

# Margarita Salas, endless constancy

**Alicia Bravo**

*CSIC Scientist at the CIB Margarita Salas*

It was 1989 when I met Margarita Salas in the *Bromfietsen Meeting on Molecular Biology of Bacillus and its Phages*, which was held at the National Parador in Almagro. At that point, I was finishing a postdoctoral stay at the Max-Planck-Institut für Molekulare Genetik (Berlin). Margarita's group presented several communications and I found them so interesting that I did not hesitate to ask if I could work with her on returning to Spain.

I had the great privilege of sharing 15 years of basic research with Margarita. They were years of much enthusiasm, a lot of work, and rewarding scientific research. Today, I remember Margarita with much love and admiration.

**Margarita Salas was an unstoppable fighter** in very difficult times for female scientists. Tenacity was undoubtedly a key feature of her personality. Her enthusiasm for science and her capacity for work always motivated those of us who were lucky enough to be close to her. She had a great ability to organize and maintain a dynamic research group, in which senior researchers, post-doctoral researchers with excellent scientific backgrounds in other national or international centers,

and PhD students from different universities all contributed to create a highly enriching scientific environment.

Despite her multiple academic and institutional responsibilities, which multiplied as she was recognized and rewarded for her scientific work, Margarita Salas always managed to remain abreast of daily activities in her laboratory. She always found a place in her busy schedule to discuss the latest results, no matter how preliminary they were. She always opened the doors of her office to talk about science. The weekly group seminars were sacred, and discussion and scientific criticism were highly motivating for all involved. Students quickly learned that working in science required a lot of dedication, that keeping up to date with one's field was essential, and that rigor, honesty, and credibility are fundamental values in science.

Margarita Salas is not gone. She will remain among us because she has made history in the field of molecular biology. She has achieved recognition and respect from the scientific community, both nationally and internationally. She succeeded in joining that still small list of women leaders in science.

