

Foreword

HPCE 2004

The 17th International Symposium on Microscale Separations and Capillary Electrophoresis, HPCE 2004 was held in Salzburg (Austria) from 8 to 12 February 2004.

The technical program followed the traditional formula starting on Sunday with three full day Short Courses, led and tutored by experts in the field. The topics were “*Multi-dimensional Pressure Driven and Electrically driven Liquid Separation Methods in Proteome Analysis*”, “*Hyphenation of Microseparations with MS Instrumentations*”, and “*Capillary Electrophoresis: Method Evaluation and Validation in Context to Industrial Application*”.

During the remaining four days, the technical program comprised ten lecture sessions including eighty-two oral presentations in the form of plenary, keynote and research papers. Also of high scientific value were the four poster sessions where two hundred and seventy contributions were presented and discussed. Overall, about four hundred and fifty attendees, including the exhibitors, actively participated in the stimulating technical program.

Twenty companies, including publishers such as Elsevier, Wiley-VCH and Springer, exhibited their products and felt very well integrated in the symposium program.

A highlight of the symposium was also the *Widmer Award Ceremony* and Session in which the awardee, Prof. Barry Karger, received the prestigious prize; co-sponsored by the Swiss Chemical Society and Novartis. The laudatio was given by Fritz Erni and Michael Sägebath.

Barry Karger presented the timely and very stimulating Widmer Award Lecture entitled “*Microscale Separation Methods in the ‘Omics’ Era*”.

At the closing session, the three best poster contributions out of twenty nominees were awarded. The nominees were selected by a prominent Poster Prize Committee which stated *uni sono* the high quality of the presented research contributions.

The two Discussion Sessions on “*Method Development and Validation Issues for μ LC/CE Methods in the Pharmaceutical Industry*” and “*State-of-the-Art and quo vadis of Biomarker Analysis*” were also highly appreciated by the audience. These forums gave an indication of the broad range of

topics covered by the HPCE 2004 program; spanning pharmaceutical analysis, bioanalysis, proteomics, genomics, biological systems, detection principles, columns and stationary phases, and theoretical aspects.

The social program, which included receptions, a splendid concert in the historic rooms of the Salzburg Residence, and the Evening with the Exhibitors, provided the attendees with ample opportunities to interact with each other and to meet friends and colleagues from all over the world in a unique atmosphere. This format followed the harmonious tradition of HPCE symposia, providing a forum for discussions of the most recent scientific results, and exchanging ideas regarding future projects and collaborations.

As chairman of the symposium, I wish to thank the entire team who enthusiastically helped to make HPCE 2004 in Salzburg a success. In particular, I would like to thank Ms. Kaehler from Tyrol Congress, Ms. Schwaiger from Congress Salzburg, my co-workers from the Institute of Analytical Chemistry at the University of Vienna, and last but not least, my wife Doris who was a kind and helpful spirit behind the scenes.

In addition we would like to thank the major sponsors of the conference: the Austrian Government; the governments of the City and of the Province of Salzburg; and especially, Elsevier, CaSSS, and Agilent who contributed significantly to the organization of this meeting. In this context, the Hálász Foundation should also be acknowledged for awarding six grants to students, enabling them to actively participate in this symposium.

Finally, we would like to thank all colleagues, speakers, poster presenters, participants, and exhibitors whose valuable contributions formed the core of the events.

This highly successful symposium series will continue, but due to the given shift of the scientific focus of the conference, in the future it will be termed “*Symposium on MicroScale Bioseparation, MSB*”. This will be next held in New Orleans in February 2005 and chaired by Mike Ramsey.

Vienna, Austria

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