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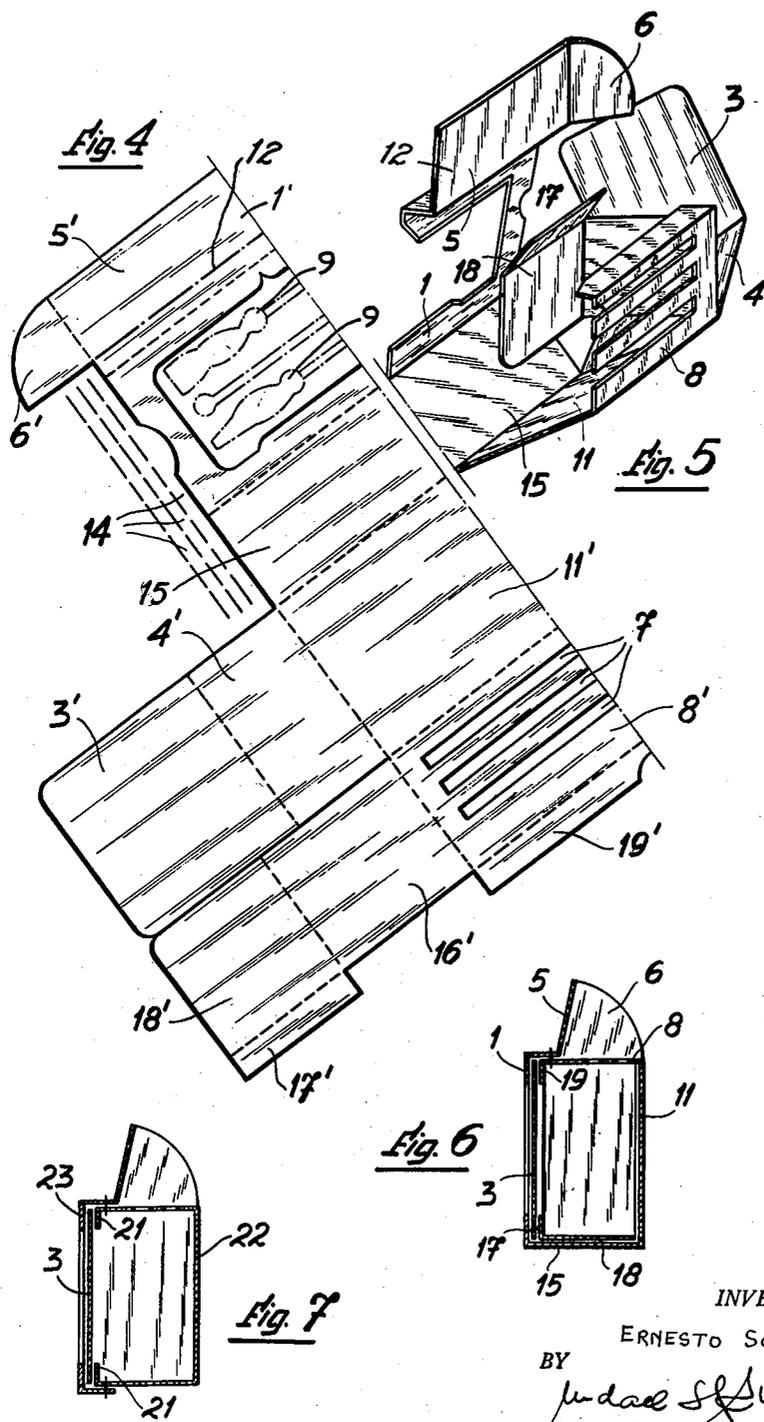
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2,620,591

TOY THEATER STAGE

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2 SHEETS—SHEET 2



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BY

[Handwritten signature]

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TOY THEATER STAGE

Ernesto Scola, Milan, Italy

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My present invention relates to a box made of cardboard or similar material, to be used as a container of sweets, small objects, toys, or other things, and such as to be transformable, after having finished its use in the aforesaid sense, into a little theatre for marionettes or puppets, also commonly known under the name of "a Punch and Judy show."

It is an object of my present invention to create a cardboard-box, including fixed and mobile parts, the latter moving within the former, in order to constitute a system of frontal opening which reproduces, in miniature, the curtain of a theatre.

Another object of my present invention is to create a box transformable in the above mentioned way, that can be produced using an originally flat sheet of cardboard, which cardboard-sheet, if folded along certain predisposed lines, would form the aforesaid fixed parts.

A preferred embodiment of my present invention consists of a box containing parts to be used as the marionettes or puppets, as well as other parts to be used as the elements necessary to move the said puppets and to work them from outside the box on the little stage obtained by opening certain parts of the box.

I obtain such aims by constructing the box as described below and as represented in the attached designs, among which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the closed box,

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the same, but opened,

Fig. 3 is a perspective rear view.

Fig. 4 is a plan view of one half of the flat sheet of cardboard or similar material, of which the box should be made,

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of the other half of the blank during the folding,

Fig. 6 is a transversal section of the folded box, and,

Fig. 7 is a modified embodiment of the box.

In all these different designs, the same numbers refer always to the same parts.

While closed, the box has the appearance shown in Fig. 1 and precisely, on its front surface 1 an aperture 2 is provided, whose surroundings represent, in miniature, the proportions of the curtain frame of a stage.

The said aperture is closed by two parts 3 and 3 that can move behind the surface 1 in the direction indicated by the arrows.

The said movable parts 3 and 3 are connected with the respective side parts 4, which can rotate round their posterior folding-edge line A—A as an axis.

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By means of this displacement, as shown in Fig. 2, the movable parts 3 and 3 reach the position 3a and 3a, thus giving completely free the aperture provided in the front surface 1.

At the same time, the side parts 4 have reached the position 4a, i. e. they actually are now in line with the box's back surface.

In order to complete the transformation of the box into the stage of a miniature theatre, the outside upper surface 5 is lifted by folding it back along the line B—B, until it reaches the position 5a, in which, as may clearly be seen in Fig. 3, it is maintained by means of its side flaps 6 and 6, that are leaning on the inside part of the upper surface 8 of the box.

The outside part of the upper surface 5 having been lifted to the position 5a, the slit formed apertures 7 provided in the inside part of the box's upper surface 8, are uncovered.

These slit shaped apertures have the purpose of allowing the little puppets or marionettes 9, 9, and 9 to be introduced into the box.

The marionettes are connected with long flat ledges 10, 10, and 10 which, protruding as they are above the inside part of the box's upper surface 8, allow moving and operating of the marionettes 9, 9, and 9 from outside the box.

It will be preferable to make the marionettes 9, 9, and 9 as well as their ledges 10, 10, and 10, of the same cardboard or similar material, of which the box itself is made.

The frontal and upper surfaces of the boxes 1 and 5 may be decorated in order to complete its ornamentation when transformed into a puppet theatre in miniature, while the box's back surface 11 may be utilized to give the necessary instructions to the person that operates the little theatre, for instance the description of the main lines of a little comedy.

In Figs. 4 and 5 is shown how a box is folded, of a blank of light or heavy weight cardboard of which one half is shown in Fig. 4. The puppets, with their ledges necessary for operation thereof, may be obtained from the same sheet of cardboard.

This aim is achieved by shaping the cardboard blank in the manner indicated in Fig. 5 for one half of the blank.

The flat cardboard blank is transformed into the box by folding it in right angles along all the dotted lines towards the inside, with the one and only exception of the line 12, which constitutes the axis B—B, along which the box's outside upper surface 5 of the box is to be folded as shown in Fig. 1.

When cutting out the aperture in the part 1' that is to become, later on, the front surface 1, which aperture is to represent the curtain frame of a stage, some cardboard material is left over.

This material may be used to cut out the outlines of the little forms 9 that are to represent the puppets or marionettes.

In a similar way, the cardboard material left over when cutting out the slit shaped apertures 7 from that part of the cardboard sheet 8' that is to become, later on, the inside part of the box's upper surface 8, may be utilized to make the little ledges 10 and 10 that are necessary in order to introduce and operate the puppets on the little stage.

Other ledges may be cut from another part 14 of the cardboard sheet, and precisely from the space that will be left over between the parts 6' destined to become the side flaps 6 of the lifting outside part of the upper surface 5, and the parts 4' destined to become the box's side surfaces 4.

Such saving of parts cut out in order to represent the curtain frame of a stage and, respectively, the slit shaped apertures in the inside upper surface necessary to introduce and operate the puppets on the stage, while using the recovered cardboard material to make the puppets and the ledges to work them, will be greatly facilitated by making the incisions on the cardboard sheet along the outlines of the said parts, but in such a way as to cut the cardboard almost completely through, thus leaving the parts to be detached easily by applying a little pressure on them.

After everything is cut out from the flat sheet of cardboard, the box itself, as shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 3 and, in section, in Fig. 6, is composed by folding the parts 1' and 11' in a right angle towards part 15' which constitutes the box's base, thus erecting the box's front 1 and back surfaces 11.

Part 8' is then folded forward in order to become the inside part of the upper surface 8, while the long straight flap 19' at its extreme end is folded down.

Part 8' is then glued on to part 17' which is folded back in a right angle towards part 1', but it is fixed in such a position as to leave part 19' well behind, at a little distance from part 1.

Part 5' is left free, as it is to become the outside part of the upper surface 5, to be lifted, later on into the position 5z.

The parts 16' are now folded down in order to form the inside parts 16 of the box's side surfaces; they are to join the inside upper surface 8 with the box's base part 15; to which they are fastened with glue at their extreme ends or flaps 18' in the manner indicated by 18 in Fig. 2.

Finally, the parts 3' are inserted behind the front surface 1, but before the extreme end 19 or flap of the inside part of the upper surface 8, thus enabling them to slide between these two guides and represent the curtain of the little theatre.

A slightly different way to construct the same box is shown in Fig. 9. Here, the sliding curtain 3 is running between a double set of guides, an upper and a lower one. To achieve this end, a piece of cardboard material 22 is cut out that, in the flat sheet, contains only the parts 3', 4', 8', 14', 15', 16', 18', and 19' as shown in Fig. 4, while the parts 1', 5', 6', and 17' are cut out from a separate piece of cardboard material which is then fastened to the upper and lower ends of the first piece in order to create, together with the opposed ends of the said first piece, an upper

and lower set of guides for the curtain to slide in.

Having thus described my invention in one preferred embodiment, I do not want this invention to remain circumscribed in the exact particulars described above and represented in the attached designs, because others, following the spirit of my invention might create transformable boxes by modifying some of my parts and by choosing perhaps other combinations of fixed and mobile parts.

I therefore ask to grant me Letters Patent to protect my invention within the meaning and range of equivalents of the detailed characteristics described above, and especially to consider such equivalents as falling under the characteristics and combinations specified in the following claims:

What I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A play theatre stage, comprising in combination, a rectangular front wall portion formed with a rectangular stage opening symmetrically arranged in said front wall portion and having a lesser height and length than the same; a back wall portion extending parallel to said front wall portion having the same length as the same but being of slightly lesser height; a ceiling portion extending normal to said front and back wall portions having the same length as the same and being formed with a plurality of parallel elongated slots extending parallel to said rear wall and front wall portion for the passing of actuating means for puppets; a stage floor portion extending parallel to said ceiling portion having the same length as the same but being slightly wider than the same; a narrow strip portion integral with said front wall portion and projecting in assembled position from the upper edge thereof normal thereto over said ceiling portion and being secured to the same; a narrow guiding strip portion integral with said ceiling portion and having the same length as the same projecting in assembled position therefrom at the angle of substantially 90° downwardly parallel and behind said front wall portion spaced a short distance therefrom; two movable side wall portions integral with said rear wall portion having the same height as the same and a width slightly lesser than the width of said stage floor portion but larger than the width of said ceiling portion, each of said movable side wall portions projecting from one of the two lateral edges of said rear wall portion turnable about the same from a first position normal to said back wall portion and stage floor portion to a second position extending substantially in the plane of said rear wall portion; and two curtain portions having the same height as said rear wall portion and said movable side wall portions and integral with the latter being connected to the front edge thereof, and having substantially half the length of said front wall portions, said curtain portions being arranged between said front wall portion and said guiding strip portion slidable from an inner position completely behind said front wall portion and closing said stage opening therein to an outer position with only their ends projecting a short distance between said front wall portion and said guiding strip portion so as to uncover said stage opening, said curtain portions being movable with said movable side wall portion from said inner position to said outer position, and being resiliently curved in said outer position.

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2. A play theatre stage, comprising in combination, a rectangular front wall portion formed with a rectangular stage opening symmetrically arranged in said front wall portion and having a lesser height and length than the same; a back wall portion extending parallel to said front wall portion having the same length as the same but being of slightly lesser height; a ceiling portion extending normal to said front and back wall portions having the same length as the same and being formed with a plurality of parallel elongated slots extending parallel to said rear wall and front wall portion for the passing of actuating means for puppets; a stage floor portion extending parallel to said ceiling portion having the same length as the same but being slightly wider than the same; a narrow strip portion integral with said front wall portion and projecting in assembled position from the upper edge thereof normal thereto over said ceiling portion and being secured to the same; a narrow guiding strip portion integral with said ceiling portion and having the same length as the same projecting in assembled position therefrom at the angle of substantially 90° downwardly parallel and behind said front wall portion spaced a short distance therefrom; an upper collapsible portion located on said ceiling portion integral with said narrow strip portion and including a rectangular middle portion foldable about the edge of said narrow strip portion spaced from the front wall from a collapsed position parallel to said ceiling portion to an upright position substantially normal thereto, and two flap portions located at either side of said middle portion extending normal thereto in upright position of the same and adapted to hold the same in upright position; two movable side wall portions integral with said rear wall portion having the same height as the same and a width slightly lesser than the width of said stage floor portion but larger than the width of said ceiling portion, each of said movable side wall portions projecting from one of the two lateral edges of said rear wall portion turnable about the same from a first position normal to said back wall portion and stage floor portion to a second position extending substantially in the plane of said rear wall portion; and two curtain portions having the same height as said rear wall portion said movable side wall portions and integral with the latter being connected to the front edge thereof, and having substantially half the length of said front wall portions, said curtain portions being arranged between said front wall portion and said guiding strip portion slidable from an inner position completely behind said front wall portion and closing said stage opening therein to an outer position with only their ends projecting a short distance between said front wall portion and said guiding strip portion so as to uncover said stage opening, said curtain portions being movable with said movable side wall portion from said inner position to said outer position, and being resiliently curved in said outer position.

3. A play theatre stage, comprising in combination, a rectangular front wall portion formed with a rectangular stage opening symmetrically arranged in said front wall portion and having a lesser height and length than the same; a back wall portion extending parallel to said front wall portion having the same length as the same but being of slightly lesser height; a ceiling portion extending normal to said front

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and back portions having the same length as the same and being formed with a plurality of parallel elongated slots extending parallel to said rear wall and front wall portion for the passing of actuating means for puppets; a stage floor portion extending parallel to said ceiling portion having the same length as the same but being slightly wider than the same; a narrow strip portion integral with said front wall portion and projecting in assembled position from the upper edge thereof normal thereto over said ceiling portion and being secured to the same; a narrow guiding strip portion integral with said ceiling portion and having the same length as the same projecting in assembled position therefrom at the angle of substantially 90° downwardly parallel and behind said front wall portion spaced a short distance therefrom; two fixed side wall portions integral with said ceiling portion and having the same width as the same and extending in assembled position substantially normal thereto downwardly therefrom and having substantially the same height as said rear wall portion and provided at their edges in assembled position adjacent to the stage floor portion with flap portions for being secured to said stage floor portion; two movable side wall portions integral with said rear wall portion having the same height as the same and a width slightly lesser than the width of said stage floor portion but larger than the width of said ceiling portion, each of said movable side wall portions projecting from one of the two lateral edges of said rear wall portion turnable about the same from a first position normal to said back wall portion and stage floor portion to a second position extending substantially in the plane of said rear wall portion; and two curtain portions having the same height as said rear wall portion and said movable side wall portions and integral with the latter being connected to the front edge thereof, and having substantially half the length of said front wall portions, said curtain portions being arranged between said front wall portion and said guiding strip portion slidable from an inner position completely behind said front wall portion and closing said stage opening therein to an outer position with only their ends projecting a short distance between said front wall portion and said guiding strip portion so as to uncover said stage opening, said curtain portions being movable with said movable side wall portion from said inner position to said outer position, and being resiliently curved in said outer position.

4. A play theatre stage, comprising in combination, a rectangular front wall portion formed with a rectangular stage opening symmetrically arranged in said front wall portion and having a lesser height and length than the same; a back wall portion extending parallel to said front wall portion having the same length as the same but being of slightly lesser height; a ceiling portion extending normal to said front and back wall portions having the same length as the same and being formed with a plurality of parallel elongated slots extending parallel to said rear wall and front wall portion for the passing of actuating means for puppets; a stage floor portion extending parallel to said ceiling portion having the same length as the same but being slightly wider than the same; a narrow strip portion integral with said front wall portion and projecting in assembled position from the upper edge thereof normal thereto over said

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ceiling portion and being secured to the same; a narrow guiding strip portion integral with said ceiling portion and having the same length as the same projecting in assembled position therefrom at the angle of substantially 90° downwardly parallel and behind said front wall portion spaced a short distance therefrom; two fixed side wall portions integral with said ceiling portion and having the same width as the same and extending in assembled position substantially normal thereto downwardly therefrom and having substantially the same height as said rear wall portion and provided at their edges in assembled position adjacent to the stage floor portion with flap portions for being secured to said stage floor portion; an upper collapsible portion located on said ceiling portion integral with said narrow strip portion and including a rectangular middle portion foldable about the edge of said narrow strip portion spaced from the front wall from a collapsed position parallel to said ceiling portion to an upright position substantially normal thereto, and two flap portions located at either side of said middle portion extending normal thereto in upright position of the same and adapted to hold the same in upright position; two movable side wall portions integral with said rear wall portion having the same height as the same and a width slightly lesser than the width of said stage floor portion but larger than the width of said ceiling portion, each of said movable side wall portions projecting from one of the two lateral edges of said rear wall portion turnable about the same from a first position

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normal to said back wall portion and stage floor portion to a second position extending substantially in the plane of said rear wall portion; and two curtain portions having the same height as said rear wall portion and said movable side wall portions and integral with the latter being connected to the front edge thereof, and having substantially half the length of said front wall portions, said curtain portions being arranged between said front wall portion and said guiding strip portion slidable from an inner position completely behind said front wall portion and closing said stage opening therein to an outer position with only their ends projecting a short distance between said front wall portion and said guiding strip portion so as to uncover said stage opening, said curtain portions being movable with said movable side wall portion from said inner position to said outer position, and being resiliently curved in said outer position.

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