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# JULI PERETÓ

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CV

PARTICIPANT AT:

## SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY. FROM STANDARD BIOLOGICAL PARTS TO ARTIFICIAL LIFE

**September, 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Barcelona**

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**Juli Peretó**, Tenured Professor, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, and researcher at the Evolutionary Genetics Unit, Cavanilles Institute for Biodiversity and Evolutionary Biology, University of València, València, Spain

His research interests include the evolution of metabolism, the minimal genome concept, and the history of ideas on the natural origin and the artificial synthesis of life. He tries to teach metabolism with an evolutionary flavor to biologists, biochemists and biotechnologists. He has been coordinator of a consortium of eight European universities in the Erasmus Intensive Program course "Origin, Evolution and Future of the Biosphere". He was formerly Secretary and Vice-President of the International Society for the Study of the Origin of Life (ISSOL) and in 2014 was elected Fellow. His most recent book, coauthored with M. Porcar, is "Synthetic Biology: from iGEM to the artificial cell" (Springer, 2014).

B-DEBATE IS AN INITIATIVE OF:



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ABSTRACT

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### **Lessons from history: promises and realities of the artificial synthesis of life.**

Synthetic biology aims at the design and construction of biological devices and systems for useful purposes. Nevertheless, the combination of our still fragmentary biological knowledge and the messy nature of biological devices are major challenges for engineering life in a predictive manner. Yet, the desire to make life is not new. Materialist and evolutionist scientists over a century ago were convinced of the possibility and even the need to synthesize living beings to advance the knowledge on the nature and origin of life. In retrospect, that promises were premature, but journalists presented many advances in biology in the past century as an attempted synthesis of life. Nor is it new, therefore, the fine line which separates the scientific enthusiasm from hype.

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