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[54] MAGICAL ILLUSION PROCESS USING FILMED AND LIVE ACTION 5 Claims, 7 Drawing Figs.

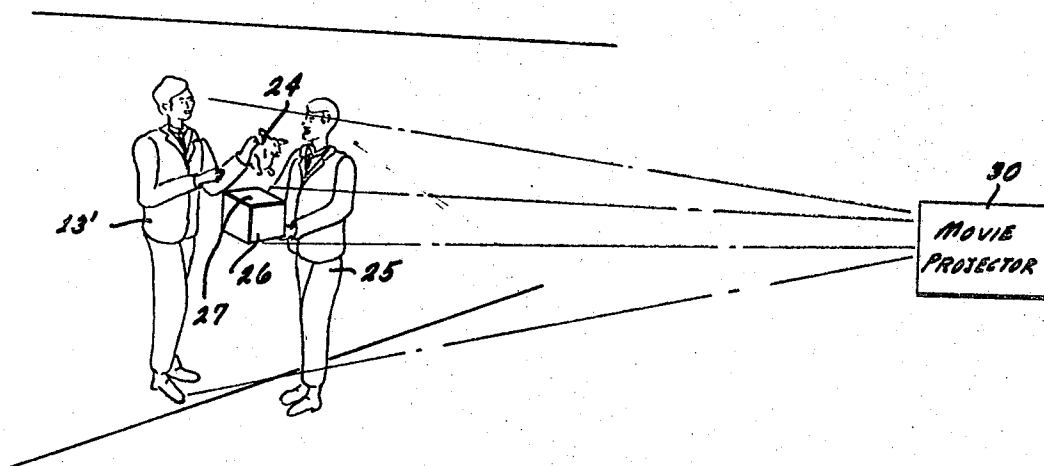
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 [50] Field of Search. 272/10, 9,
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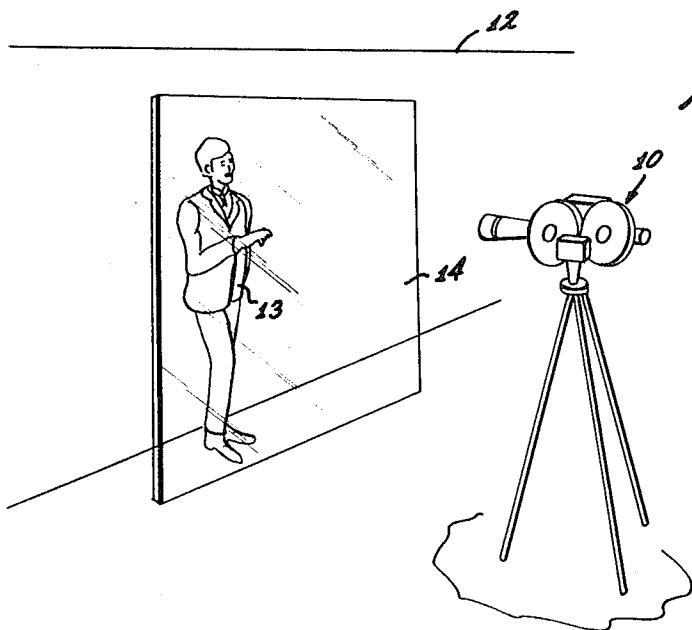
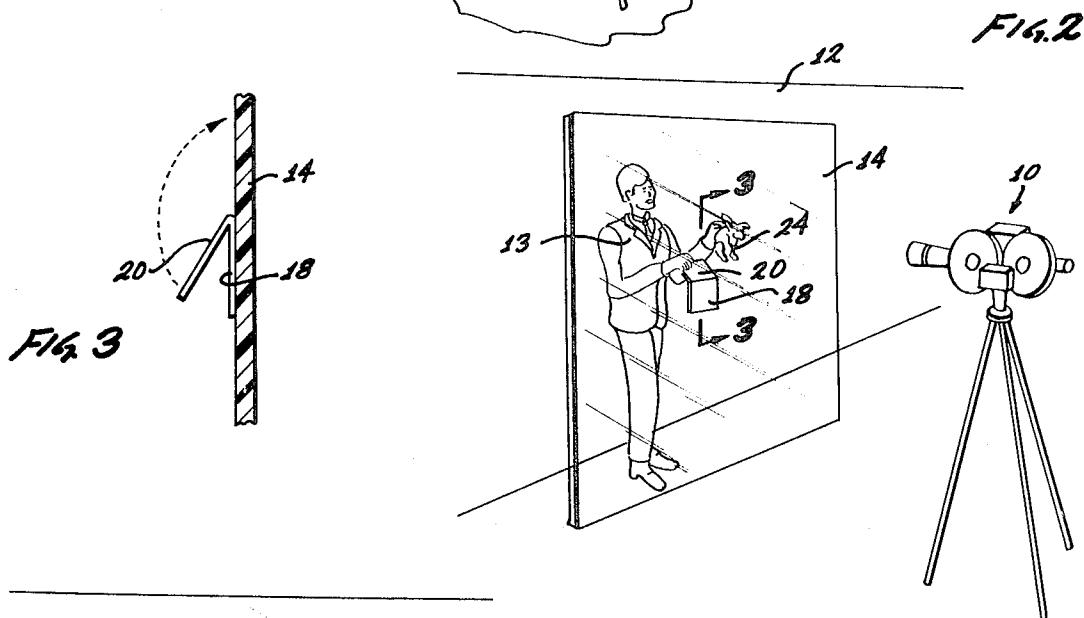
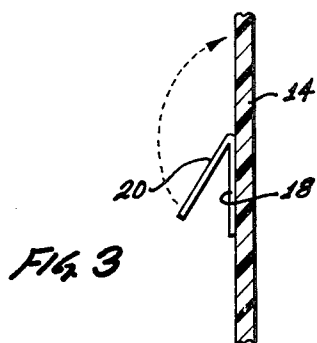
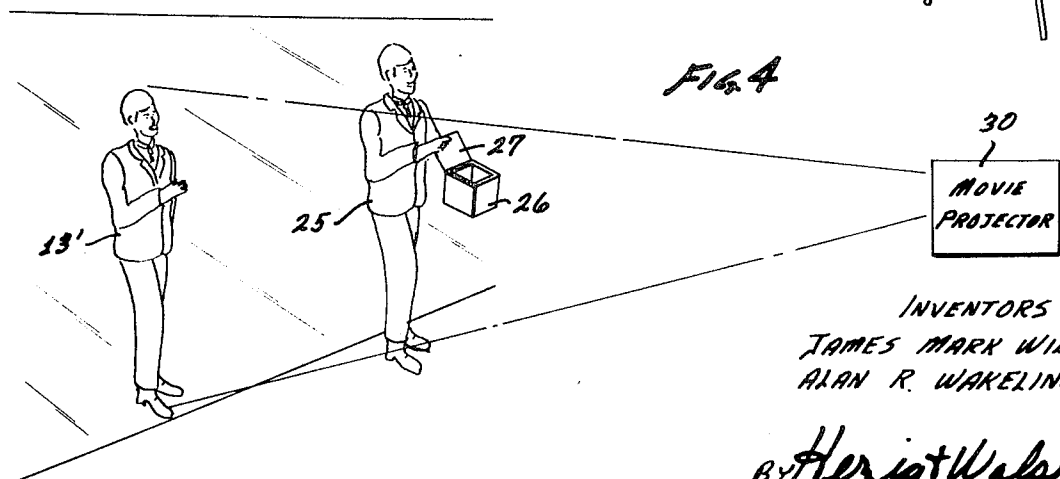
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ABSTRACT: Magical illusionary effects combining live and filmed action are produced by the method steps of filming a live action scene including items such as objects or persons while moving one of the items to a predetermined area in the scene where it is blocked from view by an opaque mask. Thereafter, when projecting the filmed action on a screen, a supposedly empty container is held by a live person in front of the screen at the time and place in the projecting sequence when and where the designated item was blocked from view, thereby making it appear that the item in the projected film was transferred to the empty container. Viewers are then surprised when the designated item is withdrawn from the supposedly empty container.





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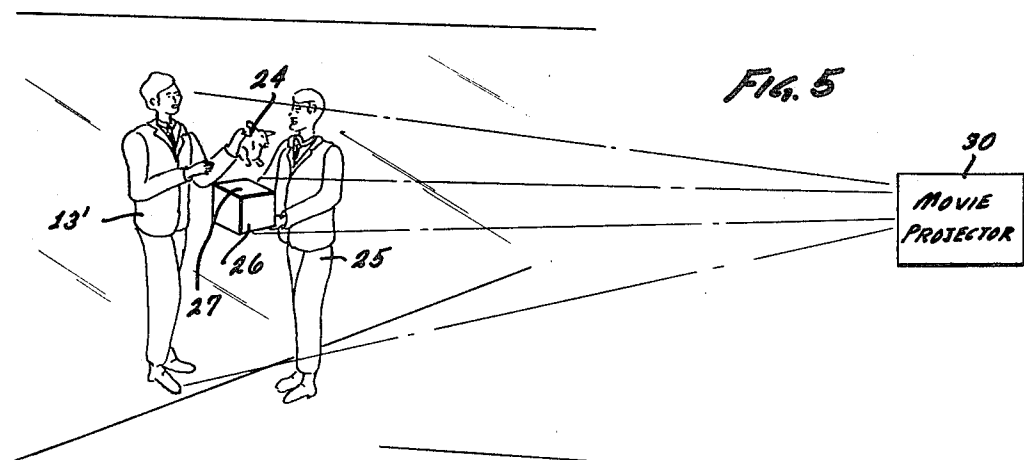


FIG. 6

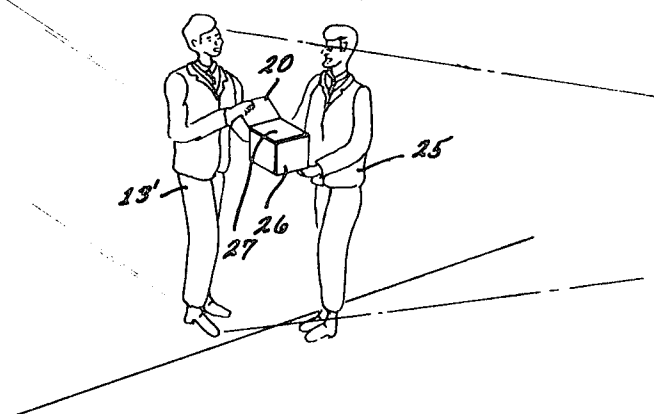
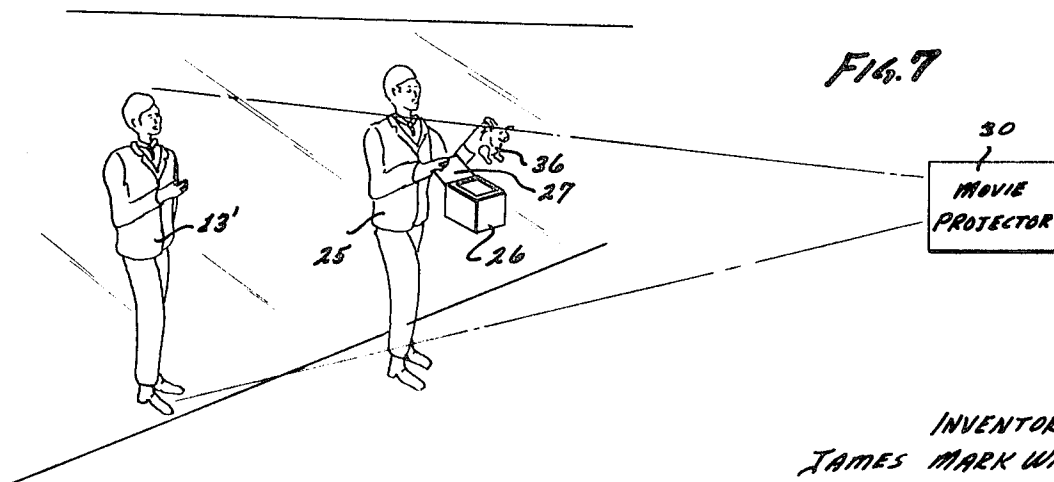


FIG. 7



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MAGICAL ILLUSION PROCESS USING FILMED AND LIVE ACTION

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to the art of producing magical illusionary effects. More particularly the invention is directed to a unique method and technique for producing fascinating magical illusionary effects wherein the effects are produced by a combination of filmed action and live action, the live action involving magical techniques. By combining the live magical techniques with filmed action, extraordinary effects can be produced. Such effects constitute a very useful and valuable medium not only of pure entertainment, but also as an instrumentality for purposes of advertising and marketing of various products and services.

The invention is described in detail hereinafter in a preferred exemplary form that illustrates its principles. Many variations and adaptations of the method or technique of the invention are readily available and adaptable from the exemplary form of the invention outlined in detail.

The nature of the invention in combining filmed action and live action which embodies magical techniques makes possible the creation of many extraordinary effects which without otherwise would not be possible or could be achieved only by way of extremely elaborate equipment and facilities. The object of the invention, is, therefore, to make it possible to achieve and realize the illusionary effects of the type referred to, and which more specifically includes such effects as the following: To effect the appearance of a human performer or physical object transferring from the physical into a screen of from the screen into the physical dimension; to make it appear that an object on a stage or platform associated with a screen is manipulated by a performer whose image appears on the screen; to create many and varied illusionary effects combining filmed and live action wherein what is viewed is a combination of images projected on a screen and physical items which are near the screen. One characteristic of the method or technique is that effects are realized in which the viewer cannot tell or perceive whether what he sees is a projected image or a physical thing.

In a preferred exemplary form of the invention a magical illusion is created in which a rabbit appears to transfer or move out of the projection on the screen, and then physically appears on a stage or platform adjacent the screen. In executing the method, action is filmed and then projected on a screen, the projection including a screen performer. The screen performer requests his onstage assistant to hold an empty box up to and against the screen at a particular position thereof. The box actually contains the rabbit that is concealed in a known manner by way of mirrors in the box. The onscreen performer appears to open the door of the physical box and to insert the screen rabbit into it, that is, this is the illusionary effect that is created and is seen by the viewers. The method makes it possible to accomplish this in the following way. At the time of filming the action at a point in the filming which corresponds to the point that the stage assistant holds the box up to the screen, a mask is placed between the action and the camera to mask out that particular area of the film corresponding to the position at which the box is held up. Preferably this masking is accomplished by performing the filming through a transparent sheet of glass or plastic to which a masking card is attached at the precise moment that it is desired that this part of the image not be projected. Preferably at that point during filming, the onscreen magician asks that a spotlight be thrown on the box that is held up to the screen; the sudden masking or that area of the projection makes it appear to the viewers that a spotlight has in fact been thrown on the box whereas in fact the mask is in the form of a white card masking that area of the projection at that instant. The presence of the mask in the form of the white card prevents that part of the film from being projected onto the box that is being held up to the screen and this door is shown to the viewers before the box is

held up. Similarly the mask, that is, the white card that is attached to the transparent panel through which the action is filmed has a corresponding hinged door attached to it and when the action is filmed, the onscreen performer lifts this door which thus appears when the film is projected, so that what appears to the viewers is that the onscreen performer lifts the hinged door that they have seen, that is actually on the box.

The onscreen performer on the screen puts the rabbit into the box that is held up, that is, it appears that this is what he is doing, the screen rabbit not being projected onto the box because of the masking white card.

The stage assistant then takes the box down from the screen and by magical techniques produces the rabbit which had been concealed in the box using known techniques by way of mirrors, etc.

Further objects and additional advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following detailed description and annexed drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a pictorial view illustrating the filming of the live action in the process;

FIG. 2 is a pictorial view similar to FIG. 1 illustrating a part of the filmed action with the masking card in place;

FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken along the line 3—3 of FIG. 2;

FIGS. 4, 5, 6 and 7 are pictorial views illustrating the combined live action and projection of the filmed action.

Referring now more in detail to FIG. 1 of the drawings, numeral 10 designates a conventional moving picture camera for filming the action against a suitable background 12. The performer 13 performs behind a sheet as designated at 14 which may be glass or clear plastic. Attached to the back of the sheet 14 is a white masking card 18 to the top of which is hinged a flap 20 which can resemble a door hinged onto a box as will be described. The masking card 18 is attached to the panel 14 at a preselected area thereof so as to mask a corresponding area of the film so that no image is reproduced at that particular area and instead when that part of the film with the masked area is projected the appearance will be given of a flash of light at that area because of the fact of the card 18 being white.

The screen performer will be filmed showing a rabbit as portrayed in FIG. 2 at 24. The film will show the performer holding the rabbit as portrayed in FIG. 2 and lifting the flap 20 at the back of the card 18 thus producing a film which will project an image appearing to be a screen performer lifting the cover of a box and placing the rabbit therein as will be described. The card 18, of course, masks out whatever is behind it.

FIG. 4 illustrates the film being projected onto a screen in combination with the live action. The projector is shown at 30. The onscreen performer being projected, as designated at 13. The live stage assistant is designated at 25. He is shown holding box 26 having door 27 which is a duplicate of the hinged flap (door) 20. Concealed within the box 26 is a live rabbit which is concealed using known mirror takes. Box 26 is shown to the audience as being empty.

FIG. 5 further illustrates the projecting of the action along with live action performed by a stage assistant. The onscreen magician 13: asks the stage assistant to hold the box 26 up to the screen which he does holding it up to the preselected area thereof this corresponding exactly to the position of the masking card 18. While the stage assistant 25 is thus holding the box up to the screen in the manner described, the filmed action as previously referred to, wherein the screen performer appears to put the rabbit in the box, is now projected and the viewers see on the screen the action of the screen performer 13: in lifting the hinged part 20 of the card 18 and it thus appears to them that the cover 27 of the box 26 is being lifted and the rabbit being inserted therein. No image, of course, is projected in the area masked by card 18. The image of the card 18 projects as a spot of light onto box 26, appearing as a spotlight.

The stage assistant 25 then moves the box 26 from the screen as illustrated in FIGS. 6 and 7 and proceeds to make the rabbit appear from it, that is, the actual live rabbit as designated at 36, the illusion created being that an actual live rabbit has transferred from the screen into physical being, the film as projected, of course, no longer including the image of the rabbit.

From the foregoing it will be observed that the method or technique can be carried out in reverse manner creating the illusion of a live rabbit being made to disappear or transfer into a screen image.

The foregoing detailed description is of a preferred exemplary form of the method or technique of the invention which is illustrative of other illusionary effect and creations that can be realized utilizing the same principles.

The basic principle or feature of the invention is the interception of or masking of a selected area of the film during filming. As illustrated in the foregoing example, the masking is by way of a white card 18. This produces what may be called an "optical hole" in the film at a preselected area and then a physical object is exposed to the audience in this area, in combination with the otherwise normal projection of the filmed action. In another variation of the invention the mask may be in the form of a white stage prop such as, for example, the front door of a cabinet of the stage in which a lady performer can be concealed or made to appear in. In this example of the invention the white cabinet is shown empty with this door open. An onscreen performer introduces the young lady on the screen who is asked to step behind the onstage cabinet so that her projected image appears on the front of the cabinet instead of the screen. The young lady's image then is made to vanish by simple optical, photographic, or filming techniques and then she physically steps forth from the cabinet. For reversing the technique, she disappears from within the cabinet to appear on the screen as if having transferred thereto.

The masking card 18 with the hinged part 20 resembling a door illustrates in principle the method or technique of making it appear that a physical object on stage is being manipulated or operated by an onscreen performer. Using the same principle and technique it may be observed that in the same way, the illusion may be created in which it appears that the onscreen performer is manipulating objects on the stage such as the lid of a stove, the door of a refrigerator, or cabinet or particular design, or, for example, lifting the back edge of a cloth covering, an onstage prop, or turning down the covers of a bed or the like. The effects can all be produced in a manner closely analogous to that illustrated by the card 18 and hinged

part 20.

From the foregoing, those skilled in the art will readily understand the nature of the invention, the manner of executing the process, and the way in which it achieves and realizes all of the objects as set forth in the foregoing as well as the many additional advantages that are apparent from the detailed description.

The foregoing disclosure is representative of preferred forms of the invention and is to be interpreted in an illustrative rather than a limiting sense, the invention to be accorded the full scope of the claims appended hereto.

What we claim is:

1. A method of producing magical illusionary effects combining live and filmed action, comprising the steps of:

15 filming a live action scene wherein what is filmed includes specific items that may be objects or persons; moving one of said items, while filming said action, to a predetermined area in said scene wherein it is blocked from the view of the filming camera;

20 thereafter projecting the filmed action on a screen; and placing a container in a position near the screen on which said filmed action is being projected and at said predetermined area at which the said one item was blocked from view, and holding it there while the projected image disappears from view, whereby it is made to appear to the viewing audience that the said one item is placed in the said container.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said container is of a type which appears to the viewing audience to be empty but which actually contains said item concealed therein; and then removing said item from said container.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of blocking said item from the view of the camera comprises masking said predetermined area of the scene just before moving said item to said area; and

35 placing said container, as described, at that time, during projection of said scene, when said masking step was performed.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein said step of masking said predetermined area is performed by filming said scene through a transparent member and mounting an opaque mask on said member, to cover said predetermined area.

5. The method of claim 4 including providing said mask with a foldable portion; and

45 swinging said foldable portion while moving said item into said area, to heighten the illusion of placing said item in a container.

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