

HUMANITIES WEST 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SEASON

**COPERNICUS, GALILEO AND KEPLER**



**Redefining Our Place  
in the Universe**



**OCTOBER 2 AND 3, 2009 HERBST THEATRE, SAN FRANCISCO**

**Commemorating the 400th anniversary of modern astronomy  
and Galileo's first use of the telescope in 1609**

Presented with support from the Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund; Bank of the West; UC Berkeley Institute of European Studies and Office of Resources for International and Area Studies (ORIAS); Chabot Space and Science Center; George and Judy Marcus Family Foundation; Stanford Humanities Center; Townsend Center for the Humanities, UC Berkeley; and individual donors.

In cooperation with California Academy of Sciences; Decorative Arts Forum of the De Young Museum; Docents Council, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; Fromm Institute for Lifelong Learning; Goethe Institut; Humanities Department, San Francisco State University; Mechanics' Institute; Osher Life Long Learning Institute; San Francisco and Oakland Unified School Districts.

# Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler

## Redefining Our Place in the Universe

For centuries, religious belief and philosophical reasoning had placed man and his earthly home at the center of the universe. Changing that deep-seated and psychologically compelling conviction took courage, persistence, and a dedication to new methods of scientific observation and measurement on the part of three provincial scholars from Toruń in Poland, Pisa in Italy, and Weil der Stadt in Germany. It also took more than 150 years of controversy and confrontation spanning most of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, from Copernicus' life work first published as *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* in 1543 to Newton's *Principia* in 1687. Those years of controversy succeeded beyond belief, leading to today's astronomical shifts in understanding an expanding universe that may contain millions of life-supporting planets in our galaxy alone.

**Alexander Zwissler** (Chabot Space and Science Center), Moderator

*Introductory slide show courtesy of Melinda Roberts and Chuck Sieloff, PhD.*

*Background music: Gustav Holst (1874–1934). The Planets Op. 32. Chicago Symphony Orchestra & Chorus; Chorus Master: Margaret Hillis; Conductor: James Levine (1990).*

**Friday, October 2**

**8:00 pm – 10:15 pm**

### The Copernican Revolution [ROGERHAHN]

In 16th century Christian Europe, nothing seemed more bizarre and contradictory to evidence than removing Man and the earth from the central position in the cosmos. Yet this was the revolution in thought that Copernicus initiated. How this happened, and why it took another century and a half to be fully absorbed in Newton's era, is an amazing story. The story's twists and turns will

take us from Copernicus' Poland to an island observatory in the Danish Sound, where Tycho Brahe compiled data Kepler tested out to establish the elliptical orbits of planets; to Northern Italy, where Galileo created a furor with Catholic authorities; and to Cambridge University, where the reclusive Newton set forth the forces that held the new solar system together.



*Intermission. Refreshments served in the lobby.*

### The Music of the Spheres [KIP CRANNA]

Kip Cranna discusses why star-gazers from Pythagoras to Kepler believed that mathematical laws producing musical harmony on earth also determine the movements of heavenly bodies, creating a universe ordered by a kind of celestial harmony.

*Image: Pythagoras experimenting with musical proportions. [from F. Gafori's Theorica Musice, 1492]*

### The Star Dances [DANSE LUMIERE] Introduced by BETHANY COBB. Choreography: KATHRYN ROSZAK

Dancers: **Hally Bellah-Guther, Rita Dantas Scott, Damon Mahoney, Lissa Resnick.** *The Star Dances* takes inspiration from Kepler's "Music of the Spheres" and star/planet mapping by UC Berkeley astronomers. The elegant simplicity of Satie's music creates an atmosphere for two and then three female dancers as the Three Graces, who echo the harmony of the spheres. Holst's energetic two-piano version of "The Planets" provides a striking score for the more volatile activity of the stars. The swiftness of "Mercury" suggests a relay race. Computer models of colliding galaxies, unfolding anemones in space, provide inspiration for a duet. Selections from Gustav Holst's "The Planets" (two piano version) (Pianists Richard Rodney Bennett and Susan Bradshaw) and from Eric Satie's "Piano Works" (Pianist Daniel Varsano).

*"The peace, wisdom and beauty of the Heavens is now ready for us to behold. We can still learn, enjoy, and develop in the light and wisdom of the three goddesses. Although the Universe will always be dynamic, we are blessed with the capability to understand parts of it and bask in its beauty and structure."*

—Carlton Pennypacker, Physicist, U.C. Berkeley.

1. Gymnopedie #1 (Satie)
2. Mars (Holst)
3. Gnossienne #4 (Satie)
4. Mercury (Holst)
5. Gymnopedie #2 (Satie)

**Galileo and the Telescope: The Instrument That Changed Astronomy** [PAULA FINDLEN]

In 1609 Galileo Galilei devised a telescope based on reports of a spyglass that could magnify things at a distance. He turned it on the heavens and saw things no one had ever seen before: the imperfections of the moon's surface, the composition of the Milky Way, and the hitherto unknown satellites of Jupiter. Galileo's report of these discoveries, the *Sidereal Messenger* (1610), became a land-

mark publication in the history of astronomy and made him one of the most important and ultimately controversial astronomers of his time. How did Galileo and his instrument change astronomy? What is the significance of his accomplishment at the distance of 400 years?

**Galileo Meets Darwin: The Search for Life in the Universe** [GEOFF MARCY]

Science fiction assumes that our Milky Way Galaxy abounds with habitable planets populated by advanced civilizations engaged in interstellar commerce and conflict. Even Kepler wrote a science-fiction work about travelling in the solar system. Back in our real universe, Earth-like planets and alien life have proved elusive. Has science fiction led us astray? This year, astronomers launched the

first searches for Earth-like worlds around other stars, using bizarre, extreme telescopes for the task. These telescopes have fundamentally superseded Galileo's historic little scope. A wild race for signs of inhabited worlds and extraterrestrial life is about to begin.



**Break for Lunch.** *Theatre closes 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm. Program resumes at 1:30 pm.*

**Copernicus Comments on Modern Astronomical Ideas** [GEORGE HAMMOND]

George Hammond impersonates Copernicus, wryly commenting on the "hot ideas" of 21st Century cosmology, dismissing those that look like "yet another epicycle dead end" and passionately predicting those that will lead to the next Copernican Revolution.

**Dark Energy and the Runaway Universe** [ALEX FILIPPENKO]

Observations of very distant exploding stars (supernovae) show that the expansion of the Universe is now speeding up, rather than slowing down as would be expected due to gravity. Other, completely independent data strongly support this amazing conclusion. Over the largest distances, our Universe seems to be dominated by

a repulsive "dark energy," stretching the very fabric of space itself faster and faster with time. The physical nature of dark energy is often considered the most important unsolved problem in physics; it probably provides clues to a unified quantum theory of gravity.

**Panel Discussion** with the presenters, moderated by **George Hammond**.

*Questions from the Audience: please fill out a card with questions for any of the presenters, for the closing Panel Discussion on Saturday. Leave card on the lobby table.*

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## Continue the Discussion with Humanities West

**Astronomy Salon**

- ▶ Thursday, October 8, 2009, Gold Room, Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, 595 Market Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco. \$8 to Commonwealth Club members and \$15 to non-members. Reservations: <http://tickets.commonwealthclub.org>. Tel: 415.597.6700. [www.commonwealthclub.org](http://www.commonwealthclub.org).

**New! Humanities West Book Discussions at the Commonwealth Club**

Facilitated by Humanities West volunteer Lynn Harris. No Charge. Contact [www.commonwealthclub.org](http://www.commonwealthclub.org).

- ▶ Wednesday, November 11 (Alexandria)
- ▶ Wednesday, January 13, 2010 (Alexandria)
- ▶ Wednesday, April 14, 2010 (Florence)
- ▶ Wednesday, June 16, 2010 (open choice)
- ▶ Wednesday, August 11, 2010 (open choice)
- ▶ Wednesday, October 6, 2010 (Venice)

**Pre-programs for Alexander/Alexandria: The Flowering of Hellenistic Culture**

- ▶ Tuesday, February 2, 2010. 7:00 pm. Alexandria Preview: Fireside Chat with George Hammond at Orinda Public Library, 7:00 pm.
- ▶ Thursday, February 4, 2010. 6:00 pm (Reception at 5:30) Alexandria Lecture by William Greenwalt. Gold Room, Commonwealth Club of San Francisco.
- ▶ February 11, 2010. 6:00 pm (Reception at 5:30) Alexandria Salon. Gold Room, Commonwealth Club of San Francisco.

**Pre-programs for Florence of the Medici: Power, Politics, and Art in Renaissance Italy**

- ▶ April 22, 2010 Lecture: Composer Francesca Caccini. Kip Cranna and Richard Savino. Mechanics' Institute.
- ▶ April 27, 2010 Medici Preview with George Hammond. Orinda Library.
- ▶ April 28, 2010 Lecture: Renaissance Women in Art. Andrea Husby. Commonwealth Club.
- ▶ May 6, 2010 Medici Salon. Commonwealth Club.



## About Our Presenters



**Bethany Cobb** (PhD, Astronomy, Yale) is a National Science Foundation Astronomy and Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellow at UC Berkeley. Her research is on massive stellar explosions called gamma-ray bursts. She is dedicated to public outreach in order to share her love of astronomy with others. She is also the astronomer for *The Old Farmer's Almanac*. She presented related Humanities West lectures, one cosponsored with Mechanics' Institute, *Creating Star Dances: Choreography and Astronomy Collaboration for the International Year of Astronomy*, and another at Commonwealth Club, *In Galileo's Footsteps: Edwin Hubble and the Reshaping of Our Universe*.



**Clifford (Kip) Cranna** (PhD, Musicology, Stanford) is Director of Musical Administration at San Francisco Opera. He has served as vocal adjudicator for numerous groups including the Metropolitan Opera National Council. For many years he was Program Editor and Lecturer for the Carmel Bach Festival. He lectures and writes frequently on music and teaches at the SF Conservatory of Music. He hosts the Opera Guild's "Insight" panels and intermission features for the SF Opera radio broadcasts, and has been a Music Study Leader for Smithsonian Tours. He was *Il Cenacolo's* 2006 "Man of the Year." In 2008 he was awarded the SF Opera Medal, the company's highest honor.



**Alex Filippenko** (PhD, Astronomy, Caltech). At UC Berkeley, he is a leading authority on exploding stars, active galaxies, black holes, gamma-ray bursts, and cosmology. He has coauthored nearly 600 scientific publications, is one of the world's most highly cited astronomers, and has won numerous prizes for research, most recently the 2007 Gruber Cosmology Prize. He was the only person to be a member of both teams that discovered the accelerating expansion of the Universe, selected as "Top Science Breakthrough of 1998" by the editors of *Science*. Students have voted him "Best Professor" six times. In 2006, he was named Carnegie/CASE National Professor of the Year among doctoral institutions. Recipient of the 2004 Carl Sagan Prize for Science Popularization, he has appeared in documentaries, produced astronomy video courses, and coauthored an award-winning textbook.



PHOTO: L. A. CICERO

**Paula Findlen** (Professor and Chair, History; Co-Director, Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies; Co-Director, History and Philosophy of Science and Technology Program; Stanford University) is "fascinated by a society that made politics, economics and culture so important to its self-definition, and that obviously succeeded in all these endeavors for some time, as the legacy of such figures as Machiavelli and Leonardo suggests. Renaissance Italy, in short, is a historical laboratory for understanding the possibilities and the problems of an innovative society." Among her many publications are *The Italian Renaissance: Essential Readings* (Blackwell, 2002); and "Men, Moments and Machines" special on the History Channel: "Galileo and the Sinful Spyglass."



**Roger Hahn** (Cornell University, PhD; École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris) is professor of Graduate Studies in History, UC Berkeley. At Berkeley he was Director of the Office for History of Science and Technology and has published widely on related cultural and scientific issues. He authored a biography of the mathematician and astronomer Laplace. He is Vice-President of the Académie Internationale d'Histoire des Sciences. Roger and his wife have long supported Humanities West, and he moderated as well as presented for a number of HW programs.



**George Hammond** is known to audiences for previous presentations on Mark Twain in 2005, Plato in 2006, and Pythagoras in 2008. George is a SF corporate attorney who specializes in international mergers and acquisitions. He is also the author of four novels, a collection of short stories and six philosophical books on rational idealism, theoretical physics, Plato's theory, early Christianity, the Soviet Union, psychology and constitutional law. His indebtedness to Pythagorean thought is pithily expressed in the name of his website: [pythpress.com](http://pythpress.com).



**Geoffrey W. Marcy** is professor of astronomy at UC Berkeley and adjunct professor of physics and astronomy at San Francisco State University. He is director of Berkeley's "Center for Integrative Planetary Science," a research unit that studies formation, geophysics, chemistry and evolution of planets. Marcy's research focuses on detection of extrasolar planets and brown dwarfs. His team discovered the majority of 350 known planets around other stars. His goal is to discover the first earth-like planets and to find other planetary systems like our solar system.

Marcy received numerous awards, including the prestigious Shaw Prize, *Discovery Magazine's* 2003 Space Scientist of the Year, NASA Medal for Exceptional Scientific Achievement, Carl Sagan Award, Beatrice Tinsley Prize, and Henry Draper Medal of National Academy of Sciences. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.



PHOTO: ANDY MOGG

**Kathryn Roszak** (Artistic Director, Danse Lumiere) previously created choreography to music based on star maps at Grace Cathedral in SF. Danse Lumiere creates dance theater linking arts, environment, and humanity. Recent productions included writers Maxine Hong Kingston, Michael McClure, and Gary Snyder. The company has performed nationally and internationally. Roszak trained at Balanchine's School of American Ballet in New York, SF Ballet School, London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, and with the American Conservatory Theater's MFA Program. She danced with SF Opera Ballet and has choreographed and taught for SF Opera Center, ACT, Dominican University and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, UC Berkeley. Her choreography won awards from the Carlisle Choreography Project and the Djerassi Resident Artists' Program. She writes for Theater Bay Area Magazine. She gave, with Bethany Cobb, an HW lecture at Mechanics' Institute, *Creating Star Dances: Choreography and Astronomy Collaboration for the International Year of Astronomy*. [kdance@sonic.net](mailto:kdance@sonic.net)/[www.dlkdance.com](http://www.dlkdance.com)



**Alexander Zwissler** is Executive Director, Chabot Space and Science Center, Oakland; a Smithsonian Affiliate, its mission is to inspire and educate students of all ages about the Planet Earth and the Universe. Prior to Chabot, Zwissler was Executive Director of the Fort Mason Foundation in SF. Earlier, Zwissler had a 17-year career in the cable television and telecommunications industry in the United Kingdom and US. Zwissler was born in Stuttgart Germany and raised in Oakland; he earned a BA in Political Science, with Honors, at UC Berkeley. Zwissler was a Postgraduate Research Fellow at the Centre for Mass Communication Research at University of Leicester, England, conducting research on the development of international satellite broadcasting. Zwissler serves on the Board of Directors for the SF Market Street Railway, Tau Kappa Epsilon at UC Berkeley, and the Non Profit Centers Network. Zwissler has also served on the Boards of Oxfordshire Foundation, Conejo Future Foundation, SF Business Arts Council, National Park Service Friends Alliance, and American Southwest Theatre Company.

## Selected Chronology for Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler: Redefining our Place in the Universe

Compiled by Bethany Cobb with excerpts from *Windows to the Universe*, <http://www.windows.ucar.edu/> at the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR).

~2,000 BCE	Egypt and Mesopotamia. First solar-lunar calendars.	1860-63	England. Huggins measures chemical composition of stars through spectral analysis.	1976	The US Viking probes land on Mars.
~280 BCE	Samos. Aristarchus suggests Earth revolves around Sun; estimates Earth-Sun distance.	1868	England. Janssen and Lockyer observe solar prominences and discover helium.	1977	US launches Voyagers 1 and 2. They transmit data from interstellar space.
~100 BCE	Greece. first mechanized calculator to calculate astronomical positions.	1872	USA. Draper, observing Vega, takes first photograph of a stellar spectrum.	1987	International. The first neutrinos from an astronomical source other than the Sun are detected following Supernova 1987A, which occurred in the Large Magellanic Cloud.
~140	Greece. Ptolemy suggests geocentric theory of universe in <i>Mathematike Syntaxis</i> .	1877	Italy. Schiaparelli observes Mars and mistakenly detects a network of "canals."	1990	USA. Hubble Space Telescope is orbited. Corrective optics installed 1993; final servicing 2009.
1543	Poland. Copernicus publishes heliocentric theory, <i>De revolutionibus orbium coelestium</i> .	1916	Germany. Einstein introduces General Theory of Relativity.	1994	Comet Shoemaker Levy crashes into Jupiter.
1608	Netherlands. Lippershey patents design for first practical refracting telescope.	1925-29	USA. Hubble announces that "spiral nebulae" are individual galaxies outside Milky Way, all apparently moving away from Milky Way, indicating that universe is expanding.	1995	Switzerland. Mayor and Queloz announce first extrasolar planet orbiting normal star (51 Peg).
1609	Italy. Galileo discovers Moon's craters, moons of Jupiter, stars that make up Milky Way.	1930	USA. Tombaugh discovers Pluto, later demoted to the status of "dwarf planet."	1998	International. High-z Supernova Search Team publishes observations of Type Ia supernovae that indicate that expansion of universe is accelerating, caused by Dark Energy.
1609	Germany. Kepler publishes First and Second Laws of Planetary Motions in <i>Astronomia nova</i> . His Third Law will be published in <i>Harmonice Mundi</i> in 1619.	1933	USA. Jansky discovers radio source at center of Milky Way, initiating radio astronomy.	1999	US launches Chandra X-ray Observatory. Eileen Collins becomes first woman shuttle commander.
1668	England. Newton builds first reflecting telescope.	1937	USA. Reber builds first radio telescope.	2001	US launches Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe (WMAP) to study the CMB. WMAP's measurements indicate that the universe is 13.7 billion years old.
1676	France. While in Paris, Danish astronomer Ole Rømer measures the speed of light.	1957	Russians launch <i>Sputnik</i> , first man-made object to orbit Earth.	2003	US launches into orbit Spitzer Space Telescope, an infrared observatory.
1687	England. Newton publishes theory of universal gravitation in the work <i>Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica</i> , and thus begins the era of modern astronomy.	1958	First US satellite to orbit Earth, <i>Explorer 1</i> , is launched. NASA is formed.	2004	US launches Swift Gamma-ray Telescope. Rovers Spirit and Opportunity land on Mars.
1705	England. Halley correctly predicts return of a comet (Halley's comet) in 1758.	1961	Russian Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin becomes first man in space.	2008	International. Direct detection of four extrasolar planets. Three orbit the star HR 8799; the other orbits Fomalhaut. Phoenix Mars Mission lands and confirms presence of water ice on Mars.
1781	England. Herschel discovers Uranus.	1962	Astronaut John Glenn becomes first American man to orbit Earth.	2009	International. GRB 090423, gamma-ray burst from massive stellar explosion observed; occurred 13 billion years ago when universe 630 million years old. Most distant object ever observed.
1781	France. Messier publishes catalogue of 103 star clusters and nebulae (some now known as galaxies).	1964	USA. Penzias and Wilson detect cosmic microwave background (CMB) radiation.		
1846	Germany. Galle identifies Neptune. his observations prompted by mathematical calculations of French astronomer Leverrier and English astronomer Adams.	1966	First "controlled touchdown" probes land on Moon—Russian <i>Luna 9</i> and USA <i>Surveyor 1</i> .		
1857	Russia. Rocket pioneer Tsiolkovskii—"father of theoretical astronautics"—is born. Many of his designs, including multi-stage rockets, are still in use in modern spacecrafts.	1967	USA. Gamma-ray bursts first detected, designed to detect covert nuclear weapons tests.		
		1969	Armstrong and Aldrin walk on Moon as part of the <i>Apollo 11</i> mission.		
		1972	US launches Pioneer 10, first space probe to an outer planet (Jupiter).		
		1973	US launches Skylab. Cygnus X-1 is identified as a black hole.		
		1975	USA. Vera Rubin announces discovery of Dark Matter to explain rotation curves of spiral galaxies.		

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## HUMANITIES WEST CONTINUES ITS 25th ANNIVERSARY SEASON

*'exploring history to celebrate the mind and the arts'*

### Alexander/Alexandria: The Flowering of Hellenistic Culture

February 5 and 6, 2010



Alexander conquered the vast Persian Empire and founded Alexandria, before dying in his 33rd year in 323 BCE. In the aftermath of his conquest, Greek literature, learning, and art intermingled with Egyptian, Persian, Babylonian, and Hebrew cultures. This interplay caused ethnic, artistic, and religious conflicts and convergence. Nowhere did the convergence of cultures emerge more dramatically than in Alexandria, which became the royal seat of Hellenistic Egypt. Its Great Library and Museum and its Lighthouse—one of

the ancient wonders of the world—became magnets for travelers from all around the Mediterranean and beyond. Though Alexandria's original Library was destroyed long ago, another has risen from its ashes, and the luster of Hellenistic Civilization that flourished for three centuries after Alexander still endures. Co-sponsored by the Center for Modern Greek Studies at San Francisco State University

### The Florence of the Medici:

#### Commerce, Power, and Art in Renaissance Italy

April 30 and May 1, 2010



Out of a small but fiercely competitive city of some 60,000 inhabitants there erupted, between the 14th and 17th centuries, a torrent of artistic and intellectual creativity that transformed western culture. The wealth of the city, and especially of its rulers, the Medici, whose patronage and influence embraced much of Italy and beyond, made possible an outburst of artistic and intellectual innovations that had consequences throughout Europe. Home to Dante, Toscanelli (the geographer who inspired

Columbus), Michelangelo, Machiavelli, and Galileo, Florence in these years was at the cutting edge of changes that eventually were to shape the modern world.

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- |  |  |
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| 1983 <b>Elaine Thornburgh</b> (Artistic Director, Founding President/Executive Director) | 1994 <b>Nancy Buffum</b> (Executive Director)                    |
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| 1985 <b>Mimi Malayan</b> (Executive Assistant)   | 2001 <b>Silvia Mazzone-Clementi</b> (Executive Director)         |
| 1987 <b>Margeaux Singleton</b> (Administrative Assistant)                                | 2005 <b>Judy Workman</b> (Interim Executive Director)            |
| 1990 <b>Amo Hoptner</b> (Administrative Assistant)                                       | 2007 <b>Patricia Lundberg</b> (Executive Director)               |
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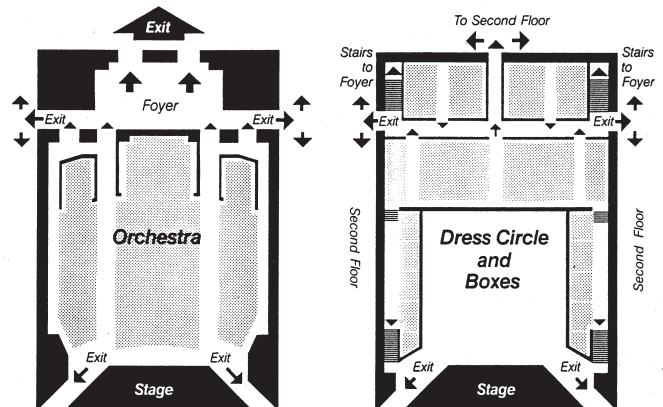
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