

The SUMO Speaker Series for Undergraduates

Thursday, November 7th

4:15-5:05, room 380C

(Food Provided)

The Music of the Spheres

Daniel Litt



Abstract:

Why does the sun orbit the earth in a perfect circle? How do we know that the universe is shaped like a luggage trunk, with the rectangular earth resting askew at its base? Why are there exactly six planets? And how can we hear the ethereal hum of the great crystal spheres on which the planets agglomerate?

We'll discover the sublime and hilarious history of cosmology, from Pythagoras to Kepler (600BC-1600AD, approximately), and learn some of the beautiful mathematics underlying their insane theories of the universe. We'll also talk a bit about the personalities and aesthetics which motivated science before the scientific revolution.

sumo.stanford.edu/speakers