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Editorial

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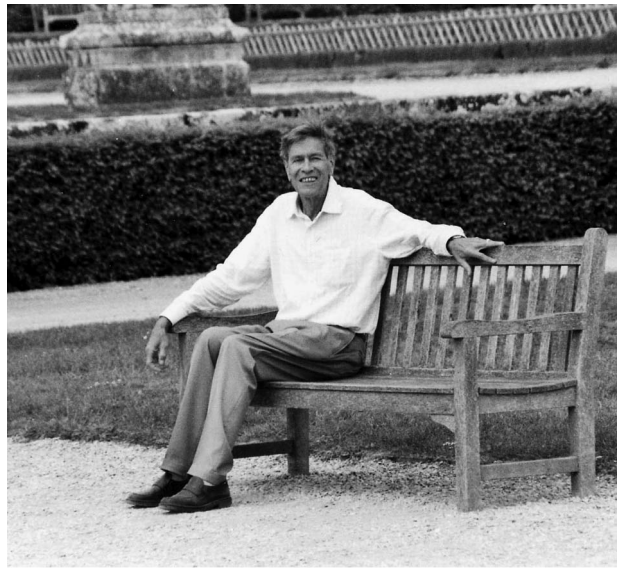
EDITORIAL

A special issue dedicated to Pierre-Gilles de Gennes

Pierre-Gilles de Gennes' death, just two years ago, brought great sadness and loss to the scientific community. Since then several volumes commemorating his life and work have appeared, spanning his contributions to a wide range of fields, including liquid crystals, polymers, colloids, adhesives and granular materials. Among his many honours, his greatest was the award of the 1991 Nobel prize in Physics for his discovery that 'methods developed for studying order phenomena in simple systems can be generalised to more complex forms of matter, in particular to liquid crystals and polymers'. It was surprising, therefore, that none of the volumes devoted to the works of de Gennes had focussed entirely on his pioneering liquid crystal studies. At the meeting of the Editorial Board of *Liquid Crystals*, held a year ago at the 22nd International Liquid Crystal Conference in Jeju, the suggestion that this omission should be rectified was proposed and unanimously supported. Here, we present this special issue of the Journal to mark the enormous contributions made by de Gennes to liquid crystal science and technology.

All of the articles in this special issue were by invitation and in each there is a connection to de Gennes. These connections vary between each, from areas he stimulated or contributed to significantly, to those in which he had shown a particular interest. As you will see, the contributions include both papers describing original research and review articles and some combine the two. The issue opens with a translation of the obituary for de Gennes which was published in *Le Monde* and an appreciation of his liquid crystal studies by Tim Sluckin.



Professor Pierre-Gilles de Gennes

I am sure that after reading this special issue you will agree that the contributions are a fitting tribute, commemorating de Gennes' huge impact on liquid crystal science.

C.T. Imrie
Editor

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