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**THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE PRESENTS A THREE-DAY SYMPOSIUM ON  
“THE LEGACY OF GALILEO” BEGINNING THURSDAY, JUNE 18**

*Featured Speakers Include Best-Selling Author Dava Sobel  
And Renowned Science Historian Owen Gingerich*

**Philadelphia, PA, May 26, 2009** – The Franklin Institute has received a \$100,000 grant from the John Templeton Foundation to host a three-day symposium beginning Thursday, June 18 entitled *The Legacy of Galileo*. The symposium, planned in partnership with the Philadelphia Area Center for History of Science (PACHS), will draw on recent scholarship on Galileo exploring his profound effect on the culture of his day – as well as highlights of Galileo’s modern-day legacy. Featuring a range of well-known authors, scholars and science experts, the event is being presented as part of an ambitious series of programs surrounding The Franklin Institute’s critically-acclaimed exhibition *Galileo, the Medici and the Age of Astronomy*. Most of the three days of events will be free with registration; more information is available at [www.fi.edu](http://www.fi.edu).

“The Legacy of Galileo symposium is the most ambitious satellite project of our *Galileo* exhibition,” said Dennis Wint, president and CEO of The Franklin institute. “The symposium will bring in the world’s leading scholars to examine the always-present tension between belief in established knowledge and acceptance of novel scientific claims – a tension that can be explored in the multiple contexts of religious beliefs, cultural practices, social structures, and institutional frameworks. We are grateful to the John Templeton Foundation for giving us the opportunity to bring to life the influence and importance of this scientific genius.”

The aim of the symposium is to explore the powerful synergies and seismic changes in science, religion, music and art that took place during Galileo’s time, and connect them to our lives today. Four main themes will be covered – the history and process of science, the interrelations of music, art and science during the Italian Renaissance, the Galileo controversy in relation to the intersection of science and religion, and the modern relevance of Galileo.

Highlights of the symposium include:

- Thursday, June 18 – A kick-off evening panel discussion entitled “What Would Galileo Think? Science, Religion and Modern Relevance,” which focuses on the relationship between science and religion in Galileo’s time. How would our modern context of science and religion affect Galileo’s thinking, and how might the controversies of Galileo’s time inform thinking today?
- Friday, June 19 – A full day of special events, discussions and speakers, including a lunch book reading and discussion with best-selling author Dava Sobel (*Galileo’s Daughter*), a presentation on the “Importance of Galileo”, “The Lineage of Genius: From Galileo to Hawking,” “Revolutions in Art and Science”, “Would the Real Galileo Please Stand Up? – Interpretations of the Trial of Galileo” and a presentation on “The Legacy of Galileo.”

- Saturday, June 20 -- “Galileo Day” at The Franklin Institute. The day begins with a “Meet the Speakers” breakfast (registration required), followed by a day celebrating the *Galileo, the Medici and the Age of Astronomy* exhibit, including performances by a Galileo impersonator, other Galileo and astronomy-themed demonstrations, live shows and activities for visitors and their families.

Confirmed speakers include **Alessio Assonitis** (Research Director, The Medici Archive Project, Archivio di Stato di Firenze); **Mario Biagioli** (Professor of the History of Science, Harvard University); **Ruth Schwartz Cowan** (Professor of the History & Sociology of Science, University of Pennsylvania); **Peter Dear** (Professor of History in Science & Technology Studies, Cornell University); **Annibale Fantoli** (Adjunct Professor of Philosophy, University of Victoria); **Maurice Finocchiaro** (Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, University of Nevada, Las Vegas); **Owen Gingerich** (Professor Emeritus of Astronomy and of the History of Science, Harvard University and Senior Astronomer Emeritus, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory); **Reverend Ernan McMullin** (O’Hara Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, University of Notre Dame); **Derrick Pitts** (Chief Astronomer, The Franklin Institute); **Joel Primack** (Professor of Physics, University of California - Santa Cruz); **Dava Sobel** (science writer, author of *Galileo’s Daughter: A Historical Memoir of Science, Faith and Love*); **Nick Wilding** (Assistant Professor of History, Georgia State University).

The John Templeton Foundation ([www.templeton.org](http://www.templeton.org)) is a non-profit grantmaking organization that funds research projects worldwide from its headquarters in West Conshohocken, PA. Established in 1987 by renowned international money manager, Sir John Templeton, the Foundation serves as a philanthropic catalyst for research and discoveries relating to what scientists and philosophers call the Big Questions. The Foundation supports work at the world’s top universities in such fields as theoretical physics, cosmology, evolutionary biology, cognitive science, and social science relating to love, forgiveness, creativity, purpose, and the nature and origin of religious belief. Also it seeks to stimulate new thinking about wealth creation in the developing world, character education in schools and universities, and programs for cultivating the talents of gifted children.

The Philadelphia Area Center for History of Science (PACHS) provides perspective on the changes in science, technology and medicine that have shaped our lives. The Center makes use of the exceptional resources of the Philadelphia area to support research, to foster a vibrant community of scholars, and to build bridges between the scholarly community and broader audiences of all ages and backgrounds

Founded in honor of America’s first scientist, Benjamin Franklin, The Franklin Institute is one of America’s oldest and premier centers of science education and development in the country. Today, the Institute continues its dedication to public education and creating a passion for science by offering new and exciting access to science and technology in ways that would dazzle and delight its namesake. For more information please visit [www.fi.edu](http://www.fi.edu).