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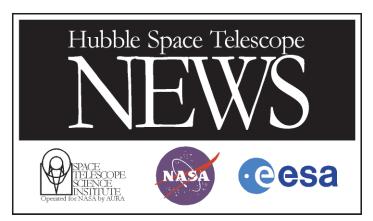


PHOTO NO.: STScI-PRC97-34a

[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).

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