Particles : Gotta Catch 'Em All CDD 2024 Camille Sironneau



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- In February, IN2P3 participated in the **Yggdrasil** festival in Lyon
- In the middle of cosplayers, knights and artists there was a space dedicated to technology and science called **"Tomorrow but better !"**
- Goal of the event : present physics and the work we do as researchers to a broad public (non specialists, children, etc...) on a specific topic in a fun way



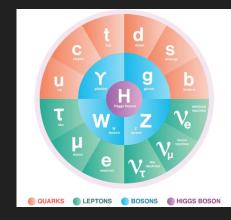
Our topic of interest : particles and especially neutrinos !

Particles : "smallest" things we know, in principle not made of other stuff and described right now using something called the **Standard Model**

 \rightarrow contains all the maths we use to characterize the behavior of the particles we know

Neutrinos : special particles that a lot of people want to find and study. Why ? \rightarrow produced in a lot of phenomena : supernovae, nuclear reactions, cosmic rays interacting in the atmosphere, etc... so it could give us information about how these work \rightarrow really weird and hard to catch guys :

- Standard Model can't explain why neutrinos have a mass (small but still)
- Neutrinos oscillate between the 3 flavors we know
- Don't interact a lot : 60 billions of neutrinos coming from the Sun traverse you per second and per cm² without doing anything
- \rightarrow we need really big detectors to try to see them

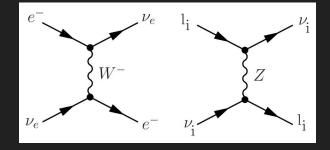




How do we talk about particles ?

Where astrophysicists can show beautiful and colorful pictures of space and stars and galaxies to get people's attention, as particle physicists we have a bit more trouble

 \rightarrow hard to imagine what a particle could look like (a spinning ball but not a ball and not spinning, yay) \rightarrow most people don't know what particles are \rightarrow can get over complicated fast

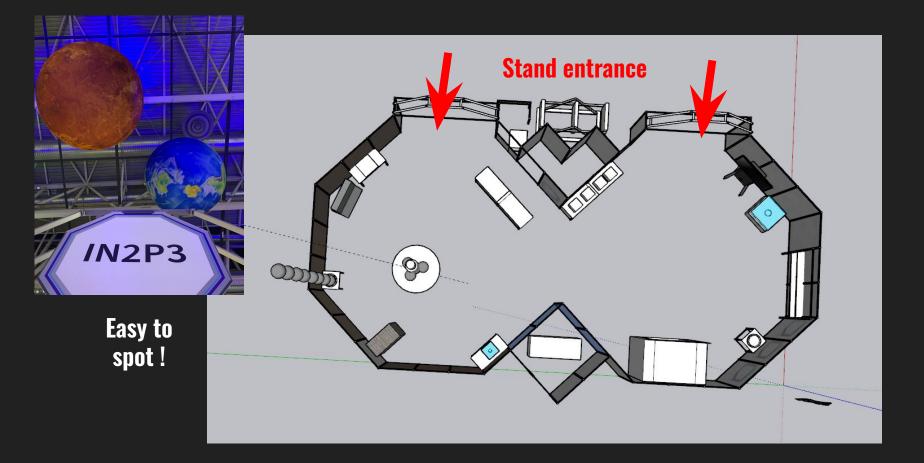


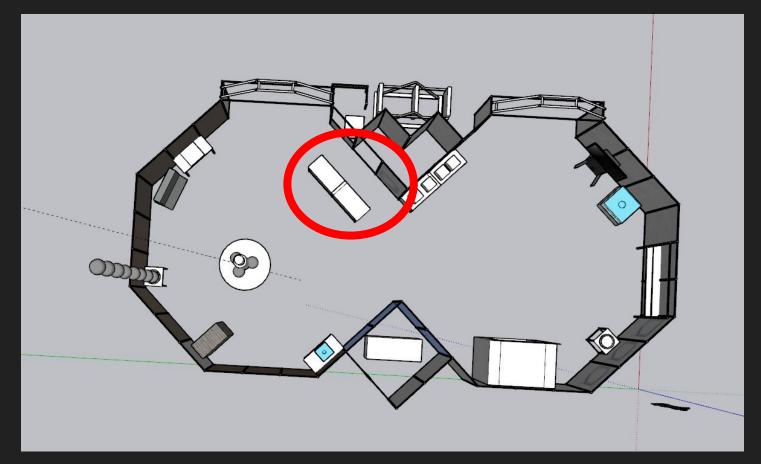
definitely not as pretty as a picture from James Webb

What do we have though ?Shiny big detectors, passion and a bunch of imagination !

Key points : Have fun, get in the mood of the festival and try to reach people halfway







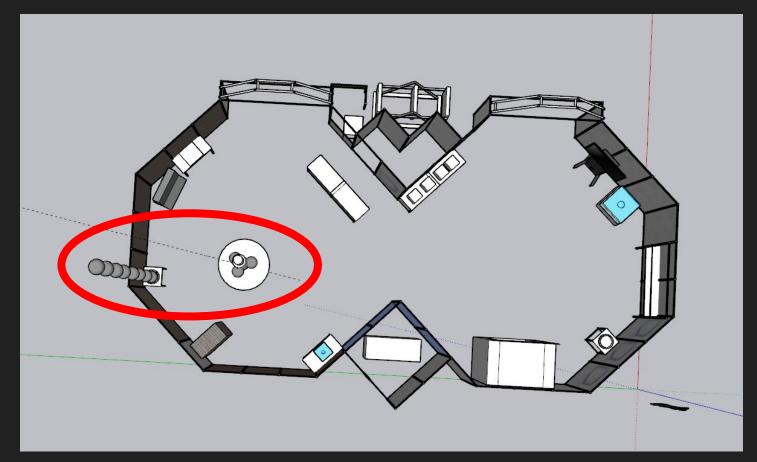
The place to ask questions !

At all time, one or two of us stayed near the entrance to answer questions, talk with people, give documents, etc... \rightarrow allowed for more in depths conversations for people who wanted to











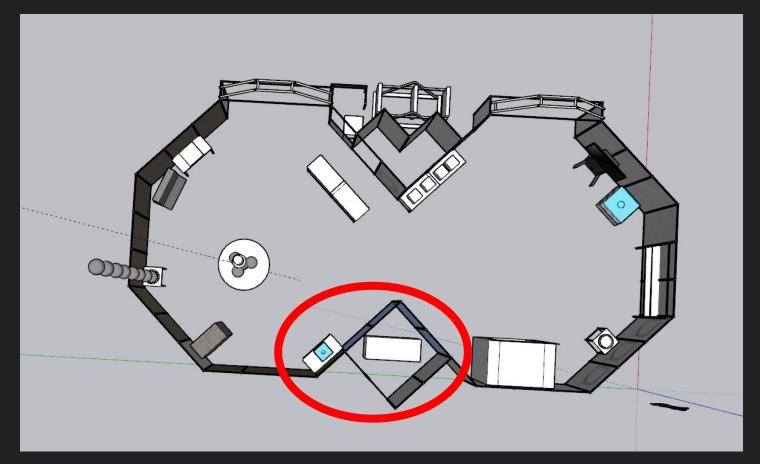


Brought **real modules** from 2 different neutrino experiments installed in the sea : **ANTARES** and **KM3NeT** For KM3NeT we wanted to show the actual size of a line of detectors

 \rightarrow a lot of people asked questions about them



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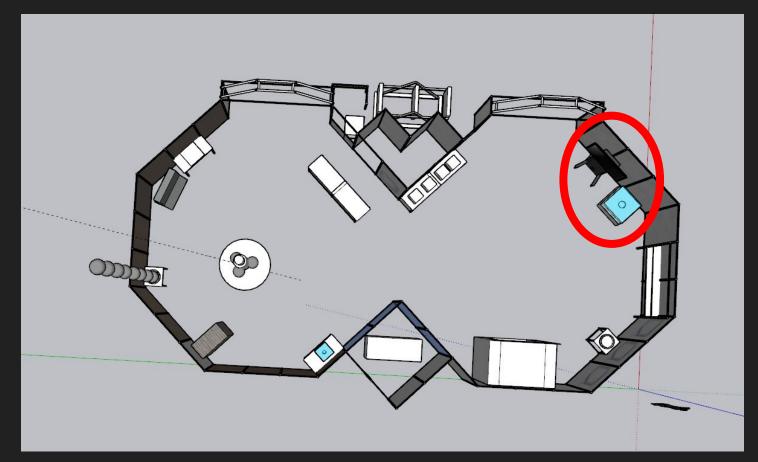






Showed parts of other neutrino experiments : JUNO, SuperNEMO, DUNE Here mostly light detectors, we could see some signals in them so pretty visual

 \rightarrow allowed us to talk about different types of experiments and why it's useful to have them



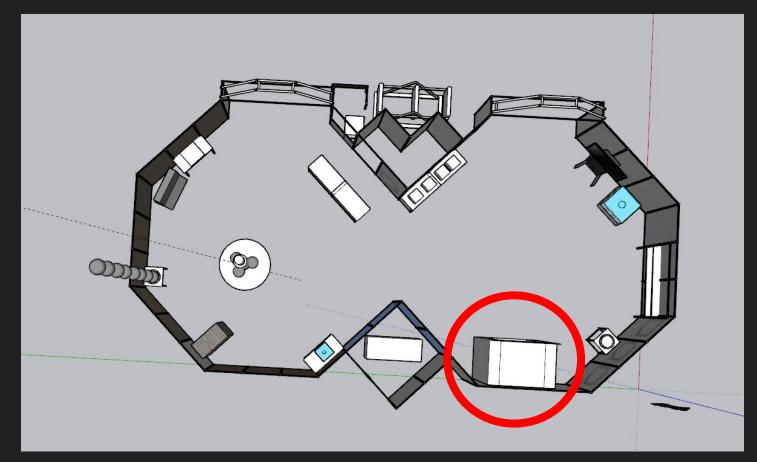




Cloud chamber : detector allowing people to actually see the **trajectory of particles** emitted by a radioactive material We also had a video playing on the TV

\rightarrow completely safe and really fun to see, had a lot of people around





The Cosmic Cabin !

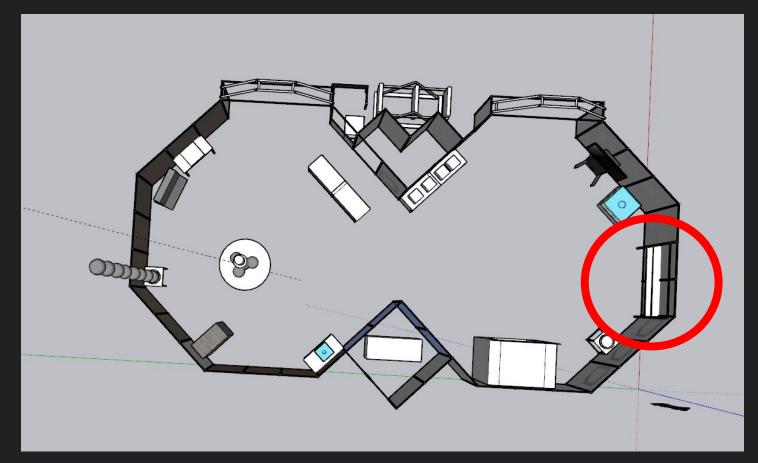
One of the main attractions of the stand, it intrigued a lot of people

Principle : tons of particles coming from space/the atmosphere go through us all the time \rightarrow what if we could see them ?

How it works : detector above and below the person inside allow us to interpolate the trajectory of incoming particles, and then we can show that on the TV

 \rightarrow Again, very visual, had a lot of people queueing for that one





The Particle Zoo !

Another big part of the stand and a recurrent ~20 min animation that happened 8 times during the weekend

Principle : what if we showed particles like rare circus animals that we managed to catch ?

How it works : each particle is shown as a plush in a cage. For the animation, we introduce them as in a "freak show" and explain the basics of the standard model of particle physics while trying our best to be funny

 \rightarrow a bit long but we had some nice comments and the zoo started a lot of discussions with people

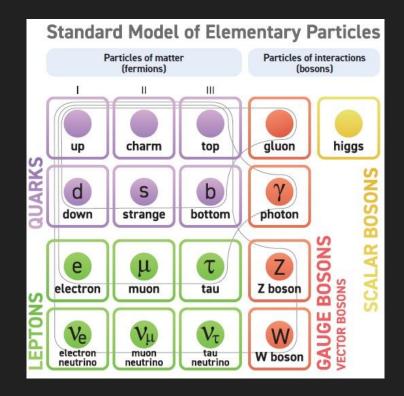


What else did we do ?

Behind the particle zoo is the idea that **particles in the standard model can be described as animals or creatures** that scientists try to catch using weird machines. The plushies we used were nice to show a representation of the particles but were simple and all looked more or less the same

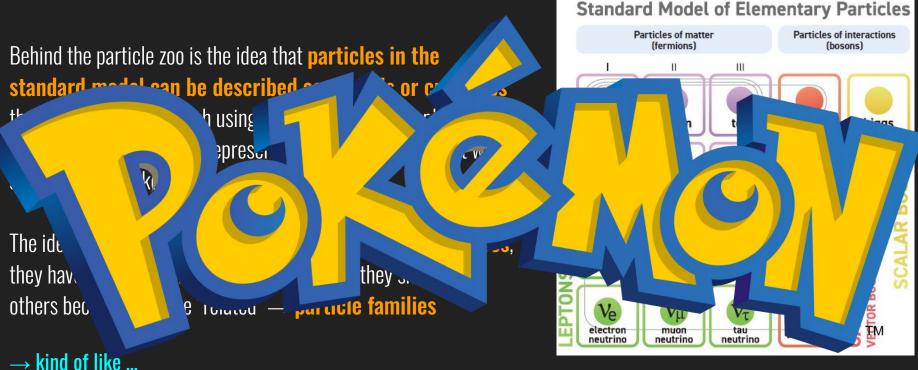
The idea we went with* is that particles come in **different types**, they have **different abilities**, and some that they share with others because they are "related" \rightarrow **particle families**

 \rightarrow kind of like ...



*which originated from Théophile Cartraud during last CDD and was meant at first to be a funny thing to put in my presentations

What else did we do ?



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Goal : create cards that look like Pokemon cards for each particle in the Standard Model

- **Design :** unfortunately made with AI, but my imagination is also to blame for the design ideas
- Template : we got the authorisation from the owner of a website allowing to create custom Pokemon cards to print (and distribute) our own cards → https://pokecardmaker.net/
- **Text :** all the text on the cards was imagined by me to include as much physics as possible while looking like an actual playable card game

 \rightarrow not really playable even though it looks like it, mostly a starting point for questions and explanations or for people to look up in their own time





\rightarrow was used across the stand on our costumes, on badges and to illustrate the "particle zoo"

People could see the cards and ask about them, nice way to do some mediation or to let them go home with something to look at afterwards. Also brought a nice cohesion to the visual of the stand

\rightarrow printed sets of cards to give to visitors

Really big success with children, a lot of people said it was really fun. We had teachers asking us for extra sets for their classes and from what I heard the sets are going around IN2P3 at the moment





Comments we got and what we learned

- Very busy weekend with many people
- Great comments about the stand, the cards, the visuals and the general vibe
- Some people who didn't come specifically for us were still interested
- Particle Zoo and cards were a huge success with kids, but also teenagers, adults, parents, teachers, etc...
 → were seen as a fun way to learn
- Prepared enough visual stuff to explain what we wanted to : artist views of the detectors, documents to give, posters, etc...

What to take from the experience : need to think a mediation activity around the public it's for, prepare enough visual stuff and have a good mix of written and spoken information. Also need to get enough person power to run/think everything

 \rightarrow important to start from what people know and to have fun with it



The APC team with our "Particle Safari" costume and our very own muon/Cherenkov cone (thanks a lot Véronique) \rightarrow cosplaying too in a way