

Acceptance of the Mineralogical Society of America Award for 2008

JAMES BADRO

Département de Minéralogie, IMPMC (UMR CNRS 7590), Institut de Physique du Globe de Paris, 140 rue de Lourmel, Paris, France

Mr. President, Ms. Past President, members of the society and guests, dear colleagues:

I am very honored and very proud to be the recipient of the MSA award. Thank you Dave for this wonderful citation.

I am honored because looking at the list of the previous recipients; a young scientist cannot but be impressed and startled by the list of names. Every “hero,” if you allow me the term, of an experimental petrologist or mineral physicist is in that list. And without false modesty, and I am convinced that this feeling is shared with many previous recipients, you always wonder whether you really belong here. It is truly an immense privilege.

I am proud because not often is this honor awarded to scientists working in Europe. I realize what it indicates in terms of openness for the society and we in Europe highly respect and salute this.

As Dave mentioned, I started off as a physics undergraduate at the Ecole normale supérieure in Lyon, and it is thanks to Philippe Gillet, who was then to become my Ph.D. advisor, that I started my journey in the wonderful world of Earth sciences. Thank you Philippe for showing me the way.

My first job as an accomplished scientist (I guess that’s what you call yourself when you just earned your Ph.D.) took me to the Geophysical Laboratory. There I worked under the supervision of Dave Mao, whom I want to thank warmly for showing guidance while giving me the freedom to pursue my projects, and his great support during all those years. Thanks especially for being such an amazing teacher. I always repeat this, but I would guess that roughly 90% of what I know, I learned from Dave.

On to another place at the Mineralogy Institute of the University of Paris and the Institut de Physique de Globe de Paris. I have a special thought for my far away colleagues on this day. Very special thanks to my closest collaborators, Guillaume Fiquet and François Guyot. Not much of what I am honored for today would have been possible without them, and in this respect, this award is also a bit theirs.

As a researcher at CNRS, I am given total liberty to pursue collaborations in various places around the world. The most active of those is in California, at Lawrence Livermore National



Laboratory, where I have been collaborating for many years with Rick Ryerson and his group. I have a special thought for all of them (David Ruddle, Chantel Aracne, Dan Farber, and Brian Bonner) on this day. We are making it work, and rather marvelously well, despite the administrative nonsense.

Last, not least, one should never forget that in this endeavor we are driven by passion, the younger scientist keep us afloat with their youthful energy. It would be unjust and unfair not to mention the younger folks I am so fortunate to work with. So, Florent Occelli, Daniele Antonangeli, Anne-Line Auzende, Julien Siebert, Eugene Gregoryanz, Alexandre Corgne: thank you for your energy and enthusiasm.

Now ladies and gentlemen, in the few acceptance speeches I’ve given so far, people notice that I usually never mix personal and professional matters. But I will make here an exception. This venue has a special meaning to me. Indeed, I know Houston pretty well, since I had two uncles who lived here. They are no longer among us, so if you please allow me, I would like to dedicate this award to their memory.

Let me finish Mr. President, Ms. Past President, members of the society and guests, dear colleagues, by thanking, once again, MSA for this award. It is a great honor.