

## 2023—2024 ASTROPHYSICS SEMINAR SERIES

**The sky and other ghosts: Astro2020, Great Observatories,  
and the looming lost decades of discovery**

This is the most remarkable moment in the recent history of our field: *JWST* is our new great time machine in the sky, poised to write new chapters of the cosmic story. It has launched in the wake of a visionary Astro2020 Report, whose priorities for space- and ground-based projects are eclipsed only by State of the Profession actions to empower all people who animate the enterprise of discovery. NASA and NSF are now charged with manifesting these priorities into great engines of discovery. *Roman* marches toward launch, Rubin is on the verge of first light, and our national community must never forget that we are *profoundly* lucky as a field, enjoying enormous support by the taxpaying public (and even policymakers in DC) that share in our wonderment of the cosmos. We are, however, walking a knife's edge of *completely* losing the decade and far beyond. This talk will begin with an urgent and fairly gloomy summary of the looming threats to *global* (not just national) efforts meant to grow cosmic discovery into the latter half of this century. It will end with optimism, a plea, and a discussion with the audience about *why* we build telescopes, and why grand pursuits of discovery are worth the cost.

**Tuesday, October 10th**

3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

CAS 502

**Grant Tremblay**

Harvard University