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(54) **DISPLAY DEVICE**

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(71) Applicant: **SONY CORPORATION**, Tokyo (JP)

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(72) Inventors: **HIROSHI FUJIMURA**, Aichi (JP);
MASUMITSU INO, Kanagawa (JP);
MITSURU ASANO, Kanagawa (JP);
AKIRA YUMOTO, Kanagawa (JP);
YUICHI IWASE, Kanagawa (JP)

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Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 13/298,960, filed on Nov. 17, 2011, now Pat. No. 8,421,349, which is a continuation of application No. 11/193,864, filed on Jul. 29, 2005, now Pat. No. 8,080,936.

least the driving film along a line

having a plurality of organic EL devices and a peripheral area having a driving circuit for the organic EL devices and surrounding the display area on the substrate; an organic insulating film covering at least the driving circuit; and a groove in the organic insulating film along a line between the display area and the peripheral area, an inorganic but not an not the organic insulating film being present in an outermost portion of the peripheral area spaced apart from the groove.

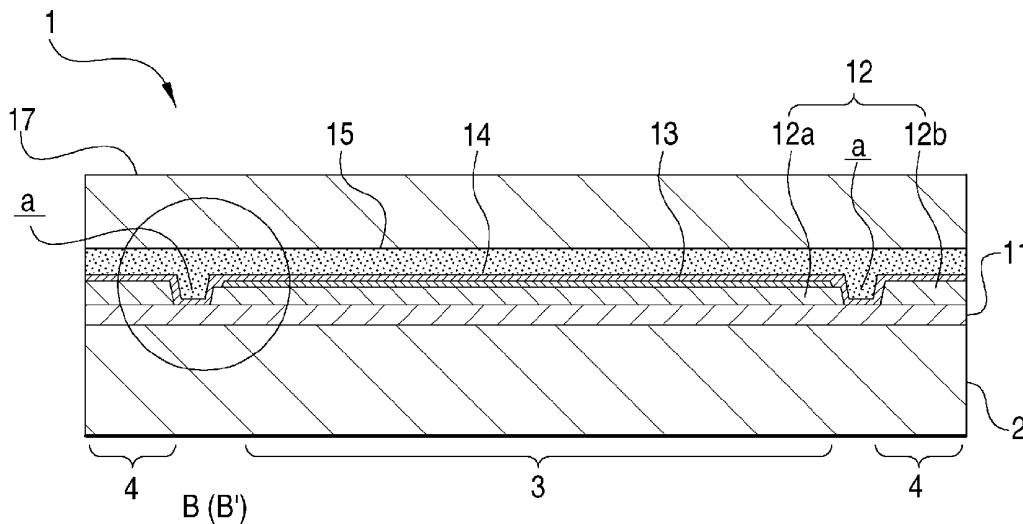


FIG. 1A

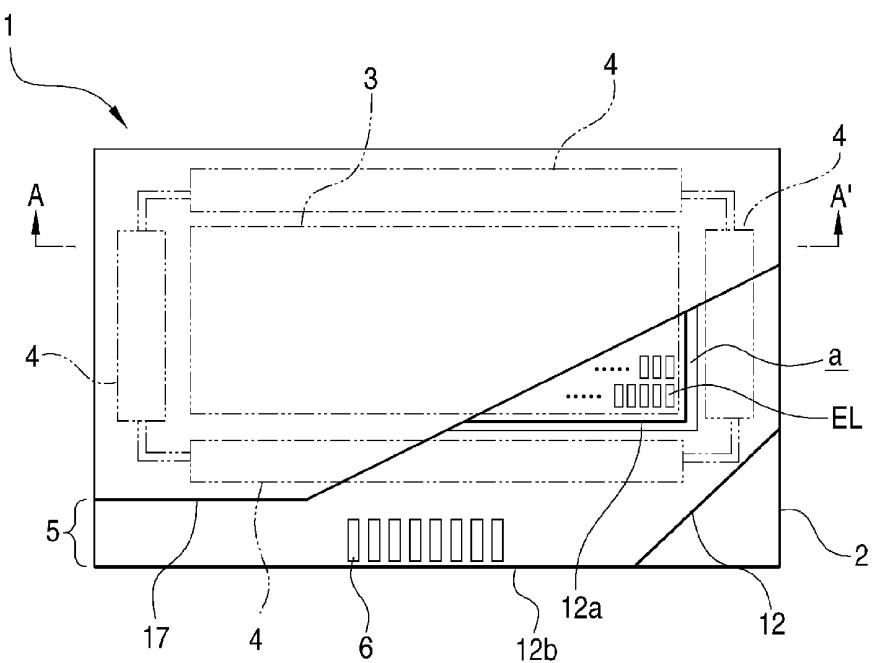


FIG. 1B

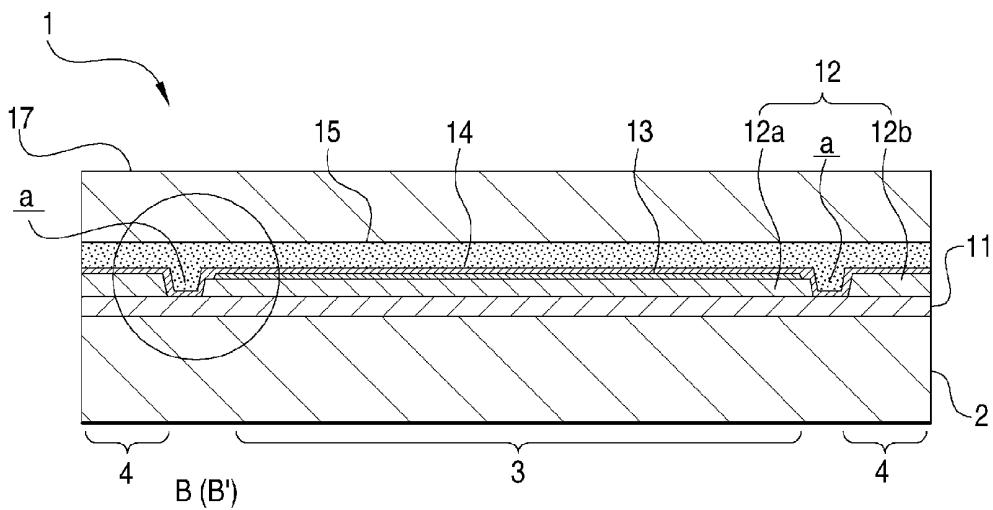


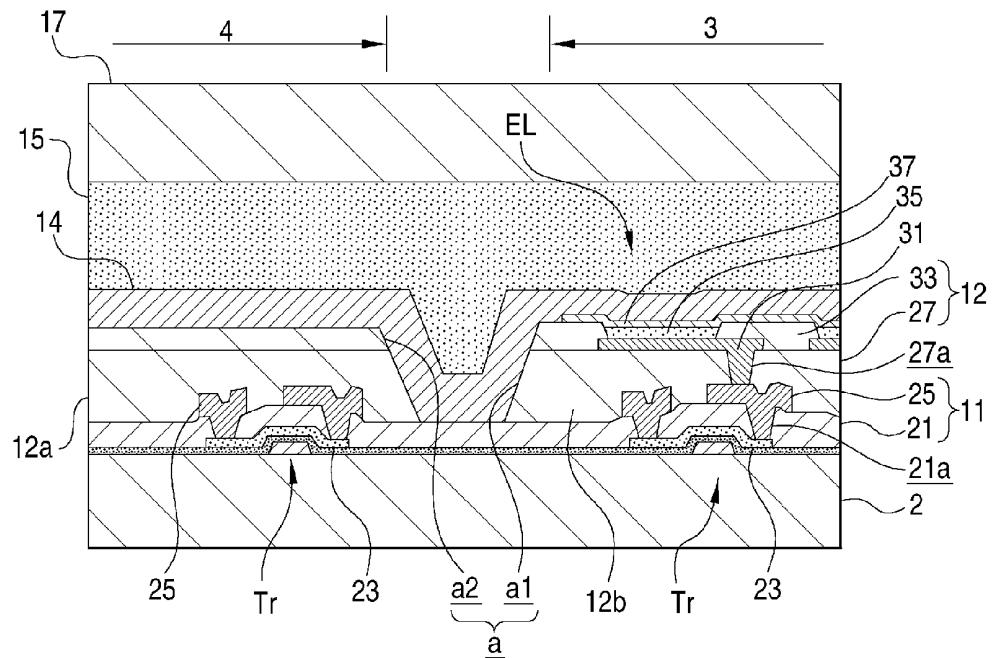
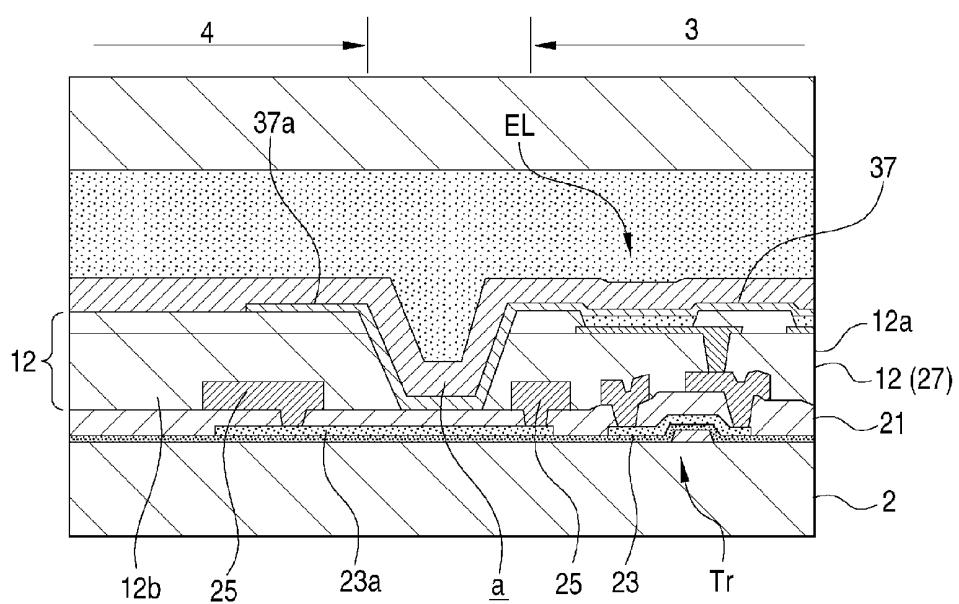
FIG. 2A**FIG. 2B**

FIG. 3A

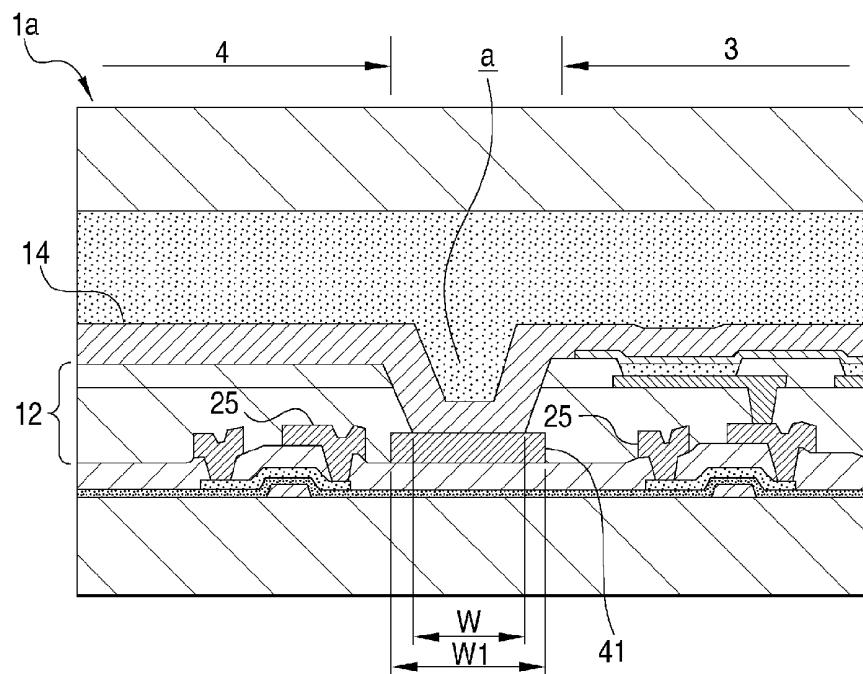


FIG. 3B

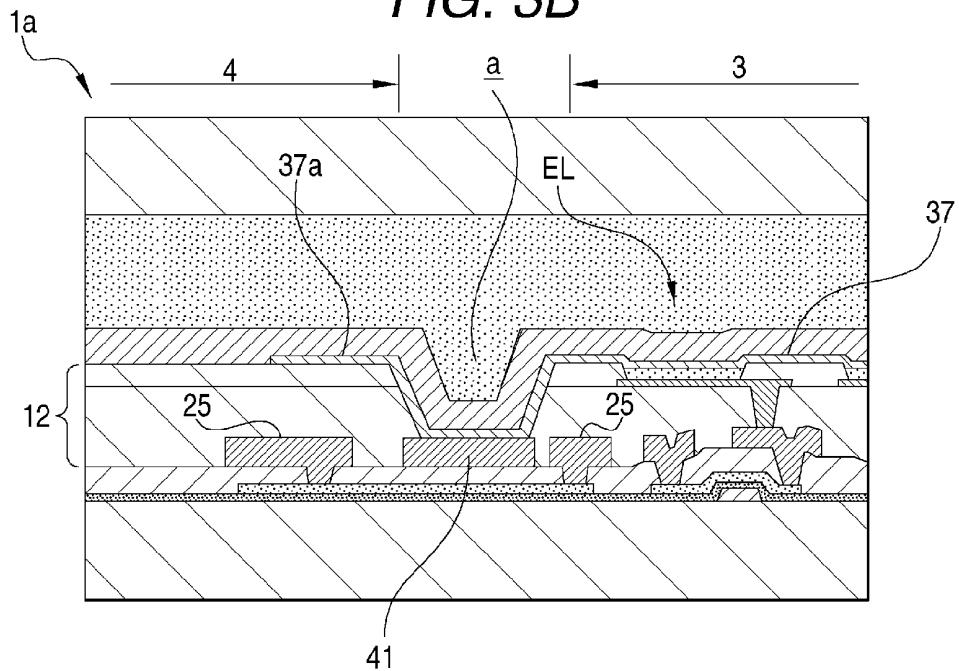


FIG. 4A

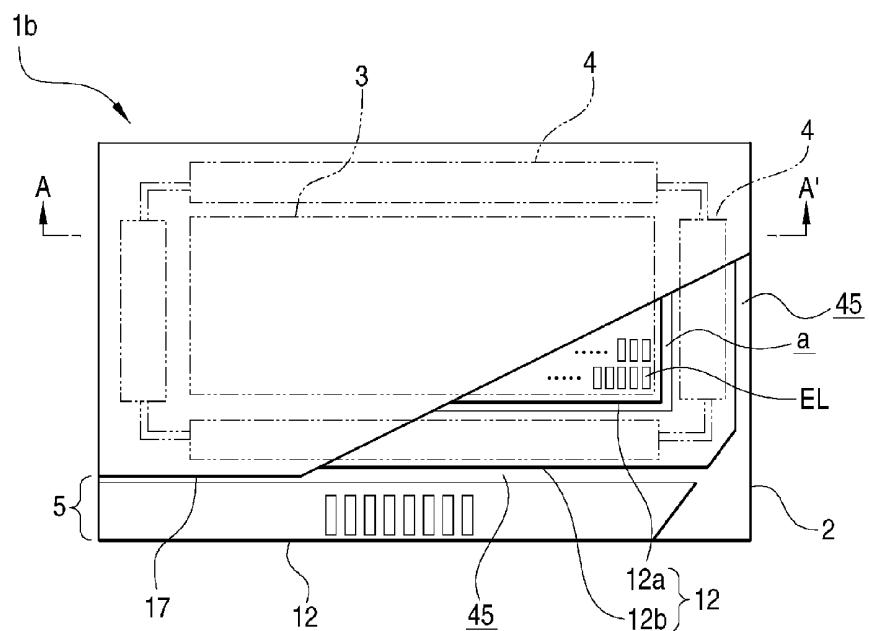


FIG. 4B

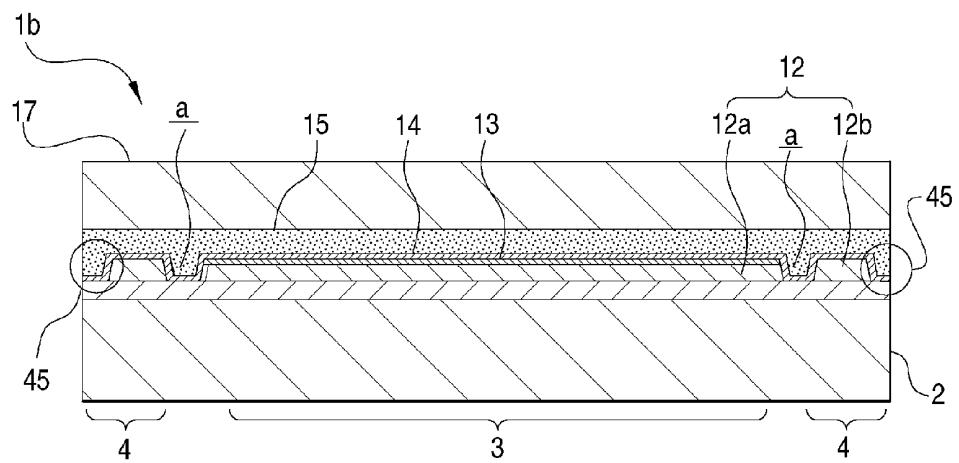


FIG. 5

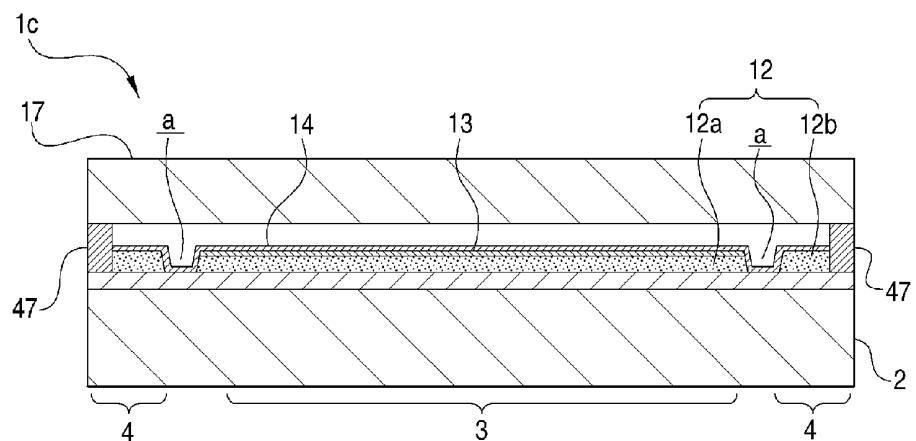


FIG. 6

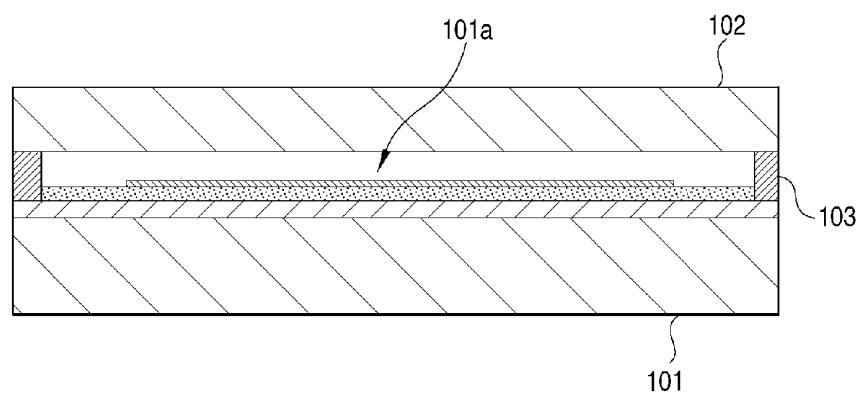
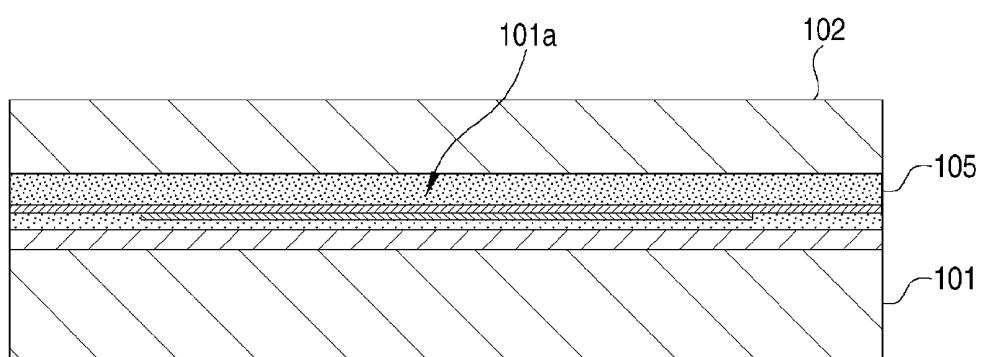


FIG. 7

DISPLAY DEVICE

RELATED APPLICATION DATA

[0001] This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/298,960, filed Nov. 17, 2011, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 11/193,864, filed Jul. 29, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 8,080,936 issued on Dec. 20, 2011, the entireties of which are incorporated herein by reference to the extent permitted by law. The present application claims priority to Japanese Patent JP2004-235125 filed in the Japanese Patent Office on Aug. 12, 2004, the entirety of which also is incorporated by reference herein to the extent permitted by law.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates to a display device and particularly relates to a display device suitable for the application to an organic EL display device.

[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0005] An organic EL device containing an organic material, electroluminescence (called EL hereinafter), is now popular as a light-emitting device, which can emit high intensity light through low-voltage direct-current driving. However, in such a device including organic EL devices (that is, an organic EL display device), moisture may deteriorate an organic layer of the device, which may lower the intensity of emitted light in each of the devices and/or may cause unstable light emission.

[0006] Conventionally as shown in FIG. 6, the organic EL devices on the substrate 101 are sealed by a cover member 102 and a sealant 103. Also, a rigid carbon film may be further provided at the outside of the sealant 103. Thus, the organic EL devices on the substrate 101 can be shielded from the outside, especially from moisture and oxygen which may cause the oxidization of the organic EL devices and prompt the deterioration of the devices (see Patent Document 1 below).

[0007] In FIG. 7, the cover member 102 is bonded via an adhesive 105 onto a device side 101a of the substrate 101 having organic EL devices and/or a circuit.

[0008] Patent Document 1: JP-A-2002-93576

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] However, in such devices, the spread of the moisture remaining within the display device is not completely prevented.

[0010] In particular, an inter-layer insulating film covering a driving circuit is made of an organic photo-sensitive material and allows water to pass through easily. Therefore, the moisture left within the display device easily spread via the inter-layer insulating film.

[0011] Accordingly, it is desirable to propose a display device which can prevent the deterioration of organic EL devices due to the spread of moisture remaining within the display device for higher long-term reliability.

[0012] According to an embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a display device including, a display area having a plurality of organic EL devices on a substrate; a peripheral area having a driving circuit for the organic EL devices and surrounding the display area on the substrate; and an organic insulating film covering at least the driving circuit,

the organic insulating film has a separating groove which divides itself into the inner part and outer part at the periphery of the display area.

[0013] In such a device, the separating groove divides the organic insulating film into the inner part and outer part. Therefore, the deterioration of the organic EL devices due to moisture in the display area can be reduced by preventing moisture in the outer part of the organic insulating film from moving into the inner part of the organic insulating film. The separating groove is preferably provided between the display area and the peripheral area, so that the moisture in the peripheral area is prevented from moving into the display area through the organic insulating film.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0014] FIGS. 1A and 1B are diagrams showing a construction of a display device of a first embodiment;

[0015] FIGS. 2A and 2B are main part enlarged section views showing a construction of the display device of the first embodiment;

[0016] FIGS. 3A and 3B are main part enlarged section views showing a construction of a display device of a second embodiment;

[0017] FIGS. 4A and 4B are diagrams showing a construction of a display device of a third embodiment;

[0018] FIG. 5 is a schematic section view showing a construction of a display device of a fourth embodiment;

[0019] FIG. 6 is a schematic section view showing a construction of a display device in the past; and

[0020] FIG. 7 is a schematic section diagram showing another construction of a display device in the past.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0021] Embodiments of a display device of the invention will be described below in detail with reference to drawings.

First Embodiment

[0022] FIG. 1A is a plan view showing a construction of a display device of a first embodiment, and FIG. 1B is a schematic section view taken at Line A-A' in FIG. 1A.

[0023] First of all, as shown in the plan view in FIG. 1A, a display device 1 is an organic EL display device including organic EL devices EL serving as light emitting elements. On a substrate (which is a supporting substrate here) 2, the display device 1 includes a display area 3, a peripheral area 4 surrounding the display area 3, and an implemented area 5. The substrate 2 is made of a transparent material such as glass. The display area 3 has a plurality of organic EL devices EL. An IC chip and/or a circuit substrate are implemented on the implemented area 5.

[0024] In the display area 3, each of pixels on the supporting substrate 2 has an organic EL device EL. When the display device 1 is an active-matrix display device, each pixel has an organic EL device and a pixel circuit (not shown) for driving the organic EL device. Each of the pixel circuits has a thin-film transistor serving as a switching element.

[0025] The peripheral area 4 surrounding the display area 3 has driving circuits (not shown) for transmitting a scan signal and/or a data signal to the organic EL devices EL. Each of the driving circuits includes a thin-film transistor. The driving circuits in the peripheral area 4 are connected to each other.

[0026] The implemented area **5** may have an array of terminals **6** for inputting an external signal to the driving circuits in the peripheral area **4**, for example.

[0027] The display device **1** including the display area **3**, peripheral area **4** and implemented area **5** as described above has the construction as shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B. In other words, a circuit-formed layer **11** (shown in the section view only) is provided on the supporting substrate **2**. The circuit-formed layer **11** has the pixel circuits in the display area **3** and driving circuits in the peripheral area **4**. An organic insulating film **12** covers the circuit-formed layer **11** on the supporting substrate **2**. Here, the organic insulating film **12** serves as a flattening insulating film.

[0028] An EL layer **13** (shown in the section view only) is provided on the surface flattened by the organic insulating film **12**. The EL layer **13** has a plurality of organic EL devices EL. An inorganic insulating film **14** (shown in the section view only) covers the organic EL devices EL (that is, EL layer **13**) in the display area **3** and peripheral area **4**. Notably, the implemented area **5** does not have the inorganic insulating film **14**.

[0029] The display area **3** and peripheral area **4** covered by the inorganic insulating film **14** further have an adhesive layer **15** (shown in the section view only). The supporting substrate **2** is bonded to an opposite substrate **17** through the adhesive layer **15** so that the organic EL devices EL in the display area **3** can be sealed. The adhesive layer **15** contains an extremely low pervious material.

[0030] In the plan view in FIG. 1A, a part of the organic insulating film **12** and opposite substrate **17** is cut out for easy description.

[0031] In the display device **1** of the first embodiment having this layer structure as described above, the organic insulating film **12** has a separating groove **a**. The separating groove **a** separates the organic insulating film **12** into an inner part **12a** and outer part **12b**.

[0032] The separating groove **a** is a groove-shaped part resulting from the complete removal of the organic insulating film **12** and at least surrounds a part of the display area **3** and preferably surrounds the entire circumference of the display area **3**. The separating groove **a** is further preferably provided between the display area **3** and the peripheral area **4** as shown in FIG. 1A.

[0033] FIG. 2A shows an enlarged section view of Part B in the schematic section diagram in FIG. 1B, and FIG. 2B shows an enlarged section view of Part B' in the schematic section view in FIG. 1B. Note that Parts B and B' overlap one another in the depth direction in FIG. 1B. Detailed layer structures of the separating groove **a** and the surrounding will be described with reference to FIGS. 1A and 1B and based on the enlarged section views in FIGS. 2A and 2B.

[0034] As shown in FIG. 2A, the display area **3** and peripheral area **4** on the supporting substrate **2** have thin-film transistors Tr included in the pixel circuit and driving circuits, and an inorganic insulating film **21** covers the thin-film transistors Tr therein. A wiring **25** is provided on the inorganic insulating film **21**. The wiring **25** is connected to a semiconductor layer included in the sources and drains of the thin-film transistors Tr through connection holes **21a** in the inorganic insulating film **21**. The thin-film transistors Tr and wiring **25** are included in the pixel circuits of the display area **3** and the driving circuits of the peripheral area **4**. These components described up to this point are included in the circuit-formed layer **11** described with reference to FIG. 1B.

[0035] A first organic insulating film **27** covers the wiring **25** on the inorganic insulating film **21**. The first organic insulating film **27** contains a photo-sensitive compound and is coated as a flattening insulating film. The first organic insulating film **27** has a separating groove **a1** between the display area **3** and the peripheral area **4** so that the display area **3** is surrounded. The separating groove **a1** is formed by lithography processing.

[0036] The display area **3** on the first organic insulating film **27** has a plurality of organic EL devices EL. The organic EL devices EL have a lower electrode **31** connecting to the wiring **25** through a connection hole **27a** in the first organic insulating film **27**. The lower electrode **31** is to be used as an anode (or cathode) and is patterned as a pixel electrode. The periphery of the lower electrode **31** is covered by a second organic insulating film **33** and is widely exposed at the center part only. The second organic insulating film **33** may contain a photo-sensitive compound, for example. Lithography processing is used to form an opening above the lower electrode **31** and a separating groove **a2** over the separating groove **a1** of the first organic insulating film **27**.

[0037] Thus, according to the first embodiment, the first organic insulating film **27** and the second organic insulating film **33** are included in the organic insulating film **12** described with reference to FIGS. 1A and 1B. The separating groove **a1** in the first organic insulating film **27** and the separating groove **a2** in the second organic insulating film **33** form the separating groove **a** described with reference to FIGS. 1A and 1B.

[0038] An organic layer **35** including a light-emitting layer at least is patterned and stacked on the lower electrodes **31** exposing from the second organic insulating film **33**. The light-emitting layer in the organic layer **35** contains an organic material, which emits light in response to the re-coupling of positive holes and electrons implanted to the light-emitting layer. An upper electrode **37** is provided on the patterned organic layer **35** and the second organic insulating film **33**. Here, the upper electrode **37** is isolated from the lower electrode **31**. The upper electrode **37** is to be used as a cathode (or anode), is provided as an electrode common to the organic EL devices EL and covers the display area **3**.

[0039] Here, the EL layer **13** described with reference to FIG. 1B is the layer having a plurality of organic EL devices EL in the construction as described above.

[0040] The inorganic insulating film **14** and adhesive layer **15** cover the organic insulating film **12** and organic EL devices EL, and the opposite substrate **17** is provided thereon.

[0041] As shown in FIG. 2B, the upper electrode **37** for the organic EL devices EL has an end extending as an upper electrode wiring **37a** in the peripheral area **4** and connecting, at predetermined positions, to the driving circuits in the peripheral area **4**. Thus, the upper electrode wiring **37a** extends to the peripheral area **4** across the separating groove **a** surrounding the display area **3**. Therefore, securing an enough thickness of the organic insulating film **12** (that is, the first organic insulating film **27**) is important for maintaining isolation between the wiring **25** in the display area **3** and the peripheral area **4** and the upper electrode wiring **37a**.

[0042] At place where the upper electrode wiring **37a** crosses the separating groove **a**, the wiring **25** in the display area **3** and the wiring **25** in the peripheral area **4** are connected through a connection wiring below the inorganic insulating film **21**. In this case, for example, the semiconductor layer part of the same layer as the semiconductor layer **23** included

in the thin-film transistors Tr may be a connection wiring 23a so that the connection wiring 23a can connect the wiring 25 in the display area 3 and the wiring 25 in the peripheral area 4. Thus, the wiring 25 in the display area 3 and the wiring 25 in the peripheral area 4 can be connected each other without a short circuit with respect to the electrode wiring 37a.

[0043] In display device 1, the separating groove a in the organic insulating film 12 surrounding the display area 3 divides the organic insulating film 12 into the inner part 12a and the outer part 12b, as described with reference to FIGS. 1A and 1B and 2A and 2B. Thus, the moisture existing in the part corresponding to the outer part 12b of the organic insulating film 12 does not enter into the inner part 12a through the organic insulating film 12. Therefore, the deterioration of the organic EL devices EL due to moisture can be prevented in the display area 3 positioned at the part covered by the inner part 12a.

[0044] In particular, the separating groove a surrounding the display area 3 and between the display area 3 and the peripheral area 4 can prevent the entry of the moisture existing in the peripheral area 4 having the driving circuits into the display area 3 through the organic insulating film 12. Therefore, even when moisture is absorbed to a foreign material (such as dust) caused in a process of manufacturing the driving circuits in the peripheral area 4, the entry of the moisture into the display area 3 can be prevented, which can further prevent the deterioration of the organic EL devices more effectively. Preferably, the separating groove a is provided surrounding the display area 3 as closely as possible to the display area 3. Thus, the volume of the inner part 12a of the organic insulating film 12 can be reduced, and the amount of moisture that reaches to the organic EL devices EL through the part can be therefore reduced.

[0045] As a result, the long-term reliability of the display device 1 can be achieved since the deterioration of the organic EL devices EL due to moisture can be prevented.

Second Embodiment

[0046] FIGS. 3A and 3B are main part enlarged section views showing features in a display device according to a second embodiment. FIG. 3A shows an enlarged section view corresponding to Part B in the schematic section view in FIG. 1B, and FIG. 3B shows an enlarged section view corresponding to Part B' in the schematic section view in FIG. 1B. A display device 1a according to the second embodiment shown in FIGS. 3A and 3B is different from the display device according to the first embodiment in that an inorganic layer 41 is provided at the bottom of the separating groove a for alleviating the degree of the level change due to the separating groove a. The other construction of the second embodiment is the same.

[0047] The inorganic layer 41 has a width W1, which is wider enough than the width W of the opening at the bottom of the separating groove a. The bottom of the separating groove a is configured to securely position on the inorganic layer 41 only so that the degree of the level change due to the separating groove a can be evenly alleviated. The inorganic layer 41 may be formed by patterning the same layer as that of the wiring 25 in the display area 3 and peripheral area 4. In this case, the inorganic layer 41 may be patterned with sufficient isolation from the wiring 25.

[0048] In particular, as shown in FIG. 3B, the upper electrode wiring 37a is connected and wired to the inorganic layer 41 containing the same material as that of the wirings 25 in the

part where the upper electrode wiring 37a extending from the upper electrode 37 for the organic EL devices EL crosses the separating groove a.

[0049] Note that the inorganic layer 41 may contain an insulating material. Also in this case, the inorganic layer 41 has the width W1, which is wider enough than the width W of the opening at the bottom of the separating groove a, and the bottom of the separating groove a is configured to securely position on the inorganic layer 41 only.

[0050] Since the separating groove a of the organic insulating film 12 is provided between the display area 3 and peripheral area 4 also in this construction, the deterioration of the organic EL devices EL due to moisture in the display area 3 can be prevented like the first embodiment.

[0051] Furthermore, this embodiment has the inorganic layer 41 at the bottom of the separating groove a so that the degree of the level change due to the separating groove a can be alleviated. Thus, the stress on the part covering the level change due to the separating groove a can be alleviated in the inorganic insulating film 14 on the organic insulating film 12. Therefore, the occurrence of a crack due to the stress can be prevented, which can prevent the entry of moisture through the crack.

[0052] The alleviation of the degree of the level change due to the separating groove a can easily secure the thickness of the upper electrode wiring 37a extending to the peripheral area 4 across the separating groove a. Thus, the increase in resistive value and/or break of the upper electrode wiring 37a can be prevented in the side walls of the separating groove a.

[0053] Notably, the inorganic layer 41 for alleviating the degree of the level change due to the separating groove a can be provided without any increase in number of steps when the inorganic layer 41 is formed by patterning the same layer as that of the wiring 25 in the display area 3 and peripheral area 4.

Third Embodiment

[0054] FIG. 4A is a plan view showing a construction of a display device according to a third embodiment, and FIG. 4B is a schematic section view taken at Line A-A' in FIG. 4A. A display device 1b shown in FIGS. 4A and 4B is different from the display devices of the embodiments above in that a sealed area 45 resulting from the removal of the organic insulating film 12 is provided in the outermost circumference of the part having the opposite substrate 17 over the supporting substrate 2, and the other construction is the same.

[0055] In other words, in the display device 1b, the separating groove a resulting from the removal of the organic insulating film 12 is provided between the display area 3 and the peripheral area 4 so that the display area 3 is surrounded. The sealed area 45 resulting from the removal of the organic insulating film 12 is provided surrounding the separating groove a and the perimeter of the peripheral area 4. The sealed area 45 is the outermost periphery of the part having the opposite substrate 17 over the supporting substrate 2 as described above. The outer part 12b of the organic insulating film 12 separated by the separating groove a has the both side walls and top face completely covered by the inorganic insulating film 14 (shown in the section view only) on the organic insulating film 12 and are sealed by the adhesive layer (shown

in the section view only). In other words, the organic insulating film **12** is not exposed to the outside in the part between the supporting substrate **2** and the opposite substrate **17**.

[0056] In display device **1b**, the deterioration of the organic EL devices EL due to moisture in the display area **3** can be prevented like the first embodiment since the separating groove **a** of the organic insulating film **12** is provided between the display area **3** and the peripheral area **4**.

[0057] Furthermore, in the display device **1b** of the third embodiment, the sealed area **45** resulting from the removal of the organic insulating film **12** and being provided at the outer edges of the supporting substrate **2** and opposite substrate **17** can prevent the entry of moisture from the outside of the display device **1b**. Thus, the deterioration of the organic EL devices EL due to moisture in the display area **3** can be more securely prevented, and the corrosion of a metallic material due to moisture, for example, can be also prevented in the peripheral area **4**.

Fourth Embodiment

[0058] FIG. 5 is a schematic section view showing a construction of a display device according to a fourth embodiment. A display device **1c** in FIG. 5 is different from the display device of the third embodiment in that a hollow part exists between the supporting substrate **2** and the opposite substrate **17**, and the other construction is the same.

[0059] In other words, in the display device **1c**, an adhesive sealant **47** is provided between the supporting substrate **2** and the opposite substrate **17** surrounding the separating groove **a** between the display area **3** and the peripheral area **4** and the perimeter of the peripheral area **4**, resulting from the removal of the organic insulating film **12**. The sealant **47** bonds the opposite substrate **17** to the supporting substrate **2** and seals the hollow part between the supporting substrate **2** and the opposite substrate **17**.

[0060] Also in the display device **1c** of the fourth embodiment, the deterioration of the organic EL devices EL due to moisture in the display area **3** can be prevented, and the reliability can be improved since the separating groove **a** of the organic insulating film **12** is provided between the display area **3** and the peripheral area **4**.

[0061] It should be understood by those skilled in the art that various modifications, combinations, sub-combinations and alterations may occur depending on design requirements and other factors insofar as they are within the scope of the appended claims or the equivalents thereof.

What is claimed is:

1. A display device comprising:
a substrate divided into a display area and peripheral area,
the display area having a plurality of light emitting devices, the peripheral area having driving circuitry for the light emitting devices, and the peripheral area surrounding the display area on the substrate; and
an organic insulating film over at least the driving circuitry;
a separation groove in the organic insulating film along a line between the display area and the peripheral area;
and
an electrode extending over the display area and the separation groove;
wherein,
the substrate has an outermost portion of the peripheral area spaced apart from the separation groove and surrounding a main portion of the peripheral area,
the organic insulating layer is not present in the outermost portion of the peripheral area, and
an inorganic insulating layer is present in the outermost portion of the peripheral area as a moisture barrier.
2. The display device of claim 1, wherein the led emitting elements are organic electroluminescent elements.
3. The display device according to claim 2, further comprising a second organic insulating film embedding the driving circuitry on the substrate.
4. The display device of claim 2, wherein the organic electroluminescent devices are on the organic insulating film.
5. The display device of claim 2, wherein the inorganic insulating layer is within a gap produced by the separating groove.
6. The display device of claim 4, wherein an upper electrode for the organic electroluminescent devices is between the organic insulating film and the inorganic insulating layer and extends to the peripheral area.
7. The display device of claim 3, wherein an upper electrode for the organic electroluminescent devices and the inorganic layer extends to the peripheral area.
8. The display device of claim 1, further comprising:
a first wiring in the display area;
a second wiring disposed in the peripheral area; and
a third wiring under the organic insulating film interconnecting the first and second wirings.
9. The display device of claim 1, wherein the inorganic insulating layer is present in the outermost portion of the peripheral area in an amount effect to serve as a moisture barrier.

* * * * *

专利名称(译)	显示设备		
公开(公告)号	US20130249385A1	公开(公告)日	2013-09-26
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[标]申请(专利权)人(译)	索尼公司		
申请(专利权)人(译)	索尼公司		
当前申请(专利权)人(译)	索尼公司		
[标]发明人	FUJIMURA HIROSHI INO MASUMITSU ASANO MITSURU YUMOTO AKIRA IWASE YUICHI		
发明人	FUJIMURA, HIROSHI INO, MASUMITSU ASANO, MITSURU YUMOTO, AKIRA IWASE, YUICHI		
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优先权	2004235125 2004-08-12 JP		
外部链接	Espacenet USPTO		

摘要(译)

一种显示装置，包括：具有显示区域的基板，所述显示区域具有多个有机EL器件；以及外围区域，所述外围区域具有用于所述有机EL器件的驱动电路并围绕所述基板上的显示区域；有机绝缘膜，至少覆盖驱动电路；沿着显示区域和周边区域之间的线在有机绝缘膜中形成凹槽，无机但不是有机绝缘膜存在于与凹槽间隔开的周边区域的最外部分中。

