

The Joint Imaging and Applied Optics and the Optical Sensors and Sensing Congresses

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The Imaging and Applied Optics Congress and the Optical Sensors and Sensing Congress is a joint conference organized by OPTICA (formerly OSA). This event brings together academics, industrial, and defense research perspectives to provide a comprehensive view of the latest developments, as well as the application of these technologies to important industrial, military, and medical challenges.

The two congresses took place at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in beautiful Vancouver, Canada, and presented together in a hybrid format comprised of in-person and virtual options. There were two technical sessions from a combined nine topical meetings—which exemplifies the topical synergies that exist between optical imaging and optical sensing. A combined exhibition and increased special events provide opportunities to gain experience from and network with a significantly larger community of scientists and industry professionals.

I was honored to be invited and speak about my research that involves 3D reconstruction using an event camera, which is an incredible piece of technology with great applications in fields such as robotics, drones, autonomous driving, fluid dynamics and many more. I was asked by the organizers to upload my presentation 24 hours prior and was given a chance to practice in an empty conference room. The organizers made sure that presenters were given all the amenities needed, and so I felt well prepared. My presentation was well received, generating genuine interest that may lead to future collaborations.

The conference was well organized, with some great speakers from leading companies and universities, spacious rooms where social distancing is possible, a thought-out program with an accompanying native app that helps organize your day's schedule, and interesting poster sessions. Although I can understand the advantages of having a conference in a hybrid format, I feel the organizers should have considered keeping it in-person only, as the attendance was a lot smaller than usual, and the online sessions were less engaging. A good compromise could be to dedicate just a day or two to the online sessions, while the rest stay in-person.

I would definitely recommend anyone who is involved in optics research to consider going to any of OPTICA's next events.

I would also like to thank the Israeli Smart Transportation Research Center from the bottom of my heart. Thanks to them I was able to be part of this important conference, that gave me new tools and understanding to push my research forward.