

SETI Artists-in-Residence Program Collection CAE1710

Introduction/Abstract

The SETI Artist-in-Residence Program was created in 2010 by artist Charles Lindsay and astronomer Jill Tarter. Materials include organizational documents regarding the establishment of the SETI AIR program, and archive materials from each project including digital images, research materials, correspondence, objects, drawings, and exhibition and press materials.

Biographical Note: SETI AIR Program

The SETI Institute is a not-for-profit research organization whose mission is to explore, understand, and explain the origin and nature of life in the universe, and to apply the knowledge gained to inspire and guide present and future generations. It aims for discovery and for sharing knowledge as scientific ambassadors to the public, the press, and the government. SETI stands for the "search for extraterrestrial intelligence". The Institute consists of three primary centers: The Carl Sagan Center, devoted to the study of life in the universe, the Center for Education, focused on astronomy, astrobiology and space science for students and educators, and the Center for Public Outreach, producing "Big Picture Science," the Institute's general science radio show and podcast, and "SETI Talks" weekly colloquium series.

The SETI Institute was at first part of NASA, but then incorporated as a 501(c)(3) California nonprofit organization in 1984. Financial and leadership support over the life of the SETI Institute has included Carl Sagan, Bernard Oliver, David Packard, William Hewlett, Gordon Moore, Paul Allen, Nathan Myhrvold, Lewis Platt, and Greg Papadopoulos. Two Nobel Laureates have been associated with the SETI Institute: Charles Townes, key inventor of the laser, and the late Baruch Blumberg, who developed the Hepatitis B vaccine. Within the SETI Institute, Seth Shostak heads the SETI effort and is the host of Big Picture Science. Dr. David Morrison was the Director of the Carl Sagan Center, until August 2015, when Nathalie Cabrol was appointed as Director.^[5] Edna DeVore is the Director of Education and Public Outreach. The SETI Institute is headquartered in Mountain View, California. In 2015, Silicon Valley businessman Bill Diamond was appointed as CEO.

Instruments used by SETI Institute scientists include the ground-based Allen Telescope Array, several ground-based optical telescopes such as the Shane telescope at Lick Observatory, the W.M. Keck telescopes and IRTF in Hawaii, the Very Large Telescopes in Chile. SETI researchers also use space telescope facilities, mostly the Hubble Space Telescope, the Spitzer Space Telescope and the Herschel Space Telescope. SETI scientists are also involved in space missions, the *New Horizons* mission toward Pluto, the *Cassini* mission, currently in orbit around Saturn, and the Mars Rovers *Opportunity* and *Curiosity*.

The SETI leadership, while committed to STEM education, also acknowledged the necessity to broaden into STEAM, and the first step was to start an artist in residence program. The CA+E was asked to advise, a consultant was hired to design the program, including archive protocols. The result: "The mandate of the SETI A.I.R. program archive is to collect artworks created by the SETI artists and place them in context with the science that inspired it. While the primary focus of the archive is to gather and preserve the work of the artists, the voices of the collaborating scientists will also be present. The archive will capture the creative process by including communications between the artists and the scientists, the artists' tests and studies, and the scientific data which informed the final artworks. It is the aim of the SETI A.I.R. program archive to paint a complete picture of the exchange of ideas between the collaborators."

Scope and Content

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This archive is currently in process.