



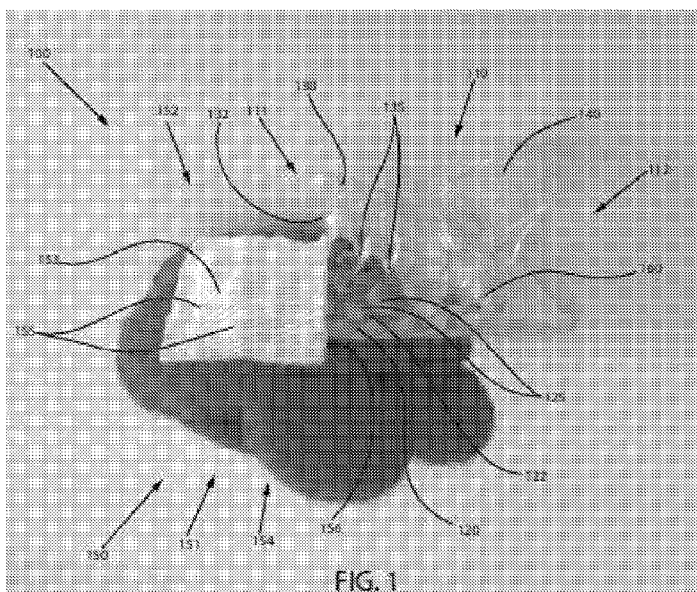
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(54) Title: DECORATIVE APPAREL CLASP AND ACCESSORIES



(57) Abstract: A decorative apparel clasp apparatus is provided. The apparel clasp is operable to modify articles of clothing to accessorize and/or otherwise alter the clothing according to personal preference. The apparel clasp permits multiple accessories, with numerous embodiments provided. Methodology corresponding to the modification and accessorizing of clothing through utilization of an embodied decorative apparel clasp is also provided.



DECORATIVE APPAREL CLASP AND ACCESSORIES

BACKGROUND

It is often desirable to physically modify articles of clothing for the purpose of accessorizing, such as through the addition of bows, floral-like pieces or other decorative accessories that otherwise compliment, match or can become integrated with the clothing design and pattern, for the purpose of gathering or pulling up the clothing articles, such as through the purposeful bunching of a dress to enable greater freedom of leg movement (especially for babies and toddlers), or for the purpose of personalizing fashion preferences, such as through the gathering of shoulders or hemlines to alter the physical appearance of a dress according to personal preference. Moreover, it is often desirable for clothing modifications to be temporary and completely reversible, so that following any modifications the clothing can be returned to its original physical condition. Furthermore, it is often desirable to utilize a single clothing modification implement to interchangeably accessorize, gather, or personalize different clothing articles. Various clips, pins and other implements have been provided to temporarily modify articles of clothing. However, current clothing modification implements do not effectively provide temporary reusable and personalized clothing modification in a manner that facilitates desirable and efficient accessorizing and garment adjustment capability. Hence, a need exists for an effectual decorative apparel clasp and accessories.

SUMMARY

A described aspect provides a decorative apparel clasp apparatus comprising: a clip fastener, the clip fastener including a clasping end, a handling end and a hinge rotatably connecting a first clasp portion having a first clasp face to a second clasp portion having a second clasp face, wherein the first clasp face of the first clasp portion includes a plurality of first engagement elements protruding therefrom, the second clasp face of the second clasp portion includes a plurality of second engagement elements protruding therefrom, and a locking element rotatably connected to at least one of the first clasp portion or the second clasp portion, and wherein the locking element is separately operable and movable with respect to both the first clasp portion and the second clasp portion and the locking element is configured to spatially secure the first clasp face of the first clasp portion in a substantially parallel opposing position to the

second clasp face of the second clasp portion so that the first engagement features protruding from the first clasp face of the first clasp portion are interspaced between the second engagement features protruding from the second clasp face of the second clasp portion, in a manner facilitating secure engagement of fabric positionable therebetween; and an ornamental element, the ornamental element including an ornament display side and an opposing clasp-mounting side, wherein the ornament display side is configured to exhibit at least one ornamental feature, and wherein the opposing clasp-mounting side includes a conformable sleeve, the conformable sleeve being sized and configured for removably and securely receiving a portion of at least one of the first clasp portion or the second clasp portion of the clip fastener within a pocket-opening of the conformable sleeve, so that clip fastener is removably secured to the ornamental element in a manner exposing at least one protruding engagement element of the first engagement elements or the second engagement elements of the first clasp face or the second clasp face of the first or second clasp portion that is received within the pocket-opening of the conformable sleeve on the clasp-mounting side of the ornamental element.

Another described aspect provides a method of physically modifying articles of clothing for the purpose of accessorizing, the method comprising: providing an article of clothing to be modified; providing a decorative apparel clasp apparatus including: a clip fastener having a hinge rotatably connecting a first clasp portion to a second clasp portion, wherein the first clasp portion and the second clasp portion each include a plurality of engagement features protruding therefrom, and a locking element configured to secure the first clasp portion in a substantially parallel opposing position to the second clasp portion so that the engagement features protruding from the first clasp portion are interspaced between the engagement features protruding from the second clasp portion, in a manner facilitating secure engagement of fabric positionable therebetween; and an ornamental element having at least one decorative feature configured to compliment a design or pattern of the article of clothing, and having a conformable sleeve configured for securely receiving a portion of at least one of the first clasp portion or the second clasp portion of the clip fastener so that at least one protruding engagement feature of the first or second clasp portion physically engages the fabric of the article of clothing; modifying the article of clothing by physically

of constituting components, connectivity, methodological steps, the materials thereof, the shapes thereof, the relative arrangement thereof, the order of system interactions thereof, etc., and are disclosed simply as an aid for understanding. The features and advantages of the described embodiments are illustrated in detail in the accompanying
5 drawing(s), wherein like reference numerals refer to like elements throughout the drawing(s).

Notwithstanding that any numerical designation(s), range(s) and parameter(s) setting forth the broad scope of the disclosure are approximations, any numerical values set forth in specific examples are reported as precisely as possible. Any numerical
10 value, however, inherently contain certain errors necessarily resulting from the standard deviation found in their respective testing measurements. As a preface to the detailed description, it should be noted that, as used in this specification and the appended claim(s), the singular forms "a", "an" and "the" include plural referents, unless the context clearly dictates otherwise.

15 Many people have the need to modify articles of clothing. While common clothing modification implements can be utilized to physically alter clothing, the implements are often cumbersome to use, not useful with multiple types/items of clothing, and unattractive so as to make the clothing modifications effected thereby undesirable. The presently described embodiments provide solutions for the problems
20 associated with modifying clothing in a fashionable and effective manner.

With reference to the drawing(s), FIG. 1 depicts a bottom perspective view of an embodiment of a decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100. The decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100 includes a clip fastener 110. As embodied, the clip fastener 110 includes a clasping end 111 configured for clasping or otherwise securely engaging
25 fabric. The clip fastener 110 also includes a handling end 112 formed so that a user may hold, maneuver, or otherwise handle and operate the clip fastener 110. The clasping end 111 and handling end 112 may be axially opposed to each other or may be opposed in an off-axis manner in a way such as to define two distinct ends of the clip fastener 110. A hinge 160 may be provided to rotatably connect a first clasp portion
30 120 of the clip fastener 110 to a second clasp portion 130 of the clip fastener 110. The hinge 160 may be structured and operable with an axil and rod type functionality or may function through compliance of material that may join the first clasp portion 120

to the second clasp portion 130. Additionally, the hinge may permit the first clasp portion 120 and second clasp portion 130 to move with respect to each other in a manner that permits the placement and retention of clothing fabric therebetween. To assist with the retention of clothing fabric, the first clasp portion 120 may have a first clasp face 122 and the second clasp portion 130 may have a second clasp face 132, wherein the first clasp face 122 of the first clasp portion 120 may include a plurality of first engagement elements 125 protruding therefrom, and the second clasp face 132 of the second clasp portion 130 may include a plurality of second engagement elements 135 protruding therefrom.

10 The clip fastener 110 of a decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100 may also include a locking element 140. The locking element 140 may be rotatably connected to at least one of the first clasp portion 120 or the second clasp portion 130. When connected in this manner, the locking element 140 may be separately operable and movable with respect to both the first clasp portion 120 and the second clasp portion 15 130. In addition, the locking element 140 may be configured to spatially secure the first clasp face 122 of the first clasp portion 120 in a substantially parallel opposing position, in relation to the second clasp face 132 of the second clasp portion 130. When the locking element 140 is operated so that the first clasp face 122 and second clasp face 132 are in a substantially parallel opposing position, the first engagement features 20 125 protruding from the first clasp face 122 of the first clasp portion 120 may be situated so that they are interspaced between the second engagement features 125 protruding from the second clasp face 122 of the second clasp portion 120. Such interspaced positioning of the engagement features 125/135 may help facilitate secure engagement of clothing fabric positioned between the first clasp face 122 and second clasp face 132. 25 Those in the art should appreciate that the engagement features 125 and/or 135 may comprise nubs, dimples, spikes, claws, ridges, grooves, serrations, teeth, grates, or other like gripping elements. The various component elements of the clip fastener 110 may be comprised of the same material, different materials or a combination of materials. For instance, the first and second clasp portions 120 and 130, along with the locking 30 element 140, may all be formed of injection molded plastic, while the hinge 160 may comprise both injection molded plastic features, as well as metallic features, such as a metal axel or rod. Other embodiments may be formed entirely of injection molded

plastic or may be fashioned from machined-metal components, as will facilitate both effective functionality and complimentary accessorizing.

To further assist with accessorizing capability, a decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100 includes an ornamental element 150. The ornamental element 150 allows
5 a user to decorate, adorn embellish, garnish, festoon, or otherwise beautify an article of clothing, while simultaneously physically modifying it with the decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100. As such, the ornamental element 150 is arranged with an ornament display side 151 and an opposing clasp-mounting side 152. The ornament display side 151 may be configured to exhibit at least one ornamental feature 154. Ornamental
10 features may include, but are not limited to flowers or floral-like structures, ribbons, bows, feathers, embroidered designs, animal figurines, jewels, amulets, charms, and/or other like adornments that may compliment a pattern and/or design of an article of clothing. Ornamental features 154 may be formed of any complimentary materials. For example, the feature may comprise a red flannel flower, as depicted in FIGS. 1, 2
15 and 6, other floral-like designs made of fabric, as depicted in FIGS. 3-5, or features made of plastics, metals, wood, gems, glass or any appropriate combination thereof or other like material.

The clasp-mounting side 152 of embodiments of an ornamental element 150 may include a conformable sleeve 153 that may be sized and configured for removably
20 and securely receiving a portion of at least one of the first clasp portion 120 or the second clasp portion 130 of the clip fastener 110 within a pocket-opening 156 of the conformable sleeve 153. The pocket-opening 156 of the conformable sleeve 153 may be formed by stitching three sides of the conformable sleeve 153 to the clasp-mounting side 152 of the ornamental element 150, thereby leaving one side of the conformable
25 sleeve 153 open to serve as a receptive pocket, or the pocket-opening 156 may be formed by applying adhesive to three sides of the conformable sleeve 153 in a like manner. Other means for attaching the conformable sleeve 153 to the ornamental element 150, including forming the sleeve 153 jointly with the ornamental element 150 should be appreciated by those of skill in the applicable art. The conformable sleeve
30 153 itself may include grip enhancing elements 155 positioned and configured to assist in the secure engagement of the decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100 with fabric proximally situated thereby.

The clip fastener 110 may be removably secured to the ornamental element 150. Some embodiments may utilize the pocket-opening 156 of the conformable sleeve 153 as a means of receiving and holding either the first clasp portion 120 or the second clasp portion 130 of the clip fastener 110. Other embodiments may likewise position a clasp portion 120 or 130 within the pocket-opening 156 of the conformable sleeve 153, as
5 assisted by an adhesive. The clasp portion 120 or 130 may be positioned within the pocket-opening 156 of the conformable sleeve 153 in a manner exposing at least one protruding engagement element 125 or 135 of either the first engagement elements 125 or the second engagement elements 135 of the first clasp face 122 or the second clasp
10 face 132 of the clip fastener 110. Still other embodiments are contemplated that involve the attachment of a clip fastener 110 directly to the clasp-mounting side 152 of an ornamental element 150 through the application of adhesives. Such embodiments may utilize physical features, like scuffing or knurling, to help the adhesive adhere to the clip fastener 110, as attached to the ornamental element 150.

15 With further reference to the drawings, FIG. 2 depicts a top view of the embodiment of the decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100 of FIG.1, having an embodiment of an ornamental element 150. The ornamental element 150 includes an ornamental display side 151 including an ornamental feature 154 comprising a red flannel flower (shaped somewhat like a rose) with a small plastic pearl attached to the
20 center of the flower. Those in the art can appreciate that an ornamental feature, such as the floral-like ornamental feature 154, can be composed of multiple component elements, such as several fabric pieces or other components, that can be attached together to form a single ornamental feature 154.

25 With focus turned again to the drawings, FIG. 3 depicts a top view of another embodiment of a decorative apparel clasp apparatus 300 having another embodiment of an ornamental element 350. The ornamental element 350 includes an ornamental display side 351 including an ornamental feature 354 comprising a dark pink flannel flower (shaped somewhat like a ranunculus bud) with two small green leaves protruding from either side under the floral component. Again, those in the art can appreciate that
30 an ornamental feature, such as the floral-like ornamental feature 354, can be composed of multiple component elements, such as several fabric pieces forming both the flower and the leaves, which can be attached together to form a single ornamental feature 354.

With continued reference to the drawings, FIG. 4 depicts a top view of still another embodiment of a decorative apparel clasp apparatus 400 having still another embodiment of an ornamental element 450. In a manner similar to those embodiments previously described, the ornamental element 450 includes an ornamental display side 5 451 including an ornamental feature 454 comprising a yellow flannel flower (shaped somewhat like a sunflower) with a black flannel center portion capped by a black button with white polka dots. Yet again, those in the art can appreciate that an ornamental feature, such as the floral-like ornamental feature 454, can be composed of multiple component elements, such as several fabric pieces forming both the yellow and black 10 portions of the flower, as well as the attached button, which can all be fastened together to form a single ornamental feature 454.

With continued reference to FIGS. 1-4 and additional reference to FIGS. 5 and 6, methodology corresponding to physically modifying articles of clothing for the purpose of accessorizing is described. A first methodological step may include the 15 provision of an article of clothing to be modified, such as the baby dress 1000. The article of clothing can be any type, shape, pattern or design, and does not have to be a baby dress, such as baby dress 1000. For example, the clothing article could comprise a blouse with shoulders that will be modified, a skirt with front and rear portions that will be modified, a scarf that will be bunched and fastened to itself around a wearers 20 neck, pant legs that will be scrunched up from the ankles to the knees, and so on, where those in the art appreciate that myriad variations of clothing types, shapes, patterns or designs may be modified in a manner that compliments and accessorizes the clothing articles. For example, as shown in FIG. 5, the front hem of a baby dress 1000 can be bustled, bunched, scrunched or otherwise brought up to modify the dress.

25 A further methodological step may include providing a decorative apparel clasp apparatus including, such as, for example, the decorative apparel clasp apparatus 300 depicted in FIG. 3. The decorative apparel clasp apparatus 300, like the decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100 (of FIGS. 1 and 2), include like features. For instance, the decorative apparel clasp 300 may include a clip fastener, such as clip fastener 110, 30 having a hinge, such as hinge 160, rotatably connecting a first clasp portion, such as first clasp portion 120, to a second clasp portion, such as as second clasp portion 130, wherein the first clasp portion and the second clasp portion each include a plurality of

engagement features, such as engagement features 125 and 135, protruding therefrom. The clip fastener may also include a locking element, such as locking element 140, configured to secure the first clasp portion in a substantially parallel opposing position to the second clasp portion so that the first engagement features protruding from the

5 first clasp portion are interspaced between the second engagement features protruding from the second clasp portion, in a manner facilitating secure engagement of fabric positionable therebetween. Moreover, the decorative apparel clasp apparatus 300 may include an ornamental element 350 having at least one decorative feature, such as the flower-shaped ornamental feature 354, configured to compliment a design or pattern of

10 the article of clothing, such as the baby dress 100. The ornamental element 350 may have a conformable sleeve, such as conformable sleeve 153, configured for securely receiving a portion of at least one of the first clasp portion or the second clasp portion of the clip fastener so that at least one protruding engagement feature of the first or second clasp portion physically engages the fabric of the article of clothing, such as

15 baby dress 1000. Still another methodological step may include modifying the article of clothing, such as the baby dress 1000, by physically bunching the fabric thereof, such as by bustling up portions 1009 of the hem (such as wear the babies legs will be located when wearing the dress. A final methodological step may include securing the fabric of the article of clothing in a bunched condition (at 1009) by securely fastening the

20 bunched fabric 1009 with the decorative apparel clasp apparatus 300 so that the decorative feature, such as the ornamental feature 354 (or dark pink flower with green leaves) is arranged as a complimentary accessory of the article of clothing (the baby dress 1000) as physically modified.

With focus turned particularly to a method of modifying an article of clothing

25 wherein the article of clothing comprises a baby dress, FIG. 6 depicts a perspective view of a young child wearing an embodiment of an article of clothing, such as a baby dress 2000, as physically modified, such as by being bustled, at 2009, and accessorized by embodiments of a decorative apparel clasp apparatus, such as decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100 depicted also in FIGs 1 and 2. With regard to this embodiment of

30 a method of modifying an article of clothing for the purpose of accessorizing, it is notable that the clothing modification(s) (the bustling 2009 of the baby dress 2000) expose the young child's knees, thereby allowing greater freedom for both crawling

and early walking. In addition, each accessorized decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100 is attached in a manner that both adorns the dress with embellished flowers and also compliments the clothing article (in this case the baby dress 2000) in a fashionable manner. Often there is a period of only a few brief months during which a clothing
5 modification, such a modification to the baby dress 2000, might be helpful, until the young child learns to walk proficiently. Hence, it is worth reiterating that each decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100 may be easily attached and then removed, thereby allowing the clothing (the baby dress 2000) to return to its original (unbustled)
10 condition. Moreover, each decorative apparel clasp apparatus 100 may be swapped or otherwise exchanged for another decorative apparel clasp apparatus embodiment having a different ornamental design providing further accessorizing capability, while retaining desirable functionality.

Although various aspects are illustrated and described herein with reference to specific embodiments, the aspects, in whole and in part, are not intended to be limited
15 to the details shown. Rather, various modifications may be made in the details within the scope and range of equivalents of the claims and without departing from the invention.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A decorative apparel clasp apparatus comprising:

5 a clip fastener, the clip fastener including a clasping end, a handling end and a hinge rotatably connecting a first clasp portion having a first clasp face to a second clasp portion having a second clasp face,

wherein the first clasp face of the first clasp portion includes a plurality of first engagement elements protruding therefrom, the second clasp face of the second clasp portion includes a plurality of second engagement elements protruding therefrom, and
10 a locking element rotatably connected to at least one of the first clasp portion or the second clasp portion, and

wherein the locking element is separately operable and movable with respect to both the first clasp portion and the second clasp portion and the locking element is configured to spatially secure the first clasp face of the first clasp portion in a
15 substantially parallel opposing position to the second clasp face of the second clasp portion so that the first engagement features protruding from the first clasp face of the first clasp portion are interspaced between the second engagement features protruding from the second clasp face of the second clasp portion, in a manner facilitating secure engagement of fabric positionable therebetween; and

20 an ornamental element, the ornamental element including an ornament display side and an opposing clasp-mounting side,

wherein the ornament display side is configured to exhibit at least one ornamental feature, and

wherein the opposing clasp-mounting side includes a conformable sleeve, the conformable sleeve being sized and configured for removably and securely receiving
25 a portion of at least one of the first clasp portion or the second clasp portion of the clip fastener within a pocket-opening of the conformable sleeve, so that clip fastener is removably secured to the ornamental element in a manner exposing at least one protruding engagement element of the first engagement elements or the second
30 engagement elements of the first clasp face or the second clasp face of the first or second clasp portion that is received within the pocket-opening of the conformable sleeve on the clasp-mounting side of the ornamental element.

2. The decorative apparel clasp apparatus of claim 1, wherein the conformable sleeve includes grip enhancing elements positioned and configured to assist in the secure engagement of the decorative apparel clasp with fabric.

5

3. A method of physically modifying articles of clothing for the purpose of accessorizing, the method comprising:

providing an article of clothing to be modified;

providing a decorative apparel clasp apparatus including:

10 a clip fastener having a hinge rotatably connecting a first clasp portion to a second clasp portion, wherein the first clasp portion and the second clasp portion each include a plurality of engagement features protruding therefrom, and a locking element configured to secure the first clasp portion in a substantially parallel opposing position to the second clasp portion so that the engagement features protruding from
15 the first clasp portion are interspaced between the engagement features protruding from the second clasp portion, in a manner facilitating secure engagement of fabric positionable therebetween; and

an ornamental element having at least one decorative feature configured to compliment a design or pattern of the article of clothing, and having a conformable
20 sleeve configured for securely receiving a portion of at least one of the first clasp portion or the second clasp portion of the clip fastener so that at least one protruding engagement feature of the first or second clasp portion physically engages the fabric of the article of clothing;

modifying the article of clothing by physically bunching the fabric thereof;

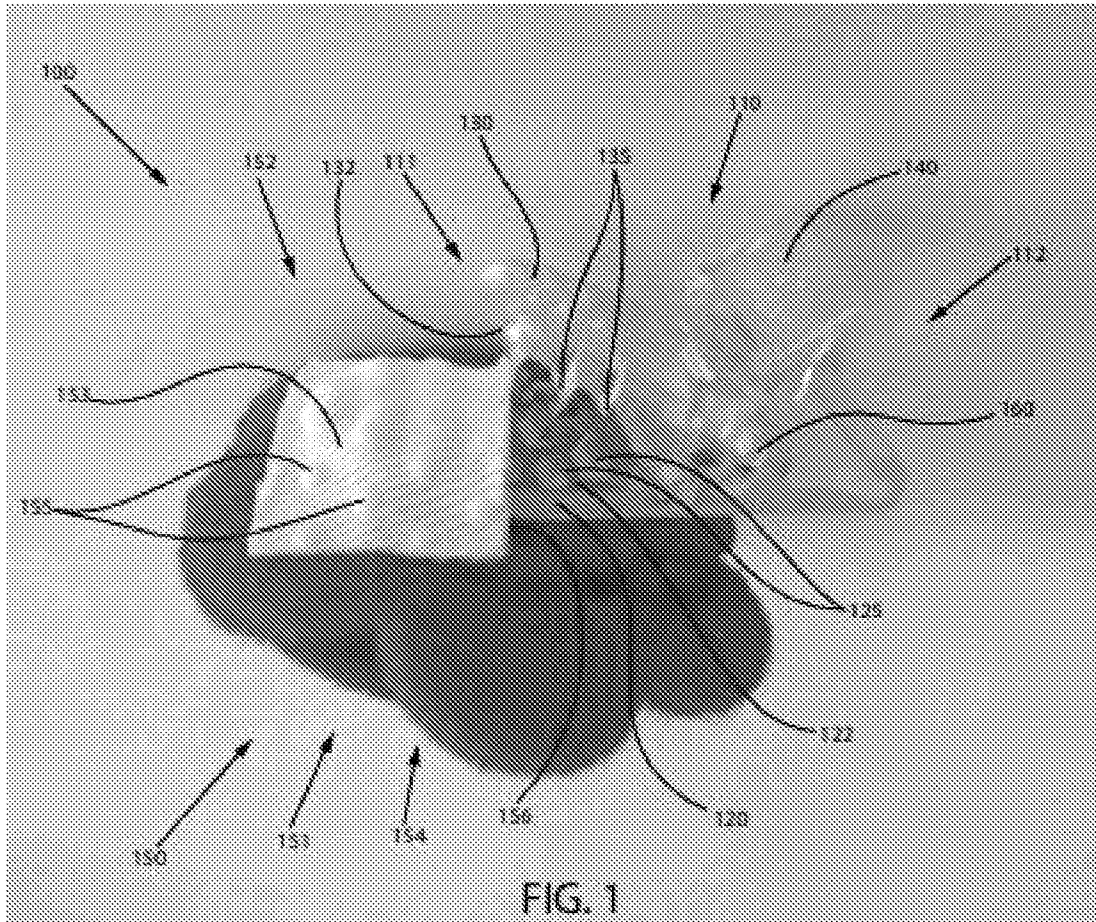
25 and

securing the fabric of the article of clothing in a bunched condition by securely fastening the bunched fabric with the decorative apparel clasp apparatus so that the decorative feature is arranged as a complimentary accessory of the article of clothing as physically modified.

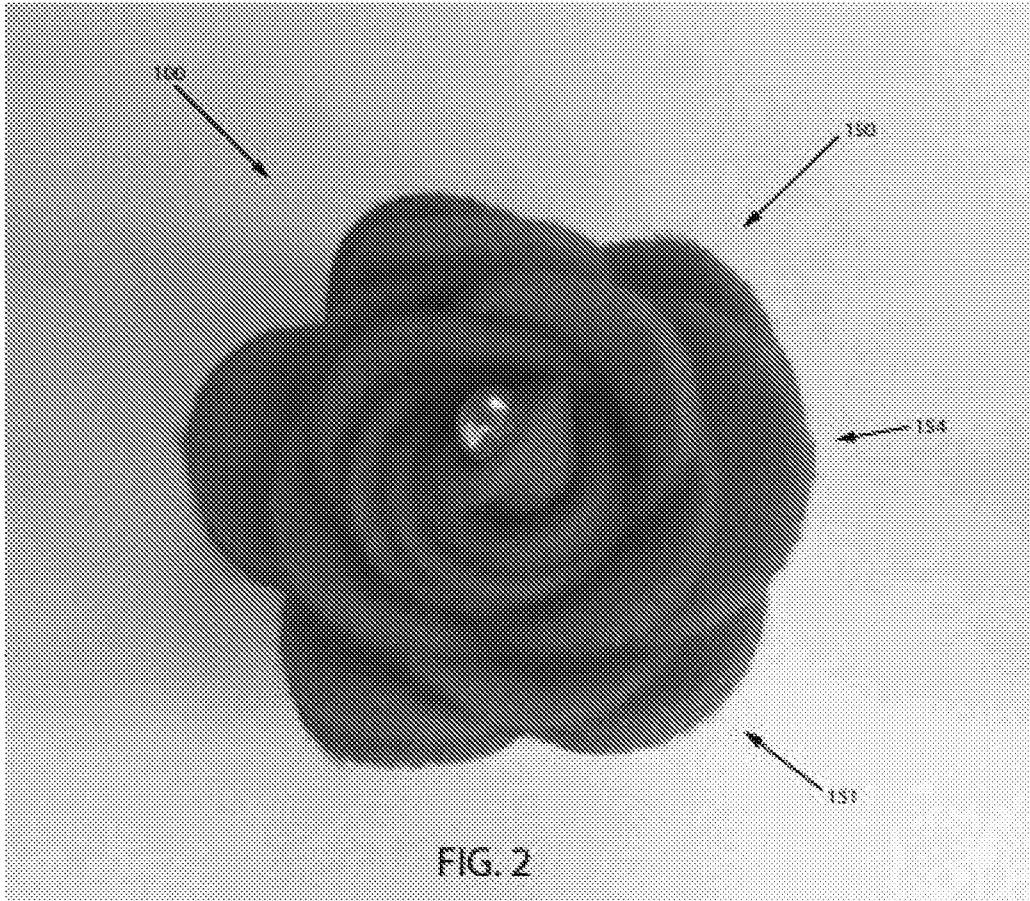
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4. The method of physically modifying articles of clothing for the purpose of accessorizing, wherein the article of clothing is a baby dress and the clothing

modification includes bustling up the hem of the dress at the locations where a young child's knees will be located when wearing the dress.



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3/6

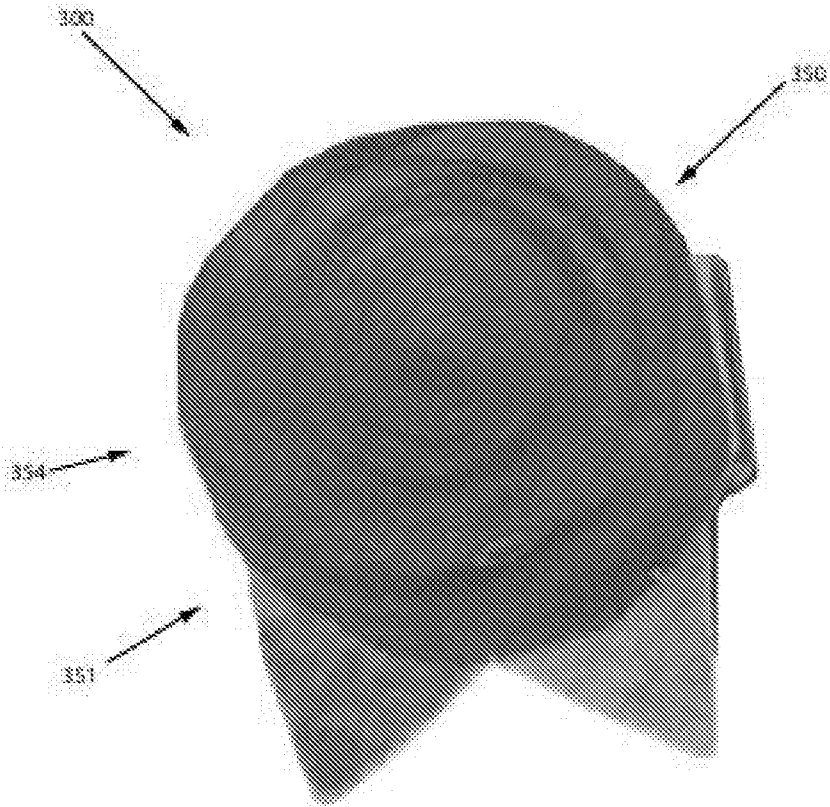


FIG. 3

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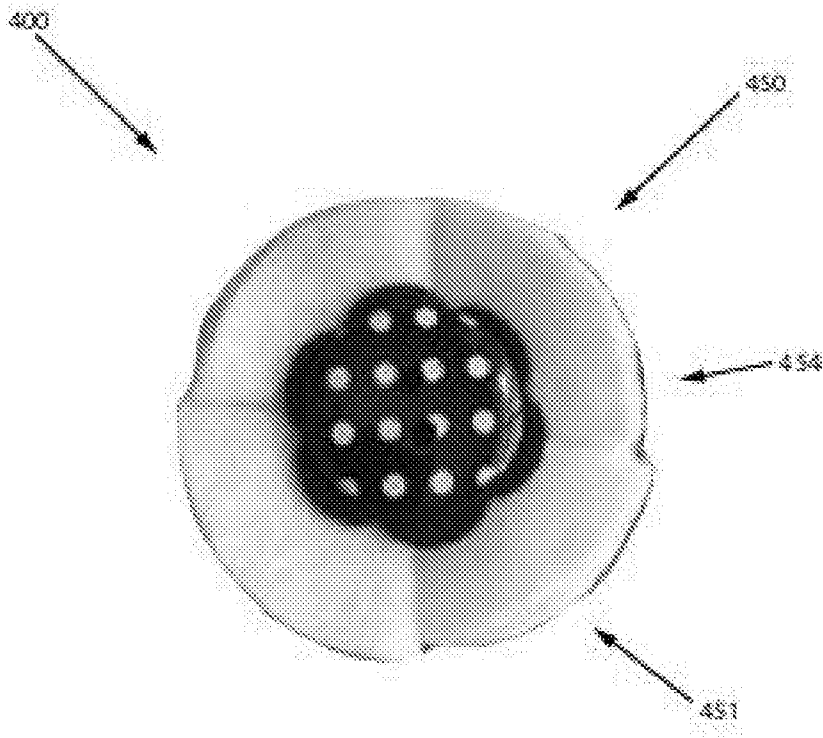


FIG. 4

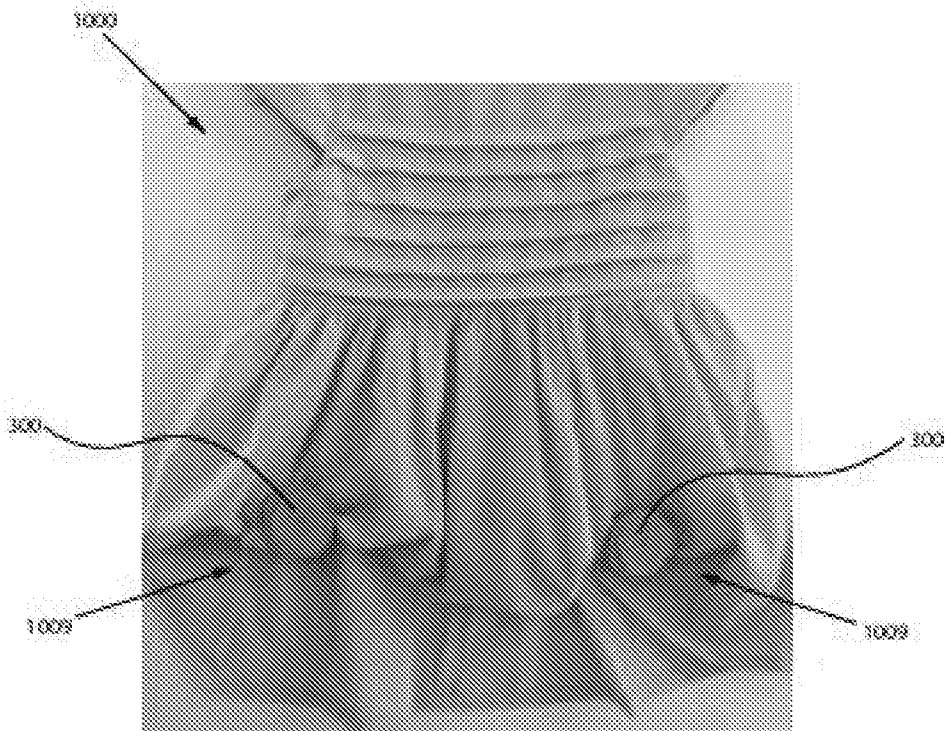


FIG. 5

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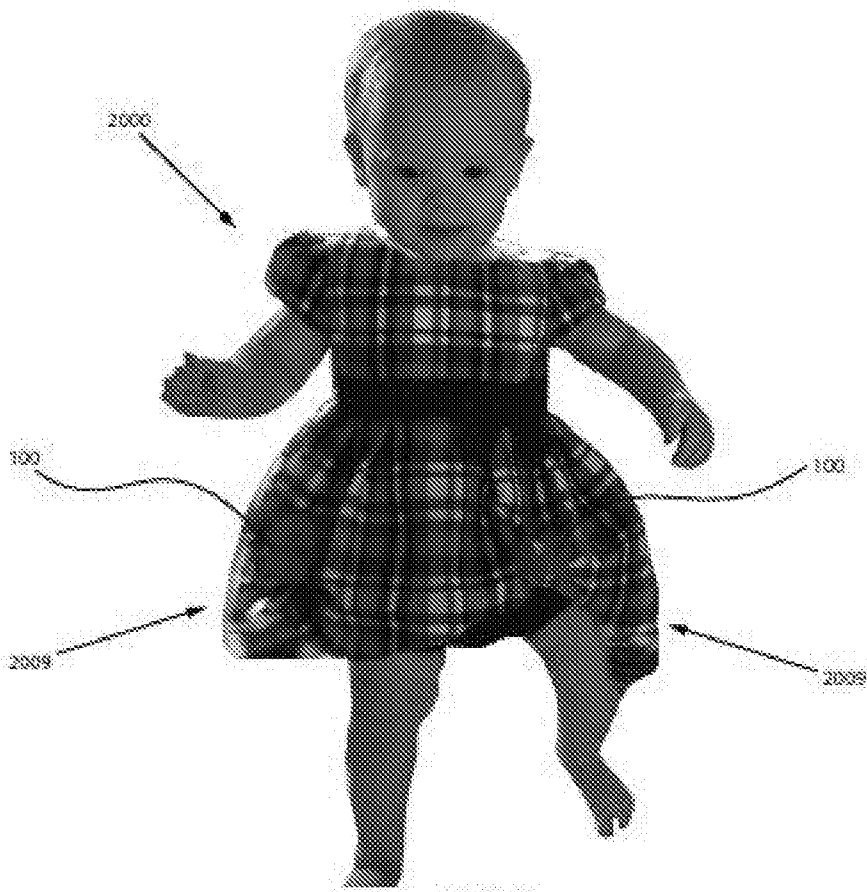


FIG. 6

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US2016/019406

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(8) - A41F 17/02 (2016.01)

CPC - A41F 17/02 (2016.02)

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)

IPC(8) - A41F 5/00, 7/00, 11/14, 17/00, 17/02; A44B 1/18, 1/38, 6/00; A45D 8/00, 8/14, 8/20, 8/22, 8/24, 8/28 (2016.01)

CPC - A41F 5/00, 7/00, 11/14, 17/00, 17/02, 17/04; A45D 8/00, 2008/004, 2008/006, 8/14, 8/16, 8/20, 8/22, 8/24, 8/28 (2016.02)

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

USPC - 24/303, 304, 305, 316, 326, 327, 335, 342.1, 455, 489; 132/200, 212 (keyword delimited)

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

Orbit, Google Patents, Google

Search terms used: clip, dress, baby, loop, sleeve, clothing, apparel, attachment, hem, alteration, decor*, removable, interchangeable, hook, clasp, bustle, aperture

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2014/0250640 A1 (4JC'S DEVELOPMENT LLC) 11 September 2014 (11.09.2014) entire document	4
A	US 4,084,299 A (NODA) 18 April 1978 (18.04.1978) entire document	1-4
A	US 2009/0266375 A1 (PATREDIS) 29 October 2009 (29.10.2009) entire document	1-4
A	US 3,135,034 A (FAUTEUX) 02 June 1964 (02.06.1964) entire document	1-4

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"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

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

17 April 2016

Date of mailing of the international search report

03 MAY 2016

Name and mailing address of the ISA/

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