



Juan-Julio Bonet Sugrañes

PRESENTATION – 1ST CONFERENCE – MEMORIAL JUAN JULIO BONET SUGRAÑES

Bona tarda a tothom, gràcies per haver vingut, crec que a en Juan Julio Bonet Sugrañes, a qui avui homenatgem, li hauria agradat estar a aquest fantàstic auditori de Cosmocaixa aquest vespre. Benvinguts tots i, en especial, la família d'en Juan Julio Bonet.

Ara si m'ho permeteu passaré a fer la resta de la presentació en anglès. I have now switched into English, since this is the main language of scientific communication, and the language of the two people that honour us with their presence here: Vivian Torrence and Roald Hoffmann, thank you for having accepted our invitation. And thanks especially to the Obra Social la Caixa and to the Bioregion of Catalonia for sponsoring this conference and exhibition at Cosmocaixa, through your great common initiative, B - Debate. My name is Jordi Quintana, and I am also representing here a team of people (Gemma Arsequell, Gregorio Valencia, Santiago Alvarez, and others) who have put together this 1st Conference in the memory of Professor Bonet.

Many of you knew personally Juan Julio Bonet Sugrañes. He was not only an excellent chemist, and excellent professor, but also a wonderful human being. The program of tonight's Conference shows a picture of Juan Julio with his characteristic smile, and forward-looking, optimistic, open attitude towards the future. For those of us that had the privilege to follow his lectures while studying Chemistry at the Institut Químic de Sarrià, in Barcelona, Juan Julio Bonet was an inspiration to love and get passionate with this exciting area of science, and also to admire the great chemists and scientists that had made the discoveries that he would teach us. Juan Julio certainly appreciated and loved chemistry and teaching, but he mainly loved humanity, and appreciated human relationships the most. All of this you could feel in the laboratory where most of us, Juan Julio Bonet's "fellows" were trained: from his open attitude to international collaborations, to the lively "afternoon tea sessions", from his permanent smile and positive comments to his rich writings and scientific papers, we all had something to learn from Juan Julio.

One of his achievements was to publish the book "Viaje al Reino de Saturno", a novel where the links between several of the most important people in the history of chemistry in Europe since Lavoisier are profiled, together with a little bit of magic and a descriptive text where you can follow their steps throughout more than two centuries. Juan Julio Bonet shows us in this major work that good scientists like himself may also become good writers, bringing together literature and chemistry.

Tonight's event also brings together science, literature and art, as Juan Julio Bonet would have loved. Vivian Torrence and Roald Hoffmann created a project some years ago, "Chemistry Imagined", where Vivian, an artist with a very open attitude towards science, interprets in her collages the wise words of Professor Hoffmann, a Nobel Prize in Chemistry, and also a wonderful poet and a great communicator of science. Vivian Torrence has brought many of her collages to the exhibition that has just opened here at Cosmocaixa, and herself and Roald Hoffmann are now proposing us this dialog between science and art, around their "Chemistry Imagined" project.

It is therefore a pleasure to invite Vivian Torrence and Roald Hoffmann to come to the stage and offer us their wisdom and their time in the crossroad between science and culture, in homage to Juan Julio Bonet.