

PRESS RELEASE

Parisi and the value of science in a joint ICTP-SISSA Colloquium in Trieste, the first after the Nobel

Recently awarded by the Swedish Academy, on 22 October at 11am the great physicist will give a lecture on the historical and cultural aspects of science during a joint ICTP-SISSA lecture. In the afternoon, the academic will give a second talk at ICTP's Dirac Medal ceremony.

Trieste 18 October 2021

“Science is very ancient. The first scientists were those who discovered fire or tamed animals. Over the centuries and millennia, science has taken on a whole new meaning. Today, therefore, it is something very different from what it was in the beginning. In this seminar I will talk about how science has evolved, what is its meaning now and what are the duties of scientists.”

It is with these words that Giorgio Parisi, 2021 Nobel laureate in Physics, introduces "The Value of Science", the seminar organized as part of a joint colloquia series by the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) and the Scuola Internazionale Superiore di Studi Avanzati (SISSA) in Trieste. This is the first public talk by Professor Parisi since the announcement of the award by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences on 5 October. The event will take place on 22 October in the main hall of SISSA in Via Beirut, next to the campus of ICTP, in Grignano, Trieste, starting at 11.00 am.

The event will be in streaming on the ICTP's YouTube Channel and on Zoom.

On this special occasion, Giorgio Parisi will talk about the progress of science from its origins, the principles and values that guide it and its role in the contemporary world, bringing his unique perspective as a researcher and intellectual capable of moving in very different fields of knowledge. Former president of the Accademia dei Lincei and member of the American National Academy of Sciences, his scientific research has mainly concerned statistical physics, mathematical physics and condensed matter physics. However, his studies have a relevance that goes beyond these boundaries to go into other areas of knowledge, from anthropology to cognitive sciences, from finance to social sciences.

A comment by ICTP Director Atish Dabholkar: "A renaissance scientist in the finest traditions of Italian Physics"

"ICTP is glad to be hosting the visit of Giorgio Parisi to Italy's 'City of Science'. The joint colloquium is especially appropriate given his strong scientific connections with ICTP and SISSA.

His wide-ranging and profound contributions were recognized already in 1999 with the prestigious Dirac Medal awarded by ICTP. His research, in the finest traditions of Italian physics and in the spirit of the 'renaissance physicist' Enrico Fermi, has left a deep imprint on diverse areas of physics ranging from the evolution of nuclear constituents in quantum chromodynamics to the physics of complex systems. He maintains close research collaborations with many members of the ICTP family which have led to important advances not only in physics but also in other areas of science."

A comment by the Director of SISSA Stefano Ruffo: "A unique and generous person, a true genius. He has been always very close to SISSA and has served as the chair of the International Scientific Advisory Committee"

The unique ability to range in different fields, offering fundamental contributions in various fields of knowledge, is also underlined by the Director of SISSA Stefano Ruffo: "It is a great pleasure and a real honour to have Giorgio Parisi as a guest in his first seminar after the Nobel. As I was able to comment on the day of the announcement," says Ruffo "during my professional life Giorgio was always a reference person with whom I was lucky enough to work, at the beginning of my career in the early '80s when, in spite of his young age, Giorgio was already a recognized "star" at the international level. He is a person who has discovered and solved such a big number of problems as to make him a truly unique scientist, for the vastness and originality with which he has faced the most diverse scientific problems. A true genius, there is no doubt. And a generous genius, because he has never been afraid to share with others his thoughts, his ideas, his incredible and innumerable intuitions."

Giorgio Parisi at the celebrations of the 2020 Dirac Medal at ICTP

Giorgio Parisi will also be a guest of ICTP on the afternoon of Friday 22 October, starting at 2 pm, at the Centre's ceremony for its 2020 Dirac Medal, one of the most prestigious awards in theoretical physics.

Awarded by the ICTP since 1985 in honour of the British physicist P.A.M. Dirac, the 2020 prize was awarded to André Neveu of the University of Montpellier, Pierre Ramond of the University of Florida and Miguel Virasoro of the Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento. The three physicists were awarded "for their pioneering contributions to the inception and formulation of string theory which introduced new Bosonic and Fermionic symmetries into physics".

Professor Parisi, the Dirac Medallist recipient in 1999, will deliver a memorial speech for his long-time friend and colleague Miguel Virasoro, former Director of ICTP, who passed away earlier this year.



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