

May 11, 1926.

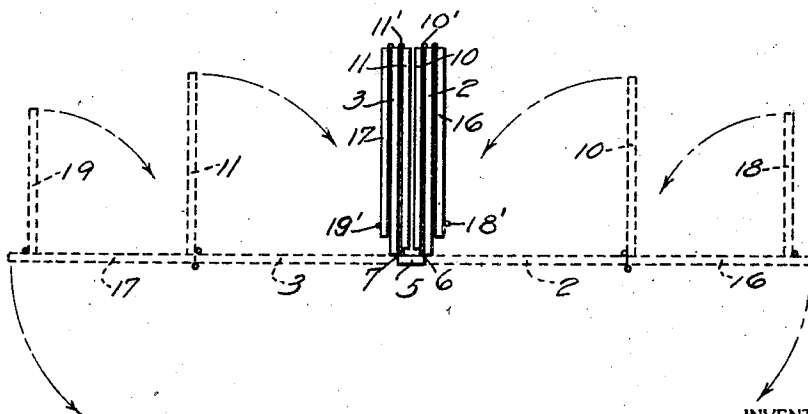
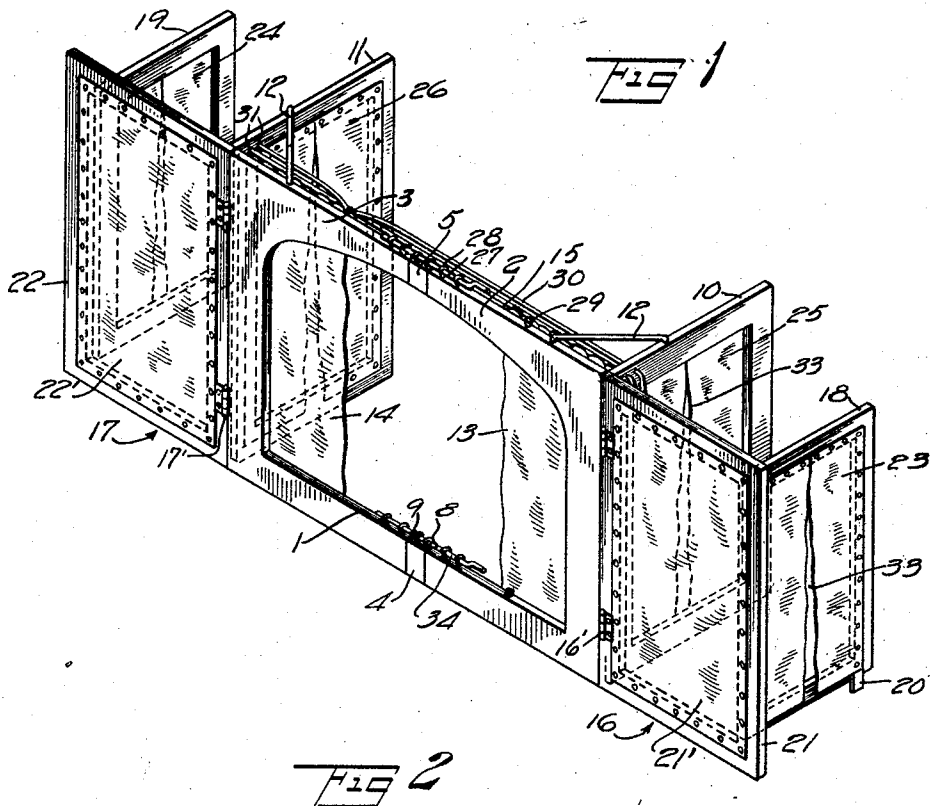
1,583,775

E. N. BRANDT

COLLAPSIBLE THEATER

Filed Oct. 11, 1924

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



INVENTOR
Erdmann N. Brandt
BY Richard E. Eyre
ATTORNEY

May 11, 1926.

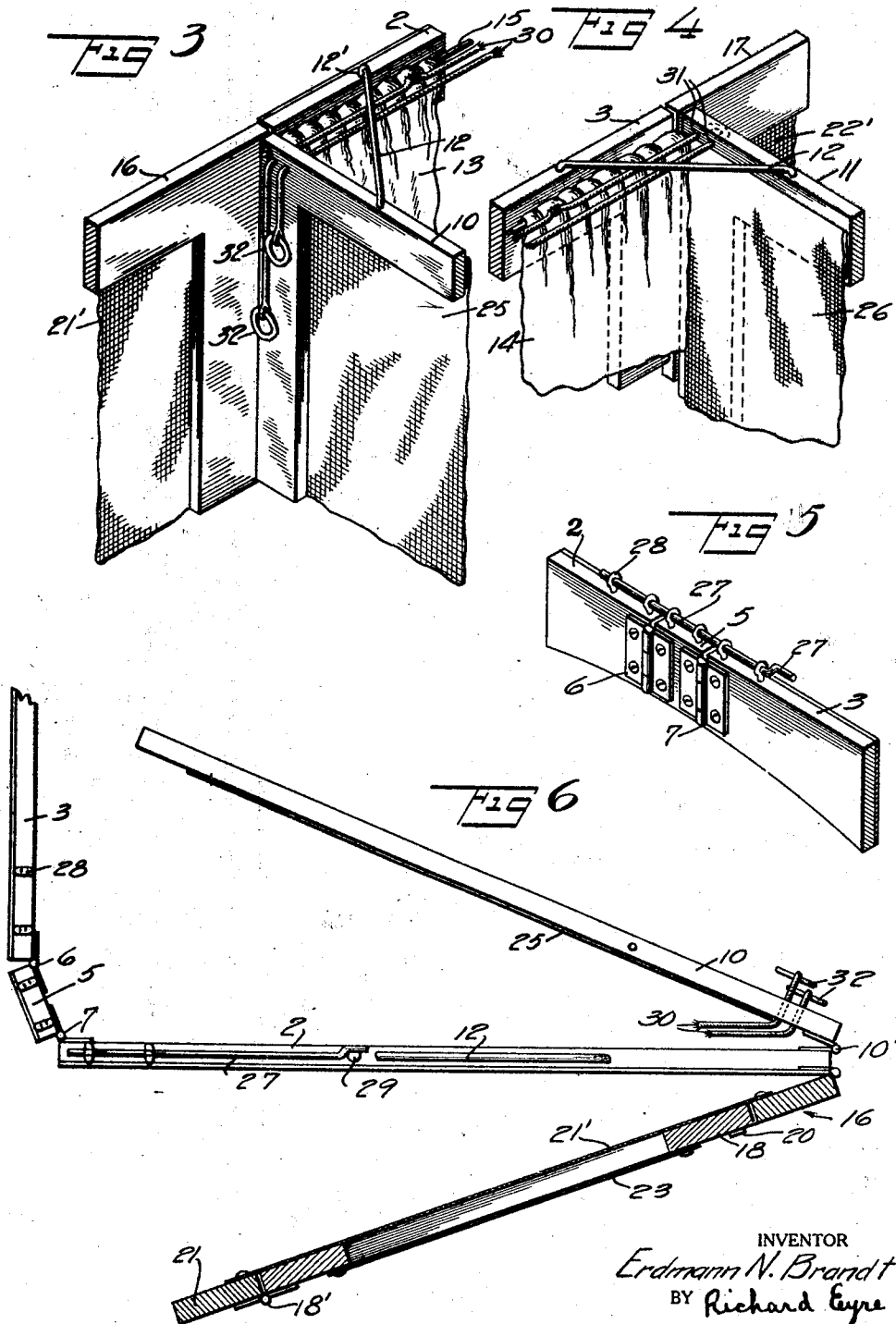
1,583,775

E. N. BRANDT

COLLAPSIBLE THEATER

Filed Oct. 11, 1924

2 Sheets-Sheet 2



Patented May 11, 1926.

1,583,775

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ERDMANN N. BRANDT, OF TARRYTOWN, NEW YORK.

COLLAPSIBLE THEATER.

Application filed October 11, 1924. Serial No. 743,069.

This invention relates to collapsible theaters and particularly toy theaters, although certain features thereof are of more general application. The object of the invention is a novel theater of a construction enabling it to be readily set up and collapsed into compact form with peculiar facility. To these ends I have devised a theatrical unit of collapsible one-piece form which may be readily knocked down into a compact form storable in confined and narrow spaces and which, with equal facility, may be set up to form the essentials of an improvised temporary theater. Further objects of the invention reside in a structure of this character which is of marked simplicity and is capable of being economically manufactured.

For a better understanding of the above indicated novel features of my invention and others which will hereinafter appear, reference may be had to the accompanying drawings wherein—

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of my invention.

Fig. 2 is a plan view illustrating the collapsible features thereof.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view in detail of certain of the parts of the apparatus.

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of still other parts on an enlarged scale.

Fig. 5 is a detailed view of a mechanism facilitating the collapsing and setting up of the parts, and

Fig. 6 is a part sectional and part plan view of a portion of the apparatus.

Referring to the drawings where similar reference numerals designate similar parts throughout, I have illustrated my invention as embodied in a toy or readily improvisable theater comprising as one of its elements the central proscenium arch 1. The latter comprises the two right and left side portions or halves 2 and 3 and the narrow central portions 4 and 5. The right and left parts 2 and 3 are hinged to the upper central part 5 by means of the hinges 6 and 7 and to the lower central base part 4 by means of the hinges 8 and 9. The two halves 2 and 3, therefore, of the arch, may swing in parallel relation to each other and at right angles to the central parts 4 and 5. On the outer edges of the proscenium arch panel 1 are swung the side panels or wings 10 and 11 these being hinged thereto by means of pairs of hinges 10' and 11'

respectively. The panels 10 and 11 are preferably of the same height as the proscenium arch 1 and are capable of assuming right angle positions with reference thereto in the set up position of the theater, as indicated in Fig. 1, and in this position suitable attaching braces 12 may be provided for rigidly anchoring the panels in this position. These braces 12 may consist of links of wire of sufficient rigidity to hold the side panels in the set up position and include the down turned ends 12' entering suitable recesses in the upper edges of the panel members 2, 3, 10 and 11 for rigidly holding the parts in distended relation. The width of the panels 10 and 11 is preferably substantially the width of the halves 2 and 3 of the arch, so that their outer edges reach approximately or fall short of the edges of the central parts 4 and 5 in the collapsed position. I have indicated a curtain for the proscenium arch containing the right and left hand halves 13 and 14, these curtains being carried by a flexible strand of suitable material 15, such for example as a flexible metallic wire. This wire 15 is attached at either end to and adjacent the upper edges of the panels 10 and 11 and at points approximating their hinged edges. The wire or flexible strand carrying the curtain should be of such length as to be reasonably taut when the panels 10 and 11 are folded backwardly, as indicated in Fig. 1 and anchored at right angle positions to the arch. The arch 1 also has hinged to its opposite side edges the front panels 16 and 17. This is effected through the pairs of hinges 16' and 17' permitting the front panels 16 and 17 to take positions, as indicated in Fig. 1, in continuation of the central arch structure or any position forward thereof, including the position wherein they are flat up against the front side of the arch halves 2 and 3. In the preferred embodiment there is an auxiliary pair of side panels 18 and 19 supported on the rear sides of the front panels 16 and 17 respectively. These auxiliary panels are supported by the pairs of hinges 18' and 19' respectively, and are capable of assuming various positions with reference to the carrying members 16 and 17. In the position indicated in Fig. 1 they are disposed at right angles respectively to the panels 16 and 17 and have suitable legs 20, on their bottom edges for forming suitable supports for the panels when

open. In the particular embodiment illustrated, the front panels 16 and 17 comprise rectangular frames 21 and 22 with suitable coverings 21' and 22' suitably secured to the front side of the rectangular frames 21 and 22 to close the rectangular frame. These coverings 21' and 22' may be of any suitable material, as for example silk fabric. Preferably the auxiliary side panels 18 and 19 are smaller than the panels 16 and 17 and are just large enough to fit snugly or easily into the interior of the rectangular frames 21 and 22 (Fig. 6) so that when the panels 18 and 19 are swung up against the rear of the carrying panels 16 and 17, they fold into the rectangular openings of the frames 21 and 22 and come substantially flush with the rear sides thereof. The panels 18 and 19 themselves are preferably constructed similarly to the panels 16 and 17 namely with rectangular frames closed by central coverings 23 and 24 of suitable material. In like manner the side panels 10 and 11 preferably consist of rectangular frames of wood or other suitable material covered by silk or other suitable fabric 25 and 26. If desired some suitable means may be provided for bracing the laterally flexible and foldable arch 1 in the rigid distended position shown in Fig. 1. This may be effected through the medium of a suitable elongated bracing arm 27 (Fig. 5) slidably carried on the upper edge of the arch and passing through the aligned eyes 28 on the parts 2, 3 and 5. This arm 27 engages a stop 29 in its open position and may be provided with an offset end 27' to prevent dislodgement and loss. This prevents the movement of the parts 2 and 3 about their respective hinges 6, 8 and 7, 9. If desired a bracing means similar to the bracing mechanism 27, 28 may be provided for the lower part of the arch across the central part 4, which adds to the rigidity when set up. The two curtains 13 and 14 may be operated in any suitable manner, as for example by means of the continuous flexible operating strand 30, the latter passing through openings in the panel 10 and extending parallel to the wire 15 to the opposite end thereof, where it is looped through two holes 31 in the left side panel 11, one of the halves of the flexible operating string 30 being attached to the curtain 13 and the other one to the curtain 14. Suitable hand holds in the form of rings 32 are fixed to the free ends of the string.

Fig. 1 illustrates the theater set up for use, the panels 10, 16, 18, and 11, 17, 19 forming dressing-rooms respectively on the right and left for the use of the performers. If desired, suitable doors 33 may be provided through the panels to permit entrance and exit of the performers, the doors being formed in any suitable manner as for example by dividing the fabric covering of the

panels into two parts for a portion of their length from the bottom. The preferred use is indicated in Fig. 1 and the theater may be set up on one side of a room or chamber to be utilized for this purpose. For example, it may be assumed that the proscenium arch 1 is disposed parallel to one wall of such chamber with the panels 10 and 11 having their rear vertical edges abutting thereagainst. If desired, however, the panels 16 and 17 may be turned forwardly 90° so as to be at right angles to the arch instead of in continuation thereof. It is observed that the whole structure forms a single unit organized together in the manner indicated so that it may be collapsed into the compact flat form indicated in Fig. 2, wherein the arch halves 2 and 3, the front panels 16 and 17, and the side panels 10 and 11 are all disposed in parallel relation substantially flat against each other with practically no unoccupied space, the side panels 10 and 11 being juxtaposed inside of the backwardly folded arch halves 2 and 3 while the front panels 16 and 17 are folded forwardly against the arch halves 2 and 3 with their auxiliary panels 18 and 19 folded within the rectangular compartments formed by the particular rectangular frame construction indicated. The central arch portions 4 and 5 which are preferably of a width slightly greater than the combined thickness of the panels 10 and 11 facilitate the compact folding function of the unit and permit the folding into the pancake form indicated without any of the parts fouling or being fouled by the others. By means of this unitary construction and arrangement all of the parts are retained in assembleable relation whether knocked down or set up, and the loss or misplacement of parts thereby obviated. Moreover, when constructed and used as a toy theater for children, it may be of dimensions, when set up, of sufficient proportions to take up a substantial portion of the usual room and still on account of its compactness as indicated in Fig. 2 when collapsed, it may be stored away with the greatest facility in the usual closet space provided in homes. The panel frames are preferably constructed of a light and cheap wood so that the whole apparatus may be manufactured cheaply and economically.

It is understood that while I have described my invention as being particularly applicable to toy theaters, yet it is equally applicable to theaters for grown-ups, as for example when a temporary theatrical structure is to be improvised for amateur and hastily arranged performances.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim and desire to protect by Letters Patent is:

1. An apparatus of the character set forth including a vertically divided laterally

foldable proscenium arch panel with side panels hinged to the opposite edges thereof for folding flat up against the foldable portions of the arch when the latter are folded into parallel relation.

2. An apparatus of the character set forth including a proscenium arch in two parts laterally foldable into parallel relation, side panels hinged to the free edges of the two halves of said arch for disposition either at right angles thereto, or in folded relation flatly thereagainst, and a flexible curtain carrier mounted thereon and permitting the collapsing and folding of the foldable proscenium arch and side panels flat against each other into a compact form.

3. An apparatus of the character set forth in claim 2 having a pair of front panels also hinged to the outer edges of the arch halves and adapted to assume any position from the continuation thereof to a position flat up thereagainst.

4. An apparatus of the character described including a vertically divided proscenium arch panel comprising two parts hinged together for folding positions parallel to each other, a pair of panels hinged to each part thereof, one to the back side to be folded flat against the rear sides of the proscenium arch parts, the other one to the front side thereof to be folded against the front sides thereof, and a pair of auxiliary panels hinged to the outer edges of the front panels.

5. A collapsible theater including a vertically divided proscenium arch panel which is formed of a pair of laterally foldable wings with an intermediate part of narrow strip form adapted to form a continuation of the arch in distended form and to assume a position at right angles to the arch halves when they are folded backwardly thereby permitting the folding of the proscenium arch wings into parallel spaced relation with each other and the disposition of other theater parts therebetween.

6. A collapsible theater including a proscenium arch panel vertically divided into two laterally foldable parts separated from each other both when in distended form and in the folded parallel form, and a pair of side panels swung on the outer edges of the arch panel parts and capable of assuming either right angle positions with reference thereto or positions flat against the rear sides of the arch panel halves and in close juxtaposition when the panel halves are folded laterally in parallel relation whereby the hinged parts may be collapsed and folded into parallel relation flat up against each other.

7. A collapsible theater of the character set forth in claim 6 having a pair of front panels swung for pivotal movement about the front side edges of the arch halves and

adapted to assume any position from a continuation of the side panels to a position flat up against the front sides thereof.

8. A collapsible theater unit including a proscenium arch panel divided vertically into two wings which are laterally foldable into parallel relation, a foldable side panel hinged to the outer vertical edge of each of the wings and spacing devices disposed between the two hinged wings to form a continuation thereof when distended and serving to space them from each other when laterally folded a distance at least equal to double the thickness of a side panel, thereby permitting the accommodation of the foldable side panels between the proscenium wings when the latter are laterally folded into parallel relation.

9. A collapsible theater unit including a proscenium arch panel divided vertically into two portions for folding laterally thereof into positions substantially parallel with each other with a spacing device between said arch halves, a pair of side panels swung on the outer edges of the arch halves and said panels being of a width not greater than the width of the arch halves whereby the side panels may be folded inwardly of the laterally folded arch halves without fouling the spacing device.

10. A collapsible theater of the character set forth in claim 9 wherein the width of the spacing device is approximately the combined thickness of the two side panels.

11. A collapsible theater unit of the character set forth in claim 9 having a flexible curtain support disposed parallel with the arch when distended.

12. A collapsible theater unit of the character set forth in claim 9 having a pair of front panels hinged to the front outer edges of the arch halves for collapsing movements opposite to the movements of the side panels.

13. A collapsible theater of the character set forth in claim 9 having bracing means for rigidly bracing the distended proscenium arch and the outwardly folded side panels.

14. A collapsible theater unit comprising a vertically divided proscenium arch panel with the halves thereof pivotally attached for lateral folding movements about vertical axes, a pair of panels pivotally attached to an outer edge of one of the divided portions of the proscenium arch, one of said panels being formed of a rectangular frame with a covering for one side thereof and an auxiliary panel hinged to the edge thereof and adapted when folded into collapsed form to repose in the rectangular chamber formed by the rectangular frame.

In testimony whereof, I have signed my name to this specification.

ERDMANN N. BRANDT.