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Science for the Public Through Collaboration and Humor

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The transformation of all things media and information into a dynamic environment of user access has created what seems infinite possibilities to inform the public in many different ways - as well as seemingly infinite possibilities to confuse. This talk will describe a rather non-conventional collaboration between two different creative cultures and its significance to maintaining scientific accuracy and devising strategies important to audience engagement - among them humor. While focusing on the award-winning effort “When Things Get Small” created by University of California Television producer R. Wargo in collaboration with condensed matter physicist I.K. Schuller and actor Adam J. Smith, with both NSF and private support, the case study provides insight into a model and modes which can be used successfully by other scientists to engage the public in what they do.