

## Burt Rutan's Race to Space: The Magician of Mojave and His Flying Innovations

Dan Linehan, Mike Melvill



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Years ago, Burt Rutan told a reporter for *Popular Mechanics*, "If we make a courageous decision like the goal and program we kicked off for Apollo in 1961, we will see our children or grandchildren in outposts on other planets." Legendary science-fiction writer Arthur C. Clark would later recall Rutan's quote in a piece he wrote about SpaceShipOne and comment, "Fortunately, we need not rely solely on governments for expanding humanity's presence beyond the Earth."

*Burt Rutan's Race to Space* showcases Rutan's herculean efforts to do just that. Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum displays his most celebrated achievements, including SpaceShipOne, which won the coveted \$10 million Ansari X Prize for private spaceflight; Voyager, which hangs with SpaceShipOne in the Milestones of Flight gallery; the Virgin Atlantic GlobalFlyer; and the VariEze. His many aerospace innovations preceding his most recently conceived designs, SpaceShipTwo and WhiteKnightTwo, chronicle a progressive, step-by-step attempt to break barriers with engineering know-how and a wondrous imagination, all the while remaining on the forefront of the burgeoning private spaceflight industry. Rutan's X Prize triumph and subsequent spacecraft designs are not a beginning, nor an end, but are steps in Burt Rutan's continuing adventure to expand humanity's presence beyond the Earth and into space.

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