

INTERACTIONS OF MARANGONI SWIMMERS/SURFERS

LABORATORY : Institut Lumière Matière
IN COOPERATION WITH : Institut Lumière Matière

TEAM(S) : LIQ@INT

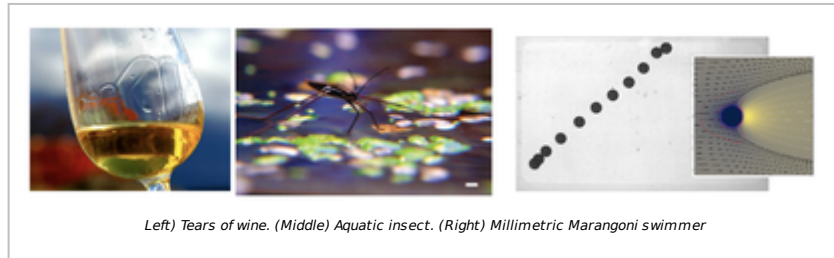
CONTACT(S) : COTTIN-BIZONNE Cécile
DETCHEVERRY François
YBERT Christophe

CONTACT(S) DETAILS: cecile.cottin-bizonne[at]univ-lyon1.fr / Tel. 0472431564
francois.detcheverry[at]univ-lyon1.fr / Tel. 0472431025
christophe.ybert[at]univ-lyon1.fr / Tel. 0472448253

KEYWORD(S) : active matter / soft matter / Interfacial swimmer

SCIENTIFIC CONTEXT :

The presence of surfactant such as amphiphilic molecules at the air-water interface may locally alter the surface tension and induce a flow in the underlying water, as exemplified in the celebrated “tears of wine” effect (Figure left). The study



Left) Tears of wine. (Middle) Aquatic insect. (Right) Millimetric Marangoni swimmer

of such Marangoni effects, dating back to the 16th century, has received a new impetus with the current interest in active matter. Some millimetric aquatic insects, like *Velia* and *Microvelia*, exploit this effect to self-propel by releasing chemicals that create surface tension differences ((Figure middle). A similar principle is currently exploited to create artificial “Marangoni swimmers”: particles that move autonomously at the water surface without moving parts (Figure right). Such swimmers have been developed in our team [1]. Their behavior raises intriguing questions about individual propulsion and collective dynamics like active turbulence [2].

MISSIONS :

The goal of this PhD project will focus on the interactions between Marangoni swimmers. The student will use advanced techniques such as PIV (Particle Image Velocimetry) and cantilever force sensors. We will also study the effects of complex flows, such as arrays of vortices, on the swimmer trajectories. The student will combine experimental investigation with exploration of simplified models to develop a clear physical understanding. This topic lies at the crossroads of soft matter, fluid mechanics and statistical physics.

OUTLOOKS :

The long-term ambition is to unveil the resulting large-scale transport properties.

BIBLIOGRAPHY :

[1] Self-propulsion of symmetric chemically active particles: Point-source model and experiments on camphor disks. Boniface, Cottin-Bizonne, Kervil, Ybert and Detcheverry, *Physical Review E* (2019).

[2] Kolmogorovian active turbulence of a sparse assembly of interacting Marangoni surfers. Bourgoïn, Kervil, Cottin-Bizonne, Raynal, Volk and Ybert, *Physical Review X* (2019).