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Method and device for a display having transparent components integrated therein

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ABSTRACT

5 A display panel includes an array of interferometric modulators arranged over a
transparent substrate and a transparent electrical device arranged between the array of
interferometric modulators and the transparent substrate. The transparent electrical device may
be electrically connected to the array of interferometric modulators or to other parts of the display
panel. Examples of suitable transparent electrical devices include capacitors, resistors, inductors
and filters. The use of such transparent electrical devices may provide various advantages, such
10 as increased design flexibility, by allowing the electrical devices to be included in various parts
of the array, including the viewing regions.

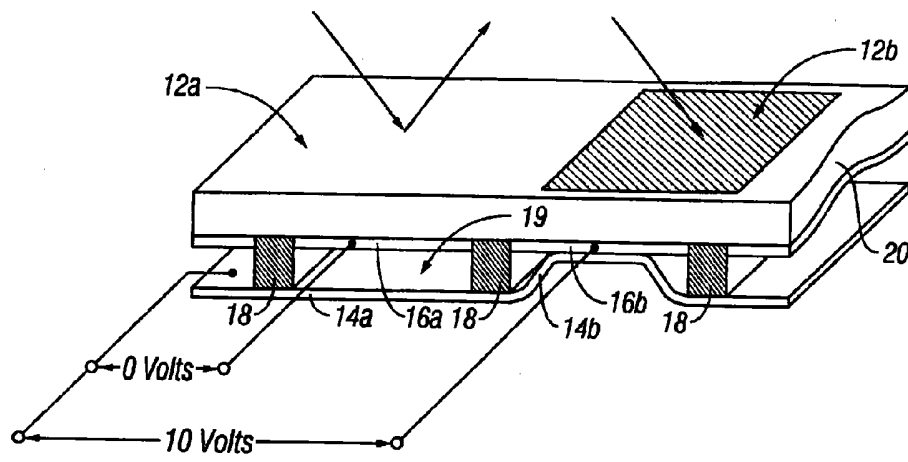


FIG. 1

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Regulation 3.2

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COMPLETE SPECIFICATION

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Invention title: METHOD AND DEVICE FOR A DISPLAY HAVING
TRANSPARENT COMPONENTS INTEGRATED
THEREIN

The following statement is a full description of this invention, including the best method of performing it known to us.

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**METHOD AND DEVICE FOR A DISPLAY
HAVING TRANSPARENT COMPONENTS INTEGRATED THEREIN**

Background

5 Field of the Invention

 The field of the invention relates to microelectromechanical systems (MEMS).

Description of the Related Technology

10 Microelectromechanical systems (MEMS) include micro mechanical elements, actuators,
 and electronics. Micromechanical elements may be created using deposition, etching, and or
 other micromachining processes that etch away parts of substrates and/or deposited material
 layers or that add layers to form electrical and electromechanical devices. One type of MEMS
15 device is called an interferometric modulator. As used herein, the term interferometric modulator
 or interferometric light modulator refers to a device that selectively absorbs and/or reflects light
 using the principles of optical interference. In certain embodiments, an interferometric modulator
 may comprise a pair of conductive plates, one or both of which may be transparent and/or
 reflective in whole or part and capable of relative motion upon application of an appropriate
 electrical signal. In a particular embodiment, one plate may comprise a stationary layer
20 deposited on a substrate and the other plate may comprise a metallic membrane separated from
 the stationary layer by an air gap. As described herein in more detail, the position of one plate in
 relation to another can change the optical interference of light incident on the interferometric
 modulator. Such devices have a wide range of applications, and it would be beneficial in the art
 to utilize and/or modify the characteristics of these types of devices so that their features can be
25 exploited in improving existing products and creating new products that have not yet been
 developed.

Summary

 The systems, methods, and devices described herein each have several aspects, no single
 one of which is solely responsible for its desirable attributes. Without limiting the scope of this
30 invention, its more prominent features will now be discussed briefly. After considering this
 discussion, and particularly after reading the section entitled "Detailed Description of the
 Preferred Embodiments" one will understand how the various embodiments described herein
 provide advantages over other methods and display devices.

 An embodiment provides a display panel that includes an array of interferometric
35 modulators arranged over a transparent substrate, and a transparent electrical device arranged

between the array of interferometric modulators and the transparent substrate, the transparent electrical device being electrically connected to the array of interferometric modulators.

Another embodiment provides a display device that includes a substrate that includes an array region, an interferometric modulator attached to the substrate in the array region, and a transparent passive electrical device attached to the substrate in the array region.

Another embodiment provides a method of making a display device. The method includes forming a transparent electrical device on a substrate, depositing an insulating layer over the transparent electrical device, forming an interferometric modulator over the insulating layer, and forming an electrical connection between the transparent electrical device and the interferometric modulator.

Another embodiment provides a display device. The display device includes a means for interferometrically modulating light arranged over a means for supporting the modulating means, means for conducting disposed between the modulating means and the supporting means, and wherein the conducting means is substantially transparent and wherein the modulating means for is electrically connected to the conducting means.

These and other embodiments are described in greater detail below.

Brief Description of the Drawings

These and other aspects of this invention will now be described with reference to the drawings of preferred embodiments (not to scale) which are intended to illustrate and not to limit the invention.

Figure 1 is an isometric view depicting a portion of one embodiment of an interferometric modulator display in which a movable reflective layer of a first interferometric modulator is in a relaxed position and a movable reflective layer of a second interferometric modulator is in an actuated position.

Figure 2 is a system block diagram illustrating one embodiment of an electronic device incorporating a 3x3 interferometric modulator display.

Figure 3A is a diagram of movable mirror position versus applied voltage for one exemplary embodiment of an interferometric modulator of Figure 1.

Figure 3B is an illustration of a set of row and column voltages that may be used to drive an interferometric modulator display.

Figure 4A illustrates one exemplary frame of display data in the 3x3 interferometric modulator display of Figure 2.

Figure 4B illustrates one exemplary timing diagram for row and column signals that may be used to write the frame of Figure 4A.

Figures 5A and 5B are system block diagrams illustrating an embodiment of a display device.

Figure 6A is a cross section of the device of Figure 1.

Figure 6B is a cross section of an alternative embodiment of an interferometric modulator.

Figure 6C is a cross section of another alternative embodiment of an interferometric modulator.

Figure 7 illustrates an embodiment in which filter circuits are arranged between the row electrodes and the row driver circuit.

Figure 8A is a cross-sectional schematic view illustrating a display panel embodiment that includes a transparent capacitor 815.

Figure 8B is a cross-sectional schematic view illustrating a display panel embodiment that includes a transparent filter 325.

Figure 9 is a schematic perspective view illustrating an inductor embodiment.

Figure 10 is a process flow diagram illustrating certain steps in a method of making a display device.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

The following detailed description is directed to certain specific embodiments of the invention. However, the invention can be embodied in a multitude of different ways. In this description, reference is made to the drawings wherein like parts are designated with like numerals throughout. As will be apparent from the following description, the embodiments may be implemented in any device that is configured to display an image, whether in motion (e.g., video) or stationary (e.g., still image), and whether textual or pictorial. More particularly, it is contemplated that the embodiments may be implemented in or associated with a variety of electronic devices such as, but not limited to, mobile telephones, wireless devices, personal data assistants (PDAs), hand-held or portable computers, GPS receivers/navigators, cameras, MP3 players, camcorders, game consoles, wrist watches, clocks, calculators, television monitors, flat panel displays, computer monitors, auto displays (e.g., odometer display, etc.), cockpit controls and/or displays, display of camera views (e.g., display of a rear view camera in a vehicle), electronic photographs, electronic billboards or signs, projectors, architectural structures, packaging, and aesthetic structures (e.g., display of images on a piece of jewelry). MEMS devices of similar structure to those described herein can also be used in non-display applications such as in electronic switching devices.

An embodiment provides a display panel in which transparent electrical devices are arranged between a substrate and an array of interferometric modulators. Examples of suitable transparent electrical devices include capacitors, resistors, inductors and filters. The use of such transparent electrical devices may provide various advantages, such as increased design flexibility, by allowing the electrical devices to be included in various parts of the array, including the viewing regions.

One interferometric modulator display embodiment comprising an interferometric MEMS display element is illustrated in Figure 1. In these devices, the pixels are in either a bright or dark state. In the bright ("on" or "open") state, the display element reflects a large portion of incident visible light to a user. When in the dark ("off" or "closed") state, the display element reflects little incident visible light to the user. Depending on the embodiment, the light reflectance properties of the "on" and "off" states may be reversed. MEMS pixels can be configured to reflect predominantly at selected colors, allowing for a color display in addition to black and white.

Figure 1 is an isometric view depicting two adjacent pixels in a series of pixels of a visual display, wherein each pixel comprises a MEMS interferometric modulator. In some embodiments, an interferometric modulator display comprises a row/column array of these interferometric modulators. Each interferometric modulator includes a pair of reflective layers positioned at a variable and controllable distance from each other to form a resonant optical cavity with at least one variable dimension. In one embodiment, one of the reflective layers may be moved between two positions. In the first position, referred to herein as the relaxed, the movable layer is positioned at a relatively large distance from a fixed partially reflective layer. In the second position, the movable layer is positioned more closely adjacent to the partially reflective layer. Incident light that reflects from the two layers interferes constructively or destructively depending on the position of the movable reflective layer, producing either an overall reflective or non-reflective state for each pixel.

The depicted portion of the pixel array in Figure 1 includes two adjacent interferometric modulators **12a** and **12b**. In the interferometric modulator **12a** on the left, a movable and highly reflective layer **14a** is illustrated in a relaxed position at a predetermined distance from a fixed partially reflective layer **16a**. In the interferometric modulator **12b** on the right, the movable highly reflective layer **14b** is illustrated in an actuated position adjacent to the fixed partially reflective layer **16b**.

The fixed layers **16a**, **16b** are electrically conductive, partially transparent and partially reflective, and may be fabricated, for example, by depositing one or more layers each of chromium and indium-tin-oxide onto a transparent substrate **20**. The layers are patterned into parallel strips, and may form row electrodes in a display device as described further below. The

movable layers **14a**, **14b** may be formed as a series of parallel strips of a deposited metal layer or layers (orthogonal to the row electrodes **16a**, **16b**) deposited on top of posts **18** and an intervening sacrificial material deposited between the posts **18**. When the sacrificial material is etched away, the deformable metal layers **14a**, **14b** are separated from the fixed metal layers by a defined gap **19**. A highly conductive and reflective material such as aluminum may be used for the deformable layers, and these strips may form column electrodes in a display device.

With no applied voltage, the cavity **19** remains between the layers **14a**, **16a** and the deformable layer is in a mechanically relaxed state as illustrated by the pixel **12a** in Figure 1. However, when a potential difference is applied to a selected row and column, the capacitor formed at the intersection of the row and column electrodes at the corresponding pixel becomes charged, and electrostatic forces pull the electrodes together. If the voltage is high enough, the movable layer is deformed and is forced against the fixed layer (a dielectric material which is not illustrated in this Figure may be deposited on the fixed layer to prevent shorting and control the separation distance) as illustrated by the pixel **12b** on the right in Figure 1. The behavior is the same regardless of the polarity of the applied potential difference. In this way, row/column actuation that can control the reflective vs. non-reflective pixel states is analogous in many ways to that used in conventional LCD and other display technologies.

Figures 2 through 4B illustrate one exemplary process and system for using an array of interferometric modulators in a display application.

Figure 2 is a system block diagram illustrating one embodiment of an electronic device that may incorporate aspects of the invention. In the exemplary embodiment, the electronic device includes a processor **21** which may be any general purpose single- or multi-chip microprocessor such as an ARM, Pentium®, Pentium II®, Pentium III®, Pentium IV®, Pentium® Pro, an 8051, a MIPS®, a Power PC®, an ALPHA®, or any special purpose microprocessor such as a digital signal processor, microcontroller, or a programmable gate array. As is conventional in the art, the processor **21** may be configured to execute one or more software modules. In addition to executing an operating system, the processor may be configured to execute one or more software applications, including a web browser, a telephone application, an email program, or any other software application.

In one embodiment, the processor **21** is also configured to communicate with an array controller **22**. In one embodiment, the array controller **22** includes a row driver circuit **24** and a column driver circuit **26** that provide signals to a display array or panel **30**. The cross section of the array illustrated in Figure 1 is shown by the lines **1-1** in Figure 2. For MEMS interferometric modulators, the row/column actuation protocol may take advantage of a hysteresis property of these devices illustrated in Figure 3A. It may require, for example, a 10 volt potential difference to cause a movable layer to deform from the relaxed state to the actuated state. However, when

the voltage is reduced from that value, the movable layer maintains its state as the voltage drops back below 10 volts. In the exemplary embodiment of Figure 3A, the movable layer does not relax completely until the voltage drops below 2 volts. There is thus a range of voltage, about 3 to 7 V in the example illustrated in Figure 3A, where there exists a window of applied voltage within which the device is stable in either the relaxed or actuated state. This is referred to herein as the "hysteresis window" or "stability window." For a display array having the hysteresis characteristics of Figure 3A, the row/column actuation protocol can be designed such that during row strobing, pixels in the strobed row that are to be actuated are exposed to a voltage difference of about 10 volts, and pixels that are to be relaxed are exposed to a voltage difference of close to zero volts. After the strobe, the pixels are exposed to a steady state voltage difference of about 5 volts such that they remain in whatever state the row strobe put them in. After being written, each pixel sees a potential difference within the "stability window" of 3-7 volts in this example. This feature makes the pixel design illustrated in Figure 1 stable under the same applied voltage conditions in either an actuated or relaxed pre-existing state. Since each pixel of the interferometric modulator, whether in the actuated or relaxed state, is essentially a capacitor formed by the fixed and moving reflective layers, this stable state can be held at a voltage within the hysteresis window with almost no power dissipation. Essentially no current flows into the pixel if the applied potential is fixed.

In typical applications, a display frame may be created by asserting the set of column electrodes in accordance with the desired set of actuated pixels in the first row. A row pulse is then applied to the row 1 electrode, actuating the pixels corresponding to the asserted column lines. The asserted set of column electrodes is then changed to correspond to the desired set of actuated pixels in the second row. A pulse is then applied to the row 2 electrode, actuating the appropriate pixels in row 2 in accordance with the asserted column electrodes. The row 1 pixels are unaffected by the row 2 pulse, and remain in the state they were set to during the row 1 pulse. This may be repeated for the entire series of rows in a sequential fashion to produce the frame. Generally, the frames are refreshed and/or updated with new display data by continually repeating this process at some desired number of frames per second. A wide variety of protocols for driving row and column electrodes of pixel arrays to produce display frames are also well known and may be used in conjunction with the present invention.

Figures 3B, 4A and 4B illustrate one possible actuation protocol for creating a display frame on the 3x3 array of Figure 2. Figure 3B illustrates a possible set of column and row voltage levels that may be used for pixels exhibiting the hysteresis curves of Figure 3A. In the Figure 3B embodiment, actuating a pixel involves setting the appropriate column to $-V_{\text{bias}}$, and the appropriate row to $+\Delta V$, which may correspond to -5 volts and +5 volts respectively. Relaxing the pixel is accomplished by setting the appropriate column to $+V_{\text{bias}}$, and the

appropriate row to the same $+\Delta V$, producing a zero volt potential difference across the pixel. In those rows where the row voltage is held at zero volts, the pixels are stable in whatever state they were originally in, regardless of whether the column is at $+V_{\text{bias}}$, or $-V_{\text{bias}}$. As is also illustrated in Figure 3B, it will be appreciated that voltages of opposite polarity than those described above can be used, e.g., actuating a pixel can involve setting the appropriate column to $+V_{\text{bias}}$, and the appropriate row to $-\Delta V$. In this embodiment, releasing the pixel is accomplished by setting the appropriate column to $-V_{\text{bias}}$, and the appropriate row to the same $-\Delta V$, producing a zero volt potential difference across the pixel.

Figure 4B is a timing diagram showing a series of row and column signals applied to the 3x3 array of Figure 2 which will result in the display arrangement illustrated in Figure 4A, where actuated pixels are non-reflective. Prior to writing the frame illustrated in Figure 4A, the pixels can be in any state, and in this example, all the rows are at 0 volts, and all the columns are at +5 volts. With these applied voltages, all pixels are stable in their existing actuated or relaxed states.

[0038] In the Figure 4A frame, pixels (1,1), (1,2), (2,2), (3,2) and (3,3) are actuated. To accomplish this, during a "line time" for row 1, columns 1 and 2 are set to -5 volts, and column 3 is set to +5 volts. This does not change the state of any pixels, because all the pixels remain in the 3-7 volt stability window. Row 1 is then strobed with a pulse that goes from 0, up to 5 volts, and back to zero. This actuates the (1,1) and (1,2) pixels and relaxes the (1,3) pixel. No other pixels in the array are affected. To set row 2 as desired, column 2 is set to -5 volts, and columns 1 and 3 are set to +5 volts. The same strobe applied to row 2 will then actuate pixel (2,2) and relax pixels (2,1) and (2,3). Again, no other pixels of the array are affected. Row 3 is similarly set by setting columns 2 and 3 to -5 volts, and column 1 to +5 volts. The row 3 strobe sets the row 3 pixels as shown in Figure 4A. After writing the frame, the row potentials are zero, and the column potentials can remain at either +5 or -5 volts, and the display is then stable in the arrangement of Figure 4A. It will be appreciated that the same procedure can be employed for arrays of dozens or hundreds of rows and columns. It will also be appreciated that the timing, sequence, and levels of voltages used to perform row and column actuation can be varied widely within the general principles outlined above, and the above example is exemplary only, and any actuation voltage method can be used with the systems and methods described herein.

Figures 5A and 5B are system block diagrams illustrating an embodiment of a display device 40. The display device 40 can be, for example, a cellular or mobile telephone. However, the same components of display device 40 or slight variations thereof are also illustrative of various types of display devices such as televisions and portable media players.

The display device 40 includes a housing 41, a display 30, an antenna 43, a speaker 44, an input device 48, and a microphone 46. The housing 41 is generally formed from any of a variety of manufacturing processes as are well known to those of skill in the art, including

injection molding, and vacuum forming. In addition, the housing 41 may be made from any of a variety of materials, including but not limited to plastic, metal, glass, rubber, and ceramic, or a combination thereof. In one embodiment the housing 41 includes removable portions (not shown) that may be interchanged with other removable portions of different color, or containing different logos, pictures, or symbols.

The display 30 of exemplary display device 40 may be any of a variety of displays, including a bi-stable display, as described herein. In other embodiments, the display 30 includes a flat-panel display, such as plasma, EL, OLED, STN LCD, or TFT LCD as described above, or a non-flat-panel display, such as a CRT or other tube device, as is well known to those of skill in the art. However, for purposes of describing the present embodiment, the display 30 includes an interferometric modulator display, as described herein.

The components of one embodiment of exemplary display device 40 are schematically illustrated in Figure 5B. The illustrated exemplary display device 40 includes a housing 41 and can include additional components at least partially enclosed therein. For example, in one embodiment, the exemplary display device 40 includes a network interface 27 that includes an antenna 43 which is coupled to a transceiver 47. The transceiver 47 is connected to a processor 21, which is connected to conditioning hardware 52. The conditioning hardware 52 may be configured to condition a signal (e.g. filter a signal). The conditioning hardware 52 is connected to a speaker 44 and a microphone 46. The processor 21 is also connected to an input device 48 and a driver controller 29. The driver controller 29 is coupled to a frame buffer 28, and to an array driver 22, which in turn is coupled to a display array 30. A power supply 50 provides power to all components as required by the particular exemplary display device 40 design.

The network interface 27 includes the antenna 43 and the transceiver 47 so that the exemplary display device 40 can communicate with one or more devices over a network. In one embodiment the network interface 27 may also have some processing capabilities to relieve requirements of the processor 21. The antenna 43 is any antenna known to those of skill in the art for transmitting and receiving signals. In one embodiment, the antenna transmits and receives RF signals according to the IEEE 802.11 standard, including IEEE 802.11(a), (b), or (g). In another embodiment, the antenna transmits and receives RF signals according to the BLUETOOTH standard. In the case of a cellular telephone, the antenna is designed to receive CDMA, GSM, AMPS or other known signals that are used to communicate within a wireless cell phone network. The transceiver 47 pre-processes the signals received from the antenna 43 so that they may be received by and further manipulated by the processor 21. The transceiver 47 also processes signals received from the processor 21 so that they may be transmitted from the exemplary display device 40 via the antenna 43.

In an alternative embodiment, the transceiver 47 can be replaced by a receiver. In yet another alternative embodiment, network interface 27 can be replaced by an image source, which can store or generate image data to be sent to the processor 21. For example, the image source can be a digital video disc (DVD) or a hard-disc drive that contains image data, or a software module that generates image data.

Processor 21 generally controls the overall operation of the exemplary display device 40. The processor 21 receives data, such as compressed image data from the network interface 27 or an image source, and processes the data into raw image data or into a format that is readily processed into raw image data. The processor 21 then sends the processed data to the driver controller 29 or to frame buffer 28 for storage. Raw data typically refers to the information that identifies the image characteristics at each location within an image. For example, such image characteristics can include color, saturation, and gray-scale level.

[0046] In one embodiment, the processor 21 includes a microcontroller, CPU, or logic unit to control operation of the exemplary display device 40. Conditioning hardware 52 generally includes amplifiers and filters for transmitting signals to the speaker 44, and for receiving signals from the microphone 46. Conditioning hardware 52 may be discrete components within the exemplary display device 40, or may be incorporated within the processor 21 or other components.

The driver controller 29 takes the raw image data generated by the processor 21 either directly from the processor 21 or from the frame buffer 28 and reformats the raw image data appropriately for high speed transmission to the array driver 22. Specifically, the driver controller 29 reformats the raw image data into a data flow having a raster-like format, such that it has a time order suitable for scanning across the display array 30. Then the driver controller 29 sends the formatted information to the array driver 22. Although a driver controller 29, such as a LCD controller, is often associated with the system processor 21 as a stand-alone Integrated Circuit (IC), such controllers may be implemented in many ways. They may be embedded in the processor 21 as hardware, embedded in the processor 21 as software, or fully integrated in hardware with the array driver 22.

Typically, the array driver 22 receives the formatted information from the driver controller 29 and reformats the video data into a parallel set of waveforms that are applied many times per second to the hundreds and sometimes thousands of leads coming from the display's x-y matrix of pixels.

In one embodiment, the driver controller 29, array driver 22, and display array 30 are appropriate for any of the types of displays described herein. For example, in one embodiment, driver controller 29 is a conventional display controller or a bi-stable display controller (e.g., an

interferometric modulator controller). In another embodiment, array driver 22 is a conventional driver or a bi-stable display driver (e.g., an interferometric modulator display). In one embodiment, a driver controller 29 is integrated with the array driver 22. Such an embodiment is common in highly integrated systems such as cellular phones, watches, and other small area displays. In yet another embodiment, display array 30 is a typical display array or a bi-stable display array (e.g., a display including an array of interferometric modulators).

The input device 48 allows a user to control the operation of the exemplary display device 40. In one embodiment, input device 48 includes a keypad, such as a QWERTY keyboard or a telephone keypad, a button, a switch, a touch-sensitive screen, a pressure- or heat-sensitive membrane. In one embodiment, the microphone 46 is an input device for the exemplary display device 40. When the microphone 46 is used to input data to the device, voice commands may be provided by a user for controlling operations of the exemplary display device 40.

Power supply 50 can include a variety of energy storage devices as are well known in the art. For example, in one embodiment, power supply 50 is a rechargeable battery, such as a nickel-cadmium battery or a lithium ion battery. In another embodiment, power supply 50 is a renewable energy source, a capacitor, or a solar cell, including a plastic solar cell, and solar-cell paint. In another embodiment, power supply 50 is configured to receive power from a wall outlet.

In some implementations control programmability resides, as described above, in a driver controller which can be located in several places in the electronic display system. In some cases control programmability resides in the array driver 22. Those of skill in the art will recognize that the above-described optimization may be implemented in any number of hardware and/or software components and in various configurations.

The details of the structure of interferometric modulators that operate in accordance with the principles set forth above may vary widely. For example, Figures 6A-6C illustrate three different embodiments of the moving mirror structure. Figure 6A is a cross section of the embodiment of Figure 1, where a strip of metal material 14 is deposited on orthogonally extending supports 18. In Figure 6B, the moveable reflective material 14 is attached to supports at the corners only, on tethers 32. In Figure 6C, the moveable reflective material 14 is suspended from a deformable layer 34. This embodiment has benefits because the structural design and materials used for the reflective material 14 can be optimized with respect to the optical properties, and the structural design and materials used for the deformable layer 34 can be optimized with respect to desired mechanical properties. The production of various types of interferometric devices is described in a variety of published documents, including, for example, U.S. Published Application 2004/0051929. A wide variety of known techniques may be used to

produce the above described structures involving a series of material deposition, patterning, and etching steps.

As illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 and discussed above, each cavity **19** of the pixel array **30** forms a capacitance that is charged by the row driver circuit **24**. The capacitance value is relatively large for any particular actuated pixel **12b** because the column electrode **14b** moves to be very close to the row electrode **16b**. Because different numbers of cavities may be actuated during a given row pulse, that impedance that the row driver circuitry sees may be highly variable.

Figure 7 illustrates an embodiment in which filter circuits **325a**, **325b**, **325c** are arranged over a substrate **20** between the row electrodes **16a**, **16b**, **16c** and the row driver circuit **24**. It has been found that such filter circuits **325a**, **325b**, **325c** are useful for controlling the impedance driven by the row driver circuit **24**. For example, such filter circuits **325a**, **325b**, **325c** may be used to control the stability of the impedance or to allow the impedance to be modifiable for different row pulses. In the illustrated embodiment, each of the filter circuits **325a**, **325b**, **325c** includes a capacitor **328a**, **328b**, **328c** and a resistor **329a**, **329b**, **329c**, respectively. The filter circuits **325a-c**, capacitors **328a-c**, and resistors **329a-c** are examples of electrical devices that may be incorporated into the pixel array **30**. Other examples of electrical devices include inductors (not shown in Figure 7). For example, in an embodiment, a filter includes at least one capacitor, at least one resistor and at least one inductor. Such electrical devices may be incorporated in various regions of the pixel array **30** and may be used for various purposes. For example, electrical devices such as filter circuits, capacitors, resistors, and/or inductors may be arranged between the column driver circuit **26** and the column electrodes **14** (not shown in Figure 7). Although Figure 7 illustrates a 3 x 3 array **30** of interferometric modulators, it will be understood that display panels or devices as described herein may comprise arrays that include hundreds, thousands or even millions of individual interferometric modulators.

In an embodiment, the electrical devices may be incorporated into the pixel array **30** at or near an edge or a peripheral region **36** of the substrate **20**. However, in some cases incorporation of the electrical devices at or near the peripheral region **36** of the substrate **20** is inconvenient or undesirable. For example, capacitors having relatively large capacitance values may be utilized in certain arrangements. Such capacitors may have relatively large capacitor plate areas and/or may be used in relatively large numbers, and thus may occupy commensurately large areas at or near the peripheral region **36** of the substrate **20**, in some cases reducing the area of the substrate **20** that is available for the pixel array **30**.

Various embodiments described herein provide a display device that includes one or more transparent electrical devices that may be incorporated at various locations within the

device, including locations within the same region or footprint of the substrate as occupied by the array, particularly between the substrate 20 and the pixel array 30. Thus, for example, the designer of a display device that includes interferometric modulators need not be constrained to place electrical devices such as filters, resistors, capacitors and inductors only at or near the edges of the device. Instead, various embodiments allow increased design flexibility by providing transparent electrical devices that may be included in viewing regions of the device.

It will be understood that a "transparent" electrical device need not transmit 100% of incident radiation at all visible wavelengths. An electrical device is considered "transparent" if, when incorporated into a viewing region of a display device, it is capable of transmitting sufficient incident radiation to permit the device to function in a generally similar or improved manner as compared to an otherwise similar device that does not include the transparent electrical device in the viewing region. In many cases, the transparent electrical device transmits at least about 80% of incident optical irradiation, more preferably at least about 90%. It follows from the foregoing that it is not necessary for all of the materials used to fabricate the transparent electrical device be transparent per se themselves. For example, various materials (such as metals) may be used in such small amounts, and/or be deposited in such thin layers, and/or be dispersed so finely in another material, that transparency is achieved, even in cases in which the bulk material is not ordinarily considered transparent per se.

Various electrical devices are described herein, including filters, resistors, capacitors and inductors. Unless otherwise stated, as used herein those terms have their ordinary meanings as understood by those skilled in the art. For example, a capacitor may be a storage capacitor. Examples of preferred capacitors include those having a capacitance in the range of about 10 picoFarad to about 0.1 microFarad. Examples of preferred resistors include those having a resistance in the range of about 100 Ohms to about one gigaOhm. Examples of preferred inductors include those having an inductance in the range of about one nanoHenry to about 10 microHenry. Each of the electrical devices described herein may be used singly, in groups or two or more like devices, or in groups comprising two or more devices that are different, in all of the embodiments described below. Likewise, it will be understood that various features, though illustrated in the context of a particular embodiment, may also be utilized in other embodiments.

An embodiment provides a display panel comprising an array of interferometric modulators arranged over a transparent substrate, and a transparent electrical device arranged between the array of interferometric modulators and the transparent substrate, the transparent electrical device being electrically connected to the array of interferometric modulators. The transparent electrical device may be a passive electrical device such as a capacitor, resistor, inductor and/or filter. It will be understood that the transparent electrical device may include

various combinations of individual electrical components. For example, a filter may include a resistor and a capacitor as illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 8A is a cross-sectional schematic view illustrating a display panel or device embodiment **800**. The display panel **800** includes an interferometric modulator **805** arranged over a transparent substrate **20**. The display panel **800** further includes a transparent capacitor **815** arranged between the interferometric modulator **805** and the transparent substrate **20**. The interferometric modulator **805** is similar to the interferometric modulator **12b** described above, and includes a moveable layer **14b** (shown in the actuated position), a fixed layer **16b**, and posts **18**. The interferometric modulator **805** also includes a dielectric layer **820** arranged over the fixed layer **16b** to prevent shorting and control the separation distance between the moveable layer **14b** and the fixed layer **16b** in the actuated position. The dielectric layer **820** may be formed from a dielectric material such as a silicon oxide. The fixed layer **16b** preferably comprises sublayers (not illustrated) of chromium and indium-tin-oxide (ITO), and the moveable layer **14b** preferably comprises aluminum. The interferometric modulator **805** is viewed through the transparent substrate **20**, and thus the transparent substrate **20** is considered to be on the view side of the display panel **800**. Accordingly, the thickness of the fixed layer **16b** is selected so that it is transparent during operation of the display panel **800**.

In Figure 8A, the transparent capacitor **815** is separated from the fixed layer **16b** of the interferometric modulator **805** by a transparent insulating layer **825**. The transparent insulating layer may comprise a silicon oxide. The transparent capacitor **815** comprises a first capacitor layer **830** and a second capacitor layer **835**, separated from one another by a capacitor dielectric layer **840**. The first and second capacitor layers **830**, **835** are preferably formed from a transparent electrical conductor such as ITO. The capacitor dielectric layer **840** preferably comprises a transparent dielectric material such as silicon oxide ($k \sim 4.1$). Contacts (not shown) electrically connect the transparent capacitor **815** to the array generally (e.g., to the overlying interferometric modulator **805** and/or other interferometric modulators in the array) and to other circuitry, such as drivers.

As noted above, in the illustrated embodiment the transparent substrate **20** is considered to be on the view side of the display panel **800**. Thus, the transparent capacitor **815** is an example of a transparent passive electrical device configured to transmit light to the interferometric modulator **805** from the viewing side of the transparent substrate **20**. In the illustrated configuration, both the transparent capacitor **815** and the interferometric modulator **805** are attached (directly or indirectly) to the substrate **20** in the array region of the display device into which they are incorporated.

Figure 8B is a cross-sectional schematic view illustrating a display panel embodiment 850. The display panel is similar to the display panel 800 except that it includes a filter 325 in place of the capacitor 815 illustrated in Figure 8A. The filter 325 includes a capacitor 815a and a resistor 329. The capacitor 815a is similar to the capacitor 815 illustrated in Figure 8A in that both comprise a first capacitor layer 830 and a second capacitor layer 835. However, in the capacitor 815a, the first and second capacitor layers 830, 835 are separated from one another by a capacitor dielectric layer 840a that includes a transparent resistor 329. The transparent resistor 329 electrically connects the first and second capacitor layers 830, 835. In the illustrated embodiment, the transparent resistor 329 has a resistance of about 10 k Ω .

In other embodiments, including those in which the resistor is not attached to a capacitor and/or those in which the display panel does not include a capacitor, the resistor has a resistance in the range of about 100 Ohms to about one gigaOhm as noted above. The resistor may comprise a transparent insulator (such as a transparent polymer or a silicon oxide) that has been doped with an amount of electrically conductive material (such as a metal) that is effective to provide the resulting resistor with a resistance that is intermediate between that of the insulator and the conductor.

Figure 9 is a schematic perspective view illustrating an inductor embodiment 900. The inductor 900 comprises a generally spiral conductor 910 that is connected to a second conductor 920. The generally spiral conductor 910 is formed in a first plane 905 and the second conductor 920 is formed in a second plane 915 that is generally parallel to the first plane 905. The generally spiral conductor 910 is connected to the second conductor 920 via a transverse conductor 912 that is generally perpendicular to the first plane 905 and the second plane 915. The inductor 900 may be formed by methods known to those skilled in the art. For example, the plane 905 may comprise a transparent substrate onto which a transparent conductive metal such as ITO is deposited and patterned into a generally spiral shape. The second plane 915 may comprise a layer of insulating material such as a silicon oxide that is deposited over the first plane 905 using known methods. A via may then be formed through the second plane 915 to the second conductor 920 and then filled with a conducting metal such as ITO to form the transverse conductor 912. The second conductor 920 may then be formed by depositing and patterning a transparent metal such as ITO on the second plane 915 to contact the transverse conductor 912. Other methods known to those skilled in the art may also be used, see, e.g., U.S. Patent No. 6,531,945; 6,249,039; and 6,166,422. An inductor such as the inductor 900 may be incorporated into a display panel in a manner similar to that described above for Figures 8A and 8B.

It will be understood that display panel embodiments 800, 850 include additional interferometric modulators (not shown in Figures 8A and 8B) that are preferably organized in an

array 30, e.g., as illustrated in Figure 7. The transparent electrical device in the display panel (e.g., the capacitor 815 and the filter 325) may be operably connected to the array of interferometric modulators in various ways. In an embodiment, the transparent capacitor 815 is electrically connected to the array of interferometric modulators by electrically connecting the second capacitor layer 835 to the fixed layer 16b and by electrically connecting the first capacitor layer 830 to the row driver circuit 24 as illustrated in Figure 7. The row driver circuit 24 on the periphery of the substrate 20 or off the substrate 20. Such electrical connections may be accomplished in various ways. For example, with reference to Figures 8A and 8B, the second capacitor layer 835 may be electrically connected to the fixed layer 16b by, e.g., forming a via in the transparent insulating layer 825, filling the via with an electrically conducting material such as a metal, then depositing a thin layer of ITO over the transparent insulating layer 825 and the filled-in via to form the fixed layer 16b, such that the electrically conducting material in the filled-in via forms an electrical connection between the second capacitor layer 835 and the fixed layer 16b.

It will be understood that the electrical connections from the transparent capacitor 815 to the array may be made in various ways, and that the transparent capacitor 815 may be connected to a plurality of interferometric modulators. For example, the fixed layer 16b may form a row line for multiple interferometric modulators in an array as illustrated in Figure 7. The electrical connection of the second capacitor layer 835 to the fixed layer 16b may be made at various places along the length of the fixed layer 16b. The transparent filter 325 may be electrically connected to the array of interferometric modulators in a similar manner.

It will be understood from the foregoing that a particular transparent electrical device in an array of interferometric modulators may be, but need not be, electrically connected to the individual interferometric modulator that is closest to it. Likewise, it will also be understood that a particular transparent electrical device need not be electrically connected to an interferometric modulator. For example, a particular transparent electrical device may be electrically connected to another device that is associated (e.g., packaged or mechanically connected) with the array of interferometric modulators. An embodiment provides a display device comprising: a substrate comprising an array region; an interferometric modulator attached to the substrate in the array region; and a transparent passive electrical device attached to the substrate in the array region. Examples of suitable transparent passive electrical devices include filters, resistors, capacitors and inductors as described above. The transparent passive electrical device(s) may be located in various parts of the array region, such as between an interferometric modulator and the substrate, or may be formed in the periphery. In an embodiment, one or more of the transparent passive electrical device are configured to transmit light to one or more interferometric modulators from

a viewing side of the substrate in the array region. Examples of such configurations are described above and illustrated in Figures 8A and 8B.

Another embodiment provides a method of making a display device, comprising: forming a transparent electrical device on a substrate; depositing an insulating layer over the transparent electrical device; forming an interferometric modulator over the insulating layer; and forming an electrical connection between the transparent electrical device and the interferometric modulator. Figure 10 is a process flow diagram illustrating certain steps in such a method. Each of the steps illustrated in Figure 10 may be conducted in various ways known to those skilled in the art of MEMS fabrication. For example, a wide variety of techniques are known to those skilled in the art, including chemical vapor deposition (including plasma chemical vapor deposition and thermal chemical vapor deposition), spin-on deposition, lithography, etching, patterning, cleaning, soldering, and packaging techniques.

In an embodiment, transparent electrical devices are formed by a combination of chemical vapor deposition, patterning and removal steps. Formation of a transparent electrical device preferably comprises depositing a conductive layer and a dielectric layer, e.g., depositing the first capacitor layer 830 and the capacitor dielectric layer 840 as described above. Formation of the transparent electrical device may further comprise patterning, e.g., patterning a deposited capacitor dielectric layer 840 to define a region to be removed and filled with the transparent resistor 329 to form the capacitor dielectric layer 840a as illustrated in Figure 8B.

Deposition of an insulating layer over the transparent electrical device may be carried out by, e.g., chemical vapor deposition of silicon oxide; chemical vapor deposition of silicon followed by oxidation to form silicon oxide; or by a spin-on glass (SOG) process. The details of such methods are known to those skilled in the art. Formation of an interferometric modulator over the insulating layer may be conducted in various ways, depending on the configuration of the interferometric modulator, see, e.g., Figure 6. The previously deposited insulating layer is a suitable substrate upon which to form an interferometric modulator, as a number of known processes for making interferometric modulators involve deposition steps onto glass substrates.

There are numerous methods for forming electrical connections between the transparent electrical device and the interferometric modulator. For example, as described above, the second capacitor layer 835 may be electrically connected to the fixed layer 16b by forming a via in the transparent insulating layer 825 prior to forming the interferometric modulator, filling the via with an electrically conducting material such as a metal, then depositing a thin layer of ITO over the transparent insulating layer 825 and the filled-in via to form the fixed layer 16b, such that the electrically conducting material in the filled-in via forms an electrical connection between the second capacitor layer 835 and the fixed layer 16b. Lateral electrical connections may be formed by deposition and patterning using a conductive metal.

It will be understood by those of skill in the art that numerous and various modifications can be made without departing from the spirit of the present invention. Therefore, it should be clearly understood that the forms of the present invention are illustrative only and are not intended to limit the scope of the present invention.

5 The reference to any prior art in this specification is not, and should not be taken as, an acknowledgment or any form of suggestion that such prior art forms part of the common general knowledge.

10 It will be understood that the term "comprise" and any of its derivatives (eg. comprises, comprising) as used in this specification is to be taken to be inclusive of features to which it refers, and is not meant to exclude the presence of any additional features unless otherwise stated or implied.

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A display device comprising:
an array of interferometric modulators arranged over a transparent substrate; and
5 a substantially transparent electrical device arranged between the array of interferometric modulators and the transparent substrate, the transparent electrical device being electrically connected to the array of interferometric modulators.
2. The display device of Claim 1, wherein the transparent electrical device is selected from the group comprising a capacitor, a resistor, an inductor and a filter.
- 10 3. The display device of Claim 2, wherein the transparent electrical device is a capacitor.
4. The display device of Claim 3, wherein the capacitor is a storage capacitor.
5. The display device of Claim 2, wherein the transparent electrical device is a resistor.
- 15 6. The display device of Claim 2, wherein the transparent electrical device is an inductor.
7. The display device of Claim 2, wherein the transparent electrical device is a filter.
8. The display device of Claim 7, wherein the filter comprises a capacitor and a resistor.
- 20 9. The display device of Claim 8, wherein the filter further comprises an inductor.
10. The display device of Claim 1, wherein the array of interferometric modulators comprises at least a first interferometric modulator, the first interferometric modulator comprising a first electrode, a first mirror mechanically coupled to the first electrode, a second electrode, and a second mirror mechanically coupled to the second electrode.
- 25 11. The display device of Claim 10, wherein the transparent electrical device is electrically connected to the first electrode.
12. The display device of Claim 10, wherein the second mirror is moveable relative to the first mirror.
- 30 13. The display device of Claim 12, wherein the first mirror is a reflective surface of the first electrode.
14. The display device of Claim 1, wherein the transparent electrical device is a passive electrical device.
15. A display device comprising:
35 a substrate comprising an array region;

an interferometric modulator attached to the substrate in the array region; and
a transparent passive electrical device attached to the substrate in the array
region.

16. The display device of Claim 15, wherein the transparent passive electrical device
5 is configured to transmit light to the interferometric modulator from a viewing side of the
substrate in the array region.

17. The display device of Claim 15 further comprising a second interferometric
modulator attached to the substrate in the array region.

18. The display device of Claim 17, wherein the transparent passive electrical device
10 is arranged between the substrate and the second interferometric modulator in the array region.

19. The display device of Claim 17 further comprising a row line in the array region
electrically connected to the first interferometric modulator and to the second interferometric
modulator.

20. The display device of Claim 19, wherein the transparent passive electrical device
15 is electrically connected to the row line.

21. A method of making a display device, comprising:
forming a transparent electrical device on a substrate;
depositing an insulating layer over the transparent electrical device;
forming an interferometric modulator over the insulating layer; and
20 forming an electrical connection between the transparent electrical device and
the interferometric modulator.

22. The method of Claim 21, wherein forming the transparent electrical device
comprises depositing a conductive layer and a dielectric layer.

23. The method of Claim 22, wherein forming the transparent electrical device
25 comprises depositing a second conductive layer.

24. The method of Claim 22 further comprising patterning at least one of the
conductive layer and the dielectric layer.

25. The method of Claim 21, wherein forming the electrical connection comprises
forming a via in the insulating layer.

30 26. The method of Claim 21, wherein forming the interferometric modulator
comprises forming a first electrode.

27. The method of Claim 26, wherein the first electrode is insulated from the
transparent electrical device by the insulating layer.

28. The display device of Claim 1 comprising:
35 a processor that is in electrical communication with the array of interferometric
modulators, the processor being configured to process image data; and

a memory device in electrical communication with the processor.

29. The display device of Claim 28 further comprising:

a first controller configured to send at least one signal to the array of interferometric modulators; and

5 a second controller configured to send at least a portion of the image data to the first controller.

30. The display device of Claim 28 further comprising:

an image source module configured to send the image data to the processor.

31. The display device of Claim 30, wherein the image source module comprises at
10 least one of a receiver, a transceiver, and a transmitter.

32. The display device of Claim 28 further comprising:

an input device configured to receive input data and to communicate the input data to the processor.

33. A display device manufactured by the method of Claim 21.

15 34. A display device comprising:

means for interferometrically modulating light arranged over

means for supporting said modulating means; and

means for conducting electricity disposed between said modulating means and said supporting means, and wherein said conducting means is substantially transparent
20 and wherein said modulating means is electrically connected to said means for conducting.

35. The display device of Claim 34, wherein said modulating means comprises an array of interferometric modulators.

36. The display device of Claim 34 or 35, wherein said supporting means comprises
25 a substrate.

37. The display device of Claim 34, 35 or 36, wherein said conducting means electricity comprises a transparent electrical device

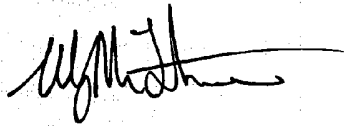
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38. A method of operating an interferometric modulator, comprising:
applying a voltage to a substantially transparent electrical device which is in
electrical communication with an interferometric modulator arranged over a substantially
transparent substrate, wherein the substantially transparent electrical device is disposed
5 between the interferometric modulator and the substantially transparent substrate; and
moving a first component of the interferometric modulator relative to a second
component of the interferometric modulator when the voltage exceeds a predetermined
threshold.

10 DATED this 9th day of August, 2005.

IDC, LLC
By its Patent Attorneys
MADDERNS



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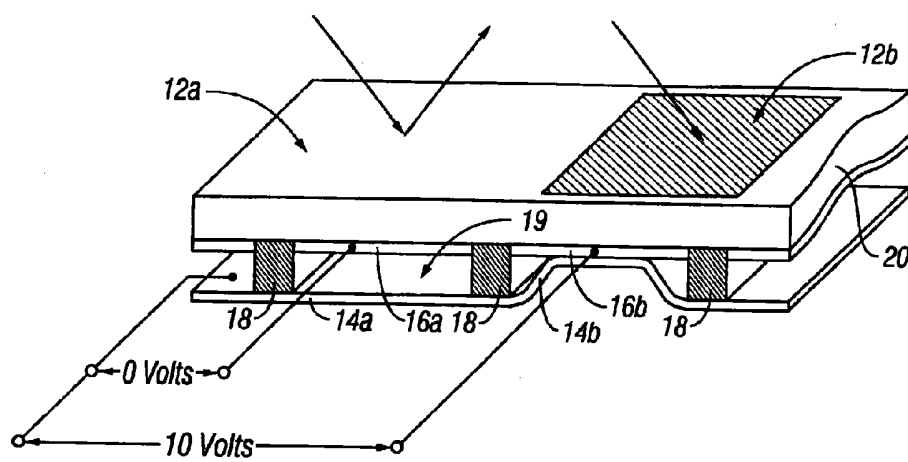


FIG. 1

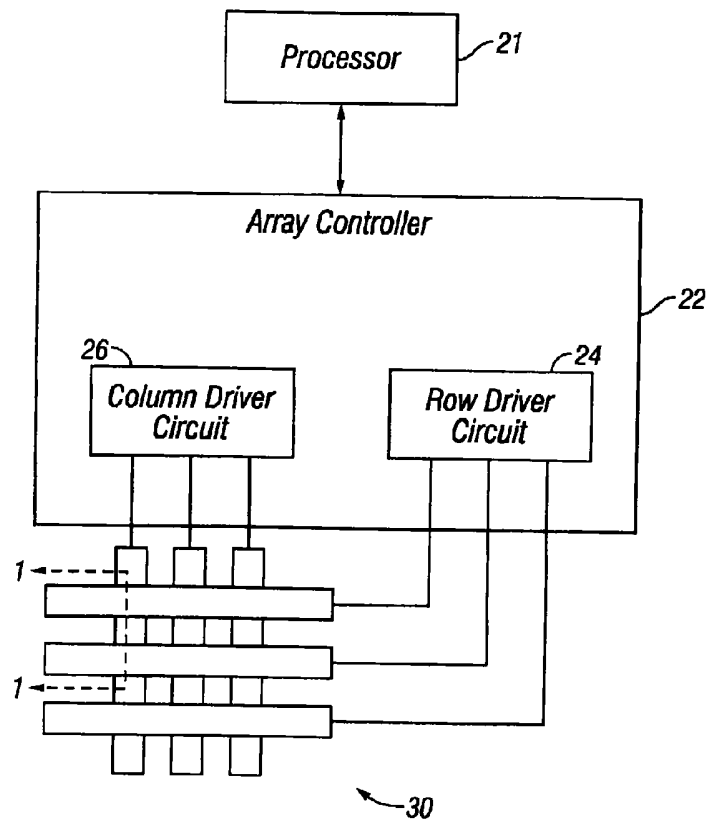


FIG. 2

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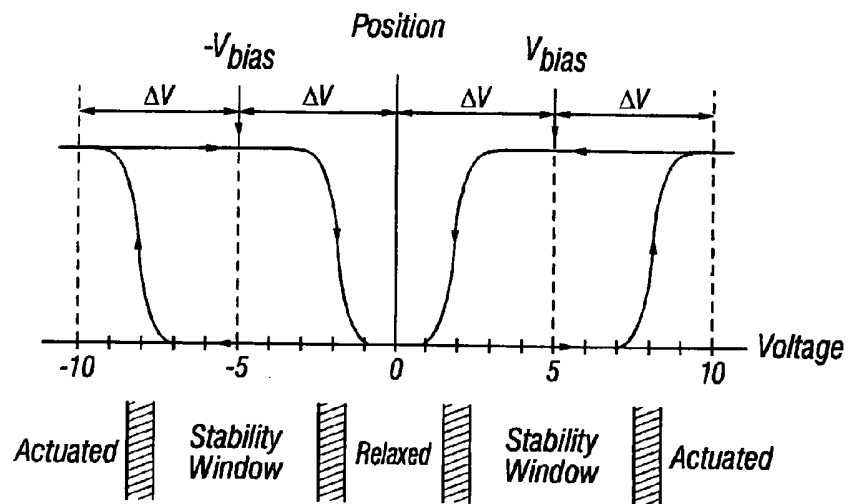


FIG. 3A

		Column Output Signals	
		$+V_{bias}$	$-V_{bias}$
Row Output Signals	0	Stable	Stable
	$+\Delta V$	Relax	Actuate
	$-\Delta V$	Actuate	Relax

FIG. 3B

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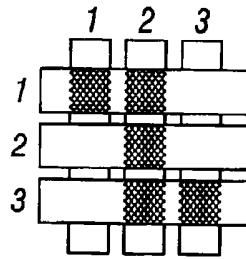


FIG. 4A

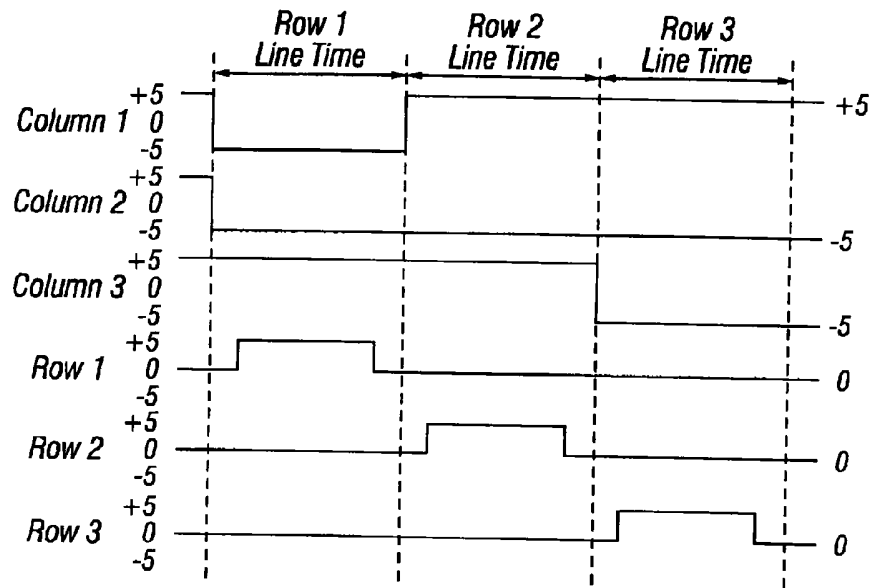


FIG. 4B

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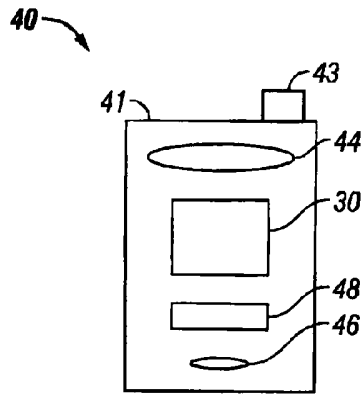


FIG. 5A

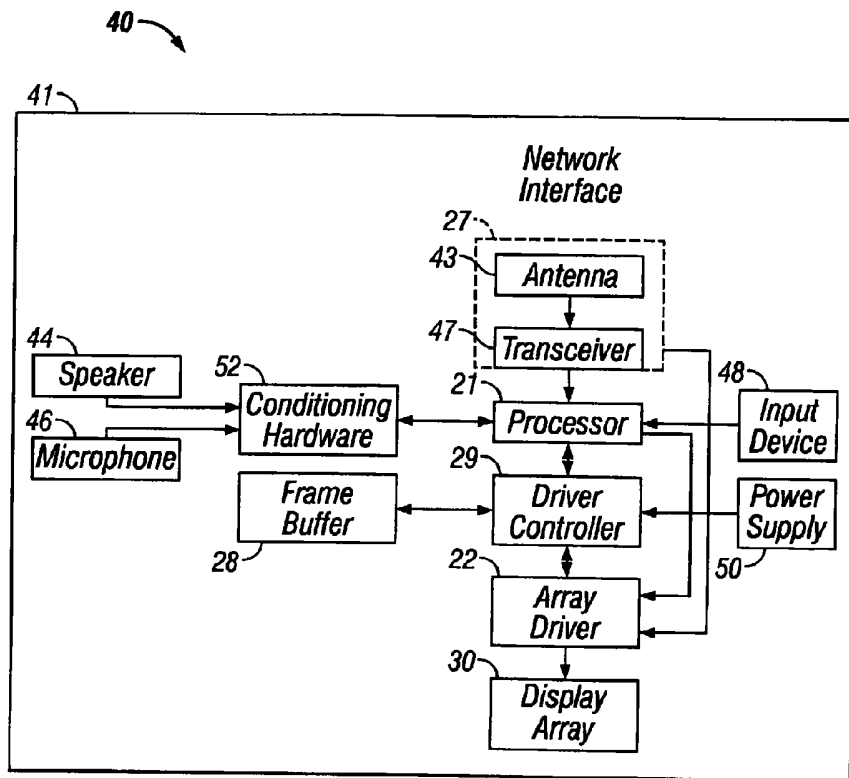


FIG. 5B

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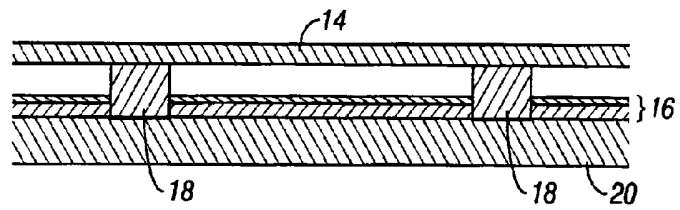


FIG. 6A

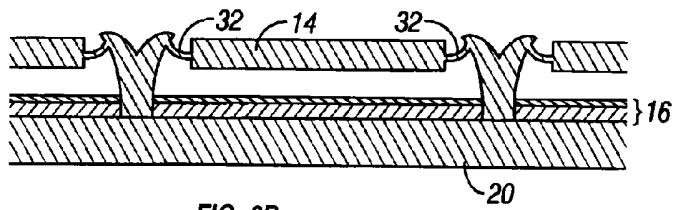


FIG. 6B

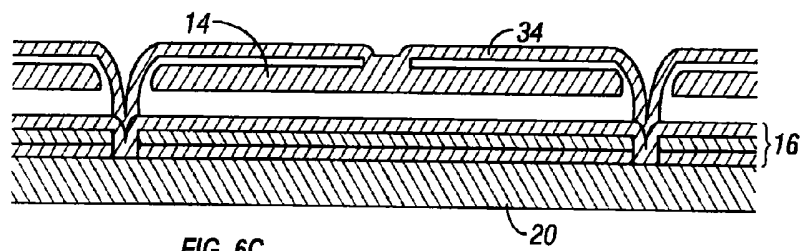


FIG. 6C

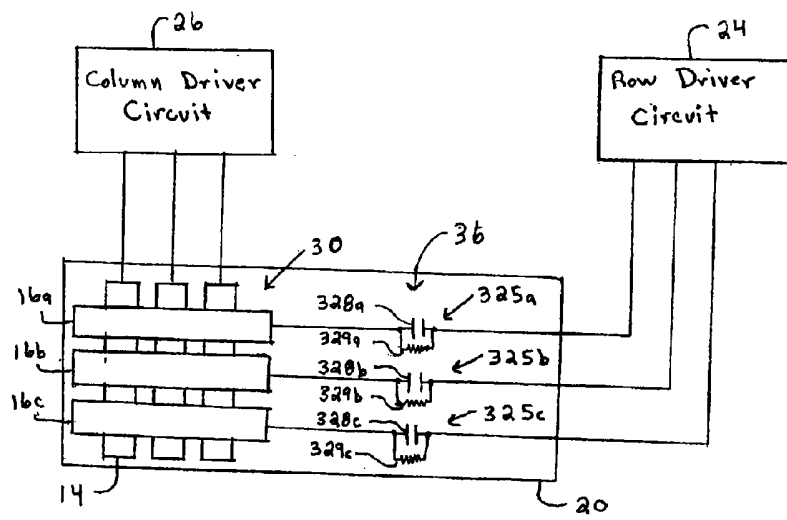


FIG. 7

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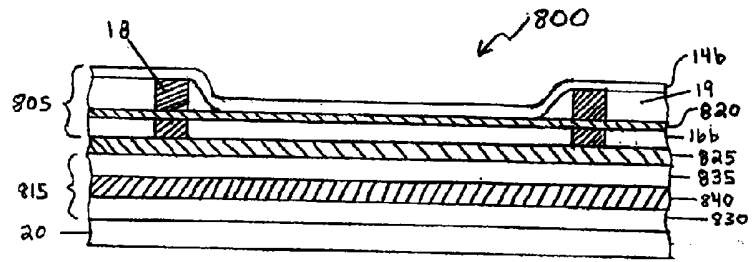


FIG. 8A

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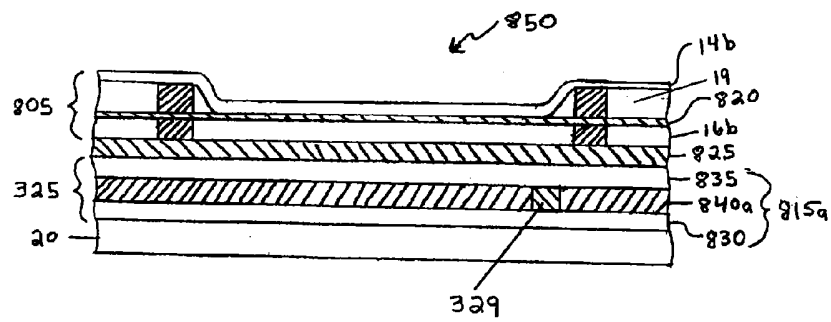


FIG. 8B

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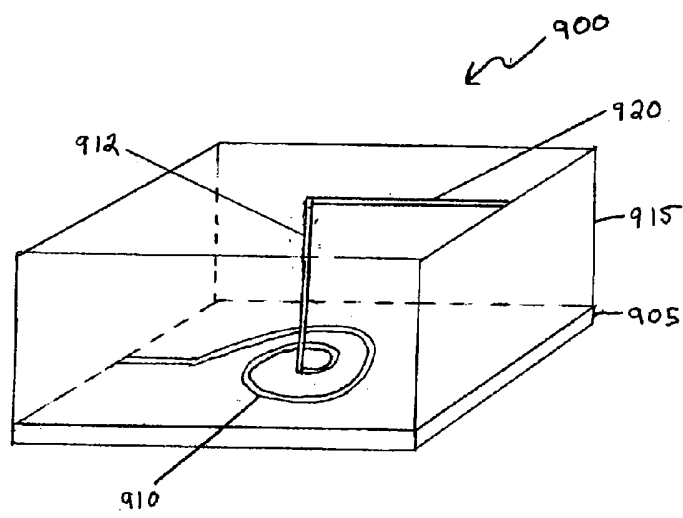


FIG. 9

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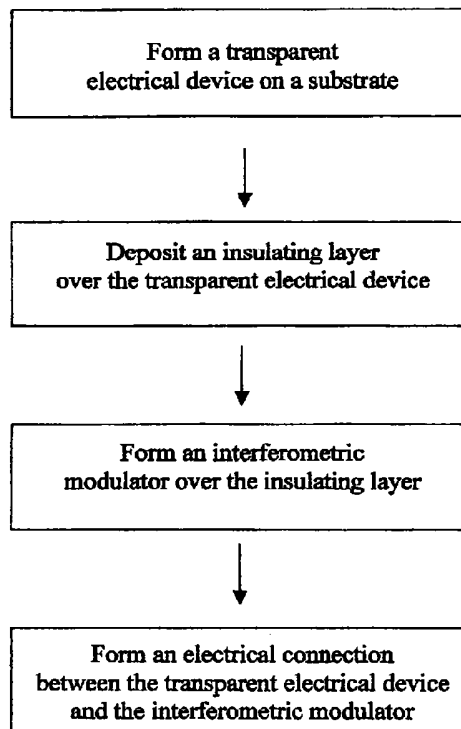


FIG. 10