



The University of Texas at Austin
Department of Physics
College of Natural Sciences

Wigner Medal 2016



The 2016 Wigner Medal has been awarded to Bertram Kostant of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (USA) for his fundamental contributions to representation theory that led to new branches of mathematics and physics.

The Wigner Medal recognizes and awards outstanding contributions to the understanding of physics through group theoretical and representation theoretical methods. It is administered by The Group Theory and Fundamental Physics Foundation, a publicly supported organization established in 1978 by Arno Bohm, John Dollard, Morton Hamermesh and John A. Wheeler at the University of Texas at Austin, U.S.A.. The medal was awarded for the first time in 1978 to Eugene P. Wigner and to Valentine Bargmann at the Integrative Conference on Group Theory and Mathematical Physics (Group7, 1978).

The Chair of the Selection Committee, Professor Michio Jimbo of Rikkyo University, Tokyo, said: “the lifelong achievements of Bertram Kostant have had profound impact in pure mathematics. At the same time, his work miraculously has been finding its way to physics. Kostant’s winning the award perfectly suits the spirit of Wigner who coined the famous phrase the ‘unreasonable effectiveness of mathematics in the physical sciences’.”

The Wigner Medal, along with the Hermann Weyl Prize will be awarded at the biannual International Colloquium on Group Theoretical Methods in Physics, June 19-25, 2016 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Chair of the Standing Committee of the Colloquium, Mariano del Olmo remarks, “We are very pleased to have the opportunity to bring a multi-national group of researchers working in this developing and exciting area to Rio de Janeiro, which is rapidly becoming one of the centers of mathematical physics in South America.” The Awards Ceremony will be held at the futuristic science museum, Museu do Amanhã designed by Santiago Calatrava.