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Photonics in Our World

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SPIE (Int. Soc. for Optics and Photonics) President, 2017

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Abstract

We will embark on a tour through the ways that light touches each of us, and survey the pervasive impact that optics and photonics has on our lives in 2018. Light-based technologies appear in a wide range of applications that affect us all. Some of these include advanced medical diagnostics and therapies, self-driving cars, energy-efficient lighting, cellular phones, virtual reality, super-resolution microscopy, and the use of lasers in manufacturing. Also, optics extends beyond just the light that we can see with our eyes. In particular, the infrared portion of the spectrum provides a very useful new window to our environment with applications in remote sensing. Taken as a whole, optics and photonics will continue to provide fruitful challenges for upcoming generations of scientists and engineers to use light to create a brighter future.