

Supporting Information

Chameleonic Metal-bound Isocyanides: π -Donating Cu^{I} - center Imparts a Nucleophilicity to the Isocyanide Carbon toward Halogen Bonding

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S1. Materials and instrumentation

Reagents and materials used. Solvents, CuI, I₂, xylyl isocyanide, CHI₃ and CHBr₃ were obtained from commercial sources (Aldrich) and used as received, apart from CH₂Cl₂, which was purified by the conventional distillation over CaCl₂.

Instrumentation and methods. The high-resolution mass spectra were obtained on a Bruker micrOTOF spectrometer equipped with electrospray ionization (ESI) source and MeOH was used as the solvent. The instrument was operated at positive ion mode using m/z range of 50–3000. The most intensive peak in the isotopic pattern is reported. Infrared spectra (4000–400 cm⁻¹) were recorded on Shimadzu IRAffinity-1 FTIR spectrophotometer in KBr pellets. NMR spectra were recorded on Bruker AVANCE III 400 spectrometers in CDCl₃ at ambient temperature (at 400 and 100 MHz for ¹H and ¹³C NMR, respectively). Chemical shifts are given in δ -values [ppm] referenced to the residual signals of undeuterated solvent (CHCl₃): δ 7.27 (¹H) and 77.0 (¹³C).

X-ray Structure Determinations. Suitable single crystals were selected and mounted on a MiTeGen tip via crystallographic oil. Data were collected using Xcalibur, Eos diffractometer (monochromated MoK α radiation, $\lambda = 0.71073$ Å) at 100(2) K. In each case, the structure was solved with the ShelXT¹ structure solution program using Intrinsic Phasing and refined with the ShelXL¹ refinement package incorporated in the OLEX2 program package² using Least Squares minimization. Empirical absorption correction was applied in CrysAlisPro³ program complex using spherical harmonics, implemented in SCALE3 ABSPACK scaling algorithm. The crystal data, data collection parameters, and structure refinement data are given in **Table S1**, a selected bond lengths and angles are given in **Table S2**. CCDC 1841440, 1841442, and 2092257 contain the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data are provided free of charge by The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre.

Theoretical methods. The calculations of the monomers and dimers shown in **Figures 2–3** were performed at the DFT level theory using the PBE0⁴-D3⁵ method, and the def2-TZVP basis set,⁶ with the help of the Gaussian-16.⁷ The topological analysis of the electron density distribution has been examined using the quantum theory of atoms in molecules (QTAIM) method developed by Bader⁸ and the noncovalent interaction plot (NCIPlot)^{9, 10} using the AIMAll program.¹⁰ The estimation of the individual XB energies was done using the potential energy density (V_r) predictor as recently proposed in the literature ($E = 0.778V_r$)¹¹ for the PBE0 functional. The MEP surfaces were computed at the same level of theory by means of the Gaussian-16 program.⁷ The PBE0 functional combined with D3 dispersion correction has been successfully used before to study halogen bonding interactions in a variety of solid-state systems and structures.¹²⁻¹⁹ In some systems we have further validated the method by using the RI-MP2/def2-TZVPD level of theory²⁰ since it

has been demonstrated that it provides reliable energies, similar to gold standard CCSD(T) energies.²¹ Latter calculations have been performed using the ORCA software.²² The MP2 interaction energies were computed using the supramolecular approach, that is by subtracting the sum of the energies of the monomers to that of the dimer and using the X-ray coordinates.

The IRIplots²³ shown in the main text and the comparative NCI, IRI and IGM²⁴⁻²⁷ plots shown below were computed using the MultiWFN program²⁸ and represented using the VMD program.²⁹ To do so, the wavefunction files obtained using the Turbomole 7.0 program³⁰ at the PBE0-D3/def2-TZVP level of theory were used as input files for their further analysis using the MultiWFN program.²⁸

Single-point periodic DFT calculations using the mixed Gaussian/plane-wave³¹ basis set and the PBE³²-D3^{5,33} method for both studied crystals ($1\times 1\times 1$ cells) were performed in the CP2K-8.1 program³⁴⁻⁴⁰ and analyzed (QTAIM,⁸ ELF^{41, 42} and $\text{sign}(\lambda_2)\rho$ ^{9, 10} projections) in MultiWFN program.²⁸ The short range variants of double- ζ polarization quality (for almost all atoms) or single- ζ (for C in aryl rings only to achieve 1.0×10^{-6} Hartree convergence for the self-consistent field cycle in the Γ -point approximation) Gaussian basis sets (DZVP-MOLOPT-SR-GTH⁴³ or SZV-MOLOPT-SR-GTH,⁴³ respectively) and a 350 Ry and a 50 Ry relative plane-wave cut-offs for the auxiliary grid, in conjunction with the Goedecker–Teter–Hutter⁴⁴⁻⁴⁶ pseudopotentials were applied. Restrained electrostatic potential (RESP)^{47, 48} atomic charges were calculated using REPEAT⁴⁷ method with constraints for all crystallographically dependent atoms of halomethanes and CuI₃ fragments to have the same RESP charges.

For periodic calculations in the CP2K program in the same schemes see refs.⁴⁹⁻⁵⁷ For examples of single-point periodic calculations for σ -hole interactions see refs.⁵⁸⁻⁶⁵

S2. Synthetic work and characterization

Synthesis of [CuI(CNXyl)₃]. Xylyl isocyanide (134 mg, 1.02 mmol) was added to a suspension of CuI (65 mg, 0.34 mmol) in MeCN (20 mL), whereupon the reaction mixture was stirred for 40 min at RT until the complete homogenization. The resulting homogenous solution was evaporated under reduced pressure (20 mbar) at RT to dryness and the colorless residue that was formed was washed with Et₂O (two 2-mL portions) and then dried in air at RT. The yield of [CuI(CNXyl)₃] is 190 mg, 96%. Calcd (%) for C₂₇H₂₇N₃CuI: C 55.53, H 4.66, N 7.20; Found: C 55.76, H 4.63, N 7.22. HRESI⁺ (MeOH, *m/z*): 325.0769 ([M-I-CNXyl]⁺, calcd. 325.0761). FTIR, ν_{\max} (KBr, cm⁻¹): 2137 s ν (C≡N). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, δ): 2.49 (s, 6H, CH₃), 7.10 (d, ³J_{H,H} = 7.5 Hz, 2H, *m*-H from xylyl), 7.21 (t, ³J_{H,H} = 7.5 Hz, 1H, *p*-H from xylyl). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, δ): 18.77 (CH₃), 126.06 (t, ¹J_{C,N} = 11.6 Hz, *ipso*-C from xylyl), 129.79 (*m*-C from xylyl), 129.20 (*o*-C from xylyl), 135.42 (*p*-C from xylyl), 151.98 (C_{isocyanide}).

Synthesis of [Cu(I)₃(CNXyl)₃]. Complex [CuI(CNXyl)₃] (190 mg, 0.33 mmol) and I₂ (83 mg, 0.33 mmol) were dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ at RT and left to stand for 30 min. Then the resulting homogenous brown solution was evaporated at RT at reduced pressure (20 mbar) until dryness with formation of brown residue. The yield of [Cu(I)₃(CNXyl)₃] is 256 mg, 94%. Calcd (%) for C₂₇H₂₇N₃Cu₃: C 38.71, H 3.25, N 5.02; Found: C 38.85, H 3.30, N 5.03. HRESI⁺, *m/z*: 325.0758 ([M-I₃-CNXyl]⁺, calcd. 325.0761), 456.1491 ([M-I₃]⁺, calcd. 456.1601). FTIR, ν_{\max} (KBr)/cm⁻¹: 2159 s ν (C≡N). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, δ): 2.52 (s, 6H, CH₃), 7.15 (d, ³J_{H,H} = 7.5 Hz, 2H, *m*-H from xylyl), 7.27 (t, ³J_{H,H} = 7.5 Hz, 1H, *p*-H from xylyl). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, δ): 19.00 (CH₃), 125.69 (t, ¹J_{C,N} = 13.1 Hz, *ipso*-C from xylyl), 128.08 (*m*-C from xylyl), 129.81 (*o*-C from xylyl), 135.58 (*p*-C from xylyl), 151.13 (t, ¹J_{C,N} = 14.6 Hz, C_{isocyanide}).

Crystal growth for the XRD study. Crystals of [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃]·CHX₃ (X = Br, I) were obtained by dissolution of a mixture of [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] and CHX₃ (molar ratio 1:1) in CH₂Cl₂ at RT followed by slow evaporation of this solution at RT for 3 d.

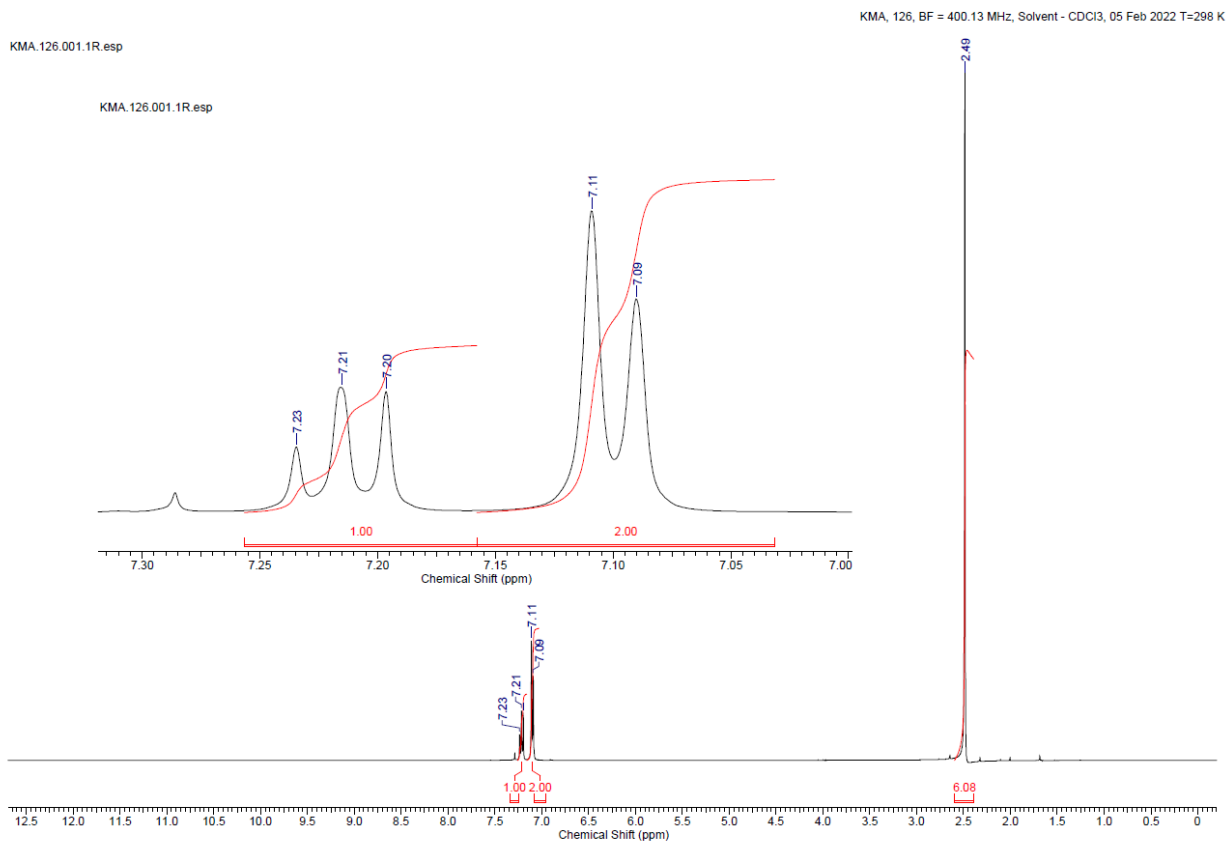


Figure S1. ¹H NMR spectrum of [CuI(CNXyl)₃] (CDCl₃, 400 MHz).

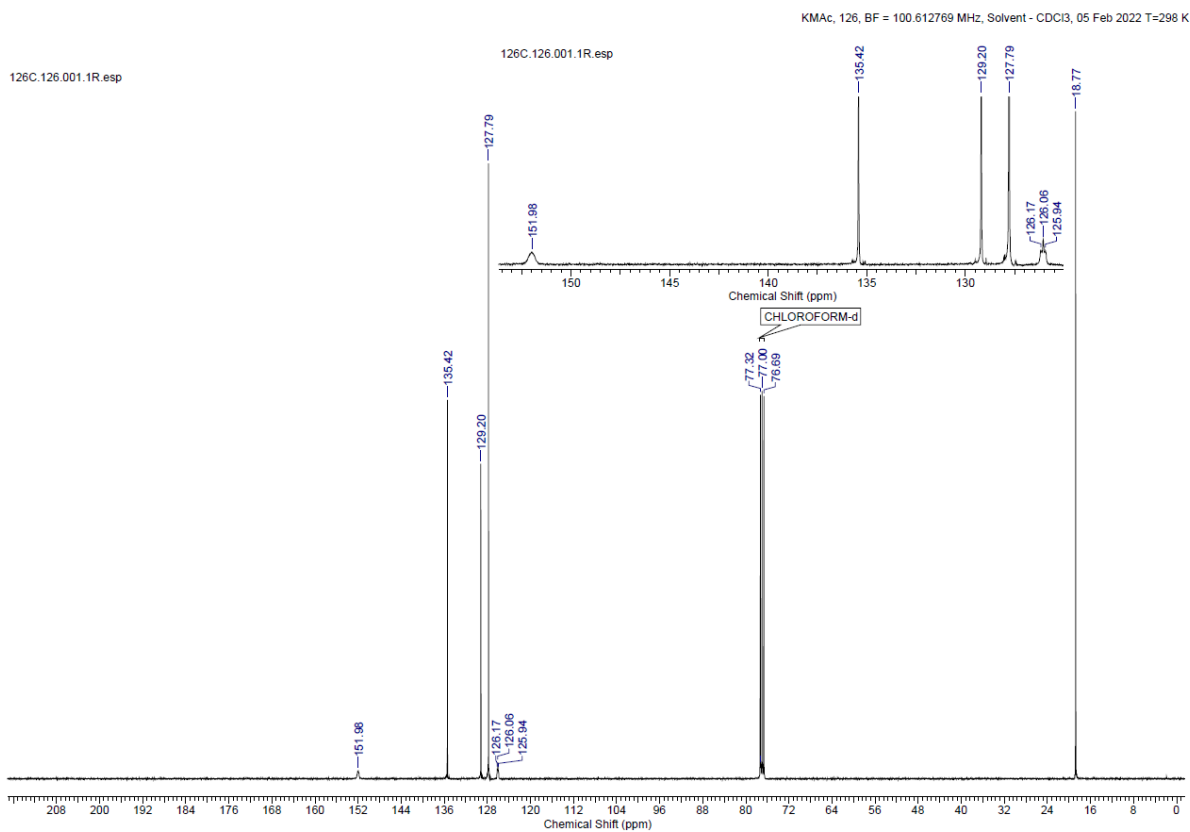


Figure S2. ¹³C NMR spectrum of [CuI(CNXyl)₃] (CDCl₃, 100 MHz).

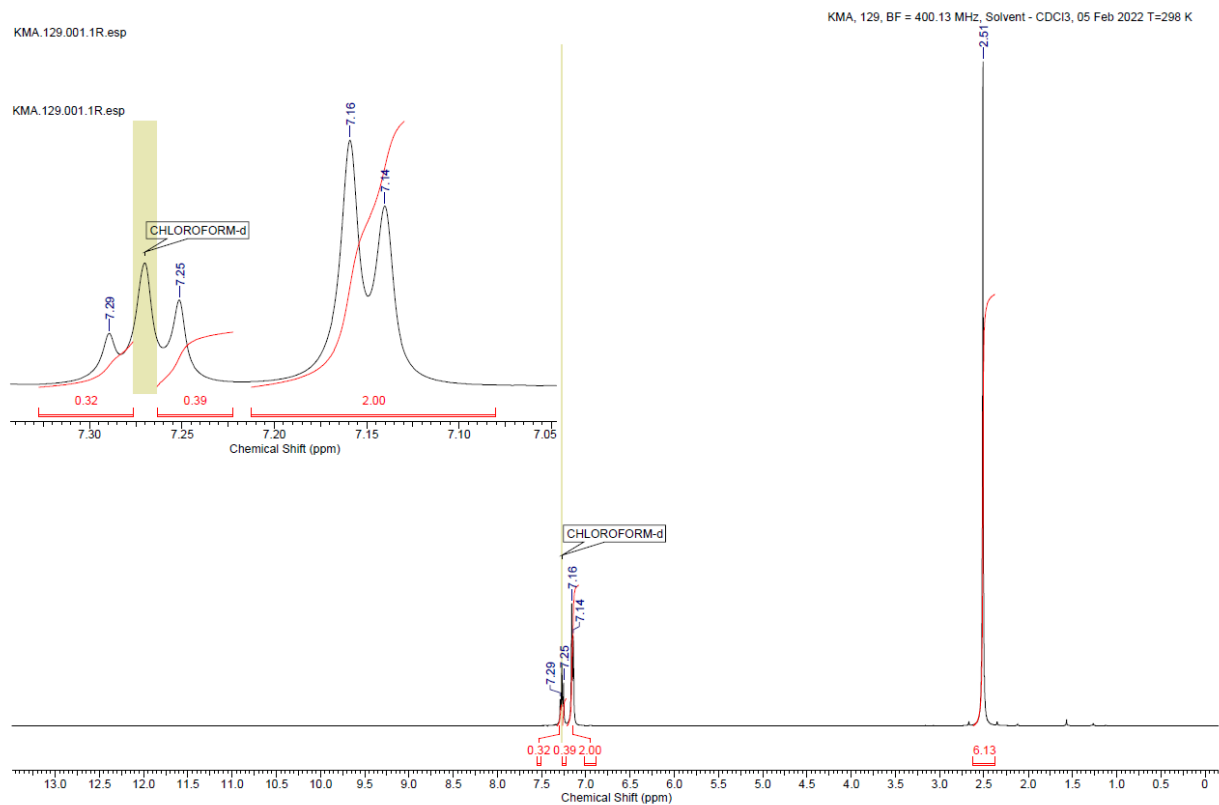


Figure S3. ¹H NMR spectrum of [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] (CDCl₃, 400 MHz).

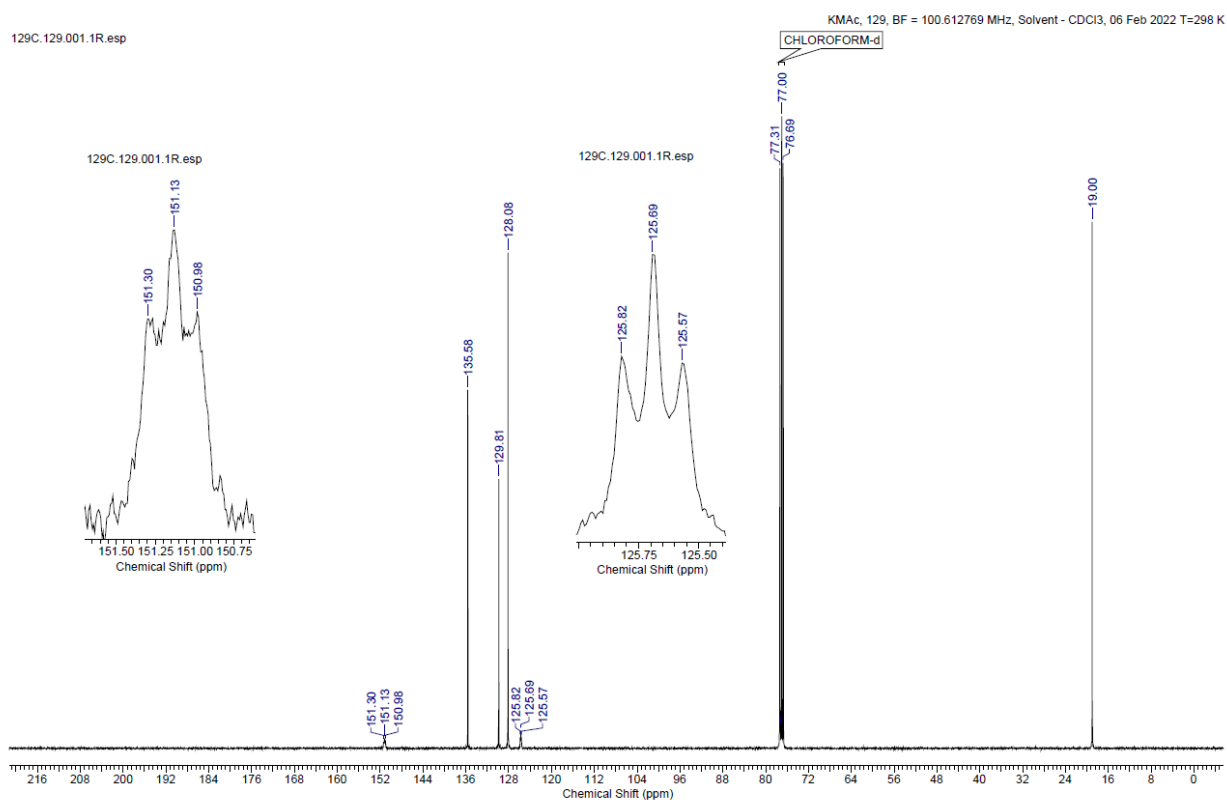


Figure S4. ¹³C NMR spectrum of [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] (CDCl₃, 100 MHz).

S3. X-ray diffraction studies

Table S1. Crystal data and structure refinement for $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]$, $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHBr}_3$, and $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHI}_3$.

	$[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]$	$[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHBr}_3$	$[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHI}_3$
CCDC	1841442	2092257	1841440
Empirical formula	$\text{C}_{27}\text{H}_{27}\text{CuI}_3\text{N}_3$	$\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{28}\text{Br}_3\text{CuI}_3\text{N}_3$	$\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{28}\text{CuI}_6\text{N}_3$
Formula weight	837.75	1090.50	1231.47
Temperature, K	100(1)	100(2)	100(1)
Crystal system	triclinic	monoclinic	monoclinic
Space group	$P\bar{1}$	$P2_1/c$	$P2_1/c$
a, Å	7.7060(3)	11.8924(3)	11.7870(3)
b, Å	9.4799(7)	17.3794(5)	17.6746(5)
c, Å	20.9583(14)	16.4283(4)	16.6827(4)
α , °	84.009(6)	90	90
β , °	88.633(4)	94.584(2)	93.467(3)
γ , °	80.703(5)	90	90
Volume, Å ³	1502.64(16)	3384.58(15)	3469.15(16)
Z	2	4	4
ρ_{calc} , g/cm ³	1.852	2.140	2.358
μ , mm ⁻¹	3.827	6.945	5.991
F(000)	796.0	2040.0	2256.0
Crystal size, mm ³	0.13 × 0.12 × 0.10	0.37 × 0.28 × 0.23	0.18 × 0.12 × 0.12
Radiation	MoK α ($\lambda = 0.71073$)	Mo K α ($\lambda = 0.71073$)	Mo K α ($\lambda = 0.71073$)
2 θ range for data collection, °	5.564 to 54.998	4.986 to 54.994	5.218 to 52.996
Index ranges	-10 ≤ h ≤ 9, -11 ≤ k ≤ 12, -24 ≤ l ≤ 27	-14 ≤ h ≤ 14, -18 ≤ k ≤ 22, -20 ≤ l ≤ 21	-14 ≤ h ≤ 14, -20 ≤ k ≤ 22, -20 ≤ l ≤ 15
Reflections collected	13669	16381	16789
Independent reflections	6869 [$R_{\text{int}} = 0.0285$, $R_{\text{sigma}} = 0.0422$]	7390 [$R_{\text{int}} = 0.0270$, $R_{\text{sigma}} = 0.0421$]	7176 [$R_{\text{int}} = 0.0231$, $R_{\text{sigma}} = 0.0292$]
Data/restraints/-parameters	6869/0/313	7390/0/349	7176/0/349
Goodness-of-fit on F^2	1.095	1.108	1.056
Final R indexes [$I \geq 2\sigma(I)$]	$R_1 = 0.0313$, $wR_2 = 0.0653$	$R_1 = 0.0332$, $wR_2 = 0.0681$	$R_1 = 0.0305$, $wR_2 = 0.0718$
Final R indexes [all data]	$R_1 = 0.0396$, $wR_2 = 0.0693$	$R_1 = 0.0478$, $wR_2 = 0.0734$	$R_1 = 0.0364$, $wR_2 = 0.0752$
Largest diff. peak/hole, e ⁻ Å ⁻³	1.26/-0.82	1.48/-0.72	3.22/-1.69

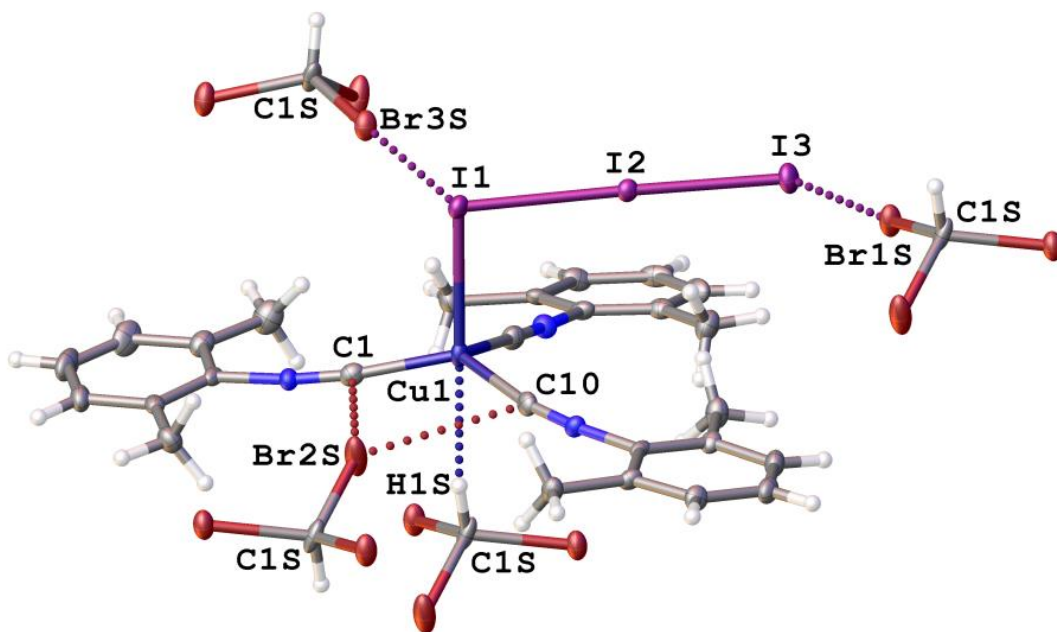


Figure S5. The structure of $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHBr}_3$ with thermal ellipsoids at the 50% level.

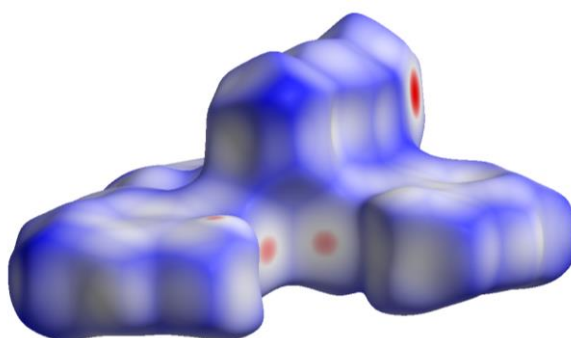


Figure S6. Hirshfeld surfaces for $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]$ in $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHI}_3$

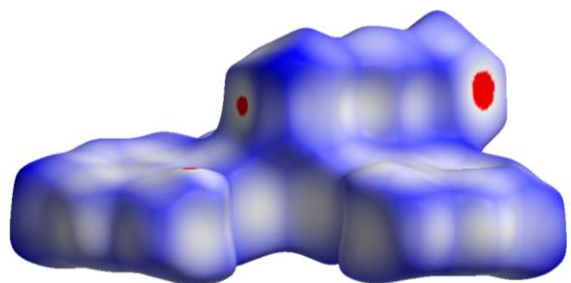


Figure S7. Hirshfeld surfaces for $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]$ in $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHBr}_3$.

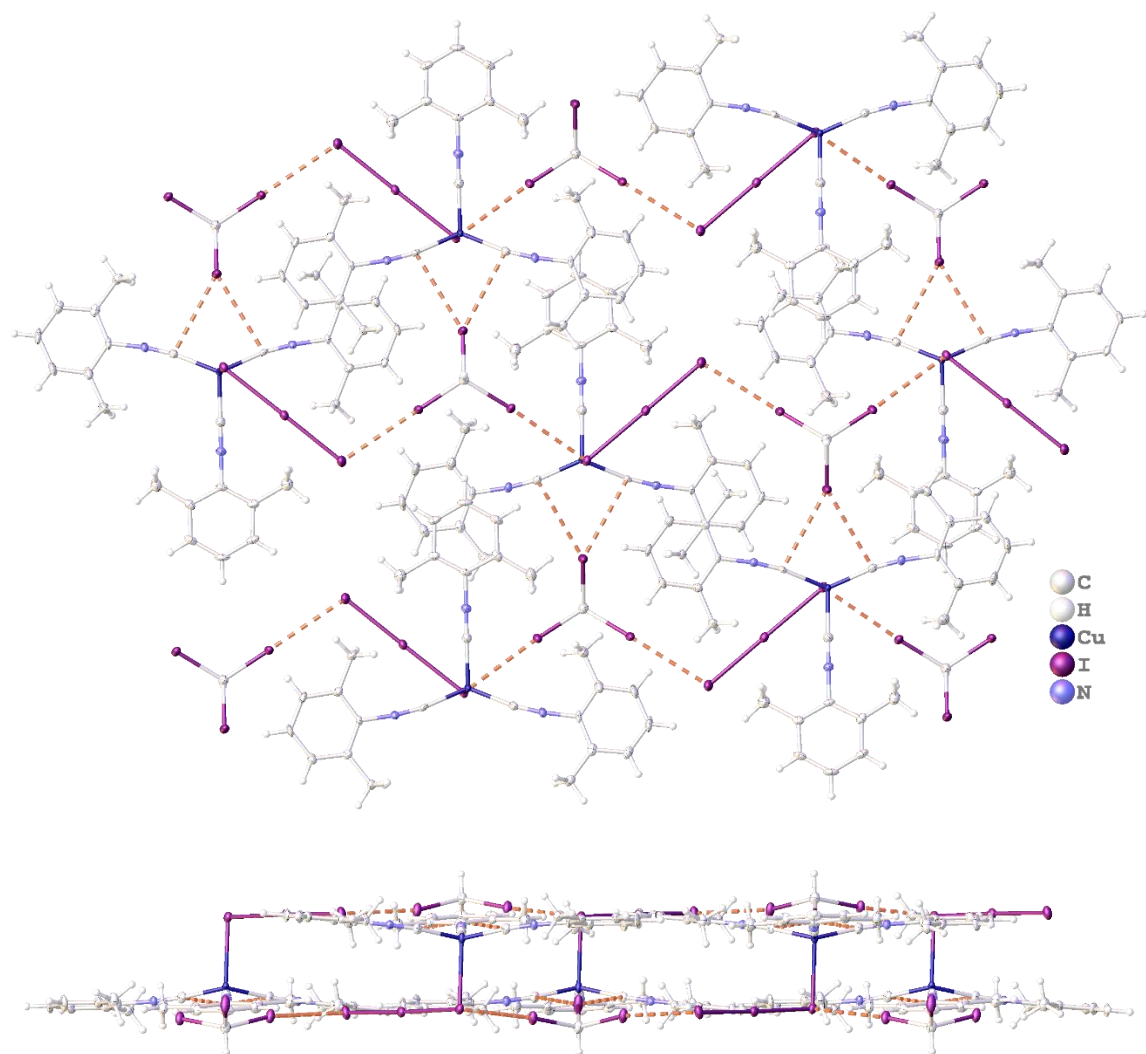


Figure S8. Crystal structure of $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHI}_3$. CHI_3 molecule is bonded through one bifurcated halogen bond onto pairs of CN triple bonds and through two $\text{I}_{\text{CH}_3} \cdots \text{I}_{\text{I}_3}$ halogen bonds with triiodide ligand interconnecting the molecules into 2D surface with each donor molecule binding to three acceptor molecules and vice versa. The crystal structure of $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHBr}_3$ is similar.

Table S2. Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (°) in [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] \cdot CHBr₃ and [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] \cdot CHI₃.

	[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHBr ₃	[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHI ₃
Bond lengths, Å		
Cu1–I1	2.7545(6)	2.7800(6)
Cu1–C1	1.935(5)	1.933(5)
Cu1–C10	1.945(5)	1.944(5)
Cu1–C19	1.968(5)	1.953(5)
N1–C1	1.152(6)	1.163(6)
N2–C10	1.147(6)	1.162(6)
N3–C19	1.144(6)	1.160(6)
I1–I2	2.9993(4)	3.0011(4)
I2–I3	2.7545(6)	2.8582(4)
Angle, °		
Cu1–C1–N1	170.8(4)	170.4(4)
Cu1–C10–N2	170.1(4)	170.3(4)
Cu1–C19–N3	178.4(5)	179.6(5)
C1–Cu1–C10	127.2(2)	129.0(2)
C10–Cu1–C19	110.04(19)	109.9(2)
C1–Cu1–C19	111.5(2)	111.1(2)
C1–N1–C2	171.7(5)	172.6(5)
C10–N2–C11	173.2(5)	173.6(5)
C19–N3–C20	178.2(5)	178.5(5)
Cu1–I1–I2	92.497(15)	92.188(15)
I1–I2–I3	178.632(14)	178.398(14)

Table S3. Geometric parameters of HaBs and H \cdots Cu H-bonding in the crystal structures of in [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] \cdot CHBr₃ and [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] \cdot CHI₃.

Structure	Contact	d(X \cdots Y), Å	R _{Bondi} ^a	R _{Alv.} ^b	\angle (C–X \cdots Y), °
HX ₂ C(μ_2 -X) \cdots ($\underline{\text{C}}-\text{Cu}-\underline{\text{C}}$) BHaBs					
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHBr ₃	C1S–Br2S \cdots C1	3.582(5)	1.01	0.99	142.6(2)
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHI ₃	C1S–I2S \cdots C1	3.546(5)	0.96	0.93	145.35(15)
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHBr ₃	C1S–Br2S \cdots C10	3.585(5)	1.01	0.99	141.4(2)
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHI ₃	C1S–I2S \cdots C10	3.559(5)	0.96	0.93	144.23(16)
HX ₂ C–X \cdots ($\underline{\text{I}}-\text{I}-\text{I}-\text{Cu}$)					
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHBr ₃	C1S–Br1S \cdots I3	3.5893(6)	0.94	0.92	175.2(2)
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHI ₃	C1S–I1S \cdots I3	3.5867(5)	0.90	0.88	170.12(13)
HX ₂ C–X \cdots ($\text{I}-\text{I}-\underline{\text{I}}-\text{Cu}$)					
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHBr ₃	C1S–Br3S \cdots I1	3.6315(6)	0.95	0.93	176.0(1)
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHI ₃	C1S–I3S \cdots I1	3.5901(5)	0.90	0.88	174.75(14)
X ₃ C–H \cdots Cu					
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHBr ₃	C1S–H1S \cdots Cu1	2.5917	0.99	0.72	171
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHI ₃	C1S–H1S \cdots Cu1	2.57	0.98	0.72	176

^a R_{Bondi} is a ratio between the interatomic distance and sum of Bondi vdW radii.⁶⁶

^b R_{Alv.} is a ratio between the interatomic distance and sum of Alvarez vdW radii.⁶⁷

The HX₂C–X \cdots ($\underline{\text{I}}-\text{I}-\text{I}-\text{Cu}$) and HX₂C–X \cdots ($\text{I}-\text{I}-\underline{\text{I}}-\text{Cu}$) halogen bonding. In the structures of [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] \cdot CHX₃, the HX₂C–X \cdots I₃Cu short contacts between an X atom from CHX₃ and I atom from triiodide ligand comprises ca. 90% of \sum_{vdw} ; the corresponding angle around the X center of CHX₃ is close to 180° ($\Theta_{\text{C-I}\cdots\text{I}} = 170.12(13)\text{--}174.75(14)^\circ$; **Table S1**). These data along with the data on a surface maximum $V_{\text{S}}(\mathbf{r})_{\text{max}}$ (18–26 kcal mol^{−1}) located on the σ -hole of the X atoms in CHX₃ indicate that this short contact is due to HaB, according to the IUPAC criteria for Type II halogen-halogen interactions⁶⁸ and the X atom from CHX₃ acts as σ -hole donor which interacts with an electron belt of triiodide ligand. The second X atom of CHX₃ exhibits the HaB with an I of the triiodide from another complex and one CHX₃ behaves as a bridge linking two neighboring complexes. Correspondingly, in this structure, CHX₃ act as bifunctional HaB/HaB donors and the triiodide functions as a bifunctional linear HaB/HaB acceptor, whose interplay gives zig-zag 1D chains held by HaB.

The X₃C–H \cdots Cu hydrogen bonding. The position of the hydrogen atom of CHX₃ indicates the presence of H \cdots Cu interaction. The H \cdots Cu distances are 2.59 Å and 2.57 Å for [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] \cdot CHBr₃ and [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] \cdot CHI₃ respectively that is less than the sum of the vdW radii (ca. 98–99% of \sum_{vdw}). The C–H \cdots Cu angle is close to linear (171.0–176.0°; **Table S3**).

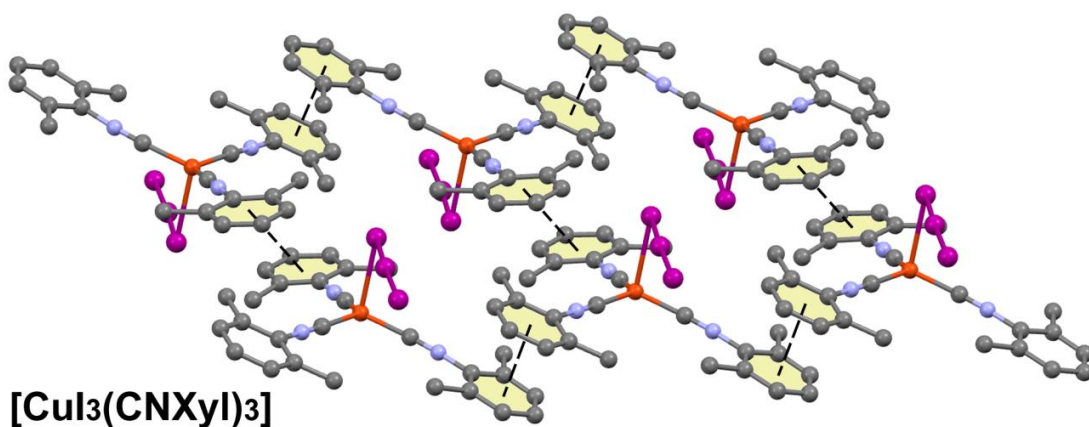


Figure S9. Partial view of the X-ray structure of [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] with indication of the dominant $\pi \cdots \pi$ stacking interactions.

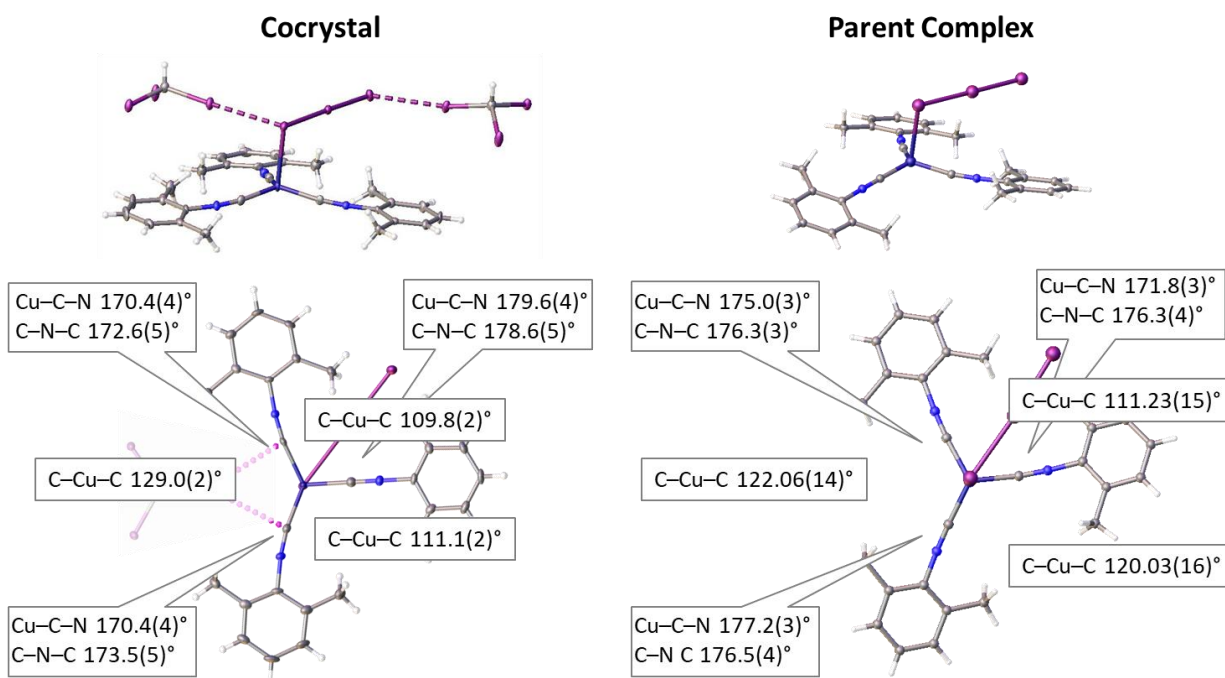


Figure S10. The comparison of the crystal structures of [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃]·CHI₃ with those of the unassociated [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃].

S4. Bromoform and iodoform as HaB donors

CHX₃ have been conventionally studied as HaB donors to give a number of reports focused on CHX₃-involving HaBs with halide anions,⁶⁹⁻⁷³ halide⁷⁴⁻⁷⁷ and pseudohalide⁷⁸⁻⁸⁰ ligands, with other *N*-⁸¹⁻⁸⁵ and *S*-nucleophiles (for CHI₃ refs.⁸⁶⁻⁸⁹ and for CHBr₃ ref.⁹⁰), CHBr₃^{75, 91, 92} and CHI₃^{69, 75, 76, 85, 93} HaB self-association, and even with Pd^{II}⁷⁵ and Pt^{II}^{75, 76} metal centers. Bromoform was also employed as HaB donor toward O-nucleophiles,^{73, 92, 94-97} whereas iodoform was found to be I-electrophile toward Se-nucleophilic center.⁹⁸

S5. Theoretical calculations

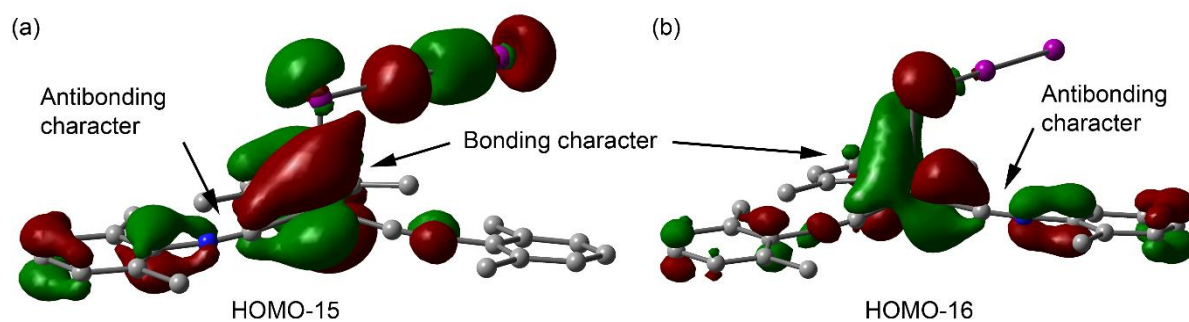


Figure S11. Surface plots of the HOMO-15 and LUMO-16 for $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]$.

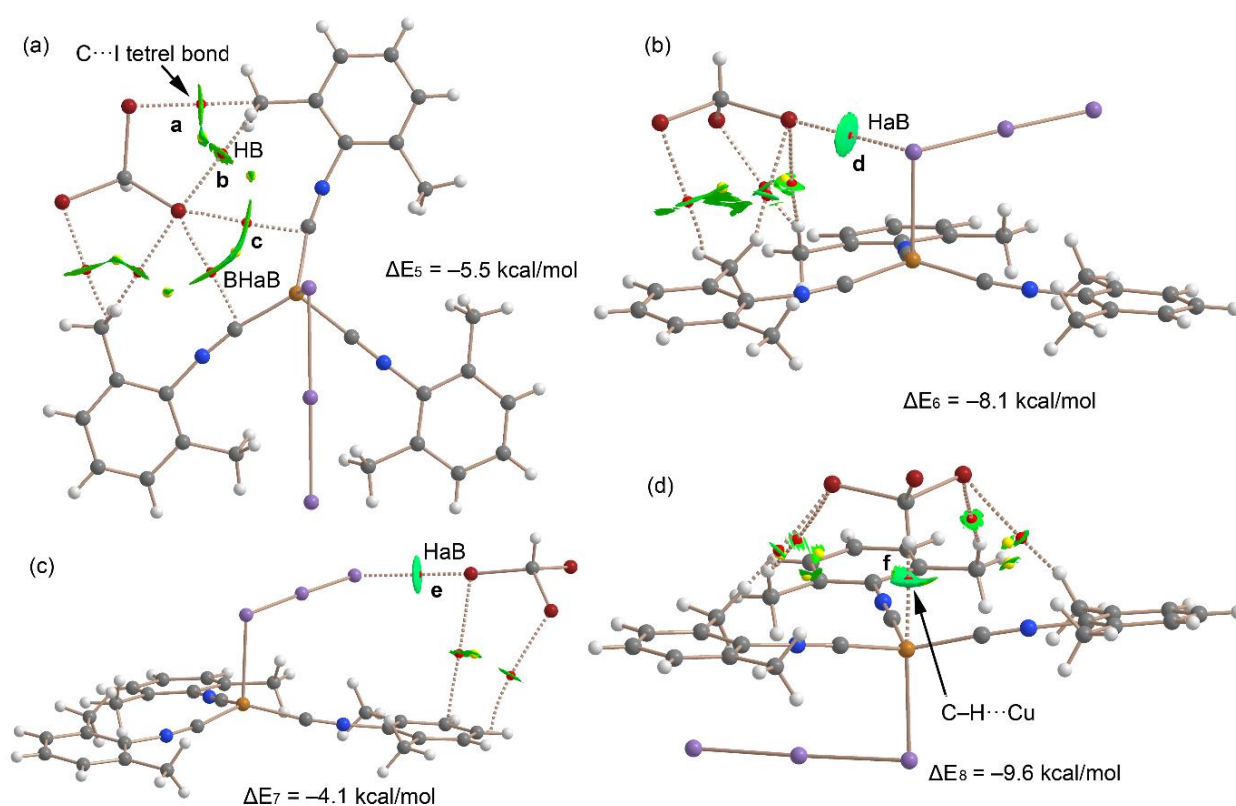


Figure S12. QTAIM distribution of bond and ring CP (red and yellow spheres, respectively) and bond paths for the BHaB dimer (a), HaB dimers (b,c), and H-bond dimer (d) of $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\text{-CHBr}_3$. The NCIPLOT isosurfaces are also represented using 0.4 au isosurface and a gradient cut-off of 0.04 au. The color range is $-0.04 \text{ au} \leq \text{sign}(\lambda_2)\rho \leq 0.04$. Only CPs and NCIPLOT surfaces characterizing intermolecular interactions are represented for clarity.

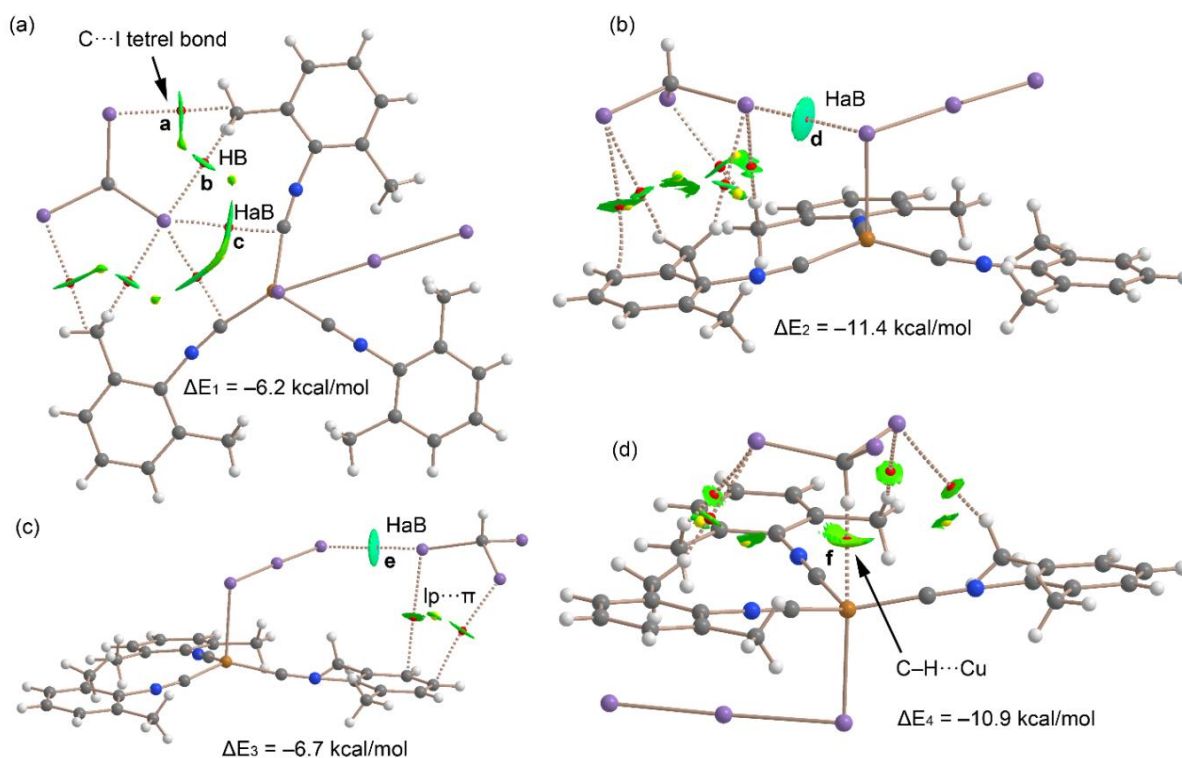


Figure S13. QTAIM distribution of bond and ring CP (red and yellow spheres, respectively) and bond paths for the BHaB dimer (a), HaB dimers (b,c), and H-bond dimer (d) of compound $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHI}_3$. The NCIPlot isosurfaces are also represented using 0.4 au isosurface and a gradient cut-off of 0.04 au. The color range is $-0.04 \text{ au} \leq \text{sign}(\lambda_2)\rho \leq 0.04$. Only CPs and NCIPlot surfaces characterizing intermolecular interactions are represented for clarity.

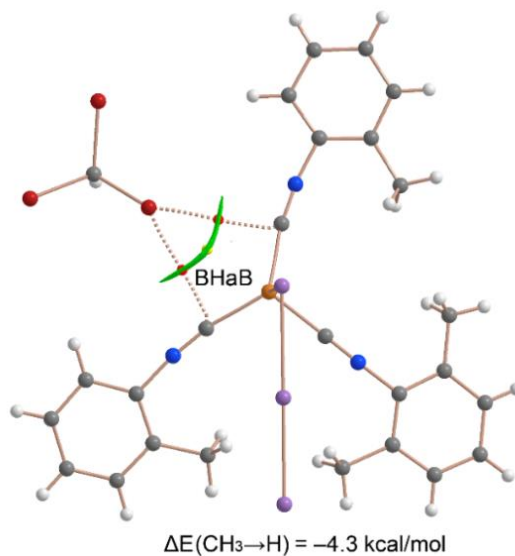


Figure S14. QTAIM distribution of bond and ring CP (red and yellow spheres, respectively) and bond paths for the mutated model of the $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHBr}_3$ adduct formed by BHaB. The NCIPlot isosurfaces are also represented using 0.4 au isosurface and a gradient cut-off of 0.04 au. The color range is $-0.04 \text{ au} \leq \text{sign}(\lambda_2)\rho \leq 0.04$. Only CPs and NCIPlot surfaces characterizing intermolecular interactions are represented for clarity.

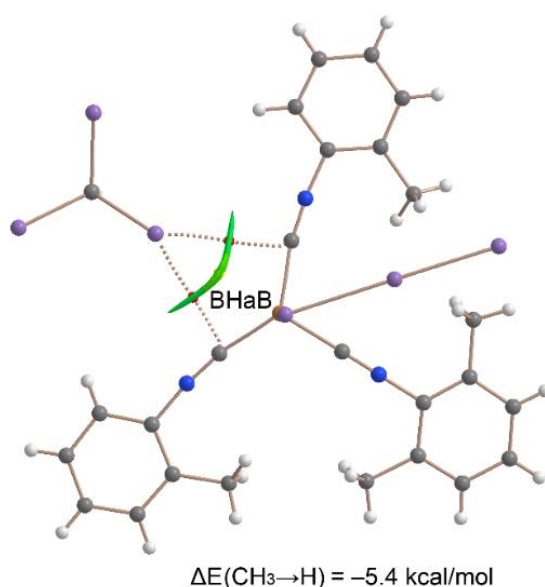


Figure S15. QTAIM distribution of bond and ring CP (red and yellow spheres, respectively) and bond paths for the mutated model of the $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHI}_3$ adduct formed by BHAb. The NCIplot isosurfaces are also represented using 0.4 au isosurface and a gradient cut-off of 0.04 au. The color range is $-0.04 \text{ au} \leq \text{sign}(\lambda_2)\rho \leq 0.04 \text{ au}$. Only CPs and NCIplot surfaces characterizing intermolecular interactions are represented for clarity.

In **Table S4**, we summarized the QTAIM values at the bond CPs labelled as “a–f” in **Figures S12–S13** and the associated interaction energies based on the potential energy density (V_r) predictor,⁹⁹ apart from the tetrel bond where the V_r predictor value is not available.

For the halogen-bonded dimer involving I1 (**Figures 3** and **S5** for atom labelling), the HaB (–2.29 and –3.22 kcal/mol, in $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHBr}_3$ and $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHI}_3$, respectively, CPs labelled as **d**) is stronger than the BHAb, in agreement with the NCIplot surface analysis. Moreover, the difference between these energies and the respective dimerization energies ($\Delta E_6 = -8.1 \text{ kcal/mol}$ and $\Delta E_2 = -11.4 \text{ kcal/mol}$) can be attributed to the rest of the $\text{H} \cdots \text{X}$ contacts (**Figures S12b** and **S13b**). For the halogen-bonded dimer involving I3, the HaB (–2.50 and –3.22 kcal/mol, in $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHBr}_3$ and $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHI}_3$, respectively, CPs labelled as **e**) is very similar to the $\text{I3S} \cdots \text{I1}$ dimer. Moreover, the difference between these energies and the respective dimerization energies ($\Delta E_7 = -4.1 \text{ kcal/mol}$ and $\Delta E_3 = -6.4 \text{ kcal/mol}$) can be attributed to the $\text{lp} \cdots \pi$ interactions (**Figures S12c** and **S13c**). Finally, the energies of the $\text{C} - \text{H} \cdots \text{Cu}$ contacts are small – 1.81 ($[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHBr}_3$) and –1.91 kcal/mol ($[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3] \cdot \text{CHI}_3$; CPs labelled as **f**) in line with the small MEP value observed at the Cu atom (–2.5 kcal/mol). Therefore, this dimer is likely dominated by the formation of the four $\text{C} - \text{H} \cdots \text{I}$ HBs.

Table S4. QTAIM parameters (ρ , $\nabla^2\rho$, V_r , G_r and H_r in au) at the bond CPs of X \cdots C,I HaBs, H \cdots Cu and H \cdots X HBs for the dimers of $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHBr}_3$ and $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHI}_3$ (see **Figures 3** and **S5** for labelling).

CP	ρ	$\nabla^2\rho$	V_r	G_r	H_r	E_{int}
$[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHBr}_3$						
a	0.0053	0.0196	-0.0028	0.0039	0.0010	n.a.
b	0.0048	0.0170	-0.0023	0.0033	0.0010	-0.72
c	0.0050	0.0158	-0.0021	0.0030	0.0009	-1.02
d	0.0105	0.0253	-0.0047	0.0055	0.0008	-2.29
e	0.0110	0.0274	-0.0052	0.0060	0.0008	-2.50
f	0.0105	0.0240	-0.0058	0.0059	0.0001	-1.81
$[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHI}_3$						
a	0.0052	0.0171	-0.0026	0.0034	0.0008	n.a.
b	0.0067	0.0181	-0.0028	0.0037	0.0009	-0.88
c	0.0070	0.0191	-0.0030	0.0039	0.0009	-1.46
d	0.0145	0.0294	-0.0066	0.0070	0.0004	-3.22
e	0.0143	0.0301	-0.0066	0.0071	0.0005	-3.22
f	0.0108	0.0255	-0.0061	0.0062	0.0001	-1.91

NCIplot, IRIPlot and IGMplot of $(\mu_2\text{-X})\cdots(\text{NC-Cu-CN})$ heterodimers

Figures S16–S17 show the results from the three analyses focused on the $(\mu_2\text{-X})\cdots(\text{C-Cu-C})$ dimers. All three methods provide similar information regarding the interactions, showing blue isosurfaces between the halogen atom and the C-atom of the isocyano group, coincident to the location of the bond CPs (red spheres) interconnecting the I,Br and C-atoms. Interestingly, these three analyses also reveal that the interaction between the Cu-atom and the halogen atom is repulsive since yellow/red isosurfaces also located between the Br,I-atoms and the Cu atom coincident to the ring CPs (yellow spheres).

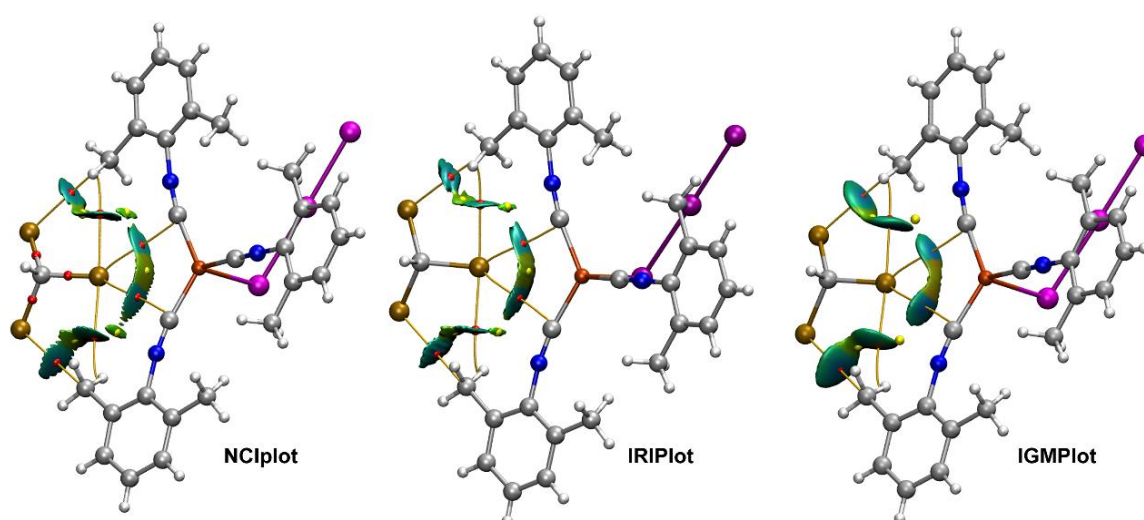


Figure S16. NCI (left), IRI (middle) and IGM (right) plots of the $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHBr}_3$ dimer at the PBE0-D3/def2-TZVP level of theory. Color scale used for the three plots $-0.01 \text{ a.u.} \leq (\text{sign}\lambda_2)\rho \leq 0.01 \text{ a.u.}$

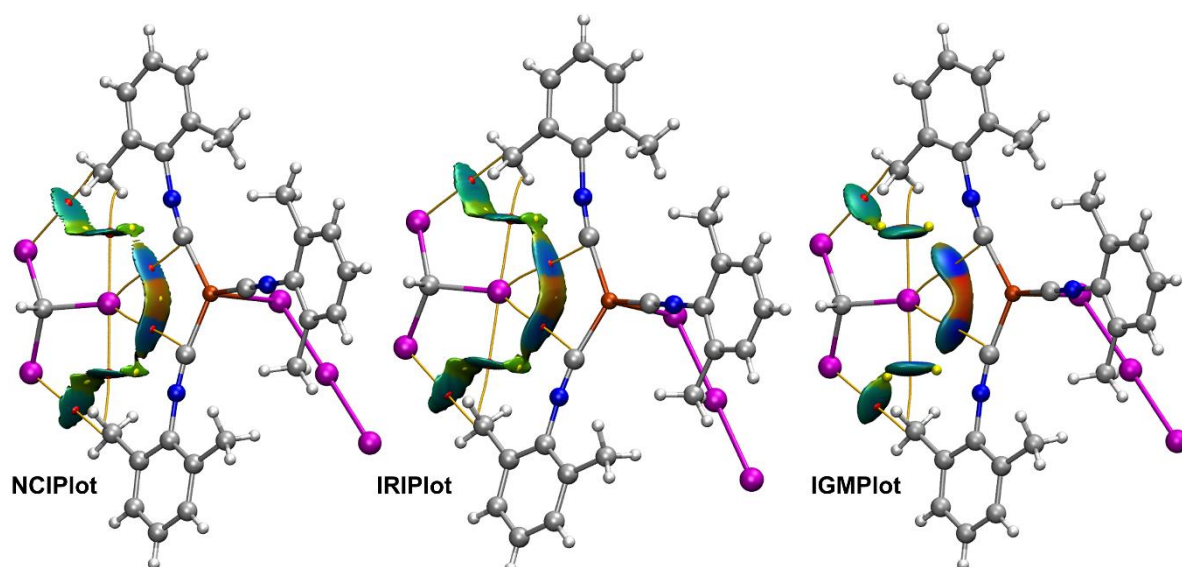


Figure S17. NCI (left), IRI (middle) and IGM (right) plots of the $[\text{Cu}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHI}_3$ dimer at the PBE0-D3/def2-TZVP level of theory. Color scale used for the two plots $-0.01 \text{ a.u.} \leq (\text{sign}\lambda_2)\rho \leq 0.01 \text{ a.u.}$

We used the intrinsic bond strength index (IBSI) to measure relative strength of the bifurcated HaBs. The intrinsic bond strength index (IBSI) proposed in ref. [27] has certain ability in characterizing strength of covalent bonds, however their ability to characterize noncovalent interaction is not proven yet. These calculations were carried out at the PBE0-D3/def2-TZVP level of theory and using the high-quality integration grid to increase the numerical accuracy. The δg values used in the equation to calculate the IBSI index were also calculated since it has been demonstrated that they correlate with bonding dissociation energies in covalent bonds. However, it is not clear if this correlation can be transferred to weak interactions. The IBSI and δg values for the $\text{Br}, \text{I} \cdots \text{C}$ and $\text{Br}, \text{I} \cdots \text{Cu}$ pairs are summarized in **Table S5**. In line with the energetic results, both the IBSI and atomic pair δg index values are larger for the $\text{I} \cdots \text{C}$ contacts, which are stronger energetically. Both parameters are smaller for the $\text{Br}, \text{I} \cdots \text{Cu}$ pairs, thus confirming that the interaction is basically with the C-atoms of the isocyano groups.

Table S5. δg , IBSI and IBSIW values for the $\text{Br}\cdots[\text{C}-\text{Cu}-\text{C}]$ and $\text{I}\cdots[\text{C}-\text{Cu}-\text{C}]$ contacts using the PBE0-D3/def2-TZVP wavefunction

Atom1	Atom2	Dist (Å)	δg	IBSI	IBSIW
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃]·CHBr ₃					
Br	Cu	3.9391	0.08127	0.01277	0.511671
Br	C(CN)	3.5854	0.09666	0.01833	0.750364
Br	C(CN)	3.5822	0.08835	0.01678	0.684239
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃]·CHI ₃					
I	Cu	3.8766	0.12047	0.01954	0.782569
I	C	3.5455	0.12615	0.02446	0.996742
I	C	3.5593	0.13557	0.02608	1.067231

Table S5 also reports the IBSIW (intrinsic bond strength index for weak interactions) This index may have stronger relation with noncovalent interaction strength than atom pair δg index. The IBSIW values of **Table S5** are in line with the IBSI ones and corroborate that the $\text{I}\cdots\text{C}$ contacts are the stronger than the $\text{Br}\cdots\text{C}$ ones. Moreover, the $\text{I}\cdots\text{C}$ and $\text{Br}\cdots\text{C}$ are the atomic pairs (apart from covalent bond) with higher δg , IBSI, and IBSIW values of all possible atoms pair combinations, thus confirming their crucial role in the stabilization of the supramolecular dimers.

Periodic calculations: comparison with cluster calculations

Since calculations with periodic boundary conditions (CP2K-8.1, PBE-D3/(DZVP/SZV)-SR-MOLOPT-GTH and for the isolated clusters (Gaussian-16, PBE0-D3/def2-TZVP) were performed in the different schemes and programs, the comparison is highly required. The QTAIM analysis was made for both *crystal* and *cluster* models, and parameters of electron density in (3, -1) BCPs of the most important noncovalent interactions were calculated (**Table S6**). Note that the models from both methodologies not only showed all required BCPs confirming the corresponding interactions, but also demonstrated almost the same ρ , $\nabla^2\rho$, V_r , and G_r values with the largest difference in $\nabla^2\rho$.

Table S6. QTAIM parameters (ρ , $\nabla^2\rho$, V_r , G_r in au) at the bond CPs of X \cdots C,I HaBs and H \cdots Cu HBs for *crystal* or *cluster* models of [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] \cdot CHBr₃ and [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃] \cdot CHI₃ (see **Figures 1** and **S5** for labelling).

Interaction	object	ρ	$\nabla^2\rho$	V_r	G_r
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHBr ₃					
Br2S \cdots C1	<i>cluster</i>	0.0050	0.0158	-0.0021	0.0030
	<i>crystal</i>	0.0049	0.0153	-0.0018	0.0028
Br2S \cdots C10	<i>cluster</i>	0.0050	0.0157	-0.0021	0.0030
	<i>crystal</i>	0.0049	0.0153	-0.0018	0.0028
Br3S \cdots I1	<i>cluster</i>	0.0105	0.0253	-0.0047	0.0055
	<i>crystal</i>	0.0099	0.0272	-0.0045	0.0057
Br1S \cdots I3	<i>cluster</i>	0.0110	0.0274	-0.0052	0.0060
	<i>crystal</i>	0.0105	0.0289	-0.0050	0.0061
H1S \cdots Cu1	<i>cluster</i>	0.0105	0.0240	-0.0058	0.0059
	<i>crystal</i>	0.0105	0.0281	-0.0055	0.0062
[CuI ₃ (CNXyl) ₃] \cdot CHI ₃					
I2S \cdots C1	<i>cluster</i>	0.0071	0.0195	-0.0031	0.0040
	<i>crystal</i>	0.0071	0.0195	-0.0028	0.0038
I2S \cdots C10	<i>cluster</i>	0.0070	0.0191	-0.0030	0.0039
	<i>crystal</i>	0.0069	0.0191	-0.0027	0.0037
I3S \cdots I1	<i>cluster</i>	0.0145	0.0294	-0.0066	0.0070
	<i>crystal</i>	0.0138	0.0301	-0.0062	0.0068
I1S \cdots I3	<i>cluster</i>	0.0143	0.0301	-0.0066	0.0071
	<i>crystal</i>	0.0139	0.0302	-0.0062	0.0068
H1S \cdots Cu1	<i>cluster</i>	0.0108	0.0255	-0.0061	0.0062
	<i>crystal</i>	0.0108	0.0294	-0.0059	0.0066

Although QTAIM can detect almost all noncovalent interactions, in some cases the following NCI analysis is required. Since the 3D visualization of NCI in *crystal* model is not as clear and convincing as for isolated clusters, the $\text{sign}(\lambda_2)\rho$ projections together with topological analysis of electron density were drawn for the most important C–X \cdots (C,C) interactions in both *crystal* and *cluster* models (**Figure S18**).

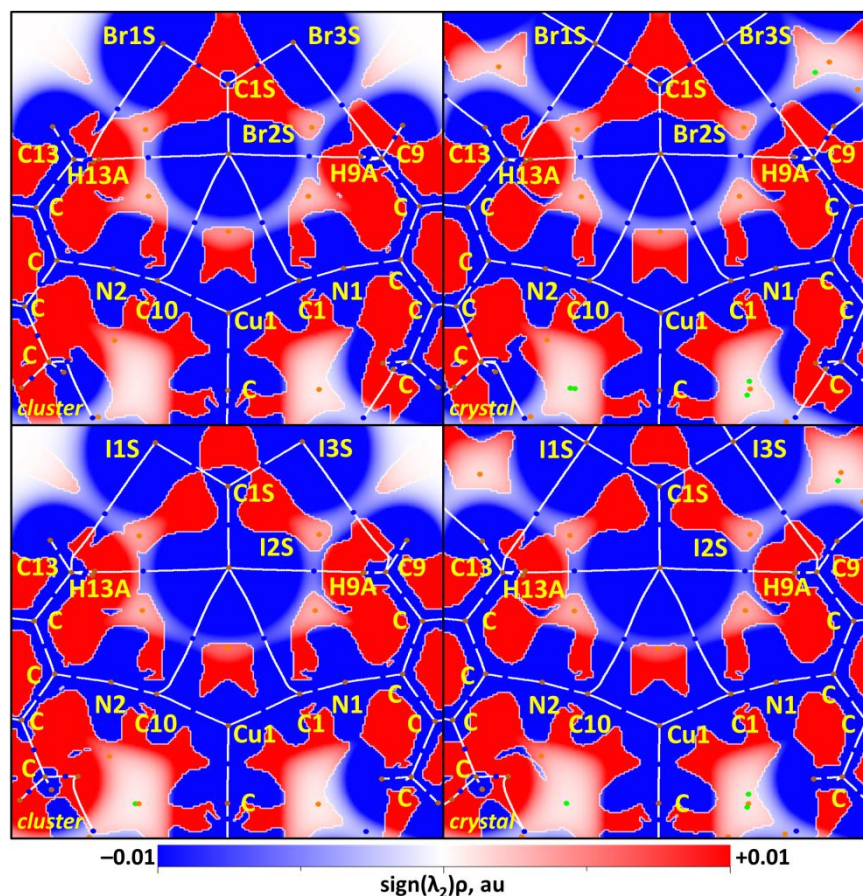


Figure S18. $\text{Sign}(\lambda_2)\rho$ projections and bond paths (white lines), bond CPs (blue dots), nuclear CPs (brown dots), ring CPs (orange dots), and cell CPs (green dots), for the C1S–X2S \cdots (C1,C10) HaBs in the cluster (left) and crystal (right) models of $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHBr}_3$ (upper) and $[\text{CuI}_3(\text{CNXyl})_3]\cdot\text{CHI}_3$ (lower).

The $\text{sign}(\lambda_2)\rho$ areas are blue (denoting attractive interaction) between the X-atom and the C-atoms of the $[\underline{\text{C}}-\text{Cu}-\underline{\text{C}}]$ core in all cases, coincident to the location of the BCPs. In contrast, a red colored areas are observed between the Cu center and the interacting X-atom or between X and N isocyanide atoms, denoting a repulsive interaction. Thus both *crystal* and *cluster* models confirmed the halogen-carbon-centered attractive interactions between haloform and isocyanide moieties.

The philicities of noncovalently interacting partners can be determined by electron localization function projections with critical points and bond paths from QTAIM electron density topology, which were drawn for both *crystal* and *cluster* models. In all cases, the X \cdots C bond paths lie down between two LPs areas of X atoms and passes through the C LP areas; the Cu–C coordination bond paths lie in the same areas. Note that the differences between ELF areas around X atoms in *cluster* and *crystal* models can be explained by exploring the large Goedecker–Teter–Hutter pseudopotentials in the latter cases, and only valent shells around X atoms were calculated. Nevertheless, the inspection of the ELF data proves the BHaB nature of

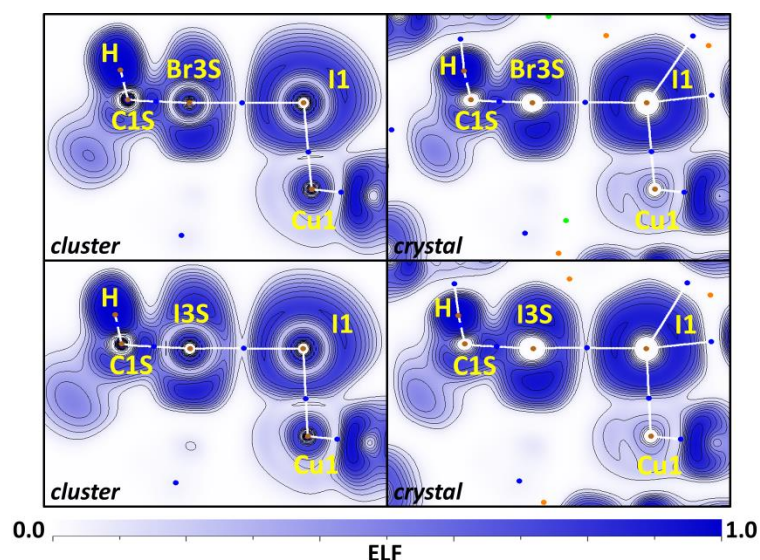


Figure S20. ELF projections (contour lines with 0.1 step) and bond paths (white lines), bond CPs (blue dots), nuclear CPs (brown dots), ring CPs (orange dots), and cell CPs (green dots), for the C1S–X3S⋯I1–Cu1 HaBs in the *cluster* (left) and *crystal* (right) models of [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃]·CHBr₃ (upper) and [CuI₃(CNXyl)₃]·CHI₃ (lower).

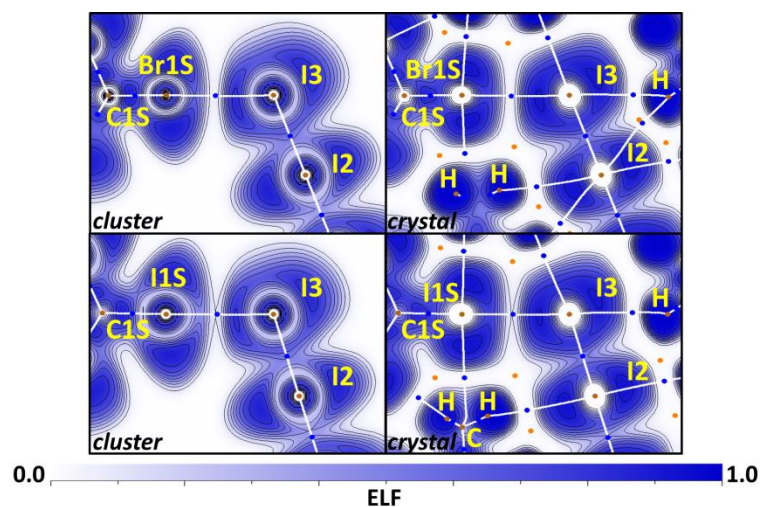


Figure S21. ELF projections (contour lines with 0.1 step) and bond paths (white lines), bond CPs (blue dots), nuclear CPs (brown dots), ring CPs (orange dots), and cell CPs (green dots), for the C1S–X1S⋯I3–I2 HaBs in the cocrystals.

Finally, overall electrophilicity of halomethane molecules toward complexes were confirmed by negative sums (−0.066 and −0.062 e for CHBr₃ and CHI₃, respectively) of halomethane RESP atomic charges in *crystal* models.

Calculations on models of $[\text{Na}(\text{Et}_2\text{O})][\text{Co}(\text{CO})(\text{CNAr})_3]$ and $\text{Na}_2[\text{Fe}(\text{CNAr})_4]$

The XRD structures of the sodium salts $[\text{Na}(\text{Et}_2\text{O})][\text{Co}(\text{CO})(\text{CNAr})_3]$ ($\text{Ar} = \text{C}_6\text{H}_3\text{-2,6-(C}_6\text{H}_2\text{-2,4,6-Me}_3)_2$) and $\text{Na}_2[\text{Fe}(\text{CNAr})_4]$ ($\text{Ar} = \text{C}_6\text{H}_3\text{-2,6-(C}_6\text{H}_2\text{-2,4,6-Me}_3)_2$) are very crowded and therefore the ligands were simplified and the minimalistic isocyanobenzene was used instead, in order to be able to visualize the $\text{Na}\cdots(\text{NC-M-CN})$ interaction in detail, which is the purpose of this study. Otherwise, a very complicated distribution of bond CPs and NCI/IRI/IGM plot isosurfaces appears that does not allow to envisage the noncovalent interactions.

In both models the QTAIM analysis shows a bond CP and bond path connecting the Na atom to the Co or Fe centers, thus disclosing the existence of $\text{Na}\cdots\text{M}$ ($\text{M} = \text{Co, Fe}$) interaction. The NCI (**Figure S22 a, c**), IRI (main text, **Figure 6**) and IGM (**Figure S22 b, d**) plots are quite similar, revealing a blue isosurface located between both metals and it originates from an attractive $\text{Na}\cdots\text{M}$ interaction. These analyses also indicate that the CN groups are mere spectators that are not involved in the $\text{Na}\cdots\text{M}$ interaction.

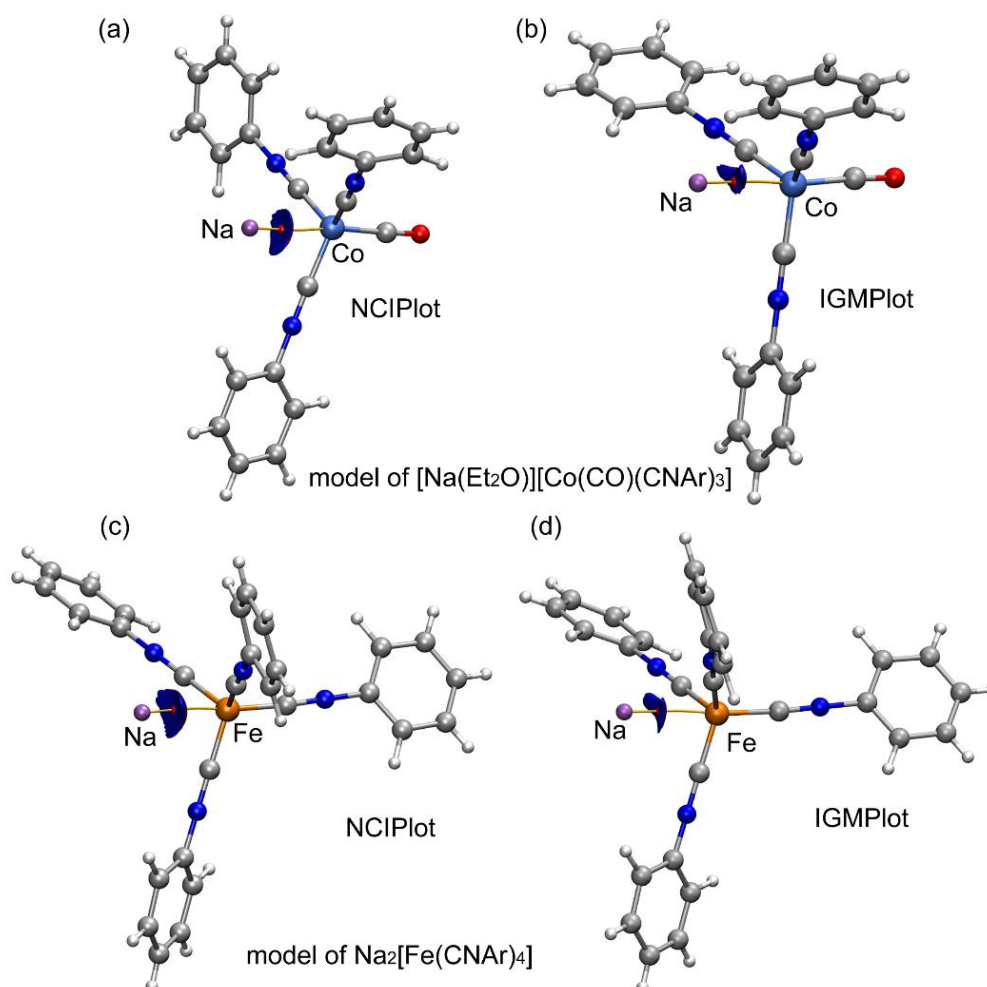


Figure S22. NCI (left) and IGM (right) plots of the reduced models of $[\text{Na}(\text{Et}_2\text{O})][\text{Co}(\text{CO})(\text{CNAr})_3]$ (top panel) $\text{Na}_2[\text{Fe}(\text{CNAr})_4]$ (bottom panel) at the PBE0-D3/def2-TZVP level of theory. Color scale used for the two plots $-0.01 \text{ a.u.} \leq (\text{sign}\lambda_2)\rho \leq 0.01 \text{ a.u.}$

The results gathered in **Figures S16–S17** and **S22** clearly demonstrate that the physical nature of the $(\mu_2\text{-X})\cdots(\text{NC-Cu-CN})$ interactions is totally different compared to that of the alkali metal cations, where the Na atom is connected to the Co/Fe metal center and the isosurface color is blue between the Na and the transition metal. It should be kept in mind that the main force in the alkali complexes is the electrostatic attraction between the cation and its anionic counterpart.

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