

## Happy birthday, Georg Maret!

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This issue of the *European Physical Journal E* is dedicated to our friend and colleague Georg Maret, Editor-in-Chief of this journal. To celebrate his 60th birthday this February, leading scientists of the field will gather for the workshop *Frontiers of Soft Condensed Matter 2009* in Les Houches, from 15 to 20 February 2009. They will discuss recent developments in various areas of soft condensed matter, biological systems, and scattering of light; fields to which Georg Maret himself has made very substantial contributions.

Georg's early work concentrated on the behaviour of various biopolymers in magnetic fields. Throughout his career he has been always interested in magnetic-field effects in soft and biological matter, including, as he frequently reminds us, experiments with pigeons. Georg (together with P.E. Wolf) was one of the first to observe the weak localization of light, and he invented and pioneered a new technique, now called diffusing wave spectroscopy, for monitoring dynamic processes in all kinds of turbid soft matter, including biological tissues such as the brain. His group developed a model two-dimensional system based on superparamagnetic colloids, which has been used to explore all aspects of the famous KTHNY theory for two-dimensional melting. These are just a few examples to demonstrate Georg's very broad interests throughout the fields of soft and biological matter.

This issue contains fully reviewed original work from invited speakers of the Les Houches workshop. It reflects Georg's fascination for all aspects of soft materials, and reminds us how, in meetings like this, Georg becomes so absorbed in discussing the physics of soft matter that he almost forgets everything else. We, as his scientific community, wish him all the best for his 60th birthday, and thank him for sharing with us all his fascination with soft and biological matter.

Holger Stark  
*Guest Editor*