

Multivalent Antibiotics via Metal Complexes: Potent Divalent Vancomycins against Vancomycin-Resistant Enterococci

Bengang Xing,[†] Chun-Wing Yu,[†] Pak-Leung Ho,[‡] Kin-Hung Chow,[‡] Terence Cheung,[‡] Hongwei Gu,[†] Zongwei Cai,[§] and Bing Xu^{†,*}

Department of Chemistry, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Clear Water Bay, Hong Kong, China, Center of Infection and Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Medicine, The University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong, China, and Department of Chemistry, Hong Kong Baptist University, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong, China

Received August 28, 2003

Dimers of vancomycin (Van), linked by a rigid metal complex, $[\text{Pt}(\text{en})(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2]^{2+}$, exhibit potent activities (MIC $\sim 0.8 \mu\text{g/mL}$, ~ 720 times more potent than that of Van itself) against vancomycin-resistant enterococci (VRE). The result suggests that combining metal complexation and receptor/ligand interaction offers a useful method to construct multivalent inhibitors.

Introduction

Drug resistance¹ of bacteria poses a serious public health threat and demands effective counter measures. Among promising approaches,^{2–8} multi/polyvalency—multiple simultaneous binding of two or more ligands and receptors—is beginning to be explored systematically.^{9–18} In the research of multivalency, the ligand–receptor pair of vancomycin (Van)-D-Ala-D-Ala has attracted a great deal of research attention because it relates to vancomycin^{19–22}-resistant enterococci (VRE).^{23,24} Walsh and colleagues^{21,24–27} have deciphered the mechanism of vancomycin resistance: VRE mutates its terminal peptides from D-Ala-D-Ala to D-Ala-D-Lac (i.e., D-alanine-D-lactate), which has substantially lowered ($\sim 10^3$ times decrease) its affinity to Van.^{25,26,28} Though Van self-associates to form homodimers upon binding to D-Ala-D-Ala, as elucidated by Williams et al.,^{29–33} this noncovalent dimerization of Van alone is insufficient to act against VRE. Griffin et al.,^{17,34} Nicolaou et al.,^{15,16,19,20} and an Eli Lilly group³⁵ have used organic linkers to synthesize dimers of Van, and demonstrated that covalently linked dimeric Vans exhibit enhanced to potent activity against VRE. It was, however, suggested that the flexibility of the organic linker limited the avidity of the multivalent binding due to the loss of conformational entropy upon binding.^{9,36,37} We believe that the combination of receptor/ligand interaction and a metal complex, which has special geometry, structural rigidity, and stability, can serve as an alternative approach to minimize the loss of conformational entropy.

To test this strategy, we used a derivative of cisplatin,³⁸ $[\text{Pt}(\text{en})(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2]^{2+}$ (en: ethylenediamine)—a rigid, square planar metal complex—to form dimeric Vans, and evaluated their activities against VRE. These rigidly linked dimeric Vans exhibit enhanced activities against VRE and are up to ~ 720 times more potent against VRE than Van itself in the best case (MIC: $0.8 \mu\text{g/mL}$). Our results suggest that combining metal

coordination and receptor/ligand interactions^{39–42} offers a useful method to construct multivalent receptors.

Results and Discussions

We chose $[\text{Pt}(\text{en})]^{2+}$ as the rigid linker to form dimeric Van via complexation due to its extensive developed chemistry, well understood properties, and well preserved planar rigidity. Moreover, the ionic nature of the $[\text{Pt}(\text{en})]^{2+}$ retains—if not increases—the solubility of Van in aqueous media, which is necessary for in vitro study. As shown in Scheme 1, commercially available vancomycin (**1**) reacted with 3-picolyamine, 4-picolyamine, 3-(2-aminoethyl)pyridine, or 1-(3-aminopropyl)imidazole to give the vancomycin carboxamide derivatives (VanCONH-L) **2a–d** in good yields ($>65\%$), respectively. Compounds **2a–d** were purified using reversed-phase HPLC according to modified literature procedure¹³ and characterized by high field ¹H NMR spectroscopy and mass spectrometry (MS). The attachment of the ligands to the C-terminal of Van hardly changes conformation of Van, as indicated by ¹H NMR—the chemical shifts of the protons belonging to Van on **2a–d** remain essentially the same as that in **1**, suggesting that the binding pockets of **2a–d** are undisrupted and should function similarly as that of **1**. $[\text{Pt}(\text{en})(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2]^{2+}$ (**3a**) coordinates with **2a–d** to give dimeric Vans **4a–d**, and $[\text{Pt}(\text{en})(\text{H}_2\text{O})(N\text{-pyridin-3-ylmethylacetamide})]^{2+}$ (**3b**) binds to **2a,b** to afford monomeric Vans **5a,b**.

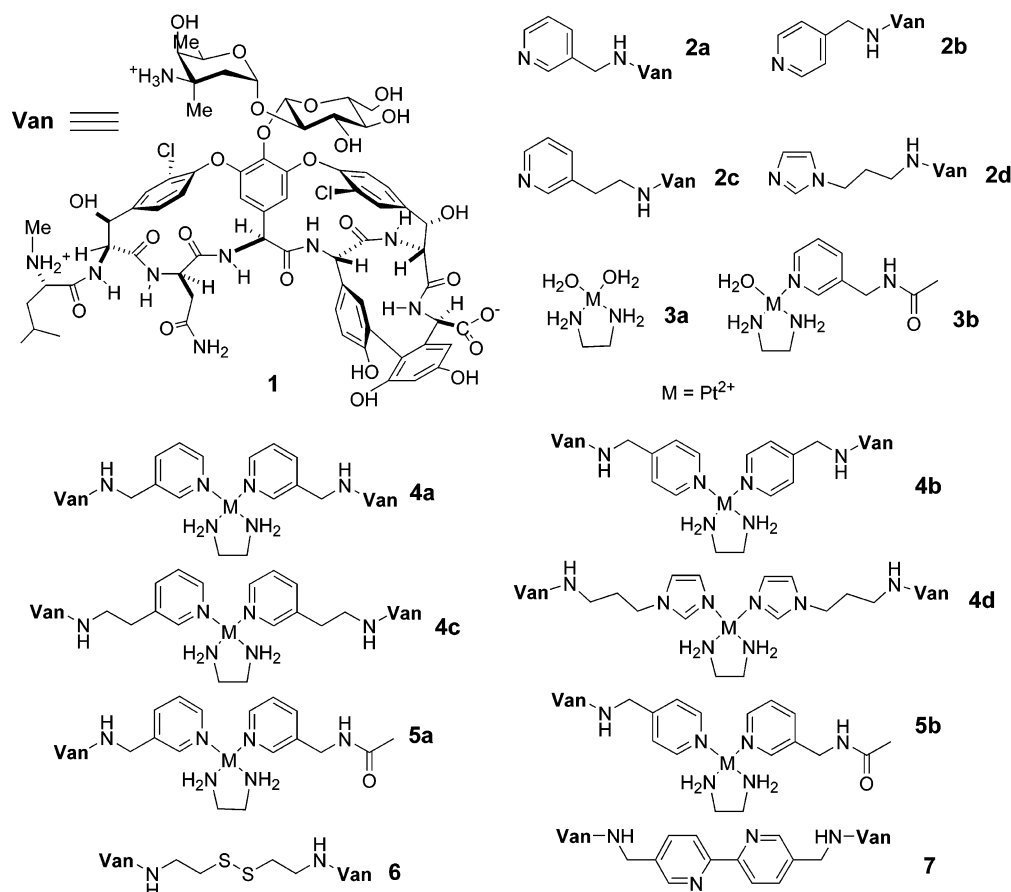
As shown in Table 1, **2a–d** are inactive against VRE, and **3a** or **3b** alone is inactive against both the Van-sensitive strain and VREs (MIC $> 128 \mu\text{g/mL}$). A simple mixture of Van and $[\text{Pt}(\text{en})(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2](\text{NO}_3)_2$ (**1+3a**) or the monovalent complexes of Van and Pt^{2+} (**5a** or **5b**) behave similarly to the corresponding monomeric Vans. These results exclude the possibility that enhanced activities of dimeric Vans against VRE originate from some unrelated synergistic effects between monomeric Van and $[\text{Pt}(\text{en})]^{2+}$. **4a–d** exhibits enhanced activity against VRE in comparison to Van. In fact, **4a** is $\sim 10^3$ times more potent against VRE (genotype VanA) than Van itself. In an attempt to form the tetravalent compound, $[\text{Zn}(\mathbf{2d})_4]^{10+}$, the activity of the mixture of **2d** and $\text{Zn}(\text{OAc})_2$ (4:1, at pH = 7) against VRE is the same as that

* To whom correspondence should be addressed. E-mail: chbingxu@ust.hk.

[†] The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

[‡] The University of Hong Kong.

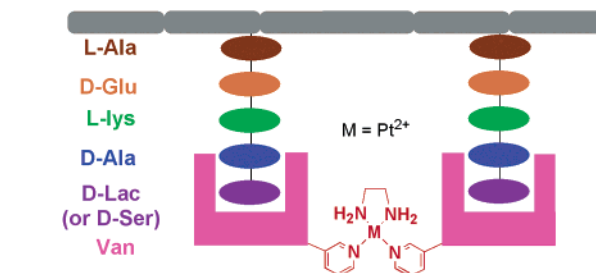
[§] Hong Kong Baptist University.

Scheme 1. The Structures of Divalent and Monovalent Derivatives of Van**Table 1.** Antibacterial Activity (MIC: $\mu\text{g/mL}$) of Vancomycin Derivatives and Dimeric Vans

compound	ATCC29212 (sensitive)	<i>E. gall</i> (VanC)	<i>E. faecium</i> (VanB)	<i>E. faecalis</i> (VanA)
1	2	8	102	576
2a	2	4	76.8	> 128
2b	2	4	70.4	> 128
2c	2	2	19	104
2d	2	2	22	64
3a	> 128	> 128	> 128	> 128
3b	> 128	> 128	> 128	> 128
1+3a	4	8	64	160
4a	1	0.03	0.28	0.8
4b	1	0.05	2	14
4c	1	1	1.2	3.3
4d	1	1	4.8	38
5a	1	2	14	84
5b	1	2	32	88
2d+Zn²⁺	1	2	22	60
6	0.5	2	1	4
7	4	2	1.6	5.5

of **2d**, suggesting that there is no multivalent Van formed by metal complexation when **2d** and $\text{Zn}(\text{OAc})_2$ react at the condition of the in vitro experiment. We also did not observe the formation of $[\text{Zn}(\mathbf{2d})_n]^{(2n+2)+}$ ($n = 1-4$) by ESI-MS, which is consistent with the observed activity.

Figure 1 illustrates the plausible divalent interaction between **4a** and the terminal peptides of peptidoglycan precursors. According to this binding mode, both the configuration and rigidity of the dimeric Vans determine their activities.³⁴ To further understand the structural-activity relationship, we performed semiquantitative entropy analysis according to the reported methods.³⁶

**Figure 1.** The illustration of possible divalent interaction of the dimeric Vans with the terminal peptides of VRE (D-Lac for VanA and VanB strains; D-Ser for the VanC strains).

Let the conformational entropies (ΔS_{conf}) of Van plus the CONHCH_2 segment to be the same as in **4-7**, we compared the ΔS_{conf} of the different linkers (green portions) upon dimerization (assuming the ΔS_{conf} of the metal complex linker to be zero due to the rigidity of $[\text{Pt}(\text{en})]^{2+}$). For example, the ΔS_{conf} of **6** would be the sum of torsional entropies of two C-C bonds and an S-S bond ($-\Sigma S_{\text{tor}} = 7.3 \times 2 + 3.5 = 18.1 \text{ J/mol}\cdot\text{K}$).³⁶ If we consider only the contribution of ΔS_{conf} to the ΔG and assume that the binding occurs at room temperature, the ratios of binding constants K_{4a}/K_n of **4a-d**, **6**, and **7** can be calculated. In the case of VanA strains (Table 2), the ratios of binding constants K_{4a}/K_n agree qualitatively with the MIC values (except **4b**). For example, **4a** is ~ 5 times more potent than **6**,¹⁷ which agrees with their ΔS_{conf} values. **4c** resembles **4a** structurally except that it has an extra CH_2 increasing the flexibility its linker; therefore, **4c** exhibits lower activity against VRE. Similarly, additional flexibility in **4d** or

Table 2. Comparison between Conformational Entropies and Activity of Divalent Vans against VRE (VanA and VanB strains)

n	$\Delta S_{\text{conf}}(\text{J/mol}\cdot\text{K}) (-\Sigma S_{\text{tor}})$	K_{4a}/K_n	MIC ($\mu\text{g/mL}$)	
			VanA	VanB
4a	0	1	0.8	0.28
4b	0	1	14	2
4c	14.6	5.9	3.3	1.2
4d	29.2	34	38	4.8
6	18.1	9	4	1
7	11.8	4	5.5	1.6

7 results in the loss of ΔS_{conf} upon divalent binding and the decrease of its activity. Similar qualitative agreement also exhibits between ΔS_{conf} and the MIC values in the case of VanB strains. The discrepancy between K_{4a}/K_{4b} and the MIC of **4b** apparently originates from the configuration of **4b**, which contributes to the changes of enthalpy. Though other mechanisms cannot be ruled out at this moment, the above analysis supports the hypothesis of the roles of rigidity in divalency for the case of VanA and VanB strains.

ΔS_{conf} correlates, however, to little enhancement of the activity of dimeric Vans against vancomycin-sensitive strains and the less resistant VRE (VanC), which has been observed in other systems of divalent Vans,^{16,17,34} suggesting the enhancement of the activity of dimeric Vans may depend on the composition of peptidoglycan precursors produced by the strains.⁴³

Conclusion

In summary, we have demonstrated that a metal complex can be used as a new platform to construct multivalent inhibitors, which are as effective as other rigid linkers^{44–46} used for multivalency. One of the concerns on platinum-based complexes is its cytotoxicity. Our preliminary study has shown that these *cis*-platin-based divalent Vans are not toxic toward mammalian cells (the detailed work will be published elsewhere). Our future work will examine other metal complex linkers, which may help further elucidate the structural basis of vancomycin resistance,^{43,47} as well as the mechanism of multivalent Vans binding to vancomycin-sensitive strains,^{48,49} which has yet to be established.

Experimental Section

General. Chemical reagents and solvents were used as received from commercial sources. Dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) was dried over 4 Å molecular sieves and dimethylformamide (DMF) was dried over silica gel. ¹H NMR spectra were obtained at 500 MHz Varian XL-500 in Me₂SO-*d*₆ and D₂O. Reversed-phase HPLC was carried out with Waters 600 Controller and 996 photodiode Array Detector, using XTerra RP18 C18 7 μm columns for both analytical and preparative purpose. HPLC elution employed linear gradients of [0.1% trifluoroacetic acid

(TFA) in water (solution A)] and [0.1% TFA in acetonitrile (solution B)]. The linear gradient started from 90% solution A and 10% solution B, changed to 80% solution A and 20% solution B in 50 min, and to 0% solution A and 100% solution B in the following 5 min, and then to 90% solution A and 10% solution B in the next 5 min. The ESI-MS spectra were obtained on LCQ DECA XP/ESI/APCI (ThermoQuest/Finnigan), and the HR ToF-MS spectra of the key compounds, **4a** and **4b**, were obtained on Agilent HP1100/Sciex Q-Star Pulsar I (Applied Biosystem).

Synthesis of dimeric Van 4c: 2.5 mg of [Pt(en)-(H₂O)₂](NO₃)₂ (0.006 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a solution of **2c** (20 mg, 0.0129 mmol, 2.15 equiv) in 1 mL of DMSO. The mixture was stirred for 20 h at room temperature in dark. During the whole procedure, RP-HPLC was used to monitor the reaction. In the first 3 h, a vancomycin-3-ethylene pyridine-carboxamide peak exists at the elution time of 24 min. With increased time, a new peak at 18 min was found and the peak intensity of the starting material at 24 min was decreased. After 14 h, RP-HPLC indicated that almost all vancomycin-3-ethylene pyridine-carboxamide was consumed completely. Then by quenching the reaction with 10 mL of acetone, a white solid was precipitated. This crude product was filtered and washed three times with acetone and dried under vacuum before it was redissolved in H₂O and separated by RP-HPLC. After purification by HPLC, 15.6 mg of pure product was obtained (yield: 75.8%): ¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 9.18 (v br s), 9.1 (v br s), 8.77 (v br s), 8.74 (d, 5.5 Hz), 8.67 (br s), 8.54 (s), 8.30 (s), 8.09 (d, 7.8 Hz), 7.98 (s), 7.75 (overlapped), 7.73 (d, 7.0 Hz), 7.59 (d, 7.8 Hz), 7.57 (s), 7.45 (d, 8.6 Hz), 7.33 (s), 7.31 (d, 8.6 Hz), 7.15 (v br s), 7.08 (d, 10.1 Hz), 6.89 (d, 8.5 Hz), 6.82 (d, 8.5 Hz), 6.80 (v br s), 6.64 (v br s), 6.47 (s), 6.34 (s), 6.09 (br s), 5.87 (d, 7.8 Hz), 5.69 (s), 5.57 (s), 5.38 (s), 5.37 (s), 5.35 (s), 5.31 (br s), 5.04 (br m), 4.79 (d, 6.2 Hz), 4.57 (d, 3.1 Hz), 4.43 (br q, 5.5 Hz), 4.34 (d, 10.1 Hz), 4.04 (d, 11.0 Hz), 3.37 (s), 3.29 (s), 2.96 (m), 2.75 (s), 2.65 (d, 4.7 Hz), 2.52 (s), 2.27 (dd, 16.4 Hz, 6.5 Hz), 2.01 (br d, 9.4 Hz), 1.85 (br d, 10.6 Hz), 1.79 (non 7.0 Hz), 1.69 (q, 7.0 Hz), 1.66 (q, 7.0 Hz), 1.42 (s), 1.18 (d, 6.2 Hz), 1.01 (d, 6.2 Hz), 0.96 (d, 6.2 Hz). ESI-MS: The peaks at *m/z* 1121.3, 1680.4, 1158.6, and 1737.5 correspond to M³⁺, M²⁺, (M + TFA)³⁺, and (M + TFA)²⁺, respectively.

Synthesis of dimeric Van 4a: Similar to the synthesis of **4c**, 2.5 mg of [Pt(en)-(H₂O)₂](NO₃)₂ (0.0060 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a solution of **2a** (20 mg, 0.0130 mmol, 2.16 equiv) in 1 mL of DMSO. After being purified by HPLC, 14.0 mg of pure product was obtained (yield: 69.6%): ¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 9.18 (v br s), 9.09 (v br s), 8.81 (d, 4.9 Hz), 8.76 (s), 8.72 (s), 8.69 (br s), 8.54 (v br s), 8.09 (d, 8.6 Hz), 7.95 (s), 7.76

(d, 8.5 Hz), 7.68(d, 8.6 Hz), 7.63(s), 7.59(s), 7.57(s), 7.56(s), 7.43-(d, 8.6 Hz), 7.39(br s), 7.30(d, 7.3 Hz), 7.11(br s), 6.89(d, 8.6 Hz), 6.82(d, 8.6 Hz), 6.80(v br s), 6.64(v br s), 6.51(s), 6.34(s), 6.00(v br s), 5.87(d, 7.3 Hz), 5.69(s), 5.58(v br s), 5.42(s), 5.37-(d, 7.3 Hz), 5.35(s), 5.31(br s), 5.21(br s), 5.05(br m), 4.78(q, 7.3 Hz), 4.66(d, 5.6 Hz), 4.59(s), 4.47(br q, 5.6 Hz), 4.40(d, 11.0 Hz), 3.79(d, 10.4 Hz), 3.67(t, 7.8 Hz), 3.57(br s), 3.37(s), 3.27-(br s), 2.97(s), 2.83(s), 2.26(dd, 15.5, 6.5 Hz), 2.01(br d, 10.4 Hz), 1.80(br d, 10.6 Hz), 1.77(mon 7.1 Hz), 1.68(q, 7.1 Hz), 1.62-(q, 7.1 Hz), 1.41(s), 1.17(d, 6.5 Hz), 1.01(d, 6.5 Hz), 0.96(d, 6.5 Hz). ESI-MS: The peak at m/z 667.3, 833.7, 1111.5, 689.6, 862.2, and 1149.6 correspond to M^{5+} , M^{4+} , M^{3+} , $(M + TFA)^{5+}$, $(M + TFA)^{4+}$, and $(M + TFA)^{3+}$, respectively.

Synthesis of dimeric Van 4b: 2.5 mg of $[Pt(en)(H_2O)_2](NO_3)_2$ (0.0060 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a solution of **2b** (20 mg, 0.0130 mmol, 2.16 equiv) in 1 mL of DMSO. After being purified by HPLC, 15.3 mg of pure product was obtained (yield: 76.1%): 1H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 9.43(v br s), 9.26(v br s), 9.13(v br s), 8.84(s), 8.8-(d, 4.7 Hz), 8.75(triple), 8.67(d, 5.9 Hz), 8.64(s), 8.62(d, 4.2 Hz), 8.28(v br s), 8.07(d, 8.2 Hz), 7.93 (s), 7.91(d, 7.6 Hz), 7.80(s), 7.77(multiple), 7.75-(v br s), 7.67(d, 8.8 Hz), 7.66(v br s), 7.63 (v br s), 7.58(d, 5.3 Hz), 7.57(s), 7.56(s), 7.43(d, 8.2 Hz), 7.34(s), 7.29(d, 8.2 Hz), 7.12(br s), 6.86(d, 8.8 Hz), 6.82(d, 8.8 Hz), 6.79(v br s), 6.64-(overlapped), 6.50(d, 2.34 Hz), 6.35(d, 2.3 Hz), 6.00(v br s), 5.87-(d, 8.1 Hz), 5.68(v br s), 5.36(s), 5.35(s), 5.33(d, 3.7 Hz), 5.29(br s), 5.22(br s), 5.00(br m), 4.78(q, 6.6 Hz), 4.72(d, 5.9 Hz), 4.55-(d, 5.1 Hz), 4.47(br q, 5.6 Hz), 4.43(d, 5.9 Hz), 4.39(d, 11.0 Hz), 4.05(v br s), 3.79(d, 11.0 Hz), 3.66(t, 8.8 Hz), 3.55(br s), 3.39-(s), 3.29(br s), 2.75(s), 2.26(dd, 15.1 Hz, 6.5 Hz), 2.01-(overlapped), 1.82(br d, 10.6 Hz), 1.77(mon 7.1 Hz), 1.68(q, 7.1 Hz), 1.62(q, 7.1 Hz), 1.41(s), 1.17(d, 6.4 Hz), 1.01(d, 6.5 Hz), 0.96(d, 6.5 Hz). ESI-MS: The peaks at m/z 834.16, 1111.15, and 1666.25 correspond to M^{4+} , M^{3+} , and M^{2+} , respectively.

Synthesis of dimeric Van 4d: Again, similar to the synthesis of **4c**, 2.5 mg of $[Pt(en)(H_2O)_2](NO_3)_2$ (0.0060 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a solution of **2d** (20 mg, 0.0128 mmol, 2.15 equiv) in 1 mL of DMSO. After being purified by HPLC, 16.0 mg of pure product was obtained (yield: 78.8%): 1H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 9.47(v br s), 9.19(s), 9.12(v br s), 8.79(br s), 8.63-(s), 8.58(br s), 8.42(s), 8.25(d, 6.2 Hz), 7.94 (s), 7.78(s), 7.77-(overlapped), 7.70(s), 7.67(d, 8.6 Hz), 7.59(s), 7.57(d, 7.8 Hz), 7.45(d, 8.6 Hz), 7.40(s), 7.31(d, 8.6 Hz), 7.15(v br s), 6.88(s), 6.87(d, 8.2 Hz), 6.82(d, 8.2 Hz), 6.80(v br s), 6.64(v br s), 6.48-(s), 6.36(m), 6.31(s), 6.00(v br s), 5.87(d, 7.8 Hz), 5.68(s), 5.57-(s), 5.43(s), 5.37(s), 5.36(s), 5.34(d, 2.9 Hz), 5.30(br s), 5.02(br m), 4.79(d, 7.0 Hz), 4.58(d, 4.4 Hz), 4.42(br q, 5.4 Hz), 4.37(d, 10.2 Hz), 4.24(m), 4.16(m), 4.04(s), 3.37(s), 3.29(s), 3.15(m), 2.83(s), 2.76(s), 2.52(v br s), 2.27(dd, 16.3 Hz, 6.4 Hz), 2.07-(m), 2.02(br d, 9.4 Hz), 1.84(br d, 10.6 Hz), 1.81(mon 7.1 Hz), 1.72(q, 7.1 Hz), 1.65(q, 7.1 Hz), 1.40(s), 1.17(d, 6.2 Hz), 1.01-(d, 6.2 Hz), 0.96(d, 6.2 Hz). ESI-MS: The peak at m/z 1161.3 corresponds to M^{3+} .

Synthesis of monomeric Van 5a: 6.0 mg of $[Pt(en)(H_2O)-(N\text{-Pyridin-3-ylmethyl-acetamide})](NO_3)_2$ (0.0124 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a solution of **2a** (20 mg, 0.0130 mmol, 1.05 equiv) in 1 mL of DMSO. After being purified by HPLC, 14.7 mg of pure product was obtained (yield: 58.9%): 1H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 9.46(v br s), 9.26(v br s), 9.17(v br s), 9.09(v br s), 8.84(s), 8.8(d, 4.7 Hz), 8.69(d, 5.9 Hz), 8.67-(overlapped), 8.64(br d, 4.4 Hz), 8.61(d, 4.2 Hz), 8.28(v br s), 8.07(d, 8.2 Hz), 7.93 (s), 7.77(multiple), 7.67(d, 8.8 Hz), 7.66(v br s), 7.63 (v br s), 7.58(d, 5.3 Hz), 7.57(s), 7.55(multiple), 7.44-(d, 8.2 Hz), 7.32(s), 7.29(d, 8.2 Hz), 7.14(s), 6.87(br s), 6.85(d, 8.8 Hz), 6.81(d, 8.8 Hz), 6.78(v br s), 6.64(overlapped), 6.50(d, 2.34 Hz), 6.35(d, 2.3 Hz), 6.00(v br s), 5.87(d, 8.1 Hz), 5.68(v br s), 5.36(s), 5.35(s), 5.33(d, 3.7 Hz), 5.29(br s), 5.22(br s), 5.00-(br m), 4.78(q, 6.6 Hz), 4.55(d, 5.1 Hz), 4.47(br q, 5.6 Hz), 4.44-(d, 5.9 Hz), 4.39(d, 11.0 Hz), 4.05 (v br s), 3.79(d, 11.0 Hz), 3.66(t, 8.8 Hz), 3.55(br s), 3.39(s), 3.29(br s), 2.75(s), 2.26(dd, 15.1 Hz, 6.5 Hz), 2.01(overlapped), 1.82(br d, 10.6 Hz), 1.77-(mon 7.1 Hz), 1.68(q, 7.1 Hz), 1.62(q, 7.1 Hz), 1.41(s), 1.17(d, 6.4 Hz), 1.01(d, 6.5 Hz), 0.96(d, 6.5 Hz). ESI-MS: The peaks

at m/z 972.9 and 1028.5 correspond to M^{2+} and $(M + TFA)^{2+}$, respectively.

Synthesis of monomeric Van 5b: 6.0 mg of $[Pt(en)(H_2O)(N\text{-pyridin-3-ylmethylacetamide})](NO_3)_2$ (0.0124 mmol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a solution of **2b** (20 mg, 0.0130 mmol, 1.05 equiv) in 1 mL of DMSO. After being purified by HPLC, 15.5 mg of pure product was obtained (yield: 62.0%): 1H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 9.43(v br s), 9.26(v br s), 9.13(v br s), 8.84(s), 8.8-(d, 4.7 Hz), 8.75(triple), 8.67(d, 5.9 Hz), 8.64(s), 8.62(d, 4.2 Hz), 8.28(v br s), 8.07(d, 8.2 Hz), 7.93 (s), 7.91(d, 7.6 Hz), 7.80(s), 7.77(multiple), 7.75(v br s), 7.67(d, 8.8 Hz), 7.66(v br s), 7.63 (v br s), 7.58(d, 5.3 Hz), 7.57(s), 7.56(s), 7.43(d, 8.2 Hz), 7.34-(s), 7.29(d, 8.2 Hz), 7.12(br s), 6.86(d, 8.8 Hz), 6.82(d, 8.8 Hz), 6.79(v br s), 6.64(overlapped), 6.50(d, 2.34 Hz), 6.35(d, 2.3 Hz), 6.00(v br s), 5.87(d, 8.1 Hz), 5.68(v br s), 5.36(s), 5.35(s), 5.33-(d, 3.7 Hz), 5.29(br s), 5.22(br s), 5.00(br m), 4.78(q, 6.6 Hz), 4.72(d, 5.9 Hz), 4.55(d, 5.1 Hz), 4.47(br q, 5.6 Hz), 4.43(d, 5.9 Hz), 4.39(d, 11.0 Hz), 4.05(v br s), 3.79(d, 11.0 Hz), 3.66(t, 8.8 Hz), 3.55(br s), 3.39(s), 3.29(br s), 2.26(dd, 15.1 Hz, 6.5 Hz), 2.01(overlapped), 1.82(br d, 10.6 Hz), 1.77(mon 7.1 Hz), 1.68(q, 7.1 Hz), 1.62(q, 7.1 Hz), 1.41(s), 1.17(d, 6.4 Hz), 1.01-(d, 6.5 Hz), 0.96(d, 6.5 Hz). ESI-MS: The peaks at m/z 648.9, 971.9, and 1028.5 correspond to M^{3+} , M^{2+} , and $(M + TFA)^{2+}$, respectively.

Synthesis of dimeric Van 6: Following to the same procedure as for **2a**, 6.8 mg of cystamide dihydrochloride (30 μ mol, 1.0 equiv) was added to a solution of vancomycin hydrochloride (100 mg, 67 μ mol, 2.2 equiv) in 1 mL of dry DMSO. The mixture was cooled to 0 $^{\circ}C$ and HBTU (90 μ mol, 3 equiv) in 1 mL of DMF was added, followed by DIEA (0.057 mL, 328 μ mol, 4.88 equiv). The reaction was allowed to rise to room temperature and stirred for overnight. At this time, analytical RP-HPLC showed that a vancomycin peak still existed. Further addition of HBTU (10 mg, 26 μ mol, 0.39 equiv) and DIEA (0.024 mL, 164 μ mol, 2.44 equiv) was made. After another 24 h, the reaction was monitored with HPLC again and almost all vancomycin was found to have been consumed. To quench the reaction, the reaction mixture was added dropwise into 15 mL of acetone by using syringe. A white solid was precipitated out and filtered, and 5 mL of acetone was used to wash the solid once. The white solid was purified by reversed-phase HPLC (RP-HPLC). The percentage yield is 52%. 1H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 9.88(v br s), 9.44(v br s), 9.10(v br s), 8.71(br s), 8.51(br s), 8.27(d, 5.1 Hz), 7.98 (s), 7.83-(overlapped), 7.69(d, 7.8 Hz), 7.56(d, 8.6 Hz), 7.43(d, 8.6 Hz), 7.31(d, 8.6 Hz), 7.29 (s), 7.09(v br s), 6.86(d, 8.6 Hz), 6.82(d, 8.6 Hz), 6.80(v br s), 6.62(v br s), 6.49(s), 6.35(s), 6.07(v br s), 5.87(d, 7.8 Hz), 5.85(s), 5.69(s), 5.50(v br s), 5.41(s), 5.39(s), 5.37(s), 5.35(d, 2.8 Hz), 5.30(br s), 5.03(br m), 4.78(d, 6.2 Hz), 4.53(br q, 5.5 Hz), 4.32(d, 10.9 Hz), 4.03(s), 3.79(d, 10.9 Hz), 3.37(s), 3.27(s), 3.00(m), 2.72(s), 2.26(dd, 16.1 Hz, 6.3 Hz), 2.07-(m), 2.01(br d, 9.4 Hz), 1.82(br d, 10.4 Hz), 1.79(mon 7.0 Hz), 1.74(q, 7.0 Hz), 1.67(q, 7.0 Hz), 1.44(s), 1.18(d, 6.7 Hz), 1.02-(d, 6.2 Hz), 0.97(d, 6.2 Hz). ESI-MS: The peak at m/z 1508.8 corresponds to M^{2+} .

5,5'-Bis(bromomethyl)-2,2'-bipyridine (7a). A solution of 5,5'-dimethyl-2,2'-bipyridine (1 g, 5.43 mmol, 1 equiv), NBS (5.1 g, 28.7 mmol, 5.3 equiv), and VAZO (265 mg, 1.09 mmol, 0.2 equiv) in CCl_4 (100 mL) was refluxed under nitrogen for 1 h, and the precipitated succinimide was removed immediately from the hot mixture by filtration. The precipitate was washed with CCl_4 , and the combined CCl_4 phases were evaporated. The remaining solid was dissolved in CH_2Cl_2 (100 mL) and extracted with 1 M $Na_2S_2O_3$ solution (2×150 mL). The combined $Na_2S_2O_3$ fractions were extracted with CH_2Cl_2 (50 mL), and the combined CH_2Cl_2 layers were dried by Na_2SO_4 . The crude product was purified by flash column chromatography (silica gel, EtOAc/hexane, 1:4) and yielded 412 mg (22%) to give white solid. 1H NMR ($CDCl_3$, δ 7.26 ppm) δ 8.68 (d, J = 2.2 Hz, 1H, CH), 8.40 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 1H, CH), 7.86 (dd, J = 8.2 Hz, 2.2 Hz, 1H, CH), 4.54 (s, 2H, CH_2). ^{13}C NMR ($CDCl_3$, δ 77.7 ppm) δ 156.08, 150.05, 138.32, 134.59, 121.87, 30.22. ESI-MS: The peak at m/z 343 corresponds to $(M + 1)^+$.

5,5'-Bis(azidomethyl)-2,2'-bipyridine (7b). NaN₃ (42 mg, 0.64 mmol, 2.2 equiv) was added to a solution of 5,5'-bis-(bromomethyl)-2,2'-bipyridine (100 mg, 0.29 mmol, 1 equiv) in dry DMF (3 mL). The solution was heated for 17 h at 90 °C and then concentrated under vacuum to yield a mixture, which was treated with CH₂Cl₂. The solid (NaBr) was filtered off, and the extract was concentrated in a vacuum to yield the product (white solid), which was purified by flash column chromatography (silica gel, EtOAc/hexane, 40/60) and yielded 69 mg (90%) of pure white solid. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, δ 7.26 ppm) δ 8.64 (d, *J* = 1.8 Hz, 1H, CH), 8.45 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H, CH), 7.81 (dd, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2.3 Hz, 1H, CH), 4.44 (s, 2H, CH₂). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, δ 77.7 ppm) δ 156.35, 149.44, 137.41, 131.99, 121.81, 52.68. ESI-MS: The peak at *m/z* 267 corresponds to (M + 1)⁺.

5,5'-Bis(aminomethyl)-2,2'-bipyridine (7c). 10% Pd on activated carbon (15 mg) was dissolved in 1 mL of dry CH₂Cl₂ in a closed round-bottom flask with vigorous stirring. 6 M HCl was added to another round-bottom flask that contained zinc powder in order to generate hydrogen gas. These two round-bottom flasks were connected by a rubber pipe. Make sure that there is no leakage. An outlet was introduced in the round-bottom flask containing 10% Pd on activated carbon. 5,5'-bis-(azidomethyl)-2,2'-bipyridine (60 mg, 0.23 mmol, 1 equiv) in 2 mL of dry CH₂Cl₂ was added to the round-bottom flask contained 10% Pd on activated carbon 3 min after the outlet was introduced. The reaction was completed within 4 h. 10% Pd on activated carbon was filtered by Celite and CH₂Cl₂ was dried to obtain 39 mg of white solid (yield, 80%). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, δ 7.26 ppm) δ 8.62 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H, Ar-H), 8.35 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H, Ar-H), 7.80 (dd, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 2.0 Hz, 1H, Ar-H), 3.97 (s, 2H, CH₂). 1.54 (s, 2H, NH₂). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, δ 77.7 ppm) δ 156.15, 150.12, 137.11, 131.08, 121.61, 43.8. ESI-MS: The peak at *m/z* 215 corresponds to (M + 1)⁺.

5,5'-Bis(aminomethyl)-2,2'-bipyridine Vancomycin (7). The experiment procedure was same as for **2a**. The crude white solid was purified by reversed-phase HPLC (RP-HPLC). The percentage yield is 43%. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 9.11 (v br s), 8.76 (v br s), 8.71 (v br s), 8.68 (br s), 8.62 (br s), 8.40 (d, 7.0 Hz), 8.04 (s), 7.95 (s), 7.67 (d, 8.5 Hz), 7.57 (d, 8.6 Hz), 7.44 (d, 8.6 Hz), 7.34 (d, 8.6 Hz), 7.29 (s), 7.12 (v br s), 6.88 (d, 9.0 Hz), 6.82 (d, 8.6 Hz), 6.80 (v br s), 6.63 (v br s), 6.48 (s), 6.36 (s), 6.10 (br s), 5.86 (d, 7.3 Hz), 5.68 (s), 5.39 (s), 5.36 (s), 5.34 (s), 5.33 (d, 2.8 Hz), 5.29 (br s), 5.04 (br m), 4.78 (d, 6.2 Hz), 4.65 (d, 10.9 Hz), 4.54 (br q, 4.9 Hz), 4.37 (d, 10.9 Hz), 4.04 (s), 3.79 (d, 10.1 Hz), 3.37 (s), 3.28 (s), 3.02 (m), 2.74 (s), 2.26 (dd, 16.6 Hz, 6.6 Hz), 2.00 (br d, 9.4 Hz), 1.84 (br d, 10.4 Hz), 1.78 (non 7.1 Hz), 1.74 (q, 7.1 Hz), 1.67 (q, 7.1 Hz), 1.62 (q, 7.1 Hz), 1.39 (s), 1.16 (d, 6.2 Hz), 1.00 (d, 6.2 Hz), 0.95 (d, 6.2 Hz). ESI-MS: The peaks at *m/z* 770.3, 1026.8 and 1539.4 correspond to M⁴⁺, M³⁺ and M²⁺, respectively.

B. In Vitro Study. Minimum concentrations of the Van, [Pt(en)(H₂O)₂](NO₃)₂+Van, and dimers of Van required to inhibit the growth of bacterial cells were measured using cation-adjusted Muller-Hinton broth as the growth media. One vancomycin-susceptible strain, one strain exhibiting low-level resistance to vancomycin, five strains exhibiting midlevel resistance to vancomycin, and four strains exhibiting high-level resistance to vancomycin were used to determine the MIC values. The average MIC values for the last two cases were shown in Table 1. The genotype of the strains was confirmed by PCR.

Acknowledgment. This work was partially supported by the Research Grant Council of Hong Kong, DuPont Young Faculty Grant (for Xu), Direct Allocation Grants (HKUST), and University Development Fund (HKU). We thank Prof. Zhongwan Mao for helps on ESI-MS.

Supporting Information Available: The synthetic scheme of **7** and the high-resolution mass spectra (in tabular form) of **4a** and **4b**. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at <http://pubs.acs.org>.

References

- Neu, H. C. The Crisis in Antibiotic-Resistance. *Science* **1992**, *257*, 1064–1073.
- Breukink, E.; Wiedemann, I.; van Kraaij, C.; Kuipers, O. P.; Sahl, H. G. et al. Use of the cell wall precursor lipid II by a pore-forming peptide antibiotic. *Science* **1999**, *286*, 2361–2364.
- Chiosio, G.; Boneca, I. G. Selective Celavage of D-Ala-D-Lac by Small Molecules: Re-Sensitizing Resistant Bacteria to Vancomycin. *Science* **2001**, *293*, 1484–1487.
- Ge, M.; Chen, Z.; Onishi, H. R.; Kohler, J.; Silver, L. L. et al. Vancomycin derivatives that inhibit peptidoglycan biosynthesis without binding D-Ala-D-Ala. *Science* **1999**, *284*, 507–511.
- Kohli, R. M.; Walsh, C. T.; Burkart, M. D. Biomimetic synthesis and optimization of cyclic peptide antibiotics. *Nature* **2002**, *418*, 658–661.
- Trauger, J. W.; Kohli, R. M.; Mootz, H. D.; Marahiel, M. A.; Walsh, C. T. Peptide cyclization catalysed by the thioesterase domain of tyrocidine synthetase. *Nature* **2000**, *407*, 215–218.
- Koeller, K. M.; Wong, C. H. Emerging themes in medicinal glycoscience. *Nat. Biotech.* **2000**, *18*, 835–841.
- Liu, H. T.; Sadamoto, R.; Sears, P. S.; Wong, C. H. An efficient chemoenzymatic strategy for the synthesis of wild-type and vancomycin-resistant bacterial cell-wall precursors: UDP-*N*-acetylmuramyl-peptides. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2001**, *123*, 9916–9917.
- Mammen, M.; Choi, S. K.; Whitesides, G. M. Polyvalent interactions in biological systems: Implications for design and use of multivalent ligands and inhibitors. *Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.* **1998**, *37*, 2755–2794.
- Cooper, M. A.; Williams, D. H. Binding of glycopeptide antibiotics to a model of a vancomycin-resistant bacterium. *Chem. Biol.* **1999**, *6*, 891–899.
- Rao, J. H.; Lahiri, J.; Isaacs, L.; Weis, R. M.; Whitesides, G. M. A trivalent system from vancomycin center dot D-Ala-D-Ala with higher affinity than avidin center dot biotin. *Science* **1998**, *280*, 708–711.
- Rao, J.; Yan, L.; Xu, B.; Whitesides, G. M. Using surface plasmon resonance to study the binding of vancomycin and its dimer to self-assembled monolayers presenting D-Ala-D-Ala. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1999**, *121*, 2629–2630.
- Rao, J. H.; Lahiri, J.; Weis, R. M.; Whitesides, G. M. Design, synthesis, and characterization of a high-affinity trivalent system derived from vancomycin and L-Lys-D-Ala-D-Ala. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2000**, *122*, 2698–2710.
- Rao, J. H.; Yan, L.; Lahiri, J.; Whitesides, G. M.; Weis, R. M. et al. Binding of a dimeric derivative of vancomycin to L-Lys-D-Ala-D-Lact in solution and at a surface. *Chem. Biol.* **1999**, *6*, 353–359.
- Nicolaou, K. C.; Hughes, R.; Cho, S. Y.; Winssinger, N.; Labischinski, H. et al. Synthesis and biological evaluation of vancomycin dimers with potent activity against vancomycin-resistant bacteria: target-accelerated combinatorial synthesis. *Chem. Eur. J.* **2001**, *7*, 3824–3843.
- Nicolaou, K. C.; Hughes, R.; Cho, S. Y.; Winssinger, N.; Smethurst, C. et al. Target-accelerated combinatorial synthesis and discovery of highly potent antibiotics effective against vancomycin-resistant bacteria. *Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.* **2000**, *39*, 3823–3828.
- Sundram, U. N.; Griffin, J. H.; Nicas, T. I. Novel vancomycin dimers with activity against vancomycin-resistant enterococci. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1996**, *118*, 13107–13108.
- Thoma, G.; Katopodis, A. G.; Voelckler, N.; Duthaler, R. O.; Streiff, M. B. Novel glycodendrimers self-assemble to nanoparticles which function as polyvalent ligands in vitro and in vivo. *Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.* **2002**, *41*, 3195–3198.
- Nicolaou, K. C.; Mitchell, H. J.; Jain, N. F.; Winssinger, N.; Hughes, R. et al. Total synthesis of vancomycin. *Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.* **1999**, *38*, 240–244.
- Nicolaou, K. C.; Boddy, C. N. C.; Brase, S.; Winssinger, N. Chemistry, biology, and medicine of the glycopeptide antibiotics. *Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.* **1999**, *38*, 2097–2152.
- Hubbard, B. K.; Walsh, C. T. Vancomycin assembly: Nature's way. *Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.* **2003**, *42*, 730–765.
- Evans, D. A.; Wood, M. R.; Trotter, B. W.; Richardson, T. I.; Barrow, J. C. et al. Total syntheses of vancomycin and eremomycin aglycons. *Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.* **1998**, *37*, 2700.
- Novak, R.; Henriques, B.; Charpentier, E.; Normark, S.; Tuomanen, E. Emergence of vancomycin tolerance in *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. *Nature* **1999**, *399*, 590–593.
- Walsh, C. Molecular mechanisms that confer antibacterial drug resistance. *Nature* **2000**, *406*, 775–781.
- Walsh, C. T. Vancomycin Resistance – Decoding the Molecular Logic (Vol 261, Pg 469, 1993). *Science* **1993**, *262*, 164–164.
- Walsh, C. Microbiology – Deconstructing vancomycin. *Science* **1999**, *284*, 442–443.
- Walsh, C. *Antibiotics: Actions, Origins, Resistance*, 1st ed.; ASM Press: Washington, D. C., 2003.
- Popieniek, P. H.; Pratt, R. F. *Anal. Biochem.* **1987**, *165*, 108–113.

- (29) Waltho, J. P.; Williams, D. H. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1989**, *111*, 2475–2480.
- (30) Williams, D. H.; Maguire, A. J.; Tsuzuki, W.; Westwell, M. S. An analysis of the origins of a cooperative binding energy of dimerization. *Science* **1998**, *280*, 711–714.
- (31) Shiozawa, H.; Chia, B. C. S.; Davies, N. L.; Zerella, R.; Williams, D. H. Cooperative binding interactions of glycopeptide antibiotics. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2002**, *124*, 3914–3919.
- (32) Williams, D. H.; Cox, J. P. L.; Doig, A. J.; Gardner, M.; Gerhard, U. et al. Toward the Semiquantitative Estimation of Binding Constants – Guides for Peptide Peptide Binding in Aqueous-Solution. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1991**, *113*, 7020–7030.
- (33) Williams, D. H.; Bardsley, B. The vancomycin group of antibiotics and the fight against resistant bacteria. *Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.* **1999**, *38*, 1173–1193.
- (34) Griffin, J. H.; Linsell, M. S.; Nodwell, M. B.; Chen, Q.; Pace, J. L. et al. Multivalent Drug Design. Synthesis and In Vitro Analysis of an Array of Vancomycin Dimers. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2003**, *125*, 6517–6531.
- (35) Stack, D. R.; Thompson, R. G. EP 0801075 A1, 1997.
- (36) Mammen, M.; Shakhnovich, E. I.; Whitesides, G. M. Using a convenient, quantitative model for torsional entropy to establish qualitative trends for molecular processes that restrict conformational freedom. *J. Org. Chem.* **1998**, *63*, 3168–3175.
- (37) Searle, M. S.; Williams, D. H. The cost of conformational order: entropy changes in Molecular associations. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1992**, *114*, 10690–10697.
- (38) Rosenberg, B.; VanCamp, L.; Trosko, J. E.; Mansour, V. H. *Nature* **1969**, *222*, 385–386.
- (39) Sakai, S.; Sasaki, T. Multivalent Carbohydrate Ligands Assembled on a Metal Template. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1994**, *116*, 1587–1588.
- (40) Cuenoud, B.; Schepartz, A. Design of a Metallo Bzip-Protein That Discriminates between Cre and Ap1 Target Sites – Selection against Ap1. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A.* **1993**, *90*, 1154–1159.
- (41) Cuenoud, B.; Schepartz, A. Altered Specificity of DNA-Binding Proteins with Transition-Metal Dimerization Domains. *Science* **1993**, *259*, 510–513.
- (42) Mack, D. P.; Dervan, P. B. Sequence-Specific Oxidative Cleavage of DNA by a Designed Metalloprotein, Ni(II).Ggh(Hin139–190). *Biochemistry* **1992**, *31*, 9399–9405.
- (43) Dong, S. D.; Oberthur, M.; Losey, H. C.; Anderson, J. W.; Eggert, U. S. et al. The structural basis for induction of VanB resistance. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2002**, *124*, 9064–9065.
- (44) Xing, B.; Yu, C.-W.; Chow, K.-H.; Ho, P.-L.; Fu, D. et al. Hydrophobic Interaction and Hydrogen Bonding Cooperatively Confer a Vancomycin Hydrogel: A Potential Candidate for Biomaterials. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2002**, *124*, 14846–14847.
- (45) Gu, H.; Ho, P. L.; Tong, E.; Xu, C.; Xu, B. Presenting Vancomycin on Nanoparticles to Enhance Antimicrobial Activities. *Nano Lett.* **2003**, *3*, 1261–1263.
- (46) Xing, B.; Ho, P. L.; Yu, C.-W.; Chow, K.-H.; Gu, H. et al. Self-Assembled Multivalent Vancomycin on Cell Surfaces Against Vancomycin-Resistant Enterococci (VRE). *Chem. Commun.* **2003**, 2224–2225.
- (47) Chen, Z.; Eggert, U. S.; Dong, S. D.; Shaw, S. J.; Sun, B. Y. et al. Structural requirements for VanA activity of vancomycin analogues. *Tetrahedron* **2002**, *58*, 6585–6594.
- (48) Kim, S. J.; Cegelski, L.; Studelska, D. R.; O'Connor, R. D.; Mehta, A. K. et al. Rotational-echo double resonance characterization of vancomycin binding sites in *Staphylococcus aureus*. *Biochemistry* **2002**, *41*, 6967–6977.
- (49) Cegelski, L.; Kim, S. J.; Hing, A. W.; Studelska, D. R.; O'Connor, R. D. et al. Rotational-echo double resonance characterization of the effects of vancomycin on cell wall synthesis in *Staphylococcus aureus*. *Biochemistry* **2002**, *41*, 13053–13058.

JM030417Q