

# **Liverpool Telescope**

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http://telescope.livjm.ac.uk/

#### LT Control room Mon Apr 28 19:16:02 2008



#### A Robotic Telescope

- One that can operate without night-time supervision.
- Not "remote controlled".
- Software is responsible for the safety of the telescope and observatory.

#### Our Vision for a Robotic Telescope

- Robotic "National facility class" telescope
- Diverse instrumentation
- Common user scheduled by TACs. Not devoted to or dominated by any one project.
- Software decides what (and how) to observe. No "queue".
- Flexible operations responsive to changing needs of time-domain astrophysics

## Advantages of Robotic (as opposed to remote)

- Unstaffed
  - Cheaper to run? (space, facilities, accommodation, food, water)
  - No night working
  - Reduced travel (also true for remote operations)
- Flexibly scheduled
  - Both better and qualitatively new science
  - Shared facility for diverse monitoring timescales (minutes months)
  - Respond rapidly to changing conditions
  - Painless Targets of Opportunity
- Standardized data taking procedures
  - Homologous data quality
  - Allows automated pipeline data reduction to scientifically useful quantities
- Simplifies inter-observatory collaboration and hand-offs between telescopes

## Operational Challenges for a Robotic Telescope

- Real-time observer interaction
  - Can be automated in very many cases
- Management and being fair to all

   Traditional block schedules are cleaner
- Reliability
  - When time lost, typically in large chunks
  - Avoid fragile instruments (Can still be innovative)



#### **Talk Outline**

- Robotic
- Hardware: Telescope & Instruments
- A User's Perspective
- Operations Staff Perspective
- Our current user community

#### **LT** Specifications

- 2m primary (f/3), f/10 at Cass
- Designed and built by TTL (now LCO)
- Alt-Az (hydrostatic bearings)
- Image quality < 0.6" on-axis</li>
- Pointing < 10" rms</li>
- Integrated autoguider
- Closed loop tracking < 0.2" over 1hr
- Max slew rate > 2° per sec
- Zenith blind spot < 2°</li>
- Clamshell enclosure
- Science Operations Jan 2004
- Sited on La Palma, Islas Canarias





#### Requirements for an automatic telescope

#### Remote & Robotic

- Automated startup and shut down procedure.
- Very reliable weather information.
- High degree of reliability
- Fault recovery/logging/management procedures.
- Failsafe operation make sure it is protected if it does fail.

#### Additional for Robotic

- Well defined sequence of observations including calibration observations.
- Autonomous scheduler for robotic operation.



#### Instrumentation

Iain Steele, Chris Mottram, Alan Scott, Stuart Bates, Steve Fraser, Robert Smith (JMU) John Meaburn, Dan Harman (Manchester) Phil Charles, Luisa Morales (Southampton) Peter Meikle (ICSTM) David Clarke (Glasgow) Don Pollacco, Ian Todd (QUB) Sue Worswick (Optical design)





# Acquisition & Guidance Box



- 1 straight-through port
- 18 side ports
- Off axis frame transfer autoguider (limit V=17)
- Retractable, folding mirror gives instrument change time < 30 seconds</li>



#### **P**ATCom







**RATCam Calibrations & Pipeline** 

- Every night
  - Automated twilight flat fields
  - Photometric standards every 2 hours.
  - Quicklook reductions in 2 3 min
- End of night pipeline
  - Debiases and trims the overscan region
  - Flat fields based on latest flats
  - Solves WCS against catalogues
  - Data distributed following business day
- Data provided to allow user to
  - Defringe
  - Apply a bad pixel mask

## FRODOSpec

- Dual beam
  - Dichroic at 5750Å
  - Blue Arm 3800 5750Å
  - Red Arm 5750 9000Å
- Two gratings
  - VPH, R = 5500
  - Transmission grism, R = 2300
- IFU 11x11 lenslet array (0.9 arcsec "pixels")
- Fixed central wavelengths
- Ar, Xe and W lamps
- 4k x 2k detectors cooled to -100 degC
- Commissioned Autumn 2008.



# A big black box



# Example: A PTF supernova



# Unprocessed 2D spectra available within ~2 minutes.



## Pipeline extracted spectra



2-d compound coordinate system

Currently available next day, but working on speeding up the software to allow inclusion in Quicklook

# RISE Fast imager / photometer

- Rapid Imaging Search for Exoplanets
- Frame transfer CCD (no shutter) camera (Andor)
- 1024 x 1024 pixels
- Fore-optics give 10x10 arcmin FoV
- 0.6 seconds minimum exposure time
- Developed with QUB for specific project but available as a common user facility.

## **Exoplanets - SuperWASP**



SuperWASP telescope on La Palma



HS209458, Hans-Jörg Deeg

## **Exoplanets - Transit timing**

Routinely delivering few-millimag photometry for transit studies.

Typical depth of transit 0.01-0.03 magnitudes and duration 1-4 hours.

An "Earth" in the same system would perturb the orbit timing by about 10 seconds a year.





# THOR Even faster imager

- Primarily the tip-tilt camera but can be deployed scientifically too.
- Integrated into the user phase 2 system
- EMCCD (no shutter) camera (Andor)
- 512 x 512 pixels (but frequently windowed)
- ~5 msec minimum exposure time
- High time resolution or "lucky" shift-and-add



Lunar occultation timing. 6msec exposures



# RINGO2

- Upgrade to RINGO polarimeter
- EMCCD has read-noise <1e<sup>-</sup> and read out approx. 8 fps.
- Gain 2 mag sensitivity
- Time resolution ~ 1sec



Can stack data post acquisition to trade sensitivity vs. time resolution

# 



Instrument for 2011: IO ("Infrared-Optical")

- Optical FOV 10 x 10 arcmin
- IR FOV 6 x 6 arcmin
- Tip-tilt feeds for both cameras
- Dichroic feed to both cameras
- Wavefront sensor (THOR) is EMCCD that can be used as very fast (10ms) timing camera and for lucky imaging.

## O camera

- Fairchild CCD486 BI array
- 4096 x 4096 15 micron pixels
- Dark current < 0.02 e<sup>-</sup> /sec
- Read noise < 10 e<sup>-</sup>
- Modifications to the telescope are complete
- Camera to be installed 2011





## I camera

- HAWAII-2RG
  - 2048 x 2048 18 micron pixels
  - 1.8 micron cutoff
  - Substrate removed
    - QE>70% 0.4 1.0 microns
    - QE>80% 1.0 1.8 microns
  - Dark current < 1 e<sup>-</sup> / sec
  - Guide window functionality to generate tiptilt signal

## Instrumentation

- Current
  - RATCam
  - RINGO2
  - FrodoSpec
  - RISE
  - THOR
- Near Future (this year)
  - IO:O
- Later
  - IO:I
  - Tip-Tilt
- Decommissioned
  - SupIRCam
  - RINGO
  - Meaburn(John)

CCD imager Polarimeter Spectrometer Fast readout CCD Very fast readout CCD

**CCD** Imager

NIR Imager

NIR imager Polarimeter Spectrometer

## Common Features Between Instruments

- Completely independent
- Common command set (e.g. CONFIG, DAY\_CALIBRATE, NIGHT\_CALIBRATE, TWILIGHT\_CALIBRATE, WAVELENGTH\_CALIBRATE, EXPOSE)
- Knowledge of calibration procedures built into the instrument control system
- Electrical power kept running 24/7
- Few servo mechanisms obtain precision via mechanical means
- Housekeeping: Single data transfer, reduction software, archiving
- Problems with cooling
- PSU failures are most common fault

#### How Users See Robotic Operation



#### Phase2 Data Entry

#### Observing Requests entered at any time. Available immediately to the scheduler.

<pre><?xml version="1.0" encoding="ISO-8859-1"?> O 0.0</pre>
<pre><!DOCTYPE RIML SYSTEM "http://www.estar.org.uk/documents/rtml2.l.dtd">    </pre>
Ventations 2011 2012 Cype request v Ventations ventations ventati
RamsName>Chris Mottpamarvhananastrint
Sinth Robert
► Suish-stable Copper (co8805
<pre>LindSedeligendsAgent host="localhost" port="1234m&gt;ss/instelligentAgent&gt;</pre>
<03582fval 109806c
Largete - VI - Vala lest Larget Lype = "no rma to" Delete
<targetname>testby ma for this ame&gt;</targetname>
Solar Elevatión Constraint
mag by the day and a second since we have a second se
wmap fixed i section in the lines i formate lead me as as 1/45 EC 01.002/Paralitation
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<pre><filter><filtertype>V</filtertype></filter></pre>
(Refresh free Chategory)
✓ Include disabled mining rows="2" columns="2"/> View Execution History ✓ Group is enabled
Expanding User %/Detactor>ratcam
Expanding Ac Geo Teority Jier Steele - PI - GaiaTest Display Observation Sequence
Expanding Proposal: GalaTest $rate = "time" units="ms">1000.0$
Displaying Group, what have a 190 stand and 55 miles a constraint of the standard sequence.
C/Observation > Delete Observation Sequence
<scolezu.uc scolez<="" td=""></scolezu.uc>

 Phase 2 GUI (for humans)

RTML document
 (for software)

#### Phase2ui

- A conventional menu driven GUI
- Java 5 and Swing executable runs locally at user
- Launched from browser by Java Webstart
- Accesses phase2 db at telescope via Web Services
  - SOAP (XML documents) over HTTP
  - Widespread compatibility and minimal system requirements. (Browser + JVM)
  - If web browser works, this should too.
- User has single sign-on for all their proposals
- When internet fails, requests cannot be changed. Observations continue using existing database.

#### **Observation Definition Wizard**

Select Target: BC Rotator Setting: C	Q Cam [Extra-solar] [F	RA: 3:34:59.89, Dec:	53:10:23.60]	3	New	
Autoguide: Defocus: 0.	O Yes O No A mm (non-c	, utomatic umulative)		ĺ	🗌 Is Standard	
dd Configuration / E	(posure					
Instrument:	RATCam	-				
	Construction					
Instrument Config:	rband [Imager conf	iguration] [Filters=[S	DSS-R]]	\$	or New	
Instrument Config: Exposure:	rband [Imager conf	iguration] [Filters=[S	DSS-R]]	Add	or <u>New</u>	
Instrument Config: Exposure:	rband [Imager conf	iguration] [Filters=[S	DSS-R]]	Add	or New	
Instrument Config: Exposure: Observation List- Instrument	rband [Imager conf	iguration] [Filters=[S seconds Expo	DSS-R]]	Count	or New	
Instrument Config: Exposure: Observation List- Instrument ATCam	rband [Imager conf       2     x       2     x       2     config       ratcam i band	iguration] [Filters=[S seconds Expo 10.0 20.0	DSS-R]] se(s) 2 2	Count	or New	
Instrument Config: Exposure: Observation List Instrument ATCam ATCam	rband [Imager conf       2     x       2     x       20       Config       ratcam i band       rband	iguration] [Filters=[S seconds Expo 10.0 20.0	DSS-R]] se(s) 2 2	Count	or New	
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For straightforward observation groups. Most programs use the conventional pre-packaged sequences.

Specify what you want, not how.

## **Modular Definition of Sequences**

Editing Observation Sequence of Group: noconfigbias_for_ag_test	
Slew Slew	
Focal Plane         Target:         6deg_moon [Extra-solar] [RA: 23:59:30.00, Dec: -1:40:0.00]	•
Fine Tune or Create New Target	
Root	
[Slew] [Extra Solar Target] T20+45 RA:[ 19:55:38.82] Dec:[ 43:57:20.80] [	Rotator] Mode: CARDINAL [Sidereal Tracking]
[Focal Plane] Target Instrument: RATCam	
[Fine Tune] Mode: WCS_FIT, Acquisition Instrument: RATCam, Science Instrum	nent: FRODO
[Dual Beam Spectrograph Config] Name: FRODO_red_low	
[Autoguider Config] Command: ON_IF_AVAILABLE	
ERANCH] FRODO	
ITERATOR] REPIAT COUNT, repeats=1 FRODO_RED	
[Dual Beam Spectrograph Config] Name: FRODO_red_low	
Arc] Xe	
Exposure] 1 x 1200.0sec	
ITERATOR] REPIAT COUNT, repeats=1 FRODO_BLUE	
📄 [Dual Beam Spectrograph Config] Name: FRODO_blue_low	
Arc] Xe	
Exposure] 1 x 1200.0sec	
📄 [Autoguider Config] Command: OFF	
📄 [Slew] [Extra Solar Target] T20+60 RA:[ 20:7:16.08] Dec:[ 61:34:21.60] [Re	otator] Mode: CARDINAL [Sidereal Tracking]
Continue	Cancel

# User defines observation as an explicitly ordered list of commands

## The Validator

000	24		Liverpool Telescope	e Phase2 UI (v0.7.2)		15-
Users Programmes T/ Marsh.Tom McHardy.lan McHardy.lan Moss.Chris Mundell.Carole Mundell.Carole Mundell.Carole Mundell.Carole Newsam.Andy Operations Ramsay.Gavin Simpson.Chris Simpson.Elaine Simpson.Elaine Simpson.Elaine Sistele.lain Steele.lain Steele.lain JLO9B06b JLO9B06b JLO9B06c BQ Cam Photometr LSI +61 303 JLO9B06c BQ Cam Photometr LSI +61 303 JLO9B06c BQ Cam Photometr LSI +61 303 Morres.Hannah Morres.Hannah	AGs P Sequence in FAILURE: Ar FAILURE: Ar The validation	GROUP Proposal Monitor editor Instru- in Instru- on con	Liverpool Telescope BQ Cam Photometry JL09B06c r Timing Constraint isplaying validation resu r ument Config is require ument Config is require npleted with 2 failures.	e Phase2 UI (v0.7.2) ults of observation sequence d before an Exposure. d before an Exposure.	e in builder	ecution History /alidate Group
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#### Validator Rules

- **DANGER** : "injury to life or equipment"
  - Cannot occur!
- FAIL : "telescope software will reject"
  - E.g., no PI, no TAC, no timing constraint, missing instrument config, sky PA specified but no target coordinates
- WARN : "telescope accepts, but it looks wrong"
  - Should almost never be ignored
  - E.g., missing focal plane configuration, no target
- No approval required by support astronomer
- No "mild warning" for uncommon configs



#### Liverpool Telescope Quicklook Data

Proposal	User Name	<u>24/06</u>	23/06	22/06	<u>21/06</u>	<u>20/06</u>
JL09B03b	Matt Darnley	-	<u>6</u>	-	-	-
JL09B06b	Iain Steele	-	-	-	15	<u>4</u>
JL09B07	Ian McHardy	2	8	-	<u>16</u>	-
PL09B03	Mark Sullivan	-	12	<u>6</u>	15	-
PL10A01	Susana Barros	-	-	103	-	-
PL10A03	Tom Barclay	4	1	-	1	-
PL10A04	M.T. Botticella	-	13	-	-	-
PL10A05	Ian McHardy	1	-	1	-	-
PL10A07	Keith Horne	<u>8</u>	<u>61</u>	27	<u>49</u>	-
PL10A13	Tom Marsh	-	8	-	17	-
CL10A02	Luis Goicoechea	4	-	-	-	-
CL10A03	Nancy Elias	11	-	-	11	-
CL10A06	Francesc Salles	-	-	10	-	-
<b>LTCollim</b>	LTOps	2	-	-	-	-
NSOPrior1	Andy Newsam	-	-	-	-	<u>3</u>
NSO Priority	Andy Newsam	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	1	-
NSO Priority	Andy Newsam	-	-	1	-	-
NSO Priority 4	Andy Newsam	-	-	-	-	4
RATStand	LTOps	<u>18</u>	66	<u>48</u>	<u>72</u>	-
<b>RISEFocus</b>	LTOps	-	-	<u>20</u>	-	-
Standards	BGCA	<u>4</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>32</u>	4	-
<u>UNKNOWN</u>	UNKNOWN	2	-	-	-	-

#### Real time status of LT

# Pipeline reduced data within 2–3 minutes



Liverpool Telescope Astrophysics Research Institute



#### DATA ARCHIVE

If you have javascript available on your browser, we strongly recommend turning it on. Should you decide not to, the 'Refresh form' button can be used to force the dynamic updates which would have been automated by javascript.

Instructions for using this form

	1
TARGET POSITION	
Target Name 🗹	
Right Ascension   Image: Constraint of the second	
`Radial' search mode: Circle 00 10 00	
Resolve name using resolver NED   Resolve name now	
Date Integration (sec.)   Seeing (pixels) Airmass (sec z)   Instrument RATCam Ringo SuplRCam Meaburn	
IMAGING CONFIGURATIONS	
Optical     IR       Clear     J       Sloan u'     H       Sloan g'     -ANY-       Sloan i'     Sloan i'       Sloan z'     Bessell B	
SPECTROSCOPIC CONFIGURATIONS	
Wavelength (Å) Dispersion (Å pix <sup>-1</sup> )	

## **Timing Constraints**

#### Flexible

Any time after a start date the conditions are met. Once only.

- Monitor
  - Repeat at an interval with regularity precision defined by a window fraction. Interval typically hours to months.
- Ephemeris
  - Once only, at a specified phase.
- Interval
  - Observe repeatedly with a fixed minimum interval.
- Fixed
  - At a specific time (e.g. occultation or simultaneous with a spacecraft)
- Target of Opportunity modes...

#### **Targets of Opportunity**

- Client script running at the telescope (e.g., GRB followup)
- Intelligent agent submitting Robotic Telescope Markup Language with the appropriate priority flag (e.g., exoplanet microlensing)
- Make it as simple or as complex as you like...

#### **Software Processes**



## **Night Operations Staffing**

- Capable of totally unsupervised operations.
- Duty Officer on rota doing one week shifts.
- Principally role is coordinating safety officer
  - Always someone on call at a single phone number.
- Can prevent operations at their discretion.
- Most errors occur at start-up, so frequently helpful to have a witness even if the automated fault recovery fixes things for itself.
- No observers means no observer support

## **Night Operations Staffing**

- Almost all staff on this rota.
- Reduces out-of-hours working by the classically "operations" staff (aka astronomers)
- Allows software engineers to see their own code running.
- One staff hour per day

#### Normal office hours

#### Out-of-hours working

#### Software

-hours working					<b>S</b>			
Liverpool Teles Control Signal Exp	cope: Robotic Control System: En ert Help	gineering Int	erface: [ADMIN:	V@version@ - B	uild @build@; _		Data A	rchiv
SPOOLTELES	Current time Process In Con	trol Status	Operations Mana	iger Observing Mode	2		Data A	
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PMC DENN Dentrol 2544260 Network Commerce Intent Acrossfree Period ND247_0118	Instruments RATELAK (SPELTON MARK) +110	.49 C	Wind Eps Wind Directi Kumidi	ea 11.9 cm 97 ty 0.1 Te	Pressure 778 Moisture 0.03 mperature 9.2			
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			CHB Okay	Szindin Onay	Millitute	Cassegran Chay		
	Live Status	22 Feb		AZM OID Okay	ALT OID Okay	CAS OID Okay	AMN OID Okay	PMS OID
	Quicklook	21 Eeb		AZMINCI Okay		CAS NCI Okay		PMS NCI
	Night Reports	20.5-1	AIT2 Okay	AZM REP Okay	ALT REP Okay	CAS REP Okay	AMN REP Okay	PMS REP
0	Information	20 Feb	AIT3 Okay	AZM NSC Okay	ALT NSC Warning	CAS NSC Okay	AMN AMS Okay	PMS AMS
0	Important Dates	19 Feb	мсв <i>Окау</i>	AZM AES Okay	ALT AES Okay	CAS AES Okay	AMN CAN Okay	PMS CAN
0	Instruments	18 Feb	SDB Okay	AZM AMC Okay	ALT AMC Okay	CAS AMC Okay	AMN MBS Okay	PMS SIF
0	Proposals	17 Feb	SPT Okay	AZM ASC Okay	ALT ASC Okay	CAS ASC Okay	AMN AGD Okay	PMS ACM
	Recent Data	16 Eeb	WMS Okay	AZM MIF Okay		CAS MIF Okay		
	Data Archive			AZM TEP Okay	ALT TFP Okay	CAS TFP Okay	AMN SFP Okay	ECI0
0	Calculator	15 Feb	TCS Okay	AZM VEN Okay	ALT VEN Warning	CAS VEN Okay	AMN SMF Okay	ECI1
0 Sunrise	Schools	14 Feb	AGS Okay					ECI2 7
0	Publications	13 Feb						ECI3 7.
0	Gallery	12 Feb	CCT-SYS Time Out	CCT-SCC Okay	CCT-AZM Okay	CCT-CAS Okay	CCT-TCC Okay	ECI4 7
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**Staff** 

## Science with the LT

- Target of Opportunity follow-up
  - GRBs
  - Extragalactic Supernovae
  - Novae
  - Solar system objects Comets and asteroids
- Regular monitoring
  - Variable stars: CVs, YSOs
  - AGN and Quasars
  - Doppler mapping with a spectroscopic capability
  - Gravitational lensing
  - Solar system objects Comet orbits



Exo

🗕 QSO

SN

#### **Science Publications**



#### **Current Time Allocations**

- PATT (UK) 40%
- Liverpool JMU 30%
- CAT (Spain) 20%
- CCI (International) 5%
- Schools/Education (UK) 5%
- OPTICON (International) up to 2%

 LT has 40-50 observing programs from 30 different institutes, allocated by 6 TACs

## Summary

- Common User Facility adds cost!
- Comprehensive instrumentation suite
- Can react to triggers (manually or automatically) within seconds
- Data products available promptly
- Always happy to work with people to make "special" modes and/or instrumentation to enable new science