

Conference Report

Christmas Symposium Basel, December 7, 2018

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Introduction

Since 2013, the Christmas Symposium has been organized by the PCC (PhD Chemistry Community) of the Department of Chemistry at the University of Basel. It enriches the research community with interesting talks of numerous professors from abroad as well as offers an opportunity for postdocs, who envision to pursue an academic career path, to present their research and recent successes.

The PhD Chemistry Community (PCC)

The PCC consists of graduate students who aim, besides performing their own research, to enhance the collaboration both of internal and external researchers and promote community spirit, by organizing social and academic events across the department, as for example symposia, research seminars and ski weekends.



Fig. 1. Jaicy Vallapurackal announces the talk of Prof. Dr. Harald Schwalbe.

The Christmas Symposium 2018

In 2018, the audience at the University of Basel was delighted to hear five highly interesting talks, given by three established full professors as well as by two postdocs, who envision to follow an academic career. The symposium consisted of two research talk sessions, a poster session combined with a coffee and snack break and a Fondue dinner. The two talk sessions were chaired by Jaicy Vallapurackal and Fadri Christoffel.

Prof. Dr. **Nico Bruns** (University of Strathclyde) presented bio-inspired polymer nanosystems that can not only be used for reaction cascades driven by light, mechanical force or chemical

stimuli, but also to influence enzymatic radical polymerizations in unprecedented ways.

Dr. **Christopher B. Larsen** (University of Basel) introduced the audience to a novel system that enables circular electron-transfer as a proof-of-concept for single molecular electronics.

Prof. Dr. **Harald Schwalbe** (Goethe University Frankfurt) dived into the astonishing and highly interesting field of transcriptional riboswitches, that exhibit regulation based on kinetic interference with transcription progression.

Dr. **Alexandria Liang** (University of Basel) presented approaches towards a more robust scaffold of artificial metalloenzymes and its subsequent use in ring-closing metathesis reactions.

Prof. Dr. **Jonathan Clayden** (University of Bristol) presented biomimetic reactivity paths exploiting conformational control for the synthesis of valuable targets, e.g. hindered amines and amino acids.



Fig. 2. Lively academic exchange during the poster session.

Poster Session and Prizes

During the poster session, lively discussions about research and associated subjects were held, while enjoying some snacks and coffee. The best posters were elected by a jury consisting of Prof. Dr. **Dennis Gillingham**, Prof. Dr. **Cornelia G. Palivan** and Prof. Dr. **Oliver Wenger**. The winners were: **Vincent Fäseke**, **Sagana Thamboo** and **Jaicy Vallapurackal**. Following the talks, a mulled wine apéro was offered to stimulate the mood for the Fondue dinner, which was accompanied by joyful and fruitful discussions.

The Department of Chemistry at the University of Basel is gratefully acknowledged for their generous financial support and we thank all poster presenters for their interesting scientific contribution and the speakers for their inspiring research presentations.

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