Supporting Information for

Gold-catalyzed Michael Addition/Intramolecular Annulation Cascade: an Effective Pathway for the Chemoselective- and Regioselective Synthesis of Tetracyclic Indole Derivatives in Water

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X-ray crystallographic structure of compound 3Ba

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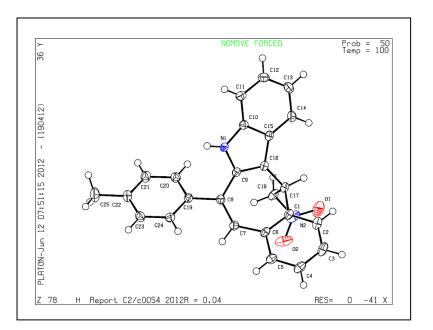
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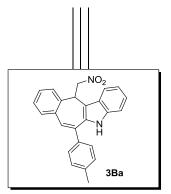
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S = 1.043 Npar= 264						
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X-ray crystallographic structure of compound 3Ba

CCDC 894928 contains the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data can be also obtained free of charge from The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre *via* www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data_request/cif.

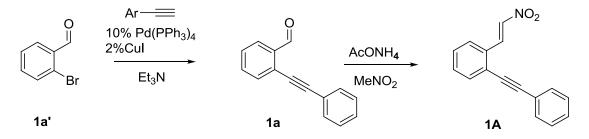
General Information

Commercially available reagents and solvents were used without further purification. Column chromatography was carried out on silica gel. ¹H, ¹³C, ¹⁹F and ³¹P NMR spectra were obtained on Varian Mercury-400 and/or Varian Mercury-500 spectrometers (TMS as IS). Chemical shifts were reported in parts per million (ppm, δ) downfield from tetramethylsilane. Proton coupling patterns are described as singlet (s), doublet (d), triplet (t), quartet (q), double doublet (dd), multipet (m) and broad (br). Low- and high-resolution mass spectra (LRMS and HRMS) were measured on Finnigan MAT 95 spectrometer.

General Procedures for the Synthesis of Starting Materials

General Procedure for Synthesis of (*E*)-1-(2-nitrovinyl)-2-(phenylethynyl)

Benzene (1A)



A dry round bottom flask was charged with 2-bromobenzaldehyde (5.0g, 27.0mmol, 1equiv.), CuI (0.103g, 0.54mmol, 0.02equiv.) and Pd(PPh₃)₄ (3.13g, 2.7mmol, 0.1equiv.). This mixture was then subjected to three purge cycles of vacuum and argon gas. 30 mL of Et₃N and phenylacetylene (5.52g, 54.0mmol, 2equiv.) were added to the reaction mixture and allowed to stir at 60°C for 2h. The reaction mixture was then diluted with ether and water. The aqueous phase was extracted three times with ether. The concentrated organic phases were dried over Na₂SO₄ and concentrated in vacuo. **1a** was obtained by flash column chromatography of the crude product (pure pentane) to yield a yellow liquid (5.09g, 24.68 mmol, 91%).

The titled compound **1A** was prepared according to the literature procedure¹. A solution of **1a** (1g, 4.85mmol, 1equiv.) and ammonium acetate (448mg, 5.82 mmol, 1.2equiv.) in dry nitromethane (5.0 mL) was stirred at 100°C for 1h. After concentration, the residue was partitioned between EtOAc and water. The aqueous layer was extracted with EtOAc, and the combined organic layers were washed with water and brine, dried over Na₂SO₄ and concentrated. Column chromatography (EtOAc:*n*-hexane = 1/100, v/v) to give the titled product **1A** (1.08g, 89%) as a light yellow solid.

Reference:

^[1] A. Poschalko, S. Welzig, M. Treu, S. Nerdinger, K. Mereiter and U. Jordis, *Tetrahedron*, 2002, **58**, 1513-1518.

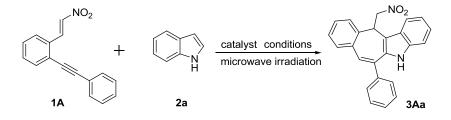


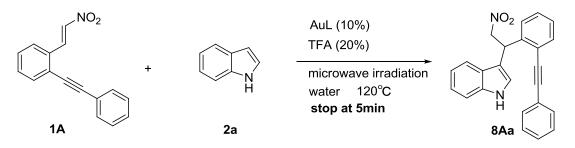
Table 1S. Optimization of the reaction conditions^a

Entry	Catalyst system	Additive	Solvent	Yield (%)
1	Au catalyst I	DBSA ^b	H ₂ O	0
2	AuCl	TFA	H ₂ O	43
3	AuBr ₃	TFA	H ₂ O	57
4	Au catalyst I	TFA	H ₂ O	59 ^c

^{*a*} *Reaction conditions*: 1A (0.2 mmol), 2a (0.3 mmol), catalyst (0.02 mmol), additive (0.04 mmol), water (3 mL) under 120°C for 20 min. ^{*b*} DBAS= Dodecyl benzenesulfonic acid. ^{*c*} Reaction was performed at 120°C in water using oil bath for 14h.

Characterization of the Michael Addition Intermediate 8Aa

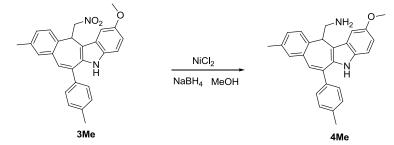
3-(2-nitro-1-(2-(phenylethynyl) phenyl) ethyl)-1H-indole (8Aa)



To a mixture of (*E*)-1-(2-nitrovinyl)-2-(phenylethynyl)benzene (**1A**, 0.2 mmol) and indole (**2a**, 0.3 mmol) in 3 mL of H₂O was added Au catalyst I (0.02 mmol) and trifluoroethanoic acid (0.04 mmol). The reaction vial was sealed and the mixture was then irradiated at 120°C for 5 min. After the reaction was cooled to ambient temperature, the mixture was concentrated in vacuum, and the resulting residue was purified by flash chromatography (petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 10/1, v/v) to afford the expected product **8Aa** (46mg, 62%) as light yellow solid. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.14 (s, 1H), 7.62-7.60 (m, 3H), 7.48-7.46 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.36-7.35 (m, 4H), 7.26-7.18 (m, 5H), 7.05 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 5.95 (dd, *J* = 9.6, 6.4 Hz, 1H), 5.13-5.03 (m, 2H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 140.6, 136.5, 132.7, 131.7, 128.8, 128.6, 128.5, 127.6, 127.4, 126.5, 122.8, 122.8, 122.7, 121.7, 119.9, 119.2, 113.7, 111.3, 95.3, 86.8, 78.4, 39.5; LRMS (ESI) *m/z* 367 (M+H)⁺.

Derivatization of Product 3Me

2-Methoxy-9-methyl-6-(*p*-tolyl)-5,12-dihydrobenzo[4,5]cyclohepta[1,2-*b*]indol-12 -yl) methanamine (4Me)



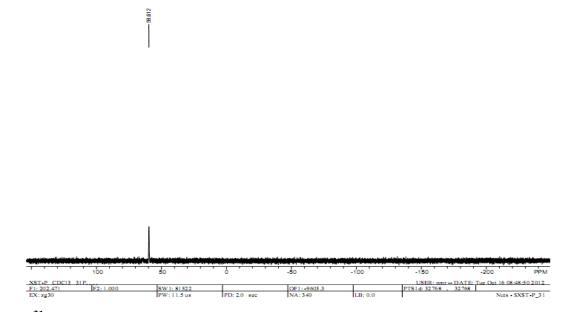
To a suspension of **3Me** (51.0 mg, 0.12 mmol, 1equiv.), NiCl₂ (15.6 mg, 0.12 mmol, 1 equiv.) in 5 mL MeOH was added NaBH₄ (22.7 mg, 0.60 mmol, 5 equiv.) at 0 °C for 1h. The reaction mixture was then quenched with saturated NH₄Cl solution and extracted with CH₂Cl₂. The combined organic phases was washed with brine and dried over MgSO₄. The concentrated organic fractions was then purified by flash column chromatography (DCM/MeOH = 15/1, v/v) to yield a yellow solid (32.0 mg, 67%). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.75 (s, 1H), 7.48-7.46 (m, 2H), 7.29-7.26 (m, 5H), 7.18-7.07 (m, 2H), 6.92 (s, 1H), 6.81-6.79 (m, 1H), 4.47 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 3.89 (s, 3H), 2.98 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.44 (s, 3H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.25-2.15 (br, 2H); LRMS (ESI) m/z 395 [M + H]+.

Stability test of Au catalyst I

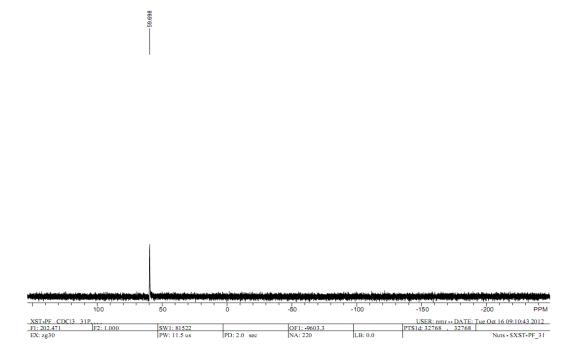
Experiments were conducted to detect the stability of the Au catalyst I at high temperature: Au catalyst I+TFA were heated at 140°C for 30min, and followed by ³¹P NMR. As references, the ³¹P of the pure Au catalyst I and Au catalyst I+TFA at room temperature are measured.

Comparing ³¹P NMR of three spectrums shows Au catalyst I did not decompose and generate any leaching of the ligand in the presence of TFA at high temperature.

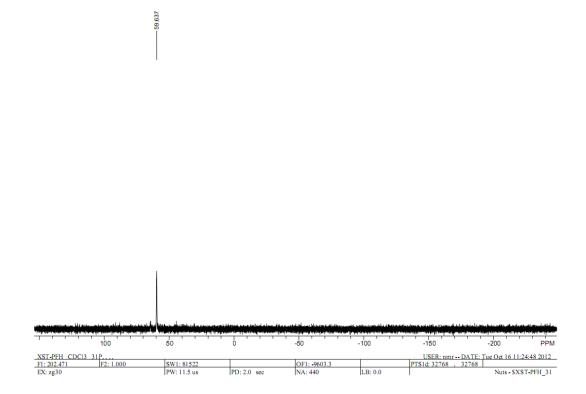
a) ³¹P NMR of pure Au catalyst I at room temperature



b) ³¹P NMR of Au catalyst I and TFA at room temperature

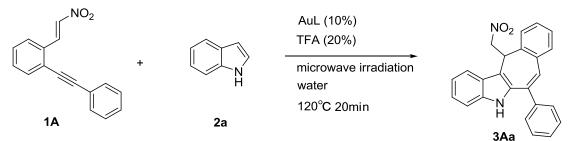


c) $^{31}\mathrm{P}\,\mathrm{NMR}$ of Au catalyst I and TFA at 140 $^{o}\mathrm{C}$ for 30min



General Procedure for Synthesis of 3Aa-3Mk

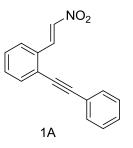
Typical procedure for synthesis of the 12-(Nitromethyl)-6-phenyl-5, 12-dihydrobenzo [4,5]cyclohepta[1,2-*b*]indoles (3Aa as an Example) in water.



To a mixture of (*E*)-1-(2-nitrovinyl)-2-(phenylethynyl)benzene (**1A**, 0.2 mmol) and indole (**2a**, 0.3 mmol) in 3 mL of H₂O was added Au catalyst I (0.02 mmol) and trifluoroethanoic acid (0.04 mmol). The reaction vial was sealed and the mixture was then irradiated at 120°C for 20 min. After cooling to ambient temperature, the mixture was concentrated in vacuum, and the resulting residue was purified by flash chromatography (petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 10/1, v/v) to afford the expected product **3Aa** (64 mg, 87%) as white solid.

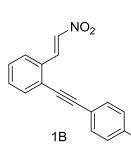
Characterization Data for Starting Materials

(E)-1-(2-nitrovinyl)-2-(phenylethynyl) benzene (1A)



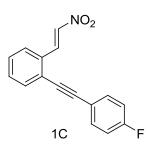
¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.55 (d, *J* = 13.6 Hz, 1H), 7.80 (d, *J* = 13.6 Hz, 1H), 7.65-7.58 (m, 4H), 7.49-7.42 (m, 1H), 7.40-7.38 (m, 4H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 137.8, 136.7, 132.8, 131.2, 131.1, 131.0, 130.7, 128.7, 128.3, 128.1, 127.3, 124.8, 121.8, 96.5, 85.9, 76.5; LRMS (ESI) *m*/*z* 250 (M+H)⁺.

(E)-1-(2-nitrovinyl)-2-(p-tolylethynyl) benzene (1B)



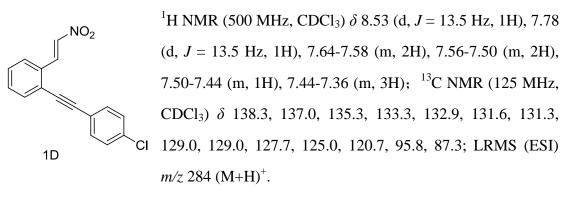
¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.56 (d, J = 13.6 Hz, 1H), 7.81 (d, J = 13.6 Hz, 1H), 7.64-7.58 (m, 2H), 7.53-7.42 (m, 3H), 7.40-7.34 (m, 1H), 7.23-7.19 (m, 2H), 2.40 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 139.4, 138.1, 137.2, 133.2, 131.5, 131.4, 131.1, 129.3, 128.5, 127.8, 125.5, 119.1, 97.3, 85.9, 21.6; LRMS (ESI) m/z 264 (M+H)⁺.

(E)-1-((4-fluorophenyl) ethynyl)-2-(2-nitrovinyl) benzene (1C)

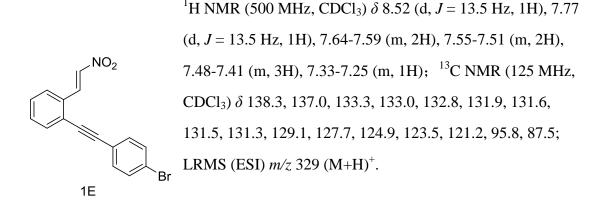


¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.53 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.79 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.67-7.55 (m, 4H), 7.52-7.44 (m, 2H), 7.14-7.08 (m, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 164.0 (d, J = 278 Hz), 138.3, 137.1, 133.7(d, J = 8 Hz), 133.3 (d, J = 8Hz), 131.6, 131.2, 128.3, 127.8, 125.1, 116.0 (d, J = 22 Hz), 115.6 (d, J = 22 Hz), 95.9, 86.2; LRMS (ESI) m/z 268 (M+H)⁺.

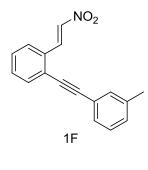
(E)-1-((4-chlorophenyl) ethynyl)-2-(2-nitrovinyl) benzene (1D)



(E)-1-((4-bromophenyl) ethynyl)-2-(2-nitrovinyl) benzene (1E)

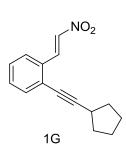


(E)-1-(2-nitrovinyl)-2-(m-tolylethynyl) benzene (1F)



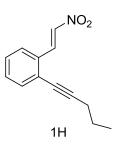
¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.52 (d, *J* = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.81 (d, *J* = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.69-7.54 (m, 2H), 7.5-7.36 (m, 4H), 7.33-7.08 (m, 2H), 2.39 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 138.3, 138.2, 137.2, 133.3, 132.2, 131.5, 131.2, 130.1, 128.8, 128.7, 128.5, 127.8, 125.4, 122.1, 97.3, 86.1, 21.3; LRMS (ESI) *m*/*z* 264(M+H)⁺.

(E)-1-(cyclopentylethynyl)-2-(2-nitrovinyl) benzene (1G)



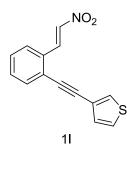
¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.43 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.76 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.57-7.45 (m, 2H), 7.42-7.27 (m, 2H), 3.13- 2.77 (m, 1H), 2.14-1.93 (m, 2H), 1.90-1.71 (m, 4H), 1.70 -1.57 (m, 2H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 137.9, 137.5, 133.2, 131.3, 131.1, 128.0, 127.7, 126.2, 103.1, 77.6, 33.8, 31.0, 25.0; LRMS (ESI) m/z 242 (M+H)⁺.

(E)-1-(2-nitrovinyl)-2-(pent-1-ynyl) benzene (1H)



¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.46 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.74 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.57-7.48 (m, 2H), 7.43-7.28 (m, 2H), 2.49 (t, J = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 1.79-1.63 (m, 2H), 1.09 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 137.9, 137.5, 133.4, 131.4, 131.2, 128.1, 127.5, 126.2, 98.7, 78.1, 22.0, 21.7, 13.6; LRMS (ESI) m/z 216 (M+H)⁺.

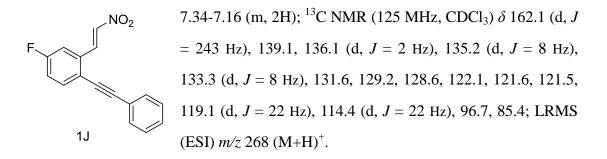
(E)-3-((2-(2-nitrovinyl) phenyl) ethynyl) thiophene (1I)



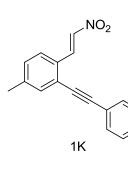
¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.52 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.81 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.66-7.57 (m, 3H), 7.49-7.44 (m, 1H), 7.41-7.35 (m, 2H), 7.30-7.26 (m, 1H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 138.3, 137.2, 133.2, 131.5, 131.1, 129.8, 129.7, 128.7, 127.9, 125.9, 125.2, 121.3, 92.3, 86.1; LRMS (ESI) m/z 256 (M+H)⁺.

(E)-4-fluoro-2-(2-nitrovinyl)-1-(phenylethynyl) benzene (1J)

¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.51 (d, *J* = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.74 (d, *J* = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.66-7.56 (m, 3H), 7.44-7.37 (m, 3H),

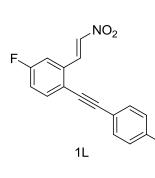


(E)-4-methyl-1-(2-nitrovinyl)-2-(phenylethynyl) benzene (1K)



¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.52 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.79 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.64-7.57 (m, 2H), 7.51-7.45 (m, 2H), 7.44-7.37 (m, 3H), 7.23-7.16 (m, 1H), 2.42 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 142.4, 137.5, 137.2, 133.8, 131.7, 129.9, 129.1, 128.6, 128.5, 127.9, 125.2, 122.4, 96.6, 86.6, 21.4; LRMS (ESI) m/z 264 (M+H)⁺.

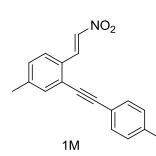
(E)-4-fluoro-2-(2-nitrovinyl)-1-(p-tolylethynyl) benzene (1L)



¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.53 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.80 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.53-7.38 (m, 4H), 7.23-7.20 (m, 1H), 7.17-7.07 (m, 2H), 2.43 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 161.0 (d, J = 237 Hz), 139.5 (d, J = 10 Hz), 139.0, 136.1 (d, J = 2 Hz), 135.1 (d, J = 9 Hz), 133.1, 132.4, 131.5, 129.4, 129.2, 121.7, 119.1 (d, J = 22 Hz), 118.9, 114.3 (d, J = 23 Hz), 97.0, 84.9, 21.6; LRMS (ESI) m/z 282 (M+H)⁺.

(E)-4methyl-1-(2-nitrovinyl)-2-(p-tolylethynyl) benzene (1M)

¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.50 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.79 (d, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 7.54-7.42 (m, 4H), 7.24-7.14 (m, 3H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃)



δ 142.4, 139.4, 137.4, 137.3, 133.8, 131.6, 129.7, 129.4, 128.3, 127.9, 125.4, 119.3, 96.9, 86.1, 21.6, 21.4; LRMS (ESI) *m/z* 278 (M+H)⁺.



