

ASTEROID DAY

2016 PRESS KIT

CONTENTS OF THE ASTEROID DAY PRESS KIT:

About Asteroid Day.....	page 1
Asteroid Day 2016 Media Alert	
Feb 9 Launch with Participants	page 2
February 9 Press Release	page 5
Social Media	page 7
Graphics & Photos.....	page 7
Supporters Videos.....	page 8
Asteroid Day Partners.....	page 10
European Space Agency/ESTEC	page 11
Asteroid Impact Mission	page 11
Asteroid Day '16 Events.....	page 12
100X Declaration & Signatories...	page 13
Approved Quotes for Publication	page 14
Profiles of Founders.....	page 15

JOIN US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

TWITTER: [@asteroidday](#) #AsteroidDay2016

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AsteroidDay

CONTACTS:

Executive Director: Grigorij Richters (Grig@AsteroidDay.org); UK: +44/07818830551

Media: Diane Murphy (pr@asteroidday.org); US: +1/3106588756

PRESS CONFERENCE (Feb 9, 2016)

To access live webcast:: <http://asteroidday.li/Y2QX3>

Archived Press Conference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udtvQqjuHJg>

Event page:<https://plus.google.com/events/ce921tr0hm03utmqeekat0phet8>; (if useful, shortened: <http://asteroidday.li/Y2QTO>)

YouTube page:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udtvQqjuHJg>

(short: <http://asteroidday.li/Y2QX3>)

www.asteroidday.org

www.esa.int/asteroidday

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

ABOUT ASTEROID DAY

On [Asteroid Day](#), people from around the world come together to recognise the collective responsibility to address asteroid impacts, the only natural disaster humankind can prevent through increased awareness and education. Asteroid Day is held each year on June 30, the anniversary of the largest impact of Earth in recent history, the 1908 Tunguska, Siberia event.

Events include lectures, films, expert science presentations and educational workshops, organised by museums, research institutes, government agencies, universities, astronomers, filmmakers and concerned citizens.



Asteroid Day 2015, London: From left to right: Lewis Dartnell, Richard Crowther, Sir Crispin Tickell, Brian May, Grig Richters, Alan Fitzsimmons, Stuart Clark and Debbie Lewis

The inaugural Asteroid Day was held in 2015, and partners organised more than 150 events around the world, educating millions of people and generating some 4 billion media impressions. Premier events were hosted at the London Science Museum and California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, as well as in Australia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, India, Italy, Mexico, Romania, Spain, Turkey and South Korea, and USA, among other locations. The event at the Natural Museum of Vienna, Austria was held in partnership with the [United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Space](#). The European Space Agency (ESA), which is a prime partner in 2016, organised a Twitter discussion #AskESA about #asteroids, an online Q&A with [ESA experts](#).

The film that inspired Asteroid Day, [51°North](#), was produced by Asteroid Day co-founder Grigorij Richters, with the music score by Asteroid Day co-founder and astrophysicist Dr Brian May. The film presents a futuristic asteroid impact and the resulting human ramifications. The film premiered in London at the [Science Museum](#) IMAX Theatre and will be made available on June 30 via AsteroidDay.org. Profits from the film's showing are donated to Asteroid Day Foundation.

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

A key element of Asteroid Day 2015 was the the [100X Declaration](#), calling for the detection of 100,000 asteroids a year to be tracked over the next 10 years. The declaration which is available on the [Asteroid Day website](#), has been signed by hundreds of esteemed scientists, astronauts, and leaders in business and the arts, as well as thousands of private citizens calling for global action.

Partners and Premiere Events for Asteroid Day 2016 are being announced on February 9 at ESA's ESTEC facility in The Netherlands.

For more information, please visit <http://www.asteroidday.org/>

ASTEROID DAY PRESS RELEASES

www.asteroidday.org/newsroom

2nd NOTICE OF PRESS CONFERENCE: FEBRUARY 9, 2016

ASTEROID DAY 2016 TO ANNOUNCE NEW PARTNERS FOR WORLDWIDE EVENTS ON JUNE 30 -- PRESS CONFERENCE ON FEBRUARY 9 CO-HOSTED BY ESA AT ESTEC IN THE NETHERLANDS

LONDON (February 7, 2016) – Building on the highly successful first-ever Asteroid Day in 2015, organisers, together with the European Space Agency, will announce partners and the addition of premier and independently organised events for Asteroid Day 2016, scheduled for June 30 around the world. The Press Conference will use multimedia platforms to accommodate speakers from around the world.

DATE OF PRESS CONFERENCE: February 9, 2016

TIME: 3:00 pm CET; 9:00 am ET; 6:00 am PT

LOCATION: ESA [ESTEC., Keplerlaan 1, 2201 AZ Noordwijk, Netherlands](#)

ACCESS FOR MEDIA:

- Media is also invited to tour the ESTEC facility: Tour begins at 13:00 CET
- RSVP for ESTEC Attendance: pr@asteroidday.org
- Questions: forward via email to: pr@asteroidday.org or via Twitter ([#AsteroidDay2016](#))
- Journalists requesting 1-1 interviews: contact Diane Murphy
- **WEBCAST ACCESS:** <http://asteroidday.li/Y2QX3>

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

[Asteroid Day](#) is a global movement to increase public awareness of potential asteroid collisions and the means to protect Earth. It was co-founded in 2015, by **Dr. Brian May**, astrophysicist and lead guitarist for the rock band *Queen*, Apollo astronaut **Rusty Schweickart**, and German filmmaker **Grig Richters**. Asteroid Day is held on 30 June each year to mark Earth's largest asteroid impact in recorded history, the Siberia Tunguska event, which devastated over 2000 square km, the size of a major metropolitan city. In 2015, on the inaugural Asteroid Day, partners organised more than 150 events worldwide, educating millions of people and generating some 4 billion media impressions.

Press Conference Participants:

Host Emcee: Dr. Stuart Clark, Astronomy Author and Journalist

AT ESTEC (The Netherlands)

- **Dr. Stuart Clark**, Science Journalist, Author, contributor to [The Guardian](#), emcee
- **Grig Richters**, Filmmaker and Co-founder of Asteroid Day
- **Ian Carnelli**, Asteroid Impact Mission (AIM) Manager, European Space Agency (ESA)
- **Detlef Koschny**, Space Situational Awareness - Near-Earth Object co-Manager, European Space Agency (ESA)
- **Debbie Lewis**, ADXP and Risk Crisis and Disaster Management at Axiom
- **Richard Moissl**, Rosetta Instrument Liaison Officer, European Space Agency (ESA)
- **Dr. Patrick Michel**, Planetary Scientist, Sr. Researcher at CNRS (French National Center for Scientific Research)
- **Unai Iparragirre**, Discovery Science
- **Tibisay Sankatsing Nava**, UNAWE

VIA LIVE-STEAM FROM AROUND THE WORLD

- **Dr. Mark Boslough**, Physicist and Planetary Defense expert; Sandia National Laboratories; Adjunct professor, University of New Mexico; Fellow of the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry. **(Albuquerque, New Mexico)**
- **Astronaut Dr. Tom Jones**, Four-time Shuttle Astronaut; Planetary scientist, Chair, Assn. of Space Explorers (ASE) Committee on Near-Earth Objects **(Washington, DC)**
- **Astronaut Dr. Ed Lu**, Three-time Shuttle astronaut; Asteroid expert and Founder, CEO, B612 **(Silicon Valley, California, USA)**
- **Romanian Astronaut Dumitru Dorin Prunariu**; Founding member, Association of Space Explorers (ASE) and liaison to the UN Committee for the Peaceful Uses of Space **(Bucharest, Romania)**
- **Franco Ongaro**, Director of Technical and Quality Management, European Space Agency (ESA) **(Paris, France)**
- **Marius Piso**, Head of ROSA **(Bucharest, Romania)**

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

- **Rakesh Sharma**, Wing Commander (Ret) Rakesh Sharma AC; Research Cosmonaut, India. Chairman, Automated Workflow Pvt. Ltd; Member Association of Space Explorers and Explorers Club (**Coonoor, India**)
- **Dr. Stephan Ulamec**, German Aerospace Center (**Cologne, Germany**)

VIDEO PRESENTATIONS

- **Anousheh Ansari**, First private woman space traveler; CEO, Prodea
- **Dr Brian May**, Astrophysicist, Co-founder, QUEEN, Co-founder of Asteroid Day
- **Chris Hadfield**, Canadian astronaut and first Canadian spacewalker
- **Alan Harris**, DLR, NEOShield-2Dr.
- **Scott Manley**, YouTube Personality, Science Educator and Imaginary Space Explorer
- **Bill Nye**, American science educator, television presenter, writer, scientist, mechanical engineer and CEO, The Planetary Society
- **Luca Parmitano**, Italian Astronaut, Member, ASE Europe, Captain of NEEMO
- **Lord Martin Rees**, Astronomer Royal, UK
- **Helen Sharman**, First British Astronaut
- **Dr. Amanda Sickafoose**, Astronomer, South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO)
- **Sir Crispin Tickell**, British Diplomat and Former Ambassador to the UN

Additional information on Asteroid Day and the 100X Asteroid Declaration as well as photos and BROLL are available at <http://asteroidday.org/newsroom>. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter @AsteroidDay or contact: PR@asteroidday.org

Media Contacts:

Asteroid Day: Diane Murphy: US: +13106588756, PR@asteroidday.org

European Space Agency: Ninja Menning: +31621437558, estecpr@esa.int

-30-

PRESS RELEASE LAUNCHING ASTEROID DAY 2016

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE: Tuesday, February 9, 2016 3:00 p.m. CET; 9:00 am EST

ASTEROID DAY 2016 LAUNCHED AT EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY WITH SUPPORT FROM 20 GLOBAL PARTNERS, SIX INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES AND A MESSAGE FROM OUTER SPACE

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016



Noordwijk, The Netherlands (February 9, 2016) -- Asteroid Day, a global movement supporting to increase awareness and education of asteroids, announced its plans for 2016, in a press conference live from [ESA ESTEC](#) and live streamed to the world - with messages from every continent on the globe and a special message from outer space.

Participants included co-founders Dr. Brian May, astrophysicist and co-founder of the rock band Queen, and filmmaker Grigorij Richters; ESA Director Franco Ongaro and AIM Mission Manager Ian Carnelli; Astronauts Dr. Tom Jones, Dorin Prunariu, Dr. Ed Lu, Col. Chris Hadfield, Rakesh Sharma, Soyeon Yi, Anousheh Ansari, Helen Sharman; Nobel Laureate Brian Schmidt; Planetary Society CEO Bill Nye; British Astronomer Royal Lord Martin Rees; Dr. Amanda Sickafoose, Astronomer, South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO); media partner Discovery Science; and world-renowned scientists and asteroid experts.

Asteroid Day is held on June 30 - the anniversary of the largest asteroid impact of Earth in recorded history, at Tunguska, Siberia in 1908. The first Asteroid Day was launched in 2015, and attracted more than 150 events worldwide, attended by tens of thousands of scientists, academics and public citizens, with media coverage exceeding 4 billion impressions. Events are independently organized by museums, research institutes, government agencies, universities, astronomers, filmmakers, and concerned citizens.

Dr. Brian May: *I became acutely aware of the risk to all creatures on Earth from asteroid impacts, while watching Grig Richters' film "51 Degrees North". This is an important issue in the back of the minds of all astronomers, but only recently could the probabilities and effects be quantified. And only recently has it become within the capability of Humanity to begin to plan ways to prevent such catastrophes. While making the music for the film, I got to know Grig, and we talked in depth about the possibility of bringing together the resources of the whole world to focus on asteroid impacts. The concept of Asteroid Day was formed, with the hope that we could bring about a massive leap in global awareness of this problem - a problem that may now have a solution.*

Ian Carnelli, Head of Asteroid Impact Mission, ESA: *"ESA has been studying the role of space missions to address the asteroid hazard over the last 15 years. Today we have the*

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

technology to change the path of an asteroid, but we need to test our technology in space and learn if our models are correct by measuring all the relevant parameters.”

Lord Martin Rees: *“The value of Asteroid Day is that it’s a way of raising public awareness and therefore putting this issue higher on the agenda so that when politicians and others in a position to deploy funds for scientific missions make their decisions, they are aware there is a serious case for doing more than is now being done to remove the asteroid risk, survey the sky for asteroids that could have orbits that cross the Earth, and explore technology that can be used to deflect one on a path to impact Earth.”*

Dr. Tom Jones: *“The Association of Space Explorers continues to promote international cooperation in confronting the risks of a future asteroid impact on Earth. Our association of astronauts and cosmonauts is excited about supporting Asteroid Day 2016, appearing at Asteroid Day events around the globe and sharing our belief that space technology can find rogue asteroids and prevent a future damaging impact on our planet. We believe that stopping future asteroid collisions will be the most important benefit of 21st century space exploration.”*

Executive Director and co-founder of Asteroid Day Grig Richters announced the six premiere events for 2016, and recognised Asteroid Day partners.

JUNE 30 PREMIERE EVENTS

Barcelona, Spain: [ICE](#) (CSIC-IEEC) Spanish National Research Council and Institut d'Estudis Espacials de Catalunya

Tenerife, Spain: [Starmus Festival](#)

San Francisco, CA: [California Academy of Sciences/B612](#)

Vienna Austria: [Natural History Museum](#)

Seoul, South Korea: [Gwacheon National Science Museum](#)

ASTEROID DAY PARTNERS

[Association of Space Explorers](#); [Asteroid Impact Mission](#); [Astronomers Without Borders](#); [Astronomy Magazine](#); [Astronomy Now Magazine](#); [B612](#); [California Academy of Sciences](#); [Discovery Science](#); [European Space Agency \(ESA\)](#); [Films United](#); [Natural History Museum of Vienna](#); [NEOShield-2](#); [The Côte d’Azur Observatory](#); [Romanian Space Agency](#); [Royal Astronomical Society](#); [The Planetary Society](#); [Seattle Museum of Flight](#); [Space Foundation](#); [Starmus](#); [Universe Awareness](#).

“**Starmus** has promoted and supported the launch of Asteroid Day from the start, which is why the edition’s celebrated honouree, **Professor Stephen Hawking** said: *“This year Asteroid Day*

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

coincides with the staging of the Starmus Festival, a unique debating forum for the future of humanity. Among the events planned at Starmus, we will also commemorate Asteroid Day”.

Astronaut Chris Hadfield: *“I’m an adventurer, explorer and astronaut, who has flown to space three times and been around this precious world of ours 2650 times. So, naturally with that point of view, I am a supporter of Asteroid Day. For the first time, we are at a level of technology capability to detect and do something about the threat of asteroids. The threat is low, but the results can be extremely high.”*

Dr. Ed Lu, three-time astronaut and CEO of B612 who co-invented the Gravity Tractor, a proposed technique for asteroid deflection. *“In the near future, when our asteroid tracking telescopes allow us to know far in advance of an impending asteroid impact on Earth, we will then be able to nudge that asteroid out of Earth’s way. The ESA & NASA proposed AIDA mission will be a great step forward in testing this technology. And ESA joining Asteroid Day as a partner is a welcome addition in helping educate the world about asteroids and our future.”*

[About the European Space Agency \(ESA\)](#)

The European Space Agency (ESA) is Europe’s gateway to space. Its mission is to shape the development of Europe’s space capability and ensure that investment in space continues to deliver benefits to the citizens of Europe and the world. ESA is an international organisation with 22 Member States. By coordinating the financial and intellectual resources of its members, it can undertake programmes and activities far beyond the scope of any single European country.

The Press Conference is live and archived at: esa.int/asteroidday

PHOTOS

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/asteroidday/albums/with/72157663909624126>

VIDEO

Archived Press Conference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udtvQqjuHJg>

Pre-Recorded video messages (for download): <https://vimeo.com/asteroidday/videos>

Join the discussion on TWITTER: @asteroidday #AsteroidDay2016

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AsteroidDay

Media Contacts:

Diane Murphy (pr@asteroidday.org); US +1/3106588756; UK: +44/07818830551

ESA: Ninja Menning (estecpr@esa.int), NL +31715656409;

-30-

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

ASTEROID DAY SOCIAL MEDIA

Join the events on Twitter: @asteroidday #AsteroidDay2016 and on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/AsteroidDay

ESA: <https://plus.google.com/events/ce921tr0hm03utmqeekat0phet8>

******Help us get word out by sending us your tweets and by retweeting!***

VIDEO & PHOTOS

PHOTOS:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/asteroidday/albums>

VIDEO: 2016 LAUNCH / Feb 9

Archived Press Conference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udtvQqjuHJg>

Pre-Recorded video messages (for download): <https://vimeo.com/asteroidday/videos>

ASTEROID DAY ARCHIVED VIDEO

<http://www.asteroidday.org/video/>

Offering:

- Asteroid Day 2016 (February 9) Press Conference videos (pre-recorded)
- Asteroid Day 2015 videos by 100X Signers
- Videos from previous Asteroid Day announcements
- Videos from Asteroid Day 2015 events

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016



ASTEROID DAY PARTNERS

[Association of Space Explorers](#)
[Asteroid Impact Mission](#)
[Astronomers Without Borders](#)
[Astronomy Magazine](#)
[Astronomy Now Magazine](#)
[B612](#)
[California Academy of Sciences](#)
[Discovery Science](#)
[European Space Agency \(ESA\)](#)
[Films United](#)
[Natural History Museum of Vienna](#)
[NEOShield-2](#)
[The Côte d'Azur Observatory](#)
[Romanian Space Agency](#)
[Royal Astronomical Society](#)
[The Planetary Society](#)
[Seattle Museum of Flight](#)
[Space Foundation](#)
[Starmus](#)
[Universe Awareness](#)

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

MEDIA PARTNERS

[Astronomy Magazine](#)

[Astronomy Now](#),

[Discovery Science](#)

EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY AND ESTEC

About ESTEC

ESA has sites in several European countries, but the European Space Research and Technology Centre (ESTEC) in Noordwijk, the Netherlands, is the largest. ESTEC is our technical heart - the incubator of the European space effort - where most ESA projects are born and where they are guided through the various phases of development.

ASTEROID IMPACT MISSION

About the Asteroid Impact Mission (AIM)

The Asteroid Impact Mission (AIM) is a candidate mission currently undergoing preliminary design work. Launched in October 2020, AIM would travel to a binary asteroid system – the paired Didymos asteroids, which will come a comparatively close 11 million km to Earth in 2022. The 800 m-diameter main body is orbited by a 170 m moon, informally called ‘Didymoon’. This smaller body is AIM’s focus: the spacecraft would perform high-resolution visual, thermal and radar mapping of the moon to build detailed maps of its surface and interior structure.

The main AIM spacecraft is planned to carry at least three smaller spacecraft – the Mascot-2 asteroid lander, being provided by DLR (Mascot-1 is already flying on JAXA’s Hayabusa-2), as well as two or more CubeSats. AIM would test optical communications and inter-satellite links in deep space, essential technology for future exploration.

If approved, AIM would also be Europe’s contribution to the larger Asteroid Impact & Deflection Assessment mission: AIDA. In late 2022, the NASA-led part of AIDA will arrive: the Double Asteroid Redirection Test, or DART, probe will approach the binary system – then crash straight into the asteroid moon at about 6 km/s.

AIM is intended to be watching closely as DART hits Didymoon. In the aftermath, it will perform detailed before-and-after comparisons on the structure of the body itself, as well as its orbit, to characterise DART’s kinetic impact and its consequences.

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

ASTEROID DAY EVENTS

www.asteroidday.org/events

All Asteroid Day events are being independently organised locally by museums, research institutes, government agencies, universities, space and astronomy organisations, and planetariums, by filmmakers, astronauts, scientific experts and concerned citizens. Events range from expert science presentations and educational workshops to films and other community events. In 2015, 150 events were held around the world in Australia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, India, Italy, Mexico, Romania, Spain, The Netherlands, Turkey, South Korea, and the US.

JUNE 30, 2016 PREMIER EVENTS

Barcelona, Spain: [ICE](#) (Spanish National Research Council)

Tenerife, Spain: [Starmus Festival](#)

San Francisco, CA: [California Academy of Sciences/B612](#)

Vienna Australia: [Natural History Museum](#)

Seoul, South Korea: [Gwacheon National Science Museum](#)

See the [Asteroid Day website](#) for an initial listing of 2016 events or to register your own. Events will be added to the schedule as provided to Asteroid Day by organizing partners

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

100X ASTEROID DECLARATION

Available for public signature at: www.asteroidday.org/declaration

As scientists and citizens, we strive to solve humanity's greatest challenges to safeguard our families and quality of life on Earth in the future.

Asteroids impact Earth: such events, without intervention, will cause great harm to our societies, communities and families around the globe. Unlike other natural disasters, we know how to prevent asteroid impacts.

There are a million asteroids in our solar system that have the potential to strike Earth and destroy a city, yet we have discovered less than 10,000 — just one percent — of them. We have the technology to change that situation.

Therefore, we, the undersigned, call for the following action:

- 1. Employ available technology to detect and track Near Earth Asteroids that threaten human populations via governments and private and philanthropic organisations. □*
- 2. A rapid hundredfold (100x) acceleration of the discovery and tracking of Near Earth Asteroids to 100,000 per year within the next ten years. □*
- 3. Global adoption of Asteroid Day, heightening awareness of the asteroid hazard and our efforts to prevent impacts, on June 30, 2015. □*

By signing below, you declare that you share the concerns of this esteemed community of astronauts, scientists, business leaders, artists and concerned citizens to raise awareness about protecting and preserving life on our planet by preventing future asteroid impacts.

The 100X Declaration was publicly introduced by Lord Martin Rees in London on 3 December 2015. Today, there are more than 15,000 signatures. Check out the list signers and join us!
See: <http://www.asteroidday.org/signatories-list/>

APPROVED QUOTES FOR PUBLICATION

Dr. Brian May, astrophysicist and co-founder, QUEEN: “I became acutely aware of the risk to all creatures on Earth from asteroid impacts, while watching Grig Richters' film “51 Degrees North”. This is an important issue in the back of the minds of all astronomers, but only recently could the probabilities and effects be quantified. And only recently has it become within the capability of Humanity to begin to plan ways to prevent such catastrophes. The concept of Asteroid Day was formed, with the hope that we could bring about a massive leap in global awareness of this problem - a problem that may now have a solution.

Grig and his team masterminded a media launch of Asteroid Day, coordinated in many countries, with contributions by the Astronomer Royal, Sir Martin Rees, and a number of eminent astronomers and astrophysicists in the USA, many of whom were already actively pursuing possible solutions to the early prediction and prevention of asteroid Impacts. The rest is history...

Asteroid Day is now headed towards its first anniversary event in Starmus in Tenerife in 2016, and already experiments are being planned to test current theories of asteroid deflection. We are all optimistic that the message will soon reach the ears of world leaders and the necessary funding and priorities will be put in place to provide a permanent solution, which one day will save the planet from disaster.”

Dr. Ed Lu, three time astronaut and CEO of B612 who co-invented the Gravity Tractor, a proposed technique for asteroid deflection. “In the near future when our asteroid tracking telescopes allow us to know far in advance of an impending asteroid impact on Earth, we will then be able to nudge that asteroid out of Earth’s way. The ESA & NASA proposed AIDA mission will be a great step forward in testing this technology. ESA joining Asteroid Day as a partner will go a long way in helping educate the world about asteroids and our future.”

Apollo Astronaut Rusty Schweickart: “If we can track the trajectories of asteroids and monitor their movement in our solar system, then we can know if they are on a path to impact Earth,” said “If we find them early enough, we can move them out of Earth’s orbit - thus preventing any kind of major natural disaster.”

Lord Martin Rees, Astronomer Royal, UK: ““The ancients were correct in their belief that the heavens and the motion of astronomical bodies affect life on Earth - just not in the way they imagined. Sometimes those heavenly bodies run into Earth. This is why we must make it our mission to find asteroids before they find us.”

Ian Carnelli, AIM Head of Mission, ESA

“The asteroid threat is a global endeavor that should be dealt with globally, engaging all space faring nations at all levels, from education to research institutions to space agencies. Good progress has been achieved in the detection and characterization of these objects, but we should continue even further to increase the support by more countries in the future.”

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

Discovery Science: “Discovery Science, the only global network dedicated entirely to the wonders of science, is proud to announce its media partnership with the Asteroid Day Foundation, in an effort to increase awareness about the hazards of asteroids and what can be done to protect humankind from potential future impacts. Following last year’s success, Discovery Science will be launching “Countdown to Asteroid Day” in June 2016 and bringing viewers the best space and asteroid themed programming as well as a consumer competition in partnership with the European Space Agency.”

PROFILES OF ASTEROID DAY CO-FOUNDERS



Dr. Brian May, CBE, PhD FRAS, is a founding member of Queen, a world-renowned guitarist, songwriter, producer and performer, also a Doctor of Astrophysics, 3D stereoscopic photographic authority and a passionate advocate and campaigner for animal rights, As an accomplished Astronomy student working towards a PhD, Brian put his academic studies on hold when Queen's popularity first exploded. Over the following four decades the band enjoyed worldwide success with a musical catalogue that consistently tops popularity polls and sees Queen

remain the most successful albums act in UK chart history.

Brian has penned 22 of Queen’s top 20 hit singles including “We Will Rock You”, namesake to the worldwide hit ‘Rock Theatrical’ written with Ben Elton which has now been seen by over 15 million people in 17 countries. Also an established sports anthem, the track was declared the most-played song at American sporting events (BMI) and reportedly played over 550,000 times during the London 2012 Olympic Games. The Games Closing Ceremony saw Brian making a solo appearance wearing a jacket embroidered with emblems of British Wildlife; he then launched into “We Will Rock You” with Roger Taylor and guest Jessie J, viewed by a TV audience estimated at one billion. A comparable iconic global live appearance was Brian playing his own arrangement of “God Save the Queen” from the roof of Buckingham Palace to open HM The Queen’s 2002 Golden Jubilee celebrations.

With a great love for live performance, having played over 700 concerts with Queen, in 2004 Brian and Roger celebrated Queen’s induction into the UK Music Hall of Fame by performing with former Free/Bad Company vocalist, Paul Rodgers. A triumphant 55-date world tour with Paul as guest vocalist followed, the first Queen tour in 20 years, along with the studio album *The Cosmos Rocks*, supported by a second world tour and the release of two live DVDs and a live album. 2012 saw a return of Queen onstage, this time with guest vocalist, Adam Lambert, a partnership, which delighted fans and critics unanimously. As an accomplished solo artist, Brian toured his highly successful albums - 1992’s *Back To The Light*, featuring “Too Much Love Will Kill You” and “Driven By You”, both Ivor Novello Award winners, and 1998’s *Another World*.

No stranger to the theatrical world, Brian wrote and performed the music for the 1987 and 1990 productions of *Macbeth* at The London Riverside Studios and he has regularly contributed to the

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016

live performance work of his wife, Anita Dobson. Brian delved into the world of film scoring when Queen became the first rock group to score a major film, *Flash Gordon*. Definitive music for Highlander followed an opera for Steve Baron's *Pinocchio*, and a complete film soundtrack created by Brian for the 1999 French art film, *Furia*. He has contributed to a number of soundtracks including *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Mission Impossible II* and *Spiderman II*. Further credits, to numerous to list, include writing themes for several TV shows, remixing Queen recordings in 5.1 Surround Sound and designing a Planetarium show in Belgium and Germany.

Brian is proud to be an ambassador for the Mercury Phoenix Trust, the charity set up in memory of Freddie Mercury, which has channelled over \$15 million to support global AIDS projects. Their commitment to AIDS awareness led to Queen's driving involvement in the 46664 campaign, alongside The Nelson Mandela Foundation founded in October 2003, with concert performances in South Africa and London. Brian also performed with Armenian Duduk player, Jivan Gasparyan, in the 2005 extraordinary 46664 ARCTIC concert in Tromsø, Norway, 200 miles inside the Arctic Circle.

Brian's songs and distinctive guitar style, produced from his revered homemade 'Red Special' guitar using a sixpence as a plectrum, continue to inspire a diverse genre of international artists. His wealth of guest contributions range from playing on Michael Kamen's 2002 *Winter Olympics theme*, to producing the No 1 Comic Relief hit, "The Stonk", and, most recently, recording and performing both with Lady Gaga, and with Dappy on his recent hit, "Rockstar".

Brian has always retained his keen passion for Astronomy and in 2006, after a 30-year break, he returned to Astrophysics and his doctoral thesis. Already the recipient of honorary degrees from the Universities of Hertfordshire, Exeter and Liverpool John Moores, upon submission of his updated thesis on the Motions of Interplanetary Dust, Brian achieved his full PhD degree from Imperial College, London, in 2007. He subsequently accepted a post of Visiting Researcher to continue his work in Astronomy and following a 5 year post as Chancellor of Liverpool John Moores, Brian now holds the honorary position of Chancellor Emeritus. 2006 saw Brian co-author his first book, *Bang! The Complete History of the Universe*, with Sir Patrick Moore and Dr Chris Lintott. This illustrated astrophysics book, now been published in 20 languages, was followed in 2012 with the release of a greatly anticipated sequel, *The Cosmic Tourist*.

Another long-term interest in 3D Photography led to the publication of Brian's second book. Co-authored with Elena Vidal, *A Village Lost and Found* is an authoritative study of the work of master 1850s stereo photographer, T R Williams, complete with an OWL stereoscopic viewer designed by Brian himself.

ASTEROID DAY

PRESS KIT FOR 2016



Grigorij Richters, director, producer and activist, began his career in front of the camera as a child model in his home country of Germany. By the age of six he was already obsessed with cameras and began making his own films on a JVC Hi-8 camcorder.

Grigorij made a documentary on Franz Kafka that he sold to a German university and directed a 30 minute short film called *Dean's Life* before the age of 16. He completed his A-Levels at film college Hurtwood House in the UK and went on to study under famed Czech-American director Milos Forman at FAMU Film School in Prague.

Following a stint in New York City working as a freelance social media consultant for MTV, Grigorij founded his film company [Films United](#). In 2010 he moved back to the UK and was appointed the Kevin Spacey Filmmaker in Residence at the Old Vic Theatre in London. This provided the platform for the young filmmaker to conceive of and develop his first full-length feature film titled [51 degrees North](#).

Through meticulous rehearsal and liberating improvisation, the character of protagonist Damon emerged; a young filmmaker struggling with professional and personal challenges who discovers that an asteroid threatens the imminent destruction of the world. Damon became an autobiographical avatar that could project the alarm and urgency Richters himself had experienced.

To underscore the personal impact of the story, an omnipresent handheld camera and innovative use of CCTV footage were used to minutely observe the unravelling of Damon and, subsequently, society. Dr Brian May, astrophysicist and lead guitarist for legendary rock band Queen, was captivated by the subject matter and agreed to provide the soundtrack for the film. Once the film was finished, May suggested that Richters screen the film at [Starmus Festival](#) in Tenerife, an annual astronomy related event combining science, art and music. *51 Degrees North* was met with acclaim and inspired Richters, May and some of the most notable names in science to propose the idea of a day dedicated to raising awareness of the asteroid threat around the world.

The proposal for Asteroid Day quickly gained momentum, attracting widespread media interest and garnering the signatures and support of luminaries such as scientists Richard Dawkins, Kip Thorne and Bill Nye; musicians May and Peter Gabriel; and astronauts Chris Hadfield and Anousheh Ansari, among many others. Asteroid Day will be held on June 30, annually, the anniversary of the largest asteroid collision with Earth in recent history, the 1908 Siberian Tunguska impact. What began as a scientifically-minded declaration has captured the popular imagination and is ramping up to be a truly global movement aimed at no less than saving the world from assured destruction. And it all started with an idea for a film.