THE MICROSCOPE
Vol. 73:2, pp. 51–63, 2026
https://doi.org/10.59082/FNVU2188

Inter/Micro 2026 — International Microscopy Conference

Gary J. Laughlin
McCrone Research Institute[1]

McCrone Research Institute hosted the 78th Anniversary Inter/Micro microscopy conference on June 16–19, 2026. Inter/Micro is the first and longest running annual meeting for professional and amateur microscopists from all areas of light and electron microscopy since it first began in 1948. As in previous years, professional and amateur microscopists from around the world gathered together in Chicago to present their latest research, newest discoveries, and specialized techniques, to help solve analytical problems with practical solutions in various fields of microscopy and microanalysis. The 2026 author and technical paper presentation schedule was followed by a two-day, hands-on workshop on sand microscopy and analysis.



Nancy Uznanski of the State Microscopical Society of Illinois prepares to take a photomicrograph during the *Microscopical Identification of Biogenic and Lithic Grains in Sands* workshop at Inter/Micro 2026.

The 2026 presentation schedule included many subjects from light and electron microscopy, microspectroscopy, microchemistry, microspectrophotometry, forensic trace evidence analysis, contrast-enhancement techniques, materials analysis, art, artist, and historical preservation studies, and digital photomicrography. The presenting authors expertly covered a range of microscopical topics such as Concrete Analysis Using Polished Thin Sections, Applications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to the Microanalytical Lab, Differential Central Mask Illumnination, Applications of Laser Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy, Building a Home Microscopy Laboratory, PLM and Microanalysis of Tableting Mixtures, Ink and Pigment Analysis of the Voynich Manuscript, Microscopy of Early Inorganic Yellow Pigments at Colonial Williamsburg, and much more.

Brian J. Ford gave us two annual video presentations this year for Inter/Micro 2026: "The Microscopist Who Gave Us the Nucleus" described Robert Brown's ground-breaking work with single-lensed microscopes 200 years ago; and "Mythical Microbes: Ambushed by Fictitious Microscopy," where Brian warns us of the many and varied modern faked images of non-existent "living cells" that are being widely circulated and artificailly (but not so intelligently) portrayed through AI today.

This year's microscopy workshop, "Microscopical Identification of Biogenic and Lithic Grains in Sands," taught by Kate Clover, was conducted in the laboratory and classrooms of McCrone Research Institute on the last two days of the symposium. Students learned to identify biogenic and lithic sand grains and stud-

[1]2820 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60616-3230; glaughlin@mcri.org
ORCID: Gary J. Laughlin, https://orcid.org/0009-0002-2142-3419