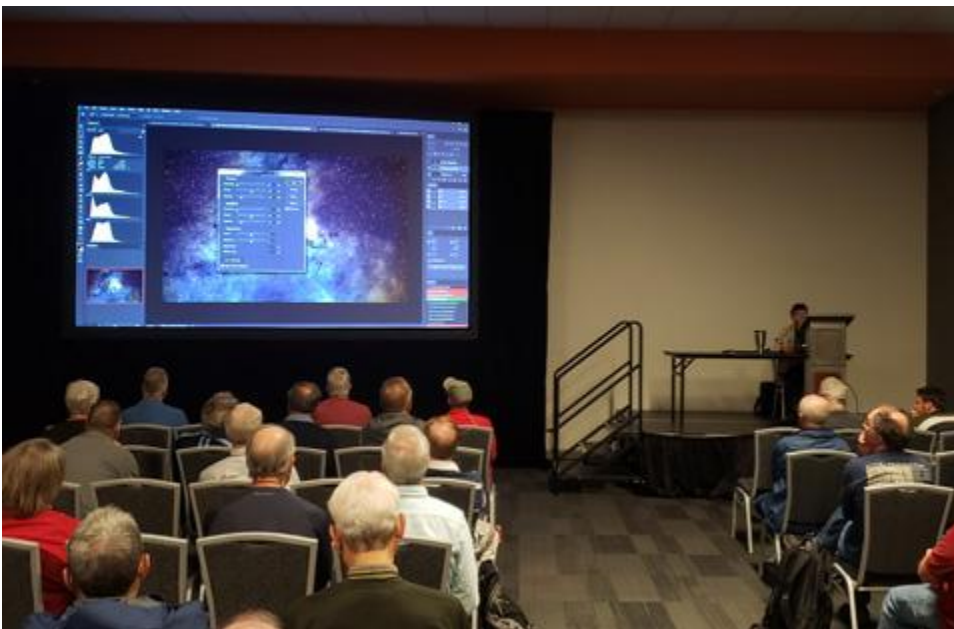


Report from the 2019 Advanced Imaging Conference

By: [Sean Walker](#) | November 21, 2019

S&T Associate Editor Sean Walker gives a rundown of last week's astro-imaging conference.

Astrophotography enthusiasts gathered at the San Jose Convention Center in California for the biennial [Advanced Imaging Conference](#) (AIC), which ran from November 15th through the 17th. The event, sponsored by various companies and groups involved with amateur and professional astronomy, featured presentations on all aspects of astrophotography from some of the most well-known imagers from around the globe.



Terry Hancock of [Grand Mesa Observatory](#) demonstrates his processing technique.

With a record attendance of nearly 500, the show featured something for virtually every aspect of astro-imaging, ranging from techniques to improve data collection to processing demonstrations using popular software packages. Luminaries including [Rogelio Bernal Andreo](#), [Adam Block](#), [Ron Brecher](#), and [Kerry-Ann Lecky Hepburn](#) demonstrated some of the work that goes into their eye-catching imagery. While I tried to attend as many talks as I could, three or four were often occurring simultaneously. Fortunately, most presenters gave repeat performances, so attendees had a chance to see everything.



Stephen Bisque readies [Software Bisque's](#) new Paramount Apollo Direct Drive Mount.

The AIC also hosts a large showroom floor with manufacturers displaying the latest in robotic telescope mounts, astrographs, and astro-cameras of all makes and models.

The talk of the town this year revolved around the impending [end of CCD manufacturing, as well as the maturing state of CMOS technology](#). Many manufacturers on hand acknowledged the challenges posed by this development, which was not completely unexpected. They have been preparing for it for some time.

In fact, several new astronomical cameras from [Atik Cameras](#), [Diffraction Limited](#), [Finger Lakes Instrumentation](#), and [QHYCCD](#) shown this weekend incorporate the latest CMOS sensors. Several new innovations debuted at the show, including a host of new gear from [Software Bisque](#), including the [Paramount Apollo Direct Drive mount](#), and [TheSky Fusion](#) integrated control system. Other neat gadgets that caught my eye included a new spectrograph from [Starlight Xpress](#) and the [Stellina](#) "observation station" (look for our review in the March 2020 issue).

Keynote speaker Professor Ann Zabludoff (University of Arizona), encouraged attendees to get involved with an upcoming program to work with professional observatories to rapidly discover the optical counterparts of gravitational wave events. A quick response to an alert is crucial to understanding the physics behind the progenitors of gravitational waves, and her group is hoping to enlist interested advanced imagers worldwide.



Organizer Ken Crawford presents R. Jay Gabany with the Hubble Award.

The organizers of AIC presented their Hubble Award for significant contribution to the astrophotography community this year to past president R. Jay GaBany for his image-processing innovations and his ongoing pro/am work. GaBany was instrumental in the discovery of galactic star-streams produced when a galaxy cannibalizes its smaller satellites.

Attendee Arora Deepanshu was the lucky winner of the door prize, an L-350 Direct Drive Mount provided by event sponsor PlaneWave Instruments.

About Sean Walker

S&T Associate Editor Sean Walker joined the staff of Sky Publishing in 2000 and specializes in astrophotography, solar system observing, and astronomy gear.

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