

Exploring Mars with Curiosity

Vortrag

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On August 6, 2012, the 1-ton Curiosity rover was lowered by ropes to the surface of Mars as part of a daring new landing scheme. Curiosity carries more than 70 kg of advanced scientific instruments capable of searching for organic molecules and of studying the climate history of our neighboring planet.

Curiosity's landing site is unparalleled in its diversity: After landing on an ancient streambed in the middle of 150-km diameter Gale crater, the rover is traveling towards Mount Sharp, a 5-km tall sedimentary feature, to learn about the wetter and warmer epochs on the Red Planet.



In this talk I will describe the Curiosity rover and the team's initial scientific discoveries, and I will share some of my personal experiences from this great adventure.

Roger Wiens is the leader of Curiosity's ChemCam instrument team. He was responsible for developing the laser instrument that vaporizes small amounts of rock and soil up to 7 m from the rover to analyze their compositions. He is affiliated with Los Alamos National Laboratory in the state of New Mexico, United States. Dr. Wiens' experiences are described in the book, «Red Rover: Inside the Story of Robotic Space Exploration from Genesis to the Mars Rover Curiosity».