



## Starmus Festival III to pay tribute to Stephen Hawking and attract greatest minds in science and space to Tenerife

**28<sup>th</sup> April 2015** – It was announced today at the Royal Astronomical Society that Tenerife will host the Starmus Festival for the third time. Due to take place on the island from **June 27<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2016**, the event will bring together the world's leading space travellers, stargazers and astrophysicists for an interactive extravaganza, inviting the general public to discover the wonders of the Cosmos through science, art and music.

Under the theme *'Beyond the Horizon – Tribute to Stephen Hawking'* the 2016 event will take inspiration from the legendary man himself and the notion that nothing is impossible. A comprehensive programme of events will include lectures from key note speakers, round table discussions, exclusive music performances, creative arts exhibitions and visits to local observatories.

"Astro-fans" will be delighted to learn that next year's line up of key note speakers will include theoretical physicist **Prof. Stephen Hawking**, Starmus Festival Founder and leading astrophysicist **Dr. Garik Israelian** and musician and astronomer **Dr. Brian May**. These big names will be joined by a line up of the world's leading scientists, astronauts and Nobel Prize winners, including:

- **Neil deGrasse Tyson** – Astrophysicist and Science Communicator
- **Eric Betzig** – Physicist and Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry 2014 for "the development of super-resolved fluorescence microscopy"
- **Colonel Chris Hadfield** – Astronaut and First Canadian Commander of the International Space Station (2015)
- **Harry Kroto** – English Chemist and Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry 1996
- **Lord Martin Rees** – Astronomer Royal. Professor of Cosmology and Astrophysics at The University of Cambridge
- **Adam Riess** – Astronomer, Physicist and Nobel Prize winner in Physics in 2011, who led a study for the High-z Team which provided the first published evidence that the expansion of the Universe was accelerating and filled with Dark Energy
- **Russell Schweickart** - Astronaut and Scientist – ex-NASA Apollo Series astronaut and logged over 4,000 hours of flight time for the US Air Force
- **Neil Turok** – Scientist and Professor of Physics and co-author of the popular science book *Endless Universe: Beyond the Big Bang*
- **Kip Thorne** – Astrophysicist who has forged a career in writing and movies – his latest project was *Interstellar (2014)*, directed by Christopher Nolan

Discussions will focus on pushing the boundaries of science and touch on subjects such as the blurring relationship between science and science fiction and how technology will affect the future of humanity.

The Starmus Festival is supported by the Tenerife Island Government and is the brainchild of Garik Israelian, an astrophysicist researcher at the IAC. He sits on a scientific advisory board which includes Prof. Stephen Hawking, Dr. Brian May, legendary Russian cosmonaut Alexei Leonov, who became the first human to make a 'space walk' back in 1965 and British ethologist and scientist Prof. Richard Dawkins. Israelian says, "Our aim is to make Starmus Festival a global brand that is recognised not just within academic circles but that inspires and captures the imagination of the wider general public who have an interest in space, stargazing, science, art, music and sci-fi. Following the success of Starmus II, which was the most ambitious all-star festival in science, we are excited to be taking Starmus III to the next level. We are delighted that Tenerife will once again be hosting the festival as there really is no better setting to appreciate firsthand the wonders of the skies and learn about what is beyond the horizon."

One of the main social highlights planned is the "Teide Starmus Party", a magical evening of stargazing in the company of professional astronomers and live music performances, set within the lunar-like landscape of Teide National Park and under the canopy of the Milky Way. The Teide National Park – a UNESCO World Heritage Site – is one of the world's best stargazing locations because of its clear dark skies, high altitude and low pollution and is recognised as a "Starlight Tourist Destination". The party last year provided such creative inspiration that one of Europe's most interesting alt/rock bands *NOSOUND* launched a live CD and DVD called Teide 2390 which was recorded at the Teide Observatory in Tenerife during their performance.

Mr. Carlos Alonso, President of the Tenerife Island Government, says, "Following the success of last year's festival and a growing interest in stargazing as a popular excursion in Tenerife, we are delighted to host this prestigious event and hope the gathering of these great minds in one of the world's stargazing capitals will inspire travel to and exploration of our wonderful island."

The full programme and delegate package costs are still to be confirmed. For more information on Starmus 2014 please visit [www.starmus.com](http://www.starmus.com)

**-Ends-**

#### **Notes to Editors:**

**Quote from musician and humanitarian, Peter Gabriel who is on the Starmus Festival Advisory Board,** "Humans are myopic apes with a very overblown sense of their own importance, but there are few things better than lying down on the ground on a warm clear summer night and looking up at a star-filled sky to expand and explode a sense of who we are and where we really belong in the big picture.

The spaceship that many of us have travelled on, to explore the heavens is actually Stephen Hawking's

brain. But just as we are taken into the mysteries of astronomy by his extraordinary mind, the way he has resolutely refused to succumb to his illness has inspired millions.

Musicians explore and define what exists inside us, astronomers explore and define what exists outside of us, that's what I love about Starmus."

**Tenerife Tourism Corporation Press Office Contact:**

The Tenerife Tourism Corporation is a membership led independent body, supported by the public and private sectors, which markets Tenerife overseas as a tourist destination. A portfolio of five specific brands has been created: Golf, Nature, Select, Convention Bureau and Film Commission.

For general tourism information on Tenerife please visit: [www.webtenerife.co.uk](http://www.webtenerife.co.uk).

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**Starmus Festival Press Office Contact:**

For further information on the Starmus Festival III please visit: [www.starmus.com](http://www.starmus.com)

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