Supporting Information

Rh(III)-Catalyzed C–H Functionalization/Aromatization Cascade with 1,3-Dienes: A Redox-Neutral and Regioselective Access to Isoquinolines

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1 General information

Unless otherwise noted, all reactions were carried out under an atmosphere of argon in flamedried glassware. Reaction temperatures are reported as the temperature of the bath surrounding the vessel unless otherwise stated. The solvents used were purified by distillation over the drying agents indicated in parentheses and were transferred under argon.

Commercially available chemicals were obtained from Acros Organics, Aldrich Chemical Co., Strem Chemicals, Alfa Aesar, ABCR and TCI Europe and used as received unless otherwise stated.

Analytical thin layer chromatography was performed on Polygram SIL G/UV₂₅₄ plates. Flash chromatography was either performed on Merck silica gel (40-63 mesh) by standard technique eluting with solvents as indicated.

GC-MS Spectra were recorded on an Agilent Technologies 7890A GC-system with an Agilent 5975C VL MSD or an Agilent 5975 inert Mass Selective Detector (EI) and a HP-5MS column (0.25 mm \times 30 m, Film: 0.25 μ m). The major signals are quoted in m/z with the relative intensity in parentheses.

¹H and ¹³C-NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker AV 300 or AV 400, Varian 500 MHz INOVA or Varian Unity plus 600 in solvents as indicate. Chemical shifts (δ) are given in ppm relative to TMS. The residual solvent signals were used as references and the chemical shifts converted to the TMS scale (CDCl₃: δ_H = 7.26 ppm, δ_C = 77.16 ppm). ESI mass spectra were recorded on a Bruker Daltonics MicroTof. No attempts were made to optimize yields for substrate synthesis.

2 Synthesis of *O*-pivaloyl arylketoximes and diverse 1,3-dienes

2.1 General procedure for the synthesis of *O*-pivaloyl arylketoximes^[1]



To a solution of aryl ketone (22.0 mmol) and pyridine (5.0 mL, 61.8 mmol) in EtOH (10 mL) was added NH₂OH•HCl (2.29 g, 33.0 mmol) in one portion and the reaction mixture was stirred at 60 °C for 1 h. The reaction was quenched by adding water and the organic materials were extracted twice with ethyl acetate. The combined extracts were washed with 1N aqueous HCl and brine, and dried over MgSO₄. Volatile materials were removed in vacuo to give aryl ketone oxime **2**, which was used for the next acetylation without further purification.

Pivalic anhydride (2.23 mL, 11 mmol, 1.1 equiv.) was added to a solution of aryl ketone oxime 2 (1.35 g, 10 mmol, 1 equiv.) in dichloromethane (30 mL). The reaction mixture was allowed to stir for 16 h at room temperature after which it was diluted with more dichloromethane and washed with sat. NaHCO₃. The organic layer was dried over MgSO₄, filtered and evaporated under reduced pressure to afford 7 in an analytically pure form.

2.2 General procedure for the synthesis of 1,3-dienes



It was prepared as described procedure by Rodriguez & Waegell, *Synthesis*, **1988**, 7, 534. Acrolein (20 mmol) and DMAP (184 mg, 15 mmol) are successively and rapidly added to a solution of monoethyl malonate 2 (3.54 g, 30 mmol) in pyridine (6 mL), and the solution is warmed to 50 °C for 24 h. Then, the reaction mixture is poured into water and extracted with ether. The ether extract is washed with 15% HCl, and dried (Na_2SO_4) and the ether extract is removed under reduced pressure. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel using ether/pentane (10:90) as eluent.

CHO + CH₃CN
$$\xrightarrow{\text{n-BuLi}}$$
 $\xrightarrow{\text{CICOOMe}}$ $\xrightarrow{\text{CN}}$ CN

- - - - -

It was prepared as described procedure by M. Braun, S. Mroß, I. Schwarz, *Synthesis*, **1998**, 83-88. Under Ar atmosphere, a 1.6 M solution of BuLi in hexane (6.6 mL, 10.5 mmol)

was stirred in a 50 mL two-necked flask, equipped with a magnetic stirrer, a septum, and a thermocouple. After cooling to -20° C, anhyd THF (8 mL) was added, and the mixture was cooled to -78° C. In a second flask, a solution of MeCN (0.52 mL, 10 mmol) in anhyd THF (2 mL) was prepared under Argon and also cooled to -78° C. The solution of MeCN was transferred by a cannula into the slightly evacuated flask containing the solution of BuLi. The temperature was allowed to reach -50° C, and a white precipitate formed gradually. The mixture was cooled to -78° C, and acrolein (0.8 mL, 12 mmol) was injected in one portion whereby the temperature reached -50° C. The cooling bath was removed, so that the mixture warmed up to -20° C. Methyl chloroformate (0.92 mL, 12 mmol) was injected rapidly, and the temperature rose to 15° C within 1 min. After stirring for 18 h at r.t., Sat. aq NH₄Cl (10 mL) and H₂O (10 mL) were added and the mixture was extracted with Et₂O. The combined organic layers were washed with H₂O (20 mL) and brine (20 mL) and dried (MgSO₄). The solvent was removed in a rotary evaporator and the residue was purified by column chromatography.

A 5 mL two-necked flask was equipped with a magnetic stirrer and charged with the crude product (5.0 mmol). Pd(PPh₃)₄ (0.058–0.289 g; 0.05–0.25 mmol) was added, and the mixture was stirred under N₂ at 25 to 35 °C until the evolution of CO₂ ceased. The crude product was purified by distillation or column chromatography.



Prepared as described by S. H. Hwang, M. J. Kurth, *Tet. Lett.* **2002**, *43*, 53-56. The CH₃I (5 equiv.) was added to the solution of sodium benzenesulfinate (30.3 mmol) in THF (80 mL) under Argon atmosphere. The reaction mixture was stirred and allowed to warm to reflux for 12 h. Then, the reaction mixture was concentrated and then dissolved in dichloromethane, washed with water and brine, dried with MgSO₄, filtered, and concentrated under reduced pressure to give the product A.

n-BuLi (1.6 M in hexanes, 48 mmol)) was added to a cooled (-78 °C), stirred solution of the product **A** (40 mmol) in dry THF (50 mL). After 1 h stirring at the same temperature, acrolein (2.93 mL, 44 mmol) in THF (5 mL) was added dropwise. After 5 min stirring at - 78 °C, the reaction was allowed to room temperature for 30 min, and then quenched by addition of sat. NH₄Cl. The mixture was then poured onto ether, washed with sat. NaCl, the organic phase separated, dried over MgSO₄, filtered and evaporated, furnishing the corresponding aldol product in quantitative yield, which was used in the next reaction with no

further purification. The crude product obtained (40 mmol) was treated with Ac_2O (3 equiv.) and DBU (4 equiv.). The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 24 h. Then, the reaction was treated with sat NaHCO₃, extracted with Et₂O, the organic phase dried over MgSO₄, filtered and evaporated. Chromatographic purification of the product furnished the 1,3- diene product as a yellow liquid.

Prepared as described by Bernardi, L *et al.; J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2007**, *129*, 5772. Acetone (2.94 mL, 40 mmol) in dry THF (5 mL) was added to a cooled (-78 °C), stirred solution of LDA (freshly prepared from diisopropylamine (6.7 mL, 48 mmol) and *n*-BuLi (1.6 M in hexanes, 48 mmol)) in dry THF (50 mL). After 1 h stirring at the same temperature, acrolein (2.93 mL, 44 mmol) in THF (5 mL) was added dropwise. After 5 min stirring at -78 °C, the reaction was quenched by addition of sat. NH₄Cl. The mixture was then poured onto ether, washed with sat. NaCl, the organic phase separated, dried over MgSO₄, filtered and evaporated, furnishing the corresponding aldol product in quantitative yield, which was used in the next reaction with no further purification. The crude product obtained (40 mmol) was treated with Ac₂O (10.2 mL, 80 mmol) and NaOAc (2.0 g). The mixture was stirred overnight at room temperature then heated at 100 °C for 1 h. After cooling, the reaction was treated with sat NaHCO₃, extracted with Et₂O, the organic phase dried over MgSO₄, filtered and carefully evaporated (p >300 mbar, T <30 °C). Chromatographic purification of the product (pentane /Et₂O, removed at p >300 mbar, T <30 °C) furnished the product as a pale yellow liquid.



A mixture of triphenylphosphine (14.8 g, 56.4 mmol) and methyl-2-bromopropionate (7.00 mL, 62.7 mmol) in H₂O was stirred at 70 °C for 24 h. The yellow mixture was cooled to room temperature and a solution of NaOH (5.02 g, 125.5 mmol) in H₂O (147 mL) was added. The resulting mixture was swirled for 5 min at room temperature and CH_2Cl_2 was added to dissolve the yellow sticky solid that formed. The organic layer was separated and the aqueous layer was extracted with CH_2Cl_2 . The combined organic layers were washed with brine, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated *in vacuo*. The solid residue was triturated with hexane and filtered. The resulting solid was dried *in vacuo* to give the ylide (18.3 g, 93 %) as a

yellow solid.

To acrolein (1.46 mL, 22 mmol) in CH_2Cl_2 (50 mL) was added the ylide (8.9 g, 25.5 mmol) at 0 °C. The resulting mixture was stirred from 0 °C to room temperature over 12 h before it was concentrated *in vacuo*. Flash column chromatography of the crude product over silica gel afforded the 1,3-diene as a colorless liquid.



Prepared as described by M. Sylla, D. Joseph, E. Chevallier, C. Camara, F. Dumas, *Synthesis* **2006**, 1045. Ac₂O (1.6 mL, 20 mmol), anhyd LiBr (170 mg, 2 mmol) and malonate (10 mmol) were placed in a round-bottomed flask (10 mL) equipped with a magnetic stirrer and a vapor condenser fitted with a septum-held gas-inlet tube. The resulting mixture was stirred for 10 min to 4 h (see Table 1) at 80 °C under nitrogen. Then, acrolein (1.7 mL, 30 mmol) was added in one portion through the vapor condenser and the solution was stirred at 80 °C until full consumption of malonate. The reaction mixture was allowed to cool to r.t. and slowly decomposed in a sat. solution of Na₂CO₃ (25 mL). The aqueous phase was extracted with Et₂O (2 × 15 mL) and the combined organic phases were washed with brine and, after drying, were evaporated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified using flash chromatography.

CHO +
$$PO(OEt)_2$$
 NaH, toluene
PO(OEt)_2 RT PO(OEt)_2

Prepared as described by E. Villemin, K. Robeyns, R. Robiette, M.-F. Herent, J. Marchand-Brynaert, *Tetrahedron* **2013**, *69*, 1138. To a suspension of sodium hydride (60% oil dispersed, 0.15 g, 3.65 mmol) in dry toluene (8 mL) was added tetrabenzyl methylenediphosphonate (1.96 g, 3.65 mmol) at room temperature. After about 15 min (end of gaseous dihydrogen evolution), a solution of acrolein (213 mL, 0.17 g, 3.04 mmol) in dry toluene (8 mL) was added dropwise to the solution and the mixture was stirred for two additional hours. After addition of water, the aqueous layer was extracted with dichloromethane and the combined organic portions were dried over magnesium sulfate. Filtration and concentration under reduced pressure gave the crude diene, which is purified by silica gel chromatography with ethyl acetate.



To a suspension of methyltriphenylphosphonium bromide (3.57 g, 10 mmol) in THF (50 ml) at 0 °C was added dropwise n-butyllithium (2 M in cyclohexane, 5 mL, 10 mmol). The reaction mixture was stirred for 15 min and the cinnamaldehyde (1.0 ml, 8 mmol) was added as a solution in THF (10 mL). After 1 h the solution was warmed to room temperature and stirred for additional 1 h. A saturated solution of NH₄Cl (50 mL) was added and the mixture was extracted with Et_2O (3×100 mL). The combined organic phases were washed with brine (100 ml), dried over MgSO₄, and the solvents were removed under reduced pressure (300 mbar, 40 °C). The residue was applied to a plug of silica, eluted with hexane, and the solvent was removed carefully under reduced pressure (300 mbar, 40 °C) to obtain the title compound (1.00 g, 96%) as a colorless liquid.

3 Rh(III)-catalyzed redox-neutral C-H/N-H annulation/isomerisation to isoquinoline from 1,3-dienes

3.1 General procedure for Rh(III)-catalyzed redox-neutral C-H/N-H annulation/isomerisation to isoquinoline from 1,3-dienes



To a 50 mL screw-capped vial equipped with a 10 x 5 mm spinvane-shaped Teflon stir bar were charged with 1 (0.2 mmol), 1,3-diene 2 (0.25 mmol), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (2.5 mol%), AgSbF₆ (15 mol%), PivOH (3.0 equiv.), and 1,2-dichloroethane (1.0 mL) under the Argon atmosphere. The resulting mixture was sealed with a Teflon-lined cap and stirred at 100 °C for 20 h in an oil bath. The reaction was cooled to room temperature, diluted with dichloromethane (15 mL) and washed with saturated NaHCO₃ solution. The organic phase was concentrate under the reduce pressure. The desired product was obtained by column chromatography using an appropriate eluent.

3.2 Procedure for the gram scale preparation of isoquinoline 3a

To a 100 mL screw-capped vial equipped with a 10 x 5 mm spinvane-shaped Teflon stir bar were charged with *O*-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (1.095 g, 5 mmol),, (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (787.5 mg, 6.25 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (77.5 mg, 0.125 mmol), AgSbF₆ (257.5 mg, 0.03 mmol), acetic acid (720 μ L, 12 mmol), and 1,2-dichloroethane (20 mL) under the Argon atmosphere. The resulting mixture was sealed with a Teflon-lined cap and stirred at 100 °C for 20 h in an oil bath. The reaction was cooled to room temperature, diluted with dichloromethane (25 mL) and washed with saturated NaHCO₃ solution. The desired product was obtained by column chromatography. Ethyl 3-(1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3a**) was formed in 81% yield (984 mg).

Ethyl 3-(1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3a)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (43.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-

dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(1-methylisoquinolin-3yl)propanoate (**3a**) was formed in 86% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 2:1): 0.25; ¹H NMR (**400 MHz, CDCl₃**): δ 8.09 – 7.99 (m, 1H), 7.71 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.60 (ddd, *J* = 8.1, 6.9, 1.1 Hz, 1H), 7.50 (ddd, *J* = 8.2, 6.9, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.35 (s, 1H), 4.12 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.20 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.91 (s, 3H), 2.84 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 1.21 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (**101 MHz, CDCl₃**): δ 173.27, 158.38, 152.22, 136.61, 129.97, 126.95, 126.40, 126.11, 125.59, 117.03, 60.40, 34.24, 33.06, 22.42, 14.32. HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₆H₂₃NO₃P]⁺: 308.1416, found: 308.1421.

Ethyl 3-(1,8-dimethylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3b)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl *m*-tolylketoxime (46.6 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol),

PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(1,8-

dimethylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3b**) was formed in 63% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 2:1): 0.3; ¹**H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃)**: δ 7.55 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.46 – 7.40 (m, 1H), 7.32 (s, 1H), 7.29 (d, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 1H), 4.13 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.17 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 3.11 (s, 3H), 2.95 – 2.88 (m, 3H), 2.88 – 2.78 (m, 2H), 1.23 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³**C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃)**: δ 173.37, 158.49, 151.11, 138.85, 136.27, 130.03, 129.46, 127.09, 126.06, 118.19, 60.46, 34.10, 32.52, 29.37, 25.92, 14.38. **HRMS**: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₆H₂₀NO₂]⁺ 258.1494, found 258.1495.

Ethyl 3-(1,7-dimethylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3c)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl *m*-tolylketoxime (46.6 mg, 0.2 mmol), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3

mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(1,7-dimethylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3c**) was formed in 81% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 2:1): 0.25; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.82 (s, 1H), 7.62 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (dd, *J* = 8.4, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.31 (s, 1H), 4.12 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.19 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.90 (s, 3H), 2.83 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.53 (s, 3H), 1.22 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C **NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 173.33, 157.65, 151.43, 136.23, 134.91, 132.22, 126.83, 126.33, 124.58, 116.87, 60.39, 34.36, 33.03, 22.38, 22.07, 14.36. **HRMS**: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₆H₂₀NO₂]⁺ 258.1494, found 258.1491.

Ethyl 3-(1,6-dimethylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3d)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl *p*-tolylketoxime (46.6 mg, 0.2 mmol), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3

mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(1,6-dimethylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3d) was formed in 91% yield. $\mathbf{R_f}$ (pentane/ethyl acetate 2:1): 0.22; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.72 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.12 (dd, J = 8.6, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.05 (s, 1H), 3.91 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 2.97 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.67 (s, 3H), 2.61 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.29 (s, 3H), 1.01 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101

MHz, CDCl₃): δ 173.32, 158.04, 152.28, 140.22, 136.98, 128.63, 125.92, 125.48, 124.53, 116.61, 60.41, 34.32, 33.11, 22.35, 21.93, 14.35. **HRMS:** m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₆H₂₀NO₂]⁺ 258.1494, found 258.1492.

Ethyl 3-(6-methoxy-1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3e)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl *p*-methoxyphenyl ketoxime (49.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25

mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(6-methoxy-1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3e**) was formed in 88% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 2:1): 0.20; ¹H **NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 7.87 (d, J = 9.2 Hz, 1H), 7.19 (s, 1H), 7.05 (dd, J = 9.2, 2.5 Hz, 1H), 6.90 (d, J = 2.5 Hz, 1H), 4.05 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.84 (s, 3H), 3.10 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 2.79 (s, 3H), 2.75 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 1.15 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 4H). ¹³C **NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 173.33, 160.74, 157.72, 152.93, 138.80, 127.48, 121.83, 119.10, 116.63, 104.69, 60.40, 55.50, 34.29, 33.09, 22.26, 14.35. **HRMS**: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₆H₂₀NO₃]⁺: 274.1443, found: 274.1437.

Ethyl 3-(6-fluoro-1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3f)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried O-pivaloyl *p*-fluorophenyl ketoxime (47.4 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl

penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(6-fluoro-1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3f**) was formed in 86% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 2:1): 0.30; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.07 (dd, J = 9.1, 5.5 Hz, 1H), 7.38 – 7.19 (m, 3H), 4.12 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.18 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 2.90 (s, 3H), 2.83 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 1.22 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 173.22, 164.41, 161.92, 158.35, 153.48, 138.41, 138.30, 128.79, 128.69, 123.39, 116.89, 116.84, 116.80, 116.55, 110.27, 110.07, 60.49, 34.07, 33.02, 22.58, 14.36. HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₅H₁₇FNO₂]⁺: 262.1243, found 262.1244.

Ethyl 3-(6-chloro-1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3g)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl *p*-chlorophenyl ketoxime (50.6 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3

mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(6-chloro-1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3g**) was formed in 82% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 2:1): 0.20; ¹H **NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃)**: δ 7.99 (dt, *J* = 8.9, 0.7 Hz, 1H), 7.69 (d, *J* = 2.1 Hz, 1H), 7.44 (dd, *J* = 8.9, 2.1 Hz, 1H), 7.27 (s, 1H), 4.12 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.19 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 2.90 (s, 3H), 2.83 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 1.22 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C **NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃)**: δ 173.18, 158.49, 153.58, 137.56, 136.24, 127.45, 127.41, 125.74, 124.38, 116.33, 60.51, 34.05, 33.00, 22.44, 14.37. **HRMS**: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₅H₁₇ClNO₂]⁺ 278.0948, found 278.0948.

Ethyl 3-(6-bromo-1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3h)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried OEt out with *O*-pivaloyl *p*-bromophenyl ketoxime (59.6 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl

penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(6-bromo-1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3h**) was formed in 79% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 2:1): 0.20; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.99 – 7.82 (m, 2H), 7.58 (dd, J = 8.9, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.26 (s, 1H), 4.12 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.19 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 2.90 (s, 3H), 2.83 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 1.22 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): \ddot{a} 173.16, 158.60, 153.56, 137.88, 129.94, 129.09, 127.42, 124.79, 124.56, 116.16, 60.51, 34.04, 33.01, 22.41, 14.37.

HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for $[C_{15}H_{17}BrNO_2]^+$: 322.0443, found 322.0424.

Ethyl 3-(1-methyl-6-(trifluoromethyl)isoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3i)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl *p*-trifluoromethylphenyl ketoxime

(57.4 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(1-methyl-6-(trifluoromethyl)isoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3i**) was formed in 83% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 2:1): 0.20; ¹H **NMR** (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.18 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 1H), 8.03 (s, 1H), 7.68 (dd, *J* = 8.8, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (s, 1H), 4.13 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.23 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 2.96 (s, 3H), 2.86 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 1.23 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C **NMR** (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 173.14, 158.74, 153.94, 135.84, 131.83, 131.51, 126.95, 125.30, 124.79, 124.75, 122.59, 122.12, 117.63, 60.56, 33.96, 32.99, 22.56, 14.36. HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₆H₁₇F₃NO₂]⁺: 312.1211, found 312.1211.

Ethyl 3-(6-cyano-1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3j)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl *p*-cyanophenyl ketoxime (48.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3

mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(6-cyano-1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3j**) was formed in 64% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 1:1): 0.20; ¹H NMR (**300** MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.16 (dt, J = 8.7, 0.9 Hz, 1H), 8.11 (d, J = 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.66 (dd, J = 8.7, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.41 (s, 1H), 4.12 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.22 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 2.95 (d, J = 0.6 Hz, 3H), 2.85 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 1.22 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 173.03, 158.96, 154.52, 135.70, 133.02, 127.11, 127.08, 126.72, 118.46, 116.89, 113.69, 60.57, 33.77, 32.92, 22.50, 14.35. HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₆H₁₇N₂O₂]⁺: 269.1290, found 269.1280.

Ethyl 3-(1-methyl-6-nitroisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3k)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was OEt carried out with *O*-pivaloyl *p*-nitrophenyl ketoxime (52.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005

mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(6-Ethyl 3-(1-methyl-6-nitroisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3k**) was formed in 64% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 1:1): 0.20; ¹H NMR (**300 MHz, CDCl₃**): δ 8.64 (d, *J* = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 8.31 – 8.17 (m, 2H), 7.55 (s, 1H), 4.13 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.25 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 2.99 (s, 3H), 2.87 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 1.23 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 173.02, 159.03, 154.84, 148.22, 136.02, 127.83, 127.74, 123.29, 119.82, 118.34, 60.60, 33.75, 32.89, 22.71, 14.37, 1.15. HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₅H₁₇N₂O₄]⁺ 289.1188, found 289.1179.

Ethyl 3-(1,6,7-trimethylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3l)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried OEt out with *O*-pivaloyl 3,4-dimethylphenyl ketoxime (49.4 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-

ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(6- Ethyl 3-(1- methyl-6-nitroisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**31**) was formed in 80% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 1:1): 0.20; ¹H **NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 7.78 (s, 1H), 7.46 (s, 1H), 7.24 (s, 1H), 4.12 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.18 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.88 (s, 3H), 2.82 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.43 (d, *J* = 6.7 Hz, 6H), 1.22 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C **NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 173.36, 157.29, 151.39, 140.29, 136.21, 135.66, 126.51, 125.13, 116.25, 60.37, 34.42, 33.10, 22.31, 20.56, 20.43, 14.36. **HRMS:** m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₇H₂₂NO₂]⁺ 272.1651, found 272.1655.

Ethyl 3-(1-ethylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3m)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out OEt with propiophenone O-pivaloyl oxime (46.6 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-

dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(1-ethylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3m**) was formed in 88% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 1:1): 0.20; ¹**H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 8.10 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.72 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.66 – 7.55 (m, 1H), 7.50 (ddd, *J* = 8.2, 6.9, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.35 (s, 1H), 4.13 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.39 – 3.10 (m, 4H), 2.86 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 1.42 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 3H), 1.22 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³**C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 173.38, 162.93, 152.32, 137.04, 129.77, 127.18, 126.32, 125.32, 125.25, 116.90, 60.38, 34.17, 33.07, 28.57, 14.34, 13.86. **HRMS**: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₆H₂₀NO₂]⁺ 258.1494, found 258.1489.

Ethyl 3-(1-isopropylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (3n)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with 2-methyl-1-phenylpropan-1-one *O*-pivaloyl oxime (49.4 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg,

0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(1-isopropylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**3n**) was formed in 73% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 5:1): 0.25; ¹H NMR (**300** MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.16 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.73 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.59 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 1H), 7.54 – 7.45 (m, 1H), 7.32 (s, 1H), 4.14 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.90 (p, J = 6.7 Hz, 1H), 3.23 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 2.89 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 1.41 (d, J = 6.8 Hz, 6H), 1.24 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 173.73, 165.74, 152.11, 137.14, 129.45, 127.31, 126.11, 124.81, 124.74, 116.59, 60.40, 33.79, 32.91, 31.17, 22.37, 14.38. HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₇H₂₂NO₂]⁺: 272.1651, found 272.1652.

Ethyl 3-(8,9-dihydro-7H-benzo[de]quinolin-2-yl)propanoate (30)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with 3,4-dihydronaphthalen-1(2H)-one O-pivaloyl oxime (49 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg,

0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(8,9-dihydro-7H-benzo[de]quinolin-2-yl)propanoate (**3o**) was formed in 82% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 5:1): 0.25; ¹H NMR (**400 MHz, CDCl₃**): δ 7.57 – 7.46 (m, 2H), 7.32 (s, 1H), 7.29 – 7.21 (m, 1H), 4.12 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.27 – 3.15 (m, 4H), 3.14 – 3.03 (m, 2H), 2.83 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 7.3 Hz, 2H), 2.17 (p, *J* = 6.2 Hz, 2H), 1.22 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (**101 MHz, CDCl₃**): δ 173.30, 160.10, 152.24, 138.76, 136.88, 130.13, 124.43, 124.14, 123.92, 116.80, 60.45, 34.40, 33.16, 30.54, 23.41, 14.36. HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₇H₂₀NO₂]⁺: 270.1494, found 270.1494.

Methyl 3-(1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (4a)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (43.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), methyl penta-2,4-dienoate (22.4 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH

(61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Methyl 3-(1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**4a**) was formed in 84% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate): 0.20; ¹**H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 8.09 – 8.03 (m, 1H), 7.72 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.62 (ddd, *J* = 8.2, 6.9, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.51 (ddd, *J* = 8.2, 6.9, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.36 (s, 1H), 3.67 (s, 3H), 3.20 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 2.92 (s, 3H), 2.86 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H). ¹³**C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 173.78, 158.46, 152.16, 136.64, 130.01, 127.01, 126.46, 126.17, 125.64, 117.07, 51.70, 33.99, 33.05, 22.49. **HRMS**: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₄H₁₆NO₂]⁺: 230.1181, found: 230.1178.

3-(1-Methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanenitrile (4b)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (43.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), penta-2,4-dienenitrile (15.8 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3

mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. 3-(1-Methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanenitrile (4b) was formed in 72% yield. $\mathbf{R_f}$ (pentane/ethyl acetate): 0.20; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.10 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.78 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.72 – 7.63 (m, 1H), 7.58 (ddd, J = 8.2, 6.9, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.43 (s, 1H), 3.20 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.95 (s, 3H), 2.91 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 159.12, 149.22, 136.56, 130.50, 127.21, 127.13, 126.57, 125.76, 119.71, 117.92, 33.62, 22.42, 17.61. HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for $[C_{13}H_{13}N_2]^+$: 197.1079, found: 197.1081.

Diethyl (2-(1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)ethyl)phosphonate (4c)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out DEt with *O*-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (43.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), OEt [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-diethyl buta-1,3-dien-1-ylphosphonate (38 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03

mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Diethyl (2-(1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)ethyl)phosphonate (4c) was formed in 80% yield. $\mathbf{R_f}$ S15

(ethyl acetate): 0.20; ¹**H** NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.06 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.72 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.62 (ddd, J = 8.1, 6.9, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.52 (ddd, J = 8.2, 6.9, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.36 (s, 1H), 4.18 – 3.98 (m, 4H), 3.22 – 3.08 (m, 2H), 2.92 (s, 3H), 2.39 – 2.21 (m, 2H), 1.28 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 6H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 158.54, 152.50, 152.33, 136.66, 130.11, 127.00, 126.56, 126.20, 125.66, 116.86, 61.61, 30.93, 30.89, 26.47, 25.08, 22.47, 16.58, 16.52. ³¹P NMR (121 Hz, CDCl₃): δ 31.56. HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₆H₂₃NO₃P]⁺: 308.1416, found 308.1421.

4-(1-Methylisoquinolin-3-yl)butan-2-one (4d)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (43.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-hexa-3,5-dien-2-one (24 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-

dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. 4-(1-Methylisoquinolin-3-yl)butan-2-one (**4d**) was formed in 62% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 3:1): 0.30; ¹**H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 8.10 – 8.02 (m, 1H), 7.73 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.63 (ddd, *J* = 8.2, 6.8, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.52 (ddd, *J* = 8.2, 6.8, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.37 (s, 1H), 3.16 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 2.99 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 2.93 (s, 3H), 2.18 (s, 3H). ¹³**C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 208.42, 158.40, 152.47, 136.73, 130.15, 127.02, 126.49, 126.11, 125.67, 117.33, 43.47, 31.92, 30.25, 22.41. **HRMS**: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₄H₁₆NO]⁺: 214.1232, found: 214.1230.

2-(1-Methylisoquinolin-3-yl)ethyl benzenesulfinate (4e)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (43.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-buta-1,3-dien-1-yl

benzenesulfinate (48.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. 2-(1-Methylisoquinolin-3-yl)ethyl benzenesulfinate (4e) was formed in 66% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 1:1): 0.20; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.02 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.93 – 7.85 (m, 2H), 7.70 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.68 – 7.60 (m, 1H), 7.54 (dddd, J = 8.1, 6.1, 4.5, 1.3 Hz, 2H), 7.50 – 7.41 (m, 2H), 7.32 (s, 1H), 3.78 – 3.61 (m, 2H), 3.30 (dd, J = 9.3, 6.5 Hz, 2H), 2.82 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 158.76, 149.06, 139.37, 136.48, 133.56, 130.31, 129.17, 128.23, 127.00, 126.91, S16

126.30, 125.63, 117.85, 55.81, 31.16, 22.35. **HRMS**: m/z (ESI) calcd for $[C_{18}H_{18}NO_2S]^+$: 312.1058, found: 312.1057.

Methyl 2-methyl-3-(1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (4f)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (43.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), methyl 2-methylpenta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03

mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Methyl 2-methyl-3-(1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (4f) was formed in 86% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 1:1): 0.20; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.10 – 8.00 (m, 1H), 7.72 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.62 (ddd, J = 8.1, 6.9, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.52 (ddd, J = 8.2, 6.9, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.37 (s, 1H), 4.18 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 3.71 (s, 6H), 3.48 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.90 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 169.83, 158.50, 149.57, 136.51, 130.05, 127.09, 126.67, 126.30, 125.63, 117.92, 77.48, 77.16, 76.84, 52.64, 51.62, 36.69, 22.49. HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₅H₁₈NO₂]⁺: 244.1338, found: 244.1340.

Dimethyl 2-((1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)methyl)malonate (4g)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (43.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), dimethyl 2-allylidenemalonate (42.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg,

0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Dimethyl 2-((1-methylisoquinolin-3-yl)methyl)malonate (**4g**) was formed in 81% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 1:1): 0.20; ¹H NMR (**400 MHz, CDCl₃**): δ 8.09 – 8.00 (m, 1H), 7.72 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.61 (ddd, *J* = 8.1, 6.9, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.51 (ddd, *J* = 8.2, 6.9, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.31 (s, 1H), 3.63 (s, 3H), 3.29 (dd, *J* = 13.5, 7.3 Hz, 1H), 3.13 (h, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 1H), 2.91 (d, *J* = 4.1 Hz, 4H), 1.21 (d, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 176.98, 158.42, 151.33, 136.51, 129.97, 126.99, 126.45, 126.15, 125.63, 117.87, 51.66, 41.75, 39.83, 22.52, 17.21. HRMS: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₆H₁₈NO₄]⁺: 288.1236, found: 288.1227.

(E)-1-Methyl-3-styrylisoquinoline (4h)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (43.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-buta-1,3-dien-1-ylbenzene (32.5 mg, 0.25 mmol),

AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), AgOAc (67 mg, 0.4 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. (E)-1-Methyl-3-styrylisoquinoline (**4h**) was formed in 44% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 9:1): 0.20; ¹**H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃)**: δ 8.08 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.82 (d, *J* = 15.9 Hz, 1H), 7.76 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.67 – 7.59 (m, 3H), 7.56 – 7.46 (m, 2H), 7.39 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 7.28 (dt, *J* = 17.5, 3.5 Hz, 2H), 3.01 (s, 3H). ¹³**C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃)**: δ 158.82, 148.24, 137.31, 136.70, 131.58, 130.23, 128.77, 128.39, 127.97, 127.46, 127.10, 126.96, 126.76, 125.91, 117.62, 22.83. HRMS m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₈H₁₆N]⁺: 246.1283, found: 246.1283.

6-Methyl-1,2-dihydrophenanthridine (4l)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with *O*-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (43.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), cyclohexa-1,3diene (20 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), AgOAc (67

mg, 0.4 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. 6-Methyl-1,2-dihydrophenanthridine (**4l**) was formed in 63% yield. **R**_f (pentane/ethyl acetate 9:1): 0.20; ¹**H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 8.07 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.95 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.71 – 7.62 (m, 1H), 7.50 (ddd, *J* = 8.1, 6.9, 1.1 Hz, 1H), 6.75 (dt, *J* = 9.7, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 6.34 – 6.18 (m, 1H), 3.18 (t, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 2.92 (s, 3H), 2.48 (tdd, *J* = 8.7, 4.3, 1.9 Hz, 2H). ¹³**C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 156.23, 145.28, 134.51, 130.96, 130.01, 129.84, 126.61, 126.37, 125.77, 122.99, 121.70, 22.88, 22.46, 21.91. HRMS m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₄H₁₄N]⁺: 196.1126, found: 196.1121.

Ethyl 3-(1-methyl-5,6,7,8-tetrahydroisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (5a)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/ isomerization reaction was carried out with (E)-1-(cyclohex-1-en-1-yl)ethanone O-pivaloyl oxime (44.6 mg, 0.2 mmol), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2,4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3

mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20

h. Ethyl 3-(1-methyl-5,6,7,8-tetrahydroisoquinolin-3-yl)propanoate (**5a**) was formed in 65% yield. **R**_f (DCM/ethyl acetate 1:1): 0.20; ¹**H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 6.74 (s, 1H), 4.12 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 2.99 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.70 (dt, J = 15.5, 6.9 Hz, 4H), 2.58 (t, J = 6.3 Hz, 2H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 1.89 – 1.64 (m, 4H), 1.31 – 1.14 (m, 6H). ¹³**C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 173.36, 156.45, 155.22, 146.78, 128.76, 121.16, 60.44, 34.30, 32.48, 29.58, 27.33, 25.84, 23.20, 22.26, 21.93, 14.38. HRMS m/z (ESI) calcd for $[C_{15}H_{22}NO_2]^+$: 248.1651, found: 248.1651.

Ethyl 3-(5,6-dimethylpyridin-2-yl)propanoate (5b)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/isomerization reaction was carried out with (E)-3-methylbut-3-en-2-one O-pivaloyl oxime (36.6 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-ethyl penta-2.4-dienoate (31.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03

mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Ethyl 3-(5,6-dimethylpyridin-2-yl)propanoate (**5b**) was formed in 71% yield. **R**_f (DCM/ethyl acetate 1:1): 0.20; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.30 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 6.91 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 4.12 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.03 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.74 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.45 (s, 3H), 2.23 (s, 3H), 1.23 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 173.34, 156.72, 156.58, 137.69, 128.93, 120.26, 60.45, 34.20, 32.77, 22.63, 18.91, 14.37. HRMS m/z (ESI) calcd for [C12H18NO2]⁺: 208.1338, found: 208.1337.



Diethyl (2-(1-methyl-5,6,7,8-tetrahydroisoquinolin-3yl)ethyl)phosphonate (5c)

Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/isomerization reaction was carried out with (E)-1-(cyclohex-1-en-1-yl)ethanone O-pivaloyl oxime

(44.6 mg, 0.2 mmol), $[Cp*RhCl_2]_2$ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), (E)-diethyl buta-1,3-dien-1ylphosphonate (38 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Diethyl (2-(1-methyl-5,6,7,8tetrahydroisoquinolin-3-yl)ethyl)phosphonate (**5c**) was formed in 71% yield. **R**_f (DCM/ethyl acetate 1:1): 0.20; ¹**H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 6.75 (s, 1H), 4.14 – 4.03 (m, 4H), 3.10 – 2.86 (m, 2H), 2.69 (t, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 2H), 2.58 (t, *J* = 6.3 Hz, 2H), 2.41 (s, 3H), 2.27 – 2.08 (m, 2H), 1.92 - 1.64 (m, 4H), 1.29 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 6H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 156.63, 155.62, 155.44, 146.51, 128.69, 120.75, 61.56, 30.52, 30.48, 29.53, 26.47, 25.86, 25.08, 23.22, 22.27, 22.22, 16.58, 16.52. ³¹P NMR (121 Hz, CDCl₃): δ 31.50. HRMS m/z (ESI) calcd for $[C_{16}H_{27}NO_{3}P]^{+}$: 312.1729, found: 312.1726.

Butyl 1-methylisoquinoline-3-carboxylate (6a)



Following the general procedure, the C-H activation/cyclization/isomerization reaction was carried out with O-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (43.8 mg, 0.2 mmol), [Cp*RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 0.005 mmol), butyl acrylate (32 mg, 0.25 mmol), AgSbF₆

(10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), AgOAc (67 mg, 0.4 mmol), PivOH (61.2 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 1,2dichloroethane (1 mL) at 100 °C for 20 h. Diethyl (2-(1-methyl-5,6,7,8-tetrahydroisoquinolin-3-yl)ethyl)phosphonate (**5c**) was formed in 71% yield. **R**_f (DCM/ethyl acetate 1:1): 0.20; ¹**H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 8.39 (s, 1H), 8.22 – 8.11 (m, 1H), 7.92 (dd, J = 6.7, 2.6 Hz, 1H), 7.78 – 7.64 (m, 2H), 4.44 (t, J = 6.9 Hz, 2H), 3.02 (s, 3H), 1.82 (dt, J = 14.7, 7.0 Hz, 2H), 1.48 (dq, J = 14.6, 7.4 Hz, 2H), 0.97 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 3H). ¹³**C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃):** δ 166.07, 159.47, 140.76, 135.53, 130.68, 129.38, 128.98, 128.74, 125.85, 122.78, 65.64, 30.89, 22.80, 19.31, 13.90. **HRMS**: m/z (ESI) calcd for [C₁₆H₂₇NO₃P]⁺: 312.1729, found: 312.1726.

4 Synthetic Utilization of Isoquinoline

4.1 General procedure for the hydrogenation of isoquinoline 3a

To a flame-dried screw-capped tube equipped with a magnetic stir bar was added $[Ru(cod)(2-methylallyl)_2]$ (4.8 mg, 0.015 mmol), imidazolium salt **ICy** (8.6 mg, 0.032 mmol) and dry KO*t*-Bu (5.0 mg, 0.045 mmol) in a glove box. The mixture was suspended in hexane (1 mL) and stirred at 70 °C for 16 h under argon. Then the mixture was transferred under argon to a glass vial containing flavones or isoquinoline **3a** (015-0.3 mmol) and a magnetic stirring bar. Then, the glass vial was placed in a 150 mL stainless-steel reactor. The autoclave was

carefully pressurized/depressurized with hydrogen gas three times before the reaction pressure of 100 bar was adjusted. The hydrogenation was performed at 60 °C for 20 h. The autoclave was depressurized carefully and the crude mixture was purified by Column . chromatography on silica gel.

3-(1-Methyl-5,6,7,8-tetrahydroisoquinolin-3-yl)propan-1-ol (7a)



Following the procedure, 3-(1-methyl-5,6,7,8tetrahydroisoquinolin-3-yl)propan-1-ol (7a) was formed in 99% yield. \mathbf{R}_{f} (DCM/methanol 12:1): 0.20; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, **CDCl₃**): δ 6.71 (s, 1H), 5.34 (s, 1H), 3.84 – 3.60 (m, 2H), 2.93 -2.78 (m, 2H), 2.66 (t, J = 6.2 Hz, 2H), 2.55 (t, J = 6.3 Hz, 2H), 2.37 (s, 3H), 2.00 - 1.62 (m,

6H). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 156.34, 155.82, 146.99, 128.36, 121.31, 62.71, 35.50, 31.52, 29.51, 25.68, 23.13, 22.21, 21.78.

Mechanistic Experiments 5

5.1 **Isotope experiments**



To a 10 mL Schlenk tube was added $[Cp^*RhCl_2]_2$ (3.1 mg, 2.5 mol %), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), O-pivaloyl phenylketoxime (0.20 mmol), 2a (0.25 mmol) PivOD (0.6 mmol) and the tube was purged with Ar for three times, followed by addition of1,2-dichloroethane (1 mL). The formed mixture was stirred at 100 °C under Ar for 20 h as monitored by TLC. The solution was then cooled to rt, and the solvent was removed under vaccum directly. The crude product was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (eluent: pentane/ethyl acetate = 2:1) to afford the desired product. The ratio was determined by ¹H NMR.

5.2 Deuteration experiments



[Cp^{*}RhCl₂]₂ (3.1 mg, 2.5 mol %), AgSbF₆ (10.3 mg, 0.03 mmol), PivOH (0.6 mmol), **1a** (0.20 mmol) or **1a-D5** (0.20 mmol), **2a** (40.0 mg, 0.25 mmol) and DCE (1.0 mL) were added in two separated Schlenk tubes. They were stirred at 100 °C under Ar for 10 minutes, then immediately quenched with DCM at the same time. Then two reaction mixtures were combined and the volatiles were removed under reduced pressure. The crude product was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (eluent: pentane/ethyl acetate = 2:1) to afford **4a** and **4a-D4**. The ratio of **4a** and **4a-D4** was determined by ¹H NMR to be 1.4 : 1 (The details in the way to calculate KIE and deuterium scrambling is presented in the Page S54).

6 References

[1] a) P. C. Too, Y.-F. Wang, S. Chiba, Org.Lett. 2010, 12, 5688; b) N. Guimond, S. Gorelsky, K. Fagnou, J. Am. Chem. Soc. 2011, 133, 6449.

7 NMR spectra



































































