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(54) Title: METHOD FOR FORMING THIN FILM PHOTOVOLTAIC INTERCONNECTS USING SELF ALIGNED PROCESS

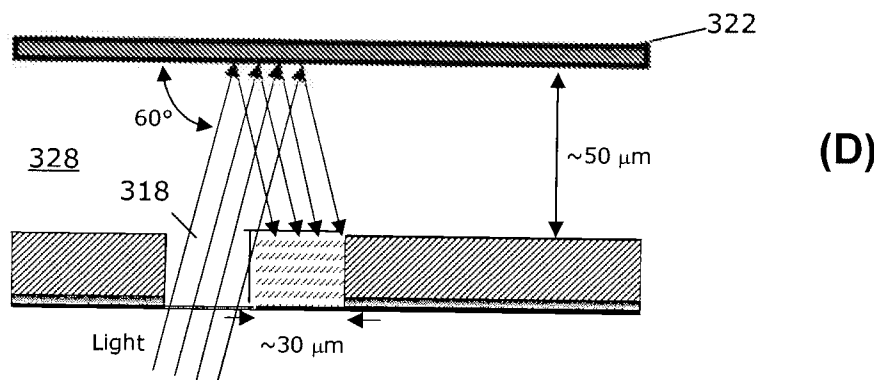


FIG. 3

(57) Abstract: Processing steps that are useful for forming interconnects in a photovoltaic module are described herein. According to one aspect, a method according to the invention includes processing steps that are similar to those performed in conventional integrated circuit fabrication. For example, the method can include etches to form a conductive step adjacent to the grooves that can be used to form interconnects between cells. According to another aspect the method for forming the conductive step can be self-aligned, such as by positioning a mirror above the module and exposing photoresist from underneath the substrate at an angle one or more times, and etching to expose the conductive step.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 IPC: **H01L 21/00(2006.01);H01B 13/00(2006.01)**

USPC: 438/48,66,73;216/18
 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)
 U.S. : 438/48,66,73; 216/18

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)
 Google, EAST word search in US classes 257 and 438.

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

| Category * | Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages | Relevant to claim No. |
|------------|--|-----------------------|
| Y, P | US 7,022,556 B1 (Adachi et al) 04 April 2006 (04.04.2006) column 6, lines 15-61 and column 23, lines 55-57 | 2, 4-6, 9 |
| X | US 4,278,473 A (Borden) 14 July 1981 (14.07.1981) columns 5 and 6 lines 1-68 | 1, 3, 7, 8 |
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| Y | | 2, 4-6, 9 |

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