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Editors

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J.-H. Jou et al., "Sunlight-style organic light-emitting diodes," *J. Photon. Energy* 1, 011021 (2011).

Special Section on Organic Light-Emitting Materials and Devices

- 011099 Guest Editorial: Organic Light-Emitting Materials and Devices**
Franky So and Chihaya Adachi
- 011024 Optimization of the efficacy and angle dependence of emission of top-emissive organic light-emitting diodes on metal foils**
Harmen Rooms, Dorothee Hermes, Stephan Harkema, Cristina Tanase, Ton van Mol, Paul W. M. Blom, and Joanne Wilson
- 011023 Transparent oxide/metal/oxide trilayer electrode for use in top-emitting organic light-emitting diodes**
Edward Wrzesniewski, Sang-Hyun Eom, William T. Hammond, Weiran Cao, and Jianguang Xue
- 011022 Cheap p- and n-doping for highly efficient organic devices**
Ralf Krause, Frank Steinbacher, Günter Schmid, Jan Hauke Wemken, and Arvid Hunze
- 011021 Sunlight-style organic light-emitting diodes**
Jwo-Huei Jou, Shih-Ming Shen, Ming-Hsuan Wu, Shiang Hau Peng, and Hsi-Ching Wang
- 011020 Electromodulated doping of the hole transport layer in a small molecule organic light-emitting diode**
Paul A. Lane, Song Chen, and Franky So
- 011019 Developments in solution processable polymer light-emitting diodes**
Martin J. Humphries, Richard J. Wilson, Oscar Fernandez, and Robert A. Archer
- 011018 Polymer light-emitting diodes with inorganic nanocomposite interlayers for efficiency enhancement**
Boris Riedel, Julian Hauss, Yuxin Shen, Markus Aichholz, Uli Lemmer, and Martina Gerken
- 011017 Evidence for holes beyond the recombination zone and trions in the electron transport layer of organic light-emitting diodes**
Ying Chen, Min Cai, Emily Hellerich, Rui Liu, Zhengqing Gan, Ruth Shinar, and Joseph Shinar
- 011016 Simulations of emission from microcavity tandem organic light-emitting diodes**
Rana Biswas, Chun Xu, Weijun Zhao, Rui Liu, Ruth Shinar, and Joseph Shinar

- 011015 Large white organic light-emitting diode lighting panel on metal foils**
Philippe Guaino, Fabrizio Maseri, Renaud Schutz, Michael Hofmann, Jan Birnstock, Ludovic Avril, Jean-Jacques Pireaux, Pascal Viville, Hani Kanaan, Roberto Lazzaroni, Jerome Loicq, Frank Rotheudt, and Christian Pans
- 011014 Charge-carrier injection and transport in organic light-emitting diodes: Single-particle versus mean-field approach**
Christian Melzer, Yuri A. Genenko, Sergey V. Yampolskii, Katja Stegmaier, Oliver M. Ottinger, and Heinz von Seggern
- 011013 Hybrid white organic light-emitting diode with a mixed-host interlayer processed by organic vapor phase deposition**
Florian Lindla, Manuel Boesing, Christoph Zimmermann, Philipp van Gemmern, Dietrich Bertram, Dietmar Keiper, Michael Heuken, Holger Kalisch, and Rolf H. Jansen
- 011012 Periodic nanostructuring for guided mode extraction in organic light-emitting diodes**
Julian Hauss, Boris Riedel, Sebastian Gleiss, Ulf Geyer, Uli Lemmer, and Martina Gerken
- 011011 Thin-film transistor as a probe to study carrier transport in amorphous organic semiconductors**
Shu K. So, Wing H. Choi, and Chi H. Cheung
- 011110 Numerical modeling of silicon evanescent lasers**
Alexey G. Rzhanov and Stanislav E. Grigas
- 011009 Organic light-emitting-diode lighting overview**
Yuan-Sheng Tyan
- 011008 Blue phosphorescent organic light-emitting devices utilizing cesium–carbonate-doped 2,4,6-tris(2',4'-difluoro-[1,1'-biphenyl]-4-yl)-1,3,5-triazine**
James S. Swensen, James E. Rainbolt, Liang Wang, Phillip K. Koech, Evgueni Polikarpov, Asanga B. Padmaperuma, and Daniel J. Gaspar
- 011007 Controlling charge transport in blue organic light-emitting devices by chemical functionalization of host materials**
Evgueni Polikarpov, Phillip K. Koech, Liang Wang, James S. Swensen, Lelia Cosimbescu, James E. Rainbolt, Amber L. Von Ruden, Daniel J. Gaspar, and Asanga B. Padmaperuma
- 011006 Comprehensive efficiency analysis of organic light-emitting devices**
Daniel S. Setz, Tobias D. Schmidt, Michael Flämmich, Stefan Nowy, Jörg Frischeisen, Benjamin C. Krummacher, Thomas Dobbertin, Karsten Heuser, Dirk Michaelis, Norbert Danz, Wolfgang Brütting, and Albrecht Winnacker

0110105 Numerical analysis of exciton dynamics in organic light-emitting devices and solar cells

Daniele Rezzonico, Benjamin Perucco, Evelyne Knapp, Roger Häusermann, Nils A. Reinke, Felix Müller, and Beat Ruhstaller

011004 Strategies for light extraction from surface plasmons in organic light-emitting diodes

Jörg Frischeisen, Bert J. Scholz, Benedikt J. Arndt, Tobias D. Schmidt, Robert Gehlhaar, Chihaya Adachi, and Wolfgang Brütting

011003 Highly flexible polymer light-emitting devices using carbon nanotubes as both anodes and cathodes

Zhibin Yu, Zhitian Liu, Meiliang Wang, Mingliang Sun, Gangtie Lei, and Qibing Pei

011002 Enhancing light extraction in organic light-emitting devices via hemispherical microlens arrays fabricated by soft lithography

Sang-Hyun Eom, Edward Wrzesniewski, and Jiangeng Xue

011001 Pyranilidene indene-1,3-dione derivatives as an amorphous red electroluminescence material

Aivars Vembris, Martins Porozovs, Inta Muzikante, Valdis Kokars, and Elmars Zarins

Guest Editorial: Organic Light-Emitting Materials and Devices

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Organic light-emitting diodes (OLEDs), invented by Ching Wang Tang in 1987, were a scientific curiosity initially until Richard Friend's discovery of electroluminescence from polymers. Since then, a lot of active research activities have been undertaken to develop highly luminescent and charge-carrier-transporting organic materials, as well as efficient and stable OLEDs. In the last decade, progress has been made in this active area of research, and many companies like Samsung, Sony, and others began to commercialize OLEDs for flat-panel display applications. Compared to liquid crystal displays (LCDs), OLEDs offer many advantages, such as higher contrast ratio, higher response speed for video, and lower power consumption. Today, next-generation display technology based on OLEDs is a new enabling technology that promises to eventually replace LCD-based displays. Another promising application is in the area of solid-state lighting. In order to achieve this new goal, the performance of OLEDs needs to go to the next level, with higher efficiency and longer lifetime. Further development in high-performance materials such as efficient phosphorescent emitters, stable and high-bandgap host materials, and efficient carrier-transport materials are critical to the development of OLEDs with enhanced efficiency and long-term stability. In addition, further understanding of loss and device degradation mechanism(s) is also very important. In OLEDs, almost 75% of the photons generated are lost, and novel approaches to enhance light extraction are vital for solid-state lighting applications.

Papers that address the above issues and challenges are presented in this special section, which is based on presentations given at the 2010 conference on Organic Light-Emitting Materials and Devices at the SPIE Optics and Photonics meeting held in San Diego. We believe that readers will find the results of the studies discussed in these manuscripts informative, interesting, and in some cases unexpected or surprising. We hope that you will enjoy reading these papers.