



Ecole Internationale d'Astrophysique



'Daniel CHALONGE'

Saturday 16 December 2006

*The Daniel Chalonge Medal has been awarded
to George Smoot*

The International School of Astrophysics "Daniel Chalonge" has awarded the Daniel Chalonge Medal to George Smoot of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. The handsome bronze medal was awarded for George Smoot's 15-year support and outstanding contributions to the Chalonge School. Since the school was established in 1991, George Smoot has actively and continuously contributed to the training and formation of young physicists and astrophysicists (graduate and postdoctoral students) from the world over in the school courses and programmes on cutting-edge topics in cosmology and astrophysics.



A Surprise Award

The award was prepared to be a complete surprise to George Smoot and the medal was presented to George Smoot at the climax of a special Nobel ceremony held Saturday December 16 in his honor at the Paris Observatory (Observatoire de Paris). During the event George Smoot delivered his Nobel Lecture, "The discovery of the anisotropy of the fossil radiation of the universe," given the previous week in Stockholm when he received the 2006 Nobel Prize in physics, which he shared with John Mather.

At the beginning of his lecture, George Smoot announced the creation at University of California at Berkeley of a New Center for Cosmological Physics seeking outstanding people, postdoctoral and graduate students and visiting scientists.



George Smoot has been a key lecturer at the Chalonge School since its creation, having contributed to all the events of the school: courses, workshops, and colloquia. The Chalonge School is very proud of George and delighted at his outstanding achievements. The Chalonge School address him the warmest congratulations.

*Only three Chalonge Medals awarded in
the 15-year school history*

George Smoot's Chalonge Medal is only the third the school has awarded in its 15-year history. The first medal was awarded in 1991 to astrophysicist and Nobel prize of Physics Subramanyan Chandrasekhar (1910-1995), who was a great friend of Daniel Chalonge and delivered the school's inaugural lecture “Daniel Chalonge and the Problem of the Abundance of the Hydrogen”. The second medal was awarded in 1992 to the distinguished high-energy physicist Bruno Pontecorvo (1913-1993), a pioneer of neutrino physics and a major supporter and lecturer at the school.

The third medal presentation December 16 2006 was particularly special: the noted french sculptor who designed the medal, Madeleine Pierre Quérolle, aged 93 and always active in her Parisian workshop, offered her own original copy of the medal to George Smoot for the third award presentation.



The Daniel Chalonge Medal was designed by the noted French sculptor Madeleine Pierre Quérolle and coined by the Hôtel de la Monnaie de Paris (the French Mint). The first side of the medal shows Daniel Chalonge's portrait. The reverse side is composed of two scenes: the upper half depicts the mirror of a telescope on which a part of the Milky Way and the Orion constellation is reflected. The lower half depicts the French Alps and the "Pic Chalonge", (the mountain, 3343 m height, named after him).

Daniel Chalonge

The School is named after the pioneering French astrophysicist Daniel Chalonge (1895-1977) for his work in experimental and theoretical astrophysics. Precursor in France of stellar spectroscopy and stellar and atmospheric spectrophotometry, he worked on the conception and construction of new instruments like the hydrogen tube and the microphotometer named after him. He was a personality of his *time*, one of the founders of the Institut d'Astrophysique de Paris. He worked at the Observatoire de Paris, at the Observatoire d'Haute Provence, and at the Jungfrauoch Scientific Station in Switzerland, where particle physics experiments (such as the Manchester-Cern collaboration) were performed.

Scientists from over the world participated to the event to congratulate George Smoot for the Nobel prize of Physics and to heard his Nobel lecture.

At the end, a celebration in the honor of George Smoot took place along the meridian of Paris crossing the Cassini Hall of Observatoire de Paris. What started as a Nobel prize celebration concluded as a twofold celebration.



More information:

http://chalonge.obspm.fr/Paris_Nobel.html

Photo Gallery:

http://chalonge.obspm.fr/photos_conference_Smoot.html

Press release Lawrence Berkeley laboratory:

<http://www.lbl.gov/Science-Articles/Archive/Smoot-Chalonge.html>

News George Smoot's Group Cosmology:

<http://aether.lbl.gov/news.html>

[George Smoot's Nobel Lecture](#) (video)

George Smoot's Nobel Lecture (pdf):

<http://chalonge.obspm.fr/SmootNobel2006.pdf>

[Daniel Chalonge](#)

