

JENAM 2005 - « DISTANT WORLDS »

European astronomers will get together in Liège (Belgium) from July 4 to 7, 2005 in the frame of the Joint European and National Astronomy Meeting (JENAM), thus having the opportunity to be presented with the most recent European discoveries while creating new links and collaborations and also discussing the future of European astronomy.

Scientists responsible for the major European projects, both ground-based and space-borne (ESO, ESA, Mars Express, Huygens, Aurora,...) will participate to JENAM 2005.

JENAM 2005 is constructed around five major hot topics of research in Europe:

Asterosismology : the science of solar oscillations, enabling to reach the deep layers of stars, and therefore to determine the fundamental properties of those objects.

- Astrobiology and exploration of the solar system : the Europeans are very active in exploring planets, in particular Mars (Mars Express) and Titan (Huygens), and are developing new techniques for the search for life on solar system objects and/or exoplanets.
- Quasars : host galaxies and gravitational lenses : the observations of these very active and very distant objects, hiding a supermassive black hole in their center, lead to the determination of fundamental characteristics of our Universe.
- Massive stars and high energy emission of OB associations : the most massive and luminous stars are the most powerful objects in the Universe. Their observation at high energies, in particular with the European satellites XMM-Newton and INTEGRAL, shows their true nature, and reveals extremely violent phenomena.
- Road map for future generation interferometers : Europe will soon have the best optical interferometer, ESO's VLTI (Very Large Telescope Interferometer) and wishes to remain at the forefront in this domain, both on the ground and in space.

Besides "specialized" talks, JENAM 2005 will also open itself to the public at large. All generations, younger to older, will be able to meet professional astronomers on two special occasions. An evening devoted to the observation of the sky will be organized on July 4, where the public will first be presented with a well illustrated, accessible-to-all conference, then will be given the possibility to observe the sky with several small-size telescopes. On July 6, an evening "science-café" will take place on the exciting themes of life in the Universe.

Two professional press conferences are also to be organized on July 6. The first one will deal with comets, since in early July 2005 "Deep Impact" will collide with a comet : this event will be followed by European astronomers, and one of them, live from Cerro Paranal in Chile, will participate in the press conference. The second meeting with the media will give the latter the opportunity to discuss with specialists in astrobiology and in solar system exploration. Among the topics, Mars will be addressed by the Principal Investigator of the highly successful Mars Express mission, by one of the team leaders of the US martian rovers, and also by the chairman of the Aurora advisory committee (Aurora being the European robotic and human exploration of Mars).

Extensions of JENAM 2005 are to take place on July 8, with, in particular, a session devoted to astrobiology in Belgium, with the presence of the Belgian Nobel prize winner, Christian de Dune.

For further details, see the site :

<http://www.astro.ulg.ac.be/jenam>