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# **Structuring and Functionalisation of Titania**

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
Chemistry

at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand.

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2008



## ***ABSTRACT***

Grätzel cells are liquid-electrolyte photoelectrochemical cells that contain dye-sensitised titania electrodes. The sensitiser is typically an organic species that absorbs visible light and increases the spectral region in which Grätzel cells may produce electricity. A key feature in the success of Grätzel cells is the high surface area of nanostructured titania electrodes. In this study, the nanostructuring of titania has been explored by two complementary methods: templation and self-assembly.

The templation of silica colloidal crystals (opals) was chosen as an inverse opal of titania would display a porous, bicontinuous structure in addition to a photonic band-gap. A diverse variety of titania inverse opals was produced, ranging from ideal 'honeycomb' to non-ideal 'grape-like' morphologies. However, the fragility of the material and difficulties in reproduction meant that the testing of such electrodes within Grätzel cells was limited.

Study towards the formation of a nanoparticle superlattice of titania via chemically-assisted self-assembly involved the investigation of both nanostructured titania surfaces and dye adsorption. The mode of dye binding to titania and the stability of adsorbed dyes was studied to aid work toward the design of a self-assembled titania superlattice, as well as to assist in the analysis of dye performance in Grätzel cells. Crystalline, aggregated titania and amorphous, dispersible titania was produced for dye binding studies of small organic carboxylic acid dyes. It was found that while dyes are adsorbed and intimately associated with titania, the mode of dye binding is different on a dry electrode than upon dispersed and solvated titania. The dyes appear to be bound to titania in a carboxylate form in the dry state, but in a mode that closer resembles that of the native dye upon dispersed titania.

## ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS***

I would like to thank all of the people who have helped me over the past four years and who have helped to make my doctoral experience a wonderful one. A tremendous “Thank you!” to David L. Officer and Mark R. Waterland for their supervision of my studies with great foresight and guidance!

Thanks also to the past and present members of the Nanomaterials Research Center (NRC) and the Institute of Fundamental Sciences at Massey University, all of who have been generous with their professional advice and time.

I would like to give a huge “Cheers!” to my husband David, my parents (Kooi Hong and Song Bong) and sisters (Valeska, Caroline & Edwina) for their support and confidence in my abilities – all without losing the plot! %:)

The support given by the MacDiarmid Institute for Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology in the form of my scholarship is also gratefully acknowledged.

### ***Acknowledgments for technical help:***

**AFM and STM:** Richard Haverkamp, Anita Sharma and Aaron Marshall of the Institute of Technology and Engineering, Massey University for training.

**Dynamic Light Scattering:** Reza Mozafari of the Riddet Centre, Massey University for training.

**Electron Microscopy:** Douglas Hopcroft and Raymond Bennett of the Electron Micrography Suite, Massey University (ex-HortResearch) for collection of SEM images, energy dispersive X-ray analysis and for training on the TEM. David Flynn and Richard Tilley of the Electron Microscopy suite, Victoria University of Wellington for the acquisition of TEM and SEM images. Aaron Hicks of the Institute of Veterinary Animal and Biomedical Sciences, Massey University for training on the techniques of embedding and sectioning samples for TEM.

**Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy:** Patrick Edwards of the Institute of Fundamental Sciences, Massey University for collection of  $^1\text{H}$  spin-echo and diffusion experiments.

**Optical Microscopy:** Elizabeth Nickless of the Institute of Molecular & Biological Sciences, Massey University, for training on the 100x Olympus microscope.

**Profilometer:** Andrea Bubendorfer of the Materials Physics Team, Industrial Research Limited for training and use of the equipment.

**Raman Spectroscopy:** Mark Waterland and Adam Swanson of the Institute of Fundamental Sciences, Massey University for training and help in using the apparatus. Geoff Waterhouse of the University of Auckland for the collection of backscattered resonance Raman spectra of titania films.

**Solar Cell Testing:** Wayne Campbell of the Nanomaterials Research Centre, Massey University for training on how to assemble and test dye-sensitised solar-cells.

**Voltammetry:** Klaudia Wagner of the Nanomaterials Research Centre, Massey University for training.

**X-ray Diffraction:** Gordon Heeley of the School of Physical and Chemical Sciences, Victoria University of Wellington and Robert Stewart of the Soil & Earth Sciences Group, Institute of Natural Resources, Massey University for training and use of the equipment. Tim Kemmit of the Materials Physics Team and Ian Brown of the Ceramics Team, Industrial Research Ltd for collection of grazing incidence XRD data.

**For help with Chemistry and in the General Prevention of Insanity during the course of my doctoral studies:** the past and present members of the NRC!

Amy Ballantyne, Warrick Belcher, Robert Breukers, Shannon Bullock, Wayne Campbell, Loretta Crowe, Beatrice Eccles, Sonja Ensink, Daina Grant, Sanjeev Ghambir, Sun Hao, Fabio Lodato, Donna Royal, Adam Stephenson, Mark Vigniswaran, Pawel & Klaudia Wagner, Amy Watson.



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- Figure 6.11. UV-Vis spectra of a 1 : 1 and a 2 : 1 molar ratio of tetra-*n*-butylammonium hydroxide to 6.1 in methanol.
- Table 6.6. UV-Vis absorption of pure dyes and dyed titania in solvent A.
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- Figure 6.13. A red shift of UV-Vis absorbance is observed when a titania plate dyed with 6.5 is wet with tetrahydrofuran is dried. The effect is reproducible as shown by further immersion of the plate in a solution of 6.5 and subsequent drying. The spectra are not subtracted for the titania blank in order to show that the wet plate is more transparent than the dry plate.
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- Figure 6.50. Fluorescence of 6.4 in methanol and with a calculated mole ratio of dye to titania 2 nm in diameter of 39 : 1, 20 : 1, 10 : 1 and 1 : 1. The excitation wavelength was 455 nm.
- Figure 6.51. Fluorescence maximum of 6.4 in methanol versus the mole ratio of dye to titania particles 2 nm in diameter. The fluorescence maximum of pure 6.4 is 592 nm. The excitation wavelength was 455 nm. The error bars are for an uncertainty of  $\pm 0.5$  nm of the fluorescence signal and approximately  $\pm 7$  % for the mole ratio of dye to 2 nm diameter titania.
- Figure 6.52. Raman spectra of a methanolic solution with a 12 : 1, a 6 : 1, a 4 : 1 and a 1 : 3 mole ratio of acidic, amorphous 2 nm sol-gel titania to dye 6.4. The non-linear background has not been subtracted.

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- Figure 6.53.  $^1\text{H-NMR}$  spectrum of 6.1 in  $\text{CD}_3\text{OD}$ .

- Figure 6.54.  $^1\text{H-NMR}$  spectrum of 6.2 in  $\text{CD}_3\text{OD}$ .  
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- Figure 6.59. A cartoon of the solvent partition method. a) Sol-gel titania solvated in  $\text{D}_2\text{O}$  is added to a saturated solution of dye in  $\text{CDCl}_3$ . b) Dye diffuses through the solvent-solvent interface and binds to titania in the  $\text{D}_2\text{O}$  layer. c) The  $\text{D}_2\text{O}$  layer was removed by pipette for analysis by NMR spectroscopy.  
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 Equation 6.3. The Einstein-Stokes equation, using methanol at 298K.

### Section 8.1.

- Table 8.1. Analysis of the  $\text{TiO}_2$ , water, solvent and acid content of sol-gel titania.

### Section 8.2.

- Table 8.2. Experimental extinction coefficients of probe dyes in tetrahydrofuran.  
 Table 8.3. Theoretical ratios of dye to titania, using estimated surface area for non-sintered native sol-gel titania 2 nm in diameter, with a surface area of  $12.57 \text{ nm}^2$  per particle and a molar mass of  $10847 \text{ g mol}^{-1}$ .  
 Table 8.4. Theoretical ratios of dye to titania, using estimated surface area for non-sintered native sol-gel titania 3 nm in diameter, with a surface area of  $28.27 \text{ nm}^2$  per particle and a molar mass of  $36607 \text{ g mol}^{-1}$ .

- Table 8.5. Theoretical ratios of dye to titania, using estimated surface area for non-sintered native sol-gel titania 4 nm in diameter, with a surface area of 50.27 nm<sup>2</sup> per particle and a molar mass of 86771 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.
- Table 8.6. The amount of dye required for monolayer coverage of sintered Dyesol titania, using the footprint areas shown in Table 8.3.
- Table 8.7. The amount of dye required for monolayer coverage of sintered sol-gel titania, using the footprint areas shown in Table 8.3.
- Table 8.8. If the surface area of sintered 'native' sol-gel titania is 187 m<sup>2</sup> g<sup>-1</sup>, if the footprint area of 6.1 is 4.5 x 10<sup>-19</sup>, a monolayer dye loading is 6.9 x 10<sup>-4</sup> mol g<sup>-1</sup>. Supposing that the sintered material was still composed of discrete spheres, then the mole ratio between dye and titania spheres is given by n(dye) : n(TiO<sub>2</sub>). The percentage dye loading of sintered titania over that of native sol-gel titania gives an indication of the degree of particle aggregation introduced by sintering.
- Table 8.9. UV-Vis absorption of dyes on sintered titania.
- Figure 8.1. The integrated area of the UV-Vis absorption of sintered Dyesol titania dyed with 6.5. The red shift in dye absorbance is due to rearrangement of dye on titania due to the loss of solvent, rather than to a decrease in the amount of dye present. The integrated region was 390 to 700 nm. Data is shown for samples immersed in a 0.2 mM solution of 6.5 in tetrahydrofuran for: a) 3 minutes, wet and dried; b) 6 minutes, wet and dried.
- Figure 8.2. The fluorescence intensity of 6.4, in methanol, normalised to absorbance. Two sets of data are displayed. The error bars are for conservative uncertainties of ± 50 counts of intensity and ± 10% of concentration.

## ***ABBREVIATIONS***

AFM	Atomic force microscopy, a type of scanning probe microscopy.
AM 1.5	Air mass 1.5. 'One Sun'. Equivalent to $100 \text{ mW cm}^{-2}$ , the intensity of solar light when the sun is $48.2^\circ$ from zenith. <sup>1-3</sup>
ATR-FTIR	Attenuated total internal reflectance Fourier transform infra-red spectroscopy.
CVD	Chemical vapour deposition.
DSSC	Dye-sensitised solar cell; Grätzel cell..
ITO	Indium-doped tin oxide. Commonly used to coat glass for a conductive surface.
SEM	Scanning electron microscopy.
SPM	Scanning probe microscopy.
STM	Scanning tunnelling microscopy, which is a type of scanning probe microscopy.
TEM	Transmission electron microscopy.
UV-Vis	Ultra-violet and visible light.
XRD	X-ray diffraction

## ***DEFINITIONS AND SYNONYMS***

### *Aqua Regia*

1 : 3 v/v concentrated (fuming) nitric acid to concentrated (1.18 g mL<sup>-1</sup>) hydrochloric acid. If the solution is to be stored, include 1 volume of water.<sup>4</sup>

### *Bohr radius*

The Bohr radius is unique for each substance and is the distance between the electron and hole of a Mott-Wannier pair, or ‘exciton’.

### *Dyesol Limited*

Previously known as Sustainable Technologies Australia (STA), then as Sustainable Technologies International Pty Ltd (STI).

### *External Quantum Efficiency (EQE)*

Of a solar cell: also known as the incident photon conversion efficiency, which is the number of electrons generated per incident photon.<sup>5</sup>  $EQE = n_e/n_{h\nu} = (I_{sc} \cdot hc)/(P_o \cdot \lambda_e)$

### *Fill-Factor (ff)*

Of a solar cell: the maximum electrical power generated divided by the product of the short-circuit current and the open circuit voltage. The maximum power generated is the product of the short circuit current (maximum) and the open circuit voltage (maximum).

$$ff = (I_{max} \cdot V_{max}) / (I_{sc} \cdot V_{oc})$$

### *Global conversion efficiency ( $\eta_{global}$ )*

Of a solar cell: the maximum electrical power generated divided by the intensity of the incident light.  $\eta_{global} = (I_{max} \cdot V_{max}) / I_s$

### *Grätzel Cell*

A liquid heterojunction DSSC which employs a mesoporous and nanocrystalline titania electrode that has been sensitised to absorb visible light.

### *Inverse Opal*

Inverse colloidal crystal, reverse-contrast colloidal crystal, air-sphere colloidal crystal.

### *Macrostructure*

A structure with dimensions larger than 100 nm.

### *Nanocrystalline*

A material that is crystalline with dimensions on the order of nanometres. The term is often used in reference to particulate material which may be composed of smaller particles.

### *Nanoparticles*

Particles with a size on the order of nanometres.

### *Nanostructure*

The structuring of materials such that at least one dimension that is less than a hundred nanometres wide.

### *Opal*

A colloidal crystal. Specifically, opal refers to a colloidal crystal of silica.

### *Polydispersity Index*

Equals the weight-average molecular weight divided by the number-average molecular weight. The number-average is never greater than the weight-average and the larger the index, the wider is the distribution.

### *Power Conversion Efficiency ( $\eta_{eff}$ )*

Of solar cells: the maximum electrical power generated divided by the incident optical power.  $\eta_{eff} = (I_{max} \cdot V_{max})/P_o$

### *Polyelectrolyte*

A polymer in which the degree of ionisation is dependent on the pH of the environment.<sup>6</sup>

### *Piranha Solution*

Either a 2 : 1 v/v, a 3 : 1 v/v or a 4 : 1 solution of concentrated (96%) sulfuric acid to 30% aqueous hydrogen peroxide.<sup>7-9</sup>

### *Quantum dot*

A material that is quantum-confined in three-dimensions.

### *Relative Centrifugal Force (rcf)*

Calculated from the rotations per minute (rpm) and the swing radius of the centrifuge. The units of measure are 'g', for gravitational acceleration.

### *Root Mean Square (RMS)*

Quadratic mean.  $RMS = ((\sum x_i)^2/n)^{1/2}$

### *Screen-printing*

Equivalent to tape-casting of material by pressing material through a mesh screen. The paste viscosity, mesh size, thread thickness and the tension of the screen determine the film thickness.

### *Sol; Sol-gel*

A suspension of tiny particles, which may be stabilised; a gel formed of a sol.

### *Superlattice*

An arrangement of material which recalls the ordering found within ionic lattices.

### *Tape-casting*

Doctor-blading, where a film is cast onto a substrate by application of a blade along guide rails or a mask. The paste viscosity and the height of the mask or guide determines the film thickness.

### $V_{Ag/Ag^+}$

Potential with respect to a pseudo-reference electrode of silver/silver ion.

$V_{SCE}$

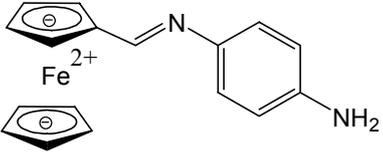
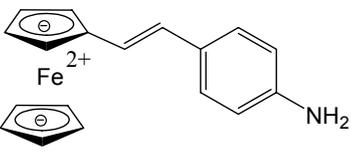
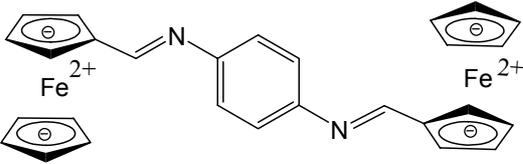
Potential with respect to a standard calomel electrode.

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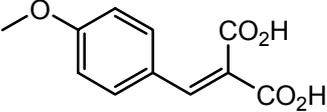
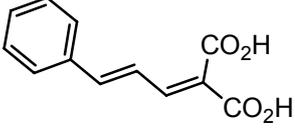
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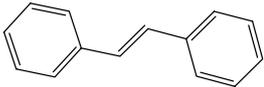
**PICTORIAL TABLES OF ORGANIC SPECIES**

***Ferrocenyl compounds for the functionalisation of ITO***

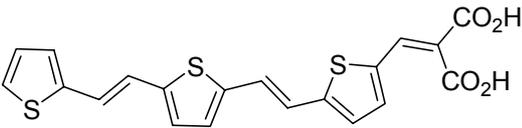
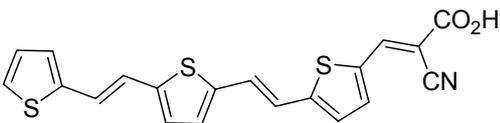
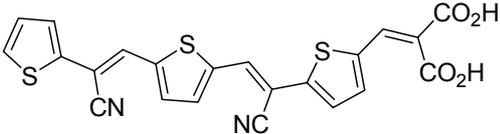
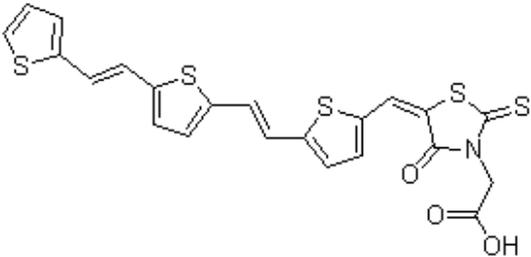
	<p><b>Compound 5.3</b>  <i>N</i>-(ferrocenylmethylidene)-4-phenylenediamine  <i>N</i>-(ferrocenylmethylidene)-<i>p</i>-phenylenediamine</p> <p>Mono-Schiff Base. 304 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  <i>Synthesised by Ms. Yvonne Ting</i></p>
	<p><b>Compound 5.4</b>            2-(4-aminophenyl)ethenylferrocene            2-(<i>p</i>-aminophenyl)ethenylferrocene</p> <p>RJD-99-3. 303 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  <i>Synthesised by Mr. Ross Davidson.</i></p>
	<p><i>N,N'</i>-di(ferrocenylmethylidene)-4-phenylenediamine  <i>N,N'</i>-di(ferrocenylmethylidene)-<i>p</i>-phenylenediamine</p> <p>Di-Schiff Base. 500 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  <i>Synthesised by Ms. Yvonne Ting.</i></p>

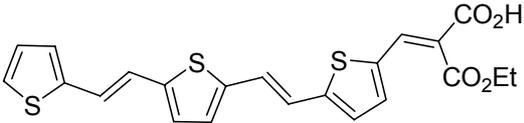
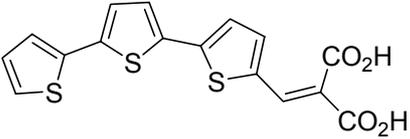
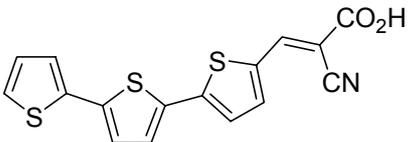
***Small organic dyes for binding to titania***

	<p><b>Compound 6.1</b>            4-methoxybenzylidenemalonic acid            4-methoxyphenylmethylene propanedioic acid  <i>p</i>-methoxybenzylidene malonic acid  <i>p</i>-methoxybenzal malonic acid</p> <p>060720. 222 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  <i>Synthesised by Ms. Yvonne Ting.</i></p>
	<p><b>Compound 6.2</b>            Cinnamylidenemalonic acid.            (3-phenyl-2-propenylidene)-propanedioic acid            3-phenyl-2-propenylidene propanedioic acid</p> <p>AWIS-126. 218 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  <i>Synthesised by Mr. Adam Stephenson.</i></p>

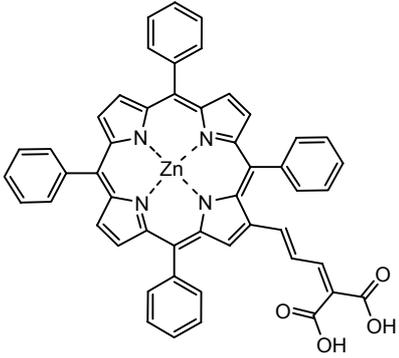
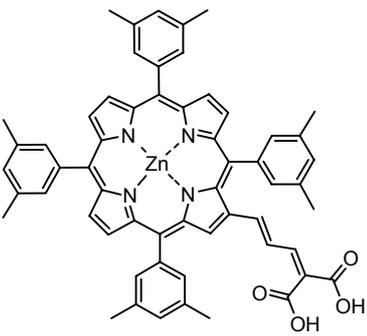
	<p><i>Trans</i>-stilbene. <i>Trans</i>-1,2-diphenyl-1-ethene</p> <p>180 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.</p>
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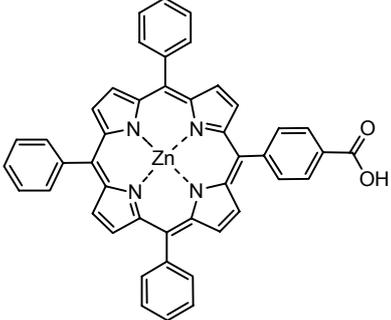
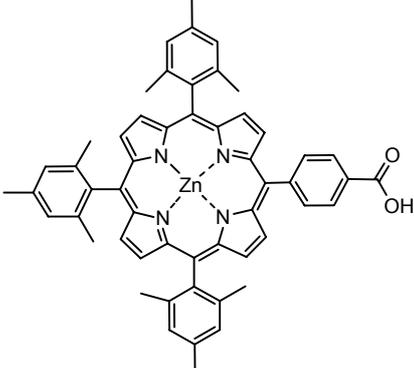
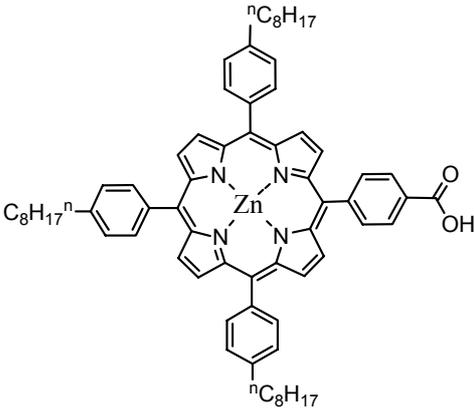
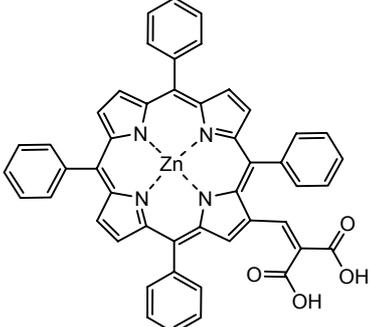
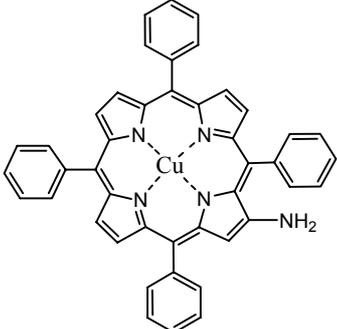
***Ter(thienylenevinylene) and ter(thienylvinylene) dyes for binding to titania***

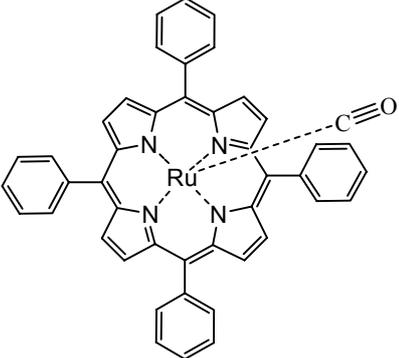
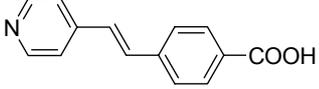
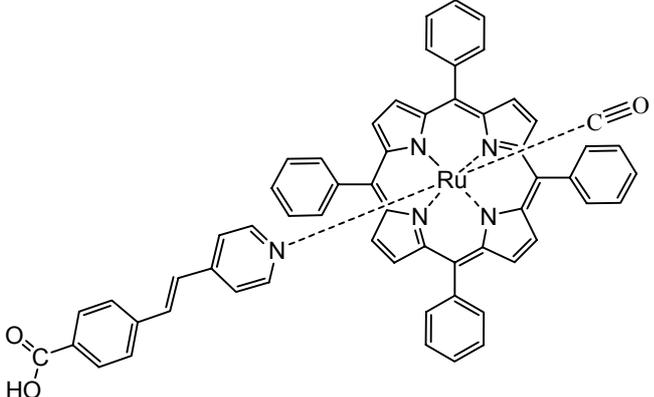
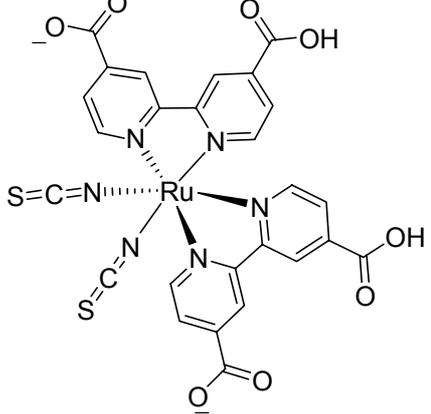
	<p><b>Compound 6.3</b>  Ter(thienylenevinylene)malonic acid  Ter(thiophene-2,5-diyl)vinylene malonic acid  (<i>E,E</i>)-(2-(5-(2-(5-(2-(2-thienyl)vinyl)-2-thienyl)vinyl)thiophenevinyl)malonic acid  5-((5-(2-thien-2-ylethenyl)thien-2-ylethenyl)thien-2-yl malonic acid</p> <p>E-491. 414.5 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  Synthesised by Dr. Pawel Wagner.</p>
	<p><b>Compound 6.4</b>  Ter(thienylenevinylene)cianoacetic acid  2-cyano-3[2,2',5',2'']terthiophen-5-yl acrylic acid  5-((5-(2-thien-2-ylethenyl)thien-2-ylethenyl)thien-2-yl cyanoacetic acid</p> <p>E-490. 395.5 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  Synthesised by Dr. Pawel Wagner.</p>
	<p><b>Compound 6.5</b>  8,15-dicyanoter(thienylenevinylene)-malonic acid  2-(5-(1-cyano-2-(5-(2(thiophen-2-yl)ethenyl)thiophen-2-yl)ethenyl)-thiophen-2-ylmethylene)malonic acid</p> <p>E-513. 464.5 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  Synthesised by Dr. Pawel Wagner.</p>
	<p><b>Compound 6.6</b>  Ter(thienylenevinylene)rhodanine acetic acid</p> <p>EM-59. 503 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  Synthesised by Dr. Pawel Wagner.</p>

	<p>Ter(thiénylenevinylene)malonate monoethyl ester</p> <p>EM-50. 442.5 g mol<sup>-1</sup>. Synthesised by Dr. Pawel Wagner.</p>
	<p>Terthiénylvinylene malonic acid 3-((2,2':5',2'')terthiophen-5-yl)malonic acid</p> <p>SG-72/5. 362.4 g mol<sup>-1</sup>. Synthesised by Dr. Sanjeev Ghambir.</p>
	<p>Terthiénylcynoacrylic acid 2-cyano-3-((2,2':5',2'')terthiophen-5-yl)acrylic acid</p> <p>SG-74/5. 343.4 g mol<sup>-1</sup>. Synthesised by Dr. Sanjeev Ghambir.</p>

***Porphyrin dyes and coordination compounds for binding to titania***

	<p>Compound <b>6.7</b> 4-(2'-(5',10',15',20'- tetraphenylporphyrinato zinc(II)yl)butadienyl)malonic acid 4-(2'-(5',10',15',20'- tetraphenylporphyrinato zinc(II)yl)allylidene)malonic acid</p> <p>WMC-236. Zn-2a. 818.2 g mol<sup>-1</sup>. Synthesised by Dr. Wayne Campbell.</p>
	<p>Compound <b>6.8</b> 4-(2'-(5',10',15',20'- tetraxylylporphyrinato zinc(II)yl)butadienyl)malonic acid 4-(2'-(5',10',15',20'- tetraxylylporphyrinato zinc(II)yl)allylidene)malonic acid</p> <p>WMC-299B. Zn-2g. 930.4 g mol<sup>-1</sup>. Synthesised by Dr. Wayne Campbell.</p>

	<p><b>Compound 6.9</b>  (5'-(10',15',20'-  triphenylporphyrinato zinc(II))-4-  benzoic acid</p> <p>EM-95. 722.12 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  Synthesised by Dr. Pawel Wagner.</p>
	<p><b>Compound 6.10</b>  (5'-(10',15',20'-  trimesitylporphyrinato zinc(II))-4-  benzoic acid  5-(4-carboxyphenyl)-10,15,20-  trimesitylporphyrinato zinc(II)</p> <p>EM-55. 848.4 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  Synthesised by Dr. Pawel Wagner.</p>
	<p><b>Compound 6.11</b>  (5'-(10',15',20'-tri-(4-<i>n</i>-  octylphenyl)porphyrinato zinc(II))-  4-benzoic acid</p> <p>EM-84. 1058.8 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  Synthesised by Dr. Pawel Wagner.</p>
	<p><b>4-(2'-(5',10',15',20'-  tetraphenylporphyrinato  zinc(II)yl)ethenylmalonic acid</b></p> <p>WMC-221. Zn-1a. 792.2 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  Synthesised by Dr. Wayne Campbell.</p>
	<p><b>2-(5'-(10',15',20'-  tetraphenylporphyrinato zinc(II))-  amine</b></p> <p>EM-428. 690.6 g mol<sup>-1</sup>.  Synthesised by Dr. Pawel Wagner.</p>

	<p>Carbonyl(5',10',15',20'-tetraphenylporphyrinato) ruthenium(II) Carbonyl(tetraphenylporphyrinato) ruthenium(II)</p> <p>RuTPPCO. 742.2 g mol<sup>-1</sup>. Synthesised by Dr. Sanjeev Ghambir.</p>
	<p><math>\gamma</math>-stilbazole-4'-carboxylic acid 4-[<i>trans</i>-2-(pyrid-4-yl-vinyl)]-benzoic acid 4-(<i>trans</i>-2-(4-pyridinyl)ethenyl)-benzoic acid</p> <p>060306. 225 g mol<sup>-1</sup>. Synthesised by Ms. Yvonne Ting.</p>
	<p>Carbonyl(5',10',15',20'-tetraphenylporphyrinato) ruthenium(II) with 4-(<i>trans</i>-2-(4-pyridinyl)ethenyl)benzoic acid.</p> <p>060327. 967 g mol<sup>-1</sup>. Synthesised by Ms. Yvonne Ting.</p>
	<p><i>Cis</i>-bis(isothiocyanato)bis(2,2'-bipyridyl-4,4'-dicarboxylato)-ruthenium(II) bis-tetrabutylammonium</p> <p>Ru 'N3' dye, Ru-535 bis-TBA, DyeSol B2/N719. 1188.5 g mol<sup>-1</sup>. 1260.5 g mol<sup>-1</sup> with 4H<sub>2</sub>O. Purchased from DyeSol, Australia.</p>