Georg Von Békésy Encyclopedia Article

Georg Von Békésy

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Georg Von Békésy

1899-1972

Hungarian-born American physicist whose discovery of how sound waves affect the cochlea, a part of the inner ear, led to greater understanding of the ear and sensory perception. In 1947 Békésy took a position at the Harvard psycho-acoustic laboratory, where he developed a mechanical model of the ear that showed that cilia lining the basilar membrane in the cochlea functions as a receptor of pitch and loudness. He received the 1961 Nobel Prize for physiology or medicine.