

## OPENING SPEECH

JACQUES DURAND

My Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that I have to open this meeting “The Functional Architecture of the Brain: From Dendrites to Networks”, held in honour of Dr Suzanne TYC-DUMONT.

First of all, I would like to thank you, Suzanne, for having accepted the idea of this special meeting with colleagues and friends working at different levels of organisation of the Brain from molecules to networks. We organized this meeting to tell you how much we learn from you and to express our gratitude for your enriching contribution to the Neuroscience fields.

You were the Director of the laboratory “Neurocybernétique Cellulaire” of CNRS in Marseille from 1978 to 1995. When I made my first steps in your lab in 1978, I was really impressed by your team spirit and your great scientific mind. With your team including Ginette Horcholle-Bossavit, Jean-Patrick Gueritaud, Kirsty Grant, Paul Gogan, Josette Destombes, and Annick Barbe, you were the first in the early seventies to combine the electrical properties and the morphology of identified neurons in the brainstem of the cat. Later in the eighties, you innovated in studying the morphology of dendrites computed in 3D using an home-made computer controller system. Further, in the nineties, you investigated the electrical behaviour of single neurons using voltage sensitive dyes in order to understand dendritic processing in space and time. I know how lucky I was to work with you in your laboratory and to be there precisely at the same place and at the same time for these years. I would like to take this occasion to express all my admiration and my high respect for the Director you were and also for the Human you are. I appreciate your scientific rigor, spirit, kindness and uprightness. I will also remember our discussions on life, politics and others subjects which were all passionate debates. Thank you to be here again in Marseille and I hope you will enjoy this meeting.

These two scientific days give us the great opportunity to all meet together and to confront ideas on different topics ranging from dendrites to networks. Many of you are stemming from Suzanne’s laboratory, others are collaborators and all of you are famous in your fields. I am sure exciting discussions will emerge during the meeting.

Now I would like to thank all the people without whom we would not have been able to organize this meeting.

First the sponsors: we received financial support from CNRS, INSERM, AFM, IFR Sciences du Cerveau, Marseille City, department CG13, and also from some companies (Andor Technology, Olympus SA France, Nikon France SAS and Bitplane/Photoniines) which have exhibition stands in the main hall.

Secondly, I thank my colleagues of the scientific committee: Drs Cesira Batini, Kirsty Grant, Jean Patrick Guéritaud and Ginette Horcholle-Bossavit. A special



Fig. 1. - Photograph of the participants of the meeting (picture by M. Morel, CNRS).

thank to Cesira Batini who has played a major role in the arrangements made for this meeting. Thanks are due also to my colleagues of the organizing committee: Mrs Michèle Elleon, Michèle Morel, Germaine Rivière and to the excellent executive secretary and manager, Joelle Ruemgardt.

I thank all the speakers and poster authors for their participation to this meeting. Thanks are also due to the chairmen who have accepted to animate the debates including Drs François Clarac, Nicolas Franceschini, Laurent Vinay, Brigitte Pettmann, Daniel Zytnicki and some of the speakers. I thank all those who attend the meeting and will participate to the discussions. All participants will be photographed this afternoon (see figure).

We warmly thank the Editor in Chief, Professor Ottavio Pompeiano and the managing Editor Professor Paola d'Ascanio for having accepted to publish the proceedings of this colloquium in the *Archives Italiennes de Biologie*.

Finally it is with deep sadness that we miss the presence of two eminent scientists who should have been with us for these two days: the late Dr Robert Naquet and the late Professor Ingemar Engberg. I would like to ask to the Audience to have some minutes of meditation.

Now I declare open this meeting and I ask to Dr Césira Batini to come to the tribune for the first talk on the scientific contributions of Suzanne Tyc-Dumont.