# PHOTOMASK

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**EUV Lithography - Invited Paper** 

## High-NA EUV Lithography Exposure Tool: Advantages and Program Progress

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#### **ABSTRACT**

While EUV systems equipped with a 0.33 Numerical Aperture (NA) lens are entering high volume manufacturing, ASML and ZEISS are in parallel ramping up their activities on an EUV exposure tool with an NA of 0.55.

The intent of this high-NA scanner, targeting a resolution of 8nm, is to extend Moore's law throughout the next decade. The high-NA optical system, together with the developments in mask and resist, provides an increased contrast, key to control stochastic contributions to EPE and the rate of printing defects.

A novel lens design, capable of providing the required NA, has been identified; this lens will be paired with new, faster stages and more accurate sensors enabling the tight focus and overlay control needed for future process nodes. Impact on system architecture and proposed solutions are described in this paper. In addition, we give a status update on the developments at ZEISS and ASML.

#### 1. Introduction

Up to now, commercially available EUV step & scan systems offer an NA of 0.33<sup>[1][2]</sup>, allowing 13 nm resolution for dense lines at single expose. Multiple patterning or a larger NA is required in order to facilitate further shrink. Figure 1 shows that both scenarios are considered in the long term ASML EUV product roadmap.

Stochastics control is based on three pillars: aerial image contrast, resist and dose. The first is described in section 2 as a key benefit of high-NA, where a contrast roadmap is also proposed. Improved contrast will strongly reduce the defect printability rate. We will elaborate on the involved mechanisms. For this, a stochastic resist simulator has been developed. Where traditionally Line With Roughness (LWR) and Local CDU (LCDU) are used as a measure o predict print fidelity, we will show that the photons in the centre of the printed contact hole play an important role, rather independent from the LCDU.

In order to reduce the angular range at the mask and the shadowing effects, a fully new anamorphic system needed to be developed<sup>[3]</sup>. This novel system architecture is now designed and being implemented, and its impact is described in section 3.

Based on all knowledge of the optics manufacturing process, the imaging properties of the high-NA system can be predicted. These are described in section 4. In addition, photoresist progress is discussed in section 5, as key for improving LWR (line width roughness) performance.

In order to industrialize the high-NA system, manufacturing equipment is installed all over the world. At Zeiss, optics production has started. At ASML, the first parts for the mask and wafer stages are being assembled. A status update is given in section 6.

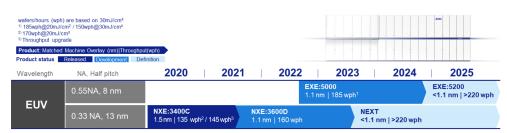


Figure 1. The current ASML EUV product roadmap.

# TAKE A LOOK INSIDE:

INDUSTRY BRIEFS
—see page 12

CALENDAR
For a list of meetings
—see page 13

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# **EDITORIAL**

# What good is it all doing? A quick look back and then forward again

Stephen Renwick, Nikon Research Corp. of America

Back in school, were you thinking that you might grow up to go out there and save the world? Or at least, did you vow to make it a better place? Sure you did. With that science or engineering degree firmly in hand, you would work on the cure for cancer, or limitless energy from clean fusion power, or the chemical breakthrough that would triple our grain production for a hungry world. A small Nobel or similar would of course be a nice token of appreciation.

Perhaps your professional career wasn't quite so glamorous as planned, but we can take credit that our own particular industry is responsible for the data-handling and worldwide communication that we all take for granted. Grandparents used to receive postcards from their grandchildren — now they see the kids on the phone. Maskmakers and lithographers didn't invent the COVID vaccine, but we can bet that said invention would have been a lot more difficult without the computing power that our industry helped to make possible.

Would you like another example? Go stand outside next to a really busy street. Take a deep breath. Did you cough, or smell a cloud of unburnt hydrocarbons? Probably not.

Automobiles touch all our lives. Consider a few not-especially-random examples. A 1973 VW Bug was the premier economy car of its day. Mine sported about fifty horsepower, accelerated as if the engine were tied to the bumper instead of powering the wheels, and got all of about 25 miles to the gallon on a good day. Fourteen years later, a 1987 Saab was bigger, considerably more comfortable, had just over a hundred horsepower, and still got about 25 miles to the gallon. Another fourteen years later, a 2001 BMW (yes, there's a trend here) was even bigger, had almost two hundred horsepower, and still returned 25 miles to the gallon. Meanwhile, the pollution coming out of the tailpipe, unburnt hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides, dropped by a factor of ten, in response to Federal regulations.

What does that have to do with photomasks? The enabling technology for that revolution in efficiency was electronic fuel injection and engine control. On the dear old Bug, the only electronics was in the radio. The Saab had a mechanical continuous fuel-injection system with electronic feedback control. The BMW had fully electronically-controlled fuel injection with a preprogrammed "map" as well as sensors for temperature, exhaust oxygen content, and fuel-air mixture, as well as electronic control of the intake and exhaust valves. Our colleagues in automotive engineering are smart folks, and made excellent use of the electronic revolution that our industry created.

That hasn't ended. As I write this, automobile companies in the US are cutting production due to a global chip shortage. Autonomous vehicles will need onboard artificial intelligence as well as fast communication. Software manages the charging and discharging of electric cars, lengthening their range and battery life.

To continue making the world a better place, our industry must supply not only leading-edge memory and logic chips, using EUV and its associated techniques, but also more and more larger-scale analog and digital electronics for machine control and artificial intelligence, challenging us to make better use of legacy technology. The Photomask Technology and co-located EUV conferences this fall will continue to explore these challenges. It's a great time to be here.



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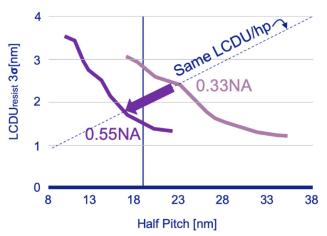


Figure 2. High-NA contrast reduces Local CDU for dense contact holes. All simulations are carried out using the same dose of 20mJ/cm<sup>2</sup>. See text for more explanation.

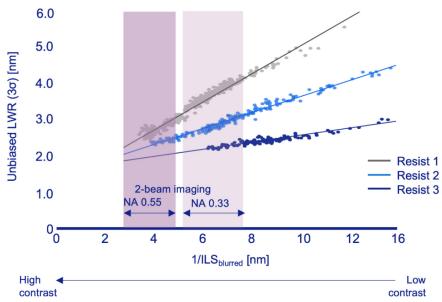


Figure 3. LWR scaling with 1/ILS extends to High-NA obtainable ILS values. The high contrast is made by printing large pitches on a 0.33NA EUV scanner. The three lines depict the behavior of three different resists.<sup>[6]</sup>

## 2. The Key Advantage of High-NA: Improving Contrast

The novel EUV system features 0.55 NA projection optics, in contrast to the 0.33NA of the preceding generation. One of the main consequences of the increased NA is that the aerial image contrast at wafer will be larger when printing the same structures. The improved contrast will help print higher resolution features and reduce the impact of photon shot noise on pattern variability and defectivity.

The role of contrast in pattern variability and defectivity will be described in section 2.1 and 2.2. Section 2.3 will describe briefly the impact of advance masks to further increase the aerial image contrast.

#### 2.1 High contrast leads to an improved LWR / LCDU

The predicted LWR is given in equation 1[4][5]

$$LWR_{3\sigma, unb} = k_4 \cdot e^{\left(\frac{\sqrt{2}\pi\sigma}{p}\right)^2} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{hv}{D_{thr}}} \cdot \frac{1}{ILS}$$

Whereby:

 $\sigma$  = resist blur [nm]

k<sub>4</sub> = contains Quantum Efficiency and absorption

 $D_{thr} = dose to clear [mJ/cm^2]$ 

ILS = image log slope [1/nm]

p = pitch [nm]

In general, a larger NA results in higher ILS, and in turn a lower LWR. This is shown in figure 2: at the same pitch, the LWR or LCDU is significantly smaller at 0.55NA compared to 0.33NA. Note that at resolutions below ~16nm, the dense contact hole arrays cannot be resolved using the 0.33NA system, leaving higher NA as the only option for single exposure.

Despite the fact that LCDU and LWR are important measures for stochastic performance, LCDU relative to the target CD is actually the relevant metric. This is depicted by the diagonal dashed line in figure 2: all points on this line have the same LCDU/CD ratio. The arrow depicts the resolution advantage (maintaining constant relative performance) of high-NA compared to 0.33NA systems.

One notable assumption is that photoresists are capable of translating the 0.55NA improved contrast into reduced LWR or LCDU. To verify this, an experiment was carried out on a 0.33 NA system where the aerial image contrast was increased deliberately for relaxed resolutions. Because of the large pitches (50.5 and 88.0 nm LS) more orders are available, resulting in higher contrast. The contrast was modified from this optimal point by varying focus and dose. Figure 3 shows that the measured LWR clearly correlates with 1/ILS as expected from equation 1, for the three different resists that were used in the experiment.

During the experiment the following conditions were used:

- Dense Lines and Spaces, pitches 50.5nm and 88.0 nm

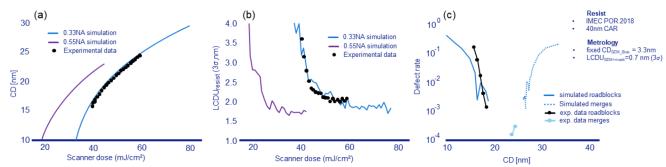


Figure 4. Stochastic resist simulations calibrated to experimental data of regular P40 contact holes printed with a CAR used as process of record at imec in 2018. Calibration included matching CD (a) and LCDU (b) for varying scanner dose. The failure rate was also simulated (c).

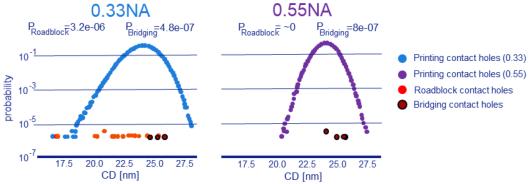


Figure 5. CD distributions for 0.33NA and 0.55NA around a target CD of 24 nm. Apart from printing contact holes that print properly (indicated by their Critical Dimension), also roadblock and bridging failures are indicated.

- Optimized illumination pupil settings to achieve highest contrast
- Contrast is reduced by varying dose & focus
- $ILS_{\mbox{\scriptsize blurred}}$  is derived from the experimental normalized dose sensitivity
- The metrology contribution to the LWR is removed (so called unbiased LWR) by subtracting the noise floor from the power spectral density (PSD) of the measured resist contours.[7]

Based on the results as shown in figure 3, we can make the following

- LWR continues to scale towards 1/ILS<sub>blurred</sub> down to ~3nm.
   All resists show the same trend, differences are due to specific resist
- Extrapolation towards  $1/ILS \rightarrow 0$  does not yield a LWR of 0, it is expected that the LWR floor is caused by chemical variability of the resist, such as local variation of the PAG and/or quencher density.

#### 2.2 High Contrast leads to a reduced defect rate

Photon shot noise and local inhomogeneities of the resist cause pattern variability, as quantified by LCDU and LWR. In extreme cases these sources of noise can also lead to patterning defects, such as missing/merging failures for contact holes, and bridges/breaks for line/spaces. For some advanced patterning applications, it can be found that these stochastic defects limit device yield more than the CD or LCDU/LWR based process windows. To compare the patterning performance of 0.55NA with 0.33NA we have used stochastic resist simulations for a fixed use-case of regular pitch 40 nm contact holes to determine expected stochastic

The CAR model used in the stochastic simulations is calibrated using CD and LCDU data through dose. As can be seen in Figure 4 both the simulated CD and LCDU match the experimental values well. For a target CD of 20 nm the dose to size was 45 mJ/cm<sup>2</sup> for 0.33NA and 33 mJ/cm<sup>2</sup> for 0.55NA. Note that the same resist model was used for both conditions, which means that the resist dose to clear is fixed. The dose to size is lower for the 0.55NA use-case, because the higher NA transmits more light from the mask to the wafer as higher diffraction orders are captured. At this target CD the LCDU goes from about 2.4 nm ( $3\sigma$ ) for 0.33NA to 1.7 nm (3 $\sigma$ ) for 0.55NA because of the higher image log slope. The predicted defect rate (Fig. 4(c)) for 0.33NA matches experimental values within an order of magnitude, despite the fact that this data was not included in the model calibration.

Stochastic defectivity is evaluated for a target CD of 24 nm. Figure 5 shows the CD distribution for the 0.33NA and 0.55NA use-case. This figure shows that the CD distribution for 0.55NA is much narrower as compared to the 0.33NA distribution. Reason for this is the higher image log slope. Furthermore, at 0.33NA we encountered both roadblock and bridging failures, indicating there is no defect free process window for this resist. For 0.55NA, we still observe a few bridging failures, but no roadblock failures at all. Because we are in this case no longer suffering from roadblock failures, the target CD can be chosen smaller to reduce the bridging failure rate accordingly. This is an encouraging result which demonstrates the effectiveness of improved optical contrast in reducing defectivity.

The reason we no longer observe any roadblock failures for the 0.55NA use-case is that the number of photons in the center of the contact hole is much higher. This is true even though the dose to size for the 0.55NA use-case is lower, because the higher NA allows the light to be focused more tightly. Figure 6 shows a quantitative comparison between the aerial image intensity of the 0.33NA and 0.55NA use-case, where the intensity has been normalized to the dose to size. The gray regions ① indicate the aerial image contrast close to the edge of the feature, relevant for the LCDU. The colored center regions @ are relevant for determining the probability of roadblock defects. As can be seen, the center region receives on average two times more photons for 0.55NA than for 0.33NA. Such a relative increase in local dose can have a significant influence on the failure rate, as also observed in experimental data<sup>[9][10]</sup>

So far, we looked at the differences when printing the same pattern with Single Exposure on both 0.33NA and 0.55NA systems. As expected, a clear advantage of the higher NA is observed. The next step is to compare the expected behavior of a pattern that is below the Single Exposure capabilities of the 0.33NA tool, so Double Exposure is needed for 0.33NA, Single Exposure is enough for 0.55NA. A dense regular CH pattern printed twice on a 0.33NA tools yields a 28nm pitch staggered CH pattern. This same pattern can be printed in one exposure with a 0.55NA lens. The aerial images of are shown in figure 7. Despite the smaller pitch on the 0.55NA system, the slope is 1.35x larger and the

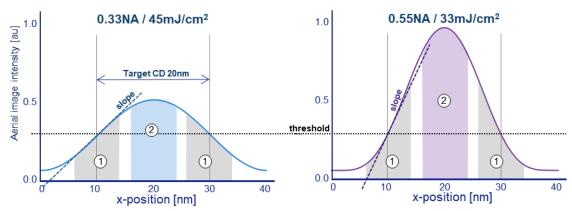


Figure 6. Normalized aerial image intensity for the two use cases. The 0.55NA use-case has significantly higher image log slope and center intensity, resulting in a lower LCDU and defect rates. The photons in the areas ① are merely determining the LCDU, where the photons in areas ② are enabling a clear developer path toward the bottom of the contact hole, and therefore determine the defect rate for roadblocks.

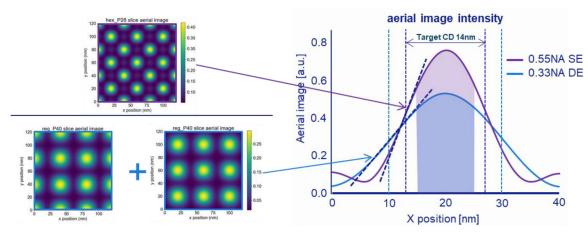


Figure 7. Normalized aerial image intensity for the two use cases. Now the 0.55NA system prints a 28nm staggered CH pattern in one go, where the 0.33NA systems needs a Double Exposure of a 40nm dense CH pattern to arrive at the same 28nm staggered pattern. The aerial image of 0.55NA case has a slope that is 1.35x larger and a number of photons in the centre of the hole that is 1.4x larger than the 0.33NA case. Based on this, a significant smaller amount of defects is expected on the Single Exposure 0.55NA pattern.

number of photons in the center of the hole is 1.4x larger than in case of the larger feature size as printed on the 0.33NA system. Based on this higher center intensity, a significantly lower defect rate is expected for the Single Exposure 0.55NA pattern.

#### 2.3 Advanced mask as a means to further improve the aerial image contrast

As can be seen in figure 2, without additional measures contrast will go down with shrinking resolution, resulting in an increase of the stochastic contribution to the imaging and edge placement error. Therefore, it is key to keep the aerial image contrast high. One way to do this is by changing the mask configuration<sup>[11]</sup>. In this context, increasing the absorption coefficient of the mask absorber or the introduction of a low-n, phase shifting absorber layer are well known methods<sup>[12]</sup>. Additional improvements are expected to come from optimized photoresists (see section 5), better post processing and the increase of the exposure dose. Also new mask multi layer stacks are being proposed<sup>[13]</sup>. Figure 8 shows the proposed contrast roadmap.

#### 3. High-NA System Architecture

The architecture of the high-NA system has been extensively described in the past<sup>[1,4][15][16]</sup> and its overall design is now finalized. We present here an overview of the main differences with respect to the 0.33NA system<sup>[17]</sup> (figure 9).

Most important to mention here is that we had to introduce a so called anamorphic lens, with different x and y magnification of resp. 4x and  $8x^{[3]}$ . As a result of the higher angles of the light on the optical

surfaces, a central obscuration was introduced<sup>[18]</sup>. A consequence of this is that the traditional Zernike description of the wave front aberrations no longer hold due to non-orthogonallity of the individual Zernikes. A better description is proposed by making use of so called Tatians<sup>[19]</sup>. As a result of the required anamorphic projection, and the desire to maintain the existing 6" mask infrastructure, a half field is printed on the wafer. To ensure that the productivity of such a system is not reduced by this, the acceleration of the mask and wafer stages had to be increased by 4x and 2x, respectively. The resulting throughput graphs for both the 0.33NA NXE:3400C and the high-NA system are depicted in figure 10.

As mentioned earlier, one of the main design constraints for the high-NA system was to keep the existing mask infrastructure in place. The main aspects of mask projection on wafer are unchanged by moving from 0.33NA to 0.55NA, however there are some differences that are important to know. The overview of the new layout is depicted in figure 11, and the overview of changed and unchanged properties is given in table 1.

Keeping the mask, wafer and optics clean is very important, so these aspects are especially considered during the design of the system. The situation around the mask is designed such that eventual particles moving towards the mask will be pushed back by a gas flow. Simulations have been done to optimize the geometry and flows in such a way that maximum suppression is ensured. At the wafer the situation is different, since the main concern is the outgassing of the resist. In this context, the gasses can potentially enter the optics and damage the optical surfaces. This is solved by maintaining an overpressure inside the projection optics that ensures sufficient suppression of contaminants. Notably, the optional DGL membrane will not impact the overall vacuum architecture of the system. In figure 12, simulation results demonstrating the required sup-



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Figure 8. Proposed roadmap to maintain the image contrast for future nodes, using high-NA and advanced mask absorbers.

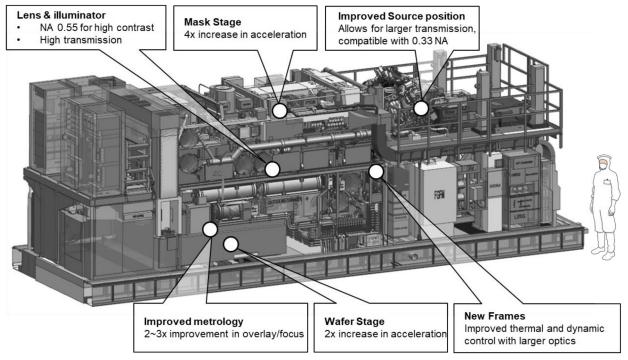


Figure 9. High-NA system architecture and highlight of the main differences with respect to the 0.33NA system.

pression are shown. Also a test setup for the experimental validation of the DLG suppression is currently being installed.

Another important change compared to the 0.33NA EUV system is the mask stage. Since the stage needs to operate at larger acceleration, the whole design has been reduced in weight significantly. This was done by, for instance, moving the cable slabs inside the vacuum<sup>[20]</sup>. However, at these large accelerations the cable slabs are likely to release particles, which need to be suppressed in order to avoid mask contamination. Simulations have been carried out to optimize a shield that suppresses these particles. Moreover, experimental validation on witness sample showed one Teflon particle after 46 h of operation. Note that the particle shield is just a first layer of protection, and a second mechanical shielding will suppress these particles even further, see figure 13.

#### 4. Expected Imaging Performance

In order to evaluate the expected imaging performance, a number of use cases have been defined. For each use case the pitches and pupil shape are defined. Importantly, the predictions of the performance are done based on the actual illuminator and source design, including the

aberrations and design tolerances. The overview of all cases (figure 14) shows that the expected outcome is well below the 10% target of CD error.

#### 5. EUV Photoresist

One of the important boundary conditions for successful continuation of EUV in high volume manufacturing into the next nodes is the availability of good photoresists. For this we evaluate the progress of the different photoresists together with partners like IMEC, PSI and CXRO. In the overview below, the z-parameter is used as a metric for the resist quality<sup>[14]</sup>.

**Z-factor** = 
$$Res^3 \cdot LWR^2 \cdot Dose$$

Note that contrast is not a term in Z-factor equation, although earlier it was demonstrated that it is of impact on the LWR or LCDU of the printed structures. For this reason, the comparison is only valid at equal contrast. To also include the effect of contrast the novel  $\mathbf{k}_4$  paradigm has been introduced<sup>[4]</sup>

Up to now, all our resist evaluations have been reported for 16nm lines and spaces  $(LS)^{[17]}$ , where a continuous improvement in the resist quality can be observed. Recently we have started using more aggressive

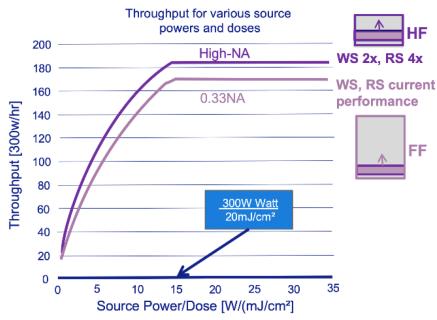


Figure 10. Throughput curves for the NXE:3400C and the high-NA system.

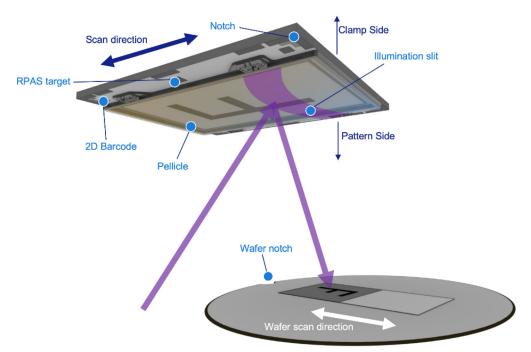


Figure 11. Definitions of the situation around the mask, main orientations of mask and wafer during printing on a 0.55NA scanner.

features to evaluate the resist: 13nm LS and 40nm staggered pillars. The first images and results are shown in figure 15.

For comparison, these results are plotted together with the 16nm LS data (figure 16). Since the resolution is present in equation 2 as a third power, the Z-factor will respond accordingly, showing an offset between the different use cases. More importantly, however, is that the descending trend continues.

#### 6. Industrialization

Recently, a lot of progress has been shown on the manufacturing of the optics at Zeiss. Mirror metrology is in place and the first interferograms of the newly manufactured mirrors have been presented[18]. In this paper, the status at ASML side is shown for some key components of the scan-

ner: the stages and the on-board optics interferometer system ILIAS<sup>[21]</sup>. Next to this, the cleanrooms to assemble the high-NA scanner are being constructed.

To be able to measure the wave front of the high-NA projection optics, the ILIAS sensor has to be redesigned. The two main drivers are: the larger angles, due to the higher NA, and the improved accuracy required. A first proto sensor has been built into an existing 0.33NA scanner, and the initial results are given in figure 17.

Furthermore, a lot of progress is being made on the development of critical components, like the wafer and mask stage (figures 18 and 18).

Dedicated manufacturing equipment is also needed to mill the large frames of the EXE:5000. In figure 20 a milling machine as installed at one of our suppliers is shown. The first demonstrators are manufactured



Table 1. Mask changes and similarities 0.55NA vs 0.33NA EUV systems.

Unchanged	Changed
Mask blank (multilayer, absorber, capping layer, substrate)	• 4x/-8y magnification (the image at the wafer is flipped in y compared to the mask image)
• Image field size at mask level (104 x 132 mm)	• Exposure Chief Ray Angle (~5.3°)
Exposure wavelength	Mask frame layout
Mask metrology Chief Ray Angle (6°)	- TIS quiet zone dimension in y
<ul> <li>Pellicle, pellicle infra- structure, pellicle relevant mask layout</li> <li>EUV pod</li> </ul>	- 45, 135° TIS (Transmission Image Sensor) RBA (Reticle Blue Align) gratings obsolete & removed
Mask backside coating	<ul> <li>Image black border size in x-direction because of larger NA in x at the mask</li> </ul>

#### Particle suppression at mask

#### Dynamic Gas Lock at wafer

#### Vessel for DLG testing

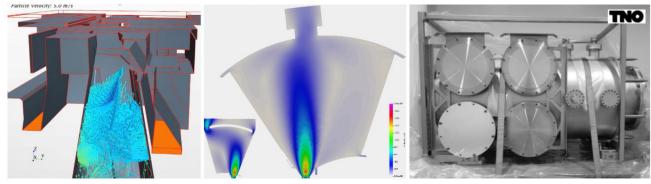


Figure 12. Particle suppression simulations at the mask (left); Equivalent Molecular Suppression simulations at the wafer; (center); Vessel for experimental validation of the molecular suppression (right).

to exhibit the capabilities of these tools.

For the final assembly, cleanrooms are being built at various locations. Note that the large reaction forces of the tool require dedicated foundation in order to ensure a sufficiently stiff fab floor, see figure 21.

#### 7. Conclusions

In order to extend Moore's law, while controlling the stochastics to feasible levels, three parameters are key: aerial image contrast, photoresist and dose. In this paper it is shown that the high-NA system delivers the increased contrast. In combination with changes in the mask absorber, the contrast can be maintained while shrinking the resolutions. The large transmission and faster stages ensure that even at larger doses the productivity of the high-NA scanner is maintained. Key benefit of the higher NA is the obtained larger contrast. It is shown that this highly contributes to defect-free printing of eg. Contact Hole arrays.

One of the main aspects is that the main mask and pellicle properties remain unchanged. There are however some smaller differences, an overview has been outlined.

The architecture of the system is ready, as well as the main design and key components. Architectural challenges are being solved and implemented

In order to industrialize the high-NA system, manufacturing equipment is installed all over the world. At Zeiss, optics production has started, and at ASML, the first parts for the mask and wafer stages are being built.

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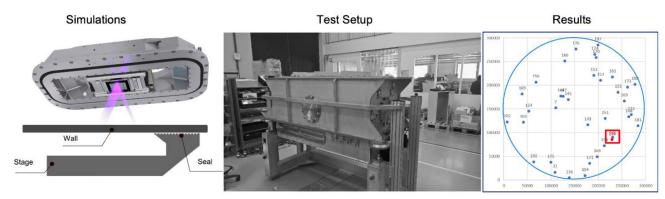


Figure 13. Avoidance of particles from cable slab in vacuum, First test results show 1 PTFE (the electrically isolating compound used in the cabled slab) particle after 46hr of operation.

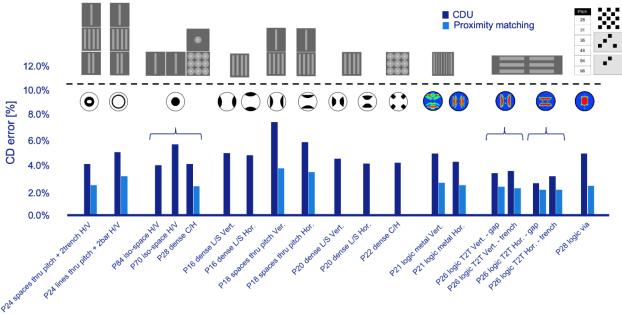


Figure 14. Overview of the critical use cases used to predict the performance of the high-NA scanner. Target specification is set at 10% of the CD of the feature. All simulations done for Ta Mask.

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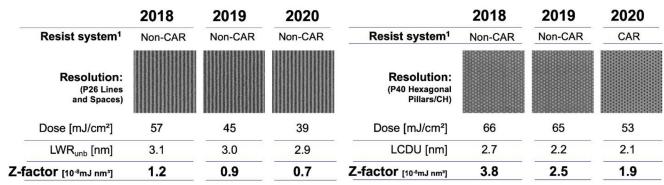


Figure 15. Continuous resist improvement for Lines/Spaces and Pillars.

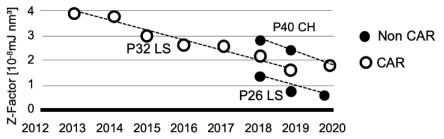
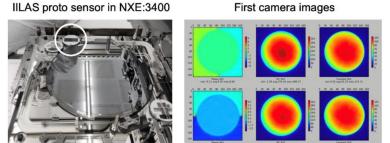


Figure 16. Continuous resist improvement for multiple use cases.



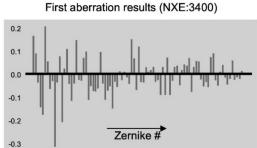
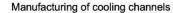


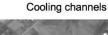
Figure 17. First images taken with high-NA ILIAS proto sensor built into NXE:3400.

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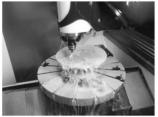
Reticle Stage design ready





First Reticle Stage short stroke







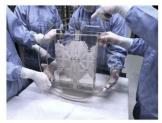


Figure 18. Progress on the mask stage short stroke module manufacturing.

#### Wafer stage design ready

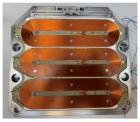
Cable slab dynamical testing

**Proto Actuator Coils** 

Mirror block manufacturing started







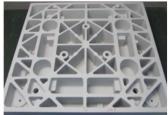


Figure 19. Wafer stage modules being manufactured.

System for final machining

Machined part of bottom frame

Rough machining of top frame







Figure 20. EXE:5000 Machining equipment for large frames.

#### 5x5m pillars for foundation

Cleanrooms being finalized in Veldhoven, NL

New clean rooms in Wilton CT







Figure 21. High-NA cleanroom: constructions in progress.



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https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/04/09/white-house-semiconductor-shortage-chips-autos/

■ News From the Front on Semiconductors: The Shortage Is Getting Worse.

https://www.barrons.com/articles/news-from-the-front-on-semiconductors-the-shortage-is-getting-worse-51618613130

■ Global Semiconductor Sales Up 14.7% Year-to-Year in February

https://www.semiconductors.org/global-semiconductor-sales-up-14-7-year-to-year-in-february/

■ How a Chip Shortage Snarled Everything From Phones to Cars

https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2021-semiconductors-chips-shortage/

■ Chip Shortage Will Last Beyond 2022 as Demand far Outstrips Supply, Intel Chief Says

https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/04/13/intel-ceo-semiconductor-chip-shortage/



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