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(71) Applicant: GEN-PROBE INCORPORATED [US/US];

10210 Genetic Center Drive, San Diego, CA 92121 (US).

(72) Inventors: COMBS, David, H.; 4041 Kenosha Avenue,

San Diego, CA 92117 (US). BUSE, David, A.; 4002

Kenosha Avenue, San Diego, CA 92117 (US). HAGEN, Norbert, D.; 3033 Paseo Estribo, Carlsbad, CA 92009 (US). OPALSKY, David; 10552 Corte Jardin Del Mar, San Diego, CA 92130 (US). CHEN, Jin; 6082 Paseo Salinero, Carlsbad, CA 92009 (US).

(74) Agent: WYDEVEN, Richard; Rothwell, Figg, Ernst & Manbeck, PC, 607 14th Street, NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005 (US).

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(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR TRANSPORTING AND HOLDING CONSUMABLES IN A PROCESSING INSTRUMENT

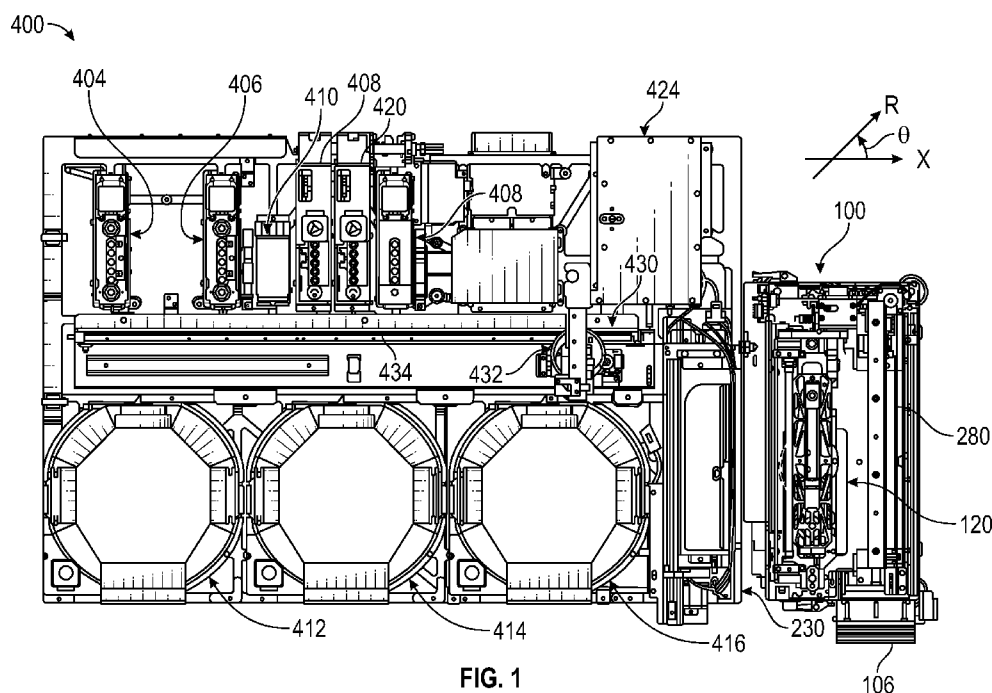


FIG. 1

(57) Abstract: A system and method provides a supply of consumables to a processing instrument that uses one or more of the consumables for each of a plurality of processes performed by the instrument. The system includes a loading drawer holding a carrier for receiving a plurality of consumables and an input module for holding a carrier supporting a plurality of consumables thereon and presenting the consumables for access by the instrument. A transporter includes a vertical elevator and a lateral actuator for moving a lift platform vertically and laterally and for transporting carriers on the lift platform with or without consumables supported thereon between the loading drawer and the input module, between the loading drawer and one or more holding shelves, or between the input module and one or more holding shelves. A carrier includes parallel support rails for holding multiple receptacle units and retainer tabs for retaining the units on the support rails.





SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, ST, SV, SY, TH, TJ, TM, TN, TR,
TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, WS, ZA, ZM, ZW.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
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ADD.

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)
B65G G01N

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 practicable, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, 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	CN 205 819 256 U (UNIV WUHAN TECH) 21 December 2016 (2016-12-21) abstract; figures 1-3 paragraphs [0035] - [0038] -----	1,2
X	WO 2012/012779 A2 (BECKMAN COULTER INC [US]; WILSON BRIAN D [US] ET AL.) 26 January 2012 (2012-01-26)	4,5,8-10
A	abstract; figures 2a,7a,7b,8h,8i,9a paragraphs [0219] - [0239], [0396] - [0400], [0428] - [0441] -----	1,2
X	EP 2 148 208 A2 (HOFFMANN LA ROCHE [CH]; ROCHE DIAGNOSTICS GMBH [DE]) 27 January 2010 (2010-01-27)	4,7,10
A	abstract; figures 4,5,6,7,10 paragraphs [0038] - [0049] -----	1,2
	-/-	

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☒ See patent family annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

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European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Nelva-Pasqual, F

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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.
X	US 2007/243600 A1 (LAIR GARY D [US] ET AL) 18 October 2007 (2007-10-18) abstract; figures 13,14,15,58 paragraphs [0166] - [0169], [0254] - [0261] -----	3
X	US 2018/155129 A1 (LAGZIEL RAFI [IL] ET AL) 7 June 2018 (2018-06-07) abstract; figure 5 -----	6

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US2020/021488

Box No. II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 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 No. III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

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

see additional sheet

1. ☒ 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 fees, this Authority did not invite payment of additional fees.
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.:
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Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest and, where applicable, the payment of a protest fee.
- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest but the applicable protest fee was not paid within the time limit specified in the invitation.
- ☒ 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, 2

Vertically holding shelves

2. claims: 3, 6, 7

Means and method to automatically transfer a carrier

3. claims: 4, 5, 8-10

Loading or unloading receptacles

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

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