

Hungarian Stamps 2009

EUROPA 2009: ASTRONOMY



The member countries of PostEurop vote each year to choose a topic which will feature on all the EUROPA stamps issued that year. 2009 is the „International Year of Astronomy” in compliance with the theme of EUROPA stamp „Astronomy”.

Galileo Galilei (Pisa, 15.2.1564 – Arcetri, 8.1.1642), the Italian scientist, was equally at home in several branches of science. His name is associated with numerous discoveries in the field of astronomy, eg.: Jupiter’s four larger moons in 1610. He was among the first to use a telescope to study the heavens; he observed sunspots and discovered mountains and craters on the moon. He established that the Milky Way is comprised of a multitude of stars.

Galilei’s attention shifted from the geocentric to the heliocentric view of the world. In 1633 he was put on trial for professing the teachings of Copernicus. Pope Urban VIII himself presided over the court. Galileo’s life was at stake as at the time the penalty for heresy was death. Thanks to his influential supporters, he was sentenced to house arrest for life. During the hearing he was forced to retract his teachings about the movement of the earth yet he uttered his today famous words *"Eppur si muove!"*, that is yet it moves. Although he went blind, his old age was spent peacefully and he died a natural death. On 31 October 1992 Pope John Paul II annulled the verdict of the inquisition. (Source: http://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galileo_Galilei)

Magyar Posta’s miniature sheet and the stamps in it have a graphic composition referring to astronomy. One of the denominations bears a portrait of Galileo and the space probe named after him and launched in 1989. On the other Jupiter and the four moons he discovered can be seen. The connection between the two stamps is strengthened by the fact that the Galileo space probe researched Jupiter. Galileo’s telescope and radio telescopes are shown in the frame. Interplanetary space is depicted in the background printing. The first day cover shows the Earth as seen from space. The graphic design of the special postmark employs stylised astronomical motifs.

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Order code: 2009110040011 (miniature sheet) * 2009110060012 (FDC)

Date of issue: 8 May 2009

Total face value: HUF 660

Printed by Pénzjegynyomda

Printing method: offset

Number of copies: 300,000

External imperforated size of miniature sheet: 105 x 65 mm, perforated size of stamps: 25 x 25 mm.

Designed by Péter Nagy

More information: belyeg@posta.hu

Orders: philately@posta.hu

www.posta.hu

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