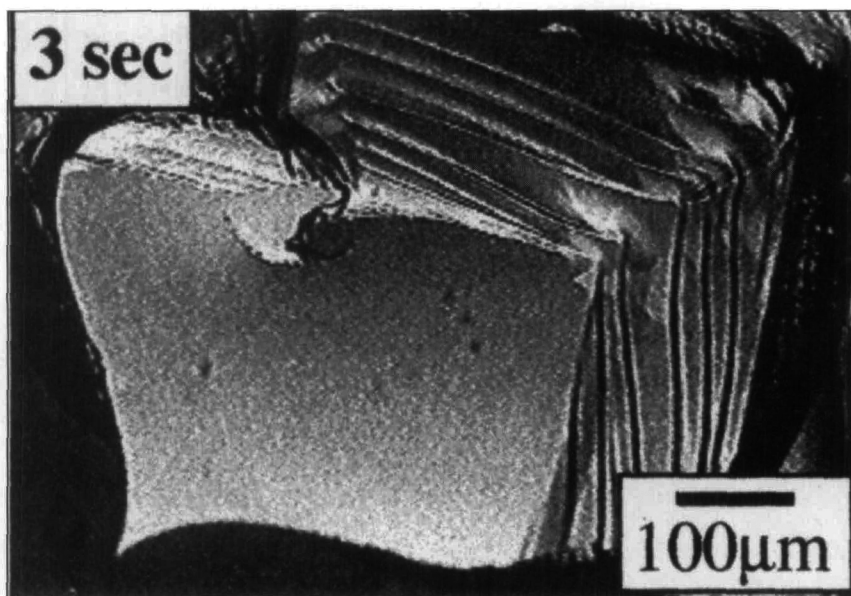


EDITOR'S CHOICE

Figures appearing in EDITOR'S CHOICE are those arising from materials research which strike the editor's fancy as being aesthetically appealing and eye-catching. No further criteria are applied and none should be assumed. When taken out of context, such figures often evoke images beyond and unrelated to the original meaning. Submissions of candidate figures are welcome and should include a complete source citation, a photocopy of the report in which it appears (or will appear), and a reproduction-quality original drawing or photograph of the figure in question.



How many times over the past decade have we been told that high-temperature cuprate superconductors are the best thing since sliced bread? Well as incredible as that claim may have seemed, this month's EDITOR'S CHOICE brings us clear evidence that they can at least look like sliced bread. The particular loaf pictured here was baked up by D.K. Aswal et al. who divulge their recipe in *J. Crystal Growth* 193 (1998) p. 61, and a rather unusual recipe it is. They place their mixture of ingredients ($\text{NdBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_x$ and $\text{Ba}_3\text{Cu}_{10}\text{O}_{13}$ in just the right proportions) on a single crystal MgO baking plate and insert it into an infrared radiative 1200°C Al_2O_3 crucible oven for 20 minutes. After letting the oven cool at 5°C per minute, not only does the baked loaf appear, but it appears already sliced. In point of fact, this stacked single crystal of Nd-123 superconductor that grew from the melt is not safe for human consumption. But that's no great loss given that the length scale marker shows us that this morsel could hardly satisfy a healthy appetite.

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