

Communicating Science; a collaborative approach through Art, Dance, Music and Science

Sarah-Jane Smart, Hugh Mortimer, and the RAL Space Dance Collaboration Team
RAL Space

A collaborative approach to communicating our amazing science.

RAL Space at the Rutherford Appleton Lab, has initiated a unique collaboration with a team of award-winning performing artists with the aim of making space science research engaging and accessible to a wide audience. The collaboration has two distinct but connected strands one of which is the development of a contemporary dance work inspired by solar science and including images and data from the Space Physics Division of STFC RAL Space.

The work has been commissioned by Sadler's Wells, one of the world's leading dance venues. It will be created by choreographer Alexander Whitley, video artist Tal Rosner and composers Ella Spira and Joel Cadbury and toured throughout the UK and internationally by the Alexander Whitley Dance Company (AWDC). The work will come about through collaboration with the work of the scientists of RAL Space and in particular the SOHO, CDS and STEREO missions, taking a particular interest in space weather.

Choreographer Alexander Whitley and composers Ella Spira and Joel Cadbury will take their inspiration from the images and data that are produced by the solar science within RAL Space. Video artist Tal Rosner will use these spectacular images to create an atmospheric backdrop to accompany the work, bringing the beauty and wonder of space exploration to new audiences. Funding for the creation and touring of the work will be sought from Arts Council England, the British Council, partner organisations, trusts and foundations and private donors. The world premiere of the work will take place at Sadler's Wells in June 2017. It will then tour throughout the UK and internationally to theatres, science conferences and outreach venues with the aim of bringing the work of STFC RAL Space and the science behind solar science and space weather to new audiences.

An education programme will combine concepts of choreography and space science aimed at young people in year 5 Key Stage 2 and be developed by a Creative Learning specialist with input from RAL Space scientists and engineers, the RAL Space communication and outreach group and Alexander Whitley Dance Company. The programme will be piloted in selected East London schools and then, following evaluation, be rolled out to several schools across the UK.