

EDITORIAL

The Department of Chemistry, ETH Zürich, in the New Hönggerberg Buildings

The Department of Chemistry of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zürich (ETH) has now moved into the new buildings at the ETH Hönggerberg campus. Besides possible troubles and the unavoidable interruption of our regular activities connected with the physical displacement of the complete laboratory equipment, including delicate instruments, as well as the installation of new facilities, a move is also a time of new departures. Therefore, opportunity enough for us to present, in this special issue of CHIMIA, the most recent research projects that will characterize our activities in the near future. I am very happy to say that nearly all research group leaders in the Department were willing to contribute an account.

The collection of thirty articles that follows gives an overview of the current research programs in disparate areas of fundamental chemistry, such as spectroscopy, analytical chemistry, solid state chemistry, both heterogeneous and homogeneous catalysis, organic synthesis, biomolecular chemistry, computational chemistry, and chemical engineering. In these areas the Department has significantly contributed in the past and it continues to be at the international forefront. It is apparent that the sequence of articles is not intended to reflect the classical subdisciplines of chemistry (inorganic, physical, organic, technical), as these are nowadays in many respects obsolete. Rather, an attempt has been made to organize the contributions according to the above areas of chemistry that are partly interdisciplinary and in any case of great significance for the Department as a whole. Despite a declining number of undergraduate students in recent years, the Department of Chemistry at ETH remains very attractive for both faculty members and ambitious Ph.D. students and postdocs from abroad. Thus, it clearly shows its leading international character at graduate and post-graduate level, precisely because of its strong commitment to basic research.

A new chemistry building means to a very large extent new laboratories. A lot of effort has been put into the design and construction of our new facilities. The contribution by B. Martinoni at the end of this issue summarizes the ideas that led to the conception of our laboratories. The extremely flexible modular units, in principle, can be easily adapted to different needs, and can be thus regarded as a new international standard.



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