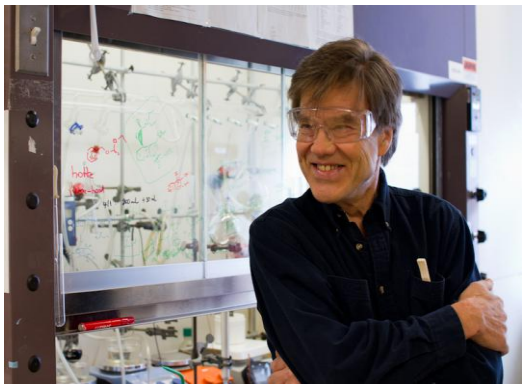
An Interview with Prof. Victor Snieckus

Conducted by Robin Padilla (26.02.2013)



Prof. Victor Snieckus
Queen's University (Kingston)
Science of Synthesis Volume Editor

RP: What are some of your current research interests?

VS: Tinkering and tankering with organic molecules to develop new useful synthetic methods for chemists, whether academic or industrial, and also finding applications for these invented methods to the construction of natural products and bioactive molecules.

RP: What are the biggest chemistry challenges of today? Of tomorrow?

VS: For the synthetic chemists of today: efficiency, brevity, and atom economy. For tomorrow: a track or device by which an organic molecule will make pit stops, pick up reagents, and get transformed in a continuum to the final product.

RP: What's your favorite scientific discovery (or discoveries) and why?

VS: In our laboratories, long ago, making a mistake on expecting a result (based on the literature) and not checking that it was NOT. Recently, we were expecting one reaction and observed two in sequence and one step away from the natural product.

RP: How did you become involved with Science of Synthesis?

VS: I started initially as editor for the Americas for *Synlett* and heterocycles editor for *Synfacts*. Due to the respect I gained for the Thieme people, *Science of Synthesis* was therefore a natural undertaking.[1,2] I look forward to more innovative projects.

RP: What do kind of hobbies/interests do you have outside of the lab?

VS: Read outside of organic chemistry to understand the past and attempt not be surprised by the future; reading in Lithuanian (Father), Estonian (Mother), German and French to maintain some facility. I appreciate jazz from Buddy Bolden to Bill Frisell. I play hockey and wish I could play soprano saxophone like John Coltrane.

Some of Prof. Snieckus' own favorite, recent publications:

Schneider, C.; David, E.; Toutov, A. A.; Snieckus, V. In Situ Anionic Shielding for Regioselective Metalation: Directed *peri* and Iterative Metalation Routes to Polyfunctionalized 7-Azaindoles. *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*, (2012) **51**, 2722.

Kitching, M. O.; Hurst, T. E.; Snieckus, V. Copper-Catalyzed Cross-Coupling Interrupted by an Opportunistic Smiles Rearrangement: An Efficient Domino Approach to Dibenzoxazepinones. *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*, (2012) **51**, 2925.

Antoft-Finch, A.; Blackburn, T.; Snieckus, V. *N*,*N*-Diethyl *O*-Carbamate: Directed Metalation Group and Orthogonal Suzuki−Miyaura Cross-Coupling Partner. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.,* (2009) **131**, 17750.

Johansson Seechurn, C. C. C.; Kitching, M. O.; Colacot, T. J.; Snieckus, V. Palladium-Catalyzed Cross-Coupling: A Historical Contextual Perspective to the 2010 Nobel Prize. *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*, (2012) **51**, 5062.

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[1] *Science of Synthesis*, Sniekcus, V.; Majewski, M., Eds.; Thieme: Stuttgart, (2006); Vols. 8a, 8b.