United States Patent

Sargeant

[15] **3,680,497**

[45] **Aug. 1, 1972**

[54] **EASEL**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **108/60,** 35/62, 312/312

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A21b 1/00**

[58] **Field of Search** ...108/60, 61; 211/184; 312/230, 312/312, 330, 258; 248/457, 441; 35/60, 62, 63, 35

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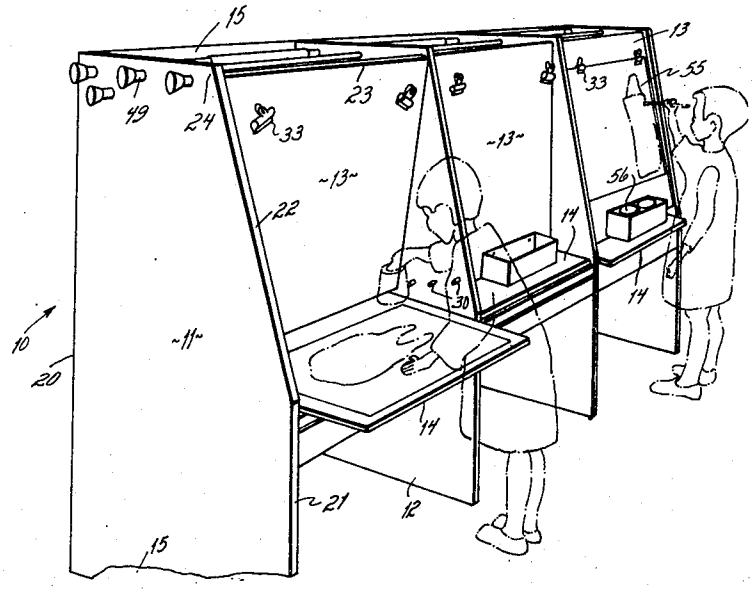
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

An easel formed by vertical side walls, a slidably mounted horizontal shelf and a panel pivotally mounted above said shelf at its upper ends between said side walls to divide the space between said side walls into a front operating area and a rear storage area.

6 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures



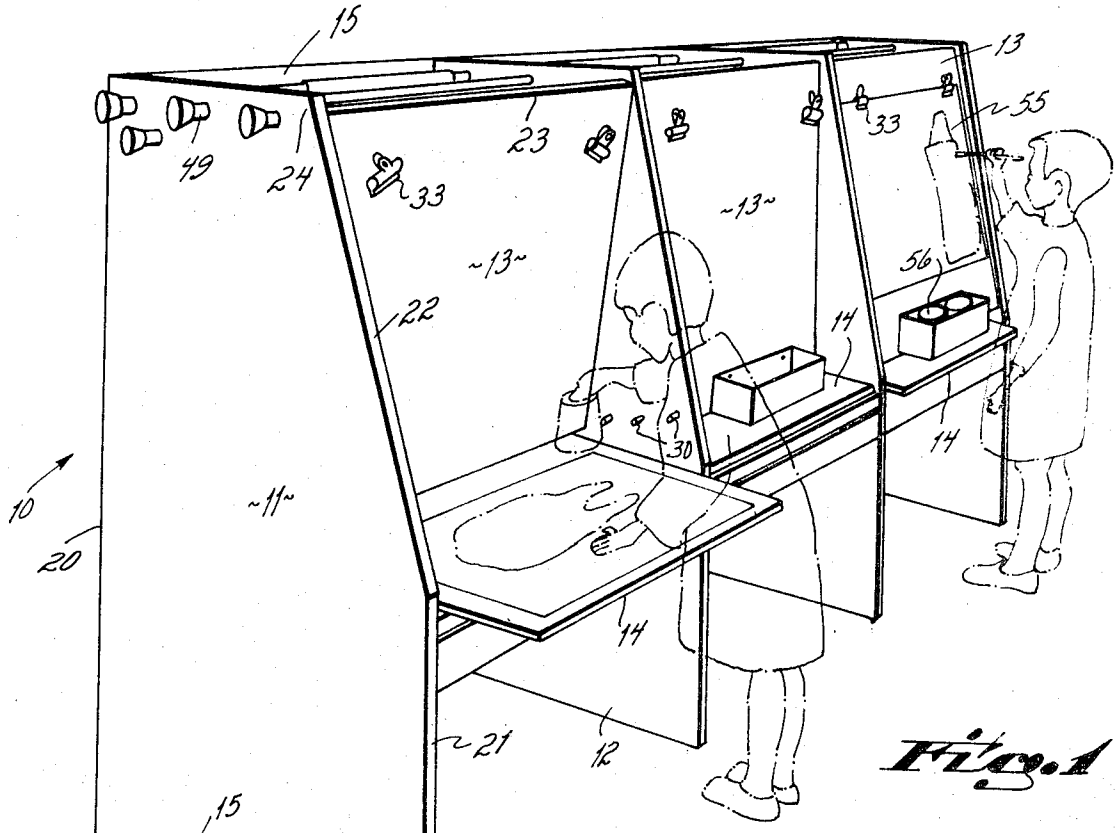


Fig. 1

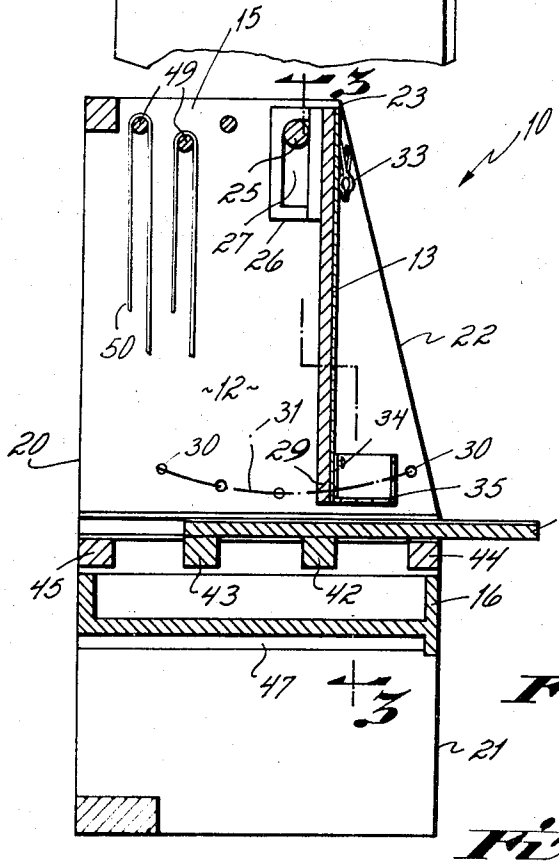


Fig. 3

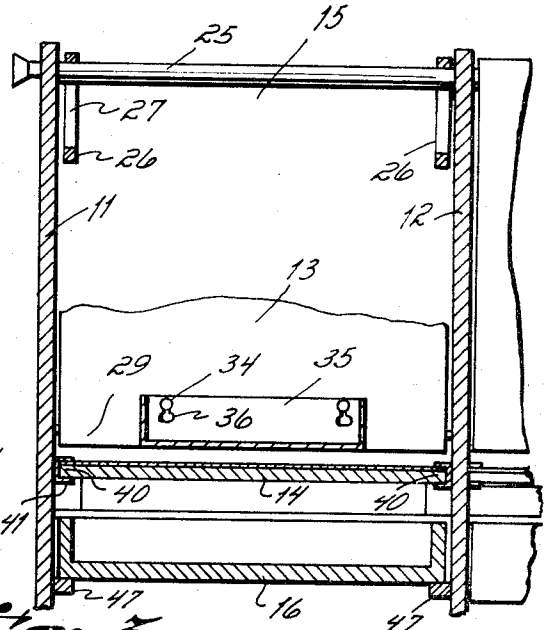


Fig. 2

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EASEL

This invention relates to an easel and is particularly directed to an easel suitable for use by small children in a classroom.

In the primary grades where art is taught, children paint with brushes on a sheet supported on a vertical panel set on an easel and they engage in finger painting and the like on horizontal surfaces generally provided by the tables normally found in classrooms. At the conclusion of the painting period, the works of art must be stored out of the way of the succeeding classroom activity. These requirements have generally resulted in a clutter of easel structures, paintings hung to dry and paint slopped tables. A further requirement, adding to the confusion, is to provide separate storage for the art supplies all of which must be taken out at the beginning of the class and then returned to storage at the end of class.

An objective of the present invention has been to provide a structure wherein all of the functions referred to above are accommodated in a single easel. Several of such easels may be joined in side-by-side relation to form a line of easels located at the side of the classroom. Each easel has distinct work areas for horizontal and vertical painting, has a storage facility for the painting supplies, and has storage area for the completed paintings. The storage area for the completed paintings is hidden from view so that after the art period, the paintings are conveniently removed to the storage area thereby eliminating them as an aesthetic or functional distraction from the classroom and its activities.

More specifically the easel of the invention comprises two side walls having a generally vertical panel pivotally mounted at its upper edge between the side walls. A horizontal panel is slideably mounted below the vertical panel. The space above the horizontal panel and behind the vertical panel forms a storage area for which horizontal rods provide hangers over which the wet paintings can be hung to dry. Below the horizontal panel is a drawer for the storage of painting supplies.

The easel of the present invention conveniently presents the proper surfaces for the two major painting operations. In one, the vertical wall is swung forwardly and the horizontal shelf is recessed so that the child can stand close to the vertical panel to paint on a sheet mounted on the vertical panel. In the other, the vertical panel is swung rearwardly and the horizontal shelf is pulled to its forwardly extended position. Thus, the rearward disposition of the vertical panel coupled with the forward extension of the horizontal panel provides a maximum surface area for horizontal painting.

The several features of the invention will become more readily apparent from the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view showing three easels of the present invention disposed in a line,

FIG. 2 is a vertical sectional view through one of the easels,

FIG. 3 is a cross sectional view taken along lines 3—3 of FIG. 2.

The easel is indicated generally at **10** and includes two side walls **11** and **12** between which a vertical panel **13** and a horizontal panel **14** are mounted. Behind the vertical panel **13** is a storage area **15**. Below the horizontal panel **14** is an outwardly slideable drawer **16** used for the storage of art supplies.

Each side wall has rear edges **20** and front edges **21**, the upper portion **22** of the front edge being downwardly and forwardly inclined. The side walls provide substantially the entire support for the easel structure.

The vertical panel **13** is pivoted at its upper end **23** to the front upper corners **24** of the side walls. The pivotal mounting structure is best illustrated in FIGS. **2** and **3** and includes a horizontal rod **25** which extends between the two side walls. The rod **25** projects through a bracket **26** fixed on each side of the rear surface of the panel **13**. Each bracket is of rectangular configuration and presents a vertical slot **27** which permits the panel **13** to be lifted vertically with respect to the rod.

The lower end **29** of the panel **13** is selectively engageable with any of four pairs of pegs **30** which are fixed to the inside surface of the side walls and are located on an arcuate line **31** having as its center the rod **25**. These pegs permit the panel to be positioned in any one of several positions. For example, when the panel rests upon the forwardmost pair of pegs, its front surface lies substantially flush with the inclined edge portion **22** of the side walls and is in position for vertical painting. In this position no interference is caused by outwardly projecting side walls. When the panel is swung rearwardly and rests on the rearmost pegs, the horizontal shelf **14** is most fully exposed for horizontal painting. The intermediate pegs provide optional positions.

Fastening devices, such as clips **33**, located at the upper front corners of the panel **13** secure the paper in operative position for painting. A pair of headed studs **34** project from the front surface at the lower end of the panel **13** to receive a removable paint tray **35**. The paint tray has keyhole slots **36** by which it is mounted to the headed studs **34**. Preferably the front surface of the panel **13** as well as the upper surface of the panel **14** is covered with a durable composition such as Formica.

The horizontal shelf has side edges **40** which are slidably mounted in tracks **41** formed by channel members fixed to the side walls. A forward block **42** and a rearward block **43** are mounted on the bottom surface of the horizontal panel. The forward block is engageable with a cross brace **44** extending between the side walls adjacent their front edges. The rearward block **43** is engageable with a cross brace **45** extending between the side walls adjacent their rear edges **20**. The engagement of the blocks **42**, **43** with their respective braces determines the position of the horizontal panel **14** in its extended position when used for horizontal painting and in its recessed position (to the left as viewed in FIG. **2**) when it is in a storage position.

The drawer **16** is preferably deep and is mounted on slides **47** which are fixed to the inside surfaces of the side walls. The drawers are mounted immediately below the horizontal shelf and is easily accessible when the shelf is returned to its recessed position.

The storage compartment **15** is equipped with racks in the form of horizontal rods **49** which extend between and are supported by the side walls **11** and **12**. As shown in FIG. **2**, completed paintings **50** are hung over

the rods **49** to dry or at least to be in storage and out of the way of the classroom activity.

As can be seen from FIGS. **1** and **3**, a plurality of easels are adapted to be mounted in side-by-side relation to form a line of work areas in a convenient grouping for the supervising teacher. In this grouping each inward side wall functions to support the two adjacent easels. This construction admits of some economy in eliminating one side wall and provides a rigid and neat structure for the classroom.

In the operation of the invention, the three principal conditions of the invention are illustrated in FIG. **1**. The center position shows the easel in inoperative or storage condition wherein the front vertical panel hangs perpendicular to the horizontal panel which is recessed. In the right-hand easel, the horizontal panel has been projected slightly to provide a support for supplies if necessary. The vertical panel **13** has been pivoted to its forward position where it lies flush with the inclined edges **22** of the side walls. Thus, the painter has unobstructed access to his painting indicated at **55**. Paints indicated at **56** are preferably contained in the paint tray **35** to minimize the possibility of their being inadvertently knocked to the floor.

The alternate form of painting is illustrated in the left-hand easel. There the vertical panel **13** is shown swung to its rearmost position wherein it is held by the pegs **30**. As indicated, the shifting of the angular position of the panel **13** is effected simply by lifting the panel, as permitted by the slot **27** engagement of the rod **25** until the panel is out of the way of the pegs and then swinging the panel to the desired position. The horizontal shelf **14** has been pulled to its most extended position wherein it is stopped by the engagement of the block **42** with the brace **44**. In this position, maximum area for painting is provided. The paint tray **35** can be removed to expose even more area for painting or, if desired, it can be retained on the vertical panel.

When the painting is completed, the paintings are hung on the storage rods **49** and the vertical and horizontal panels are returned to the condition indicated in the center easel of FIG. **1**.

I claim:

1. A combined easel and sheet storing structure for painting comprising, two spaced vertical said walls of substantial width, and having front and rear edges,

a generally vertical sheet-supporting panel pivoted at its upper end between said side walls adjacent the front edges of said side walls and spaced forwardly of the rear edges of said side walls such that the area defined by the side walls and the rear surface of said vertical panel forms a storage area extending a substantial distance rearwardly of said vertical panel and which is open at the rear and top of the easel,

a plurality of sheet-supporting horizontal rods behind said vertical panel extending between the upper ends of said side walls and being spaced horizontally of each other providing rack means for temporarily storing painted sheets,

and a horizontal shelf extending between said side walls and located immediately below said vertical panel.

2. An easel according to claim **1** further comprising, means for mounting said horizontal shelf for slidable movement between a forward position in which it projects forwardly beyond the front edges of said side walls to provide a maximum working surface in combination with a rearwardly, inclined angular position of the vertical panel, and a rearward position in which it is disposed within the confines of said side walls.

3. An easel according to claim **1** further comprising,

a horizontal rod extending between said side walls at the upper front corner portion thereof,

a pair of brackets mounted on the rear surface of said panel at the upper corners thereof, each said bracket including a vertical slot receiving said rod and forming a pivotal mounting for said rod which permits said panel to be moved vertically,

and at least two pairs of pegs projecting inwardly from the lower portions of said side walls and engageable by said panel,

whereby the angular position of said panel can be changed by lifting said panel out of the way of said pegs, shifting said panel angularly, and lowering said panel to a position wherein its movement is restricted by engagement with said pegs.

4. An easel according to claim **1** wherein each said side wall has forwardly and downwardly inclined front edges at the upper portion thereof.

5. An easel according to claim **1** further comprising a drawer slidably mounted immediately below said horizontal shelf.

6. An easel according to claim **1** further comprising,

support means fixed on the lower edge portion of said vertical panel,

and a tray removably mountable on said support means.

* * * * *

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

Patent No. 3,680,497 Dated August 1, 1972

Inventor(s) Jane L. Sargeant

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent are hereby corrected as shown below:

The name of the inventor appears as "Lane" and should be changed to -- Jane --

Signed and sealed this 30th day of January 1973.

(SEAL)
Attest:

EDWARD M.FLETCHER,JR.
Attesting Officer

ROBERT GOTTSCHALK
Commissioner of Patents

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