



## Personal foreword on Helmut Schwarz Honor Issue<sup>☆</sup>

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### Personal foreword

Helmut Schwarz has served as Editor in Chief of the *International Journal of Mass Spectrometry* for incredible 27 years. It was therefore natural to ask Mike Bowers as special issue consultant whether the Journal would publish an issue on the occasion of Helmut's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. Mike immediately agreed, and the idea received "unanimous, enthusiastic support from all the remaining editors". Not surprisingly, the large community of colleagues and friends also provided overwhelming response. We received numerous high-quality submissions, and cordially thank all contributors for making this Special Issue possible. We are also indebted to Andrea Beck and Irmgard Staud for collecting names and verifying email addresses of potential contributors, as well as to Thomas Weiske for assembling Helmut's list of publications, which is available as supporting information to the *Curriculum Vitae*.

Like in a baroque fugue, the main theme of the special issue, *science and friendship*, is introduced by Sason Shaik in his personal essay, and taken up in many personal variations in the dedication lines of the scientific contributions. In our careers, each of us had her or his very personal moment with Helmut, when the distance between the young, ambitious researcher and the eminent professor suddenly disappeared, to be replaced by an unspoken understanding and deep intimacy, born from sharing new ideas and excitement for something special going on. It may look ironic that

the long-lasting personal memories connected with an exceedingly eloquent person such as Helmut originate from unspoken, subtle and indirect means of communication. In truth, however, this only underlines his marvelous gift, making strong ties with people and building an extensive network of scientists and friends.

That gift made Helmut Schwarz the perfect cast for high-ranking, meaning high-work load, positions like Vice President of the German Science Foundation DFG and President of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. In both posts, Helmut was not an administrator, but an enthusiastic ambassador of science, making personal ties to politicians and underlining the importance of scientific excellence for society and our modern way of life. This special issue is also a token of appreciation for Helmut's outstanding community service.

Helmut was first reluctant to the idea of celebrating his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday with a scientific symposium. He finally agreed to a family-like meeting, with talks given by his scientific offspring - students, postdocs and associates. The meeting took place in September 2018 near Innsbruck. It turned into a celebration of Helmut's key concepts: doing science for the joy of discovery, for the intellectual challenges provided by nature, and, last but not least, for the interaction with students and colleagues, who turn into friends.

This brings us back to the theme of the special issue: Helmut, we wish you many more years in good health for actively engaging in science and friendship, and for enjoying the love of your family.

<sup>☆</sup> Virtual Special Issue of the International Journal of Mass Spectrometry. See <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/international-journal-of-mass-spectrometry/special-issue/10WK91ZBR5N>

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