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Fabricating and Testing Freeform Optics: Current Capabilities, Lessons Learned and Future Opportunities

Freeform optical shapes or optical surfaces that are designed with non-symmetric features are gaining popularity with lens designers and optical system integrators. A common question about freeform optics is, "If I design it, can you really make it?" This paper will overview a freeform optical fabrication process that includes generation, high speed VIBE polishing, sub-aperture figure correction, surface smoothing and testing of freeform surfaces. This paper will briefly highlight the progress made to each of the processes as well as the challenges associated with each of them.

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