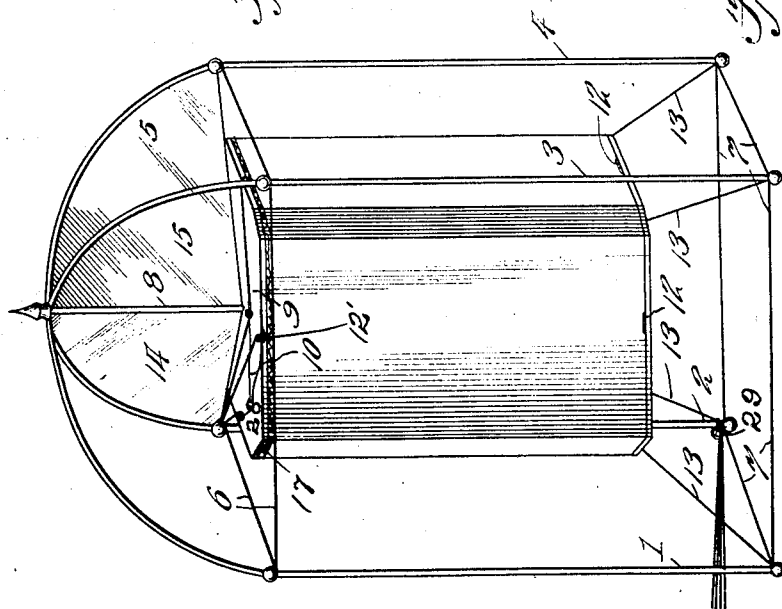
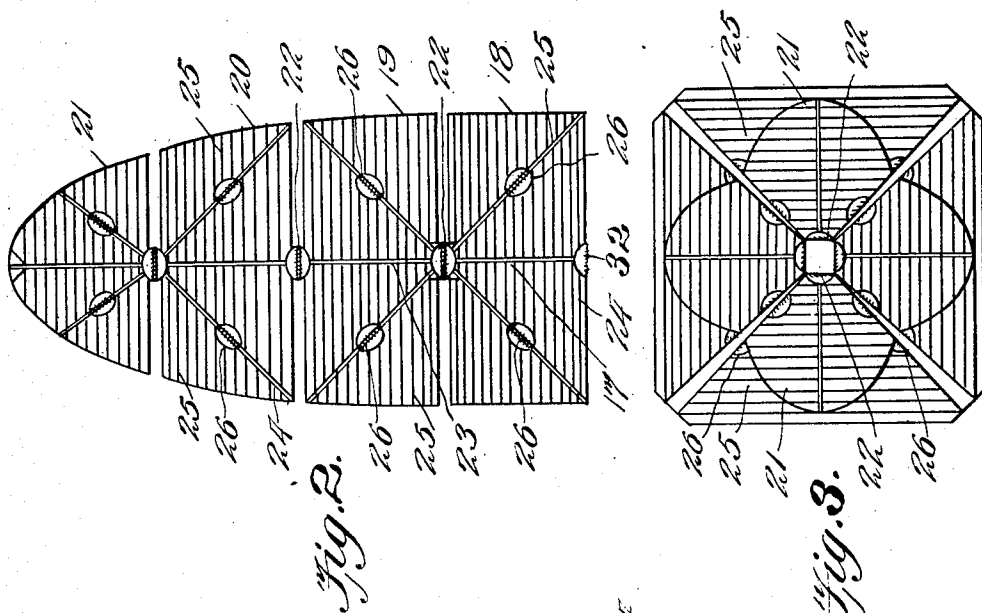


No. 872,305.

PATENTED NOV. 26, 1907.

B. PURPURA.
ILLUSORY APPARATUS.
APPLICATION FILED JULY 26, 1907.

3 SHEETS—SHEET 1.



Witnesses

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Fig. 1.

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3 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

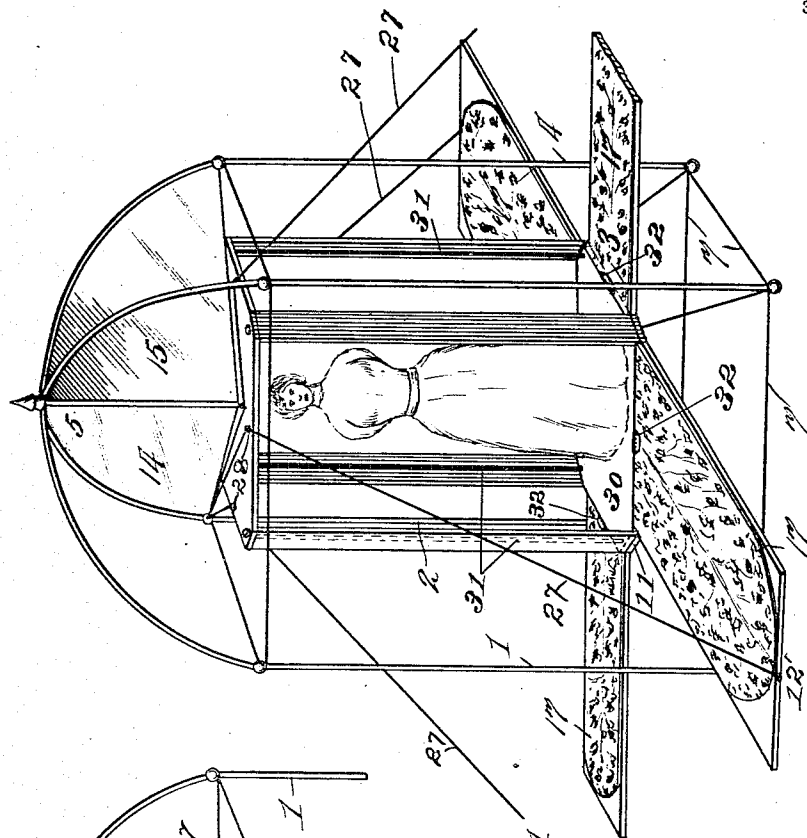


Fig. 6.

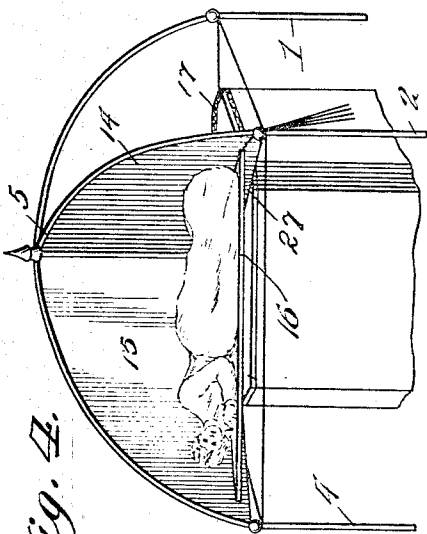


Fig. 7.

Witnesses

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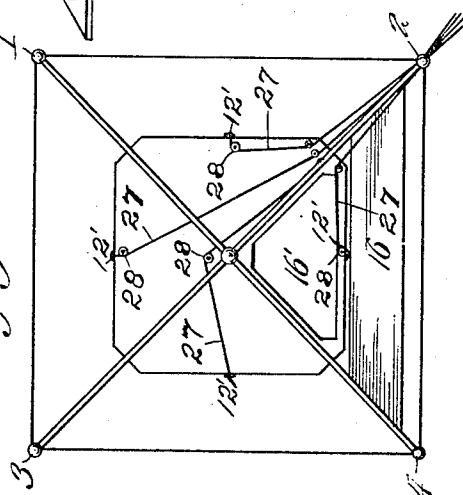


Fig. 5.

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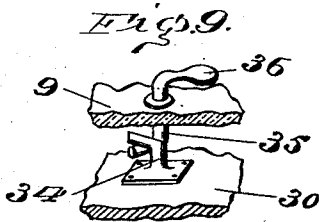
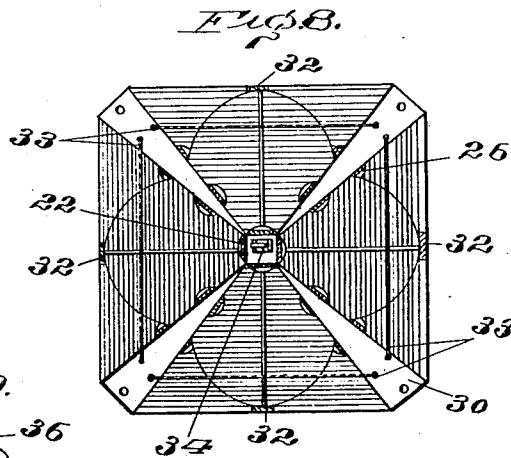
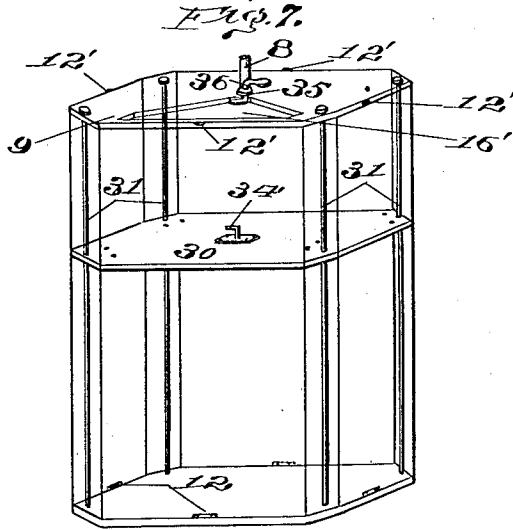
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3 SHEETS—SHEET 3.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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ILLUSORY APPARATUS.

No. 872,305.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Nov. 26, 1907.

Application filed July 26, 1907. Serial No. 385,661.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, BARTOLOMEO PURPURA, a citizen of the United States, residing at Wheeling, in the county of Ohio and State of West Virginia, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Illusory Apparatus, of which the following is a specification.

The invention relates in general to an improvement in apparatus for producing optical illusions and particularly to one designed for amusement or exhibition purposes and adapted to induce the observer to believe the illusory result is produced without the aid of manual manipulation or collusion.

The main object of the invention is to provide apparatus adapted to apparently accomplish, at the will of the operator, in an exhibition cabinet, the instantaneous creation, in full view of an audience, of a person or object and to provide means whereby said audience is reasonably assured of the improbability of prearranged concealment of the person or object in or near the cabinet.

Another object is the provision of an apparatus of the kind described embracing a cabinet swung entirely clear of the stage floor and formed, if desired, of transparent material, said position and material of the cabinet conducting in large degree to the assurance of the audience that the creation or production of the person or object is accomplished entirely without the aid of trap doors, false panels, etc. and thus making more effective the illusory effect produced.

Another object is to provide an apparatus of this class which shall be highly efficient in very rapidly and noiselessly performing its function and which embraces parts which, in conjunction with the sudden appearance of the person or object, are adapted to present a pleasing ensemble to the observer or audience.

The invention will now be described in the following specification, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, and then more particularly pointed out in the claims.

In the drawings: Figure 1 is a perspective of my illusory apparatus, the usual stage drapings not being shown. Fig. 2 is a side elevation of a spring-actuated screen used in conjunction with the cabinet shown in Fig. 1. Fig. 3 illustrates four such screens as shown in Fig. 2 folded, in plan, looking from the top. Fig. 4 is a broken perspective showing the person concealed and the means for support-

ing her. Fig. 5 is a top plan of the cabinet and supporting frame, illustrating the arrangement of mirrors and the trap in the top of the cabinet. Fig. 6 is a perspective of the whole apparatus, illustrating the appearance of the device immediately subsequent to the production of the person. Fig. 7 is a perspective view of the cabinet removed from the frame, illustrating the means for supporting the screens, the latter being omitted. Fig. 8 is a top plan of the screens and supporting plate. Fig. 9 is a broken perspective view, showing the means for suspending the supporting plate from the top of the cabinet.

Referring now to the drawings, wherein like reference numerals refer to like parts throughout the several views, 1, 2, 3, and 4 denote uprights forming the four corners of a main supporting frame, surmounted by an open dome-like top 5, said frame being preferably constructed of light, hollow shafts and held in desired relative position by removable stay braces 6 and 7, the latter, preferably, being formed of appropriately heavy material to afford the necessary stability and firmness to the frame at this point, said detachable stay braces permitting the ready disengagement of the several parts to facilitate packing and shipping in small and convenient form.

8 represents a rigid hanger-bar depending from the apex of the dome top of the frame and supporting from its lower end, in any well-known or usual manner, a cabinet 9, shown in the drawings as composed entirely of transparent material, such as glass or the like and of octagonal form, though the invention contemplates making the cabinet of any desired outline and material, as may be found appropriate for the purposes of the particular illusion to be accomplished. As illustrated the cabinet 9 is formed with top 10 and bottom platform 11 each formed of material similar to the body of the cabinet, in order that, in the case where the material is glass, the audience or observer may have a perfectly unobstructed view entirely through the cabinet and be assured of the absence of trap doors, false panels or the like.

Four of the sides of the cabinet illustrated are provided at their lower edges with hinges 12 to permit the dropping of said sides to desired lowered position, as illustrated in Fig. 6, small spring catches 12', adapted for instantaneous release, securely holding said sides in

normal upright engagement with the cabinet top when desired. Detachable braces 13 connect the outer edges of the cabinet platform to the lower ends of the frame and hold the cabinet in correct relative position thereto, the cabinet by this construction, as shown, being spaced from the stage floor sufficiently to enable the operator to pass a wand between the cabinet bottom and stage to demonstrate to the audience the absence of any paraphernalia below the cabinet and dispel the belief, common to audiences of this description, of the manipulation of trap doors in the stage floor immediately below the cabinet. Positioned above the cabinet and arranged at an angle to each other of approximately 90° with the apex toward the front of the cabinet and reaching to the central point of the top thereof, are two plate mirrors 14 and 15 extending to the top of the dome structure and the full width of the same, the meeting line of the mirrors being, as far as practical, obliterated. A horizontal platform 16, extending across the back part of the dome of the frame and supported between the mirrors and sufficiently raised above the lower edges of the same to insure entire removal from the plane of vision of the audience, is adapted to support the person or object forming the subject of the illusion, as illustrated in Fig. 4 and Fig. 5. An approximately triangular opening, hereinafter termed the trap, 16', formed in the top of the cabinet, behind the mirrors, provides means for the descent of the person concealed into the cabinet when desired, and of course, is entirely out of view of the audience, as will be evident.

17 denotes one of a plurality of folding screens, preferably four in number and similar as to construction and material. Each screen is formed of a number of sections 18, 19, 20, and 21, as shown in Fig. 2 said sections being connected each to the immediately adjacent section by means of spring hinges 22, a rigid stiffening strip 23, positioned centrally of each section serving to sufficiently brace the respective sections. Each section is formed of a central member 24 and two side members 25, all of approximately triangular outline, the latter being joined to the central section through the medium of spring hinges 26, similar in construction and function to hinges 22. The function of hinges 26 is to adapt the side members 25 to be folded back on the central member of their respective screen sections, the dimensions of said side members being such that when so folded they will lie entirely within the plane of said central section. The side members of the respective sections being in folded position, the sections are then each folded back upon the immediately adjacent section resulting in the whole screen assuming a flat, approximately triangular

form, the four screens when completely folded and lying in operative position, presenting the appearance shown in Fig. 3. It is contemplated to form these screens of light, strong wire, in order that as little space as possible may be required under the top of the cabinet, where they are positioned previous to the production of the subject of illusion, to accommodate them. The screen sections are mounted upon a supporting plate 30, slidably movable on guide-rods 31 fixed in the cabinet floor and top, said screen sections being connected with the plate 30 by springs 32 which are tensioned to force the screen sections outward into a plane with the plate when the sections are released, as shown in Fig. 6. In arranging the parts for operation, the screen sections are disposed in folded relation and temporarily secured by cords 33 after which the plate is elevated into contact with the under side of the top of the cabinet, where a hook 34, carried by the plate 30, is engaged with a revolvable catch member 35 to secure the plate in elevated position. As the screen sections in this position are secured between the plate 30 and the top of the cabinet, the cords 33 are withdrawn, leaving the parts ready for operation. The catch 35 has a handle member 36 projecting through the top of the cabinet within reach of the person concealed, so that, when desired, the said person may release the plate, permitting the same to fall and the screen sections to unfold against the sides or walls of the cabinet. Permanently attached to the inner side of each screen section is a number of artificial "feather" flowers arranged in such manner as to entirely conceal the person behind the assembled upright screens for the short space of time required.

Of course it will be understood that the cabinet and frame will be surrounded by the usual cloth inclosure (not shown) formed of appropriate material, such as velvet or other desired cloth and of proper dimensions, a top-covering of suitable construction and arrangement being provided in order to conceal the cabinet and frame from an observer in the flies of the theater.

The operation of the apparatus is as follows: Assuming that the operator wishes to produce the impression of apparently instantaneously creating a person at will, said person is, previous to the withdrawing of the cloth inclosure from in front of the cabinet, concealed on platform 16 behind the mirrors in a recumbent position, as shown in Fig. 4, the audience being of course deceived into believing, by means of the mirrors and appropriately-arranged stage side lights, that it has unobstructed vision entirely through the dome of the cabinet as well as through the body thereof, the side walls of the above-mentioned velvet inclosure, being reflected in said mirrors, as is obvious, and tending to

confirm the said belief. When the operator is ready to produce the illusion, the concealed person releases the supporting plate, as before described, which immediately
 5 throws the several screens to full extension, while the person concealed behind the mirrors drops quickly on the bottom of the cabinet in upright position, the artificial flowers completely concealing her descent, which of
 10 course takes place as rapidly as possible, while almost simultaneously the spring catches 12' are released, through the medium of pull cords 27 attached to the same and passing through appropriately positioned
 15 pulleys 28 and through a guide formed on the upper end of one of the rear uprights of the supporting frame and thence down to and through a pulley 29 on the lower end of the same upright and thence to the operator, as
 20 clearly shown in Figs. 1, 5, and 6. Said release of catches 12' allows the four hinged sides of the cabinet to fall to lowered position, as illustrated in Fig. 6 and discloses the person to the view of the audience, appar-
 25 ently created at the will of the operator, the artificial flowers and screens falling, of course, with their respective sides of the cabinet.

While I have shown the cabinet as composed of glass I wish it to be understood that
 30 among other material contemplated to be used, metal is particularly designated when the illusion popularly known as "Cremation" is to be performed, in which event of course,
 35 the person is shown to the audience within the cabinet, the usual manipulation of stage fire accomplished to conceal the disappearance of the person through the trap in the top of the cabinet, and the cabinet disclosed
 40 empty to the audience.

I do not wish to be limited to the precise form and structure shown and described herein but to avail myself of any adaptations which fall within the scope of my in-
 45 vention.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is:—

1. An illusory apparatus comprising a
 50 frame, a cabinet supported between the extremes of the frame, and object-concealing means arranged above the cabinet.

2. An illusory apparatus comprising an open-work frame, a cabinet supported be-
 55 tween the extremes of the frame, and object-concealing means arranged above the cabinet, said means including angularly related mirrors.

3. An illusory apparatus comprising an
 60 open-work frame, a cabinet supported between the extremes of the frame, and object-concealing means arranged above the cabinet, said means including mirrors arranged at right angles with respect to each other.

65 4. An illusory device comprising a frame

having an upper dome section, a cabinet supported within the frame and spaced from the bottom thereof, and object-concealing means arranged in the dome section.

5. An illusory apparatus comprising a
 70 frame having a dome section, a cabinet supported within the frame, a rod depending from the dome apex and secured to the cabinet top, and mirrors extending from said top to the side walls of the dome.

6. An illusory apparatus comprising a
 frame having a dome section, a cabinet supported within the frame, a rod depending from the dome apex and secured to the cabinet top, mirrors extending from the rod to
 80 the side walls of the dome, and a supporting platform arranged in rear of the mirrors.

7. An illusory device comprising a frame, a cabinet supported between the extremes of the frame, object-concealing means support-
 85 ed by the frame above the cabinet, and a platform supported in rear of said means between the upper and lower edges thereof.

8. An illusory device comprising a frame, a cabinet supported within the frame, and
 90 object-supporting means arranged above the cabinet, the upper portion of said cabinet being formed with an opening conveniently accessible from the supporting means.

9. An illusory device comprising a frame,
 95 a cabinet supported within the frame, object-concealing means extending from the top of the cabinet to the upper portion of the frame, said concealing means having forward reflecting surfaces disposed at right
 100 angles to each other, and an object-supporting means arranged in rear of the concealing means, the upper portion of the cabinet being formed with an opening in advance of the supporting means.

10. An illusory device comprising a frame, a transparent cabinet supported between the extremes of the frame, and object-concealing means arranged above the cabinet.

11. An illusory device comprising a frame,
 110 a transparent cabinet supported therein and including a bottom, a top and side walls, the side walls having hinged connection with the bottom, and object-concealing means supported within the frame above the cabinet.

12. An illusory device comprising a frame, a cabinet supported therein, object-conceal-
 ing means arranged above the cabinet, and a collapsible structure supported within the cabinet.

13. An illusory device comprising a frame, a cabinet supported therein, object-conceal-
 ing means arranged above the cabinet, an independent structure supported within the cabinet, said structure comprising collapsible
 125 sections, and means for normally holding said structure collapsed.

14. An illusory device comprising a frame, a cabinet supported therein, object-conceal-
 ing means arranged above the cabinet, a col- 130

lapsible structure supported within the cabinet, means for securing said structure in collapsed condition, and means for automatically projecting said structure upon release of said
5 securing means.

15. An illusory device comprising a frame, a cabinet supported within the frame, object-concealing means arranged above the cabinet, and a collapsible structure supported

within the cabinet, said structure comprising 10 a series of foldable sections and spring hinges connecting the sections.

In testimony whereof I have affixed my signature, in presence of two witnesses.

BARTOLOMEO PURPURA.

Witnesses:

JOHN GLENN,

C. M. DRIEHOUST.