

Macchine molecolari: realtà o fantascienza?

Alberto Credi

Photochemical Nanosciences Laboratory

Dipartimento di Chimica "G. Ciamician"

Università di Bologna

via Selmi, 2

40126 Bologna



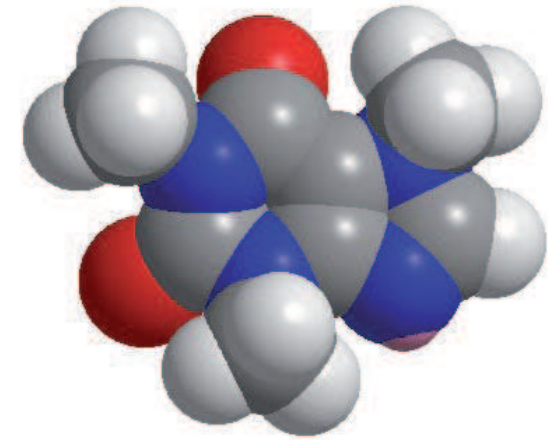
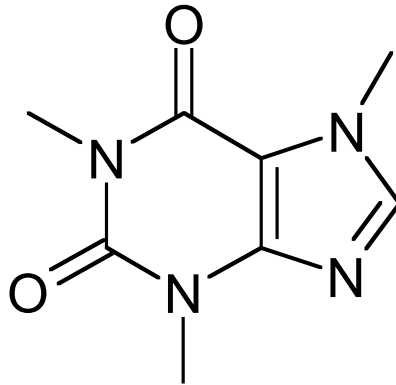
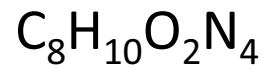
Photochemical Nanosciences Laboratory

alberto.credi@unibo.it

www.credi-group.it
www.photonanolab.it



Caffeina



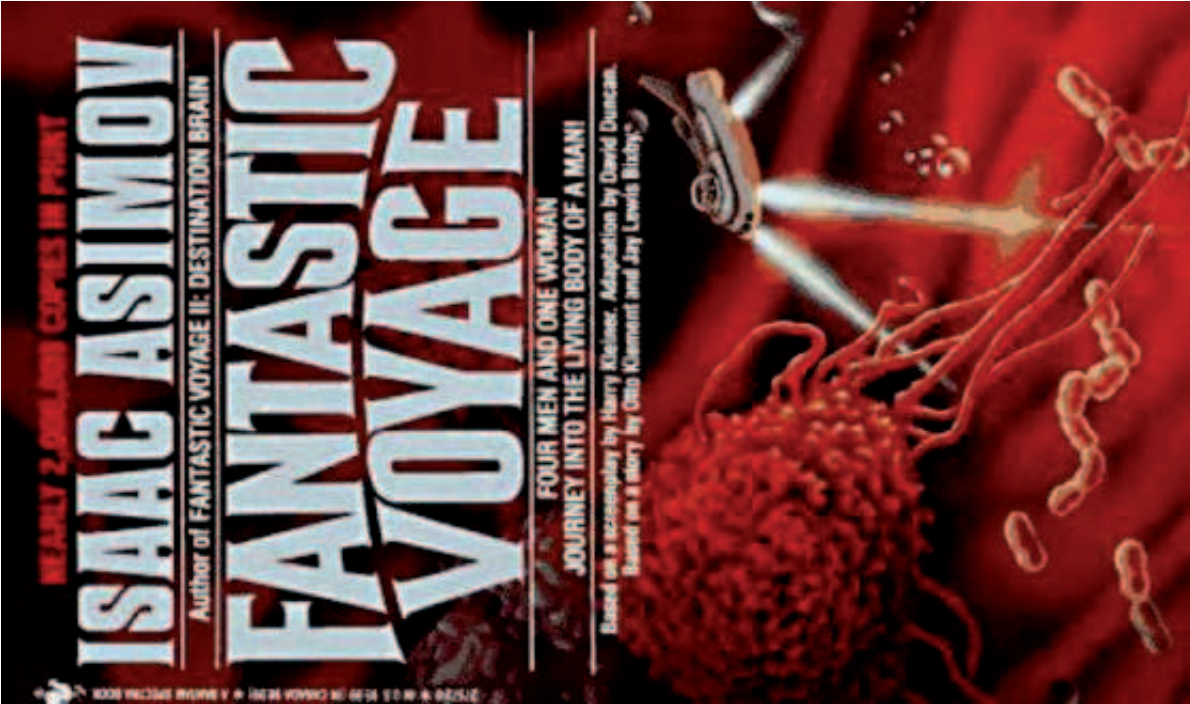
0.0000000007 m

0.7 nm

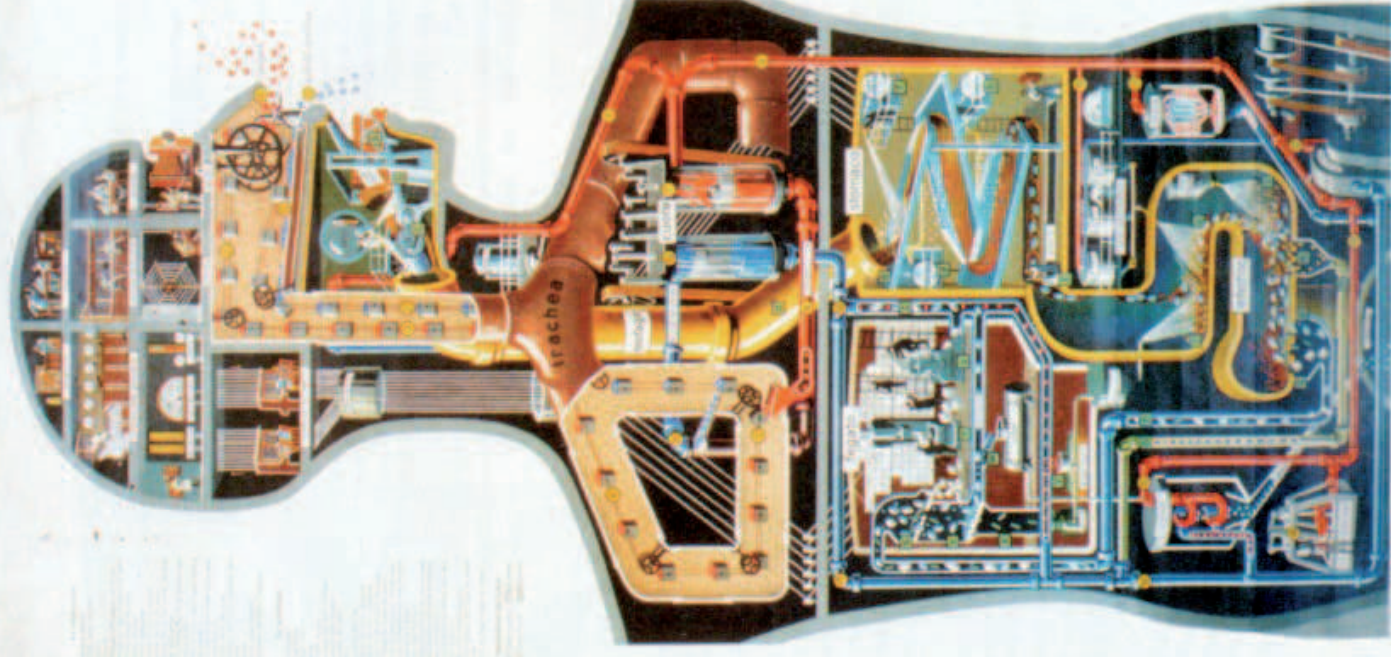
1 nanometro (nm) = 1 miliardesimo di metro

spessore di un capello = 100.000 nanometri

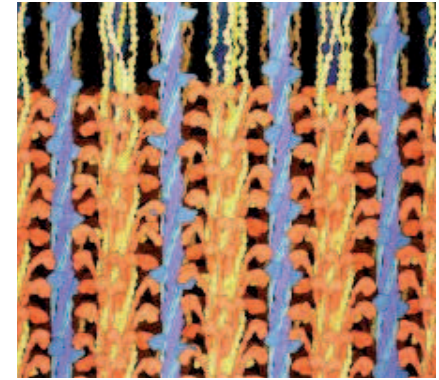
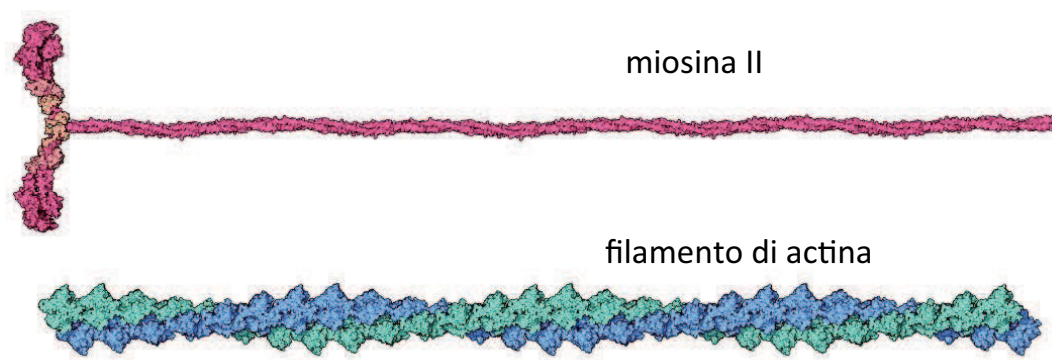
NANOTECNOLOGIA = tecnologia alla scala dei nanometri



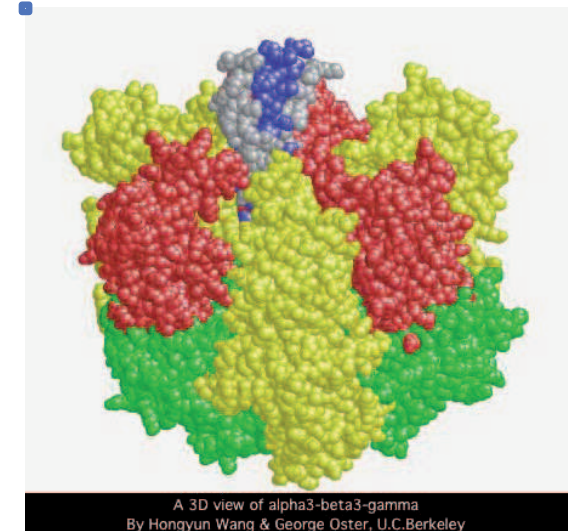
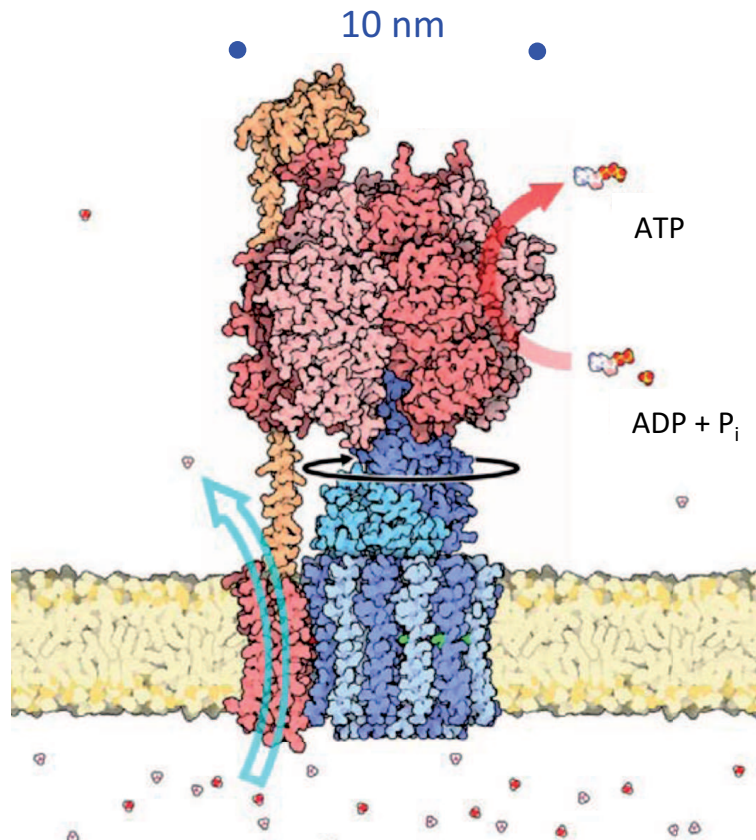
LA MACCHINA UMANA



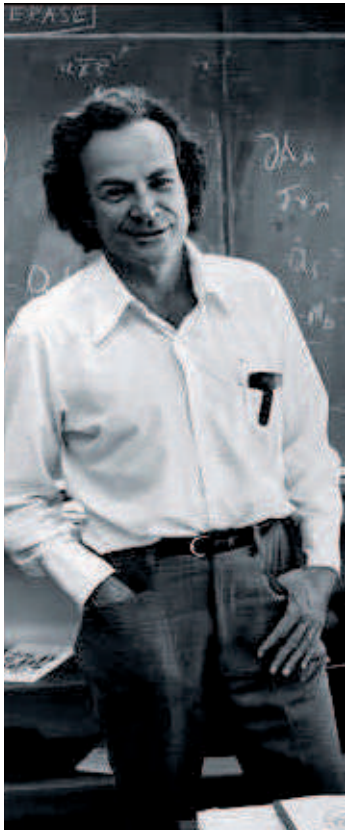
**Miosina
(motore
lineare)**



**ATPasi
(motore
rotatorio)**



C'è un sacco di posto là sotto



[...] Considerate la possibilità che anche noi, come la biologia molecolare, siamo in grado di costruire oggetti piccolissimi che facciano quello che vogliamo; allora potremo anche produrre macchine capaci di manovrare a quel livello.

R. P. Feynman, "There's plenty of room at the bottom"
Discorso alla Società Americana di Fisica, 29 Dicembre 1959
www.zyvex.com/nanotech/feynman.html

Synthetic molecular motors

Anthony P. Davis

The construction of miniature, 'nanoscale' machines is a goal of modern science and technology, inspired by Richard Feynman's remark that "There's plenty of room at the bottom". Chemists, by the nature of their discipline, are already at the bottom, manipulating the smallest entities that have complex shapes (molecules), and which can therefore be used as engineering components. While engineers and physicists explore the top-down approach to nanoscale engineering through lithography and scanning probe microscopy, chemists are well placed to pursue the bottom-up strategy, whereby molecular-scale components are created using chemical synthesis and then self-assembled into devices by pre-programmed intermolecular forces.

Among the more interesting challenges in this area is the design and synthesis of 'molecular actuators', molecules that can undergo changes in shape in response to external stimuli and thereby, in principle, perform mechanical work. To date, most research has concentrated on two-state systems, ranging from classical *cis-trans* isomerism to more elaborate 'rotaxanes' and 'catenanes' (Fig. 1)^{1,4}, and biomolecular constructs, such as a device based on the translocation of right-handed to left-handed DNA⁵. These systems, in which movement is driven by chemical, electrochemical or photochemical forces, are best described as molecular

switches or shuttles, and they have great potential in, for example, molecular-scale information processing. However they are not capable of the continuous, unidirectional

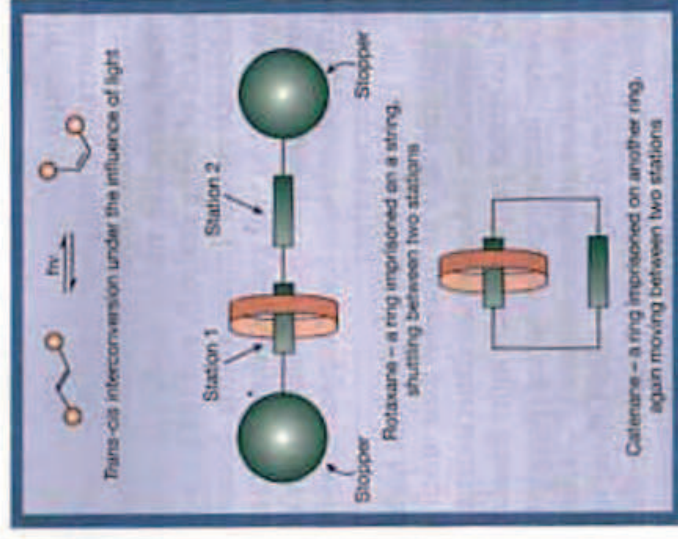


Figure 1 Two-state molecular systems.

Established molecular actuators include systems capable of *cis-trans* isomerism, where groups lie on the same (*cis*) or opposite (*trans*) sides of a double bond, and more complex structures such as rotaxanes and catenanes. The rings in the rotaxanes and catenanes may be driven between stations by chemical, electrochemical or photochemical input.

A Photochemically Driven Molecular Machine**

By Roberto Ballardini,* Vincenzo Balzani,* Maria Teresa Gandolfi, Luca Prodi, Margherita Venturi, Douglas Philp, Howard G. Ricketts, and J. Fraser Stoddart*

In everyday life, we make extensive use of macroscopic devices called machines, which are assemblies of components designed for specific functions. The concept of a machine can be extended to the molecular level.¹⁻⁹ Whereas the ma-

[*] Dr. R. Ballardini

Istituto FRAE-CNR

via De Castagnoli 1, I-40126 Bologna (Italy)

Prof. V. Balzani, Prof. M. T. Gandolfi, Dr. L. Prodi, Prof. M. Venturi

Dipartimento di Chimica "G. Ciamician" dell'Università

Via Selmi 2, I-40126 Bologna (Italy)

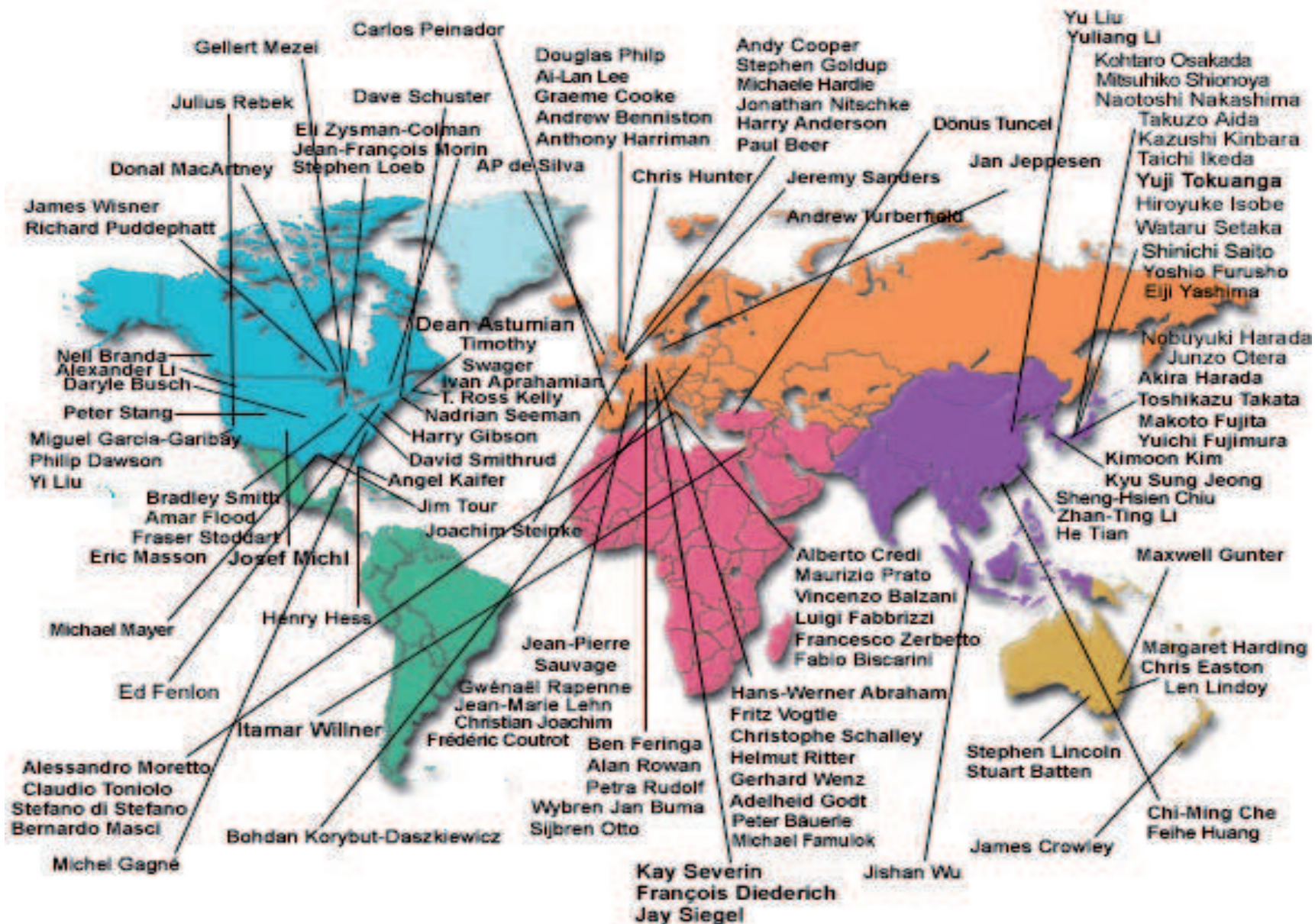
Prof. J. F. Stoddart, Dr. D. Philp, H. G. Ricketts

School of Chemistry, The University of Birmingham

Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT (UK)

[**] This work was supported by the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (Progetto Finalizzato Chimica Fine II) and the Italian Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca Scientifica e Tecnologica, and by SERC and Glaxo Group Research in the UK. We thank Anna Godi for some preliminary experiments.

□



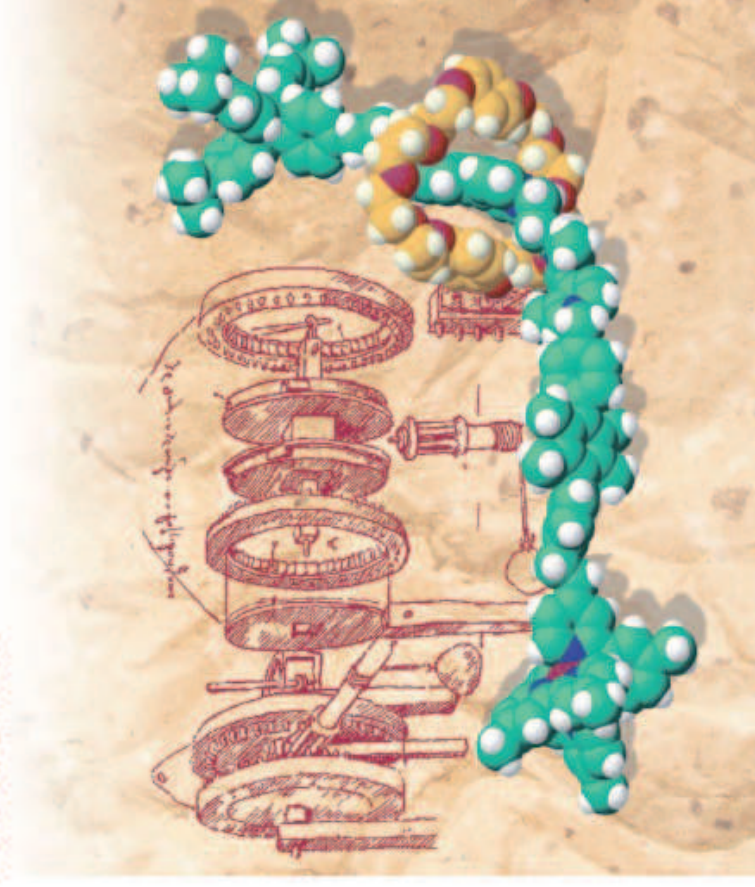
Vincenzo Balzani, Alberto Credi,
and Margherita Venturi

WILEY-VCH

Molecular Devices and Machines

Concepts and Perspectives for the Nanoworld

Second Edition



Progettazione di macchine molecolari artificiali

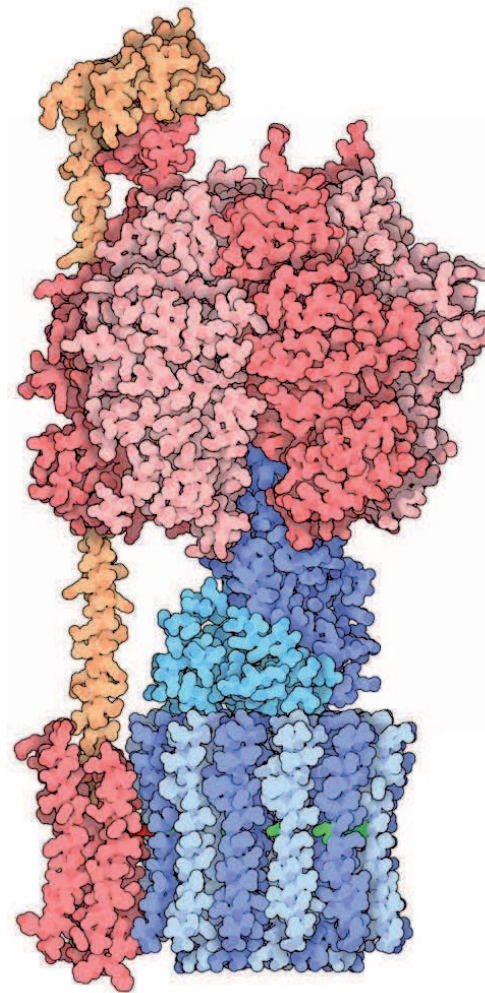
Dispositivo macroscopico



Dispositivo microscopico



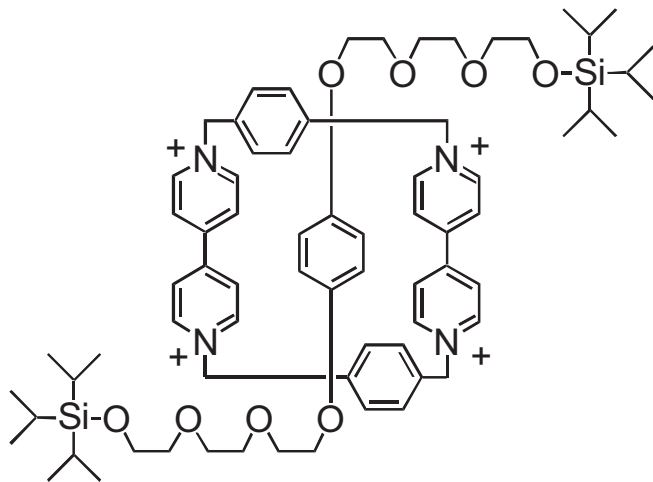
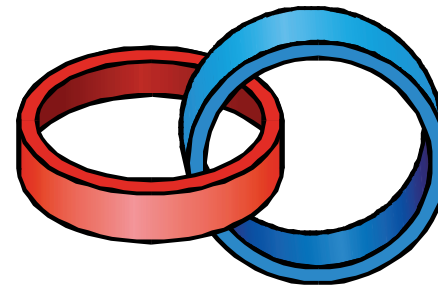
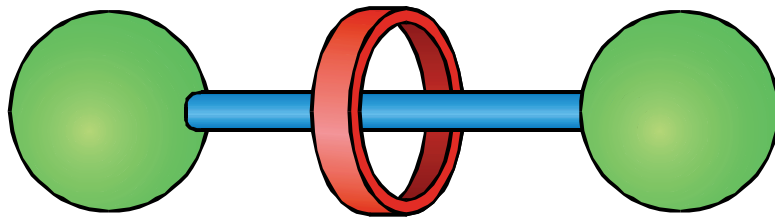
atti semplici



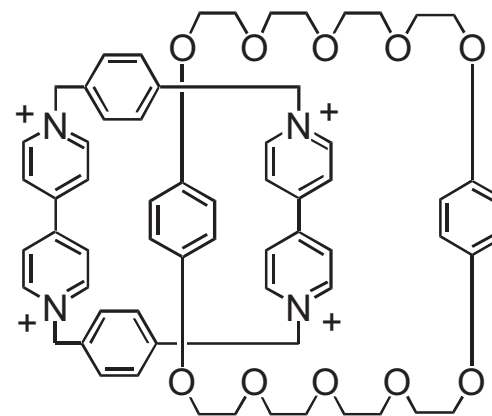
funzione complessa



Rotassani e catenani

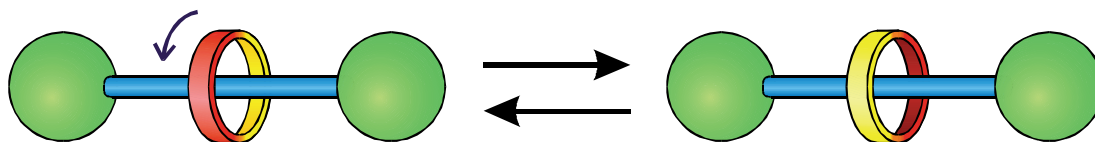


Rotassano

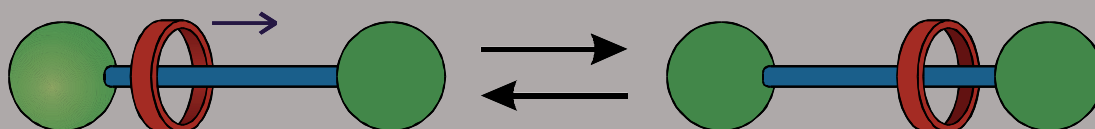


Catenano

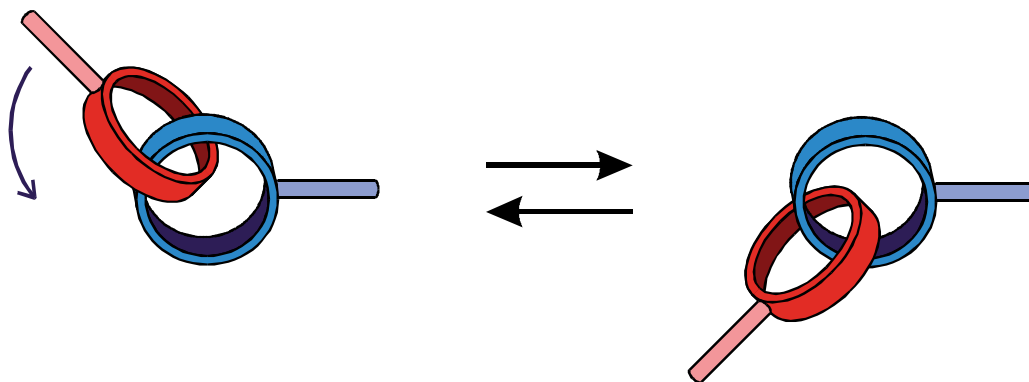
Rotassani e catenani: prototipi di macchine molecolari



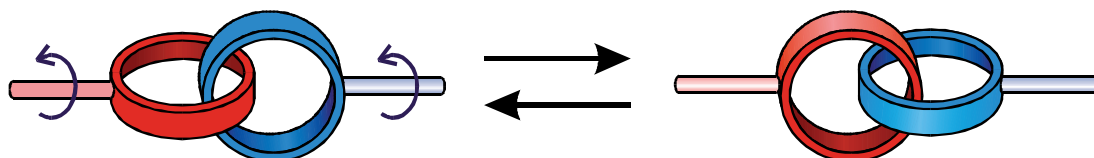
▪ ruota
e asse



▪ “shuttling”

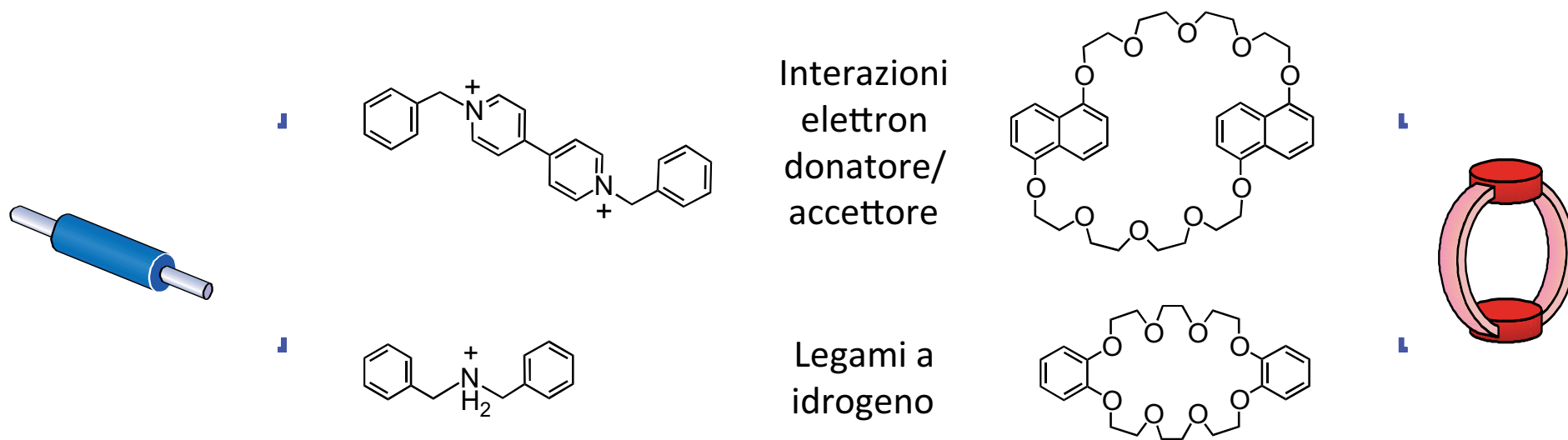
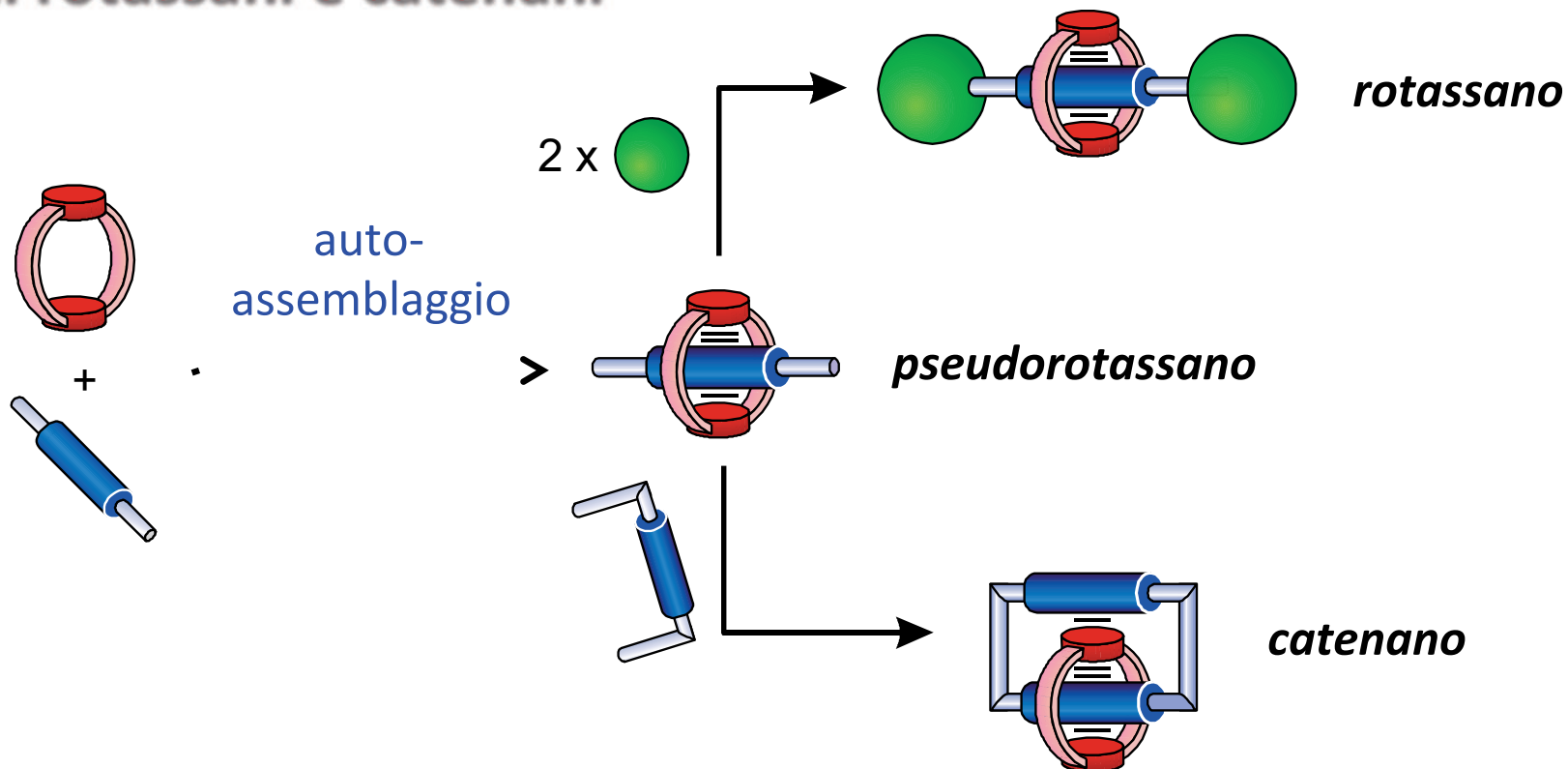


▪ rotazione
relativa
degli anelli
molecolari



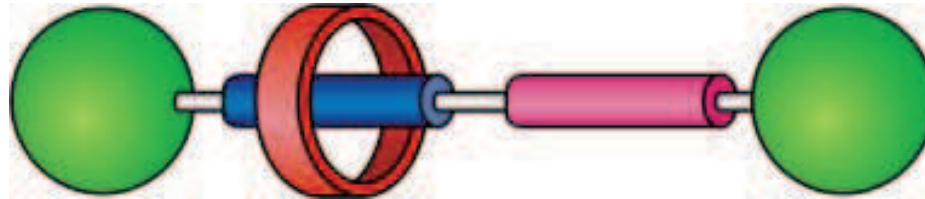
▪ giunto
cardanico

Sintesi di rotassani e catenani



Moti lineari in un rotassano: una “navetta” molecolare

□



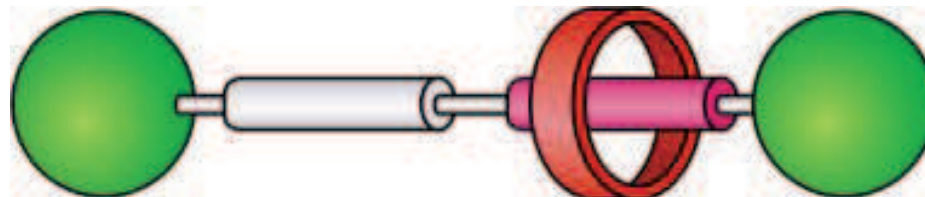
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Stimolo

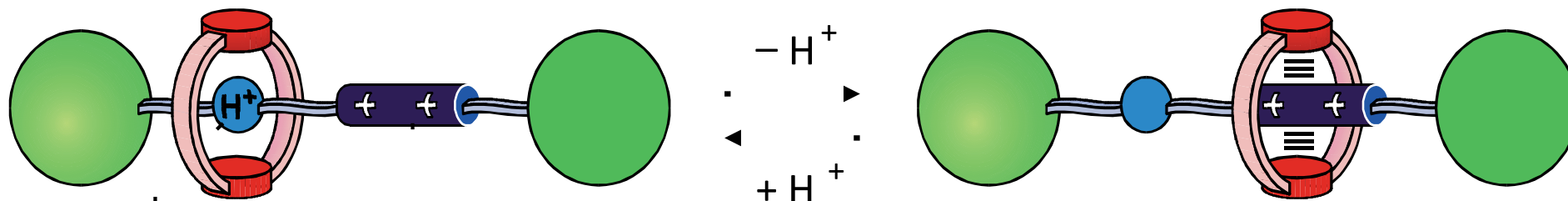
Stimolo

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Una navetta molecolare azionata chimicamente

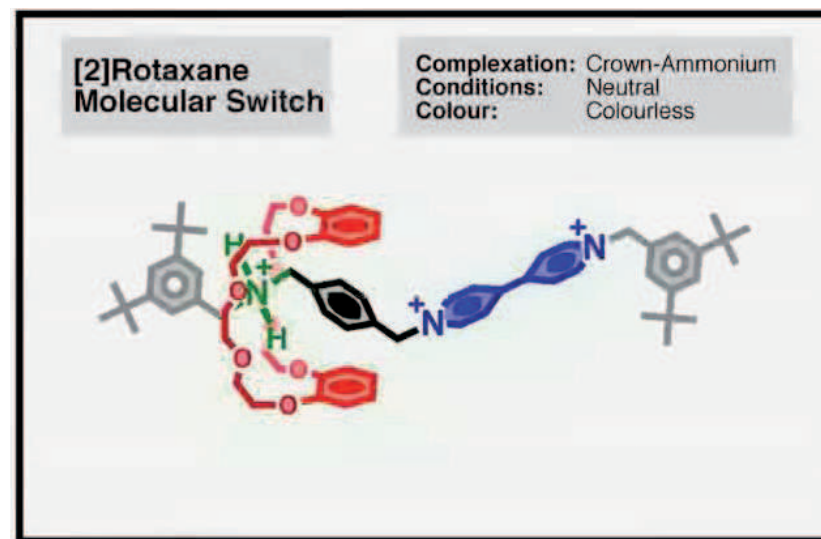
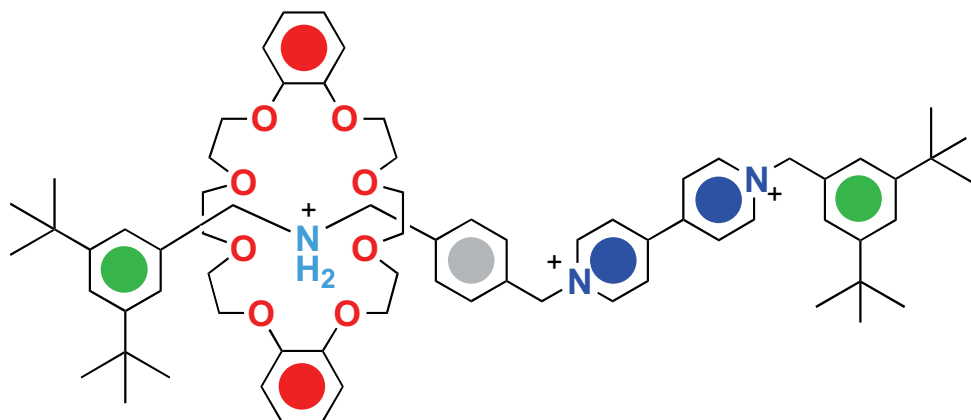


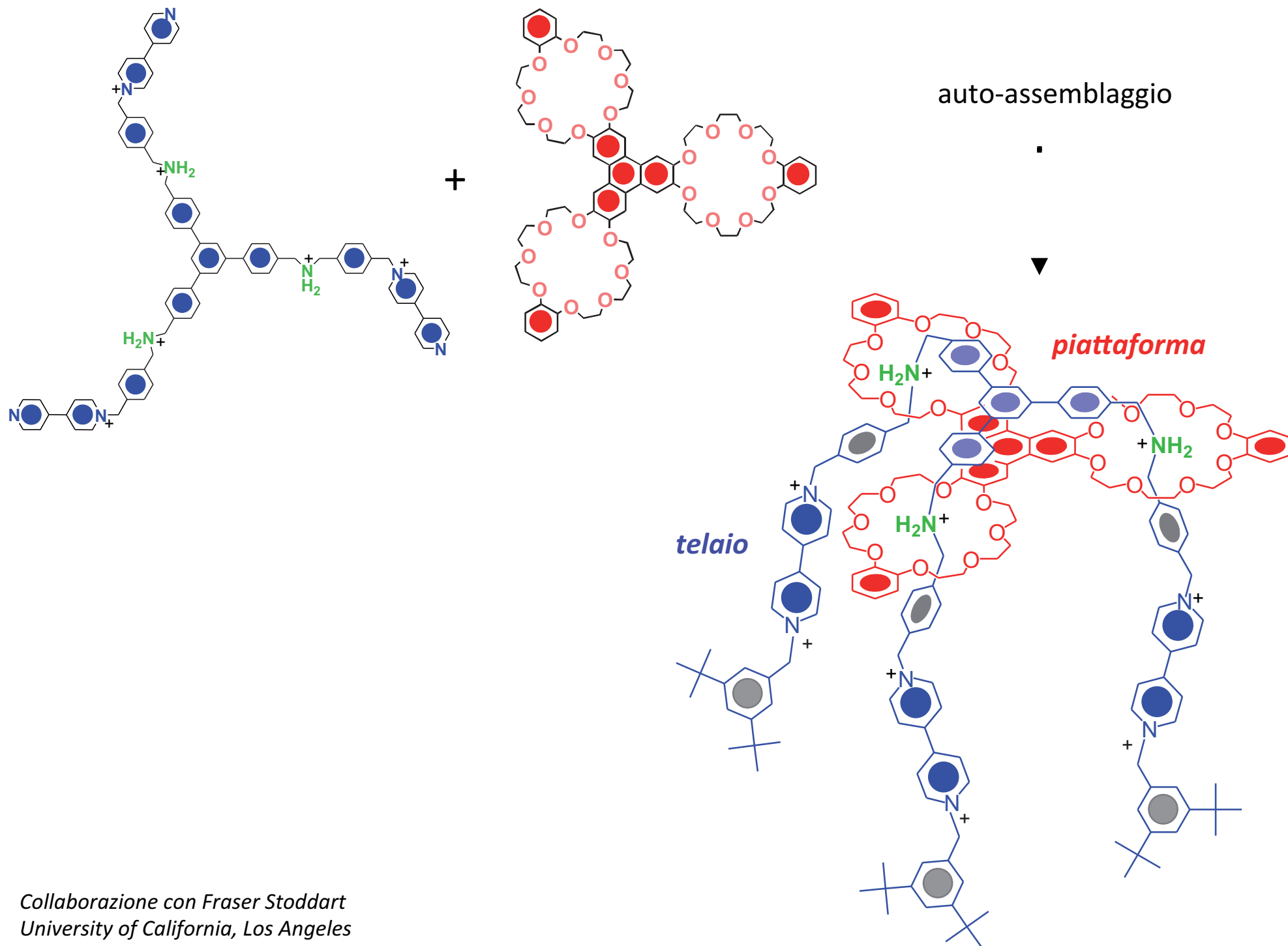
stazione
ammonio

stazione
bipiridinio



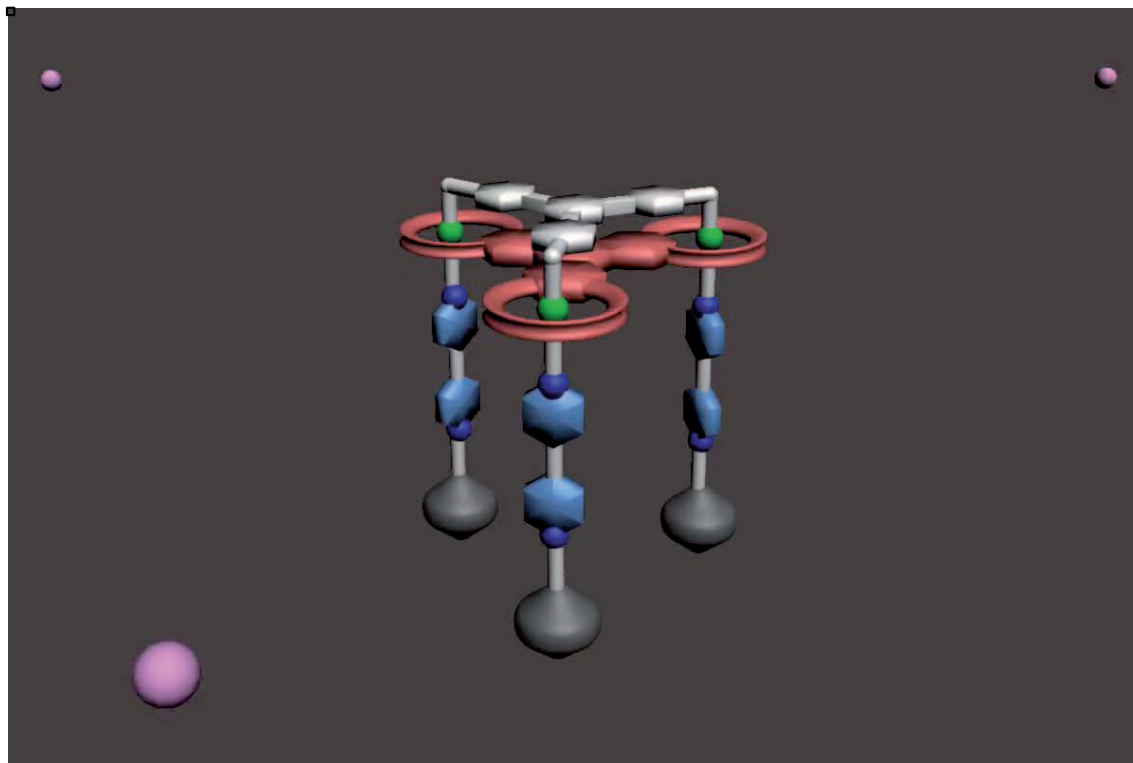
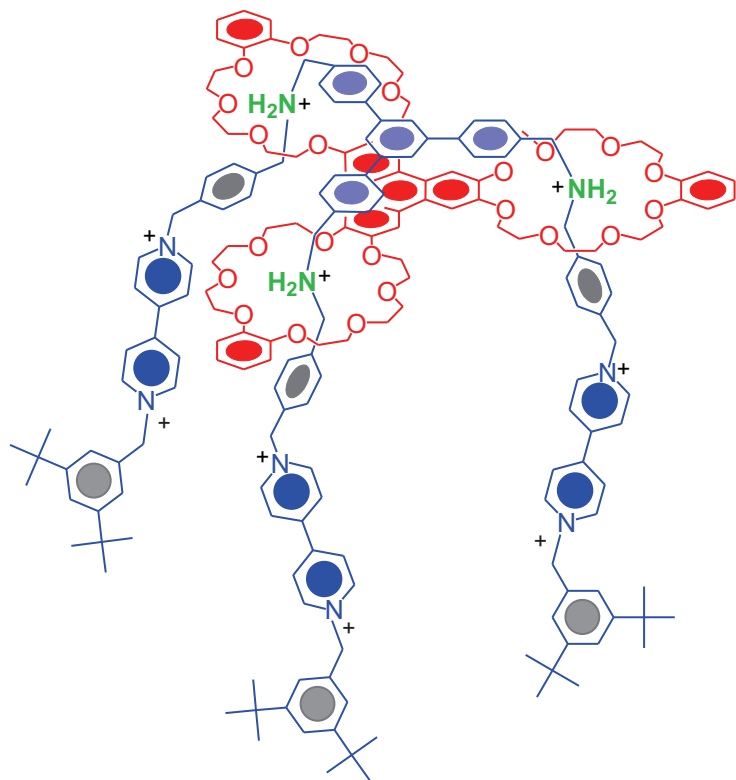
unità di "carico/scarico"



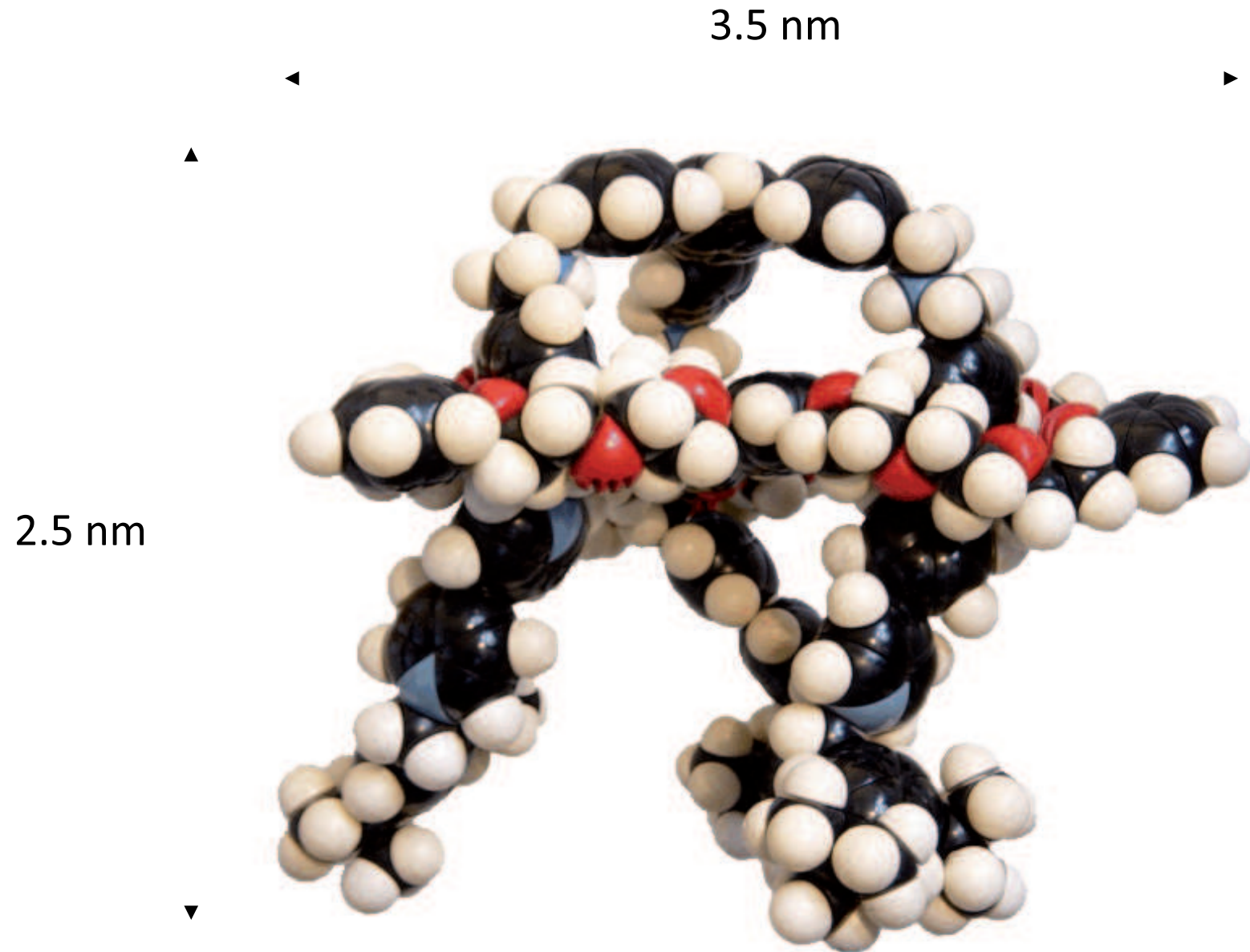


Collaborazione con Fraser Stoddart
University of California, Los Angeles

Un prototipo di “ascensore” molecolare azionato chimicamente in soluzione



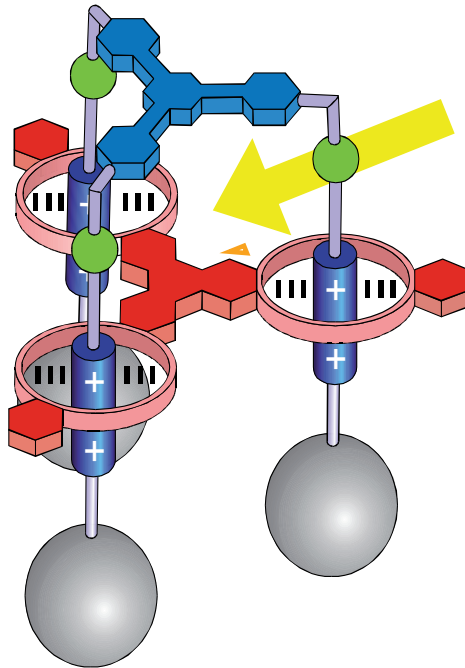
Modello dell'ascensore molecolare



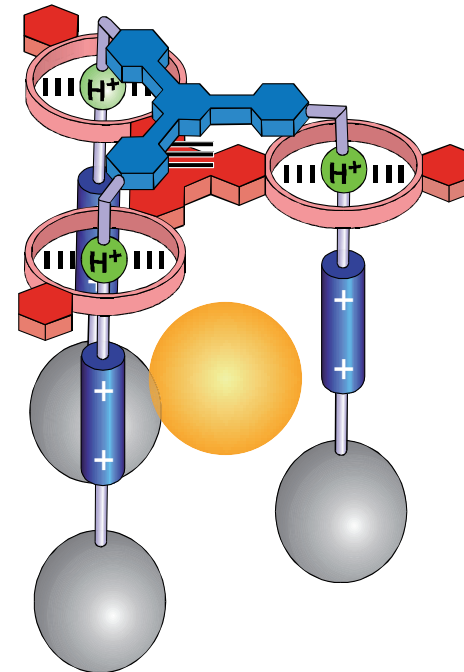
Quale futuro per l'ascensore molecolare?

controllo della capacità di catturare/rilasciare altre molecole

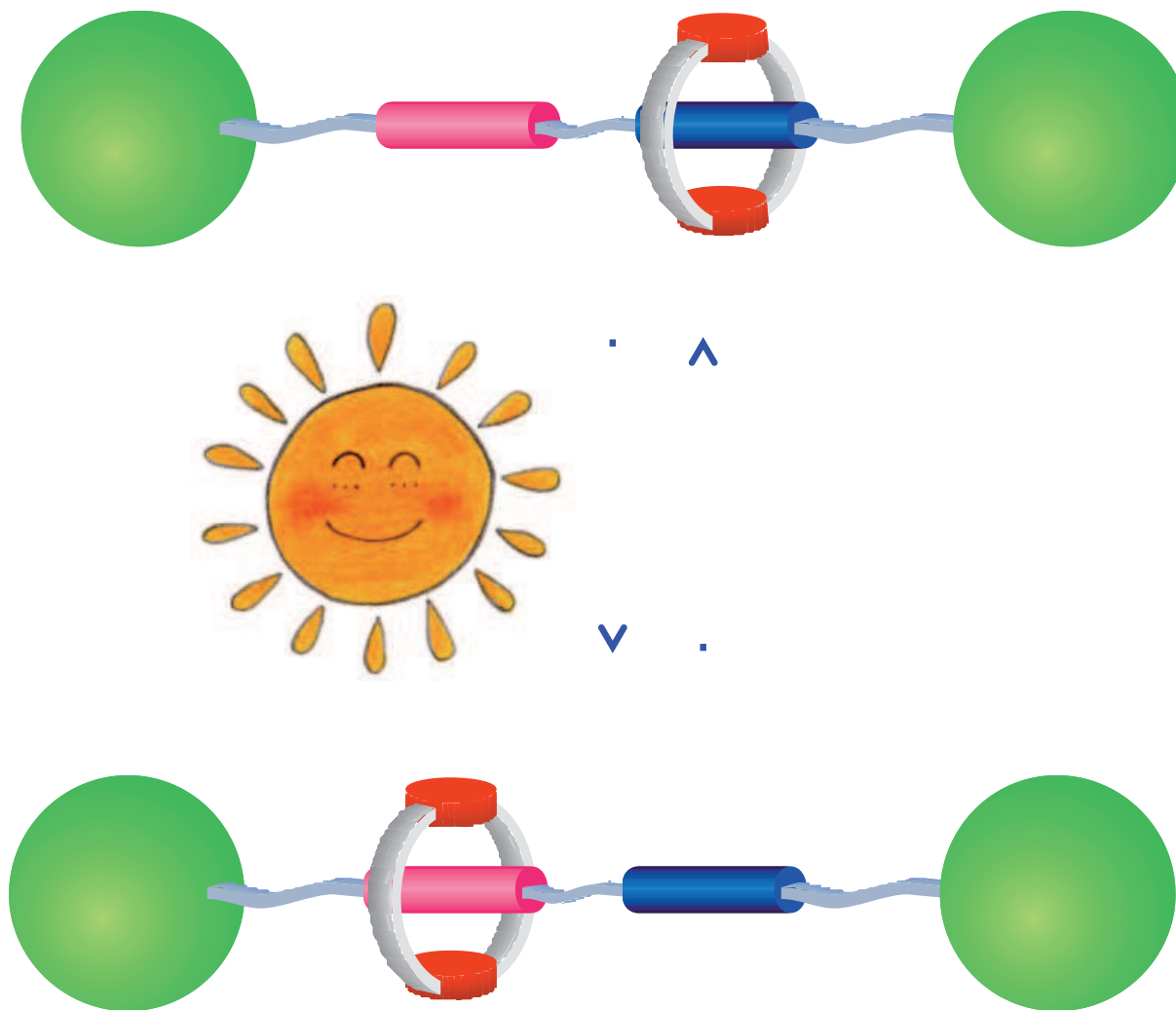
*apertura/chiusura
di una cavità nanometrica*

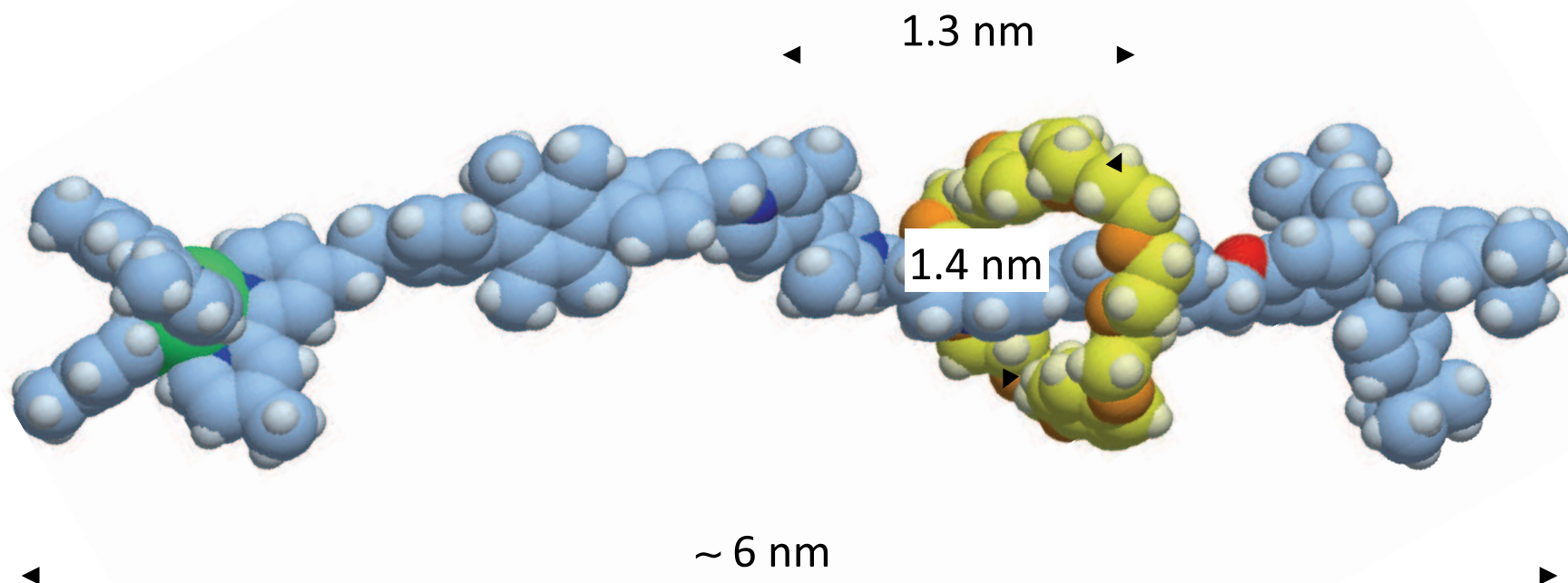
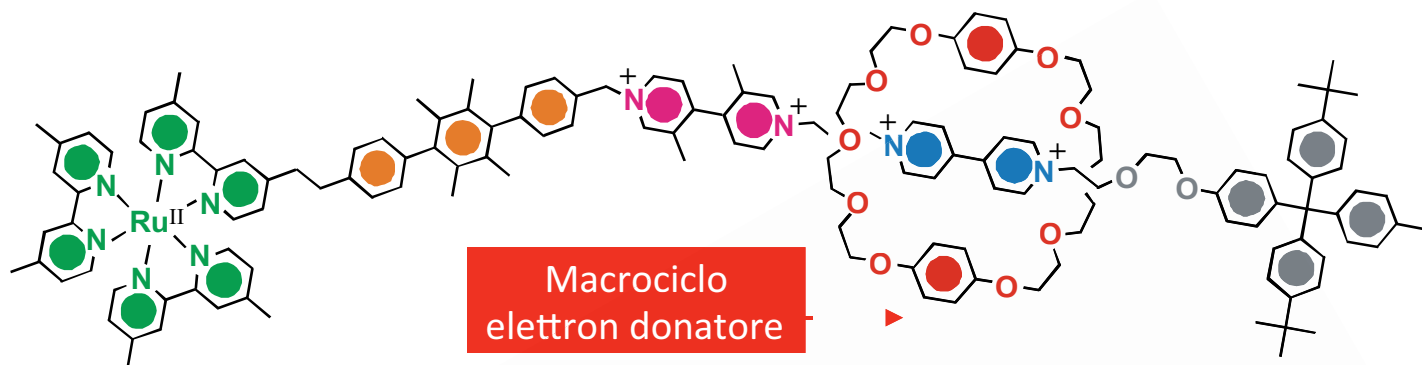


*azione di "dita"
molecolari*

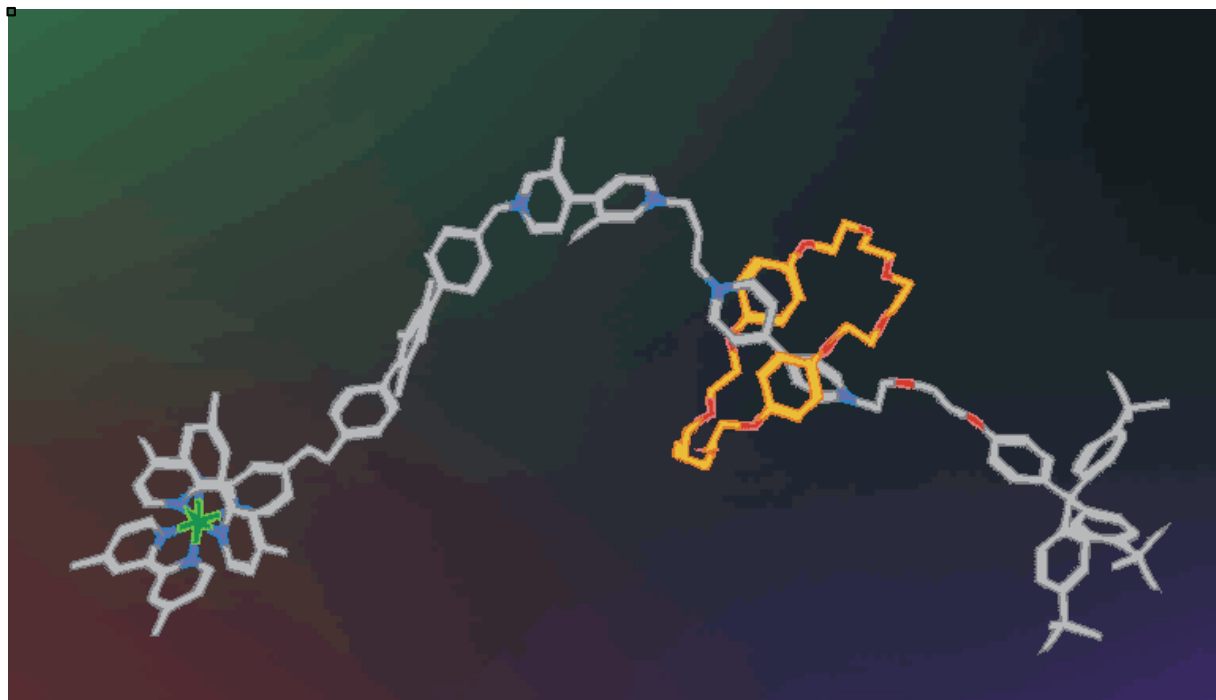
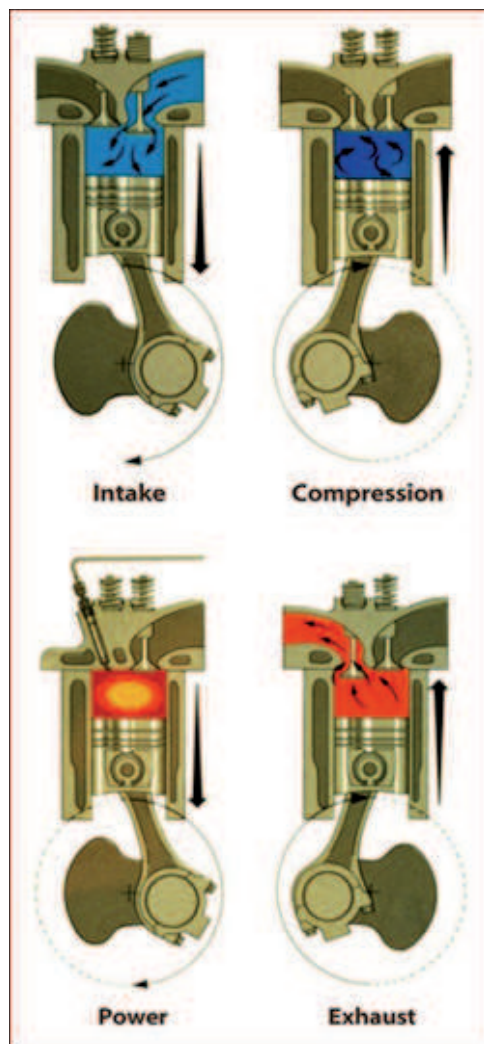


Una nanomacchina azionata dalla luce solare





Una nanomacchina “a quattro tempi”



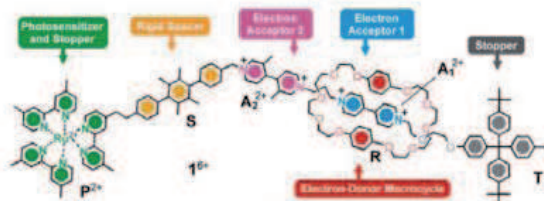
Autonomous artificial nanomotor powered by sunlight

Vincenzo Balzani^{†‡}, Miguel Clemente-León^{†§}, Alberto Credi^{†‡}, Belèn Ferrer^{†¶}, Margherita Venturi[†], Amar H. Flood[§], and J. Fraser Stoddart[¶]

[†]Dipartimento di Chimica "G. Ciamician," Università di Bologna, via Selmi 2, 40126 Bologna, Italy; and [‡]California NanoSystems Institute and Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, 405 Hilgard Avenue, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90095

Edited by Jack Halpern, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, and approved December 6, 2005 (received for review October 14, 2005)

Light excitation powers the reversible shuttling movement of the ring component of a rotaxane between two stations located at a 1.3-nm distance on its dumbbell-shaped component. The photoinduced shuttling movement, which occurs in solution, is based on a "four-stroke" synchronized sequence of electronic and nuclear processes. At room temperature the deactivation time of the high-energy charge-transfer state obtained by light excitation is $\sim 10 \mu\text{s}$, and the time period required for the ring-displacement process is on the order of 100 μs . The rotaxane behaves as an



PHOTOCHEMISTRY

Lighting up nanomachines

Euan R. Kay and David A. Leigh

A cleverly engineered molecule uses light to generate a charge-separated state and so cause one of its components to move. It's the latest study of a molecular machine that exploits nature's most plentiful energy source.

Nature runs the nanomachinery that makes life possible using the last word in clean, free and readily available power sources — sunlight. In photosynthetic bacteria and green plants, photon absorption by chlorophyll generates a charge-separated state, from which the electron is quickly passed down a cascade of electron carriers, ultimately generating energy in a convenient chemical form. Can similar capabilities be engineered? An exemplary effort to do just this is given by Balzani *et al.* who, writing in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, describe photochemical experiments on an artificial machine that uses light to displace a fragment of its unimolecular structure.

Those who seek to harness the Sun's energy for synthetic molecular machines find that chemistry is always throwing up obstacles. In particular, charge recombination typically occurs thousands or millions of times faster than the nuclear movements on which such machines rely, making charge-separated states difficult to exploit. This problem can be overcome using intramolecular systems: here, the charged partners quickly diffuse apart so their energy can be used, for example, to achieve

switching in a rotaxane¹. This class of molecule, consisting of a ring that shuttles randomly and incessantly along a string, stopped only by bulky groups at the string's termini, is also that used by Balzani and colleagues². Their rotaxane² (Fig. 1) incorporates two structurally different bipyridinium sites — "stations" 1 and 2 — that drive the shuttling ring's motion through strong short-range electrostatic interactions. The ring thus divides its time between station 1, station 2 and the rest of the string in the ratio of around 95:5:1. At room temperature, the ring shuttles between the stations tens of thousands of times per second, but the net flux is zero. So no work can be done, or useful task performed, by the shuttling action (the "principle of detailed balance").

One of the bulky end-groups of the rotaxane's string is a ruthenium trisbipyridine complex. This can absorb a photon of visible light and so form a reactive, excited state that donates an electron to the more easily reduced of the two bipyridinium sites — station 1, the ring's preferred binding site. One would normally expect the resulting charge imbalance to be corrected by back-transfer of an electron on

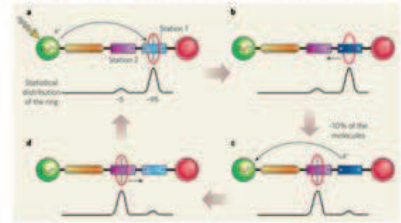


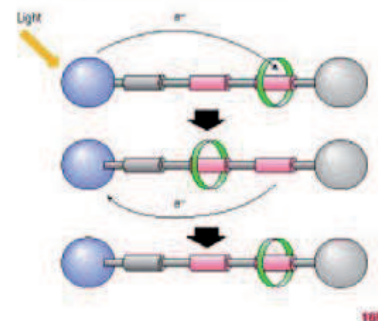
Figure 1 Light-driven molecular shuttle. Balzani and colleagues' rotaxane² consists of a molecular ring free to move along a molecular string. **a**, At equilibrium in the ground state, the ring spends most of the time over station 1, as a result of attractive, non-covalent interactions. But irradiation of the ruthenium complex (green) at one end of the string generates a highly reducing excited state, resulting in electron transfer to station 1, and the weakening of this station's electrostatic interaction with the ring. **b**, Normally, charge recombination is fast in comparison with nuclear motions, but here a delay allows approximately 10% of the molecules to undergo significant separation motions, shifting the distribution of three rings to favor station 2, **c**, & **d**, Where charge recombination eventually does take place, the higher binding affinity of station 1 is restored, and **d**, the system relaxes to restore the original statistical distribution of rings.

Nature
March 16,
2006, p. 286

Making light work of it

In contrast to motors in nature, artificial ones generally require one input to cause motion, followed by another to reset the motor. Often these inputs are chemical fuels, and therefore generate waste products, as well as requiring intervention at each stage. Now Balzani *et al.* report an autonomous motor powered simply with light (*Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* 103, 1178–1183; 2006). The motor consists of a rotaxane — a ring threaded around a dumbbell-shaped component of two electron-acceptor sites, or "stations", for the ring to move between, with a bulky stopper group on each end. Absorption of a photon at

a stopper group initiates electron transfer to the station where the ring rests, causing displacement to the second station. An electron can then transfer back to the stopper group from the now-free first station, and the ring can return to its original position. The motor works analogously to a four-stroke engine, with fuel injection and combustion, piston displacement, exhaust removal and piston-replacement steps. The motors of Balzani *et al.* rely exclusively on intramolecular processes and light absorption, and therefore do not consume chemical fuel or produce waste.

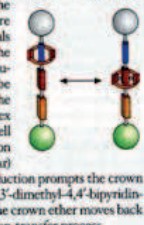


Nature Materials
Vol. 4,
March 2006,
p. 165

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY CONCENTRATES

Light drives molecular motor

A molecular motor powered by sunlight alone has been prepared by chemists in Italy and in the U.S. (*Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 2006, 103, 1178). Vincenzo Balzani and Alberto Credi of the University of Bologna, J. Fraser Stoddart of the University of California, Los Angeles, and their coworkers believe their device is unique for several reasons. Because it's powered solely by visible light, the motor's movement — the shuttling of a crown ether back and forth between two points on the handle of a dumbbell-shaped structure (shown) — requires no additional chemicals and produces no waste products. Also, the shuttle's movement relies on intramolecular processes, so it could, in principle, be operated at the single-molecule level. The motor moves when a ruthenium complex (green sphere) at one end of the dumbbell absorbs a photon and transfers an electron to a 4,4'-bipyridinium moiety (blue bar) within the dumbbell's handle. This reduction prompts the crown ether (pink circle) to move 1.3 nm to a 3,3'-dimethyl-4,4'-bipyridinium unit (red bar) in the compound. The crown ether moves back to its original position via a back electron-transfer process.



subjected the protein to an approach called SIAFE (simultaneous incorporation and adjustment of functional elements) in conjunction with directed evolution (iterative modification and selection for desirable activity). The result was eMBL8, a designed enzyme with the ability to hydrolyze β -lactam amide bonds, a type of activity on which bacterial resistance to β -lactam antibiotics is based. Key to the change was the replacement of several of the enzyme's surface loop structures. The researchers say they hope the technique can be extended to convert other structures into enzymes that catalyze diverse reactions, including some not found in nature.

Down-to-earth NMR spectrometry

Chemical & Engineering News
January 30, 2006, p. 36

Synthetic procedures

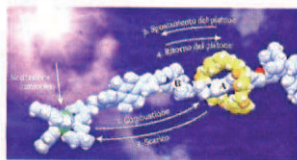
Nano Motor Powered by Solar Energy

Chemists at the University of Bologna (Italy), UCLA, and the California NanoSystems Institute (both USA) have designed and constructed a rotaxane-based molecular motor of nanometer size that is powered only by sunlight. The system is built up from a dumbbell-shaped component, which is more than 6 nm long, and a ring component of a diameter of approximately 1.3 nm. The ring component is trapped on the rod portion by two bulky stoppers, which are attached to the ends of the rod so that the ring cannot slip off. The rod portion of the dumbbell contains two "stations" that can be called

Small
Vol. 2, April 2006
p. 446

UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

Motore molecolare superveloce



Si chiama Sunny il nanomotore inventato da un gruppo di scienziati del dipartimento di Chimica dell'Università di Bologna in collaborazione con l'Università della California di Los Angeles. È un minuscolo motore a 4 tempi che funziona con l'energia solare, non produce inquinanti e supera i 60.000 giri al minuto (è il più veloce del mondo della categoria). Il nuovo prototipo di motore molecolare (nell'illustrazione sopra), che verrà presentato nei «Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences», è composto di due molecole: una filiforme, lunga circa 6 nanometri che funziona da asse di scorrimento (B), l'altra ad anello (A), infilata nella prima, con un diametro di 1,3 nanometri.

Corriere della Sera

24 Gennaio 2006

p. 26

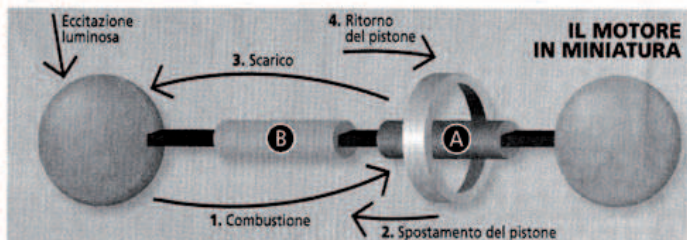
TECNOLOGIA

Il nanomotore è meglio di una Formula 1

DUE MOLECOLE CON IL SOLE COME CARBURANTE. TANTE APPLICAZIONI, DALLA MEDICINA ALL'INFORMATICA

UN motore di Formula 1 arriva a 20 mila giri al minuto. Questo supera i 60 mila. Piacerebbe di sicuro a Schumacher, se non fosse piccolissimo: è un nanomotore formato da due molecole. Invisibile a occhio nudo. Ha però un vantaggio straordinario: non richiede benzina, lo fa girare la luce del sole. Per questo i ricercatori dell'Università di Bologna, che l'hanno realizzato con l'Università della California, lo chiamano «Sunny». La notizia è su «Pnas», la rivista dell'Accademia americana delle Scienze. Il gruppo italiano fa capo a Vincenzo Balzani, uno dei 50 chimici più citati nelle riviste scientifiche. Il laboratorio Nanofaber della Regione Emilia sta esplorandone le future applicazioni.

L'unità di misura delle nanotecnologie è il nanometro, il milionesimo di metro o - se preferite - il milionesimo di mili-



metro. Il motore «Sunny» è formato da una molecola sottile, lunga 6 nanometri, che funziona da asse di scorrimento, e da una molecola ad anello dal diametro di 1,3 nanometri, infilata nella prima. Sotto l'azione della luce l'anello scorre lungo la molecola mille volte al secondo. In sostanza, l'anello si muove come un pistone che trasforma l'energia

dei fotoni solari in lavoro utilizzabile. Esiste un altro motore molecolare concettualmente simile costruito all'Università di Groningen nei Paesi Bassi, ma impiega un'ora a completare un ciclo: quello bolognese è quasi 4 milioni di volte più veloce.

Tipica delle nanotecnologie è la trasversalità. Sono utilizzabili nei settori più diversi: farmacia,

elettronica, meccanica, chimica, fisica. Una possibile applicazione riguarda la salute: l'anello mobile funziona come un nastro trasportatore e, quindi, può far passare un farmaco attraverso la membrana delle cellule. Un altro uso potenziale riguarda l'informatica: si pensa a un computer chimico che sfrutti la logica binaria del nanomotore, fa-

MADE IN ITALY IL PIÙ ECOLOGICO E VELOCE DEL MONDO

Un nanomotore a «benzina» solare

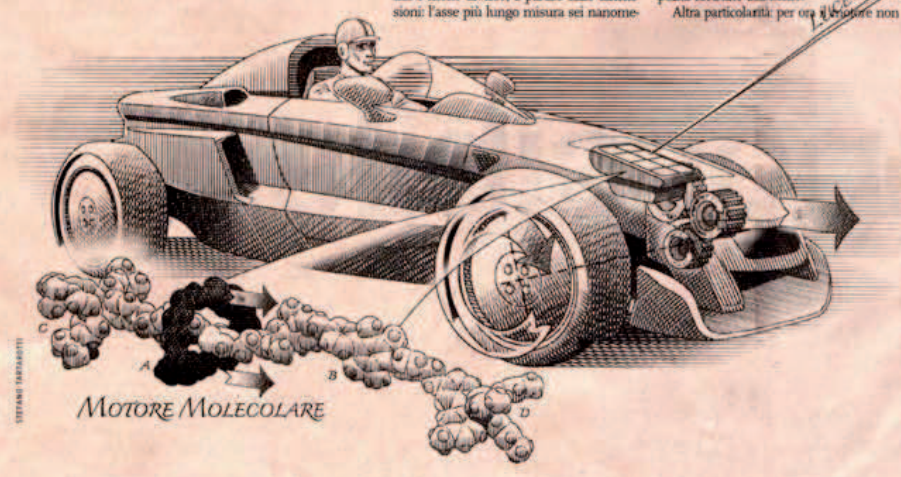
Chimici bolognesi hanno costruito una macchina microscopica azionata dalla luce, che non genera alcun prodotto di scarto

DI LARA RICCI

Un motore portentoso: funziona a energia solare, è velocissimo e pulito, non emette prodotti di scarto. «Sunny» è un macchinario al confine dell'altro mondo, quello invisibile, dell'ultrapiccolo, dove le leggi sono quelle della fisica quantistica. Ha quattro tempi come il motore a scoppio, ma è molto diverso, a partire dalle dimensioni: l'asse più lungo misura sei nanome-

tri, impossibile da vedere, difficile da immaginare. Un nanometro, cioè un milionesimo di metro, è circa 80 mila volte più piccolo del diametro di un capello umano, o ancora, è uno spessore centomila volte minore di quello di un foglio di carta. La velocità di Sunny è sbalorditiva: un milione di volte maggiore dell'unico altro esempio al mondo di motore molecolare a energia pulita costruito dall'uomo.

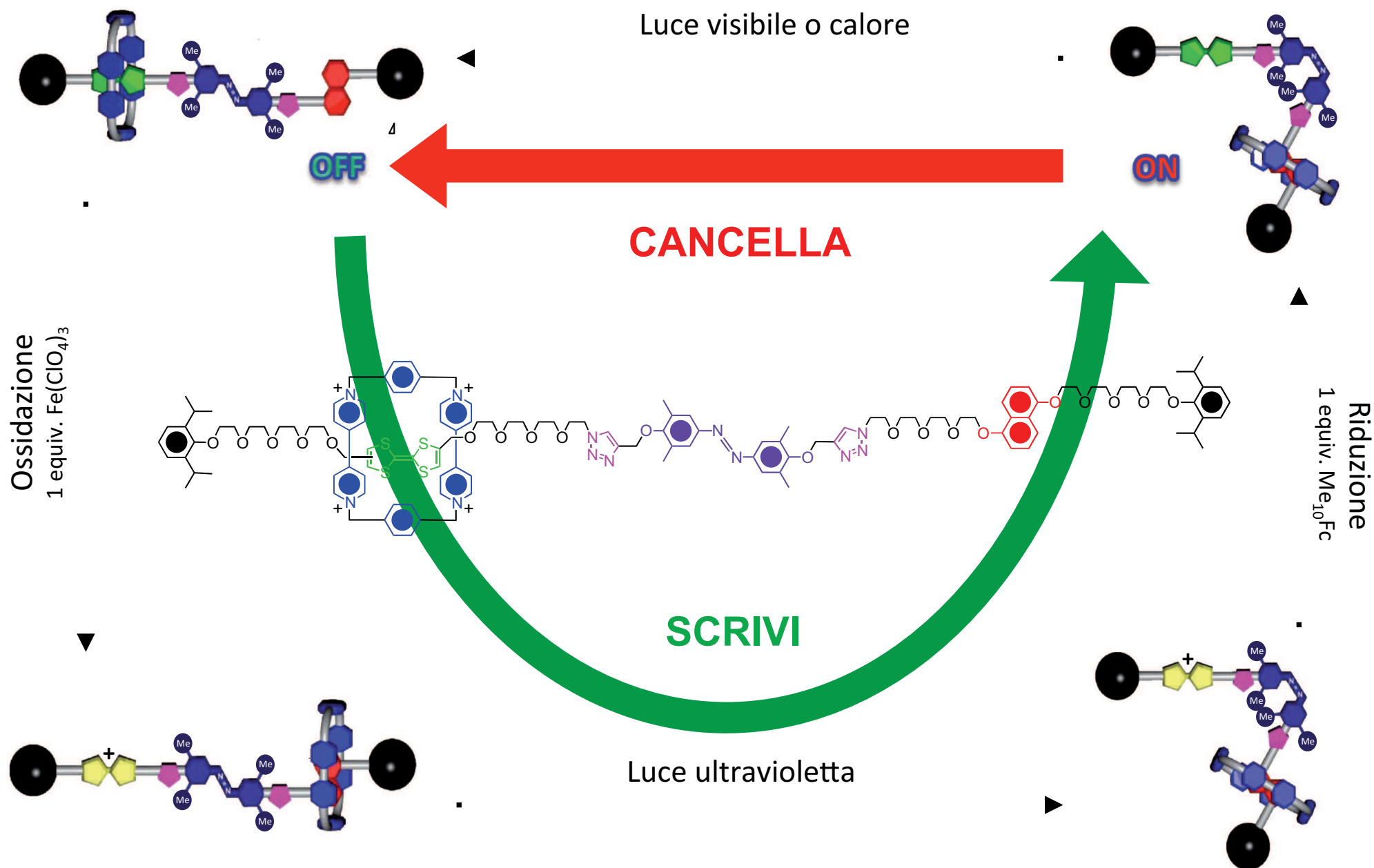
Altra particolarità: per ora il motore non



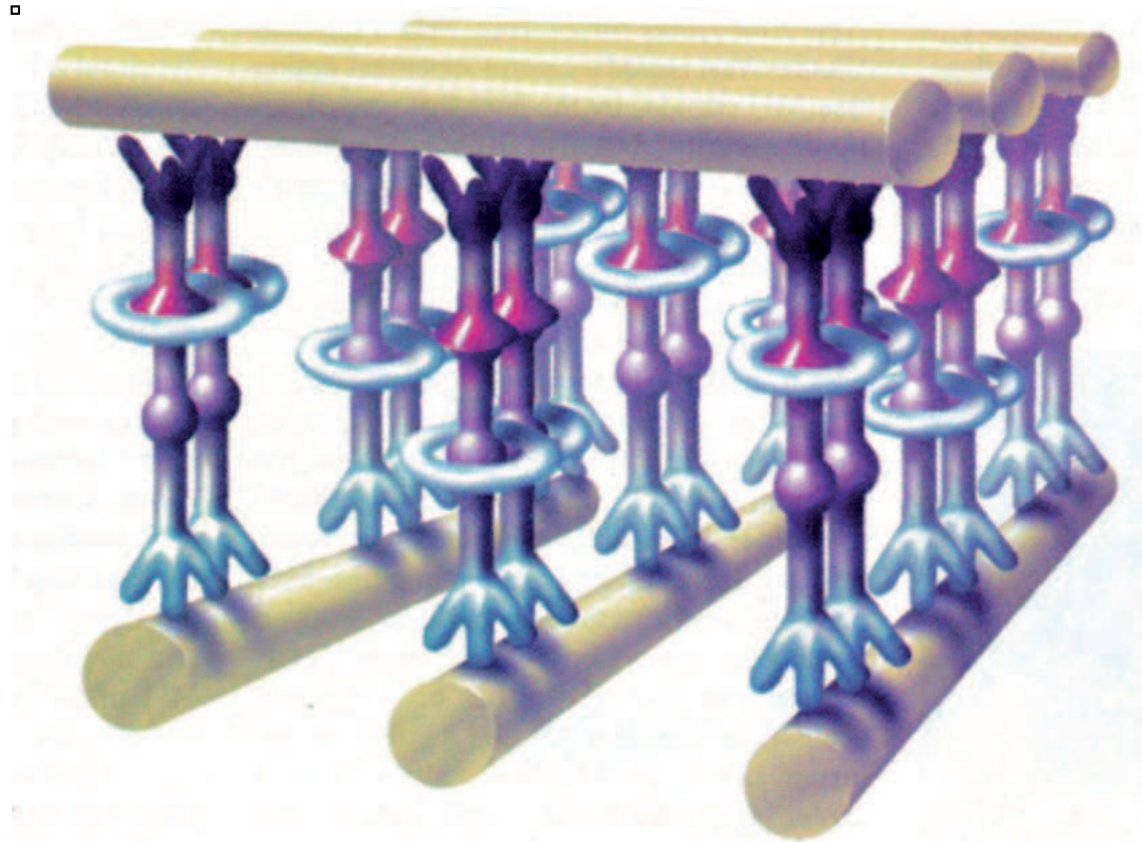
Il Sole-24 Ore
26 Gennaio 2006

La Stampa-Tuttoscienze
1 Febbraio 2006, p. 2

Effetto memoria in macchine molecolari



Memorie molecolari



Molecular memory circuit. In a promising array design, currents passed between perpendicular nanowires alter the conductivity of organic molecules sandwiched in between.

3 AUGUST 2001 VOL 293 SCIENCE www.sciencemag.org

LETTERS

A 160-kilobit molecular electronic memory patterned at 10^{11} bits per square centimetre

Jonathan E. Green^{1*}, Jang Wook Choi^{1*}, Akram Boukai¹, Yuri Bunimovich¹, Ezekiel Johnston-Halperin^{1†}, Erica Delonno¹, Yi Luo^{1†}, Bonnie A. Sheriff¹, Ke Xu¹, Young Shik Shin¹, Hsian-Rong Tseng^{2†}, J. Fraser Stoddart² & James R. Heath¹

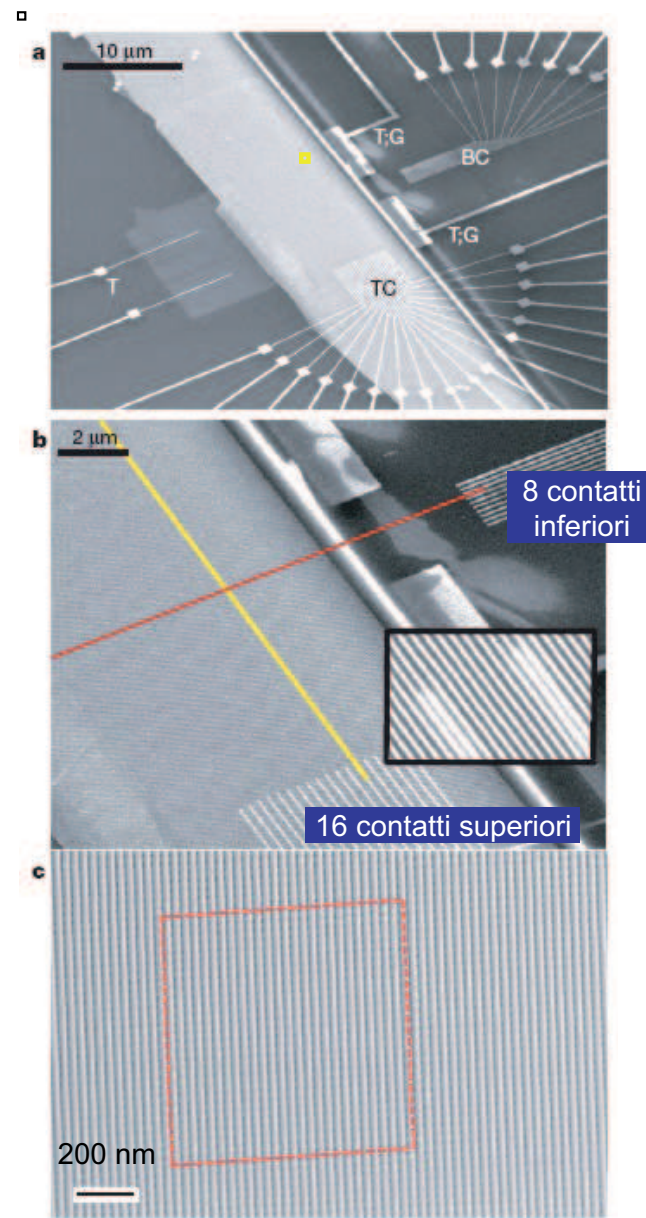
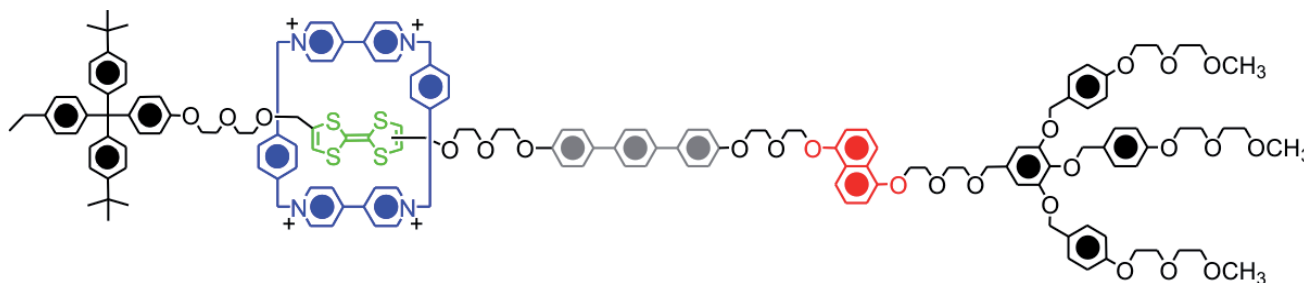
Circuito di memoria di 160.000 bit (400x400) basato su molecole

Densità: 10^{11} bit/cm²

Distanza fra gli elementi: 0.33 nm

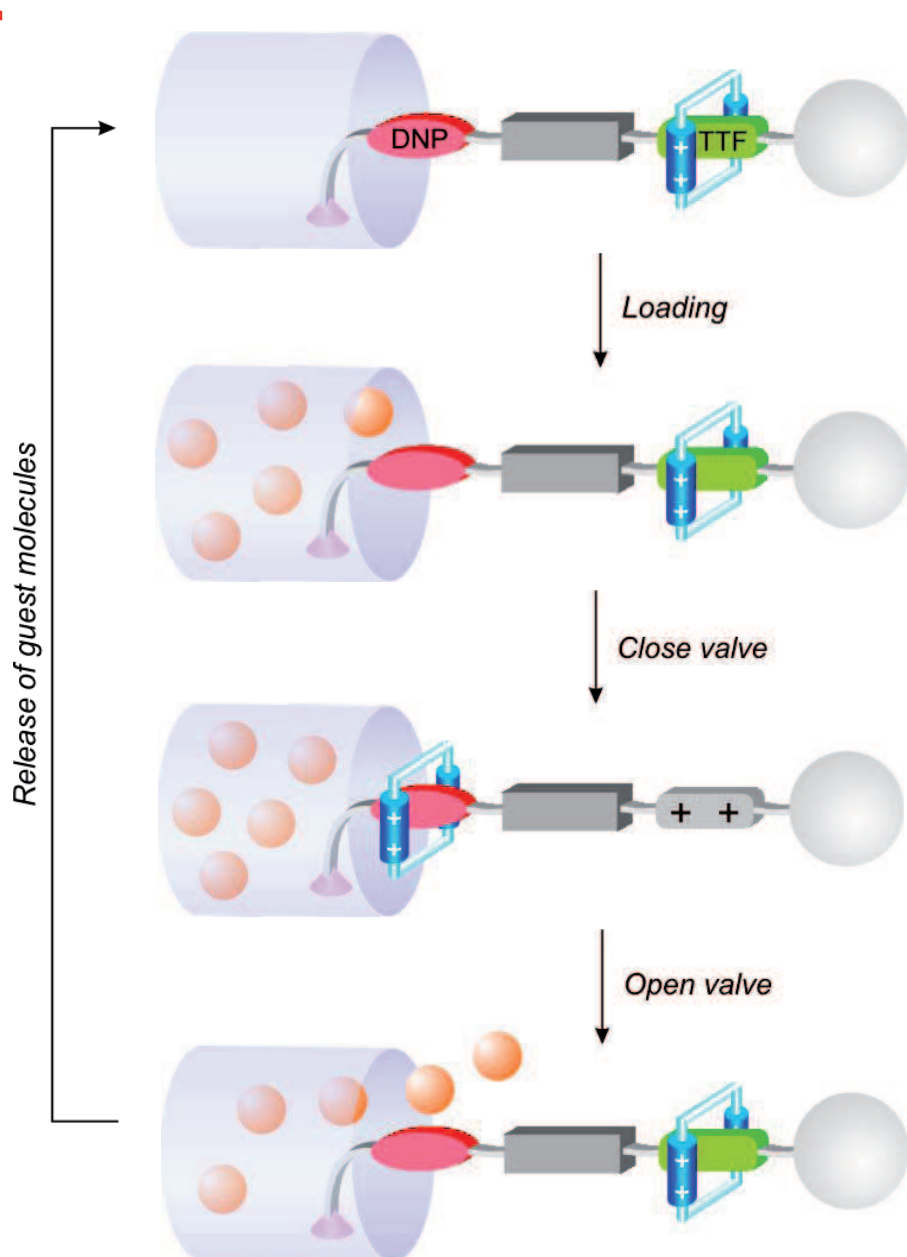
Dimensioni della cella di memoria: 0.0011 μm^2

Ciascuna giunzione contiene circa 100 molecole di rotassano



Immagini al microscopio elettronico

Nanovalvole per rilascio molecolare controllato



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Themed Issue: Inorganic nanoparticles for biological sensing, imaging, and therapeutics

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RSC Publishing

HIGHLIGHT
Jeffrey Zink *et al.*
Mesoporous multifunctional
nanoparticles for imaging and drug
delivery

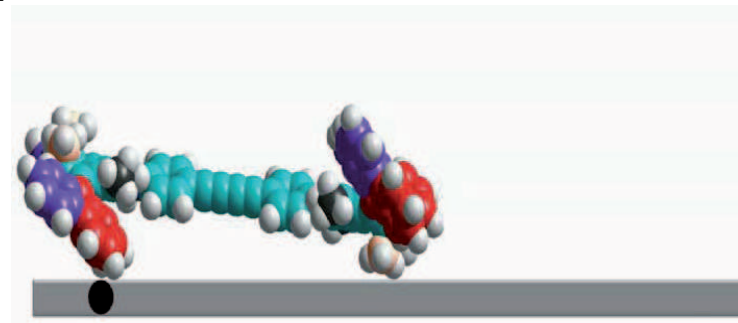
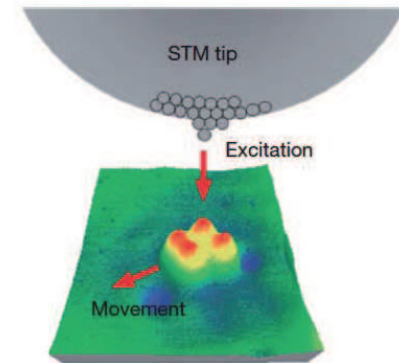
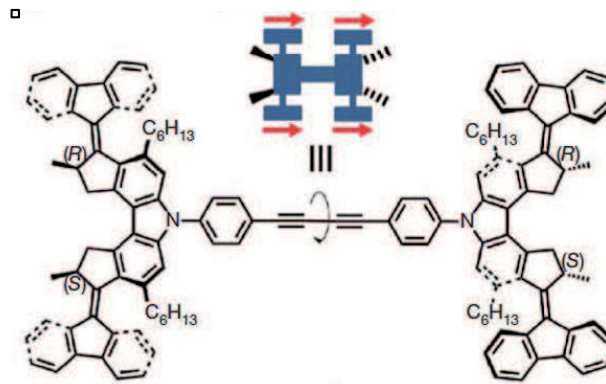
COMMUNICATION
Warren Chen and Sawitri Maityani
Quantification of quantum dots using
phage screening and assay



0959-9428(2009)19:35;1-O

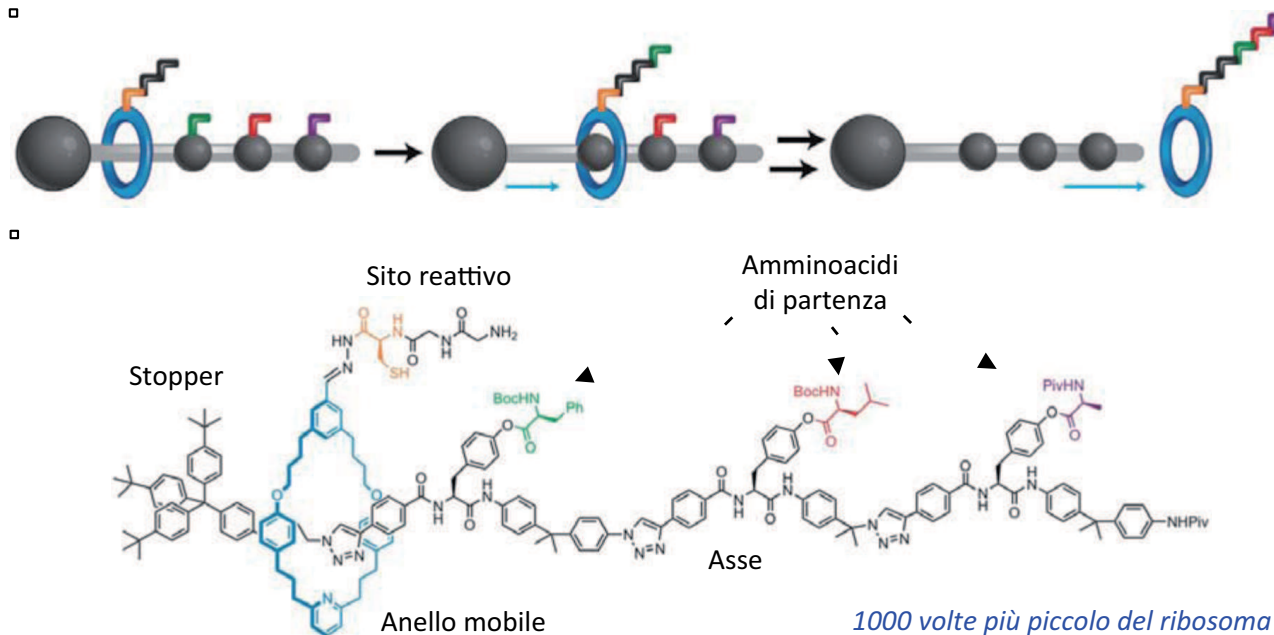
Nanoveicoli in movimento autonomo su superfici

B. L. Feringa e altri, *Nature*, **2011**, 479, 208



Macchine molecolari per la sintesi di oligopeptidi

D.A. Leigh e altri, *Science* **2013**, 339, 189



1000 volte più piccolo del ribosoma

Macchine molecolari, nanotecnologie, ...

...per fare che cosa?

Per alleviare la povertà

Per curare le malattie

Per risolvere il problema energetico

.....

Per applicazioni pacifiche

Per il bene di tutti