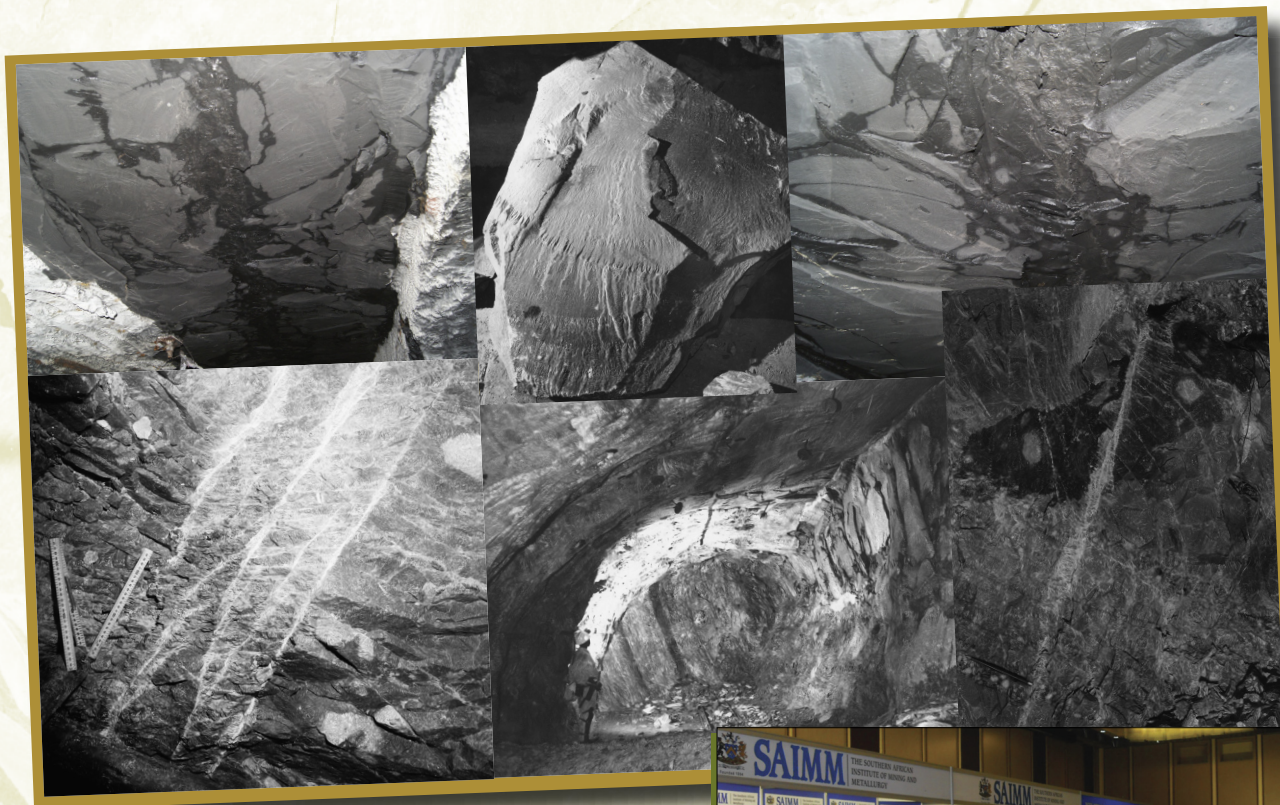


Spotlight

Southern Hemisphere International Rock Mechanics Symposium SHIRMS 2012



SHIRMS 2012 (Southern Hemisphere International Rock Mechanics Symposium) was held at Sun City from May 14 to 17. This is the second in a series, which was started by the Australian Centre for Geomechanics (ACG) in Perth in October 2008. The purpose of the Symposium was to provide an international forum to present and discuss the latest developments in rock mechanics and geotechnical engineering. The Symposium was attended by 165 delegates, of whom 24 were international, hailing from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Japan, Mozambique, Namibia, Norway, Switzerland, Thailand, and USA.

The first day comprised a workshop on 'Risk in Rock Engineering Design'. Leaders in this developing field were invited to present on the application of risk in the design of surface and underground mines and on methods of risk analysis. The workshop concluded with a lively debate, which highlighted the requirement for improved analytical methods for complex mechanisms of failure and to define an acceptable level of risk for design purposes.

Technical papers were presented from day two to day four. These included a number of interesting contributions on rock fracture and the mechanics of rock failure. Several papers explored the rock mechanics aspects of mining at great depths and the management of seismicity in mines. New methods of geotechnical investigation were presented and existing methods were critically reviewed. Useful case studies on the rock mechanics aspects of bord and pillar and massive mining methods were discussed. For surface mines, new developments in slope design and slope monitoring were presented. The nine papers selected for this journal are high-quality contributions that provide a sample of the range of topics presented.

The symposium was jointly organized by the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (SAIMM) and the South African National Institute of Rock Engineering (SANIRE).



Spotlight (continued)

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