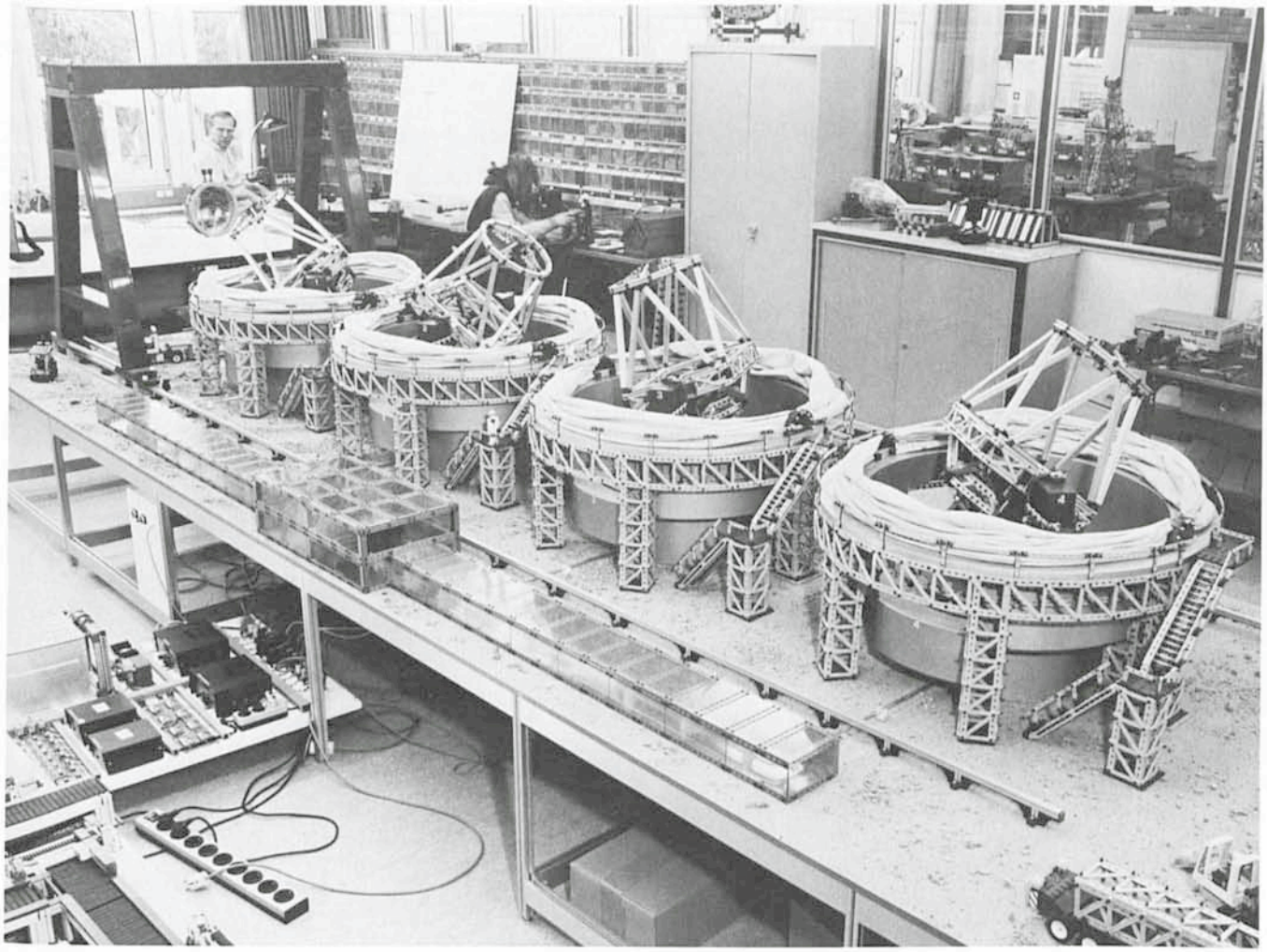

The ESO VLT as fischertechnik-Model

The first fully steerable VLT *has already been built!*

Early in 1988, the well-known German firm "fischerwerke" approached ESO with an interesting suggestion. Having read in the local press about the decision to build the VLT, one of their engineers thought that a model of the VLT, built with the "fischertechnik" building blocks, might become an eye-catching centre on the next toy-fairs in Germany.

The ESO people involved in the VLT project felt the same way and after some consultations, fischerwerke built a 6-metre long model, here seen during the final checkout in their workshop. It is controlled by a small computer (PC) and the telescopes move individually and in unison during a demonstration sequence. Light guides illustrate the light-paths through the system, all the way down to the combined coudé focus in the auxiliary building. A giant crane lifts one of the enormous mirrors and moves along its rails.

The model went on display at the autumn toy fair in Cologne and will later be shown in Frankfurt. It attracted at lot of attention and made good publicity for fischerwerke, ESO and European technology. It is too big and complicated to travel with ESO's own exhibitions, but ESO will receive a similar model of a single telescope to be shown for the first time at the Council meeting in December. It will thereafter be included in the ESO exhibition.

It would be interesting if a smaller VLT model could also be made, similar to those of airplanes, cars and rockets, which are available as build-it-yourself kits. However, this has not yet been decided.

The Astronomy and Astrophysics Review

This new review journal will be started in 1989 to publish critical reviews of the worldwide astronomical literature that are reasonably complete and balanced. It will encompass all subjects in astronomy and astrophysics and boundary areas with other fields. Developments in atomic, molecular, or particle physics directly relevant to astronomy may be included as well as cosmic-ray physics, solar-system studies, and relevant computational procedures. All important fields will be reviewed periodically with the frequency a function of the level of activity. Within about six years, the collected volumes should present a view of the important developments in all of astronomy. The relatively rapid publication schedule aims at four issues per year.

All reviews will be commissioned by the Editor, who will be assisted by the Associate Editors M.C.E. Huber (ESTEC), P. Léna (Meudon), P.G. Mezger (Bonn), F. Pacini (Florence) and S.R. Pottasch (Groningen). While the new journal will be an independent publication, a loose cooperation has been established with *Astronomy and Astrophysics*. Subscription information (including a special rate for individuals) and sample copies may be obtained from Springer-Verlag, attention: Ludwig Kuhn, P.O. Box 105280, D-6900 Heidelberg 1, Federal Republic of Germany, except for the U.S. (Springer-Verlag, attention: Margo Martin, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10010).

L. WOLTJER, Editor