

Jeremiah Horrocks
Public Lecture Series

The Universe: Reality or Simulation?

Thursday 19th November, 6:30pm
Darwin Lecture Theatre, Preston Campus

Scotland's Astronomer Royal, Prof. Catherine Heymans, is having an existential crisis! Ever since her son asked, 'could we be living inside a computer game?' she's been questioning everything she sees. Throwing all the science that she knows at the problem, Catherine explores whether humanity could ever create a virtual universe as rich and diverse as our own. Unpack the rules that appear to govern our existence as we journey from the quirky quantum world, up into the wild dark Universe. Will technology ever be able to replicate the complexity of life? Could consciousness be coded? Catherine invites you to reconsider what it means to be real.



Catherine Heymans is Astronomer Royal for Scotland, the first woman to hold the title in its 200-year history. A Professor of Astrophysics

at the University of Edinburgh, she is internationally recognised for her pioneering research mapping invisible dark matter and mysterious dark energy across the Universe. Catherine's accolades include the Royal Astronomical Society's William Herschel Medal, the Max Planck-Humboldt Research Award, and fellowships of both the Royal Society of Edinburgh and Leopoldina. All net royalties from her book, *How to Design a Universe*, go to the Royal Observatory Trust, supporting astronomy youth projects across Scotland.



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