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(54) Title: ARRAY PLATES AND METHODS FOR MAKING AND USING SAME

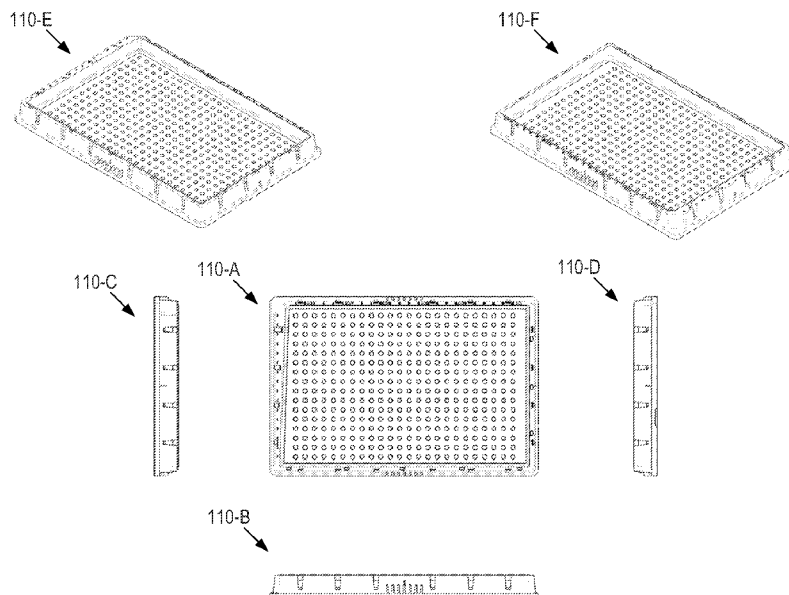


Figure 1

(57) Abstract: Array plates and methods for making and using them are described. One implementation of the method for making an array plate includes providing a first structure including a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through holes. The method also includes pressing the first structure against a first surface of a mold, providing a heated plastic material into the mold, and cooling the plastic material to form a second structure so that the first structure and the second structure are coupled. The second structure includes a base layer and one or more vertical structures along a periphery of the base layer.



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## Array Plates and Methods for Making and Using Same

### TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The disclosed embodiments relate generally to array plates and slides, and methods for making and using the same. More particularly, the disclosed embodiments relate to array plates and slides for biological and/or chemical reactions, and methods for making and using the same.

### BACKGROUND

[0002] An array plate is also called a microtiter plate, microplate, or microwell plate. Array plates are typically used to hold respective liquid droplets separately for biological and/or chemical reaction. For example, a well-type array plate includes a plurality of wells so that each liquid droplet or each sample may be dispensed into a separate well for further processing. Typically, the number of wells is selected from 6, 24, 96, 384, 1536, 3456, and 9600.

[0003] Polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) matrix-coated slides have been used for holding larger volumes of droplets on a microscope slide surface. The PTFE matrix is patterned on a glass slide (e.g., a microscope slide) so that the PTFE matrix covers portions of the glass microscope slide and the remaining portions of the glass microscope slide are not covered by the PTFE matrix. The PTFE matrix has hydrophobic characteristics and the portions of the glass microscope slide that are not covered by the PTFE matrix have hydrophilic characteristics.

[0004] The PTFE matrix-coated slides are typically made by depositing a mixture of resin and PTFE powder on glass slides. The resin in the PTFE matrix holds the PTFE powder together and also onto the glass slides.

[0005] However, the PTFE matrix has a lower hydrophobicity than pure PTFE, because the resin in the PTFE matrix has a lower hydrophobicity than the pure PTFE. When the PTFE matrix-coated slides are used in biological/chemical processing, the PTFE matrix is easily contaminated by biological and/or chemical materials used in the biological/chemical processing. For example, proteins in biological samples may attach to the PTFE matrix

during biological assays. This leads to contamination of samples and inaccurate assay results.

## SUMMARY

**[0006]** Accordingly, there is need for plates and slides with hydrophobic surfaces with higher hydrophobicity. Such plates and slides may replace the PTFE matrix-coated slides in performing biological and/or chemical reactions. Such plates and slides reduce or eliminate adsorption of biological and/or chemical materials onto hydrophobic surfaces, thereby reducing contamination of samples and improving accuracy in assays.

**[0007]** A number of embodiments that overcome the limitations and disadvantages of existing array plates and slides are presented in more detail below. These embodiments provide array plates and slides for biological and/or chemical reactions and methods for making and using the same.

**[0008]** As described in more detail below, some embodiments involve a method for manufacturing an array plate. The method includes providing a first structure, the first structure including a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through holes. The method includes pressing the first structure against a first surface of a mold, providing a heated plastic material into the mold, and cooling the plastic material to form a second structure so that the first structure and the second structure are coupled. The second structure includes a base layer and one or more vertical structures along a periphery of the base layer, adjacent a first surface of the base layer. At least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the base layer of the second structure adjacent the first surface of the base layer.

**[0009]** In accordance with some embodiments, an apparatus includes an array plate manufactured by the aforementioned method.

**[0010]** In accordance with some embodiments, an apparatus includes a first structure, the first structure including a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through holes. The apparatus includes a second structure coupled to the first structure, the second structure including a base layer and one or more vertical structures along a periphery of the base layer, adjacent a first surface of the base layer. At least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure, and a second surface of the sheet

layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the base layer of the second structure adjacent the first surface of the base layer.

**[0011]** In accordance with some embodiments, a method includes providing an apparatus of the aforementioned apparatuses, the apparatus defining a reservoir. The method includes storing a liquid medium in the reservoir of the apparatus so that the first surface of the sheet layer is covered by the liquid medium, and dispensing respective liquid droplets on respective locations on the base layer. The respective locations correspond to locations of the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer, and the respective liquid droplets are immiscible with the liquid medium. In some embodiments, the method includes adding one or more solutions to one or more liquid droplets of the respective liquid droplets. In some embodiments, the method includes performing an immunoassay by: immobilizing one of one or more antibodies and one or more antigens in one or more respective liquid droplets to the base layer; adding one or more solutions to the one or more respective liquid droplets of the respective liquid droplets, at least one of the one or more solutions including the other of the one or more antibodies and the one or more antigens; and detecting a binding of the at least one antigen with at least one antibody in the one or more respective liquid droplets. In some embodiments, the method includes washing the respective liquid droplets on the apparatus by: removing a portion of the liquid medium; adding a wash buffer to the reservoir; shaking the apparatus so that the wash buffer and the respective liquid droplets are mixed; draining at least a portion of the wash buffer from the reservoir; and providing a liquid medium in the reservoir of the apparatus so that the first surface of the sheet layer is covered by the liquid medium.

**[0012]** Some embodiments involve a method for manufacturing an array slide. The method includes providing a first structure in a mold. The first structure includes a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through-holes. The method also includes providing a heated plastic material into the mold and cooling the plastic material to form a second structure so that the first structure and the second structure are coupled. At least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the second structure.

**[0013]** Some embodiments involve an array slide manufactured by the aforementioned method.

**[0014]** In accordance with some embodiments, an array slide includes a first structure including a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through-holes; and a second structure coupled to the first structure. At least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure. A top portion of the sheet layer, including the exposed portion of the first surface of the sheet layer, includes at least 95% of fluorocarbon by weight. A second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the second structure.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

**[0015]** For a better understanding of the aforementioned embodiments as well as additional embodiments, reference should be made to the Description of Embodiments below, in conjunction with the following drawings in which like reference numerals refer to corresponding parts throughout the figures.

**[0016]** Figure 1 is perspective views of an exemplary array plate in accordance with some embodiments.

**[0017]** Figure 2A is an exploded view of an exemplary combination of a first structure and a second structure in accordance with some embodiments.

**[0018]** Figure 2B is a perspective view of the exemplary combination of the first structure and the second structure in accordance with some embodiments.

**[0019]** Figure 2C is a cross-sectional view of the exemplary combination of the first structure and the second structure in accordance with some embodiments.

**[0020]** Figure 2D is a partial sectional view of the exemplary combination illustrated in Figure 2C in accordance with some embodiments.

**[0021]** Figures 2E-2H are schematic diagrams illustrating selected steps for manufacturing an exemplary combination of a first structure and a second structure in accordance with some embodiments.

**[0022]** Figure 3A is an exploded view of an exemplary array plate in accordance with some embodiments.

**[0023]** Figures 3B, 3D, and 3F are top perspective views of an exemplary array plate in accordance with some embodiments.

[0024] Figure 3C is a cross-sectional view of the exemplary array plate corresponding to a section indicated in Figure 3B in accordance with some embodiments.

[0025] Figure 3C-1 is a partial sectional view of the exemplary array plate corresponding to a portion of the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 3C in accordance with some embodiments.

[0026] Figure 3E is a cross-sectional view of the exemplary array plate corresponding to a section indicated in Figure 3D in accordance with some embodiments.

[0027] Figure 3E-1 is a partial sectional view of the exemplary array plate corresponding to a portion of the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 3E in accordance with some embodiments.

[0028] Figure 3G is a cross-sectional view of the exemplary array plate corresponding to a section indicated in Figure 3F in accordance with some embodiments.

[0029] Figure 3G-1 is a partial sectional view of the exemplary array plate corresponding to a portion of the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 3G in accordance with some embodiments.

[0030] Figures 3H-3J are schematic diagrams illustrating selected steps for manufacturing an exemplary array plate in accordance with some embodiments.

[0031] Figure 4A is a top perspective view of an exemplary array plate in accordance with some embodiments.

[0032] Figure 4B are partial top views of an exemplary array plate in accordance with some embodiments.

[0033] Figures 5A-5C are partial sectional views of exemplary array plates in accordance with various embodiments.

[0034] Figures 6A-6D are flow charts representing a method of making an array plate in accordance with some embodiments.

[0035] Figure 7 is a perspective view of an exemplary array slide in accordance with some embodiments.

[0036] Figure 8A is a top-down view of an exemplary array slide in accordance with some embodiments.

[0037] Figure 8B is a partial cross-sectional view of an exemplary array slide in accordance with some embodiments.

[0038] Figure 8C is an exploded view of an exemplary array slide in accordance with some embodiments.

[0039] Figures 9A-9D are schematic diagrams illustrating selected steps for manufacturing an exemplary array slide in accordance with some embodiments.

[0040] Figure 10A is a top-down view of an exemplary array slide in accordance with some embodiments.

[0041] Figure 10B is a partial cross-sectional view of an exemplary array slide in accordance with some embodiments.

[0042] Figure 10C is a top-down view of exemplary array slides in accordance with some embodiments.

[0043] Figure 11A is a top-down view of an exemplary array slide in accordance with some embodiments.

[0044] Figure 11B is a partial cross-sectional view of an exemplary array slide in accordance with some embodiments.

[0045] Figures 12A-12D are flow charts representing a method of making an array slide in accordance with some embodiments.

[0046] Like reference numerals refer to corresponding parts throughout the drawings.

## DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

[0047] Array plates and slides and methods for making and using the array plates and slides are described. Reference will be made to certain embodiments, examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings. While the claims will be described in conjunction with the embodiments, it will be understood that it is not intended to limit the claims to these particular embodiments alone. On the contrary, the embodiments are intended to cover alternatives, modifications and equivalents that are within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

[0048] Moreover, in the following description, numerous specific details are set forth to provide a thorough understanding of the embodiments. However, it will be apparent to



one of ordinary skill in the art that the embodiments may be practiced without these particular details. In other instances, methods, procedures, components, and networks that are well-known to those of ordinary skill in the art are not described in detail to avoid obscuring aspects of the embodiments.

[0049] It will also be understood that, although the terms first, second, *etc.* may be used herein to describe various elements, these elements should not be limited by these terms. These terms are only used to distinguish one element from another. For example, a first surface could be termed a second surface, and, similarly, a second surface could be termed a first surface, without departing from the scope of the embodiments. The first surface and the second surface are both surfaces, but they are not the same surface.

[0050] The terminology used in the description of the embodiments herein is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only and is not intended to be limiting of the invention. As used in the description of the embodiments and the appended claims, the singular forms “a,” “an,” and “the” are intended to include the plural forms as well, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. It will also be understood that the term “and/or” as used herein refers to and encompasses any and all possible combinations of one or more of the associated listed items. It will be further understood that the terms “comprises” and/or “comprising,” when used in this specification, specify the presence of stated features, integers, steps, operations, elements, and/or components, but do not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, integers, steps, operations, elements, components, and/or groups thereof.

#### Array Plates and Methods for Making the Array Plates

[0051] Figure 1 is perspective views of an exemplary array plate in accordance with some embodiments. In particular, Figure 1 includes a top perspective view 110-A, a front perspective view 110-B, a left perspective view 110-C, a right perspective view 110-D, and oblique perspective views 110-E and 110-F of an exemplary array plate 110.

[0052] The exemplary array plate 110 includes at least a combination of a first structure (e.g., a plate) and a second structure (e.g., a frame). The details of the first structure and the second structure are described with respect to Figures 2A-2G below.

[0053] Figure 2A is an exploded view of an exemplary combination of a first structure 202 and a second structure 204 in accordance with some embodiments. The first structure 202 includes a sheet layer that typically has a square or rectangular planar shape.

Alternatively, the sheet layer of the first structure 202 may have a round shape, such as a circle or an oval. Optionally, the first structure 202 may also include additional features, such as one or more vertical structures described below (e.g., the first structure 202 may be a tray including the sheet layer and one or more short sidewalls). In some embodiments, the sheet layer of the first structure 202 includes a sheet of a preselected material of a predefined thickness. The preselected material includes a polymer (e.g., polytetrafluoroethylene, any other perfluorocarbon polymer, or any other fluorocarbon polymer). The sheet layer has a thickness typically of 0.01—10 mm, 0.1 – 2 mm, 0.2 – 1 mm, or 1 – 2 mm.

**[0054]** A plurality of discrete through holes 206 are defined in the sheet layer of the first structure 202. The plurality of discrete through holes 206 are formed by punching holes through the sheet layer of the first structure 202 (which typically includes a polymer). Typically, the plurality of discrete through holes have substantially the same diameter (e.g., with less than 50, 30, 20, 10, or 5% variation among the holes). In some embodiments, a respective through hole has a 1 mm – 5 mm diameter, or 2 mm – 3 mm diameter. In some embodiments, the discrete through holes are arranged in a predefined pattern. For example, when 96 discrete through holes are defined in the sheet layer of the first structure 202, the 96 discrete through holes are arranged in an 8×12 array. In some embodiments, the discrete through holes have a predefined spacing.

**[0055]** In some embodiments, the sheet layer of the first structure 202 includes at least 50% of fluorocarbon by weight. Alternatively, the sheet layer of the first structure 202 may include at least 60, 70, 80, 90, 95, or 99% of fluorocarbon by weight. In some embodiments, the sheet layer of the first structure 202 includes at least 90% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight. Alternatively, the sheet layer of the first structure 202 may include at least 50, 60, 70, 80, 95, or 99% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight.

**[0056]** In some embodiments, a first surface (e.g., a surface facing away from the second structure 204) of the first structure 202 is roughened to increase the hydrophobicity and/or oleophobicity.

**[0057]** In some embodiments, at least the first surface of the first structure 202 is coated with a material of at least 50 % of fluorocarbon by weight. The thickness of the coated material may be as thin as 1 nm, 2 nm, 5 nm, or 10 nm.

**[0058]** The second structure 204 includes a base layer 208 and one or more vertical structures 212 along, or adjacent to, a periphery of the base layer 208, adjacent a first surface

of the base layer 208 (e.g., a top surface of the base layer 208 facing the first structure 202 as illustrated in Figure 2A). As used herein, a vertical structure 212 refers to a structure protruding from a plane defined by the base layer 208. The vertical structure 212 typically defines a plane that is substantially perpendicular to the plane defined by the base layer 208 (e.g., the angle formed by the vertical structure 212 and the base layer 208 is 45° or less). In some embodiments, the one or more vertical structures 212 typically have at least 3 mm height. Alternatively, the one or more vertical structures 212 may have 1 mm, 2 mm, 4 mm, 5 mm, 6 mm, 8 mm, 10 mm, 12 mm, 14 mm, or 15 mm height. In some embodiments, the one or more vertical structures 212 have 0.1-5 mm width. Alternatively, the one or more vertical structures 212 may have 1-4 mm, 1-3 mm, 2-4 mm, 1-2 mm, or 2-3 mm width. In some embodiments, the one or more vertical structures 212 are configured to form a reservoir with the base layer 208. In other words, the reservoir is defined by the one or more vertical structures 212 and the base layer 208. In such embodiments, the reservoir formed by the one or more vertical structures of the second structure hold liquid without leaks. In some embodiments, the reservoir formed by the first structure and the second structure is configured to store at least a predefined volume of liquid (e.g., 1 ml, 5 ml, 10 ml, 20 ml, 50 ml, 100 ml, etc.).

**[0059]** In some embodiments, the base layer 208 of the second structure 204 includes a plurality of structures 210 that correspond to the plurality of discrete through holes in the first structure 202. In some embodiments, the second structure 204 is configured to mate with the first structure 202.

**[0060]** In some embodiments, the one or more vertical structures 212 include a plurality of pins 214. In some embodiments, the plurality of pins 214 vertically protrudes from the rest of the one or more vertical structures (e.g., a tip of a pin 214 is located further away from the rest of the one or more vertical structures). In some embodiments, the pins 214 provide additional stiffness for the one or more vertical structures 212. In some embodiments, the pins 214 also provide additional stiffness for the one or more side walls formed over the one or more vertical structures 212 so that the one or more side walls may maintain a flat top surface. In some embodiments, the pins 214 are used to remove an array plate from a mold, the process of which is described below with respect to Figure 3J.

**[0061]** The second structure 204 typically includes a plastic material. In some embodiments, the plastic material includes polycarbonates. In some embodiments, the plastic material includes cyclic olefin polymer or copolymer.

[0062] In some embodiments, the plastic material of the second structure 204 is optically transparent. This allows the second structure 204 to be optically imaged from a bottom surface side of the base layer 208 facing away from the first structure 202. In order to obtain high quality images, it is important to keep the first structure and the second structure.

[0063] Figure 2B is a perspective view of the exemplary combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 in accordance with some embodiments.

[0064] In some embodiments, the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 is made by forming the second structure 204 through a molding process while the first structure is placed in a mold. The details of the molding process are described with respect to Figures 2E-2H below. Alternatively, the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 may be separately manufactured and subsequently attached together. However, forming the second structure through the molding process provides several advantages, including a better seal between the first structure and the second structure, the absence of glue or adhesives in forming the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204, and also a reduced number of manufacturing steps. The absence of glue or adhesives reduces the interference on biological experiments on the plate.

[0065] Figure 2B also indicates a line 2B-2B' across the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204. The line 2B-2B' corresponds to the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 2C.

[0066] Figure 2C is a cross-sectional view of the exemplary combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 in accordance with some embodiments. Figure 2C also illustrates a pin 214 that vertically protrudes from the rest of the second structure 204 and a base layer 208.

[0067] Figure 2D is a partial sectional view of the exemplary combination 220 illustrated in Figure 2C, near the junction of the base layer 208 and the one or more vertical structures 212, in accordance with some embodiments. When the second structure 204 is formed by a molding process, the base layer 208 and the one or more vertical structures 212 are integrally formed so that there is no hole or gap through which liquids leak.

[0068] As shown in Figure 2D, in the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204, at least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure 202 (e.g., a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure 202 facing away from the second structure 204) is exposed from the second structure 204, and a second surface of

the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, (e.g., a bottom surface of the sheet layer of the first structure 202 facing the base layer 208 of the second structure 204) is embedded in the base layer 208 of the second structure 204 adjacent the first surface of the base layer 208. In other words, the top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure 202 is not entirely covered by the second structure 204. However, in some embodiments, a portion of the top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure 202 is covered by the second structure 204 along the periphery of the first structure. The bottom surface of the sheet layer of the first structure 202 is in contact with the base layer 208 of the second structure 204.

[0069] In some embodiments, the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 have a surface tension difference of more than 10 dynes/cm. In some embodiments, the second structure 204 is more hydrophilic than the first structure 202, and the first structure 202 is more hydrophobic than the second structure 204.

[0070] Figures 2E-2H are schematic diagrams illustrating selected steps for manufacturing an exemplary combination 220 of a first structure 202 and a second structure 204 in accordance with some embodiments. The elements in Figures 2E-2H are not drawn to scale.

[0071] Figure 2E illustrates that the first structure 202 is held in a first mold component 230 by vacuum suction. The vacuum suction pulls the first structure 202 toward the first mold component 230 so that the first structure 202 remains flat through the molding process. Typically, the vacuum suction is applied over a plurality of locations on the first structure 202. The vacuum suction typically leaves one or more indentations on the surface of the first structure 202 facing the first mold component 230. In some embodiments, the first mold component 230 includes a plurality of vacuum holes (not shown).

[0072] In some embodiments, a plurality of pins 242 coupled with the second mold component 240 are spring loaded so that the plurality of pins 242 are configured to apply force on the first structure 202 toward the first mold component 230 when the first mold component 230 and the second mold component 240 are assembled together.

[0073] In some embodiments, the bottom surface of the first structure 202 (e.g., the surface facing the second mold component 240) is treated, typically before the first structure 202 is held in the first mold component 230, to facilitate coupling with the second structure 204. In some embodiments, the bottom surface of the first structure 202 is treated to reduce the hydrophobicity (e.g., increase the surface tension) of the first structure 202. In some

embodiments, the bottom surface of the first structure 202 is roughened to increase the contact area with the second structure 204.

[0074] In some embodiments, the first mold component 230 has a flat surface or a portion of the surface that is flat facing the first structure 202. In some embodiments, the surface of the first mold component 230 has protrusions and/or indentations, the impact of which is described below with respect to Figures 5A-5C below.

[0075] Figure 2F illustrates that the first mold component 230 and the second mold component 240 are assembled, thereby forming a cavity inside, into which a heated plastic material is introduced for a molding process.

[0076] Figure 2G illustrates that a heated plastic material is introduced into the cavity. In some embodiments, the plastic material includes polycarbonates. In some embodiments, the plastic material includes cyclic olefin polymer or copolymer.

[0077] Once the heated plastic material is cooled, the plastic material forms the second structure 204. When the second structure 204 is formed, the second structure 204 is coupled with the first structure 202 so as to form the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204.

[0078] Figure 2H illustrates that the combination 220 is removed from the first mold component 230 and the second mold component 240.

[0079] Note that the combination 220 removed from the first mold component 230 and the second mold component 240 has pin marks corresponding to the plurality of pins 242 coupled with the second mold component 240. When optical measurements (e.g., collection of optical images or optical signals) are performed through respective portions of the second structure 204 corresponding to the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the first structure 202, if the pin marks are located at the respective portions of the second structure 204 corresponding to the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the first structure 202, the pin marks interfere optical measurements. Thus, to avoid the interference by the pin marks, the plurality of pins 242 are located offset from the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the first structure 202. Alternatively, the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 are aligned so that the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer of the first structure 202 is offset from the plurality of holding locations in the second structure 204.

**[0080]** Although Figures 2E-2H illustrate forming the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 by a molding process, the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 may be manufactured by attaching the first structure 202 to a preformed second structure 204.

**[0081]** Figure 3A is an exploded view of an exemplary array plate 320 in accordance with some embodiments. The exemplary array plate 320 includes a third structure 310 and the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 described above with respect to Figures 2E-2H.

**[0082]** In some embodiments, the third structure 310 includes a plurality of vertical indentations 314 along the outside of the third structure 310. In some embodiments, a respective side of the third structure 310 defines a longitudinal axis, and respective vertical indentations 314 located on the respective side of the third structure 310 are substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis formed by the respective side of the third structure 310 (e.g., a respective vertical indentation 314 forms 60-120° with the longitudinal axis of the respective portion of the third structure 310). In some embodiments, the vertical indentations 314 are substantially perpendicular to the plane defined by the base layer 208 of the second structure 202 of the combination 220 (e.g., a respective vertical indentation 314 forms 45° or less with a surface normal of the base layer 208 of the second structure 202 of the combination 220). In some embodiments, the plurality of vertical indentations 314 reduces distortion of the third structure 310, thereby maintaining a flatness of the top surface of the third structure 310.

**[0083]** In some embodiments, the third structure 310 includes one or more handles 312, each handle 312 including a plurality of fins.

**[0084]** Figures 3B, 3D, and 3F are top perspective views of an exemplary array plate in accordance with some embodiments.

**[0085]** Figure 3B also indicates a line 3B-3B' across the array plate 320. The line 3B-3B' traverses a plurality of the discrete through holes in the sheet layer of the first structure 202. The line 3B-3B' corresponds to the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 3C.

**[0086]** Figure 3C is a cross-sectional view of the exemplary array plate 320 corresponding to a section indicated in Figure 3B in accordance with some embodiments. Figure 3C-1 is a partial sectional view of a side wall region of the exemplary array plate 320

illustrated in Figure 3C. Figures 3C and 3C-1 show that, in some embodiments, at least a portion of the first structure 202 is covered by the third structure 310 so that the first structure 202 is securely coupled, and any leak or retention of a liquid solution along the line between the first structure 202 and the third structure 310.

[0087] Figure 3D also indicates a line 3D-3D' across the array plate 320. The line 3D-3D' corresponds to the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 3E. The line 3D-3D' traverses the pins 314 in the vertical structures of the second structure 204. The line 3D-3D' corresponds to the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 3E.

[0088] Figure 3E is a cross-sectional view of the exemplary array plate 320 corresponding to a section indicated in Figure 3D in accordance with some embodiments. Figure 3E-1 is a partial sectional view of a side wall region (corresponding a circle illustrated in Figure 3E) of the exemplary array plate 320 illustrated in Figure 3E. As illustrated in Figure 3E, in some embodiments, the pin 314 extends through the third structure 310 so that a top of the pin 314 is exposed.

[0089] Figure 3F also indicates a line 3F-3F' across the array plate 320. The line 3F-3F' corresponds to the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 3E. The line 3F-3F' traverses vertical indentations 314 on the side walls. The line 3F-3F' corresponds to the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 3G.

[0090] Figure 3G is a cross-sectional view of the exemplary array plate corresponding to a section indicated in Figure 3F in accordance with some embodiments. Figure 3G-1 is a partial sectional view of a side wall region (corresponding to a circle illustrated in Figure 3G) of the exemplary array plate 320 illustrated in Figure 3G. In some embodiments, the one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure 202, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and a respective side wall of the one or more side walls includes one or more lips 322 on the top surface, at least one of the one or more lips aligned with the inner surface of the respective side wall.

[0091] Figures 3H-3J are schematic diagrams illustrating selected steps for manufacturing an exemplary array plate with a second molding process in accordance with some embodiments. The elements in Figures 3H-3J are not drawn to scale.

[0092] Figure 3H illustrates that the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 is located in a cavity formed by a third mold component 350 and a fourth mold component 360.



[0093] Figure 3I illustrates that the cavity formed by the third mold component 350 and the fourth mold component 360 is filled with a heated second plastic material. In some embodiments, the second plastic material is distinct from the plastic material used to form the second structure. In some embodiments, the second plastic material is identical to the plastic material used to form the second structure. In some embodiments, the second plastic material has a glass transition temperature lower than the glass transition temperature of the plastic material used for the second structure 204. This reduces the glass transition of the plastic material in the second structure 204 during the second molding process so that the second structure 204 maintains its shape and flatness during the second molding process. Exemplary glass transition temperatures are ~95 °C for polystyrene, ~130 °C for polyfluorotetraethylene, and 145-150 °C for polycarbonates. The glass transition temperature of cyclic olefin copolymer may exceed 150 °C. In some embodiments, the melting temperature for the second plastic material is typically not higher than 200 °C.

[0094] Once the second plastic material is cooled, the third structure 310 is formed. The third structure 310 is coupled with the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204. In some embodiments, the third structure 310 covers at least the one or more vertical structures of the second structure 204. In some embodiments, the third structure 310, when included, covers at least a portion of an inner surface of respective vertical structures 204, thereby forming one or more side walls. In other words, in such embodiments, the reservoir of the array plate 320 is defined by the third structure 310 on the sides, and the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 on the bottom. In some embodiments, a respective side wall of the one or more side walls has 1-8 mm, 2-5 mm, 2-4 mm, 2-3 mm, or 3-4 mm width. In some embodiments, a respective side wall of the one or more side walls has 1-10 mm, 2-9 mm, 3-8 mm, 4-7 mm, or 5-6 mm height.

[0095] In some embodiments, the one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure 202, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and a respective side wall of the one or more side walls includes one or more vertical indentations 314 (Figure 3G) along the outer surface of the respective side wall.

[0096] In some embodiments, the one or more side walls are made of a hydrophobic material of a surface tension lower than 35 dynes/cm (e.g., hydrocarbon polymer, polypropylene, polytetrafluoroethylene, and their derivative, etc.). In some embodiments, the

one or more side walls are made of a hydrophobic material of a surface tension lower than 25 dynes/cm.

**[0097]** In some embodiments, the one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and the inner surface of a respective side wall of the one or more side walls is coated to expose a hydrophobic surface of a surface tension lower than 35 dynes/cm.

**[0098]** Array plates with the one or more side walls made with an elastic material can better handle thermal stress. Thus, in some embodiments, the hardness of the second plastic material is Shore A hardness of 85 or less. In some embodiments, the hardness of the second plastic material is Shore A hardness of 80 or less. In some embodiments, the hardness of the second plastic material is Shore A hardness of 75 or less. In some embodiments, the second plastic material has a tensile modulus of less than 2 GPa.

**[0099]** Figure 3J illustrates that the array plate 320 is released from the third mold component 350 and the fourth mold component 360. In some embodiments, releasing the array plate 320 from the third mold component 350 includes pushing the plurality of pins 214 of the second structure 204. In some embodiments, the second structure 204 and the plurality of pins 214 of the second structure 204 are made of a stiffer material (e.g., a material with a higher elastic modulus, such as a spring constant, Young's modulus, etc.) than the third structure 310.

**[00100]** Although Figures 3H-3J illustrate forming the array plate 320 by a molding process, the array plate 320 may be manufactured by interposing the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204 between a top layer and a bottom layer, both of which are prefabricated, and attaching the top layer and the bottom layer to each other and/or to the combination 220 of the first structure 202 and the second structure 204.

**[00101]** Although Figures 2E-2H and Figures 3H-3J illustrate manufacturing an exemplary array plate using two-step molding processes, it is also possible to make an array plate with a single molding process.

**[00102]** In some embodiments, the one or more vertical structures formed during the first molding process may be configured to form one or more side walls, thereby eliminating the need for a second molding process to form one or more side walls over the one or more vertical structures.

[00103] Alternatively, in some embodiments, the first structure 202 includes one or more vertical structures (e.g., the first structure 202 includes a tray that has the sheet layer and one or more vertical structures, such as short walls, along the periphery of the sheet layer). In such embodiments, the molding step to form the vertical structures is skipped. In a molding step for forming one or more side walls, the first structure 202 is placed inside a mold, and a heated plastic is introduced to form one or more side walls over the one or more vertical structures of the first structure.

[00104] Figure 4A is a top perspective view of an exemplary array plate in accordance with some embodiments. Figure 4B are partial top views of an exemplary array plate, corresponding to regions indicated with circles in Figure 4A, in accordance with some embodiments.

[00105] When the inner side walls and the base layer form sharp corners (e.g., the inner side walls and the base layer form 90 degree angle), the sharp corners hold more residual wash solution due to increased surface interaction, i.e. adhesion between the plastic surface and the solution. Therefore, in some embodiments, the contact lines between the inner side walls and the base layer of the second structure have a curved transition (e.g., rounded) as shown in Figure 4. The rounded four corners of the circumferential wall reduce residual solution after a washing process.

[00106] Figures 4A-4B illustrate that, in some embodiments, at least one side wall is tilted outward an angle of 2 – 20 degrees so that the top of the side wall (e.g., the end of the side wall that is away from the base layer) is positioned outside the bottom of the side wall (e.g., the end of the side wall that is closer to the base layer). In some embodiments, all side walls are tilted by between 2 – 5 degrees.

[00107] Figures 5A-5C are partial sectional views of exemplary array plates in accordance with various embodiments.

[00108] Figure 5A illustrates that, in some embodiments, a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure 202 is aligned with a top surface of the base layer 208 of the second structure 204. In some embodiments, the alignment of the top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure 202 and the top surface of the base layer 208 of the second structure 204 is achieved by using a mold component (e.g., the first mold component 230, Figure 2E) that has a flat surface at least over a portion of the surface facing the top surface of the first structure 202. As shown in Figure 2G, the heated plastic material fills up the plurality of discrete

through holes defined in the first structure 202 up to the surface of the mold component 230 that faces the first structure 202, which is aligned with the top surface of the first structure 202.

**[00109]** In some embodiments, a mold surface that has indentations and/or protrusions is used. When the mold surface facing the top surface of the first structure 202 has indentations at locations corresponding to the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the first structure 202, the heated plastic material, when introduced into the cavity formed by mold components, fills the indentations. As a result, the top surface of the second structure is located above the top surface of the first structure as shown in Figure 5B. Alternatively, when the mold surface facing the top surface of the first structure 202 has protrusions at locations corresponding to the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the first structure 202, the heated plastic material, when introduced into the cavity formed by mold components, underfills the discrete through holes defined in the first structure 202. As a result, the top surface of the second structure is located below the top surface of the first structure as shown in Figure 5C. In some embodiments, the top surface of the second structure includes a plurality of concave surfaces. In some embodiments, a mold surface that has both indentations and protrusions is used. When the mold surface facing the top surface of the first structure 202 has indentations and protrusions at locations corresponding to the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the first structure 202, complex structures can be formed at the locations corresponding to the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the first structure 202.

**[00110]** Figures 6A-6D are flow charts representing a method 600 of making an array plate in accordance with some embodiments.

**[00111]** The method includes (602) providing a first structure. The first structure includes a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through holes.

**[00112]** In some embodiments, the sheet layer includes (604) at least 50% of fluorocarbon by weight.

**[00113]** In some embodiments, the sheet layer includes (606) at least 90% of fluorocarbon by weight.

[00114] The method includes placing the first structure adjacent to a first surface of a mold. In some embodiments, the method includes (608) pressing the first structure against the first surface of the mold.

[00115] In some embodiments, includes placing the first structure adjacent to the first surface of the mold includes placing the first structure adjacent to the first surface of the mold with a plurality of pins. In some embodiments, pressing the first structure against the first surface of the mold includes pressing the first surface of the sheet layer against the first surface of the mold with a plurality of pins. In some embodiments, pressing the first structure against the first surface of the mold includes (610) pressing the first surface of the sheet layer against the first surface of the mold with a plurality of pins at least on the second surface of the sheet layer.

[00116] In some embodiments, the method includes (612) providing vacuum suction on the first surface of the sheet layer.

[00117] The method includes (614) providing a heated plastic material into the mold.

[00118] In some embodiments, the plastic material includes (616) polycarbonates.

[00119] In some embodiments, the plastic material includes (618) cyclic olefin polymer or copolymer.

[00120] The method includes cooling the plastic material to form a second structure. In some embodiments, the method includes (620, Figure 6B) cooling the plastic material to form a second structure so that the first structure and the second structure are coupled. The second structure includes a base layer. In some embodiments, the second structure includes a base layer and one or more vertical structures along a periphery of the base layer, adjacent a first surface of the base layer. At least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the base layer of the second structure adjacent the first surface of the base layer.

[00121] In some embodiments, the plastic material of the second structure is (622) optically transparent.

[00122] In some embodiments, the method includes (624) coupling a third structure with at least the second structure over at least a portion of the one or more vertical structures, the third structure including one or more side walls.

[00123] In some embodiments, the one or more vertical structures of the second structure include (626) a plurality of pins vertically protruding from the rest of the one or more vertical structures.

[00124] In some embodiments, the method includes (628) molding the third structure over at least a portion of the one or more vertical structures with a second mold so as to couple the second structure and the third structure, and removing a combination of the second structure and the third structure from the second mold by pushing respective locations on the third structure that correspond to the plurality of pins of the second structure.

[00125] In some embodiments, the one or more side walls are (630) made of a plastic material that has a glass transition temperature lower than the glass transition temperature of (the material for) the second structure.

[00126] In some embodiments, the one or more vertical structures include (632) one or more side walls.

[00127] In some embodiments, the one or more side walls are (634, Figure 6C) made of a material that has Shore A hardness of 85 or less.

[00128] In some embodiments, the one or more side walls each have (636) an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and a respective side wall of the one or more side walls includes one or more lips on the top surface, at least one of the one or more lips aligned with the inner surface of the respective side wall.

[00129] In some embodiments, the one or more side walls each have (638) an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and a respective side wall of the one or more side walls includes one or more vertical indentations along the outer surface of the respective side wall.

[00130] In some embodiments, the one or more side walls are (640) made of a hydrophobic material of a surface tension lower than 35 dynes/cm.

[00131] In some embodiments, the one or more side walls each have (642) an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and the inner surface of a respective side wall of the one or more side walls is coated to expose a hydrophobic surface of a surface tension lower than 35 dynes/cm.

[00132] In some embodiments, the second structure includes (644) a plurality of holding locations, the method comprising aligning the first structure and the second structure so that the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer of the first structure is offset from the plurality of holding locations in the second structure.

[00133] In some embodiments, the mold is configured (646, Figure 6D) so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is aligned with a top surface of the base layer of the second structure.

[00134] In some embodiments, the mold is configured (648) so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is above a top surface of the base layer of the second structure.

[00135] In some embodiments, the mold is configured (650) so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is below a top surface of the base layer of the second structure.

[00136] In some embodiments, the first surface of the mold has (652) one or more of: a plurality of indentations and a plurality of protrusions corresponding to the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer.

[00137] In some embodiments, at least one of the side walls includes (654) one or more handles, each handle comprising a plurality of parallel fins.

[00138] Many modifications and variations are possible in view of the above teachings. For example, in accordance with some embodiments, a method for making an array plate includes providing a first structure. The first structure including a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through holes. The method includes pressing the first structure against a first surface of a mold, and providing a heated plastic material into the mold. The method includes cooling the plastic material to form a second structure so that the first structure and the second structure are coupled. The second structure includes a base layer and one or more

side walls along a periphery of the base layer, adjacent a first surface of the base layer. At least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the third structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the base layer of the second structure adjacent the first surface of the base layer.

**[00139]** In some embodiments, an array plate includes a first structure. The first structure including a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through holes. The array plate also includes a second structure coupled to the first structure. The second structure including a base layer and one or more side walls along a periphery of the base layer, adjacent a first surface of the base layer. At least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the base layer of the second structure adjacent the first surface of the base layer.

**[00140]** In accordance with some embodiments, a method for making an array plate includes providing a first structure. The first structure includes a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through holes. The first structure also includes one or more vertical structures along a periphery of the sheet layer. The method includes pressing the first structure against a first surface of a mold, and providing a heated plastic material into the mold. The method includes cooling the plastic material to form a second structure so that the first structure and the second structure are coupled. The second structure includes a base layer and one or more side walls formed over the one or more vertical structures. At least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the third structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the base layer of the second structure adjacent the first surface of the base layer.

**[00141]** In some embodiments, an array plate includes a first structure. The first structure including a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through holes. The first structure also includes one or more vertical structures along a periphery of the sheet layer. The array plate also includes a second structure coupled to the first structure. The second structure including a base layer and one or more side walls formed over the one or more vertical structures. At least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the



first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the base layer of the second structure adjacent the first surface of the base layer.

[00142] Operations and characteristics described above with respect to the method 600 are also applicable to these methods and apparatuses. For brevity, such operations and characteristics are not repeated herein.

#### Methods for Using the Array Plates

[00143] In some embodiments, a method for using an array plate includes providing the array plate, wherein the array plate defines a reservoir. The method includes storing a liquid medium in the reservoir of the apparatus so that the first surface of the sheet layer is covered by the liquid medium, and dispensing respective liquid droplets on respective locations on the base layer. The respective locations correspond to locations of the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer, and the respective liquid droplets are immiscible with the liquid medium.

[00144] In some embodiments, the method also includes adding one or more solutions to one or more liquid droplets of the respective liquid droplets.

[00145] In some embodiments, the method also includes performing an immunoassay by: immobilizing one of one or more antibodies and one or more antigens in one or more respective liquid droplets to the base layer, and adding one or more solutions to the one or more respective liquid droplets of the respective liquid droplets. At least one of the one or more solutions includes the other of the one or more antibodies and the one or more antigens. The method also includes detecting a binding of the at least one antigen with at least one antibody in the one or more respective liquid droplets.

[00146] In some embodiments, the method includes washing the respective liquid droplets on the apparatus by: removing a portion of the liquid medium, adding a wash buffer to the reservoir, shaking the apparatus so that the wash buffer and the respective liquid droplets are mixed, draining at least a portion of the wash buffer from the reservoir, and providing a liquid medium in the reservoir of the apparatus so that the first surface of the sheet layer is covered by the liquid medium.

#### Array Slides

**[00147]** Figure 7 is a perspective view of an exemplary array slide 1100 in accordance with some embodiments. The exemplary array slide 1100 includes at least a first structure 1110 (e.g., a sheet layer) and a second structure 1120 (e.g., a slide). The first structure 1110 includes fluorocarbon polymers. The first structure 1110 defines a plurality of discrete through-holes (e.g., 1112-1 through 1112-8). The second structure 1120 includes a plastic material (e.g., polycarbonate, cyclic olefin polymer or copolymer, polystyrene, etc.). The first structure 1110 covers one or more portions of the second structure 1120. One or more portions of the second structure 1120 are not covered by the first structure 1110. Thus, one or more portions of the second structure 1120 are exposed through the plurality of discrete through-holes 1112 defined by the first structure 1110. The details of the first structure and the second structure are described with respect to Figures 8A-8C, 10A-10C, and 11A-11B, below.

**[00148]** Figure 8A is a top-down view of an exemplary array slide 1200 in accordance with some embodiments. The array slide 1200 includes a first structure 1210 and a second structure 1220. In some embodiments, the first structure 1210 has one or more characteristics of the first structure 1110 described above with respect to Figure 7. In some embodiments, the second structure 1220 has one or more characteristics of the second structure 1120 described above with respect to Figure 7. The descriptions of such characteristics are not repeated for brevity.

**[00149]** The first structure 1210 includes a sheet layer 1212 that typically has a square or rectangular shape (e.g., a sheet of PTFE cut into a rectangle). Alternatively, the sheet layer of the first structure 1210 may have a round shape, such as a disc, or any other shape (e.g., a generally rectangular shape with one or more chamfered corners).

**[00150]** The sheet layer 1212 defines a plurality of discrete through-holes (e.g., 1214-1 through 1214-8). Typically, a discrete through-hole 1214 has a round shape (e.g., a circle or an oval). Alternatively, the discrete through-hole 1214 may have a non-round shape (e.g., a triangle, a square, a rectangle, a pentagon, a hexagon, an octagon, a star, a slit, etc.). In some embodiments, the plurality of discrete through-holes 206 are formed by punching holes through the sheet layer 1212. Typically, the plurality of discrete through-holes have substantially the same diameter (e.g., with less than 50, 30, 20, 10, or 5% variation among the holes). In some embodiments, a respective through-hole has a 1 mm – 5 mm diameter, or 2 mm – 3 mm diameter. In some embodiments, the discrete through-holes are arranged in a predefined pattern. For example, when 96 discrete through-holes are defined in the sheet

layer 1212, the 96 discrete through-holes may be arranged in an 8×12 array. In another example, when 8 discrete through-holes are arranged in the sheet layer 1212, the 8 discrete through-holes may be arranged in a 2×4 array, as illustrated in Figure 8A. In some embodiments, the discrete through-holes have a predefined spacing.

[00151] The second structure 1220 typically has a rectangular shape. For example, the second structure 1220 may have a shape and size of a microscope slide. However, the second structure 1220 may have a larger or smaller size than a microscope slide. In some embodiments, the second structure 1220 has a square shape. In some embodiments, the second structure 1220 has a non-rectangular shape (e.g., a disc or a generally rectangular shape with one or more chamfered corners).

[00152] Figure 8A also indicates a line A-A' across the array slide 1200. The line A-A' corresponds to the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 8B.

[00153] Figure 8B is a partial cross-sectional view of the exemplary array slide 1200 in accordance with some embodiments.

[00154] In some embodiments, the sheet layer 1212 solely constitutes the first structure 1210. In some other embodiments, the first structure 1210 includes additional features, such as one or more vertical structures (e.g., the first structure 1210 may be a tray including the sheet layer and one or more sidewalls) in addition to the sheet layer 1212.

[00155] In some embodiments, the sheet layer 1212 of the first structure 1210 has a uniform thickness across the sheet layer 1212. In some other embodiments, the sheet layer 1212 has a range of thicknesses across the sheet layer 1212. Typically, the thickness of the sheet layer 1212 is less than the width and length of the sheet layer 1212. In some embodiments, the thickness of the sheet layer 1212 is less than a predefined thickness. For example, the sheet layer has a thickness typically of 0.01—10 mm, 0.1 – 2 mm, 0.2 – 1 mm, or 1 – 2 mm.

[00156] In some embodiments, the sheet layer 1212 is a sheet of a preselected material. The preselected material typically includes a polymer (e.g., polytetrafluoroethylene, any other perfluorocarbon polymer, or any other fluorocarbon polymer). In some embodiments, the sheet layer 1212 includes a sheet of a preselected material. For example, the sheet layer 1212 may include multiple layers of different materials, wherein one of the multiple layers (e.g., typically a top layer) is a sheet of fluorocarbon (e.g., polytetrafluoroethylene). Alternatively,

the sheet layer 1212 may include a core (e.g., a sheet metal) coated with fluorocarbon (e.g., polytetrafluoroethylene).

**[00157]** Figure 8B also illustrates a cross-section of discrete through-holes 1214-7 and 1214-8 defined by the sheet layer 1212. As shown in Figure 8B, a discrete through-hole has a first opening on a first planar surface of the sheet layer 1212 and a second opening on a second planar surface, opposite to the first planar surface, of the sheet layer 1212.

**[00158]** In some embodiments, the sheet layer 1212 includes at least 50% of fluorocarbon by weight. Alternatively, the sheet layer 1212 may include at least 80, 90, 95, or 99% of fluorocarbon by weight. In some embodiments, the sheet layer 1212 includes at least 90% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight. Alternatively, the sheet layer 1212 may include at least 50, 80, 95, or 99% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight.

**[00159]** In some embodiments, a top portion of the sheet layer 1212 includes at least 95% of fluorocarbon by weight. As used herein, a top portion of the sheet layer 1212 refers to a layer that is defined by an exposed surface of the sheet layer 1212 and a predefined thickness. Thus, the top portion includes the exposed surface of the sheet layer 1212 and has the predefined thickness. In some embodiments, a top surface of the top portion is the exposed surface of the sheet layer 1212 and the bottom surface of the top portion has the same shape and size as the top surface of the top portion. In some embodiments, the exposed surface of the sheet layer 1212 has a flatness of at most 400  $\mu\text{m}$ . In some embodiments, the bottom surface of the sheet layer 1212 has a flatness of at most 400  $\mu\text{m}$ . In some embodiments, the thickness of the top portion may be 1  $\mu\text{m}$  or 100 nm. In some embodiments, the top portion of the sheet layer 1212 includes at least 99% of fluorocarbon by weight.

**[00160]** In some embodiments, at least 90% of the exposed portion of the first surface of the first structure 1210 (e.g., the surface of the sheet layer 1212 that faces away from the second structure) is covered by fluorocarbon. In some embodiments, at least 95 % of the exposed surface is covered by fluorocarbon. In some embodiments, at least 99 % of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by fluorocarbon. The PTFE-matrix does not satisfy this requirement because the resin is included in the exposed portion of the first surface. In some embodiments, at least 90% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by PTFE. In some embodiments, at least 95% of the exposed portion of the first

surface is covered by PTFE. In some embodiments, at least 99% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by PTFE.

**[00161]** In some embodiments, the exposed portion of the first surface is characterized by advancing and receding contact angles, for a liquid selected from a group including water, ethanol, and isopropanol. The advancing and receding contact angles for the selected liquid on the exposed portion of the first surface are substantially similar to advancing and receding contact angles for the selected liquid on PTFE (e.g., a PTFE sheet containing at least 99% PTFE by weight). For example, the difference between the advancing contact angle for the selected liquid on the exposed portion of the first surface and the advancing contact angle for the selected liquid on PTFE is less than 20% or 10% of the advancing and receding contact angles for the selected liquid on PTFE.

**[00162]** In some embodiments, a first surface (e.g., a surface facing away from the second structure 1220) of the first structure 1210 is roughened to increase the hydrophobicity and/or oleophobicity.

**[00163]** In some embodiments, the second structure 1220 includes a plurality of structures that correspond to the plurality of discrete through-holes in the first structure 1210.

**[00164]** The second structure 1220 typically includes a plastic material. In some embodiments, the plastic material includes polycarbonates. In some embodiments, the plastic material includes cyclic olefin polymer or copolymer or polystyrene.

**[00165]** In some embodiments, the plastic material of the second structure 1220 is optically transparent. This allows the second structure 1220 to be optically imaged from a bottom surface side of the second structure 1220.

**[00166]** Figure 8C is an exploded view of an exemplary array slide 1200 in accordance with some embodiments. In Figure 8C, the plurality of discrete through-holes 1214 defined by the sheet layer 1212 of the first structure 1210 are shown. Figure 8C also illustrates a plurality of protrusions in the second structure 1220 that correspond to the plurality of discrete through-holes 1214 defined by the sheet layer 1212.

**[00167]** Although the sheet layer 1212 is illustrated as having a width less than the width of the second structure 1220 and a length less than the length of the second structure 1220 in Figures 8A-8C, in some embodiments, the sheet layer 1212 has the same width and length as the second structure 1220. Thus, the sheet layer 1212 may run from one end of the second structure to the opposite end of the second structure 1220.

## Methods for Making the Array Slides

**[00168]** Figures 9A-9D are schematic diagrams illustrating selected steps for manufacturing an exemplary array slide 1200 in accordance with some embodiments.

**[00169]** Figure 9A illustrates that the first structure 1210 is held in a first mold component 1330 by vacuum suction. The vacuum suction pulls the first structure 1210 toward the first mold component 1330 so that the first structure 1210 remains flat through the molding process. Typically, the vacuum suction is applied over a plurality of locations on the first structure 1210. The vacuum suction typically leaves one or more indentations on the surface of the first structure 1210 facing the first mold component 1330. In some embodiments, the first mold component 1330 includes a plurality of vacuum holes (not shown).

**[00170]** In some embodiments, a plurality of pins 1342 coupled with the second mold component 1340 are spring loaded so that the plurality of pins 1342 are configured to apply force on the first structure 1210 toward the first mold component 1330 when the first mold component 1330 and the second mold component 1340 are assembled together.

**[00171]** In some embodiments, the bottom surface of the first structure 1210 (e.g., the surface facing the second mold component 1340) is treated, typically before the first structure 1210 is held in the first mold component 1330, to facilitate coupling with the second structure 1220. In some embodiments, the bottom surface of the first structure 1210 is treated to reduce the hydrophobicity (e.g., increase the surface tension) of the first structure 1210. In some embodiments, the bottom surface of the first structure 1210 is roughened to increase the contact area with the second structure 1220.

**[00172]** In some embodiments, the first mold component 1330 has a flat surface or a portion of the surface that is flat facing the first structure 1210. In some embodiments, the surface of the first mold component 1330 has protrusions and/or indentations, the impact of which is described above with respect to Figures 5A-5C. For brevity, these descriptions are not repeated herein.

**[00173]** Figure 9B illustrates that the first mold component 1330 and the second mold component 1340 are assembled, thereby forming a cavity inside, into which a heated plastic material is introduced for a molding process.

**[00174]** Figure 9C illustrates that a heated plastic material is introduced into the cavity. In some embodiments, the plastic material includes polycarbonates. In some embodiments,

the plastic material includes cyclic olefin polymer or copolymer or polystyrene. The heated plastic material fills the cavity.

[00175] Once the heated plastic material is cooled, the plastic material forms the second structure 1220. When the second structure 1220 is formed, the second structure 1220 is coupled with the first structure 1210 so as to form the array slide 1200.

[00176] Figure 9D illustrates that the array slide 1200 is removed from the first mold component 1330 and the second mold component 1340.

[00177] Note that the array slide 1200 removed from the first mold component 1330 and the second mold component 1340 has pin marks corresponding to the plurality of pins 1342 coupled with the second mold component 1340. When optical measurements (e.g., collection of optical images or optical signals) are performed through respective portions of the second structure 1220 corresponding to the plurality of discrete through-holes defined in the first structure 1210, if the pin marks are located at the respective portions of the second structure 1220 corresponding to the plurality of discrete through-holes defined in the first structure 1210, the pin marks interfere optical measurements. Thus, to avoid the interference by the pin marks, the plurality of pins 1342 are located offset from the plurality of discrete through-holes defined in the first structure 1210.

[00178] Although Figures 9A-9D illustrate forming the array slide 1200 by using both the vacuum suction and the plurality of pins 1342, in some embodiments, only one of the vacuum suction and the plurality of pins 1342 is used. For example, the vacuum suction may be used without using the plurality of pins 1342. Alternatively, the plurality of pins 1342 may be used without the vacuum suction.

#### Additional Features of Array Slides

[00179] Figure 10A is a top-down view of an exemplary array slide 1400 in accordance with some embodiments. The array slide 1400 has one or more characteristics of the array slide 1200 described above with respect to Figures 8A-8C. The descriptions of such characteristics are not repeated for brevity.

[00180] The array slide 1400 has a first structure 1410 and a second structure 1420. The first structure 1410 includes a sheet layer 1412 and one or more connectors 1416. In some embodiments, the one or more connectors 1416 are integrated in the sheet layer 1412.

[00181] Figure 10A also indicates a line B-B' across the array slide 1400. The line B-B' corresponds to the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 10B.

[00182] Figure 10B is a partial cross-sectional view of the exemplary array slide 1400 in accordance with some embodiments. The partial cross-sectional view shown in Figure 10B has one or more characteristics of the partial cross-sectional view shown in Figure 8B. The descriptions of such characteristics are not repeated for brevity.

[00183] The first structure 1410 includes one or more connectors 1416. In some embodiments, at least one of the connectors 1416 is positioned so that its top surface is aligned with the top surface of the sheet layer 1412. However, as explained below with respect to Figure 11B, at least one of the connectors 1416 may be positioned that its top surface is positioned below the top surface of the second structure 1412 (e.g., the top surface of the connectors 1416 is embedded in the second structure 1420).

[00184] The one or more connectors 1416 serve multiple functions. For example, the one or more connectors 1416, in particular when the one or more connectors 1416 are embedded in the second structure 1420, prevents the peeling of the first structure 1410 from the second structure 1420. The one or more connectors 1416 also allow first structures for multiple array slides to be held together in the molding cavity. This facilitates the manufacturing of multiple array slides.

[00185] Figure 10C is a top-down view of exemplary array slides (1400-1 through 1400-8) in accordance with some embodiments. The array slides (1400-1 through 1400-8) shown in Figure 10C can be formed in a single molding process. For example, in some embodiments, instead of placing a single first structure in a molding cavity as illustrated in Figures 9A-9D, an array of first structures is placed in a molding cavity, and the molding steps (e.g., filling the cavity with heated plastic material and cooling the plastic material to form second structures). After the array of array slides (1400-1 through 1400-8) is formed, the array slides may be separated (e.g., by cutting the array along boundary lines between array slides).

[00186] Figure 11A is a top-down view of an exemplary array slide 1500 in accordance with some embodiments. The array slide 1500 has one or more characteristics of the array slides 1200 and 1400 described above with respect to Figures 8A-8C and Figures 10A-10C. The descriptions of such characteristics are not repeated for brevity.



[00187] The array slide 1500 has a first structure 1510 and a second structure 1520. The first structure 1510 includes a sheet layer 1512 and one or more connectors (not shown). The sheet layer 1512 defines a plurality of discrete through-holes (1514-1 through 1514-8).

[00188] Figure 11A also indicates a line C-C' across the array slide 1500. The line C-C' corresponds to the cross-sectional view illustrated in Figure 11B.

[00189] Figure 11B is a partial cross-sectional view of the exemplary array slide 1500 in accordance with some embodiments. The partial cross-sectional view shown in Figure 11B has one or more characteristics of the partial cross-sectional view shown in Figure 11B. The descriptions of such characteristics are not repeated for brevity.

[00190] The first structure 1510 includes one or more connectors 1516. In Figure 11B, at least one of the connectors 1416 is positioned so that its top surface is positioned below the top surface of the second structure 1520 (e.g., the top surface of the connectors 1416 is embedded in the second structure 1520). This reduces the peeling (i.e., separation) of the first structure 1510 from the second structure 1520.

[00191] Figure 11B also illustrates that one or more sides of the first structure 1510 are angled. For example, the sides of the through-holes 1514-7 and 1514-8 are angled. As shown in Figure 11B, a cross-sectional view of the sheet layer 1512 includes a trapezoidal shape. As a result, the top surface of the sheet layer 1512 has a smaller area than the bottom surface of the sheet layer 1512. This further reduces the peeling (i.e., separation) of the first structure 1510 from the second structure 1520.

[00192] Although Figure 11B illustrates the angled sides of the first structure 1510 have having straight lines, in some embodiments, the sides of the first structure 1510 have curves (e.g., concave or convex).

[00193] Although Figures 11A-11B illustrate embodiments that implement both the connectors and the angled sides, it is possible to implement only one of two features. For example, as illustrated in Figures 10A-10C, the connectors may be implemented without the implementing angled sides. Alternatively, the angled sides may be implemented without implementing the connectors.

[00194] Figures 12A-12D are flow charts representing a method 700 of making an array slide in accordance with some embodiments.

**[00195]** The method includes (702) providing a first structure in a mold (e.g., Figure 9A). The first structure includes a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through-holes (e.g., Figure 8C).

**[00196]** In some embodiments, the sheet layer includes (704) at least 50% of fluorocarbon by weight. In some embodiments, the sheet layer includes (706) at least 90% of fluorocarbon by weight. In some embodiments, the sheet layer includes (708) at least 95% of fluorocarbon by weight. In some embodiments, the sheet layer includes (710) at least 99% of fluorocarbon by weight.

**[00197]** In some embodiments, the sheet layer includes (712) at least 90% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight. In some embodiments, the sheet layer includes (714) at least 95% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight. In some embodiments, the sheet layer includes (716) at least 99% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight.

**[00198]** In some embodiments, the method includes (718) pressing the first structure against a first surface of a mold prior to providing the heated plastic material (e.g., Figures 9A-9B).

**[00199]** In some embodiments, pressing the first structure against the first surface of the mold includes (720) pressing the first surface of the sheet layer against the first surface of the mold with a plurality of pins at least on the second surface of the sheet layer (e.g., Figure 9B).

**[00200]** In some embodiments, the method includes (722) providing vacuum suction on the first surface of the sheet layer (e.g., Figure 9A).

**[00201]** The method includes (724) providing a heated plastic material into the mold (e.g., Figure 9C).

**[00202]** In some embodiments, the plastic material includes (726) polycarbonates.

**[00203]** In some embodiments, the plastic material includes (728) cyclic olefin polymer or copolymer or polystyrene.

**[00204]** In some embodiments, the plastic material is (730) optically transparent. In some embodiments, the plastic material is optically transparent for a wavelength range

selected from the group consisting of: 250 – 900 nm, 35 – 850 nm, 400 – 800 m, 450 – 800 nm, and 500 – 800 nm.

[00205] The method includes (732) cooling the plastic material to form a second structure so that the first structure and the second structure are coupled (e.g., Figures 9C-9D).

[00206] In some embodiments, a base of the second structure is (734) optically transparent. A base of the second structure includes one or more portions of the second structure located below the plurality of discrete through-holes defined by the first structure. In some embodiments, the base is optically transparent for a wavelength range selected from the group consisting of: 250 – 900 nm, 35 – 850 nm, 400 – 800 m, 450 – 800 nm, and 500 – 800 nm.

[00207] At least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed (736) from the second structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the second structure (e.g., Figures 8B, 10B, and 11B).

[00208] In some embodiments, a top portion of the sheet layer, including the exposed portion of the first surface of the sheet layer, includes (738) at least 95% of fluorocarbon by weight. In some embodiments, a top portion of the sheet layer, including the exposed portion of the first surface of the sheet layer, includes (740) at least 99% of fluorocarbon by weight.

[00209] In some embodiments, the top portion of the sheet layer is defined (742) by the exposed portion of the first surface and less than 1  $\mu\text{m}$  thickness.

[00210] In some embodiments, the top portion of the sheet layer is defined (744) by the exposed portion of the first surface and less than 100 nm thickness.

[00211] In some embodiments, at least 90% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered (746) by fluorocarbon. In some embodiments, at least 95% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered (748) by fluorocarbon. In some embodiments, at least 99% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered (750) by fluorocarbon.

[00212] In some embodiments, at least 90% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered (752) by polytetrafluoroethylene. In some embodiments, at least 95% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered (754) by polytetrafluoroethylene. In some

embodiments, at least 99% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered (756) by polytetrafluoroethylene.

[00213] In some embodiments, the exposed portion of the first surface is characterized (758) by advancing and receding contact angles, for a liquid selected from a group including water, ethanol, and isopropanol, that are similar to advancing and receding contact angles, for the selected liquid, on polytetrafluoroethylene.

[00214] In some embodiments, the second structure includes (760) a plurality of holding locations. The method includes aligning the first structure and the second structure so that the plurality of discrete through-holes defined in the sheet layer of the first structure is offset from the plurality of holding locations in the second structure.

[00215] In some embodiments, the mold is configured (762) so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is aligned with a top surface of a base layer of the second structure (e.g., Figure 5A).

[00216] In some embodiments, the mold is configured (764) so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is above a top surface of a base layer of the second structure (e.g., Figure 5C). In some embodiments, the mold is configured (766) so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is below a top surface of a base layer of the second structure (e.g., Figure 5B). In some embodiments, the first surface of the mold has (768) one or more of: a plurality of indentations and a plurality of protrusions, corresponding to the plurality of discrete through-holes defined in the sheet layer.

[00217] In some embodiments, at least a portion of the first surface of the sheet layer is embedded (770) in the second structure. For example, the second structure covers along a periphery of discrete through-holes defined by the sheet layer over the first surface of the sheet layer. In some embodiments, a plurality of portions of the first surface of the sheet layer is embedded in the second structure.

[00218] In some embodiments, the first structure includes (772) one or more connectors coupled to one or more sides of the sheet layer (e.g., Figures 10A-10C and Figure 11B). In some embodiments, the one or more connectors are embedded (774) in the second structure (e.g., Figure 11B).

[00219] In some embodiments, at least a portion of the sides of the sheet layer is angled (776) (e.g., Figure 11B). In some embodiments, the sides, other than the inner walls of the discrete through-holes, of the sheet layer are angled. In some embodiments, an inner wall of at least one discrete through-hole of the sheet layer is angled (778) (e.g., Figure 11B).

[00220] In some embodiments, the second surface of the sheet layer has a larger area than the first surface of the sheet layer (780) (e.g., Figure 11B)

[00221] In some embodiments, the method includes (782) coating a portion of the second structure with oil. In some embodiments, the method includes coating (784) a portion of the first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure with the oil. In some embodiments, the oil is selected (786) from the group consisting of a mineral oil, a silicone oil, a hydrocarbon compound, a hydroperfluorocarbon compound and a perfluorocarbon compound.

#### Methods for Using the Array Slides

[00222] In some embodiments, a method for using an array slide includes providing the array slide, and providing one or more biological and/or chemical samples for processing.

[00223] In some embodiments, a method for using an array slide includes placing the array slide in a reservoir. The method includes storing a liquid medium in the reservoir of the apparatus so that the first surface of the sheet layer is covered by the liquid medium, and dispensing respective liquid droplets on respective locations on the base layer. The respective locations correspond to locations of the plurality of discrete through-holes defined in the sheet layer, and the respective liquid droplets are immiscible with the liquid medium.

[00224] In some embodiments, a method includes processing a cell by placing a plurality of droplets on respective regions of the second structure that are not covered by the first structure. Respective droplets include cells for processing. The method also includes adding one or more biological and/or chemical reagents to the respective droplets.

[00225] Various aspects and characteristics of the methods of using the array plates described above are applicable to array slides (e.g., adding one or more solutions to one or more liquid droplets of the respective liquid droplets, performing an immunoassay, and washing a respective liquid droplets), and vice versa. Because these aspects and characteristics are described above, they are not repeated herein.

[00226] It is well known to a person having ordinary skill in the art that array slides and plates can be used in many other biological and chemical reactions. Therefore, such details and specific examples are omitted for brevity.

[00227] The foregoing description, for purpose of explanation, has been described with reference to specific embodiments. However, the illustrative discussions above are not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the embodiments to the precise forms disclosed. Many modifications and variations are possible in view of the above teachings. The embodiments were chosen and described in order to best explain the principles of the invention and its practical applications, to thereby enable others skilled in the art to best utilize the invention and various embodiments with various modifications as are suited to the particular use contemplated.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for manufacturing an array plate, the method comprising:  
providing a first structure, the first structure including a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through holes;  
pressing the first structure against a first surface of a mold;  
providing a heated plastic material into the mold; and  
cooling the plastic material to form a second structure so that the first structure and the second structure are coupled, the second structure including a base layer and one or more vertical structures along a periphery of the base layer, adjacent a first surface of the base layer, wherein at least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the base layer of the second structure adjacent the first surface of the base layer.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 50% of fluorocarbon by weight.
3. The method of any of claims 1-2, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 90% of fluorocarbon by weight.
4. The method of any of claims 1-3, wherein the plastic material includes polycarbonates.
5. The method of any of claims 1-4, wherein the plastic material includes cyclic olefin polymer or copolymer.
6. The method of any of claims 1-5, wherein the plastic material of the second structure is optically transparent.
7. The method of any of claims 1-6, wherein pressing the first structure against the first surface of the mold includes pressing the first surface of the sheet layer against the first surface of the mold with a plurality of pins at least on the second surface of the sheet layer.
8. The method of claim 7, further comprising providing vacuum suction on the first surface of the sheet layer.

9. The method of any of claims 1-8, further comprising coupling a third structure with at least the second structure over at least a portion of the one or more vertical structures, the third structure including one or more side walls.
10. The method of claim 9, wherein the one or more vertical structures of the second structure include a plurality of pins vertically protruding from the rest of the one or more vertical structures.
11. The method of claim 10, including:
  - molding the third structure over at least a portion of the one or more vertical structures with a second mold so as to couple the second structure and the third structure; and
  - removing a combination of the second structure and the third structure from the second mold by pushing respective locations on the third structure that correspond to the plurality of pins of the second structure.
12. The method of any of claims 9-11, wherein the one or more side walls are made of a plastic material that has a glass transition temperature lower than the glass transition temperature of the second structure.
13. The method of any of claims 1-8, wherein the one or more vertical structures include one or more side walls.
14. The method of any of claims 9-13, wherein the one or more side walls are made of a material that has Shore A hardness of 85 or less.
15. The method of any of claims 9-14, wherein the one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and a respective side wall of the one or more side walls includes one or more lips on the top surface, at least one of the one or more lips aligned with the inner surface of the respective side wall.
16. The method of any of claims 9-15, wherein the one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and a respective side wall of the one or more side walls includes one or more vertical indentations along the outer surface of the respective side wall.



17. The method of any of claims 9-16, wherein the one or more side walls are made of a hydrophobic material of a surface tension lower than 35 dynes/cm.
18. The method of any of claims 9-17, wherein the one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and the inner surface of a respective side wall of the one or more side walls is coated to expose a hydrophobic surface of a surface tension lower than 35 dynes/cm.
19. The method of any of claims 1-18, wherein the second structure includes a plurality of holding locations, the method comprising aligning the first structure and the second structure so that the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer of the first structure is offset from the plurality of holding locations in the second structure.
20. The method of any of claims 1-19, wherein the mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is aligned with a top surface of the base layer of the second structure.
21. The method of any of claims 1-19, the mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is above a top surface of the base layer of the second structure.
22. The method of any of claims 1-19, wherein the mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is below a top surface of the base layer of the second structure.
23. The method of any of claims 1-22, wherein the first surface of the mold has one or more of: a plurality of indentations and a plurality of protrusions corresponding to the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer.
24. The method of any of claims 9-23, wherein at least one of the side walls include one or more handles, each handle comprising a plurality of parallel fins.
25. An apparatus, comprising:  
a first structure, the first structure including a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through holes;

a second structure coupled to the first structure, the second structure including a base layer and one or more vertical structures along a periphery of the base layer, adjacent a first surface of the base layer,

wherein at least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the base layer of the second structure adjacent the first surface of the base layer.

26. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 50% of fluorocarbon by weight.

27. The apparatus of any of claims 25-26, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 90% of fluorocarbon by weight.

28. The apparatus of any of claims 25-27, wherein the second structure includes polycarbonates.

29. The apparatus of any of claims 25-28, wherein the second structure includes cyclic olefin polymer or copolymer.

30. The apparatus of any of claims 25-29, wherein the second structure is made of an optically transparent plastic material.

31. The apparatus of any of claims 25-30, wherein the second structure is coupled to the first surface by molding the second structure over the first structure.

32. The apparatus of claim 31, wherein the sheet layer includes one or more indentations formed by vacuum suction.

33. The apparatus of any of claims 25-32, further comprising a third structure coupled with at least the second structure over at least a portion of the one or more vertical structures, the third structure including one or more side walls.

34. The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the one or more vertical structures of the second structure include a plurality of pins vertically protruding from the rest of the one or more vertical structures.

35. The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the plurality of pins has an elastic modulus higher than an elastic modulus of the one of more side walls of the third structure.
36. The apparatus of any of claims 25-32, wherein the one or more vertical structures include one or more side walls.
37. The apparatus of any of claims 33-36, wherein the one or more side walls are made of a material that has Shore A hardness of 85 or less.
38. The apparatus of any of claims 33-37, wherein the one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and a respective side wall of the one or more side walls includes one or more lips on the top surface, at least one of the one or more lips aligned with the inner surface of the respective side wall.
39. The apparatus of any of claims 33-38, wherein the one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and a respective side wall of the one or more side walls includes one or more vertical indentations along the outer surface of the respective side wall.
40. The apparatus of any of claims 33-39, wherein the one or more side walls are made of a hydrophobic material of a surface tension lower than 35 dynes/cm.
41. The apparatus of any of claims 33-40, wherein the one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and the inner surface of a respective side wall of the one or more side walls is coated to expose a hydrophobic surface of a surface tension lower than 35 dynes/cm.
42. The apparatus of any of claims 33-41, wherein the one or more side walls are made of a plastic material that has a glass transition temperature lower than the glass transition temperature of material for the second structure.
43. The apparatus of any of claims 25-42, wherein the second structure includes a plurality of holding locations, and the first structure and the second layer are aligned so that the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer of the first structure is offset from the plurality of holding locations in the second structure.

44. The apparatus of any of claims 25-43, wherein the mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is aligned with a top surface of the base layer of the second structure.
45. The apparatus of any of claims 25-43, the mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is above a top surface of the base layer of the second structure.
46. The apparatus of any of claims 25-43, wherein the mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is below a top surface of the base layer of the second structure.
47. The apparatus of any of claims 25-46, wherein the first surface of the mold has one or more of: a plurality of indentations and a plurality of protrusions corresponding to the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer.
48. The apparatus of any of claims 33-47, wherein at least one of the side walls includes one or more handles, each handle comprising a plurality of parallel fins.
49. An apparatus comprising an array plate manufactured by any method of claims 1-24.
50. A method, comprising:  
providing an apparatus of any of claims 25-49, wherein the apparatus defines a reservoir;  
storing a liquid medium in the reservoir of the apparatus so that the first surface of the sheet layer is covered by the liquid medium; and  
dispensing respective liquid droplets on respective locations on the base layer, wherein the respective locations correspond to locations of the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer, and the respective liquid droplets are immiscible with the liquid medium.
51. The method of claim 50, further comprising:  
adding one or more solutions to one or more liquid droplets of the respective liquid droplets.
52. The method of any of claims 50-51, further comprising:  
performing an immunoassay by:

immobilizing one of one or more antibodies and one or more antigens in one or more respective liquid droplets to the base layer;

adding one or more solutions to the one or more respective liquid droplets of the respective liquid droplets, wherein at least one of the one or more solutions includes the other of the one or more antibodies and the one or more antigens; and

detecting that the at least one antigen is bound to at least one antibody in the one or more respective liquid droplets.

53. The method of any of claims 50-52, further comprising:

washing the respective liquid droplets on the apparatus by:

removing a portion of the liquid medium;

adding a wash buffer to the reservoir;

shaking the apparatus so that the wash buffer and the respective liquid droplets are mixed;

draining at least a portion of the wash buffer from the reservoir; and

providing a liquid medium in the reservoir of the apparatus so that the first surface of the sheet layer is covered by the liquid medium.

54. A method for manufacturing an array slide, comprising:

providing a first structure in a mold, the first structure including a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through-holes;

providing a heated plastic material into the mold; and

cooling the plastic material to form a second structure so that the first structure and the second structure are coupled,

wherein at least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the second structure.

55. The method of claim 54, including pressing the first structure against a first surface of a mold prior to providing the heated plastic material.

56. The method of claim 55, wherein pressing the first structure against the first surface of the mold includes pressing the first surface of the sheet layer against the first surface of the mold with a plurality of pins at least on the second surface of the sheet layer.

57. The method of any of claims 55-56, further including providing vacuum suction on the first surface of the sheet layer.
58. The method of any of claims 54-57, wherein a top portion of the sheet layer, including the exposed portion of the first surface of the sheet layer, includes at least 95% of fluorocarbon by weight.
59. The method of any of claims 54-58, wherein a top portion of the sheet layer, including the exposed portion of the first surface of the sheet layer, includes at least 99% of fluorocarbon by weight.
60. The method of any of claims 58-59, wherein the top portion of the sheet layer is defined by the exposed portion of the first surface and less than 1  $\mu\text{m}$  thickness.
61. The method of any of claims 58-59, wherein the top portion of the sheet layer is defined by the exposed portion of the first surface and less than 100 nm thickness.
62. The method of any of claims 54-61, wherein at least 90% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by fluorocarbon.
63. The method of any of claims 54-62, wherein at least 95% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by fluorocarbon.
64. The method of any of claims 54-63, wherein at least 99% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by fluorocarbon.
65. The method of any of claims 54-64, wherein at least 90% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by polytetrafluoroethylene.
66. The method of any of claims 54-65, wherein at least 95% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by polytetrafluoroethylene.
67. The method of any of claims 54-66, wherein at least 99% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by polytetrafluoroethylene.
68. The method of any of claims 54-67, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 50% of fluorocarbon by weight.

69. The method of any of claims 54-68, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 90% of fluorocarbon by weight.
70. The method of any of claims 54-69, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 95% of fluorocarbon by weight.
71. The method of any of claims 54-70, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 99% of fluorocarbon by weight.
72. The method of any of claims 54-71, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 90% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight.
73. The method of any of claims 54-72, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 95% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight.
74. The method of any of claims 54-73, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 99% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight.
75. The method of any of claims 54-74, wherein the exposed portion of the first surface is characterized by advancing and receding contact angles, for a liquid selected from a group including water, ethanol, and isopropanol, that are similar to advancing and receding contact angles, for the selected liquid, on polytetrafluoroethylene.
76. The method of any of claims 54-75, wherein the plastic material includes polycarbonates.
77. The method of any of claims 54-76, wherein the plastic material includes cyclic olefin polymer or copolymer or polystyrene.
78. The method of any of claims 54-77, wherein the plastic material is optically transparent.
79. The method of any of claims 54-78, wherein a base of the second structure is optically transparent.
80. The method of any of claims 54-79, wherein the second structure includes a plurality of holding locations, the method comprising aligning the first structure and the second

structure so that the plurality of discrete through-holes defined in the sheet layer of the first structure is offset from the plurality of holding locations in the second structure.

81. The method of any of claims 54-80, wherein the mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is aligned with a top surface of a base layer of the second structure.

82. The method of any of claims 54-80, the mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is above a top surface of a base layer of the second structure.

83. The method of any of claims 54-80, wherein the mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is below a top surface of a base layer of the second structure.

84. The method of any of claims 54-83, wherein the first surface of the mold has one or more of: a plurality of indentations and a plurality of protrusions, corresponding to the plurality of discrete through-holes defined in the sheet layer.

85. The method of any of claims 54-84, wherein at least a portion of the first surface of the sheet layer is embedded in the second structure.

86. The method of any of claims 54-85, wherein the first structure includes one or more connectors coupled to one or more sides of the sheet layer.

87. The method of claim 86, wherein the one or more connectors are embedded in the second structure.

88. The method of any of claims 54-87, wherein at least a portion of the sides of the sheet layer is angled.

89. The method of any of claims 54-88, wherein an inner wall of at least one discrete through-hole of the sheet layer is angled.

90. The method of any of claims 54-89, wherein the second surface of the sheet layer has a larger area than the first surface of the sheet layer.

91. The method of any of claims 54-90, further including coating a portion of the second structure with oil.



92. The method of any of claims 54-91, further including coating a portion of the first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure with the oil.
93. The method of any of claims 91-92, wherein the oil is selected from the group consisting of a mineral oil, a silicone oil, a hydrocarbon compound, a hydroperfluorocarbon compound and a perfluorocarbon compound.
94. An apparatus comprising an array slide manufactured by any method of claims 54-93.
95. A device, comprising:  
a first structure including a sheet layer with a plurality of discrete through-holes; and  
a second structure coupled to the first structure,  
wherein:  
at least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure;  
a top portion of the sheet layer, including the exposed portion of the first surface of the sheet layer, includes at least 95% of fluorocarbon by weight; and  
a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the second structure.
96. The device of claim 95, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 96 discrete through-holes.
97. The device of any of claims 95-96, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 384 discrete through-holes.
98. The device of any of claims 95-97, wherein the top portion of the sheet layer includes at least 99% of fluorocarbon by weight.
99. The device of any of claims 95-98, wherein the top portion of the sheet layer is defined by the exposed portion of the first surface and less than 1  $\mu\text{m}$  thickness.
100. The device of any of claims 95-99, wherein the top portion of the sheet layer defined by to the exposed portion of the first surface and less than 100 nm thickness.
101. The device of any of claims 95-100, wherein at least 90% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by fluorocarbon.

102. The device of any of claims 95-101, wherein at least 95 % of the exposed surface is covered by fluorocarbon.

103. The device of any of claims 95-102, wherein at least 99 % of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by fluorocarbon.

104. The device of any of claims 95-103, wherein at least 90% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by polytetrafluoroethylene.

105. The device of any of claims 95-104, wherein at least 95% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by polytetrafluoroethylene.

106. The device of any of claims 95-105, wherein at least 99% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by polytetrafluoroethylene.

107. The device of any of claims 95-106, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 90% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight.

108. The device of any of claims 95-107, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 95% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight.

109. The device of any of claims 95-108, wherein the sheet layer includes at least 99% of polytetrafluoroethylene by weight.

110. The device of any of claims 95-109, wherein the exposed portion of the first surface is characterized by advancing and receding contact angles, for a liquid selected from a group including water, ethanol, and isopropanol, that are similar to advancing and receding contact angles, for the selected liquid, on polytetrafluoroethylene.

111. The device of any of claims 95-110, wherein the second structure includes polycarbonates.

112. The device of any of claims 95-111, wherein the second structure includes cyclic olefin polymer or copolymer or polystyrene.

113. The device of any of claims 95-112, wherein at least a portion of the second structure is optically transparent.

114. The device of any of claims 95-113, wherein at least a portion of the second structure is optically transparent.
115. The device of any of claims 95-114, wherein a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is aligned with a top surface of a base layer of the second structure.
116. The device of any of claims 95-114, wherein a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is above a top surface of a base layer of the second structure.
117. The device of any of claims 95-114, wherein a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is below a top surface of a base layer of the second structure.
118. The device of any of claims 95-117, wherein the second structure has a first surface adjacent the first structure, and the first surface of the second structure has one or more of: a plurality of indentations and a plurality of protrusions, in regions corresponding to the plurality of discrete through-holes defined in the sheet layer when the second structure is coupled to the first structure.
119. The device of any of claims 95-118, wherein at least a portion of the first surface of the sheet layer is embedded in the second structure.
120. The device of any of claims 95-119, wherein the first structure includes one or more connectors coupled to one or more sides of the sheet layer.
121. The device of claim 120, wherein the one or more connectors are embedded in the second structure.
122. The device of any of claims 95-121, wherein at least a portion of the sides of the sheet layer is angled.
123. The device of any of claims 95-122, wherein an inner wall of at least one discrete through-hole of the sheet layer is angled.
124. The device of any of claims 95-123, wherein the second surface of the sheet layer has a larger area than the first surface of the sheet layer.
125. The device of any of claims 95-124, wherein the sheet layer includes one or more indentations formed by vacuum suction.

126. The device of any of claims 95-125, wherein the second structure has a plurality of pin holes.
127. The device of claim 126, wherein the plurality of pin holes are offset from the plurality of discrete through-holes.
128. The device of any of claims 95-127, further including a layer of oil coating a portion of the second structure.
129. The device of any of claims 95-128, further including a layer of oil coating a portion of the first surface of the first structure.
130. The device of any of claims 128-129, wherein the oil is selected from the group consisting of a mineral oil, a silicone oil, a hydrocarbon compound, a hydroperfluorocarbon compound and a perfluorocarbon compound.
131. The device of any of claims 95-130, further comprising a grid.
132. The device of claim 131, wherein the grid includes a plurality of through-holes aligned with at least some of the plurality of discrete through-holes in the sheet layer of the first structure.
133. The device of any of claims 95-132, wherein the exposed portion of the first surface has a flatness of at most 400  $\mu\text{m}$ .
134. The device of any of claims 95-133, wherein a base layer of the second structure is optically transparent for a wavelength range selected from the group consisting of: 250 – 900 nm, 350 – 850 nm, 400 – 800 nm, 450 – 800 nm, and 500 – 800 nm.
135. The device of any of claims 95-133, wherein a base layer of the second structure is optically opaque for a wavelength range selected from the group consisting of: 250 – 900 nm, 350 – 850 nm, 400 – 800 nm, 450 – 800 nm, and 500 – 800 nm.
136. The device of any of claims 95-135, wherein a base layer of the second structure includes one or more feet.
137. The device of any of claims 95-136, further comprising an orientation reference.

138. The device of any of claims 95-137, wherein a portion of the base layer is removed to indicate an orientation of the device.
139. The device of any of claims 95-138, further comprising a device identification feature.
140. The device of any of claims 95-139, wherein one or more portions of the base layer or the second structure are removed for identifying the device.
141. A grid for use with the device of any of claims 95-140.
142. A lid for use with the device of any of claims 95-140.

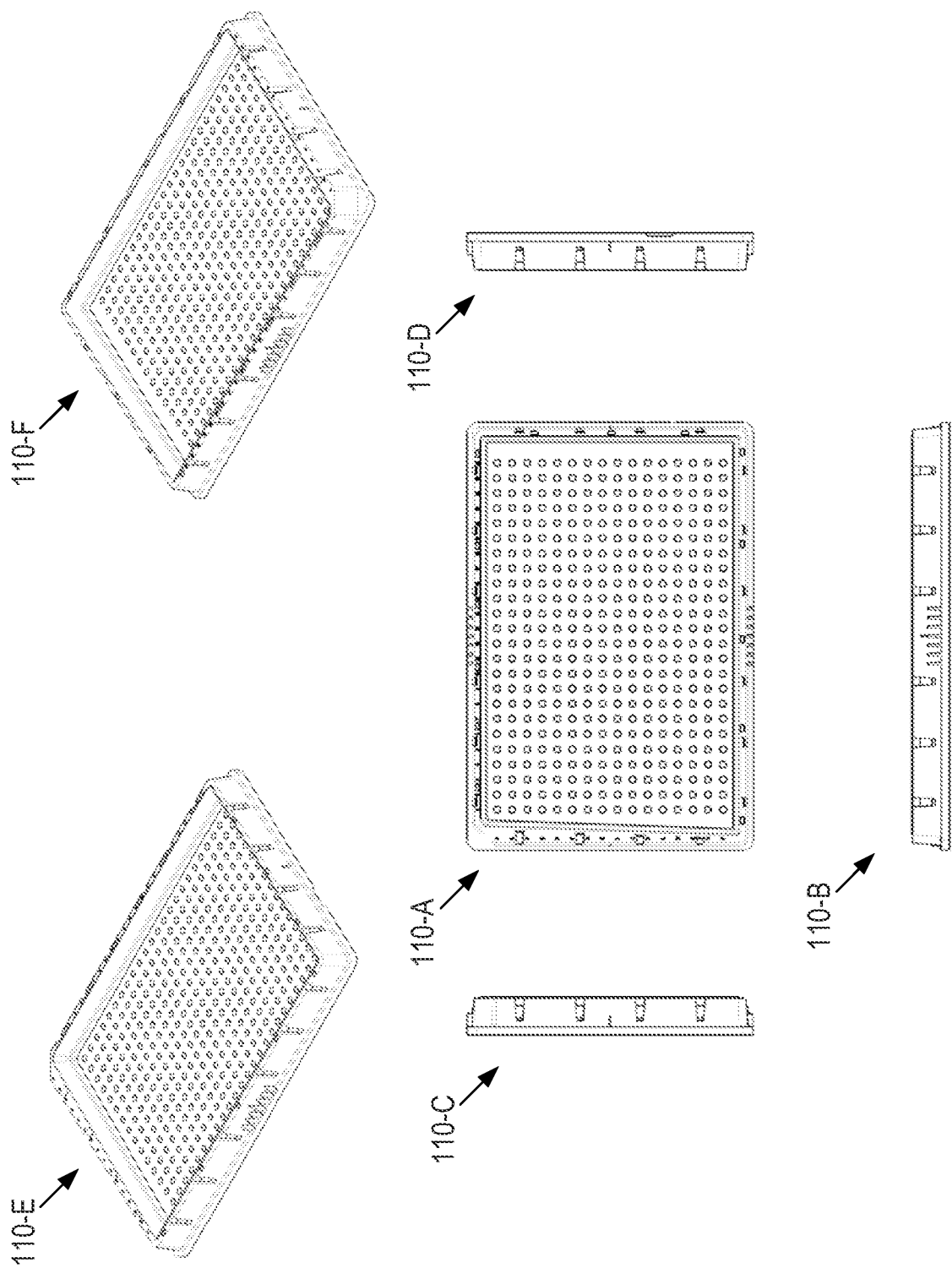


Figure 1

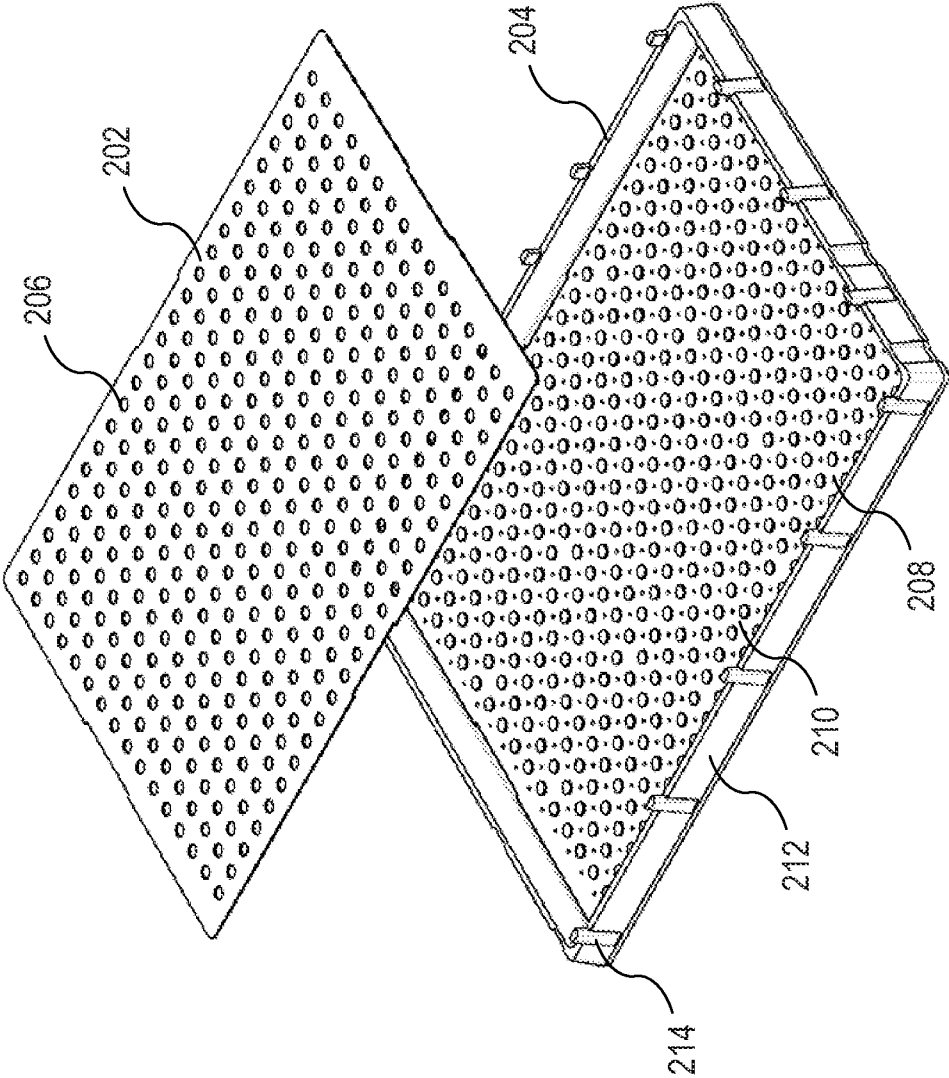


Figure 2A

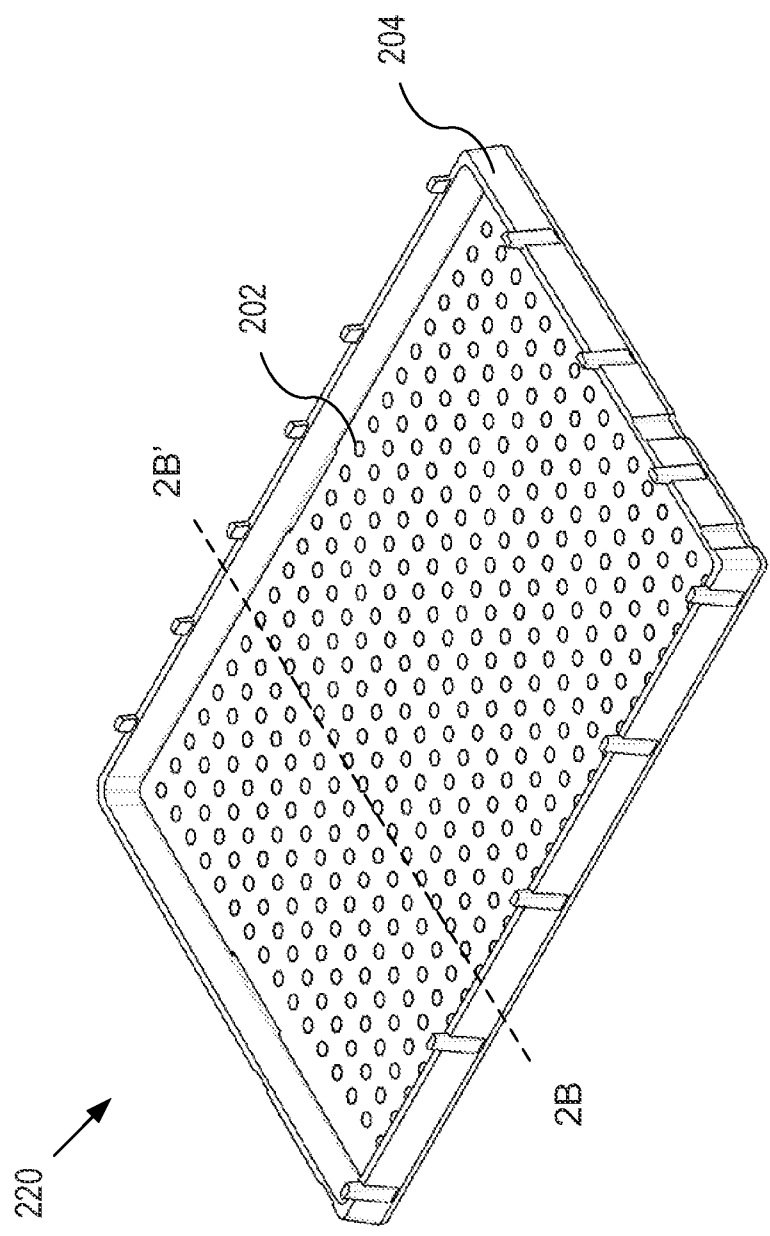


Figure 2B



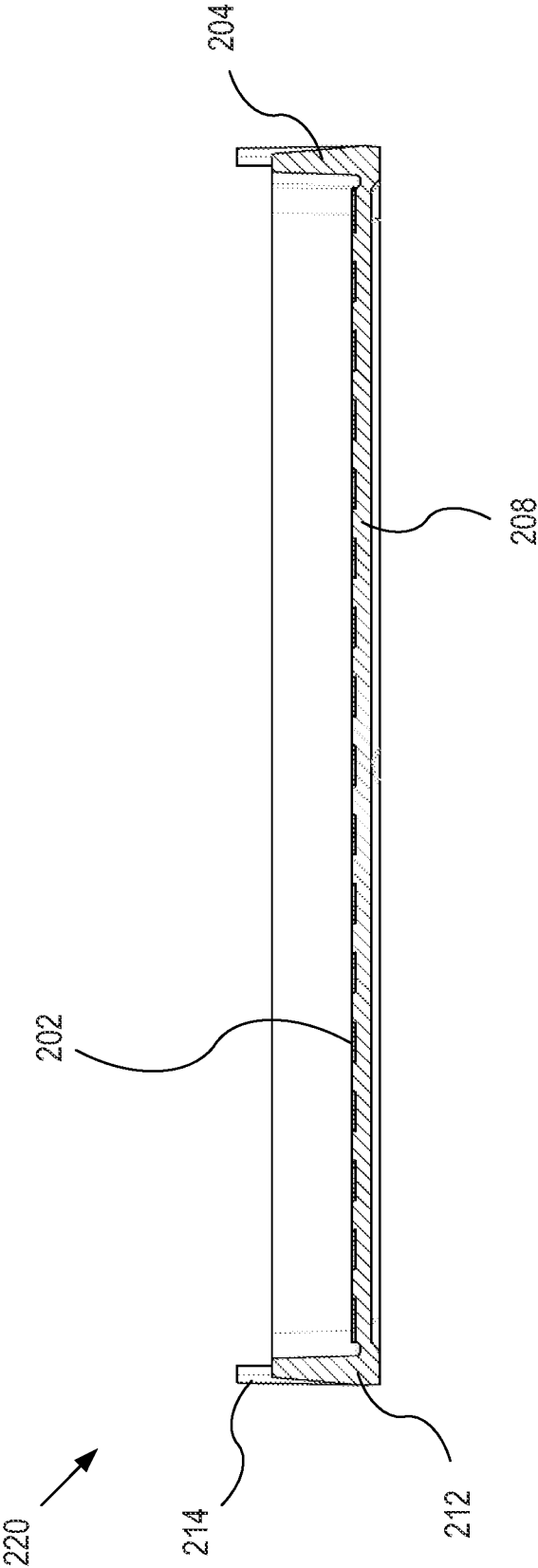


Figure 2C

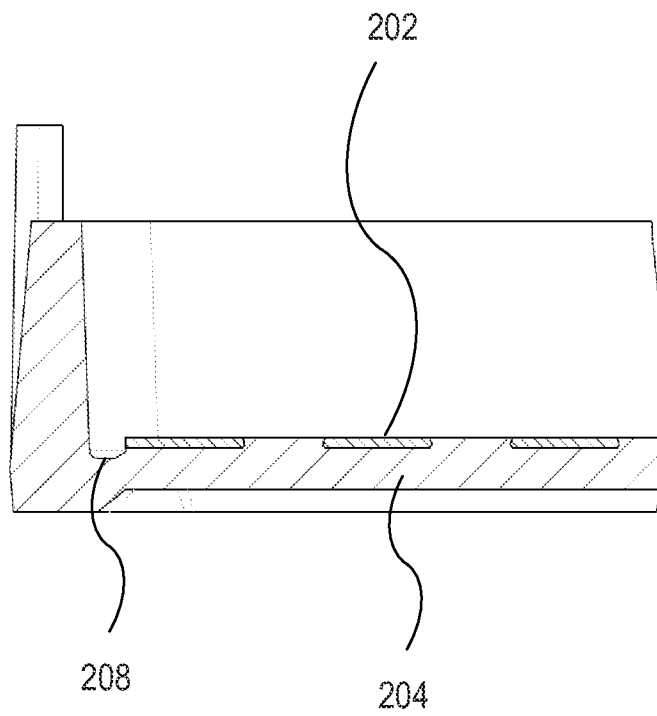


Figure 2D

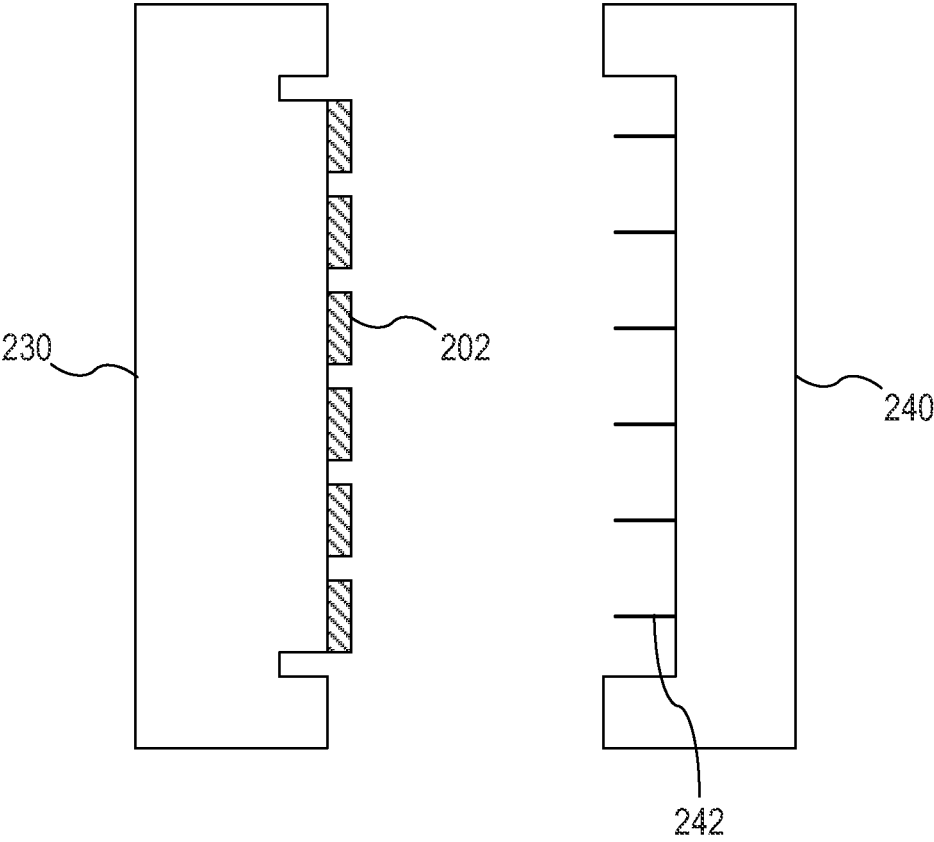


Figure 2E

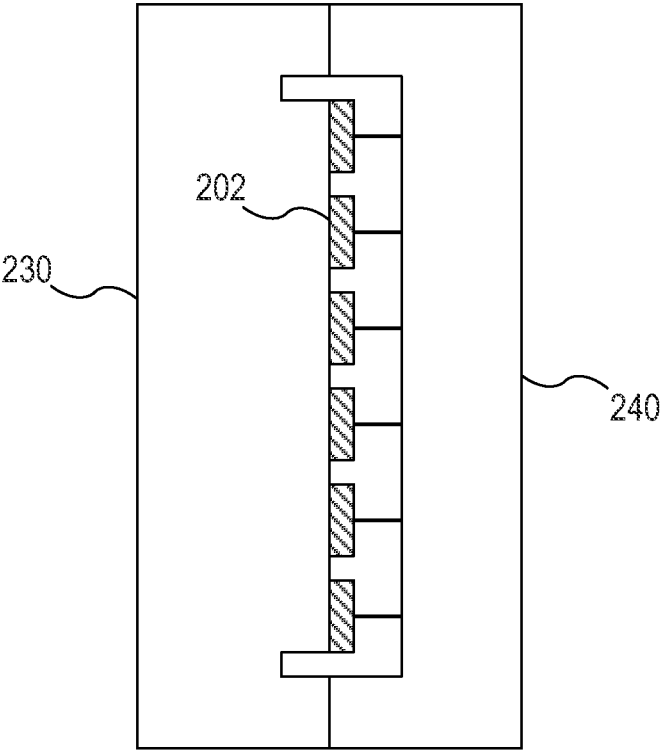


Figure 2F

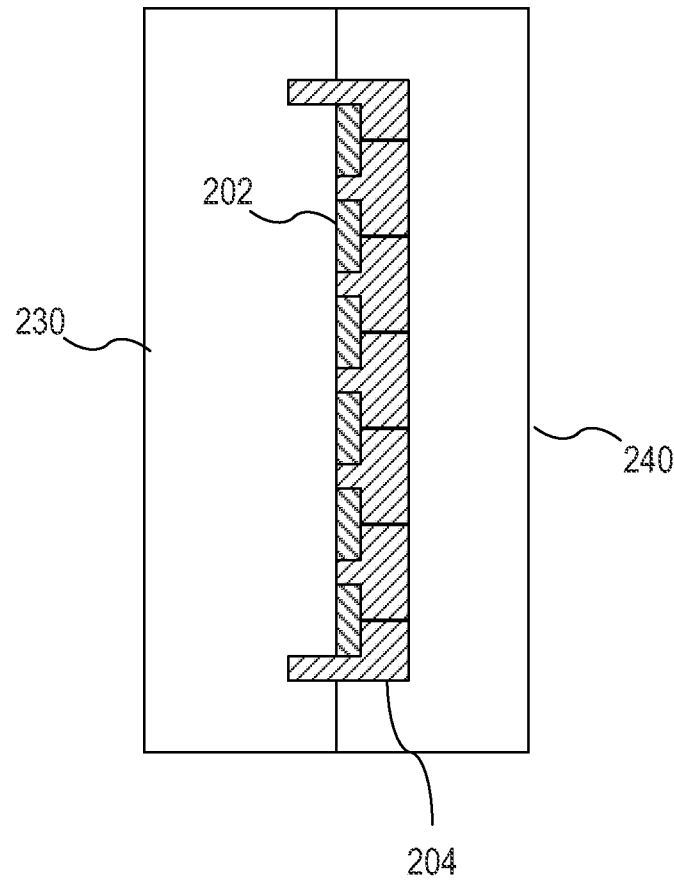


Figure 2G

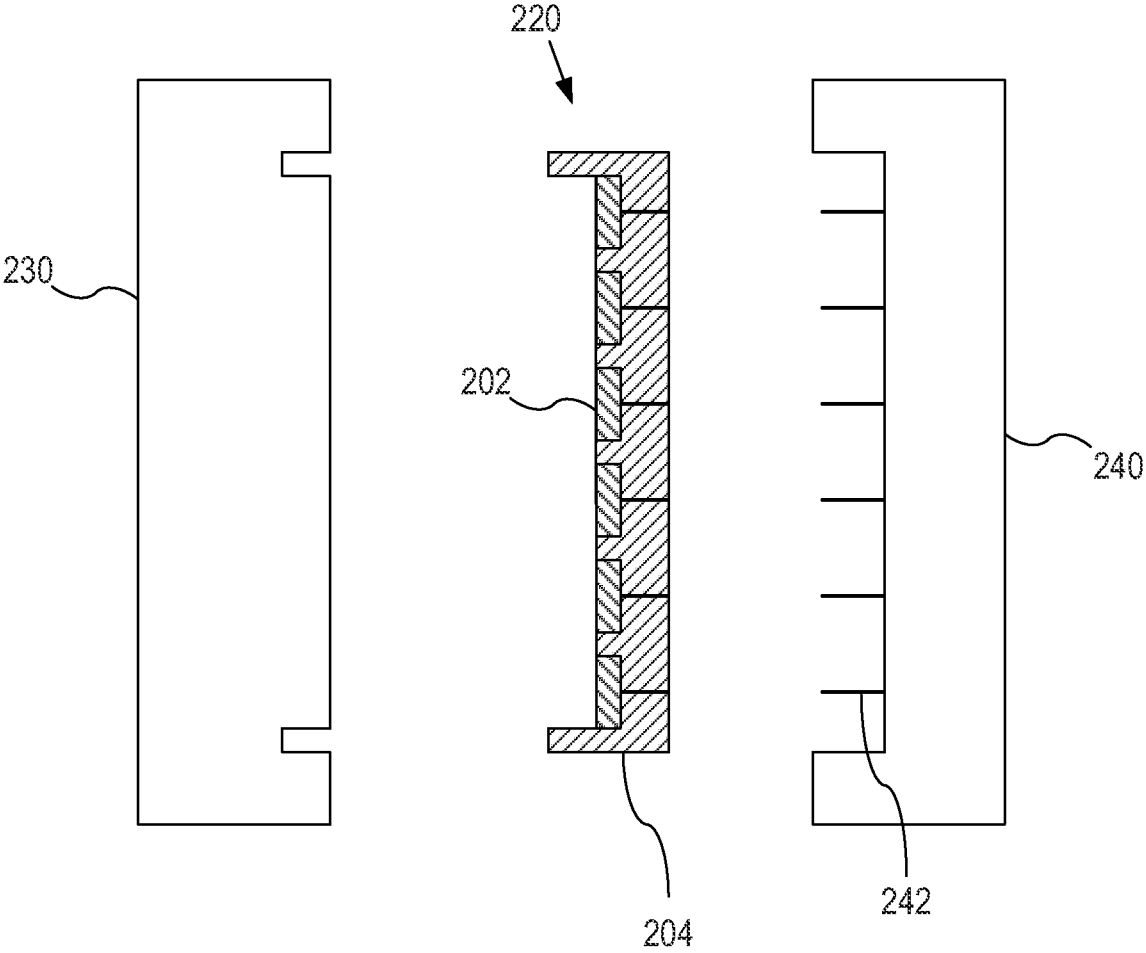


Figure 2H

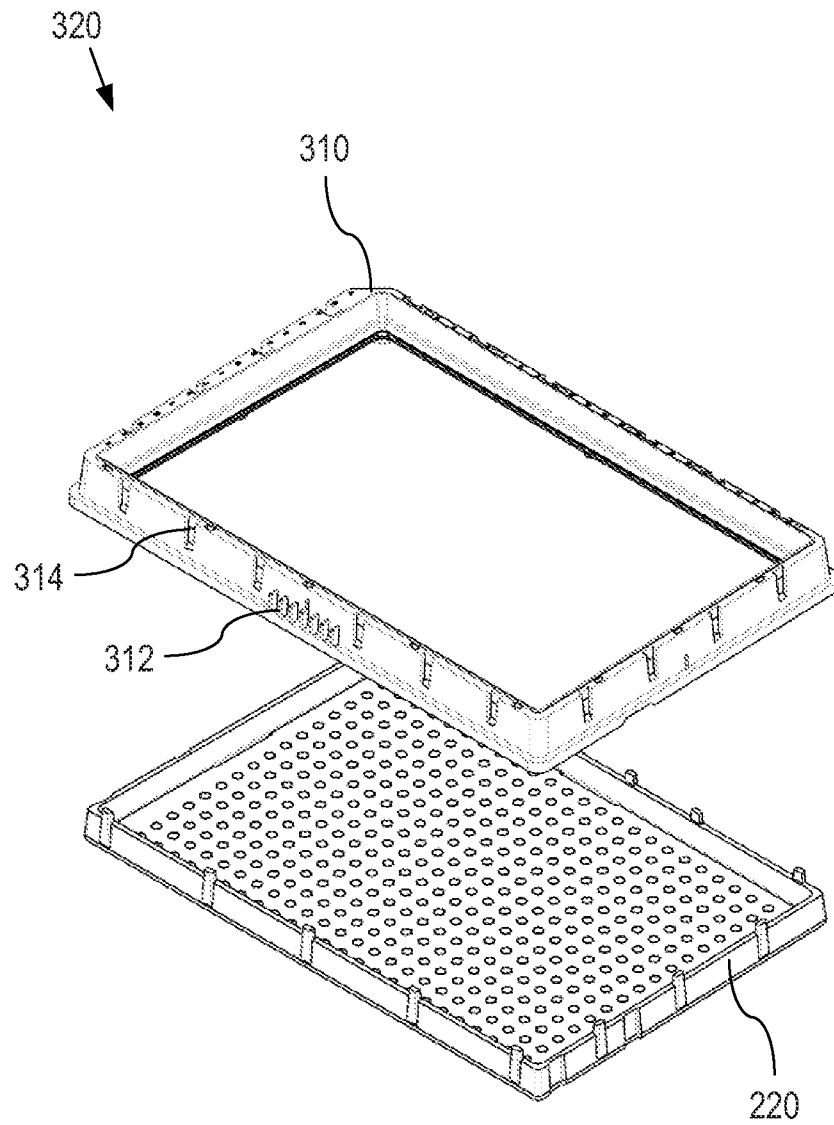


Figure 3A

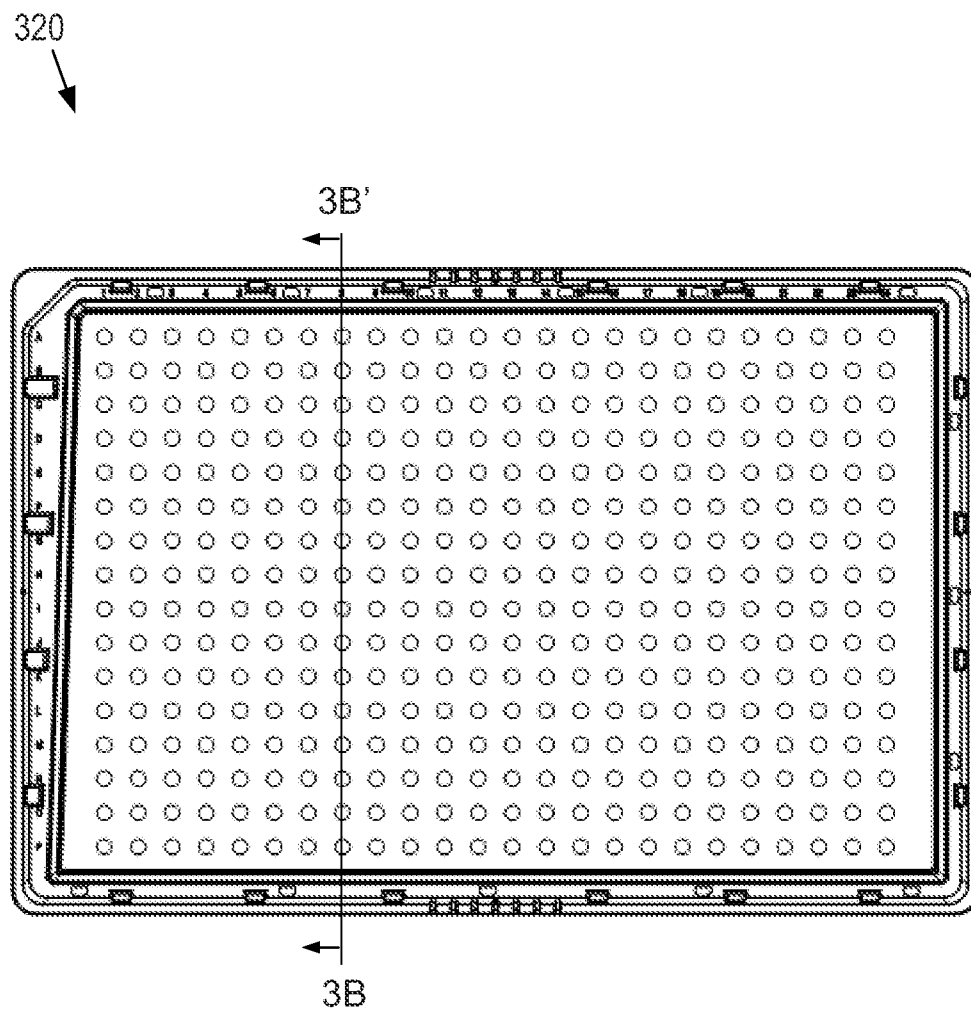


Figure 3B



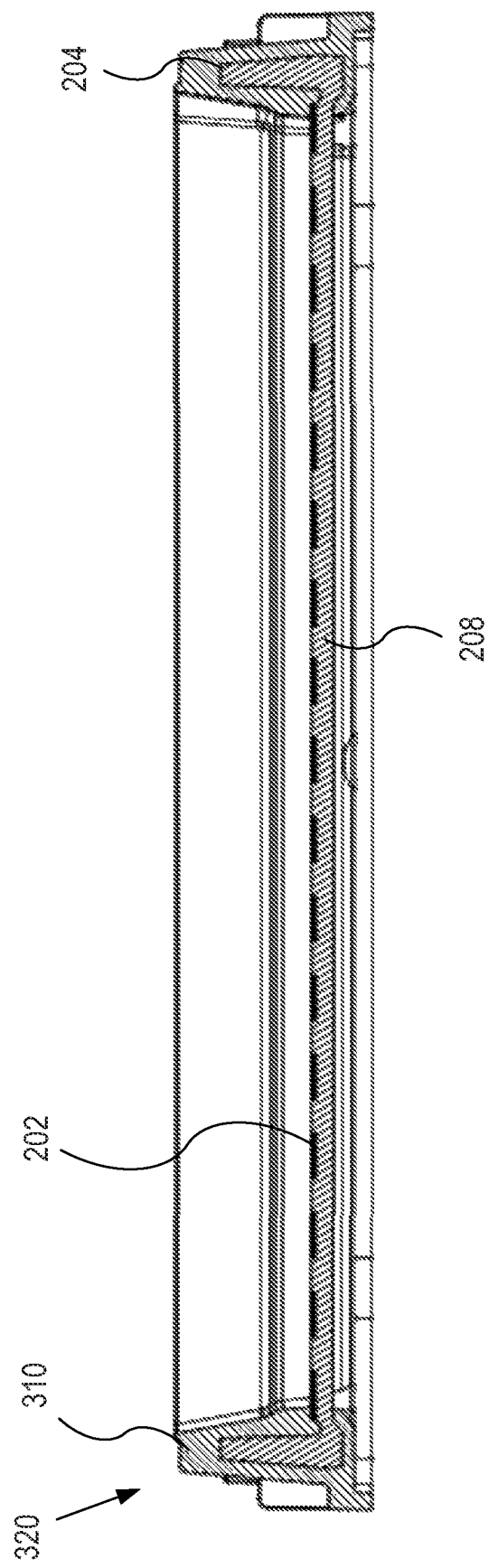


Figure 3C

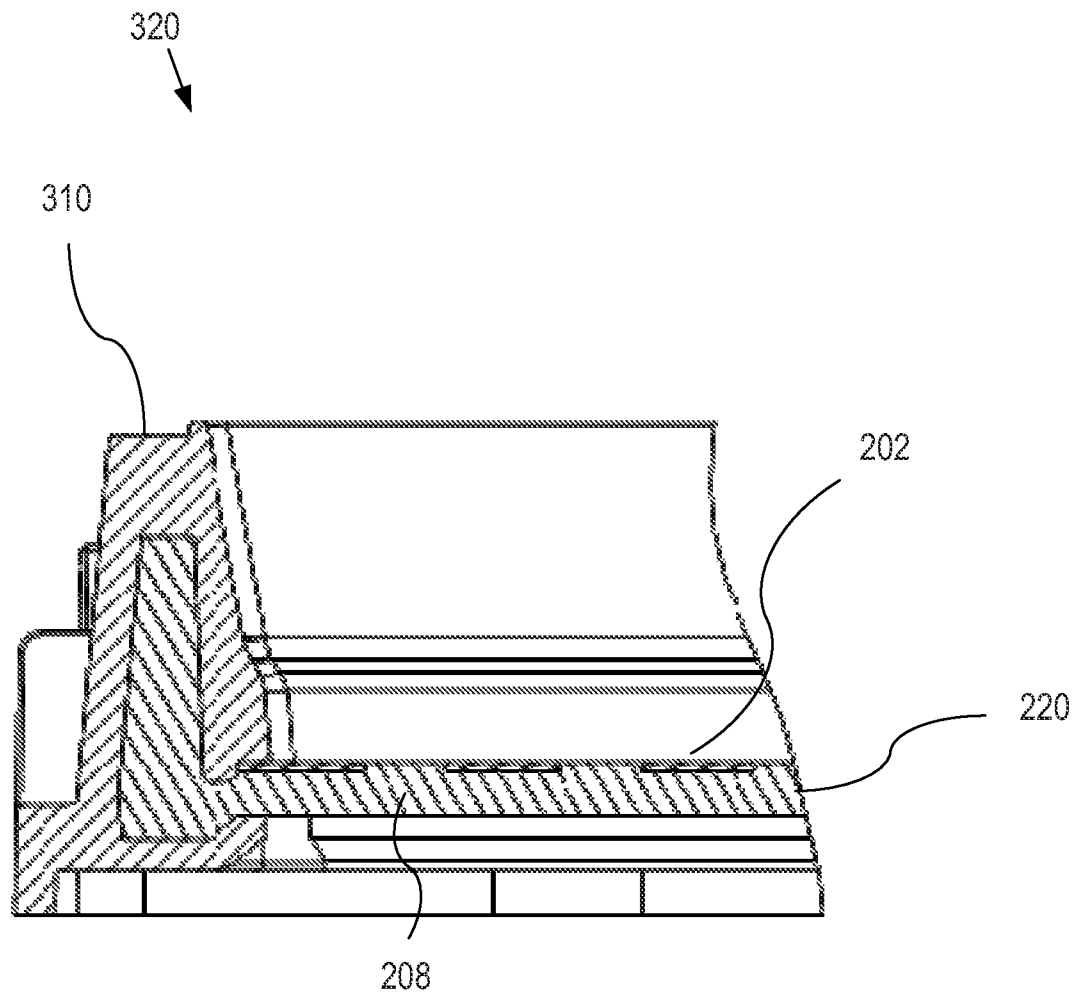


Figure 3C-1

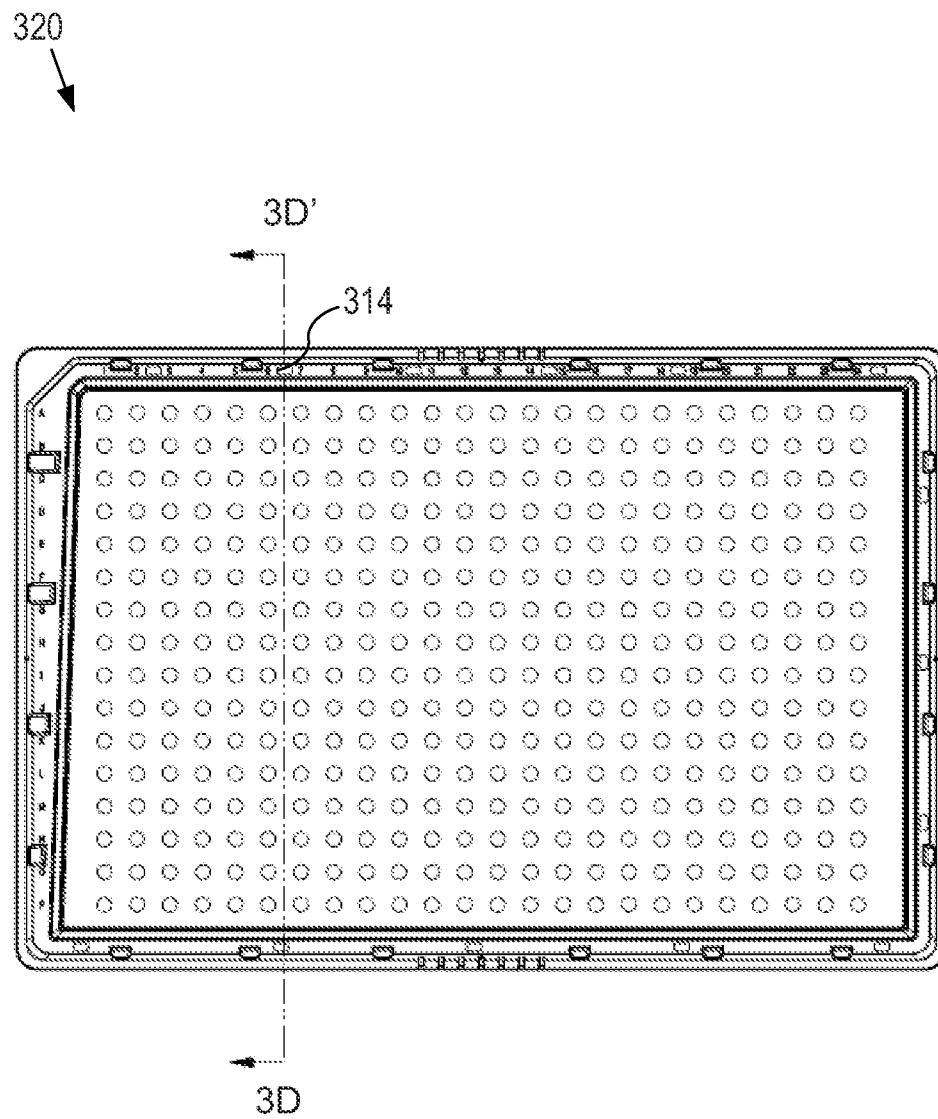


Figure 3D

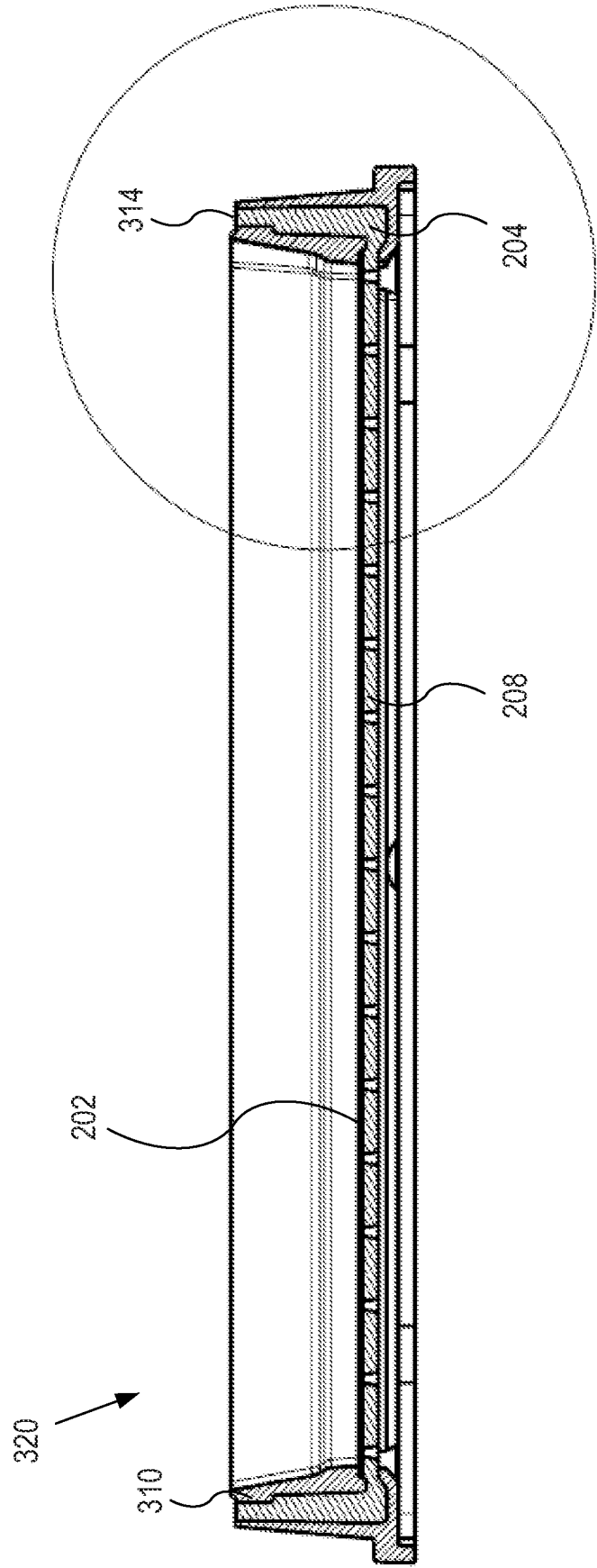


Figure 3E

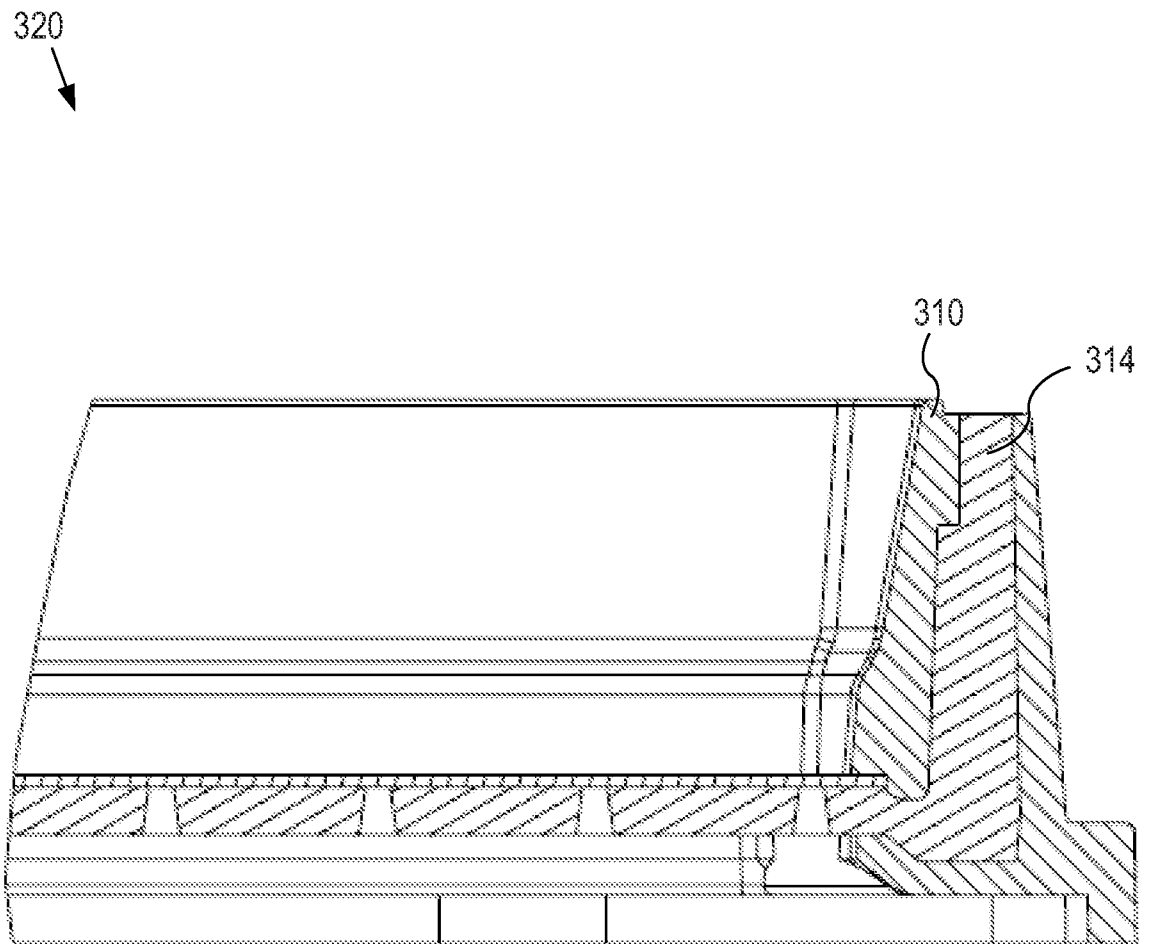


Figure 3E-1

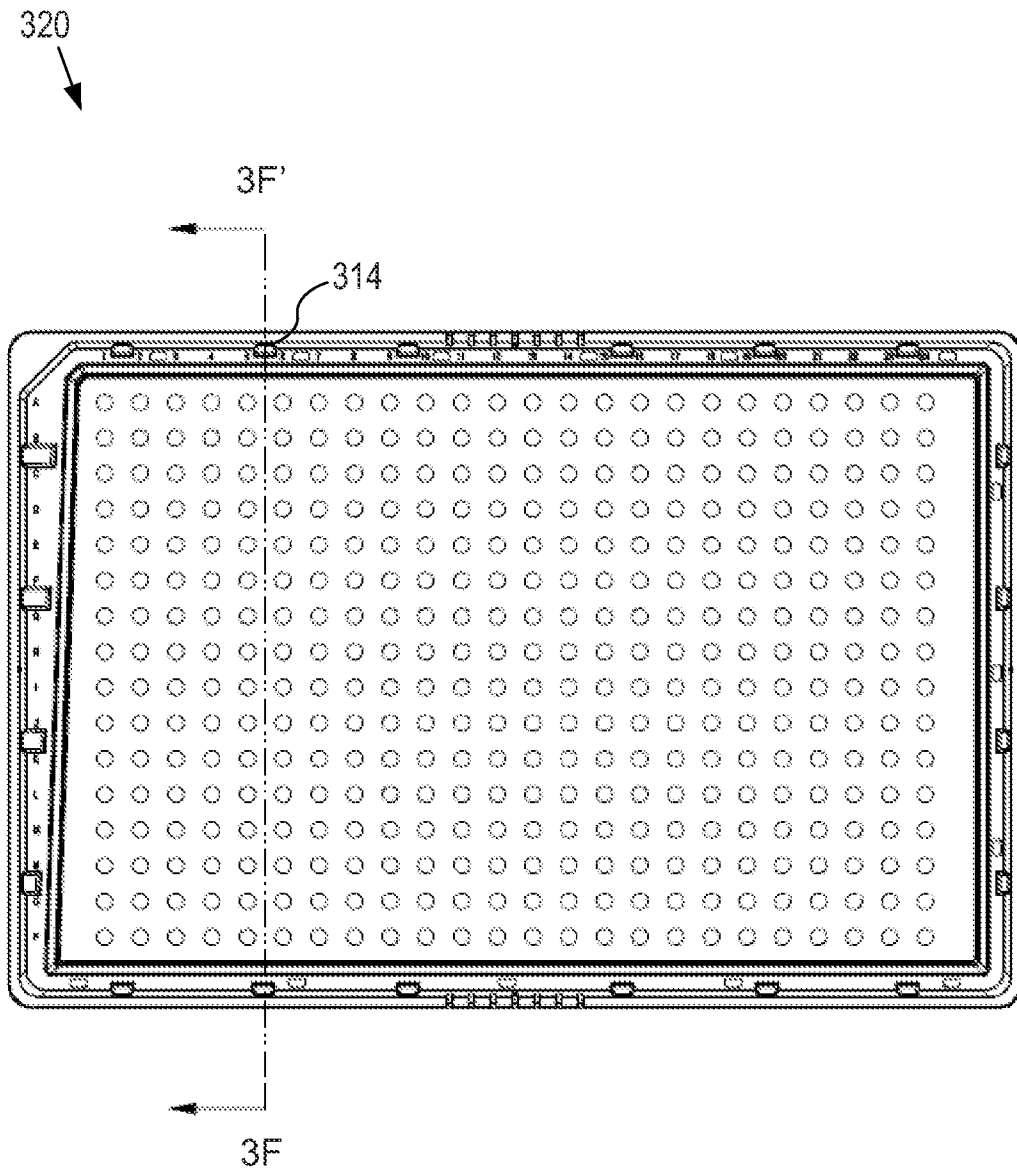


Figure 3F

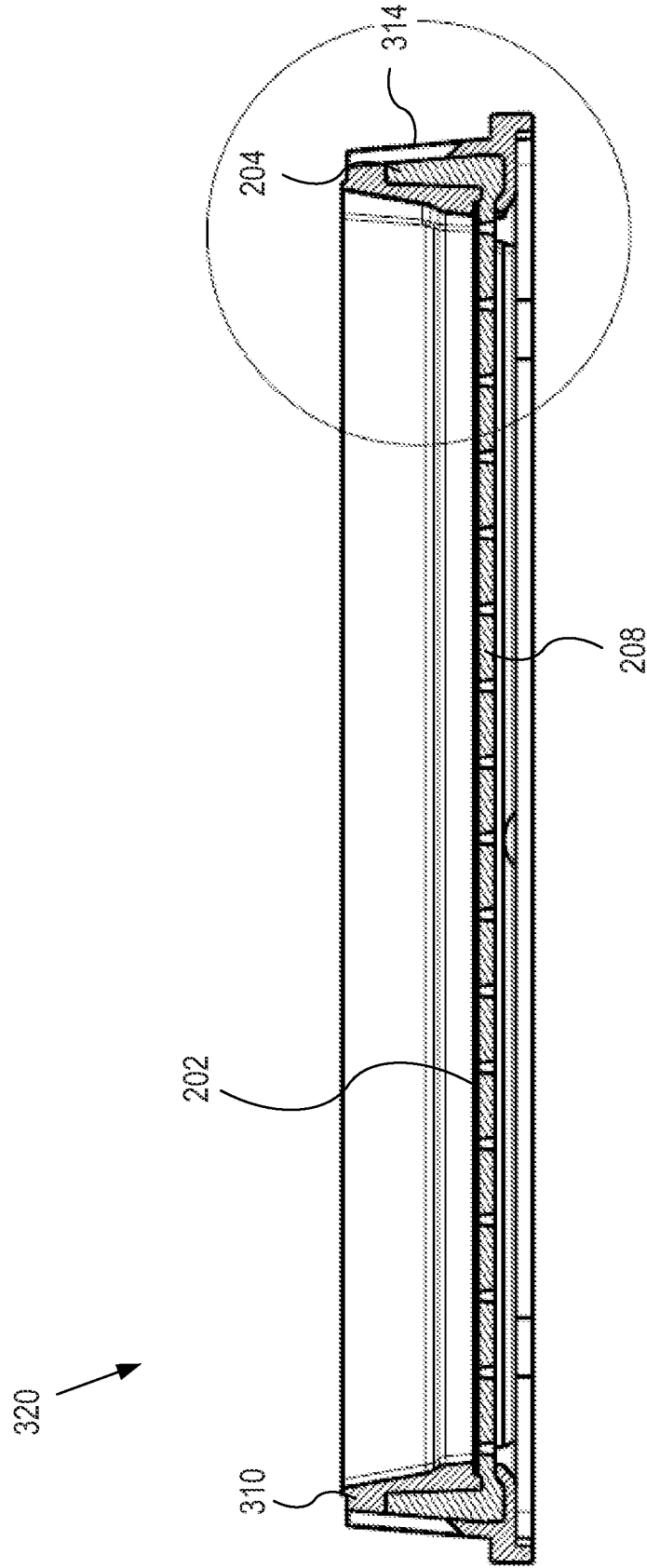


Figure 3G

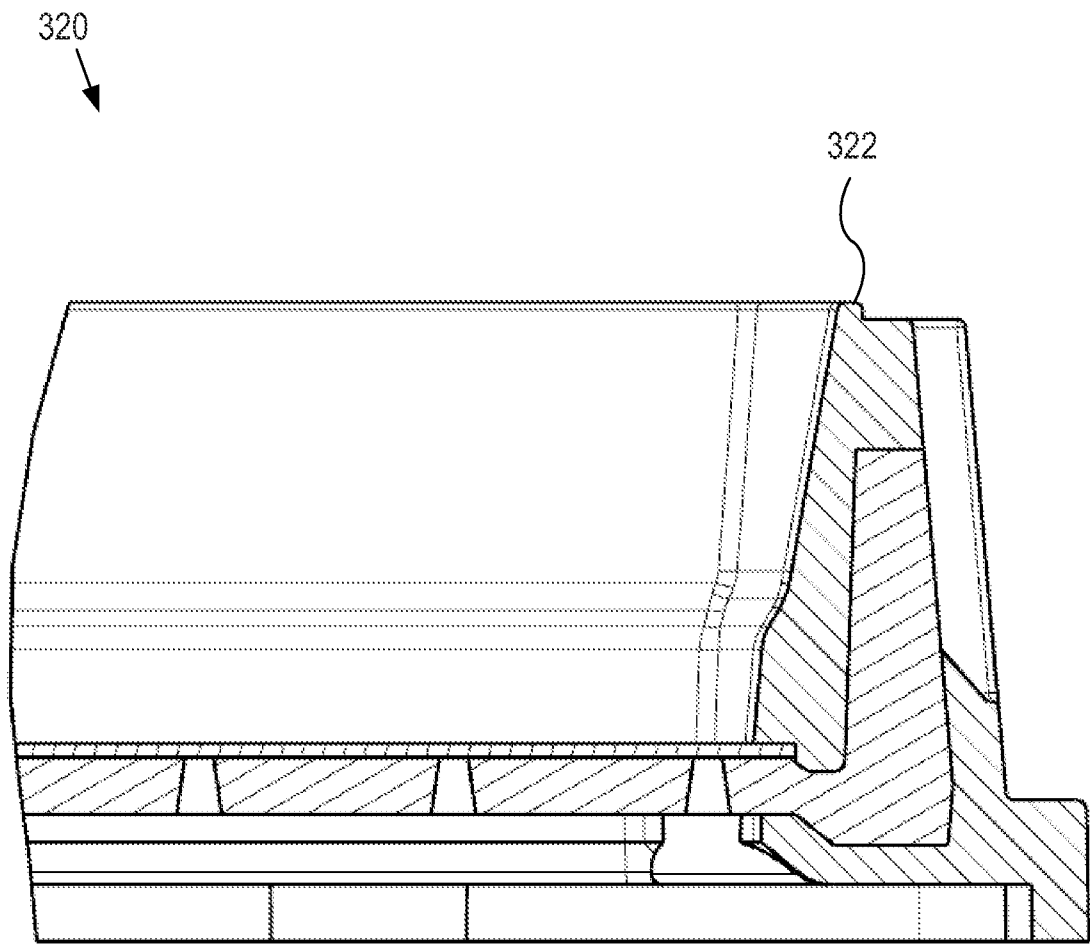


Figure 3G-1



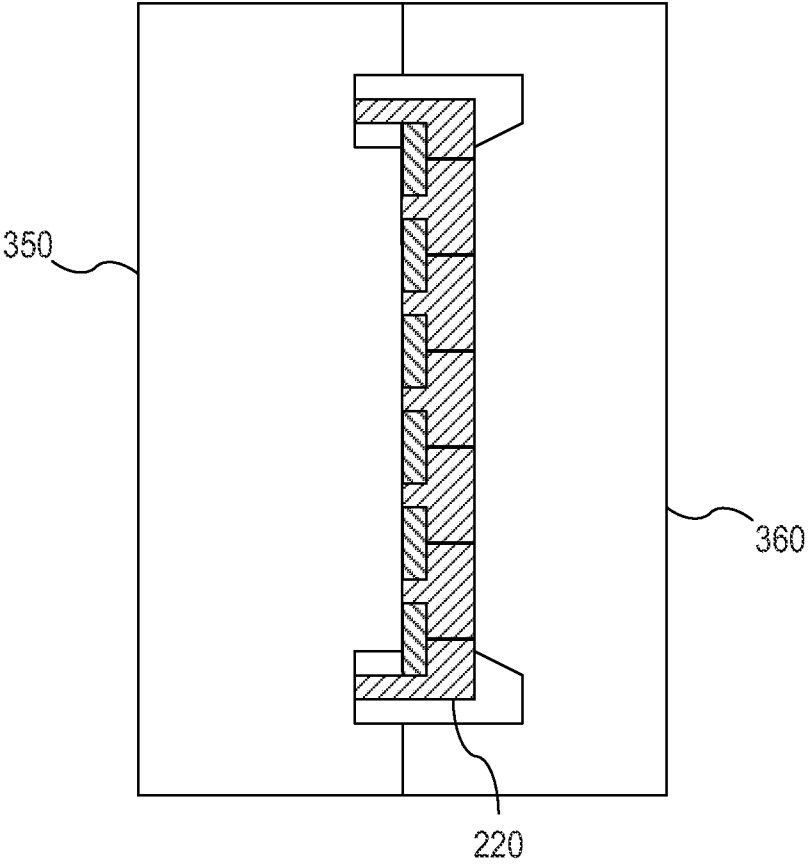


Figure 3H

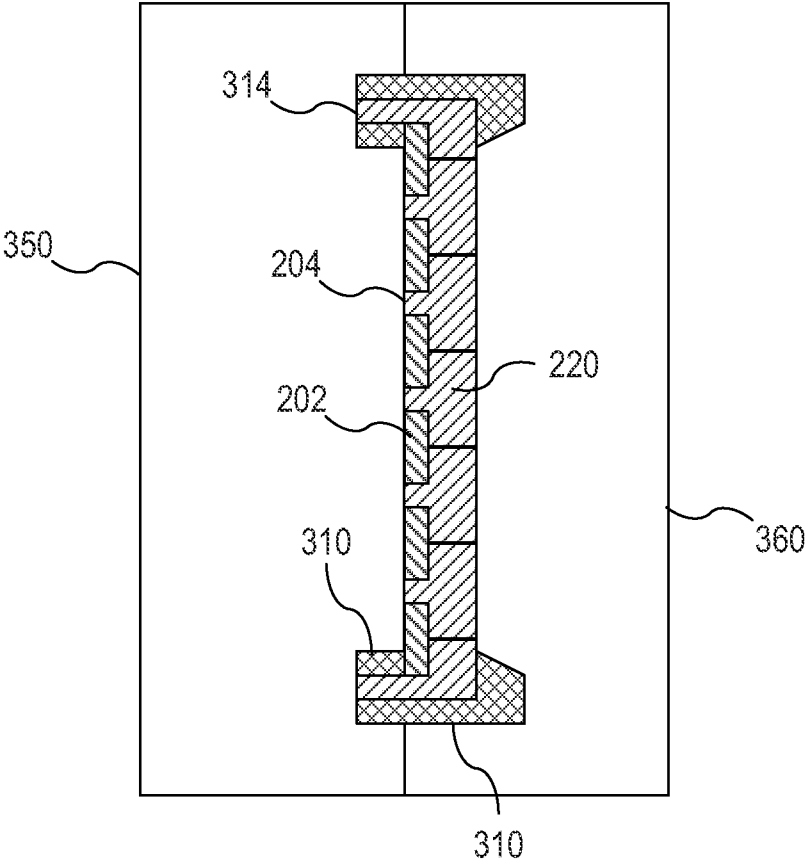


Figure 3I

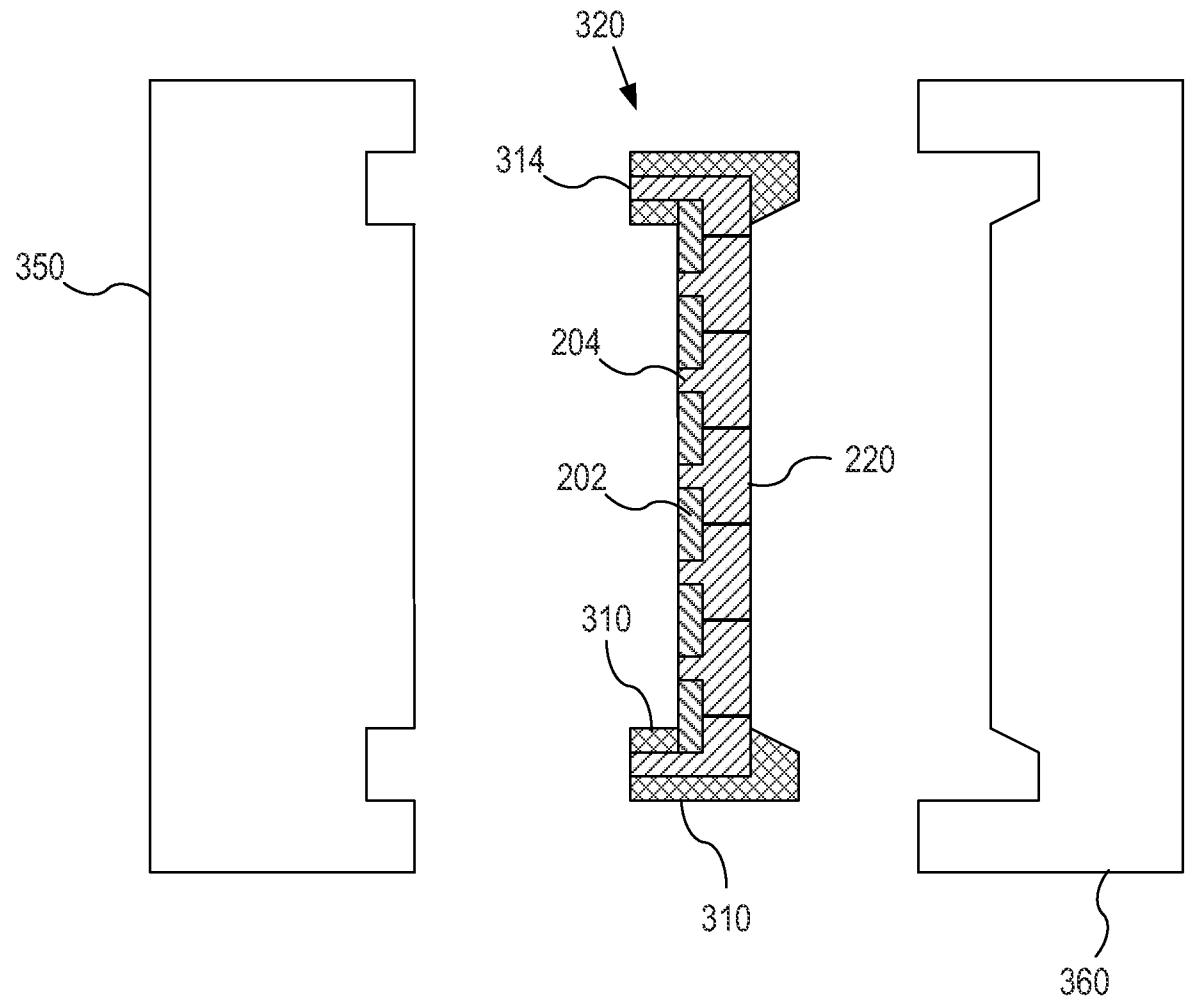


Figure 3J

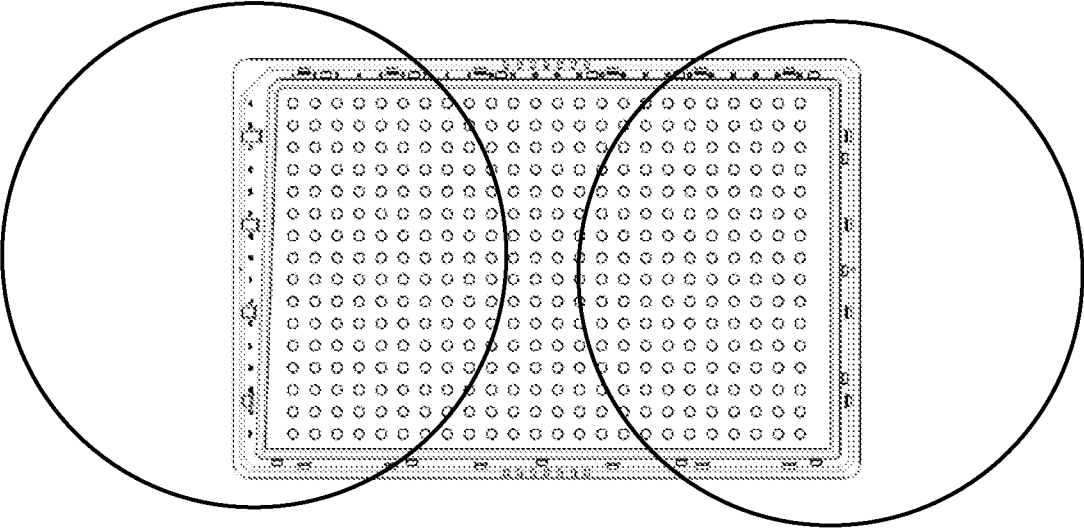


Figure 4A

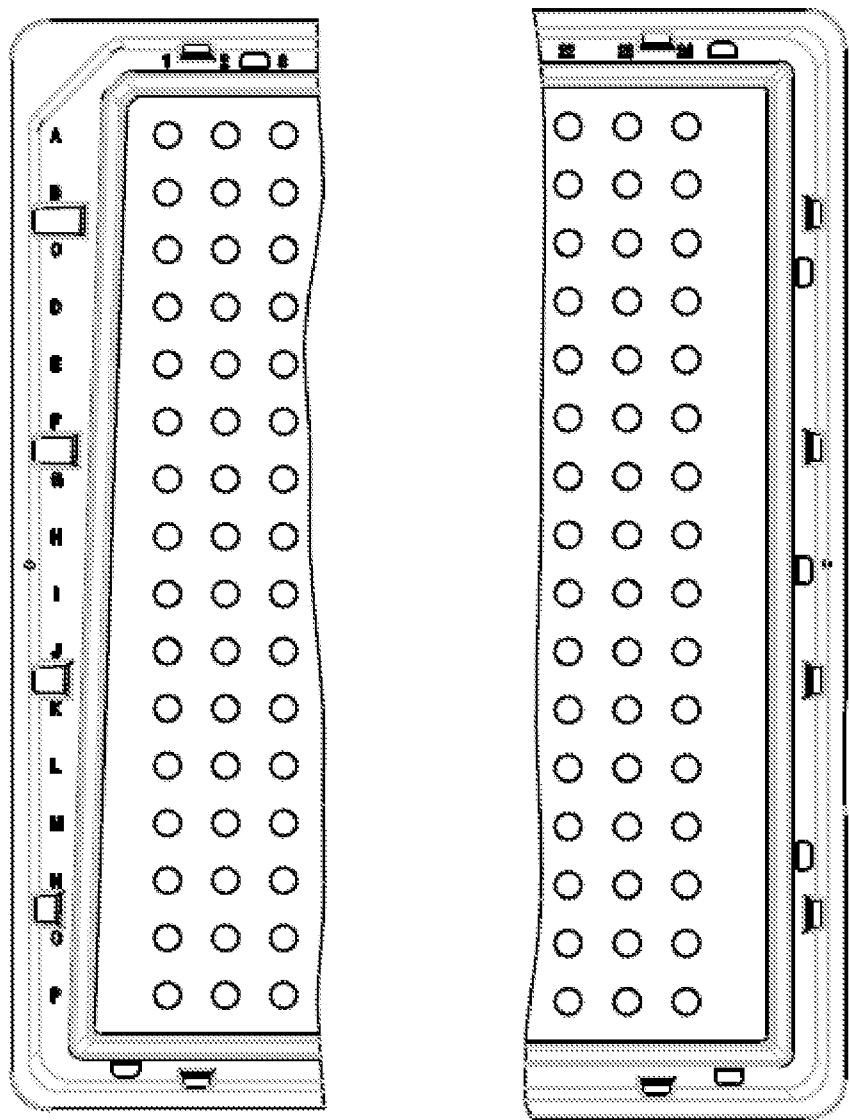


Figure 4B

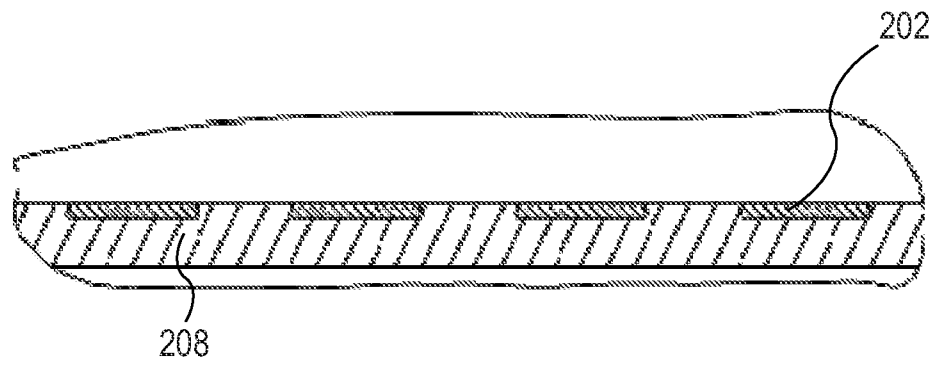


Figure 5A

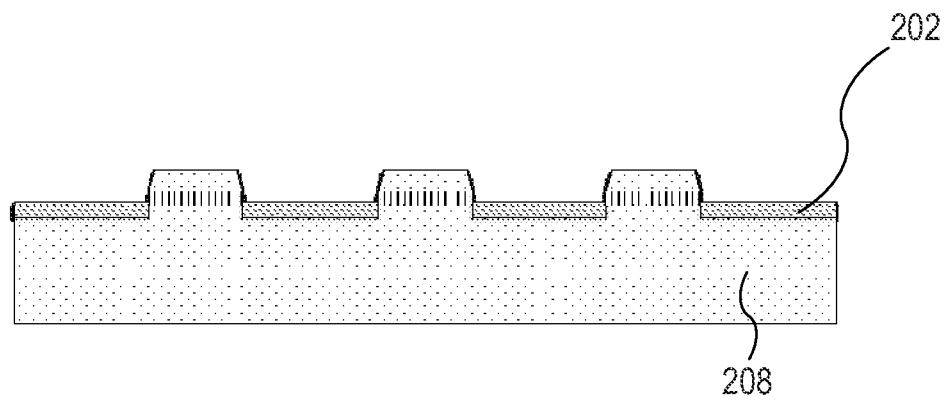


Figure 5B

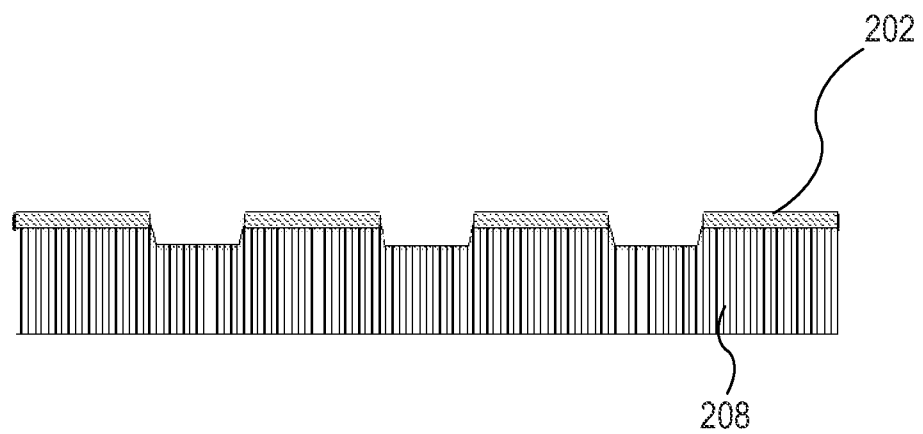


Figure 5C

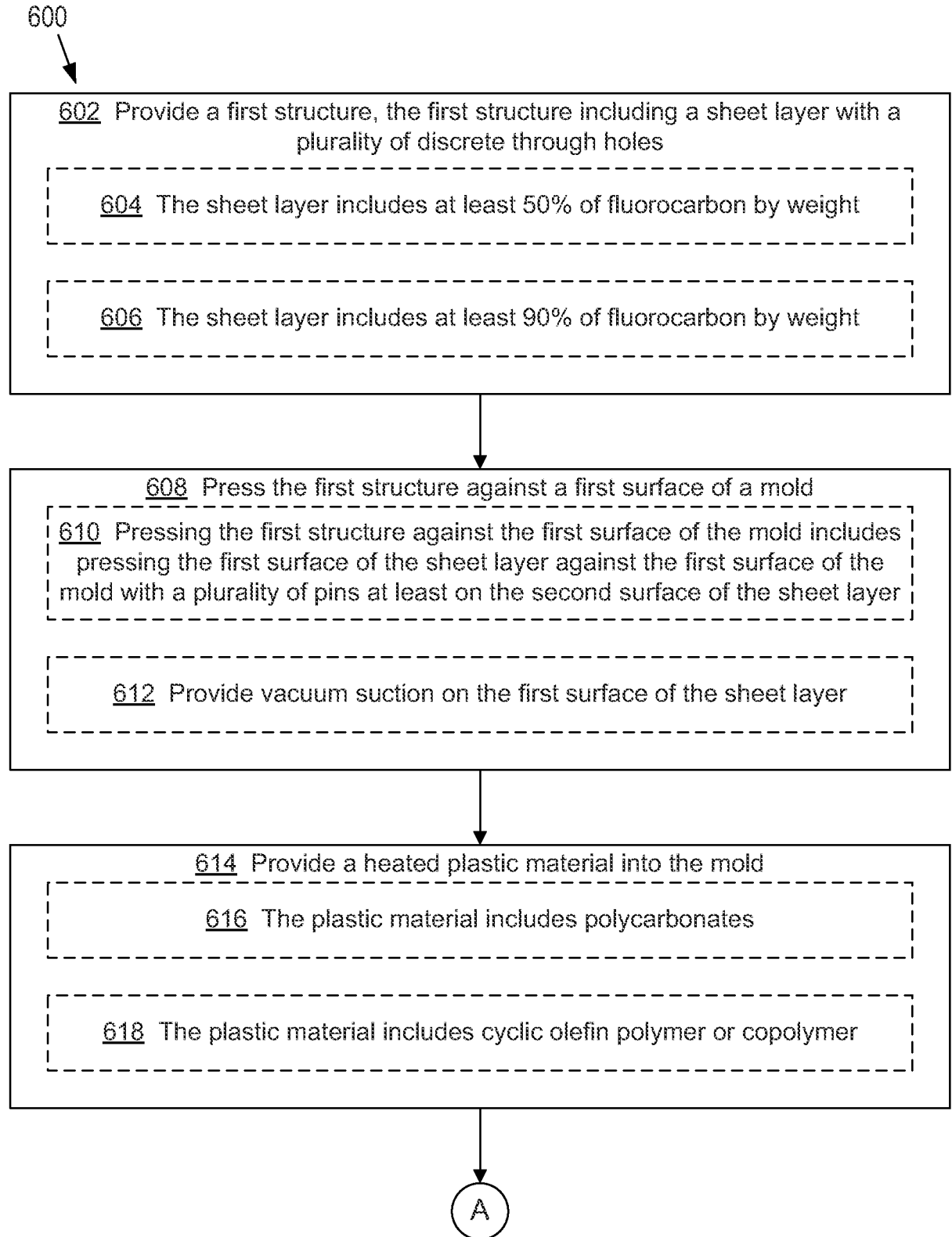


Figure 6A

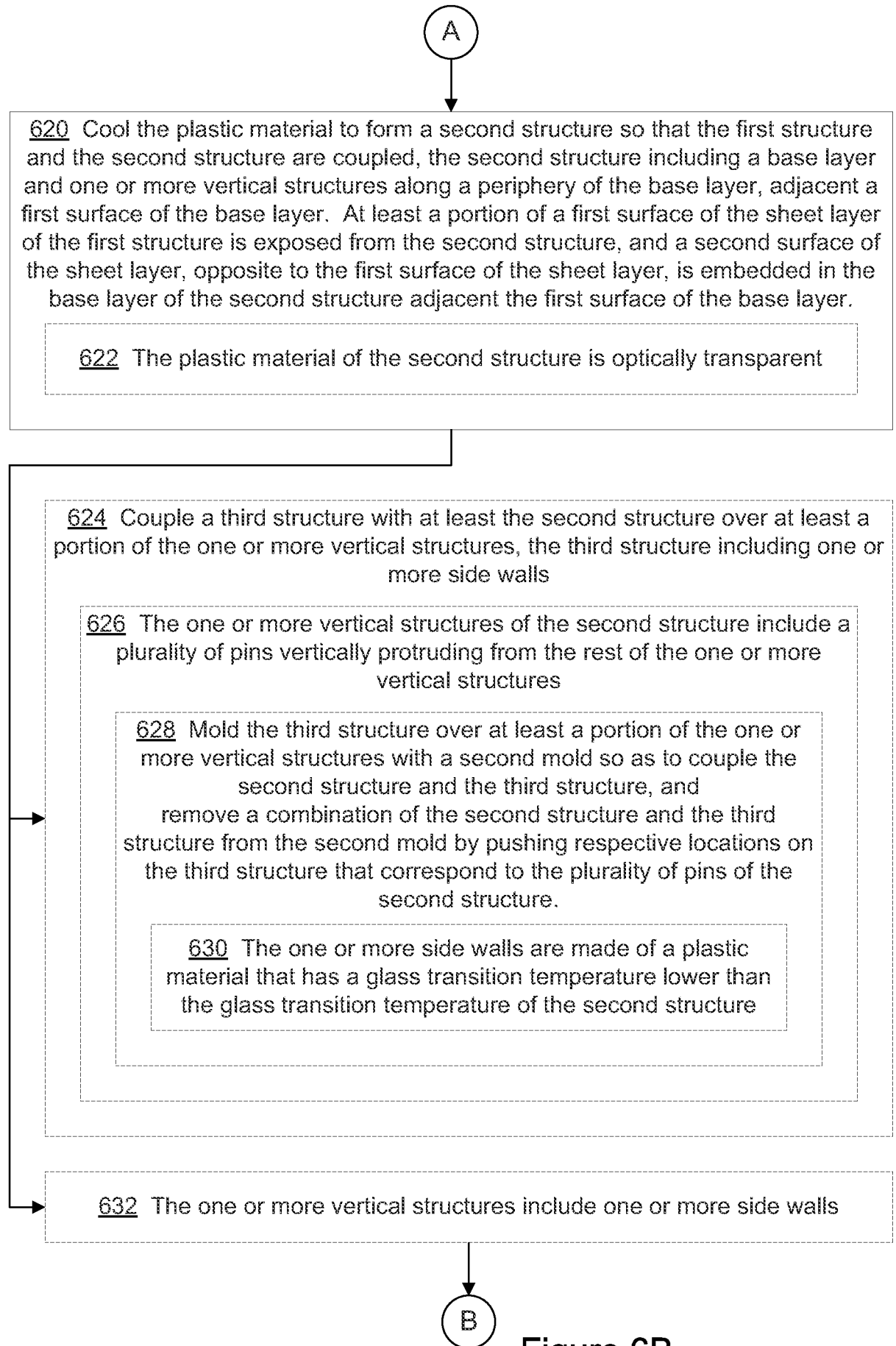


Figure 6B





634 The one or more side walls are made of a material that has Shore A hardness of 85 or less

636 The one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and a respective side wall of the one or more side walls includes one or more lips on the top surface, at least one of the one or more lips aligned with the inner surface of the respective side wall

638 The one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and a respective side wall of the one or more side walls includes one or more vertical indentations along the outer surface of the respective side wall

640 The one or more side walls are made of a hydrophobic material of a surface tension lower than 35 dynes/cm

642 The one or more side walls each have an inner surface, an outer surface, a bottom adjacent the sheet layer of the first structure, and a top surface opposite the bottom, and the inner surface of a respective side wall of the one or more side walls is coated to expose a hydrophobic surface of a surface tension lower than 35 dynes/cm

644 The second structure includes a plurality of holding locations, the method comprising aligning the first structure and the second structure so that the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer of the first structure is offset from the plurality of holding locations in the second structure

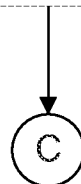


Figure 6C



646 The mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is aligned with a top surface of the base layer of the second structure

648 The mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is above a top surface of the base layer of the second structure

650 The mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is below a top surface of the base layer of the second structure

652 The first surface of the mold has one or more of: a plurality of indentations and a plurality of protrusions corresponding to the plurality of discrete through holes defined in the sheet layer

654 At least one of the side walls include one or more handles, each handle comprising a plurality of parallel fins

Figure 6D

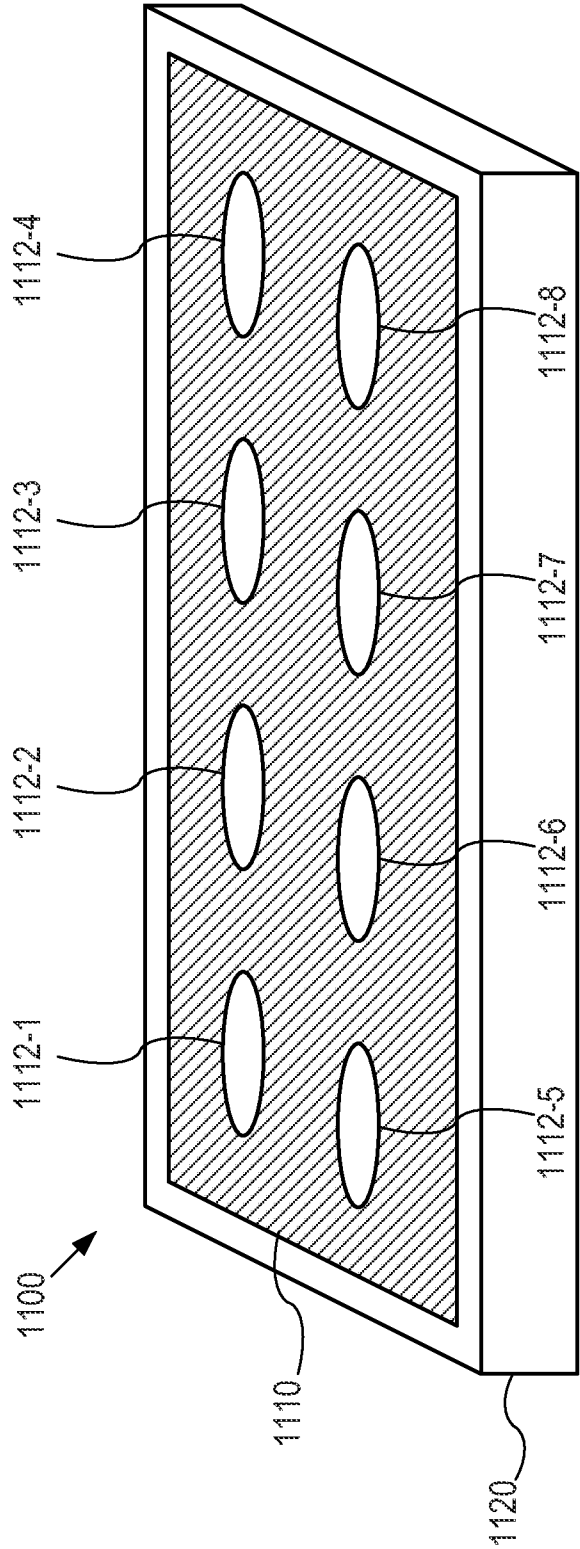


Figure 7

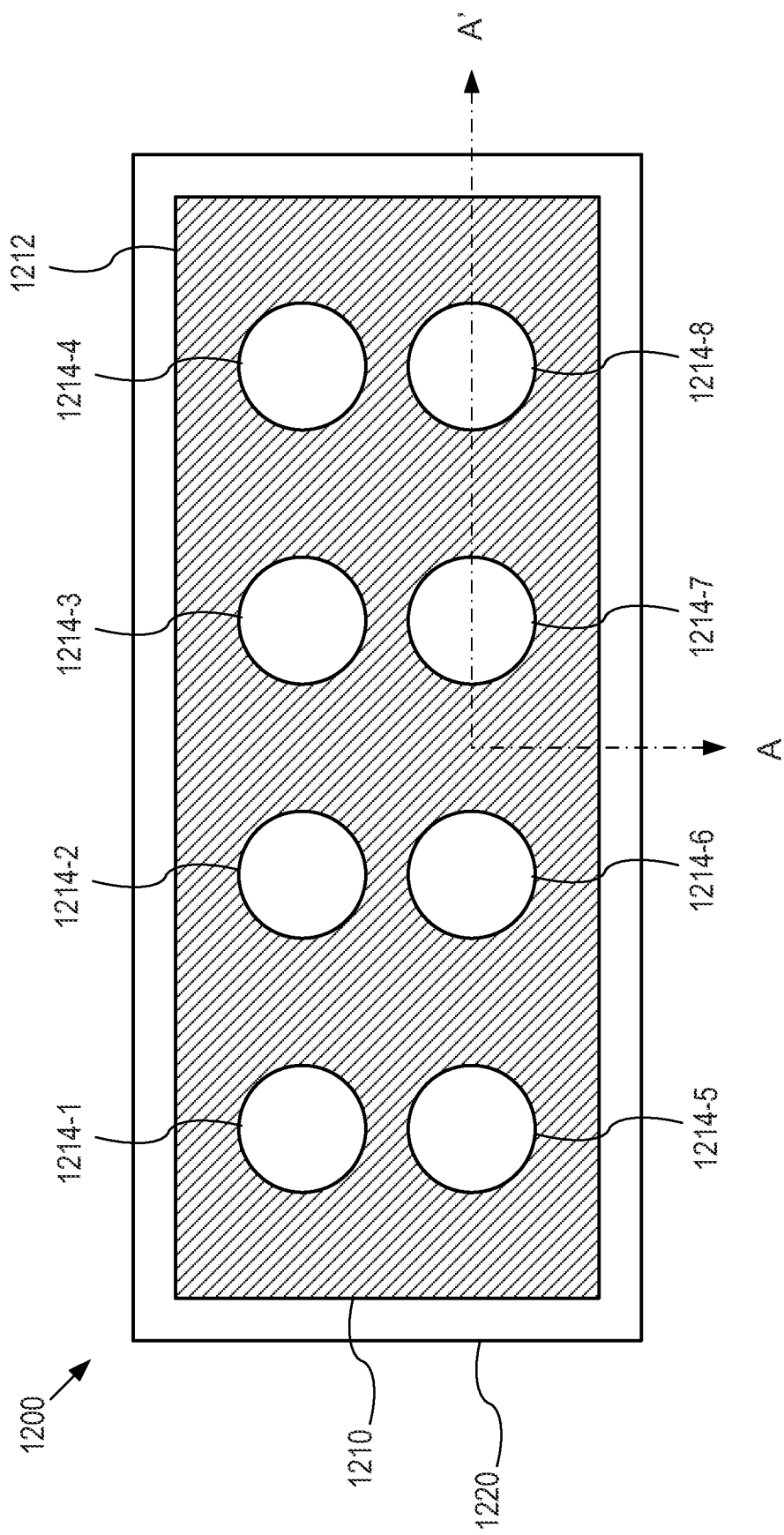


Figure 8A

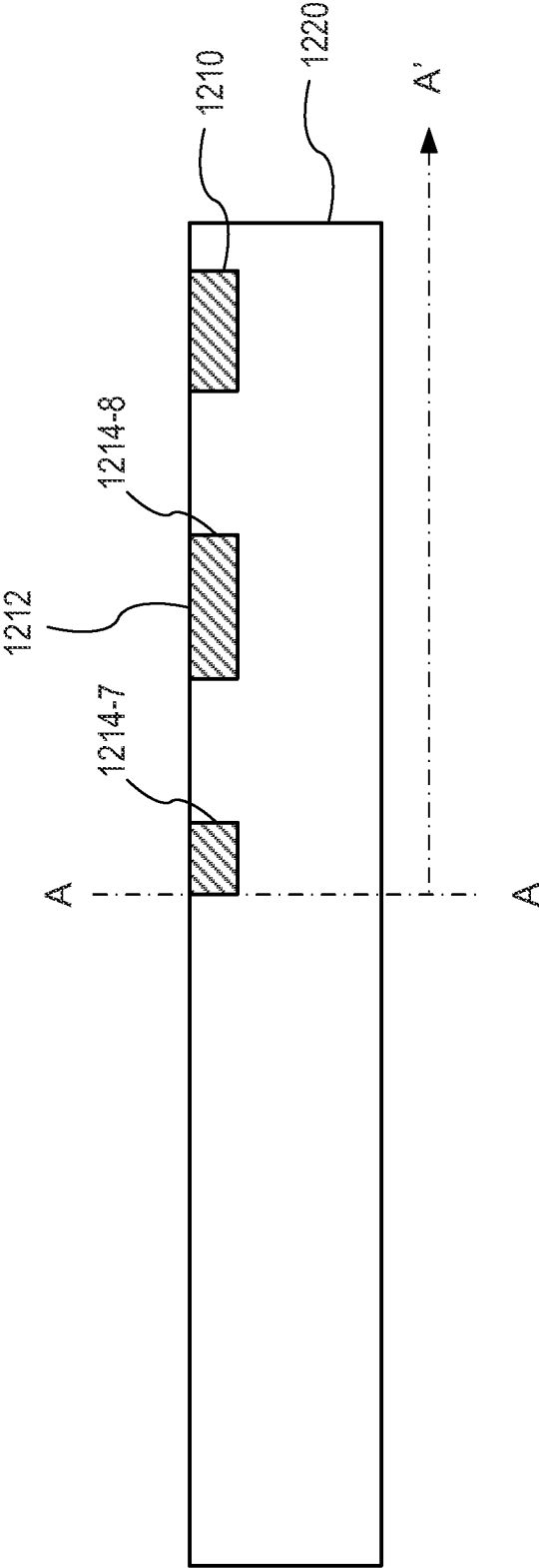
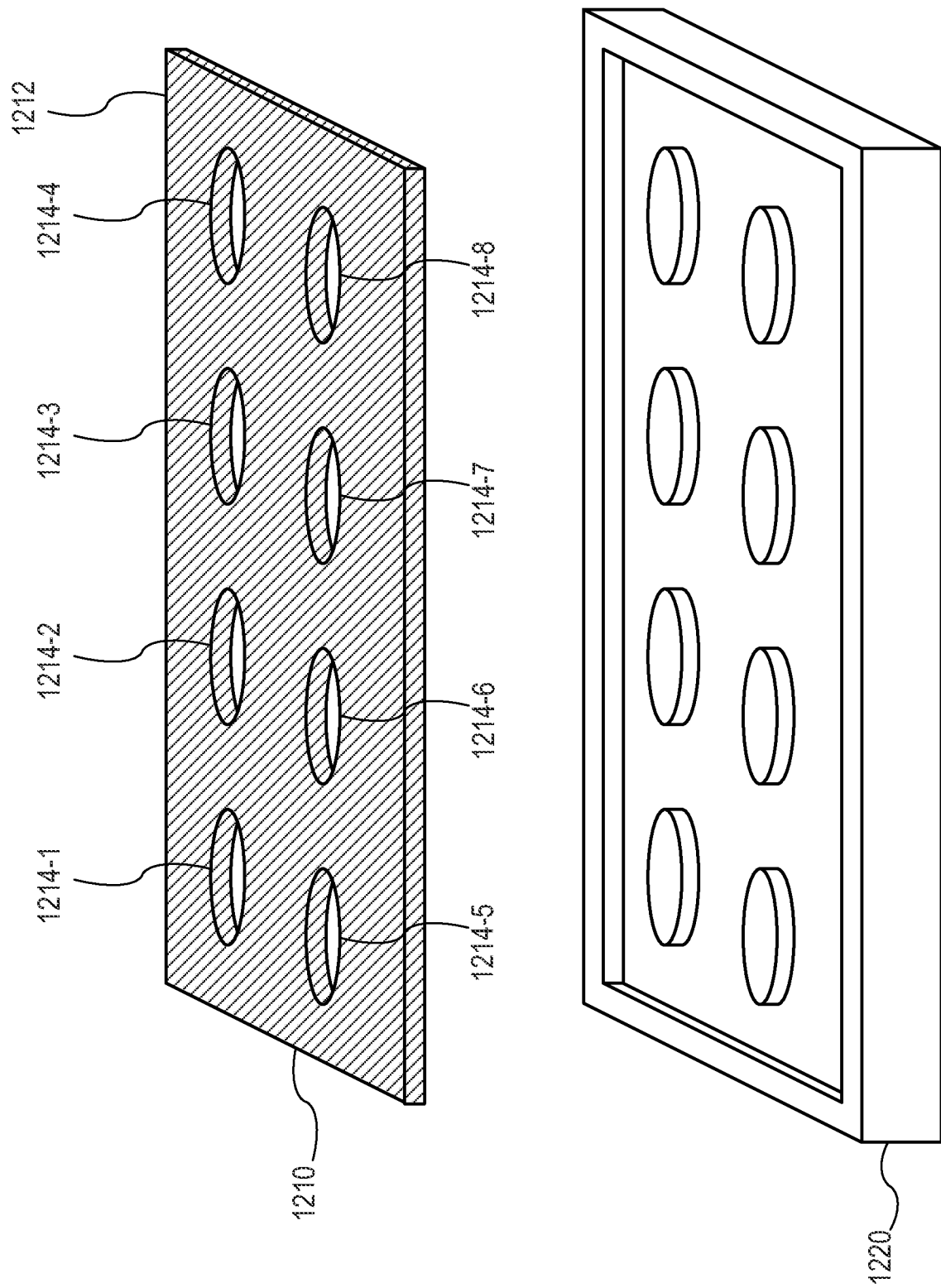


Figure 8B



**Figure 8C**

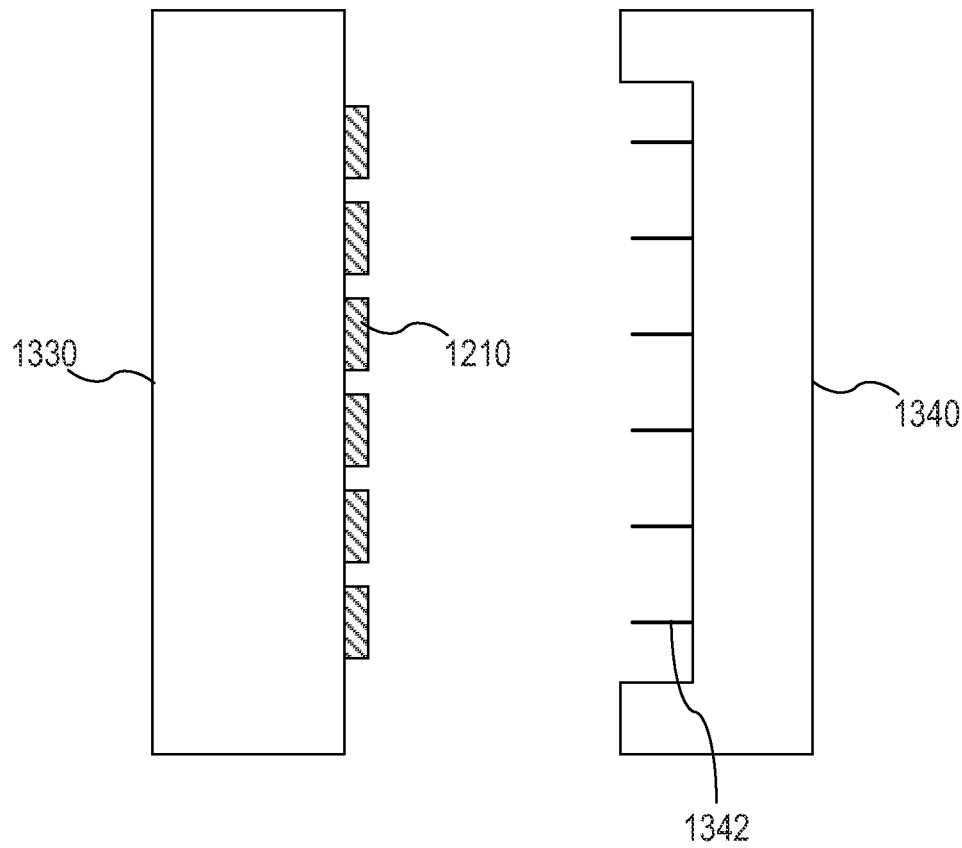


Figure 9A

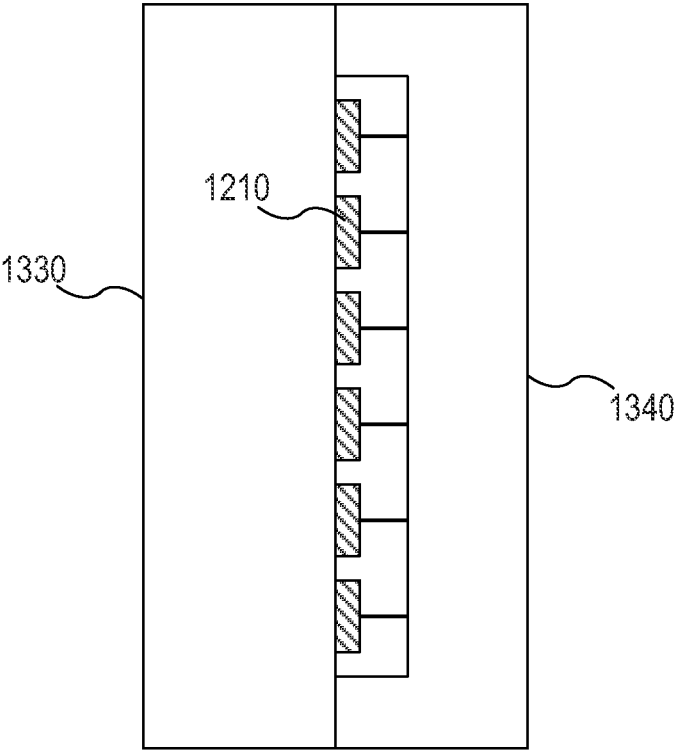


Figure 9B



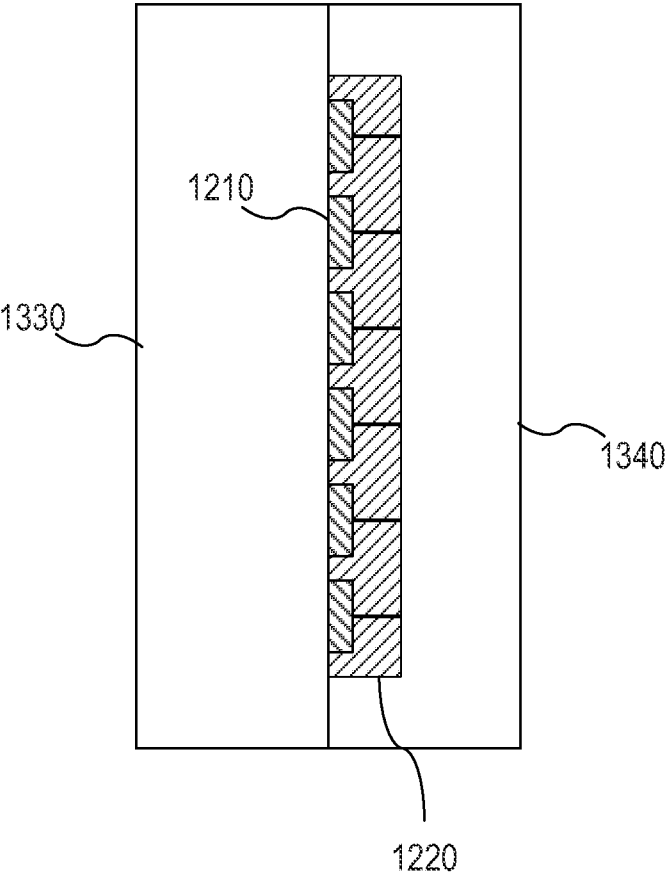


Figure 9C

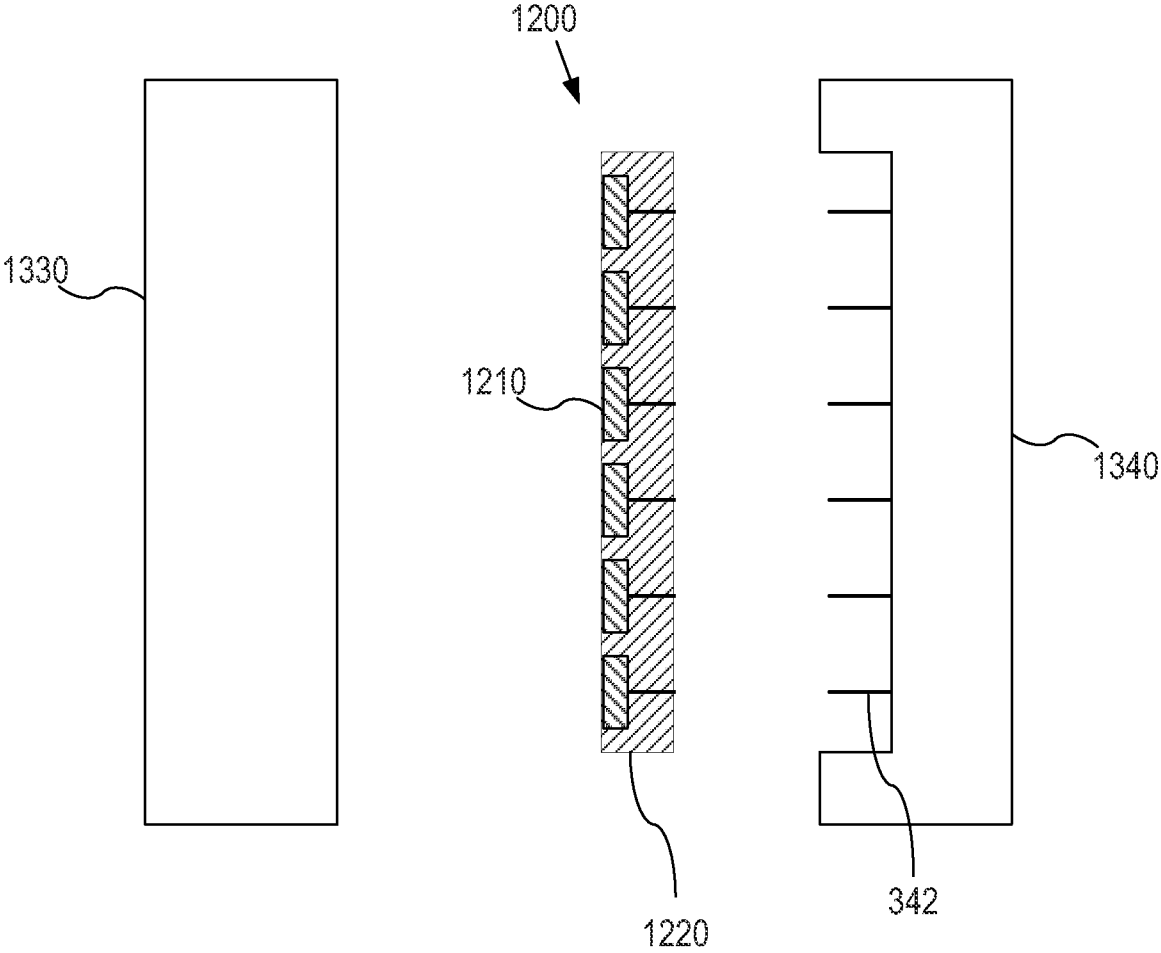


Figure 9D

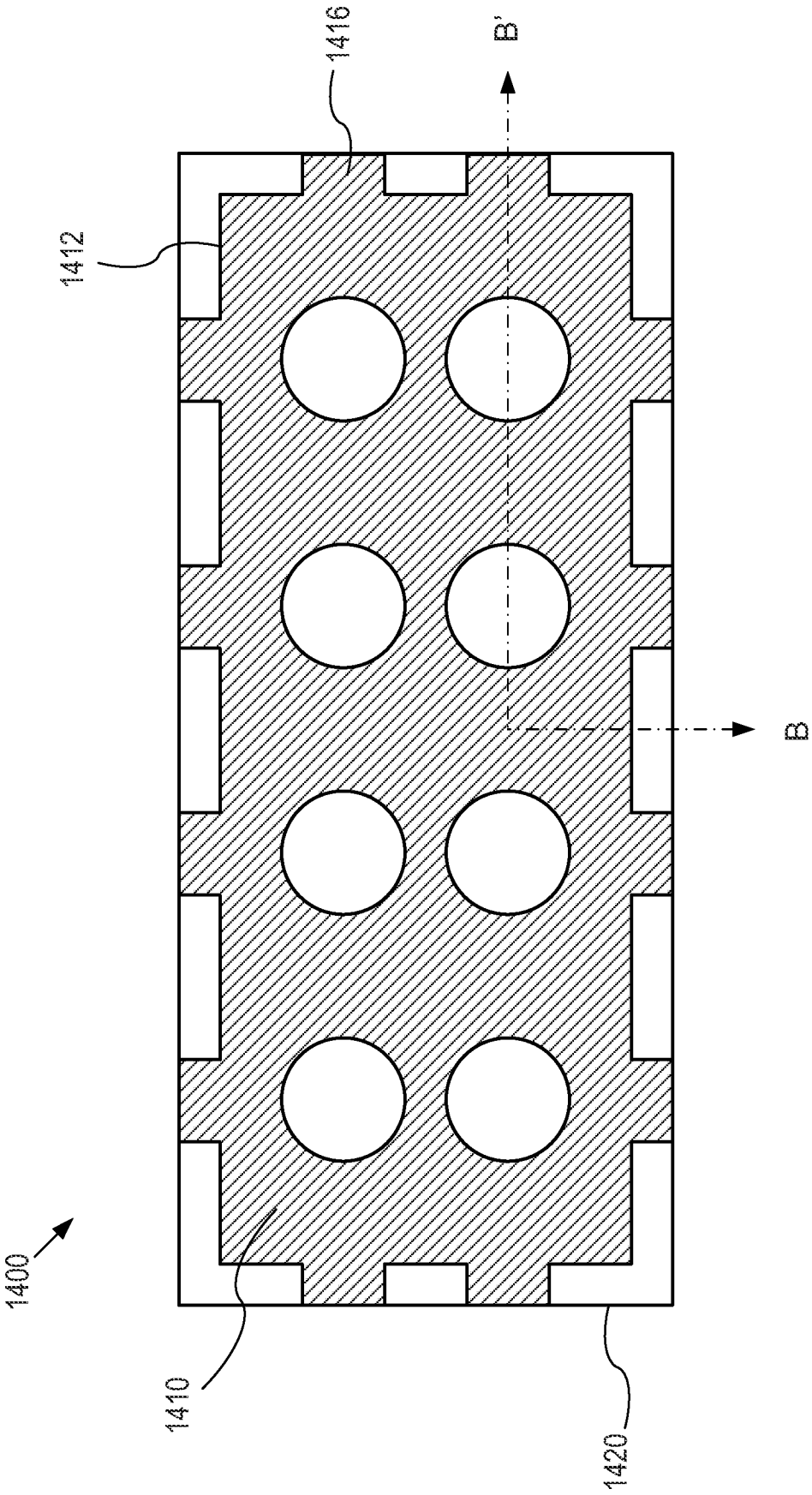


Figure 10A

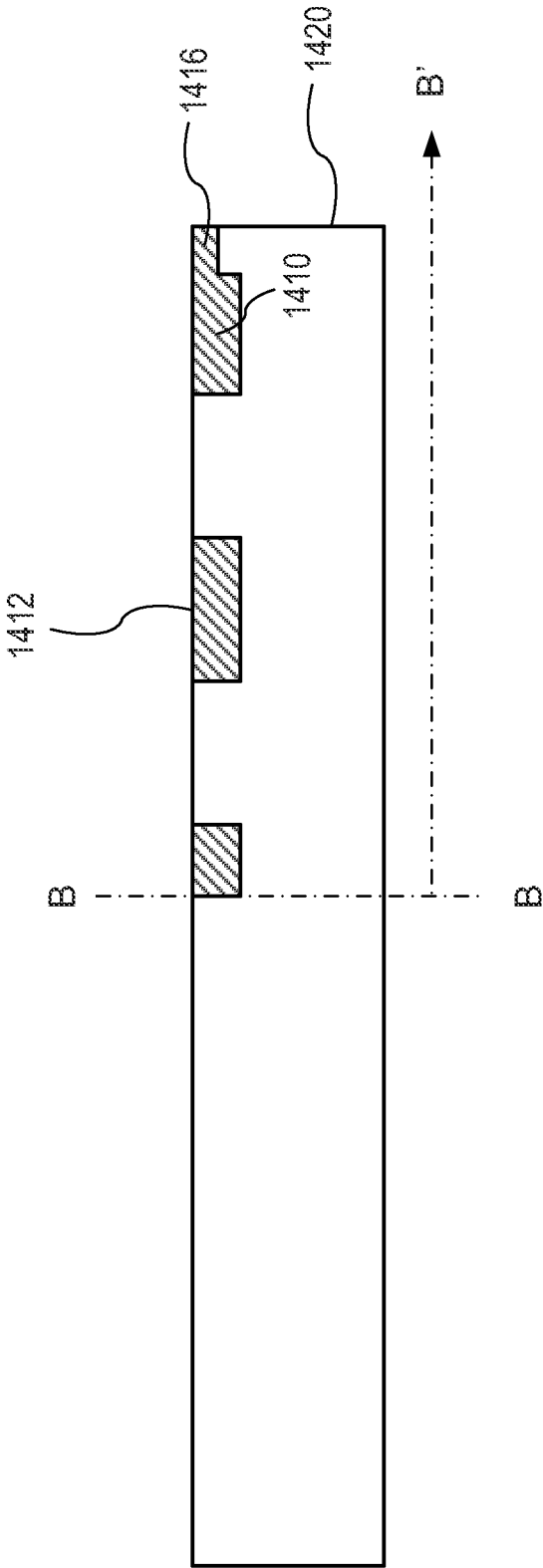


Figure 10B

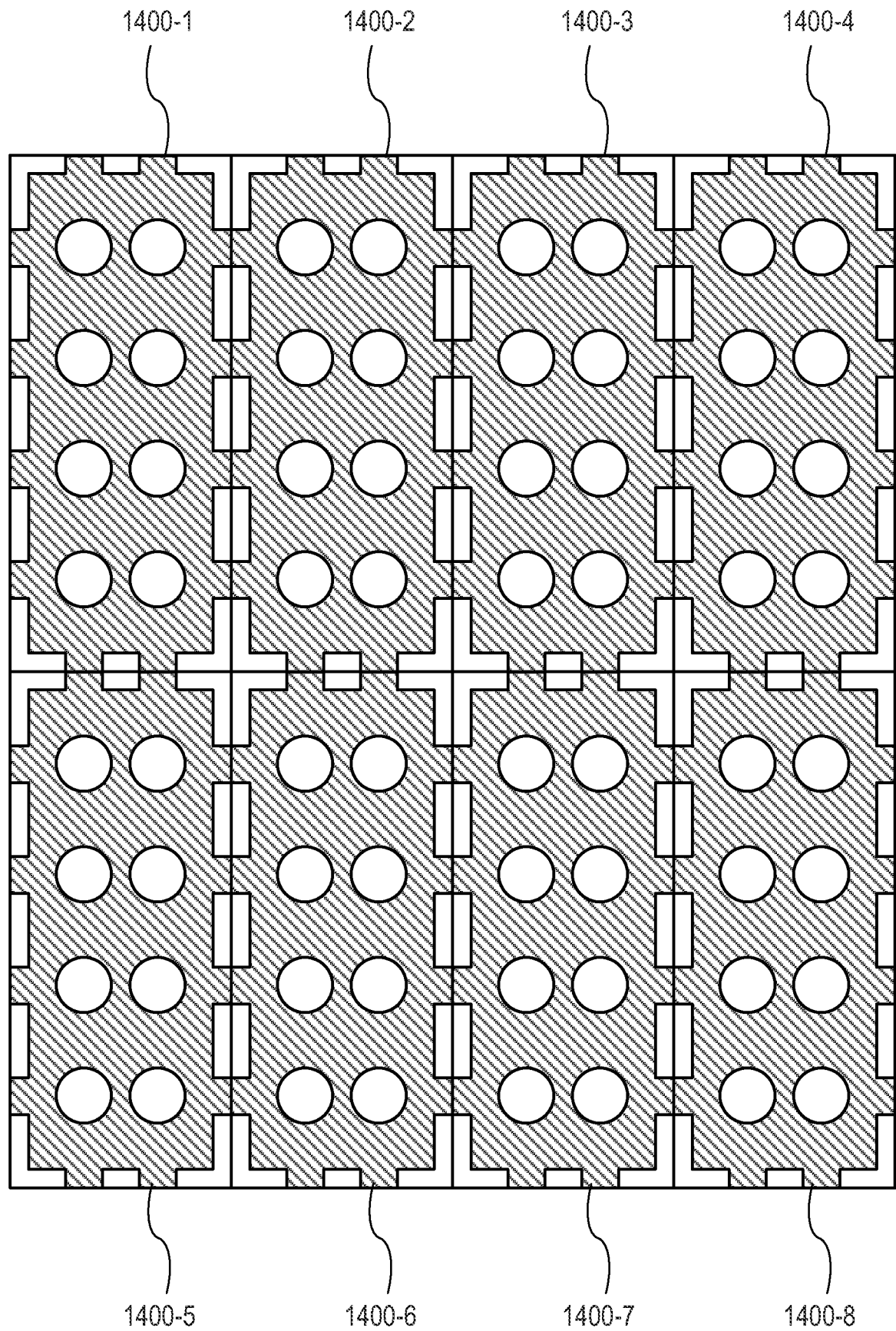


Figure 10C

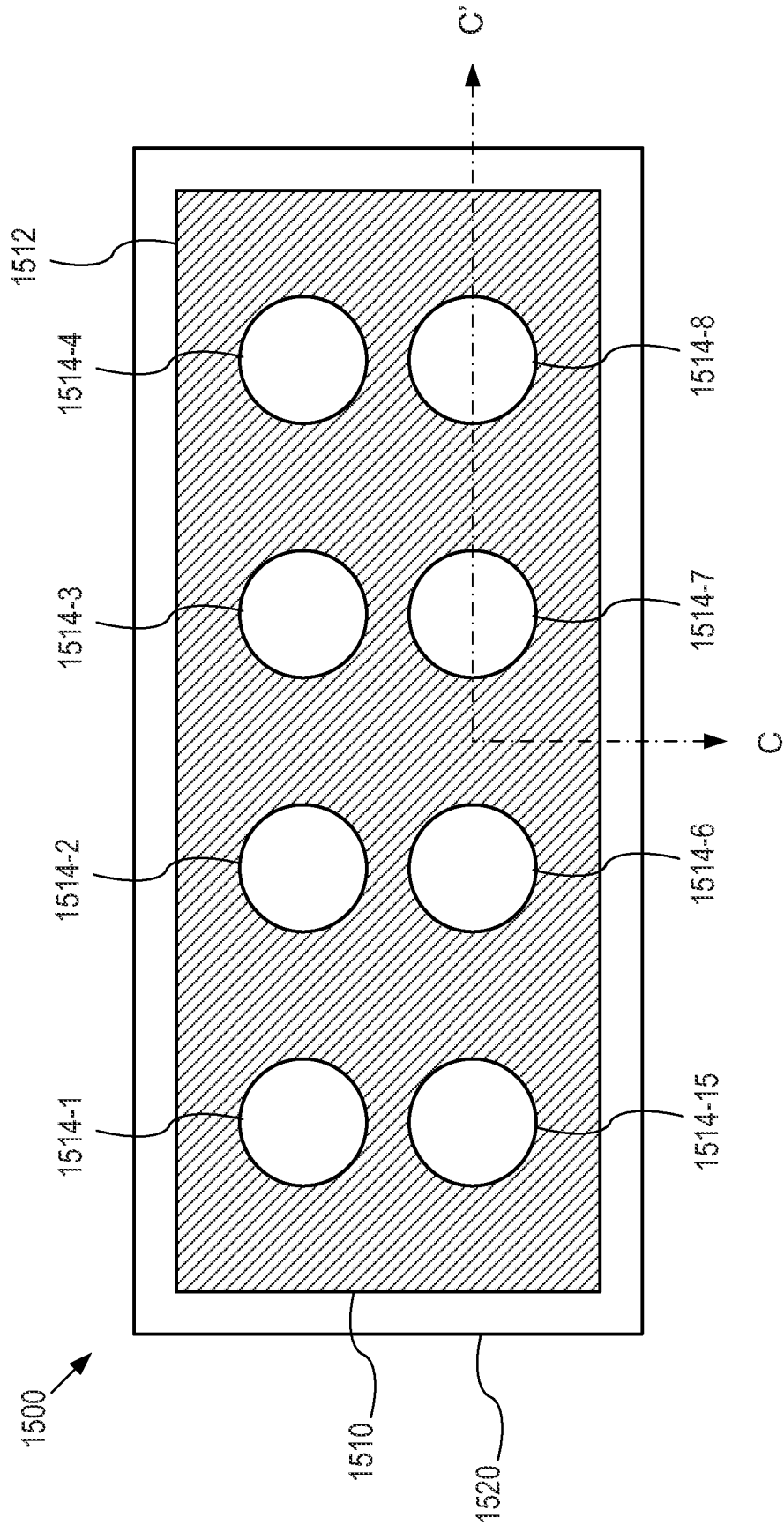


Figure 11A

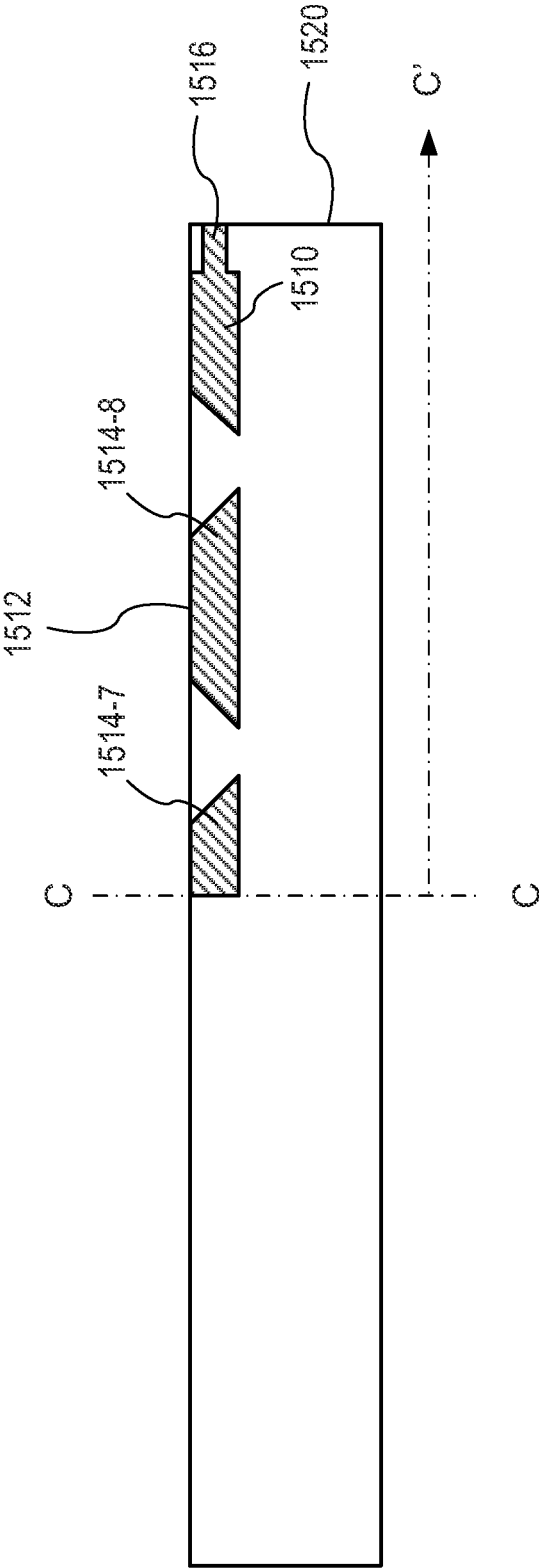


Figure 11B

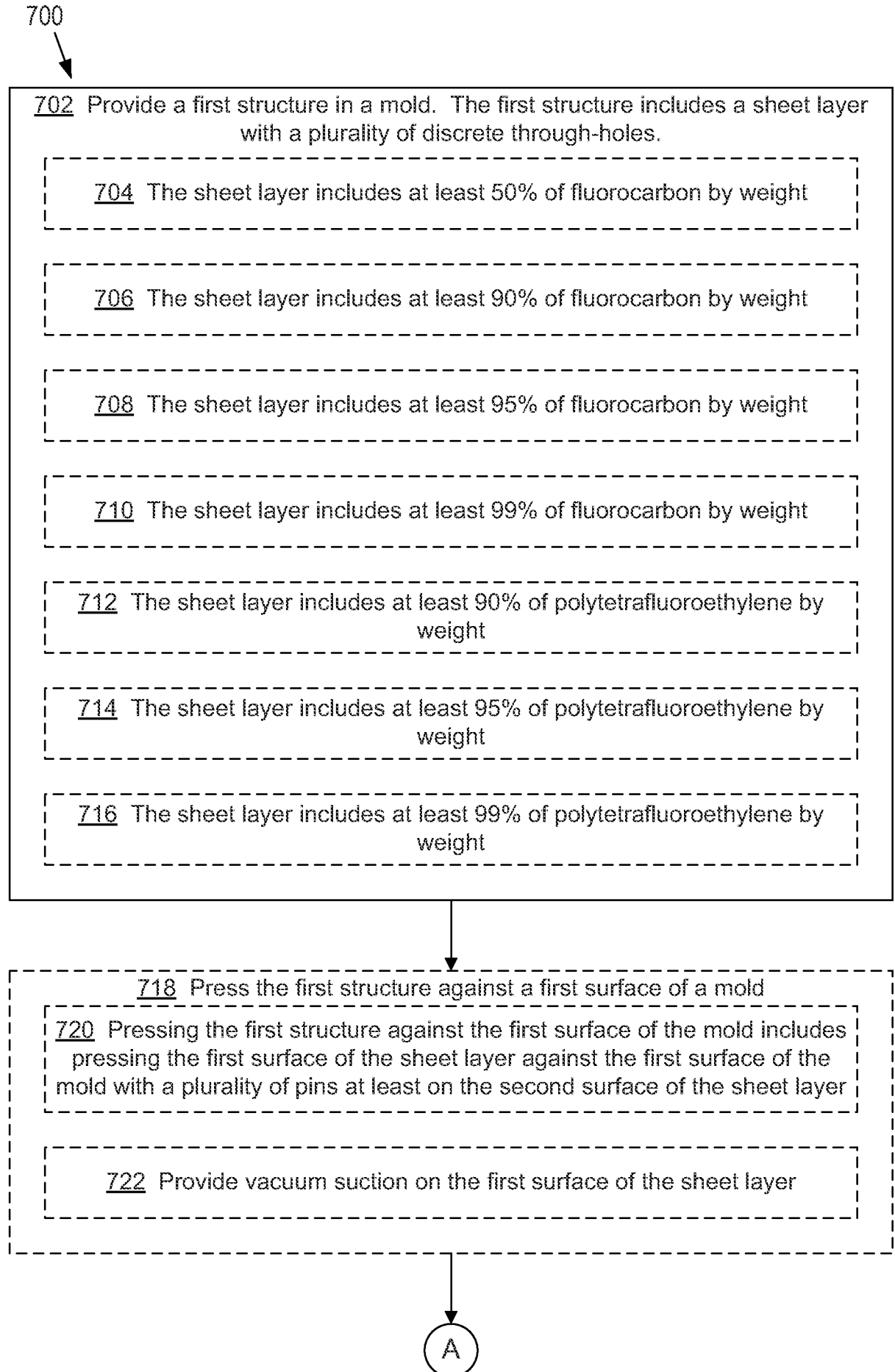


Figure 12A



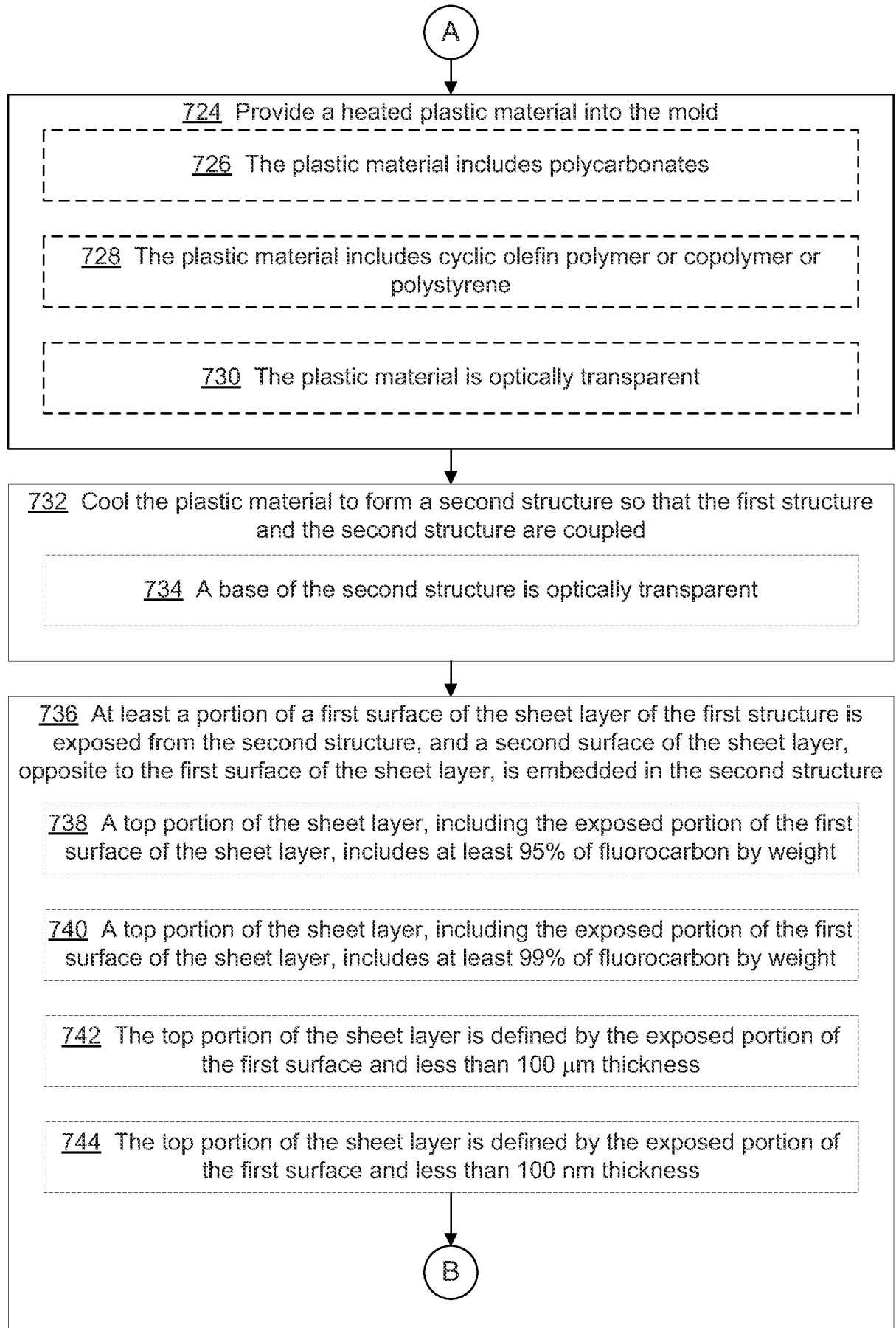


Figure 12B

736 At least a portion of a first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is exposed from the second structure, and a second surface of the sheet layer, opposite to the first surface of the sheet layer, is embedded in the second structure



746 At least 90% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by fluorocarbon

748 At least 95% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by fluorocarbon

750 At least 99% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by fluorocarbon

752 At least 90% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by polytetrafluoroethylene

754 At least 95% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by polytetrafluoroethylene

756 At least 99% of the exposed portion of the first surface is covered by polytetrafluoroethylene

758 The exposed portion of the first surface is characterized (758) by advancing and receding contact angles, for a liquid selected from a group including water, ethanol, and isopropanol, that are similar to advancing and receding contact angles, for the selected liquid, on polytetrafluoroethylene

760 The second structure includes a plurality of holding locations. Align the first structure and the second structure so that the plurality of discrete through-holes defined in the sheet layer of the first structure is offset from the plurality of holding locations in the second structure.

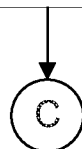


Figure 12C



762 The mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is aligned with a top surface of a base layer of the second structure

764 The mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is above a top surface of a base layer of the second structure

766 The mold is configured so that a top surface of the sheet layer of the first structure is below a top surface of a base layer of the second structure

768 The first surface of the mold has one or more of: a plurality of indentations and a plurality of protrusions corresponding to the plurality of discrete through-holes defined in the sheet layer

770 At least a portion of the first surface of the sheet layer is embedded in the second structure

772 The first structure includes one or more connectors coupled to one or more sides of the sheet layer

774 The one or more connectors are embedded in the second structure

776 At least a portion of the sides of the sheet layer is angled

778 An inner wall of at least one discrete through-hole of the sheet layer is angled

780 The second surface of the sheet layer has a larger area than the first surface of the sheet layer

782 Coat a portion of the second structure with oil

784 Coat a portion of the first surface of the sheet layer of the first structure with the oil

786 The oil is selected from the group consisting of a mineral oil, a silicone oil, a hydrocarbon compound, a hydrofluorocarbon compound and a perfluorocarbon compound

Figure 12D

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/IB2013/000623

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER  
 INV. B01L3/00  
 ADD.

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)  
 B01L

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	EP 1 316 360 A2 (MJ RES INC [US] BIO RAD LABORATORIES [US]) 4 June 2003 (2003-06-04)	1,25, 49-94
Y	the whole document	2-24, 26-48, 95-142
X	DE 100 43 042 A1 (BRUKER DALTONIK GMBH [DE]) 21 March 2002 (2002-03-21)	25-31, 95-142
Y	the whole document	2-24, 26-48, 95-142
A	GB 2 332 273 A (BRUKER DALTONIK GMBH [DE]) 16 June 1999 (1999-06-16) the whole document	1-142
	----- -/-	



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

\* Special categories of cited documents :

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"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

28 June 2013

Date of mailing of the international search report

10/07/2013

Name and mailing address of the ISA/

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2  
 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk  
 Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040,  
 Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Skowronski, Maik

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/IB2013/000623

C(Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	GB 2 334 954 A (CHROMACOL LTD [GB]) 8 September 1999 (1999-09-08) the whole document -----	1-142
A	EP 1 348 533 A2 (BECTON DICKINSON CO [US]) 1 October 2003 (2003-10-01) the whole document -----	1-142

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

PCT/IB2013/000623

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date		Patent family member(s)		Publication date
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			EP	1316360 A2		04-06-2003
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			GB	2370114 A		19-06-2002
			US	2002045270 A1		18-04-2002
			US	2004197921 A1		07-10-2004
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