

Electronic Supplementary Information (ESI)

A bioinspired thiolate-bridged dinickel complex with a pendant amine: synthesis, structure and electrocatalytic properties

Puhua Sun,^a Dawei Yang,^{*a} Ying Li,^a Baomin Wang^a and Jingping Qu^{*ab}

^a*State Key Laboratory of Fine Chemicals, Dalian University of Technology, Dalian 116024, P. R. China.*

^b*Key Laboratory for Advanced Materials, East China University of Science and Technology, Shanghai, 200237, P. R. China.*

E-mail: qujp@dlut.edu.cn

yangdw@dlut.edu.cn

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X-ray crystallographic information

Table S1. Crystallographic data for **1**[BPh₄]₂, **2**[PF₆]₂·2CH₂Cl₂

	1 [BPh ₄] ₂	2 [PF ₆] ₂ ·2CH ₂ Cl ₂
Formula	C ₁₀₄ H ₉₆ B ₂ Ni ₂ P ₄ S ₃	C ₆₄ H ₆₅ Cl ₄ F ₁₂ NNi ₂ P ₆ S ₂
Formula weight	1704.90	1585.33
Crystal dimensions (mm ³)	0.28 × 0.25 × 0.23	0.30 × 0.28 × 0.25
Crystal system	Monoclinic	Monoclinic
Space group	P 21/c	P2(1)/n
a (Å)	28.1408(18)	13.2896(7)
b (Å)	13.9434(9)	35.8764(18)
c (Å)	25.5790(17)	14.5814(7)
α (°)	90.00	90.00
β (°)	106.097(2)	97.5201(11)
γ (°)	90.00	90.00
Volume (Å ³)	9643.1(11)	6892.4(6)
Z	4	4
T (K)	220(2)	173(2)
D _{calcd} (g cm ⁻³)	1.174	1.528
μ (mm ⁻¹)	0.566	0.974
F (000)	3576	3240
No. of rflns. collected	178329	96297
No. of indep. rflns. /R _{int}	16979 / 0.0393	12126 / 0.0554
No. of obsd. rflns. [I ₀ > 2σ(I ₀)]	13776	10037
Data / restraints / parameters	16979 / 0 / 916	12126 / 132 / 929
R ₁ / wR ₂ [I ₀ > 2σ(I ₀)] ^a	0.0500 / 0.1158	0.0461 / 0.1065
R ₁ / wR ₂ (all data) ^a	0.0662 / 0.1227	0.0604 / 0.1118
GOF (on F ²) ^a	1.042	1.030
Largest diff. peak and hole (e Å ⁻³)	1.125 / -0.599	0.953 / -0.618

Table S2. Crystallographic data for **3[PF₆]**·MeCN, **4[PF₆]**·CH₂Cl₂

	3[PF₆] ·MeCN	4[PF₆] ·CH ₂ Cl ₂
Formula	C ₅₈ H ₅₉ ClF ₆ Ni ₂ NP ₅ S ₃	C ₅₇ H ₅₈ Cl ₃ F ₆ Ni ₂ OP ₅ S ₂
Formula weight	1287.96	1315.77
Crystal dimensions (mm ³)	0.30 × 0.20 × 0.18	0.28 × 0.27 × 0.25
Crystal system	Monoclinic	Monoclinic
Space group	C2/c	C2/c
a (Å)	35.436(4)	35.7408(15)
b (Å)	13.4228(15)	13.3259(5)
c (Å)	24.186(3)	24.6081(10)
α (°)	90.00	90.00
β (°)	91.00	91.220(3)
γ (°)	90.00	90.00
Volume (Å ³)	11502(2)	11717.6(8)
Z	8	8
T (K)	173(2)	230(2)
D _{calcd} (g cm ⁻³)	1.488	1.492
μ (mm ⁻¹)	1.008	1.046
F (000)	5312	5408
No. of rflns. collected	77349	138914
No. of indep. rflns. /R _{int}	10108 / 0.0843	13465 / 0.0602
No. of obsd. rflns. [<i>I</i> ₀ > 2σ(<i>I</i> ₀)]	8707	10745
Data / restraints / parameters	10108 / 1 / 685	13465 / 0 / 685
R ₁ / wR ₂ [<i>I</i> ₀ > 2σ(<i>I</i> ₀)] ^a	0.0552 / 0.1575	0.0461 / 0.0976
R ₁ / wR ₂ (all data) ^a	0.0658 / 0.1653	0.0664 / 0.1069
GOF (on <i>F</i> ²) ^a	1.010	1.034
Largest diff. peak and hole (e Å ⁻³)	1.525 / -1.039	1.339 / -0.816

Figure S1. ORTEP diagram of **1[BPh₄]₂**

Thermal ellipsoids are shown at 50% probability level. Two BPh₄[−] counter anions and all hydrogen atoms on carbons are omitted for clarity.

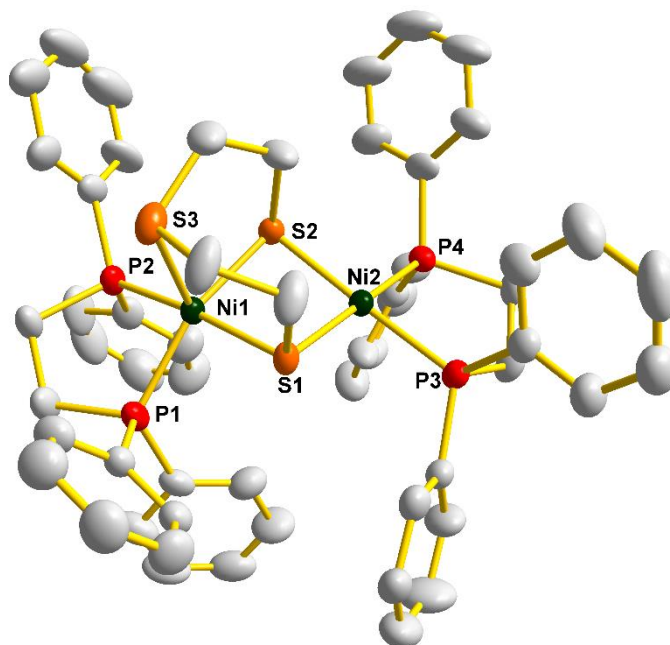


Table S3. Selected bond distances (Å) and bond angles (°) for **1[BPh₄]₂**

Distances (Å)			
Ni1···Ni2	3.1093(8)	Ni1–P2	2.174(2)
Ni1–S1	2.238(2)	Ni2–S1	2.217(2)
Ni1–S2	2.247(2)	Ni2–S2	2.237(2)
Ni1–S3	2.391(2)	Ni2–P3	2.178(2)
Ni1–P1	2.183(1)	Ni2–P4	2.168(2)
Angles (°)			
S1–Ni1–S2	87.86(6)	P1–Ni1–P2	83.90(6)
S1–Ni1–S3	90.28(6)	S1–Ni2–S2	88.64(5)
S2–Ni1–S3	91.79(6)	P3–Ni2–P4	86.68(6)
Torsion angles (°)			
S1–Ni1Ni2–S2	151.45(8)	Ni1S1S2/Ni1P1P2	25.55(6)
Ni2S1S2/Ni2P3P4	3.65(6)	Ni1S1S2/Ni2S1S2	28.57(5)

Figure S2. ORTEP diagram of **2[PF₆]₂·2CH₂Cl₂**

Thermal ellipsoids are shown at 50% probability level. Two PF₆[−] counter anions, the two co-crystallized CH₂Cl₂ molecules and all hydrogen atoms on carbons are omitted for clarity.

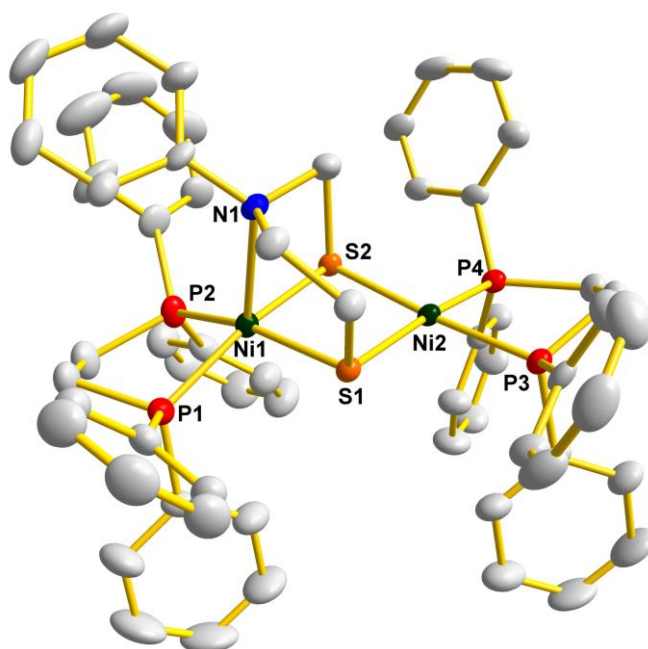


Table S4. Selected bond distances (Å) and bond angles (°) for **2[PF₆]₂·2CH₂Cl₂**

Distances (Å)			
Ni1···Ni2	3.2048(6)	Ni1–P2	2.1731(10)
Ni1–S1	2.2574(9)	Ni2–S1	2.2378(9)
Ni1–S2	2.2185(9)	Ni2–S2	2.2283(8)
Ni1–N1	2.475(3)	Ni2–P3	2.1754(9)
Ni1–P1	2.1757(10)	Ni2–P4	2.1872(10)
Angles (°)			
S1–Ni1–S2	87.86(3)	P1–Ni1–P2	85.51(4)
S1–Ni1–N1	80.84(7)	S1–Ni2–S2	88.11(3)
S2–Ni1–N1	84.97(7)	P3–Ni2–P4	85.57(4)
Torsion angles (°)			
S1–Ni1Ni2–S2	169.98(4)	Ni1S1S2/Ni1P1P2	21.52(3)
Ni2S1S2/Ni2P3P4	8.45(4)	Ni1S1S2/Ni2S1S2	9.71(3)

Figure S3. ORTEP diagram of **3[PF₆]·MeCN**

Thermal ellipsoids are shown at 50% probability level. One PF₆[−] counter anion, one co-crystallized MeCN molecule and all hydrogen atoms on carbons are omitted for clarity.

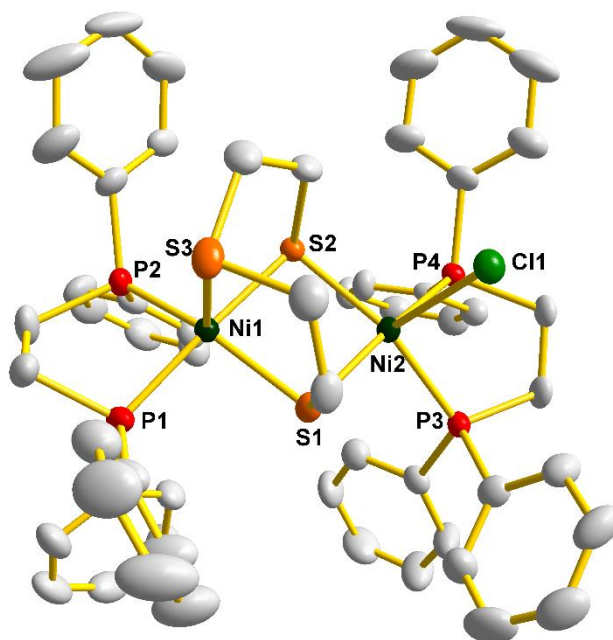


Table S5. Selected bond distances (Å) and bond angles (°) for **3[PF₆]·MeCN**

Distances (Å)			
Ni1···Ni2	3.2528(10)	Ni2–S1	2.239(2)
Ni1–S1	2.250(1)	Ni2–S2	2.244(1)
Ni1–S2	2.242(1)	Ni2–P3	2.170(1)
Ni1–S3	2.392(2)	Ni2–P4	2.188(2)
Ni1–P1	2.158(2)	Ni2–Cl1	2.614(2)
Ni1–P2	2.180(2)		
Angles (°)			
S1–Ni1–S2	86.55(5)	S1–Ni2–S2	86.77(5)
S1–Ni1–S3	91.87(6)	S1–Ni2–Cl1	104.38(5)
S2–Ni1–S3	90.05(5)	S2–Ni2–Cl1	105.62(5)
P1–Ni1–P2	84.80(6)	P3–Ni2–P4	84.63(5)
Torsion angles (°)			
S1–Ni1Ni2–S2	169.76(7)	Ni1S1S2/Ni1P1P2	22.07(6)
Ni2S1S2/Ni2P3P4	21.54(4)	Ni1S1S2/Ni2S1S2	9.70(4)

Figure S4. ORTEP diagram of **4[PF₆]·CH₂Cl₂**

Thermal ellipsoids are shown at 50% probability level. One PF₆[−] counter anion, one co-crystallized CH₂Cl₂ molecule and all hydrogen atoms on carbons are omitted for clarity.

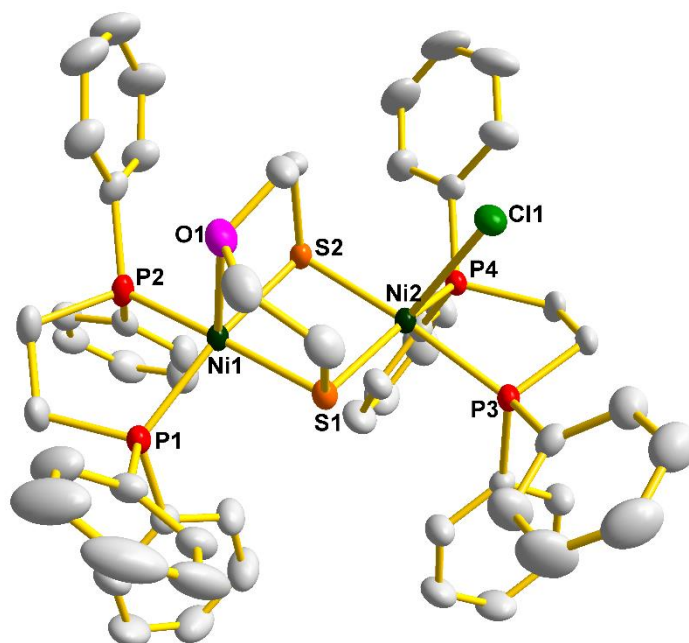


Table S6. Selected bond distances (Å) and bond angles (°) for **4[PF₆]·CH₂Cl₂**

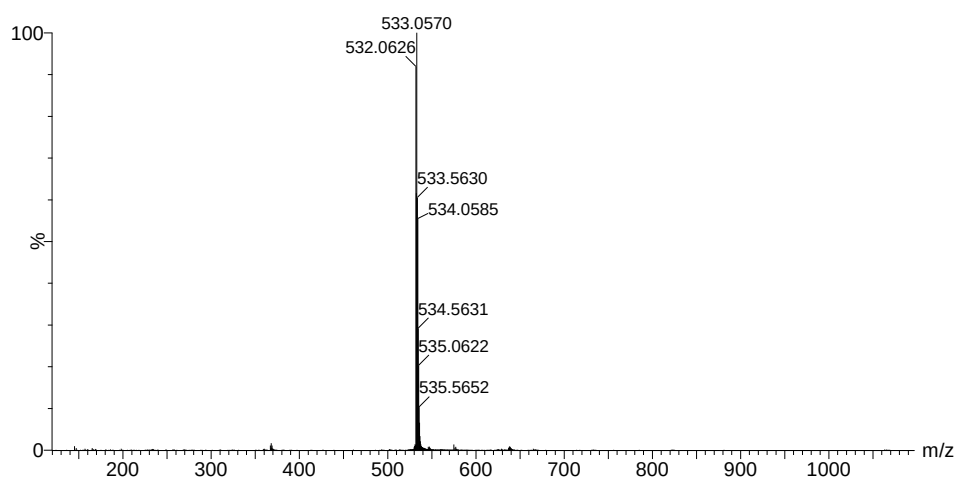
Distances (Å)			
Ni1···Ni2	3.2276(4)	Ni2–S1	2.2533(8)
Ni1–S1	2.2462(7)	Ni2–S2	2.2390(7)
Ni1–S2	2.2365(8)	Ni2–P3	2.1934(7)
Ni1–O1	2.377(2)	Ni2–P4	2.1750(8)
Ni1–P1	2.1790(8)	Ni2–Cl1	2.5955(8)
Ni1–P2	2.1701(8)		
Angles (°)			
S1–Ni1–S2	87.34(3)	S1–Ni2–S2	87.10(3)
S1–Ni1–O1	83.20(5)	S1–Ni2–Cl1	105.14(3)
S2–Ni1–O1	82.49(6)	S2–Ni2–Cl1	105.34(3)
P1–Ni1–P2	85.44(3)	P3–Ni2–P4	84.96(3)
Torsion angles (°)			
S1–Ni1Ni2–S2	166.26(4)	Ni1S1S2/Ni1P1P2	15.26(2)
Ni2S1S2/Ni2P3P4	21.65(2)	Ni1S1S2/Ni2S1S2	13.18(1)

ESI-HRMS

Figure S5. ESI-HRMS of **1**[PF₆]₂ in MeCN

(a) The signal at an $m/z = 532.0626$ corresponds to $[1]^{2+}$. (b) Calculated isotopic distribution for $[1]^{2+}$ (upper) and the amplifying experimental diagram for $[1]^{2+}$ (bottom).

(a)



(b)

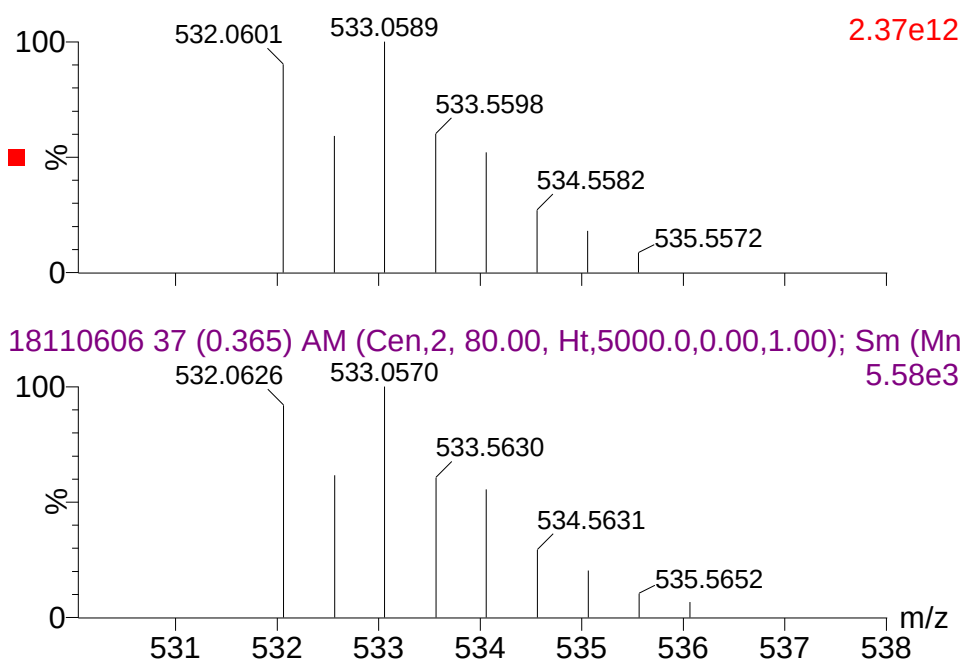
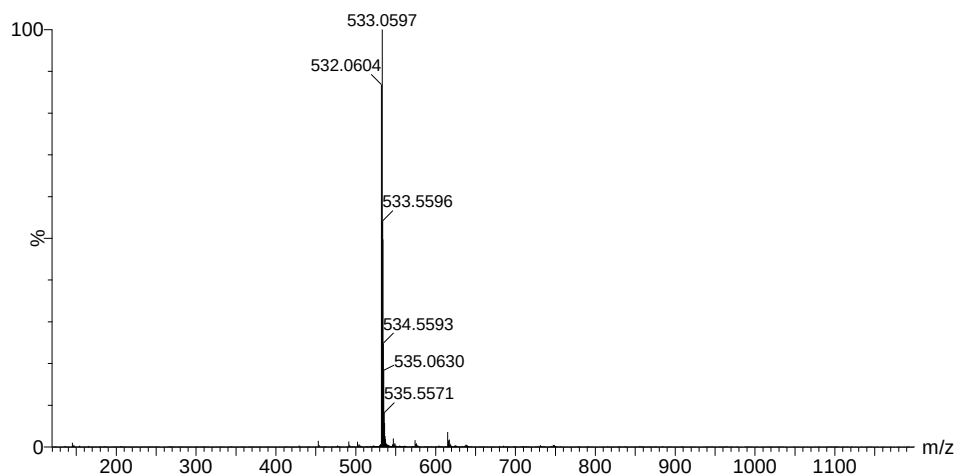


Figure S6. ESI-HRMS of **1**[BPh₄]₂ in MeCN

(a) The signal at an $m/z = 532.0604$ corresponds to $[1]^{2+}$. (b) Calculated isotopic distribution for $[1]^{2+}$ (upper) and the amplifying experimental diagram for $[1]^{2+}$ (bottom).

(a)



(b)

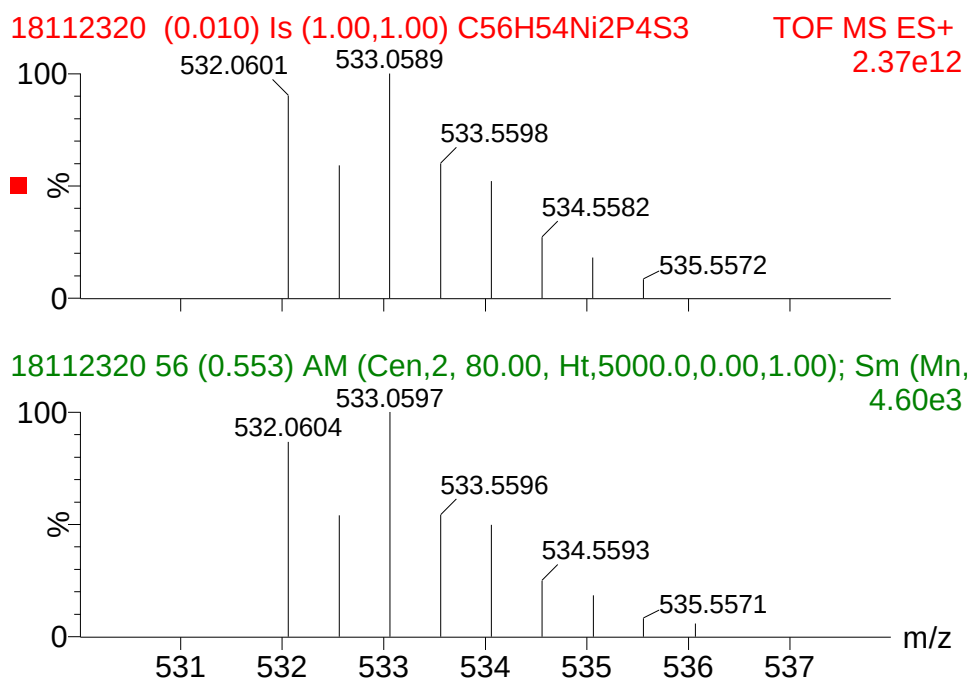
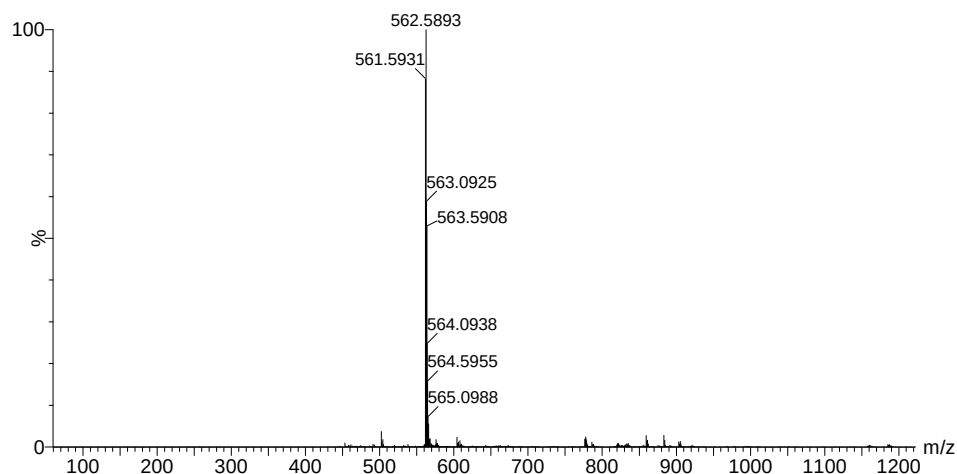


Figure S7. ESI-HRMS of $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$ in MeCN

(a) The signal at an $m/z = 561.5931$ corresponds to $[\text{2}]^{2+}$. (b) Calculated isotopic distribution for $[\text{2}]^{2+}$ (upper) and the amplifying experimental diagram for $[\text{2}]^{2+}$ (bottom).

(a)



(b)

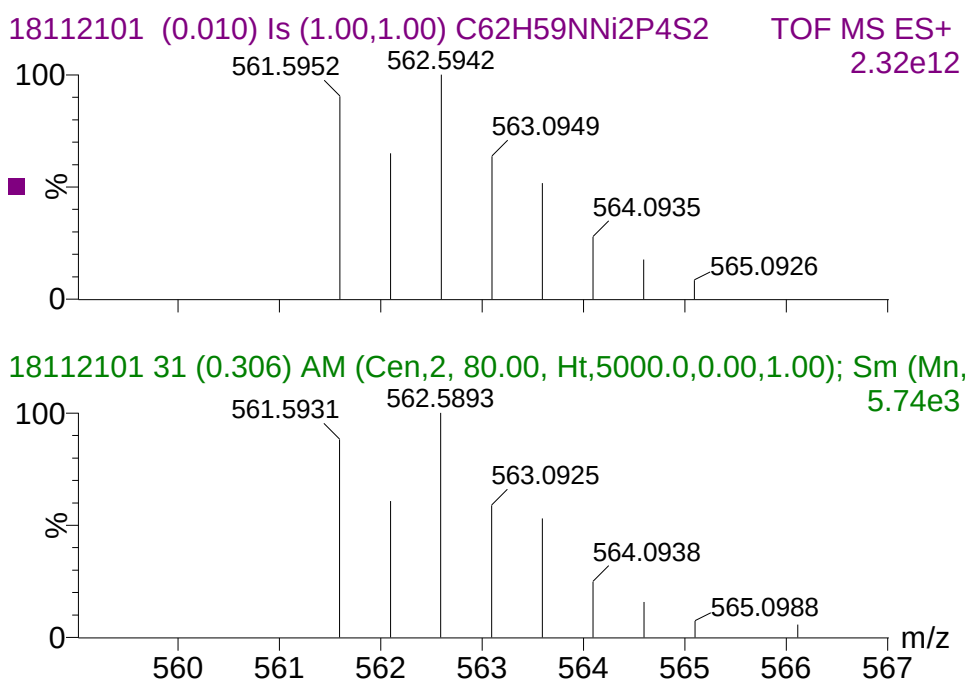
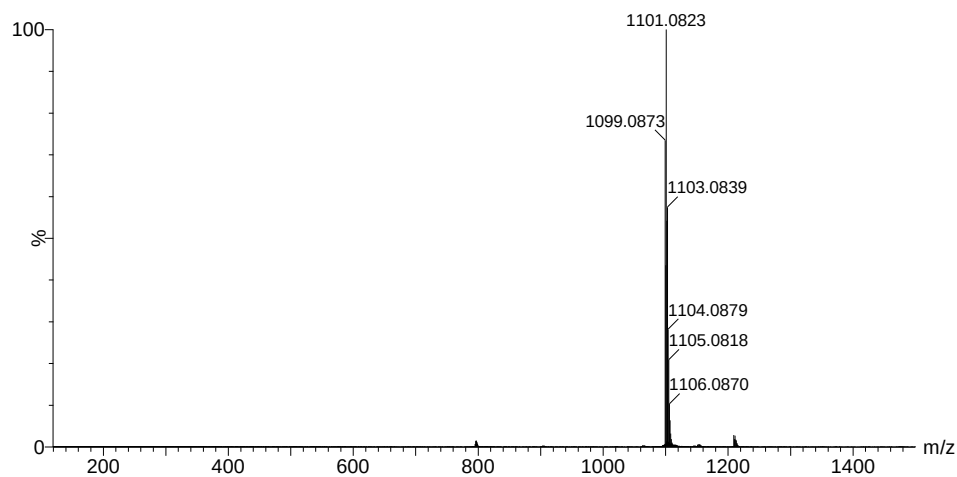


Figure S8. ESI-HRMS of **3**[PF₆] in MeCN

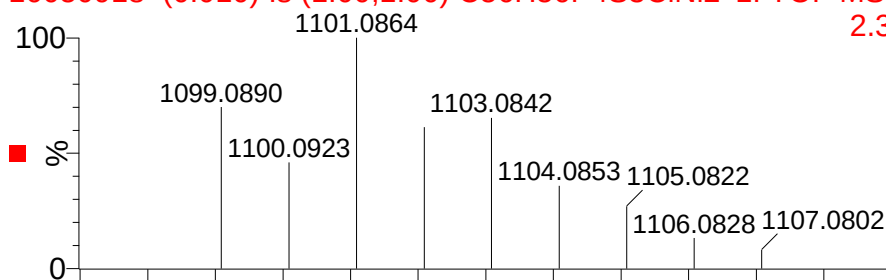
(a) The signal at an $m/z = 1099.0873$ corresponds to **[3]**⁺. (b) Calculated isotopic distribution for **[3]**⁺ (upper) and the amplifying experimental diagram for **[3]**⁺ (bottom).

(a)



(b)

16050918 (0.010) Is (1.00,1.00) C₅₆H₅₆P₄S₃CINi₂ 1: TOF MS ES+ 2.31e12



16050918 74 (0.730) AM (Cen,2, 80.00, Ht,5000.0,0.00,1.00); Sm (SG 3.96e3

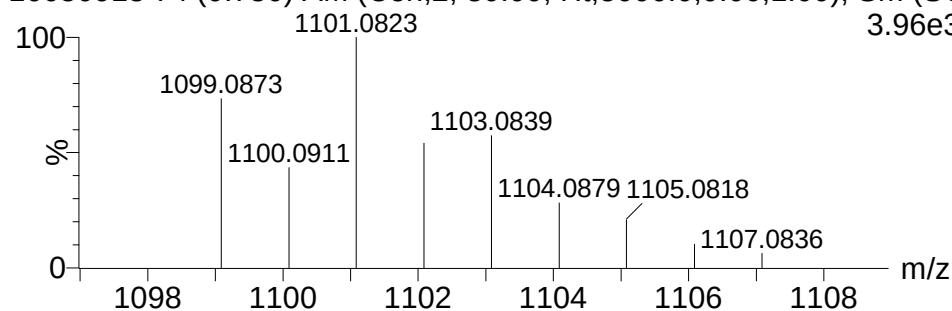
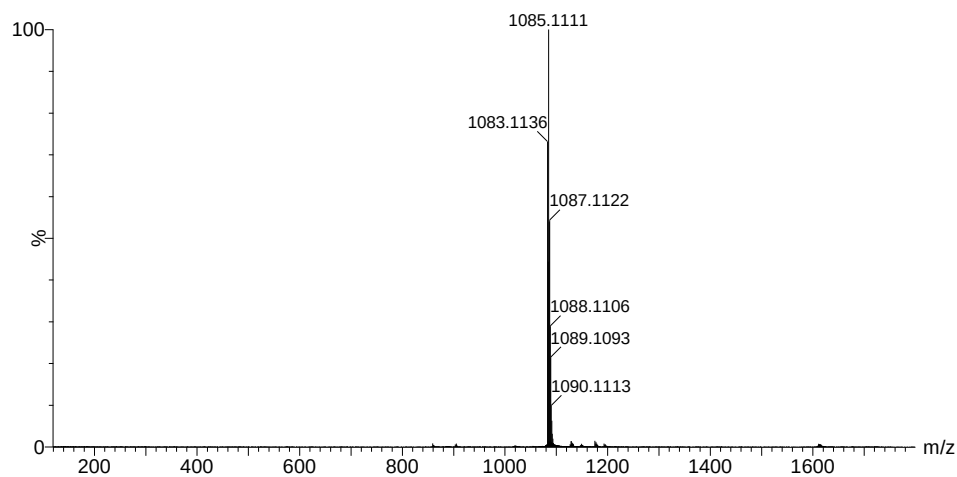


Figure S9. ESI-HRMS of **4[PF₆]** in MeCN

(a) The signal at an $m/z = 1083.1136$ corresponds to **[4]⁺**. (b) Calculated isotopic distribution for **[4]⁺** (upper) and the amplifying experimental diagram for **[4]⁺** (bottom).

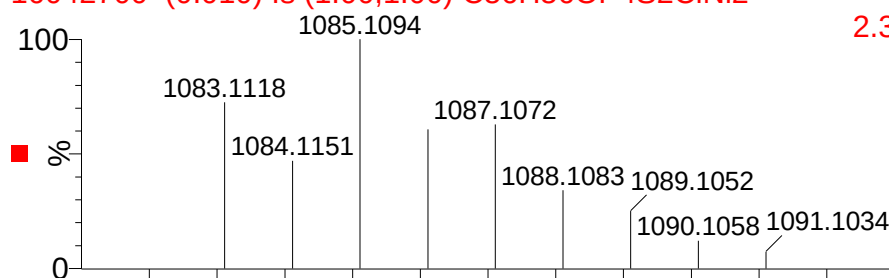
(a)



(b)

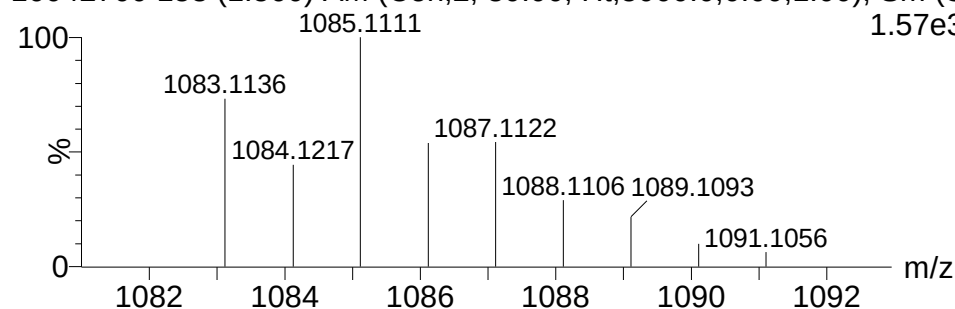
16042700 (0.010) Is (1.00,1.00) C₅₆H₅₆OP₄S₂CINi₂

2.34e12



16042700 158 (1.560) AM (Cen,2, 80.00, Ht,5000.0,0.00,1.00); Sm (S_i)

1.57e3



NMR spectra

Figure S10. The ^1H NMR spectrum of **1** $[\text{PF}_6]_2$ in CD_2Cl_2

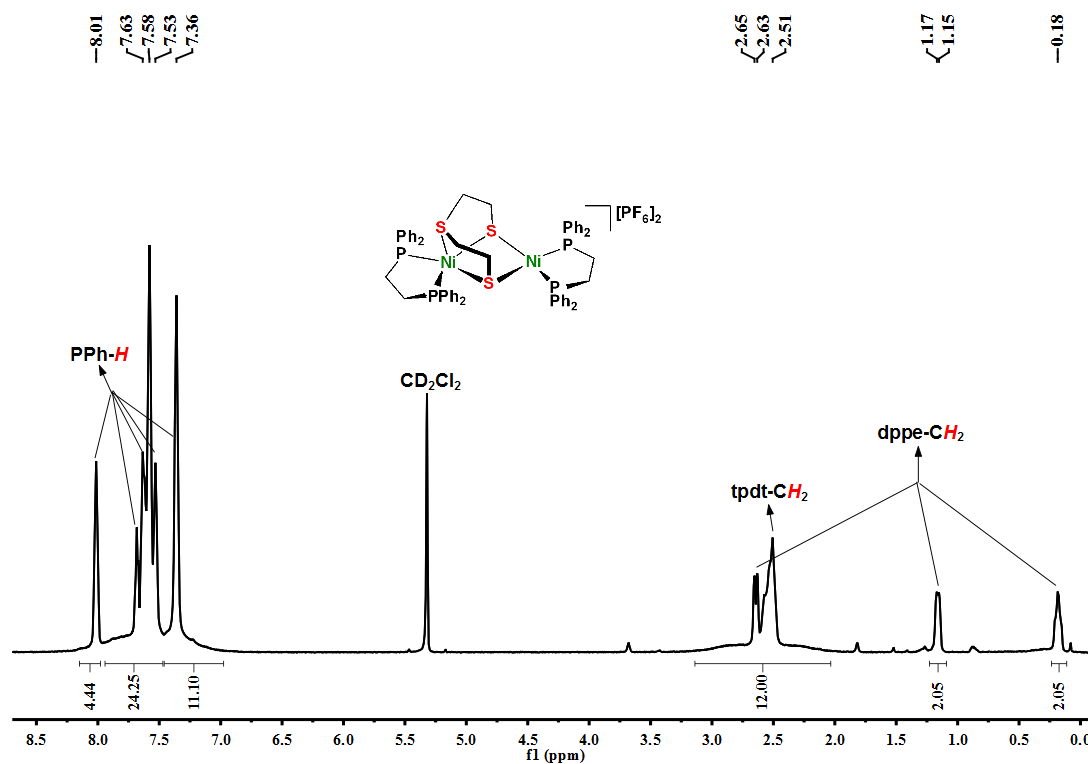


Figure S11. The ^1H , ^1H -COSY spectrum of **1** $[\text{PF}_6]_2$ in CD_2Cl_2

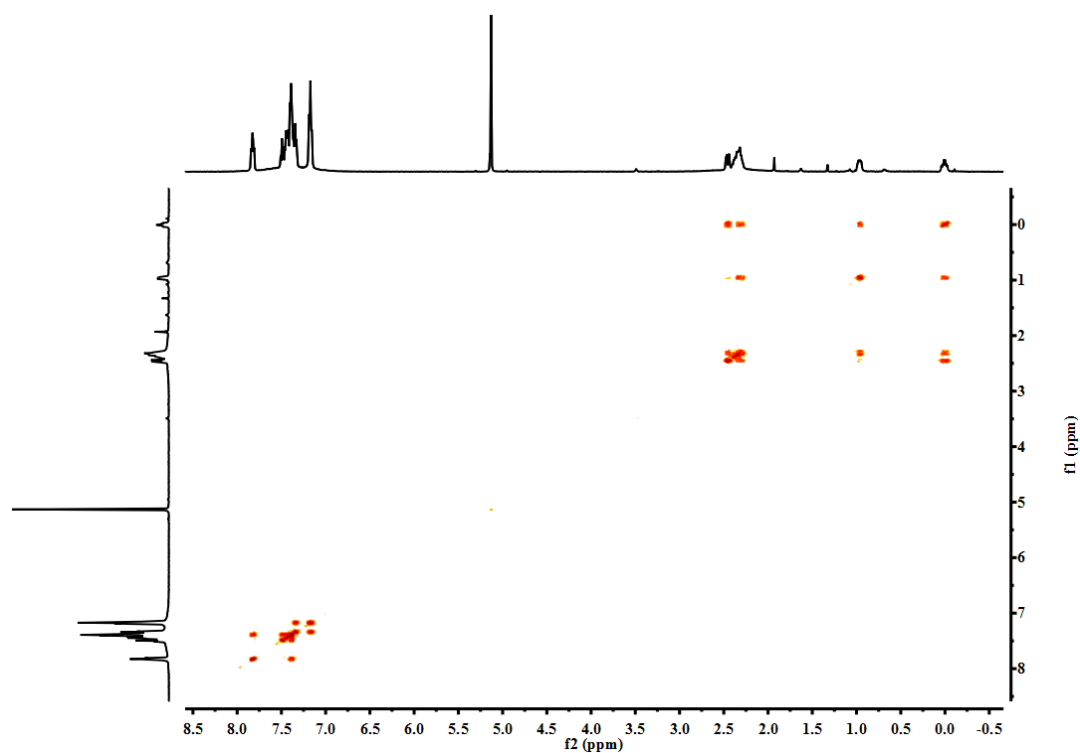


Figure S12. The $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$ NMR spectrum of **1**[PF₆]₂ in CD₂Cl₂

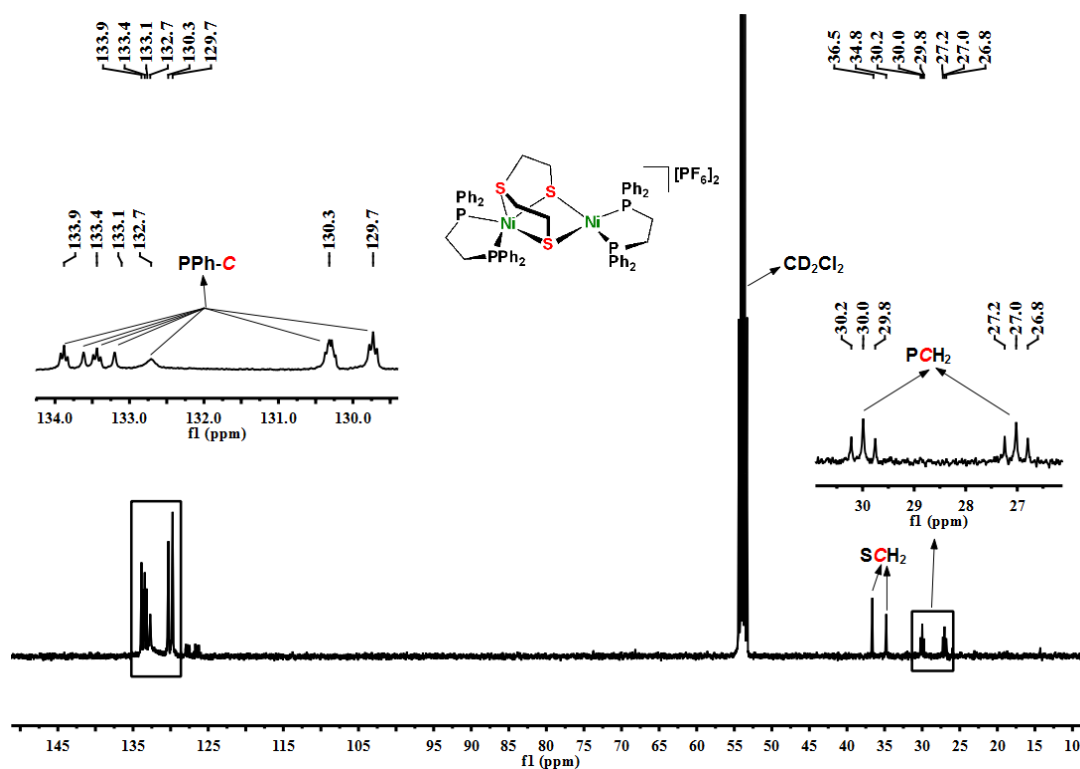


Figure S13. The $^{31}\text{P}\{^1\text{H}\}$ NMR spectrum of **1**[PF₆]₂ in CD₂Cl₂

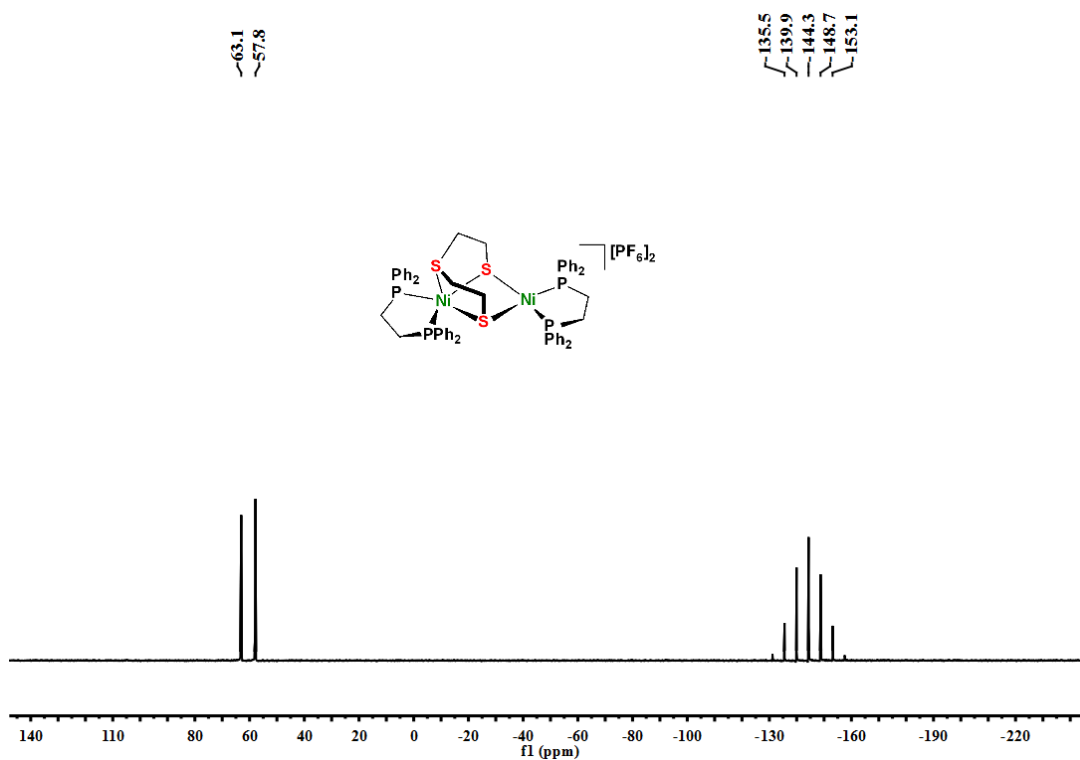


Figure S14. The ^1H NMR spectrum of $1[\text{BPh}_4]_2$ in CD_2Cl_2

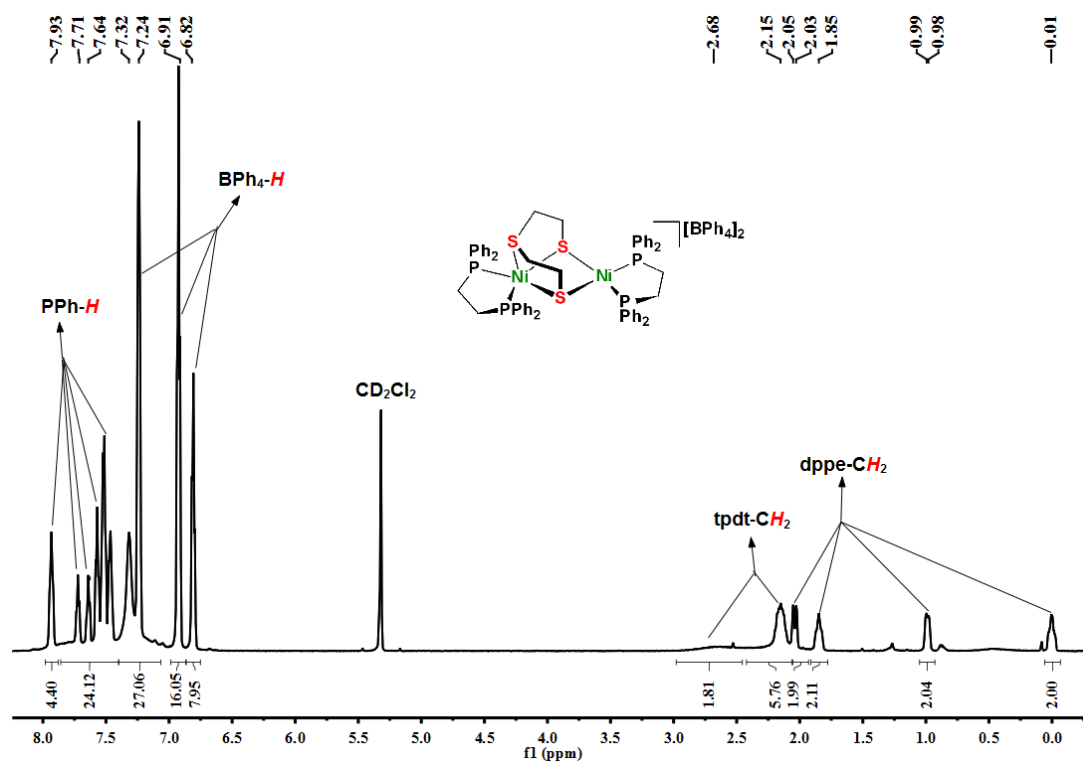


Figure S15. The $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$ NMR spectrum of $1[\text{BPh}_4]_2$ in CD_2Cl_2

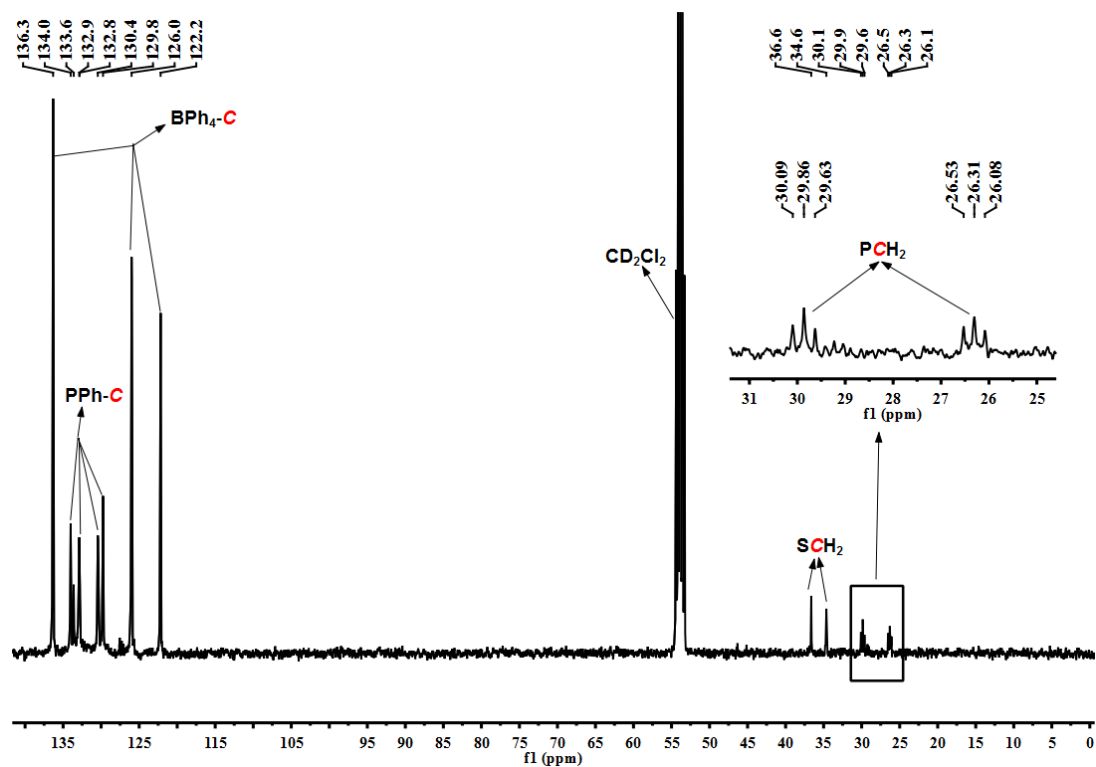


Figure S16. The $^{31}\text{P}\{^1\text{H}\}$ NMR spectrum of **1**[BPh₄]₂ in CD₂Cl₂

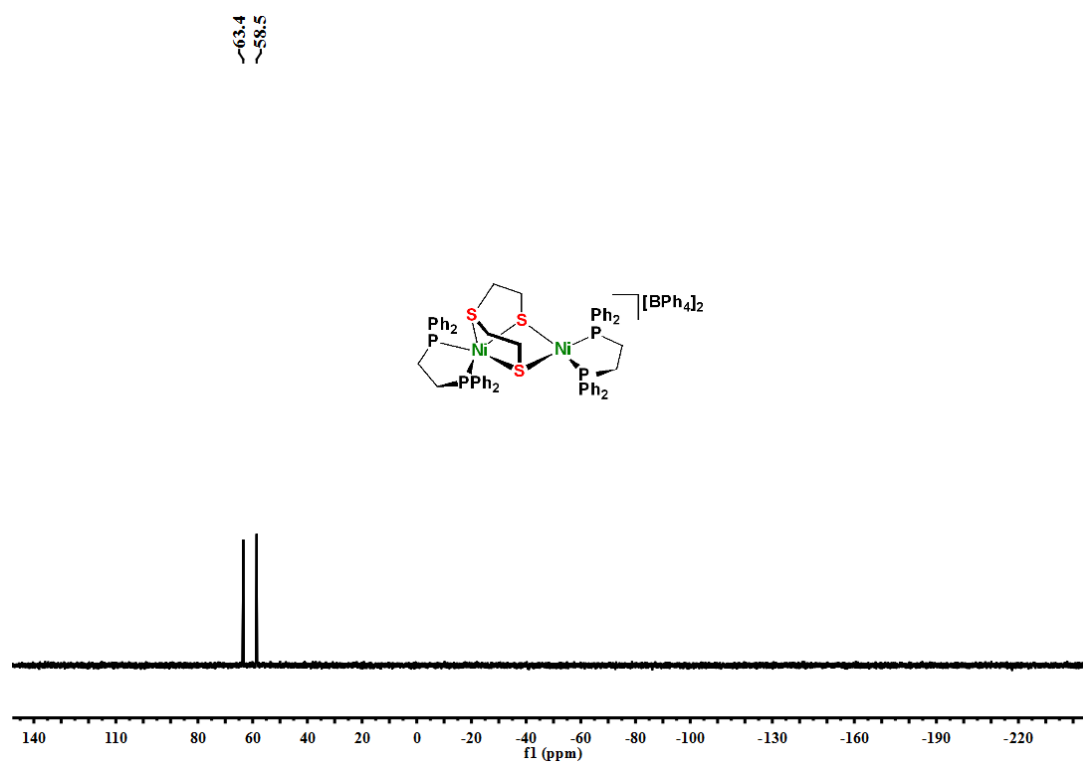


Figure S17. The ^1H NMR spectrum of **2**[PF₆]₂ in CD₂Cl₂

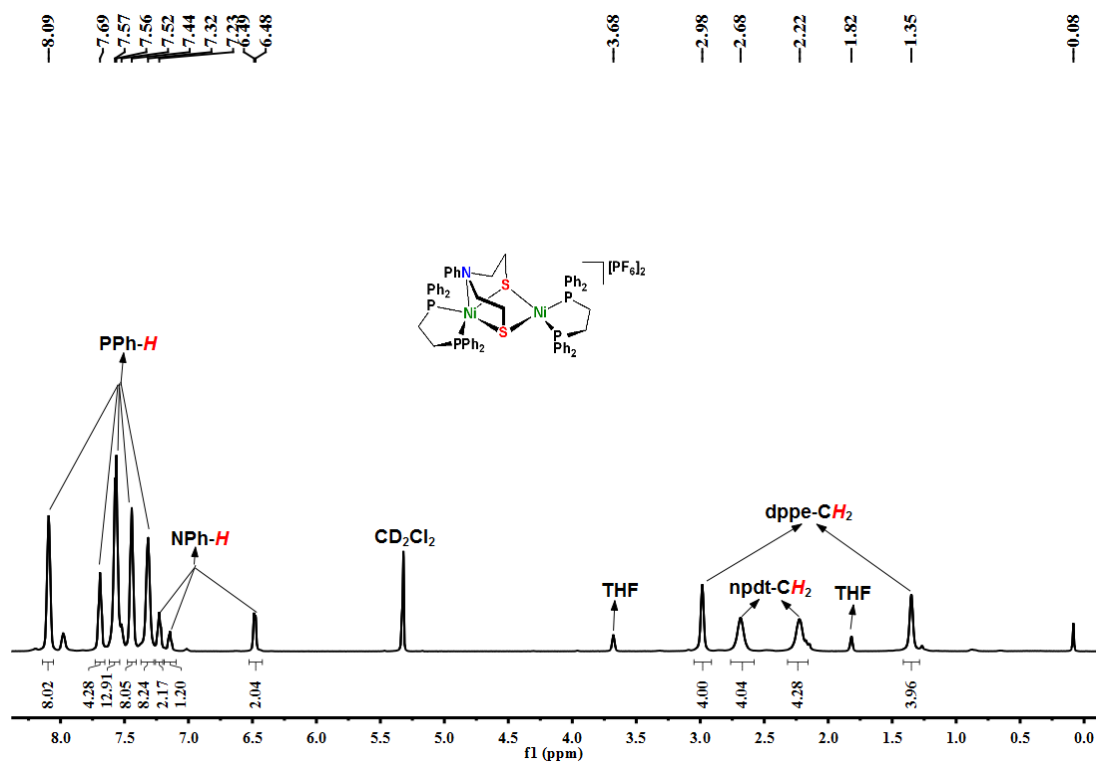


Figure S18. The $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$ NMR spectrum of $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$ in CD_2Cl_2

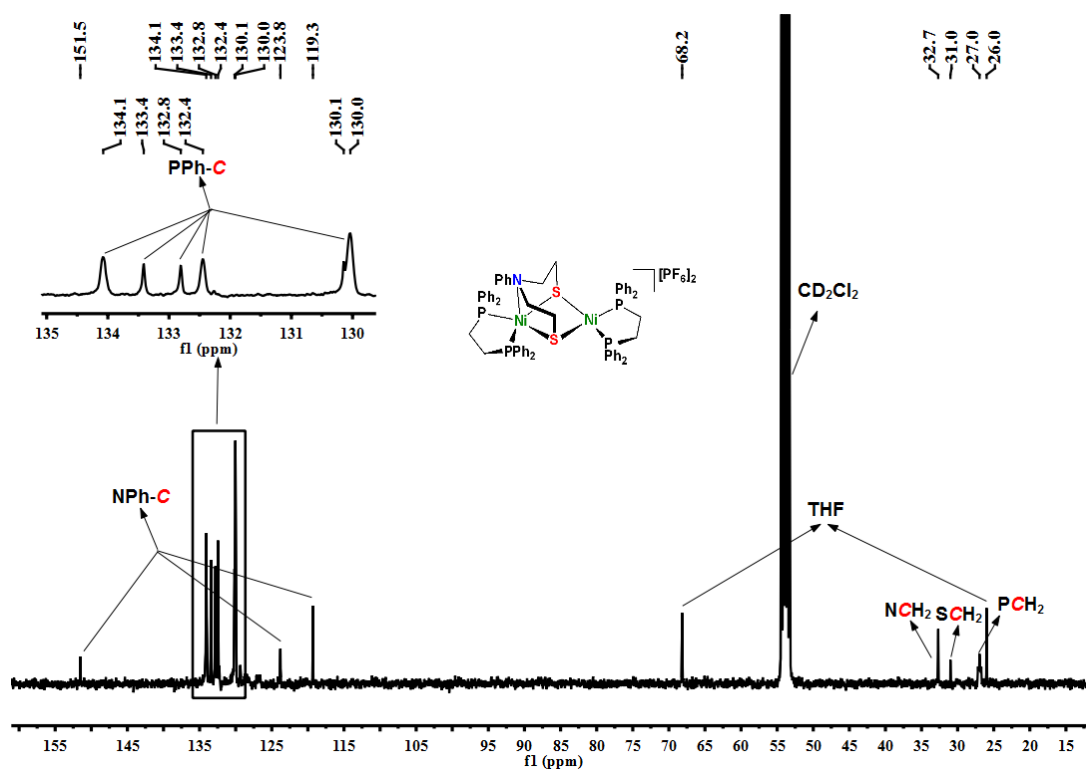


Figure S19. The $^{31}\text{P}\{^1\text{H}\}$ NMR spectrum of $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$ in CD_2Cl_2

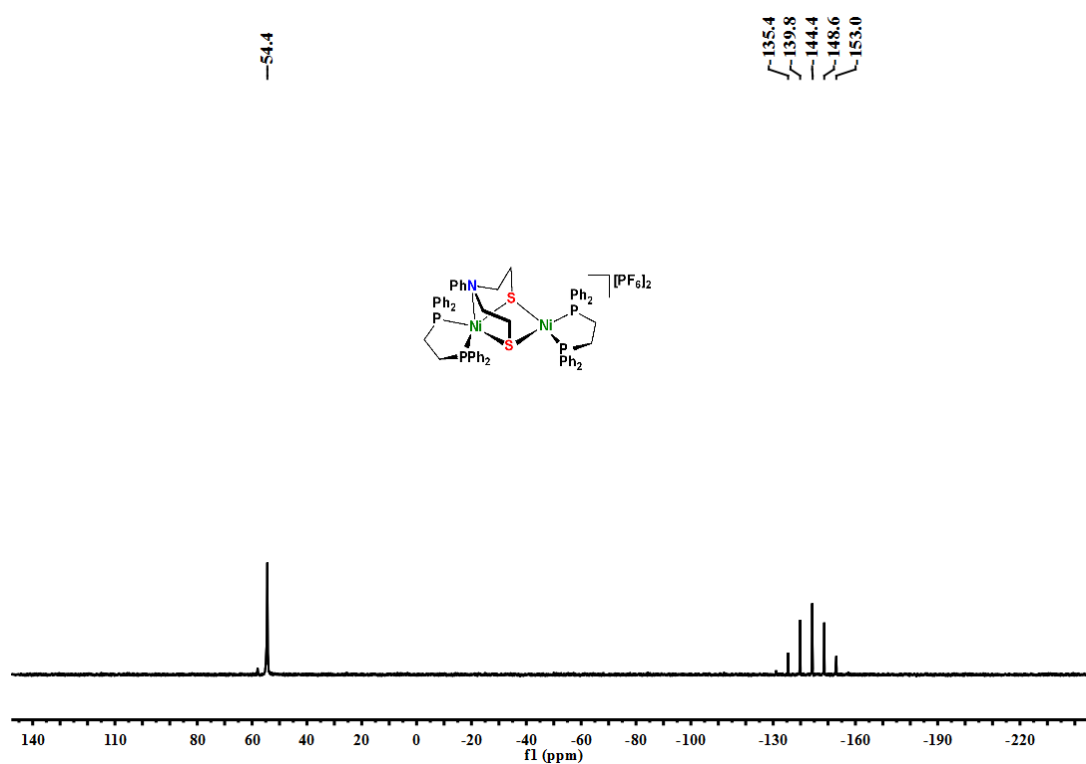


Figure S20. The ^1H NMR spectrum of **3**[PF₆] in CD₂Cl₂

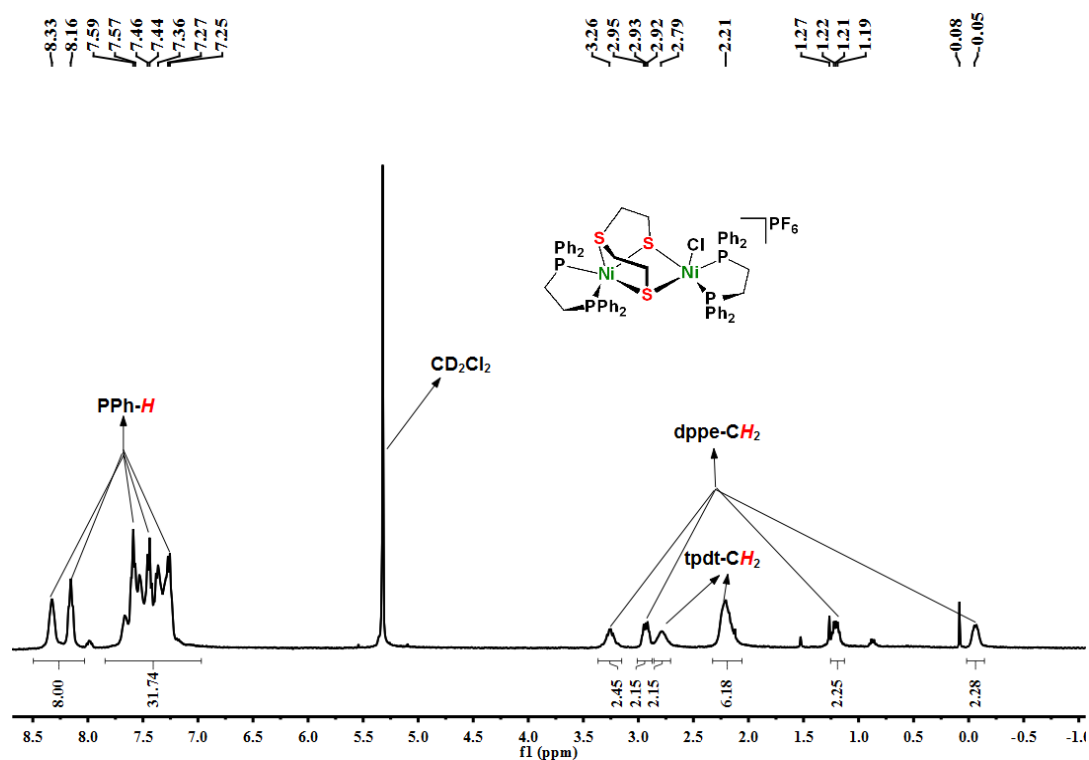


Figure S21. The $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$ NMR spectrum of **3**[PF₆] in CD₂Cl₂

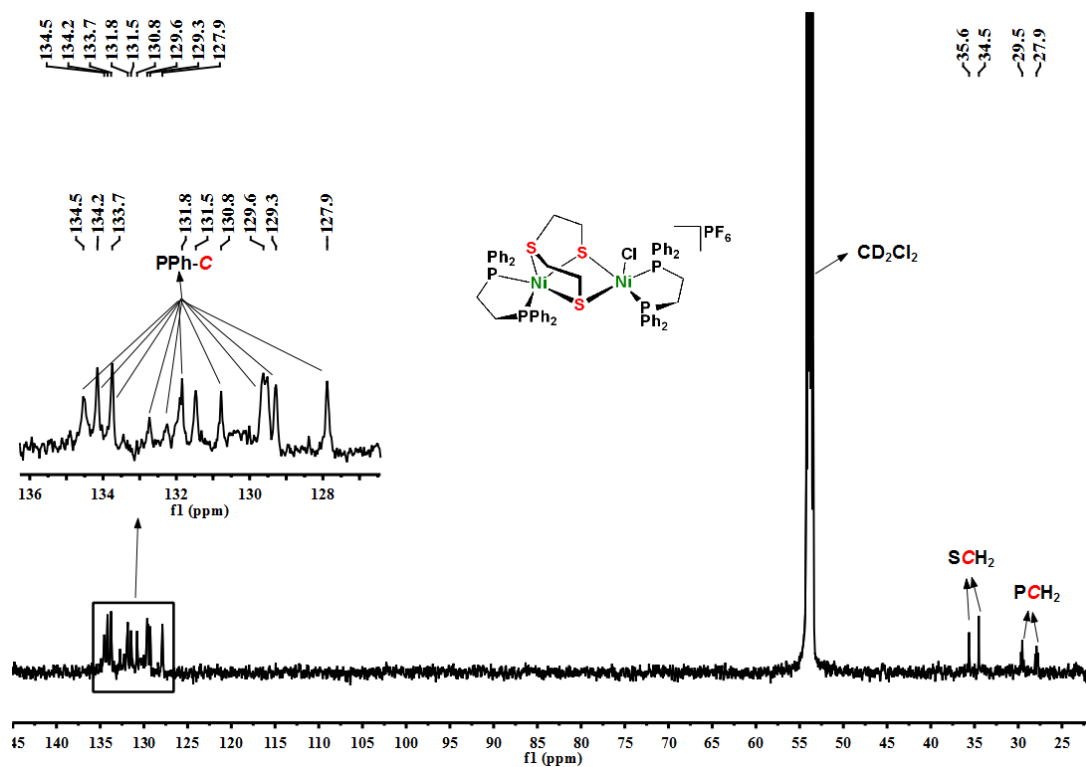


Figure S22. The $^{31}\text{P}\{^1\text{H}\}$ NMR spectrum of **3**[PF₆] in CD₂Cl₂

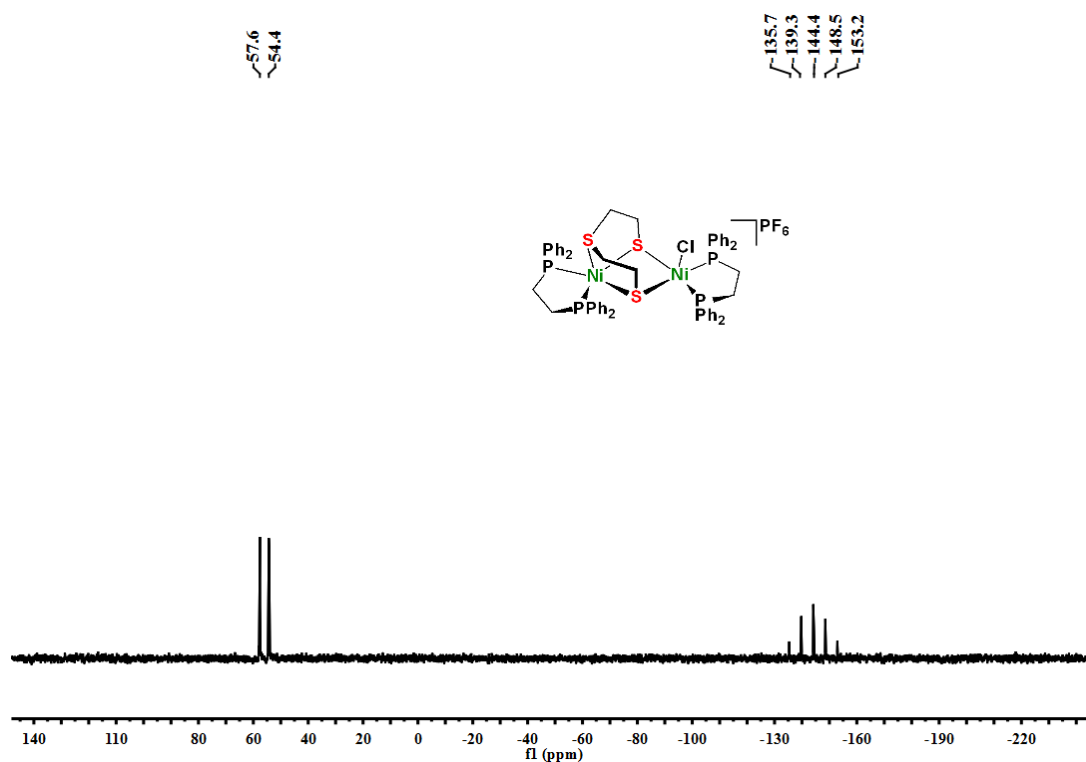


Figure S23. The ^1H NMR spectrum of **4**[PF₆] in CD₂Cl₂

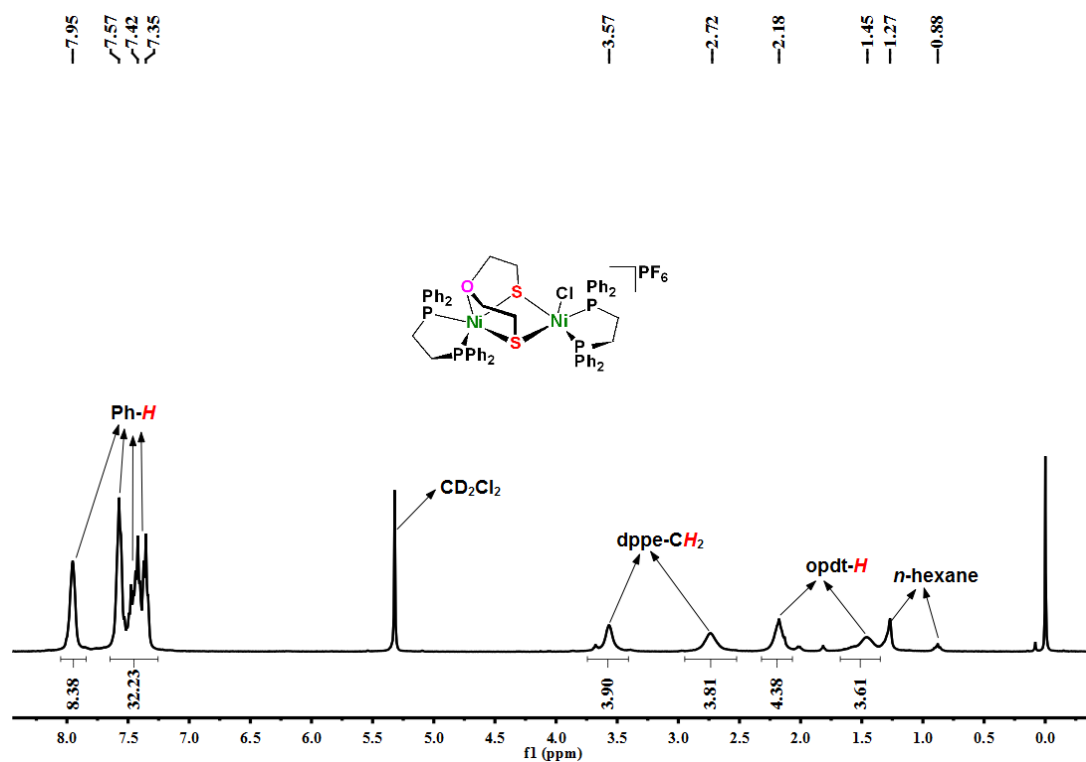


Figure S24. The $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$ NMR spectrum of **4**[PF₆] in CD₂Cl₂

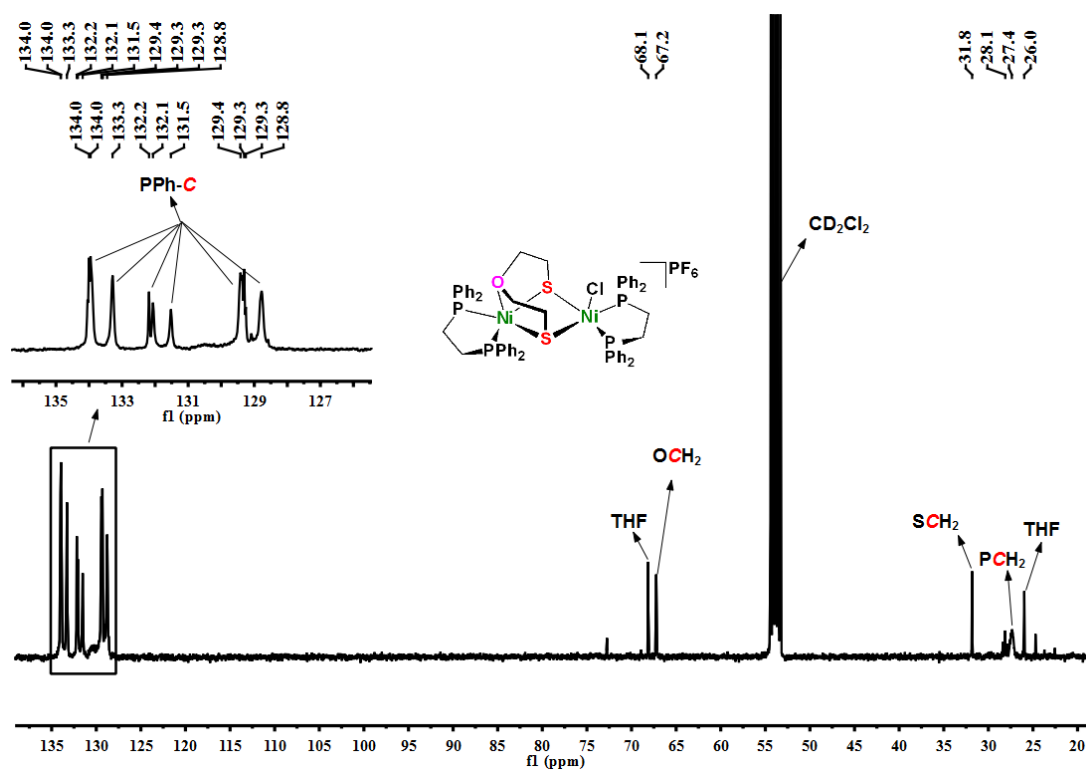
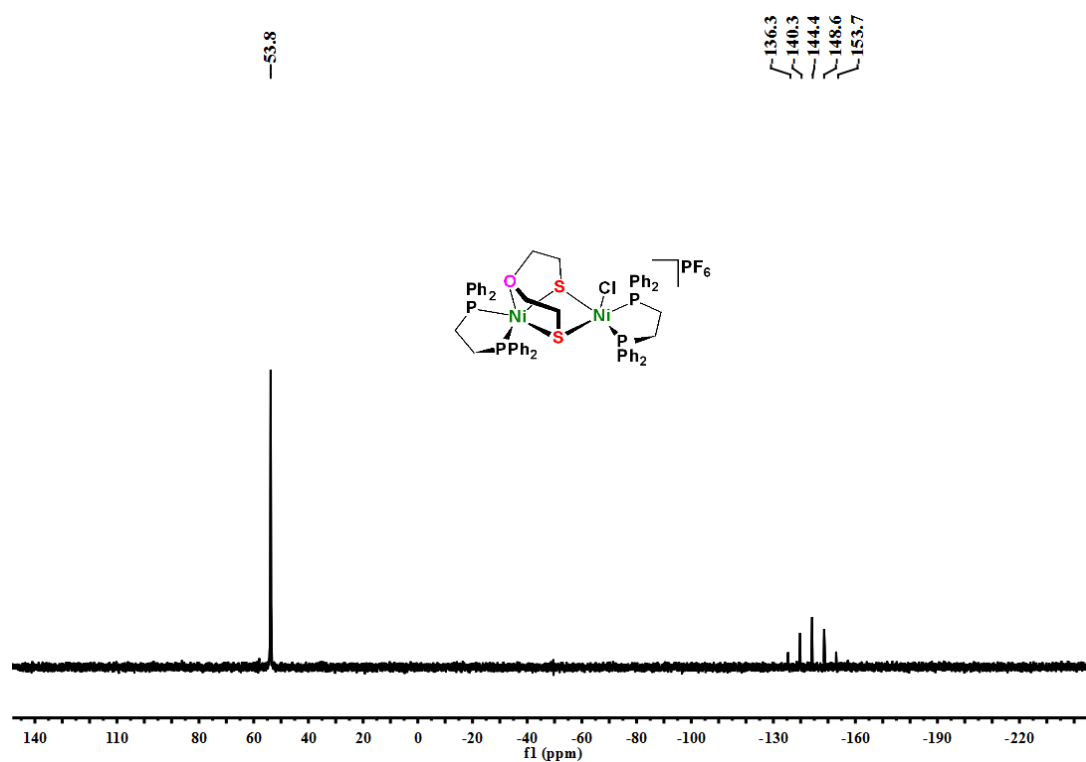


Figure S25. The $^{31}\text{P}\{^1\text{H}\}$ NMR spectrum of **4**[PF₆] in CD₂Cl₂



IR spectra

Figure S26. The IR (film) spectrum of **1**[PF₆]₂

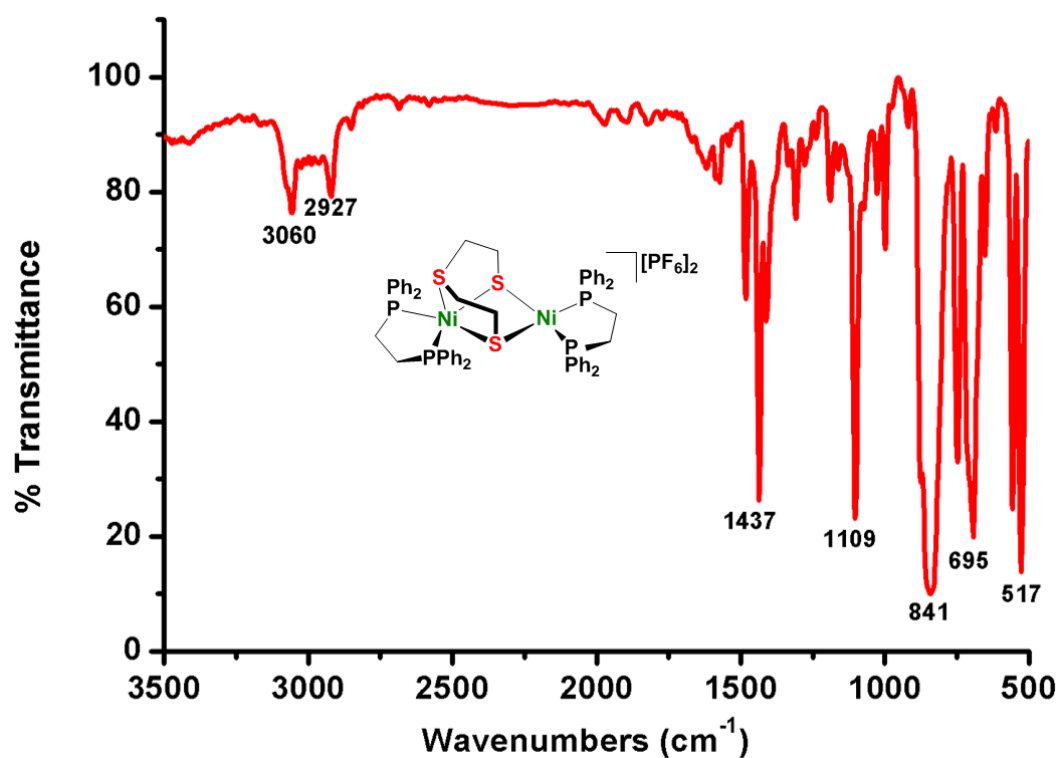


Figure S27. The IR (film) spectrum of **1**[BPh₄]₂

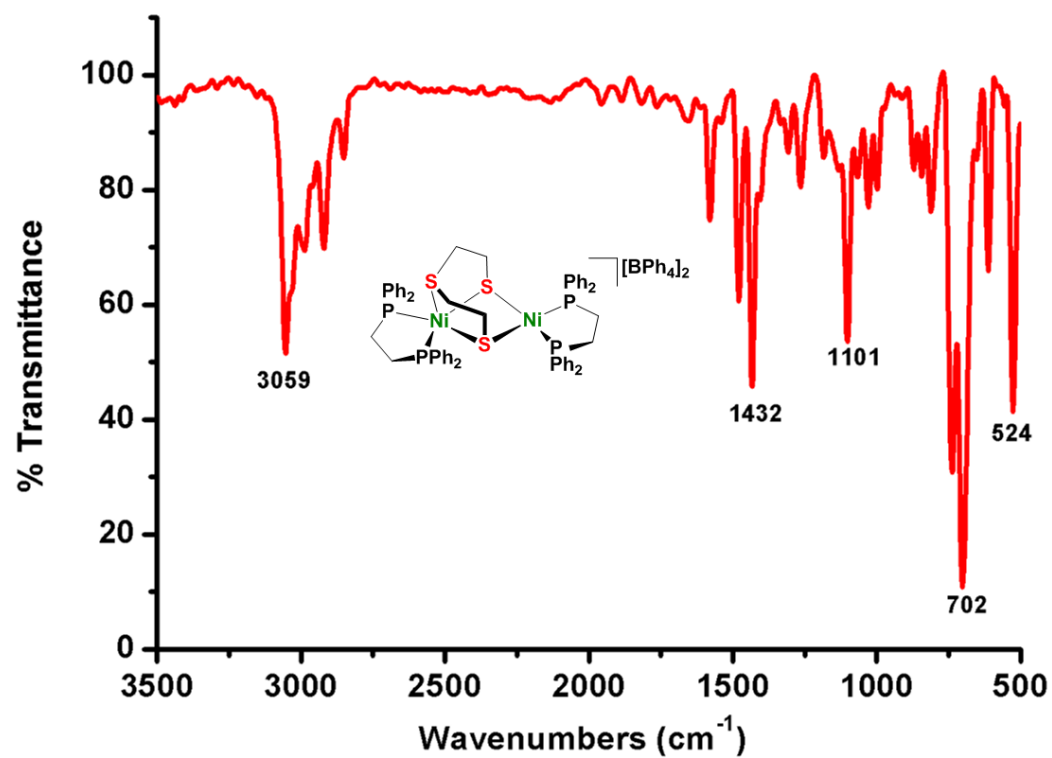


Figure S28. The IR (film) spectrum of **2**[PF₆]₂

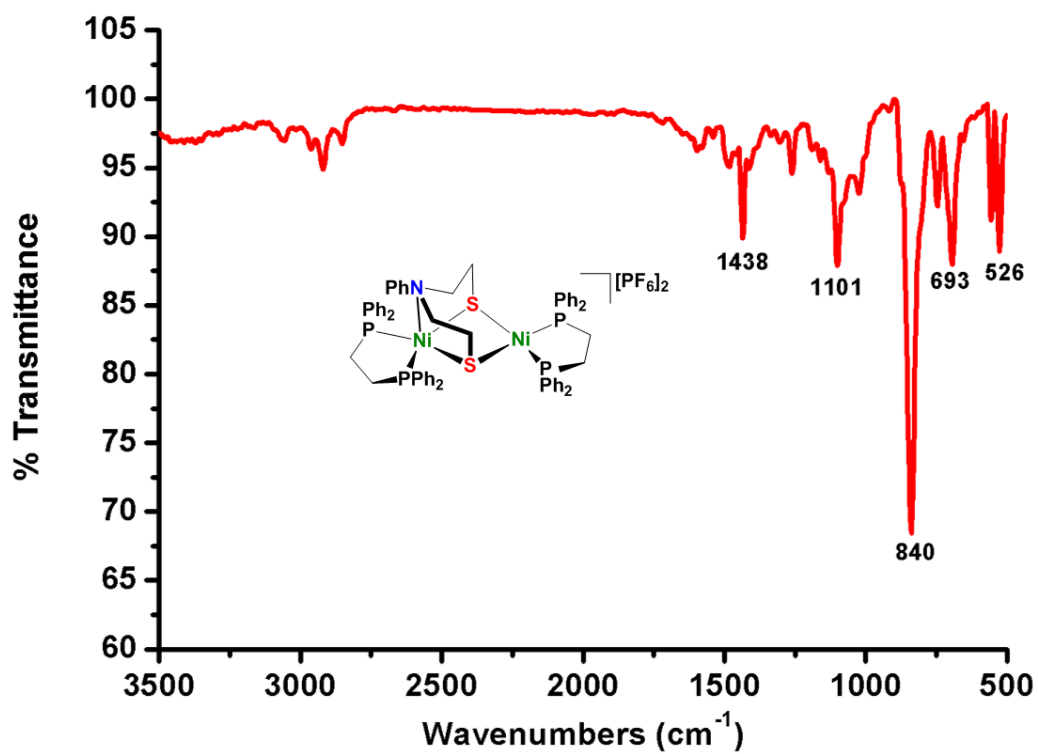


Figure S29. The IR (film) spectrum of **3**[PF₆]

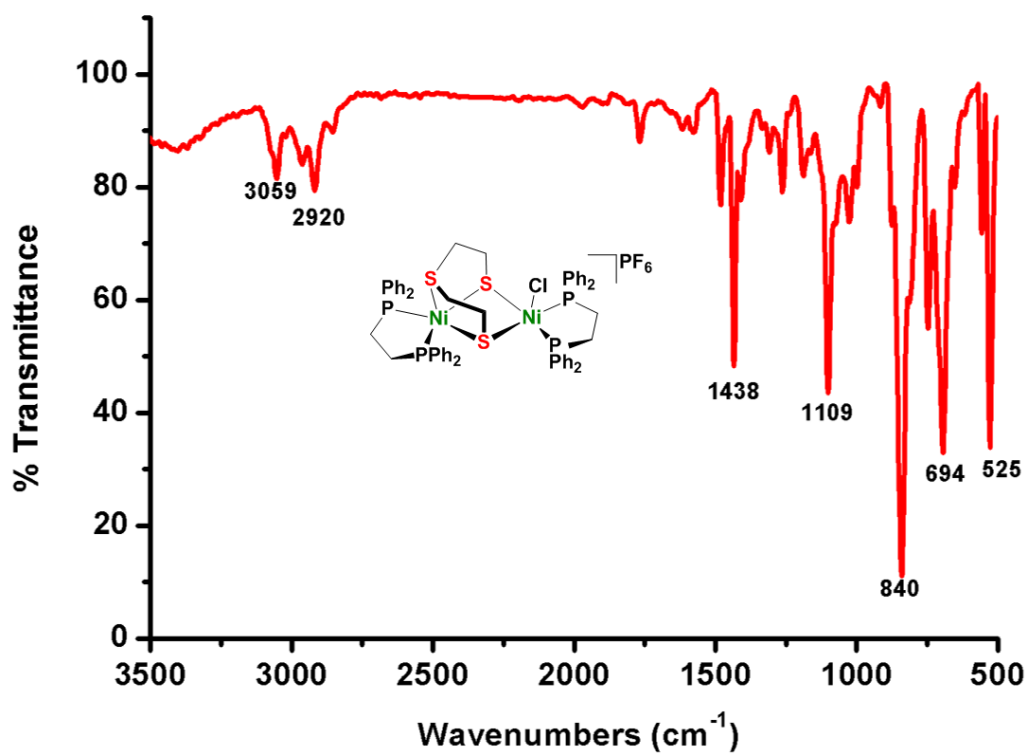
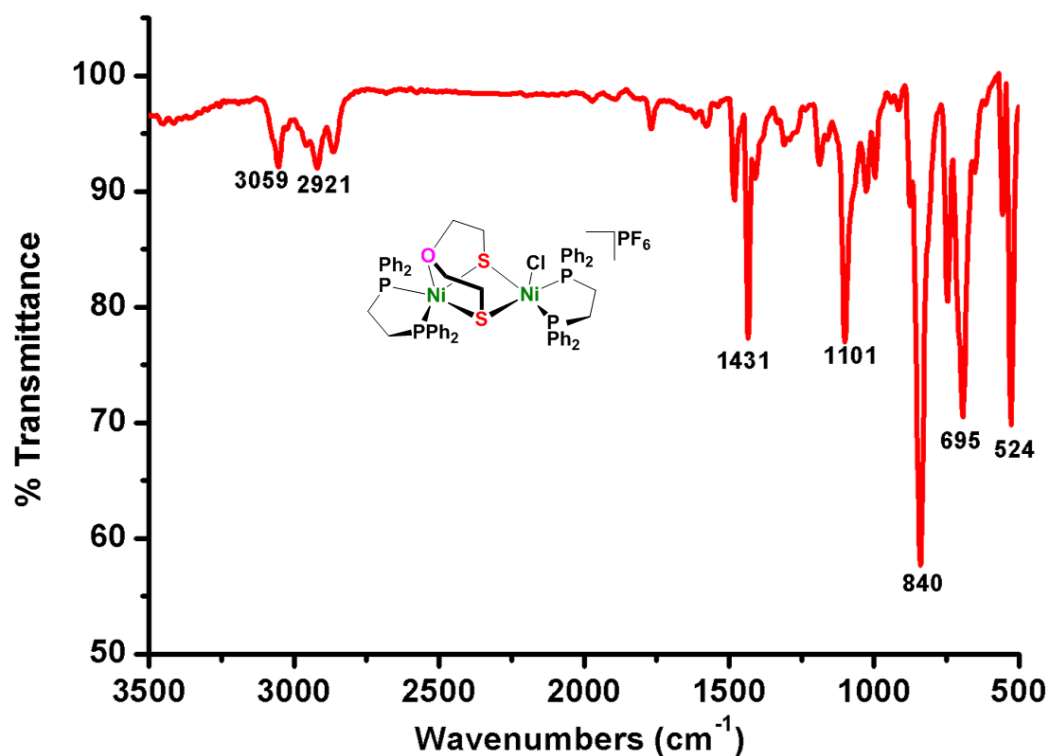


Figure S30. The IR (film) spectrum of **4**[PF₆]



Electrochemistry

Figure S31. The cyclic voltammogram of **1**[PF₆]₂ (1 mM) in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆/MeCN at 25 °C with a scan rate of 100 mV s⁻¹

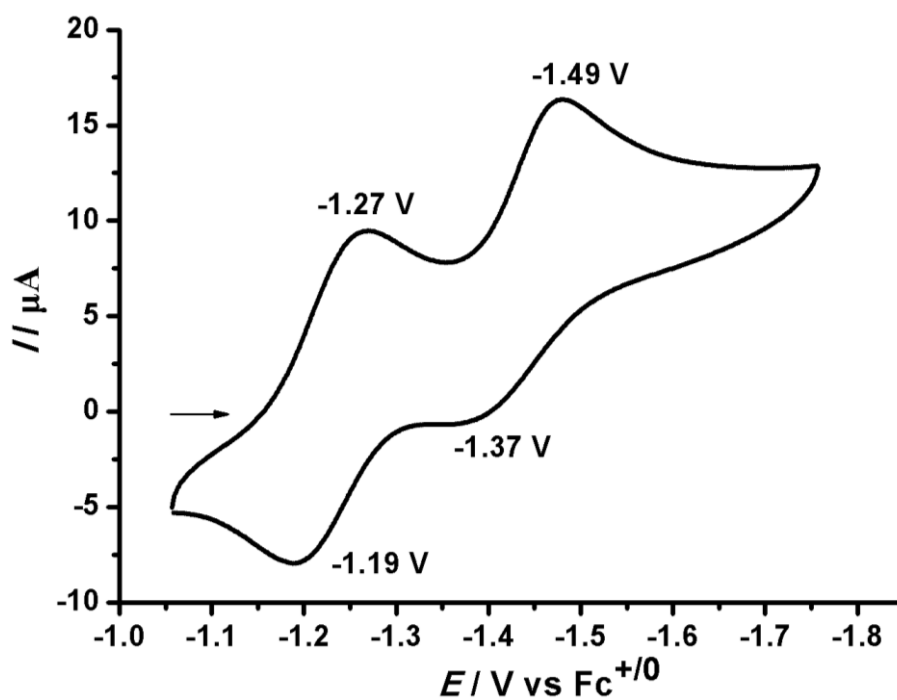


Figure S32. The cyclic voltammogram of **1**[PF₆]₂ (1 mM) in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆/CH₂Cl₂ at 25 °C with a scan rate of 100 mV s⁻¹

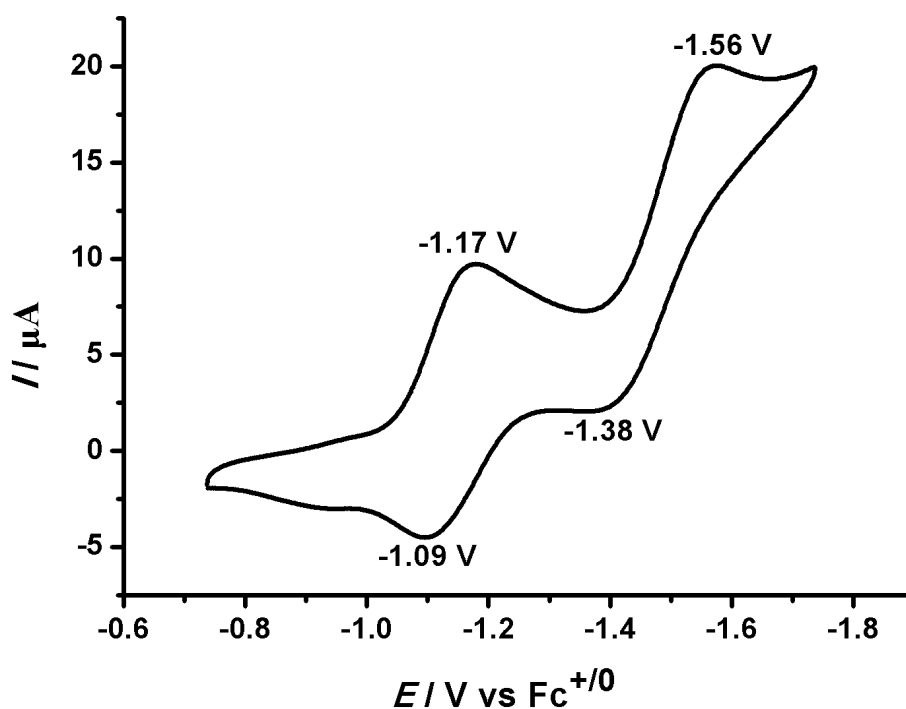


Figure S33. The cyclic voltammograms of **1**[PF₆]₂ (1 mM) in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆/MeCN at 25 °C at different scan rates (0.1~0.7 V s⁻¹)

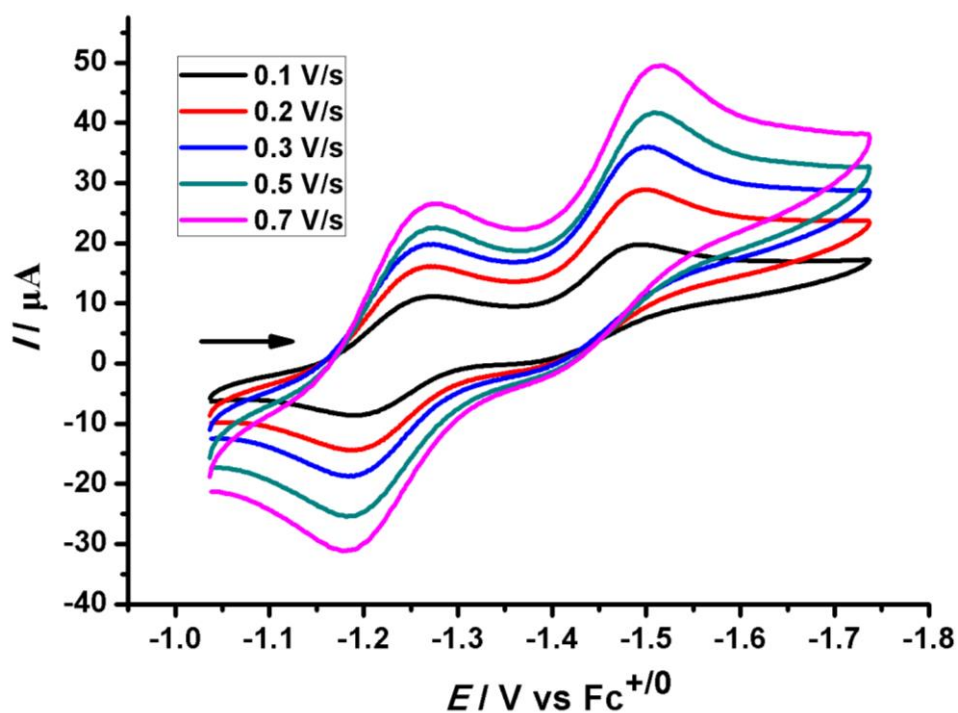


Figure S34. Plot of i_p versus $v^{1/2}$ for the second reduction peak of **1**[PF₆]₂

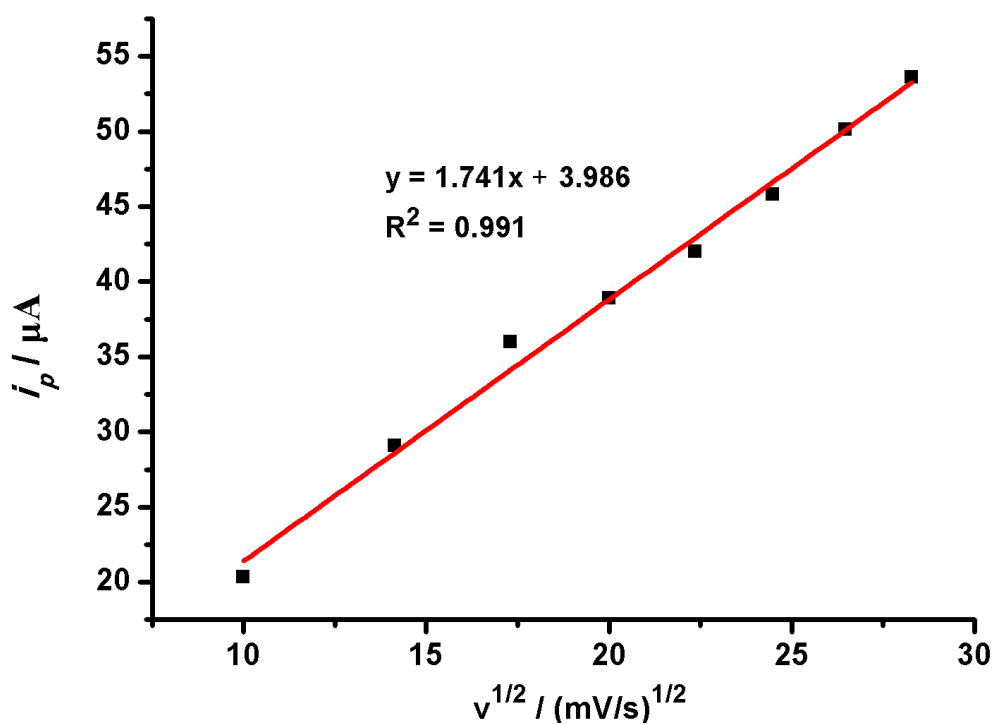


Figure S35. The cyclic voltammogram of **2**[PF₆]₂ (1 mM) in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆/MeCN at 25 °C with a scan rate of 100 mV s⁻¹

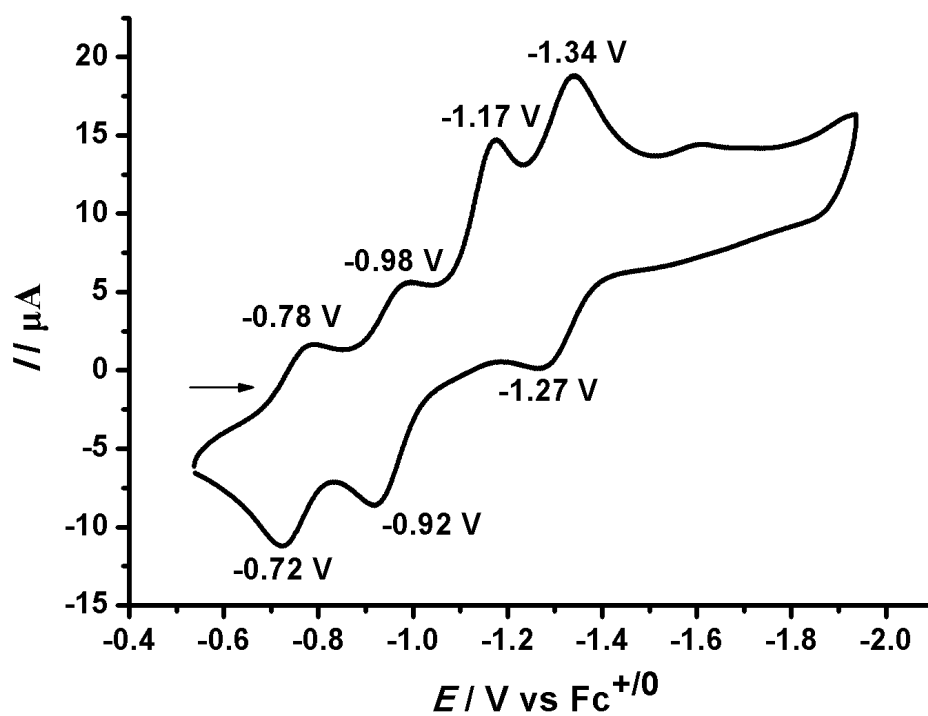


Figure S36. The cyclic voltammogram of $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$ (1 mM) in 0.1 M $n\text{Bu}_4\text{NPF}_6/\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ at 25 °C with a scan rate of 100 mV s^{-1}

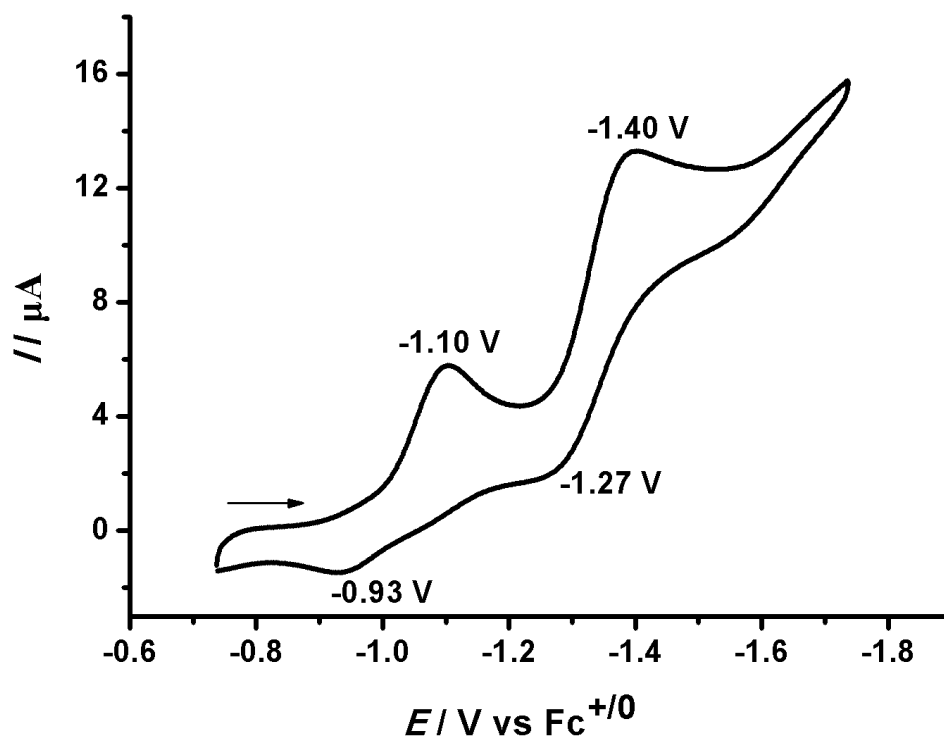


Figure S37. The cyclic voltammograms of $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$ (1 mM) in 0.1 M $n\text{Bu}_4\text{NPF}_6/\text{MeCN}$ at 25 °C at different scan rates (0.1~1.0 V s^{-1})

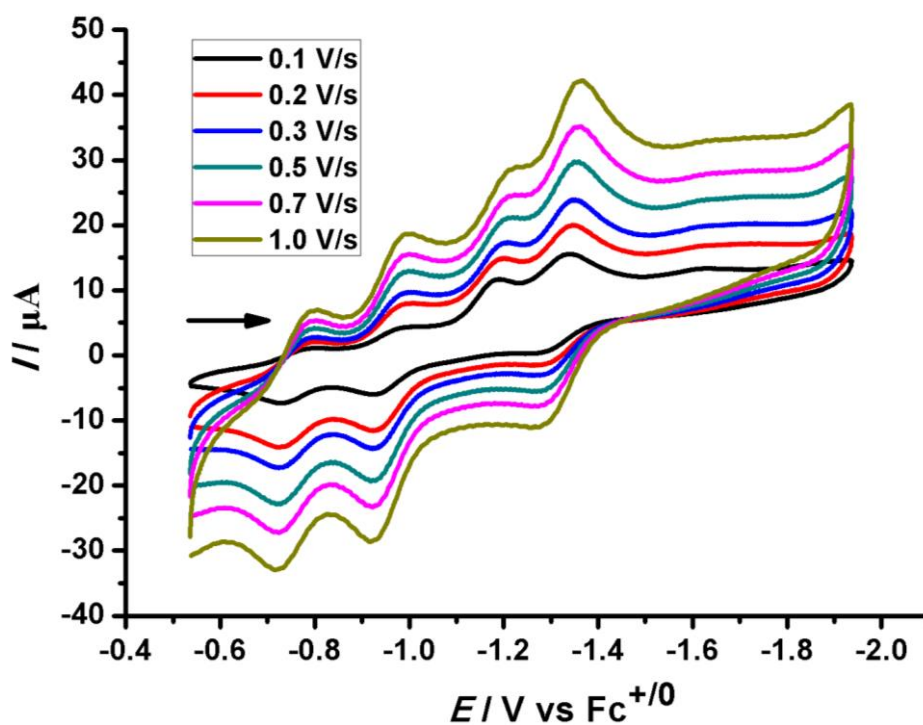


Figure S38. Plot of i_p versus $v^{1/2}$ for the third reduction peak of $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$

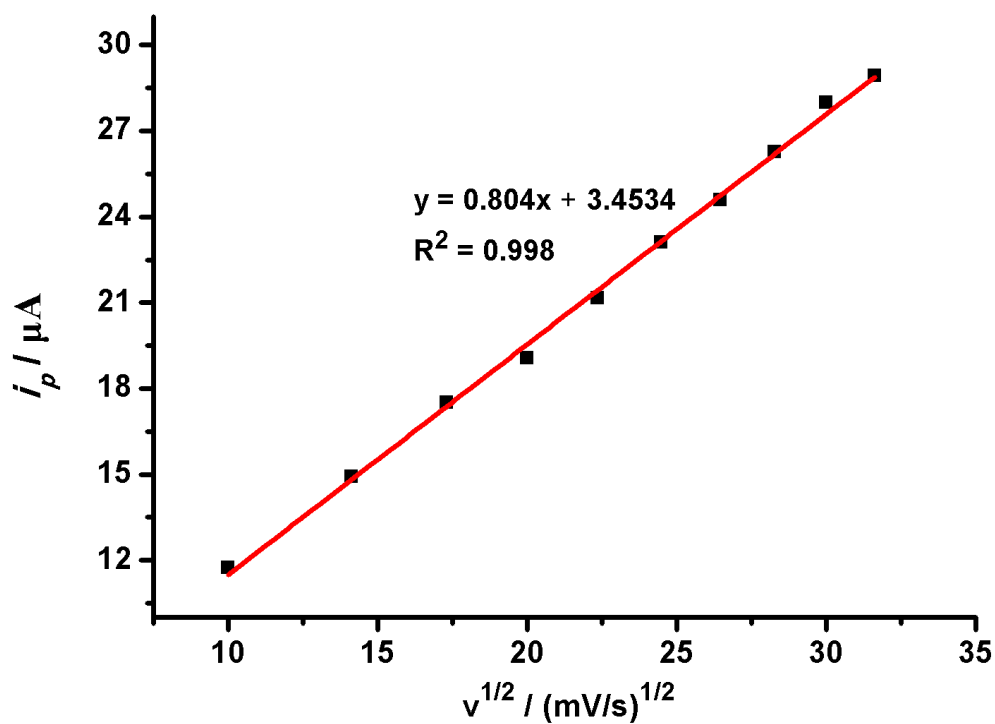


Figure S39. The cyclic voltammogram of $3[\text{PF}_6]$ (1 mM) in 0.1 M $n\text{Bu}_4\text{NPF}_6/\text{MeCN}$ at 25 °C with a scan rate of 100 mV s^{-1}

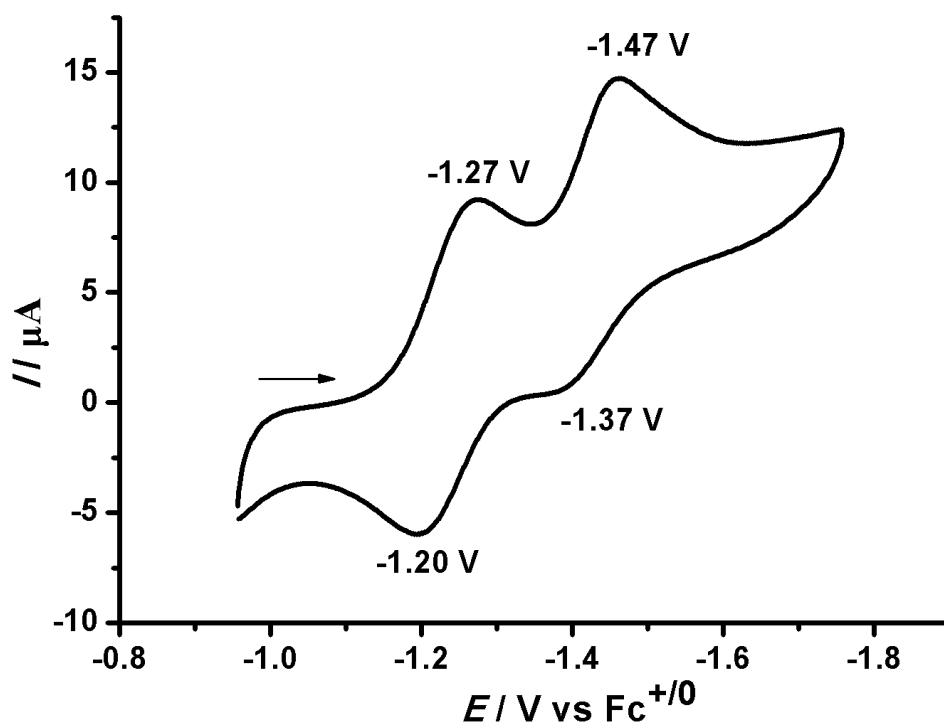


Figure S40. The cyclic voltammogram of **3**[PF₆] (1 mM) in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆/CH₂Cl₂ at 25 °C with a scan rate of 100 mV s⁻¹

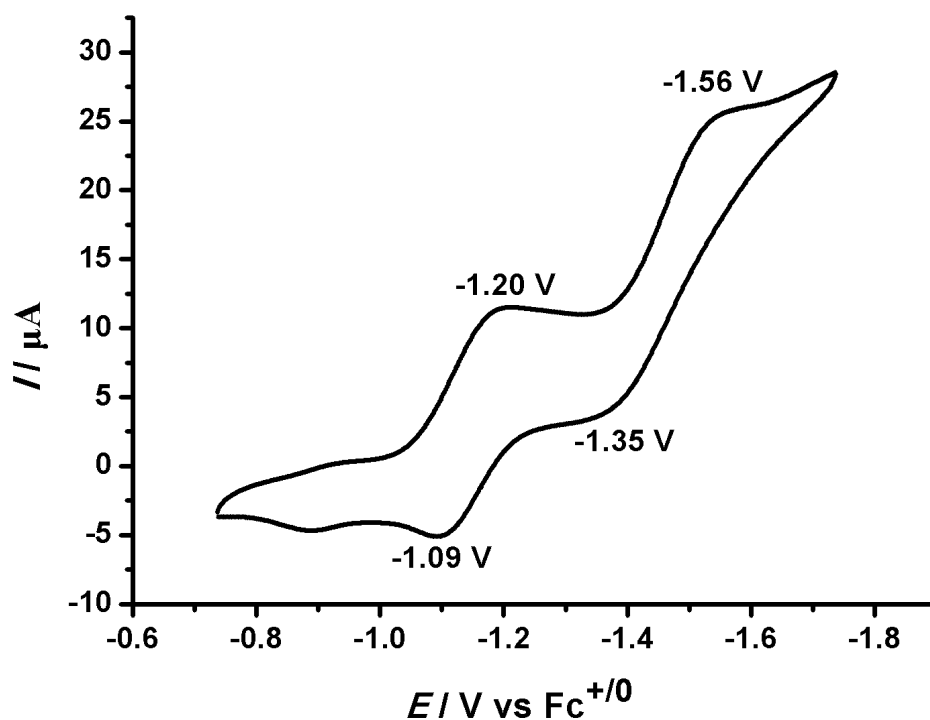


Figure S41. The cyclic voltammograms of **3**[PF₆] (1 mM) in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆/MeCN at 25 °C at different scan rates (0.1~1.0 V s⁻¹)

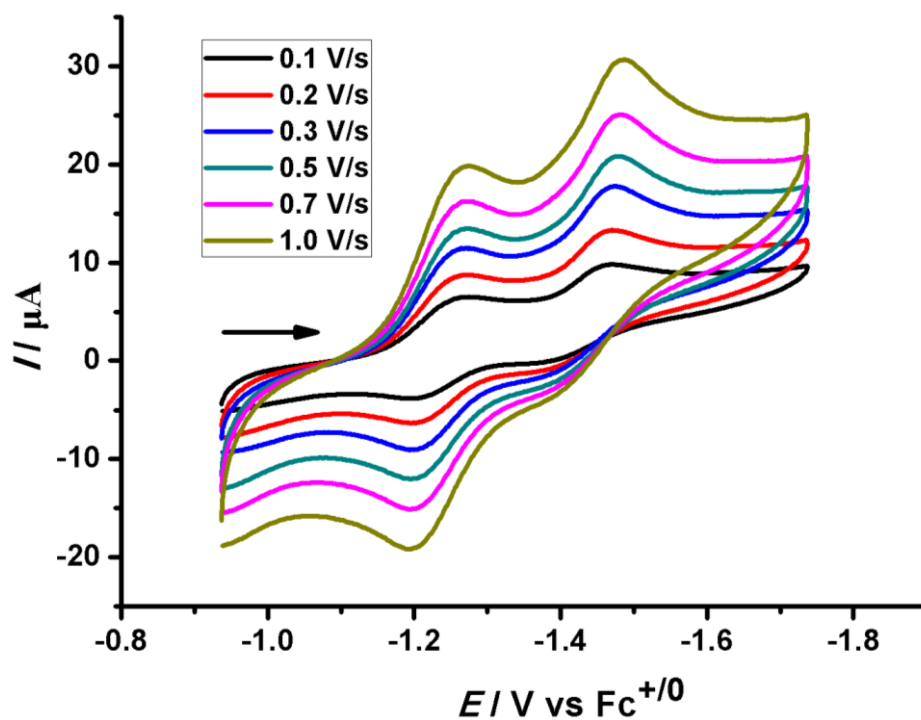


Figure S42. Plot of i_p versus $v^{1/2}$ for the second reduction peak of **3**[PF₆]

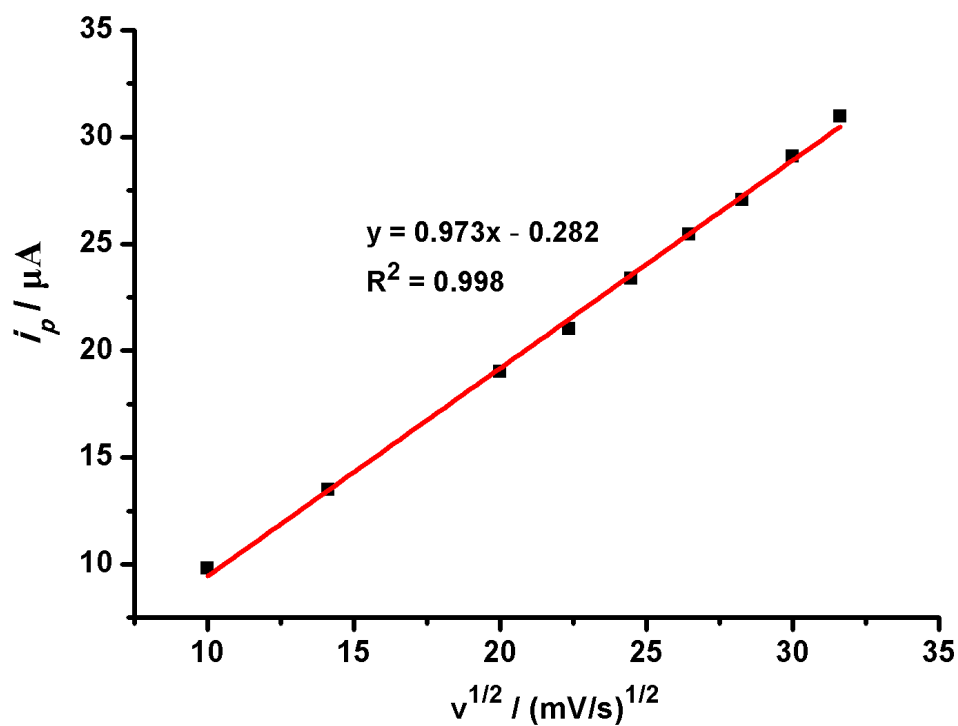


Figure S43. The cyclic voltammogram of **4**[PF₆] (1 mM) in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆/MeCN at 25 °C with a scan rate of 100 mV s⁻¹

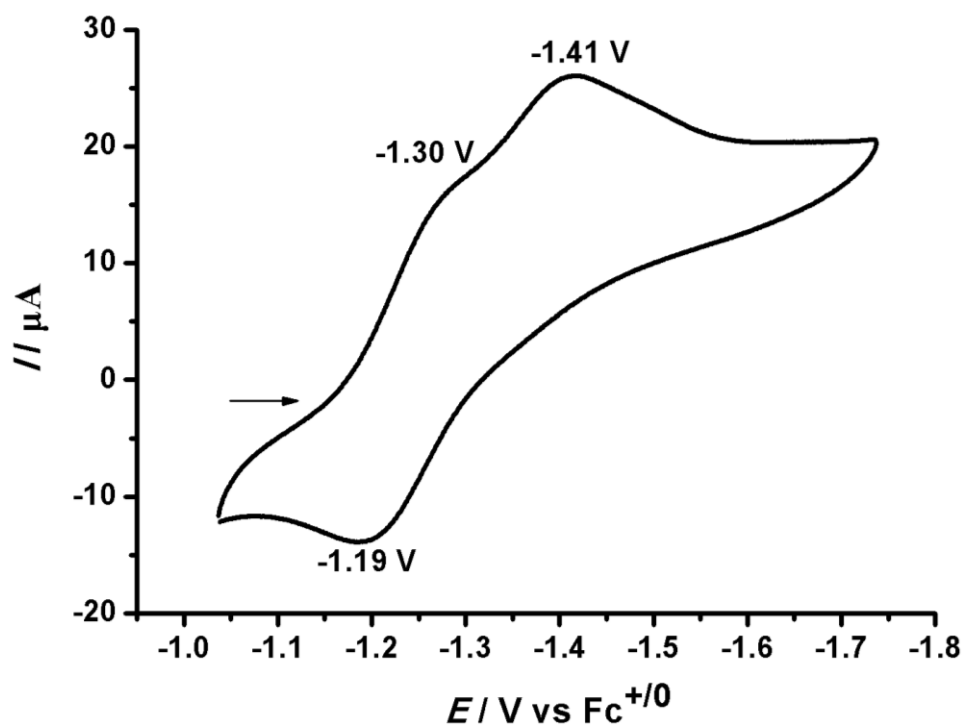


Figure S44. The cyclic voltammogram of **4**[PF₆] (1 mM) in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆/CH₂Cl₂ at 25 °C with a scan rate of 100 mV s⁻¹

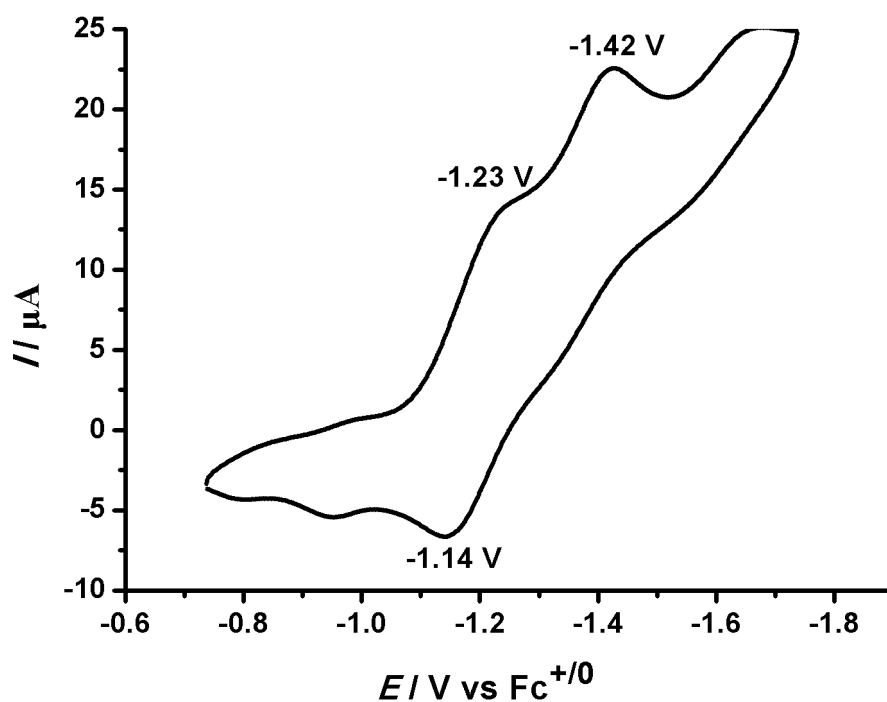


Figure S45. The cyclic voltammograms of **4**[PF₆] (1 mM) in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆/MeCN at 25 °C at different scan rates (0.1~0.7 V s⁻¹)

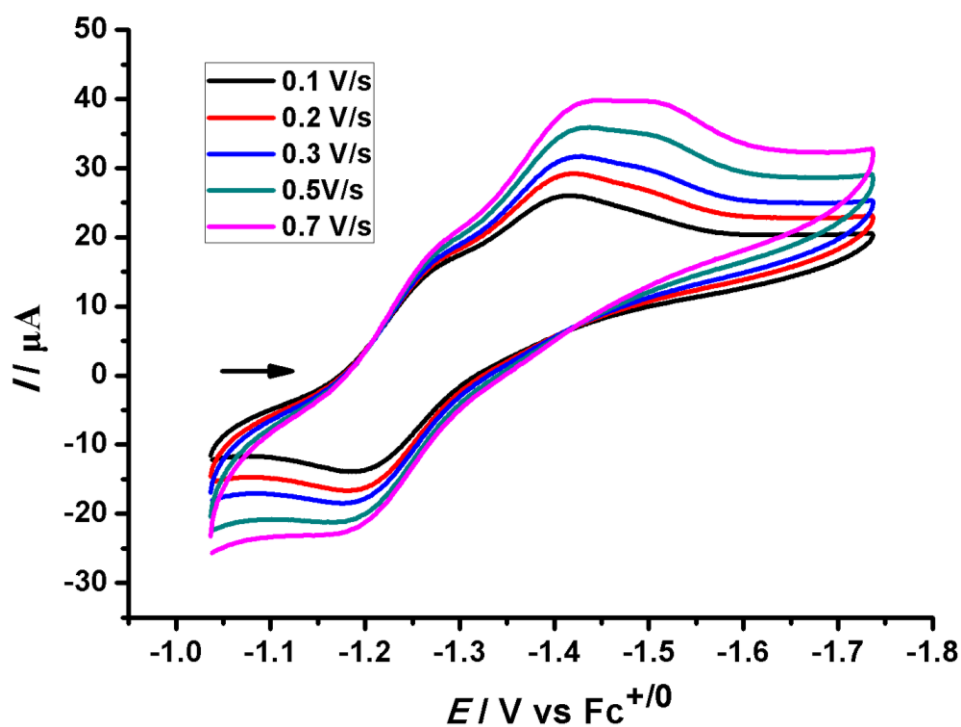


Figure S46. Plot of i_p versus $v^{1/2}$ for the second reduction peak of **4**[PF₆]

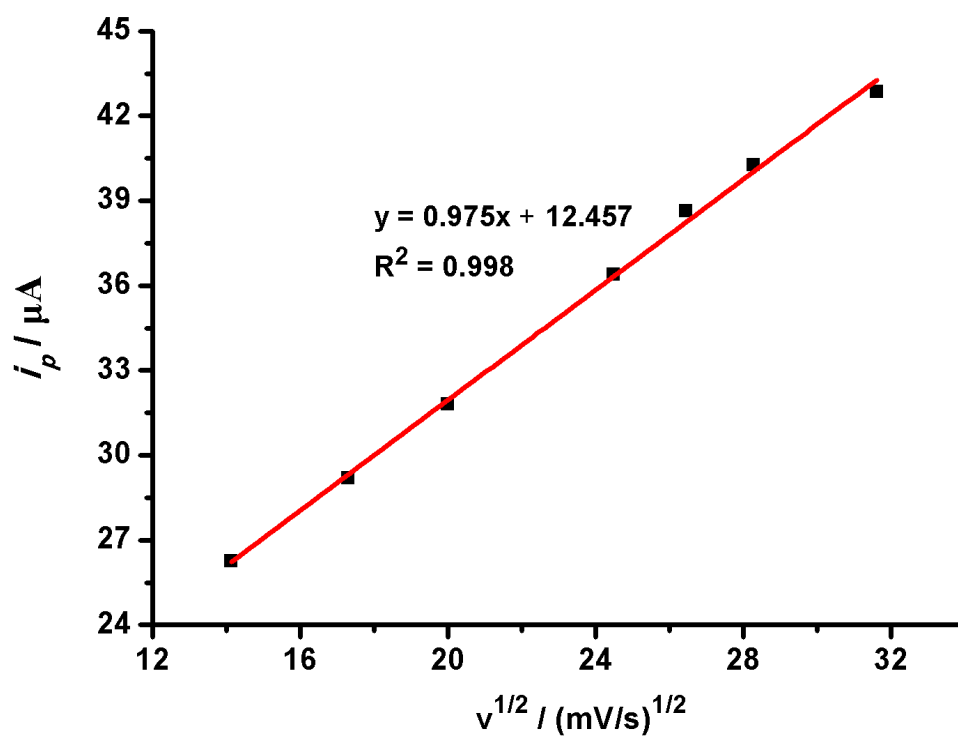


Figure S47. Cyclic voltammograms of **1**[PF₆]₂ (1 mM in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆ in MeCN under Ar, scan rate = 100 mV s⁻¹) with increments of TFA (0, 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 mM)

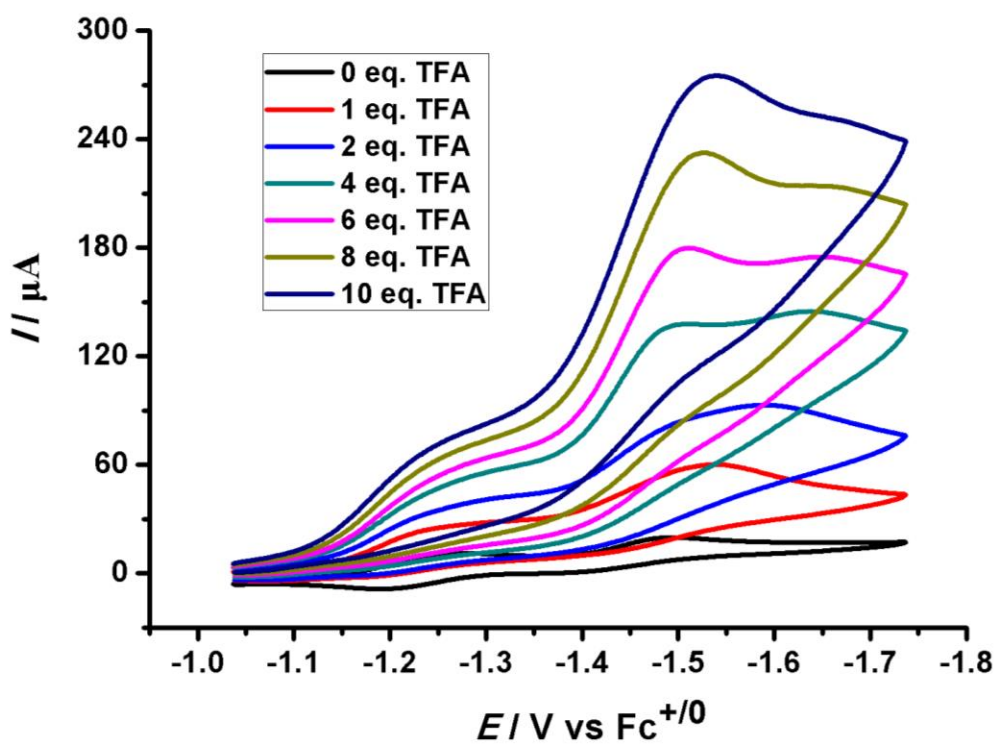


Figure S48. Corresponding plot of i_c/i_p for 1 mM **1**[PF₆]₂ on the concentration of TFA near to cathodic process at -1.3 V in MeCN

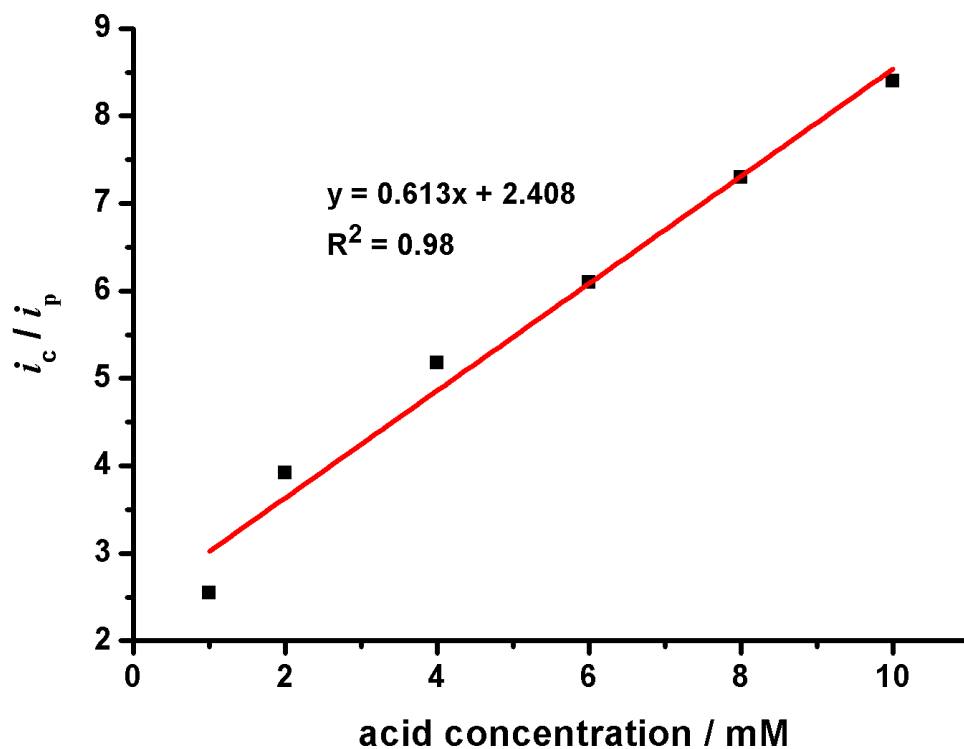


Figure S49. Cyclic voltammograms of **2**[PF₆]₂ (1 mM in 0.1 M *n*Bu₄NPF₆ in MeCN under Ar, scan rate = 100 mV s⁻¹) with increments of TFA (0, 1, 2, 4, 8, 10, 20, 40 and 60 mM)

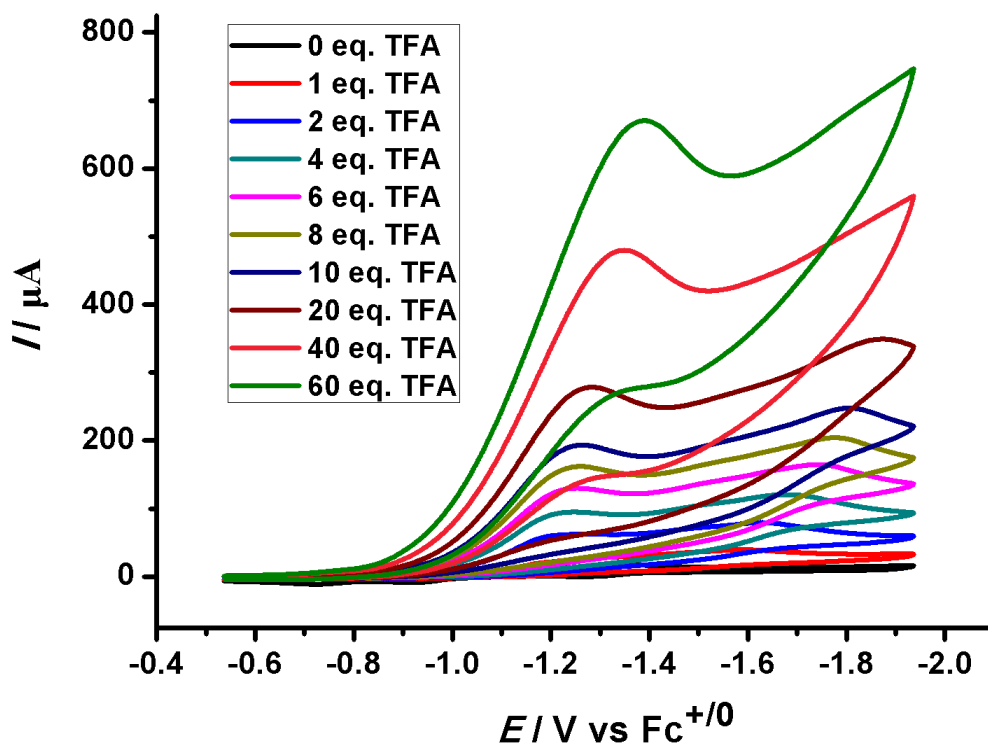


Figure S50. Corresponding plot of i_c/i_p for 1 mM **2**[PF₆]₂ on the concentration of TFA near to cathodic process at −1.3 V in MeCN

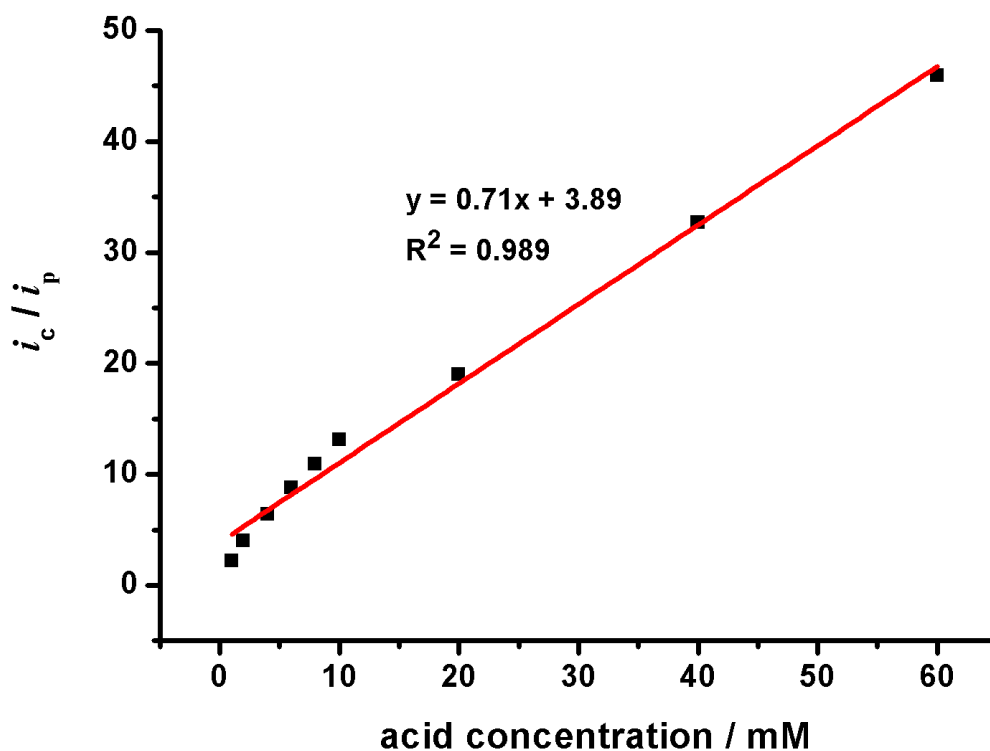


Figure S51. Cyclic voltammograms of **2**[PF₆]₂ (1 mM in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆ in MeCN under Ar, scan rate = 100 mV s^{−1}) with increments of TFA (0 and 2 mM)

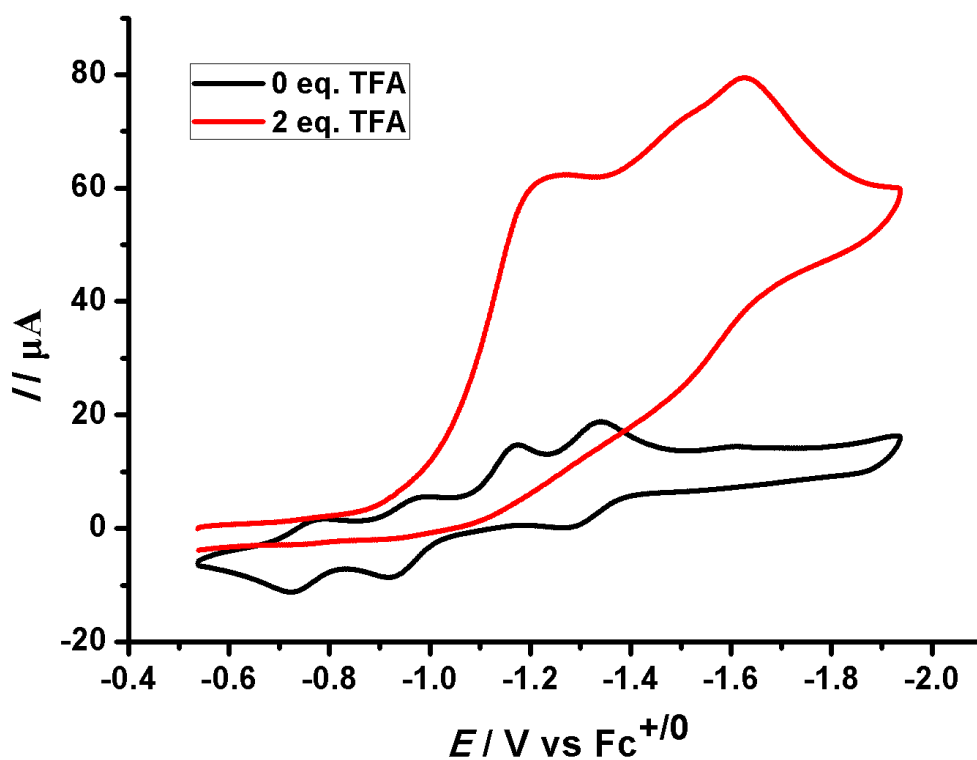


Figure S52. Cyclic voltammograms of 3[PF₆] (1 mM in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆ in MeCN under Ar, scan rate = 100 mV s⁻¹) with increments of TFA (0, 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 mM)

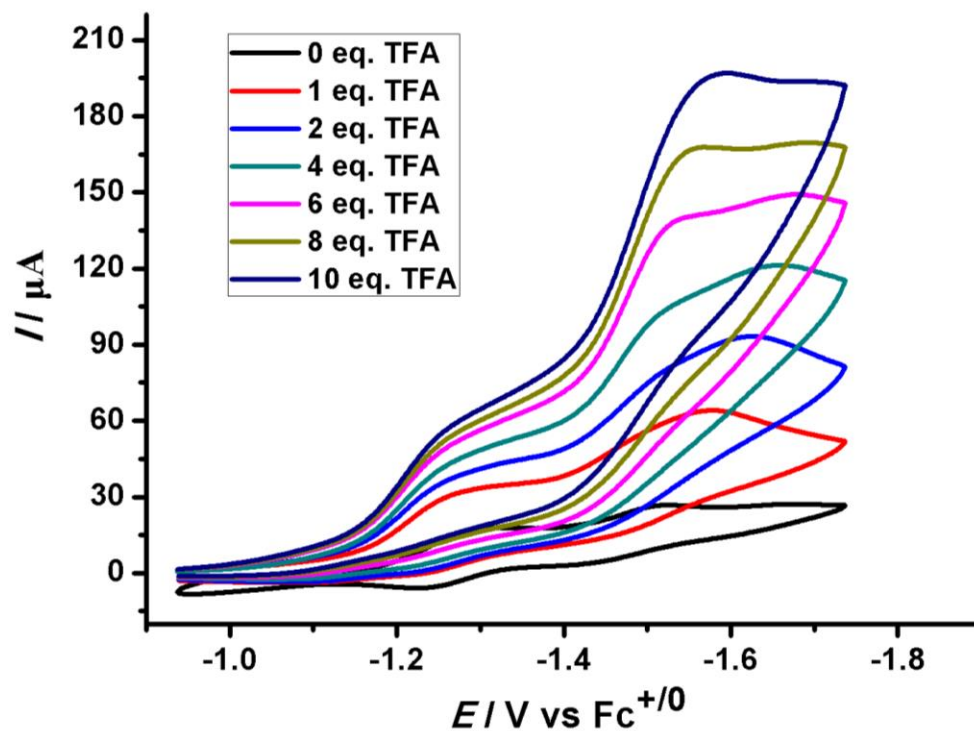


Figure S53. Corresponding plot of i_c/i_p for 1 mM 3[PF₆] on the concentration of TFA near to cathodic process at -1.3 V in MeCN

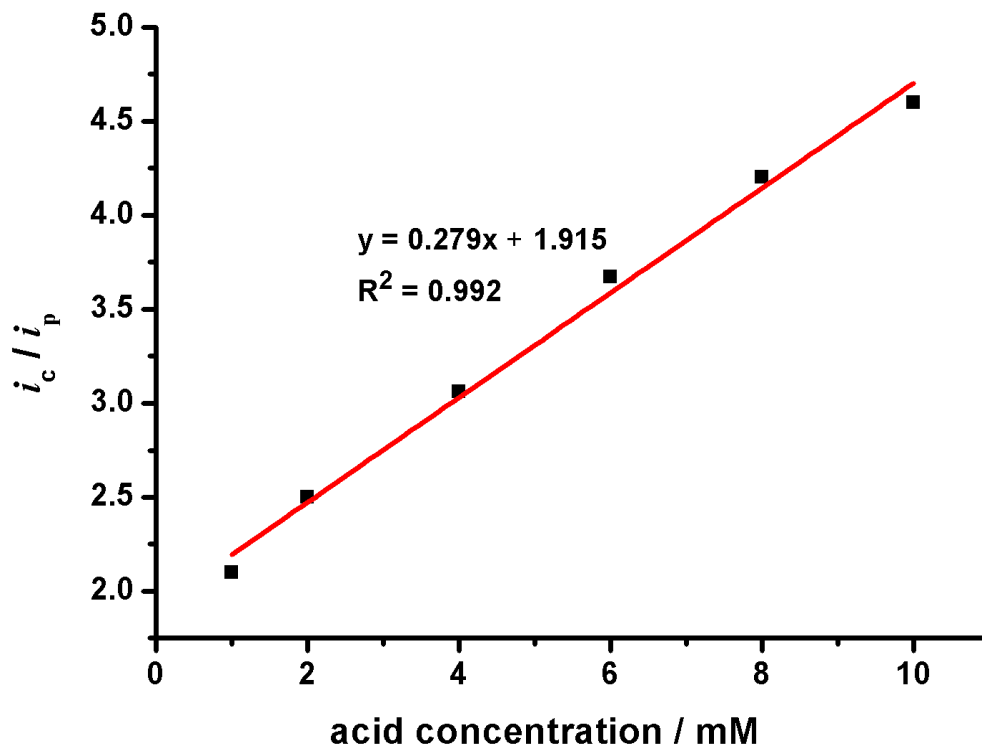


Figure S54. Cyclic voltammograms of **4[PF₆]** (1 mM in 0.1 M ⁿBu₄NPF₆ in MeCN under Ar, scan rate = 100 mV s⁻¹) with increments of TFA (0, 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 20, 30 and 40 mM)

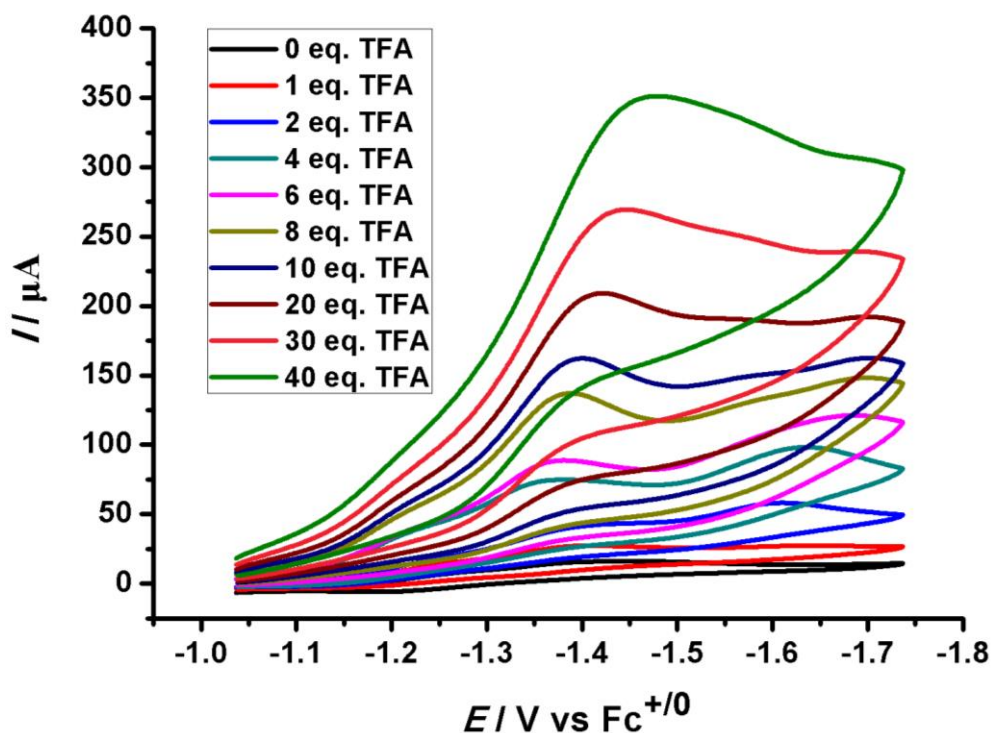


Figure S55. Corresponding plot of i_c/i_p for 1 mM **4[PF₆]** on the concentration of TFA near to cathodic process at -1.5 V in MeCN

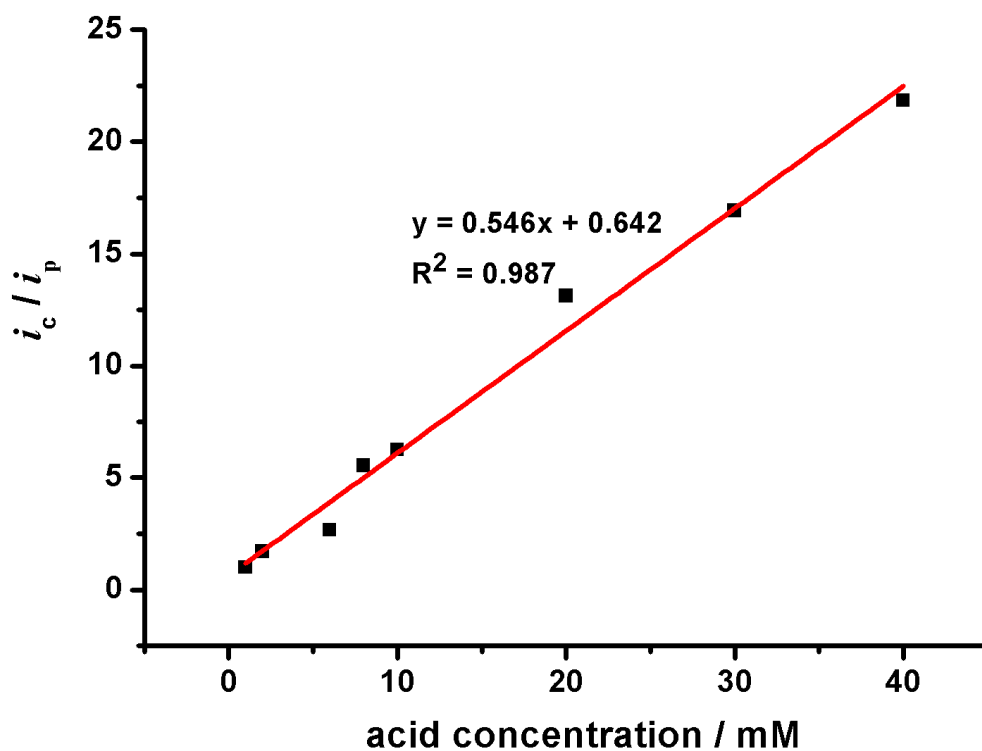


Figure S56. The cyclic voltammograms in 0.1 M $n\text{Bu}_4\text{NPF}_6/\text{MeCN}$ with a scan rate of 100 mV s^{-1}

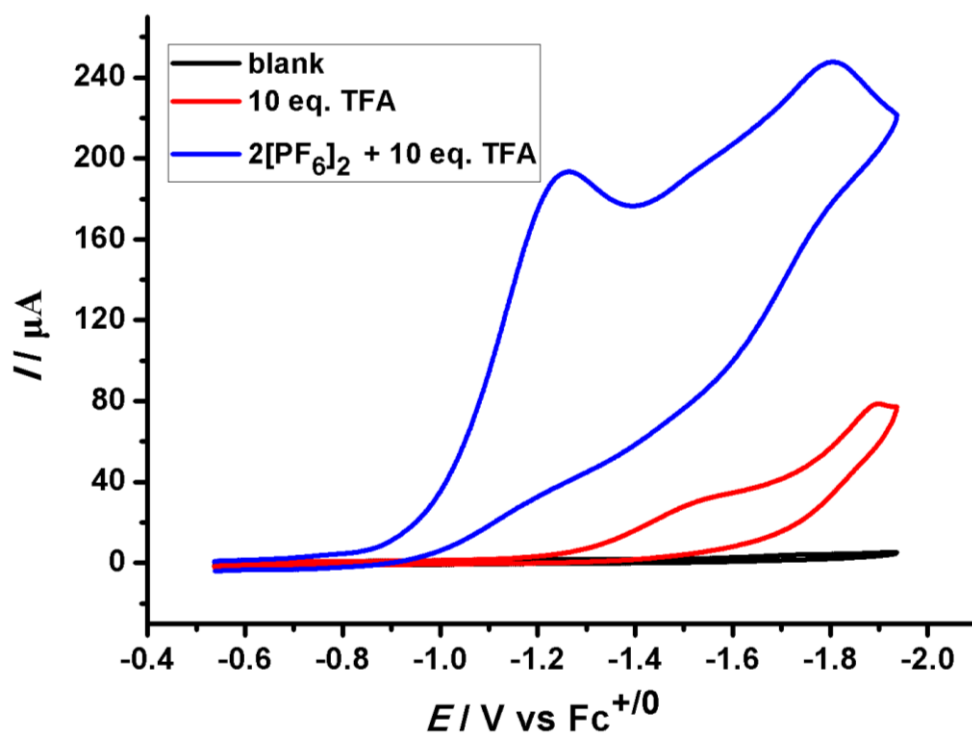


Figure S57. The i - t curve for bulk electrolysis of TFA (10 mM) in the presence of $1[\text{PF}_6]_2$ (1 mM) at -1.3 V

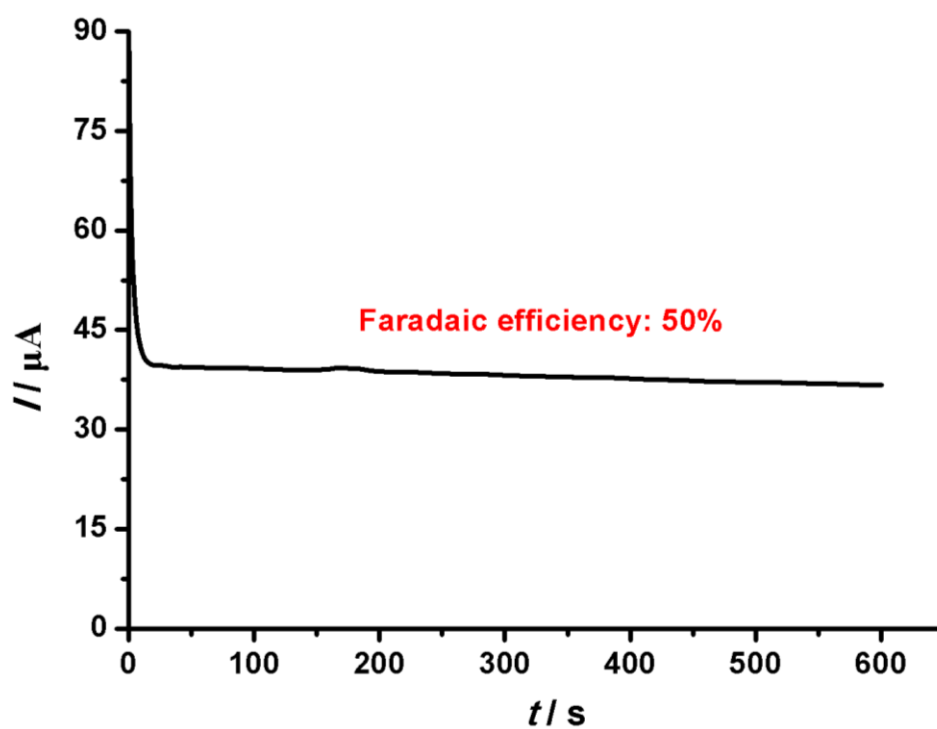


Figure S58. The i-t curve for bulk electrolysis of TFA (60 mM) in the presence of $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$ (1 mM) at -1.2 V

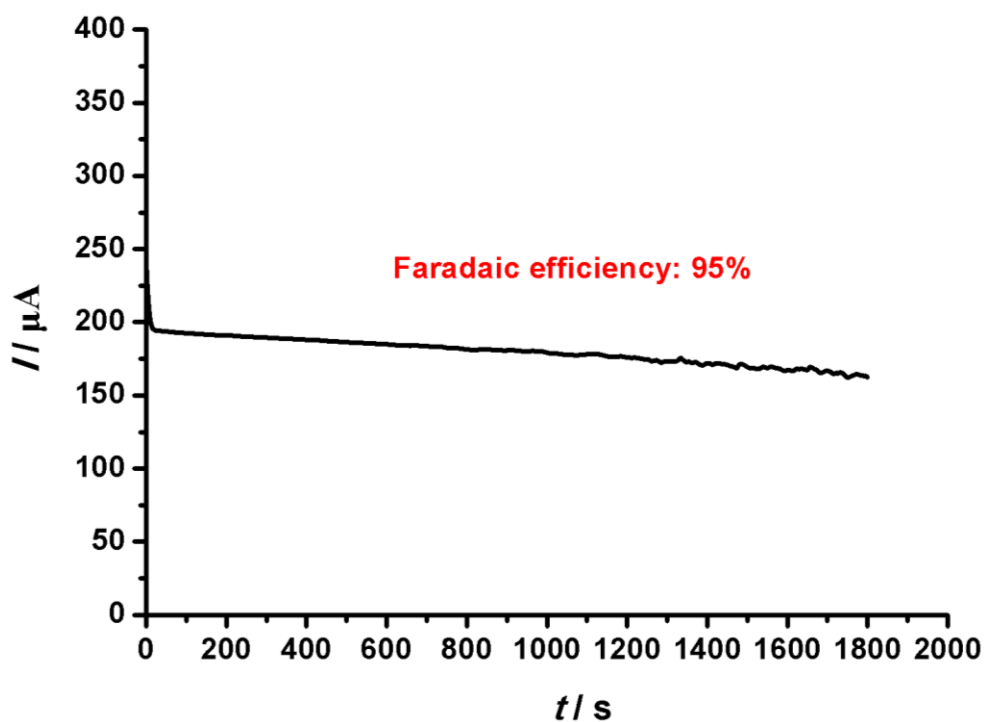


Figure S59. The i-t curve for bulk electrolysis of TFA (10 mM) in the presence of $3[\text{PF}_6]$ (1 mM) at -1.3 V

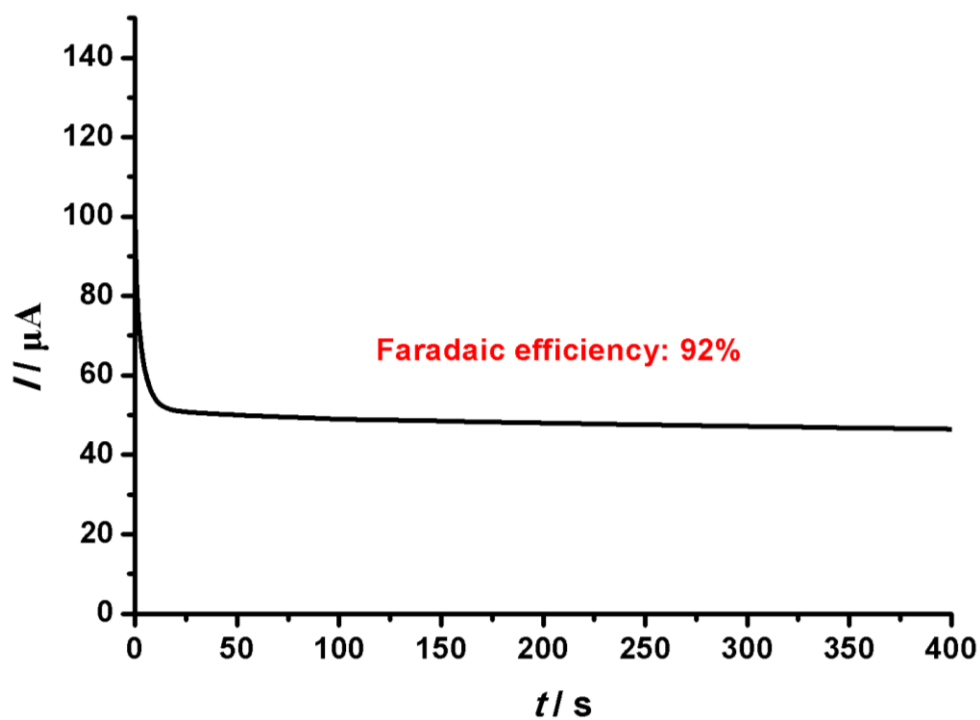


Figure S60. The i-t curve for bulk electrolysis of TFA (40 mM) in the presence of **4[PF₆]** (1 mM) at -1.3 V

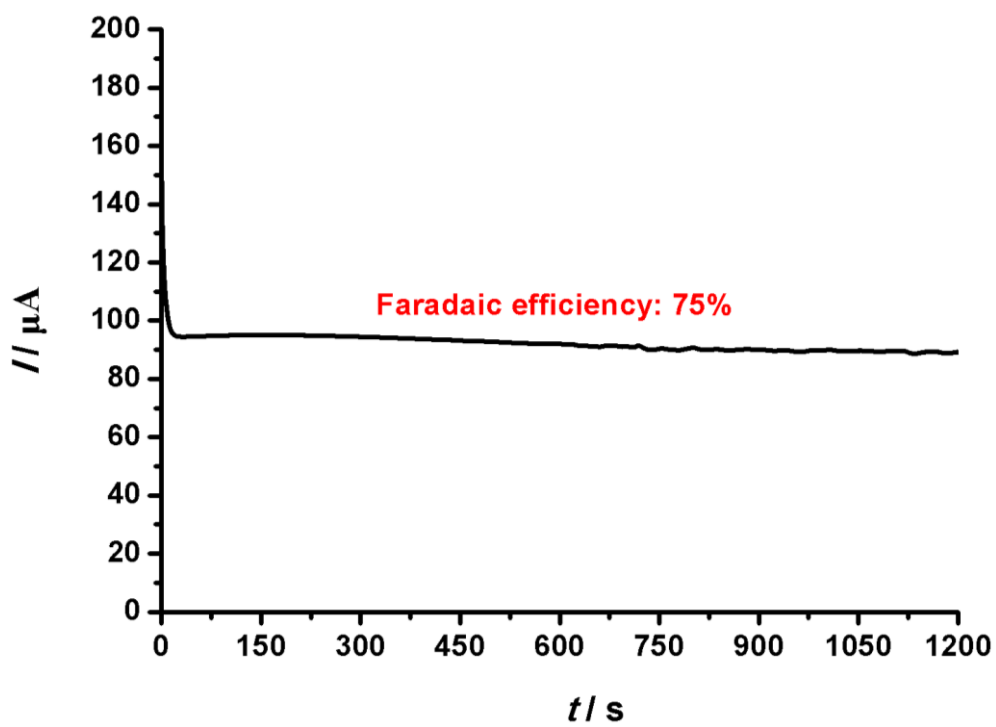
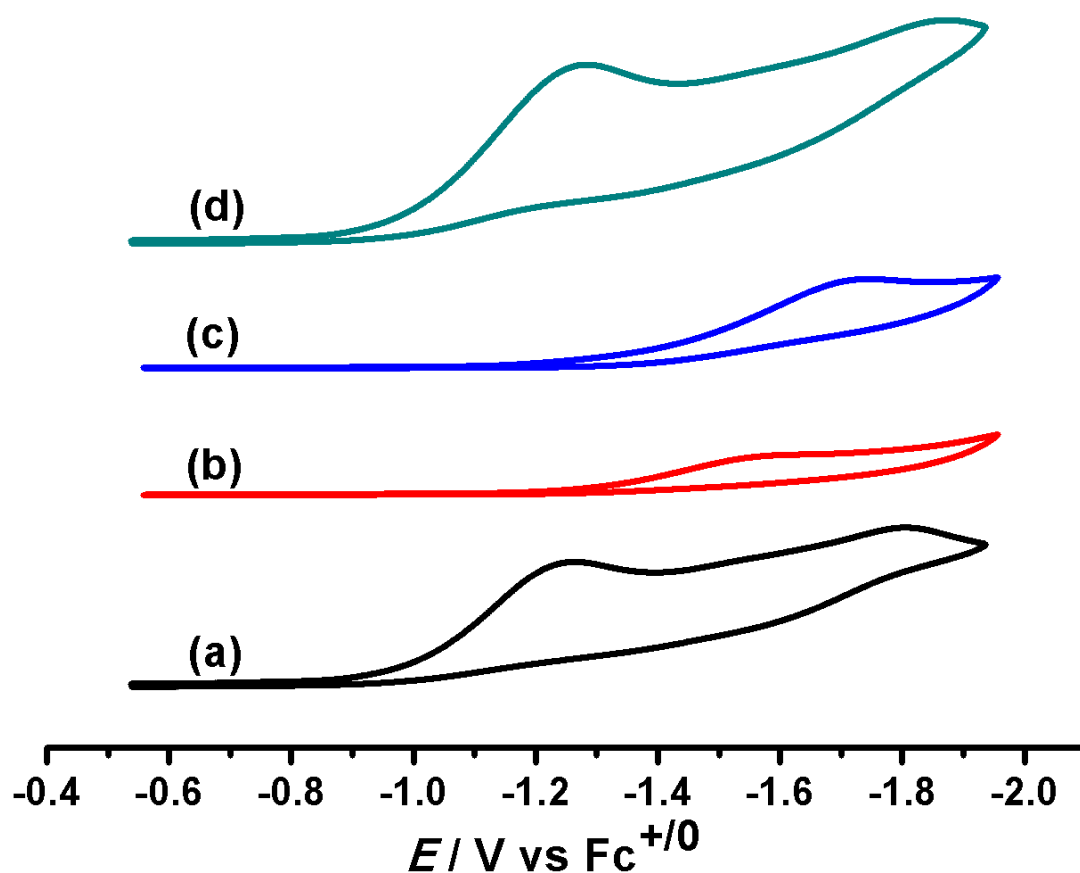


Figure S61. Cyclic voltammograms recorded for the rinse test experiments.

Detailed procedure: **1)** Conduct the CV scan of 1 mM of complex $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$ in a MeCN solution containing 0.1 M $n\text{Bu}_4\text{NPF}_6$ and 10 mM TFA; **2)** The solution was then discarded and the electrodes were rinsed several times with pure MeCN. The electrodes were then dipped into a fresh MeCN solution containing 0.1 M $n\text{Bu}_4\text{NPF}_6$ and 10 mM TFA in the absence of complex $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$; **3)** Another 10 mM of TFA was added into this solution to make up 20 mM of acid while retaining the same concentrations for 0.1 M $n\text{Bu}_4\text{NPF}_6$; **4)** 1 mM of complex $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$ was added into the solution.

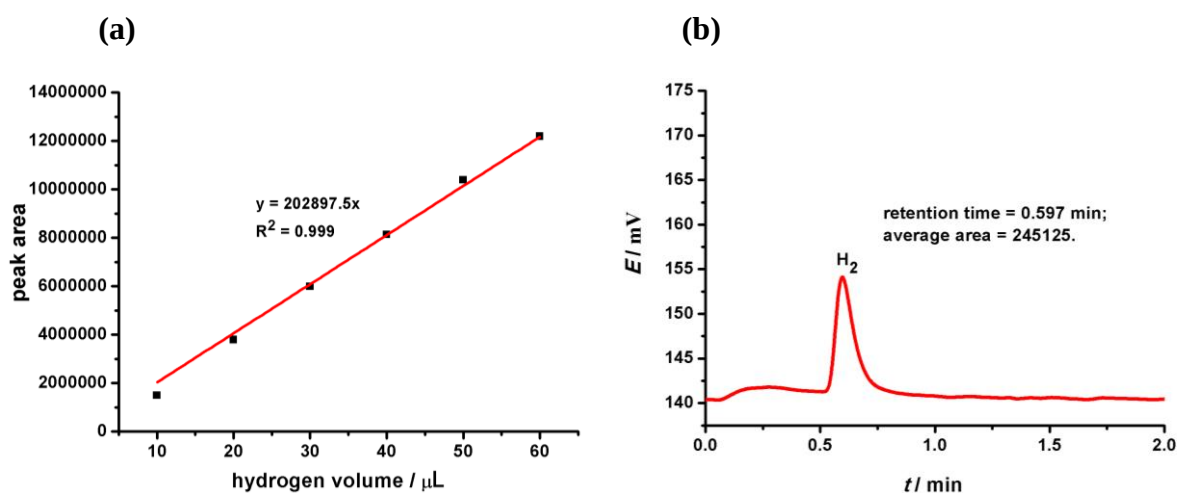


Curve (a): CV scan of 1 mM of complex $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$ in a MeCN solution containing 0.1 M $n\text{Bu}_4\text{NPF}_6$ and 10 mM TFA. **Curve (b):** CV scan of a fresh MeCN solution containing 0.1 M $n\text{Bu}_4\text{NPF}_6$ and 10 mM TFA in the absence of complex $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$. **Curve (c):** CV scan of the solution containing 20 mM of TFA in the absence of complex $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$. **Curve (d):** CV scan of the solution containing $2[\text{PF}_6]_2$ and 20 mM of TFA.

Determine the amount of H₂

Choose catalyst 2[PF₆]₂ as an example. Firstly, we constructed a standard curve based on the relationship between peak area and amount of hydrogen by gas chromatography (GC), as shown **Figure 62a**. After bulk electrolysis, 1 mL of gas sample was extracted from headspace (30 mL) of H-type electrolysis cell using gas-tight syringe and then injected into GC instrument. An obvious signal peak for hydrogen appeared at the retention time of 0.597 min (**Figure 62b**), which can be integrated to give the value of the peak area. Finally, this value was brought into the above standard curve of hydrogen to obtain the amount of hydrogen.

Figure S62. (a) Standard curve of hydrogen (b) GC plot of gas analysis of headspace



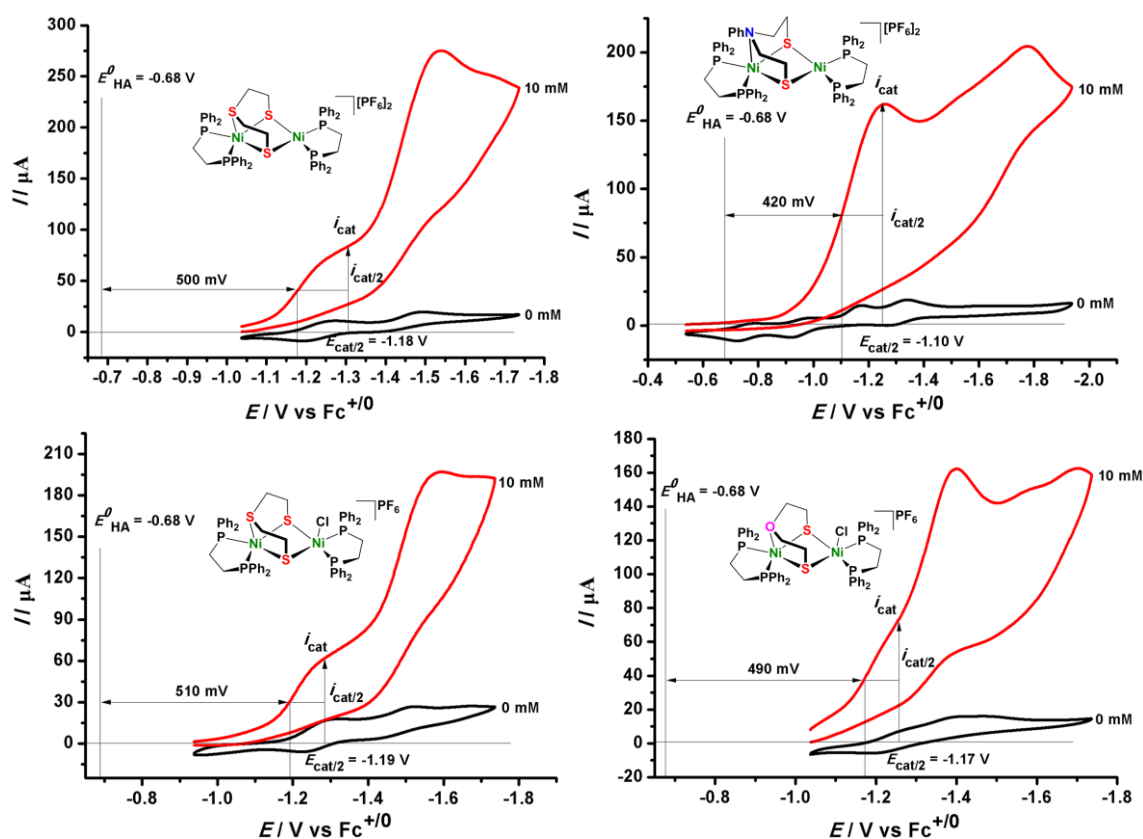
Overpotential determinations

For many acids, homoconjugation of acid/base pairs is a known problem, which significantly lowers the accuracy of calculating E^0_{HA} . TFA has a relatively large homoconjugation constant in MeCN.¹ E^0_{HA} has been accurately measured by Artero and coworkers by taking into account homoconjugation of the acid at various concentrations.² For 10 mM TFA, $E^0_{\text{HA}} = -0.68$ V versus $\text{Fc}^{+/0}$. Now that we can have determined a value for E^0_{HA} , we can calculate the overpotential for the reduction of H^+ to H_2 via eq. S1.

$$\text{Overpotential} = |E^0_{\text{HA}} - E_{\text{cat}/2}| \quad \text{eq. S1}$$

In the eq. S1, the catalytic potential is defined as the potential at half of the catalytic current ($E_{\text{cat}/2}$), as recommended by Appel and Helm.³

Figure S63. Determinations of the overpotential of complexes **1**[PF₆]₂, **2**[PF₆]₂, **3**[PF₆] and **4**[PF₆] for hydrogen evolution from TFA (10 mM) in MeCN.



References

- 1 K. Izutsu, *Acid-Base Dissociation Constants in Dipolar Aprotic Solvents*; Blackwell Scientific Publications: Oxford, Boston, 1990.
- 2 V. Fourmond, P.-A. Jacques, M. Fontecave and V. Artero, *Inorg. Chem.*, 2010, **49**, 10338-10347.
- 3 A. M. Appel and M. L. Helm, *ACS Catal.*, 2014, **4**, 630-633.