

Spitzer Unveils Biggest Milky Way View at Adler Planetarium

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The world's largest image of our Milky Way galaxy, taken by NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope, went on display this week at the Adler Planetarium in Chicago. It is 120 feet long and 3 feet wide at its sides, bulging to about 6 feet wide at the center of our galaxy. Image credit: Adler Planetarium

(PhysOrg.com) -- The world's largest image of our Milky Way galaxy, taken by NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope, went on display this week at the Adler Planetarium in Chicago.

The new image spans a mind-boggling area measuring 120 feet long and 3 feet wide at its sides, bulging to about 6 feet wide at the center of our galaxy. The portrait was taken over a five-year period and is made up of 800,000 individual images stitched together to create one enormous mosaic. It is comprised of 2.5 billion pixels, making it an image of truly galactic proportions.

The images were captured in the infrared, highlighting things such as space dust and organic molecules that can't be seen by the human eye. The panorama represents the combined effort of two Spitzer survey teams. Data from the Spitzer Infrared Array Camera was collected and processed by the Galactic Legacy Infrared Mid-Plane Survey Extraordinaire team, led by Ed Churchwell of the University of Wisconsin, at Madison. The Multiband Imaging Photometer for Spitzer Galactic Plane Survey Legacy team, led by Sean Carey of NASA's Spitzer Science Center at the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, Calif., processed observations from Spitzer's Multiband Imaging [Photometer](#).

The image will remain on display at the Adler Planetarium as a permanent exhibit. For those who cannot visit the enormous image mosaic in person, a link to the high-resolution image is at www.spitzer.caltech.edu/Media/releases/ssc2008-11/ .

More information about the Adler Planetarium is at www.adlerplanetarium.org/ .

Provided by JPL/NASA ([news](#) : [web](#))

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