

## Space Talk at the Figge Art Museum

Written by Steve Mohr

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### Art Talk Highlights the Challenges of Reaching Space

Davenport, IOWA (July 2012) The Figge Art Museum presents the art talk “**Physics 101: The Challenges of Reaching Space**” at 7 pm Thursday, August 2. Brett McCarty will lead the talk and focus on the obstacles that NASA has had to overcome in their quest to explore outer space. The talk is offered in conjunction with the special exhibition *NASA | ART: 50 Years of Exploration* and is free with Figge membership or paid admission.

Mr. McCarty’s talk will look at some of the scientific and economic challenges that have faced the NASA program, including the high cost of sending material to space, the challenges of gravity, the biological effects of zero-gravity, sustaining life in orbit and the hazards of radiation and space debris. The talk will also focus the technologies and studies that assisted in NASA’s missions to space.

Participants can also expect to have Mr. McCarty dispel some common misconceptions during the talk. “Despite the popular belief, the gravity in space is not actually ‘zero gravity.’ Instead, it is more accurately described as micro-gravity and orbiting the earth is actually like skydiving only you never hit the earth,” explained Mr. McCarty

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Brett McCarty is an adjunct physics instructor, specializing in condensed matter physics, at St. Ambrose University. He received his master's in science from Iowa State University.

### **About *NASA / ART: 50 Years of Exploration***

In celebration of its 50th anniversary in 2008, NASA collaborated with the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum on the exhibition *NASA / ART: 50 Years of Exploration*. Drawn from the collections of NASA and the National Air and Space Museum, the exhibition features 72 works of art commissioned by the NASA Art Program. Established soon after the inception of the U.S. space program in 1958, NASA's Art Program provides a unique way to communicate the accomplishments, setbacks, and sheer excitement of space exploration to the public. The selected works span the entire history of NASA and include paintings, drawings, photographs, sculptures, and other media by such artists as Annie Leibovitz, Nam June Paik, Robert Rauschenberg, Norman Rockwell, Andy Warhol, William Wegman and Jamie Wyeth.

*NASA / ART* at the Figge Art Museum is generously sponsored by the ALCOA Foundation, John Deere, Genesis Health Systems and Cobham, plc.

*NASA / ART* was organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in cooperation with the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum. The Smithsonian Community Grant program, funded by MetLife Foundation, is a proud sponsor of "NASA | ART" public programs.

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