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2,705,386

COLLAPSIBLE MINIATURE STAGE

Filed May 27, 1952

3 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1.

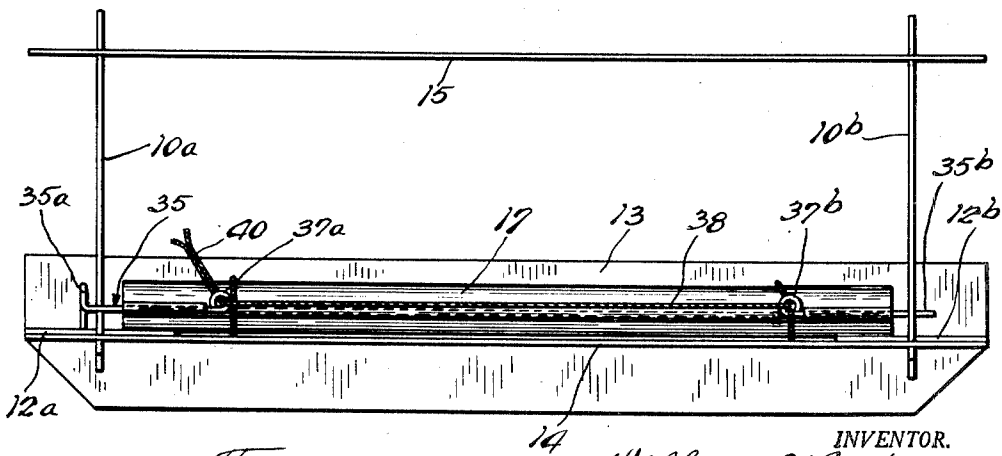
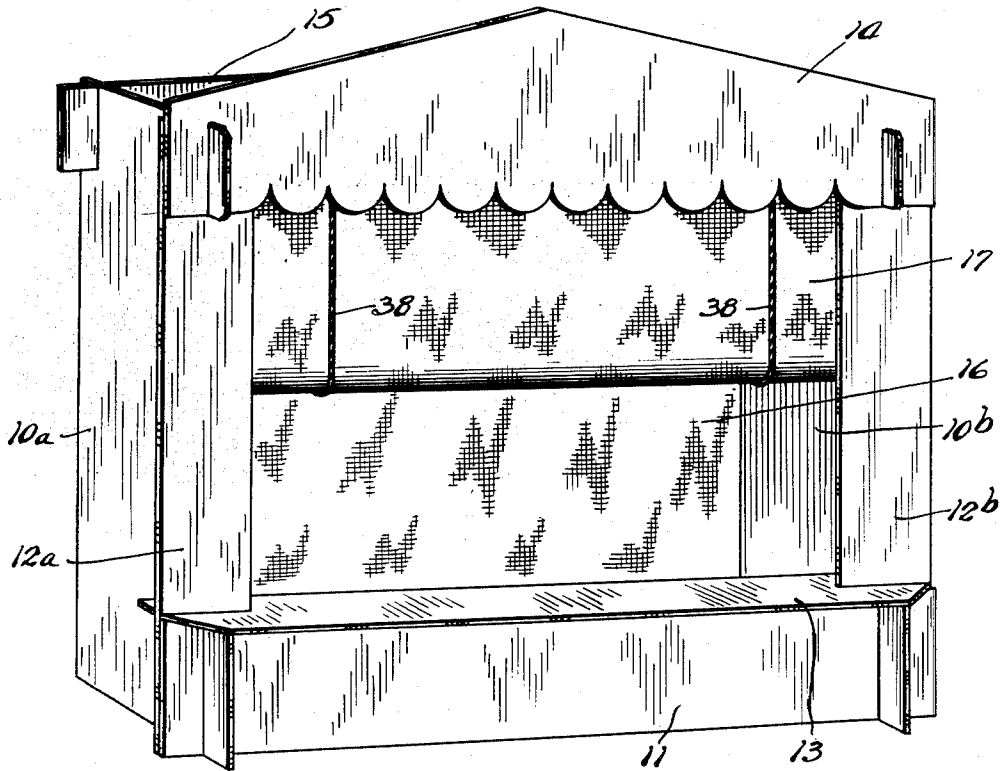


Fig. 2.

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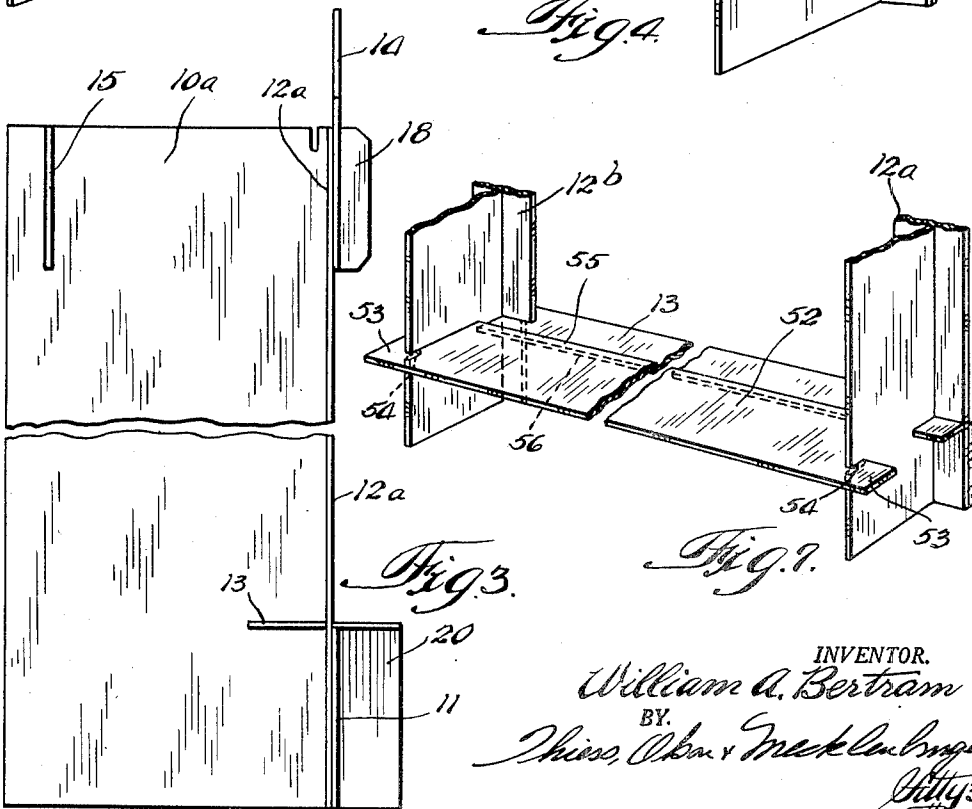
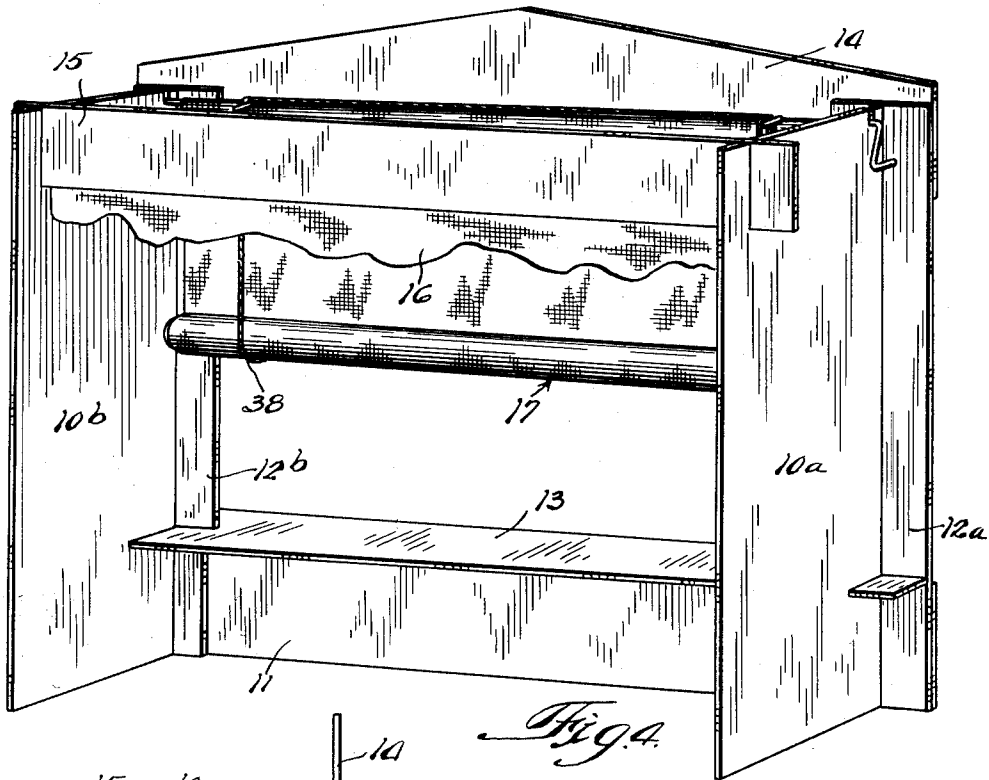
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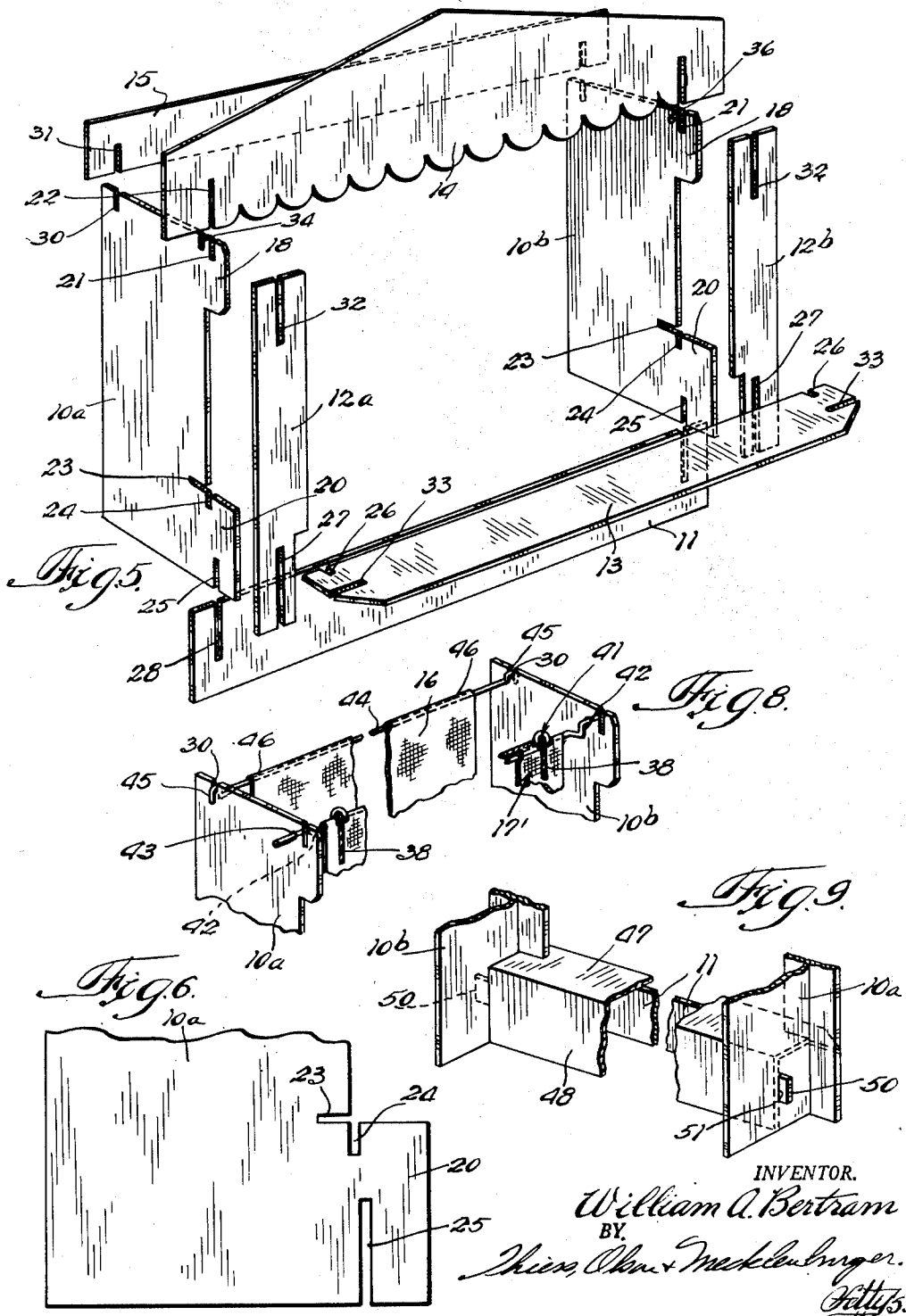
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3 Sheets-Sheet 3



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COLLAPSIBLE MINIATURE STAGE

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9 Claims. (Cl. 46—13)

This invention relates to a collapsible miniature stage for use with puppets, marionettes or the like.

Various stage constructions of this type have heretofore been proposed which are not readily adaptable for collapsing, or are of such complex and costly construction as to restrict primarily the use of such devices to professional entertainers.

Thus it is one of the objects of this invention to provide a miniature stage which may be readily collapsed, when desired, into a small compact package which may be conveniently carried or stored.

It is a further object of this invention to provide a miniature stage which is adapted for use with either puppets or marionettes.

It is a still further object of this invention to provide a miniature stage which is of simple, yet sturdy, construction, inexpensive to produce, and does not require the use of nails or screws to effect erection thereof.

Further and additional objects will appear from the description, accompanying drawings, and appended claims.

In accordance with one embodiment of this invention, a collapsible miniature stage is provided comprising a pair of side pieces arranged in upright spaced relation and having slotted peripheral portions. Detachably mounted on the front edge of the side pieces is a base piece which extends transversely with respect to said side pieces. The base piece is provided with a slotted periphery which is adapted to cooperate with the slotted peripheries of the side pieces to effect slidable interlocking engagement therewith. Disposed transversely of the side pieces and the base piece and resting on the upper edge of the latter is a platform piece which is provided with a slotted periphery. The platform piece is detachably mounted on the side pieces and has the slotted periphery thereof cooperating with the slotted peripheries of the side pieces to effect slidable interlocking engagement therewith. Disposed above the platform piece and in substantially parallel coplanar relation with the base piece is a head piece which has a slotted periphery adapted to engage with the slotted peripheries of the side pieces to effect slidable interlocking engagement therewith.

For a more complete understanding of this invention reference should be made to the drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective front view of the stage when erected;

Fig. 2 is a top plan view of the stage shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a left-end view of the stage shown in Fig. 2;

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary perspective back view of the stage shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 5 is a fragmentary exploded view of the stage shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 6 is a fragmentary enlarged side elevational view of one of the side pieces;

Fig. 7 is a fragmentary perspective view of the rear of the stage in erected position and showing a second platform piece attachment mounted thereon;

Fig. 8 is a fragmentary perspective view of a modified form of stage; and

Fig. 9 is a fragmentary perspective view of another modified form of stage.

Referring now to the drawings and more particularly to Fig. 1, a collapsible miniature stage is shown comprising a pair of upright side pieces 10a and 10b which are of substantially the same construction. The side pieces are disposed in spaced substantially parallel relation with

2

respect to one another and are held in such position by an elongated base piece 11, which is detachably mounted on the lower portion of the front edges of said side pieces. Detachably mounted on the front edge of each of the side pieces and disposed in abutted transverse relation therewith is a face piece 12a or 12b. The face pieces are of like construction and have the lower portions thereof adapted to be disposed behind the base piece 11, as seen more clearly in Fig. 3. Positioned transversely with respect to the side, face, and base pieces and embracing portions of the face pieces is an elongated platform piece 13. The platform piece 13 is adapted to rest on the upper edge of the base piece 11 and provides a relatively shallow stage or platform surface on which the puppets may perform. Disposed above platform piece 13 and in substantially parallel coplanar relation with respect to base piece 11 is a head piece 14 which is adapted to detachably engage the upper front edge portions of the side pieces 10a and 10b. Positioned rearwardly of the head piece 14 and detachably engaging the upper rear edges of the side pieces 10a and 10b is a spacer piece 15. Suspended from the spacer piece 15 is a backdrop 16 which is made of suitable fabric to enable the performer to readily view the audience; while, on the other hand, making it difficult for the audience to see the performer when the stage is illuminated from the front. Positioned in close proximity to the head piece 14 and intermediate the head piece and spacer piece 15 is a raisable front curtain 17. The curtain and the various pieces forming the stage will be discussed more fully hereinafter.

The various pieces comprising the stage, with the exception of the backdrop 16 and the curtain 17, may be formed of heavy cardboard, hardboard, plywood, or any other suitable material which is inexpensive, lightweight, and has sufficient rigidity to provide a sturdy construction when the various pieces are assembled.

The side pieces 10a and 10b are substantially of the same construction and one of said side pieces is shown more clearly in Figs. 3 and 6. Each of said side pieces is flat and has the front edge thereof provided with a pair of spaced protuberances 18 and 20; protuberance 18 is disposed above protuberance 20, when the side piece assumes its upright position. Protuberance 18 is provided with an open end slot 21 formed in the upper edge thereof which is adapted to cooperate with an open end slot 22 formed in the lower edge of the head piece 14 to effect slidable interlocking of the two pieces in a manner as seen more clearly in Fig. 1. The lower protuberance 20, seen more clearly in Fig. 6, is provided with a rearwardly or horizontally extending open end slot 23 and a pair of vertically extending slots 24 and 25. It is to be noted, in Fig. 6, that slot 25, which is formed in the lower edge of the side piece, is disposed forwardly of the slot 24, the latter being formed in the upper edge of the protuberance 20 adjacent the open end of slot 23. Slot 23 is adapted to cooperate with the slot 26 formed in platform piece 13 when the latter is assembled in a manner as shown. The lengths of slots 23 and 26 are such that when the two pieces 10a or 10b and 13 are assembled, slot 24 will register with a slot 33 formed in platform piece 13. Slot 33 is disposed at a right angle with respect to slot 26. Slot 24 is relatively short and is adapted to cooperate with a relatively long open end slot 27 formed in the bottom edge or narrow end of each of the face pieces 12a or 12b. When face piece 12a or 12b is assembled with respect to the side piece 10a or 10b, the slot 24 serves to lock the lower portion of the face piece against forward movement relative to the side piece. Open end slot 25 formed in the bottom edge of the side piece is adapted to cooperate with an open end slot 28 formed in the upper edge of base piece 11, as seen more clearly in Fig. 5, to effect interlocking of the base and side pieces.

Formed in the upper edge of each of the side pieces 10a and 10b and disposed adjacent the rear thereof is an open end slot 30 which is adapted to cooperate with an open end slot 31 formed adjacent the end of spacer piece 15 to effect interlocking of the side and spacer pieces.

The height or length of the upper protuberance 18

is substantially the same as the depth of an open end slot 32 formed in the upper edge or end portion of each of the face pieces 12a and 12b. Thus when assembling the pieces, the protuberance 18 of each side piece may be readily inserted through the slot 32.

In the form of stage shown in Figs. 1 through 6, the side pieces 10a and 10b are of identical construction with the exception of an open end slot 34 formed in the upper edge of the left-hand side piece 10a and an aperture 36 formed adjacent the upper edge of the right-hand side piece 10b. Slot 34 and aperture 36 serve as supports for an elongated supporting rod 35 for the front curtain 17. The slot 34 and aperture 36 are disposed adjacent the slots 21 formed in side pieces 10a and 10b so that when the stage is erected, the curtain 17 will be disposed immediately behind the head piece 14.

In the form of the front curtain, shown in Figs. 2 and 4, the rod 35 has a pair of loops 37a and 37b which are spaced a predetermined distance from the ends of the rod and are adapted to serve as eyes through which the cords 38, used for raising and lowering the curtain, may be threaded. One end 35a of the rod 35 is offset and is adapted to engage the backside of face piece 12a, when the latter is assembled, see Figs. 2 and 4. End 35a prevents the rod from accidentally turning within slot 34 and aperture 36, when the curtain is being raised or lowered. The other end 35b of the rod 35 is straight to facilitate threading thereof through aperture 36. Both ends 40 of the cord 38 are threaded through loop 37a and may be secured to a cleat, not shown, mounted on the inside of the side piece 10a, or may be knotted together and disposed within a notch, not shown, formed in the rear edge of said side piece. The operation of raising and lowering the front curtain 17 is conventional and is believed well understood by those skilled in the art and therefore explanation thereof has been omitted.

In assembling the stage, shown in Figs. 1 through 6, the following steps are suggested:

(a) The base piece 11 is assembled with respect to side pieces 10a and 10b so that the slots 25, formed in the side pieces, will register with corresponding slots 28 formed in the base pieces, then the pieces are slidably brought into interlocking relation so that the side pieces assume an upright, spaced, substantially parallel relation with respect to one another;

(b) The platform piece 13 is positioned horizontally relative to the base and side pieces so that the slots 23, formed in the front edges of the side pieces are aligned with the slots 26 formed adjacent the ends of the platform piece, whereupon the latter is moved rearwardly of the side pieces until the side pieces are fully seated in the slots 26. The depths of slots 23 and 26 are such as to effect registration of the second set of slots 33 formed in platform piece 13 with respect to the slots 24 formed in side pieces 10a and 10b;

(c) The lower narrow end of each face piece is threaded through slot 33 formed in platform piece 13 and into slot 24 formed in the side pieces so that the lower end portion of each face piece extends the full length of protuberance 20 and is disposed immediately behind base piece 11;

(d) The upper end portion of each face piece is then swung toward the front edge of the side piece so that the upper protuberance 18 of the side piece projects through slot 32 formed in the face piece, and the front edge of the piece, between the protuberances, abuts the back surface of the face piece;

(e) The head piece 14 is then mounted on the upper protuberance 18 of each side piece so that the slots 21 formed in the upper edges of said protuberances will cooperate with slots 22 formed adjacent the ends of the head piece thereby enabling the head and side pieces to be moved into interlocking engagement;

(f) The spacer piece 15 is then assembled with respect to the rear upper edge of each side piece so that the slots 31, formed adjacent the ends of the spacer piece 15 align themselves with the slots 30 formed in the side pieces 10a and 10b, whereupon the spacer piece can be moved downwardly into interlocking engagement with the side pieces;

(g) The front curtain 17 is then positioned on the

side pieces so that the ends of the supporting rod 35 are disposed within slot 34 and aperture 36;

(h) The erected stage is then moved to its desired location, the front curtain 17 raised, and the show begun.

It is to be noted that when the stage is erected, the head piece 14 locks the upper end of each face piece against forward movement with respect to each side piece 10a 10b, and the base piece 11 and platform 13 cooperate with one another to lock the lower portion of each face piece against forward movement with respect to the side pieces 10a and 10b.

A modified form of front curtain 17' is shown in Fig. 8 wherein a supporting rod 41 is provided having straight ends and offset portions 42 spaced a predetermined distance from said ends. In instances where rod 41 is used, an aperture or opening 43 is formed in side piece 10a in place of the slot 34. The apertures 36 and 43 prevent the curtain rod 41 from becoming accidentally disengaged from the side pieces. The offset portions 42 of the rod 41 serve as stops and prevent longitudinal movement of the rod with respect to the side pieces once it has been assembled thereon. In assembling this modified form of curtain 17', the rod 41 is threaded through the apertures formed in the side pieces 10a and 10b by spreading apart the upper portions of the side pieces before the head piece and spacer piece 15 are assembled.

In the modified form of stage shown in Fig. 8, an elongated rod 44 has been substituted for the spacer piece 15. Rod 44 has the ends 45 thereof offset to form hooks which are adapted to seat within the open end slots 30 formed in the side pieces 10a and 10b. The offsetting of the rod ends 45 serves to retain the rear portions of the side pieces in relatively fixed positions while the rod 44 is positioned within slots 30. The rod 44, as seen in Fig. 8, extends through a hem 46 formed in the upper edge of backdrop 16 and acts as a support therefor.

In instances where the stage is constructed of cardboard material, it may be desirable to effect greater rigidity for the platform piece 13 by either making the piece of double thickness of cardboard or substituting therefor a modified form of platform piece 47, shown in Fig. 9, which is provided with a depending skirt 48 having laterally extending ears 50 at opposite edges thereof which project through elongated openings 51 formed in the side pieces 10a and 10b. The skirt or apron 48 is foldable and is disposed to the rear of base piece 11 and in a plane substantially parallel to the plane of said base piece.

Where it is desired to adapt the stage for use with marionettes, a second platform piece 52, shown in Fig. 7, is provided which, in combination with the platform piece 13 or 47, increases the depth of the stage surface. Piece 52 is provided with slotted wing portions 53 which are adapted to engage slots 54 formed in the rear edge of each side piece, see Fig. 7. The second platform piece extends forwardly between the side pieces and has the forward edge portion 55 thereof resting upon the rear edge portion 56 of platform piece 13.

Thus it will be seen that a miniature stage has been provided which is readily assembled or disassembled and, when in disassembled condition, forms a small, compact package which may be readily stored or carried. Furthermore the stage is of simple, yet durable construction, inexpensive to produce, and effective in operation whether used for puppets or marionettes.

While several embodiments of this invention are shown above, it will be understood, of course, that the invention is not to be limited thereto, since many modifications may be made, and it is contemplated, therefore, by the appended claims, to cover any such modifications as fall within the true spirit and scope of this invention.

I claim:

1. A collapsible miniature stage comprising a pair of planar side pieces for arrangement in upright spaced substantially coextensive relation, each of said side pieces having portions of the front edge thereof slotted, a pair of planar face pieces having slotted edge portions, one of said face pieces being detachably mounted within the slotted front edge portions of one of said side pieces and being disposed in upright transverse abutting relation with respect to the front edge of said side piece, a planar base piece having a slotted edge portion detach-

5

ably mounted on a portion of the front edge of each of said side pieces and disposed transversely with respect thereto and in front of said face pieces to effect sandwiching of portions of said face pieces between the front edges of said side pieces and a planar face of said base piece, a platform piece having slotted edge portions disposed above and transversely to said base piece and having the slotted edge portions thereof embracing portions of said face pieces, and a head piece having slotted edge portions disposed in spaced relation above said platform piece and detachably mounted on slotted front edge portions of said side pieces and disposed in front of portions of said face pieces to effect sandwiching portions of each of said face pieces between the front edge portions of said side pieces and a planar side of said head piece.

2. A collapsible miniature stage comprising a pair of planar side pieces for arrangement in upright substantially parallel spaced relation and having slotted front edge portions, a pair of planar face pieces having slotted edge portions, one of said face pieces being disposed in transverse relation with respect to the front edge of one of said side pieces and in cooperative relation with the slotted front edge portions of said side piece, a base piece having a slotted edge portion detachably mounted on the front edge portions of said side pieces and disposed in front of said face pieces to effect locking of said face pieces against movement in one direction relative to said side pieces, a platform piece having slotted edge portions disposed transverse with respect to said side, face, and base pieces and resting on the latter and having slotted edge portions of said platform piece detachably embracing said side and face pieces to effect locking of the latter against relative movement in a second direction, and a head piece having slotted edge portions disposed transversely with respect to said platform piece and spaced thereabove, said head piece being positioned substantially in front of said face pieces and having the slotted edge portions of said head piece detachably embracing the slotted front edge portions of said side pieces to effect locking of a portion of said face pieces between said head piece and the front edges of said side pieces.

3. A collapsible miniature stage comprising a pair of planar side pieces for arrangement in upright spaced relation, each of said side pieces having slotted edge portions, a planar base piece disposed substantially in front of said side pieces and extending transversely thereof, said base piece having slotted edge portions coacting with slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect slidable interlocking engagement of said side and base pieces, a planar head piece disposed substantially in front of said side pieces and spaced above and in substantially parallel relation with said base piece and extending transversely between said side pieces, said head piece having slotted edge portions coacting with slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect slidable interlocking engagement of said side and head pieces, and a spacer piece disposed rearwardly of said head piece and extending transversely between said side pieces and having the end portions of said spacer piece detachably engaging slotted edge portions of said side pieces.

4. A collapsible miniature stage comprising a pair of planar side pieces for arrangement in upright spaced relation, each of said side pieces having slotted edge portions, a pair of elongated planar face pieces, one of said face pieces arranged in upright transverse abutting relation with respect to the front edge of one of said side pieces, said face pieces being of like construction and having slotted edge portions coacting with slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect slidable interlocking engagement of said face and side pieces, an elongated horizontally extending planar base piece disposed in front of said face pieces having slotted edge portions coacting with slotted edge portions of the lower portions of said face pieces between the front edge of said side pieces and said base piece, an elongated horizontally extending planar platform piece having the plane thereof disposed transversely with respect to the plane of said base piece, said platform piece having a portion thereof resting on an upper edge of said base piece, said platform piece having a slotted edge portion coacting with slotted edge portions of said side and face pieces to effect interlocking engagement of said

6

side, face, base, and platform pieces, an elongated horizontally extending planar head piece disposed above said platform piece and in front of said face pieces and in substantially coplanar relation with said base piece, said head piece having slotted edge portions coacting with the slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect interlocking of the upper portions of said face pieces between said side and head pieces, and an elongated spacer piece positioned rearwardly of said head piece and extending transversely between said side pieces and being supported thereby.

5. A collapsible miniature stage comprising a pair of planar side pieces of like construction having slotted edge portions for arrangement in upright spaced relation with respect to one another, a pair of planar face pieces, one of said face pieces being disposed upright and substantially in front of one of said side pieces and in transverse abutting relation with the front edge thereof, said face pieces having slotted edge portions slidably engaging slotted edge portions of said side pieces, a planar base piece disposed in front of the lower portions of said face pieces and extending transversely with respect thereto, said base piece having slotted edge portions slidably engaging slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect interlocking of the lower portion of each of said face pieces between the corresponding side piece and base piece, and an elongated head piece disposed in spaced relation above said base piece and in front of the upper portions of said face pieces and extending transversely thereof, said head piece having slotted edge portions slidably engaging portions of slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect interlocking of the upper portion of each of said face pieces between the corresponding side piece and said head piece.

6. A collapsible miniature stage comprising a pair of planar side pieces having slotted edge portions and arranged in upright spaced relation with respect to one another, an elongated planar base piece positioned transversely with respect to said side pieces, said base piece having slotted edge portions slidably interlocking with the slotted edge portions of said side pieces, an elongated head piece disposed in spaced relation above said base piece and extending transversely of said side pieces, said head piece having slotted edge portions slidably interlocking with the slotted edge portions of said side pieces, and a raisably mounted curtain supported by said side pieces and disposed behind but adjacent to said head piece.

7. A collapsible miniature stage comprising a pair of planar side pieces of like construction having slotted edge portions and arranged in upright substantially parallel spaced relation with respect to one another, a pair of planar face pieces of like construction, one of said face pieces being detachably mounted on the front edge of one of said side pieces and disposed transversely with respect thereto, said face pieces having slotted edge portions cooperating with slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect slidable interlocking engagement of said face and side pieces, an elongated planar base piece detachably mounted on and extending substantially perpendicularly of said side pieces and being disposed in front of said face pieces, said base piece having a slotted edge portion cooperating with slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect slidable interlocking of the lower portion of each of said face pieces between said base piece and the front edges of said side pieces, an elongated planar platform piece detachably mounted on said face and side pieces and disposed substantially perpendicular with respect thereto, said platform piece resting on the upper edge of said base piece and having slotted edge portions cooperating with slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect interlocking engagement of said side, face, base, and platform pieces, an elongated planar head piece detachably mounted on and disposed in front of said face pieces and above said platform piece, said head and base pieces being in substantially parallel coplanar relation with respect to one another, said head piece having slotted edge portions cooperating with slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect interlocking of the upper portions of said face pieces between the front edges of said side pieces and said head piece, an elongated spacer piece detachably mounted on said side pieces and disposed rearwardly of said head piece and in substantially parallel relation therewith, said spacer piece having the opposing ends thereof cooperating

7

with slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect slidable interlocking engagement of said side and spacer pieces, and an elongated raisably mounted curtain detachably mounted on said side pieces and disposed intermediate said spacer and head pieces and in substantially parallel juxtaposed relation with said head piece.

8. A collapsible miniature stage comprising a pair of planar side pieces for arrangement in upright substantially parallel spaced relation, each of said side pieces having slotted edge portions, an elongated planar base piece having slotted edge portions detachably mounted on the front edge of said side pieces and disposed transversely with respect thereto to effect slidable interlocking engagement of slotted edge portions of said side and base pieces, an elongated head piece detachably mounted on said side pieces and disposed in spaced substantially parallel relation above said base piece, said head piece having slotted edge portions cooperating with slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect interlocking engagement therewith, an elongated spacer rod detachably mounted on said side pieces and extending transversely therebetween and disposed rearwardly of said head and base pieces, said rod having the ends thereof offset in substantially the same direction to form hooks engageable with slotted edge portions of said side pieces, and a backdrop suspended from said spacer rod.

9. A collapsible miniature stage comprising a pair of spaced upright planar side pieces having slotted edge portions

8

detachably mounted on the front edge of each of said side pieces and cooperating with slotted edge portions thereof to effect slidable interlocking engagement of said side and base pieces, a first planar platform piece having slotted edge portions detachably mounted on the front portions of said side pieces and disposed transverse with respect to said side and base pieces and resting on said base piece, the slotted edge portions of said first platform piece cooperating with slotted edge portions of said side pieces to effect slidable interlocking engagement therewith, and a second planar platform piece having slotted edge portions detachably and transversely mounted on the rear portions of said side pieces and having slotted edge portions of said side and second platform pieces cooperating with one another to effect slidable interlocking engagement, said second platform pieces extending forwardly between said side pieces and having the front edge portion thereof overlapping the rear edge portion of said first platform piece.

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