Electronic Supplementary Material (ESI) for Journal of Materials Chemistry C. This journal is © The Royal Society of Chemistry 2020

Supporting Information

Efficient Deep-Blue Organic Light-Emitting Diodes Employing

Difluoroboron-Enabled Thermally Activated Delayed Fluorescence Emitters

Guijie Li,^{1,*} Feng Zhan,¹ Weiwei Lou,¹ Dan Wang,² Chao Deng,² Lina Cao,¹ Yuning Yang,¹ Qisheng Zhang^{2*} and Yuanbin She^{1,*}

¹College of Chemical Engineering, Zhejiang University of Technology, Hangzhou, 310014, P. R.

China

²MOE Key Laboratory of Macromolecular Synthesis and Functionalization, Department of Polymer Science and Engineering, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou 310027, P. R. China

E-mail: guijieli@zjut.edu.cn; qishengzhang@zju.edu.cn. sheyb@zjut.edu.cn

S3-S4 1 General Information 2 Table S1. DFT calculations for difluoroboron complexes S5 Figure S1. TGA of the difluoroboron complexes **S6** S7 Figure S2. DSC of the difluoroboron complexes Figure S3. Prompt transient PL decay curves and Delayed transient PL decay **S**8 3 curves of the difluoroboron complexes in doped DPEPO film Figure S4. Fluorescence and phosphorescence spectra of the difluoroboron 4 **S9** compounds measured at 77 K in toluene solution Figure S5. Fluorescence and phosphorescence spectra of the difluoroboron S10 5 compounds measured at 77 K in doped DPEPO film S10 Table S2. Electrochemical properties of the difluoroboron compounds 6 Figure S6. DPV of the difluoroboron compounds 7 S11 8 Figure S7. Device performances of BF2-MPCz-based OLEDs. S12 9 Figure S8. Device performances of BF2-DMPCz-based OLEDs. S13 10 Figure S9. Device performances of BF2-DMCz-based OLEDs. S14 Table S3. Summarized Photophysical and Device Properties of Some Selected 11 S15 TADF Emitters Using Tetracoordinated Boron Units as Acceptors Figure S10. Molecular structures of some selected TADF emitters using 12 S16 tetracoordinated boron units as acceptors discussed in this study (Table S4). 13 **Experimental Procedures** S17-S23 14 Synthesis of BF2-MPCz S17-S20 15 S20–S23 Synthesis of **BF2-DMPCz** 16 Synthesis of BF2-DMCz S24–S27 17 Reference S27 ¹H, ¹³C, ¹⁹F, ¹¹B NMR spectra of the difluoroboron compounds and their ligands 18 S28-S44

Table of Contents

General Information.

Synthesis and Characterization. Unless noted, all commercial reagents were purchased and used as received without further purification. ¹H NMR spectra were recorded at 500 MHz, and ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded at 150 MHz NMR instruments in CDCl₃ or DMSO-*d*₆ solutions and chemical shifts were referenced to tetramethylsilane (TMS) or residual protiated solvent. If CDCl₃ was used as solvent, ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded with TMS ($\delta = 0.00$ ppm) and CDCl₃ ($\delta = 77.00$ ppm) as internal references, respectively. If DMSO-*d*₆ was used as solvent, ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded with TMS ($\delta = 39.52$ ppm) as internal references, respectively. The following abbreviations (or combinations thereof) were used to explain ¹H NMR ultiplicities: s = singlet, d = doublet, t = triplet, q = quartet, p = quintet, m = multiplet, br = broad. All of the new compounds were analyzed for HRMS on an mass spectrometer using electrospray ionization in positive ion mode on ESI-QTOF mass spectrometer from Applied Biosystems.

Electrochemistry. Cyclic voltammetry and different pulsed voltammetry were performed using a CH1760E electrochemical analyzer according previous report.¹ 0.1 M tetra-*n*-butylammonium hexafluorophosphate was used as the supporting electrolyte, anhydrous *N*,*N*-dimethylformamide, was used as the solvents for the E_{ox} and E_{red} measurements, and the solutions were bubbled with nitrogen for 15 min prior to the test. Silver wire, platinum wire and glassy carbon were used as pseudoreference electrode, counter electrode, and working electrode respectively. Scan rate was 300 mV/s. The redox potentials are based on the values measured from different pulsed voltammetry and are reported relative to an internal reference ferrocenium/ferrocene (Cp₂Fe/Cp₂Fe⁺).² The reversibility of reduction or oxidation was determined using CV.³ As defined, if the magnitudes of the peak anodic and the peak cathodic current have an equal magnitude as scan speeds of 100 mV/s or slower, then the process is considered reversible; if the magnitudes of the peak anodic and the peak cathodic currents are not equal, but the return sweeps are nonzero, the process is considered quasi-reversible; otherwise, the process is considered irreversible.^{2,3}

DFT Calculations. Gaussian 16 program package was used for all quantum chemical calculations. The molecular geometries of ground states (S_0) were optimized with the density functional theory (DFT) method. The DFT calculations were performed using a B3LYP functional

with a basis set of 6-311G (d, p) for all atoms. TD-DFT was then employed to obtain the vertical transitions of the S_1 and T_1 states based on the corresponding S_0 geometries at same theoretical level.⁴

Photophysical Measurements. The absorption spectra were measured on an Agilent 8453 UV–VS Spectrometer. Steady state emission experiments and lifetime measurements were performed on a Horiba Jobin Yvon FluoroLog-3 spectrometer. Low temperature (77 K) emission spectra and lifetimes were measured in toluene cooled with liquid nitrogen.

Table S1. DFT Calculations for difluoroboron Complexes ^a									
complexes	Front view	Side view	Top view						
BF2-MPCz		A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A	the start						
BF2-DMPCz		A A	A Contract						
BF2-DMCz	AL A	A A	Alt						

 a Optimized S₀ were calculated at the B3LYP/6-311G (d, p) level in the gas phase.



Figure S1. Thermogravimetric analysis (TGA) of BF2-MPCz, BF2-DMPCz and BF2-DMCz.



Figure S2. Differential scanning calorimetry (DSC) of BF2-MPCz, BF2-DMPCz and BF2-DMCz.



Figure S3. Prompt transient PL decay curves (black lines) and biexponential fitting curves (blackred lines) of (a) **BF2-MPCz** (8.9 ns), (b) **BF2-DMPCz** (6.4 ns) and (c) **BF2-DMCz** (6.0 ns) in 10 wt% emitter:DPEPO doped film measured at room temperature under N₂ using semiconductor laser (371 nm) on Horiba deltaflex01 system via TCSPC technique. Delayed transient PL decay curves of (d) **BF2-MPCz** (70 μ s), (e) **BF2-DMPCz** (95 μ s) and (f) **BF2-DMCz** (130 μ s) in 10 wt% emitter:DPEPO doped film measured at room temperature under N₂ using nitrogen laser (337 nm) on PTI QM-40 spectrofluorometer via strobe technique.



Figure S4. Fluorescence and phosphorescence spectra of (a) **BF2-MPCz**, (b) **BF2-DMPCz** and (c) **BF2-DMCz** measured at 77 K in toluene solution.



Figure S5. Fluorescence and phosphorescence spectra of (a) BF2-MPCz, (b) BF2-DMPCz and (c) BF2-DMCz measured at 77 K in 10 wt% doped DPEPO film.

Fluorescence

Phosphorescence

SEDMPCz

600

650

500

550

Table S2. Electrochemical Properties of the Difluoroboron Compounds

Compound	$E_{\rm ox}$ (V)	$E_{\rm red}({ m V})$	HOMO/LUMO ^{a)} (eV)	
BF2-MPCz	0.82	-1.82	-5.62/-2.99	
BF2-DMPCz	0.83	-1.97	-5.63/-2.83	
BF2-DMCz	0.84	-1.97	-5.64/-2.83	

^{a)}The HOMO and LUMO levels were estimated by using Cp_2Fe^+/Cp_2Fe values of 4.8 eV below the vacuum level. Differential pulsed voltammetry (DPV) of the difluoroboron compounds measured in anhydrous N,N-dimethylformamide (DMF); a silver wire was used as pseudoreference electrode; a platinum wire was used as counter electrode; glassy carbon was used as the working electrode; scan rate is 300 mV/s.



Figure S6. Differential pulsed voltammetry (DPV) of **BF2-MPCz**, **BF2-DMPCz** and **BF2-DMCz** measured in anhydrous *N*,*N*-dimethylformamide (DMF); a silver wire was used as pseudoreference electrode; a platinum wire was used as counter electrode; glassy carbon was used as the working electrode.



Figure S7. Device performances of BF2-MPCz-based OLEDs.



Figure S8. Device performances of BF2-DMPCz-based OLEDs.



Figure S9. Device performances of BF2-DMCz-based OLEDs.

emitter	$\lambda_{\rm PL}$ [nm]	$arPhi_{ m PL}$ [%]	Peak EQE (%)	CIE (x, y)	Ref.
BF2-MPCz	471	94	13.8	(0.175, 0.354)	This work
BF2-DMPCz	443	99	7.5	(0.146, 0.174)	This work
BF2-DMCz	435	98	8.4	(0.149, 0.083)	This work
NOBF2-Cz	467	99	11.0	(0.14, 0.16)	(4)
NOBF2-DTCz	471	74	12.7	(0.14, 0.21)	(4)
DPPyBF-1	480	65	8.8	(0.16, 0.31)	(5)
NOBF2-DPCz	483	70	15.8	(0.14, 0.28)	(4)
PIZOB-1	490	37	_	(0.223, 0.365)	(6)
BFOXD	492	66	20.1	(0.21, 0.38)	(7)
PrFPCz	495	40	7.6	_	(8)
PPyOB-4	504	97	22.7	(0.20, 0.42)	(9)
DPPyBF-2	508	89	18.0	(0.28, 0.54)	(5)
DPPyBF-3	512	82	5.6	(0.303, 0.519)	(5)
PrFTPA	515	60	13.5	_	(8)
PrFCzP	520	38	4.8	_	(8)
NOBF2-DMCz	523	65	13.2	(0.29, 0.60)	(4)
fppyBTPA	529	72	20.2	(0.27, 0.54)	(10)
dfppyBTPA	535	100	26.6	(0.26, 0.58)	(10)
PPyOB-1	544	42	17.5	(0.40, 0.56)	(6)
PPyOB-2	548	29	8.3	(0.450, 0.529)	(6)

Table S3. Summarized Photophysical and Device Properties of Some Selected TADF EmittersUsing Tetracoordinated Boron Units as Acceptors



Figure S10. Molecular structures of some selected TADF emitters using tetracoordinated boron units as acceptors discussed in this study (Table S4).

Experimental Procedures

Synthesis of **BF2-MPCz**:



Synthesis of 9-(4-bromo-2-methylphenyl)-3,6-diphenyl-9H-carbazole 1a: 3,6-Diphenyl-9*H*-carbazole (767 mg, 2.40 mmol, 1.0 equiv), Cs₂CO₃ (2.35 g, 7.20 mmol, 3.0 equiv) were added to a dry sealed tube equipped with a magnetic stir bar. Then the sealed tube was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfill procedure was repeated twice. Then 4-bromo-1-fluoro-2-methylbenzene (1.36 g, 7.2 mmol, 3.0 equiv) and DMSO (20 mL) were added to the tube quickly under nitrogen atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at 145 °C for 48 h, and the reaction monitored by TLC until the reaction was completed. Then the resulting mixture was cooled down to room temperature, and diluted with ethyl acetate. The organic layer was washed with water, and then dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 50:1-20:1 as eluent to afford the desired product as a white solid 780 mg in 67% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 2.03 (s, 3H), 7.10 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.29 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.34–7.37 (m, 2H), 7.47–7.50 (m, 4H), 7.57 (dd, J = 8.0, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.65 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.67 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 2H), 7.72–7.74 (m, 4H), 8.41 (d, J = 1.0 Hz, 2H).

Synthesis

9-(2-methyl-4-(4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolan-2-yl)phenyl)-3,6-diphenyl-9H-carbazole

2a: 9-(4-Bromo-2-methylphenyl)-3,6-diphenyl-9*H*-carbazole **1a** (940 mg, 1.92 mmol, 1.0 equiv), bis(pinacolato)diboron (586 mg, 2.31 mmol, 1.2 equiv), Pd(dppf)Cl₂ (42 mg, 0.06 mmol, 3 mol%), AcOK (376 mg, 3.84 mmol, 2.0 equiv) were added to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. Then the flask was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfilled procedure was repeated twice. Then dry 1,4-dioxane (15 mL) was added under nitrogen atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at 85 °C for 46 h, and the reaction monitored by TLC until the reaction was completed. The resulting mixture was cooled down to room temperature, then the solvent was removed and the residue was diluted with ethyl acetate. The mixture was washed with water, separated and then the organic layer dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 100:1-50:1 as eluent to afford **2a** as white solid 807 mg in 78% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 1.43 (s, 12H), 2.08 (s, 3H), 7.12 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.34–7.37 (m, 2H), 7.44 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 7.47–7.50 (m, 4H), 7.66 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 1.5 Hz, 2H), 7.73–7.75 (m, 4H), 7.89 (dd, *J* = 7.5, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.98 (s, 1H), 8.42 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 2H).

Synthesis of 9-(4-(2-(2-methoxyphenyl)pyridin-4-yl)-2-methylphenyl)-3,6-diphenyl-9*H*carbazole 3a: 2a (700 mg, 1.31 mmol, 1.0 equiv), 4-bromo-2-(2-methoxyphenyl)pyridine BrPyPOCH₃ (345 mg, 1.31 mmol, 1.0 equiv, which was synthesized according previous report.⁴), Pd(PPh₃)₄ (46 mg, 0.04 mmol, 3 mol%), and K₂CO₃ (543 mg, 3.93 mmol, 3.0 equiv) were added to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. Then the flask was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfilled procedure was repeated twice. Then 1,4-dioxane (15 mL) and H₂O (3 mL) were added to the mixture under nitrogen atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at 90 °C for 50 h, and the reaction monitored by TLC until the reaction was completed. Then the resulting mixture was cooled down to room temperature, then the solvent was removed and the residue was diluted with ethyl acetate. The mixture was washed with water, the organic layer was separated, dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/ethyl acetate/dichloromethane = 10:2:1 as eluent to afford **3a** as green yellow solid 696 mg in 89% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 2.15 (s, 3H), 3.93 (s, 3H), 7.07 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.14 (td, J = 7.5, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.19 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.34–7.38 (m, 2H), 7.41–7.44 (m, 1H), 7.47–7.51 (m, 4H), 7.54–7.56 (m, 2H), 7.67 (d, J = 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.69 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.73–7.75 (m, 5H), 7.81 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.84 (dd, J = 7.5, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 8.14 (d, J = 1.0 Hz, 1H), 8.44 (d, J = 1.5 Hz, 2H), 8.82 (dd, J = 5.0, 0.5 Hz, 1H).

Synthesis of 2-(4-(4-(3,6-diphenyl-9H-carbazol-9-yl)-3-methylphenyl)pyridin-2-yl)phenol 4a: 9-(4-(2-(2-Methoxyphenyl)pyridin-4-yl)-2-methylphenyl)-3,6-diphenyl-9H-carbazole 3a (750 mg, 1.27 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. Then the flask was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfill procedure was repeated twice. Then dry CH₂Cl₂ (20 mL) was added under nitrogen atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at -15 °C for 10 min, then BBr₃ (0.24 mL, 634 mg, 2.53 mmol, 2.0 equiv) was dropped slowly. The mixture was stirred at -15 °C for 1.5 hours and then the temperature of the mixture allowed to raised to room temperature and stirred for further 10 hours. The reaction monitored by TLC until the reaction was completed. Then the reaction was quenched with NaHCO₃ solution, and then extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/ethyl acetate/dichloromethane = 10:2:1 as eluent to afford 4a as green yellow solid 596 mg in 81% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 2.19 (s, 3H), 6.96–6.99 (m, 1H), 7.09 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.18 (s, 1H), 7.19 (s, 1H), 7.34–7.38 (m, 3H), 7.47–7.51 (m, 4H), 7.57 (dd, *J* = 5.0, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.59 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.69 (dd, J = 8.5, 1.5 Hz, 2H), 7.73–7.77 (m, 5H), 7.83 (d, J =2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.98 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 8.22 (s, 1H), 8.44 (d, J = 1.5 Hz, 2H), 8.64 (dd, J = 5.0, 1.0 Hz. 1H), 14.37 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 17.93, 110.09, 117.20, 118.76, 118.87, 119.03, 119.74, 123.89, 125.79, 126.19, 126.21, 126.62, 127.29, 128.78, 130.00, 130.42, 131.71, 133.63, 137.21, 138.27, 138.62, 140.91, 141.83, 146.34, 149.50, 158.31, 160.14. HRMS (ESI): calcd for C₄₂H₃₁N₂O [M+H]⁺ 579.2431, found 579.2428.

Synthesis of BF2-MPCz: 4a (550 mg, 0.95 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was add to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. The flask then evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfill procedure repeated twice. Then dry CH_2Cl_2 (20 mL) was added under nitrogen atmosphere, and then $Et_2O:BF_3$ (0.36 mL, 404 mg, 2.85 mmol, 3.0 equiv) was added to the flask. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 1.5 hour, after that,

N,*N*-diisopropylethylamine (DIPEA) (0.66 mL, 491 mg, 3.80 mmol, 4.0 equiv) was added. The mixture was stirred for further 17 hours, and the reaction monitored by TLC until the starting material was consumed completely. Then the reaction was quenched with NaHCO₃ solution, and then extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. Then the mixture was concentrated and the residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/dichloromethane/ethyl acetate = 10:4:1 as eluent to afford **BF2-MPCz** as light yellow solid 340 mg in 57% yield. m.p.: 201.5–202.6 °C. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 2.23 (s, 3H), 7.10–7.13 (m, 1H), 7.17 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.25 (dd, *J* = 1.1 Hz, 1H), 7.35–7.39 (m, 2H), 7.49–7.52 (m, 4H), 7.53–7.57 (m, 1H), 7.67–7.71 (m, 3H), 7.74–7.76 (m, 4H), 7.83 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (dd, *J* = 6.5, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.90 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 8.01 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 8.38 (d, *J* = 1.0 Hz, 1H), 8.45 (d, *J* = 1.0 Hz, 2H), 8.81 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 1H). ¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, CDCl₃): δ –146.59. ¹¹B NMR (192.5 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 1.03. HRMS (ESI): calcd for C₄₂H₃₃¹¹BF₂N₃O [M+NH₄]⁺ 644.2679, found 644.2687.





Synthesisof9-(4-bromo-3,5-dimethylphenyl)-3,6-diphenyl-9H-carbazole1b:3,6-Diphenyl-9H-carbazole(1.10 g, 3.45 mmol, 1.0 equiv), CuI (65 mg, 0.35 mmol, 10 mol%) and K_3PO_4 (2.20 g, 10.35 mmol, 3.0 equiv) were added to a dry tube equipped with a magnetic stir bar.s20 / s44

Then the tube was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfill procedure was repeated twice. Then 2,5-dibromo-1,3-dimethylbenzene (1.00 g, 3.79mmol, 1.1 equiv), *trans*-1,2-diaminocyclohexane (79 mg, 0.69 mmol, 20 mol%) and dry 1,4-dioxane (20 mL) were added to the tube rapidly under nitrogen atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at 110 °C for 60 hours, and the reaction monitored by TLC until the reaction was completed. The resulting mixture was cooled down to room temperature, then the solvent was removed and the residue was diluted with ethyl acetate. The mixture was washed with water, separated and then the organic layer dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/dichloromethane = 30:1-10:1 as eluent to afford the desired product as light yellow solid 1.54 g in 89% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 2.55 (s, 6H), 7.34–7.37 (m, 4H), 7.45–7.50 (m, 6H), 7.68 (dd, J = 8.5, 1.5 Hz, 2H), 7.72–7.74 (m, 4H), 8.39 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 2H).

Synthesis of 9-(3,5-dimethyl-4-(4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolan-2-yl)phenyl)-3,6diphenyl-9*H*-carbazole 2b: 9-(4-Bromo-3,5-dimethylphenyl)-3,6-diphenyl-9*H*-carbazole 1b (1.30 g, 2.59 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. The flask was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfill procedure was repeated twice. Then anhydrous THF (40 mL) was added under nitrogen atmosphere. After cooling it to -76 °C using liquid nitrogen, *n*-BuLi (1.78 mL, 2.85 mmol, 1.1 equiv, 1.60 M in hexane) was dropped slowly, followed by stirring for 1 hour, and then 2-isopropoxy-4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolane (579 mg, 3.11 mmol, 1.2 equiv) was added to the cold reaction mixture. The resulting solution was then allowed to raise to room temperature and stirred for further 21 hours. Then the mixture was quenched with a saturated solution of NH₄Cl in water, and then extracted with ethyl acetate three times, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 100:1 as eluent to afford **2b** as white solid 1.0 g in 71% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 1.45 (s, 12H), 2.53 (s, 6H), 7.21 (s, 2H), 7.32–7.36 (m, 2H), 7.44–7.49 (m, 6H), 7.66 (dd, *J* = 8.5, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 7.72–7.74 (m, 4H), 8.38 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 2H).

Synthesis of 9-(4-(2-(2-methoxyphenyl)pyridin-4-yl)-3,5-dimethylphenyl)-3,6-diphenyl-9*H*carbazole 3b: 2b (1.0 g, 1.83 mmol, 1.0 equiv), 4-bromo-2-(2-methoxyphenyl)pyridine (**BrPyPOCH**₃) (508 mg, 1.92 mmol, 1.05 equiv, which was synthesized according previous report.⁴), Pd(PPh₃)₄ (63 mg, 0.055 mmol, 3 mol%), and K₂CO₃ (759 mg, 5.49 mmol, 3.0 equiv) were added to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. Then the flask was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfilled procedure was repeated twice. Then 1,4-dioxane (15 mL) and H₂O (3 mL) were added to the mixture under nitrogen atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at 100 °C for 83 h, and the reaction monitored by TLC until the reaction was completed. Then the resulting mixture was cooled down to room temperature, then the solvent was removed and the residue was diluted with ethyl acetate. The mixture was washed with water, the organic layer was separated, dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 20:1–5:1 as eluent to afford **3b** as light yellow solid 986 mg in 89% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-d6) δ 2.21 (s, 6H), 3.85 (s, 3H), 7.11 (td, *J* = 8.0, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.18 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (dd, *J* = 5.0, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.35–7.38 (m, 2H), 7.42–7.46 (m, 1H), 7.49–7.53 (m, 6H), 7.58 (s, 1H), 7.60 (s, 1H), 7.78 (q, *J* = 1.5, 0.5 Hz, 1H), 7.80 (d, *J* = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.81–7.87 (m, 6H), 8.75 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 2H), 8.80 (d, *J* = 5.0 Hz, 1H).

Synthesis

2-(4-(4-(3,6-diphenyl-9*H***-carbazol-9-yl)-2,6-dimethylphenyl)pyridin-2-yl)phenol 4b: 3b** (956 mg, 1.58 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. Then the flask was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfill procedure was repeated twice. Then dry CH₂Cl₂ (15 mL) was added under nitrogen atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at -15 °C for 10 min, then BBr₃ (791 mg (0.3 mL), 3.16 mmol, 2.0 equiv) was dropped slowly. The mixture was stirred at -15 °C for 1.5 hour and then the temperature of the mixture allowed to raised to room temperature and stirred for further 10 hours. The reaction monitored by TLC until the reaction was completed. Then the reaction was quenched with NaHCO₃ solution, and then extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/dichloromethane/ethyl acetate = 50:2:1 as eluent to afford **4b** as light yellow solid 652 mg in 70% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 2.21 (s, 6H), 6.92–6.95 (m, 1H), 7.09 (dd, *J* = 8.5, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.34–7.38 (m, 3H), 7.43 (s, 2H), 7.50 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 4H), 7.59 (d, *J* =

of

8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.72 (dd, J = 8.5, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 7.74–7.76 (m, 4H), 7.86 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.89 (s, 1H), 8.42 (d, J = 1.5 Hz, 2H), 8.67 (d, J = 5.0 Hz, 1H), 14.39 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 20.86, 110.25, 118.74, 118.78, 118.86, 118.91, 119.80, 122.31, 124.11, 125.67, 125.87, 126.24, 126.63, 127.29, 128.79, 131.77, 133.74, 137.27, 137.36, 138.07, 140.72, 141.85, 146.32, 150.80, 158.36, 160.13. HRMS (ESI): calcd for C₄₃H₃₃N₂O [M+H]⁺ 593.2587, found 593.2582.

Synthesis of BF2-DMPCz: 4b (622 mg, 1.05 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was add to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. The flask then evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfill procedure repeated twice. Then dry CH₂Cl₂ (15 mL) was added under nitrogen atmosphere, and then Et₂O:BF₃ (0.39 mL, 448 mg, 3.15 mmol, 3.0 equiv) was added to the flask. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 4 hours. after that. N,N-Diisopropylethylamine (DIPEA) (0.73 mL, 543 mg, 4.2 mmol, 4.0 equiv) was added, and the mixture was stirred for further 12 hours, the reaction monitored by TLC until the starting material was consumed completely. Then the reaction was quenched with NaHCO₃ solution, and then extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. Then the mixture was concentrated and the residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/dichloromethane = 10:1-3:1 as eluent to afford **BF2-DMPCz** as green yellow solid 542 mg in 81% yield. m.p.: 235.3–236.1 °C. ¹H NMR $(500 \text{ MHz}, \text{CDCl}_3) \delta 2.24 \text{ (s, 6H)}, 7.06-7.10 \text{ (m, 1H)}, 7.26 \text{ (dd}, J = 8.5, 1.0 \text{ Hz 1H)}, 7.36-7.39 \text{ (m, 1H)}, 7.26 \text{ (dd}, J = 8.5, 1.0 \text{ Hz 1H)}, 7.36-7.39 \text{ (m, 1H)}, 7.26 \text{ (dd}, J = 8.5, 1.0 \text{ Hz 1H)}, 7.36-7.39 \text{ (m, 1H)}, 7.26 \text{ (dd}, J = 8.5, 1.0 \text{ Hz 1H)}, 7.36-7.39 \text{ (m, 1H)}, 7.26 \text{ (dd}, J = 8.5, 1.0 \text{ Hz 1H)}, 7.36-7.39 \text{ (m, 1H)}, 7.26 \text{ (dd}, J = 8.5, 1.0 \text{ Hz 1H)}, 7.36-7.39 \text{ (m, 1H)}, 7.26 \text{ (dd}, J = 8.5, 1.0 \text{ Hz 1H)}, 7.36-7.39 \text{ (m, 1H)}, 7$ 2H), 7.48–7.52 (m, 6H), 7.53–7.58 (m, 4H), 7.72 (dd, *J* = 8.5, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 7.74–7.76 (m, 4H), 7.89 (dd, J = 8.5, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 8.07 (s, 1H), 8.42 (d, J = 1.4 Hz, 2H), 8.85 (d, J = 6.0 Hz, 1H).¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 20.93, 110.15, 115.94, 119.00, 120.72, 121.00, 121.22, 124.13, 124.24, 125.33, 125.77, 126.22, 126.74, 127.30, 128.81, 128.84, 133.99, 135.00, 136.07, 137.01, 138.41, 140.54, 141.59, 141.75, 150.68, 156.06. ¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, CDCl₃): δ -146.41. ¹¹B NMR (192.5 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 1.09. HRMS (ESI): calcd for C₄₃ H₃₅¹¹BF₂ N₃O [M+NH₄]⁺ 658.2836, found 658.2843.

Synthesis of **BF2-DMCz**:



Synthesis of 9-(4-bromo-3,5-dimethylphenyl)-9H-carbazole 1c: 9H-carbazole (1.65 g, 9.85 mmol, 1.3 equiv), CuI (144 mg, 0.76 mmol, 10 mol%) and K₃PO₄ (4.82 g, 22.73 mmol, 3.0 equiv) were added to a dry sealed tube equipped with a magnetic stir bar. Then the sealed tube was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfill procedure was repeated twice. 2,5-dibromo-1,3-dimethylbenzene (2.0 g, 7.58 mmol, 1.0 equiv), Then trans-1.2diaminocyclohexane (173 mg, 1.52 mmol, 20 mol%) and dry 1,4-dioxane (30 mL) were added to the tube rapidly under nitrogen atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at 110 °C for 44 h, and the reaction monitored by TLC until the reaction was completed. The resulting mixture was cooled down to room temperature, then the solvent was removed and the residue was diluted with ethyl acetate. The mixture was washed with water, separated and then the organic layer dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 100:1 as eluent to afford the desired product as yellow white solid 2.34 g in 88% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 2.52 (s, 6H), 7.27–7.30 (m, 4H), 7.37–7.43 (m, 4H), 8.13 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H).

Synthesis of 9-(3,5-dimethyl-4-(4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolan-2-yl)phenyl)-9*H*-carbazole 2c: 9-(4-Bromo-3,5-dimethylphenyl)-9*H*-carbazole 1c (1.70 g, 4.85 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. The flask was evacuated and

backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfill procedure was repeated twice. Then anhydrous THF (70 mL) was added under nitrogen atmosphere. After cooling it to -76 °C using liquid nitrogen, *n*-BuLi (3.18 mL, 5.09 mmol, 1.05 equiv, 1.60 M in hexane) was dropped slowly, followed by stirring for 1 hour, and then 2-isopropoxy-4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolane (1.08 g, 5.82 mmol, 1.2 equiv) was added to the cold reaction mixture. The resulting solution was then allowed to raise to room temperature and stirred for further 13 hours. Then the mixture was quenched with a saturated solution of NH₄Cl in water, and then extracted with ethyl acetate three times, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 100:1 as eluent to afford the desired product as white solid 1.28 g in 66% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 1.45 (s, 12H), 2.51 (s, 6H), 7.16 (s, 2H), 7.25–7.28 (m, 2H), 7.37–7.41 (m, 4H), 8.12 (dt, *J* = 8.0, 1.0 Hz, 2H).

Synthesis of 9-(4-(2-(2-methoxyphenyl)pyridin-4-yl)-3,5-dimethylphenyl)-9H-carbazole 3c: 9-(3,5-Dimethyl-4-(4,4,5,5-tetramethyl-1,3,2-dioxaborolan-2-yl)phenyl)-9H-carbazole 2c (1.28 g, 3.22 mmol, 1.0 equiv), 4-bromo-2-(2-methoxyphenyl)pyridine BrPyPOCH₃ (936 mg, 3.54 mmol, 1.1 equiv, which was synthesized according previous report.⁴), Pd(PPh₃)₄ (74 mg, 0.064 mmol, 2 mol%), and K₂CO₃ (1.33 g, 9.66 mmol, 3.0 equiv) were added to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. Then the flask was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfilled procedure was repeated twice. Then 1,4-dioxane (20 mL) and H₂O (4 mL) were added to the mixture under nitrogen atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at 95 °C for 60 h, and the reaction monitored by TLC until the reaction was completed. Then the resulting mixture was cooled down to room temperature, then the solvent was removed and the residue was diluted with ethyl acetate. The mixture was washed with water, the organic layer was separated, dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/dichloromethane/ethyl acetate = 20:1:1 as eluent to afford **3c** as white solid 1.00 g in 68% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 2.19 (s, 6H), 3.85 (s, 3H), 7.11 (td, J = 7.5, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.18 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.29–7.32 (m, 3H), 7.42–7.44 (m, 1H), 7.45–7.48 (m, 4H), 7.51 (dt, J = 8.0, 1.0 Hz, 2H), 7.77 (q, J = 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.85 (dd, *J* = 7.5, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 8.26 (dt, *J* = 7.5, 1.0 Hz, 2H), 8.80 (dd, *J* = 5.0, 1.0 Hz, 1H).

2-(4-(4-(9H-carbazol-9-yl)-2,6-dimethylphenyl)pyridin-2-yl)phenol **Synthesis** of 4c: 9-(4-(2-(2-Methoxyphenyl)pyridin-4-yl)-3,5-dimethylphenyl)-9H-carbazole 3c (1.00 g, 2.20 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. Then the flask was evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfill procedure was repeated twice. Then dry CH₂Cl₂ (15 mL) was added under nitrogen atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at -15 °C for 10 min, then BBr₃ (0.42 mL, 1.10 g, 4.40 mmol, 2.0 equiv) was dropped slowly. The mixture was stirred at -15 °C for 1.5 hour and then the temperature of the mixture allowed to raised to room temperature and stirred for further 11 hours. The reaction monitored by TLC until the reaction was completed. Then the reaction was guenched with NaHCO₃ solution, and then extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/dichloromethane/ethyl acetate = 50:2:1 as eluent to afford 4c as yellow white solid 680 mg in 70% yield. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 2.18 (s, 6H), 6.91–6.94 (m, J = 1H), 7.08 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.0Hz, 1H), 7.20 (dd, J = 5.0, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.30–7.37 (m, 3H), 7.38 (s, 2H), 7.43–7.46 (m, 2H), 7.51 (dt, J = 8.5, 1.0 Hz, 2H, 7.85 (dd, J = 8.0, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.87 (s, 1H), 8.17 (dt, J = 7.5, 1.0 Hz, 2H), 8.66 (dd, J = 5.0, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 14.40 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 20.81, 109.83, 118.74, 118.83, 119.78, 119.96, 120.33, 122.32, 123.42, 125.91, 126.02, 126.22, 131.72, 137.12, 137.43, 137.93, 140.80, 146.29, 150.83, 158.33, 160.11. HRMS (ESI): calcd for C₃₁H₂₅N₂O [M+H]⁺ 441.1961, found 441.1961.

Synthesis of BF2-DMCz: 2-(4-(4-(9*H*-Carbazol-9-yl)-2,6-dimethylphenyl)pyridin-2-yl)phenol 4c (640 mg, 1.45 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was add to a dry three-necked flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar. The flask then evacuated and backfilled with nitrogen, this evacuation and backfill procedure repeated twice. Then dry CH₂Cl₂ (15 mL) was added under nitrogen atmosphere, and then Et₂O·BF₃ (0.55 mL, 617 mg, 4.35 mmol, 3.0 equiv) was added to the flask. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 4 hours, after that, *N*,*N*-Diisopropylethylamine (DIPEA) (1.01 mL, 749 mg, 5.80 mmol, 4.0 equiv) was added, and the mixture was stirred for further 13 hours, the reaction monitored by TLC until the starting material was consumed completely. Then the reaction was quenched with NaHCO₃ solution, and then extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. Then the mixture was concentrated and the residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel using petroleum ether/dichloromethane = 10:1-1:3 as eluent to afford **BF2-DMCz** as white solid 545 mg in 77% yield. m.p.: 240.1–241.0 °C. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 2.21 (s, 6H), 7.05–7.09 (m, 1H), 7.26 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.31–7.34 (m, 2H), 7.43–7.47 (m, 4H), 7.50 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.53–7.56 (m, 2H), 7.88 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 8.06 (s, 1H), 8.17 (d, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 8.84 (d, J = 6.0 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 20.87, 109.72, 115.93, 120.22, 120.44, 120.70, 120.97, 121.22, 123.56, 124.15, 125.33, 126.03, 126.36, 134.96, 135.94, 136.86, 138.49, 140.63, 141.55, 150.63, 156.12, 156.19. ¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, CDCl₃): δ –146.38. ¹¹B NMR (192.5 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 1.07. HRMS (ESI): calcd for C₃₁H₂₇¹¹BF₂N₃O [M+NH₄]⁺ 506.2210, found 506.2221.

References:

- (1) G. Li, A. Wolfe, J. Brooks, Z.-Q. Zhu, and J. Li, Inorg. Chem., 2017, 56, 8244-8256.
- (2) N. G. Connelly, and W. E. Geiger, Chem. Rev., 1996, 96, 877-910.
- (3) D. C. Harris, In Quantitative Chemical Analysis, 6th ed.; W. H. Freeman: New York, 2002; pp 394–396.
- (4) G. Li, W. Lou, D. Wang, C. Deng and Q. Zhang, ACS Appl. Mater. Interfaces, 2019, 11, 32209–32217.
- (5) P. Li, H. Chan, S.-L. Lai, M. Ng, M.-Y. Chan and V. W.-W. Yam, *Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.*, 2019, 58, 90
- (6) Y.-J. Shiu, Y.-C. Cheng, W.-L. Tsai, C.-C. Wu, C.-T. Chao, C.-W. Lu, Y. Chi, Y.-T. Chen, S.-H. Liu and P.-T. Chou, *Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.*, 2016, **55**, 3017–3021.
- (7) B. M. Bell, T. P. Clark, T. S. De Vries, Y. Lai, D. S. Laitar, T. J. Gallagher, J.-H. Jeon, K. L. Kearns, T. McIntire, S. Mukhopadhyay, H.-Y. Na, T. D. Paine and A. A. Rachford, *Dyes Pigm.*, 2017, **141**, 83–92.
- (8) D. Zhou, D. H. Liu, X. Gong, H. L. Ma, G. W. Qian, S. L. Gong, G. H. Xie, W. G. Zhu and Y. F. Wang, ACS Appl. Mater. Interfaces, 2019, 11, 24339–24348.
- (9) K. Matsuo, T. Yasuda and C. Adachi, Chem. Commun., 2017, 53, 8723-8726.
- (10) Y.-J. Shiu, Y.-T. Chen, W.-K. Lee, C.-C. Wu, T.-C. Lin, S.-H. Liu, P.-T. Chou, C.-W. Lu, I.-C. Cheng, Y.-J. Lien, Y. Chi, *J. Mater. Chem. C* 2017, *5*, 1452–1462.



S28 / S44



S**29** / S44









S**31 /** S**44**

ł















S**36** / S**4**4



S**37** / S44





S**39** / S44



Spectrum from 0812sample.wiff (sample 18) - BFDMCz-OH, +TOF MS (100 - 2000) from 1.2...12sample.wiff (sample 18) - BFDMCz-OH, +TOF MS (100 - 2000) from 1.679 to 1.730 min)





S**42** / S**4**4



