## Electronic supplementary information

## Solvent-dependent and highly selective anion sensing and molecular logic application of bisindolylmaleimide derivatives

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**Fig. S1** Normalized absorption and emission spectra of IM-PFB (a, b), IM-TBA (c, d) and IM-MB (e, f) in various solvents.

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Compound	$\lambda_{abs}(nm)$	$\lambda_{em}(nm)$	$\lambda_{0\text{-}0}(nm)$	$\Phi_{\rm em}(\%)$
IM-PFB	371, 459	602	528	30
IM-TBA	370, 456	599	531	34
IM-MB	367, 457	597	524	33
IMC-MB	320, 403	490	461	39

Table S1 Physical data of sensors in THF.



Fig. S2 Absorption (a) and emission (b) spectra of IM-TBA (50  $\mu$ M in ACN) in the presence of anions (100 eq). Anions arrangement: 0-none, 1-NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, 2-Br<sup>-</sup>, 3-HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 4-Cl<sup>-</sup>, 5-OAc<sup>-</sup>, 6-CN<sup>-</sup>, 7-H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 8-F<sup>-</sup>, 9-I<sup>-</sup>.



Fig. S3 a) Photograph of IM-PFB (50  $\mu$ M in ACN) in the presence of various anions (100 eq) under daylight (top) and UV light (bottom). Absorption (b) and emission (c) spectra of IM-PFB (50  $\mu$ M in ACN) in the presence of anions (100 eq). Anions arrangement: 0-none, 1-NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, 2-Br<sup>-</sup>, 3-HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 4-Cl<sup>-</sup>, 5-OAc<sup>-</sup>, 6-CN<sup>-</sup>, 7-H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 8-F<sup>-</sup>, 9-I<sup>-</sup>.



Fig. S4 Absorption (a) and emission (b) spectra of IM-PFB (50  $\mu$ M in DCM) in the presence of anions (100 eq). Anions arrangement: 0-none, 1-NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, 2-Br<sup>-</sup>, 3-HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 4-Cl<sup>-</sup>, 5-OAc<sup>-</sup>, 6-CN<sup>-</sup>, 7-H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 8-F<sup>-</sup>, 9-I<sup>-</sup>.



Fig. S5 a) Photograph of IM-PFB (50  $\mu$ M in THF) in the presence of various anions (100 eq) under daylight (top) and UV light (bottom). Absorption (b) and emission (c) spectra of IM-PFB (50  $\mu$ M in THF) in the presence of anions (100 eq). Anions arrangement: 0-none, 1-NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, 2-Br<sup>-</sup>, 3-HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 4-Cl<sup>-</sup>, 5-OAc<sup>-</sup>, 6-CN<sup>-</sup>, 7-H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 8-F<sup>-</sup>, 9-I<sup>-</sup>.



Fig. S6 a) Photograph of IMC-MB (50  $\mu$ M in ACN) in the presence of various anions (20 eq) under daylight (top) and UV light (bottom). Absorption (b) and emission (c) spectra of IMC-MB (50  $\mu$ M in ACN) in the presence of anions (20 eq). Anions arrangement: 0-none, 1-NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, 2-Br<sup>-</sup>, 3-HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 4-Cl<sup>-</sup>, 5-OAc<sup>-</sup>, 6-CN<sup>-</sup>, 7-H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 8-F<sup>-</sup>, 9-I<sup>-</sup>.



Fig. S7 a) Photograph of IMC-MB (50  $\mu$ M in DCM) in the presence of various anions (20 eq) under daylight (top) and UV light (bottom). Absorption (b) and emission (c) spectra of IMC-MB (50  $\mu$ M in DCM) in the presence of anions (20 eq). Anions arrangement: 0-none, 1-NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, 2-Br<sup>-</sup>, 3-HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 4-Cl<sup>-</sup>, 5-OAc<sup>-</sup>, 6-CN<sup>-</sup>, 7-H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 8-F<sup>-</sup>, 9-I<sup>-</sup>.



**Fig. S8** a) Photograph of IMC-MB (50  $\mu$ M in THF) in the presence of various anions (20 eq) under daylight (top) and UV light (bottom). Absorption (b) and emission (c) spectra of IMC-MB (50  $\mu$ M in THF) in the presence of anions (20 eq). Anions arrangement: 0-none, 1-NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, 2-Br<sup>-</sup>, 3-HSO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 4-Cl<sup>-</sup>, 5-OAc<sup>-</sup>, 6-CN<sup>-</sup>, 7-H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 8-F<sup>-</sup>, 9-I<sup>-</sup>.



Fig. S9 Absorption (a) and emission (b) spectra of IM-MB (5 µM) in ACN upon titration of F<sup>-</sup>.



Fig. S10 Absorption (a) and emission (b) spectra of IM-PFB (5  $\mu$ M) in DCM upon titration of H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>.



Fig. S11 Absorption (a) and emission (b) spectra of IM-PFB (5  $\mu$ M) in THF upon titration of CN<sup>-</sup>.



Fig. S12 Absorption (a) and emission (b) spectra of IM-PFB (5  $\mu$ M) in THF upon titration of F<sup>-</sup>.



Fig. S13 Absorption (a) and fluorescence (b) spectra of IM-PFB (50  $\mu$ M) in DCM upon the addition of different amounts of N(Et)<sub>4</sub>OH.



Fig. S14 Absorption (a) and fluorescence (b) spectra of IM-PFB (10  $\mu$ M) in THF upon the addition of different amounts of N(Et)<sub>4</sub>OH.



Fig. S15 Absorption (a) and fluorescence (b) spectra of IM-PFB (10  $\mu$ M) in ACN upon the addition of different amounts of N(Et)<sub>4</sub>OH.

		Main orbital transition <sup>a</sup> (CIC)	$\lambda (nm)^b$	f <sup>c</sup>
IM-PFB	$S_0 \rightarrow S_1$	HOMO→LUMO (0.70)	499.5	0.1384
	$S_0 \rightarrow S_2$	HOMO-1→LUMO (0.69)	384.3	0.1096
	$S_0 \rightarrow S_3$	HOMO-3→LUMO (0.66)	374.3	0.0045
IM-PFB <sup></sup>	$S_0 \rightarrow S_1$	HOMO→LUMO (0.67)	544.8	0.1899
	$S_0 \rightarrow S_2$	HOMO→LUMO+1 (0.68)	527.9	0.0435
	$S_0 \rightarrow S_3$	HOMO→LUMO+2 (0.71)	461.0	0.0062
IMPFB <sup>2-</sup>	$S_0 \rightarrow S_1$	HOMO→LUMO (0.71)	1458.8	0.0066
	$S_0 \rightarrow S_2$	HOMO→LUMO+1 (0.71)	1085.7	0.0051
	$S_0 \rightarrow S_3$	HOMO→LUMO+2 (0.71)	775.8	0.1333

Table S2 Calculated absorption parameters for IM-PFB, IM-PFB<sup>-</sup> and IMPFB<sup>2-</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> CI expansion coefficients for the main orbital transitions. <sup>b</sup> Wavelength. <sup>c</sup> Oscillator strength.



Fig. S16 Job's plot of IM-PFB showing the 1:2 binding stoichiometry in ACN and DCM, and the 1:1 binding stoichiometry in THF with anions. The total concentration of IM-PFB and anion is 20  $\mu$ M. Emission intensity is recorded at 609 nm.



Fig. S17 Absorption (a) and emission (b) spectra of IM-PFB (50  $\mu$ M) and F<sup>-</sup> (50 eq) in ACN solvent.



**Fig. S18** 1-to-2 decoder (a) and 1:2 demultiplexer (b) demonstrated by using the emission intensity at 607 nm ( $I_{E,607}$ ) and the absorption intensity at 570 nm ( $I_{A,570}$ ) in ACN as two outputs (O1 and O2).



Fig. S19 Absorption (a) and emission (b) spectra of IM-PFB (50  $\mu$ M) in the presence of F<sup>-</sup> and H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> (50 eq) in DCM solvent.



**Fig. S20** 2-to-3 decoder demonstrated by using F<sup>-</sup> and H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> as two inputs, the emission intensity at 604 nm ( $I_{E,604}$ ), the absorption intensity at 560 nm ( $I_{A,560}$ ) and the ratio of the absorption intensity at 467 nm and 350 nm ( $I_{A,467/350}$ ) in DCM as three output.



Fig. S21 Absorption (a) and emission (b) spectra of IM-PFB (50  $\mu$ M) in the presence of F<sup>-</sup>, I<sup>-</sup>, CN<sup>-</sup> and H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> (50 eq) in THF solvent.