

SEMINAR ANNOUNCEMENT

DATE: 22 February 2012, Wednesday
TIME / VENUE: 2:00PM @ Level 3, IMCB Seminar Room 3-46, Proteos, Biopolis
SPEAKER: Dr. Andrea Pasini
TITLE OF SEMINAR: **The ascidian *Ciona intestinalis*, a simple and versatile system to study chordate development**



Ascidians are marine invertebrate organisms that diverged early from the vertebrate lineage. Their tadpole larvae possess a typical chordate body plan, but are composed of just a few hundred cells which develop with a stereotypical cleavage pattern and according to invariant lineages. The morphological simplicity of the ascidian larva is mirrored by the small size and compactness of its genome, which has been sequenced and annotated in several species. Ascidian embryos are amenable to a large spectrum of embryological and molecular manipulations. Thus, ascidians in general and *Ciona intestinalis* in particular provide an ideal model to study at the cellular and molecular level the processes of cell fate determination in chordates. In the first part of my talk, I will provide a general introduction to ascidians as a model system for developmental biology studies, while in the second part I will present the work I carried out in the past few years on the development of the Peripheral Nervous System and patterning of the posterior body in *Ciona intestinalis*.

Host: A/Prof. Sudipto Roy

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