

Seminar

Friday, 10th September 2010

11 am - Room 701

Peter McLeish

Peter McLeish's tour of New Zealand is undertaken with the support of the Canadian High Commission in Wellington.

A Collaboration based on Red Sprites

Peter McLeish will discuss the nature of his collaboration based on Red Sprites. Red sprites are upper atmospheric optical phenomenon associated with thunderstorms that have recently been only documented using low level television. The first images of a sprite were taken in 1989 and from 1990 to 1994 the space shuttle obtained twenty more images. Despite nearly a century of anecdotal reports from airline pilots, most scientists didn't really believe in sprites until the first images were captured on high-speed video. The blink of an eye last 250 milliseconds: sprites often last only ten. Cameras and computer models freeze sprites in time.

Since 2001, Peter has been involved in a collaboration based on Red Sprites with American scientist Walter A. Lyons. This collaboration eventually led to Walter A. Lyons receiving a United States National Science Foundation grant regarding the collaboration and subsequent creation of Lyons's DVD titled **The Hundred Year Hunt for Red Sprites** and interactive website. Peter created the artwork in the *The Hundred Year Hunt for Red Sprites* as well as his companion-six minute film titled **Lightning's Angels**. Since 2002, both films have been presented at many major International science symposiums, conferences, media festivals, science film festivals, science & art museums/centres and planetariums all over the world. Peter's continued research subsequently led him to an additional collaboration with Dr. Colin Price from the Department of Geophysics and Planetary Science, Tel Aviv University who was working on sprite research from a ground station with the ill-fated crew of the Columbia in 2003. Since 2007, Peter has been working on a new project titled **Polaris Terrarum about the Polar Regions**.

<http://www.sky-fire.tv/index.cgi/mcleish.html>

<http://www.sky-fire.tv/index.cgi/spritegallery.html>

All Welcome

Contact Details

For further information phone 364 2404, or visit our website: www.phys.canterbury.ac.nz