

Around the genesis of femto lasers

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In the last century, the decade of the 80s saw the birth of lasers producing really short light pulses, less than 100 fs. The collision of pulses in a ring laser was at the origin of this advance, then came the compression of out- and intra-cavity pulses which completed the abrupt descent in duration. Correspondingly, one had to find a way to measure these shorter and shorter durations. In this talk I propose to guide you in a memorial walk in this wonderful decade that goes from the CPM laser to the Ti: Sapphire, alongside with the amplification by frequency chirp. I would mention some of the major players in this epic, some of whom have already left us, and I will attempt to evoke the bubbling of ideas that accompanies an era of this type.