

Dec. 17, 1968

E. C. EBNER

3,416,765

PICTURE SUPPORT

Filed Feb. 28, 1967

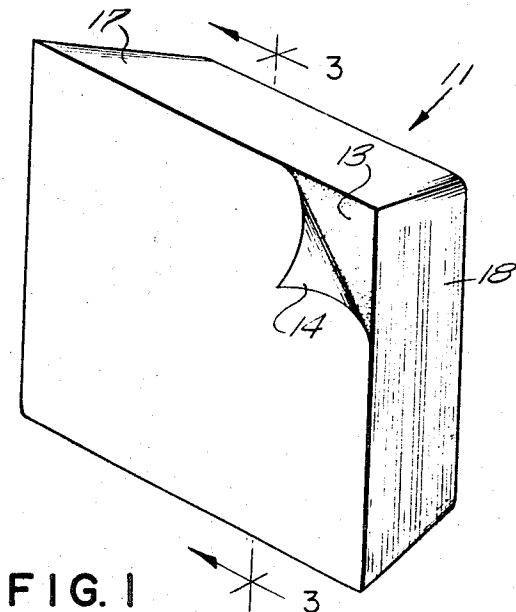


FIG. 1

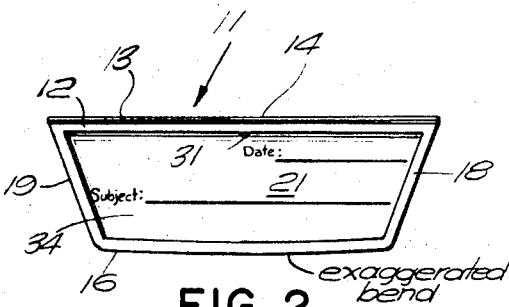


FIG. 2

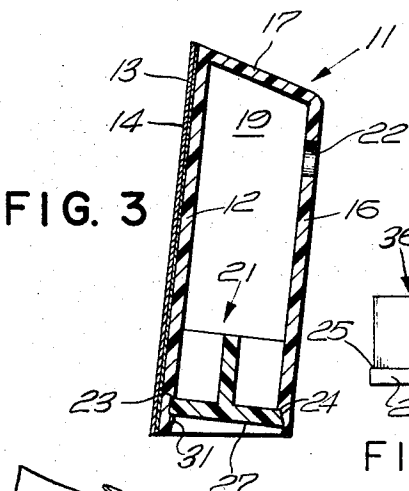


FIG. 3

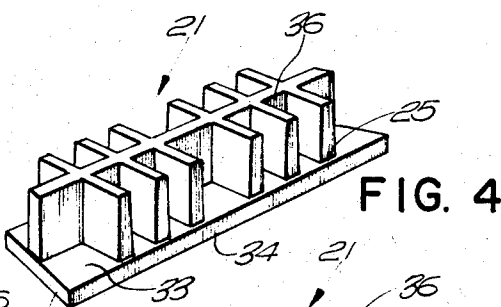


FIG. 4

FIG. 6

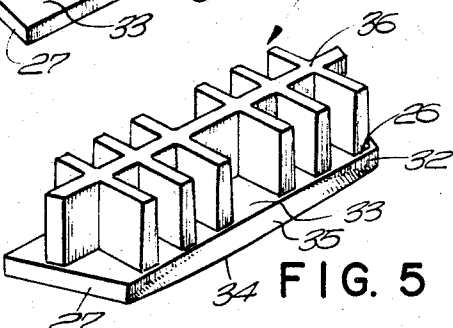


FIG. 5

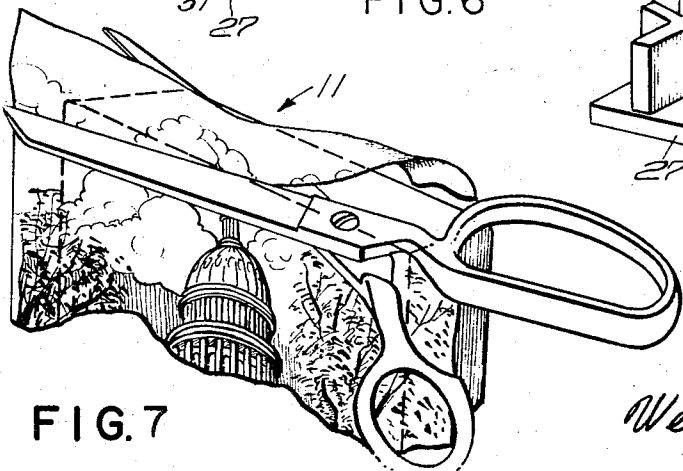


FIG. 7

INVENTOR.
EMANUEL C. EBNER
BY
Weingarten, Orenbuch & Kahne
ATTORNEY

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PICTURE SUPPORT

Emanuel C. Ebner, Chelmsford, Mass., assignor to Foto-Cube, Inc., Chelmsford, Mass., a corporation of Massachusetts

Filed Feb. 28, 1967, Ser. No. 619,409

5 Claims. (Cl. 248-467)

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A hollow, plastic, three dimensional picture support capable of being hung on a wall, stood on a flat surface or held in one's hands. The front face of the support is adapted to adhesively receive a picture or other flat work of art which is desired to be displayed. The back of the support is smaller than the front and the sides slope at a modest angle from front to back. A snap-in base having substantial mass is provided for increased stability when the picture support is free-standing.

Field of the invention

This invention relates in general to picture supports and more particularly concerns a novel support for displaying a picture or work of art without the visual interference associated with normal framing, which picture support may be handled, hung on a wall or stood on a flat surface.

Summary of the invention

Broadly speaking, the picture support of this invention comprises a hollow body having a flat front face to which a picture, photograph or work of art may be adhesively secured. The support is of substantial depth so that it can stand freely on a flat surface. The back of the support is smaller than the front so that the end, top and bottom walls slope toward the back and away from the front. The slope of the bottom is generally at a lesser angle than the other three walls so that when the support is standing, the front face is tilted slightly back to enhance viewing and to provide a more pleasing visual effect.

The support is provided with a snap-in-tap-out base which is formed with additional structure to concentrate mass and lower the center of gravity of the support for better stability when it is standing on a flat surface. Most of the base is recessed, thereby providing a flat surface which is protected from wear and upon which may be written the identification of the picture which has been applied to the front face. With the base being recessed, only the peripheral edges of the bottom, which lie in a plane, make contact with the flat surface upon which the support stands, thus enhancing the stability of the support.

Picture supports constructed according to the principles of this invention allow viewing of pictures or works of art without interference by frames; the pictures so supported appearing to be framed by the surrounding space. This is especially advantageous where it is desired to view mass groupings of pictures in one area. Additionally, the shape and depth of the support provide the viewer with a novel aesthetic experience in that a substantially two dimensional work of art or photograph can be contemplated in the manner that a three dimensional sculpture is contemplated, that is, without interference or intrusion by a frame. The viewer's attention is thus concentrated solely on the art being displayed. Furthermore, a picture support of appropriate size may be held in one's hand as one might do when appreciating a statuette or other sculpture. This allows one to employ not only his visual, but also his tactile and kinesthetic senses to fully appreciate the work of art or picture so displayed. This partaking of the senses in appreciating a picture allows the observer to enjoy a picture in a unique manner. For this purpose, variations in

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the surface structure of the body of the picture support, for example, from a satin smooth to a coarsely textured pattern, produces variations of responses and moods in the beholder, thus augmenting and reinforcing the intended aesthetic experience of the art so displayed.

Other features, objects and advantages of the present invention will be more fully appreciated from the detailed specification when read in conjunction with the drawing.

Brief description of the drawing

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a picture support constructed in accordance with the principles of this invention, with an adhesive protecting element partially stripped away;

FIG. 2 is a bottom view of the picture support of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a sectional view of the picture support of FIG. 1 viewed in the direction of arrows 3-3;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the front of the base insert of the picture support of FIG. 1;

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the rear of the base insert of FIG. 4;

FIG. 6 is an end view taken from the left end of the base insert of FIG. 5; and

FIG. 7 indicates the procedure for trimming a photograph after its application to the front surface of the picture support of FIG. 1.

Description of the preferred embodiment

Referring now to the drawing and more particularly to FIGS. 1 through 3 thereof, there is shown in detail a hollow picture support 11 having a front wall 12, to the outer surface of which has been applied a pressure sensitive adhesive coating 13 which is covered by a protective element 14. It should be pointed out that the adhesive coating is not necessary to the concept of the invention, since one may use various adhesives to apply a picture to an uncoated front face. The body of picture support 11 is formed of integral front wall 12, rear wall 16, top wall 17, right side wall 18, and left side wall 19. The structure of picture support 11 is completed by insertion of a removable base 21. Although the picture support, as shown in the drawing, is a hollow molded plastic body having a plastic snap-in base, it is to be understood that the principles of this invention apply equally well to a picture support which is made of any other suitable material. The hollow plastic configuration is particularly desirable since it may be easily and economically made, being ideally suited for high yield, low cost injection mold fabrication; furthermore, this construction provides substantial rigidity but is of relatively light weight making it easy to handle or hang on a wall, and permitting it to be shipped or mailed economically.

As shown in FIGS. 1 through 3, the interconnecting edges and corners between top 17, sides 18 and 19, and rear wall 16 are generally smoothly rounded, with top 17 and sides 18 and 19 sloping from front wall 12 to rear wall 16 at a modest angle. While the back and upper portion of picture support 11 has generally smoothly rounded edges and corners, the peripheral edges of both the bottom and the front are generally sharp, clean and bold. Reasons for the sharpness of these peripheral edges will be set forth below. Rear wall 16 is provided with a hole 22 which is suitable for hanging the picture support if desired.

The lower portions of the interior of front wall 12 and rear wall 16 are provided with shoulders 23 and 24 respectively. Marginal areas 25 and 26 on upper surface 33 of bottom wall 27 of base 21, as shown in FIGS. 4-6, are designed to register with shoulders 23 and 24 respectively. A button-shaped projection 31 below shoulder 23 on the interior of front wall 12 securely holds bottom

wall 27 against shoulder 23 after base 21 has been snapped-in past button 31. The front wall 12 is flexible enough to allow base 21 to be snapped over button 31 when the base is inserted. In order to maintain the base securely in position after it is inserted, the central portion of rear edge 32 of bottom wall 27 slopes outward from top surface 33 to bottom surface 34 as shown in FIGS. 5 and 6. Since the ends of edge 32 are square, this outward slope results in a longitudinally curved, relatively sharp, projecting lip 35 on bottom wall 27. When base 21 is mounted in the body of the picture support, lip 35 causes the central portion of the bottom of rear wall 16 to bow slightly outward as shown exaggerated in FIG. 2, while front wall 12 remains flat because the front edge of base 21 is square. The sharpness of lip 35 provides a firm frictional contact with the inner surface of rear wall 16 and the pressure exerted by the rear wall on lip 35 causes bottom wall 27 to be compressed and held firmly between the front and rear walls. Base 21 is thus maintained in place and yet, since the rear portion is secured merely by frictional forces, it may be easily removed by sharply rapping the bottom of picture support 11 against an external object.

The perpendicular grouping of raised ribs 36 on base 21, as shown in FIGS. 4 and 5, is integrally molded with bottom wall 27. All portions of base 21 are of substantially the same thickness to provide for uniform and rapid curing time in the mold during fabrication. This network of ribs is not intended to be structural but is designed to provide for concentration of mass. This added concentration of mass in the base tends to lower the center of gravity of the picture support making it more stable when standing freely on a flat surface. The network of ribs 36 is indented from the edges of bottom wall 27 in order to provide marginal areas such as 25 and 26 to rest against shoulders such as 23 and 24 on the interior walls of the main body of picture support 11. Although not shown, side walls 18 and 19 may also have shoulders similar to shoulders 23, 24 so that top surface 33 of bottom wall 27 is firmly supported around its entire periphery.

As stated before, the peripheral edges of the bottom of picture support 11 are generally sharp and lie in a plane, with most of the base being recessed as seen in FIG. 3. Additionally, the slight outward bowing of the bottom of rear wall 16 tends to broaden the base somewhat. This combination of features, enhanced by the added mass of ribs 36, results in a stable picture support when resting upon a flat surface.

Since only the peripheral edges of the bottom of the picture support make contact with the supporting surface, irregularities on bottom surface 34 of base 21 which may be introduced by the manufacturing process can be tolerated and will have no adverse effects upon the stability of picture support 11. Furthermore, with base 21 recessed there is provided a protected bottom surface 34, as shown in FIG. 2, upon which a written message, such as the identification of the picture on the front, may be placed. The surface area 34 of base 21 may be of such a nature as to readily receive pencil or pen inscriptions, or a gummed sticker may be applied if desired.

In the embodiment shown, the plane of the peripheral edges of the bottom of picture support 11 also slopes from front to back but at a lesser angle than that of the top and side walls. Thus front wall 12 of picture support 11 does not stand vertically, but tilts slightly back to provide easier viewing and a more pleasing visual effect when the support stands freely on a flat surface. However, it should be pointed out that the bottom plane may be square rather than sloping, in which case the picture support would stand vertically.

Now that the structure of the picture support of this invention has been set forth, the aesthetic features and uses to which this support may be put will now be described. Although the picture support of this invention is not limited as to size, it has been found that a picture sup-

port with a 3 inch square front face is ideal for a number of purposes; it is convenient for display purposes and snapshots are developed in a size which is appropriate to place on such a picture support. Any relatively thin, flat picture or work of art which it is desired to display, and which is of at least the size of the front face, may be readily displayed by means of the picture support of this invention. Miniature reproductions of famous works of art as well as photographs and snapshots may thus be displayed with a very pleasing effect.

When the object to be displayed is chosen, the protective coating 14 on adhesive 13 is stripped off and the front face is pressed against the back of the object to be displayed. If the size of the picture being mounted is greater than the size of the front face, the excess may easily be trimmed by use of a pair of scissors as shown in FIG. 7, or by use of a sharp knife or razor blade. When the trimming process has been completed, the picture is then ready for display in any way desired.

This method of mounting pictures for display affords a viewer a unique and exciting experience, because by this display method individual pieces of art may be viewed without interference caused by frames, or other supporting structure. Since the proper visual effect is gained only if the picture being displayed completely covers the front face, and since trimming of the picture is normally required it is generally desirable that the walls break sharply from the front wall 12, as stated previously. In this way a completely new experience of viewing art in mass groupings on blocks having sides which slope away from the object on the front is created, which is not possible with other methods of picture support. The unique impact on a viewer provided by mass groupings could not be created by frame-supported art due to the clutter and discontinuity naturally introduced by frames. If the viewer desires to hold the combined picture support in his hands, a three dimensional impression is provided by the two dimensional picture because his visual, tactile and kinesthetic senses are all stimulated by the same object. This, of course, greatly enhances one's viewing pleasure. If the picture support is hung on a wall or stood on a flat surface, direct head-on viewing will reveal only the picture and no part of the picture support will interfere or tend to distract the viewer's attention. This allows the viewer to feel that the art is framed by the surrounding space. If the picture is viewed from any angle other than directly in front, the sides by virtue of their distinctive tapers and smoothly rounded corners, provide uniquely aesthetic enhancement to the effect of the smooth continuous flat front picture bearing surface.

In addition, the aesthetic value of this picture support, the combination of a rigid block having a flat surface for mounting a picture on the front imparts a rigidity to the base to which the picture is applied, preventing distortion of the art sometimes caused by warping shrinkage and other physical forces which are allowed to act upon the art surface by the conventional picture frame. Use of a hollow molded plastic block allows one to economically communicate by mail with another person by sending a block with a picture mounted thereon and, if further communication is desired, a written message may be inserted into the block itself since the base is removable. The relatively thin walls as shown in FIG. 3 provide substantial rigidity but weight is minimal, making it economical to mail.

Having described the invention, various modifications and improvements will now occur to those skilled in this art, and the invention disclosed herein should be construed as limited only by the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A picture support comprising:

a hollow body enclosed on five sides having a flat rectangular front wall and a smaller rear wall, the

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exterior surface of said front wall being adaptable to receive a picture by adhesion;
 a removable base recessed into said body;
 the top wall and side walls of said body sloping at a first predetermined angle from the periphery of said front wall to the periphery of said rear wall;
 the bottom edges of said front, rear and side walls lying in a plane, which slopes from said front wall to said rear wall at a second predetermined angle; and
 wherein no portion of said picture support extends below said plane.

2. A picture support as in claim 1, wherein:
 the front and rear walls of said body are formed with internal retaining shoulders against which rests said removable base, said front wall also being formed with an inwardly projecting button between said shoulder and said bottom edge, said base being snapped into position between and held in position by said shoulder and said bottom.

3. A picture support as in claim 2, wherein:
 said base has a bottom wall with a flat outer surface and is formed with a plurality of ribs extending from its inner surface, said bottom wall and each of said ribs being of substantially the same thickness, said ribs substantially increasing the mass of said base and providing said picture support with a low center of gravity.

4. A picture support as in claim 3, wherein:
 the front edge of said bottom wall is straight and the

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rear edge of said bottom wall is square at each end, sloping outwardly at its center from said inner surface to said outer surface, providing said outer surface with a substantially sharp protruding lip which frictionally engages and causes the bottom of said rear wall to bow slightly outward at its center, said front wall remaining flat, whereby said base is firmly held between said rear and said front walls.

5. A picture support as in claim 4, wherein:
 the exterior surface of said front wall is substantially uniformly covered with a pressure sensitive adhesive; and
 said adhesive is covered by a removable protective element which is stripped off immediately prior to adhering a picture to said picture support.

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ROY D. FRAZIER, *Primary Examiner*.

F. DOMOTOR, *Assistant Examiner*.

U.S. Cl. X.R.

248—469; 40—152.1, 312