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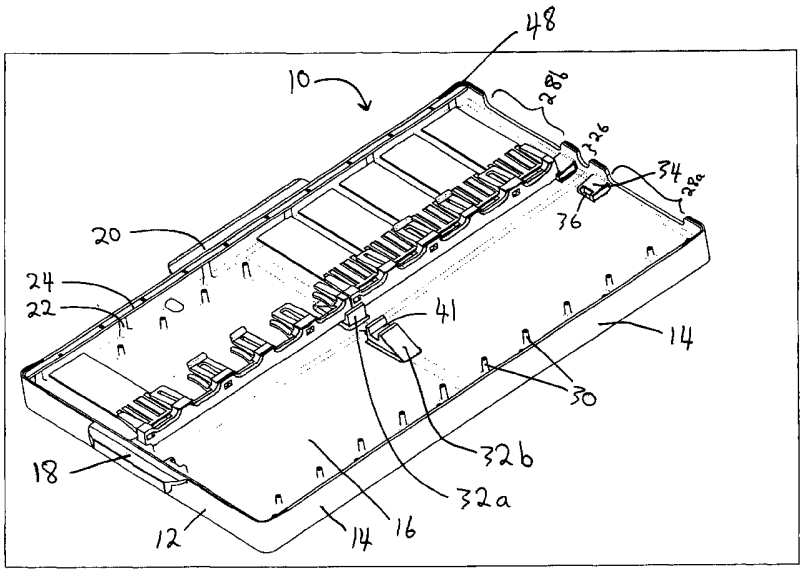
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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: TRAY FOR AUTOMATED HISTOCHEMICAL PROCESSING



(57) Abstract: The invention is the combination of a rectangular-shaped tray adapted to hold one or more removable slide frames which orient the slides horizontally, the combination also functioning to accurately and reproducibly align the slides for automated processing. The slide tray has molded features that positively hold the slide frames in place. The slide frames are removable so that the histotechnician may load the five or so slides that each frame holds in groups of five. The frames are removable to facilitate loading of slides and cleaning of the tray. A related invention is a slide tray for holding microscope slides substantially horizontally for automated chemical processing, comprising a tray having a floor and integral means for holding slides securely and fixedly positioned on said floor.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Internal Application No
PCT/US 03/22199

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 G01N1/31 G02B21/34 B01L9/00 G01N35/00

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 7 G01N G02B B01L

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

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)
EPO-Internal, PAJ, WPI Data

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5 958 341 A (CHU WEI-SING) 28 September 1999 (1999-09-28) column 2, line 10 -column 4, line 64 ---	1
X	EP 1 174 702 A (MEDIC SRL) 23 January 2002 (2002-01-23) paragraphs '0001!,'0004!,'0008!,'0009! paragraphs '0015!-'0018!,'0025!; claim 1; figure 2 ---	1,5-7
X	WO 94 23326 A (HYBAID LTD ;SCOPES GEOFFREY ERIC (GB); MEYER EDWARD (GB)) 13 October 1994 (1994-10-13) page 2, line 6 -page 2, line 21; figures 6,9 claims 1,2,4,8,10,14 --- -/--	1

[X] Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

[X] Patent family members are listed in annex.

° Special categories of cited documents :

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

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"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	Date of mailing of the international search report
5 February 2004	19 02 2004

Name and mailing address of the ISA	Authorized officer
European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL – 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31–70) 340–2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31–70) 340–3016	Tiede, R

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C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication,where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	EP 0 590 506 A (HOFFMANN LA ROCHE) 6 April 1994 (1994-04-06) column 5, line 10 -column 5, line 31 column 6, line 16 -column 6, line 28 ---	1-3
A	GB 2 197 949 A (MUIR IAIN MURRAY) 2 June 1988 (1988-06-02) abstract ---	1-7
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X	US 5 338 358 A (MIZUSAWA YOSHITADA ET AL) 16 August 1994 (1994-08-16) column 7, line 30 -column 8, line 8 column 9, line 29 -column 10, line 58; figures 13-15 ---	8-19
X	US 5 654 200 A (SHOWALTER WAYNE A ET AL) 5 August 1997 (1997-08-05) column 21, line 11 -column 22, line 33; figures 28,29 ---	8-14,17, 19-24
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PCT/US 03/22199

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication,where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 2002/079239 A1 (HRISINKO MARY ANN) 27 June 2002 (2002-06-27) paragraph '0049!; figure 7	20

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US 03/22199

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:

3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see additional sheet

1. [X] As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.

2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.

3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:

4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.

[X] No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. Claims: 1-7

   combination of tray and slide frame holder comprising bottom with means to position said slide frame

2. Claims: 8-19

   tray with integral means to position slides relative to said tray

3. Claims: 20-27

   tray with attached elements to position slides relative to each other

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

Internati application No
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