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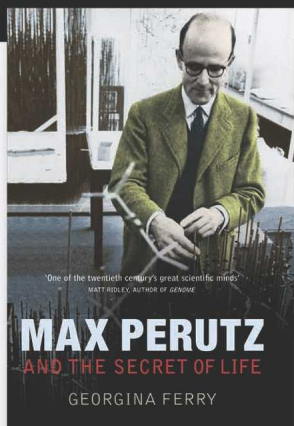
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# MAX PERUTZ

## AND THE SECRET OF LIFE



*"In science, truth always wins."  
—Max Perutz*

By Georgina Ferry

Few scientists have thought more deeply about the nature of their calling and its impact on humanity than Max Perutz (1914-2002). Born in Vienna, Jewish by descent, lapsed Catholic by religion, he came to Cambridge in 1936, to join the lab of the legendary Communist thinker J.D. Bernal. There he began to explore the structures of the molecules that hold the secret of life. In 1940, he was interned and deported to Canada as an enemy alien, only to be brought back and set to work on a bizarre top secret war project. In 1947, he founded the small research group in which Francis Crick and James Watson discovered the structure of DNA: under his leadership it grew to become the world-famous Laboratory for Molecular Biology. Max himself explored the protein hemoglobin and his work, which won him a Nobel Prize in 1962, launched a new era of medicine, heralding today's astonishing advances in the genetic basis of disease.

Max Perutz's story, wonderfully told by Georgina Ferry, brims with life. It has the zest of an adventure novel and is full of extraordinary characters. Max was demanding, passionate and driven but also humorous, compassionate and loving. Small in stature, he became a fearless mountain climber; drawing on his own experience as a refugee, he argued fearlessly for human rights; he could be ruthless but had a talent for friendship. An articulate and engaging advocate of science, he found new problems to engage his imagination until weeks before he died aged 88.

**About the author:** Georgina Ferry is a former staff editor on *New Scientist*, and contributor to BBC Radio 4's *Science Now*. Her books include the acclaimed biography *Dorothy Hodgkin: A Life* (1998); *The Common Thread* (2002, with Sir John Sulston) and *A Computer Called LEO* (2003). She lives in Oxford.

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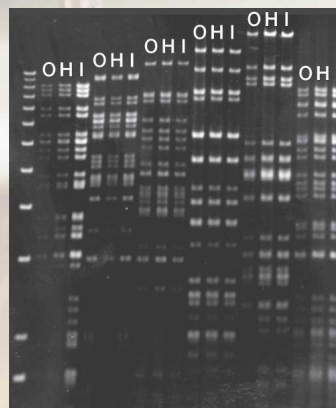
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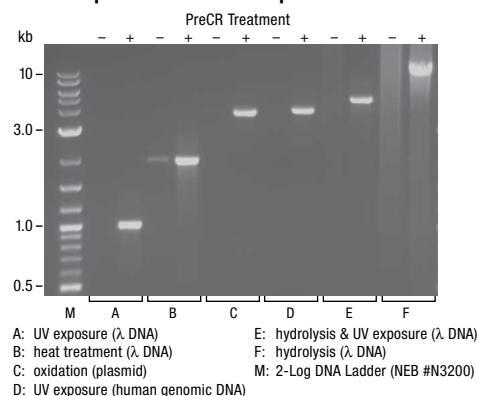
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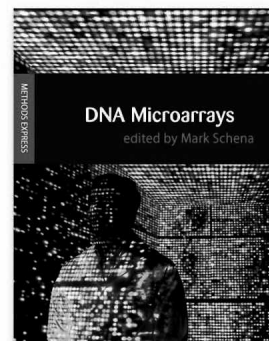
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## MOLECULAR EVOLUTION

February 3-8, 2008  
Crowne Plaza, Ventura, CA

<http://www.grc.org/programs.aspx?year=2008&program=molecevo>

This biennial Gordon Research Conference on Molecular Evolution draws scientists from a diversity of fields and promotes interactions between evolutionary and population genetics, genomics, computational biology, developmental biology, molecular biology, ecology, microbial physiology, and medical genetics and epidemiology.

The goal of this conference is to bring together representatives from this diversity of research areas to examine the most recent findings on the molecular bases of evolution. Molecular evolution underlies much of comparative genomics, informs models of computational biology, and provides a framework for understanding evolution of development and complex systems. The small size of the conference (restricted to 130 participants) and the location (on the beach in sunny Ventura, CA), coupled with the large blocks of time set aside for informal discussion are all critical features to the ongoing success of this conference. The following sessions and speakers have been confirmed:

### Exploring Adaptive Landscapes

Ben Kerr (University of Washington)  
Tony Dean (University of Minnesota)  
Dan Weinreich (Brown University)

### Measuring Evolutionary Timescales with classes of molecular markers

Bret Payseur (University of Wisconsin at Madison)  
Asher Cutter (University of Toronto)  
Joanna Mountain (Stanford University)

### Molecular Basis of Heart Evolution

Doug Crawford (University of Miami)  
Brad Davidson (University of Arizona)  
Jose Xavier-Neto (Universidade de São Paulo)  
Nadia Rosenthal

### Positive and Negative Selection on Noncoding DNA

Peter Andolfatto (Univ. of California at San Diego)  
Manolis Dermitzakis (The Wellcome Trust, Sanger Institute)

### Evolvability

Günter Wagner (Yale University)  
Lilach Hadany (University of Iowa)  
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Susan Rosenberg (Baylor College of Medicine)

### Molecular Evolution of Body Axes

Mike Levine (University of California at Berkeley)  
Elaine Seaver (University of Hawaii)  
Mark Martindale (University of Hawaii)  
John Gerhart (University of California at Berkeley)

### Computational and Statistical Advances

Sudir Kumar (Arizona State University)  
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RNA Catalysis	RNA Editing and Modification
RNA Structure and Folding	Splicing Mechanisms & Regulation
Bioinformatics	3' End Formation
RNA & Disease	Ribosomes & Translational Regulation
Viral RNA Mechanisms	Novel Methods in RNA&RNP Research

*RNA2008 will start with a keynote address and special session on Monday evening*

**Keynote Speaker: Dr. Craig Mello**

**Invited speakers: Dr. Phil Sharp and Dr. David Baulcombe**

Organizing Committee: Elena Conti (*EMBL Heidelberg*), Volker Erdmann (*Free University Berlin*), Witek Filipowicz (*Friedrich Miescher Institute*), Reinhard Lührmann (*Max-Planck-Institute for Biophysical Chemistry*), Joan Steitz (*Yale University*), Juan Valcarcel (*Centre de Regulació Genòmica*)

Abstract Deadline: The Organizing Committee invites abstracts on all aspects of RNA structure, function, biology and chemistry. Abstracts for oral presentations will be selected by the Committee and the Session Coordinators. Abstracts that are not selected for oral presentations will be presented as posters.

**The deadline for submission of abstracts is Monday March 24th, 2008.**

Sponsorship Opportunities: If you are interested in sponsorship opportunities, please email the Society at [rna@faseb.org](mailto:rna@faseb.org).

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