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2014 Prizes



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2014 Prizes

Gérard Berry



Laureate of the CNRS Gold Medal

- 1 Gérard Berry, *Algorithms, Machines and Languages*, has won the most prestigious French scientific award: the CNRS Gold Medal.
- 2 The next issue of the *La Lettre du Collège de France* (no. 40) will publish excerpts from the speech that Prof. Berry delivered at the awards ceremony for this distinction. Several

Collège de France professors have received the CNRS Gold Medal in the last ten years: Alain Connes in 2004, Serge Haroche in 2009 and Philippe Descola in 2012.

Alain Fischer

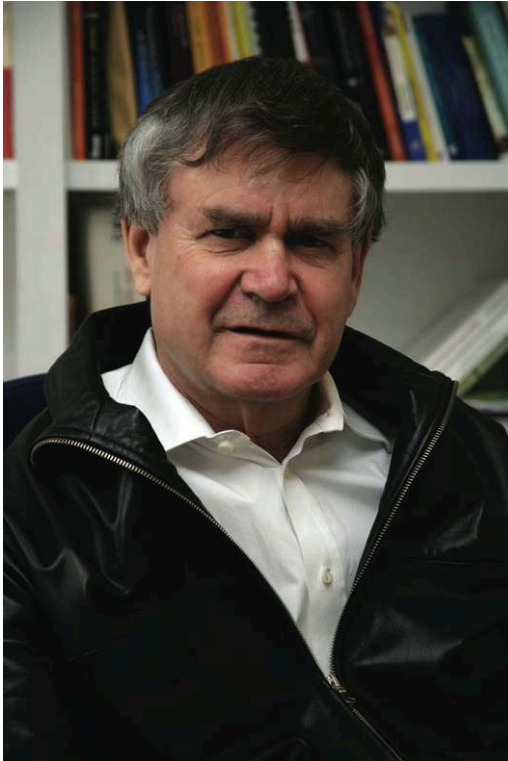


2015 Japan Prize Laureate

Medical Science and Medicinal Science

- 3 The Japan Prize is awarded by the Japan Prize Foundation. Since its inception in 1985, the Foundation has awarded the Prize to eighty-one persons from thirteen countries. The Japan Prize Foundation wished to reward Alain Fischer, Director of the Institute *Imagine*, Chair of Experimental Medicine at the Collège de France, for his pioneering work on gene therapy. Prof. Fischer has demonstrated the therapeutic power of this therapy on X-linked severe combined immunodeficiency.
- 4 In 2000, Profs Alain Fischer, Marina Cavazzana and Salima Hacein-Bey carried out and published the world's first test on gene therapy for this disease. The retroviral vector used for this first test has since been modified successfully to prevent any side effects. Prof. Fischer commented that "gene therapy is an extra weapon in the arsenal of therapeutic strategies for enhancing the treatment of genetic diseases and probably other pathologies as well".
- 5 More information is available at: http://www.japanprize.jp/en/prize_past_2015_prize02.html

Ian Hacking



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Balzan Prize

- 6 Emeritus Prof. Ian Hacking, Chair of Philosophy and History of Scientific Concepts from 2001 to 2006, won the 2014 Balzan Prize for his fundamental contributions to the philosophy and history of the natural and social sciences, for the broad range of themes studied in his research, and for his original epistemological perspective centred on a version of scientific realism, and which departs from the dominant paradigm in the philosophy of science from the last century. Ian Hacking is one of the most important contemporary philosophers of the natural and social sciences. His work consists in a reconstruction and genealogical interpretation of major scientific theories and concepts. His research seeks to highlight the cultural, social, institutional, cognitive, and practical circumstances in which we can identify the historical appearance or emergence of ways of seeing, of styles of reasoning, and of theories about ourselves and the world that provide contemporary models of understanding in the framework of scientific knowledge.

Clément Sanchez



Eni Award

- 7 Clément Sanchez, Chair of Chemistry of Hybrid Materials, received the prestigious Eni Award 2014, in the “Environmental protection” section. The chemistry of hybrid materials consists for example in endowing a simple piece of transparent glass with the flexibility and the bright colour of a flower petal to create a material with high-performance mechanical and optical properties. And it is only our imagination that limits the realm of possibilities (in information technology, medicine, energy, cosmetics, construction, transport, etc.). In the environmental field, for instance, we can develop photovoltaic cells on hard or flexible substrates, sensors able to detect toxic materials, photocatalysts to depollute a liquid, absorbers to capture CO₂, catalysts to turn heavy hydrocarbons into petrol using minimal energy, and so on.