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**THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY PRESENTS
THE WORLD PREMIERE OF *CORAL: REKINDLING VENUS*
THURSDAY, MAY 31, 2012**

CORAL ECOSYSTEMS COME TO LIFE IN THIS NEW IMMERSIVE DOME EXPERIENCE

ENCORE PRESENTATIONS THROUGHOUT JUNE

The American Museum of Natural History, in collaboration with the World Science Festival, presents the dome premiere of *Coral: Rekindling Venus*, a new video installation created by Australian artist **Lynette Wallworth** on **Thursday, May 31**. The installation immerses viewers in the stunning underwater realm of fluorescent coral reefs and exotic sea creatures, highlighting the complexity of coral ecosystems and their struggles to handle environmental stresses such as rising ocean temperatures. Additional opportunities to see the installation will be available in the Hayden Planetarium and the Milstein Hall of Ocean Life throughout June.

The installation's premiere heralds a rare celestial occurrence, the transit of Venus, when the cloud planet passes between the Earth and Sun. During the transit of Venus in 1761, scientists around the world worked to measure the distance from the Earth to the Sun in a unique act of global cooperation. This June, Venus will once again pass between the Earth and the Sun. Wallworth uses Venus's transit as a rallying point for global cooperation around this century's pressing issue: climate change.

Coral: Rekindling Venus free-falls through an oceanic constellation of sea anemones, jellyfishes, red sea dragons, seals, lionfishes, kelp forests, crinoids, starfishes, Christmas tree ferns, whale sharks, and brain corals, fluorescent corals, and soft corals. Featuring the musical artists Antony and the Johnsons, Fennesz

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and Sakamoto, Gurrumul, Max Richter, and Tanya Tagaq-Gillis, the installation is the culmination of Wallworth's ongoing concern with the fragile health of the planet's marine environment. The artist worked with renowned underwater cinematographer David Hannan, who filmed in the oceans and seas around Papua New Guinea and the Great Barrier Reef, as well as with cinematographers based in Indonesia and Florida, and musicians and marine biologists from all over the world.

Lynette Wallworth is an Australian artist working in video installation, photography, and film. Her work has been presented internationally, including at Brighton Festival, Arnolfini, the BFI, and the Young Vic in the UK, Festival d'Aix en Provence in France, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York, and at the Auckland Triennial, Melbourne International Arts Festival, Adelaide Film Festival, and the Sydney Festival.

Several presentations of *Coral: Rekindling Venus* will be offered in the Hayden Planetarium and the Milstein Hall of Ocean Life.

- **Thursday, May 31 from 7 to 9:30 pm:** In collaboration with the World Science Festival, the American Museum of Natural History presents the dome premiere of *Coral: Rekindling Venus* in the Hayden Planetarium Space Theater. The program begins in the Milstein Hall of Ocean Life, where leading researchers will share their insights on coral reefs and set the stage for a remarkable evening of art and science. Following the screening, guests can enjoy cocktails and an after-hours viewing of the Museum's latest exhibition, *Creatures of Light: Nature's Bioluminescence*, which features an interactive fluorescent coral wall.
- **Tuesday, June 5 at 6:30 pm:** At 5:30 pm, as Venus passes directly between the Earth and Sun, the Museum will host a live simulcast of this rare transit from the Mauna Kea Observatory in Hawaii. At 6:30 pm, program participants can watch a screening of Wallworth's *Coral: Rekindling Venus* in the Hayden Planetarium Space Theater.
- **Sunday, June 10 at 5 pm:** As part of the **Milstein Science Series program Great Barrier Reef**, a special immersive presentation of the installation will be held in the Hayden Planetarium. *The Milstein Science Series is proudly sponsored by the Paul and Irma Milstein Family.*
- **Monday, June 11 to Sunday, June 24:** The installation will screen continuously throughout the day during Museum hours in a special mini-dome presentation in the Milstein Hall of Ocean Life.

American Museum of Natural History (amnh.org)

The American Museum of Natural History, founded in 1869, is one of the world's preeminent scientific, educational, and cultural institutions. The Museum encompasses 45 permanent exhibition halls and galleries for temporary exhibitions, the Rose Center for Earth and Space with the Hayden Planetarium, state-of-the-art research laboratories and five active research divisions that support more than 200 scientists in addition to one of the largest natural history libraries in the Western Hemisphere and a permanent

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collection of more than 32 million specimens and cultural artifacts. Through its Richard Gilder Graduate School, it is the first American museum authorized to grant the Ph.D. degree. In 2012, the Museum will begin offering a pilot Master of Arts in Teaching with a specialization in earth science. Approximately 5 million visitors from around the world came to the Museum last year, and its exhibitions and Space Shows can be seen in venues on five continents. The Museum's website and growing collection of apps for mobile devices extend its collections, exhibitions, and educational programs to millions more beyond its walls. Visit amnh.org for more information.

At the Museum

The Museum offers a broad array of programs for adults, children, families, students, educators, and scientists. These range from special exhibitions to symposia, lecture series, workshops, and film festivals. Highlights include *Creatures of Light: Nature's Bioluminescence* (March 31, 2012-January 6, 2013), which explores the extraordinary organisms that produce light, from the flickering fireflies found in backyards around the world to the alien-like deep-sea fishes and other fantastic creatures that illuminate the perpetually dark depths of the oceans; *Beyond Planet Earth: The Future of Space Exploration* (November 19, 2011-August 12, 2012), which offers a vision of the future of space travel as it boldly explores our next steps in our solar system and beyond; the Hayden Planetarium Space Show, *Journey to the Stars*, narrated by Whoopi Goldberg; *The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter* (October 8, 2011-May 28, 2012), an annual exhibition that features up to 500 live, free-flying tropical butterflies; *Picturing Science: Museum Scientists and Imaging Technologies* (June 25, 2011-June 24, 2012), an exhibition of stunning large-format photographs captured by high-tech imaging devices used by Museum scientists in their research; and a year-round calendar of engaging and educational public programs that feature dynamic encounters with living cultures and authentic science.

Public Information

For additional information, the public can call 212-769-5100 or visit the Museum's website at amnh.org.

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