

IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Space Culture – Public Engagement in Space through Culture (9)

Author: Mr. Sathesh Raj
World Space Week Association, Malaysia, sraj@worldspaceweek.org

Mr. Marc-Bernhard Gleißner
Germany, marcbernhard@gmx.net

THE CELESTIAL THEATRE: OF BLACK-LIGHT, FLUORESCENT COSTUMES & A SPACE
ODYSSEY**Abstract**

World Space Week (WSW) is the largest public space event on Earth. WSW is organized by World Space Week Association (WSWA) with a mission to strengthen the link between space and society through public education, participation, and dialogue on the future of space activities. People across the globe celebrate the benefits of space and the excitement of space exploration for a week during the UN-declared WSW, from October 4 to 10 annually. Many space events are synchronized over this one week to provide the space community the needed leverage to raise public awareness, grow media attention and inspire youth.

The Celestial Theatre's participation in WSW provides an interesting opportunity to explore performance arts against the backdrop of space or science. The Celestial Theatre is based in Saint Louis, Missouri, United States of America and specializes in black light theatre performances; where performers come clad in fluorescent costumes to present a visual extravaganza. With over 100 varied self styled shows, events, and even parades since 1970, this space cult-like theatre seems to have gathered its own set of followers. The theatre's journey of almost 50 years offers some valuable insights of its highs and lows.

Thus, this paper aims to look at the approaches that have worked and that have not for the theatre during its entire timeline approaching its 50th anniversary. The effectiveness of the performances that come in distinctive pairs of black and fluorescent colors, as an exciting outreach tool during events like WSW will be examined as well.