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Williams

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[54] **ATTACHMENT STRUCTURE FOR PUPPET, MANIPULATOR COMBINATION**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **46/126,** 16/114 R, 24/204, 24/DIG. 18, 46/DIG. 1

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63h 7/00**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 46/126, DIG. 1, 137, 138; 24/204, DIG. 18; 16/114 R, 114 A, 114 B; 224/45 P, 52, 55

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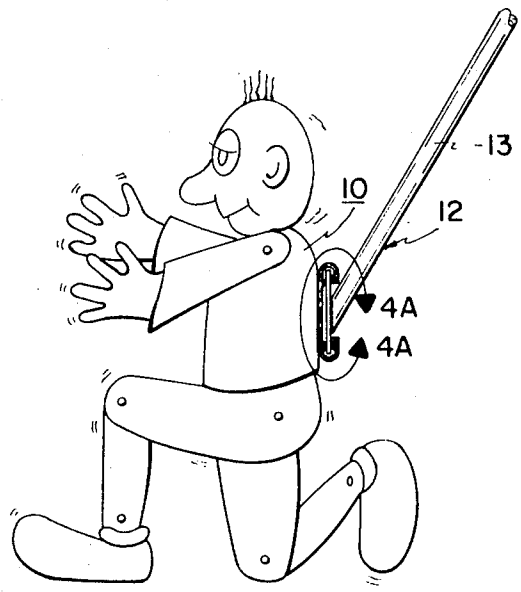
Primary Examiner—F. Barry Shay

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A puppet manipulator and a manipulator-puppet combination and improvement wherein the manipulator comprises an elongate member uniquely releasably secured, at a beveled edge thereof, with an associated puppet. The means of securement comprises releasably interlocking fabric portions, respectively attached to the puppet and the manipulator thereof, wherein one of said fabric portions overlaps another of said fabric portions.

4 Claims, 6 Drawing Figures



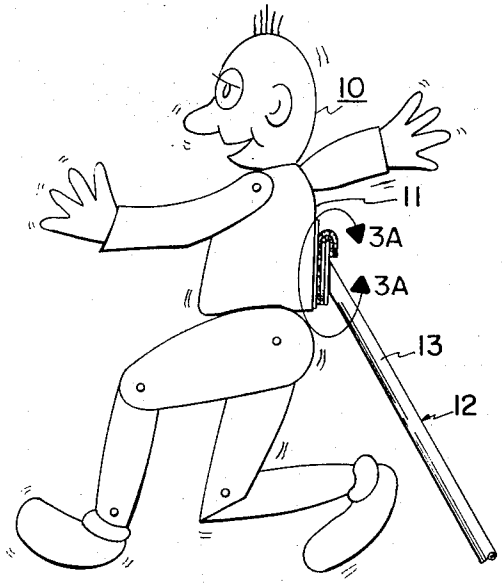


FIG. 1

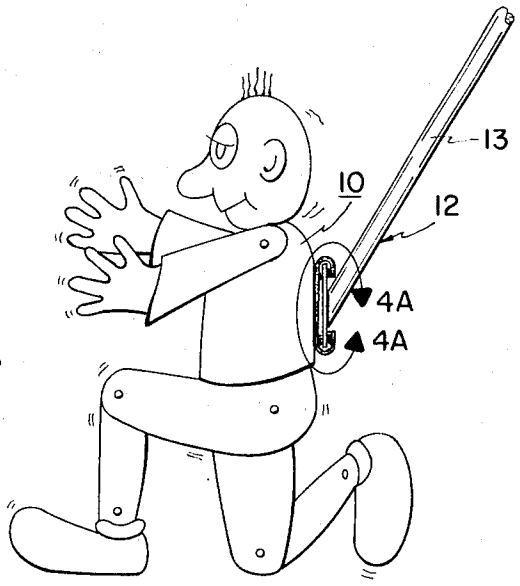


FIG. 2

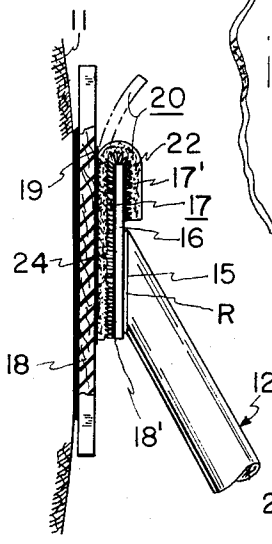


FIG. 3A

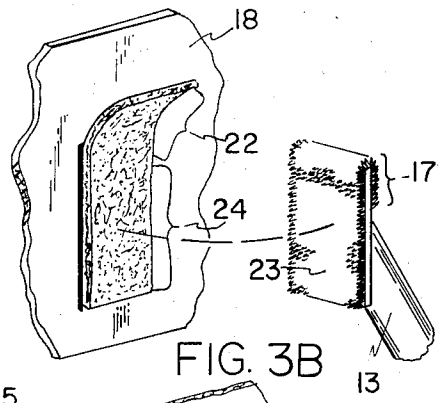


FIG. 3B

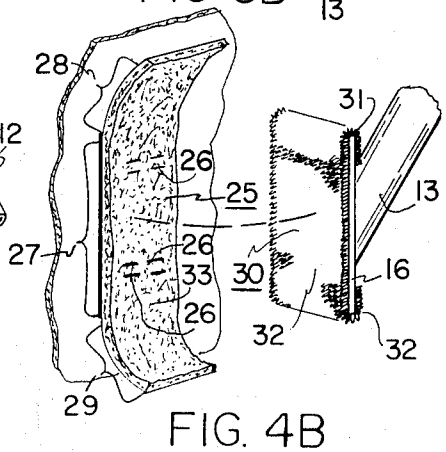


FIG. 4B

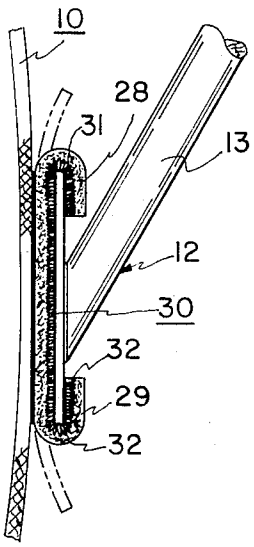


FIG. 4A

ATTACHMENT STRUCTURE FOR PUPPET, MANIPULATOR COMBINATION

The present invention relates to puppets and, more particularly, to a new and improved puppet manipulator and puppet-manipulator combination, wherein a user can manipulate a puppet to his or her satisfaction from behind a puppet stage, for example, and this whether or not the user is in a sitting or standing position.

The present invention represents an improvement as to one embodiment relative to the inventor's prior U.S. Pat. No. 3,742,644, issued July 3, 1973.

The inventor's prior patent as above referenced taught the concept of having an manipulator in the form of an elongate support member provided with a beveled edge, and plate attached thereto, wherein the manipulator might be attached to a puppet from either upper vertical or lower vertical positions, this to accommodate both the sitting and standing positions of a user. Different means were illustrated whereby the beveled plate or edge of the manipulator or elongate support might be attached to the back of the puppet.

In this invention releasably securable fabric members are employed in such a manner that one fabric member overlaps the other.

Reference is now made to the so-called interlocking "fabrics," including plastics, currently on the market and sometimes known under the tradename Velcro. As is well known in the art, Velcro and similar fabrics or flexible sheet members will include surface means wherein the surface elements of one will releasably interlock with the surface elements of another upon contact. As to Velcro, there will be disposed on a surface of one of the fabric members a multiplicity of loops, and on the other fabric surface a multiplicity of fabric hooks. When the two members are crossed together the hooks become engaged with the loops so as to preclude an inadvertent separation of the two fabrics without intentional pulling away of one from the other.

Various types of objects have heretofore been secured together by means of the surface of one Velco member simply touching the surface of another Velcro member. Indeed, this has been taught in the applicant's prior patent at FIG. 3 thereof, by way of example.

A central problem that is incurred, in connection with using Velcro for attachment of a manipulator to the puppet, is that the hook and eye engagement of the strips, taken along when such engagement is in a single plane, effects too great a flexibility or movement as between the puppet and and the stick, this about an axis normal to the plane of attachment of the Velcro members. Thus, if a beveled manipulator is simply attached by planar Velcro means to the puppet, the puppet will swing either clockwise or counter-clockwise, i.e., to the right or left of the user, and not have a really rigid securement for various positions of the puppet: thus, the same might be displaced from the intended vertical position thereof by slight pivotal displacement of the puppet attachment relative to the manipulator.

It has been found that this situation can be corrected if the flexible fabric strips overlap each other, that is, if that fabric strip attached to the puppet actually overlaps at least one or even both edges of that strip attached to the plate of the manipulator. It has been found that such a configuration, even at one edge of the manipulator plate, measurably reduces tendency of the puppet to swing even slightly about the axis vertical to the Velcro attachment plane.

Accordingly, a principal object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved attachment means for elongate manipulator, puppet combinations.

A further object is to provide a manipulator having a beveled edge and plate combination, wherein the same includes an attachment fabric disposed not only on the face of the plate but also curved over at least one edge thereof, this to receive an overlapping margin of a corresponding attachment fabric secured to the puppet to be manipulated.

A further object is to provide a stabilized attachment of interlocking fabric members, this so that the object to be attached will not become inadvertently pivotally displaced or move or tip relative to the manipulator used.

The features of the present invention which are believed to be novel are set forth with particularity in the appended claims. The present invention, both as to its organization and manner of operation, together with further objects and advantages thereof, may best be understood by reference to the following description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. **1** is a side elevation of one type of puppet used in combination with an elongate manipulator, the latter being attached thereto in a manner as taught by the present invention.

FIG. **2** is similar to FIG. **1** but illustrates a reversal of the manipulator so that the puppet can be actuated from a standing position, for example.

FIG. **3A** is an enlarged side elevation and is taken along the line **3A—3A** in FIG. **1,** this illustrating the details of construction and contact of representative parts of the structure.

FIG. **3B** illustrates the securement fabric members as being separated relative to the structure of FIG. **3.**

FIG. **4A** is similar to FIG. **3A,** but this time illustrates an alternative embodiment wherein the attachment strip of the puppet overlaps opposite edges of the plate associated with the manipulator.

FIG. **4B** is a perspective detail of the structure of FIG. **4A** shown in its separated condition.

In the drawings the puppet **10** is shown to include a back surface **11** which receives the attachment means for manipulator **12.** Manipulator **12** includes an elongate support member **13** provided with a beveled edge **15.** To beveled edge **15** is secured, as by a suitable adhesive R, a plate **16.** Plate **16** itself has a fabric attachment member **17** disposed over its face **18'**, which is secured thereto by means of an adhesive. It is important to be noted that the fabric attachment member also is doubled back at its upper margin **17'** and is secured to the plate thereat by a suitable adhesive.

Glued or otherwise secured to the back surface **11** of puppet **10** is a back plate **18.** The same is provided with an adhesive **19** for securing the flexible overlap member **20.** The same includes not only a base **24** but also an overlap portion **22.** Members **17** and **20** include respective fabric attachment surfaces comprising loops and hooks, respectively or alternatively, such that upon contact of the adjacent surfaces the hooks will engage the loops and prevent the inadvertent separation of the two fabric members. Of course, as is well known in the art, the Velcro or equivalent fabric strips may be physi-

cally pulled apart and separated as shown in FIG. 3B by the user simply pulling away overlap portion 22 and then separating the fabric face 23 from base portion 24 of the respective Velcro strips.

In operation as to FIGS. 3A and 3B, the face 23 in FIG. 3B is advanced towards base portion 24 to engage the same, after which overlap portion 22 is caused to overlap the overlap portion 17' of FIG. 3B. It has been found through use that where the overlap provision is made as shown in FIG. 3B, then there is much less tendency of the puppet to rock or tip to the right or left while it is being manipulated in simply a vertical plane. Thus, the attachment is much more rigid even though a flexible fabric material is used for such attachment.

The structure as shown in FIGS. 4A and 4B is similar to that of FIGS. 3A and 3B excepting for the fact that this time the overlap is an opposite extremities of the flexible overlap member and the associated plate of the manipulator.

Thus, the back surface 11 of the puppet includes the flexible overlap member 25 which is stitched thereto by stitches 26 or secured by adhesive or other means. At opposite extremities of base portion 27 are the overlap portions 28 and 29. Elongate support member 13 is made up as before, including plate 16 and this time fabric attachment member 30 having overlap portions 31 and 32 glued to the plate. Thus, in the case of FIGS. 4A and 4B, when the plate of the manipulator is advanced forwardly such that the two surfaces 32 and 33 contact each other, the overlap portions 28 and 29 are overlapped as shown in FIG. 4A so that a firm gripping securement is achieved by the flexible fabric. It is found in practice that this is extremely sturdy and much more efficient than were the surfaces simply joined together in a planar configurement.

What is provided, therefore, is a means of attachment whereby, by the use of Velcro or other releasably securable fabric or plastic materials, the side-sway of the puppet is essentially precluded by virtue of the overlap of the edges of the attachment means as seen in FIGS. 3A and 4A, this so that the surface of engagement of the fabrics is not merely in a single plane but rather a single or double-J surface as shown. Such a construction measurably increases rigidity through such attachment structure.

While particular embodiments of the present invention have been shown and described, it will be obvious to those skilled in the art that changes and modifications may be made without departing from this invention in its broader aspects, and, therefore, the aim in the appended claims is to cover all such changes and modifications as fall within the true spirit and scope of this invention.

I claim:

1. In a puppet and manipulator combination comprising a puppet and a manipulator attached thereto, an improvement wherein said puppet has a back surface having secured thereon first attaching means comprising an attachment-type, fabric, flexible overlap member, said manipulator comprising an elongate member provided at one end with an attached plate which is inclined with respect to the axis of said elongate member, second attaching means comprising a releasably securable fabric attachment member secured to said plate and detachably cooperatively self-securable to said flexible overlap member by surface engagement therewith, said fabric attachment member being disposed over said plate, and doubled back over at least one edge of said plate, said fabric attachment member being adhered in place in its doubled back configurement with respect to said plate, said flexible overlap member having, along at least one edge thereof, a foldable flexible overlap portion, said plate with said fabric attachment member being releasably secured to said flexible overlap member in a manner such that said flexible overlap portion is overlappingly disposed around at least said one edge of said plate and in said surface engagement with said fabric attachment member where the latter itself doubles back over said plate edge.

2. The structure of claim 1 wherein said fabric attachment member is doubled back and secured to said plate over opposite edges of said plate, said flexible overlap member likewise being releasably doubled back about said plate and having doubled-back edges engaging said fabric attachment member.

3. The structure of claim 1 wherein said flexible overlap member is sewn to said back surface.

4. Structure according to claim 1 wherein said back surface of said puppet includes a plate provided with said flexible overlap member which faces rearwardly.

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