MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers,

We witnessed last January (18 to 22) to a particular series of messages through the ISP-L list regarding the Journal. It all started when one person asked informations about an article that appeared in the vol 13 no 2. It quite fast degenerated to become nothing but a complain's line against the Journal. We found in some of these messages sentences like:

"...I have also noticed the lack of specifics in a number of journal articles but I have no answer to the problem..."

"...some items can not be reproduced that appear in our journal..."

"...we need to get a handle on what gets accepted as article for the Journal..."

"...Journal and conferencees are showcases for the Society. These should excude excellence, not calamity..."

and even:

"...I have receive e-mail concerning a number of presentations at Trois-Rivieres that were
1. not related to plastination
2. of lousy quality (slides of unidentifiable objects)
3. exceeding time allocation..."

This last sentence coming from the fact that ONE participant complained to the wrong person (neither Dr Olry nor myself ever received this kind of complain) refering to ONE single poster presentation that according to him was below any standards.

All these exagerations rapidly took the appearance of a "group therapy" more than an exchange among scientists. This king of fast exchange even makes difficult to find who wrote what and when?

As mentioned by Mr. Ronn Wade, the ISP-L list is an open list. Open to members and non-members. This means that non-members can be signed-on and read all these messages. Peoples that have never seen one copy of your Journal or never attended one plastination conference may judge our group according to what they read in the ISP-L list. This can give a quite negative image of our Journal and Society. It will never be possible to measure the negative impact that such a story could have had on our Society and Journal but I strongly believe that it certainly had no real positive impact.

Your Journal is prepared according the following rules:

1. All articles submitted are sent for review to 2 members of the editorial board. In some particular situations, the editor also have the opportunity to ask external reviewers when it is considered that these persons could have a particular interest in the subject of the reviewed paper. When the 2 reviewers do not aggree on the paper submitted, the editor will ask a third opinion before taking the decision to accept or reject the paper.

2. The editor will then send the reviewers' comments to the authors asking them to answer the questions and to modify their paper to comply with the reviewers comments.

3. The authors will send back the corrected paper to the editor for publication. When major corrections have been asked by the reviewers, the paper may be sent to them again for a second review.

All this process is a "double blind processs" meaning that the reviewers do not know the names of the authors of the paper they review (until that paper is published) and the authors will never know the names of the reviewers who evaluated their papers.

The final decision regarding the publication belongs to the editor and the authors always remain responsible for their writing. In my opinion, the members of the editorial board always did their best and I am sure they will keep on doing so to ensure that a paper published in your Journal will respond to the criteria of a scientific paper but we can not guarantee the complete exactitude of everything included in an article. We do not have the task nor the possibilities to reproduce any experiment described in an article to ensure that everyone will be capable to reproduce exactly what is described. Some processes described may need to be modified or adapted to be reproduced in other laboratories.

Any reader who do not understand or agree with an article appearing in the Journal is welcomed to address his (her) critics and questions directly to the authors. This is why you always find the complete mailing address of the authors on the first page of the papers published. Any reader can also choose to address a letter to the editor who will transmit it to

the authors and publish in a following issue of the Journal, the letters from readers and the answers from the authors. This can help to clarify articles or add details that may have been omitted in the first publication.

The letters that will be judged of general interest, clearly identified and signed will be published in the Journal. I do believe that this is the best way to improve the content of your Journal and to answer all your questions. I hope that you will take the habit to express your opinions regarding the Journal and it's content because you are the persons to whom the Journal is dedicated. Any reaction, negative or positive, is worth being shared with other readers but in a way that will benefit to everyone. We must remember that less than one half of the members of the Society are signed to the ISP-L list but everyone receives the Journal.

You will find in the present issue 2 novelties. The "*Current Plastination Index - Updating*" section will now include abstracts of the new papers, in addition to the complete references.

In spite of the problems related at the beginning of my present message, I also decided to follow the suggestion received from many of you and to add at the end of the "*Letters to the Editor*" section a section of "*Questions and Answers*" reprinted from the ISP-L. I hope that you will consider these 2 additions to the content of your Journal as an improvement of the quality as well as the quantity of the information that we want to bring to you.

Finally, I would like to welcome Mr Vincent DiFabio and Mr Geoffrey D. Guttmann who offered to join the Editorial Board.

Thank you,

Gilles Grondin