This special issue of *Optics & Photonics News* highlights exciting peer-reviewed optics research that has emerged over the past year. Our panel of editors reviewed 91 summaries of work by researchers from around the world. They selected for publication 30 stories that they felt communicated breakthroughs of particular interest to the broad optics community. Some of the summaries have related multimedia that you can access at www.osa-opn.org/optics-in-2019. OPN thanks all who submitted summaries, as well as our panel of guest editors.

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Vibrational pattern of an ultracoherent membrane resonator (Mason et al., p. 45). [Illustration by Schliesser lab, University of Copenhagen]