

Microsymposium

MS68.O01

Crystallography at your door

A. Bacchi¹, N. Corriero⁵, A. Guerri², A. Lenco⁴, C. Massera¹, F. Punzo³

¹University of Parma, Dipartimento di Chimica, Parma, Italy, ²University of Florence, Dipartimento di Chimica, Florence, Italy, ³University of Catania, Dipartimento di Scienze del Farmaco - Div. Chimica, Catania, Italy, ⁴CNR-ICCOM, CNR, Florence, Italy, ⁵CNR-IC, CNR, Bari, Italy

The idea at the basis of the project 'Crystallography at your door' is to associate crystallography with cultural, artistic, and natural beauty by creating a virtual list of 'Crystallographic sites in Italy'. One of the challenges that science in general has to face is to increase awareness of the impact that research has on daily life, culture and history. In addition, crystallography is not a discipline generally known to public, and while the words chemistry, physics, biology immediately bring to people at least some memories of lessons at high schools, crystallography remains an obscure term. However the natural beauty of crystals related to their regular shape, symmetry, colours has since the dawn of humankind fascinated people; even nowadays concepts related to crystals are widely used in marketing to convey to the buyers the idea of cleanliness, purity and freshness of many products, that are not necessarily related to crystalline materials. On the wave of IYCr2014 the Italian Crystallographic Association promotes initiatives to bring people closer to crystallography [1]; one of these is aimed at stimulating people to look around for places where crystallography may be seen 'in action' in all its facets: mines, saltworks, historical places related to the work of crystallographers, museums, and most of all buildings or masterpieces of art where symmetry has been exploited to create beauty. Italy has a unique strength in the artistic and cultural heritage fields; in the last years the public awareness towards the richness of Italy in this area has been growing and has being fostered by media and public institutions. A list of 'italian crystallographic sites' has been compiled and is being continuously extended on the IYCr2014 italian website[1]; it will be advertised at tourist offices and an applet for smartphones will be implemented.

[1] www.iycr2014.it

Keywords: outreach, iycr2014, cultural heritage