CENTER FOR CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

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CCP OPENS *ASTRONOMICAL*, A SURVEY OF THE HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE 19TH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT

The Center for Creative Photography (CCP) at the University of Arizona presents *Astronomical: Photographs of Our Solar System and Beyond*, a major exhibition that surveys the conjoined histories of astronomy and photography from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day. Opening January 31 and on view through May 17, 2015 in the CCP's galleries, the exhibition brings together a striking array of rare photographic objects, books, and artifacts drawn from University collections as well as from local and international private collections. Many objects in *Astronomical*, which has been supported in part by the University's College of Science, are on public view for the first time.

"We wanted not only to showcase some of the most extraordinary examples of objects from collections that are right here on the University of Arizona campus," says Joshua Chuang, the Center's Chief Curator, "but also to elucidate the University's central role in propelling the field of astrophotography forward." Chuang organized the exhibition with Andrew Kensett, curatorial assistant, and Stephen Strom, photographer and former associate director of the National Optical Astronomy Observatory, who has contributed extended texts offering greater insight into the astronomical phenomena seen in the pictures. On Thursday, February 26 at 5:30 p.m., the Center will host a keynote lecture by Xavier Debeerst, a noted specialist in the history of astrophotography, followed by a public reception for the exhibition. Other exhibition-related talks and programs to be announced.

Since the announcement of photography's invention in 1839, the medium has have evolved alongside the field of astronomy. Several of photography's early pioneers, including Sir John Herschel, were astronomers who sought to apply the precise recording abilities of photography to their work, and it is through analyzing photographic images that astronomers today continue to make many of their discoveries. The ambitions of scientists have likewise been instrumental in driving photographic innovation, spurring the development of technologies including the shutter, the motion picture, and the digital camera.

Without the aid of photography, for example, Neil Armstrong's first steps on the Moon in 1969 would not have been possible. Before he and his fellow Apollo astronauts could successfully carry out their historic mission, the lunar surface had to be surveyed by teams of earthbound scientists and robotic spacecraft with photographic eyes. Original prints of images from the Ranger, Lunar Orbiter, Apollo, and Surveyor missions to the Moon, drawn from the comprehensive holdings of the Lunar and Planetary Laboratory's Space Imagery Center, are among those featured in the exhibition. Also included will be a selection of unprecedented high-resolution images of the surface of Mars from the HiRISE camera, one of several cutting-edge astronomical imaging systems that UA scientists have helped to design over the years.

Other highlights of the exhibition include an extensive display of Johann Palisa and Max Wolf's *Photographische sternkarten,* 1900-1908, the first photographically-illustrated star atlas; photographs by Ansel Adams, Richard Misrach, and Andreas Feininger from the CCP's permanent holdings; a private collection of mostly-anonymous vintage photographs of solar eclipses dating from the first three decades of the twentieth century; and *Solarium*, an immersive installation developed by NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory that depicts the activity on the Sun's surface with breath-taking intimacy.

The capacity of photography to record light has done more than expand our visual reach; it has enabled scientists to observe ancient celestial events and break down the composition of astral bodies element by element. The exhibition demonstrates that by allowing us to probe the materials, structure, and history of the cosmos, photography has fundamentally changed the nature of our questions and shaped our understanding of the expanding universe.

The Center for Creative Photography gallery is located at 1030 North Olive Road in Tucson, Arizona and is open to the public Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Admission is free.

About the Center for Creative Photography

Founded in 1975 by Ansel Adams and University of Arizona President Dr. John P. Schaefer, the Center for Creative Photography (CCP) is a museum and research center that houses the archives of some the most accomplished artists in the history of photography.

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