

# 2009 ASTRONOMY PROGRAMS

## INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ASTRONOMY

5/2 8:00pm

**John Dillon**

**Randall Museum**

***"The Autopsy of Heaven:***

***Galileo, Telescopes and the Beginning of Modern Science"***

400 years ago when Galileo announced his telescopic discoveries, the story goes, he threw off the yoke of the ancient Greeks and challenged the authority of the Church – thus opening the way for “modern” Science. John Dillon will take a longer view of the history of science and explore a subtler, more complex, relationship between Galileo, telescopes, Science and the Church.

5/30 8:30pm

**Kenneth Frank**

**Astronomical Society of the Pacific**

***"Your Other Address: Where We Are in the Universe"***

Our view of where we live is one which most of us don't think about. OK, Kenneth Frank knows he has a 94920 address on the Tiburon Peninsula, and If he takes out a AAA map or browses Google online he gets a better idea of where he lives. But what else defines where we are situated? In this talk he seeks to inform the audience of where we are on a grander scale and find that sense of place that we call home.

6/27 8:30pm

**Professor Lynn R. Cominsky**

**Sonoma State University**

***"Exploring the Extreme Universe with Fermi"***

NASA's Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope (formerly known as GLAST) mission is exploring the most energetic and exotic objects in the cosmos: blazing galaxies, intense stellar explosion and super-massive black holes. Fermi Probes the Universe on scales from the infinite to the infinitesimal, and future observations may shed light on the nature of dark matter.

7/25 8:30pm

**Dr. Natalie Batalha**

**San Jose State University**

***"Kepler's Hunt for Habitable Planets"***

NASA's Kepler Mission has begun its 3.5-year quest for habitable planets like Earth in our galaxy. Dr. Batalha will describe how and where the spacecraft will look for planets we might call home and what to expect in the coming years as we work to understand whether Earth-like planets in our galaxy are common or rare..

**8/22 8:30**

**Dr. Anthony Colaprete  
NASA-Ames Research Center**

***“Prospecting for Water on the Moon”***

In 2009, NASA will purposely crash two spacecraft into one of the Moon’s polar regions. The impacts should raise huge plumes of material, visible even to smaller telescopes on Earth. Astronomers will search for evidence of water in the plumes to get a better sense of how much frozen water may lay hidden in the deep, shadowed craters of the Moon’s North and South poles.

**9/19 8:30**

**Wil van Breugel, Ph.D  
University of California Merced**

***“Astrobiology: What is Life & Where is It?”***

Astrobiology combines astronomy, biology, physics and chemistry to investigate the origin and evolution of life in extreme environments, including early Earth, and guides the search for alien life on other planets in our Solar System and beyond. Dr. vanBreugel will discuss how our perception and understanding of life has evolved, and the close connection of life to the cosmos.

**10/24 7:30**

**Professor Michael Dine  
University of California Santa Cruz**

***“The Dawn of the LHC Era: The Convergence of Particle Physics and Astrophysics”***

Over the past year, the Large Hadron Collider, an extraordinary scientific instrument, has begun to operate in Geneva. It offers the possibility of answering some of the great questions we confront in understanding the universe, including the identity of the dark matter and the asymmetry between matter and antimatter.