



# Alfonso Corti. The discovery of the hearing organ

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EUGENIO MIRA, AND ALBERT MUDRY

UNIVERSITY SCHOOL  
OF MEDICINE - PADOVA

**22**  
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**AULA  
MORGAGNI  
POLICLINICO**

Coinciding with the bicentenary of his birth, Alessandro Martini, Paolo Mazzarello, Eugenio Mira, and Albert Mudry celebrate the discovery of the hearing organ by the Italian anatomist Alfonso Corti in 1851. He first described the microscopic anatomy of the organ that contains the cellular receptors that transduce and carry airborne vibrations into electric signals to the auditory nerve and brain. Since his discovery, researchers have continued to fascinate over this complex and gracile organ. In this book the biography is followed by a synopsis of scientists who followed in Alfonso Corti's footsteps through the present, offered together with beautiful anatomic reproductions of Corti's organ. Important followers were Nobel Prize winner Santiago Ramón y Cajal and Swedish anatomist Gustaf Retzius, nominated for the Nobel Prize nine times. Several others have provided new insights into the physiology, biochemistry, and especially, genetics involved in the coordinated development of this organ. This volume provides a historic background on the emergence of clinical applications from basic research leading to novel treatments for patients suffering from hearing loss that any otologist and anatomist would find intriguing. As a grand finale, the authors present the original copy of Alfonso Corti's paper "*Recherches sur l'organe de l'ouïe des mammifères*".

(From the Forward by Helge Rask-Andersen MD, PhD, Professor, Uppsala University, Sweden)



**Alessandro Martini** is Full professor of Otorhinolaryngology, Padova University School of Medicine; previous Chief of ENT and of Padova Hospital Neurosciences and Sense Organs Department; previous Director University Neurosciences Dept. and Bioacoustic Laboratory, University of Padova. His major research interests include genetic causes of deafness and malformation pathology of ear, cochlear implants and implantable prosthesis, ototoxicity and ear protection and regenerative medicine.

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