



In Singapore (above) and across the globe, people watched as Venus made its once-in-a-lifetime transit between the Earth and the Sun. PHOTOS REUTERS, ERNEST CHUA



In Manila.



In Singapore.



In New York.

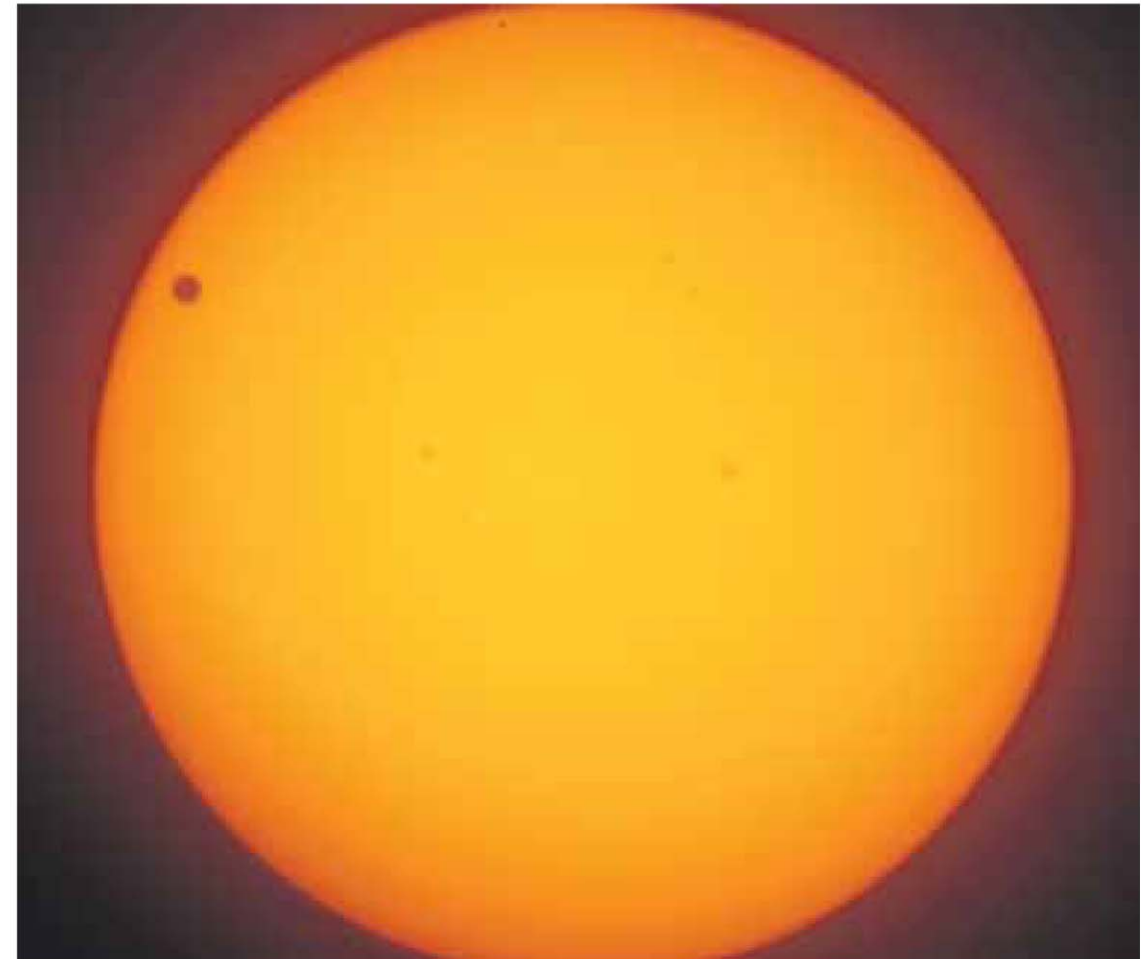


In Seoul.



WATCHING VENUS

- Transit events occur in pairs separated by eight years
- These pairs are separated by about 105 or 121 years
- Previous transit was on 8 June 2004
- Next will be in December 2117
- Venus is similar in size and weight to Earth



A once-in-a-lifetime event

SINGAPORE – Some 4,000 people gathered across Singapore yesterday morning to witness the transit of Venus, one of the rarest sights in astronomy.

It occurs when the orbits of Venus and Earth align with the sun, and this happens only four times every 243 years. From 6.15am, Venus could be seen travelling across the sun as a small black dot.

Six hours later, the silhouette of the planet slowly made its exit.

To witness this rare event, more than 1,000 people, some armed with telescopes, gathered at the National

University of Singapore (NUS). Some had even camped there from as early as 5pm on Tuesday.

At the Singapore Science Centre, some 3,000 visitors braved long queues to view the event and speak to guides.

NUS' Faculty of Science vice-dean Chin Wee Shong said: "Early science actually started from observing the astronomy objects, so we think this is an opportunity to arouse the interest (among) the young people".

The next Venus transit is expected in 2117. **MELISSA CHONG**