Centaurus A: An active galaxy located about 11 million light years from Earth in the constellation Centaurus.


Chandra's image of this nearby active galaxy revealed two large arcs of multimillion degree Celsius gas in the outskirts of the galaxy. A composite image of the X-ray (blue), the radio (pink and green), and the optical (orange and yellow) presents a stunning tableau of a galaxy in turmoil. The arcs of hot, X-ray emitting gas appear to be part of a projected ring 25,000 light years in diameter. The size and location of the ring indicate that it may have been produced in a titanic explosion that occurred in the nucleus of the galaxy about ten million years ago.

Scale: Images are about 18 x 17 arcmin

Chandra X-Ray Observatory HRC Image