



Press release

**22nd Neuronal Plasticity Prize of the Fondation Ipsen:
Helen J. Neville, Isabelle Peretz and Robert J. Zatorre
awarded for their pioneering research
into the domain of “Music and Brain Plasticity”**

Paris (France), 19 July 2011 – The 22nd annual Neuronal Plasticity Prize of the Fondation Ipsen has been awarded to Helen J. Neville (*University of Oregon, Eugene, USA*), Isabelle Peretz (*Brams – University of Montreal, Montreal, Canada*) and Robert J. Zatorre (*Montreal Neurological Institute and Brams Laboratory, Montreal, Canada, USA*) for their pioneering research in the domain of “Music and Brain Plasticity”. The €60,000 prize was awarded on July 15, 2011 by an international jury¹ led by Professor Nikos Logothetis (*Max Planck Institute for Biological Cybernetics, Tübingen, Germany*) at the 8th International Brain Research Organization (IBRO) World Congress of Neuroscience, Florence, Italy.

About the laureates

Helen J. Neville is currently The Robert and Beverly Lewis Endowed Chair and Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience, Director of the Brain Development Lab, and Director of the Center for Cognitive Neuroscience at the University of Oregon in Eugene. Her work experience includes Director of the Laboratory for Neuropsychology at the Salk Institute. She has published in many journals such as *Nature*, *Nature Neuroscience*, *Journal of Neuroscience*, *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, *Cerebral Cortex* and *Brain Research* and has made a DVD about the brain for non-scientists. She has received many honors like being elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Board of Governors of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society, the Academic Panel of Birth to Three and is active in many educational outreach programs. She is known for her research on the role of biological constraints and experience (including music) in brain development including the study of the plasticity of auditory system.

Isabelle Peretz, Ph.D., is Professor of Psychology and the holder of a Canada Research Chair in neurocognition of music. In 2005, she became the founding co-director of the international laboratory for Brain, Music, and Sound research (BRAMS). Dr. Peretz is also the founding Editor-in-chief of *Frontiers in Auditory Cognitive Neuroscience*, the recipient of several awards, and a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and of the American Psychological Association. She is renowned for her work on congenital and acquired musical disorders (amusia) and for pioneering the study of the biological foundations of music in general. Her research focuses on the musical potential of ordinary people, its neural

¹ Albert Aguayo (*Montreal General Hospital, Montréal, Canada*), Joël Bockaert (*Institut de Génomique Fonctionnelle, Montpellier, France*), Alexis Brice (*Hôpital de la Salpêtrière, Paris, France*), Stanislas Dehaene (*Inserm U562, Orsay, France*), Stephen Dunnett (*Cardiff University, Cardiff, United Kingdom*), Kjell Fuxe (*Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden*), Marc Jeannerod (*Institut des Sciences Cognitives, Lyon, France*), Christine Petit (*Institut Pasteur, Paris, France*), Wolf Singer (*Max Planck Institute for Brain Research, Frankfurt, Germany*).



correlates, its heritability and its specificity relative to language. She has published over 150 scientific papers on a variety of topics, ranging from perception, memory, and emotions to singing and now, dancing.

Robert J. Zatorre is a James McGill professor of neuroscience at the Montreal Neurological Institute of McGill University. Dr. Zatorre's research explore the functional and structural organization of the human brain using neuroimaging and behavioral methods. His principal research interests relate to the neural substrate for auditory cognition, with special emphasis on two complex and characteristically human abilities: speech and music. He and his collaborators have published over 200 scientific papers on a variety of topics including pitch perception, musical imagery, absolute pitch, music and emotion, perception of auditory space, and brain plasticity in the blind and the deaf. In 2006 he co-founded the international laboratory for Brain, Music, and Sound research (BRAMS), a unique multi-university consortium dedicated to the cognitive neuroscience of music and auditory cognition.

About the Neuronal Plasticity Prize

Founded in 1990, the Neuronal Plasticity Prize of the Fondation Ipsen has been awarded to renowned specialists: Albert Aguayo (*Montréal, 1990*), Anders Björklund (*Lund, 1990*), Fred Gage (*La Jolla, 1990*), Ursula Bellugi (*La Jolla, 1991*), Wolf Singer (*Frankfurt, 1990*), Torsten Wiesel (*New York, 1991*), Philippe Ascher (*Paris, 1992*), Kjell Fuxe (*Stockholm, 1992*), Terje Lomo (*Oslo, 1992*), Per Andersen (*Oslo, 1993*), Masao Ito (*Wako Saitama, 1993*), Constantino Sotelo (*Paris, 1993*), Mariano Barbacid (*Princeton, 1994*), Yves Barde (*Planegg-Martinsried, 1994*), Hans Thoenen (*Planegg-Martinsried, 1994*), Jacques Mehler (*Paris, 1995*), Brenda Milner (*Montreal, 1995*), Mortimer Mishkin (*Bethesda, 1995*), Friedrich Bonhoeffer (*Tubingen, 1996*), Corey Goodman (*Berkeley, 1996*), Marc Tessier-Lavigne (*San Francisco, 1996*), Antonio Damasio (*Iowa City, 1997*), Richard Frackowiak (*London, 1997*), Michael Merzenich (*San Francisco, 1997*), Heinrich Betz (*Frankfurt, 1998*), Gerald Fischbach (*Boston, 1998*), Uel McMahan (*Stanford, 1998*), Masakazu Konishi (*Pasadena, 1999*), Peter Marler (*Davis, 1999*), Fernando Nottebohm (*Millbrook, 1999*), Tomas Hökfelt (*Stockholm, 2000*), Lars Olson (*Stockholm, 2000*), Lars Terenius (*Stockholm, 2000*), Albert Galaburda (*Boston, 2001*), John Morton (*Londres, 2001*), Elisabeth Spelke (*Cambridge, USA, 2001*), Arturo Alvarez-Buylla (*San Francisco, 2002*), Ronald Mc Kay (*Bethesda, 2002*), Sam Weiss (*Calgary, 2002*), François Clarac (*Marseille, 2003*), Sven Grillner (*Stockholm, 2003*), Serge Rossignol (*Montréal, 2003*), James Gusella (*Boston, 2004*), Jean-Louis Mandel (*Strasbourg, 2004*), Huda Y. Zoghbi (*Houston, 2004*), Ann Graybiel (*Cambridge, USA, 2005*), Trevor Robbins (*Cambridge, UK, 2005*), Wolfram Schultz (*Cambridge, UK, 2005*), Eckhart D. Gundelfinger (*Magdeburg, 2006*), Mary B. Kennedy (*Pasadena, 2006*), Morgan Sheng (*Cambridge, USA, 2006*), Nikos K. Logothetis (*Tübingen, 2007*), Keiji Tanaka (*Wako, 2007*), Giacomo Rizzolatti (*Parma, 2007*), Jean-Pierre Changeux (*Paris, 2008*), Peter W. Kalivas (*Charleston 2008*), Eric J. Nestler (*Dallas, 2008*), Alim-Louis Benabid (*Grenoble, 2009*), Apostolos P. Georgopoulos (*Minneapolis, 2009*), Miguel A. L. Nicolelis (*Durham, 2009*), Thomas Insel (*Bethesda, 2010*), Bruce Mc Ewen (*New York, 2010*) and Donald Pfaff (*New York, 2010*).

La Fondation Ipsen

Established in 1983 under the aegis of the *Fondation de France*, the mission of the *Fondation Ipsen* is to contribute to the development and dissemination of scientific knowledge. The long-standing action of the *Fondation Ipsen* aims at fostering the interaction between researchers and clinical practitioners, which is indispensable due to the extreme specialisation of these professions. The ambition of the *Fondation Ipsen* is to initiate a reflection about the major scientific issues of the forthcoming years. It has developed an important international network of scientific experts who meet regularly at meetings known as *Colloques Médecine et Recherche*, dedicated to six main themes: Alzheimer's disease, neurosciences, longevity, endocrinology, the vascular system and cancer science. Moreover, in 2007, the *Fondation Ipsen* started three new series of meetings. The first series is an annual meeting



organized in partnership with the Salk Institute and *Nature* and focuses on Biological Complexity; the second series is the “Emergence and Convergence” series with *Nature*, and the third with *Cell* and the Massachusetts General Hospital entitled “Exciting Biologies”. Since its beginning, the *Fondation Ipsen* has organised more than 100 international conferences, published 70 volumes with renowned publishers and 216 issues of a widely distributed bimonthly newsletter *Alzheimer Actualités*. It has also awarded more than 100 prizes and grants.

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