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Press Release

### City of Madrid awards Medal of Merit to Prof. Ignacio Cirac.



The City of Madrid has presented Professor Ignacio Cirac, Director at the Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics (Garching, near Munich) with the “Gran Cruz de la Orden del Dos de Mayo de la Comunidad de Madrid”. This year in addition to Professor Cirac there were eleven other recipients of this high decoration, e.g. Vicente Del Bosque, the coach of the National Spanish soccer team, which won the world cup of 2010. The award is approximately equivalent to the “Bayerischer Verdienstorden”. The official ceremony took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2011 in Madrid.

Professor Ignacio Cirac was born in the City of Manresa in 1965. He finished his studies of theoretical physics at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid with the degree of a PhD in 1991. Cirac started his career successfully as “Professor Titular” at the Universidad Castilla-La-Mancha, where he did his research from 1991 till 1996. In 1996 he was appointed to the Leopold Franzens Universität Innsbruck and the local Institute of Theoretical Physics. Since 2001 he is Director at the Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics and head of the Theory Division.

Prof. Cirac takes a decisive part in the development of a new information theory based on the laws of quantum mechanics. In his Theory Division scientists do research on the processing of quantum information and create new theoretical tools to characterize and quantify e.g. entanglement of remote quantum systems. Another focus is the description of quantum many-body systems which will lead to a deeper understanding of macroscopic phenomena such as superconductivity.

Prof. Cirac has already been presented with many awards for his merits in the area of quantum information: 2005 for example with the prestigious “Quantum Electronics Prize” of the European Science Foundation. In May 2006 he got as the youngest winner ever the Royal Spanish Prince of Asturias Prize and in the same year he was presented with the “International Quantum Communication Award” together with Peter Zoller. In January 2009 he was recipient of the “Frontiers of Knowledge Award in Basic Sciences” of the Spanish BBVA-Foundation and also of the Benjamin Franklin Medal (again with Peter Zoller). *Olivia Meyer-Streng*

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