Supporting Information

Regioselective Arene C–H Alkylation Enabled by Organic Photoredox Catalysis

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General Reagent Information: Commercially available reagents were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich, Fischer Scientific or TCI Corporation and were used without further purification. Solvents used in photochemical reactions were dried *via* distillation over compatible drying agent (typically calcium hydride or activated 4Å molecular sieves). Dry solvents were then degassed *via* freeze-pump-thaw (4 cycles or until no bubbling was visible during thawing). Solvents were then stored in a nitrogen filled glovebox $(O_2$ levels ≤ 10 ppm) and dispensed within the glovebox.

General Analytical Information: Proton and carbon (1H and 13C) magnetic resonance spectra were collected on a Bruker AVANCE III 600 CryoProbe (¹ H NMR at 600 MHz and ¹³C NMR at 151 MHz) spectrometer or Bruker AVANCE III 500 (1 H NMR at 500 MHz and $13C$ NMR at 126 MHz) spectrometer. Unless otherwise noted, spectra are referenced to Chloroform-d (1 H NMR at 7.26 ppm and 13C at 77.16 ppm) and reported as parts per million. 1H NMR data are reported as follows: chemical shift, multiplicity ($s = singlet$, $d = doublet$, $t = triplet$, $dd = doublet$ of doublets, ddd = doublet of doublets of doublets, ddddd = doublet of doublets of doublets of doublets of doublets, dt = doublet of triplets, ddt = doublet of doublets of triplets, td = triplet of doublets, tt = triplet of triplets, $m =$ multiplet, $q =$ quartet), coupling constants (Hz), and integration

High Resolution Mass Spectra (HRMS) were obtained via direct infusion using a Thermo LTQ FT mass spectrometer with positive mode electrospray ionization, via gas chromatography using an Exactive GC gas chromatographic system in positive mode chemical ionization, equipped with a Trace 1300 SSL injector and TriPlus RSH autosampler, or via liquid chromatography using Waters Acquity H-class liquid

Electrochemical potentials were obtained with a standard set of conditions to main internal consistency. Cyclic voltammograms were collected with a Pine WaveNow Potentiostat. Data was analyzed using MATLAB by subtracting a background current prior to identifying the maximum current (Cp) and determining the potential (Ep/2) at half this value (Cp/2). The obtained value was referenced to Ag|AgCl and converted to SCE by subtracting 0.03 V. Samples were prepared with 0.1 mmol of analyte in 5 mL of 0.1 M tetra-(N)-butylammonium hexafluorophosphate in dry, degassed acetonitrile. Measurements employed a glassy carbon working electrode, platinum wire counter electrode, 3.5 M NaCl silver-silver chloride reference electrode, and a scan rate of 100 mV/s. Reductions were measured by scanning potentials in the negative direction and oxidations in the positive direction.

Flash chromatography was performed using SiliaFlash P60 silica gel (40-63 µm) purchased from Silicycle.

General Photoreactor Configuration: All photochemical reactions were conducted using a SynLED Parallel Photoreactor, available for purchase from Sigma-Aldrich (item number: Z742680)**.** The unit has bottom-lit LEDS (465-470 nm) with 130-140 lm intensity and a built-in cooling fan. The measured temperature range was 35 - 40°C. The reactor was fit to an IKA magnetic stirrer with round plate (item number: Z645052). Small stir bars are sometimes required for efficient stirring when using 2 dram vials. All reaction mixtures were kept under a positive pressure of nitrogen *via* an inlet needle which was routed to a standard Shlenk line, equip with a nitrogen source which feeds through a desiccant tube (Dririte/CaCl2).

General Procedure for Photochemical Reactions: A flame-dried 2 dram borosilicate vial (purchased from Fisher Scientific, catalogue # 03-339-22D), equip with a stir bar, was charged with 3,6-Di-tert-butyl-9-mesityl-10-phenylacridin-10-ium tetrafluoroborate (0.05 equiv, 0.01 mmol). For solid/non-volatile substrates, the substrate (0.20 mmol) was then added. The vial was moved into a nitrogen filled glovebox \langle <10 ppm O_2 and acetonitrile (1.0 mL) and TFE (1.0 mL) were added via syringe. Ethyl diazoacetate (or other liquid diazo- compounds) was added via a microliter syringe (0.20 mmol, 1.0 equiv.). Vials were capped tightly with a Teflon lined phenolic resin septum cap (purchased through VWR international, Microliter Product # 15-0060K) and moved out of the glovebox. Prior to irradiation, vials were sealed with electrical tape to ensure maximal oxygen exclusion. The reaction vial was then placed into the reactor and equip with a nitrogen inlet needle. The reactions were irradiated for 18 hours unless otherwise noted. Following irradiation, the reaction mixture was concentrated under reduced pressure and the desired products were isolated *via* flash column chromatography (see substrate/product details for solvent information). *Unless otherwise noted, all reaction yields and regioisomer ratios are reported as the average of two separate trials (including chromatography)*. As regioisomers were extremely difficult to separate by conventional silica gel chromatography, NMR data for each regioisomer was determined from the mixture of compounds, utilizing 2-D NMR when required for peak assignments

General Procedure for Batch Reaction: A flame-dried 20 mL borosilicate vial (purchased from Chemglass Life Sciences, catalogue # CG-4904-01), equipped with a stir bar was charged with 3,6-Di-tert-butyl-9-mesityl-10-phenylacridin-10-ium tetrafluoroborate (0.05 equiv, 0.05 mmol). The vial was sealed with the PTFE faced septa and was then put under an inert atmosphere by evacuating under vacuum and refilling with nitrogen three times. A 1:1 mixture of MeCN and TFE was sparged to remove oxygen for fifteen minutes, then was transferred to the vial via cannula. Mesitylene (1.0 equiv., 1.0 mmol) and ethyldiazoacetate (1.0 equiv., 1.0 mmol) were added via microsyringe. Prior to irradiation, vials were sealed with electrical tape to ensure maximal oxygen exclusion. The reaction vial was then placed into the reactor and equip with a nitrogen inlet needle. The reactions were irradiated for 18 hours. Following irradiation, the reaction mixture

was concentrated under reduced pressure and the desired products were isolated *via* flash column chromatography (see substrate/product details for solvent information). General Photoreactor Information: The photoreactor consists of two Par38 Royal Blue Aquarium LED lamps (Model #6851) angled towards the reaction wells for maximum LED exposure. The wells were placed on top of a stir plate for and the reactions were cooled with a fan. The measured temperature with cooling was 26 °C.

Large Scale Flow Synthesis of 1a:

- **A.** Masterflex L/S Variable-Speed Drive (Cole-Parmer # EW-07528-30)
- **B.** Masterflex L/S Rigid PTFE-Tubing Pump Head (Cole-Parmer # EW-77390-00)
- **C.** Masterflex PTFE-tubing 4mm O.D. (Cole-Parmer # EW-77390-50)
- **D.** 4MM PTFE Male NPT Compression Adapter (Cole-Parmer # WU-31321-62)
- **E.** 1/8" O.D. to 1/8" PTFE Female NPT Compression Adapter (Cole-Parmer # EW31320-50)

F. 1/4-28 flangeless fitting/ferrule for 1/8" O.D. tubing (Sigma-Aldrich SUPELCO #

58686)

G. Microreactor (Little Things Factory Gmbh # XXL-ST-02)

H. PTFE Tubing 1/16" I.D., 1/8" O.D. (Cole-Parmer # WU-06605-27)

A flame-dried, 100 mL pear flask was charged with 3,6-di-tert-butyl-9-mesityl-10-phenylacridin-10-ium tetrafluoroborate (143 mg, 0.05 Eq, 250 µmol) and degassed 1:1 MeCN:TFE (50 mL). The resulting mixture was sparged with argon for five minutes. ethyl 2-diazoacetate (571 mg, 528 μ L, 1.00 Eq, 5.00 mmol) followed by mesitylene (601 mg, 696 µL, 1.00 Eq, 5.00 mmol) were added via microsyringe. The flow cell was purged with 1:1 MeCN:TFE which was sparging with nitrogen prior to the introduction of the reaction mixture. Two 15W PAR38 blue LED floodlamps were positioned on either side of the microreactor (G). Tubing was introduced into the flask using a commercially available rubber septum which had been punctured. A nitrogen line was introduced into the headspace of the flask to ensure the complete exclusion of oxygen from the reaction mixture. The Masterflex L/S Variable-Speed Drive was set to 15 rpm and the occlusion bed of the pump head was adjusted as per the manufacturer's instructions. The floodlamps were then switched on and the reaction mixture was allowed to flow though the reactor for 18 hours. The temperature remained at \approx 35 °C during the reaction, as measured at the center of the lamps, close to the flow cell using a conventional alcohol thermometer. Solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting residue was purified via flash column chromatography (0->5% EtOAc/hexanes), yielding the desired product as a colorless oil $(45\%, 0.46 \text{ g})$.

Electrochemical Data: Samples were prepared with 0.1 mmol of analyte in 5 mL of 0.1 M tetra-Nbutylammonium hexafluorophosphate in dry, degassed acetonitrile. Measurements employed a glassy carbon working electrode, platinum wire counter electrode, 3.5 M NaCl silver-silver chloride reference electrode, and a scan rate of 100 mV/s. Reductions were measured by scanning potentials in the negative direction and oxidations in the positive direction.

Optimization Data:

Procedure for Three Step Methylation:

- *1)* Ethyl 2-([1,1'-biphenyl]-4-yl)acetate was prepared according to the general procedure (S3), 42% yield.
- *2)* A 10 mL round bottom flask was charged with potassium hydroxide (47 mg, 5.0 eq., 0.832 mmol) and 0.10 mL water. Dioxane (1.6 mL) and ethyl 2-([1,1'-biphenyl]-4-yl)acetate (40.0

mg, 1.0 eq., 0.166 mmol) were added. This was heated at reflux for 18 hours. After, the solution was neutralized with 1 M HCl until pH ~7. The organics were extracted with diethyl ether (3 x 5 mL), washed once with brine, combined and dried over magnesium sulfate. This was filtered and concentrated to give the pure product, 2-([1,1'-biphenyl]-4-yl)acetic

acid, as a white solid (27 mg, 76%). Spectral data matched that reported in the literature.¹

3) The hydrodecarboxylation was performed according to the published procedure,² giving 4-methyl-1,1'-biphenyl as a white solid (70%). Spectral data matched that reported in the literature.³

Catalyst and Substrate Synthesis:

3,6-Di-tert-butyl-9-mesityl-10-phenylacridin-10-ium tetrafluoroborate was prepared according to literature precedent. Spectral data matched that reported in the literature. 4

2-chloro-2'-methoxy-1,1'-biphenyl was prepared according to literature precedent. Spectral data matched that reported in the literature.5

(2,4-dimethoxyphenyl)(phenyl)methanone was prepared according to literature precedent. Spectral data matched that reported in the literature.4

7-methoxychroman-4-one was prepared according to literature precedent. Spectral data matched that reported in the literature.⁶

1,3-dihexanoylquinazoline-2,4(1H,3H)-dione was prepared according to literature precedent. Spectral data matched that reported in the literature.5

 $M \neq O_2C$
 $B \circ C H N \neq O$

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methyl 2-(3-phenoxyphenyl)propanoate was prepared according to literature precedent. Spectral data matched those previously reported in the literature.8

methyl 2-(2-fluoro-[1,1'-biphenyl]-4-yl)propanoate: A flame dried 25 mL RBF was charged with potassium carbonate (1.44 g, 5.1 Eq, 10.4 mmol), 2-(2-fluoro-[1,1'-biphenyl]-4-yl)propanoic acid (0.500 g, 1.00 Eq, 2.05 mmol) and DMF (5 mL). The reaction solution was cooled to 0 °C. Iodomethane (0.4 mL, 3.1 Eq., 6.36 mmol) was added dropwise over 5 minutes. The reaction was allowed to warm to room temperature while stirring overnight. After, the resulting reaction mixture was quenched with a saturated sodium bicarbonate solution. The organics were extracted with EtOAc (3x 15 mL), washed with brine (2x 30 mL) then a LiCl aqueous solution (2x 30 mL). The organics were combined, dried over magnesium sulfate, filtered and concentrated to give the crude mixture. This was purified via flash column chromatography with 5% EtOAc in Hexanes to give the pure product, a clear oil (0.3868 g, 73%). Spectral data matched that reported in the literature.⁹

ethyl 2-(2,4,6-trimethylcyclohepta-2,4,6-trien-1-yl)acetate was prepared according to literature precedent. Spectral data matched that reported in the literature.11

MeO M OMe

dimethyl 2-diazomalonate was prepared according to literature precedent. Spectral data matched that reported in the literature.12,13

 $\bigvee_{1}^{\bigvee_{1}^{n}}$

3-diazodihydrofuran-2(3H)-one was prepared according to literature precedent. Spectral data matched that reported in the literature.14

(-) Menthyl 2-diazoacetate was prepared according to literature precedent. Spectral data matched that reported in the literature.15

Procedure and Data for Product Synthesis:

standard.10

d3-mesitylene was prepared according to literature precedent. Spectral data matched that reported in the literature. The final product was calculated to be 95.3% deuterated by using 1H NMR integration of the methyl relative to residual aromatic protons with HMDSO as an internal

Isolated by column chromatography (0-5% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a colorless oil, 76% yield. Spectral data matched reported literature values.16

The desired product was isolated as a white solid, 42% yield, Spectral data matched reported literature values.17

The desired product was isolated as a clear oil following flash column chromatography (3% EtOAc in hexanes) (24% yield) (NMR data for each individual isomer is not able to be reported due to overlapping signals. Regioisomeric ratio = 1:5 based on NMR ratios)

1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-*d***)** 7.17 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.15 (s, 1H), 7.04 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 4.15 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.58 (s, 2H), 2.89 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 4H), 2.10 – 2.00 (m, 2H), 1.26 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H). 13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) 172.20, 144.84, 143.19, 131.94, 127.14, 125.39, 124.52, 60.94, 41.38, 32.90, 32.66, 25.62, 14.34.

13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-*d***)** 172.07, 144.71, 143.06, 131.81, 127.01, 125.27, 124.39, 60.82, 41.27, 32.79, 32.54, 25.50, 14.23.

HRMS: Calculated (M+H): 205.1223; found: 205.1230

The desired product was isolated as a clear oil following column chromatography (5% EtOAc in hexanes) as a clear oil (36% yield, n = 2). 4:1 ratio of para:ortho products. NMR characterization is given below for the major isomer.

1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-*d***)** 7.31 – 7.25 (m, 5H), 6.99 – 6.93 (m, 4H), 4.18 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.61 (s, 2H), 1.28 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 171.67, 155.93, 155.87, 130.74, 129.72, 129.40, 120.05, 119.49, 118.97, 60.97, 40.60, 14.22. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 291.0782; found: 291.0793

Isolated by column chromatography (5% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a colorless oil, 29% yield (n=2), 5:1(para:ortho).

Para Isomer: **1H NMR** (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) 1.25 – 1.29 (m, 3H), 3.59 (s, 2H), 4.16 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 6.94 – .96 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.01 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.09 (t J = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.21 – 7.27 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.32 (t, J = 7.7, 5.5 Hz, 2H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 171.85, 157.26, 156.41, 130.70, 129.85, 123.38, 119.02, 119.01, 61.04, 40.74, 31.10, 14.33. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 257.1172; found: 257.1151

Ortho Isomer: **1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 1.17 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 3.68 (s, 2H), 4.07 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 6.88 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 6.94 – 6.98 (app d, 1H), 7.09 (app t, 2H), 7.21 – 7.27 (m, 2H), 7.32 (3, 3H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 171.54, 157.44, 155.19, 131.61, 129.77, 129.04, 128.75, 126.19, 123.78, 123.14, 118.43, 60.91, 36.07, 14.27. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 257.1172; found: 257.1151

Isolated by column chromatography (10 to 30% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a colorless oil, 47% yield $(n=2)$.

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) 1.25 (d, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H), 3.52 (s, 2H), 3.89 (s, 3H), 4.15 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 6.88 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.14 (dd, J = 8.3, 2.1 Hz, 1H), 7.30 (d, J = 2.1 Hz, 1H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 171.54, 154.20, 131.15, 128.69, 127.29, 122.43, 112.14, 77.37, 77.16, 61.14, 56.30, 40.28, 14.32. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 229.0625; found: 229.0516

Isolated by column chromatography (10% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a colorless oil, 33% yield (n=2).

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) 1.25 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 4H), 3.52 (s, 2H), 3.88 (s, 3H), 4.15 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 6.85 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.19 (dd, J = 8.4, 2.2 Hz, 1H), 7.47 (d, J = 2.2 Hz, 1H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 171.53, 155.07, 134.15, 129.45, 127.74, 111.96, 111.64, 61.13, 56.38, 40.15, 14.31. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+Na): 294.9940; found: 294.9951

Isolated by column chromatography (10 % EtOAc in Hexanes) as a white solid, 55%. Spectra obtained as a mixture of rotational isomers.

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) 1.28 (br app t, 3H), 3.63 (br s, 2H), 3.81 (br s, 3H), 4.14 – 4.26 (br app q, 2H), 6.98 (app d, J = 8.7, 3.8 Hz, 1H), 7.16 (s, 1H), 7.28 – 7.40 (m, 4H), 7.49 (app d, 1H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 172.00, 156.84, 155.96, 137.84, 137.56, 134.05, 134.00, 132.03, 131.82, 131.79, 131.09, 130.16, 129.49, 129.43, 128.71, 128.66, 126.55, 126.03, 120.46, 111.17, 111.07, 60.98, 55.86, 55.76, 40.60, 31.11, 14.35. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H); 305.0938, found: 305.0941

The desired product was isolated as a mixture of three regioisomers following purification by column chromatography (7% EtOAc in hexane) as a clear oil , 57% yield (n = 2), 3.5:1.8:1.0 (*1:5:3*) $(n=2)$.

*Regioisomer (1):***1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 7.06 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 6.73 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 6.69 (app. s, 1H), 4.15 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 3.80 (s, 3H), 3.58 (s, 2H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 1.25 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 172.27, 157.42, 138.60, 130.67, 125.21, 121.14, 111.51, 60.69, 55.45, 35.83, 21.73, 14.36. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 209.1172; found: 209.1160

*Regioisomer (5):***1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 7.11 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 6.74 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 6.69 (s, 1H), 4.15 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.56 (s, 2H), 2.29 (s, 3H), 1.25 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 172.02, 158.75, 138.32, 131.24, 120.18, 116.05, 111.22, 60.69, 55.29, 38.56, 20.05, 14.33. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 209.1172; found: 209.1160

Regioisomer (3): **1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-***d*) 7.15 (t, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.81 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 6.72 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 4.15 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.80 (s, 3H), 3.70 (s, 2H), 2.29 (s, 3H), 1.25 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-***d*) 172.01, 157.74, 138.38, 127.80, 121.98, 111.22, 108.19, 60.89, 55.73, 32.09, 29.84, 14.29. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 209.1172; found: 209.1160

The desired product was isolated as a mixture of two regioisomers following purification by column chromatography (3% EtOAc in hexane) as a clear oil , 48% yield (n = 2), 6.0:1.0 (*2:4*).

Regioisomer (2): **1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 6.64 (s, 1H), 6.57 (s, 1H), 4.15 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.79 (s, 3H), 3.65 (s, 2H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 2.25 (s, 3H), 1.25 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). **13C NMR (126 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 172.15, 157.69, 137.82 (d, *J* = 49.3 Hz), 123.41, 119.00, 113.55, 109.25, 60.61, 55.72, 31.84, 21.65, 19.78, 14.38. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 223.1328; found: 223.1337

Regioisomer (4): **1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 6.61 (s, 2H), 4.14 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.77 (s, 3H), 3.61 (s, 2H), 2.31 (s, 6H), 1.25 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). **13C NMR (126 MHz, Chloroform-***d*) 171.79, 158.18, 138.61, 124.17, 119.00, 60.79, 55.18, 34.90, 29.84, 20.75. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 223.1328; found: 223.1337

Isolated by column chromatography (10% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a colorless oil, 47% yield as a mixture of three regioisomers, 2.7:2.0:1.0 (**4:6:2**) (n=2)

Regioisomer (4): **1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 1.25 (t, 3H), 3.56 (s, 2H), 3.80 (s, 3H), 4.12 – 4.20 (q, 2H), 6.99 (s 1H), 7.05 (m, 2H).

Regioisomer (6): **1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 1.25 (t, 3H), 3.71 (s, 2H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 4.12 – 4.20 (q, 2H), 6.83 (dd, J = 8.5, 2.8 Hz, 1H), 7.04-7.20 (m, 2H).

Regioisomer (2): **1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 1.25 (t, 3H), 3.81 (3, 2H), 3.87 (s, 2H), 4.12 – 4.20 (q, 2H), 7.04-7.20 (m, 3H).

13C NMR (126 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) 171.45, 171.07, 170.93, 159.32, 158.66, 158.24, 132.04, 131.90, 129.16, 126.45, 126.23, 125.30, 124.79, 123.90, 123.59, 122.39, 121.72, 118.09, 114.21, 113.75, 109.57, 77.16, 61.11, 60.89, 55.83, 55.66, 40.92, 35.71, 14.35, 14.34. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 273.0120; found: 273.0128

Isolated by column chromatography (20 to 30% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a white solid, 31% yield $(n=2)$.

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) 1.23 – 1.26 (t, 3H), 3.55 (s, 2H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 3.90 (s, 3H), 4.14 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 6.49 (s, 1H), 7.29 (s, 1H), 7.41 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.51 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.75 – 7.80 (d, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 195.51, 171.76, 161.17, 159.31, 138.97, 133.39, 132.43, 129.83, 129.80, 128.11, 120.46, 115.37, 95.30, 60.79, 55.96, 55.83, 35.32, 14.35. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 329.1383; found: 329.1395

The desired product was isolated as a single regioisomer following purification by column chromatography as a white solid (15% EtOAc in hexanes -> 20% EtOAc in hexanes), 63% yield (n $= 2$

1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-*d***)** 1.25 (d, J = 1.6 Hz, 4H), 3.63 (s, 2H), 3.88 (d, J = 2.8 Hz, 6H), 4.16 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 6.89 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (d, J = 2.2 Hz, 1H), 7.98 (dd, J = 8.6, 2.2 Hz, 1H). **13C** **NMR** 171.47, 166.95, 161.44, 132.64, 131.07, 123.37, 122.44, 109.98, 77.16, 60.91, 55.84, 52.05, 36.12, 29.85, 14.36. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 253.1070; found : 253.1071

The desired product was isolated as a mixture of two regioisomers following purification by column chromatography (15% EtOAc/in hexanes) as clear oil, 33% yield (n = 2), 2.3:1.0 (**1:3**) $(n=2)$.

*Regioisomer 1:***1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-d)** : 7.72 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.32 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.04 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 6.55 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz, 1H), 6.44 (dd, *J* = 8.2, 2.3 Hz, 1H), 4.21 – 4.10 (m, 2H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.54 (s, 2H), 2.44 (s, 3H), 1.23 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H). **13C NMR (126 MHz, Chloroform-d)**: 171.36, 158.08, 149.61, 145.36, 131.98, 131.03, 129.74, 128.61, 122.17, 113.76, 105.50, 60.76, 55.65, 35.47, 21.74, 14.20 **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 365.1053; found: 365.106

Regioisomer 3: **1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-d)**: δ 7.77 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.34 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.17 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 6.78 (dd, *J* = 8.5, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.60 (d, *J* = 2.6 Hz, 1H), 4.17 – 4.03 (m, 2H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.41 (s, 2H), 2.45 (s, 3H), 1.29 – 1.13 (m, 3H).f**13C NMR (126 MHz, Chloroform-d)**: δ 171.28, 159.69, 148.81, 145.93, 133.13, 132.75, 130.22, 128.87, 120.15, 113.53, 108.49, 61.28, 55.85, 35.25, 22.09, 14.51. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 365.1053; found: 365.1063

Isolated by column chromatography (30% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a white solid, 50% yield, 3.8:1 (*1:3*) (n=2).

Regioisomer 1: **1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 1.25 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 2.75 (t, 2H), 3.54 (s, 2H), 3.84 (s, 3H), 4.15 (q, 2H), 4.52 (t, 2H), 6.39 (s, 1H), 7.70 (s, 1H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 190.54, 171.57, 164.06, 163.55, 129.49, 118.05, 114.67, 99.05, 67.60, 60.89, 56.06, 37.49, 35.57, 14.37. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 287.0889; found: 287.0898

Regioisomer 3: **1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 1.25 (app t, 3H), 2.75 (app t, 2H), 3.66 (s, 2H), 3.88 (s, 3H), 4.15 (app q, 2H), 4.52 (app t, 2H), 6.63 (d, J = 8.9 Hz, 1H), 7.89 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 191.17, 171.60, 163.44, 160.96, 128.07, 115.79, 110.96, 104.81, 67.53, 60.82, 56.16, 37.59, 28.74, 14.40. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 287.0889; found: 287.0898

The desired product was isolated as clear oil following purification by column chromatography (5% EtOAc in hexanes), 21% yield(n=2).

1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-*d***)** 7.40 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.29 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 4.17 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.95 (s, 3H), 3.92 (s, 3H), 3.52 (s, 2H), 1.27 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform***d*) 171.88, 162.40, 160.64, 141.93, 108.03, 100.44, 60.87, 53.71, 53.53, 34.65, 14.36. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 226.1073; found: 226.1077

The desired product was isolated as a mixture of regioisomers following purification by column chromatography (15% EtOAc in hexanes -> 20% EtOAc in hexanes) as a white solid, 23% yield (n =2), 10:1 (**3:7**). Spectral data for minor isomer is not reported due to the low concentration of this product in the obtained mixture (some signals corresponding to this product are visible in proton NMR data and were used to determine the ratio of regioisomers).

*Regioisomer 3***: 1H NMR (500 MHz, Chloroform-***d*): 7.71 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.47 – 7.32 (m, 2H), 7.15 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 4.18 (q, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 4.04 (s, 3H), 4.00 (s, 2H), 1.25 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). **13C NMR (126 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 170.54, 137.88, 126.52, 122.97, 120.65, 120.43, 109.15, 61.27, 35.50, 33.76, 29.84, 14.33. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 219.1128; found: 219.1138

Isolated by column chromatography (0 to 10% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a colorless oil, 13% yield $(n=2)$.

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) 0.87 – 0.90 (m, 6H), 1.26 (d, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.30 – 1.37 (m, 12H), 1.65 – 1.73 (m, 5H), 3.67 (s, 2H), 4.05 – 4.11 (m, 4H), 4.15 – 4.18 (m, 2H), 7.14 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 7.60 (dd, J = 8.6, 2.3 Hz, 1H), 8.11 (d, J = 2.2 Hz, 1H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 171.31, 161.68, 150.77, 138.99, 136.12, 129.70, 128.83, 115.89, 114.02, 61.30, 43.95, 42.11, 40.38, 31.67, 31.61, 27.91, 27.42, 26.80, 26.62, 22.73, 22.72, 14.34, 14.22, 14.17. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 445.2333; found: 445.2322

Isolated by column chromatography (20% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a clear oil , 37% yield (n=2).

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) 1.25 (t, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.38 (s, 9H), 3.04 (dd, J = 6.7, 3.1 Hz, 1H), 3.51 (s, 2H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.81 (s, 3H), 4.13 (q, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 4.48 (q, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 5.23 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.81 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.00 (d, J = 2.3 Hz, 1H), 7.14 (d, J = 2.3 Hz, 1H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 172.97, 171.94, 156.84, 155.38, 132.20, 129.27, 126.30, 124.93, 110.60, 79.70, 60.95, 55.55, 54.22, 52.22, 40.56, 32.88, 28.41, 14.34. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+Na): 418.1836; found: 418.1847

Isolated by column chromatography (10% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a white solid , 28% yield (n=2), 7.2:1 (**p:o**). Spectral data for minor isomer is not reported due to the low concentration of this product in the obtained mixture (some signals corresponding to this product are visible in proton NME data and were used to determine the ratio of regioisomers).

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-*d***)** 7.51 – 7.47 (m, 2H), 7.39 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 7.36 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.14 (dd, *J* = 7.9, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.11 (dd, *J* = 11.5, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 4.17 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.76 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 1H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.66 (s, 2H), 1.53 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.27 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-***d***)** 174.58, 171.66, 159.81 (d, *J* = 248.3 Hz), 141.91 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz), 134.38, 133.72, 130.87 (d, *J* = 3.9 Hz), 129.51, 129.23 (d, *J* = 2.8 Hz), 127.57 (d, *J* = 13.7 Hz), 123.67 (d, *J* = 3.3 Hz), 115.37 (d, *J* = 23.6 Hz), 61.11, 52.39, 45.03, 41.23, 18.57, 14.33. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+Na): 367.1316; found: 367.1332

Isolated by column chromatography (20% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a white solid, 17% yield.

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) 1.26 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, 3H), 1.42 (s, 9H), 3.05 – 3.20 (m, 2H), 3.65 (s, 2H), 3.74 (s, 3H), 4.17 (d, J = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 4.62 (q, J = 6.6 Hz, 1H), 5.01 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.19 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 7.35 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 7.48 – 7.59 (m, 4H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 172.49, 171.75, 155.23, 139.66, 139.62, 135.17, 133.30, 129.87, 129.82, 127.29, 127.29, 80.12, 61.10, 54.49, 52.44, 41.17, 38.11, 28.44, 14.35. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+Na): 464.2043; found: 464.2057

Isolated by column chromatography (4% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a white semisolid in a 2:1 mixture of para/ortho isomers, 32% yield (n=2). NMR data is reported for the mixture of isomers – some trace impurities are present

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-*d***):** 7.39 – 7.17 (m, 6H), 7.15 – 6.95 (m, 7H), 6.92 – 6.88 (m, 1H), 6.87 – 6.78 (m, 1H), 4.18 (q, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 4.10 (dq, *J* = 9.5, 7.1 Hz, 1H), 3.73 – 3.63 (m, 8H), 3.61 (s, 2H), 1.50 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.45 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 1.28 (dd, *J* = 8.8, 5.5 Hz, 3H), 1.19 (td, *J* = 7.2, 3.1 Hz, 2H).

13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-*d***):** 174.79, 174.72, 171.84, 171.51, 157.53, 157.44, 156.17, 155.04, 142.60, 142.52, 141.42, 141.39, 130.72, 129.96, 129.90, 129.86, 129.79, 126.12, 125.04, 123.82, 123.13,

122.87, 122.42, 122.21, 119.05, 118.26, 118.21, 117.43, 61.05, 60.94, 52.25, 45.37, 45.15, 40.74, 36.04, 35.72, 18.63, 18.57, 14.32, 14.26. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+Na): 365.1359; found: 365.1367

Isolated by column chromatography (10% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a colorless oil, 61% yield (n=2). Spectral data matched reported literature values.18

Isolated by column chromatography (0-5% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a colorless oil, 44% yield (n=2).

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) 2.27 (s, 3H), 2.28 (s, 6H), 3.71 (s, 2H), 5.13 (s, 2H), 6.87 (s, 2H), 7.30 – 7.39 (m, 5H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 171.48, 137.13, 136.66, 136.13, 129.03, 128.63, 128.58, 128.25, 128.15, 66.56, 53.58, 35.15, 22.29, 20.37. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+Na): 291.1355; found: 291.1365

Isolated by column chromatography (0-5% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a colorless oil, 39% yield (n=2).

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) 1.26 – 1.32 (m, 2H), 1.57 (m, 2H), 1.66 (m, 4H), 1.79 – 1.85 (m, 2H), 2.26 (s, 3H), 2.29 (s, 6H), 3.60 (s, 2H), 5.16 (dt, J = 6.0, 3.4 Hz, 1H), 6.86 (s, 2H). **13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)**) 171.43, 137.06, 136.41, 128.99, 128.94, 77.43, 35.50, 32.76, 23.80, 21.03, 20.35. **HRMS:** Calculated (M+H): 269.1511; found: 269.1515

Isolated by column chromatography (0-5% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a colorless oil, 57% yield (n=2). Spectral data matched reported literature values.19

Isolated by column chromatography (0-10% EtOAc in Hexanes) as a colorless oil, 19% yield (n=2). Spectral data matched reported literature values.20

Isolated by column chromatography (0-2.5% EtOAc in Hexanes, stained with CAM) as a colorless oil, 45% yield (n=2).

1H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) 0.70 (d, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H), 0.84 (d, J = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 0.89 (d, J = 6.6 Hz, 3H), 0.91 – 1.07 (m, 3H), 1.32 (t, J = 11.6 Hz, 1H), 1.46 (dd, J = 16.8, 10.5 Hz, 1H), 1.65 (dt, J = 13.8, 7.6 Hz, 2H), 1.74 (d, J = 2.5 Hz, 1H), 1.98 (d, J = 11.4 Hz, 1H), 2.27 (d, J = 15.2 Hz, 9H), 3.63 (d, J = 3.0 Hz, 2H), 4.67 (td, J = 10.9, 4.4 Hz, 1H), 6.85 (s, 2H).**13C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-d)** 171.19, 137.02, 136.39, 129.00, 128.90, 74.54, 47.17, 40.91, 35.46, 34.35, 31.48, 26.26, 23.42, 22.17, 21.03, 20.87, 20.32, 16.32. **HRMS:** Calculated(M+Na): 339.2294; found: 339.2164

Computational Details

All computations were performed using the Gaussian 9 software package at the UB3LYP level of theory using the 6-31+G(d) basis set with solvation in dichloromethane evaluated in a self-consistent reaction field (SCRF) with the PCM model. All obtained geometries were verified as minima by ensuring that they possess no negative vibrational frequencies. Transition states were calculated using the QST2 method. All transition states were verified as local maxima by ensuring that they possessed one negative vibrational mode, and confirming that this vibrational mode corresponds to the bond forming/bond breaking event in question. Transition states were confirmed using IRC calculations, which resulted in optimized product and starting material geometries which matched those submitted in the QST2 calculation. Free energies at 298.15 K were calculated using scaled vibrational frequencies. In cases where rotational isomers may exist, verification of the minimized geometry was accomplished by conducting a scan of dihedral angles corresponding to the proposed rotamers and comparing these energies to those of the previously optimized geometry.

Cartesian coordinates, thermally corrected free energies, and entropy values for all optimized geometries are given below. The complete computed reaction pathway is illustrated below for reference. All values of Gibbs free energy are given in kcal/mol, relative to the starting structure (neutral ethyl diazoacetate and mesitylene). Images were generated using the CYLview program.

EE + Thermal Free Energy Correction: -765.961078 Hartree

Entropy = 178.382 cal mol⁻¹ K ⁻¹

EE + Thermal Free Energy Correction: -765.721331 Hartree

Entropy = 168.135 cal mol⁻¹ K⁻¹

EE + Thermal Free Energy Correction: --765.702786

Entropy = 147.572 cal mol-1 K-1

EE + Thermal Free Energy Correction: --765.712026 Hartree

Entropy = 147.378 cal mol-1 K-1

EE + Thermal Free Energy Correction: -656.428463

Entropy = 127.753 cal mol-1 K-1

For N2, EE + Thermal Free Energy Correction: -109.543015

Entropy = 45.784 cal mol-1 K-1

EE + Thermal Free Energy Correction: -656.230901

Entropy = 133.065 cal mol-1 K-1

EE + Thermal Free Energy Correction: -656.222938

Entropy = 132.556 cal mol⁻¹ K ⁻¹

EE + Thermal Free Energy Correction: -656.231844 Hartree Entropy = 136.631 cal mol-1 K-1

EE + Thermal Free Energy Correction: -656.499163 Hartree

Entropy = 134.337 cal mol-1 K-1

Emission and Isotope Studies:

Emission lifetime and Stern-Volmer Experiments: Emission lifetime measurements were taken at ambient temperature using a Edinburgh FLS920 spectrometer and fit to single exponential according to the methods previously described by our laboratory.21 The fluorescence of **Mes-Acr-Ph** in 1:1 MeCN:TFE was observed as a single exponential decay. Stern-Volmer analysis on the quenching of fluorescence lifetime was carried at a 1.5x10-6 M concentration of Mes-Acr-Ph. The quenching constant was determined with varying quencher concentrations in the range of $0-1.0x10-2$ M. Bimolecular quenching constant, k_q , was determined from the corresponding Stern-Volmer Constant.

Fluorescence decay obtained by Time-Correlated Single Photon Counting of 3,6-Di-tertbutyl-9-mesityl-10-phenylacridinium tetrafluoroborate in 1:1 MeCN:TFE with quenching by ethyl diazoacetate 0-1.0x10-2 M.

Stern-Volmer Analysis of the fluorescence quenching of 3,6-Di-tert-butyl-9-mesityl-10 phenylacridinium tetrafluoroborate in 1:1 MeCN:TFE with quenching by ethyl diazoacetate 0-1.0x10-2 M.

Fluorescence decay obtained by Time-Correlated Single Photon Counting of 3,6-Di-tertbutyl-9-mesityl-10-phenylacridinium tetrafluoroborate in 1:1 MeCN:TFE with quenching by anisole 0-1.0x10-2 M.

Stern-Volmer Analysis of the fluorescence quenching of 3,6-Di-tert-butyl-9-mesityl-10 phenylacridinium tetrafluoroborate in 1:1 MeCN:TFE with quenching by anisole 0-1.0x10-2 M.

The reaction was prepared according to the general conditions with d₃-Mesitylene as the substrate. The reaction was analyzed by NMR and GCMS and showed no deuterium incorporation at the α -ester methylene.

Deuterium is incorporated from d_1 - 2,2,2-trifluoroethanol

according to the general conditions using d₁-2,2,2 trifluoroethanol. The reaction was analyzed by NMR and GCMS. The major product observed was mono deuteration. Minor di- and non-deuterated product was observed, which is believed to be from enolate equilibration of the monodeuterated product in the last protonation step.

No Deuterium exchage from d_1 TFE occurs once product is formed

Ethyl 2-mesitylacetate (0.100 mmol, 20.6 mg) were added to a 2 dram vial equipped with a stir bar. The vial was moved to a nitrogen filled glovebox $($ <10 ppm $O₂)$ and and 0.50 mL 2,2,2,-trifluoroethan-1-ol-d was added. The vial was capped tightly with a Teflon lined phenolic resin septum cap (purchased through VWR international, Microliter Product # 15-0060K) and moved out of the glovebox. Prior to irradiation, vials were sealed with electrical tape to ensure maximal oxygen exclusion. The reaction vial was then placed into the reactor and equip with a nitrogen inlet needle. The reactions were irradiated for 18 hours to mimic any heating throughout the reaction. The reaction was concentrated and analyzed by 1H NMR which showed no deuterium incorporation.

No Deuterium exchage from d₁ TFE occurs once product is formed

Ethyl 2-mesitylacetate (0.100 mmol, 20.6 mg) and 3,6-Di-tert-butyl-9-mesityl-10 phenylacridinium tetrafluoroborate (0.05 mmol, 2,9 mg) were added to a 2 dram vial equipped with a stir bar. The vial was moved to a nitrogen filled glovebox (<10 ppm O2) and and 0.50 mL 2,2,2,-trifluoroethan-1-ol-d was added. The vial was capped tightly with a Teflon lined phenolic resin septum cap (purchased through VWR international, Microliter Product # 15-0060K) and moved out of the glovebox. Prior to irradiation, vials were sealed with electrical tape to ensure maximal oxygen exclusion. The reaction vial was then placed into the reactor and equip with a nitrogen inlet needle. The reaction were irradiated for 18 hour, then was concentrated and analyzed by ¹H NMR which showed no deuterium incorporation.

Full Conversion to the Desired Product When Subjecting the Intermediate Cycloheptatriene

The reaction was prepared according to the general conditions with ethyl 2-(2,4,6 trimethylcyclohepta-2,4,6-trien-1-yl)acetate as the substrate. The reaction was analyzed by 1H NMR which gave full conversion to the desired product. Spectra data matched those previously reported.

Without the Photoredox Catalyst, No Ring Opening is Observed

The reaction was prepared according to the general conditions with ethyl 2-(2,4,6 trimethylcyclohepta-2,4,6-trien-1-yl)acetate as the substrate and without 5 mol% dit BuAcr. The reaction was analyzed by 1H NMR which gave only returned starting material with no ethyl 2-mesitylacetate observed. Spectra data matched those previously reported.

UV-Vis absorbance of a 0.5 mM solution of ethyl diazoacetate in 1:1 MeCN:TFE. λ_{max} =371 nm

Spectral data:

S54

HMQC:

Figure X: Mass spectrum from GC-MS trace of crude reaction mixture containing 1.0 eq. maleic anhydride

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