

# My experience at the ICM 2018

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At 08:00 on the first of August I landed in Rio de Janeiro. Volunteers from the congress were waiting at the airport for the participants, and we took a buss to the conference center. With more than three thousand participants I was initially worried that it would be very crowded, but due to the huge conference center and the very good organization of the event the only time it felt crowded was when all the participants left the plenary lectures simultaneously.

The scientific program was extensive. It started at 8:30 and ended at 19:00 most days, and at some times of the day 20 lectures were running simultaneously. This meant that it was often possible to find a good lecture to go to. The ICM gave me a glimpse into what kind of mathematics people around the world are interested in. It was quite different from what I expected. Sometimes it is nice to see what is happening outside the scientific bubble I live in.

In general, the talks I enjoyed the most were the plenary talks. I especially liked the lectures of the Fields medalists Alessio Figalli and Caucher Birkar. The lecture with the biggest audience was probably the popular scientific lecture of Cédric Villani, the “rock star” of the congress. While most speakers were very careful to end their talk according to the schedule, Villani did not seem to be bothered by the fact that he went thirty minutes over time. I also suspect that the audience was pleased with his decision.

One of the highlights of my stay in Rio was to get invited for a reception organized by the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters. It was at the top floor of the hotel neighboring the conference center. The special guest of the reception was Michael Atiyah, and he kindly took the time to speak with the PhD students from Norway. It was also nice to get to know the other PhD students from Norway better during the congress.



The fifth day of the conference was a free day. Stine, the PhD student from NTNU, invited me to go with her for a hike in the rain forest, despite her admitted fear of mosquitoes. After one very interesting hour in a bus, we started walking into the Tijuca National Park. It took three hours before we somewhat unexpectedly ended up at Pico Da Tijuca (1021 moh) where we got an amazing view of the city.

I really enjoyed being at the ICM. The mix of scientific and social events made it a very memorable experience.

