

Centre for Strings, Gravitation and Cosmology presents

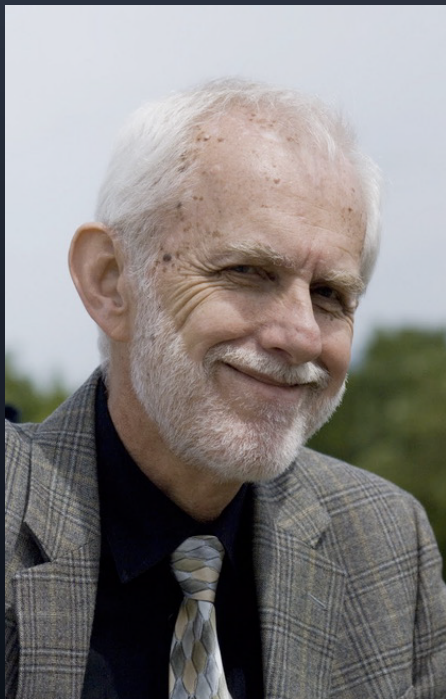
CHANDRASEKHAR LECTURE

THE REBIRTH OF EINSTEIN'S GENERAL RELATIVITY

Professor Clifford Martin Will
University of Florida, U.S.A.

Einstein completed his monumental theory of General Relativity in 1915, and four years later became an international science superstar when astronomers announced that the Sun's gravity bent light rays in agreement with his theory. Yet within a decade, interest and research in the theory declined, and by the late 1950s, people did not consider general relativity a suitable topic for a serious scientist to pursue. Yet 20 years later it had been reborn and had become one of the hottest fields of physics, with astronomers, particle physicists and experimentalists, once disdainful of the theory, now joining the fun. In this talk, I describe what happened to cause this renaissance, culminating in the stunning 1979 announcement by Joe Taylor of the detection of the inspiral of the orbit of the Binary Pulsar, caused by gravitational wave emission. I caught this rising relativistic wave in 1969 as a new student in Kip Thorne's group at Caltech, and I will pepper the talk with personal experiences and encounters with many of the people who aided this rebirth.

January 17, 2022 5:30 PM IST



Clifford Martin Will is Distinguished Professor of Physics at the University of Florida, and Chercheur Associé at the Institut d'Astrophysique de Paris. Born in Hamilton, Canada in 1946, he obtained a Ph.D. in Physics under Kip Thorne from the California Institute of Technology in 1971 and was an Enrico Fermi Postdoctoral Fellow with S. Chandrasekhar at the University of Chicago. After 38 years on the faculties of Stanford University and Washington University in St. Louis, in 2012, he moved to the University of Florida.

He is a member of the US National Academy of Sciences and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2019, he received the Albert Einstein Medal from the Albert Einstein Society in Switzerland, and in 2021 received the Einstein Prize of the American Physical Society

He has published over 220 scientific articles and four books. His 1986 popular book "Was Einstein Right?" was selected one of the 200 best books for 1986 by the New York Times Book Review, and has undergone translation into French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, Korean, Greek, Persian, and Chinese. His latest book, "Is Einstein Still Right?", with Nicolás Yunes, has been translated into Chinese and recorded as an audiobook.

Online platform: Zoom



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