



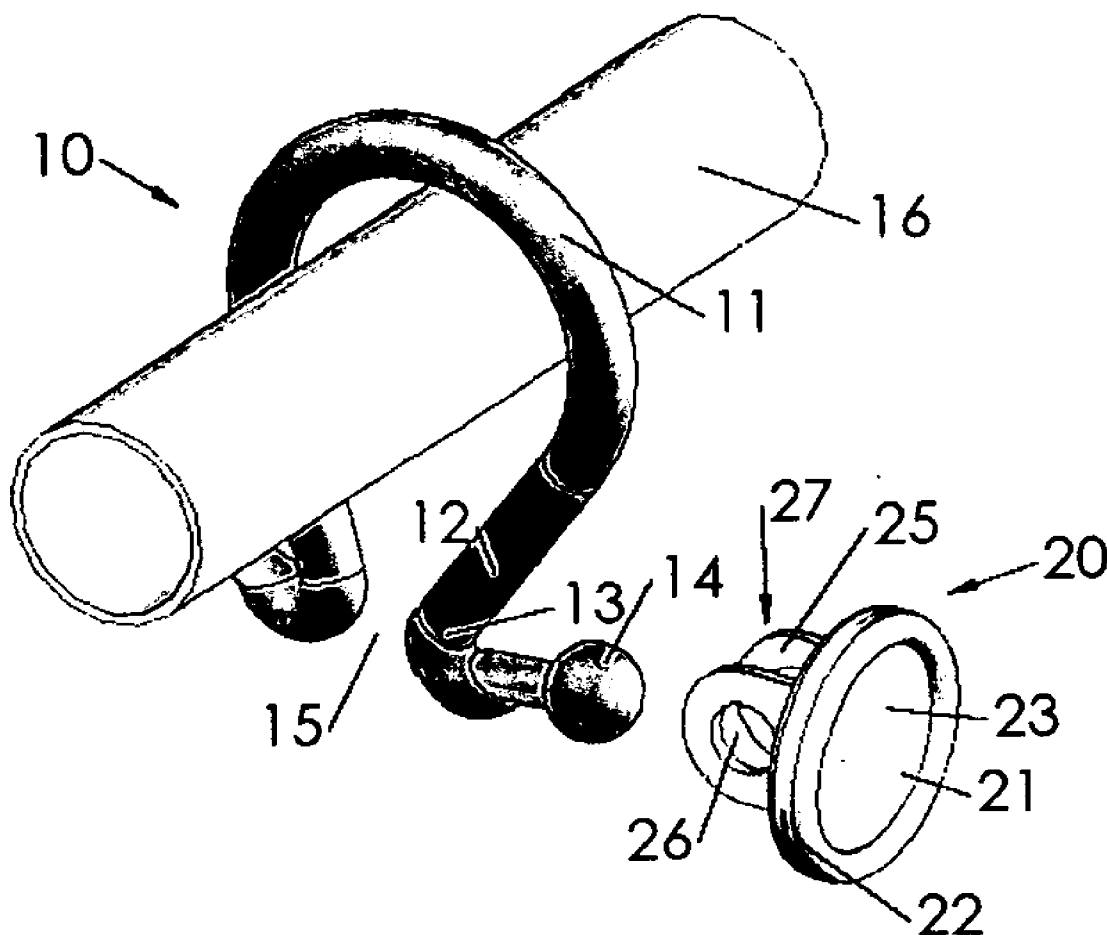
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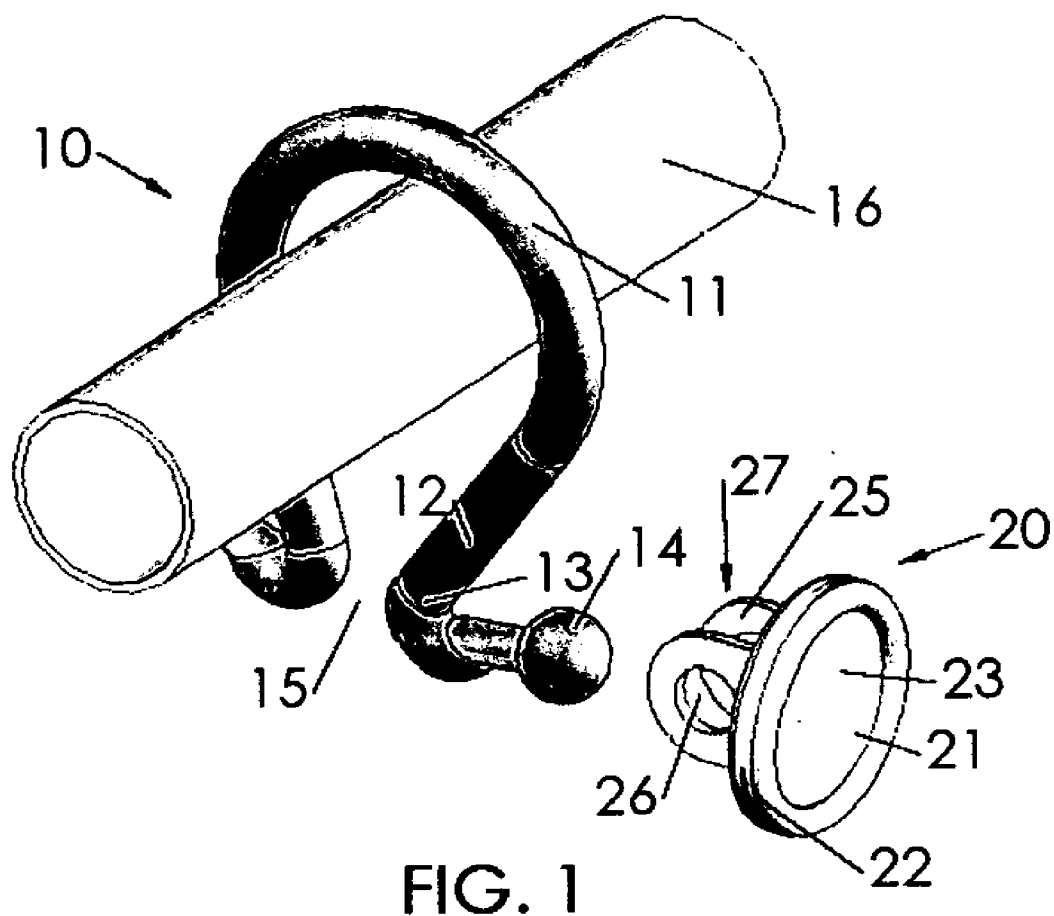
(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Liu(10) **Pub. No.: US 2007/0261330 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Nov. 15, 2007**(54) **DECORATIVE CURTAIN HANGER**(52) **U.S. Cl. 52/235**(76) **Inventor: Calvin Junetieh Liu, South Riding, VA (US)**(57) **ABSTRACT**

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(21) **Appl. No.: 11/412,867**(22) **Filed: Apr. 28, 2006****Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.**
E04H 1/00 (2006.01)

The decorative curtain hanger device is in an omega-shaped configuration that securely suspends one or more panels such as a shower curtain and a liner on a hanging fixture such as a curtain rod. The decorative curtain hanger shape allows quick and easy attachment and detachment of the curtains as well as simple and speedy engagement and disengagement of the hanging fixture. Additionally, the ornamental device allows decorative stickers to be attached as well as allowing the sticker to be exchange without the need to replace the entire curtain hanging device to accomplish a decoration change. Similarly, the style and shape of the ornamental device can be changed without the need to replace the entire curtain hanging device.





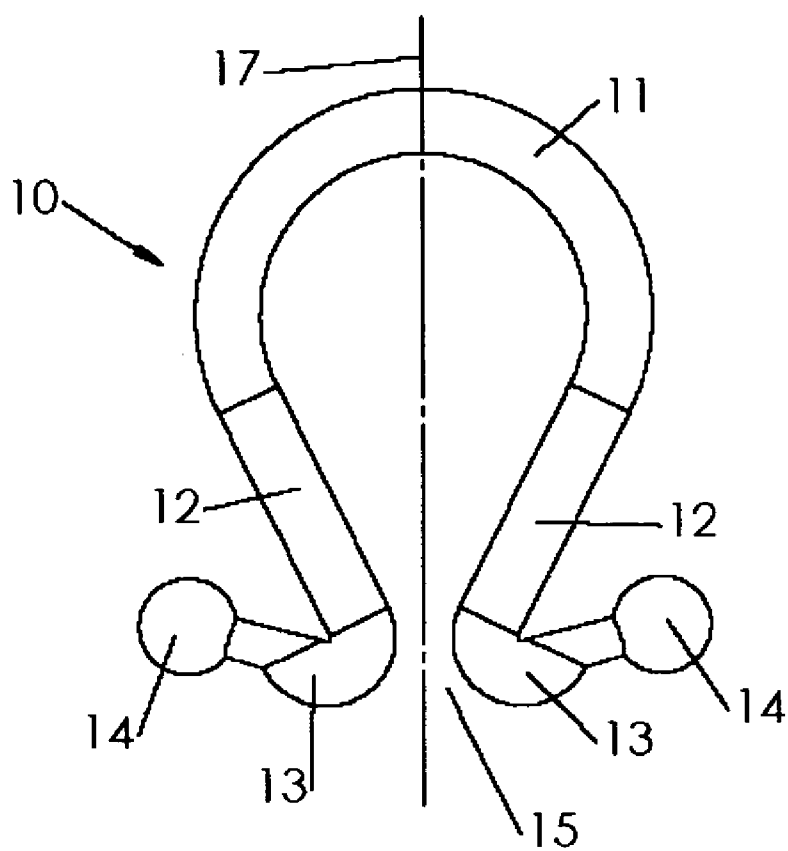


FIG. 2

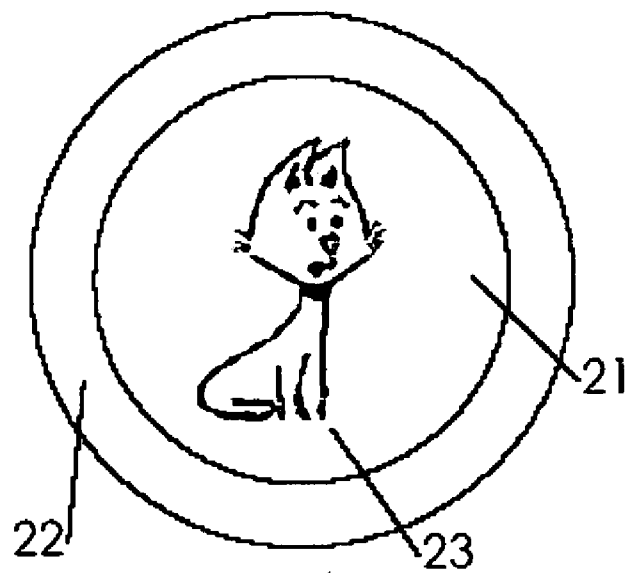


FIG. 3

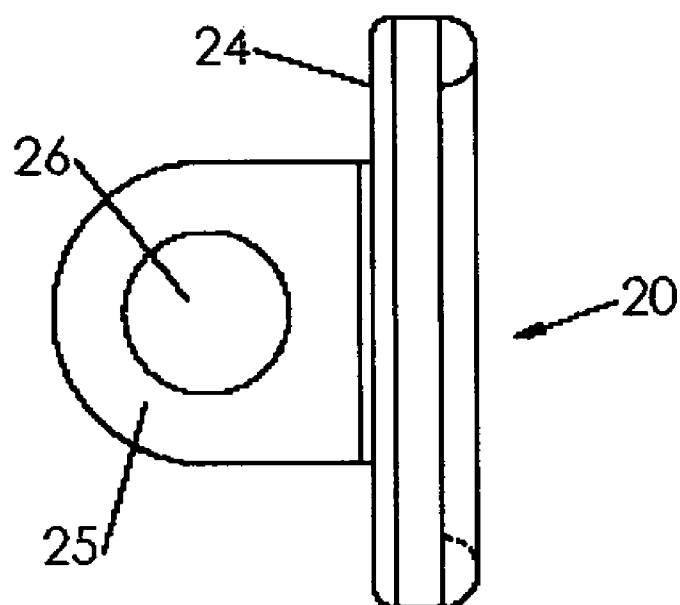


FIG. 4

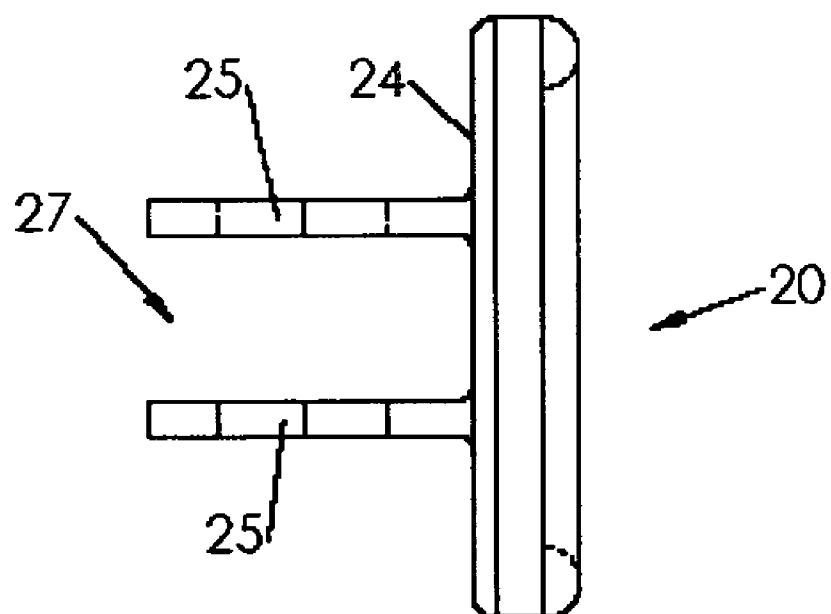


FIG. 5

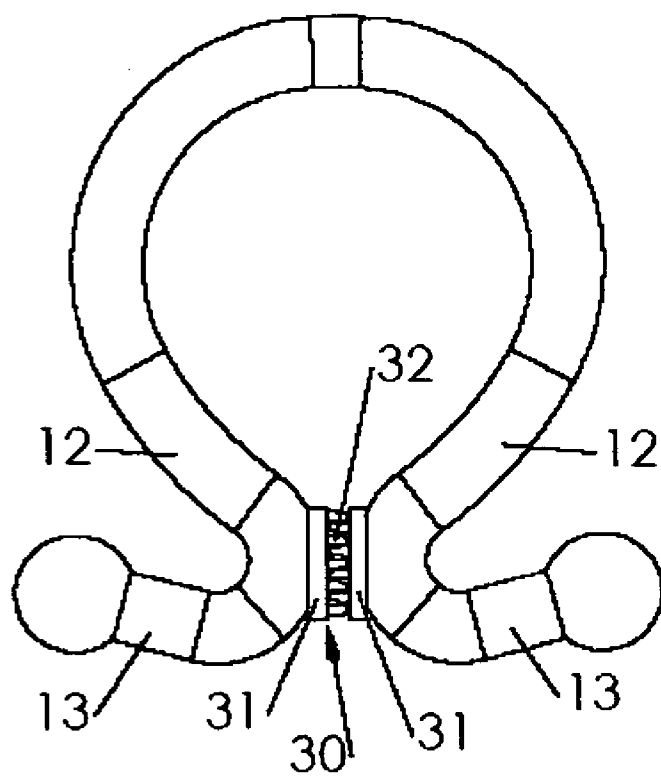


FIG. 6

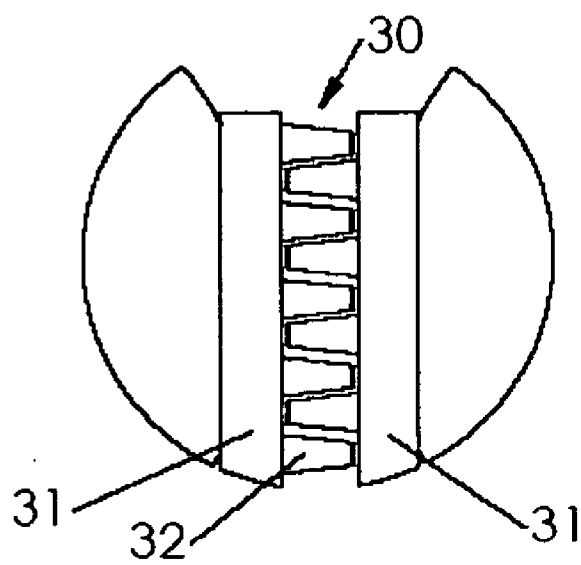


FIG. 7

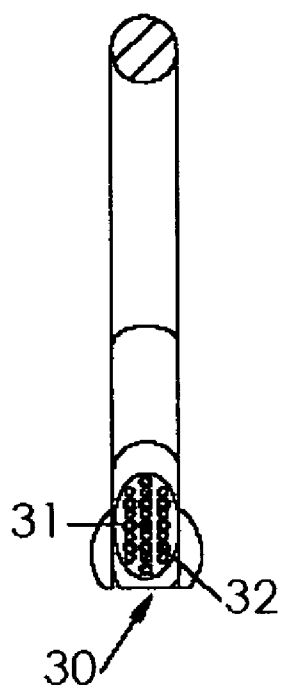


FIG. 8

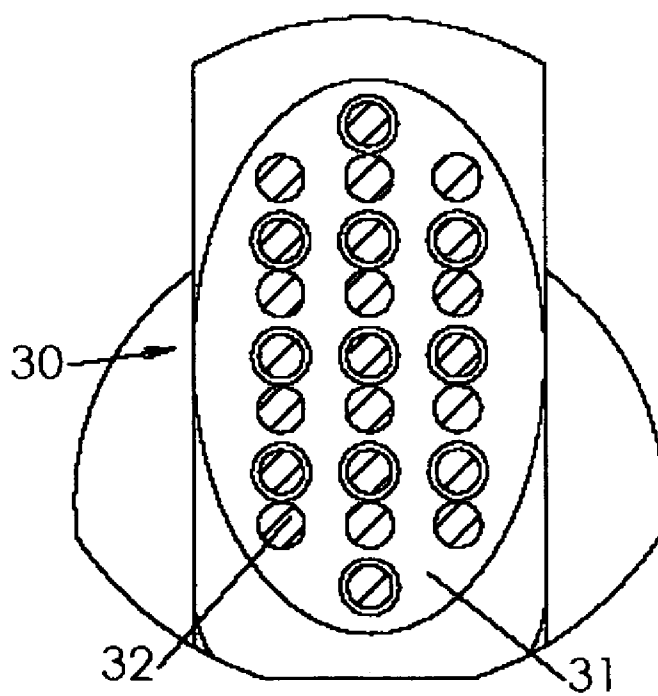


FIG. 9

DECORATIVE CURTAIN HANGER**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION****[0001]** 1. Field of Invention

[0002] The present invention relates generally to a panel hanger, more specifically to an omega shaped curtain hanging device with ornamentation.

[0003] 2. Description of Related Art

[0004] Traditionally, a piece of water-proof panel, hereinafter referred to as a shower curtain, is used to block water from spilling outside of a shower structure such as a bathtub. When two panels are used, a perforated water-proof panel, hereinafter called a liner, is hung inside the bathtub while another perforated fabric panel, hereinafter called a curtain, is hung outside the bathtub for decorative purposes. The fixture on which curtains are hung is called curtain rod and is conventionally circular in cross-section.

[0005] In general, a curtain hanging device has a rod engaging means at the upper part of its body and a curtain engaging means at the lower part of its body. Some curtain hanging devices also have ornamental means for decorative purposes. Typically, the top edge of a panel, whether it is a shower curtain, a liner, or some other curtain, has a plurality of equally spaced apertures such as slots or eyelets which allow the panel to be hung or suspended from a plurality of curtain or panel hanging devices that engage a fixed rod. In aggregate, the panel hanging devices suspend the panel or panels from the rod in movable fashion.

[0006] Curtain hanging devices come in numerous shapes, sizes, and construction materials. Such shapes, sizes and construction materials are well known in the art. Recently, attempts have been made to improve either the curtain hanging devices' function in terms of ease of use and/or their esthetic in terms of visual impression.

[0007] Straps, rings and hooks are common commercially available curtain hangers. Each device has its own advantages and disadvantages. Use of curtain straps, which are functionally akin to shower curtain rings since both have nearly identical construction in their upper bodies, requires that lower bodies of curtain straps must either be sewn onto the curtain or attached to the curtain in some way by using special hardware. This additional process or step adds to the cost and time of manufacture. Straps, on the other hand, generally do not require the purchase of a separate hanging device. Straps differ from rings and hooks in the manner that the curtain hangs from the fixed rod. U.S. Pat. No. 5,651,407 issued to Perez describes a curtain strap.

[0008] Curtain rings are similarly structured as straps combining rod engaging means and the curtain engaging means; the curtain ring suspends a curtain and engages a curtain rod. Curtain rings are difficult to engage and disengage from both the curtain and the rod, especially when this task has to be performed overhead while standing on a slippery surface. A number of curtain rings are described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 345,904; 686,124; 722,370; 1,034,630; 1,811,619; 2,320,308; 2,711,555; 3,772,734; 4,010,503; 4,308,637; 4,750,243; 5,339,884; 5,367,742; D350,279 and D404,639.

[0009] Most curtain hooks comprise a large rod engaging hook at the upper part of the body permitting the curtain

hook to rest on a curtain rod and a curtain engaging means or a hook at the lower part of the body for hanging. Compared to curtain rings, curtain hooks are easy to use and simple to manufacture. When engaging a curtain, however, the weight of the curtain tends to cause the curtain to slip off the curtain hanging hook. Similarly, the rod engaging hook can slip off the curtain rod when the curtain is moved on the rod. A number of curtain hooks are described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 2,320,003; 6,530,120; D253,276; D344,670; D439,141; D458,536 and D484,027.

[0010] One attempt at solving the problem of the curtain hook falling off the curtain rod is described in U.S. Pat. No. D465,996 issued to Suero, Jr. U.S. Pat. No. D465,996 describes the addition of two short pegs attached to the rod engaging hook, which are in turn compressed into two mating grooves on a curtain rod. One drawback with this solution is that this configuration inhibits smooth movement of the curtain hook on the grooved curtain rod.

[0011] To accommodate a curtain and a liner at the same time, some curtain hooks are constructed with two curtain hanging hooks at the lower part of their bodies. Typically, these curtain hooks upper body fastening means are a single large rod engaging hook. However, there still remains the problem of the hook slipping off the curtain rod. U.S. Pat. Nos. D436,024; D459,201; D489,249 and D505,614 describe curtain hooks with two curtain hanging hooks.

[0012] CA Pat. No. 2,316,100 issued to Lauk describes a different approach to solving the problem of hanging two curtains or panels simultaneously. CA Pat. No. 2,316,100 describes a shower curtain hook with two depending lower-body engagement hooks. However, Lauk's suggested arrangement seems to double the problems associated with the engagement and disengagement of the panels or curtains.

[0013] In addition to having a functional purpose, certain curtain hanging devices may also have an ornamental or decorative function. Generally, such decorative or ornamental functions are permanently affixed in some fashion to the curtain hanging device. When a different theme or artistic design is desired, one has to change the entire suite of curtain hanging devices.

[0014] A ball joint or a ball-and-socket connection is a common mechanical device. As demonstrated in U.S. Pat. No. 1,330,912 issued to Short, a ball joint has been cleverly used as a part of a shift lever assembly for changing speed in motor vehicle gear boxes. A ball-and-socket connection can be adapted to construct a changeable, rotatable and tiltable decorative article that overcome the problems associated with curtain hangers such as those disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 2,230,003; 2,805,457 and D484,027. These structures are complex and cumbersome to use.

[0015] Thus, there remains a need to produce a curtain hanging device that is simpler to use, more cost effective to manufacture, and less likely to inadvertently disengage either the rod or the panels or panels which are to be hung. Furthermore, there exists a need for a decorative or ornamental device which can easily be changed without the need to replace the entire curtain hanging device.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0016] Accordingly, the present invention is directed to a curtain hanging device in an omega-shaped configuration

that securely suspends one or more panels such as a shower curtain and a liner from a hanging fixture such as a curtain rod and that affords quick and easy attachment and detachment of the panels as well as simple and speedy engagement and disengagement of the hanging fixture.

[0017] Additional features and advantages of the invention are set forth in the description which follows, and in part are apparent from the description, or may be learned by practice of the invention. The objectives and other advantages of the invention will be realized and attained by the curtain hanging device particularly pointed out in the written description and the claims hereof as well as the appended drawings.

[0018] To achieve these and other advantages and in accordance with the purpose of the invention, as embodied and broadly described, the curtain hanging device for use with a curtain rod has a molded body in the shape of an omega. The omega shaped curtain hanging device has a rod-engaging section or ring and a pair of curtain-hanging sections or hooks at opposite ends of the rod-engaging section. Each of the curtain-hanging sections may be capped by a ball. Each end ball and an ornamental device form a ball-and-socket apparatus. Such apparatus accommodates a decorative or ornamental object.

[0019] One objective of the invention is to provide for a curtain hanging device with two curtain-hanging hooks to simultaneously receive one or more panels.

[0020] Another objective of the invention is to provide an ornamental device that can be exchanged without the need to replace the entire curtain hanging device.

[0021] Another objective of the present invention is to provide an ornamental device having a ball-and-socket configuration.

[0022] Another objective of the invention is to provide for an ornamental device having a disk with a socket-like apparatus on the back for engaging the end ball of the curtain hanging device.

[0023] Another objective of the invention is to provide for an ornamental device having a socket integrally formed as part of the ornamental device back.

[0024] Another objective of the invention is to provide an ornamental device that permits quick, easy and inexpensive decorative variations and modifications

[0025] Another objective of the invention is to provide for a curtain hanging device to hang a curtain lacking pre-formed slots or apertures for inserting the curtain-hanging section.

[0026] It is to be understood that both the forgoing general description and the following detailed description are exemplary and explanatory and are intended to provide explanation of the invention as claimed.

[0027] The accompany drawings are included to provide a further understanding of the invention and are incorporated in and constitute a part of this specification. These drawings illustrate several embodiments of the invention and together with the description serve to explain the principles of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0028] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a curtain hanging device resting on a curtain rod and an ornamental device in accordance with the present invention;

[0029] FIG. 2 is front view of the curtain hanging device of FIG. 1 without the ornamental device mounted thereon;

[0030] FIG. 3 is a front view of the ornamental device with a decorative feature on the face;

[0031] FIG. 4 is a side view of the ornamental device;

[0032] FIG. 5 is a top view of the ornamental device;

[0033] FIG. 6 is a front view of an alternative embodiment of the curtain hanging device showing the curtain-grasping device between the ends;

[0034] FIG. 7 is a close up of the front view of the curtain-grasping device;

[0035] FIG. 8 is a side view of the alternative embodiment of the curtain hanging device detailing the curtain-grasping device at the bottom of the curtain hanging device; and

[0036] FIG. 9 is a close up of the side view of the curtain-grasping device.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0037] The present invention is directed to a curtain hanging device in an omega-shaped configuration that securely suspends one or more panels such as a shower curtain and a liner on a hanging fixture such as a curtain rod and that affords quick and easy attachment and detachment of the panels as well as simple and speedy engagement and disengagement of the hanging fixture.

[0038] Reference will now be made in detail to the present preferred embodiment of the invention, an example of which is illustrated in the accompanying drawings. The exemplary embodiment of the invention is shown in FIG. 1 and is designated generally by reference number 10. Referring to FIG. 1, the curtain hanging device 10 is in an omega shaped configuration. The upper body of the curtain hanging device is a section of a ring 11 that has two rod-engaging or retaining sections 12 projected downwardly and inwardly toward the central axis 17 (FIG. 2). In this configuration, there is a gap 15 formed between lower ends of the two rod-engaging sections 12. The gap 15 width is slightly smaller than the diameter of the curtain rod 16. From the gap 15, the two rod-engaging sections are respectively connected to two outwardly and upwardly protruding curtain-hanging sections 13. The free ends of the curtain-hanging sections are then capped by two bulbous objects called end-balls 14 that, as a connection means, are to receive the socket 27 (FIGS. 4 and 5), a corresponding connection means, of the decorative device 20, and to prevent the curtain from falling off the curtain hanging section 13. The curtain hanging sections 13 are angled upwards and along with the bulbous end ball 14, curtain panels will hang securely on the curtain hanging device as it engages the curtain rod 16. Preferably the ring 11, the rod-engaging sections 12, the curtain-hanging sections 13 and the end-balls 14 are constructed as a single unit such as an injection molded plastic article. However, it will be easily understood

by one of ordinary skill in the art that the numerous suitable materials are available as well as a number of manufacturing methods.

[0039] FIG. 2 is a front view of the curtain hanging device 10 depicting the ring 11, the rod-engaging sections 12, the curtain-hanging sections 13 and the end-balls 14.

[0040] FIGS. 1 and 3 illustrate the ornamental device 20 front side or face 21 as a circular disk with a raised rim 22 capable of receiving a decorative sticker 23.

[0041] FIGS. 1, 4 and 5 illustrate side views of the ornamental device 20. Referring particularly to FIGS. 4 and 5, the rear side or the back 24 of the ornamental device has two integrally formed parallel flat prongs 25, each with a circular hole 26 (FIGS. 1 and 4). The distance between the two prongs is slightly less than the diameter of the end-balls 14 (FIGS. 1 and 2). Thus, the back of the ornamental device resembles a male electrical plug and acts like a socket 27 (FIGS. 1 and 5). When an end-ball 14 is united with the socket 27 of the ornamental device, a ball-and-socket structure is created. This socket structure of the ornamental device 20 is an open-hole ball joint wherein the edges of the holes 26 grip and apply tension to the end-ball 14 of the curtain hanging device 10 (FIGS. 1 and 2). This ball and socket arrangement allows the ornamental device to rotate and tilt about the end-ball. The ornamental device may be shaped as a round disk, but other shapes such as hexagons, other polygonal shapes or ovals as well as various sizes may be used. Such shapes and sizes are well known to those in the art.

[0042] FIG. 6 illustrates an alternative embodiment of the curtain hanging device in a front view. In particular, FIG. 6 depicts a curtain grasper 30 located between the two curtain-hanging sections 13 where the gap 15 (FIGS. 1 and 2) exists between the lower ends of the rod-engaging section 12. This curtain grasper is particularly useful for engaging or hanging curtains lacking a slot or an aperture for the curtain-hanging section 13 to enter but may also be used to hang curtains with slots. The curtain grasper 30 has two base plates 31 and a plurality of interlocking prongs 32. The prongs 32 may lock the curtain material between the base plates 31 when hanging a slot less curtain. Alternatively, the prongs may pierce the fabric.

[0043] FIG. 7 is a detailed illustration of the curtain grasper in a front view. As can be seen from the close up, the prong 32 arrangement is an interlocking arrangement.

[0044] FIG. 8 depicts the alternative embodiment of a curtain hanging device in a side view. As can be seen in this view the curtain grasper 30 has base plates 31 that are oval shaped.

[0045] FIG. 9 is detailed illustration of the curtain grasper showing the prong 32 arrangement on the base plate 31. The plurality of the prongs is arranged such that one plate has a central column containing more prongs than either of the flanking columns while the other plate has three columns of equal number of prongs. Additionally, the rows of prongs on one plate will be arranged to abut with the opposing side prongs to form the interlocking grasping device. It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that the prongs may be arranged in various shapes and sizes and still remain within the scope of the present invention.

[0046] In one embodiment, the curtain hanging device is attached to a curtain rod by aligning the gap 15 with the top of the curtain rod 16 and then pushing the curtain hanging device 10 down to engage the rod (FIG. 1). The curtain hanging device is disengaged by reversing the procedure. To hang a curtain on the curtain hanging device the curtain-hanging sections 13 are pushed through the preformed apertures at the top of the curtain. Again by reversing the process the curtain is disengaged from the curtain-hanging section.

[0047] To decorate a hanging curtain, a decorative sticker 23 is applied to the face 21 of the ornamental device 20 (FIG. 3) and then the prongs 25 of ornamental device 20 are pushed against an end-ball 14 of the curtain hanging device 10 until the two prongs straddle the end-ball (FIG. 1). The holes 26 on the prongs 25 that grip the end-ball 14 are under tension and thus exert a compressive clamping force to hold the ornamental device 20 in place yet allow the ornamental device to rotate and to tilt about the end-ball. Pulling the ornamental device's socket 27 away from the end-ball will disengage the socket and the ball.

[0048] Stickers, which are to be used on the faces of the ornamental devices of the present invention, can be fabricated in differently colored designs (a group of flowers, an assortment of animals, an assembly of flags, etc.). Optionally, a variety of objects, such as shampoo, may be hung on the inside hook to be available while showering, and other objects, such as a towel, may hang on the outside hook to be available after the shower.

[0049] In an alternative embodiment as exemplified by FIGS. 6-9, the curtain hanging device has a curtain grasper for engaging a curtain without slots or apertures. In this embodiment, the curtain hanging device is attached or removed from a curtain rod as described above. To hang a curtain the interlocking curtain grasper is separated and the upper edge of the curtain is placed between the opposing prongs. The two sides are then pushed together with the curtain fabric remaining between the prongs thereby locking the curtain between the opposite prongs of the curtain grasper.

[0050] It will be apparent to those skilled in the art that various modifications and variations can be made to the curtain hanging device of the present invention without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention. Thus, it is intended that the present invention cover the modifications and variations of this invention provided that they come within the scope of the appended claims and their equivalents.

I claim:

1. A curtain hanging device for use with a curtain rod, comprising:

(a) a rod-engaging section and a pair of curtain-hanging sections, said curtain hanging device, having a frame shape resembling the Greek letter omega; and

(b) an ornamental device comprising a means to connect said ornamental device to the curtain hanging device.

2. The curtain hanging device according to claim 1, wherein the curtain-hanging sections are capped by end-balls.

3. The curtain hanging device according to claim 1, wherein the ornamental device has a pair of prongs formed on the back of said ornamental device, said prongs form a socket.

4. The ornamental device according to claim 3, wherein said pair of prongs each has a fixed diameter hole near the terminal end of each prong for engaging the end-ball of the curtain hanging device.

5. The ornamental device according to claim 1, wherein said ornamental device is a disk, oval, or polygonal shape.

6. The ornamental device according to claim 5, wherein said shape is a disk.

7. The ornamental device according to claim 1, wherein the front face of the ornamental device receives decorative stickers.

8. The ornamental device according to claim 7, wherein the front face is rimmed.

9. A curtain hanging device for use with a curtain rod, comprising:

(a) a rod-engaging section and a pair of curtain-hanging sections, said curtain hanging device, having a frame shape resembling the Greek letter omega;

(b) a curtain grasper located on the interior side of the curtain-hanging sections; and

(c) an ornamental device comprising a means to connect said ornamental device to the curtain hanging device.

10. The curtain grasper according to claim 9, wherein said curtain grasper comprises a pair of base plates and a plurality of prongs, each base plate is located on opposite sides of the curtain-hanging sections of the curtain hanging device.

11. The curtain grasper according to claim 9, wherein the base plate of one side has the plurality of prongs arranged in three columns and one column of prongs is longer than either flanking column; and the opposing side base plate has three columns of equal size.

12. The curtain grasper according to claim 9, wherein said prongs on one side are arranged to interlock with the prongs on the opposite side.

13. The curtain hanging device according to claim 9, wherein the curtain-hanging sections are capped by end-balls.

14. The curtain hanging device according to claim 9, wherein the ornamental device has a pair of prongs formed on the back of said ornamental device, said prongs form a socket.

15. The ornamental device according to claim 14, wherein said pair of prongs each has a fixed diameter hole near the terminal end of each prong for engaging the end-ball of curtain hanging device.

16. The ornamental device according to claim 9, wherein said ornamental device is a disk, oval, or polygonal shape.

17. The ornamental device according to claim 16, wherein said shape is a disk.

18. The ornamental device according to claim 9, wherein the front face of the ornamental device receives decorative stickers.

19. The ornamental device according to claim 18, wherein the front face is rimmed.

* * * * *