

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Where Real Science Meets Science Fiction at the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre

Vancouver, BC (April 13, 2007) - On Saturday, May 26, four of the country's most passionate and quirky scientists and engineers will gather on the stage of the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre's Auditorium to speculate about "**Where Real Science meets Science Fiction**".

Spider Robinson, world-acclaimed science fiction writer and first Writer In Residence at the Space Centre, will host this lively evening of far-fetched and fascinating speculation. "Science Fiction opens up outrageous possibilities in the universe," he explains. "How do we know what happens on our planet is strictly local? The only way to know is to go out there".

To get there in his novels, Robinson turns to the *Lunarians*, an informal group of astrophysicists, engineers, and diverse scientists who meet regularly to challenge and spark ideas about science. Spider Robinson has been a "fly on the wall" in these discussions for over 15 years and draws on their expertise and enthusiasm in his writing. "When I want to understand light sabers or the impact of a particularly wild time lapse, these are the guys I go to."

Spider Robinson's latest book, *Variable Star*, released in October 2006, was truly a collaborative effort. Robinson was honoured by being selected to write the book based on notes and an outline left by the late science fiction writer Robert Heinlein. In developing the plot, Robinson turned to the *Lunarians* for advice on details such as ship propulsion systems, time lapses and robotic engineering.

Astrophysicists **Dr. Douglas Beder** and **Dr. Jaymie Matthews** of the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of British Columbia, **Mr Guy Immega**, Robotics Engineer; and **Mr. Ray Maxwell**, Electronics Engineer will join Spider Robinson for a memorable evening of scientific theory, illustrations, lively anecdotes, wild-eyed speculation and maybe even a song or two that will have everyone reaching for the stars.

This lively and provocative evening begins at 7:30 p.m. at the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre Auditorium. Admission is free, but seating is limited. This event has been supported in part by a grant from the Canada Council.

The H.R. MacMillan Space Centre is a non-profit community resource that brings the wonders of space to Earth, while providing a personal sense of ongoing discovery. Through innovative programming, exhibits and activities, our goal is to inspire sustained interest in the fields of earth science, space science and astronomy from a Canadian perspective.

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