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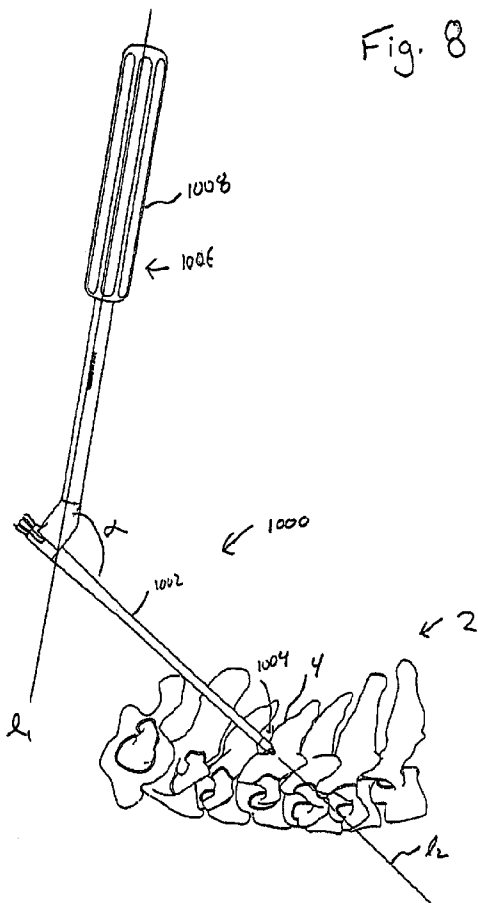
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- (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): INTERVENTIONAL SPINE, INC. [US/US]; 13700 Alton Parkway, Suite 160, Irvine, CA 92618-1618 (US).
- (72) Inventors: CULBERT, Brad, S.; 18 Ballantree, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 (US). KHOO, Larry; 12144 Laurel Terrace Drive, Studio City, CA 91604 (US).
- (74) Agent: KIMMEL, Andrew, I.; Knobbe, Martens, Olson And Bear, LLP, 2040 Main Street, Fourteenth Floor, Irvine, CA 92614 (US).
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR SPINAL FIXATION



(57) Abstract: Fusion of cervical spinal vertebrae with one or more fixation devices can be accomplished with the described tools and methods. For example, a guidewire introducer can include a tubular introducer cannula and a handle. The handle can be angularly offset from the introducer cannula such that positioning of the introducer on the cervical spine does not interfere with a patient's head. A sheath assembly can include inner and outer sheath bodies and a handle. The handle is angularly offset from the sheath bodies such that the sheath assembly can be applied to the cervical spine without interference to the patient's head. The sheath body can be curved or straight. Various tools such as drills, tapping devices, compression tools, and pin release tools can be applied to the cervical spine through the sheath body to apply the fixation device. The tools can include elongate flexible shafts.

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FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MT, NL, PL,  
PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM,  
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# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER**  
 IPC: **A61B 17/58**( 2006.01)  
       **A61B 17/60**( 2006.01)  
  
 USPC: **606/279**  
 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

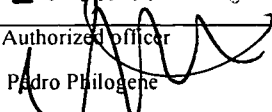
**B. FIELDS SEARCHED**  
  
 Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)  
 U.S. : 606/279  
  
 Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched  
  
 Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)  
 EAST

**C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT**

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 6,520,907 B1 (Foley et al) 18 February 2003 (18.02.2003) see entire document	1-34
X	US 2001/0027320 A1 (Sasso) 04 October 2001 (04.10.2001) see entire document	1-34
X	US 6,066,142 A (serbousek et al.) 23 May 2000 (23.05.2000) see entire document	1-34
X	US 6,929,606 B2 (Ritland ) 16 August 2005 (16.08.2005) see entire document	1-34

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.       See patent family annex.

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"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"X"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
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"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means		
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Name and mailing address of the ISA/US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (571) 273-3201	Authorized officer  Pedro Philogene Telephone No. (571) 272-4716