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(54) **METHOD AND ELEMENTS FOR DECORATING AND/OR FINISHING OF SWIMMING POOLS AND SWIMMING POOL COMPRISING USE OF SAME**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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The invention concerns a method for decorating and/or finishing of swimming pools of the type comprising a light rigid structure mainly consisting of one or more lateral metal walls (1) and whereof the base, for example, formed by an apron (2) made of cement mortar or reinforced concrete, and a liner or sealed flexible pocket (3) housed in said structure and pressed against the lateral wall(s) of the latter. The invention is characterised in that the decorative (6) and/or finish (7) elements comprising a skin surface (8) and a magnetised surface or soleplate (9) are pressed, via their magnetic surface or soleplate, against the lateral wall(s) (1-3) of the swimming pool, and said elements are fixed against the metal wall of said structure, by the action of magnetic forces generated by said magnetised soleplate (9) and passing through the liner (3).

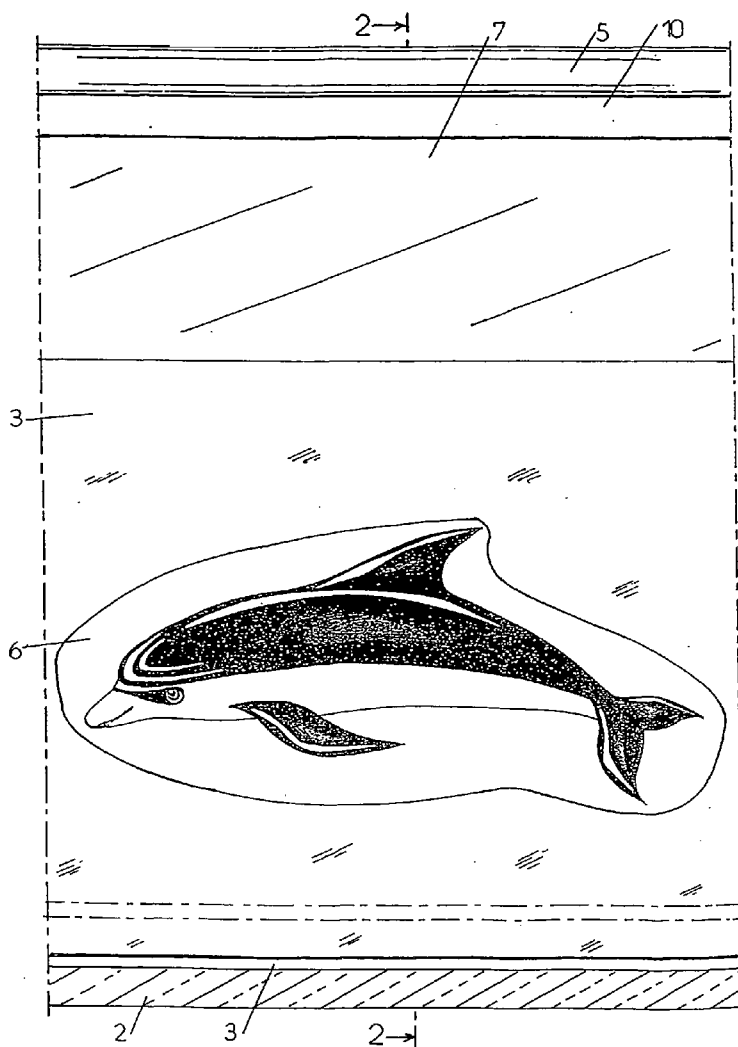
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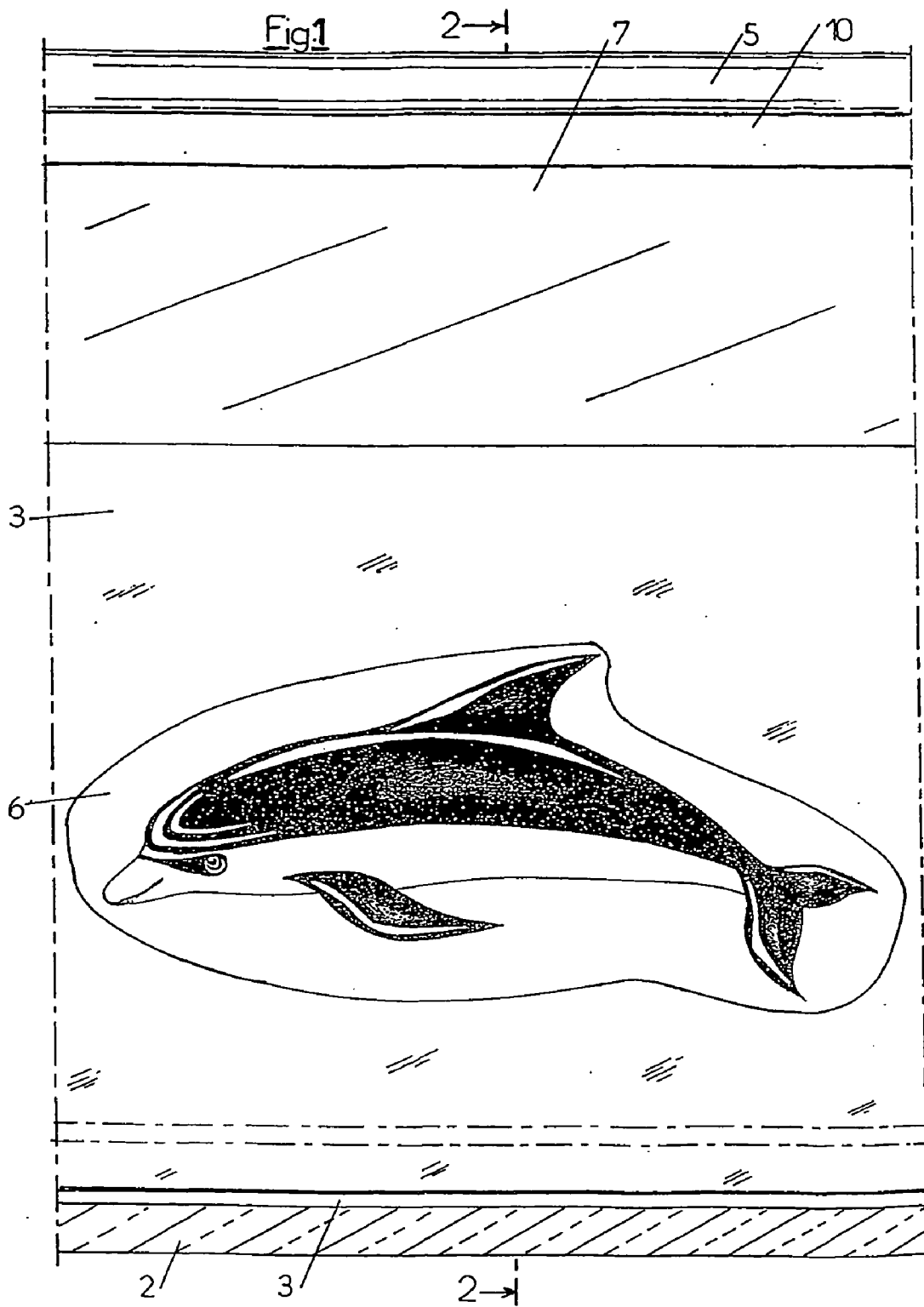
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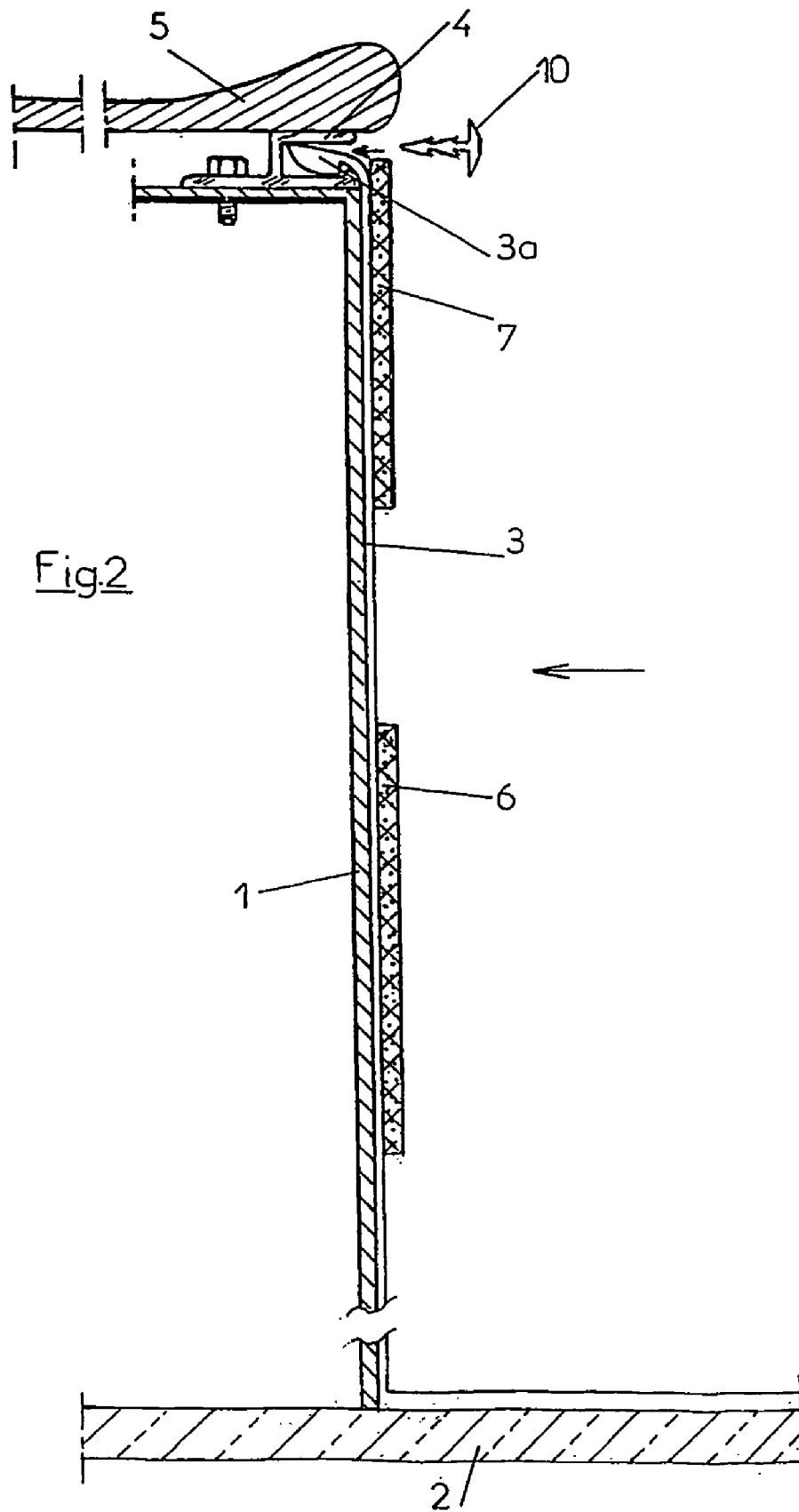


Fig.3



Fig.4

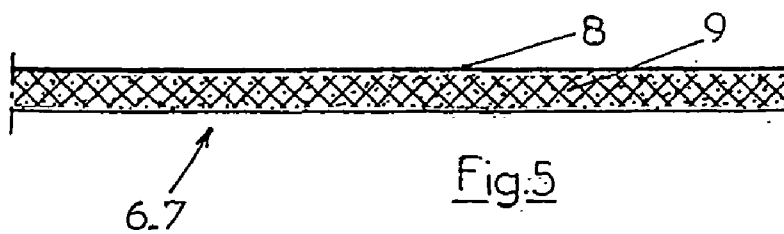
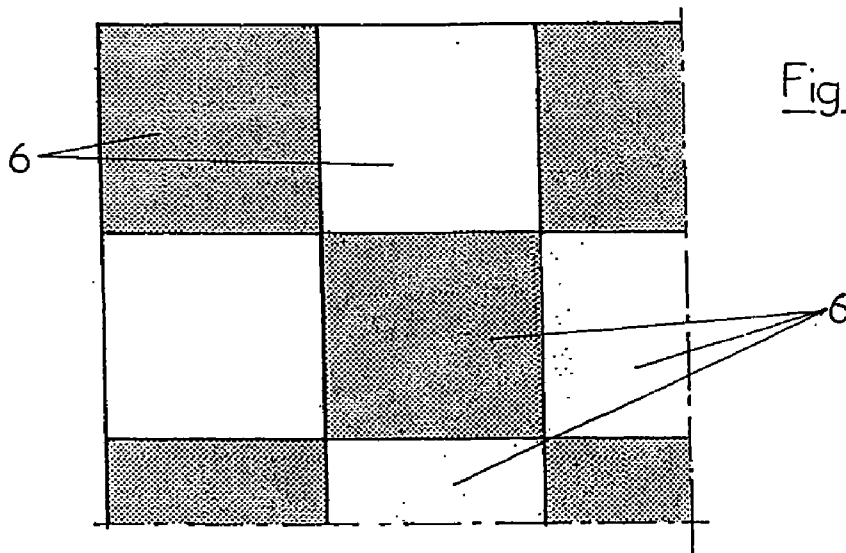


Fig.5

METHOD AND ELEMENTS FOR DECORATING AND/OR FINISHING OF SWIMMING POOLS AND SWIMMING POOL COMPRISING USE OF SAME

RELATED U.S. APPLICATIONS

[0001] Not applicable.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

[0002] Not applicable.

REFERENCE TO MICROFICHE APPENDIX

[0003] Not applicable.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0004] The present invention involves a process and elements for decoration and/or finishing of swimming pools of the type comprising metallic side walls and a bottom which can be comprised of a sole plate made of cement mortar or reinforced concrete, these swimming pools also comprising a cover made of a plastic material in the form of a watertight and flexible lining, housed in the cavity defined by the side walls and the rigid bottom, and ensuring watertightness. This watertight lining, called a "liner" in the current language, is located closely pinned against the bottom and hard side walls under the force of pressure of the water contained in the swimming pool. The invention also applies to the swimming pools and other pools comprising the application of the claimed process and the elements for decoration and/or finishing.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The liners are comprised of an assembly of panels of vinyl cloth or another flexible and impermeable plastic material, having a thickness on the order of 0.35 mm to 1.50 mm, and connected to each other by any suitable watertight joining process, generally joining by ultrasound.

[0006] A disadvantage of these liners is that they are made and supplied by manufacturers without any decorative element or with a selection of printed decorations that is very limited in quantity.

[0007] Another disadvantage of the liners that are currently available results from the fact that after a certain period of installation, a visible discoloration or alteration of a narrow band of their upper surface forms above the water line, due to the fact that this narrow band ages differently from their remaining surface, under the action of ultraviolet rays.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] The present invention proposes notably to correct the disadvantages mentioned above.

[0009] According to the invention, the elements for decoration and/or finishing comprise a facing surface and a magnetized surface designed to be applied against the inside surface of the liner, and these elements are affixed against one or more metallic walls of the rigid structure of the swimming pool, by the action of magnetic forces that are generated by the magnetized surface and go through the liner.

[0010] The elements for decoration and/or finishing can be made in the form of flexible sheets or plates that have a reduced thickness and are able to have various shapes: the shape of tiles, general shape of the decorative motif depicted, shape of fascia, etc.

[0011] It is understood that the owners and tenants of swimming pools having a lightweight structure of the type mentioned above thus have the ability to decorate all or part of the vertical walls of their swimming pool using various decorative elements, depending on their tastes, without altering the properties of the liner. These decorative elements can be detached rapidly and easily, in order to be replaced by others.

[0012] They can comprise portions of the surfaces of various games such as, for example: scenarios of games of chess or checkers, scenarios of tick-tack-toe, etc.

[0013] In addition, it is possible to create finishing friezes or bands covered with or without decorative motifs, affixed horizontally against the upper part of the side walls of the swimming pool, for example, above the water line. In case of alteration of the appearance of these friezes or bands, for example, under the action of ultraviolet rays, it is possible to replace them rapidly and easily with new friezes or bands.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWINGS

[0014] The goals, characteristics, and advantages above, as well as others, are better explained from the description which follows and the attached drawings, in which:

[0015] **FIG. 1** is a front view of a portion of a side wall of a swimming pool, provided with a decorative element and a finishing element according to the invention.

[0016] **FIG. 2** is a section view along the line **2-2** of **FIG. 1**.

[0017] **FIG. 3** is a front view of an embodiment example of the decorative element according to the invention.

[0018] **FIG. 4** is a front view of another embodiment example of these decorative elements.

[0019] **FIG. 5** is a large scale transverse section view of an example for setting up the decorative element.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0020] Reference is made to the drawings in order to describe some examples of interest in implementing the process and in embodiments of the elements for decoration and/or finishing and swimming pools according to the invention.

[0021] The swimming pools to which the invention can apply are of the type comprising a lightweight rigid structure mainly made of one or more metallic side walls **1**, generally laid out vertically and comprised of panels of steel sheets having a thickness on the order of 2 mm, assembled by exterior screw-bolt connections or otherwise. This peripheral wall is installed in a pit dug in the ground. The bottom of the rigid structure can be comprised of a bottom **2** that can be made of cement mortar or reinforced concrete, or any other hard surface.

[0022] In this rigid external structure, a liner 3 is installed whose shapes and dimensions correspond approximately to those of this structure, whereby this liner is made in a manner previously described, in a manner impermeable to water, but equipped with a magnetic permeability, such as a vinyl sheet. It is fastened, for example, by means of its upper peripheral edge equipped with an enlarged edge strip 3a, to a fastening system 4 affixed onto an outside shoulder 1a of the metallic walls 1, under the brim 5 of the swimming pool.

[0023] According to the process of the invention, the elements for decoration 6 and/or finishing 7 comprising a facing surface 8 and a magnetized surface 9, are applied, by means of their magnetized surface, against at least one and preferably, against the four composite side walls 1-3 of the rigid structure of the swimming pool, and these elements are affixed against the metallic wall(s) of this structure, by the action of the magnetic forces that are generated by the magnetized surface and go through the liner.

[0024] The elements for decoration 6 and/or finishing 7 are, preferably, made in the form of flexible plates having a reduced thickness, for example, on the order of 1 to 2 mm.

[0025] These elements comprise a facing surface 8 preferably made of a thin sheet made of plastic material and affixed by gluing or otherwise onto a magnetized flexible plate or sole plate 9, for example comprised of a plate of a magnetized elastomer (itself known from the prior art) thicker than the previous one and designed in order to generate magnetic forces and a magnetic field that makes it possible to closely line and to hold these elements against the wall of the swimming pool.

[0026] The elements for decoration and/or finishing according to the invention can have more diverse shapes and dimensions: the shape of a square tile (FIG. 4), general shape of a decorative motif represented on a facing sheet (general shape of a fish according to FIG. 3), the shape of an ornamental frieze or continuous band (FIG. 1), etc.

[0027] They can comprise portions of the surfaces of various games such as, for example, scenarios of the game of chess or checkers (FIG. 4), scenarios of tick-tack-toe, etc., covering one or more side walls of the swimming pools.

[0028] When they comprise ornamental friezes or finishing bands 7, a clamping and finishing ring 10 forming a junction plate (or stay) can be engaged between the upper edge of the band 7 and the lower surface of the brim 5 (FIG. 2).

[0029] The invention also comprises swimming pools provided with the elements for decoration and/or finishing described above.

I claim:

1. Process for decoration and/or finishing of swimming pools of the type comprising, on the one hand, a rigid structure mainly consisting of one or more metallic side

walls (1) and having a bottom which, for example, can be formed from a sole plate (2) made of cement mortar or reinforced concrete, and, on the other hand, a watertight and flexible liner or lining (3), housed in this structure and applied against the metallic side wall(s) of the structure, characterized in that the elements for decoration (6) and/or finishing (7) comprise a facing surface (8) and a magnetized surface or soleplate (9), applied, by means of their magnetized surface or soleplate, against one or more side walls (1-3) of the swimming pools, and these elements are affixed against the metallic wall of this structure by the action of magnetic forces that are generated by the magnetized soleplate (9) and go through the liner (3).

2. Elements for decoration and/or finishing of swimming pools of the type comprising, on the one hand, a rigid structure mainly consisting of one or more metallic side walls (1) and having a bottom which, for example, is formed from a sole plate (2) made of cement mortar or reinforced concrete, and, on the other hand, a watertight and flexible liner or lining (3), housed in this structure and applied against the metallic side walls of the structure, characterized in that they comprise a facing surface (8) and a magnetized surface or soleplate (9) generating magnetic forces that allow them to be affixed, due to the action of these forces, against the side walls of the swimming pool.

3. Elements for decoration and/or finishing of swimming pools according to claim 2, characterized in that they are made in the form of flexible plates (6, 7) having a reduced thickness, for example on the order of 1 to 2 mm.

4. Elements for decoration and/or finishing of swimming pools according to one of the claims 2 or 3, characterized in that they comprise a facing surface comprised of a thin sheet of plastic material (8) affixed to a flexible magnetized plate or soleplate (9).

5. Elements for decoration of swimming pools according to any one of the claims 2 to 4, characterized in that they also comprise portions of surfaces or scenarios of games, using one or more side walls of the swimming pools.

6. Finishing elements according to any one of the claims 2 to 5, characterized in that they are made in the form of ornamental friezes or finishing bands (7) designed to be affixed horizontally against the upper part of the side walls of the swimming pool, above the water line.

7. Swimming pool of the type comprising, on the one hand, a light structure mainly consisting of one or more metallic side walls (1) and having a bottom which, for example, can be formed from a sole plate (2) made of cement mortar or reinforced concrete, and, on the other hand, a watertight and flexible liner or lining (3), housed in this structure and applied against the metallic side walls (1) of the structure, characterized in that one or more of its side walls (1-3) is or are equipped with elements for decoration (6) and/or finishing (7) made and affixed according to any one of the claims 1 to 6.

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