

PROCEEDINGS OF SPIE

# ***Planetary Defense and Space Environment Applications***

**Gary B. Hughes**  
*Editor*

**30 August 2016**  
**San Diego, California, United States**

*Sponsored and Published by*  
SPIE

**Volume 9981**

Proceedings of SPIE 0277-786X, V. 9981

SPIE is an international society advancing an interdisciplinary approach to the science and application of light.

Planetary Defense and Space Environment Applications, edited by Gary B. Hughes, Proc. of SPIE  
Vol. 9981, 998101 · © 2016 SPIE · CCC code: 0277-786X/16/\$18 · doi: 10.1117/12.2261585

Proc. of SPIE Vol. 9981 998101-1

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Author(s), "Title of Paper," in *Planetary Defense and Space Environment Applications*, edited by Gary B. Hughes, Proceedings of SPIE Vol. 9981 (SPIE, Bellingham, WA, 2016) Six-Digit Article CID Number.

ISSN: 0277-786X

ISSN: 1996-756X (electronic)

ISBN: 9781510603530

ISBN: 9781510603547 (electronic)

Published by

**SPIE**

P.O. Box 10, Bellingham, Washington 98227-0010 USA

Telephone +1 360 676 3290 (Pacific Time) · Fax +1 360 647 1445

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# Contents

- v *Authors*
- vii *Conference Committee*
- ix *Introduction*

---

## **SESSION 1 PLANETARY DEFENSE I**

---

- 9981 02 **Target tracking and pointing for arrays of phase-locked lasers** [9981-1]
- 9981 03 **Directed-energy deflection laboratory measurements of common space-based targets** [9981-2]
- 9981 04 **Building the future of WaferSat spacecraft for relativistic flight** [9981-3]
- 9981 05 **Stability of laser-propelled wafer satellites** [9981-4]
- 9981 06 **Relativistic solutions to directed energy** [9981-5]
- 9981 07 **Comet deflection by directed energy: a finite element analysis** [9981-6]
- 9981 08 **Simulations of directed energy comet deflection (Invited Paper)** [9981-7]

---

## **SESSION 2 SPACE ENVIRONMENT APPLICATIONS I**

---

- 9981 09 **Space activity and programs at SOFRADIR** [9981-8]
- 9981 0B **LAST: Laser Array Space Telescope** [9981-10]

---

## **SESSION 3 SPACE ENVIRONMENT APPLICATIONS II**

---

- 9981 0C **The fiber optic system for the Advanced Topographic Laser Altimeter System instrument (ATLAS) (Invited Paper)** [9981-11]
- 9981 0D **Ultra high molecular weight polyethylene (UHMWPE) fiber epoxy composite hybridized with Gadolinium and Boron nanoparticles for radiation shielding (Invited Paper)** [9981-12]
- 9981 0E **Using microporous polytetrafluoroethylene thin sheets as a flexible solar diffuser to minimize sunlight glint to cameras in space (Invited Paper)** [9981-13]
- 9981 0F **Cryogenic fiber optic assemblies for spaceflight environments: design, manufacturing, testing, and integration** [9981-14]

- 9981 OG **Optical components in harsh space environment (Invited Paper)** [9981-15]
- 9981 OH **Implications of directed energy for SETI** [9981-16]
- 9981 OI **Probing organic residues on Martian regolith simulants using a long-wave infrared laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy linear array detection system** [9981-17]
- 9981 OJ **Remote laser evaporative molecular absorption spectroscopy** [9981-18]

## Authors

Numbers in the index correspond to the last two digits of the six-digit citation identifier (CID) article numbering system used in Proceedings of SPIE. The first four digits reflect the volume number. Base 36 numbering is employed for the last two digits and indicates the order of articles within the volume. Numbers start with 00, 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 0A, 0B...0Z, followed by 10-1Z, 20-2Z, etc.

Batliner, Payton, 03  
Baufista, Miguel, 0B  
Bishman, Chase, 0B  
Blair, Diana, 0C, 0F  
Böttger, Roman, 0G  
Bouakka-Manesse, A., 09  
Brashears, Travis, 02, 03, 04, 05, 0B, 0J  
Brown, EIEI, 0I  
Choi, Michael K., 0E  
Chorier, P., 09  
Chuska, Richard, 0C, 0F  
Cohen, Alexander, 02, 05, 0B, 0J  
Corso, Alain Jody, 0G  
Decuir, Eric, 0I  
Delannoy, A., 09  
Della Corte, Vincenzo, 0G  
Fièque, B., 09  
Foggetta, Luca, 0G  
Frese, Erich, 0C, 0F  
Gandra, Anush, 07  
Griswold, Janelle, 02, 05, 07, 0J  
Ho, Ian, 0B  
Hömmerich, Uwe, 0I  
Huebner, Rene, 0G  
Hughes, Gary B., 02, 03, 04, 05, 07, 08, 0J  
Hwang, Rebecca, 0B  
Jamin, N., 09  
Jia, Ken, 0I  
Jia, Yingqing, 0I  
Jin, Feng, 0I  
Kelkar, Ajit, 0D  
Knowles, Patrick, 03, 04  
Kulkarni, Neeraj, 02, 05, 06, 0J  
Leroy, C., 09  
Lin, Lucas, 0B  
Lubin, Philip M., 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 0B, 0H, 0J  
Macasaet, Van P., 02  
Madajian, Jonathan A., 02, 03, 05, 07, 0B, 0J  
Mani, Venkat, 0D  
Martucci, Alessandro, 0G  
Matysek, Marc, 0C, 0F  
Mehta, Amal, 04  
Meinhold, Peter, 03  
Mercer, Whitaker, 03  
Motta, Caio, 03  
Napolitani, Enrico, 0G  
Onuma, Eleanya, 0C, 0F  
Off, Melanie N., 0C, 0F  
Palumbo, Pasquale, 0G  
Pelizzo, Maria G., 0G  
Péré-Laperne, N., 09  
Pidancier, P., 09  
Pon, Brandon, 0B  
Prasad, Narasimha S., 0D, 0I  
Prazak, Michael, 0B  
Preti, G., 0G  
Rancoita, Piergiorgio, 0G  
Reyes, Rachel, 0B  
Rommelfanger, Nicholas, 0B  
Ruehl, Patrick, 0B  
Rupert, Nic, 04, 07, 0B  
Samuels, Alan C., 0I  
Srinivasan, Prashant, 05  
Stanton, Eric, 04  
Switzer, Robert, 0C, 0F  
Taglioni, G., 0G  
Tessarolo, Enrico, 0G  
Thomes, W. Joe, 0C, 0F  
Trivedi, Sudhir, 0I  
Tsukamoto, Ryan, 0B  
Valente, Paolo, 0G  
Vanmali, Dylan, 0B  
Vial, L., 09  
Wijewarnasuriya, Priyalal, 0I  
Xu, Xu, 0B  
Yang, Clayton S.-C., 0I  
Zhang, Qicheng, 02, 05, 06, 07, 08, 0J  
Zuppella, P., 0G



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# Planetary Defense and Space Environment Applications I

This volume contains papers presented at the SPIE Optics+Photonics conference, *Planetary Defense and Space Environment Applications*. This conference was formed as a natural extension of the *Nanophotonics and Macrophotonics for Space Environments* conference series, which was chaired by Edward W. Taylor and David A. Cardimona. In recent years, the emerging field of planetary defense, protecting Earth from bombardment by asteroids and comets, has begun to explore the use of directed energy technology. Transitioning ground-based, directed-energy systems for use in space environments presents many challenges, including robust design for survivability and reliability of components and systems operating in the extreme environmental conditions of space.

The focus of the *Planetary Defense and Space Environment Applications* conference is emerging and advanced optical and photonic technologies appropriate for use in space environments, including applications such as planetary defense missions and systems for solar system exploration. In the space environment, the effects of ionizing radiation, temperature ranging, and environmental effects such as atomic oxygen (AO), vacuum, and ultraviolet (UV) radiation can degrade space sensors, systems, and related components. Papers presented at the conference describe satellite architectures, including payloads which require micro-component optical or photonic systems such as Micro Electro-Mechanical Systems (MEMS) devices, integrated monolithic photonics and innovative, miniaturized, cost-effective, reliable and radiation-resistant sensor and communications technologies. This conference also incorporates papers dealing with specific missions that rely on optical and photonic technologies, such as directed-energy planetary defense, directed-energy spacecraft propulsion, active target illumination, orbital debris mitigation, spectrometry and other missions. Missions that seek to explore the surfaces of solar system bodies, by remote sensing or landing missions are included in this conference, as these missions occur in unique and challenging environments requiring specialized hardware to explore. For example, one might consider the range of unusual considerations that arise if trying to explore Venus. Conditions at most altitudes are inhospitable to present technology, especially on the surface. Similarly intriguing and challenging environments are considered, such as those of Titan, Enceladus, and Europa. Emerging and improved photonics technology can facilitate implementation of future small sat systems, as well as significantly improve related dual-use commercial and military terrestrial system applications where reduced size, reliability, and resistance to temperature and ionizing radiations are major issues. Topics dealing with research and development in these areas, and especially technologies expected to operate in adverse UV and AO environments such as

near-Earth orbits or locations such as interplanetary space that are exposed to galactic cosmic rays, are discussed.

As chair of the inaugural *Planetary Defense and Space Environment Applications* conference, I wish to thank Ron Pirich, who served as conference Co-chair, and the entire Program Committee for generously offering their time and effort in support of this conference. I am very grateful to all of the authors for their efforts and willingness to present their incredible research at this conference. I especially appreciate all of the SPIE staff members who work tirelessly to organize and execute this conference, which is truly among the best conference experiences in any field.

**Gary B. Hughes**  
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