

Categories

- U.S. news
World news
Politics
Business
Entertainment
Sports
Health
Tech & science
Travel
Travel photos
News
Tips
Destinations
Deals
Seasonal
Cruising
Active
Family
Business travel
Luxury
Local news
Weather

Browse

- Video
Photos

Disable Fly-out

Marketplace

- Watch Movies
Progressive

'Star Trek' launching near NASA spaceport

Show at Kennedy Space Center aims to educate about life in space

By Adam Hadhazy

Space.com
updated 10:14 a.m. ET, Tues., May 11, 2010

A slice of "Star Trek's" final frontier will warp into the visitor's center for NASA's Kennedy Space Center spaceport in Florida this June with the world premiere of the interactive stage show STAR TREK LIVE.

Featuring live actors on a set with giant screens and special effects, the program aims to entertain and educate about life in space through the futuristic lens of the starship Enterprise at the non-profit Kennedy Space Center Visitor's Complex in Cape Canaveral, Fla., near NASA's space shuttle launch site.

The 30-minute show's interactive storyline sets up the audience as cadets in the inaugural class at Starfleet Academy. While contending with an unwelcome visit from a time traveling, renegade Romulan, audience members will discover the many challenges of modern-day space travel, as well as how humans will continue to (boldly) go where no one has gone before.

Story continues below

Advertisement for American Airlines featuring a smartphone and the text 'FLIGHT INFO THAT FINDS YOU.'

Beaming up real space-age technology

One example is the fictional deflector shields that "Star Trek's" ships rely on to scatter the rare, small but potentially hull-puncturing bits of dust and matter in their paths. To demonstrate how much damage can be done, an air cannon will blast a piece of material through a sheet of aluminum right on stage.

This very-real threat of space debris - a big concern of NASA's for the safety of astronauts and the integrity of the International Space Station and satellites - is just one of many educational points that STAR TREK LIVE hopes to get across.

"We try to tie NASA in as much as humanly possible," said Leonard Lipes, STAR TREK LIVE producer and productions managing director of Mad Science Productions, which is creating the theatrical show under a license from CBS Consumer Products.

The Apollo moon landings plus other aspects of spaceflight of the past, present and future will get wrapped into what promises to be an exhilarating adventure as the audience saves the day, Star Trek-style, said Lipes.

Trek-inspired science ... and some cameos

In many ways, the "Star Trek" franchise has already presaged plenty of real-life technology. An instance that the show touches on is modern cell phones, which mirror the then-futuristic, flip-phone communicators of the original 1960s show chronicling the voyages of Captain Kirk and his crew.

Speaking of Kirk - though Lipes cannot provide details at this point - the swashbuckling starship commander and his stoic Vulcan counterpart Spock will make on-screen appearance at the show.

STAR TREK LIVE will run five times daily in a 300-seat theater and comes included in regular admission to the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. The worldwide debut will be at the space center on June 11, 2010.

DON'T MISS THESE TRAVEL STORIES FROM MSNBC.COM

- Delta apologizes for putting kids on wrong flights
Can't make the Cup? Party down in capital cities
Shh! Hotel sleep wardens listen for night noise
Cute recruits: Familiar faces fight for family cruisers
RV industry celebrates 100 years on open road

Advertisement for American Airlines: THE ONE AND ONLY AADVANTAGE PROGRAM. Learn more. >>

Advertisement for American Airlines: THE ONE AND ONLY AADVANTAGE PROGRAM. Learn more. >>

Advertisement for American Airlines: THE ONE AND ONLY AADVANTAGE PROGRAM. Learn more. >>

Space.com sidebar menu with links like 'Gallery - Hayabusa: Japan's Asteroid Mission' and 'What We Don't Know About Asteroids'.

Space.com sidebar menu with links like 'Gallery - Hayabusa: Japan's Asteroid Mission' and 'What We Don't Know About Asteroids'.

It's A Snap! contest sidebar with text: 'See the latest entries', 'View the latest contest winner and take the quiz'.