

Goals and Activities of the Kepler-Gesellschaft

„Man, stretch thy reason hither so that thou mayest comprehend these things . . . ”

(Johannes Kepler, in: Prognosticum for the year 1604)



Nemo cadit, recedens, sed ex deo cypite plana Oceanus hominum, a quibus est in rebus inabae; Joannes Keplerus, S^co^m Rudolphi II. Mathematicus Sempiterni Lincolni Id. Jan. Anno Christianum M. DC. XI obiit 2. Nov. 1630.

Johannes Kepler - together with Galileo Galilei, René Descartes, Isaac Newton and other like-minded men of learning - laid the foundations for modern science in the 17th century. Kepler's "Astronomia Nova" and "Harmonice Mundi" as well as Galileo's "Nuova Scienza" became the cornerstones of scientific research for generations to follow them.

Johannes Kepler has left us a legacy of impressive scientific diversity. Not only did he pioneer in astronomy by discovering the laws of planetary motion and making astronomy become an integral part of natural philosophy but he also made unique contributions to optics, mathematics and music theory. Already in the early 17th century he developed ideas in his posthumously published manuscript "Somnium" on how man could get to the moon. His vision of interplanetary travel elaborated in fascinating detail in this treatise, provided an important basis for mankind's dream to come true in the 20th century.

As well as being a brilliant researcher, Johannes Kepler's unremitting striving for religious tolerance and living a life in harmony with his contemporaries earned him great respect. He became a symbol of unbiased and responsible research, opposed to dogmatism of any kind, answerable only to truth and ethics.

Kepler invented the astronomical telescope – known as the Keplerian telescope to the present day – as well as e.g. the gear pump, which is widely used even today.

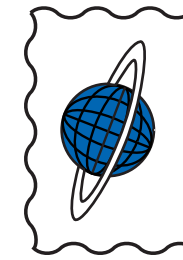
Kepler's birthplace was set up as a museum by the Kepler-Gesellschaft e.V. at the historic marketplace in Weil der Stadt to honour the memory of this great astronomer and scientist. The present exhibition follows a complete renovation of the building and an extension of the showrooms. It was carried out under the guidance of an interdisciplinary team of experts who put a conception into effect

that pays tribute to the didactics and requirements of modern museums.

Among the many exhibits the visitor will find original documents of Kepler's main works, letters written or addressed to him, tableaus and illustrations depicting his eventful life and career and his long and exhausting travels as well as important instruments and objects of interest of Kepler's time.

Modern techniques of presentation like computer- and sound simulations as well as video shows help to visualize Kepler's unique discoveries.

Visitors from abroad will appreciate the English explanations of the documents and objects on exhibition.



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