



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Official Photographer to the Lord of the Rings in Victoria Wednesday

VICTORIA, BC – The Victoria Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC) and UVic's Department of Physics and Astronomy will be hosting world renowned expert on the planet Saturn, Carolyn Porco, as part of this year's Astronomy Day Celebrations.

Dr. Porco is the leader of the Cassini Imaging Science team – controlling the cameras on the spacecraft orbiting Saturn as we speak. Check out <http://saturn.jpl.nasa.gov/home/index.cfm> to sample the exciting pictures coming from the Cassini Spacecraft every day.

Her talk is free and will be held at the **David Lam Auditorium, MacLaurin Building, Room A144 at the University of Victoria, Wednesday, May 3, at 7:30.**

ADVENTURES IN THE PROMISED LAND: CASSINI EXPLORES SATURN, TITAN, AND THE FOUNTAINS OF ENCELADUS,

A glistening spaceship, with seven lonely years and billions of miles behind it, glides into orbit around a ringed, softly-hued and dream-like planet. A flying-saucer shaped machine descends through a hazy atmosphere and lands on the surface of an alien moon, ten times farther from the Sun than the Earth. Fantastic though they seem, these visions are not a dream. The Cassini spacecraft and its Huygens probe have traveled invisible interplanetary roads to the place we call Saturn. Their successful entry into orbit, the mythic landing of Huygens on the cold, dark equatorial plains of Titan, and Cassini's explorations of the saturnian environment are already the stuff of legend. What they have shown us thus far, and the images they have collected, are being closely examined in the pursuit of precise scientific information on the nature of this very alien planetary system. Come along for the ride, and witness the sights and magic worked by these emissaries from Earth to the enchanting realm of Saturn.

Dr. Carolyn Porco is the leader of the Cassini Imaging Science team and the Director of the Cassini Imaging Central Laboratory for Operations (CICLOPS) at the Space Science Institute in Boulder, Colorado (<http://ciclops.org>). She is also an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Planetary Sciences at the University of Arizona in Tucson, and in the Department of Astrophysical and Planetary Sciences at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Her specialty is the study of planetary ring and moon interactions. She is currently a regular CNN guest analyst and consultant on planetary science, and has appeared on TV often in the past explaining science to the layman, including recent appearances on CBS' "60 Minutes", and the Emmy-nominated TV documentary "Cosmic Journey: The Voyager Interstellar Mission and Message" on A&E. She was a consultant on the movie 'Contact'. In late 1999, she was selected by the Sunday London Times as one of 18 scientific leaders of the 21st century, and by Industrial Week magazine as one of "50 R&D Stars to Watch".

An extended bio is available at: http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/bios/porco.html
A recent article is posted at: <http://www.adn.com/life/story/7656436p-7567984c.html>

For more information on Astronomy Day, please phone Scott Mair at 889-8021 or visit the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada's website at <http://victoria.rasc.ca>.