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Patent Public Search | Text View

United States Patent Application Publication

20250258191

Kind Code

A1

Publication Date

August 14, 2025

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DISPOSABLE FLOW VELOCITY MEASURING DEVICE HAVING PREDETERMINED SENSITIVITY TO PRESSURE CHANGE BY USING VARIOUS TYPES OF ULTRA-THIN FILMS, AND MICROFLUIDIC DEVICE CAPABLE OF REMOVING MICRO BUBBLES INSIDE CHANNEL BY USING SUPPORT PATTERNS PROTRUDING FROM POROUS ULTRA-THIN FILM AND MANUFACTURING METHOD THEREFOR

Abstract

A disposable flow velocity measuring device including: a first panel having a flow velocity measuring structure, and having additional micro protrusion patterns formed around the flow velocity measuring structure; a second panel separated from the first panel, and including a fluid channel through which a sample passes; a porous ultra-thin film formed on a portion, at which the first panel and the second panel come in contact with each other, so that the sample passing through the fluid channel does not directly come in contact with the flow velocity measuring structure, thereby separating the first panel and the second panel and removing micro-air bubbles included in the fluid passing through the fluid channel; a non-porous ultra-thin film formed in a partial region of the porous ultra-thin film; and a negative pressure forming means for applying negative pressure in order to adsorb the first panel and the second panel.

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Appl. No.: 19/195674

Filed: April 30, 2025

Foreign Application Priority Data

KR	10-2018-0109380	Sep. 13, 2018
KR	10-2019-0000378	Jan. 02, 2019

Related U.S. Application Data

parent WO continuation PCT/KR2019/011810 20190911 PENDING child US 17144301
parent US division 18649988 20240429 parent-grant-document US 12332274 child US 19195674
parent US division 17144301 20210108 parent-grant-document US 12105116 child US 18649988

Publication Classification

Int. Cl.: G01P5/12 (20060101); B01L3/00 (20060101); G01F1/692 (20060101)

U.S. Cl.:

CPC G01P5/12 (20130101); B01L3/502707 (20130101); B01L3/502746 (20130101); G01F1/692 (20130101); B01L3/502723 (20130101); B01L2200/0684 (20130101); B01L2200/12 (20130101); B01L2300/0645 (20130101); B01L2300/0681 (20130101); B01L2300/0816 (20130101); B01L2300/0887 (20130101); B01L2300/123 (20130101); B01L2300/165 (20130101); B01L2300/1827 (20130101); B01L2400/049 (20130101); B01L2400/086 (20130101)

Background/Summary

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS [0001] This application is a Divisional Application of U.S. application Ser. No. 18/649,988 filed on Apr. 29, 2024, which is Divisional Application of U.S. application Ser. No. 17/144,301 filed on Jan. 8, 2021, which claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a) to Korean Patent Application No. 10-2018-0109380 filed on Sep. 13, 2018 and Korean Patent Application No. 10-2019-0000378 filed on Jan. 2, 2019, the entire disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] The present invention relates to a disposable flow velocity measuring device with a structure which can be separated using various types of ultra-thin films.

[0003] Further, the present invention relates to a microfluidic device capable of removing micro bubbles inside a channel using a support pattern protruding from a porous ultra-thin film and a manufacturing method therefor.

BACKGROUND ART

[0004] Recently, a method for measuring a flow velocity of a fluid in a micro-fluid structure generally uses a structure in which measuring sensors are disposed at both ends and a heater is located therebetween.

[0005] A measurement principle thereof is that a fluid on a heater has a higher temperature than a fluid around the heater so that when the fluid does not flow, the fluids in channels of two measurement parts on both sides of the heater have the same temperature, but when fluid flows through the channel, a temperature measured by a temperature measurement sensor at the back of the heater and a temperature measured by a temperature measurement sensor in front of the heater

are different, which causes a resistance difference of both measurement sensors by the temperature difference and is electrically measured to measure a flow velocity of the fluid.

[0006] In the related art technology, most fluid flow velocity measuring devices generally have an integrated structure in which a channel of the fluid, a heater, and a measurement sensor are manufactured in one structure.

[0007] For this reason, it is generally difficult to manufacture the fluid flow velocity measuring device and the fluid flow velocity measuring device is expensive. Specifically, when a biosample is used, the device cannot be reused and must be used only once and then discarded so that there is a serious problem of waste in terms of cost.

[0008] Among them, the micro-fluid flow velocity measuring device is too expensive to be discarded after one-time use.

[0009] Further, in the case of the fluid flow velocity measuring device which is currently being commercialized, a measurable range of the flow velocity may be limited depending on a cross-sectional area of a channel through which the fluid flows and a structure of a heater and a measurement unit which measure a flow velocity.

[0010] Accordingly, there is a disadvantage in that a flow velocity measurement range which is measurable for every fluid flow velocity measuring device is limited.

[0011] In the meantime, blockage of bubbles or air formed in a micro-channel in the microfluidic device may affect the performance degradation of the device.

[0012] For example, air bubbles trapped in a major channel part of a chip which performs various functions, such as a micro polymerized chain reaction (PCR), a chip-based cell culture, cell separation, particle separation, a micro-fluid pump, a micro-fluid mixer, or a fluid sensor, degrade a unique function of the chip and cause the efficiency degradation.

[0013] Accordingly, a function which discharges air bubbles introduced during the usage of the chip to the outside in real time is essentially requested.

DISCLOSURE

Technical Problem

[0014] An object of the present invention is to provide a disposable flow velocity measuring device which is capable of removing micro air bubbles generated in a fluid channel and stably maintaining a structure of the fluid channel even in a heat caused by a heater or an electrode of the flow velocity measuring device.

[0015] Further, an object of the present invention is to provide a disposable flow velocity measuring device which removes a residual space between a heater and a measurement electrode of the flow velocity measuring device and an ultra-thin film so that there is no space which is changed according to the pressure to have a constant sensitivity for flow velocity measurement and be stable.

[0016] Further, an object of the present invention is to provide a microfluidic device which discharges air bubbles flowing during the usage of the chip in the devices, such as sensor, separation, measurement, cell culture, and analysis based on a microfluidic technique, to the outside of the chip in real time to prevent the interruption of the flow of the fluid in the channel or the micro bubble from occupying a volume to be occupied by the fluid, to significantly improve the efficiency of a specific function such as analysis, separation, or measurement.

[0017] Further, an object of the present invention is to provide a manufacturing method for a microfluidic device which discharges air bubbles trapped in a major channel part of a chip which performs various functions, such as a micro polymerized chain reaction (PCR), a chip-based cell culture, cell separation, particle separation, a micro-fluid pump, a micro-fluid mixer, or a fluid sensor, in real time to improve a unique function and an efficiency of the chip.

Technical Solution

[0018] In order to achieve the above-described objects, the present invention provides a disposable flow velocity measuring device including: a first panel having a flow velocity measuring structure

for measuring a flow velocity of fluid and having additional micro protrusion patterns around the flow velocity measuring structure; a second panel separated from the first panel and including a fluid channel through which a sample passes; a porous ultra-thin film formed on a portion at which the first panel and the second panel come in contact with each other so that the sample passing through the fluid channel does not directly come in contact with the flow velocity measuring structure, thereby separating the first panel and the second panel and removing micro air bubbles included in the fluid passing through the fluid channel; a non-porous ultra-thin film formed in a partial region of the porous ultra-thin film; and a negative pressure forming unit which applies a negative pressure to adsorb the first panel and the second panel.

[0019] Further, in order to achieve the above-described objects, the present invention provides an upper channel including a microfluidic channel through which fluid passes; a porous ultra-thin film which is attached on a lower surface of the microfluidic channel to be integrated with the upper panel and includes a support pattern protruding to remove micro bubbles included in fluid passing through the microfluidic channel in real time; a lower panel which is in contact with lower surfaces of the upper panel and the porous ultra-thin film; and a negative pressure forming unit which forms a negative pressure between the microfluidic channel to which the porous ultra-thin film is attached and the lower panel.

Advantageous Effects

[0020] As described above, according to the present invention, micro air bubbles generated in a fluid channel may be removed and a structure of the fluid channel may be stably maintained even in the heat due to the heater or the electrode of the flow velocity measuring device.

[0021] Further, a residual space between a heater and a measurement electrode of the flow velocity measuring device and an ultra-thin film is removed so that there is no space which is changed according to the pressure to provide a disposable flow velocity measuring device which has a constant sensitivity for flow velocity measurement and is stable.

[0022] Further, micro bubbles generated in a fluid channel of devices such as sensor, separation, measurement, cell culture, and analysis based on a microfluidic technique are removed to prevent the interruption of the flow of the fluid in the channel or the micro bubble from occupying a volume to be occupied by the fluid, to significantly improve the efficiency of a specific function such as analysis, separation, or measurement.

[0023] Further, the bubbles in the fluid are removed by the microfluidic device in real time to simultaneously remove the bubbles in the fluid and drive the device so that a separate device for removing the bubbles is not necessary, which is very advantageous in terms of the cost, as compared with the related art.

[0024] A structure which removes the bubbles in the fluid is simple to be easily manufactured and massively produced, thereby being widely used for various techniques.

Description

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0025] FIG. 1 is an exploded perspective view of a disposable flow velocity measuring device of the present invention.

[0026] FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view of a disposable flow velocity measuring device of the present invention illustrating a state in which a first panel and a second panel are separated.

[0027] FIG. 3 is a combined cross-sectional view of a disposable flow velocity measuring device of the present invention.

[0028] FIGS. 4 and 5 are enlarged cross-sectional views for explaining a function of a disposable flow velocity measuring device of the present invention.

[0029] FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional view for explaining a problem of the related art.

[0030] FIG. 7 is a graph illustrating a change of a measurement sensitivity according to a pressure in the related art of FIG. 6.

[0031] FIG. 8 is a graph illustrating a change of a measurement sensitivity according to a pressure in the present invention.

[0032] FIGS. 9 and 10 are photographs obtained by directly manufacturing an embodiment of the present invention.

[0033] FIG. 11 is an exploded perspective view illustrating an embodiment of a microfluidic device of the present invention in which micro bubbles in a channel can be removed.

[0034] FIG. 12 is a combined perspective view of an embodiment illustrated in FIG. 11.

[0035] FIG. 13 is a cross-sectional view separately illustrating an upper panel and a lower panel of a microfluidic device of the present invention.

[0036] FIG. 14 is a cross-sectional view taken along the line A-A' of FIG. 12.

[0037] FIG. 15 is an enlarged cross-sectional view of a main part of a microfluidic device of the present invention.

[0038] FIG. 16 is a cross-sectional view illustrating another embodiment of a microfluidic device of the present invention.

[0039] FIG. 17 is a cross-sectional view illustrating a process sequence of a manufacturing method of a microfluidic device of the present invention.

MODES OF THE INVENTION

[0040] In order to achieve the above-described objects, the present invention provides a disposable flow velocity measuring device including: a first panel having a flow velocity measuring structure for measuring a flow velocity of fluid and having additional micro protrusion patterns around the flow velocity measuring structure; a second panel separated from the first panel and including a fluid channel through which a sample passes; a porous ultra-thin film formed on a portion at which the first panel and the second panel come in contact with each other so that the sample passing through the fluid channel does not directly come in contact with the flow velocity measuring structure, thereby separating the first panel and the second panel and removing micro air bubbles included in the fluid passing through the fluid channel; a non-porous ultra-thin film formed in a partial region of the porous ultra-thin film; and a negative pressure forming unit which applies a negative pressure to adsorb the first panel and the second panel.

[0041] Further, in order to achieve the above-described objects, the present invention provides an upper channel including a microfluidic channel through which fluid passes; a porous ultra-thin film which is attached on a lower surface of the microfluidic channel to be integrated with the upper panel and includes a support pattern protruding to remove micro bubbles included in fluid passing through the microfluidic channel in real time; a lower panel which is in contact with lower surfaces of the upper panel and the porous ultra-thin film; and a negative pressure forming unit which forms a negative pressure between the microfluidic channel to which the porous ultra-thin film is attached and the lower panel.

BEST MODE

[0042] FIG. 1 is an exploded perspective view of a disposable flow velocity measuring device of the present invention, FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view of a disposable flow velocity measuring device of the present invention illustrating a state in which a first panel and a second panel are separated, and FIG. 3 is a combined cross-sectional view of a disposable flow velocity measuring device of the present invention.

[0043] A disposable flow velocity measuring device of the present invention includes a first panel **100** in which flow velocity measuring structures **110**, **120**, **130** for measuring a flow velocity of fluid are formed and a micro protrusion pattern **140** is added around the flow velocity measuring structures and a second panel **200** which is separated from the first panel **100** and includes a microfluid channel **210** through which a sample passes.

[0044] Further, a porous ultra-thin film **300** is formed at a portion at which the first panel **100** and

the second panel **200** come in contact with each other so that the sample passing through the micro-fluid channel does not directly come in contact with the flow velocity measuring structures to separate the first panel **100** and the second panel and remove the micro air bubbles included in the fluid passing through the fluid channel.

[0045] Further, a non-porous ultra-thin film **310** which is formed in a partial region of the porous ultra-thin film **300** with a material different from the porous ultra-thin film and a negative pressure forming means which applies a negative pressure to adsorb the first panel **100** and the second panel **200** are provided.

[0046] As described above, according to the present invention, the first panel **100** for measuring a flow velocity of the fluid and the second panel **200** through which the sample passes are separately configured and the porous ultra-thin film **300** is configured at a portion at which the first panel **100** and the second panel **200** come in contact with each other so that it is advantageous in that the first panel **100** including the flow velocity measuring structure may be permanently used.

[0047] The flow velocity measuring structure installed in the first panel **100** includes a heater **110** which applies heat to the sample passing through the micro-fluid channel and two temperature measurement electrodes **120** and **130** which are installed in front and back of the heater **110** to measure a resistance difference according to the temperature change of the sample when the temperature of the sample rises by the heat generated from the heater **110**.

[0048] That is, a first temperature measurement electrode **120** is installed at one side of the heater **110** and a second temperature measurement electrode **130** is installed at the other side of the heater **110** so that the temperature measurement electrodes are installed in front and back of the heater **110** in a direction where the sample flows. Therefore, when the temperature of the sample which passes through the micro-fluid channel **210** of the second panel **200** is increased due to the heat generated in the heater **110**, the resistance difference according to the temperature change of the sample is measured.

[0049] In this case, various structures and shapes are applicable to the heater **110** and the temperature measurement electrodes **120** and **130** and as long as a configuration can measure a temperature of the sample, the configuration is not limited to the structure illustrated in the drawings of the present invention.

[0050] Here, the first panel **100** of the present invention has a micro protrusion pattern **140** formed around the flow velocity measuring structure.

[0051] The micro protrusion pattern **140** is formed with a height of several micrometers on a surface of the first panel **100** to form a space with several micrometers between the porous ultra-thin film **300** and the first panel **100** and provides a passage through which micro air bubbles passing through the porous ultra-thin film **300** are smoothly leaked to the outside through the space.

[0052] In this case, the micro protrusion pattern **140** is desirably formed to have a height of 3 to 7 μm and the micro protrusion patterns **140** may be integrally formed on the surface of the first panel **100** or formed by attaching a patterned ultra-thin film.

[0053] As a method for integrally forming the micro protrusion patterns **140** on the surface of the first panel **100**, a known technique can be applied so that a detailed description thereof will be omitted.

[0054] In the meantime, the second panel **200** includes a micro-fluid channel through which the sample flows. The micro-fluid channel may be configured to include a fluid inlet **220** through which the sample is injected, a fluid channel **210** through which the sample flowing from the fluid inlet **220** flows, and a fluid outlet **230** through which the sample flowing through the fluid channel **210** is discharged.

[0055] In the embodiment of the present invention, the fluid inlet **220** and the fluid outlet **230** are formed to communicate with an upper surface of the second panel **200** and lower ends of the fluid inlet **220** and the fluid outlet **230** are connected by the fluid channel **210** so that the flow of the

sample is performed with a shape of “U”.

[0056] However, the position where the fluid inlet **220** and the fluid outlet **230** are formed is not limited thereto and in some cases, the fluid inlet **220** and the fluid outlet **230** may be formed to communicate with a side surface of the second panel **200**.

[0057] The present invention has a structure in which the micro air bubbles included in the fluid which passes through the fluid channel may be leaked through the porous ultra-thin film **300**.

[0058] The porous ultra-thin film **300** is attached onto a lower surface of the micro-fluid channel **210** to remove micro air bubbles included in the fluid which passes through the micro-fluid channel **210**.

[0059] The porous ultra-thin film **300** has hydrophobicity so as not to pass the fluid flowing through the micro-fluid channel **210** but pass only the micro air bubbles included in the fluid to be leaked to the first panel **100**.

[0060] That is, when the fluid passes on the porous ultra-thin film **300** while flowing through the micro-fluid channel **210**, since the ultra-thin film **300** has hydrophobicity, the fluid flowing through the micro-fluid channel **210** flows as it is without being leaked through pores of the porous ultra-thin film **300**.

[0061] In contrast, the micro air bubbles in the fluid are leaked through the pores of the porous ultra-thin film **300** having hydrophobicity.

[0062] In the present invention, the porous ultra-thin film **300** is formed of a hydrophobic material or may have hydrophobicity by processing the surface of the porous ultra-thin film **300** with a hydrophobic material.

[0063] As the porous ultra-thin film **300**, various materials such as glass, polymer, or paper are applicable and for example, the porous ultra-thin film may include at least one material selected from the group consisting of polydimethyl siloxane (PDMS), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polyimide (PI), polypropylene (PP), poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA), polycaprolactone, polystyrene, propylene carbonate, ethylene carbonate, dimethylcarbonate, diethylcarbonate, polymer plastic, glass, paper, and ceramics.

[0064] In the present invention, polydimethyl siloxane (PDMS) is applied as the porous ultra-thin film **300**.

[0065] The micro air bubbles leaked through the porous ultra-thin film **300** are gathered on the first panel **100** so that a passage needs to be prepared in the first panel **100** to discharge the micro air bubbles to the outside.

[0066] To this end, in the present invention, micro protrusion patterns **140** are formed to protrude on the surface of the first panel **100** with a predetermined interval.

[0067] In the meantime, in the present invention, a non-porous ultra-thin film **310** which is formed of a material different from that of the porous ultra-thin film is formed in a partial region of the porous ultra-thin film **300**.

[0068] Here, the non-porous ultra-thin film **310** is located above the heater and two measurement electrodes. As described above, the non-porous ultra-thin film **310** is installed above the porous ultra-thin film **300** corresponding to the position of the flow velocity measuring structure so that a two-layered ultra-thin film is configured.

[0069] When the porous ultra-thin film **300** is located above the heater and two measurement electrodes, the porous ultra-thin film **300** expands by the heat of the heater to pass not only the air bubbles, but also the fluid, which causes the loss of the sample fluid injected through the fluid inlet. Therefore, in order to solve this problem, the non-porous ultra-thin film **310** may be formed of various materials having a property which prevents the air bubbles and the fluid from passing therethrough.

[0070] For example, the non-porous ultra-thin film may be formed of polydimethyl siloxane (PDMS), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polyimide (PI), polypropylene (PP), poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA), polycaprolactone, polystyrene, propylene carbonate, ethylene carbonate,

dimethylcarbonate, diethylcarbonate, polymer plastic, glass, paper, and ceramics.

[0071] Unlike the porous ultra-thin film **300**, the non-porous ultra-thin film **310** has a characteristic in that pores are not formed so that even though heat of the heater is applied, the non-porous ultra-thin film may completely prevent the air bubbles or fluid from passing through the ultra-thin film.

[0072] Desirably, the non-porous ultra-thin film **310** may be formed of a PET material.

[0073] Here, in the first panel **100** corresponding to the position of the non-porous ultra-thin film **310**, the flow velocity measuring structure is provided, so that as illustrated in FIG. **1**, the micro protrusion pattern **140** is omitted.

[0074] Further, the first panel **100** is installed to be in contact with the lower surfaces of the second panel **200** and the porous ultra-thin film **300**, is attached to the micro-fluid channel **210** to which the porous ultra-thin film **300** is attached in a vacuum state, and includes a passage through which the micro air bubbles leaked through the porous ultra-thin film **300** is discharged to the outside.

[0075] In order to attach the micro-fluid channel **210** with the porous ultra-thin film **300** attached thereto and the first panel **100** in a vacuum state, in the present invention, a negative pressure forming unit which applies a vacuum is included.

[0076] Here, the negative pressure forming unit includes a negative pressure forming groove **240** formed on a lower surface of the second panel **200**, a vacuum suction unit **250** which communicates with the negative pressure forming groove **240** to apply the vacuum to the negative pressure forming groove **240** to attach the micro-fluid channel **210** with the porous ultra-thin film **300** attached thereto to the first panel **100** in a vacuum state.

[0077] The negative pressure forming groove **240** is formed to enclose the micro-fluid channel **210** and the porous ultra-thin film **300**.

[0078] That is, as illustrated in FIG. **1**, the negative pressure forming groove **240** may be desirably formed with a quadrangular shape to include all the areas where the micro-fluid channel **210** and the porous ultra-thin film **300** are formed.

[0079] The vacuum suction unit **250** is formed such that both ends communicate with an upper surface or a side surface of the negative pressure forming groove **240** and the second panel **200** and is connected to an external device to apply the vacuum. Therefore, an air layer between the first panel **100** and the second panel **200** is completely removed so that the first panel **100** and the second panel **200** are vacuum-adsorbed.

[0080] In the present invention, it has been illustrated that the vacuum suction unit **250** is formed to communicate with the upper surface of the second panel **200** in FIGS. **1** to **3**.

[0081] However, the present invention is not limited thereto and a structure in that the vacuum suction unit **250** communicates with the side surface of the second panel **200** to suck air in the negative pressure forming groove **240** through the vacuum suction unit **250** at the outside is also available.

[0082] With this structure, the first panel **100** and the channel **110** may be detachable by the negative pressure forming groove **240**.

[0083] That is, when the vacuum is applied to the negative pressure forming groove **240**, the first panel **100** and the channel **110** are attached by the vacuum and when the vacuum applied to the negative pressure forming groove **240** is released, the first panel **100** and the channel **110** are detached to be separated.

[0084] FIGS. **4** and **5** are enlarged cross-sectional views for explaining a function of a disposable flow velocity measuring device of the present invention and FIG. **6** is a cross-sectional view for explaining a problem of the related art.

[0085] An operation and an effect of the present invention will be described with reference to the drawings.

[0086] The disposable flow velocity measuring device of the present invention basically has a structure in which the first panel **100** and the second panel **200** are separated by the ultra-thin film and the porous ultra-thin film **300** entirely configures the ultra-thin film.

[0087] The porous ultra-thin film **300** desirably uses a material of polydimethyl siloxane (PDMS) and the non-porous ultra-thin film **310** which is locally configured in a partial region of the porous ultra-thin film **300** in two layers is formed of a PET material.

[0088] As illustrated in FIG. **4**, not only the fluid, but also the micro air bubbles **10** always remain in the fluid channel **210**, and the air bubbles **10** interrupt the flow of the fluid or particles so that it is a very critical problem in the microscopic fluidic field.

[0089] When the micro protrusion pattern **140** formed on the first panel **100** and the porous ultra-thin film **300** formed in the second panel **200** are coupled using the negative pressure, as illustrated in the enlarged view of FIG. **4**, the porous ultra-thin film **300** which is a soft material is slightly bent to be coupled between the micro protrusion patterns **140** at the time of coupling using the negative pressure.

[0090] However, a small space remains between the micro protrusion patterns **140** and thus when air bubbles remain in the fluid channel, the air bubbles **10** passes (arrow) through the porous ultra-thin film **300** by the force of the negative pressure to be leaked to the small space.

[0091] However, when this structure is formed in the heater **110** and two measurement electrodes **120** and **130**, the porous ultra-thin film **300** expands more due to the heat of the heater **110**.

[0092] The expanded porous ultra-thin film **300** passes not only the air, but also the fluid so that damages of the sample fluid injected through the fluid inlet may be caused.

[0093] Accordingly, in order to prevent the above-mentioned problem, in the present invention, only in the heater **110** and two measurement electrodes **120** and **130**, a two-layered ultra-thin film is configured without providing the micro protrusion pattern **140**.

[0094] As described above, in the present invention, even though the ultra-thin film is formed in two layers in a temperature measuring portion, as illustrated in FIG. **5**, even though the micro protrusion pattern **140** is not provided in the first panel **100**, air bubbles **10** generated when the first panel **100** and the second panel **200** are coupled using the negative pressure may be discharged to the side surface through the porous ultra-thin film **300** so that it does not affect the measurement sensitivity.

[0095] The biggest advantage of the present invention is that the sensitivity of the flow velocity measuring device measured at the measurement electrode does not vary depending on the intensity of the negative pressure for coupling the first panel **100** and the second panel **200**.

[0096] In the related art, the first panel and the second panel are separated using a PET ultra-thin film which is a hard material so that when the negative pressure is applied to couple the first panel and the second panel, a small remaining space is generated at a boundary surface and a size of the remaining space is changed according to a degree of vacuum. However, the size is not reduced after a specific vacuum pressure, but only air in the remaining space disappears so that a vacuum state is formed.

[0097] A disadvantage generated as a result is that as the intensity of the vacuum is increased, the size of the remaining space is not reduced, but the air in the remaining space disappears to be a vacuum state. Therefore, as illustrated in FIG. **6**, there is no medium (air) which transmits heat generated in the heater to the fluid in the fluid channel so that as illustrated in FIG. **7**, the sensitivity is degraded.

[0098] Accordingly, when the structure proposed by the present invention is used, as illustrated in FIG. **5**, there is no remaining space between the heater and the measurement electrode and the ultra-thin film **300** of the second panel **300**, so that there is no space which varies depending on the pressure. Therefore, the sensitivity for measuring a flow velocity does not vary in accordance with the change of the negative pressure as illustrated in FIG. **8**.

[0099] FIGS. **9** and **10** are photographs of the embodiment of the present invention which is actually manufactured. According to the flow velocity measuring device of the present invention, micro air bubbles in the fluid channel may be removed and a remaining space between the heater and the measurement electrode of the flow velocity measuring device and the ultra-thin film is not

provided so that there is no space which is changed according to the pressure. Therefore, the sensitivity of measuring the flow velocity does not vary and the structure of the fluid channel is stably maintained regardless of the heat by the heater or the electrode.

[0100] In the meantime, FIG. **11** is an exploded perspective view illustrating an embodiment of a microfluidic device of the present invention from which micro bubbles in a channel can be removed, FIG. **12** is a combined perspective view of an embodiment illustrated in FIG. **11**, FIG. **13** is a cross-sectional view separately illustrating an upper panel and a lower panel of a microfluidic device of the present invention, and FIG. **14** is a cross-sectional view taken along the line A-A' of FIG. **12**.

[0101] As illustrated in the drawings, a microfluidic device of the present invention mainly includes an upper panel **100**, a porous ultra-thin film **200**, and a lower panel **300**.

[0102] The upper panel **100** includes a microfluidic channel **110** through which the fluid passes and is formed of a material such as silicon rubber (PDMS) or plastic.

[0103] The microfluidic channel **110** is a channel through which a fluid serving as a sample flows and includes a fluid inlet **112** into which the fluid is injected, a flow path **114** through which the fluid injected from the fluid inlet **112** flows, and a fluid outlet **116** from which the fluid flowing through the flow path **114** is discharged.

[0104] Here, the flow path **114** is formed on a lower surface of the upper panel **100** with a groove shape with a predetermined depth.

[0105] That is, the flow path **114** is formed on the lower surface of the upper panel **100** as a groove with a predetermined depth and the porous ultra-thin film **200** is attached onto a lower surface of the groove so that the flow path **114** through which the fluid flows is formed.

[0106] In the embodiment of the present invention, the fluid inlet **112** and the fluid outlet **116** are formed to communicate with an upper surface of the upper panel **100** and lower ends of the fluid inlet **112** and the fluid outlet **116** are connected by the fluid channel **114** so that the flow of the sample is performed with a shape of "U".

[0107] However, this is merely an embodiment of the present invention and the position where the fluid inlet **112** and the fluid outlet **116** are formed is not limited thereto.

[0108] That is, in some cases, the fluid inlet **112** and the fluid outlet **116** may be formed to communicate with the side surface of the upper panel **100** and the flow path **114** may also be formed with various shapes.

[0109] In other words, in the microfluidic device of the present invention, the flow path **114** of the microfluidic channel **110** is formed on the lower surface of the upper panel **100** as a groove with a predetermined depth and the porous ultra-thin film **200** is attached onto the lower surface of the groove.

[0110] By doing this, when the fluid flows through the microfluidic channel **110**, the micro bubbles in the fluid are leaked through the porous ultra-thin film **200** and the shape of the flow path **114** and the position where the fluid inlet **112** and the fluid outlet **116** are formed may be applied in various ways.

[0111] In the meantime, the porous ultra-thin film **200** is attached onto a lower surface of the microfluidic channel **110** to remove micro air bubbles included in the fluid which passes through the microfluidic channel **110**.

[0112] The porous ultra-thin film **200** has hydrophobicity so as not to pass the fluid flowing through the microfluidic channel **110** but pass only the micro bubbles included in the fluid to be leaked to the lower panel **300**.

[0113] That is, when the fluid passes on the porous ultra-thin film **200** while flowing through the microfluidic channel **110**, since the ultra-thin film **200** has hydrophobicity, the fluid flowing through the microfluidic channel **110** flows as it is without being leaked through pores of the porous ultra-thin film **200**, in contrast, the micro bubbles in the fluid are leaked through the pores of the porous ultra-thin film **200** having a hydrophobicity.

[0114] In the present invention, the porous ultra-thin film **200** is formed of a hydrophobic material or may have hydrophobicity by processing the surface of the porous ultra-thin film **200** with a hydrophobic material.

[0115] As the porous ultra-thin film **200**, various materials such as glass, polymer, or paper are applicable and for example, the porous ultra-thin film may include at least one material selected from the group consisting of polydimethyl siloxane (PDMS), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polyimide (PI), polypropylene (PP), poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA), polycaprolactone, polystyrene, propylene carbonate, ethylene carbonate, dimethylcarbonate, diethylcarbonate, polymer plastic, glass, paper, and ceramics.

[0116] The porous ultra-thin film **200** may mainly use a film in which nano-sized pores are formed in polymer (PET, PI, PP, PMMA, and the like).

[0117] In the present invention, the porous ultra-thin film **200** is integrated with the upper panel **100** and includes a support pattern **210** protruding to remove micro bubbles included in the fluid which passes through the microfluidic channel **110** in real time.

[0118] That is, in the present invention, the porous ultra-thin film **200** is attached and bonded to a lower portion of the upper panel **100** to be integrated.

[0119] The protruding support pattern **210** is formed on the lower portion of the porous ultra-thin film **200** to remove the micro bubbles included in the fluid which passes through the microfluidic channel **110** in real time.

[0120] When the support pattern **210** is bonded to the lower panel **300**, a passage through which air is leaked is formed.

[0121] The protruding support pattern **210** may be simultaneously manufactured with the porous ultra-thin film **200** to be integrated by a processing process to be described below or may also be used to attach the protruding support pattern **210** which is separately processed to the porous ultra-thin film **200**.

[0122] The support pattern **210** is formed on the surface of the porous ultra-thin film **200** with a height of several micrometers to form a space of several micrometers between the porous ultra-thin film **200** and the lower panel **300** and a passage through which micro bubbles passing through the porous ultra-thin film **200** are smoothly leaked to the outside is formed by means of this space.

[0123] The micro bubbles which are downwardly leaked through the porous ultra-thin film **200** come into contact with the surface of the lower panel **300**.

[0124] The lower panel **300** serves as a substrate which bonds the upper panel **100** and is installed to be in contact with the lower surfaces of the upper panel **100** and the porous ultra-thin film **200** and is attached to the microfluidic channel **110** to which the porous ultra-thin film **200** is attached to discharge the micro bubbles leaked through the porous ultra-thin film **200** to the outside.

[0125] In order to attach the microfluidic channel **110** to which the porous ultra-thin film **200** is attached and the lower panel **300**, the present invention includes a negative pressure forming unit which forms a negative pressure.

[0126] The negative pressure forming unit includes an air removal passage **120** formed on the lower surface of the upper panel **100** and a negative pressure applying hole **130** which communicates with the air removal passage **120** to apply a vacuum to the air removal passage **120** so that the microfluidic channel **110** to which the porous ultra-thin film **200** is attached is attached to the lower panel **300** in a vacuum state.

[0127] A vacuum pump (not illustrated) is connected to the negative pressure applying hole **130** so that when the vacuum pump operates, air of the air removal passage **120** is sucked through the negative pressure applying hole **130**.

[0128] The air removal passage **120** is formed to enclose the microfluidic channel **110** and the porous ultra-thin film **200**.

[0129] That is, as illustrated in FIG. **11**, the air removal passage **120** may be desirably formed with a quadrangular shape to include all the areas where the microfluidic channel **110** and the porous

ultra-thin film **200** are formed.

[0130] The negative pressure applying hole **130** is formed such that both ends communicate with the air removal passage **120** and an upper surface or a side surface of the upper panel **100**.

[0131] The negative pressure applying hole is connected to an external device to apply a negative pressure to completely remove an air layer between the lower panel **300** and the upper panel **100** so that the lower panel **300** and the upper panel **100** are vacuum-adsorbed.

[0132] In the present invention, it has been illustrated that the negative pressure applying hole **130** is formed to communicate with the upper surface of the upper panel **100** in FIGS. **11** to **14**.

[0133] However, the present invention is not limited thereto and the negative pressure applying hole **130** communicates with the side surface of the upper panel **100** to suck air in the air removal passage **120** through the negative pressure applying hole **130** at the outside.

[0134] The lower panel **300** and the channel **110** may be detachable by the air removal passage **120**.

[0135] That is, when the negative pressure is applied to the air removal passage **120**, the lower panel **300** and the channel **110** are attached by the vacuum and when the negative pressure applied to the air removal passage **120** is released, the lower panel **300** and the channel **110** are detached to be separated.

[0136] FIG. **15** is an enlarged cross-sectional view of a main part of a microfluidic device of the present invention.

[0137] When the vacuum pump operates, the air of the air removal passage **120** is sucked through the negative pressure applying hole **130** and the negative pressure is formed in the air removal passage **120** which encloses the channel **110** not only to bond the upper panel **100** and the lower panel **300** but also to be formed between the protruding support patterns **210**. That is, the negative pressure is formed below the porous ultra-thin film **200**.

[0138] Accordingly, when micro bubbles or air is trapped in the channel **110**, only air is leaked below the porous ultra-thin film **200** and the protruding support pattern **210** in real time and the micro bubbles leaked through the porous ultra-thin film **200** are gathered in a space formed by the support pattern **210** and then finally discharged to the air removal passage **120** in which the negative pressure is formed.

[0139] The support pattern **210** is formed on the surface of the porous ultra-thin film **200** with a height of several micrometers to form a space of several micrometers between the porous ultra-thin film **200** and the lower panel **300** and a passage through which micro bubbles passing through the porous ultra-thin film **200** are smoothly leaked to the outside is formed by means of this space.

[0140] In the meantime, the lower panel **300** may be a panel shape which does not have any function or may be a panel including a pattern with a specific function which provides a function such as a magnetic field, an electric field, or heat generation in the lower panel **300**. Energy fields generated by the above-mentioned function pass through the porous ultra-thin film **200** to be transmitted to the channel.

[0141] FIG. **16** is a cross-sectional view illustrating another embodiment of a microfluidic device of the present invention.

[0142] The lower panel **300** is provided to simply operate the device (bond the upper panel and the lower panel), but if necessary, may include a patterning **310** for a specific function of the device.

[0143] For example, an electric field, a magnetic field, heat, or the like may be generated depending on the type of patterning (a material or a pattern shape) to apply an energy to a fluid channel.

[0144] The energy is applied to perform a function for a specific purpose of the device. This is because the porous ultra-thin film **200** having a very small thickness and the protruding support pattern **210** are used so that energy generated in the lower panel **300** easily passes to be formed on the channel **110**.

[0145] It may be confirmed that in the microfluidic device of the present invention with the above-

described configuration, when fluid and gas are injected to the microfluidic channel **110** attached to the lower panel **300** with a predetermined interval, gas in the channel disappears and only the fluid flows.

[0146] A velocity at which the micro bubbles in the fluid are leaked may be adjusted according to a thickness of the porous ultra-thin film, a height of the pattern of the lower panel, an intensity of the vacuum applied to the air removal passage, and a size of a hole formed in the porous ultra-thin film.

[0147] Therefore, in order to quickly remove the micro bubbles in the fluid, the thickness of the porous ultra-thin film may be formed to be thin.

[0148] In addition, a velocity at which the micro bubbles in the fluid are leaked may be adjusted according to a thickness of the porous ultra-thin film, a height of the pattern of the lower panel, an intensity of the vacuum applied to the air removal passage, and a size of a hole formed in the porous ultra-thin film.

[0149] FIG. **17** is a cross-sectional view illustrating a process sequence of a manufacturing method of a microfluidic device of the present invention. The microfluidic device of the present invention may be manufactured according to a process sequence to be described below.

[0150] First, a mold **10** in which a support pattern **12** is patterned on one surface is prepared (see (a) of FIG. **17**).

[0151] A liquid material for forming a porous ultra-thin film is poured into the mold on which the support pattern is formed.

[0152] Here, the material for forming the porous ultra-thin film may include at least one material selected from the group consisting of polydimethyl siloxane (PDMS), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polyimide (PI), polypropylene (PP), poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA), polycaprolactone, polystyrene, propylene carbonate, ethylene carbonate, dimethylcarbonate, diethylcarbonate, polymer plastic, glass, paper, and ceramics.

[0153] Thereafter, the material for forming a porous ultra-thin film poured into the mold **10** is subjected to a planarization process and then thermally treated to produce the porous ultra-thin film **200** ((b) of FIG. **7**).

[0154] In this case, the planarization process makes the material very thin and flat by spin coating and flattening processes and the thermal treatment may be performed in the range of 65 to 110° C. for thirty minutes to one hour thirty minutes.

[0155] As a result of the experiment conducted by the applicant, the thermal treatment process for forming the porous ultra-thin film **200** is most desirably performed to be baked at 75° C. for one hour.

[0156] Next, the upper panel **100** in which the microfluidic channels **112**, **114** and the air removal passage **120** are formed is attached onto the porous ultra-thin film **200** ((c) of FIG. **17**).

[0157] Here, the porous ultra-thin film **200** and the upper panel **100** are attached by an oxygen plasma process and two minutes are taken for plasma treatment.

[0158] In a state in which the upper panel **100** and the porous ultra-thin film **200** are attached, thermal treatment is performed in a predetermined temperature range to bond the upper panel **100** and the porous ultra-thin film **200**.

[0159] Also, in this case, the thermal treatment may be performed in the range of 65 to 110° C. for thirty minutes to one hour thirty minutes and most desirably, it is baked at 75° C. for one hour.

[0160] Next, the mold **10** is removed from the upper panel **100** to integrally form the porous ultra-thin film **200** with a support pattern on a lower portion of the microfluidic channel ((d) of FIG. **17**).

[0161] As described above, when the mold **10** is removed from the upper panel **100**, a protruding support pattern **210** formed with the porous ultra-thin film **200** is exposed on the lower portion of the microfluidic channel.

[0162] After removing an unnecessary part of the porous ultra-thin film **200** ((e) of FIG. **17**, the

upper panel **100** and the lower panel **300** are bonded using a negative pressure forming unit ((f) of FIG. 17).

Claims

1. A manufacturing method of a microfluidic device, comprising: preparing a mold in which a support pattern is patterned on one surface; pouring a liquid material for forming a porous ultra-thin film into the mold on which the support pattern is formed; producing a porous ultra-thin film by performing a planarization process of the material for forming a porous ultra-thin film poured in the mold and then a heat treatment thereon; attaching an upper panel on which a microfluidic channel and an air removal passage are formed onto the porous ultra-thin film; bonding the upper panel and the porous ultra-thin film by performing heat treatment in a predetermined temperature range in a state in which the upper panel and the porous ultra-thin film are attached; integrating the upper panel and the porous ultra-thin film with a support pattern on a lower portion of the microfluidic channel by detaching the mold from the upper panel; removing unnecessary parts of the porous ultra-thin film; and bonding the upper panel and the lower panel using a negative pressure forming unit.
 2. The manufacturing method of a microfluidic device of claim 1, wherein in the attaching of the upper panel onto the porous ultra-thin film, a surface of the porous ultra-thin film and one surface of the upper panel are subjected to oxygen plasma treatment.
 3. The manufacturing method of a microfluidic device of claim 1, wherein the material for forming the porous ultra-thin film includes at least one material selected from the group consisting of polydimethyl siloxane (PDMS), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polyimide (PI), polypropylene (PP), poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA), polycaprolactone, polystyrene, propylene carbonate, ethylene carbonate, dimethylcarbonate, diethylcarbonate, polymer plastic, glass, paper, and ceramics.
 4. The manufacturing method of a microfluidic device of claim 1, wherein the heat treatment is performed in the range of 65 to 110° C. for thirty minutes to one hour thirty minutes.
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