

# Hubble and the Language of Images

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Images released from the Hubble Space Telescope, for at least a decade, have been very highly regarded by the astronomy-attentive public. Due in large part to these images, the Hubble has become an iconic figure, even among the general public.

This iconic status is both a boon and a burden for those who produce the stream of images flowing from this telescope. While the benefits of attention are obvious, the negative aspects are less visible.

One of the most persistent challenges is the need to continue to deliver images that “top” those released before. In part this can be accomplished because of Hubble’s upgraded instrumentation. But it can also be a source of pressure that could, if left unchecked, erode ethical boundaries in our communication with the public. These pressures are magnified in an atmosphere of uncertainty with regard to the future of the mission.