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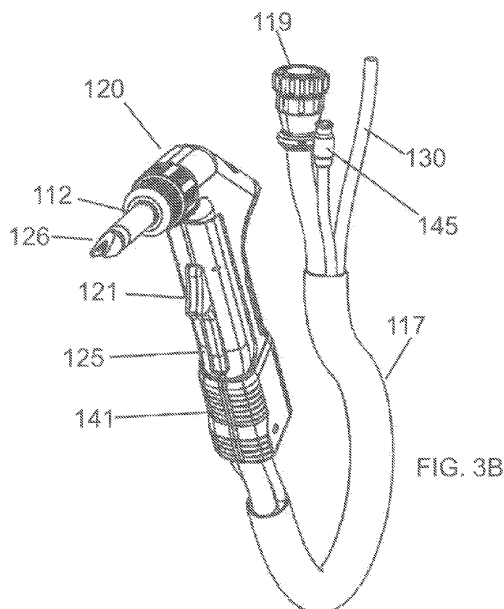
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(54) Title: **HANDHELD LASER SYSTEM**



(57) Abstract: A handheld laser system. In certain examples the handheld laser system includes a laser source emitting laser light at a wavelength for performing a material processing operation on a workpiece material with a laser beam of the emitted laser light, a plasma sensor configured to detect plasma emitted from the workpiece material during a material processing operation, and a controller coupled to the plasma sensor and configured to: compare an optical intensity value obtained by the plasma sensor to a threshold value at a time when a predetermined time period has elapsed after the material processing operation has commenced, and produce a control command based on the comparison.

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