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PREFACE

This volume consists of written versions of lectures delivered at the Banach Center Colloquium in Warsaw in the academic years 1992/93 and 1993/94.

The common purpose of these lectures was to feature some of the most important developments in mathematics in a way accessible to a general mathematical audience. As the rapid development of mathematics leads to a growing specialisation, the necessity to foster the exchange of ideas between different domains of mathematics becomes particularly vital. We hope that the present volume will contribute towards this process.

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