

Energy Transition Focus Topic

Room A212 - Session TL+2D+HC+SS-MoA

Surface Reaction Mechanisms in Energy Conversion (ALL INVITED SESSION)

Moderators: Marie Turano, Loyola University Chicago, Sarah Zaccarine, Colorado School of Mines

1:40pm **TL+2D+HC+SS-MoA1 Selective Photo-driven Organic Reactions on the Surfaces of Colloidal Quantum Dots**, Y. Jiang, K. McClelland, C. Rogers, Emily Weiss, Northwestern University **INVITED**

Colloidal quantum dots present a unique opportunity not only to power chemical reactions with sunlight but to control those chemical reactions through various templating strategies. This talk will explore demonstrations of chemo-, regio-, and stereoselective reactions photocatalyzed by quantum dots.

2:20pm **TL+2D+HC+SS-MoA3 Single-Atom Alloy Catalysts: Born in a Vacuum, Tested in Reactors, and Understood In Silico**, Charles Sykes, Tufts University **INVITED**

In this talk I will discuss a new class of metallic alloy catalysts called *Single Atom Alloys* in which precious, reactive metals are utilized at the ultimate limit of efficiency.¹⁻⁵ These catalysts were discovered by combining atomic-scale scanning probes with more traditional approaches to study surface-catalyzed chemical reactions. This research provided links between the atomic scale surface structure and reactivity which are key to understanding and ultimately controlling important catalytic processes. Over the last five years the concepts derived from our surface science and theoretical calculations have been used to design *Single Atom Alloy* nanoparticle catalysts that can perform industrially relevant reactions at realistic reaction conditions in collaboration with Maria Flytzani-Stephanopoulos at Tufts. For example, alloying elements like platinum and palladium with cheaper, less reactive host metals like copper enables 1) dramatic cost savings in catalyst manufacture, 2) more selective chemical reactions, 3) reduced susceptibility to CO poisoning, and 4) higher resistance to deactivation by coking. I go on to describe very recent theory work by collaborators Stamatakis and Michaelides at UCL that predicts reactivity trends of 16 different *Single Atom Alloy* combinations for important reaction steps like activation of H-H, C-H, N-H, O-H and C=O bonds. This project illustrates that the field of surface science is now at the point where it plays a critical role in the design of new heterogeneous catalysts.

References:

- [1] Kyriakou et al. *Science* **335**, 1209 (2012).
- [2] Marcinkowski et al. *Nature Materials* **12**, 523 (2013).
- [3] Lucci et al. *Nature Communications* **6**, 8550 (2015).
- [4] Liu et al. *JACS* **138**, 6396 (2016).
- [5] Marcinkowski et al. *Nature Chemistry* **10**, 325 (2018).

3:00pm **TL+2D+HC+SS-MoA5 Understanding Fundamental Energy Conversion Mechanisms: How Surface Science Can Help**, Ulrike Diebold, Institute of Applied Physics, TU Wien, Austria **INVITED**

As we move to a more sustainable society, current energy conversion schemes need to be improved and novel ones designed. The relevant charge transfer processes and chemical transformations all occur at interfaces, so insights into fundamental mechanisms are needed to provide a scientific basis for these developments.

Using the frontier tools of surface science, I will discuss how we can directly inspect charge transfer to molecules, investigate the influence of the local environment on the reactivity of active sites, or probe the acidity of individual hydroxyls. Together with first-principles computations such experiments give crisp and clear insights into surface processes. I will also discuss the steps that are necessary to transfer the knowledge gained from model systems to more complex environments.

4:00pm **TL+2D+HC+SS-MoA8 Atomically-defined Model Interfaces in Energy-related Catalysis, Electrochemistry, and Photoelectrochemistry**, Jörg Libuda, University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany **INVITED**

The transformation between chemical energy, solar energy, and electrical energy occurs at interfaces. Therefore, functional interfaces are the key to the development of new materials in energy technology and energy-related catalysis. In our work, we explore model systems, which provide

detailed insight into the chemistry and physics at such functional interfaces. Complex, yet atomically-defined model systems are studied both under 'ideal' surface science conditions and under 'real' conditions, i.e., in contact with gases, liquids, in electrochemical, and in photoelectrochemical environments. We illustrate the approach in three examples from our recent research.[1-5]

First, we consider new noble-metal-efficient catalysts for fuel cell applications.[1] We show that precious noble metals such as Pt can be anchored to nanostructured oxide supports. The resulting materials show very high noble metal efficiency and high stability. Surface science studies on model catalysts provide insight into the functionality of these systems. Electronic metal support interactions modify the reactivity of the catalytic surfaces but also stabilize sub-nanometer-sized Pt nanoparticles against sintering and deactivation.

Secondly, we report on the development of atomically defined model systems for oxide-based electrocatalysts, which can be studied under true operation conditions, i.e., in liquid environments and under potential control. We describe how such model electrodes are prepared by surface science methods and, subsequently, are studied in liquid electrolytes preserving their atomic structure. We investigate the role of particle size effects and identify the origin of metal-support interactions.

In the third part, we scrutinize the role of organic-oxide hybrid interfaces in energy transformation. Particularly fascinating are organic layers of molecular photoswitches, which provide an extremely simple solution for solar energy conversion and storage. We show that it is possible to assemble fully operational solar-energy-storing hybrid interfaces by anchoring tailor-made norbornadiene photoswitches to atomically defined oxides. Interestingly, the activation barrier for energy release in these systems is not affected by the anchoring reaction. Finally, we demonstrate that solar energy storage and release in such systems can also be controlled electrochemically with high reversibility.

- [1] A. Bruix, et al., *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*, **53**, 10525 (2014)
- [2] Y. Lykhach, et al., *Nat. Mater.* **15**, 284 (2016)
- [3] O. Brummel et al., *ChemSusChem* **9**, 1424 (2016)
- [4] O. Brummel et al., *J. Phys. Chem. Lett.*, **8**, 2819 (2017)
- [5] F. Faisal et al., *Nat. Mater.*, **17** 592 (2018)

4:40pm **TL+2D+HC+SS-MoA10 Controlling Ultrafast Photochemical Reactions in Photocatalysis**, Annemarie Huijser, University of Twente, The Netherlands **INVITED**

The transition from fossil to renewable energy is one of the most important challenges of our society. Solar devices are widely considered as a highly promising option, as the energy provided by the sun to the earth by far exceeds global needs. We are investigating the use of nanostructured materials for application in solar energy conversion. The overall efficiency relies on the complex interplay of many elementary process, occurring at different time scales and also dependent on the nanostructure. In this presentation I will show how a combination of methods for ultrafast spectroscopy can shed light on the nature of photoinduced processes and provide mechanistic information valuable for the design of novel materials.

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