National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (Miraikan; Director: Mamoru Mohri, Address: Aomi, Koto-ku, Tokyo) will hold the Special Exhibition "The Science of Aliens" from March 20 (Thu./Holiday) to June 16 (Mon.), 2008.

The Alien Exhibition, which was held with the title "The Science of Aliens" in London in 2005 for its initial appearance, is an exhibition which "scientifically" pursues the possibility of the existence of extraterrestrial life as it unravels the psychology of humans which has been fascinated by the concept of alien life from the old days, based on the research results obtained through cutting-edge life science and the advancement of recent planetary exploration and astronomical observation technology. In addition to this, we will think about the current and the future earth through these research findings that briefly observes the comprehensive universe.

At the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation, we have decided on presenting this exhibition from the idea that it might give a new perspective to our lives by introducing the existence of the extraterrestrial life from the perspective of astrobiology as we grasp the research results in each field that is becoming evident through cutting-edge science and technology in a cross sectional manner. The exhibition site will be composed of 4 zones and we will approach the possibility of the existence of extraterrestrial life from various angles. In Zone 1, "Aliens in the Imaginary World" we will unravel human psychology attracted to aliens from the imaginary figures of aliens depicted in history and in the movies. Visitors can enjoy various figures starting with the alien queen which appears in the film "Alien," records from early witch trials, and games which exterminate animated monsters. In Zone 2 "Aliens in the World of Science," we will study the possibilities of the existence of extraterrestrial life from the path of the evolution of organisms on earth that is becoming evident through cutting-edge life science, the progress of recent planetary exploration and astronomical observations. We will present the above in an understandable way through planetary quizzes, graphics that show the evolution of animals and the specimens of organisms living in the deepest sea which is considered to have an environment comparable to the Earth in its primitive era. In Zone 3, "The World of Aliens," based on the latest scientific evidence, we will express the planets where extraterrestrial life, as imagined by scientists, lives through a giant interactive exhibit. Visitors will learn about the ecology of organisms and the environment of the planets while having fun with the touch panel. In the final Zone 4 "Communication with Aliens," we will introduce the method of how to receive signals or exchange signals from extraterrestrial life, which has been continuously attempted by scientists.

In addition to this, during the event, demonstrations of the "Mission Report" (5 series), which helps you further enjoy the Alien Exhibition, will be held on a daily basis. Also, talk events and workshops, which are related to life and space, are scheduled. Look for further updates on our Website.

This exhibition has been seen in western countries such as France, Spain and the US, but it will be exhibited for its first time in Asia on this occasion. Also, this is an official event of "UK-JAPAN 2008" sponsored by the British Embassy in Tokyo and the British Council.

*Astrobiology: It is a new field of research that studies the possibility of the existence of life on planets other than the earth through various fields of astronomy, planetary sciences, biology, etc.

[Outline]
Term: March 20 (Thursday/Holiday) - June 16 (Monday), 2008
Opening Hours: 10:00 - 17:00 (Please enter at least 30 minutes before closing time.)
Venue: 1F Exhibition Space b, National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (Address: 2-41 Aomi Koto-ku, Tokyo)
Closed: Every Tuesday (except April 1, April 29 and May 6)
Admission Fees: Adults: 900 yen, 18 years old and under: 350 yen/Groups (8 or more people)
Adults: 800 yen, 18 years old and under: 310 yen
* Permanent Exhibition can also be viewed.
* Free admission for those in possession of a Disability Book and one accompanying person
Organizers: National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation/Fuji Television
In Association with: The British Council
Planning and Production: SCIENCE & MEDIA LLP (Britain)/National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation/Fuji Television
Zone 1 Alien Fiction
We will unravel the social background which caused us to imagine the existence of aliens and the image of the aliens we humans envisioned as we looked at science fiction books such as the "War of the Worlds" by H.G. Wells and the figures in the past used in television and recent movies such as "ET," "Predator" and "The Blob." As we look at the exhibits, we may find that the hetromorphic figures of aliens portrayed in the fictional world may in fact show our primitive fear. It will also make you think about the definition of a human being such as "what are the conditions which cause us to be defined as human" which is a common theme that has been depicted in numerous alien stories.

Being frightened: What is the human mind which seems to be displayed through the figures of scary aliens?
We will approach this mystery from stories and the figures of aliens that appear in movies and fairytales. In addition to this, we will think about the aliens that reflected the times and those that were created from the fear of humans toward other strong and intelligent creatures as we look at the "War of the Worlds" by H.G. Wells and the records of early witch trials.

Let us not forget loveable humanlike aliens: We will introduce aliens that are depicted as cute and loveable figures.

Zone 2 Alien Science
What scientists focus on as one of the clues to ponder regarding aliens are the creatures that live in the deep sea. As life living under some of the most extreme conditions on earth was discovered, scientist came to rethink of the possibilities of the existence of life in space. As we take a look at the extraordinary path of evolution of life on earth, we will observe these organisms, which carry far different characteristics than ours. Furthermore, in the final area of this zone, we will introduce the latest earth planetary sciences using the giant galaxy map and focus on how scientists are trying to search for planets with life.

Deep sea: From organisms that live under the extreme conditions of the deep sea, we will think about the physical aspects of extraterrestrial life and their existing environment.
Earth: We will think about the roots of organisms and the environment which had a great influence on their actions and the formation of the organisms through the process of evolution of various organisms.
Solar System: From recent planetary exploration, new research results such as the possibility of the existence of microorganisms in the atmosphere of Titan and on Mars are coming to light. Based on those results, we will approach the possibility of the existence of life in solar systems other than that of the Earth.

World Outside of the Solar System: As we introduce the method of the latest planetary exploration outside of the solar system, we will search for the possibility of the existence of life outside our solar system.

Zone 3 Alien Worlds
We will introduce the 2 imaginary planets, "Aurelia" and "Blue Moon," where extraterrestrial life created based on imagination and the latest scientific research results exists. "Aurelia" orbits around the red dwarf and holds an atmosphere without an ozone layer and is rich in water and "Blue Moon" is a gas giant planet with shallow sea and active volcanoes. The environment of the planet is set in detail and the types of organisms which may exist under such environmental conditions can be observed through a giant display and can be animated by giving orders to the creatures.

Zone 4 Alien Communication
Is it possible to communicate with extraterrestrial life? It is a zone where hints regarding this question are hidden. Up to this point, attempts to detect signals from space have been made through various methods throughout the world. Here, we will introduce how scientists are trying to receive signals from space and how they are trying to communicate with extraterrestrial civilizations. In addition to this, in the final area of this zone, using a giant display, visitors can create messages to aliens.

[Sample Pictures]

The press release of this event and related images can be downloaded from the homepage of Miraikan. (URL: http://www.miraikan.jst.go.jp//press/index.html) The release of series of columns on the "Alien Exhibition" is scheduled from February on the mail magazine "Miraikan News."

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