

Lee Smolin describes a new model of the universe (w/ Video)

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Time is real, the laws of physics can change and our universe could be involved in a cosmic natural selection process in which new universes are born from black holes, renowned physicist and author Lee Smolin said in a talk at the Institute of Physics on 22 May.

His views are contrary to the widely-accepted model of the universe in which time is an illusion and the [laws of physics](#) are fixed, as held by

Einstein and many contemporary [physicists](#) as well as some ancient philosophers, Prof. Smolin said. Acknowledging that his statements were provocative, he explained how he had come to change his mind about the nature of reality and had moved away from the idea that the assumptions that apply to observations in a laboratory can be extrapolated to the whole universe.

The debate had sometimes taken a metaphysical turn, he said, in which the idea that time is not real had led some to conclude that everything that humans value – such as free will, imagination and agency – is also an illusion. "Is it any wonder that so many people don't buy science? This is what is at stake," he said.

Prof. Smolin's talk drew on his new book, [Time Reborn: from the crisis of physics to the future of the universe](#). He is a founding faculty member at the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics in Toronto.

Provided by Institute of Physics

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