

Desty Memorial Lecture For Innovation In Separation Science

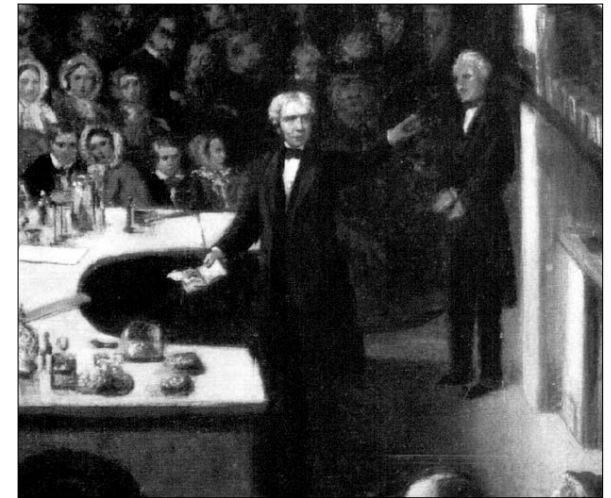


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Denis H. Desty

DENIS HENRY DESTY 21 October 1923 - 18 January 1994 was both a distinguished scientist and pre-eminently a great creative inventor. He was a man of vision who knew how to turn his visions into reality for he had an outstanding facility for solving real problems. He devised practical techniques for analytical hydrocarbon separations, combustion, gas-flares, the treatment of oil spills, and in a variety of applications in capillary gas chromatography, many of which have had widespread application. There are nearly 500 patents associated with his name. For some he would be the most unforgettable chromatographic character that they ever met.



Sadly many of his ideas and investigations have never been published in the open literature, although Denis seemed always ready himself to condemn others who thought their ideas were new, when they had in fact been well discussed many years ago. Ball-lightning was one of his abiding interests, and he appeared to have read everything ever published on the subject. However attempts to demonstrate how this might be produced artificially with a feed of a stoichiometric hydrogen/oxygen mixture at 55 cubic feet per second, 25 feet away from a four-storey research building with 100 occupants, had to be stopped when the Safety Officer at B.P. became concerned that there was a real risk that the whole building might be blown up.

Desty was a great admirer of the 'string and sealing-wax' approach. Apart from the painting skills, he was something of a latter-day Leonardo da Vinci. Perhaps he too might have written that famous self-congratulatory letter to the Duke of Milan if he thought it would enable him to get the support and equipment he needed for practical problems that he knew he could solve. He once puckishly admitted that 'between 1967 and 1974 he spent over £1 million on two projects without ever getting formal approval for them', and as he said 'In B.P., I have done all the things that an independent inventor or entrepreneur does, but without the commercial risk that the independent man has to carry. I have had the best of both worlds'. Many of Desty's ideas have had enormous application: it has for example been estimated that his flare systems have had a gross value of the order of 150 million pounds sterling. He was above all an inspiring and indeed much-loved person who possessed a great ability to impart enthusiasm to others.

His famous *Flames are Fun* lecture was given 81 times to a variety of enthusiastic audiences: it would begin with a candle and end with a spectacular detonation travelling at one mile per second and 3500°C through a plastic tube. In his 'swan-song' at the Royal Institution in December 1989, he fulfilled a much cherished ambition by standing in the same 'sacred' place as one of his heroes, Michael Faraday.

Waters Ltd
730-740 Centennial Court
Centennial Park
Elstree
Hertfordshire
WD6 3SZ
UK

Wednesday 20th October 2004

10:30 am-4:30 pm

at

The Royal Institution of Great Britain

21 Albemarle Street

London

W1X 4BS

Desty Memorial Lecture For Innovation In Separation Science

Denis Desty was a great innovator in separation science. Waters were proud to be associated with him and are now pleased to sponsor the Desty Memorial Lecture for Innovation in Separation Science.

The winner of the 2004 Desty Memorial Prize will have been judged to have shown great innovation in separation science



Pictured: Left - Denis H. Desty; Middle - A.J.P. Martin; Right - Victor Pritorius

The prize winner will receive a cheque for £1000 and present a lecture on their work at the Royal Institution of Great Britain - Faraday's Mayfair home, on Wednesday 20th October 2004

Programme

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 9:30 | Faraday Museum Opens |
| 9:30-10:30 | Registration Tea Coffee |
| 10:30-10:45 | Introduction <i>Peter Myers</i> |
| 10:45-11:15 | The need for higher efficiency separations in pharmaceutical development. <i>Stephen Wren</i> |
| 11:15-11:45 | The promise of smaller particles realised. <i>John Morawski</i> |
| 11:45-12:15 | Recent innovations in pharmaceutical analysis. <i>Roman Szucs</i> |
| 12:15-13:30 | Lunch |
| 13:30-14:00 | A new integrated direct-flow nanoLC system <i>Jeffrey Finch</i> |
| 14:00-14:45 | Shear-driven flows: A new approach to rapid LC and macro molecule separations <i>Gert Desmet</i> |
| 14:45-15:00 | Presentation of the 2004 Desty Memorial Award |
| 15:00-15:45 | The 9 th Desty Award Lecture |

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