

New Solutions for the Heart

An Update in Advanced Perioperative Protection

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Preface

If I have seen a little further it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants.
Sir Isaac Newton (1643–1727), February 5, 1676, in a letter to Robert Hooke.

The mere formulation of a problem is far more essential than its solution, which may be merely a matter of mathematical or experimental skills. To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle requires creative imagination and marks real advances in science.

Albert Einstein, (1879–1955)

Routine work can be accomplished easily and quickly by all who are willing to do so. However, almost everybody has to undergo a tiresome training to carefully and systematically reflect on complex processes.

Theodor Billroth, (1829–1894) “Über das Lehren und Lernen der medizinischen Wissenschaften an den Universitäten der Deutschen Nation” Vienna, 1876.

The idea for this book was conceived by Bruno Podesser in 2006, after realizing that there had been no comprehensive summary of myocardial protection during cardiac surgery since a book edited by HM Piper and CJ Preusse in 1993 (Ischemia-Reperfusion in Cardiac Surgery). It became more of a reality when I was invited to give a lecture at the Medical University, Vienna. Afterwards, we were chatting in a traditional Kaffeehaus in the old town of Vienna and I was persuaded (against my better judgement) to become part of the project as a Co-Editor (and author). This involved help in deciding a structure, and co-opting/persuading a number of eminent clinicians and scientists in the field of myocardial protection associated with cardiac surgery to write a chapter relevant to their expertise. It also became apparent that there was an expectation to write not one, but two, chapters (hence my reservations). Fortunately, the work involved in editing the other chapters was made relatively easy by the erudition of our authors.

That we have been successful in our endeavour can be seen within the book that has now been published. We hope this will be seen as a stepping-stone for continuing research in this field, and as an aid for the challenges that are before those of us involved in moving cardiac surgery forward as a modern and exciting specialty in medicine.

The quotes above encapsulate how we feel about our Authors and about how we hope that the book will be viewed. If it could act as a basis for future studies and stimulate more research in this field, we would be pleased with the achievement and consider the work involved worthwhile. The quest for new “solutions” to optimize protection in all aspects of

cardiac surgery is a worthy goal, and one that is done primarily to benefit the patients who have to undergo such surgery.

We thank all the authors involved in this project, for agreeing to write for us and for the time and effort they have devoted to bringing the project to fruition. We appreciate that without their efforts this would not have been possible. Finally, we thank our families for putting up with the time spent away from home whilst working to finalize the end result.

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