



SPEAKER: Graham Farmelo
TITLE: **Paul Dirac and the religion of mathematical beauty**
DATE: Thu 25/03/2010 16:30
PLACE: Main Auditorium

ABSTRACT

For Paul Dirac, the importance of mathematical beauty in the fundamental theoretical physics was like a religion. Although his great papers on quantum mechanics showed an acute aesthetic awareness, he first set out his principle of mathematical beauty only in 1939. Afterwards, he continually stressed the importance of mathematical beauty for mathematical physics. In this talk, I discuss the origins of Diracs aesthetic sensibility and looks at the successes and failures of his philosophy.