



Infinity Beckoned: Adventuring Through the Inner Solar System, 1969-1989 (Outward Odyssey: A People's History of Spaceflight)

Jay Gullentine

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Infinity Beckoned illuminates a critical period of space history when humans dared an expansive leap into the inner solar system. With an irreverent and engaging style, Jay Gallentine conveys the trials and triumphs of the people on the ground who conceived and engineered the missions that put robotic spacecraft on the heavenly bodies nearest our own. These dedicated space pioneers include such individuals as Soviet Russia's director of planetary missions, who hated his job but kept at it for fifteen years, enduring a paranoid bureaucracy where even the copy machines were strictly regulated.

Based on numerous interviews, Gallentine delivers a rich variety of stories involving the men and women, American and Russian, responsible for such groundbreaking endeavors as the Mars Viking missions of the 1970s and the Soviet Venera flights to Venus in the 1980s. From the dreamers responsible for the Venus landing who discovered that dropping down through heavy clouds of sulfuric acid and 900-degree heat was best accomplished by *surfing to* the five-man teams puppeteering the Soviet moon rovers from a top-secret, off-the-map town without a name, the people who come to life in these pages persevered in often trying, thankless circumstances. Their legacy is our better understanding of our own planet and our place in the cosmos.

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