

Projections

Summer 2012

In this issue:

- LATEST ZEISS TECHNOLOGY FOR LAUPHEIM
- FULL DOME FESTIVAL
- EARTHQUAKE PLANETARIUM SHOW
- HEIDELBERG HOUSE OF ASTRONOMY

Latest ZEISS Projection Technology for Laupheim Planetarium



The planetarium of the public observatory in Laupheim Germany has purchased a combined system comprised of the optical-mechanical SKYMASTER ZKP4 star projector and the VELVET Duo digital full-dome system. The new system, which will replace the 20-year-old ZEISS Model 1015 star projector and the analog slide projection system, will provide a variety of stunning, state-of-the-art programming.

The SKYMASTER ZKP4, now with LED illumination, provides a bright, natural looking star field, unmatched anywhere except the real sky on a crisp winter's night on a remote mountain top. With the addition of the VELVET Duo full-dome system, video can now complement a beautiful night sky and provide a complete system with no compromises on quality or programming options. VELVET produces an absolute black background and the highest contrast (2,500,000 : 1) available from a digital projector. The powerdome computer system combines the traditional optical projection along with the digital projections. VELVET fulfills the desires of the planetarium operators, video projection that won't wash out the optical night sky or destroy its brilliance. For the first time, astronomical objects such as gas nebulae and galaxies appear as if they were embedded in the pitch-black depths of space.

continued on next page



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News & Notes

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A Note from Laura Misajet

Conference season is in full bloom, and I want to thank Gloria and her wonderful team at Ocean County College in Toms River NJ for hosting a fabulous MAPS conference a few weeks back. It was a thrill to attend a conference once again where the centerpiece of the planetarium was a Zeiss optical star projector, in this case the ZKP4. The Jena FullDome Festival in May was hosted for the 6th year in a row by the Zeiss Planetarium in Jena Germany which features the Zeiss powerdome®VELVET full-dome video system along with the Zeiss Universarium Star Projector. This year's SEPA (Southeastern Planetarium Association) and WAC (Western Alliance) Conferences will take place right before the IPS conference this July at Louisiana Art and Science Museum in Baton Rouge and we're happy to announce Zeiss just finished installing a full-dome powerdome®VELVET system in host planetarium. This September the Uniview Users Group will be hosted by the Bochum Planetarium in Germany, proud owners of a Zeiss Universarium Star Projector and powerdome®VELVET full-dome system and Uniview, of course. However we know not everyone can or will attend conferences this year, so we can arrange to come to you. Please don't hesitate to contact us to arrange a Zeiss demonstration at your facility. Enjoy the summer season!

Latest ZEISS Projection Technology for Laupheim Planetarium continued

The Laupheim Planetarium opened in 1990 as part of the non-profit public observatory in Laupheim, Germany. The association is primarily dedicated to the promotion of amateur astronomy, educating the general public about the wonders of astronomy and youth work. The 10 meter dome has 60 seats and has around 40,000 visitors annually. The modernization of the planetarium was financed with the support of the city, county, Foundation of the Kreissparkasse bank in Biberach, the Oberswabian Electric Company (OEW) and donations. The Laupheim Planetarium, along with Modesto CA, is one of the first to feature the 2-channel VELVET Duo full-dome system. It is scheduled to reopen in fall 2012.

FullDome Festival Testifies to Innovative Media Competence in Germany

Visitors from all over the world vindicated Jena as a venue of fulldome enthusiasts Jena, May 15th, 2012.

Close to a thousand visitors came to the Zeiss-Planetarium in Jena, host of the 6th FullDome Festival, a key event devoted to multimedia productions for dome-filling projections. From May 8th to 12th, 90 different shows, short films and clips were presented and assessed, among them 29 productions by students. With contributions and guests from 18 countries, the FullDome Festival once more confirmed its status as the biggest international festival of its kind.

Eleven of the 16 prizes awarded went to German students and producers, which was less due to Germany being the host country than to its high media competence. Students from five universities entered contributions, with the Hochschule für Gestaltung (Academy of Art and Design) in Offenbach turning out to be most successful: seven of its eight entries made it to the final round according to the jury's decision.

The high point of the festival was the Festival Gala with the presentation of prizes. Following a cherished tradition, Carl Zeiss AG for the fifth time donated three student awards with prize moneys of €500 each. An independent jury of seven experts chose the winners of the Creative Award and the Performance Award. The



Tim Florian Horn is shown here receiving the Honorable Award for the show from the California Academy of Sciences "Life: A Cosmic Story" awarded for "Best integration of scientific data into fulldome visualization and best in narration."



Carolyn and Mark Petersen were honored to accept the Creative Award on behalf of Rose Generazio, Ringling College of Art and Design, who was unable to attend, for her Festival contribution "Pressure".

2012 Creative Award for the best idea went to Rose Generazio, a student at the Ringling College of Art and Design in Florida for her contribution "Pressure". The Performance Award for the best design and implementation was given to Sönke Hahn, a student at the Bauhaus University of Weimar for his production "breakFAST" inspired by the film noir. The winner of the Audience Award, also endowed with €500, was picked from the finalists shortlist by the Festival Gala audience casting a ballot. The majority of the audience voted for "Listen Carefully", a film by Sebastian Hilgetag and Marie Havemann of the Potsdam University of Applied Science. The film also won the "Dissolving Space" special prize named after this year's festival theme. Donated and endowed with €500 by the Sky-Skan corporation (USA), this prize pays tribute to the masterly manner of dissolving the dome into a virtual space with the devices of the cinema. Two female Chinese students of the Bauhaus University were happy to receive another prize donated by the festival organizers themselves and endowed with

FullDome Festival continued

€100. Jiayao Chen and Jie Wang convinced the jury with an animation in blue and white, which, inspired by traditional Chinese porcelain art, reflects elements of Chinese culture in a modern version.

A panel of planetarium and media experts selected the best professional fulldome shows of those shown on the first three days of the festival. Most of the productions with lengths between 20 and 45 minutes, intended for presentation in planetariums all over the globe, touch upon astronomical topics, but also take up questions of protection of the environment or entertain with music and animation. An honorary prize in this category was awarded to the film "The Future", which deals with the future of air transportation, exemplified by the visions of aircraft manufacturer Airbus. This feature surprised the experts as much as the audience. For the first time, the fulldome medium was employed to treat a corporate theme in a manner both informative and entertaining. Further honorary awards went to the production "Planet Earth – Life between Ice Age and Hothouse" of the Hamburg Planetarium, and to the fulldome film "Life: A Cosmic Story" by the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. The American fulldome show was convincing thanks to the best translation of original scientific data into the language of fulldome imagery, and to an outstanding script. The contribution from Hamburg brings the topical issue of global climate change home in an exciting and convincing way.

Finally, eight more honorary awards went to new professional and artistic short films. Most of these, too, came from German producers, not a few of which won their fulldome spurs at the leading academies in Weimar and Kiel. The fulldome medium is still young and far from explored comprehensively. The FullDome Festival contributes to sounding out the potential of the mediums, trying out new ideas,

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Stefanie Neuhaeuser (Carl Zeiss), Brian Wirthlin (Seiler Instrument), Eric and Elaine Seiler, Anja Mugil (Baden Switzerland), Wilfried Lang (Carl Zeiss) at the Papiermuhle in Jena Germany, May 2012, in front of the 400 year old tree.



Anja Mugil, Elaine Seiler, Laura Misajet, Sefanie Neuhaeuser at the Papiermuhle in Jena Germany, May 2012.

approaches and technical tools, and pushing back frontiers. The work-in-progress presentation of the “Kepler Project” of the American performance artist Nina Wise was a striking example. In a collaboration with the California Academy of Sciences and the Morehead Planetarium in San Francisco, she visualized the life story of the astronomer Johannes Kepler in a dramaturgy combining fulldome projection with stage play. Some of the animations were contributed by the Jena artists Jan Zehn and Stephan Berge, award-winners at last year’s FullDome Festival.

The FullDome Festival provides an internationally recognized platform for creative people and a forum for planetariums and fulldome theaters. In the many workshops, presentations and discussions during the festival, the participants got to know each other and exchanged their experience. Getting kindred spirits into contact, inspiring new ideas and promoting collaboration is not the least of the strengths of this festival. In that respect, too, the 6th FullDome Festival was a complete success.

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For the complete list of Fulldome Award winners, the program brochure with descriptions of all shows and workshop contributions, and introduction to the seven-member festival jury, visit the download area at www.fulldome-festival.de.



Laura Misajet on the blue carpet.

VELVET Projectors from Carl Zeiss and Uniview software from SCISS for Heidelberg House of Astronomy, Germany

The Klaus Tschira Foundation (KTS) and Carl Zeiss are proud to announce the installation of a full-dome powerdome®VELVET projection system in Heidelberg's House of Astronomy that is constructed in the shape of a spiral galaxy and opened in December of 2011. KTS, a non-profit foundation that primarily supports research projects in applied informatics, the natural sciences and mathematics, is financing this facility.

With powerdome®VELVET and Uniview software by SCISS, the House of Astronomy contains the leading technology for the projection of digital full-dome images. The special feature of the projectors developed by Carl Zeiss is the image contrast ratio of 2.5 million to one - the highest contrast currently possible with digital projectors anywhere in the world. As a result, the dome projection achieves outstanding brilliance and sharpness. In Heidelberg, five VELVET projectors are integrated, generating five partial images. These are combined so that a complete image measuring 360 degrees by 180 degrees is obtained without any visible transitions or image edges.



The architecture of the House of Astronomy is modeled on the shape of a spiral galaxy, at the center of which the VELVET system is located. (Photo: Bernhardt + Partner)

The focus of interest of the institution directed by the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy (MPIA) is the promotion of scientists and researchers in the fields of physics and astronomy. In addition, the House of Astronomy will make research results available and intelligible to the general public. The 12-meter dome of the lecture room will accommodate around 100 spectators. During the first year the facility will be available to school and college students free of charge. Workshops and seminars will be offered in collaboration with the University of Heidelberg.

The commitment of the Klaus Tschira Foundation extends right across Germany; it starts in kindergartens and continues in schools, universities and research institutes. The Foundation devotes special attention to new ways of communicating scientific subject matter. It supports both the development and the understandable presentation of research results.

Partners of the House of Astronomy include not only the KTS, but also the city of Heidelberg, the University of Heidelberg with its Center for Astronomy, the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport in the German state of Baden-Württemberg.



PRESS RELEASE: EARTHQUAKE PLANETARIUM SHOW

Following its first two award-winning productions, *Fragile Planet* and *Life: A Cosmic Story*, Morrison Planetarium will premiere an earthquake-themed planetarium show on May 26 in conjunction with the exhibit.

“Our all-digital planetarium has the ability to present complex topics — such as earth processes and the slow march of geological time — within a very visual, immersive environment,” said Ryan Wyatt, Director of Morrison Planetarium and Science Visualization. “The new show harnesses the latest techniques in data-driven visualization to help visitors understand earth processes and think differently about living on our dynamic planet.”

Starting at Point Reyes in Northern California, the show flies south along the San Andreas Fault until it reaches San Francisco. The Golden Gate Bridge fades away as the clock rewinds to 1906. The audience experiences an all-digital recreation of the 7.9-magnitude earthquake, followed by a scientific dissection of the event—including views of the underground fault plane and the propagation of seismic energy waves based on supercomputer simulations. Guests then embark on a high-speed tour of the past 200 million years, witnessing the formation of the Atlantic Ocean, flying over the cradle of humanity in Africa’s Great Rift Valley, and visiting sites of historic earthquakes in India, China, and Japan — including the 9.0-magnitude Tohoku earthquake and tsunami in March 2011. A planetarium presenter will bring audiences even more up-to-date during a live portion showing the latest seismic events happening around the planet — earthquakes big and small occur almost constantly. The show ends with a look at the modern building strategies used by scientists and engineers for a safer and better prepared future.

Scientific advisers and partners on the show include Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Geo Hazards International, San Francisco State University, Stanford University, University of California at Berkeley, and the U.S. Geological Survey. The show will play several times daily.



The Best of Both Worlds!

The Zeiss ZKP4 star projector delivers fiber optic stars, the same technology in the larger Starmaster and Universarium, now with brilliant LED high intensity lamps for domes 20 - 50 feet.

Introducing: Velvet Duo Full dome for domes from 6 to 14 meters with either center or peripheral projection!

The two projection types work together as one, providing a complete planetarium solution.



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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Zeiss VELVETS at IPS:

The International Planetarium Society conference will be held at the Louisiana Art and Science Museum in Baton Rouge from Sunday July 22 - Thursday July 26, 2012.

Carl Zeiss is one of the top sponsors and will demonstrate the powerdome®VELVET full-dome digital projection system during the vendor sessions in the Irene W. Pennington Planetarium. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to see these amazing high-contrast projectors, designed and manufactured by Carl Zeiss specifically for the planetarium, and learn about the latest software developments and special new features of powerdome®. Please be sure to join us during one of the sessions and visit us at our booth at the Baton Rouge River Center. For more information, visit the IPS web site at www.ips2012.com.

A special thanks goes out to our host Jon Elvert and the wonderful folks at the Louisiana Art & Science Museum!

Uniview Users Group:

The Uniview User Group 2012 will take place on the 17-18 of September, at the state-of-the-art Zeiss Planetarium Bochum, Germany. Covering two days of training for beginners and veteran users alike, we guarantee there is something for everyone. Even more so this year, as the summer release of Uniview has some interesting new graphical support, promising to take scientific visualization to the next level.

We recommend far away guests to arrive on the 16th, and everyone is of course also invited to the customary reception in the evening. With the great success of last year where almost 50 attendees came to the user group in Texas, US, we anticipate an even larger user group this year. Please contact SCISS early to let them know you're coming! Contact SCISS at usergroup@sciss.se. We would also like to give a very special thanks to our hosts at the Zeiss Bochum Planetarium for their great hospitality!