



# PRESS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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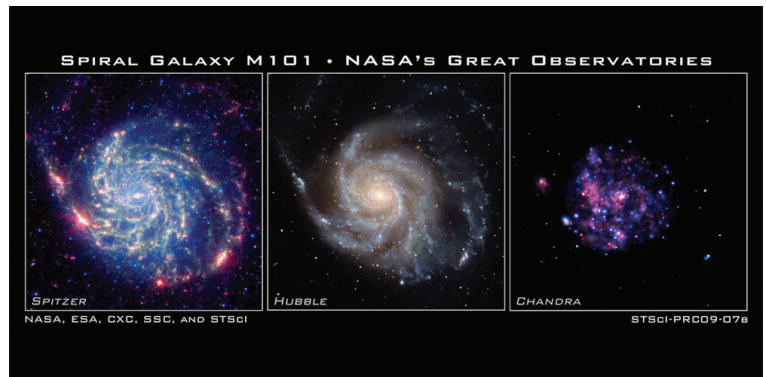
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Images and online press kit can be found at <http://hubblesite.org/newscenter/archive/releases/2009/07/>

## MUSEUM CELEBRATES THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ASTRONOMY WITH UNVEILING OF NEW MURAL-SIZED IMAGES FROM NASA'S GREAT OBSERVATORIES

**BUFFALO (February 13, 2009)** -- Witness a spectacular event on **Saturday, February 21 at 1:00pm** at the **Buffalo Museum of Science** when two new mural-sized images of the well-known spiral galaxy Messier 101 taken by NASA's Hubble Space Telescope, Spitzer Space Telescope, and Chandra X-ray Observatory will be unveiled to the public to commemorate the International Year of Astronomy. Museum admission is required to view the unveiling.



The International Year of Astronomy 2009 celebrates the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Galileo first turning a telescope to the heavens. From Galileo's first spyglass, telescopes have grown ever larger and ever better, and have moved to mountaintops and to space. NASA's Great Observatories represent the achievements of astronomy four centuries later and are honoring this legacy with a national image unveiling. The Buffalo Museum of Science was selected to present these incredible images to its community.

One 6-foot-by-3-foot image shows three striking full-color images that showcase the galaxy's features in the infrared light observed by Spitzer, the visible light observed by Hubble, and the X-ray light observed by Chandra. The images show not only the details of the grand design spiral structure for which the galaxy is famous, but also the underlying giant clouds where stars are born, as well as the hidden locations of black holes and exploded stars. These multi-wavelength views provide both stunning beauty and a wealth of scientific information not even dreamed of by Galileo.

Another 3-foot-by-3-foot image of Messier 101 combines the views from all three telescopes into an amazing composite. It's like seeing with your eyes, night vision goggles, and X-ray vision all at once!

Additional information about the Hubble Space Telescope is available at <http://hubblesite.org/>. Additional information about the Spitzer Space Telescope is available at <http://www.spitzer.caltech.edu/>.

Additional information about the Chandra X-ray Observatory is available at <http://chandra.harvard.edu/>.

**-MORE-**

## **-NASA IMAGES Cont'd-**

After the new images are unveiled in the Museum's main hall on February 21<sup>st</sup>, they will be on display in the museum's *Our Place In Space* exhibit. Image unveiling guests will also be able to view and engage in the museum's current exhibits, *First Observers* and *Alien Earths*. The Buffalo Museum of Science is located at 1020 Humboldt Parkway in Buffalo. For more information on other programs and activities taking place at the museum, call 716.896.5200 or visit [www.buffalomuseumofscience.org](http://www.buffalomuseumofscience.org).

### **ABOUT FIRST OBSERVERS: January 10 – April 30, 2009**

The *International Year of Astronomy* ignites a celebration of the human spirit's sense of wonder. It is this sense of wonder that has been a driving force behind great explorations of our land, seas and heavens. In *First Observers*, the Buffalo Museum of Science pays tribute to those whose curious pursuits have laid the path for better understanding our planet, our solar system, our universe and ultimately ourselves. It is from these findings that we will formulate the questions that will determine tomorrow's explorations. Where will your questions take you?

### **ABOUT ALIEN EARTHS: February 1 – April 30, 2009**

Address some of humankind's most ancient concerns: Where did we come from? Are we alone? Through hands-on components and multi-media presentations, the nationally-traveling *Alien Earths* invites visitors to join the search for distant, habitable worlds. Learn about the formation of stars and planets, the search for planets beyond our solar system, and search for life beyond Earth. Visitors to the exhibition will be able to compare the life cycle of our Sun to other stars; set planets in motion around a star and watch what happens; experiment with an infrared camera and ordinary objects; explore the methods used to search for extrasolar planets; listen to sounds from space and find out what signals from intelligent beings might sound like; and have other experiences of the search for alien earths.

*The Buffalo Museum of Science is the non-profit educational institution dedicated to the study and interpretation of the natural and physical sciences. Its extensive collections of over 600,000 specimens and artifacts represent all facets of the natural world with an emphasis on Western New York as well as man-made objects spanning the globe. Based at 1020 Humboldt Parkway and anchoring Buffalo's East Side in Olmsted-designed Martin Luther King, Jr. Park since 1929, the Museum presents a wide variety of programs and services for children, teachers, families, adults, and community organizations throughout each year. General admission to the Museum is \$7 adults; \$6 seniors (age 62+); \$5 students and children over 3; and free for members and children under 3. The Museum also operates Tiff Nature Preserve in South Buffalo, a 264-acre urban wetland preserve on reclaimed former industrial land and seasonally sponsors archaeological exploration at the Hiscock Site in nearby Genesee County, NY, one of North America's richest Ice Age sites.*

*For further information on the Museum and its upcoming activities, call 716-896-5200 or visit [www.buffalomuseumofscience.org](http://www.buffalomuseumofscience.org).*

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