



Fig. 4: Sub-mount PCB in the card-board box – loaded in the shuttle for irradiation.

## Conclusions and Future

First irradiation tests at mentioned doses were carried out at CERN successfully. The irradiated samples are awaited after careful precautions are taken regarding radioactive material handling. Optical measurements on the non-irradiated modulators are being made at the time of writing this article. Typical measurements include: Measuring phase vs. Voltage characteristics, determining extinction ratio etc. Future steps include analyzing the results of characterisation and understanding the radiation hardness performance of the modulator. Based on the investigation, a modulator will be designed and tested for radiation hardness.

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Dr. Mike Wale & Ian Knight from Oclaro for providing the MZ samples, Joop Rovekamp from NIKHEF for wire bonding the samples and Maurice Glaser at CERN to help irradiate the devices. This work is part of the research program of the "Stichting voor Fundamenteel Onderzoek der Materie (FOM)", which is financially supported by the "Nederlandse organisatie voor Wetenschappelijke Onderzoek (NWO)".

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# SOI thickness uniformity improvement using wafer-scale corrective etching for silicon nano-photonic device

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*Spectral response of high-index contrast silicon nano-photonic devices are very sensitive to small dimensional variations. The change in the device dimension is mainly caused by thickness/height and width of the device. While the later can be controlled by using high resolution patterning technology, such as e-beam lithography or advanced optical lithography. However, thickness or height of the device is largely dictated by the wafer manufacturing process. In this paper, we present our recent work on thickness non-uniformity improvement using Gas Cluster Ion Beam-Location Specific Processing where the thickness non-uniformity over a 200 mm is reduced by 50% by using this process.*

## Introduction

High-refractive index silicon-on-insulator based photonic integrated circuit platform have matured over the past years. Various active and passive functionalities have been demonstrated with good performance figures close to commercial requirements. However, silicon photonics, despite taking advantage of high volume CMOS compatible fabrication is struggling to become a main-stream integrated circuits platform. One of the main reasons for such failure is its extreme sensitivity of the device to small variations in device dimension, or in other words less tolerant to fabrication non-uniformity/variability. For example, one nanometer in thickness variation would result in about two nanometer shift in the device spectral response and one nanometer width variation would result in one nanometer shift in device response. These variations could be fatal in lot of applications, such as, optical filters in optical communication network [1]. We have already demonstrated that by using high resolution fabrication process width variation within a 200 mm wafer could be reduced to 2-3 nm [2]. In this work, we address the issue of thickness variation control over a 200mm wafer using location specific processing where we demonstrate that by using corrective etching thickness non-uniformity could be reduced by over 50%.

## Thickness correction process

Thickness non-uniformity over the wafer is dictated by the wafer manufacturing process. A typical non-uniformity specification for a 220 nm thick Si layer over a 200 mm SOI is 10%, i.e. 22 nm over the wafer. This non-uniformity is simply not acceptable for many

applications. In this work, we use Gas Cluster Ion Beam (GCIB) process to correct the thickness variations by using location specific processing (LSP) [3]. Figure 1 shows a schematic of a GCIB system. The GCIB tool generates clusters by passing high pressure process gas thru a proprietary nozzle into a low pressure beamline. The clusters are ionized and accelerated, creating a directional, energetic chemical beam. The beam is fixed in position and the wafer is scanned in front of it. SOI thickness uniformity improvement is achieved by utilizing an etch process gas and adjusting the scanner velocity across the wafer so that local etch amounts can be varied, producing precise thickness control.

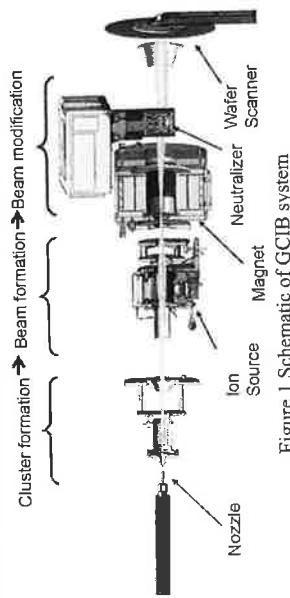


Figure 1 Schematic of GCIB system

Since the thickness control is achieved by removing material from the surface the final thickness of Si depends on the lowest etch rate achievable by the GCIB process and the minimum thickness of the uncorrected wafer. In order to decouple these two factors from the achievable target thickness we propose a route where the Si thickness of the incoming wafer is increased by using epitaxial growth. Figure 2 shows the proposed route to achieved desired Si thickness after thickness uniformity correction using GCIB process.

During the correction process high energy radicals increases the surface roughness and amorphisation occurs at the Si surface during this thickness correction process. Even though these two side-effects are detrimental to device performance in terms of additional loss we have explored ways to recover the surface quality through post correction treatments discussed in the following section.

### Thickness correction and device fabrication

Figure 3 show experimental result of the thickness uniformity improvement using GCIB-LPS. Figure 3a shows the thickness uniformity after increasing the thickness of Si from 220 to 245 nm, which has a 3sigma non-uniformity of 3.2 %. After correcting the thickness non-uniformity while targeting a thickness of 220 nm we have improved the thickness non-uniformity to 0.6% (Table 1).

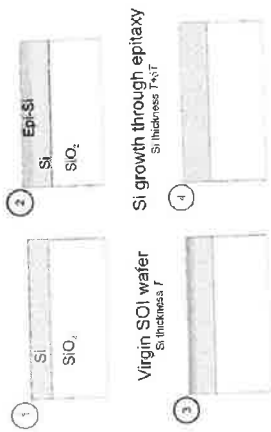


Figure 2 Thickness correction process flow route.

Table 1 Wafer statistics

|            | Pre-correction | Post-correction |
|------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Mean (nm)  | 245            | 219             |
| Range (nm) | 13.5           | 2.5             |
| 3sigma (%) | 3.2            | 0.6             |

As mentioned earlier the correction process creates surface defects. After correction process some of the wafers were thermally annealed at 900C for 10min in N2 atmosphere. After annealing the wafers were patterned with 450 nm wide spiral photonic wire waveguide of different length (1-7 cm) to access the propagation loss and two identical racetrack ring resonators placed 25 um apart to access device uniformity. Patterning is done by using 193nm optical lithography and dry etching process [4]. We also patterned shallow etched grating fiber-chip couplers for in and out coupling of light through the waveguides [5].

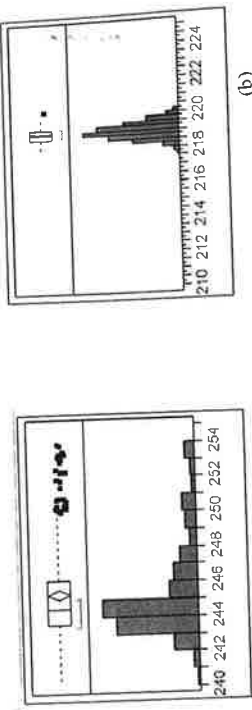


Figure 3 Thickness distribution (a) after epi targeting 245 nm Si and (b) after thickness correction targeting 220 nm.

### Propagation loss and device characterization

After device fabrication, propagation loss of photonic wires were characterized using a SLED and optical spectrum analyzer. TE polarized light is coupled in and out through the grating couplers. Figure 4a shows the propagation loss of photonic wire waveguides. As mentioned earlier waveguides after correction had very high loss of ~50 dB/cm while

# Towards Linear Optical Detection with Single Photon Sensitivity at Telecommunication Wavelengths

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*The conventional optical detectors operate in a linear mode, but their sensitivity is limited due to the noise in the readout electronics. Single photon detectors, on the other hand, have the highest sensitivity, but are strongly nonlinear. Photon number resolving detectors, which can precisely determine the number of photons in weak optical pulses, are potential candidates to fill the gap between these two detection modes. We present the design of photon number resolving detectors with large dynamic range, based on spatial multiplexing of superconducting single photon detectors, with excellent timing resolution and very high sensitivity at the telecommunication wavelength range.*

## Introduction

Photon number resolving (PNR) detectors which have the capability to determine the exact number of photons in a weak optical pulse are required in many applications including linear optics quantum computing [1] and ultra-long distance optical communications. However, a mature technology for fast and sensitive PNR detection, with large dynamic range does not exist, particularly in the telecom wavelength range. In this paper we propose a PNR detector with large dynamic range based on the series connection of  $N$  nanowire superconducting single photon detectors (SSPDs), called hereafter Series Nanowire Detector (SND). The SSPD [2], in brief, is an ultrathin, and narrow superconducting nanowire, arranged in a meander-like geometry to cover a large active area. It is cooled down typically to 2–4 K to operate in the superconducting state and is biased slightly below its critical current. The photon detection process is based on the formation of a resistive region in the nanowire upon absorption of an incoming photon, which results in a measurable voltage pulse. SSPDs offer broad spectral response from ultraviolet to infrared wavelengths, high count rate, low dark count rate and small timing jitter. SNDs preserve all the advantages of SSPDs in terms of simplicity, sensitivity, timing resolution and speed.

## The SND structure

The SND structure consists of the series connection of  $N$  superconducting nanowires, each connected in parallel to a resistor  $R_p$ . It is operated in a circuit as depicted in Fig. 1. The bias current of the SND is provided by the DC arm of a bias-T, while its voltage response is read-out through a cryogenic high impedance load  $R_L$  (e.g. cryogenic preamplifier with large input impedance) that can be further amplified using room temperature amplifiers. The superconducting nanowire is modelled as an inductor  $L$  (the kinetic inductance of the nanowire) in series with a resistor  $R_n(i)$  which is zero when the nanowire is in the superconducting state and manifests as a time-dependent resistance upon absorption of a photon. All the detecting sections are equally biased (in series) with a bias current  $I_b$  very close to the critical current of the superconducting wire (ideally the same for all branches).

wafers that went through thermal annealing exhibited a loss of 4dB/cm compared, which is over a 10 fold decrease and only 1dB more than untreated photonic wire loss of same dimension. This reduction in loss can be attributed to reducing in surface defect; amorphous layer.

Figure 4b shows the spectral response of race track ring resonator from three nominally identical dies placed ~100 nm apart. We observed a non-uniformity of ~1.8 nm over this distance scale and 0.2 nm within a die. Even though this is a limited measurement this is a good indication of the uniformity. And requires detailed full wafer measurement, which is the primary focus in the work.

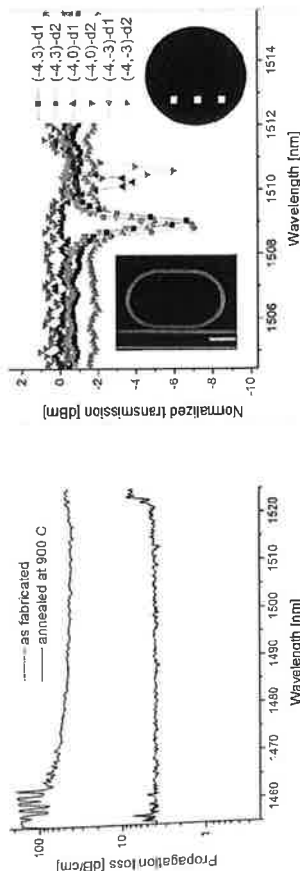


Figure 4 (a) Propagation loss of 450 nm Photonic wire as fabricated (after LSP) and after defect curing anneal. (b) ring resonator uniformity over a distance scale of 100 nm

## Summary

We have demonstrated Si thickness uniformity improvement using GCIB corrective etch process. The uniformity of a virgin 200 nm SOI wafer was improved by 50 %. The damage created during the corrective etch is cured by thermal annealing by which the loss was reduced from 50 dB/cm to 4 dB/cm. We have achieved a short range (intra die) non-uniformity of ~0.2 nm and long range (inter die) non-uniformity of ~1.8 nm.

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Proceedings of the  
2011 Annual Symposium of the  
IEEE Photonics Benelux Chapter



**Editors**

Peter Bienstman, Geert Morthier,  
Gunther Roelkens & Marie Verbist



**1 & 2 December 2011  
Ghent University  
Belgium**

ISBN 9789076546001

IEEE Photonics Benelux Chapter

<http://www.photonics-benelux.org/>

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