

## PREFACE

On January 14, 2007, our beloved friend Xiao-Song Lin left us. On his 50th birthday—July 27, 2007, his friends, colleagues and family members gathered in the Chern Institute of Mathematics to celebrate his wonderful life. These proceedings resulted from this conference, and is a permanent tribute to a humble person, an excellent mathematician, a great friend, and a devoted family man.

Topology and physics are central themes in Xiao-Song's professional career. A central player in quantum topology is knot theory. Knot invariants such as the celebrated Jones polynomial and finite type invariants were constantly on Xiao-Song's mind. As one of the leading quantum knot theorists in the world, Xiao-Song made fundamental contributions to the development and popularization of knot theory. With his untimely death, the knot world lost a leader.

During the international conference from July 27 to July 31, 2007 at the Chern Institute of Mathematics, Xiao-Song's friends and colleagues covered a variety of topics in topology and physics. We are sure that Xiao-Song will smile in heaven when the topics dear to his heart continue to flourish.

We thank all the participants and speakers for making the conference a memorable one. Staff in the Chern Institute won the hearts of the participants for staying on top of everything. We thank all of them, especially Mrs. Hongqin Li.

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