Preface

This volume contains the papers presented at the 15th International Symposium on Hearing (ISH), which was held at the Hotel Regio, Santa Marta de Tormes, Salamanca, Spain, between 1st and 5th June 2009.

Since its inception in 1969, this Symposium has been a forum of excellence for debating the neurophysiological basis of auditory perception, with computational models as tools to test and unify physiological and perceptual theories. Every paper in this symposium includes two of the following: auditory physiology, psychophysics or modeling. The topics range from cochlear physiology to auditory attention and learning. While the symposium is always hosted by European countries, participants come from all over the world and are among the leaders in their fields. The result is an outstanding symposium, which has been described by some as a “world summit of auditory research.”

The current volume has a bottom-up structure from “simpler” physiological to more “complex” perceptual phenomena and follows the order of presentations at the meeting. Parts I to III are dedicated to information processing in the peripheral auditory system and its implications for auditory masking, spectral processing, and coding. Part IV focuses on the physiological bases of pitch and timbre perception. Part V is dedicated to binaural hearing. Parts VI and VII cover recent advances in understanding speech processing and perception and auditory scene analysis. Part VIII focuses on the neurophysiological bases of novelty detection, attention, and learning. Finally, Part IX describes novel results and ideas on hearing impairment. Some chapters have appended a written discussion by symposium participants; a form of online review that significantly enhances the quality of the content. In summary, the volume describes state-of-the-art knowledge on the most current topics of auditory science and will hopefully act as a valuable resource to stimulate further research.

It is not possible to organize a meeting of this size and importance without a considerable amount of help. We would like to express our most sincere thanks to the organizing team: Almudena Eustaquio-Martín, Jorge Martín Méndez, Patricia Pérez González, Peter T. Johannesen, and Christian Sánchez Belloso, whose expertise and willing help were essential to the smooth running of the meeting and preparation of this volume. Many thanks also to the staff of the Fundación General de la Universidad de Salamanca for their skillful and unconditional support with the administrative aspects of the organization. We are very grateful for the generosity
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Finally, we would like to thank all authors and participants for the high quality of their scientific contributions and for their cheerful conviviality during the meeting. The first editor wishes to thank all participants for generously and enthusiastically allowing this extraordinary symposium to take part in Spain for the first time ever.

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ISH 2009 - SALAMANCA
Key to photograph

Agus, Trevor 48    Martín Méndez, Jorge 8
Alves-Pinto, Ana 13    Mc Laughlin, Myles 24
Balaguer-Ballester, Emili 55    McAlpine, David 53
Bernstein, Joshua 57    McKinney, Martin 47
Bruce, Ian 43    Meddis, Ray 6
Carlyon, Robert 37    Nelson, Paul 72
Carr, Catherine 19    Oberfeld-Twistel, Daniel 35
Colburn, Steve 14    Oxenham, Andrew 38
Culling, John 62    Palmer, Alan 4
Dau, Torsten 74    Panda R. Manasa 22
Delgutte, Bertrand 44    Patterson, Roy 45
Denham, Susan 20    Pérez González, Patricia 7
Elhilali, Mounya 18    Plack, Chris 31
Eustaquio-Martin, Almudena 3    Pressnitzer, Daniel 51
Ewert, Stephan 54    Recio-Spinoso, Alberto 70
Ferry, Robert 25    Roberts, Brian 27
Ghitza, Oded 63    Rupp, André 56
Goupell, Matthew 28    Shamma, Shihab 66
Hancock, Kenneth 71    Simon, Jonathan 46
Heinz, Michael 33    Spitzer, Philipp 69
Henning, G. Bruce 79    Strahl, Stefan 68
Ibrahim, Rasha 12    Strelcyk, Olaf 34
Irino, Toshio 41    Strickland, Elizabeth 16
Jennings, Skyler 64    Sumner, Christian 59
Johannesen, Peter 2    Tan M. Christine 21
Johnsrude, Ingrid 15    Tollin, Daniel 73
Joris, Philip 26    Trahiotis, Constantine 29
Kidani, Shunsuke 58    Unoki, Masashi 36
Klinge, Astrid 67    Uppenkamp, Stefan 39
Klump, Georg M. 75    van de Par, Steven 40
Kohlrausch, Armin 23    van der Heijden, Marcel 30
Laback, Bernhard 50    Vieimeister, Neal 32
Lecuyse, Wendy 17    Wang, Xiaoen 65
LeGoff, Nicolas 78    Watkins, Anthony 10
Li, Feipeng 49    Wiegrebe, Lutz 52
Lopez-Poveda, Enrique 5    Witton, Caroline 9
Lüddemann, Helge 60    Wojtczak, Magdalena 11
Lütkenhöner, Bernd 76    Yasin, Ifat 61
Majda, Piotr 42    Young, Eric 1
Marquardt, Torsten 77


Not in photograph

Antunes, Flora
Brand, Thomas
Devore, Sasha
King, Andrew
Lopéz-García, Mª Dolores
Neher, Tobias

Nodal, Fernando
Russell, Ian
Sánchez Belloso, Christian
Schnupp, Jan
Xia, Jing
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