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People

Faces and Places

Dirac prize is awarded to inflation pioneers



[Guth](#)

The Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Trieste, Italy, has awarded this year's Dirac Medal and Prize to Alan Guth of MIT, Andrei Linde of Stanford and Paul Steinhardt of Princeton for the development of cosmological inflation. While the possibility of an exponential expansion of the early universe had been noted before, it was Guth who first realized that inflation would



[Linde](#)

solve some of the major problems confronting Big Bang cosmology. Difficulties with the original inflationary model were recognized from the start, and were overcome with the introduction of "new" inflation by Linde, Steinhardt and Andreas Albrecht, a student of Steinhardt's. Linde went on to propose other promising versions of inflationary theory, such as chaotic inflation. Guth and Steinhardt, among others, showed that inflation leads to a spectrum of density perturbations that can seed galaxy formation and explain the fluctuations in the cosmic microwave background.



[Steinhardt](#)

Although not yet firmly established, the idea of inflation has had notable observational successes, and has become the paradigm for fundamental studies in cosmology. Its greatest success has been in accounting for the existence of inhomogeneities in the universe and predicting their spectrum.



[Lund symposium](#)



[KEK visit](#)

Veneziano joins French Academy



[Veneziano](#)

CERN's Gabriele Veneziano was among 24 new foreign associates received into France's Academy of Science at a ceremony under the Institut de France's famous Coupole in June. Head of CERN's theoretical physics division from 1994 to 1997, Veneziano is already a member of the Italian Accademia dei Lincei. He is best known for starting the string theory ball rolling with his 1968 description of the strong force in which

fundamental particles behave as strings rather than points. In the physics section of the Academy, Veneziano shared the honour with MIT's Daniel Kleppner.

US physicist Richard L Garwin has been awarded the