

The theme of this year's symposium, "Instruments at Crossroads", took on many different shapes. It seemed particularly suited to our host location, Havana, which has been operating at crossroads ever since its foundation by the Spanish exactly 500 years ago. We were received at two beautiful historic locations, the University of Havana founded 290 years ago, and the spectacular lecture theatre at the National Museum of Fine Arts (Universal collections). The scientific program included papers, pitches and posters about scientific instruments from all continents and roughly one millennium, taking us from medieval astrolabes to contemporary Cuban guerilla science (doing science under tropical and strained financial conditions). It is this eclectic mix of "old" and "new", and everything in-between provided the stage for the symposium to explore the many more crossroads instruments, instrument collections, scientists and historians of science can find themselves in.

Although the focus was mainly on the last two centuries, there was sufficient variation within the thematic sessions to make them attractive to everyone. Especially interesting were the talks about the recent developments of the scientific collections of our host country and host institution and the excursions to local collections and museums, with access to places where you would not normally be able to enter. Being in Cuba was a rare chance to meet local academics and enthusiasts of the history of instrumentation who would not be able to attend the other SIC symposiums.

Our personal highlights were the night visit to the Astronomical Observatory of the University of Havana, where several telescopes were pointed to Jupiter and Saturn for a private observation session. The visit to the Jose Marti High School that opened its doors of their physics laboratories for us was certainly another highlight of our visit to Cuba. It gave us a unique chance to see their collections as well as the spectacular architecture of the school. Moreover, it provided insight on the school system in Cuba.

The pitch sessions, which was introduced only last year to the SIC symposiums, was particularly fruitful for exchange of ideas and information among SIC members. Lunch and sessions breaks were equally productive for scholarly discussions. In general, whenever instruments were present, small groups formed immediately for examination and discussion. This was wonderful to watch and to participate in. The open, welcoming and supportive atmosphere was extremely fruitful. The last day of the symposium was also the Day for the Defends of the Revolution and as Havanans gathered to celebrate this national holiday in numerous street parties, we joined the festival mood by celebrating the 2019 SIC gathering with the symposium dinner. Driving along the promenade while the sky was turning lilac in an old convertible car after an interesting and intense week in Havana will certainly stay with us for a very long time.

We are grateful for the travel grant that enabled us to attend the 38th SIC symposium in Havana and happy to be part of the community. See you next year!

Laura Volkmer, Floor Koeleman, Michelle Mercier, and Taha Yasin Arslan