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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Comet Encounter Vision Created Locally

CARMEL Valley, CA - December 22, 2003

History will be made this next Friday and one local artist has a front row seat. Carmel Valley artist B.E. Johnson has produced all of the artwork for NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory that detail the journey of a small spacecraft called Stardust.

Stardust will become NASA's first spacecraft to encounter a celestial object, take samples and return them to Earth. This encounter is scheduled for Friday, January 2. Johnson was hired before the launch 4 years ago to create panoramic paintings of the spacecraft's journey, encounter and the return home.

Next Friday, the car-sized spacecraft will fly next to the head of Comet Wild-2, start collecting samples of the dust and ice that make up a comet, and then will fold up its collector paddle and return to Earth in 2006, where scientists will finally learn exactly what comets are made of.

Johnson has been creating artworks for various NASA missions for over 25 years, using his engineering background and his superrealistic style. He has won numerous awards for his pieces and remains a favorite artist for space enthusiasts throughout the world. For more information and to see the Stardust and other mission artworks, call 659-4950, and please visit www.bejohnson.net

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include: stardust press sheets, bio, business card, bookmark

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