Ig® Nobel Prize Ceremony 2014

This Year's Theme: Food

Twitter: #IgNobel
About the Ig Nobel Prizes

Ig Nobel Prizes are awarded for achievements that first make people LAUGH, and then make them THINK. The Igs are intended to spur public curiosity and interest in science and other fields of endeavor. Ten prizes are awarded each year. Winners travel to the ceremony at their own expense.

The Ig Nobel Prize winners are, despite possible appearances to the contrary, real. Their achievements are well documented.

What to expect tonight: Imagine every ceremony you have ever had to endure. Loop them all together, at high speed, upside down. Add ten Ig Nobel Prize winners. That’s the Ig Nobel Prize ceremony.

Paper airplanes are a tradition at the Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony. Modern flight regulations apply. Listen for the Special Announcement just before the start of the ceremony.

There will be two (2) designated paper airplane deluge periods. Prior to each, please ready your aircraft — but do not yet launch them.

See page 5 for more details.
The Twenty-Fourth 1st Annual Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony – September 18, 2014

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Pointless Preamble
- Pre-ceremony Lobby AccordioConcert (5:00, in the lobby)
- Pre-ceremony concert (5:40, in the theatre)
- Ceremony begins (6:00, in the theatre)
- Paper Airplane Deluge #1
- The Traditional Ig Nobel “Welcome, Welcome” Speech
- Entrance of the New Winners
- Introduction of the Nobel Laureates and other Ignitaries

Everything Else**
- Awarding of the 2014 Ig Nobel Prizes* (weather permitting)
- What’s Eating You: A Mini-Opera in 3 Acts*
- The 24/7 Lectures
- Introduction of Past Winners*
- Paper Airplane Deluge #2
- The Win-a-Date-With-a-Nobel-Laureate Contest
- Other Things*
- The Traditional Ig Nobel “Goodbye, Goodbye” Speech
- Disappearance of the Audience

* scattered throughout the evening
** but maybe in some different order

Paper Airplanes
In the interests of safety and recycling, there will be two (2) special paper-aeronautic moments tonight: one at the ceremony’s beginning, the other at the midpoint.

Please hold your paper airplanes in readiness. Then fly them only – and profusely, to the point of deluge – during those two special moments. Please AIM FOR SAFETY!

An authority figure will make it very clear when each of those moments arrives.

Roy Glauber, Ig Nobel paper airplane sweeper (though not this year, as he is traveling), and Nobel Laureate.
This Year’s Theme
The theme of this year’s ceremony is FOOD. The theme applies to various goings-on, though not necessarily (and not necessarily not) to any of the particular achievements being honored with an Ig Nobel Prize.

Live Webcast
Tonight we will be joined from afar, in spirit and electro-mechanically, by teeming hordes watching via the Internet. The Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony has been webcast annually, beginning in 1996, when webcasting was a thing barely dreamt of, and heroically accomplished. Very special thanks to The Harvard Extension School and to CS-50 for helping make this year’s webcast happen. Video highlights of many past ceremonies are online at www.improbable.com.

Celebrity Bacteria
The theme of the 2010 ceremony was Bacteria. Several trillion celebrity bacteria were seated in or on the audience. Many of them are still here. See if you can spot them.

Pre-Ceremony: mini-Concerts
(One in the lobby, then another in the theatre)

Before the ceremony, watch for two special mini-concerts. At 5:00, in the lobby, the Boston Squeezebox Ensemble (BSE) will play a Mozart-Foodie Concert, insinuating strangely familiar tunes into your consciousness.

At 5:40, in the theatre, the BSE will reassemble on stage in the theatre proper, there to delight you whilst things happen around, above, and behind them.

The Ig Informal Lectures!
SATURDAY afternoon, Sept 20, 2014, 1:00 pm
MIT Building 26, Room 100
60 Vassar Street, Cambridge
FREE! (But seating is limited, so get there early)

A Saturday Treat…
At tonight’s Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony, each winner is allowed just ONE MINUTE to deliver an acceptance speech. But of course you’ll want to hear more juicy details, and ask them questions, and so….
You are invited to come enjoy a lazy, lively half-afternoon of brief (FIVE MINUTES each, plus questions & answers), high-spirited talks by the 2014 Ig Nobel Prize winners, and by Dr. NakaMats.

Produced by the Annals of Improbable Research
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“What’s Eating You”

World Premiere mini-opera in three (3) acts

The story is about a couple who decide to stop eating traditional food — to instead get all their nutrients from pills, hundreds of pills per day. The trillions of microbes who live inside, on, and generally as part of them, also figure in the proceedings. Acts 2 and 3 happen, literally, several hundred years after Act 1. By special arrangement with Sanders Theatre, all three acts will be performed not only during the same century, but within the confines of this year’s Ig Nobel Prize ceremony.

(Special thanks to Rich Losick, Sara Leiman, and Alicia DeFrancesco, for microbial insights and suggestions.)

The Words: Marc Abahams wrote the story and lyrics. This is his nineteenth Ig Nobel opera libretto.

The Music: The tunes were composed, in advance, by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, a German composer, and a consumer of traditional foods.

Tonight’s performance: Henry Akona arranged, orchestrated, and is directing What’s Eating You.

The singers: What’s Eating You stars Maria Ferrante (soprano) and Scott Taylor (baritone). The soloists will be accompanied by The Microbe Choir: Delphine Gabbay, Kelsey Calhoun, Ted Sharpe, Sylvia Rosenberg, Daniel Rosenberg, Andrew B. Jones, Paul Goodwin, Clia Goodwin, Erika Hutchinson, Patrick Yacono, Julia Lunetta. The Microbe Choir’s ranks will be swelled by the Nobel Laureates.

The orchestra: The singers are backed by an all-star biomedical orchestra, “The Forces of Nature,” composed of Harvard and MIT physicians and researchers, and one lawyer, and two other people.

Accordion: Thomas Michel (Harvard Medical School [HMS] Professor of Medicine)

Violin: Ted Sharpe (computational biologist at the Broad Institute)

Violin: Marla Rubinson

Cello: David Fisher (HMS Professor and Chair of Dermatology)

Double bass: Paul Glenn

Flute: Elizabeth Henske (HMS Professor of Medicine)

Bassoon: Ben Steinhorn (HMS MD-PhD student)

Clarinet: Abby Schiff (HMS MD-PhD student)

Trumpet: Omar Arnouk (lawyer)

Percussion: David Gootenberg (HMS MD-PhD student)

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Authority-Like Figures

As always, IgBill had incomplete information at press time. You may not be able to tell the players even with this scorecard.

(Note: ** indicates name is misspelled)

Producer/Director: Marc Abrahams
Co-Producer and Stage Manager: David Kessler
Ig Nobel Facilitator: Katherine Griffin
Opera Arranger/Orchestrator/Stage Director: Henry Akona
Assistant Stage Manager: Linda Brennan
Master Stagehand: Rob Sanders
Authoritative Presence: Roger Kautz
Opera Costumer: Catherine Quick Spingler
Opera Rehearsal Pianist: Patrick Yacono
Director of Improbable Engineering: Quentin Smith
Writers: Marc Abrahams, Alice Shirrell Kaswell, and friends
Ig House Band: Nicholas Carstoiu and the Ig Leaves
Boston Squeezebox Ensemble and
Forces of Nature Maestro: Thomas Michel
Lurking Presences: Roger Kautz, Robin Abrahams, Stanley Eigen
Lighting & Technology: Holly Gettings, Hunter Heinlen
Props and Scenery: Eric Workman
House Sound: David Nickerson, Bay State Sound
Sound Recording: Miles Smith, Frank “Barefoot” Cunningham
Slide Show: John Armstrong, Andrew Smiles, Geri Sullivan
Prize & Props Creation: Eric Workman
Sponsorships Coordinator: Heidi Clark
Provisionary Logisticians: Gus Rancatore and Corky Whiten
HRSFA Coordinator: Nameless Person
HRSPS Coordinators: Person Unnamed

Grand Panjandrum of the Delegations: Louise Sacco
Videography: Seven Generations Video, Bruce Petschek, Brian Galford, Don Schechter, Jon Shedler, Trevor Chamberlain
Lead Diplomats: Susan Kany, Dany Adams
Corps d’Esprit Diplomatique: Gus Rancatore, Corky White, Judith Fagin, Delphine Gabbay, Michelle Barmazel Steinberg, Zach Steinberg et al.
Liaison to the Ig Glorious Persons: Jason Kleinerman
Green Room Oracles: Maria Eliseeva, Heidi Clark
Photographers: Alexey Eliseev, David Holzman, Mike Benveniste
Ig Informal Lectures (Saturday) Coordinator: John Jenkins
Ig Nobel Webmaster: Julia Lunetta
Artwork & Logos: Geri Sullivan, Lois Malone
IgBill Design and Layout: Geri Sullivan

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People

Master of Ceremonies
Marc Abrahams, editor, Annals of Improbable Research (AIR)

Nobel Laureates
most of the following:
Martin Chalfie (Chemistry, 2008)
Carol Greider (Physiology or Medicine, 2009)
Dudley Herschbach (Chemistry 1986)
Eric Maskin (Economics, 2007)
Rich Roberts (Physiology or Medicine, 1993)
Jerome Friedman (Physics, 1990)
and perhaps some others

Welcome Welcome Speaker: Jean Berko Gleason
24/7 Lecturers: Corky White, Eric Maskin, Carol Greider, Martin Chalfie
Keynote Speaker: Dr. Yoshio NakaMats, who was awarded the 2005 Ig Nobel Prize for nutrition, for photographing and retrospectively analyzing every meal he consumed during a period of 34 (now, in 2014, 43) years.
Opera Soloists: Maria Ferrante and Scott Taylor
Opera Orchestra: The Forces of Nature
Pre-Ceremony Band: The Boston Squeezebox Ensemble (Thomas Michel, Colin Ferguson, Patrick Yacono, Ted Sharpe, Betty Widersky)
Opera Narrator: Karen Hopkin
Opera Non-Soloists: The Microbe Choir, abetted by the Nobel Laureates
Pre-Ceremony Mozart Foodie Concert: Boston Squeezebox Ensemble
Mike Monkey: Edgar W. Herwick III
Parade and Opera Announcer: Karen Hopkin
Human Spotlights: Jim Bredt, Natasha Rosenberg
Human Curtain Rods: Maria Eliseeva, Debra Wise
Human Aerodrome: Eric Workman
Referee: Mr. John Barrett
Recipe Reciters: Corky White & Gus Rancatore, and Rich Roberts
V-Chip Monitor: Noted New York Attorney William J. Maloney
New York Attorney William J. Maloney: Himself

Majordomo: Gary Dryfoos
Minordomos: Julia Lunetta, Peaco Todd, Ben Biggs, Sylvia Rosenberg, Eliza Kosoy, Alex Nemirosky, Chris Deter
Performing Chemists: Joost Bonsen, Daniel Rosenberg, et al.
Performing Props Master: Eric Workman
Miss Sweetie Poo: Jasper Milstein
Official Sweeper: Sophie Haas
Hecklers: You, the audience
Goodbye Goodbye Speaker: Jean Berko Gleason

Special Thanks to...


Very special thanks also to the late Alan Symonds, who for more than a decade helped us solve our technical problems, and the late Bob Dushman, who gallantly defended the Ig against a marauder.

** Name misspelled.

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The 24/7 Lectures

Each 24/7 Lecture will be delivered by one of the world’s great thinkers. Each lecture has two parts:

**A complete technical description in 24 SECONDS**

**A clear, accurate summary that anyone can understand in SEVEN WORDS**

The time limit and word limit will be **strictly enforced** by Mr. John Barrett, the Ig Nobel Referee.

This year’s 24/7 lecturers:

- **Corky White** (Professor of anthropology, Boston University, and co-author of *The Ig Nobel Cookbook*, volume 1)
  TOPIC: FOOD

- **Eric Maskin** (Nobel Laureate, Economics, 2007)
  TOPIC: ECONOMICS

- **Carol Greider** (Nobel Laureate, Physiology or Medicine, 2009)
  Topic: TELOMERES

- **Martin Chalfie** (Nobel Laureate, Chemistry, 2008)
  Topic: BIOLUMINESCENCE

...and perhaps one or two others.

NPR Broadcast

On the day after Thanksgiving, listen to the traditional Ig Nobel Broadcast on National Public Radio (NPR)’s *Science Friday* with Ira Flatow. Many of the previous year’s Ig broadcasts are at [www.ScienceFriday.com](http://www.ScienceFriday.com). You can see video highlights of several past ceremonies at [www.improbable.com](http://www.improbable.com).

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“Marc Abrahams is a perfectly calibrated filtration system into which all of science is poured and out of which comes pure, giddy goofball delight. This book is a delicious, addictive treat.”

—Mary Roach, author of *Stiff* and *Packing for Mars*
A list of the new Ig Nobel Prize winners will be posted at WWW.IMPROBABLE.COM

Last Year’s (2013) Ig Nobel Prize Winners

MEDICINE PRIZE: Masateru Uchiyama [JAPAN], Xiangyuan Jin [CHINA, JAPAN], Qi Zhang [JAPAN], Toshihito Hirai [JAPAN], Atsushi Amano [JAPAN], Hisashi Bashuda [JAPAN] and Masanori Niimi [JAPAN, UK], for assessing the effect of listening to opera, on heart transplant patients who are mice.

PSYCHOLOGY PRIZE: Laurent Bègue [FRANCE], Brad Bushman [USA, UK, the NETHERLANDS, POLAND], Oulmann Zerhouni [FRANCE], Baptiste Subra [FRANCE], and Medhi Ourabah [FRANCE], for confirming, by experiment, that people who think they are drunk also think they are attractive.

JOINT PRIZE IN BIOLOGY AND ASTRONOMY: Marie Dacke [SWEDEN, AUSTRALIA], Emily Baird [SWEDEN, AUSTRALIA, GERMANY], Marcus Byrne [SOUTH AFRICA, UK], Clarke Scholtz [SOUTH AFRICA], and Eric J. Warrant [SWEDEN, AUSTRALIA, GERMANY], for discovering that when dung beetles get lost, they can navigate their way home by looking at the Milky Way.

SAFETY ENGINEERING PRIZE: The late Gustano Pizzo [USA], for inventing an electro-mechanical system to trap airplane hijackers — the system drops a hijacker through trap doors, seals him into a package, then drops the encapsulated hijacker through the airplane’s specially-installed bomb bay doors, whence he parachutes to earth, where police, having been alerted by radio, await his arrival.

PHYSICS PRIZE: Alberto Minetti [ITALY, UK, DENMARK, SWITZERLAND], Yuri Ivanenko [ITALY, RUSSIA, FRANCE], Germana Cappellini [ITALY], Nadia Dominici [ITALY, SWITZERLAND], and Francesco Lacquintini [ITALY], for discovering that some people would be physically capable of running across the surface of a pond — if those people and that pond were on the moon.

CHEMISTRY PRIZE: Shinsuke Imai [JAPAN], Nobuaki Tsuge [JAPAN], Muneaki Tomotake [JAPAN], Yoshiaki Nagatome [JAPAN], H. Sawada [JAPAN], Toshiyuki Nagata [JAPAN, GERMANY], and Hidehiko Kumgai [JAPAN], for discovering that the biochemical process by which onions make people cry is even more complicated than scientists previously realized.

ARCHAEOLOGY PRIZE: Brian Crandall [USA] and Peter Stahl [CANADA, USA], for parboiling a dead shrew, and then swallowing the shrew without chewing, and then carefully examining everything excreted during subsequent days — all so they could see which bones would dissolve inside the human digestive system, and which bones would not.

PEACE PRIZE: Alexander Lukashenko, president of Belarus, for making it illegal to applaud in public, AND to the Belarus State Police, for arresting a one-armed man for applauding.

PROBABILITY PRIZE: Bert Tolkamp [UK, the NETHERLANDS], Marie Haskell [UK], Fritha Langford [UK, CANADA], David Roberts [UK], and Colin Morgan [UK], for making two related discoveries: First, that the longer a cow has been lying down, the more likely that cow will soon stand up; and Second, that once a cow stands up, you cannot easily predict how soon that cow will lie down again.

PUBLIC HEALTH PRIZE: Kasian Bhanganada, Tu Chayavatana, Chumporn Pongnumkul, Anunt Tomnukayakul, Piyasukol Sakolsatayadom, Krit Komaratal, and Henry Wilde, for the medical techniques described in their report “Surgical Management of an Epidemic of Penile Amputations in Siam” — techniques which they recommend, except in cases where the amputated penis had been partially eaten by a duck. [THAILAND]
SANDERS THEATRE INFORMATION

Sanders Theatre is managed by
Memorial Hall/Lowell Hall Complex at Harvard University
45 Quincy Street, Room 027, Cambridge, MA 02138
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For history of the building, visit www.fas.harvard.edu/memhall

RESTROOMS are located on the lower level.

LATECOMERS will be seated at the discretion of management.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND RECORDING of any kind is not permitted in Sanders Theatre. Equipment may be confiscated.

Lost and Found Call 617.496.4595 or visit Memorial Hall 027. Harvard University is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

PARKING
There is no parking at Sanders Theatre.

Free parking for most events is available at Broadway Garage, corner of Broadway and Felton Street, from one hour pre-performance to one hour post. Parking for some student events will be at 52 Oxford Street Garage.

Access for Patrons with Disabilities
Accessible seating can be arranged through the Box Office. Sanders Theatre is equipped with Assistive Listening Devices, available 30 minutes prior to events.

Accessible parking for events: There is no parking at Sanders Theatre itself. Patrons may be dropped off in the circle on the Kirkland Street side of Sanders Theatre near the accessible entrance. We encourage patrons to park at either the Broadway Garage or 52 Oxford Street Lot. The Broadway Garage is fully accessible and there are curb cuts at all crosswalks between the garage and the Sanders Theatre.

If necessary, a limited number of accessible parking spaces may be available in nearby location by advance arrangement. It is extremely difficult to honor requests received less than 5 business days prior to an event. Please plan ahead.

To arrange for an Accessible Parking Space in a nearby parking lot, contact:
1. Harvard University Parking Office at 495-3772 AND/OR
2. University Disability Services at 495-1859, Mon-Fri 9am-5pm or email: disabilityservices@harvard.edu

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Advance Sales: Holyoke Center Arcade, Harvard Square
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Calendar of events, online sales and current hours: www.boxoffice.harvard.edu

Pre-Performance Sales: Sanders Theatre
On performance days: Opens at noon for matinees and 5pm for evening performances. Closes 30 minutes after curtain.

Upcoming Ig/Improbable Events!

For upcoming Ig Nobel / Improbable Research events (including the annual Improbable Research session at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science; the annual U.K Ig Nobel tours of the UK and Scandinavia, etc., see: www.improbable.com
E-books are in the AIR (and vice versa)

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