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News Release Number: STScI-1997-17

June 9, 1997 12:45 PM (EDT)

# A Collision In The Heart Of A Galaxy

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## An American Astronomical Society Meeting Release


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The Hubble telescope's infrared camera has uncovered a collision between two spiral galaxies in the heart of the peculiar galaxy called Arp 220. The collision has provided the spark for a burst of star formation.

Hubble's infrared vision has captured bright knots of stars forming in the heart of Arp 220. The bright, crescent, moon-shaped object is a remnant core of one of the colliding galaxies. The core is a cluster of 1 billion stars. The core's half-moon shape suggests that its bottom half is obscured by a disk of dust about 300 light-years across. This disk is embedded in the core and may be swirling around a black hole. The core of the other colliding galaxy is the bright round object to the left of the crescent, moon-shaped object. Both cores are about 1,200 light-years apart and are orbiting each other.

### What is an American Astronomical Society Meeting release?

A major news announcement issued at an American Astronomical Society meeting, the premier astronomy conference.

*Credit: Rodger Thompson, Marcia Rieke, Glenn Schneider (University of Arizona) and Nick Scoville (California Institute of Technology), and NASA*

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