

基于导星纳米对准的片上光子引线直写技术

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摘要 针对双光子激光直写片上光子引线波导的纳米级对准需求,提出了基于导星数字匹配与纳米智能对准的方法,实现了高精度、高密度片上光子引线互联纳米结构3D直写加工。面向片上光子引线波导的背景与需求,设计了双光子直写光刻系统的光学系统结构,在硬件上设计了独特的导星,在算法上利用机器视觉的智能识别方法,精确定位了片上光子引线波导连接结构。所刻写的光子引线与硅片波导的平均偏差角度为 0.19° ,绝对位置平均对准精度为29 nm,标准差为17 nm。所提方案为实现高精度、高密度的光学片上互联提供了一种可行的方法,在芯片封装、多材料功能结构制备、复杂结构修饰等高精度加工领域有着重要的科学和应用意义。

关键词 光学设计; 光刻; 机器视觉; 片上光子引线; 波导加工; 双光子激光直写

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1 引言

双光子聚合三维微纳加工技术可使得激光直写(LDW)的分辨率达到超越光学衍射极限的亚百纳米量级,具有工艺流程简单、热效应小、光阈值损伤小等显著优点,很大程度上提高了光刻技术的使用灵活性^[1-3],为拓宽光刻技术的应用领域提供了基础^[1-7]。与投影式光刻不同,LDW无需掩模版,因此基于掩模版与基板的相对位置对准技术并不适用于LDW。对准技术能够发挥LDW高自由度灵活刻写的优势,用于基板特定位置上高精度定位刻写、复杂几何形状的聚合物结构加工^[8-9],在片上通信^[10-12]、细胞生物^[13-14]、超材料^[15-16]等领域具有广泛的应用。

光刻对准方法主要分为基于光强探测的对准方法与基于图像识别处理的对准方法两大类^[17]。Lio等^[18]利用对准标记两侧对称的衍射光强确定对准位置,提出了光栅衍射激光干涉对准技术;ASML公司提出了与基于二元棋盘叠栅强度的同轴对准技术(TTL)较为类似的干涉对准技术^[19-20];Fay等^[21-22]提出了一种二维零位光栅对准技术,根据两光栅零位位置光强极大值判断对准位置;Kwon等^[23]提出了一种基于视频图像对准技术的对准算法,该算法能够采用任意图形对准标记进行光刻对准,但只适用于带有掩模版的接触

式光刻系统。综上,基于光强探测的对准方法普遍使用光栅作为衍射器件,对标记制造工艺要求较高,同时需要粗对准,导致了对准的效率低下。图像识别对准方法直观简单、效率高,但其对准精度受限于图像像素密度与光学衍射极限,需要根据实际需求使用。

本文聚焦高精度激光直写片上光子引线中的纳米对准技术的研究,针对双光子三维直写加工系统,基于导星纳米对准的机器视觉与图像处理技术,对导星对准标识进行智能识别与定位,定义加工范围并建立三维加工坐标系,再控制双光子激光刻写光束进行高精度位移,并以差分共焦系统定位轴向空间为辅助,进而实现在片上波导间3D直写加工高精度、高密度片上光子引线互联纳米结构。通过在直写光刻机中实现对特定标识物或特定图形特征的智能识别与对准,可使直写光刻系统具备各类复杂结构加工等实用功能,其在芯片封装、多材料功能结构制备、复杂结构修饰等高精度加工领域有着重要的科学和应用意义^[24]。

2 双光子直写光刻系统

2.1 光学系统

双光子直写光刻系统的光学设计如图1所示。激发光采用钛蓝宝石飞秒激光器出射的800 nm波长的飞秒激光,经过光学参量振荡器(OPO)产生532 nm波

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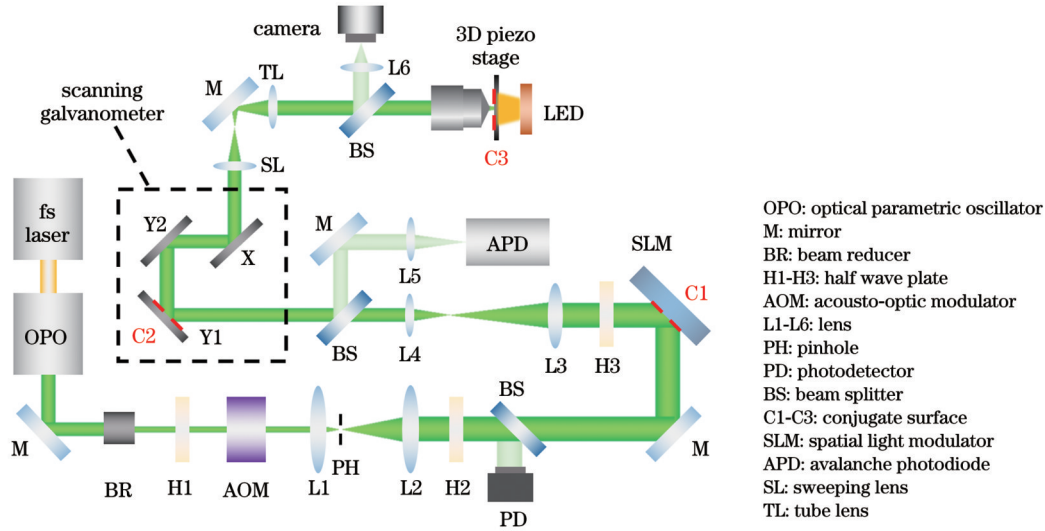


图 1 双光子直写光刻系统光路原理图

Fig. 1 Optical schematic diagram of two-photon LDW system

长的飞秒激发光。声光调制器(AOM)用于控制激光功率。为了与声光调制器的有效孔径相配合,使用光斑缩束器(BR)将激发光的光束直径缩小至 0.6 mm。透镜(L1, 焦距 $f=30$ mm)、小孔PH和透镜(L2, 焦距 $f=150$ mm)用于对光束进行小孔滤波和扩束处理,从而提高光斑质量、增大光束直径,使得出射的光斑能够完全覆盖空间光调制器(SLM)的像素点,改善调制效果。在调制前设有光电探测器(PD),该器件能够实时监控激发光的功率,随后激发光照射至SLM上进行调制。扫描振镜模块采用三振镜扫描方案实现XY平面激光光束的快速扫描,包含两个Y方向振镜(Y1、Y2)与一个X方向振镜(X),结构简单、紧凑、有效。调制光束经过振镜后依次经过扫描透镜(SL, 焦距 $f=50$ mm)和管镜(TL, 焦距 $f=200$ mm),最终射入显微物镜(放大倍数为100, 数值孔径为1.45)进行聚焦。为了匹配物镜的设计,系统采用折射率为1.52的光刻胶,实现光胶浸没式刻写,与传统油浸式物镜相比尽可能地避免了折射率不均带来的像差,且允许多种刻写基板。使用纳米位移台补充扫描振镜,实现三维空间的自由刻写。系统采用波长为 (589 ± 10) nm的LED光源,配合照相机实现刻写的实时监控。系统使用了一个雪崩光电二极管(APD)收集直径为150 nm的金颗粒样品反射光,实现系统的点扩散函数测量。

理想情况下,SLM对光束的相位调制需要光束作用在聚焦光斑对应的入瞳位置(C3),即C1与C3共轭。振镜不动点(C2)同样需要与C3共轭,以避免振镜扫描时造成的入瞳光斑切割。因此系统需要满足3个面(C1~C3)的共轭关系。其中SLM的C1面、透镜(L3, $f=400$ mm)、透镜(L4, $f=200$ mm)和C2面组成一组 $4f$ 系统,实现SLM与振镜不动点的共轭。随后的扫描透镜(SL)和管镜(TL)同样实现了C2面与C3面的共轭,至此完成C1~C3面的全部共轭。

2.2 对准评估

集成光子芯片是一种将激光光源、调制器、波导、探测器等光电器件结合在一起的集成芯片,具有小体积、大带宽、低延迟、低功耗等显著优势,在量子信息处理、光通信等领域均有重要的地位,是下一代通信系统与数据互联的关键技术^[25-32]。双光子激光直写技术能够制造小于衍射极限宽度的聚合物波导,用于高精度、高密度的片上互联。此外,双光子激光直写系统具有极高的灵活性,能够有效应对实际片上互联中接口的空间位置、尺寸、方向等特征各异的复杂情况,很大程度上降低了主动对准的要求。与一次加工一个平面结构的投影式光刻不同,片上光子引线激光直写需要在波导尖端高精度定位刻写三维光子引线,刻写位置的精度直接影响耦合信号的传输质量,因此亟需高精度的对准方案。

传统方案采用肉眼观察相机并手动操纵位移台移动完成对准,其对准精度很大程度上受人为因素干扰,仅能实现微米量级的绝对对准精度,重复对准精度同样较低,不能满足片上集成芯片的高精度波导对准需求。同时,每次对准均需耗费数秒乃至数十秒的时间,无法满足高密度、高数量的片上光子引线对准刻写需求。

本文双光子激光直写系统通过内部耦合高清CMOS,在放大倍数为100的高倍物镜下有24 nm/pixel的“像素-物空间”转换关系,即拍摄出的图片每个像素代表平台上24 nm的宽度。根据图像处理算法的原理,本文系统的定位极限精度在像素宽度量级,因此通过图像处理算法得到的理论坐标计算精度为亚百纳米量级。设备采用三维纳米压电平台,移动精度很高,可以达到5 nm以下的高精度三维定位,这足以让计算出的理论坐标实现对准。综合各类因素,理论对准精度在数十纳米量级,与该设备的双光子光刻最小结构宽度(60 nm)相近,能够满足该系统的一般对准加工需求。

3 导星设计与纳米对准方案

本文为片上每一对波导设计了独特的导星,利用纳米智能图像识别处理技术获取位置坐标,通过算法输出指令、操纵三维移动平台完成 X、Y 轴平面对准,同时使用差分共焦技术实现对样品面位置的高精度测量,结合载物台 Z 轴方向的精密控制,实现对焦面的跟踪锁定,进而在目标位置加工出片上光子引线纳米结构。通过对片上聚合物波导的研制加工,实验和数据分析均表明,基于导星数字匹配与纳米智能对准的方法在双光子激光直写系统中的定位加工具有高度可行性。

3.1 导星设计方案

考虑尽可能地提高波导透射率,设计光子引线单个耦合结构如图 2 所示,参数选取如表 1 所示。硅波导在光子引线内的宽度 W_{wg} 从 500 nm 逐渐收窄,波导内 TE0 模式耦合为光子引线内的 TE0 模式。考虑加工难度和耦合效率,尖端宽度 W_{tip} 选取 130 nm,波导高度 H_{wg} 选取 220 nm。当尖端长度 $L_{tip}=10\ \mu\text{m}$ 时,用双向本征模展开(EME)扫描锥长 L_{taper} ,透射率随 L_{taper} 长度的增加而升高,当 $L_{taper}>100\ \mu\text{m}$ 后基本维持不变,如图 3(a) 所示,因此选取 L_{taper} 为 $100\ \mu\text{m}$ 。当光子引线

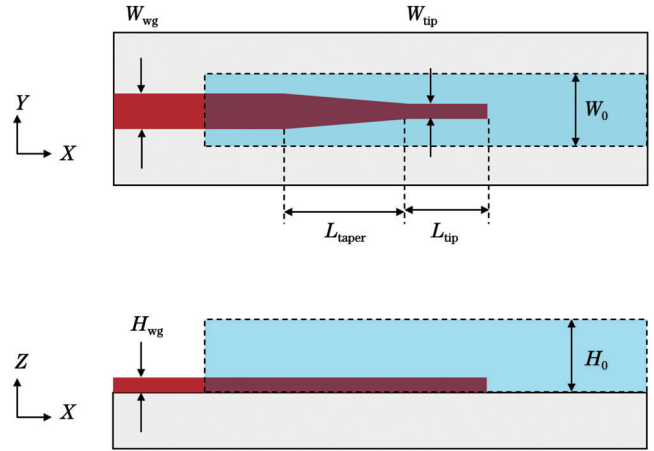


图 2 光子引线耦合结构(虚线框为待刻写光子引线)

Fig. 2 Photonic lead coupling structure (dotted line box is photonic lead to be written)

波导宽度 $W_0=3\ \mu\text{m}$ 、高度 $H_0=3\ \mu\text{m}$ 时,用 EME 扫描得到透射率随 L_{tip} 的变化曲线,如图 3(b) 所示,从图中可知:随着 L_{tip} 的增加,光强在窄波导和光子引线波导间周期变化,在 $L_{tip}=10\ \mu\text{m}$ 时达到第一个透射率最大值,因此选取 $L_{tip}=10\ \mu\text{m}$ 。

表 1 耦合结构参数

Table 1 Parameters for coupling structure

W_{wg}/nm	H_{wg}/nm	W_{tip}/nm	$W_0/\mu\text{m}$	$H_0/\mu\text{m}$	$L_{taper}/\mu\text{m}$	$L_{tip}/\mu\text{m}$
500	220	130	3	3	100	10

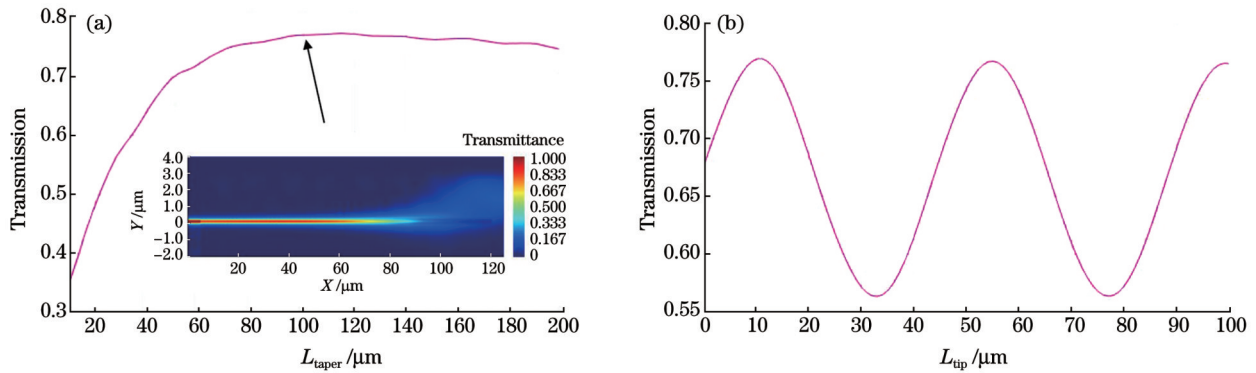


图 3 仿真结果图。(a)EME 扫描透射率随 L_{taper} 的变化图;(b)透射率随 L_{tip} 的变化图

Fig. 3 Simulation results. (a) EME scanning transmittance versus L_{taper} ; (b) transmittance versus L_{tip}

光子引线耦合基板如图 4 所示,共设有 5 对耦合光栅波导,相邻波导间隔 $40\ \mu\text{m}$,波导尖端间隔依次为 $10、20、30、40、50\ \mu\text{m}$ 。设计的“导星”对准标记拟采用两组,两个斜对接的正方形为一组,边长为 $5\ \mu\text{m}$,每组标记相距 $20\ \mu\text{m}$ 。如图 5 所示,波导尖端基准线与对准标记边缘线严格对准,因此两组对准标记的几何中心即为波导尖端中心,由此利用机器视觉图像处理技术识别对准标记,得到波导尖端的精确坐标。

3.2 纳米对准方案

由于刻写的光子引线波导长度为 $230\sim 270\ \mu\text{m}$,

长度较长,在该尺度下很难保证平台与刻写激光 Z 轴完全垂直,即完全水平,因此需要在刻写之前测量并建立平台的三维坐标系,以保证光子引线能够在三维空间上准确刻写。对于 Z 轴方向的对准,采用差分共焦技术实现对样品面位置的高精度测量,结合载物台 Z 轴方向的精密控制,实现对焦面的跟踪锁定。对于 X、Y 平面的对准,利用纳米智能图像识别处理技术获取位置坐标,通过算法输出指令操纵三维移动平台完成 X、Y 轴平面的对准。

纳米对准算法流程如图 6 所示。首先利用差分共

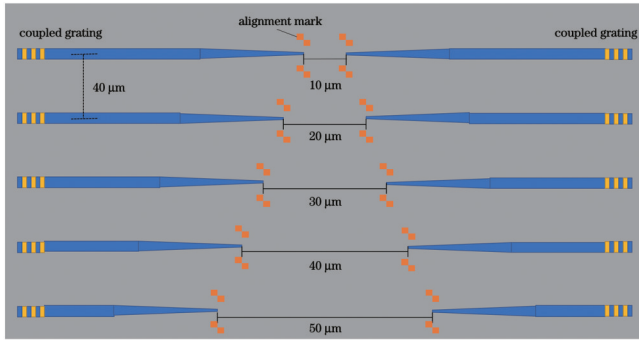


图 4 光子引线耦合基板
Fig. 4 Coupling substrate of photon lead

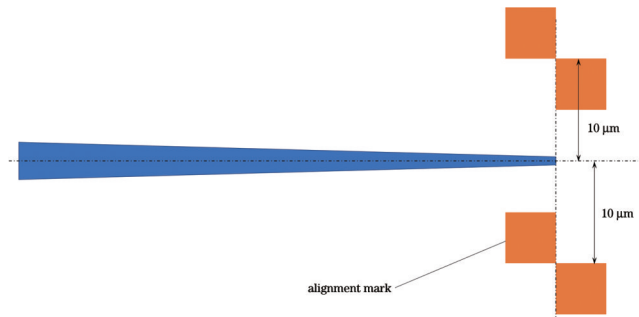


图 5 对准标记示意图
Fig. 5 Schematic diagram of alignment mark

焦技术在基板表面不同位置采样若干次,获得基板各位置的 Z 轴坐标,以此通过最小二乘法获得拟合基板平面。随后使用放大倍数为 100 的物镜拍摄多个波导的导星对准标记图片。使用 canny 边缘算子遍历图片,得到含有边缘的二值化图像。随后对其进行形态学闭操作,即先腐蚀后膨胀,弥合边缘较小的缝隙。接着使用区域填充算法填充所有闭合的曲线,从而得到所有的正方形标记。实际图片中含有一定的噪声和干扰物体(如波导尖端),这会干扰标记的判定,因此需要通过算法将其去除。将图片进行多次腐蚀,初

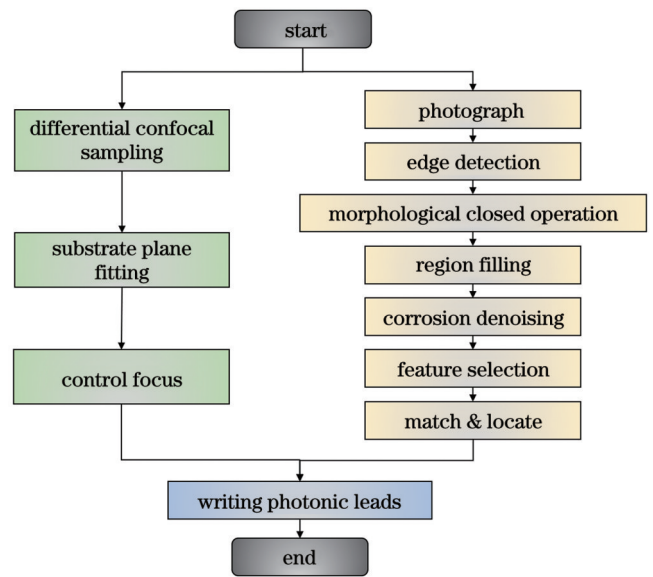


图 6 纳米对准算法流程图
Fig. 6 Flow chart of nano-alignment algorithm

步去除面积较小的噪声,同时也让每个正方形的标记相互独立、不再粘连。随后找出图片中所有的连通图,通过连通图的面积、外接矩形的长宽比等参数筛选出真正的正方形标记。最后设计智能匹配算法将成对的正方形一一配对成为导星,从而通过计算得到 4 个波导尖端的精确坐标,完成片上光子引线的定位激光直写。

4 实验结果与分析

4.1 对准刻写结果

受限于视场大小因素,双光子激光直写系统不足以一次性刻写出长度为 270 μm 左右的光子引线,因此将其分成三部分分别进行刻写。图 7(a)为一次刻写结果,图 7(b)为三次刻写拼接后的光子引线刻写结果图。

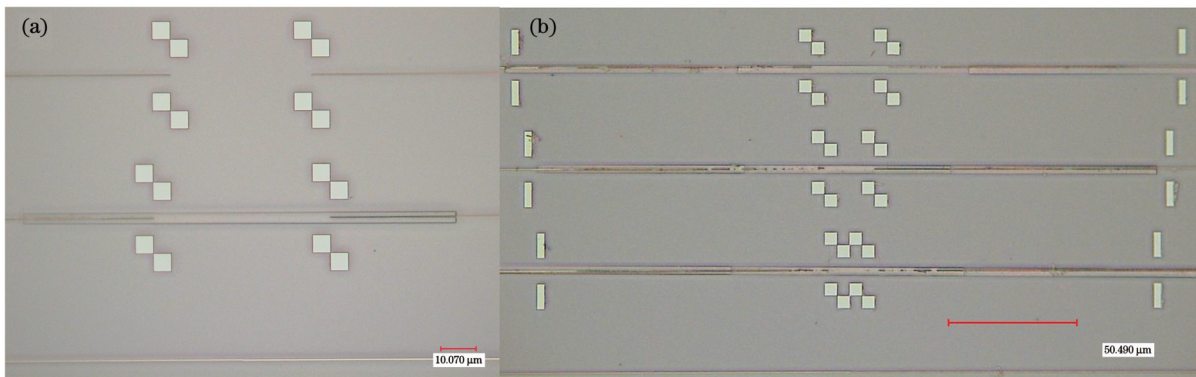


图 7 光子引线刻写结果。(a)一次刻写结果;(b)三次刻写拼接结果
Fig. 7 Writing results of photonic lead. (a) One-time writing result; (b) three-time writing and splicing results

为了分析光子引线的刻写对准精度,使用刻写程序重复进行 6 次刻写实验,得到刻写结果如表 2 所示,其中水平与垂直距离分别为显微镜中水平方向与垂直

方向上光子引线与波导的距离,两者平方和的开方值即为偏差距;光子引线与波导的斜率分别为两者在显微镜视场中的斜率,两斜率对应的角度之差即为角度

表 2 光子引线刻写对准精度
Table 2 Alignment accuracy of photonic lead writing

Number	Horizontal distance / μm	Vertical distance / μm	Distance deviation / μm	Photonic lead slope	Waveguide slope	Angle deviation /($^{\circ}$)
1	0.021	0.020	0.029	0.0034	0.0047	0.075
2	0.031	0.025	0.040	-0.0023	0.0040	0.363
3	0.013	0.005	0.014	0.0120	0.0133	0.077
4	0.007	0.001	0.007	0.0110	0.0099	0.060
5	0.051	0.018	0.054	0.0058	-0.0009	0.383
6	0.026	0.013	0.029	0.0020	-0.0010	0.173

偏差。所有数据的获取均通过对放大倍数为 100 的显微镜下的图像进行多次取点并取平均得到。由计算结果可知,本算法的对准精度均值为 29 nm,标准差为 17 nm,一次偏差最大为 50 nm 左右,保证了亚百纳米级的对准精度,这与理论预期精度吻合得很好。刻写的光子引线硅片波导的平均相差角度为 0.19° ,标准差为 0.15° ;光子引线位置与波导位置平均相差 29 nm,该算法能够实现精确的光子引线刻写,满足片上波导的高精度连接。

4.2 误差分析

绝对位置偏差方面,观察数据可以发现,水平方向的距离偏差普遍比垂直方向的距离偏差大一些,而水平方向几乎平行于光子引线的长边。由于程序刻写光子引线时采用的刻写策略为使用振镜扫描光子引线的长边,待扫描一行结束后再沿光子引线短边方向平移一行,继续扫描,因此长边两端的扫描精度可能导致刻写位置的整体偏移,最终导致水平对准精度略高。

角度偏差方面,由于光子引线长度远大于定位精度,在其长度的量级上,水平方向的对准精度几乎可以忽略不计,因此垂直方向上的对准精度很大程度上决定了角度的偏差大小。

经过分析,对准误差主要由以下 5 个方面导致:

1) 光学衍射极限。虽然在光学衍射极限的影响下,利用数百纳米波长的可见光拍摄到的边缘已经较为模糊,但由于设计的纳米导星为各向同性的正方形,算法仍然能够利用对称性达到数十纳米的识别定位精度。尽管如此,光学衍射极限仍很大程度上限制了图像处理的对准极限。

2) 图像像素尺寸。系统采用的 CCD 单个像素经过光学系统放大后,最后成像对应的尺寸为 24 nm,这很大程度上也决定了基于图像处理算法的对准极限。

3) 对准精度测量误差。采用图片中的手动采样来确定光子引线的位置,进而评估对准算法的对准精度。虽然多次采样取平均值能够很大程度上减小误差,但肉眼选取以及像素离散化终究会带来一定的测量误差。

4) 设备与环境不稳定。对焦探测激光功率、光刻

胶性质、刻写环境温度、刻写平台震动等因素均会影响算法的计算结果与刻写的结构效果,最终引入了对准刻写精度的随机误差。

5) 对准标记较近。本实验设计光子引线长度为 230 μm 时,对准标记仅间隔 10 μm ,这导致角度误差被放大了数十倍,后续工作可以将对准标记移至光子引线两端,以保证更高的角度准确性。

5 结 论

常规的光刻设备单次刻写的结构普遍为独立的个体,仅需要保证刻写图案在可刻写的二维平面内,即光刻胶平面上,并不能完成小型三维结构的准确对准刻写,这很大程度上限制了光刻机的应用场景。受益于直写光刻技术本身较好的应用灵活性与较低的成本,若能将纳米级对准技术与双光子激光直写光刻相结合,则能够实现以可控的价格刻写光子引线,进而实现光学片上互联,该技术拥有非常广阔的应用前景。

本文针对双光子激光直写片上光子引线波导的纳米级对准需求,提出了基于导星数字匹配与纳米智能对准的方法,成功实现了高精度、高密度片上光子引线互联纳米结构 3D 直写加工。在面向片上光子引线波导的背景与需求下,本文设计了双光子激光纳米直写系统的光学系统结构。在硬件层面上,独特的导星设计使得光子引线能够实现高精度定位刻写;在算法层面上,利用机器视觉与图像处理技术对导星进行智能识别匹配与定位,以差分共焦系统辅助轴向对准,建立三维加工坐标系,再控制直写光刻系统中的刻写光束进行高精度位移,进而使得激光直写加工光子引线特定聚合物波导连接。实验所加工的光子引线聚合物波导的平均偏差角度仅为 0.19° ,达到了 29 nm 的绝对位置平均对准精度,标准差为 17 nm。这一研究在高精度、高密度的光学片上互联领域、复杂结构修饰等高精度加工领域有着重要的科学和应用意义。

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On-Chip Photonic Lead Direct Writing Technology Based on Nano-Alignment Guide Star

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Abstract

Objective Integrated photonic chip is a key technology that combines laser light sources, modulators, waveguides, detectors, and other photonic devices into a compact, high-bandwidth, low-latency, and energy-efficient package. They hold significant importance in fields such as quantum information processing and optical communication and play a crucial role in the next generation of communication systems and data interconnectivity. The two-photon polymerization technology for three-dimensional micro and nanofabrication has pushed the resolution of laser direct writing (LDW) beyond the limit imposed by optical diffraction to achieve sub-hundred nanometer scales. Meanwhile, it has significant advantages such as simple processing workflow, minimal thermal effect, and low optical threshold damage, which makes it suitable for high-precision, high-density on-chip interconnections. Additionally, the exceptional flexibility of two-photon laser direct writing systems allows for effective adaptation to the varying spatial positions, dimensions, and orientations of interfaces in on-chip interconnections, substantially reducing the requirements for active alignment. In contrast to projection lithography which processes planar structures at one time, on-chip photonic interconnections demand high-precision positioning for the three-dimensional photonic lead at the tips of the waveguides. The writing position accuracy directly influences the signal coupling quality, emphasizing the need for high-precision alignment solutions.

Methods We focus on the research on nanoscale alignment techniques in high-precision laser direct writing for on-chip photonic waveguides. In the context of a two-photon three-dimensional direct writing system (Fig. 1), machine vision and image processing technologies based on guide star nano-alignment are employed. Intelligent recognition and positioning of nano-alignment markers are carried out in Figs. 5 and 6 to enable the definition of the processing area and the establishment of a three-dimensional processing coordinate system. The two-photon laser writing beam is then precisely controlled, aided by a differential confocal system for axial spatial positioning. This approach facilitates the high-precision and high-density 3D direct writing of on-chip photonic lead interconnections within nanoscale structures between waveguides. By enabling intelligent recognition and alignment of specific markers or distinctive graphical features within the direct writing lithography system, the system is equipped with practical functions, including the fabrication of various complex structures. This has significant scientific and practical implications in high-precision processing areas such as chip packaging, multi-material functional structure fabrication, and complex structure modifications.

Results and Discussions Due to limitations imposed by the field of view, the two-photon laser direct writing system cannot write photonic leads of approximately 270 μm in length at one time. Consequently, each one is divided into three segments and written separately. Fig. 7(a) displays the result of a single writing operation, and Fig. 7(b) illustrates the combined photonic lead that results from three-time writing. To analyze the alignment accuracy of the photonic lead, we conduct six writing experiments using the writing program, with the results shown in Table 2. The analysis indicates that the algorithm achieves an average alignment accuracy of 29 nm, with a maximum deviation of approximately 50 nm in a single experiment. This ensures sub-hundred nanometer-level alignment precision, which aligns very closely with the theoretically expected accuracy. Among the results, the average angular deviation between the written photonic lead and the silicon waveguide is 0.19°. This alignment level enables the precise writing of photonic lead and fulfills the requirements for high-precision on-chip waveguide connections.

After analysis, the alignment deviation of this algorithm is mainly caused by the optical diffraction limit. Although the edge of visible light with hundreds of nanometers wavelength is blurred under the influence of optical diffraction limit, the algorithm can still achieve the recognition and positioning accuracy of tens of nanometers since the designed nano-guide star is an isotropic square. However, the optical diffraction limit still largely restricts the alignment limit of image processing. Additionally, the pixel size of the image, the measurement error of alignment accuracy, the instability of the equipment

and the environment, and the close distance between the alignment marks also limit the alignment accuracy of the algorithm.

Conclusions We address the nanoscale alignment requirements for on-chip photonic interconnection waveguides in the context of two-photon laser direct writing. Meanwhile, a method is proposed based on guide star digital matching and intelligent nano-alignment to achieve 3D laser direct writing for on-chip photonic lead nanostructures with low cost, high precision, and high density. In response to the background and demand for on-chip photonic interconnection waveguides, we design the optical system structure of the two-photon laser direct writing system. On the hardware side, the unique design of the guide star enables high-precision positioning and writing of photonic leads. On the algorithmic side, machine vision and image processing technologies are adopted for intelligent recognition, matching, and positioning. Differential confocal systems assist in axial alignment, creating a three-dimensional machining coordinate system. This system then controls the direct writing laser beam for high-precision displacement, which helps fabricate photonic leads that connect specific polymer waveguides. The experiments produce photonic leads with an average angular deviation of only 0.19° from the polymer waveguides, achieving an average absolute positional alignment accuracy of 29 nm. Finally, our study holds scientific and practical significance in the fields of high-precision optical on-chip interconnections and complex structure modifications.

Key words optical design; lithography; machine vision; on-chip photonic lead; waveguide processing; two-photon laser direct writing