

Nebra Sky Disc Flies into the Universe

ESA-astronaut Matthias Maurer carries a downscaled copy in his baggage

On Sunday 31 October 2021 at 07.21 hours (German time) the German ESA-astronaut Matthias Maurer starts on his space journey and flies with the company SpaceX to the International Space Station ISS. For his space mission Maurer chose the motto ›Cosmic Kiss‹, a name which at the same time is an »expression of love for the universe«. For the corresponding emblem he was inspired amongst other things by the Nebra Sky Disc.

But not only this: in the astronaut's baggage is a downscaled copy of the Nebra Sky Disc of 20 centimetres diameter. It consists of hand-coloured epoxy resin with glass fiber reinforcement and gives an impression that is true to the original of this exceptional Early Bronze Age find, which was manufactured more than 3,600 years ago. The applications, representing crescent and full moon, stars, horizon arcs, and sun barge, are from pure gold.

For the State Museum of Prehistory in Halle (Saale), the home of the Sky Disc, the space journey of its world-famous artefact is a special sign of appreciation: »That Mr Maurer incorporated the Nebra Sky Disc into his mission logo and it now also accompanies him to the ISS in the form of a replica is both a great joy and an honour for us« says Harald Meller, State Archaeologist and Director of the State Museum of Prehistory. »This underlines once more the significance of the Sky Disc not only for Saxony-Anhalt and central Germany but also for humankind as a whole, as it mirrors the questions and aspirations towards the cosmos that have occupied us for thousands of years.«

Also Dr. Reiner Haseloff, Minister President of the State of Saxony-Anhalt and President of the Federal Council of Germany (Bundesrat), is delighted by the news: »The Sky Disc as oldest depiction of the cosmos draws on the ISS attention also internationally to Saxony-Anhalt's rich cultural heritage. Our Federal State with its unparalleled culture and history is thus present in space. Together with the team of the State Museum I wish Mr Maurer for his mission all the best and great success.«

With an age of more than 3,600 years, the Nebra Sky Disc is considered to be the world's oldest representation of concrete celestial phenomena. In 2013 it was therefore included in the UNESCO ›Memory of the World‹ register.

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Press images



Abb. 1:

The Nebra Sky Disc.

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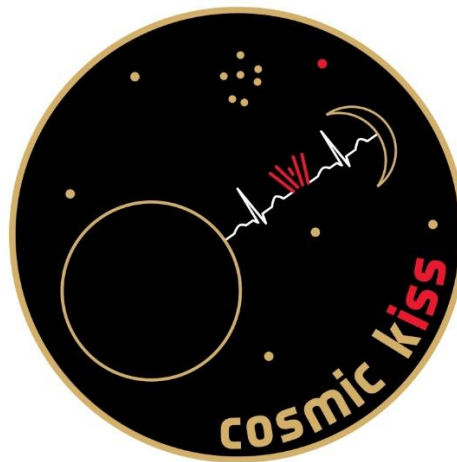


Abb. 2:

The ›Cosmic Kiss‹ mission patch.

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