

The Collected Works of William P. Thurston with Commentary

Benson Farb, David Gabai, and
Steven P. Kerckhoff, Editors.
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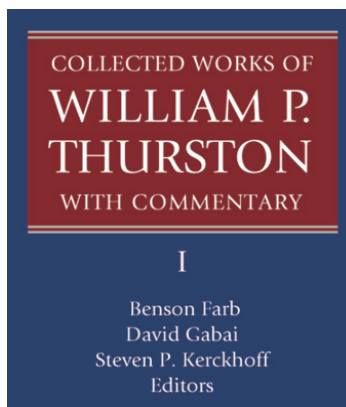
Francis Bonahon

Bill Thurston (1946–2012) was one of the giants of twentieth century mathematics. His best-known work, and most likely the one that had the most profound impact on many branches of mathematics, is centered on his groundbreaking results and insights on what is now known as the Thurston Geometrization Program for 3-dimensional manifolds. However, this was only a part of his oeuvre, which consistently displayed great breadth and breathtaking originality.

The four-volume set of his collected works brings together all of Thurston's writings, many of which were never formally published as books or journal articles. They go from his 1967 senior thesis as an undergraduate at New College to the mathematics that he was still developing at the time of his untimely passing.

In addition to an overview of the prodigious scientific output of a great mathematician, these collected works offer a unique glimpse into the originality of how he approached a broad range of problems.

This massive four-volume set, with



over 2300 pages, is very different from other collected works. Those tend to feel like a mausoleum, where one can admire the greatness of a mathematician through a body of work that has already appeared elsewhere. This collection includes a lot of unpublished material, often in relatively unpolished form. The editors have grouped these articles by themes.

A very nice feature is that each section begins with a few introductory pages on its theme, providing great perspective as well as occasional historic information.

It is a great tribute to the genius of one of the greatest mathematicians of all time, as well as a great resource for today's and tomorrow's mathematicians.

There is much to learn here. One can also be impressed by the amazing breadth of this collection, and by the prodigious number of great results that it includes.

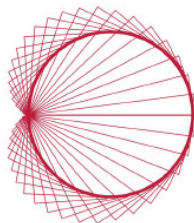


Robots II

Si los vínculos entre seres humanos resultan tan complicados es porque -más allá de las jerarquías sociales- todos somos en potencia igual de inteligentes, de rebeldes e impredecibles. Para vivir en paz hace falta crear acuerdos y respetarlos, y aun así sabemos que esa paz será siempre frágil y condicionada, que incluso nuestro propio hermano, llevado por los celos o por la avaricia, podría asestar un golpe mortal sobre nuestra cabeza. En cambio los androides, la aspiradora, las muñecas sexuales, los escorts mecánicos y los cirujanos electrónicos no se cansan, no protestan, no se ofenden ni necesitan anteojos; son mucho más precisos que nosotros, carecen de orgullo y de deseos, y por lo tanto son impermeables a las tentaciones que nos caracterizan. Los robots son entonces un reflejo de nuestras carencias, de nuestras esperanzas, ciertamente, pero también de nuestros miedos.

Guadalupe Nettel

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