

POLYCRYSTALLINE FERROELECTRIC CAPACITOR
HETEROSTRUCTURE EMPLOYING HYBRID ELECTRODES

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Ferroelectric thin films of high crystalline quality have recently been grown on silicon substrates using suitable combinations of buffer layers and templates to initiate the crystallization and formation of the desired material phase in a proper crystallographic orientation. For example, yttria-stabilized zirconia (YSZ) has been used as a buffer layer on a chemically cleaned [100] Si wafer to provide a crystalline template for the growth of subsequent layers of cuprate superconductors, such as yttrium-barium-cuprate (YBCO). In U.S. Pat. No. 5,155,658, a high crystalline quality, c-axis oriented YBCO was used as a structural template for subsequent growth of a pseudo-cubic lead zirconium titanate (PZT) perovskite ferroelectric layer and a covering YBCO electrode layer to yield a ferroelectric memory element. High growth temperatures presented a problem in Si-CMOS processing, however.

Improved, lower temperature crystallographic growth was later achieved with cubic metal oxides, such as lanthanum-strontium-cobalt oxide (LSCO), employing a layered perovskite, e.g., bismuth titanate (BTO), template layer to initiate c-axis orientation in LSCO and PZT ferroelectric overlayers, as described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,270,298. Further improvement in the growth of ferroelectric devices was realized in U.S. Pat.

No. 5,248,564 through the use of lead-lanthanum-zirconium-titanate (PLZT) in a LSCO/PLZT/LSCO heterostructure which could be compatibly formed on a CMOS SiO₂/Si substrate by means of the layered BTO, or similar bismuth tungstate (BWO), template.

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Although the temperature limitations had thus been surmounted and CMOS compatibility achieved, the electrical conductivity of the heterostructure on a SiO₂/Si substrate was insufficient for effective integrated circuit application. This shortcoming was remedied by the intermediate epitaxial deposition of oriented platinum on the layered perovskite template according to the procedure disclosed in copending U.S. Patent application, Ser. No. 08/318,587, filed 5 October 1994 and commonly assigned with this application. The additional operations of template and crystallographic layer growth significantly extended device processing, however.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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It has now been discovered in the present invention that, surprisingly, the layered perovskite, e.g., BTO, template interlayer may be dispensed with and that a thin film of metal, such as platinum, routinely grown upon a commercial-grade Si wafer substrate having an amorphous SiO₂ surface primed with Ti, Ta, or TiO₂ will provide the desired electrical sheet conductivity and will also support satisfactory polycrystalline growth of any number of metallic oxide capacitor electrode materials, such as LSCO, LaSrCrO₃, RuO_x, and SrRuO₃, as well as subsequent similar growth of at least one intermediate

perovskite ferroelectric layer of, for example, PLZT or PZT. The desirable ferroelectric performance of such materials, especially with respect to resistance to fatigue and imprint, is not impaired by the polycrystalline growth and may be further
5 optimized by doping with 1%-10% lanthanum or niobium.

The earlier-discovered manner of processing the layered heterostructure, for example by controlled cooling of the growth layer to its operating ambient in an oxygenating
10 atmosphere, continues to have considerable positive effect upon the ferroelectric performance of a resulting device, particularly in its reliability as manifest with respect to such properties as fatigue, aging, retention, and imprint.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

The present invention will be described with reference to
20 the accompanying drawing of which:

FIG. 1 is a representative elevational section of a ferroelectric heterostructure of the present invention;

25 FIG. 2 is a representative x-ray diffraction pattern of a highly ferroelectric heterostructure obtained from growth upon a substrate of Si/SiO₂ according to the present invention;

FIG. 3 is a representative x-ray diffraction pattern of a
30 weakly ferroelectric heterostructure resulting from growth upon a substrate lacking a SiO₂ layer;

FIG. 4 is a representative x-ray diffraction pattern of a highly ferroelectric heterostructure obtained from growth upon a LSCO electrode underlayer;

5 FIG. 5 is a representative x-ray diffraction pattern of a weakly ferroelectric heterostructure obtained from growth without a LSCO electrode underlayer;

FIG. 6 is a graph of comparative hysteresis loops
10 obtained from testing heterostructures characterized in FIG.s 2 and 3; and

FIG. 7 is a graph of comparative hysteresis loops
15 obtained from testing heterostructures characterized in FIG.s 4 and 5.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

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A typical ferroelectric heterostructure memory element 10 prepared according to the present invention is shown in FIG.1 comprising as a substrate a single crystal oriented [001] silicon wafer 11 the surface of which has been thermally wet-
25 oxidized to form an electronic grade amorphous SiO_2 layer 12 of about 100 nm thickness. Another silicon-coating layer material particularly useful in piezoelectric devices is silicon nitride, Si_3N_4 . Upon the SiO_2 layer surface at a temperature of about 600-680°C was grown a priming layer 13 of about 50 nm of
30 titanium using pulsed laser deposition (PLD) with an excimer laser (248 nm) at an energy density in the range of about 2-2.5 J/cm². A 50-150nm layer of platinum metal was then likewise

grown on Ti layer 13. Other common growth techniques, such as sputtering, chemical vapor deposition (CVD), and electron-beam deposition, could similarly be employed.

5 With targets of the appropriate composition, the PLD apparatus was used to sequentially deposit the electrode and ferroelectric layers. At the usual temperature range of about 550° to 700°C and in an atmosphere of about 13.3 Pa oxygen partial pressure, a first electrode layer 15 of LSCO, typically
10 a composition of $L_{1-x}Sr_xCoO_3$ where x is about 0.15 to 0.85, preferably about 0.5, was grown on the Pt layer 14 to a thickness of about 50-150 nm, preferably about 100 nm. Other known metal oxide electrode materials, such as RuO_x , $SrRuO_3$, and $LaSrCrO_3$, would be equally viable.

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 A ferroelectric layer 16 of PLZT followed at about 100-500 nm, typically 300 nm. The composition of the PLZT material was $Pb_{0.9}La_{0.1}Zr_{0.2}Ti_{0.8}O_3$ in this example, but could be varied over a wide range depending on the intended application. Also,
20 1% to 10% lanthanum or niobium doping, preferably about 4% to 6%, is useful in optimizing the ferroelectric properties. Other ferroelectric, or paraelectric, materials, such as barium titanate, barium strontium titanate, lead titanate, bismuth titanate, bismuth strontium tantalate, bismuth strontium
25 niobate, and potassium tantalate niobate, could similarly be employed for layer 16 in high dielectric constant capacitor applications and in pyroelectric and piezoelectric devices. A top electrode layer 17 of about 100 nm LSCO was then grown and the completed heterostructure was cooled to ambient temperature
30 at an optimum rate of about 5-20°C/min in an atmosphere having an oxygen partial pressure ranging from about 1×10^2 to about 1×10^5 Pa. X-ray diffraction examination of the completed

polycrystalline heterostructure confirmed that the ferroelectric stack was fully in the perovskite phase.

Using a common photolithographic process, 50 μm diameter test capacitor electrodes 18 were fashioned of the upper LSCO layer 17 upon which Pt/Au electrical contacts 19 were deposited. Complementary contact with bottom electrode layer 15 was established by capacitive coupling through a large conductive pad, not shown, elsewhere on the surface of the structure. Typical ferroelectric testing of the capacitor heterostructure showed very desirable fatigue, aging, and retention properties which were eminently suitable for long term, non-volatile memory application. Remnant polarization values of about 15-20 $\mu\text{C}/\text{cm}^2$ at 5 V exhibited by the device are quite sufficient for this purpose. Additional testing at more extreme conditions of elevated temperature and the presence of dc bias showed equally satisfactory results. At about 100°C, for example, the device showed good read-write endurance over at least 10^{11} cycles.

Additional heterostructures were grown to provide samples for testing the efficacy of the processing of the present invention. In one set of such samples, a first heterostructure was prepared as described above to include SiO_2 layer 12 while in a second sample the SiO_2 layer was omitted. Respective x-ray diffraction patterns of the samples depicted in FIG.s 2 and 3 show the preferential ferroelectric orientation of the PLZT layers (FIG. 2) grown with SiO_2 interlayer 12 and the weak orientation and diffraction peaks of impurity phases (FIG. 3) resulting from lack of the SiO_2 layer. The respective intensities of the patterns are particularly remarkable.

Comparative x-ray diffraction patterns of FIG.s 4 and 5 were obtained from a second set of samples which differed, respectively, in the inclusion and omission of LSCO layer 15 needed to form the hybrid metal/metal oxide electrode with Pt layer 14 beneath PLZT ferroelectric layer 16 of the heterostructure stack (FIG. 1). The effect of the LSCO electrode layer 15 can be seen most dramatically in the x-ray diffraction peaks of the PLZT ferroelectric perovskite phase (FIG. 4), as well as in the intensity of the diffractions. Without the LSCO electrode layer, only the non-ferroelectric pyrochlore phase (pyro) of the PLZT was formed (FIG. 5).

Subsequent ferroelectric properties measurements highlighted the significant contribution of the SiO_2 layer residing upon the Si wafer substrate, as may be observed in the comparative hysteresis loops of those samples (FIG. 6). Such measurements also confirmed the distinct advantage that the LSCO electrode layer provides for both surface characteristics enabling preferential nucleation of the ferroelectric perovskite phase and superior ferroelectric reliability characteristics. The comparative hysteresis loops (FIG. 7) of heterostructures fabricated with and without the LSCO electrode layer illustrate the substantial absence of ferroelectric properties in the latter sample.

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The processes and ferroelectric heterostructure capacitor materials of the present invention have application for a wide range of devices, such as dielectrics for DRAM capacitors, ferroelectric FET elements for non-destructive readout memories, and electro-optic perovskites grown on SiO_2/Si substrates for integrated optics, pyroelectric detectors, and the like. In another important aspect of these ferroelectric

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thin films using hybrid metal/metal oxide electrodes is their application in nonvolatile memory storage media, such as FRAMs.

Additional devices in the form of magnetoresistive random
5 access memories (MRAM) and magnetic recording and sensing
elements may be realized through the integration of
ferromagnetic elements and transistor circuitry enabled by the
present invention. Such structures are also of particular value
for use in integrated microelectromechanical systems in which
10 piezoelectric properties of the ferroelectric materials are
utilized. These and other applications will become apparent to
the skilled artisan in the light of the foregoing description
and are to be considered within the scope of the invention as
defined in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A ferroelectric capacitor heterostructure comprising a
5 silicon substrate having a primed silicon compound surface and
at least one crystalline ferroelectric material layer grown
above said surface

characterized in that
a layer of metal grown on said surface provides electrical
10 conductivity for said heterostructure and with a metallic oxide
layer grown thereon forms a hybrid capacitor electrode
substrate for said ferroelectric layer.

2. A structure according to claim 1

15 characterized in that
said silicon compound is selected from the group consisting of
silicon dioxide and silicon nitride and is primed with a
compound selected from the group consisting of titanium,
tantalum, and titanium dioxide.

3. A structure according to claim 1

25 characterized in that
said layer of metal consists essentially of platinum.

4. A structure according to claim 1

30 characterized in that
said metallic oxide layer comprises a polycrystalline growth of
a material selected from the group consisting of lanthanum
strontium cobalt oxide, lanthanum strontium chromium oxide,
ruthenium oxide, and strontium ruthenium oxide.



5. A structure according to claim 1

characterized in that
said ferroelectric layer comprises a polycrystalline growth of
a material selected from the group consisting of lead lanthanum
zirconium titanate, barium titanate, barium strontium titanate,
5 lead titanate, bismuth titanate, bismuth strontium tantalate,
bismuth strontium niobate, and potassium tantalate niobate.

10 6. A structure according to claim 4

characterized in that
said ferroelectric layer material comprises 1% to 10% of a
doping material selected from the group consisting of lanthanum
and niobium.

15 7. A method of preparing a ferroelectric capacitor
heterostructure which comprises growing at least one
crystalline ferroelectric material layer above a silicon
substrate having a primed silicon compound surface layer

20 characterized in that
a layer of metal is grown on said surface layer to provide
electrical conductivity for said heterostructure and a metallic
oxide layer is grown on said metal to form therewith a hybrid
capacitor electrode substrate for said ferroelectric layer.

25 8. A method according to claim 7

characterized in that
said silicon compound is primed with a compound selected from
30 the group consisting of titanium, tantalum, and titanium
dioxide and said layer of metal consists essentially of
platinum.



9. A method according to claim 7

characterized in that
said metallic oxide layer is formed by polycrystalline growth
of a material selected from the group consisting of lanthanum
5 strontium cobalt oxide, lanthanum strontium chromium oxide,
ruthenium oxide, and strontium ruthenium oxide.

10. A method according to claim 7

10 characterized in that
said ferroelectric layer is formed by polycrystalline growth on
said metallic oxide layer.

11. A method according to claim 10

15 characterized in that
the material of said ferroelectric layer is selected from the
group consisting of lead lanthanum zirconium titanate, barium
titanate, barium strontium titanate, lead titanate, bismuth
titanate, bismuth strontium tantalate, bismuth strontium
20 niobate, and potassium tantalate niobate.

12. A method according to claim 10

25 characterized in that
an electrode layer of said metallic oxide is grown on said
ferroelectric layer.

13. A method according to claim 7

30 characterized in that
said ferroelectric layer is grown on said hybrid capacitor
electrode substrate at a temperature in the range of about 550°



to 700°C and is cooled at a rate of about 5° to 25°C/min from said growth temperature to an operating ambient in an atmosphere comprising a partial pressure of oxygen ranging from about 1×10^2 to 1×10^5 Pa.

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