The *coronatine-insensitive 1* Mutation Reveals the Hormonal Signaling Interaction between Abscisic Acid and Methyl Jasmonate in Arabidopsis Guard Cells. Specific Impairment of Ion Channel Activation and Second Messenger Production[1][OA]

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Methyl jasmonate (MeJA) elicits stomatal closing similar to abscisic acid (ABA), but whether the two compounds use similar or different signaling mechanisms in guard cells remains to be clarified. We investigated the effects of MeJA and ABA on second messenger production and ion channel activation in guard cells of wild-type Arabidopsis (*Arabidopsis thaliana*) and MeJA-insensitive *coronatine-insensitive 1* (*coi1*) mutants. The *coi1* mutation impaired MeJA-induced stomatal closing but not ABA-induced stomatal closing. MeJA as well as ABA induced production of reactive oxygen species (ROS) and nitric oxide (NO) in wild-type guard cells, whereas MeJA did not induce production of ROS and NO in *coi1* guard cells. The experiments using an inhibitor and scavengers demonstrated that both ROS and NO are involved in MeJA-induced stomatal closing as well as ABA-induced stomatal closing. Not only ABA but also MeJA activated slow anion channels and Ca^{2+} permeable cation channels in the plasma membrane of wild-type guard cell protoplasts. However, in *coi1* guard cell protoplasts, MeJA did not elicit either slow anion currents or Ca^{2+} permeable cation currents, but ABA activated both types of ion channels. Furthermore, to elucidate signaling interaction between ABA and MeJA in guard cells, we examined MeJA signaling in ABA-insensitive mutant *ABA-insensitive 2* (*abi2-1*), whose ABA signal transduction cascade has some disruption downstream of ROS production and NO production. MeJA also did not induce stomatal closing but stimulated production of ROS and NO in *abi2-1*. These results suggest that MeJA triggers stomatal closing via a receptor distinct from the ABA receptor and that the *coi1* mutation disrupts MeJA signaling upstream of the blanch point of ABA signaling and MeJA signaling in Arabidopsis guard cells.

Stomatal pores that are formed by a pair of guard cells respond to various stimuli, including plant hormones and elicitors. Methyl jasmonate (MeJA), which mediates various plant defense responses (Liechti and Farmer, 2002; Turner et al., 2002), has been reported to induce stomatal closing (Gehring et al., 1997; Suhita et al., 2003; Suhita et al., 2004). It has been suggested that there are several components common to both abscisic acid (ABA)-induced and MeJA-induced sto-matal closing (e.g. reactive oxygen species [ROS] and cytosolic alkalization [Suhita et al., 2004]). Nitric oxide (NO) as well as ROS functions as an important second messenger in ABA-induced stomatal closing signal transduction (Desikan et al., 2002; Neill et al., 2002; Bright et al., 2006). It has been shown that NO is also involved in the defense signaling mediated by MeJA (Orozco-Cárdenas and Ryan, 2002; Huang et al., 2004). Moreover, a recent finding suggests that ABA induces NO production via hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2) synthesis (Bright et al., 2006). However, the role of NO in MeJA-induced stomatal closing remains to be clarified. These second messengers have been shown to mediate ion channels in the plasma membrane of guard cells. For example, ROS and NO modulate the activation of K^+ channels (Garcia-Mata et al., 2003; Köhler et al., 2003; Sokolovski and Blatt, 2004; Sokolovski et al., 2005), Cl^- channels (Garcia-Mata et al., 2003; Sokolovski et al., 2005), and Ca^{2+} channels (Allen et al., 2000; Pei et al., 2000; Murata et al., 2001; Köhler et al., 2003; Kwak et al., 2003) in guard cells of fava bean (*Vicia faba*) or Arabidopsis (*Arabidopsis thaliana*).

The activation of several types of ion channels in the plasma membrane of guard cells is an important process for ABA-induced stomatal closing. Activation of slow (S-type) anion channels depolarizes the plasma membrane of guard cells (Schroeder and Keller, 1992; Schmidt et al., 1995; Pei et al., 1997), and the activation of S-type anion channels by ABA is impaired in many ABA-insensitive mutants (Pei et al., 1997; Li et al., 2000; Wang et al., 2001; Kwak et al., 2002). These results indicate that activation of S-type anion channels is essential for ABA-induced stomatal closing.

Ca^{2+} permeable cation (I_{Ca}) channels, which are activated by H_2O_2, contribute to elevation of cytosolic-free Ca^{2+} ($[Ca^{2+}]_{cyt}$) in guard cells (Pei et al., 2000). I_{Ca} channels are also activated by ABA and fungal elicitors only in the presence of cytosolic NAD(P)H (Murata et al., 2001; Klüsener et al., 2002), and activation of I_{Ca} channels by ABA is abolished in the Arabidopsis ABA-insensitive mutants gca2 (Pei et al., 2000) and ABA-insensitive 2 (abi2-1; Murata et al., 2001). In addition, both ABA-induced ROS production and ABA-induced cytosolic NAD(P)H-dependent activation of I_{Ca} channels are impaired in the Arabidopsis double mutant of catalytic subunits of plasma membrane NAD(P)H oxidases atrboh D/F (Kwak et al., 2002). These studies revealed that NAD(P)H oxidase-mediated ROS production is necessary for activation of I_{Ca} channels by ABA.

It has been demonstrated that K^+ efflux across the plasma membrane of guard cells is stimulated by long-term depolarization of the plasma membrane (Schroeder et al., 1987) and that cytosolic alkalization activates outward rectifying K^+ currents (Blatt and Armstrong, 1993). Recently, it was demonstrated that MeJA activates outward potassium currents in guard cell protoplasts (GCPs) of fava bean (Evans, 2003). However, to our knowledge, no study has elucidated whether MeJA regulates other ion channels in the plasma membrane of guard cells.

In this study, we used the MeJA-insensitive mutant, coronatine-insensitive 1 (coi1), which fails in various jasmonate-mediated responses, including inhibition of root growth and expression of defense genes (Feys et al., 1994; Benedetti et al., 1995; Penninckx et al., 1996; Xie et al., 1998). The coi1 mutation disrupts an F-box protein that functions in the E3 ubiquitin ligase involved in the 26S proteasome-mediated protein degradation pathway (Xie et al., 1998; Xu et al., 2002). However, the role of F-box proteins in signal transduction in guard cells remains unknown.

In this article, to elucidate the signaling interaction between ABA and MeJA in guard cells, we examined ROS production, NO production, activation of S-type anion channels, and activation of I_{Ca} channels induced by MeJA and also tested the effects of MeJA on stomatal aperture and second messenger production in the abi2-1 mutant. Based on our results, we present a new model of hormonal signaling interaction in Arabidopsis guard cells.

RESULTS

Impairment of MeJA-Induced Stomatal Closing in coi1 Mutant

To clarify MeJA signaling in guard cells, we examined stomatal movements of the MeJA-insensitive mutant coi1. ABA induced stomatal closing in coi1 plants as well as wild-type plants (Fig. 1A). Both plants responded to ABA in a similar dose-response manner, suggesting that ABA signal cascade in the coi1 mutant could not be disrupted. However, MeJA induced stomatal closing in wild-type plants but did not induce stomatal closing in coi1 plants (Fig. 1B). Time courses of stomatal closing in wild-type plants and coi1 plants are shown in Figure 1, C and D, respectively. Application of 1 μM ABA or 1 μM MeJA reduced stomatal apertures by 18% at 30 min and by 21% at 120 min in wild-type plants (Fig. 1C). The similar time course of stomatal movements was observed in coi1 plants treated with ABA, but there was no change in stomatal aperture of coi1 plants treated with MeJA (Fig. 1D). Note that reverse transcriptional-PCR analysis with highly purified GCPs (>80%) showed that COI1 is expressed in guard cells (data not shown). This result indicates that COI1 can be involved in MeJA signaling in guard cells. Taken together, our results indicated that the coi1 mutation specifically impaired MeJA-induced stomatal closing but not ABA-induced stomatal closing.

Impairment of ROS Production and NO Production in coi1 Mutant

To elucidate that ROS and NO act as second messengers in MeJA signaling pathway in guard cells, we examined effects of the coi1 mutation on ROS production and NO production induced by MeJA using the ROS detection fluorescence dye 2′,7′-dichlorodihydrofluorescein diacetate (H_2DCF-DA), and the NO detection fluorescence dye 4,5-diaminofluorescein-2 diacetate (DAF-2DA). As shown in Figure 2A, ABA induced ROS production ($P < 0.01$) and NO production ($P < 0.05$) in wild-type guard cells, which is consistent with previous results (Pei et al., 2000; Murata et al., 2001; Neill et al., 2002; Garcia-Mata et al., 2003). MeJA also promoted both ROS production ($P < 0.001$) and NO production ($P < 0.01$) in wild-type guard cells. ABA stimulated ROS production ($P < 0.02$) and NO production ($P < 0.04$) in coi1 guard cells as well as wild-type guard cells, whereas MeJA did not induce either ROS production ($P = 0.55$) or NO production ($P = 0.69$) in coi1 guard cells unlike wild-type guard cells (Fig. 2B).

To confirm that ROS and NO function as second messengers on MeJA-induced stomatal closing, we evaluated the effects of the NAD(P)H oxidase inhibitor diphenylene iodonium chloride (DPI), the H_2O_2-specific scavenger catalase, and the NO-specific scavenger 2-(4-carboxyphenyl)-4,4,5,5-tetramethylimidazoline-1-oxyl-3-oxide (cPTIO) on MeJA-induced stomatal
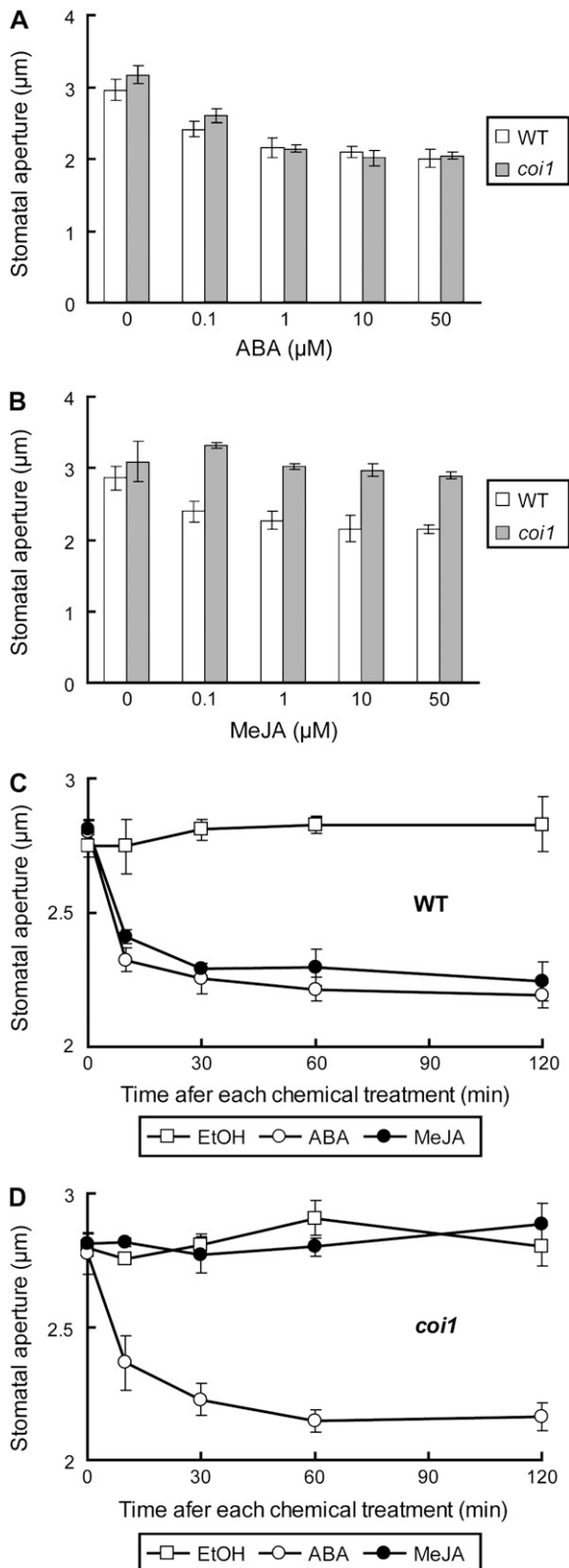
Figure 1. ABA-induced and MeJA-induced stomatal closing in wild-type plants and *coi1* plants. A, ABA-induced stomatal closing in wild-type plants (white bars) and in *coi1* plants (gray bars). B, MeJA-induced stomatal closing in wild-type plants (white bars) but not in *coi1* plants

closing (Fig. 3). Treatment with 25 μM DPI, 100 units/mL catalase, or 100 μM cPTIO significantly prevented ABA-induced stomatal closing, as shown in previous reports (Pei et al., 2000; Zhang et al., 2001; Neill et al., 2002). Treatment with each compound also inhibited MeJA-induced stomatal closing in wild-type plants. These results suggest that MeJA as well as ABA induces stomatal closing via ROS production and NO production in guard cells.

Activation of S-Type Anion Currents and I_{Ca} Currents by MeJA in Wild-Type Guard Cells and Impairment of Activation of These Ion Channels in *coi1* Guard Cells

Many reports have demonstrated that the activation of S-type anion channels in the plasma membrane of guard cells is important for ABA-induced stomatal closing. However, no report demonstrates activation of S-type anion channels in the plasma membrane of guard cells induced by MeJA. Thus, we examined whether MeJA activates S-type anion channels. ABA activated S-type anion currents in wild-type GCPs ($P < 0.03$ at -115 mV; Fig. 4, A and C), which is consistent with previous reports (Pei et al., 1997; Wang et al., 2001; Kwak et al., 2002). Pretreatment with MeJA elicited S-type anion currents in wild-type GCPs ($P < 0.01$ at -115 mV; Fig. 4, A and C). These results suggest that S-type anion channels may play an important role in MeJA-induced stomatal closing as well as ABA-induced stomatal closing. ABA elicited S-type anion currents in *coi1* GCPs ($P < 0.04$ at -115 mV; Fig. 4, B and D) as well as wild-type GCPs, whereas MeJA did not activate S-type anion currents in *coi1* GCPs ($P = 0.57$ at -115 mV; Fig. 4, B and D) unlike wild-type GCPs. These results are consistent with the results of stomatal movements, ROS production, and NO production shown in Figures 1 and 2.

It has been suggested that signals to induce stomatal closing (i.e. ABA and extracellular high Ca^{2+} condition) modulate priming of Ca^{2+} sensors, including calcium-dependent protein kinases in guard cells, which can response elevation of $[Ca^{2+}]_{cyt}$ and then activate S-type anion channels (Allen et al., 2002; Mori et al., 2006). We tested whether the *coi1* mutation affects activation of S-type anion channels by Ca^{2+}. Preincubation of GCPs with 40 mM $CaCl_2$ evoked S-type anion currents both in wild-type GCPs and *coi1* GCPs when the concentration of $[Ca^{2+}]_{cyt}$ was 2 μM (Fig. 4E).

Elevation of $[Ca^{2+}]_{cyt}$ in guard cells occurs during stomatal closing (McAinsh et al., 1995), and application of ABA and H_2O_2 elicits I_{Ca} currents and $[Ca^{2+}]_{cyt}$

(gray bars). C, The time course of stomatal apertures in wild-type plants treated with 0.1% ethanol (white squares), 1 μM ABA (white circles), and 1 μM MeJA (black circles). D, The time course of stomatal movements of *coi1* plants treated with 0.1% ethanol (white squares), 1 μM ABA (white circles), and 1 μM MeJA (black circles). Averages from three independent experiments (60 total stomata per bar) are shown. Error bars represent SEs.
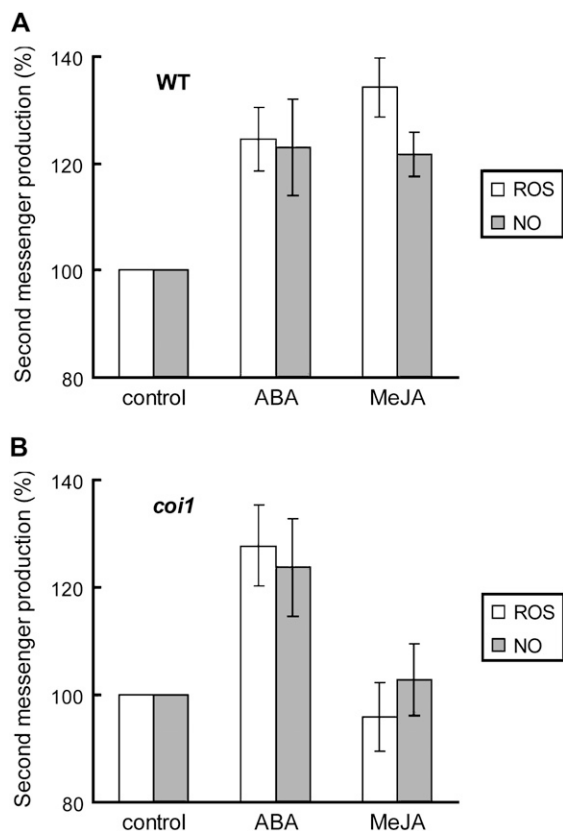
Figure 2. ABA-induced and MeJA-induced production of ROS and NO in wild-type guard cells and *coi1* guard cells. A, Effects of ABA (50 μM) and MeJA (50 μM) on ROS production ($n = 4$, white bars) and NO production ($n = 4$, gray bars) in wild-type guard cells. B, Effects of ABA (50 μM) and MeJA (50 μM) on ROS production ($n = 4$, white bars) and NO production ($n = 5$, gray bars) in *coi1* guard cells. The vertical scale represents the percentage of H_2DCF-DA fluorescence levels (ROS) and DAF-2DA fluorescence levels (NO) when fluorescent intensities of ABA- or MeJA-treated cells are normalized to control value taken as 100% for each experiment. Each data was obtained from >60 total guard cells. Error bars represent SES.

oscillation in guard cells (Allen et al., 1999b, 2000; Hamilton et al., 2000; Pei et al., 2000; Köhler et al., 2003). Thus, we examined whether MeJA activates I_{Ca} channels. MeJA ($P < 0.04$ at -180 mV) as well as ABA ($P < 0.05$ at -180 mV) elicited typical spiky I_{Ca} currents in wild-type GCPs (Fig. 5, A and C). However, in *coi1* GCPs, MeJA ($P = 0.60$ at -180 mV) did not elicit I_{Ca} currents in contrast with ABA ($P < 0.01$ at -180 mV; Fig. 5, B and D). We also examined activation of I_{Ca} currents by H_2O_2 in the *coi1* mutant. Application of 1 mM H_2O_2 to bath solution elicited I_{Ca} currents both in wild-type GCPs and in *coi1* GCPs (Fig. 5E). Additionally, treatment with H_2O_2 induced stomatal closing both in wild-type plants and *coi1* plants (Fig. 5F).

Impairment of MeJA-Induced Stomatal Closing by the *abi2-1* Mutation

To clarify the signaling interaction between ABA and MeJA in Arabidopsis guard cells, we examined

whether MeJA induces stomatal closing, ROS production, and NO production in the ABA-insensitive protein phosphatase 2C mutant, *abi2-1* (Meyer et al., 1994; Leung et al., 1997), of which the mutation disrupts ABA signaling downstream of ROS production and NO production in guard cells (Murata et al., 2001; Desikan et al., 2002). Neither ABA nor MeJA induced stomatal closing in *abi2-1* plants unlike in wild-type plants (Fig. 6A). MeJA as well as ABA elicited ROS production and NO production in *abi2-1* guard cells (Fig. 6B).

DISCUSSION

MeJA-Induced Stomatal Closing

Similar to ABA, MeJA accumulates in planta under drought conditions (Creelman and Mullet, 1995). As shown in Figure 1, MeJA induces stomatal closing in a dose- and time-dependent manner similar to that of ABA-induced stomatal closing. Furthermore, we also found that, similar to ABA, MeJA regulates production of second messengers and activation of ion channels in Arabidopsis guard cells. Taken together, these findings suggest that MeJA could play a physiological role in inducing stomatal closing to accommodate the drought condition as ABA.

Specific Impairment of MeJA-Induced Stomatal Closing in *coi1* Mutant

Suhita et al. (2004) investigated the signal interaction between ABA and MeJA using ABA-insensitive mutant *ost1* and MeJA-insensitive mutant *jar1* and reported that the *ost1* mutation and the *jar1* mutation impaired both ABA-induced stomatal closing and MeJA-induced stomatal closing. These results showed some signal interactions between ABA and MeJA but failed to clarify MeJA-specific signaling or ABA-specific
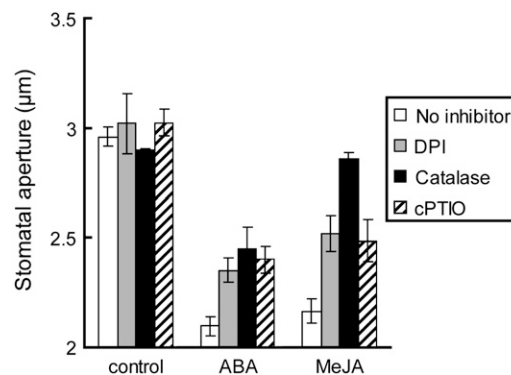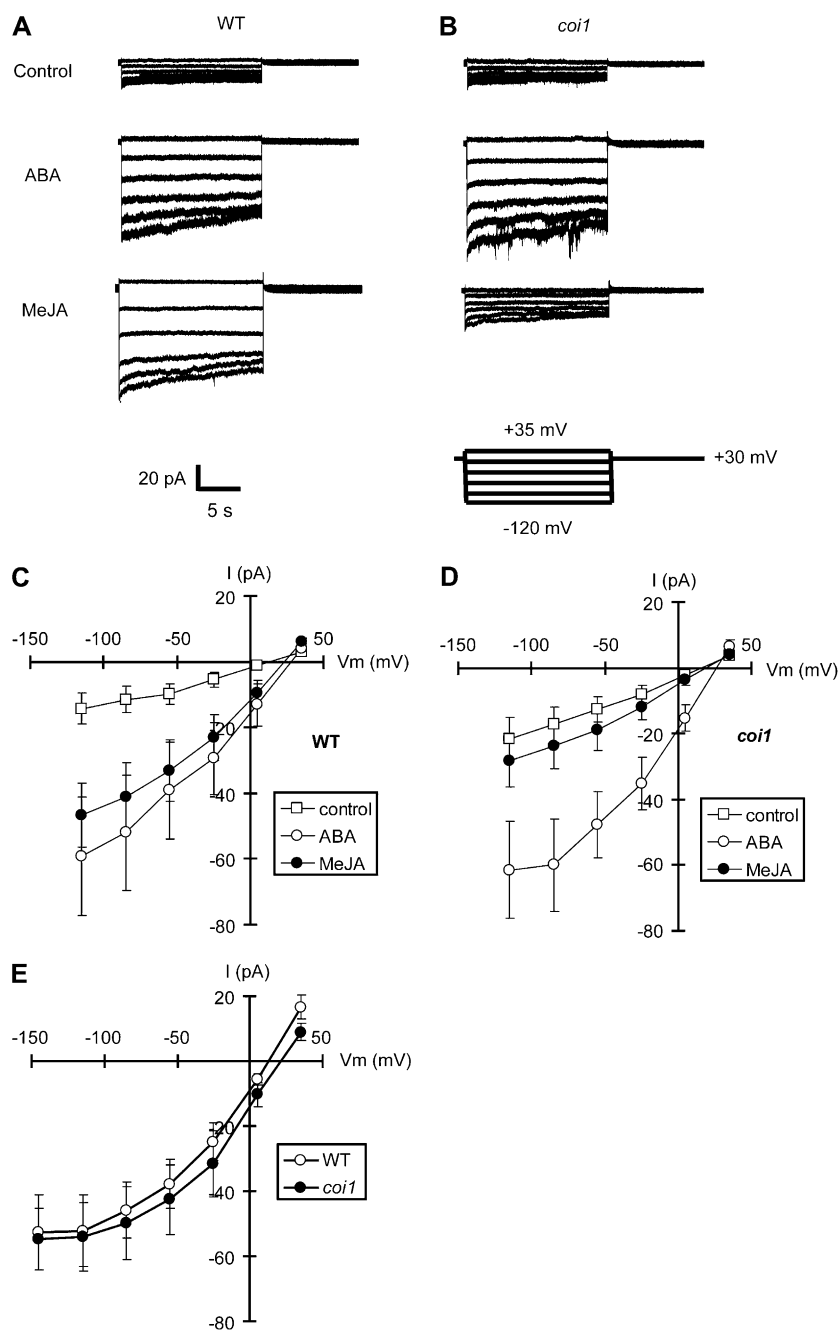

Figure 3. ABA-induced and MeJA-induced stomatal closing inhibited by DPI, catalase, and cPTIO. Rosette leaves of wild-type plants were treated with 20 μM DPI (gray bars), 100 units/mL catalase (black bars), or 100 μM cPTIO (hatched bars). Then, rosette leaves pretreated with each inhibitor for 30 min were treated with 1 μM ABA or 1 μM MeJA. Averages from three independent experiments (60 total stomata per bar) are shown. Error bars represent SES.

Figure 4. S-type anion currents in wild-type GCPs and *coi1* GCPs. A, Whole-cell recordings of S-type anion currents in wild-type GCPs treated with no hormones (top trace), 50 μM ABA (middle trace), or 50 μM MeJA (bottom trace). B, Whole-cell recordings of S-type anion currents in *coi1* GCPs treated with no hormones (top trace), 50 μM ABA (middle trace), or 50 μM MeJA (bottom trace). C, Steady-state current-voltage relationships for ABA and MeJA activation of S-type anion currents in wild-type GCPs as recorded in A (white squares, control; white circles, 50 μM ABA; black circles, 50 μM MeJA). D, Steady-state current-voltage relationships for ABA and MeJA activation of S-type anion currents in *coi1* GCPs as recorded in B (white squares, control; white circles, 50 μM ABA; black circles, 50 μM MeJA). E, Steady-state current-voltage relationships for extracellular high Ca^{2+} (40 mM) activation of S-type anion currents in wild-type GCPs (white circles) and in *coi1* GCPs (black circles). The voltage protocol was stepped up from 35 mV to -115 mV in 30-mV decrements (holding potential, 30 mV). GCPs were treated with 50 μM ABA or 50 μM ABA MeJA for 2 h before recordings. Each datum was obtained from at least $n = 6$ GCPs. Error bars represent SES.

signaling. In this article, the *abi2-1* (Fig. 6A) and *abi1-1* (data not shown) mutations impaired both ABA-induced stomatal closing and MeJA-induced stomatal closing. These data also indicated that there are some interactions between ABA signaling and MeJA signaling but could not give us any valuable information about ABA-specific signaling and MeJA-specific signaling.

The *coi1* mutants exhibit male sterility, susceptibility to insect attack and pathogen infection, and insensitivity to jasmonates, which are involved in root growth and defense gene expression (Feys et al., 1994; Benedetti et al., 1995; Penninckx et al., 1996;

McConn et al., 1997; Xie et al., 1998). In this article, we investigated MeJA signaling and the signaling interaction between ABA and MeJA using the *coi1* mutant. The *coi1* mutation impaired MeJA-induced stomatal closing but did not impair ABA-induced stomatal closing (Fig. 1). These results indicate that, in contrast with the *jar1* mutation, the *coi1* mutation disrupts MeJA signaling upstream of a blanch point between ABA signaling and MeJA signaling in Arabidopsis guard cells, suggesting that COI1 could be an early signaling component in MeJA signaling and that COI1 might be closely involved in perception of MeJA. In future experiments, the *coi1* mutant could be more
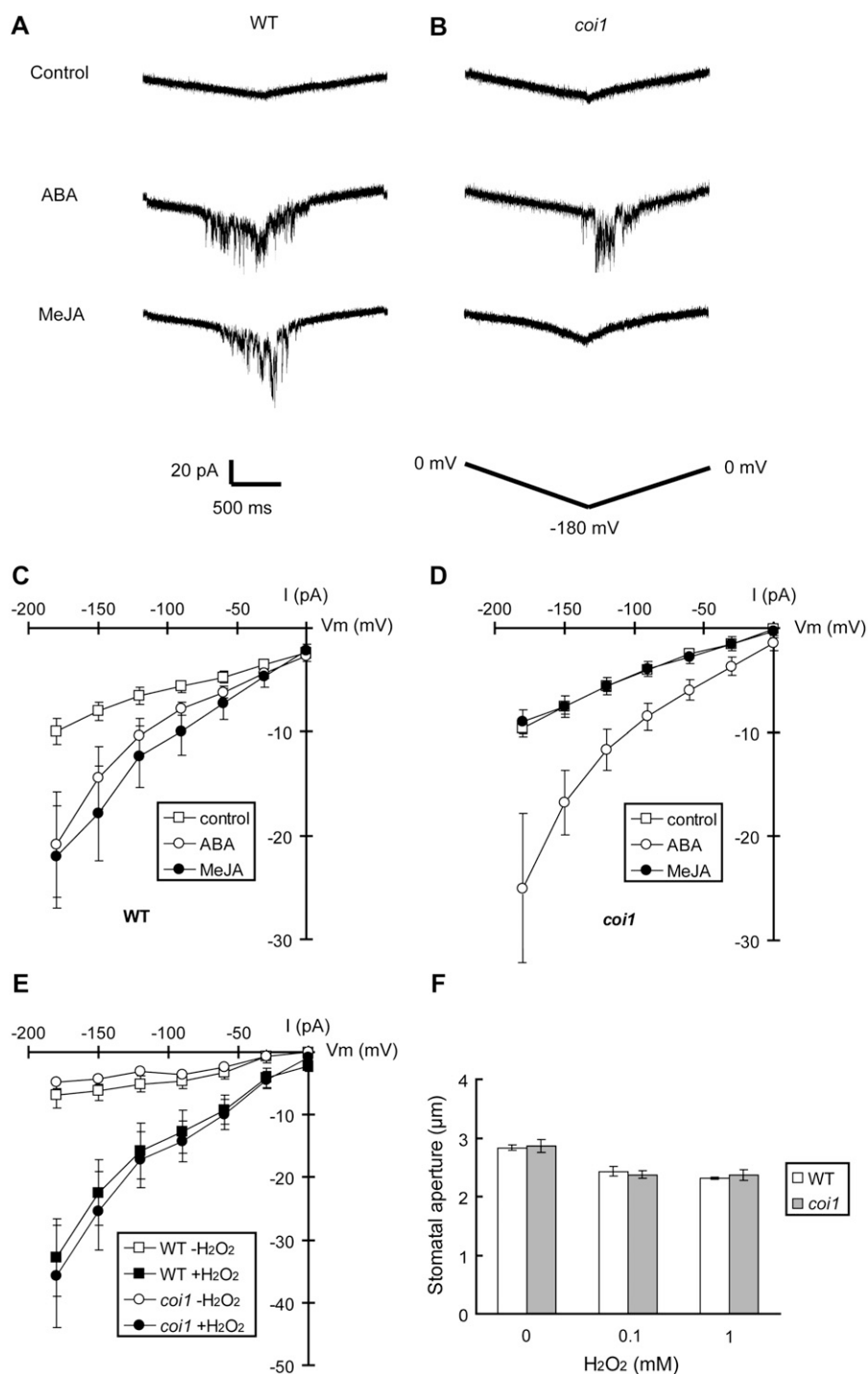
Figure 5. I_{Ca} currents in wild-type GCPs and *coi1* GCPs. A, Whole-cell recordings of I_{Ca} currents in wild-type GCPs treated with no hormones (top trace), 50 μM ABA (middle trace), or 50 μM MeJA (bottom trace). B, Whole-cell recordings of I_{Ca} currents in *coi1* GCPs treated with no hormones (top trace), 50 μM ABA (middle trace), or 50 μM MeJA (bottom trace). C, Current-voltage relationships for ABA and MeJA activation of I_{Ca} currents in wild-type GCPs as recorded in A (white squares, control; white circles, 50 μM ABA; black circles, 50 μM MeJA). D, Current-voltage relationships for ABA and MeJA activation of I_{Ca} currents in *coi1* GCPs as recorded in B (white squares, control; white circles, 50 μM ABA; black circles, 50 μM MeJA). E, Current-voltage relationships for H_2O_2 (1 mM) activation of I_{Ca} currents in wild-type GCPs and *coi1* GCPs (white squares, wild-type $- H_2O_2$; black squares, wild-type $+ H_2O_2$; white circles, *coi1* $- H_2O_2$; black circles, *coi1* $+ H_2O_2$). A ramp voltage protocol from 20 to -180 mV (holding potential, 0 mV; ramp speed, 200 mV/s) was used. After making the whole-cell configuration, control currents were recorded 16 times for each GCP as control data. Then, 50 μM ABA, 50 μM MeJA, or 1 mM H_2O_2 was applied to bath solution and I_{Ca} currents were recorded another 16 times. Each datum was obtained from at least $n = 6$ GCPs. Error bars represent SES. F, H_2O_2-induced stomatal closing in wild-type plants (white bars) and in *coi1* plants (gray bars). Averages from three independent experiments (60 total stomata per bar) are shown. Error bars represent SES.

available to elucidate different roles of MeJA from ABA in guard cell response to various environmental stresses.

Involvement of ROS and NO Production in MeJA Signaling in Guard Cells

Both ROS and NO play important roles in MeJA-induced defense signal transduction (Orozco-Cárdenas et al., 2001; Orozco-Cárdenas and Ryan, 2002; Huang et al., 2004), but roles of ROS and NO in MeJA-induced stomatal closing remain unclear. In this study, we found that MeJA as well as ABA induces both ROS production and NO production in wild-type guard cells (Fig. 2) and that ROS and NO actually function as second messengers in the signal pathway of MeJA-induced stomatal closing (Fig. 3). However, in contrast with ABA, MeJA did not induce either ROS production or NO production in *coi1* guard cells (Fig. 2). These results suggest that the *coi1* mutation disrupts
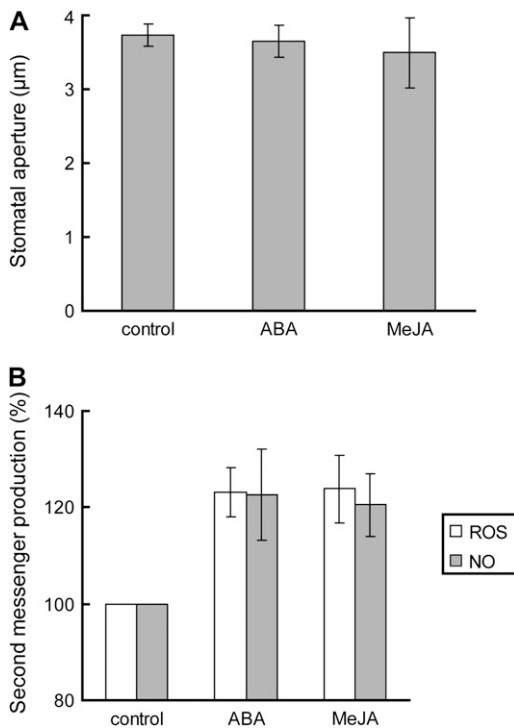
Figure 6. ABA-induced and MeJA-induced stomatal closing in the *abi2-1* mutant. A, Stomatal closing caused by 10 μM ABA and 10 μM MeJA in *abi2-1* plants. Note that the concentration of each chemical was sufficient to induce stomatal closing in wild-type plants. Averages from three independent experiments (60 total stomata per bar) are shown. Error bars represent SES. B, ROS production (white bars) and NO production (gray bars) caused by 50 μM ABA and 50 μM MeJA. The vertical scale represents the percentage of $H_2DCF-DA$ fluorescence levels (ROS) and DAF-2DA fluorescence levels (NO) when fluorescent intensities of ABA- or MeJA-treated cells are normalized to control value taken as 100% for each experiment. Each datum was obtained from >60 total guard cells. Error bars represent SES.

MeJA signaling upstream of production of ROS and NO, while the *abi2-1* mutation disrupts MeJA signaling downstream of production of ROS and NO in Arabidopsis guard cells (Fig. 6).

DPI, catalase, and cPTIO partly inhibited ABA-induced and MeJA-induced stomatal closing (Fig. 3). Interestingly, catalase showed stronger inhibitory effects on MeJA-induced stomatal closing than ABA-induced stomatal closing (Fig. 3). This finding suggests that, in addition to the production of NAD(P)H oxidase in the guard cell plasma membrane, apoplastic production of ROS by epidermal cells and/or mesophyll cells adjacent to guard cells might be involved in MeJA-induced stomatal closing, because catalase is a cell-impermeable scavenger of H_2O_2 (Lee et al., 1999; Zhang et al., 2001).

Activation of Ion Channels in the Plasma Membrane of Guard Cells by MeJA

It has been shown that the activation of S-type anion channels, which triggers long-term plasma membrane

depolarization that results in K^+ efflux via outward K^+ channels, is the primary driving force causing K^+ efflux in guard cells (Schroeder et al., 1987; Schroeder and Keller, 1992; Schmidt et al., 1995; Pei et al., 1997); that is, the activation of S-type anion channels is essential for ABA-induced stomatal closing. In this study, we found that MeJA as well as ABA activates S-type anion channel in wild-type GCPs (Fig. 4, A and C).

S-type anion channels are activated via cytosolic Ca^{2+} dependent and phosphorylation events (Schroeder and Hagiwara, 1989; Schmidt et al., 1995; Allen et al., 1999a, 2002; Mori et al., 2006). Although activation of S-type anion currents by MeJA was impaired in *coi1* GCPs (Fig. 4, B and D), pretreatment with extracellular high Ca^{2+} elicited S-type anion currents both in wild-type GCPs and in *coi1* GCPs (Fig. 4E). This result suggested that COI1 could function upstream of Ca^{2+} sensor priming and $[Ca^{2+}]_{cyt}$ elevation to activate S-type anion channel activation.

We also observed activation of I_{Ca} channels by MeJA in wild-type GCPs but not in *coi1* GCPs (Fig. 5). Suhita et al. (2003) showed that Ca^{2+} channel blockers inhibit MeJA-induced stomatal closing. These findings suggested that the activation of I_{Ca} channels is necessary for Ca^{2+}-dependent signal transduction in MeJA-induced stomatal closing. We also found the *coi1* mutation had no effect on activation of I_{Ca} channels by H_2O_2 (Fig. 5E) and disrupted production of ROS and NO caused by MeJA (Fig. 2). These results also support the conclusion that ROS and NO function as second messengers to activate the plasma membrane ion channels on MeJA signaling in guard cells.

Involvement of ABI2 Protein Phosphatase 2C in MeJA-Induced Stomatal Closing

ABI2 is a protein phosphatase 2C (Meyer et al., 1994; Leung et al., 1997) and the *abi2-1* mutation disrupts
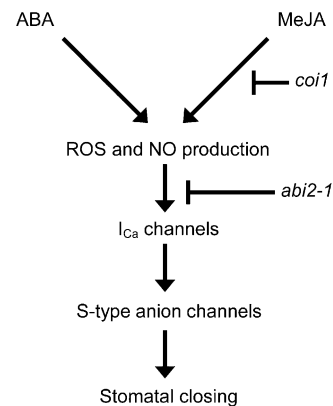

Figure 7. A simple model of the signaling interaction between ABA and MeJA in Arabidopsis guard cells. Similar to ABA, MeJA also induces ROS production and NO production and activates I_{Ca} channels and S-type anion channels. The *coi1* mutation disrupts MeJA signaling upstream of the blanch point of ABA signaling and MeJA signaling. The *abi2-1* mutation disrupts both ABA signaling and MeJA signaling downstream of production of ROS and NO.

ABA signaling downstream of ROS production and NO production in guard cells (Murata et al., 2001; Desikan et al., 2002). MeJA does not induce stomatal closing in *abi2-1* plants (Fig. 6A) but does induce production of ROS and NO in *abi2-1* guard cells (Fig. 6B). These results indicate that MeJA induces stomatal closing via *ABI2*-dependent signal pathway and suggest that the *abi2-1* mutation could disrupt MeJA signaling downstream of production of ROS and NO in Arabidopsis guard cells. It has been shown that the protein phosphatase activity of ABI2 is sensitive to redox status (Meinhard et al., 2002). Therefore, the perception of redox signaling through redox sensors such as ABI2 could be indispensable for the stomatal closing caused by MeJA.

The Physiological Significance of *COI1* in MeJA Signaling in Arabidopsis Guard Cells

Based on our results, we presented a simple model of the signaling interaction between ABA and MeJA in Arabidopsis guard cells in Figure 7. This model positions *COI1*, production of ROS and NO, *ABI2*, I_{Ca} channels, and S-type anion channels in this hormone signal cascade. *COI1* functions upstream of the blanch point of ABA signaling and MeJA signaling and *ABI2* functions downstream of the blanch point.

COI1 encodes one of the F-box proteins that function in E3 ubiquitin-ligase complexes, which are involved in the 26S proteasome-mediated protein degradation pathway (Xie et al., 1998; Xu et al., 2002). In this article, we found that the *coi1* mutation impaired production of second messengers and activation of ion channels induced by MeJA in guard cells, suggesting that the ubiquitin/proteasome pathway could regulate production of second messengers and activation of ion channels in plants.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Plant Material and Growth

Throughout this study, we used the Arabidopsis (*Arabidopsis thaliana*) ecotype Columbia as the wild-type plant. Columbia, the *coi1* mutant (Columbia accession), and the *abi2-1* mutant (Landsberg *erecta* accession) were grown in growth chambers (22°C, 8,000 Lux under a 16-h-light/8-h-dark regime). Both ecotypes showed similar stomatal response to MeJA and ABA (data not shown). The *coi1* mutant, which was used in all parts of this article, has an amber substitution in the Trp-44 of COI1 (TGG to TAG). Because *coi1* mutants have the recessive sterile phenotype, this mutation was kept heterozygous. Additionally, the *coi1* mutant has the JA-responsive *VSP1::luciferase* reporter system, as previously described (Ellis and Turner, 2001). F2 seeds were sown on standard Murashige and Skoog plates. Plates were subjected to vernalization treatment at 4°C for 4 d and then transferred to growth chambers in a vertical orientation. Five-day-old seedlings were transferred to Murashige and Skoog plates containing 50 μM MeJA. Plates were further incubated in growth chambers for another 5 d. After that, homozygous *coi1* seedlings were screened by root length, anthocyanin accumulation in cotyledons (Feys et al., 1994), and luciferase activities (Ellis and Turner, 2001). For measurements of luciferase activities, the solution containing 3 mM luciferin (Promega) and 0.01% Triton X-100 was sprayed on detached leaves. Homozygous *coi1* seedlings did not show inhibition of root elongation, anthocyanin accumulation in cotyledons, and luciferase expression induced by MeJA. The screened

homozygous *coi1* seedlings were transferred to the soil condition as wild-type plants.

Stomatal Aperture Measurements

Stomatal aperture measurements were performed as described previously (Pei et al., 1997; Murata et al., 2001). Excised rosette leaves were floated on medium containing 5 mM KOH, 50 μM CaCl₂, and 10 mM MES-Tris, pH 6.15, for 2 h in the light (8,000 Lux) to induce stomatal opening followed by the addition of MeJA or ABA. Then, stomatal apertures were measured after 2-h incubation. Leaves were blended for 30 s and epidermal peels were collected. Twenty stomatal apertures were measured on each epidermal peel. For time course experiments, stomatal apertures were measured at each pointed time after application of ethanol, ABA, or MeJA.

Detection of ROS and NO

ROS and NO production in guard cells was analyzed by using H₂DCF-DA (Lee et al., 1999; Murata et al., 2001; Suhita et al., 2004) and DAF-2DA (Foissner et al., 2000; Neill et al., 2002; Huang et al., 2004), respectively. In the case of the ROS detection, epidermal peels were incubated for 3 h in medium containing 5 mM KOH, 50 μM CaCl₂, and 10 mM MES-Tris, pH 6.15, and then 50 μM H₂DCF-DA was added to this medium. The epidermal tissues were incubated for 30 min at room temperature, and then the excess dye was washed out with distilled deionized water. The dye-loaded tissues were treated with 50 μM ABA or 50 μM MeJA for 20 min, and then fluorescence of guard cells was imaged and analyzed using AQUA COSMOS software (Hamamatsu Photonics). For NO detection, 10 μM DAF-2DA was added instead of 50 μM H₂DCF-DA.

Electrophysiology

For whole-cell patch-clamp recordings of S-type anion and I_{Ca} currents, Arabidopsis GCPs were prepared from rosette leaves of 4- to 6-week-old plants with the digestion solution containing 1.0% cellulase R10, 0.5% macerozyme R10, 0.5% bovine serum albumin, 0.1% kanamycin, 10 mM ascorbic acid, 0.1 mM KCl, 0.1 mM CaCl₂, and 500 mM D-mannitol, pH 5.5, with KOH, as previously described (Pei et al., 1997). Whole-cell currents were recorded using a CEZ-2200 patch clamp amplifier (Nihon Kohden). The resulting values were corrected for liquid junction potential, and leak currents were not subtracted. For data analysis, pCLAMP 8.1 software (Molecular Devices) was used. For S-type anion current measurements, the patch-clamp solutions contained 150 mM CsCl, 2 mM MgCl₂, 6.7 mM EGTA, 5.58 mM CaCl₂ (free Ca²⁺ concentration, 2 μM), 5 mM ATP, and 10 mM HEPES-Tris, pH 7.1, in the pipette and 30 mM CsCl, 2 mM MgCl₂, 1 mM CaCl₂ (40 mM CaCl₂ in Fig. 4E only), and 10 mM MES-Tris, pH 5.6, in the bath (Pei et al., 1997). For I_{Ca} current measurements, the pipette solution contained 10 mM BaCl₂, 0.1 mM dithiothreitol, 3 mM NADPH, 4 mM EGTA, and 10 mM HEPES-Tris, pH 7.1. The bath solution contained 100 mM BaCl₂, 0.1 mM dithiothreitol, and 10 mM MES-Tris, pH 5.6 (Pei et al., 2000; Murata et al., 2001). In both cases, osmolarity was adjusted to 500 mmol/kg (pipette solutions) and 485 mmol/kg (bath solutions) with D-sorbitol.

Statistical Analysis

Significance of differences between data sets was assessed by Student's *t*-test analysis in all parts of this article. We regarded differences at the level of $P < 0.05$ as significant.

Accession Numbers

Arabidopsis Genome Initiative numbers for the genes discussed in this article are as follows: *COI1*, At2g39940; and *ABI2*, At5g57050.

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