

an instrument for the international promotion of our country, an instrument that many other countries wish for but do not have.

Today we believe that our mathematical community is richer, that our country is scientifically more developed, and we congratulate ourselves for this and thank all of those who have made it possible.

Let us end this article with a sentence of the letter addressed by Sir John Kingman, Presi-

dent of the European Mathematical Society in occasion of the 20th anniversary of the CRM: “You have put Catalan Mathematics firmly and permanently on the map”.

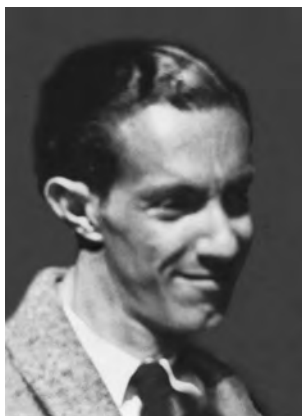
### Website

Additional information about the CRM, including full lists of visitors and activities, can be found at <http://www.crm.cat>.

Manuel Castellet  
CRM Director

## The Catalan mathematician Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer (1912–1967) and the Prize in his honor

Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer was a self-taught Catalan mathematician very active in classical Mathematical Analysis in the period 1940–1967. Each year, in honor of his memory, the Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer Foundation awards a mathematical research prize, which was awarded for the first time in April 1993.



Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer

### A biographical sketch

Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer was born in Figueras (Girona) in 1912, with a practically complete physical disability that confined him for all his life to a wheelchair, and died in Barcelona in 1967. After the early death of his father, he moved in with Ferran’s maternal grandmother and his cousins Maria, Àngels and Ferran, who provided the pleasant and suitable environment in which the mathematician grew up. The sickly

boy was left with the option to learn by himself or through his mother’s lessons. After a period of intense reading, arousing a first interest in astronomy and physics, his passion for Mathematics awoke and dominated his further life. Ferran’s physical handicap did not allow him to write down any of his papers by himself. He dictated them to his mother until her death in 1955, and when, after a period of grief and desperation, he resumed research with new vigor, his cousins took care of the writing. His working power, paired with exceptional talents, produced a number of results which were eventually recognized for their high scientific value and for which he was awarded various prizes. In 1938, he communicated his first results to Prof. J. Hadamard of the Academy of Sciences in Paris, who published one of his papers in the Academy’s “Comptes Rendus” and encouraged him to proceed in his selected course of investigation. From this moment, Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer maintained a constant interchange with the French analytical school, in particular with Szolem Mandelbrojt and his students. In the following years, his results were published regularly. His research was recognized with a significant number of prizes: Agell Prize, of the Acadèmia de Ciències i Arts de Barcelona (1948); Premi Prat de la Riba, of the Institut d’Estudis Catalans (1949); Premi de l’Academia de Ciencias de Zaragoza (1950); two prizes “Torres Quevedo” and “Francisco

Franco" (1956) of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas; Premi de l'Academia de Ciències de Madrid (1959), and the Prize Martí d'Ardenya of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans (1966). Despite all honour it was much more difficult to reach the social and professional position corresponding to his scientific achievements. At times, his economical situation was not the most comfortable either. It wasn't until the 9th of December 1967, 18 days prior to his death, that his confirmation as a scientific member was made public by the Divisi3n de Ciències Matemàtiques, Mèdiques y de Naturaleza of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. Furthermore, his election was qualified only as "de entrada", in contrast to the first class election. He always participated and supported guest lectures in Barcelona, many of them having been prepared or promoted by him. On the occasion of a conference in 1966, H. Mascart of Toulouse publicly pronounced his feeling honoured by the presence of M. Sunyer i Balaguer, "the first, by far, of Spanish mathematicians". On December 27, 1967, still fully active, Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer unexpectedly passed away.

### The Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer Foundation

In June, 30 of 1983 Mrs. Maria Assumpci3 Carbona i Balaguer and Maria dels Àngels Carbona i Balaguer, cousins of Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer, created the Fundaci3 Sunyer i Balaguer. This Foundation became inoperative for several years, until it was remodeled by Ferran's cousins in December 1991, entering the Institut d'Estudis Catalans. Since then, the Foundation is presided by the President of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans. The main objective of the Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer Foundation is to award a mathematical monograph of an expository nature presenting the latest developments in an active area of research in Mathematics, in which the applicant has made important contributions. The Foundation may award also other works related to the mathematical research. The Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer Prize is awarded yearly in the Prize Ceremony of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans after the proposal of an International Jury. The conditions of the Prize are:

- The monograph must be original, written in English, and of at least 150 pages. The

monograph must not be subject to any previous copyright agreement. In exceptional cases, manuscripts in other languages may be considered.

- The winning monograph will be published in Birkhäuser Verlag's series *Progress in Mathematics*, subject to the usual regulations concerning copyright and author's rights.
- The prize, amounting to 12,000 euros, is provided by the Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer Foundation.

For the 2007 call of the Prize, the scientific committee is formed by: A. Córdoba (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid), P. Malliavin (Université de Paris VI), J. Oesterlé (Institut de Mathématiques de Jussieu), O. Serra (Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya), A. Weinstein (University of California at Berkeley).

Here is the list of winner monographs from the set up of the Prize in 1992:

- 1992** Alexander Lubotzky, Hebrew University of Jerusalem *Discrete Groups, Expanding Graphs and Invariant Measures*, (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 125, Birkhäuser)
- 1993** Klaus Schmidt, Warwick University. *Dynamical Systems of Algebraic Origin*, (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 128, Birkhäuser)
- 1994** The scientific committee decided not to award the prize.
- 1995** As from this year prizes will bear the year they are awarded, rather than the year they were announced.
- 1996** V. Kumar Murty and M. Ram Murty, University of Toronto. *Non-Vanishing of L-Functions and Applications* (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 157, Birkhäuser)
- 1997** A. Böttcher, T. U. Chemnitz and Y. I. Karlovich, Marine Hydrophysical Institute. *Carleson Curves, Muckenhoupt Weights, and Toeplitz Operators*, (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 154, Birkhäuser)
- 1998** Juan J. Morales-Ruiz, Technical University of Catalonia. *Differential Galois Theory and Non-integrability of Hamiltonian Systems*, (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 179, Birkhäuser)
- 1999** Patrick Dehornoy, Université de Caen. *Braids and Self-Distributivity*, (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 192, Birkhäuser)

- 2000** Juan-Pablo Ortega and Tudor Ratiu, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne. *Hamiltonian Singular Reduction*, (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 222, Birkhäuser)
- 2001** Martin Golubitsky and Ian Stewart, University of Houston, Warwick University. *The Symmetry Perspective*, (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 200, Birkhäuser)
- 2002** Alexander Lubotzky and Dan Segal, Hebrew University of Jerusalem and All Souls College, Oxford. *Subgroup Growth*, (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 212, Birkhäuser)
- André Unterberger, Université de Reims. *Automorphic Pseudodifferential Analysis and Higher-level Weyl Calculi* (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 209, Birkhäuser)
- 2003** Fuensanta Andreu-Vaillo and José M. Mazón, Universitat de València, and Vicent Caselles, Universitat Pompeu Fabra. *Parabolic Quasilinear Equations Minimizing Linear Growth Functionals*, (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 223, Birkhäuser)
- 2004** Guy David, Université de Paris-Sud. *Singular Sets of Minimizers for the Mumford-Shah Functional*, (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 233, Birkhäuser)
- 2005** Antonio Ambrosetti and Andrea Malchiodi, SISSA, Italy. *Perturbation Methods and Semilinear Elliptic Problems on  $\mathbb{R}^n$* , (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 240, Birkhäuser)
- José Seade, UNAM, Mexico *On the Topology of Isolated Singularities in Analytic Spaces*, (Progress in Mathematics, vol. 241, Birkhäuser)
- 2006** Xiaonan Ma, École Polytechnique Palaiseau and George Marinescu, Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe Universität. *Holomorphic Morse Inequalities and Bergman Kernels*.
- For more information on the Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer Prize and on the Foundation, see the web page <http://ffsb.iec.cat>.

Pere Pascual Gainza  
Director of the  
Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer Foundation

## Mathematics at the University of Barcelona



Building of the UB



The Cloister

The University of Barcelona (UB) has recently celebrated its 555 anniversary. It is the university of Catalonia which has the biggest number of students and offers the widest and most complete range of courses including undergraduate degrees, masters and doctorate programs. It is also the leading center for university research in Spain in terms of number of research pro-

grams and excellence of results. The faculties of the University of Barcelona are distributed along four main campuses in different places of the city of Barcelona.

The University of Barcelona has been offering studies of Mathematics since the 16th century. In modern times the Faculty of Mathematics of the University of Barcelona was cre-