Title: **SCIENTISTS ON FAITH**

Richard Fortey, Paleontologist, Natural History Museum, London:
My personal beliefs grow out of my scientific knowledge. I've spent most of my working life studying the rich biodiversity of life and its long four-billion-year history. For me, the most joyful thing about the world is its shared complexity, and that's probably the spiritual basis that I need.

Francis Collins, Director, Human Genome Project:
I'm a scientist that believes the tools of science are the way to understand the natural world, and one needs to be rigorous about that. But I'm also a believer in a personal God. I find the scientific worldview and the spiritual worldview to be entirely complementary. And I find it quite wonderful to be able to have both of those worldviews existing in my life in any given day, because each illuminates the other.

Richard Fortey, Paleontologist, Natural History Museum, London:
Many good scientists have a very strong religious faith. There is nothing inherently contradictory about both being a scientist and having religious faith. The problems, it seem to me, come when the faith actually intercedes itself into the scientific process itself.

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Eugenie Scott, Executive Director, National Center for Science Education:
Intelligent design-creationism is a more recent form of creationism in which the idea is offered that there are some things in nature that are just so incredibly complex that they could not be the result of natural cause.

Kenneth Miller, Biologist, Brown University:
The basic premise of intelligent design is that a supernatural Creator or designer, operating by means that are above our ability to understand, somehow produced the changes that we see in living things, the instructions in the genetic code, the proteins and molecules and molecular machines that make up the cell.

Francis Collins, Director, Human Genome Project:
Essentially this then puts God in the gaps. And it says, if there's some part of science that you can't understand that must be where God is. Historically, that hasn't gone well. And if science does figure out—and I believe it's very likely that science will—how it is that the complexity of the eye came into being one step at a time, perhaps beginning with a single-light sensitive cell and gradually resulting in a very complex organ, with each of those steps having its own natural selection ability, then where is God? If we've put him in a box—if we said okay, God has to be in this particular part of nature and science explains that—then we have potentially done great harm to people's faith.

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Kenneth Miller, Biologist, Brown University:
Science is the process by which we learn about the natural world, and it's a process that's driven by something really powerful which is the objective reality of nature. Because science is so powerful and so useful and so productive, everybody has tried to use science to their own ends. And it's not surprising, therefore, that that people leading non-scientific movements—social movements, political movements and even religious movements—have appealed to science to bolster their cause.
Georgia Dunston, Microbiologist, Howard University:
Science says, it demands that you test it. And that's what makes the science exciting and takes it out of the realm of just, what some would say, blind faith. It's a complementary, because if it's true, it has to sustain the test.

Inter-title:

*There is a grandeur in this view of life.*
– Charles Darwin

Francisco Ayala, Evolutionary Biologist, University of California, Irvine:
The great contribution of Darwin to science is precisely that he provided an explanation of the origin and diversity of organisms, and therefore now everything in the world—organic as well as the living world—everything could be explained by science.

Niles Eldredge, Paleontologist, American Museum of Natural History:
So I think that Darwin's idea—coming along after 10,000 years of living independently of the natural world—coming along and reminding us that we're connected to the natural world was a bit shocking. I think though, I agree with him personally, and this is where my personal feelings comes in, that there is grandeur, as he put it: “There is grandeur in this view of life.” It's wonderful for me to feel connected to all the rest of the living things on the planet, present day and in the deep past and beyond that to the basic fundamental units and history of the universe in which we live.
THANK YOU
TO OUR PARTICIPANTS:

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