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(43) **Pub. Date: Dec. 22, 2005**(54) **GARMENT UTILIZING WEARER'S HEAD
TO DEPICT A FULL CHARACTER**(52) **U.S. Cl. 2/115**(76) **Inventor: Steven N. Altman, Davie, FL (US)**(57) **ABSTRACT**

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(21) **Appl. No.: 10/872,291**(22) **Filed: Jun. 18, 2004****Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.⁷ A41B 1/00; A41B 1/08;
A41D 27/10**

A headless character shirt (100) is provided that includes an illustration (102) of a full character except for the character's head. The illustration (102) is situated about the headless character shirt (100) such that when the headless character shirt (100) is worn by a wearer, the head of the wearer appears to be the head of the character depicted in the illustration (102). Preferably, when the headless character shirt is worn, all or substantially all of the character's body is depicted above the waistline of the wearer. Additionally, in preferred embodiments, the character in the illustration is generally recognizable. Also provided is an upper body garment that includes such an illustration of a full character except for the character's head.

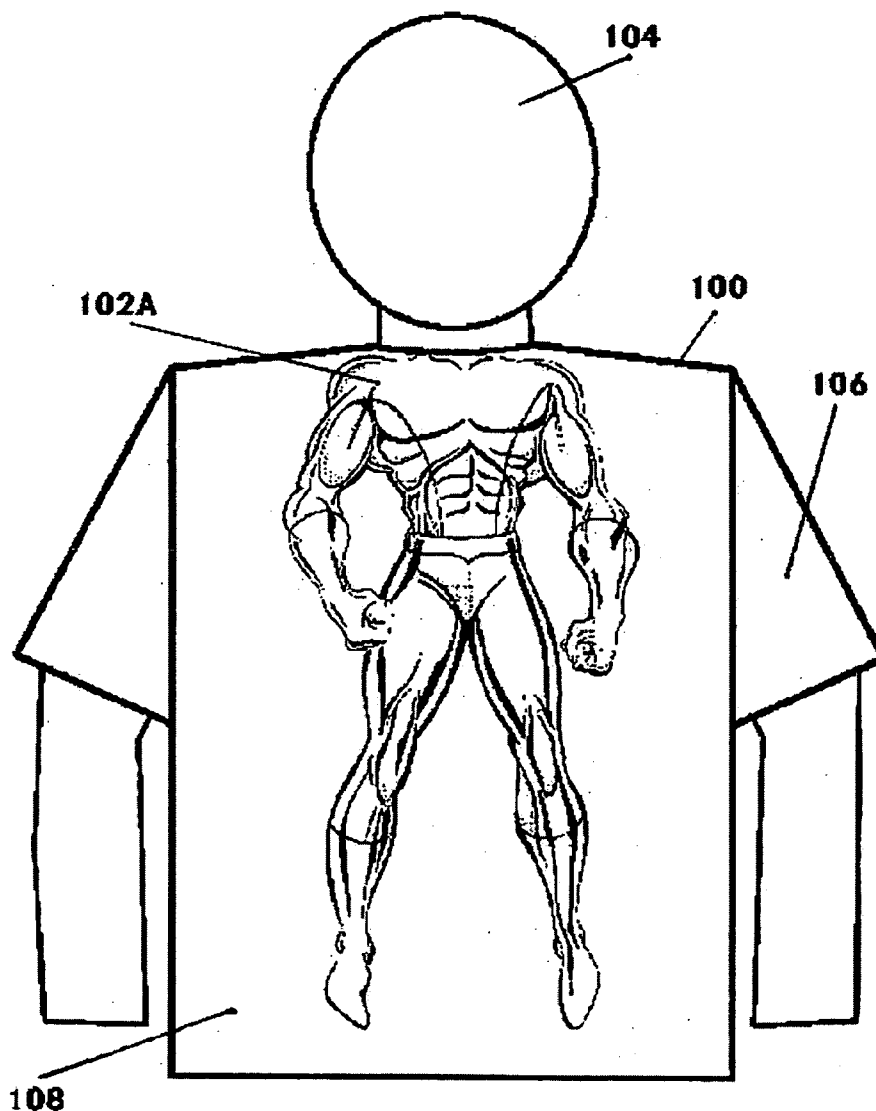


Figure 1A

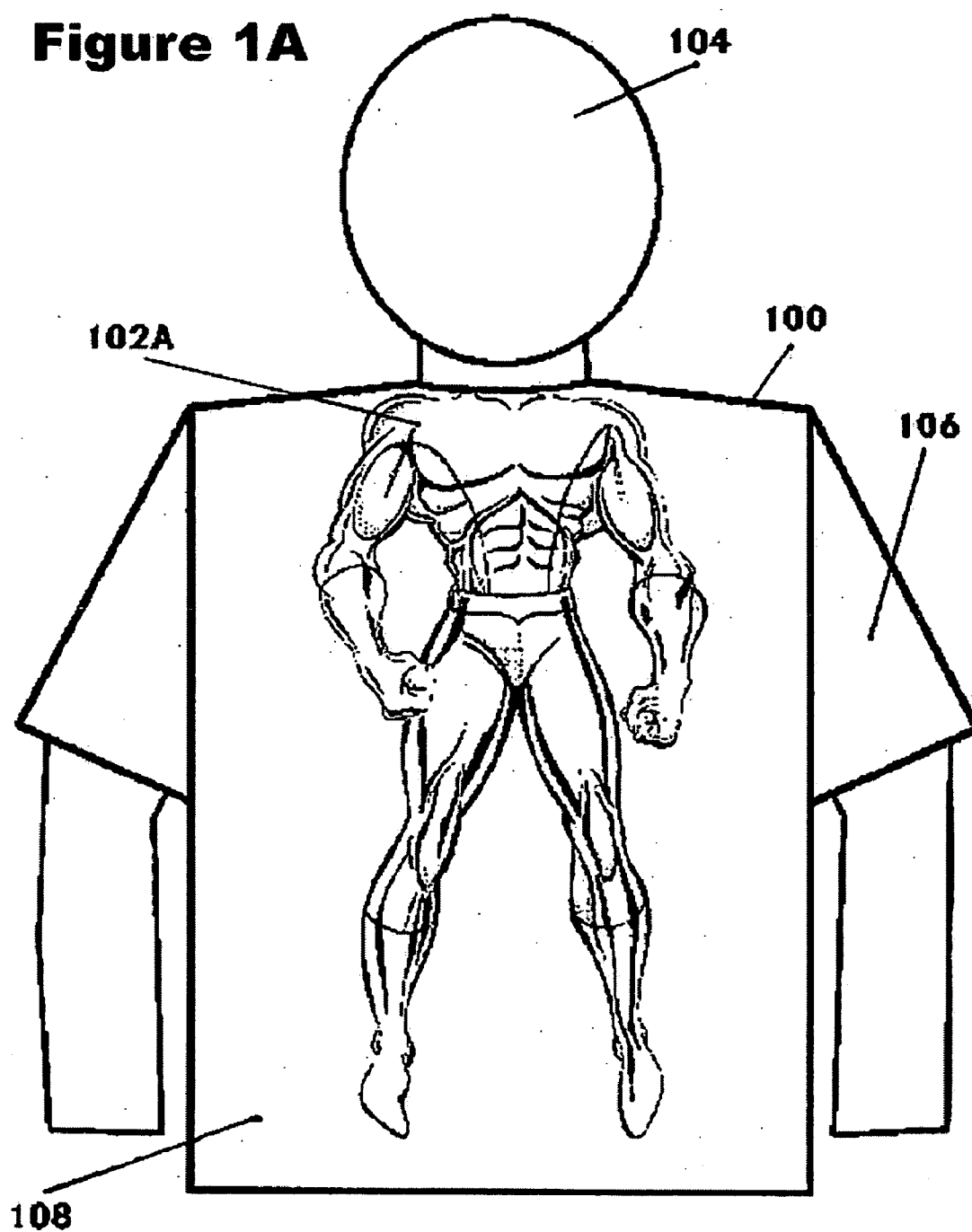


Figure 1B

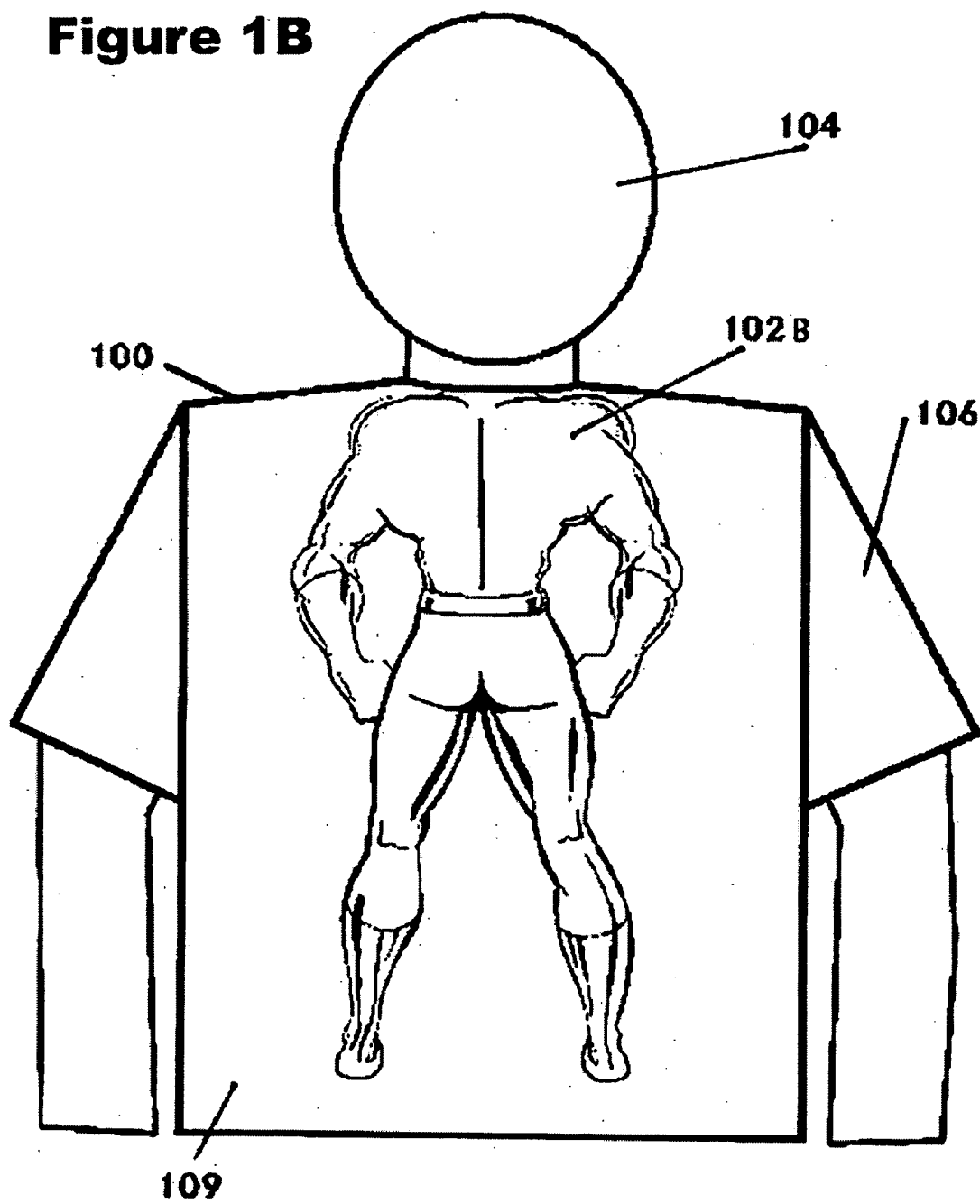


Figure 2

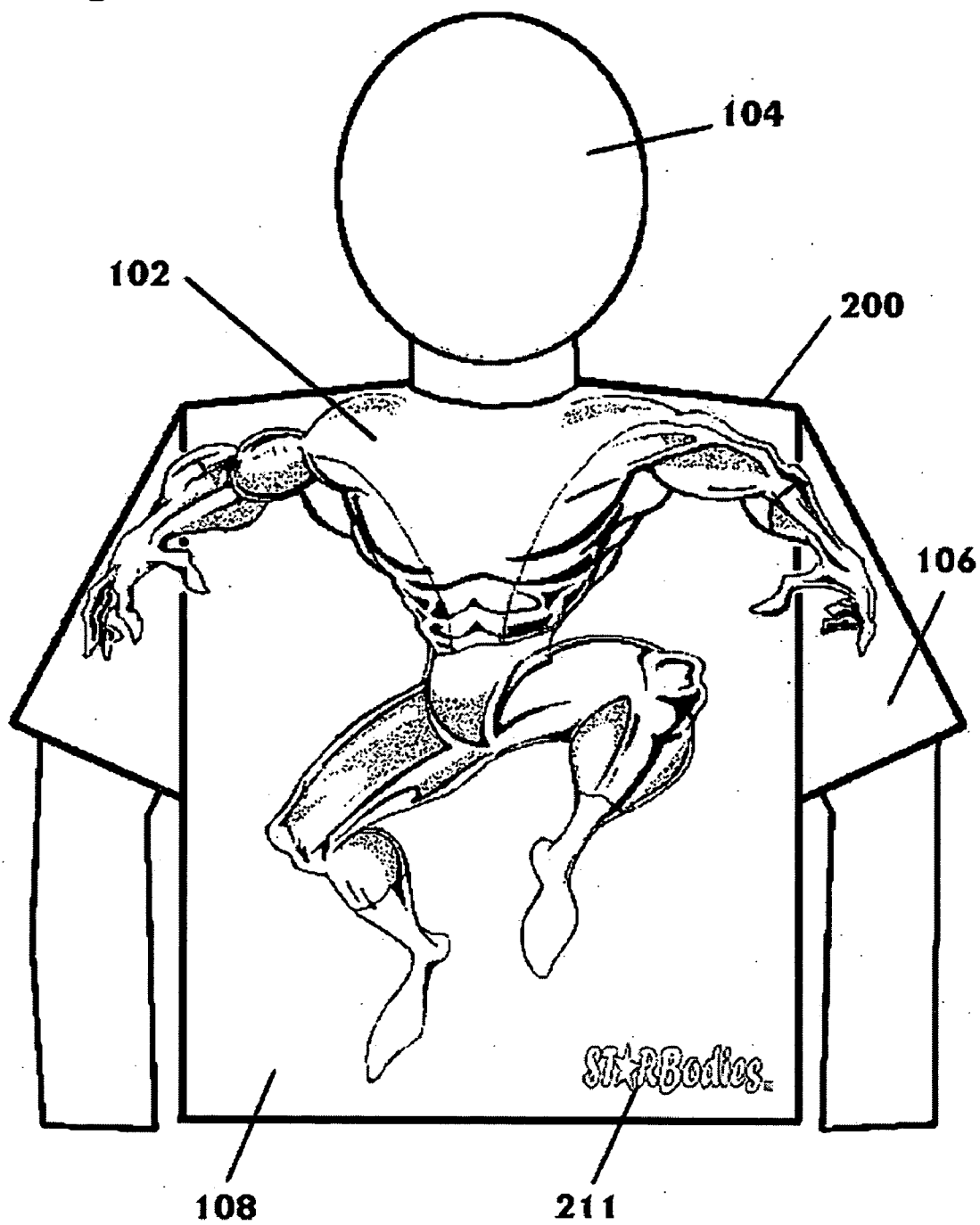


Figure 3

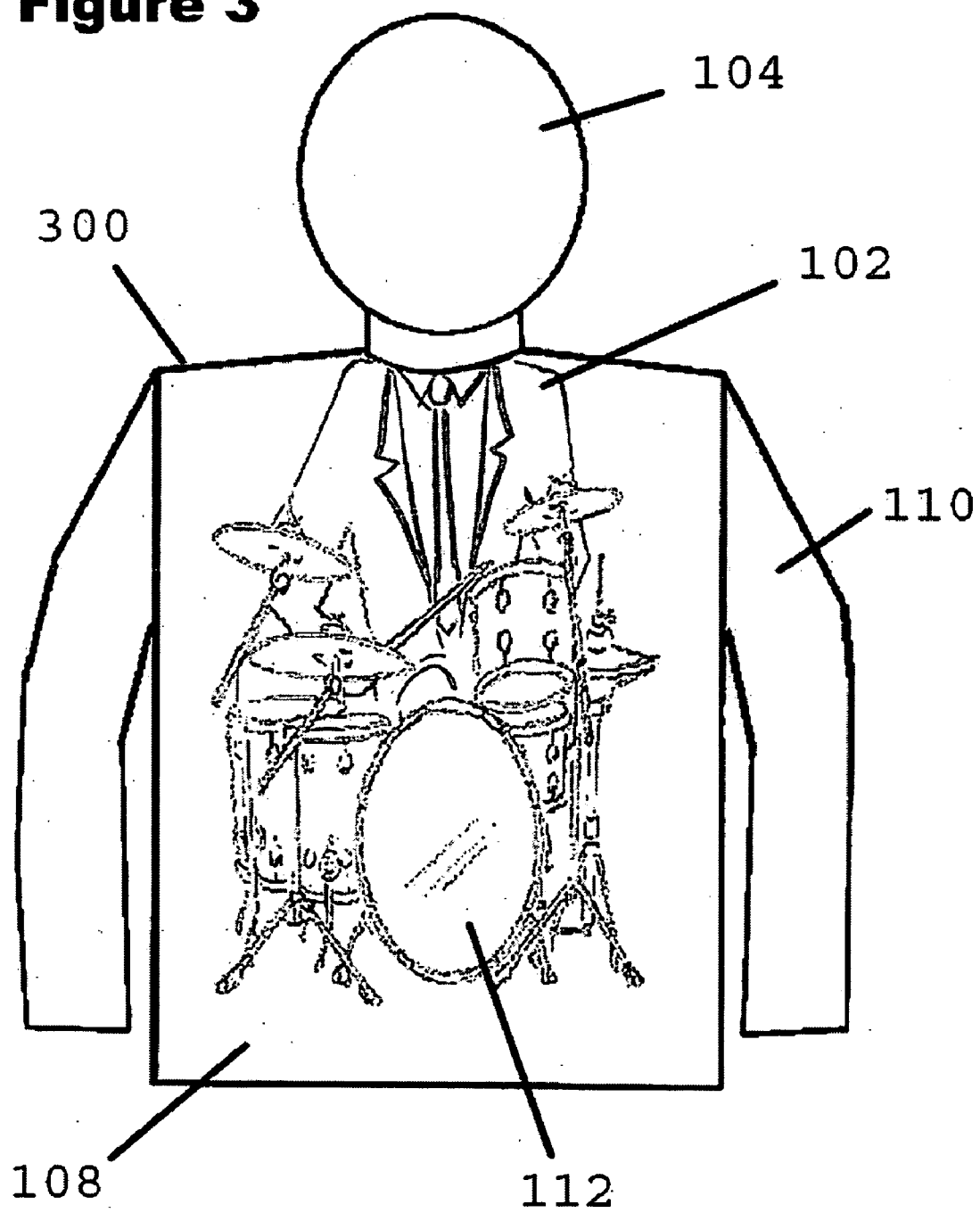


Figure 4

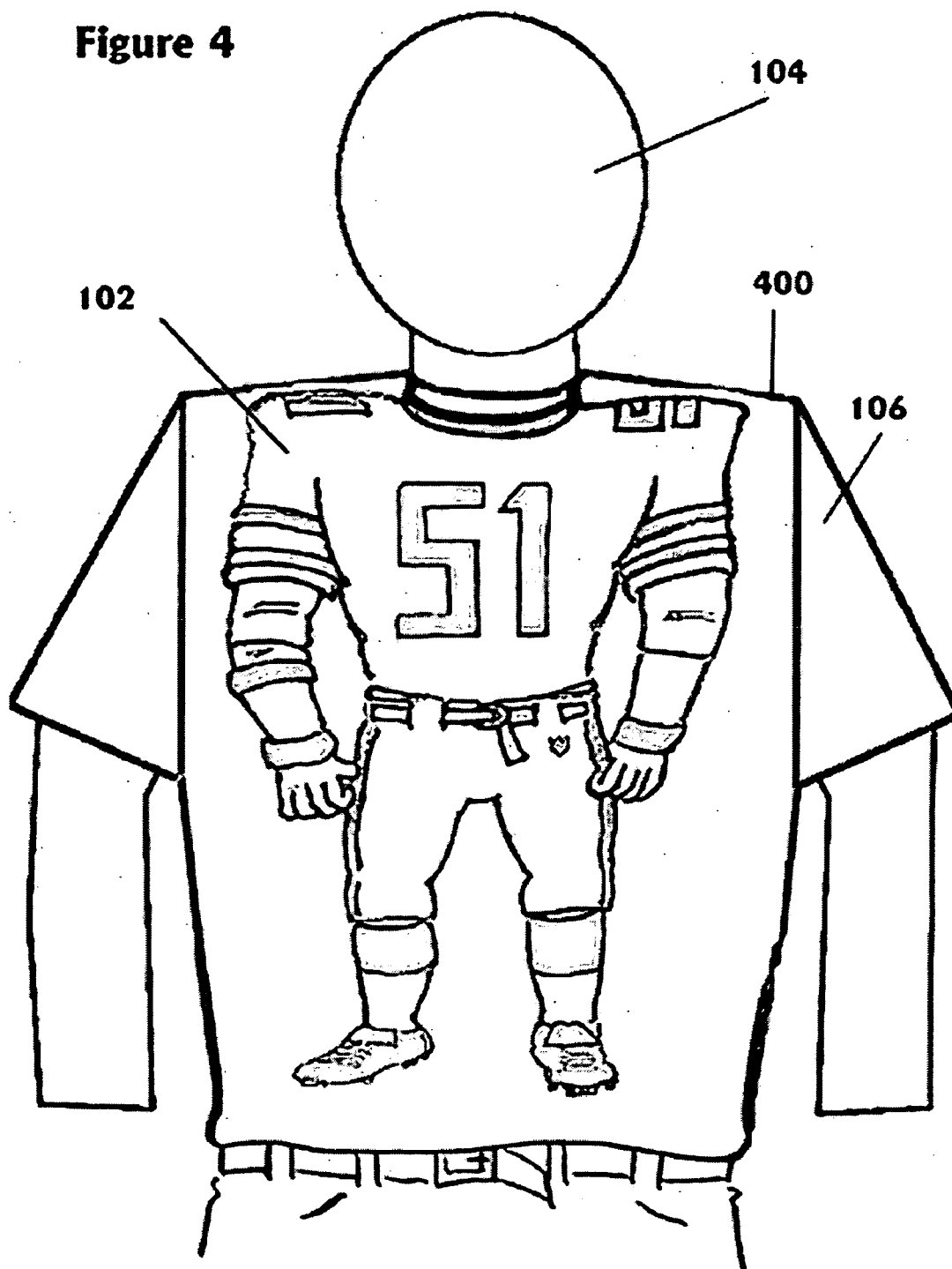


Figure 5

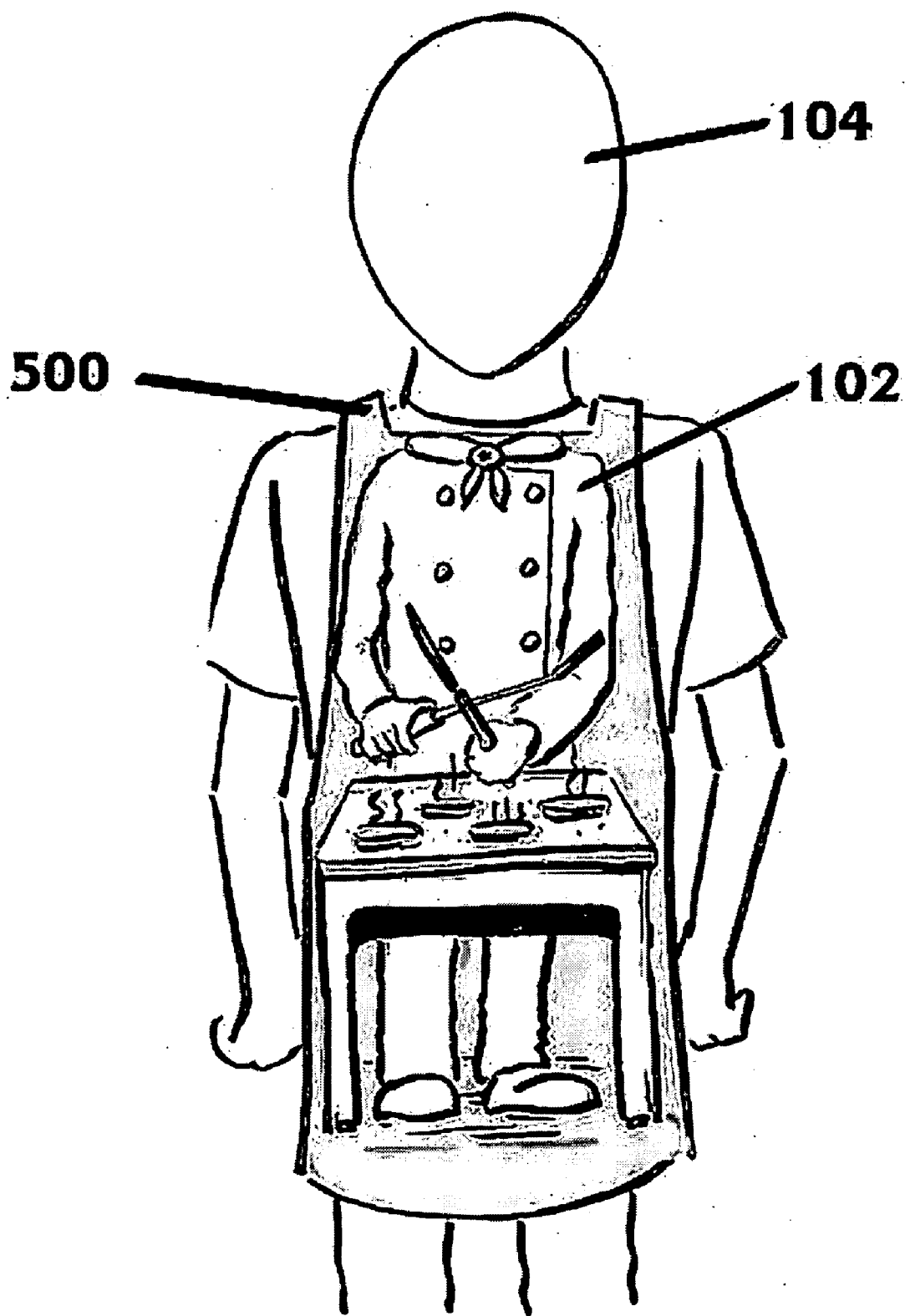
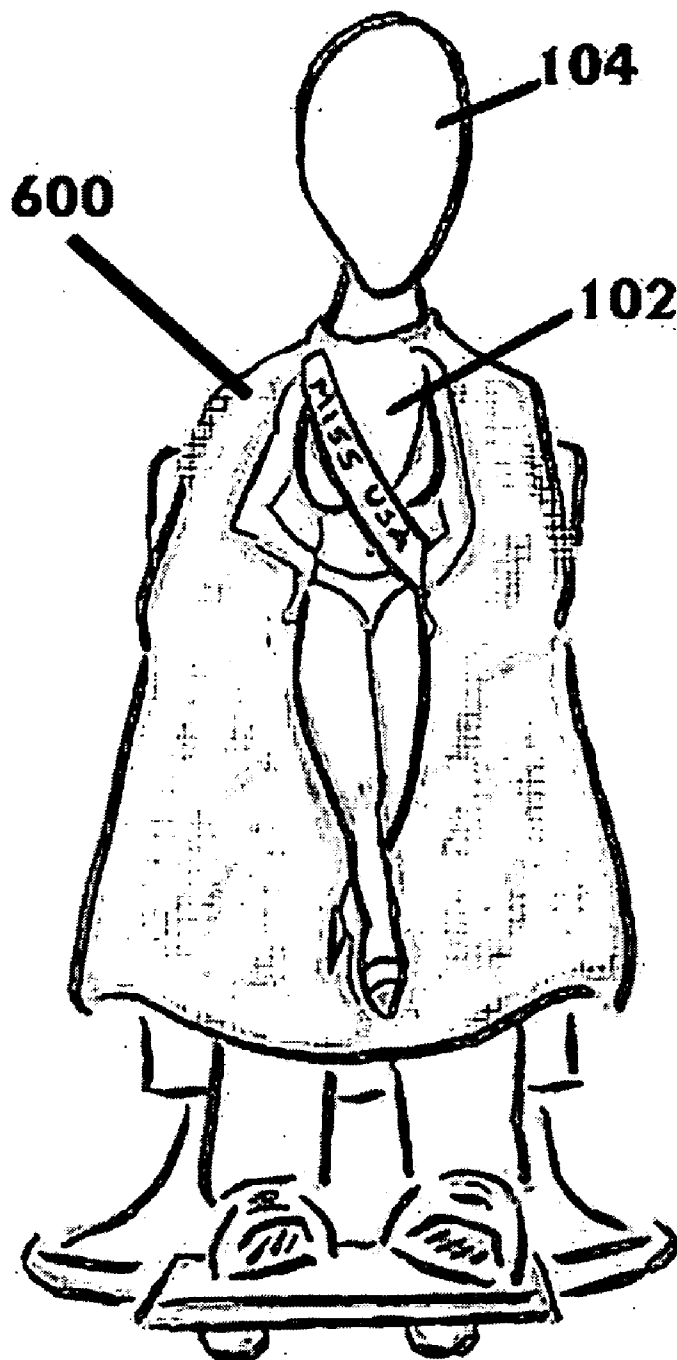


Figure 6



GARMENT UTILIZING WEARER'S HEAD TO DEPICT A FULL CHARACTER

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates in general to clothing, and more particularly to upper body garments that utilize the wearer's head in depicting an illustration of a full character.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Consumers are continually interested in new clothing designs, particularly clothing designs that are unique and that will enable the wearer to be noticed and stand out from a crowd, so as to draw the interest of others and perhaps even elicit complements or conversation from them. Such clothing allows the wearer to feel good. Furthermore, individuals often desire apparel that enables them to express themselves, such as to show their admiration, support or enthusiasm for something, or just to have fun. Moreover, many organizations seek to differentiate themselves from others through the use of apparel that their supporters wear, and these organizations seek novel clothing designs to set themselves apart from others. Additionally, clothing items are often worn or distributed as a means of advertising or promotion, and unique clothing designs are continually in demand for such purposes.

[0003] What is needed is an upper body garment that provides a novel design which uniquely distinguishes that garment from other garments. This could enable an individual wearing the garment to, for example, distinguish themselves from other individuals and to project a desired appearance. It could also allow the wearer to have a means for expressing themselves; to show their admiration, enthusiasm and support for a favorite character, celebrity, musician, band, athlete, sports team, organization, or the like; or to realize or project an enhanced sense of self-confidence, fun, humor, creativity, or the like. Additionally, a novel upper body garment design that is unique and distinguishable from other garments could provide a format for advertising or promotion, and could be useful for organizations that want to distinguish themselves.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] It is an object of the present invention to provide an upper body garment such as a shirt that utilizes the wearer's head in depicting an illustration of a full character.

[0005] Another object of the present invention is to provide an upper body garment such as a shirt that includes an illustration of a full character excerpt for the character's head, such that the wearer's head is used as the head of the illustrated character.

[0006] Yet another object of the present invention is to provide an upper body garment such as a shirt that includes an illustration of a full character excerpt for the character's head, such that the head of the wearer appears to be the head of the character whose body is illustrated on the shirt.

[0007] One embodiment of the present invention provides a headless character shirt that includes an illustration of a full character except for the character's head. The illustration is situated about the headless character shirt such that when the headless character shirt is worn by a wearer, the head of the wearer appears to be the head of the character

depicted in the illustration. Preferably, when the headless character shirt is worn, all or substantially all of the character's body is depicted above the waistline of the wearer. Additionally, in preferred embodiments, the character in the illustration is generally recognizable.

[0008] Another embodiment of the present invention provides an upper body garment for clothing at least a wearer's upper body. The upper body garment includes an illustration of a full character except for the character's head. The illustration is situated about the upper body garment such that, when the upper body garment is worn by the wearer, the wearer's head appears to be the head of the character. Preferably, the upper body garment is a jacket, poncho, or upper body wrap-around.

[0009] Other objects, features, and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following detailed description. It should be understood, however, that the detailed description and specific examples, while indicating preferred embodiments of the present invention, are given by way of illustration only and various modifications may naturally be performed without deviating from the present invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] FIGS. 1A and 1B are diagrams illustrating a shirt in accordance with a first embodiment of the present invention.

[0011] FIG. 2 is a diagram illustrating a shirt in accordance with a second embodiment of the present invention.

[0012] FIG. 3 is a diagram illustrating a shirt in accordance with a third embodiment of the present invention.

[0013] FIG. 4 is a diagram illustrating a shirt in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention.

[0014] FIGS. 5 and 6 are diagrams illustrating upper body garments in accordance with further embodiments of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0015] While the present invention is susceptible of embodiment in many different forms, there are shown in the drawings and will herein be described in detail specific embodiments, with the understanding that these embodiments are to be considered as examples of the principles of the present invention and are not intended to limit the invention to the specific embodiments shown and described. Further, the terms and words used herein are not to be considered limiting, but rather merely descriptive. In the description below, like reference numerals are used to describe the same, similar, or corresponding parts in the figures.

[0016] The present invention, according to one embodiment, provides an upper body garment (which is interchangeably referred to below as clothing or apparel) that includes an illustration on the garment of a full character in such a manner as to project the appearance that the garment wearer's head is the head of the character. In other words, the full character is illustrated on the garment except for the character's head, and this illustration is aligned so as to appear contiguous with the head of the garment wearer. This

creates the illusion that the head of the garment wearer is conjoined with the character's body that is illustrated on the garment to depict the full character. For convenience, such an upper body garment is referred to below as a "headless character garment" (or "headless character shirt").

[0017] **FIGS. 1A-6** illustrate headless character garments according to exemplary embodiments of the present invention. These headless character garments include an illustration **102** of a full character except for the character's head, and are intended to be worn by a wearer **104**. The exemplary headless character shirts depicted in **FIGS. 1A-4** also include sleeves **106** of various lengths. In embodiments of the present invention, the headless character shirt can have any length of sleeves or no sleeves (such as a in "tank-top"). In other words, sleeves may or may not be part of a headless character garment according to the present invention, depending on the specific form of garment that is chosen.

[0018] In accordance with the present invention, a "shirt" is any shirt-type garment for clothing the upper body (or trunk), including, but not limited to, a T-shirt (with any length sleeves or without sleeves), tank-top, sports shirt or jersey (such as a rugby, baseball, or bowling shirt), polo or golf shirt (V-neck), dress shirt (button-down with or without a collar), sweatshirt or sweater, flannel shirt, pullover, turtleneck, or blouse. Further, in accordance with the present invention, an "upper body garment" is any garment that clothes at least the upper body (or trunk), including, but not limited to, a "shirt" (as defined above), vest, jacket, poncho, or upper body wrap-around (e.g., an apron, hospital gown, or hairdresser's cape). The headless character garments of the present invention may include any practical or fashion features such as pockets, hoods, buttons, zippers, and insignia.

[0019] **FIGS. 1A and 1B** illustrate the front and back of a headless character shirt according to a first embodiment of the present invention. As shown, the headless character shirt **100** is a T-shirt that includes short sleeves **106** and an illustration **102** on the shirt **100** of a full character except for the character's head (i.e., it depicts the character's entire body except for the head). In this embodiment, the illustration **102** of the character includes an illustration **102A** of the front side of the character on the front **108** of the shirt **100**, and an illustration **102B** of the back side of the character on the back **109** of the shirt **100**.

[0020] The illustration **102** depicts a generally recognizable fictional character from popular culture (e.g., a hero or villain from television, movies, books, and/or comics). The character is recognizable from the form of the body and/or the outfit depicted in the illustration. When a wearer **104** wears the headless character shirt **100**, the head of the wearer **104** is located about where the head of the character depicted in the illustration **102** should be located, notwithstanding differences in scale. Thus, the headless character shirt gives the appearance of the full character when worn, with the head of the wearer **104** being the head of the character depicted in the illustration **102**.

[0021] The illustration **102** can be varied in the area around the neckline (i.e., the transitional area where the illustration **102** "joins" with the head of the wearer **104**) depending on the form of garment that is chosen (e.g., non-collared, collared, V-neck, or turtleneck) and the desired depiction of the character. In other words, embodiments of

the present invention can include an illustration **102** that depicts anywhere from none of to all of the character's neck. Thus, in the context of the present invention, "an illustration of a full character except for the character's head" is meant to encompass illustrations that contain anywhere from none of to all of the character's neck in transitioning from illustrated body to the wearer's head.

[0022] For example, in the embodiment of **FIGS. 1A and 1B** the illustration **102** on the headless character garment **100** includes substantially none of the character's neck. Such an embodiment, which gives the appearance that the neck of the wearer **104** is the neck of the character, is meant to be included within the definition of "an illustration of a full character except for the character's head". In other exemplary embodiments that also fit within this definition, the illustration **102** includes substantially the entire neck of the character or a portion of the character's neck. The exact manner in which the body of the character is "joined" to the head of the wearer is merely a matter of choice for a particular application, and can be varied to take advantage of the neckline of the form of garment that is used.

[0023] **FIG. 2** illustrates a headless character shirt according to a second embodiment of the present invention. As shown, the headless character shirt **200** of the second embodiment is also a T-shirt that includes short sleeves **106** and an illustration **102** of a full character except for the character's head (i.e., it depicts the character's entire body except for the head). In the second embodiment, the illustration **102** of the character only shows the front side of the character on the front **108** of the shirt **200**. Furthermore, in the second embodiment, the illustration **102** depicts the character in a different body position, and the arms of the character in the illustration **102** extend onto the sleeves **106** of the shirt **200**.

[0024] In general, the headless character garment of the present invention can include an illustration of any character in any position, as long as the illustration depicts the full body of the character except for the character's head and is aligned so as to appear contiguous with the head of the garment wearer. Similarly, the illustration can appear on either or both of the front and back of the garment, and portions of the illustration can extend to any part or feature of the garment, such as the sides, sleeves, pocket, or collar. For example, the illustration can extend onto the sleeves so as to depict on the sleeves a portion of the character (such as arms, hands, legs, or feet) or an object associated with the character. Furthermore, any desired sleeve length can be utilized for the headless character garment, including short, midsize, or long sleeves. In one embodiment in which the sleeves of the headless character shirt are long sleeves, the illustration depicts the character's arms extending down the full length of the long sleeves so that the character's hands are near the wrist line at the end of the sleeves.

[0025] Additionally, the headless character garment of the present invention can include, located anywhere on the garment, any type and number of insignia (e.g., names, logos, emblems, symbols, slogans, text, trademarks, or other identifying information). Typically, such insignia are associated with the character depicted in the illustration or the company making or selling the garment. For example, the insignia may designate the name of a team, band, organization, company, or product in order to help identify the

character depicted in the illustration or for advertising or promotional purposes. In the embodiment of **FIG. 2**, both the illustration **102** of the character and an insignia **211** containing the character's name and/or logo are located on the front of the shirt. In another embodiment, the illustration of the character is located on the front of the headless character shirt and a name and/or logo associated with that character or the company selling the shirt is located on the back of the shirt. Similarly, in some embodiments an Internet address (i.e., URL) associated with the depicted character or with the company selling the garment is placed on the garment near the top of one or both sleeves.

[0026] **FIG. 3** illustrates a headless character shirt according to a third embodiment of the present invention. As shown, the headless character shirt **300** of the third embodiment is a T-shirt that includes long sleeves **110** and an illustration **102** of a full character except for the character's head. In the third embodiment, the illustration **102** on the front **108** of the shirt depicts a character that is a generally recognizable real person. The character (or person) is recognizable from the form of the body, the outfit worn, and/or props or other objects depicted in the illustration. For example, in this illustrative embodiment the illustration **102** on the headless character shirt **300** depicts a character in the form of a drummer from a well known band. The illustration **102** depicts an outfit that the drummer frequently wears along with a set of drums **112**.

[0027] In general, the illustration is not limited to the depiction of only a character. The headless character garment of the present invention can include, located anywhere on the garment, any number of props or other identifying objects that are associated with the character depicted in the illustration. For example, the character can be depicted as holding (or being otherwise associated with) one or more objects. In the embodiment of **FIG. 3**, the musician character is depicted in association with his instrument. In further embodiments, a fantasy hero is shown holding a usual weapon, and a sports figure is shown associated with the sport's usual gear and/or a team uniform. Similarly, the illustration can depict a background or otherwise show some aspect of the character's environment.

[0028] The characters depicted in the illustrations of the exemplary embodiments that are described above with reference to **FIGS. 1A-3** are just a few illustrative examples of the virtually limitless variety of possible characters, poses, and arrangements that can be depicted in the illustrations of embodiments of the present invention. In general, the illustration can depict any fictional or real character. The character depicted in the illustration can be, but is not limited to, a cartoon character, comic book character, hero, villain, video game character, advertising icon, rock star, teen idol, musician, band member, singer, actor, comedian, celebrity, athlete, member of a sports team, team mascot, race car driver, politician, or historical figure. For example, **FIG. 4** shows a headless character shirt **400** according to another embodiment in which the illustration **102** depicts a character in the form of a well known football player in his uniform.

[0029] In preferred embodiments, the character is an identifiable character that members of the public would generally recognize, such as a celebrity, well known fictional character, or a member of a well known team or organization (e.g., a "Pittsburgh Steeler" or "Miami Hurricane" identified by a

recognizable uniform). In further embodiments any desired character can be depicted, including a generic character such as a "football player", "chef" (**FIG. 5**), "beauty queen" (**FIG. 6**), "patriotic citizen", or "guitarist". Furthermore, the character depicted in the character illustration does not have to be a human type of character. For example, a monster, space alien, robot, or other type of creature could be depicted in a headless manner.

[0030] Additionally, while the exemplary embodiments of **FIGS. 1A-4** each use a shirt as the garment containing the illustration, other types of upper body garments are used in further embodiments of the present invention. For example, **FIGS. 5 and 6** show headless character garments according to further embodiments. In the embodiment of **FIG. 5**, the upper body garment is a first upper body wrap-around **500** that includes an illustration **102** depicting a character in the form of a chef. In the embodiment of **FIG. 6**, the upper body garment is a second upper body wrap-around **600** that includes an illustration **102** depicting a character in the form of a beauty queen. The exemplary first upper body wrap-around **500** of **FIG. 5** is an apron, and the exemplary second upper body wrap-around **600** of **FIG. 6** is a hairdresser's cape (i.e., the type of garment used at beauty salons to protect the clothing of patrons). Other types of upper body wrap-arounds, such as hospital gowns, can similarly be used. Similarly, the upper body garment can be a jacket or poncho, such as one of the type used for warmth or rain protection.

[0031] The headless character garment of the present invention can be manufactured in any known manner, and the illustration of the character can be incorporated into the garment in any known manner. For example, the illustration can be an integral design woven into the garment during manufacture, it can be embroidered or silk-screened onto the garment, it can be ironed, sewed, or otherwise affixed to the garment, or it can be dyed or painted onto the garment.

[0032] Accordingly, embodiments of the present invention provide upper body garments that include an illustration of a full character except for the character's head, and this illustration is aligned so as to appear contiguous with the head of the wearer. More specifically, the illustration depicts a distinct outline of a character's full body except for the head (with or without props). This creates the illusion that the head of the wearer is conjoined with the character's body that is illustrated on the garment to depict the full character in a caricature-type manner, as opposed to a costume-type garment that depicts the entire wearer as being the character. In other words, the head of the character is out of proportion with (i.e., significantly larger in scale than) the rest of the character's body. In preferred embodiments, the illustration is made such that, when the garment is worn, all or substantially all of the character's full body is depicted above the waistline of the wearer (see, e.g., **FIG. 4**). Additionally, in preferred embodiments the illustration is of a generally recognizable (or identifiable) character.

[0033] The upper body garments of the present invention with illustrations that create the illusion of a full character in a caricature-type manner are very different from known types of clothing having illustrations that function as a costume for the wearer. For example, there are known garments that contain an illustration so as to make it appear that the wearer is wearing an entirely different type of

clothing. Examples of this are the “tuxedo shirt”, which is a T-shirt containing an illustration that makes it appear that the wearer is wearing a tuxedo on the upper body, and the “faux body cover-up”, which is a significantly oversized garment that extends to about the knee area and contains an illustration that makes it appear that the wearer has a more shapely body and is wearing much less clothing (such as only a small bikini or lingerie). Such known garments depict only a portion of the “character’s body” (namely, the portion that they cover), not a depiction of the full character except for the character’s head as in embodiments of the present invention. In other words, only the wearer’s head forms part of the depicted character. Furthermore, such known garments are partial costumes for the wearer in that they function to create a different look for that portion of the wearer’s body that is covered by the garment. In other words, such garments use the entire body of the wearer to depict a “character” that is properly proportioned (i.e., to-scale or substantially to-scale), not a caricature-type depiction having a head that is significantly larger than the rest of the character as in embodiments of the present invention.

[0034] Embodiments of the present invention allow the wearer of the headless character garment to realize an enhanced sense of self-confidence, fun, humor, creativity, or the like. Additionally, preferred embodiments allow the wearer to show enthusiasm or support for a chosen character, celebrity, actor, musician, athlete, sports team, band, organization, or the like. Furthermore, the headless character garment of the present invention can be worn or distributed for promotional or advertising purposes, such as to promote a movie, TV show, book, comic book, video game, musician, album, or sporting event. Thus, the headless character garment of the present invention is particularly well suited for advertising purposes, particularly in instances in which a generally recognizable character or icon is associated with a particular product or service. The headless character garment of the present invention is also well suited for use by children as it allows a child to depict one of their favorite characters, such as a cartoon character.

[0035] While there has been illustrated and described what are presently considered to be the preferred embodiments of the present invention, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various other modifications may be made, and equivalents may be substituted, without departing from the true scope of the present invention. Additionally, many modifications may be made to adapt a particular situation to the teachings of the present invention without departing from the central inventive concept described herein. Furthermore, an embodiment of the present invention may not include all of the features described above. Therefore, it is intended that the present invention not be limited to the particular embodiments disclosed, but that the invention include all embodiments falling within the scope of the appended claims.

1. A headless character shirt comprising an illustration of a full character except for the character’s head, with the illustration being situated about the shirt such that, when the shirt is worn by a wearer, the wearer’s head appears to be the

head of the character and all or substantially all of the character’s body, including the character’s legs and feet, is depicted above the waistline of the wearer.

2. (canceled)

3. The headless character shirt of claim 1, further comprising sleeves, the illustration extending onto the sleeves.

4. The headless character shirt of claim 1, wherein the illustration includes at least a portion of the character’s neck.

5. The headless character shirt of claim 1, wherein the illustration does not include any portion of the character’s neck.

6. The headless character shirt of claim 1, wherein the character in the illustration is generally recognizable.

7. The headless character shirt of claim 1, wherein the illustration comprises a front view of the character situated about a front side of the shirt.

8. The headless character shirt of claim 7, wherein the illustration further comprises a back view of the character situated about a back side of the shirt.

9. The headless character shirt of claim 1, wherein the illustration comprises a back view of the character situated about a back side of the shirt.

10. The headless character shirt of claim 1, wherein the illustration comprises at least one prop or object that is associated with the character.

11. The headless character shirt of claim 1, further comprising at least one insignia that is associated with the character.

12. The headless character shirt of claim 1, further comprising at least one insignia that is associated with a seller or manufacturer of the shirt.

13. An upper body garment for covering at least a wearer’s upper body, the upper body garment comprising an illustration of a full character except for the character’s head, with the illustration being situated about the upper body garment such that, when the upper body garment is worn by the wearer, the wearer’s head appears to be the head of the character and all or substantially all of the character’s body, including the character’s legs and feet is depicted above the waistline of the wearer.

14. (canceled)

15. The upper body garment of claim 13, wherein the character in the illustration is generally recognizable.

16. The upper body garment of claim 13, wherein the illustration comprises at least one prop or object that is associated with the character.

17. The upper body garment of claim 13, wherein the upper body garment is a jacket, poncho or apron.

18. The upper body garment of claim 13, wherein the illustration comprises a front view of the character situated about a front side of the upper body garment.

19. The upper body garment of claim 13, wherein the illustration further comprises a back view of the character situated about a back side of the upper body garment.

20. The upper body garment of claim 13, further comprising at least one insignia that is associated with the character or at least one insignia that is associated with a seller or manufacturer of the upper body garment, or both.