



Optics in 2004

Guest Editors: Bob D. Guenther

David Hardwick, Changsheng Li and R. John Koschel

The December *Optics & Photonics News* (OPN) is a special issue that highlights the most exciting research to emerge in the preceding 12 months in the fast-paced world of optics.

“Optics in 2004” offers readers a unique opportunity to access, in a single source, descriptions of cutting-edge optics research reported in the peer-reviewed press. The areas covered in this year’s special issue range from semiconductor optics to nanophotonics and from optical engineering to ultrafast technology. This year’s issue comprises 31 summaries that represent the work of 155 authors.

A record number of research groups submitted summaries to “Optics in 2004”: there were 104 submissions this year, representing the work of 414 authors. This was a significant increase over the total of 61 submissions to “Optics in 2003.”

This year as in previous ones, submissions were judged on the basis of the following requirements:

- the accomplishments described had to have been published in a refereed journal in the year prior to publication in OPN;
- the work had to be illustrated in a clear, concise manner, readily accessible to the at-large optics community.

In addition, the authors were asked to describe the topical area as a whole and to detail the importance of their work in that context.

Although OPN makes every effort to ensure that achievements in all optics subfields are recognized, there are no requirements in the selection process for inclusion of specific topical areas. When a large number of submissions is received for a specific area, it is taken as evidence that the topic has been fertile ground for activity and research. OPN strives to ensure that engineering, science and technology are all represented. The number of papers accepted overall is limited by space.

OPN and OSA would like to thank the hundreds of researchers from around the world who submitted summaries of their peer-reviewed articles to “Optics in 2004.”

OSA and the OPN staff would like to take this opportunity to express their heartfelt thanks to the panel of OPN Editorial Advisory Committee members who vetted submissions to “Optics in 2004”: Bob D. Guenther (Optics in 2004 Panel Chair), Physics Department, Duke University; David Hardwick, Confluent Photonics Corporation; Changsheng Li, Hong Kong Polytechnic University; R. John Koschel, General Dynamics C4 Systems.

(Background image) Each fiber in the spectrometric fabric is a photodetector sensitive to external illumination at a particular wavelength range. Credit: Greg Hren Photography-RLE/Fink Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. [From *Nature* **431**, 826-9, Oct. 2004.]