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Foreword

PREP'97, the yearly Symposium on Preparative Chromatography, took place 1–4 June 1997 at the Georgetown University Conference Center, in Washington DC, USA. As the previous meetings of this series, PREP'97 was attended by approximately 300 participants. This year, 44 oral communications were presented and 33 poster contributions were exhibited and discussed. In addition, an exhibition of the equipment, material, and products used in preparative chromatography was organized to offer the attendant an opportunity to get more familiar with recent technical developments. Three symposium workshops, two manufacturers workshops and two roundtable discussions were organized the Sunday before the meeting, during the lunches and the afternoon pauses. The format of these workshops, seminars and discussions was conducive to intense exchanges of ideas. The topics selected emphasized practical and concrete considerations, thus complementing the more fundamental aspect of the classical part of the program.

Preparative chromatography is a complex process at all levels, from its principles to method development, implementation, and equipment design. The optimization of its parameters is a multiparameter, nonlinear problem, still incompletely mastered. Besides, the successful development of a new application requires the understanding of many physico-chemical phenomena. A comprehensive knowledge of the state of the art in materials, equipment, and products, especially stationary phases, is necessary. Thus, an exhibit with ample opportunity for contact with manufacturers and suppliers complements well a scientific meeting. With process chromatography having been practiced in industry for nearly fifteen

years, many can now use successfully the concepts of tag-along and displacement effects to increase production rate. However, our level of understanding is deepening. The rapid development of fast computers is permitting the use of general programs for the optimization of the experimental conditions of a new separation. The advent of the simulated moving bed unit will make modeling by computer a necessity. Only a rich scientific program permits the clarification of the issues and variables necessary to utilize a modern technology. The quality of the presentations made at PREP'97 demonstrates the vigor of the research effort undergone in both academy and industry as well as the importance of the separation problems encountered in various applications.

The help of Dr. Firoz Antia (Merck and Co), Dr. John Frenz (Genentech), Dr. Giorgio Carta (The University of Virginia), Dr. Jana Jacobson (Lygramura), Dr. Anita Katti (NaPro BioTherapeutics), Mr. Klaus Lohse (BTR Separations), and Dr. Joan Newburger (R.W. Johnson Pharmaceutical Research Institute), the members of the organization committee of PREP'97, in the review of the abstracts submitted and in the organization of the program was greatly appreciated. The sponsorship of the Washington Chromatography Discussion Group is gratefully acknowledged, as well as the support extended by Prochrom and TechniKrom for the organization of the social program. It is a pleasure to thank Mrs. Janet Cunningham, Symposium Manager, whose organizational skills allowed its successful operation. The present issue of the *Journal of Chromatography A* includes the papers submitted during the symposium. These papers represent the nature and intensity of the research carried out in preparative

chromatography. We hope that this volume will prove useful to those involved in this field. We are grateful to the Editor of the Symposium Volumes and to the editorial staff of the *Journal of Chromatog-*

raphy A for their professionalism and dedication in producing this volume.

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Georges Guiochon