



MIRROR EXHIBIT OPENS AT CHABOT SPACE & SCIENCE CENTER

— Exclusive U.S Premiere from Switzerland, January 29 – June 5, 2005—

OAKLAND, CA (January 18, 2005)— The parallel universe of mirrors is explored in Chabot Space & Science Center's newest exhibit, ***Mirror, Mirror*** which opens on **January 29, 2005**. The exhibition is on loan from the internationally famed Technorama, The Swiss Science Center, for an exclusive U.S. premiere before it travels to Finland. ***Mirror, Mirror*** includes over thirty interactive exhibits that explore mirrors, reflections and optics. Visitors can reflect on their own images in curved mirrors and experiment with kaleidoscopes, mirror mazes, mirages, cylinders, mirror writing and more in a variety of hands-on exhibits. The exhibition also includes works from notable mirror artists Don Doak and James Seawright from the United States, Caspar Schwabe from Switzerland, multi media artist Bill Spinhoven from the Netherlands, and Christian Megert from Germany.

“We are excited to have this exhibition at Chabot for its first US presentation,” said Programs Manager Claire Pillsbury. “The exhibit combines the aesthetic appeal of mirrors with the science of optics. There is a natural connection with astronomy; telescopes use mirrors to collect and focus light for our observations of distant regions in outer space. Our visitors will also have fun with the exhibit: they can see themselves in a fun-house mirror, crawl through a mirrored cube, and make a small mirror maze. This playful exploration is an informal method of learning and experimenting with optics.”

The exhibition explores topics of fundamental importance to astronomy such as atmospheric distortion, interference fringes, optical filters, and virtual images. ***Mirror, Mirror*** includes exhibits such as:

“Color Corner”—Created by Zurich mathematician/artist Caspar Schwabe, the three mirrors in this kaleidoscope are arranged in three spatial dimensions producing a 60-fold reflection in which 98% of what you see is an illusion.

“Chaotic Scatterings”—Inspired by an article titled “Topology in Chaotic Scattering” in the international scientific journal *Nature*, visitors can peer into or build a pyramid of four silvered balls and see the complex colorful triangular reflections from one sphere to the next.

“Cube to Infinity”—A crawl-through mirror where your image is reflected inside an apparently infinite space.

“Deformable Mirror”—The computer controlled wiggling curvature of this mirror creates a constantly changing fun-house reflection of you.

“Dual Mirror”—Created by James Seawright and inspired by French scientist Augustin Fresnel. Fantastic checkerboard patterns and face-combinations are produced by the arrangement of 110 mirror tiles.

“Eyes in the Back of Your Head”—This exhibit works like a periscope for viewing the back of your head. A four-fold reflection allows you to see yourself from behind by looking straight ahead.

“It’s About Time”—In Bill Spinhoven’s installation, a video camera captures visitor’s images and movements, and through computer processing, projects distorted manipulations of the same scene wiggled, twisted and contorted.

“Mirror Writing”—Explore how vertical and horizontal symmetry in letters can make for surprising transformations of words. Secret mirror writing was employed by Leonardo da Vinci.

“Parallel Universe”—Created by San Francisco artist David Barker, many thin strips of mirrors reveal a slivered view of your face. Try walking past it and see your mirror image suddenly passing you in the opposite direction

“Pepper’s Ghost”—Play with ghost reflections and special effects to make figures appear and disappear using mirrors.

“Picasso’s Dream”—Created by kaleidoscope artist Don Doak and named after Picasso’s cubism, this kaleidoscope is composed of 48 right-angled triangles and places your image in a perfect cube.

“Polytakis”— Created by Zurich mathematician/artist Caspar Schwabe, light shining through star-shaped holes creates multiple reflections in the four movable wings of the mirror. The Greek word ‘polytakis’ stands for a mathematical representation of the cosmos.

“S-Bend Mirror”—This fun-house mirror can make you short and squashed or tall and wobbly.

“Spectral Shimmer”— The classic Schlieren optics demonstration uses precisely aligned mirrors to focus light so that it is able to reveal warm air rising off your fingers. This visual evidence that the slightest temperature difference can bend the light path is analogous to the twinkling of starlight when it passes from outer space though the warmth of Earth’s atmosphere.

“Zoom Mirror”—Created by Christian Megert, the mirror seems to come get you and is composed of reflecting foil originally created for satellites and refrigerators.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Technorama, The Swiss Science Center, is located in Winterthur, Switzerland, and features over 500 interactive exhibits. It was established in 1947.

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Chabot Space & Science Center is located at 10000 Skyline Blvd. in Oakland’s Joaquin Miller Park. **Public hours:** Wed – Thurs, 10 am–5pm; Friday & Saturday, 10 am–10 pm; Sunday, 11am–5 pm. Closed Mon & Tues. General admission, including free parking and a Planetarium show, is \$13.00 for adults, \$9.00 youth and seniors. Children under 3 are admitted free. Movies in the MegaDome Theater are \$8.00 adult, and \$7.00 youth and seniors. Telescopes are open for Free Public Viewing Fridays & Saturdays from dusk – 10 pm, weather permitting. Tickets may be purchased at the door, or by calling (510) 336-7373.

For more information, call (510) 336-7300, or visit www.chabotspace.org

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