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## A New Look at the Sombrero Galaxy



This image of Messier 104, also known as Sombrero Galaxy, because of its particular shape, was obtained with FORS1 at VLT Antu on January 30, 2000. The colour image was made by a combination of three CCD images obtained by Peter Barthel from the Kapteyn Institute at Groningen, Netherlands. He and Mark Neeser, also from the Kapteyn Institute, produced the composite images. The "Sombrero" is notable for its dominant nuclear bulge, composed primarily of old stars, and its nearly edge-on disk composed of stars, gas and intricately structured dust. The complexity of this dust and the high resolution of this image are most apparent directly in front of the bright nucleus, but it is also evident as dark absorbing lanes throughout the disk.