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“Molecular mechanisms of evolutionary innovation”

Where do genes come from? All genomes contain genes whose sequences appear unique to a given species or lineage to the exclusion of all others. These “orphan” genes cannot be related to any known gene family; they are considered evolutionarily novel and are thought to mediate species-specific traits and adaptations. In this seminar, I will present an investigation of the evolutionary origins of orphan genes in eukaryotes. According to our results, most orphan genes may have evolved through an enigmatic process called “de novo gene birth”. I will present a series of integrated computational and experimental analyses in budding yeast that begin to shed light on the molecular mechanisms of de novo gene birth. Serendipitously, these analyses reveal the existence of thousands of previously unsuspected species-specific translated elements in the yeast genome that appear to mediate beneficial phenotypes yet are evolutionarily transient. I will discuss the implications of these findings for our understanding of molecular innovation in eukaryotes.

Le lundi 17 avril, 12h00
Pavillon Joseph-Armand-Bombardier, Salle : 1035
ET
Lien Zoom
Invité de Stephen Michnick
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