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PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

A show for the whole family: *Galileo Live* at the Montréal Planetarium

Montréal, October 15, 2009 – Montréal's Nature Museums are celebrating the International Year of Astronomy by presenting ***Galileo Live* at the Montréal Planetarium until January 10, 2010**. The new show is the result of collaboration by four Canadian planetariums: the HR MacMillan Space Centre in Vancouver, the TELUS World of Science in Calgary, the Planetarium of the Manitoba Museum in Winnipeg and the Montréal Planetarium.

Galileo the great scientist

"The innovative aspect of our new show is that it adds a theatrical dimension to a traditional multimedia show. By combining the emotions conveyed by an actor with the amazement created by astronomical images, the show offers a unique way of understanding the infinitely large and explaining Galileo's discoveries. He changed our view and our understanding of the world and our planet," says Charles-Mathieu Brunelle, Director of Montréal's Nature Museums.

The show explores the life and work of this passionate 17th-century visionary and scientist who caused such great upheavals in the scientific community and society of his time. Galileo, with his inquisitive mind, had only one credo: the search for truth. He proclaimed that to explore the great book of the Universe one had to start with experimentation and demonstration – concepts on which all modern research is based.

The telescope, an ingenious invention

Although Galileo did not invent the telescope, he nevertheless perfected the instrument and was one of the first to turn it toward the stars. Four hundred years ago, in 1609, he gazed at the Moon through this very special spyglass. He observed Saturn, discovered the four main satellites of Jupiter and drew the phases of Venus. All this led him to postulate that the planets revolve around the Sun and that the Earth rotates on its own axis, although the hypothesis was considered subversive at the time. He was praised, honoured, criticized and later disgraced, but the obstinate Galileo remained undaunted, continuing to study the heavens to learn their secrets.

A show for the whole family

Audience members are transported to 17th-century Italy, as they are surrounded by panoramic images projected on the Planetarium's screen to set the scene. **Galileo** is alone on the stage, but surrounded by virtual characters. His adoring daughter, **Virginia**, sees his discoveries through a child's wondering eyes. She makes the link between the action occurring in 1609 and today's viewers, adding a personal and touching note to the great man's scientific explorations. Galileo's detractors also make an appearance, heckling and mocking him.

Galileo Live combines the physical presence of an actor, Dominic Lorange in English and Pierre Limoges in French, with multimedia effects to create a fascinating and exciting setting. It appeals to ages 9 and up and lets audiences see an authentic replica of Galileo's very first telescope, up close. The original script and direction were by Alan Dyer, of the Calgary Planetarium; the Montréal adaptation is the work of Pierre Chastenay, directed by Raynald Michaud, with Sophie DesRosiers as Artistic Director. It's an enthralling experience!

The show was produced with the financial assistance of the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Canadian Space Agency and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC).

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Montréal's Nature Museums – the Biodôme, Insectarium, Botanical Garden and Planetarium – helping people enjoy nature to the fullest.

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Visual available on request