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# Supplemental information

# Selective aqueous anion recognition

## in an anionic host

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Supplemental Information

## **Supplemental Figures**



Figure S-1. Reaction scheme of self-assembled cages 1 and 2. Related to Figure 1.





Figure S-2. <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage 1 (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage 1.



Figure S-3. <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of a) cage 1 and b) NaNTf<sub>2</sub> with hexafluoroisopropanol (HFIP) as a standard (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage 1.



**Figure S-4.** ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**. The flow rate, sheath gas flow rate, aux gas flow rate, spray voltage, capillary temperature, and the S-lens RF level were set to be 3 ul/min, 5 arb, 10 arb, 2.8 kV, 215 C, and 40% respectively. Full mass spectra were acquired with a resolution of r = 30,000. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**.



**Figure S-5.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of **1**, showing obtained and simulated isotope region [**1**]<sup>4-</sup> + [Fe<sub>2</sub>L<sub>2</sub>]<sup>2-</sup>. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**.



**Figure S-6.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage **1**•AsF<sub>6</sub>. The peak for H<sub>f</sub> is under the HDO peak (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 2 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage **1**•AsF<sub>6</sub>.



Figure S-7. <sup>13</sup>C{<sup>1</sup>H} NMR spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot AsF_6$  (D<sub>2</sub>O, 101 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 2 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage  $1 \cdot AsF_6$ .



Figure S-8. <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot AsF_6$  (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 2 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage  $1 \cdot AsF_6$ .



**Figure S-9.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of a) **1-AsF**<sub>6</sub> with added NaAsF<sub>6</sub>; b) **1-AsF**<sub>6</sub>; and c) NaAsF<sub>6</sub> (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 2 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage **1-AsF**<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-10.** gCOSY NMR spectrum of cage  $1-AsF_{6}$ . The peak for H<sub>f</sub> is under the HDO peak (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 2 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage  $1-AsF_{6}$ .



**Figure S-11.** ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**•AsF<sub>6</sub>. The flow rate, sheath gas flow rate, aux gas flow rate, spray voltage, capillary temperature, and the S-lens RF level were set to be 5 ul/min, 10 arb, 12 arb, 2.8 kV, 200 C, and 40% respectively. Full mass spectra were acquired with a resolution of r = 60,000. Related to Figure 2 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**•AsF<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-12.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of **1**•AsF<sub>6</sub>, showing obtained and simulated isotope region [**1**•AsF<sub>6</sub>]<sup>5</sup>. Related to Figure 2 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**•AsF<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-13.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of  $1 \cdot AsF_6$ , showing obtained and simulated isotope region  $[1]^{4-} + [Fe_2L_2]^{2-}$ . Related to Figure 2 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot AsF_6$ .



**Figure S-14.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot PF_6$ . The peak for H<sub>f</sub> is under the HDO peak (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage  $1 \cdot PF_6$ .



Figure S-15. <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot PF_6$  (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage  $1 \cdot PF_6$ .



**Figure S-16.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of a)  $1 \cdot PF_6$  with added NaPF<sub>6</sub>; b)  $1 \cdot PF_6$ ; and c) NaPF<sub>6</sub> (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 3 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage  $1 \cdot PF_6$ .



**Figure S-17.** <sup>13</sup>C{<sup>1</sup>H} NMR spectrum of cage **1-PF**<sub>6</sub> (D<sub>2</sub>O, 101 MHz, 298K). The low solubility of the complex precluded a high signal to noise ratio in any reasonable amount of time. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage **1-PF**<sub>6</sub>.



Figure S-18. gCOSY NMR spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot PF_6$ . The peak for H<sub>f</sub> is under the HDO peak (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage  $1 \cdot PF_6$ .



**Figure S-19.** ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**•**PF**<sub>6</sub>. The flow rate, sheath gas flow rate, aux gas flow rate, spray voltage, capillary temperature, and the S-lens RF level were set to be 3 ul/min, 5 arb, 10 arb, 3.5 kV, 200 C, and 40% respectively. Full mass spectra were acquired with a resolution of r = 30,000. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**•**PF**<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-20.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of **1**•**PF**<sub>6</sub>, showing obtained and simulated isotope region [**1**•**PF**<sub>6</sub>]<sup>5-</sup>. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**•**PF**<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-21.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of  $1 \cdot PF_6$ , showing obtained and simulated isotope region  $[1]^{4-}+[Fe_2L_2]^{2-}$ . Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot PF_6$ .



**Figure S-22.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of  $1 \cdot PF_6$ , showing obtained and simulated isotope region  $[1 \cdot PF_6 + Na^+]^{4-}$ . Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot PF_6$ .



**Figure S-23.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot SbF_{6}$ . The peak for H<sub>f</sub> is under the HDO peak (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage  $1 \cdot SbF_{6}$ .



Figure S-24. <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot SbF_6$  (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage  $1 \cdot SbF_6$ .



**Figure S-25.** ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1-SbF**<sub>6</sub>. The flow rate, sheath gas flow rate, aux gas flow rate, spray voltage, capillary temperature, and the S-lens RF level were set to be 5 ul/min, 5 arb, 10 arb, 4 kV, 200 C, and 20% respectively. Full mass spectra were acquired with a resolution of r = 15,000. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1-SbF**<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-26.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of **1·SbF**<sub>6</sub>, showing obtained and simulated isotope region [**1·**SbF<sub>6</sub>]<sup>5-</sup>. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1·SbF**<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-27.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of  $1 \cdot SbF_6$ , showing obtained and simulated isotope regions  $[1]^{4-+}$  [Fe<sub>2</sub>L<sub>2</sub>]<sup>2-</sup>. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot SbF_6$ .



**Figure S-28.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage **1•CIO**<sub>4</sub>. The peak for H<sub>f</sub> is under the HDO peak (D<sub>2</sub>O, 600 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, synthesis of cage **1•CIO**<sub>4</sub>.



**Figure S-29.** ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1-CIO**<sub>4</sub>. The flow rate, sheath gas flow rate, aux gas flow rate, spray voltage, capillary temperature, and the S-lens RF level were set to be 5 ul/min, 5 arb, 10 arb, 3.5 kV, 200 C, and 20% respectively. Full mass spectra were acquired with a resolution of r = 15,000. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1-CIO**<sub>4</sub>.



**Figure S-30.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of **1**•CIO<sub>4</sub>, showing obtained and simulated isotope region [**1**•CIO<sub>4</sub>]<sup>5</sup>. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**•CIO<sub>4</sub>.



**Figure S-31.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of  $1 \cdot CIO_4$ , showing obtained and simulated isotope region  $[1]^{4-+}$  [Fe<sub>2</sub>L<sub>2</sub>]<sup>2-</sup>. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot CIO_4$ .



**Figure S-32.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage **1**, made with  $Fe(NTf_2)_2$  and NaBF<sub>4</sub>. The peak for H<sub>f</sub> is under the HDO peak (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, Synthesis of **1**, made with  $Fe(NTf_2)_2$  and NaBF<sub>4</sub>.



**Figure S-33.** ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**, made with  $Fe(NTf_2)_2$  and NaBF<sub>4</sub>. The flow rate, sheath gas flow rate, aux gas flow rate, spray voltage, capillary temperature, and the S-lens RF level were set to be 3 ul/min, 5 arb, 10 arb, 3.2 kV, 200 C, and 40% respectively. Full mass spectra were acquired with a resolution of r = 30,000. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**, made with Fe(NTf\_2)\_2 and NaBF\_4.



**Figure S-34.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of **1**, made with  $Fe(NTf_2)_2$  and NaBF<sub>4</sub>, showing obtained and simulated isotope region  $[1 + BF_4]^{5-}$ . Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**, made with  $Fe(NTf_2)_2$  and NaBF<sub>4</sub>.



**Figure S-35.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of **1**, made with  $Fe(NTf_2)_2$  and NaBF<sub>4</sub>, showing obtained and simulated isotope region  $[1]^{4-}$ +  $[Fe_2L_2]^{2-}$ . Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **1**, made with  $Fe(NTf_2)_2$  and NaBF<sub>4</sub>.



Figure S-36. <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage 2-AsF<sub>6</sub> (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, Synthesis of cage 2-AsF<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-37.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of cage **2**•**AsF**<sub>6</sub> (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, Synthesis of cage **2**•**AsF**<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-38.** <sup>13</sup>C{<sup>1</sup>H} NMR spectrum of cage **2**•AsF<sub>6</sub> (D<sub>2</sub>O, 101 MHz, 298K). The low solubility of the complex precluded a high signal to noise ratio in any reasonable amount of time. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, Synthesis of cage **2**•AsF<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-39.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage **2•PF**<sub>6</sub> (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, Synthesis of cage **2•PF**<sub>6</sub>.



Figure S-40. <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of cage  $2 \cdot PF_6$  (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, Synthesis of cage  $2 \cdot PF_6$ .



**Figure S-41.** ESI-MS spectrum of cage **2•PF**<sub>6</sub>. The flow rate, sheath gas flow rate, aux gas flow rate, spray voltage, capillary temperature, and the S-lens RF level were set to be 3 ul/min, 5 arb, 10 arb, 3.5 kV, 200 C, and 50% respectively. Full mass spectra were acquired with a resolution of r = 30,000. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **2•PF**<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-42.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of **2•PF**<sub>6</sub>, showing obtained and simulated isotope region [**2•**PF<sub>6</sub>]<sup>5-</sup>. Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage **2•PF**<sub>6</sub>.



**Figure S-43.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of  $2 \cdot PF_6$ , showing obtained and simulated isotope region  $[2]^{4-}$ +  $[Fe_2L_2]^{2-}$ . Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage  $2 \cdot PF_6$ .



**Figure S-44.** Expansion of the ESI-MS spectrum of  $2 \cdot PF_6$ , showing obtained and simulated isotope region  $[2 \cdot PF_6 + Na^+]^{4-}$ . Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, ESI-MS spectrum of cage  $2 \cdot PF_6$ .



**Figure S-45.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage **2**, made with  $Fe(NTf_2)_2$  and  $NaBF_4$  (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1 and STAR methods, Synthesis of **2**, made with  $Fe(NTf_2)_2$  and  $NaBF_4$ .

#### Anion Recognition: Binding in Unoccupied Cages



**Figure S-46.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of **1** with 10 equivalents of NaPF<sub>6</sub> added, over 14 days (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 5.



**Figure S-47.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectra of **1** with 10 equivalents of NaPF<sub>6</sub> added, over 14 d ( $D_2O$ , 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 5.



**Figure S-48.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of a) **1**, made with  $Fe(NTf_2)_2$  and  $NaBF_4$  with 10 equivalents of cyclohexane added and b) **1-BF**<sub>4</sub> (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 7.

#### Anion Recognition: Anion Exchange Experiments in Occupied Cages



Figure S-49. <sup>19</sup>F-<sup>19</sup>F EXSY NMR spectrum of  $1 \cdot PF_6$  (2 mM, D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 300 ms mixing time, 298K). Related to Figure 4.



**Figure S-50.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of  $1 \cdot PF_6$  with 10 equivalents of NaAsF<sub>6</sub>, over 14 days (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 4.



**Figure S-51.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectra of  $1 \cdot PF_6$  with 10 equivalents of NaAsF<sub>6</sub>, over 14 days (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 4.



**Figure S-52.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of **1**•AsF<sub>6</sub> with 10 equivalents of NaPF<sub>6</sub>, over 14 days (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 4.



**Figure S-53.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectra of **1**•AsF<sub>6</sub> with 10 equivalents of NaPF<sub>6</sub>, over 14 days (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 4.



**Figure S-54.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of  $1 \cdot PF_6$  with 10 equivalents of NaSbF<sub>6</sub>, over 14 days (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298 K). Related to Figure 7.



**Figure S-55.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectra of  $1 \cdot PF_6$  with 10 equivalents of NaSbF<sub>6</sub>, over 14 days (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 7.



**Figure S-56.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of  $1 \cdot PF_6$  with 10 equivalents of NaSbF<sub>6</sub>, over 1 day at 70°C (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K/343K). Related to Figure 7.



**Figure S-57.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectra of  $1 \cdot PF_6$  with 10 equivalents of NaSbF<sub>6</sub>, over 1 day at 70°C (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K/343K). Related to Figure 7.



**Figure S-58.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of  $2 \cdot PF_6$  with 10 equivalents of NaAsF<sub>6</sub>, over 14 days (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 7.



**Figure S-59.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectra of **2-PF**<sub>6</sub> with 10 equivalents of NaAsF<sub>6</sub>, over 14 days (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 7.



**Figure S-60.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of  $2 \cdot AsF_6$  with 10 equivalents of NaPF<sub>6</sub>, over 14 days (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 7.



Figure S-61. <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectra of  $2 \cdot AsF_6$  with 10 equivalents of NaPF<sub>6</sub>, over 14 days (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 7.



**Figure S-62.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of d)  $1 \cdot PF_6$ ; and  $1 \cdot PF_6$  with tris(2-aminoethyl)amine after c) 5 minutes; b) 1 week; and a) 2 weeks (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 6.

Synthesis: Alternate Methods of Cage Assembly





**Figure S-63.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot PF_6$ , made with Fe(PF<sub>6</sub>)<sub>2</sub> (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1.



**Figure S-64.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of a) **1-PF**<sup>6</sup> made with Fe(PF<sub>6</sub>)<sub>2</sub> and b) NaPF<sub>6</sub> with hexafluoroisopropanol (HFIP) as a standard (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1.



Figure S-65. <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage 1, made with  $Fe(BF_4)_2$  (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1.



**Figure S-66.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of a) **1** made with  $Fe(BF_4)_2$  and b) NaBF<sub>4</sub> with hexafluoroisopropanol (HFIP) as a standard (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1.





**Figure S-67.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot AsF_6$ , made from pure water (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1.



**Figure S-68.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of a) **1-AsF**<sub>6</sub>, made from pure water and b) NaAsF<sub>6</sub> with hexafluoroisopropanol (HFIP) as a standard ( $D_2O$ , 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1.



**Figure S-69.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of cage  $1 \cdot PF_6$ , made with Fe(NTf<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub> and 10 equivalents of KPF<sub>6</sub> (D<sub>2</sub>O, 400 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1.



**Figure S-70.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of a) **1**•**PF**<sub>6</sub>, made from Fe(NTf<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub> and KPF<sub>6</sub> and b) NaAsF<sub>6</sub> with hexafluoroisopropanol (HFIP) as a standard (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 1.

Characterization: <sup>19</sup>F NMR Spectra of Guests and Cages including HFIP Standards



**Figure S-71.**<sup>19</sup>F NMR spectra of anionic guests with hexafluoroisopropanol (HFIP) as a standard (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 3.



**Figure S-72.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of a)  $1 \cdot AsF_6$  and b) NaAsF<sub>6</sub> with hexafluoroisopropanol (HFIP) as a standard (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 3.



**Figure S-73.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of a)  $1 \cdot PF_6$  and b) NaPF<sub>6</sub> with hexafluoroisopropanol (HFIP) as a standard (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 3.



**Figure S-74.** <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectrum of a) **2•PF**<sub>6</sub> and b) NaPF<sub>6</sub> with hexafluoroisopropanol (HFIP) as a standard (D<sub>2</sub>O, 376 MHz, 298K). Related to Figure 3.