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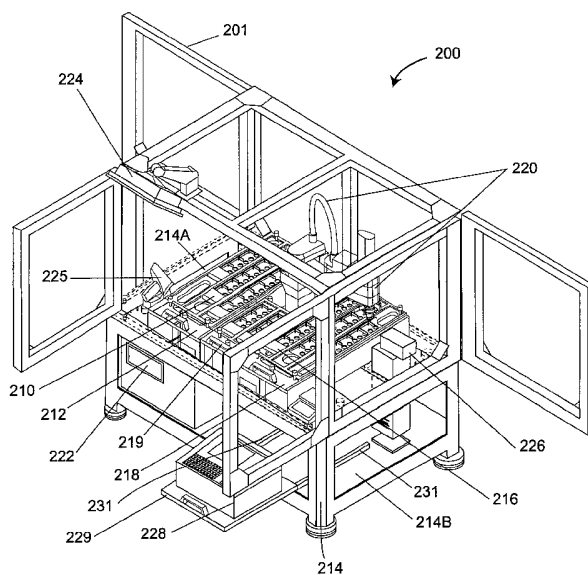
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: SYSTEMS AND METHODS OF SORTING SAMPLES



(57) Abstract: Methods and systems for sorting compounds and compound holders into batches for subsequent processing are provided. A source unit (210) may be used in sorting apparatus (200) in conjunction with destination units (216). When light sensitive material/samples are involved, interlocking enclosure (201) may be used. The device also includes platform (214), loading fixture (218), holding station (219), automatic sorting mechanism (220), and central processing unit (CPU) (222) that control the sorting process with interaction from an operator via interface (224).

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— *before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments*

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

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 US CL : 436/180, 174; 422/63, 64, 67, 68.1

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)
 U.S.: 436/180, 174; 422/63, 64, 67, 68.1

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)
 Please See Continuation Sheet

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X, P	US 2003/0044990 A1 (SETO) 06 March 2003, see description of Figure 2 on page 5	1-3, 10, 15, 16-17, 19, 40, 53-54, 60, 68,
X, P	US 2003/0022380 A1 (JAKUBOWICZ et al.) 30 January 2003, entire document.	1-3, 10, 15-17, 19, 40, 53-54, 60, 68
X	US 6,455,002 B1 (JOKES et al.) 24 September 2002, entire document.	1-3, 10, 15-17, 19, 40, 53-54, 60, 68
X	US 4,861, 554 A (SAKUMA) 29 August 1989, entire document.	1-3, 10, 15-17, 19, 40, 53-54, 60, 68
X	US 4,118,280 A (CHARLES et al.) 03 October 1978, entire document.	1-3, 10, 15-17, 19, 40, 53-54, 60, 68
A, P	US 2003/0017084 A1 (DALE et al.) 23 January 2003.	
A, P	US 2003/0003017 A1 (FRANK et al.) 02 January 2003.	
A	US 6,436,349 B1 (CAREY et al.) 20 August 2002.	
A	US 5,314,825 A (WEYRAUCH et al.) 24 May 1994.	

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	"T"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"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
"E" earlier application or patent published on or after the international filing date	"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
"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"&"	document member of the same patent family
"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means		
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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Continuation of B. FIELDS SEARCHED Item 3:

East

keywords: automat\$3, computer, central processing unit, cpu, control\$3, processor, sort\$3, plate, carrousel, holder, weigh\$3