

# A General Strategy to Superstructured Networks and Nested Self-Similar Networks of Bismuth Compounds

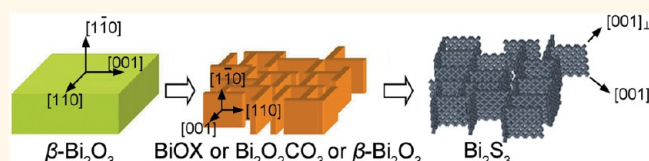
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Designing and synthesizing nanostructured materials, especially those ordered and superstructured semiconductors with facet dominated growth and properties are significant for high performance devices and systems. Single crystalline building blocks or hierarchical structures composed of single crystalline building blocks are often ideal units for this purpose. In the past decade, a great amount of facet dominated single crystal building blocks, for example, nanowires,<sup>1–3</sup> nanorods,<sup>4,5</sup> nanobelts,<sup>6,7</sup> nanoplates,<sup>7</sup> and nanorings<sup>8</sup> have been synthesized. Ordered arrays and hierarchical nanostructures made up of single crystalline building blocks have also been obtained.<sup>9–11</sup> Sequential growth of different nanostructures, such as ZnO/SnO<sub>2</sub>, Co<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub>@MnO<sub>2</sub>, and Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub>/CoSe<sub>2</sub> nanostructures could lead to novel architectures and enhanced properties.<sup>12–14</sup> As one of the challenges, it is still difficult to synthesize ordered architectures made up of two-dimensional (2D) building blocks, which might be useful in supercapacitors, energy storage, and gas sensing. In our previous work, we successfully synthesized 2D orthogonal networks (2DONWs) of BiOCl nanowall, and nested self-similar 2D orthogonal networks (N2DONWs) of Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> nanorods.<sup>15</sup> We believe the novel architectures could be extended to many other bismuth compounds according to their similarity in crystal structure.

Many bismuth compounds have a crystal structure with a 4-fold symmetry (e.g., tetragonal or cubic  $\beta$ -Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>,  $\gamma$ -Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>,  $\delta$ -Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2.33</sub>, Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>, BiOX (X = Cl, Br), BiFeO<sub>3</sub>, Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>Se, and C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>3</sub>BiO<sub>3</sub>) or quasi 4-fold symmetry (e.g., orthorhombic Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub>, Bi<sub>2</sub>WO<sub>6</sub>, Bi<sub>2</sub>MoO<sub>6</sub>, and Bi<sub>2</sub>VO<sub>5</sub>) and a lattice parameter of  $\sim 2^{n/2} \times 3.9 \text{ \AA}$  ( $n = 0, 1, 2, 3, 4$ ). And interestingly, many single crystalline nanostructures of such materials tend to present layered morphologies, because of weak non-bonding interaction (van der Waals force) among the *c*-planes, or strong polarization

## ABSTRACT



We have reported the synthesis of superstructured nanonetworks of BiOCl and nested nanonetworks of Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> in a series of lattice-directed topotactic transformations [C. F. Guo *et al.* *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* 2011, 133, 8211–8215]. Here we extend the transformations to a much broader system including ordered nanowall networks of BiOCl, BiOBr, Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>,  $\beta$ -Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, and Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub>, as well as nested self-similar networks of Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> and amorphous BiO<sub>*x*</sub>. We suggest even more superstructured networks and nested self-similar networks of bismuth compounds with a lattice parameter of  $\sim 2^{n/2} \times 3.9 \text{ \AA}$  ( $n = 0, 1, 2, 3, 4$ ), might also be obtained. The superstructured networks and nested networks are novel architectures that may find applications in electronic devices, sensors, filters, and photocatalysts.

**KEYWORDS:** bismuth compounds · superstructure · network · lattice match · topotactic transformation

along the *c*-axis.<sup>15–18</sup> These characteristics make it possible to synthesize superstructured 2D nanostructures of bismuth compounds in a series of topotactic transformations.<sup>15,19</sup> The 2DONWs of BiOCl nanowall, and nested self-similar N2DONWs of Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> are a successful demonstration of sequential topotactic transformations that lead to complex and/or hierarchical superstructures, by using 2D building blocks as the template.<sup>15</sup> However, we would like to alert that this route is only one out of many processes that can result in the formation of 2DONWs and N2DONWs of bismuth compounds. Here we show the synthesis of  $\beta$ -Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>, BiOCl, BiOBr, and Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> 2DONWs, together with Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> and amorphous BiO<sub>*x*</sub> self-similar N2DONWs, in mild conditions. And we predict that there shall be 2DONWs and N2DONWs of many other bismuth compounds (but not limited to), such as Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2.33</sub>, BiFeO<sub>3</sub>, Bi<sub>2</sub>WO<sub>6</sub>, Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>Se, and Bi<sub>2</sub>MoO<sub>6</sub> due to lattice match.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The bismuth compounds involved in this study are tetragonal (t)  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{BiOX}$  ( $X = \text{Cl}, \text{Br}$ ),  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$ , and orthorhombic (o)  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$ , whose lattice parameters are listed in Table 1. The  $\{200\}$  facets of  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ , the  $\{100\}$  facets of  $\text{BiOCl}$ ,  $\text{BiOBr}$ , and  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$ , as well as the (001) facet of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$ , all have a  $d$ -spacing close to 3.90 Å. The design and fabrication of related superstructures are based on lattice match among these phases. Lattice misfit is defined as

$$f = \frac{|d - d_s|}{d_s} \quad (1)$$

where  $d$  is an interplanar spacing of the emerging phase, and  $d_s$  is the corresponding spacing of the substrate or precursor.

**Synthesis and Characterization of  $\text{BiOX}$  ( $X = \text{Cl}, \text{Br}$ ) 2DONWs and  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs.** Tetragonal  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  (lattice parameters  $a = 7.741$  Å and  $c = 5.634$  Å) films obtained by annealing  $\text{BiO}_x$  films were used as the precursors for all nanostructures in the study. During crystallization of the amorphous films, many randomly oriented single crystalline domains with an average diameter of  $\sim 25$   $\mu\text{m}$  were formed. As presented in our previous work, the  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  domains could transform to  $\text{BiOCl}$  (lattice parameters  $a = 3.887$  Å and  $c = 7.354$  Å) 2DONWs in diluted hydrochloric acid (HCl), with an epitaxial relationship of  $(110)_{\text{BiOCl}} \parallel (220)_{\beta}$ ,  $(110)_{\text{BiOCl}} \parallel (220)_{\beta}$ , and  $[001]_{\text{BiOCl}} \parallel [001]_{\beta}$  for one set of nanowalls and  $(110)_{\text{BiOCl}} \parallel (002)_{\beta}$ ,  $(110)_{\text{BiOCl}} \parallel (220)_{\beta}$ , and  $[001]_{\text{BiOCl}} \parallel [110]_{\beta}$  for the other set of nanowalls in the perpendicular direction (marked by  $\perp$ ),<sup>15</sup> as shown in the scanning electron microscopy (SEM) image and schematic plan in Figure 1 panels a and b, respectively. A  $\text{BiOCl}$  nanowall could then transform to a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  network of nanorods, with the presence of  $\text{S}^{2-}$  (Figure 1c). We used a blended solution of thioacetamide (TAA, 0.04 M) and HCl (0.02 M) to produce  $\text{S}^{2-}$ .

$\text{BiOBr}$  also has a tetragonal structure, with lattice parameters  $a = 3.927$  Å and  $c = 8.101$  Å. The  $d$ -spacing of the  $\{110\}_{\text{BiOBr}}$  facets is 2.78 Å, close to that of the  $\{220\}_{\beta}$ . Therefore,  $\text{BiOBr}$  could also form epitaxial 2DONWs of nanowalls (Figure 1d). However, the formed  $\text{BiOBr}$  2DONWs do not present very good ordering, probably because of the larger lattice misfit. Similar to  $\text{BiOCl}$ , a  $\text{BiOBr}$  2DONW can also transform to  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONW (Figure 1e), and corresponding solution is blended TAA (0.04 M), NaBr (0.02 M), and  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  (0.01 M).

**Synthesis and Characterization of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONWs.** A  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  film (which is transparent) incubated in blended solution of  $\text{NaHCO}_3$  (0.04 M) and  $\text{HNO}_3$  (0.02 M) at 60 °C for 5 h could convert to a white film. SEM images in Figure 2a,b show that the white film is made up of many 2DONWs of nanowalls, which are typically 5–10 nm in thickness and 300 nm in length. The morphology is very similar to the  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONWs.

TABLE 1. Lattice Parameters of the Materials in This Study

materials	lattice parameters (Å)			structure	lattice misfit <sup>a</sup>
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>		
$\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$	7.741	7.741	5.634	t	
$\text{BiOCl}$	3.887	3.887	7.354	t	0.43% ( $d_{100}$ )
$\text{BiOBr}$	3.927	3.927	8.101	t	1.5% ( $d_{100}$ )
$\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$	3.865	3.865	13.67	t	0.14% ( $d_{100}$ )
$\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$	11.14	11.30	3.981	o	2.9% ( $d_{001}$ )

<sup>a</sup> Lattice misfit in reference to  $d_{200}$  (3.871 Å) of  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ .

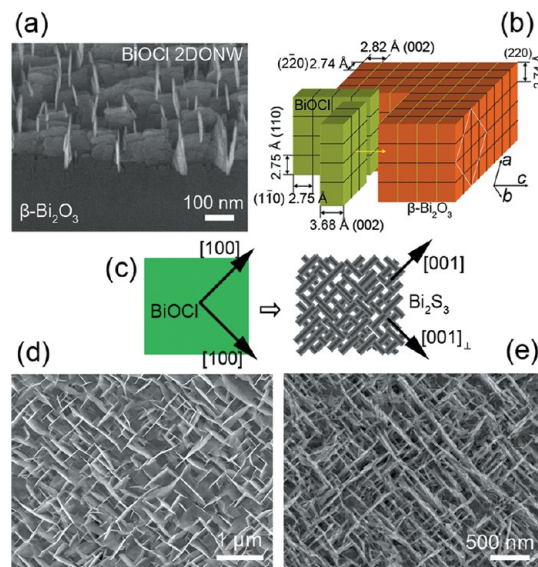
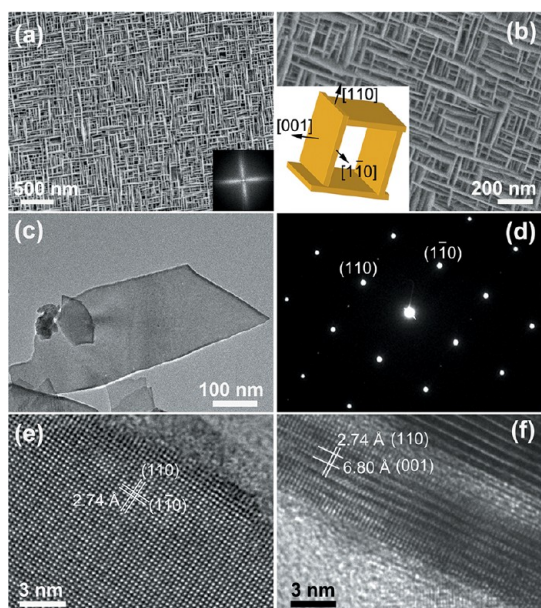


Figure 1. (a) Tilt view of a  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONW grown from  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ . (b) Schematic illustration on the epitaxial relationship between  $\text{BiOCl}$  nanowalls and  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ . (c) Epitaxial relationship between  $\text{BiOCl}$  nanowall and  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  network. (d) Epitaxial  $\text{BiOBr}$  2DONW. (e)  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONW transformed from a  $\text{BiOBr}$  2DONW.

Crystal structure of a single nanowall was investigated by using high-resolution transmission electron microscopy (HRTEM) and selected area electron diffraction (SAED). Figure 2c is a bright field TEM image of a nanowall, while Figure 2 panels d and e are corresponding SAED pattern and HRTEM image taken perpendicularly to the nanowall plane, showing a 4-fold symmetry with a  $d$ -spacing of 2.74 Å. Figure 2f is a HRTEM image taken from the side, for which the  $d$ -spacings of 6.80 Å and 2.74 Å belong to the  $\{002\}$  and  $\{110\}$  planes of tetragonal  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  (lattice parameters  $a = b = 3.865$  Å, and  $c = 13.67$  Å). We can see from Figure 2e that the thickness of the nanowall is about 5.5 nm, exactly 4 times the (001)  $d$ -spacing, implying the nanowall is made up of four monolayers stacking along the  $c$ -axis. Upon our observation, most of the nanowalls are made of only several monolayers. This strongly anisotropic growth should be ascribed to the weak nonbonding interaction in the  $c$ -planes.<sup>15</sup>

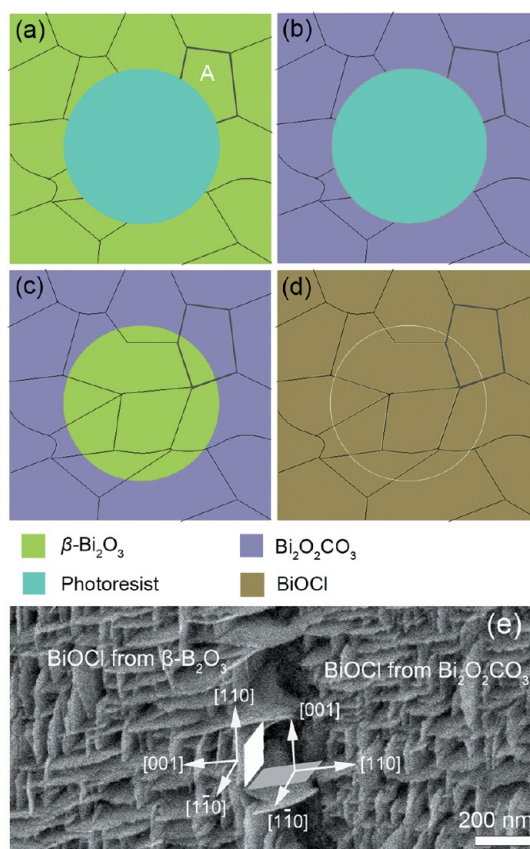


**Figure 2.** (a) SEM image of a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW, showing two sets of nanowalls aligned perpendicularly. Inset is the corresponding Fourier transformation pattern. (b) Magnified SEM image of a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW, inset indicates crystal orientations of the nanowall. (c) Bright field TEM image of a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  nanowall. (d) SAED pattern corresponding to the nanowall in panel c shows a 4-fold symmetry. (e) HRTEM image taken along the [001] zone axis of the nanowall in panel c. (f) HRTEM of a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  nanowall taken along the [110] zone axis. The nanowall is about 5.5 nm in thickness.

The  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONWs can also be formed in other solution which can generate  $\text{CO}_2$ , e.g., blended solution of  $\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$  and  $\text{HNO}_3$ , and blended solution of  $\text{NaHCO}_3$  and  $\text{CH}_3\text{COOH}$ . Concentrations of the reagents should be low to avoid  $\text{CO}_2$  bubbles. An acidic environment is also important for the formation of the unique nanostructures because  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  needs to be etched before a new phase emerges.

**Structural Relations between  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  and  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ .** Exploring structural relationship among the  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  nanowall and  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  is significant and interesting. In our previous work, we used focused ion beam (FIB) milling to make TEM specimen to investigate the epitaxial relationship between  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONW and  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  film.<sup>15</sup> FIB milling is unquestionably an effective and visualized technique to fabricate TEM specimen and thus to understand crystal structure information. However, fabricating TEM specimen by FIB milling is rather costly and time-consuming. We tactfully avoid the use of FIB, while show intuitively the structural relationship of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  and  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  in an SEM observation.  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONW is introduced here as a reference object since its structural relationship with  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  has already been known.

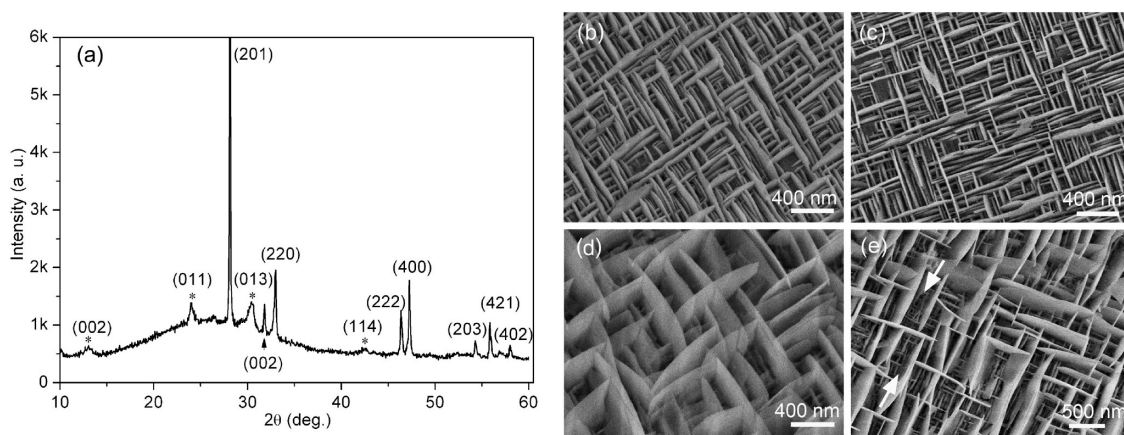
A small drop of photoresist (MircoChem SU-8) on a  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  film can partially shade some  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  domains (exemplified by the domain marked with 'A'), as schematically shown in Figure 3a. Then the sample is



**Figure 3.** Determination of the epitaxial relationship between  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  and  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ . (a) A drop of photoresist on a  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  film, shading some crystalline domains. (b) Non-shaded  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  converts to  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$ . (c) Removal of the photoresist. (d) Both  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONWs and  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  domains convert to  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONWs. (e) SEM image of two  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONWs from  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  and  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW, respectively. The left half was once shaded by photoresist.

incubated in a preblended solution of  $\text{NaHCO}_3$  (0.04 M) and  $\text{HNO}_3$  (0.02 M) for 5 h, leading to the formation of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONWs in the nonshaded  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  (Figure 3b) film. After that, the photoresist is removed in acetone and  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  becomes exposed (Figure 3c). Finally, the sample is dipped in diluted  $\text{HCl}$  solution (0.10 M) for 30 s, during which both single crystalline  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  and  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONWs transform to  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONWs (Figure 3d). Figure 3e shows a SEM image of a domain (that used to be partially covered by photoresist, like the domain 'A') made of two parts: a  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONW from  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW (a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  nanowall could transform to a  $\text{BiOCl}$  nanowall without changing morphology, which will be discussed in the next part), and a  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONW from  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ . The two parts have a similar morphology and exactly the same crystalline orientations, implying that  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  and  $\text{BiOCl}$  have a similar epitaxial relation with  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ . That is,  $(110)_{\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3} \parallel (220)_{\beta} \parallel (1\bar{1}0)_{\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3} \parallel (2\bar{2}0)_{\beta}$  and  $[001]_{\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3} \parallel [001]_{\beta}$ ;  $(110)_{\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3 \perp} \parallel (002)_{\beta}$ ,  $(1\bar{1}0)_{\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3 \perp} \parallel (2\bar{2}0)_{\beta}$ , and  $[001]_{\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3 \perp} \parallel [110]_{\beta}$ . The epitaxial growth of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  from  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  is related to their good lattice

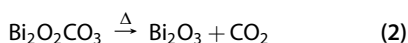




**Figure 4.** (a) XRD spectrum of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONWs heated at  $300\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$  for 24 h. Besides  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ , there are several weak peaks that belong to residual  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  (marked with an asterisk (\*)), which will vanish by heating the sample for more than 2 days. (b) Tilt view of a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW. (c) Top view of a  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONW transformed from  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW. (d) Tilt view of a  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONW from  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONW, compared with panel b, the  $\text{BiOCl}$  nanowalls become much larger. (e) Top view of the  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONW, showing secondary networks indicated by the arrows.

match: the  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  has a tetragonal structure with  $d_{220} = 2.737\text{ \AA}$  and it  $d_{002} = 2.817\text{ \AA}$ , both are close to the  $\{110\}$   $d$ -spacing ( $2.734\text{ \AA}$ ) of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$ .

**Transformation from  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONWs to  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  and  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONWs and to  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs.**  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$ , as an oxycarbonate, is unstable and it converts to  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  by annealing in a temperature range of  $260\text{--}400\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ , according to



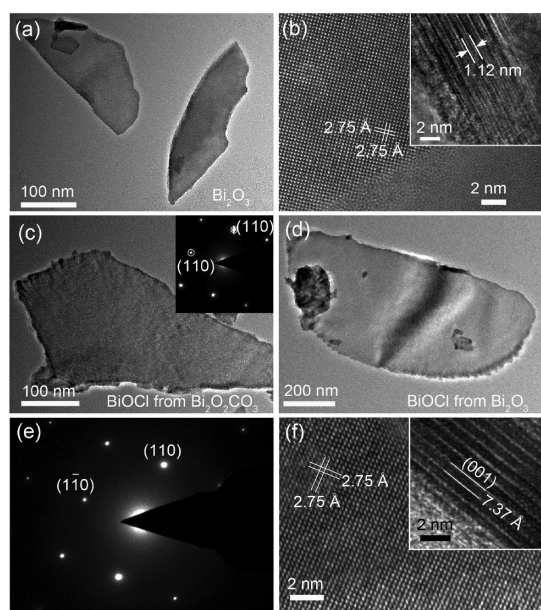
We experimentally find that  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  can well take the morphology of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$ , namely a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW transforms to a  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONW. Accordingly, the film turns from white to yellow. The lattice misfit between the  $\{110\}$  facets of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  and  $\{220\}$  facets of  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  is only 0.1%, that means the two phases can almost perfectly match, suggesting a possible epitaxial relationship of  $(110)_{\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3} \parallel (220)_{\beta}$ ,  $(\bar{1}10)_{\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3} \parallel (\bar{2}\bar{2}0)_{\beta}$ , and  $[001]_{\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3} \parallel [001]_{\beta}$ . The conversion has been proved by X-ray diffraction (XRD) measurement shown in Figure 4a.

The as-formed  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONWs convert directly to  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONWs in diluted HCl solution. The formed  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONWs, however, do not take exactly the same morphology of  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONWs, but undergo a process in which some nanowalls grow significantly larger. Figure 4 panels b–d show the morphology difference of a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW, corresponding  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONW and  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONW. We can see that the  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONW is almost the same as the  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW, but the  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONW clearly consists of much larger nanowalls, as a result of subsequent growth of  $\text{BiOCl}$  from the  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  nanowalls. Figure 4e shows that in the  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONW there are some secondary networks with smaller features close to that of the  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  precursor. For a  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONW rinsed in HCl aqueous solution, the surface layer of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  nanowalls first get dissolved in the acidic solution, releasing  $\text{BiO}^+$  (aq) ions; and then

the  $\text{BiO}^+$  ions combine with  $\text{Cl}^-$ , forming epitaxial  $\text{BiOCl}$  on the nondissolved nanowall surface. The most likely case is the small nanowalls get dissolved and large nanowalls grow even larger, and that is why we have large  $\text{BiOCl}$  nanowalls. It is worth noting that in this conversion the intermediate does not necessarily need to be pure  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ .  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONWs partially converted to  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  can also lead to a similar morphology of the subsequent  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONWs.

Figure 5a is a bright field TEM image of  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  nanowalls, and Figure 5b is a corresponding HRTEM image, showing fringes with a 4-fold symmetry and a spacing of  $2.75\text{ \AA}$ . The inset taken from the side of a nanowall reveals fringes with a  $d$ -spacing of  $1.12\text{ nm}$ , right twice that of the  $(001)$  plane (we could also see the  $(001)$  fringes). For  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  nanostructures, such superlattices are common and have been reported in the literature.<sup>20</sup> Figure 5 panels c and d are bright field TEM images of  $\text{BiOCl}$  nanowalls from  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  and  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ , respectively. In good consistence with SEM images, the latter reveals a semicircular shape for nearly  $1\text{ }\mu\text{m}$  in length, much larger than its counterpart in panel c. Figure 5 panels e and f are the SAED pattern and HRTEM image of the large  $\text{BiOCl}$  nanowall. The structural analysis indicates that all nanowalls shown here are single crystalline.

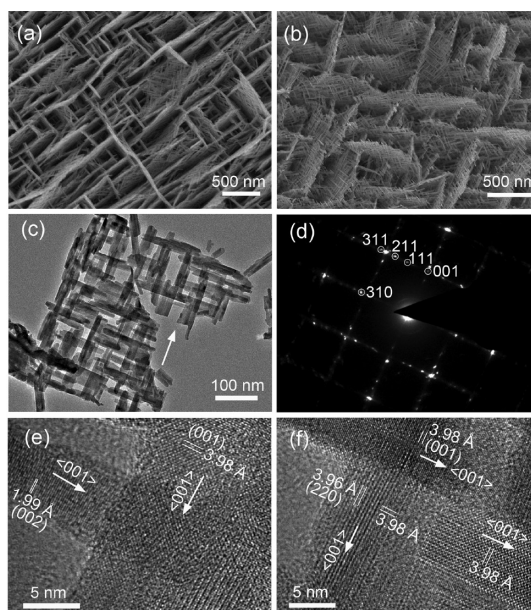
As has been reported,  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONWs transform to  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs by incubating in a blended solution of HCl and TAA in a  $60\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$  water bath. Both  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  and  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONWs can convert to  $\text{BiOCl}$  nanowalls in diluted HCl solution, and be used as the template for  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs. Here we show  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs converted from  $\beta\text{-Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONWs in blended solution of HCl and TAA at  $60\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ , as displayed in Figure 6a,b. Additionally Figure 6c is a bright-field TEM image of a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  network made of two sets of perpendicularly aligned  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  nanorods. The corresponding SAED



**Figure 5.** (a) Bright-field TEM image of  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  nanowalls transformed from  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$ . (b) HRTEM image of a  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  nanowall along the [001] zone axis; inset shows side view of a  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  nanowall, in which the 1.12 nm fringes belongs to the  $1/2(001)$ . (c) TEM image of a BiOCl nanowall transformed from  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$ ; inset is the SAED pattern. (d) TEM image of a BiOCl nanowall transformed from  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ . (e and f) SAED pattern and HRTEM image of the nanowall in panel d; inset in panel f reveals fringes with a  $d$ -spacing of 7.37 Å, consistent with the (001) facet of BiOCl.

pattern (Figure 6d) consists of reflections that belong to two sets of woven nanorods, in accordance with the HRTEM images in Figure 6 panels e and f, in which all the nanorods are along the  $\langle 001 \rangle$ -directions. Our observation upon tens of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  nanorods indicates that all nanorods are grown along the  $c$ -axis without exception. However, these nanorods are in fact in different crystal orientations, proven by the reflections of (111), (211), (311) from one set of paralleled  $\langle 001 \rangle$ -oriented nanorods (Figure 6d). The  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs also imply that all nanowall structures in this route, including that of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$ ,  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ , and BiOCl, are single crystalline.

BiOCl is a very important intermediate for the formation of superstructured  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs. The  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  or  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONWs cannot transform to well ordered  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs with the absence of  $\text{Cl}^-$ . The products obtained by using a blended solution of TAA and  $\text{HNO}_3$  instead of HCl are much different. Supporting Information, Figure S1a is the product transformed from a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW in TAA (0.04 M) and  $\text{HNO}_3$  (0.02 M) at 60 °C, showing that the ordering of the  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  networks is much worse than that are formed in blended solution of TAA (0.04 M) and HCl (0.02 M), as shown in Figure S1b. Typically, it takes the  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  film half an hour to turn black (as a sign of the formation of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$ ) and more than one day to accomplish the transformation. In comparison, in the same environment (0.04 M TAA and 0.02 M  $\text{HNO}_3$ ), the

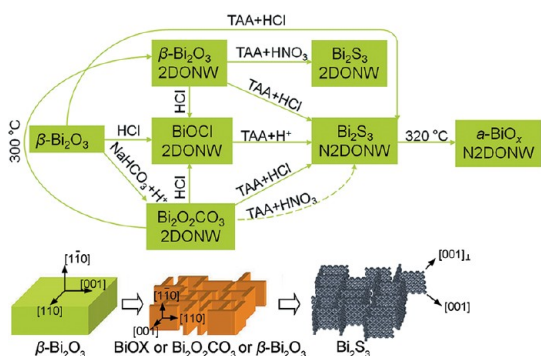


**Figure 6.** (a) Top view of a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONW transformed from  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONW. (b) Tilt view of the  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONW. (c) Bright field TEM image of a  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  network. (d) Corresponding SAED pattern, in which the indexed reflections belong to a set of paralleled  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  nanorods along the direction indicated by the arrow in panel c. (e and f) HRTEM images of woven  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  nanorods, showing all nanorods are along the  $\langle 001 \rangle$ -directions.

$\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONWs turn black in tens of seconds, and the product does not present a self-similar structure, but instead each nanowall demonstrates a smooth surface (Figure S1c). It is interesting that the  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  morphology is very sensitive to the concentration of TAA. When the concentration of TAA decreases to 0.02 M, each  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  nanowall becomes rough and consists of many nanoparticles or random nanocones, as shown in Figure S1d. We will show in a further study that  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  can transform to  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  nanocones arrays at a low concentration (0.01–0.02 M) of TAA. Unlike  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  or  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONWs, BiOCl 2DONWs could convert directly to self-similar N2DONWs in a blended solution of TAA and  $\text{HNO}_3$ , or TAA and  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  (or TAA and other acids without  $\text{Cl}^-$ ).

The fact that  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  and  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONWs could not transform to well ordered  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs should be related to the large lattice misfits with  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  ( $f = 3.0\%$  and  $2.9\%$ , see Table 1). However, an intermediate enables this transformation if it has a smaller lattice misfit with  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$ , exemplified by the transformation from  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  to BiOCl and finally to  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs. The reaction from  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  directly to  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  is too fast might be another reason that we did not see any ordered  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  nanorods formed on the  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  nanowalls.

**Thermal Oxidation of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs.** Thermal oxidation of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs has also been investigated as we expected to obtain  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  N2DONWs. A  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONWs heated at 320 °C for 3 h is found to convert



**Figure 7.** Routes from  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  to various superstructured bismuth compounds.

to amorphous  $\text{BiO}_x$  N2DONWs instead of  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  structures. Accordingly, the black sample turns to semitransparent. Supporting Information, Figure S2a is a SEM image of an amorphous  $\text{BiO}_x$  N2DONW, while Figure S2 panels b and c are corresponding TEM image and HRTEM image. The corresponding SAED pattern of such a network, however, reveals a 4-fold symmetry, and weak reflections correspond to an interplanar spacing of  $\sim 2.75$  Å, which seems to be consistent with the  $\{220\}$  facets of  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ . This is in contradiction with the fact that although the precursor  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  nanorods grow along the  $\langle 001 \rangle$ -directions, they are actually not in the same crystal orientations. A possible explanation is that the weak reflections belong to residual  $\text{BiOCl}$ , which is right 4-fold symmetric in the  $[001]$ -direction with the interplanar spacing of  $\{110\}$  to be 2.75 Å. As we know, it takes at least two days for a  $\text{BiOCl}$  nanowall to convert to  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  network completely, but we typically spend only one day for the conversion, so that it is reasonable to have residual  $\text{BiOCl}$  in the networks.

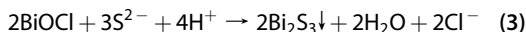
Another sample annealed for 32 h is quite different, for which the networks have been completely destroyed and transformed to nanoparticles, as shown in Figure S2d. During the long time annealing, the amorphous nanorods (which are formed in the first several hours of heating) cannot convert to single crystalline nanorods again, instead, many  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  nanoparticles are formed in the long heating time.

**Corrosion, Epitaxial Nucleation, and Growth.** The networks of bismuth compounds are epitaxially formed from the single crystalline  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ . How new crystalline phases emerge is rather important and interesting. Here we discuss the nucleation and growth of the bismuth compounds.

Take the formation of  $\text{BiOCl}$  for example. A single crystalline  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  domain in diluted hydrochloric acid is first etched by  $\text{H}^+$  (aq), and the released  $\text{BiO}^+$  ions incorporate with  $\text{Cl}^-$  (aq) in the liquid–solid interface, leading to the formation of epitaxial  $\text{BiOCl}$  nuclei. The  $\text{BiOCl}$  nuclei form in the liquid–solid interface rather than in the solution, because heterogeneous nucleation and epitaxial growth can efficiently decrease the surface energy of the system. The epitaxial  $\text{BiOCl}$  nuclei

grow up to nanowalls because the weak nonbonding interaction between  $c$ -planes can result in strongly anisotropic growth. And the lattice-directing guides orientation of the nanowalls, which finally construct an orthogonal network. The formation of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  networks is in a very similar process.

For the formation of the  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  network, the template,  $\text{BiOCl}$  nanowall is first etched by  $\text{H}^+$  (aq). Then epitaxial  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  nuclei are formed in the surface of  $\text{BiOCl}$ , and the nuclei grow up and form rodlike structures. The reaction can be expressed as



Because  $\text{BiOCl}$  is indissoluble, it takes a long time to complete the reaction. An acidic environment is also very necessary for this process. We have observed that networks of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  cannot be formed with the absence of acid, and the concentration of  $\text{H}^+$  influences significantly the size and morphology of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  nanostructures. Generally speaking, a higher concentration of  $\text{H}^+$  will cause coarsening of nanorods.

The crystalline superstructures fabricated in this study are all formed upon the epitaxial relationships among the phases. Here we summarize these transformations in Figure 7, which shows that a  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  crystal domain could convert to a  $\text{BiOX}$  ( $X = \text{Cl}$  or  $\text{Br}$ , and we only show  $\text{BiOCl}$  here), or  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW; the  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW converts to  $\text{BiOCl}$  2DONW in diluted  $\text{HCl}$ , or to  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  2DONW by annealing at  $\sim 300$  °C for tens of hours; the  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{BiOX}$ , or  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$  2DONW can act as an intermediate template for the formation of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$  N2DONW in a preblended solution of TAA and  $\text{HCl}$  at 60 °C. All the tetragonal phases, including  $\text{BiOX}$  ( $X = \text{Cl}$  or  $\text{Br}$ ),  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ , and  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$ , have a lattice parameter  $a \approx 2^{n/2} \times 3.9$  Å ( $n = 0$  or  $2$ ), and this matches the lattice parameter  $c$  of the orthorhombic  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$ . We believe that there will be much more bismuth compounds that can present the unique morphology of 2DONW or N2DONW in a lattice directed process.

## CONCLUSION

We have successfully demonstrated the fabrication of superstructured 2DONWs of  $\text{BiOX}$  ( $X = \text{Cl}$ ,  $\text{Br}$ ),  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{CO}_3$ ,  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ , and  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$ , as well as self-similar N2DONWs of  $\text{Bi}_2\text{S}_3$ , in a series of lattice-directed transformations. The  $\beta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$  single crystalline domains serve as the precursor of the superstructures. All phases involved in this work have a lattice parameter of  $\sim 2^{n/2} \times 3.9$  Å ( $n = 0, 1, 2, 3, 4$ ). We predict that many other bismuth compounds with a 4-fold symmetry of quasi 4-fold symmetry and a lattice parameter close to  $\sim 2^{n/2} \times 3.9$  Å ( $n = 0, 1, 2, 3, 4$ ), for example,  $\gamma$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\delta$ - $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_{2.33}$ ,  $\text{BiFeO}_3$ ,  $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_2\text{Se}$ ,  $\text{C}_2\text{H}_3\text{BiO}_3$ ,  $\text{Bi}_2\text{WO}_6$ ,  $\text{Bi}_2\text{MoO}_6$ , and  $\text{Bi}_2\text{VO}_5$ , may also present the unique morphologies of 2DONW or N2DONW. Also the use of single crystalline substrates with lattice match may enable the formation of a 2DONW or N2DONW on



wafer scale. The superstructures are expected to find applications that require gridlike structure or large specific surface. Additionally, the Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> networks have

been found to have excellent resistance switching property and good thermoelectric property, which will be discussed in our further works.

## EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

Amorphous BiO<sub>x</sub> films by reactive magnetron sputtering were heated at 300–500 °C to produce β-Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> films. For the transformation from β-Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> to Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> N2DONWs, a β-Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> film was incubated in blended solution of TAA (0.04 M) and HCl (0.02 M) for 1–3 days, or blended solution of TAA (0.04 M), NaBr (0.02 M), and H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> (0.01 M) at a water bath temperature of 60 °C. Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> 2DONWs were formed with a β-Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> film incubating in a blended solution of NaHCO<sub>3</sub> (0.04 M) and HNO<sub>3</sub> (0.02 M) at 60 °C for 5 h. β-Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> 2DONWs were formed by thermal annealing of the Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> 2DONWs at 320 °C for 1–3 days. The as-formed β-Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> 2DONWs transformed to BiOCl 2DONWs in diluted HCl solution (0.1 M) for minutes, or transformed to Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> N2DONWs in blended solution of TAA (0.04 M) and HCl (0.02 M) for tens of hours. Two Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> N2DONW samples were annealed at 320 °C for 3 and 32 h, respectively, forming amorphous BiO<sub>x</sub> N2DONWs.

The morphology of the samples was observed by SEM (Hitachi S-4800) and TEM (FEI Tecnai G<sup>2</sup> F20). Crystal structure analysis was made by using HRTEM, SAED (with the FEI Tecnai G<sup>2</sup> F20 microscope), and XRD (Bruker D8 Focus).

*Conflict of Interest:* The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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*Supporting Information Available:* Two electron micrographs on the transformation from Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> 2DONWs to Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> nanostructure with different conditions and the transformation from Bi<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> N2DONWs to amorphous BiO<sub>x</sub> N2DONWs. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at <http://pubs.acs.org>.

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