

**Structural DNA Nanotechnology:  
A Powerful Example of Self-Assembly  
on the Nanometer Scale**

**Nadrian C. Seeman**

**Department of Chemistry  
New York University  
New York, NY 10003, USA  
[ned.seeman@nyu.edu](mailto:ned.seeman@nyu.edu)**

**The Science of Digital Fabrication  
MIT  
March 07, 2013**

# Everything Self-Assembles

The Most Interesting Examples Entail  
Biological Macromolecules

[Nucleic Acids and Proteins]

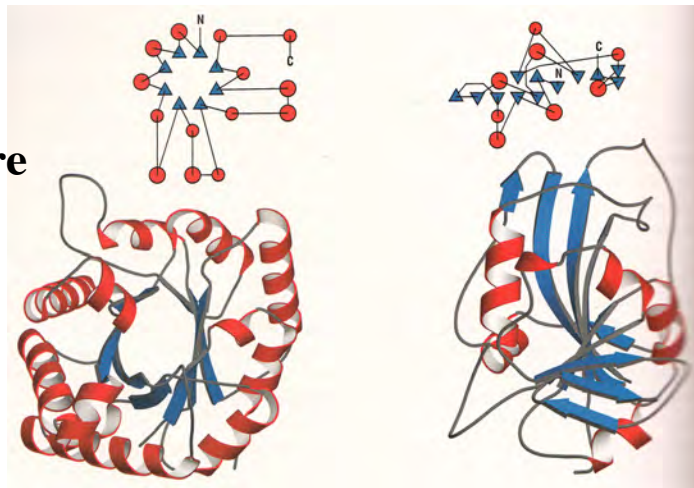
Because Their Surfaces Encode

INFORMATION

# Proteins are Long Strings of Amino Acids that Fold into 3D Shapes Called Tertiary Structures

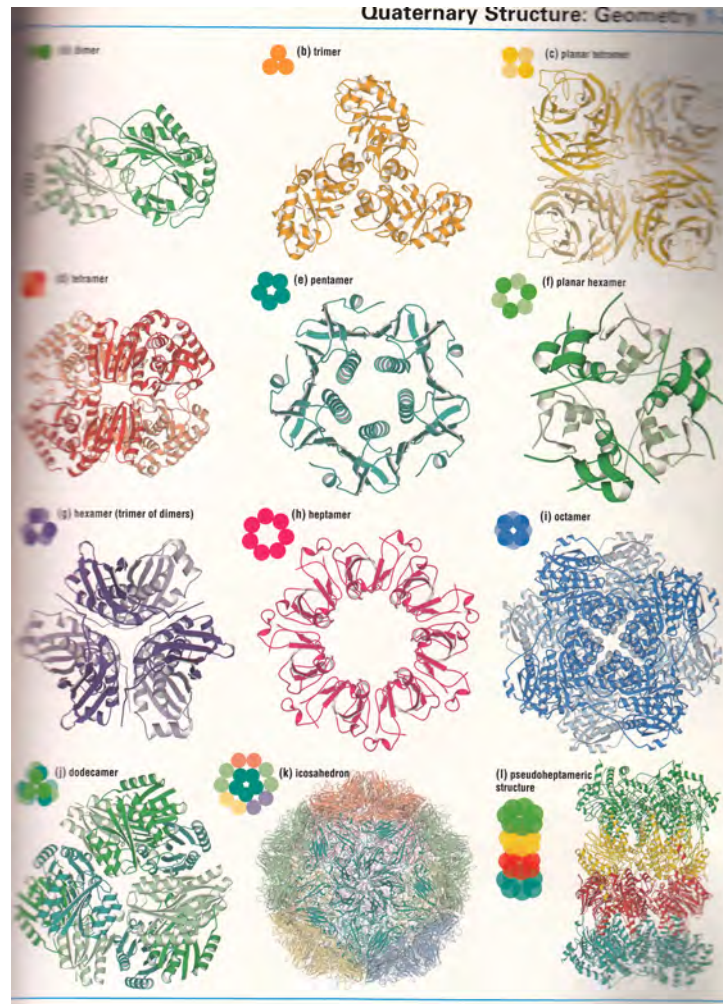
**Red Coils = Alpha Helices**

**Blue Arrows = Beta Structure**



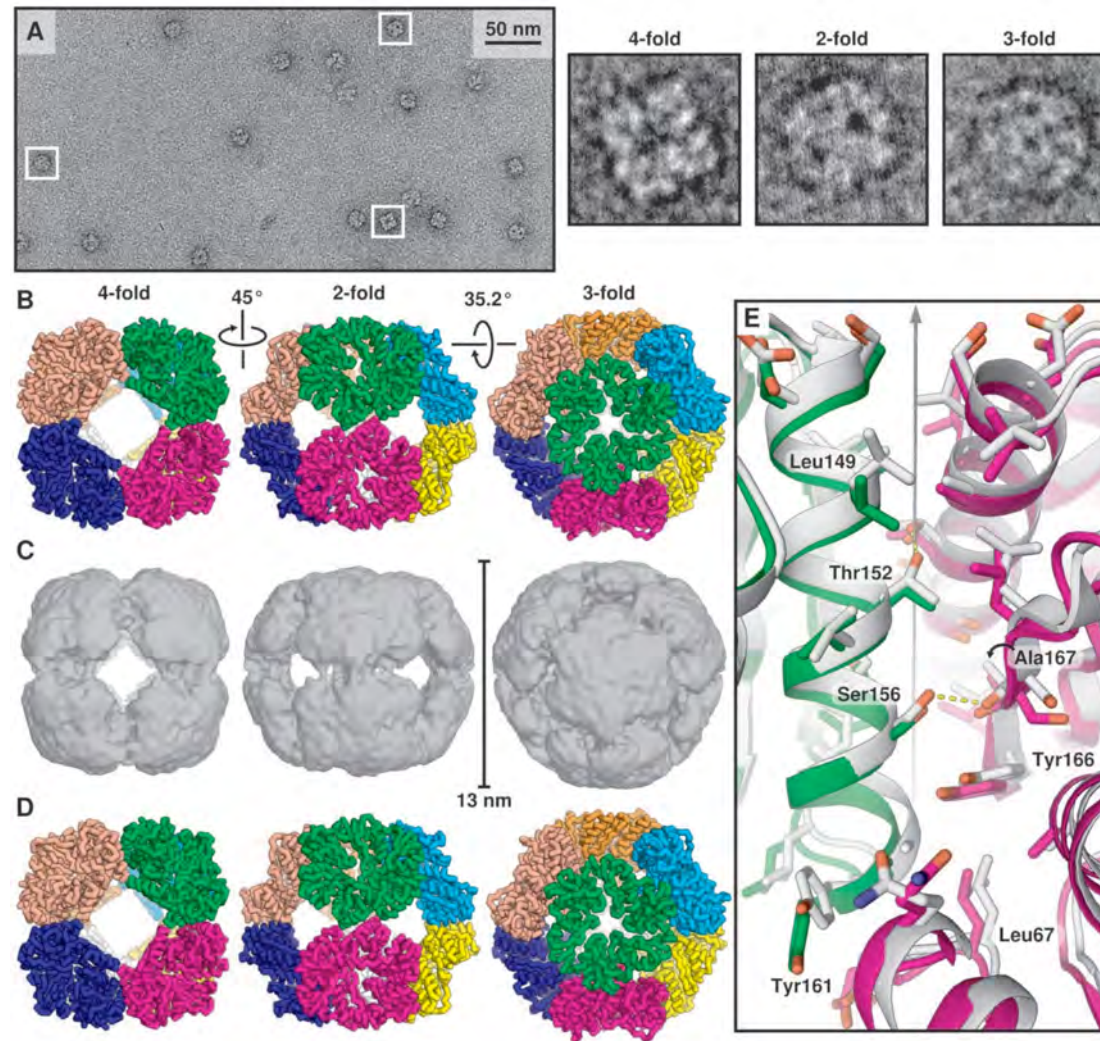
**We DO NOT Know How to Predict or Design Tertiary Structure Very Well**

# These Can Associate to Produce Quaternary Structures

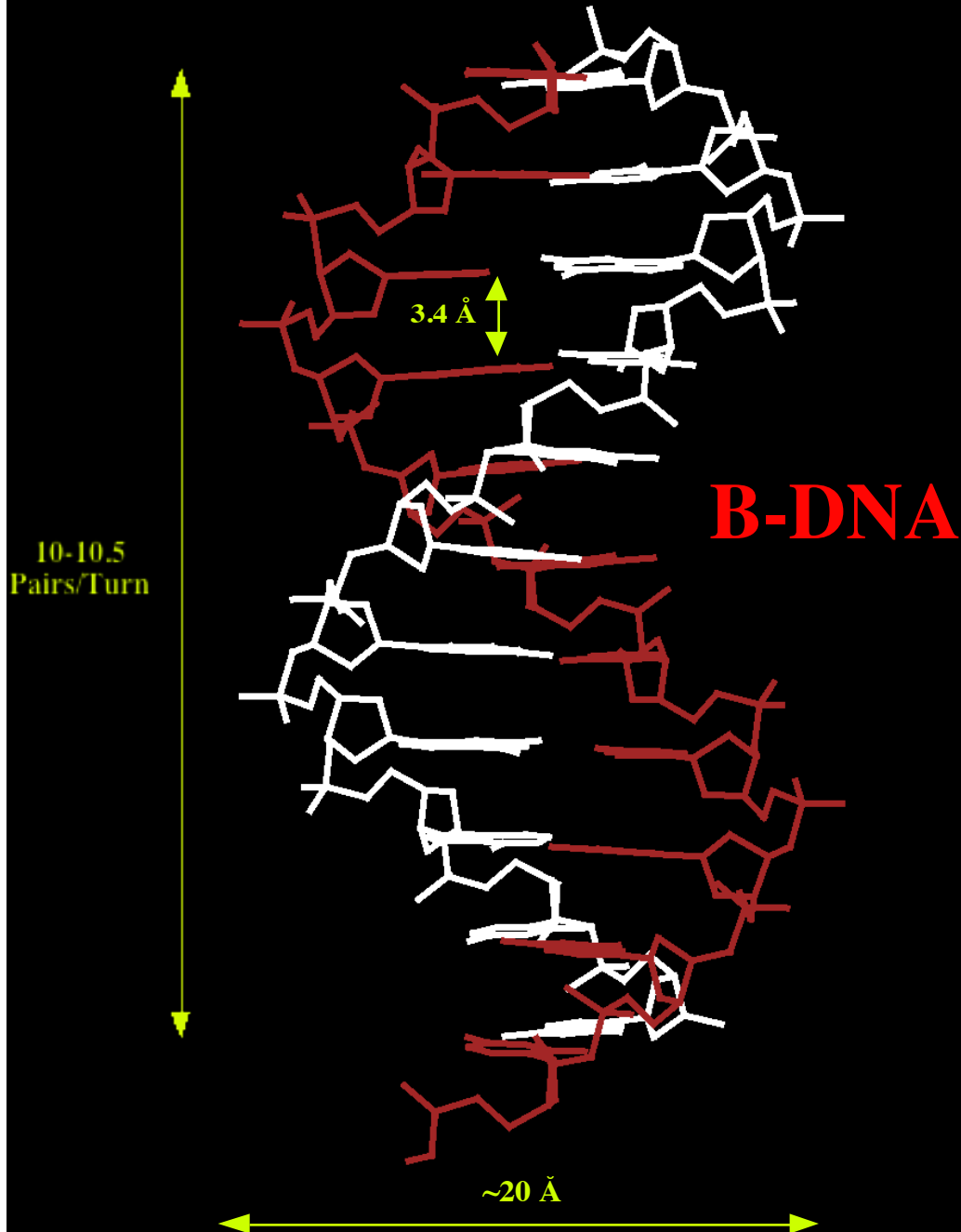


**We DO NOT Know How to Predict or Design Quaternary Structure Very Well Either**

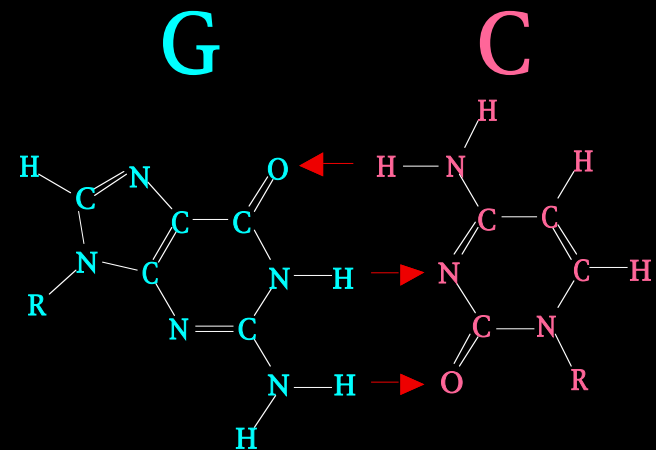
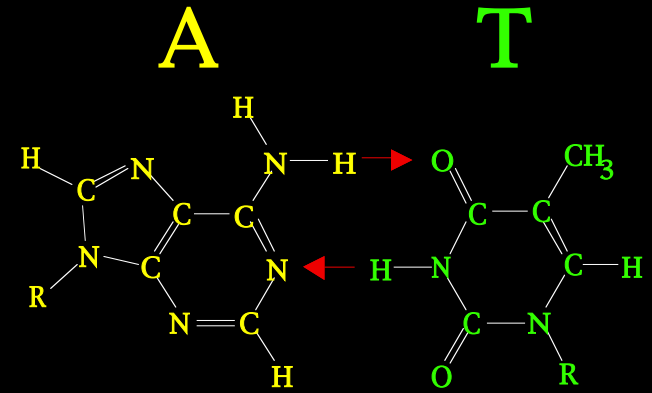
# The Most Successful Example is from Yeates, Baker and Colleagues



# DNA Is Much Easier



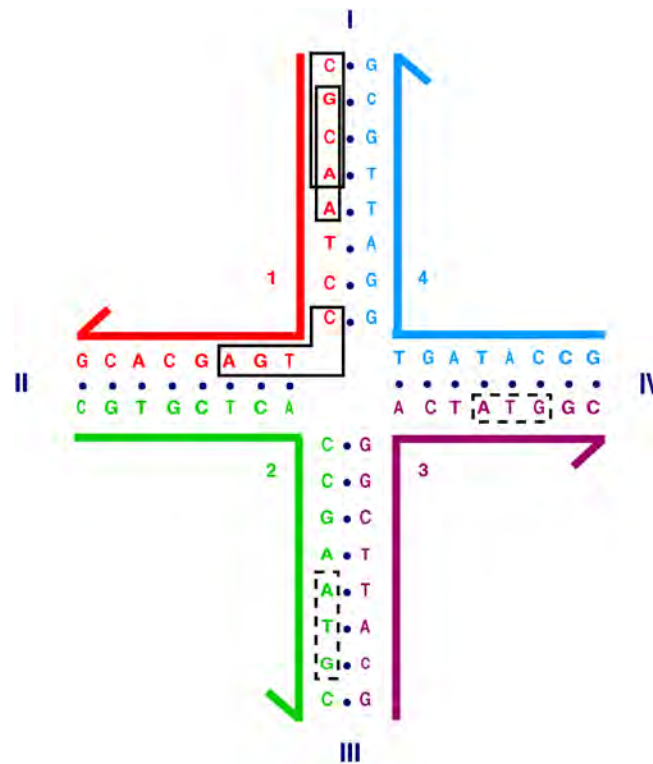
## DNA BASE PAIRS



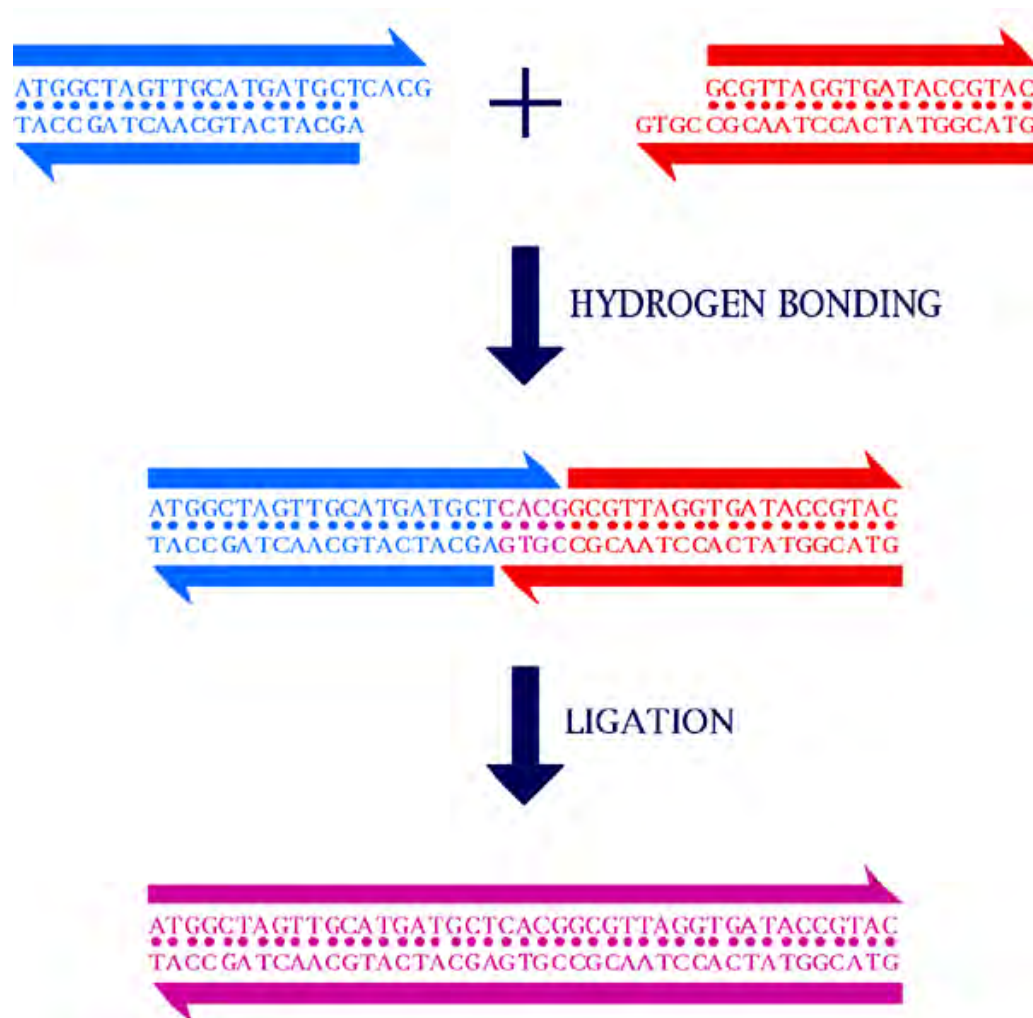


However, It Must be **Branched** to Produce Interesting Structures.

A Simple Algorithm Exists to Minimize Symmetry, Leading to Branching In **Synthetic** Molecules

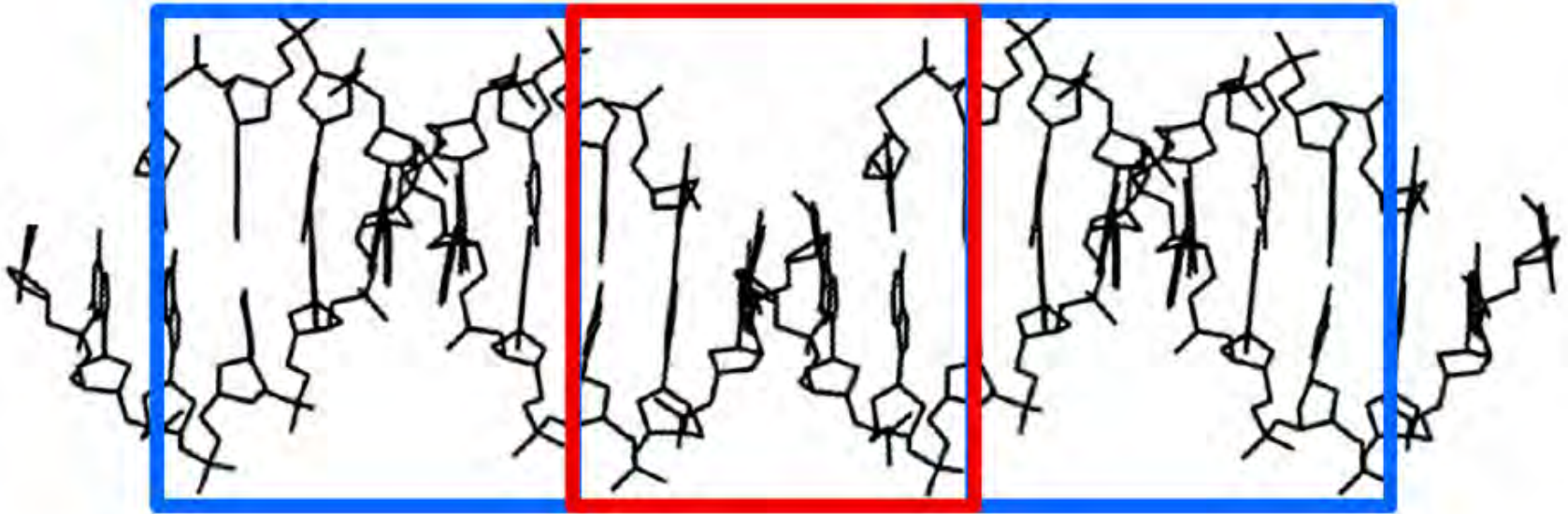


# Sticky-Ended Cohesion: Programmable Affinity

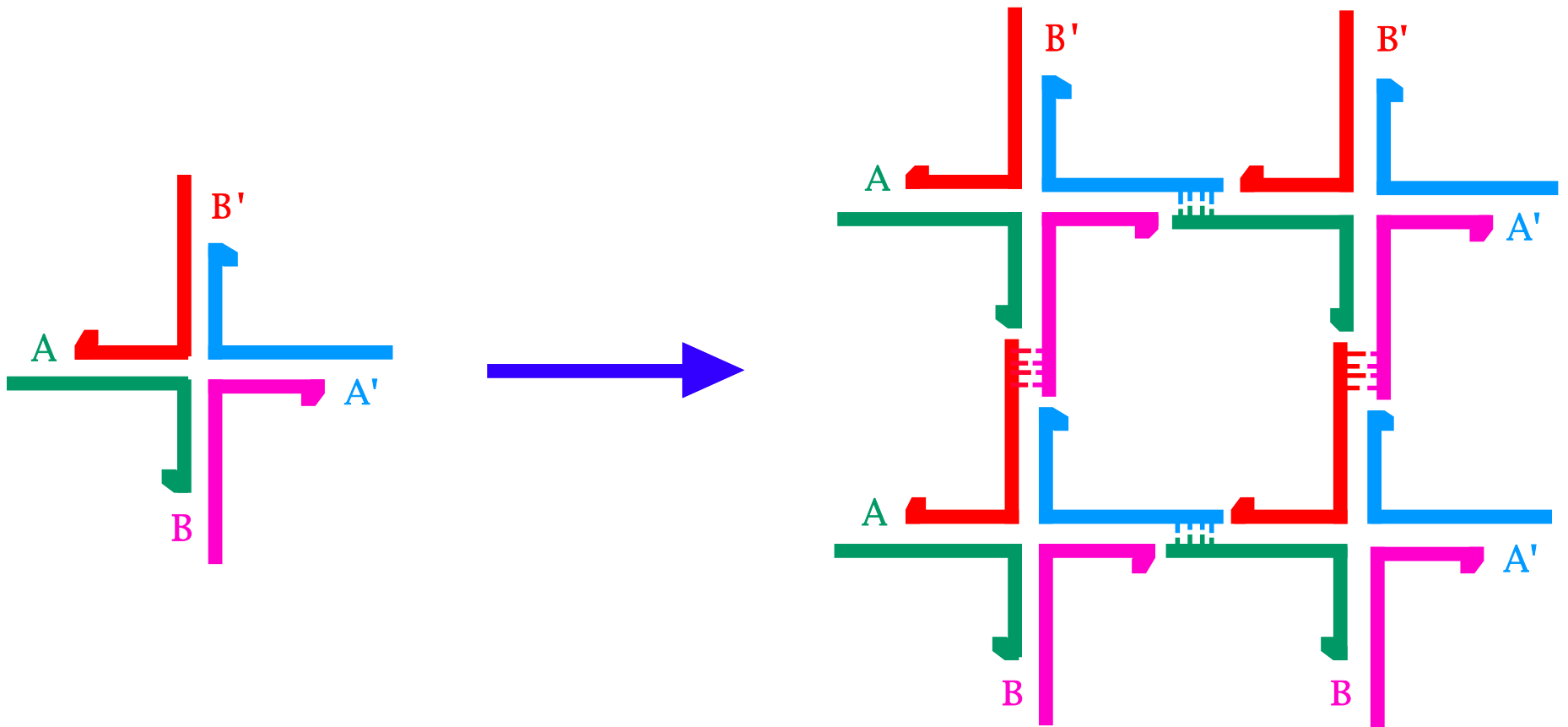




# Sticky-Ended Cohesion: Structure



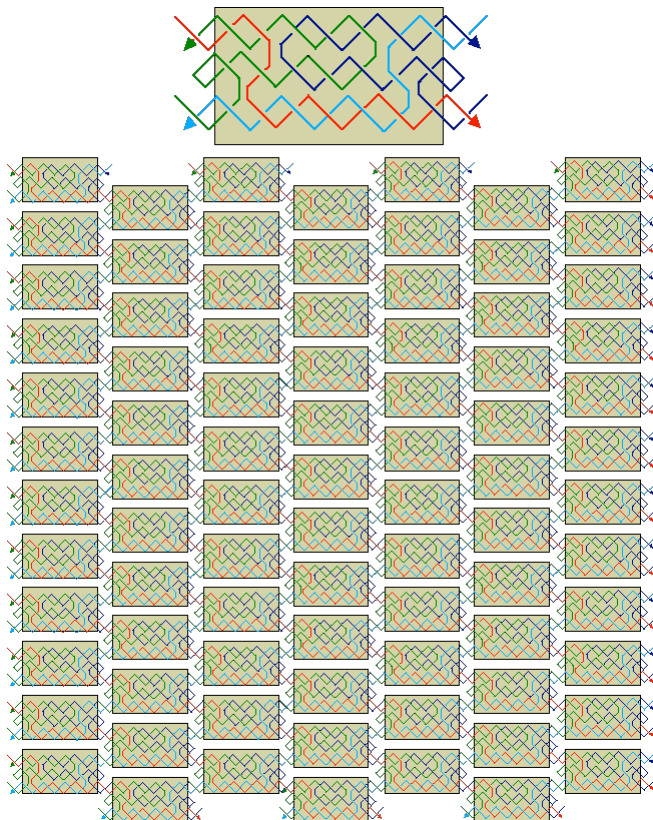
# The Central Concept of Structural DNA Nanotechnology: Combine Branched DNA with Sticky Ends to Make Objects, Lattices and Nanomechanical Devices



# DNA NANOTECHNOLOGY

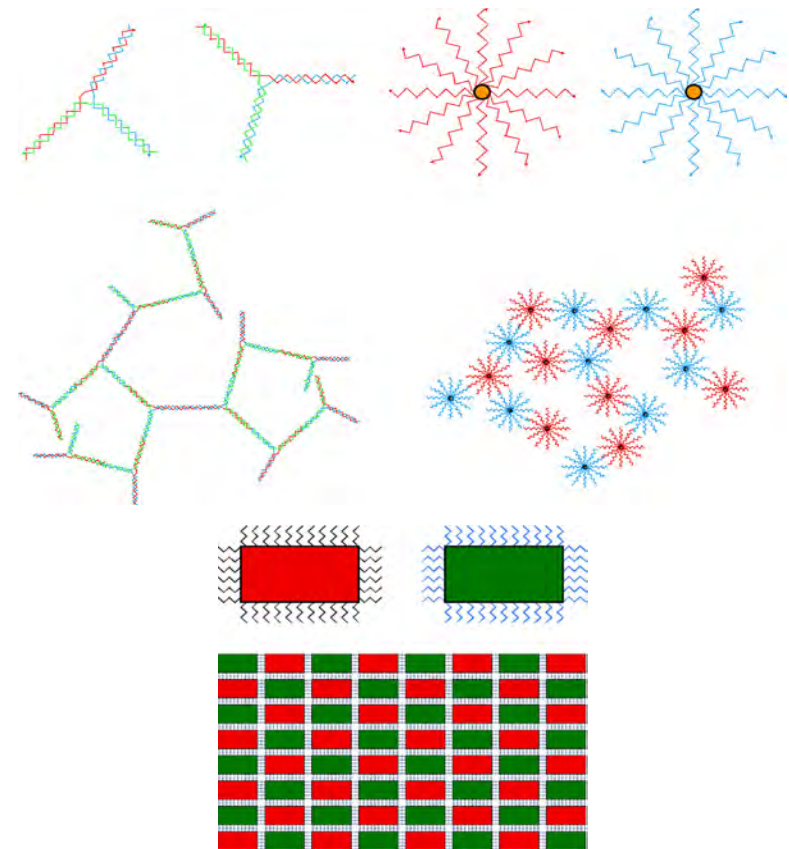
**High Resolution/Structural:  
DNA as Bricks and Mortar**

**Propagation Directions  
Well-Defined**



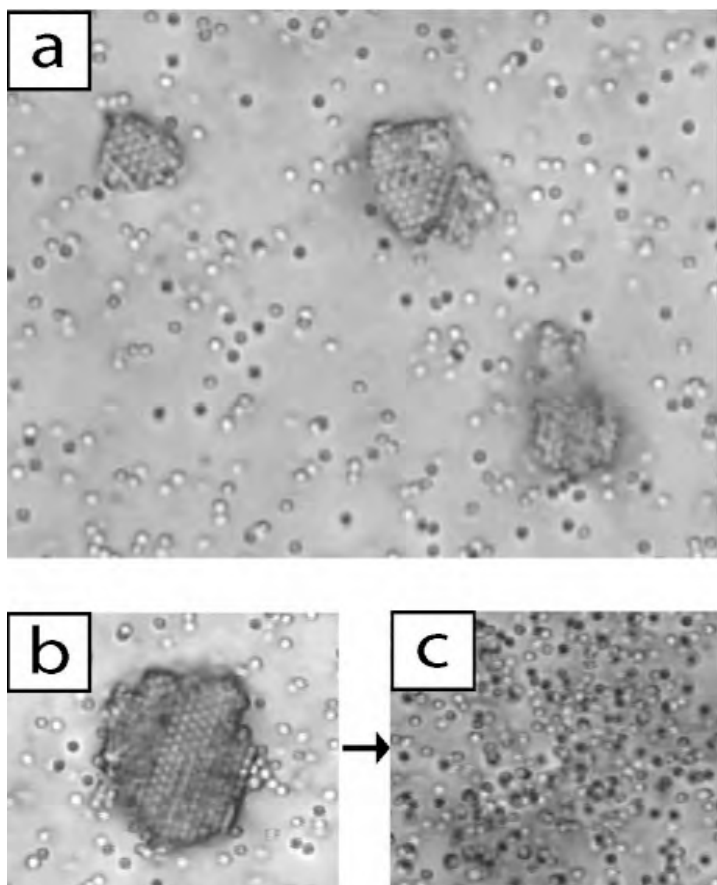
**Low Resolution/Compositional:  
DNA as Mortar/**Smart Glue** Only**

**Propagation Directions  
Not Well-Defined**

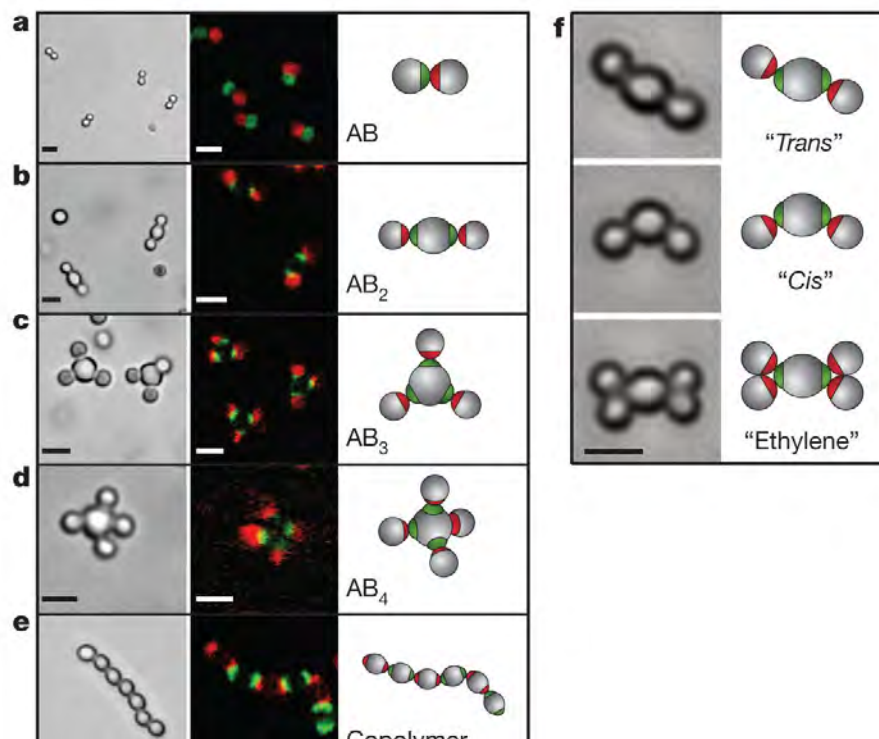


# EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL LOW-RESOLUTION DNA NANOTECHNOLOGY

## Crocker and Colleagues



## Pine and Colleagues



# Polyhedral Catenanes

**Cube: Junghuei Chen**

# Cube



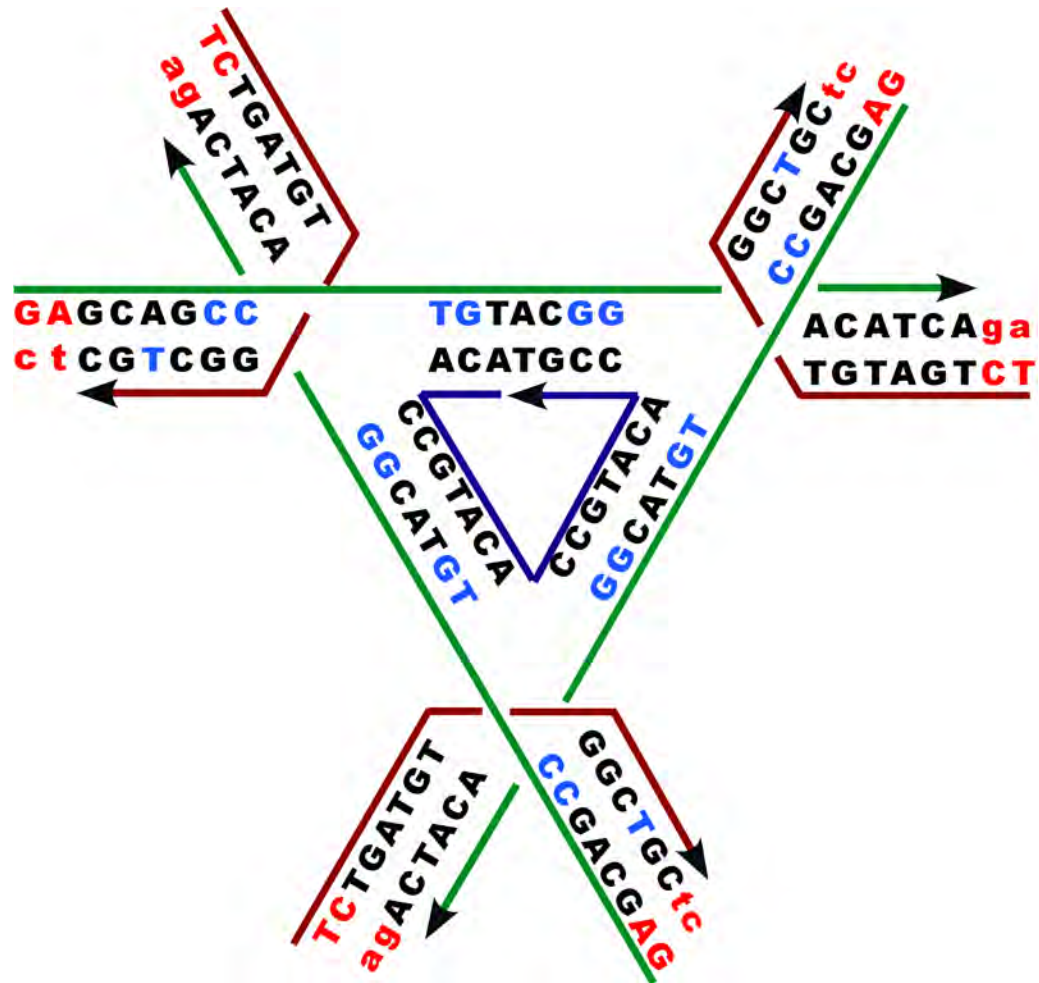


# **Three-Dimensional Self-Assembled Arrays: DESIGNED CRYSTALS!**

**Jianping Zheng, Jens J. Birktoft, Yi Chen (Purdue),  
Tong Wang, Ruojie Sha, Pam Constantinou,  
Steve Ginell (Argonne), Chengde Mao (Purdue)**

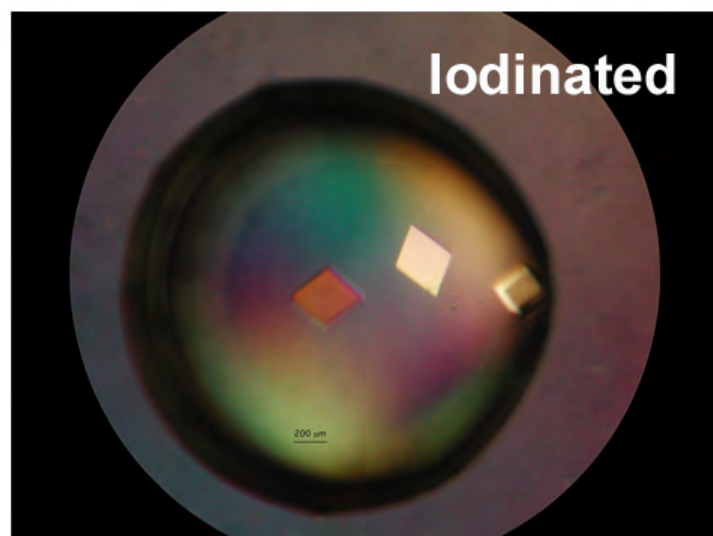
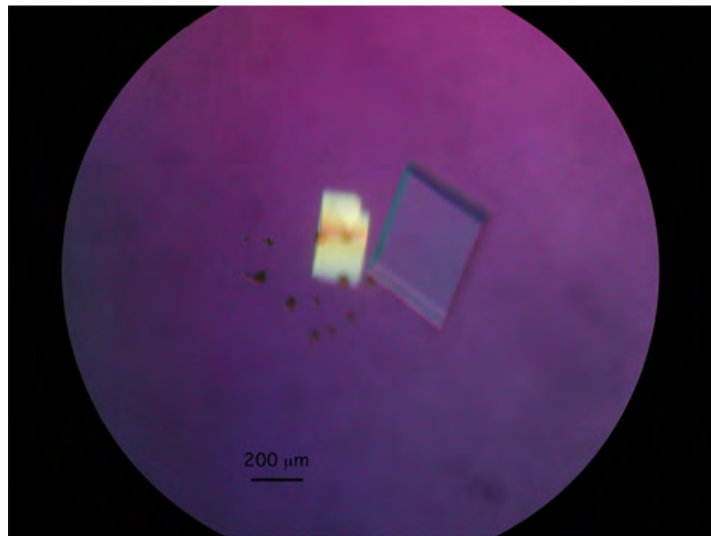
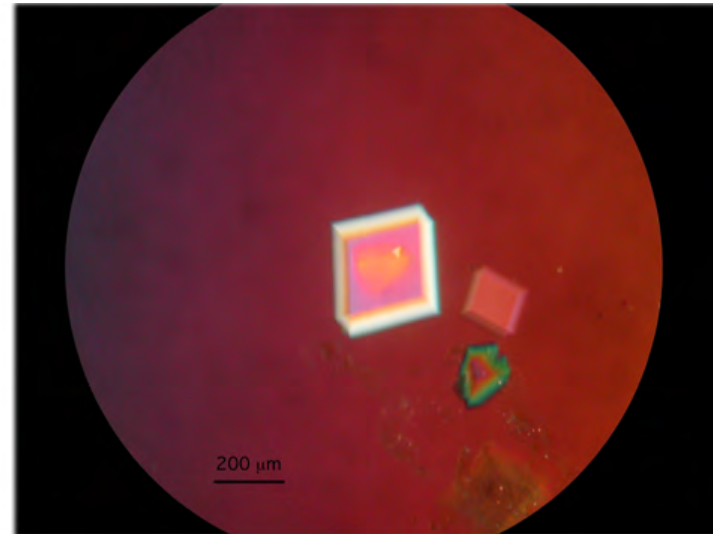
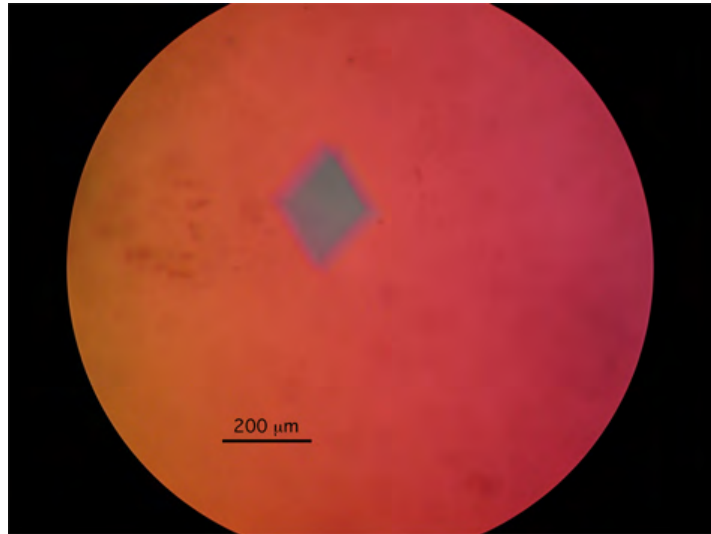
**Diffraction Data Collected at  
Brookhaven National Laboratory (NSLS) and  
Argonne National Laboratory (APS)**

# A Small Threefold Pseudosymmetric DNA Tensegrity Triangle



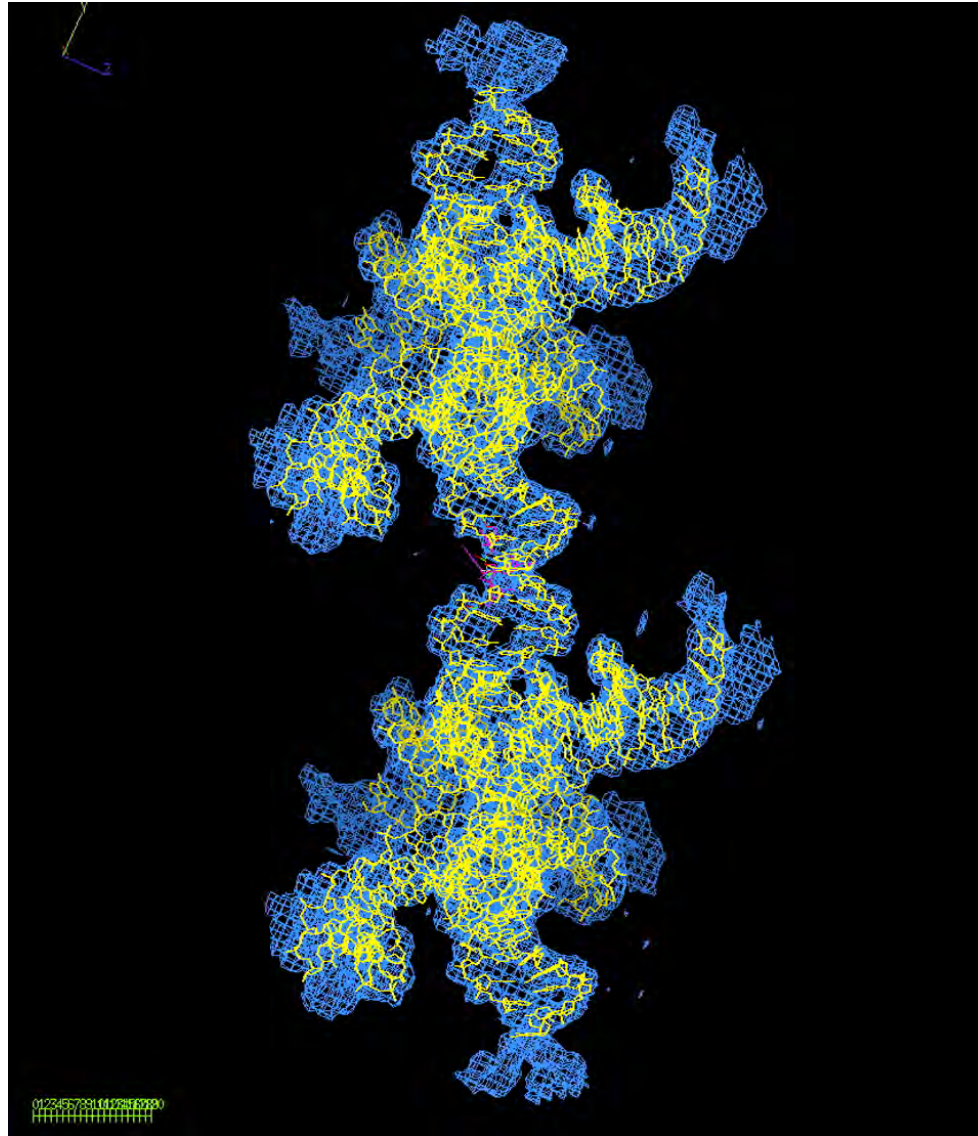
J. Zheng, J.J. Birktoft, Y. Chen, T. Wang, R. Sha,  
P.E. Constantinou, S.L. Ginell, C. Mao & N.C. Seeman, *Nature* 461, 74-77 (2009).

# Crystal Images



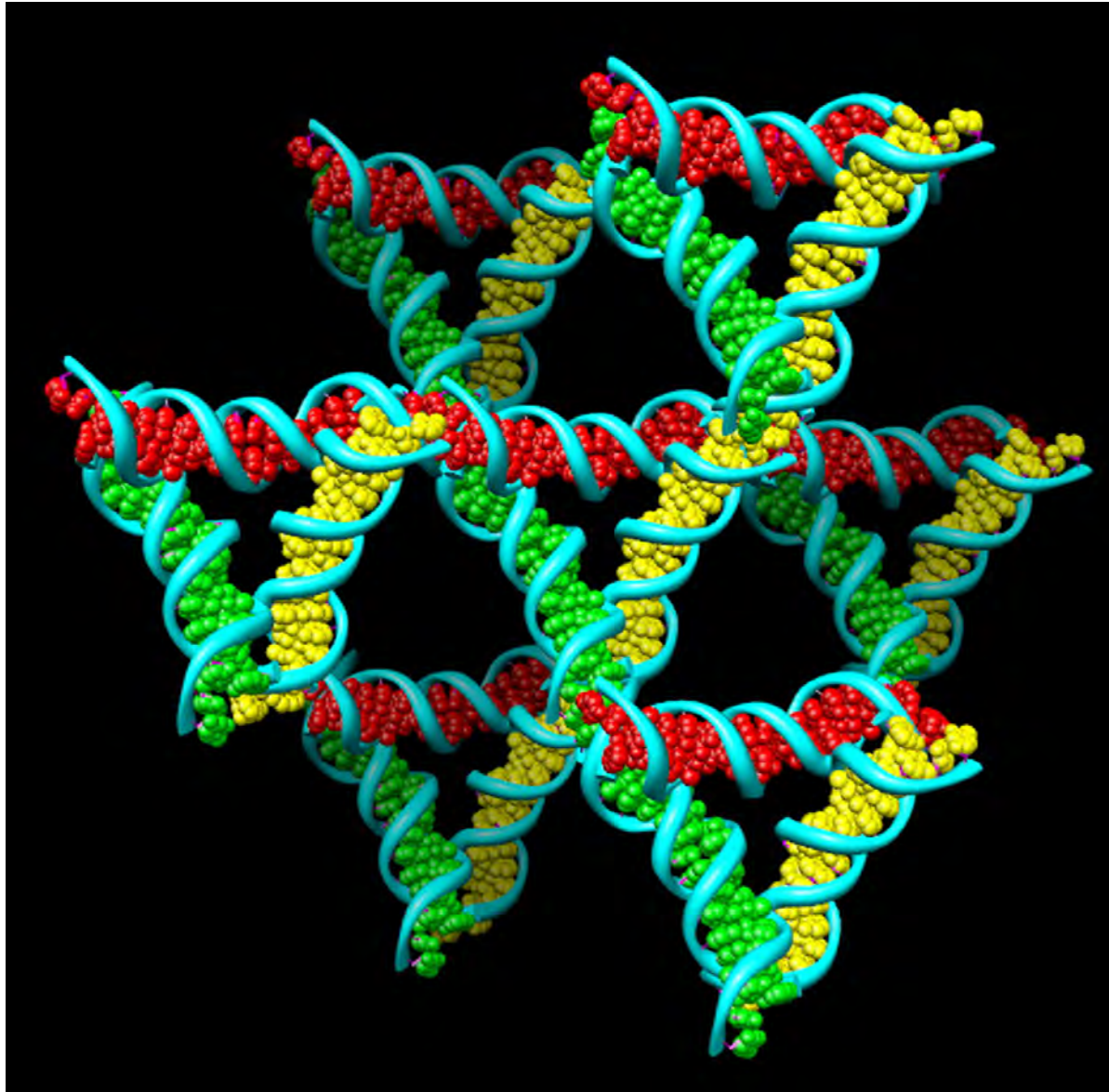
J. Zheng, J.J. Birktoft, Y. Chen, T. Wang, R. Sha, P.E. Constantinou, S.L. Ginell, C. Mao & N.C. Seeman, *Nature* 461, 74-77 (2009).

# 4 Å Map Perpendicular to a Helix



J. Zheng, J.J. Birktoft, Y. Chen, T. Wang, R. Sha,  
P.E. Constantinou, S.L. Ginell, C. Mao & N.C. Seeman, *Nature* 461, 74-77 (2009).

# Environment of a Single Triangle



J. Zheng, J.J. Birktoft, Y. Chen, T. Wang, R. Sha,  
P.E. Constantinou, S.L. Ginell, C. Mao & N.C. Seeman, *Nature* 461, 74-77 (2009).



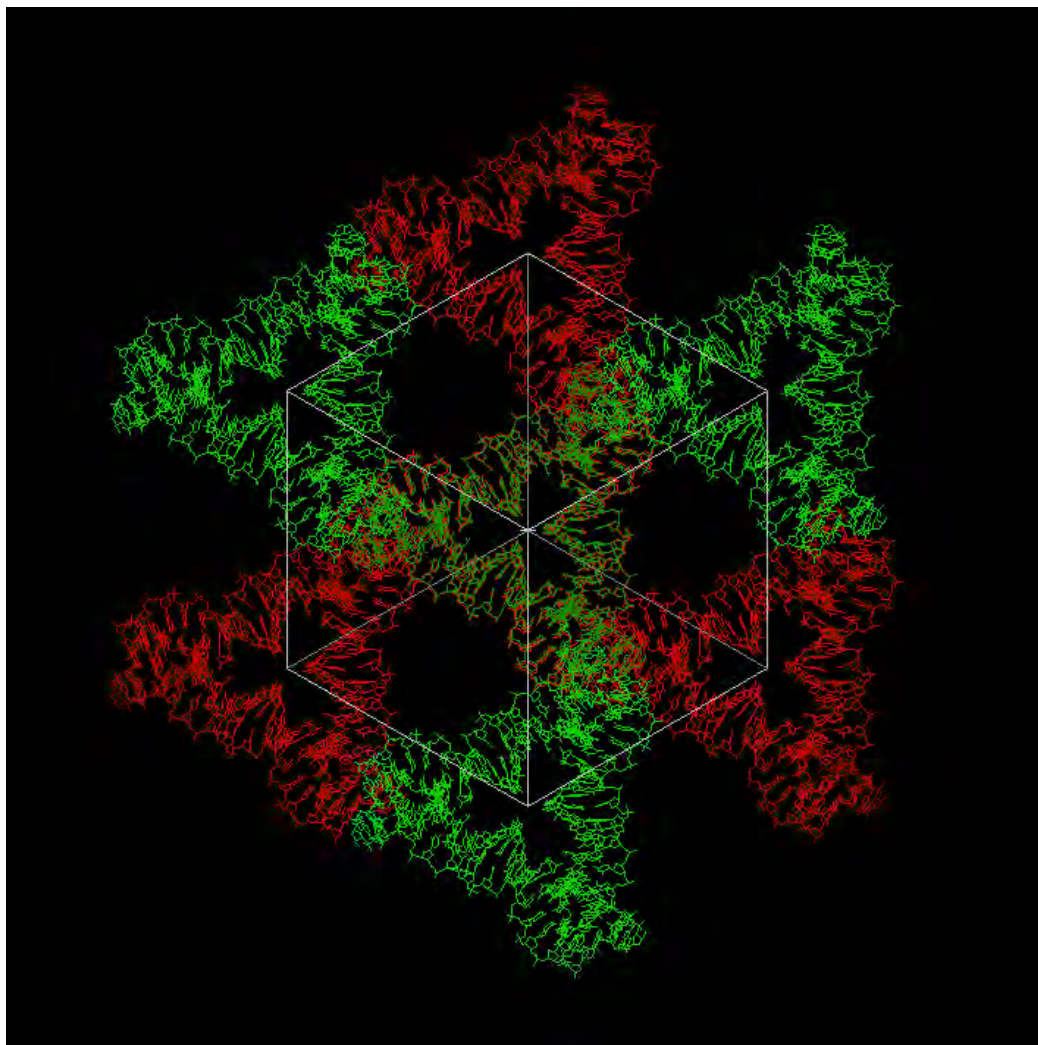
### Table 1. Crystalline Tensegrity Triangles

Edge Length	Symmetry	Inter-junction Pairs	Rhombohedral Cell Dimensions	Resolution (Å)	Cross Section (nm <sup>2</sup> )	Cavity Size (nm <sup>3</sup> )
21	+	7	a = 68.3, $\alpha = 102.4^\circ$	4.0	23	103
21	-	7	a = 68.0, $\alpha = 102.6^\circ$	5.0	23	101
31	+	17	a = 102.0, $\alpha = 112.7^\circ$	6.1	62	366
31	-	17	a = 100.9, $\alpha = 111.6^\circ$	6.3	61	373
32	+	18	a = 103.6, $\alpha = 113.6^\circ$	6.5	64	367
32	-	18	a = 103.3, $\alpha = 112.2^\circ$	6.5	64	395
42	+	17	a = 134.9, $\alpha = 110.9^\circ$	11.0	123	1104
42	-	17	a = 133.7, $\alpha = 111.3^\circ$	14.0	120	1048
42	+	28	a = 134.9, $\alpha = 117.3^\circ$	10.0	117	643

J. Zheng, J.J. Birktoft, Y. Chen, T. Wang, R. Sha, P.E. Constantinou, S.L. Ginell, C. Mao & N.C. Seeman, *Nature* 461, 74-77 (2009).

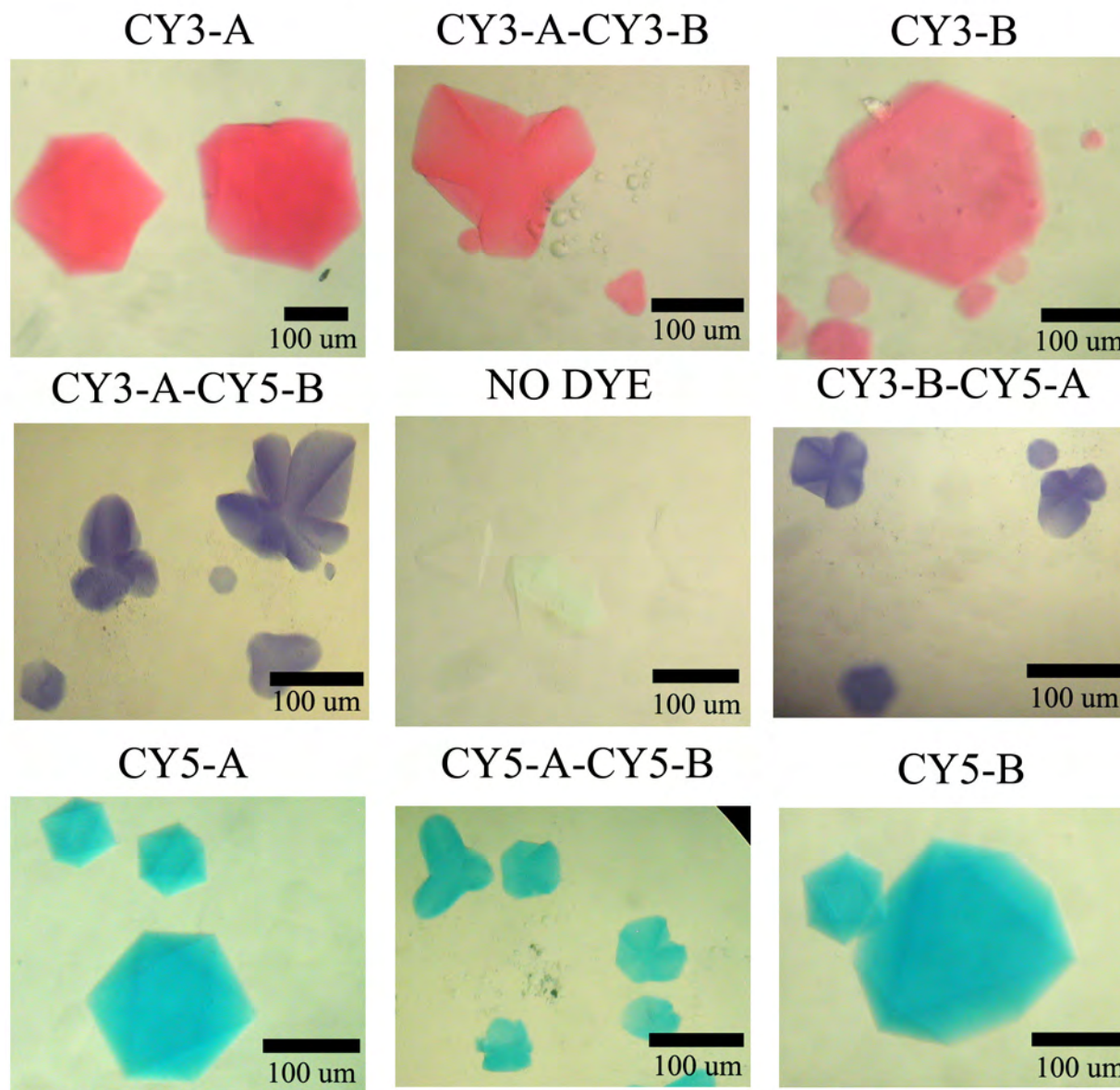


# The Rhombohedral Cavity With Alternating A and B Molecules



T.Wang, R. Sha, J.J. Birktoft, J. Zheng, C. Mao, N.C. Seeman, *J. Am. Chem. Soc.*, **132**, 15471-15473 (2010).

# Attachment of Cy3 & Cy5 to Triangles



# **SUPPORT**

**National Institute of General Medical Sciences (1982-)**

**Office of Naval Research (1989-2004; 2009-)**

**National Science Foundation (1997-)**

**DARPA/AFOSR (2001-2003)**

**Army Research Office (2005-)**

**W. M. Keck Foundation (2006-2010)**

**Nanoscience Technologies, Inc. (2003-2006)**

**Department of Energy -- (2006-2008; 2012-)**

# **WEB PAGE**

**[HTTP://SEEMANLAB4.CHEM.NYU.EDU](http://seemanlab4.chem.nyu.edu)**