
NGV NEWS

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National
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30 April 2009

Light Years: Photography and Space

8 May – 27 September 2009

NGV International

“Once a photograph of the Earth, taken from outside, is available, we shall, in an emotional sense, acquire an additional dimension ... and a new idea as powerful as any in history will be let loose.” Sir Fred Hoyle, 1948.



A fascinating exhibition featuring photographs of space travel and images inspired by space will open at the National Gallery of Victoria on 8 May.

Light Years: Photography and Space will feature around 50 works drawn entirely from the NGV Collection. Focusing largely on the 1960s and '70s, the exhibition will include photographs taken during early NASA missions.

The exhibition celebrates the International Year of Astronomy and the 40th anniversary of the first Moon walk.

Maggie Finch, Assistant Curator, Photography, NGV said that cameras were used to give form to

both the fantasies and realities of space travel, revealing extra dimensions and animating space.

“The 1960s and ‘70s were an exciting time for the artistic and scientific exploration of worlds beyond our own. They were ‘light years’ in which people looked up to the skies and beyond, in a real and an imagined sense, and through photography discovered additional dimensions.

“The photographs in *Light Years* represent a giant leap forward in the collective journey into space. They retain the extraordinary sense of awe and wonderment that encapsulates our first encounters with a larger universe,” said Ms Finch.

A highlight of the exhibition is a collection of more than 30 NASA photographs, on display for the first time in over twenty years. Among the NASA selection are many celebrated space photographs, including the iconic image of Edwin E. (Buzz) Aldrin, Jr standing on the lunar surface, taken in 1969 by Neil Armstrong, the first man to step foot on the Moon.

These remarkable photographs will be on display alongside works by Sir George Pollock, John Wilkins Raymond de Berquelle, Dacre Stubbs, Val Foreman, Susan Fereday, Olive Cotton and Ronnie van Hout – artists who have been inspired by, and have responded to, the mysteries of space and science.

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Frances Lindsay, Deputy Director, NGV said: “The photography from the NASA missions of the 1960s and ‘70s has a fascinating yet nostalgic quality, particularly when one considers the advances in both science and photographic technology since that time.

“These early photographs of space changed our awareness and offered a new understanding of the Earth, the universe and our shared existence within it.

“Coinciding with the International Year of Astronomy and the 40th anniversary of the first Moon walk, this exhibition will delight viewers, providing a glimpse into another dimension,” said Ms Lindsay.

Light Years: Photography and Space will be on display at NGV International, St Kilda Road from 8 May to 27 September 2009. NGV International is open 10am–5pm, closed Tuesdays. Admission to this exhibition is free.

For further information visit ngv.vic.gov.au

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Image credit: NASA United States est. 1958, James McDIVITT (photographer) American 1929– , *Astronaut Edward H. White, Gemini 4, June 1965* 1965 (detail), type C photograph 39.0 x 49.1 cm. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne . Presented by Photimport, 1971