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TOY THEATRE FOR PUPPETS OR MARIONETTES

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2 Sheets-Sheet 1

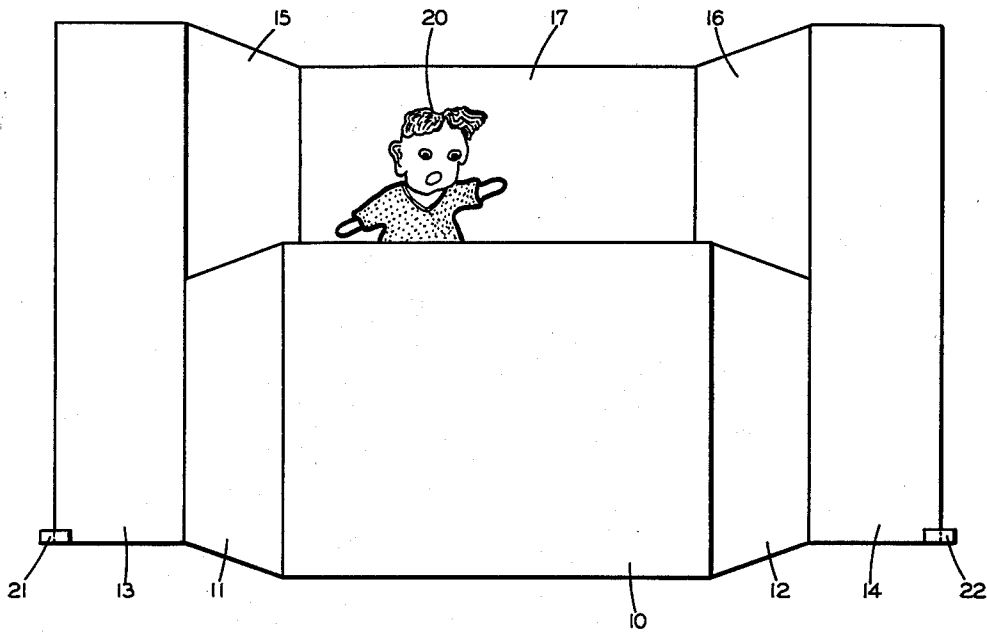


FIG. 1

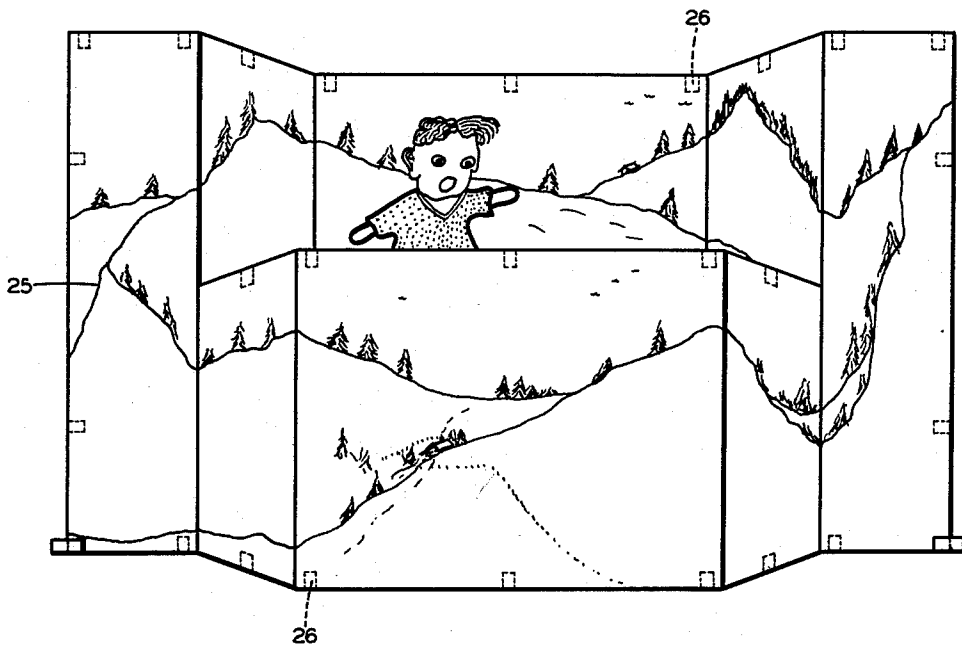


FIG. 2

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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

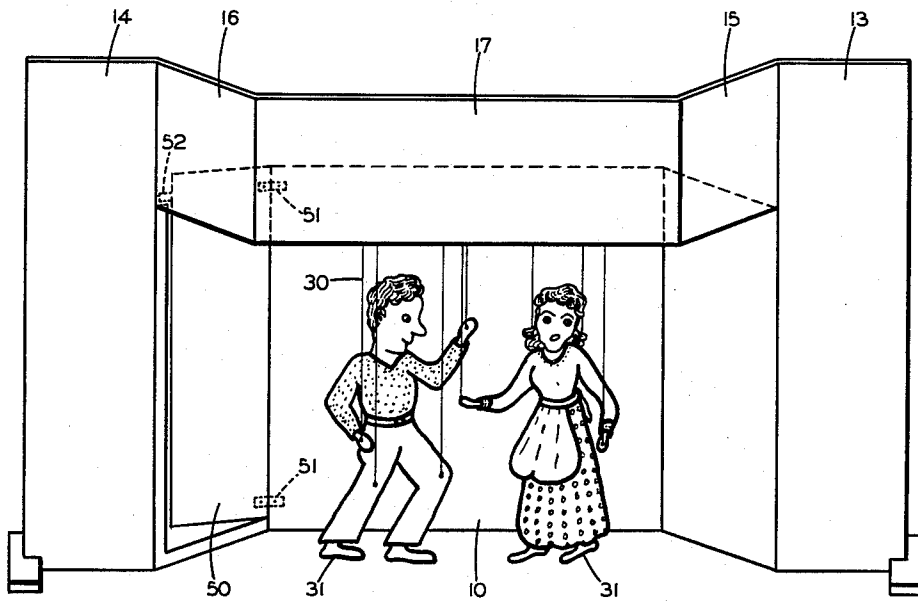


FIG. 3

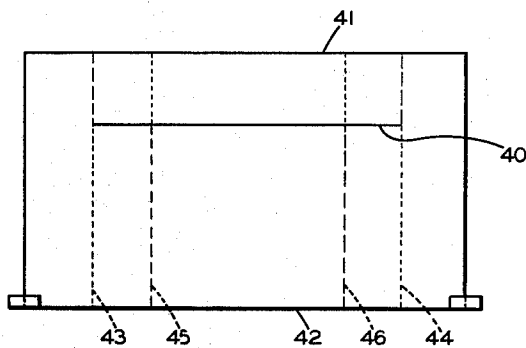


FIG. 4

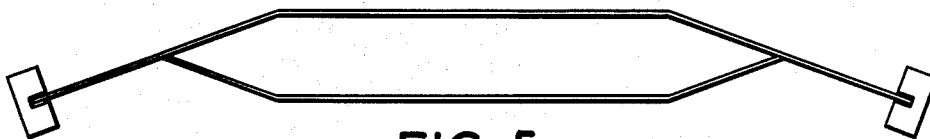


FIG. 5



FIG. 6

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TOY THEATRE FOR PUPPETS OR MARIONETTES

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6 Claims. (Cl. 46—13)

This invention pertains to a toy theatre or stage for use either as a stage for a puppet show or as a stage for a marionette show.

It is an object of my invention to provide a toy stage which, with substantially no work, can be changed from a puppet stage to a marionette stage, and vice versa.

A further object of my invention is to provide, as a single unit, a device adaptable for use either as a puppet or a marionette stage, particularly for the use of children or on television.

Another object of my invention is to provide the stage and complete scenery necessary for a child to produce, by puppets or marionettes, a complete show such as Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, etc.

A further object of my invention is to provide a very inexpensive toy for children which may, in one position, be used as a puppet stage and, by simply turning the device around, may be used as a marionette stage.

For a better understanding of the present invention, together with other and further objects thereof, reference is had to the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, and its scope will be pointed out in the appended claims.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a front view of the device of the invention showing it being used as a stage for a puppet show;

Fig. 2 shows scenery connected to the stage of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 shows the device of Fig. 1, in reversed position being used for a marionette show;

Fig. 4 is a plan view, on a reduced scale, showing the device of Figs. 1 to 3 as it is manufactured;

Fig. 5 is a top view of the device shown in Fig. 4; and

Fig. 6 is a top view showing the device folded for packing.

With reference to the drawings, there is shown in Fig. 1 a view of the device of this invention being used as a puppet stage. As erected, the stage comprises a front portion 10 having two integrally connected side portions 11, 12 folded diagonally back with respect to the front portion 10 and integrally joining, respectively, the lower portions of the two wings 13, 14. The upper portions of the two wings 13, 14 are integrally connected, respectively, to rearwardly extending side walls 15, 16, and the back wall 17 is integrally secured to the rearwardly extending side walls 15, 16.

The back wall 17 is above and well to the rear of the front portion 10 thereby providing a relatively large space in which an operator's hand may be positioned to operate the puppet 20.

The puppet appears in front of the back wall 17 and the operator's hand is hidden from the audience by the front portion 10.

Supports 21, 22, such as slotted blocks of wood are connected to the lower outside corners of the two wings 13, 14 to help maintain the stage in its upright position.

Fig. 2 shows the stage of Fig. 1 provided with scenery 25. The scenery 25 may be made of a single sheet of printed paper and may be provided with foldable tabs

26 to hold the scenery to the stage. Other means of course may be used to secure the scenery to the stage, and it is within the scope of this invention to print the scenery directly onto the face of the stage. An advantage in having the scenery readily removable is that a number of different scenes can be used with the same stage. Thus a complete play could be sold for a few dollars, the kit including, for example, all of the equipment necessary for a child to give the play Cinderella. The several characters and sufficient replaceable scenery would be included with the stage to give all the scenes of the complete play.

When the stage is to be used for marionettes instead of puppets, the device is simply turned around to the position shown in Fig. 3. The back wall 17 now is forward of the front portion 10 and hides the strings 30 used to actuate the marionettes 31, and the floor on which the device rests becomes the floor of the stage. Scenery may be provided as previously described.

An important advantage of the combined marionette and puppet stage of the invention is its simplicity of manufacture. The device can be stamped out of cardboard by a single operation and, in one or two subsequent operations, the material can be scored for folding. The stage and its scenery are shipped in a flat condition so that there is no danger of damage, and small children can readily fold the stage into proper shape for erection and can attach the scenery to either of the faces of the stage, depending upon whether a puppet or a marionette show is to be given.

In the event large marionettes are to be used, it would be convenient to provide the stage with one or more doors 50 through which the marionettes and their actuating strings may enter onto the stage. The door 50 may be hinged at 51 and suitable latch means 52 may be provided to keep the door shut during the performance.

Fig. 4 shows, on a reduced scale, the stage as produced. It comprises a flat oblong body of cardboard or other material sufficiently rigid to stand erect on one edge. The flat oblong body has a slot 40 extending parallel to the long edges 41, 42 of the oblong body, and the slot 40 is positioned closer to the edge 41 than to the edge 42. This is so that the depth of the back wall 17 is less than the depth of the front portion 10 when the stage is erected for use as shown in Figs. 1 to 3. The length of the slot 40 is substantially less than the length of the oblong body and the slot is centered so that there are two substantially equal lengths of unslotted material at either end of the slot 40 which form the two wing sections 13, 14 of the stage.

As shown in Fig. 4 the cardboard body is scored to facilitate folding it in the proper directions. Two first fold lines 43, 44 extend completely transversely across the cardboard at the location of the ends of the slot 40. Two second fold lines 45, 46 extend transversely across the cardboard body parallel to the fold lines 43, 44 and positioned slightly inward from the ends of the slot 40. It is desirable that the cardboard be scored to facilitate folding in two directions. The dotted lines in Fig. 4 represent the fold lines in one direction and the dash lines represent the fold lines in the opposite direction. Thus the bottom sections A of the first fold lines 43, 44 are dotted, showing that they are scored on one face of the cardboard sheet, while the top sections B of these lines are dashed showing that they are scored for folding in the opposite direction. The second fold lines 45, 46 are divided at the cut line 40, the portion A to one side of the cut line being adapted for folding in the same direction as the portions A of fold lines 43, 44, and the portions B being adapted to be folded in the same direction as the portions B of lines 43, 44.

While there have been described what are at present

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considered to be the preferred embodiments of this invention, it will be obvious to those skilled in the art that various changes and modifications may be made therein without departing from the invention, and it is, therefore, aimed in the appended claims to cover all such changes and modifications as fall within the true spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A toy theatre for use either as a stage for a puppet show or as a stage for a marionette show, comprising a flat oblong body of material having straight top and bottom edges and being of material sufficiently rigid to stand erect on either top or bottom edge and having a horizontal slot extending parallel to the long top and bottom edges of said body at a location nearer one of said long edges than the other, the length of said slot being less than the length of said body, said body having two first fold lines extending transversely across it respectively at the two ends of said slot, and having two second fold lines extending transversely across it respectively parallel to said first two fold lines and positioned inward of said two first fold lines forming an upper and a lower centrally located wall section, said upper and lower wall sections being parallel to each other, and upon the theatre being used for a puppet show the lower of the two sections being located closer to the audience and upon the theatre being used for a marionette show the upper of the two sections being located closer to the audience.

2. A toy theatre as set forth in claim 1, further characterized by each of said two first fold lines comprising a portion to one side of the slot folded in one direction and a portion on the other side of said slot folded in the opposite direction, and by each of said two second fold lines comprising a portion to one side of said slot folded in one direction and a portion on the other side of said slot folded in the opposite direction.

3. A toy theatre as set forth in claim 2, further characterized by the adjacent parallel fold lines facilitating folding the body in opposite directions.

4. A toy theatre for use either as a stage for a puppet show or as a stage for a marionette show, comprising a

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flat oblong body of cardboard having straight top and bottom edges and sufficiently rigid to stand erect on either top or bottom edge and having a horizontal slot through it extending in a direction parallel to the long edges of said body at a location nearer one of said long edges than the other, the length of the slot being less than the length of said body; said body being scored for folding along two first fold lines extending transversely across it at the two ends of said horizontal slot, and being scored for folding along two second fold lines extending transversely across it parallel to said first two fold lines and positioned inward of said two first fold lines forming an upper and a lower centrally located wall section, said upper and lower wall sections being parallel to each other, and upon the theatre being used for a puppet show the lower of the two sections being located closer to the audience and upon the theatre being used for a marionette show the upper of the two sections being located closer to the audience.

5. A toy theatre as set forth in claim 4, further characterized by said body of cardboard being scored on one side to form part of each of said two first fold lines and being scored on the opposite side to form the remainder of each of said two first fold lines, and further characterized by said body of cardboard being scored on one side to form part of each of said two second fold lines and scored on the opposite side to form the remainder of each of said two second fold lines.

6. A toy theatre as set forth in claim 5, further characterized by the adjacent parallel fold lines facilitating folding the cardboard body in opposite directions.

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