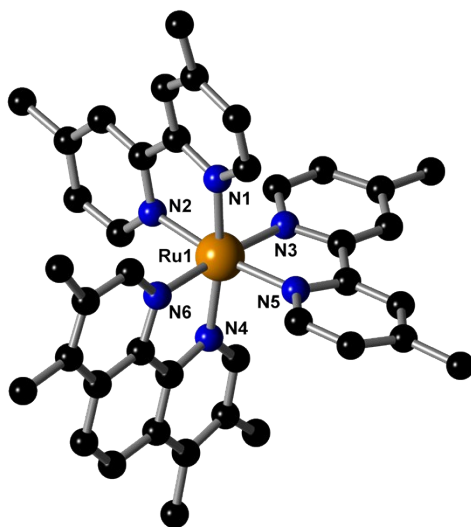


## SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION



**Figure S1.** X-ray crystal structure of the  $[\text{Ru}(\text{Me}_4\text{phen})(\text{Me}_2\text{bpy})]^{2+}$  complex.

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**Experimental:** Characterisation for the decomposition products detected in the synthesis of *cis-α*- $[\text{Ru}(\text{phen}')(\text{bb}_7)]^{2+}$  (phen' = Me<sub>2</sub>phen and Me<sub>4</sub>phen).

**$[\text{Ru}(\text{Me}_2\text{phen})(\text{Me}_2\text{bpy})_2]^{2+}$ :** <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CD<sub>3</sub>CN): δ 8.361 (s, 4H; H2/H9 & H5/ H6); 8.315 (br s, 2H; bipy3'); 7.90 (d, J= 5.2 Hz, 2H, bipy3); 7.63 (dd, J= 6.0Hz, 2H, H3/ H8); 7.55 (dd, J= 0.8, 5.6 Hz, 2H; bipy6'); 7.32 (d, J= 6.0 Hz, 2H; bipy6); 7.25 (dd, J=0.8, 5.6 Hz, 2H; bipy5'); 7.02 (dd, J=1.2, 6.0 Hz, 2H; bipy5); 2.90 (s, 6H; CH<sub>3</sub> Me<sub>2</sub>phen); 2.55 (s, 6H; CH<sub>3</sub> bipy); 2.46 (s, 6H; CH<sub>3</sub> bipy). TOF MS (ESI +): most abundant ion found for  $[\text{M} - 2\text{PF}_6]^{2+}$ , *m/z* 339.1. Calc. for  $[\text{C}_{38}\text{H}_{36}\text{N}_6\text{Ru}]^{2+}$ , *m/z* 338.9. most abundant ion found for  $[\text{M} - \text{PF}_6]^+$ , *m/z* 823.2. Calc. for  $\text{Ru}[\text{C}_{38}\text{H}_{36}\text{N}_6(\text{PF}_6)]^+$ , *m/z* 822.8.

**$[\text{Ru}(\text{Me}_4\text{phen})(\text{Me}_2\text{bpy})_2](\text{PF}_6)_2$ :** <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CD<sub>3</sub>CN): δ 8.35 (s, 2H; H2/H9); 8.34 (s, 2H, H5/ H6); 8.31 (s, 2H; bipy3'); 7.76 (s, 2H, bipy3); 7.60 (d, J=

6.0 Hz, 2H; bipy6<sup>+</sup>); 7.31 (d,  $J=6.0\text{Hz}$ , 2H; bipy6); 7.24 (dd,  $J=0.8, 5.6\text{Hz}$ , 2H; bipy5<sup>+</sup>); 7.01 (dd,  $J=0.8, 5.6\text{Hz}$ , 2H; bipy5); 2.78(s, 6H, CH<sub>3</sub> Me<sub>4</sub>phen); 2.55 (s, 6H; CH<sub>3</sub> bipy); 2.46 (s, 6H; CH<sub>3</sub> bipy); 2.33(s, 6H, CH<sub>3</sub> Me<sub>4</sub>phen). TOF MS (ESI +): most abundant ion found for  $[M - 2\text{PF}_6]^{2+}$ ,  $m/z$  353.1. Calc. for  $[\text{C}_{40}\text{H}_{40}\text{N}_6\text{Ru}]^{2+}$ ,  $m/z$  353.1. most abundant ion found for  $[M - \text{PF}_6]^+$ ,  $m/z$  851.2. Calc for  $\text{Ru}[\text{C}_{40}\text{H}_{40}\text{N}_6(\text{PF}_6)]^+$ ,  $m/z$  851.2.

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