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Author(s)	Ohtsuka, Keisuke; Moritani, Akihiro; Ojima, Masayoshi et al.
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Preparation of Si-microspikes by Electrochemical Etching and Field Emission Characteristics from Diamond particles on the Si-microspikes prepared by Plasma CVD

Keisuke OHTSUKA¹⁾, Akihiro MORITANI¹⁾, Masayoshi OJIMA²⁾, Masanori OZAKI²⁾ and
Katsumi YOSHINO^{2) 3) 4)}

- 1) Faculty of Science and Engineering, Shimane University
1060 Nishi-Kawatsu, Matsue, Shimane 690-8504 Japan
- 2) Department of Electrical, Electronic and Information Engineering, Graduate School of Engineering, Osaka University
2-1 Yamada-Oka, Suita, Osaka 565-0871 Japan
- 3) Shimane-Institute for Industrial Technology,
1 Hokuryo-cho, Matsue, Shimane 690-0816 Japan
- 4) Collaboration Center, Shimane University
2 Hokuryo-cho, Matsue, Shimane 690-0816 Japan

Sharp needle-like Si-microspikes array was prepared on Si surface electrochemically by anodization. Tops of Si-microspikes were covered with diamond particles by plasma chemical vapor deposition with CH₄/H₂ gas.

Field emission characteristics from the Si-microspikes, and from diamond particles on Si flat surfaces and on the Si-microspikes were clarified. The diamond particles on the Si-microspikes gave the lowest threshold voltage for the field emission among them.

Key words: Si, microspikes, diamond, field emission

シリコンマイクロスパイクの電気化学的エッチングによる作製と プラズマ CVD で作製されたマイクロスパイク上のダイヤモンドからの 電界電子放出特性

大塚恵祐¹⁾、森谷明弘¹⁾、尾島正禎²⁾、尾崎雅則²⁾、吉野勝美^{2) 3) 4)}

- 1) 島根大学総合理工学部 690-8504 島根県松江市西川津町 1060
- 2) 大阪大学大学院工学研究科電気電子情報工学専攻 565-0871 大阪府吹田市山田丘 2-1
- 3) 島根県産業技術センター 690-0816 島根県松江市北陵町 1
- 4) 島根大学産学連携センター 690-0816 島根県松江市北陵町 2

シリコン表面を電気化学的に陽極酸化することによって、鋭い針状のシリコンマイクロスパイク列を作製した。このシリコンマイクロスパイクの先端にメタン・水素混合ガスを用いたプラズマ CVD 法でダイヤモンド粒子を形成した。

シリコンマイクロスパイク、平坦シリコン基板に形成したダイヤモンド及びシリコンマイクロスパイクの先端に載せたダイヤモンドからの電界電子放出特性を明らかにした。

これらの試料においてマイクロスパイク上のダイヤモンドが最も低い閾電圧を示した。

キーワード: シリコン、マイクロスパイク、ダイヤモンド、電界放出

1. Introduction

Since the first report of micropore formation in anodized p-type Si by Propst and Khol¹⁾, many reports have been reported on the control of micropores formation on Si and their applications for various devices such as photo-emission and field electron emission devices^{2) 3) 4)}. We have also studied micropores on Si depending on the detailed preparation condition and succeeded to control the shape of the pores edge by selective etching and removal of pore walls. Indeed we obtained arrays of needles of Si by this method, with which preliminary measurements of field emission characteristics have also been carried out.

On the other hand, carbons have also attracted much attention as field emission device. For example, diamonds are considered to have surface of negative electron affinity which may enhance the field emission. Carbon nano-tubes are also known as the candidate of field emission device^{5) 6) 7) 8)}. We have also reported that electron emission from the sharp wall edges of carbon inverse opals can be also excellent emission sites⁹⁾.

From these back ground, in this paper, we carried out detailed study of the surface micropores formation, resulting in the formation of Si microspikes array. Then we prepared carbons such as diamonds on these Si devices. The field emission characteristics from the Si-microspikes, and from diamond particles on Si flat surfaces and on the Si-microspikes have been measured and compared.

2. Experimental

2.1 Experimental procedure of micropores and microspikes formation

The starting material was the p-type Si wafer with (100) surface, whose back surface was mechanically ground and then coated with successively deposited Ti/Ni/Au. The anodic reaction was carried out at room temperature using a sample holder, in which the Au-plated Cu block was pressed to the back surface of the sample by a spring used for the electrical contact and the front surface of the sample was covered by a Teflon plug with a window through which the anodic reaction occurred.

The electrolyte was 48wt.% HF : de-ionized water : isopropyl alcohol(IPA)=1:1:6 (vol.). Anodization was carried out for 30 min, changing the current density from 0.5 to 63 mA/cm² and the anodized surface morphology was investigated by Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM).

We expected that the beams at corners of rectangular parallel-piped pores might be modified to field emission arrays by a selective removal of pore walls. For such a purpose, an anisotropic wet etching was carried out to pores by using the etching solution of 1 mol KOH : IPA=4.8 : 1 (vol.) at 50°C.

The typical etched surfaces observed by SEM is shown in Fig.1. As evident in this figure, sharp Si microspikes were formed by these procedures.

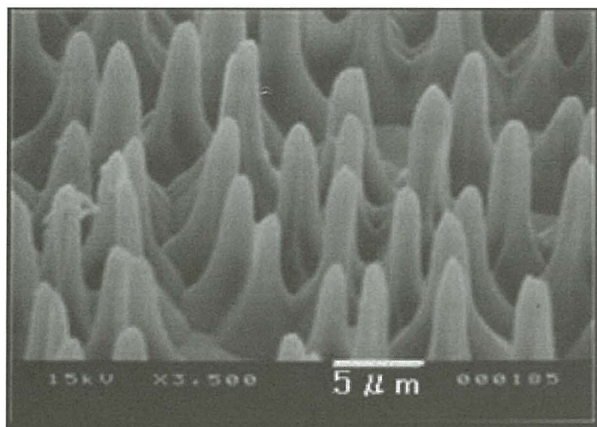


Fig.1: SEM image of a typical etched surface of Si by anodization.

図 1. 典型的な陽極酸化によるエッチングで処理された Si 表面の電子顕微鏡写真

2.2 Diamond growth

Diamond particles were formed on various Si(100) substrates at 500°C under the discharge of H₂ and CH₄ mixture gas with H₂:CH₄ ratio of 99:1 at 120 Torr for 60, 120, 180 and 300 minutes under an applied voltage pulse of 500V (150 μs ON and 50μs OFF) and current of 1 A.

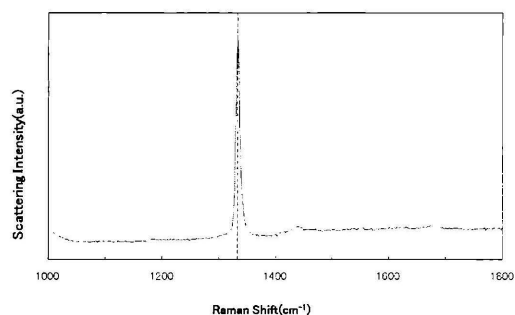


Fig.2: Raman spectrum of a diamond particle grown on Si for 60 min.

図 2. Si 上に 60 分間成長したダイヤモンドのラマンスペクトル

Growth of diamond prepared with a growth time of 60 min. was confirmed by the

observation of a peak at 1333cm⁻¹ in a Raman spectrum as shown in Fig.2, where the Raman spectra were taken in the backscattering geometry using a 514.5 nm Ar-ion laser for the excitation. A SEM image of the diamond particles on Si substrates for the deposition time of 60 min is shown in Fig.3.

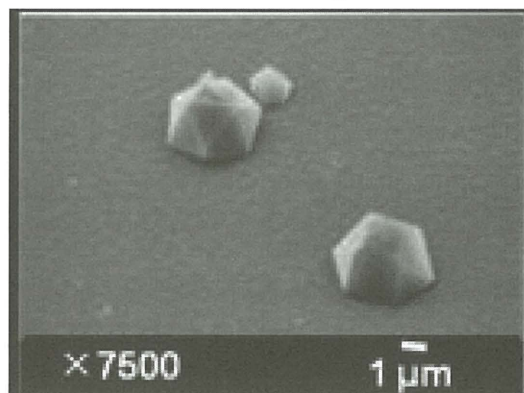


Fig.3: SEM image of the diamond particles on a Si substrate for the deposition time of 60 min.

図 3. Si 表面上に 60 分間堆積したダイヤモンド粒子の走査電子顕微鏡写真

Figure 4 shows typical SEM images of diamond particles on the Si microspikes

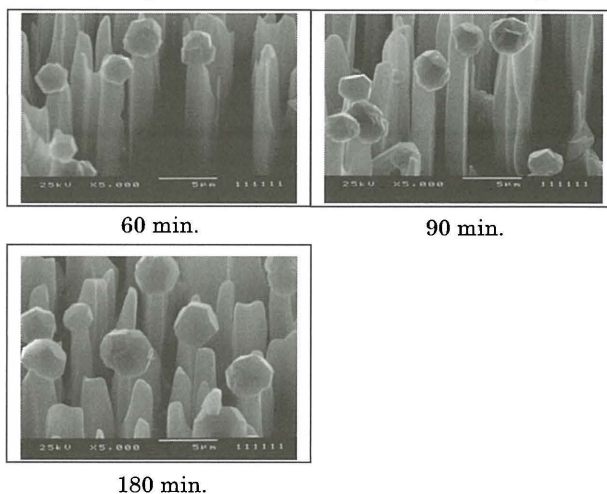


Fig.4: SEM images of the diamond particles on Si microspikes for various deposition times.

図 4. 種々の堆積時間における Si マイクロスパイク上のダイヤモンド粒子の走査電子顕微鏡写真

electrochemically formed. The particles were formed on some of tip tops of Si and not all the tip tops were capped with the diamond particles.

2.3 Field emission measurements

The field emission measurements were performed for the samples as an emitter in a high vacuum chamber (about 10^{-7} Torr). We used a tungsten probe with a diameter of 500 μm as an anode. The cross-sectional area of the anode was $1.96 \times 10^{-7} \text{ m}^2$. The field emission current density – electric field characteristics were studied for various distances (z) between the anode and the specimen.

3. Results and discussion

Field electron emission current was not observed from the flat Si substrate. However, upon anodization of the Si substrate, micropore formation progresses and then sharp Si microspikes have been formed. From these Si-microspikes clear field emission current was observed as shown in Fig.5.

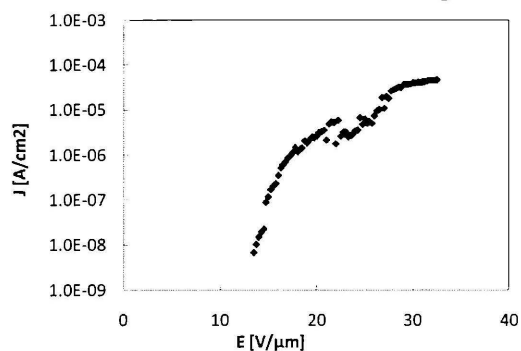


Fig.5: Voltage dependence of field emission current from Si microspikes.

図 5. Si マイクロスパイクからの電界放出電流の電圧依存性

The emission should be induced by the field enhancement at the tip of the Si spikes.

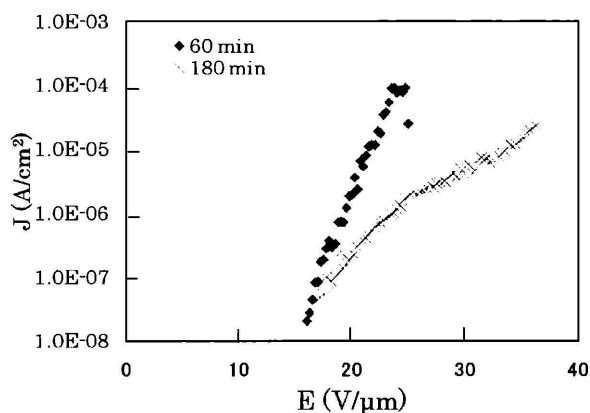


Fig.6: Voltage dependences of field emission current from diamond particles grown on the flat Si surface for the deposition time of 60 min and 180 min

図 6. Si 平坦表面上に堆積したダイヤモンド粒子からの電界放出電流の電圧依存性

◆ : 堆積時間 0 分, × : 180 分

To clarify the effect of diamond deposition for the field emission, the field emission characteristics were studied in the flat Si substrate with the deposited diamond particles on it. As evident in Fig.6, in the flat Si substrate with the diamond particles deposited on it, clear field emission current was observed. This may be explained by both the enhancement of electric field at the corner edge of the diamond particles as evident in Fig.3 and also the electron affinity characteristic of diamond. In this case of diamond formation by plasma deposition method with the discharge of H_2 and CH_4 mixture gas, the surface of the diamond particles may be terminated with hydrogen. It is known that saturated hydrocarbons are considered to have negative electron affinity.

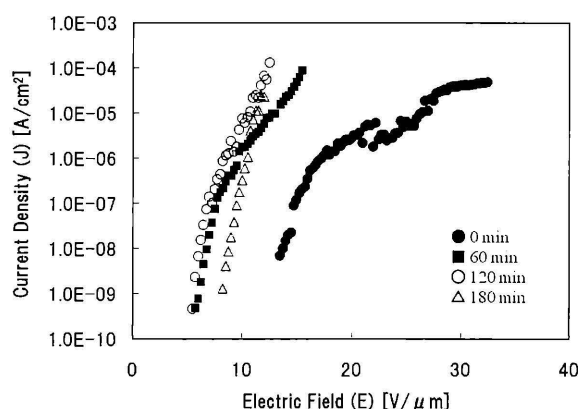


Fig.7: Voltage dependences of field emission current from Si microspikes deposited with diamond particles on it at various deposition times.

図 7. ダイヤモンド粒子を種々の時間堆積した Si マイクロスパイクからの電界放出電流の電圧依存性

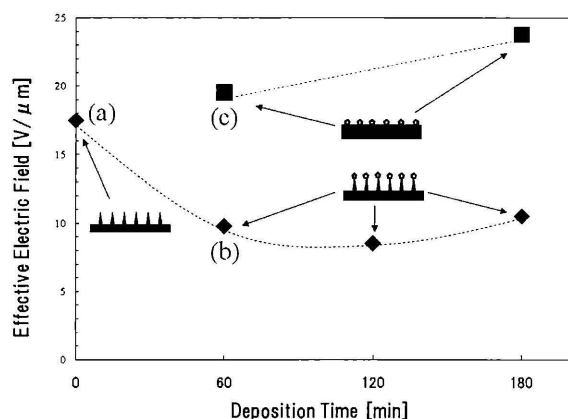


Fig.8: Dependence of the threshold electric field for the field emission from (a) the Si microspikes, (b) diamond particles on the microspikes and (c) diamond particles on the flat Si surface upon the deposition time of diamond particles.

図 8. Si マイクロスパイク(a)及び Si マイクロスパイク上に堆積したダイヤモンド粒子(b), 並びに平坦 Si 上に堆積したダイヤモンド粒子(c), からの電界放出電流の閾電界の堆積時間依存性

It should be noticed, as also evident in Fig.7, that in the diamond deposited Si microspikes, the emission current was remarkably enhanced at low voltage and the threshold field was much suppressed. However, it should be mentioned that longer time deposition of diamond does not induce further reduction of the threshold field of the field emission current as also evident in this figure and clearly shown in Fig.8, where threshold fields are summarized in the three cases.

Figure 9 shows Fowler-Nordheim plots, that is, the field emission current density J – electric field E characteristics in Si-microspikes, Si-flat substrate with diamond particles on it, and Si-microspikes with diamond particle caps.

The threshold electric field of the field emission from the Si micro-tips was decreased remarkably upon diamond particle deposition. These J - E characteristics seem to be saturated in current density range of $J > 10^{-3} - 10^{-5}$ (A/cm^2).

These J - E characteristics were analyzed by the Fowler-Nordheim (FN) equation for the field emission. The emission current density J as a function of the local electric field at the emitter surface F is given by

$$J = (AF^2/\phi) \exp(-B\phi^{3/2}/F) \quad (A/m^2)$$

with $A = 1.56 \times 10^{-10}$ (AV^{-2}), $B = 6.83 \times 10^9$ ($V eV^{-3/2}m^{-1}$) and ϕ as the work function.

As evident in Fig.9, in the FN plots for the observed current-voltage characteristics, data points in a low-voltage range of the FN plots were approximately on a straight line, which indicates that the analysis of the data

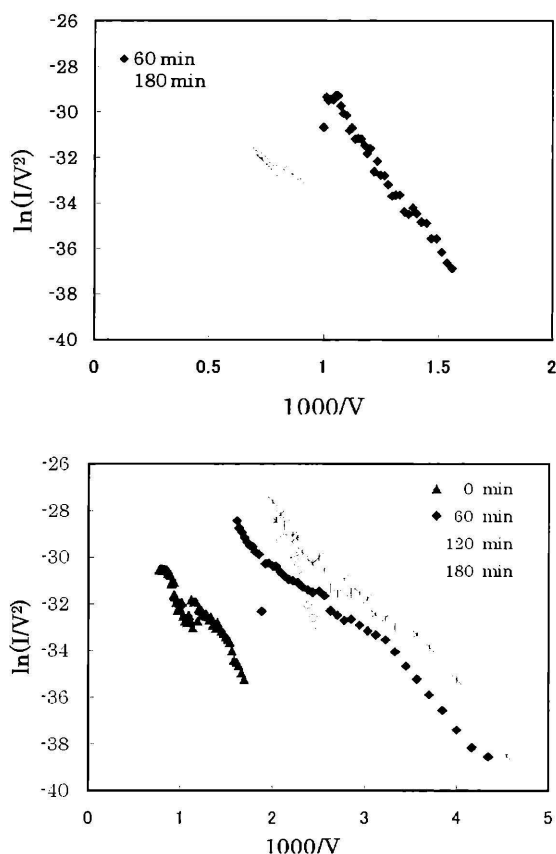


Fig.9: Fowler-Nordheim plots of field emission current-voltage characteristics shown in Figs.5, 6 and 7.

図9. 図5, 6, 7の電界放出電流の電圧依存性のファウラー・ノルドハイムプロット

utilizing FN equation is reasonable.

Judging from the Fig.4, the sharpness of the emission site seems not so much changing with diamond deposition.

We are also expecting the increase of the emission stability, because diamond should be more stable than Si tips during emission.

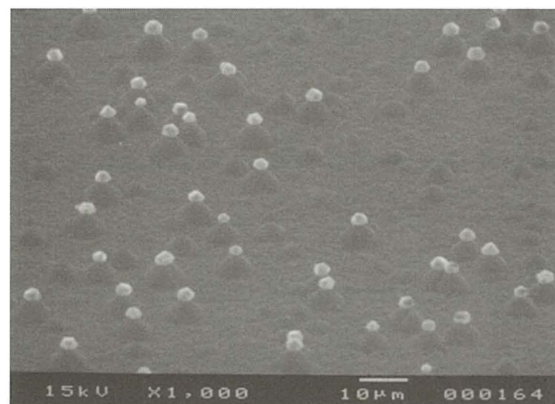


Fig.10: SEM image of the Si surface formed by anisotropic electrochemical etching after the deposition of diamond particles on the flat Si surface.

図10. 平坦Si表面にダイヤモンド粒子を堆積後異方性エッチングで形成した表面の走査電子顕微鏡写真

For the preparation of Si microspikes fully capped with diamond particles, anisotropic electrochemical etching was performed to Si flat substrates deposited with diamond particles on it. As evident in Fig. 10, with progress of electrochemical etching Si-microtips all capped with diamond particles were obtained. The emission characteristics of these samples are now under study.

4. Summary

Sharp Si-microspikes array was prepared on Si surface electrochemically by anodization. Tops of Si-microspikes were covered with diamond particles by plasma chemical vapor deposition with CH_4/H_2 gas.

Field emission characteristics from the Si-microspikes, and from diamond particles on

Si flat surfaces and on the Si-microspikes were clarified. The enhancement of the field emission current upon deposition of the diamond particles grown on the Si microspikes has been clearly observed.

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Keisuke Ohtsuka
He graduated in 2008 from Electronic and Control Systems Engineering at the graduate school of Science and Engineering of Shimane University. Working now for Izumo Murata Manufacturing Co.



Akihiro Moritani
He graduated in 1972 from Graduate School of Electronic Engineering, Osaka University, became a research associate, School of Electronic Engineering, Osaka University. In 1985 he became a senior researcher, Advanced Technology Research Laboratories, Nippon Steel Corporation. In 1997 he became a professor, Faculty of Science and Engineering, Shimane University



Masayoshi Ojima was born in Tokyo, Japan in 1983. He graduated in 2007 from Department of Electronic Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Osaka University. He is now a doctor's degree student of Department of Electronic Engineering, Graduate School of Engineering, Osaka University.



Masanori Ozaki was born in Aichi, Japan in 1960. He graduated in 1983 from Department of Electronic Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Osaka University, where he obtained a Doctor of Engineering Degree in 1988. In that year, he became a Research Associate in Osaka University and promoted to Lecturer in 1991, Associated Professor in 1994. In 2005, he became a Professor in Department of Electronic Engineering, Osaka University.

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Katsumi Yoshino was born in Shimane, Japan. He received the B.E., M.E., and the Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering from Osaka University, respectively in 1964, 1966 and 1969. In 1969 he became a research associate at the Department of Electrical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Osaka University, and in 1972, he was lecturer at the same university. From 1974 to 1975 he was a visiting scientist at the Hahn-Meitner Institute for Nuclear Research. In 1978, he was an associate professor at the same university, and in 1988 he became a professor at the Department of Electronic Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Osaka University. Presently, he is Director General of Shimane Institute for Industrial Technology, Emeritus Professor of Osaka University, Guest Professor of Shimane University, Guest Professor of Nagasaki Institute of Applied Science and Guest Professor of Osaka University. His research fields are mainly electrical and electronic materials such as conducting polymers, insulating polymers, carbons, liquid crystals, ferroelectrics, superconductors and photonic crystals. He has received many awards and honors such as IEEE Fellow, Applied Physics Fellow etc..