



First cell 'mapped' in 3D by EMBL researchers

Claude Antony's group at EMBL Heidelberg has created the first high-resolution 3D image of a complete eukaryotic cell. This 3D 'map' shows the precise locations of the insides of a cell, including microtubules, nucleus, mitochondria, vesicles and vacuoles, revealing remarkable insights into the fine structure of the cytoskeleton, as well as its interactions with other parts of the cell. The image was published in *Developmental Cell* last month, and generated huge coverage in big science journals and mainstream newspapers throughout the world, including *Nature*, *Science* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine*. [page 2](#)

An Indian adventure

After six years at EMBL Hamburg, Will Stanley has swapped the sea mist for 39° temperatures on a Visiting Fellowship (VF) to Hyderabad, India. At the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, a flagship life sciences lab and an organ of the Indian government's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, he's been initiating the *E. coli* expression technologies developed at EMBL and teaching on the new predocs' course. The VF programme is a new initiative to internationalise Indian labs and can be awarded to PhD holders of any nationality to work in any suitable CSIR lab. [page 3](#)



A huge thumbs-up at Cambridge Science Festival

More than 30 volunteers from the EBI and their next-door neighbour, the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, took 2,000 people through an array of activities at the 2007 Cambridge Science Festival in March. As well as tried and tested activities from previous years, there were also some new ideas, including 'Annotate Anopheles', and 'Pathway Builder'. Thanks to the hard work of the the Sanger's Frankin Centre for Public Engagement, the creative and enthusiastic volunteers from both institutes enjoyed themselves almost as much as the visitors. [page 2](#)

Trip to the frozen north for partnership talks

EMBL DG Iain Mattaj and Coordinator of International Relations Silke Schumacher have visited Umeå University, Sweden, together with a native predoc and postdoc to act as Swedish ambassadors, to discuss the latest EMBL partnership: the Nordic EMBL Partnership for Molecular Medicine. The partnership will have three 'nodes' in Oslo, Helsinki and Umeå. The latter's university is famous for its life sciences research, with biology of infection and cancer research just two of its particular areas of excellence. Next door to the town hospital is the molecular biology department, shared equally between the Science and Technology and Medicine faculties. This Swedish 'node' will be called the Laboratory of Molecular Infection Medicine. As well as being an opportunity to discuss the new partnership and meet the people that are involved, the visit was also a good chance to advertise EMBL to Swedish scientists as a place to visit and work. [page 6](#)

Sack's the way



EBI Associate Director Graham Cameron celebrated 25 years at EMBL at the beginning of April. EBI marked the occasion by throwing him a party, complete with Scottish piper, cake and a SAC(k) race (above) to celebrate the completion of their services review.

4 Applicants sought for new EIPODs

4 EMBL Grenoble in international research unit

5 Tips from the experts for predoc writers

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The image was published in *Developmental Cell* last month, and generated huge coverage in big science journals and mainstream newspapers throughout Europe, including *Nature*, *Die Welt* and *FAZ*.

Using electron tomography, and with the help of a collaborating team in Boulder, Colorado, PhD student Johanna Höög generated pictures of sequential slices of a yeast cell from many different angles through an electron microscope and combined them into a 3D computer reconstruction. A similar principle is used to generate brain scans.

"To really understand the architecture of the cytoskeleton you have to see the entire cell in three dimensions, but at the same time you need a very good resolution to be able to investigate its structural details," says Claude. "It is impossible to obtain such detailed images of a eukaryotic cell with normal microscopes."

This 3D 'map' shows the precise locations of the insides of a cell, including microtubules, nucleus, mitochondria, vesicles and vacuoles, revealing remarkable insights into the fine structure of the cytoskeleton, as well as its interactions with other parts of the cell.

For the first time researchers can see directly what previous studies in fission yeast only suggested: when a cell is not dividing, a microtubule bundle consists of four or five individual filaments which are physically connected with each other via tiny protein 'bridges'. In the networks created through this crosslinking the orientation of microtubules is crucial. The filaments are polar structures, their two ends



Claude Antony and Johanna Höög with some of their publicity

"You can extract information about all sorts of cellular structures and processes from the images, or use them to place findings into the spatial context of the cell"

growing and shrinking at different rates. The study created a precise map to indicate the location of all these growing and shrinking microtubule ends in the cell.

The image also sheds light on other important functions of microtubules, revealing that the cytoskeleton determines the correct positioning of mitochondria, the energy-producing organelles, throughout the cell.

"Our 3D image of fission yeast can serve as a reference map of the cell for all biologists interested in its architecture," says Johanna. "You can extract information about all sorts of cellular structures and processes from our images, or use them to place findings into the spatial context of the cell."

Coverage of the story in the mainstream press has been especially high in Germany, Johanna's native Sweden and even in the US, with an article appearing in *Science*. Professor Jeremy Hyams of Massey University in Palmerston North, New Zealand, said the findings opened "a new chapter in our understanding of cell structure".

As a result, Claude is planning to obtain a cellular tomography microscope. "Fission yeast was just the beginning. There are already plans to reconstruct the *Xenopus* spindle using this technology, which will be a huge project," he says. "Not many groups in the world are using electron tomography – it's something that's restricted to bigger institutes because of the expense – and it will be great to be able to expand on this sort of technology here at EMBL. Labs such as the Ellenberg and Ephrussi groups are planning to reconstruct high-resolution 3D images such as these for their own research."

Science for 'big and small'

On 17 March, volunteers from the EBI and the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute took 2,000 people through a dazzling array of activities at the 2007 Cambridge Science Festival, with this year's theme being 'big and small'.

New activities included 'Annotate Anopheles', explaining how genes from other species are used to find those in newly sequenced genomes. 'Coiling Chromosomes', where visitors were challenged to wind 2m of 'DNA' (wool) into the smallest space possible, also proved to be immensely popular. Visitors proved keen to go around every activity, collecting a stamp for each one completed.

Old favourites included making DNA models from origami or jelly babies, and sequence bracelets, where participants thread a double-stranded bracelet of

coloured beads according to short lengths of sequence from a range of organisms.

Bronwyn Terrill and Maureen Ainsworth at the Sanger's Franklin Centre for Public Engagement, along with the rest of their team, put a huge amount of hard work into coordinating the event.

Raffaella, Bert, Victoria, Karyn and Rashmi get to grips with chromosome coiling



Success at the molecule memory game

An Indian adventure

After six years at EMBL Hamburg, **Will Stanley** has swapped the sea mist for 39° temperatures on a Visiting Fellowship (VF) to Hyderabad, India. Here, he talks about his experiences.

I arrived here in August last year (it was a bit cooler then) – here being the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), something of a flagship life sciences lab and an organ of the Indian government's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). According to Dr. Lalji Singh, the Director of CCMB, CSIR “runs 39 laboratories – in all areas of science and technology – across the country, to bring the benefits of science and technology to the masses.” CCMB is primarily a basic research institute, but it fits well into CSIR. “A proportion of research at CCMB is on socially relevant themes, which is beyond evaluation in terms of money,” explains Lalji. He cites examples of major advances in DNA fingerprinting technology and how it has become widely used in paternity tests, crime investigations, wildlife conservation and in studies on human genetic diversity.

So, what is the Visiting Fellow (VF) programme? It's a new idea, motivated by a desire to internationalise Indian labs. The fellowship covers a monthly stipend of up to a year's duration funded by CSIR, and accommodation provided by the host lab. The fellowships can be awarded to PhD holders of any nationality to work in any suitable CSIR lab.

My host here at CCMB, Dr. Rajan Sankaranarayanan (helpfully abbreviated to Sankar), who leads the X-ray crystallography group, says: “We encourage either senior post-doctoral fellows or junior scientists from academic research organisations or universities to take up the VF programme.” He suggests that VFs should “possess complementary or additional expertise to that of the CSIR lab so that it is beneficial to both the parties. Also, we encourage scientists who would like to learn a specific technique to apply.” Dr. LS Shashidhara, one of the senior scientists at CCMB whose main interest is *Drosophila* genetics, adds that the VF programme “should provide a platform for cross-cultural interactions and be a positive experience for those with respect for Indian science, culture and social values”.

So, how have I used my time as a VF? Sankar had me bring over some of the nice *E. coli* expression technologies developed at EMBL by Gunter Stier, Arie Geerlof and all the folks in the Protein Expression and Purification core facility, and I've been teaching a bit on the new predocs' course. I've also been finishing up some lingering manuscripts, getting some new ideas, starting some new

Globe-trotting Will and his host institute, the CCMB

“The programme ... provides a platform for cross-cultural interactions and is a positive experience for those with respect for Indian science, culture and social values”
– LS Shashidhara

projects, looking at protein crystallisation technologies and chatting to people about all kinds of diverse research programmes. I've been hustled around different science institutes in Kolkata, New Delhi and Chennai as well as Hyderabad for conferences, experiments and to give seminars. And, of course, soaking up some Indian culture – I've been in India several times as a tourist and didn't have

a major culture shock when I arrived – but of course it's a very different experience being here to live and work for a while.

I've certainly had a great time at CCMB and been made very welcome, especially by the top-notch students here and all the folks in Sankar's group. I'd thoroughly recommend the experience to adventurous people in need of a change of scenery for a while – some sort of sabbatical, I suppose. If anyone out there is interested, then apply directly to the head of the group you'd like to visit and they'll take your application up with CSIR headquarters.

Next stop for me is the University of Western Australia in Perth starting in May. If you happen to be passing sometime in the next three years, do drop by.

– Will Stanley



No textbooks here!

Where can you expect to find cars running on aspirin, ice cream made from liquid nitrogen and mummified apples?

Only at the EIROforum's Science on Stage 2 festival, held in Grenoble from 2-6 April 2007. Around 500 science teachers from 27 European countries took part in the event, which showcases the most weird and wonderful in science education today.

Among the amazing sights, sounds and smells were the bubble machines on the

French stand using soluble aspirin to drive sub-aqua cars, the UK stand rustling up super-quick liquid nitrogen rum 'n' raspberry ice cream, the Germans rediscovering the chemistry of the ancient Egyptians and, as pictured above, an open-air demonstration of the Magdeburg Sphere. The teachers manning the stands also had the chance to tour the local scientific facilities, including EMBL Grenoble, and meet many of the scientists.

Science on Stage is organised by the seven members of the EIROforum (CERN, EFDA, EMBL, ESA, ESO, ESRF and ILL).

Applicants sought for new interdisciplinary EMBL postdocs

You thought they were a device for listening to your favourite music. In fact, EIPODS are EMBL's new Interdisciplinary Postdocs, the first round of which will be selected by the end of this year.

The new Interdisciplinary Postdoc initiative will provide internal funding for up to 15 postdocs per year working across at least two labs on an interdisciplinary project. Funding will be available for a maximum of three years for each postdoc.

Group or team leaders should hand in project

outlines to their Head of Units by end of April. The projects, usually inter-unit, will be chosen by June 2007, displayed on the EMBL website and advertised internationally. Potential contenders will have until the end of August to formulate their applications, and a first selection will take place towards the end of the year. Thereafter there will be two selections per year.

"The initiative aims to identify and support postdocs to work on shared projects across different labs or units," explains EICAT Coordinating Manager Matthias Haury. "The

idea is to promote interdisciplinary research through the exchange of ideas and technology between scientific fields that are usually separate."

First information on the EIPODs and the selection procedure has been sent to group and team leaders, and more details will be appearing on the postdoc pages of the EMBL website in the next couple of weeks. You can contact Katalin Szpisjak (szpisjak@embl.de), Matthias Haury (eicat@embl.de) or Detlev Arendt (arendt@embl.de) for more details.



Photo: Ed Janssen, ESO

EMBL goes stateside

Lena Raditsch (middle) and Anna-Lynn Wegener man the stand in San Francisco

To show the US what European molecular biology has to offer and raise its profile internationally, EMBL took part for the first time in the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), held in San Francisco on 16-19 February. The AAAS is the world's largest general science organisation and once a year it brings together scientists, policy-makers, teachers, journalists and members of the public in a big science fair.

This year's meeting was centred around the topic of 'Science and Technology for Sustainable Well-Being'. In an interactive exhibition and countless lectures and workshops, more than 4,000 visitors learned about current scientific hot topics and their impact on society.

Many of them, mostly graduate and undergraduate students, teachers, and professors interested in either research or in training and job opportunities, stopped by at the EMBL stand to find out about European science and molecular biology. There was also a chance to network with other European organisations, including IRB Barcelona, ESO, Robert-Bosch-Stiftung, the DG for research from the EC, the German Department of Foreign Affairs and the ESOF 2008 organisers, all of whom welcomed EMBL's display at the exhibition for strengthening Europe's presence at a major American conference. There are also plans to exhibit at the FEBS and ISMB meetings this year, so EMBL's international profile should continue to grow.

– Anna-Lynn Wegener and Lena Raditsch

Spreading virus skills

EMBL Grenoble is part of a new international research unit, the Unit of Virus-Host Cell Interactions (UVHCI), whose other partners are the city's University Joseph Fourier and the CNRS.

The unit is aimed at strengthening the collaborative work going on in viral structure and host biology between the Outstation and its neighbours – Winfried Weissenhorn's work on RNA viruses, for example. Other projects that will benefit from the UVHCI include one studying the Epstein-Barr Virus, and ties with Grenoble Hospital will bring patients into the picture too. "Ultimately, we want the UVHCI to lead the way in the revolution to link structural biology with cell biology and systems biology," says Head of EMBL Grenoble Stephen Cusack.

EMBL Grenoble already has extensive collaborations with neighbouring facilities in the form of the Partnership for Structural Biology (PSB) which includes ESRF, the ILL and the IBS. The UVHCI replaces the temporary Institut de Virologie Moléculaire et Structurale (IVMS), founded in 2001 as a step towards this international research unit.

Third BIOXHIT meeting emphasises the fundamental role of structures in biology

The 3rd annual meeting of the EU IP BIOXHIT (Biocrystallography (X) on a Highly Integrated Technology Platform for European Structural Genomics), held at the DIAMOND light source synchrotron in Didcot, UK from 19-21 February, looked at the role of structures in biology. The conference, organised by coordinator Victor Lamzin, gathered over 140 leading scientists aiming to bridge the past, where single molecules have been studied, to the future, where whole complexes, pathways and systems will be researched. This area, systems biology, is one into which EMBL is very keen to expand.

One of the speakers, Professor in Molecular

Structure Biology Gunter Schneider from the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, later explained the importance of structures in systems biology: "You have to have structural information to get insights on an atomic level. Structures already have a great deal to do with drug design, but they're also essential for the understanding of the effect that signalling pathways or chemical interactions between molecules have on the entire organism. Structural biologists who are driven by specific scientific questions are making the biggest impact in adjacent fields other than their own."

BIOXHIT, which is coordinated by EMBL

Hamburg and which involves groups from EMBL Grenoble and the EBI, among others, brings together scientists at all European synchrotrons and leading software developers to develop, assemble and provide a highly effective technology platform for structural genomics. It has managed to create a very fruitful European team spirit. "It is of paramount importance to drive the technological developments further today so that we can meet the scientific challenges of tomorrow," says Victor. All attendees of the meeting agreed that a dedicated project will be needed to continue the good work when BIOXHIT ends in December 2007.

the EMBO corner



A way forward for women in science

EMBO's mission to promote excellence in the molecular life sciences means more than simply funding the best researchers. Improving the quality of research requires attention to the environment in which science is performed and an awareness of any obstacles that might prevent scientists from fulfilling their potential. This targeted approach takes many different forms across EMBO activities but one important example is the organisation's Women in Science Activities.

EMBO has been following developments in this area for some time and the statistics speak for themselves. While over 50% of life science PhD graduates in Europe are female*, the higher echelons of science paint a different picture. The majority of senior positions are occupied by men, with an average of only 15% of full professorships in Europe held by women*. EMBO's Women in Science Activities make efforts to address this deficit, paying particular

attention to the impact of gender and family on participation in its own activities.

Continual analysis of EMBO's programmes has resulted in changes that bring greater flexibility to female applicants and more family-friendly working conditions for all scientists with children. For example, EMBO Long-Term Fellowships now include paid maternity leave and crèche support, while women returning to the bench after a break for child-care are able to take advantage of more flexible working hours. EMBO's most recent study in this area looks at the career progression of male and female applicants to the EMBO Fellowship and Young Investigator Programmes. The results of this study will be published in the coming months.

EMBO also works closely with other scientific organisations. One major example is the EC-funded SET-Routes initiative, co-ordinated by EMBL in partnership with CERN and EMBO. SET-Routes will send female science 'ambassadors' into schools and universities in an effort to encourage young women to pursue scientific

careers. As a launch pad for the new ambassadors programme, EMBO is organising an international conference. This meeting will follow on from an earlier EMBO conference, 'The Glass Ceiling for Women in the Life Sciences'. While that event took stock of the situation and gave a voice to scientists' concerns, the SET-Routes conference will take a more concrete look at how to move forward and invoke real change.

'The Way Forward' will analyse the latest findings in gender research with talks on gender stereotypes and the origin of bias, as well as discussions on quotas and committee culture. The conference will also present initiatives that are already helping women make their way in science. The most promising of these focus on changing the institutional environment to better cater for the needs of women scientists. The institutions involved are already seeing a higher retention of female scientists, as well as the added benefit of an improved working environment for all staff. The conference will also help prepare the SET-Routes ambassadors for their motivational role in Europe's schools and universities.

– Gerlind Wallon

www.embo.org/gender

*European Commission: *She Figures 2006*

SET-Routes Women in Science Conference
'The Way Forward', 9-11 May 2007
EMBL Heidelberg
www.set-routes.org/conference

Tips from the experts for predoc writers

Demands for changes in the education system are usually effective at least a generation of students later – not so at EMBL. A recent survey among EMBL PhD students showed a strong desire for communication training, and now funds from the Marie Curie E-STAR grant allowed a first round of predocs to participate in a course on scientific writing and publishing on 21-23 March, entitled 'Effective Writing for Life Sciences Research'.

The course was organised by Matthias Hauray of EICAT together with E-STAR coordinator Britta Schläger and Julia Willingale-Theune of ELLS. "We tried to tailor it specifically to the need of PhD students and included interactive sessions on how to write a good paper, together with information on fellowship applications, and the publishing process," says Matthias.

The tutors were Jane Fraser, a freelance scientific writing trainer, Executive Editor of EMBO Journal and EMBL Group Leader Pernille Rørth, EMBO Fellowships Programme Manager Jan Taplick, and

L-r: Yawen Chen, Lukas Niedhart and Kasia Oktaba get down to a writing exercise during the course



Photo: Fabian Filipp

Guntram Bauer, Director of HFSP Fellowships. Practical sessions covered style, writing and editing exercises, different ways of presenting information, and a mind-mapping exercise.

Jane Fraser, who guided the students through abstracts, tables and figure legends, said: "It's important to get insight into scientific writing at quite an early stage of your career. You will need these skills wherever you end up in science." She taught that concise and clear writing makes the reader feel comfortable, even if he does not agree with the data. A manuscript about a huge scientific finding might end up sitting around, just because it is not written well. As key features of clear writing style are

good structure, the active voice and short sentences (15 to 20 words), she speculated: "In twenty years we will probably speak 'Globish', which will consist of a small, restricted set of 1,500 English words that everybody knows, plus specific scientific vocabulary. It will probably make language more boring, but definitely more understandable."

On the last day Pernille Rørth discussed the publishing process in scientific journals, while Jan Taplick and Guntram Bauer gave valuable guidelines on how to write a successful postdoc fellowship application. The course was very much appreciated by all attendees, and EICAT is planning more such events in the future.

– Fabian Filipp

News from the Alumni Association

John Kendrew Young Scientist Award

The EMBL Alumni Association is delighted to launch the "John Kendrew Young Scientist Award" in 2007. The award is open to young scientists who have been, within the past five years, members of the EMBL International PhD Programme or EMBL post-doctoral fellows. It is intended to recognise excellence in either scientific research or in science communication after leaving EMBL.

The award, which is named after the first Director General of EMBL, Sir John Kendrew (right), will consist of a cash prize of €1,000 plus a further €1,000 towards the cost of travel and accommodation, as the winner will be expected to present a lecture at EMBL Heidelberg or one of the outstations. The prize has been generously sponsored by the EMBL Pensioners' Association for an initial period of three years.

Applicants should supply:

1. a summary of their main achievements since leaving EMBL (not more than one A4 page);
2. a CV, including full details of their time spent at EMBL;
3. the names of two people who are familiar with and qualified to comment on their

achievements since leaving EMBL.

Applications should be sent to Mehrnoosh Rayner (alumni@embl.de) no later than 14 September 2007. Candidates may also be nominated by a member of the Alumni Association or a current EMBL staff member.

For more details, please refer to the Alumni Association website, www.embl.org/aboutus/alumni/services/index.html.

– Angus Lamond



We'd like to hear from you! If you'd like to let the EMBL community know what you're doing now, please write to alumni@embl.de.

Scientists can be artists too

EMBL Monterotondo head Nadia Rosenthal demonstrated a hidden talent in the latest issue of *Science in School*, the EMBL-based journal for science teachers; she contributed the artwork for the cover (right) and several other illustrations inside.

In addition to this feature article, in which Nadia discusses the ethics of using stem cells and live animals in research, the issue is full of goodies. Find out how man-made spider silk could be used to repair ligaments, or how biological systems may provide an answer to many engineering challenges; or investigate how understanding hallucinogenic plants casts light on the persecution of witches. Read the journal online at www.scienceinschool.org or register to receive a print copy. Or if you enjoy communicating science to the public, why not submit an article? See the website for details.



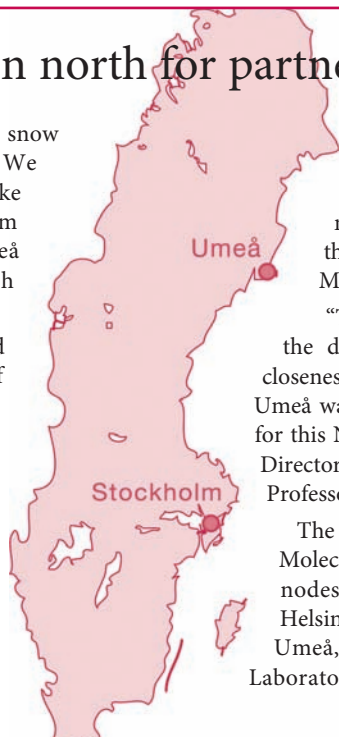
– Eleanor Hayes

Trip to the frozen north for partnership talks

Do you know where all the snow came from in mid spring? We think Iain Mattaj and Silke Schumacher brought it with them after their visit to Umeå University, with us as Swedish ambassadors.

The small town is situated eleven hours by train north of Stockholm – that's very far north! The university has won a prestigious competition to become the Swedish 'node' of the new Nordic EMBL Partnership for Molecular Medicine.

The university is famous for its life sciences research, with biology of infection and cancer research just two of its particu-



lar areas of excellence. Next door to the town hospital is the molecular biology department, shared equally between the Science and Technology and Medicine faculties.

"This unique combination of the dual faculties, as well as the closeness to the hospital, may be why Umeå was the most suitable university for this Nordic collaboration," said the Director of the new Swedish 'node', Professor Bernt Eric Uhlin.

The Nordic EMBL Partnership for Molecular Medicine will have three nodes: one in Oslo and one in Helsinki as well as this third one in Umeå, which will be called the Laboratory of Molecular Infection

Medicine. The work will proceed in close collaboration with the other nodes, and the Swedish Research Council will help the Umeå department expand with six new independent research groups.

As well as being an opportunity to discuss the new partnership and meet the people that are involved, the visit was also a good chance to advertise EMBL to Swedish scientists as a place to visit and work. Iain Mattaj informed a full lecture hall about EMBL, a talk spiced up with some Sweden-specific comments. Then we gave an account of what it's like for a Swede to do a postdoc or PhD at EMBL. Perhaps this will inspire more Nordic applicants to EMBL, and maybe EMBL alumni applications to Umeå.

– Johanna Höög and Johan Ledin

On top of the world

EMBL snow-fans past and present once again enjoyed fresh air, exercise and plenty of the white stuff on 15-18 March – despite a freak-

ishly warm winter – on the Great Annual EMBL Ski and Snowboard Weekend 2007 in Arosa, Switzerland. Thanks to Damian

Brunner, Irena Niebling and Philipp Heindl for organising everything.



Photo: Matt Betts

newsinbrief

❑ **The first EMBL-EBI Science and Society Symposium**, 'Biology and Language', will take place on 21 June at Robinson College, Cambridge, UK. Keynote speakers will include neuroscientists W. Tecumseh Fitch and Faraneh Vargha-Khadem, as well as Svante Pääbo. See www.embl.de/aboutus/sciencesociety/symposia/index.html.

❑ **The Ninth International EMBL PhD Student Symposium**, 'Patterns in Biology – Organisation of Life in Space and Time' will take place on 25-27 October at EMBL Heidelberg. This year's theme will look at the central role biological patterns play in animal behaviour, the control of the cell cycle and cell morphogenesis, the structure of proteins, the sequence of DNA and proteins, and many other aspects of biology. See <http://phdsymposium.embl.org/>.

❑ **At the EMBL International PhD Programme's Graduate Committee Meeting** on 9 February in Hamburg, the committee agreed to move the PhD interview week back to March, beginning in 2008. The suggested application deadline is 15 December 2007, with online application opening from mid-August.

❑ **EMBL Associate Director** Matthias Hentze is now officially a member of the Directors' Research unit, having moved from Gene Expression.

❑ **The Protein Expression and Purification Core Facility** in Heidelberg is experiencing a short-term lack of human resources which may cause delays, but has gained a newly available Broad Range Protein Molecular Weight Marker. Facility head Hüseyin Besir says it saves 80% of users' costs. Contact him at besir@embl.de or visit the new website, www.pepcore.embl.de.

❑ **Visitors from Japan's** National Institute of Basic Biology (NIBB) on 25-28 February had a tour of EMBL Heidelberg with a dif-

ference. As well as learning about the Core Facilities and some of the science, Professor Naoto Ueno and his colleagues were given presentations about the outreach and training activities that go on at EMBL. They had a tour of the Photolab, the Operon and the Szilárd Library, and were introduced to the activities of OIPA and EICAT by the staff.

❑ **As part of the Heidelberger Frühling International Music Festival 2007**, pianist Ragna Schirmer will be performing Bach's Goldberg Variations on 19 April at 8pm in the Operon. The event is supported by EMBO, EMBLEM and EMBL Ventures, among other sponsors. Instead of an entrance fee, donations will be invited to support the charity organisation Helfer ohne Grenzen e.V.

❑ **EuroBioFund has opened** a Call for Expressions of Interest for its annual conference, EuroBioForum 2007, which will be held in Lisbon on 5-7 December. It's an opportunity for life science researchers across Europe to discuss ideas for large-scale research programmes with a wide variety of funding

organisations, and all selected Expressions of Interest will also be made public in a web-based database. Set up in 2006 by the ESF with support from the EC, EuroBioFund identifies pan-European life sciences programmes for which a coordinated approach for financing and expertise is needed. See www.esf.org/activities/eurobiofund.html.

❑ **Thanks to everyone for** your great suggestions about how to decorate the new chimney at EMBL Heidelberg (last issue). The overwhelming consensus was to paint it to look like a microtubule, and this has been agreed by the construction company.

❑ **The new Molecular Evolution Journal Club's** first meeting on 27 April at 2.30pm in Room 208, EMBL Heidelberg will look at a paper by Lynch and Conery, 'The evolutionary fate and consequences of duplicate genes'. "An evolutionary perspective can allow us to place the implications of our results in a wider context," says organiser Aidan Budd. "This new club will focus on how such a perspective can be applied to our work."



Photo: Christine Panagiotidis

GeneCore hosted PhD students from Nice University for a week in March, all non-French nationals from a special Marie Curie programme similar to the E-STAR initiative. The students were here not only to learn about the core facility and take practical courses in proteomics and genomics, but also to experience life in an established international institution. "This programme, InterDeC, has been instrumental in encour-

aging a more international approach in a primarily French-speaking environment," explains Rob Arkowitz, the Group Leader associated with the visit. "The EMBL PhD programme is a successful model for encouraging a truly international organisation, and based on this, Nice University has started providing English-language events for the benefit of its InterDeC students."

from the Staff Association

- **Staff Association Elections:** As announced at the Staff Association General Assembly on 23 March, elections will take place on 23-27 April. If you'd like to stand on the committee, please contact a SA representative or one of the Election Committee (Annabel Goulding/Monique Cuq-Beutler).
- **Farewell to Fabian:** After almost seven years of DJing at EMBL events in Heidelberg, Fabian Philipp is saying 'Auf Wiedersehen'. The SA would like to give a special thanks for all his work and for keeping the EMBL parties alive and kicking until the wee hours. Fabian says that with such an international crowd, his aim was always to

choose music that would appeal to everyone. In May, he will start studying at the University of California and San Diego, where he will be playing with nuclear spins instead of spinning turntables! We wish him the best of luck and thank him again for all his support and dedication. We'd also like to welcome our new DJ, Fay Christodoulou, a PhD student in the Arendt Group. She is originally from Athens and has been DJing since high school. Her experiences include working at a beach bar on the island of Limnos, having a radio show at Sussex University and DJing at several Afro-Caribbean and Asian parties. She's really

looking forward to DJing at the EMBL parties in future.

- **Turkish Party:** On the subject of parties, our next event will be the Turkish Party on Saturday 19 May. Keep an eye out for the posters.
- **Summer Party:** Before making your holiday plans this year, make sure you keep 14 July free for the 7th Annual EMBL Summer Party. This is always a great day filled with activities for all the family.
- **Keep up-to-date** with Staff Association events at www.embl-heidelberg.de/~staff/.

– Catherine Floyd

people@EMBL



Christine Panagiotidis is the new photographer in EMBL Heidelberg's Photolab. Originally from Canada with Greek origins, Christine studied art with a focus on sculpture and photography in the US before going freelance as a photographer in Greece, Canada and Italy. Her first taste of photography in a scientific environment was at the MPI in Dresden, where she stayed for more than four years. "Scientific photography is a fascinating challenge because, with a background in art, you experience the best of both worlds," she says. "I'm really glad to be part of this unique environment."

Rossana de Lorenzi has just finished her PhD at EMBL Monterotondo and is now the newest ELLS (European Learning Laboratory for the Life Sciences) member, and will be organising education activities at the outstation. Having been involved in ELLS' work during her PhD, including running activities in Italian for teachers, Rossana was keen to continue with the communication of science rather than staying in research. "I'm used to explaining science to laypeople, as my husband is a non-scientist, and I think it's really important to encourage a positive attitude in young people," she says.



events@EMBL

28 April-5 May EMBL Heidelberg
Course: International Symposium and EMBO Practical Course on High Throughput Microscopy for Systems Biology

3 May EMBL Heidelberg
Event: emBASE: A Microarray Storage And Analysis Platform

3-6 May EMBL Heidelberg
Conference: EMBO Conference on Chromatin and Epigenetics

9 May-11 May EMBL Heidelberg
Conference: International Women in Science Conference: The Way Forward

14 May EMBL Heidelberg
EMBL Distinguished Visitor Lecture: Andrew W. Murray, Harvard University. 'Friday night at the singles bar: how yeast cells find a mate'

19 May EMBL Heidelberg
Turkish Party

25 May EMBL Heidelberg
Science and Society: Horace Freeland Judson, historian and science writer. 'Whatever happened to gene therapy?'

6-12 June EMBL Heidelberg
Course: EMBO Practical Course on RNAi

11 June EMBL Heidelberg
Career Options Day

12 June EMBL Heidelberg
Lab Day

13-14 June EMBL Heidelberg
Workshop: Preparing for the Academic Job Market

13-14 June EMBL Heidelberg
Heads of Units Meeting
Senior Scientists Meeting

17-23 June EMBL Heidelberg
Course: EMBO Practical Course on Microinjection and Detection of Probes in Living Cells

20-22 June EMBL Hamburg
Course: EMBO Workshop on Integrated Approaches in Structural Enzymology - 'The chemistry and biochemistry of catalysis by biological systems'

For more events, visit www.embl.org/events



Winter wonderland

Building maintenance were puzzled; absolutely no takers for a seat outside the canteen at lunchtime, despite all the effort they'd spent getting the tables and chairs out of storage.

awards&honours

EMBL DG **Iain Mattaj** has been elected president of the European Life Science Forum (ELSF), taking over from Professor Julio E. Celis of FEBS. The ELSF was founded in 2002 as a coalition of independent life sciences organisations, biotechnology and biomedical research communities in Europe. Its mission is to increase their visibility and impact, to advance research and to promote the contribution of scientists to European society. The 13 member organisations include EMBL, EMBO, ELSO and FEBS.

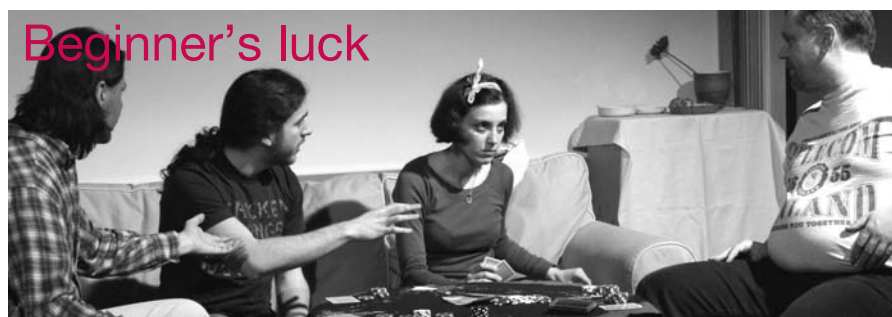


Photo: Bogdan Costescu

Chuck (Mirco Castoldi), Phil (Ioannis Legouras) and Ray (Jorma Tapola) get thoroughly beaten by poker virgin Francie (Andreea Gruia) in EMBL Theatre Club's performance of Jesse Kellerman's *Poker and the Declaration of the Rights of Man* on 23 March. If you'd like to try your hand at acting or help behind the scenes, contact Jorma at tapola@embl.de.

It is with regret that we inform the EMBL community of the death of Philip Goodman on 23 February in Sheffield, England. Philip worked in the Mechanical Workshop at EMBL Heidelberg from 1982 to 1991.