Letter from the President

Dear EATCS members,

As it is usual in this time of the year, I have the great pleasure to announce the assignments of this year's Goedel Prize, EATCS and Presburger Award.

The Goedel Prize 2011 which is co-sponsored by EATCS and SIGACT, has been awarded to Johan T. Håstad for his paper Some optimal inapproximability results, *Journal of the ACM, 48: 798-859, 2001. As you can read in the laudation, published in this issue of the bulletin, this paper is definitely a landmark paper in computational complexity. Johan has tackled in his paper a category of search problems known as NP-hard, which are unlikely to be solved by an absolute solution but may be addressed with approximation. He improved on the PCP Theorem, a technique for creating proofs that can be verified very efficiently. Johan will receive the 2011 Gödel Prize in a ceremony at the ACM Symposium on the Theory of Computing (STOC) held as part of the Federated Computing Research Conference (FCRC), June 7, 2011, in San Jose, CA. This year's Goedel Prize Committee consists of Cynthia Dwork, Sanjeev Arora, Josep Diaz, Mogens Nielsen, Mike Paterson, and Eli Upfal (chair). On behalf of the whole EATCS community I would like to offer our congratulations to Johan who has remarkably already won the Goedel Prize in 1994 for his paper "Almost optimal lower bounds for small depth circuits", Advances in Computing Research, Vol 5, 143-170, 1989.*

The EATCS Award 2011 has been assigned to Boris (Boaz) Trakhtenbrot for his decisive

influence on the development of theoretical computer science, for his pre-eminent career as distinguished researcher, and for his role as a most illustrious leader and disseminator. The laudation, also published in this issue of the bulletin, illustrates his distinguished scientific career. Boris Trakhtenbrot is unquestionably a principal founding father of the discipline of theoretical computer science. For over half a century, Trakhtenbrot has been making seminal contributions to virtually all of the central aspects of theoretical computer science, inaugurating numerous brand new areas of investigation. The list of topics in which Trakhtenbrot has made his lasting mark is breathtaking in its scope: decidability problems in logic and schematology of programs, finite automata theory, the connection between infinite automata and monadic second-order logic, complexity of algorithms, abstract complexity, algorithmic logic, probabilistic computation, program verification, the lambda calculus and foundations of programming languages, programming semantics, type theory, semantics and methodology for concurrent and hybrid systems, and much more. The proposal has been made by our selection committee consisting of Eugenio Moggi, Friedhelm Meyer auf der Heide and Pavlos Spirakis (chair), and it has been unanimously approved by the EATCS Council members. On behalf of the whole EATCS community I would like to offer our congratulations to Boris for this well-deserved award!

The Presburger Award Committee 2011,

consisting of Monika Henzinger, Stefano Leonardi, and Andrzej Tarlecki (chair) has unanimously decided to propose Patricia Bouyer-Decitre as the recipient of the Presburger Award in 2011. This excellent proposal has been unanimously approved by the EATCS Council members. The laudation, also published in this issue of the bulletin, illustrates that she is one of the most impressive researchers in theoretical computer science of her generation and an ideal recipient for the Presburger Award. Patricia Bouyer has contributed fundamental results to the theory and applications of timed automata as a fundamental model of real-time systems. In 2007 she received the CNRS Bronze medal, awarded for outstanding achievements by a junior researcher. Her publication record includes about 70 research papers in leading international journals and conferences. Patricia Bouyer's research had a deep impact on the field of timed automata and related topics. She combines excellent technical skills and ability to pursue deep and complex technical results with research stamina and ingenuity that together make the best among scientists. All our congratulations go out to Patricia Bouyer!

Please note that the Presburger Award 2011 as well as the EATCS Award 2011 will be presented in a ceremony that will take place during ICALP 2011 in Zurich. On behalf of EATCS, I would like to offer our sincere thanks to all members of the Award Committees for their work and excellent choices.

The program of ICALP 2011 is now ready and can be viewed in detail on the

corresponding website http://icalp11.inf.ethz.ch/. It is again an excellent program, both for the high quality of the contributed papers and for the large number of scientific events, like the presentation of the Awards mentioned above and the invited talks. We are all convinced that the ICALP conference chaired by Jiri Sgall (track A), Luca Aceto (track B) and Monika Henzinger (track C) will again be a great success. In Zurich, you will have also the opportunity to see the first Call for Papers for ICALP 2012 with the indication of the program committees and the invited speakers. In this context, I would like to invite you to attend the EATCS General Assembly which will take place on Tuesday evening during the ICALP week in Zurich and where you will be informed in detail about the EATCS activities within the last year and the plans for the next year. There is one point I would like to mention already in this letter. This year the term of office of ten Council members that were elected in 2007 expires. You can find the corresponding list of Council members on the EATCS web site. The electronic election of ten new members will take place in September of this year. In order to prepare the election, we will have to nominate a list of candidates. Nominations of candidates can be made by any EATCS member. You are kindly requested to send your nominations by email to me and to the EATCS Secretary, Ioannis Chatzigiannakis, by June 30.

In March of this year we received the shocking message that our friend and colleague Philippe Flajolet passed away.

Philippe was an outstanding theorist and an impressive unforgettable person. Most of Philippe's research work was dedicated towards generic methods for analyzing the computational complexity of algorithms, including the theory of average-case complexity. He introduced the theory of analytic combinatorics. With Robert Sedgewick of Princeton, he wrote the first book-length treatment of the topic, the 2009 book entitled Analytic Combinatorics. At the time of his death from a serious illness, Philippe Flajolet was a research director (senior research scientist) at INRIA in Rocquencourt. He was a member of the French Academy of Sciences as well as of the Academia Europaea. You can find the obituary written by Michele Soria, Brigitte Vallee, Bruno Salvy, Robert Sedgewick, and Wojciech Szpankowski in this bulletin issue. Philippe, we will all miss you!

Burkhard Monien, Paderborn
May 2011