

British inventor takes flight in 'Iron Man' suit

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Richard Browning attends the TED Conference in his personal flight suit in Vancouver, Canada, on April 27, 2017

British inventor Richard Browning lifted off from the shore of Vancouver Harbor on Thursday in a personal flight suit that inspired references to comic superhero 'Iron Man.'

Using thrusters attached to his arms and back, Browning flew in a circle

and hovered a short distance from the ground, captivating attendees at a prestigious TED Conference.

The personal [flight suit](#) is capable of propeling wearers much higher and faster, according to its creators.

"The hypothesis was that the human mind and body, if properly augmented, could achieve some pretty cool stuff," the extreme athlete and engineer said at the gathering a short time earlier.

Browning told of experimenting with various numbers and arrays of essentially miniature jet engines on his limbs.

Along the way, he said, there were more than a few crashes to the ground.

"The whole journey was about trying and failing, and learning from that," Browning said.

The first reasonably stable, six-second flight with the gear inspired his team to press on.

His startup, Gravity, formally debuted about a month ago with an early-version suit called Daedalus.

A 55-second video clip of the suit in action has logged more than a million views since being posted on YouTube about three weeks ago.

Browning said he is already getting interest from investors and some in the British military who told him they had given up on the flight feature of an 'Iron Man' suit until seeing his human-propulsion gear.

"I don't think anyone is going to be going down to Wal-Mart with it or

taking anybody to school for quite a while, but the team at Gravity is moving it along," Browning said.



British inventor Richard Browning used thrusters attached to his arms and back to fly in a circle a short distance from the ground, captivating attendees of a prestigious TED Conference

He dreams of a flight suit that one day will allow its wearer to launch

from a beach, soar along the coast and then perhaps hop into a helicopter in the air to continue their journey.

Browning has already seen the early-version flight suit compared to 'Iron Man' armor worn by Marvel Comics character Tony Stark, but stressed that his goal is firmly rooted in the real world.

He also described the project as part of a personal journey, inspired by an engineer father with a love for flying machines, but who died when he was just a teenager.

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