The Collegium Medicorum Theatri

H.	Hans	von Leden
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Introductory Remarks at the First International Seminar in Barcelona, Spain on November 14–15, 1970

Welcome to the first Seminar of the Collegium Medicorum Theatri!

The Collegium Medicorum Theatri (or COMET) was founded in August 1969 during the 9th International Congress of Oto-Rhino-Laryngology in Mexico City by a small nucleus of prominent laryngologists with a special interest in the voice of the singer and actor. During the ensuing 15 months a selected group of distinguished scientists and clinicians have been invited to join our ranks, so that we are now represented in the major cultural centers of Europe, Asia, North and South America. The founders of COMET intended to meet the need for an organization devoted to the vocal problems of the professional voice-user – problems that have increased each decade with the demands and tempo of the 20th century. We are dedicated to the scientific investigation of the highly specialized physiology and pathology as well as to the improvement in the clinical care of singers and actors.

Thus, it seems natural that the program of this Seminar divides into 2 equally important phases: This afternoon we shall listen to a series of short presentations about the medical care of the singer and actor in different countries, for accurate information about the present status of clinical care is a prerequisite for advance and improvement. Tomorrow we shall hear some of the latest scientific data about the ‘key’ to voice production, the vocal cords and their complex vibrations. A review of this subject appears particularly appropriate this year – 20 years after Husson challenged the scientific world with his new theory of phonation. We are all indebted to this scientist, himself a singer of note, for initiating a renaissance of laryngeal research, even though his own theory did not survive the test of critical investigation.

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It is indeed fitting that our meeting takes place in this colorful country well-known for its choral groups, in this beautiful metropolis with its fine opera, and in this beautiful building dedicated to the rehabilitation of the vocally handicapped. We are sincerely grateful to our host, Dr. Jorge Perello, for his careful preparations and his splendid arrangements on our behalf. We are deeply impressed with this magnificent new Centro Municipal Fonoaudiologico which Dr. Perello has created in this lovely park of Montjuich, with its magnificent view of the city of Barcelona. We are looking forward to the reception at the Teatro del Liceo tonight, to the performance of the opera Aida, and to our excursion to the ancient Abbey of Montserrat with its world-famous choir.

I feel confident that these scientific and social programs will result in closer friendship and cooperation between leading laryngologists in different parts of the world and thereby contribute to the better care of our patients, the singers and actors, as they move from continent to continent and city to city in the pursuit of their artistic profession. In this spirit I greet you on behalf of the Collegium Medicorum Theatri – Fellows and guests, from the East and from the West, from the

North and from the South, for Medicine and the Fine Arts know no geographic or political boundaries.

Welcome!

Secretary-coordinator of COMET