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Method of producing an integrated circuit with a carbon nanotube

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Schlaf

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(54) **METHOD OF PRODUCING AN INTEGRATED CIRCUIT WITH A CARBON NANOTUBE**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 47 days.

Publication: "Growth of a Single Freestanding Multiwall Carbon Nanotube On Each Nanonickel Dot"; published in Applied Physics Letters, vol. 75, No. 8, dated Aug. 23, 1999.
Publication: "High-Yield Assembly Of Individual Single-Walled Carbon Nanotube Tips For Scanning Probe Microscopies"; published in The Journal Of Physical Chemistry B, vol. 105, No. 4, Feb. 1, 2001.

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(65) **Prior Publication Data**

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Paper on "AFM and STM Investigation Of Carbon Nanotubes Produced By High Energy Ion Irradiation Of Graphite"; Journal Name: Nuclear Instruments & Methods In Physics Research, Section B (Beam Interactions with Materials and Atoms), Jan. 1, 1999, vol. 147, No. 1-4, Corporate Author—Res. Inst. For Tech. Phys. & Mater. Sci., Budapest Hungary.

Related U.S. Application Data

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(60) Provisional application No. 60/319,026, filed on Dec. 6, 2001, provisional application No. 60/319,182, filed on Apr. 12, 2002, and provisional application No. 60/319,183, filed on Apr. 12, 2002.

(51) **Int. Cl.**⁷ **H01L 21/8238**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** **438/199**; 438/151; 438/618; 438/680

Assistant Examiner—Thanhha Pham

(58) **Field of Search** 438/20, 149, 151, 438/197, 199, 618, 99, 585, 680, 681

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Howard & Howard

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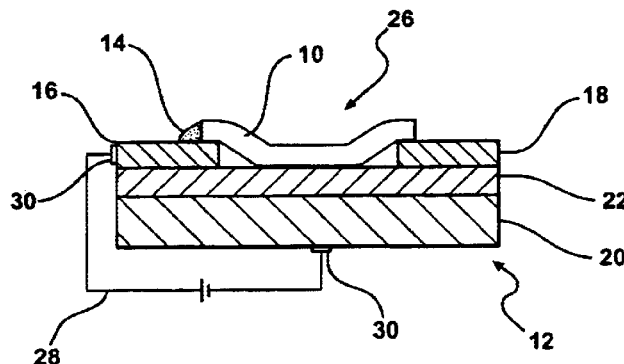
(57) **ABSTRACT**

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A method of producing an integrated circuit with a carbon nanotube is disclosed. The integrated circuit includes a source, a drain, and a gate, and the source and the drain are positioned on the gate. A catalytic material is deposited onto the source. The catalytic material is then subjected to chemical vapor deposition. This initiates growth of the carbon nanotube such that the carbon nanotube extends from the source. Next, the carbon nanotube is bent toward the integrated circuit such that the carbon nanotube extends between the source and the drain to render the circuit operable.

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17 Claims, 2 Drawing Sheets



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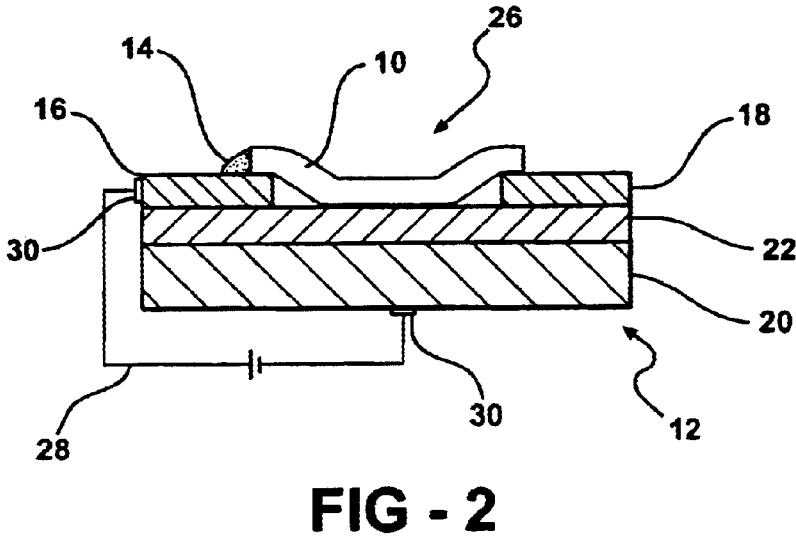
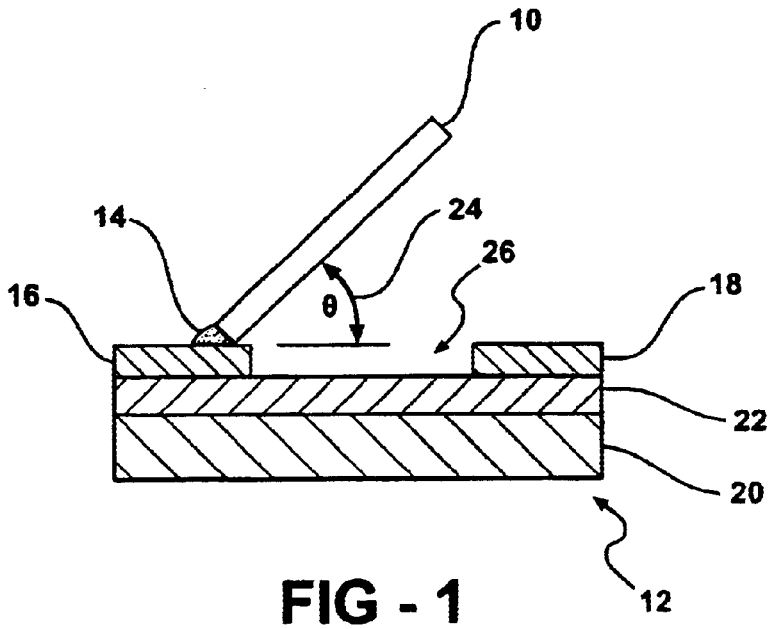
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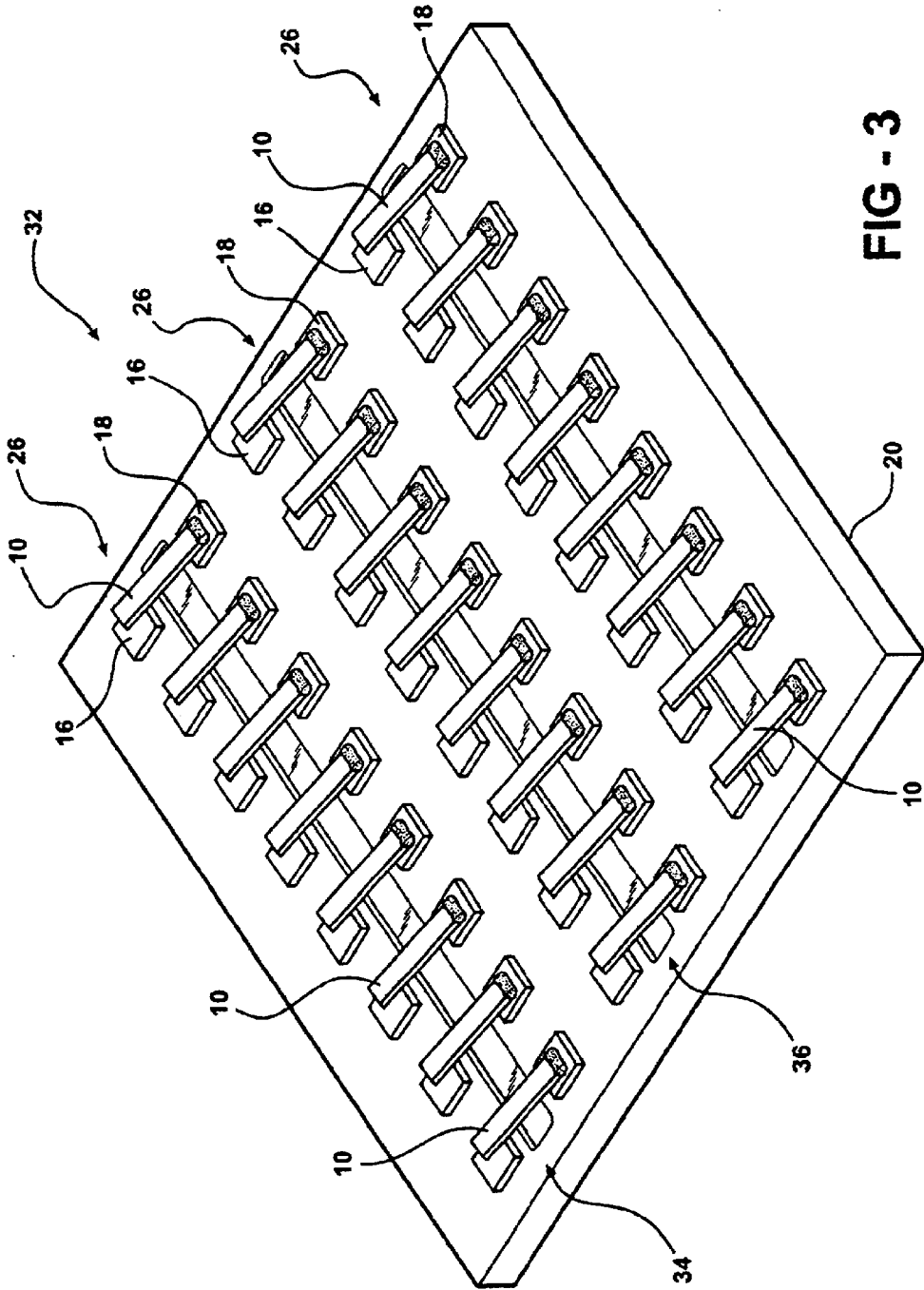


FIG - 3

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METHOD OF PRODUCING AN INTEGRATED CIRCUIT WITH A CARBON NANOTUBE

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This patent application claims priority to and all advantages of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Nos. 60/319,026; 60/319,182; and 60/319,183, which were filed on Dec. 6, 2001; Apr. 12, 2002; and Apr. 12, 2002, respectively.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The subject invention relates to a method of producing an integrated circuit with a carbon nanotube (CNT) for use in the field of nanotechnology.

2. Description of the Related Art

Current related art methods utilize previously prepared carbon nanotubes and manually micro-manipulate the carbon nanotubes into useful structures. The manual manipulation methods include utilizing a modified scanning probe microscope or utilizing electric fields to isolate the carbon nanotubes having desired electric properties. The isolated carbon nanotubes are then selected, removed, and utilized accordingly. Such manual methods are extremely slow and only suitable for the preparation of exploratory test structures, thereby limiting advances in the field of nanotechnology.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION AND ADVANTAGES

A method of producing an integrated circuit with a carbon nanotube is disclosed. The integrated circuit includes a source, a drain, and a gate. The source and the drain are positioned on the gate. The method includes the step of depositing a catalytic material onto at least one of the source and the drain. Next, the catalytic material is then subjected to chemical vapor deposition to initiate growth of the carbon nanotube. As such, the carbon nanotube extends from at least one of the source and the drain. The carbon nanotube is then bent toward the integrated circuit such that the carbon nanotube extends between the source and the drain. This renders the integrated circuit operable.

The CNTs of the subject invention exhibit a variety of desired electronic properties. The electronic properties depend on the diameter, number of walls, and defect density of the CNT. The method allows for the CNT to be positioned at specific locations on circuit structures to fulfill specific electronic functions such as forming electric interconnects, diodes and transistors. The subject invention allows for mass production of circuits having CNT connections due to the repeatability of making the circuits functional.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Other advantages of the present invention will be readily appreciated as the same becomes better understood by reference to the following detailed description when considered in connection with the accompanying drawings wherein:

FIG. 1 is a side view of a circuit having components and a carbon nanotube extending from one of the components;

FIG. 2 is a side view of the circuit of FIG. 1 having the carbon nanotube connecting the components, thereby activating the circuit; and

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a circuit having a plurality of carbon nanotubes aligned in a same direction for forming the circuit.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring to the Figures, wherein like numerals indicate like or corresponding parts throughout the several views, a method for producing an integrated circuit **12** with a carbon nanotube (CNT) **10** is disclosed. The CNT integrated circuits **12** may be incorporated into any devices, which utilize nanotechnology. These circuits **12** include a plurality of components that are positioned on its surface. In order for the circuits **12** to be functional and incorporated into the devices, the CNT **10** must be connected to at least a two components. The subject invention provides a novel method of connecting the CNT **10** to at least two of these components.

The method includes the steps of depositing a catalytic material, or catalyst, **14** on the circuit **12** in predetermined locations. The circuit **12**, as shown in FIG. 1, includes a source **16** and a drain **18** positioned upon a gate **20** coated with a gate oxide **22**. Using suitable patterning techniques, the catalytic material **14** is deposited onto at least one of the source **16** and the drain **18**. Next, the catalytic material **14** is then subjected to chemical vapor deposition (CVD) to initiate growth of the CNT **10** such that the CNT **10** extends from at least one of the source **16** and the drain **18**. The CNT **10** is then bent toward the integrated circuit **12** such that the CNT **10** extends between the source **16** and the drain **18** to render the integrated circuit **12** operable. This bending step is described additionally below.

It is to be understood that the catalyst **14** can be deposited in any location on the integrated circuit **12**, including a plurality of locations, where it is needed for fabricating the circuit **12**. Preferably, the catalyst **14** is deposited on the source **16** such that the CNT **10** extends from the source **16**. However, in alternative embodiments, the catalyst **14** may be deposited on the drain **18** such that the CNT **10** extends from the drain **18**. The depositing of the catalyst **14** is carried out using a focused ion beam (FIB) deposition technique or other similar patterning techniques with high resolution. The FIB deposition technique is understood by those skilled in the art. The FIB deposition technique uses an ion beam to deposit the catalyst **14** onto the surface with surgical precision. The catalyst **14** may include, but is not limited to, Ni, Co, Fe, and combinations thereof.

The CNT **10** growth process occurs wherever the catalyst **14** is located on the circuit **12** surface. The growth process enables the preparation of multiple CNTs **10** on the circuit **12** surface simultaneously. Also, multiple circuits **12** may be subject to the growing process simultaneously, thereby making integration and mass production possible.

The CNT **10** can be grown from the catalyst **14** in a straight and directed manner. As shown in FIG. 1, the CNT **10** is grown at a growth angle $24, \theta$, relative to the position of the source **16**. The angle at which the CNT **10** grows relative to the source **16**, the drain **18**, or both the source **16** and the drain **18** can be controlled. To control this angle, it is possible to apply an electric field as the catalytic material **14** is subjected to CVD. Either a diameter of the CNT **10**, or the number of wall present in the CNT **10**, or both of these characteristics, can be varied by controlling an amount of the catalytic material **14** that is deposited onto the source **16** and/or the drain **18**. Also, if the duration of the CVD is controlled, then the length of the CNT **10** can be varied. A suitable diameter and length of the CNT **10** are selected in order to bridge a gap **26** between the source **16** and the drain **18**. For the circuit to function, i.e., operate, the CNT **10** must extend between the source **16** and the drain **18**.

One method of growing the CNT **10** is by CVD. CVD is a chemical reaction that transforms gaseous molecules, called precursors, into a solid material, in the form of thin film. Many different precursors may be utilized with the subject invention. Common precursors include, but are not limited to, hydrides, halides, metal-organics such as metal alkyls, metal alkoxides, metal dialkylamides, metal diketonates, or metal carbonyls, and mixtures thereof. For forming the CNT **10**, it is understood that the source of carbon may be any organic compound, such as acetylene.

The CVD is carried out in a reactor. Most reactors include gas and vapor delivery lines, a reactor main chamber having a hot wall and a cold wall. The reactor also includes a circuit loading and unloading assembly for positioning the circuit **12** within the reactor.

The reactor also includes at least one energy source. Typical examples of energy sources include resistive heating, radiant heating, and inductive heating. Resistive heating includes energy from a tube furnace or a quartz tungsten halogen lamp. Radiant heating provides energy from radio-frequency and inductive heating provided energy from a laser as a thermal energy source. Yet another energy source is photo energy from an UV-visible light laser.

The products from the CVD include a solid and a gas product. The solid product is the growth of the CNT **10**. The gas products are volatile byproducts and are always formed. The gas products generated in CVD processes are usually hazardous and must be disposed of accordingly.

Another type of CVD is plasma enhanced CVD (PECVD). PECVD is performed in a reactor at temperatures up to ~1000° C. The deposited film is a product of a chemical reaction between the source gases supplied to the reactor. A plasma is generated in the reactor to increase the energy available for the chemical reaction at a given temperature. The system for carrying out the PECVD is similar to that described above for CVD.

The subject invention uses these methods of growing the CNT **10** on the circuit **12** in conjunction with the application of electrostatic forces to form the completed circuit **12**. After the CNT **10** has been grown, referring to FIG. **2**, the CNT **10** is bent toward the integrated circuit **12** such that the CNT **10** extends between the source **16** and the drain **18** to render the integrated circuit **12** operable. More specifically, the integrated circuit **12** is subjected to an electrical charge. This creates an attractive force between the CNT **10** and the integrated circuit **12**. As disclosed in FIG. **2**, at least one electrode **30** is positioned on the circuit **12** opposite the CNT **10**. In FIG. **2**, two electrodes **30** are positioned on the circuit **12**. A DC voltage source **28** is used to apply a voltage between the CNT **10** and the single or multiple electrode(s) **30** that have been positioned on the circuit **12** surface opposite the CNT **10**. In FIG. **2**, the electrodes **30** are positioned below the CNT **10**, but this is not required depending on the orientation of the circuit **12**. The voltage creates the attractive force between the CNT **10** and the integrated circuit **12** and bend the CNT **10** toward the surface of the circuit **12**. The bending of the CNT **10** contacts the other components of the circuit **12**, thereby connecting the desired components together and enabling the operation of the circuit **12**. Once the CNT **10** is in contact with the other components, the CNT **10** remains connected permanently due to bonding forces between the components and CNT **10**. These bonding forces secure the position of the CNT **10** and the connection between the components.

Referring to FIG. **3**, an extended circuit **32** for a device made from utilizing the subject invention is illustrated. The

extended circuit **32** is designed to allow for multiple CNTs **10** to be grown and positioned simultaneously. The growth of the CNT **10** is uniform across the entire extended circuit **32** surface due to the principal growth mechanism. The extended circuit **32** may have the electrodes **30** attached similar to that of FIG. **2** and when the voltage **28** is applied all of the CNTs **10** bend and connect with the other components. After all of the CNTs **10** are bent, the gap **26** is bridged between the source **16** and the drain **18**. In order for the voltage **28** to be applied, a plurality of electrodes (not shown) may be embedded in the extended circuit **32** for the formation process. With embedded electrodes **30**, the formation process occurs independent of the extended circuit **32** operation.

In another embodiment, the formation process occurs according to the design and operation of the extended circuit **32**. Therefore, the CNT **10** will be bent down successively as the extended circuit **32** becomes operational, similar to a "domino effect". When the extended circuit **32** is turned on for the first time, a first set **34** of CNTs **10** are bent over to complete the extended circuit **32**. The complete extended circuit **32** then causes a second set **36** of CNTs **10** to be bent over. This occurs across the entire extended circuit **32**, until the extended circuit **32** is fully operational.

In certain embodiments, it may be desirable to increase the rigidity of the CNT **10** that extends from the source **16**, the drain **18**, or both **16**, **18**. To accomplish this, it is preferred that a suitable material, such as platinum, is deposited onto at least one of the source **16** and the drain **18** prior to deposition of the catalytic material **14**. The platinum enhances the mechanical attachment of the CNT **10** to the source **16** and/or the drain **18** and enhance the lifetime of the CNT **10** in the circuit **12**. Preferably, the platinum is deposited using FIB deposition techniques.

Obviously, many modifications and variations of the present invention are possible in light of the above teachings. The invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described within the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of producing an integrated circuit with a carbon nanotube, wherein the integrated circuit includes a source, a drain, and a gate, the source and drain being positioned on the gate, said method comprising the steps of:

depositing a catalytic material onto at least one of the source and the drain;

subjecting the catalytic material to chemical vapor deposition to initiate growth of the carbon nanotube such that the carbon nanotube extends from at least one of the source and the drain;

depositing platinum onto at least one of the source and the drain prior to deposition of the catalytic material to increase the rigidity of the carbon nanotube that extends from at least one of the source and the drain; and

bending the carbon nanotube toward the integrated circuit such that the carbon nanotube extends between the source and the drain to render the circuit operable.

2. A method as set forth in claim **1** wherein the step of bending the carbon nanotube is further defined as subjecting the integrated circuit to an electrical charge to create an attractive force between the carbon nanotube and the integrated circuit.

3. A method as set forth in claim **2** wherein the step of subjecting the integrated circuit to the electrical charge comprises the step of positioning at least one electrode on the circuit opposite the carbon nanotube.

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4. A method as set forth in claim 3 wherein the step of subjecting the integrated circuit to an electrical charge further comprises the step of applying a voltage between the carbon nanotube and the at least one electrode to create the attractive force between the carbon nanotube and the integrated circuit.

5. A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the step of depositing the catalytic material onto at least one of the source and the drain is further defined as depositing the catalytic material onto the source.

6. A method as set forth in claim 5 wherein the step of subjecting the catalytic material to chemical vapor deposition is further defined as subjecting the catalytic material to chemical vapor deposition to initiate growth of the carbon nanotube such that the carbon nanotube extends from the source.

7. A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the step of depositing the catalytic material onto at least one of the source and the drain is further defined as depositing the catalytic material onto the drain.

8. A method as set forth in claim 7 wherein the step of subjecting the catalytic material to chemical vapor deposition is further defined as subjecting the catalytic material to chemical vapor deposition to initiate growth of the carbon nanotube such that the carbon nanotube extends from the drain.

9. A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the step of depositing the catalytic material onto at least one of the source and the drain is further defined as depositing a catalytic material selected from the group consisting of nickel, cobalt, iron, and combinations thereof.

10. A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the step of subjecting the catalytic material to chemical vapor deposition comprises the step of transforming a gaseous precursor selected from the group consisting of hydrides, halides, metal-organics, and combinations thereof into a solid material.

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11. A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the step of subjecting the catalytic material to chemical vapor deposition is further defined as subjecting the catalytic material to plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition.

12. A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the step of depositing the catalytic material onto at least one of the source and the drain is further defined as depositing the catalytic material onto at least one of the source and the drain using focused ion beam deposition.

13. A method as set forth in claim 1 further comprising the step of controlling an angle that the carbon nanotube grows at relative to at least one of the source and the drain.

14. A method as set forth in claim 13 wherein the step of controlling the angle that the carbon nanotube grows at is further defined as applying an electric field as the catalytic material is subjected to chemical vapor deposition.

15. A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the step of depositing the catalytic material onto at least one of the source and the drain comprises the step of controlling an amount of the catalytic material that is deposited onto at least one of the source and the drain to vary at least one of a diameter of the carbon nanotube and a number of walls present in the carbon nanotube.

16. A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the step of subjecting the catalytic material to chemical vapor deposition comprises the step of controlling a duration of the chemical vapor deposition to vary a length of the carbon nanotube.

17. A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the step of depositing platinum onto at least one of the source and the drain is further defined as depositing platinum onto at least one of the source and the drain using focused ion beam deposition.

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