

PARTY WITH THE STARS AT THE MCDONALD OBSERVATORY IN FORT DAVIS

By Brandon Zech – September 8, 2018



On September 15, 2018, Ballroom Marfa and the McDonald Observatory in Fort Davis are partnering to host a program featuring the best of both institutions: a screening of Patricio Guzmán's film *Nostalgia for the Light*, and a Star Party featuring star and constellation viewing through the observatory's various telescopes.

Guzmán released *Nostalgia for the Light* in 2010 at the Cannes Film Festival. After receiving wide critical acclaim, the film was later shown at the Toronto International Film Festival, the San Francisco International Film Festival, and the Melbourne International Film Festival, among others. Narrated by Guzmán, the film examines the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet in Chile by following two parallel,

but similar, storylines: that of women who search the country's Atacama Desert for the remains of their relatives who were killed under Pinochet, and astronomers' affinity for conducting research in the desert due to its ideal weather and observational conditions. Throughout the 90-minute documentary, Guzmán makes poignant statements about the researchers' desire to look at the universe at large, verses the Chilean women who look down in search of their loved ones.

Following the screening of *Nostalgia for the Light*, the McDonald Observatory is offering visitors a free Star Party, during which astronomers offer naked-eye tours of the night sky paired with access to multiple telescopes aimed at various celestial bodies. Since the

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observatory is set high on a mountain, and because there is little light pollution around it, the naked-eye tours allow visitors to see full constellations, shooting stars, and other sights they wouldn't be able to see while standing in an urban space.

The observatory will also give visitors a chance to learn about the Giant Magellan Telescope project it is involved in. When completed in 2025 in Vallenar, Chile, the Giant Magellan Telescope will be the largest optical observatory in the world.

You can catch Nostalgia for the Light at the McDonald Observatory in Fort Davis on September 15th at 6PM. The program is part of Ballroom Marfa's exhibition, Hyperobjects. While the program is free, reservations are required. To register, please send your zip code and the number of people in your party to sarah@ballroommarfa.org or call 432-729-3600.

Link: [Party with the Stars at McDonald Observatory in Fort Davis](#)