

Meet Prof. Jian Lei, Thieme Chemistry Journals Awardee 2024!



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Prof. Jian Lei is an Associate Professor at Quanzhou Normal University (P.R. China). He obtained his Master's degree from the West China School of Pharmacy at Sichuan University in 2012, and his PhD from the Guangzhou Institutes of Biomedicine and Health in 2015, before taking up his current position.

Thieme: Which field of organic chemistry are you interested in the most and why?

Prof. Lei: I am interested in nonprecious-metal catalysis. Because of economy issues and availability, nonprecious metal catalysis is promising in both academic laboratories and industry. It also opens up unprecedented new possibilities for organic synthesis.

Thieme: Following that, what is the focus of your current research activity?

Prof. Lei: Our lab focuses on nonprecious-metal-catalyzed hydrazidation reactions to build valuable substituted hydrazines and heterocycles that cannot be approached through other means.

Thieme: What do you think about the modern role and prospects of organic chemistry?

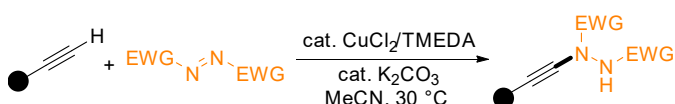
Prof. Lei: Organic chemistry is a powerful tool in modern science. Since it's a tool, the simpler the better. Thus, to make organic synthesis simpler is always a future direction; for example, simpler starting materials, simpler reaction conditions and simpler operation.

Thieme: Which difficulties are there for young upcoming chemists in your field? Do you have any tips?

Prof. Lei: I think "peer pressure" (i.e. involution) is the biggest difficulty. My suggestion is to do your innermost chemistry and enjoy it.

Thieme: What is your most important scientific achievement to date and why?

Prof. Lei: Our team merely resolves some synthetic problems. I like our “copper-catalyzed C(sp)-H bond hydrazidation” (scheme below), because a readily available copper complex was found to catalyze the addition of terminal alkynes across dialkyl azodicarboxylates effectively. This strategy really resolves the synthesis problem of *N,N'*-bis-Boc yne-hydrazides, which was previously approached under harsh conditions.



Thieme: Could you tell us something about yourself outside the lab, such as your hobbies or extra-work interests?

Prof. Lei: Outside the lab, I enjoy time with my family. I also like hiking and watching films.
