

IMU President Sir John Ball, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ever since the Gauss Prize was announced at the ICM in Madrid this August, I have received numerous congratulatory words and letters from my friends and acquaintances in Japan and abroad. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to all of them for sending me their warm congratulations.

Today my only regret is that I was not able to share the news of the Gauss Prize with my teacher and mentor, Professor Shokichi Iyanaga, who passed away this June at the age of 100.



伝し先唯 | 大出来| た先に

As a mathematics student at the University of Tokyo in the 1930's, I would not have been able to continue my research interests in probability theory, had it not been for his kind and constant encouragements. Professor Iyanaga taught all of his students to pursue their own interests, whether or not these were popular at the time, and whether or not they had any visible potential practical applications.

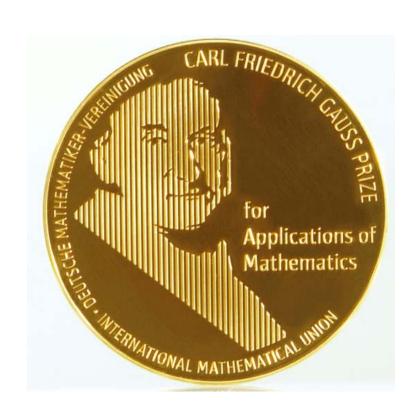
Professor Iyanaga would have agreed with the statute of the Gauss Prize for applications in mathematics, which imposes no age limit on the prize winner, "because the practical usefulness of mathematical results is often not immediately visible and the applicability and importance for practice may only be realized after a long time lag."

まの限え時

I am still astonished that my work on stochastic processes, which I started pursuing more than six decades ago, gradually found so many applications in other areas, both in other academic disciplines, and in practical applications that I never imagined.

おをたるのさ厳持

I am grateful for the honor that the International Mathematical Union, in cooperation with the Deutsche Mathematiker-Vereinigung, has bestowed on me.



深受者く賞連

I hope you will allow me to donate the monetary award of the Gauss Prize to the IMU scholarship funds for young mathematicians, so that they can be encouraged to pursue their own interests, as I was allowed to do more than sixty years ago.



Kiyosi Itô September 14th, 2006