

1 **Cell-type aware regulatory landscapes governing monoterpene indole alkaloid biosynthesis**
2 **in the medicinal plant *Catharanthus roseus***

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14
15 **Abstract**

16 In plants, the biosynthetic pathways of some specialized metabolites are partitioned into
17 specialized or rare cell types, as exemplified by the monoterpene indole alkaloid (MIA)
18 pathway of *Catharanthus roseus* (Madagascar Periwinkle), the source of the anti-cancer
19 compounds vinblastine and vincristine. In the leaf, the *C. roseus* MIA biosynthetic pathway is
20 partitioned into three cell types with the final known steps of the pathway expressed in the rare
21 cell type termed idioblast. How cell-type specificity of MIA biosynthesis is achieved is poorly
22 understood. Here, we generated single-cell multi-omics data from *C. roseus* leaves. Integrating
23 gene expression and chromatin accessibility profiles across single cells, as well as transcription
24 factor (TF) binding site profiles, we constructed a cell-type-aware gene regulatory network for
25 MIA biosynthesis. We showcased cell-type-specific transcription factors as well as cell-type-
26 specific *cis*-regulatory elements. Using motif enrichment analysis, co-expression across cell
27 types, and functional validation approaches, we discovered a novel idioblast specific TF
28 (Idioblast MYB1, CrIDM1) that activates expression of late stage vinca alkaloid biosynthetic
29 genes in the idioblast. These analyses not only led to the discovery of the first documented cell-
30 type-specific TF that regulates the expression of two idioblast specific biosynthetic genes within
31 an idioblast metabolic regulon, but also provides insights into cell-type-specific metabolic
32 regulation.

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36 Introduction

37 An emerging feature of plant specialized metabolism is the spatial and temporal restriction of
38 biosynthetic gene expression¹, some of which are confined to rare and specialized cells within
39 an organ². The medicinal plant *Catharanthus roseus* produces monoterpene indole alkaloids
40 (MIAs), including vinblastine and vincristine (also known as vinca alkaloids) that are clinically
41 used to treat various cancers³. The MIA biosynthetic pathway can be conceptually divided into
42 four stages: the methyl erythritol phosphate (MEP) pathway that provides the precursor to the
43 monoterpene moiety of MIAs, the iridoid stage that generates the monoterpene moiety of MIAs,
44 the alkaloid scaffolding stage, and finally the late alkaloid stage that further decorates MIA
45 (Supplementary Table 1). The MIA pathway genes in *C. roseus* display intricate cell-type
46 specific expression patterns. The MEP and iridoid stages of the pathway are exclusively
47 expressed in a specialized vasculature associated cell type, the inner phloem associated
48 parenchyma (IPAP)⁴⁻⁶. The alkaloid scaffolding steps are expressed in the epidermis^{4,5,7}, and the
49 final known steps of the pathway are restricted to a rare and specialized cell type termed idioblast
50^{7,8}, which are scattered throughout the leaf^{9,10}. In addition to its economic importance as the
51 source of chemotherapeutic medications, the intricate partitioning of the MIA pathway into
52 multiple cell types highlights *C. roseus* as a model system for investigating cell-type specific
53 regulation of plant specialized metabolism.

54
55 Several transcription factors (TFs) have been identified as regulators of the MIA biosynthetic
56 pathway in *C. roseus*^{11-17,17-20}, primarily in the context of jasmonate (JA)-induction of this
57 pathway. Major known regulators of the MIA pathway include MYC2^{14,20}, bHLH iridoid
58 synthesis (BIS) family TFs^{15,18,19}, and Octadecanoid-derivative Responsive Catharanthus AP2-
59 domain (ORCA) family TFs^{12,13,17,21}, all of which mediate JA induction of the MIA pathway.
60 However, since all currently available studies on transcriptional regulation of the MIA pathway
61 have relied on whole organ (bulk) samples, how the pathway is regulated at the cell type level
62 remains unknown. Furthermore, MYC2, BIS, and ORCA families TFs have been shown to
63 activate the pathway up to the alkaloid scaffolding stage of the pathway, and to date, no cell-
64 type-specific regulators for the late-stage portion of the pathway have been identified.

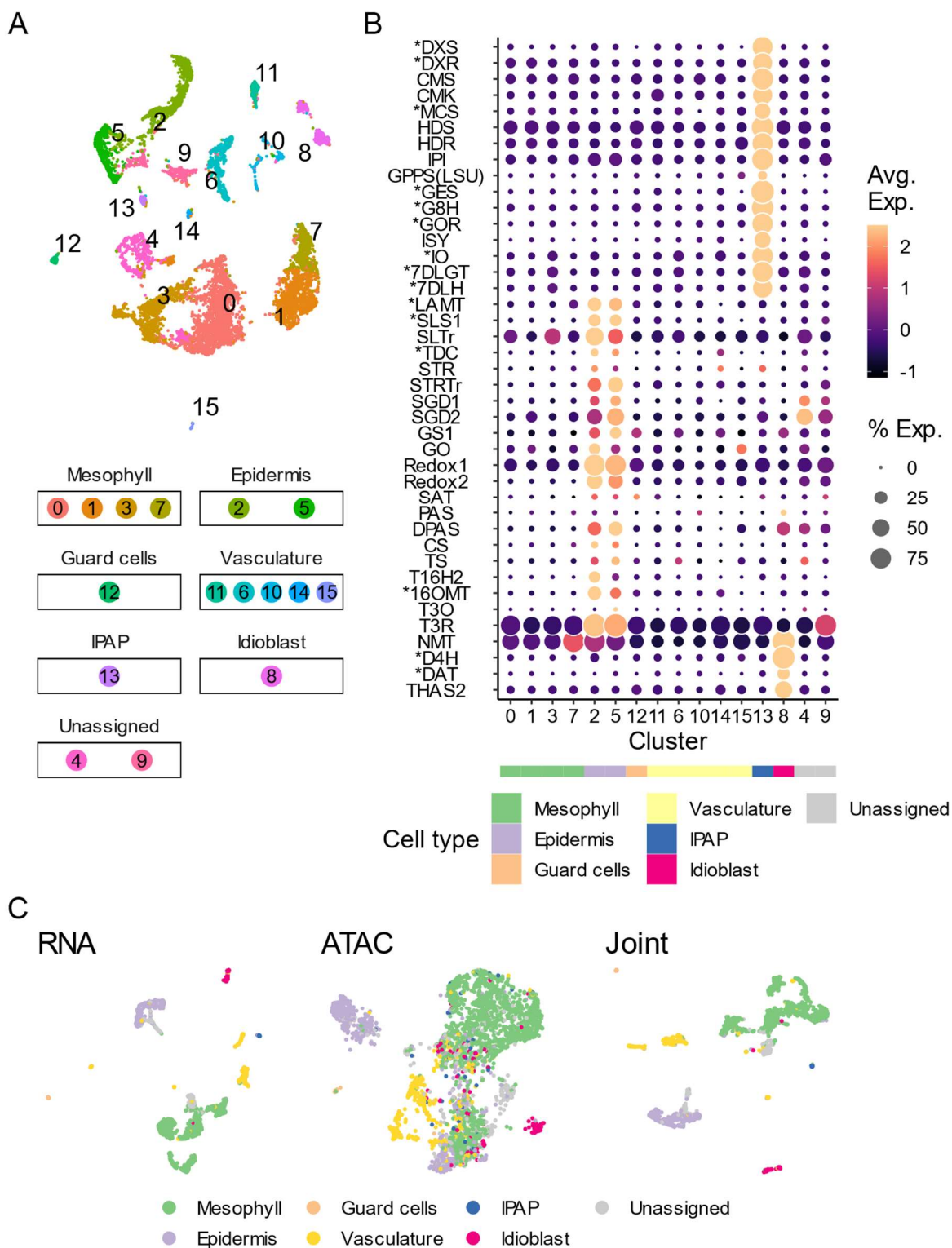
65
66 Here, we apply single cell multiome (gene expression and accessible chromatin profiles from the
67 same nucleus) to investigate the regulatory landscapes of the MIA biosynthetic pathway in
68 mature *C. roseus* leaves at the cell type level. Using co-expression across single cells,
69 transcription factor binding site (TFBS) profiles, and cell-type-aware TFBS accessibility, we
70 constructed a knowledge-based gene regulatory network (GRN) for this biosynthetic pathway.
71 Our analyses uncovered a new idioblast specific MYB TF that through functional genomics
72 approaches, we showed regulates the expression of two idioblast specific biosynthetic genes
73 which are co-regulated within an idioblast metabolic regulon. This study discovered a new
74 regulatory component pertinent to the final steps of vinblastine and vincristine biosynthesis in *C.*
75 *roseus* and furthers our understanding of cell-type-specific regulation of plant specialized
76 metabolism.

77 78 Results

79 1. The cell-type specific expression patterns of MIA biosynthetic genes are reflected in single
80 cell multiome profiles.

81
82 To investigate the regulation of MIA biosynthetic genes (Supplementary Table 1, Supplementary
83 Fig. 1A) at the single cell resolution, we generated dual gene expression and chromatin
84 accessibility profiles across single cells. We first isolated intact nuclei (Supplementary Fig. 1B-I)
85 from mature *C. roseus* leaves and constructed replicated single cell multiome (RNA-seq and
86 assay for transposase accessible chromatin followed by sequencing [ATAC-seq]) libraries using
87 the 10x Genomics Multiome Kit (Supplementary Table 2). For gene expression, we obtained
88 gene expression profiles for a total of 8,803 high quality nuclei and 18,532 expressed genes (Fig.
89 1A, Supplementary Fig. 2, Supplementary Table 3).

90
91 We first examined the gene expression data of this multiome dataset (Fig. 1A). Cell clustering
92 patterns are highly similar across the three biological replicates (Supplementary Fig. 3A). Using
93 previously established marker genes⁴⁻⁸ (Supplementary Table 4), we identified major cell types
94 of leaf (e.g., mesophyll, epidermis, and vasculature) as well as two rare cell types in which MIA
95 biosynthetic genes were expressed (i.e., IPAP and idioblast) (Supplementary Fig. 3B). Mesophyll
96 and epidermis were the most abundant cell types, accounting for 54% and 18% of assayed
97 nuclei, respectively. Consistent with their rare nature, IPAP and idioblast accounted for only 1%
98 and 4% of assayed nuclei, respectively (Supplementary Fig. 3C). We found that the MIA
99 biosynthetic pathway was organized into three discrete cell types (Fig. 1B). The MEP and iridoid
100 stages (up to 7-DLH, Supplementary Fig. 1A) of the pathway were exclusively expressed in the
101 IPAP cells. The following stage, which includes most of the alkaloid steps, was expressed in the
102 epidermis. Finally, the last four known steps of the pathway were only expressed in the idioblast.
103 The data were highly consistent with recently published single cell RNA-seq results using
104 protoplasts^{8,22} and were fully supported by previously reported RNA *in situ* hybridization results
105 (marked with asterisk)⁴⁻⁷.



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Fig. 1. Cell-type specific expression of MIA biosynthetic genes is recapitulated in a leaf single cell multiome dataset.

110 A. UMAP of nuclei containing high-quality RNA-seq data ($n = 8,803$), color coded by cell
111 clusters.

112
113 B. Gene expression heatmap of MIA biosynthetic genes across cell clusters detected in (A).
114 Rows are biosynthetic genes and transporters, which are ordered from upstream to downstream
115 (see also Supplementary Table 1). Asterisks denote matching cell type specificity with previously
116 reported RNA *in situ* hybridization results⁴⁻⁷. Color scale shows the average scaled expression
117 of each gene at each cell cluster. Dot size indicates the percentage of cells where a given gene is
118 detected. The predicted cell type for each cell cluster is annotated by the color strip below the x-
119 axis (see also Supplementary Fig. 3B and Supplementary Table 5).

120
121 C. UMAP of nuclei containing both high-quality RNA-seq and ATAC-seq data ($n = 3,542$ nuclei
122 for all three UMAP), color coded by cell types. From left to right: UMAP based on gene
123 expression assay, chromatin accessibility assay, and joint analysis.

124
125 We next proceeded to analyze chromatin accessibility data to investigate how biosynthetic genes
126 might be regulated to generate cell-type-specific expression patterns. For the chromatin
127 accessibility assay, high quality ATAC-seq nuclei have fraction of fragments in peaks > 0.25 ,
128 greater than 2,000 ATAC fragments per nuclei, and greater than 1,000 peaks per cell
129 (Supplementary Table 4), resulting in accessibility profiles for a total of 3,765 high quality nuclei
130 and 43,630 accessible chromatin peaks (Fig. 1C). We performed a joint analysis by matching the
131 cell barcodes from both assays. Matching 8,803 high quality nuclei from the RNA-seq assay with
132 3,765 high quality nuclei for the ATAC-seq assay, the joint analysis resulted in an intersecting set
133 of 3,542 nuclei containing both high-quality RNA-seq and ATAC-seq data (Fig. 1C).

134
135 2. A gene regulatory network for MIA biosynthetic genes integrating co-expression, chromosome
136 accessibility, and transcription factor binding site (TFBS) profiles.

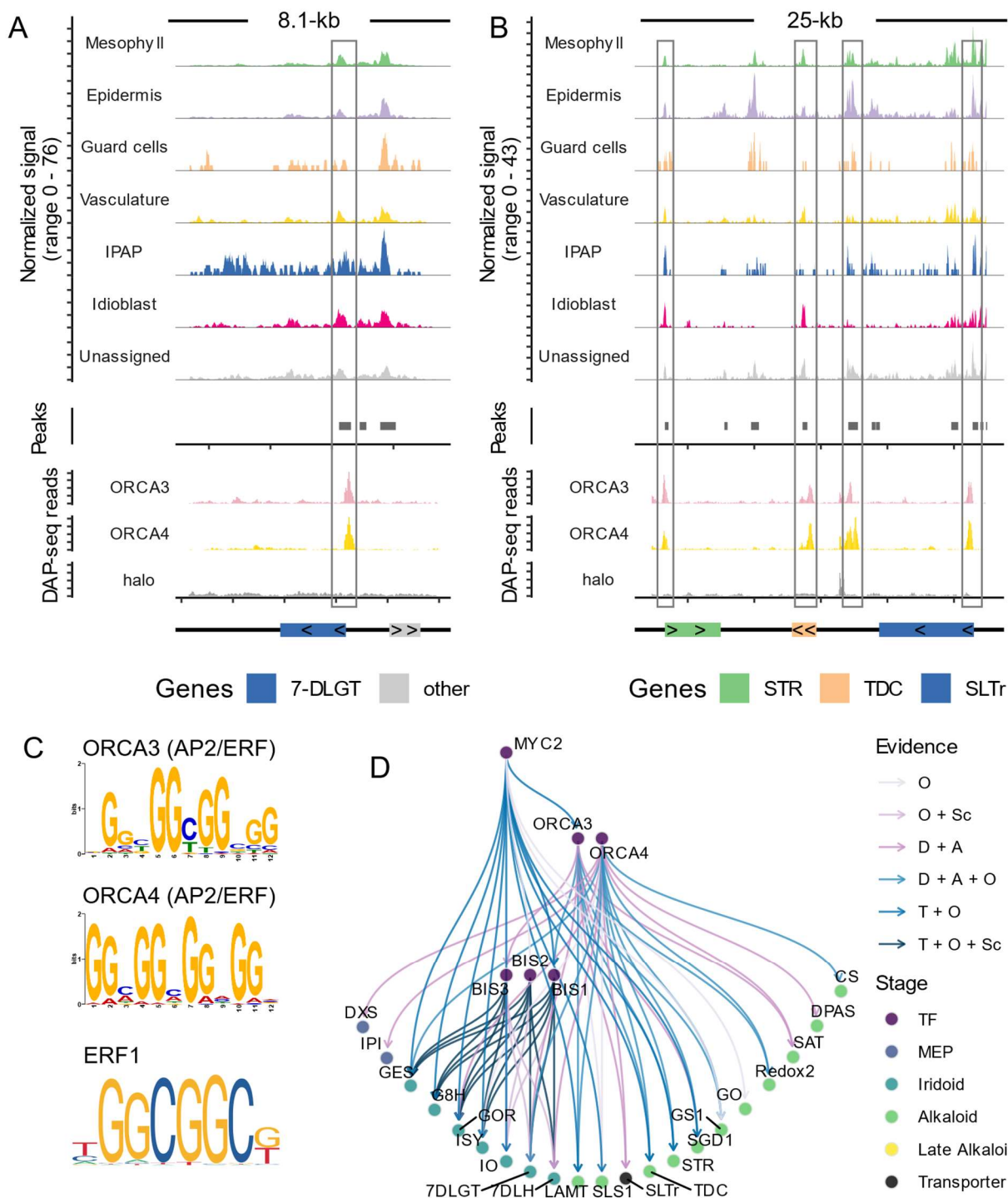
137
138 To investigate the regulation of MIA biosynthetic genes, we examined chromatin accessibility
139 landscapes across cell types. ATAC-seq fragments were highly enriched at transcription start and
140 end sites (Supplementary Fig. 4). Among the three biological replicates, 45.9%, 40.9%, and
141 41.3% of ATAC-seq fragments overlapped transcriptional start sites (Supplementary Fig. 4,
142 Supplementary Table 5). We then defined ATAC-seq peaks using MACS2²³; among biological
143 replicates, 48.9%, 48.5% and 48.8% of fragments are within ATAC-seq peaks (Supplementary
144 Fig. 5, Supplementary Table 5). The median length of ATAC-seq peaks was 566-bp
145 (Supplementary Fig. 6A). The chromatin accessibility landscapes were complemented with
146 transcription factor binding site (TFBS) profiles of ORCA3, a well-known master regulator of
147 MIA biosynthesis¹⁷, and its tandemly duplicated paralog ORCA4²¹ (Fig. 2A, B, Supplementary
148 Table 6). We determined TFBS profiles for ORCA3/4 using DNA affinity purification
149 sequencing (DAP-seq)²⁴. Average DAP-seq peak lengths were similar (~300-bp) between
150 ORCA3 and ORCA4 (Supplementary Fig. 6B, C) with ~10% of DAP-seq peaks intersecting
151 with ATAC-seq peaks (Supplementary Fig. 6D), consistent with the *in vitro* nature of the DAP-
152 seq assay²⁴. Signal-to-noise ratios at DAP-seq peaks were strong (Supplementary Fig. 6E, F,

153 Supplementary Table 6), comparable to the most high-quality DAP-seq datasets that have been
154 published ²⁴.

155
156 ORCA TFs are known to activate both the alkaloid steps of the biosynthetic pathway (e.g.,
157 Strictosidine Synthase [STR] and Tryptophan Decarboxylase [TDC]) ^{13,17} and the upstream
158 iridoid steps (e.g., 7-DLGT) ²¹. 7-DLGT is exclusively expressed in the IPAP cells (Fig. 1B) ⁸
159 and consistent with its expression specificity, the 7-DLGT locus has a unique chromatin
160 accessibility signal in IPAP cells at both 5' and 3' ends of the gene (Fig. 2A). Strong DAP-seq
161 peaks were observed for both ORCA3 and ORCA4 at the 7-DLGT locus, but not for the affinity-
162 tag control (Fig. 2A). These DAP-seq peaks also overlapped with an ATAC-seq peak that was
163 accessible across all cell types. Together with previously reported data that overexpression of
164 ORCA3 or ORCA4 led to the upregulation of 7-DLGT ²¹, 7-DLGT is a direct target of both
165 ORCA3 and ORCA4.

166
167 ORCA3 has been reported to bind to the promoters of STR and TDC and activate their
168 expression ^{17,21}. STR and TDC are physically clustered on chromosome 3, along with the
169 secologanin transporter SLTr ⁸. Multiple ATAC-seq peaks were detected within this 25-kb
170 biosynthetic gene cluster, all of which were accessible across multiple cell types (Fig. 2B).
171 ORCA3 and ORCA4 displayed similar binding profiles at this biosynthetic gene cluster. Each TF
172 binds a total of four DAP-seq peaks in this region. Consistent with STR and TDC being direct
173 targets of ORCA3, DAP-seq peaks were detected in the promoters of both STR and TDC.
174 ORCA4 has also been reported to activate both STR and TDC in overexpression assays ²¹, and
175 the presence of ORCA4 binding sites suggests ORCA4 can directly activate both STR and TDC.
176 Lastly, since binding sites for ORCA3/4 were detected at the promoter of Secologanin
177 Transporter (SLTr), and as SLTr is highly co-expressed with STR and TDC in the epidermis (Fig.
178 1B) ⁸, SLTr is likely a direct target for ORCA3/4 as well.

179
180 We performed *de novo* motif discovery ²⁵ to identify the DNA binding motifs of ORCA3/4. We
181 found that the GCC box motif was enriched among ORCA3/4 binding sites (Fig. 2C). The same
182 GCC box motif was detected regardless of whether we used all DAP-seq peaks as input or only
183 accessible DAP-seq peaks as input. The GCC box is recognized by ethylene responsive factors
184 (ERFs) (Fig. 2C) ²⁶ consistent with ORCA family TFs being within the broader AP2/ERF family.



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Fig. 2. A gene regulatory network for MIA biosynthetic genes integrating chromosome accessibility landscapes and transcription factor binding site profiles.

A-B. Coverage plot showing ATAC-seq (upper panels) and DAP-seq (lower panels) signals at the 7-DLGT locus (A) and STR-TCD-SLTr biosynthetic gene cluster (B). Grey boxes highlight

192 DAP-seq peaks that overlap with ATAC-seq peaks. Bottom track indicates the location and
193 length of genes, where the direction of carets (> or <) indicates the strand of a gene. Halo:
194 control DAP-seq experiment using the halo tag (affinity tag) alone.

195
196 C. DNA motifs enriched in ORCA3/4 binding sites, as well as a reference GCC box/ERF motif
197 ²⁷.

198
199 D. A GRN integrating multiple modules of omics data and experimental data. Each node is a
200 gene, color coded by the stage of the biosynthetic pathway. Each edge represents a regulatory
201 relationship, color coded by the type of evidence supporting it. O: upregulated when the TF is
202 overexpressed; Sc: co-expressed across single cells; D: overlapping or within 2-kb to a DAP-seq
203 peak; A: DAP-seq peak accessible; T: promoter activated in a transactivation assay. Gene
204 abbreviations are listed in Supplementary Table 1.

205
206 Integrating gene co-expression across single cells, TF binding sites, binding site chromatin
207 accessibility, as well as previously reported overexpression ^{14,21} and reporter transactivation data
208 ^{13,15,18,19}, we generated a knowledge-based gene regulatory network (GRN) for the MIA
209 biosynthetic pathway (Fig. 2D). We first queried the expression patterns of previously studied
210 TFs (Supplementary Table 7) ^{11-20,28,29} in our single cell dataset and found that only ORCA4 and
211 BIS1/2/3 displayed cell type specific expression patterns relevant to iridoid and alkaloid
212 biosynthetic genes (Supplementary Fig. 7A). BIS1/2/3 were expressed specifically in the IPAP
213 cells, highly concordant with the iridoid biosynthetic genes that they regulate (Fig. 1B). ORCA4,
214 but not ORCA3, was expressed specifically in the epidermis, albeit only in a small fraction of
215 cells. Thus, ORCA4, but not ORCA3, may contribute to the epidermal specific expression of
216 alkaloid biosynthetic genes such as STR, TDC, and SLTr (Fig. 2B). All other TFs reported in the
217 literature to be associated with MIA biosynthesis were expressed broadly across cell types, or
218 were not expressed in IPAP, epidermis, or idioblast cells (Supplementary Fig 7A).

219
220 Based on their co-expression with target genes at the cell type level, BIS1/2/3 and ORCA4 were
221 selected as TF nodes for the GRN. Co-overexpression of MYC2 and ORCA3 was previously
222 reported to strongly activate the iridoid and alkaloid stages of the pathway ¹⁴, and thus MYC2
223 and ORCA3 were also included in this network (Fig. 2D). The gene regulatory network contains
224 66 edges (Supplementary Table 8), which were decorated by the types of evidence: 1) activated
225 by overexpression of TF, 2) co-expressed at the single cell level, 3) overlapping or within 2-kb of
226 a DAP-seq peak, 4) DAP-seq peak accessible, and 5) promoter activated in a transactivation
227 assay (Fig. 2D). We found that the combined actions of MYC2, ORCA3/4, and BIS1/2/3 activate
228 a large section of the MIA pathway, up to the biosynthetic gene encoding Catharanthine
229 Synthase. Evidence also supported multiple feed-forward regulatory loops, where an upstream
230 TF activates both downstream TFs and biosynthetic genes. The downstream TFs in turn activate
231 the same target biosynthetic genes. For example, ORCA3/4 activates iridoid and alkaloid
232 biosynthetic genes, as well as BIS TFs that in turn activate iridoid biosynthetic genes. However,
233 we also found that no regulatory relationships were detected beyond Catharanthine Synthase for
234 these six TFs, consistent with previous reports where overexpression of MYC2, ORCA, and/or

235 BIS TFs led to an increase in early-stage alkaloid metabolites (e.g., strictosidine), but not late-
236 stage alkaloid such as vinblastine^{14,21}. These observations prompted us to investigate
237 components involved in the regulation of the late MIA pathway.

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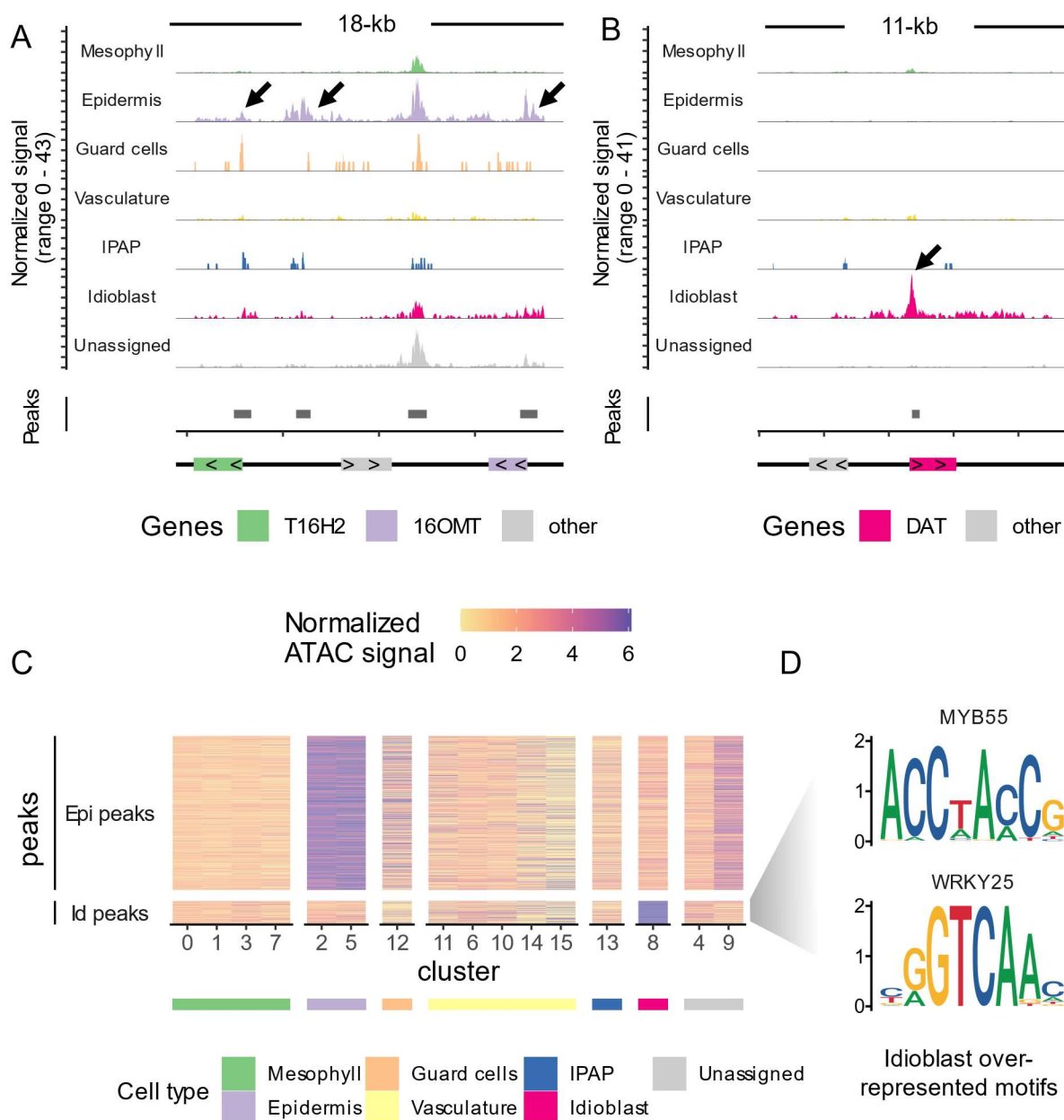
239 3. Cell-type specific accessible chromatin regions mark late-stage MIA biosynthetic genes.

240

241 MIA biosynthetic pathway genes downstream of Catharanthine Synthase are sequentially
242 expressed in epidermis (TS, T16H2, 16OMT, T3O, and T3R) and then in idioblast cells (NMT,
243 D4H, DAT, and THAS2) (Fig. 1B, Supplementary Table 1)^{7,8}. T16H2 and 16OMT are
244 consecutive steps of the late MIA pathway, expressed exclusively in the epidermis (Fig. 1B), and
245 physically linked as a biosynthetic gene cluster (Fig. 3A), between which there is another gene
246 encoding a cytochrome P450 that was not expressed in the leaf. At the T16H2/16OMT locus,
247 there are four ATAC-seq peaks. All but one of the peaks were preferentially accessible in the
248 epidermis, consistent with the cell-type specific expression of this gene pair (Fig. 3A). DAT, one
249 of the final known steps of the MIA pathway, is only expressed in the idioblast (Fig. 1B), and its
250 promoter was also specifically accessible in the idioblast (Fig. 3B).

251

252 To identify novel regulators for late-stage MIA biosynthetic genes downstream of Catharanthine
253 Synthase, we first detected epidermis and idioblast marker peaks, which are ATAC-seq peaks
254 preferentially accessible in the epidermis or idioblast, but not in any other cell types (Fig. 3C,
255 Supplementary Table 9). We detected 1,050 epidermis-marker peaks and 163 idioblast marker
256 peaks. We next performed a motif enrichment analysis on epidermis marker peaks against the
257 JASPAR plant TF binding motif collection²⁷. We found that homeodomain, ERF, and MYB
258 motifs were overrepresented among epidermis marker peaks (Supplementary Fig. 7B).
259 Homeodomain (e.g., ANTHOCYANINLESS2/ANL2³⁰), AP2/ERF (e.g., WAX INDUCER1³¹),
260 and MYB TFs (e.g., WEREWOLF³²) have been reported to control metabolic and
261 developmental processes such as anthocyanin biosynthesis, cuticle development, and trichome
262 development, respectively. Enrichment of these motifs suggests that additional TFs in the
263 homeodomain, ERF, or MYB families may play a role in the regulation of MIA biosynthesis in
264 the epidermis. We also performed motif enrichment analysis on idioblast marker peaks and found
265 that MYB and WRKY type motifs were overrepresented (Fig. 3C), for which we followed up
266 with additional analyses and experiments.



267
 268 **Fig. 3. Cell-type specific accessible chromatin regions mark late-stage MIA biosynthetic**
 269 **genes.**
 270
 271 A-B. Coverage plot showing ATAC-seq signals at the T16H2-16OMT gene pair (A) and
 272 DAT
 locus (B). Arrows highlight cell-type specific ATAC-seq peaks. Bottom track indicates the
 273 location and length of genes, where the direction of carets (> or <) indicates the strand of a gene.
 274 Grey boxes along the “Peaks” track represent ATAC-seq peaks.
 275
 276 C. Heat map showing accessibility of epidermis (Epi) and idioblast (Id) ATAC-seq marker peaks
 277 across cell clusters. Each row is an ATAC-seq peak (see also Supplementary Table 9). Each

278 column is a cell cluster. Color scale is maxed out at 90th percentile of normalized ATAC-seq
279 signal. The predicted cell type for each cell cluster is annotated by the color strip below the x-
280 axis (see also Supplementary Fig. 3B).

281

282 D. TF binding motifs overrepresented among idioblast marker peaks. For motifs overrepresented
283 among epidermis marker peaks, see Supplementary Fig. 7B.

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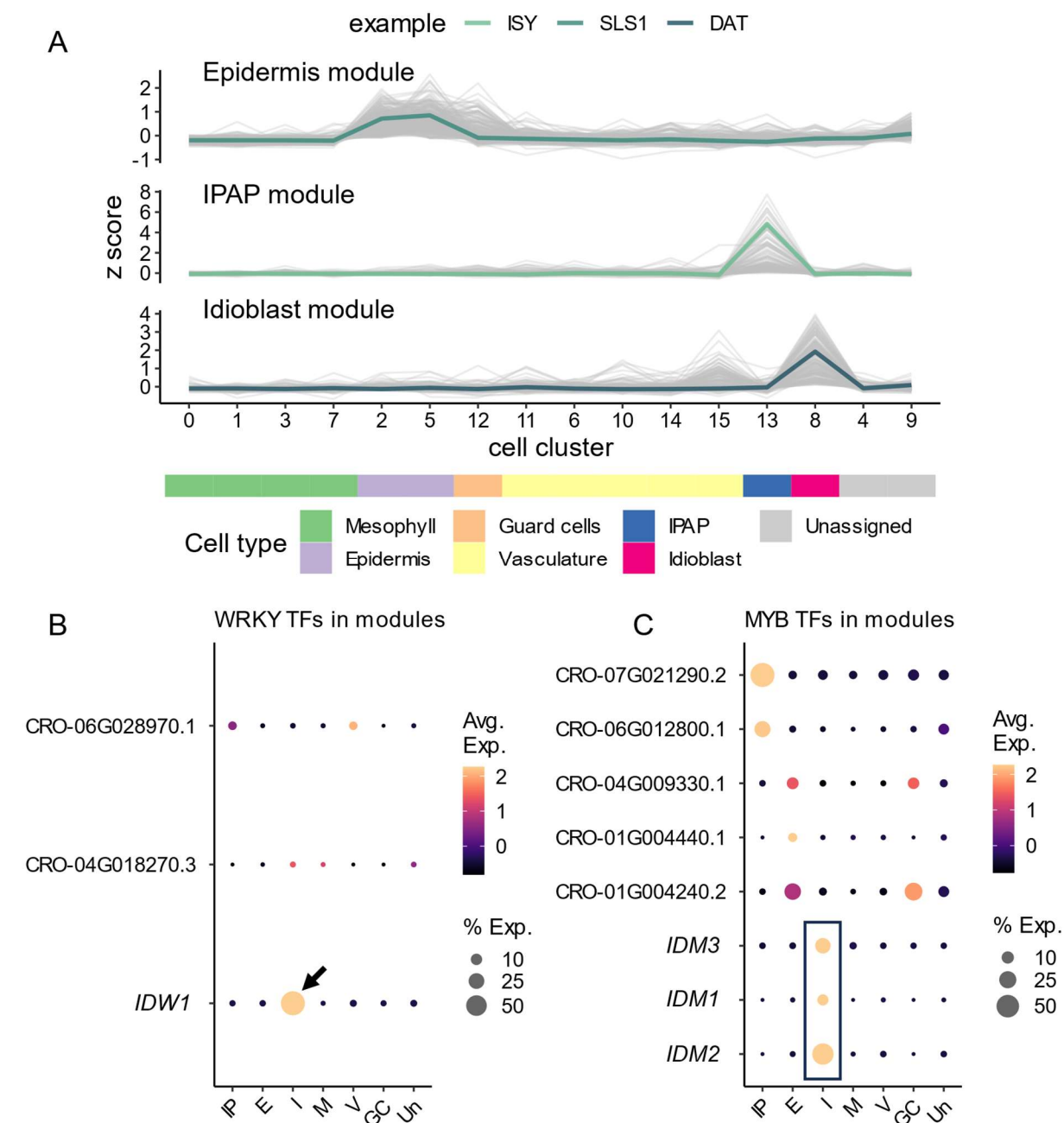
285 4. Candidate WRKY and MYB TFs specifically expressed in the idioblast discovered by gene 286 co-expression analysis.

287

288 To further understand gene regulation in idioblast cells, we focused our attention on potential
289 metabolic regulators in the idioblast. We performed gene co-expression analysis across cell
290 clusters using graph-based clustering³³ and detected tightly co-expressed modules (Fig. 4A). We
291 queried co-expression modules containing MIA biosynthetic genes and detected a single co-
292 expression module for epidermis, IPAP, and idioblast, respectively (Supplementary Table 10).
293 For example, SLS1, which was specifically expressed in the epidermis, was a member of the
294 epidermis co-expression module, whereas the final known steps of the pathway, namely NMT,
295 D4H, DAT, and THAS2 were all members of the idioblast co-expression module (Fig. 4A,
296 Supplementary Table 10). The partitioning of MIA biosynthetic genes into three distinct co-
297 expression modules is similar to a co-expression network constructed from single cell RNA-seq
298 data generated from protoplasts⁸.

299

300 Since WRKY and MYB motifs were overrepresented among idioblast ATAC-seq marker peaks,
301 we queried WRKY and MYB family TFs within the gene co-expression modules. We identified a
302 single WRKY TF (Fig. 4B) as well as three strong candidates of R2-R3 MYB TFs (Fig. 4C) that
303 were exclusively expressed in the idioblast. We named these candidates *Idioblast WRKY1*
304 (*IDW1*) and *Idioblast MYB1/2/3* (*IDM1/2/3*), respectively. All four candidates were induced by a
305 methyl-jasmonate treatment³⁴ (Supplementary Fig. 7C), among which *IDM1* displayed the
306 highest level of induction ($\log_2FC = 5.4$, or 42-fold increase over control). Since the entire
307 vinblastine biosynthetic pathway is elicited by methyl-jasmonate^{17,18}, the MeJA-responsiveness
308 displayed by these TF candidates suggests they might be transcriptional activators of the
309 pathway. A recent study applied fluorescence activated cell sorting to enrich for idioblast cells
310 prior to RNA-seq³⁵. Consistent with their idioblast specificity, all four TF candidates were
311 detected at high levels in the idioblast fraction of sorted cells, but not in the mesophyll fraction
312 (Supplementary Fig. 7D).



313
 314 **Fig. 4. Gene co-expression analysis across cell clusters discovered candidate WRKY and**
 315 **MYB TFs specifically expressed in the idioblast.**
 316

317 A. Line graphs showing expression patterns of genes in the epidermis, IPAP, and idioblast co-
 318 expression modules (Supplementary Table 10). Grey lines are individual genes, and colored lines
 319 are exemplary biosynthetic genes in each module. The predicted cell type for each cell cluster
 320 is annotated by the color strip below the x-axis (see also Supplementary Fig. 3B).
 321

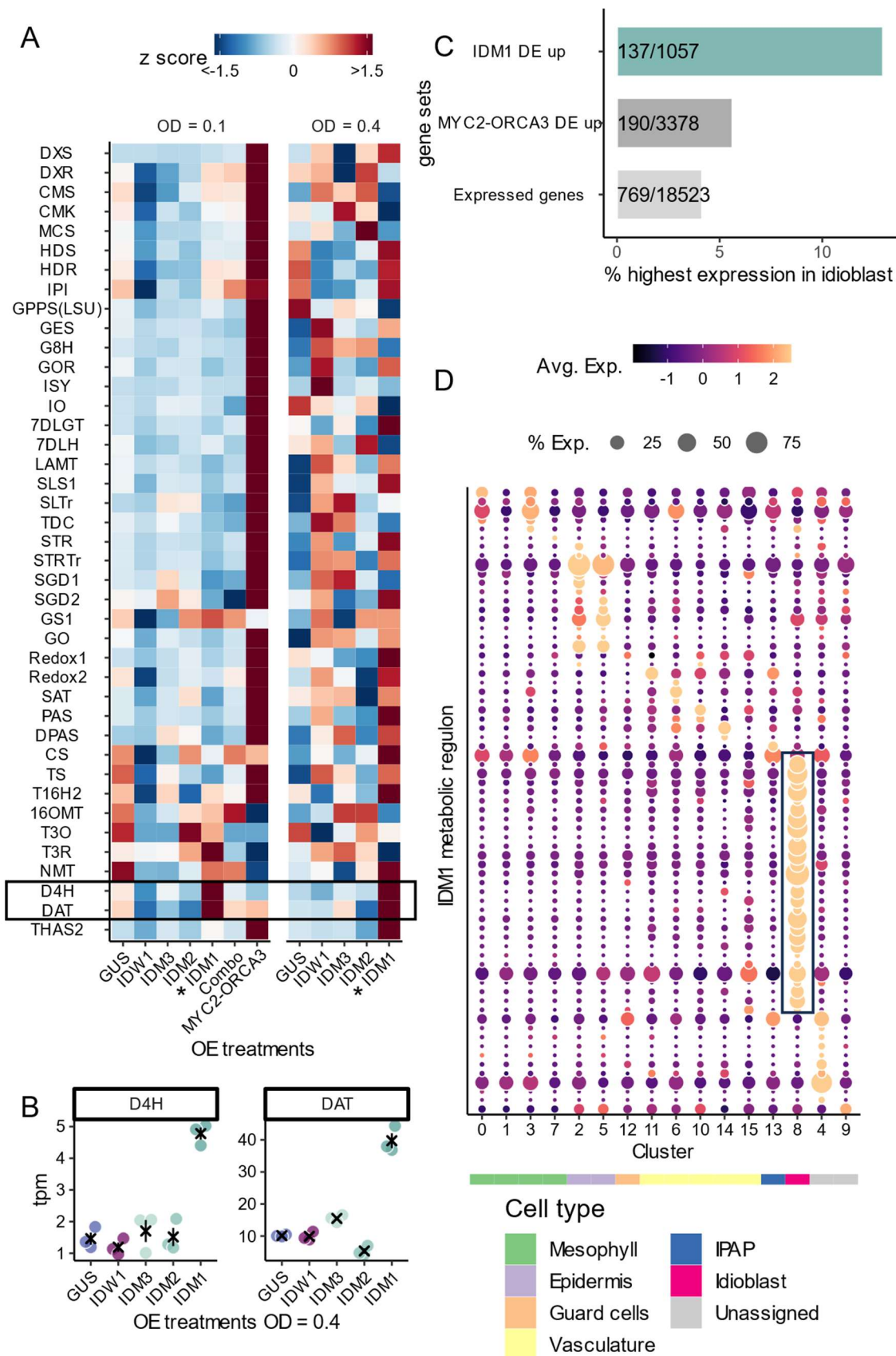
322 B-C. Gene expression heatmap of WRKY TFs (B) and MYB TFs (C) across cell types. Color
323 scales show the average scaled expression of each gene for each cell type. Dot size indicates the
324 percentage of cells where a given gene is detected in each cell type. Only WRKY and MYB TFs
325 detected in epidermis, IPAP, or idioblast co-expression modules are presented. Arrow indicates a
326 single WRKY candidate (IDW1: CRO_03G000120) specifically expressed in the idioblats. Box
327 highlights three MYB candidates (IDM1: CRO_05G006800, IDM2: CRO_04G033370, IDM3:
328 CRO_07G002170) specifically expressed in the idioblast.

329
330 To investigate the phylogenetic relationship among the three MYB candidates, we performed
331 genome-wide identification of MYB domain proteins³⁶ in the *C. roseus* genome⁸ and detected
332 92 MYB domain proteins (Supplementary Fig. 8 and Supplementary Fig. 9). We aligned the
333 MYB domains from MYB TFs to produce a phylogeny that includes *C. roseus*, the model
334 species *Arabidopsis thaliana*, *Solanum lycopersicum* (tomato), and *Solanum tuberosum* (potato)
335 MYBs (Supplementary Fig. 8). Tomato and potato MYBs were included to distinguish
336 Solanaceae-specific MYBs against Asterids-specific (encompassing Apocynaceae species that
337 include *C. roseus* and Solanaceae species) MYBs. We found that the three *IDM* candidates were
338 not closely related to each other (Supplementary Fig. 9). Their MYB domains are more similar to
339 MYB TFs in other species than to each other, although they share the same expression pattern.
340 Notably, IDM1 is outgroup to a clade that contains multiple *Arabidopsis* MYBs that belong to
341 two subclades. One subclade contained MYBs that control trichome and root hair development
342 (MYB0 (GLABRA 1), MYB23, and MYB66 (WEREWOLF))^{30,37,38}, whereas the other subclade
343 is involved in the regulation of anthocyanin biosynthesis (MYB113/114, MYB75, and MYB90)
344^{39,40}. IDM2 is outgroup to a clade that contains two less well-characterized *Arabidopsis* MYBs,
345 MYB6 and MYB8⁴¹. Lastly, IMD3, along with two other *C. roseus* MYBs, is sister to a clade
346 containing *Arabidopsis* MYB123 (TRANSPARENT TESTA 2/TT2)⁴², which is involved in
347 proanthocyanidin biosynthesis in the *Arabidopsis* seed coat (Supplementary Fig. 9).

348 349 5. IDM1 directly activates the expression of D4H and DAT.

350
351 To test the functions of IDW1 and IDM1/2/3, we performed overexpression assays followed by
352 RNA-seq to investigate whether overexpression of these TFs affect the expression of the MIA
353 biosynthetic pathway. Coding sequences of *IDW1* and *IDM1/2/3* were cloned downstream of the
354 35S promoter. The overexpression vectors were transformed into *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* and
355 infiltrated into *C. roseus* petals. In our experience, *C. roseus* petals are much more amenable to
356 agrobacterium-mediated transient expression than leaves, and a highly efficient protocol has
357 been established for petals²¹. For these reasons, petals were used for transient overexpression
358 assays, instead of leaves. We used GUS as a negative control, as infiltrating agrobacterium
359 affects the expression of the pathway. As a positive control, an engineered MYC2 TF¹⁴ and
360 ORCA3¹⁷ were co-infiltrated which have been previously shown to strongly activate the MIA
361 pathway¹⁴. The MYC2 coding sequence was previously engineered to carry the D126N
362 mutation, such that it could no longer be post-translationally repressed by the JAZ repressor
363 protein. A combined overexpression treatment of IDW1 and IDM1/2/3 was also tested; a total of
364 seven treatments including controls were assayed.

365
366 We performed infiltrations at two agrobacterium titers, 0.1 optical density (OD) and 0.4 OD
367 which is the highest titer that can be used without resulting in wilting of the petals after
368 infiltration (see also Methods). Using triplicated overexpression treatments at 0.1 OD
369 (Supplementary Fig. 10A, Supplementary Table 2), we found that the MYC2-ORCA3 positive
370 control strongly activates the MIA pathway up to the DPAS step (Fig. 5A), consistent with
371 previous reports that these known regulators do not activate later-stage biosynthetic genes
372 downstream of Catharanthine Synthase (Fig. 2D)¹⁴. We discovered that one of the MYB
373 candidates, IDM1, activated the expression of both D4H and DAT (Fig. 5A), resulting in a 2.8-
374 fold and 1.68-fold increase in expression relative to the GUS control, respectively. All other
375 overexpression treatments, including the combination of all candidates, did not activate the
376 pathway relative to the GUS control (Fig. 5A). Encouraged by the initial result for IDM1, we
377 examined gene expression profiles at 0.4 OD (Supplementary Fig. 10B, Supplementary Table 2).
378 To control for batch-to-batch variation between experiments, independent GUS controls were
379 included across both 0.1 OD and 0.4 OD experiments (Fig. 5A).
380 We found that IDM1 continued to activate both D4H and DAT at 0.4 OD (Fig. 5A, B), resulting
381 in even higher fold changes (3.2-fold and 3.9-fold increase relative to GUS control of the
382 corresponding experiment, respectively).



384 **Fig. 5. Idioblast MYB1 (IDM1) activates the expression of D4H and DAT, as well as an**
385 **idioblast-specific transcriptional program.**

386
387 A. Gene expression heatmap of the MIA biosynthetic genes across overexpression treatments.
388 Each row is a biosynthetic gene or transporter, ordered from upstream to downstream. Color
389 scale represents scaled expression (z score). Combo: the combinatory treatment in which IDW1
390 and IDM1/2/3 are co-infiltrated.

391
392 B. Mean separation plots showing expression levels of D4H and DAT (in units of transcripts per
393 million) in the 0.4 OD treatments. Each data point is a biological replicate. Error bars represent
394 average and standard error. Black × indicates average.

395
396 C. Bar graph showing percentage of genes that are most highly expressed in the idioblast.
397 Expressed genes: all 18,523 expressed genes in this single cell multiome dataset. MYC2-
398 ORCA3: 3,378 differentially expressed genes that are upregulated in the MYC2-ORCA3
399 overexpression treatment. IDM1: 1,057 differentially expressed genes that are upregulated in the
400 0.4 OD overexpression IDM1 treatment.

401
402 D. Gene expression heatmap of IDM1 metabolic regulon (see also Supplementary Table 11).
403 Color scale shows the average scaled expression of each gene at each cell cluster. Dot size
404 indicates the percentage of cells where a given gene is detected. The predicted cell type for each
405 cell cluster is annotated by the color strip below the x-axis. Box highlights genes specifically
406 expressed in the idioblast.

407
408 In addition to D4H and DAT, we found that genes differentially upregulated by IDM1 were
409 enriched for idioblast expression (Fig. 5C). Among all 18,523 expressed genes in the single cell
410 multiome dataset, only 769 (4% of 18,523) were most highly expressed in the idioblast.
411 Similarly, among 3,378 differentially upregulated genes in the MYC2-ORCA3 treatment, 190
412 (5.6% of 18,523) were most highly expressed in the idioblast. In contrast, among 1,057
413 differentially upregulated genes in the IDM1 treatment at 0.4 OD, 137 (13% of 1,057) were most
414 highly expressed in the idioblast, representing a 3.3-fold enrichment over the background of all
415 expressed genes ($p < 2.2 \times 10^{-16}$, χ -squared test). IDM1 also activated IDW1 and IDM2/3, the
416 three other idioblast specific WRKY and MYB TF candidates described above (Supplementary
417 Fig. 10C). Gene set enrichment analyses revealed that, similar to MYC2-ORCA3, IDM1
418 upregulated genes were enriched for gene families relevant to specialized metabolism
419 (transporters, cytochrome P450s, alcohol dehydrogenases, and 2-OG-dependent oxygenases).
420 For example, among all expressed genes, 0.27% of them are annotated as alcohol
421 dehydrogenases, whereas 0.65% and 1.3% of MYC2-ORCA3 and IDM1 upregulated genes were
422 annotated as alcohol dehydrogenase, respectively. These IDM1 upregulated genes that are
423 potentially relevant to specialized metabolism were designated as the IDM1 metabolic regulon (n
424 = 61 genes, Supplementary Table 11). We found that 44% (27/61) of the IDM1 metabolic
425 regulon were specifically expressed in the idioblast (Fig. 5D), more than 10-fold enrichment over
426 the background of all expressed genes (background = 4% of 18,523 expressed genes, $p < 2.2 \times$

427 10^{-16} , χ -squared test). Taken together, these observations suggest IDM1 regulates an idioblast
428 specific transcriptional program, which includes the MIA biosynthetic genes D4H and DAT, as
429 well as other gene families potentially involved in natural product biosynthesis.

430
431 We next tested whether IDM1 could directly activate the expression of D4H and DAT using
432 reporter transactivation assays (Supplementary Fig. S11-12). We first confirmed that IDM1 is
433 localized to the nucleus (Supplementary Fig. S11A-D). To construct reporters, we fused
434 accessible chromatin regions upstream of DAT (Fig. 3B) and D4H (Supplementary Fig. 11E) to a
435 minimal 35S promoter driving an DsRed reporter. On the same plasmid, a GFP internal control
436 was included, which is driven by the constitutive Arabidopsis UBQ1 promoter (Supplementary
437 Fig. 11F). We then performed the transactivation assay by co-infiltrating an agrobacterium strain
438 carrying 35S:IDM1 (Supplementary Fig. 11G) and a strain carrying the reporter construct for
439 either DAT or D4H. We observed conspicuous DsRed⁺ cells in infiltrated petals for both DAT
440 and D4H reporters (Supplementary Fig. 12A, B, E, F). In contrast, no DsRed⁺ cells in petals
441 could be observed when either reporter was infiltrated alone (Supplementary Fig. 12C, D, G, H).
442 These observations were confirmed by pixel intensity quantifications using ImageJ⁴³. High red
443 to green pixel intensity ratio was only detected when 35S:IDM1 and one of DAT or D4H
444 reporters were co-infiltrated (Supplementary Fig. 12I). In contrast, low red to green ratio was
445 detected when the reporter was infiltrated without 35S:IDM1. IDM1 could not transactivate a
446 reporter construct that did not contain the DAT or D4H accessible chromatin regions
447 (Supplementary Fig. 12J-O), which was confirmed by pixel intensity quantifications
448 (Supplementary Fig. 12I). Taken together, these results strongly suggest that IDM1 is a direct
449 activator of D4H and DAT, and the idioblast specific expression of IDM1 contributes to the
450 idioblast specific expression of D4H and DAT.

451 452 **Discussion**

453 The cell-type-specific expression patterns of MIA biosynthetic genes in *C. roseus* are well
454 documented^{5,7,8}. In this study, using single cell multi-omics datasets, we discovered the first
455 reported idioblast specific TF (CrIDM1) that regulates late-stage vinblastine biosynthetic genes
456 (D4H and DAT). Although several TFs that regulate MIA biosynthesis have been characterized
457^{11-20,28,29}, how the exquisite cell-type specific regulation is achieved for this pathway remains
458 unclear. We generated the first single cell multiome dataset for *C. roseus* leaves to investigate
459 gene regulation of the MIA pathway at single cell resolution. Not only did we recapitulate the
460 cell-type specific expression pattern of the pathway, but we also catalogued a dictionary of *cis*-
461 regulatory elements associated with MIA biosynthetic genes. We showed that among previously
462 studied TFs pertinent to the MIA pathway, only BIS1/2/3 and ORCA4 were co-expressed with
463 their target genes at the cell type level (Fig. 2D, Supplementary Fig. 7A), suggesting BIS1/2/3
464 and ORCA4 contribute to the cell-type specific expression pattern of the MIA biosynthetic
465 pathway.

466
467 There is little information on how the pathway is regulated beyond Catharanthine Synthase (Fig.
468 2D, Fig. 5A). The late-stage MIA biosynthetic genes were marked with cell-type specific ATAC-
469 seq peaks, suggestive of coordinated regulation at the chromatin level (Fig. 3A). Epidermis

470 marker peaks (Fig. 3B) were enriched for homeodomain, ERF, and MYB binding motifs
471 (Supplementary Fig. 7B). Members of the above-mentioned TF families have been reported to
472 regulate other specialized metabolism pathways, such as anthocyanin³⁰, cuticle⁴⁴, suberin⁴⁵,
473 and glucosinolate⁴⁶ in other species. We speculate that yet unidentified homeodomain, ERF, and
474 MYB TFs may contribute to the cell type specific expression of MIA biosynthetic genes in
475 epidermis. The dataset generated in this study can be used to mine and characterize additional
476 metabolic regulators that operate specifically in the epidermis.

477
478 We found that WRKY and MYB motifs were overrepresented among idioblast marker peaks
479 (Fig. 3C). Paired with gene co-expression analyses across cell clusters, we narrowed down our
480 candidates to a single WRKY (IDW1) and three MYB TFs (IDM1/2/3) (Fig. 4). While candidate
481 TFs can be identified from gene expression data alone^{8,35}, we demonstrated that cell-type
482 specific chromatin accessibility profiles allowed us to identify putative cell-type specific *cis*-
483 regulatory elements and the corresponding TF families using motif enrichment (Fig. 4C,
484 Supplementary Fig. 7A), which in turn pin-pointed TF candidates that most likely activate target
485 genes in a cell-type specific manner.

486
487 Overexpression and reporter transactivation assays demonstrated that IDM1 is a novel idioblast
488 specific regulator for D4H and DAT (Fig. 5). IDM1 binds the accessible chromatin regions
489 upstream of D4H and DAT and activates their expression (Supplementary Fig. 10-11). Recently,
490 a GATA family TF, GATA1 was reported to activate the expression of late vinblastine
491 biosynthetic genes in de-etiolating seedlings, including T16H2, T3O, T3R, D4H and DAT²⁸.
492 However, we found that GATA1 was only expressed in the mesophyll of the leaf in our single
493 cell dataset (Supplementary Fig. 7A), suggesting GATA1 is likely not responsible for the cell-
494 type specific patterns of the late-stage pathway. In contrast, IDM1 is expressed exclusively in the
495 idioblast, and thus it contributes to the idioblast specific expression of D4H and DAT. Since
496 IDM1 is also JA-inducible (Supplementary Fig. 7C), IDM1 may also mediate JA-dependent
497 activation of D4H and DAT.

498
499 In addition to D4H and DAT, IDM1 activates an idioblast metabolic regulon (Fig. 5C, D). Gene
500 sets such as transporters, cytochrome P450, alcohol dehydrogenase, and 2-OG dependent
501 oxygenase are strongly enriched in IDM1 upregulated genes, suggesting that IDM1 is a *bona fide*
502 metabolic regulator. The IDM1 metabolic regulon is highly enriched for idioblast specific
503 expression (Fig. 5D), suggesting other targets of IDM1 may play a role in the biosynthesis of
504 vinblastine or other alkaloids in the idioblast. IDM1 activates IDW1 and IDM2/3, which did not
505 appear to activate the MIA pathway, at least in the experimental conditions we tested (Fig. 5A).
506 IDW1 and IDM2/3 might regulate other biological processes in the idioblast, which may be
507 important for the specialization of these rare cells. Even after decades of focused research, the
508 final steps of the *C. roseus* MIA biosynthetic pathway remains an enigma. The discovery of
509 IDM1 as a regulator of the late stages of MIA biosynthesis and access to an idioblast-specific
510 gene regulatory network will expedite completion of this 40-plus step biosynthetic pathway with
511 important human-health implications.

512

513 **Methods**

514 Nuclei isolation and single cell library preparation.

515 *Catharanthus roseus* (cultivar “Sunstorm Apricot”) plants were grown in under a 14-hr
516 photoperiod at 22 °C. Mature, fully expanded leaves were sampled from 8-10-week-old plants.
517 Nuclei isolation was performed as described previously ⁴⁷ with 0.01% Triton-X-100 in the nuclei
518 isolation buffer. Around 0.3-0.5 g of leaves were chopped vigorously on ice on a petri dish in
519 nuclei isolation buffer for exactly 2 min. The lysate was filtered through 100 µm and 40 µm
520 sieves, before passing through a 20 µm strainer twice. Nuclei were stained with 4',6-diamidino-
521 2-phenylindole (DAPI) and sorted using a Moflo Astrios EQ flow cytometer at the UGA
522 Cytometry Shared Resource Laboratory. At least 100,000 nuclei were sorted into 500 µL of
523 nuclei buffer (part of 10x Genomics Single Cell Multiome Kit). Sorted nuclei were pelleted by
524 centrifugation at 200 g for 5 min and resuspended in 50 µL nuclei buffer. The integrity of the
525 nuclei was visually inspected using a fluorescence microscope (Supplementary Fig. 1B-I).
526 Multiome libraries were constructed using the 10x Genomics Single Cell Multiome Kit,
527 according to manufacturer’s instruction.

528

529 Single nuclei RNA-seq processing.

530 Single nuclei RNA-seq libraries were processed using Cutadapt (v3.5) ⁴⁸ with the following
531 parameters: -q 30 -m 30 --trim-n -n 2 -g AAGCAGTGGTATCAACGCAGAGTACATGGG -a
532 "A{20}". The pairing of the reads was restored using SeqKit (v0.16.1) *pair* ⁴⁹. Paired reads were
533 aligned and quantified using STARsolo ⁵⁰, with the following parameters: --runThreadN 24 --
534 alignIntronMax 5000 --soloUMIlen 12 --soloCellFilter EmptyDrops_CR --soloFeatures
535 GeneFull --soloMultiMappers EM --soloType CB_UMI_Simple, and --soloCBwhitelist using the
536 latest 10x Genomics whitelist of multiome barcodes. Gene-barcode matrices were analyzed with
537 Seurat (v4) ⁵¹ for downstream analysis. Removal of low-quality nuclei and suspected multiplets
538 was performed using the distributions of UMI counts and detected genes (Supplementary Fig. 2).

539

540 Single nuclei RNA-seq analyses.

541 Biological replicates were integrated using the `IntegrateData()` function in Seurat using the top
542 3,000 variable genes. Uniform manifold approximation and projection (UMAP) were performed
543 after a principal component analysis (PCA) using the following parameters: dims = 1:30,
544 min.dist = 0.001, repulsion.strength = 1, n.neighbors = 15, spread = 5. Clustering of cells was
545 performed with a resolution of 0.5. For cell type classification, we used a manually curated
546 marker gene list for mesophyll, epidermis, guard cells, and vasculature (Supplementary Table 5),
547 using previously established marker genes from *Arabidopsis* ^{52,53} and *C. roseus* ⁵⁻⁸. For dot-plot
548 style expression heat maps, average expression of genes was calculated as the average Z-score of
549 log-transformed normalized expression values across cell clusters and cell types. Dot sizes
550 indicated the percentage of cells where a given gene is expressed (> 0 reads) in each cell type or
551 cell cluster.

552

553 Single nuclei ATAC-seq processing.

554 Single nuclei ATAC-seq data were processed using the 10x Genomics Cell Ranger ARC pipeline
555 (<https://www.10xgenomics.com/software>). For initial quality control and nuclei filtering, the

556 'atac_peaks.bed' files from the Cell Ranger ARC output were used. The peak bed files for the
557 three biological replicates were sorted and merged using BEDTools (v2.30) *merge*⁵⁴. This
558 common set of peaks was used to process all three biological replicates. The
559 'atac_fragments.tsv.gz' files from the Cell Ranger ARC output were used for downstream
560 analyses using Signac (v1.6.0)⁵⁵ and Seurat (v4)⁵¹. Nuclei were filtered for > 1000
561 peaks/nuclei, > 2000 fragments/nuclei, and fraction of fragments in peaks > 0.25. For data
562 integration, the replicates were merged first, then integrated using the 'IntegrateEmbeddings()'
563 function in Signac using the "lsi" dimension reduction. Integration with the gene expression
564 assay was performed by first filtering for shared nuclei in both gene expression and chromatin
565 assays, after which the integrated ATAC-seq object was adjoined to the integrated RNA-seq
566 object as a chromatin assay. By doing so, the cell cluster and cell type assignment information is
567 transferred to the ATAC-seq assay. Fragment files were split into separate files for each cell
568 cluster and converted to bed files. Peak calling at each cell cluster performed using MACS2
569 (v2.2.7.1)²³ using the following parameters: -f BED -g 444800000 (80% of the genome
570 assembly size was set as the effective mappable genome size) --nomodel --broad. The resultant
571 peak files were sorted and merged to be used as the features in the chromatin accessibility assay.
572 These peaks were used as "ATAC-seq peaks" in all downstream analyses. UMAP visualization
573 (Fig. 1C) for ATAC-seq was performed using the following parameters: reduction = "lsi", dims =
574 2:30, min.dist = 0.001, repulsion.strength = 1, n.neighbors = 30, spread = 1. Joint UMAP
575 visualization was done using the 'FindMultiModalNeighbors()' functions in Signac. ATAC-seq
576 coverage around genes (Supplementary Fig. 4) and peaks (Supplementary Fig. 5) was calculated
577 and visualized using deepTools (v3.5.1)⁵⁶.

578 579 DAP-seq library construction and processing.

580 The coding sequence of *ORCA3* and *ORCA4* were synthesized and cloned into pIX-Halo²⁴,
581 downstream and in frame with the halo tag. *In vitro* gene expression was performed using
582 Promega TnT SP6 High-Yield Wheat Germ Protein Expression System. Each *in vitro* gene
583 expression reaction was spiked with 200 ng of a pIX-RFP plasmid, such that the gene expression
584 reaction can be monitored using RFP fluorescence. Genomic data libraries were constructed from
585 genomic DNA isolated from mature leaves of 8-10-week-old *C. roseus* plants using a KAPA
586 HyperPrep Kit, after the genomic DNA was sheared to 200-bp with a Covaris ultrasonicator at
587 the UGA Genomics and Bioinformatics Core. The full volume of gene expression reaction was
588 combined with 40 ng of gDNA library and 10 μ L of Promega Halo-beads for each affinity
589 reaction. Bead-bound DNA was recovered by heating the affinity reaction to 95°C for 5 min.
590 Indexing PCR was performed with 13 cycles, and the libraries were sequenced in paired-end 50-
591 bp format (Supplementary Table 2).

592
593 Sequencing adapters were trimmed with Cutadapt (v3.5)⁴⁸, after which reads were aligned to the
594 *C. roseus* v3 genome⁸ using BWA mem (v0.1.17)⁵⁷. Peak calling was performed with MACS2
595 (v2.2.7.1) using the following parameters: -g 444800000 (80% of the genome assembly size was
596 set as the effective mappable genome size), using the bam file of the halo tag control as the
597 background file. DAP-seq coverage around peaks (Supplementary Fig. 6E, F) was calculated and
598 visualized using deepTools (v3.5.1). Putative target genes were assigned using BEDTools

599 (v.2.30) *closest*, with the -d parameter selected. Genes overlapping or within 2-kb of a DAP-seq
600 peak were designated as a putative target gene. Accessible DAP-seq peaks were defined as DAP-
601 seq peaks overlapping or within 100-bp to either ends of an ATAC-seq peak (Supplementary Fig.
602 6D). DNA sequence of DAP-seq peaks were extracted using BEDTools (v.2.30) *getfasta* and
603 subjected to *de novo* motif discovery using MEME (v5.4.1)²⁵: using the following parameters: -
604 dna -revcomp -mod anr -nmotifs 10 -minw 5 -maxw 12 -evt 0.01.

605

606 Marker peak and motif overrepresentation analyses.

607 Marker peaks for epidermis and idioblast were detected using the `FindMarkers()` function in
608 Seurat after setting the default assay of the multiome object to chromatin accessibility, using the
609 following parameters: `only.pos = T`, `test.use = "LR"`, `min.pct = 0.05`, `latent.vars = 'nCount_peaks'`,
610 `group.by = "cell_type"`. Only peaks with adjusted p values < 0.05 were used for downstream
611 analyses. For motif enrichment analysis, position weight matrices were obtained using the
612 `getMatrixSet()` function in Signac, using the following parameters: `x = JASPAR2020`²⁷, `opts =`
613 `list(collection = "CORE", tax_group = 'plants', all_versions = FALSE)`. These motifs were added
614 to the multiome object using the `AddMotifs()` function in Signac. Overrepresented motifs were
615 identified using the `FindMotifs()` function in Signac.

616

617 Gene co-expression analyses.

618 Gene co-expression analysis by graph-based clustering was performed as previously described³³.
619 The top 3,000 most variable genes were used for gene-wise correlation. Pairwise Pearson
620 correlation was performed to generate an edge table, which was filtered for $r > 0.75$. Graph-
621 based clustering was performed with a resolution parameter of 4.

622

623 Overexpression assays.

624 Coding sequences of *IDW1* and *IDM1/2/3* were cloned in between the 35S promoter and 35S
625 terminator and transformed into *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* strain GV3101. We used previously
626 published MYC2 and ORCA3 overexpression constructs¹⁴. Transient expression experiments
627 were done on *C. roseus* (cultivar "Little Bright Eyes") petals. Infiltration was done as previously
628 described⁵⁸. Two days before the infiltration, all open flowers were removed. Two sets of
629 experiments were performed. In the first set, individual strains were infiltrated at 0.1 OD and the
630 total OD was adjusted to 0.4 using the control agrobacterium strain carrying GUS. In the second
631 set, all strains were infiltrated at 0.4 OD. Two days after the infiltration, infiltrated petals were
632 harvested and stored in a -80 freezer until RNA extraction.

633

634 RNA-seq analysis for overexpression samples.

635 Sequencing adapters were trimmed from petal RNA-seq libraries using Cutadapt (v3.5)⁴⁸.
636 Adapter trimmed libraries were pseudo-aligned and quantified using kallisto (v0.48)⁵⁹, with the -
637 -plaintext option turned on. When the appropriate strandedness parameter was used, pseudo-
638 alignment rate ranged from 86.2% to 89%. Differential gene expression analyses were performed
639 using DESeq2 (v.1.34.0)⁶⁰, using the GUS treatment with of the corresponding experiment as
640 control. Genes with adjusted p values < 0.05 were taken as differentially expressed genes.

641

642 Reporter transactivation assays.

643 The reporter transactivation assays were performed in a two-component format: a reporter
644 component and an overexpression component. Genetic parts used in reporter assays were
645 amplified from a vector tool kit for plant molecular biology⁶¹. The accessible chromatin regions
646 immediately upstream of D4H (Supplementary Fig. 11A) and DAT (Fig. 3B) were cloned
647 upstream of a 35S minimal promoter (Supplementary Fig. 11B), which controls the expression of
648 DsRed reporter. On the same plasmid, a GFP internal control driven by the Arabidopsis UBQ1
649 promoter was also included. The overexpression component was an agrobacterium GV3101
650 strain carrying 35S:IDM1 (Supplementary Fig. 11C), the same construct used in overexpression
651 assays. As in the transient expression assays described above, experiments were done on *C.*
652 *roseus* (cultivar “Little Bright Eyes”). Two days after the infiltration, petals were imaged using a
653 fluorescent microscope. Pixel intensity was quantified using ImageJ⁴³.

654

655 **Data Availability**

656 All sequencing data associated with this study are available at the National Center for
657 Biotechnology Institute Sequence Read Archive BioProject PRJNA1098712. Seurat objects for
658 single nuclei multiome experiment and gene expression matrices are available via the online
659 digital repository figshare (to be made public upon publication). Plasmid maps are available at
660 Zenodo (<https://zenodo.org/records/11036874>).

661

662 **Code Availability**

663 All custom codes used to generate figures can be found at
664 https://github.com/cxli233/Catharanthus_multiome.

665

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677

678 **Author contributions**

679 C.R.B., S.E.O., and C.L. designed the study. C.L. generated single cell multiome and DAP-seq
680 datasets. J.C.W. assisted with single cell library preparation and quality control. C.L. and S.L.J
681 performed molecular cloning and transactivation assays. M.C. performed molecular cloning and
682 overexpression assays, and together with L.C. generated overexpression samples and RNA-seq
683 datasets. C.L., J.C.W, B.V., and J.P.H performed data analyses. C.L. wrote the manuscript with
684 input from all authors.

685

686 **Conflict of Interest Statement**

687 The authors have declared no conflict of interest.

688

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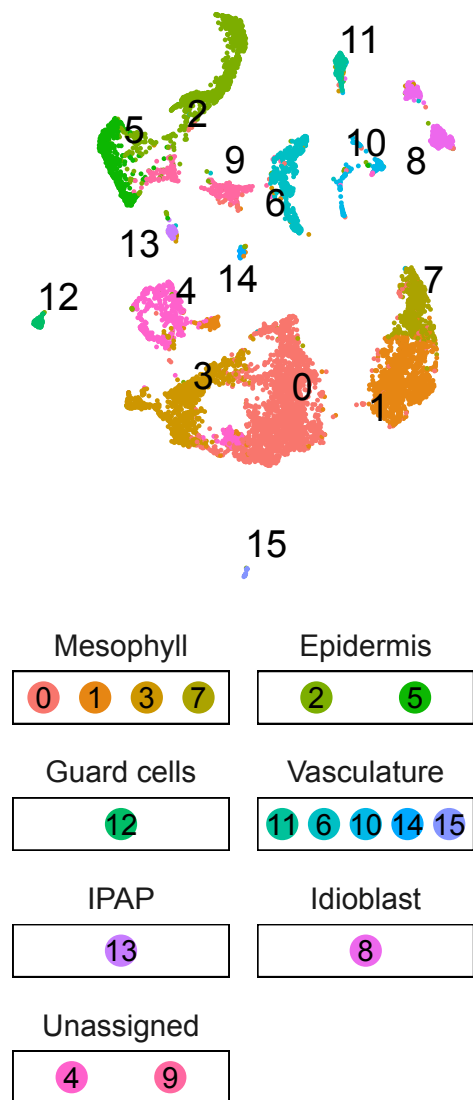
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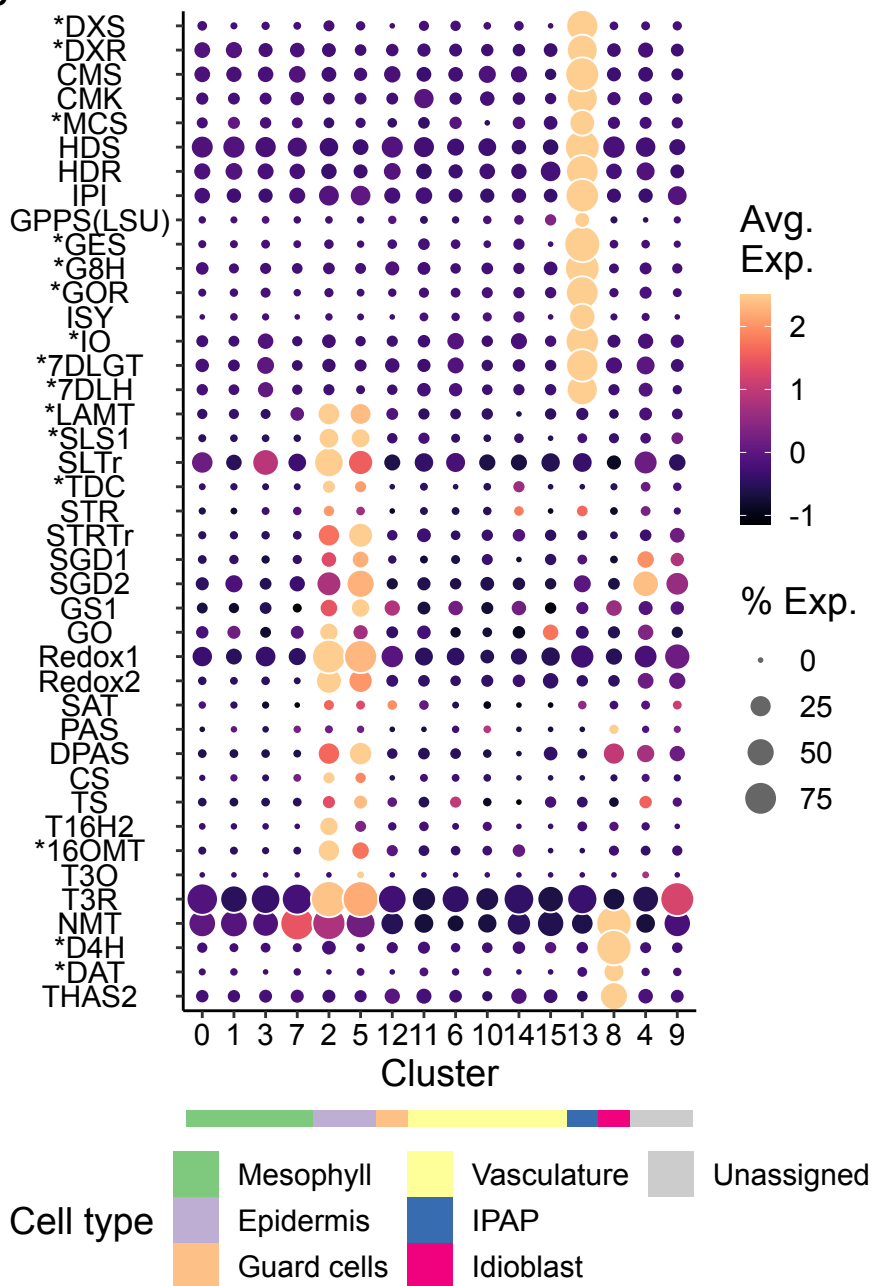
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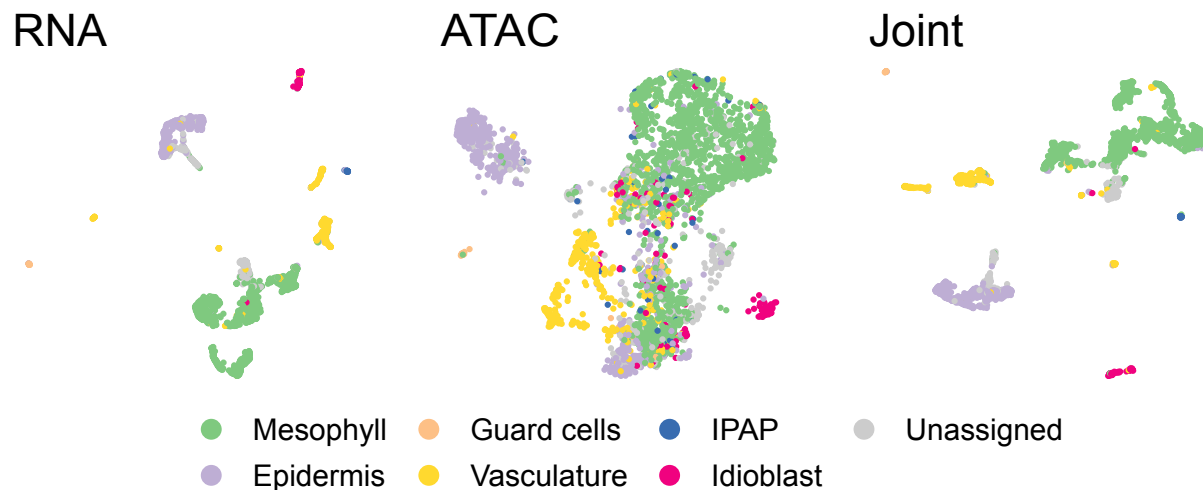
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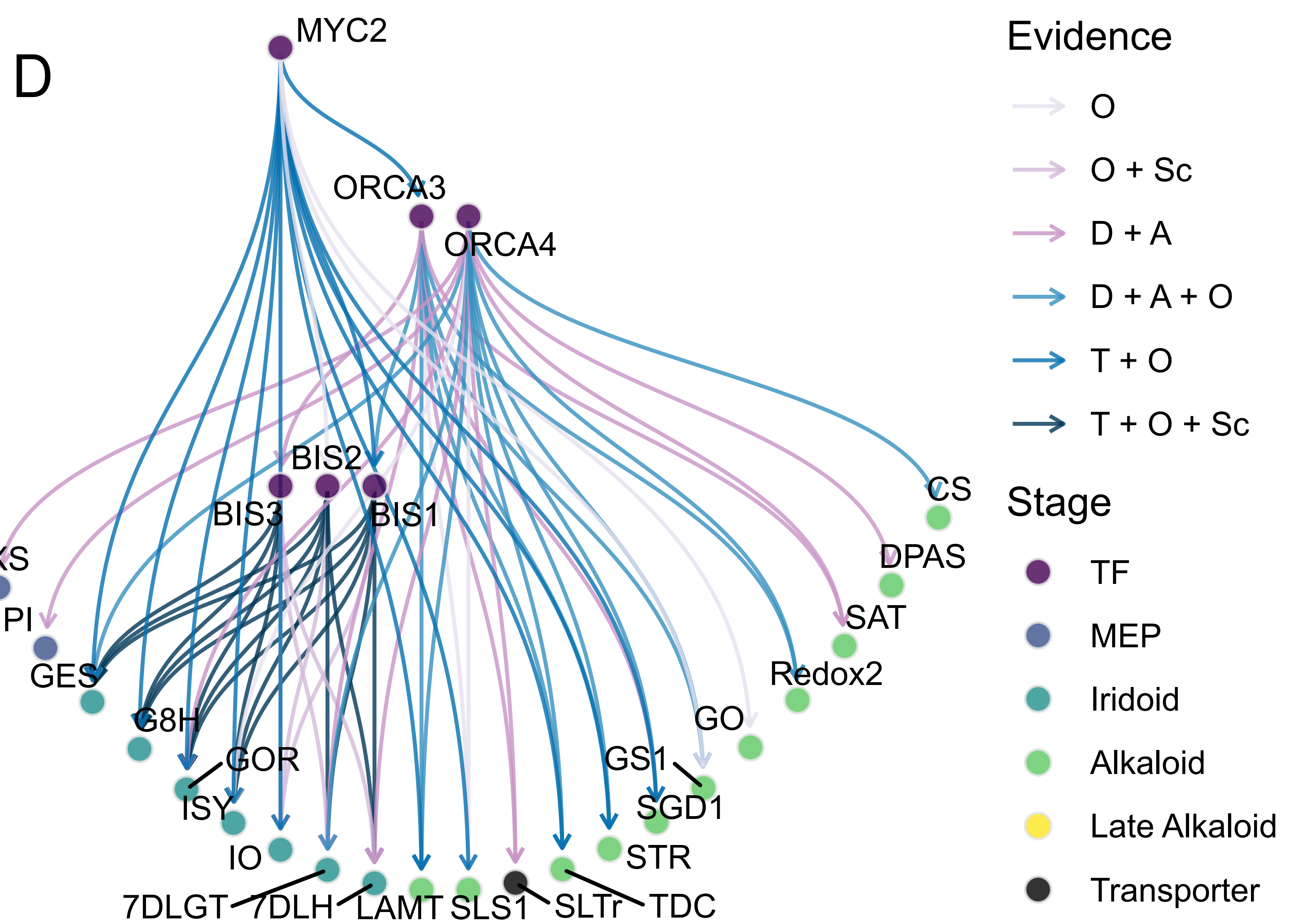
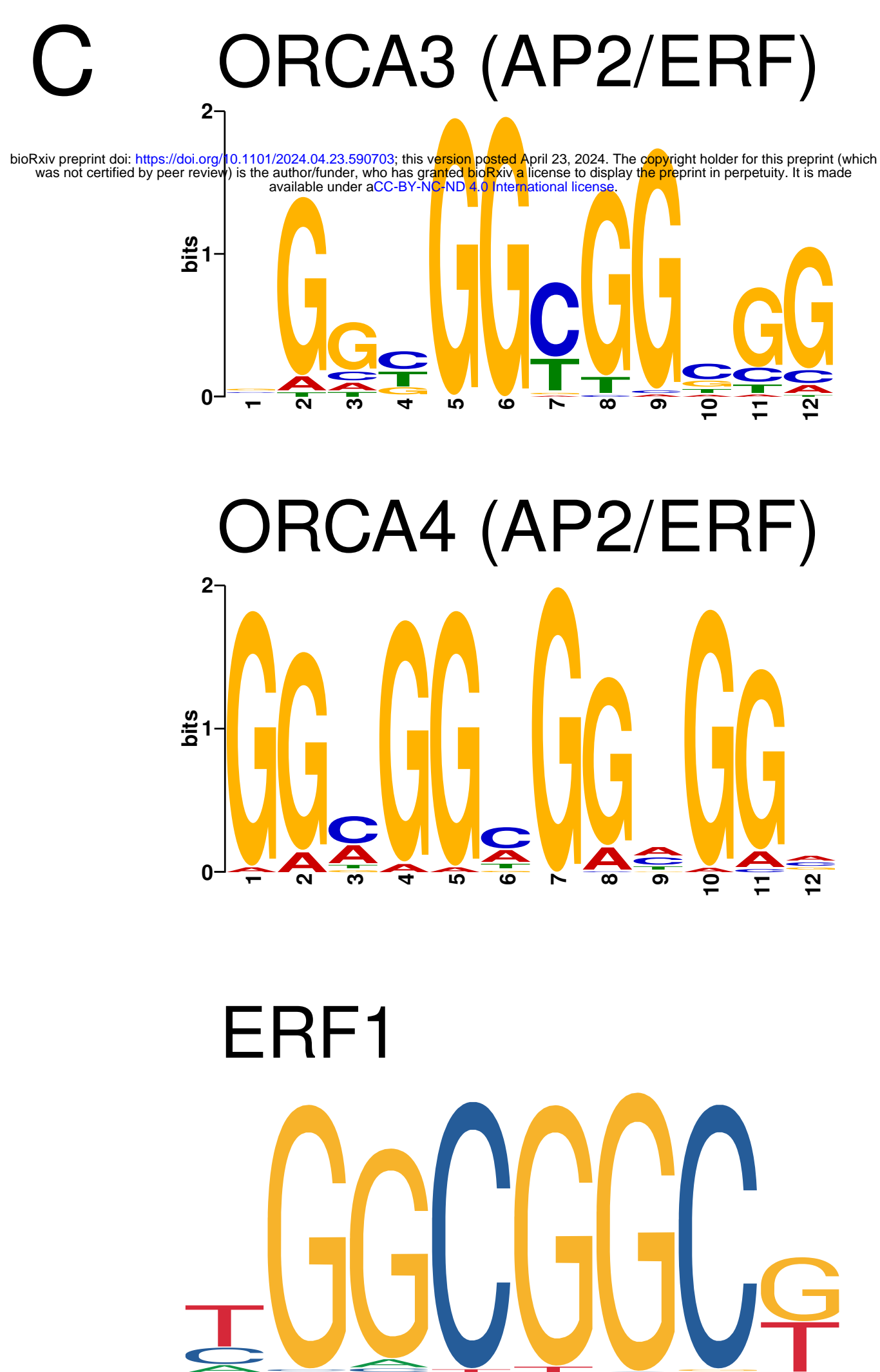
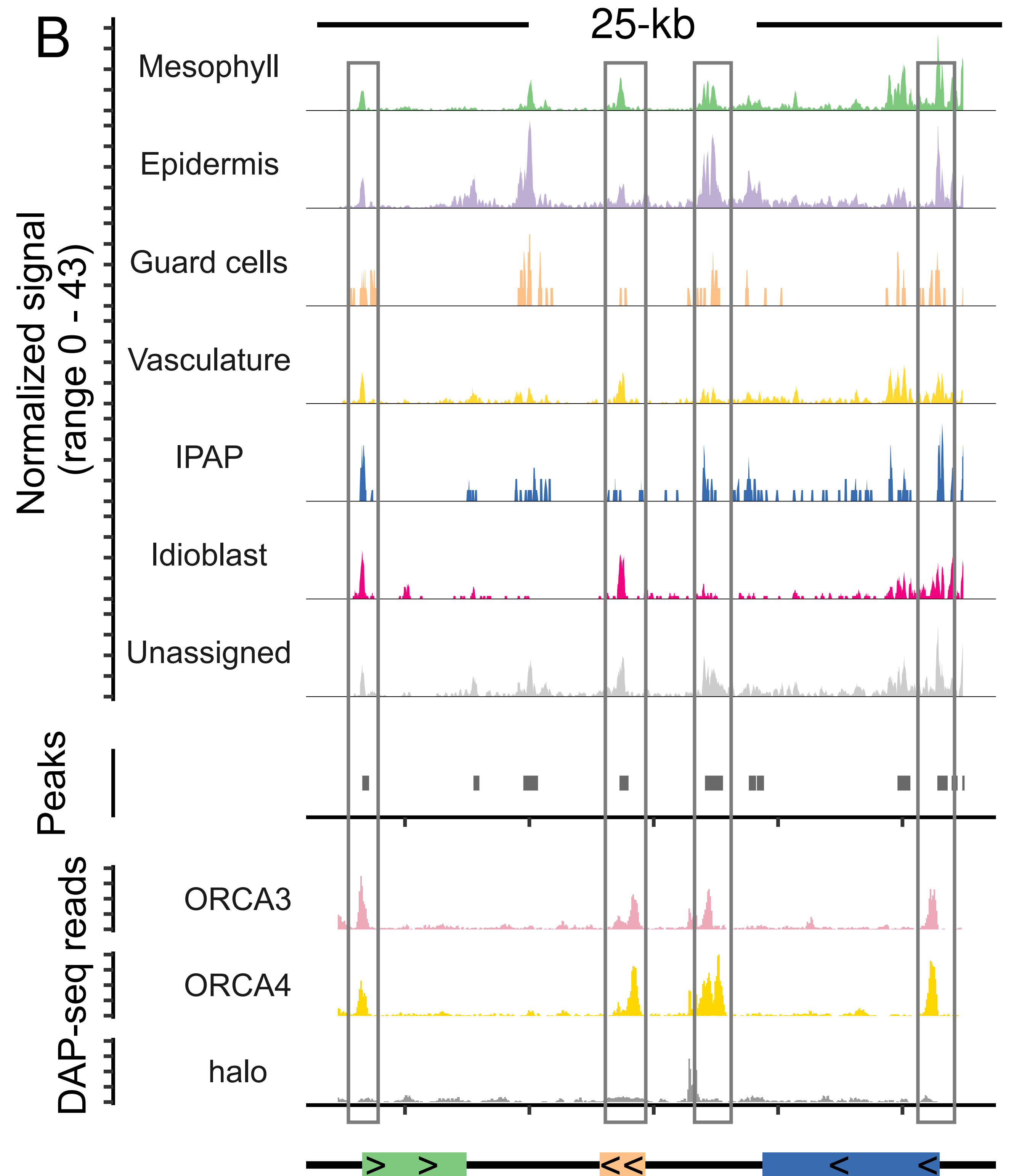
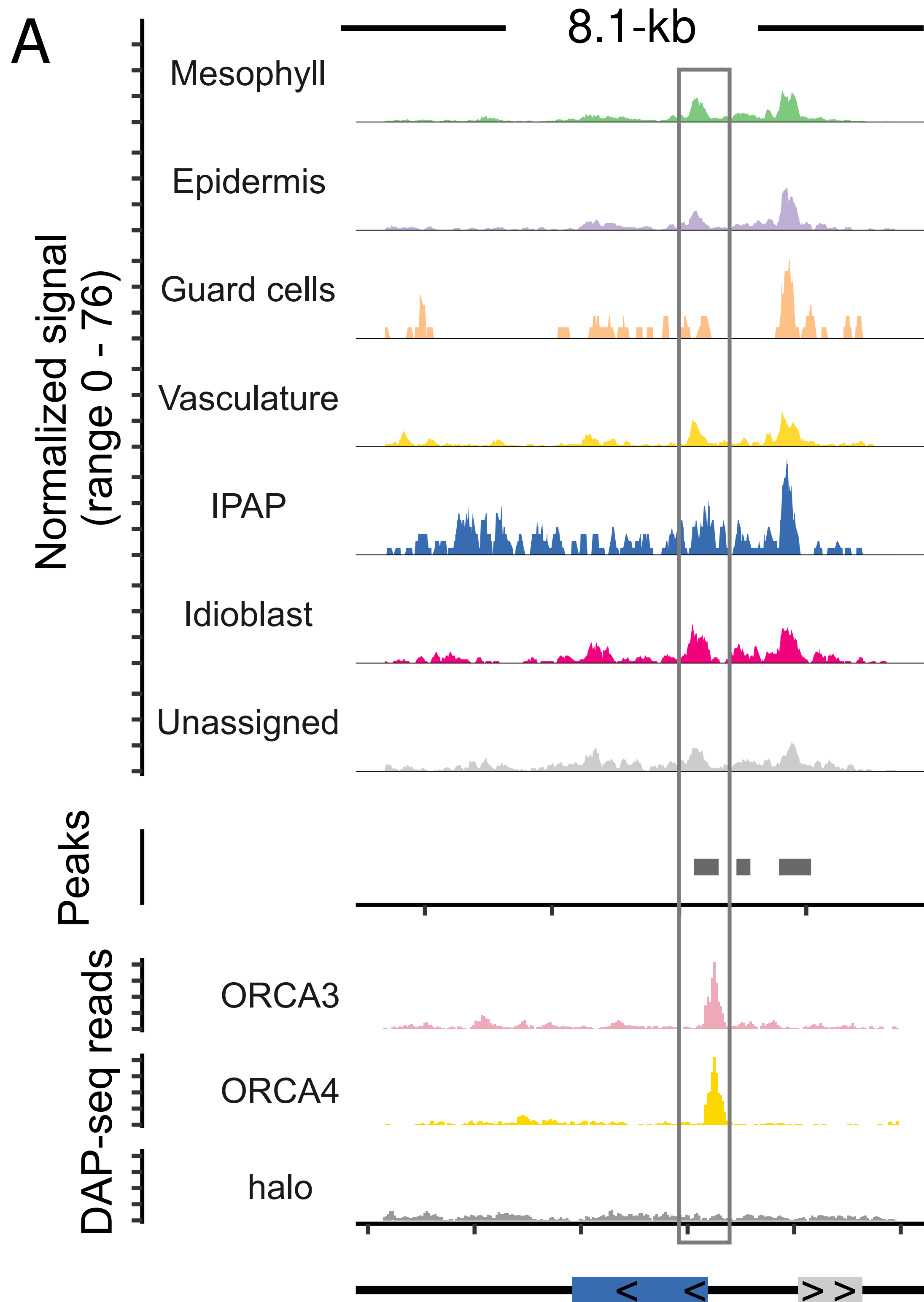


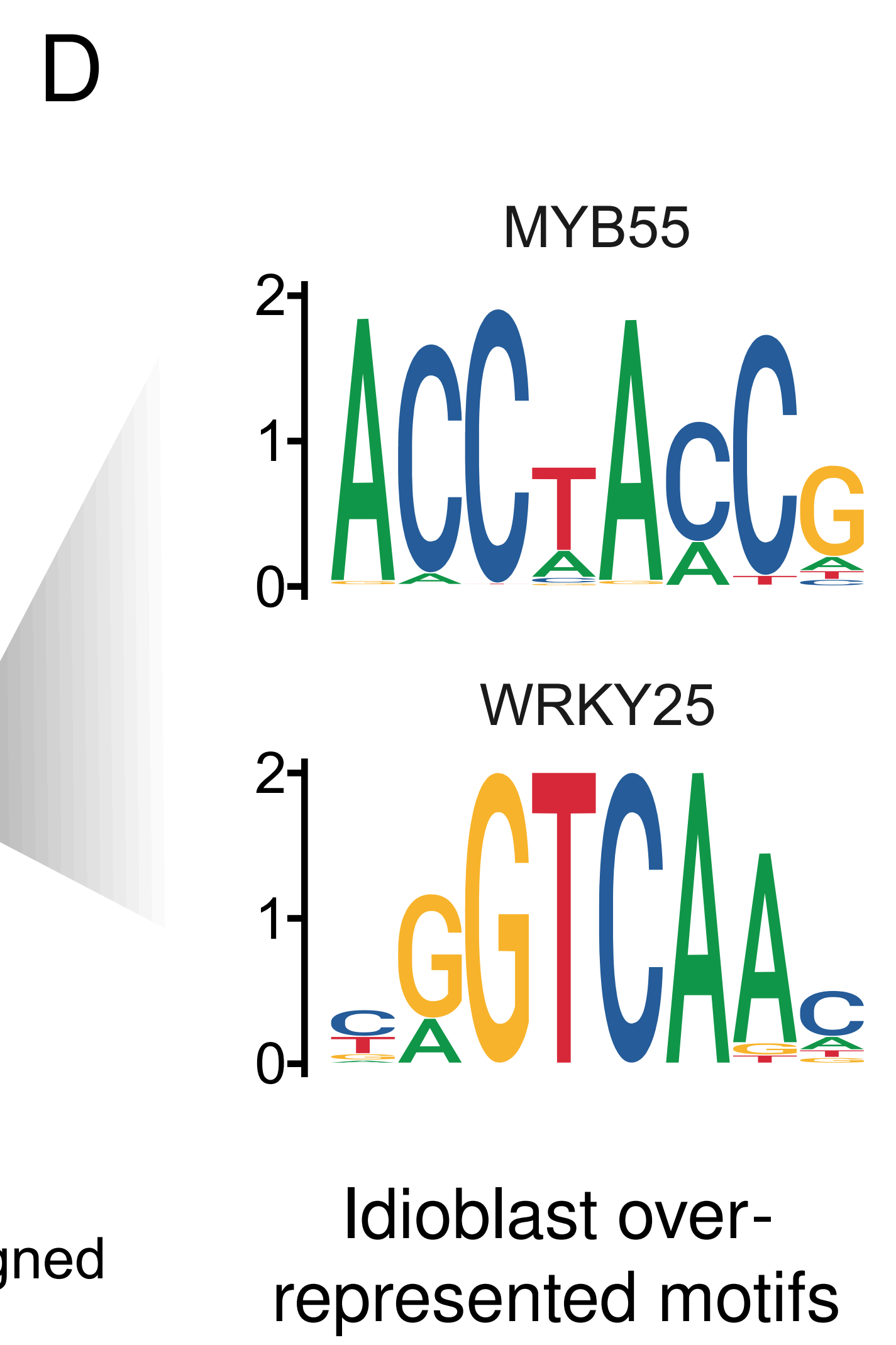
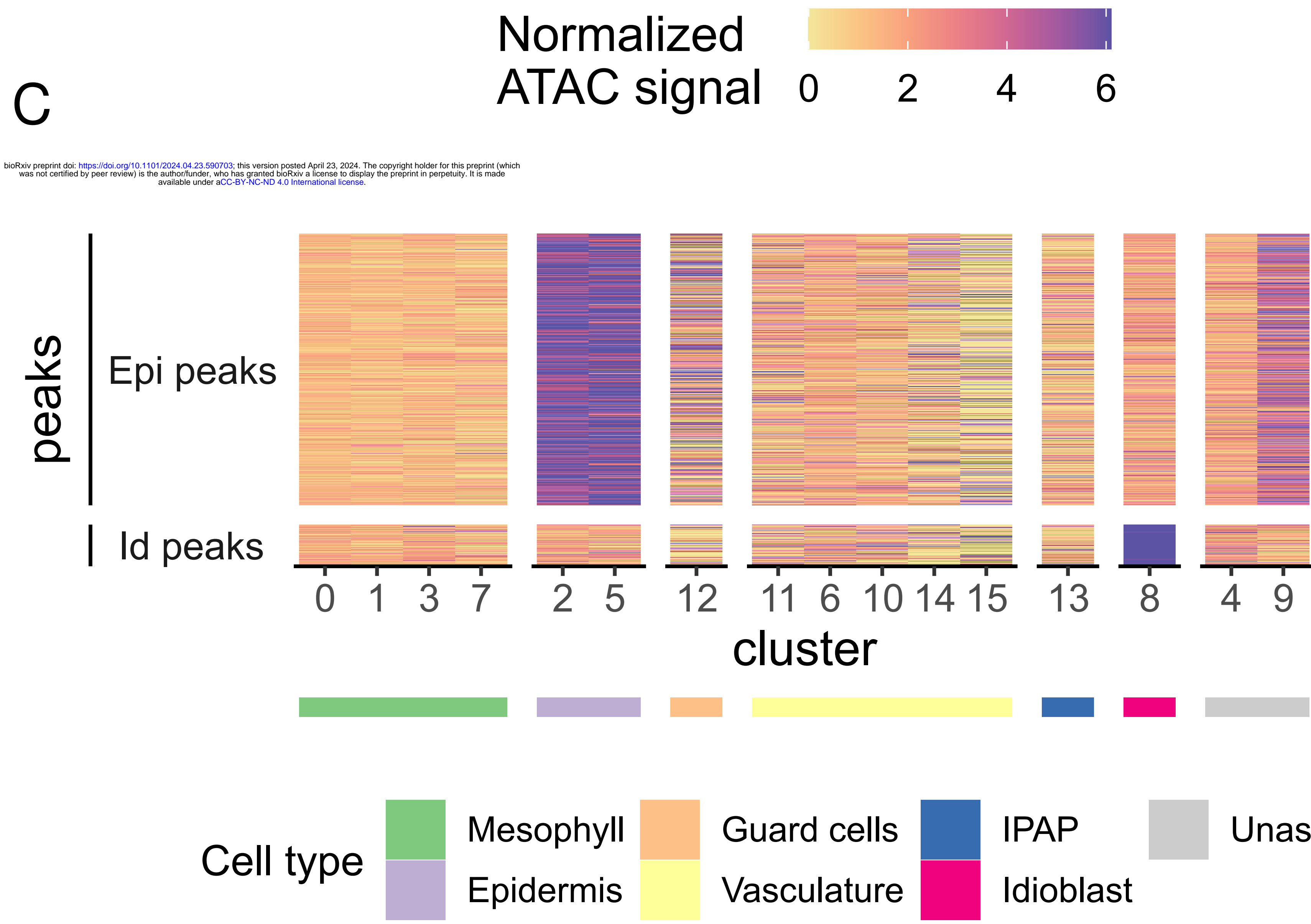
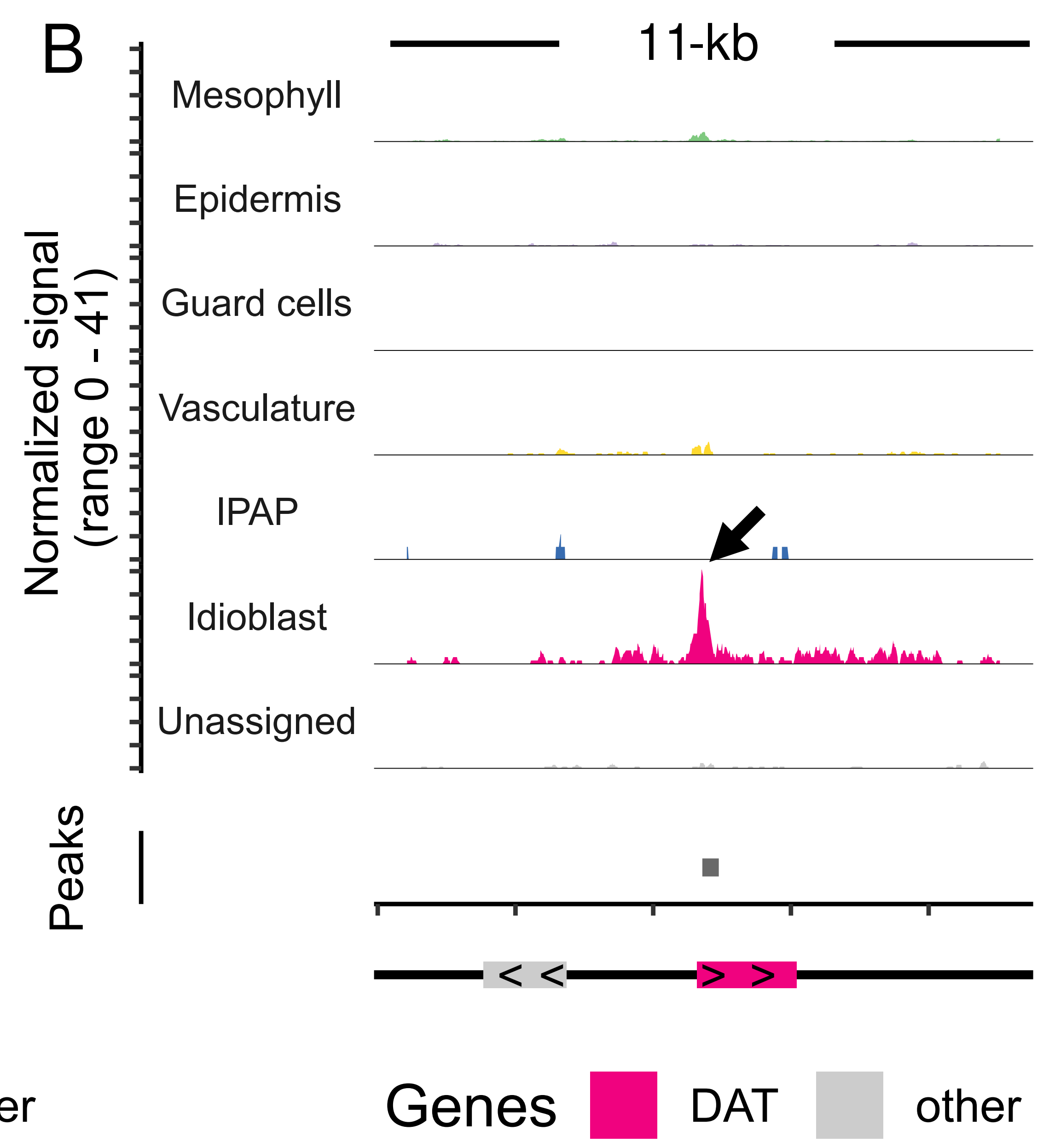
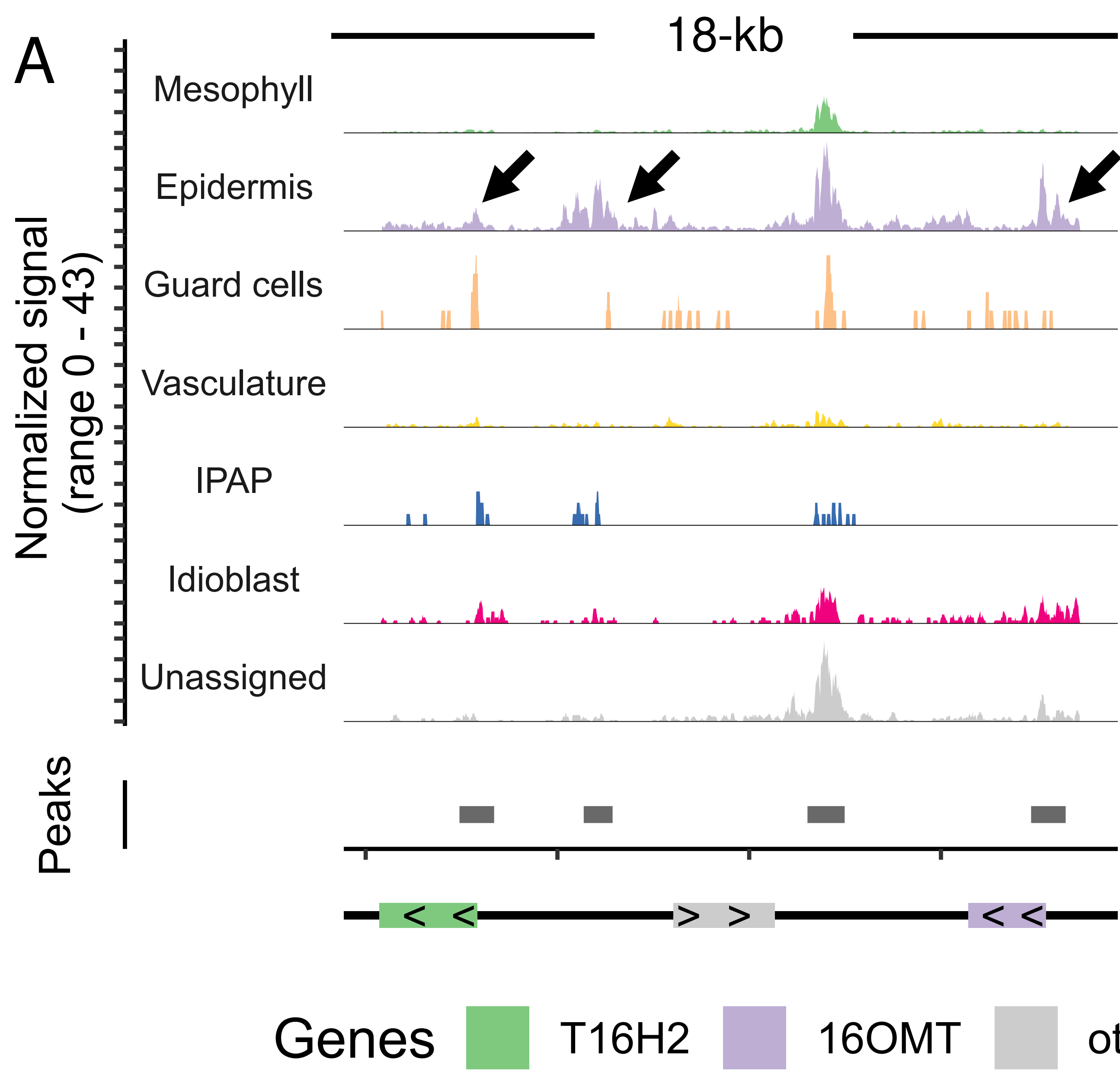
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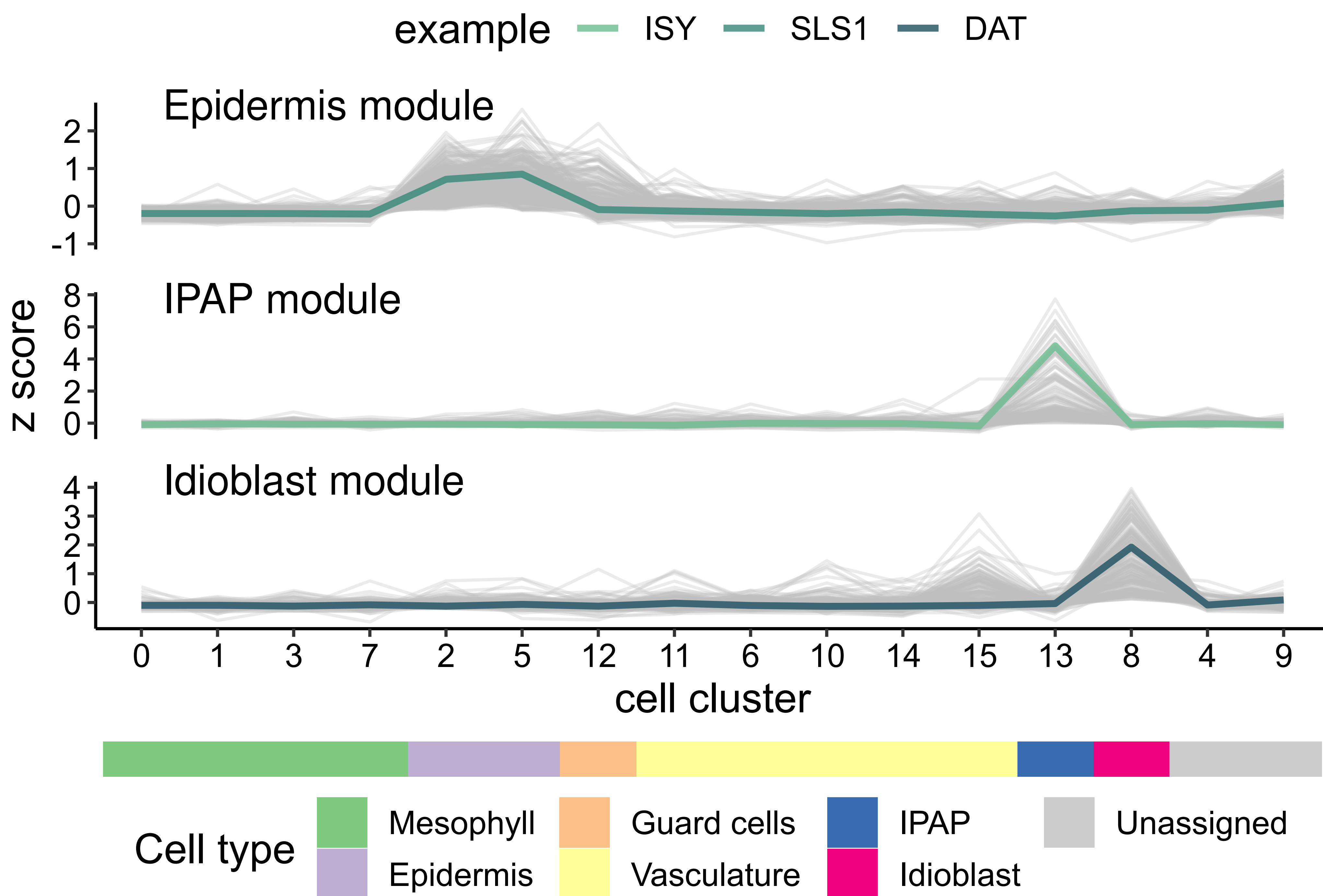






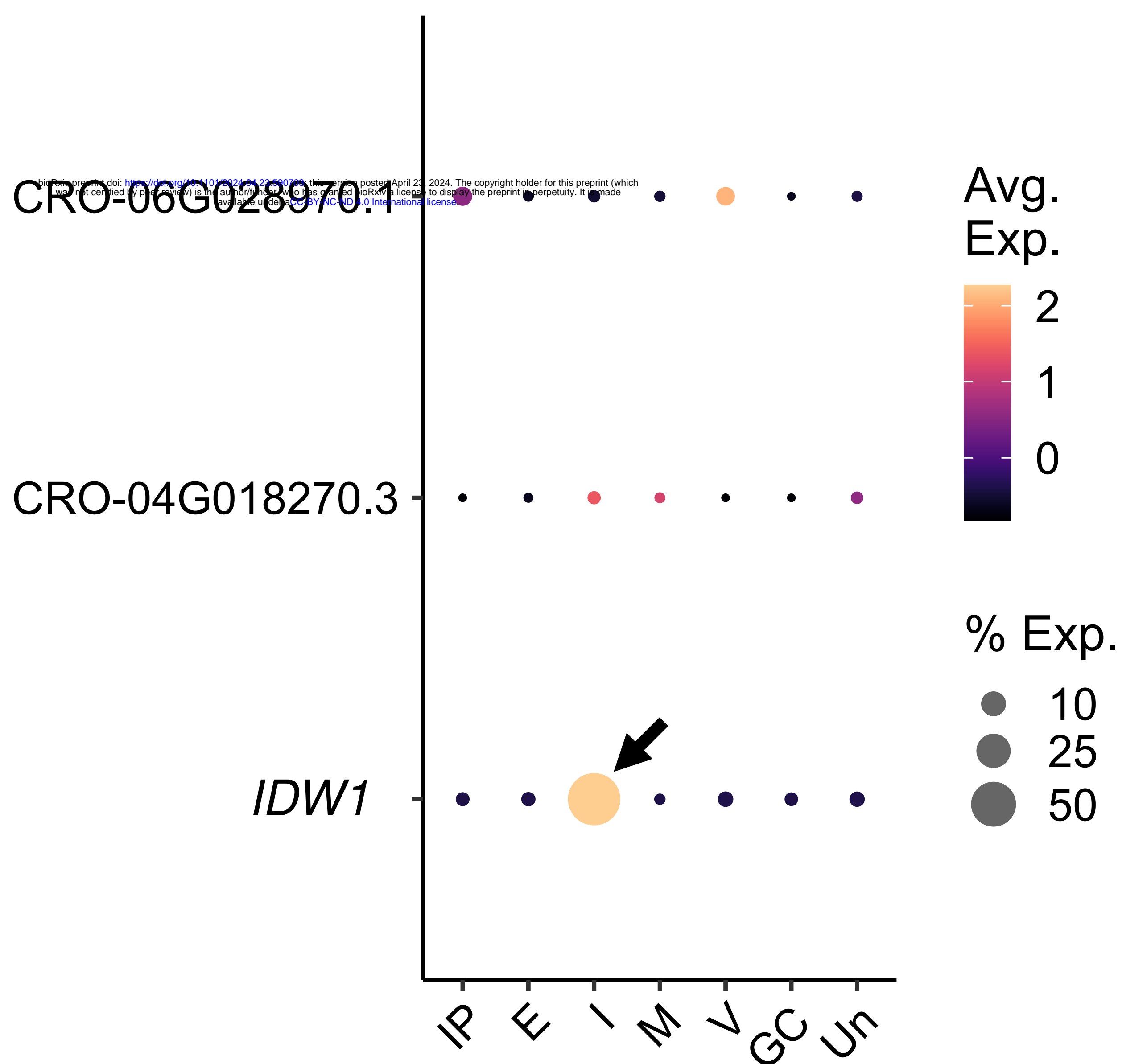
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A



B

WRKY TFs in modules



C

MYB TFs in modules

