

Years later, I'm at the helm of the VLT, a truly impressive technological feat, performing complicated spectroscopy of the transit of extrasolar planets, and it works superbly well.

I also obtained my PhD degree in Brazil, at the University of São Paulo, on the formation and evolution of stellar bars in galaxies. This led me to work on the secular building of galaxy bulges, a subject that is receiving considerable attention now. After São Paulo, I continued my work on bars at the Laboratoire d'Astrophysique de Marseille. Just before I came to work at ESO in Chile, I worked for four years as a researcher in the cosmology group at the Max-Planck Institute for Astrophysics, in Garching, just across the street from ESO Headquarters. Ironically, when I received the offer of the ESO fellowship, it was not to just cross the street, but to move twelve thousand kilometres away and spend 80 nights per year on Paranal — I was thrilled!

Working as support astronomer at Paranal for FORS2, CRIRES, X-shooter,



Dimitri Gadotti

FLAMES and UVES, even if a very demanding job, both mentally and physically, has been a refreshing and very rewarding experience. Supporting observing programmes outside my field

of expertise, which is the formation, evolution and structure of galaxies, has not only been fun, but also given me a chance to become much more complete as an astronomer. Paranal provides me with a chance to be involved in programmes on topics that range from Solar System bodies to high redshift quasars. Programmes such as the rapid time-monitoring of comets and supernovae allow me to see such objects, unlike galaxies, evolve before my eyes. In addition, the exchange of ideas, and the exciting atmosphere of discovery and challenge that permeates the control building during a regular night, has helped my own research on multiple occasions.

Understanding the intricate evolution of galaxies and their substructures is the main focus of my research. The current instrument suite at Paranal is paramount in providing us with the data we need to fulfill this wish. New instruments, already scheduled to come to the mountain, are even more revealing and challenging. I can only be thankful that my career path has led me here.

Personnel Movements

Arrivals (1 October–31 December 2011)

Europe

Reckmann, Fabian (DE)	Construction Technician
Davis, Timothy (GB)	Fellow
Spezzi, Loredana (IT)	Fellow
Muller, Nicolas (FR)	Optical Engineer
Argomedo, Javier (CL)	Software Engineer
Niederhofer, Florian (DE)	Student
Feldmeier, Anja (DE)	Student
Ferreira, Letícia (BR)	Student
Feltre, Anna (IT)	Student
Scicluna, Peter (GB)	Student
Costigan, Gráinne (IE)	Student
Sanchez, Joel (MX)	Student

Chile

Barkats, Denis (FR)	System Astronomer
Vlahakis, Catherine (GB)	Commissioning Scientist
Wesson, Roger (GB)	Fellow
Manjarrez, Guillermo (MX)	Student
Saulder, Christoph (AT)	Student
Kim, Taehyun (KR)	Student

Departures (1 October–31 December 2011)

Europe

Austin-May, Samantha (GB)	Deputy Head of Human Resources
Igl, Georg (DE)	Quality Engineer
Checcucci, Alessio (IT)	Software Engineer
Santander Vela, Juan de Dios (ES)	Software Engineer
Boehnert, Alex (DE)	Student
Sartoris, Barbara (IT)	Student

Chile

Gillet, Gordon (DE)	Electronics Engineer
Aguila, Luis (CL)	Electrical Technician
Arcos, Juan Carlos (CL)	Warehouse Assistant
Saguez, Claudio (CL)	Warehouse Supervisor
Costa, Jaime (CL)	Electrical Engineer
Pizarro, Andres (CL)	Safety Engineer
Quitana, Rolando (CL)	Procurement Officer
Beletsky, Yuri (BY)	Operations Astronomer
Kurz, Richard John (US)	ALMA Project Manager
Mateluna, René Cecilia (CL)	Student
Alamo, Karla Adriana (MX)	Student
Jilkova, Lucie (CZ)	Student