

Swiss Nobel Physics laureates hail win as 'simply extraordinary'

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Credit: Wikipedia

Two Swiss scientists [who on Tuesday won the Nobel Physics Prize](#) along with a Canadian-American colleague hailed their win as "simply extraordinary".

Swiss scientists Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz, who shared half the 2019 prize "for the discovery of an exoplanet orbiting a solar-type star", said the discovery was "the most exciting of our careers".

"Being awarded the Nobel Prize (for this discovery) is just simply extraordinary," they said in a statement issued by the University of Geneva.

Canadian-American James Peebles won the other half of the prize for "theoretical discoveries in physical cosmology".

Mayor was a professor at Geneva University and Queloz was his doctorate student when the pair on October 6, 1995 "revolutionised the world of astrophysics by announcing the first discovery of a planet situated outside of our solar system," the university said.

The very first exoplanet was named 51 Pegasi b.

News of its discovery "was like a bomb exploding in astrophysics circles", the university said.

Today, around 2,000 exoplanets have been identified.

Geneva University President Yves Flückiger applauded Tuesday's announcement.

"This is a fantastic recognition of the work accomplished by Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz," he said in the statement.

"It is testimony to the quality of their scientific process, their rigour but also to a creativity and a capacity to think—and to search—outside of the beaten path, which is the source of the greatest discoveries," he said.

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