



TED TALKS

SCIENCE & WONDER

TED Talks: Science and Wonder
Premieres Wednesday, March 30 on PBS

First in a Series of Three TED Talks Specials for 2016



Host Baratunde Thurston
Credit: Ryan Lash/TED

SAN FRANCISCO, CA— **TED Talks: Science and Wonder**, the first of three new **TED Talks** specials planned for 2016, premieres Wednesday, March 30, 2016, 10:00-11:00 p.m. ET ([check local listings](#)) on PBS. Filmed at New York's The Town Hall theater and hosted by best-selling author and comedian Baratunde Thurston, **TED Talks: Science and Wonder** features talks delivered before a live audience. Each talk examines the riddles of the universe that keep leading scientists awake at night, taking viewers on a mind-blowing journey examining the relationship between science and art, a look

deep inside the human body, disappearing landscapes, and the world of Pixar animation as speakers look at the future of nanotechnology, the science of light, and the rise of genetic manipulation.

Featured speakers include:

- **Danielle Feinberg**, Pixar's director of photography, who explains how she builds a 3D world inside a computer, using math, science and code to create stories with soul and wonder;
- **Juan Enriquez**, leading authority in genomic code and *Evolving Ourselves* author, who delves into the complex ethical questions raised by the rise of intelligent design;
- **Paula Hammond**, MIT's Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering, who reveals new technologies being developed to kill cancer cells;
- Artist **Zaria Forman**, who uses her work to bring attention to the imminent perils of climate change; and
- Radiolab's **Latif Nasser** takes us on an investigative journey high above the Arctic Circle to solve the mystery of a tiny fragment of bone from thousands of years ago.

TED Talks: Science and Wonder also includes three original short films produced by ITVS: “*Bridge to the Future*,” by **Denise Zmekhol** and **Max Salomon**, about designer Joris Laarman, who plans to use a robot to build a 3D bridge; “*Our Place in Space*,” by **David Alvarado** and **Jason Sussberg**, about the future of space exploration, featuring Bill Nye; and “*The Rapture*,” by **Ric Burns**, featuring the late Oliver Sacks.

TED Talks: Science and Wonder is a co-production of TED and the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB).

“Our mission at TED is to spread ideas,” said Juliet Blake, producer of TED TALKS LIVE and TED's Curator of Special Projects. “This series brings PBS viewers an eye-opening evening of television brimming with powerful thinking, humanity and passion.”

“The public media and TED Talks collaboration further enhances efforts to support innovative ideas and to encourage deeper dialogue among diverse communities and platforms,” said Pat Harrison, President and CEO of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. “This partnership builds on the CPB-supported [TED Talks Education](#), which premiered as an [American Graduate](#) special in 2013.”

“High-quality, enriching programming is the hallmark of our work at PBS,” said Marie Nelson, Vice President News & Public Affairs at PBS. “**TED Talks: Science and Wonder** is a wonderful example of the type of smart and compelling content viewers can find only on PBS.”

“This partnership provides a fantastic opportunity to connect the work of brilliant independent filmmakers with the talents of TED speakers, bringing audiences a rich experience on many levels,” says Tamara Gould, Senior Vice President of National Productions at ITVS.

Two additional **TED Talks** specials, **War and Peace** and **Education Revolution** will premiere later this year on PBS.

TED Talks: Science and Wonder is curated by Chris Anderson and Juliet Blake. The executive producer is Juliet Blake and Allen Kelman is the producer. TED content director is Kelly Stoetzel. Executive producers for ITVS are Tamara Gould and Sally Jo Fifer. **TED Talks: Science and Wonder** is directed by Linda Mendoza.

More information is available at pbs.org/tedtalks.

ABOUT THE HOST

BARATUNDE THURSTON is a professionally funny writer, television host, and technologically connected human being. A regular on Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*, he has worn many hats in service of providing insight, inspiration, and laughs. His creative and inquisitive mind, forged by his mother's lessons and polished by a philosophy degree from Harvard, have found expression in the pages of *Fast Company*, the screens of HBO, Comedy Central, CNN, MSNBC, BBC, the sound waves of NPR and roughly one bajillion podcasts, including *Our National Conversation About Conversations About Race*, which he co-hosts with Raquel Cepeda and Tanner Colby. He has hosted shows on Discovery's Science Channel, Yahoo, AOL, YouTube, and Pivot TV, where he was co-host of *TakePart Live* with Meghan McCain and Jacob Soboroff. Far from simply appearing in media, Baratunde is also helping define its future. In 2006 he co-founded Jack & Jill Politics, a black political blog whose coverage of the 2008 Democratic National Convention has been archived by the Library of Congress. From 2007 to 2012, he helped bring one of America's finest journalistic institutions into the future, serving as Director of Digital for The Onion. He has been a judge for the Knight Foundation News Challenge, an affiliate at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society, and a director's fellow at the MIT Media Lab. His book, *How To Be Black*, was published by HarperCollins in February 2012 and is a *New York Times* bestseller. In 2012, he co-founded Cultivated Wit with two former Onion employees, Brian Janosch and Craig Cannon. The ACLU of Michigan honored Thurston "for changing the political and social landscape one laugh at a time," *The Root* named him to its list of 100 most influential African Americans, and *Fast Company* listed him as one of the 100 Most Creative People In Business. He has advised the Obama White House and serves on the National Board of BUILD, an organization that uses entrepreneurship-based experiential learning to propel underserved youth through high school and onto college and career success.

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS, IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

DANIELLE FEINBERG began her career at Pixar Animation Studios in 1997 on the feature film *A Bug's Life*. She quickly discovered her love for lighting and went on to light on many of Pixar's feature films including *Toy Story 2*, *Monsters, Inc.*, the Academy Award®-winning *Finding Nemo*, *The Incredibles* and *Ratatouille*. Feinberg was the Director of Photography for Lighting on Disney•Pixar's Academy Award®-winning films *WALL•E* and *Brave* and is now working on Pixar's upcoming film *Coco*. Feinberg's love of combining computers and art began when she was eight years old and first programmed a Logo turtle to create images. This eventually led her to a Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science from Harvard University. Now, in addition to her Pixar work, she mentors teenage girls, encouraging them to pursue code, math and science.

LATIF NASSER is the director of research at public radio's "Radiolab," where he has reported on such disparate topics as culture-bound illnesses, snowflake photography,

sinking islands and 16th-century automata. The history of science is "brimming with tales stranger than fiction," says Nasser, who wrote his PhD dissertation on the Tanganyika Laughter Epidemic of 1962. A writer and researcher, his job at Radiolab allows him to dive into archives, talk to interesting people and tell stories as a way to think about science and society.

JUAN ENRIQUEZ works on the cutting edge of discovery. An active investor in early stage private companies in the life sciences and big data sectors, he is one of the world's leading authorities on the uses and benefits of genomic code. Bio-science is beginning to affect the way we live, work, and do business, and Enriquez is a mapper and implementer of its promise. Synthetic Genomics, which he co-founded, produced the world's first synthetic life form and the first standard, programmable cells. These technologies are being applied to energy, chemicals, vaccines, agriculture, information storage, and various other fields. He is the co-author of *Evolving Ourselves* (March 2015), which describes a world where humans increasingly shape their environment, themselves and other species. He is also the author of the global bestseller *As The Future Catches You* and *The Untied States of America*, and co-author of *Homo Evolutis*. In addition to his entrepreneurial work in the life sciences, Enriquez writes, speaks and teaches about the profound changes that genomics and other life sciences will cause in business, technology, politics and society. He was the founding director of the Harvard Business School Life Sciences Project and currently chairs the Genetics Advisory Council for the Harvard Medical School.

ZARIA FOREMAN is an artist whose inspiration began in early childhood when she traveled with her family throughout several of the world's most remote landscapes, which were the subject of her mother's fine art photography. After formal training at Skidmore College, she exhibits extensively in galleries and venues throughout the United States and overseas. In addition to exhibitions, recent projects include a series of drawings that served as the set design for the classic ballet *Giselle*, which premiered in October 2012 at the Grand Theatre of Geneva, Switzerland. In August 2012 she led Chasing the Light, an expedition sailing up the NW coast of Greenland, retracing the 1869 journey of American painter William Bradford and documenting the rapidly changing arctic landscape. Continuing to address climate change in her work, she spent September 2013 in the Maldives, the lowest-lying country in the world, and arguably the most vulnerable to rising sea levels.

PAULA T. HAMMOND is the Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering and David H. Koch Chair Professor in Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). She is a member of MIT's Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research, the MIT Energy Initiative, and a founding member of the MIT Institute for Soldier Nanotechnology. She is the first woman and the first person of color appointed to head MIT's Department of Chemical Engineering (ChemE). She also served as the Executive Officer (Associate Chair) of the Chemical Engineering Department (2008-2011). Professor Hammond was elected into the 2013 Class of the American Academy

of Arts and Sciences. She is also the recipient of the 2013 AIChE Charles M. A. Stine Award, which is bestowed annually to a leading researcher in recognition of outstanding contributions to the field of materials science and engineering, and the 2014 Alpha Chi Sigma Award for Chemical Engineering Research. In 2010, she was named the Scientist of the Year by the Harvard Foundation. Professor Paula Hammond received her B.S. in Chemical Engineering from MIT in 1984, and her M.S. from Georgia Tech in 1988 and earned her Ph.D. in 1993 from MIT.

ABOUT TED

TED is a nonprofit organization devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading, usually in the form of short, powerful talks (18 minutes or fewer) delivered by today's leading thinkers and doers. Many of these talks are given at TED's annual conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, and made available, free, on TED.com. TED speakers have included Bill Gates, Jane Goodall, Elizabeth Gilbert, Sir Richard Branson, Nandan Nilekani, Philippe Starck, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Sal Khan and Daniel Kahneman. TED's open and free initiatives for spreading ideas include TED.com, where new TED Talk videos are posted daily; the Open Translation Project, which provides subtitles and interactive transcripts as well as translations from thousands of volunteers worldwide; the educational initiative TED-Ed; the annual million-dollar TED Prize, which funds exceptional individuals with a "wish," or idea, to create change in the world; TEDx, which provides licenses to thousands of individuals and groups who host local, self-organized TED-style events around the world; and the TED Fellows program, which selects innovators from around the globe to amplify the impact of their remarkable projects and activities.

The spirit of openness is foundational to TED's mission of spreading ideas. What was once simply a closed-door conference devoted to Technology, Entertainment and Design has become a global platform for spreading ideas across a wide variety of disciplines. Founded in 1984, the first TED conferences were held in Monterey, California. In 2006, TED experimented with putting TED Talk videos online for free – a decision that opened the doors to a radically new model for sharing ideas: today there are nearly 2,000 TED Talks available for free on TED.com, which are viewed close to a million times a day, with more than two and a half billion views total. Thanks to the support of thousands of volunteer translators, there are nearly 70,000 published translations of TED Talks in 107 languages. TEDx, the licensing program that allows communities to produce independently organized TED events, has already seen nearly 12,000 such events held in 166 countries. For more information about TED Talks Live, visit go.ted.com/tedtalkslive. Follow TED on Twitter at twitter.com/TEDTalks, on Facebook at facebook.com/TED or Instagram at instagram.com/ted.

ABOUT CPB

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government's investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of more than 1,400 locally owned and operated public television and radio stations nationwide. CPB is also the largest single

source of funding for research, technology, and program development for public radio, television and related online services. For more information, visit cpb.org.

ABOUT PBS

[PBS](http://pbs.org), with 350 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and online content. Each month, PBS reaches more than 103 million people through television and over 33 million people online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS' broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry's most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. PBS' premier children's TV programming and its website, pbskids.org, are parents' and teachers' most trusted partners in inspiring and nurturing curiosity and love of learning in children. More information about PBS is available at www.pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org websites on the Internet, or by following [PBS on Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or through our [apps for mobile devices](#). Specific program information and updates for press are available at pbs.org/pressroom or by following [PBS Pressroom on Twitter](#).

ABOUT ITVS

Independent Television Service (ITVS) funds, presents, and promotes award-winning documentaries on public television, innovative new media projects on the Web, and the Emmy Award-winning weekly series "Independent Lens" on Monday nights at 10:00 p.m. on PBS. Mandated by Congress in 1988 and funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, ITVS has brought thousands of independently produced programs to American audiences. For more information, visit itvs.org.

For further information and photos visit <http://www.pbs.org/pressroom>

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