



FILM

***Hidden Figures*, Based on Sloan-Supported Book, Wins Sloan Science in Cinema Prize in San Francisco**



On December 17, Sloan and the San Francisco Film Society (SFFS) will award the Sloan Science in Cinema Prize to *Hidden Figures*, a much anticipated film that is attracting significant pre-release Oscar buzz and opens in limited release on December 25. The film, starring Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer, Janelle Monáe, Jim Parsons, Kevin Costner, and Kirsten Dunst, with Pharrell Williams as a producer and songwriter, is based on the Sloan-supported bestselling book of the same name by

Margot Lee Shetterly. The book profiles the African-American female scientists who worked on NASA's space program in the early 1960s and contributed significantly to many of the program's achievements.

The award presentation will be followed by a major premiere screening of the film and a panel discussion featuring director Ted Melfi, co-star Octavia Spencer, and NASA Engineer Tracy Drain. This will be the second Sloan Science in Cinema Prize with SFFS. The first was awarded to *The Martian* in 2015, before the film received seven Oscar nominations. SFFS is the recipient of a current grant to nurture, develop, and champion films that explore scientific or technological themes and characters. Earlier this year, Sloan and SFFS awarded the first Sloan Science in Cinema Screenwriting Fellowship to Director/Writer Michael Almereyda to develop his narrative feature script *Tesla* about physicist and inventor Nikola Tesla.

White House Hosts *The Man Who Knew Infinity* Screening



On October 28, the White House hosted a special screening of *The Man Who Knew Infinity*, which stars Dev Patel as mathematical prodigy Srinivasa Ramanujan and Jeremy Irons as his Cambridge mentor G.H. Hardy. Jim Young, the film's producer, won a Film Independent/Sloan Producers Grant for the screenplay in 2008 and a TFI/Sloan Filmmaker Fund Production Award in 2015. After the screening, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Senior Advisor Knatokie Ford



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[moderated a panel discussion](#) with Emory University math professor Ken Ono, actor Jeremy Irons, and US Chief Data Scientist DJ Patil. Tenth-grade math student Kendall Clark, a special guest at the event, received a Spirit of Ramanujan Award, founded by Ono in response to the film, to recognize extraordinary young math minds that may not otherwise get the chance to showcase their talents.

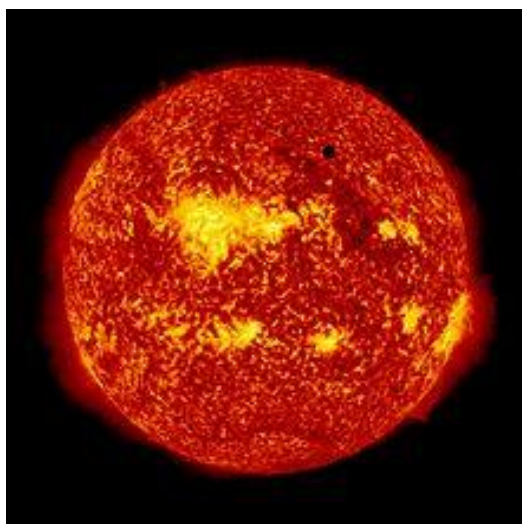
Sloan and Science & Entertainment Exchange Host LA Event on Science Themes in Marvel's *Doctor Strange*



In late October, Sloan partnered with the National Academy of Sciences' Science & Entertainment Exchange and Marvel Entertainment to highlight the science and engineering themes in the latest Marvel film *Doctor Strange*. The [event](#) included panel discussions with distinguished scientists, Silicon Valley technologists, and Hollywood filmmakers, as well as a screening of clips from the film. The Science & Entertainment Exchange, of which Sloan is a leading funder, connects filmmakers with NAS scientists to provide scientific advice for popular films and television shows. The Exchange is the recipient of a current grant to sustain and strengthen the role of science in Hollywood and to

provide support for the Sloan Film Program.

Sloan and Tribeca Film Institute Host Work-in-Progress Screenplay Reading



In November, Sloan and Tribeca Film Institute (TFI) hosted a Work-in-Progress reading of Giulia Corda's screenplay *Venus in Transit*. The script, which won a USC/Sloan student film award in 2013 and a Tribeca/Sloan Filmmaker award in 2014, tells the story of an unexpected friendship between two women—an elderly astrophysicist and a forty-something chick-lit novelist—on a road trip to see the transit of Venus, a rare astronomical phenomenon (pictured at left). The Sloan/TFI reading, held at Soho House, featured a cast of well-regarded television actors. TFI is the recipient of a current grant to support the development of Sloan film projects through screenings, readings, and panels at the Tribeca Film Festival and year-round.



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TELEVISION

American Experience's *Rachel Carson* to Air on PBS Stations January 24



Fifty-five years after the publication of Rachel Carson's seminal work *Silent Spring*, widely credited with originating the modern environmental movement, American Experience will air a [Sloan-supported documentary](#) about the pioneering conservationist, writer, and marine biologist. The *New Yorker*, where *Silent Spring* first appeared as a serial, will re-publish excerpts of the book to coincide with the January premiere. The American Experience documentary incorporates new scholarship on Carson and features Tony, Emmy, and Golden Globe winner Mary-Louise Parker as Carson's voice. WGBH is the recipient of a current grant to produce and broadcast new documentaries on the role of science and technology in history on PBS's American Experience.

WETA Africa's *Great Civilizations* to Air on PBS Stations in February



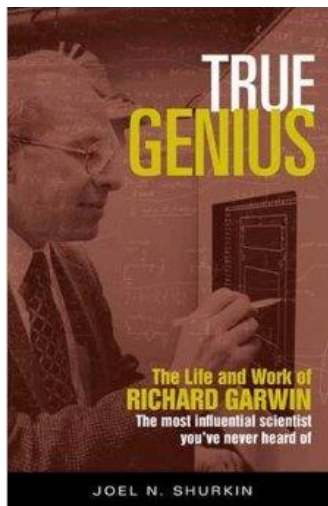
A new Sloan-supported six-part series, *Africa's Great Civilizations*, will air on PBS stations nationwide in February. Hosted by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and Director of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research at Harvard University, the series presents a dynamic and comprehensive history of Africa, showing the pivotal role the continent's civilizations have played in shaping all aspects of human history—including science, technology, and engineering—from ancient history to the present day. Gates and the production crew traveled to over 11 countries, including South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria, Benin, Nigeria, Ghana, Angola and Morocco, to visit ancient archeological sites, monuments, churches, mosques, and museums and to interview

African scholars, paleontologists, curators, art historians, and anthropologists. Sloan support for the documentary included adding four scientific experts to the show's advisory committee. The series promises to be a groundbreaking show that could begin to change Americans' perceptions of Africa.



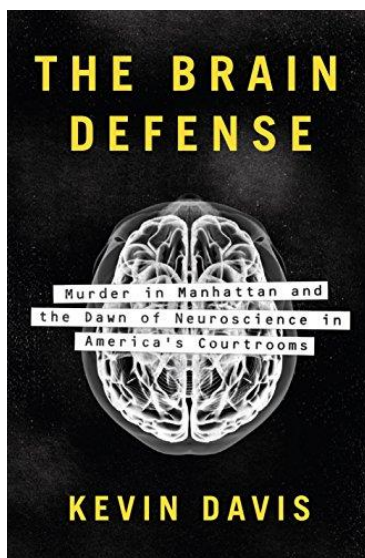
BOOKS

***True Genius: The Life and Work of Richard Garwin* by Joel Shurkin to be Published in February**



True Genius: The Life and Work of Richard Garwin, The Most Influential Scientist You've Never Heard of will be published by Prometheus in February. The book profiles Richard Garwin (b. 1928), the American physicist who helped design the first hydrogen bomb in 1952. He became a disarmament advocate and served on the President's Science Advisory Committee under Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon, was chair of the State Department Arms Control and Nonproliferation Advisory Board from 1993-2001, and has been a member of the JASON Defense Advisory Group since 1966. His scientific research made important contributions to the development of many contemporary technologies, such as GPS navigation, air-traffic control systems, and touch screens. Most recently, Garwin was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama in November 2016. Joel Shurkin, a science writer who shared a Pulitzer Prize for covering the Three Mile Island nuclear-reactor accident, received a small book grant to support this work.

***The Brain Defense* by Kevin Davis to be Published in February**



The Brain Defense: Murder in Manhattan and the Dawn of Neuroscience in America's Courtrooms, by journalist and author Kevin Davis, will be released on February 28 by Penguin Press. The book uses a 1991 murder case—the first time a judge allowed a scan showing a defendant's brain activity as evidence to support a claim of innocence—to explore the intersection between neuroscience and criminal justice and to consider how the legal system has changed along with our understanding of the human brain. The book also details how neuroscience has begun to influence how we think about responsibility and free will, what is the purpose of punishment, and how scientific evidence can clarify moral issues. Davis received a grant in 2014 for the research and writing of a popular book on the intersection of criminal law and neuroscience.



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THEATER

Ensemble Studio Theatre Hosts Reading of Sloan-Commissioned Play *Spill* at New York Theatre Workshop



Long-time Sloan theater partner Ensemble Studio Theatre (EST) and Sloan hosted a reading of the play [Spill by Leigh Fondakowski](#) at New York Theatre Workshop in October. *Spill*, which received a commission from EST and Sloan in 2012, explores scientific questions around the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, such as how deepwater drilling works and different methods of oil clean-up and recovery, as it dramatizes the personal stories of those affected.

Fondakowski used extensive reportage as the basis for the play, incorporating details from

transcripts of hearings and depositions as well as her interviews with industry experts, surviving crew members and the families of the victims into the narrative. The play also received production support from the EST/Sloan partnership for regional productions in Chicago and Baton Rouge. EST is the recipient of a current grant to commission, develop, produce and disseminate new science plays in New York and across the country.

RADIO

Science Friday Celebrates 25th Anniversary



Science Friday Host Ira Flatow presenting geneticist Craig Venter with the *Science Friday* Accelerator Award at the 25th Anniversary gala in October.

Science Friday, the Sloan-supported weekly science radio show and podcast hosted by Ira Flatow, celebrated its 25th Anniversary this October with a gala at the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum. More than 300 people gathered to celebrate the program's many accomplishments during 25 years on-air. Guests included Alan Alda, Steve Strogatz, Brian Greene, and Eric Kandel, and Sloan received a special shout-out for its many years of support. The gala also honored major scientific figures with three awards, including the Science Friday Accelerator Prize for innovation in science and technology to geneticist, entrepreneur, and former Sloan



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grantee Craig Venter. Sloan has supported *Science Friday* for over a decade, including a current grant to support the show's coverage of science and the arts, including radio broadcasts, digital science videos, blog posts, and associated media.

UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE

Digital Public Library of America Partners with the Library of Congress



In November, following the appointment of former Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) steering committee member Carla Hayden as Librarian of Congress, DPLA launched a [new official partnership](#) with the Library of Congress (LOC). The LOC will become DPLA's newest Content Hub, joining 16 other institutions like the Smithsonian, New York Public Library, and the Getty Trust, that serve as Content Hubs for DPLA and each provide over 20,000 digital object records. This is the first step of what will be a "long term and multifaceted collaboration" between the two institutions as

DPLA ally Hayden and DPLA Executive Director Dan Cohen continue to discuss new initiatives. The historic partnership [will start with 5,000 records](#) from the LOC's collections of Revolutionary War maps, Civil War maps, and panoramic maps. These materials will add to the 100,000 LOC books already in DPLA's collection through existing content hubs HathiTrust and the Biodiversity Heritage Library. DPLA is the recipient of a current grant to complete its Nationwide Service Hub Network and to pilot an eBooks distribution program.

Program Team: Doron Weber, *Vice President, Programs and Program Director* | Eliza French, *Program Associate* | Delia DiBiasi, *Senior Program and Investments Assistant*