

## Galileo! Galileo!

**Holly Trechter**

**Jane Donovan**

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Holly Trechter and Jane Donovan's graphic novel *Galileo! Galileo!* introduces children to NASA's mission to Jupiter. Its colorful spreads and clear diagrams recap half a century of aeronautics research and space missions.

In the 1950s, intrigued by radio waves coming from Jupiter, NASA started planning a mission. The Galileo project suffered numerous setbacks, however, including a computer hack, technical problems, an earthquake, and all space missions being put on hold after the *Challenger* disaster. The unmanned *Galileo* spacecraft, launched at last in 1989, sent back data on asteroids, the ozone hole, and Jupiter's atmosphere and moons. The orbiter was retired via a controlled crash on Jupiter's surface in 2003.

For the book, Trechter drew on knowledge gained during her internship at the NASA Ames History Archives. It conveys the science of space travel in an understandable manner. Its mentions of US politics and wider historical events from the years the spacecraft was in development create a helpful context, revealing, for instance, that Carl Sagan was part of a mass letter-writing campaign to Ronald Reagan's White House to save the Galileo enterprise after a budget slash.

The book is narrated in an informal, witty style by Galileo Galilei, the seventeenth century Italian astronomer who gave the mission its name. His appearance mixes historical accuracy with whimsy: he wears a doublet and hose, but also has a halo and wings. Heavenly bodies and other inanimate objects also get a chance to speak, while modern characters are drawn in a style that's the *Jetsons* meets the *Muppets*. The book's background colors are vibrant, ranging from purple to orange.

A final section of reflection questions and a joke makes the text ideal for classroom use or parent-child reading. *Galileo! Galileo!* brings space travel down to earth through comics.

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