



Juno, The Cultural Connection

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by Theodore Clarke

Abstract

After a 5 year journey and a billion miles cartwheeling through the vastness of space, the Juno spacecraft is in orbit about the planet Jupiter. With its suite of scientific instruments Juno scientists will catch a glimpse of the dawn of creation of our own solar system. Juno will address origins, asking for us all, Who am I? Where do I come from?

But Juno is more than a space laboratory to study the planet Jupiter. Juno embodies the history of humankind's perception of the universe from Aristotle, Copernicus and Galileo, to the Juno spacecraft peering beneath the clouds of Jupiter. Juno embodies the literature of classical mythology and the timeless masterpieces of the Renaissance and Baroque periods in its very name. Juno carries to Jupiter small statuettes of the gods Jupiter and Juno and the scientist Galileo. Juno embodies cosmic visualization experiences through first ever movies of the moon occulting Earth (>2 million hits on YouTube) and the Galilean satellites orbiting about Jupiter (>1.8 million hits on You Tube). Juno embodies the stirring music of modern Greek composer Vangelis, the Orpheus of Juno, who provided the score for the movies of the moon occulting Earth and of the Galilean satellites orbiting Jupiter. Juno embodies down to Earth visualization experiences through trajectory models created of Juno's passage through the Earth-moon system and Juno's entire orbital mission at Jupiter. Juno is the embodiment of public engagement in its science in a fishbowl program. Indeed, because Juno is the embodiment of this remarkable union of science and technology, history and literature, music and art, and visualization and public engagement, Juno is truly an ambassador to the universe of a New Renaissance.

In my paper, "Juno, the Cultural Connection," I will unveil a dimension of the Juno mission to the planet Jupiter that will appeal to a broad sector of the global public.