

The Dr. Sandra F. Pritchard Mather Planetarium Public Shows

Our movie shows offer a 25-minute tour of the night sky followed by a fulldome movie. These shows are run by WCU undergraduate students. Below is a synopsis of the movies currently being shown in the Mather Planetarium.

Asteroid: Mission Extreme - Asteroid: Mission Extreme takes audiences on an epic journey to discover the possibilities that asteroids present for space travel. Explore what it would take for astronauts to reach an asteroid and tame it for our use, as well as how such an extraordinary adventure could benefit humankind. A mission this extreme could ultimately lead us to learn how to protect our planet and how to successfully inhabit other worlds.

Astronaut - The exploration of space is the greatest endeavor that humankind has ever undertaken. What does it take to be part of this incredible journey? What does it take to become an astronaut? Experience a rocket launch from inside the body of an astronaut. Explore the amazing worlds of inner and outer space, from floating around the International Space Station to maneuvering through microscopic regions of the human body. Discover the perils that lurk in space as we subject 'Chad', our test astronaut, to everything that space has to throw at him.

Birth of Planet Earth - Birth of Planet Earth tells the twisted tale of our planet's origins. Scientists now believe that our galaxy is filled with solar systems, including up to a billion planets roughly the size of our own. The film employs advanced, data-driven, cinematic-quality visualizations to explore some of the greatest questions in science today: How did Earth become a living planet in the wake of our solar system's violent birth? What does its history tell us about our chances of finding other worlds that are truly Earth-like?

Black Holes: The Other Side of Infinity - This cutting-edge production features high-resolution visualizations of cosmic phenomena, working with data generated by computer simulations, to bring the current science of black holes to the dome screen. Audiences will be dazzled with striking, immersive animations of the formation of the early universe, star birth and death, the collision of giant galaxies, and a simulated flight to a super-massive black hole lurking at the center of our own Milky Way Galaxy.

Oasis In Space - Oasis In Space transports the audience on a startling and beautiful voyage through our universe, galaxy and solar system in search of liquid water - a key ingredient for life on Earth.

Phantom of the Universe - From the journey of protons racing through the world's largest particle collider in Europe to up-close views of the Big Bang and emergent universe, and the nearly mile-deep descent to an underground experiment in South Dakota, Phantom of the Universe immerses the audience in the manifold search for dark matter.

To Space and Back - To Space & Back takes audiences on an incredible journey from the far reaches of our known universe to our own planet. It is an extraordinary story of human ingenuity and incredible engineering, describing how the technology that transports us through space is paving the way for the devices and apps we use every day. What is happening above is coming back down to Earth!

Unseen Universe – Unseen Universe explores the Universe far beyond our human senses. For millions of years our view of the heavens has been limited by our eyes; allowing us to only see a narrow band of electromagnetic radiation we call visible light. For the first time ever, in the greatest breakthrough since the invention of the telescope, we now have the technology to capture the Universe over an amazing width of the spectrum and beyond. We can even interlink telescopes around the world to capture data on a global scale. Unseen Universe is an uplifting look at the new era of astronomy and what has yet to come.