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NEWS RELEASE  
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News release:

### **Hubble's 15th Anniversary – an opportunity too good to miss!**

14-April-2005 **The NASA/ESA Hubble Space Telescope is one of the biggest scientific projects of all time and is approaching the 15th anniversary of its launch. To mark the event on 24 April, the European Space Agency is presenting a series of unique activities in collaboration with partners all over Europe. These includes an exclusive, full-length DVD film (one of the most widely distributed documentary films ever), a CD of the film soundtrack, a full-colour book and additional educational material. All over Europe, there will be Hubble Day events, press events and planetarium shows about Hubble.**

#### **Background**

On 24 April 2005 the NASA/ESA Hubble Space Telescope will have been in orbit around the Earth for 15 years. As an observatory in space, Hubble is a major project that has made an enormous impact both in terms of scientific output and in its immediate public appeal.

Hubble has exploited a unique scientific niche where no other instruments can compete. The telescope consistently delivers super-sharp images and clean, uncontaminated spectra over the entire near-infrared to ultraviolet regions of the electromagnetic spectrum. This has opened up new scientific territory and resulted in many paradigm-breaking discoveries.

Exquisite quality images have enabled astronomers to gain entirely new insights into the workings of a huge range of different astronomical objects. Hubble has provided the visual overview of the underlying astrophysical processes taking place in these objects, ranging from planets in our Solar System to galaxies in the young Universe.

The renowned British astronomer Malcolm Longair writes in the preface to ESA's anniversary book: "The Hubble Space Telescope has undoubtedly had a greater public impact than any other space astronomy mission ever. The images included in this beautiful volume are quite staggering in what they reveal about the Universe we live in and have already become part of our common scientific and cultural heritage."

#### **The movie**

ESA's anniversary DVD film "Hubble - 15 years of discovery" covers all aspects of the Hubble Space Telescope project – a journey through the history, the troubled early life and the ultimate scientific successes of Hubble. This portrait, directed by Lars Lindberg Christensen, contains large amounts of previously unpublished footage of superb quality. With more than 500,000 copies distributed, this DVD movie is probably the most widely available science documentary ever.

Hubble's spectacular visual images make a stunning backdrop throughout the film, bringing an immediacy and vitality as the narrative reveals the new insights Hubble has inspired in all fields of astronomy from exoplanets to black holes. Complex though the science behind the telescope's images often is, Art Director Martin Kornmesser has developed a unique style of elaborate 3D animation that enhances and vividly clarifies the underlying science.

The movie is presented by an ESA scientist, Dr. Robert (Bob) Fosbury, who has himself used Hubble for his own research on many occasions.

The 83-minute film DVD contains more than 60 minutes of bonus material and has narration in three languages: English, German and Greek. In addition, there are subtitles in 15 languages: Bulgarian, Danish, English, German, Greek, Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Finnish and Swedish.

The film can be requested by TV broadcasters on Betacam SP or DVD without cost. This material may be used freely for shorter reports in the time leading up to the anniversary, but may not be broadcast in its entirety before 24 April.

### **The score**

The score for the film especially composed by the German composer duo moveTWO – Axel Kornmesser and Markus Löffler. Its celestial and enchanting style provides the perfect setting for this audiovisual voyage through the cosmos. In a special appearance on the soundtrack, the Celtic vocalist Audrey Quinn captivates the listeners with her dreamy voice.

The score soundtrack will be available in May on a CD bundled with the DVD in selected record stores throughout Europe and the USA.

Events, planetarium shows and press meetings

All over Europe, more than 40 Hubble Day events are planned. Thousands of copies of ESA's DVD will be given away for free and two amazing anniversary images from Hubble are going to be unveiled. Many planetariums in Europe have premieres of their new Hubble shows on 24 April. A list of the many events can be found on the ESA Hubble web site.

There are press meetings at various sites around Europe: For instance at ESA/ESTEC in Noordwijk (19 April) and at Hamburg Planetarium (with ESA/Hubble) 22 April. More information is available on the web.

### **Educational material**

A 24-page set of educational material in English will be published online in PDF format on the ESA Hubble website on 22 April.

The educational material is aimed at students from 7th Grade to High-School (low-level Science). Sample tasks include calculations of the mass of the Earth using the orbit of Hubble or the number of stars that would fit inside the Solar System.

### **Anniversary Book**

ESA has produced a book in full colour that gives an overview of the project with emphasis on the magnificent images and the incredible discoveries. Astronomy is fortunate in that telescopes not only produce results of great scientific value, but also of eye-catching beauty and artistic potential. This book shows the close relationship between the two at its best.

Despite its age, Hubble continues to deliver frontier science results on a daily basis, and as Bob Fosbury remarks: "Hubble's current capabilities lie far beyond the dreams of its original designers. I think what arouses the strongest feelings in me is watching the astronauts carrying out day after day of extremely arduous spacewalking from the Shuttle, fitting new instruments to the telescope and replacing ageing components. It is then that you realise that this is a serious business and that people are putting their lives on the line to allow you to understand what goes on in the Universe."

The DVD, book etc. mentioned here are available from the various outlets listed on the ESA Hubble web site: [www.spacetelescope.org](http://www.spacetelescope.org)

### **Notes for editors**

The Hubble Space Telescope is a project of international cooperation between ESA and NASA.

This project was realised in collaboration with 22 European partners:

- o Academy of Athens (Greece)
- o Eugenides Planetarium (Greece)
- o Eleftherotypia (Greece)
- o Hamburg Planetarium (Germany)
- o Sterne und Weltraum (Germany)
- o Astronomie Heute (Germany)
- o New Scientist (UK)
- o ESPACE magazine (France)
- o Expresso (Portugal)
- o Tycho Brahe Planetarium (Denmark)
- o Danish Space Centre (Denmark)
- o Politiken (Denmark)
- o Ursa Astronomical Association (Finland)
- o The Finnish National Technology Agency (Finland)
- o Centro Multimeios de Espinho (Portugal)
- o Fundação Navegar (Portugal)
- o Le Stelle (Italy)
- o Zeiss Planetarium Vienna (Austria)
- o SDC (Denmark/Germany)
- o Armagh Planetarium (Northern Ireland)
- o DeKoepel (The Netherlands)
- o Veen Magazines (The Netherlands)

Image credit: ESA

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