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Technology

Remote-Controlled Humans

Leah Hoffmann, 08.04.05, 10:00 AM ET



Video: Remote-Controlled Woman

LOS ANGELES - Smiling nervously, the young woman walks forward in a straight line. Suddenly, she veers to the right. She stumbles and stops, attempting to regain her balance, and continues to walk forward. And then she veers off to the left.

No, she's not intoxicated. The young lady's vestibular system, which controls her sense of movement and balance, has been thrown off-kilter by two weak electrical currents delivered just behind her ears. (Click here to see video of a remotely controlled woman.)

This sort of electrical stimulation is known as galvanic vestibular stimulation, or GVS. When a weak DC current is delivered to the mastoid behind your ear, your body responds by shifting your balance toward the anode. The stronger the current, the more powerful its pull. If it is strong enough, it not only throws you off balance but alters the course of your movement.

GVS has been known about for at least a century, but it attracted relatively little interest until the last 20 years. If researchers at the **Nippon Telegraph and Telephone** (nyse: [NTT](#) - news - people) Communication Science Laboratories have their way, that

By This Author



Leah Hoffmann

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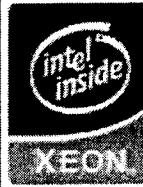
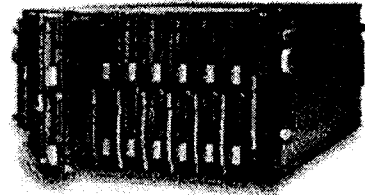
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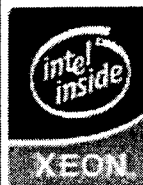
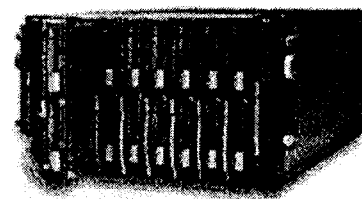
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