

Preface

This volume 'Basal Ganglia IX' is derived from the proceedings of the Ninth Triennial Meeting of the International Basal Ganglia Society (IBAGS). The meeting was held from 2 to 6 September 2007 at Hotel Zuiderduin, Egmond aan Zee, the Netherlands. Basal ganglia researchers meet each other during the years on several occasions and in various combinations. Yet, the triennial IBAGS meetings have become a strong tradition and an attractive occasion to specifically consider the progress in our understanding of the basal ganglia in health and disease, and to meet colleagues and friends with a common interest. For the 9th IBAGS meeting more than 240 delegates were registered, many of them young scientists, with an interest in the basal ganglia, and with many different expertises and backgrounds. Based on the input from the Scientific Advisory Committee and the Council, the Local Organizing Committee was able to put together a diverse and attractive scientific programme with more than 160 posters and 47 oral presentations. Many different aspects and a wide range of questions regarding functions and dysfunctions of the basal ganglia were dealt with in either oral presentations or posters. The attractive format of former IBAGS meetings was maintained in having no parallel oral sessions and ample time for poster viewing. Contributions to the present Volume were open to all presenters during the meeting. The book, consisting of 45 chapters, is a good reflection of the wide range of subjects related to the basal ganglia dealt with during the meeting.

It was originally planned that Dr. Lennart Heimer would open the conference with a plenary lecture on the 'Changing Faces of the Basal Ganglia'. Unfortunately, Lennart passed away on March 12, 2007. Here we want to memorize the major contributions of Lennart Heimer to the concepts of the parallel organization of cortical–basal ganglia circuits and limbic–motor interactions, and the functional–anatomical characterization of the major neuronal components of the basal forebrain, including the ventral striato-pallidal system, the extended amygdala and the magnocellular basal forebrain cholinergic system. His ultimate goal was to further our understanding of the organization of the brain in the context of debilitating neurological and psychiatric disorders such as Parkinson's disease, schizophrenia, and drug abuse. The importance of these concepts is reflected in their influence on the presently widely utilized surgical and pharmacotherapeutic approaches of these neurological and psychiatric

diseases. Therefore, we dedicate this volume to Lennart Heimer for his great contribution to the functional anatomy of the basal ganglia.

Scientific interactions prosper in an open and pleasant social atmosphere. Many of the participants, senior or junior, took part in the social activities. The dancing to Caribbean music was very pleasant and animating. We hope that on the basis of the scientific and social interactions new ideas and collaborations have evolved.

Finally, we want to thank all contributors to this volume for their pleasant cooperation and the publishing editor Ann Avouris for her assistance in finishing this job. We further thank all sponsors for their contributions which in particular enabled us to promote participation of junior researchers to participate in the meeting. We hope that the contents of this volume will further inspire and stimulate discussions and new interdisciplinary research on the basal ganglia.

The next meeting will take place in the East coast of the USA in 2010 and will be organized by Jim Tepper and Elizabeth Abercrombie. We are all looking forward to another exciting IBAGS meeting.

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