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## Volume Editor's Preface

Volume 29 of **Science of Synthesis** is concerned with the synthesis of acetals, one of the most fascinating functionalities in chemistry. At a fundamental level the acetal group exemplifies many of the central tenets of modern chemistry from the subtle variations between  $S_N1$  and  $S_N2$  mechanisms in substitution reactions to the stereoelectronics which underpin the anomeric effect. The acetal also enables the chemist to exploit the delights of thermodynamic and kinetic control in synthesis, concepts which are used to such great effect in selective acetal protection. Acetals also occur naturally within the elegant structures of natural products which have challenged generations of synthetic chemists, and are also the fundamental linkage that holds together the exquisite architectures of carbohydrates, which control so many aspects of cellular biology.

I am hugely indebted to all the authors of Volume 29 who have taken large tracts of literature and used their expertise to present the current state of the art for the synthesis of the many different classes of acetal described within this volume. I would also like to thank Prof. Steve Ley for his kind invitation to edit Volume 29 and for his help during the production process. Throughout the realization of this volume, Thieme have been of tremendous support. I am grateful to Dr. Joe Richmond for his help in dissecting acetal chemistry into the discrete subsections at the conception of the Volume and to Dr. Fiona Shortt de Hernandez and all of her editorial team, in particular Dr. Mark Smith, for all of their expertise and assistance throughout the project, and for patiently cajoling and guiding me to its successful completion.

### Volume Editor

Stuart Warriner

Leeds, March 2007