
Preface

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Biographical notes: Gabriele Milani is an Associate Professor of “Scienza delle Costruzioni” (Strength of Materials) at the Technical University of Milan, Italy. So far he has authored more than 150 papers on international journals and edited a book on DEM. He is the 2nd author in Scopus under the keyword ‘masonry’. He has been awarded a Telford Premium by ICE in 2012, a most cited author 2005–2008 by Computers & Structures, a Bathe award in 2014. He is EIC of a journal dedicated to masonry (*International Journal of Masonry Research and Innovation*) and a generalist civil engineering journal (*Open Civil Engineering Journal*). He is in the editorial board of several renewed international journals, including “Computers & Structures” and “Structural Engineering and Mechanics”. He co-chairs the *10th International Masonry Conference* in July 2018.

January 2018 represents an important milestone for *International Journal of Masonry Research and Innovation (IJMRI)*, because the journal has just entered into its third year of activity.

After 24 months of running-in, characterised by a growing interest and enthusiasm of the scientific community, I can now proudly claim that IJMRI is establishing as one of the leader journals in a difficult, very specialised and classic field of research like ‘masonry’.

IJMRI exhibits undoubtedly a strong structural engineering character, not for that missing its multi- and cross-disciplinary vocation, as confirmed by the effective digressions on material science, architecture, cultural heritage preservation and environmental engineering that I am sure the readers have enjoyed in many papers published in the biennium 2016–2017.

In this two first years of my activity as Editor-in-Chief (EiC) and founder of the journal, I have been enthusiastically engaged in creating an international and interdisciplinary editorial board of renewed experts, attracting papers from all over the world, requiring always a very high technical quality of the submissions, with the final aim of establishing for the journal a high reputation in the common feeling of the specialised scientific community.

‘International’ is a keyword -present not without reason in the title of the journal- that, with the help and commitment of Inderscience Publishers, I am constantly fostering. As a matter of fact, very international is the editorial board, the case studies presented and the authors of the papers.

In this issue, the reader will enjoy a paper by Cennamo and Cusano dealing with equilibrium concepts with no-tension materials applied to the Gothic arcade of a church

in Naples, a topic that certainly has a good balance between structural engineering, heritage preservation and architecture.

The second paper, by Milosevic et al. presents advanced seismic analyses for old mixed masonry-RC buildings, focusing on real case studies in Lisbon.

Then, Magdalena Layos and García Muñoz focus on local phenomena occurring typically in case of dry-stack masonry structures, using a method of numerical analysis of rigid blocks in unilateral contact and two types of contrast tests (load tests and photoelasticity).

The last paper by Thamboo and Dhanasekar is devoted to the study of the effect of concrete block height variation to the shear bond strength of thin layer mortared masonry.

With the constant effort of establishing IJMRI as the leader journal on masonry, in agreement with Inderscience Publishers, it has been finally established an annual award for the best paper published in that year in the journal.

Papers are awarded by the EiC according to the following criteria (within brackets the maximum points achievable): review scores (3 Pts); specific recommendations from the reviewers for an award (2 Pts); originality, contributions to the field and soundness of the science (3 Pts); quality of presentation (2 Pts).

For 2016, 24 candidate papers were eligible for competing. The result of the competition -first three places- is the following:

- 1st place and winner (8.00 Pts): Alessio Pierdicca, Francesco Clementi, Daniela Isidori, Enrico Concettoni, Cristina Cristalli, Stefano Lenci, Numerical model upgrading of a historical masonry palace monitored with a wireless sensor network, Vol. 1(1), pp.74–98. DOI: 10.1504/IJMRI.2016.074748
- 2nd place (7.75 Pts): Gábor Lengyel, Katalin Bagi, Horizontal reaction components of pointed vaults, Vol. 1(4), pp.398–420. DOI: 10.1504/IJMRI.2016.10002047
- 3rd place (7.50 Pts): Nebojša Mojsilović, Amir Hosein Salmanpour, Masonry walls subjected to in-plane cyclic loading: application of digital image correlation for deformation field measurement, Vol. 1(2), pp.165–187. DOI: 10.1504/IJMRI.2016.077473

For 2017, 16 candidate papers were eligible for competing. The result of the competition -first three places- is the following:

- 1st place and winner (8.75 Pts): Ernest Bernat-Maso, Christian Escrig, Lluís Gil. Study of the compressive response of masonry using non-conventional joint materials, Vol. 2(1), pp.83–103. DOI: 10.1504/IJMRI.2017.10003271
- 2nd place (8.50 Pts): Maria Letizia Raffa, Frédéric Lebon, Raffaella Rizzoni, On modelling brick/mortar interface via a St. Venant-Kirchhoff orthotropic soft interface. Part II: in silico analysis, Vol. 2(4), pp.259–273. DOI: 10.1504/IJMRI.2017.10008288
- 3rd place (8.25 Pts): Michele Betti, Andrea Borghini, Alberto Ciavattone, Sonia Boschi, Emanuele Del Monte, Andrea Vignoli, Assessment of the seismic risk of the museum of Casa Vasari in Arezzo (Italy), Vol. 2(2/3), pp.107–133. DOI: 10.1504/IJMRI.2017.10006804

Let us congratulate the authors for their significant contributions to the state-of-the-art of the research on masonry. They should be very proud of their achievements in a very competitive pool.

The award consists of a certificate and free access to IJMRI Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 for 2016 and 2017 winners, respectively.

A sample issue collecting the papers ranked in the top three for years 2016 and 2017 will be available for the readers free of charge. Such sample issue showcases the range and quality of the content provided by *International Journal of Masonry Research and Innovation* in its first two years of activity.