

# Advancements in experiments on non-ideal compressible flows for ORC applications

Andrea Spinelli







## **POLITECNICO** MILANO 1863

## Experiments in NICFD for ORCs

#### Non-ideal compressible flows of organic vapors

- Compressible M > 0.3 but typically higer  $\rightarrow M \approx 2$
- $Pv \neq RT$  proximity to saturation curve and critical point
- TMD state relatively high T & moderate P
- $\rightarrow$  Typical blade passages flows of ORC **turboexpanders**



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#### Experiments for ORCs

#### Title-Abs-Key

Experimental & Organic & Rankine & Cycle



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#### **Experiments for ORC Turbine**

#### Title-Abs-Key

## Experimental & Organic & Rankine & Cycle

& Turbine



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#### **Experiments for ORC Turbine**

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## Experimental & Organic & Rankine & Cycle

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## Discussion

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Challenges in experiments for ORCs

- $\rightarrow$  Design experiments
- → Manage facilities/measuring techniques
- → Perform test/understand results

#### **CREA Lab experience**

- Issues/solutions trials/errors failures /successes open problems
  - o some peculiar of expander flow experiments
  - some shared with test of other ORC components
  - $\rightarrow$  worth to share aspects of experimentation
- → Best solutions? Comprehensive options? Exhaustive findings?



NO!  $\rightarrow$  Applied methodology for experiments in ORCs

## Summary

- Need of experiments
- Provide experimental data
- Challenges in ORCs
- Experimental apparatuses: options & management
- Measuring techniques: peculiarities in ORC flows
- Some achievements
- $\circ$   $\,$  Conclusions and outlook  $\,$



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## Flow features

#### Complex flows in ORC turbine passages

- High compressibility  $\downarrow c \uparrow M$
- High non-ideal effects

## Proper flow modeling

Not straightforward

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 $\circ$  Crucial  $\rightarrow$   $\eta_{turbine}$   $\rightarrow$   $\eta_{cycle}$ 



- being 'the expander the key component of ORCs' <sup>(1)</sup>
- and *'improvement of the expander fluid-dynamic performance directly* affects the power output [...] often without affecting the unit cost' <sup>(</sup>

1 Macchi E., Astolfi M. Organic Rankine Cycle (ORC) power systems. New York Woodhead , Elsevier, 20172 Colonna P. et al.ORC power systems: Concept, current technology, applications, outlook. ASME JGTP, 2015

## Detailed flow modeling

#### Demand for detailed experiments

- Design tools demand for accurate data
- CFD codes + TMD models verification
- Tool refinement  $\rightarrow$  reliability

#### Provide experimental data

- What to measure
- At which points
- In which test section/device
- Reaching mesuring points
- With proper instrumentation





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# Provide experimental data

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## **Properties of significance**

Turbine passage flow characterized by

- $\circ P_T, T_T = \Delta P_T, \Delta T_T \rightarrow \text{losses, work}$
- $\circ$  **V** 3D (V, α, ψ) → work, KE losses, incidence/deviation
- P, M boundary condition & compressibility
- $\rightarrow$  Related by fluid EoS



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## Measuring domain

## Within blade channels

- ✓ Wall taps/Schlieren/LDV (PIV)
  - $\rightarrow$  blade *P*,  $\nabla \rho$ , *V*

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- $\rightarrow$  NO aerodynamic calibration
- $\bigstar$  Intrusive probes  $P_T$ ,  $T_T$ , P, V



Best possible space resolution

## Upstream/downstream rows

- ✓ Add Intrusive probes  $P_T$ ,  $T_T$ , P, V
- **★** Aerodyn. calibration required





## **Device & Test section**

#### Industrial ORC modules – field operating

- Medium/large size  $\cap$
- Customized accesses  $\rightarrow$ Ο
- probes upstream/downstream stages
  - traversing: blade span  $\rightarrow$
  - NO optical windows  $\rightarrow$
- Limited availability  $\rightarrow$  plant operator Ο
- Operating conditions  $\rightarrow$  dictated by  $\dot{W}$ ,  $\dot{Q}$ Ο

#### Limited investigation

- Relatively low M Ο
- NO tangential span traversing Ο
- Aero-calibrated probes NOT AVAILABLE Ο nulling mode  $\rightarrow P_T$ ,  $T_T$ ,  $\alpha$  for  $\sim$  2D flows





## Industrial ORC modules

#### *n* radial time-averaged distribution of $P_T$ , $T_T$ , $\alpha$ where ~ 2D flow



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#### Linear cascade test section

• Easy access

- → probes upstream/downstream blades
- → traversing: blade span & tangential
- $\rightarrow$  blade/endwall taps
- $\rightarrow$  optical windows

#### Limitations

- High cost to attain detailed mapping
- Aero-calibrated probes NOT AVAILABLE
- Suitable for axial machine
- $\rightarrow$  Good results achievable for  $\sim$  2D flows





## Achievable for $\sim$ 2D flows



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## Nozzle based tunnels

#### Nozzles

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- Simplest geometry expanding the flow
- $\circ$   $\,$  Small dimensions allow detailed investigation  $\rightarrow$  limited  $\dot{m}$

## Enable the study of turbine-like phenomena

- Isentropic expansion processes
- Shock waves & expansion fans (wind tunnel mode)



## Nozzle test sections

#### Easy access – Planar nozzle

- $\circ$  Probes upstream  $P_T, T_T$
- Wall taps P
- Optical windows  $V, M, \nabla \rho$
- Object/probe insertion

## Advantages

- Large isentropic core flow
- Aero-calibrated probes NOT required
- Possible reference flow for calibration

## Limitations

- Absence of blade row flow features
  → semi-bladed channel
  - $\rightarrow$  secondary flows, deviation



# Existing facilities for detailed flow studies

Reserch facilities for detailed study of ORC expanding flows						
Facility	Institution	Cycle	Operation	Test section	Year of publ.	
TROVA	PoliMi	Rankine	Batch	Nozzle	2010	
CLOWT	Muenster U	Gas	Continuous	Nozzle/Cascade	2015	
Whittle LT	Cambridge U	-	Batch	Nozzle	2016	
ORCHID	TU Delft	Rankine	Continuous	Nozzle	2016	

All facilities can operate with diverse organic fluids

Nozzle flow experiments is the preferred choice

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 $\rightarrow$  Paradigm of early 1900s exp. on gasdynamic foundations

## Nozzle based experiments

Meyer nozzle experiment		Nozzle experiment @ CREA Lab		
WF	Air	WF	Octamethyltrisiloxane – MDM	
Year	1908	Year	2016	
$Z_{inlet}$	= 1	$Z_{inlet}$	= 0.65	
		0		
- State State	ICFD	0	NICFD	

#### Conventional fluid machines

ORC turboexpanders



## Nozzle based experiments



#### conventional fluid machines

ORC turboexpanders

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# Challenges in experiments for ORCs

#### Design of experiments/interpretation of results

- Modeling thermo-physical properties of WFs
- Theoretical understanding non-ideal flow behavior
- Simulating non-ideal flows + UQ

## Perform the experiments in ORC environment

- Conceive/design/implement experimental apparatuses
- Manage test rigs

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Select/adapt/renew measuring techniques







## Thermo-physical properties of WFs

#### **Experiments & modeling**

- Thermodynamic properties LVE/PVT/Critical Point
- Pure fluids and mixtures
- o Thermal stability limit
- Transport properties



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## Non-ideal flow behavior

## Theoretical effort

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- Quasi-1D theory + simple TMD model (e.g. vdW)
- Analytical solution & identification of flow regimes
- Non-ideal/Non-conventional/Non-classical





## Non-ideal flow simulations

## **NICFD** solvers

- Coupling with accurate thermodynamic models
- Grid adaptation
- Implementing uncertainty quantification (UQ)
- Code validation







## Experimental challenges in ORC environment 22

- High T, up to 400 °C
- Vapor desirous to condense
- o Fluid not releasable to atm
- $\circ$  Possible low  $P_{cond}$
- Toxic/flammable fluids
- Fluid can decompose



- $\rightarrow$  materials & sealing
- $\rightarrow$  complementary heating, purging
- $\rightarrow$  closed loops & sealing
- $\rightarrow$  sealing
- $\rightarrow$  ventilation, atex devices
- $\rightarrow T_{limit}$  information, avoid contamination



## Thermal stability experiments

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# 💿 Experimental apparatuses

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## Thermodynamic cycles – Continuous

Given  $OP_{des} \& A_{th}$ 400 GAS CYCLE 350 6 h=const. () 300 250 200 2 0.8 0.6 0.4s (kJ/(kg K))✓ Low Ż **X** High  $\dot{W}_{compression}$  ( $\downarrow$  diffuser) **×** Compressor complexity imes Low operation flexibility ★ Heating system required

X Liquid phase not available



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## Operational mode



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## Plant construction

#### Few considerations

- Size Dictated by WF, TMD region, measurement resolution
- Materials
  Carbon steel vs stainless steel
- Control system
  PC based
  - WF flexibility Relatively easy to reach (phase transition cycles)
    - ATEX may be required

Safety valves + bursting disks

CLOWT @ Muenster Univ



ORCHID @ P&P TUDelf







Ο

Ο

Safety

## Nozzle design

## Profile design

- o Divergent
- o Convergent
- o **Throat**

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o Roughness

MOC – good approach, proven by experiments smooth transition to throat of y'' (CFD verification) no singularities for low curvature (recommended) enhanced for direct M measurements





## The TROVA @ CREA Lab



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# Plant management

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## Issues – Sealing

#### Pressure & vacuum/low & high T

o Joints

threads ... are threat valve stem packing

- o Gasket type
- High T materials
  & compatibility

planar o-rings steel, copper graphyte for o-rings

- $\rightarrow$  regular surfaces & strong tightening
- → weak tightening, vacuum grooves
  - $\rightarrow$  not for optical windows
    - $\rightarrow$  not for o-rings
    - → FKM, silicone (210 °C) PTFE (300 °C) NO spring back FFKM (310 °C) high cost




## Issues – Vacuum

#### Vacuum system

- Vacuum keeping
- o Evacuation
- Minimum P
- Avoid air intake
- Vacuum pump

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size dependent

at each start & during operation

 $P_{sat} @ T_{amb}$  – plant stop WF contamination O<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>O inert gases at plant stop cold traps recommended frequent oil inspection





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# **Issues - Condensation**

#### Undesired condensation

- Additional heating Ο
- mandatory up to the test section
- $\rightarrow$  optical measurements
- $\rightarrow$  avoid liquid blockage & nozzle reshape



**CAMERA** 

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## **Issues - Cleanliness**

#### Solid particles/liquids/greases

- Residuals construction/assembling/commissioning
- Purposely inserted seeding particles (LDV/PIV)
- Generated
   fluid decomposition (even limited)

#### Consequences

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- Damaging
- Test section soiling

coarse particles & high T/high sealing valves optical access hindered (also nm particles)





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#### Consequences

• Damaging

 $\cap$ 

• Test section soiling





- coarse particles & high T/high sealing valves optical access hindered (also nm particles)
  - → Enhance vacuum sealing
  - $\rightarrow$  Fluid degassing
  - $\rightarrow$  Cleaning + filtration
  - → Post-exp WF analysis

# **Measuring techniques**

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# Pressure – P, $P_T$

#### Sensor requirements

- High accuracy
   to catch non-ideal effects
- Fluid compatibility
- Possibly high  $f_{n,sensor}$  appreciated also for steady flow

Mounting	T  OP	T variation	Miniaturization	Condensation	f response
Local/Flush	$\sim T$ vapor	Variable	Required	No	High
Remote	$\sim T$ room	$\sim$ Constant	Not required	Yes	Low



#### Pressure sensors

#### Candidate sensor type

• Piezoresistive

- local/remote mounting
- Capacitive remote mounting



# Piezoresistive transducers

U	Maximum <i>T</i>	f <sub>n,sensor</sub>	<i>T</i>	Fluid
(% FS)	(°C)	(kHz)	sensitivity	compatibility
~ 0.1	500	250 ÷ 1000	Yes	



# Calibration

#### Static calibration

○ *T* compensation for local mounting  $\rightarrow P \& T$  calibration

#### Dynamic response estimation

Line cavity system

$$\circ \quad f_n \propto cd(Vl)^{-1/2} , \ f_r = f_n \sqrt{1-\zeta^2}$$

$f_r$ , $d$ = 2 mm	<i>l</i> = 10 mm	<i>l</i> = 100 mm	<i>l</i> = 1000 mm
MDM vapor	300 Hz	120 Hz	20 Hz
N <sub>2</sub>	1000 Hz	400 Hz	70 Hz
P(t)	ne <i>l, d</i>	sensing element V cavity	sensor



#### Issues

#### **Condensation in lines**

Liquid heads MUST be avoided



10 mm MDM ≈ 0.8 mbar → horizontal lines/purging → local mounting

~ negligible for low  $\sigma$  fluids





 $\circ$  Laplace-Young  $\Delta P$ 



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Fluid	ϑ (°)	$\sigma$ (N/m)	<i>d</i> (mm)	$\Delta P$ (mbar)
MDM	0÷10	0.015	2	0.3

◦ Liquid ejection ( $P \downarrow$ /line purging) → possible optical disturbance



# Temperature $-T_T$

#### Sensors

o RTDs

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- Thermocouples
- Dynamic response
- Fluid compatibility

#### Thermocouples

- Time constant
  - → miniaturization recommended
  - $\rightarrow$  exposed junction preferred

TC	U (°C)	<i>d</i> (mm)	Junction	$ au_{est}$ (s)
J	1.2	0.70	exposed	1.30
K	1.0	0.25	sheathed	0.25
К	0.6	0.10	exposed	0.12

high accuracy & low f response  $\rightarrow$  steady flows good accuracy & higher f response  $\rightarrow$  transient well below P sensors good



# Schlieren – $\nabla \rho$

#### Configurations

Single passage

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- ★ 2 optical access NO plate
- $\mathbf{X}$  lower sensitivity
- $\checkmark$  no mirror polished surface
- $\checkmark$  reduced meas. range issue

#### Double passage

- ✓ 1 optical access+plate easy align.
- ✓ higher sensitivity
- ✗ mirror polished surface
- ★ increased meas. range issue



# Issues – Measuring range

#### 

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#### Gladstone-Dale

 $\frac{\partial n}{\partial x} = K \frac{1}{c^2} P_T \frac{\partial (P/P_T)}{\partial x}$ Ray path  $\frac{K_{MDM}}{K_{air}} \approx 2 \text{ and } \frac{c_{air}^2}{c_{MDM}^2} \approx 10$ Rear Plate (pt 3) Glassint (pts 2,4) -0.5  $\rightarrow \quad \varepsilon_{x,MDM} \gg \varepsilon_{x,air}$ Glass (pts 1,5) L1 (pt6) [m]z -1.5 Knife Frame (pt 8) Knife frame -2.5 0.02 0.04 0.06 0.08 0.1 0.12 0.14 0.16 0.18 0.2 x[m]

# Issues – Measuring range

Influence of  $P_T$  and c for organic vapor

$$\frac{\partial n}{\partial x} = K \frac{1}{c^2} P_T \frac{\partial (P/P_T)}{\partial x}$$

Solutions

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Remove all unnecessary obstacles



• Proper selection/arrangement





# Direct V measurement

Key for TMD model verification

- ✓ No calibration required
- $\bigstar$  Challenging flow seeding  $\rightarrow$  proper particle

 $\rightarrow$  seeding system

#### Seeding strategy & particles

Solid particles

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 Spray of liquid WF/particle suspension upstream of the test section

#### $\rightarrow$ still open problem

Test	T	iO <sub>2</sub>	SiO <sub>2</sub>				
	$d_p=1\mu\text{m}$	$d_p=0.5\mu\text{m}$	$d_p=1\mu m$	$d_p=0.5\mu\text{m}$			
$MDM_2$	5.57%	2.35%	4.06	1.61%			
$MDM_{1st}$	3.86%	1.36%	2.70	0.90%			
Maximum clin factor							

#### Maximum slip factor





# Some achievements

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Non-ideal nozzle expansion -P/PT

Significant non ideal effects  $Z_T \approx 0.80$  difference to PG @ throat -6% on P/PT, -20% on  $\rho$ , +16% on V



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0

y/H

41

M2.0 nozzle

•

# **CFD** Comparison

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# Mach number measurement

#### Through Mach waves detection



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# Supersonic airfoil

#### Appreciable non-ideal effects

- In shock/expansion patterns
- Good Exp./CFD agreement for accurate TMD models



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# Backward facing step

#### Typical flow pattern at blade TE

- $\circ$  Large abla 
  ho due to high compressibility
- Fan/separation/shock structures
- $\circ$   $\,$  Well captured by SU2 through grid adaptation  $\,$



 $\Delta \Delta$ 





# Thermal stability

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Vapor [µmol]

0.948

Component

Methane

#### Tests on pure & binary mixtures

- Linear siloxanes: MM, MDM,  $MD_2M$ ,  $MD_3M$
- $\circ \forall T_{stress}$ : cycles of  $P_{sat}$ /80h thermal stress/  $P_{sat}$
- Chemical analysis of liquid & vapor fractions



# **E** Conclusions & Outlook

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#### Conclusions

- Key to refine design tools
- o Entail diverse challenges
- Overcome some of them
- Encouraging experimental work

#### Outlook

- Perform direct velocity measurements
- Design & aerodynamically calibrate probes (sensor embedded FRAPP)
- Test actual turbine blade shapes
- Assess the potentiali of thermal stability of mixtures (already ongoing)

- $\rightarrow$  turbine & cycle performances
- $\rightarrow$  exp. activity & fluid/flow modeling
- $\rightarrow$  highly rewarding results
- $\rightarrow$  feel free to fail & share



# Acknowledgements

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# Support

#### 2008 - 2010



#### Since 2013



#### **European Research Council**

Established by the European Commission

#### Consolidator Grant 2013, Prof. A. Guardone Project NSHOCK



# People





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People

Prof. Mario Gaia

#### Prof. Carlo Osnaghi



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# Thank you for your attention

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# Information

#### References

• Available soon with the presentation at:

crealab.polimi.it

Laboratory tour available also this morning. Ask the help desk.



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#### Actual ORCs for research needs

- Medium/large plant size Ο
- Access design probes upstream/downstream **blade rows**  $\rightarrow$ Ο
  - traversing: blade span, possible tangential  $\rightarrow$
  - possible optical windows  $\rightarrow$
- Full availability & flexible operating conditions Ο

#### Limitations

- VFRY HIGH COST!!!
- Aero-calibrated probes NOT AVAILABLE  $\cap$
- $\rightarrow$  Size reduction
- Limits for detailed flow mapping 0
- Good for global measurements Ο



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Recent ORC modules for turbine research <sup>(3)</sup>									
Module	Institution	Expander	Ŵ <sub>out</sub> (kW)	Working fluids	Year of publ.				
KIER ORC Loop	KIER	Rad-IN-T	~ 35	R245fa	2011				
Jiaotong ORC Loop	Xi'an Jiaotong U	Ax-T	~ 10	R123	2012				
ORC Test Bench	LU Hannover	Ax-T	~ 20	Ethanol	2015				
High Pressure Loop	U Queensland	Rad-IN-T	~ 20	HFC-HC-CO <sub>2</sub> (R245fa)	2016				
ICE WHR Loop	Lappeenranta UT	Rad-IN-T	~ 15	MDM	2016				
ORCHID	TU Delft	Diverse (R-IN-T)	up to 100	Diverse (MM)	2016				
Liège ORC Loop	U Liège	Rad-IN-T	~ 3.5	R245fa, R1233zd	2017				

3) Research modules in the mini/small power range, suitable for research on turboexpanders



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pea) #	k R.T. min	Start min	End min	PK TY	peak height	peak area	peak % max.	% of total
1	2.378	2.325	2.530	BB	2818	44002	0.03%	0.032%
2	3.833	3.724	3.889	BB	2082	41479	0.03%	0.030%
3	6.822	6.745	6.917	BB	466	12563	0.01%	0.009%
4	7.792	7.704	7.875	BB	125	3720	0.00%	0.003%
5	10.433	9.895	11.091	BB	1029722	138072172	100.00%	99.862%
6	14.133	13.985	14.188	PB	51	7922	0.01%	0.006%
7	16.418	16.318	16.491	BB	987	23462	0.02%	0.017%
8	21.608	21.525	21.665	вv	376	8866	0.01%	0.006%
9	26.048	25.951	26.118	BB	169	4295	0.00%	0.003%
10	29.513	29.421	29.558	BB	115	2179	0.00%	0.002%
11	39.531	39.468	39.725	BB	2045	42738	0.03%	0.031%
12	39.971	39.868	40.021	BB	176	-112	-0.00%	-0.000%
			Sum	of c	orrected	areas:	13826328	6
peal	C R.T.	Start	Enđ	PK	peak	peak	peak	% of
#	min	min	min	ΤY	height	area	% max.	total
1	2.383	2.329	2.541	BB	3069	46471	0.04%	0.035%
2	2.679	2.608	2.751	BB	537	7776	0.01%	0.006%
3	3.225	3.168	3.283	BB	203	2910	0.00%	0.002%
4	3.837	3.736	3.906	BB	5274	94412	0.07%	0.072%
5	6.823	6.743	6.923	BB	746	18850	0.01%	0.014%
6	7.794	7.691	7.876	BB	859	24129	0.02%	0.018%
7	8.519	8.408	8.626	BB	844	27775	0.02%	0.021%
8	10.428	9.828	11.028	BB	996802	131480512	100.00%	99.638%
9	11.390	11.298	11.478	BB	384	9406	0.01%	0.007%
10	12.706	12.632	12.802	BB	133	3623	0.00%	0.003%
11	13.139	13.062	13.205	BB	121	3035	0.00%	0.002%
12	13.527	13.442	13.638	BB	1345	32108	0.02%	0.024%

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peak #	R.T. min	Start min	Enđ min	PK TY	peak height	peak area	peak % max.	% of total
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12	13.527	13.442	13.638	BB	1345	32108	0.02%	0.024%
13	13.809	13.725	13.885	BB	362	8480	0.01%	0.006%
14	14.131	14.048	14.205	BB	215	5224	0.00%	0.004%
15	14.465	14.368	14.565	BB	135	4005	0.00%	0.003%
16	14.831	14.745	14.888	вV	299	7031	0.01%	0.005%
17	15.817	15.735	15.865	BB	152	3546	0.00%	0.003%
18	16.420	16.262	16.515	BB	3956	93564	0.07%	0.071%
19	17.466	17.378	17.525	BB	223	5305	0.00%	0.004%
20	18.989	18.918	19.065	BB	149	4064	0.00%	0.003%
21	19.953	19.868	19.993	BV	178	4357	0.00%	0.003%
22	20.082	20.040	20.162	VB	305	8251	0.01%	0.006%
23	21.090	20.912	21.148	BV	396	9977	0.01%	0.008%
24	21.608	21.505	21.698	BB	1041	25228	0.02%	0.019%
25	24.612	24.562	24.712	BB	111	3838	0.00%	0.003%
26	25.572	25.468	25.655	вv	325	10041	0.01%	0.008%
27	26.049	25.995	26.122	BB	334	8459	0.01%	0.006%
28	29.514	29.432	29.582	BB	164	3283	0.00%	0.002%
29	41.823	41.742	41.877	BV	113	3191	0.00%	0.002%
			Sum	of c	orrected	areas:	131958852	2

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# Resolution

### Space

• As high as possible

### Time

CREALab

- Fixed blade
- Rotating blades

- → detailed measurements
- → capture flow gradients
- → steady/slow transient
- $\rightarrow$  average
- $\rightarrow$  time resolved  $f_{blade \ pass} \sim 10^{\circ} \div 10^{\circ} \text{ kHz}$
- $\rightarrow$  dynamic calibration & vane field REQUIRED



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## Pressure sensors

### Our choice

CREALab

- Piezoresistive + local mounting
  - $\rightarrow$  nozzle based experiments



O Capacitive + remote mounting
→ thermal stability tests





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# Issues – Miscellaneous

#### Cavitation

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 $\circ$   $\dot{V}$  reduction

- $\rightarrow$  pump intake cooling
- $\rightarrow$  reduce installation height
- → pressurize condenser (batch cycles only)
- Side level meters
- $\rightarrow$  useless



# Calibration

Static calibration in *P* & *T* 

• Compensation resistor **R** 

Dynamic response estimation



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