

# Sky & Telescope's News Bulletin – Nov 19

**Source:** <http://sci.tech–archive.net/Archive/sci.astro/2004–11/1167.html>

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**Date:** 11/20/04

Date: 20 Nov 2004 02:58:43 GMT

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\* \* \* SKY & TELESCOPE's WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN – November 19, 2004 \* \* \*

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## SOMETHING WARM IN A VERY DARK PLACE

They teach in school that stars form in gas–and–dust clouds that collapse under the influence of their own gravity. It sounds simple, but how it actually happens is complicated, confusing, and somewhat mysterious. It's like telling a visitor to Earth, "Water runs downhill." True enough, but that hardly captures the essence of Victoria Falls, the Mississippi Delta, or a trout stream in the Vermont woods.

A key gap in our star–forming knowledge is just what happens as a shapeless, collapsing cloud knot turns into a symmetrical, rotating disk around a central pre–star. The action is hidden from view inside dark nebular blobs — "cloud cores"— where anything could be going on unseen. Looking inside these star–forming globules is one reason why NASA built and launched the infrared Spitzer Space Telescope.

A team of 30 astronomers has used Spitzer to examine dozens of dark cloud cores....

> [http://SkyandTelescope.com/news/article\\_1391\\_1.asp](http://SkyandTelescope.com/news/article_1391_1.asp)

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## IMAGE PROCESSING FROM THE CUTTING EDGE

With the emergence of the Internet as the main form of communication in the astronomy community, amateurs often correspond for years without ever meeting and exchanging ideas on a personal level. With this in mind, amateur imager Steve Mandel saw a need to put a face on the names behind the emails and forum posts, as well as the potential for great strides to be made in digital astrophotography processing and imaging. Out of this idea was born the Advanced Imaging Conference (AIC). CCD astrophotographers from around the globe converged on San Jose, California, the weekend of November 6th for the first AIC. With an attendance limit of 140, registration filled up weeks before the event, guaranteeing that this will be an annual occurrence. "The presentations were superb and almost everyone wants to do this again next year," says M