# MIND & BRAIN PRIZE

Center for Cognitive Science

The **Mind & Brain Prize** (M&BP) was established in 2003 by the Center for Cognitive Science of the University and Polytechnic of Turin to recognize outstanding achievement in advancing our knowledge about mind and brain in the field of Cognitive Science..

## Mind & Brain Prize

The M&BP is awarded to pioneering scientists whose groundbreaking research has significantly advanced the comprehension of the functioning of the human mind and brain. In the past editions it has been assigned to:

2003: *Giacomo Rizzolatti, Domenico Parisi*
2004: *Philip Johnson-Laird, Carlo Umiltà*
2005: *Jerry Fodor, James McClelland*
2006: *John Searle, Giovanni Liotti*
2007: *Michael Tomasello, Cristiano Castelfranchi*
2008: *John Kabat-Zinn, Giorgio Rezzonico*
2009: *Dan Sperber, Jacques Mehler*

## Young Mind & Brain Prize

Starting from the 2010 edition we will introduce a new Mind and Brain Prize: The Young M&BP. The Young M&BP is awarded to early career scientists whose innovative research has led to significant breakthroughs in the understanding of the human mind and brain. Eligible are scientists under the age of 40, who have demonstrated outstanding scientific creativity and productivity. As the Prize is intended to stimulate European research, candidates are preferable researchers operating in EU Member States.

## Mind & Brain Prize Committee

The committee is constituted by the winners of the previous editions of the Mind and Brain Prize, the Director and two members of the Center for Cognitive Science of the University of Turin.

## Nomination Process and Winners Selection

The nomination process is open to all who wish to nominate candidates, but self-nominations and nominations of scientists who have been working at the Center for Cognitive Science of Turin will not be accepted. Nomination proposals must be accompanied by curriculum vitae of the candidate including a selected publication list.

The M&BP Committee is responsible for the choice of the M&BP and YM&BP winners.

## Mind & Brain Lectures

The M&BP winner is invited to give a public lecture on the day following the M&B ceremony.
The YM&BP recipient is invited to give two lectures on his/her research topics, on the days following the M&B ceremony.

## Mind & Brain Prize Winners for the 2010 Edition

We are glad to announce the M&BP and YM&BP winners for the 2010 edition:

Professor **Uta Frith**: *For her fundamental contribution to the understanding of the psychological and neural bases of disorders such as autism, dyslexia, schizophrenia and personality disorders, contribution which has transformed the way researchers and clinicians look at/ /the mind-brain relationship.*

Professor **Natalie Sebanz**: *For her significant contribution to the understanding of the cognitive and neural mechanisms underlying the human competence of planning and executing joint actions.*

# Professor Uta Frith – Short Biography

*Uta Frith studied experimental psychology at the Universität des Saarlandes, Saarbrücken and trained in clinical psychology at the University of London's Institute of Psychiatry. Since completing her Ph.D. on autism in 1968, she has worked as a scientist funded by the Medical Research Council. She is now Emeritus Professor of Cognitive Development at the UCL Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience and Visiting Professor at the University of Aarhus.*

*Uta Frith has received many honours, including honorary degrees from the Universities of Gothenburg, St Andrews, Palermo, York and Nottingham. She is a fellow of the British Academy and the Royal Society of London.*

*Uta Frith has pioneered an approach that combines psychological, clinical and neuroscience methods to study neuro-developmental disorders. She is well known for her work on autism and she was one of the first to recognise the importance of Asperger syndrome. When Uta Frith started her career, autism was hardly recognised, and dyslexia was considered an invention of the middle classes. The idea that these disorders are life-long and could be studied experimentally, not only in children but also in adults, was then considered audacious. Now, both autism and dyslexia have become widely studied developmental disorders and their basis in the brain and in the genes is taken for granted. Uta Frith has contributed to this leap in knowledge by her research on specific cognitive deficits that underlie these disorders. Examples for autism are Theory of Mind and Central Coherence. This work has led to a better understanding of the core features of autistic disorders. Uta Frith has published numerous scientific articles and is the author and editor of eight books.*

# Professor Natalie Sebanz – Short Biography

*After studying psychology at Innsbruck University and University College London (supervised by David Green), Natalie joined the Cognition and Action group at the Max Planck Institute for Psychological Research in Munich (directed by Wolfgang Prinz). In 2004 she received her PhD and was awarded the Heinz Heckhausen Young Scientist Prize of the German Psychological Society for groundbreaking research on joint action.*

*Between 2004 and 2008 she held positions as post-doc (working with Maggie Shiffrar), assistant professor, and lecturer at Rutgers University, US, and Birmingham University, UK. In 2007 she received the European Young Investigator Award (EURYI) and shortly afterwards became an Associate Professor at Radboud University Nijmegen. Natalie is currently heading an independent research group investigating the cognitive and neural mechanisms of joint action (www.somby.nl).*

*Natalie has been at the forefront of a "social turn" in the cognitive sciences. Combining behavioural and neuroscience methods, her research has revealed that acting together with others changes the way we perceive the world, the way we plan and control our actions, and the way we encode information. These findings have resulted in an innovative theoretical framework that emphasizes the role of joint action for understanding individual and social cognition. Focusing on the requirements of interpersonal action coordination, this approach also provides new perspectives on the phylo- and ontogenetic emergence of human cognition.*