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Smothers

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[54] **PORTABLE, SELF-CONTAINED MOVIE THEATRE**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **52/7**

[51] **Int. Cl.** **E04h 3/22**

[58] **Field of Search** 52/6–8, 52/143, 71; 272/10, 16–18

[56] **References Cited**

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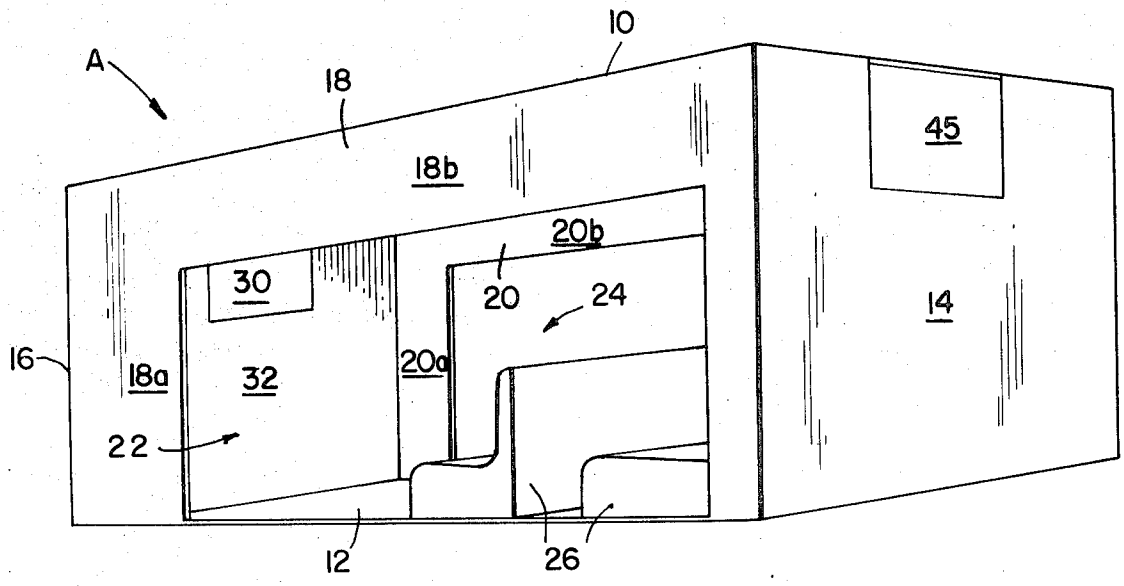
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A portable, self-contained movie theatre having a movie screen, movie projector and seating therein. This theatre is dimensioned for ready installation into food, variety, department stores and the like and comprises a rectangular, box-shaped theatre housing having a ceiling and floor, a pair of oppositely opposed end walls, and a pair of oppositely opposed sidewalls. The movie screen is carried within the housing adjacent one of the end walls, and a rectangular opening in at least one of the sidewalls is provided to define a portal for easy access to seats secured interior of the theatre housing.

5 Claims, 2 Drawing Figures



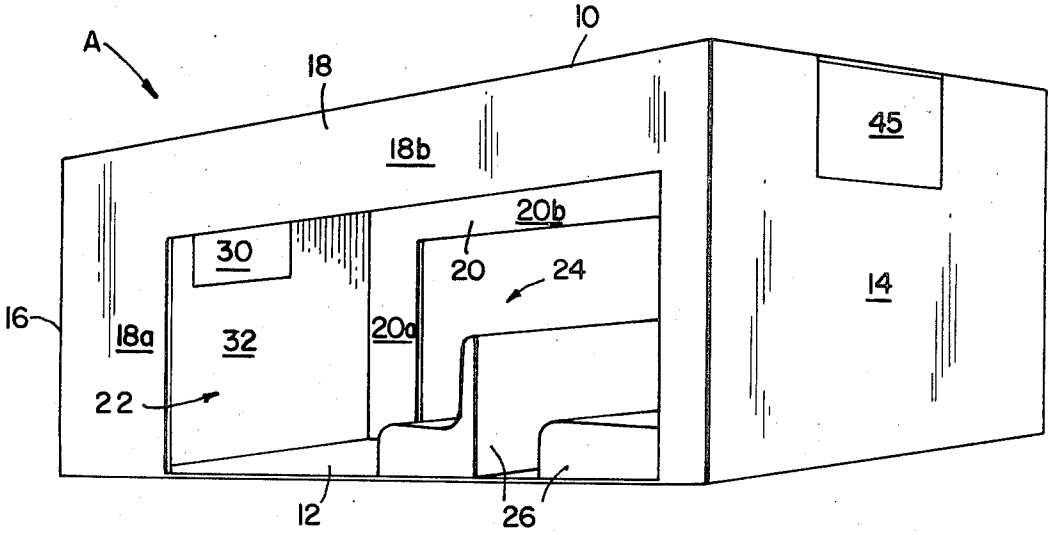


FIG_1

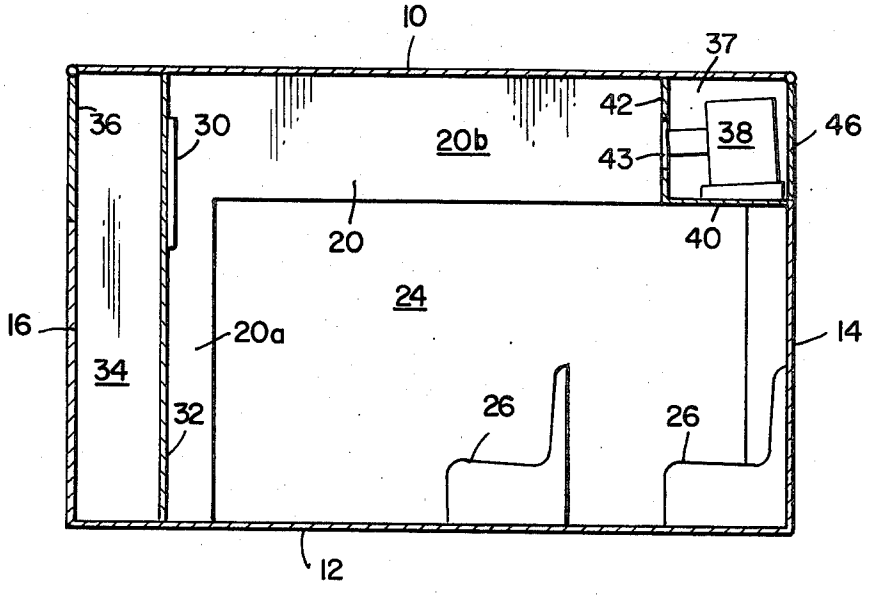


FIG_2

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PORTABLE, SELF-CONTAINED MOVIE THEATRE

This invention pertains to movie theatres, and more particularly to a portable, self-contained movie theatre dimensioned for easy installation into food, variety, department stores and the like.

Children who accompany their parents shopping require constant supervision and attention to their needs, thus restricting their parents' freedom to move about easily as they shop. Further, because of their curious nature, children are prone to reach out for merchandise on store shelves, thus disrupting displays, and often times causing breakage.

It is an object of this invention to provide a form of entertainment for children which will hold their attention and free their parents from the responsibility of watching them while shopping. This form of entertainment should be low in cost, require a minimum of supervision, and not present any safety hazards to the children.

In accord with this object, a portable, self-contained movie theatre containing a movie screen, movie projector and seats has been designed for providing small children with a form of continuous entertainment. This portable theatre is dimensioned for ready installation into variety, food, department stores and the like, installation requiring little more than the seating of the theatre within the store at the desired location.

The portable movie theatre comprises a rectangular, box-like theatre housing having sidewalls, end walls, a top and floor. The top, sidewalls, and end walls of the box serve to shield the movie screen, mounted on the inside of one of the end walls, from the lights in the store. A large rectangular opening is provided in the sidewalls to allow ease of access to seats provided within the theatre. A continuous projection unit is mounted either at the far end of the theatre housing opposite the movie screen for front projection, or behind the movie screen for rear screen projection.

The movie theatre of this invention is of unitized construction. It contains no exposed parts which children can reach and break and possibly injure themselves upon. In addition, the continuous projection equipment contemplated herein requires virtually no maintenance aside from the starting and stopping of the projector and the periodic changing of the film program. Maintenance requirements may be further reduced by using a timer to automatically start and stop projection equipment.

The invention will be further understood with reference to the following drawings and specification wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the portable, self-contained movie theatre of this invention; and

FIG. 2 is a sectioned side view of the portable, self-contained movie theatre of FIG. 1.

With reference now to the drawings, particularly FIG. 1, the portable, self-contained movie theatre of this invention is illustrated and designated generally as A. It is delimited by ceiling panel **10**, floor panel **12**, end walls **14** and **16**, and sidewalls **18** and **20**. The panels and walls that delimit the theatre are formed of any suitable opaque material of adequate strength. Horizontally disposed, rectangular portals **22** and **24** in sidewalls **18** and **20** extend upwardly from the floor and are offset towards the rear of the theatre so that portions **18***a*, and **20***a* of the sidewalls adjacent end wall **14** and portions **18***b* and **20***b* of the sidewalls adjacent top

panel **10** shield the inner surface of the end wall from light. These surfaces also serve as structural bracings for the theatre housing.

The portals are sized so as to afford easy access to the seating area within the theatre. Preferably, they are coextensive in length with the seating area to not only facilitate easy access to the seating within the theatre but also to permit an unobstructed view of the children inside. For reasons of esthetics and ease of fabrication, the portals are of the same dimension and oppositely aligned with each other.

A plurality of rows of chairs **26** are secured to floor **12** to provide seating for the theatre occupants. These chairs are preferably provided as molded benches formed of plastic and sized to seat youngsters from 1 to 12 years of age, and extend across the floor of the theatre from one side to the other. In FIG. **1**, only two rows of benches are shown installed. It should be appreciated that as many rows of benches can be installed as desired so long as they are not placed so close together as to restrict access and leg room.

A movie screen **30** is mounted interior of the theatre housing. In the case of front screen projection, it can be carried on the inside of end wall **16**. Alternatively, and as shown in the drawing, the screen **30** can be carried on an interior wall **32**, this wall parallelly opposed to end wall **16** and spaced a short distance therefrom to define a rectangular chamber **34**. Within chamber **34**, means can be provided to support a motion picture projector adapted for rear screen projection. It is to be appreciated that any suitable mounting means for the motion picture projectors may be used herein and as such, the mounting means does not constitute part of this invention. A hingedly mounted panel **36** is provided on the back of end wall **16** to afford access to chamber **34** for installation and servicing of the film projector.

From a consideration of the drawings, it will be readily apparent how the walls of the theatre shield the movie screen from lights in the store. A portion of the screen extends upwardly into the shielded area of the movie theatre housing above the uppermost boundary of openings **22** and **24**. The screen is also recessed from the leading edges of these openings so as to be shielded from side lighting in the vicinity of the movie theatre. It is to be appreciated that the higher the screen is carried within the theatre housing, the better it will be shielded from light. With the screen so shielded, the motion picture image can easily be viewed.

For standard type front screen projection, a compartment **37** is provided adjacent rear wall **14** of the housing for receiving a movie projector **38** therein. This compartment is delimited by ceiling **10**, end wall **14**, horizontal panel **40** and vertical panel **42**. An aperture **43** in panel **42** provides an opening through which the motion picture can be projected. Hinged drop panel **45** is provided on wall **14** to afford access to compartment **37**. Preferably, the compartment supports the projector above the upper limit of the portals so as to be out of the way of the theatre occupants. As the light projection passes over the heads of the theatre occupants, no shadows will be cast on the screen.

By way of example, conveniently sized movie theatres in accordance with this invention are 6 × 10 feet at the base and 6 feet high. Larger or smaller movie theatres can be constructed depending upon the environment into which the theatre is to be placed. Obvi-

ously, in larger stores having more floor space and higher ceilings, larger dimensioned theatres can be installed. For a theatre of the above-mentioned size, it has been found that eight bench-type seats, 18 inches high by 6 feet long can be installed to accommodate up to 28 youngsters at one time.

The continuous projection theatre equipment to be used with the portable, self-contained movie theatre of this invention can be of any type now available on the market. Generally, these continuous projection devices are designed to hold up to 2½ hours of film which will play constantly without rewinding. To operate the theatre, all one need do is start the projector. No further attendance is required until the projector is to be shut off. If a timer is used, the projection equipment is automatically started and stopped.

What I claim is:

1. A portable, self-contained childrens' movie theatre comprising:

a rectangular box-shaped theatre housing of unitized construction having a ceiling and floor, first and second oppositely opposed end walls, and a pair of oppositely opposed sidewalls;

a plurality of seats within said housing, said seats being secured at their base to said floor and being arranged in a plurality of rows aligned to face said second end wall;

a horizontally disposed rectangular opening in at least one of said sidewalls, said opening extending upwardly from said floor and being offset towards said first end wall at one end of said housing to shield the inner surface of said second end wall from light, said opening being coextensive in length with the seating area within the theatre to provide direct access to each of said rows of seats and to afford an unobstructed view of the theatre interior from the outside;

a movie projection screen mounted within said theatre housing adjacent said second end wall, and lying in a plane parallel with the plane of said end wall; and,

projector receiving means for supporting a movie projector within said theatre housing for movie projection onto said movie screen.

2. The portable, self-contained movie theatre of claim 1 wherein said movie screen is carried by a vertically upstanding wall secured within said housing, and parallel to said second end wall, said vertically upstanding wall recessed from said opening in said sidewall and displaced a sufficient distance from said second end wall to define a rectangular compartment therebetween for receiving a movie projector mounted for rear screen projection.

3. The portable, self-contained movie theatre of claim 1 wherein said projector receiving means is secured within the theatre housing proximate the first end wall of said housing opposite said movie screen for front screen projection.

4. The portable, self-contained movie theatre of claim 3 wherein said movie screen is carried on said second end wall.

5. The portable, self-contained movie theatre of claim 3 wherein said projector receiving means is carried proximate said first end wall above the upper boundary of said rectangular opening.

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