



The 74th IIW Annual Assembly and International Conference: Revisiting the virtual online concept

With the continuing worldwide COVID-19 pandemic the International Institute of Welding (IIW) took the decision to reformat, for the second consecutive year, the face-to-face Annual Assembly of 50 Member Countries which was planned for Genoa, Italy from 7 to 21 July 2021. IIW revisited the concept of an online Annual Assembly based on the experience and feedback gathered at the 2020 virtual event. At a glance the online event, held on the dates originally planned, involved over 10 IIW Working Units and included an International Conference and social events, with steady participation of over 700 individuals from Member Countries around the world over the 10-day period.

A professional event organiser was selected, with the brief to create an event which ensured a participation experience as close as possible to a face-to-face Annual Assembly and International Conference. A full range of online IIW activities and social engagements ensured the safety of all, participating from home or in their offices.

New technology was used to hold meetings, allowing real-time interaction amongst participants so everyone could freely exchange views and opinions and contribute to discussions.

In Summary

- Meetings of IIW Technical Working Units and the International Authorisation Board (IAB) for qualification and certification took place 12-17 July
- Up to 10 sessions were offered each day from Monday to Saturday, allowing participants to virtually jump from one session to another and participate in different Working Units
- Administrative Units also met 19-21 July
- All meetings were held between 13:00 and 16:00 Central European Summer Time (CEST) to best accommodate participants' home time zones
- The IIW International Conference titled 'Artificial intelligence to innovate welding and joining' was held on 8 July with outstanding experts presenting the results of their scientific work and study, and more than 200 attendees online and others accessing the recording on-demand
- Social events included the IIW Opening and Awards Ceremony following the IIW General Assembly on 7 July, Young Professionals Ice Breaking event and Annual Assembly Closing Ceremony
- Virtual display booths were created for sponsors, including pre-recorded videos, presentations and displays of products, and a live chat feature to facilitate their interaction with the audience
- The Welded art exhibition displayed works from around the world and explained the perspectives on welding of 33 artists

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Running the Event

The online Annual Assembly and International Conference was hosted directly by IIW under the management of the IIW CEO and with the support of the IIW Secretariat and IAB Management Team.

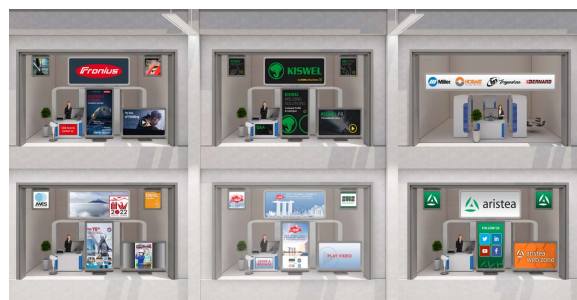
Registration started on 1 June and the virtual conference centre was opened on 7 July, facilitating the participation of over 700 people.



The virtual conference centre for the 74th IIW Annual Assembly and International Conference



The virtual foyer at the 74th IIW Annual Assembly



The sponsors' area at the virtual conference centre for the 74th IIW Annual Assembly

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Access to meeting rooms and exhibitions



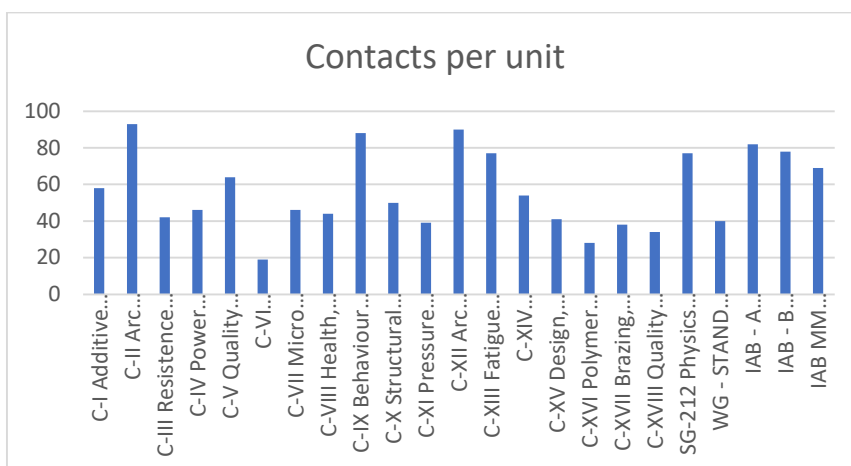
The virtual lounge at the 74th IIW Annual Assembly

The event was held with the support of the following sponsors:

- Kiswel Ltd
- Fronius International GmbH
- Miller Electric LLC

At the close of the event, IIW is proud to announce that the virtual online Annual Assembly and International Conference was a great success with participation far exceeding expectations and significant and prolific technical output:

- 44 IIW Member Countries represented
- 70 sessions of different Working Units
- 186 hours of meetings in 62 sessions
- 210 scientific papers, standards and IIW position, best practice and guideline documents presented, discussed and developed.
- 19 – 93 participants per session



Number of attendees joining each IIW Working Unit

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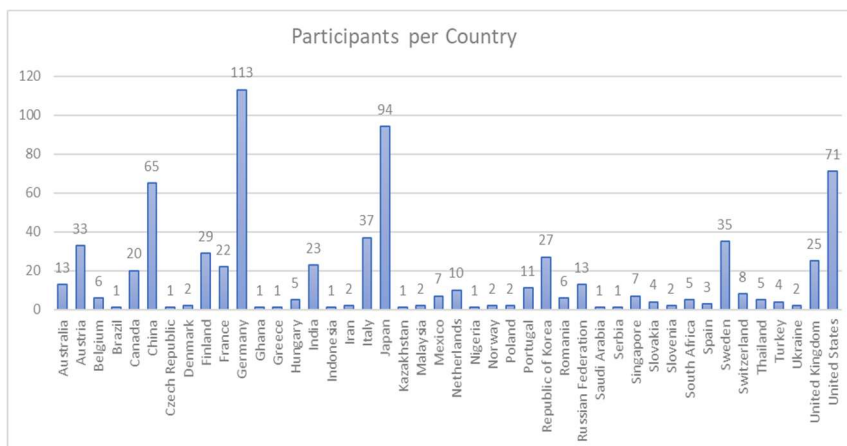
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As usual, participants were grouped in delegations managed by the participating IIW Member Countries and their national welding organisations, with 44 represented at the 74th IIW Annual Assembly.



Count of delegates per Country Delegation

Prestigious Awards

During the Assembly the announcement of the IIW Prizes and Awards recognised individuals for their outstanding contributions to welding, joining and allied processes and their support for the work of the organisation:

- WALTER EDSROM MEDAL, awarded to Mr Christian Ahrens
- FELLOW OF THE IIW, awarded to Prof. Bruno De Meester, Prof. Arun Kumar Bhaduri, Dr Murali Tumurulu, Dr Vincent Van Der Mee, Mr Lars Johansson
- ARTHUR SMITH AWARD, awarded to Prof. Gary Marquis
- EVEGENY PATON AWARD, awarded to Prof. Michael Ghede
- CHRIS SMALLBONE AWARD, awarded to Mr Ang Chee Pheng
- TOMAS MEDAL, awarded to Mr Walter Sperko
- YOSHIAKI ARATA AWARD, awarded to Prof. Americo Scotti
- HALIL KAYA GEDIK AWARD awarded to Mr Carl Peters
- HENRY GRANJON CATEGORY A AWARD, awarded to Dr Zongyao Chen
- HENRY GRANJON CATEGORY C AWARD, awarded to Dr Mayhar Asadi
- HEINZ SOSSENHEIMER SOFTWARE INNOVATION AWARD awarded to Dr Zhili Feng, Dr Hui Huang, Dr Jian Chen Blair Carlson, Dr Hui -ping Wang, Dr Wayne Cai Greg Frederick Jon Tatman.
- WELDING IN THE WORLD 2020 BEST PAPER AWARD, awarded to Dr Stephan Egerland, Dr Arne Kromm, Mr Andreas Deinbock

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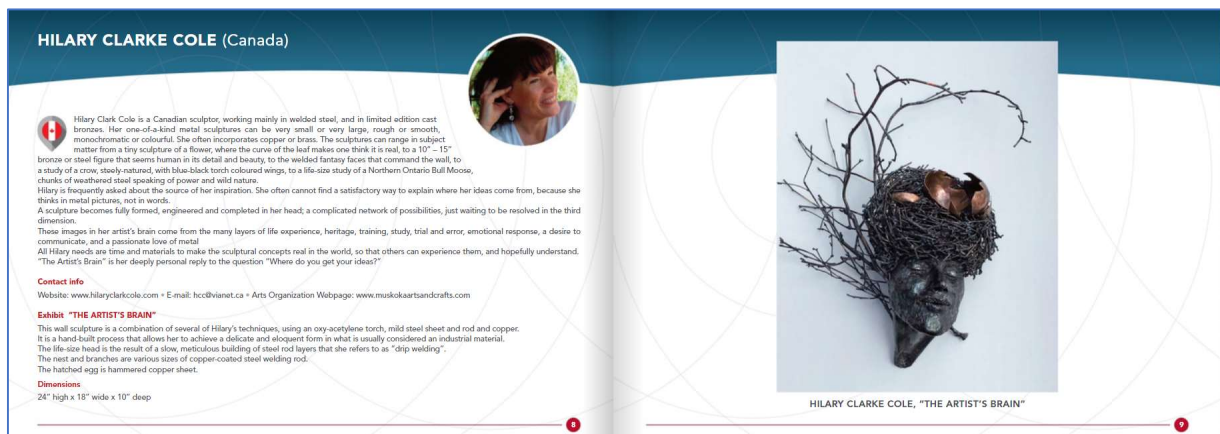
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Welded Art Exhibition

IIW also held the 3rd IIW Welded Art Exhibition during the period of the Annual Assembly and International Conference, with participation from 33 artists from all over the world. Exhibitors range from world-renowned artists and sculptors to hobbyists, part-time business owners, researchers experimenting with newer processes such as additive manufacturing, and this year included photographers bringing the viewer closer to the world of technology and welding from the perspective of fine art photography.



A page of the Welded art exhibition catalogue. The welded art "The artist's brain".

[Click here](#) to view the full IIW 2021 Welded Art Digital Collection

Future IIW Events

With the current uncertainty associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, IIW is closely monitoring the situation concerning the numerous IIW events planned in the following months. Our experience with online meeting technology during the past two IIW Annual Assemblies and International Conferences has proven the strength and dedication of the IIW community, but also highlighted the importance of personal interactions as they were still heavily missed.

IIW is hoping to gather the welding, joining and associated processes community together face-to-face at upcoming Regional and International Congresses and associated events held in cooperation with its partners, and in particular at the 75th IIW Annual Assembly and International Conference planned for Tokyo, Japan on 17 to 22 July 2022.

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The venue for the 75th IIW Annual Assembly and International Conference in Tokyo, Japan 17 to 22 July 2022

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