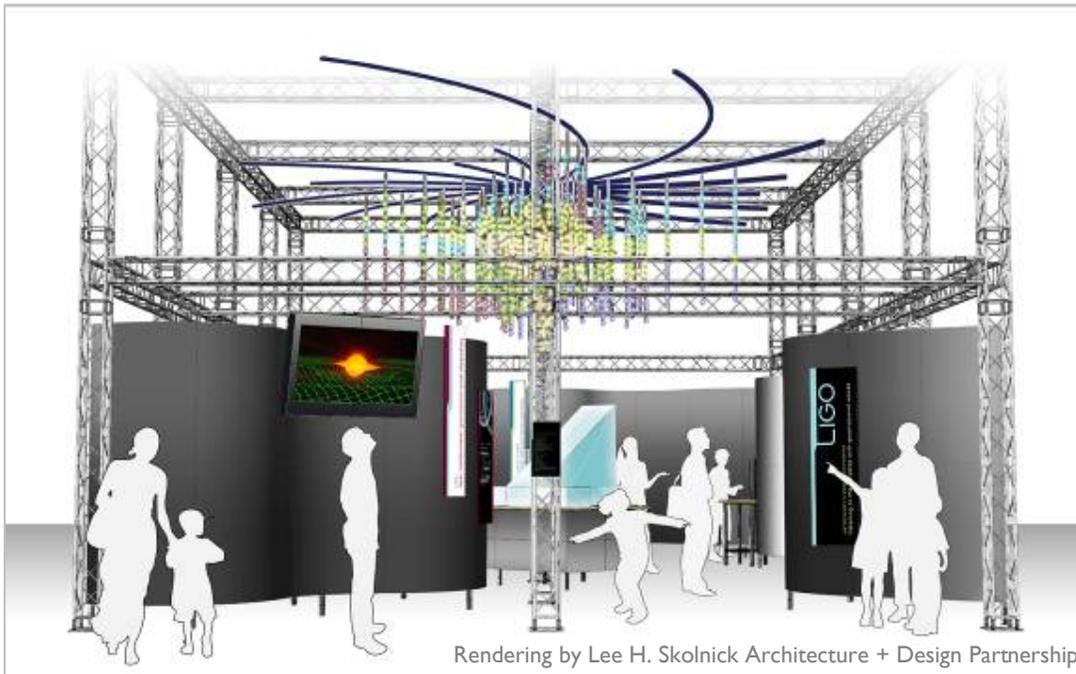




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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
“Astronomy's New Messengers” Arrive in Manhattan

Free for New Yorkers of all ages: A fantastical collision of Art and Science to hear gravity firsthand.



NEW YORK (June 2 – 6, 2010) “Astronomy's New Messengers: Listening to the Universe with Gravitational Waves”, courtesy of the National Science Foundation and the LIGO Scientific Collaboration and presented as part of the [World Science Festival](#), will be on view June 2- 6 with panel discussions taking place June 3rd and 4th. Throughout the Festival this interpretive exhibition will offer an up-close look at the work process of a dynamic group of over 800 physicists and astronomers worldwide who have joined together in the search for gravitational waves from the most violent astrophysical events in the Universe.

LIGO, short for Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory, is a revolutionary new kind of telescope designed and built to observe, for the first time, ripples in the fabric of space-time caused by massive cosmic events. This amazing interactive exhibit features a model interferometer with laser, a space-time curvature simulation, games to find the hidden gravitational wave in the static of the universe, even a mirror from the real LIGO. Overhead, Leni Schwendinger’s dazzling interactive light sculpture depicts the universe LIGO is trying to observe with a show of light and sound in real time.

“Astronomy's New Messengers” is not only science. “The LIGO scientific endeavor is motivated by the same desire for exploration, the curiosity for the unknown and the awe of nature which motivated humankind throughout millennia of history. In this respect, science and art are two facets of the same

human quest for beauty and truth" says Marco Cavaglia, Principal Investigator of Astronomy' New Messengers and Assistant Professor of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Mississippi.

To communicate the wonderment in our universe Lee H. Skolnick Architecture + Design Partnership and Leni Schwendinger Light Projects LTD, have creatively re-interpreted the ideas behind the science of LIGO resulting in an immersive exhibit that encourages visitors in self-guided exploration. "Our goal and our hope is that the installation and the interactives faithfully convey the fascinating story of the quest to observe gravitational waves and what they will reveal to us about the history and nature of the universe." Says Lee Skolnick, FAIA, Principal of LHSA+DP. "We have attempted to interpret and evoke the spirit of these waves and the mystery of space-time; and embody them in the visitor experience."

The exhibition's design emphasizes the relationship between the light sculpture, the model interferometer acting as a real one, and the interaction of the visitor representing an event in the universe detected by the interferometer. "Light Projects was very excited by the opportunity to translate the search for gravity through our art medium, video and LEDS. Our light attracts people, young and old", says Leni Schwendinger. Guests learn that gravity is a manifestation of the curvature of space-time and how LIGO scientists hope to see supernova explosions, black hole collisions, even the birth of the universe - the Big Bang - with a new set of eyes. These scientific ideas are the basis for design throughout the exhibit from the undulating waveform shape of the space to the programming of the light sculpture and the graphic design.

"Astronomy's New Messengers" will be open daily June 2 -6, from 10:00am to 8:00pm at the Broad Street Ballroom, 41 Broad Street, New York. Admission is free. Presented in collaboration with the World Science Festival.



[The Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory \(LIGO\)](#) is a facility dedicated to the detection of cosmic gravitational waves and the measurement of these waves for scientific research. It consists of two widely separated installations within the United States, operated in unison as a single observatory. LIGO is available for use by the world scientific community, and is a vital member in a developing global network of gravitational wave observatories. Albert Einstein first predicted gravitational waves in his 1916 general theory of relativity, but for years their effects were regarded as too small to measure. LIGO now participates in an international quest to detect gravitational waves. LIGO is funded by the National Science Foundation, and operated by the California Institute of Technology and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



[LHSA+DP](#) is an integrated full service architectural and interior design firm specializing in master planning, architecture, interior design, sustainable design, exhibition design, graphic design and interpretive services. We have been designing projects since 1980, and in that time we have developed a diverse and talented inter-disciplinary staff of over 40. Our philosophy is to see "design as interpretation" and our approach "listen-learn-distill-create" is based on an immersive process that we use in order to develop a profound understanding of each client's goals and objectives, mission, values, budget and site parameters. Therefore, our work is content driven and very much a process of designing from the inside out.



[Leni Schwendinger Light Project LTD \(LSLP\)](#) fuses art and design with light. With over a decade of experience illuminating public works and infrastructure around the world, LSLP has collaborated with a wide range of clients – from state and municipal agencies and architectural firms to museums and event planners. Recent projects include the award-winning Triple Bridge Gateway in Manhattan, the Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum, and SpecraScape in Dallas, Texas. Leni Schwendinger is an internationally renowned lighting designer, speaker, teacher and the recipient of numerous professional awards. www.lightprojectsltd.com.

About the World Science Festival [The World Science Festival](#), co-founded by Brian Greene and Tracy Day, is an unprecedented annual celebration of imagination, ingenuity and inventiveness. It takes science out of the laboratory and into the streets, theaters, museums and public halls of New York City, making the esoteric understandable and the familiar fascinating. The Festival's mission is to cultivate and sustain a general public informed by the content of science, inspired by its wonder, convinced of its value, and prepared to engage with its implications for the future. For more information, visit www.worldsciencefestival.com.

