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### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4fb626pb>

### Journal

Applied Physics Letters, 111(22)

### ISSN

0003-6951

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### Publication Date

2017-11-27

### DOI

10.1063/1.5004669

Peer reviewed

# High-Gain Monolithic 3D CMOS Inverter using Layered Semiconductors

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We experimentally demonstrate a monolithic 3D integrated complementary metal oxide semiconductor (CMOS) inverter using layered transition metal dichalcogenide (TMD) semiconductor N-channel (NMOS) and P-channel (PMOS) MOSFETs, which are sequentially integrated on two levels. The two devices share a common gate. Molybdenum disulphide and tungsten diselenide are used as channel materials for NMOS and PMOS, respectively, with ON-to-OFF current ratio ( $I_{ON}/I_{OFF}$ ) greater than  $10^6$ , and electron and hole mobility of 37 and 236  $\text{cm}^2/\text{Vs}$ , respectively. The voltage gain of the monolithic 3D inverter is about 45 V/V at supply voltage of 1.5 V and gate length of 1  $\mu\text{m}$ . This is the highest reported gain at the smallest gate length and lowest supply voltage for any 3D integrated CMOS inverter using any layered semiconductor.

Device scaling has been essential to increase integration density in semiconductor circuits and systems with the accompanied benefits of higher speed and lower power dissipation <sup>1</sup>. With scaling, several second order effects like variability, parasitic resistance, and parasitic device and interconnect capacitance are limiting the performance of the devices, circuits and systems <sup>2</sup>. Monolithic 3-dimensional (3D) integration in which active device layers are sequentially fabricated can improve the circuit and system performance by reducing the average interconnect length and capacitance, thereby increasing the circuit speed and decreasing power dissipation <sup>3</sup>. 3D integration also enables the integration of heterogeneous active materials. To this effect, monolithic 3D integration of logic circuits, memory and sensors were demonstrated. Layered transition metal dichalcogenides (TMD) like molybdenum disulphide ( $\text{MoS}_2$ ), tungsten diselenide ( $\text{WSe}_2$ ) and so on show promising electronic and opto-electronic properties <sup>4</sup>. TMDs allow precise thickness control down to a monolayer thickness (less than a nanometer), which could potentially solve an important problem in scaled devices, i.e. variation in channel thickness in ultra-thin body devices <sup>5</sup>. Many of the TMD materials like  $\text{MoS}_2$  and  $\text{WSe}_2$  have a lower dielectric constant, which can reduce the drain-to-channel coupling and hence improve the short-channel performance of highly scaled devices <sup>6</sup>. The relative dielectric constant is  $\sim 10.7$  for bulk and reduces to  $\sim 3.4$  for monolayer thickness of  $\text{MoS}_2$ . The in-plane and out-of-plane dielectric constants of bulk  $\text{MoS}_2$  are 7.43 and 15.4, respectively, and for monolayer  $\text{MoS}_2$ , they are 1.63 and 7.36, respectively <sup>7</sup>. Transistors using  $\text{MoS}_2$  and  $\text{WSe}_2$  have shown low mobility degradation with gate-to-channel electric field even at monolayer channel thickness <sup>8-10</sup>. Field-effect hole mobility as high as  $300 \text{ cm}^2/\text{Vs}$  was reported for monolayer  $\text{WSe}_2$  MOSFET <sup>10</sup>. Hence, monolithic 3D integration using TMDs is interesting for further scaling.

In the planar complementary metal oxide semiconductor (CMOS) static logic gates, the NMOS and the PMOS transistors are placed on the same plane. The gate, source and drain electrodes are connected appropriately to form the inverter circuit as shown in Fig. 1(a). It can be seen that a pair of NMOS and PMOS devices are present in the circuit and electrically they share the same gate electrode. A typical layout for the inverter is shown in Fig. 1(b). The NMOS and the PMOS share the gate electrode. In many circuits like NAND, NOR, XOR, XNOR etc., the source and drain electrodes cannot always be shared, and must be electrically isolated in the generalized device structure as shown in Fig. 1(c). This type of shared gate 3D architecture was explored for silicon MOSFETs and FinFETs, and TMDs <sup>11,12</sup>. To date, the only monolithic 3D integration using TMDs showed a CMOS inverter voltage gain ( $\Delta V_{\text{OUT}}/\Delta V_{\text{IN}}$ ) of about 10 V/V at supply voltage ( $V_{\text{DD}}$ ) of 3 V <sup>11</sup>. In comparison to <sup>11</sup>, in

this work we have added forming gas anneal, which is used as a cleaning step after the transfer of  $WSe_2$ . Forming gas anneal was used to reduce the output conductance of the  $WSe_2$  PMOS device and hence improve the voltage gain of the CMOS inverter. In this work, we report a high-gain monolithic 3D integrated common-gate CMOS inverter using  $MoS_2$  as NMOS and  $WSe_2$  as PMOS with a peak switching gain of about 45 V/V at  $V_{DD} = 1.5$  V, which is the highest reported gain at the smallest gate length and the lowest supply voltage for any reported 3D integrated CMOS inverter using any channel material.

Device fabrication was carried out on p+ doped silicon substrate with 260 nm of silicon dioxide ( $SiO_2$ ).  $MoS_2$  and  $WSe_2$  flakes were transferred onto the substrate using mechanical exfoliation method. Flakes with 3 nm to 6 nm thickness were chosen for further device fabrication. The chosen  $MoS_2$  flakes were etched into rectangular shapes using xenon difluoride ( $XeF_2$ ) gas<sup>13</sup>. 40 nm of nickel (Ni) was evaporated and lifted-off to form the source/drain contacts to  $MoS_2$  (Fig. 2(a)). 1 nm of  $SiO_x$  was evaporated as the seeding layer and 20 nm zirconium dioxide ( $ZrO_2$ ) deposited using atomic layer deposition (ALD) at 110 °C acts as the high- $\kappa$  gate oxide (Fig. 2(b)). Fig. 2(c) shows the first layer  $MoS_2$  MOSFET with 40 nm Ni metal common gate for the  $MoS_2$  N-MOSFET in the first layer and the  $WSe_2$  P-MOSFET that will be formed on top of the first layer. Next, 20 nm of  $ZrO_2$  was deposited at 110 °C using ALD (Fig. 2(d)).  $WSe_2$  flake was transferred on top of the gate dielectric using a pick-and-place transfer method (Fig. 2(e))<sup>8</sup>. The flake was etched into a rectangular shape using  $XeF_2$  gas. At this stage, forming gas anneal was performed at 120 °C for 30 minutes. Forming gas anneal is known to remove organic residues<sup>14</sup>. Forming gas anneal helps to clean the surface of  $WSe_2$ . 10 nm of platinum (Pt) and 30 nm of gold (Au) was evaporated and lifted-off to form the S/D contacts to  $WSe_2$ . Fig. 2(g) shows the device after the gate metal formation. Fig. 2(h) shows the final device after S/D contacts are formed on  $WSe_2$ .

Fig. 3 and Fig. 4 show the  $I_D-V_G$  and  $I_D-V_D$  characteristics of representative  $MoS_2$  NMOS and  $WSe_2$  PMOS devices, respectively. The threshold voltage ( $V_T$ ) was extracted using constant current method with a current reference of  $10^{-7}$  A/ $\mu$ m. For the  $MoS_2$  NMOS,  $V_T$  was extracted to as -0.56 V. The drain current at  $V_D = 1$  V and  $V_G - V_T = 1$  V is about 10  $\mu$ A/ $\mu$ m. The  $I_{ON}/I_{OFF}$  ratio is over  $10^6$ . For the  $WSe_2$  PMOS,  $V_T$ , drain current at  $V_D = -1$  V and  $|V_G - V_T| = 1$  V, and  $I_{ON}/I_{OFF}$  ratio are about -1.48 V, 50  $\mu$ A/ $\mu$ m, and  $10^7$ , respectively. Electron field-effect mobility for  $MoS_2$  was extracted as 37  $cm^2/Vs$  and hole field-effect mobility for  $WSe_2$  was 236  $cm^2/Vs$ , which are commensurate with those reported in literature<sup>8-10,15</sup>. Contact resistance of  $MoS_2$  MOSFET is 1.45  $k\Omega\text{-}\mu$ m and that for  $WSe_2$  MOSFET is 1.04  $k\Omega\text{-}\mu$ m on each side. The peak transconductance ( $g_m$ ) for  $MoS_2$  and  $WSe_2$  MOSFETs is about 15  $\mu$ S/ $\mu$ m and 42

$\mu\text{S}/\mu\text{m}$ , respectively. The devices show excellent output saturation. The output conductance ( $g_{ds}$ ) at  $|V_G - V_T| = 1\text{ V}$  for  $\text{MoS}_2$  and  $\text{WSe}_2$  MOSFETs is less than  $1\text{ nS}/\mu\text{m}$  each. In <sup>11</sup>, the output conductance of the reported  $\text{WSe}_2$  PMOS device was about  $5\text{ }\mu\text{S}/\mu\text{m}$ . Forming gas anneal step that was added after the transfer of  $\text{WSe}_2$  helped to obtain a cleaner surface and improved the output conductance. The voltage gain for a CMOS inverter is  $(g_{mn} + g_{mp}) / (r_{on} || r_{op})$ , where  $r_o$  is the output resistance of the device and the subscripts  $n$  and  $p$  refer to the NMOS and PMOS devices, respectively <sup>16</sup>. High  $g_m$  and  $r_o$  ( $= 1 / g_{ds}$ ) are required to achieve high switching voltage gain in a CMOS inverter. Fig. 5 shows the voltage transfer characteristics and peak gain of a representative monolithic 3D integrated CMOS inverter. Highest peak gain of about  $45\text{ V/V}$  is observed at  $V_{DD} = 1.5\text{ V}$  and  $L_G = 1\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ , which is the highest gain reported at the smallest gate length and lowest supply voltage for a monolithic 3D CMOS inverter using any channel material. To use an inverter in a circuit, switching must be achieved between 0 and  $V_{DD}$ , preferably at around  $V_{DD}/2$ . The inverter shown in Fig. 5 does not switch between 0 and  $V_{DD}$  as the  $V_T$  of NMOS is negative. Hence, the noise margins for the inverter cannot be calculated. Methods like gate work function engineering <sup>17</sup>, channel doping <sup>9,16,18</sup> and local back biasing <sup>11,19</sup> can be used to achieve the correct  $V_T$  for NMOS. Fig. 6 shows the impact of substrate back-biasing ( $V_B$ ) on the performance of  $\text{MoS}_2$  NMOS and inverter. By applying a more negative back bias, the  $V_T$  of the  $\text{MoS}_2$  NMOS increases and becomes less negative. The  $V_T$  changes from  $-1.32\text{ V}$  to  $-0.45\text{ V}$  when the back bias is changed from  $-50\text{ V}$  to  $-70\text{ V}$ , respectively. The back-bias-coefficient ( $\gamma = \delta V_T / \delta V_B = C_{oxb} / C_{oxf} = t_{oxf} / t_{oxb}$ ) is about  $44\text{ mV/V}$ , where the subscripts  $oxf$  and  $oxb$  refer to the front and back oxides, respectively <sup>20</sup>. The low  $\gamma$  is due to the thick  $\text{SiO}_2$  layer and can be increased by decreasing the thickness of the  $\text{SiO}_2$  layer. Substrate back bias shifts the switching point ( $V_{IN}$  at  $V_{OUT} = V_{DD}/2$ ) of the inverter to more positive values of  $V_{IN}$  as the  $V_T$  of NMOS increases (Fig. 6(b)). The switching point shifts by about  $200\text{ mV}$  positive when the back bias changes from  $-50\text{ V}$  to  $-70\text{ V}$ . Voltage gain increases with increase in RBB (Fig. 6(c)). The voltage gains are  $26\text{ V/V}$ ,  $31\text{ V/V}$  and  $45\text{ V/V}$  at  $V_B = -50\text{ V}$ ,  $-60\text{ V}$  and  $-70\text{ V}$ , respectively. This shows that  $\text{MoS}_2$  NMOS with positive  $V_T$  can further improve the voltage gain of the monolithic 3D CMOS inverter. The inverter voltage gain is benchmarked against the other reported implementations of planar and 3D CMOS inverters <sup>11,15,16,19,21,22</sup>. Among all the reported monolithic 3D CMOS inverters using any channel materials, this work shows the highest voltage gain of  $45\text{ V/V}$ , obtained at  $V_{DD} = 1.5\text{ V}$  and  $L_G = 1\text{ }\mu\text{m}$  (Fig. 7). Previously reported implementation of  $\text{MoS}_2$ - $\text{WSe}_2$  monolithic 3D CMOS inverter showed a voltage gain of  $10\text{ V/V}$  at  $V_{DD} = 3\text{ V}$  <sup>11</sup>. Monolithic 3D CMOS inverter using  $\text{InAs}$  (NMOS) /  $\text{Ge}$  (PMOS) showed voltage gain of  $45\text{ V/V}$  at  $V_{DD} = 4\text{ V}$  and  $L_G = 1.5\text{ }\mu\text{m}$  <sup>23</sup>. CNT-based 3D CMOS inverter showed a gain of about  $8\text{ V/V}$  at  $V_{DD} = 5\text{ V}$  <sup>22</sup>. The gain of the

inverter increases with smaller channel length modulation parameter,  $\lambda$ , which is inversely proportional to the gate length ( $L_G$ ). CMOS inverters with longer  $L_G$  will show higher gain. Hence, this work shows that highest gain at the smallest gate length for a 3D CMOS inverter using any channel material.

Monolithic 3D integration is essential to increase the integration density accompanied with higher speed and lower power dissipation. We demonstrate monolithic 3D integrated CMOS inverter using layered transition metal dichalcogenides. For a monolithic 3D CMOS inverter using any layered semiconductor, we report the highest voltage gain of about 45 V/V, which is achieved at a supply voltage of 1.5 V and gate length of 1  $\mu\text{m}$ .

This work was funded by Applied Materials, Inc. and Entegris, Inc. through the I-RiCE program.

## Figure Captions

Fig. 1. (a) Planar implementation of CMOS inverter. (b) Layout of a planar CMOS inverter. (c) Monolithic 3D CMOS inverter with common gate and electrically-isolated source/drain electrodes.

Fig. 2. Device fabrication flow: (a) MoS<sub>2</sub> flake (thickness = 3.5 nm) on Si/SiO<sub>2</sub> substrate after source/drain Ni contacts; (b) after ZrO<sub>2</sub> deposition using ALD; (c) Ni top gate is formed; (d) ZrO<sub>2</sub> is deposited using ALD; (e) WSe<sub>2</sub> flake (thickness = 2.8 nm) is placed on the gate stack using dry transfer; and (f) Pt/Au contacts are formed on WSe<sub>2</sub>. Optical image of the device after (g) S/D contacts and gate formation to MoS<sub>2</sub>; and (h) Pt/Au S/D formation on WSe<sub>2</sub>. WSe<sub>2</sub> MOSFET is fabricated right on top of the MoS<sub>2</sub> MOSFET. Gate length for NMOS and PMOS is 1 μm.

Fig. 3.  $I_D$ - $V_G$  and  $I_D$ - $V_D$  characteristics of MoS<sub>2</sub> N-MOSFET

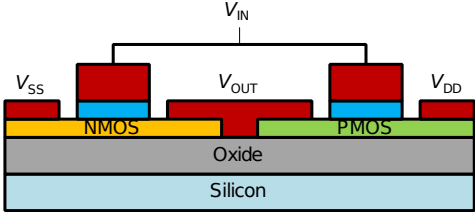
Fig. 4.  $I_D$ - $V_G$  and  $I_D$ - $V_D$  characteristics of WSe<sub>2</sub> P-MOSFET

Fig. 5. (a) Voltage transfer characteristics of the monolithic 3D CMOS inverter, and (b) Peak voltage gain as a function of supply voltage.

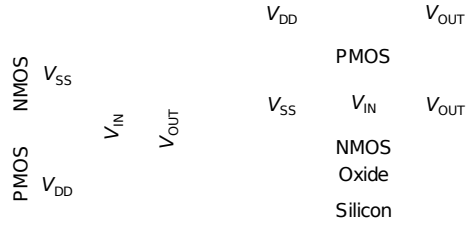
Fig. 6. (a)  $I_D$ - $V_G$  characteristics as a function of  $V_B$ . (b) Voltage transfer characteristics of a monolithic 3D CMOS inverter as a function of  $V_B$ . (c) Voltage gain of the monolithic 3D CMOS inverter as a function of  $V_B$ . (d) Current drawn from the supply voltage as a function of  $V_{IN}$ .

Fig. 7. Benchmarking of our TMD monolithic 3D CMOS inverter against other reported 3D CMOS inverters. MoS<sub>2</sub>-WSe<sub>2</sub> 3D <sup>11</sup>, InAs/Ge 3D <sup>23</sup>, and CNT 3D <sup>22</sup>.

**Figure 1**



(a)

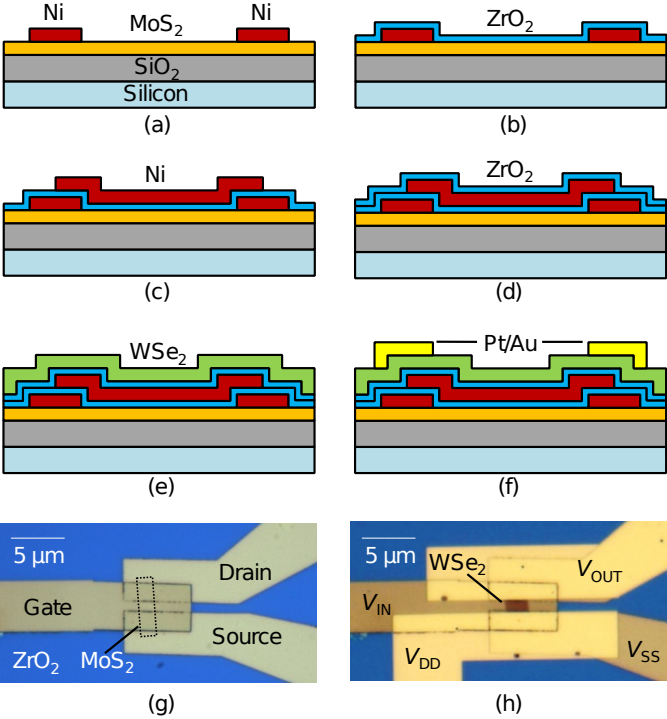


(b)

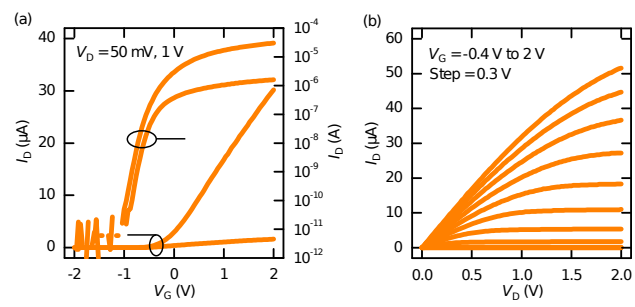
(c)



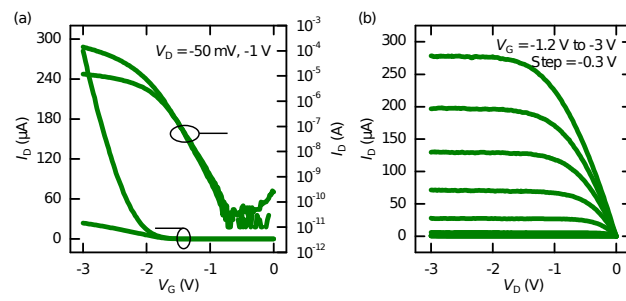
Figure 2



**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**



**Figure 5**

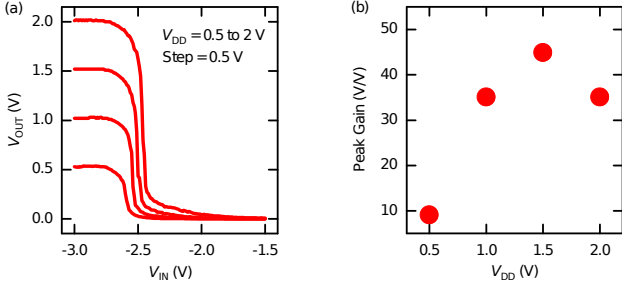
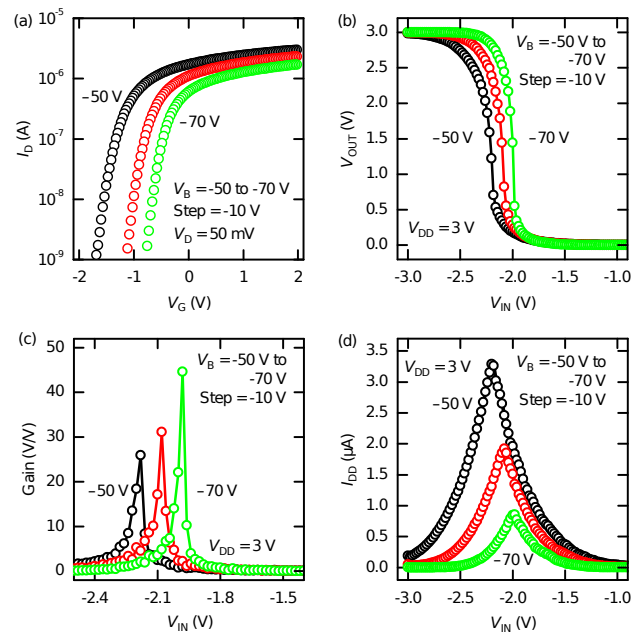
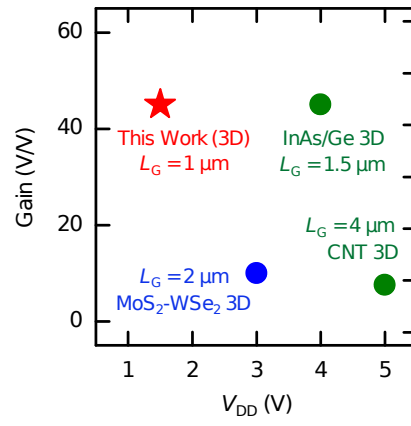


Figure 6



**Figure 7**



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