

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends

I want first of all to salute all the members of ESSFN and to thank for the confidence in electing me as President of our great Society, last September in Edinburgh.

It is a distinguished honor to serve you as first officer and a great responsibility in this time of fast changes and new challenges for the Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery. I think that during the last years as Vice-president I became well aware of the difficulties and the good expectations that face us during the next quadriennium.

I hope to dignify the tradition of many outstanding functional neurosurgeons that lead this Society so far and so long, by taking charge of our main concerns and help guiding our historical and prestigious society into a healthy future. I solemnly declare my will and dedication to this cause.

The new Board of Officers elected in Edinburgh General Assembly also includes Jocelyne Bloch as Vice-president, Jean Régis as Secretary, Rick Schuurman as Treasurer and Loránd Eross as Second Secretary. It is an excellent team of officers with renewed motivation, from different parts of Europe. I am sure that together we shall be able to solve our problems in harmony and to develop and strengthen ESSFN forward. The fact that a greater part of the officers were already in the board during the last years is a guaranty of continuous experience and major skill to manage most of the dossiers. That is why our treasurer has kept our finances healthy and our secretary (first and second) are so efficient on making our machine working so well (see the new ESSFN web site).

I must emphasize that our secretary Jean Regis is also chairman of the Educational Committee that has developed an outstanding program of 4 year Hands-on Courses, usually in different countries, concerning the main chapters of Functional Neurosurgery: Stereotactic & Functional Neurosurgery Fundamentals, Psychosurgery and Research, Movements Disorders, Epilepsy Surgery, Pain & Spasticity, Radiosurgery. Every year there are two courses, except in the Congress years when there is only one. Next courses will be on Pain and Spasticity in September 2019 in Lisbon (chairmen: Patrick Mertens and me) and Movement Disorders in February 2020 in Amsterdam (chairman: Rick Schuurman). These courses has been highly successful, with more and more applicants to attend. To be continued and promoted.

The ESSFN Executive Committee met in Edinburgh and there were some changes in its members: Angelo Franzini was replaced by Ivano Dones from Italy, Jurgen Voges by Volker Coenen from Germany, Vladimir Shabalov by Andre Sidnikov from Russia; Jean Ciurea proposed to be replaced from the next meeting on by Felix Breca from Romania. We have for the first time someone from Bulgaria, Krassimir Minkin that I welcome. The site of the second next ESSFN Congress, in 2022 was discussed (the 2020 Congress will be in Marseille) between Budapest and Stockholm; Stockholm was chosen with Patrick Blumstedt as organizer.

The General Assembly approved each one of the Officers and the new members of the Executive Committee unanimously. The past president, secretary and treasurer presented their reports and the Auditing and the Nominating Committees gave their agreements. The sites of the next fore coming ESSFN Congresses, Marseille (2020) and Stockholm (2022) were presented.

The ESSFN Congress 2018, The XXIII ESSFN Congress, held in Edinburgh on the 26-29th September was an enormous success. It was organized by Marwan Hariz, Keith Matthews and Ludvic Zrinzo at the Royal College of Surgeons and the main theme was Psychosurgery or, better saying, Surgery for Psychiatric Disorders. It was preceded by a pre-congress meeting dedicated to psychiatrists, chaired by Benjamin Greenberg and Keith Matthews; it had a crowded session with an animated discussion around the different issues in debate. The Congress had a record number of more than 800 registrations and very good participation in most sessions. I must congratulate the Organizing Committee for their outstanding achievement.

As you see, the ESSFN is growing and advancing continuously. We are more individual members than ever (above 300 active members), we have better and better scientific meetings, we organize more educational events for an increasing number of applicants, we produce and publish more and more science, we develop increasing and closer relationships with other societies namely our brothers WSSFN and ASSFN, but also EANS.

Finally, we must reinforce our Society promoting a greater participation of our younger members, our residents, in our initiatives (meetings, newsletter) through an active collaboration of their delegates. All this progress must be raised from now on.

That is my bet, my challenge and my commitment as president.

I expect and wish you'll help and support me to prosecute this goal.

António José Gonçalves Ferreira



MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

Dear Friends,

After a very successful congress in Edinburgh it is clear that we are witnessing a profound transformation of our field with remarkable advances and undoubtedly our Society is at the forefront of Stereotactic & Functional Neurosurgery.

The leadership would like to follow this momentum with new initiatives. During the Gent Officer meeting it was proposed to reinforce the role of the executive committee and, on the occasion of the upcoming meeting of the ESSFN in Marseille, we intend to introduce and detail new proposals for the functioning of the executive committee.

We would like to also enhance the role of the new generation of young functional neurosurgeons. With the end of the first cycle of the new "European Diploma of Stereotactic & Functional Neurosurgery" a series of young neurosurgeons have received this new diploma (2 diplomas in Malta and 4 in Gent). In my charge of being the Chair of the Educational and training program, I proposed in Gent the following:

1. The holders of the new FN ESSFN diploma are invited to create a "young FN" task force
2. They are asked to propose an internal role sorting / organization, name
3. They are asked to elect a liaison person (contact for the board & MCO)
4. They will have a corner in the newsletter written by them
5. MCO will create a specific room in the website for them (a shared platform is discussed, chat ... job opportunities, ..) the members will appear namely (pictures, short CV)
6. They could have the initiative of a scientific session on the occasion of each congress. To be proposed at least 6 months before the congress to the board for review and 2 of them will moderate this session
7. The possibility to organize "speed networking" session with seniors on the occasion of congresses have also been discussed

Since our last congress Loránd Eross was elected in the board and will serve as a second secretary in the upcoming years. Dr. Loránd Eross is the head of the Functional Neurosurgical Department and Center of Neuromodulation at the National Institute of Clinical Neuroscience in Budapest.



He is the Director of Research and Innovation, and the Epilepsy Surgery Program of the institute. He got his PhD degree at Semmelweis University in 2010 in epilepsy surgery. His main interest is epilepsy surgery, movement disorder surgery, neurosurgical treatment of pain, spasticity and neuromodulation.

He has an active research group in the field of epilepsy, and neuroimaging. He developed new intraoperative localisation method for invasive recordings in epilepsy surgery and introduced MCS, DRG, Gasserian ganglion stimulation in Hungary. In 2018 he introduced robot assisted neurosurgery in Central-Eastern Europe. His activity includes research and development of in vitro and in vivo electrophysiological and optical investigation methods. He is lecturer at the Medical faculty of the Semmelweis and the Szeged Universities and at the Pazmany Peter Catholic University, Faculty of Information Technology in bionical sciences.

In the frame of our collaboration with the EANS we proposed some years ago with Pr Grotenhuis the creation of a European Diploma of Radiosurgery. In a combined approach the ESSFN together with the European Association of Neurosurgical Societies (EANS) have decided to offer structured theoretical and practical training in stereotactic radiosurgery as additional competence training for neurosurgeons or neurosurgical residents. The goal is the definition of theoretical and practical learning objectives that will be certified by the ESSFN and EANS. The program and joined educational committee are under elaboration.

Last but not least we are working hard now preparing the upcoming congress of the ESSFN in Marseille and would like to invite all of you to submit your more recent scientific findings. We are looking forward seeing you soon in Marseille.

Jean Régis



MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

Dear colleagues and friends,

The Society's financial position is solid and the revenue of the XXIIIrd ESSFN congress in Edinburgh further enhanced our security. The assets are now large enough to cover the full costs of a conference in case of an unexpected occurrence, which is one of the reasons for the Society to have money in the first place. There is now additional financial room for increasing the number of research grants and prizes that are awarded during our conferences.

The membership fees, for which you receive an invoice via email once a year but you can also pay directly via our website, are used diligently. They roughly cover the running costs of the society. The ESSFN pays a contribution to the World Society of Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery of which we all are members and pays for our joint subscription to online access to the journal Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery, which is available for all members.

The membership fees were also used in the past to support educational activities of the society. However, largely following the great efforts of Natalie Ruxton from our professional congress organizer MCO, the educational courses of the ESSFN are now financially self-supporting, due to continuing support from our partners from medical industry.

The preparations for the XXIVth congress in Marseille in September 2020 are underway. A large attendance will enhance the scientific value of the conference and create new opportunities for international collaboration and friendship. It will also enhance our financial position. So I hope to see you there!

Rick Schuurman



MESSAGE FROM THE YOUNG FUNCTIONAL NEUROSURGEONS

Having travelled Europe from the Karolinska Institute Stockholm in the north to the Maltese presidential palace in the south with stops in Marseille, Lausanne and lastly Ghent, this small yet growing group of functional neurosurgeons represents the first ones to acquire the Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery diploma, awarded by the educational committee of the ESSFN. Looking back at our journey over several years, the motivation to attend the ESSFN training courses ranged from getting the possibility to deepen the knowledge in one particular field to acquiring a compelling overview on the field of functional neurosurgery. To many of us the diploma ultimately and formally confirms our interest and skill in the field of functional neurosurgery, and while the trend of national and European regulations to acquire certification for subspecialties continues, the ESSFN diploma may gain further importance in the future.

Although generally being regarded as a subspecialty with the highest degree of innovation and future potential, stereotactic and functional procedures are not part of the regular training in several European countries to qualify for the neurosurgery board exams. Therefore, the accessibility to the field may be limited and the possibilities of functional neurosurgery may not be very well known to residents. The ESSFN training courses offer a wonderful opportunity for residents to get an in-depth experience in functional neurosurgery by a group of highly-experienced and skilled tutors. Furthermore, the ESSFN training courses represent, other than commercial fellowships through medical device companies, a really independent, all-encompassing and balanced way to be educated in functional neurosurgery. To our knowledge no other neurosurgical society in the world is currently able to offer anything that comes close to the ESSFN training course program with regards to quality of the content, excellence of faculty and scientific appeal.

Our journey with the ESSFN will not end with the acquisition of the diploma. In a far-sighted project, the society reached out to us to form a young functional neurosurgeons' task force. The task force is meant to emphasize on the needs and demands of residents and young fully-trained neurosurgeons with a special interest in the field of functional neurosurgery: improving accessibility to the field of functional neurosurgery, connecting with experts in the field to get help with specific cases and creating a network for job and research opportunities.

Over the summer the task force will gather ideas for concrete projects and proposals to be presented to the board of the society. We are grateful for the opportunity that the ESSFN has given us with the training courses, now it is our privilege to represent and further develop the role of young functional neurosurgeons within the society and within Europe.

Martin Jakobs, Attilio Della Torre, Kuan Hua Kho, Lina Rafaella, Barzaghi, Marcin Rusinek, Michele Rizzi, Elena Jiltsova, Ali Razmkon, Niels van der Gaag

REMINISCENCES FROM THE XXIII ESSFN CONGRESS, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND, SEPTEMBER 2018

In the year 2010, The XIX Congress of the ESSFN was held in Athens, Greece, and organised by Dr Damianos Sakas from...Athens.

In the year 2012, the XX congress of the ESSFN was held just outside Lisbon, Portugal, and organised by Dr Antonio José Gonçalves Ferreira from...Lisbon.

In the year 2014, the XXI congress of the ESSFN was held in Maastricht, The Netherlands, and organised by Dr Yassin Temel who works in...Maastricht.

In the year 2016, the XXII congress of the ESSFN was held in Madrid, Spain, and organised by Dr Antonio Barcia Al Bakar who works in...Madrid.

In 2018, the XXIII congress of the ESSFN was held in Edinburgh, Scotland. The "local" organisers were three individuals who neither were from Edinburgh nor worked in Edinburgh: Lebanese-Swedish neurosurgeon Marwan Hariz who had then just retired from Queen Square, Maltese-British neurosurgeon Ludvic Zrinzo who works at Queen Square and Scottish psychiatrist Keith Matthews who works in Dundee.



"local" organisers of the XXIII ESSFN Congress in Edinburgh

Other original features unique to that XXIII 2018 ESSFN congress include the following:

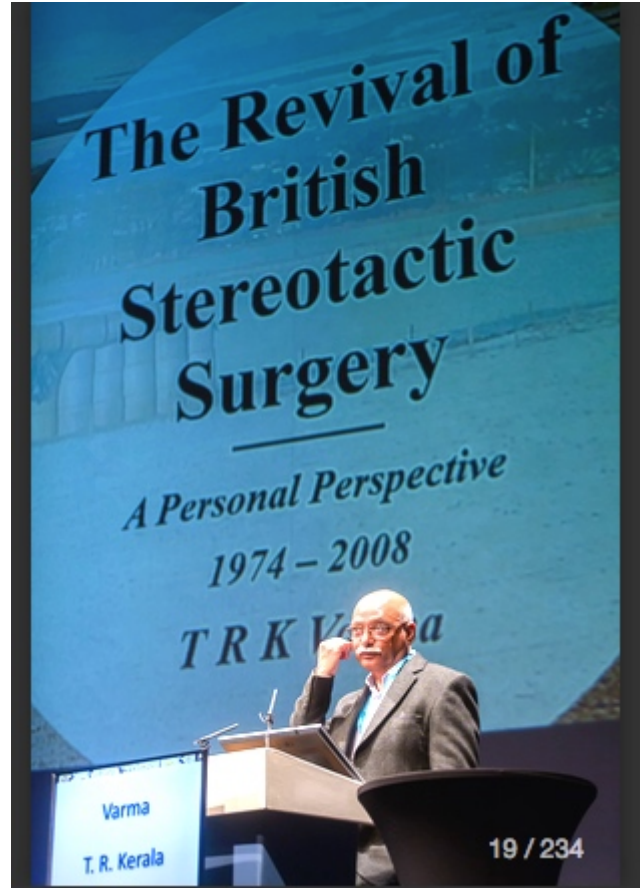
1) A psychiatrist as co-organiser of an ESSFN congress is unique in the history of ESSFN congresses. The famous late pioneer Jean Talairach, one of the founding members of the ESSFN in 1970, would have been proud of this, having been himself a psychiatrist before becoming neurosurgeon. Who knows, maybe one day Keith Matthews would apply to a neurosurgical residency, to follow in the glorious path of Jean Talairach...

2) Never before has the main topic of an ESSFN congress been about "Surgery for Psychiatric Illness". This main theme of the 2018 congress, most prominent on the day before the congress per se, when a satellite symposium on this issue was organised, has enabled a record number of psychiatrists to attend the 2018 congress and debate and deliver talks. However, almost all --if not all-- present psychiatrists are known to be in favour of surgery for refractory psychiatric illness, especially OCD and depression. This is a good beginning that may pave the way for more psychiatrists attending future meetings of the ESSFN, and more activity in this field. American psychiatrist Ben Greenberg, a veteran of clinical-academic psychiatric surgery was one of the main speaker at the congress, and his clear and down-to-earth position on psychiatric surgery, both lesional and DBS, was highly candid and welcome.

3) 2018 marked the second time in the history of the ESSFN that its congress was held in Edinburgh. The first time was at the occasion of the very first congress of the Society, in 1972, and that congress was organised by one of the Society's founders, John Gillingham who was a neurosurgeon working in Edinburgh. The venue of the 1972 First congress was the famous Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, same venue as for the 2018 XXIII congress. The welcome address at the 1972 congress was given by Lars Leksell, and the welcome address at the 2018 congress was given by his son, Dr. Dan Leksell. There was a definite sense of déjà vu, déjà vécu, déjà entendu...

4) The year 2018 was the occasion for many jubilee celebrations at the ESSFN Congress: we celebrated the 110th anniversary of the seminal publication of Horsley and Clarke that heralded the very introduction of stereotaxy as a surgical method (Brain, 1908); the 25th anniversary of the first publication on STN DBS (Pollak and Benabid, Neurologie, 1993); the 50th birth anniversary of neurosurgeon Professor Rick Schuurman (Amsterdam); the 200th birth anniversary of the philosopher and economist Karl Marx (1818, Trier, Germany); the 80th anniversary of the founding in 1938 of the Journal Confinia Neurologica by Ernst Spiegel (that became eventually "Applied Neurophysiology" then "Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery"); the 60th anniversary of the first publication on focused ultrasound pallidotomy for Parkinson's by Russel Meyers (J Neurosurg, 1958); the 50th anniversary of introduction of the Gammaknife (1968); The 88th birth anniversary of the famous Scottish citizen and former milkman Sean Connery; the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One; the 70th anniversary of the introduction of the National Health Service in Britain; and the 30th anniversary of the visit and stay of Prof Takaomi Taira in Edinburgh. We also celebrated the addition of two new "ben" or hill in Scotland, adding to the existing ones such as the Ben Nevis, the Ben Lomond and others: the Ben Abid and the Ben Gun. We also commemorated with sadness the 10th anniversary of the passing away of Dr Harald Fodstad who was a most prominent member of the ESSFN and the WSSFN. Hence, the 2018 ESSFN meeting was filled with celebrations and remembrances of mostly happy memories of jubilars, and of their lasting legacies.

5) Two retired grand old men of British Neurosurgery gave historical lectures about Scottish and Welsh neurosurgical heritage at the beginning of the congress: Indian-Scottish Dr Varma, who trained and worked in Edinburgh



Dr Varma presenting his talk

and Welsh Dr Brian Simpson who worked in Cardiff.



Dr Brian Simpson (right) shaking hands with Dr Christer Lindqvist (with Dr Mike Schulder sitting in between)

6) Despite being held in Scotland where the most available beverage named in Gaelic "uisge", meaning "water" (in English: Whisky) was freely available, the XXIII congress of the ESSFN was a very sober, serious, dignified and well-attended meeting. The leadership of the ESSFN gave the tone of the seriousness and dignity of that congress as illustrated hereunder



Members of the Board of the ESSFN in kilt: From left to right: Antonio Gonçalves Ferreira (Lisbon, Portugal); Jocelyne Bloch Pache (Lausanne, Switzerland). Jean Régis (Marseille, France); Rick Schuurman (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

7) The XXIII ESSFN congress was the biggest congress of the ESSFN ever, with 832 delegates from 52 countries, including neurosurgeons, neurologists, psychiatrists, neurophysiologists, neuropsychologist, neuroscientists, neuro-occupational therapist, neuro-ophthalmologist, few neurotics, as well as nurses, students, ethicists, representatives from patients associations, representatives from Industry and delegates with undisclosed / unknown affiliations. There were some 330 abstracts submitted, and 45 invited lecturers. For more information, including topics, abstracts, photos from the congress, etc, please refer to the web site: <http://essfncongress.org/en/>

8) On the last day, right after the end of the congress, an improvised ad hoc satellite meeting was organised in a Castle south of Edinburgh by the Unit of Functional Neurosurgery of Queen Square, with selected speakers who presented their latest breaking abstracts that missed the abstract submission deadline to the main ESSFN congress. Extracts from this ad-hoc extra-meeting are available on:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/xkv2qirw54qz78s/MH_leaving_do.mp4?dl=0



Delegates to the post-congress ad-hoc meeting at the Castle

Marwan Hariz

OBITUARY

Prof. Björn Meyerson (February 21, 1933 to June 20, 2019)

Björn Meyerson was a disciple of Lars Leksell and was one of the 2nd generation of pioneers in stereotactic and functional neurosurgery. In Scandinavia he was one in a very small group who used and developed stereotactic techniques.

Björn lived and worked all his life in Stockholm and much of it he actually dedicated to neurosurgery at the Karolinska University Hospital.



In fact Björn started his academic studies at the University of Stockholm in 1953 but soon turned to medical studies and passed his MD exam in 1963. During a period Björn was chairman of the Medical Students Union at the Karolinska Institutet and he was asked by the inspector of the Students Union if he would be interested in a project concerning the early development of the brain running at the Department of physiology. Anyway Björn joined Carl Gustaf Berhard's research group and dedicated much time to studies of the development of the brain in foetal sheep – experiments that could go on until late in the night. Björn defended a doctoral thesis based on his work in 1968 with excellence and became associate prof of physiology the same year.

Björn's interest in brain function led him to work within neurosurgery where he became a specialist in 1975 and associate prof in 1980.

Björn was - like Lars Leksell - a pioneer in the area of modulating and normalizing brain functions, first by applying precise lesions to target areas in the brain and later by implanting stimulation electrodes in structures – sometimes to inhibit - sometimes to enhance functions.

In the neuromodulation by applying weak electric current via implanted leads – especially to the spinal cord – Björn and his team became one of the leading research groups in the world and certainly in Europe.

First, Björn coordinated and reported some multicentre studies on deep brain stimulation (DBS) for pain and also run an in-house DBS clinic for severe pain conditions, but soon his interest shifted more towards the less invasive spinal cord stimulation (SCS) where his team developed stimulation techniques and examination methodology adapted to rodent.pain models.

In fact the research soon became truly translator since clinical problems were attacked on the preclinical level and treatment methods were developed in the animal research milieu and thereafter tried in pilot clinical cases – some of the techniques developing into “routine therapies”.

Björn’s research went into the depth both relating to neurophysiological mechanisms and how the patients actually experienced their treatment. He managed during his early projects to have a specialized psychologist in the team and she wrote a thesis about her studies.

Björn was much highly respected internationally and also loved by many patients for his vast knowledge and his sometimes rather unorthodox style in their discussions.

Björn was appointed professor in Clinical Pain Research in 1997 and he was also heading the neurosurgical clinic 1988-1991.

Besides administration of the section and periodically the clinic, Björn also had much clinical teaching and mentoring for younger colleagues and medical students.

Björn was the primary promotor for eight doctoral students and associate mentor for many more.

Björn published about 200 scientific article, book chapters and review papers and was during his long career awarded many prizes. Among these should be mentioned Spiegel & Wycis Gold Medal 1997 as well as the Swedish awards The Mångberg Prize 1991, The Olivecrona Hon. Lecture and medal 2005 and the David Ingvar Hon. Award for research within neuroscience 2006.

Björn was president for the European Society for Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery 1992-1995; Vice president for the Scandinavian Assoc. For the Study of Pain 1977-1990; Chairman for the Karolinska Center for Pain Research 1997-2001 and Head of the Section of Functional Neurosurgery at the Karolinska 1980-1998 -when he reached retirement age.

However, in spite of his formal retirement from the clinic Björn came to the hospital almost every day and continued his collaboration with the "Functional Research Group" and was in fact a co-author to some papers as late as in 2015 i.e 17 years after his retirement!

Everyone who has met Björn immediately experienced him as a very "colourful person". He could both be very charming and ready to discuss a lot of different issues from culture, art and literature, to political debate, actual medical problems – and of course neurophysiology. Björn was "a master" in all these areas.

There will be an empty place after Björn in the ESSFN, WSSFN, IASP and several other societies and of course he is missed a lot by his friends at the Karolinska Dept of Neurosurgery and especially by those in the "Functional Group" who have been working so intimately with him for many years.

We are all thankful for the research areas he initiated and in which the work now is continued by his successors.

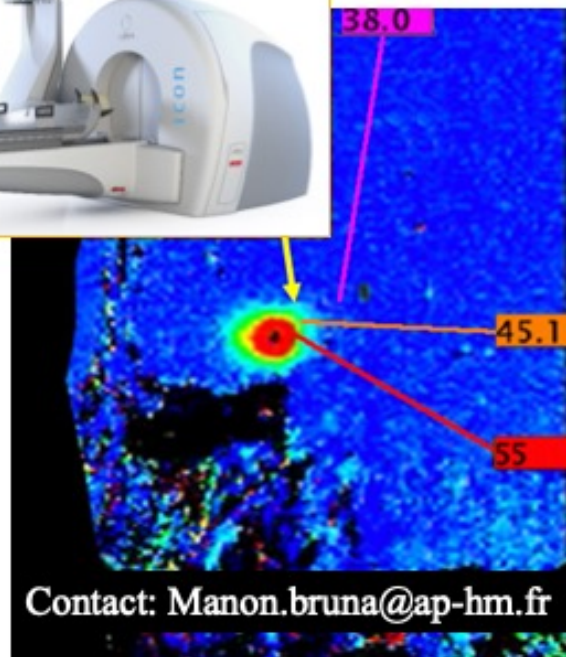
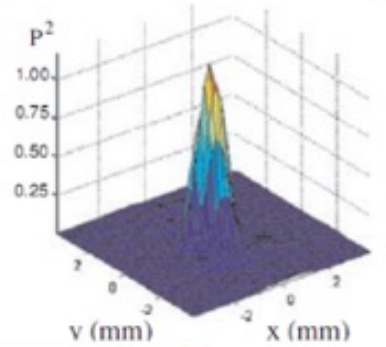
Bengt Linderöth, Göran Lind (Karolinska Institutet) and Marwan Hariz (Umeå University)

Radiofrequency
Radiosurgery
HIFU
LITE ...
Hands On

Noble Art of Lesioning International Course Marseille, Oct 28-29, 2019



*Rees Cosgrove
Marwan Hariz
Takaomi Taira
Jean Régis*



ESSFN Hands On Courses

MOVEMENT DISORDERS

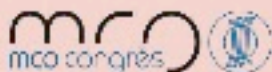


10-12 February 2020

Amsterdam - Netherlands

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European Society for
Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery



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September

2020

XXIV CONGRESS

OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY

FOR STEREOTACTIC

AND FUNCTIONAL

NEUROSURGERY

SAVE THE DATE

