This invention relates to an artist's paint box so formed as to be convertible into an easel.

It is highly desirable that an artist's paint box be capable of conversion into an easel, so as to reduce the number of articles to be carried by the artist to a location at which he intends to make a painting or other drawing. It is further desirable that the artist's paint box include, in a compact, readily portable assembly, all the equipment which the artist needs. Still further, it is desirable that the box be convertible not only to an easel, but also be adapted for support thereon of a plurality of legs so as to provide a low table which will elevate the easel portion.

The main object of the present invention is to provide an artist's paint box in which these desirable features will be incorporated.

Another important object is to provide a paint box of the character stated which will not be increased in overall size above the size of a conventional paint box not having the desirable features referred to.

Another important object is to provide a paint box as described which, despite the desirable features embodied therein, can be manufactured at little or no increase in cost above that required in the manufacture of conventional paint boxes.

In carrying out the invention, I provide a relatively flat paint box compartmented to form divided spaces for holding various articles required by the artist. The paint box is adapted to contain a plurality of legs, which can be removed from the paint box and can be detachably secured to various sides of the varous walls of the paint box, thus to form the paint box into a low table. The lid of the paint box is so formed as to be raised in a manner to provide an easel, said lid in its lowered position being adapted to securely cover the articles contained within the box.

Other objects will appear from the following description, the claims appended thereto, and from the annexed drawings, in which like reference characters designate like parts throughout the several views, and wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the paint box in a closed position;

Figure 2 is a perspective view illustrating the paint box as it appears when the lid is raised to form an easel, and the legs are applied to provide a low table;

Figure 3 is a top plan view of the opened paint box;

Figure 4 is a transverse sectional view taken substantially on line 4--4 of Figure 3;

Figure 5 is a transverse sectional view on an enlarged scale, taken on line 5--5 of Figure 3; and

Figure 6 is a transverse sectional view, taken on an enlarged scale, said view being on line 6--6 of Figure 2.

At the outset, it may be noted that the entire device can be formed of any suitable material, and at the present time I prefer that plywood be used for the exterior walls of the box. However, except as necessarily required by the claims, I do not propose to limit myself to any particular material, and it is entirely possible that the box can be formed, for example, of metal or the like.

In any event, the box includes a rectangular bottom wall 10, to the back edge of which is glued or otherwise fixedly attached an upstanding rear wall 12. The rear wall 12 is of low height, so that the paint box will be of relatively flat configuration when closed, as readily seen from Figure 1.

Secured to the opposite side edges of the bottom wall 10, and upstanding from said bottom wall, are side walls 14, and a front wall 16 is secured to the front edge of the bottom wall and to the front ends of the respective side walls. I prefer that the several component parts referred to above be fixedly joined by glue or its equivalent, but it will be understood that any suitable connecting means can be employed to join the several parts together.

The bottom wall 10, rear wall 12, side walls 14, and front wall 16 cooperate to define a generally rectangular, shallow, receptacle that constitutes the main body of the device.

It is preferred that the paint box be subdivided into a plurality of compartments, to hold various articles required by the artist. To this end, partitions 18 can be secured to the bottom wall, extending upwardly from said bottom wall, the partitions 18 being spaced inwardly from and being in parallelism with the respective side walls 14.

The front ends of the partitions 18 terminate short of the front wall 16, and extending between the front ends of the partitions is a longitudinal partition 20 that is parallel to the front wall.

A longitudinal divider 22 is parallel to the longitudinal partition 20, and is disposed between said partition and the rear wall 12. The longitudinal divider 22 terminates at the transverse partitions 18, as may be readily seen from Figure 3.

Extending between the longitudinal divider 22 and the rear wall 12 are transverse dividers 24.
In this connection, the longitudinal and transverse dividers 22, 24 cooperate with the longitudinal and transverse partitions 18 and 16 to form a plurality of compartments, wherein paints or other artists' materials may be stored. The transverse dividers 24, in this connection, are lower in height than the rear wall 12 and the transverse partitions 18, and are also lower than the longitudinal divider 22, so as to receive an artist's palette 26 having the usual finger-receiving opening 28.

For the purpose of holding a plurality of artists' brushes, I provide spaced brush holders 30 disposed in the area between one of the transverse partitions 18 and the side wall 14 contiguous thereto. The brush holders 30 may each be formed of some flexible material, such as leather or a leather substitute. In any event, the holders are glued or otherwise attached along one edge to the bottom wall 10 (Figure 5), and are provided with upwardly extended free portions 32 having slits 34 through which brushes 36 can be positioned.

I provide in the paint box a plurality of legs 38, three legs being illustrated in the present instance. The legs 38 are each formed at one end with a cutaway portion 41 adapted to receive the side and front walls of the paint box, when the paint box is to be elevated to provide a low table or support. In this connection, the legs 38 normally are positioned as shown in Figure 3, being stored compactly within the paint box when the paint box is being carried from place to place. Covering the legs 38 when they are stored in the paint box is a mixing board 41.

I believe it will be apparent that any suitable means can be employed to hold the legs 38 against movement while they are stored in the paint box, and I believe it is sufficiently obvious as not to require special illustration that suitable braces or clamps can be mounted within the paint box to hold the legs against movement.

In any event, when the legs are to be used, they are positioned as illustrated in Figure 2. From this figure, it can be seen that two of the legs are disposed adjacent the back ends of the respective side walls 14. The other leg is disposed medially between opposite sides of the paint box, at a location offset slightly to one side of the mid-rectangular point of the box.

At the locations where the legs are to be secured to the paint box, the paint box is formed with smooth walled openings 42. These register with openings 44 formed in the upper ends of the legs 38, and opening into the notches 46. After registration of the openings 42, 44, bolts 48 are extended therethrough and wing nuts 48, disposed interiorly of the paint box, are used to secure the legs to the box.

To each of the back corners of the paint box, I attach hinges 50, secured to strips 52, that extend transversely of the box, said strips extending from the back edge of the box to a location short of the front wall, as may be readily noted from Figure 1. The respective strips 52 are so hinged to the paint box as to conceal the hinged portion when the box is in closed position, so as to eliminate any undesirable projections upon the paint box when the paint box is being carried from place to place.

To the front end of the strips 52, I attach hinges 54, which are attached to the lid body 56. The lid body 56 covers substantially the entire area of the paint box when in closed position, but as will be seen from Figures 1 and 2, is formed as opposite sides thereof with cutaway portions 58 complementary to and receiving the strips 52 when the box is in closed position.

When the box is closed, disks 60 that are attached adjacent their margins to the respective strips 52 by means of screws 62 and their equivalents, are swingable upon the screws to positions in which they partially overlie the lid body 56, thus to prevent accidental opening of the box.

Secured to the bottom wall 10, at the front of the paint box, is a handle 64 which may be formed of any suitable material, such as plastic webbing or the like. A handle 66 is secured to the front portion of the lid body 56, and overlies the handle 64, so as to afford a convenient grip for a user when the paint box is being transported from one location to another. A latch 68 of any desired ornamental configuration is applied to the lid and to the front wall, for the purpose of preventing the lid from opening accidentally.

When the paint box is closed, the lid body 56 and the strips 52 will be coplanar. This may be readily seen from Figure 1. When, however, the lid body is to be used as an easel, it is merely necessary that the latch 68 be disengaged, and the lid 56 raised.

As a result, the strips 52 will be swung upwardly upon their hinges 50, and the lid body 56 may then be pivoted about the axes of the hinges 54, to a position in which it is related acutely to the strips 52 (see Figure 2). As a result, an easel is formed, while access is at the same time conveniently had to the interior of the paint box.

Thus, a highly compact paint box assembly is provided, which is ordinarily of relatively small, flat dimensions, as may be seen from Figure 1. When, however, the paint box is to be used, it is merely necessary that the lid be raised to provide an easel if desired, while the legs 38 are quickly and readily attached to the box to provide an elevated support for the easel.

It is believed clear that the invention is not necessarily confined to the specific use or uses thereof described above, since it may be utilized for any purpose to which it may be suited. Nor is the invention to be necessarily limited to the specific construction illustrated and described, since such construction is only intended to be illustrative of the principles of the means presently devised to carry out said principles, it being considered that the invention comprehends any minor changes in construction that may be permitted within the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An artist's paint box comprising a receptacle; strips hinged at one end to one edge of the receptacle for swinging movement toward and away from the receptacle to lowered and raised positions respectively; a lid body hinged to the other ends of the strips so as to be swingable into coplanar and angular relationships thereto, said lid body swinging into an angular relationship in the raised position of the strips to cooperate therewith in forming an easel, and swinging into said coplanar relationship in the lowered strip position to position the lid body for use as a receptacle; a latch on the lid body engageable with the receptacle along that edge thereof opposite said one edge in the lowered, lid-forming position of the strips and lid body; and stop elements mounted on the strips and arranged to shift into position over the lid body in said lid-forming position thereof, to cooperate with the latch in holding the lid body and strips
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against relative swinging movement while in their lowered, lid-forming positions.

2. An artist's paint box comprising a receptacle; strips hinged at one end to one edge of the receptacle for swinging movement toward and away from the receptacle to lowered and raised positions respectively; a lid body hinged to the other ends of the strips so as to be swingable into coplanar and angular relationships thereto, said lid body swinging into an angular relationship in the raised position of the strips to cooperate therewith in forming an easel, and swinging into said coplanar relationship in the lowered strip position to form, with the strips, a lid for the receptacle; a latch on the lid body engageable with the receptacle along that edge thereof opposite said one edge in the lowered, lid-forming position of the strips and lid body; and stop elements mounted on the strips and arranged to shift into position over the lid body in the lid-forming position thereof, to cooperate with the latch in holding the lid body and strips against relative swinging movement while in their lowered, lid-forming positions, said stop elements comprising rigidly formed members pivotally connected to the respective strips and having portions shiftable into and out of overlying relation to the lid body on pivotal movement of said members.

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