Acknowledgments

First of all, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Harm H. Kampinga for his patient guidance and support throughout my entire PhD. Dear Harrie, you opened me the door to your lab and changed my life for the better!

Thanks to the members of the thesis assessment committee, Prof. Dr. Reits, Prof. Dr. Nagai and Prof. Dr. Eisel for reading my thesis.

Thanks to Prof Dr. Ody Sibon and her group for their constant help and support especially in the fly lab.

Dear Despina Serlidaki, my experience in Groningen and in the lab would not have been the same without you. You are truly one of the kindest persons that I have ever met in my life. Kindness is a quality that is too often overlooked. Please give a hug to Kostas Tassis: I know he would not want it directly from me so please do it on my behalf.

Dear Marco dal Lago, I consider one of my best fortunes to have a friend like you! I am grateful to have met you in Groningen and that you, Silvia Longo and Nicola are with us, here in Amsterdam!

Dear Melanie Meister-Broekema, this thesis would not be here without you! Thank you for all your help, a big hug to your husband Peter Meister-Broekema and the kids!

Dear Niels Alberts, thanks for being an excellent student, an enthusiastic collaborator and a good friend! And thanks also to the other students, Marco Bangma and Niels Fritsma, who helped me with this project.

Dear members of the Kampinga’s lab, Steven Bergink, Vaishali Kakkar, Jan Vonk, Maria van Waarde-Verhagen, Suzanne Dekker, Melania Minoia and Jing Yang: what a great experience it was to work and, yes, live with you! A special thanks to you, Jeanette Brunsting, as you were the first person who made me feel welcome in the lab.

Dear Yixian, you are indeed the special one: we spent a lot of time together in the lab and supported each other in many difficult moments. Moreover, your contribution to Isa’s bachelorette will not be forgotten. Thank you, Wondwossen Yeshaw, for your friendship and help with the fly work. Els Kuiper, thank you for all the great moments of fun and gezelligheid in and out of work. I wish you all the best in your careers and lives.

Dear Gentlemen Club (whos I am honored to be part of), Dear Peter Nagle, Gabriel Furtado, Martti Maimets and Eduardo de Mattos: I will not use too many words, as the code of our club decrees, only I wish to say: “Gold, always believe in your soul, you’ve got the power to know, you’re indestructible, always believe in, ‘cos you are gold!”.

Thank you to all the other members of the lab, I really felt like being part of a family and especially to Cecilia Rocchi, Paola Serrano Martinez, Marianne van der Zwaag, Sarah Pringle, Liza Lahaye, Nicola Grzeschik, Bart Kanon, Ellie Eggens-Meijer, Hette Faber, Onno Schaap, Reinier Bron, Caterina Macrini, Jean Paul Entingh, Pascale Dijkers, Sven van IJzendoorn, Daisy Wang, Rob Coppes, Chandhuru Jagadeesasan, Ena Sokol, Nynke Hosper, Anita Faber, Reenske Veenendaal, and Roald Lambrechts.

Dear Gabriele Gallo, Italian Major of Groningen, thank you for your friendship, kindness and all the wonderful pranzi eleganti in UMCG. And thank you to the greatest Italian community in the Netherlands, the Italians in Groningen, Francesco Meccozzi, Liliana Cozzoli, Francesco Lanza, Dam Ski, Alessandra Buoninfante, Fede Font, Giulia Leonetti, Salvatore Alvino, and the others. Mi sono sempre sentito a casa grazie a tutti voi! Groningen is really a place where you can find many marvelous people: a special thanks to Bernard Specken, Edwin de Vrij, George Johnson, Oana Draghiciu, Robert Rosén, and Giorgos Gouridis for the lovely time spent together.

Caro Bonni, Cara Cecilia Gallucci, Caro Agno, quando si parte una delle paure più grandi è quella di perdere le amicizie, ma grazie a voi per me non è stato così. Come potrei non ringraziarvi? “La Via prosegue senza
fine, lungi dall’uscio dal quale parte. Ora la Via è fuggita avanti, devo inseguirla ad ogni costo…” Io so che per la Via, voi siete sempre con me e io sono sempre con voi!

Un abbraccio a tutte le persone che mi accolgono ogni volta che torno alla mia cara splendida Brescia e in particolare Marco Fenaroli, Stefano Mauroner, Matteo Albanese e famiglia.

Dear Pinto, thank you for bringing the southern Italian spirit in the lab! Just my name and not a sentence for me in your acknowledgments, so in return, I put you in a separated line and distant from the other lab people and Italians, so that you will think to have been forgotten. Got you!

Un grazie di cuore ai miei “amiche e amici di Milano”, Francesca Bamberg, Elena Grassi, Paolo Francesco Croci e la piccola Alessia. Non vedo l’ora di rincontrarvi, ogni volta! A special thanks to Marta Valenza and Elena Cattaneo.

A great thanks to ECNP and in particular to Alexander Schubert, Ellen van den Berg and Iris Allebrandi and my ECNP colleagues for giving me an extraordinary new opportunity of career.

Cari mamma e papà mi mancate ogni giorno da quando sono partito, grazie per il vostro continuo aiuto e supporto. Come sempre: a presto!

Cara Ewa Solak, jesteś najlepszą teściową, jaką można sobie wymarzyć.

Cari Maddalena Boscaro, Alex Boscaro, Simone Beghella Bartoli e Giulia Daniela Zucca, siete la mia famiglia, non posso che augurarvi ogni bene possibile. Cara Dorotea, sei la migliore nipotina e figliuccia che potevo desiderare, “baci, baci... e anche un abbraccio ti do!” Un caro saluto a Massimo e Paola Beghell Bartoli.

Cara Isa...che dire? Ed anche questa è fatta! Le chiavi, i traslochi, le case, i corsi di olandese, festival del cibo, le foche, carina, la Macesina, per me è un si, Morricone & Red Hot Chili Peppers, Niu Iorch, presentazione sui droni, lo spiedo, Pasquetta ad Amburgo, dog show, ciao ragazzi, fuori-dal-ring, socialize, bici, tieddo, Torigno, capodanni, no-problem-at-all, ventiseeeetee, gli, sfida a giochi in scatola, location-menu-servizio-conto, sun sneezing, Amsterdam, bachelorette, ci vogliono 11 anni, ma è uno scherzo, e ora pannolini... Ti amo!

Cara Irene, forse un giorno sfoglierai le pagine di questa tesi, l’ho scritta mentre ti aspettavamo. Ricorda che “it’s a Long Way to the Top (If You Wanna Rock ‘n’ Roll)”.

Matteo, December 2019