

Artwork heads for Red Planet

Just as a television set can be tuned against a colour chart, several of the instruments aboard the *Beagle 2* Mars lander must be calibrated once on the surface. The standard calibration target has been replaced with something with much more artistic appeal – a spot painting by British artist Damien Hirst

Blue: Azurite – a copper carbonate mineral suspended in clear adhesive

Mars colours: Nine synthetic **iron oxides**. Shades from yellow through orange and red to violet, brown and black will allow scientists to match accurately the colour of the martian landscape

White spot: Titanium oxide – needed for contrast against black

Earth green: Natural green pigment from mixture of **hydrated iron silicates**

Trace elements: Cobalt blue and **Manganese violet**

Yellow: Molybdenum
– in rare mineral **Wolfenite** – used to calibrate Mössbauer and X-ray spectrometers

Calibration target: 8cm high, weighs only 26.5g. Texture of unpolished aluminium plate used to check focus of microscope

