

March 10, 1936.

G. C. HAIUM

2,033,826

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

Filed Oct. 11, 1934

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

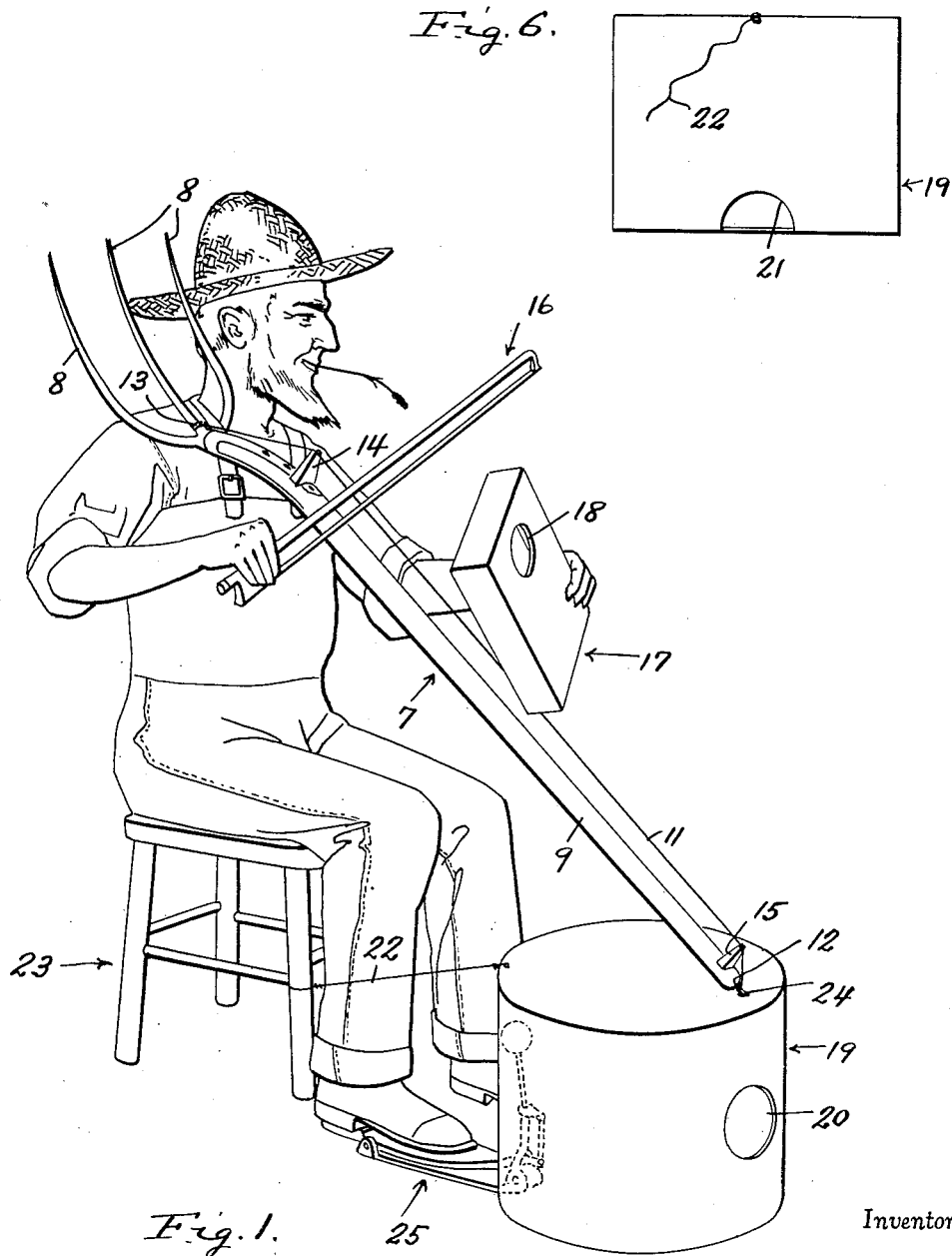


Fig. 1.

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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 2.

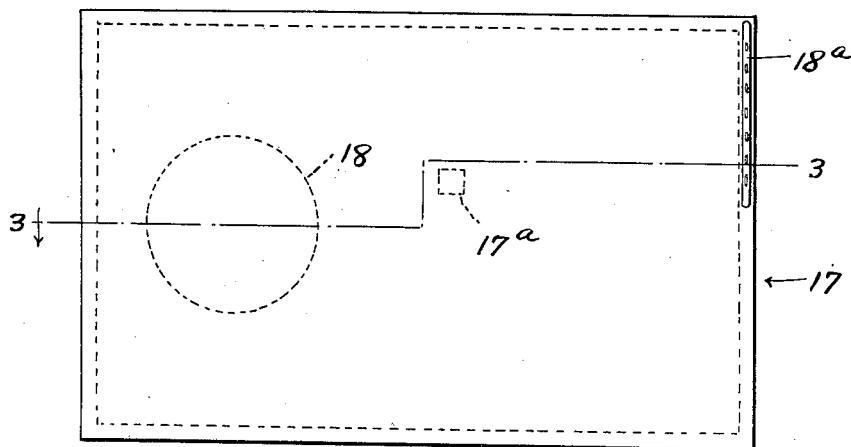


Fig. 3.

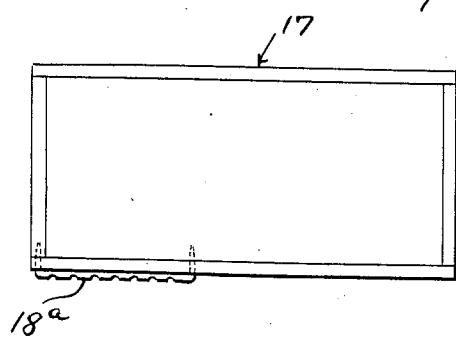
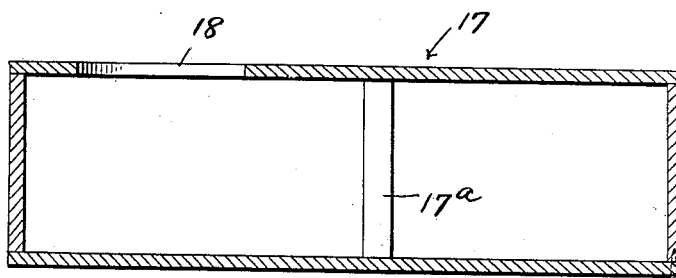


Fig. 4.

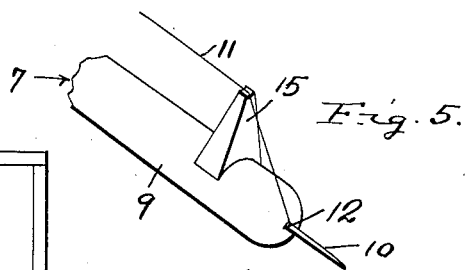


Fig. 5.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

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Application October 11, 1934, Serial No. 747,945

6 Claims. (Cl. 84-173)

This invention relates to a novel combination structure such as may be broadly referred to as a musical instrument, notwithstanding the fact that it actually embodies a combination structure susceptible of use in a manner permitting a single performer to play a tune or melody and to accompany himself, if desired, by the rhythmic beat of a bass drum.

Briefly stated, the novel conception embodies a structure characterized primarily by a stringed musical instrument usable in conjunction with a hollow can-like resonator which may, if desired, have the secondary or additional function of a bass drum.

As will be evident from the succeeding description and the accompanying illustrative drawings the invention has to do with a combination instrument playable by a single performer and effectively accompanied by a background musical instrument such as a piano or guitar, preferably a guitar, whereby to permit two persons to perform on the stage or elsewhere, particularly for the humorous amusement and benefit of a congregation of listeners.

Inasmuch as the structure appeals especially to the eye of the listeners, it may be said to be of the homely or rural type such as lends itself particularly for use alone or in combination in what may be designated as a performance of the "Hill-billy" type.

Being an innovation, and in fact somewhat of a rustic revelation, the structure will be found notable as a unique contribution to the art and trade in that it may be justly accredited as possessing the attributes of an irregular yet practicable stringed musical instrument which though of a limited tone compass is nevertheless usable, in the hands of an artist, to promote achievement not of a renowned type, but rather of a captivating and humorous character calculated to appeal to a listener moved by the efforts of an humble performer.

The details forming the foundation of the complete structure selected for accomplishing the desired results will become more readily apparent from the following description and the accompanying drawings.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a perspective view showing the complete music-making device or ensemble and illustrating the manner in which it is utilized by a single player or performer.

Figure 2 is a bottom plan view of the pitch regulating slide, and which has the additional function of a tone amplifying sound box.

Figure 3 is a sectional view taken approximately on the plane of the line 3-3 of Figure 2.

Figure 4 is an end view of the adjustable sound box or slide showing the means provided for effectively maintaining it in sliding relation with respect to the strings.

Figure 5 is a fragmentary detail perspective view showing the pin equipped end of the shaft of the main or body portion of the musical instrument.

Figure 6 is a detail elevational view of the hollow rest for the musical instrument possessing the additional function of a resonator and drum.

I will describe first the preferred embodiment and particular construction of the stringed musical instrument as an article of manufacture. Purely for antiquity and unusual appearance and appeal, I prefer to use a frame or body which is of a characteristic type. This body portion of the instrument, as a unit, is denoted by the numeral 7. Specifically, however, it is in the nature of a pitchfork. The tines of the fork are differentiated by the numerals 8 and in practice constitute a convenient means for resting the handle or shaft 9 on the shoulder of the player in the manner illustrated in Figure 1. At the opposite end of the handle, as shown in Figure 5 is a pointed anchoring member which is nothing more than a nail 10 driven into the handle and adapted to provide a means for holding the shaft 9 in a recumbent or inclined attitude. This stringed musical instrument includes a single vibratory string 11. In practice, this is a piece of piano wire of appropriate gauge and vibratory properties. At the right hand or lower end it is wound around and attached firmly to the anchoring pin 10 as indicated at 12. At the opposite end it is tied around the central tine 8 of the fork head as indicated at 13. The string is maintained in vibratory position above the shaft 9 through the instrumentality of longitudinally spaced bridges. There is a relatively high two-inch bridge 14 adjacent the fork head and a somewhat shorter one-inch bridge 15 at the opposite or lower end. The string is trained over these bridges and both bridges are fashioned so as to conform to and fit firmly upon the shaft or handle 9. The string is drawn sufficiently taut so that it will vibrate through the instrumentality of the hairs on the violin bow 16. This is a conventional bow. Instead of using the fingers of the left hand to make the "stops", I have chosen to substitute a slide. This slide is denoted as a unit by the numeral 17 and is actuated somewhat in the nature of a slide such as is em-

ployed on a Hawaiian steel guitar. In the present instance, however, it is utilized in one sense as a novelty and innovation but really possesses the utility of a pitch regulator. That is to say, it is moved back and forth in a longitudinal line in contact with the string to vary the effective vibratory length of that portion of the string between the slide 17 and the bridge 14. As a general proposition, the bow 16 is moved back and forth across the string as if playing a violin or viola and the sounds are made by the shifting and sliding of the slide 17. The slide has an additional function, however, and is in the nature of a sound wave amplifying unit. Under the circumstances, I have found it expedient and practicable to use an ordinary cigar box and to fasten the lid closed and to form an opening or outlet 18 in the top thereof. This enables the box to serve somewhat in the capacity of the "body" on a violin or equivalent instrument.

Although it is not absolutely essential it is preferred to utilize this set up in conjunction with a peculiar rest or base of the type shown in Figures 1 and 6. This base is differentiated by the numeral 19 and is in the form of an enlarged hollow can or casing. In practice, I have found it practicable to utilize a relatively large lard can for the purpose. All that I do is to form a sound outlet or opening 20 in the rim of the can and to form a toe hole 21 in a diametrically opposite side of the can. This allows one foot of the performer to be placed in the can to hold it against unnecessary sliding. The can is, however, tied by a wire or the like 22 to one of the legs of the stool 23 on which the performer sits. It will be noticed that the top or diaphragm of the can, which is vibratory, is formed with a relatively small hole 24 which receives and accommodates the anchoring pin 10. With this arrangement, it has been found that the device 19 acts as a resonator and has a tendency to reinforce and render more responsive the playing effects of the stringed musical instrument itself.

It is doubtless apparent at this stage in the description that the structure as a whole is not calculated to be possessed of a resplendent and appealing tone capable of adequate comparison with legitimate musical instruments of the violin family. At the same time, notwithstanding the use of a single string, it has been found that the structure, in the hands of a capable performer, is responsive and is susceptible of producing a tone quality similar to that of a cello. In fact the pitch may range from the lower compass of the violin to the upper or medium compass of a cello. Under the circumstances the quality of tone produced is sufficient to excite human and modest interest such as would be expected to reside in the average patron or listener attending a moving picture show or equivalent stage performance. To add to the utility and effectiveness of the structure, it is possible to provide a drum pedal unit such as is indicated broadly at 25. This can be attached to the rim of the resonator or can and the impact device or hammer can be alternately or intermittently struck against said rim to produce bass drum beats in rhythm with the stringed musical instrument played by the performer and in this way the structure as a whole can be utilized to greater satisfaction especially when accompanied by a guitar accompanist.

It follows, therefore, that I have in a sense a unique stringed musical instrument and a resonator base which resonator base may or may

not be utilized as a drum depending on the requirements of the performance. Whether the device 19 is used as a drum or not it has the capacity of an unusual resonator such as will reinforce the carrying power of the sound waves produced by the single string and bow arrangement.

In interpreting the succeeding claims, it is desired not to restrict the novelty to the antique characteristics of the structure. These are utilized primarily to promote interest and attraction from a purely humorous standpoint. It is believed, however, that novelty resides in the structure as a legitimate arrangement as well as a special rustic or rural set up.

It is thought that persons skilled in the art to which the invention relates will be able to obtain a clear understanding of the invention after considering the description in connection with the drawings. Therefore, a more lengthy description is regarded as unnecessary.

Minor changes in shape, size and rearrangement of details coming within the field of invention claimed may be resorted to in actual practice, if desired.

What is claimed is:—

1. In a structural assemblage of the class described, a hollow vibratory support constituting a combined base and tone resonating device, said base being provided on one side with a tone hole on the other side with a foot opening for the reception of the foot of the user, and in its top with a pin reception and retention hole, and a complementary stringed musical instrument designed for humorous, stage and public entertainment purposes, said instrument including a vibratory string equipped body having a shoulder rest at its upper end, and provided at its opposite end with an anchoring pin removably insertable in said retention hole.

2. In a musical instrument assemblage of the class described, a hollow resonator having foot controlled means enabling it to be held by the performer's foot in a substantially fixed playing position, and a stringed musical instrument including a body having a shoulder rest at one end, a bridge mounted on said body, a string attached at one end to said shoulder rest and anchored at its opposite end adjacent the corresponding end of said body and having its intermediate portion trained over said bridge, the body having means at the last named end for detachable supporting connection with said resonator.

3. A stringed musical instrument of the class described comprising an elongated shaft having string attaching means, a vibratory string operatively connected with said means, and a manually manipulated slide adapted to be held in one hand of the player and moved along the string in a longitudinal direction to serve as a tone controlling stop, said slide being in the form of a hollow apertured box and a predetermined portion thereof being adapted to be maintained in slidable contact with said string when the string is set into vibratory motion by a bow or the like.

4. In a musical instrument of the class described, a stringed musical instrument including a body having a bridge and a vibratory string operatively connected with said bridge and body, the combination therewith of a hollow instrument resting and supporting base, said base being in the form of a vertically disposed cylindrical sound wave amplifying and resonating casing having a foot opening in the wall on one side, a tone hole at the other side, and means at its

top to detachably receive and hold in playing position the adjacent end portion of the body of said stringed musical instrument.

5 In a stringed musical instrument of the class described comprising an elongated shaft having a shoulder rest at its upper end, and an anchoring and retaining pin at its lower end, a relatively low bridge mounted on the lower end of the shaft adjacent said pin, a complemental
10 relatively high bridge mounted on the upper end portion of said shaft, and a single vibratory string attached at its lower end to said pin and at its upper end to said shoulder rest, the end portions

of said string being trained over both of said bridges.

6. As a new article of manufacture, a component part of a stringed musical instrument assemblage of the class described comprising a
5 manually manipulated string engaging and tone changing slide in the form of a hollow box having a tone hole in its top, and provided externally at one end with a notched bracket fashioned to ride slidably on the string and to serve as a wear
10 and retention element.

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