LUIS AMADEO PIOVAN, 1959–2015

PABLO A. PANZONE

Our dear colleague Luis Amadeo Piovan passed away in a premature and unforeseen way this past May 24th, just three days after reaching his 56th birthday. He was a full Professor at the Mathematics Department of the Universidad Nacional del Sur (UNS), and a CONICET researcher working at the INMABB (Instituto de Matemática de Bahía Blanca).

In 1982 Luis obtained his degree of Licenciado in Mathematics from the UNS. In 1983, with support from a CONICET fellowship, he got his degree of Magister in Mathematics, also from the UNS. Shortly after, he was appointed Adjoint Professor. Rafael Panzone, who supervised his Magister work on differential equations, recalls that his work at that point was clearly worthy of a doctoral degree, but due to Luis' imminent move to USA, they agreed not to pursue that goal and settle for the Magister degree.

Luis got his Ph.D. from Brandeis University, in Waltham, Massachusetts, under the direction of Mark Adler in 1989. His dissertation, an expression of his talent and creative prowess, was published in Mathematische Annalen[1].

He married María Inés Platzeck and they had two daughters, Luciana and Julia.

Beginning in 2000, he acted as vice director of the Revista de la Unión Matemática Argentina, and the next year he took over its direction. For ten years he carried out most of the tasks involved in the production of the journal, from maintaining correspondence with authors and referees to typesetting of articles and distribution of print issues. Under his direction, this journal gained in regularity and international visibility: it started to be published also on the web, and it entered in major citation indices (Science Citation Index, Latindex, and SciELO Argentina).

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[1]Algebraically completely integrable systems and Kummer varieties, Math. Ann. 290 (1991), 349–403, MR 1109639.

Luis' passion for music —a family legacy— took him to participate in choirs and classical opera productions. Lately he was also interested in algorithmic composition using mathematical tools like graphs and surfaces. As a result he published some articles in journals dedicated to music and mathematics.

Luis was a singular individual and an incredibly capable polymath, yet naturally humble and warm at the same time. A mathematician with a solid and wide education, he expected the same from his students, insisting that they learn from the great masters and have a broad knowledge of mathematics. This is reflected in his research work on analysis, integrable systems and number theory. He was an observing person with a sharp intelligence. Though it wasn't always easy to follow his mathematical expositions, he was invariably ready to repeat and expand on his presentations. On other occasions his lectures were diaphanous and fun: he got groups of teachers and high school students singing Beatles songs to explain the mathematics used in those compositions. When one got to know him, one was certain of being in the presence of an admirable person.

Those of us who knew Luis deeply regret his departure.

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