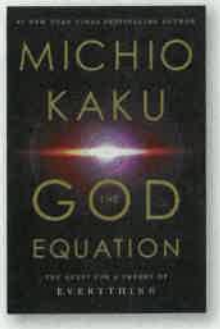
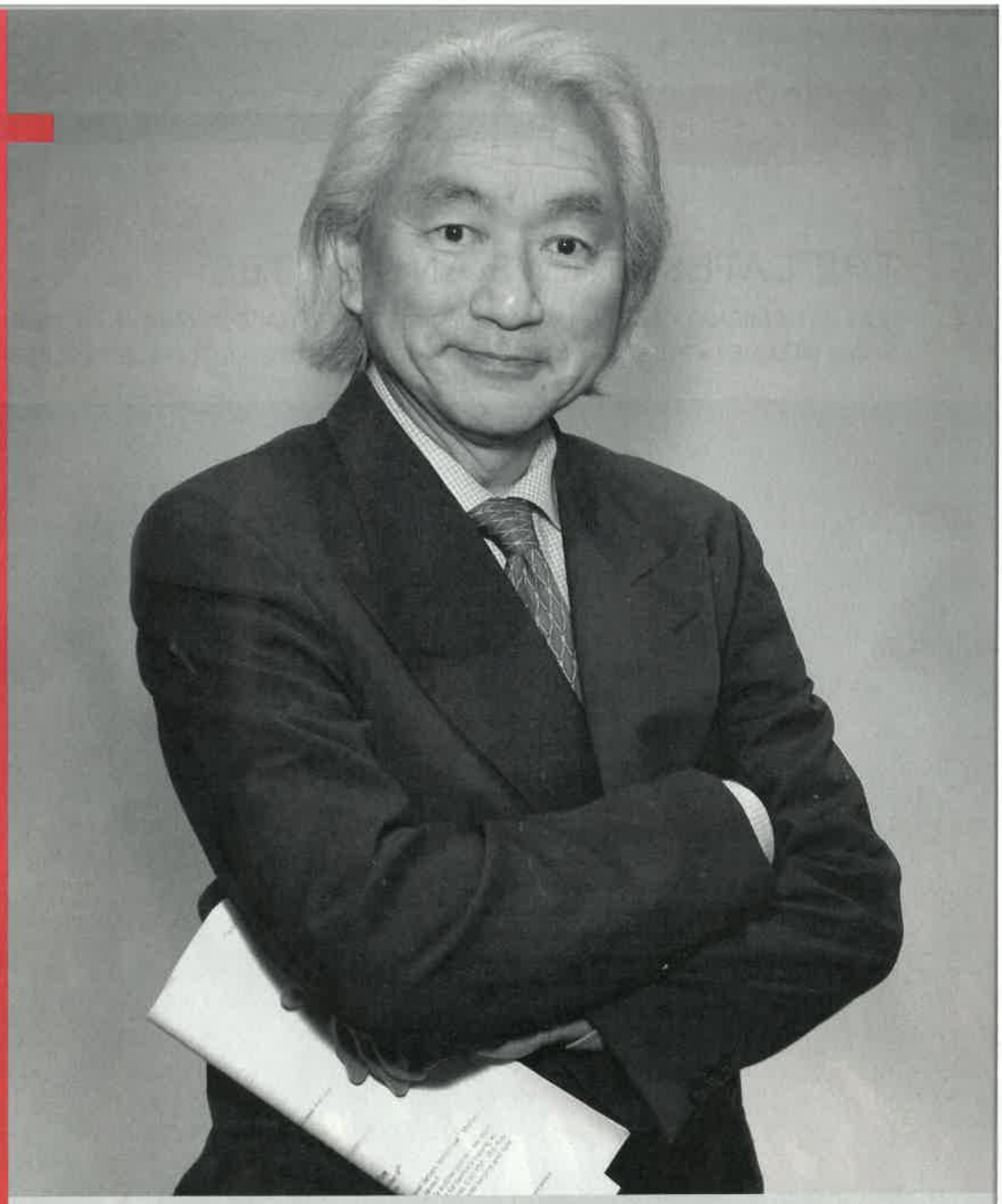
Q+A



THE THEORETICAL PHYSICIST TALKS ABOUT THE BOOK THAT ALBERT EINSTEIN COULDN'T FINISH, HIS FAVORITE SCI-FI UNIVERSE AND THE LONG-SOUGHT EFFORT TO UNITE THE FORCES OF NATURE IN A SINGLE EQUATION.



Michio Kaku's Lifelong Quest

Even with a smartphone and Google at your fingertips, some things are just hard to wrap your brain around. Take, for example, the seemingly improbable idea that energy does not flow continuously, but is released in discrete packets called quanta. Or the mind-numbing notion that the entirety of the cosmos, spanning some 93 billion light-years across, may be just one in a multitude of parallel universes.

That's where Michio Kaku comes in. The theoretical physicist has built a robust secondary career as a mass-market science popularizer, untangling some of physics' knottiest concepts and streamlining them for the public. His latest book, *The God Equation* (Doubleday, 2021), chronicles the long quest to create a "theory of everything" that would combine Einstein's model of general relativity with quantum theory, and potentially unlock new understandings of space and time.

Kaku caught up with *Discover* to chat about what fascinated him about this quest as a young child, why subatomic particles are like notes on a vibrating string, and what we can learn from science fiction.