



# PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

## The Montréal Space for Life Invites You to a Unique Event **Venus Has a Meeting with the Sun**

**Montréal, May 23, 2012** – This is your last chance to see Venus silhouetted against the Sun for another 105 years! The Planetarium, part of the Montréal Space for Life, urges you not to miss this exceptional event, on June 5. The whole team invites you to come out and admire this unusual phenomenon, called the transit of Venus.

Venus passes between the Sun and the Earth every 584 days, but most of the time it cannot be seen since its trajectory takes it far above or below the Sun. On very rare occasions, the planets are aligned in such a way that it moves directly across the solar disk, and we can see its black shadow travelling across the bright background of the Sun for several hours. The show will get underway around 6:03 p.m. (EST). In fact, the Planetarium has prepared a table showing the exact times the phenomenon will be visible in different regions of Quebec. The transit of Venus is difficult to observe with the naked eye and is much more impressive with binoculars or a telescope – **which must be equipped with a filter specially designed for looking at the Sun.**

### PROTECT YOUR EYES!

It's always important to be very cautious when looking directly at the sun, with the naked eye or through optical instruments. It is safe to do so, however, if you place a filter between your eyes and the Sun. You can use No. 14 welder's glasses, for sale in hardware stores, or filters specially designed and certified for observing the Sun, which you can find in astronomy boutiques. Sunglasses, even of excellent quality, or sheets of glass coated with soot are totally useless and even dangerous. Children looking directly at the Sun should always be supervised by an adult.

### IT'S A PARTY!

The Space for Life, the Fédération des astronomes amateurs du Québec and Rio Tinto Alcan invite everyone across the province to head to a local park and enjoy the show, along with amateur astronomers who will be happy to explain the details of this unique event and share their telescopes.

Do you feel lucky? We're holding a "Transit of Venus" contest. Regional winners will get a trip to the Biodôme, Insectarium and Botanical Garden, along with a night's stay for a family at the Hôtel Universel, with breakfast included. In addition to these prizes, the grand prize winner will be taken on a private tour of the Rio Tinto Alcan Planetarium construction site guided by one of the Planetarium's astronomers. Entry forms will be available on the Web on June 5. Just mention the clue that will be given out at the event site between 5:30 p.m. and sunset.

Since an event like this is sure to generate lots of interest, you can follow the phenomenon as it happens on Twitter. A Planetarium staff member will lead the discussion and answer questions from the public. (#venustransit)

For the complete list of regional activities, a description and the history of this exceptional event, and details on the contest and prizes, see [passagedevenus.ca](http://passagedevenus.ca).

*The Biodôme, Insectarium, Botanical Garden and Planetarium are launching a daring, creative urban movement, urging everyone to rethink the bonds between humankind and nature. **Space for life** (Espace pour la vie) is a place where people come together to create, one that cultivates a new way of living, shaped by Montrealers and people from around the world.*

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### Information

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