

Preface

The Abel Prize is an international prize established in 2002 by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and is administered through an annual grant by the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters. It is awarded every year in recognition of pioneering scientific achievements in mathematics. The year 2002 marked the bicentennial of Nils Henrik Abel's birth and the prize was established in honour of his exceptional mathematical heritage. The Abel Prize is also meant to promote the field of mathematics and to make the prize winners and their work known to the public.

Every year from 2003 until 2016, the Abel Prize laureates have been interviewed by Martin Raussen and Christian Skau in connection with the award ceremony. These interviews have been broadcast on Norwegian national television (and often repeated) and can be streamed from the Abel Prize website, www.abelprize.no. Transcripts of the interviews have been published in the *EMS Newsletter* and the *Notices* of the AMS. This book is a collection of the interviews, with a new introduction by the interviewers.

The Abel Board and the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters would hereby like to express our gratitude to Martin Raussen and Christian Skau for conducting the Abel interviews and for preparing their transcripts for publication in this book, thus making them available to a broad audience in printed form that has proven its durability.

Autobiographical pieces by the laureates and descriptions of their work by fellow mathematicians are published by Springer in volumes entitled "The Abel Prize", edited by Helge Holden and Ragni Piene.

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