

# Monday Afternoon, November 10, 2014

## Energy Frontiers Focus Topic

Room: 315 - Session EN+EM+MN+NS+TR-MoA

## Energy Harvesting with Nanostructures

Moderator: Phillip Christopher, University of California - Riverside

2:00pm EN+EM+MN+NS+TR-MoA1 **Optical Engineering for Colloidal Quantum Dot Photovoltaics**, *Susanna Thon*, Johns Hopkins University **INVITED**

The next generation of photovoltaics seeks to improve both efficiency and cost through the use of flexible platforms and new materials. Colloidal quantum dots (CQDs), semiconductor nanoparticles synthesized from solution, are a particularly attractive material for solar energy. The bandgap of films composed of arrays of CQDs can be tuned via the quantum confinement effect for tailored spectral utilization. The performance of CQD solar cells is currently limited by an absorption-extraction compromise, whereby photon absorption lengths in the near infrared regime exceed minority carrier diffusion lengths. I will review several photonic and optical engineering schemes aimed at overcoming this compromise. These include nanophotonic and geometric light trapping techniques, as well as jointly-tuned plasmonic-excitonic photovoltaics. Additionally, I will discuss how nanoscale engineering of CQDs and related materials can lead to emergent optical properties for building color-tuned optoelectronic films.

2:40pm EN+EM+MN+NS+TR-MoA3 **Energy Transfer from Nanocrystal Quantum Dots to Si Nanomembranes Monitored via Wavelength Dependent Photocurrent Response**, *Weina Peng, S. Sampat, S. Rupich, B. Anand, H. Nguyen, D. Taylor, Y. Gartstein, Y.J. Chabal, A. Malko*, University of Texas at Dallas

We report the observation of wavelength dependent photocurrent in thin silicon nanomembranes (75 nm) coupled to colloidal CdSe/ZnS nanocrystal quantum dots (NQDs). The measurement was performed on back-gated, FET-type thin Si structures, which are functionalized with self-assembled monolayer (SAM) of ester termination groups to prevent surface oxidation and the formation of surface defect states. A thin film of nanocrystals is drop casted on the surface and an increase of photocurrent, up to several hundred nA, are recorded as a function of excitation wavelength on NQD/SAM/Si devices vs. plain SAM/Si structures. Quantitative analysis of photocurrent vs. NQD absorption spectrum allows us to ascribe the observed photocurrents to the photoexcited NQD excitons transferred to the underlying Si substrate via non-radiative and radiative energy-transfer mechanisms<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>H. M. Nguyen, O. Seitz, W. N. Peng, Y. N. Gartstein, Y. J. Chabal, and A. V. Malko, *ACS Nano* **6**, 5574 (2012).

3:40pm EN+EM+MN+NS+TR-MoA6 **Triboelectric Nanogenerator - A New Energy Technology**, *ZhongLin Wang*, Georgia Institute of Technology **INVITED**

Triboelectrification is an effect that is known to each and every one probably ever since the ancient Greek time, but it is usually taken as a negative effect and is avoided in many technologies. We have recently invented a triboelectric nanogenerator (TEG) that is used to convert mechanical energy into electricity by a conjunction of triboelectrification and electrostatic induction. As for this power generation unit, in the inner circuit, a potential is created by the triboelectric effect due to the charge transfer between two thin organic/inorganic films that exhibit opposite tribo-polarity; in the outer circuit, electrons are driven to flow between two electrodes attached on the back sides of the films in order to balance the potential. Ever since the first report of the TENG in January 2012, the output power density of TENG has been improved for five orders of magnitude within 12 months. The area power density reaches 500 W/m<sup>2</sup>, volume density reaches 490 kW/m<sup>3</sup>, and a conversion efficiency of ~50% has been demonstrated. The TENG can be applied to harvest all kind mechanical energy that is available but wasted in our daily life, such as human motion, walking, vibration, mechanical triggering, rotating tire, wind, flowing water and more. Alternatively, TENG can also be used as a self-powered sensor for actively detecting the static and dynamic processes arising from mechanical agitation using the voltage and current output signals of the TENG, respectively, with potential applications for touch pad and smart skin technologies. The TENG is possible not only for self-powered portable electronics, but also as a new energy technology with a potential of contributing to the world energy in the near future.

[1] Z.L. Wang "Triboelectric Nanogenerators as New Energy Technology for Self-Powered Systems and as Active Mechanical and Chemical Sensors", *ACS Nano* **7** (2013) 9533-9557.

[2] G. Zhu, J. Chen, T. Zhang, Q. Jing, Z. L. Wang\* "Radial-arrayed rotary electrification for high-performance triboelectric generator", *Nature Communication*, **5** (2014) 3456.

4:20pm EN+EM+MN+NS+TR-MoA8 **Conflicting Roles of Charge Traps in ETA Solar Cells: The CREM Point of View**, *Hagai Cohen*, Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel

The characterization of multi-interfacial devices commonly encounters critical difficulties due to the limited access of standard electrical probes to selected inner domains. In this respect, the XPS (x-ray photoelectron spectroscopy) based CREM (chemically resolved electrical measurements) [1] is a technique proposing particularly useful capabilities. Demonstration of internal junction fields evaluation has already been provided, as well as the direct measurement of layer-specific photovoltages in ETA (extremely thin absorber) solar cells.[2] However, the complex dynamics realized during charge separation in such cells has not yet been investigated thoroughly by CREM.

The present work focuses on this issue, showing conflicting roles of charge trap states and, specifically, their different expression under controllably varied conditions. Comparison with complementary characterization techniques is further discussed, demonstrating the unique insight provided by CREM for their interpretation.

### References

1. H. Cohen, *Appl. Phys. Lett.* **85**, 1271 (2004).

2. Y. Itzhaik, G. Hodes, H. Cohen, *J. Phys. Chem. Lett.* **2**, 2872 (2011).

4:40pm EN+EM+MN+NS+TR-MoA9 **Understanding Morphological and Structural Effect on Organic Photovoltaic Devices from Plasmonic Particles using Advanced Characterization Techniques**, *Nuradhika Herath, V. Lauter, J. Browning*, Oak Ridge National Laboratory

Organic electronics have been under intense scientific interest in recent years because of their attractive properties such as low cost fabrication processes, ability to performance under low light, and flexibility. Major achievements are based on use of new conjugated polymer and small molecules in bulk heterojunction (BHJ) devices to increase the inner donor acceptor interfaces of fully functional devices such as organic photovoltaics (OPVs) and organic light emitting devices (OLEDs). Many strategies have been introduced to enhance the power conversion efficiency (PCE) of organic electronics. Among them, one of the most promising solutions to enhance the absorption and device efficiencies of OPVs is incorporation of various metal nanoparticles (NPs). Metallic NPs enhanced the efficiency of the devices through local surface plasmonic responses (LSPR). This phenomenon reduced the recombination level of geminate excitons and increases the exciton dissociations, which enhanced the photocurrent and fill factors of devices. However, metallic NPs blended within the active layer can act as polaron traps detracting the device performances. In this study, we investigate layer and interfacial structure of small molecule (SM), *p*-DTS(FBTTh<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub> and fullerene, PC<sub>70</sub>BM system incorporated with silver (Ag) NPs, using neutron reflectometry (NR), X-ray reflectometry and Atomic Force Microscopy (AFM). We present detailed composition changes with Ag NPs concentrations along the film depth to understand morphological and dynamical effects of BHJ devices incorporated with plasmonic particles. To complement and enhance the findings from NR, we report optical properties of the samples using UV-Visible absorption and Photoluminescence spectroscopy. Our findings provide unique information and clear insights into dynamics of plasmonic organic solar cells and their future applications for further enhancement of PCE.

This research was conducted at Spallation Neutron Source and at the Center for Nanophase Materials Sciences, which is sponsored at ORNL by the Scientific User Facilities Division, Office of Basic Energy Sciences, U.S. Department of Energy.

5:00pm EN+EM+MN+NS+TR-MoA10 **Doped TiO<sub>2</sub> Based Core-Shell Structures for High Efficiency Hybrid Solar Cells**, *Jonas Weickert, J. Dorman, M. Noebels, M. Putnik, T. Pfadler*, University of Konstanz, Germany, *A. Wisnet, C. Scheu*, LMU Munich, Germany, *L. Schmidt-Mende*, University of Konstanz, Germany

Hybrid solar cells, with an inorganic/organic interface for charge separation, have been extensively investigated in the past decade in order to replace the expensive Si based technology with an inexpensive alternative. Typically, these devices incorporate a mesoporous TiO<sub>2</sub> film which is decorated with dye molecules and filled with a hole transport polymer, for example P3HT,

to conduct the electrons and holes, respectively. Recently, we have shown that the efficiency of nanowire based hybrid solar cells can be increased from ~1.8 % to 2.5 % through the formation of a Sn-doped TiO<sub>2</sub>/TiO<sub>2</sub> core-shell device created via a hydrothermal growth and subsequent TiCl<sub>4</sub> treatment. However, this surface treatment presents difficulties in creating a crystalline conformal coating, limiting the control over the extent of coating and the crystallinity, directly affecting the charge injection from the polymer into the TiO<sub>2</sub> array. In this work, we directly deposit a controllable TiO<sub>2</sub> film through atomic layer deposition to conformally coat the nanowire arrays with various thicknesses. By changing the thickness and TiO<sub>2</sub> crystallinity, we are able to engineer the energy levels at the TiO<sub>2</sub>-dye-P3HT interface due to the magnitude and position of the Fermi levels of the core and shell material, influencing the rate of charge injection and recombination. Furthermore, the crystallinity of the shell layer directly affects the amount of dye that can be absorbed on the surface of the nanostructures with a reduction in light absorption by roughly 30% from anatase to rutile TiO<sub>2</sub>. Finally, a detailed mechanism will be proposed for the device performances based on the energy level alignment between the pinned Fermi-level TiO<sub>2</sub> structure and the HOMO of the P3HT resulting in a shifting open circuit voltage based on the crystal phases. Additionally, the core-shell structures are characterized with photovoltage decay and impedance spectroscopy measurements to study the charge transport and recombination across these various interfaces.

5:20pm **EN+EM+MN+NS+TR-MoA11 Stack Numbers Dependence of the Activation Energies for Carrier Escape from and Recombination in Strain-Balanced InGaAs/GaAsP MQW**, *Atsuhiko Fukuyama, T. Ikari, K. Nishioka, T. Aihara, H. Suzuki*, University of Miyazaki, Japan, *H. Fujii, M. Sugiyama, Y. Nakano*, The University of Tokyo, Japan

Fabrication of multiple quantum well (MQWs) in an absorption layer can extend the absorption region toward a longer wavelength and enhance the short-circuit current in the solar cells. However, MQWs function as recombination centers, leading to degradation in both open-circuit voltage and fill factor. We have already reported that the increase in stack number of QW causes the degradation of carrier collection efficiency [1]. In this study, we investigate the effects of stacks number on temperature dependences of the photoluminescence (PL), photothermal (PPT) and the surface photovoltage (SPV) signals. Although the photoexcited carriers in the barrier should relax by the radiative recombination (PL), carriers can thermally escape (SPV) or non-radiatively recombine (PPT) at the same time. Therefore, the latter two methodologies give us new insights for the carrier recombination and drift through the QW.

The present strain-balanced InGaAs/GaAsP MQWs absorption layer was composed of a 7.0-nm-thick In<sub>0.25</sub>Ga<sub>0.75</sub>As well and a 10.8-nm-thick GaAs<sub>0.66</sub>P<sub>0.34</sub> barrier. All layers were grown on an *n*-type GaAs substrate using metal-organic vapor phase epitaxy. We prepared different samples with MQW stack numbers of 10, 20, 30, and 40 in the *i*-region.

All PPT and SPV spectra showed three distinctive peaks followed by a step like function. They were decomposed into inter-subband transitions expressed by the two dimensional density of states for the QW and exciton peaks [2]. Although the PL intensity decreases with increasing the temperature, signals for PPT and SPV increases. We suppose two activation energies for the process: one is that for the carrier escape from the QW and another is for the non-radiative recombination in the QW. The three rate equations were built for PL, PPT and SPV and the temperature dependences are numerically fitted to estimate the two activation energies. As a result, we have estimated the activation energy for carrier escaping from the QW is constant as 70 meV for all samples with different stacks number. This is the same as the calculated barrier height. However, the activation energy for the non-radiative recombination increases from 6 to 49 meV for the sample with 10 and 40 stacks. This means that radiative recombination increases with increasing the stack number. The carriers thermally escape from the QW again relax into next well and may contribute to increase the radiative recombination.

[1] H. Fujii et al., Jpn. J. Appl. Phys. **51**, 10ND04 (2012).

[2] M. Kondow, A. Fukuyama, and T. Ikari et al., Appl. Phys. Express **2**, 041003 (2009).

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