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The Casimir effect

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The Casimir effect is usually interpreted as due to the modification of the zero point energy of QED when two perfectly conducting plates are put very close to each other, and as a proof of the "reality" of this zero point energy. The Dark Energy, necessary to explain the acceleration of the expansion of the Universe, is sometimes considered as a manifestation of the same reality despite a huge quantitative mismatch. The usual interpretation of the Casimir effect is however challenged by some authors who rather interpret it as a "giant" van der Waals effect. All these aspects are shortly reviewed.

Auteur principal: Prof. CUGNON, Joseph (Université de Liège)

Orateur: Prof. CUGNON, Joseph (Université de Liège)

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