

ESO, the European Southern Observatory, was created in 1962 to . . . establish and operate an astronomical observatory in the southern hemisphere, equipped with powerful instruments, with the aim of furthering and organizing collaboration in astronomy . . . It is supported by eight countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. It operates the La Silla observatory in the Atacama desert, 600 km north of Santiago de Chile, at 2,400 m altitude, where thirteen telescopes with apertures up to 3.6 m are presently in operation. A 3.5-m New Technology Telescope (NTT) is being constructed and also a 15-m radio telescope (SEST). A giant telescope (VLT=Very Large Telescope), consisting of four 8-m telescopes (equivalent aperture = 16 m) is being planned for the 1990's. Six hundred scientists make proposals each year for the use of the telescopes at La Silla. The ESO Headquarters are located in Garching, near Munich, FRG. It is the scientific-technical and administrative centre of ESO, where technical development programmes are carried out to provide the La Silla observatory with the newest instruments. There are also extensive facilities which enable the scientists to analyze their data. In Europe ESO employs about 150 international Staff members, Fellows and Associates; at La Silla about 40 and, in addition, 150 local Staff members.

The ESO MESSENGER is published four times a year: normally in March, June, September and December. ESO also publishes Conference Proceedings, Preprints, Technical Notes and other material connected to its activities. Press Releases inform the media about particular events. For further information, contact the ESO Information and Photographic Service at the following address:

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Perhaps the most crucial question for the moment is the development of an adequate facility for the optical figuring and polishing of the 8-m mirrors; this is likely to determine the project lead time.

The priority activities for the next two years will be the detailed analysis of the telescope dynamic behaviour and the

definition of the active primary mirror and of its support system.

Parallel to the technical investigations, scientific working groups pursue the analysis of the VLT concept with respect to its various observing goals. They are expected to give their final recommendation by July 1986 before a VLT workshop to be held next October.

## Catálogo de ESO de publicaciones y fotografías disponible

A partir de mediados de julio de 1986 estará disponible un catálogo de libros, publicaciones, posters, diapositivas, etc. que se podrán obtener de ESO. Rogamos enviar sus pedidos por escrito al Servicio Informativo y Fotográfico de ESO (ver dirección en esta página).

febrero y mediados de abril, recibiendo la visita de aproximadamente 15600 personas. Dicha muestra se encuentra actualmente exhibiéndose en Punta Arenas, iniciando un itinerario que la llevará a las principales ciudades del país. Al mismo tiempo, el Museo Arqueológico de La Serena expuso una segunda colección de fotos y explicaciones entre noviembre de 1985 y mayo de este año, siendo admirada por aproximadamente 19500 personas.

R. Huidobro

## Exhibiciones ESO

Durante buena parte del paso visible del cometa Halley por los cielos de Chile, la ESO contribuyó a una mejor información del público interesado, ofreciendo sendas exhibiciones en importantes centros culturales de Santiago y La Serena. En la Galería Azul de la Biblioteca Nacional (Santiago), nuestra exposición permaneció abierta entre mediados de

## Libro de ESO aparecerá en 1987

Fué decidido que el libro de ESO titulado "Visiones del cielo austral" (ver *El Mensajero* N° 43, pág. 36) será publicado en 1987 con ocasión del 25° aniversario de la ESO.

Se están finalizando las negociaciones por un contrato de publicación con una de las editoras más importantes de Europa.

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