Aug. 2, 1960 S. R. FACEY ET AL 2,947,210

PIANO

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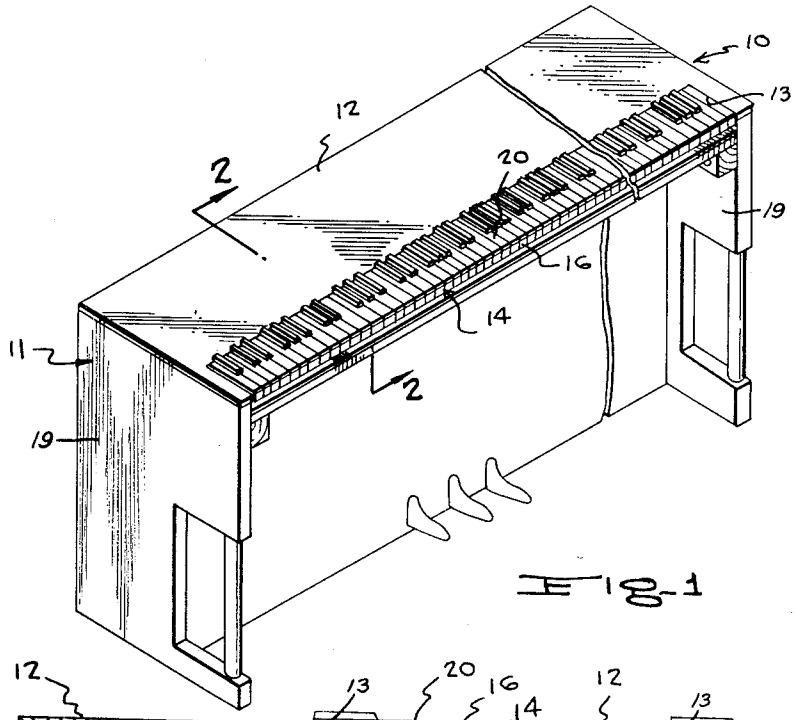


Fig-1

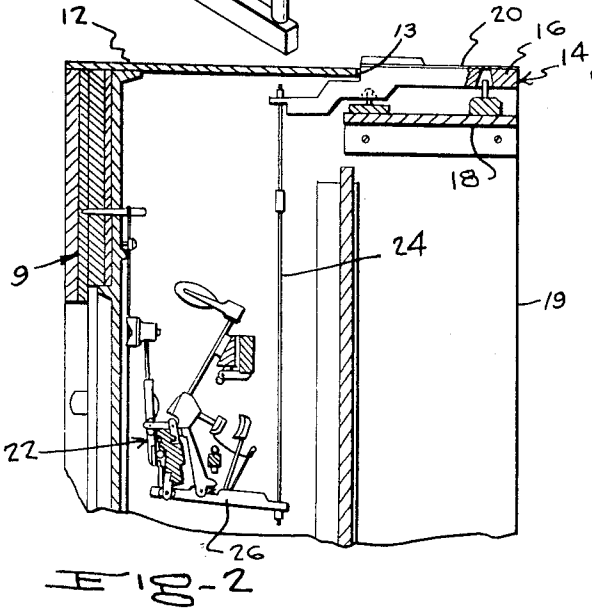


Fig-2

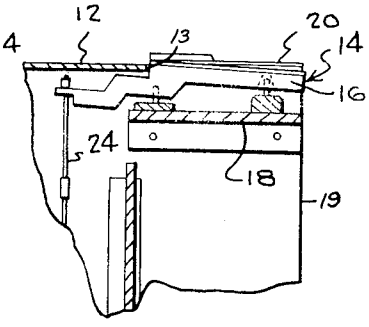


Fig-3

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PIANO

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1 Claim. (Cl. 84—177)

The present invention appertains to improvements in pianos and more particularly relates to an improved piano of the kind wherein the keyboard is located in a position generally coplanar to the top or upper surface of the piano.

The primary object of the present invention is to provide an improved construction for a piano of the type in which the keyboard is located in a position so that it can be seen at all times and from any direction, the keyboard being substantially coplanar with the top or upper surface of the piano.

It has become increasingly important during recent personal and television appearances of pianists that the finger movement of the pianist be seen from any angle. With conventional pianos it is impossible for the intricate finger movement of the pianist to be seen when the television camera or the audience are facing the front of the piano. When such an audience is facing the front of the piano, the pianist's fingers are obscured from view because of the conventional keyboard which is arranged and disposed well below the top of the piano.

It is the primary object and purpose of this invention to provide a piano wherein the keyboard is mounted in a recess provided in a wholly flat, horizontal top portion of the piano, and is disposed coplanar or substantially coplanar with the top or upper surface of the piano so that, in a frontal view, the fingers of the pianist are visible with the striking surface of the keys being equally well visible so that one may appreciate the intricate finger movement of the pianist while listening to the delicate tones. In many instances, the tonal quality of the instrument can only be appreciated with the visible appreciation of the dexterity of finger movement of the artist and, unfortunately, such visible appreciation is lost when the viewer cannot have a total and complete frontal, side and overall view of the finger movement of the artist. Therefore, it is the primary aim and purpose of this invention to provide a piano wherein the keyboard is disposed so that viewers, irrespective of number, type, that is television or in person, can from any position see the finger dexterity and movement of the artist and so gain a greater appreciation of the piece that the artist is playing. With conventional pianos, the artist's fingers are obscured from view, when one is glancing directly at the artist. With the present invention, the artist's fingers are at all times exposed because the keys are disposed in a position substantially coplanar with the upper surface or top of the piano, in a recess of said top, so that the striking surface of the keys is always visible.

The foregoing and ancillary objects are attained by this invention, the preferred embodiment of which is set forth in the following description and illustrated in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is a view in perspective of a piano, constructed in accordance with the present invention;

Figure 2 is an enlarged vertical, cross-sectional view taken on line 2—2 of Figure 1; and,

Figure 3 is an enlarged fragmentary view, similar to Figure 2, but showing one of the keys in a struck position.

Referring now more particularly to the accompanying drawing, the reference numeral **10** generally designates a piano, which is constructed in accordance with this invention. The piano **10**, which is of the upright type, includes a frame **9** having a case **11** operatively associated therewith having a flat top wall or upper surface **12**. A keyboard **14** is arranged along one side of the top wall in an elongated recess **13** thereof, and includes conventional type keys **16** which are mounted on a keyboard bottom or base **18** that is disposed below the recess, slightly below the top wall or upper surface **12**. The base **18** and the uniplanar top **12** are connected to and extend between end members **19**. The keys **16** are arranged on the keyboard bottom in a conventional manner, that is, being mounted on the conventional fulcrums and being provided with the conventional guides. The keys are arranged so that their striking surfaces **20** are disposed substantially coplanar with the top wall or upper surface **12**.

The keys are connected by connecting elements **24** to the conventional lift arms **26** which, in turn, connect to a conventional piano action **22**.

As shown in Figures 2 and 3, the striking surfaces **20** of the keys are disposed slightly above the upper surface or top **12** of the case and are arranged so that they are at all times visible.

As has been pointed out, the primary aim of the present invention is to provide an improved construction for a piano of the kind in which the keyboard is disposed, at least, coplanar with the top wall or upper surface **12**, whereby the striking surfaces of the keys are visible, at all times and from any angle. It is to be particularly noted that the striking surfaces of the keys are visible from a position directly in front of the frame structure of the piano. This is particularly distinct from conventional upright pianos wherein the keyboard is disposed in the conventional well and is completely hidden from view from the front of the piano.

As has been pointed out, the finger movement of the pianist is constantly and completely exposed to view regardless of the viewer's angle.

It is to be understood that the arrangement, which is described above and illustrated in the drawing, is only to be regarded as an example and modifications may be made consonant with the objective of the present invention which is to arrange the keyboard **14** in a recess **13** of a horizontal top **12**, above a base **18**, in an improved construction of the type wherein the keyboard is visible from any angle, and it is to be further understood that the essence of the invention resides in the fact that these components are so arranged, while at the same time the keys have their striking surfaces **20** disposed substantially coplanar with the top or upper surface **12** of the piano.

Having thus described this invention, what is claimed is:

A piano comprising a frame having a case operatively associated therewith, said case having a pair of end members and a uniplanar top connected to the tops of said end members, said top having a recess along one side thereof, a keyboard base below said recess and operatively connected at its ends to said end members, and a keyboard on said base, said keyboard having a top surface which is substantially coplanar with that of said top.

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