

## New art installation featuring the 'sound of the stars' unveiled at Thinktank

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Did you know that the Sun is playing its own stellar symphony, just like a musical instrument? Scientists at the University of Birmingham who study the 'music of the stars' have worked with sound artist Caroline Devine to create an art-science installation that goes live this week at Thinktank Birmingham science museum.

The scientists, who run a global network of telescopes called the Birmingham Solar-Oscillations Network (BiSON) that detects this 'stellar music' have teamed up with Caroline, who has made a sound composition called '5-minute oscillations of the Sun', which has been shortlisted for a British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors (BASCA) British Composer Award.



The Sun makes sound naturally inside - this sound is trapped, making the sun resonate like an oboe or a trumpet. As the Sun is a huge ball of gas it pulses gently in and out. The team provided Caroline with data on the pitch of the Sun's pulses or tones, and she incorporated the tones into a sonic composition to bring a whole new meaning to the phrase 'twinkle, twinkle little star'.

The exhibit combines the aural and visual – a four-channel sound installation of Caroline's composition and an animated educational display explaining the origins and use of the music of the stars.

Professor Bill Chaplin, from the University of Birmingham's School of Physics and Astronomy, said: *'This is a novel combination of science and art that aims to engage and inspire schoolchildren and members of the public with exciting, cutting-edge astronomy research.'*

Caroline Devine said: *'I am delighted to have my work exhibited at Thinktank along with the science that informed it.'*

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. The installation was supported by the Institute of Physics (IoP) via a public engagement grant.
2. The BiSON data were also featured in "Space Ham", a BBC Radio 3 episode of "[Between the Ears \(http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01pyfhm\)](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01pyfhm)" that Caroline Devine was commissioned to produce by the BBC, and which explored the relationship between radio amateurs and space exploration.
3. Read further information about the [BISON network of telescopes \(http://bison.ph.bham.ac.uk/musicstars/\)](http://bison.ph.bham.ac.uk/musicstars/)
4. Read further information about [Thinktank \(http://www.thinktank.ac/\)](http://www.thinktank.ac/)

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