

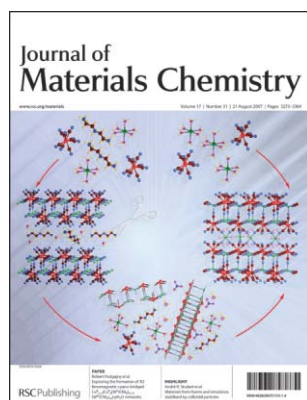
Journal of Materials Chemistry

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IN THIS ISSUE

ISSN 0959-9428 CODEN JMACEP 17(31) 3273–3364 (2007)



Cover

See R. Podgajny *et al.*, pp. 3308–3314.
Synthetic-route-dependent non-stoichiometry and magnetic anisotropy of two 3D ferromagnets $\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}_{2+x}[\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}_4[\text{W}^{\text{V}}(\text{CN})_8]_{4-2x}[\text{W}^{\text{IV}}(\text{CN})_8]_{2x}] \cdot y\text{H}_2\text{O}$ of $T_{\text{C}} = 40$ K. Image reproduced by permission of Robert Podgajny from *J. Mater. Chem.*, 2007, 17, 3308.

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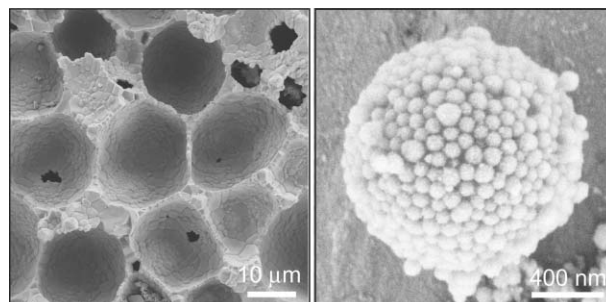
HIGHLIGHT

3283

Materials from foams and emulsions stabilized by colloidal particles

André R. Studart,* Urs T. Gonzenbach,* Ilke Akartuna, Elena Tervoort and Ludwig J. Gauckler

Foams and emulsions stabilized by colloidal particles can lead to porous structures (left) and capsules (right) with potential applications as membranes, catalytic supports, light and insulating materials, drug delivery units and scaffolds for tissue regeneration.



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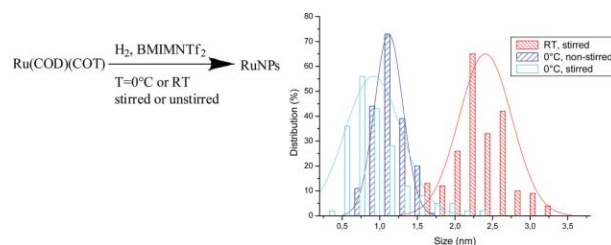
COMMUNICATIONS

3290

Influence of the self-organization of ionic liquids on the size of ruthenium nanoparticles: effect of the temperature and stirring

Thibaut Gutel, Jordi Garcia-Antón, Katrin Pelzer, Karine Philippot, Catherine C. Santini,* Yves Chauvin, Bruno Chaudret and Jean-Marie Basset

The self-organization of ionic liquids enables control over the size of ruthenium nanoparticles.

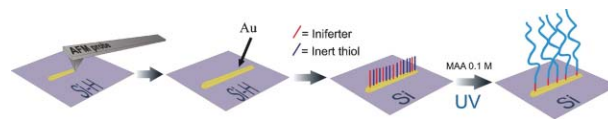


3293

Preparation and characterization of macromolecular “hedge” brushes grafted from Au nanowires

Szczepan Zapotoczny, Edmondo M. Benetti and G. Julius Vancso*

This communication illustrates a new nanofabrication method as an easy, stepwise “bottom-up” technique which couples AFM tip-assisted deposition of gold nanowires with controlled grafting of polymers.



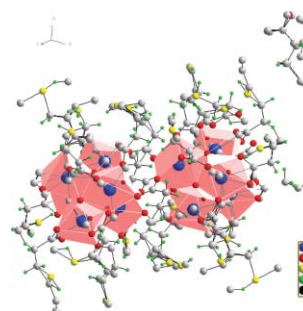
PAPERS

3297

ω-Mercapto-functionalized hafnium- and zirconium-oxoclusters as nanosized building blocks for inorganic–organic hybrid materials: synthesis, characterization and photothiol-ene polymerization

F. Faccini, H. Fric, U. Schubert, E. Wendel, O. Tsetsgee, K. Müller, H. Bertagnolli, A. Venzo and S. Gross*

Two isostructural mercapto-functionalized Zr- and Hf-oxoclusters [M₁₂(μ₃-O)₈(μ₃-OH)₈(MP)₂₄·n(MPA), MPA = HS-(CH₂)₂-C(O)OH; MP = HS-(CH₂)₂-C(O)O⁻; M = Zr, Hf] were prepared and used for the synthesis of inorganic–organic hybrid materials

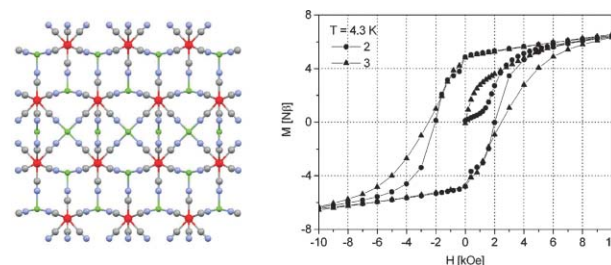


3308

Exploring the formation of 3D ferromagnetic cyano-bridged Cu^{II}_{2+x}{Cu^{II}₄[W^V(CN)₈]_{4-2x}[W^{IV}(CN)₈]_{2x}}·yH₂O networks

R. Podgajny,* N. P. Chmel, M. Bałanda, P. Tracz, B. Gawel, D. Zajac, M. Sikora, C. Kapusta, W. Lasocha, T. Wasiutyński and B. Sieklucka

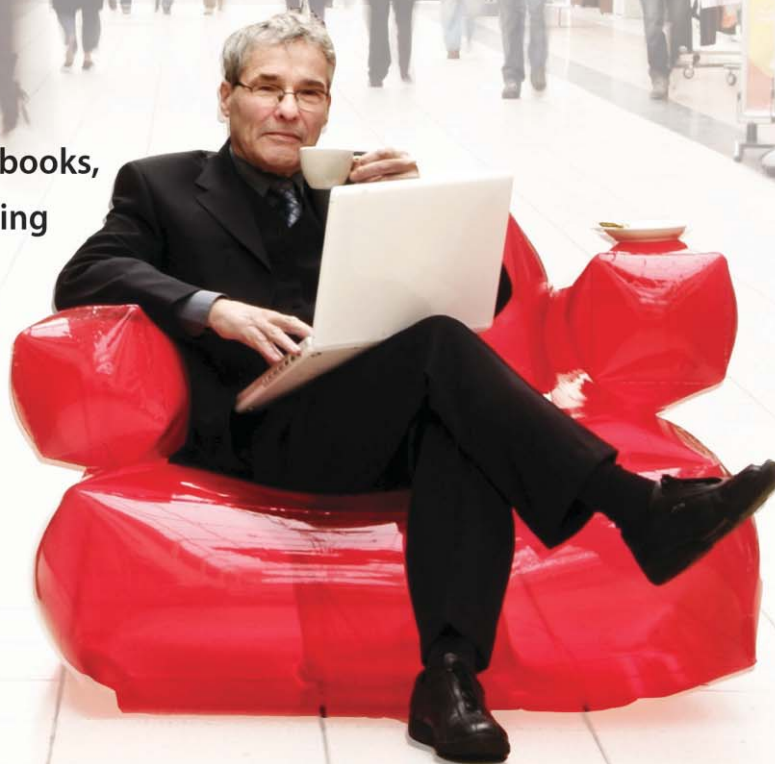
Non-stoichiometry of two 3D ferromagnetic Cu^{II}_{2+x}{Cu^{II}₄[W^V(CN)₈]_{4-2x}[W^{IV}(CN)₈]_{2x}}·yH₂O (x = 0.44, y = 5 (2); x = 0.97, y = 4 (3)) networks of T_C = 40 K influences their magnetic dimensionality: 2 exhibits metamagnetic features; 3 resembles a classical magnet with 3D ordering.



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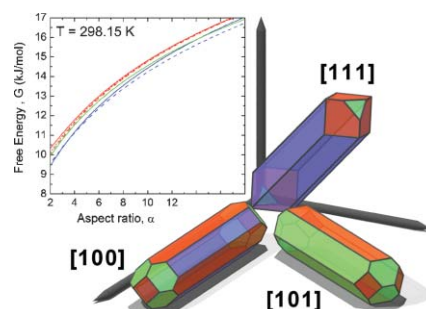
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3315

Modeling the preferred shape, orientation and aspect ratio of gold nanorods

A. S. Barnard* and L. A. Curtiss

A systematic study of 30 different nanorod structures using an analytical shape-dependent thermodynamic model with input from relativistic first-principles calculations, gives results highlighting the important relationships between shape, aspect and orientation at finite temperatures.

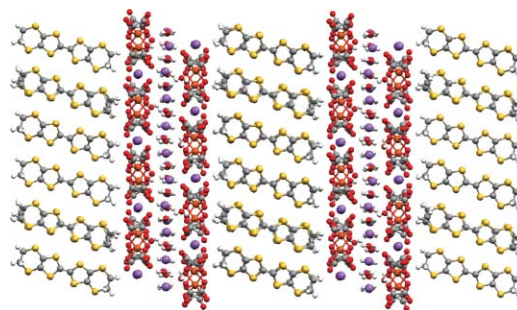


3324

Multi-layered molecular charge-transfer salts containing alkali metal ions

Lee Martin, Peter Day,* William Clegg, Ross W. Harrington, Peter N. Horton, Ann Bingham, Michael B. Hursthouse, Paul McMillan and Steven Firth

Two new BEDT-TTF charge-transfer salts, novel examples of multi-layered stacking, demonstrate the potential of such structures for combining properties such as electronic and ionic conduction with chirality and magnetism.

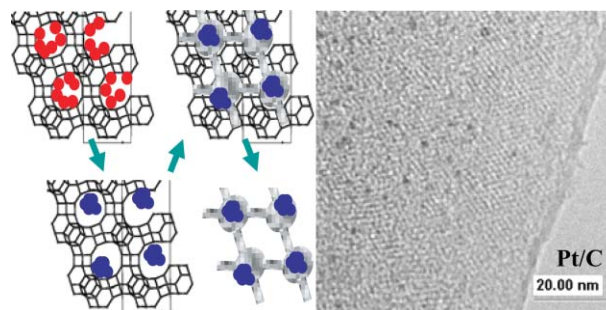


3330

The preparation and characterization of novel Pt/C electrocatalysts with controlled porosity and cluster size

Eric N. Coker,* William A. Steen, Jeffrey T. Miller, A. Jeremy Kropf and James E. Miller

Pt/C electrocatalysts with small, size-tunable Pt clusters and ordered porosity have been prepared through a novel zeolite-templating route.

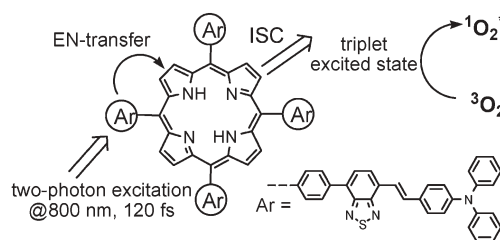


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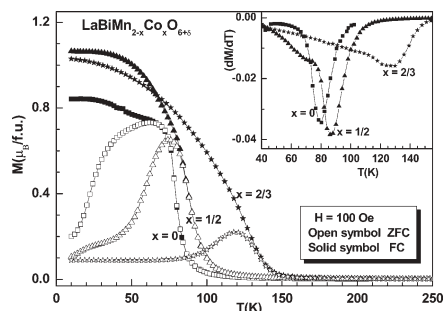
Singlet oxygen generation by two-photon excitation of porphyrin derivatives having two-photon-absorbing benzothiadiazole chromophores

Tsutomu Ishi-i,* Yoshiki Taguri, Shin-ichiro Kato, Motoyuki Shigeiwa,* Hideki Gorohmaru, Shuuichi Maeda and Shuntaro Mataka

Two-photon absorbing material with singlet oxygen sensitization ability is created by a combination of two-photon absorbing benzothiadiazole dye and oxygen sensitizing porphyrin.



3347

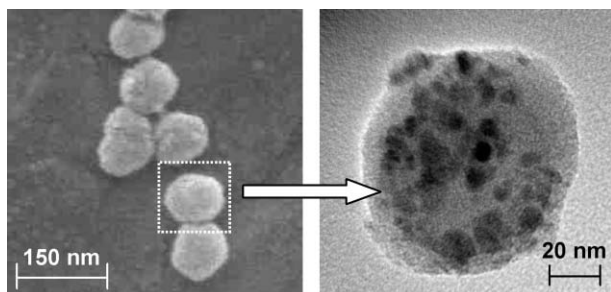


Enhancement of ferromagnetism by Co and Ni substitution in the perovskite $\text{LaBiMn}_2\text{O}_{6+\delta}$

Asish K. Kundu,* V. Pralong, V. Caignaert, C. N. R. Rao and B. Raveau

The substitution of manganese by cobalt and nickel in $\text{LaBiMn}_2\text{O}_{6.20}$ leads to a significant increase in the ferromagnetic transition temperature up to 130 K, the materials remain insulating. The presence of both a ferromagnetic and an insulating state in bismuth based oxides are important properties for multiferroics. These materials may exhibit such phenomena at low temperature.

3354



Synthesis and functionalization of polypyrrole- Fe_3O_4 nanoparticles for applications in biomedicine

Shy Chyi Wang, Koon Gee Neoh,* En-Tang Kang, Daniel W. Pack and Deborah E. Leckband

Well-defined polypyrrole- Fe_3O_4 nanoparticles with desirable magnetic and conducting properties were synthesized and functionalized with a cancer cell targeting ligand for applications in biomedicine.

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AUTHOR INDEX

Akartuna, Ilke, 3283
 Balanda, Maria, 3308
 Barnard, A. S., 3315
 Basset, Jean-Marie, 3290
 Benetti, Edmondo M., 3293
 Bertagnolli, Helmut, 3297
 Bingham, Ann, 3324
 Caignaert, V., 3347
 Chaudret, Bruno, 3290
 Chauvin, Yves, 3290
 Chmel, Nikola Paul, 3308
 Clegg, William, 3324
 Coker, Eric N., 3330
 Curtiss, L. A., 3315
 Day, Peter, 3324
 Faccini, Francesco, 3297
 Firth, Steven, 3324
 Fric, Helmut, 3297


Garcia-Antón, Jordi, 3290
 Gauckler, Ludwig J., 3283
 Gaweł, Bartłomiej, 3308
 Gonzenbach, Urs T., 3283
 Gorohmaru, Hideki, 3341
 Gross, Silvia, 3297
 Gutel, Thibaut, 3290
 Harrington, Ross W., 3324
 Horton, Peter N., 3324
 Hursthouse, Michael B., 3324
 Ishi-i, Tsutomu, 3341
 Kang, En-Tang, 3354
 Kapusta, Czesław, 3308
 Kato, Shin-ichiro, 3341
 Kropf, A. Jeremy, 3330
 Kundu, Asish K., 3347
 Lasocha, Wiesław, 3308
 Leckband, Deborah E., 3354

Maeda, Shuichi, 3341
 Martin, Lee, 3324
 Mataka, Shuntaro, 3341
 McMillan, Paul, 3324
 Miller, James E., 3330
 Miller, Jeffrey T., 3330
 Müller, Klaus, 3297
 Neoh, Koon Gee, 3354
 Pack, Daniel W., 3354
 Pelzer, Katrin, 3290
 Philippot, Karine, 3290
 Podgajny, Robert, 3308
 Pralong, V., 3347
 Rao, C. N. R., 3347
 Raveau, B., 3347
 Santini, Catherine C., 3290
 Schubert, Ulrich, 3297
 Shigeiwa, Motoyuki, 3341

Sieklucka, Barbara, 3308
 Sikora, Marcin, 3308
 Steen, William A., 3330
 Studart, André R., 3283
 Taguri, Yoshiki, 3341
 Tervoort, Elena, 3283
 Tracz, Piotr, 3308
 Tssetsgee, Otgontuul, 3297
 Vancso, G. Julius, 3293
 Venzo, Alfonso, 3297
 Wasiutyński, Tadeusz, 3308
 Wendel, Eric, 3297
 Wuang, Shy Chyi, 3354
 Zając, Dariusz, 3308
 Zapotoczny, Szczepan, 3293

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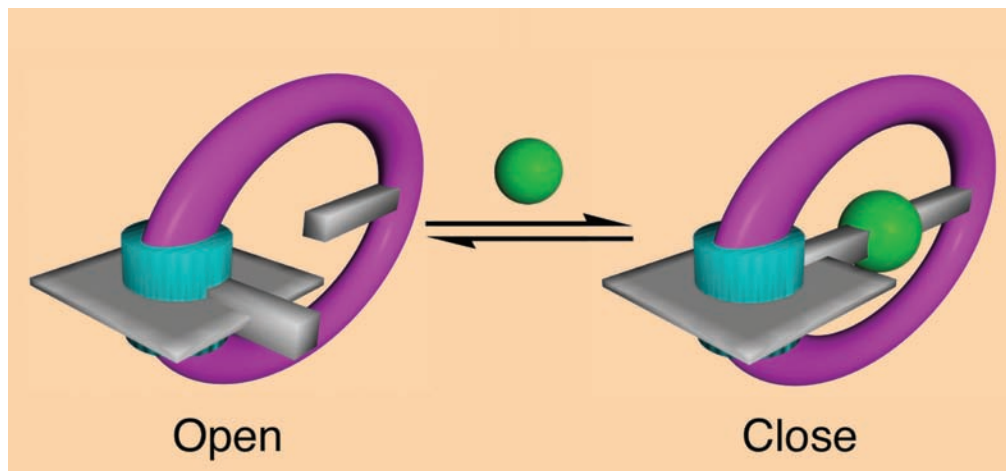
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Chemical Science

A new accessory for molecular machinery

Molecular gate with a silver key



French scientists reveal the design of a new molecular gate locked by a silver ion.

The gate was designed by a team at Louis Pasteur University, Strasbourg. As well as providing a controllable component for use in molecular machines, the researchers see a future for it as a switch that can store and release ions.

The gate has a porphyrin hinge and a freely rotating handle. The hinge and handle both include a pyridyl group designed to form a complex with a silver ion. When no silver ions are around, the handle can rotate freely around the hinge. As soon as a silver ion enters the gate, however, it forms a complex with both pyridyl groups, locking the handle in place.

The metal key (green) locks the gate with coordination bonds

The inspiration for the system came from several places, including public park gates and ATP synthase, an enzyme which acts as a rotating molecular motor, said Waiss Hosseini, who led the research.

'The design principle is interesting because it is rather general and opens the way to set-up many other systems. In particular, we are currently working on other molecular gates based on different types of coordination sites and other metal centres such as mercury or palladium. We're also working on a system operated by proton concentration,' said Hosseini.

'The final goal of our investigation is to open the path to rotational motors with control of the direction of rotation,' he added. 'We are currently working on how to introduce a potential gradient to achieve that.'

Clare Boothby

Reference

A Guenet *et al.*, *Chem. Commun.*, 2007, 2935 (DOI: 10.1039/b706527b)

In this issue

Crystals as genes?

A thirty year old hypothesis that crystals could have been primitive genetic materials has been tested in the lab

Golden future for addition reaction

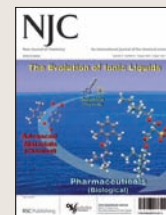
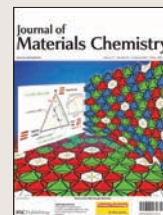
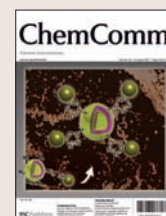
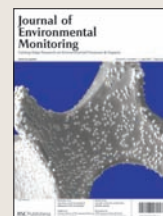
Catalyst lifetime extended without need for mercury

Interview: Molecular aesthetics

John Arnold talks to May Copsey about the joys of molecular inorganic chemistry

Instant insight: An adsorbing tale

Hong-Cai (Joe) Zhou describes how metal-organic frameworks could play their part in the hydrogen economy



A snapshot of the latest developments from across the chemical sciences

Research highlights

Zeolite softening agents increase levels of airborne particles

Is folding laundry bad for your health?

Levels of laundry detergent particles found in house dust are 'close to the margins of safety', say scientists in Sweden.

Anders Gudmundsson at Lund University and colleagues have systematically studied the source, amount and type of airborne particles, which are greater than half a micrometre in size, found in house dust.

'It is estimated that we spend more than 80% of our time inside buildings and increasing attention is being paid to the effects of indoor airborne particles on public health', said team member Mats Bohgard. 'Our aim is to develop methodology for identifying particle sources that contribute to dust problems in buildings.'

The Swedish study involved three similar households, two of which had complained of high dust levels. Inhabitants were asked to keep a diary of activities while airborne particle size and concentration were



measured throughout the house.

The researchers found that the amount of airborne particles in all of the houses fluctuated throughout the day, but they tended to peak in the dusty houses when the residents were making the bed or folding laundry. The team identified the particles as zeolites – porous inorganic materials.

According to Gudmundsson,

Dust levels peaked on washing days

zeolites have increasingly been replacing phosphates as softening agents over the last two decades, and about one million tons of zeolites are used worldwide in laundry detergents every year. And in fact, the two dusty households used laundry detergents containing zeolites, while the third, less dusty household, did not.

For the most common detergent zeolite, the lowest adverse effect level has been determined to be one milligram per cubic metre. Gudmundsson's study concludes that for the two households using zeolite containing detergents, the airborne particle levels were approaching the margins of safety and could imply a potential health risk for the major part of the population that uses these detergents. *Michele Zraggan*

Reference

A Gudmundsson, J Löndahl and M Bohgard, *J. Environ. Monit.*, 2007, DOI:10.1039/b708731b

Do you want porphyrins with that?

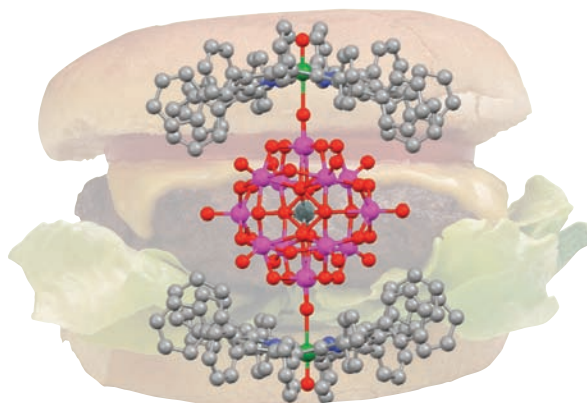
Photofunctional hamburgers

A hamburger-shaped compound could open the way to a new class of molecular architectures.

A team of researchers led by Takahiko Kojima and Shunichi Fukuzumi at Osaka University, Japan, fused a molybdenum–porphyrin complex and a tungsten polyoxometalate to form a compound they have named the porphyrin hamburger.

Two saddle-shaped porphyrin complexes make up the burger buns, while a cluster of tungsten oxide anions surrounding a central silicon cation, known as a polyoxometalate, forms the meat sandwiched between them. The molecules are joined by stable coordination bonds.

The structure combines two kinds of photoresponsive, redox-active molecules. This means the molecules can respond chemically



to light and can participate in reduction–oxidation processes. For example, polyoxometalates have been used in applications such as catalytic oxidation reactions and optoelectronics, explained Kojima. 'The fusion of these two functional molecules will give rise to novel photofunctional materials for light

The porphyrin hamburger: tungsten atoms are shown in pink, oxygen in red, molybdenum in green, carbon in grey and nitrogen in blue. The central silicon ion is shown in dark grey

energy conversion,' he said.

Lee Cronin, an expert in the design of complex molecular architectures at the University of Glasgow, UK, explained how the porphyrins effectively encapsulate the large metal oxide structure in an organic sheath. 'Not only does this give rise to new electronic properties, it raises the prospect of engineering metal oxide structures that can be made bio-compatible or allow catalysis in non-aqueous systems,' he said.

The Japanese team hope to develop their work in both solution and solid phase, looking in particular at catalytic oxidation in solution and photoinduced proton conduction in the solid state.

Katherine Davies

Reference

A Yokoyama et al., *Chem. Commun.*, 2007, DOI: 10.1039/b704994c

Longer lasting pain relief by switching counter ions

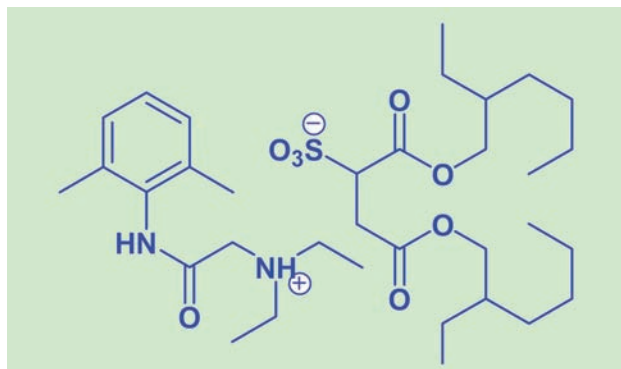
The third age of ionic liquids?

Scientists in the US and Poland have shown that ionic liquids could have significant biological applications in drug delivery.

The unique physical properties of ionic liquids (ILs), such as their low volatility and high stability, have made them a source of fascination for chemists. In recent years, research has moved on to combine the useful physical properties of ILs with precisely targeted chemical properties, for applications such as lubricants and energetic materials.

Robin Rogers at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, US, and colleagues have now taken the application of ILs to a third level, moving on from their physical and chemical attributes to look at their biological properties and applications.

Rogers' team made an ionic liquid based on the common local anaesthetic, lidocaine. Lidocaine is usually used in pharmaceutical



formulations as the solid hydrochloride salt, lidocaine hydrochloride. But by changing the anion from hydrochloride to docusate (dioctylsulfosuccinate) a room temperature ionic liquid was formed.

Compared to lidocaine hydrochloride, the researchers found that the ionic liquid form of the drug delivered longer lasting

The biological properties of ionic liquids are yet to be exploited

pain relief, suggesting that an entirely new but beneficial slow-release mechanism of drug delivery was active.

According to Rogers, the ability to finely adjust the biological properties of ILs by changing their anion/cation combination is a real benefit. 'I am convinced that the tunability inherent to ... ILs is entirely appropriate and applicable to the field of pharmaceuticals,' he said.

Peter Styring, professor of chemical engineering and chemistry at the University of Sheffield, UK, points out that many ILs possess motifs that are also present in drug molecules. 'Much has been asked of the possible toxicology of ILs. This is the first paper [to address] the issue in a positive sense,' he added.

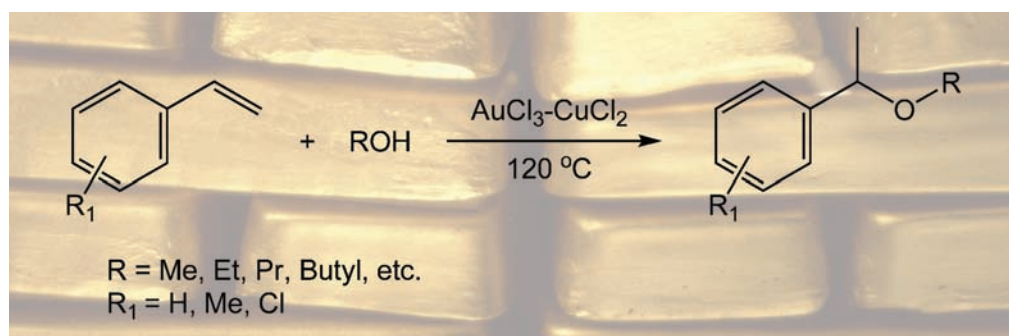
David Parker

Reference

W L Hough *et al*, *New J. Chem.*, 2007, DOI: 10.1039/b706677p

Catalyst lifetime extended without need for mercury

Golden future for addition reaction



By adding a copper salt to a gold catalyst, synthetic chemists have eliminated the need for mercury in an important chemical synthetic method.

The reaction of alcohols with alkenes to give ethers is a very useful synthetic method, but has traditionally used highly toxic mercury salts. Chemists at the University of Valencia, Spain, have now found that a more

The reaction of alcohols with alkenes can now be carried out without toxic mercury salts

environmentally friendly mixture of gold and copper salts can be used instead.

Gold(III) salts had previously been tried for the reaction of alcohols with alkenes, but tended to get reduced to gold(0) in the reaction mixture, destroying the catalytic activity. Avelino Corma and Xin Zhang found that they could solve this problem by adding copper(II) chloride to the gold(III)

chloride catalyst.

The method works because the copper(II) chloride acts as an oxidising agent, slowing down the reduction of gold(III) ions to gold(0). The next stage, said Corma, is to optimise the catalytic conditions, and to extend their method to the additions of alcohols to allenes and alkynes.

The significance of the work was emphasised by A Stephen K Hashmi, an expert in gold catalysis at the University of Heidelberg, Germany, who said that 'the discovery of an increase of the lifetime of a gold catalyst by a copper co-catalyst might well be the basis for industrial applications, and I look forward to future results in this area.'

David Barden

Reference

X Zhang and A Corma, *Chem. Commun.*, 2007, 3080 (DOI: 10.1039/b706961h)

News in brief

Relax, it's fluorine-19

Fluorinated lanthanide probes allow much faster collection of fluorine-19 magnetic resonance spectra.

A clearer view of heart disease

Versatile pyrazole ligands offer a promising future for heart imaging radiotracers.

Cheaper biodiesel

Producing biodiesel from cheap feedstocks could become easier and more environmentally friendly thanks to scientists in the US.

Calcium is key for Pt drug delivery

A porous silica material, doped with calcium, gives targeted delivery of a new platinum anticancer drug.

Sending peptides round the twist

Nanoparticles with flexible side chains cause peptides to adopt a helical form, making them promising anticancer agents.

See www.rsc.org/chemicalscience for full versions of these articles

This month in Chemical Technology**Keeping your powder dry**

Ever wondered why there is a little packet marked 'Do not eat' inside the box for your new DVD player?

From glycerol to gas

Liquid alkane fuel can be produced from a by-product of biomass processing, thanks to researchers from the US.

See www.rsc.org/chemicaltechnology for full versions of these articles

This month in Chemical Biology**Genetic display for butterflies**

Scientists manipulate the insect dress code as butterflies wear new genes.

Is the clock ticking for cancer cells?

Electrostatic attraction helps give telomeres some structure.

See www.rsc.org/chembiology for full versions of these articles

Thirty year old hypothesis tested in the lab

Crystals as genes?

Scientists have for the first time tested the hypothesis that crystals could have been primitive genetic materials.

Nearly three decades ago Graham Cairns-Smith proposed that the first genetic systems must have been more primitive than the sophisticated chemistries of DNA and RNA. He argued that crystals, particularly clay minerals, have the capacity to act as primitive genes.

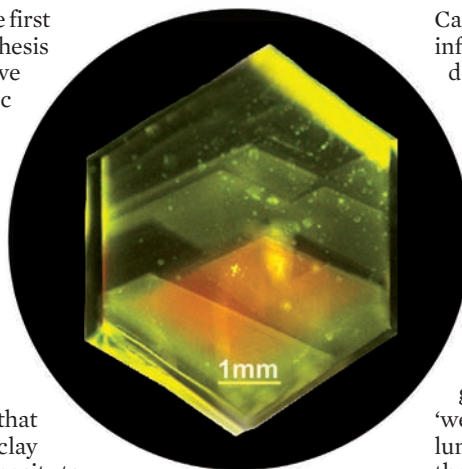
His idea was that imperfect crystals can act as genes by transferring information from one crystal to another by means of their imperfections. Screw dislocations, for instance, are often replicated through crystal growth so their arrangement can be considered a store of information, like a punch card. This so-called 'crystals-as-genes' hypothesis has captivated the imagination of many people, but so far has never been put to the test.

Until now. Bart Kahr and colleagues at the University of Washington, Seattle, US, have performed the first experiment to examine the idea.

While clays were abundant on prebiotic Earth, as crystals they are difficult to grow reproducibly so Kahr used a different crystal system, potassium hydrogen phthalate.

'Our paper is really an experimental test of an idea, whether or not that idea is relevant to life's origins,' said Kahr.

He looked at the disposition of hillocks in the crystal system by fractal analysis. 'Mother' crystals with these imperfections were cleaved with a razor and used as seeds to grow 'daughter' crystals from solution. The resulting daughter crystals were imaged using fluorescence microscopy to see whether the information encoded in the spatial distribution of the hillocks had been inherited. Kahr found that, as



Can imperfections in clay minerals store information?

Cairns-Smith suggested, the information encoded in the crystal defects can be transferred from one crystal to another. However, a large number of new hillocks, 'mutations', were also observed. For crystals to resemble genes there must be more inheritance than mutation.

'While we determined that the dislocations in the crystal system that we studied were not faithful enough to store and transfer information from one generation to the next,' said Kahr, 'we did demonstrate how we can use luminescent molecules to identify the sequence in time and space of all growth active dislocations.'

Cairns-Smith himself is not deterred. 'The success of [the] idea that RNA preceded DNA has provided inadvertent support for crystal genes,' he commented. 'The big thing missing ... is an account of how activated nucleotides might have appeared on the primitive Earth as feedstock for replicating RNA molecules. The kind of organic chemical competence required here could only have been the result of natural selection – based of course on some other genetic material.'

Kahr is more guarded. 'We wanted to try to bring one aspect of the multifaceted proposal of Cairns-Smith to the realm of experimental science. How could a hypothesis that failed to generate experimental evidence in 25 years still captivate the imagination of scientists?'

'I hope that our experiment encourages scientists to subject other aspects of the broad crystal-as-genes hypothesis to the scrutiny of experiment. Simple, unexpected replicating systems have taken centre stage. There is good reason to expect that other non-nucleic acid replicating systems will be found that can likewise evolve through growth and autocatalysis.'

While they may not have unravelled the mysteries of life's origins, the scientists have provided new tools to study crystal growth mechanisms, an area of great interest in many aspects of materials science. *Caroline Moore*

Reference

T Bullard *et al*, *Faraday Discuss.*, 2007, **136**, DOI: 10.1039/b616612c

Interview

Molecular aesthetics

John Arnold talks to May Copsey about the joys of molecular inorganic chemistry

**John Arnold**

John Arnold is a professor of inorganic chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley, US, and associate editor of *Dalton Transactions*. His research interests include organometallic chemistry and catalysis.

What inspired you to become a scientist?

I became interested in science when I was a child. I always wanted to build and make things. After leaving school at the age of 16, I worked in a plastics company in Lancaster, UK. The attraction of the job was studying, one day and two nights a week, at a further education college. That's where I became interested in chemistry. Four years later, I started at Salford University. University was like wonderland compared to my job in industry – I had never known anything like it. I enjoyed making things in the lab and ultimately doing my own research project. I still love making molecules.

Why did you become an inorganic chemist?

While I was an undergraduate student, two people who inspired me to become an inorganic chemist were Geoffrey Wilkinson and Malcolm Green. At that stage, I had never met them but I admired their chemistry – their work with ferrocene, metal carbonyls, hydrides, etc., fascinated me.

I subsequently discovered that Wilkinson and Green were incredible personalities, but it was their published chemistry which initially attracted me to them. Ultimately that's what survives – it's what people publish. These scientists and similar characters have left an incredible legacy of important chemistry through their publications.

What projects are you currently working on?

We are interested in ligand scaffolds that can support what we hope to be new complexes and reactivity. These ligands are intended to play supporting roles in that they chaperone what goes on at the metal centre. Right now, we are working on a tetradentate ligand system that is proving to be versatile for a wide range of metals. The ligand is capable of stabilizing dinitrogen complexes with widely-differing transition metals and the hope is that unusual binding modes will subsequently influence reaction chemistry in these complexes. We are also working on related ligand design concepts in main group chemistry and in lanthanide and actinide chemistry.

My co-workers and I benefit from the collaborative environment of research at Berkeley. For example, with Peidong Yang's group we are exploring the

surface-modification of nanomaterials in chemistry related to ion transport and applied some of what we have learnt to arsenate sensing. We also work with Bob Bergman on a project making complexes of Group 4 and 5 metals and their use as catalysts.

As an Englishman working in a US university, what are the advantages of working there?

I like the energy of the people involved and their willingness to work hard and try new things. I am fortunate to be working in a department with very talented people and great facilities. The graduate students are heavily involved in teaching the undergraduate students and this aspect is beneficial all-round; it certainly helped me when I was a graduate student. I had to lecture on topics such as kinetics and thermodynamics, which I don't think I started to understand properly until I had to teach them. US students let you know if they're not following you and this tends to keep you on your toes. Now as a professor, I encourage students to ask questions because everyone has a chance to learn something from the resulting discussion.

What lies in the future for inorganic chemistry?

Molecular inorganic chemistry has a lot to offer as a result of the kinds of issues that are now emerging as a result of energy and environmental concerns. For example, many of these questions relate to the chemistry of small molecules such as hydrogen, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, nitrogen, etc. There are fundamental questions still to be addressed regarding the chemistry of these molecules and molecular inorganic chemistry will be a part of how we go about answering these questions.

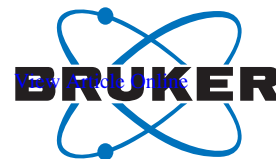
I think inorganic chemistry will continue to be an important discipline because it is a fundamental component of other chemistry; from materials, to catalysis, to biology. Combined with this breadth of scope and the challenges that are out there, the aesthetics of synthetic inorganic chemistry are wonderful, so this will continue to attract people who really enjoy doing the day-to-day chemistry itself in the laboratory.

If you weren't a scientist, what would you be?

If I had any footballing talent, a centre-half for Manchester United.



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think forward

NMR Solutions

An adsorbing tale

Hong-Cai (Joe) Zhou at Miami University, Ohio, US, describes how metal–organic frameworks could play their part in the hydrogen economy

Hydrogen powered vehicles offer the prospect of an emission-free future for transport. Perfecting hydrogen fuel cells, which provide the energy to drive the car, is an intensively researched area. But it's important to remember that there is another major barrier to the practical fuel-cell vehicle – the storage of useful amounts of hydrogen on board.

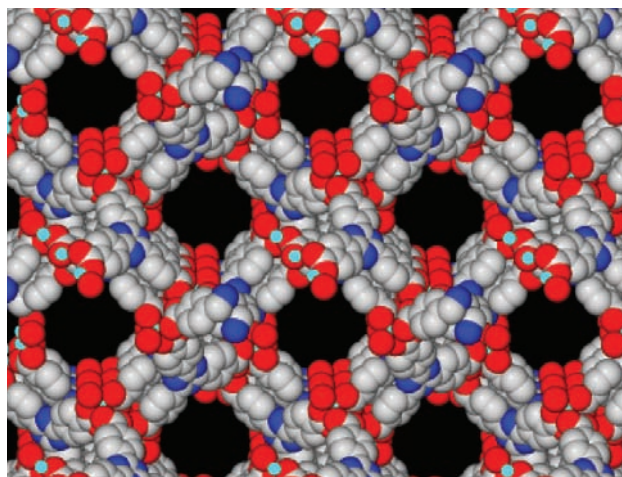
For a vehicle to travel for 400–500 kilometres before needing to refuel, it is estimated that about five kilograms of hydrogen would be needed. But with a density of less than one tenth of a gram per litre at room temperature and atmospheric pressure, this would mean finding space for some 55 000 litres of hydrogen.

High-pressure compression or liquefaction could go some way to help, but these methods would be difficult to implement in a typical small personal vehicle. Compression of five kilograms of hydrogen to a reasonable volume, such as the typical 45 litre car fuel tank, would require dangerously high pressures of more than 1000 bar. And the tank itself would have to be quite heavy to withstand the pressure.

Liquefaction requires cooling to -252°C , and even then the volume required would still be larger than typical car fuel tanks – not including all the refrigeration machinery and insulation required.

Targets set by the US Department of Energy say that, by 2015, we should be able to store 90 grams of hydrogen per kilogram of tank and 81 grams of hydrogen per litre. These targets cannot conceivably be met by either compression or liquefaction.

What options remain? One possibility is physisorption, in which hydrogen is adsorbed onto the interior surfaces of a porous material, and held there by



The porous structure of a metal–organic framework is ideal for storing hydrogen molecules

relatively weak attractive forces. Candidate materials include carbon nanostructures (including nanotubes, fullerenes, and activated carbon), zeolites, and metal–organic frameworks (MOFs).

MOFs are hybrid organic–inorganic materials that contain metal atoms or clusters connected by organic linkers. Most have three-dimensional structures incorporating uniform pores and a network of channels. By varying the size of the organic linker, a wide range of pore sizes can be created. Hydrogen molecules can be adsorbed into the pores, where they weakly interact with the metal ions and the organic linkers.

At very low temperatures (about -196°C) and atmospheric pressure, some MOFs can adsorb more than 25 grams of hydrogen per kilogram. Increasing the pressure can push that up as high as 60 or 70 grams per kilogram. But adsorption at room temperature, even at hydrogen pressures in excess of 50 bar, is rarely greater than 15 grams per kilogram. At these higher temperatures, thermal motions easily overcome the attraction between the hydrogen molecule and the MOF. A key measure of

the magnitude of this attraction is the heat of adsorption – the higher the heat of adsorption, the greater the interaction between hydrogen molecules and the framework.

There are various ways of increasing the hydrogen uptake of these materials. Increasing the total amount of pore volume and/or surface area within the MOF is an obvious first step; however, several materials have been synthesized with over 80 per cent porosity (empty space) and much further increase seems unlikely. A better strategy is to increase the interaction between hydrogen molecules and the linker molecules, metal clusters, or both. This can be done by: changing chemical function of the organic linker, exposing uncoordinated or ‘naked’ metal atoms, or adjusting the pore size so that a single hydrogen molecule interacts with multiple parts of the framework at once. Each of these improvements has the potential to increase the attraction between hydrogen and the MOF, as measured by the heat of adsorption.

So far, in this emerging field, much of the work has been exploratory. A lot of materials have been synthesized and tested, but only a very few have been investigated in depth. Isolation of the several factors contributing to hydrogen adsorption has remained difficult. But, with increased effort comes increased understanding and a more systematic approach to these materials. The coming years are sure to see further development of novel MOFs with ever-greater uptake capacities – all in the hope of a more efficient, cleaner energy future.

Read the full feature article on ‘Hydrogen storage in metal–organic frameworks’ in the New Energy Materials themed issue (issue 30) of Journal of Materials Chemistry.

Reference

D J Collins and H-C Zhou, *J. Mater. Chem.*, 2007, DOI: 10.1039/b702858j

Essential elements

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RSC Publishing is celebrating the continued success of its journals following the release of the 2006 impact factors calculated by ISI®. Journals from across the collection have recorded significant rises, while new interdisciplinary titles have received their first official ranking of the internationally recognised publishing industry metric.

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The RSC materials science journals further strengthen and grow. For the second year running, weekly *Journal of Materials Chemistry's* impact factor rose significantly, to 4.29. Meanwhile, new interdisciplinary journal *Soft Matter* (launched June 2005) received an impressive first (partial) impact factor of 4.39, positioning it ahead of its competitors and achieving the journal's aim of bringing together interdisciplinary research in this field.

RSC journals at the interface with biology have also been bolstered by increasing impact factors, with *Organic & Biomolecular Chemistry*



and *Natural Product Reports* achieving 2.87 and 8.89 (rises of 13% and 21%) respectively. Newcomer *Molecular BioSystems* (launched May 2005) celebrates its first (partial) impact factor of 2.45.

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The immediacy index measures how topical and urgent the papers published in a journal are. The 2006 immediacy index is the total number of citations given in 2006 to citeable articles published in 2006 divided by the number of citeable articles published in 2006.

Data based on 2006 impact factors, calculated by ISI®, released June 2007.

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