



400 YEARS
of the TELESCOPE
A JOURNEY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND THOUGHT

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March 17, 2009

**“Star-Studded” Advanced Screening and WHYY Debut:
400 Years of the Telescope
Celebrates International Year of Astronomy**

The public is invited to join WHYY at the Franklin Institute on Tuesday, April 7th to celebrate the “*International Year of Astronomy*” with a reception and preview of the sweeping new PBS film *400 Years of the Telescope; A Journey of Science, Technology and Thought*. The film will debut on WHYY TV Tuesday, April 14 at 10 p.m.

As part of this special event, guests will enjoy a cocktail reception and tour of the Franklin’s exhibit Galileo, Medici and the Age of Astronomy before screening a preview of *400 Years of the Telescope* and a new full-dome planetarium film titled *Two Small Pieces of Glass*. There will be a post-film Q&A with *400 Years* producer Kris Koenig and the co-hosts of WHYY-FM’s SkyTalk, Dr. Derrick Pitts (Chief Astronomer at the Franklin Institute) and Dave Heller. Attendees will also have the opportunity to gaze upon the night sky through a variety of telescopes compliments of the Delaware Valley Amateur Astronomers.

As part of their outreach around *400 Years of the Telescope*, WHYY is conducting a sweepstakes wherein a school within the station’s broadcast area will be awarded a new Celestron CPC® 800 GPS XLT telescope. The lead science teacher at the winning school will also receive telescope training from Dr. Derrick Pitts.

For more information, or to register for the event, visit:
www.whyy.org/memberexperience.

ABOUT THE FILM:

In *400 Years of the Telescope*, viewers take a visually stunning journey from Galileo’s first look at the cosmos in 1609, to today’s thrilling quests to discover new worlds and glimpse the formation of the first stars after the Big Bang. Emmy award-winning writer and producer Kris Koenig and the Interstellar Studios production team traveled the globe, interviewing leading astronomers and cosmologists against a backdrop of the world’s greatest observatories, to create a vivid film that presents



the human quest of the past *400 years* to understand the structure and nature of the universe.

400 Years of the Telescope features a lush score performed by the London Symphony Orchestra, and is an official product of the International Year of Astronomy 2009.

400 Years of the Telescope is one part of a multifaceted set of experiences funded by a single National Science Foundation award, designed to reconnect society to the starry night.

From reenactments of Galileo's invention and early pen drawings of the moons of Jupiter, to vivid multi-colored nebulas captured by the Hubble Space Telescope, *400 Years of the Telescope* takes viewers from their armchairs into the wonders of space exploration. With warmth and humor, the planet's top astrophysicists enthusiastically discuss momentous discoveries, and define dark energy – a mysterious vacuum energy that is accelerating the expansion of the universe. Looking into the future, viewers will learn of emergent telescopes the size of stadiums, and a massive radio telescope array that will be perched on one of the highest plateaus on the planet - enormous new instruments that may detect life outside our solar system, and allow humans to view the initial moments of the Big Bang. Like Galileo's first telescopic observations, these new technologies will reshape our entire perception of the universe.

Beautifully photographed in 4k digital cinematography, *400 Years of the Telescope* is the first PBS documentary to be filmed on 35mm RED technology. Recorded at 4520 X 2540 pixels per frame, the output is RAW format, over five times the resolution of HD. To accompany these brilliant visuals, modern English composer Mark Slater was commissioned to create a vibrant musical score, performed by the London Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Slater created elements of the score based on the numbers 1,6,0,9 - the year Galileo made his discovery, with numbers correspond to pitch classes, in which numerical values are assigned to tones.

400 Years of the Telescope was produced and directed by Kris Koenig, written by Donald Goldsmith, Ph.D. (author, co-author, or editor of more than two-dozen books on astronomy), Albert van Helden, Ph.D. (President Emeritus of the History of Science Society and author of several books including [The Invention of the Telescope](#) and [Measuring the Universe](#)) and filmmaker, Kris Koenig. The script for *400 Years of the Telescope* was developed with a board of advisors composed of the leading astronomers, cosmologists, and astrophysicists in the world today.

Kris Koenig is founder and director of one of the most successful community observatories and the nation's only outdoor planetarium, as well as creator of the Emmy award-winning ten-hour *PBS telecourse Astronomy: Observations and*



Theories. His astrophotography is featured on the covers of nationally acclaimed astronomical textbooks, and in numerous publications and videos.

The program is narrated by astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson Ph.D., host of the popular PBS program *NOVA ScienceNow*, which airs on WHYY TV. Tyson is the author of eight books including the New York Times best-seller *Death By Black Hole and Other Cosmic Quandaries*. He was named one of Time's 100 Most Influential People of 2007, was appointed to serve on two presidential advisory committees on aerospace, is a member of the NASA Advisory Council, and a recipient of the NASA Distinguished Service Medal.

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