

## Book review

**Perspectives in organometallic chemistry.** Edited by C.G. Screttas and B.R. Steele, Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge, 2003, pp. 322 + x, £99.50, ISBN 0-85404-876-6

We should all spend more time sitting quietly, reading and thinking about our chemistry. This edited book is just the kind of reading matter to help stimulate one's imagination during those quiet moments; it contains a series of thoughtfully written, specialised and topical accounts of different areas of organometallic research.

The book, a product of the 20th International Organometallic Chemistry conference, held in Corfu in 2002, has been well-edited to contain chapters covering an excellent range of p-, d-, and f-block chemistry, with a good balance of topics across these general divides. The large number of chapters (24 in total, but sadly unnumbered in the contents list) means that, in addition to treatises on the chemistry of a particular set of complexes, some interesting more specialised techniques are also surveyed. For example, a chapter on recent progress in the organometallic coordination chemistry of the titanium imido fragment is accompanied by one concerning C–F bond activation at nickel centres, and one on NMR spectroscopic elucidation of inter-ionic structure in complexes.

The chapters are written by experts in their fields, and structured so that the topics move from synthesis studies

through techniques to reactivity studies and catalysis. Thus the book starts with a series of treatises on the chemistry of a particular set of metal complexes or clusters such as Group 15 imido and phosphido cages, or (diphosphine) gold hydrocarbyl complexes. The chapters then start to slant towards the field of homogeneous catalysis, including topics such as 'cheap chiral ligands', and iridium hydride-based hydrogenation catalysts.

The index in the book is very good, which makes up for the contents list. Sadly, even though the contributing authors are well known, it is hard to gain much insight into the coverage of the book chapters simply by reading the contents list. I would have been grateful for a collection of short abstracts following the titles.

It must be impossible to attend the talks on every one of these topics at a conference. This book provides a simple way to delve into areas far from one's research, and it is a good source of ideas concerning reagents or for reactions complementary to those in the current literature.

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