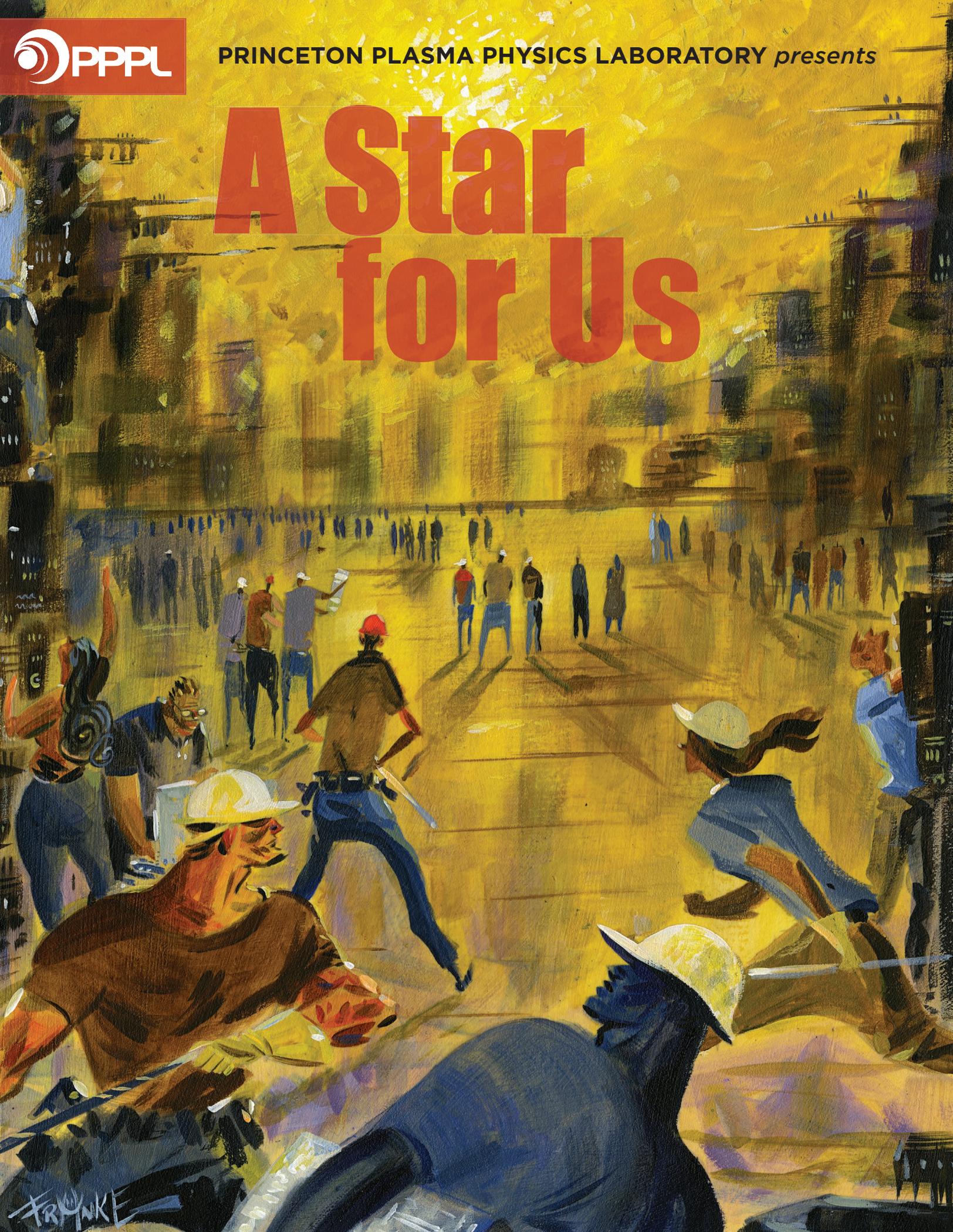




PRINCETON PLASMA PHYSICS LABORATORY *presents*

A Star for Us





The Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory (PPPL) is a collaborative national center for plasma and fusion energy sciences managed by Princeton University for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). It is the only DOE Laboratory devoted to these areas and it is committed to being the leading U.S. institution investigating the science of magnetic fusion energy.

Today, the National Spherical Torus Experiment-Upgrade (NSTX-U), the Laboratory's flagship endeavor, is set to advance the worldwide quest for fusion as a safe, clean and virtually limitless source of energy for producing electricity. The original NSTX began operating in 1999 and our 21st century upgrade is poised to bring the world closer to the dawn of a bold new Energy Age.

This illustrated science booklet tells the story of the promise of fusion energy and the ambitious steps that are being taken to achieve it.

PRINCETON PLASMA PHYSICS LABORATORY PRESENTS

A Star for Us

NINETY-THREE MILLION MILES FROM A SUN IGNITED BY THE UNIVERSAL POWER OF FUSION, THE WORLD OF HUMANS ORBITS AND SPINS IN SILENCE. DRIVEN BY MORTAL DREAMS.

FROM CAVES TO SKYSCRAPERS, THE SUN'S POWER DEFINED OUR PAST AND SHAPES OUR PRESENT. ITS HEAT GIVES US HOPE. ITS LIGHT GIVES US REASON.

AND NOW, THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO MASTER THAT WHICH MADE US AND OUR WORLD, AND BUILD A FUTURE UNLIKE ANY OUR ANCESTORS IMAGINED.

Writer: Sajan Saini
Artist: Frank Espinosa

1: The Fusion Barrier



IMAGINE A NEW WORLD WHERE OUR URBAN AMBITIONS YIELD NEW NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS.

HUMANITY'S ACCELERATING HUNGER FOR LIGHTING, TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMUNICATION, INTEGRATED INTO A RENEWABLE REALITY.

A WORLD FREE FROM THE FEARS OF AN ATMOSPHERIC CARBON BUDGET. WHERE OUR CHILDREN TAKE UP AN INTIMATE BOND WITH LAND AND SEA...

PROFITING FROM A BOUNTY OF ELECTRICITY AS LIMITLESS AS THE OCEANS.

IT WILL BE A WORLD POWERED BY A COLLABORATION OF SMARTER, CLEANER TECHNOLOGIES.

WHERE OUR ABILITIES TO SEE, MOVE, AND SPEAK ARE AMPLIFIED BY A POWER MORE SAFE, PLENTIFUL, RELIABLE--

AND COMMONPLACE, THAN THE ENERGY INDUSTRIES OF TODAY.

FUSION TECHNOLOGY, IN PARTICULAR, WILL DELIVER THESE PROMISES. FOR IT IS THE POWER OF A STAR THAT CREATED AND SUSTAINS OUR WORLD.

WHAT MORE WILL WE CREATE WHEN WE TAKE UP THIS POWER IN OUR INDUSTRIOUS HAND?



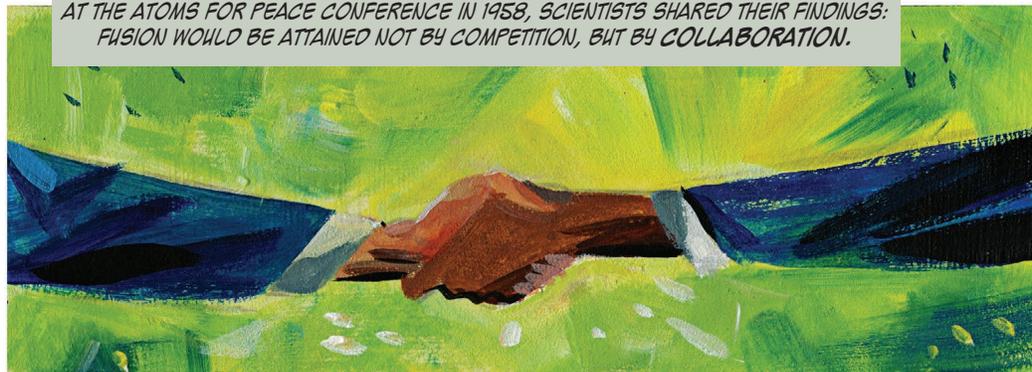
*BEFORE WE IMAGINE THE FUTURE,
WE MUST LEARN FROM THE PAST.*

*THE QUEST FOR
MANMADE FUSION
EMERGED FROM
THE ARMS RACE
OF THE COLD WAR,
AS SUPERPOWER
NATIONS STRIVED
TO UNLEASH THE
POWER LOCKED
WITHIN ATOMIC
NUCLEI.*



*BELOW THE CRITICAL
DENSITY OF A CHAIN-
REACTION, FUSION IS
BENIGN-- A NUCLEAR
PROCESS CONSUMING
NATURALLY ABUNDANT
HYDROGEN, TO GENERATE
HARMLESS HELIUM.*

*AT THE ATOMS FOR PEACE CONFERENCE IN 1958, SCIENTISTS SHARED THEIR FINDINGS:
FUSION WOULD BE ATTAINED NOT BY COMPETITION, BUT BY COLLABORATION.*



*AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY, LYMAN SPITZER
HAD ALREADY TAKEN UP THE CHALLENGE.*



*THE SUN AND THE STARS FUSED
ATOMIC NUCLEI UNDER THE CRUSH
OF GRAVITY, WHICH COULDN'T BE
RECREATED ON EARTH.*

*BUT WITH A MAGNETIC FIELD, A FACSIMILE STAR COULD BE
WROUGHT ON EARTH. IT WOULD NOT BE EASY, IT WOULD TAKE
MUCH TIME AND GREAT EFFORT.*



IT COULD BE DONE, IN THEORY.

2: Building a Star



WITHIN THE SUN RUMBLES A FIERY, GASEOUS PLASMA-- ATOMS HEATED TO 10 MILLION DEGREES CELSIUS, THEIR ELECTRONS BREAKING FREE TO EXPOSE CHARGED NUCLEI.

CREATING A PLASMA ISN'T A TECHNICAL CHALLENGE. WE CREATE PLASMAS RELIABLY INSIDE NEON LIGHTS, SELECT FLATSCREEN TVS, AND PLASMA GLOBES.

BUT THAT ISN'T SUFFICIENT TO ACHIEVE FUSION... FOR THE ELECTRIC REPULSION OF CHARGED NUCLEI DRIVES THEM APART.

IF THE SUN'S GRAVITY CAN FORCE NUCLEI INTO A PROXIMITY A MILLION MILLION TIMES SMALLER THAN A CENTIMETER-- A TITANIC SHORT-RANGE NUCLEAR FORCE TAKES HOLD AND LIBERATES VAST ENERGIES LOCKED INSIDE NUCLEAR MASSES.

ON EARTH, WE HAVE NO MEANS TO OVERCOME THIS REPULSION WITH GRAVITY.

YET WE CAN FIND OTHER MEANS TO CONFINE, BRINGING LIKE NUCLEI CLOSE ENOUGH, LONG ENOUGH...

AND MAKE THEM FAST ENOUGH TO OVERCOME REPULSION, AND FUSE.

WITH A MAGNETIC FIELD, CHARGED HYDROGEN ISOTOPES ARE CLOSELY HELD INSIDE THE NATIONAL SPHERICAL TORUS EXPERIMENT (NSTX) AT A DENSITY THAT RAISES THE RATE OF FUSION--

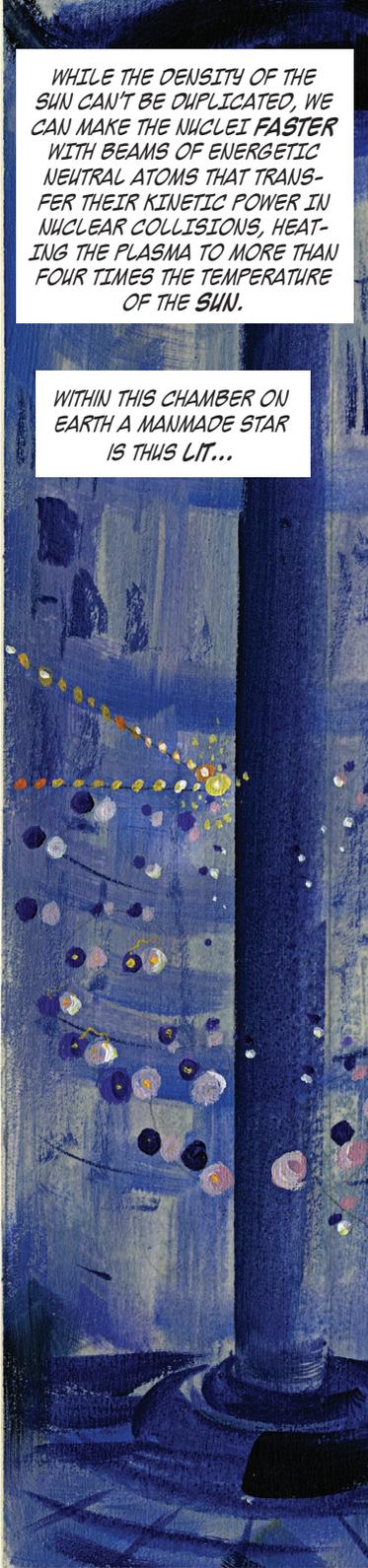
PROVIDED THAT...





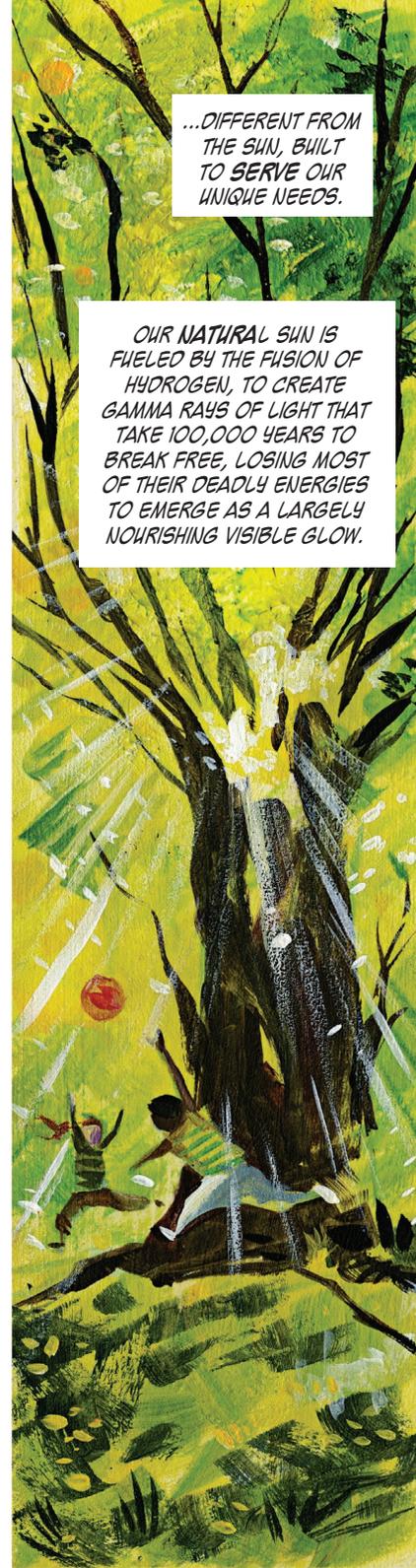
...THE MAGNETIC FIELD PATTERN CAN CONTAIN THE VOLATILE TRAJECTORIES OF A ROILING PLASMA.

HOLDING THIS DENSITY FOR A LONG CONFINEMENT TIME REMAINS A KEY CHALLENGE.



WHILE THE DENSITY OF THE SUN CAN'T BE DUPLICATED, WE CAN MAKE THE NUCLEI FASTER WITH BEAMS OF ENERGETIC NEUTRAL ATOMS THAT TRANSFER THEIR KINETIC POWER IN NUCLEAR COLLISIONS, HEATING THE PLASMA TO MORE THAN FOUR TIMES THE TEMPERATURE OF THE SUN.

WITHIN THIS CHAMBER ON EARTH A MANMADE STAR IS THUS LIT...



...DIFFERENT FROM THE SUN, BUILT TO SERVE OUR UNIQUE NEEDS.

OUR NATURAL SUN IS FUELED BY THE FUSION OF HYDROGEN, TO CREATE GAMMA RAYS OF LIGHT THAT TAKE 100,000 YEARS TO BREAK FREE, LOSING MOST OF THEIR DEADLY ENERGIES TO EMERGE AS A LARGELY NOURISHING VISIBLE GLOW.



BUT THE NSTX FUSES THE HYDROGEN ISOTOPE DEUTERIUM, EXTRACTED FROM SEAWATER, TO CREATE AN ULTRAFAST CLOUD OF HIGH ENERGY NEUTRONS THAT ARE TRAPPED BY A BUFFER, DRAWING THEIR ENERGIES INTO HEAT... TO BOIL WATER AND DRIVE TURBINES OF ELECTRICITY.

THE NSTX AND ITS PEER REACTORS ACROSS THE WORLD WILL BE DARK STARS, THEIR PRIMARY POWER CARRIED FORTH NOT IN LIGHT, BUT IN NEUTRONS.



THE SUN, DESPITE ITS COSMIC SCALE, REMAINS INEFFICIENT AT FUSION, WHILE OUR EARTHBOURN STAR WILL CREATE A POWER DENSITY 100,000 TIMES GREATER.

WHEN FUNCTIONAL, IT WILL BE MANKIND'S GREATEST ENGINEERING FEAT: HEATING SEAWATER TO CREATE A GRAND SURPLUS OF ELECTRICITY... FROM A PLASMA THE SIZE OF A HOUSE.

3: Holding it Better

A KEY ENGINEERING CHALLENGE FOR STABLE FUSION IS INCREASED CONFINEMENT TIME.

AT PPPL, THE SPHERICAL TORUS DESIGN OF THE NSTX CHAMBER WAS A CRITICAL STEP TOWARDS HOLDING ONTO A STABLE PLASMA... AND NOW IT'S TIME TO UPGRADE.

FIFTEEN YEARS OF EXPERIMENT AND THEORY REVEAL HOW TO REDUCE THE RATIO OF OUTWARD PLASMA PRESSURE VERSUS INWARD MAGNETIC PRESSURE, DOUBLING OUR ABILITY TO CONFINE THE UNRULY GAS WITH A LARGER CENTER STACK MAGNET.

BUT THIS YIELDS NEW COMPLICATIONS.

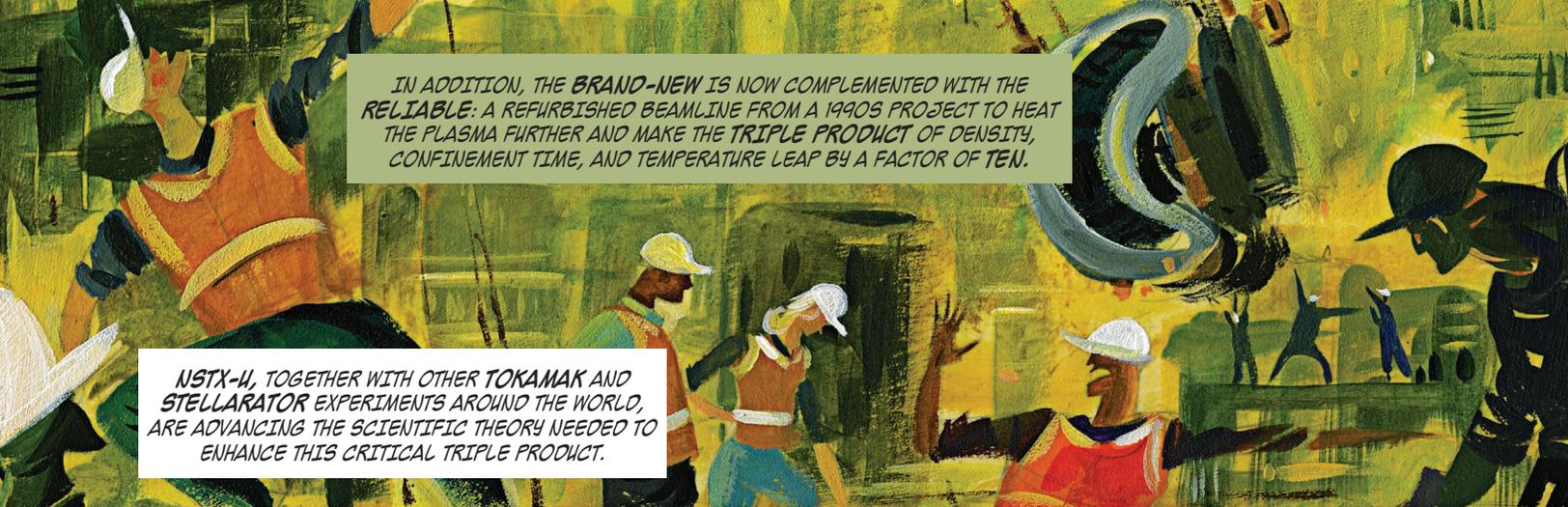
WITH THE LARGER MAGNETIC FIELD, TREMENDOUS FORCES WILL RUN UNCHECKED ALONG THE CENTER STACK, RENDING IT AND THE NSTX-U TO PIECES...

THE UNEARTHLY CHALLENGE TO HOLD THE SUPERHOT PLASMA MORE STABLY, BEGETS A HUMBLER CHALLENGE TO HOLD ITS VESSEL MORE SECURELY.

TECHNICAL STAFF AND ENGINEERS HAVE WORKED AROUND THE CLOCK TO ARMOR THE NSTX-U INTO A STRUCTURE OF SUPREME STATIC STABILITY...

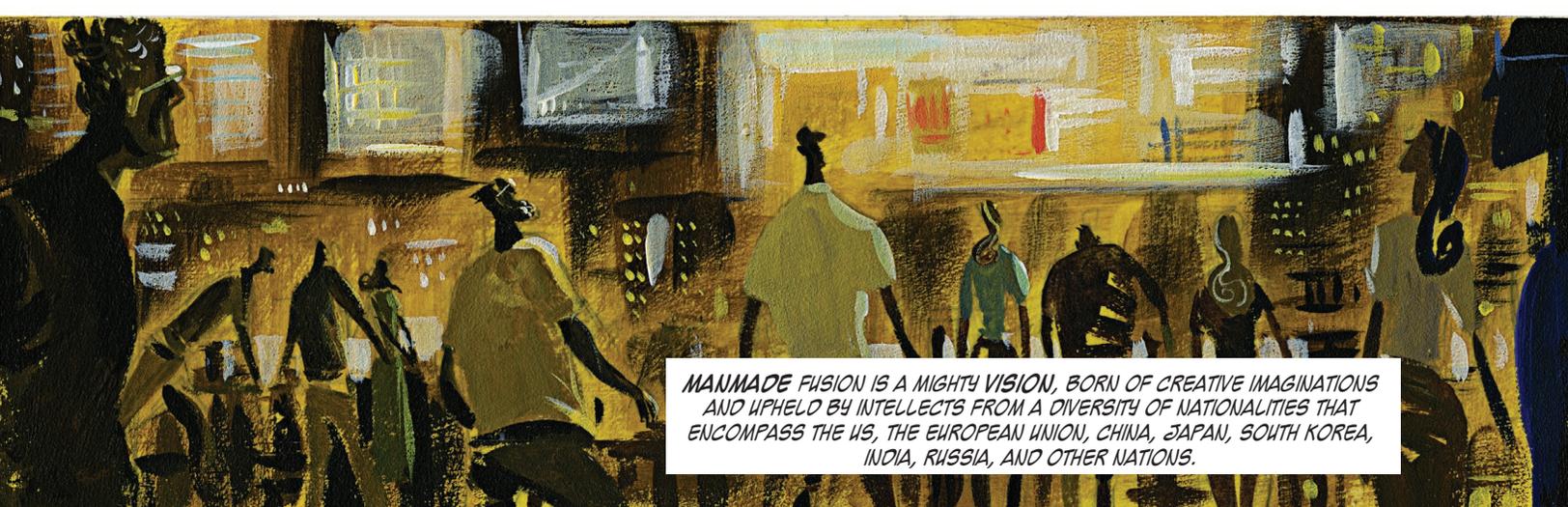
SEIZING UPON THE CENTER STACK WITH A MASTER'S ABSOLUTE GRIP, REFUSING TO HEED ITS TWISTING CRIES.





IN ADDITION, THE BRAND-NEW IS NOW COMPLEMENTED WITH THE RELIABLE: A REFURBISHED BEAMLINER FROM A 1990S PROJECT TO HEAT THE PLASMA FURTHER AND MAKE THE TRIPLE PRODUCT OF DENSITY, CONFINEMENT TIME, AND TEMPERATURE LEAP BY A FACTOR OF TEN.

NSTX-U, TOGETHER WITH OTHER TOKAMAK AND STELLARATOR EXPERIMENTS AROUND THE WORLD, ARE ADVANCING THE SCIENTIFIC THEORY NEEDED TO ENHANCE THIS CRITICAL TRIPLE PRODUCT.



MANMADE FUSION IS A MIGHTY VISION, BORN OF CREATIVE IMAGINATIONS AND UPHOLD BY INTELLECTS FROM A DIVERSITY OF NATIONALITIES THAT ENCOMPASS THE US, THE EUROPEAN UNION, CHINA, JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, INDIA, RUSSIA, AND OTHER NATIONS.



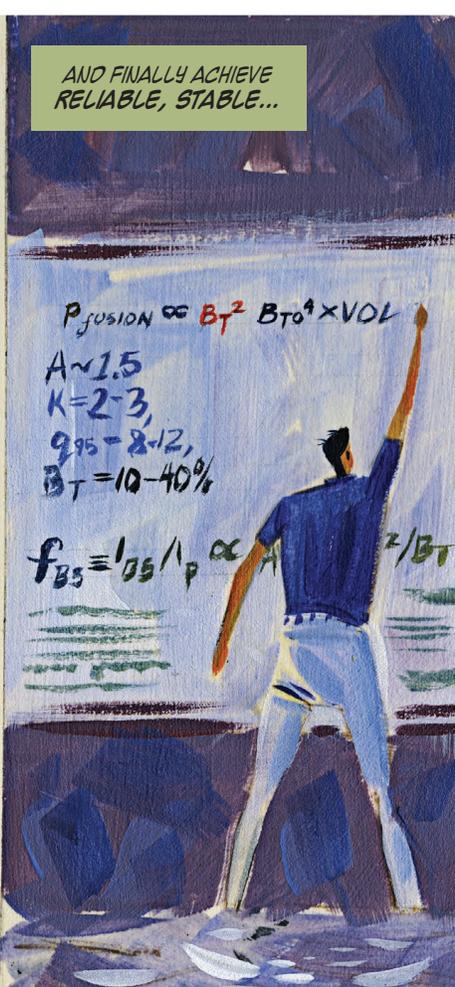
IT IS THE PINNACLE OF OUR SCIENTIFIC AND ENGINEERING DARING, SUMMONING COSMIC POWER IN SERVICE OF OUR QUOTIDIAN NEEDS.



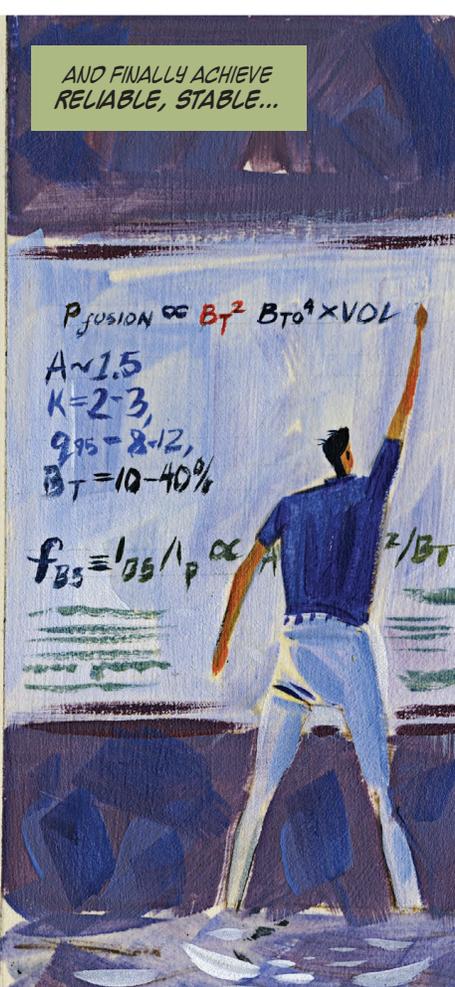
IT IS AN UNDERTAKING THAT DEMANDS OUR RACE UNITE AS ONE, BUILDING PROFESSIONAL TRUST ACROSS NATIONS AND THROUGHOUT HISTORY, AS ITS CONSTITUENT COMPONENTS ARE SHARED AND REFINED.



IT IS THE HALLMARK OF THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD AND THE ENGINEERING PROCESS, AS OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE FLEETING AND EXPERIMENTAL GROWS, INFORMING THEORIES TO BUILD THE OPERATIONAL.



AND FINALLY ACHIEVE RELIABLE, STABLE...



$P_{\text{fusion}} \propto B_T^2 B_{T0}^3 \times \text{VOL}$
 $A \sim 1.5$
 $K = 2-3,$
 $q_{95} = 2-12,$
 $B_T = 10-40\%$

$f_{BS} = 1/q_{95} / p \propto A^2 / B_T$

...STEADY STATE FUSION!



“ Fusion has the potential to help with all the emerging challenges of this still-new century: energy independence, national economic competitiveness, environmental responsibility and reduction of conflict over natural resources.”

Stewart Prager

Director, Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory

“ I would like nuclear fusion to become a practical power source. It would provide an inexhaustible supply of energy, without pollution or global warming.”

Stephen Hawking

Physicist and best-selling author of “A Brief History of Time”

“ The challenge of global warming should stimulate a whole raft of manifestly benign innovations for conserving energy and generating it by ‘clean’ means (biofuels, innovative renewables, carbon sequestration, and nuclear fusion).”

Martin Rees

Physicist and Astronomer Royal of the United Kingdom

