



**Chandra X-ray
Observatory Center**

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RW Aur A: a young star located about 450 light years from Earth
(Credit: Illustration: NASA/CXC/M.Weiss; X-ray spectrum: NASA/CXC/MIT/H.M.Günther)

Caption: This artist's illustration depicts the destruction of a young planet, which scientists may have witnessed for the first time. For decades, astronomers have known that RW Aur A changes its brightness in optical light. X-ray data from Chandra data revealed the most recent dimming may have been due to the collision of two infant planetary bodies. The Chandra spectra from the 2013 and 2017 observations are shown in an inset. The sharp peak on the right side of the 2017 spectrum is a signature of a large amount of iron, evidence for the planetary smash-up.

Chandra X-ray Observatory ACIS Image

CXC operated for NASA by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory
