

# Planetariums, Great Messengers of the Astronomical Research

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Planetariums provide up-to date information on scientific advances in Astronomy/Astrophysics to their visitors (~1,300,000 per year in France). In this perspective, the "Association des Planetariums de Langue Française" (APLF, [www.aplf-planetariums.org](http://www.aplf-planetariums.org)) hosted by the Strasbourg Observatory (Universite Louis Pasteur), realize high quality Planetarium shows, based on images and videos (observations and modelisations performed in international institutes), and produced at different technical levels – the show being available both to giant and small equipments.

Two shows were realized in six langages and distributed by APLF to 40 Planetariums in Europe and beyond:

- In 2001 "The Planet with a thousand eyes", a show devoted to the Earth seen from space, in collaboration with the Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales (CNES).
- In 2002 "The mysteries of the southern sky", a show celebrating the 40th Birthday of the European Southern Observatory (ESO). A new show "Venus and the planets hunters" was realized in 2004 at the occasion of the Venus transit, with an additional presentation of extrasolar planets (thanks the support of the French "ministere de la recherche") for 16 European Planetariums.

In addition, APLF is producing and distributing pedagogic tools, in particular a French/German/English version of an interactive CDrom (with booklet) "Universe Explorer": a series of exercises based on the observation and analysis of astronomical numerical images by using computer, a "Hands-on-Universe" product created by the Laurence Hall of Science at the University of California (Berkeley).