

PREFACE

Proceedings of the 7th Liquid Matter Conference (Lund, Sweden, 27 June–1 July 2008)

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PREFACE

Proceedings of the 7th Liquid Matter Conference (Lund, Sweden, 27 June–1 July 2008)

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The three-yearly Liquid Matter Conference is organized by the Liquids Section of the Condensed Matter Division of the European Physical Society. This series of meetings began in Lyon in 1990. The previous meeting was held in 2005 in Utrecht. The original aim of the Liquid Matter Conference was to bring together scientists working on the liquid state of matter. A closer analysis of the program booklets over the past 18 years reveals that new and highly active research fields that are closely related to liquid matter have been successfully integrated in the scope of the conference, notably the rapidly developing fields of soft matter and biophysics. Concomitantly, a broadening of the spectrum from the classical liquid state to a wide spectrum of phases and systems could be observed. Therefore, the rapidly growing field covered by this conference series at present includes physics, chemistry, biology, and chemical engineering as well as various applied research areas.

Liquid state physics is at the interface of many research fields. As a consequence, many of the attendants come from adjacent fields and encounter at the Liquid Matter Conference a community where they can meet experts from other research areas. This aspect of the Liquid Matter Conference makes it an exciting meeting as it not only offers the participants an up-to-date picture of the status of research into the liquid state of matter, but it also allows them to establish new (and often unexpected) transdisciplinary contacts for joint scientific endeavours. This applies in particular to the area of soft condensed matter such as colloidal suspensions, polymeric systems and biological materials.

The Lund meeting, organized in collaboration with Lund University, had 574 registered participants from five continents. During the conference, and following the tradition established at the Utrecht meeting, the second Liquid Matter Prize of the European Physical Society was awarded to Professor Henk Lekkerkerker (Utrecht) and to Professor Peter Pusey (Edinburgh) for their seminal studies of colloidal matter. In addition to plenary speeches by the two recipients of the Liquid Matter Prize, the scientific program consisted of ten plenary lectures, 108 symposia talks, 23 of which were keynote lectures, and 458 poster contributions. This special issue of *Journal of Physics: Condensed Matter* contains 47 of the oral communications.

The conference was held in the buildings of Lund University and the Student Union facing the University Square in the heart of Lund. The organizers gratefully acknowledge the substantial financial support offered by the Nobel Foundation and by the Swedish Research Council. The success of the conference owes a great debt of gratitude to the members of the Local Organizing Committee and all the people who helped them tirelessly (and very efficiently) to make the conference run smoothly and to the members of the International Program Committee, who were deeply involved in the planning of the conference. During the conference dinner our colleague Lennart Piculell gave a singing performance, which included a song dedicated to the two winners of the Liquid Matter Prize, entitled *Hard-Breaking Gel*, whose lyrics are printed below.

Finally, the Board of the Liquids Section of the European Physical Society decided that the 8th Liquid Matter Conference will be held in Vienna (Austria) 6–10 September 2011.

Hard-Breaking Gel

New lyrics by Lennart Piculell to the melody of Heartbreak Hotel, created in June 2008 for the 7th Liquid Matter Conference, dedicated to Henk Lekkerkerker and Peter Pusey.

Well, since my baby left me,
I found a new place to be!
It's downtown Lund, in a narrow street,
Where hundreds of cool people meet!
There I don't feel lonely,
No, I don't feel lonely -
So, if you feel lonely, you should try!

It's all about liquid matter:
Liquids flow, and soft bodies swell!
Your mind is blown, and your blood will boil
To a hard-breaking gel.
And you won't be lonely,
No, you won't be lonely -
So, if you feel lonely, you should try!

A tough guy tells you: Freeze!
This is something that you have to test,
'Cause when you freeze you'll be super-cool,
Or else you'll be under arrest.
But you won't be lonely, baby,
No, you won't be lonely, baby -
So, if you feel lonely, you should try!

I learn that the slightest nano-rod,
That wouldn't seem very large;
It still can fill up a lot of space
As soon as you give it some charge!
So, if you feel lonely, baby,
Yes, if you feel lonely, baby -
If you feel lonely, you should try!

Well, when the party's over,
What memories will time erase?
Well, the chemistry may be lost on me,
But I never forget a phase!
And I won't be lonely,
No, I won't be lonely -
I won't be lonely 'til I die!