

Synthetic Organic Molecular Machines: Academic Curiosities or Potentially Useful Technology?

Bruce Branchaud
University of Oregon
Eugene, OR

Recently, much interest has been generated in the academic community over "molecular machines." These are synthetic organic compounds, usually single molecules, that have been designed and synthesized to have some property that mimics everyday devices, such as molecular tweezers, molecular ratchets, molecular motors, molecular pistons, etc. Such devices are scientific novelties that excite the imagination, but are they, or can they become, practically useful? This presentation will provide some background information on the emerging field of molecular machines and some perspective on translating this intriguing science into useful technology.