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Foreword

The Seventeenth International Symposium on the Separation and Analysis of Proteins, Peptides, and Polynucleotides (ISPPP'97), was held in Rockville, MD, USA, a suburb of Washington, DC, USA and the home of an alphabet soup of government agencies (NIH, FDA, USDA), 26–29 October 1997. The symposium was attended by 175 registered delegates from 15 countries. The meeting comprised 14 different sessions, including 37 lecture presentations, 102 poster presentations, and two discussion sessions. Special seminar/workshops were presented by the Hewlett-Packard Co., Waters Corp., Bio-Rad Laboratories, and PerSeptive Biosystems. Several students were awarded student scholarships to attend the meeting sponsored by Elsevier Science and the California Separation Science Society (CaSSS). Seed sponsorship money was provided by the Forum for Separation Science.

The three-day symposium explored such state-of-the-art topics as proteomics, combinatorial techniques, high-throughput screening, and evolving column technologies. The focus of the meeting is on the use of modern separation and characterization technologies in the rapidly developing field of bio-analytical science. Symposium sessions were dedicated to nucleic acid separations, protein analytical methods, microscale/capillary methods, separation of synthetic peptides, and mass spectrometry applications. This diversity of analytical methodologies, combined with the focus on practical applications of these techniques, provided valuable insights to many of the participants. The extensive poster sessions and the social program, which included evening receptions and a banquet, gave attendees ample time to interact with each other in non-formal, intimate settings for technology discussions and story-sharing.

The ISPPP symposia have emphasized these opportunities for personal conversations and exchanges of recent advances among the participants.

The symposium and social program was sponsored by the Hewlett-Packard Company and Waters Corporation which was greatly appreciated by the participants and the Organizing Committee. In addition to these major sponsors, the following companies co-sponsored the meeting and are recognized for their valuable contributions to the success of the program: Affinity Sensors, Bio-Rad Laboratories, EKA Chemicals, Michrom Bioresources, PerSeptive Biosystems, and Sialomed, Inc.

I wish to thank the Secretariat of the meeting, Janet Cunningham and Cheryl Popp of Barr Enterprises, for their many efforts in support of the meeting and for their guidance to me in the many details required for holding an excellent symposium. Special appreciation is accorded to the members of the Scientific Committee: Professor Milton T.W. Hearn (Australia), Professor Robert S. Hodges (Canada), Professor Alois Jungbauer (Austria), Professor Fred Regnier (USA), and Professor Klaus Unger (Germany). A special note of thanks goes to the Organizing Committee in the USA: Bill Hancock, Barry Boyes, Brian Bidlingmeyer, Robert Ricker, and Stephen Coates for their work in establishing an excellent scientific program.

Finally, I thank the many speakers and participants at the meeting for their invaluable participation and invite them to attend future ISPPP symposia to continue their growth in knowledge and to share with others the recent advances in the separation and characterization of biologically important molecules.

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