~~THEREFORE WHAT IS CLAIMED IS~~ CLAIMS:

1. A method of preparing a substrate for cleavage, the method comprising the steps of:

irradiating the substrate with a burst of pulses of a focused laser beam, wherein the substrate is transparent to the focused laser beam, wherein a time delay between successive pulses in the burst of pulses is less than a time duration over which relaxation of one or more material modification dynamics occurs, and wherein the burst of pulses have an energy and pulse duration selected to produce a filament within the substrate;

translating the substrate relative to the focused laser beam to irradiate the substrate and produce an additional filament at one or more additional locations;

thereby forming an array of discrete filaments ~~wherein the filaments form an array~~ defining an internally scribed path for cleaving the substrate.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein substrate is translated relative to the focused laser beam with a rate selected to produce a filament spacing on a micron scale.

3. The method according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the burst of pulses are provided two or more times with a prescribed frequency, and wherein the substrate is translated relative to the focused laser beam with a substantially constant rate.

4. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein a location of a beam focus of the focused laser beam is selected to generate the filaments within