

Conference Report

Bernd's Birthday Symposium – A Firework of Chemistry

Katharina M. Fromm*

*Correspondence: Prof. K. M. Fromm, University of Fribourg, Department of Chemistry, Chemin du Musée 9, CH-1700 Fribourg, E-mail: katharina.fromm@unifr.ch

On June 2nd, 2017, a chemistry symposium was held at the University of Fribourg on behalf of Bernd Giese's 77th birthday. Accompanied by sunshine, some 150 colleagues, PhD students and Master students as well as former coworkers of Bernd gathered together in the big lecture hall of Fribourg's Chemistry Department to listen to a very select list of speakers. Guests came from as far as Australia, USA, Great-Britain, France, Belgium, Germany, and from all over Switzerland, in particular Basel, Bern, Geneva and Zurich. Philippe Renaud even brought his research group along for this special kind of 'group excursion'.

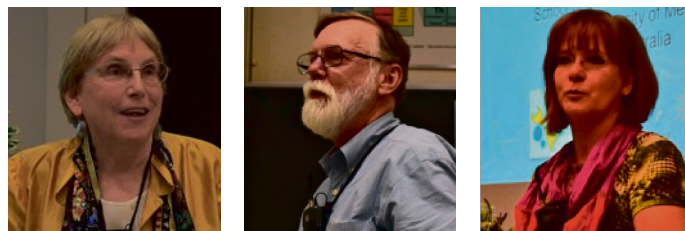
Thorsten Linker from Potsdam presented Helma Wennemers, ETHZ, as first speaker who kicked off the meeting with a report on a beautiful interwoven supramolecular three-dimensional Kagome lattice type structure based on a polyproline-helix, substituted with aromatic side-groups in collaboration with Klaus Müllen. Andy Marx from Konstanz, introduced by Hendrik Zipse from LMU Munich, reported on the roles of new nucleotides, while Carsten Bolm, RWTH Aachen, whose talk was chaired by Jens Hartung from Kaiserslautern, highlighted on the surprising selectivity and yields of organic reactions achieved by ball milling. The morning session was concluded by Ulrich Lüning, Kiel, who was presented by Thomas Wirth from Cardiff and who gave an overview on macrocycles for coordination, molecular muscle type assemblies and switching.

After the lunch break, Martin Spichty from Lyon presented Eric Meggers, Marburg, who reported on new results with the catalytic enantioselective Giese reaction as well as others, using chiral octahedral metal complexes as catalysts. JoAnne Stubbe, MIT, winner of the National Science Medal in the USA and chaired by Christian Bochet, Fribourg, discussed on the beautiful work how electrons are transported through large proteins with latest details on the electron hopping path for a better understanding of ribonucleotide reductases. The talk by Frank Giese, Schopfheim, on how a chemical compound becomes a drug, was chaired by Vladimir Cmiljanovic, CEO of PIQUR, a company co-founded by Bernd Giese.

Following the coffee break, I had the pleasure to introduce Dennis Curran from Pittsburg for his talk on N-heterocyclic car-

bene boranes, showing how these new compounds can be made and how they react. Fabio Zobi, Fribourg, chaired the talk by Uta Wille from Melbourne, who presented new insights on the damage of biomolecules by NO and ozone, *e.g.* that this involves ionic species such as NO⁺. The day was concluded by a chemistry show, highlighting the chemical career of Bernd with beautiful reactions presented by Ulrich Lüning, Michel Piccand, Fribourg, and myself.

The fact that the presentations came from different fields of chemistry made this symposium very rich, never boring, and always gave rise to interesting and fruitful discussions after each talk. A true festival of great chemistry from all corners of chemistry and the world! Thanks to all chairs and speakers for making this a memorable day, and to all sponsors (the Swiss Chemical Society, the Fribourg Chemical Society, the NCCR "Bioinspired Materials", Thieme and several private contributors) for supporting this event.



Speakers from overseas: JoAnne Stubbe, Dennis Curran, Uta Wille.



A Bernd Giese Fanclub: Ulrich Lüning, Thorsten Linker, Carsten Bolm.

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Lively discussions and real chemistry.

