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Global launch for From Earth to the Universe project

Paris, 25 February 2009: Worldwide exhibitions of large-scale astronomical images are being launched in over 40 countries around the world. The IYA2009 Cornerstone project, From Earth to the Universe (FETTU), is designed to bring the undeniable beauty of astronomy to the general public in a series of free showings across the world.

Fantastic images of the Universe are captured by the world's fleet of ground- and space-based telescopes, and they belong to everyone. The grandeur of popular images of the cosmos captivates people, but their allure also presents an opportunity to learn the science behind them.

IYA2009 is an unprecedented opportunity to present astronomy to the global community in a way that has never been done before. The Cornerstone project, From Earth to the Universe, is an exhibition arranged by the IYA2009 that will showcase images of a great variety of astronomical objects to a wider audience in non-traditional venues such as public parks and gardens, art museums, shopping malls, airports and metro stations around the globe.

The FETTU images – highlighting planets, comets, stars, nebulae, galaxies, clusters and more – have been selected for their stunning beauty to engage members of the general public who might normally overlook or pass up astronomy. With short, yet informative, captions on each panel, the goal is introduce some basics of the science once an individual has been drawn to the image. In an attempt to bring astronomy to a wider audience, FETTU panels for the visually impaired are being prepared with support from NASA.

“A key aim of the IYA2009 is to bring astronomy to the attention of everybody. The stunning images from space have always resonated with the wider public in a way no other piece of science data can.” said Kim Kowal Arcand of the Chandra X-ray Center and co-chair of the FETTU Cornerstone project. Her co-chair Megan Watzke, also of the Chandra X-ray Center, adds *“This IYA2009 Cornerstone project is very exciting because we will be using astrophotography in a new way and hopefully surprise the public by putting astronomy in places you wouldn't expect.”*

With 2009 underway, FETTU is already being showcased in a variety of formats – both physically and digitally – in over 40 countries across the globe. These worldwide exhibits have been funded through a variety of local resources and are organised by each individual location. For a full list of FETTU exhibits visit www.fromearthtotheuniverse.org/table_events.php.

FETTU is one of 11 global Cornerstone projects being supported by the International Astronomical Union's IYA2009 efforts. To learn more about IYA2009 internationally, the Cornerstone projects and other activities please visit www.astronomy2009.org.

Links

- From Earth to the Universe: <http://www.fromearthtotheuniverse.org>
- IYA2009 website: <http://www.astronomy2009.org>

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