Acknowledgement

As for the end of all the great adventures, it is time for me to thank all the people that made these almost 5 years in Groningen an indelible experience.

Dear Syuzi, completing my PhD without your guidance would have been much harder. When I started in your group, I was a student with a lot of enthusiasm but not enough experience to support it. You have always found the right words to put me back on the right path and ultimately you taught me how to be an independent scientist. I will be always grateful for the opportunities you gave me. Thank you.

I would like to thank Prof. Otten for his help with crystallographic analysis (Chapters 3 and 4) and for being part of the reading committee together with Prof. Dekker and Prof. Alonso; your comments on my thesis were highly appreciated.

Many thanks to Peter, Monique and Theodora for their priceless support with NMR experiments, GC-MS, HPLC and HRMS analysis.

Thanks to staff members of the Stratingh Institute Alphons, Cristina, Hilda, Annette and Tineke for their immense kindness and their valuable support.

When I joined Syuzi’s group, not only I found a group of talented colleagues, but most important a group of fantastic people. Francesca, you were the first welcoming me in the group and your kindness and help in my first months of my PhD has been very important. Thanks a lot!

Soon after my arrival, new people arrived in the group and the “sublimations” process began! Ravi, Tilde, JuanFer, Mamen, Pablo, Simone, Rik, and Johnny we started as a very heterogeneous group and we grew up together building a solid friendship that goes beyond any distance. I have spent many precious moments with you guys and some of them will stay in my memory forever. I consider myself really lucky for having the chance to meet you and learn so many things from you. Despite life will put some distance between us, I am sure we will find a way to meet “each of us” again and I am looking forward for those moments.

Dear Ravi and Simone, thank you both for being my paranymphs. Your arrival in the group brought an unparalleled mixture of science and fun in and outside the lab. It has been a real pleasure having the chance to work with you!

To all the other people that are or have been part of our group: Xingchen, Yafei, Luo, Manas, Kiril, Alaric, Antonio, Eduarda, Bouke, Daan, Paula, Ilayda, Dima, Natasha, Emilio, Filip, Joost, Marieke, Renske, Daniël, Juaní, you are all great guys and I am glad to have meet you. I wish you all the best for your future!

As I often say and strongly believe, the faculty of Science and Engineering has a unique atmosphere, almost magical. The highly friendly and cooperative environment not only allows to achieve great scientific success, but also makes possible to build an almost endless network of friends from all over the World. This special feature can be summarized in a single word: THE BORREL! The borrel at Nijenborgh 4 is an appointment that people shouldn’t miss, a perfect way to finish a week of hard work putting aside the problems and relaxing with your friends over few beers (sometimes a little bit more than few). During those Fridays, I have built many funny
memories that I will always bring with me. Writing all the names of the people that I met in these 5 years spent at the RUG would take a lot of time and even more paper. I will just say that I am really glad that I met you even if for a short time. Thank you all for being part of one of the best period of my life.

Organizing a proper WorkWeek is always a challenge, but it is much easier when you work with skilful co-organiser like Dorus, Stella and Filippo. Thank you guys for the nice experience.

Special thanks to Prof. Wesley Browne and Clemens for helping me with the stellingen, to Rik for the translation of the Nederlandse samenwatting and to Manas for proof reading my thesis.

If at the work place I found many good friends, outside the Zernike campus I found a second family in the Italian community. When you arrive in a new country where you don't know almost anybody, nothing warm your heart more than be surrounded by people sharing your culture! I owe a big thank to you, Giulia! The help you provided me during these years and when I came for my interview has been priceless. I am glad that our friendship is a long lasting one!

To the other member of “Gabbia di Matti”: Fede, Elena, Eva, Michela, Francesco (all of them!), Nikolas, Silvia L, Silvia S, Marco, Stefano I, Stefano F., Sasà, Gabriele, Sara, Dems. Thank you for everything!!!

During the time spent in Groningen, I built a special relationship with the Greek community. Kostas, Despina, Ilias, Alex, Mimis, Evie, Fotis, thank you for the many funny moments and game-nights!

If I got so far, a good deal of credit goes to those people that shaped me as a chemist.

Dear Prof. Trombini, Prof. Lombardo, Arianna and Elisa, the time I spent in Bologna working in the lab with you has been amazing and I always remember it gladly. Special mention to Nicola for being such an excellent study-partner and friend!

Dear Prof. Barattucci, Elisa and Daria, it was an honour to be the first male student in the group and more important my bachelor internship with you was an amazing experience!

Finally, I want to thank my parents and my sister. It has been a long journey started long time ago, that brought me thousands of kilometres from home and none of this could have been possible without your continuous and unconditional support. Thank you from the bottom of my heart, I love you!