

**Press, actuator set and method for encapsulating electronic components
with at least two individual controllable actuators**

5 The invention relates to a press for encapsulating electronic components mounted on a carrier. The invention also relates to an actuator set for converting a press for encapsulating electronic components mounted on a carrier to a press of the present invention, as well as to a method for encapsulating electronic components mounted on a carrier.

10 The encapsulation of electronic components mounted on a carrier with an encapsulating material is a known art. On an industrial scale such electronic components are provided with an encapsulation, usually an encapsulation of a curing epoxy to which a filler material is added. There is a trend in the market toward simultaneous encapsulation of larger quantities of relatively small electronic
15 components. Electronic components may be envisaged here such as semiconductors (chips, although LED's are in this respect also deemed semiconductors) which are generally becoming increasingly smaller. Once the encapsulating material has been arranged the collectively encapsulated electronic components are situated in an encapsulation (package) which is arranged on one
20 side, but sometimes also on two sides, of the carrier. The encapsulating material often takes the form here of a flat layer connected to the carrier. The carrier may consist of a lead frame, a multi-layer carrier - manufactured partially from epoxy - (also referred to as board or substrate and so on) or another carrier structure like sensible silicon-, glass- or ceramic- carriers or wafers or any other carrier structure.

25 During the encapsulation of electronic components mounted on a carrier, use is usually made according to the prior art of encapsulating presses driving two mould parts with a moulding press, into at least one of the mould parts is recessed one or plural mould cavities. After placing the carrier with the electronic components for
30 encapsulating between the mould parts, the mould parts may be moved toward each other by moving press parts to which the mould parts are connected, e.g. such that they clamp the carrier. A, normally heated, liquid encapsulating material may then be fed to the mould cavities, usually by means of transfer moulding. As an alternative it is also possible to bring the encapsulating material before closure
35 of the mould parts, e.g. as a granulate, or sheet, or as liquid, in the mould cavity

after which the components to be moulded are pressed into the encapsulating material; such compression encapsulating process is an alternative for transfer moulding. Applied as encapsulating material is epoxy (also referred to as resin) which is generally provided with filler material. After at least partial (chemical) curing of the encapsulating material in the mould cavity/cavities, the carrier with encapsulated electronic components is taken out of the encapsulating press. And subsequently the encapsulated products may be separated from each other during further processing. This method of encapsulation is practised on large industrial scale and enables well controlled encapsulation of electronic components. A problem during the encapsulating process and the subsequent processing of the moulded electronic components is that the control of the accuracy of the dimensions of the moulded product is not always enough to meet the increasing accuracy demands in the market furthermore there is a risk of damaging the carriers during the moulding process.

The present invention has for its object to provide an alternative method and device with which the advantages of the prior art method of encapsulating electronic components are maintained but that provide an enhanced process control leading to, among others, a better control of the dimensions of the encapsulated electronic components and/or a limit the risk of damaging the carriers. The invention is also capable of encapsulating exposed electronic components, by clamping the components before any encapsulating material is fed.

The invention provides for this purpose a press for encapsulating electronic components mounted on a carrier comprising at least two press parts displaceable relative to each other for supporting at least two co-operating mould parts, a drive system for driving the relative displacement of the press parts and an intelligent control connecting to the drive system of the press parts, said intelligent control being adapted to control the drive system of the press parts, wherein the drive system comprises at least two individual controllable actuators that enable to change the distribution of the pressure exerted by the drive system on at least one of the press parts in a position of the press parts wherein the press parts mutually exert pressure (thus after closure of the mould parts carried by the press parts).

The intelligent control of the press of the present invention further connects to plural displacement sensors for detecting the relative displacement of the press parts at

various locations, wherein the intelligent control is adapted to control the actuators of the drive system dynamically over time based on the measured values detected with the displacement sensors.

5 The press according to the present invention enables to substantially maintain the relative orientation of the press parts, and thus also of the co-operating mould parts supported by the press parts, independent of the external loads and variations in the distribution of the loads exerted onto the press parts (or exerted onto the mould parts and transferred to the press parts). In the position of the press parts wherein
10 the press parts mutually exert pressure, the mould parts are in a closed position. An external pressure exerting influence may be the feed of (liquid) moulding material into a moulding cavity or moulding cavities of at least one of the mould parts. During the start of the feed of the moulding material only runners and subsequently also a part of the moulding cavity (moulding cavities) will be filled with
15 liquid moulding material so only at those locations the moulding material will exert pressure onto the mould parts (that is transferred to the press parts). This local and changing loads onto the press parts will lead to (limited; in the order of microns) local displacements of the mould parts (and thus also of the press parts carrying the mould parts) that - without further action - would lead to corresponding
20 inaccuracies in the dimensions of the moulded product to be formed and to local enhanced pressure on the carriers. The present invention now enables the detection of any (limited) local displacements of the press parts and to correct/compensate these displacements by changing the distribution of the pressure exerted by the drive system on at least one of the press parts and so to
25 level the press parts (and thus the mould parts attached to the press parts) to the original (desired) mutual position. Furthermore the clamping force on the carrier is more under control with the press according to the invention as peak pressures on the carrier due to local displacements of the press parts (and thus the mould parts attached to the press parts) may be avoided, or at least limited. The advantage
30 better control of the (maximum) pressure on the carrier is e.g. that for instance cracks in sensible silicon or glass (or other weak carriers or wafers) may be avoided. Also and enhanced control in the clamp force distribution provides a better control on the venting (to vent out the internal cavity gasses) as the planned dimensions of the venting apertures will better be maintained with the improved
35 position control of the press parts (and thus the mould parts attached to the press

parts). Furthermore a better control of the press part orientation (and thus of the mould parts attached to the press parts) is that there is less chance of leakage of moulding material in between the mould parts ("bleed" or "flash"). The present invention thus results in more control on the resulting dimensions of the moulded products, less chance of carrier damage and better process control (e.g. a proper venting function and avoidance of bleed/flash). It must be clear that not only during the feed of moulding material into at least one of the mould parts the external loads on the press parts may change. The same situation may arise during the curing process (or a part of the curing process) of the moulding material. The same compensation of local changing relative positioning of the press parts during (part of) the curing of the moulding material may be compensated by changing the distribution of the pressure exerted by the drive system on at least one of the press parts by the at least two individual controllable actuators.

In case the drive system of the press comprises at least three individual controllable actuators, e.g. one drive cylinder in combination with at least two press cylinders, the adjustability of a press part in two dimensions is possible, which further enhances the control on the dimensions of the electronic components to be moulded.

The individual controllable actuators may be formed by pressure cylinders, normally hydraulic pressure cylinders. But as an alternative one or more of the individual controllable actuators could be embodied as a spindle. These types of actuators are suited for the pressure demands in a moulding press, as long as the direction of the pressure exerted by the actuators corresponds to the direction of displacement of the actuators. As for the positioning of the individual controllable actuators; at least two of the pressure cylinders preferably contact the press part off-centre to enable to change the orientation of the press part with the actuators. The actuators may act on the opposite press parts but regulatory and constructional it is most simple if at least three actuators, like pressure cylinders, co-act with a single press part. An alternative option is to use four or more cylinders co-acting with a single press part.

As the demands of geometric- and clamp force distribution-accuracy in the field of moulding electronic components are high the displacement sensors preferably are

- sensitive to relative displacements of microns (μm). Displacement sensors may provide such accuracy and can be combined with UOD (Unwanted Object Detection) to detect unwanted and/or unexpected materials, e.g. objects which should not be present at the place the objects are detected, during closure of the mould parts. An option for such sensors are – relative cheap - analog inductive proximity switches or analog capacitive proximity switches used as displacement sensors, and a more expensive alternative is the incorporation of incremental linear optical- or hall effect-sensors with high accuracy ruler systems.
- 10 The present invention not only relates to the press as such but also to the press wherein the press parts are supporting at least two mould parts, at least one of which mould parts being provided with at least one mould cavity recessed into a contact side for enclosing at least one electronic components placed on the carrier, the contact surface of this mould part at least partially enclosing the mould cavity
- 15 for medium-tight connection onto the carrier in a closed position of the mould parts. A mould part may also include a feed channel for moulding material recessed into the contact surface of the mould part provided with the mould cavity. Such a feed channel is also referred to as a “runner”.
- 20 The press with mould parts may further also comprises feed means provided with at least one plunger for the purpose of exerting pressure on a liquid encapsulating material such that the encapsulating material is displaced to the mould cavity enclosing the electronic component. This type of presses are also referred to as “transfer moulding” presses. The press according the invention makes it possible
- 25 reach a higher product specification with prior art mould parts and limited chance of damage of the carriers, and thus requires no adaptation / adjustment of standard mould parts. This limits the investments required for enhancing the production accuracy and process control.
- 30 The press with mould parts may further comprise releasing means to facilitate the release of the at least one mould part being provided with at least one mould cavity recessed into a contact side for enclosing at least one electronic component placed on the carrier. By use of such releasing means, the contact side is formed by the contact surface of the releasing means and the contact surface of the at least one
- 35 mould part the releasing means cooperate with. By providing the releasing means,

the release of the mould part provided with the mould cavity from an encapsulated assembly of electronic components mounted on a carrier is facilitated. Preferably the releasing means are configured to cooperate with the contact side of the mould part just beneath the position the runners are located. Even more preferred, the releasing means cooperate with the at least one mould part provided with the mould cavity such that the runners are formed by closing of the at least one mould part onto the releasing means. Alternatively, the runners may be incorporated into the releasing means, i.e. the at least one mould part the releasing means cooperate with is no longer provided with runners. The releasing means are configured such that the runners provided by the releasing means debouch into the mould cavity formed by closing the at least one mould part on the releasing means.

The press provided with releasing means facilitates the easy release of the mould part provided with runners, since the contact side of the mould part beneath the runners needs not to be removed together with the release of the mould part. Removal of the contact side beneath runners is considerably more difficult after performing the encapsulating method due to the cured moulding material which remains in the runners after the moulding process. By release the mould part provided with the mould cavity, e.g. the top mould part, first, the encapsulated electronic components may be release subsequently, before retracting the releasing means from the mould assembly.

Alternatively, the releasing means may be retracted from the mould assembly after release of the mould part the releasing means cooperate with. Preferably the releasing means are displaceable in a direction substantially perpendicular to the direction of the relative displacement of the press parts. In such embodiment, the material the releasing means are made of is chosen such that the part of the moulding material cured in the runners (and which moulding material partially connects to the surface of the releasing means) is retracted from the mould assembly by retraction of the releasing means.

Alternatively the releasing means may be displaceable in a direction which corresponds to the direction of the relative displacement of the press parts. By providing releasing means which are displaceable in the same direction as of the

relative displacement of the press parts, the moulding material cured in the runners after moulding the electronic components may be removed by breaking.

5 The present invention also provides an actuator set for converting a press for encapsulating electronic components mounted on a carrier to a press according to the present invention and as disclosed above, the actuator set comprises at least one actuator for driving the relative displacement of one of the press parts of the press, wherein the at least one actuator being adapted to be assembled with one of the press parts and to be connected to an intelligent control of the press. Such an
10 actuator set enables the conversion of a prior art press with a single drive in an advanced press according to the invention. Such a retrofit unit enables to convert standard presses with limited investment in the advanced system according to the present invention. The actuator set also comprises displacement sensors for detecting the relative displacement of the press parts of the press at various
15 locations, said displacement sensors being adapted to be assembled with the press parts of the press and to be connected to the intelligent control of the press. The actuator set may further comprise an intelligent control program required to control the processing information of the displacement sensors.

20 The present invention also provides a method for encapsulating electronic components mounted on a carrier with encapsulating material, comprising the processing steps of: A) placing an electronic component for encapsulating on a mould part, B) relatively displacing a least two mould parts towards each other with a closing force such that the electronic components for encapsulating are enclosed
25 by at least one mould cavity and the carrier is clamped between the mould parts, C) exerting pressure on a liquid encapsulating material with at least one plunger such that encapsulating material is displaced to the at least one mould cavity enclosing the electronic components, D) filling the mould cavity with encapsulating material, and E) at least partially curing the encapsulating material in the mould cavity,
30 wherein the distribution of the pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts during at least processing step D) is varied dependent on measured local displacements of the mould parts.

With regard to the relative displacement of the at least two mould parts, it is noted
35 that the term "relative displacement" encompasses at least the displacement of

both mould parts towards each other as well as the displacement of one of the mould parts towards the other mould part.

5 The distribution of the pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts during at least processing steps D) and E) may be varied dependent on measured local displacements of the mould parts. With this method an active pressure distribution over one (or even both) mould parts is realised during at least a part of the transfer trajectory. The transfer of the moulding material will realise a variation in the loads exerted on the mould parts as well as a variation in the distribution of the loads
10 exerted onto the mould part with the effect of (limited) changes in the local relative positioning of the mould part. These (limited) changes in the local relative positioning of the mould part will on their turn result in (limited) inaccuracies in the dimensions of the moulded product, an enhanced process control, as well as in a limited chance of carriers damage during the moulding process. For further
15 advantages of the method according the present invention reference is made to the advantages as above mentioned in relation to the press according the present invention and which are incorporated here by reference in relation to the method according the invention too.

20 The distribution of the pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts may be varied by individually controlling at least two, but preferably at least three, independent controllable actuators cooperating with at least one of the mould parts. The plural controls enable to change the orientation of the mould part and full control of the orientation settlement requires at least three controls. For control of
25 the orientation of a mould part the distribution of the pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts may be at least partially controlled by feedback of the measured local displacements of the mould parts. Additionally the distribution of the pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts may at least partially be controlled by feed forward of at least one detected process variable. In case e.g.
30 filling pressure and filling progression are running along known paths the variations of the exerted pressure and pressure distribution there is a fair estimate to be made on the changes in the relative orientation of the mould parts in a passive situation wherein the expected changes are not compensated. Based on these estimates in the behavior a feed forward steering can anticipate on the relative orientation
35 changed to be expected. For such feed forward steering the distribution of the

pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts may at least partially controlled by stored historical process information. Such a steering (controlling) may also continuously adapt so that the control becomes a “self-learning” control system.

- 5 Further, the method for encapsulation according to present invention may further comprising the step of displacing releasing means in a direction substantially perpendicular (or alternatively in a direction which corresponds) to the direction of the relative displacement of the at least two mould parts before clamping the carrier between the mould parts in step B), such that the releasing means form part of the
- 10 contact side of the at least one mould part provided with the at least one mould cavity to clamp the carrier between the releasing means and the mould parts. It is noted that by using the releasing means the releasing means reduces the effective clamp force of the mould part the releasing means cooperate with. Therefore, the method of the present invention may further comprise a calibration step, before
- 15 clamping the carrier between the releasing means and the mould parts. Such calibration step comprises the relatively displacement of the at least two mould parts towards each other with a closing force such that the electronic components for encapsulating are enclosed by at least one mould cavity and the carrier is clamped between the mould parts. By inclusion of such calibration step a baseline
- 20 pressure may be measured without using the releasing means. The baseline measurement of the clamping force is performed by relatively displacing the at least two mould parts towards each other. The clamping force measured during use of the releasing means is compared with the clamping force measured during the baseline measurement. The actual clamping force exerted on the carrier is
- 25 corrected by independently controlling the actuators.

The present invention will be further elucidated on the basis of the non-limitative exemplary embodiments shown in the following figures. Herein shows:

- 30 figure 1 a schematic view on a press for encapsulating electronic components according the present invention;
- figure 2A a schematic side view on a pair of mould parts and a carrier with electronic components in a situation before encapsulation wherein the mould parts are opened;

figure 2B a side view on the mould parts and the carrier with electronic components as shown in figure 2A in a situation before encapsulation wherein the mould parts are closed;

figure 2C a side view on the mould parts and the carrier with electronic components as shown in figures 2A and 2B in a situation during encapsulation with closed
5 mould parts according the prior art;

figure 2D a side view on the mould parts and the carrier with electronic components as shown in figures 2A and 2B in a situation during encapsulation with closed mould parts according the present invention;

10 figure 2E a side view on mould parts and the carrier with electronic components with different dimensions as the situation shown in figure 2B, also here in a situation before encapsulation wherein the mould parts are closed;

figure 2F a side view on the mould parts and the carrier with electronic components as shown in figure 2E in a situation during encapsulation with closed mould parts
15 according the present invention;

figure 3 a top view on a mould part with a moulding cavity partially filled with moulding material;

figure 4A a schematic side view on a pair of mould parts and a carrier with electronic components in a situation before encapsulation wherein the mould parts
20 are opened;

figure 4B a side view on the mould parts and the carrier with electronic components as shown in figure 4A in a situation before encapsulation wherein the mould parts are closed;

figure 5A a schematic side view on a pair of mould parts and a carrier with electronic components in a situation before encapsulation wherein the mould parts
25 are opened; and

figure 5B a side view on the mould parts and the carrier with electronic components as shown in figure 5A in a situation before encapsulation wherein the mould parts are closed.

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Figure 1 shows a press 1 for encapsulating electronic components with a frame 2 holding two press parts 3, 4 displaceable relative to each other according arrow P_1 . The press 1 comprises a main drive cylinder 5, i.e. the first actuator, which is controlled by a fluid pump system 6. The press parts 3, 4 are suited for carrying two
35 co-operating mould parts (not shown in this figure). The press also includes two

displacement sensors 7, 8 for detecting the relative displacement of the press parts 3, 4 at various locations location of the press parts 3, 4 (here at the left and right sight of the press parts 3, 4). The displacement sensors 7, 8 are connected to an intelligent control 9 which may be part of an operator console 10. The information
 5 provided by the displacement sensors 7, 8 is processed by the intelligent control 9 and may result in a steering of the fluid pump system 6. In the present invention there are two additional individual controllable press cylinders 11, 12, i.e. the second and third actuator, which are also fed (steered) by the fluid pump system 6 via control line 13 but so that their displacement is individually controlled (so
 10 independent of the main drive cylinder 5 and independent from each other). This provides the opportunity to influence the distribution of the pressure (load) exerted onto lower press part 4 and thus of the orientation of the lower press part 4.

Figure 2A shows a schematic side view on a pair of mould parts 20, 21. The top
 15 mould part 21 is provided with a moulding cavity 22 that is recessed into a contact side 23 of the mould part 21 for enclosing at least electronic components 24 placed on a carrier 25. In the top mould part 21 is also recessed a feed channel 26 for feeding moulding material (not visible in this figure) to the moulding cavity 22. The moulding cavity 22 is surrounded by the contact side 23 that is designed for
 20 connecting onto the carrier 25 and in this contact side 23 a venting opening 27 is provided to allow gasses to leave the moulding cavity 22 during the moulding process. According arrow P_2 the mould parts 20, 21 are closed onto each other as is shown in figure 2B.

25 In figure 2B mould closure is executed by the top mould part 21 contacting the carrier 25 on bottom mould part 20 but still before the moulding material is fed into the moulding cavity 22. The venting opening 27 leaves a small gas outlet free between the carrier 25 and the mould part 21. As the mould parts 20, 21 are closed now with restricted clamp force from the press carrying the mould parts 20, 21 to
 30 avoid damage on carrier 25, the situation is prepared to fill the moulding cavity 22 via runner 26 with moulding material according P_3 .

In figure 2C moulding material 28 is fed into the mould cavity 22 according the prior art. The effect that may occur (which is exaggerated in this figure 2C) is that the
 35 moulding material 28 locally (here on the left side) exerts a pressure (see arrow P_4)

onto the top mould part 21, which local pressure (P_4) makes the top mould part 21 to tilt (displacement relative to the lower mould part 20). The drawbacks of such relative displacement of the mould parts 20, 21 are among others that the resulting moulded electronic component has an undesired shape (here a sloping remaining housing “package” of the moulding material 28) as well as that moulding material 28 may leak between the contact side 23 of the mould part 21 and the carrier (see leakage/bleed/flash 30). A further draw back of the situation as depicted in figure 2C is that the top mould part 21 locally (see right sight of the drawing) is pressed into the carrier 25 which could damage the carrier 25 and which also may influence the gas discharge capacity of the venting opening 27 (or even leads to a complete blocking of the gas discharge).

In figure 2D moulding material 28 is also fed into the mould cavity 22 but now in a situation according the present invention. The top mould part 21 is attached to a press part 31 driven by two individual controllable actuators 32, 33 (here spindle actuators as an alternative for the cylinder actuators as shown in figure 1). To compensate the pressure exerted by the moulding material 28 (see arrow P_4) the pressure exerted by the left actuator 32 (see arrow P_5) is larger than the pressure exerted by the right actuator 33 (see arrow P_6). The different pressure distribution according the present invention during the feed of the moulding material 28 by the actuators 32, 33 prevents various disadvantages as shown in figure 2C, the dimensions of the moulded electronic components 24 are better controlled, there is less chance of damaging the carrier 25 and the venting 27 will function properly.

Figure 2E shows the mould parts 20,21 clamping a carrier 25 with electronic components 24, which electronic components 24 are just touching with high accuracy the inside of the mould cavity 22 of the top mould 21. In the depicted situation the mould parts 20, 21 are closed with a restricted clamp force to avoid damage of the carrier 25 and the electronic components 24.

In figure 2F moulding material 28 is fed into the mould cavity 22 holding the electronic components as shown in figure 2E according the present invention. The top side of the electronic components 24 is kept free of moulding material 28 such that “exposed” electronic components 24 remain after the moulding process. The top mould part 21 is attached to the press part 31 as is shown in figure 2D and is

driven by the two individual controllable actuators 32, 33 as already explained in relation to figure 2D. Also here the pressure exerted by the moulding material 28 (see arrow P₄) is compensated by the pressure exerted by the left actuator 32 (see arrow P₅) that is larger than the pressure exerted by the right actuator 33 (see arrow P₆). The dimensions and the exposed surfaces of the moulded electronic components 24 are well controlled, there is limited chance of damaging the carrier 25 or the electronic components 24 and the venting 27 will function properly.

Figure 3 shows a top view on a mould part 40 with a moulding cavity 41 partially filled with moulding material 42. The (liquid) moulding material 42 is fed by plungers 43 to the moulding cavity 41. The moulding cavity 41 here shown is circular, e.g. for moulding a wafer type carrier. Also dotted indicated are the locations where three individual controllable actuators 44, 45, 46 are located on the opposite side of the mould part 40 where the moulding cavity 41 is located. The positions of the individual controllable actuators 44, 45, 46 enable to control the full orientation of the mould part 40 as three actuators 44, 45, 46 enable full levelling of a surface (the mould part 40) in the second dimension (lengthwise and crosswise on the flow direction of the moulding material 42).

Figure 4A and figure 4B show a further embodiment of the present invention. Figure 4A shows a schematic side view on a pair of mould parts 20, 21. The top mould part 21 is provided with a moulding cavity 22 for enclosing at least electronic components 24 placed on a carrier 25. In the top mould part 21 is also recessed a feed channel 26 for feeding moulding material (not visible in this figure) to the moulding cavity 22. Different to the embodiment shown in figure 2A, the moulding device of figure 4A further comprises top mould part 21 releasing means 47, for facilitating the release of the top mould part 21 from the encapsulated electronic components 24. The releasing means 47 are displaceable according to arrow P₇. The releasing means 47 can be displaced independently from the displacement of the mould parts 20, 21. Similar to the embodiment disclosed in figure 2A, the mould parts 20, 21 are closed onto each other according arrow P₂. Ultimately by closure of the mould parts 20, 21, but preferably before closure of the mould parts 20, 21, releasing means 47 are placed in line with the mould parts 20, 21, to form the closed mould part assembly of figure 4B.

In figure 4B the moulding cavity 22 is surrounded by the contact side 23 as shown in figure 2B of which releasing means 47 form part of and wherein the contact side 23 is designed for connecting onto the carrier 25 and in this contact side 23 a venting opening 27 is provided to allow gasses to leave the moulding cavity 22 during the moulding process. Further, the mould closure is executed by the top mould part 21 contacting the carrier 25 and the releasing means 47 on bottom mould part 20 but still before the moulding material is fed into the moulding cavity 22. The venting opening 27 leaves a small gas outlet free between the carrier 25 and the mould part 21. As the mould parts 20, 21 are closed now with restricted clamp force from the press carrying the mould parts 20, 21 to avoid damage on carrier 25, the situation is prepared to fill the moulding cavity 22 via runner 26 with moulding material according P₃.

After filling the mould cavity 22 with moulding material, the top mould part 21 can be released easily. By providing the releasing means 47 in the part of the contact side 23 the runner 26 is provided, the top mould part 21 can be released without the need of releasing the complete surrounding contact side 23 from the carrier 25 on the bottom mould part 20. After the top mould part 21 is removed, the releasing means 47 are retracted from the closure position (the position as shown in figure 4B) to allow the further release of the encapsulated electronic components 24. Preferably, the releasing means 47 are retracted in a direction opposite to the direction indicated by arrow P₇ as shown in figure 4A. Preferably, the material used for the releasing means 47 is chosen such that the part of moulding material 28 cured in the runner 26 is retracted from the mould part device by retraction of the releasing means 47.

Similar to the embodiments shown in figures 4A and 4B, figures 5A and 5B show an embodiment comprising the releasing means 47, wherein the runner 26 is provided in the releasing means 47. By closing the mould parts 20, 21 the mould cavity 22 formed connects to the runner 26 of the releasing means 47.

Claims

1. A transfer moulding press for encapsulating electronic components mounted on a carrier, comprising:
 - 5 - at least two press parts displaceable relative to each other for supporting at least two co-operating mould parts, at least one of which mould parts being provided with at least one mould cavity recessed into a contact side for enclosing at least one electronic components placed on the carrier, the contact surface of this mould part at least partially enclosing the mould cavity for
 - 10 medium-tight connection onto the carrier in a closed position of the mould parts;
 - a drive system for driving the relative displacement of the press parts; and
 - an intelligent control connecting to the drive system of the press parts, said intelligent control being adapted to control the drive system of the press parts, wherein the drive system comprises at least two individual controllable actuators,
 - 15 and wherein the intelligent control further connects to plural displacement sensors for detecting the relative displacement of the press parts at various locations, **characterised in that**, and wherein the intelligent control is adapted to control the actuators of the drive system dynamically over time based on the measured values detected with the displacement sensors to change the distribution of the pressure exerted by the drive system on at least one of the press parts during feeding of an
 - 20 encapsulating material into the mould cavity, wherein the mould parts are in a closed position and the press parts mutually exert pressure.
2. The transfer moulding press according to claim 1, **characterised in that** the
 - 25 drive system comprises at least three individual controllable actuators.
3. The transfer moulding press according to claim 1 or 2, **characterised in that** the direction of the pressure exerted by the actuators corresponds to the direction of displacement of the actuators.
 - 30
4. The transfer moulding press according to any of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the individual controllable actuators are pressure cylinders.
5. The transfer moulding press according to claim 4, **characterised in that** at
 - 35 least three pressure cylinders co-act with a single press part.

6. The transfer moulding press according to any of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the displacement sensors are sensitive to relative displacements of microns.
- 5 7. The transfer moulding press according to any of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the displacement sensors are adapted to detect objects which should not be present at the place the objects are detected.
- 10 8. The transfer moulding press according to any of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the press with mould parts also comprises feed means provided with at least one plunger for the purpose of exerting pressure on a liquid encapsulating material such that the encapsulating material is displaced to the mould cavity enclosing the electronic component.
- 15 9. The transfer moulding press according to claim 8, **characterised in that** the press further comprises releasing means to facilitate the release of the at least one mould part being provided with at least one mould cavity recessed into a contact side for enclosing at least one electronic component placed on the carrier, wherein the contact side is formed by the contact surface of the releasing means and the
- 20 contact surface of the at least one mould part the releasing means cooperate with.
10. The transfer moulding press according to claim 9, **characterised in that** the releasing means are displaceable in a direction substantially perpendicular to the direction of the relative displacement of the press parts.
- 25 11. The transfer moulding press according to claim 9 or 10, **characterised in that** the releasing means comprise a feed channel for feeding encapsulating material to the mould cavity.
- 30 12. Method for encapsulating electronic components mounted on a carrier with encapsulating material, comprising the processing steps of:
- A) placing an electronic component for encapsulating on a mould part,
 - B) relatively displacing at least two mould parts towards each other with a closing force such that the electronic components for encapsulating are

enclosed by at least one mould cavity and the carrier is clamped between the mould parts,

C) exerting pressure on a liquid encapsulating material with at least one plunger such that encapsulating material is displaced to the at least one mould cavity enclosing the electronic components,

D) filling the mould cavity with encapsulating material, and

E) at least partially curing the encapsulating material in the mould cavity,

wherein the distribution of the pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts during at least processing step D) is varied dependent on measured local displacements of the mould parts.

13. The method for encapsulating according to claim 12, **characterized in that** the distribution of the pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts during at least processing steps D) and E) is varied dependent on measured local displacements of the mould parts.

14. The method for encapsulating according to claim 12 or 13, **characterized in that** the distribution of the pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts is varied by individually controlling at least two independent controllable actuators cooperating with at least one of the mould parts.

15. The method for encapsulating according to any of the claims 12 - 14, **characterized in that** the distribution of the pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts is at least partially controlled by feedback of the measured local displacements of the mould parts.

16. The method for encapsulating according to any of the claims 12 - 15, **characterized in that** the distribution of the pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts is at least partially controlled by feed forward of at least one detected process variable.

17. The method for encapsulating according to any of the claims 12 - 16, **characterized in that** the distribution of the pressure exerted on at least one of the mould parts is at least partially controlled by stored historical process information.

18. The method for encapsulating according to any of the claims 12-17,
characterized in that before clamping the carrier between the mould parts in step
B), the method further comprising the step of displacing releasing means in a
direction substantially perpendicular to the direction of the relative displacement of
5 the at least two mould parts such that the releasing means form part of the contact
side of the at least one mould part provided with the at least one mould cavity to
clamp the carrier between the releasing means and the mould parts.

19. The method for encapsulating according to claim 18, **characterized in that**,
10 before clamping the carrier between the releasing means and the mould parts, the
method further comprising a calibration step, including relatively displacing the at
least two mould parts towards each other with a closing force such that the
electronic components for encapsulating are enclosed by at least one mould cavity
and the carrier is clamped between the mould parts.