



SHE ASTRONOMER

# The stars as cultural objects

Astronomy has influenced many aspects of culture, throughout every age and in all civilisations. The apparent regularity of the stars and the immensity of the star-filled sky have inspired deep reflection and powerful emotion which has reverberated in poetry, novels, music, painting, architecture, photography, cinema and comics.

## Comics

**Sailor Moon** is a manga comic created by Naoko Takeuchi in 1992. The series popularised the 'Magical Girls' genre. Japanese illustrator Naoko Takeuchi named her characters after stars in the Solar System. She gave each planet a guardian to protect it from attacks from other galaxies.



Joyce Scrivner

## Science Fiction

The American **Ursula K. Le Guin** is one of the most celebrated authors in the field of science fiction. She was just 11 years old when she sent her first story to a well known science fiction magazine. It was rejected but she was not put off. One of her best-known works is *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969), which won a number of major literary awards.



## Poetry

"Still bright, the pure light from the sky,  
Bright is the Moon, and bright the stars,  
And bright, th'ephemeral flashes are  
That lift the air; their fires purify."

Fragment of the sonnet to the astronomer Eusebio Kino  
17th century

**Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.**

"From the four corners of our great  
planet - which is young, despite its many  
lines - thousands of busy, searching  
minds are expanding the fields of  
science, already so vast and lush that  
they confound reason, to keep their date  
with progress at its temple of 100 doors."



"Desde los cuatro puntos  
cardinales"  
1884  
**Rosalía de Castro.**

## Cinema



The Universe and its objects has inspired many films. In **Ágora** (2009) by Alejandro Amenábar, the central character is Hypatia of Alexandria, a woman who appears as a symbol of the conflict between faith and science. In **Contact** (1997), which was based on the novel by Carl Sagan, the protagonist investigates the existence of intelligent life elsewhere in the Universe.

