Stimuli-responsive Materials and Biomimetic Microfluidics

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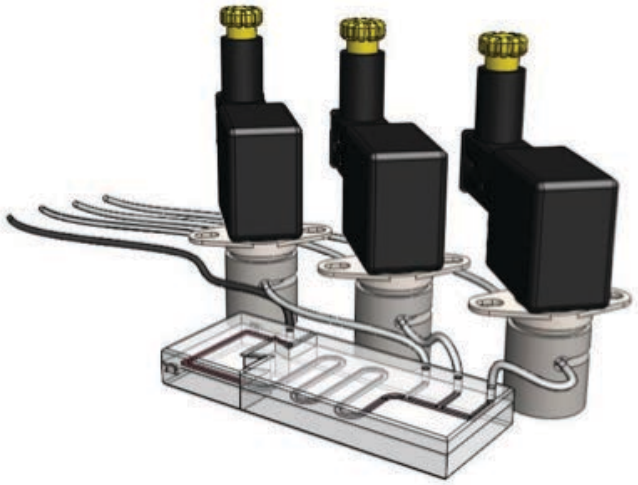
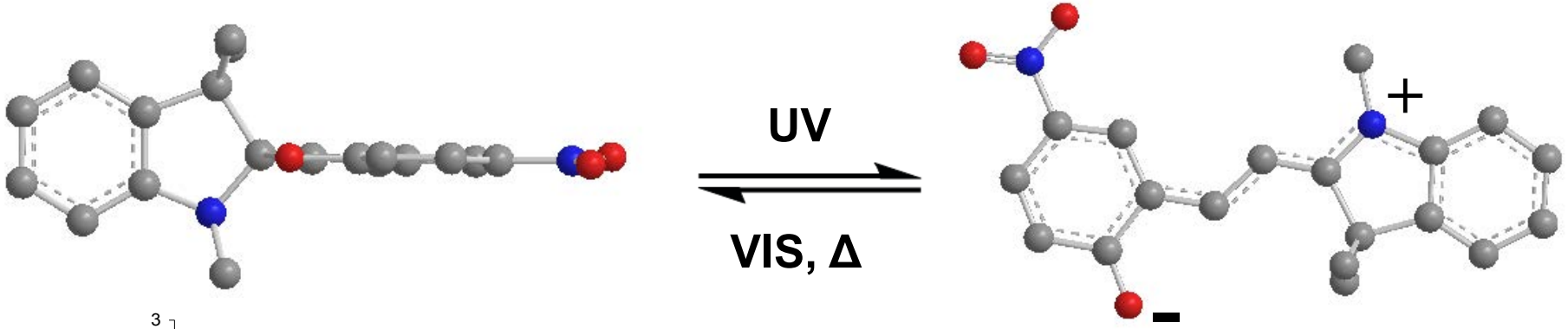
How to advance fluid handling in LOC platforms: re-invent valves (and pumps)!

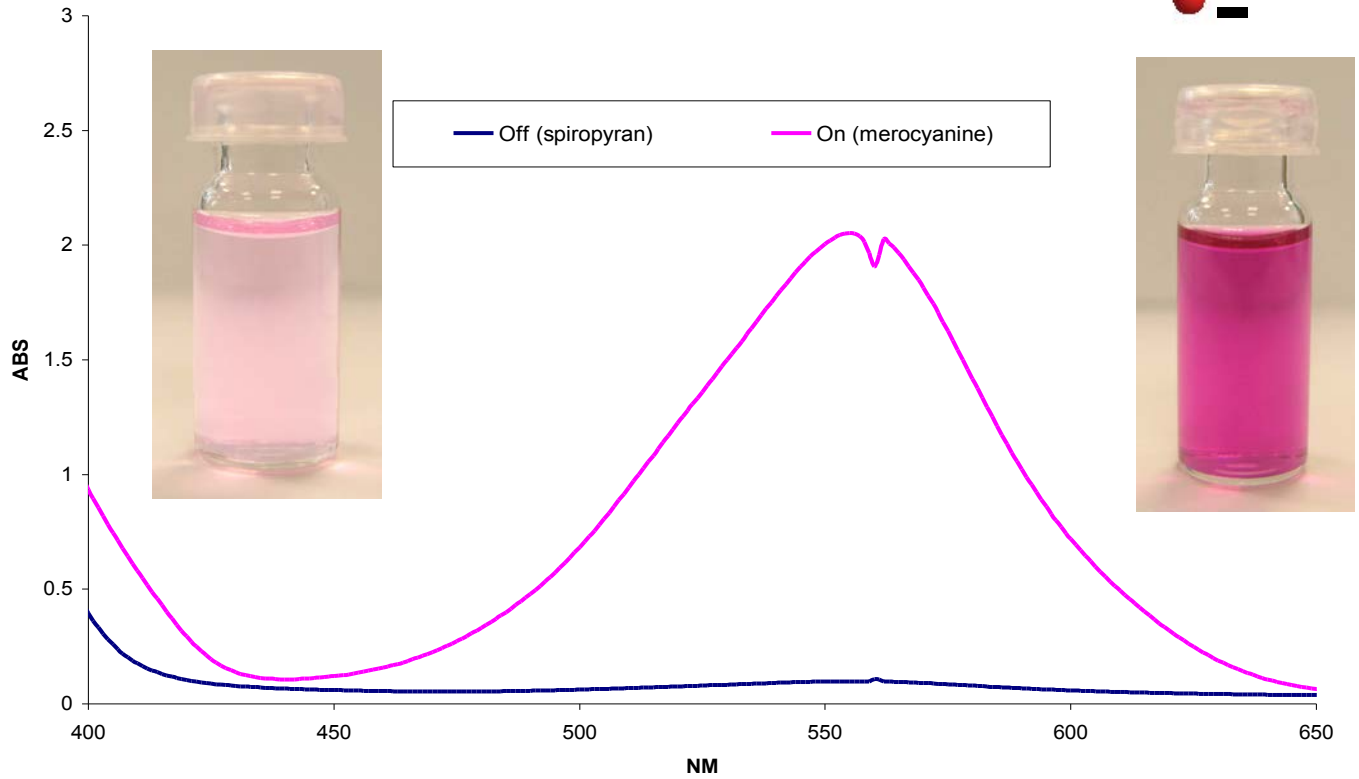
- **Conventional valves cannot be easily scaled down - Located off chip: fluidic interconnects required**
  - Complex fabrication
  - Increased dead volume
  - Mixing effects
- **Based on solenoid action**
  - Large power demand
  - Expensive



Solution: soft-polymer (biomimetic) valves fully integrated into the fluidic system

Photoswitchable Actuators





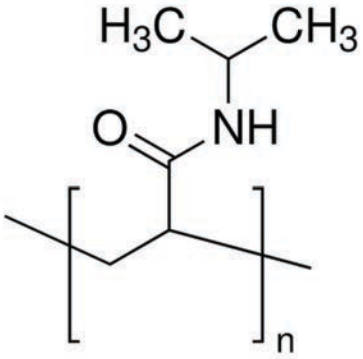
Famous Molecule….

From Prof. Thorfinnur Gunnlaugsson, TCD School of Chemistry
Spotted on Nickelodeon Cartoons February 2015

Poly(*N*-isopropylacrylamide)

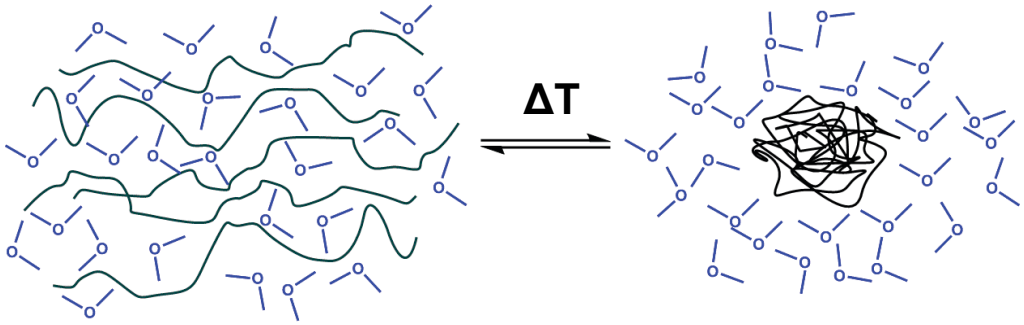
- pNIPAAM exhibits inverse solubility upon heating
- This is referred to as the LCST (Lower Critical Solution Temperature)
- Typically this temperature lies between 30-35^{o}C, but the exact temperature is a function of the (macro)molecular microstructure
- Upon reaching the LCST the polymer undergoes a dramatic volume change, as the hydrated polymer chains collapse to a globular structure, expelling the bound water in the process

pNIPAAM



Hydrophilic

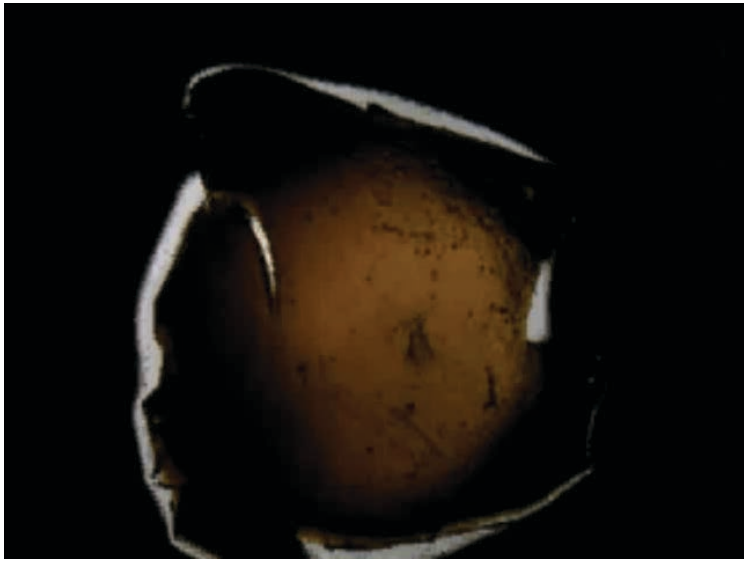
Hydrophobic

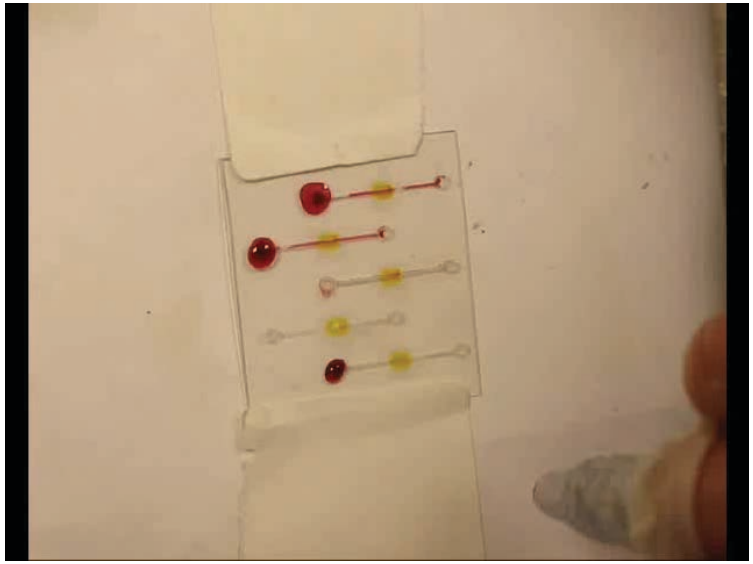


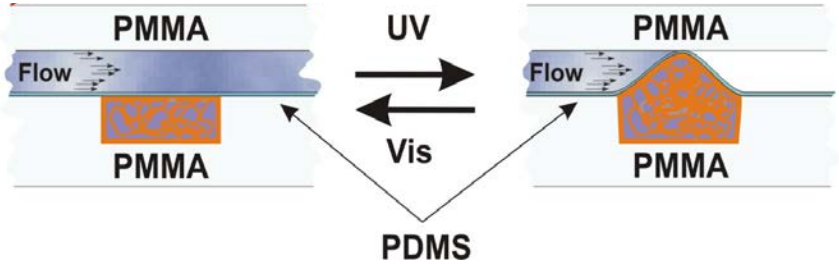
Hydrated Polymer Chains

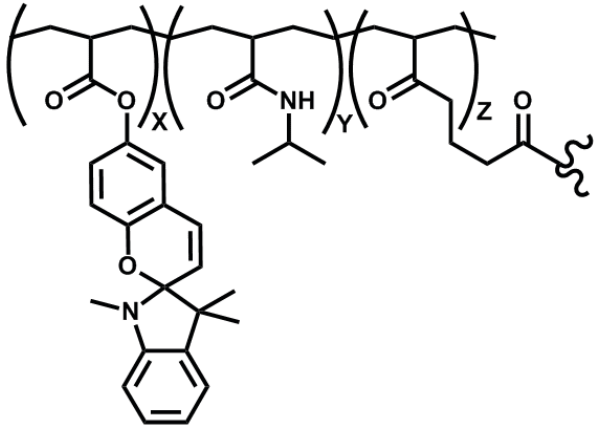
Loss of bound water -> polymer collapse

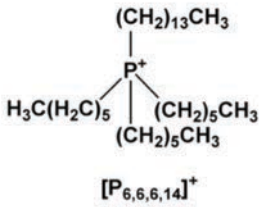
Photo-actuator polymers as microvalves in microfluidic systems

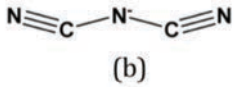








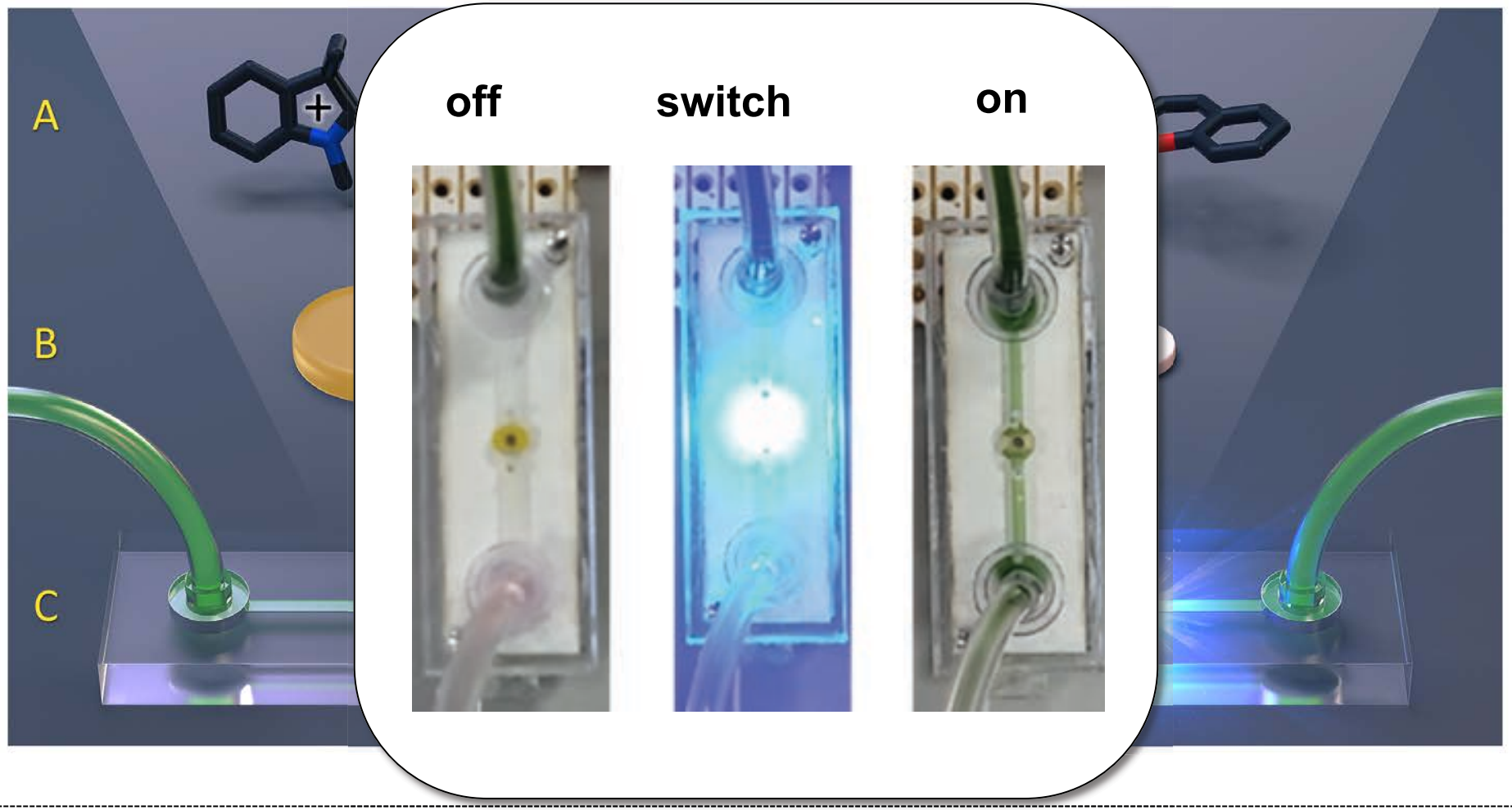




trihexyltetradecylphosphonium dicyanoamide $[P_{6,6,6,14}]^+[dca]^-$

Ionogel-based light-actuated valves for controlling liquid flow in micro-fluidic manifolds, Fernando Benito-Lopez, Robert Byrne, Ana Maria Raduta, Nihal Engin Vrana, Garrett McGuinness, Dermot Diamond, Lab Chip, 10 (2010) 195-201.

Reversible Photo-Switching of Flow



From *'Molecular Design of Light-Responsive Hydrogels, For in Situ Generation of Fast and Reversible Valves for Microfluidic Applications*', J. ter Schiphorst, S. Coleman, J.E. Stumpel, A. Ben Azouz, D. Diamond and A. P. H. J. Schenning, Chem. Mater., 27 (2015) 5925−5931. **(cover article)**

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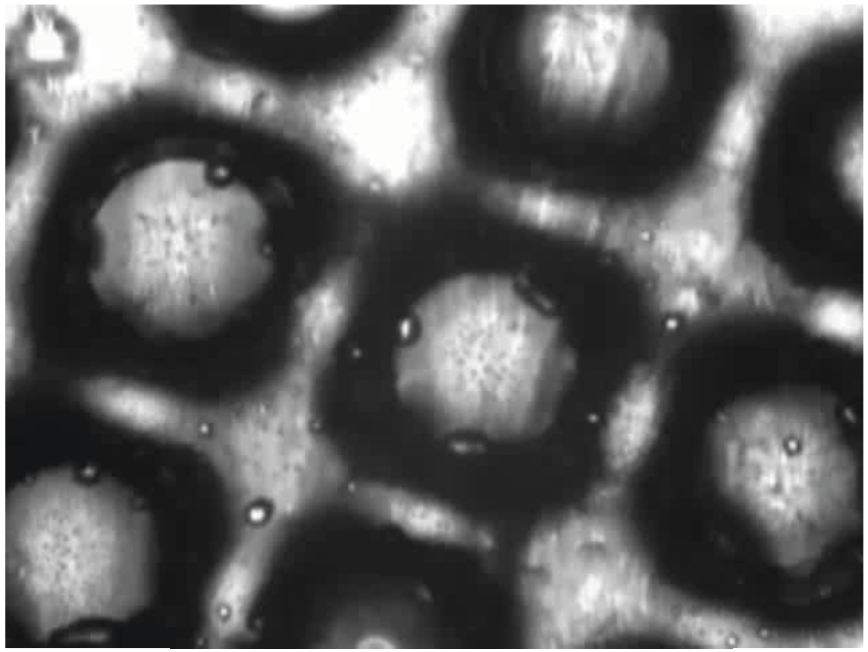
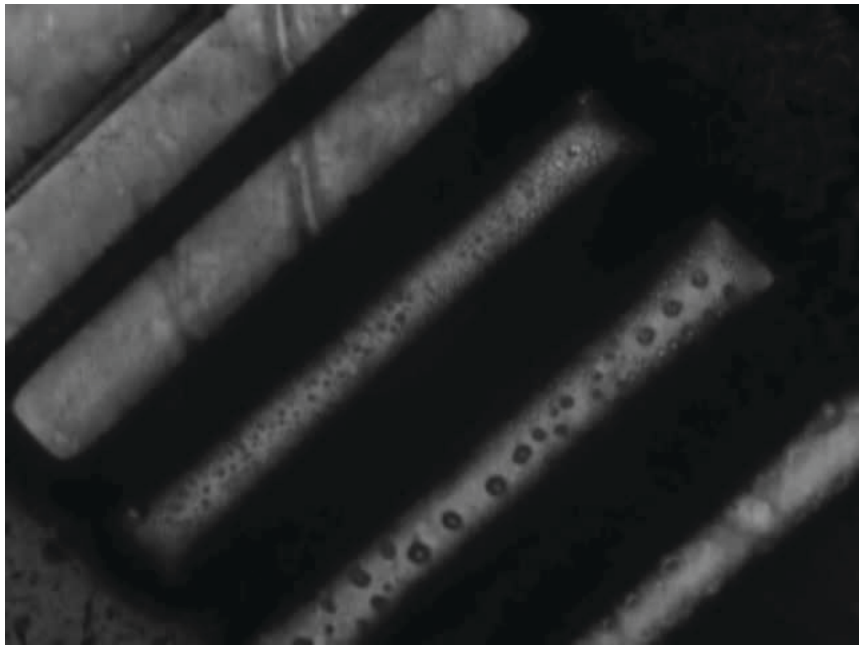
Flexible creation of μ-dimensioned features in flow channels using in-situ photo-polymerisation



Ntf2 pillars speed x3



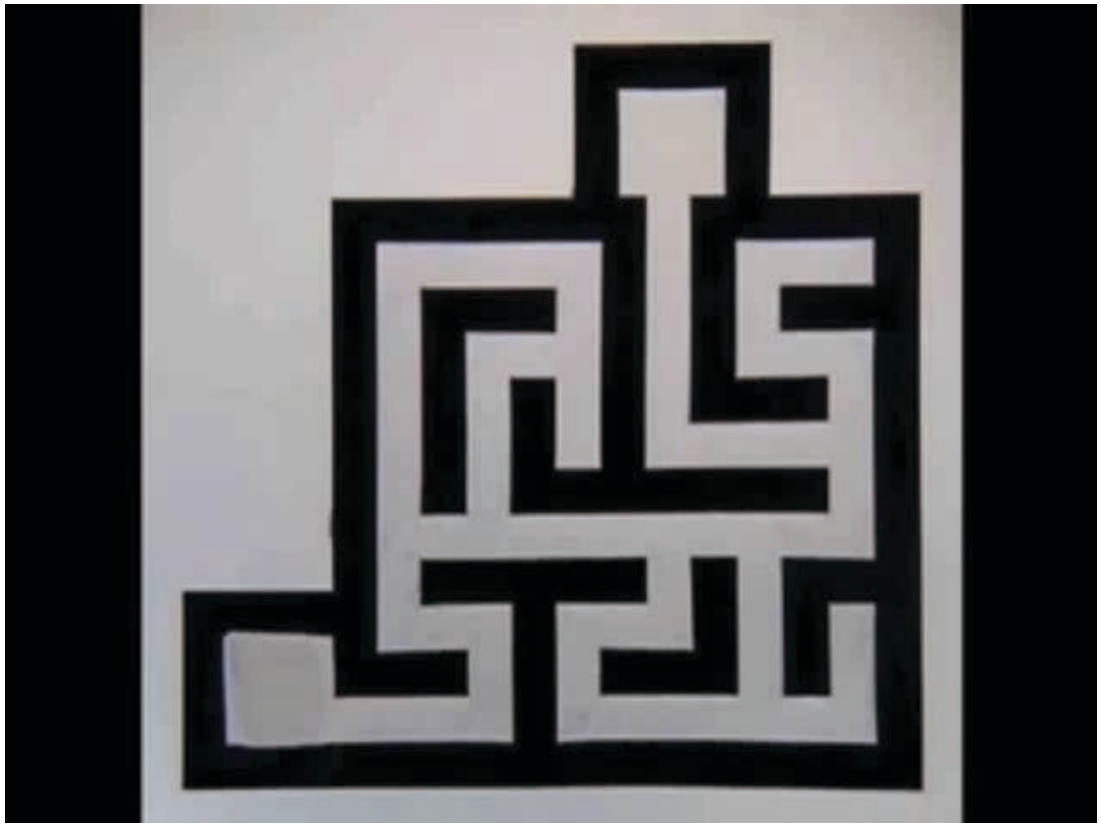
DCA lines speed x4

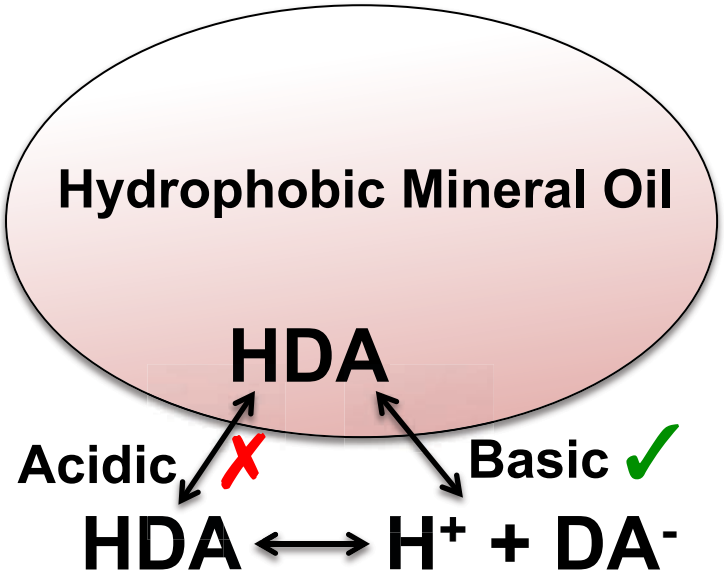
With Dr Peer Fischer, Fraunhofer-Institut für Physikalische Messtechnik (IPM), Freiburg

Multi-Functional Bio-Inspired Fluidics!

- **At present, the fluidic system's function is to;**
  - Transport reagents, samples, standards to the detector
  - Perform relatively simple (but important) tasks like cleaning, mixing
  - Switching between samples, standards, cleaning solutions
- **In the future, the fluidic system will perform much more sophisticated 'bioinspired' functions**
  - System diagnostics, leak/damage detection
  - Self-repair capability
  - Switchable behaviour (e.g. surface roughness, binding/release),
- **These functions will be inherent to the channels and integrated with circulating smart micro/nano-vehicles**
  - Spontaneously move under an external stimulus (e.g. chemical, thermal gradient) to preferred locations

Chemotactic Systems





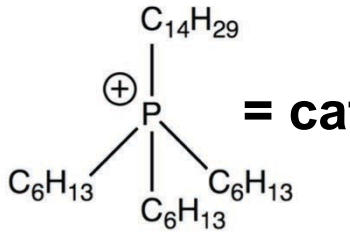
In a pH gradient, DA^- is preferentially transferred to the aqueous phase at the more basic side of the drop.

Published on Web 11/01/2010 (speed ~x4): channels filled with KOH (pH 12.0-12.3 + surfactant; agarose gel soaked in HCl (pH 1.2) sets up the pH gradient; droplets of mineral oil or DCM containing 20-60% 2-hexyldecanoic acid + dye. Droplet speed ca. 1-10 mm/s; movement caused by convective flows arising from concentration gradient of HDA at droplet-air interface (greater concentration of DA^- towards higher pH side); **HDA <-> H^+ + DA^-**

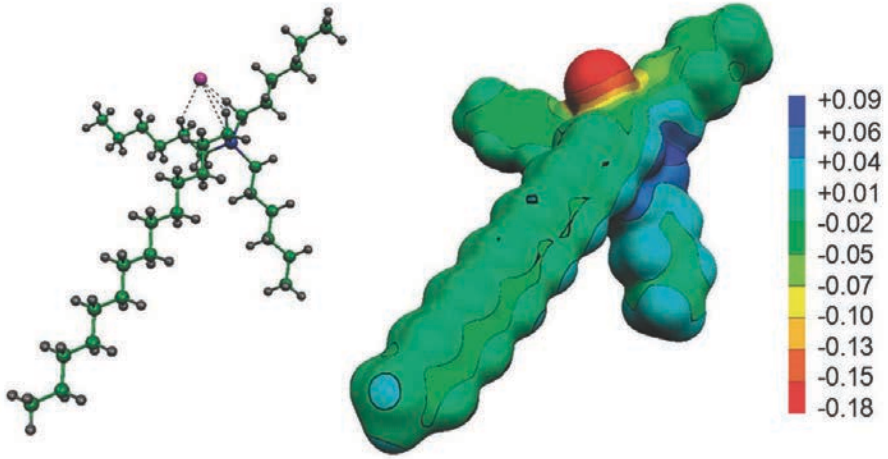
Maze Solving by Chemotactic Droplets; Istvan Lagzi, Siowling Soh, Paul J. Wesson, Kevin P. Browne, and Bartosz A. Grzybowski; **J. AM. CHEM. SOC. 2010,** ***132, 1198–1199***

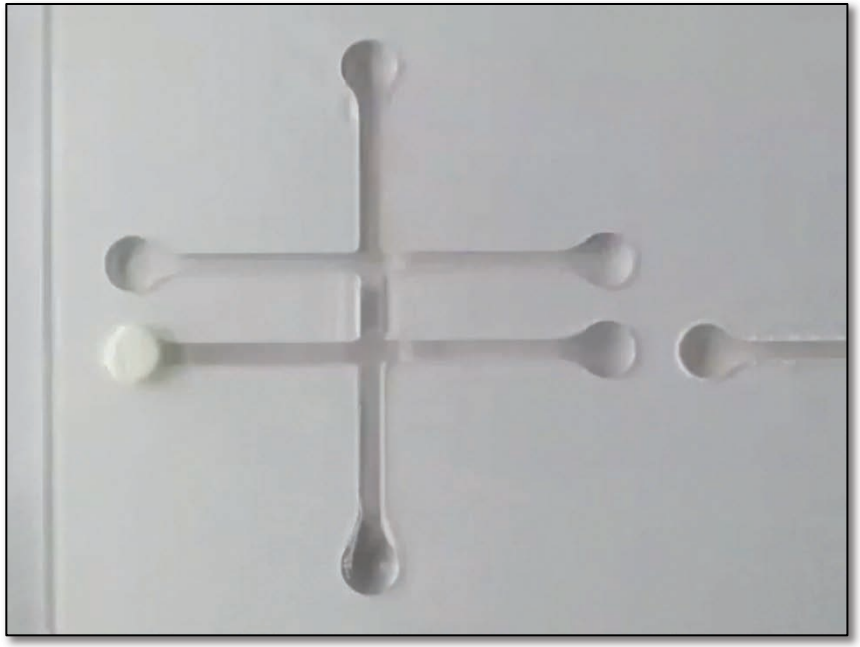
Fuerstman, M. J.; Deschatelets, P.; Kane, R.; Schwartz, A.; Kenis, P. J. A.;Deutch, J. M.; Whitesides, G. M. *Langmuir 2003, 19, 4714.*

We can do the same with IL Droplets



= cationic surfactant

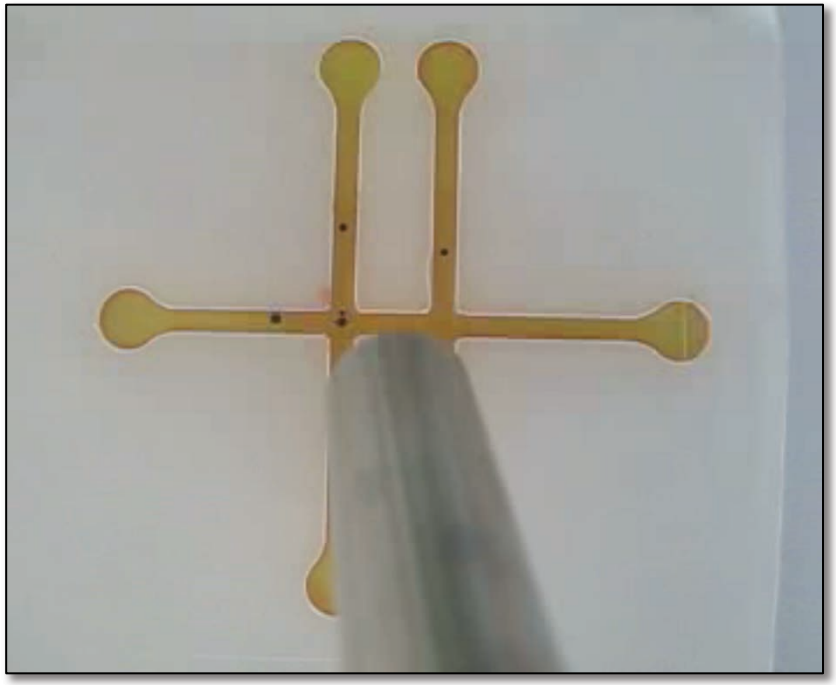




Trihexyl(tetradecyl)phosphonium chloride ($[P_{6,6,6,14}][Cl]$) droplets with a small amount of 1-(methylamino)anthraquinone red dye for visualization. The droplets spontaneously follow the gradient of the Cl^- ion which is created using a polyacrylamide gel pad soaked in 10^{-2} M HCl; A small amount of NaCl crystals can also be used to drive droplet movement.

Electronic structure calculations and physicochemical experiments quantify the competitive liquid ion association and probe stabilisation effects for nitrobenzospiropyran in phosphonium-based ionic liquids, D. Thompson et al., *Physical Chemistry Chemical Physics*, 2011, 13, 6156-6168.

Movement of Droplets in Channels using Light



- We use light to create a localised pH gradient
- This disrupts an ion pair at the droplet interface
- Surfactant is expelled and movement of the droplet occurs
- Interested in exploring how to use droplets for sensing and for transport & release of active components

Electrochemical Generation of Cl- gradients on demand…

Time to re-think the game!!!

- New materials with exciting characteristics and unsurpassed potential…
- Combine with emerging technologies and techniques for exquisite control of 3D morphology
- And greatly improved methods for characterisation of structure and activity

We have the tools – now we need creativity!

Thanks for listening

sfi DCU UCC OÉ Gaillimh NUI Galway UCD DUBLIN