



Infinity Beckoned: Adventuring Through the Inner Solar System, 1969–1989 (Outward Odyssey: A People's History of Spaceflight)

By Jay Gallentine

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Infinity Beckoned illuminates a critical period of space history when humans dared an expansive leap into the inner solar system. With an irreverent and engaging style, Jay Gallentine conveys the trials and triumphs of the people on the ground who conceived and engineered the missions that put robotic spacecraft on the heavenly bodies nearest our own. These dedicated space pioneers include such individuals as Soviet Russia's director of planetary missions, who hated his job but kept at it for fifteen years, enduring a paranoid bureaucracy where even the copy machines were strictly regulated.

Based on numerous interviews, Gallentine delivers a rich variety of stories involving the men and women, American and Russian, responsible for such groundbreaking endeavors as the Mars Viking missions of the 1970s and the Soviet Venera flights to Venus in the 1980s. From the dreamers responsible for the Venus landing who discovered that dropping down through heavy clouds of sulfuric acid and 900-degree heat was best accomplished by *surfing* to the five-man teams puppeteering the Soviet moon rovers from a top-secret, off-the-map town without a name, the people who come to life in these pages persevered in often trying, thankless circumstances. Their legacy is our better understanding of our own planet and our place in the cosmos.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Based on numerous interviews, Gallentine delivers a rich variety of stories involving the men and women, American and Russian, responsible for such groundbreaking endeavors as the Mars Viking missions of the 1970s and the Soviet Venera flights to Venus in the 1980s. . . . Their legacy is our better understanding of our own planet and our place in the cosmos."—*Lunar and Planetary Information Bulletin*
(*Lunar and Planetary Information Bulletin*)

"In this lively and memorable journey, Jay Gallentine captures the amazing people behind history's robotic explorers, who journeyed where no machines had gone before."—Andrew Chaikin, author of *A Man on the Moon* and *A Passion for Mars*
(Andrew Chaikin 2015-03-05)

"Jay Gallentine has written a truly engaging account of lunar and planetary exploration in the halcyon days of the 1970s and 1980s, when scientists and engineers were boldly pushing into the unknown. . . . [He brings] to life the struggles, triumphs, and disappointments of the first great era of deep space exploration. Highly recommended."—Asif Siddiqi, author of *The Red Rockets' Glare: Spaceflight and the Soviet Imagination, 1857–1957*

(Asif Siddiqi 2015-03-05)

"*Infinity Beckoned* is a stirring account of [the robotic race to the moon, Venus, and Mars] and its bobs and weaves over more than thirty years as both nations expanded knowledge of the solar system, expended resources for science, and competed for stature on the world stage."—Roger Launius, associate director for collections and curatorial affairs at the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution

(Roger Launius 2015-03-05)

"With *Infinity Beckoned* you'll read a big piece of history you never even knew was there."—Jeffrey Kluger, coauthor of *Apollo 13*
(Jeffrey Kluger 2015-03-05)

About the Author

Jay Gallentine is a historian and filmmaker who has spent more than ten years researching the history of unmanned spaceflight. He is the author of *Ambassadors from Earth: Pioneering Explorations with Unmanned Spacecraft* (Nebraska, 2009), winner of the 2009 Eugene M. Emme Award for Astronautical Literature. Bobak Ferdowsi is a systems engineer from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

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