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Supplementary Information

Rh(III)-catalyzed synthesis of 1-aminoindole derivatives from 2-acetyl-1-arylhydrazines and diazo compounds in water

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1. General Informations: All the reactions were carried out under argon atmosphere using standard Schlenk technique. ¹H NMR (400 M Hz), ¹⁹F (376 M Hz), and ¹³C NMR (101 M Hz) were recorded on a Bruker AV400 NMR spectrometer with CDCl₃ or DMSO-d₆ as solvent. Chemical shifts of ¹H, ¹⁹F, and ¹³C NMR spectra are reported in parts per million (ppm). The residual solvent signals were used as references and the chemical shifts converted to the TMS scale (DMSO-d₆: δ H =2.50 ppm, δ C =39.52 ppm; CDCl₃: δ H = 7.26 ppm, δ C = 77.00 ppm). All coupling constants (J values) were reported in Hertz (Hz). Multiplicities are reported as follows: singlet (s), doublet (d), doublet of doublets (dd), doublet of doublets (ddd), doublet of triplets (dt), triplet (t), triplet of doublets (td), quartet (q), and multiplet (m). Column chromatography was performed on silica gel 200-300 mesh. Analytical thin-layer chromatography (TLC) was performed on pre-coated, glass-backed silica gel plates. Visualization of the developed chromatogram was performed by UV absorbance (254 nm). HRMS were done on Varian 7.0 T FTICR-mass spectrometer. [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ was prepared from RhCl₃·xH₂O following a literature procedure.^[1] [Cp*Rh(OAc)₂] was prepared from [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ following a literature procedure.^[2] Unless otherwise noted below, all other compounds have been reported in the literature or are commercially available from Alfa Aesar China (Beijing) Chemical Co., Ltd. without any further purification.

2. General Procedure: Preparation of 2-acetyl-1-arylhydrazines and diazo compounds Substrates

The 2-acetyl-1-arylhydrazines substrates **1a-1d**, **1f-1j**, **1n-1o**, and **1r-1s** were prepared following the same procedure described by F. Glorius et al.^[3] **1e** was synthesized following the known procedure.^[4] **1k-1m**, **1p-1q**, and **1t-1v** were prepared according to the following procedure:

The corresponding arylhydrazine hydrochloride salt (13 mmol) was dissolved in 1N NaOH (25 mL) and THF (7 mL), then acetic anhydride (1.3 g, 13 mmol) was added dropwise. After stirring for 1 h, EtOAc (25 mL) was added, and the organic layer was separated. The aqueous layer was extracted with EtOAc (3×25 mL). The combined extracts were dried over anhydrous MgSO₄. After removal of solvents under reduced pressure, the resulting solid was washed with diethyl ether (20 mL), and purified by short column chromatography on silica

gel (using eluent : EtOAc / Petroleum ether =1/1 (v/v)).

Diazo compounds 2a, 2b, 2d, 2h, 2i;^[5] 2c, 2f;^[6] 2e;^[7] 2g, 2j^[8] were all reported previously.

N'-(naphthalen-1-yl) acetohydrazide (1k)

Following the general procedure, this compound was isolated as a grey solid (1.56 g, 60% yield). NMR showed the compounds to be a mixture of two rotamers (ratio: approx 1/0.14). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 9.80 and 9.13 (2×bs, 1H), 8.62 and 8.22 (2×bs, 1H), 8.18-8.20 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.80-7.82 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.44-7.47 (t, 2H), 7.28-7.32 (t, 2H), 6.69-6.71 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 1H), 1.99 and 1.89 (2×s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 169.0, 144.1, 133.8, 127.9, 136.3, 125.7, 124.4, 122.0, 121.7, 118.2, 104.9, 20.7. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3243, 3044, 1653, 1624, 1521, 1400, 1373, 795, 767, 668. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₂H₁₃N₂O [M+H]⁺: 201.1028, Found: 201.1023. Mp: 139-141 °C.

N'-(naphthalen-2-yl) acetohydrazide (11)



Following the general procedure, this compound was isolated as an off-white solid (1.60 g, 61% yield). NMR showed the compounds to be a mixture of two rotamers (ratio: approx 1/0.16). ¹H NMR (400 MHz,

DMSO-d₆): δ 9.75 (bs, 1H), 7.98 (bs, 1H), 7.63-7.70 (m, 4H), 6.92-7.35 (m, 5H), 1.964 and 1.904 (2×s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 169.0, 147.1, 134.3, 128.4, 127.8, 127.5, 126.1, 125.8, 122.1, 116.1 104.5, 20.7. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3295, 3046, 1673, 1632, 1522, 1369, 1218, 811, 746, 599. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₂H₁₃N₂O [M+H]⁺: 201.1028, Found: 201.1026. Mp: 169-171 °C.

N'-(o-tolyl) acetohydrazide (1m)

Following the general procedure, this compound was isolated as a yellow
 NHAC
 solid (1.40 g, 66% yield). NMR showed the compounds to be a mixture of two rotamers (ratio: approx 1/0.15). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ

9.62-9.63 (d, J = 2.1 Hz, 1H), 6.98-7.02 (q, 3H), 6.61-6.66 (m, 2H), 2.13 (2×s, 3H), 1.91 (2×s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 168.9, 146.7, 129.9, 126.3, 121.6, 118.4, 110.8, 20.6, 17.2. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3229, 3020, 1688, 1652, 1500, 1251, 752, 623. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₉H₁₃N₂O [M+H]⁺: 165.1028, Found: 165.1019. Mp: 98-100 °C.

N'-(3-bromophenyl) acetohydrazide (1p)



Following the general procedure, this compound was isolated as a white
 solid (2.37 g, 80% yield). NMR showed the compounds to be a mixture of two rotamers (ratio: approx 10/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ

9.70 (bs, 1H), 7.97 (bs, 1H), 7.05-7.09 (t, 1H), 6.82-6.84 (d, 2H), 6.67-6.69 (d, 1H), 1.90 and 1.85 (2×s, 3H).¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 169.1, 151.1, 130.6, 122.0, 120.6, 114.1, 111.0, 20.6. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3294, 3010, 1653, 1593, 1501, 1471, 1247, 860, 771, 677, 572. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₈H₁₀BrN₂O [M+H]⁺: 228.9977, Found: 228.9973. Mp: 138-140 °C.

N'-(3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl) acetohydrazide (1q)



Following the general procedure, this compound was isolated as a white solid (1.7 g, 60% yield). NMR showed the compounds to be a mixture of two rotamers (ratio: approx 10/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz,

DMSO-d₆): δ 9.76 (bs, 1H), 8.15 (bs, 1H), 7.33-7.37 (t, 1H), 6.94-7.01 (m, 3H), 1.92 and 1.86 (2×s, 3H).¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 169.2, 150.0, 129.8, 115.5, 114.4, 114.3, 107.7, 107.7, 20.5. ¹⁹F NMR (DMSO-d₆, 376 MHz): δ -61.38 (s). IR (cm⁻¹): v 3305, 3029, 1655, 1616, 1344, 1123, 1068, 791, 677. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₉H₁₀F₃N₂O [M+H]⁺: 219.0745, Found: 219.0742. Mp: 134-136 °C.

N'-(3-chloro-4-methylphenyl) acetohydrazide (1t)



Following the general procedure, this compound was isolated as a white solid (1.8 g, 70% yield). NMR showed the compounds to be a mixture of two rotamers (ratio: approx 9/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz,

DMSO-d₆): δ 9.64 (bs, 1H), 7.78 (bs, 1H), 7.06-7.08 (d, 1H), 6.70 (s, 1H), 6.58-6.60 (d, 1H), 2.18(s, 3H), 1.90 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ169.1, 148.9, 133.3, 131.2, 124.3, 111.99, 111.2, 20.6, 18.5. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3302, 3054, 3027, 1643, 1503, 1368, 1291, 1039, 811,

696. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₉H₁₂ClN₂O [M+H] ⁺: 199.0638, Found: 199.0631. Mp: 125-127 °C.

Following the general procedure, this compound was isolated as a white

solid (1.61 g, 80% yield). NMR showed the compounds to be a mixture

N'-(3-chloro-4-fluorophenyl) acetohydrazide (1u)



F' \checkmark of two rotamers (ratio: approx 10/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 9.71 (bs, 1H), 7.90 (bs, 1H), 7.15-7.20 (t, 1H), 6.78-6.79 (t, 1H), 6.66-6.68 (m, 1H), 1.91 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ169.2, 150.5 (d, *J*_{C-F} = 235.9 Hz), 146.8, 119.3 (d, *J*_{C-F} = 90.5 Hz), 116.8 (d, *J*_{C-F} = 21.8 Hz), 112.7, 112.0 (d, *J*_{C-F} = 6.6 Hz), 20.5. ¹⁹F NMR (DMSO-d₆, 376 MHz): δ -130.68 (s). IR (cm⁻¹): v 3294, 3011, 1645, 1602, 1496, 1373, 1214, 1050, 858. 707. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₈H₉CIFN₂O [M+H]⁺: 203.0387, Found: 203.0379. Mp: 140-142 °C.

N', N'-diphenylacetohydrazide (1v)

Ph Following the general procedure, this compound was isolated as a white solid (1.13 g, 49% yield). NMR showed the compounds to be a mixture of two rotamers (ratio: approx 6/1). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 10.55
 (bs, 1H), 7.26-7.37 (m, 4H), 7.06-7.11 (t, 5H), 6.95-6.99 (t, 2H), 1.94 and 1.90 (2×s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ174.5, 168.7, 146.2, 145.8, 129.3, 129.0, 122.9, 122.0, 119.0, 118.6, 20.5, 19.5. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3269, 3034, 1671, 1526, 1495, 1367, 746, 698, 691, 628. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₈H₉ClFN₂O [M+H]⁺: 227.1184, Found: 227.1179. Mp: 192-194 °C.

3. Experimental Procedure and Characterization of products

3.1 General Procedure: Rh(III)-catalyzed cyclization of 2-acetyl-1-arylhydrazine with diazo compounds.

A mixture of 2-acetyl-1-arylhydrazine 1 (0.6 mmol, 1.2 equiv), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (7.725 mg, 0.0125 mmol, 2.5 mol%) and CsOAc (24 mg, 0.125 mmol, 25 mol%) were weighted in a sealed tube equip with a stir bar. Water (3 mL), HOAc (15 mg, 0.25 mmol, 50 mol%) and diazo compounds 2 (0.5 mmol, 1 equiv) were added successively. The mixture were sealed

and stirred at 100 °C for 1 h under Ar. Afterwards, it was cooled to room temperature, water was filtered off under reduced pressure and the solid residue was washed with water thoroughly and dried. It is generally enough pure for the white solid. If the products contain some colours, they can be further purified by a short column chromatography on silica gel using EtOAc/petroleum ether = 1/1 as eluent to afford the desired pure products.

3.2 General procedure for the gram scale preparation of ethyl 1-acetamido-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3aa)

A mixture of 2-acetyl-1-phenylhydrazine **1a** (901.08 mg, 6 mmol, 1.2 equiv), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (77.25 mg, 0.125 mmol, 2.5 mol%) and CsOAc (240 mg, 1.25 mmol, 25 mol%) were weighted in a 100 mL sealed tube equip with a stir bar. Water (30 mL), HOAc (150 mg, 2.5 mmol, 50 mol%) and ethyl diazoacetoacetate **2a** (780 mg, 5 mmol, 1 equiv) were added successively. The mixture were sealed and stirred at 100 °C for 1 h under Ar. Afterwards, it was cooled to room temperature, water was filtered off under reduced pressure and the solid residue was washed with water thoroughly, dried to afford the spectroscopically pure product **3aa** 1.16g (89% yield).

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3aa)



Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (118 mg, 91% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.27 (s, 1H), 7.98-8.00 (m, 1H), 7.28-7.30 (q, 1H), 7.20-7.23 (m, 2H), 4.28-4.34 (q, 2H),
 CO₂Et 2.52 (s, 3H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 1.34-1.38 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz):

δ 169.1, 164.6, 145.2, 135.2, 123.8, 122.4, 122.0, 120.5, 109.1, 101.8, 59.1, 20.4, 14.36, 10.7. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3252, 2989, 1701, 1672, 1556, 1408, 1214, 1166, 733, 550. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₄H₁₇N₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 261.1239, Found: 261.1239. Mp: 177-179 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-5-fluoro-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ba)

Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (125 mg, 90% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ

11.31 (s, 1H), 7.65-7.68 (d, J = 9.8 Hz, 1H), 7.31-7.34 (q, 1H), 7..5-7.10 (t, 1H), 4.29-4.34 (q, 2H), 2.52 (s, 3H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 1.34-1.37 (t, 3H), ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.2, 164.3, 158.7 (d, $J_{C-F} = 234.4$ Hz), 146.9, 131.8, 124.5 (d, $J_{C-F} = 11.0$ Hz), 110.6 (d, $J_{C-F} = 3.4$ Hz), 110.4 (d, $J_{C-F} = 12.4$ Hz), 105.7 (d, $J_{C-F} = 25.4$ Hz), 102.0 (d, $J_{C-F} = 3.6$ Hz), 59.3, 20.4, 14.3, 10.9. ¹⁹F NMR (DMSO-d₆, 376 MHz): δ -121.33 (s). IR (cm⁻¹): v 3255, 2991, 1701, 1672, 1550, 1476, 1257, 1167, 864, 781. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₄H₁₆FN₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 279.1145, Found: 279.1145. Mp: 198-200 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-5-bromo-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ca)

Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a beige solid (137 mg, 81% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.34 (s, 1H), 8.11 (s, 1H), 7.36-7.38 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 7.29-7.32 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 4.30-4.35 (q, 2H), 2.52 (s, 3H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 1.34-1.38 (t, 3H), ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.2, 164.2, 146.6, 134.1, 125.6, 125.1, 122.7, 114.8, 111.4, 101.5, 59.4, 20.4, 14.4, 10.8. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3190, 3012, 1701, 1691, 1683, 1539, 1456, 1269, 1176, 800, 782. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₄H₁₆BrN₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 339.0344, Found: 339.0344. Mp: 203-205 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-5-chloro-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3da)



Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (122 mg, 82% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.34 (s, 1H), 7.96 (s, 1H), 7.36-7.40 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 7.24-7.26 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 4.30-4.35 (q, 2H), 2.52 (s, 3H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 1.34-1.37 (t,

3H), ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.2, 164.2, 146.8, 133.9, 126.7, 124.9, 122.5, 119.7, 110.9, 101.6, 59.4, 20.4, 14.4, 10.8. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3235, 2991, 1696, 1671, 1565, 1329, 1110, 904, 807, 689. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₄H₁₆ClN₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 295.0849, Found: 295.0847. Mp: 185-187 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2-methyl-5-(trifluoromethyl)-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ea)



Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a yellow solid (125 mg, 76% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.45 (s, 1H), 8.32 (s, 1H), 7.54 (s, 2H), 4.32-4.37 (q, 2H), 2.56 (s, 3H), 2.18 (s, 3H), 1.35-1.38 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ

169.2, 164.1, 147.6, 137.0, 126.4, 123.3 (q, J_{C-F} = 92.3 Hz), 119.2, 117.7, 117.7, 110.3, 102.6, 59.6, 20.4, 14.2, 10.8. ¹⁹F NMR (DMSO-d₆, 376 MHz): δ -59.09 (s). IR (cm⁻¹): v 3193, 3018, 2978, 2935, 1565, 1691, 1540, 1457, 1270, 804. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₅H₁₆F₃N₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 329.1113, Found: 329.1112. Mp: 165-167 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-5-methoxy-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3fa)



2.15 (s, 3H), 1.35-1.39 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.1, 164.7, 155.5, 145.3, 130.2, 124.7, 111.6, 109.9, 103.0, 101.5, 59.1, 55.3, 20.4, 14.4, 10.9. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3260, 2981, 1695, 1670, 1478, 1202, 1171, 669. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₅H₁₉N₂O₄ [M+H]⁺: 291.1345, Found: 291.1344. Mp: 200-202 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2,5-dimethyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ga)



Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (114 mg, 83% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.22 (s, 1H), 7.79 (s, 1H), 7.16-7.18 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.02-7.04 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 4.28-4.33 (q, 2H), 2.41 (s, 3H), 2.15 (s, 3H), 1.34-1.38 (t, 3H).

¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.1, 164.7, 145.1, 133.6, 130.81, 124.1, 123.8, 120.4, 108.8, 101.4, 59.1, 21.3, 20.4, 14.4, 10.8. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3231, 2980, 1691, 1651, 1541, 1466, 1411, 1375, 1267, 1063, 801, 783. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{15}H_{19}N_2O_3$ [M+H]⁺: 275.1396, Found: 275.1396. Mp: 168-170 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2-methyl-5-(trifluoromethoxy)-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ha)

Following the general procedure, prolong reaction time to 2h, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (151 mg, 87% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.38 (s, 1H), 7.90 (s, 1H), 7.42-7.44 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.21-7.23 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 1H), 4.30-4.35 (q, 2H), 2.54 (s, 3H), 2.18 (s, 3H), 1.34-1.38 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101MHz): δ 169.2, 164.1,

147.3, 144.0, 133.7, 124.2, 120.3 ($J_{C-F} = 254.7$ Hz), 116.1, 112.6, 110.7, 102.2, 59.5, 20.4, 14.2, 10.9. ¹⁹F NMR (DMSO-d₆, 376 MHz): δ -56.98 (s). IR (cm⁻¹): v 3245, 2982, 1705, 1674, 1559, 1470, 1372, 1261, 1174, 1154, 789. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₅H₁₆F₃N₂O₄ [M+H]⁺: 345.1062, Found: 345.1063. Mp: 155-157 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-5-cyano-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ia)



3H), ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.2, 163.9, 148.0, 137.2, 125.8, 125.4, 123.6, 120.0, 110.8, 104.5, 102.5, 59.7, 20.4, 14.3, 10.8. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3290, 2987, 2224, 1696, 1458, 1247, 1173, 1128, 817, 668. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₅H₁₆N₃O₃ [M+H]⁺: 286.1192, Found: 286.1192. Mp: 182-184 °C.

3-ethyl 5-methyl 1-acetamido-2-methyl-1H-indole-3,5-dicarboxylate (3ja)



Following the general procedure, the solid residue was purified by a short column chromatography using EtOAc/petroleum ether = $1/10 \sim 1/1$ (v/v) as eluent. The titled compound was isolated as a white solid (140 mg, 88% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.41

(s, 1H), 8.70 (s, 1H), 7.84-7.86 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.41-7.43 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 4.32-4.37 (q, 2H), 2.54 (s, 3H), 2.18 (s, 3H), 1.36-1.39 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.2, 166.8, 164.2, 147.1, 137.9, 123.6, 123.5, 122.7, 109.4, 102.9, 59.5, 51.9, 20.4, 14.3, 10.9.

(One signal missing due to overlap). IR (cm⁻¹): v 3242, 2986, 1716, 1696, 1677, 1556, 1433, 1170, 765. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{16}H_{19}N_2O_5 [M+H]^+$: 319.1294, Found: 319.1295. Mp: 186-188 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2-methyl-1H-benzo[g]indole-3-carboxylate (3ka)

Following the general procedure, prolong reaction time to 12h, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (17 mg, 11% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.86 (s, 1H), 8.49-8.51 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 1H), CO₂Et 8.20-8.22 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 1H), 7.99-8.01 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.69-7.71 (d,

 $J = 8.8 \text{ Hz}, 1\text{H}, 7.57-7.60 \text{ (t, 1h)}, 7.46-7.50 \text{ (t, 1H)}, 4.33-4.39 \text{ (q, 2H)}, 2.58 \text{ (s, 3H)}, 2.29 \text{ (s, 3H)}, 1.38-1.41 \text{ (t, 3H)}. {}^{13}\text{C} \text{ NMR} \text{ (DMSO-d_6, 101 MHz)}: \delta 169.1, 164.7, 143.7, 130.6, 128.8, 127.9, 126.1, 124.2, 122.8, 121.0, 120.9, 120.0, 119.6, 103.4, 59.4, 20.6, 14.4, 10.7. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3249, 2976, 1701, 1668, 1553, 1521, 1403, 8110, 745. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for <math>C_{18}H_{19}N_2O_3$ [M+H]⁺: 311.1396 , Found: 311.1392 . Mp: 196-198 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2-methyl-1H-benzo[f]indole-3-carboxylate (3la)



Following the general procedure, the solid residue was purified by a short column chromatography using EtOAc/petroleum ether = 1/10 to 1/1 (v/v) as eluent. The titled compound was isolated as a white solid (121 mg, 78% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.37 (s, 1H),

8.53 (s, 1H), 7.98-8.04 (q, 2H), 7.81 (s, 1H), 7.38-7.46 (m, 2H), 4.36-4.41 (q, 2H), 2.62 (s, 3H), 2.22 (s, 3H), 1.40-1.44 (t, 3H), ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.3, 164.6, 150.4, 135.8, 129.8, 128.2, 127.3, 124.8, 124.4, 123.6, 118.3, 104.7, 101.0, 59.3, 20.53, 14.5, 11.3. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3246, 2980, 1694, 16718, 1566, 1262, 1174, 1124, 737. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₈H₁₉N₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 311.1396, Found: 311.1395. Mp: 179-181 °C.

S10

Ethyl 1-acetamido-7-fluoro-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3na)

Following the general procedure, prolong reaction time to 2 h, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (115 mg, 83% yield). ¹H NMR

(DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.46 (s, 1H), 7.81-7.83 (s, 1H), 7.13-7.18 (m, 1H), 7.00-7.05 (q, 1H), 4.29-4.34 (q, 2H), 2.51 (s, 3H), 2.11 (s, 3H), 1.34-1.37 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.4, 164.3, 148.2 (d, $J_{C-F} = 244.0$ Hz), 146.6, 127.7, 122.8 (d, $J_{C-F} = 8.5$ Hz), 122.3 (d, $J_{C-F} = 6.5$ Hz), 116.8 (d, $J_{C-F} = 3.4$ Hz), 108.6 (d, $J_{C-F} = 16.8$ Hz), 102.8, 59.4, 20.2, 14.3, 10.5. ¹⁹F NMR (DMSO-d₆, 376 MHz): δ -140.30 (s) IR (cm⁻¹): v 3252, 2988, 1703, 1672, 1582, 1258, 1244, 1194, 790, 725, 553. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₄H₁₆FN₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 279.1145, Found: 279.1138. Mp: 183-185 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2,6-dimethyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (30a)



Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (114 mg, 83% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.21 (s, 1H), 7.84-7.86 (d, *J* = 7.8Hz, 1H), 7.08 (s, 1H), 7.02-7.04 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 4.27-4.32 (q, 2H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 1.33-1.37 (t, 3H). ¹³C

NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.1, 164.7, 144.6, 135.6, 131.9, 123.6, 121.7, 120.3, 108.9, 101.7, 59.1, 21.2, 20.4, 14.4, 10.7. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3247, 2990, 2912, 1704, 1674, 1557, 1406, 1192, 1130, 807, 553. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₅H₁₉N₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 275.1396, Found: 275.1393. Mp: 152-154 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-6-bromo-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3pa)



Following the general procedure, the solid residue was purified by a short column chromatography using EtOAc/petroleum ether = $1/10 \sim 1/1$ (v/v) as eluent. The titled compound was isolated as a beige solid (144

^{CO₂Et} mg, 85% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.29 (s, 1H), 7.9-7.92 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.57 (s, 1H), 7.35-7.37 (dd, J = 1.6 Hz, 1.7 Hz, 1H), 4.28-4.34 (q, 2H), 2.51 (s, 3H), 2.17 (s, 3H), 1.33-1.37 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.3, 164.3, 146.2, 136.2, 125.0, 122.9, 122.3, 115.3, 112.04, 102.1, 59.4, 20.5, 14.4, 10.8. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3244, 2929, 1701, 1672, 1554, 1466, 1261, 809, 564. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₄H₁₆BrN₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 339.0344, Found: 339.0343. Mp: 213-215 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2-methyl-6-(trifluoromethyl)-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3qa)



Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a yellow solid (121 mg, 74% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.41 (s, 1H), 8.17-8.19 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.71 (s, 1H), 7.53-7.55 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 4.31-4.37 (q, 2H), 2.56 (s, 3H), 2.19 (s, 3H), 1.35-1.39

(t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.4, 164.1, 148.4, 134.5, 126.6, 123.1 (q, J_{C-F} = 90.9 Hz), 121.4, 118.5, 106.7, 106.7, 102.3, 59.5, 20.5, 14.3, 10.9. ¹⁹F NMR (DMSO-d₆, 376 MHz): δ -59.06 (s). IR (cm⁻¹): v 3246, 2989, 1704, 1676, 1557, 1334, 1540, 1152, 1104, 825. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₅H₁₆F₃N₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 329.1113, Found: 329.1114. Mp: 220-222 ^oC.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-5,6-dichloro-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ra)

Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (149 mg, 90% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.36 (s, 1H), 8.10 (s, 1H), 7.73 (s, 1H), 4.30-4.35 (q, 2H), 2.52 (s, 3H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 1.34-1.37 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.8, 164.4, 148.2, 134.9, 125.8, 125.3, 124.1, 121.9, 111.8, 102.2, 60.1, 20.0, 14.8, 11.4. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3229, 2982, 2910, 1704, 1672, 1552, 1457, 1171, 1062, 878, 632. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₄H₁₅Cl₂N₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 329.0460, Found: 329.0456. Mp: 229-231 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2,5,6-trimethyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3sa)



Following the general procedure, prolong reaction time to 2h, the solid residue was purified by a short column chromatography using EtOAc/petroleum ether = $1/2 \sim 1/1$ (v/v) as eluent. The titled compound was obtained as a white solid (104 mg, 72% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆,

400 MHz): δ 11.20 (s, 1H), 7.76 (s, 1H), 7.07 (s, 1H), 4.29-4.34 (q, 2H), 2.53 (s, 3H), 2.33 (s, 6H), 2.17 (s, 3H), 1.36-1.39 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.1, 164.8, 144.1, 134.1, 131.1, 130.2, 122.1, 120.8, 109.3, 101.3, 59.0, 20.4, 19.9, 19.9, 14.4, 11.7. IR (cm⁻¹): v

3246, 2979, 2938, 1696, 1674, 1556, 1189, 1126, 579. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₆H₂₁N₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 289.1152, Found: 289.1151. Mp: 167-169 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-6-chloro-2,5-dimethyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ta)



MHz): δ 169.2, 164.3, 146.1, 134.4, 128.7, 128.2, 123.0, 109.4, 101.6, 59.3, 20.5, 20.1, 19.9, 14.4, 10.8. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3247, 2990, 2912, 1704, 1674, 1557, 1406, 1192, 1130, 807, 553. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₅H₁₈ClN₂O₃ [M+H] ⁺:309.1006, Found: 309.1004. Mp: 226-228 ^oC.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-4-chloro-5-fluoro-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ua)

Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (115 mg, 73% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.33 (s, 1H), 7.80-7.83 (d, *J* = 10.1 Hz, 1H), 7.65-7.66 (d, *J* = 6.3 Hz, 1H), 4.29-4.34 (q, 2H), 2.51 (s, 3H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 1.34-1.37 (t, 3H).¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.3, 164.0, 154.7, 152.4, 147.6, 131.8, 123.0 (d, *J*_{C-F} = 25.2 Hz), 114.9 (d, *J*_{C-F} = 21.1 Hz), 107.1 (d, *J*_{C-F} = 25.2 Hz), 102.1, 59.5, 20.5, 14.3, 10.9. ¹⁹F NMR (DMSO-d₆, 376 MHz): δ -124.21 (s). IR (cm⁻¹): v 3250, 2991, 1704, 1672, 1550, 1474, 1411, 1177, 864, 781, 555. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₄H₁₅ClFN₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 313.0755, Found: 313.0756. Mp: 179-181 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2-phenyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ab)



Following the general procedure, the solid residue was purified by a short column chromatography using EtOAc/petroleum ether = $1/5 \sim 1/1$ (v/v) as eluent. The titled compound was isolated as a white solid (114 mg, 71% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.22 (s, 1H), 8.11-8.13 (q, 1H),

7.42-7.48 (m, 5H), 7.30-7.38 (m, 3H), 4.11-4.16 (q, 2H), 1.92 (s, 3H), 1.10-1.14 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.1, 163.8, 145.8, 135.7, 130.2, 129.3, 129.0, 127.5, 124.0, 123.5, 122.5, 121.2, 109.8, 103.2, 59.1, 20.2, 14.0. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3254, 3024, 2984, 1681, 1458, 1409, 1185, 1042, 757. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₉H₁₉N₂O₃ [M+H] ⁺: 323.1396, Found: 323.1393. Mp: 178-180 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2-cyclohexyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ac)



Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (115 mg, 70% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.29 (s, 1H), 8.00-8.02 (t, 1H), 7.19-7.22 (t, 3H), 4.30-4.35 (q, 2H), 2.18 (s, 3H), 1.60-2.14 (m, 8H), 1.37-1.40 (t, 3H), 1.30-1.33 (m, 3H).

¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.7, 165.0, 152.5, 135.7, 124.6, 123.1, 122.5, 121.6, 109.8, 102.0, 59.8, 36.1, 29.4 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz), 26.9, 25.9, 21.0, 14.9. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3254, 2928, 2853, 1695, 1683, 1529, 1257, 1160, 1114, 753. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₉H₂₅N₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 329.1865, Found: 329.1864. Mp: 196-198 °C.

Methyl 1-acetamido-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ad)



Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (112 mg, 91% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.24 (s, 1H), 7.95-7.96 (d, J = 6.2 Hz, 1H), 7.18-7.26 (t, 3H), 3.81 (s, 3H), 2.50 (s,

^{CO₂Me 3H), 2.13 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.6, 165.6, 145.8, 135.7, 124.3, 123.0, 122.5, 121.0, 109.6, 102.2, 51.2, 20.9, 11.3. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3241, 2988, 2950, 1697, 1673, 1370, 1272, 1214, 1162, 784, 736. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₃H₁₅N₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 247.1083, Found: 247.1079. Mp: 160-162 °C.}

Methyl 1-acetamido-2-(methoxymethyl)-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3ae)



Following the general procedure, reaction time was shortened to 0.5h, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (132 mg, 95% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.40 (s, 1H), 8.05-8.09 (t, 1H), 7.27-7.32 (q, 3H), 4.98-5.01 (d, J = 11.4 Hz, 1H), 4.54-4.57 (d, J = 11.6Hz, 1H), 3.88 (s, 3H), 3.28 (s, 3H), 2.15 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.1, 164.6, 142.2, 135.7, 123.7, 123.3, 122.4, 121.4, 109.7, 104.2, 61.8, 57.6, 51.0, 20.4. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3250, 2985, 1682, 1458, 1262, 1185, 1167, 750. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₄H₁₆NaN₂O₄ [M+Na]⁺: 299.1008, Found: 299.1002. Mp: 199-201 °C.

Ethyl 1-acetamido-2-phenethyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate (3af)



Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (130 mg, 74% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.40 (s, 1H), 8.03-8.05 (t, 1H), 7.32-7.35 (t, 3H), 7.25-7.27 (d, 5H), 4.30-4.35 (q, 2H), 3.29-3.37 (td, 1H), 3.08-3.16 (td, 1H), 2.87-2.94 (td,

1H), 2.76-2.83 (td, 1H), 2.24 (s, 3H), 1.35-1.38 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 169.4, 164.4, 147.9, 140.9, 135.3, 128.5, 128.1, 126.1, 123.9, 122.8, 122.2, 120.8, 109.4, 101.8, 59.3, 34.5, 27.0, 20.5, 14.4. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3259, 3059, 3024, 2982, 2926, 1701, 1669, 1551, 1255, 1213, 1173, 742, 696. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₂₁H₂₃N₂O₃ [M+H]⁺: 351.1709, Found: 351.1705. Mp: 149-151 °C.

N-(2, 2-dimethyl-4-oxo-3, 4-dihydro-1H-carbazol-9(2H)-yl) acetamide (3ag)



Following the general procedure, the titled compound was isolated as a white solid (98 mg, 73% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.33 (s, 1H), 7.98-8.00 (q, 1H), 7.21-7.34 (m, 3H), 2.61-2.78 (q, 2H), 2.38-2.41 (t, 2H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 1.09 (s, 6H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ

192.3, 169.1, 151.7, 136.5, 123.0, 122.6, 122.0, 120.2, 109.4, 108.8, 51.7, 34.9, 34.2, 28.1, 28.0, 20.4. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3213, 2956, 1717, 1624, 1524, 1456, 1241, 1173, 761, 550. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₆H₁₉N₂O₂ [M+H]⁺: 271.1447, Found: 271.1445. Mp: 224-226 °C.

N-(3-benzoyl-2-methyl-1H-indol-1-yl) acetamide (3ah)

A mixture of 2-acetyl-1-phenylhydrazine **1a** (90.108 mg, 0.6 mmol, 1.2 equiv), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (7.725 mg, 0.0125 mmol, 2.5 mol%) and

2-diazo-1-phenylbutane-1,3-dione 2h (94.1 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1 equiv) and CsOAc (24 mg, 0.125 mmol, 25 mol%) were weighted in a sealed tube equip with a stir bar. Water (3 mL), HOAc (15 mg, 0.25 mmol, 50 mol%) were added successively. The mixture were sealed with a Teflon-lined cap and stirred at 100 °C for 1 h under Ar. Afterwards, it was cooled to room temperature, CH₂Cl₂ (10mL) was added to the tube and it was shaked vigorously. The organic layer was separated, the aqueous layer was extracted by CH₂Cl₂ (10 mL) once. The combined organic extracts were dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄ and evaporated under reduced pressure. The resulting solid was purified by a short column chromatography on silica gel (eluent: EtOAc/petroleum ether = 1:1 (v/v)). The titled compound was isolated as a beige solid (70 mg, 48% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.32 (s, 1H), 7.11-7.64 (m, 9H), 2.24 (s, 3H), 2.18 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 191.7, 169.3, 144.7, 140.9, 135.3, 131.7, 128.5, 128.2, 124.3, 122.7, 122.0, 120.1, 111.2, 109.2, 20.4, 11.4. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3221, 3018, 1713, 1622, 1521, 1385, 907, 748, 725. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{18}H_{17}N_2O_2$ [M+H]⁺: 293.1290, Found: 293.1285. Mp: 194-196 °C.

N-(3-acetyl-2-methyl-1H-indol-1-yl) acetamide (3ah)



Following the general procedure, the resulting solid was purified by a short column chromatography on silica gel (eluent: EtOAc/petroleum ether = 2:1 (v/v)). The titled compound was isolated as a white solid (83 mg, 72% yield). ¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 400 MHz): δ 11.30 (s, 1H), 8.08 (s, 1H), 7.23-7.29 (d, J = 25.8 Hz, 3H), 2.58 (s, 3H), 2.54 (s, 3H), 2.18 (s, 3H). 13 C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 101 MHz): δ 193.4, 169.1, 144.6, 135.2, 123.8, 122.5, 122.3, 120.7, 112.1, 109.2, 31.2, 20.4, 11.6. IR (cm⁻¹): v 3506, 1687, 1626, 1412, 1400, 1276, 1165, 775. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₃H₁₅N₂O₂ [M+H]⁺: 231.1134, Found: 231.1132. Mp: 100-102 °C.

3.3 General procedure for the deprotected reaction of $3aa^{[9]}$

Ethyl 1-amino-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-carboxylate



subsequently, the solution was sealed with a Teflon-lined cap and heated to reflux (in an 80 °C oil bath) for 3 h. After cooling to room temperature, the reaction was quenched by saturated aqueous solution of sodium bicarbonate (5 mL). Concentrated and the aqueous layer was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ until no obvious fluorescence of the aqueous phase was observed under a UV lamp. The combined organic extract was dried over anhydrous MgSO₄ and the solvent was removed under reduced pressure to give the crude product. The crude product was purified by silica gel chromatography (eluting with EtOAc/petroleum ether = 1:2 (v/v)) to give the titled compound in 87% yield (43.5 mg) as a white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 400 MHz): δ 8.09-8.11 (q, 1H), 7.30-7.33 (q, 1H), 7.22-7.26 (m, 2H), 4.36-4.41 (q, 2H), 4.32-4.33 (bs, 2H), 2.72(s, 3H), 1.43-1.46 (t, 3H). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 101 MHz): δ 166.0, 146.4, 136.6, 124.6, 122.1, 122.0, 121.2, 108.2, 101.7, 59.4, 14.6, 11.2. HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₁₂H₁₅N₂O₂ [M+H]⁺: 219.1134, Found: 219.1132. Mp: 90-92 °C.

4. Mechanistic Studies:

1. Tested which N-H bond is more acidic.



Following the same procedure described by Liang et al.,^[10] freshly cut Na (58 mg, 2.5 mmol, 1 equiv) was added to absolute ethanol (1.5 mL) in a sealed tube to get a clear solution. N'-phenylacetohydrazide (375.4 mg, 2.5 mmol, 1 equiv) was added to the resulting solution, and then iodomethane was added. The resulting solution was sealed and kept in 100 °C in the dark for 20 h. The solution was concentrated and the residue was dissolved in CH_2Cl_2 (5 mL), and then washed with water, dried over anhydrous MgSO₄, filtered, and concentrated. Purification by chromatography on silica gel provided the product.

2. Tested whether six member ring can be formed.



A mixture of N',N'-diphenylacetohydrazide 1v (135.76 mg, 0.6 mmol, 1.2 equiv), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (7.725 mg, 0.0125 mmol, 2.5 mol%) and CsOAc (24 mg, 0.125 mmol, 25 mol%) were weighted in a Schlenk tube equip with a stir bar. CH₃OH (3 mL), HOAc (15 mg, 0.25 mmol, 50 mol%) and ethyl diazoacetoacetate 2a (78 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1 equiv) were added successively. The mixture were sealed with a Teflon-lined cap and stirred at 100 °C for 12 h under Ar. Afterwards, it was cooled to room temperature, no reaction was detected by TLC analysis, no product was obtained and the starting material 1v was recovered which demonstrated that the six member ring is not favored.

3. Tested whether carbene inserted product can be formed.



A mixture of 2-acetyl-1-phenylhydrazine **1a** (90.1 mg, 0.6 mmol, 1.2 equiv), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (7.725 mg, 0.0125 mmol, 2.5 mol%) and CsOAc (24 mg, 0.125 mmol, 25 mol%) were weighted in a Schlenk tube equip with a stir bar. Water (3 mL), HOAc (15 mg, 0.25 mmol, 50 mol%) and diethyl 2-diazomalonate **2j** (93.1 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1 equiv) were added successively. The mixture were sealed and stirred at 100 °C for 1 h under Ar. Afterwards, it was cooled to room temperature, no reaction was detected by TLC analysis and the starting materials were recovered. This indicated that the condensation step may play a vital role in the reaction.

4. Intermolecular Kinetic Isotope Effect.



A mixture of 2-acetyl-1-phenylhydrazine **1a** (90.108 mg, 0.6 mmol, 1.2 equiv), 2-acetyl-1-(2, 3, 4, 5, 6-pentadeueriophenyl)hydrazine d^5 -**1a** (93.108 mg, 0.6 mmol, 1.2 equiv), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (7.725 mg, 0.0125 mmol, 2.5 mol%) and CsOAc (24 mg, 0.125 mmol, 25 mol%) were weighted in a Schlenk tube equip with a stir bar. Water (3 mL), HOAc (15 mg, 0.25 mmol, 50 mol%) and ethyl diazoacetoacetate (78 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1 equiv) were added successively. The mixture were sealed with a Teflon-lined cap and stirred at 100 °C for 25 min. Afterwards, it was cooled in ice bath and the water was filtered off immediately. The solid residue was washed with water thoroughly, and purified by passing through a short pad of silica gel with EtOAc as eluent. The ratio of **3aa**/d⁴-**3aa** was indicated to be 2.2:1 by ¹H NMR (see below), thus the KIE value was determined to be 2.2.



5. X-ray Crystallography: Data collection was performed on a Rigaku Saturn 70 CCD diffractometer equipped with a rotating anode system by using graphite-monochromated $Mo_{K\alpha}$ radiation (ω -2 θ scans). Semiempirical absorption corrections were applied for all complexes. The structures were solved by direct methods and refined by full-matrix least-squares. All calculations were done using the SHELXL-97 program system. All non-hydrogen atoms were refined anisotropically. Hydrogen atoms were assigned idealized positions and were included in structure factor calculations.

CCDC-983540 (**3aa**) contains the supplementary crystallographic data. These data can be obtained free of charge from The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre via www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data_request/cif.



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7. NMR Spectra





S23











S27











ppm (t1)



























ppm (t1)



































S56







S59





