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**Stephen L. O'Dell
Giovanni Pareschi**
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Contents

xiii	Conference Committee
xv	Introduction

SESSION 1 TELESCOPE SYSTEMS

7437 02	IXO system studies and technology preparation [7437-01] M. Bavdaz, Ph. Gondoin, K. Wallace, T. Oosterbroek, D. Lumb, D. Martin, P. Verhoeve, L. Puig, L. Torres Soto, A. N. Parmar, European Space Agency (Netherlands)
7437 03	Current status of the Astro-H X-ray Telescope system [7437-02] H. Awaki, Ehime Univ. (Japan); Y. Ogasaka, H. Kunieda, A. Furuzawa, H. Mori, T. Miyazawa, Y. Haba, Y. Tawara, K. Yamashita, Nagoya Univ. (Japan); P. Serlemitsos, Y. Soong, T. Okajima, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); M. Ishida, Y. Maeda, K. Tamura, ISAS/JAXA (Japan); Y. Namba, Chubu Univ. (Japan); K. Uesugi, Y. Suzuki, JASRI/SPring-8 (Japan); K. Ogi, Ehime Univ. (Japan); M. Itoh, Kobe Univ. (Japan); T. Kosaka, Osaka City Univ. (Japan); H. Tsunemi, Osaka Univ. (Japan)
7437 04	Design and development of the optics system for the NHXM Hard X-ray and Polarimetric Mission [7437-03] G. Pareschi, G. Tagliaferri, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); P. Attinà, Thales Alenia Space (Italy); S. Basso, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); G. Borghi, Media Lario Technologies (Italy); O. Citterio, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy) and Media Lario Technologies (Italy); M. Civitani, V. Cotroneo, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); B. Negri, Agenzia Spaziale Italiana (Italy); G. Sironi, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy) and Media Lario Technologies (Italy); D. Spiga, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); D. Vernani, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy) and Media Lario Technologies (Italy); G. Valsecchi, Media Lario Technologies (Italy)
7437 05	The Focusing Optics X-ray Solar Imager (FOXSI) [7437-04] S. Krucker, S. Christe, L. Glesener, S. McBride, P. Turin, D. Glaser, P. Saint-Hilaire, G. Delory, R. P. Lin, Univ. of California, Berkeley (United States); M. Gubarev, B. Ramsey, NASA Marshall Space Flight Ctr. (United States); Y. Terada, Saitama Univ. (Japan); S. Ishikawa, Institute of Space and Astronautical Science (Japan) and Univ. of Tokyo (Japan); M. Kokubun, Institute of Space and Astronautical Science (Japan); S. Saito, T. Takahashi, Institute of Space and Astronautical Science (Japan) and Univ. of Tokyo (Japan); S. Watanabe, Institute of Space and Astronautical Science (Japan); K. Nakazawa, Univ. of Tokyo (Japan); H. Tajima, Stanford Univ. (Japan); S. Masuda, T. Minoshima, Nagoya Univ. (Japan); M. Shomojo, NAOJ (Japan)
7437 06	The Soft X-ray Imager (SXI) on board the EXIST mission [7437-05] G. Tagliaferri, S. Basso, P. Conconi, G. Pareschi, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); A. Bazzano, INAF-IASF (Italy); P. Caraveo, INAF-IASF (Italy); J. E. Grindlay, Harvard-Smithsonian Ctr. for Astrophysics (United States); L. Natalucci, P. Ubertini, INAF-IASF (Italy); M. Uslenghi, G. Villa, INAF-IASF (Italy)

- 7437 08 **Spectrum-RG astrophysical project** [7437-68]
M. Pavlinsky, Space Research Institute (Russian Federation); R. Sunyaev, E. Churazov, Space Research Institute (Russian Federation) and Max-Planck-Institute for Astrophysics (Germany); A. Vikhlinin, Space Research Institute (Russian Federation) and Harvard-Smithsonian Ctr. for Astrophysics (United States); S. Sazonov, Space Research Institute (Russian Federation); M. Revnivtsev, Technische Univ. München (Germany) and Space Research Institute (Russian Federation); V. Arefiev, I. Lapshov, V. Akimov, V. Levin, M. Buntov, N. Semena, Space Research Institute (Russian Federation); S. Grigorovich, Russian Federal Nuclear Ctr. (Russian Federation); V. Babyshkin, Lavochkin Association (Russian Federation); P. Predehl, Max-Planck-Institut für Extraterrestrische Physik (Germany); G. Hasinger, Max-Planck-Institut für Plasmaphysik (Germany); H. Böhringer, Max-Planck-Institut für Extraterrestrische Physik (Germany); J. Schmitt, Hamburg Univ. (Germany); A. Santangelo, Univ. Tübingen (Germany); A. Schwobe, Astrophysikalisches Institut Potsdam (Germany); J. Wilms, Univ. Erlangen-Nürnberg (Germany)
- 7437 09 **The current status of ASTRO-H/HXT development facility** [7437-56]
A. Furuzawa, Nagoya Univ. (Japan); Y. Ogasaka, Japan Science and Technology Agency (Japan); H. Kunieda, T. Miyazawa, M. Sakai, Y. Kinoshita, Y. Makinae, S. Sasaya, Y. Kanou, D. Niki, T. Ohgi, N. Oishi, K. Yamane, N. Yamane, Y. Ishida, Y. Haba, Nagoya Univ. (Japan); Y. Tawara, Nagoya Univ. (Japan); K. Yamashita, Japan Science and Technology Agency (Japan); M. Ishida, Y. Maeda, H. Mori, K. Tamura, Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (Japan); H. Awaki, Ehime Univ. (Japan); T. Okajima, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States)

SESSION 2 TELESCOPE DESIGN AND OPTIMIZATION

- 7437 0A **Preliminary design of the International X-ray Observatory flight mirror assembly** [7437-07]
R. S. McClelland, SGT, Inc. (United States); T. M. Carnahan, M. K. Choi, D. W. Robinson, T. T. Saha, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States)
- 7437 0B **The design, manufacture and predicted performance of Kirkpatrick-Baez Silicon stacks for the International X-ray Observatory or similar applications** [7437-08]
R. Willingale, F. H. P. Spaan, Univ. of Leicester (United Kingdom)
- 7437 0C **NuSTAR hard x-ray optics design and performance** [7437-10]
J. E. Koglin, H. An, K. L. Blaedel, Columbia Astrophysics Lab. (United States); N. F. Brejnholt, F. E. Christensen, Danish Technical Univ. (Denmark); W. W. Craig, Lawrence Livermore National Lab. (United States); T. A. Decker, C. J. Hailey, L. C. Hale, Columbia Astrophysics Lab. (United States); F. A. Harrison, California Institute of Technology (United States); C. P. Jensen, Danish Technical Univ. (Denmark); K. K. Madsen, California Institute of Technology (United States); K. Mori, Columbia Astrophysics Lab. (United States); M. J. Pivovarov, Lawrence Livermore National Lab. (United States); G. Tajiri, Columbia Astrophysics Lab. (United States); W. W. Zhang, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States)
- 7437 0D **Design optimization and trade-off study of WFXT optics** [7437-11]
P. Conconi, G. Pareschi, S. Campana, O. Citterio, M. Civitani, V. Cotroneo, L. Proserpio, G. Tagliaferri, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); G. Parodi, BCV Progetti (Italy)

- 7437 OE **Optimization of detectors positioning with respect to flying dynamics for future formation flight missions** [7437-12]
M. Civitani, INAF-OAB (Italy); S. Djalal, CNES (France); R. Chipaux, CE-Saclay, CEA (France)
- 7437 OF **On the design of wide-field x-ray telescopes** [7437-57]
R. F. Elsner, S. L. O'Dell, B. D. Ramsey, M. C. Weisskopf, NASA Marshall Space Flight Ctr. (United States)

SESSION 3 GRATING SPECTROSCOPY

- 7437 OG **Development of a critical-angle transmission grating spectrometer for the International X-Ray Observatory** [7437-13]
R. K. Heilmann, M. Ahn, M. W. Bautz, R. Foster, D. P. Huenemoerder, H. L. Marshall, P. Mukherjee, M. L. Schattenburg, N. S. Schulz, M. Smith, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (United States)
- 7437 OH **Off-plane grating spectrometer for the International X-ray Observatory** [7437-14]
R. L. McEntaffer, Univ. of Iowa (United States); N. J. Murray, A. Holland, Open Univ. (United Kingdom); C. Lillie, S. Casement, D. Dailey, T. Johnson, Northrop Grumman Space Technology (United States); W. C. Cash, P. H. Oakley, Univ. of Colorado at Boulder (United States); T. Schultz, Univ. of Iowa (United States); D. N. Burrows, Pennsylvania State Univ. (United States)
- 7437 OI **The EXOS sounding rocket payload** [7437-15]
P. Oakley, W. Cash, Univ. of Colorado, Boulder (United States); R. McEntaffer, Univ. of Iowa (United States); A. Shipley, Univ. of Colorado, Boulder (United States); T. Schultz, Univ. of Iowa (United States)

SESSION 4 DIFFRACTIVE OPTICS

- 7437 OJ **X-ray and gamma-ray focusing and interferometry** [7437-16]
G. K. Skinner, NASA-GSFC (United States) and Univ. of Maryland (United States)
- 7437 OK **Soft gamma-ray optics: new Laue lens design and performance estimates** [7437-17]
N. M. Barrière, L. Natalucci, INAF-IASF (Italy); N. Abrosimov, IKZ (Germany); P. von Ballmoos, CESR, CNRS (France); P. Bastie, LSP, CNRS (France); P. Courtois, M. Jentschel, ILL (France); J. Knödseder, J. Rousselle, CESR, CNRS (France); P. Ubertini, INAF-IASF (Italy)
- 7437 OL **High-Z crystals for gamma-ray optics** [7437-18]
J. Rousselle, P. von Ballmoos, CESR, UPS, Univ. of Toulouse (France) and UMR 5187, CNRS (France); N. Barrière, INAF-IASF (Italy); N. V. Abrosimov, IKZ (Germany); P. Bastie, LSP (France); G. Bonnetto, Thales Alenia Space (France); T. Camus, CESR, UPS, Univ. of Toulouse (France) and UMR 5187, CNRS (France); P. Courtois, M. Jentschel, ILL (France); E. Lecomte, CESR, UPS, Univ. of Toulouse (France) and UMR 5187, CNRS (France); E. Rivière, Ctr. National d'Études Spatiales (France); G. Roudil, CESR, UPS, Univ. of Toulouse (France) and UMR 5187, CNRS (France)

- 7437 OM **New results on focusing of gamma-rays with Laue lenses** [7437-19]
 F. Ferrari, Univ. degli Studi di Ferrara (Italy); F. Frontera, Univ. degli Studi di Ferrara (Italy) and INAF-IASF (Italy); G. Loffredo, E. Virgili, C. Guidorzi, Univ. degli Studi di Ferrara (Italy); V. Carassiti, F. Evangelisti, Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare (Italy); L. Landi, Univ. degli Studi di Ferrara (Italy); S. Chiozzi, S. Squerzanti, Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare (Italy); E. Caroli, J. B. Stephen, F. Schiavone, A. Basili, INAF-IASF (Italy); K. H. Andersen, P. Courtois, ILL (France)

SESSION 5 MIRROR FABRICATION AND CHARACTERIZATION

- 7437 ON **Manufacture of mirror glass substrates for the NuSTAR mission** [7437-20]
 W. W. Zhang, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States)
- 7437 OP **Hot slumping glass technology and integration process to manufacture a grazing incidence scaled prototype for the IXO telescope modules** [7437-22]
 M. Ghigo, S. Basso, Astronomical Observatory of Brera (Italy); R. Canestrari, Astronomical Observatory of Brera (Italy) and Insubria Univ. (Italy); P. Conconi, O. Citterio, Astronomical Observatory of Brera (Italy); M. Civitani, Astronomical Observatory of Brera (Italy) and Insubria Univ. (Italy); E. Dell'Orto, Univ. Milano Bicocca (Italy); D. Gallieni, A.D.S. S.r.l. (Italy); G. Pareschi, Astronomical Observatory of Brera (Italy); G. Parodi, BCV Progetti (Italy); L. Proserpio, Astronomical Observatory of Brera (Italy) and Insubria Univ. (Italy); D. Spiga, Astronomical Observatory of Brera (Italy)
- 7437 OQ **Mirror technology development for the International X-ray Observatory mission** [7437-23]
 W. W. Zhang, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); M. Atanassova, NPP, Oak Ridge Associated Univ. (United States); P. Augustin, Bastion Technologies, Inc. (United States); P. N. Blake, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); G. Byron, Stinger Ghaffarian Technologies, Inc. (United States); T. Carnahan, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); K. W. Chan, Univ. of Maryland (United States); C. Fleetwood, C. He, Ball Aerospace and Technologies, Corp. (United States); M. D. Hill, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); M. Hong, Stinger Ghaffarian Technologies, Inc. (United States); L. Kolos, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); J. P. Lehan, NPP, Oak Ridge Associated Univ. (United States); J. R. Mazzarella, R. McClelland, Stinger Ghaffarian Technologies, Inc. (United States); L. Olsen, R. Petre, D. Robinson, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); R. Russell, Stinger Ghaffarian Technologies, Inc. (United States); T. T. Saha, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); M. Sharpe, Stinger Ghaffarian Technologies, Inc. (United States); M. V. Gubarev, W. D. Jones, S. L. O'Dell, NASA Marshall Space Flight Ctr. (United States); W. Davis, D. R. Caldwell, M. Freeman, W. A. Podgorski, P. B. Reid, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (United States)
- 7437 OR **Progress toward a complete metrology set for the International X-ray Observatory (IXO) soft x-ray mirrors** [7437-24]
 J. P. Lehan, Univ. of Maryland, Baltimore County (United States) and NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); M. Atanassova, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States) and Oak Ridge Associated Univ. (United States); K.-W. Chan, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States) and Univ. of Maryland, Baltimore County (United States); T. Hadjimichael, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States) and Ball Aerospace (United States); T. T. Saha, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); M. Hong, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States) and SCT, Inc. (United States); W. W. Zhang, P. Blake, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States)

SESSION 6 MIRROR FABRICATION AND CHARACTERIZATION II

- 7437 OS **Advanced x-ray optics with Si wafers and slumped glass** [7437-25]
R. Hudec, Astronomical Institute (Czech Republic) and Czech Technical Univ. (Czech Republic); V. Marsikova, Rigaku Innovative Technologies Europe (Czech Republic) and Institute of Chemical Technology (Czech Republic); M. Mika, Institute of Chemical Technology (Czech Republic); J. Sik, M. Lorenc, ON Semiconductor Czech Republic (Czech Republic); L. Pina, Rigaku Innovative Technologies Europe (Czech Republic) and Czech Technical Univ. (Czech Republic); A. Inneman, Rigaku Innovative Technologies Europe (Czech Republic); M. Skulinova, Astronomical Institute (Czech Republic)
- 7437 OT **Silicon pore optics development** [7437-26]
K. Wallace, M. Bavdaz, P. Gondoin, ESA-ESTEC (Netherlands); M. J. Collon, R. Günther, M. Ackermann, M. W. Beijersbergen, cosine Research B.V. (Netherlands); M. Olde Riekerink, M. Blom, B. Lansdorp, L. de Vreede, Micronit Microfluidics B.V. (Netherlands)
- 7437 OU **Production of silicon mirror plates** [7437-27]
M. B. Olde Riekerink, B. Lansdorp, L. J. de Vreede, M. T. Blom, R. van't Oever, Micronit Microfluidics BV (Netherlands); M. D. Ackermann, M. J. Collon, cosine Research B.V. (Netherlands); K. Wallace, M. Bavdaz, ESA-ESTEC (Netherlands)
- 7437 OV **Alternative materials in view of new light weight x-ray optics** [7437-59]
M. Skulinova, R. Hudec, Astronomical Institute (Czech Republic); J. Sik, M. Lorenc, ON Semiconductor Czech Republic (Czech Republic); L. Pina, V. Semencova, Rigaku Innovative Technologies Europe (Czech Republic)

SESSION 7 MIRROR FABRICATION AND CHARACTERIZATION III

- 7437 OW **Technologies for manufacturing of high angular resolution multilayer coated optics for future new hard x-ray missions: a status report** [7437-28]
G. Borghi, D. Vernani, E. Marchi Boscolo, O. Citterio, G. Grisoni, J. Kools, F. Marioni, A. Orlandi, A. Ritucci, M. Rossi, G. Salmaso, G. Valsecchi, Media Lario Technologies (Italy); S. Basso, G. Pareschi, D. Spiga, G. Tagliaferri, INAF-Brera Astronomical Observatory (Italy); B. Negri, Italian Space Agency (Italy)
- 7437 OX **Performance of supersmooth x-ray mandrels for new hard x-ray missions** [7437-29]
D. Vernani, G. Borghi, O. Citterio, S. Moretti, A. Ritucci, G. Sironi, M. Riva, Media Lario Technologies (Italy); S. Basso, G. Pareschi, G. Tagliaferri, INAF-Brera Astronomical Observatory (Italy); B. Negri, ASI (Italy)
- 7437 OY **Mandrel replication for hard x-ray optics using titanium nitride** [7437-30]
S. Romaine, Harvard-Smithsonian Ctr. for Astrophysics (United States); J. Boike, Jacobs Technology (United States); R. Bruni, Harvard-Smithsonian Ctr. for Astrophysics (United States); D. Engelhaupt, Univ. of Alabama, Huntsville (United States); P. Gorenstein, Harvard-Smithsonian Ctr. for Astrophysics (United States); M. Gubarev, B. Ramsey, National Space Science and Technology Ctr. (United States)
- 7437 OZ **A stainless-steel mandrel for slumping glass x-ray mirrors** [7437-58]
M. V. Gubarev, S. L. O'Dell, W. D. Jones, T. J. Kester, C. W. Griffith, NASA Marshall Space Flight Ctr. (United States); W. W. Zhang, T. T. Saha, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); K.-W. Chan, Univ. of Maryland, Baltimore (United States)

- 7437 10 **Development of a computer-controlled polishing process for x-ray optics** [7437-67]
G. S. Khan, M. Gubarev, W. Arnold, B. Ramsey, NASA Marshall Space Flight Ctr. (United States)

SESSION 8 ATMOSPHERIC CHERENKOV TELESCOPES

- 7437 11 **Techniques for the manufacturing of stiff and lightweight optical mirror panels based on slumping of glass sheets: concepts and results** [7437-31]
R. Canestrari, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy) and Univ. degli Studi dell'Insubria (Italy); M. Ghigo, G. Pareschi, S. Basso, Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); G. Motta, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy) and Univ. degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca (Italy); M. Doro, INFN-Padova (Italy); E. Giro, L. Lessio, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Padova (Italy)
- 7437 12 **Mirror development for CTA** [7437-33]
A. Förster, Max-Planck-Institut für Kernphysik (Germany); M. Doro, Univ. of Padova (Italy) and Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare (Italy); P. Brun, Institut de Recherches sur les Lois Fondamentales de l'Univers (France); R. Canestrari, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); P. Chadwick, Durham Univ. (United Kingdom); L. Font, Univ. Autònoma de Barcelona (Spain); M. Ghigo, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); E. Lorenz, Max-Planck-Institut für Physik (Germany); M. Mariotti, Univ. of Padova (Italy) and Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare (Italy); J. Michalowski, J. Niemiec, The Henryk Niewodniczanski Institute of Nuclear Physics (Poland); G. Pareschi, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); B. Peyaud, Institut de Recherches sur les Lois Fondamentales de l'Univers (France); K. Seweryn, Space Research Ctr. (Poland)

SESSION 9 MIRROR COATING

- 7437 13 **Coating of silicon pore optics** [7437-34]
C. P. Jensen, DTU-space (Denmark); M. Ackermann, cosine Research B.V. (Netherlands); F. E. Christensen, DTU-space (Denmark); M. J. Collon, cosine Research B.V. (Netherlands); M. Krumrey, Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (Germany)
- 7437 14 **SiC/Al multilayers for normal incidence EUV applications** [7437-35]
D. L. Windt, J. A. Bellotti, Reflective X-Ray Optics LLC (United States)
- 7437 15 **Depth-graded Co/C multilayers prepared by reactive sputtering** [7437-36]
J. A. Bellotti, D. L. Windt, Reflective X-Ray Optics LLC (United States)
- 7437 16 **Optimizations of Pt/SiC and W/Si multilayers for the Nuclear Spectroscopic Telescope Array** [7437-37]
K. K. Madsen, F. A. Harrison, P. H. Mao, California Institute of Technology (United States); F. E. Christensen, C. P. Jensen, N. Brejnholt, DTU-Space (Denmark); J. Koglin, Columbia Univ. (United States); M. J. Pivovarov, Lawrence Livermore National Lab. (United States)
- 7437 17 **Optimization of the reflecting coatings for the new hard x-ray mission** [7437-38]
V. Cotroneo, G. Pareschi, D. Spiga, G. Tagliaferri, Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy)

- 7437 18 **Thin gold layer in Ni electroforming process: optical surface characterization** [7437-69]
G. Sironi, Univ. degli Studi dell'Insubria (Italy), Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy), and Media Lario Technologies (Italy); D. Spiga, G. Pareschi, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); N. Missaglia, Media Lario Technologies (Italy); L. Paganini, Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy)
- 7437 19 **Development of differential deposition technique for figure corrections in grazing incidence x-ray optics** [7437-63]
K. Kilaru, Univ. of Alabama in Huntsville (United States); B. D. Ramsey, M. V. Gubarev, NASA Marshall Space Flight Ctr. (United States)

SESSION 10 ALIGNMENT AND MOUNTING

- 7437 1A **Stacking of silicon pore optics for IXO** [7437-39]
M. J. Collon, R. Günther, M. Ackermann, R. Partapsing, C. Kelly, M. W. Beijersbergen, cosine Research B.V. (Netherlands); M. Bavdaz, K. Wallace, European Space Agency (Netherlands); M. Olde Riekerink, Micronit Microfluidics BV (Netherlands); P. Mueller, M. Krumrey, Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (Germany)
- 7437 1B **Optical bench elements (petals) for IXO** [7437-40]
D. Kampf, M. Erhard, Kayser-Threde GmbH (Germany); M. Bavdaz, K. Wallace, P. Gondoin, European Space Agency (Netherlands); M. J. Collon, cosine Research B.V. (Netherlands)
- 7437 1C **The problems concerning the integration of very thin mirror shells** [7437-41]
S. Basso, O. Citterio, F. Mazzoleni, G. Pareschi, G. Tagliaferri, R. Valtolina, P. Conconi, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); G. Parodi, BCV Progetti S.r.l. (Italy)
- 7437 1D **An approach for alignment, mounting, and integration of IXO mirror segments** [7437-42]
K.-W. Chan, Univ. of Maryland, Baltimore County (United States) and NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); W. Zhang, T. Saha, D. Robinson, L. Olsen, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); R. McClelland, J. Mazarella, L. Lozipone, NASA/Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States) and SGT, Inc. (United States); J. Lehan, Univ. of Maryland, Baltimore County (United States) and NASA/Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States); M. Hong, C. Fleetwood, T. Evans, G. Byron, NASA/Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States) and SGT, Inc. (United States); J. Larimore, Missouri Univ. of Science and Technology (United States)
- 7437 1E **Progress on the active alignment system for the IXO mirrors** [7437-43]
M. D. Freeman, P. B. Reid, W. Podgorski, D. Caldwell, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (United States)

SESSION 11 ACTIVE OPTICS

- 7437 1F **Generation-X mirror technology development plan and the development of adjustable x-ray optics** [7437-44]
P. B. Reid, W. Davis, Harvard-Smithsonian Ctr. for Astrophysics (United States); S. O'Dell, NASA Marshall Space Flight Ctr. (United States); D. A. Schwartz, Harvard-Smithsonian Ctr. for Astrophysics (United States); S. Tolier-McKinstry, R. H. T. Wilke, Pennsylvania State Univ. (United States); W. Zhang, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States)

- 7437 1G **First results from the testing of the thin shell adaptive optic prototype for high angular resolution x-ray telescopes** [7437-45]
C. Feldman, R. Willingale, Univ. of Leicester (United Kingdom); C. Atkins, D. Brooks, Univ. College London (United Kingdom); T. Button, Univ. of Birmingham (United Kingdom); P. Doel, A. James, Univ. College London (United Kingdom); D. Rodriguez Sanmartin, Univ. of Birmingham (United Kingdom); A. Smith, Daresbury Lab. (United Kingdom); C. Theobald, S. Thompson, Univ. College London (United Kingdom); H. Wang, Diamond Light Source Ltd. (United Kingdom); D. Zhang, Univ. of Birmingham (United Kingdom)
- 7437 1H **Advances in active x-ray telescope technologies** [7437-46]
C. Atkins, P. Doel, D. Brooks, S. Thompson, Univ. College London (United Kingdom); C. Feldman, R. Willingale, Univ. of Leicester (United Kingdom); T. Button, D. Rodriguez Sanmartin, D. Zhang, Univ. of Birmingham (United Kingdom); A. James, C. Theobald, Univ. College London (United Kingdom); A. D. Smith, STFC (United Kingdom); H. Wang, Diamond Light Source (United Kingdom)
- 7437 1I **EUV imaging experiment of an adaptive optics telescope** [7437-47]
S. Kitamoto, T. Shibata, E. Takenaka, M. Yoshida, H. Murakami, Y. Shishido, N. Gotoh, K. Nagasaki, D. Takei, Rikkyo Univ. (Japan); M. Morii, Tokyo Institute of Technology (Japan)

SESSION 12 PERFORMANCE MODELING

- 7437 1J **Evaluation of epoxy for use on NuSTAR optics** [7437-48]
H. An, Columbia Univ. (United States); F. E. Christensen, Danish Technical Univ. (Denmark); M. Doll, C. J. Hailey, Columbia Univ. (United States); C. P. Jensen, Danish Technical Univ. (Denmark); J. E. Koglin, K. Mori, G. Tajiri, Columbia Univ. (United States)
- 7437 1K **Simulation of the Simbol-X telescope: imaging performance of a deformable x-ray telescope** [7437-49]
M. Chauvin, J.-P. Roques, UPS, CESR, Univ. de Toulouse (France) and UMR 5187, CNRS (France)
- 7437 1L **Analysis of the relative movement between mirrors and detectors for the next generation x-ray telescopes** [7437-50]
M. M. Civitani, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy)
- 7437 1M **Surface smoothness requirements for the mirrors of the IXO x-ray telescope** [7437-51]
D. Spiga, G. Pareschi, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy)

SESSION 13 PERFORMANCE TESTING

- 7437 1N **Performance prediction and measurement of silicon pore optics** [7437-53]
M. D. Ackermann, M. J. Collon, R. Guenther, R. Partapsing, G. Vacanti, cosine Research B.V. (Netherlands); E.-J. Buis, cosine Science & Computing B.V. (Netherlands); M. Krumrey, P. Müller, Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (Germany); M. W. Beijersbergen, cosine Research B.V. (Netherlands); M. Bavdaz, K. Wallace, European Space Agency (Netherlands)
- 7437 1O **Performance of the demonstration model of DIOS FXT** [7437-54]
Y. Tawara, I. Sakurai, T. Masuda, T. Torii, K. Matsushita, Nagoya Univ. (Japan); B. D. Ramsey, NASA Marshall Space Flight Ctr. (United States)

- 7437 1P **Recent results from hard x-ray telescope characterization at SPring-8** [7437-65]
T. Miyazawa, Y. Ogasaka, T. Iwahara, Y. Kanou, Y. Makinae, S. Sasaya, T. Ohgi, K. Matsuda, M. Sakai, D. Niki, Y. Ishida, K. Yamane, A. Furuzawa, Y. Haba, H. Kunieda, K. Yamashita, Nagoya Univ. (Japan); K. Uesugi, Y. Suzuki, Japan Synchrotron Radiation Research Institute, SPring-8 (Japan); K. Tamura, Y. Maeda, M. Ishida, Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (Japan); T. Okajima, NASA Goddard Space Flight Ctr. (United States)
- 7437 1Q **Hard x-ray reflectivity measurement of broad-band multilayer samples** [7437-61]
V. Cotroneo, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); R. Bruni, P. Gorenstein, Harvard-Smithsonian Ctr. for Astrophysics (United States); G. Pareschi, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); S. Romaine, Harvard-Smithsonian Ctr. for Astrophysics (United States); D. Spiga, INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera (Italy); Z. Zhong, Brookhaven National Lab. (United States)
- 7437 1R **Imaging performance and test of extreme ultraviolet telescope** [7437-66]
L. Yang, T. Cui, Changchun Institute of Optics, Fine Mechanics and Physics (China) and Graduate Univ. of Chinese Academy of Science (China); B. Chen, Changchun Institute of Optics, Fine Mechanics and Physics (China)
- 7437 1S **Space environment experiments of SiC/Mg multilayer for astronomical observation** [7437-64]
J. Zhu, H. Li, L. Bai, Q. Huang, M. Tan, L. Jiang, Z. Zhang, Tongji Univ. (China); L. Li, Ctr. for Space Science and Applied Research (China); H. Zhou, T. Huo, Univ. of Science and Technology of China (China); X. Wang, J. Xu, Z. Wang, L. Chen, Tongji Univ. (China)

Author Index

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- 2 Telescope Design and Optimization
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- 3 Grating Spectroscopy
John F. Seely, Naval Research Laboratory (United States)
- 4 Diffractive Optics
Webster C. Cash, Jr., University of Colorado at Boulder (United States)
- 5 Mirror Fabrication and Characterization
Marcos Bavdaz, European Space Center (Netherlands)
- 6 Mirror Fabrication and Characterization II
William W. Zhang, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center (United States)
- 7 Mirror Fabrication and Characterization III
David L. Windt, Reflective X-Ray Optics LLC (United States)
- 8 Atmospheric Cherenkov Telescopes
Brian D. Ramsey, NASA Marshall Space Flight Center (United States)
- 9 Mirror Coating
Suzanne E. Romaine, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics (United States)
- 10 Alignment and Mounting
Yuzuru Tawara, Nagoya University (Japan)
- 11 Active Optics
Finn E. Christensen, National Space Institute, DTU (Denmark)
- 12 Performance Modeling
Paul B. Reid, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics (United States)
- 13 Performance Testing
Gerald K. Skinner, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center (United States)

Introduction

The conference *Optics for EUV, X-Ray, and Gamma-Ray Astronomy IV* met August 4–6 in San Diego, California, as part of the SPIE Optics + Photonics 2009 international symposium *Optical Engineering + Applications*. As with previous conferences in this series, it provided an effective forum for discussion of recent progress in imaging and spectroscopic optics for EUV, x-ray, and gamma-ray astronomy. With over 60 papers in 13 sessions, this volume attests to the vitality of research in this field. We thank the conference committee for helping to organize the technical program and for fostering broad participation. We also appreciate the efforts of the SPIE staff in organizing the meeting and in preparing these Proceedings.

In 2009, the *International Year of Astronomy* commemorates the first astronomical observations with an optical telescope, performed 400 years ago by Galileo Galilei. The year 2009 marks significant anniversaries for x-ray astronomy as well. It is the 60th anniversary of the discovery of extraterrestrial x rays (solar corona), which was followed in 1962 by the discovery of extrasolar x rays (Scorpius X-1) and then in 1963 by the first x-ray observations (of the sun) using focussing optics. Further, 2009 is the 50th anniversary of the arrival at American Science & Engineering of Riccardo Giacconi, whose extraordinary vision and persistence fathered modern x-ray astronomy from the early rocket-borne experiments to large orbiting facilities for high-energy astrophysics. Indeed, in 2009 we also celebrate the 10th anniversaries of the Chandra X-ray Observatory and of XMM-Newton.

The Einstein Observatory was the first x-ray-astronomy satellite with a high-resolution focusing x-ray telescope. It, ROSAT, ASCA, and SAX enabled the study of diverse cosmic sources at x-ray energies, thus establishing high-energy astrophysics as a fundamental tool for studying the universe. Currently operating space observatories—Chandra (AXAF), XMM-Newton, Suzaku (Astro-E2), Swift, and Hinode (Solar-B)—demonstrate the importance of focusing optics to x-ray astronomy. Launching within the next 5 years, NuSTAR, Astro-H, and NHXM will extend the power of focused imaging into the hard-x-ray band, improving sensitivity by a couple orders of magnitude.

Collectively, these missions have appreciably advanced technologies for high-angular resolution, large collecting area, high-spectral resolution, and lightweight x-ray optical components. Requirements for the International X-ray Observatory (IXO)—a joint NASA–ESA–JAXA facility-class mission proposed for launch around 2021—are currently stimulating significant progress in developing technologies for lightweight, large-area, precision x-ray mirror systems. Future missions will require further advances to enhance such capabilities for EUV, x-ray, and gamma-ray astronomy. Furthermore, while EUV and x-ray optics continue to be an exciting

and rapidly developing field, there is growing interest in introducing focussing techniques into γ -ray astronomy.

TELESCOPE SYSTEMS (Session 1) reports on science goals, concepts, development, and implementation of high-energy telescope systems aboard future sub-orbital or space missions. Some of the papers also serve as an introduction to more detailed papers elsewhere in this volume. Among these are the paper on the IXO system studies and technology preparation and those on the hard-x-ray telescopes for Astro-H and NHXM. Other papers described telescope systems for impending missions—the FOXS solar hard-x-ray rocket experiment and the Russian–German SRG all-sky-survey—and for future missions—the EXIST black-hole finder.

TELESCOPE DESIGN AND OPTIMIZATION (Session 2) describes design studies to optimize the performance of x-ray telescopes. For impending missions—such as NuSTAR—the design is now complete and implementation is in progress. For planned missions—such as IXO—trades continue to optimize the design and approach that satisfy science requirements within resource constraints. For future missions, design studies range from optimizing the optical prescription for wide-field x-ray telescopes—such as WFXT—to dealing with formation-flight issues.

GRATING SPECTROSCOPY (Session 3) addresses objective gratings for dispersive high-resolution x-ray spectroscopy. The papers propose alternatives to the transmission and in-plane reflection gratings used on previous missions—e.g., Chandra and XMM-Newton, respectively. One is the critical-angle transmission (CAT) grating; the other is the off-plane reflection grating.

DIFFRACTIVE OPTICS (Session 4) relates to the development of (transmission) lenses based upon either (phase) Fresnel zone plates or (Laue-configuration) Bragg diffraction in mosaic crystals. Such techniques enable focusing (concentration or imaging) at much higher energies than is feasible with grazing-incidence optics. Hence, they offer the prospect of focused imaging for γ -ray astronomy, which would dramatically improve sensitivity. In addition, variants of this approach can provide diffractive beam combiners for x-ray interferometry.

MIRROR FABRICATION AND CHARACTERIZATION I–III (Sessions 5–7) are all devoted to technologies for fabricating and characterizing lightweight, precision x-ray mirrors—mainly motivated by IXO's demanding requirements for high throughput and $<5''$ resolution. In particular, Session 5 reports on technology development of thermally slumped glass mirrors (the NASA baseline for IXO), which is used for NuSTAR's 45" mirror modules and being improved in the US and Europe, toward IXO's 5" systems-level requirement. Session 6 covers technology development of silicon pore optics (the ESA baseline for IXO), which is being actively pursued by European industry under ESTEC's guidance. Session 7 addresses technologies for cost-effective manufacturing of durable, precisely figured mandrels for mirror replication—by thermal slumping, electroforming, or other process. The session

also touches upon polishing and maintaining supersmooth surfaces, which some applications—especially, multilayer-coated hard-x-ray optics—require.

ATMOSPHERIC CHERENKOV TELESCOPES (Session 8), for the first time, reports on visible-light (normal-incidence) mirrors for ground-based telescopes used to detect very-high-energy (≈ 0.1 –100 TeV) γ rays from cosmic sources—via Cherenkov radiation from γ -ray induced electromagnetic showers in the atmosphere. Ground-based γ -ray astronomy requires a next-generation telescope array—such as the proposed (European) CTA or (US) AGIS—comprising numerous telescopes with a very large total collecting area (10,000 m²), to obtain the desired sensitivity and source-location accuracy. The telescopes need not have a resolution better than 1' or so, but must be very durable and be manufactured at a much lower cost per unit area than traditional ground-based observatories. Replicated segmented mirrors, fabricated using processes like those being developed for x-ray astronomy, can fulfil this requirement for low areal cost.

MIRROR COATING (Session 9) concerns the coating of EUV mirrors and soft- and hard-X-ray mirrors, with primary emphasis on multilayer coatings—both periodic for normal incidence and graded for grazing incidence. Other topics covered in the session include characterization of coated surfaces, patterned coatings for silicon-pore optics, and differential deposition to correct figure errors.

ALIGNMENT AND MOUNTING (Session 10) covers technical issues in alignment, mounting, and integration of lightweight x-ray mirrors into a mirror module or an assembly. Naturally, much of the development effort is directed toward the demanding requirements of IXO, which is to utilize either silicon-pore optics (ESA baseline) or slumped-glass mirrors (NASA baseline). However, accurate alignment and minimal-distortion mounting are critical issues for all lightweight precision optical systems.

ACTIVE OPTICS (Session 11) reports on the growing interest in active controlled deformation of mirrors to correct figure errors, thus improving the angular resolution for EUV and x-ray telescopes. This method, now widely used for ground-based optical telescopes and for focusing synchrotron-generated x rays, is particularly demanding for the mass-constrained mirror systems needed for space observatories. For highly nested grazing-incidence mirror assemblies, applying this approach is even more challenging: lacking room for a reaction structure, bimorph deformation through zoned piezo-electric coatings seems the most promising approach.

PERFORMANCE MODELING (Session 12) and PERFORMANCE TESTING (Session 13) deal with the identification of effects that affect the performance of an optical system and relevant modelling, simulations (including ray traces), and/or testing to assess the impact of these effects or to predict performance. Several papers address issues such as contamination, epoxy materials and application, (static

and dynamic) optical-bench deformation, surface smoothness, and space-environment degradation of multilayer coatings. Others reported the results of x-ray imaging performance predictions and/or testing of specific mirror modules or telescopes.

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