

Pressemitteilung**Max-Planck-Institut für Entwicklungsbiologie****Sarah Hailer**

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MAX-PLANCK-GESELLSCHAFT

Detlef Weigel will receive the Barbara McClintock Prize 2019

Saint Malo, March 24th. Today the Maize Genetics Executive Committee announces that Professor Detlef Weigel, Director at the Max Planck Institute for Developmental Biology, Tuebingen, will receive the Barbara McClintock Prize 2019 for Plant Genetics and Genome Studies. The announcement takes place at the 2018 Maize Genetics Conference in Saint-Malo.

The prize, which recognizes scientific accomplishment over the course of a career, is awarded annually to the most creative minds and productive scientists in the study of plant genome structure, function, and evolution, including the analysis of gene regulation and epigenetics. It is named in honor of Barbara McClintock, a distinguished geneticist and winner of the 1983 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. The award and medal will be conferred during a ceremony in Saint Louis, MO, as part of the 61st Annual Maize Genetics Conference.

Short Interview with Detlef Weigel

What does your research stand for?

„I’m a died-in-the-wool geneticist and my obsession for the past two decades has been how genetic variation is generated and maintained in nature, and how the resulting phenotypic variation allows plants to adapt to their ever-changing environment.“

What pleases you most about receiving this award?

„First, that it is named for one of my genetics heroes, Barbara McClintock. Second that the work of all the previous awardees is full of examples where plant genetics has yielded insights that go far beyond plants.“

Do you associate something special with this award?

„Yes, the unity of plant genetics, which is not focused on any single species, which is so nicely illustrated by the previous awardees, who have been working on a wide range of organisms.“

Did you have the privilege to know Dr. Barbara McClintock?

„Yes! I had the great privilege to meet her a few times at Cold Spring Harbor, the first time during the CSHL Plant Molecular Biology Course in 1987. While our encounters were brief, it was clear that she lived and breathed science!“

The Barbara McClintock Prize for Plant Genetics and Genome Studies has been created to memorialize the unequalled contributions of Dr. McClintock through providing recognition to the most outstanding plant geneticists of the present era. Barbara McClintock (1902-1992), one of the foremost women scientists in 20th century America, is most noted for her pioneering research on transposable elements in maize. For this work she was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1983. She was the third woman to receive an unshared Nobel Prize in the sciences. The Maize Genetics Executive Committee awards the Barbara McClintock Prize for Plant Genetics and Genome Studies in memory of McClintock’s many contributions.

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Detlef Weigel
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