United States Patent [19]

Leonhardt

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[54] **DIMENSIONAL PICTURE FRAMES**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **40/152**

[51] **Int. Cl.** **G09f 1/12**

[58] **Field of Search** 40/152, 152.1, 156, 154, 10

[56] **References Cited**

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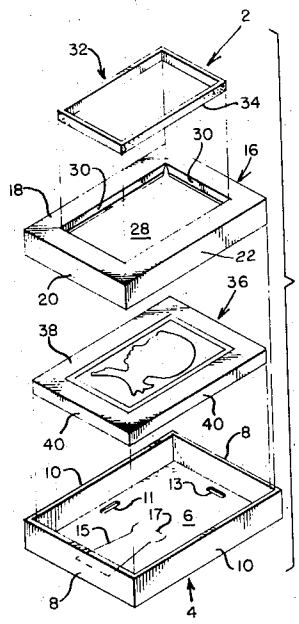
[57] **ABSTRACT**

This invention relates to a picture frame assembly adapted to afford a depth dimension to a picture mounted therein. The picture frame assembly includes a frame member having bottom and side walls, a mat member having a top containing a window opening and having downwardly depending inner and outer side walls telescopically arranged within the frame member, and picture mounting means having vertical support flaps arranged between the top and bottom walls, whereby a picture mounted on the picture mounting means may be viewed through the window opening. In a first embodiment, the support flaps of the picture mounting means extend upwardly and have the same height as the outer side walls of the frame member and the inner and outer side walls of the mat member, whereby a picture, supported on the picture support means, will have a maximum depth relation relative to the mat top wall. In a second embodiment, the support flaps extend downwardly and terminate at the lower extremity in engagement with the bottom wall, the height of the support flaps and the mat inner side walls being equal to the height of the mat and frame side walls. In both embodiments, a trim member may be mounted about the entire periphery of the window opening, said frame, mat and trim members having contrasting colors to emphasize the depth dimension.

10 Claims, 5 Drawing Figures



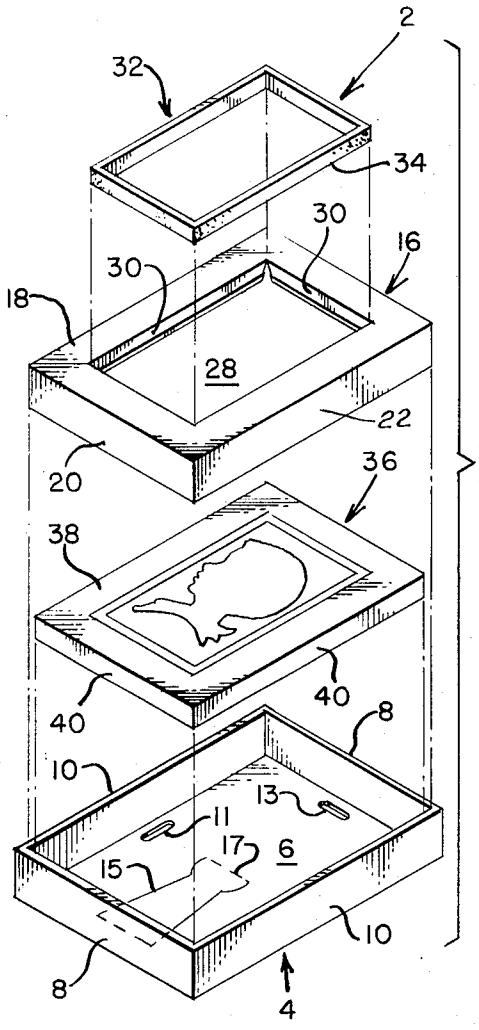


FIG. 1

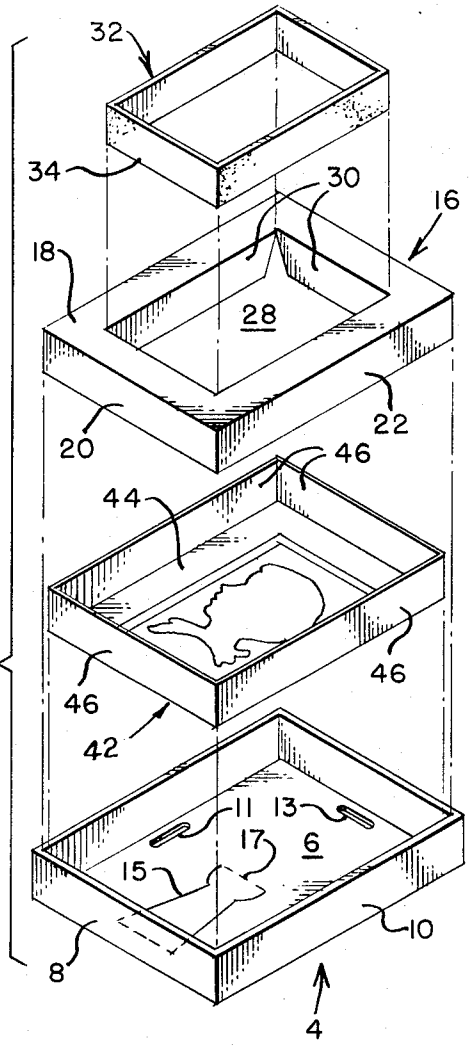


FIG. 2

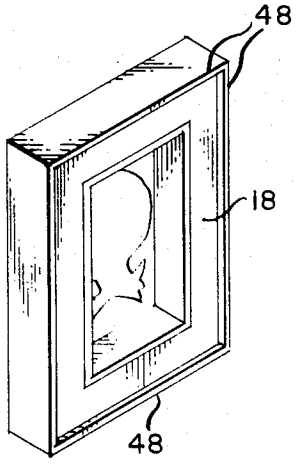


FIG. 3

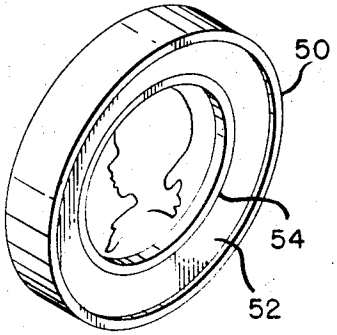


FIG. 4

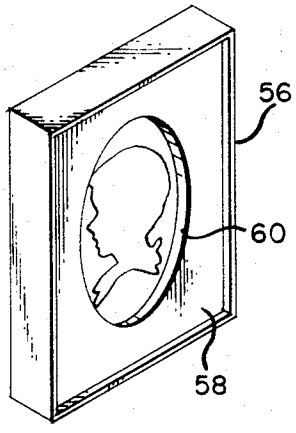


FIG. 5

DIMENSIONAL PICTURE FRAMES

Picture frames known heretofore have generally relied upon a flat picture mat for providing an overlay border around the periphery of the picture mounted in the frame. Such mats create an essentially two dimensional extension of the framed picture and, therefore, fail to emphasize the depth dimension of a mounted picture. In U. S. Pat. No. 3,382,595 to Shore issued May 14, 1968, a picture mat is disclosed, wherein the border adjacent the inner opening may be folded backwardly adjacent the inner opening so as to produce the effect of a relatively thicker mat. While the thickness of a mat can thus be increased, this method is quite limited in the degree of thickness variation that can be obtained and becomes impractical and costly when substantial thickness is desired to afford a large dimensional depth impression relative to the length and width of the picture.

Of course, it is known in other fields, e.g., the container art, to space two surfaces relative to one another by use of telescoping members and in some instances to employ a window opening in one of the telescoping members as illustrated in U. S. Pat. to Randall No. 910,576, issued Jan. 26, 1909. However, such telescoping members have not been used in the picture frame art and are not adapted to support a picture intermediate the top and bottom walls in such a manner as to afford a depth dimension thereto.

Accordingly, it is a primary object of this invention to provide a picture frame assembly including a frame member and a mat member having a window opening, wherein the mat member is telescopically mounted within the frame member, thereby permitting a picture when arranged between the top and bottom walls, to be viewed through the window opening.

Another object of this invention is to provide a picture frame assembly including an open-topped frame member having bottom and side walls and an inverted generally tray shaped mat member having top and downwardly depending outer side walls, said mat member having a cross-section complementary with and being telescopically mounted within the frame member, the top wall containing a window opening, thereby to permit a picture, when arranged between said top and bottom walls, to be viewed through the window opening.

Yet another object of this invention is to provide a picture frame assembly as described above, wherein the mat member includes an inner side wall extending downwardly from the periphery of the window opening, whereby when a picture is arranged adjacent the lower edge of the inner side wall, the mat member affords a depth dimension thereto.

Still another object of this invention is to provide a picture frame assembly as described above further including a trim member adhesively mounted within and extending continuously about the periphery of the window opening, wherein the frame, mat and trim members may have contrasting colors to emphasize the depth dimension.

Still another object of this invention is to provide a picture frame assembly as described above further including a generally tray-shaped picture mounting means telescopically mounted within the mat member including a panel and vertical support flaps, the panel being generally parallel with the top and bottom walls for supporting a picture beneath the window opening.

Yet another object of this invention is to provide a picture frame assembly in which the support flaps of the picture support means extend upwardly and the height of each support flap is substantially equal to the height of the mat inner and outer side walls, whereby when a picture supported on the panel is viewed through the window opening, it will have a maximum depth relation relative to the mat top wall.

An additional object of this invention is to provide a picture frame assembly wherein the frame and mat outer side walls have generally the same height and wherein the support flap extends downwardly and the sum of the height of the mat inner wall and the support flap is generally equal to the height of the mat outer wall, whereby when a picture supported on the panel is viewed through the window opening, it will have an intermediate recessed depth relation relative to the mat top wall.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from a study of the following description of the preferred embodiments when viewed in the light of the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIG. **1** is an exploded perspective view of a picture frame assembly in accordance with a first embodiment of this invention;

FIG. **2** is an exploded perspective view of the picture frame assembly in accordance with a second embodiment of this invention;

FIG. **3** is a perspective view of the picture frame assembly of FIG. **2** in the assembled condition;

FIG. **4** is a perspective view of the picture frame assembly in accordance with a third embodiment of this invention; and

FIG. **5** is a perspective view of the picture frame assembly in accordance with a fourth embodiment of this invention.

As illustrated in FIG. **1**, the picture frame assembly **2** of this invention includes a rectangular open-topped tray-shaped frame member **4** having a bottom wall **6** and two vertically extending opposed pairs of side walls **8, 8** and **10, 10.** Telescopically mounted within the frame member **4** is an inverted generally rectangular tray-shaped mat member **16** having a cross-section complementary with the frame member and having a top wall **18** and two downwardly depending outer pairs of opposed side walls **20, 20** and **22, 22.** Top wall **18** contains a rectangualar window opening **28** through which a picture mounted between the top and bottom walls can be viewed. Depending downwardly from the periphery of the window opening are inner side walls **30** adapted to emphasize the depth dimension of a picture mounted adjacent the lower edges of the walls **30.**

To facilitate display, the picture frame assembly may include mounting holes **11, 13** so that it can be hung either horizontally or vertically. In addition, a die cut easel **15** with a pre-perforated hinge **17** may also be included for free standing use.

The picture frame assembly may also include a rectangular trim member **32** configured to be mounted within and extend continuously around the periphery of window opening **28.** The trim member **32** is adapted to extend vertically between the top wall **18** and the lower edges of the inner side walls **30** of the mat member, thereby to visually emphasize the distance between a picture mounted adjacent the lower edges of the inner side walls and the top wall of the mat member.

Adhesive 34 may be provided on the outer surface of the trim member 32 to secure the trim member directly to the mat inner side walls.

To further emphasize the depth affording feature of the disclosed invention, the frame, mat and trim members may have contrasting colors. A particular effective arrangement is to make the frame and trim members black in color and the mat member a color complementing the picture to be framed.

The picture frame assembly of FIG. 1 also includes a generally tray-shaped picture mounting means 36 including a panel 38 for supporting the picture beneath the window opening and depending vertical support flaps 40 on each side of the periphery thereof. The picture mounting means has generally the same cross-section as and is telescopically mounted within the mat member. In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 1, the height of the frame side walls 8, 10 and the mat outer walls 20, 22 are generally equal and the sum of the height of each of the flaps 40 and the height of each of the inner side walls 30 of the mat member is generally equal to the height of the mat outer walls, whereby when a picture supported on the panel is viewed through the window opening it will have an intermediate recessed depth relation relative to the mat top wall.

FIG. 2 illustrates a second embodiment of the picture frame assembly in which the identical elements are indicated with the same numerals as in FIG. 1. The second embodiment includes a tray-shaped picture support means 42 having a panel 44 adapted to lie against bottom wall 6 of the frame member and having upwardly extending vertical support flaps 46 on each side of the panel 44. In this embodiment, the support flaps and the mat inner and outer side walls have substantially the same height as the frame side walls, whereby in the assembled condition, a picture supported on the panel 44 will have a maximum recessed depth relation relative to the mat top wall.

FIG. 3 illustrates the rectangular picture frame assembly of FIG. 2 in an assembled condition. In FIG. 3 the upper edges 48 of the frame side walls are illustrated as extending slightly above top wall 18, whereby the contrasting colors of frame, mat and trim members are readily visible.

FIG. 4 illustrates a third embodiment of the instant invention wherein the frame, mat and trim members 50, 52 and 54, respectively, have a generally concentric circular configuration.

FIG. 5 illustrates yet a further embodiment of the instant invention having a square frame member 56, a square mat member 58 and an oval opening and frame member 60. It will thus be apparent that the present invention can utilize a variety of shapes and combinations thereof.

While the disclosed picture frame assembly has been illustrated as being either rectangular or circular, other shapes, including irregular configurations, could be used in accordance with the picture to be framed. Furthermore, to increase the versatility of the disclosed assembly, the mat and frame members may be formed of multi-layered composite material whereby the exposed layer may be readily changed in accordance with the desired color.

While in accordance with the Patent Statutes the preferred form and embodiments have been illustrated and described, it will be apparent that various changes and modifications may be made in the disclosed apparatus without deviating from the inventive concepts.

What is claimed is:

1. A picture frame assembly, comprising
   a. a generally tray-shaped open-topped frame member (4) having bottom (6) and side walls (8, 10);
   b. an inverted generally tray-shaped mat member (16),
      1. said mat member having top (18) and downwardly depending outer side walls (20, 22);
      2. said mat member having a cross-sectional configuration that corresponds with, and is telescopically mounted within, said frame member, the lower edges of said mat side walls being in engagement with said frame bottom wall to support said mat top wall in spaced parallel relation relative to said frame bottom wall;
      3. said mat top wall containing a picture opening (28);
      4. said mat member including inner side wall means (30) connected with the mat top wall and extending downwardly substantially continuously from the periphery of said picture opening; and
   c. generally tray-shaped picture mounting means (36; 42) for mounting a picture within said frame member beneath said window opening and in spaced relation to said top wall, said picture mounting means having a cross-section that corresponds with, and being telescopically mounted within, said mat member, said picture mounting means including
      1. a panel (38; 44) parallel with the frame bottom wall; and
      2. vertical support flap means (40, 46) connected with the peripheral edge portion of said panel for supporting said panel in engagement with the lower edges of said inner side wall means, whereby the picture is supported in recessed relation beneath said picture opening.

2. A picture frame assembly as defined in claim 1, wherein the exposed portions of said frame member and said mat top wall have contrasting colors.

3. A picture frame assembly as defined in claim 2, wherein said frame and mat members are circular in outer configuration and said window opening is circular and uniformly spaced from the periphery of said mat and frame members.

4. A picture frame assembly as defined in claim 2, wherein said frame and mat members are formed of multi-layered composite material, the exposed layers of said material determining the colors of said frame and mat members respectively.

5. A picture frame assembly as defined in claim 1, and further including a trim member mounted within and extending continuously about the periphery of said window opening.

6. A picture frame assembly as defined in claim 5, wherein at least two of said frame, mat and trim members have contrasting colors.

7. A picture frame assembly as defined in claim 5, wherein said trim member is adhesively secured to said mat inner side wall means.

8. A picture frame assembly as defined in claim 1, wherein said support flap means extends upwardly from said panel adjacent the inner surface of the corresponding mat outer side wall, said support flap means and said mat inner and outer side walls having substantially the same height, whereby when a picture sup-

ported on said panel is viewed through said window opening, it will have a maximum recessed depth relation relative to said mat top wall.

9. A picture frame assembly as defined in claim **1**, wherein said frame and mat outer side walls have generally the same height and wherein the height of the mat inner wall is less than the height of the mat outer wall, said support flap means extending downwardly from said panel and terminating at its lower extremity in engagement with said bottom wall, the sum of the heights of said support flap means and said mat inner wall being generally equal to the height of said mat outer wall, whereby when a picture supported on said panel is viewed through said window opening, it will have an intermediate recessed depth relation relative to said mat top wall.

10. A picture frame assembly as defined in claim **1**, wherein said frame and mat members are rectangular in outer configuration and said window opening is rectangular and uniformly spaced from the periphery of said mat and frame members.

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