
ICTP Dirac medal

Peter Goddard of Cambridge and David Ian Olive of Swansea (UK), share the prestigious 1997 Dirac Medal awarded by International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Trieste, for their pioneer research in string theory.

Goddard's work on the quantization of the relativistic string (with J. Goldstone, C. Rebbi, and C. Thorn) showed definitively that dual resonance models should be understood as string theories. Olive's

work on spacetime supersymmetry of the spinning string theory (with F. Gliozzi and J. Scherk) made possible the whole idea of superstrings, which we now understand as the most natural framework for supersymmetry and string theory.

The recent 'second superstring revolution' has also depended on pioneering insights on magnetic monopoles by Goddard, Olive, and J. Nuyts, and further extended by Olive and C. Montonen. Their revolutionary ideas for a dual interpretation of magnetic charge and electric-magnetic duality in non-abelian gauge theory have been of far-reaching importance.

Each year, ICTP announces the winners of the Dirac Medal on 8 August, the birthday of Paul A.M. Dirac who died in 1984 at the age of 82. The most recent winners have included Martinus Veltman, Tullio Regge, Michael Berry and Frank Wilczek.