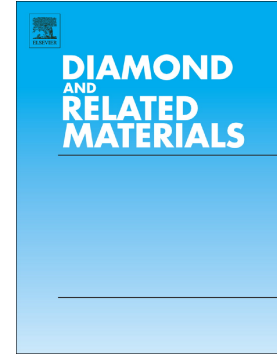


Accepted Manuscript

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PII: S0925-9635(16)30522-2
DOI: doi: [10.1016/j.diamond.2017.01.007](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.diamond.2017.01.007)
Reference: DIAMAT 6797
To appear in: *Diamond & Related Materials*
Received date: 25 September 2016
Revised date: 7 January 2017
Accepted date: 8 January 2017

Please cite this article as: A. Wiatrowski, W. Kijaszek, W.M. Posadowski, W. Oleszkiewicz, J. Jadcak, P. Kunicki, Deposition of diamond-like carbon thin films by the high power impulse magnetron sputtering method. The address for the corresponding author was captured as affiliation for all authors. Please check if appropriate. *Diamat*(2017), doi: [10.1016/j.diamond.2017.01.007](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.diamond.2017.01.007)

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Deposition of diamond-like carbon thin films by the high power impulse magnetron sputtering method

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Abstract

The goal of the conducted experiments was to evaluate if the increased density of the plasma in high-power magnetron sputtering (HiPIMS) argon discharge would give the possibility of obtaining diamond-like films with high sp^3 fraction content at room temperature. The magnetron cathode was driven by the self-designed supply. It consisted of high voltage supply, tank capacitors and a set of switches. The tank capacitors and the inductances of connecting wires formed a LC resonant circuit. As a result, each sputtering pulse (duration of 20 μ s, peak current of 1500-2200 A) was followed by the inverse pulse (duration of 25 μ s, peak current of 400-700 A), both having a sinusoidal shape. The repetition time was 3 s. The silicon substrates were placed 8 cm above the target surface. The sputtering processes of 99.99% pure graphite target were conducted in argon atmosphere at a pressure of $6-8 \times 10^{-3}$ hPa. The carbon films obtained after 400 deposition pulses had a thickness of 35 nm. The surface RMS roughness, measured using an optical profiler, was about 2 nm. The refractive index was estimated by means of ellipsometric studies to be 2.45 and 2.3 at 400 and 800 nm, respectively. The sp^3 hybridization fraction content of about 70-80% was calculated based on the analysis of Raman Scattering spectra.

Keywords

diamond-like carbon, film deposition, magnetron sputtering, HiPIMS, HPPMS

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