Communication

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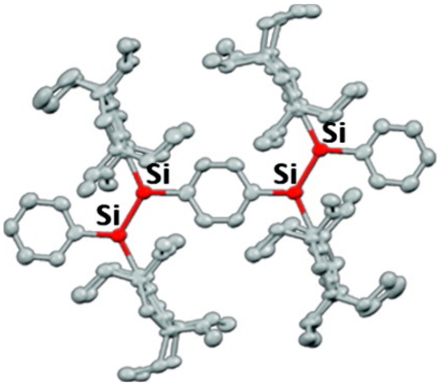
J. Am. Chem. Soc., **2007**, 129 (46), 14164-14165• DOI: 10.1021/ja0764207 • Publication Date (Web): 27 October 2007



Journal of the American Chemical Society is published by the American Chemical Society. 1155 Sixteenth Street N.W., Washington, DC 20036

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Coplanar Oligo(*p*-phenylenedisilenylene)s Based on the Octaethyl-Substituted *s*-Hydrindacenyl Groups

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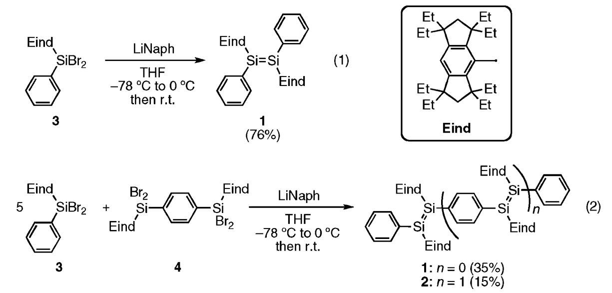
Since the stable silene (Si═C),[1] disilene (Si═Si),[2] and diphosphene (P═P)[3] were reported in 1981 by introducing a concept of steric protection with bulky substituents, a variety of unsaturated compounds of heavy main group elements have successfully been isolated by many leading scientists by using their own, newly developed bulky ligands.[4] The incorporation of multiple bonds of heavy main group elements into a π-conjugated framework would provide access to new potential materials for organic electronics. In this regard, several examples of oligomers and polymers comprising heavy multiple bonds, such as P═C,[5] P═P,[6] Si═Si,[7−9] Ge═C,[10]and Ge═Ge[11] bonds in the main chain, have recently been reported. However, this chemistry always suffers from a dilemma. While the steric protection by bulky ligands is essential to stabilize the highly reactive heavy multiple bonds, it causes the π-conjugated framework to twist, which reduces the extension of the π-conjugation. A key for the further evolution of this chemistry is undoubtedly to attain a well-defined ligand which can maintain the highly planar π-conjugated framework, in addition to providing sufficient steric protection of the reactive heavier multiple bonds.

We now present a new ligand, the 1,1,3,3,5,5,7,7-octaethyl-*s*-hydrindacen-4-yl (Eind) group.[12] By exploiting this ligand, we have succeeded in synthesizing the disilene analogues of the oligo(*p*-phenylenevinylene)s (Si-OPVs), disilastilbene **1** and tetrasiladistyrylbenzene **2** with highly coplanar π-conjugated frameworks. Their photophysical properties as well as X-ray single crystal analyses provide clear evidence for the effective extension of the π-conjugation. During the course of our investigation, Scheschkewitz et al. reported a 2,4,6-triisopropylphenyl-substituted tetrasiladistyrylbenzene derivative by a different route.[9]



The Eind-substituted Si-OPVs **1** and **2** were synthesized by the reductive coupling of the corresponding dibromosilanes **3** and **4** with lithium naphthalenide (LiNaph) in THF. Thus, the homocoupling reaction of the dibromosilane **3** afforded the disilastilbene **1** with an exclusively *E* configuration as orange crystals in 76% yield (eq 1), of which the structure was confirmed by X-ray crystallography (Figure S1). Similarly, the tetrasiladistyrylbenzene **2** was synthesized by the reductive coupling of the dibromosilane **3** and bis(dibromosilane) **4** in a 5:1 ratio (eq 2). After separation by silica gel column chromatography in a glovebox using degassed hexane and toluene as the eluent, the tetrasiladistyrylbenzene **2** was successfully isolated as purple-red crystals in 15% yield (based on **4**), together with the disilastilbene **1** in 35% yield (based on **3**) and unidentified purple higher oligomers. These disilenes are air-stable in the solid state (no decomposition in **1** was observed for at least 1 month), whereas they decomposed within 2 days in a dilute solution at room temperature in air. Their high stability demonstrated the effectiveness of the steric protection by the bulky Eind groups.

Figure 1 shows the crystal structure of **2**. Notably, the tetrasiladistyrylbenzene skeleton is entirely coplanar with the dihedral angle between the central and terminal benzene rings of 9.0°. It is also noteworthy that the Si═Si bonds adopt an almost planar geometry with the twist angles of 0.3 and 3.8° as well as the *trans*-bent angles of 0.7 and 2.7°.[13] The disilastilbene **1** also has an entirely planar geometry (Figure S1). The space-filling model (Figure 1c) shows that the *s*-hydrindacene planes of the Eind groups are orthogonal to the tetrasiladistyrylbenzene framework, and the peripheral ethyl groups effectively protect the Si═Si moieties without severe steric repulsion between themselves.

The high coplanarity, observed in **1** and **2**, is of interest, considering the fact that a disilene moiety usually has a bent and/or twisted geometry depending on the substituents.[14] In our case, within the disilene unit, the ethyl side chains on the *rigid s*-hydrindacene skeletons interlock with one another above and below the Si═Si moiety to enforce the planar geometry. The resulting cavity surrounded by the ethyl groups fixes the framework phenyl groups in a coplanar structure with the Si═Si plane, which is ideal for extension of the π-conjugation.

The photophysical data for **1** and **2** are summarized in Table 1, together with those of the recently reported **5**,[6] *trans*-stilbene **6**,[15] and *trans,trans*-1,4-distyrylbenzene **7**[16] for comparison. Their spectra show several features to be noted as follows: (1) The absorption maximum of **1** corresponding to the $\pi-\pi^*$ transition appears at 461 nm (ϵ 2.4 × 10^4), which is the longest value among those of the already known tetraaryldisilenes (λ_{max} 400−440 nm). (2) The tetrasiladistyrylbenzene **2** has an absorption maximum at 543 nm with a larger molar extinction coefficient (ϵ 3.0 × 10^4) compared to the disilastilbene **1**. (3) The λ_{max} of **2** is about 190 nm longer than that of the carbon analogue **7**, demonstrating that the incorporation of the Si═Si bonds into the π-conjugated system narrows the band gap. However, in terms of the degree of the extension of the π-conjugation, the shift of the absorption maximum

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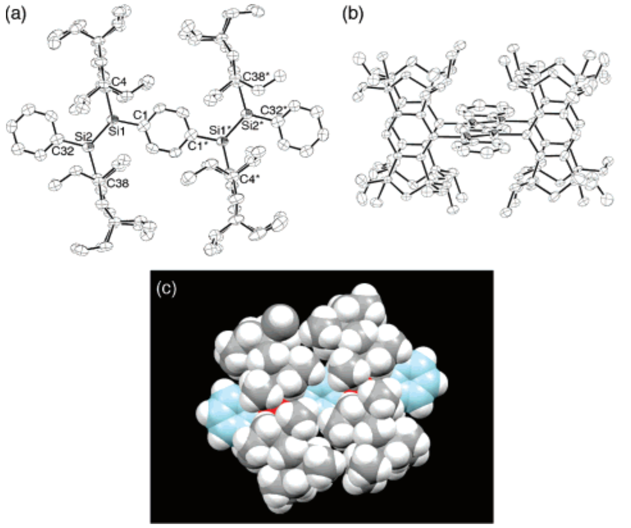

Figure 1. Crystal structures of **2**. ORTEP drawing (50% probability for thermal ellipsoids): (a) top view, (b) front view. Hydrogen atoms are omitted for clarity. Selected bond lengths (Å) and bond angles (°): Si1−Si2, 2.156(2); Si1−C1, 1.860(6); Si1−C4, 1.911(5); Si2−C32, 1.876(6); Si2−C38, 1.902(5); C1−Si1−C4, 114.5(3); C1−Si1−Si2, 120.4(2); C4−Si1−Si2, 125.12(19); C32−Si2−Si1, 117.51(19); C32−Si2−C38, 119.6(3); C38−Si2−Si1, 122.79(19); (c) space filling model: red, silicon; gray, carbon; white, hydrogen. Carbon atoms in the disilastyrylbenzene framework are colored light-blue for clarity.

Table 1. Photophysical Data of Disilenes **1** and **2** and Related Compounds[a]

cmpd	UV–vis absorption		fluorescence
	λ_{max}/nm (ν_{max}/cm^{-1})	ϵ/cm^{-1} M^{-1}	λ_{max}/nm (ν_{max}/cm^{-1})
1	461 (21700)	2.4×10^4	n.d.[b]
2	543 (18400)	3.0×10^4	612[c] (16300)
5[d]	508 (19700)	2.7×10^4	−
6[e]	295 (33900)	−	335 (29900)
7[f]	350 (28600)	−	385[g] (26000)

[a] Measured in *n*-hexane at room temperature. [b] Not detected. [c] Fluorescence quantum yield $\Phi_F = 0.10$, fluorescence lifetime $\tau_s = 1.8$ ns. [d] Scheschkewitz's 1,4-bis(disilenyl)benzene: $(Tip)_2Si{=}Si(Tip){-}C_6H_4{-}Si(Tip){=}Si(Tip)_2$ (**5**): Tip = 2,4,6-tri(isopropyl)phenyl (ref 9). [e] *trans*-Stilbene: PhCH=CHPh (**6**) (ref 15). [f] *trans*,*trans*-1,4-Distyrylbenzene: PhCH=CH−C_6H_4−CH=CHPh (**7**) (ref 16). [g] In methylcyclohexane/3-methylpentane.

from **1** to **2** is 3300 cm^{-1} (0.41 eV), which is lower than that of the carbon counterparts (from **6** to **7**, 5300 cm^{-1}, 0.66 eV). The MO calculations for **2** indicate that the HOMO mainly localizes on the Si=Si bonds with little contribution from the phenylene moieties, while the LUMO delocalizes over the main chain.[17] This type of electronic structure may be responsible for the difference between the Si=Si containing OPVs and their carbon counterparts. (4) The absorption maximum of **2** is also red-shifted by 35 nm relative to that of Scheschkewitz's compound **5**, which has a slightly twisted π-conjugated framework. This difference reflects the effect of the extension of the π-conjugation over the highly planar tetrasiladistyrylbenzene skeleton in **2**. (5) While the disilastilbene **1** does not show any fluorescence, the extended **2** exhibits an orange fluorescence both in solution and in the solid state even at room temperature. The emission maximum was observed at 612 nm with the fluorescence quantum yield (Φ_F) and the fluorescence lifetime (τ_s) of 0.10 and 1.8 ns, respectively, in a hexane solution. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first example of a disilene derivative which exhibits a fluorescence at room temperature.[18] (6) The excitation spectrum of **2**[17] is almost identical to the absorption spectrum, indicating that the major conformer of **2** in solution is responsible for the fluorescence. The radiative rate constant (k_r) and nonradiative rate constant (k_{nr}) of **2** were 5.6×10^7 and 5.0×10^8 s^{-1}, respectively, according to the calculation with the experimental Φ_F and τ_s values. The experimental k_r value is comparable to the theoretical value of 8.5×10^7 calculated from the area of the lowest-energy absorption band.[19] These observations also support the assumption that the fluorescence is due to the predominant conformer in solution.

In summary, we have synthesized planar Si-OPVs **1** and **2** by introduction of a newly developed Eind ligand, which not only efficiently protects the reactive Si=Si bridge but also controls the Si-OPV framework to coplanar structure. Further investigation in synthesizing higher homologues of Si-OPVs and various π-extended systems is currently in progress.

Acknowledgment. Dedicated to the memory of Prof. Makoto Kumada. Financial support from Creative Scientific Research (17GS0207) for H.T. is gratefully acknowledged. We thank Dr. Motoo Shiro (Rigaku Co.) and Dr. Atsushi Wakamiya (Nagoya Univ.) for their kind help with X-ray crystallographic analysis, and Prof. Norihiro Tokitoh and Ms. Toshiko Hirano (ICR, Kyoto Univ.) for elemental analysis. We are also grateful to Dr. Tsukasa Matsuo (RIKEN) for valuable discussions.

Supporting Information Available: Experimental details, spectral data, crystallographic data of **1** and **2** (PDF and CIF), and MO calculation results on **1** and **2**. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

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JA0764207