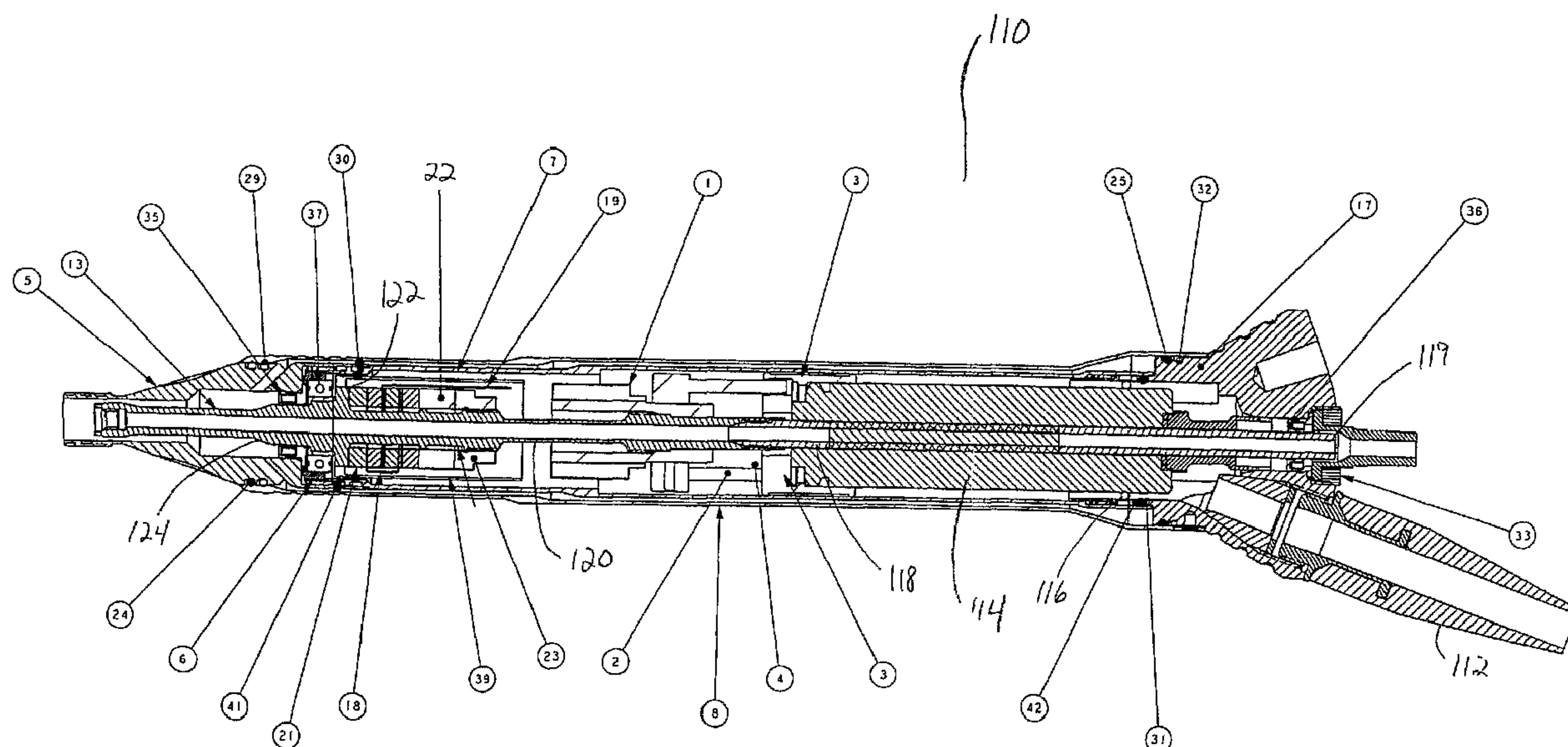




(86) Date de dépôt PCT/PCT Filing Date: 2001/07/23  
(87) Date publication PCT/PCT Publication Date: 2002/01/31  
(45) Date de délivrance/Issue Date: 2008/12/23  
(85) Entrée phase nationale/National Entry: 2002/02/19  
(86) N° demande PCT/PCT Application No.: US 2001/023194  
(87) N° publication PCT/PCT Publication No.: 2002/007658  
(30) Priorité/Priority: 2000/07/25 (US09/625,294)

(51) Cl.Int./Int.Cl. *A61F 9/007* (2006.01),  
*A61B 17/00* (2006.01)  
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(54) Titre : **PIECE A MAIN A ULTRASONS**  
(54) Title: **ULTRASOUND HANDPIECE**



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

A handpiece having a set of longitudinally vibrating piezoelectric elements (21) and which may additionally have an electric motor (114) to provide rotational or oscillatory movement to the ultrasound horn. The piezoelectric elements (21) are surrounded by a high temperature plastic sleeve (39), and the sleeve is filled with high temperature potting material (141). The potting material seal the piezoelectric elements against moisture without affecting the performance of the piezoelectric elements.



## (12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization  
International Bureau



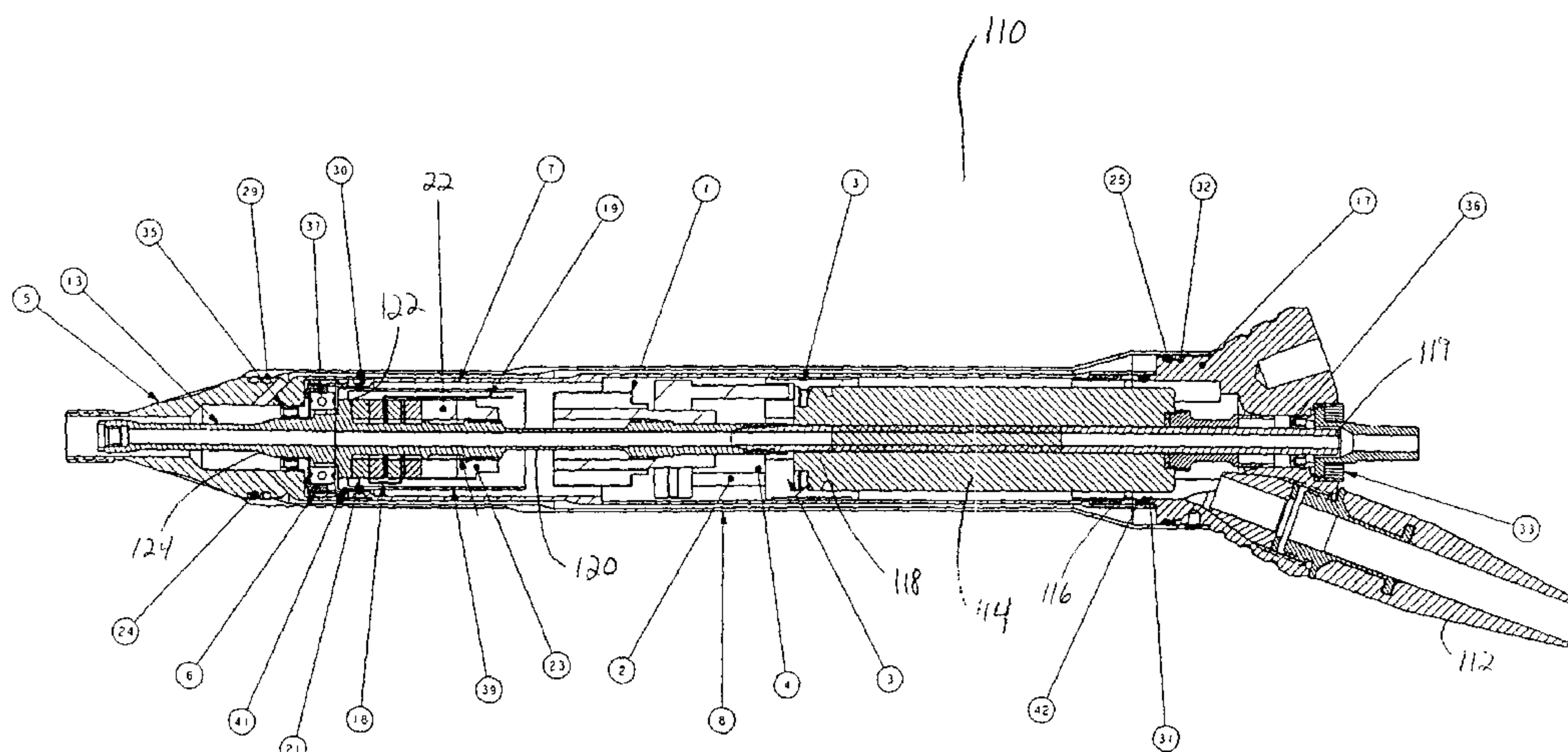
(43) International Publication Date  
31 January 2002 (31.01.2002)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number  
**WO 02/07658 A1**

- (51) International Patent Classification<sup>7</sup>: **A61F 9/007** (74) Agents: SCHIRA, Jeffrey, S. et al.; Alcon Research, Ltd., 6201 South Freeway, R & D Counsel, Q-148, Fort Worth, TX 76134-2099 (US).
- (21) International Application Number: PCT/US01/23194
- (22) International Filing Date: 23 July 2001 (23.07.2001) (81) Designated States (*national*): AU, BR, CA, IL, JP, MX, US.
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English (84) Designated States (*regional*): European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR).
- (30) Priority Data: 09/625,294 25 July 2000 (25.07.2000) US Published:  
— with international search report  
— before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments
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- For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*

(54) Title: ULTRASOUND HANDPIECE



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## ULTRASOUND HANDPIECE

This invention relates to ultrasonic devices and more particularly to an  
5 ophthalmic phacoemulsification handpiece.

### Background of the Invention

A typical ultrasonic surgical device suitable for ophthalmic procedures consists  
10 of an ultrasonically driven handpiece, an attached hollow cutting tip, an irrigating  
sleeve and an electronic control console. The handpiece assembly is attached to the  
control console by an electric cable and flexible tubings. Through the electric cable,  
the console varies the power level transmitted by the handpiece to the attached cutting  
tip and the flexible tubings supply irrigation fluid to and draw aspiration fluid from the  
15 eye through the handpiece assembly.

The operative part of the handpiece is a centrally located, hollow resonating bar  
or horn directly attached to a set of piezoelectric crystals. The crystals supply the  
required ultrasonic vibration needed to drive both the horn and the attached cutting tip  
during phacoemulsification and are controlled by the console. The crystal/horn  
20 assembly is suspended within the hollow body or shell of the handpiece at its nodal  
points by relatively inflexible mountings. The handpiece body terminates in a reduced  
diameter portion or nosecone at the body's distal end. The nosecone is externally  
threaded to accept the irrigation sleeve. Likewise, the horn bore is internally threaded  
at its distal end to receive the external threads of the cutting tip. The irrigation sleeve  
25 also has an internally threaded bore that is screwed onto the external threads of the  
nosecone. The cutting tip is adjusted so that the tip projects only a predetermined  
amount past the open end of the irrigating sleeve.

When used to perform phacoemulsification, the ends of the cutting tip and  
irrigating sleeve are inserted into a small incision of predetermined width in the cornea,  
30 sclera, or other location in the eye tissue in order to gain access to the anterior chamber  
of the eye. The cutting tip is ultrasonically vibrated along its longitudinal axis within  
the irrigating sleeve by the crystal-driven ultrasonic horn, thereby emulsifying upon  
contact the selected tissue in situ. The hollow bore of the cutting tip communicates  
with the bore in the horn that in turn communicates with the aspiration line from the  
35 handpiece to the console. A reduced pressure or vacuum source in the console draws

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or aspirates the emulsified tissue from the eye through the open end of the cutting tip, the bore of the cutting tip, the horn bore, and the aspiration line and into a collection device. The aspiration of emulsified tissue is aided by a saline flushing solution or irrigant that is injected into the surgical site through  
5 the small annular gap between the inside surface of the irrigating sleeve and the outside surface of the cutting tip.

Ultrasound handpieces are subjected to the extreme heat and pressure of autoclave sterilization, which can shorten the life of the piezoelectric elements. Prior attempts to increase the longevity of the electronic  
10 components of piezoelectric handpieces have been directed primarily to preventing moisture from entering the handpiece by better sealing of the outer shell and/or electric cabling. While these attempts have increased significantly the useful life of ultrasound handpieces, further improvements are needed.

15 Accordingly, a need continues to exist for an ultrasound handpiece having increased reliability.

### Brief Summary of the Invention

In accordance with one aspect of the present invention there is provided an ultrasound surgical handpiece, comprising: a) an outer shell;  
20 b) an ultrasound horn having a distal hub, the hub being held within the shell by a first seal, the horn being sized and shaped for receiving a piezoelectric stack and for being connected to a distal end of a motor shaft with a proximal end of the motor shaft held within the shell by a second seal, the first and second seals thereby locating the horn and the shaft within the outer shell;  
25 and c) a sleeve surrounding the piezoelectric stack; and d) a potting material within the sleeve sealing the piezoelectric stack from moisture so that the potting material does not affect the longitudinal vibration of the piezoelectric stack.

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In accordance with another aspect of the present invention there is provided an ultrasound surgical handpiece, comprising: a) an outer shell; b) an ultrasound horn having a distal hub, the hub having a hard coating and being held within the shell by a first seal, the horn being sized and shaped for receiving a piezoelectric stack and for being connected to a distal end of a motor shaft with a proximal end of the motor shaft held within the shell by a second seal, the first and second seals thereby locating the horn and the shaft within the outer shell; and c) a sleeve surrounding the piezoelectric stack; and d) a potting material within the sleeve sealing the piezoelectric stack from moisture.

The present invention improves upon prior art ultrasonic devices by providing a handpiece having a set of longitudinally vibrating piezoelectric elements and which may additionally have an electric motor to provide rotational or oscillatory movement to the ultrasound horn. The piezoelectric elements are surrounded by a high temperature plastic sleeve, and the sleeve is filled with high temperature potting material. The potting material seals the piezoelectric elements against moisture without affecting the performance of the piezoelectric elements.

It is accordingly an object of the present invention to provide an ultrasound handpiece having both longitudinal and torsional motion.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide an ultrasound handpiece having piezoelectric elements sealed against moisture.

Another objective of the present invention is to provide a more reliable ultrasound handpiece.

Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent with reference to the drawings, and the following description of the drawings and claims.

- 3a -

Brief Description of the Drawings

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of the ultrasonic handpiece of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a cross-section view of one embodiment of the ultrasonic handpiece of the present invention.

FIGS. 3A & 3B are perspective views of one embodiment of the ultrasonic handpiece of the present invention having the inner and outer handpiece shells removed.

Detailed Description of the Invention

As best seen in FIG. 1, handpiece 100 of the present invention generally consists of handpiece body 110, electric cable 112 and electric connector 20. Handpiece 100 combines both longitudinal motion and rotary or oscillatory motion, such handpieces being more fully described in U.S. Patent Nos. 5,222,959; 5,492,528; 5,827,292 (Anis); 5,722,945; 5,730,718; 5,911,699 (Anis, et al.) and 4,504,264 (Kelman). One skilled in the art will recognize that the present invention is suitable for use on ultrasonic handpieces having only longitudinal motion.

As best seen in FIG. 2, handpiece body 110 of the present invention generally includes nosecone shell 5, handpiece inner shell 7, handpiece outer shell 8 and handpiece end piece 17. Motor 114 is mounted within inner shell 7 by motor mount 3 and seal 116 and may contain devices, such as torsioner ring 2 and torsioner wire 4, for limiting the rotary movement of motor 114. Attached to distal end of shaft 118 of motor 114 is driveshaft 120 portion of horn 13. Piezoelectric stack 21 is received over driveshaft 120 portion of horn 13 and held in place against end plate 122 on driveshaft 120 by split nuts 22 and 23. Front bulkhead 1 is threaded onto driveshaft 120 behind nut 23 to de-couple the ultrasonic energy generated by piezoelectric stack 21 from

motor 114. Power is supplied to piezoelectric stack by electrodes 18 and 19, and the entire assembly may be surrounded by insulating sleeve 39. Ultrasound horn 13 is threaded into endplate 122 on driveshaft 120. Horn 13 is held within inner shell 7 by spring-loaded seal 35 and by bearing 37 contacting hub 124 of horn 13. Piezoelectric stack 21 is supported by bearings 6 and 41. Inner shell 7 is held within outer shell 8 by silicone rubber or elastomeric O-rings 30, 31, 41 and 42. Nosecone shell 5 is received in the distal end of outer shell 8 and sealed fluid tight by silicone rubber or elastomeric O-rings 24 and 29. End piece 17 is received on the proximal end of outer shell 8 and sealed fluid tight by silicone rubber or elastomeric O-rings 25 and 32. Proximal end 119 of motor shaft 118 is held within end piece 17 by spring-loaded seal 36 and by spanner ring 33.

In use, motor 114 is energized and causes motor shaft 118 to rotate. Rotation of shaft 118 causes rotation of driveshaft 120, piezoelectric stack 21 and horn 13. Rotation of horn 13 and motor shaft 118 causes friction and wear at the interface between hub 124 and seal 35 and distal end 119 of shaft 118 and seal 36. This friction can cause excessive wear on hub 124 and shaft 118, which preferably are made from titanium, by seals 35 and 36, which are preferably carbon/graphite filled, a very abrasive material. When such wear occurs, handpiece body 110 may no longer be sealed fluid tight, particularly in a steam autoclave. To prevent excessive wear on hub 124 and shaft 118, hub 124 and proximal end 119 of shaft 118 may be plated or coated with any hard coating such as titanium nitride, zirconium nitride, chromium nitride or boron carbide (also known as black diamond), but titanium nitride is preferred. While titanium nitride coatings may be applied as thin as 2-4 microns, the inventors have found that such a thin coating is easily cracked when applied over a relatively soft material such as titanium. Therefore, it has been discovered that a titanium nitride coating greater than 4 microns, and preferably between 9-12 microns gives the best results. Coatings greater than 4 microns, however, may change the surface morphology of the coating, resulting in a sandpaper-like finish undesirable for a sealing surface. The inventors have discovered that in such situations, polishing of the surface, for example, with a diamond powdered paste, removing approximately 1 micron of material or less, results in a satisfactory surface.

FIGS. 3A and 3B illustrate the operative parts of handpiece 110 with nosecone 5, inner shell 7 and outer shell 8 removed. As seen in FIG. 3A, endplate 122, piezoelectric stack 21, split nuts 22 and 23 and electrodes 18 and 19 are exposed to the atmosphere internal to handpiece 110. As been seen in FIG. 3B, piezoelectric stack 21, endplate 122 split nuts 22 and 23 and electrodes 18 and 19 may be covered by protective sleeve 39. Sleeve 39 preferably is made from a high temperature plastic such as polyetheretherketone (PEEK) and is slip-fitted around endplate 122, piezoelectric stack 21, split nuts 22 and 23 and electrodes 18 and 19. The interior of sleeve 39 may be filled with high temperature potting material 141, such as a primerless silicone adhesive (Dow Corning Q3-6611). The filling operation generally may include raising the temperature of potting material 141 and sleeve/ piezoelectric stack assembly 139 to, for example, around 120 °C and injecting potting material 141 into sleeve/ piezoelectric stack assembly 139 with a syringe. The elevated temperature is held for a short time, approximately 5 minutes, for example, to degas any air bubbles from potting material 141. Additional potting material 141 is injected into sleeve/ piezoelectric stack assembly 139 to replace any volume lost by the escaping gases. The entire potting material 141 filled sleeve/ piezoelectric stack assembly 139 is then cured, for example, at around 120 °C for 2 hours. Such a potting process does not affect the ultrasonic performance of handpiece 110, but helps to increase the reliability and longevity of handpiece 110 by sealing piezoelectric stack 21 and electrodes 18 and 19 from moisture.

While certain embodiments of the present invention have been described above, these descriptions are given for purposes of illustration and explanation. Variations; changes, modifications and departures from the systems and methods disclosed above may be adopted without departure from the scope or spirit of the present invention.

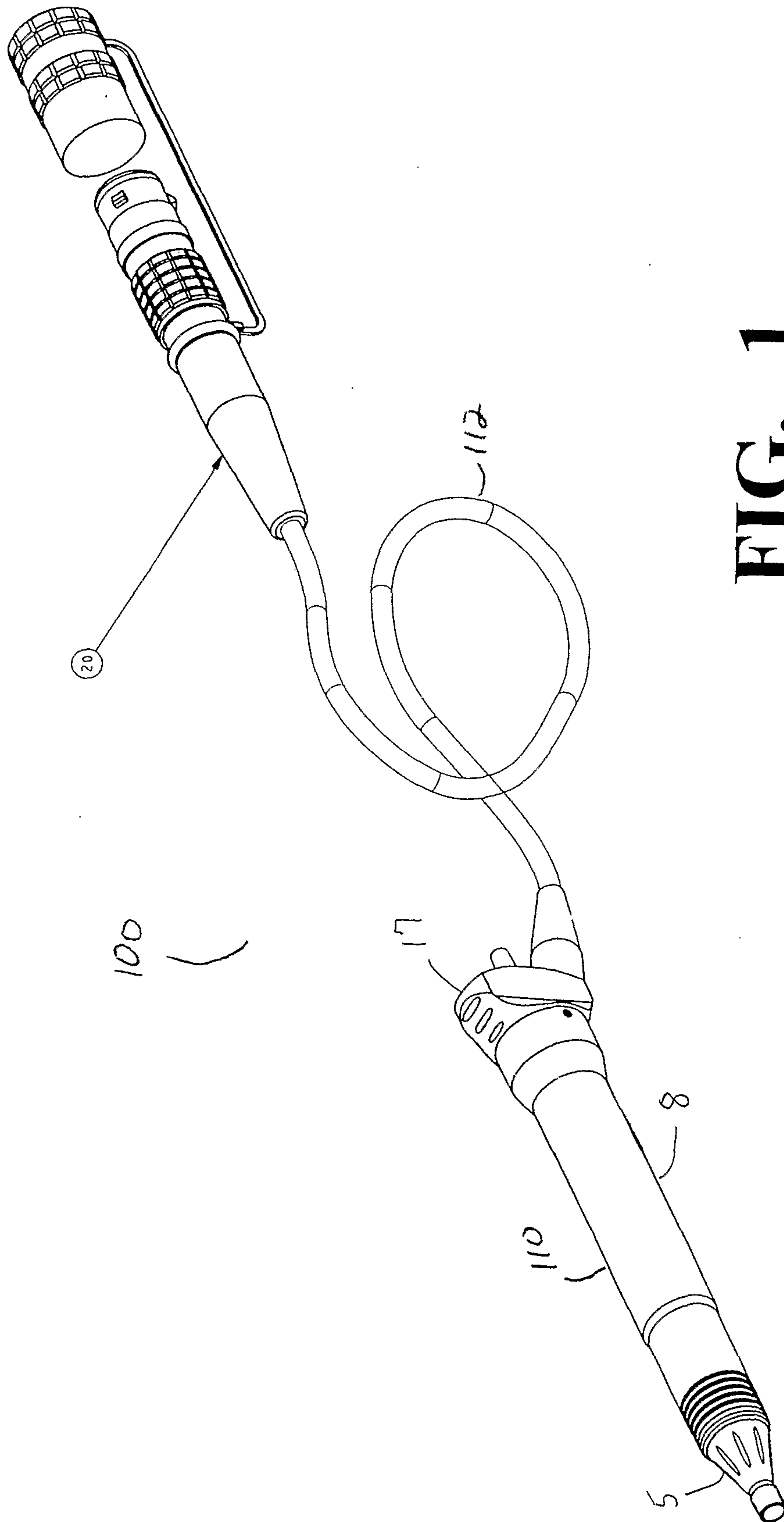
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## CLAIMS

1. An ultrasound surgical handpiece, comprising:
  - a) an outer shell;
  - b) an ultrasound horn having a distal hub, the hub being held within  
5 the shell by a first seal, the horn being sized and shaped for receiving a piezoelectric stack and for being connected to a distal end of a motor shaft with a proximal end of the motor shaft held within the shell by a second seal, the first and second seals thereby locating the horn and the shaft within the outer shell; and
  - 10 c) a sleeve surrounding the piezoelectric stack; and
  - d) a potting material within the sleeve sealing the piezoelectric stack from moisture so that the potting material does not affect the longitudinal vibration of the piezoelectric stack.
2. The handpiece of claim 1 wherein the sleeve is polyetheretherketone.
- 15 3. The handpiece of claim 1 wherein the potting material is a primerless silicone adhesive.
4. The handpiece of claim 1 wherein the hub has a hard coating.
5. The handpiece of claim 4 wherein the hard coating is titanium nitride.
6. The handpiece of claim 5 wherein the coating is greater than 4 microns  
20 thick.
7. The handpiece of claim 6 wherein the coating is between approximately 9 microns and 12 microns thick.
8. The handpiece of claim 4 further comprising a hard coating on the proximal end of the motor shaft.

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9. The handpiece of claim 8 wherein the coating is greater than 4 microns thick.
10. The handpiece of claim 9 wherein the coating is between approximately 9 microns and 12 microns thick.
- 5 11. The handpiece of claim 4 wherein the coating is greater than 4 microns thick.
12. The handpiece of claim 11 wherein the coating is between approximately 9 microns and 12 microns thick.
13. An ultrasound surgical handpiece, comprising:
- 10 a) an outer shell;
- b) an ultrasound horn having a distal hub, the hub having a hard coating and being held within the shell by a first seal, the horn being sized and shaped for receiving a piezoelectric stack and for being connected to a distal end of a motor shaft with a proximal end of the motor shaft held within the
- 15 shell by a second seal, the first and second seals thereby locating the horn and the shaft within the outer shell; and
- c) a sleeve surrounding the piezoelectric stack; and
- d) a potting material within the sleeve sealing the piezoelectric stack from moisture.



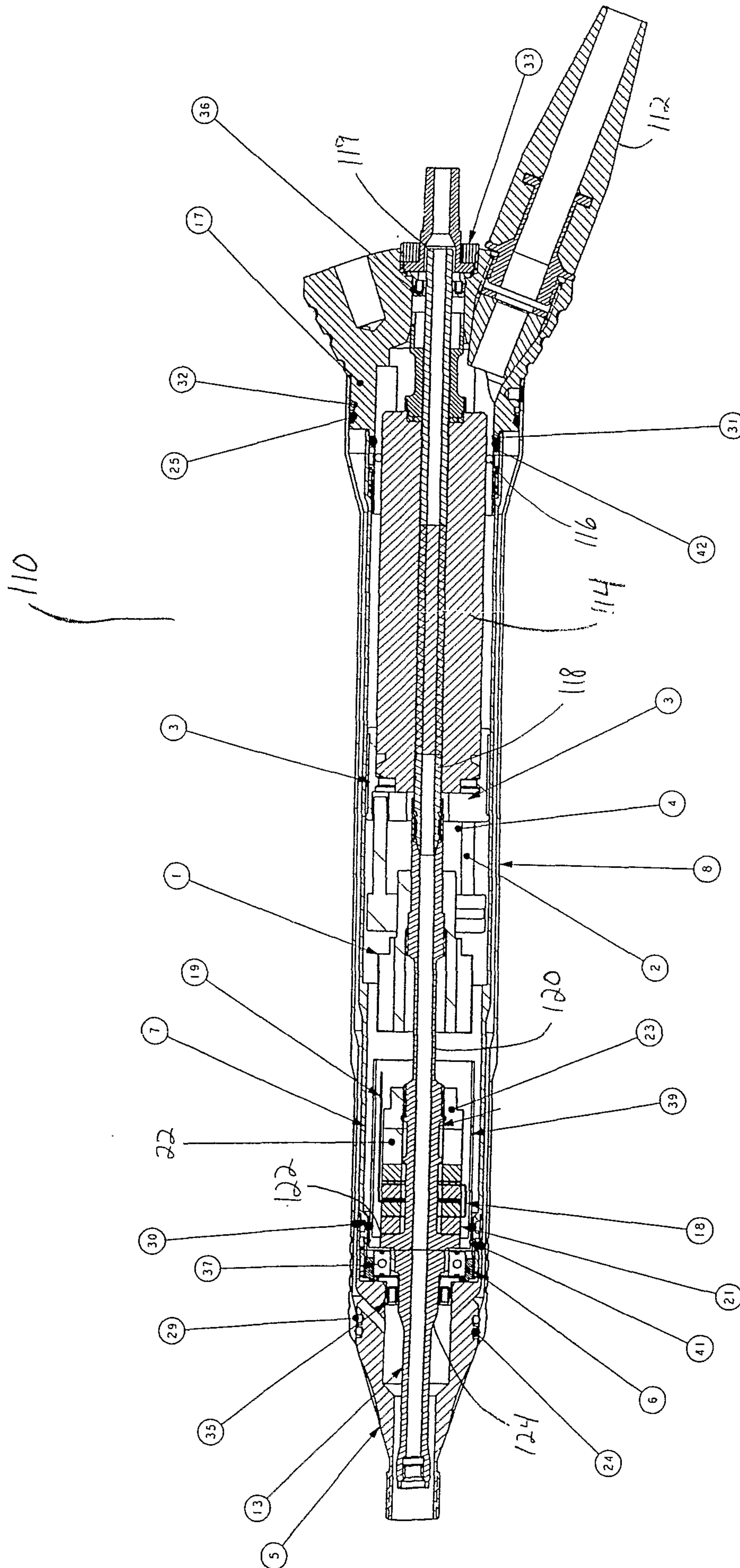


FIG. 2

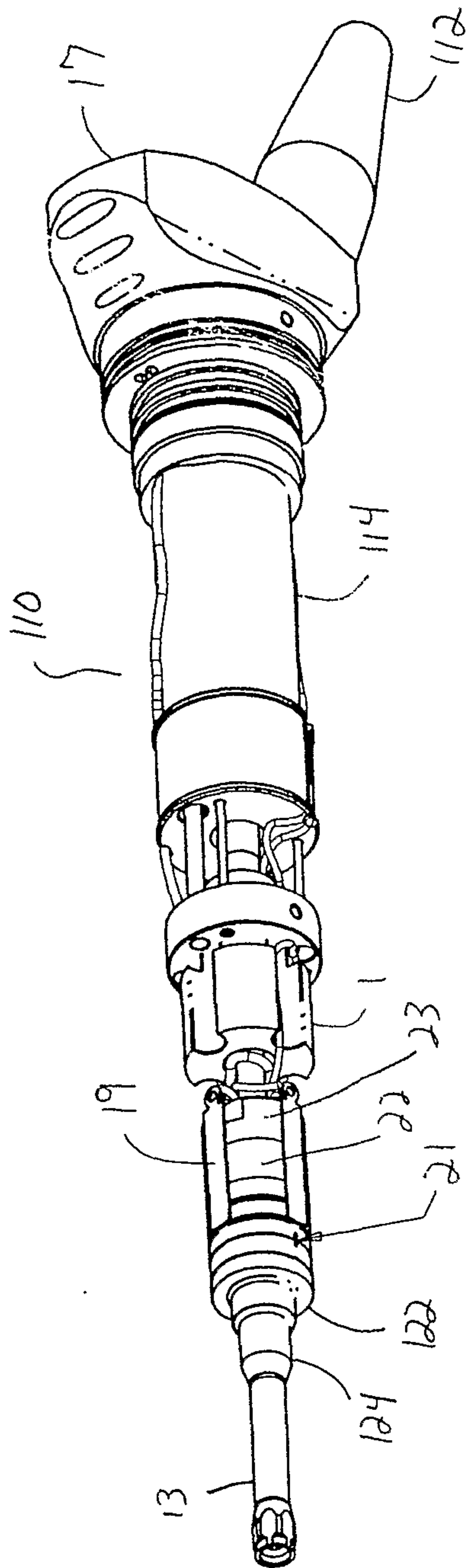


FIG. 3A

FIG. 3B

