
PHOTO AVAILABLE: Oct. 20 - Paleaku Astronomy Center Launches The Galaxy Garden, The World's First Walk-through Model Of The Milky Way Galaxy

Long-time artist collaborator of Carl Sagan maps the galaxy in plants and flowers in Hawaii

Media Advisory

Captain Cook, Hawaii/EWORLDWIRE/Sep. 27, 2007 --- The Galaxy Garden, the world's first walk-through model of the Milky Way Galaxy, will open to the public on Oct. 21, 2007. Located on the Big Island of Hawaii, this 100-foot diameter garden accurately maps the galaxy using almost 1000 carefully selected plants to represent actual stars and nebulae. The centerpiece of the model is a unique fountain that represents the giant black hole at our galaxy's center.

The Galaxy Garden was conceived and designed by famed astronomical artist Jon Lomberg, long-time collaborator of Carl Sagan. Lomberg worked with astronomer Leo Blitz of UC Berkeley, an expert in the structure of the spiral galaxy in which our solar system resides. Blitz's maps of the galaxy were traced out on a quarter acre of lawn in rows of plants that show the galaxy's structure. This unique art/ science/ landscaping project is the first of its kind anywhere on Earth.

The garden is located on the grounds of the Paleaku Peace Gardens Sanctuary, a non-profit, 9-acre botanical garden in the Kona district, '<http://www.paleaku.com>'. The Paleaku Astronomy Center is now open for guided daytime tours of the galaxy, as well as evening stargazing events and visits by students. Major funding for the creation of the garden came from the Change Happens Foundation. Seed money was provided by the New Moon Foundation.

Our Sun is located by a single small jewel on a leaf of the gold-dust croton plant, whose speckled leaves symbolize starfields. Nearby stars - other jewels - are positioned at the correct distance on our leaf. More distant objects, like the famous Orion Nebula, are shown to scale, just a few feet from our Sun, using colorful hibiscus flowers to represent these gorgeous cosmic clouds. Other esoteric features like the warp of the galactic disk, and the recently discovered "bar" at the galactic center will satisfy the expert viewer and allow the average visitor to grasp the geography and scale of our Milky Way as never before. According to artist Lomberg, "The Galaxy Garden presents cosmic vastness in a way that you actually experience it."

Scale models of our solar system are a common teaching device showing how planets orbit the Sun. This unique garden extends this concept to the entire galaxy. The Paleaku Astronomy Center is now open for guided and self-guided tours of the Galaxy Garden, as listed on the website www.galaxygarden.net.

Emmy Award winner Lomberg has been depicting our galaxy for 35 years: in Carl Sagan's COSMOS TV series, in the opening animation of the film CONTACT, and in a famous mural for the National Air and Space Museum called "Portrait of the Milky Way." "Who wouldn't like to explore the galaxy without leaving Hawaii?" he says.

The Galaxy Garden opens on Oct. 21. More information and more pictures may be found at '<http://www.galaxygarden.net>'.

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AVAILABLE MEDIA: : The Galaxy Garden (size: 0.2 k)

A pair of Milky Ways created by Jon Lomberg. The top one is his famous mural for the National Air and Space Museum. The bottom one is the new Galaxy Garden.

http://eworldwire.com//mediauploads/Galaxy_Garden.jpg

: Jon Lomberg & The Galaxy Garden (size: 0.2 k)

Artist Jon Lomberg with the black hole fountain he designed for the center of the Galaxy Garden

http://eworldwire.com//mediauploads/GalaxyJon_fountain.jpg