

Upcoming Events**Past Events****Subscribe eNews**

Keyword

Discipline

Venue

Year

Jan To Dec

Search

IAS DISTINGUISHED LECTURE**A Tale of Two Mathematicians**

Prof Phillip Griffiths, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton

Date : 14 Sep 2017 (Thursday)**Time** : 2:30 - 4:00 pm**Venue** : IAS Lecture Theater, Lo Ka Chung Building, Lee Shau Kee Campus, HKUST

Save to Calendar



Directions

Abstract

The lecture is about the story of some of the mathematical work of two mathematicians, Jean Victor Poncelet and Niels Henrik Abel. They were contemporaries in the early 19th century, who never met and were not even aware of each other's work. However, between Poncelet and Abel laid the cornerstones of the modern field of algebraic geometry, a field that is central to current work in geometry, arithmetic and theoretical physics. In this lecture, the speaker will try to explain what each of them did, Poncelet in geometry and Abel in analysis, and how the fusion of their work revealed one of the deepest aspects of mathematics. This fusion is captured by an amazing property of playing billiards on a table formed by two ellipses.

About the speaker

Prof Phillip Griffiths received his BS from Wake Forest College in 1959 and his PhD from Princeton University in 1962. Since then, he held faculty positions at University of California at Berkeley (1962-1967), Princeton University (1967-1972), Harvard University (1972-1983), and Duke University (1983-1991). In 1991, Prof Griffiths joined the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton and was the Director there until 2003. He remained in the Institute for Advanced Study as the Professor of Mathematics until he retired in 2009.

Prof Griffiths' research focuses on the theory of variation of Hodge structure, which has come to play a central role in many aspects of algebraic geometry and its uses in modern theoretical physics. In addition to algebraic geometry, he has contributed to differential and integral geometry, geometric function theory, and the geometry of partial differential equations.

Prof Griffiths received numerous honors, including the Leroy P. Steele Prize for Lifetime Achievement by the American Mathematical Society (2014); Chern Medal by the International Mathematical Union (2014); Brouwer Prize by the Royal Dutch Mathematical Society; and the Wolf Prize in Mathematics (2008). He was also elected a member of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei; the American Mathematical Society; the Indian Academy of Sciences; the US National Academy of Sciences; and the World Academy of Sciences.

For attendees' attention

The lecture is free and open to all. Seating is on a first come, first served basis.



Light refreshments will be served from 4:00 to 4:30 pm.