Fundamental physics is poised to take a great leap forward in coming years. An extraordinary instrument — the Large Hadron Collider, or LHC — will enable us to see whether some gorgeous ideas about the ultimate laws of physics correctly describe reality. Nature has given us hints: Is she teaching, or teasing? In a multimedia presentation including rap video, spectacular images, some amazing ideas, and a few jokes, I’ll demonstrate why this is an especially exciting time to be a physicist — or a curious person.

Frank Wilczek has received many prizes for his work in physics, including the Nobel Prize of 2004 for work he did as a graduate student at Princeton University, when he was only 21 years old. He is known, among other things, for the discovery of asymptotic freedom, the development of quantum chromodynamics, the invention of axions, and the exploration of new kinds of quantum statistics (anyons). Much in demand for public lectures to a wide range of audiences, Dr. Wilczek has been anthologized in the Norton Anthology of Light Verse and twice in Best American Science Writing (2003, 2005). Frank is currently the Herman Freshbach professor of physics at MIT.