

Academy News

Induction Ceremony Welcomes New President and 226th Class of Members

On Saturday, October 7, 2006, the Academy inducted its 44th President, **Emilio Bizzi**, and its 226th class of Fellows and Foreign Honorary Members. In opening remarks, **Patricia Meyer Spacks** expressed her appreciation to Academy officers, Trust members, and Fellows for their support during her tenure in office and voiced her delight in passing the presidency on to “a remarkable man who is deeply dedicated to the Academy’s interests.” **Denis Donoghue**, Chair of the Academy’s Presidential Search Committee, introduced Emilio Bizzi, noting that “over the past three centuries, U.S. and university presidents, inventors, businessmen, humanists, and scientists have been called upon to serve as president.” A leading neuroscientist, Bizzi is Institute Professor and Investigator at the McGovern Institute for Brain Research at MIT. A Fellow for over twenty-five years, he served as Secretary of the Academy from 1998 – 2005.

The Induction Ceremony followed a morning orientation program that provided new members with an overview of Academy activities, including meetings and seminars held across the country as well as research programs ranging from initiatives on science and technology, the humanities, and higher education to studies on Internet security and the independence of the judiciary. Throughout their presentations, the project leaders emphasized that the Academy seeks to avoid quick judgments. Rather, it tries to assess all sides of difficult issues, to conduct long-term analyses of American and international policy choices, and to further scholarship as the basis for thoughtful action. (The orientation presentations appear on pages 11 – 20.)

Of the 195 new Fellows and Foreign Honorary Members elected in 2006, nearly 78 percent attended the Induction events. Greeting the over 500 members and guests at the afternoon ceremony, President Bizzi remarked, “From the beginning, the Academy has convened bankers and businessmen, physicians and public servants, as well as farmers, theologians, and academics to address the issues of the day.” The 2006 class includes writers and performers, physical and biological scientists, humanists and social scientists, philanthropists and corporate leaders, among others. But as Chief Executive Officer **Leslie Berlowitz** observed, “what binds this distinguished class together is the fact that you engage in path-breaking work that influences our culture, our society, and our dreams” (see pages 39 – 51 for descriptors of the new members).

This year’s ceremony focused on the wide-ranging interests and diverse perspectives of the new members as well as their common concern with many of the critical issues facing a global society.



Forty-fourth President Emilio Bizzi (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) accepting the gavel from Chairman of the Presidential Search Committee Denis Donoghue (New York University) at the Induction Ceremony on October 7, 2006.

Physicist and business and foundation leader **Fred Kavli** (Class V) urged those in attendance to “celebrate human curiosity in science, the humanities, the arts, business, and philanthropy, and to support the urge to explore, to gain knowledge, and to pursue confidently our daring search into the unknown.” Other speakers included NASA meteorologist **Joanne Simpson** (Class I); biomedical researcher and Nobel laureate **Paul Nurse** (Class II); member of the French Senate, civil-liberties advocate, and authority on constitutional law **Robert Badinter** (Class III); and actor, writer, and director **Alan Alda** (Class IV). To close the ceremony, Denis Donoghue read two poems by Academy Fellows – an early draft of “Poetry” by Marianne Moore and “Style” by Howard Nemerov.

At a dinner honoring the speakers and the platform party, Cochair of the Academy Trust **Peter Nicholas** praised the Academy’s commitment to unite scholars and practitioners as critical partners in advancing the nation. “In founding the Academy, John Adams said that ‘we shall not be solely of the schoolmen of Cambridge.’ He saw colleges as the site for the development of basic knowledge, but the Academy would be a center for drawing together thinkers and doers to shape and guide the new country. Today we recognize that our task is to turn knowledge and informed perspectives into actionable activities. We embrace this translational role as our fundamental purpose.” ■