

*Media preview: Thursday, March 2, 3 – 5 pm
Images available on request*

Bay Area Premiere of DomeFest
Presented at Chabot Space & Science Center, March 3
—Show Features Winners of International “Domie Awards”—

OAKLAND, CA (February 22, 2006) — Winners and finalists of the 2004 and 2005 International DomeFest, the world’s only festival dedicated to the art and practice of the large-scale immersive digital medium called ‘fulldome,’ will be presented **Friday, March 3, 7 and 9 pm**, on Chabot Space & Science Center’s newly installed, ultra high definition, state-of-the-art immersive 70-foot dome screen. The show features the finest examples of immersive digital art, science, entertainment, education and experimental works created around the world by production studios, fulldome theaters, independent artists, and college students. Originated by the LodeStar Astronomy Center and the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, DomeFest is a juried show dedicated to exploring and advancing the potentials of this nascent and powerful new medium.

“Our purpose in bringing DomeFest to the Bay Area is to raise awareness and explore community partnerships that will generate resources to support the development and use of this phenomenal educational and entertainment tool,” commented Alex Barnett, Executive Director of Chabot. “Chabot’s full-dome system is currently among the world’s most advanced and we would like to tap into the Bay Area’s resources—the leaders and innovators in animation, gaming and innovative technology.”

The screenings at Chabot will feature remarks from Ms. Barnett, who has been a DomeFest jurist for the past two years. She will also conduct a short Q&A at the end of each screening. Tickets are \$13 and are available at the box office by calling 510-336-7373, or online at www.museumtix.com. Doors open at 6:30 pm and \$1.00 beer and pizza will be available. Interested participants will also be invited to attend Sunday morning workshops where they will get a more hands-on look at the tools and technology used to create fulldome content, and to hear more about the real-time capabilities of the platform.

DomeFest features programs that demonstrate a wide and wild gamut of story, style, techniques and spirit—from a single artist’s hand-drawn, laptop-rendered sketches of New York City (entitled “Dome Sketch”) to the National Center for Supercomputing Applications’ science visualization of a tornado in a thunderstorm (entitled “Visualization of an F3 Tornado in a Supercell Thunderstorm Simulation.”) Submissions to the festival include student and professional work, and come from such countries as Australia, England, Italy, Germany, Greece, and Switzerland, as well as the United States.

The Ask Jeeves Planetarium is home to a brand-new sophisticated array of projection technology, digital effects, and advanced audiovisual capabilities. The new system is capable of projecting a brilliant seamless image over the entire 70-foot dome surface and can deliver jaw-dropping digital sound.

Developed by SEOS, the system uses six high-brightness, high-contrast DLP projectors driven by a powerful array of computers and software. As well as presenting pre-rendered shows, the planetarium can also display real-time data visualizations. This enables Chabot to take audiences through the three dimensional Universe, across the surface of Earth and other planets, through nebulas and into star fields. The images surround the audience, extending beyond the peripheral vision, leading to an experience that is fully immersive and engaging.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Chabot Space and Science Center, a Smithsonian affiliate, is nonprofit interactive science center focusing on astronomy and the inter-relationships of all the sciences. Its observatory, planetarium, exhibits, and natural park setting are a place where a diverse population of students, teachers, and the public can imagine, understand, and learn to shape their future through science. The Center is located at 10000 Skyline Blvd. in Oakland's Joaquin Miller Park. Hours: Wed – Thurs, 10 am–5pm; Friday & Saturday, 10 am–10 pm; Sunday, 11am–5 pm. Closed Monday and Tuesday. General admission, including free parking and a daytime planetarium show, is \$13.00 adults; \$10 students and seniors; \$9.00 youth 12 and under Children under 3 are admitted free. Evening planetarium shows and large format movies in the MegaDome Theater are \$8.00 adult, and \$7.00 Youth & Senior. Telescopes are open for Free Public Viewing Fridays & Saturdays from 7pm – 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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