Today’s Plenaries

Andrzej Ruszczyn’ski
Risk-Averse Optimization
Marriot–Chicago DE, 8:30am

Pablo Parrilo
The Convex Algebraic Geometry of Rank Minimization
Marriot–Chicago D, 1pm

That’s So Random!
Arbitrarily featured, potentially great...
Welington Oliveira
An Inexact Bundle Method for Two-stage Stochastic Linear Programming (Session FA16, Stochastic Optimization Cluster)
Gleacher 200, 11:30am
Oliveria’s talk is about joint work with his Rio colleagues Claudia Sagsastizabal and Susana Scheimberg.

Conference Context

Millenium Park Feature
- How ‘The Bean’ Was Born -
Affectionately nicknamed ‘the Bean’ by Chicagoans, the 110-ton elliptical Cloud Gate sculpture (pictured on back) has garnered both criticism and praise for its whimsical legume-like shape. Still, regardless of aesthetics, the gleaming steel pod is a sight atop the raised plane of AT&T Plaza.

Conceived by London-based artist Anish Kapoor, the Bean was forged of over 150 highly polished steel plates with no visible seams. It is 66 feet long and 33 feet tall, with a 12-foot ‘gate’ at its middle. Kapoor and engineer Chris Hornzee-Jones, also from London, intentionally shaped and positioned the sculpture to reflect and distort Chicago’s famous skyline and invite interaction.

The Bean is usually surrounded by crowds gazing at, touching, exploring and generally being captivated by its shape and reflection.

As Cloud Gate was somewhat difficult to engineer, its construction fell behind schedule, so that it was unfinished when unveiled at Millennium Park’s grand opening celebration in 2004. The Bean was then concealed again until its official dedication, in 2006.

Wednesday’s ISMP Banquet

Next ICCOPT Announced
The next International Conference on Continuous Optimization (ICCOPT) will be held in Santiago, Chile on July 26-29, 2010. This MPS-sponsored conference is the third in a series, the first two being help in Troy (2004) and Hamilton (2007). Visit http://www.iccopt2010.cmm.uchile.cl/ for additional details.

As is traditional at ICCOPT, the main conference will be preceded by “winter school” for graduate students on July 24-25, which students can apply to attend. Organizing Committee chair Alejandro Jofre or any of his fellow organizers would be happy to tell more.
Inside ISMP
Interview with MPS publications editors Andrea Lodi (Optima editor),
Marc Pfetsch (MPS webmaster)
To Andrea Lodi: You’ve been Optima editor since 2006 and have put the
newsletter back on a regular publication schedule. Please tell us a little about
how you’ve reshaped Optima and how you structure each issue.
AL: Optima has a long tradition of
almost thirty years. With my co-editors,
Alberto Caprara and Katya Scheinberg,
I have been primarily concerned
about putting Optima back on MPS
members’ desks regularly—without
changing too much of the newsletter’s
structure. Just in 2008, we decided to
change the structure a bit to associate
with each issue a specific topic. To do
this, we added a “Discussion Column”
to the traditional area-specific work
contributed by recognized experts. The
column is intended to offer a [relevant]
commentary written by other experts,
or a related interview or another
(shorter) paper in the area. [Using this
format], we hope each issue has its own
character and can be referred to by
interested readers.
Also in 2008, we started publishing
an “MPS Chair’s Column” regularly.
The column recaps the activity of the
Society and drives readers’ attention to
important events and decisions.
To Mark Pfetsch: You took over as Web
editor in 2007. The site was redesigned
Tell us a bit about the redesign:
the motivation, the process, the
implementation details, etc.
MP: The old webpages were a bit
outdated, both from the visual
impression and the technical details
behind the scenes. We initiated the
redesign in Spring 2008. We hired a
design company to set up the new
framework and transform most of the
content. This process was finished in
late Fall 2008, and the web pages went
online in January 2009. The new web
pages are based on PHP and are easily
maintainable and extendable. From the
(visual) design point of view, we tried to
stay close to the old setting.
What new features have been added to
the site during your term? Why?
MP: New features include the news
bar on the left, and new content
at several places, e.g., on the new
journal Mathematical Programming
Computation. Moreover, the site for the
Optima newsletter has been moved to
our server and all issues of Optima
are now available online. Additionally, most
issues of the COAL newsletter of the
former Committee on Algorithms are
now available online, thanks to Trond
Steilhaug.
What features would you like to see
added in future? Why?
MP: Here are some ideas out of the box:
A blog devoted to more mathematical
issues, a discussion forum for MPS
members, a RSS feed, and many others.
MPS and I are open to support such
and other ideas. Of course, their
implementation would depend on
someone volunteering to provide
content, e.g., for a Blog. Feedback on this
would be very welcome.
On a higher level, it is a general question
of how the MPS can provide information
and data that is interesting and useful
for current and prospective members.
To all: What do you see as a current hot
topic in optimization?
AL: My personal preference goes to
MINLP, a great domain of interaction
among mathematicians in different
areas and an endless source of
interesting applications.
MP: Maybe the extension of integer
programming techniques to nonlinear
integer programming can be seen as a
current hot topic, on the edge of
evolving into a separate mature research
field.
Puzzler!
Given a doughnut (with a hole), what
is the largest number of pieces you
can divide it into using just three
planar cuts?

Optimal Chicago
If you’re staying in Chicago for the
weekend, you’ll have plenty to do!
Good Eats
Taste Chicago - The Gage
24 S. Michigan
This spot, across from Millennium Park,
is a lively Irish pub with culinary flare.
Look for a globally influenced American
menu—lamb chop and stew vindaloo or
roasted saddle of elk with juniper berry
and rosemary. The interior has a vin-
tage-industrial vibe with green subway
tiles and reclaimed factory windows.
Good stroll - Gaylord Indian Restaurant
100 E. Walton St.
Try their lunch buffet offering a variety
of Indian dishes for $11.95. (An a la carte
menu is also available.) At dinner, expect
more traditional table service.
Tonight in Chicago
Chicago Architecture Foundation Happy
Hour Tour - ‘Modern Skyscrapers’
Visit some of the sites that gave Chicago
its status as a center of modern architec-
ture. Includes stops at Trump Tower and
the Art Institute’s new modern wing.
Free drink ends two-hour tour. $16;
reservations recommended - 312-922-
3432 x226. Meet at CAF shop, 224 South
Michigan Avenue, 5:30pm.
Jammim’ at the Zoo
Angel Taylor, 7:15pm; Five for Fighting,
8:45pm. Tickets, $28 at the door. Take
a txi for a short ride. Lincoln Park Zoo,
Cannon Dr./Fullerton.
This weekend
Chicago Architecture Foundation Tours
‘Secrets of Grant Park,’ Sat., 11:30am
‘Magnificent Mile,’ Sat., 10am, ‘Millenium
Park Revealed,’ Sun., 11am. $15; reser-
vations recommended - 312-922-3432
x226. Meet at CAF shop, 224 South
Michigan Avenue.
Baseball - Chicago Cubs
vs. New York Mets. Purchase tickets at the event. Take
the ‘L’ Red Line North from the Grand
station to the Addison station. Wrigley
Field, 3pm.
Also try
Renting a bicycle. Available for under
$40/day, at the Michigan Ave. bridge.
River water taxi. $3 gets you a scenic
boat ride. Multiple pick-up points.
Clark St.! Chicago’s Gold Coast, Lincoln
Park and Wrigleyville neighborhoods
flank this bustling vein through the city.