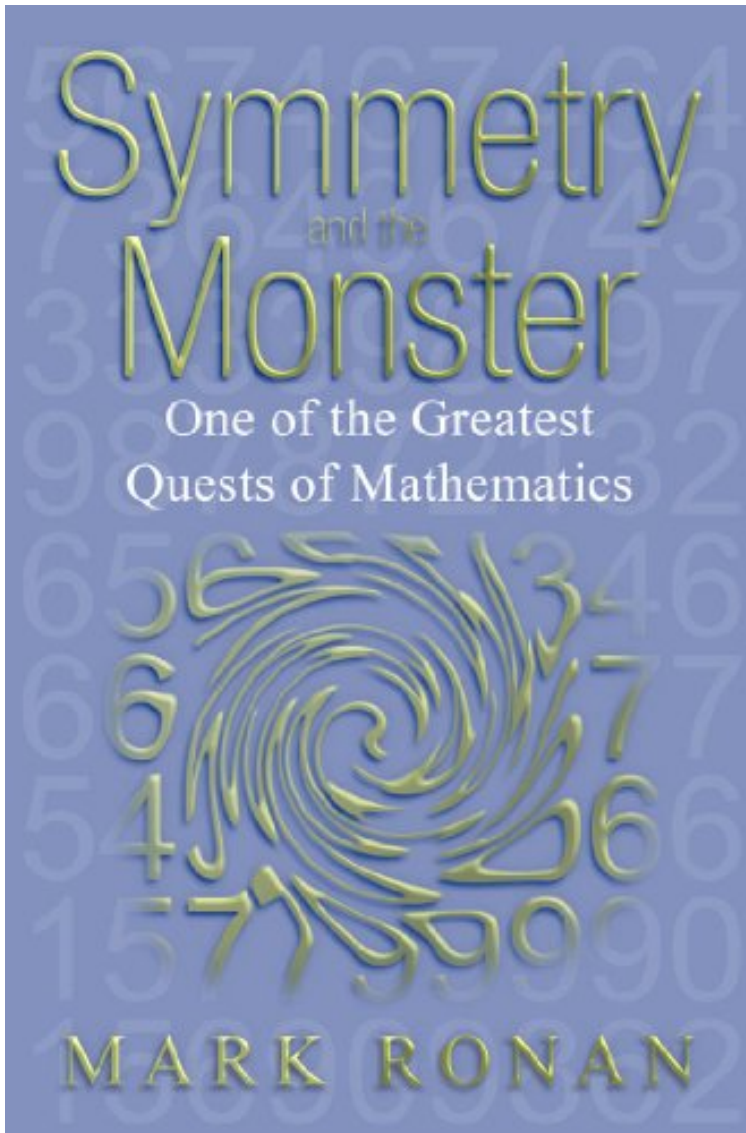


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Symmetry and the Monster: One of the greatest quests of mathematics



Par Mark Ronan
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurImagine a giant snowflake in 196,884 dimensions...This is the story of a mathematical quest that began two hundred years ago in revolutionary France, led to the biggest collaboration ever between mathematicians across the world, and revealed the 'Monster' - not monstrous at all, but a structure of exquisite beauty and complexity. Told here for the first time in accessible prose, it is a story that involves brilliant yet tragic characters, curious number 'coincidences' that led to breakthroughs in the mathematics of symmetry, and strange crystals that reach into many dimensions. And it is a story that is not yet over, for we have yet to understand the deep significance of the Monster - and its tantalizing hints of connections with the

physical structure of spacetime. Once we understand the full nature of the Monster, we may well have revealed a whole new and deeper understanding of the nature of our Universe. Revue de presse Ronan unfolds his story with admirable verve and clarity... [His] exposition includes entertaining glimpses of the personalities involved in this extraordinary quest, but best of all gives an admirable amount of detail concerning the actual substance of their work. (Peter Pesic, TLS)...accessible, artfully written...it stresses the human side of the drama. Though I have been a long-time participant in the story, I found myself learning much in every chapter and not wanting to put the book down. (Robert L. Griess Jr.) Ronan does a good job of describing the mathematics in broad strokes and giving a flavour of what is happening and - more importantly - why mathematicians get excited about these questions. (The Mathematical Association of America) This book tells for the first time the fascinating story of the biggest theorem ever to have been proved. Mark Ronan graphically describes not only the last few decades of the chase and the intriguing characters who led it, but also some of the more interesting byways, including my personal favourite, the one I called 'Monstrous Moonshine'. (John H. Conway, F.R.S.) Ronan tells a good story, and in doing so he paints a convincing picture of how mathematicians conduct their research. (Gareth Jones, London Mathematical Society Newsletter) Presentation de l'auteur Imagine a giant snowflake in 196,884 dimensions... This is the story of a mathematical quest that began two hundred years ago in revolutionary France, led to the biggest collaboration ever between mathematicians across the world, and revealed the 'Monster' - not monstrous at all, but a structure of exquisite beauty and complexity. Told here for the first time in accessible prose, it is a story that involves brilliant yet tragic characters, curious number 'coincidences' that led to breakthroughs in the mathematics of symmetry, and strange crystals that reach into many dimensions. And it is a story that is not yet over, for we have yet to understand the deep significance of the Monster - and its tantalizing hints of connections with the physical structure of spacetime. Once we understand the full nature of the Monster, we may well have revealed a whole new and deeper understanding of the nature of our Universe.