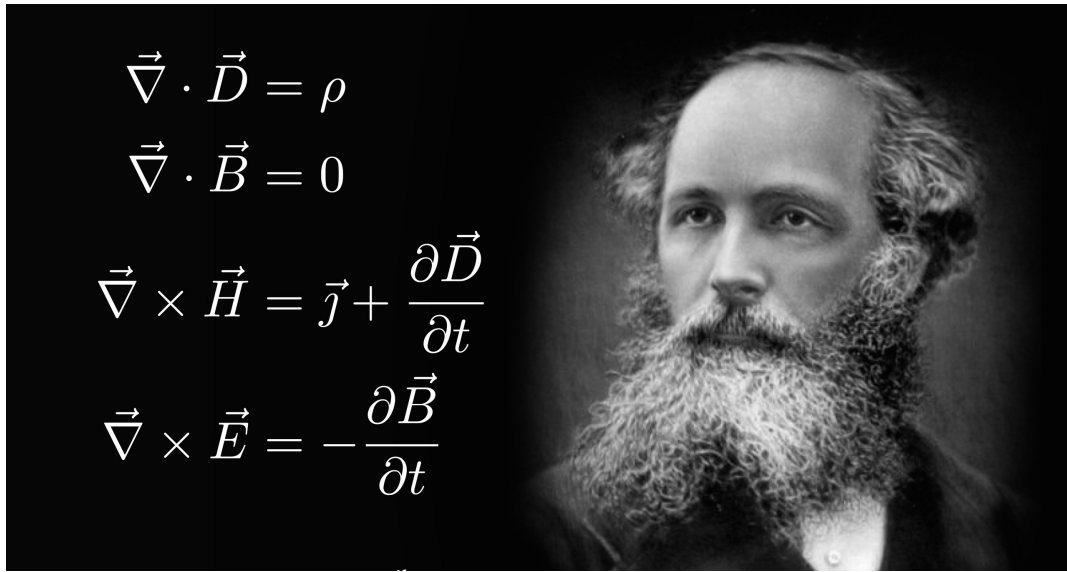


The Strathclyde Physics Society presents:



The genius of James Clerk Maxwell, the man who made equations speak

Prof. Gian-Luca Oppo, University of Strathclyde

5 pm Thursday 24 November 2016
Room 3.14, John Anderson Building

In Einstein's office in Princeton there were three portraits: Newton, Faraday and James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879). Although Maxwell is considered by the academics as one of the most important physicists together with Newton, Galilei, Bohr and, of course, Einstein, his work does not enjoy the same popularity of that of his peers.

In his short life, Maxwell revolutionised the history of science with sensational discoveries: electro-magnetic waves, the speed of light, the unification of electric and magnetic forces, statistical mechanics, the vastness of the electro-magnetic spectrum, light emission, the theory of the thermostat, and even colour photography. While the nineteenth century has linked thermodynamics to the industrial revolution, the twentieth century has been dominated by the consequences of Maxwell's discoveries: radio, television, x-rays, radars, microwave ovens, lasers, light-matter interactions, mobile phones, phase transitions, spectroscopy and fibre-optic internet. We will show that Maxwell has also changed theoretical physics from just explanation to a combination of explanation and prediction of physical phenomena. Quite many achievements for a reserved and self-deprecating Scot.