

**Part I**

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**Lectures on Arrangements:  
Combinatorics and Topology**

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These notes represent the revised and enlarged text of my lectures at Nordfjordeid, Norway in June 2003. My background made this invitation poignant. I arrived in Norway in December 1956 as a shell-shocked and depressed refugee of the defeated Hungarian revolution. Olaf Hauge accepted me into his home, healed my body and spirit, and taught me Norwegian. He was instrumental in helping me reunite with my parents and remained a cherished friend throughout his life. I enrolled in the Technical University in Trondheim, where I came under the guidance of Haakon Waadeland whose encouragement was essential in my decision to switch from engineering to mathematics. He helped me get into graduate school in the United States and I embarked on a career there. My wife, children, and I spent many summers with my parents in Oslo and once again I had the good fortune of developing a lasting friendship with a colleague. Per Holm's hospitality made me welcome in his mathematics department at every visit.

In Hungary my parents and I survived a Fascist dictatorship, World War II, a Communist dictatorship, and a revolution. We found in Norway not only safety, but also the indescribable joy of freedom and respect for human dignity. Even after my father died in 1997, my mother preferred to stay in Oslo, where she felt at home. Although her death in 2002 severed my strongest tie to Norway, this beautiful country and its generous people are embedded in my heart forever.

*These notes are dedicated to the memory of my parents  
and to the many Norwegians whose help and kindness enriched our lives.*