Professor Jacques Salat-Baroux’s unexpected death left a void in the World community of Obstetrics and Gynecology. His family and friends, his patients and his innumerable students many of whom hold important positions all over the World will miss him.

He was a true clinician – scientist who left behind an extensive publication list. A cursory search through Pub Med, of the National Library of Medicine in the USA, revealed a list of 171 articles in refereed Journals, the last of which was published during the same month in which his illness was discovered, five months before his death. The content of this work is varied, reflecting his broad range of interests, from clinical issues such as “the evaluation of tissue pH monitoring during labor” or “diagnosis and treatment of intrauterine adhesions by microcolpohysteroscopy”, to pure science such as “the molecular basis of embryo implantation in humans”. He contributed to the development of operative hysteroscopy and many aspects of in vitro fertilization. This body of work was carried out with his many students and collaborators. The broad range of the work is a testimony to his open-mindedness and scientific curiosity.

Monsieur Salat as he was often called was a precise and elegant surgeon. I say this from personal observation, having had the pleasure of operating with him on several occasions at the Tenon Hospital where he was professor and chair.

France and its medical establishment recognized the importance of his contributions; he was awarded the medal of Officier de la Légion d’Honneur and elected member to the Academy of Medicine.

He was truly a self made man. Born in Tunis, he lost his father when he was only 11 years old. He moved to Paris at 18 years of age to study medicine. His success has been the result of determination, commitment and work.

What made him truly a great man were the human qualities that framed his professional persona. With the passage of time since his death, when I think of him, which occurs frequently, certain words randomly surge to my mind, words that define this unique individual: elegance, charm, humanity, culture, curiosity, enchantment, commitment, dedication, discipline…

He was always impeccably dressed; an expression of his sense of esthetics and his meticulous personality. But his elegance transcended beyond his habit and was reflected in his manners and demeanor. It took a brief exchange of words to be drawn to his charm. He understood the plight of the needy, the underdog and was generous without ever wanting to show it. He was a disciplined worker who rigorously kept up with developments in his field of medicine. I have seen him at work writing an article or preparing for a presentation, checking and rechecking minute details. He kept a childish curiosity that made him interested in everything around him; from the beautiful butterflies in Dunk Island to the mysteries of the Universe. Beauty, in every form, natural, physical, moral and artistic enchanted him. He was an avid reader and greatly enjoyed literature and history. He was committed to his work. Yet he was as much committed to life. He will be missed.

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