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Front Matter: Volume 8150

, "Front Matter: Volume 8150," Proc. SPIE 8150, Cryogenic Optical Systems and Instruments XIII, 815001 (10 October 2011); doi: 10.1117/12.914670

SPIE.

Event: SPIE Optical Engineering + Applications, 2011, San Diego, California, United States

PROCEEDINGS OF SPIE

Cryogenic Optical Systems and Instruments XIII

**James B. Heaney
E. Todd Kvamme**
Editors

**24–25 August 2011
San Diego, California, United States**

Sponsored and Published by
SPIE

Volume 8150

Proceedings of SPIE, 0277-786X, v. 8150

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Please use the following format to cite material from this book:

Author(s), "Title of Paper," in *Cryogenic Optical Systems and Instruments XIII*, edited by James B. Heaney, E. Todd Kvamme, Proceedings of SPIE Vol. 8150 (SPIE, Bellingham, WA, 2011) Article CID Number.

ISSN 0277-786X

ISBN 9780819487605

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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Printed in the United States of America.

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Introduction

This volume contains the Proceedings of our 14th Cryogenic Optical Systems and Instrumentation Conference that was held in San Diego, 21-25 August 2011. Previous books in this series include SPIE volumes 509 (1984), 619 (1986), 973 (1988), 1340 (1990), 1765 (1992), 2227 (1994), 2814 (1996), 3435 (1998), 4131 (2000), 4822 (2002), 5172 (2003), 5904 (2005), 6692 (2007), and 7439 (2009). Taken together with this most recent volume (8150), these yellow-covered Proceedings are a veritable library documenting more than a quarter century of technological advances related to the design, development, testing, and performance of optical components and instruments and the mechanisms and techniques used to cool and maintain them at cryogenic temperatures. The international community is well represented in their contents.

From the beginning, the needs of the aerospace community have had a formative influence on the evolution of this technology. Space satellite missions such as UARS, COBE, SIRTf (Spitzer), Cassini, WMAP, the evolving JWST and many others have contained instrumentation that was required to operate in some cases at temperatures near absolute zero. Their design, testing and performance evaluation challenged their cryogenic engineering and forced an advancement of the state-of-the-art. In our most recent conferences dating back to 2005, NASA's JWST Mission, with its joint NASA/ESA instrumentation suite, has contributed significantly to the contents of volumes 5904, 6692, 7439 and this current volume. A statement of the challenges confronted and the clever engineering remedies applied can be found in the papers contained in their Proceedings. In our age when digital publishing and record archiving have forced institutions of all types to re-evaluate their methods of capturing institutional knowledge, we are privileged with these Proceedings to be part of the SPIE's digital library that can make the fruit of our labor permanently and readily available to all.

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E. Todd Kvamme