Smart Interfacial Materials from Super-Wettability to Binary Cooperative Complementary Systems

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Learning from nature and based on lotus leaves and fish scale, we developed super-wettability system: superhydrophobic, superoleophobic, superhydrophilic, superoleophilic surfaces in air and superoleophobic, superareophobic, superoleophilic, superareophilic surfaces under water [1]. Further, we fabricated artificial materials with smart switchable super-wettability [2], i.e., nature-inspired binary cooperative complementary nanomaterials (BCCNMs) that consisting of two components with entirely opposite physiochemical properties at the nanoscale, are presented as a novel concept for the building of promising materials [3-4].

The smart super-wettability system has great applications in various fields, such as self-cleaning glasses, water/oil separation, anti-biofouling interfaces, and water collection system [5].

The concept of BCCNMs was further extended into 1D system. Energy conversion systems that based on artificial ion channels have been fabricated [6]. Also, we discovered the spider silk's and cactus's amazing water collection and transportation capability [7], and based on these nature systems, artificial water collection fibers and oil/water separation system have been designed successfully [8].

Learning from nature, the constructed smart multiscale interfacial materials system not only has new applications, but also presents new knowledge: Super wettability based chemistry including basic chemical reactions, crystallization, nanofabrication arrays such as small molecule, polymer, nanoparticles, and so on [9].

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