Enantioselective and Stereodivergent Synthesis of $\beta,\beta$-Diaryl-$\alpha$-Amino Acids

Significance: The $\beta,\beta$-diarylalanine core is a synthetically useful motif due to its prevalence in bioactive molecules. Merck process chemists demonstrate the elegant utility of asymmetric Rh-catalyzed hydrogenation to access such challenging structures.

Comment: The authors report a three-step sequence with potential access to all four stereoisomers of the $\beta,\beta$-diarylalanines. A difficult to achieve hydrogenation on a tetrasubstituted olefin was effected using Rh catalysis with a chiral Josiphos ligand.