

REPORT

Prof. Lotfi Zadeh received the BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award for enabling computers and machines to behave and decide like human beings

Luis Magdalena

According to the Jury, by equipping computers to tolerate real-world complexities and decide accordingly, fuzzy logic transforms them from mere calculating machines, and allows appliances and systems to operate autonomously. The award consists of 400,000 EUR, a diploma and a commemorative artwork. The Awards ceremony took place past June 20th 2013 in Madrid, and was preceded by a Gala Concert taking place on June 19 at Royal Theatre of Madrid.

The BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award in the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) category has been granted in this fifth edition to the electrical engineer Lotfi A. Zadeh, “for the invention and development of fuzzy logic”. This “revolutionary” breakthrough, affirms the jury in its citation, has enabled machines to work with imprecise concepts, in the same way humans do, and thus secure more efficient results more aligned with reality. In the last fifty years, this methodology has generated over 50,000 patents in Japan and the U.S. alone.

The award consists, in each of the eight categories, of 400,000 EUR, a diploma and a commemorative artwork.

Lotfi arrived in Madrid on June 19 and was received by part of the European fuzzy community which accompanied him during the Gala Concert taking place that evening. Rudolf Kruse, Ellie Sanchez, Rudolf Seissing, Javier Montero, Enric Trillas and Luis Magdalena, among others, attended the important event. The Gala Concert included works from Richard Wagner, Alban Berg, Pierre Boulez and Igor Stravinsky, performed in the magnificent environment of the Royal Theatre of Madrid.

After the concert, Prof. Zadeh jointly with Luis Magdalena, Director General of the European Centre for Soft Computing (promoter of his nomination) and Ramón López de Mántaras (secretary of the Jury), had dinner at the restaurant of Westin Palace Hotel in Madrid (where all awardees and members of the different juries were hosted).

All information including a video message by Prof. Zadeh can be found at Fundación BBVA (<http://www.fbbva.es/TLFU/tlfu/ing/microsites/premios/fronteras/galardonados/2012/informacion.jsp>).

Prof. Zadeh was nominated by Luis Magdalena, Director General of the European Centre for Soft Computing (<http://www.softcomputing.es>) and Secretary of the IFSA Board. The jury in this category was chaired by George Gottlob, Professor of Computer Science at the University of Oxford (United Kingdom), with Ramon Lopez de Mantaras, Director of the Artificial Intelligence Research Institute of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) acting as secretary. Remaining members were Oussama Khatib, Professor in the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory in the Computer Sciences Department of Stanford University (United States), Rudolf Kruse, Head of the Department of Knowledge Processing and Language Engineering at Otto-von-Guerike-Universitat Magdeburg (Germany), Mateo Valero, Director of the Barcelona Supercomputing Center (Spain) and Joos Vandewalle, Head of the SDC Division in the Department of Electrical Engineering at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium).



Dinner after the Gala Concert: Prof. Zadeh, Luis Magdalena and Ramón López de Mántaras.



Headquarter of the BBVA Foundation. Location of the Awards Ceremony.



Prof. López de Mántaras read the decision of the Jury and accompanied Prof. Zadeh while receiving the Diploma from Mr. González and Prof. Lora. (Right) Ramón López de Mántaras, Francisco González, Lotfi Zadeh and Emilio Lora.

The awardees in the eight categories were received by BBVA CEO, Mr. Francisco González, who chaired the ceremony jointly with Prof. Emilio Lora, President of the Spanish Research Council. (Left) Mr. Francisco González with the awardees.



Then Prof. Zadeh addressed the audience to thank the Award and offer a short view of fuzzy logic and some figures showing its successful application. His talk was enthusiastically received. (Left) Prof. Zadeh addressing the audience.

Finally, a cocktail was offered to all attendants, in the garden of the palace. (Right) The cocktail after the Awards Ceremony.



(Left) The Jury during the announcement of their decision.