



Press Release – Science

Ghent, Belgium – 5 October 2006

King Baudouin Foundation honors fundamental cancer research

Ghent, Belgium – Today, on 5 October, Jean-Christophe Marine, researcher at the Flanders Interuniversity Institute for Biotechnology (VIB) and Ghent University, received the EUR10,000 André Vander Stricht Prize for his research. He is the first researcher to be awarded this prize. Through the André Vander Stricht Prize, the King Baudouin Foundation seeks to reward innovative, high-quality research that offers added value for society. Jean-Christophe Marine's research focuses on the p53 tumor suppressor protein in the effort to create a more targeted cancer therapy. The prize-giving ceremony was preceded by an academic session in which Moshe Oren, one of the pioneers of p53 research, outlined the importance of this research.

The p53 protein's crucial role in preventing tumor formation

Our bodies are composed of an enormous collection of continuously-dividing cells. This cell division is overseen by a very precisely constructed control system involving a lot of different actors – including the crucial p53 protein. The importance of p53 is clear in the case of tumor cells: tumors can arise only if p53 has been rendered completely ineffective. Jean-Christophe Marine and his group are concentrating on p53 and the signaling chain that determines the protein's production.

Without question, as the guardian of the DNA, the p53 protein is a central character in the cancer story. Every other element involved that acts on p53 or that is under p53's control presents a possible point of application for developing medicines against cancer. So Jean-Christophe Marine is helping science move toward a more targeted cancer therapy.

The King Baudouin Foundation's Vander Stricht Fund

The King Baudouin Foundation manages a number of Funds that support scientific and medical research. Through these Funds, the Foundation seeks to stimulate research that is innovative, offers added value to society, and exhibits high scientific caliber. The André Vander Stricht Fund was established in 2003 to promote research into the role of signaling proteins in cancer. Jean-Christophe Marine is the first to receive this prize – to the value of €10,000 – for his research.

Eminent names from cancer research

Added luster was given to the prize-giving ceremony by the presence of **Moshe Oren**, one of the first to have researched p53. Moshe Oren was the first to succeed in cloning the p53 gene, which triggered numerous important contributions in the p53 research area, including 10 *Nature* publications, 4 *Cell* publications, 2 *Science* publications, and an impressive number of publications in other authoritative journals. Dr. Oren will provide an overview of the history of p53 research and of his role in it.

Attachment

The program of the prize-giving ceremony is attached to this invitation.



Note to the Editor:

VIB

VIB, the Flanders Interuniversity Institute for Biotechnology, is a research institute where 900 scientists conduct gene technological research in a number of life-science domains, such as human health care and plant systems biology. Through a joint venture with four Flemish universities (Ghent University, the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, the University of Antwerp, and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel) and a solid funding program for strategic basic research, VIB unites the forces of nine university science departments in a single institute. Through its technology transfer activities, VIB strives to convert the research results into products for the benefit of consumers and patients. VIB also distributes scientifically substantiated information about all aspects of biotechnology to a broad public.

King Baudouin Foundation

The King Baudouin Foundation is an independent public service foundation whose mission is to help improve living conditions for the population. The Foundation supports projects and individuals who are engaged in building a better society and seeks to contribute in a sustainable way to greater justice, democracy, and respect for diversity. The King Baudouin Foundation is independent and pluralistic.

For more information

Please contact VIB's Communication service:

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Jean-Christophe Marine is the head of the Laboratory for Molecular Cancer Biology

(for more info, see: www.vib.be/Research/EN/Research+Departments/Molecular+Cancer+Biology)



*Presentation of the André Vander Stricht Prize to
Jean-Christophe Marine
5 October 2006*

Program

- 2:00 – 2:05 **Jo Bury** , General Director VIB
Welcome and presentation of VIB
- 2:05 – 2:15 **Bruno Gryseels**, Director Institute for Tropical Medicine in Antwerp
Presentation of KBS and Funds
- 2:15 – 3:00 **Moshe Oren**, Department of Molecular Cell Biology, Weizmann Institute of Science,
Israel
Presentation of p53 research
- 3:00 – 3:30 **Jean-Christophe Marine**, VIB Laboratory for Molecular Cancer Biology
Presentation of winning research
- 3:30 – 4:00 **Prize-giving Ceremony**

Location:

UGent-VIB Research Building FSVM
Technologiepark 927
BE-9052 GHENT
BELGIUM