Ventricular, atrial and outflow tract heart progenitors arise from spatially and

molecularly distinct regions of the primitive streak.

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Abstract

The heart develops from two sources of mesoderm progenitors, the first and second heart

field (FHF and SHF). Using a single cell transcriptomic assay in combination with genetic

lineage tracing, we find the FHF and SHF are subdivided into distinct pools of progenitors in

gastrulating mouse embryos at earlier stages than previously thought. Each subpopulation has

a distinct origin in the primitive streak. The first progenitors to leave the primitive streak

contribute to the left ventricle, shortly after right ventricle progenitor emigrate, followed by

the outflow tract and atrial progenitors. Moreover, a subset of atrial progenitors are gradually

incorporated in posterior locations of the FHF. Although cells allocated to the outflow tract

and atrium leave the primitive streak at a similar stage, they arise from different regions.

Outflow tract cells originate from distal locations in the primitive streak while atrial

progenitors are positioned more proximally. Moreover, single cell RNA sequencing

demonstrates that the primitive streak cells contributing to the ventricles have a distinct

molecular signature from those forming the outflow tract and atrium. We conclude that

cardiac progenitors are pre-patterned within the primitive streak and this prefigures their

allocation to distinct anatomical structures of the heart. Together, our data provide a new

molecular and spatial map of mammalian cardiac progenitors that will support future studies

of heart development, function and disease.

Introduction

The cells that comprise different parts of an organ can arise from distinct origins and acquire their fate at different times during ontogeny. In the case of the heart, two mesodermal derived sources of cardiac progenitors, named the first heart field (FHF) and the second heart field (SHF), have been identified (reviewed in Meilhac and Buckingham, 2018). The FHF forms mainly the left ventricle and constitutes the initial cardiac crescent. By contrast, the cardiac progenitors of the SHF contribute to the right ventricle, outflow tract and atria in addition to branchiomeric muscles.

Retrospective clonal analysis has suggested that the FHF and SHF progenitors segregate either before or at the onset of gastrulation (Meilhac and Buckingham, 2018; Meilhac et al., 2004). The analysis showed large clones spanning multiple compartments. Clones belonging to the first lineage labelled the left ventricle and other compartments with the exception of the outflow tract while the second lineage contributed to the outflow tract, atria and right ventricle but never to the left ventricle. Subclones within the first and second lineages were also observed. These were smaller in size and suggested that the individualisation of the different regions of the heart happens at later stages (Meilhac et al., 2004).

Consistent with the notion that the cardiac lineages are established during gastrulation, clonal analysis based on tracing the progeny of *Mesp1*-expressing cells, which is expressed in the primitive streak and nascent mesoderm (https://marionilab.cruk.cam.ac.uk/MouseGastrulation2018/; Arnold and Robertson, 2009;

Costello et al., 2011; Pijuan-Sala et al., 2019), indicated that independent sets of *Mesp1*

expressing cells contribute to FHF and SHF derivatives (Devine et al., 2014; Lescroart et al.,

2014). These can be distinguished by their time of appearance during gastrulation, with

embryonic day (E)6.5 *Mesp1+* cells supplying the FHF while SHF derivatives preferentially

derive from E7.5 *Mesp1+* cells (Lescroart et al., 2014). The *Mesp1* clonal analysis resulted in

clones of small sizes restricted to compartments derived from the FHF or SHF (Devine et al.,

2014; Lescroart et al., 2014). Thus, these observations are consistent with the existence of

two groups of progenitors that subsequently became further restricted to specific cardiac fates

in the mesoderm.

In addition to a separation between the FHF and SHF, genetic tracing experiments uncovered

a distinction between the atria and ventricular progenitors. Genetic lineage tracing with the

transcription factor *Foxa2* identifies a population of cardiac progenitors in the anterior

primitive streak at E6.5 that contribute to both left and right ventricles but not to the atria

(Bardot et al., 2017). This is in line with fate mapping studies in the chick showing that the

atrial and ventricular cells arise at different anterior-posterior positions in the primitive streak

(Garcia-Martinez and Schoenwolf, 1993; Yutzey and Bader, 1995). Although these analyses

did not resolve the clonal relationship between the cells, these findings are compatible with a

model in which sublineages within the FHF and SHF lineages already exist in the primitive

streak, such that the atrial lineage is distinct from the right ventricle lineage within SHF

progenitors. This would imply that two distinct cardiac progenitors exist solely at the epiblast

stage, prior to gastrulation, and that more subpopulations of cardiac progenitors than first and

second progenitors can be molecularly defined in the primitive streak. The most rigorous way

to decide if this is the case is to define the location of all the cardiac progenitors in the streak

and the precise embryonic stages at which they ingress. This would allow the comparison of

distinct subpopulations of cardiac precursors and reveal putative molecular differences of

cardiac progenitors in the primitive streak. Single cell transcriptomic assays show *Mesp1+*

cardiac progenitors diversify into molecularly distinct FHF and SHF populations at late

embryonic day (E7.25) stage once cells have migrated and reached their final location in the

embryo (Lescroart et al., 2018). The signalling environment cells encounter during and after

their migration might play a role in the patterning of the cardiac progenitors into FHF and

SHF domains (Andersen et al., 2018; Bardot et al 2020; Guzzetta et al., 2020; Hochgreb et

al., 2003; Xavier-Neto et al., 1999). Whether initial molecular differences between different

sets of cardiac progenitors already exist in the primitive streak remains unclear.

In this study, we use genetic tracing of *T* and *Foxa2* expressing cells and find there is an

orderly allocation of primitive streak cells first into the left ventricle at mid-streak stage, then

the right ventricle progenitors at late streak stage, and finally at the no bud (OB)-early bud

(EB) stage into outflow tract and atrial progenitors. Consistent with this, we identified

independent sets of *Foxa2+* cells that are allocated to the left ventricle and right ventricle.

Allocation of cells to the outflow tract and atria happens at similar gastrulation stages but

from distinct locations within the primitive streak. The outflow tract originates from distal

regions of the primitive streak, while proximal regions contribute to the atria. Moreover, the

outflow tract forms from primitive streak cells that initially expressed *Foxa2*, but

subsequently turned off *Foxa2* expression as they switched their contribution from right

ventricle to the outflow tract. Crucially, by combining single cell transcriptomic assays with a

lineage tracer to label cells supplying only the poles of the heart, we uncover molecularly

distinct subpopulations of cells that correspond to progenitors for right ventricle, outflow

tract and atria in the SHF. Further single cell transcriptomic experiments at earlier stages

established that the primitive streak cells contributing to the ventricles and outflow tract/atria

are also molecularly distinct. Thus, rather than a simple subdivision of cardiac progenitors

into FHF and SHF, our analysis reveals a more elaborate map for the source of cells that form

the heart with distinct spatial and temporal origins for outflow tract and atrial progenitors as

well as left and right ventricular progenitors. We conclude that the cardiac progenitors are

pre-patterned within the primitive streak and this prefigures their contribution to distinct

anatomical structures of the heart both in time and space. This has implications for the

classification of congenital heart diseases based on the origin of malformation in a specific

mesodermal lineage as well as for the design of *in vitro* methods to generate specific cardiac

cells from pluripotent stem cells.

Results

Genetic tracing of primitive streak cells using a tamoxifen inducible T reporter.

During gastrulation, epiblast cells ingress through the primitive streak to form the mesoderm.

This process occurs over an extended period of time, from embryonic day (E)6 to E8 in the

mouse. The T-box transcription factor *T* is expressed in the primitive streak and is

downregulated shortly after ingression during migration within the nascent mesoderm. To

assess the developmental time points at which the *T*-expressing primitive streak cells are

destined to contribute to the heart, we performed genetic tracing using an inducible $T^{nGFP\text{-}CreERT2/+}$

mouse, expressing *CreERT2* and nuclear localised GFP (nGFP) downstream of the

endogenous *T* (Imuta et al., 2013), in combination with the $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ reporter mice

($T^{nEGP\text{-}CreERT2/+}; R26R^{tdTomato/+}$, Fig 1A) (Madisen et al., 2010).

We first assessed how long the activity of the tamoxifen persists after it is administered by

oral gavage in a pregnant mouse. We administered tamoxifen (0.08mg/bw) at E5, ~24 hours

prior to the initial onset of *T*-expression in the primitive streak (Rivera-Perez and Magnuson,

2005), and we detected recombined tdTomato-expressing cells within mesodermal

derivatives including the heart tube, head mesenchyme and endothelium, albeit at a low

density, in E8.5 embryos, (S1A Fig.). Thus, the activity of the tamoxifen persists for at least

24 hours at this dose.

Primitive streak cells contribute first to the ventricles and subsequently to the outflow

tract and atria myocardium.

We next administered single doses of tamoxifen $T^{nEGP\text{-}CreERT2/+}; R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ at successive

stages of gastrulation. We reasoned this would result in pulse-labelling of most populations

of *T*-expressing cells from the time of administration for at least 24 hours (Fig 1B). The fate

of their progeny could then be followed and the developmental stages during which primitive

streak cells contribute to the left and right ventricle, atria and outflow tract could be deduced.

To gain better control over the embryonic stages, mice were synchronized in estrus and

mated over short periods of 2 hours for all the experiments (from 7am to 9 am; vaginal plugs

were checked at 9 am and if positive, were defined as E0). To quantify the contribution of the

T-expressing cells to the heart, we measured surface area occupied by the tdTomato-positive

cells in the heart myocardium at E12.5 and within each cardiac chamber.

An early administration of tamoxifen at E6+8h resulted in the population of left and right

ventricles, outflow tract and atria with tdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes (in 6 out of 6

hearts analysed, Fig 1Ci, D and E). The contribution of tdTomato-positive cardiomyocytes to

the left and right ventricle was similar (left ventricle: 31.4% ±12.4; right ventricle: 31.6% ±

15.5, mean ± SD, p-value: ns). Contribution to the outflow tract and atria was the highest,

covering almost their entirety in all cases (83.8% ± 11.7 and 91.7 ± 5.9, mean ± SD, for

outflow tract and atria, respectively).

An administration at E6+21h or E7 also resulted in tdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes in

the left and right ventricles, outflow tract and atria (in 17 out of 17 hearts analysed, Fig 1Cii-

v, D and E). In these cases, the contribution of the tdTomato-positive cells to the left ventricle

was lower, on average, than to the right ventricle (for E6+21h, left ventricle: 22.2% ±11.1;

right ventricle: 40.2% ± 12.2 and for E7, left ventricle: 24.8% ±16, and right ventricle: 33.4%

± 9.9, mean ± SD, p-value: 0.004). Contribution to the outflow tract and atria continued to be

the highest in all cases (89.1%± 8.4 and % 94.1± 6.9, mean ± SD, for outflow tract and atria,

respectively). Variability in embryonic stages within litters at the time of tamoxifen

administration can explain the variability in the results (see below). For example, in 4/17

hearts, tdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes populated less than 10% of the total left

ventricle surface area. In those hearts, the proportion of tdTomato-positive cardiomyocytes

found in the right ventricle was high (Fig 1Ciii, v and D). We never observed the reverse,

however, where a lower proportion of tdTomato positive cardiomyocytes was found in the

right ventricle compared to the left ventricle (Fig 1D). These results suggest that subsets of

the embryos at E6+21h and E7 were at more advanced embryonic stages with most left

ventricle precursors having already left the primitive streak with right ventricular precursors

remaining in the primitive streak.

We next asked if the administration of tamoxifen at a later time point would result in the

absence of tdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes in the left ventricle and right ventricle. We

administered tamoxifen at E7+7h. TdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes were detected in the

left ventricle in only 2/13 hearts (Fig 1D). TdTomato-positive cardiomyocytes were detected

more frequently in the right ventricle, in 7/13 hearts (Fig 1D). However, these cells covered

less than 5% of the total right ventricle surface area (yellow arrow in Fig 1Cvi and E), except

for the two hearts in which tdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes were also detected in the

left ventricle. These results indicate that left ventricle and most right ventricle precursors

have left the primitive streak by E7+7h. In these embryos, tdTomato-expressing

cardiomyocytes were evident in the outflow tract and atria in 13/13 hearts, covering in some

cases between 72.8% and 94% of the total surface area of the outflow tract and atria,

including hearts without tdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes in the left ventricle and right

ventricle. These results suggest that the majority of the outflow tract and atria precursors are

still located in the primitive streak at stages after the ventricular precursors have already left

the primitive streak.

Finally, when tamoxifen was administered at a later stage (E7+11h), the contribution of the

tdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes to the outflow tract and atria was lower (Fig 1Cviii-ix

and E, 12.6% ± 17.4 and 19.7% ± 20.8). In all cases, these embryos lacked tdTomato-

expressing cells in the left and right ventricles. In 5/14 hearts, tdTomato-expressing cells

were absent in the outflow tract but present in the atria albeit in low numbers. The reverse,

i.e. tdTomato expressing cells found only in the outflow tract but not in the atria, was never

observed, suggesting that the atrial precursors are the last cardiomyocyte precursors to leave

the primitive streak.

Combining the $T^{nEGP-CreERT2/+}$ transgene with the $R26^{mGFP/+}$ reporter (Muzumdar et al 2007)

produced similar results (S2A Fig). An early tamoxifen administration (at E6+8h) led to

mGFP positive cardiomyocytes populating the left ventricle myocardium. When tamoxifen

was administered late (E7+7h) no mGFP cardiomyocytes were identified in the left ventricle

myocardium. mGFP cardiomyocytes were observed in the outflow tract and atria in both

conditions.

To analyse variability in embryonic stages at the time of tamoxifen administration, we

dissected litters of $T^{nEGP-CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ embryos at E6+21h and E7+7h and staged

embryos according to morphological landmarks using the dissecting brightfield microscope

(Downs et al., 1993). As expected, we found a range of stages for each time point. Litters

dissected at E6+21h included early (17%) mid (56%) and late-streak stages (27%). Litters

dissected at E7+7h included late streak (10%), no bud (OB, 37%), early bud (EB, 32%) and

late bud stages (LB, 21%) (Fig 1F and G). Whole mount immunostaining for the oestrogen

receptor ERT revealed CreErt2 in the nucleus within two hours of oral gavage of tamoxifen

(0.08mg/bw) (Fig 1H and S3Ai-vi Fig.). PCR analysis showed that the $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ locus

was recombined (Fig 1I and S4Ai-ii and B Fig.).

Together, these results indicate that cardiac progenitors ingress in an orderly sequence

through the primitive streak. Left ventricle progenitors leave the primitive streak first, at the

mid-streak stage, followed by right ventricle progenitors at the late-streak stage. Outflow

tract and atrial precursors leave the primitive streak at subsequent stages, starting around the

OB stage.

T is expressed at low level in ventricular progenitors and at higher levels in atrial and

outflow tract progenitors.

Ventricular progenitors were captured less efficiently than the OFT and atria progenitors in

T-lineage tracing experiments. This prompted us to quantify expression levels of T and Cre

protein in embryos collected at the mid to late streak, when ventricular progenitors reside in

the streak, and OB to EB, when OFT and atria progenitors reside instead in the streak. All

primitive streak cells express T, however, we found that primitive streak cells at the mid to

late streak stages express lower levels of T protein compared to the OB and EB stages (Fig

1Ji-iv and K). The transgenic $T^{nEGP-CreERT2/+}$ embryo showed a similar pattern of expression,

with lowest Cre (Fig 1L and M) and nGFP signal at the mid-late streak stage (compare GFP

levels in S4Ai-ii Fig). These results suggest why not all ventricular progenitors are captured

by our T-lineage tracing experiments.

Late primitive streak cells/atrial progenitors contribute to posterior regions of the first heart field and differentiate early into cardiomyocytes.

The first heart field contributes mainly to the left ventricle in addition to a minority of the atria (Cai et al. 2003, Spater et al. 2013) and our late *T*-lineage tracing at E7+7h may have missed these FHF atrial progenitors. This prompted us to test whether the descendants from the late E7+7h were also populating the first heart field. We assayed cTnnT, to mark first heart field cells, since these differentiate early into cardiomyocytes to establish the cardiac crescent. We found in 5 out of 9 embryos analysed, sparse tdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes located in posterior regions of the cardiac crescent or prospective inflow (Fig. 2Ai-iv). No tdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes were found in anterior regions of the cardiac crescent in any of the embryos examined. TdTomato positive cells could also be found in the endoderm (blue arrows in Fig 2Aii). Furthermore, analysis at the heart tube stage reveals that late E7+7h T cell descendants were populating the inflow regions of the heart tube (in 3 out of 4 embryos, Fig 2Bi and yellow arrows in Fig 2Bii). A sparse contribution to the endocardium was also noted (blue arrows in Fig 2Biii). We conclude that a subset of the late *T*-expressing cells/atrial progenitors are recruited to posterior regions of the first heart field and differentiate early into cardiomyocytes.

Independent *Foxa2*-expressing cells located in the anterior primitive streak at the mid to late streak stages contribute to either the left or right ventricular myocardium.

Genetic tracing experiments at E6-E6.5 (Frank et al., 2007; Bardot et al., 2017) showed that *Foxa2* positive cells contribute to cardiomyocytes in the ventricles but not in the atria. These

results prompted us to test whether *Foxa2* positive cells contribute to ventricular myocardium

at similar stages to the *T* expressing cells *i.e.* at the mid-late streak stage. We performed

genetic tracing of the *Foxa2* positive cells using a $Foxa2^{nEGP\text{-}CreERT2/+}$ line expressing

CreERT2 downstream of the endogenous *Foxa2* in combination with the $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$

reporter line (Imuta et al., 2013) (Fig 3A-B). Mice were synchronized in estrus and timed

matings performed for periods of 2 hours to better control embryonic stages.

Administration of tamoxifen at E6+21h resulted in patches of tdTomato-expressing

cardiomyocytes populating the left and right ventricle and outflow tract (Fig 3Ci). On

average, the contribution of the tdTomato positive cells to the ventricles was low (left

ventricle: 9.5% ± 9.5; right ventricle: 11.2% ± 10, p-value:ns). In 5 hearts out of 14, less than

10% of the left or right ventricle myocardium was populated by tdTomato-expressing

cardiomyocytes. In addition, in 3 out of 14 heart no tdTomato-expressing cells could be

detected in either the left or right ventricles (Figure 3D- E).

When we administered tamoxifen at E7+7h, tdTomato-positive cardiomyocytes could be

detected in the left ventricle in only 1 out of 11 embryos and in the right ventricle in 3 out 11

embryos (Fig 3Cii, D and E). These cells covered less than 10% of the total left and right

ventricle surface area (Fig 3D and E). In 3/14 hearts, small tdTomato-expressing domains

formed either in the left (when labelled at E6+21h, n=2) or right ventricular myocardium

(when labelled at E7+7h, n=1). This indicates that independent groups of *Foxa2* expressing

progenitors exist in the primitive streak that contribute to the left and right myocardium (Fig

3Civ-v and E). We conclude that *Foxa2* positive primitive streak cells contribute to the

ventricular myocardium at similar stages but in a lower proportion to the *T*-expressing cells.

Analysis of the embryos at stages when the cardiac crescent is differentiating into

cardiomyocytes, confirmed that cells arising from *Foxa2* positive cells at E6+21h contribute

to the myocardium in addition to other lineages including the epicardium and pericardium

(S5A Fig.). This is consistent with previous studies showing that the FHF contribute to all

these cell types (Bardot et al 2014, Devine et al 2014, Tyser et al 2021, Zhang et al. 2021).

No contribution to the endocardium located below the presumptive myocardial epithelium

was found in our conditions however (S5B Fig.).

These results prompted us to analyse the location of *Foxa2* and *T* expressing cells at the mid

and late streak stages. Whole mount immunostaining for T and Foxa2 revealed coexpression

in individual primitive streak cells at the mid-streak position of mid and late streak stages.

Double positive cells are also detected in the definitive endoderm (Fig 4Bi-ii, Ci. and S6Ai-ii

Fig) and at the distal tip of the embryo where the node forms (Fig 4Cii). These results

indicate that *T* and *Foxa2* are not always in mutually exclusive populations of cells as

previously reported (Burtscher and Lickert, 2009). Instead, it suggests *Foxa2* and *T* are co-

expressed in a population of anterior primitive streak cells that contribute to the ventricular

myocardium but not to the atria. Finally, Foxa2 is undetectable in the primitive streak from

the OB stage onwards, the stages during which primitive streak cells switched their

contribution from the ventricles to the outflow tract and atria (Fig 4E and F and S6D-D"i

Fig).

All ventricular progenitors derived from the *Foxa2* lineage express *Foxa2* at the mid-late streak stage.

It is possible that a subset of the ventricular progenitors expresses *Foxa2* early and downregulate *Foxa2* and upregulate *T* by the mid to late streak stages. To test this idea, we administered tamoxifen in *Foxa2$^{nEGP-CreERT2/+}$ R26R$^{tdTomato/+}$* embryos earlier (E6+8h), collected the embryos at E6+21h and assayed for Foxa2 and T protein. Because of the variation in embryonic stages, we could analyse both the early and mid to late streak stages (Fig. 1F and G). As expected, at the early streak stage, we found Foxa2 positive cells with weak tdTomato signal located in the distal primitive streak (yellow arrows in Fig 5A). At the mid-streak stage, the streak had extended along its proximal-distal axis and we found tdTomato positive cells coexpressing Foxa2 and T in the anterior primitive streak (Fig 5B-G). We also found rare tdTomato positive cells expressing only T and not Foxa2 (red arrow in Fig 4Cii, yellow arrows in Fig 3F). Quantification of Foxa2 and T intensities revealed that the tdTomato positive cells located in the anterior primitive streak co-express low levels of Foxa2 and T (yellow arrows in Fig 5Ci-iii, Fig 5D-F and S7A Fig). The tdTomato positive cells located most distally expressed higher level of Foxa2 and low or no T (blue arrows in Fig 5Cii and iii and Fig 5D-F). These more distal regions correspond to where the axial mesoderm and definitive endoderm are established (Lawson et al 1991; Tam and Beddington, 1992). We conclude that cells expressing *Foxa2* early are not contributing to proximal regions of the primitive streak. Instead, these cells maintain *Foxa2* expression in the anterior primitive streak and contribute to the left and right ventricles at the mid-to-late streak stages (Fig 5G-H).

Distal primitive streak cells downregulate *Foxa2* expression as they switch their contribution from the ventricles towards the outflow tract myocardium.

Following tamoxifen administration in $Foxa2^{nEGP\text{-}CreERT2/+}$ $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ embryos at E6+21h, we found tdTomato-expressing cells located in the outflow tract myocardium (Fig 3Cii and Di and S5A Fig.). As previously mentioned, when we administered tamoxifen at E7+7h, no tdTomato-positive cardiomyocytes could be detected in the outflow tract (in 11 out of 13 hearts, Fig 3Ciii). This could indicate that a subset of the *Foxa2* positive primitive streak cells, at E6+21h, are outflow tract progenitors and not solely ventricular progenitors. Alternatively, primitive streak cells contributing to the outflow tract may arise from cells that had previously expressed *Foxa2* but no longer do so as the primitive streak switches its contribution from right ventricular to outflow tract myocardium by E7+7h. Consistent with this latter hypothesis, the presence of tdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes in the outflow tract was always associated with the presence of tdTomato-expressing cardiomyocytes in the right ventricle (in 11/14 hearts, Fig 3E).

We next administered tamoxifen in $Foxa2^{nEGP\text{-}CreERT2/+}$ $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ embryos at E6+21h and fixed the embryos at E7+7h (Fig 6A). We immunostained embryos for Foxa2 and T protein. Computationally masking cells for Foxa2 expression (*i.e.* endodermal and axial mesoderm cells, Fig 6Aii-iii) revealed tdTomato-expressing mesodermal cells (*i.e.* cells that had expressed Foxa2) located in distal regions of the primitive streak and in the medial/dorsal mesoderm (Fig 6Aiii). No tdTomato positive cells were detected in lateral regions of the mesoderm.

We then analysed all tdTomato-expressing cells within the distal primitive streak region and

found these cells expressed T protein, (yellow arrows in Fig 6Av), although none co-

expressed Foxa2 and T. Cells expressing Foxa2 but not T corresponded to endodermal cells,

as indicated by their location in the outer layer of the embryo (green arrow in Fig 6Av).

These experiments show that the outflow tract myocardium descendants from *Foxa2* progeny

arise from the distal primitive streak. The outflow tract progenitors are *Foxa2* negative, but

they arise from cells that expressed *Foxa2* previously. We propose that distal primitive streak

cells downregulate *Foxa2* as they switch their contribution from the right ventricle to the

outflow tract myocardium (Fig 6C). Atrial cells arise instead from the proximal primitive

streak since they never arise from cells that had expressed *Foxa2* and all the cells located in

the anterior primitive streak express *Foxa2* (Fig 5E and F).

We further characterised the tdTomato-expressing mesodermal cells arising from the *Foxa2*

lineage. These cells have a cranial mesodermal identity since they express *Mesp1* (S8A Fig).

In addition, they are located adjacent to endoderm expressing the nodal and Wnt antagonists

Cerebus1 (Cer1) and Dkk1 respectively (S8B and D Fig.) (Nandkishore N. *et al.* 2018). The

primitive streak and posterior mesoderm are instead marked by Wnt/β−catenin signalling

activity (S8E Fig.). TdTomato positive cells located in anterior regions of the embryo (red

arrows in S8C Fig) were unlikely to be endothelial cells since they did not express the

endothelial marker Flk1 (for all the embryos we analysed (n=7). Instead, they are more likely

to be cardiac progenitors since they were responding to BMP signalling (by E7+12h) and

cardiomyocytes of the first heart field -or cardiac crescent- are characterised by high levels of

BMP signalling activity at these stages (Klaus et al., 2007; Lescroart et al., 2018) (Fig. 6B

and S9A-A" Fig.).

Ventricular, outflow tract and Atrial progenitors have distinct locations and

transcriptional profile within the heart fields.

Having identified distinct population of *T*-expressing cells descendants, we reasoned their

final locations could correlate with the previously described heart fields at gastrulation stages

(Lescroart et al. 2018). We analysed the locations of the descendants of early E6+21h and

late E7+7h *T*-expressing cells. These cells formed the ventricles and the majority of the

outflow tract/atria, respectively (see above). We used a BMP reporter (S9A-A" Fig) and

assayed for Phospho(P)-Smad1/5/8 to mark the first heart field and for Raldh2 to mark the

posterior second heart field. Progenitors derived from the early E6+21h *T*-expressing cells

contributed to anterior structures, distinct from the region occupied by late E7+7h *T*-

expressing cells (Fig 7Ai-ii). The descendants from the late E7+7h were located in posterior

mesoderm anterior to the node where Raldh2 localisation is strong (Fig 7Di-iv). They were

instead mostly excluded from the first heart field domain in which BMP activity is high, and

also from the cranial paraxial mesoderm with no detectable BMP activity (Fig 7Biii-iv, Ci-ii

and S10A Fig). Some tdTomato-expressing cells were also sparsely intermingled within the

posterior BMP positive domain and among these some had detectable BMP activity (see

yellow and red arrows in Fig 7Bi-iv, Ci-ii and S10A Fig). This is consistent with a late

recruitment of E7+7h progenitors to posterior regions of the cardiac crescent (see above).

To ask whether molecular differences exist between the ventricular, outflow and atrial

cardiac progenitors, we performed single-cell transcriptome analysis of four $T^{nEGP\text{-}CreERT2/+}$

$R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ embryos dissected 7 hours after tamoxifen administration at E7+7h (early

head fold -EHF- stage, Fig 8A). We reasoned we could use the presence or absence of

tdTomato transcripts to discriminate the transcriptome of the tdTomato-positive outflow tract

and atrial progenitors from the tdTomato-negative ventricular progenitors within the heart

fields. We obtained 3494 high-quality single cell transcriptomes. We clustered cells into

subpopulations, guided by available single cell transcriptomic data (S4A-C Fig) (Pijuan-Sala

et al., 2019, E7+7h dataset, see Material and Method, S11A-D Fig and S12A-D Fig). Within

these subpopulations, cardiac progenitors belonging to the previously defined first heart field

-FHF-, anterior heart field -AHF- and posterior second heart field -pSHF- (Lescroart et al.

2018) and cranial paraxial mesoderm (Campione et al., 1999; Filipe et al., 2006; Nam et al.,

2007; Zhao et al., 1996) were identified based on the expression of *Tbx5*, *Tbx20*, and *Hand2*

for FHF; *Tbx1* and *Fgf8/10* for AHF; *Raldh2*, *Hoxb1and Tbx6* for pSHF; and *Pitx2*, *Alx1* and

Cyp26a1 for the cranial paraxial mesoderm (Fig 8C). Notably, *Fgf8* expression was reduced

in the cranial paraxial mesoderm cluster, consistent with the absence of *Fgf8* expression in

this cell population (Ilagan et al., 2006).

We next analysed the proportion of tdTomato positive cells in each cluster (S12C Fig, Fig

8Di-iii and S8_source data). Consistent with the imaging, we found that posterior mesoderm

populations (*i.e.* caudal, presomitic, intermediate and paraxial mesoderm) and notochord

were enriched in tdTomato positive cells (50-67%, scale data>1, Fig 8Ciii). Conversely, we

found a lower frequency of tdTomato positive cells or none in anterior mesoderm populations

including the anterior paraxial mesoderm (0%, scale data>1). Among the cardiac progenitors,

the pSHF had the highest proportion of tdTomato-expressing cells (43%, scale data >1)

followed by the AHF (10%, scale data>1). The FHF had very few tdTomato-positive cells

(3%, scale data>1) (Fig 8Diii).

Since the AHF contribute to both the right ventricle and the outflow tract (Kelly et al. 2001),

we next increased the resolution of the clustering to better distinguish tdTomato positive from

tdTomato negative subpopulations. We observed the FHF, AHF and pSHF clusters could be

subdivided into six discernible clusters (Fig 8E and F, S13A Fig and S8_source data). Three

of these clusters were enriched for tdTomato-positive cells (14%, 34% and 74% for cluster 4,

5 and 6 respectively, scale data>1). The three other clusters were depleted of tdTomato-

positive cells (0%, 4% and 3% for cluster 1, 2 and 3 respectively, scale data>1). We

hypothesised that the tdTomato positive clusters included progenitors contributing to the

outflow and atria. Conversely, we reasoned that the tdTomato negative clusters comprised

progenitors derived from earlier *T*-expressing cells that contribute to the left and right

ventricles and atrioventricular canal. We have summarised these results as a fate map for the

different cardiac regions (Fig 11A-B) and we propose that left and right ventricular, outflow

and atrial progenitors form molecularly distinct populations within the FHF, AHF and pSHF

at the EHF stage mirroring their distinct origin in the primitive streak. We describe below the

genes expressed in each of the tdTomato positive (4, 5 and 6) and negative (1, 2 and 3)

subpopulations in relation to the known expression patterns in cardiac progenitors (Fig 8F-G

and S7_source data res12 and Fig 8F).

Cells from cluster 5 and 6 -pSHF derived- expressed *Raldh2* and *Hoxb*1 (Fig 8C and F).

Previous lineage tracing experiments have demonstrated that retinoic acid activated cells

contribute to the outflow and atria (Dolle et al., 2010). Additionally, *Hoxb1* positive cells

have been shown to contribute to the atria and to the inferior wall of the outflow tract that

subsequently forms the myocardium at the base of the pulmonary trunk, in addition to

patches of myocardium in the ventricles (Stefanovic et al 2020, Bertrand et al., 2011; Roux et

al., 2015). Our data show *Tbx1* and *Raldh2* positive cells formed complementary cell

populations within the tdTomato positive clusters. *Tbx1* is expressed in cluster 4 and 5 and

Raldh2 in cluster 5 and 6. This is consistent with lineage tracing experiments demonstrating

that *Tbx1* expressing cells within the AHF contribute to the outflow tract (Huynh et al.,

2007). We also found that *Wnt2* was expressed in cluster 6. This is consistent with *Wnt2*

expression in posterior mesoderm in addition to the anterior mesoderm where the prospective

cardiac crescent forms (Costello et al., 2011; Monkley et al., 1996).

Fgf8, a known marker of the AHF (Lescroart et al. 2018), was enriched in both cluster 4 (low

tdTomato positive) and cluster 3 (tdTomato negative). Lineage tracing experiments have

shown that *Tbx1* marks part of the right ventricle progenitor domain within the AHF (Baldini

et al., 2017; Huynh et al., 2007) while *Fgf8* marks it entirely (Crossley and Martin, 1995;

Ilagan et al., 2006). Consistent with the hypothesis that cluster 3 corresponded to a right

ventricular progenitor domain, we found *Tbx1* to be enriched within a subset of the cluster 3

(expressed in 30% of the cells) while *Fgf8* is expressed throughout (expressed in 70% of the

cells). Also consistent with the hypothesis that cluster 2, 3 and 4 contained ventricular and

outflow progenitors is the enrichment of *Jag1* in these three clusters, a gene shown to be

expressed in progenitors derived from the *Foxa2* lineage (Bardot et al. 2020). *Jag1* is

expressed anteriorly, complementary to the region where the cardiac crescent resides

(Przemeck et al., 2003). *Dkk1*, a Wnt modulator controlling cardiac differentiation (David et

al., 2008; Guo et al., 2019; Phillips et al., 2011), was also enriched in clusters 2 and 3. *Id 2,*

which is essential for the specification of the heart tube-forming progenitors (Cunningham et

al., 2017) is also enriched in clusters 2 and 3.

The ventricular and outflow tract myocardium are prepatterned within the primitive

streak.

The signalling environment that cells encounter during migration influences the patterning of

the heart fields (S13C Fig) (Andersen et al., 2018; Bardot et al. 2020; Guzzetta et al., 2020;

Hochgreb et al., 2003; Klaus et al., 2007; Sirbu et al., 2008). However, our findings that the

ventricles and the outflow/atria arise from distinct primitive streak cell populations raise the

possibility that these progenitors are already molecularly distinct in the primitive streak. To

address this question, we analysed the transcripts of cells from of tamoxifen treated $T^{nEGP\text{-}CreERT2/+}$

$R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ embryos at the mid-late steak stages (3635 cells from nine

embryos, Fig 6A) and OB-EB stages (3994 cells from four embryos, Fig 6A). Because we

administered tamoxifen in these embryo, tdTomato positive mesodermal cells that had

already emigrated could be visualised. In the mid-late streak stage embryos, tdTomato-

positive cells were identified in the extra-embryonic mesoderm, consistent with the idea that

the earliest progenitors to emerge from the primitive streak are contributing to the yolk sac

blood cells and vasculature endothelium (Kinder et al., 1999). TdTomato-positive cells were

also sparsely found in the embryonic mesoderm. In the OB-EB stage embryos, tdTomato-

positive cells were found in the embryonic mesoderm where ventricular progenitors reside,

and outflow and atrial progenitors are leaving the primitive streak at these stages.

Unfortunately, the low level of expression at these times that meant very few tdTomato reads

could be recovered and tdTomato positive cells could therefore not be identified in our single

cell transcriptomic analysis at these early stages (15A, B Fig).

We clustered cells guided by available atlases of mouse gastrulation (Pijuan-Sala et al., 2019)

(Fig 9B-C and S14A-C Fig). We analysed cells corresponding to the primitive streak and

anterior primitive streak (aPS) clusters at the mid-late streak stages and cells in primitive

streak cluster at the OB-EB stages (Fig 9E). The primitive streak cells at the mid-late streak

and OB-EB stages did not express the *Cdx1/4* TFs associated with a posterior mesodermal

identity. Nor did these cells express *Raldh2*, suggesting that the outflow and atrial progenitors

start expressing *Raldh2* once the cells have reached their final location in the embryo (S14E

Fig.).

Integration of the MS-LS and EB-OB datasets (Fig 9D) and differential gene expression

analysis revealed major molecular differences between primitive streak cells contributing to

either the ventricles or the outflow/atria (Fig 9E and F). The T-box transcription factor *Eomes*

was strongly expressed in the mid-late streak stage primitive streak (ventricular progenitors)

while its expression was lower at the OB-EB stages in the outflow/atrial progenitors (Fig

9G). This is in line with the function of *Eomes* in establishing the anterior mesoderm and

specifying cardiac progenitors upstream of *Mesp1* (Costello et al., 2011). *T* had the opposite

pattern of expression and showed a stronger expression at the OB-EB stages compared to the

mid-late streak stages (Fig 9G). Fate mapping in the mouse also identified the anterior

primitive streak adjacent to the organiser as a source of cardiac progenitors (Kinder et al.,

2001) and *Hes1*, *hHex* (Thomas et al., 1998), *Gsc* (Blum et al., 1992), *Foxa2* (Ang and

Rossant, 1994), *Upp1*, *Tdgf1* (Ding et al., 1998; Dono et al., 1993), *Bmp2, Epha2, Lhx1*

(Costello et al., 2015; Shimono and Behringer, 1999)*, Otx2* (Acampora et al., 2003) and

Chrd (Bachiller et al., 2000) were among the genes enriched in the anterior primitive streak at

the mid-late streak stages (Fig 9E and H). *Sp8*, *Amt*, and *Notch2* (Williams et al., 1995) were

preferentially enriched in the primitive streak at the OB-EB stages (Fig 6E and H). *Ccnd2* is

expressed in the proximal regions of the primitive streak where the atrial progenitors are

located (Wianny et al., 1998) and where BMP signalling activity is high (Morgani et al.,

2018). *Mixl1* (Hart *et al.* 2002), *Fst* (Albano et al., 1994), *Gas1* (Lee and Fan, 2001), *Frzb*

(Hoang et al., 1998) and *Apln* were expressed in the primitive streak at both the mid-late

streak and OB-EB stages (Fig 9E). We conclude that ventricular, outflow and atrial

progenitors derive from molecularly distinct groups of cells that occupy spatially and

temporally discrete regions of the primitive streak.

Live imaging reveals the migratory routes of the mesodermal cells.

Finally, to confirm that early and late *T*-expressing cells migrated to distinct anterior-

posterior locations within the heart fields, we tracked single cell in live $T^{nEGP-CreERT2/+}$

$R26R^{mg/+}$ embryos (Fig 10E and S10_movie). Early mesodermal cells from distal locations

(yellow arrows in Fig 10E) migrated anteriorly along the midline to regions where the first

heart field is established. Conversely, both late distal and proximal mesodermal cells (orange

and red arrows respectively in Fig 10E) contributed to more posterior regions of the

mesoderm. The distal progenitors migrated to more medial regions (labelled as AHF, orange

arrows in Fig 10E) and proximal cells to more lateral regions of the mesoderm (labelled as

pCC and pSHF, red arrows in Fig 10E).

Discussion

Our findings, summarised in Fig 11A-C, reveal the temporal and spatial order in which

different cardiac lineages arise within the primitive streak. The left ventricular progenitors are

the first to leave the primitive streak at the mid-streak stage followed shortly after by the right

ventricular progenitors at the late-streak stage. Progenitors contributing to the poles of the

heart leave the primitive streak at the OB-EB stages. The outflow progenitors arise from

distal regions of the primitive streak while the atrial progenitors are located in proximal

regions of the primitive streak. These different subpopulations constitute molecularly distinct

groups of progenitors within the heart field and the transcriptional differences in the primitive

streak cells suggest that cardiac progenitors are prepatterned in the primitive streak prior to

their migration. This organization of myocardial progenitors is conserved during evolution

and in zebrafish, the ventricular and atrial myocardial progenitors are spatially separate in the

blastula (Keegan et al. 2004).

Primitive streak origin of the cardiac progenitors.

While our *Foxa2* lineage tracing demonstrates an aPS origin of the ventricular myocardium,

it is likely that more proximal regions of the PS marked by M*esp1* at the mid-late streak stage

also contribute to the ventricles. Two lines of evidence support this hypothesis. First, the

maximum contribution of the *Foxa2* progeny to the ventricles is 30-50% in *Foxa2* based

lineage tracing experiments (Bardot et al. 2017 and this study). This suggests that the *Foxa2*

progeny represent a subset of the whole pool of ventricular progenitors. Second, fate mapping

analysis in the mouse demonstrated that some cells from the middle/proximal regions of the

PS also contributed to the cardiac crescent or FHF (which mostly form the left ventricle) in

addition to the aPS (Kinder et al 1998). Further investigation is required to characterize the

descendants and contribution of the proximal primitive streak to the ventricles and whether or

not they overlap with descendants of *Foxa2* progenitors. It is also unclear whether the *Foxa2*

progeny contribute to a population of multipotent progenitors recently identified at the intra-

/extra-embryonic boundary in the FHF (Zhang et al. 2021, Tyser et al. 2021). Instead, these

progenitors may arise from an early population of proximal *Mesp1* positive primitive streak

cells (Fig 11C) (Zhang et al. 2021).

Our *T*-lineage tracing experiments demonstrate that most of the atria arise from late OB-EB

stages primitive streak. Our results further revealed that a subset of the atrial progenitors are

gradually incorporated into posterior regions of the FHF to establish the inflow of the initial

heart tube. This is consistent with the notion that the FHF contribute also contributes to part

of the atria (Cai et al 2003, Später et al. 2014). The earliest PS cells contribute to the most

anterior regions of the FHF which are fated to give rise mostly to the left ventricle and atrio-

ventricular canal in addition to the epicardium in the heart while a rare contribution to the

dorsal aspect of the right atria is noted (Zhang et al 2021). Thus, we propose that in the

proximal regions of the primitive streak, progenitors contributing to the atrioventricular canal

and left ventricle and are the first to emigrate followed rapidly by the atrial progenitors and a

subset of these will contribute to posterior regions of the FHF (Fig 11C).

Lineage relationships between cardiac progenitors.

The *Foxa2* lineage tracing demonstrate the existence of a common lineage between the right

ventricle and the outflow. This suggests a population of cells resides within the PS, the

progeny of which contributes successively to the right ventricle and outflow tract progenitor

pools while self-renewing (see model in Fig 11A-C). This is similar to a previous study that

found the progeny of individually labelled primitive streak cells contributed to the notochord

and somites while also leaving descendants in the primitive steak (Psychoyos and Stern,

1996). Live-imaging experiments will provide a more direct indication of the existence of

asymmetric cell divisions mediating this process within the primitive streak.

While the right ventricle and outflow tract progenitors were identified in the anterior/distal

primitive streak, atrial progenitors were located in the proximal primitive streak. This spatial

segregation suggests that atrial progenitors are likely to constitute a pool of progenitors

independent from right ventricle and outflow cardiac progenitors because of their physical

separation. This is consistent with the original clonal analysis from Meilhac et al. (Meilhac et

al., 2004), which concluded that atrial cells became clonally distinct before the presumptive

right ventricle and outflow tract (Meilhac et al. 2004). Subsequent clonal experiments tracing

Mesp1 positive progenitors (Lescroart et al., 2014, Devine et al. 2014) also resulted in small

clones spanning both the right ventricle and outflow tract compartments while independent

clones were found in the atria (Lescroart et al., 2014, Devine et al. 2014) in addition to left

ventricle-atrium clones (Devine et al. 2014). Thus, atrial progenitors are likely to constitute a

pool of progenitors in the primitive streak distinct from a common progenitor for the right

ventricle and outflow tract (see model in Fig 11C).

Meilhac et al. also observed two classes of larger clones extending across multiple

compartments. This demonstrated the existence of two cardiac lineages in the embryo

corresponding to the two heart fields (Meilhac and Buckingham, 2018; Meilhac et al., 2004).

Our analysis and others (Devine et al. 2014, Lescroart et al. 2014 and Zhang et al. 2021)

suggest that the segregation of two cardiac lineages could only occur before the onset of

gastrulation, for example at the epiblast stage. A further subdivision into progenitors with

more restricted cardiac lineages then arises by the time epiblast cells ingress through the

primitive streak during gastrulation. This is reflected by the existence of progenitor

subpopulations within the FHF and SHF corresponding to the prospective left and right

ventricle, outflow tract and atria.

A combination of intrinsic factors and inductive events specify and pattern the cardiac

progenitors.

Depending on the initial timing and site of ingression through the primitive streak, cardiac

progenitors might adopt distinct migratory routes that exposes them to different signaling

environments and influencing their cardiac fate. BMPs and Fgfs secreted by the anterior

endoderm (Alsan and Schultheiss, 2002; de Soysa et al., 2019; Lough and Sugi, 2000;

Schultheiss et al., 1997), retinoic acid expressed in the posterior lateral plate mesoderm

(Hochgreb et al., 2003; Xavier-Neto et al., 1999) and signals expressed in the anterior

intestinal portal (AIP) at later stages (Anderson et al., 2016) all contribute to the patterning of

the cardiac progenitors. A Hedgehog-Fgf signaling axis has also been proposed to pattern the

anterior mesoderm to allocate the head and heart during mesodermal migration (Guzzetta et

al., 2020). Our analysis shows the primitive streak cells that contribute to either the ventricles

or to the poles of the heart are molecularly distinct prior to migration. For example, changes

in the transcriptional profile of primitive streak cells, including the downregulation of *Foxa2*

expression, accompany the transition from contributing to the right ventricle to supplying the

outflow tract. This mode of cellular diversification is reminiscent of temporal programmes in

other tissues, such as neural progenitors (Doe, 2017), where sequential expression of distinct

sets of transcription factors in progenitors defines the later differentiated cell types. These

findings raise the possibility that cardiac progenitors are specified via a combination of both

initial conditions set in the primitive streak and inductive events happening during migration

(Bardot et al., 2020; Guzzetta et al., 2020) or once cells have reached their final location in

the embryo.

Our analysis could not resolve putative differences between left and right ventricular

progenitors in the primitive streak, and a more precise staging of embryos separating the mid

from the late streak stages within a single cell transcriptomic assay will be required for this.

Transcriptional differences between left and right ventricular progenitors may be established

during migration by exposure to BMP and FGF signaling, both of which are known to

mediate medio-lateral patterning of the mesoderm (Dorey and Amaya, 2010; Ilagan et al.,

2006; Kelly et al., 2001; Tuazon and Mullins, 2015).

The observation that initial molecular differences in the primitive streak leads to the

formation of groups of mesodermal cells that generate distinct populations of cardiac

progenitors might inform *in vitro* cardiac differentiation protocols (Lee et al. 2017, Mendjan

et al. 2014). We show that atrial cells are located in the proximal primitive streak where BMP

signaling marked by P-Smad1/5/8 is high (Morgani et al., 2018). By contrast, ventricular

progenitors originate in anterior primitive streak regions where cells are exposed to high

Nodal signaling. This is consistent with methods to generate cardiac cells from human ESCs

in vitro that rely on the exposure to different levels of Nodal and BMP signaling (Lee et al.,

2017). A higher ratio of BMP4 to activin A signaling is required for the generation of Raldh2

positive mesoderm, which forms atrial cells. Conversely, the generation of ventricular

cardiomyocytes relies on a higher level of activin to BMP4 signaling and the formation of

Raldh2 negative CD235a positive mesoderm (Lee et al., 2017).

We conclude that cardiac progenitors are pre-patterned within the primitive streak and this

prefigures their allocation to distinct anatomical structures of the heart. Further work will be

required to test if generating the correct population of primitive streak cells can help to obtain

purer populations of cardiomyocytes from pluripotent stem cells. Our analysis will also help

to identify the initial mesodermal population that when dysregulated lead to specific

malformations in the heart. For example, left ventricle hypoplasia results from a reduction in

the number of specified cardiomyocytes within the mesoderm and this is due to a reduction in

the expression of key cardiac transcription factors (Santos-Ledo et al., 2020). Whether such

cardiac defects can arise from mutations affecting initial primitive streak cell populations and

mesoderm remains to be addressed.

Methods

Experimental Model and Subject Details

All animal procedures were performed in accordance with the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 under the UK Home Office project licenses PF59163DB and PIL IA66C8062.

Mice

The $T^{nEGFP-CreERT2/+}$ (MGI:5490031) and $Foxa2^{nEGP-CreERT2/+}$ (MGI:5490029) lines (Imuta *et al.* 2013) were obtained from Hiroshi Sasaki. The $R26^{Tomato\ Ai14/\ Tomato\ Ai14}$ (*Gt(ROSA)26Sor$^{tm14(CAG-tdTomato)Hze}$* (MGI:3809524), *Gt(ROSA)26Sor$^{tm4(ACTB-tdTomato,-EGFP)Luo,}$* (MGI: 3716464) were obtained from the Jackson Laboratory. The $Mesp1^{tm2(cre)Ysa}$ (MGI:2176467) line was obtained from MRC Harwell, Mary Lyon. The TCF/Lef:H2B:mCherry WNT reporter line was generated in house by the Briscoe laboratory (Metzis et al. 2019).

BRE:H2B-Turquoise BMP reporter line

The MLP:H2B-Turquoise sequence (originally from BRE-MLP-H2B-Turquoise pGL3 basic, Briscoe lab, unpublished) was cloned using In-Fusion Cloning (Takara, 639650) between two chicken insulators at the BamHI site of plasmid pJC5-4 (Chung et al., 1993) without the LCR fragment. The 1.6kb MLP:H2B-Turquoise fragment was amplified using Phusion High-Fidelity PCR Master Mix (ThermoFisher Scientific, F532L) according to the manufacturer's

instructions. Subsequently the 92bp BRE element was isolated with MluI/XhoI digest from

BRE-MLP-H2B-Turquoise pGL3 basic and cloned 5' to the MLP sequence of MluI/XhoI

digested MLP:H2B-Turquoise pJC4-4 plasmid. The final plasmid was linearized with NdeI

and used for pronuclear injection using fertilized embryos from the F1 hybrid strain

(C57BL6/CBA). Mice with BRE reporter activity were verified by genotyping by a

commercial vendor (Transnetyx). 5'-3' Forward primer:

CACAAGCTGGAGTACAACTACATCAGCGA Reporter 1: TCTATATCACCGCCGAC

Reverse Primer: GGCGGATCTTGAAGTTGGCCTTGA. The BRE reporter line was

maintained on the F1 background by crossing heterozygous *BRE:H2B-Turquoise* mice to F1

wild-type mice.

Lineage tracing of the *T* and *Foxa2* expressing cells

Lineage tracing of *T and Foxa2* mesodermal progenitors was performed by crossing $T^{nEGFP\text{-}}$

$^{CreERT2/+}$ and $Foxa2^{nEGP\text{-}CreERT2/+}$ with $R26^{\text{ }Tomato\text{ }Ai14/\text{ }Tomato\text{ }Ai14}$ mice. To gain better control

over embryonic staging, mice were synchronized in estrus by by introducing soiled bedding

from a male's cage into the females' three days in advance. On the fourth day, mice were

crossed over a two-hours period from 7am to 9am. Vaginal plugs were checked at 9 am and if

positive, the embryonic day was defined at E0. This was followed by tamoxifen oral gavage

with tamoxifen at 0.08mg/body weight (T5648 SIGMA) dissolved in corn oil at indicated

times.

Wholemount immunofluorescence and image acquisition

Embryos were fixed for 20min (for early E6.5-E7.5 embryos) or overnight (for late E12.5 hearts) in 2% PFA at 4°C, then permeabilized in PBST (PBS containing 0.5% Triton X-100) for 15min (for early E6.5-E7.5 embryos) or 1 hour (for late E12.5 hearts) and blocked for 5 hours (5% donkey serum, Abcam ab138579). Embryos were incubated overnight at 4°C with antibodies diluted in PBST (PBS 0.1% Triton X-100): rabbit anti-Estrogen Receptor alpha antibody (Sp1) (1:100, Abcam ab16660), rat anti-Flk1 (1:250, BD Biosciences 55307), goat anti-DKK1 (R&D Systems, AF1765), rabbit ranti-Aldh1a2 (Abcam ab96060), rat anti-CER1 (R&D Systems, MAB1986), goat anti-T (1:250, R&D Systems AF2085), rabbit anti-FOXA2 (1:250, Abcam ab108422); mouse anti-cTNT2 (1:250, Thermo Fischer Scientific Systems, MS295P0); rabbit anti-PhosphoSMAD1/5/8 (1:250, Cell Signalling D5B10 Rabbit mAb #13820). After washing in freshly prepared PBST at 4°C, embryos were incubated with secondary antibodies (Molecular Probes and Biotium) coupled to AlexaFluor 488 or 647 fluorophores and CF430 as required at 1:250 overnight at 4°C. Before imaging, embryos were washed in PBST at room temperature. Confocal images were obtained on an inverted Zeiss 710 confocal microscope with a 20X water objective (for early E6.5-E7.5 embryos) or a 10X air objective (0.4 NA) (for late E12.5 hearts) at a 1024×1024 pixels dimension with a z-step of 3-6-μm (2×2 tile scale, for the late E12.5 hearts). Embryos were systematically imaged throughout from top to bottom. Images were processed using Fiji software (Schindelin et al., 2012).

Image Analysis

To segment the Foxa2 and T positive cells a Gaussian filter whose radius is adjusted to the

typical size of a cell was first applied with Fiji (Schindelin et al., 2012). The resulting image

was next converted to a mask by thresholding. When objects touched each other, a watershed

on the binary mask. Finally, particle analyser generated a binary image with objects outside

specified size (50) and circularity (0.75-1.00) removed. This process was repeated in each

optical z-section of the z-stack. To quantify the surface area of the tdTomato labelled

myocardial cells, patches of tdTomato cells were manually segmented and area measured

with Fiji (Schindelin et al., 2012) for each individual heart within each litter.

PCR analysis

Primers were designed to span the floxed SV40 poly(A) signal sequence removed from the

genome following Cre recombinase-mediated recombination: 5'-3' Forward primer:

CGTGCTGGTTATTGTGCTGT; Reverse: CATGAACTCTTTGATGACCTCCTCGC.

Primers yield a 1145 bp product from unrecombined DNA and a 274 bp product following

recombination. gDNA was extracted using the HotSHOT method (Truett *et al.*, 2000) from

either the ear clip of an adult $R26^{\text{Tomato Ai14/ Tomato Ai14}}$ mouse (unrecombined) or tail bud

dissected from E9.5 embryos from a pregnant $T^{\text{nEGFP-CreERT2/+}}$ $R26^{\text{Tomato Ai14/ Tomato Ai14}}$ mouse,

at 2, 4 and 12 hrs following oral gavage with Tamoxifen at 0.08mg/body weight

(T5648 SIGMA) dissolved in corn oil. gDNA was then used in Q5 High-Fidelity 2X Master

Mix (NEB) PCR reactions according to the manufacturer's instructions. Amplicons were

resolved on a 2% agarose gel with a 100 bp ladder.

Sample preparation for single cell RNA sequencing

$T^{nEGFP\text{-}CreERT2/+}$ $R26$ $^{Tomato\ Ai14/\ Tomato\ Ai14}$ mouse embryos were imaged prior to dissociation with

a Leica stereo fluorescent microscope with an exposure of ~ 1mn to reveal the tdTomato

signal. Sample preparation was done using previously established method (Delile et al.

2019). Mouse embryos were dissected in Hanks Balanced Solution without calcium and

magnesium (HBSS, Life Technologies, 14185045) supplemented with 5% heat- inactivated

foetal bovine serum (FBS). The samples were then incubated on FACSmax cell dissociation

solution (Amsbio, T200100) with 10× Papain (30 U/mg, Sigma-Aldrich, 10108014001) for

11 min at 37°C to dissociate the cells. To generate a single cell suspension, samples were

transferred to HBSS, with 5% FBS, rock inhibitor (10 μM, Stemcell Technologies, Y-27632)

and 1× non-essential amino acids (Thermo Fisher Scientific, 11140035), disaggregated

through pipetting, and filtered once through 0.35 μm filters and once through 0.20 μm

strainers (Miltenyi Biotech, 130-101-812). Quality control was assayed by measuring live

cells versus cell death, cell size and number of clumps and 10,000 cells per sample were

loaded for sequencing.

Analysis of scRNA-seq data

A suspension of 10,000 single cells was loaded onto the 10x Genomics Single Cell 3′ Chip,

and cDNA synthesis and library construction were performed as per the manufacturer's

protocol for the Chromium Single Cell 3′ v2 protocol (10x Genomics; PN-120233) and

sequenced on an Hiseq4000 (Illumina). 10x CellRanger (version 3.0.2) was used to generate

single cell count data for each sample using a custom transcriptome built from the Ensembl

mouse GRCm38 release 86 with the addition of the sequence from tdTomato Ai9 plasmid

(Madisen et al., 2010). Due to 10x's poly A bias, an additional 225 bases between the

tdTomato gene stop codon and the bGH poly(A) signal was included to represent the WPRE

gene. Depth of sequencing was 47975 mean reads per cell for the E7+14h dataset, 32629

mean reads per cell for the MS-LS dataset and 64340 mean read per cell for the OB-EB

dataset. All subsequent analyses were performed with R (v.3.6.1) (R Core Team (2013))

using the Seurat (v3) package (Stuart et al., 2019). Primary filtering was performed on each

dataset by removing from consideration: cells expressing unique feature counts fewer than

500, number of Unique Molecular Identifiers (UMIs) fewer than 1000 and cells for which

mitochondrial genes made up greater than 3 times the standard deviation value of all

expressed genes. Each dataset was normalised using the 'LogNormalize' function, with a

scale factor of 10,000. The top 2000 highly variable genes were found using the

'FindVariableGenes' function and the data centred and scaled using the 'ScaleData' function.

PCA decomposition was performed and after consideration of the eigenvalue 'elbow-plots',

the first 50 components were used to construct Uniform Manifold Approximation Projection

(UMAP) plots. Samples E7+14h and E7.75 from Pijuan et al. (Pijuan et al 2019) were

integrated using Seurat standard integration workflow. Common anchor features between

both experiments were selected using the 'FindIntegrationAnchors' functions, using the first

20 dimensions. Cluster identity from Pijuan et al. E7.75 dataset was next transferred to the

E7+14h dataset. Cluster specific gene markers were identified using the 'FindMarkers'

function using the settings (min.pct=0.25; min.diff.pct = 0.1 and return.thresh=0.0001),

which uses the Wilcoxon rank sum test to compare each cell belonging on one cluster versus

all other cells. Genes were ranked based on logFC and the highest logFC was used to

determine unique markers per cluster. Selected cluster marker genes were used to draw a

heatmap showing the expression of tdTomato on the top row (S12A Fig and S7_source data

_res4.5). The clustering analysis was then repeated by increasing the resolution parameter

and discernible clusters with marker genes corresponding to cluster 1-6 and anterior paraxial

mesoderm were identified (S7_source data_res12). Cluster specific markers were also

identified, after subsetting only clusters, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 (Fig 8F and S7_source data_Fig

8F). Samples E6+21h and E7+3h were similarly integrated using Seurat standard integration

workflow. Common anchors feature between both experiments were selected using the

'FindIntegrationAnchors' functions, using the first 20 dimensions. Clusters were labelled and

grouped using pre-existing cell markers (Pijuan et al 2019) and differential expression

between clusters were determined using the "FindMarkers Function", without logfc or

minimum percentage expressed thresholds. Genes showing the largest logFC and smallest

adjusted p value between clusters were used to generate heatmaps (S9_source data).

Embryo culture and two-photon live-imaging

Embryos were dissected at E6.5 in pre-equilibrated DMEM supplemented with 10% foetal

bovine serum, 25 mM HEPES-NaOH (pH 7.2), penicillin (50µml21) and streptomycin

(50mgml21). Embryos were cultured in 100% fresh rat serum filter sterilized through a 0.2

mm filter. To hold embryos in position during time-lapse acquisition, we made bespoke

plastic holders with holes of different diameters (0.3–05 mm) to ensure a good fit of embryos

similarly to the traps developed by Ivanovitch et al. (2017) and Nonaka et al. (1999).

Embryos were mounted with their anterior side facing up. To avoid evaporation, the medium

was covered with mineral oil (Sigma-Aldrich; M8410). Before starting the time-lapse

acquisition, embryos were pre-cultured for at least 2 hours in the microscopy culture set up.

The morphology of the embryo was then carefully monitored and if the embryos appeared

unhealthy or rotated and or moved, they were discarded, otherwise, time-lapse acquisition

was performed. For the acquisition, we used the multi-photon MPSP5 equipped with a 5%

CO_2 incubator and a heating chamber maintaining 37°C. The objective lens used was a HCX

APO L 20x/1.00 W dipping objective, which allowed a 2mm working distance for imaging

mouse embryos. A SpectraPhysics MaiTai DeepSee pulsed laser was set at 880 nm and used

for one-channel two-photon imaging. Leica Las AF software was used for aquisition. Image

settings was: output power: 250 mW, pixel dwell time: 7μs, line averaging: two and image

dimension: 610 × 610 μm (1024 × 1024 pixels). To maximize the chance of covering the

entire embryo during the long-term time lapse video, we allowed 150–200 μm of free space

between the objective and the embryo at the beginning of the recording.

Data availability

Single cell RNA sequencing data have been deposited in NCBI under the accession number

GSE153789.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the Science Technology Platforms at the Francis Crick Institute. In particular, we thank the Advanced Light Microscopy facility, the Advanced Sequencing Facility, Bioinformatics and Biostatistics Facility and the Biological Research Facility for their ongoing support and access to equipment. We are grateful to Robert Goldstone and Amelia Edwards for excellent support with single cell sequencing, Teresa Rayon for assistance with single cell preparation, Gavin Kelly for support with single cell data processing and Joe Brock for research illustration. We thank Teresa Rayon, Florencia Cavodeassi and Peter Scambler for comments on the manuscript and members of the Smith and Briscoe lab for useful discussion. K.I. has received funding from HFSP LTF (LT000609/2015-L). Work in the J.C.S. and J.B.'s lab was supported by the Francis Crick Institute, which receives its core funding from Cancer Research UK (FC001-157, FC001-051) the UK Medical Research Council (FC001-157, FC001-051), and the Welcome Trust (FC001-157, FC001-051). Work in the J.B.'s lab was also supported by the the European Research Council under European Union (EU) Horizon 2020 research and innovation program grant 742138.

Author contributions

K.I.: Conceptualization, Investigation, Formal analysis, Visualisation, Writing – Original Draft Preparation. P.S.B. and P.C.: Formal analysis, J.D.: Data curation, N.M.G., D.S.: Investigation, R.A.J.: Investigation, Visualisation, D.M.B: Methodology, J.C.S.: Funding

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Figure legends

Fig 1. Genetic tracing of the *T+* primitive steak cells. (A) Schematics of the $T^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$;

$R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ allele (Imuta et al., 2013). Cre-ERT2 is expressed in cells expressing *T*. In the

presence of tamoxifen, Cre protein is translocated to the nucleus where it recombines the

$R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ reporter. As a result, the cell and its descendants are permanently labeled. **(B)**

Diagram of the experimental approach. *T*-expressing cells and their descendants are labelled,

from E6+21h, E7, E7+7h and E7+11h by administrating a dose of tamoxifen (Tam) to T^{nGPF-}

$^{CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ mice (0.08mg/body weight via oral gavage). Cell descendants in the

myocardium are analysed at E12.5. **(C)** Representative hearts resulting from the

administration of tamoxifen at different time points in $T^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$

immunostained with cTnnT to reveal the cardiomyoyctes (blue). Yellow arrows identify

small patches of tdTomato positive cardiomyocytes in the LV (iii and v), in the RV (v) and in

the outflow tract and atria (vii and viii). Views are ventral. Single epicardial cells are labeled

in each condition. **(D-E)** Summary of all $T^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ hearts examined. The

contribution of the *T*-expressing cells to the different compartments of the heart is quantified

by measuring the proportion of tdTomato positive myocardium. Numbers in brackets in (E)

represent the number of litters assessed. Error bars are SD. **(F)** Stage variation quantified

according to Downs and Davies criteria (Downs and Davies, 1993). Number in brackets

represents the number of litters assessed. All the timed matings were for 2-hour periods. **(G)**

Embryos collected at E6+21h or E7+7h showing variation in stage. ((H) Representative

$T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$embryos untreated or tamoxifen treated for two hours mice (0.08mg/body

weight via oral gavage) and immunostained with estrogen receptor. Insets iii and iv are

magnified view from i and ii respectively. **(I)** PCR amplicons generated from the genomic

region in which Cre-mediated recombination occurs, resolved on an agarose gel. Before

recombination, the PCR product is 1145 bp (white rectangle); after recombination it is 274 bp

(black rectangle). Template gDNA was extracted from either an ear clip of an adult $T^{nGPF\text{-}}$

$^{CreERT2/+}; R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ mouse (untreated) or $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}; R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ embryos

dissected at 2, 4 and 12 hours following oral gavage with Tamoxifen, as labelled. An increase

in the proportion of the recombined band can be seen over time following Tamoxifen

administration. (J) Representative $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$embryos at the MS-LS and OB-EB stages,

immunostained with. (iii) and (iv) are magnified views in (i) and (ii) respectively. (K)

Quantification of T intensity in single segmented nuclei from embryo shown in (J). (L)

Representative $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$embryos at the MS-LS and OB-EB stages treated with

tamoxifen for two hours (0.08mg/body weight via oral gavage) and immunostained for

estrogen receptor. (iii) and (iv) are magnified views in (i) and (ii) respectively. (M)

Quantification of Estrogen receptor intensity in single segmented nuclei from the embryos

shown in (L). Embryos in J (i) and (ii) and in L (i) and (ii) were immunostained together and

imaged under similar conditions. LV: left ventricle, RV: right ventricle, OFT: outflow tract,

LA: left atria, RA: right atria, cTnnT: cardiac troponinin T. MS: Mid-streak LS: late-streak,

OB: "no bud" stage, EB: "early bud" stage, LB: "late bud stage", EHF: early head fold.

cTnnT: cardiac Troponin T. ant.: anterior, post.: posterior, PS: primitive streak. Scale bar:

200 μm.

Fig 2. Descendants from late E7+7h T positive primitive streak cells contribute to

posterior regions of the FHF. (A-B) Representative embryos resulting from the

administration of tamoxifen at E7+7h in $T^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ immunostained with

cTnnT to reveal the cardiomyoyctes of the first heart field (green)(A) and heart tube (B).

Yellow arrows identify tdTomato positive cardiomyocytes in the posterior first heart field

(Aii-iv) and inflow tract (Bii). Blue arrows identify tdTomato positive endodermal cells (Aii)

and endocardial cells (Biii). (Aii) shows magnfied view of inset in (Ai). (Ai-ii and Bi-ii) are

z-maximum projection, (Aiii-iv and biii) are single optical sections. Views are ventral. Single

epicardial cells are labeled in each condition. Scale bar: 200 μm.

Fig 3. Independent *Foxa2*+ progenitors contribute to the ventricles and outflow tract.

(A) Schematics of the *Foxa2*$^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$; *R26R*$^{tdTomato/+}$ allele (Imuta et al., 2013). **(B)** Pulse-

labelling of the *Foxa2*-expressing cells and their descendants, from stage (i) E6+21h, (ii)

E7+7h by administration of tamoxifen to *Foxa2*$^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$; *R26R*$^{tdTomato/+}$ mice

(0.08mg/body weight via oral gavage). Cell descendants in the heart analysed at E12.5. **(C)**

Representative hearts resulting from the administration of tamoxifen at different time points

in *Foxa2*$^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$; *R26R*$^{tdTomato/+}$ immunostained for cTnnT to reveal the cardiomyocytes

(blue). Views are ventral. Single epicardial cells are also labelled in iii. **(D-E)** Summary of all

hearts analysed. The contribution of the *Foxa2*-expressing cells to the different compartments

of the heart is quantified by measuring the proportion of tdTomato positive myocardium.

Numbers in brackets in (E) represent the number of litters assessed. Error bars are SD. Scale

bar: 200 μm.

Fig 4. T and Foxa2 colocalise in primitive streak cells. Representative embryos of E6+21h

MS (A-B) and LS (C-D) and E7+7h "early bud" EB (E-F). Embryos are immunostained for T

(red) and Foxa2 (green). Images are Z-maximum projections. Views are lateral/slightly

posterior to show the whole width of the primitive streak. Insets in Bi-iii, Di-iii and Fi-iii

show magnified views and white arrows point to T+/Foxa2+ double positive cells. Scale bar:

100 μm.

Fig 5. *Foxa2* lineage positive cells maintain *Foxa2* expression at the mid-late steak stage.

(A-B) Representative embryos at the early (A) and mid-late (B) streak stages resulting from

the administration of tamoxifen at E6+8h in $Foxa2^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$

immunostained for *Foxa2* (green) and T (blue). View is lateral in (A) and posterior in (B).

(B") Schematics of the embryo shown in (B). (**C**) Same embryo as in (B). Single optic

sections are shown. (i-iii) are magnified views of the insets. Yellow arrows point to double

Foxa2/T positive, blue arrows to Foxa2 positive T negative and red arrow to Foxa2 negative

T positive tdTomato-expressing cells. (**D**) Representative example of a segmented image

based on Foxa2 and T signal. (**E**) Quantification of T and Foxa2 signal intensities along the

proximal-distal axis of the embryo in single cell nuclei. All the TdTomato positive cells are

all located in the distal (anterior) portion of the primitive streak. (**F**) Quantification of Foxa2

and T intensities in single cell in distal (green), proximal (blue) primitive streak cells and

tdTomato positive cells. (**G-H**) Model. As the primitive streak extend along the proximal-

distal axis, from the early to mid-late streak stages, a subset of the *Foxa2* positive cells switch

contribution from endoderm to cardiac (ventricles) progenitors and express *T*.

Fig 6. Ventricular precursors originate from distal regions of the primitive streak. (A)

Localisation of the tdTomato+ cells from the *Foxa2* lineage are assessed (i-ii) at E7+7h -OB-

EB stage-. nGFP signal from the transgene is shown in i. The embryos are immunostained for

T (bleu) and Foxa2 (green) (ii). Image is a z-maximum projection. (iii) The same embryo (i-

ii), but with Foxa2+ cells masked to reveal the tdTomato+/Foxa2- cells. Insets (iv) and (v)

show magnified views in single optical sections of (ii). Red arrows point to

tdTomato+/Foxa2-/T- mesodermal cells. Yellow arrows point to tdFtomato+/Foxa2-/T+

primitive streak cells. Green arrows point to tdTomato+/Foxa2+/T- endodermal cells. No

tdTomato+/Foxa2+/T+ cells are identifiable. (**B**) Localisation of the tdTomato+ cells from

the *Foxa2* lineage are assessed in Bre-cerulean (BMP reporter) embryos at (i-ii) E7+12h -

EHF stage. nGFP signal from the transgene is shown in (i). The embryos are immunostained

for Foxa2 (blue) (ii). Image is a z-maximum projection. (iii) The same embryo (i-ii), but with

Foxa2+ cells masked to reveal the tdTomato+/Foxa2- cells. Insets (iv) and (v) show

magnified views in single optical sections of (ii). Red arrows point to tdTomato+/Foxa2-

/Bre-cerulean+ mesodermal cells. Blue arrow points to tdTomato+/Foxa2-/Bre-cerulean- cell.

(**C**) (i) A common progenitor between the RV and the outflow tract in the distal primitive

streak. *Foxa2* is downregulated as it switches its contribution toward outflow tract

myocardium. (ii) Proximal PS contribute to the atria and are descended from cells that had

not expressed *Foxa2* in their past. PS primitive streak, pro. PS: proximal primitive streak.

Ant: anterior, Post: posterior. Scale bar: 100 µm

Fig 7. Ventricular, outflow tract and Atrial progenitors are located in distinct regions of

the mesoderm (A-B) TdTomato localisation in $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$, *Bre-*

Cerulean (BMP reporter) embryos at the EHF stage and following tamoxifen administration

at E6+21h (A) and at E7+7h (B-C). Insets Aii, Bii-iv and Ci show magnified views of Ai, Bi

and Ci respectively. Yellow arrows in Ai, Bii-iv and Cii point to double tdTomato/Bre-

cerulean positive cells and red arrows in Bii-iv and Cii to tdTomato+ bre-cerulean- cells. (**D**)

TdTomato localisation in $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ embryos at the EHF stage,

following tamoxifen administration at E7+7h and immunostained for Raldh2. Insets in ii-iv

show magnified view of i. Images are z-maximum projection of 37 sections acquired every 5

µm and covering 185 µm. Interval between frames: 6mn and 30s. n: node, cc: cardiac

crescent, ml: midline. EHF: early head fold. Scale bar: 100 µm

Fig 8. Subclusters corresponding to the left and right ventricle, outflow tract and atrial

progenitors can be defined within the FHF, AHF and pSHF. (A) The four $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$;

$R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ embryos (dissected at E7+14 h ~EHF stage) analysed in the single cell

transcriptomic assay. (**B**) UMAP plot showing the ectodermal, epiblast and mesodermal cell

populations coloured by cluster identity (i). (ii-iii) Magnified view of (i) showing the

cardiomyocytes, pharyngeal mesoderm, anterior paraxial and paraxial mesoderm clusters (ii)

and subclusters (iii). The cardiomyocytes, pharyngeal mesoderm and paraxial mesoderm

clusters are renamed FHF, AHF and pSHF based on the marker genes shown in (D). (**C**)

UMAP showing the log normalised counts of the tdTomato gene (i). (ii) Magnified view of

(i) showing the log normalised counts of the tdTomato gene in the FHF, AHF and pSHF

clusters (**D**) UMAP showing the log normalised counts of the selected genes (**E**) Diagram

showing the repartition of the tdTomato positive cells from the FHF, AHF and pSHF clusters

into 6 subclusters, each with different proportion of tdTomato positive cells (see also S13A

Fig). We hypothesis that cells in clusters enriched in tdTomato reads contribute to the OFT

and Atria (**F**) Expression heat map of marker genes (source data Figure 5) and tdTomato.

Scale indicates z-scored expression values. The full heat map with all the genes display is

shown S13A Fig. (**G**) UMAP showing the log normalised counts of selected genes. n.: node,

PS: Primitive streak, FHF: first heart field, AHF: anterior second heart field, pSHF: posterior

second heart field, aPxm: anterior paraxial mesoderm, meso: mesoderm, Intermediate:

Intermediate mesoderm, OFT: outflow tract, AHF: anterior heart field, pSHF: posterior

second heart field, AVC: atrio-ventricular canal.

Fig 9. The molecular signature of the primitive streak cells contributing to the ventricles

or outflow/atria are distinct. (**A**) Mid-late streak and OB/EB $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$;

$R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ embryos analysed in the sc-RNA seq. Embryos were selected at the mid-

late streak stages (dissected at E6+21h, and resulting from tamoxifen administration at

E6+5h) and at the OB-EB stage (dissected at E7+3h, and resulting from tamoxifen

administration at E6+21h). (**B-C**) Expression heat map of marker genes (source data Figure

6). Scale indicates z-scored expression values. (**D**) UMAP plot showing the integrated data

from the two scRNA-seq mid-late streak and OB/EB datasets (see also Figure 6–figure

supplement 1). Colour code correspond to the embryonic stage of collection or population

identity. (**E**) Expression heat map of marker genes comparing the anterior primitive streak

and primitive streak cells at the mid-late streak stages and primitive streak cells at the OB-EB

stages (source data Figure 6). Scale indicates z-scored expression values. (**F**) UMAP plot of

the anterior primitive streak, (aPS), mid-late streak (MS-LS) primitive streak and OB-EB

primitive streak cells color coded. (**G-H**) Violin plots showing the normalized log2

expression value of *Eomes* and *T* (G) and *Foxa2*, *Lhx1*, *Sp8 Hes1*, *Ccnd2* and *Notch2* (H) in

the anterior primitive streak (aPS) and primitive streak at mid-late streak and OB-EB stages.

DE: definitive endoderm, aPS: anterior primitive streak, PS: primitive streak, Nascent meso:

nascent mesoderm, LPM/Ex-meso: lateral plate mesoderm and Extra-embryonic mesoderm,

mesenchyme. PGC: primordial germs cells. MS: mid-streak, LS: late streak, OB: no bud, EB:

early bud.

Fig 10. Live-imaging of the mesodermal cells reveal their trajectories during

gastrulation. (A) Image sequence from time-lapse video (S9_movie) of an $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$;

$R26^{mgpf/+}$ embryo resulting from the administration of tamoxifen at around E6.5 (overnight

timed matings). Yellow arrows point to progenitor initially located in proximity to the node/

distal regions and migrating along the midline in medial regions of the prospective cardiac

crescent. Red arrows point to progenitors initially located proximally and migrated towards

posterior regions of the prospective cardiac crescent and posterior second heart field. Blue

arrow points to a progenitor located at the embryonic-extraembryonic border. Images are z-

maximum projection of 37 sections acquired every 5 μm and covering 185 μm. Interval

between frames: 6mn and 30s. n: node, cc: cardiac crescent, pCC, posterior cardiac crescent,

pSHF: posterior second heart field, ml: midline. EHF: early head fold.

Fig 11. Model of early cardiac development (**A**) Cells located in distal regions of the

primitive streak contribute first to the left ventricle (mid-streak stage), then to the right

ventricle (late-streak stage) and finally to the outflow tract (OB-EB stages). Although the

outflow and atria leave the primitive streak at similar stages they arise from different regions.

The outflow tract originates from distal locations in the primitive streak while atrial

progenitors are positioned more proximally. The distal primitive streak cells express *Foxa2*

when they contribute to the ventricles. They stop expressing *Foxa2* when they contribute to

the outflow tract. (**B**) Proposed location of the FHF, AHF and pSHF in comparison to the

hypothetical fate of these different cardiac regions at the pre-headfold stage in (A). (**C**)

Lineage tree of the primitive streak. Within the distal end of the primitive streak, independent

primitive streak cells contribute to the left ventricle, the right ventricle, the (at the mid-late

streak stage) and to the outflow tract (OB-EB stages). A common progenitor between the

right ventricle and the outflow tract exists. By contrast, atrial progenitors are located in the

proximal primitive streak and a common progenitor between the left ventricle and atrium

may exist in the primitive streak. LV: left ventricle, RV: right ventricle, OFT: outflow tract,

Pha: Pharyngeal arches, epi: epicardium, cranial pxm: cranial paraxial mesoderm, FHF: first

heart field, AHF: anterior heart field, pSHF: posterior second heart field. OB: no bud stage.

EB: early bud stage, epic: epicardium.

Supporting information

S1 Fig. Tamoxifen activity persists for at least 24 hours when administrated at a high

dose by oral gavage. (A) The administration of a high dose of tamoxifen (0.08mg/bw by oral

gavage) at E5 in $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ mice leads to the presence of tdTomato

positive-cells in mesoderm derivatives including cardiomyocytes (see yellow arrow in inset),

head mesenchyme (red arrow), endothelium (green arrow) and allantois. hm: head mesoderm,

ht: heart tube, a: allantois. Mouse were mated for a two-hour period. Scale bar: 100 μm

S2 Fig. Genetic tracing of the *T*+ primitive steak cell with the R26mt/mg reporter. (A)

Representative hearts resulting from the administration of tamoxifen at E6+8h (i) and E7+7h

(ii-iii) in $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{mtmg/+}$ immunostained with cTnnT to reveal the cardiomyoyctes

(blue).

S3 Fig. CreErt2 nuclear localisation 2 hours after tamoxifen administration. (A)

Representative embryos resulting from a 2-hours pulse of tamoxifen via oral gavage

(0.08mg/bw) immunostained with eostrogen receptor. Embryos have been immunostained

simultaneously and image under the same conditions. Maximum z-projection (i-iii) and

single optical sections (iv-vi) are shown.

S4 Fig. Recombination of the R26RtdTomato reporter is occurring 2.5 hours after

tamoxifen administration by oral gavage. (A-B) PCR amplicons generated from the

genomic region in which Cre-mediated recombination occurs from $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$;

$R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ s embryos (A), resolved on an agarose gel (B). Before recombination, the

PCR product is 1145 bp (white rectangle); after recombination it is 274 bp (black rectangle).

Template gDNA was extracted from either an ear clip of an adult $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$;

$R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ mouse (untreated) or $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ embryos (i-ii)

following oral gavage with Tamoxifen, as labelled. An increase in the proportion of the

recombined band can be seen over time following Tamoxifen administration.

S5 Fig. *Foxa2*-expressing cells contribute to the outflow tract myocardium but not to

the atria. (A) Heart resulting from the administration of tamoxifen at E6+21h. View is

ventral. TdTomato-positive cardiomyocytes are absent from the myocardium in the atria,

however, contribution to the epicardium (yellow arrow) and myocardium (yellow arrows) in

the ventricle and outflow tract is visible. **(B)** E8 embryo resulting from the administration of

tamoxifen at E6+21h in $Foxa2^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/+}$ mouse and immunostained for

Foxa2 (green). TdTomato-positive cells are localised in the pericardium, cardiomyocytes and

endoderm but not in the endocardium. OFT: outflow tract, LA: left atria, RA: right atria, LV:

left ventricle, RV: right ventricle, CC: cardiac crescent, cardio: cardiomyocyte, endo:

endoderm, Scale bars: 200 μm in (A) and 100 μm in (B).

S6 Fig. T and Foxa2 colocalise in primitive streak cells. **(A-D)** Single optical sections from

same embryos as shown in Fig 4. E6+21h MS (A-A") and LS (B-B") and E7+7h "early bud"

EB (E-F) embryos are immunostained for T (red) and Foxa2 (green). Views are

lateral/slightly posterior. Insets in Ai-ii, Bi and Di show magnified views (A-C). White

arrows point to T+/Foxa2+ double positive cells in the definitive endoderm (Ai-ii) at mid-

streak position in MS-LS embryos (Bi and Ci). Scale bar: 100 μm.

S7 Fig. Segmentation of the proximal and distal primitive streak cells. **(A)** Example of a

segmented images based on T signal for the proximal cells (i) and Foxa2 signal for the distal

cells (ii). Segmentation for only the tdTomato positive cells is shown in (iii). Merge of the

two segmented images (i and ii) is shown in (iv).

S8 Fig. Characterisation of the *Foxa2* lineage positive mesodermal cells. (A)

Representative *Mesp1$^{cre/+}$;R26R$^{mGFP/+}$* embryo at ~E7.5. (**B-C**) Representative embryos

resulting from the administration of tamoxifen at E6+21h in *Foxa2$^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$;*

R26R$^{tdTomato/+}$ immunostained for Foxa2 (bleu) and Cer1 (bleu) (B) or Foxa2 (bleu) and Flk1

(green)(C). Inset in Bi-Ci show magnified view (B-C) in single optical section. (**D**)

Representative E7.5 embryo immunostained for DKK1 (red) and Foxa2 (green). (**E**)

Representative TCFdsred embryo (red) at E7.5 immunostained for Foxa2 (green). Ant.

Anterior, post.: posterior, PS: primitive streak. Scale bar: 100 µm.

S9 Fig. Bre-cerulean line report BMP signalling activity in the mesoderm. (A-A'')

Colocalisation of the Cerulean signal and P-Smad1/5/8 in Bre-cerulean embryos at the

cardiac crescent stage. (A) z-max proj. (A') Single optical projection. (A'') Magnified view

form insets in A'. cc.: cardiac crescent. e: endoderm. p: pericardium. Scale bar: 100 µm

S10 Fig. Outflow tract and atrial progenitors are located away from regions with high

BMP signalling activity. (A) TdTomato localisation in *T$^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$; R26R$^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$*

embryos immunostained against P-Smad1/5/8 following tamoxifen administration at E7+7h.

cc: cardiac crescent, pm: pharyngeal mesoderm. Yellow arow points to a Phospho-

Smad1/5/8+/tdTomato+ cell, red arrows point to Smad1/5/8-/tdTomato+ cells. Scale bar: 100

µm.

S11 Fig. Assignment of cluster identities in scRNA-seq E7+7h dataset. (A) UMAP plot of

the *Pijuan et al.* E7.75 dataset. (**B**) UMAP plot of the E7+7h $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$;

$R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ dataset clustered at resolution 4.5. (**C-D**) UMAP plot showing the

integrated data from the two scRNA-seq E7+7h $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ and *Pijuan*

et al. E7.75 dataset. Colour codes correspond to the embryonic stage of collection or

population identity (**C**) and clusters (**D**). Note, the paraxial mesoderm cluster is split into two

sublcusters we named "paraxial mesoderm" and "anterior paraxial mesoderm" based on

expression of marker genes (see also Fig 8D, S12A Fig and S7_Source data).

S12 Fig. scRNA-seq analysis of the E7+7h $T^{nGPF\text{-}CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ dataset. (A)

Expression heat map of marker genes (S7_Source data) and tdTomato. Scale indicates z-

scored expression values. (**B**) UMAP showing the log normalised counts of selected genes

(**C**) Percentage of tdTomato positive cells in each cluster for expression values above 0.1 and

1. (**D**) Dot plot of factors with restricted expression in progenitors. Dot size corresponds to

the percentage of cells expressing the feature in each cluster, while the colour represents the

average expression level. Cm: cardiomyocytes, Phm: pharyngeal mesoderm, aPxm: anterior

paraxial mesoderm, Pxm: paraxial mesoderm.

S13 Fig. Identification of mesodermal sublclusters and gradient of tdTomato

expression. (A) Repartition of the cells from the FHF, AHF, pSHF and aPxm cluster to

subclucster 1,2,3,4,5 and 6 and aPxm. (**B**) Dot plot of factors with restricted expression in

progenitors. Dot size corresponds to the percentage of cells expressing the feature in each

cluster, while the colour represents the average expression level. aPxm: anteriorparaxial

mesoderm, FHF;first heart field, AHF: anterior heart field, pSHF: posterior second heart

field.

S14 Fig. scRNA-seq analysis of the mid-late streak and OB-EB stages. (A and **C)** UMAP

plot coloured by cluster identity from sc-RNA seq analysis of $T^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$;

$R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ embryos at the E6+21h, MS-LS stages (A) and at the E7+3h, OB-EB

stages (C). (**B** and **D**) UMAP showing the log normalised counts of selected genes. Colour

intensity is proportional to the expression level of a given gene. DE: definitive endoderm,

aPS: anterior primitive streak, PS: primitive streak, Nascent meso: nascent mesoderm,

LPM/Ex-meso: lateral plate mesoderm and Extra-embryonic mesoderm, mesenchyme. PGC:

primordial germs cells. MS: mid-streak, LS: late streak, OB: no bud, EB: early bud.

S15 Fig. TdTomato reads in $T^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$; $R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ **at the mid-late streak and**

OB-EB stages. (A-B) Violin plots showing tdTomato expression for each cluster in $T^{nGPF-CreERT2/+}$;

$R26R^{tdTomato/tdTomato}$ mid-late streak (A) and OB-EB (B) embryos shown in Fig 9A.

S1_raw image. Related to Fig 1G

S2_raw image. Related to S4 Fig.

S3_ source data. Quantification of labelled surface area related to Fig 1E

S4_source data. Quantification of T and ERT intensities related to Fig 1K and M

S5_source data. Quantification of labelled surface area related to Fig 3D

S6_source data. Quantification of T and Foxa2 intensities related to Fig 5E and F.

S7_source data. Single cell RNA sequencing data related to Fig 8F and S12 Fig.

S8_source data. Quantification of the tdTomato positive cells in each cluster related to Fig

8C and E and S12C Fig.

S9_source data. Single cell RNA sequencing data related to Fig 9 and S14 Fig.

S10_movie. Related to Fig10.

Figure 1

Figure 2

A $T^{nGFP\text{-}CreERT2/+};R26R^{tdtomato/+}$ tam@E7+7h E8

cTnnT tdtomato

i ii iii z=0 iv z=-28um

B $T^{nGFP\text{-}CreERT2/+};R26R^{tdtomato/+}$ tam@E7+7h E8.5

cTnnT tdtomato

i ii iii

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

Figure 7

Figure 11

A

$T^{nGFP\text{-}CreERT2/+};R26R^{tdtomato/+}$
tam@E5

a.

hm.

ht.

cTnnT tdtomato Dapi E8.5

A

$T^{nGFP\text{-}CreERT2/+};R26R^{mgfp/+}$
tam@E6+8h (n=4 from 2 litters)

tam@E7+7h (n=8 from 2 litters)

A

$T^{hGFP-CreERT2/+}$ tam +2 hrs CreERT2

	MS-LS stage		OB-EB stage
	raw image	enhanced image	raw image

max proj

i ii iii

single section

iv v vi

A *T^nGFP-CreERT2/+;R26R^tdtomato/*

(i)

2 embryos 2.5hours after tam administration

brightfield   GFP   tdTomato

(ii)

2 embryos 20hours after tam administration

brightfield   GFP   tdTomato

B *T^nGFP-CreERT2/+;R26R^tdtomato/+*

Tam + 2.5 hrs (i)   Tam +20 hrs (ii)   untreated

bp

not recombined
1145 bp

1200
1000

recombined
274 bp

300
200

A *Foxa2^{nGFP-CreERT2/+};R26R^{tdtomato/+}*

tam@E6+21h

cTnnT tdtomato

RA LA

OFT

RV LV

epicardium

LA

OFT

myocardium

B *Foxa2^{nGFP-CreERT2/+};R26R^{tdtomato/+}*

tam@E6+21h

Foxa2 tdtomato

c.c.

z-max projection

pericardium cardio.

endo.

Foxa2

endo.

single optical section

A

T Foxa2 tdTomato merge

i Z=0 ii iii iv

Segmentation of the proximal cells

Segmentation of the distal cells

tdTomato+ segmented cells

A *Mesp1^{Cre/+};R26R^{mgfp/+}*

GFP

post.

ant.

PS

node

max z-projection

B *Foxa2^{nGFP-CreERT2/+};R26R^{tdtomato/+}* tam@E6+21h

Foxa2 tdtomato Cer1

E7+7h

ant.

post.

PS

node

max z-projection

i

single z-section

C *Foxa2^{nGFP-CreERT2/+};R26R^{tdtomato/+}* tam@E6+21h

Foxa2 tdtomato Flk1

E7+7h

ant.

post.

PS

node

max z-projection

i

single z-section

D DKK1 Foxa2

E7.5

ant.

post.

PS

node

max z-projection

ant.

post.

PS

node

single z-section

E TCFdsred Foxa2 Dapi

E7.5

ant.

post

PS

max z-projection

ant.

post

PS

single z-section

A

Bre-Cerulean

max-proj

P-Smad1/5/8 Cerulean | Cerulean | P-Smad1/5/8

A′ *Bre-Cerulean*

single optical section

P-Smad1/5/8 Cerulean

A″

Merge | P-Smad1/5/8 | Cerulean

A

T^nGFP-CreERT2/+;R26R^tdtomato/+

Tam E7+7h

cc.

pm.

tdtomato P-Smad1/5/8 GFP

Merge

P-Smad1/5/8 GFP

tdtomato GFP

S12 Fig.

A

B

A $T^{nGFP\text{-}CreERT2/+};R26R^{mtmg/+}$ tam@ E6+5h

tdtomato

B $T^{nGFP\text{-}CreERT2/+};R26R^{mtmg/+}$ tam@ E6+21h

tdtomato