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Preface

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PREFACE

This volume contains material presented at the Fifth International Topical Meeting on Optics of Liquid Crystals (OLC'93). The conference was held in Siófok at Lake Balaton, Hungary, from 4 to 8 October 1993; 63 scientists from 16 countries attended the meeting.

One of the central themes of the meeting was linear and nonlinear optics of liquid crystals, including instabilities and optical pattern formation in these systems. A number of presentations dealt with surface properties and optical methods for controlling the surface alignment of liquid crystals. The intriguing optical properties of composite systems, such as polymer dispersed liquid crystals, liquid crystalline gels and filled nematics, were also discussed extensively. Potential device applications (pattern recognition, optical computing, light modulation) were emphasized in several talks. As traditional at the OLC meetings, the atmosphere was very friendly, with open discussions both during and after the lectures helped the exchange of ideas.

The number of participants and the high level of the presentations clearly demonstrated the continuing interest of the scientific community in the topics covered by the OLC series. Several excellent proposals were made for organizing the next OLC meeting; finally it was decided to be held in France, in 1995.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank my colleagues at the Research Institute for Solid State Physics, who were a great help in organizing the conference. The generous financial support from Gordon and Breach Publishers and the National Committee for Technical Developments (Hungary) are also gratefully acknowledged.

István Jánossy
Chairman of OLC'93