

COMMISSION 33

STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS OF THE GALACTIC SYSTEM

*STRUCTURE ET DYNAMIQUE DU
SYSTÈME GALACTIQUE*

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1. Introduction

Commission 33 provides a forum for astronomers studying the structure and dynamics of the Milky Way Galaxy, a unique laboratory for exploring the stellar and gaseous components of galaxies and the processes by which they form and evolve.

2. Symposia and reviews

Sponsoring IAU Symposia is one of the main activities of the Commission. Since the General Assembly in Prague in 2006, Commission 33 has supported the following IAU meetings:

- IAU Symposium No. 241, *Stellar Populations as Building Blocks of Galaxies*, La Palma, Spain, December 2006
- IAU Symposium No. 245, *Formation and Evolution of Galaxy Bulges*, Oxford, UK, July 2007
- IAU Symposium No. 246, *Dynamical Evolution of Dense Stellar Systems*, Capri, Italy, September 2007
- IAU Symposium No. 254, *The Galactic Disk in Cosmological Context*, Copenhagen, Denmark, June 2008
- IAU Symposium No. 258, *The Ages of Stars*, Baltimore, MD, USA, October 2008
- IAU Symposium No. 261, *Relativity in Fundamental Astronomy - Dynamics, Reference Frames and Data Analysis*, Virginia Beach, USA, April 2009
- IAU Symposium No. 262, *Stellar Populations – Planning for the Next Decade*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, August 2009
- IAU Symposium No. 266, *Star Clusters – Basic Building Blocks throughout Time and Space*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, August 2009

In addition to the reviews presented in the proceedings of these conferences, Helmi's review on the Galactic Halo (2008, *A&ARv* 15, 145) is worth noting.

3. Closing remarks

In addition to the Symposia, Commission 33 has been supporting a Joint Discussion on *Modeling the Milky Way in the Era of Gaia*, and a Special Session on *The Galactic Plane - in Depth and Across the Spectrum*, both to be held during the IAU XXVII General Assembly in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2009. The topics of these two events show the enormous progress we may expect in Milky Way studies over the next years, due to on-going or planned new surveys of unprecedented depth and sky coverage across the entire wavelength spectrum, culminating in the planned *Gaia* mission, and their modeling and theoretical analysis. Further information relevant to the Commission can be found on the Commission web page <www.mpe.mpg.de/IAU_Comm33/>.

Ortwin Gerhard
president of the Commission