



Colliding Galaxies NGC 4038 and NGC 4039
Hubble Space Telescope • Wide Field Planetary Camera 2

EMBARGOED UNTIL: 1:00 P.M. (EDT) OCTOBER 21, 1997

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[Full image]

HUBBLE REVEALS STELLAR FIREWORKS ACCOMPANYING GALAXY COLLISION

This Hubble Space Telescope image provides a detailed look at a brilliant "fireworks show" at the center of a collision between two galaxies. Hubble has uncovered over 1,000 bright, young star clusters bursting to life as a result of the head-on wreck.

[Left]

A ground-based telescopic view of the Antennae galaxies (known formally as NGC 4038/4039) - so named because a pair of long tails of luminous matter, formed by the gravitational tidal forces of their encounter, resembles an insect's antennae. The galaxies are located 63 million light-years away in the southern constellation Corvus.

[Right]

The respective cores of the twin galaxies are the orange blobs, left and right of image center, crisscrossed by filaments of dark dust. A wide band of chaotic dust, called the overlap region, stretches between the cores of the two galaxies. The sweeping spiral-like patterns, traced by bright blue star clusters, shows the result of a firestorm of star birth activity which was triggered by the collision.

This natural-color image is a composite of four separately filtered images taken with the Wide Field Planetary Camera 2 (WFPC2), on January 20, 1996. Resolution is 15 light-years per pixel (picture element).

Credit: Brad Whitmore (STScI), and NASA

A photo and caption are available via the World Wide Web at: <http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/PR/97/34.html> and via links in <http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/Latest.html> or <http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/Pictures.html>.

Images are available via the World Wide Web at: <http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/gif/n40389w.gif>, <http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/gif/n40389d.gif> (GIF), <http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/jpeg/n40389w.jpg> and <http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/jpeg/n40389d.jpg> (JPEG).

Image files also may be accessed via anonymous ftp from oposite.stsci.edu in /pubinfo: [gif/n40389w.gif](http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/gif/n40389w.gif), [gif/n40389d.gif](http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/gif/n40389d.gif) (GIF), [jpeg/n40389w.jpg](http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/jpeg/n40389w.jpg) and [jpeg/n40389d.jpg](http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/jpeg/n40389d.jpg) (JPEG). Higher resolution digital versions (300 dpi JPEG) of the release photograph are available in /pubinfo/hrtemp: [97-34a.jpg](http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/hrtemp/97-34a.jpg) [97-34b.jpg](http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/hrtemp/97-34b.jpg) (color), [97-34abw.jpg](http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/hrtemp/97-34abw.jpg) and [97-34bbw.jpg](http://oposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/hrtemp/97-34bbw.jpg) (black & white). Full resolution TIFF images are available in /pubinfo/tiff/1997/34a.tif, 34b.tif, 34c.tif, 34d.tif, 34e.tif and 34f.tif.

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