

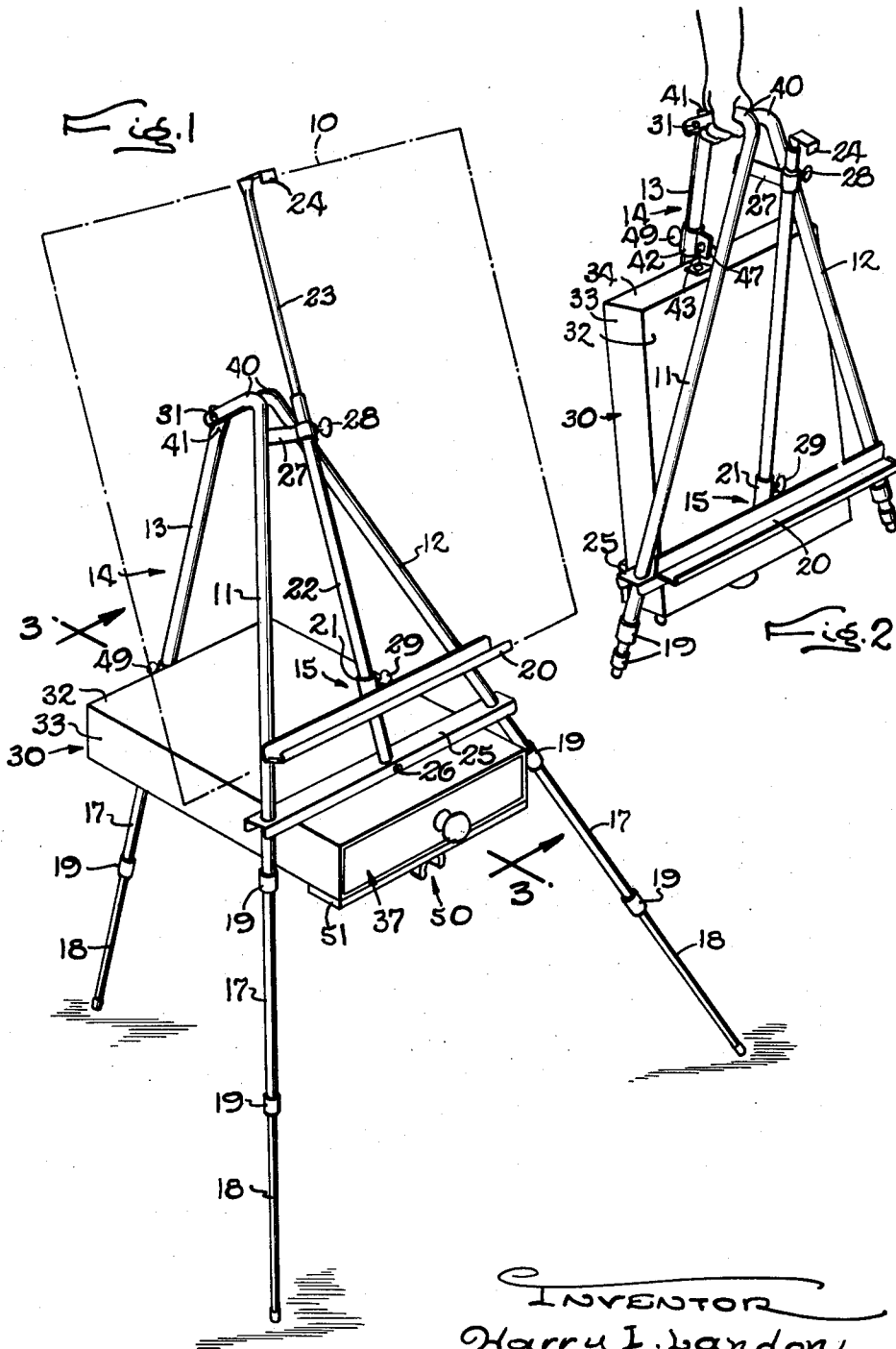
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H. I. LANDON  
PORTABLE EASEL

3,145,966

Filed March 21, 1962

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



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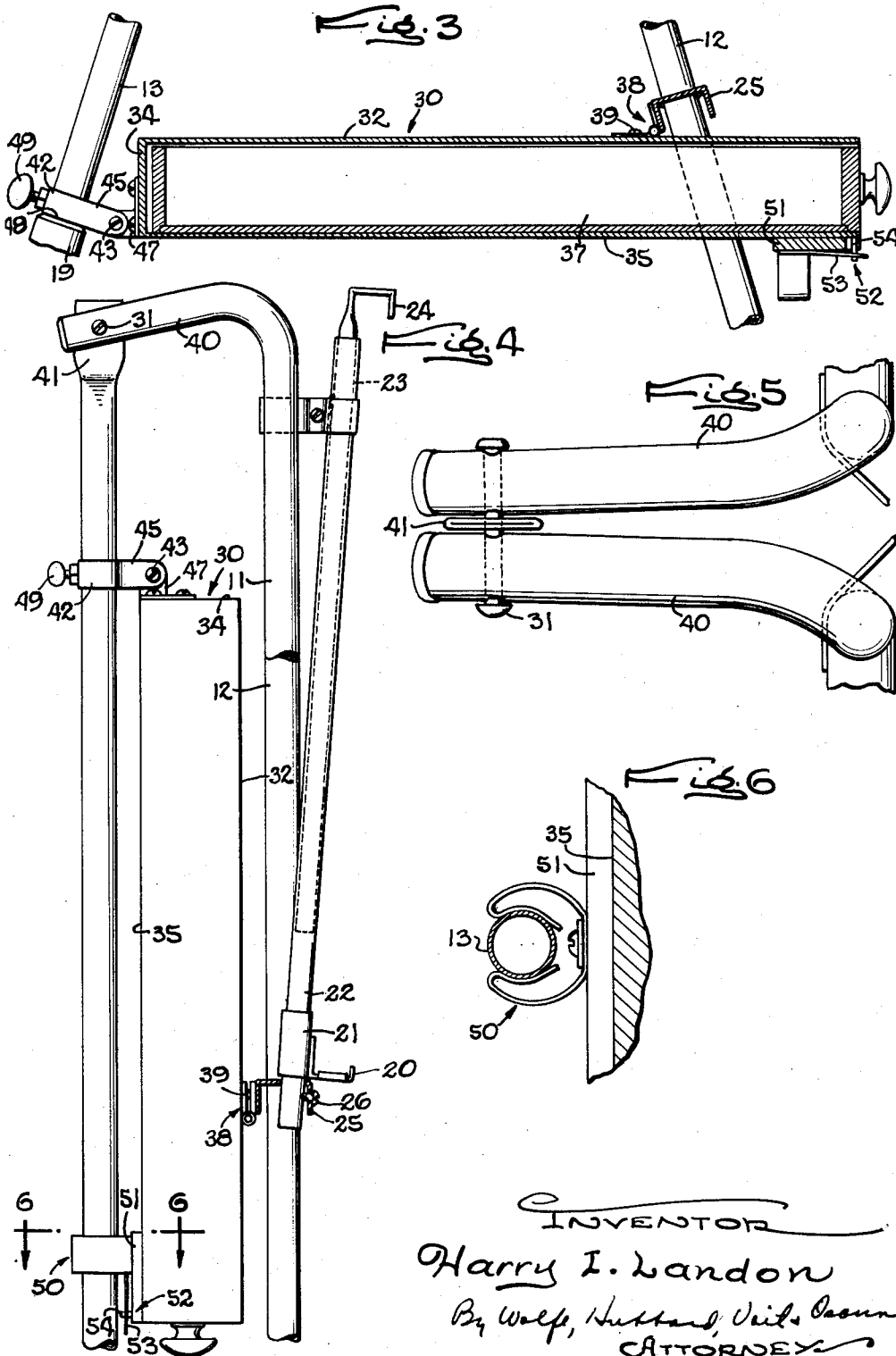
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PORTABLE EASEL

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6 Claims. (Cl. 248-464)

This invention relates to a portable artist's easel for holding a canvas or the like in an upright position for the convenience of the artist and including a plurality of legs usually arranged in the form of a collapsible tripod, and a holder on the tripod for supporting the canvas thereon.

The general object of the present invention is to provide a novel easel of the above character which includes a utility compartment for the storage of art supplies in an easily accessible location, is simple and inexpensive in construction as compared to prior easels of this type, and is foldable quickly and easily into a compact and easily transportable unit.

A more specific object is to utilize the compartment as a truss for rigidly bracing the tripod in the open position and to swing the compartment into an out-of-the-way position between the legs when the tripod is collapsed.

Another object is to form the tripod in a novel manner to provide space between the legs in the collapsed position to receive the compartment, and also to form a convenient carrying handle for the easel.

A further object is to secure the easel in a novel manner tightly in the collapsed condition.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following detailed description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, in which

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of an easel embodying the novel features of the present invention, the easel being shown in the open position.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the easel shown in FIG. 1, the easel being collapsed.

FIG. 3 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view taken along the line 3-3 of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is an enlarged fragmentary side elevational view of the collapsed easel.

FIG. 5 is an enlarged fragmentary plan view.

FIG. 6 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view taken along the line 6-6 of FIG. 4.

As shown in the drawings for purposes of illustration, the invention is embodied in a portable artist's easel for holding a canvas 10 or the like in an upright position as shown in broken lines in FIG. 1 for the convenience of the artist as he paints or sketches thereon. Such easels include generally a plurality of legs 11, 12 and 13 usually arranged in the form of a collapsible tripod 14 to facilitate leveling of the canvas on uneven supporting surfaces, and a holder 15 mounted on the tripod to support the canvas thereon.

Each of the legs is made tubular to telescope with two tubular sections 17 and 18 which may be telescoped to any length and clamped in place by sleeves 19 threaded onto the ends of the legs and on the intermediate sections 17 to be tightened against the telescoping sections when the latter are in selected extended positions. Thus, the easel may be raised, lowered, and tilted as desired.

The holder 15 includes a horizontal, channel-shaped bar 20 fast as by welding on a sleeve 21 slidable along an upright tube 22 mounted on the tripod between the legs 11 and 12 which thereby form the front of the tripod. The channel opens upwardly to receive and support the lower edges of the canvas. Telescoped into the open upper end of the tube 22 is a rod 23 bent adjacent its upper end to form a clamp 24 for tilting over the top of the canvas and holding the latter securely against falling out of the channel. To support the tube on the tripod,

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the lower end of the tube is fastened by a screw 26 to a brace 25 spanning and secured as by welding to the front legs adjacent their lower ends. A metal strip 27 is wrapped intermediate its ends around the upper end of the tube and fastened at its ends to the two front legs to hold the tube upright and offset slightly forwardly of the tripod (see FIG. 4).

The rod 22 is adjustable upwardly and downwardly in the tube to accommodate canvases of different sizes and is held in a selected position by a thumb screw 28 threaded through the strip 27 and projecting into the tube to engage the rod. A similar screw 29 positions the bar 20 along the tube.

The present invention contemplates the provision of a novel portable easel which includes a utility compartment 30 for the storage of art supplies in an easily accessible location, is simple and inexpensive in construction as compared to prior easels of this type, and is foldable quickly and easily into a compact and easily transportable unit. For these purposes, the compartment 30 is utilized to brace the tripod legs 11, 12 and 13 rigidly in properly spaced relation when the tripod 14 is open, and is swingable into an out-of-the-way position between the legs when the tripod is collapsed.

To achieve these ends, the front legs 11 and 12 are disposed in a common plane and the rear legs 13 is pivotally connected at 31 to the front legs adjacent the upper ends thereof to swing toward and away from the plane of the front legs and collapse and open the tripod. The compartment 30 includes a top panel 32 narrower than the spacing of the front legs near their lower ends and hinged adjacent its front end on the front legs to swing about a horizontal axis between a horizontal position and an upright position in which the panel 32 is behind but closely adjacent the front legs. Means is provided to connect the rear leg when the tripod is open and limit downward swinging of the panel from the upright position whereby the panel and the rest of the compartment form a truss rigidly bracing the tripod in the open position.

In the present instance, the compartment 30 comprises a box-like structure formed by the top panel 32, two vertical side walls 33, a rear end wall 34, and a bottom panel 35, the front end of the compartment being open. Slidable in and out of the compartment through the open end is a drawer 37 for holding the supplies in the compartment.

The means for hinging the top panel 32 on the tripod 14 includes the brace 25 spanning the lower end portions of the front legs. Herein, the compartment is disposed below the brace with its open end projecting forwardly therefrom for convenient access to the drawer, and two hinges 38 spaced along the brace intermediate the front legs are screwed at 39 to the top panel. The axis defined by the hinges 38 is spaced from the lower ends of the legs a greater distance than its spacing from the front end of the compartment to permit the front end to swing downwardly and under the axis into the collapsed position (FIGS. 2 and 4) without contacting the floor or other supporting surface.

In order that the rear end of the compartment will swing upwardly into a position closely adjacent the front legs, the compartment is shorter than the legs so that the rear end is disposed below the upper ends of the front legs when the compartment is upright. When the tripod is collapsed, the rear leg 13 is offset rearwardly from the plane of the front legs a distance greater than the thickness of the compartment and preferably is substantially parallel to the plane so that the compartment fits compactly between the legs. This offsetting of the rear leg is accomplished herein by bending the upper end portions 40 of the front legs to extend rearwardly at an angle of approximately ninety degrees with the lower portions.

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When the tripod is assembled, the upper portions 40 are disposed side by side and the flattened upper end 41 of the rear leg is disposed between the upper ends of the front legs. A rivet projected through aligned holes in the three legs forms the pivotal connection 31 defining an axis paralleling the hinge axis. The rivet cooperates with the brace 25 to hold the front legs in their proper relation.

It will be evident that, instead of bending the front legs rearwardly, the upper end of the rear leg could be bent forwardly with the same result. In addition to offsetting the rear leg from the plane of the front leg, the upper portions form a convenient carrying handle for transporting the collapsed easel (see FIG. 2).

Preferably, the rear end of the compartment 30 is connected to the rear leg 13 by means comprising a collar 42 loosely encircling the rear leg and fulcrumed at 43 on the rear wall 34 to slide up and down along the rear leg as the compartment swings up and down about the axis defined by the hinges 38. For this purpose, the collar is formed by a metal plate having a cylindrical bend 44 intermediate its ends larger in diameter than the rear leg with the straight end portions 45 of the plate disposed on opposite sides of a rearwardly projecting bracket 47 screwed to the rear wall 34 of the compartment adjacent the lower edge of the wall. A bolt projected through the end portions 45 and the bracket 47 forms the fulcrum 43 which parallels the hinge axis and the tripod axis.

To limit downward sliding of the collar 42 along the rear leg 13 and thereby limit downward swinging of the compartment 30 about the hinges 38, a stop 48 (FIG. 3) formed adjacent the lower end of the rear leg abuts against the collar when the compartment is in a predetermined angular position, in this instance when the compartment is generally horizontal. While the stop may be formed in various ways, herein it comprises the upper end of the sleeve 19 threaded onto the lower end of the rear leg to hold the extension 17 in place. A thumb screw 49 is threaded through the collar to be tightened against the leg and fix the collar in any position along the leg. It will be apparent, however, that the weight of the compartment is sufficient to hold the collar against the stop so that the rigid structure of the compartment braces the rear leg against swinging either toward or away from the front legs.

With the foregoing arrangement, the easel is collapsed from the open position (FIG. 1) by swinging the rear end of the compartment upwardly and toward the front legs. The collar 42 slides upwardly along the leg and simultaneously pivots about the fulcrum 43 to swing the rear leg forwardly toward the underside of the compartment. The extensions 17 and 18, of course, are telescoped into the legs to complete the collapsing of the easel. To reopen the easel, either the compartment is pushed downwardly or the rear leg is swung outwardly. In either case, downward swinging of the compartment is stopped automatically in the horizontal position in which the sleeve 19 abuts against the collar.

To hold the easel securely in a compact unit when collapsed, a catch 50 (FIGS. 3, 4 and 6) is mounted on the bottom of the compartment to receive and grip the rear leg when it is disposed adjacent the bottom. Herein, this catch comprises a spring clip fastened to a rail 51 extending across the forward end of the bottom panel, the clip opening outwardly to receive and releasably grip the lower end portion of the leg 13. When the leg is seated in the clip, the compartment leg is held tightly in a fixed position relative to the front legs and the tripod is held securely in the collapsed condition and in a tight unit.

It will be seen that the easel will stand in an upright position on its legs even when the tripod is collapsed. A latch 52 (FIGS. 3 and 4) comprising a resilient plate 53 mounted on the rail 51 and formed with a hole for receiving a pin 54 projecting downwardly from the drawer

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37 holds the drawer against opening accidentally when the compartment is upright. With the easel formed as described herein, a canvas may be left in place on the holder 15 when the easel is collapsed thereby avoiding the necessity of removing the canvas and carrying it separately from one place to another.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that an easel as described herein is relatively simple in construction as compared to prior easels of this type and consequently may be manufactured at a substantially lower cost. The compartment 30 braces the tripod 14 rigidly in the open position while being conveniently located for easy access by the artist, and folds quickly and easily into the collapsed tripod in a manner such that the collapsed easel is extremely compact and easily transportable. Further, when the rear leg 13 is seated in the latch 52, the compartment connects the rear leg to the front legs and holds the easel tightly in the collapsed condition.

I claim as my invention:

1. In an easel, the combination of, two front legs disposed in a common plane and joined together with their upper ends close together and their lower end portions diverging downwardly, a rear leg pivotally connected at its upper end to said front legs to form a collapsible tripod, said rear leg swinging toward and away from said plane to collapse and open said tripod, a box-like compartment narrower than the spacing of said front legs near the lower ends thereof with its front end projecting between and beyond the front legs near said lower ends, a horizontal bar spanning and secured to said front legs above said compartment, a hinge connecting the upper side of said compartment to said bar to swing the compartment about a horizontal axis between a horizontal position and an upright position in which the compartment is disposed behind said front legs, said rear leg being offset rearwardly from said plane a distance greater than the thickness of said compartment generally paralleling said plane when said tripod is collapsed whereby the compartment fits into the space between the front legs and the rear leg, said upright position with the rear leg extending along the underside of the compartment, a collar pivotally connected to the rear end of said compartment and slidable along said rear leg as the compartment swings up and down, a stop on said rear leg engageable with said collar to limit downward swinging of said compartment when the latter is horizontal whereby the compartment forms a truss bracing said tripod in the open position, and a clamp mounted on the underside of said compartment engageable with said rear leg to grip the latter when the tripod is collapsed thereby to maintain the tripod collapsed.

2. In an easel, the combination of, two front legs disposed in a common plane and joined together with their upper ends close together and their lower end portions diverging downwardly, a rear leg pivotally connected at its upper end to said front legs to form a collapsible tripod, said rear leg swinging toward and away from said plane to collapse and open said tripod, a box-like compartment narrower than the spacing of said front legs near the lower ends thereof with its front end disposed between the front legs, means on said front legs hinging said compartment for swinging about a horizontal axis between a horizontal position and an upright position in which the compartment is disposed behind said front legs, said rear leg being offset rearwardly from said plane, when said tripod is collapsed, a distance greater than the thickness of said compartment whereby the latter fits into the space between said front legs and said rear leg, and means on said rear leg for limiting the downward swinging of the rear end of the panel as the tripod is opened and connecting the panel to the rear leg whereby the panel forms a truss bracing the tripod in the open position.

3. An easel as defined in claim 2 in which said rear leg is connected to said compartment by means including a collar slidable along the rear leg and pivotally connected to said rear end.

4. An easel as defined in claim 2 including a clamp mounted beneath said compartment to engage and hold said rear leg when said tripod is collapsed thereby to maintain the tripod tightly in the collapsed condition.

5. An easel as defined in claim 1 in which said axis is spaced from said front end a distance less than the spacing of the axis from the lower ends of said front legs.

6. In an easel, the combination of, two upright front legs laterally spaced apart, a rear leg pivotally connected to said front legs adjacent the upper ends of the latter to swing toward and away from the front legs thereby to collapse and open said easel, a box-like compartment narrower than the spacing of said front legs adjacent their lower ends, means on said front legs hinging said compartment adjacent its front end for swinging upwardly into an upright position in which the compartment is disposed behind said front legs and between the latter and said rear leg and downwardly from said upright position, and means on said rear leg for limiting the downward

swinging of the rear end of the compartment and connecting said rear end to the rear leg when the compartment is in a predetermined angular position whereby the compartment forms a truss bracing said easel in the open position, said rear leg being offset rearwardly from said front legs a distance greater than the thickness of said compartment when said easel is collapsed whereby the compartment fits compactly between said legs.

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