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The 2009 Clay-Mahler Public Lecture: The Cosmic Distance Ladder

by Professor Terence Tao, Professor of Mathematics, UCLA

About this Lecture

How do we know the distances from the earth to the sun and moon, from the sun to the other planets, and from the sun to other stars and distant galaxies? Clearly we cannot measure these directly. Nevertheless there are many indirect methods of measurement, combined with basic high-school mathematics, which can allow one to get quite convincing and accurate results without the need for advanced technology (for instance, even the ancient Greeks could compute the distances from the earth to the sun and moon to moderate accuracy). These methods rely on climbing a "cosmic distance ladder", using measurements of nearby distances to then deduce estimates on distances slightly further away; we shall discuss several of the rungs in this ladder in this talk.

About Terence Tao

Terence Tao was born in Adelaide, Australia in 1975. He has been a professor of mathematics at UCLA since 1999, having completed his PhD under Elias Stein at Princeton in 1996. Tao's areas of research include harmonic analysis, PDE, combinatorics, and number theory. He has received a number of awards, including the Salem Prize in 2000, the Bochner Prize in 2002, the Fields Medal and SASTRA Ramanujan Prize in 2006, the MacArthur Fellowship and Ostrowski Prize in 2007, and the Waterman Award in 2008. Terence Tao also currently holds the James and Carol Collins chair in mathematics at UCLA, and is a Fellow of the Royal Society, the Australian Academy of Sciences (Corresponding Member), and the National Academy of Sciences (Foreign member).

Lecture Details

Date: Thursday, 3 September 2009 at 6pm

Venue: Social Sciences Lecture Theatre, UWA

The nearest carpark is P3 off Hackett Drive Entrance 1

Cost: free and open to the public, no RSVP required

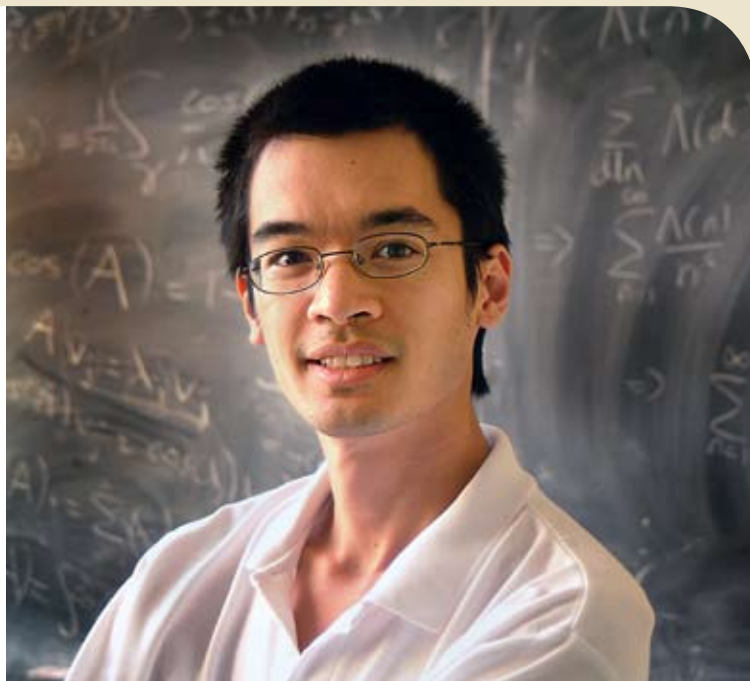
2009 Clay-Mahler Colloquium

Terence Tao will also present a specialist Colloquium during his visit to UWA, on Compressed Sensing.

The Colloquium will be held on Friday 4 September, 1-2pm in Engineering Lecture Theatre 1.

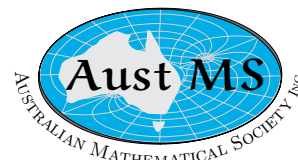
For more information please contact

Professor Cheryl Praeger, School of Mathematics and Statistics, at praeger@maths.uwa.edu.au



The Mahler lectures are a biennial activity organised by the Australian Mathematical Society.

In 2009 we have partnered with the Clay Mathematical Institute to combine the Mahler Lectures and the Clay Lectures into the 2009 Clay-Mahler Lecture Tour, with funding also from the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute.



For more information about the lecture, please contact:

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