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M. M. OSGOOD

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MANUFACTURE OF MARIONETTES

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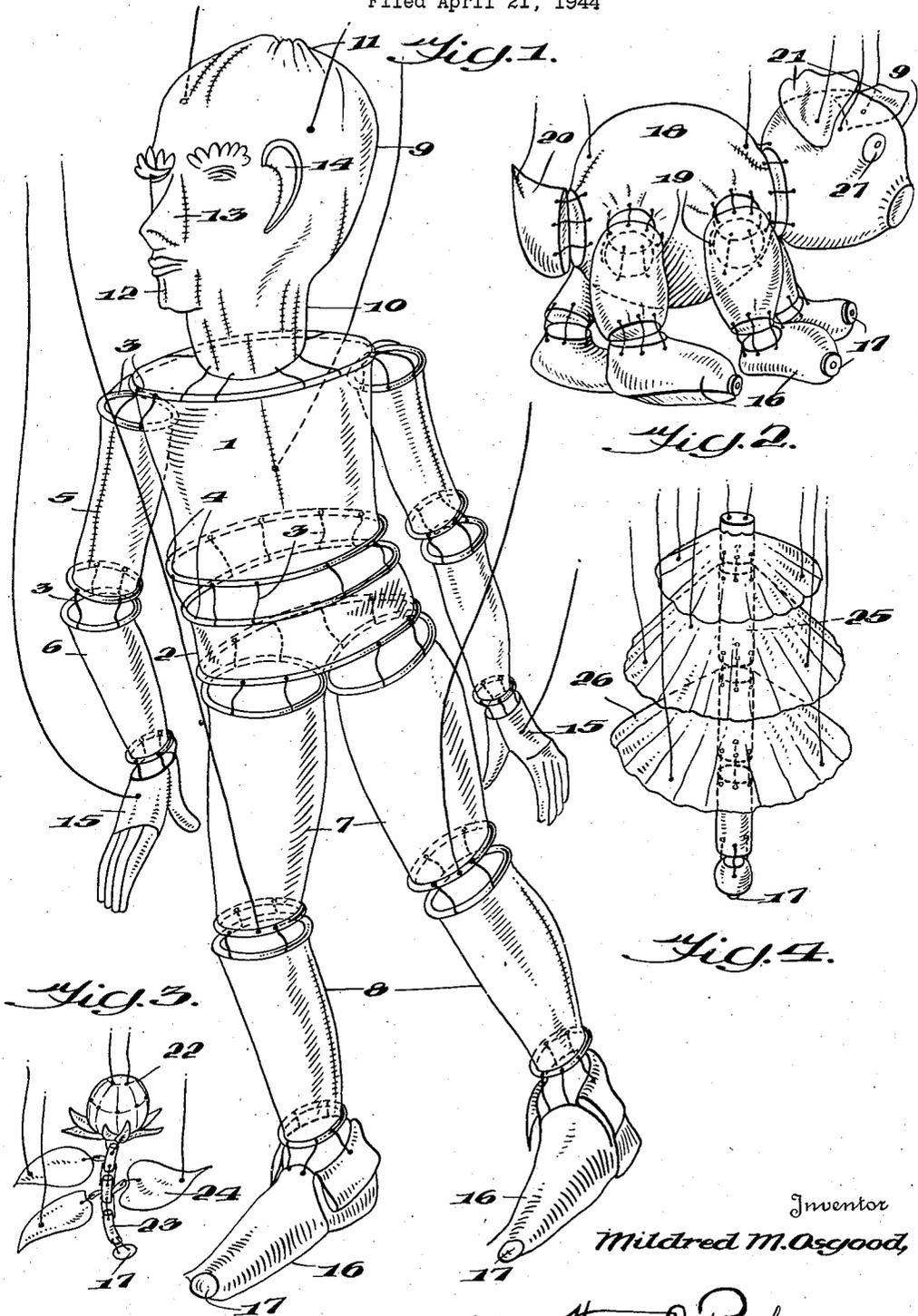


Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 3.

Inventor
Mildred M. Osgood,

By Henry C. Parker

Attorney

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MANUFACTURE OF MARIONETTES

Mildred M. Osgood, Terre Haute, Ind.

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This invention relates to manufacture of marionettes; and it comprises a marionette or puppet, simulating the human figure, or an animal, flower or the like, said marionette comprising a plurality of body portions which, with the possible exception of the extremities, are in the general shape of cylinders and constructed from thin, resilient, sheet material of the nature of organdy, tarlatan or the like, said cylinders being advantageously rolled at their ends to provide reinforcement and being connected at the joints by a plurality of peripheral threads, said figures usually being provided with control threads for manipulation; all as more fully hereinafter set forth and as claimed.

The making of marionettes is an ancient art. Their use dates back at least to the 15th century. These figures have been constructed of a wide assortment of different materials but, prior to the present invention, it has been conventional to employ filled or stuffed figures or figures made of various solid materials, such as wood, sponge rubber or the like. While such figures can be manipulated satisfactorily by adults, they are somewhat too heavy for children to operate satisfactorily. And their weight militates against any nimble or dainty movements of the figures, which are frequently required to produce the best effects. Solid, heavy figures appear relatively clumsy in action.

I have discovered that improved marionettes can be made from stiff elastic textile materials, such as organdy, crinoline, tarlatan, rayon net and the like or from parchment paper, cellophane, cellulose acetate or sheet materials of like nature having sufficient stiffness and resiliency to hold their shape when rolled into the form of cylinders. All of these materials can be described as having the physical characteristics of organdy. All body portions of human marionettes can be constructed of these cylinders, with the possible exception of the hands and feet. These cylinders can be made rounded at their ends for example in the construction of heads, by the use of darts or overlapping folds and the like. For reinforcement purposes it is desirable to curl the material at the ends of the cylinders where they are to be joined. The resulting cylinders can then be connected to produce joints by a plurality of threads having a length sufficient to produce adequate articulation.

The trunks of my human marionettes can be constructed of either one or two of the described cylinders. When two are employed greater resiliency is produced. The arms and legs can each

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be constructed of a pair of the cylinders joined to each other and to the trunk portions by threads. The hands and feet can also be constructed from the same sheet material, such as organdy, the fingers being formed separately and sewed to the palm portion, or by sewing the material into folds to produce fingers with the thumb being sewed on separately. The ears and nose can be made of organdy likewise and sewed on the head, while the eyes, eyebrows and mouth can be embroidered, if desired. Beads can be used for eyes.

The described construction produces a marionette which has a small fraction of the weight of marionettes constructed of solid materials. Yet these figures are sufficiently strong to support clothing. Owing to the lightness of the figures it is also possible to employ light-weight controls. I have made suitable controls from rolled construction paper, for example, the wings or transverse bars being made of cardboard or rolled paper. The use of controls of this type, together with my light weight marionettes, is much less tiring on the operators. And the figures are more graceful and dainty in their movements owing to their lower inertia.

My invention can be described in greater detail by reference to the accompanying drawing which shows, more or less diagrammatically, illustrative embodiments of several marionettes constructed in accordance with the present invention. In this showing,

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a marionette simulating a human body,

Fig. 2 is a similar view of an animal marionette,

Fig. 3 is a similar view of a flower, while

Fig. 4 is a similar view of a tree constructed in accordance with this invention.

In the various figures like parts are designated by like reference numerals. Referring to Fig. 1, the trunk of this human figure is made in two cylindrical sections 1 and 2, joined at their ends by a plurality of threads 3. The material at the ends of the cylinders is curled, as indicated at 4. The arms are also formed into upper and lower cylindrical portions shown at 5 and 6, which are joined in a similar manner, the upper arm portions being united to the top of trunk section 1 by threads in the manner indicated. The legs are formed in similar manner, with thigh and calf portions 7 and 8, respectively. The tops of the thigh portions are joined to section 2 of the trunk by means of threads as shown. The head 9 is formed from a cylinder but the neck 10 and the crown 11 are shaped by being gathered as shown. To make the chin 12 cross cuts in the

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shape of a T can be made, the adjacent edges of the lower cut being overlapped and sewn together to produce the neck portion. The nose 13 and ears 14, shown in Fig. 1, are made separately of organdy and then sewn to the head. The hands 15 are likewise made separately of organdy and attached by threads to the arm cylinders as shown. The feet 16 are of organdy and are attached to the legs by a plurality of threads. Beads 17 are sewn to the ends of the feet in order to provide additional weight. It will be noted that control threads are attached on either side of the head, to the back, to the knees and to the hands. But it is evident, of course, that additional control threads may be employed and that these threads can be attached at different points, if desired.

In Fig. 2 a representation of a dog or other animal is shown. The body 18 of this marionette is made from a single cylinder gathered at its ends as shown. The thigh and calf portions of the legs 19 are also made in one piece, the legs being attached to the body by threads extending from the upper inner side of the legs. The feet 16 are attached to the legs in a similar manner and are provided with beads 17 as in the case of the human figure. The head 9 and tail 20 are formed from cylinders gathered at one or both ends and secured to the body by threads. The ears 21 can be made of organdy or rayon net, for example. Control threads may be attached as shown.

In Fig. 3 a flower marionette is shown. The blossom 22 can be made of a hollow glass ball, which may be brightly colored, if desired. The stem 23 is made of a plurality of organdy cylinders attached at their ends by threads to provide flexibility. The leaves 24 are attached by threads to the stem and may be constructed of rayon net, for example. In making leaves or other flat parts from rayon net, this material is preferably used in a double thickness sewed together or a single thickness can be used if the edges are turned back and hemmed. A glass bead 17 is attached at the base of the stem to provide weight.

In Fig. 4 is shown the representation of a tree. The trunk 25 is constructed of cylinders of organdy, for example, joined by threads as shown. The branches and leaves 26 can be adequately represented by skirt-like ruffles of organdy or rayon net, for example. A glass bead 17 at the base of the trunk furnishes the required weight. The control threads are attached to the leaf ruffles and to the top of the trunk as shown.

While I have described what I consider to be the best embodiments of my invention, it is evident, of course, that various modifications can be made in the specific constructions described without departing from the purview of this invention. I have constructed a large assortment of marionettes of different types in addition to those shown in the drawing, representing butterflies, birds, cows, horses, etc. It is believed evident from the preceding description how these and other types can be constructed from stiff, resilient, sheeted materials of all types, using my cylinders as construction elements and with their attendant advantages of lightness in weight and flexibility. If desired, the marionettes can be constructed from thin textile materials which normally lack the necessary stiffness for the purpose but which have been artificially stiffened by the use of sizing agents, such as starch or glue. The marionettes can be constructed in large sizes, if desired, and operated by mechanical means. Full size tree

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marionettes can be employed as background material in theatrical stage settings, for example. If desired the threads connecting the cylinders can be made of rubber. Reinforcing elements of cardboard or other material can be introduced if necessary. Transparent marionettes can be constructed from cellophane, cellulose acetate or other transparent plastic sheet materials. Other modifications of my invention which fall within the scope of the following claims will be evident to those skilled in the art.

What I claim is:

1. A marionette constructed at least partly from thin sheet material rolled into the general shape of hollow cylinders with the cylinders spread apart and loosely connected at their peripheries by means of threads to produce joints, said sheet material being resilient and sufficiently stiff to hold its shape when rolled.

2. The marionette of claim 1 wherein said sheet material is one selected from a class consisting of organdy, crinoline, tarlatan, rayon net, parchment paper, cellophane and cellulose acetate.

3. The marionette of claim 1 wherein said sheet material is a textile material which has been sized to produce sufficient stiffness.

4. The marionette of claim 1 wherein said sheet material is curled at the ends of said cylinders, said threads being attached to the curls.

5. A marionette comprising a body and appendages constructed of a plurality of hollow cylinders spaced apart and formed from thin sheet material having the characteristics of organdy and a plurality of threads loosely connecting the ends of said cylinders around their peripheries and serving to produce joints.

6. A human marionette having a trunk, arms and legs constructed of hollow cylinders of thin sheet material having approximately the stiffness of organdy, said cylinders being spaced apart and loosely connected at their peripheries with a plurality of threads, thereby forming joints, said cylinders being curled at their ends to produce stiffness.

7. The marionette of claim 6 wherein the head of said marionette is formed of a cylinder of sheet material of the nature of organdy gathered at the top to produce the crown and at the bottom to produce a neck portion, the neck portion being spaced from but attached to the trunk with a plurality of threads connected to the peripheries of the neck portion and the trunk cylinder.

8. An animal marionette comprising a head, tail, trunk and legs constructed of hollow cylinders of thin sheet material having approximately the stiffness of organdy, said cylinders being spaced apart and loosely connected at their peripheries by threads, thereby forming joints, the cylinders forming said head and tail being gathered at their ends and connected to said trunk by means of threads.

9. A flower marionette comprising a stem constructed of a plurality of hollow cylinders of a thin sheet material having approximately the stiffness of organdy, said cylinders being spaced apart and loosely joined at their peripheries by threads to produce flexibility.

10. The marionette of claim 9 wherein leaves are provided of said material joined to said stem by threads to produce flexibility.

11. The marionette of claim 9 wherein a glass ball representing a flower is mounted at the top of said stem and a bead to provide weight is mounted at the bottom of said stem.

12. A marionette having a trunk portion constructed of at least one hollow cylinder of a thin sheet material having approximately the stiffness and resiliency of organdy, legs constructed of cylinders of said sheet material spaced from but loosely attached at their peripheries to said trunk portion with threads to produce joints, feet constructed of said material attached to said leg cylinders with threads, and weighting beads mounted on said feet, said cylinders being curled at their ends for reinforcement.

MILDRED M. OSGOOD.

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