

One evening in the spring of 1781, William Herschel, a professional musician living in Bath, England, looked through his homemade telescope and saw what he thought must be a comet. In fact, it was the planet Uranus — the first planet ever discovered by an individual in human history. But this remarkable observation, which catapulted Herschel almost overnight into the ranks of the most accomplished and celebrated astronomers in the world, was by no means his biggest achievement. This lecture will discuss the astronomical contributions of William Herschel and of his sister Caroline, and tell the improbable story of how a poor musician ended up inventing the modern science of astronomy.

How William and Caroline Herschel Invented Modern Astronomy

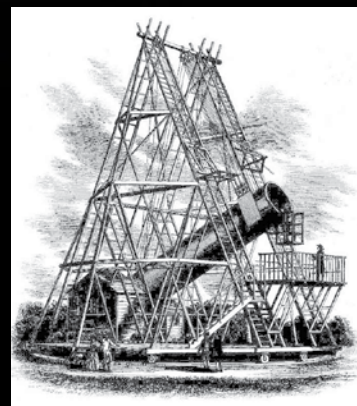


MR. MICHAEL D. LEMONICK

Michael Lemonick has been a journalist and author for more than 25 years — 20 of them at *TIME Magazine*, where he wrote more than 50 cover stories on topics ranging from climate change to particle physics before stepping down as a senior science writer in 2007. Today, he teaches writing at Princeton and is the senior staff writer for *Climate Central*.

Called one of “astronomy’s great popularizers” by the *New York Times Sunday Book Review*, Lemonick has written four books on astronomy:

The Light at the Edge of the Universe (1993); *Other Worlds* (1996; winner of the American Institute of Physics Science Writing Award), *Echo of the Big Bang* (2003), and *The Georgian Star* (2008).



Using a homemade telescope, William Herschel discovered the planet Uranus in 1781.



Caroline Herschel supported her brother William’s efforts and discovered several comets in her own right.

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DR. ALEX FILIPPENKO

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