

## **Huge Molecular Gas Concentrations Outside the Merging Disks**

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We present BIMA CO(1-0) image of the luminous infrared galaxy II Zw 96 which shows huge molecular gas concentrations outside the apparently on-going merging spiral disks. Similar to other well studied mergers like Arp 299 and VV 114, II Zw 96 is almost an ultraluminous system, but has not yet reached the late stage of coalescence which is the norm for most ultraluminous galaxies. II Zw 96 shows four distinct star-forming regions, as revealed by optical and near-IR imaging. The dominant extra-disk CO concentrations correspond to two star-forming knots hidden by heavy dust, whereas the other two CO concentrations correspond to the two nuclear gas disks. It is intriguing how such huge molecular gas concentrations could be accumulated far away outside the merging disks. We here explore the exotic nature of the extra-disk gas concentrations in one of the few known examples of a major merger caught in mid-act.

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