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The Palladium-Catalysed Copper-Free Sonogashira Coupling of

**Isoindoline Nitroxides: A Convenient Route to Robust Profluorescent** 

**Carbon-Carbon Frameworks** 

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A series of novel acetylene substituted isoindoline nitroxides were synthesised via

palladium-catalysed copper-free Sonogashira coupling. These results demonstrate that

the Sonogashira reaction is suitable for the generation of a wide range of aryl nitroxides of expanded structural variety. The novel aryl-iodide containing nitroxide, 5-iodo-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl, 3, was a key intermediate for this coupling, giving acetylene-substituted isoindoline nitroxides in high yield. Subsequent reaction of the deprotected ethynyl nitroxide 12 with iodinated polyaromatics furnished novel aromatic nitroxides with extended-conjugation. Such nitroxides have been described as profluorescent as their quantum yields are significantly lower than those of the corresponding diamagnetic derivatives. The quantum yields of the

naphthyl- and phenanthryl-acetylene isoindoline nitroxides (13 and 14) were found to

be ~200-fold and ~65-fold less than the non-radical methoxyamine derivatives (23)

and 24). Ethyne- and butadiyne-linked nitroxide dimers could also be synthesised by

Introduction

this cross coupling methodology.

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Aryl-acetylenes are common precursors in the synthesis of natural products, pharmaceuticals and organic molecular materials. Since the initial investigations in 1975 by Cassar,<sup>2</sup> Heck et al<sup>3</sup> and Sonogashira et al,<sup>4</sup> the Pd-catalysed alkynylation reaction (now often referred to as the Sonogashira reaction) has proven to be a convenient and frequently utilised method for the synthesis of aryl-acetylenes.<sup>5</sup> Whilst aryl-acetylenes are accessible via several Pd-catalysed cross coupling methodologies such as Stille (Sn), Suzuki (B) and Negishi (Zn) couplings, the Sonogashira reaction remains attractive because the generation of alkynyl-organometallics is not required prior to the coupling reaction. Rather, with respect to the traditional Sonogashira reaction, a Cu-acetylide is formed in situ from a Cu(I) co-catalyst. The use of alkylamines, such as triethylamine, as the solvent is commonplace as these also serve as a base to remove the hydrogen halide (HX) generated from the reaction.<sup>5</sup> The Cu(I) salts commonly used in Sonogashira couplings are also known to catalyse the homocoupling of terminal alkynes in the presence of Pd catalysts. 6-9 These are often observed as unwanted side reactions when coupling to less activated aryl-halides, 10 and copper-free Sonogashira coupling has been employed to address this.<sup>6, 10-15</sup> The nature of the amine is critical, as it performs multiple roles in the coupling reaction, including accelerating oxidative insertion and acting as a ligand and a base. 16 Cyclic amines are most commonly employed, as they often lead to enhanced yields in comparison to simple alkylamines.<sup>17</sup>

Although Sonogashira couplings to t-butylphenyl,  $^{18, 19}$  nitronyl $^{19-21}$  and pyrroline $^{22}$  nitroxides have been described, these reactions are often performed on somewhat activated starting materials. To date, little has been reported on Sonogashira reactions using more deactivated aromatic halogenated nitroxides, such as the isoindolines, as coupling partners.

Despite possessing some advantages over commercially available nitroxides, including structural rigidity, superior EPR linewidths<sup>23-26</sup> and enhanced thermal and chemical stability,<sup>27</sup> applications of the isoindoline class of nitroxides have been limited, in part, by a lack of structural variation. Expansion of the structural diversity of the isoindoline nitroxides is particularly important in regards to the generation of extended conjugated systems which possess substantial (masked) fluorescence. These compounds possess interesting fluorescence properties as quenching of the fluorophore excited state, *via* enhanced intersystem crossing, by the unpaired electron of the nitroxide makes these nitroxide-fluorophore hybrids profluorescent.<sup>28, 29</sup> Such profluorescent nitroxides are able to detect reactive species by radical scavenging or by redox activity as indicated by an increase in fluorescence generated by the diamagnetic derivatives, such as the alkoxyamine or hydroxylamine.<sup>30-33</sup>

Herein we report the first Sonogashira couplings performed on the isoindoline class of nitroxides. The syntheses of two novel profluorescent acetylene-linked nitroxides incorporating naphthalene and phenanthrene fluorophores are detailed and their fluorescent properties reported. Furthermore, the synthesis of two novel acetylene-linked dinitroxides arising from coupling of the terminal acetylene nitroxide is described.

## **Results and Discussion**

## Synthesis of novel nitroxides via Pd-catalysed Sonogashira coupling

Recently, we have shown that Pd-catalysed Heck coupling can be successfully performed on brominated isoindoline nitroxides,<sup>34</sup> although more vigorous conditions than commonly employed are required to obtain acceptable yields. With this result in hand, we first attempted Sonogashira couplings with the bromo nitroxide 1, using the

typical conditions of Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/CuI as the catalyst and triethylamine as the solvent/base.<sup>35</sup> None of the targeted products were obtained using these conditions when attempting to couple (trimethylsilyl)acetylene **8** or phenylacetylene **10** to the bromo nitroxide **1** at either room temperature or in refluxing triethylamine (see Entries 1-4, Table 1). Instead only starting material **1** and the homocoupled alkynes (butadiynes) could be isolated from the reaction mixture. The presence of CuI is known to disfavour the Sonogashira cross-coupling of less active aryl halides,<sup>6</sup> promoting the homocoupling of the acetylene compounds. Nitration of the bromo nitroxide **1**, with HNO<sub>3</sub>/H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub><sup>24</sup> in AcOH gave the nitro-bromo nitroxide **2** in excellent yield (95 %). The attempted coupling of (trimethylsilyl)acetylene **8** with the nitro-bromo compound **2**, with presumably reduced electron density, still only yielded the homocoupled acetylenes.

The coupling reactions between (trimethylsilyl)acetylene **8** and the bromo nitroxide **1** or the nitro-bromo nitroxide **2**, utilising the aerobic copper-free conditions of Li *et al*<sup>6</sup> (2 mol% Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub>, 3 equiv DABCO, MeCN, air, 50 °C) gave trace amounts of both the (trimethylsilyl)acetylene nitroxide **4** and the nitro-(trimethylsilyl)acetylene nitroxide **5**, which were observed by GCMS of the crude reaction mixture. When performed at 80 °C in air, the yields did not increase markedly, whilst under an argon atmosphere at 80 °C the yields could be increased to 5 % and 9 % for **4** and **5** respectively (see Entries 5 and 6, Table 1). Attempts to couple 2-methyl-3-butyn-2-ol **9** and phenylacetylene **10** under the same conditions gave only trace amounts of the desired compounds. Further attempts to optimise the bromo coupling, including increasing catalyst loadings and using Heck-type conditions did not improve the yield of the reaction. Additional equivalents of (trimethylsilyl)acetylene **8** only improved the reaction slightly (Entry 7), whilst

increased reaction temperature, in MeCN or DMF, did not increase the yield of the desired product, with the DMF reactions failing to produce any of the desired product.

#### Editor insert Scheme 1 here

## **Scheme 1.** Sonogashira coupling of isoindoline nitroxides

#### Editor insert Table 1 here

**Table 1.** Sonogashira couplings of halogenated isoindoline nitroxides and alkynes

Due to the low reactivity of the brominated isoindoline nitroxides towards palladium-catalysed reactions, a limitation we previously encountered whilst investigating Heck coupling,<sup>34</sup> we investigated the use of the iodo nitroxide<sup>30</sup> 3 to improve the viability of the reaction. Aryl-iodides are known to undergo oxidative addition more readily in Pd-catalysed couplings.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, in this case, the coupling of (trimethylsilyl)acetylene 8 with iodo nitroxide 3 (2 mol% Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub>, 3 equiv DABCO, MeCN, argon, 80 °C, 24 h), gave the (trimethylsilyl)actylene nitroxide 4 in an excellent yield (92 %) (see Entry 8, Table 1), although the product is difficult to separate from the starting material 3 using standard chromatography. By comparison the bromo nitroxide 1 gave a poor yield of 4 (5 %) using the same reaction conditions. Reaction of the iodo nitroxide 3 with 2-methyl-3-butyn-2-ol 9 and phenylacetylene 10 gave the desired acetylene nitroxides 6 and 7, with yields of 78 % and 96 % respectively (see entries 9 and 10, Table 1). The reduced yield for the dimethyl propargyl alcohol nitroxide 6 can be attributed to a competing cyclotrimerization reaction,<sup>37</sup> which gives a substituted 3-benzylidene-2,3-dihydrofurane nitroxide 11 as an undesired side product (detected by GCMS of the reaction mixture).

Editor insert Structure 11 here

Treatment of the (trimethylsilyl)acetylene nitroxide 4 with aqueous KOH in MeOH

gave the desired terminal alkyne nitroxide 12 in 90 % yield (see Scheme 2a).

Although this method resulted in a high product yield, separation of the desired

product 12 from the starting material 4 proved troublesome on a preparative scale due

to loss of band resolution when using greater loadings on the silica gel columns. Thus,

an alternative alkyne protecting group was employed for the synthesis of the alkyne

nitroxide 12.

Treatment of the dimethyl propargyl alcohol nitroxide 6 with KOH in

refluxing toluene gave the acetylene nitroxide 12 in high yield (88 %) (see Scheme

2b). The presence of the polar OH group facilitated the separation of traces of the

protected alkyne 6 from the product 12, which allowed 12 to be isolated in larger

quantities and in higher purity than when prepared from the trimethylsilyl(acetylene)

nitroxide 4. Therefore, this was the synthetic route of choice for the synthesis of 12

for use in subsequent coupling reactions.

Editor insert Scheme 2 here

Scheme 2 Synthesis of acetylene nitroxide 12

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The Sonogashira coupling of the acetylene nitroxide 12 with 1iodonaphthalene 17 (2 mol% Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub>, 3 equiv DABCO, MeCN, Ar, 80 °C, 4 h)
gave the naphthylacetylene nitroxide 13 in high yield (78 %) (see Entry 1, Table 2).

Due to the electron deficiency of 1-iodonaphthalene 17, the reaction rate was
significantly increased (complete conversion within 4 h) compared with the coupling
reactions performed on the iodo nitroxide 3 (cf. 24 h). Similar results were obtained
using 9-iodophenanthrene 18 as the aryl-halide coupling partner giving the
phenanthrylacetylene nitroxide 14 in 90 % yield within 4 h (Entry 2, Table 2).

Although the homocoupled side product, a butadiyne-linked nitroxide dimer 16, can
be detected by TLC of the reaction mixture, the high reactivity of both aryl halides 17
and 18, ensured that 16 was only formed in trace amounts and could be readily
separated from the desired products.

Coupling of the iodo nitroxide 3 and the acetylene nitroxide 12 gave the targeted acetylene-linked dinitroxide 15, albeit in a moderate yield of 36 % (see Entry 3, Table 2). The butadiyne-linked nitroxide dimer 16 was again a side product of the reaction, although due to the decrease in reactivity of the aryl-halide 3 (complete conversion 24 h), it was formed in larger amounts (40 %). The formation of the homocoupled product 16, and the resulting decrease in the concentration of alkyne 12, may explain the diminished yield of this reaction compared to those using aryl halides 17 and 18.

### Editor insert Scheme 3 here

Scheme 3 Sonogashira and Eglinton couplings with alkyne nitroxide 12

### Editor insert Table 2 here

Table 2. Sonogashira and Eglinton couplings of alkyne nitroxide 12

The butadiyne nitroxide dimer **16**, obtained as a side product in the Sonogashira reaction, could be selectively synthesised *via* Eglinton oxidative coupling. Refluxing the alkyne nitroxide **12** in pyridine/methanol with Cu(OAc)<sub>2</sub> (1.5 equiv) gave the butadiyne-linked nitroxide dimer **16** in excellent yield (91 %).

# Synthesis of methoxyamines via radical trapping

Methoxyamine analogues **19-26** of the acetylene substituted nitroxides **4**, **6**, **7** and **12-16** were prepared following the previously published literature procedure.<sup>34</sup> Reaction of the nitroxides **4**, **6**, **7** and **12-16** with methyl radicals (formed using Fenton chemistry by reaction of FeSO<sub>4</sub>·7H<sub>2</sub>O with H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> in DMSO) gave the desired methoxyamine adducts in moderate to high yields (31-82 %) (see Scheme 4). Unlike the nitroxide precursors, the methoxyamines **19-26** can be analysed by NMR spectroscopy as the paramagnetic centre is no longer present.

## Editor insert Scheme 4 here

**Scheme 4** Synthesis of methoxyamines **19-26** 

## Editor insert Scheme 4 here

**Table 3.** Isolated yields of methoxyamine derivatives of the nitroxides synthesised

### **Fluorescence**

A comparison of the fluorescence spectra of naphthyl nitroxide 13 and its methoxyamine derivative 23 (Figure 1) and phenanthryl nitroxide 14 and its methoxyamine analogue 24 (Figure 2) reveals a substantial differential in fluorescence intensity. A measure of the fluorescence suppression of the napthyl and phenanthryl nitroxides 13 and 14 respectively can be attained by comparison of the quantum yields.

## Editor insert Figures 1 and 2 here (preferably side by side)

Figure 1. Fluorescence spectra of 13 (---) and 23 (—) excited at 320 nm in cyclohexane normalised to 1  $\mu M$ 

**Figure 2.** Fluorescence spectra of **14** (---) and **24** (—) excited at 320 nm in cyclohexane normalised to 1  $\mu M$ 

Quantum yields of the nitroxides (13 and 14) and the methoxyamines (23 and 24) were calculated using anthrancene ( $\Phi_F = 0.36$ , in cyclohexane) as a standard. As expected, the quantum yields of the naphthyl 23 ( $\Phi_F = 0.83$ ) and phenanthryl 24 ( $\Phi_F = 0.26$ ) methoxyamines were significantly larger than the analogous nitroxides 13 ( $\Phi_F = 4.0 \times 10^{-3}$ ) and 14 ( $\Phi_F = 4.0 \times 10^{-3}$ ). The nitroxides 13 and 14 and the phenanthryl methoxyamine 24 have similar quantum yields to related nitroxides and methoxyamines that have been previously reported.<sup>32</sup> Notably, the presence of the heterocyclic ring does not impact significantly on the fluorescence quantum yield. To

test this we prepared the unsubstituted parent compound 1-(phenylethynyl)naphthalene<sup>14</sup> **27** and recorded its quantum yield. After preparation by coupling 1-iodonaphthalene and phenylacetylene, the quantum yield ( $\Phi_F$ ) of 1-(phenylethynyl)naphthalene **27** in cyclohexane was found to be quite similar (0.80) to the naphthylacetylene methoxyamine **23** (0.83).

#### Editor insert Structure 27 here

# Conclusion

The first examples of palladium-catalysed Sonogashira cross coupling reactions performed on isoindoline nitroxides are reported. Attempts to couple the electron rich bromo nitroxide 1 with substituted alkynes under copper or copper-free Sonogashira conditions were unsuccessful due to the low reactivity of the brominated isoindoline nitroxide 1. The more reactive iodo nitroxide 3 underwent palladium-catalysed Sonogashira couplings with substituted alkynes under copper-free conditions to give acetylene nitroxides (4, 6 and 7) in good yield (78-96%). The terminal alkyne nitroxide 12 could be prepared preparatively by cleavage of the 2-methylpropan-2-ol group of 6 with base. Subsequent reaction of the ethynyl nitroxide 12 with iodinated polyaromatics under copper-free Sonogashira conditions gave nitroxides (13 and 14) possessing extended conjugation in high yield (78-90%). Notably, the electron deficient nature of the iodinated polyaromatics significantly increased the rate of the reaction compared with use of the iodo nitroxide 3. Ethyne- and butadiyne-linked dinitroxides (15 and 16) could also be formed in moderate yield (36-40%) using this cross coupling approach. Examination of the fluorescent properties of the profluorescent nitroxides (13 and 14) and their corresponding diamagnetic derivatives (23 and 24) revealed a significant suppression of fluorescence for the nitroxide containing compounds, which was restored upon formation of the methoxyamines. This Sonogashira cross-coupling methodology is currently being investigated for the synthesis of other acetylene extended isoindoline nitroxide systems for a variety of applications. These results will be reported in due course.

# **Experimental**

<sup>1</sup>H NMR and <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker Avance 400 spectrometer in CDCl<sub>3</sub>. Coupling constants are given in Hz. IR spectra were recorded on a Nicolet 870 Nexus Fourier Transform infrared spectrometer equipped with a DTGS TEC detector and an ATR objective. High accuracy mass spectra were recorded using a Micromass autospec double focusing magnetic sector mass spectrometer (EI+ spectra). Formulations were calculated in the elemental analysis programs of Mass Lynx 4.0 or Micromass Opus 3.6. Spectrofluorimetry was performed on a Varian Cary Eclipse fluorescence spectrophotometer equipped with a standard multicell Peltier thermostatted sample holder. All fluorescence measurements were performed in cyclohexane and quantum yields were calculated using anthracene ( $\Phi_F = 0.36$ ) as the standard. Reversed-Phase Preparatory HPLC was performed on an Agilent 1200 Series Prep-HPLC using an Agilent Semi-Prep-C18 (21.2 × 150 mm, 10 μm) column. Melting points were measured on a Gallenkamp Variable Temperature Apparatus by the capillary method. Microanalyses were performed by the Microanalytical Service, University Department Chemistry, of Queensland. 5-Bromo-1,1,3,3tetramethylisoindolin-2-vloxyl<sup>38</sup> 1 and 5-iodo-1,1,3,3-tetramethylsioindolin-2-vloxyl<sup>30</sup> **3** were synthesised by the literature procedures.

# 5-Nitro-6-bromo-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (2)

To an ice/water cooled solution of 5-bromo-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **1** (200 mg, 0.74 mmol) in glacial acetic acid (0.6 mL) was added conc.  $H_2SO_4$  (1.15 mL), followed by conc.  $HNO_3$  (0.3 mL). The resultant solution was heated at 40 °C for 4 h, after which the reaction was quenched by slow addition of NaOH (5M, 10 mL) and extracted with  $CHCl_3$  (3 × 30 mL). The combined organics were washed with water (30 mL), dried ( $Na_2SO_4$ ) and the solvent removed under reduced pressure. Recrystallisation from MeCN gave orange needles of 5-nitro-6-bromo-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **2** (220 mg, 0.70 mmol, 95 %) mp 246–248 °C (decomp.);  $v_{max}$  (ATR-FTIR): 3032 (aryl CH), 2979 and 2931 (alkyl CH), 1577 and 1530 ( $NO_2$ ), 1473 and 1463 (aryl C-C), 1430 ( $NO_2$ ) cm<sup>-1</sup>; +EI MS found M<sup>+</sup> 313.0187 (0.3 ppm from calc. mass of  $C_{12}H_{14}BrN_2O_3$ \*): m/z 313 ( $M_2$ +, 63 %), 298 (47), 283 (69), 268 (100), 143 (87), 128 (62).

## Sonogashira reactions performed using halogenated isoindoline nitroxides (1-3)

The general procedure for the synthesis of substituted acetylene nitroxides 4-7 is given below. The synthesis of the (trimethylsilyl)acetylene nitroxide 4 from the bromo nitroxide 1 is used a representative example. Alterations of the procedure for the synthesis of 4 using iodo nitroxide 3 as starting material and acetylene nitroxides 5-7 are also given below.

## 5-[2-(Trimethylsilyl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (4)

5-Iodo-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **3** (59 mg, 0.186 mmol), 1,4-diazabicyclo[2.2.2]octane (DABCO) (62.5 mg, 0.557 mmol, 3 equiv) and Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> (1

mg, 2.5 mol%) were dissolved in dry MeCN (1 mL). (Trimethylsilyl)acetylene **8** (131  $\mu$ L, 91 mg, 0.927 mmol, 5 equiv) was added and the mixture heated at 80 °C under argon in a sealed Schlenk vessel for 24 h. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the residue taken up in CHCl<sub>3</sub> (~1 mL). Purification of the resulting solution by column chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, eluant: 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane) gave 5-[2-(trimethylsilyl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **4** as a yelloworange gum (49 mg, 0.171 mmol, 92 %); (Found: C, 70.7; H, 8.5; N, 4.7;  $C_{17}H_{24}SiNO^{\bullet}$  requires C, 71.3; H, 8.4; N, 4.9 %);  $v_{max}$  (ATR-FTIR): 2972 and 2928 (alkyl CH), 2154 (C $\equiv$ C), 1487 and 1465 (aryl C-C), 1431 (NO $^{\bullet}$ ) cm $^{-1}$ ; +EI MS found M $^{+}$  286.16265 (0.25 ppm from calc. mass of  $C_{17}H_{24}SiNO^{\bullet}$ ): m/z 286 (M $^{+}$ , 12 %), 271 (21), 256 (100), 241 (79), 225 (32).

# Alternate synthesis of 5-[2-(trimethylsilyl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (4)

5-Bromo-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **1** (50 mg, 0.186 mmol), DABCO (62.5 mg, 0.557 mmol, 3 equiv), Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> (1 mg, 2.5 mol%), (trimethylsilyl)acetylene **8** (131 μL, 91 mg, 0.927 mmol, 5 equiv) and MeCN (1 mL) were treated as described above. Column chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, eluant: 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane) gave 5-[2-(trimethylsilyl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **4** (3 mg, 0.010 mmol, 5 %). GCMS analysis showed that the product was identical to that reported above.

# 5-[2-(Trimethylsilyl)ethynyl]-6-nitro-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (5)

5-Nitro-6-bromo-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **2** (58 mg, 0.186 mmol), DABCO (62.5 mg, 0.557 mmol, 3 equiv), Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> (1 mg, 2.5 mol%), (trimethylsilyl)acetylene **8** (131 μL, 91 mg, 0.927 mmol, 5 equiv) and MeCN (1 mL) were treated as described above. Column chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, eluant: 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane) gave 5-[2-(trimethylsilyl)ethynyl]-6-nitro-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **5** as a yellow-orange solid (5 mg, 0.016 mmol, 9 %) mp 144–147 °C;  $v_{max}$  (ATR-FTIR): 3045 (aryl CH), 2972 and 2927 (alkyl CH), 2150 (C $\equiv$ C), 1573 and 1523 (NO<sub>2</sub>), 1480 and 1467 (aryl C-C), 1431 (NO\*) cm<sup>-1</sup>; +EI MS found M<sup>+</sup> 331.14808 (0.85 ppm from calc. mass of C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>24</sub>SiN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>\*): *m/z* 331 (M<sup>+</sup>, 100 %), 316 (43), 301 (52), 286 (22).

# 5-(3-Hydroxy-3-methyl)butynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethlisoindolin-2-yloxyl (6)

5-Iodo-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **3** (1.18 g, 3.73 mmol), DABCO (1.25 g, 11.14 mmol, 3 equiv), Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> (20 mg, 2.5 mol%), 2-methyl-3-butyn-2-ol **9** (1.82 mL, 1.60 g, 19 mmol, 5 equiv) and MeCN (20 mL) were treated as described above. Column chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, eluant: 50 % EtOAc, 50 % *n*-hexane) gave 5-(3-hydroxy-3-methyl)butynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethlisoindolin-2-yloxyl **6** as a brownorange oil (797 mg, 2.93 mmol, 78 %) (Found: C, 74.3; H, 8.3; N, 5.0;  $C_{17}H_{22}NO_2^*$  requires C, 75.0; H, 8.1; N, 5.1 %);  $v_{max}$  (ATR-FTIR): 3387 (OH), 2976 and 2930 (alkyl CH), 2165 (C=C), 1490 and 1453 (aryl C-C), 1431 (NO $^*$ ) cm<sup>-1</sup>; +EI MS found M<sup>+</sup> 272.1654 (1.3 ppm from calc. mass of  $C_{17}H_{22}NO_2^*$ ): m/z 272 (M<sup>+</sup>, 100 %), 257 (95), 242 (92), 227 (87).

## 5-[2-(Phenyl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (7)

5-Iodo-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **3** (59 mg, 0.186 mmol), DABCO (62.5 mg, 0.557 mmol, 3 equiv), Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> (1 mg, 2.5 mol%), phenylacetylene **10** (102 μL, 95 mg, 0.930 mmol, 5 equiv) and MeCN (1 mL) were treated as described above. Column chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, eluant: 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane) gave 5-[2-(phenyl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **7** as a yellow-orange solid (52 mg, 0.179 mmol, 96 %) mp 108–112 °C (found: C, 82.0; H, 6.9; N, 4.7;  $C_{20}H_{20}NO^{\bullet}$  requires C, 82.7; H, 6.9; N, 4.8 %);  $v_{max}$  (ATR-FTIR): 3047 (aryl CH) 2977 and 2928 (alkyl CH), 2214 (C≡C), 1487 and 1465 (aryl C-C), 1431 (NO $^{\bullet}$ ) cm<sup>-1</sup>; +EI MS found M<sup>+</sup> 290.1542 (1.0 ppm from calc. mass of  $C_{20}H_{20}NO^{\bullet}$ ): m/z 290 (M<sup>+</sup>, 90 %), 275 (75), 260 (100), 245 (50), 215 (40).

# 5-Ethynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (12)

5-(3-Hydroxy-3-methyl)butynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethlisoindolin-2-yloxyl **6** (478 mg, 1.76 mmol) was dissolved in dry toluene (320 mL). Solid KOH was added (0.8 g, 14.3 mmol, 8 equiv) and the mixture refluxed for 1 h. The dark brown suspension was washed with water (3 × 200 mL) and brine (200 mL), dried (Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>) and the solvent removed under reduced pressure. The residue was taken up in CHCl<sub>3</sub> (~ 5 mL) and purified by column chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, eluant: 30 % EtOAc, 70 % *n*-hexane) to give 5-ethynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **12** as a pale yellow crystalline solid (331 mg, 1.54 mmol, 88 %) mp 126–128 °C;  $v_{max}$  (ATR-FTIR): 3196 ( $\equiv$ CH), 2978 and 2929 (alkyl CH), 2097 (C $\equiv$ C), 1487 and 1464 (aryl C-C), 1428 (NO\*) cm<sup>-1</sup>; +EI MS found M<sup>+</sup> 214.1235 (1.5 ppm from calc. mass of C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>16</sub>NO\*): m/z 214 (M<sup>+</sup>, 86 %), 199 (90), 184 (100), 169 (84), 152 (53).

## Alternate synthesis of 5-ethynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (12)

A solution of 5-[2-(trimethylsilyl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **4** (113 mg, 0.39 mmol) was dissolved in degassed MeOH (2.1 mL). Aqueous KOH was added (50  $\mu$ L, 0.5 M) and the solution was stirred at room temperature for 1 h. The reaction mixture was treated with water (50 mL), extracted with Et<sub>2</sub>O (2 × 50 mL), dried (Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>) and the solvent was removed under reduced pressure to give the 5-ethynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **12** and a trace amount of unreacted starting material **4**, which were inseparable by SiO<sub>2</sub> column chromatography. Reversed-phase prep-HPLC (50 % THF, 50 % H<sub>2</sub>O) gave 5-ethynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **12** as a yellow crystalline solid (78 mg, 0.37 mmol, 90 %). GCMS analysis and mp comparison showed that the product was identical to that reported above.

## Sonogashira reactions performed using ethynyl nitroxide (12)

The procedure for the synthesis of substituted acetylene nitroxides 13-15 is detailed below. The synthesis of the naphthyl-acetylene nitroxide 13 is used as an example. Alterations of the procedure for the synthesis of acetylene nitroxides 14 and 15 are also described below.

# 5-[2-(1-Naphthyl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (13)

1-Iodonaphthalene **17** (28.3  $\mu$ L, 49 mg, 0.193 mmol), DABCO (62.5 mg, 0.557 mmol, 3 equiv) and Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> (1 mg, 2.5 mol%) were dissolved in dry MeCN (1 mL). 5-Ethynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **12** (50 mg, 0.233 mmol, 1.2 equiv) was added and the mixture heated at 80 °C under argon for 4 h. The solvent was

removed under reduced pressure and the residue taken up in CHCl<sub>3</sub> (~1 mL). Purification of the resulting solution by column chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, eluant: 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane) gave 5-[2-(1-naphthyl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **13** as an orange solid (51 mg, 0.151 mmol, 78 %); mp 145–148 °C;  $v_{max}$  (ATR-FTIR): 3055 (aryl CH), 2972 and 2924 (alkyl CH), 2211 (C $\equiv$ C), 1488 and 1460 (aryl C-C), 1430 (NO $^{\bullet}$ ) cm<sup>-1</sup>; +EI MS found M<sup>+</sup> 340.1701 (0.1 ppm from calc. mass of C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>22</sub>NO $^{\bullet}$ ): m/z 340 (M<sup>+</sup>, 84 %), 325 (60), 310 (100), 295 (32), 265 (35).

# 5-[2-(9-Phenanthryl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (14)

9-Iodophenanthrene **18** (59 mg, 0.194 mmol), DABCO (62.5 mg, 0.557 mmol, 3 equiv), Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> (1 mg, 2.5 mol %), 5-ethynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **12** (50 mg, 0.233 mmol, 1.2 equiv) and MeCN (1 mL) were treated as described above. Column chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, eluant: 10 % EtOAc, 90 % n-hexane) gave 5-[2-(9-phenanthryl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **14** as an orange solid (52 mg, 0.179 mmol, 96 %); mp 175–178 °C;  $v_{max}$  (ATR-FTIR): 3070 (aryl CH), 2971 and 2924 (alkyl CH), 2214 (C $\equiv$ C), 1490 and 1451 (aryl C-C), 1430 (NO $^{\bullet}$ ) cm $^{-1}$ ; +EI MS found M $^{+}$  390.1857 (0.2 ppm from calc. mass of  $C_{28}H_{24}NO^{\bullet}$ ): m/z 390 (M $^{+}$ , 72 %), 375 (45), 360 (100), 345 (25).

# 1,2-Bis-[5,5'-(1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxylyl)]ethyne (15)

5-Iodo-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **3** (61 mg, 0.193 mmol), DABCO (62.5 mg, 0.557 mmol, 3 equiv), Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> (1 mg, 2.5 mol%), 5-ethynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **12** (50 mg, 0.233 mmol, 1.2 equiv) and MeCN (1 mL) were treated as described above and heated at 80 °C for 24 h. Column chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, eluant: 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane) gave the desired 1,2-bis-

[5,5'-(1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxylyl)]ethyne **15** and the homo-coupled acetylene 1,4-bis-[5,5'-(1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxylyl)]-1,3-butadiyne **16**. Reversed-phase prep-HPLC (45 % THF, 55 % H<sub>2</sub>O) gave 1,2-bis-[5,5'-(1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxylyl)]ethyne **15** as a yellow crystalline solid (28 mg, 0.070 mmol, 36 %); mp 214–216 °C (decomp.);  $v_{max}$  (ATR-FTIR): 3045 (aryl CH), 2972 and 2928 (alkyl CH), 2207 (C $\equiv$ C), 1496 and 1466 (aryl C-C), 1433 (NO $^{\circ}$ ) cm<sup>-1</sup>; +EI MS found M<sup>+</sup> 402.2306 (0.3 ppm from calc. mass of C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>30</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> $^{\circ}$ ): m/z 402 (M<sup>+</sup>, 95 %), 387 (40), 372 (50), 357 (100), 342 (83).

# 1,4-Bis-[5,5'-(1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxylyl)]-1,3-butadiyne (16)

5-Ethynyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl **12** (50 mg, 0.233 mmol) and  $Cu(OAc)_2$  (65 mg, 0.358 mmol, 1.5 equiv), were dissolved in MeOH (0.5 mL) and pyridine (0.5 mL) and the resultant mixture was refluxed for 1 h.  $H_2SO_4$  (conc.) was added to the resultant mixture until a suspension formed, which was subsequently extracted with DCM (3 × 20 mL), washed with  $H_2O$  (20 mL), dried (Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>) and the solvent removed under reduced pressure to give 1,4-bis-[5,5'-(1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxylyl)]-1,3-butadiyne **16** as an orange crystalline solid (45 mg, 0.105 mmol, 91 %) mp 183–185 °C (decomp.); (ATR-FTIR): 3046 (aryl CH), 2975 and 2928 (alkyl CH), 2150 ( $C \equiv C$ ), 1487 and 1463 (aryl C-C), 1430 (NO\*) cm<sup>-1</sup>; +EI MS found M<sup>+</sup> 426.2307 (0.1 ppm from calc. mass of  $C_{28}H_{30}N_2O_2$ \*): m/z 426 (M<sup>+</sup>, 40 %), 411 (28), 396 (35), 381 (100), 366 (33).

# Synthesis of methoxyamines (19-24)

A general procedure for the synthesis of methoxyamines **19-24** is shown below. For the synthesis of dimethoxyamines **25** and **26** the amounts of all reagents were doubled.

# General procedure

To a solution of acetylene-substituted nitroxide (0.077 mmol) and FeSO<sub>4</sub>·7H<sub>2</sub>O (0.154 mmol, 2 equiv) in DMSO (2.6 mL) was added H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> (30 %, 18  $\mu$ L). The reaction mixture was stirred under argon at room temperature for 1.5 h. NaOH (1 M) was added and the resulting solution extracted with Et<sub>2</sub>O. The organic phase was washed with H<sub>2</sub>O and dried (Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>). Removal of the solvent under reduced pressure gave the crude methoxyamine. Subsequent purification was achieved by column chromatography (see below for specific conditions).

## 5-[2-(Trimethylsilyl)ethynyl]-2-methoxy-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindoline (19)

Yield: 18 mg, 0.061 mmol, 79 %; Chromatography: SiO<sub>2</sub>, 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane;  $\delta_{\rm H}$ : 0.27 (9H, s, SiCH<sub>3</sub>) 1.43 (12H, br s, CH<sub>3</sub>), 3.79 (3H, s, NOCH<sub>3</sub>), 7.04 (1H, dd, *J* 0.5 and 7.8 Hz, 7-H), 7.22 (1H, dd, *J* 0.5 and 1.4 Hz, 4-H), 7.36 (1H, dd, *J* 1.4 and 7.8 Hz, 6-H);  $\delta_{\rm C}$ : 0.0 (SiCH<sub>3</sub>) 30.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 65.5 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 67.0 (alkyl C\*), 67.1 (alkyl C\*), 93.3 (C=C), 105.4 (C=C), 121.5 (C-7), 121.8 (C-5), 125.2 (C-6), 131.2 (C-4), 145.3 (C-3a), 145.9 (C-7a).

## 5-(3-Hydroxy-3-methyl)butynyl-2-methoxy-1,1,3,3-tetramethlisoindoline (20)

Yield: 12 mg, 0.042 mmol, 55 %; Chromatography: SiO<sub>2</sub>, 30 % EtOAc, 70 % n-hexane;  $\delta_H$ : 1.43 (12H, br s, CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.64 (6H, s,  $\equiv$ CCCH<sub>3</sub>), 2.06 (1H br s, OH), 3.79 (3H, s, NOCH<sub>3</sub>), 7.04 (1H, dd, J 0.6 and 7.8 Hz, 7-H), 7.18 (1H, dd, J 0.6 and 1.5 Hz,

4-H), 7.30 (1H, dd, J 1.5 and 7.8 Hz , 6-H);  $\delta_C$ : 29.7 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 31.5 (≡CCCH<sub>3</sub>), 65.5 (≡CC\*) 65.7 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 67.0 (alkyl C\*), 67.1 (alkyl C\*), 82.4 (C≡C), 93.1 (C≡C), 121.4 (C-5), 121.5 (C-7), 124.9 (C-6), 130.8 (C-4), 145.4 (C-3a), 145.6 (C-7a).

## 5-[2-(Phenyl)ethynyl]-2-methoxy-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindoline (21)

Yield: 15 mg, 0.048 mmol, 62 %; Chromatography: SiO<sub>2</sub>, 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane;  $\delta_H$ : 1.46 (12H, br s, CH<sub>3</sub>), 3.81 (3H, s, NOCH<sub>3</sub>), 7.10 (1H, d, *J* 7.8 Hz, 7-H), 7.30 (1H, d, *J* 1.5 Hz, 4-H), 7.36 (3H, m, ArH), 7.43 (1H, dd, *J* 1.5 and 7.8 Hz, 6-H), 7.55 (2H, m, ArH);  $\delta_C$ : 30.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 65.5 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 67.1 (alkyl C\*), 67.2 (alkyl C\*), 88.7 (C≡C), 89.7 (C≡C), 121.6 (C-7), 122.0 (C-5), 123.4 (ArC-C≡), 124.8 (C-6), 128.2 (ArC), 128.4 (ArC), 130.8 (C-4), 131.6 (ArC), 145.5 (C-3a), 145.6 (C-7a).

## 5-Ethynyl-2-methoxy-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (22)

Yield: 14 mg, 0.059 mmol, 76 %; Chromatography: SiO<sub>2</sub>, 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane;  $\delta_H$ : 1.45 (12H, br s, CH<sub>3</sub>), 3.07 (1H, s, ≡CH), 3.80 (3H, s, NOCH<sub>3</sub>), 7.08 (1H, dd, *J* 0.5 and 7.8 Hz, 7-H), 7.27 (1H, dd, *J* 0.5 and 1.4 Hz, 4-H), 7.40 (1H, dd, *J* 1.4 and 7.8 Hz, 6-H);  $\delta_C$ : 30.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 65.4 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 66.9 (alkyl C\*), 67.1 (alkyl C\*), 76.5 (C≡C), 83.9 (C≡C), 120.8 (C-5), 121.5 (C-7), 125.3 (C-6), 131.3 (C-4), 145.5 (C-3a), 146.2 (C-7a).

## 5-[2-(1-Naphthyl)ethynyl]-2-methoxy-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindoline (23)

Yield: 17 mg, 0.049 mmol, 64 %; Chromatography:  $SiO_2$ , 10 % EtOAc, 90 % n-hexane;  $\delta_H$ : 1.49 (12H, br s, CH<sub>3</sub>), 3.82 (3H, s, NOCH<sub>3</sub>), 7.15 (1H, dd, J 0.5 and 7.8 Hz, 7-H), 7.40 (1H, dd, J 0.5 and 1.5 Hz, 4-H), 7.48 (1H, m, ArH), 7.56 (2H, m, ArH), 7.63 (1H, m, ArH), 7.78 (1H, dd, J 1.5 and 7.8 Hz, 6-H), 7.86 (1H, m, ArH),

7.89 (1H, m, ArH), 8.46 (1H, m ArH);  $\delta_C$ : 30.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 65.5 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 67.2 (alkyl C\*), 67.3 (alkyl C\*), 86.9 (C=C), 94.6 (C=C), 121.0 (C-5), 121.7 (C-7), 122.2 (ArC-C=), 124.8 (C-6), 125.3 (ArC), 126.3 (ArC), 126.4 (ArC), 126.8 (ArC), 128.3 (ArC), 128.7 (ArC), 130.3 (ArC), 130.9 (C-4), 133.2 (ArC), 133.3 (ArC), 145.6 (C-3a), 145.8 (C-7a).

# 5-[2-(9-Phenanthryl)ethynyl]-2-methoxy-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindoline (24)

Yield: 26 mg, 0.063 mmol, 82 %; Chromatography: SiO<sub>2</sub>, 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane;  $\delta_H$ : 1.51 (12H, br s, CH<sub>3</sub>), 3.83 (3H, s, NOCH<sub>3</sub>), 7.17 (1H, dd, *J* 0.6 and 7.8 Hz, 7-H), 7.44 (1H, dd, *J* 0.6 and 1.5 Hz, 4-H), 7.59 (1H, dd, *J* 1.5 and 7.8 Hz, ArH), 7.63 (1H, m, ArH), 7.70 (1H, m, ArH), 7.74 (2H, m, ArH), 7.90 (1H, dd, *J* 1.5 and 7.8 Hz, 6-H), 8.11 (1H, s, ArH), 8.58 (1H, m, ArH), 8.70 (1H, m, ArH), 8.74 (1H, m, ArH);  $\delta_C$ : 30.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 65.5 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 67.1 (alkyl C\*), 67.2 (alkyl C\*), 87.1 (C≡C), 94.3 (C≡C), 119.7 (C-5), 121.8 (C-7), 122.1 (ArC-C≡), 122.7 (ArC), 122.8 (ArC), 124.9 (C-6), 125.6 (ArC), 127.0 (ArC), 127.1 (ArC), 127.4 (ArC), 128.6 (ArC), 130.1 (ArC), 130.3 (ArC), 131.0 (C-4), 131.2 (ArC), 131.3 (ArC), 131.8 (ArC), 135.8 (ArC), 145.6 (C-3a), 145.9 (C-7a).

## 1,2-Bis-[5,5'-(2-methoxy-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindoline)]ethyne (25)

Yield: 25 mg, 0.058 mmol, 75 %; Chromatography: SiO<sub>2</sub>, 10 % EtOAc, 90 % n-hexane;  $\delta_H$ : 1.46 (24H, br s, CH<sub>3</sub>), 3.80 (6H, s, NOCH<sub>3</sub>), 7.09 (2H, dd, J 0.6 and 7.8 Hz, 7-H), 7.29 (2H, dd, J 0.6 and 1.5 Hz, 4-H), 7.42 (2H, dd, J 1.5 and 7.8 Hz, 6-H);  $\delta_C$ : 30.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 65.5 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 67.1 (alkyl C\*), 67.2 (alkyl C\*), 89.0 (C≡C), 121.6 (C-5 and C-5'), 122.1 (C-7 and C-7'), 124.8 (C-6 and C-6'), 130.8 (C-4 and C-4'), 145.4 (C-3a and C-3a'), 145.5 (C-7a and C-7a').

## 1,4-Bis-[5,5'-(2-methoxy-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindoline)]-1,3-butadiyne (26)

Yield: 11 mg, 0.024 mmol, 31 %; Chromatography: SiO<sub>2</sub>, 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane;  $\delta_H$ : 1.45 (24H, br s, CH<sub>3</sub>), 3.79 (6H, s, NOCH<sub>3</sub>), 7.08 (2H, dd, *J* 0.5 and 7.8 Hz, 7-H), 7.28 (2H, dd, *J* 0.5 and 1.5 Hz, 4-H), 7.41 (2H, dd, *J* 1.5 and 7.8 Hz, 6-H);  $\delta_C$ : 30.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 65.5 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 67.0 (alkyl C\*), 67.2 (alkyl C\*), 73.4 (C≡C), 81.8 (C≡C), 120.6 (C-5 and C-5'), 121.8 (C-7 and C-7'), 125.8 (C-6 and C-6'), 131.7 (C-4 and C-4'), 145.6 (C-3a and C-3a'), 146.7 (C-7a and C-7a').

# 1-(Phenylethynyl)naphthalene (27)<sup>14</sup>

1-Iodonaphthalene 17 (57.6 μL, 100 mg, 0.393 mmol), DABCO (130 mg, 1.200 mmol, 3 equiv) and Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> (2 mg, 2.5 mol%) was dissolved in dry MeCN (1 mL). Phenylacetylene 10 (51.6 μL, 48 mg, 0.470 mmol, 1.2 equiv) was added and the mixture heated at 80 °C under argon for 4 h. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the residue taken up in CHCl<sub>3</sub> (~1 mL). Purification of the resulting solution by column chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, eluant: 10 % EtOAc, 90 % *n*-hexane) gave 1-(phenylethynyl)naphthalene 27 as a colourless oil (85 mg, 0.373 mmol, 95 %);  $\delta_{\rm H}$ : 7.40-7.73 (8H, m ArH), 7.80-7.92 (3H, m, ArH), 8.49-8.53 (1H, m, ArH);  $\delta_{\rm C}$ : 87.6 (C=C), 94.4 (C=C), 121.0 (ArC), 123.5 (ArC), 125.4 (ArC), 126.3 (ArC), 126.5 (ArC), 126.9 (ArC), 128.4 (ArC), 128.5 (ArC), 128.5 (ArC), 128.9 (ArC), 130.5 (ArC), 131.8 (ArC), 133.3 (ArC), 133.3 (ArC). The NMR data was in agreement with that previously reported.<sup>14</sup>

### Fluorescence quantum yield calculations

Fluorescence quantum yield measurements were calculated using cyclohexane as the solvent and anthracene ( $\Phi_F = 0.36$ ) as the standard. Stock solutions of napthyl and

phenanthryl compounds 13, 14, 23, 24 and 27 (approximately 1 mg/100 mL, measured accurately, exact concentrations listed below) were diluted using analytical glassware to give four solutions of decreasing concentration, ensuring that the UV/Vis of the highest concentration did not exceed 0.1 absorbance units at the fluorescence excitation wavelength (320 nm). The fluorescence detector voltage was set at 480 V for naphthalenes 13, 23 and 27 and 600 V for the phenanthrenes 14 and 24. Total fluorescence emission was plotted against UV/Vis absorbance to give a straight line with gradient (m), which was ratioed against the anthracene standard, giving the quantum yield ( $\Phi_F$ ).

# Anthracene (28)

Stock solution **28** (1.07 mg, 0.00600 mmol, 0.0600 mM). Diluted to give solutions of 12.000, 9.600, 7.200 and 4.800  $\mu$ M; m = 157765.

## 5-[2-(1-Naphthyl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (13)

Stock solution **13** (1.07 mg, 0.00314 mmol, 0.0314 mM). Diluted to give solutions of 5.024, 3.768, 2.512 and 1.256  $\mu$ M; m = 1896;  $\Phi_F$  = 0.36 (1896/157765) = 0.004.

## 5-[2-(9-Phenanthryl)ethynyl]-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindolin-2-yloxyl (14)

Stock solution **14** (0.99 mg, 0.00254 mmol, 0.0254 mM). Diluted to give solutions of 3.048, 2.540, 2.032 and 1.016  $\mu$ M; m = 5514;  $\Phi_F$  = 0.36 (5514/1338220) = 0.004.

## 5-[2-(1-Naphthyl)ethynyl]-2-methoxy-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindoline (23)

Stock solution **23** (1.07 mg, 0.00301 mmol, 0.0301 mM). Diluted to give solutions of 4.816, 3.612, 2.408 and 1.204  $\mu$ M; m = 361630;  $\Phi_F$  = 0.36 (361630/157765) = 0.825.

# 5-[2-(9-Phenanthryl)ethynyl]-2-methoxy-1,1,3,3-tetramethylisoindoline (24)

Stock solution **24** (1.17 mg, 0.00289 mmol, 0.0289 mM). Diluted to give solutions of 4.624, 3.468, 2.312 and 1.156  $\mu$ M; m = 40375;  $\Phi_F$  = 0.36 (343353/1338220) = 0.257.

# 1-(Phenylethynyl)naphthalene (27)<sup>14</sup>

Stock solution **27** (1.08 mg, 0.00473 mmol, 0.0473 mM). Diluted to give solutions of 3.784, 2.838, 1.892 and 0.946  $\mu$ M; m = 348354;  $\Phi_F$  = 0.36 (348354/157765) = 0.795.

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