

MIXING 16: The European Conference on Mixing visits “*La Ville Rose*”

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The European Conference on Mixing is an international congress organized by the Working Party on Mixing from the European Federation of Chemical Engineering. For the 16th meeting, more than 180 academic and industrial delegates from over 30 countries came together in early September last year, in the beautiful setting of Toulouse.

The event was hosted in “Les Abattoirs”, a historical building, now a museum of modern and contemporary art in the centre of Toulouse, or “*La Ville Rose*” (the pink city). 48 oral presentations and more than 80 poster presentations were given.

The conference was opened by the chair, Dr. Joelle Aubin (University of Toulouse) and the different presenters that took to the stage covered a comprehensive range of mixing topics of relevance to both the chemical and biochemical industries. The breadth of the scientific program thus appealed to many different disciplines; experimental studies using different techniques (optical, tomographic, torque, ultrasound, fluorescence) were complemented by computational studies (ranging from Finite Volume to Lattice-Boltzmann methods) with the common objective of developing multi-scale approaches for the understanding of mixing dynamics.

The talks covered the most challenging aspects of mixing from both industrial and academic points of view. Amongst the highlights were the invited key-note speakers: Dr Richard Grenville (Philadelphia Mixing Solutions), who discussed the issues of blending in large scale oil storage tanks; Dr. Montante (University of Bologna) and Dr. Bertrand (Polytechnique Montréal) engaged the audience covering both experimental and computational studies on solid-liquid mixing; multiphase systems were covered in the presentation of Dr. Kraume (Technical University of Berlin), while Dr. Ducci, from University College of London (UCL), covered the characterization of flow and mixing across a variety of bioreactor platforms using advanced measurement techniques and innovative data processing methods.



Figure 1. View of the conference auditorium

During the event, Dr. Federico Alberini, from the University of Birmingham, was awarded the EFCE Young Researcher Award in Mixing 2018 by the EFCE President Prof. Jerzy Bąldyga

(Warsaw University of Technology), for his outstanding contribution to research in the field. Dr. Alberini took to the stand to give a very inclusive seminar about his wide field of scientific activity. The awards ceremony also notably included an EFCE 2018 Lifetime Recognition award in Mixing for Professor Michael Yianneskis (UCL), whose fluid mixing research contributions begun some 30 years ago, paving the way to the advancement of mixing science, continuing on today with his esteemed colleagues, collaborators and students.

The conference brought together exceptional researchers from a variety of different fields and institutions across the globe and incited many intellectual exchanges and the start of promising collaborations. Besides the oral presentations given, the quality of the posters was very high. The poster sessions offering the chance for networking amongst the splendid surroundings in the South of France late summer evenings.

Events like this represent unique opportunities for young researchers to access the very open and international community of mixing; it was inspiring to see diverse groups in enthusiastic discussions where advice and encouragement was given by expert professors to researchers at the early stages of their careers.

As researchers approaching the end of doctorate programs, the authors can only emphasize that attending this conference was beneficial for them, both from a technical and interpersonal point of view. As a young researcher it is indeed humbling and exhilarating to meet the experts whom your work is based upon and often referenced in a bibliography! It is with wholehearted encouragement the authors recommend all researchers, young and established, to take part in such events (Mixing17 will be held in Porto in 2021).

The mixing community has long proven to be very welcoming and encouraging to anyone who approaches it, so the message is: get mixed up!