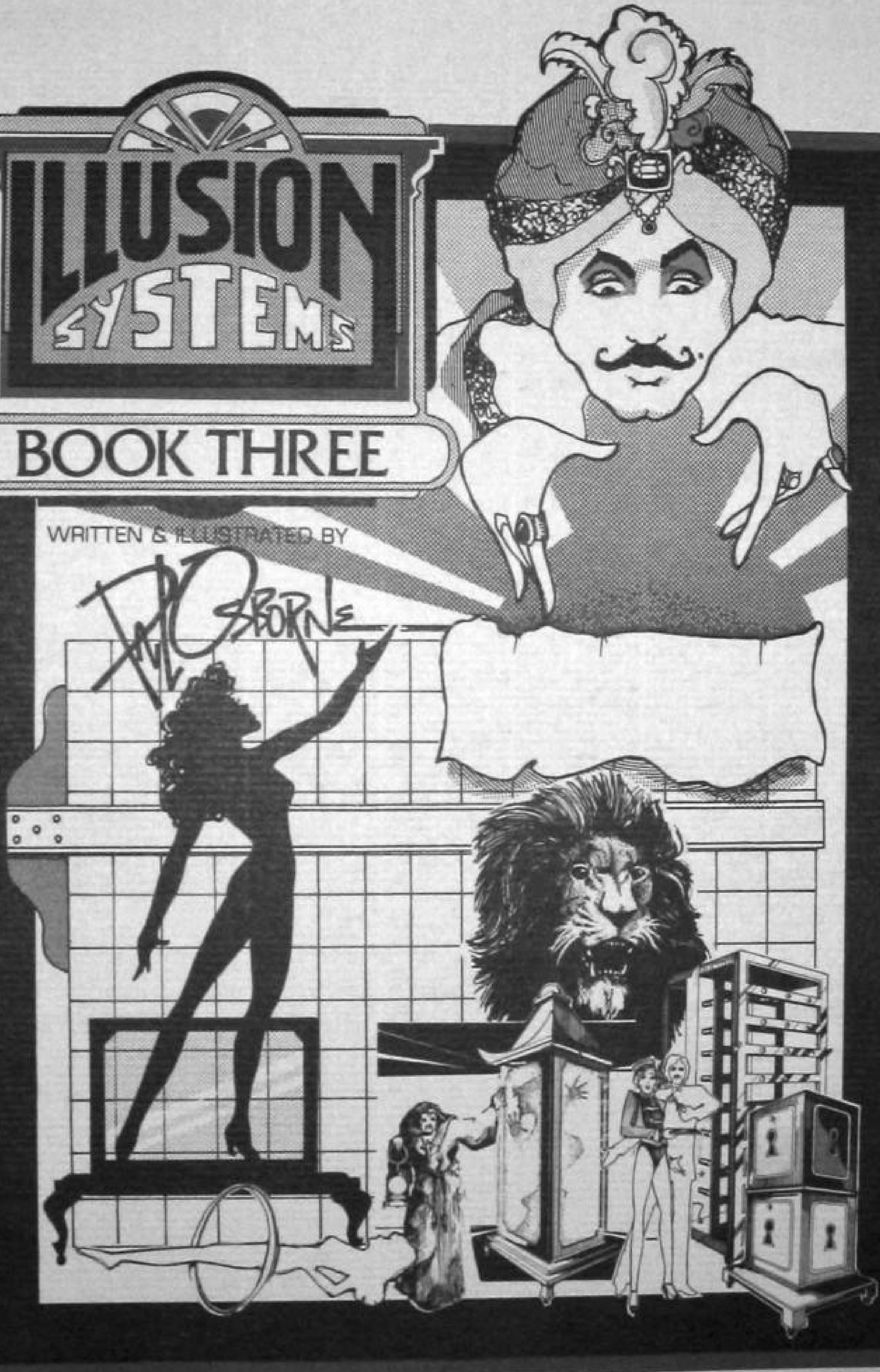


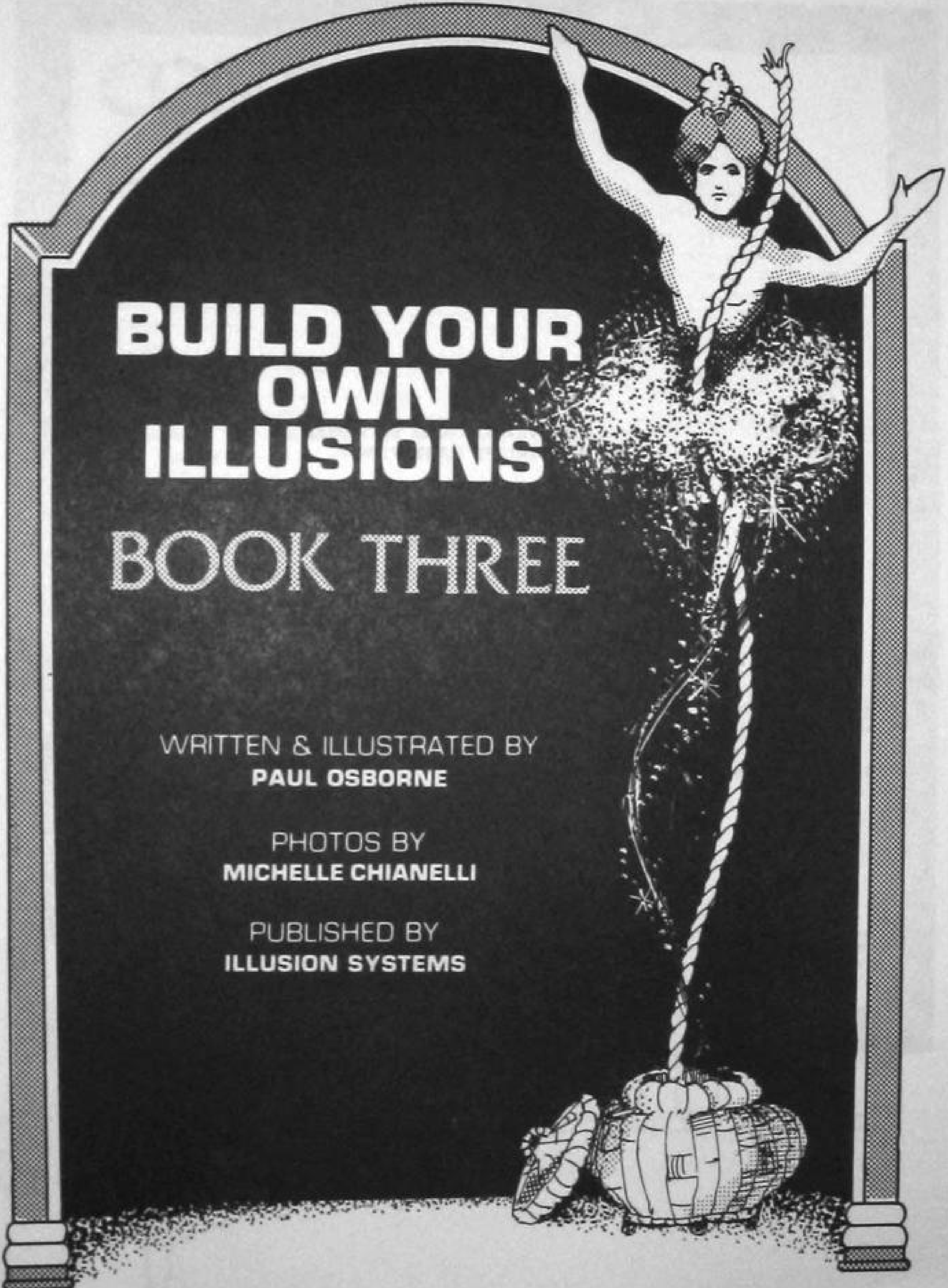
ILLUSION SYSTEMS

BOOK THREE

WRITTEN & ILLUSTRATED BY

DAVID SPORNE





**BUILD YOUR
OWN
ILLUSIONS**
BOOK THREE

WRITTEN & ILLUSTRATED BY
PAUL OSBORNE

PHOTOS BY
MICHELLE CHIANELLI

PUBLISHED BY
ILLUSION SYSTEMS

BUILD YOUR
OWN
ILLUSION

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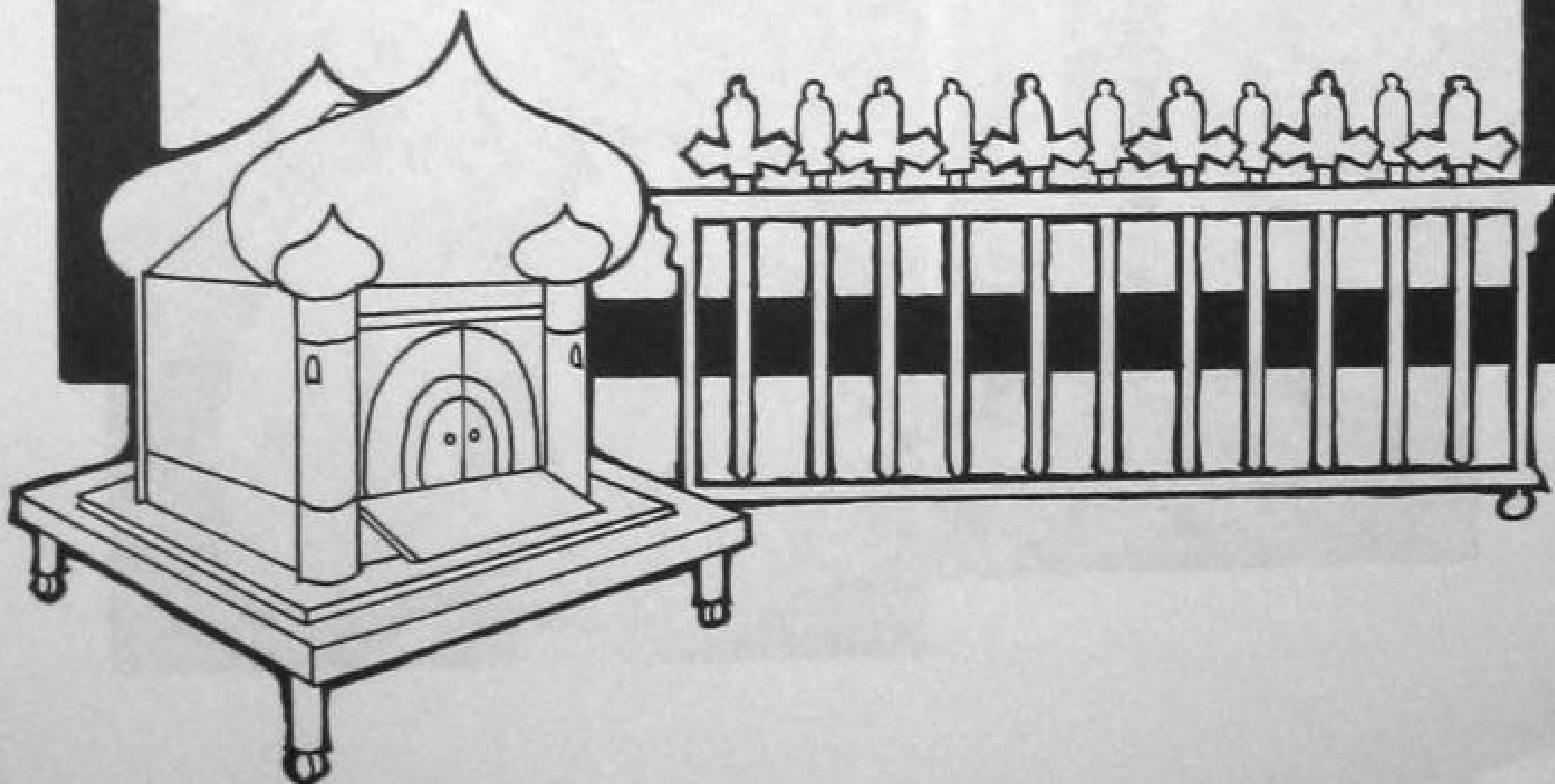
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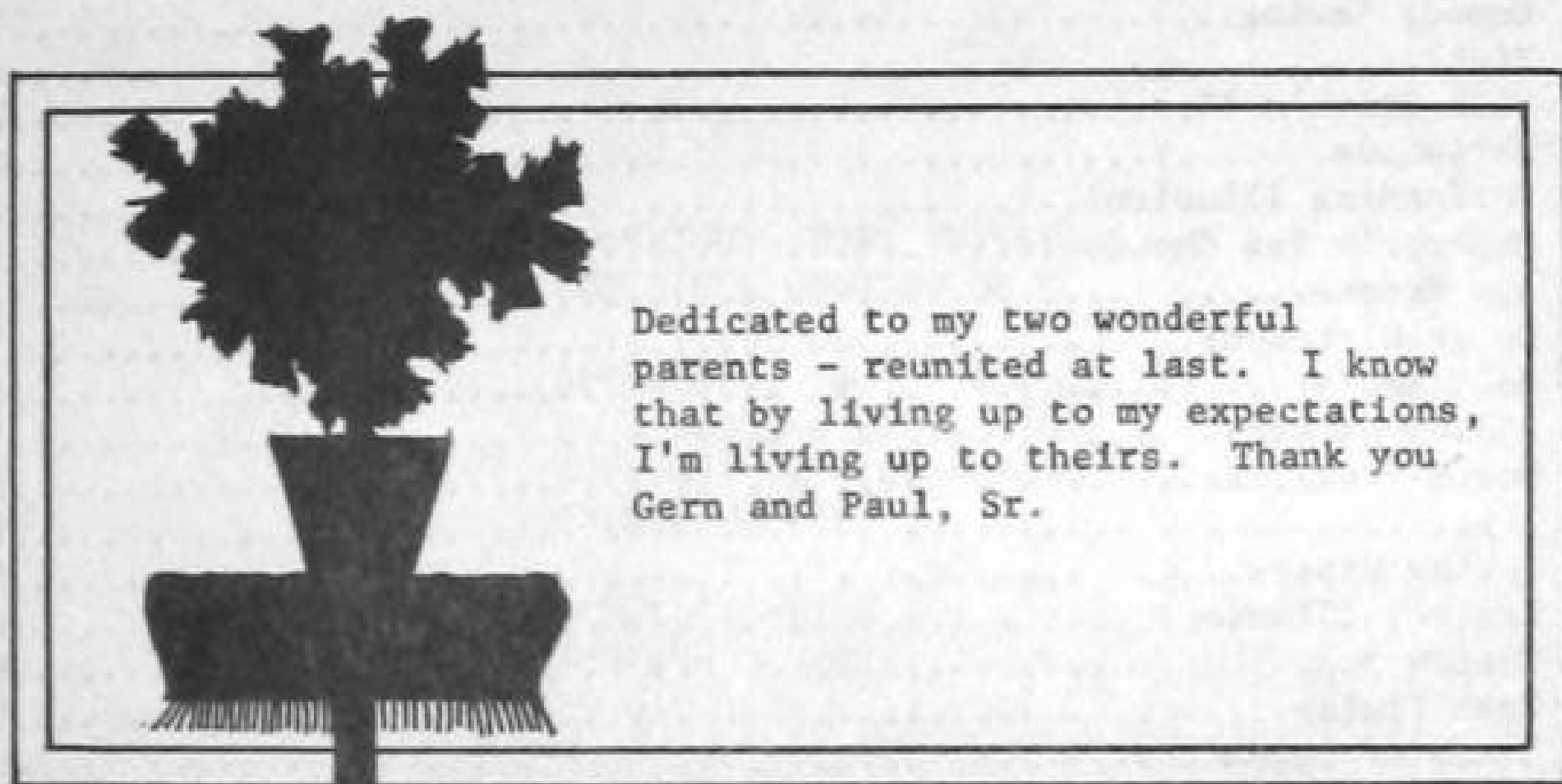


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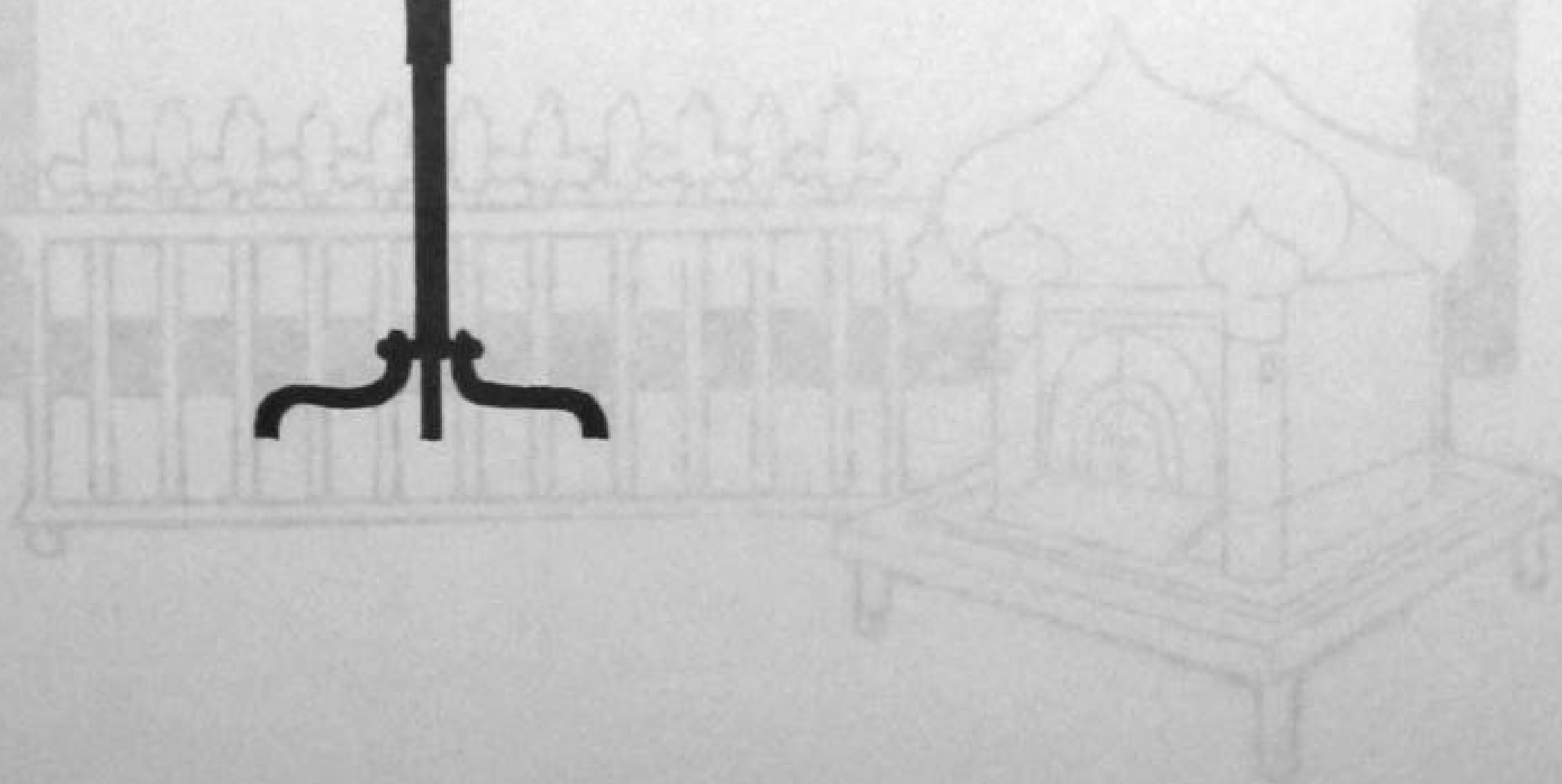
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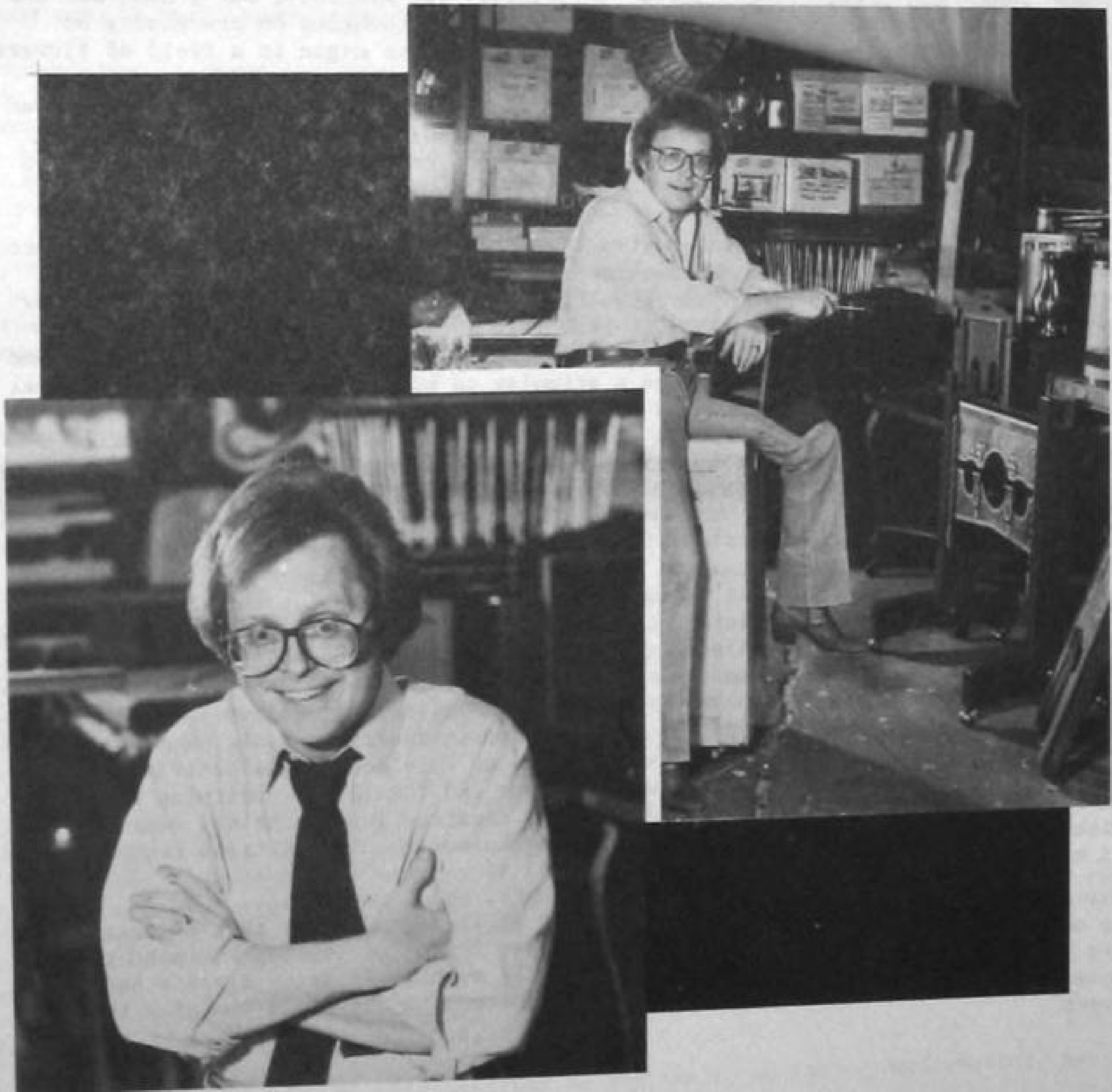


Dedicated to my two wonderful
parents - reunited at last. I know
that by living up to my expectations,
I'm living up to theirs. Thank you
Gern and Paul, Sr.



PAUL OSBORNE

Paul Osborne's magical career began at age five with a Mark Wilson magic kit handed to him by its creator. Paul went on to follow magic as a career, not just a hobby, designing and producing shows for television, amusement parks and trade shows. Realizing a need for current, up-to-date illusion plans drawn to scale with the builder in mind, Paul released his first set of over one hundred plans not only to Genii magazine, but also as a mail order product. Illusion Systems was set up by Paul to handle the publishing and marketing of Paul's plans and writings. Currently Illusion Systems sells plans and books relating to illusion ideas, construction and performance to the four corners of the world. Paul Osborne plans to continually update his existing illusion file while always adding new products like this, the biggest to date...Illusion Systems' Build Your Own Illusions - Book Three!





It was either Br'er Fox or Br'er Rabbit that said, "Lay low, boy, and don't look back." Pretty good advice when you think about it. I feel sorry for the magician who is still protecting the idea he claims to have come up with in 1928. I also feel sorry for the performers who choose to open the oldest of magic books to come up with a "new" idea. Oh, I believe in "roots" and history and all that, but I also believe in the promise of a future. When I read Andre' Kole's thoughts on creativity or experience David Ginn's enthusiasm, it makes me feel like magic is a field of flowers, yet to be picked. All we have to do is work a little at it. New ideas are there, we just have to do our part. Now, that makes sense to me and that's how I've chosen to spend my time. I want to find, invent, create or discover that new idea, then once I've done that, I'll head out to that field for another. And the good news is you can do the same!

Originality is what I'm really interested in. I get excited when I see it in others and when it happens to me, you can imagine the thrill! There's a lot of different forms of originality; maybe the prop itself, the way it's built or painted, the way you perform it, or the way you blend it into your show. Don't stop until you have something unique. It is my sincere hope that the ideas from me and others contained within the pages of this book serve as a stimulus to your inherent creativity. Feel free to take these basic concepts and adapt them to your circumstances. Re-theme them or present them in a unique way. I firmly believe that the presentation of a magical effect, as opposed to the magical effect itself, is most important. So do your best to make that effect you.

Percy Abbott used to say, "There's no such thing as a bad trick." Certainly a good debate topic for the pros. I can see both sides. Look at Willard's, Thurston's, Houdini's, Blackstone, Sr.'s, or Dante's props...look close. In most cases up close you'll see bad wood, poorly painted, but what they could do with their props entertained audiences for hours at a time. Now take one of today's well-known young performers with their perfect-to-the-touch props. Again though, they, too, entertain audiences for hours at a time. The common thread here is originality in style, approach and performance. You've got to have that in addition to the props...no matter what shape they're in. So take the pages of this book in as basic ideas. Visualize how this or that prop will work for you and then begin modifying the illusion to suit your needs. You won't hurt my feelings. As a child I remember thinking a magic trick could only be performed the way the instructions read - we all have to get away from that.

I have had many magicians call or write asking if they can modify this or that or use our plans to build props for others. My answer is, "Of course, but make that prop you!" Customize, modify and improve, by all means. It is my sincere hope that at least one of our three illusion books has sent you to the field to "pick that flower".



FORWARD

by **ANDRÉ KOLE**

"I cannot imagine any profession that could possibly be more fascinating than creating and performing the impossible. There have been times when I have almost felt guilty having so much fun doing what I do for a living. In my profession I have worked, and I have worked hard, often 16 to 20 hours a day. But I can truthfully say that for the most part I have always worked for the love of it, not for the money of it.

Through the years my performances have taken me to all 50 states many times. During my 7 world tours I have performed in 74 countries on 5 continents, and our next international tour will take us to even more countries. Most people work all year at a job they don't particularly like and look forward to that two week vacation when they can get away and go somewhere. I go somewhere all year long, and if I ever took a vacation I can't imagine anywhere I would want to go.

I began in magic when I was seven years old. It all started when my mother bought me a magic book for Christmas called Peter Rabbit the Magician. Sometime later I met a professional magician named Moxo who showed me a couple of tricks and inspired me to continue in magic.

Since I had very little help beyond this, I was forced to be creative. I didn't have the money to buy any magic so I would make up and construct my own tricks. Something else I did at that time was to get the various magic catalogs. Then I would go through each one and come up with a solution to accomplish every trick in the catalog. As I later learned, some of my guesses were right, some were wrong, and in some cases I had come up with better methods to accomplish the effect than what was being sold.

To be creative a person must spend time creating. In the beginning it does not make any difference what you create as long as you keep creating just to develop and improve your creative ability. Through the years, various tests on creativity have shown that between the age of 5 and 7 a person's creativity drops about 90%. By the age of 40 a person is only about 2% as creative as he was at the age of 5. But if a person chooses to keep his creative fire alive, he can overcome and greatly exceed what is a common happening to most people.

There was a period of several years in my life that I forced myself to invent at least three tricks a day. I would not allow myself to go to sleep at night until I had accomplished that goal. It made sense to me that what was true in the world of baseball was also true in the world of magical creativity. This is the fact that the famous home run king, Babe Ruth, struck out more times than he hit home runs. As I have created new magical effects and illusions, I have found that you have to come up with a lot of effort in order to get a few good ones. In those days I found that I would get one good idea out of about every 16 not so good ideas. As time has gone on, fortunately that ratio has lessened.

Most of the ideas I came up with were not of any use to me for my performances, but

some were useful for other purposes. One of those three-a-day tricks became the best selling magical trick in the world for several years - 'Spikes Through the Balloon' effect. Thousands were made, sold, and performed all over the world, but I never performed the trick in a show myself. It also became the inspiration for dozens of other spike through, wand through, candle through, effects that have been put on the market since that time.

Another one of my three-a-day tricks I performed at my first magicians' convention when I was about 16 years old. Afterwards, an elderly gentleman came back stage raving about the trick saying that it had completely baffled him, and he asked me if he could buy it. I politely refused to divulge the secret, but thanked him for his interest. When he left a friend who was back stage with me said, 'Do you know who that was?' I said that I did not. My friend continued, 'That man is probably the leading authority on the subject of magic in the world today. His name is Dr. Harland Tarbell, the author of the Tarbell course in magic.' Later I made a set of my Helicopter Cups for Dr. Tarbell and we became very good friends during his final years.

Another one of those three-a-day tricks was an illusion called "Table of Death". My first national television appearance was on the original 'You Asked For It' television show in which I presented this illusion. A few years ago I performed it on another TV show called 'The Magician' starring Bill Bixby. At one point in the story, Bill also had to perform the illusion but something really did go wrong, and if Mark Wilson and I had not rushed on the set and stopped it at the last instant, Bill Bixby very likely would have been killed.

I might also add that all of those in this country and other countries who have built the illusion, sold the illusion, and performed the 'Table of Death' illusion have all done so without my permission.

I mention this because I hope those of you who read this article will develop a respect for other people's ideas and property. I still believe it is wrong and unethical to steal from another person. If there is something you want to do that someone else is doing I hope you will at least have the courtesy to go to that person and ask permission or offer to pay him. Chances are that something will be able to be worked out, and you will be friends instead of having him feel badly toward you. And if he says 'no', respect that and go on to something else.

When Doug Henning asked for my permission to use my 'Vanishing Feet, and 'Squeeze Box' illusions for his TV special and 'Merlic' show I worked out a mutually agreeable arrangement for him to use my 'Vanishing Feet' illusion. I said I wanted to keep the 'Squeeze Box' illusion exclusive for a few more years, and Doug agreed to honor that request.

To be creative I believe a person should let his mind soar and not allow himself to be tied to the thoughts of others. I have found that one of the surest ways to stop my creativity is to read what other people have done. One of my favorite quotations is a statement made by Alan Pitt. He said, 'The man who follows the crowd will usually get no further than the crowd. The man who walks alone is likely to find himself in places no one has ever been before. You have two choices in life; you can dissolve into the mainstream, or you can be distinct. To be distinct, you must be different. To be different, you must strive to be what no one else but you can be.'

People have said 'the sky is the limit'. I do not believe that. For example, years ago I worked out 7 ways to make the moon disappear - yes the real moon! One of my newest illusions is one in which a rocket ship disappears in the 'Black Hole' in space. In addition to these individual 'sky's the limit' illusions, I have been working on ideas for a gigantic stage show for several years. If it were ever built

it would not only be the largest magic show in the world, but it would be the largest stage show of any kind.

At this point I would like to say that I believe that God gives each one of us his talents and abilities, and it has been my desire to honor Him and give Him the credit for anything that I have accomplished. I believe that when we use our lives and talents in a way that is pleasing to Him, it is only then that we can achieve our greatest potential and truly experience life to the fullest.

There is no limit to the creativity and imagination that God has given us. With His help man can achieve anything the mind can conceive.

'Make no small plans for they have no magic to inspire the minds of men.' I challenge you to dare to dream great dreams and to join with me in the exciting challenge of 'creating the impossible!'"

Best wishes,

Andre

Andre Kole

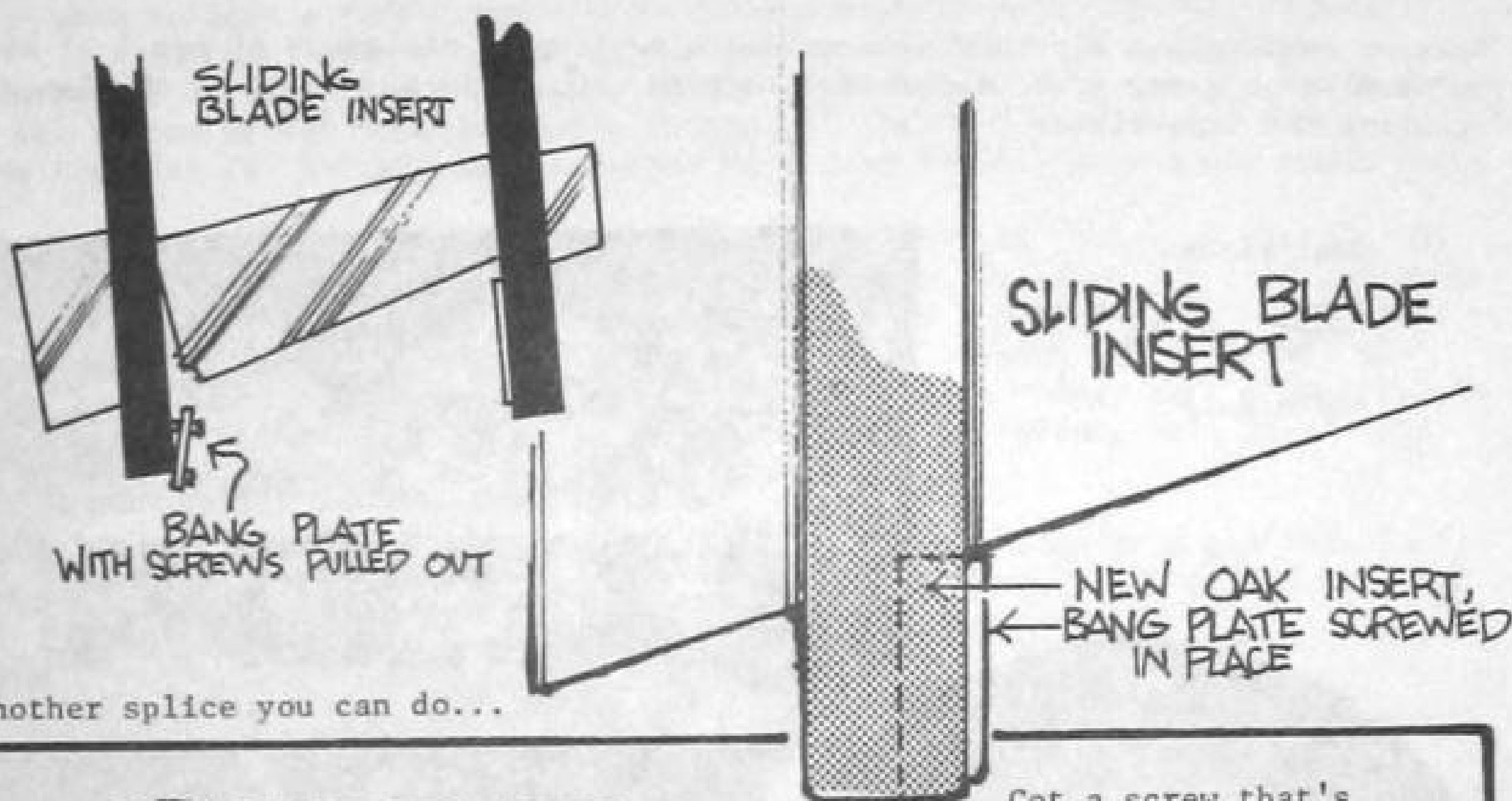


**ANDRÉ
KOLE**

TIPS...

The grand tradition started in Book II of supplying you with simple, but "life saving" hints continues in Book III. Take, for example when your Head Chopper's sliding blade looks like this one. Chances are it's because the blade has slid down, hitting the "bang plates" (usually steel or aluminum that stop

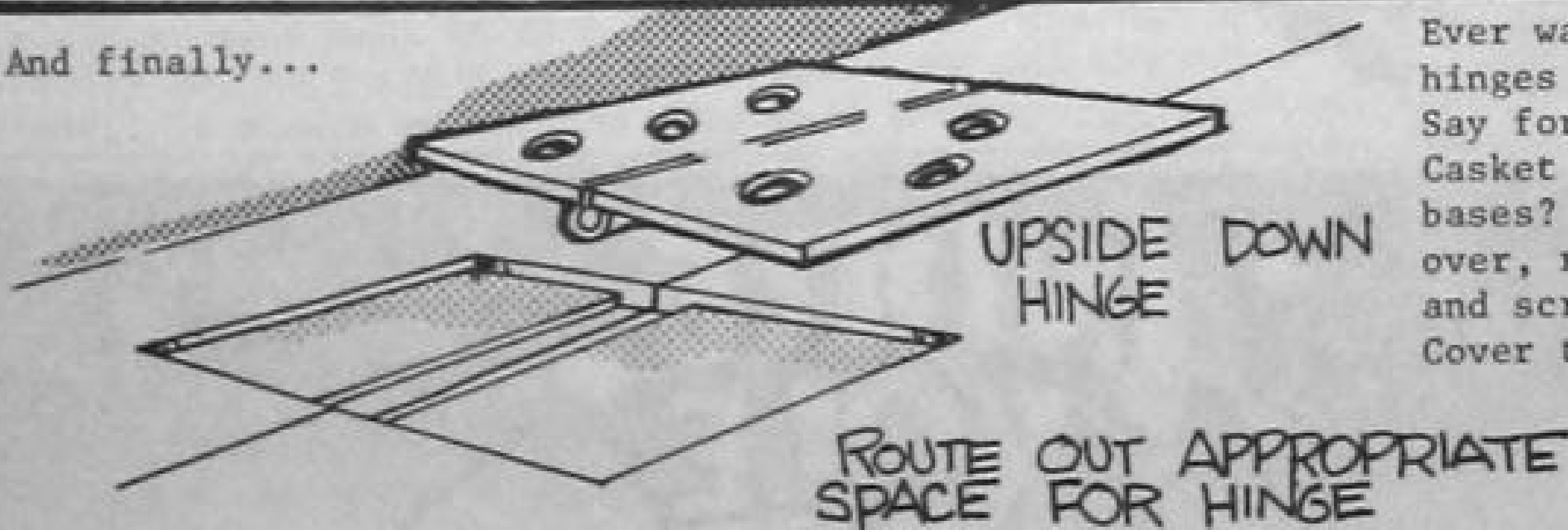
it) once too often, pulling out plates and screws. How do you fix it? The screw holes are no longer usable. The solution to this and other torn screw hole problems is a splice. Cut out the old ripped out section with a band or jig saw. Then glue and clamp a brand new insert. Try oak, so it will hold screws tighter this time.



Here's another splice you can do...



And finally...



Ever want perfectly flat hinges on trap doors? Say for the Crystal Casket or Doll House bases? Just flip them over, rout out the wood, and screw them down. Cover the traps with black felt and run your hand over it... Perfectly flat and smooth!



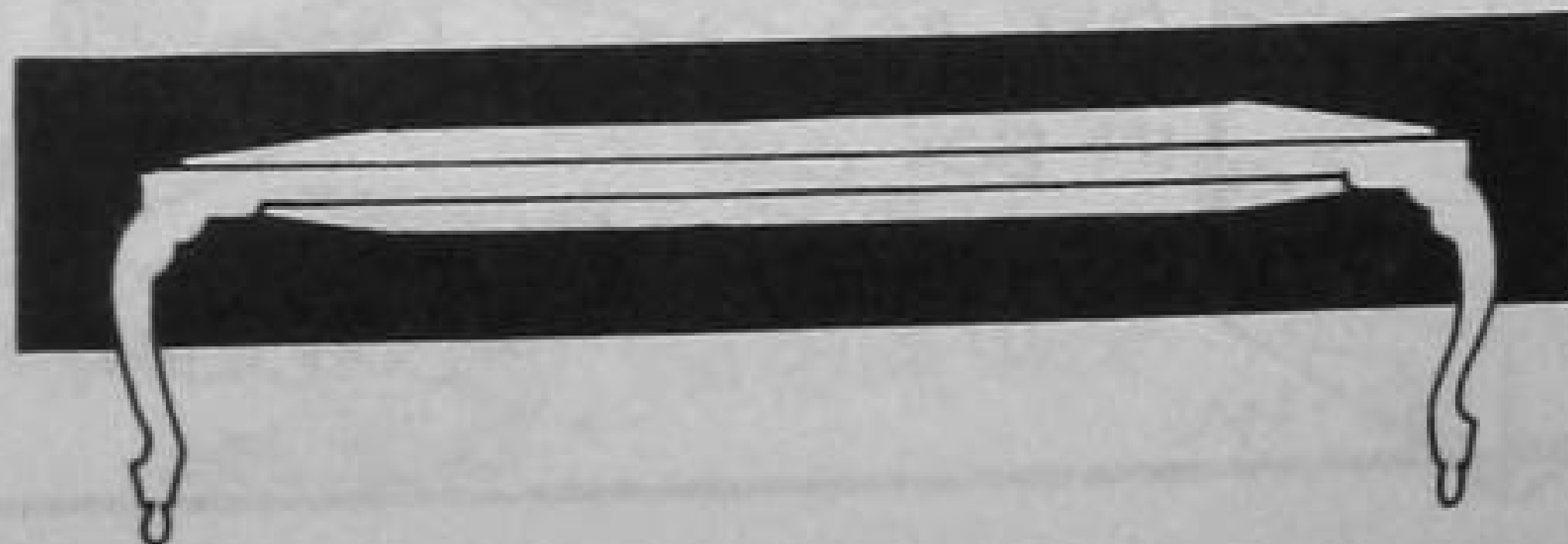
QUICKIES

In the world of illusion the simplistic is often overlooked. The big and showy props have their place, but practicality will always be utmost in the minds of most working pros. The following ideas are not new. I have updated and revised the initial concepts to give them a fresher appeal but, rest assured, they all like most illusions have roots.

In many ways I hope this chapter will open your eyes with respect to presentation. All of us are guilty in one way or another of putting too much time and thought into our props, leaving the presentation to take care of itself. Because these props are the bare bones, once you get them built I believe you'll be pleasantly surprised to find the many presentation opportunities available to you. Don't be afraid of the "sneak on" props like the Toy Box Miracle and the Costume Case. So much can be done with this concept. I have had terrific results with these simple props. Remember we are not just magicians...we are entertainers, and the bottom line is audience reaction. All of these quickies are designed to give you maximum audience reaction with a minimum output on your part.

If you're beginning to add bigger props to your act, you may want to consider these. If you're beginning to build your own props, this is an ideal chapter for the novice craftsman. If you have to have a quick new prop for an upcoming show, all of these should require no more than ten to twelve hours to construct. But most importantly, these props can be transported, rehearsed, performed and stored easily. You can even think of them as the disposable props because you won't have a major investment in these and you can constantly repaint, retheme and modify to fit your changing presentation needs. And once you've performed them for just about everybody who's going to see them, discard them with no guilt attached because you will have probably made back many times over your initial investment.

If you take a serious look at that garage woodpile, I'm sure you'll find one or more of these props just waiting to be born and just think, you can tell your wife you're cleaning out the garage! I can think of no better place to start an illusion book than with a few basics. So warm up that cup of coffee, sit down and think about how one of these "quickies" would look in your act!



TOY BOX MIRACLE

This one can actually be made out of cardboard boxes. It travels easily and may be just the illusion for you to add to your two person illusion show!

As shown box #2 should be around 3' x 3' x 3'. Box #1 should be slightly larger. Both boxes should have tops and bottoms removed. It is also suggested that the edges and corners be reinforced with tape. Box #2 has a 28" x 28" square hole cut in the back as indicated in figure #2. The boxes can be decorated quickly with contact paper to represent giant toy blocks.

Performing the trick is almost as easy as making it. Below sets #1 through #4 indicate the performance. Make sure your angles check out and no one can see behind the boxes. As with any illusion, you want to allow plenty of rehearsal time, but I think you'll find for all involved this is one of the easiest props to build, rehearse, perform, transport and store.

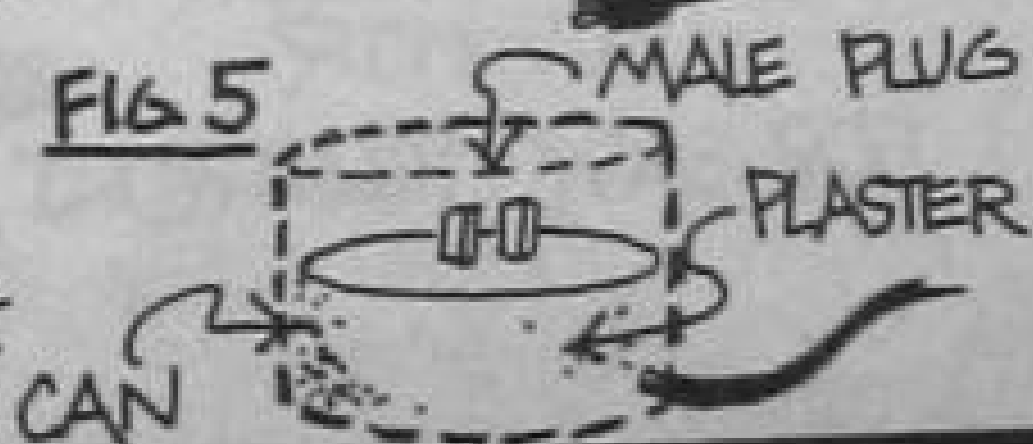
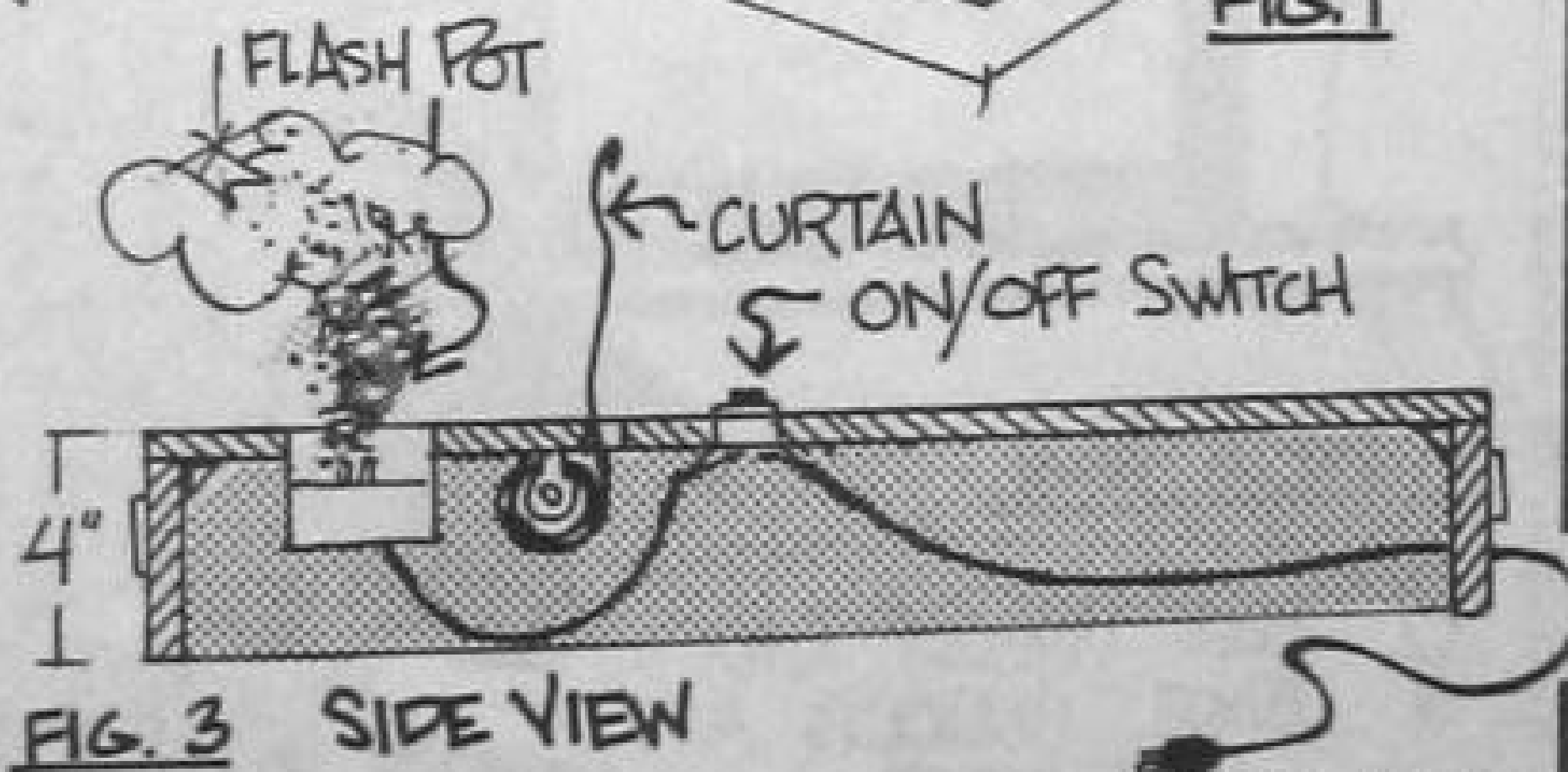
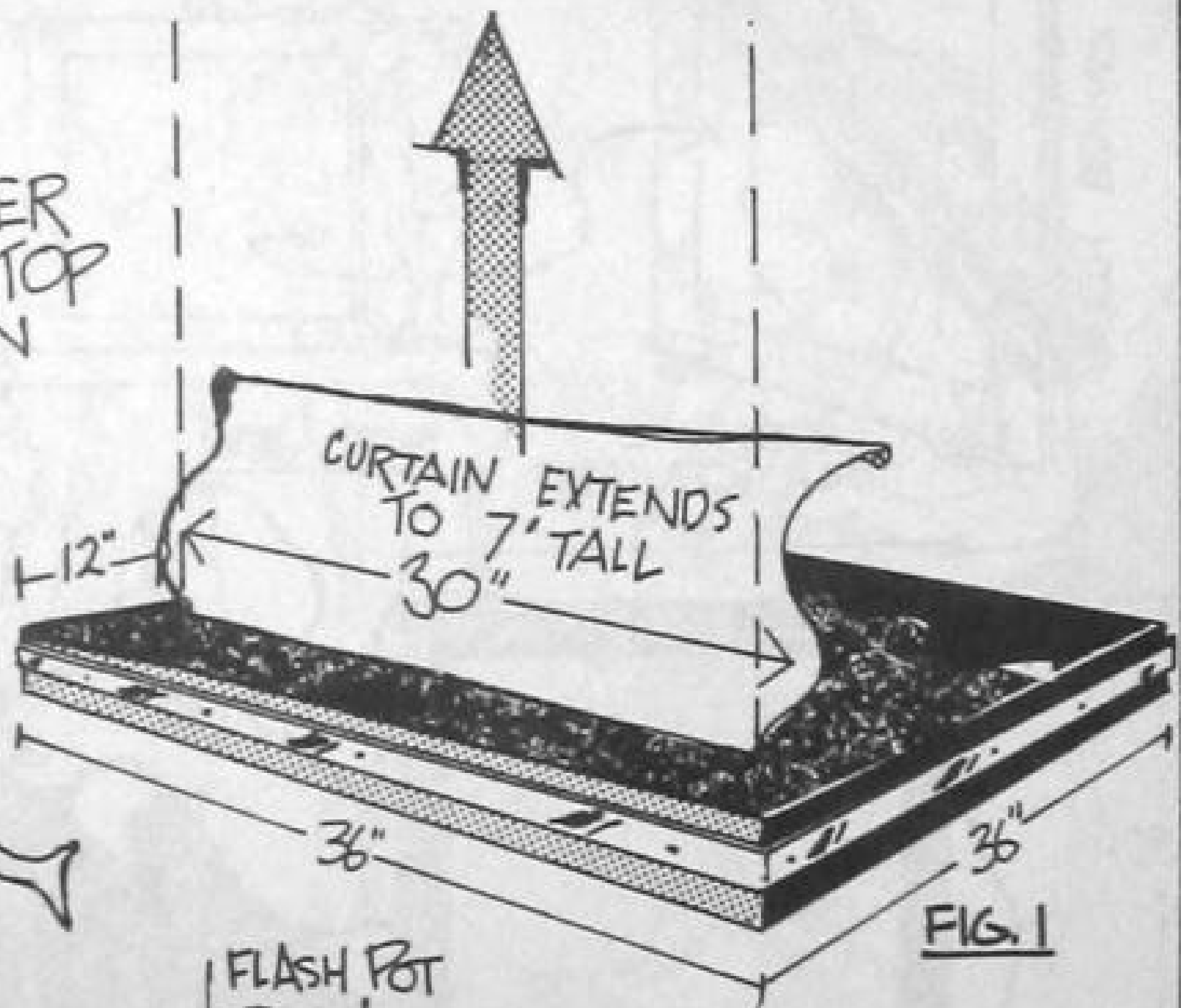


POOF!

Flash appearances have long been a magical way for a magician to make his entrance. This one can travel in your car's back seat and is just as easy to build. From 1/2" plywood construct a 36" x 36" x 4" platform. 12" back from the front cut a 1/2" slit 30 1/4" long. Beneath this, within the platform, mount the roller shade. As in Figure #4, crimp the catches in the roller shade so it won't stop. In front of the shade mount the flash pot as drawn in Figure #5. Wire it into an on/off button. This entire assembly is shown in Figure #3. To perform, the magician crouches behind the roller shade as his assistants stand on either side. At the appropriate time the magician hits the switch igniting the flash pot, stands up and releases the curtain. The assistants drop their arms and the miracle worker steps down to receive his applause. This is performed in front of a black backdrop and dimmer lighting gives a more magical atmosphere.

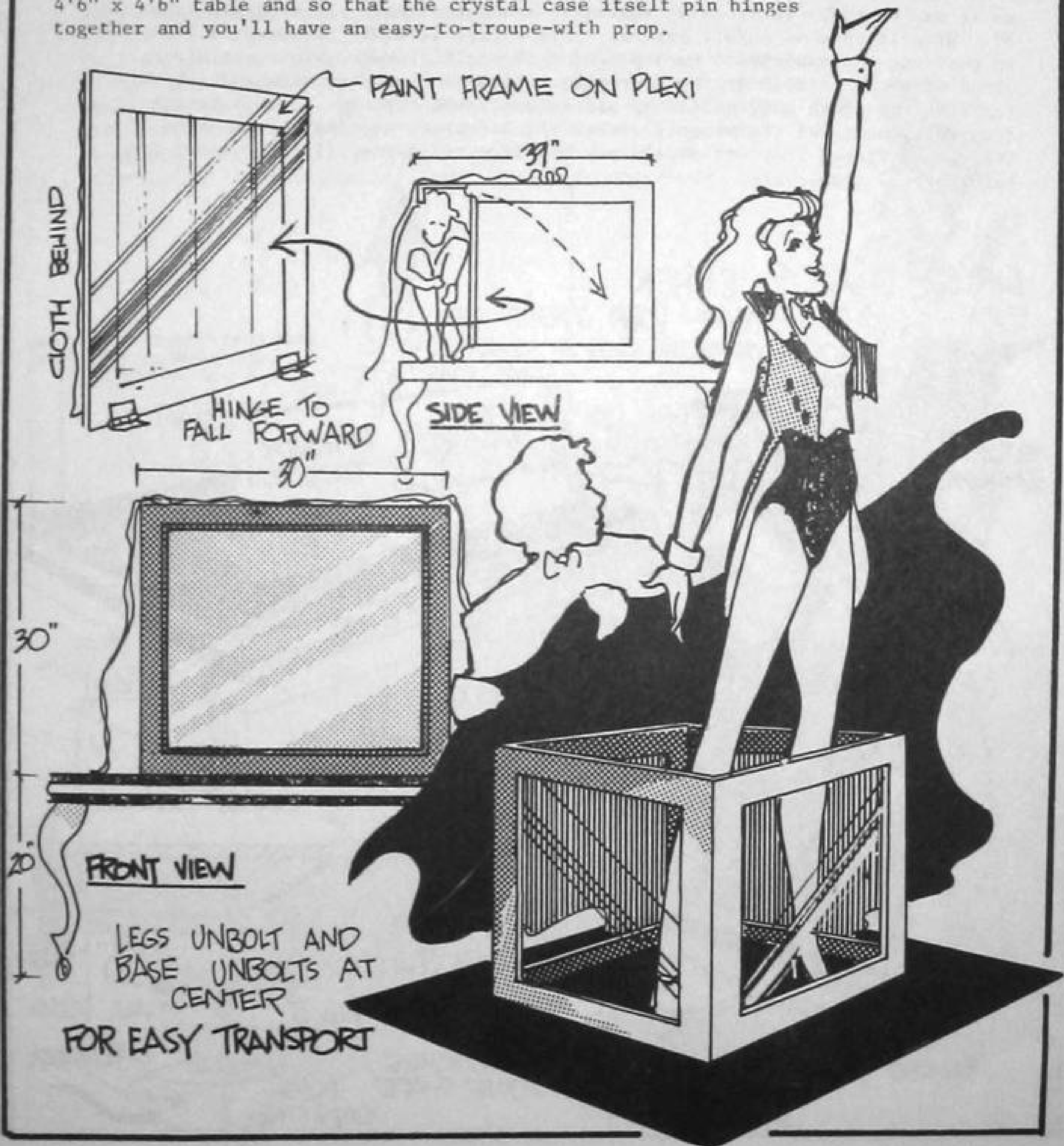
GIRLS STAND TO EITHER SIDE - ARMS MASK TOP OF CURTAIN

BLACK BACKDROP



CRYSTAL CASE

This is little sister to the Crystal Casket. The 30" x 30" x 30" case is a 1" x 3" framework with clear plexiglass walls. The back panel is clear plexi with painted framework. In back of it attach matching cloth. This entire assembly is hinged to fall within the case. The girl hides behind this gimmick wall. Once the cloth covers the entire case, the girl drops the wall and slides within the case. Once the magician makes his magical pass, the cloth is whisked away, the lid removed and the girl makes her magical appearance! Make this one so the legs unbolt from the 4'6" x 4'6" table and so that the crystal case itself pin hinges together and you'll have an easy-to-troupe-with prop.



the FLOWER GIRL

Initially I believe this was a Robert Harbin idea. A small bush is momentarily displayed, covered and in its place a beautiful young lady appears. This illusion makes a startling first illusion. The concept is simple. The girl rests on a small 14" diameter platform as shown. Around her is a green cloth bag to which are attached feather flowers, leaves and garland. The bag velcros up the back. The pipe that holds up the platform nests and is covered with a cloth tube "bark". The girl breaks out of the velcroed "bush", disassembles the pipes and takes her place, ready to appear.



COSTUME CASE

Based on the popular Costume Trunk illusion, this version is much easier to build, transport and store. The flat case is opened and assembled on a thin base as the lid is displayed and put in place. Several cards representing costumes hanging on a display rack are shown. An audience member selects one and the representative costume is removed from the rack and placed in the small trunk. The magician instantly claps his hands and out steps his costumed assistant.

The cards are forced and the pre-costumed assistant crawls unseen from behind the costume rack through the two 20" tall by 1'6" wide trap doors in the back of the case. The 4'8" x 38" x 4" base is made from 1/2" ply. The case and lid are made from 3/8" ply with decorative straps and buckles applied. The sides of the case are hinged to fold in as per our drawing. While the assistant waits behind the rack, the entire case can be brought out and assembled on stage.



the SACRIFICE

by Masklyn ye Mage

If you've followed the writings and products of Masklyn ye Mage then you undoubtedly know he has been "seduced by the dark side of the force." Enjoy more of the Magik of Masklyn.

"Facing a richly draped altar replete with thurible, chalice and other arcane paraphernalia, stands the cowl-robed Magus, his arms raised in oblation. Silhouetted in the dancing illumination of his altar candles, he chants some time-lost litany as a white robed acolyte, carrying a lighted taper, enters and stations herself behind the chanting Magus. The invocation ends and the Mage turns to take the candle from the hooded girl and place it on the altar.



Returning his attention to his fair novice, he gazes hypnotically into her eyes as he makes cabalistic gestures about her, finally resting his hands upon her shoulders and placing a light kiss upon her lips. Suddenly there is a shower of sparks from the Mage's hands, a cry of terror from the girl, and her white robe falls to the floor-EMPTY! She has vanished. The sacrifice has been made."

METHOD

"Now for the secret of this bit of ritualistic mumbo-jumbo. The altar is a commodious four-legged table draped to the floor in some heavily pleated fabric. There is a vertical slit in the front center of these altar draperies which is concealed by the folds of cloth or pleats. Various instruments of the craft, i.e. bell, book and candle, dress the altar.

The ceremonial robe of the Mage is rather voluminous, (mine has a 90" bottom hem), and has the usual flowing sleeves. Similar to a Priest's cassock, it must have a deep rear vent (or slit) which due to the fullness of the "skirt" will not be noticed. It is belted with a heavy red cord. Personal preference will dictate whether or not it is coweled.

The neophyte's robe should be either white or a light pastel of some light weight fabric. It should not have a rear vent, but its sleeves should be somewhat too long and quite full and it must have a hood and trail on the floor.

A gimmick, fashioned out of thin piano wire, conforming to the GENERAL shape of the girl's shoulders and back of her head, is lightly "tacked" or sewn inside her robe. This gimmick should fit loosely upon her shoulders so she may slip easily out of it with a minimum of movement. At each shoulder is a small projection of the piano wire which the Mage may hook between his fingers to steady the form during presentation. This gimmick may be constructed from

light clothes hanger wire, but the lighter piano wire is by far more practical, though perhaps more difficult to handle during assembly. It is best to pre-form the wire before assembly and then modify it after soldering. (While the tendency is to make the form a definite head and shoulders shape, remember that it is merely to support the robe in a general suggestion of the head and shoulders.)

In donning the robe the girl does not put her arms inside the sleeves (it must be cut full to compensate for this), but rather simply enshrouds herself in it with the form resting on her shoulders. The front of the robe is held closed by the hand in which she holds the candle by pressing the material tightly against her body. The sleeve of the arm holding the robe closed is brought up and tucked around the bent arm inside the robe to appear natural. When the Mage takes the candle from her she drops this arm, releasing the sleeve and allowing the robe to fall open in the front. This is masked by the performer's actions of placing the taper on the altar.

Turning to face the girl again, the Mage makes some gestures of benediction over her head and then grasps her by her shoulders (actually he grasps only the wire form) as he intones some dedication as:

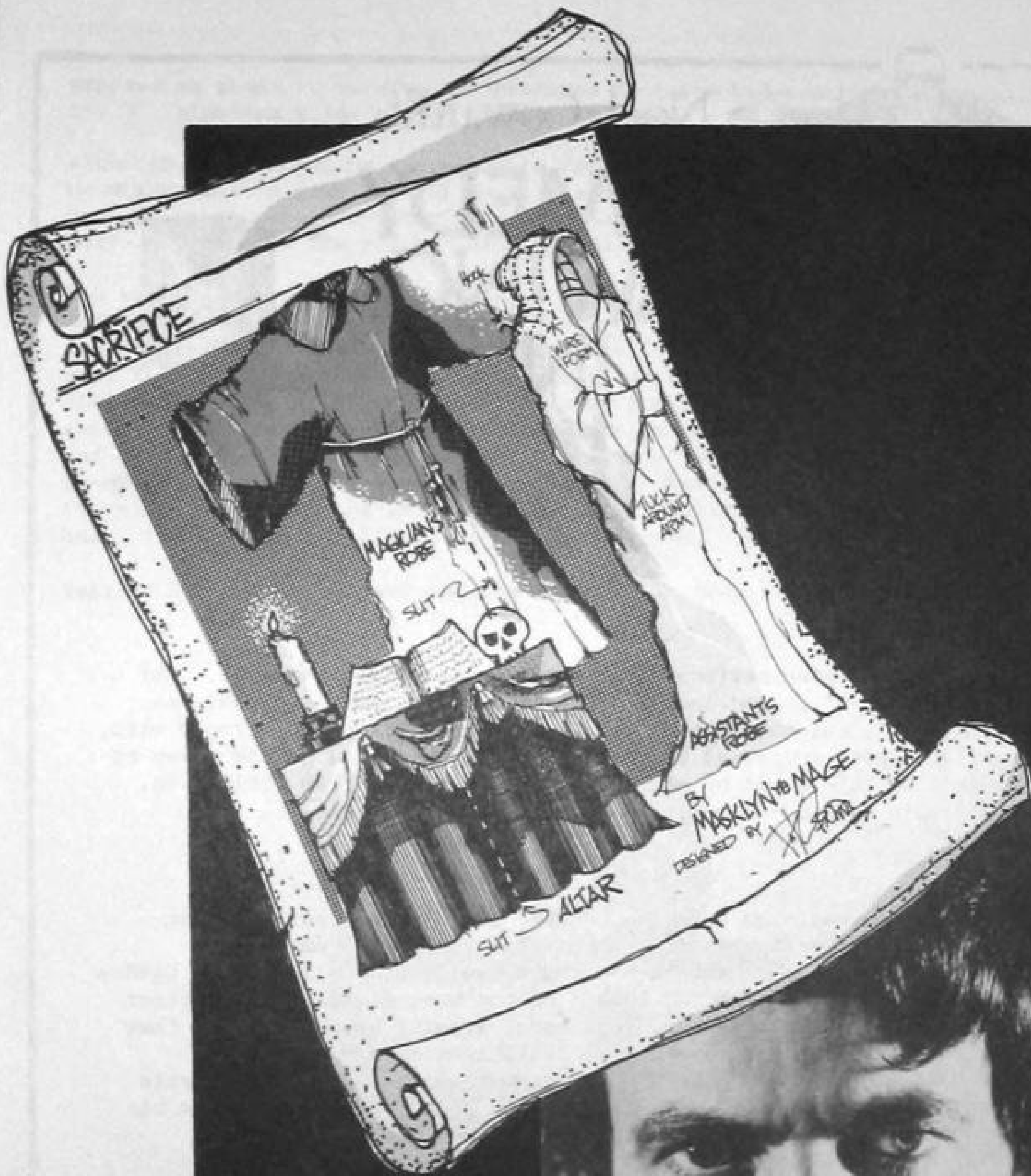
*'Mighty Watchers of the Cosmos,
I release this spirit unto Thy
keeping with The Kiss of Liberation
upon her lips.'*

By the time these words are spoken, the girl should have slipped down inside her robe and forward into the skirts of the mage's robe, between his legs and out the rear vent of his robe and into the altar, via the front slit in its draperies. Any tell-tale motion of her robe should be concealed by the Mage's pantomiming implanting a kiss on her lips. Also the flowing sleeves of the Mage's robe conceal any side angle problems. Once she is securely ensconced inside the altar, the Mage looses a Cosmic shower of sparks and drops the form and robe to the floor as the girl screams.

The 'Cosmic shower' of sparks? Simply two FunkenRings - which the Mage engaged, one on each hand, as he placed the acolyte's candle upon his altar, and which he loses in the folds of her robe as he gathers it up from the floor, being careful to bunch it around the form to conceal it also.

NOTE: A 'FunkenRing' is similar to the joker's Joy Buzzer but emits a shower of flint sparks in place of sound. Obtainable in most decent magic shops."





MASKLYN
Ye
MAGE





INTRODUCTION

When I first saw this illusion performed, it came as a complete surprise. For those of you wanting to add a good laugh and an illusion to your act, this may be just the thing. It's not terribly difficult to build, perform or troupe with, and I think you'll be most surprised at the combined mystery and comedy value of this prop. So join me in a round of applause for our friends from Midlothian, Texas, Noel and Stella Coward - who perform this illusion so well!

EFFECT

Performing to music, the magician gestures for the curtain to open. Sitting center stage is a long, mysterious box. A beautiful young girl enters, is hypnotized, and then laid to rest within the box. Two long, "solid steel" blades are introduced and thrust down into the center of the box, dividing the cabinet and the lady in half. The two boxes are separated, proving beyond a doubt that truly great magic has been created here! Two assistants come on stage and remove the head half of the illusion. The magician beckons for the assistants to return to remove the foot half. They do not come so the magician shrugs his shoulders, reaches down and tips the foot half over onto the occupant's protruding feet...and off it walks under its own power.

METHOD

Of course, throughout the entire trick your second female assistant is hidden within the foot box. When the first assistant is placed within the illusion the open lids hide the fact that she immediately folds into the head section box and base. This process is a staging procedure that can be worked out with your own tastes in mind.

The basic prop is easily made with the box sides made from 3/8" ply, supported by one corner block in each corner. The base is made from 1/2"ply with pipe and decorative legs screwed on. Hanging from the top lip of the base is a 5" velvet drape plus fringe to hide the thickness of the base. The corner blocks extend down into the base and bolt into position. These blocks are very important since they not only provide needed strength, but they are also

grooved as shown to receive the head and foot stocks as well as the blades. Notice the 3" aluminum guide plates screwed in place.

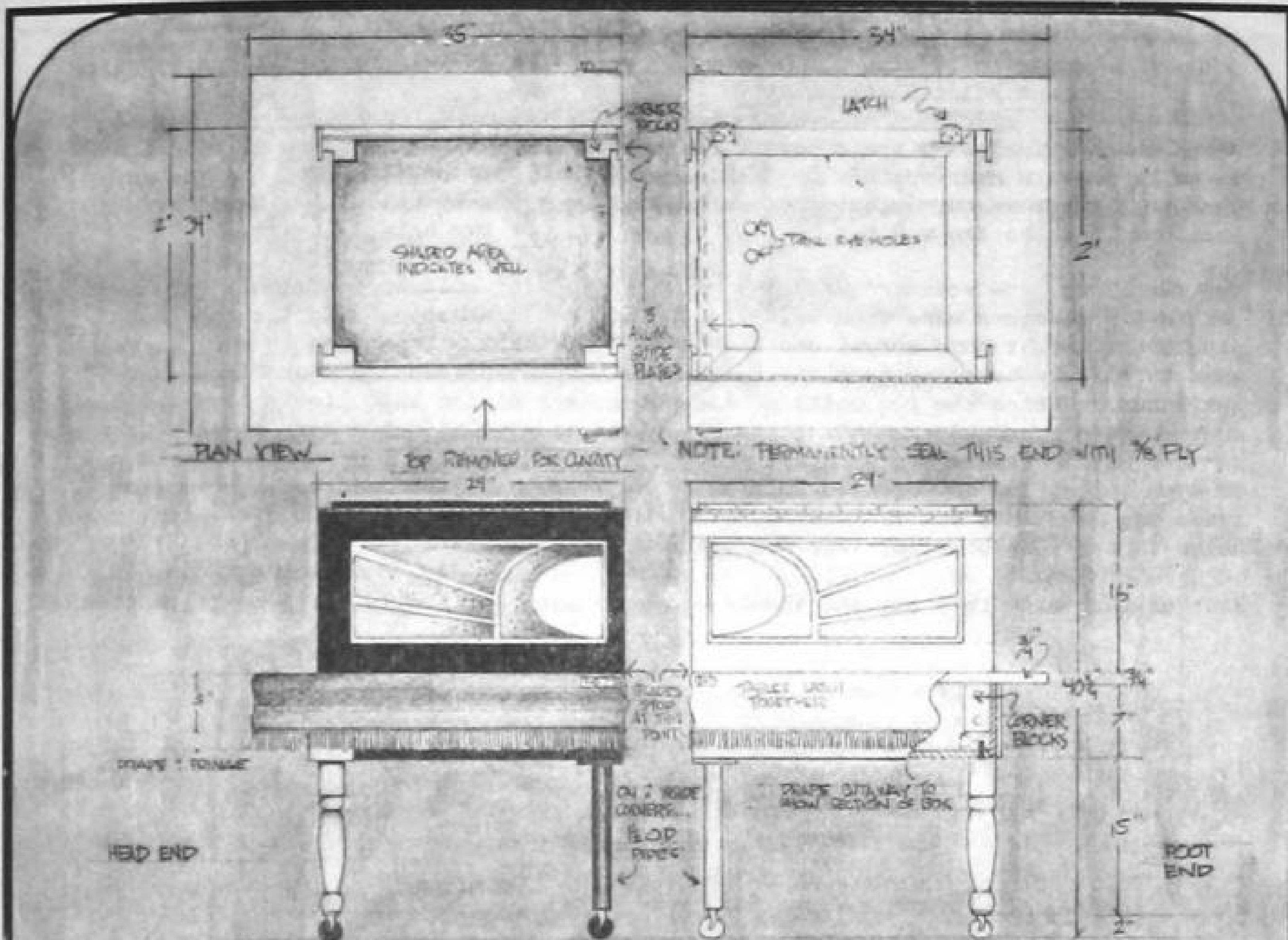
Although the dimensions are accurate reflecting Mr. Coward's version of this prop, we might want to mention that he is blessed with a very petite wife. So you may want to first test our interior dimensions of each box by building a cardboard mock-up. Chances are you may have to add an inch or two here or there.

The two blades are standard, made as shown from 1/16" polished aluminum. The head and foot stocks are made from 1/2" ply, cut to our dimensions. Notice the foot stocks are larger than normal and backed by black felt. Depending on angles, you may want to already have the foot stock in place before introducing your "to-be-sawed" assistant. Notice the two units do latch together at the base line. Also the foot section is permanently sealed at the blade end so your hidden assistant is protected and can have a stable top when she walks out. One other thing you may want to add is some spring loaded cupboard door locks to keep the blade and foot stocks from traveling when this box is "walking off". Finally, don't forget to drill tiny eye holes in the foot box lid...for obvious reasons.

Best of luck with this one and thanks again to Noel and Stella for a terrific idea!



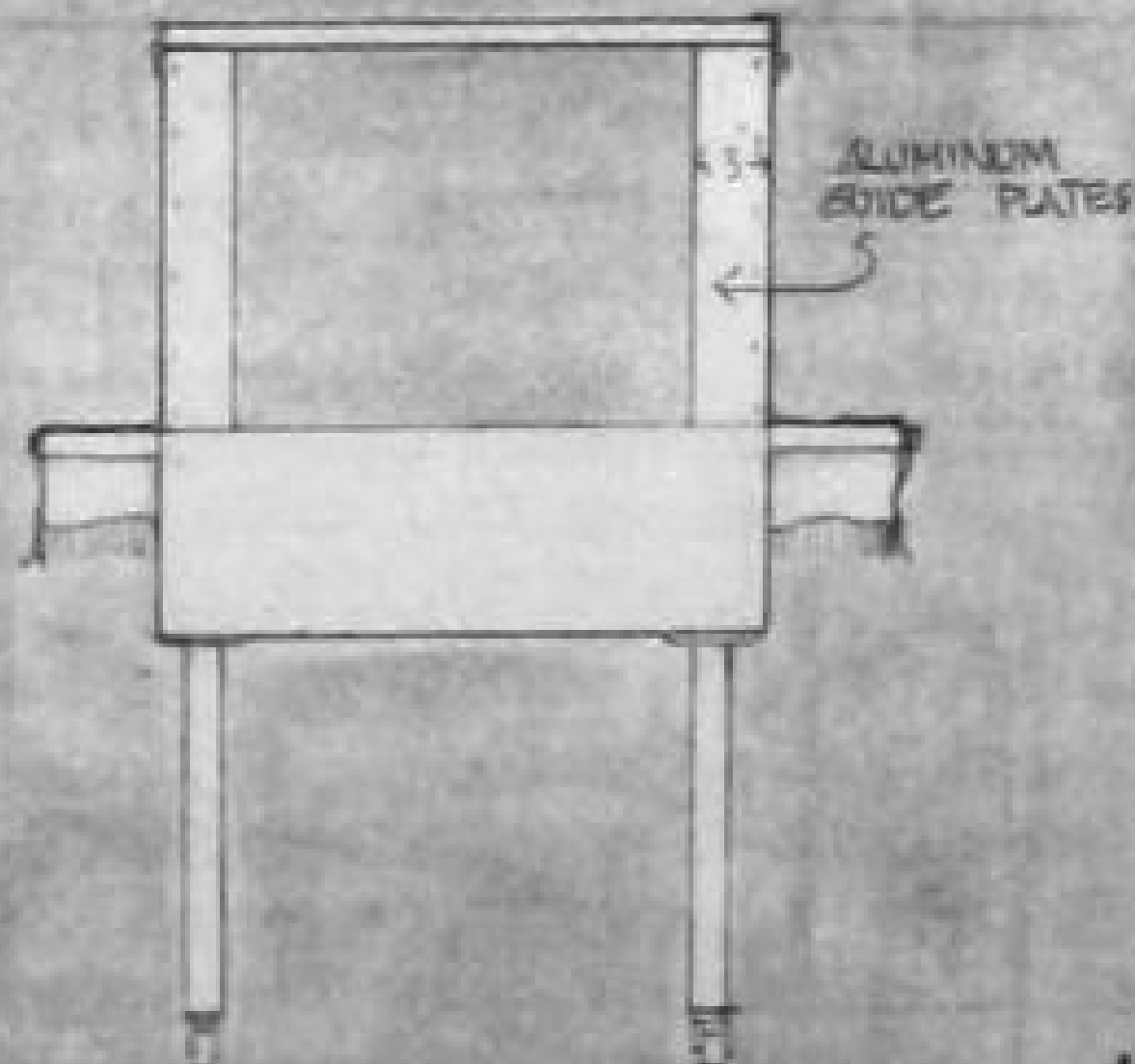
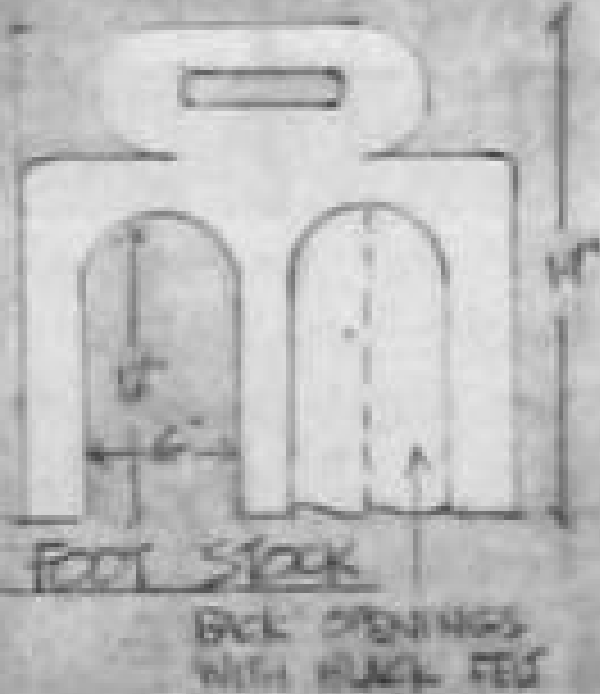
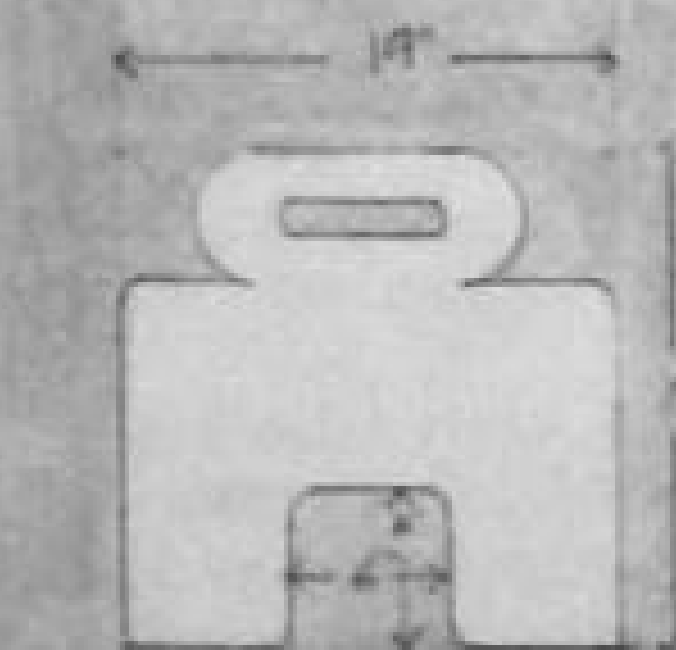
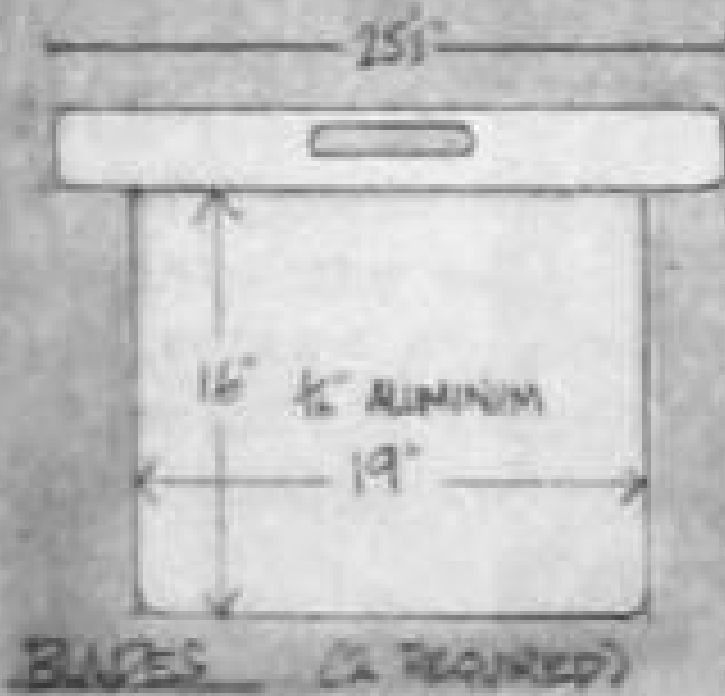
Noel and Stella Coward



FRONT ELEVATION
BOXES SEPARATED

NOEL COWARD'S
COMEDY
SAWING A WOMAN IN 1/2

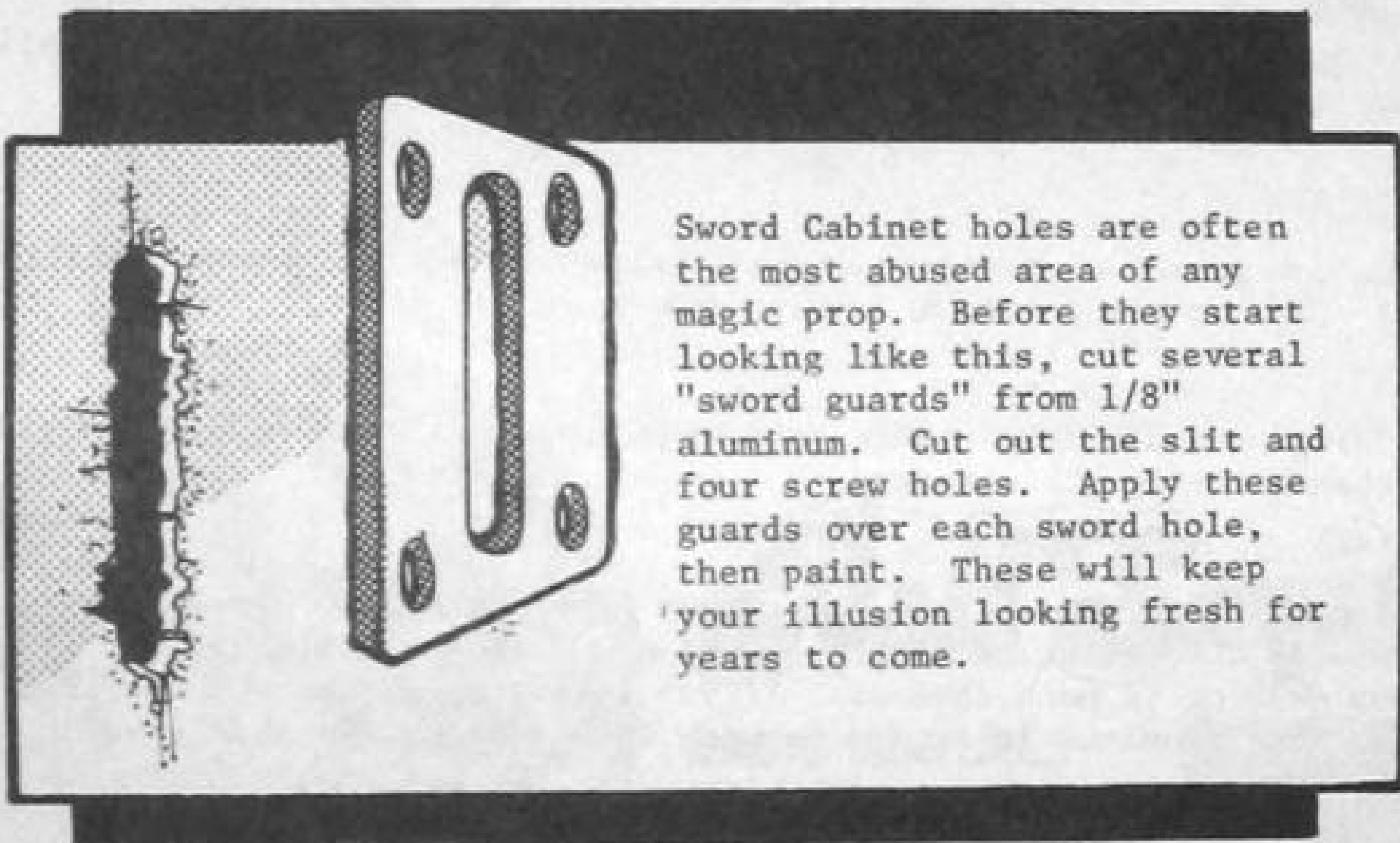
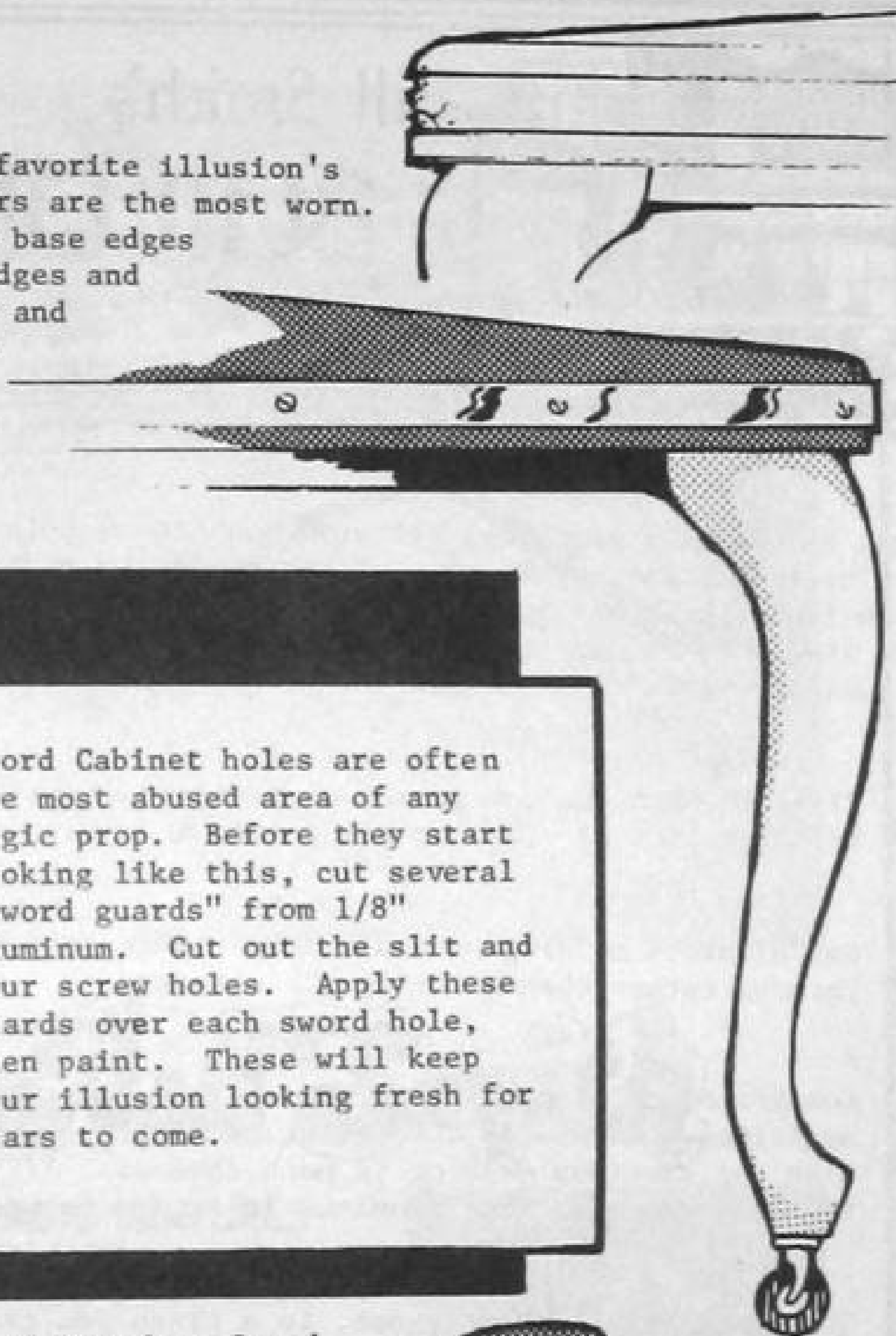
DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE '83
SCALE: 3/4" = 10" 1" = 10"



Paul Osborne
83

TIPS...

Take a look at your favorite illusion's base. Chances are its corners are the most worn. That's because, in most cases, the base edges extend farther than any point so edges and corners are the first to hit walls and door frames. Protect your prop by immediately adding decorative silver or gold aluminum trim if it doesn't already have it.



Sword Cabinet holes are often the most abused area of any magic prop. Before they start looking like this, cut several "sword guards" from 1/8" aluminum. Cut out the slit and four screw holes. Apply these guards over each sword hole, then paint. These will keep your illusion looking fresh for years to come.

Got a saggy, creaky, just-before-coming-undone Sword Basket? Stop by your local full-service hardware store or marine boat center. Pick up some fiberglass resin and liquid hardener (normally used for boat or auto repairs). Mix it up as per the instructions and paint the inside of your prop. Let harden, air out thoroughly and you'll have a revitalized durable prop!





Bill Smith's

BUILDING TIPS

Bill Smith has a practical illusion background both backstage and on stage. Not only has he been assistant to many of the greats in magic, but Bill's custom props have also found their way into the hands of today's most contemporary wonder workers. Bill has kindly taken some time away from his shop to jot down these important tips in illusion construction:

- "Instead of slotted screws, use hardened drywall screws. They are cheap, phillips' head for easy driving, no pilot hole necessary and extremely strong.
- Use aluminum molding around all base edges and legs. It is better to bend around corners rather than mitering the corners.

Concerning moldings: I prefer anodized or brushed aluminum. Even though most magicians like flashy chrome, it is a pain to clean and causes a distracting glare.

- Also the aluminum molding is much cheaper. If you insist on chrome you can have aluminum chromed. The aluminum is easier to work with and lighter than steel.

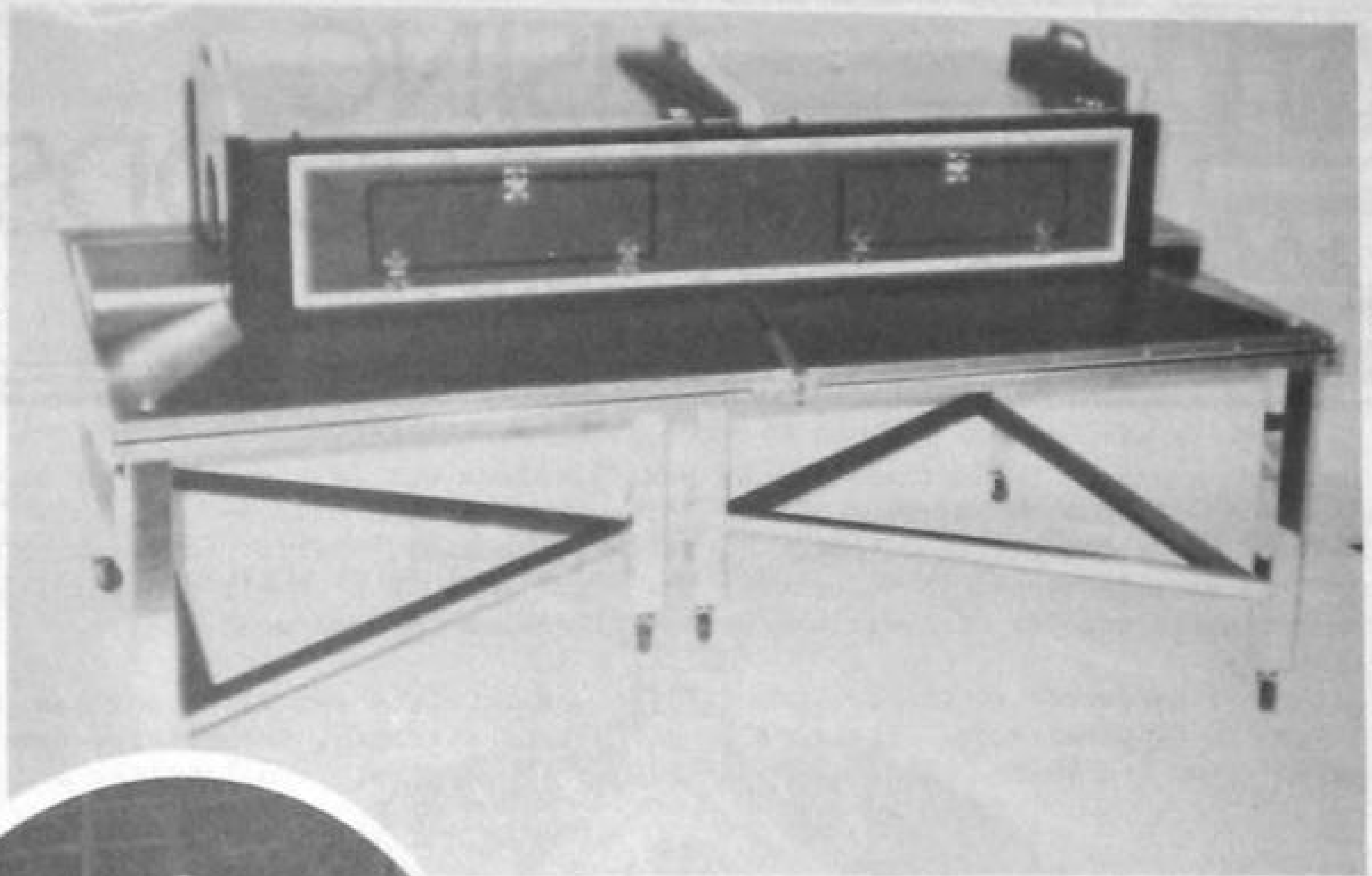
- Concerning touch-up of props, in a pinch you can use felt pens. They are now available in a wide variety of colors. I sometimes just use spray cans and spray a little paint in the cap and apply with a touch up brush.

Regarding casters, make sure casters are always bolted on. Most of the time casters take more punishment than any other part of a prop. Make sure you use a size of caster that can handle the weight of the illusion and assistant inside. Shepard casters are nice looking but on heavy props may break down.

- For cleaning out the inside of illusions, get a Black and Decker cordless Dustbuster. It is small and powerfull. "

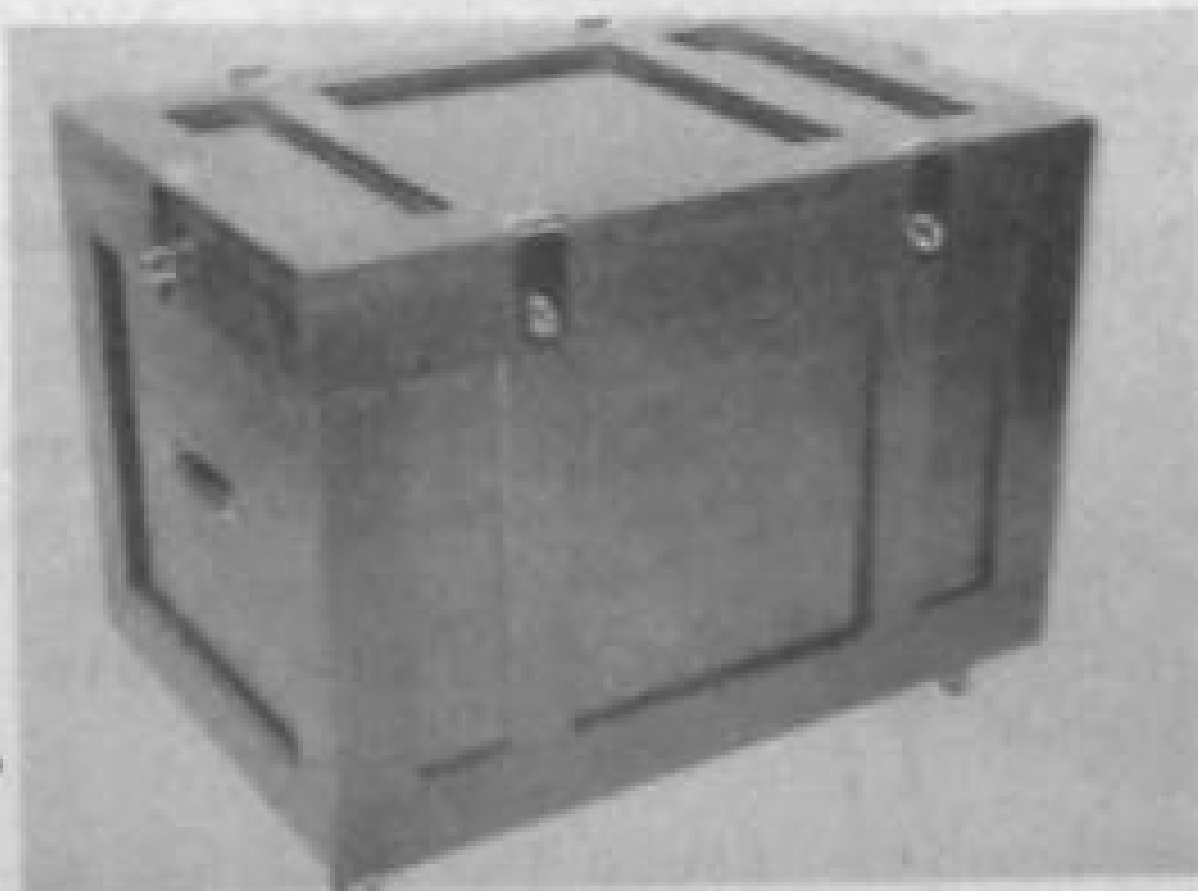
- T-nuts should be used instead of regular nuts. They are stronger and you are able to take apart something without having to deal with a loose nut.

- If you are building props a handy item to have is a cordless drill. No cords to deal with and are great for getting into corners of bases."

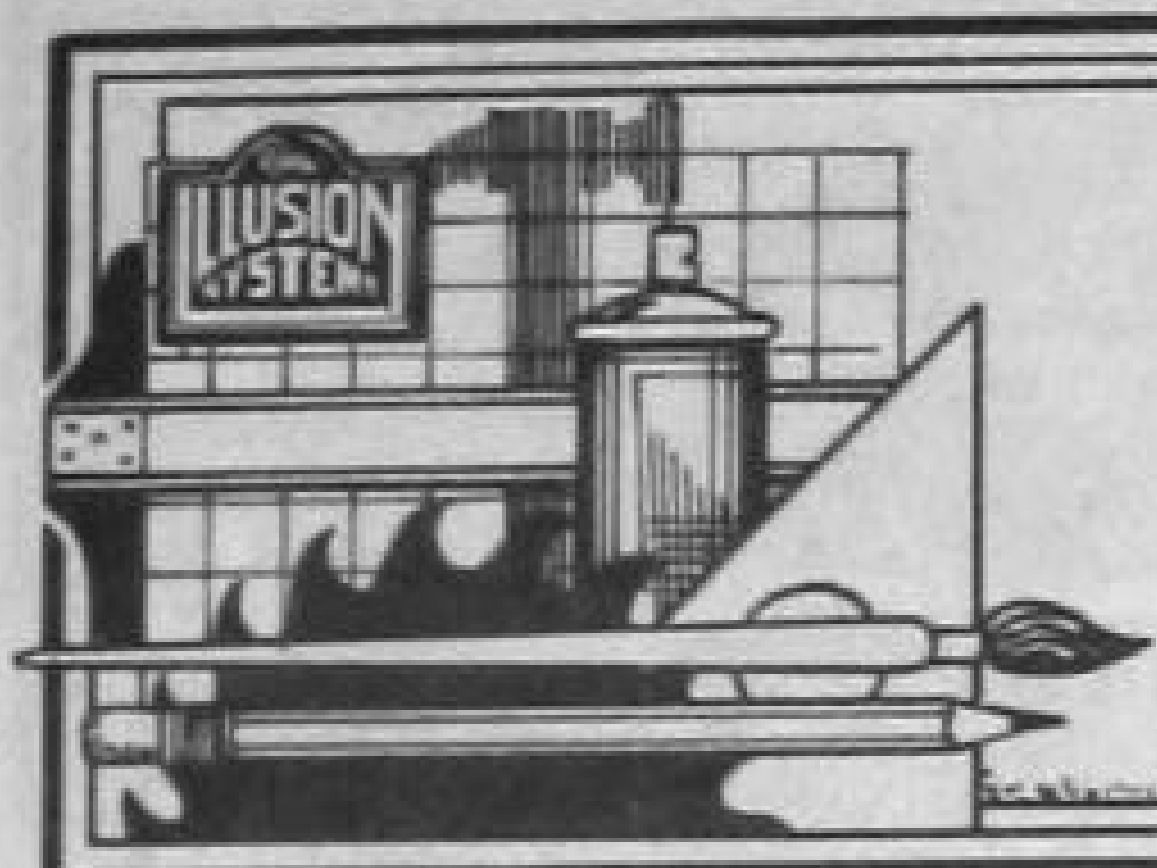


Bill Smith

MAGIC VENTURES
7890 E. SPRING ST. # 23-C
LONG BEACH, CA. 90815



From his California studios Bill Smith has built illusions and special effects for some of today's most respected performers. Harry Blackstone, Lance Burton, Abb Dickson, Doug Henning, Mark Kalin, Andre Kole and Orson Wells have all utilized Bill's expertise



USING HARDWOODS

by Scott Davis

"Most magical craftsmen build their tricks and illusions out of plywood. But another alternative is the use of hardwood lumber. Thayer, Owen and Milson-Worth have manufactured beautiful pieces of magic in walnut, mahogany, cherry and rosewood -- effects that have increased in value over the years because of their fine craftsmanship and the aesthetic quality of their exquisitely finished natural wood.

But the use of hardwoods in the construction of magic tricks and illusions has several advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include strength, durability, ease of working and fine finishing. The disadvantages include weight, availability and expense.

The weight consideration is an important one, especially in the building of illusions that must be transported from engagement to engagement. Though hardwoods are extremely strong, they are heavy. Often pieces of an illusion can be built using hardwood lumber - legs, pillars, door frames - while the rest of the illusion is made from hardwood plywood. Quarter-inch, half-inch and three-quarter inch plywood is available in birch, mahogany, walnut and oak. Often these must be edged with veneer or solid lumber, but they finish beautifully at a great reduction in weight.

Another alternative is to have your hardwood lumber milled down to smaller thicknesses - half-inch or even quarter-inch. This can be expensive, however, if you don't own your own planer, and results in a great deal of wasted wood.

For smaller projects such as card boxes, silk cabbies and other parlor tricks, you can often obtain nicely milled pieces of walnut, cherry and mahogany from your local well stocked hobby shop. Many carry two-foot lengths of hardwood in various thicknesses from one-sixteenth to one-quarter inch. You can also purchase this kind of 'miniature builder's' lumber through the mail from Northeastern Scale Models, Inc., P.O. Box 425, Methuen, Ma. 01844. They will send you a catalogue listing dimensions and prices. Unfortunately, most of the hobby lumber is only three or four inches wide, and must often be glued together to make wider sections for magic tricks.

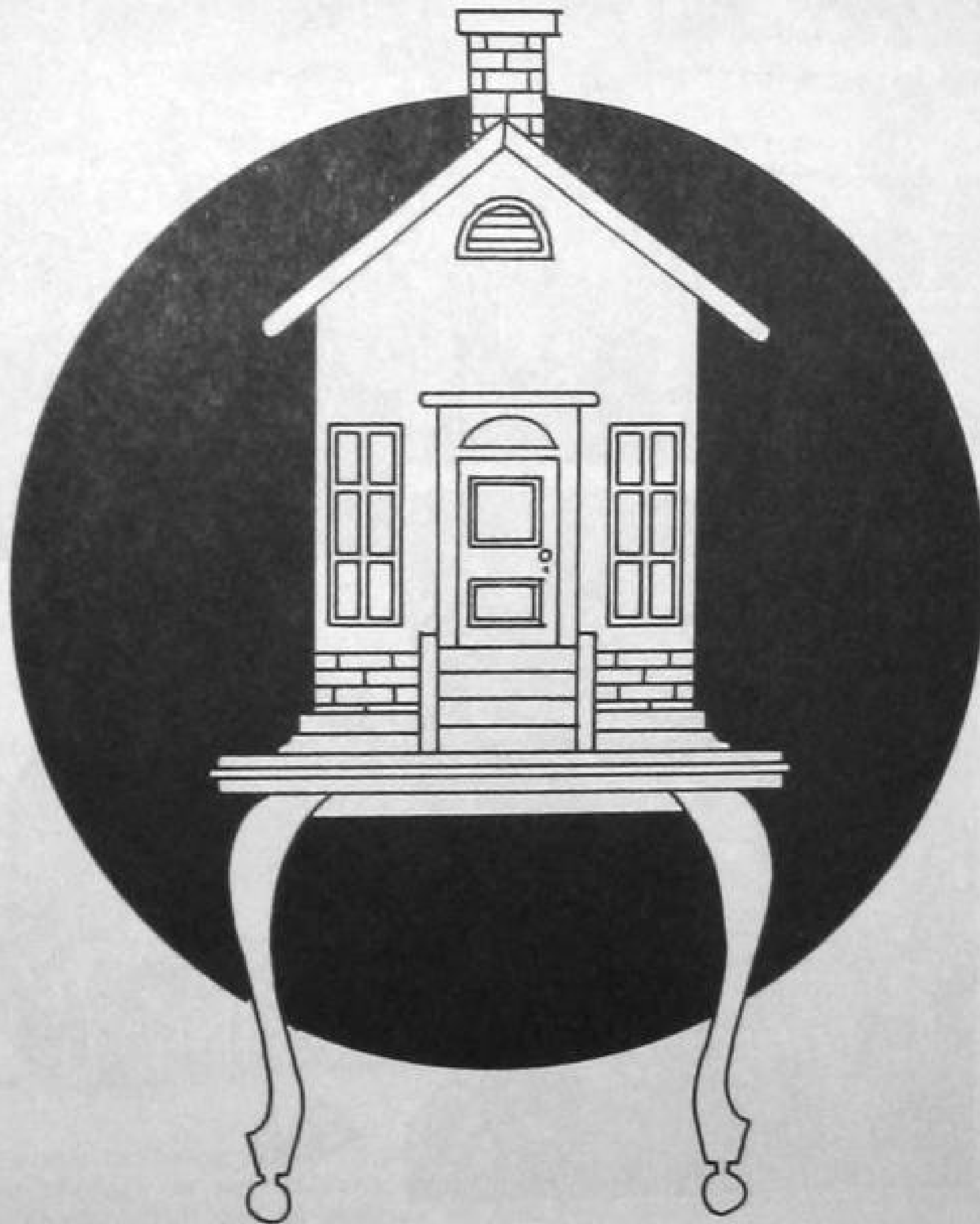
The construction of tricks and illusions out of hardwoods requires precision, care and patience. Because the wood is expensive, you want to be very accurate in measuring and cutting. Be sure your cutting tools are sharp and true. Carbide or carbide-tipped saw blades and router bits will give you cleaner, smoother cuts and retain their sharpness longer than steel cutters.

Cutting joints in hardwoods should be taken very seriously. Since you will not be painting most tricks you build with hardwoods, you want to protect the surface from scratches and nicks, and the joints from being sloppy and loose. Mistakes are very hard to cover up and patching with wood filler, even the wood-matched kind, is rarely successful. So joints and critical fittings should be cut with great care and accuracy. Use yellow carpenter's glue and be sure to wipe off all excess with a

damp cloth. This is absolutely essential! Any residual glue will seep into the grain and destroy your finish. And finally, if you use screws or nails, be sure to drill pilot holes to avoid splitting or cracking your handiwork.

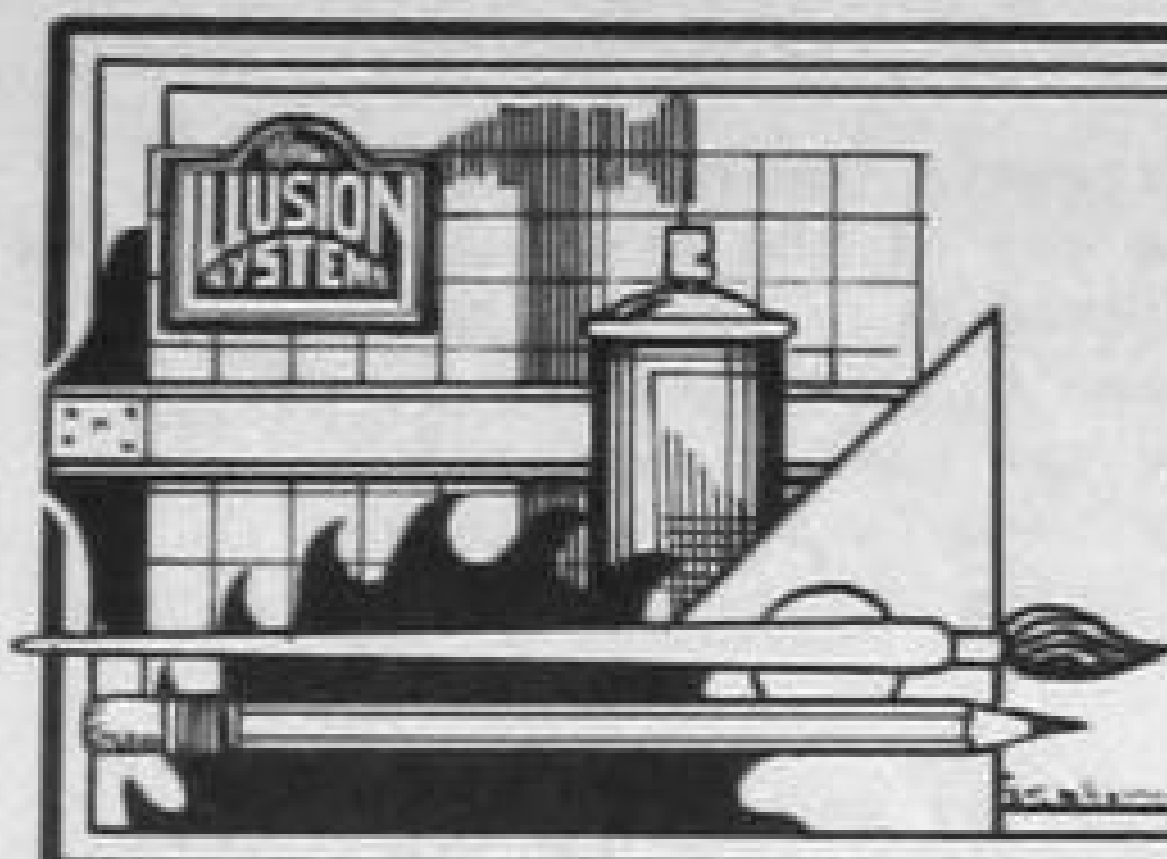
The final stage in building with hardwoods is finishing. And this is where hardwoods such as walnut, cherry and rosewood take on their real beauty. Hardwoods can be sanded to an exceptionally smooth surface, using finer and finer grades of sandpaper. The surface to be finished should then be vacuumed and wiped down with a tack cloth to remove all traces of dust. The wood should then be stained with a quality oil-base stain to avoid raising the grain. When the stain had dried thoroughly in a dust-proof environment, you can top it with varnish or an oil finish such as Minwax Antique Oil Finish. This product is one of the easiest methods of finishing both bare or stained hardwoods. It goes on simply and dries to a hard, soft-lustre finish which is easy to care for and simple to restore - simply wipe on another coat of the finish.

Though requiring a bit more care and a bit more time, the building of things magical out of quality hardwoods can be a very rewarding experience, producing tricks that will last a lifetime; gaining value and beauty through the years."



DOUG ANDERSON
MAGICAL ENTERTAINER





PERFORMING ILLUSIONS

by Doug Anderson

As you and your assistants begin performing illusions, expect bruises. There is really not any way around it until you get used to the prop. When I was practicing the DeKolta Chair, the undersides of my arms and back looked like Bruce Lee had been using me for a punching bag! To minimize these take vitamin C or drink lots of orange or pineapple juice. Do this prior to and during rehearsals.

When doing a show, it is best to cross train your assistants in all aspects of the show. If one of your assistants for a critical part (i.e. Sub Trunk exchange) gets sick, you will still be able to do the illusion if another assistant knows how. Assistants will also develop short cuts to do their backstage job more efficiently. Make sure they pass this on to other assistants to avoid problems.

Here's a few more thoughts I've picked up along the way:

Magicians, if your assistants want to try something new in the show, let them if it shows good judgement. Try it for several shows and, if it works, stick with it. I had an assistant at Cypress Gardens dream about a different way to do the Sub Trunk. Tina told me about it and we tried it to a great success. It required us to both be faster during the exchange, but that is what it takes to be on your way to becoming a great magician instead of just a good one. All because of a dream.

Good reading for any magician is the Magician's Assistant Handbook by Jan Jones. Be sure and let your assistants read it too! Also for the magician is Showmanship For Magicians by Darel Fitzke. When I first got the book, I threw it against the wall, screaming he didn't know what he was talking about. As I grew older and wiser, I realized the opposite is true. It was a hard pill to swallow (pride), but now that book is one of my favorites.

Good reading for a magician and the carpenter he chooses (if any) are the many Paul Osborne books. They teach magicians how to think like carpenters and carpenters how to think like magicians.

Minor horseplay during a show is, in my opinion, very valuable. It helps keep performers happy and new ideas are often brought out by it. The greatest compliment we have received is, "You looked like you were having such a great time up there. How do you do so many shows without getting bored with it?" What they don't see and realize is that someone taped a Gumby doll to the back of the Sawing In Half illusion or that there is a Smurf doll between the fake feet on the Mismade Girl! Things like this, when they don't happen all of the time, can really help to break up the monotony of the show.

Once you begin building and performing your own illusions, be creative. I recently did a show through an advertising agency that did the advertising for a large hamburger chain. The second quarter of the year was going to be a state wide

promotion bringing all of the individual stores in California together. In the presentation we did the Mismade Girl and scotch taped a map of the state of California from the top to the bottom. The script read as we performed it: (apart) We are all individual stores. (mismade) Without organization we can't accomplish much. (back together correctly) If we work on this plan together we can have a successful marketing plan with happy results! A little creativity transformed a standard illusion into a powerful sales tool. The more you try being creative, the better you will become at it.

A common mistake some magicians make is thinking they already know how to do everything. People all over are willing to help you if they think you want to learn. It can be very frustrating when you try to teach someone something and they keep saying, "right, right" like they already know it. Acting like you know something will not help you learn because the teacher will assume you know. I like to pretend I am the pupil and the entire world is my teacher. When I performed close up at Six Flags Over Texas, I learned a really neat impromptu card rise effect from a four year old kid! I was 18. I learned a really neat behind the back toss for a linking ring to use in Whit Hayden's four ring routine from Danny Raynor. He is 14. As you can see, age doesn't always make a difference.

Make sure the props you make your living with are in excellent condition. I went to a theme park where they were doing a levitation. The couch to hide the gimmick had a big splotch of overspray on the front. Someone had touched up the black border and got the black paint on the multi-colored front. Not only did this show a lack of caution when using a spray (i.e. no masking), but also an attitude of not caring because one week later on a return visit, it still had not been cleaned off. Around 17,000 people saw that show in one week's time. Not a good reflection on the show. If you want a first rate show, make sure the things that are visible to the audience look first rate. I realize some of the things you can't be aware of while you are performing. If you don't have access to a video system, have friends watch the show and take notes. It can be a real pain in the behind to constantly repair or touch-up paint the props, but it is a job that must be done. When I managed and performed the illusion show for Cypress Gardens, I would clean everything each morning. It was not until I watched my day-off magician do the show that I realized I would have to start cleaning the plexi for the Crystal Casket every show. From the audience's view with spotlights on, fingerprints really show up. People at the 5:00 show payed the same amount as the people at the 11:45 show. They deserved to see as good of a show, so I cleaned the plexi after each show.

If I were asked to give one piece of advice on magic, it would have to be the following: Magic is Show Business. Business is the bigger of the two words. If you spend all of your time learning magic and no time learning the business, I seriously doubt if you will make it big. I don't particularly enjoy keeping a set of books, touch-up painting props, writing press releases, doing taxes, etc., but that is what I have to do to make it. "Do you want to do magic or do you want to make money?" "Well, I want to do both." "Which do you want to do the most?" "I want to make money, doing magic." And that is what I set out to do.

The following are bits and pieces that I have learned while performing illusions at Magic World in Tennessee, Cypress Gardens in Florida, Ringling Bros. & Barnum and Bailey Circus World in Florida and Marriott's Great America in Santa Clara, California. Approximately 4000 shows in four years for approximately one and a half million people. Experience in 40 major illusions:

If you produce two girls from the Crystal Casket (as per my method covered in Illusion Systems' Book II), the first produced might have trouble swinging into the

box. Have the girl in the base stick her finger up through the hole after the cover is down. This will serve as a guide for the girl climbing in to find the hole in the trap door. She can then use this as an anchor to pull herself in easily.

Rabbit To Girl: Have the lid only in the Crystal Casket, covered on all sides except the front. Put the rabbit in and pull the cover down. The girl climbs in first. Then as you spin the box she puts the rabbit in the base. Have the girl in the base hold the rabbit on a towel. This keeps her from getting scratched and urinated on if the rabbit is nervous. If he does urinate, clean with Pine-sol and let air out.

If you don't want to put the glass in on stage as part of your act and you still want to produce two girls from the Crystal Casket, put in all of the glass except the back. It will look like all of the glass is in from the audience view and you can still produce two girls.

For a newspaper Tear Apart Vanish or Shadow Box where we constantly had to replace the paper, we cut a stencil out of cardboard to size and traced it on appropriate paper. The newspaper was stored on two separate clip boards (three sizes of paper for Tear Apart.) The Shadow Box paper was, after being cut to size, rolled and stored in a mailing tube. When ready to use, an "X" perforation was made with a sewing implement called a tracing wheel. It was made from corner to corner and it made the paper break in the middle perfectly every time.

We put a small cloth pouch in the head box of the Mismade Girl to hold a party favor called a blowout. In the Mismade position the girl blew it at the magician for an added comedy bit.

If you have to replace Sawing In Half blade handles, make them long enough to reach the edge of the box. This will help to prevent the blade handles and the top of the box from getting chewed up. Instead of trying to route a line down the middle of the handle to slip the blade in, just bolt the blade to one side of the handle. They will last a lot longer that way.

If you perform the Sawing In Half frequently and use the same assistant, use shoes on fake feet the same size as the assistant wears. Switch the shoes so they will have approximately the same amount of wear look. It's a minor point, but people do notice a difference in the shoes.

If the Sawing In Half boxes don't fit snugly together and you don't use a saw, get 5/16" weather stripping and build it up to the desired thickness to hide the gap.

For the tickle bit on the Sawing In Half, the male assistant would pull the girl's hair as a signal. The same will work for the Cutting In Thirds.

Ever do a Mismade Girl and the girl couldn't get up through the two trap blades? I have. On top of the blade that stays with the bottom box, paint the word "bottom." The audience will never see it and it will help assure that the blades will be set correctly.

If you build an Indian Dove Chest, use bolts instead of screws on the hinges. Constant use will loosen the screws and bolts will hold long after screws fall out.

The biggest problem I have had with making a Sub Trunk is finding a hoop that is practical and inexpensive. For a good, lightweight, easily taken apart hoop for about \$4.00, go to a hardware store and look in the plumbing department. Get two 1/2" x 4' pvc pipes with both ends threaded, two 1/2" x 3' pvc pipes not threaded and four "L" connectors threaded on one end only. Screw the threaded ends of the connectors to the threaded ends of the pipe, then slip fit the 3' pieces. It will

hold tight enough without cement. This way it can be easily taken apart for shipping.

If the bottom falls out of an illusion base (i.e. Crystal Casket, Avoid The Crush), it can be easily repaired with Liquid Nails. It comes in a caulking tube and its usual purpose is to hold up paneling. After Liquid Nails is applied, use several screws to hold the base in place.

If you spray the curtain track for Assistant's Revenge with silicone, make sure you do not do this where you will be performing. The stage will become very slippery. It might seem stupid to mention, but I've seen two "professional magicians" do the exact thing.

If you have problems with a hood from a levitation robe falling down and getting caught between the gimmick and the couch, sew three or four bobby pins inside the hood near the front. These bobby pins will hold the hood to the front of the girl's hair.

If you have a Crystal Casket cover made, have the corners rounded off to prevent them from getting caught in the wheels. Reinforce the top where the curtain begins to drape. Those four corners will take the most abuse.

If you end your show with the Sub Trunk and a few people stay around and want to check out the trunk for trap doors - let them! Have the lid still on the floor behind the trunk and, as you are taking the shackles off, casually drop them and the locks on top of it. This is a psychological move and they won't even check the lid!

If you have a Hansel and Gretel type Owen's Doll House, trim off 1" where the two traps meet so the assistant won't run the risk of getting pinched. Replace the hanger bolts on the legs with lag screws and finishing nail tack the tops of the legs on. The hanger bolts will not hold up.

If you want to do the Girl To Lion quickly and still have a safety margin, have the girl scream for effect and as a signal when she is in the base (or steps). Also, hold the front curtain taught from left to right to avoid the tell-tale curtain flapping as the flap falls.

Replace the blocks of wood on Owen's Avoid The Crush with taller 4" x 4"s. You will have to drill more holes in the legs so you can install more screws for added strength. On the bottom of the 4" x 4"s attach heavy duty flat mount wheels. The blocks of wood and the ball-type casters couldn't handle the weight of the box, cage and two people all at the same time for more than 100 shows.

Plexiglass is very expensive and gets scratched easily. Before you check into buying new plexiglass for a Crystal Casket or a similar prop, get some jeweler's rouge and a buffing pad and attach the pad to a high speed drill motor. You can use this to buff a lot of scratches. Do not hold the buffing pad in the same place for too long at one time, or the heat build-up will warp the glass.

We had a problem with the curtain getting caught in the wire form for the Asrah. Our problem was timing. I had to pull the cover off completely before the form was whisked away to the ceiling.

Sometimes the girl might have a problem getting the fake feet set correctly on the Mismade. Attach pegs to the bottom of the feet and drill corresponding holes in the trap door if she doesn't have to move the feet as a part of the choreography. This will assure them being straight and looking natural. (Well, as natural as possible.)

the EMPEROR'S TEA CHEST



INTRODUCTION

One of the many virtues of this illusion is the apparently very thin base. This illusion is created because the Tea Chest itself rests over 3" of the thickness, as you will soon see. In the meantime, I think you'll enjoy the simplicity of the Emperor's Tea Chest.

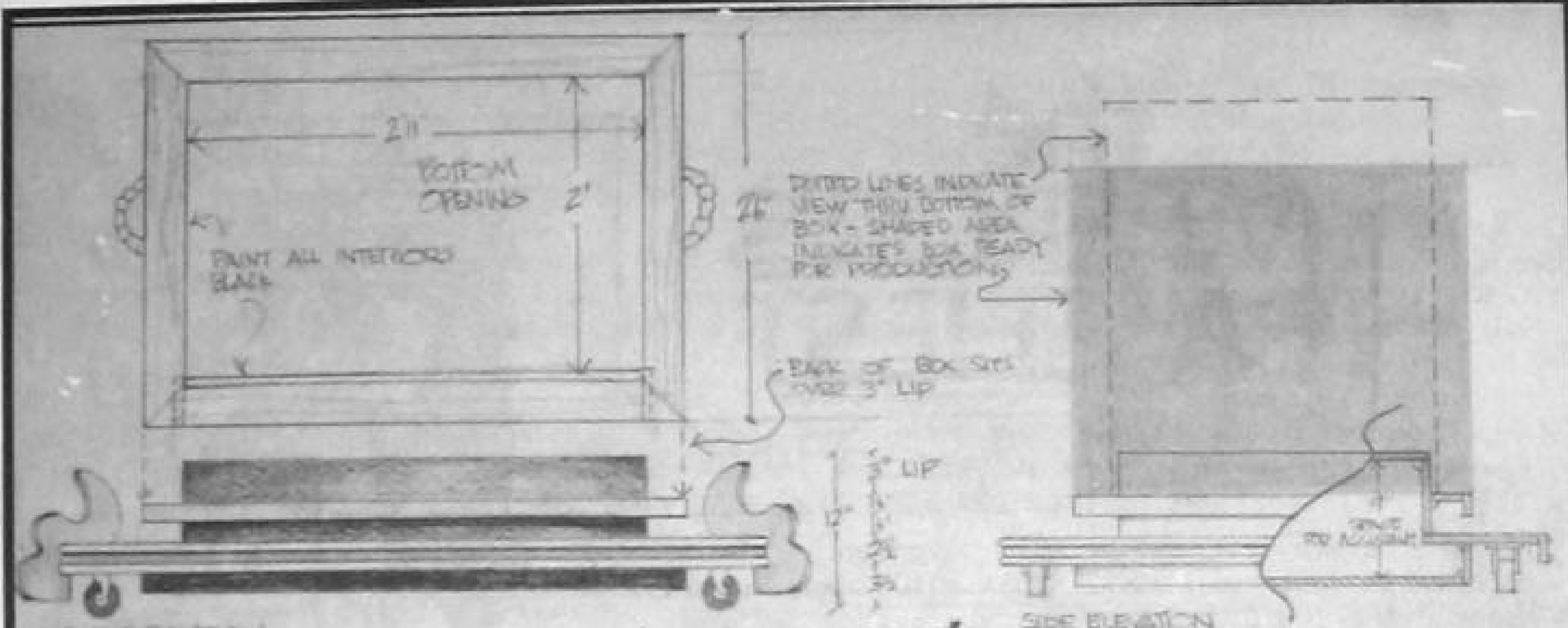
EFFECT

As the gong sounds, the curtains part to reveal a thin looking platform with an empty box resting on it. The magician steps behind the box, proving the absence of mirrors. He claps his hands and two assistants lift the box, tilting it forward and setting it back on the base. It is apparent that this is some type of old Chinese crate. The entire unit is revolved and the lid placed on top. A magical pass is made and we once again hear the gong. The magician reaches into the chest and produces doves, ducks, rare silks and finally, a full grown beautiful Chinese princess!

METHOD

The girl and your production items rest within the 9" thick base. In looking at our plans, you will notice the chest itself has a 3" recess in the back so that when we first see it resting on the platform, bottom forward, the base seems much thinner than it is. The chest itself is made from 3/8" plywood, pin-hinged and braced. It has no top or bottom. The lower right drawing shows the 3" recession in the back. Since there are no compound miters in the base, it is actually pretty simple to construct. Our side elevation cutaway gives the basic construction method. I recommend 3/8" ply with 1/2" ply used on platforms and the base bottom. Brace on the inside with quarter-round. The decorative corner pieces are cut from 1" white pine. In the top of the base are the trap doors. As illustrated, this area should be covered with black felt.

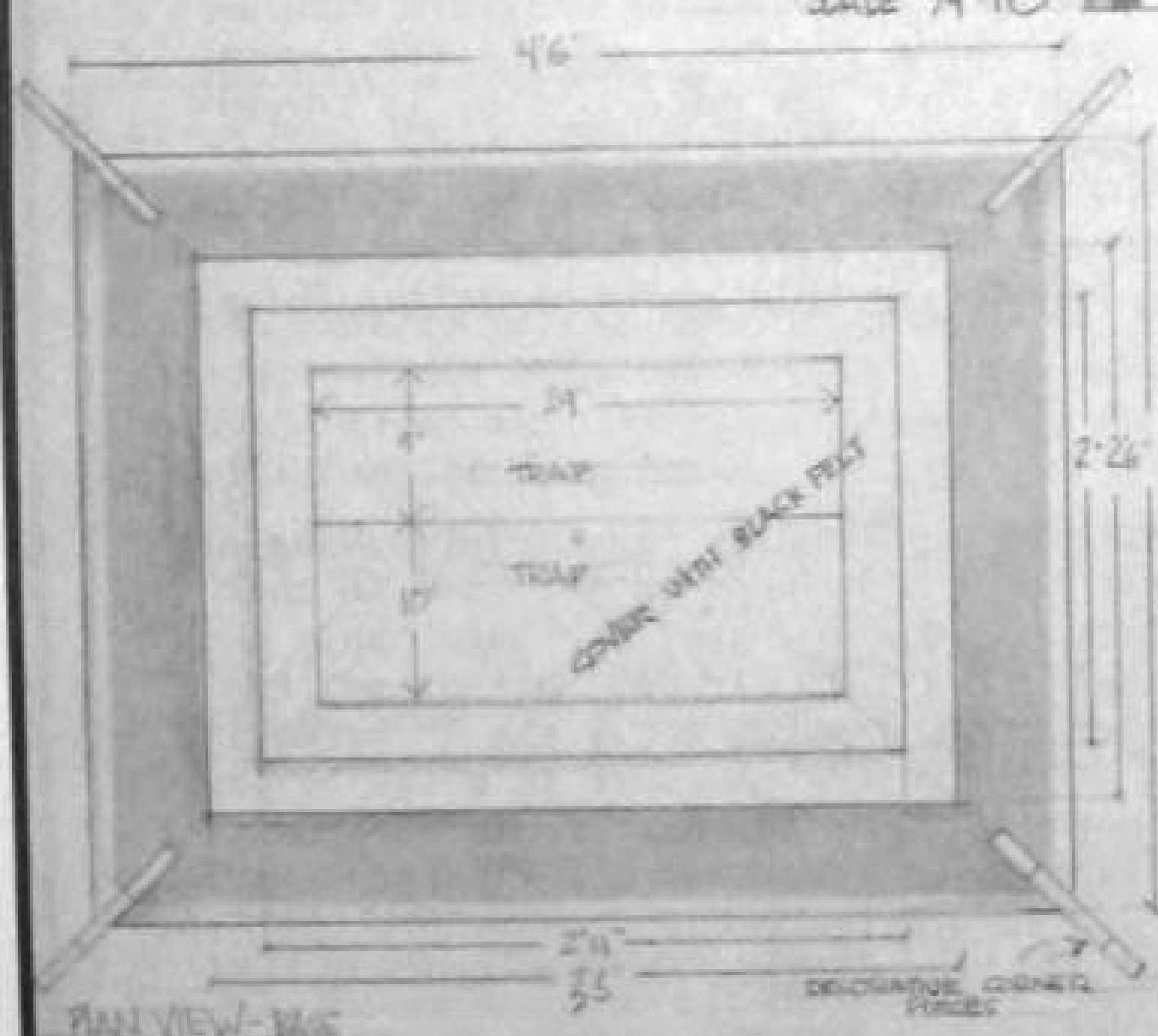
When the unit is first displayed, the chest is resting bottom to top on (over) the base. The lid is resting on the top (front) of the chest. Your assistants remove the lid and with the aid of rope handles, tip the box full forward and off the base, resting it on the floor just in front of the base with its front Oriental characters now forward. Again the box is tipped forward, back up and on to (over) the base. The lid is set on the base, leaning against the back of the box (hiding the recession). The unit now may be revolved. Once done, the lid is placed on top and you are ready to make magic!



THE EMPEROR'S TEA CHEST

DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE '83
SCALE 3/4" = 10" ——— 10"

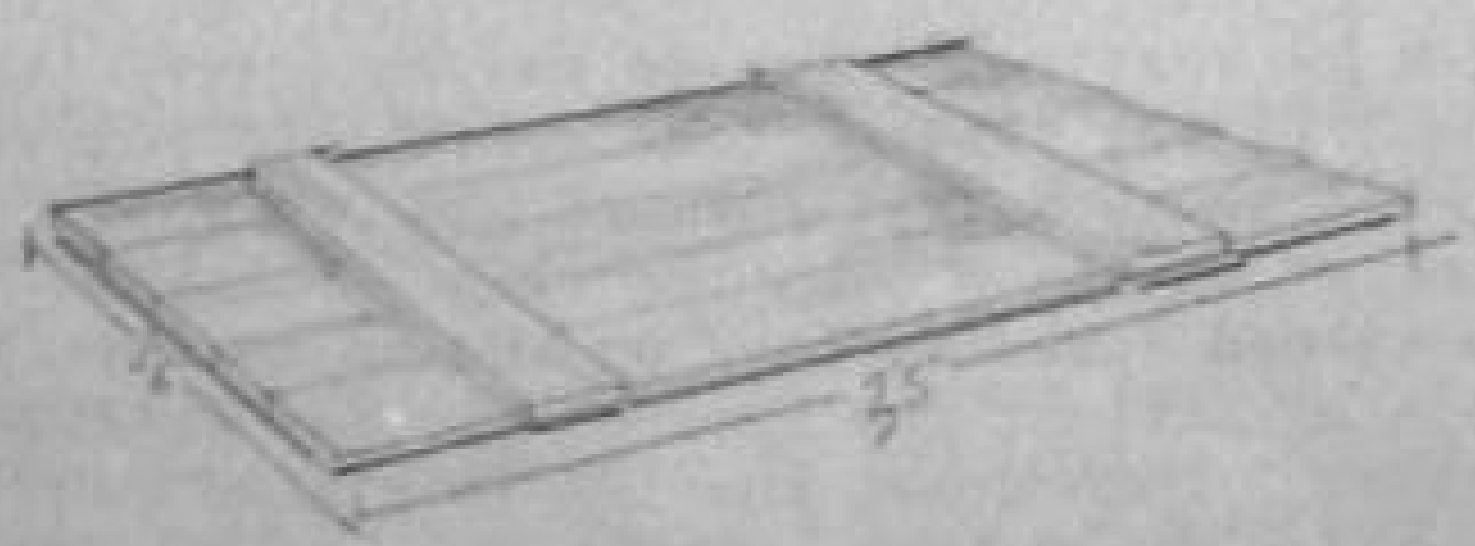
NOTE: DECORATIVE
CORNER PIECES KEPT FOR
QUALITY



FRONT ELEVATION - CHEST
THEATRICALY PAINT TO RESEMBLE
AN OLD TEA CHEST



BACK VIEW



NOTE: ONCE CHEST IS SET UP ON BASE, IT IS SPRUNG
AGAINST BACK OF CHEST (COVERING PLY). SPRING UNIT
CAN NOW BE REMOVED - THE LID PUT ON - THEN
PRODUCTION!

Paul Osborne
83

the GREAT APE ESCAPE!



INTRODUCTION

Our smaller book Illusion Planning goes into routing your illusion show. This sequence of illusions makes a great closer, or if you already have a strong finale, put "The Ape Escape" in the middle of your program. It really gets your audience involved!

EFFECT

At the appropriate time in your show, the jungle drums beat hot and heavy. A small, African looking cage is wheeled out. Obviously empty, the container is partially covered. Once all have seen within, the cover is pulled around the front of the cage and the entire prop is revolved to show all sides. A cymbal crash - and the curtain is pulled off as a full-grown gorilla stands up dramatically, throwing the cage lid back out of the way. Quickly the gorilla opens the front door and runs into the audience. From the stage the magician and his assistants fire shots (blanks) at the escaped beast. In the audience the gorilla is sitting in the laps, lifting toupees and examining purses. Quickly the animal is caught and brought to the stage. He is secured within a tall witch doctor-styled cabinet. This illusion is slowly revolved to show all sides.

Five large steel blades are now introduced and inserted within the cabinet as it is being revolved, cutting the gorilla into six pieces. As if this wasn't enough, spears are inserted from all angles, apparently impaling the beast! Quickly now, all the blades and spears are removed, the front door is opened and out steps a beautiful African princess!

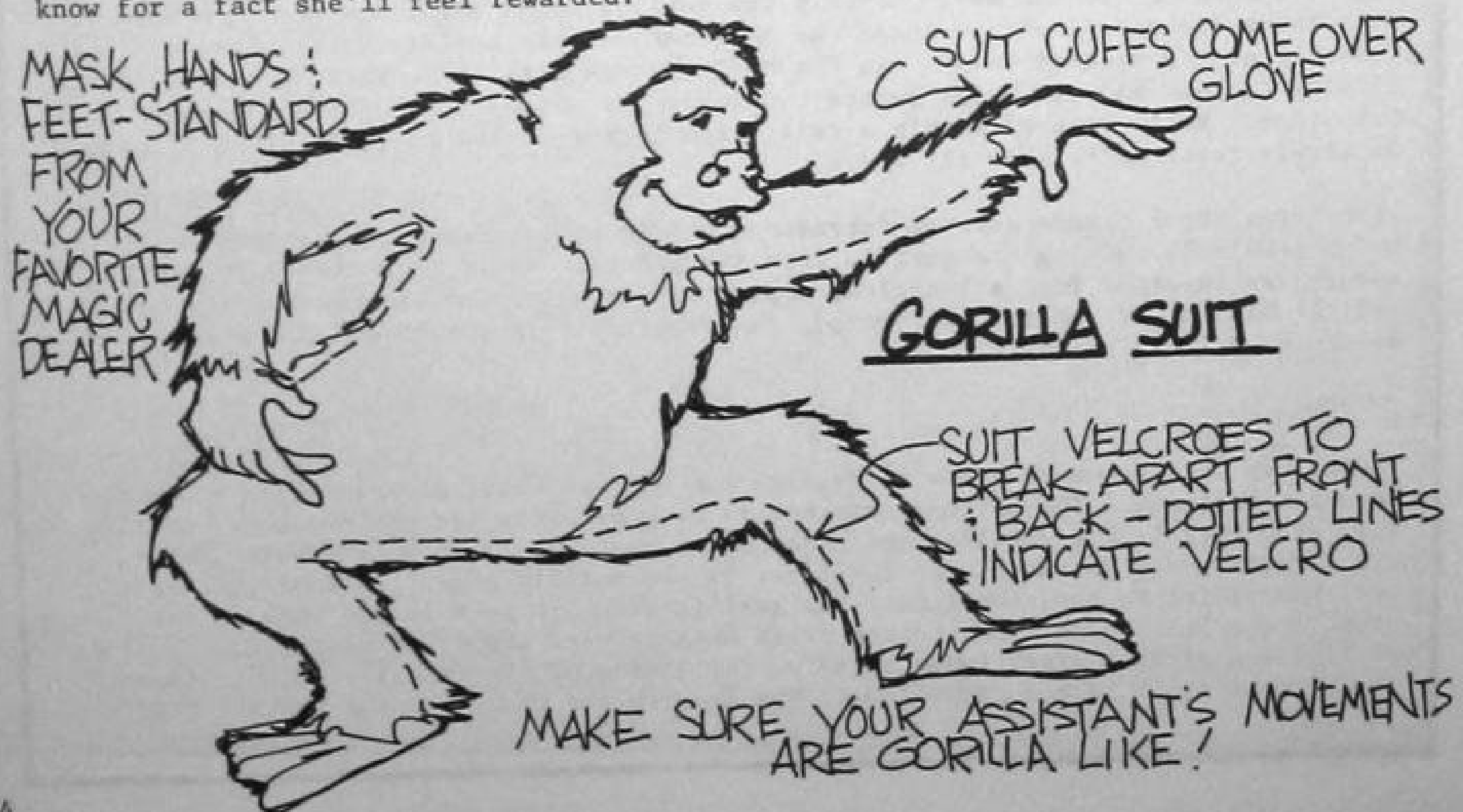
METHOD

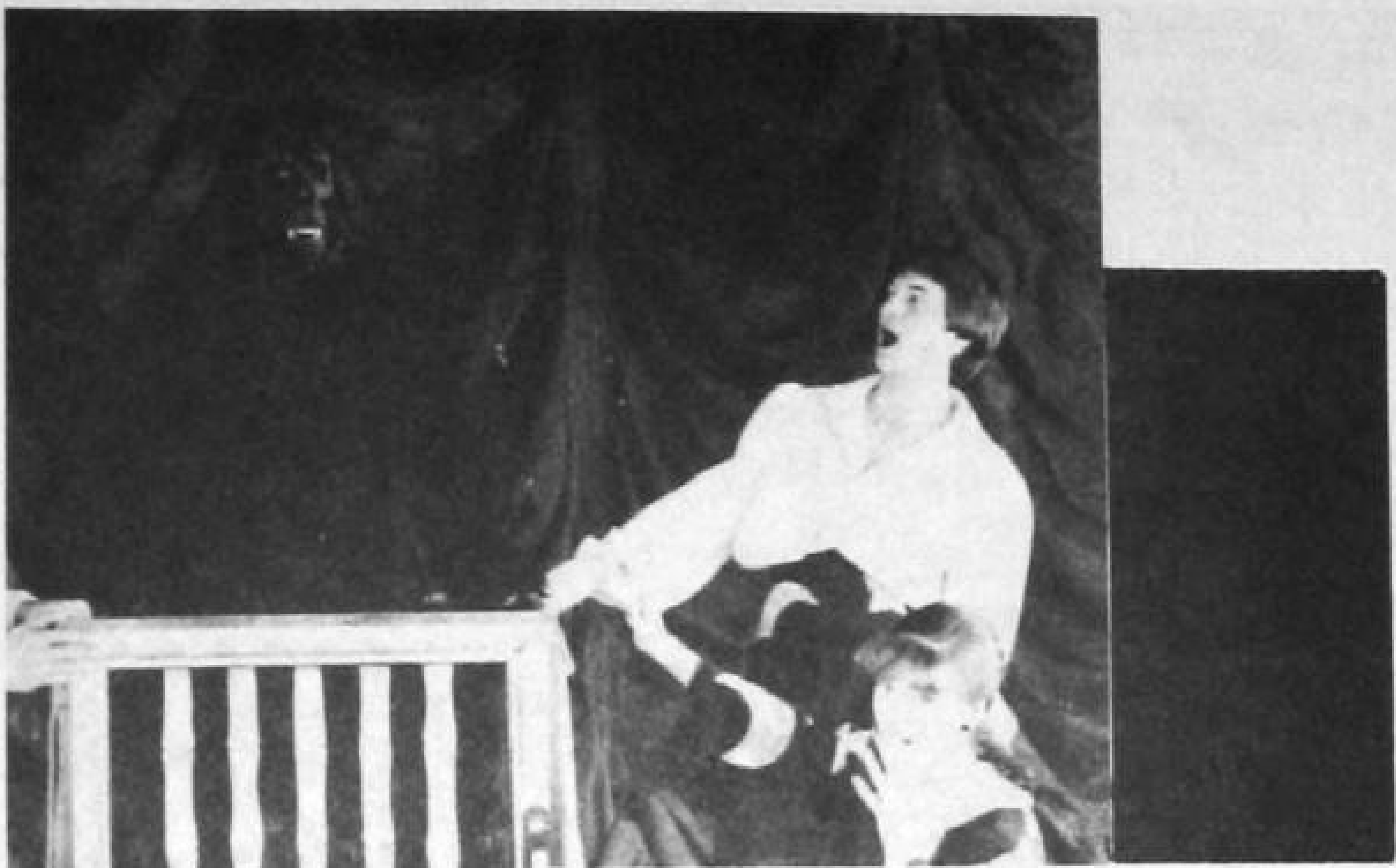
To perform this sequence you will require our Gorilla Cage, African Slice and a few thematic costumes. The African princess is an underdress for the breakaway gorilla suit (the girl is the gorilla) and perhaps the magician could wear a bush jacket, etc. Turning now to our plans; the first is the gorilla cage. Basically it is a Doll House/Girl To Lion combined. The gorilla actually sits in the back of the prop like a Doll House. Our bottom right cutaway view shows the position. In front of him is a gimmick cloth (made to match the lining of the exterior cloth), then the cut out front bamboo traps. Over his lap are the floor traps A and B. Trap C

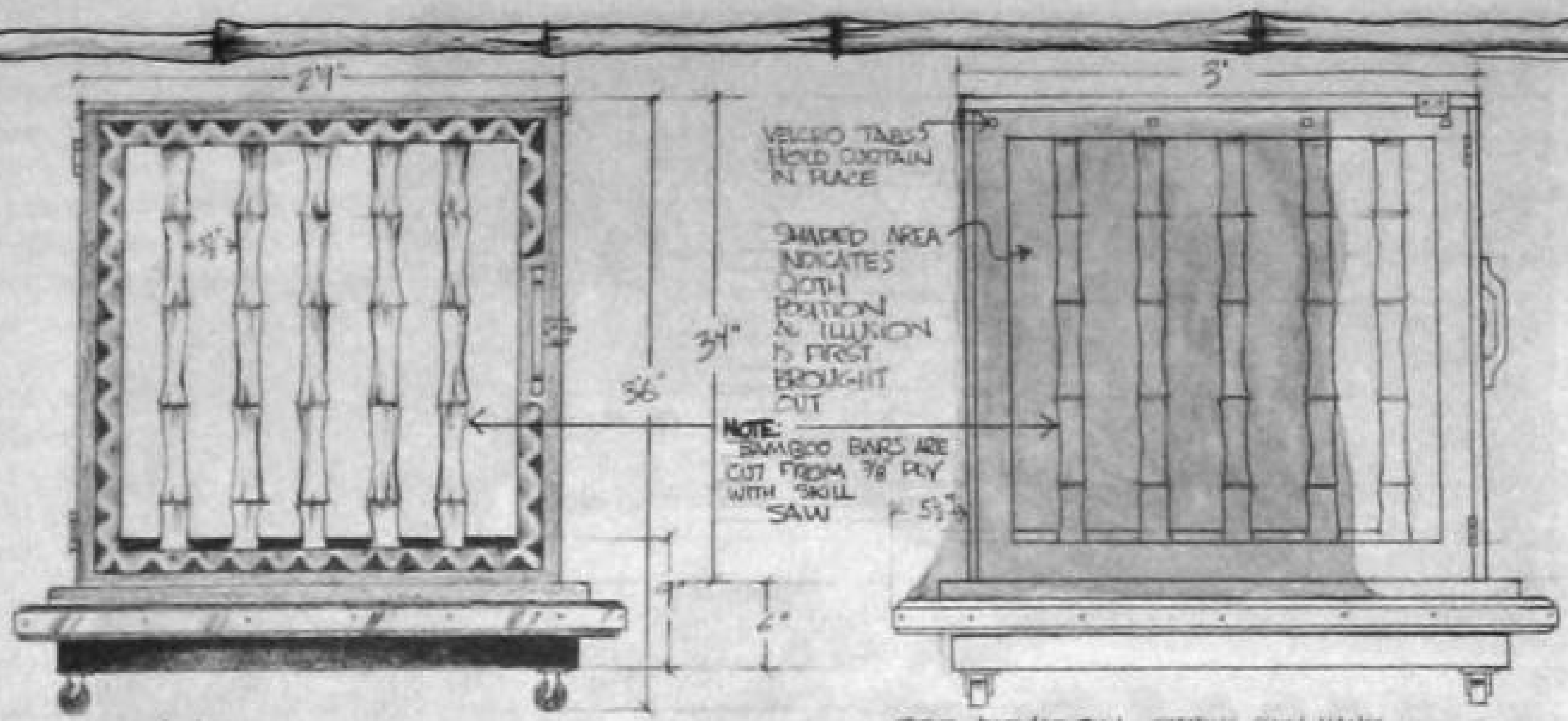
is folded up behind him. The exterior cloth is around the back 75% of the cage, as shown in our top right drawing. When the audience looks into the front of the cage they look past the front door and when they see the cut-out bamboo traps with the cloth behind, the illusion of depth is perfect and it seems as though you are seeing through the entire cage. The exterior cloth is unfolded and wrapped around the front of the cage and secured to the side so there is no view inside. As the prop is revolved, the gorilla pulls down the gimmick cloth (it's Velcroed to the top batten) and swings open the front bamboo traps. (They should perfectly align with the sides so you can still see through, once the cloth is removed.) The gimmick cloth goes into the base. He then folds traps A & B up and forward. Crouching down, the gorilla allows trap C to fall in place behind him/her. Sitting on trap C, traps A and B are slid back into place and the gorilla is ready! The magician pulls the cloth off as the gorilla stands, swinging back the lid. The front door is opened and your ape has just escaped!

As the beast cavorts in the audience, the African Slice illusion is brought on stage. Referring to the plan for it now I'm sure you can tell it's basically a Cutting In Sixths. Once the gorilla is inside, off comes the mask (we had a trap door located in the roof for the mask.) As the illusion is revolved, the gorilla removes her costume. No easy task, but the ape suit was Velcroed up and around the inseam and from the inside wrists all the way down the side of the costume to the ankles. So basically, it comes off in two pieces - front and back - no step throughs. But it still requires practice. As the gorilla is getting disrobed, she must get down below the middle blade (side to side), which is the first one inserted. Then the top blade (side to side) then the top (front to back) blade, then the bottom (back to front) blade, and finally, she must be well into the base and below the bottom blade (side to side). Once this is done, the thirteen spears are inserted and the illusion appears to be fully loaded with spears and blades with virtually no hiding places available. The spears are removed first, then the blades, as your assistant works her way up into the box, leaving the gorilla suit, hands and feet in the base. Finally, when the front door is opened, there stands your beautiful female assistant!

Yes, this one is a tight fit. It requires practice and determination from your girl assistant - she won't get it the first time. But when she hears the applause, I know for a fact she'll feel rewarded!



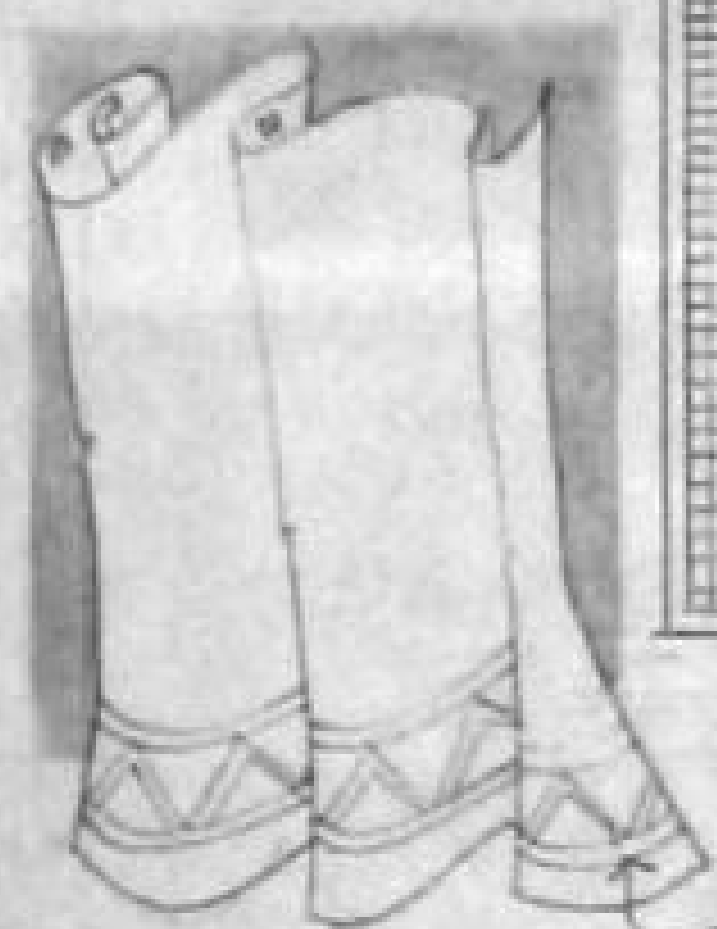




FRONT ELEVATION

SIDE ELEVATION

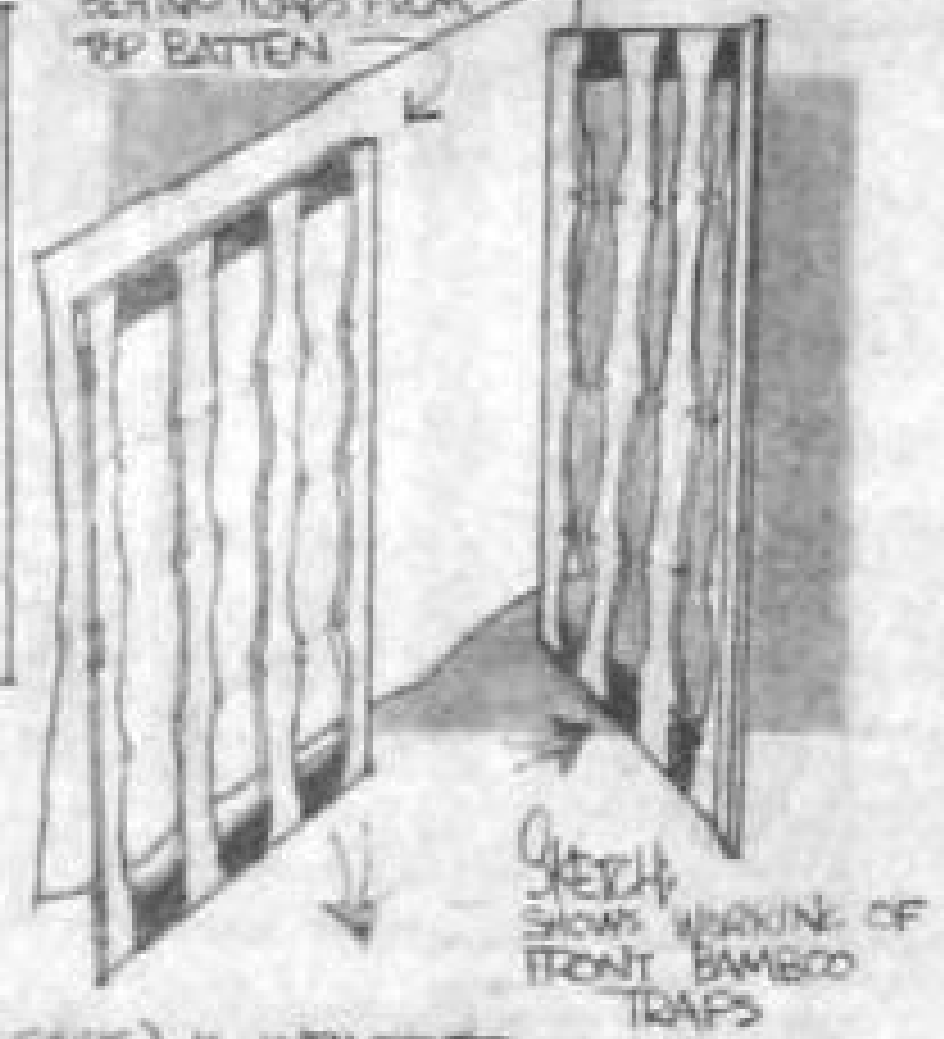
SMOCK CLOTH HANGS BEHIND TRAPS FROM TOP BATTEN



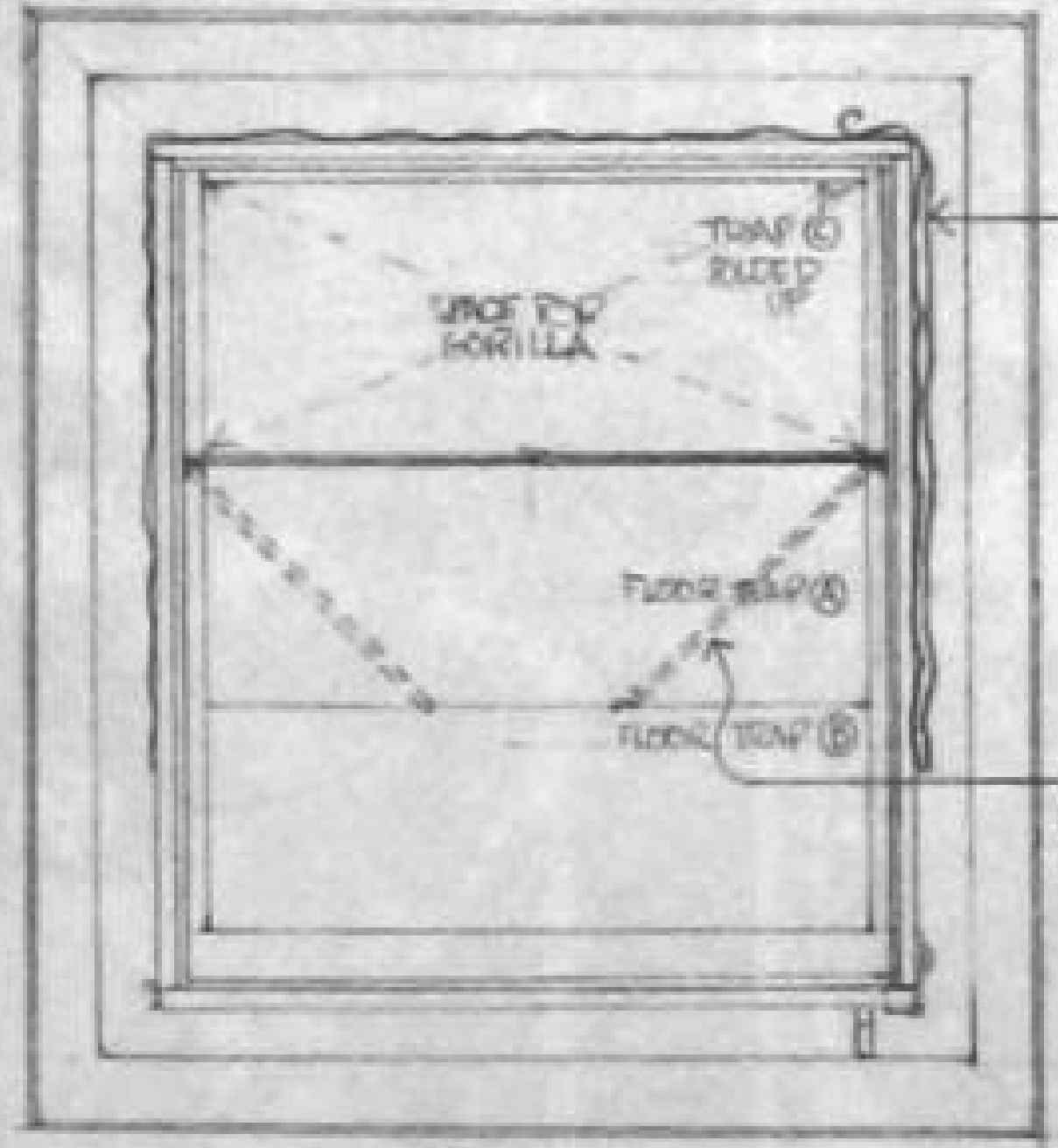
the GORILLA CAGE

DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE '83
SCALE 3/4" = 10"

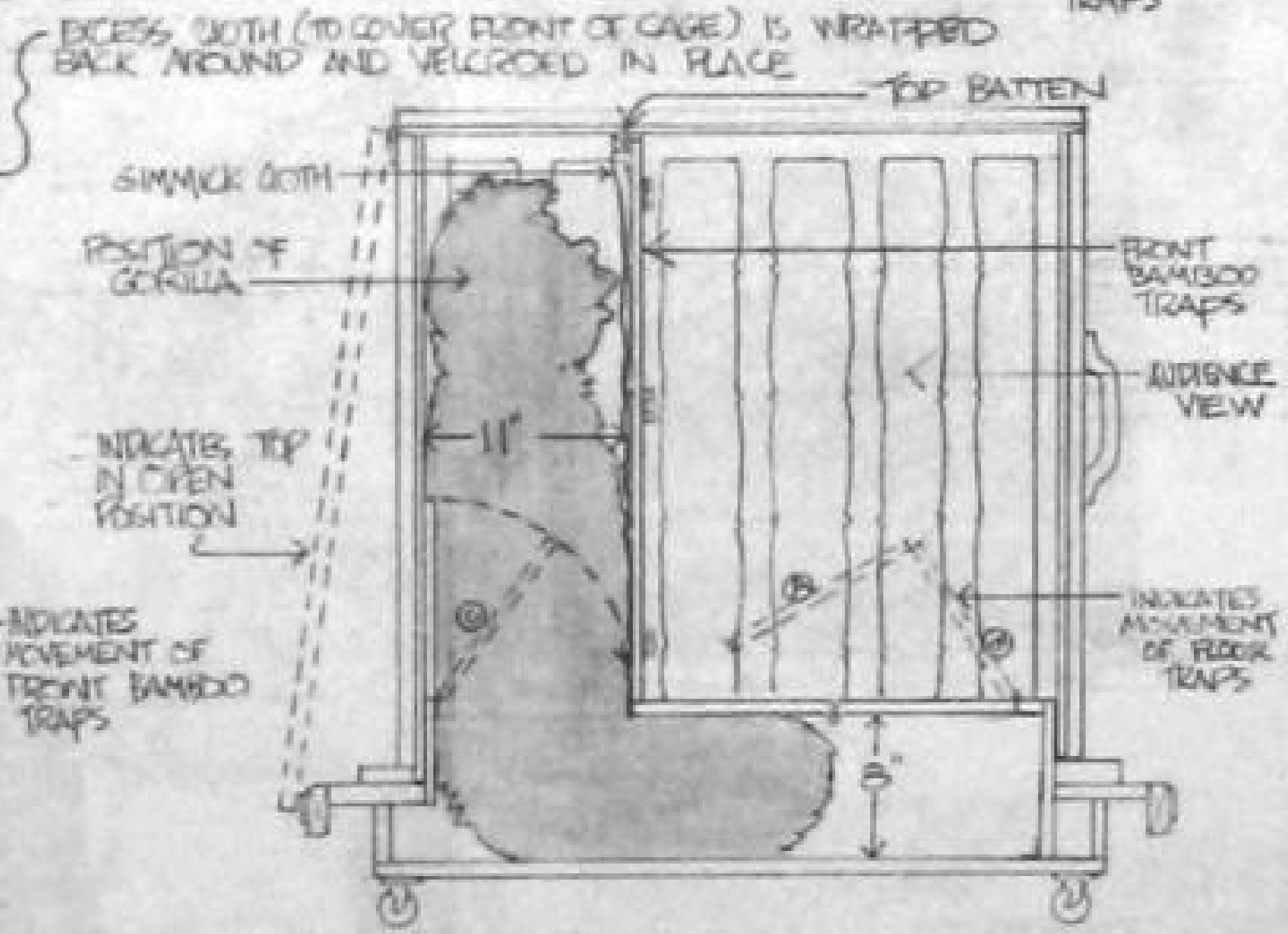
CLOTH IS 29" TALL x 12' LONG WITH VELCRO TABS AT TOP INSIDE; GOLD TRIM ON BOTTOM



SKETCH SHOWS WORKING OF FRONT BAMBOO TRAPS

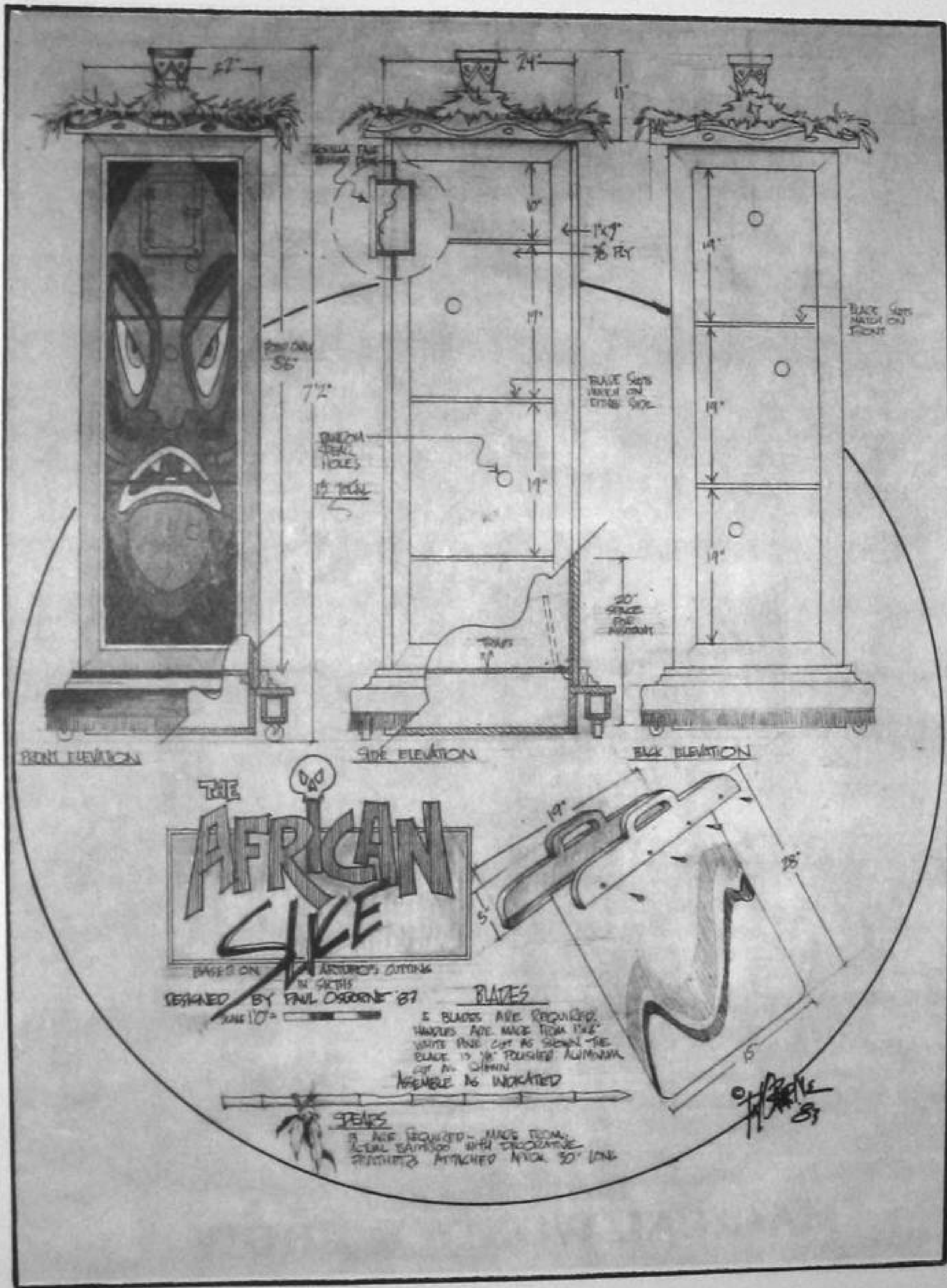


TOP VIEW INTO CAGE
TOP REMOVED FOR CLARITY



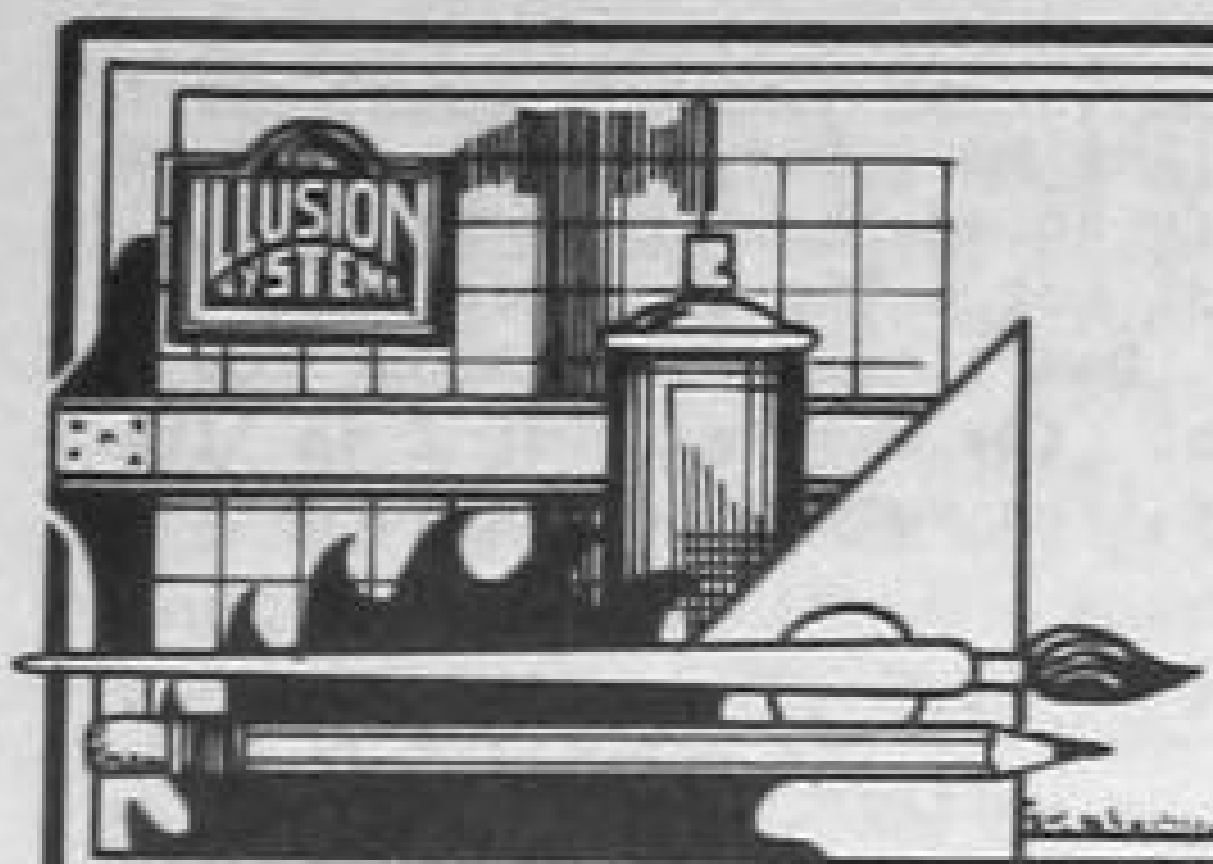
CUTAWAY SIDE VIEW
(CLOTH OMITTED FOR CLARITY)

OSBORNE '83





David Ginn's
MAGICAL WONDER SHOW



DO IT DIFFERENT!

by David Ginn

"My type of magic is stage magic, and I have always loved illusions. When I was eleven and twelve years old I used to watch Mark Wilson and Bev Bergeron (as Rebo the Clown) do all those fantastic things on "The Magic Land Of Allakazam" and dream of doing them myself. Yet it was years before I really had the chance.

When I was 16 years old, I was fortunate enough to acquire some illusions from a lady whose magician husband had died. Among them were the Thayer Phantom White Cargo and what I call the Dragon Box, a tea chest affair that produces a girl after being shown empty. By the time I was 20, I was doing live shows and TV appearances in Atlanta, and many times had the opportunity to present these illusions both live and on television. In fact, in my first published book, COLORFUL MAGIC, I showed a half dozen ways that I used the Dragon Box on TV beyond its basic girl production job.

During my second year in fulltime magic, in 1972, I began using an illusion and a girl assistant in all of my high school and junior high shows, as well as shopping malls and the bigger, higher-paying dates. We used the sub-trunk, chair suspension, Caliph's Cutter (an old Abbott illusion), the Hindoo Sword Basket, Abbott's Visible Sawing, the Sword Box, the guillotine, rod thru body and others, usually one per show. Elementary school shows I worked alone, using a smaller illusion such as Stocks of Zanzibar, Disecto, Arrowhead, Dagger Head Chest or Sword Thru Neck. Each of these illusions went through over 400 shows yearly during the school year I used them, and some I re-used four or five years later for another 400 performances.

Three years ago an opportunity came along that allowed me to take all these illusions I love so much and put them together into a paying venture. The promoter of the Grand American Magic Show out of Augusta, Georgia, asked me to take over the two-hour evening show, which I have now done for three years. We perform the show with charity backing once or twice a month in South Carolina and Georgia at 12-15 different cities each year. In three years' time I have gone through 13 different girl assistants (I use 3-4 per show); from three to seven or eight illusions, through the building of sets; and more than I can tell you about here.

Finally our Magical Wonder Show (which is the name I use when not working jobs for the promoter) has jelled down to a good crew of 5-6 people who nearly know what's going on. We travel in one station wagon now, pulling a trailer full of the equipment (sets, illusions, sound, smaller magic and other props), spend 3-4 hours setting up, 2 hours performing the show, an hour breaking down, and 2-4 hours driving home the same night; unless we're more than 200 miles away, in which case we stay over night. It's a lot of work, but also a lot of fun for the entire crew, all of whom happen to be my friends.

With all this background out of the way, let me say straight out that if you could see my illusion show, you would see things done differently. I strongly shy away from copying, and if you see Doug Henning do something on TV, you can rest assured that David Ginn will not be doing it that way.

You will never see me do the Zig-Zag or Mis-Made Girl illusions, for example, because everybody is doing them and half of those everybody's are doing them the same way! I read in one magazine that an eleven-year-old kid magician got a Zig-Zag under the Christmas tree, custom-made for his 13-year-old sister! Don't talk to me about the Zig-Zag---everybody and his brother and kid are doing it! (Be assured that I do like the Zig-Zag as an illusion. It's great. But I shy away from something everybody is doing)

Now, unless you're Andre Kole or Doug Henning or David Copperfield, you probably don't have the financial resources or proving ground or place to perform totally new and original illusions. But you still can be different, just as I am in the Magical Wonder Show. Because being different means doing things differently as well as having things that are different. Let me give you some examples out of my own show:



1. THE HINDOO SWORD BASKET. My basket came from Chu's in Hong Kong. It is 14 inches tall at the lid and will hold only one girl (not the type you can sit in and rock, or produce a second girl with), and it's made of real wicker, not painted fiberglass. This illusion, by the way, is the greatest thing ever for a school gym floor when the students are in the bleachers looking down on it. Anyway, the typical presentation involves the girl standing in the basket, covering her with a cloth, her going down, putting on the lid and removing the cloth, sticking four swords inside, removing them, covering the basket again with the cloth and stepping into it to show it empty, then finally shaking and lifting the cloth to reproduce the girl. About two minutes at the most.

But by adding showmanship, presentation and even a bit of humor, I get 3-4 minutes out of the illusion, especially in the Magical Wonder Show.

I introduce the next bit of magic in front of the curtains, as "something that starts out nice and easy, but ends up ROUGH...music, lights, curtain!" The curtains open to reveal the basket center stage, a pair of swords criss-crossed on each side of it on the floor. The lid is on the basket and the stick or club is stuck through the lid hole. The music for the first minute is "Airshire Lament" by Dan Fogelberg, a quiet instrumental from his album, "The Innocent Age." Atop the basket is a set of juggling scarves; orange, green and pink. I pick up the scarves and perform a 50-second juggling routine with the scarves, graceful and pretty, working in front center stage and finishing as the music ends, which brings applause.

Then I drop the scarves to one side as the music changes, and the opening guitar riffs of Survivor's "Eye Of The Tiger" begin. This was the theme song (and hit record) from the movie, "Rocky III" and most everybody knows it, which is a good selling point. I am now standing to the left of center stage. I turn and point toward the stage right wings.

Jeannie and Susan, dressed in black pants, suspenders and red/black striped shirts, come onstage dragging, forcing a third assistant, Debra, with them. Debra is dressed in a turquoise leotard and striped knicker pants, and each of the other assistants is pulling her by one arm. Clearly, she does not want to come. The other girls act as guards and they are bringing the prisoner, whom they force to stand behind the basket.

With Debra in place, I walk to her and dramatically point into the basket (which I have opened), indicating that she is to get inside. She reluctantly steps inside and stands there. I walk around her and pick up the cloth, which is about 6 x 8 feet. I wrap the cloth around her, leaving only her head showing; I stare at her face, then step behind her and lift the cloth over her head, covering her completely. Then I place the lid on her head, which she sways back and forth (humorously) as I pick up the stick. This stick is like a policeman's billy club in size and shape, and I use it to an advantage. I steady the lid (on her head) with one hand and she gets still. Then I pretend I am going to hit her a blow with the club or stick; I stop. I tap the lid twice (her signal to drop into the basket), then immediately drop the club, grab the lid and the cloth until I can lay it across the basket and jerk the cloth out. Debra is fast; she is already in the basket and in position.

I violently throw the cloth on the floor to my left. Next I pick up the stick and plunge it into the lid hole, stirring it around like you would a pot of soup. (Inside, Debra holds the bottom of the stick so it won't hit and hurt her.) Finally I pull out the stick, moving rapidly.

Jeannie and Susan in the meanwhile have picked up the swords and are holding them one in each hand, points into the air. I take a sword from one, bang the stick against it to make it ring (and prove it real), then plunge the sword into the basket. Debra knows the exact order of the swords and how to help them through the basket past her. The second sword comes from the other assistant, then I go back and forth for swords three and four, plunging each one in from a different direction.

The two assistants stand at ease, hands behind them, facing the audience without expression at this point. I walk over to the cloth, pick it up, then throw it down violently. I am a mean man, the punisher, thinking like Mister T in "Rocky III," finding that "Eye Of The Tiger." I kneel down, lift the lid and look into the basket, contorting my face in disgust, as though the girl is dead. (Actually, Debra usually makes a funny face at me or sticks out her tongue playfully. As much as I get a laugh out of her antics, it's my character's job to be the bad man, so I must keep my straight and mean look, instead of laughing. This is some of the backstage fun we have working together.)

Now I put the lid back down and hang my head. I stand up, hesitate, then pick up the

cloth and toss it up and over the basket, letting it spread completely out. As it settles, I reach under it and quickly remove the lid, which I toss aside. Now I walk around the basket and kick the cloth closer to it, assuring the audience that Debra is not on the outside anywhere.

I walk away from the basket next, straight behind it maybe ten feet, then stop and face it dramatically. After a moment's hesitation, I boldly walk toward the basket and step right into it with both feet, pushing down the cloth with my weight. (When students look down on this from gym bleachers, when we work on a gym floor, it looks absolutely impossible for the girl to be in there.) For a couple of seconds I stand there, looking down into the basket but seeing nothing, since the cloth covers it all. Applause often comes at this point, perhaps because the audience thinks I have really made Debra disappear.

Then I step out of the basket and walk back around behind it. I quickly grasp the back cloth corners and lift to my waist level; then I give the cloth a snap to straighten it out. That snap is Debra's cue to come out, and she does it pretty fast, working her head and shoulders out first, then rising straight up. Meanwhile, I have spread the top corners of the cloth wide apart, giving Debra about six feet wide for cover, holding it slightly higher than her head. When she is fully standing, she has one moment to smooth her hair---then I whip away the cloth to one side and onto the floor behind me.

At the same moment I whip away the cloth, the guard girls swing their swords from point on the floor to a criss-cross above their heads, clanging them together once. Debra styles (poses for applause) with both arms spread, and I take a step back, gesturing toward Debra. Applause is usually instant, and we hold there for a moment. Then Debra steps out of the basket and we walk together toward the footlights hand in hand for a second bow, more or less.

Finally I move in front as the curtain closes and the music fades. And that routine, to me, is different! It runs exactly four minutes and is filled with action, drama, and seemingly impossible magic. It has a beginning (quiet scarf juggling), a middle (girl in basket, swords shoved in, and my standing in the basket), and a strong ending (the reproduction of the girl and bows).

2. DRAGON BOX GIRL PRODUCTION. Briefly, this is a four sided, topless box on a base. The four sides, about three feet square, all lay down, hinged to the base in order to show the box empty. The girl hides sitting on a shelf behind the back side, her legs inside the base, and leans back when the back and one side are opened to show empty. Once the box is closed again, she swings in double doors in the back side and lifts the base floor trap, gets her legs over it and works her way inside, quietly letting the shelf up and closing the double doors so that the box may be turned and shown on all sides. Then she pops out of the top for her appearance.

For the Magical Wonder Show, I took this simple girl production and built around it a sketch that lasted 8 1/2 minutes. The sketch has a narrator on tape, along with various music to accompany different parts as background.

On stage, I introduce the sketch, then exit into the wings. A petty thief, played by my friend, Phil Thomas (not the magic dealer), enters the stage and talks on a pay telephone to stage left, in one. A girl (Susan) comes on stage right and stands under a Bus Stop sign. Phil sneaks over, steals her purse and runs off the stage into the audience. Susan chases him, screaming, "Stop! Thief!" and the two of them run through the audience for about a minute, covering the whole auditorium. Finally back on stage, Susan catches Phil as he falls in front center; she beats him with her umbrella and gets her purse back, then leaves.

Phil gets up, brushes himself off. The narrator tells how this petty thief heard of "The Mysterious Flower Of Tibet", a rare treasure in the Himalayas. The curtains open

to show a Chinese type lady opening a large tea chest (the Dragon Box). She takes out a bouquet of flowers (the Mysterious Flower), shows them and replaces them, closing the box, then leaves the stage.

All this time I am changing from my tux into another suit for my appearance in the sketch later. I've been onstage already about 40 minutes, so it's a Coke break, too!

When the Chinese lady is gone, the thief, Phil, sneaks onto the scene and steals the flower. He leaves. The Chinese lady returns, finds her flower gone and falls to her knees crying (Jeannie). I enter the scene now, a "partly famous American magician passing through the village," change my cane to a large scarf (one-handed Vanishing Cane), and give it to the lady to dry her eyes. She gets up, tells me of the theft, then I magically make the flower reappear in the tea chest. Following that, to the "Chariots Of Fire" theme song, she and I show the box empty, replace the flowers, close the box and cover it with the lady's shawl. We turn the box around 360° and move it closer to the front. The shawl rises up from the center of the box as though the flower is growing (Debra's arm), then suddenly vanishes (she whisks it inside and hides it in the base along with the flower bouquet).

Now I clap my hands and Debra pops out the top. Applause. I open the box, she hops out and bows for the end of the sketch. Actually, there are many details I left out of this description, but I think you get the general idea of how we built a sketch or story around the one trick. And it gives me a chance to change clothes, breathe easy for five minutes, and drink a Coke!



David Ginn's
MAGICAL WONDER SHOW

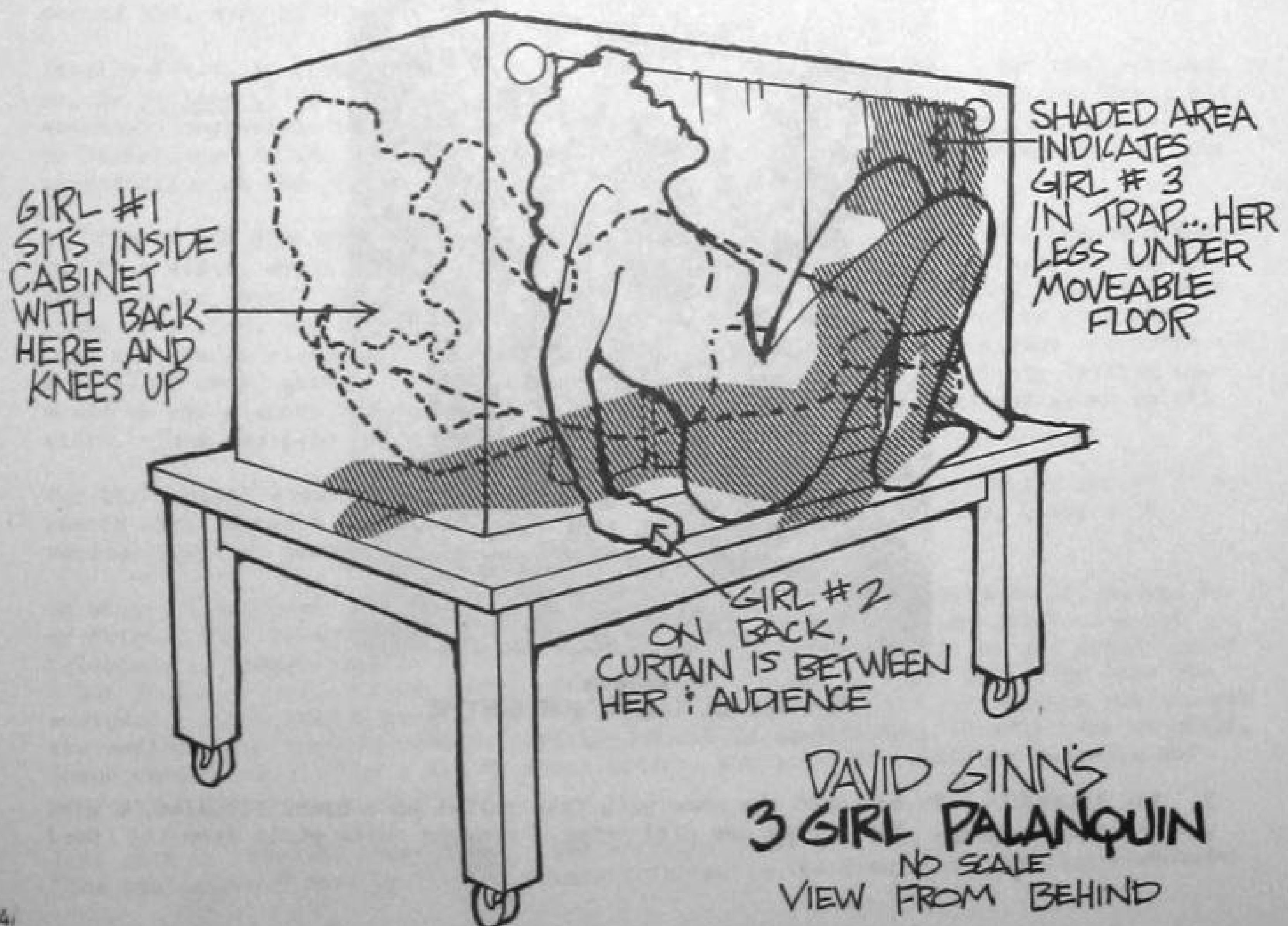
3. THE PALANQUIN. We now open the show with this curtained cabinet illusion, a girl production basically. Mine holds one girl---but I produce three girls from it! How? I cheat.

Susan goes into the trap. Debra, our smallest girl in the show, sits on the back ledge, partly in and partly out of the cabinet, the back curtain between her and the audience. Jeannie actually sits inside the cabinet with the front curtain closed.

In performance, I walk onstage and clap my hands, pushing back the front curtain about halfway. Jeannie immediately pops out and goes forward, arms outstretched in her bright red dress. At the same time I step in front of the cabinet and style, too; then I close the curtain and walk around the Palanquin as Debra slides into the cabinet. Back at the front I clap my hands again, slide back the curtain (rings on a top rod) and there's Debra, filling the cabinet. She gets out and goes forward for applause. Jeannie has taken up a position at front left, and Debra front right.

Now I walk behind the Palanquin and slide the back curtain aside, thrusting my head and shoulders through the cabinet to show it empty. Then I close the back curtain, walk around and close the front. Debra comes over and helps me turn the Palanquin 360°, taking up her stage right position again when we've stopped. I clap my hands again, push aside the front curtain to reveal Susan filling the cabinet. Susan hops out and then she and I go forward hand in hand for applause. From there we go into our barrage of silent effects opening, canes, candles, flowers and much more in ten minutes or so.

Now here's the thing: Sure, I really only produced one or two girls by magic, depending on your thinking. But the audience people will walk out of that theatre thinking or remembering that three girls came out of that box. It may be cheating--- but it's sound psychology. And as they tell people who didn't see the show, the fact will fade and it will become, "He showed this curtained box empty and brought three beautiful girls out of it!"



Well, those are just three ways I have tried to be different. Actually, I could go on and on. If you ever see me do my quillotine routine (not yet published) you would understand further what I mean. Or the way we handle the Super X suspension with five people and witch costumes, strange music and lighting. Or the conclusion of the Sub-Trunk in the big show.

One night my friend Debra and I sat in a bar-b-q house eating after a show, and right there on a table, using salt and pepper shakers, napkins, a catsup bottle and various other items, we worked out a future sketch for the show involving three major illusions, five people and a gorilla. We haven't put it in the show yet (maybe the summer of 1984), but we are cooking on it and over a period of time it will gell into something very good, thanks to feedback and suggestions from Debra, Susan, Jeannie and Phil after hearing my initial conception.

Already I am planning a six-minute sketch to close the first half of the show--- combining, of all things, a girl vanish and a strait jacket! Phil will help me work on the technicalities and Susan will get vanished, along with the help of music by Donna Summer!

That's what I mean by being different. After all, why be like someone else, I say, when you can be different and be YOU.

Along the road somewhere, somebody remarked to me, "That's not normal," about something I did or said. I immediately retorted, "Why by normal, when you can be abnormal!" What I really meant, of course, is why be normal and hum-drum and run of the mill and ordinary and like every other magician---when you can be different with just a bit of thought.

Different in your tricks, or selection of tricks. Different in your style, your costuming, your presentation, your delivery. Different in your set decoration, your jokes, your music. Different in the way you program and dish out your illusions.

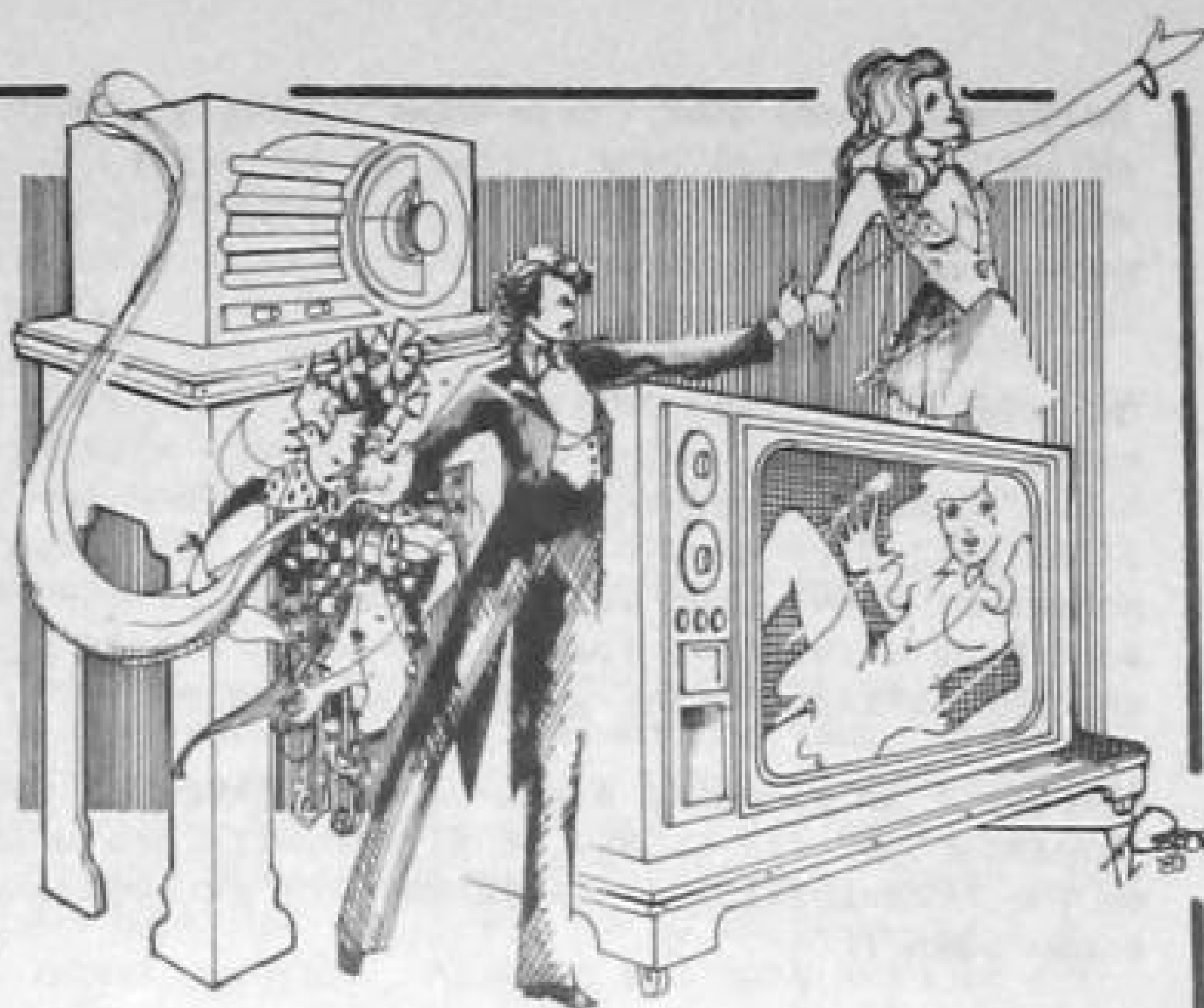
So let me close by encouraging you to be yourself and be different from other performers. And even if you do perform the Zig-Zag---DO IT DIFFERENT!



MULTI MEDIA

INTRODUCTION

The second in a series of "perfect pairs." Like the Ape Escape, these two props work well together and I'm proud to say I've had success with them in our shows. I think you might, too.



EFFECT

As the audience waits for the show to begin, on stage sits an oldtime radio, resting on a decorative tray and a three-fold screen. Suddenly, out steps a young assistant who turns the antique radio on. Familiar Glenn Miller and Big Band songs, coupled with classic cuts from Fibber McGee and Molly, the Jack Benny Show and the Lux Radio Theater are heard as, surprisingly, an announcer introduces...you!

Out you step, quickly grabbing the radio and showing it empty, placing it back on the tray and lifting it off of the screen. This three-fold table is shown on all sides and folded flat. Once again, all is replaced. The lid is removed from the radio and you begin to bring forth silks, doves, alarm clocks, bottles, flowers and whatever else your imagination dictates.

Stepping forward, you comment on how mass communication has changed over the years... almost like magic!

Next, to the music you show the TV on all sides. The clear plexi front is slid out and the back door is opened, permitting a view clear through...clearly empty. The back door is closed, the plexi replaced and the unit is covered by a large cloth and revolved. The foulard is removed and on the screen, magically it says..."Stay tuned for more magic from (your name here with logo, etc.). Quickly you cover the set, again turning it and again removing the cloth. Filling the interior of the set is your beautiful young assistant. The plexi is slid up and out she comes! Another great moment in broadcasting!

METHOD

Naturally the secret to the radio production is the shifting load container as indicated in our side elevation/cutaway. As the radio sits on stage, the load chamber is in the down position (in the screen). The music is from your sound track. You come out, show the radio empty, it has no bottom and the top comes off. Replacing same, you reach under the load chamber, push it up into the radio, and lift the tray and the radio off the screen, which is now shown innocent. The radio and tray are once again set on the screen. Velcro tape placed on the load chamber and tray keep the load in the "up" position and you are ready to make your production.

The plan is relatively self-explanatory. The 11" x 18 1/2" x 13" radio is made from

a good 3/8" wood, stained and finished to resemble the classic antique radio as pictured. The tray is made from 1/2" ply with the sliding gimmick made from 3/8" ply. Notice the Velcro on the gimmick and the tray. Notice also, the positioning of the quarter-round molding to hold the radio in place. Our plan view of the tray shows the gimmick and the two trap doors.

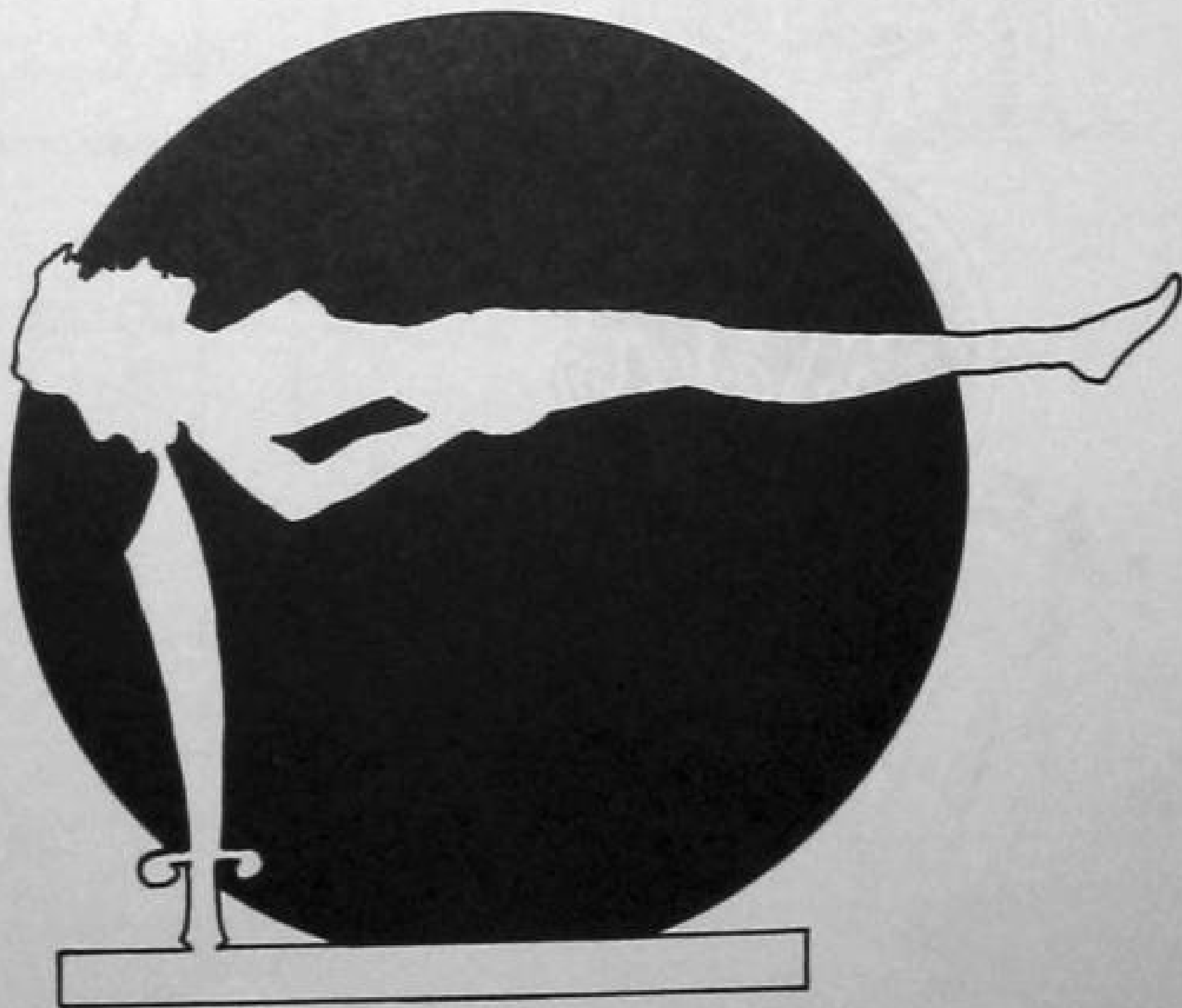
The three-fold screen is made from 3/8" ply and painted a high gloss tan with the 1/4" Masonite trim and decoration sprayed a bright gold.

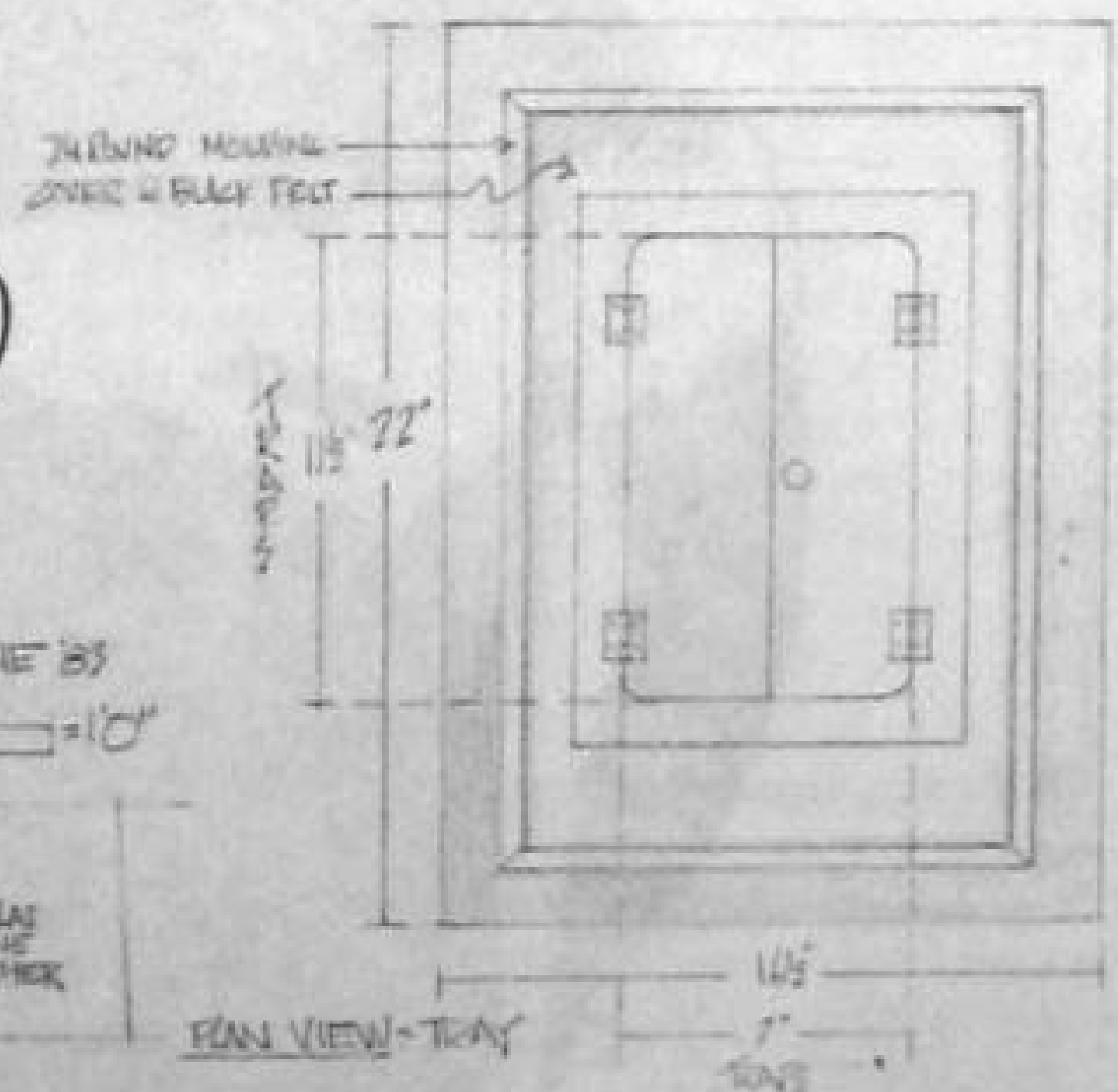
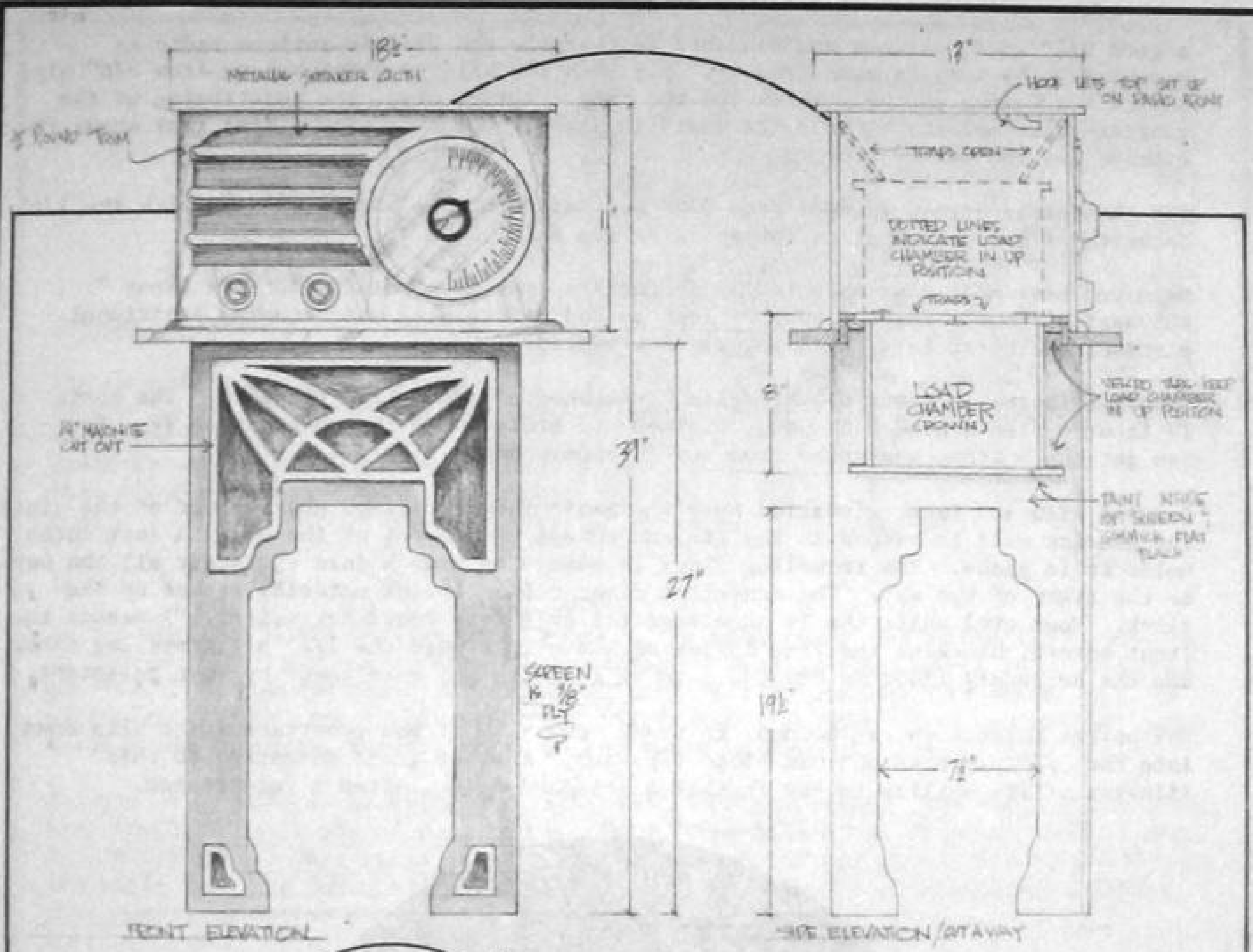
Once you have made your astonishing production, you step forward to talk about "... the magic of man's inventiveness. Just as radio listening was becoming a national pastime, the first television set was introduced!"

The TV illusion is based on the Palanquin method of concealing the girl. The basic TV is made from a good 3/8" wood, stained and finished to resemble a real TV. You can get the buttons and knobs from any TV repair shop.

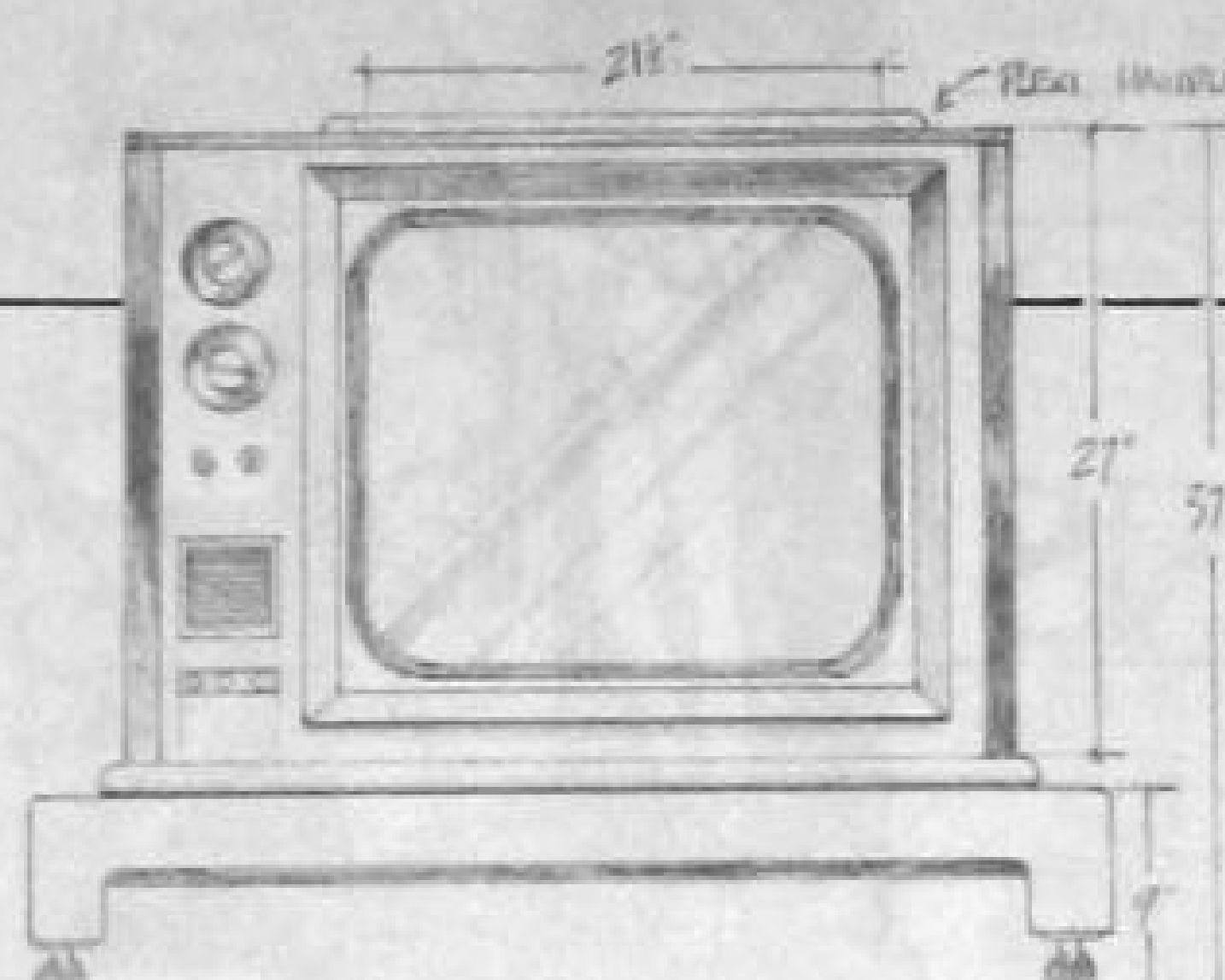
Our top view and front elevation show the basic inner workings under cover of the cloth. The gimmick wall is hinged to the lid and swings up and out of the way. A lock catch holds it in place. The traveling floor is pushed by your hidden assistant all the way to the right of the set. The traveling floor roller (black material) takes up the slack. Your girl pulls the TV show logo roller ("Stay tuned for magic...") across the front screen, blocking the view inside as she climbs onto the 1/2" ply traveling floor and the secondary floor is dropped down to fill the gap once taken by your assistant.

The entire television can be made to break down flat if you construct it to slip down into the 1/2" ply base and pin hinge together. Another great advantage to this illusion is its ability to fit through a standard door...often a requirement.

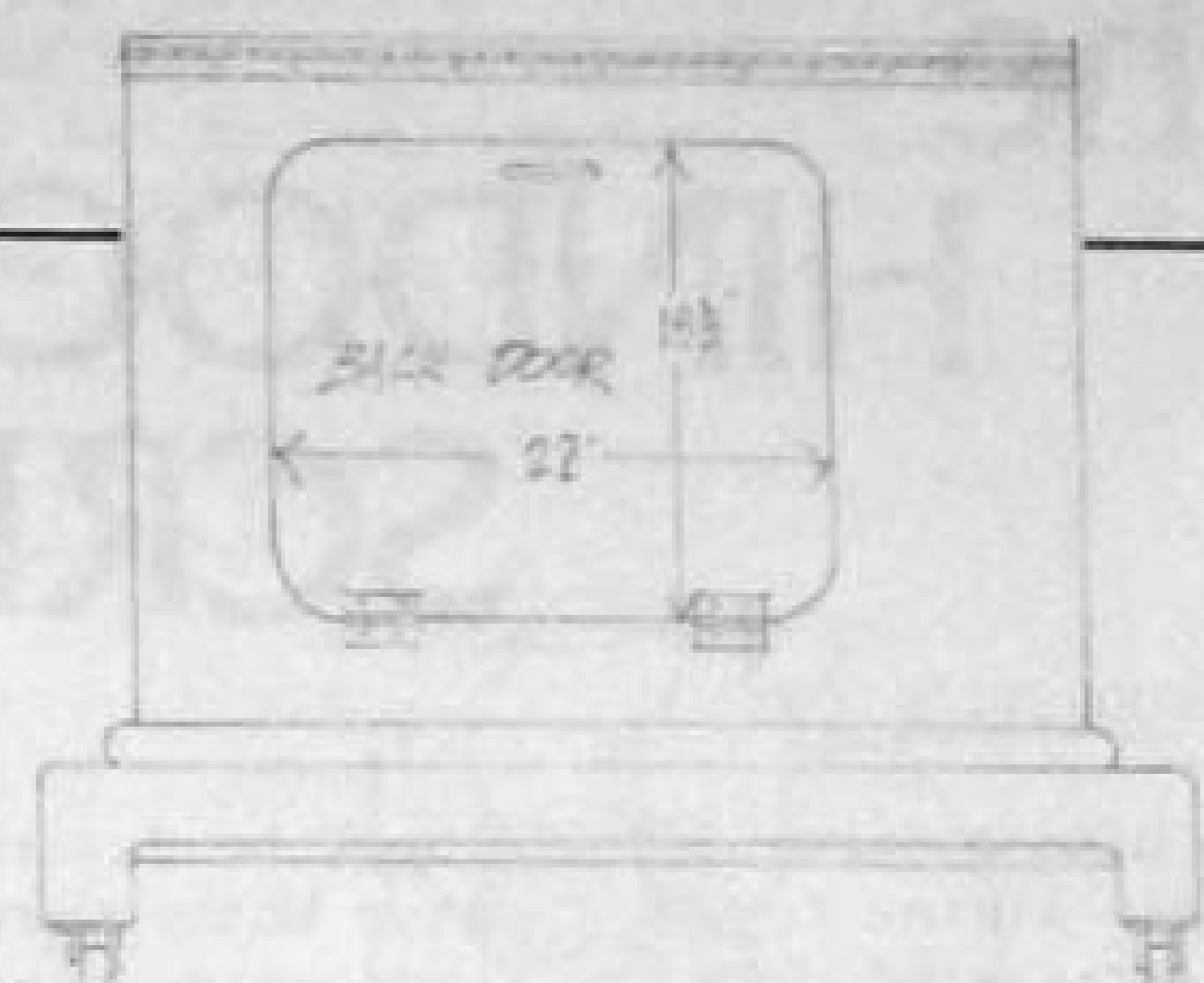




NOTE:
 3 TONK GREEN FOLDS FLAT
 ALLOW 3 INCH GAP SO ONE
 SIDE CAN TONG OVER OTHER

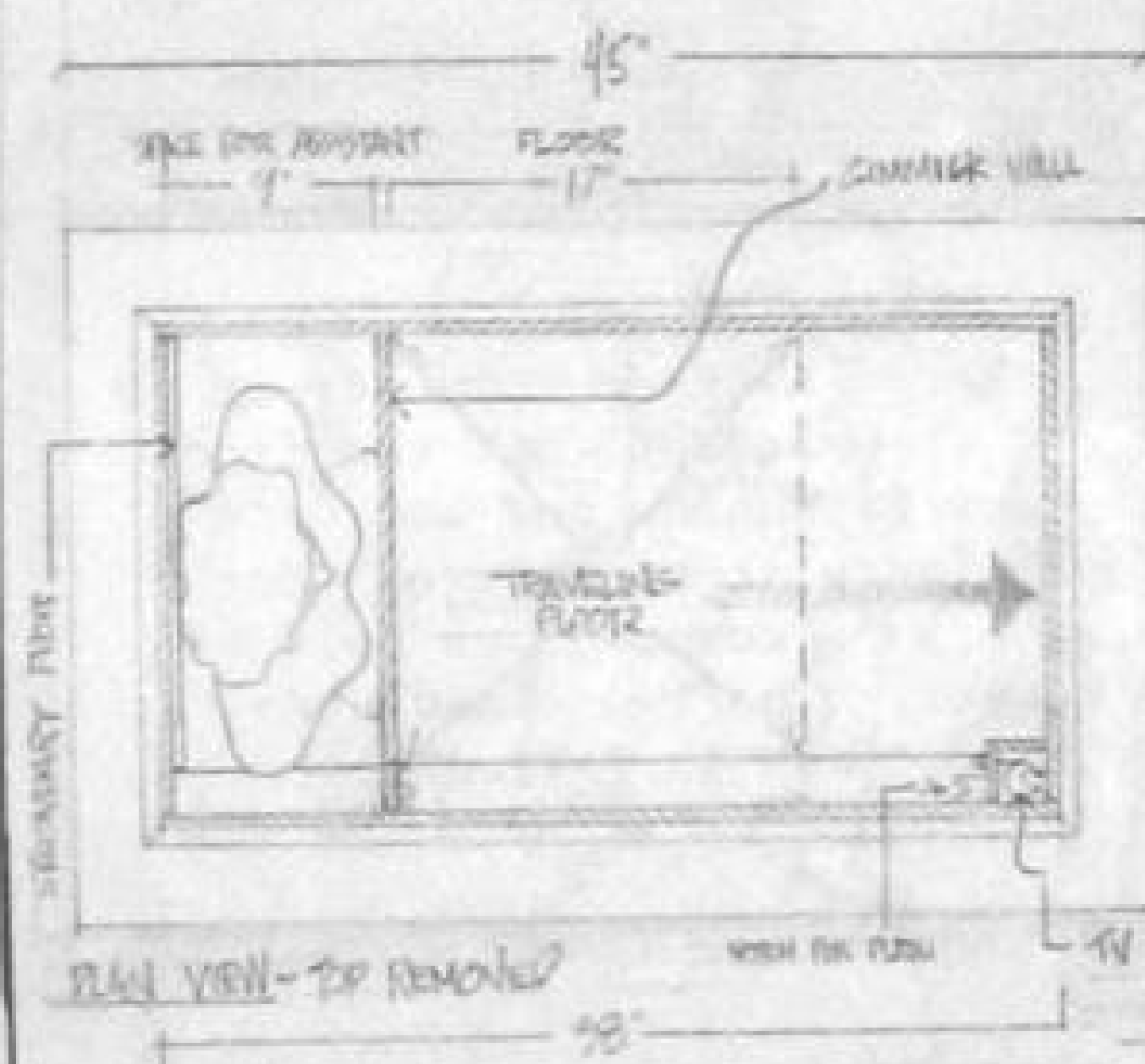


FRONT ELEVATION



BACK ELEVATION

BACK DOOR IS TO SHOW
MURDER EVIDENCE GIRL
EXITS FRONT



PLAN VIEW - TOP REMOVED

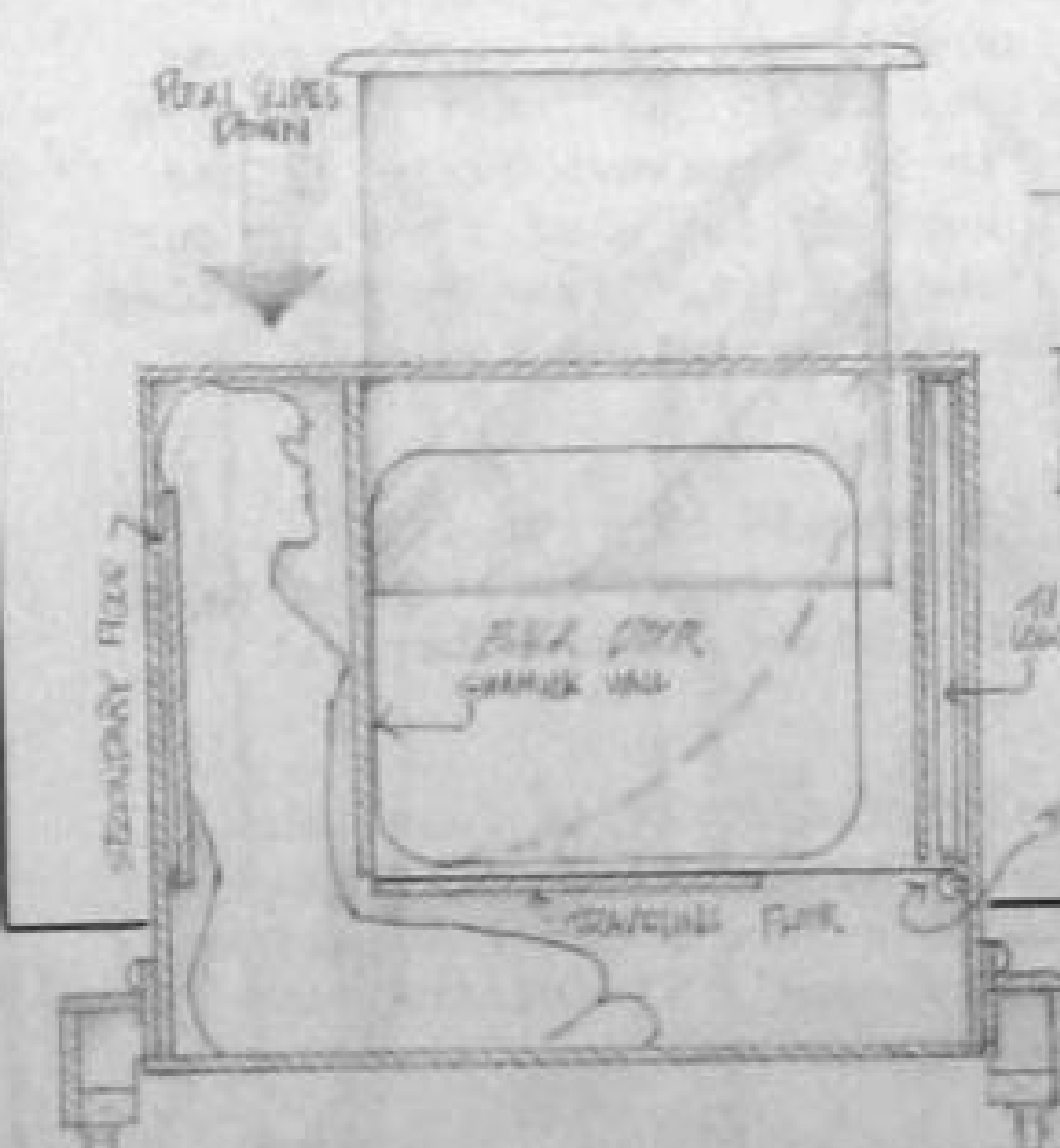
TRAVELING FLOOR
IS PUSHED BACK
AS GIRL IS
GETTING IN POS-
ITION. SECONDARY
FLOOR THEN
FALLS IN PLACE



DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

NOTE:
TRAVELING FLOOR RAISE TRIPS
UP SACK AS FLOOR IS SLID
OVER - SECONDARY FLOOR FALLS
IN PLACE ONCE ASSISTANT IS
OUT.

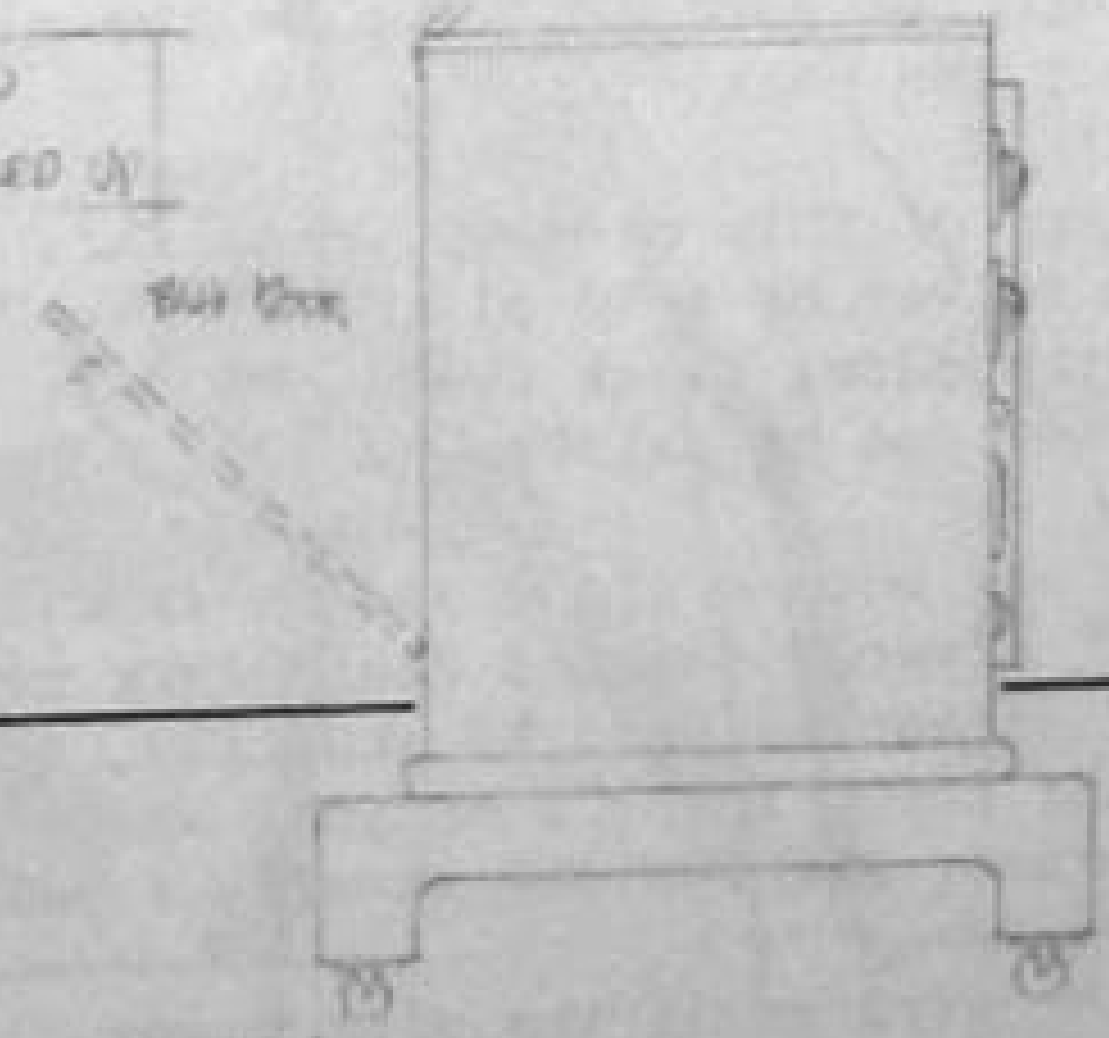
LET OPEN TO
LEAVE GIRL



FRONT ELEVATION - STATIONARY

GIRL EXITS THROUGH
FRONT
ONCE FLOOR IS PULLED UP

TV SHOW 1000 EVIDENCE
TRAVELING FLOOR ROLLER



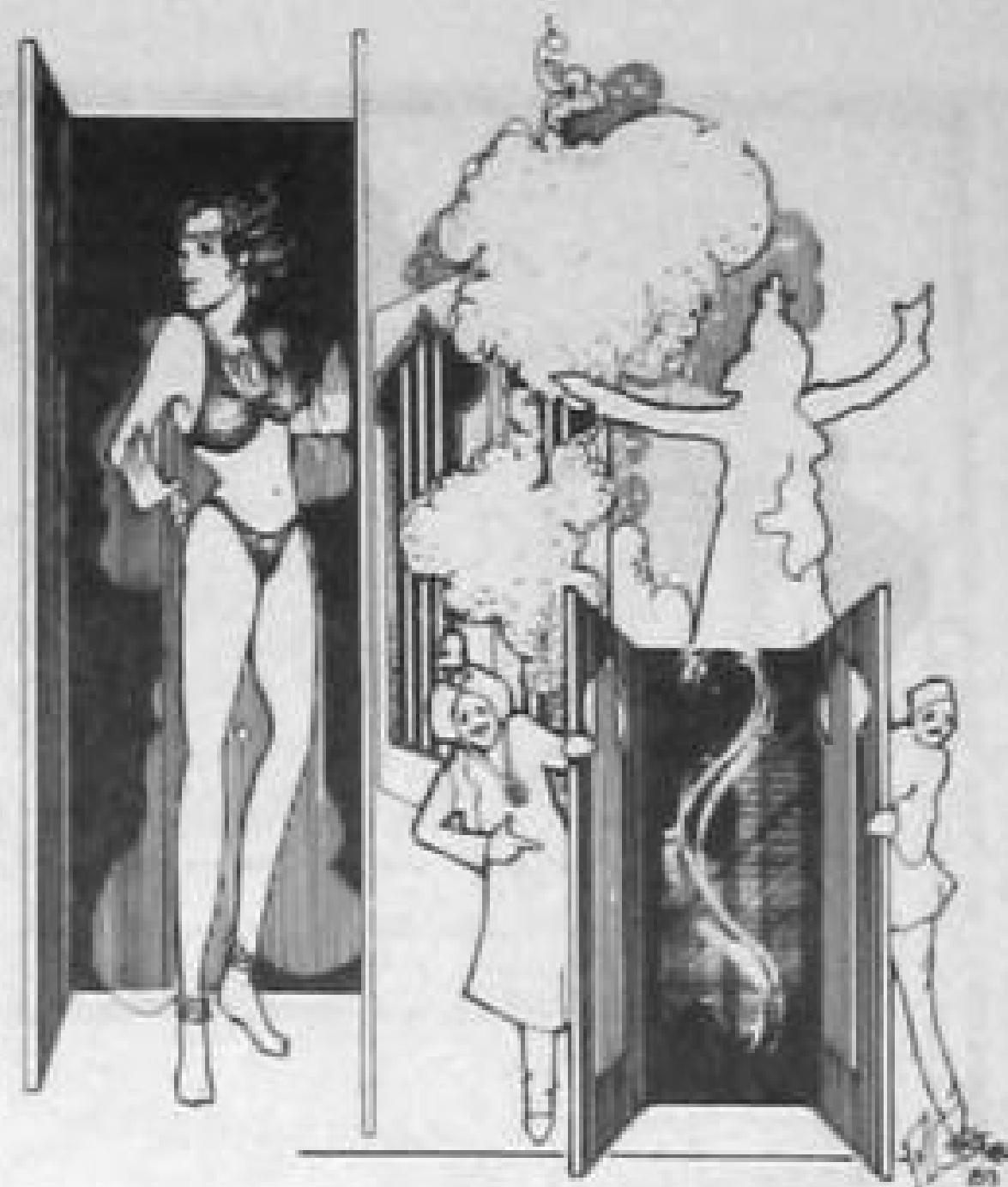
SIDE VIEW

Paul Osborne '83

the HINDOO SCREENS

INTRODUCTION

The Hindoo Screens could best be described as a little sister to the Phantom White Cargo Cage. The advantages of easy and inexpensive construction, easy transportability and performance simplicity make this prop very alluring. But remember, it is not for outdoor platforms, nor can it be done surrounded. But it might be just the thing for that upcoming convention show.



EFFECT

On a dimly lit stage, to the strains of an all Indian band, a three-fold screen is brought out and assembled. Upon close examination, it is apparent that the front area of the screens are transparent. The magician claps his hands and his beautiful assistant enters and is encased within the triangular structure. Her form can be seen through the front slats. At the magician's command...a puff of smoke... and no longer can you see the girl in the screen. The two sides are opened. It is, beyond a shadow of a doubt, empty. The screen is folded flat and carried off.

METHOD

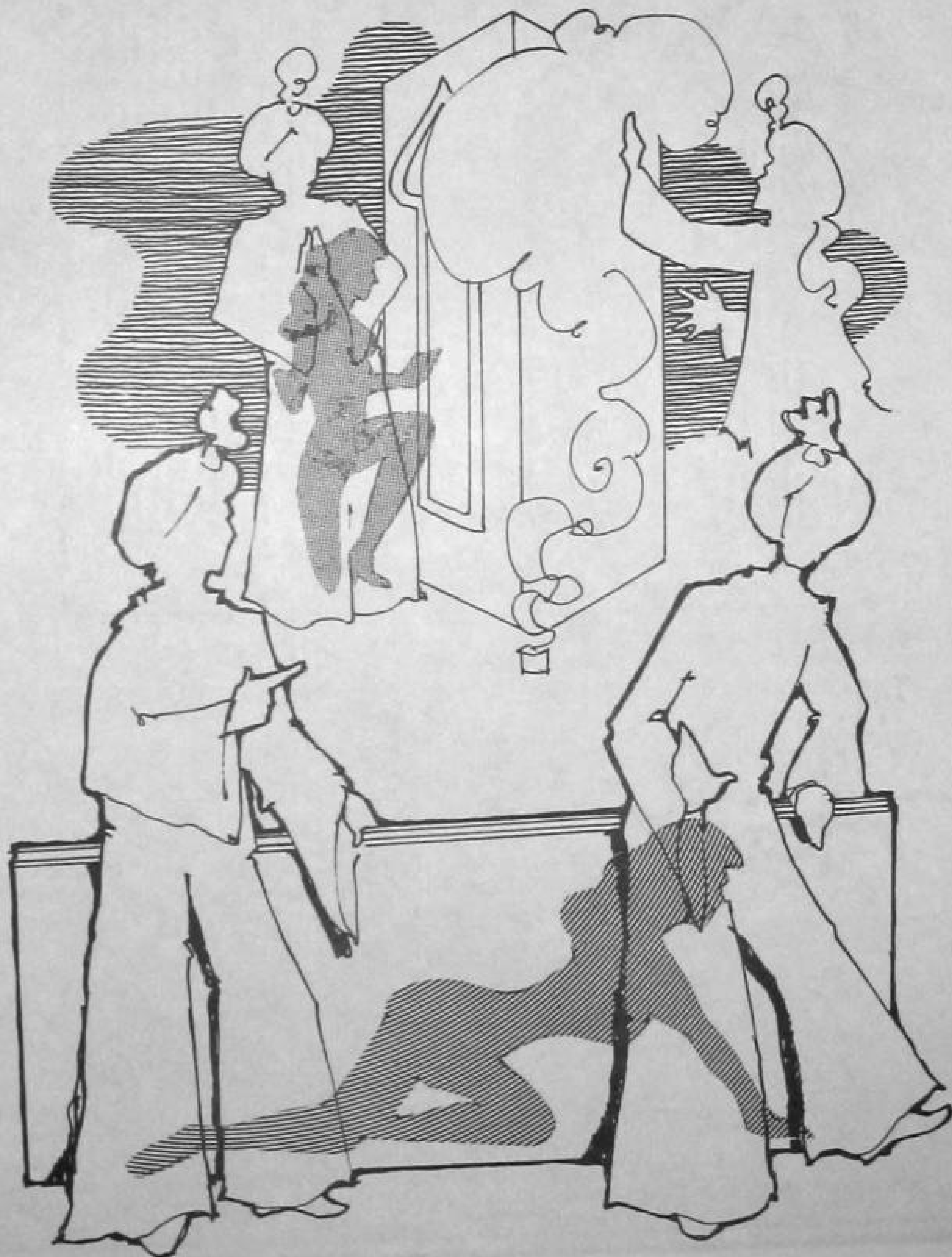
All three screens are simply constructed from 1/4" plywood, braced on the inside with 1" x 2". As shown in our drawing, frame #1 and #3 feature the sliding slat frame while frame #2 has the two 10" x 5'3" escape traps. All three frames are braced with 1" x 2" as required and hinged together as in our lower left plan view. Notice the 2 1/2" rise allowing frame #1 to lie flat between frame #2 and #3 when the screen is folded. Notice also the pull cord on our plan view and our sketch of the inside of frame #3. This cord allows the sliding frame to be pulled back into the open position by the magician once the girl assistant has made her exit out the back.

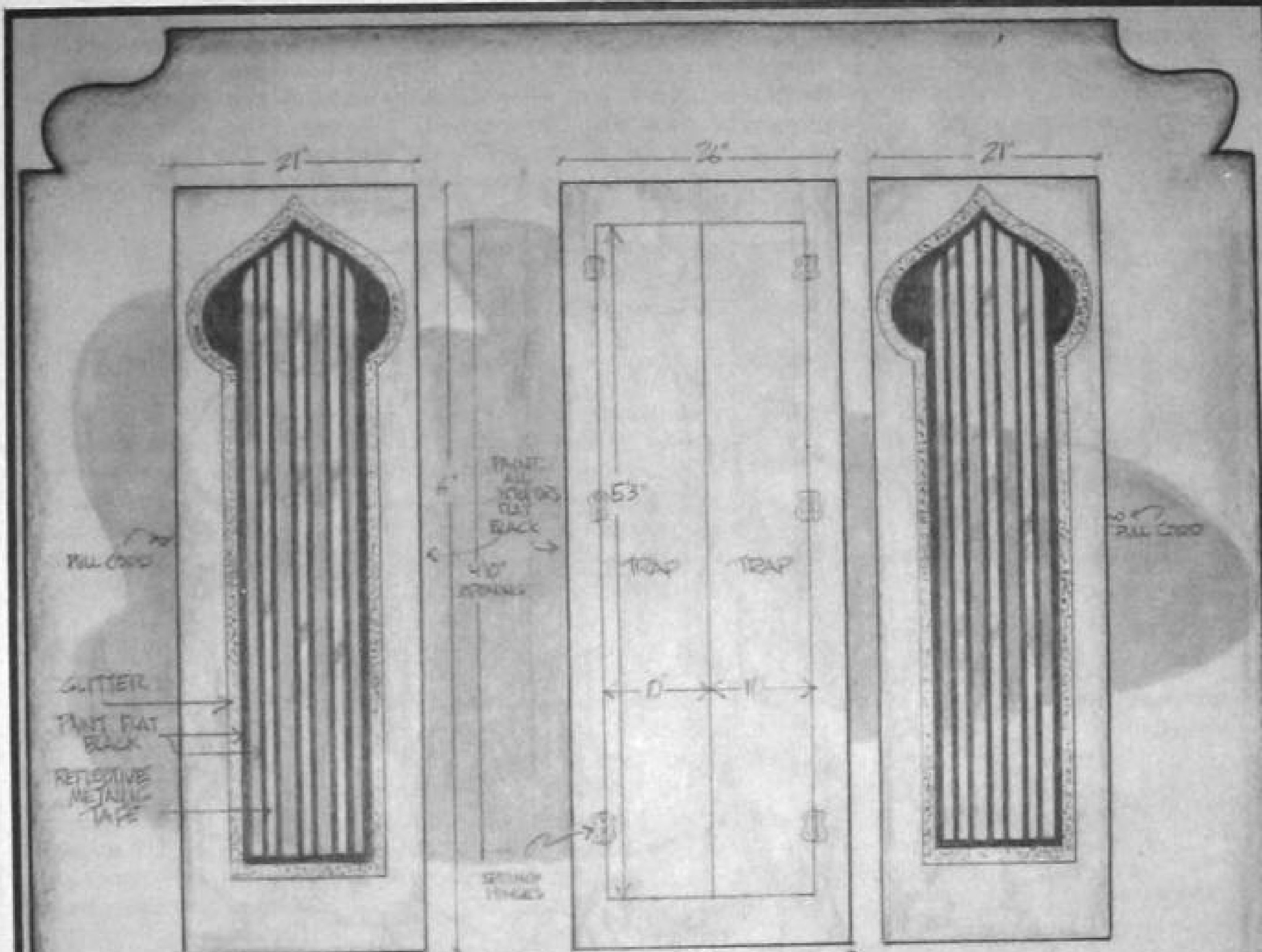
The decor of this prop is important. The front design should be rimmed in a bright silver or gold glitter. The "bars" should also be a shiny reflective tape. The surrounding black should be very flat or could be applied felt. The rest of the frame can be painted to suit your taste.

Notice our bottom right sketch showing the sliding slat frame. This frame should be 1/2" plywood painted flat black or even fronted with black felt. If framed in behind screens #1 and #3 properly, the sliding slat frame should smoothly slide back and forth 1 1/2", or just enough to hamper the audience's visibility into the frame. All insides should be painted flat black.

Once the girl pulls the slat frame closed (under cover of flash pots), she

escapes out the back traps. Where she then goes is really up to your performance requirements. She could go behind a curtain, a table, a set piece or, as I would suggest, behind a fully costumed assistant and then finally behind the folded screen as it is carried off. In any event, once she has exited, the magician steps over, pulls the pull cords (sliding frame now in open position) and opens the screens... gone! The screens are folded flat and you are on to your next miracle while the audience is still saying..."But, wait!"





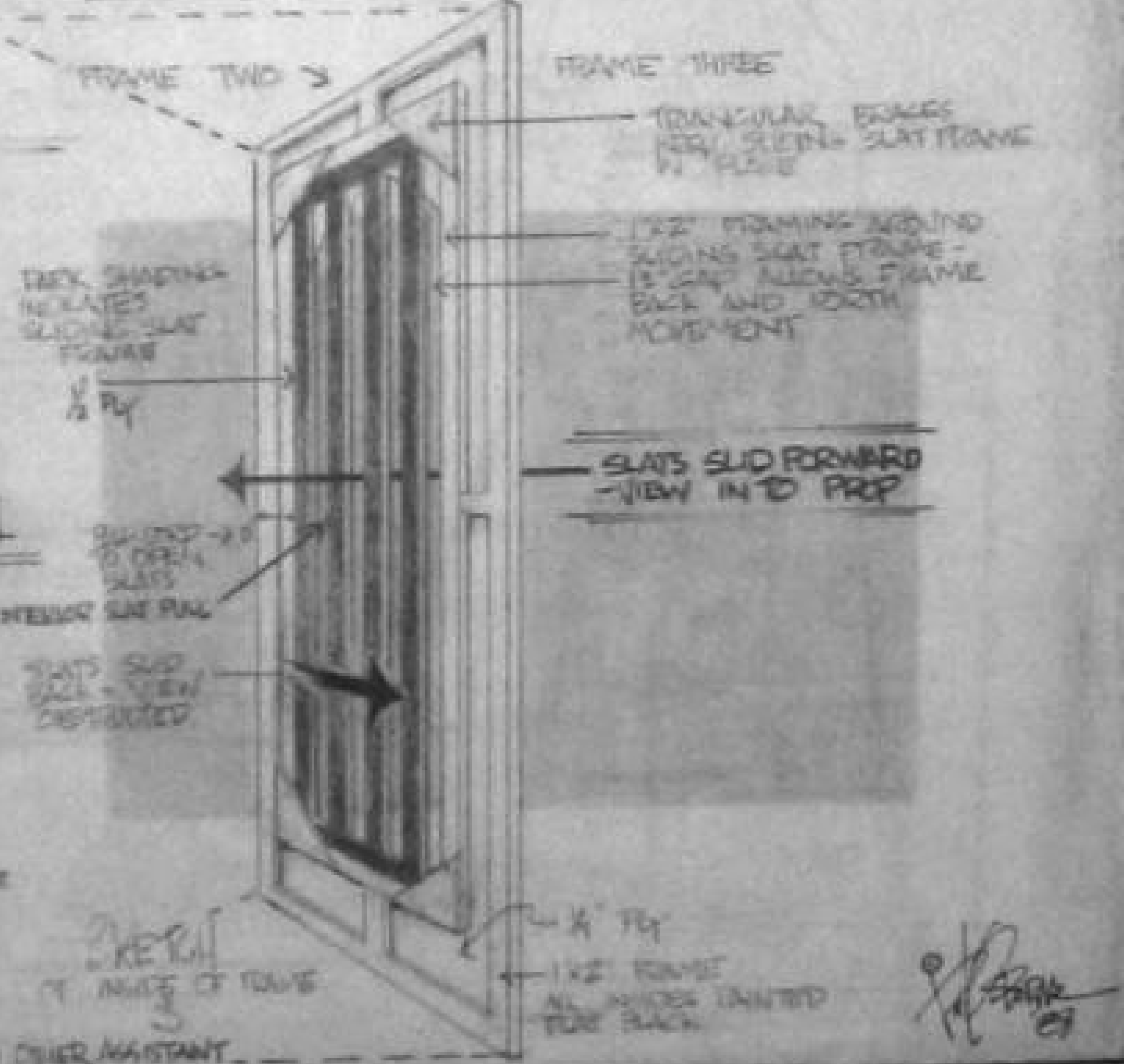
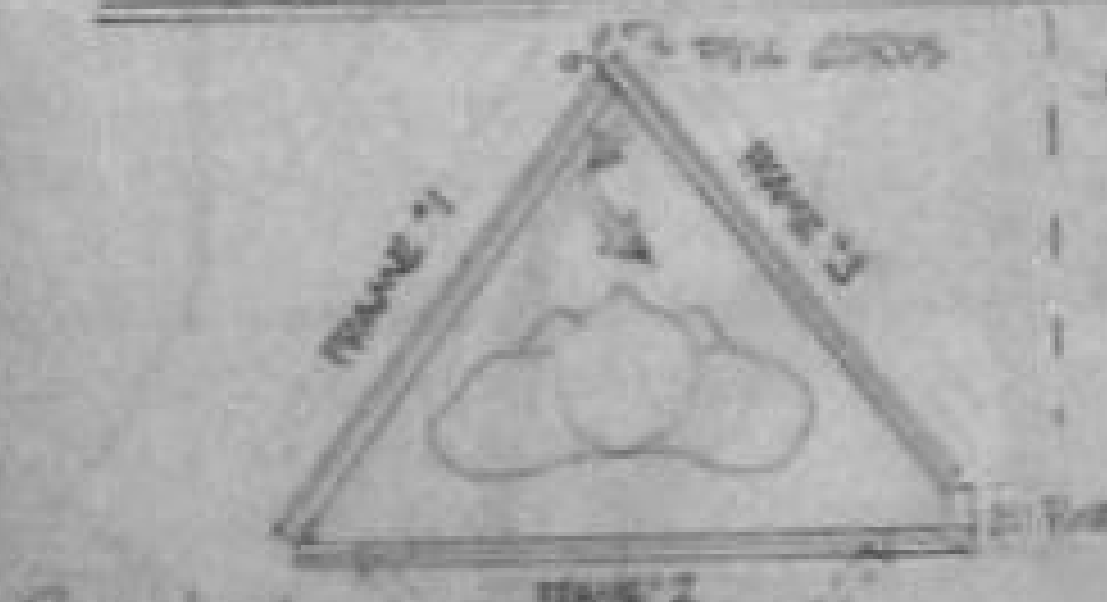
ELEVATION OF SCREEN EXTERIORS
FRAME ONE

FRAME TWO

FRAME THREE

THE HINDOO SCREENS

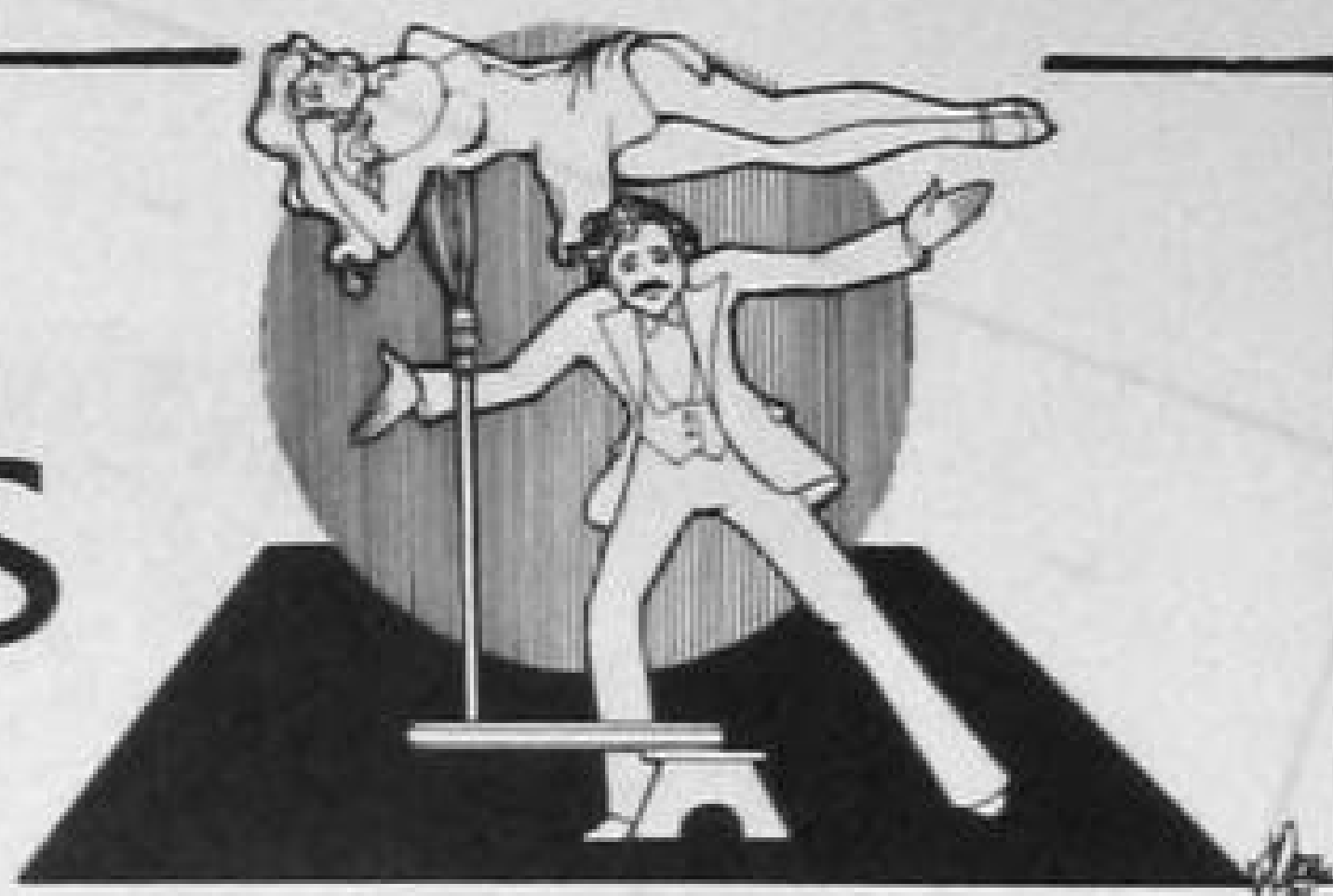
DESIGN BY TALL ORDINE 73
SCALE 3/4"=1'-0"



PLAN VIEW
SHOWS
POSITION
ONCE SEEDING SEATS ARE CLOSED - ASSISTANT
EXITS TRAP TRAPS AND SLATS IN POSITION BEHIND OTHER ASSISTANT

1/2" FRAME
ALL SIDES PAINTED
FLAT BLACK

Stan Allen's BROOM PLUS



INTRODUCTION

I am proud to have the talented Stan Allen contribute to this volume. It is only fitting that Stan send us a variation on the Broom Suspension. As you may or may not know, Stan is the head man at "Illusionsales", a company currently manufacturing and marketing one of the finer versions of the Broom Suspension available today. Some of Stan's satisfied customers are Harry Blackstone, Jr., Chuck Jones, Lee Edwards, John Topman and Les Arnold, just to name a few. If you're interested in learning more about this classic illusion, you can contact Stan at Illusionsales, Box 963, Los Alamitos, California, 90720. I'm sure he'll be happy to supply you with information on all of his products.

But now, taking his specialty to greater heights, Stan Allen, with the help of Robert Houdin, Robert Harbin, Les Arnold, Bill Smith and Lynn Saltzer present "Broom Plus".

THE ILLUSION

"In April of 1976, I had the pleasure of working a week with Robert Harbin in the old Palace of Mystery, downstairs at The Magic Castle. He suggested that I perform the Broom Suspension as Robert-Houdin is shown doing the illusion in old drawings, the base being balanced on a single support under the feet-end. I let the idea drift away...literally, as a few weeks later I went to work on my first Princess Cruise. I didn't have much call for the trick on the open seas!

In February of the following year, Bill Smith asked if I would do 'something' on the Long Beach Mystic's annual show, 'It's Amazing'. I thought the 'something' would be my cruise act, however, Bill had a little bigger 'something' in mind. He had designed the entire second act of the show to feature illusion vs. manipulation. An illusionist would perform one illusion on stage, followed by a manipulator presenting one form of manipulation on a small platform built into the orchestra pit, then another illusionist, etc. It was a fun show and presented a number of performers. It did, however, leave me slotted in as an illusionist.

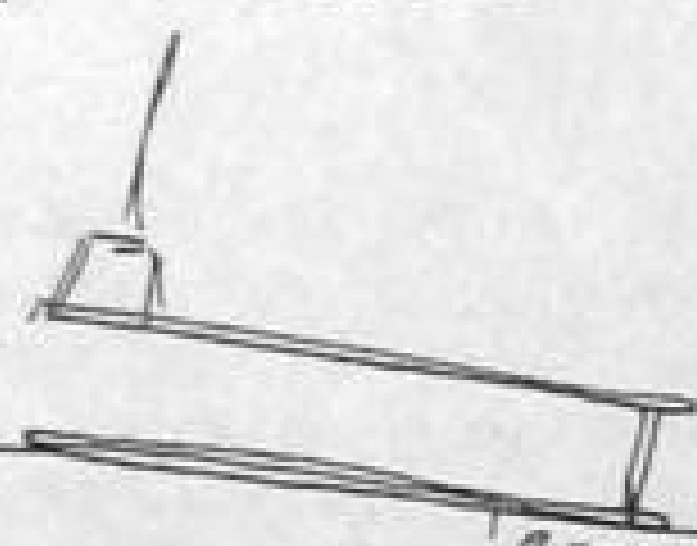
I discover this fact upon my return from San Juan less than a week before the show. Surprise! I suggested the Harbin idea...Les Arnold, Bill Smith, and I worked out a method...Bill built it on Tuesday and Wednesday...we tested it at the theater on Thursday...rehearsed it seriously on Friday...and performed it on Saturday, with Lynn Saltzer, the daring young lady on the flying contraption.

The version was met with a round of magical discussions on whether it added anything or actually took away from the mystery, etc. I wrote to Harbin that I had done the trick and he sent the following letter and suggestion for doing it without attaching to the floor. Unfortunately, I did not get to perform the illusion again for almost a year to have photos taken. Robert Harbin died before their arrival.

ROBERT H. BAIN
23 Charter Gas Company London NW1 5DP
147 No 512 1981 22

March 23

Dear Stan Allen, I am green with
every - I couldn't get anything
like that - I made sure it was
I am delighted that
I am sure that Harding
had the leg problem to his
stop - no problem to his
for general use only not
they are extra plain
- Sincerely -

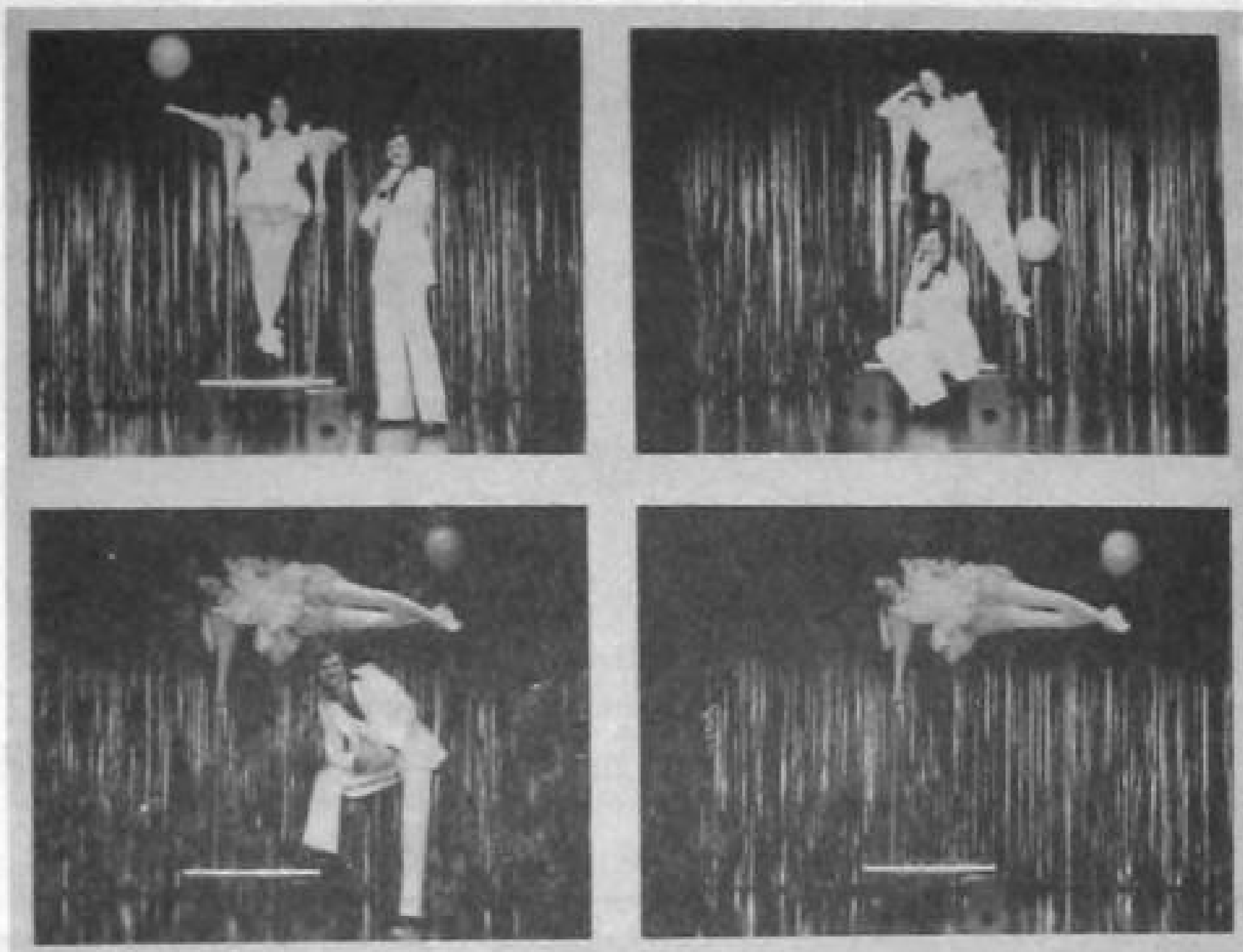


EXTRA BARD
USE ANY WHERE??

Will look forward to seeing
any photographs which came up
- in the meantime good luck
and full to work for having
a go

Sincerely
Robert H.

The following photos were taken in the new Palace of Mystery, where I did the illusion unannounced for a few nights. Actually, I only did the first half of the routine. After setting the support stools, the base, brooms and stool, I would lift the girl up to the 90° point. I would pass the hoop over the balloon, over the girl, down the broom...kick out the support stool...continue to pass the hoop along the base, and drop it onto the floor over the remaining support stool. Walking forward I would gesture with my hand as if pulling on a light cord...blackout. When the lights came up a few seconds later, I was in front of the curtain with a microphone ready to introduce the first act. This definitely made life a lot easier!

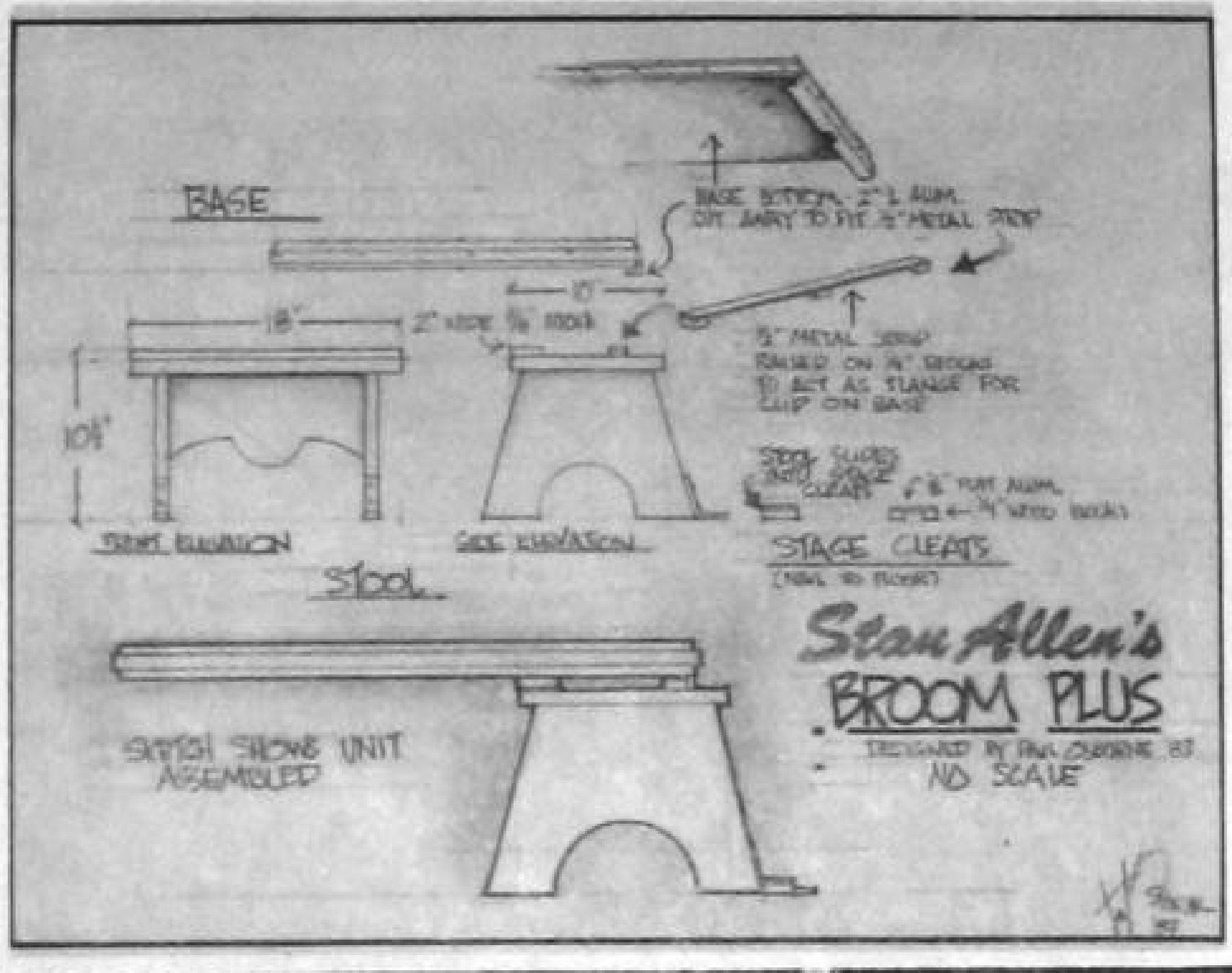


That was the last time I performed this version of the illusion. I have seen variations since, however, only few and very far between. To be quite honest, I am not sure that it adds all that much...and I am not sure that it doesn't. Also, I'm not sure that Robert-Houdin ever performed it as it was drawn. The written descriptions fail to mention any removal of supports.

This variation is based on the fact that when the girl is in the 90° position, the trick is 'feet-heavy'. This means that her weight is pulling away from the broom. First glance at a picture of the trick implies that her weight is coming straight down onto the broom. Actually, you can lift the broom end of the trick, tipping her over onto her feet, quite easily. It's a matter of balance.

The remaining support stool was made from birch and attached to the floor with metal cleats. These cleats just slide into small metal pieces that have been nailed to the floor. There is no reason to 'lock' this stool to the floor. The cleats are on the outside edge, thus her weight pulls the cleats into their holders. The top of the support stool has a metal flange that receives the aluminum clip piece on the bottom of the base. Once again, this locks in so gravity is pulling the flange into its holder, thus keeping it in place. As soon as the weight of the girl is off the pieces, they will disassemble easily.

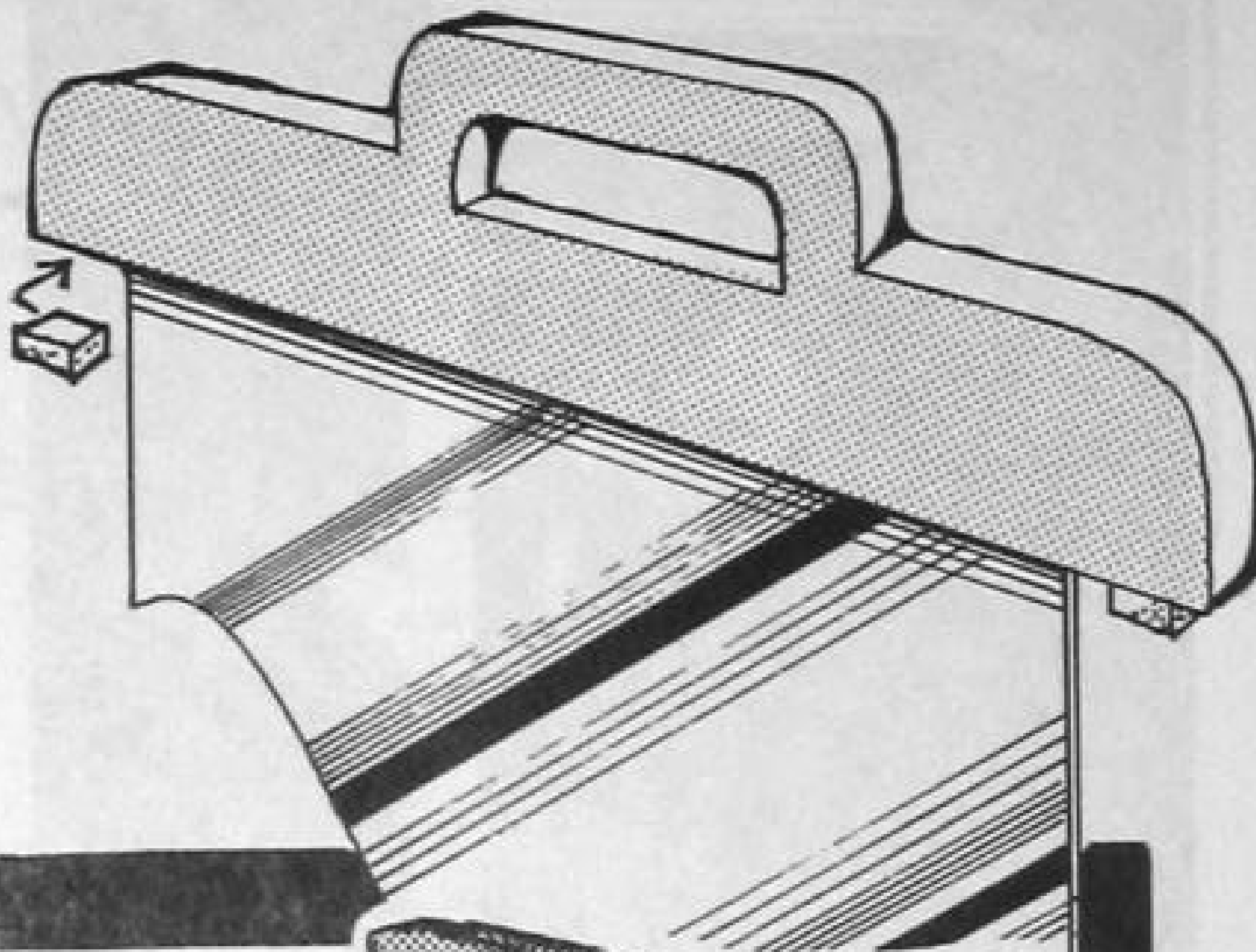
That's about it. It does seem a little too easy, but the rest works itself. Make sure everything is in place and perform the first part of the suspension as normal. After the girl is up in the 90° position, lift slightly on the broom (pivoting the weight off the support stool below), and kick out the support stool! To get out of the effect, reverse the entire procedure. Enjoy!"



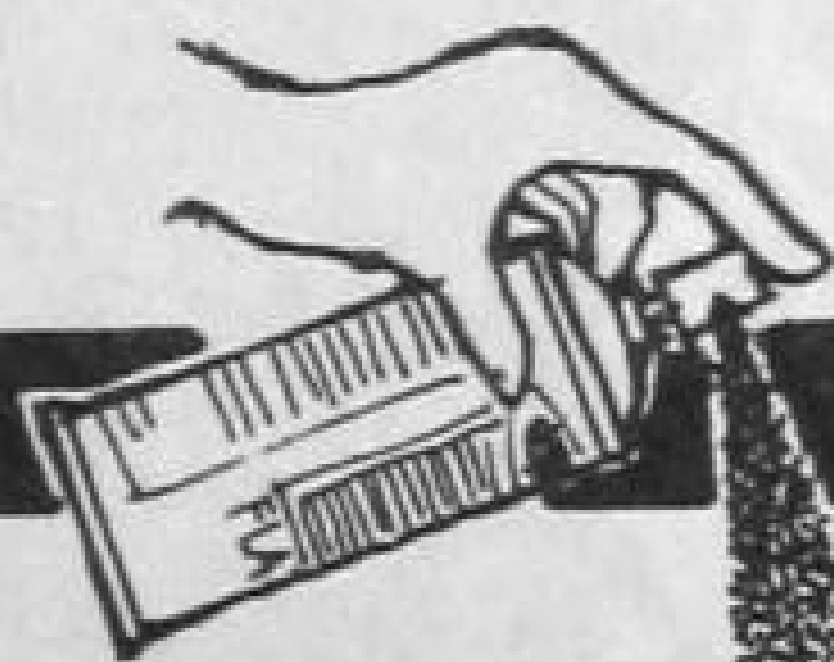
Stan Allen

TIPS...

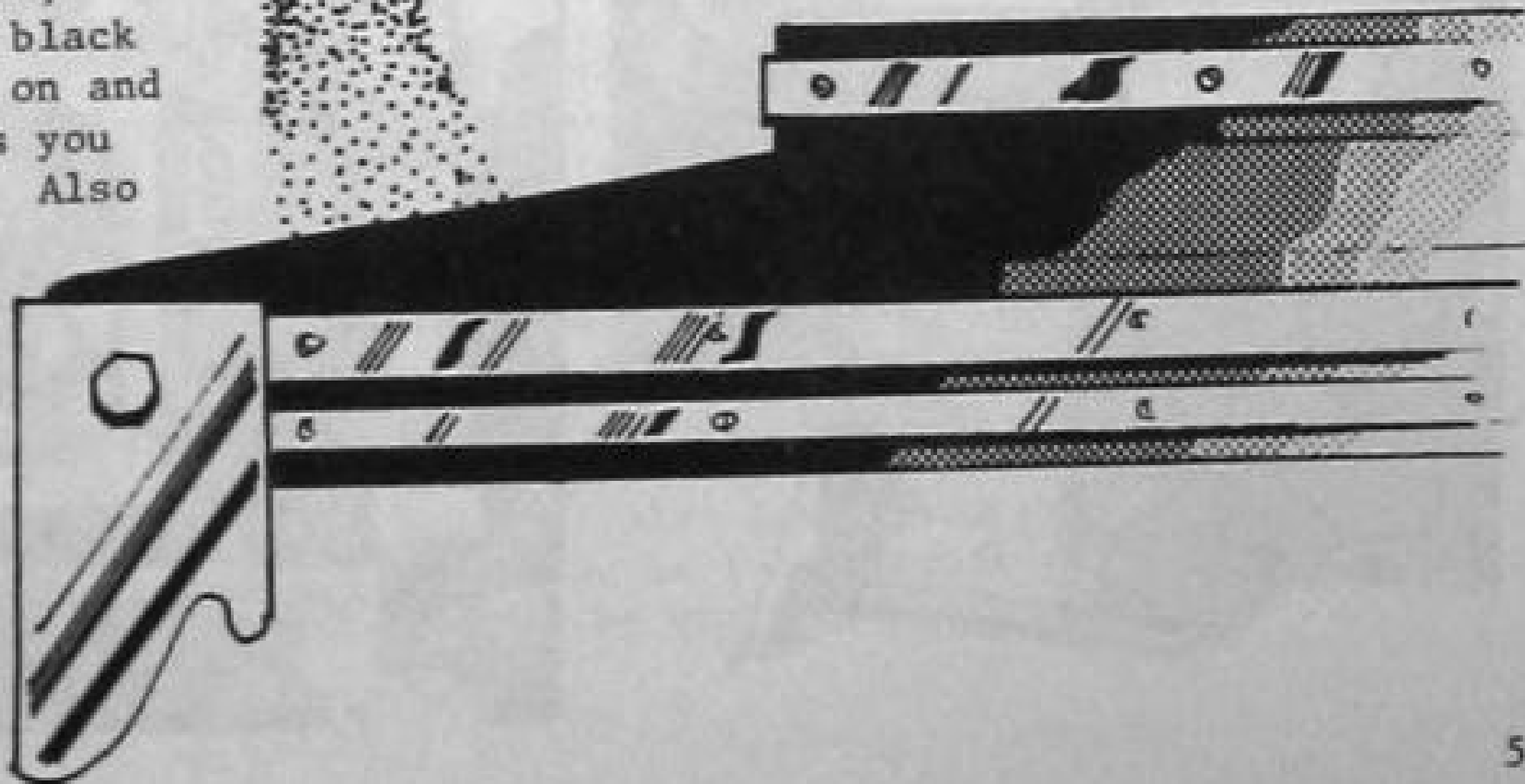
If your Zig Zag or Mismade Lady blade handles are chipping or nicking the wood, here's a minor modification that will keep your prop scratch free: Contact cement two foam rubber squares on the blade side of your handle. Now the foam rubber will hit the prop before your blade handle does.



Sew a stiff piece of fabric in the bottom back of your Sub Trunk bag. Now when you "land" in the trunk you'll know that is the bottom back of the bag. Pull this stiffer side over your head and you'll be in the bag the right way!



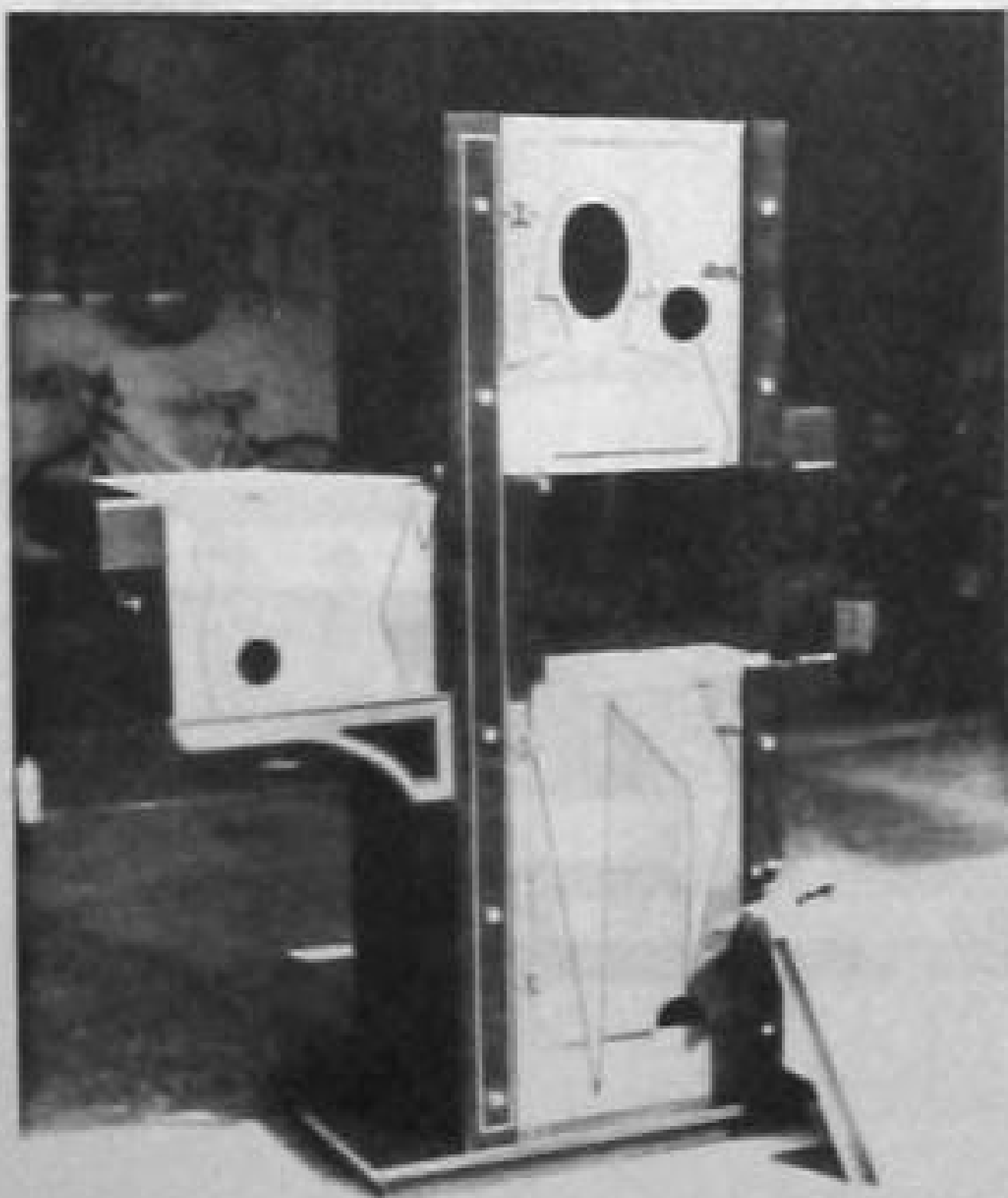
To cure worn spots or stains on your black felt covered base, touch it up with some flat black spray paint. Just mist it on and remember to cover the areas you don't want to get painted. Also let it dry thoroughly before using.

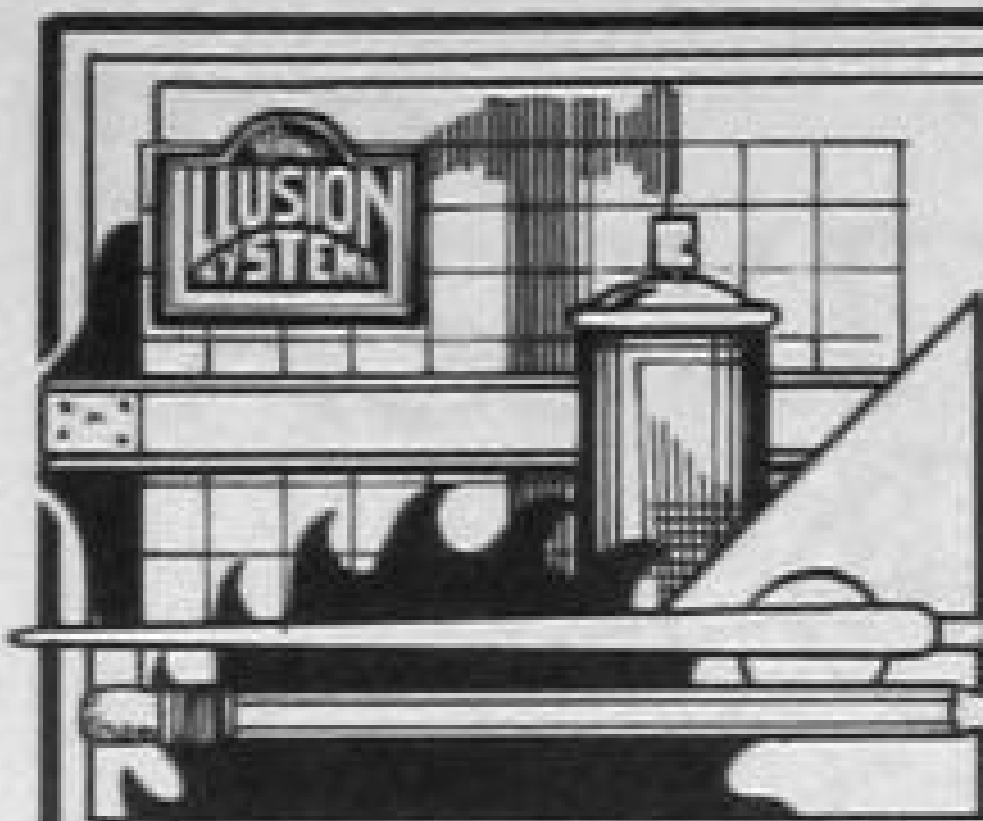


Phil Osborne
**ILLUSION
SYSTEMS**



Illusion Systems' plans at work! At left is Dave Jackson performing his newly built Assistant's Revenge; bottom right, Owen Redwine's completed Zig Zag; and below, the television illusion scores a hit with park audiences. Builders working from Paul Osborne's plans modify the illusion as they build it to suit their various needs. No plan should be inflexible and no builder uncreative. These finished products all feature custom modifications.





Ed Verba's SPRING HINGES

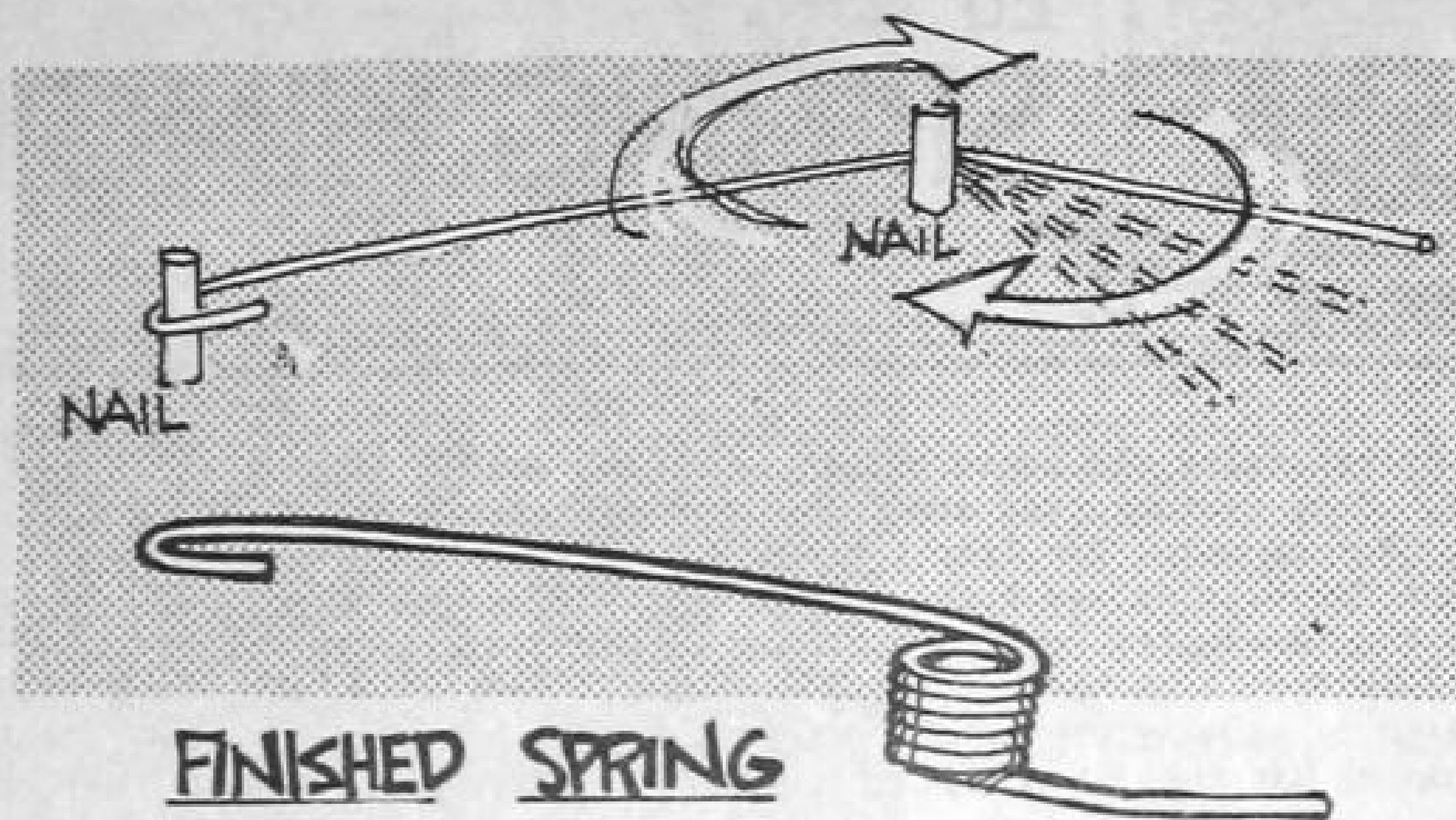
In building or repairing old magic props one of the most difficult items to find is a spring hinge. Some springs that are found on commercial made items can be adapted to magical use. For example, Rat Trap Springs are perfect for making Balloon To Dove and Gloves To Dove Trays. Springs found on old clip boards and springs taken from magnetic clip holders can be adapted to fit on hinges for trap doors that need spring hinges. However, some springs have to be specially made for props like Forgetful Freddie and Botantias. Here is an easy way to make a spring for a hinge or as a replacement for one that is broken or has lost its "spring" because the prop was stored with its spring in full tension.

First you are going to need steel spring wire, more commonly known as piano wire. Most hardware stores do not carry this type of wire and if you go to a commercial steel supplier, you may be faced with a minimum bill of \$35.00 to \$100.00. Unless you are making Asrah dummies, you may be stuck with a few lifetimes of spring steel if you get stuck with that minimum purchase. Go to a good supplier of hobby supplies. Piano wire is an everyday staple with the model plane builder. If your local hobby store does not carry piano wire, contact the K&S Engineering Company in Chicago, Illinois. They are the main supplier of music wire to hobby stores. They sell all gauges of wire, most come in three foot lengths. They will let you know where your nearest source of their piano wire is.

For a start I suggest that you purchase .032 thickness of steel spring wire. A thicker wire would give you more tension but would be more difficult to work with. A thinner gauge wire would be a lot easier to work with, but may not give you the "spring" or tension that you need. .032 is an excellent size to start making springs with.

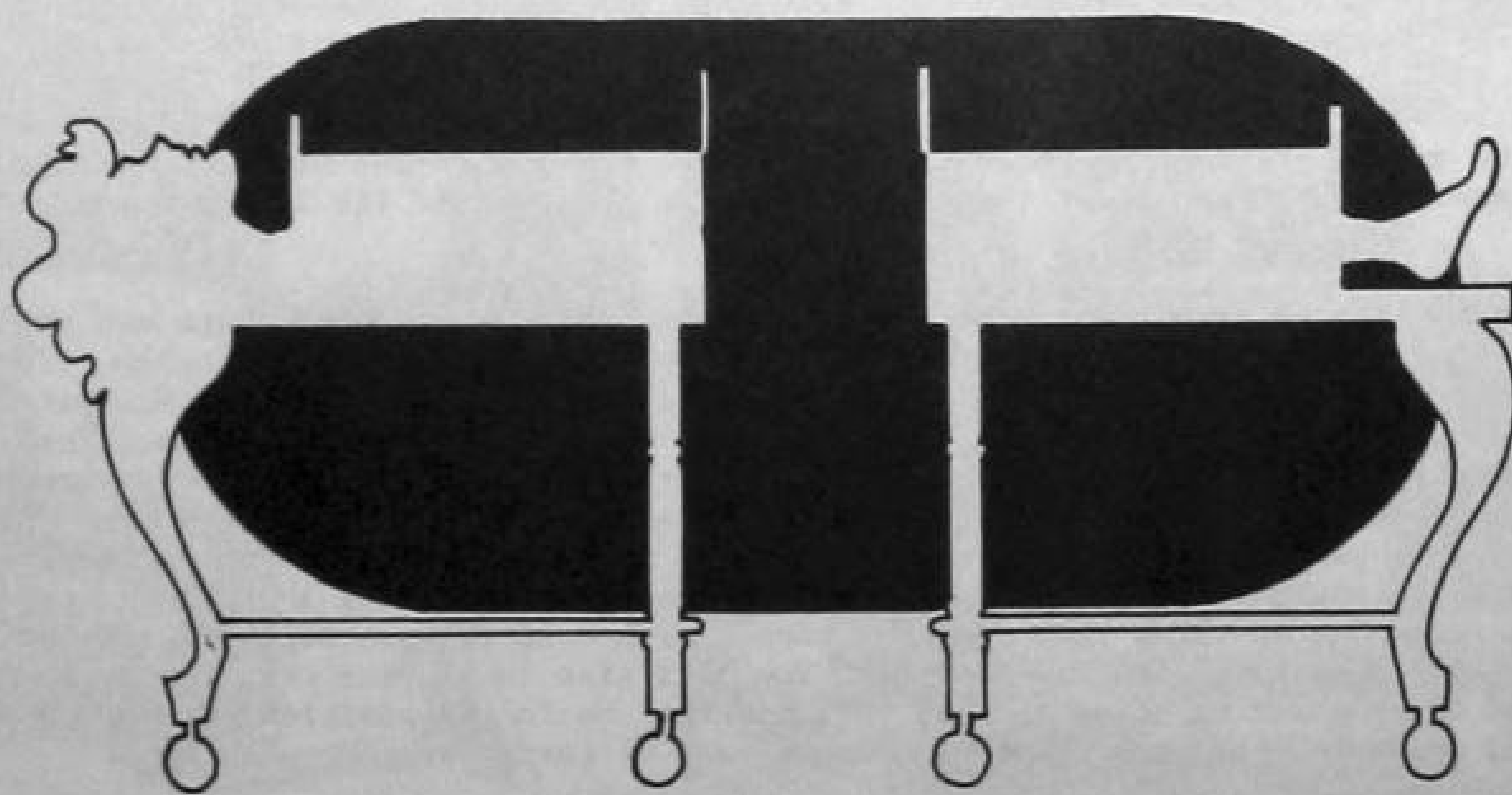
The next information you will need to know is the size of spring that will be needed. If you are making the spring for a hinge, take the pin out of the hinge and find a nail that is about eighty percent of the coil size. The nail should fit loosely inside the coil.

If you would like to experiment making springs, here is a suggestion: Take two nails (common) size 16D and 8D and pound them into the wooden side of your workbench. I use these sizes a lot so I've put the nails into the side of my Black & Decker Workmate. Pound the nails in and then cut off the heads with bolt cutters or a hacksaw. They should be about two and one-half inches apart. With a pair of pliers, bend a shepherd's hook at one end of the spring wire that you will be working with. Hook the end of the spring wire on one nail...pull it tightly and wrap it around the other nail. Make sure that you wrap it tightly...make seven or eight turns. If replacing another spring, give it the same amount of turns plus one more turn. With a little practice you will soon be making very professional looking springs. You will also learn from practice where you will need to stop making turns so that the ends will be in the position needed. Don't be afraid to waste some wire. The experience will be worth it.

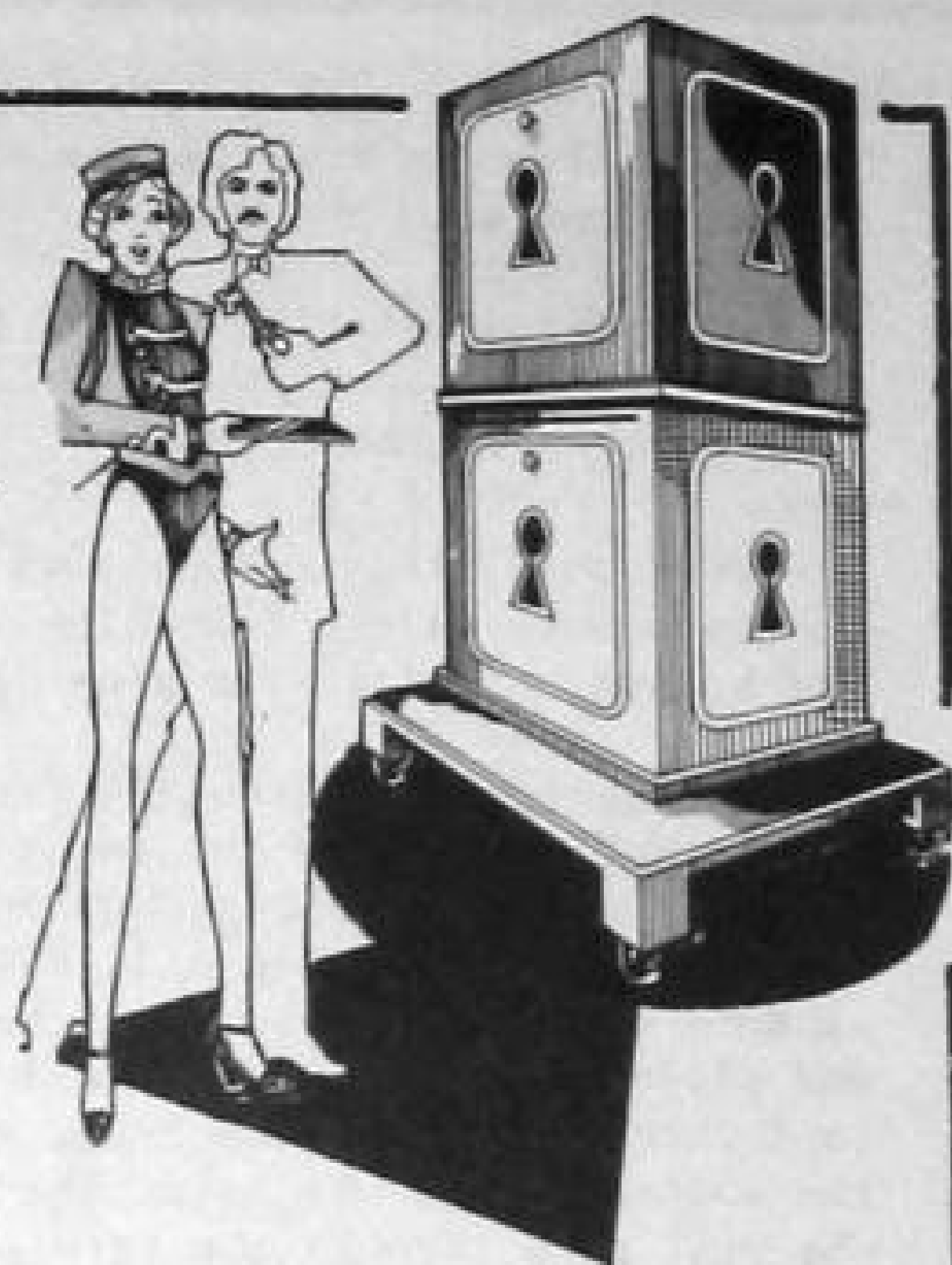


Cut the spring wire with side cutters or pliers that are made to cut thin wire. You can also shape the wire ends with needle nose pliers. After you make a few springs, you'll be surprised with the things that you will learn to do on your own in making bends and in shaping to make more tension.

By using two different size nails you can make different size springs. Turning from left to right you will make a larger spring. Going the opposite way, right to left, will make a smaller spring. You, of course, will need a nail of the proper size to make a spring that will fit a hinge that needs a special amount of tension.



the PASSKEY ILLUSION



INTRODUCTION

Illusion Systems' Book II featured a photo of this prop. I assumed most readers had seen the plan for it in the October, 1981 issue of Genii, but apparently not so. Here you go...oh, and by the way, we have used this prop in our shows and it's terrific!

EFFECT

A small, upright cabinet, consisting of two stacked boxes is introduced. The uppermost box is tilted forward and its top is opened to give the audience a view inside. Cut into the bottom of this top box is a mysterious keyhole shape cut-out. Calling attention to this, the magician introduces his lovely assistant, who will pass "through the keyhole". The box is tilted back and, with the aid of a small ladder, she climbs into the top box, closing the lid behind her.

A 2' x 2'10" piece of clear plexi-glass is shown to have a matching keyhole cut-out and two audience members are invited up to examine. As this is being done, the magician opens the front and back doors on the bottom box to demonstrate that it is empty. The girl is still contained in the top box. The plexi sheet is now slid into the top of the bottom box, so that both keyhole cut-outs line up. Audience members hold on to the projecting ends of the plexi panel as the magician counts to three. On three a scream is heard - the front and back doors of box #1 are opened - no girl! Box #2 is opened and there she is - passed through the keyhole! The plexi is removed and examined as you take your bows.

METHOD

The working of this illusion is relatively simple. Once the girl climbs into the top box and its lid is closed, she immediately opens traps A and B and steps down into Box #2. Then, opening traps C and D, finally getting into the base and closing C and D over her. This is all being done as you are demonstrating the plexi. When you open the bottom box, she is actually in the base, not the top box as suspected. The plexi is inserted and Box #2 is closed up. Then, she simply gets out of the base into Box #2 and waits to be discovered.

Both boxes are built from 3/8" ply with all traps being reinforced and braced 1/2" material. The 1" thick sliding braces attached to Box #1 run through drawer knobs on Box #2. These braces serve to stabilize Box #1 as it is tipped forward. Notice the base has a deep bottom bevel to hide its 1 1/2" thickness. Also, the floor of the base traps C and D comes flush with the bottom of the front and back door of Box #2.

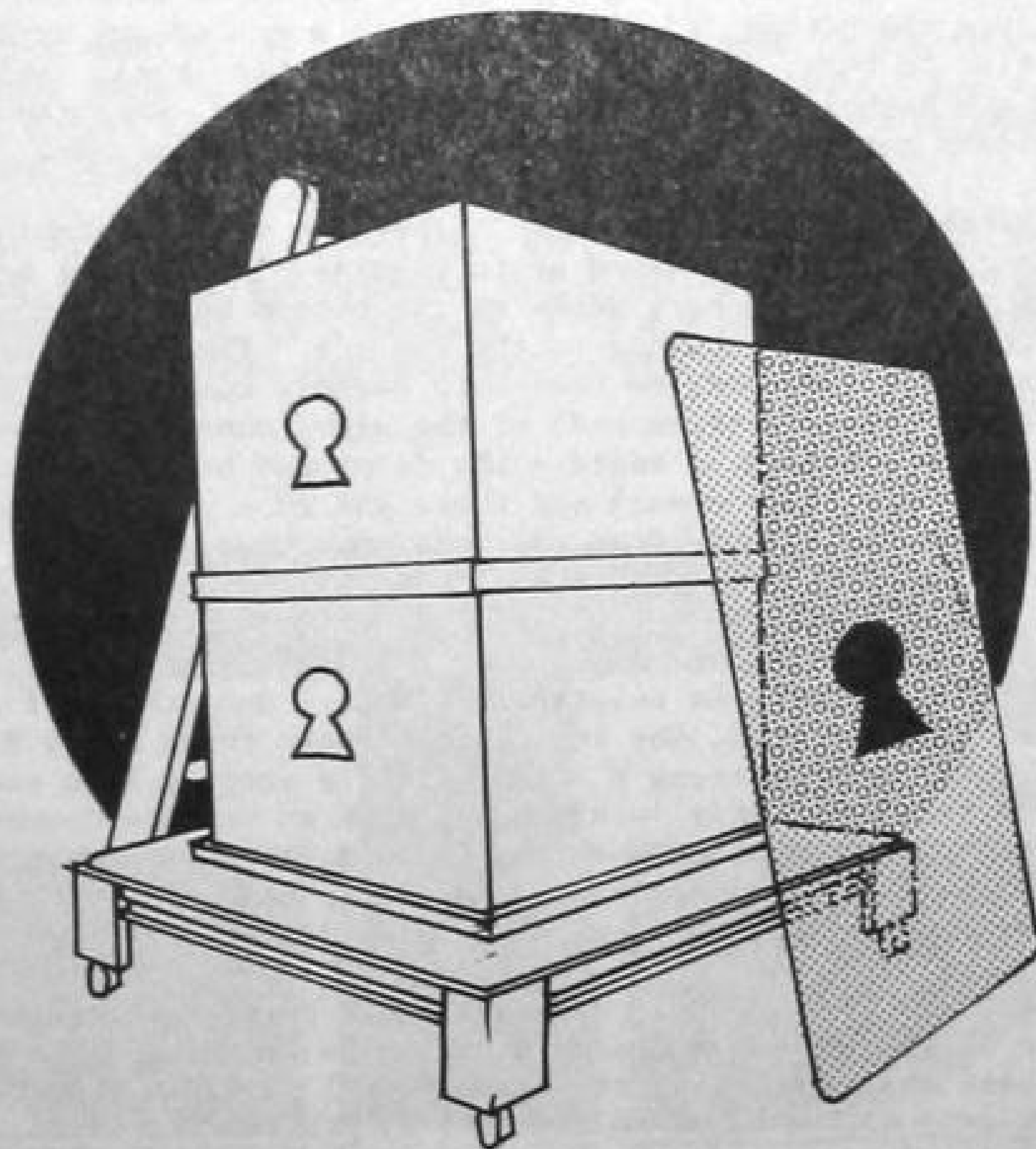
The small 4'2" ladder is built from 1" x 3" white pine, glued and screwed together.

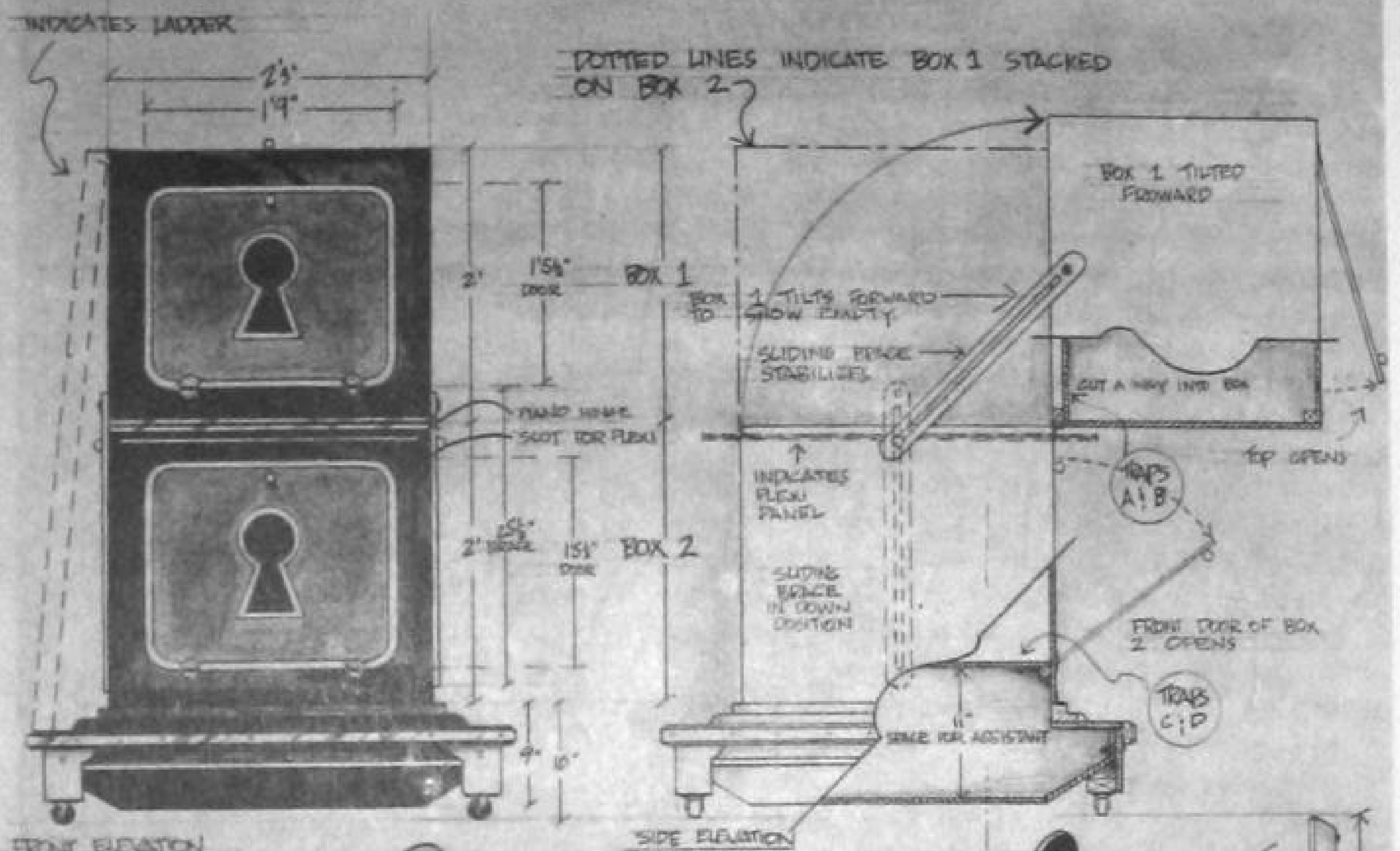
Peg the bottom of the runners and you can align it in holes on the base. Attach rubber bumpers to the top of the runners so it won't mar the finish on Box #1.

I would advise painting Box #1 in shades of red and maroon with gold and black trim. Paint Box #2 in oranges and yellows with gold and black trim. Line both boxes with a pleasing patterned fabric.

To break this illusion down, we had the top and bottom of the top box made so they carriage-bolt to the four sides. The bottom box pin-hinged together without a top and bottom. It was also pin-hinged to the base.

A final performance note: I have tried this pantomimed to pre-recorded music with some narration. I feel as though it can actually be performed best if narrated by the magician with some background music. Otherwise the audience seems to get lost on where the girl is. You will have to constantly reinforce that she is in the top box. As soon as you have shown the bottom box empty (she's in the base), close the doors and slide in the plexi. Once done she should reach up through the plexi putting her hand through the top box front keyhole opening and you should, once again, remind the audience that she is in the top box. Now comes the magic! Again reinforce that she will pass through the tiny plexi keyhole into the bottom box... You get the idea - most magic show audiences don't want to think, they only want to be entertained - and that's your job, so do it right!



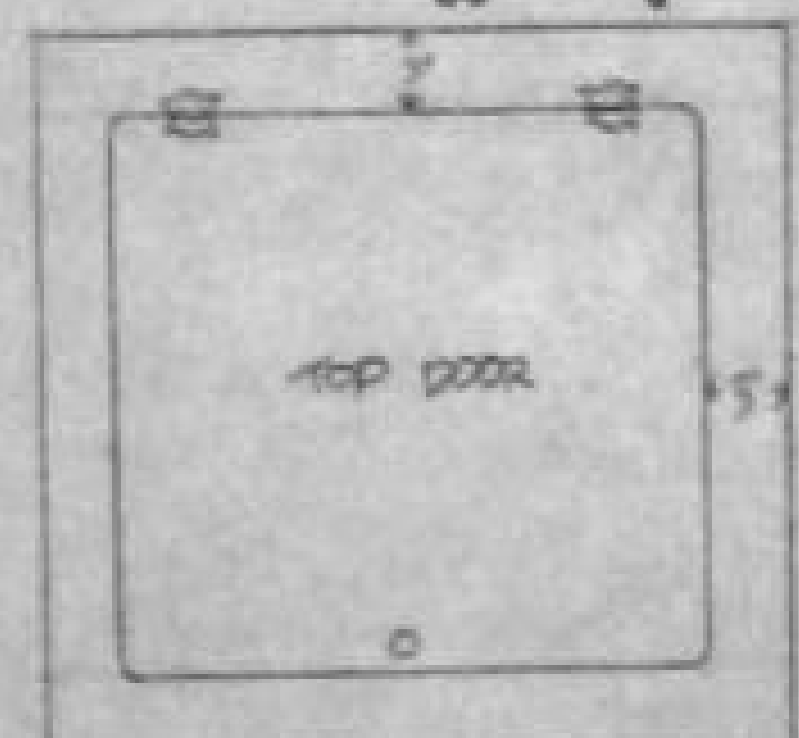


FRONT ELEVATION

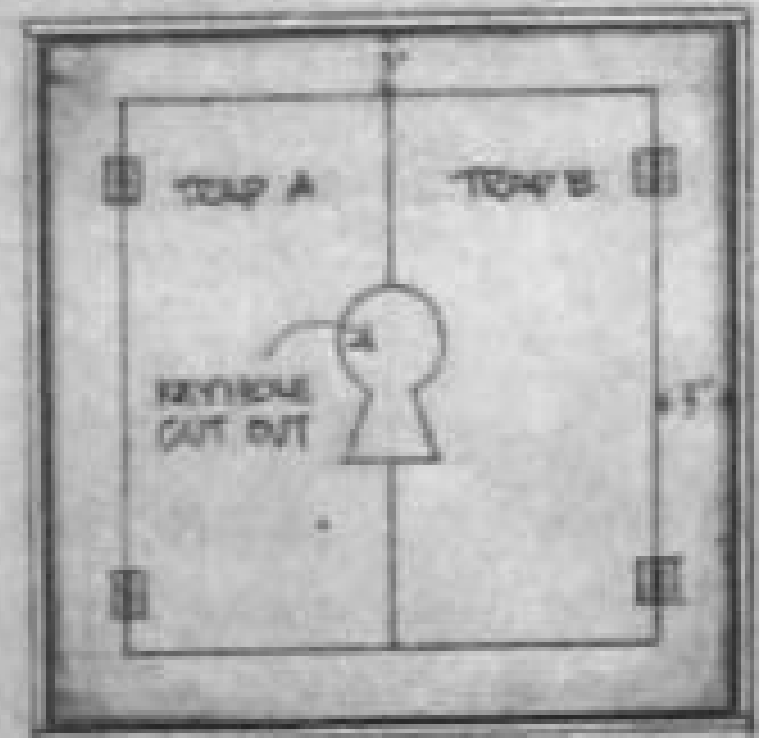
SIDE ELEVATION

PASSKEY ILLUSION

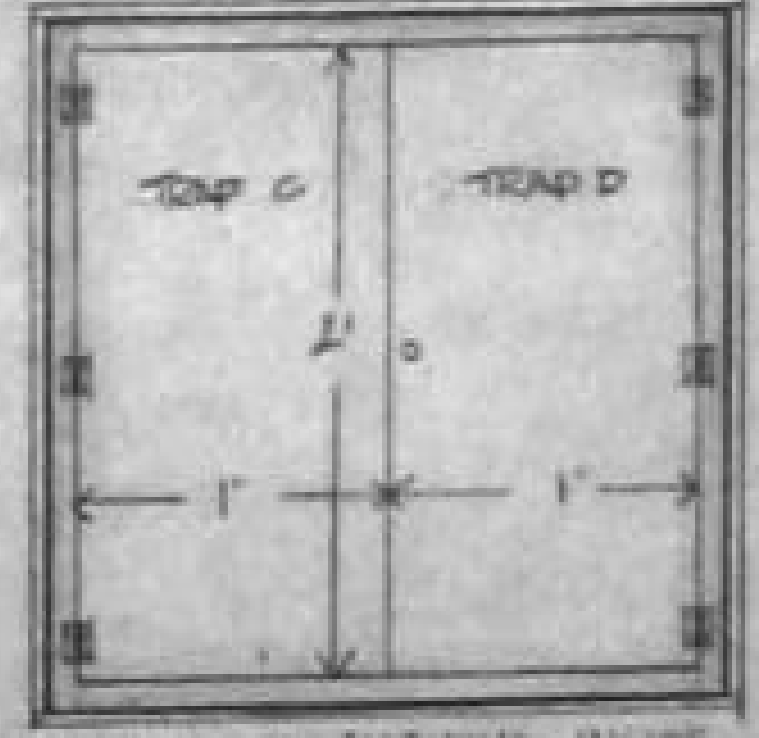
DESIGNED BY RALPH CARBONE, JR.
SCALE 1/2" = 1'



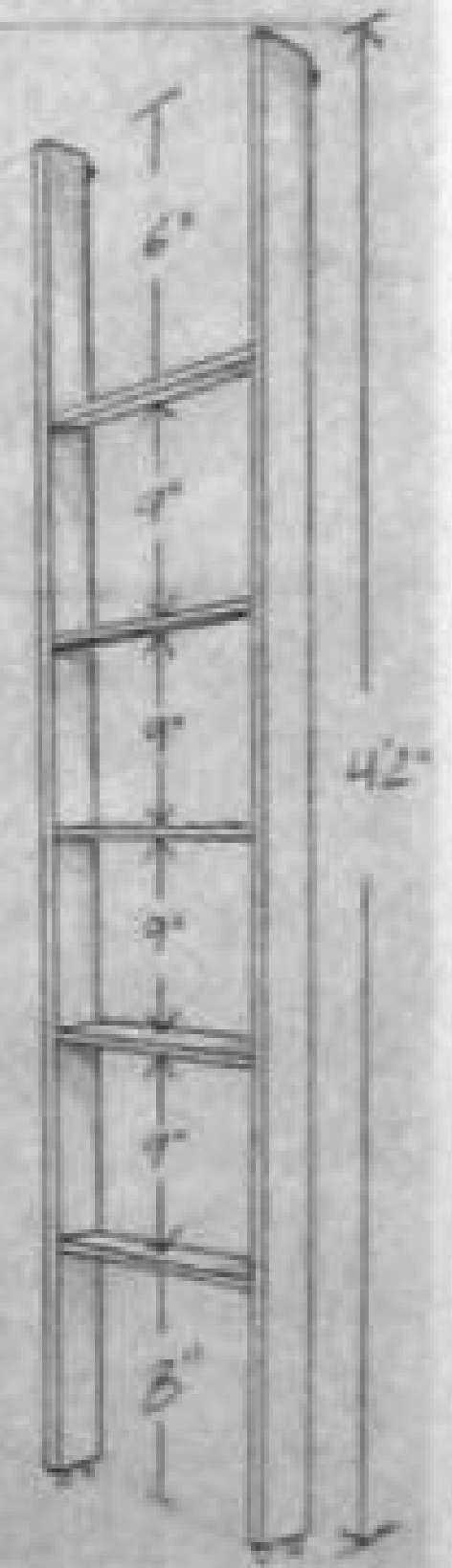
PLAN VIEW SHOWING TOP DOOR OF BOX 1



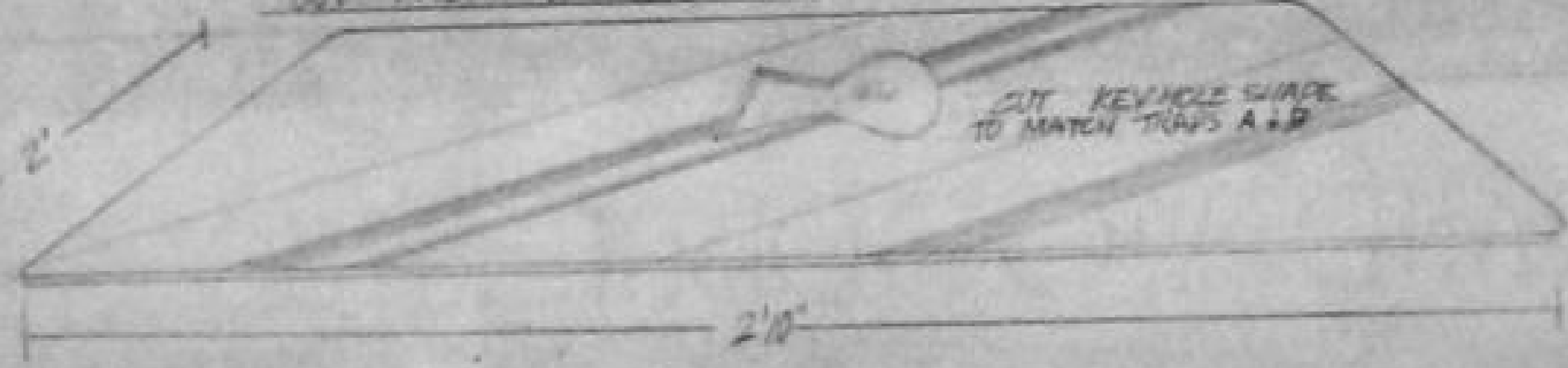
PLAN VIEW SHOWING INSIDE OF BOX 1 - TRAPS A: B



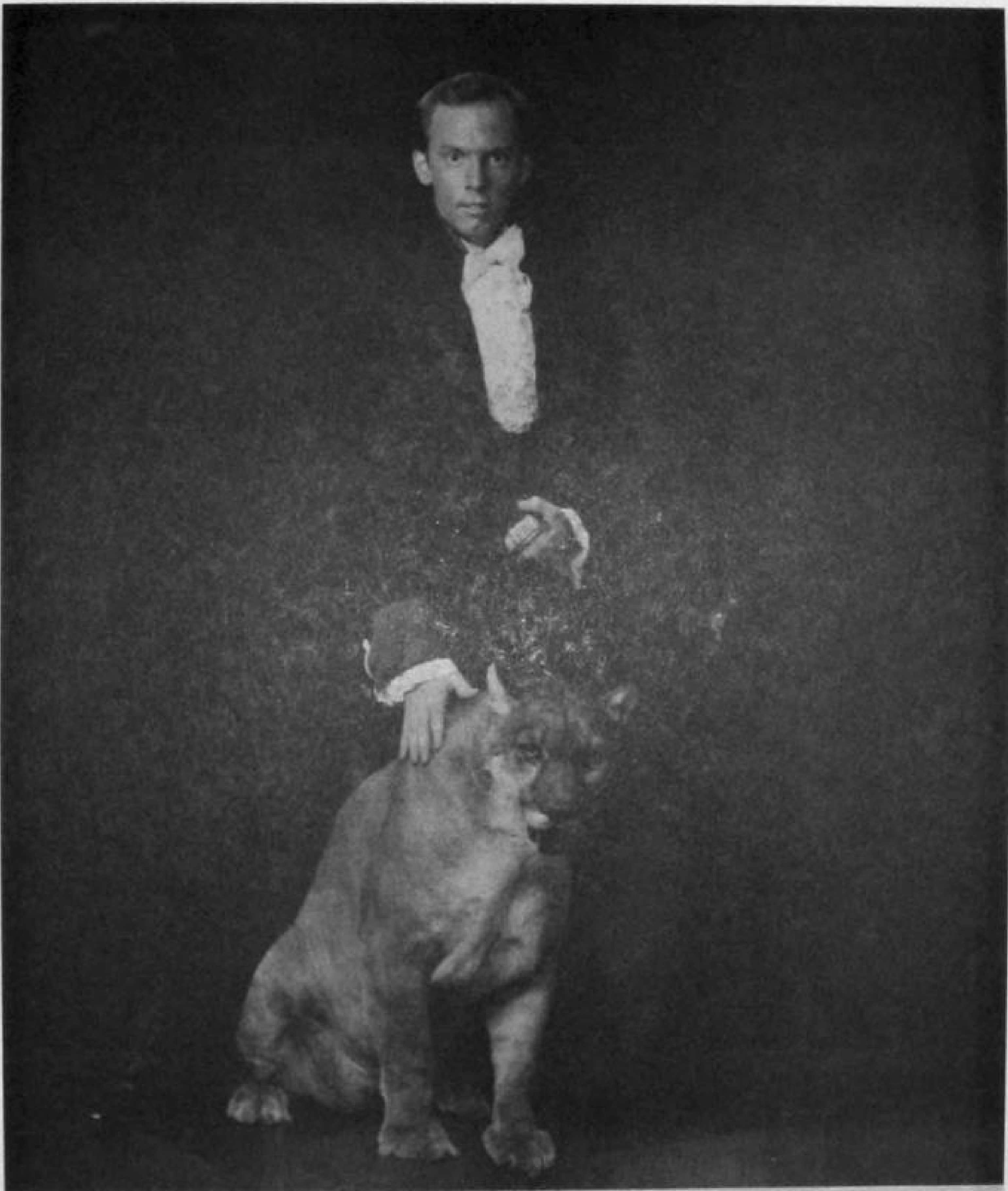
PLAN VIEW SHOWING INSIDE OF BOX 2 - TRAP TEND C: D
BOX 2 HAS NO TOP



CUT FROM 1/4" CLEAR PLEXI:



Ralph Carbone Jr.



RAND WOODBURY

*General Mgr. Gray-Kline
Capital Management Group, Incorporated
New Lauderdale, Florida 33309-1000*

Rand Woodbury's vertical SHADOW BOX



INTRODUCTION

Full time professional, Rand Woodbury, sends this unique version of the Shadow Box illusion. The various design possibilities intrigue me as well as the potential for a switch between assistant and magician...with the magician appearing inside. Anyway, I'm sure you'll find many ways to utilize this unique prop and thanks again, Rand for this great idea!

EFFECT

An Oriental styled upright cabinet is brought on stage and revolved to show all sides. Once done, the front, sides and back panels are let down to give a full view into the open framework. Clearly the cabinet is empty with the exception of a suspended Oriental lamp hanging from the ceiling of the box. The sides are again lifted into place and the unit is once again revolved. A small electrical cord running from the prop is plugged in, illuminating the interior light, giving the four sides an eerie glow. As the magician gestures, a shadow materializes on the front. Slowly it becomes evident that the form is none other than the magician's shapely assistant who instantly breaks through the front papered panel!

METHOD

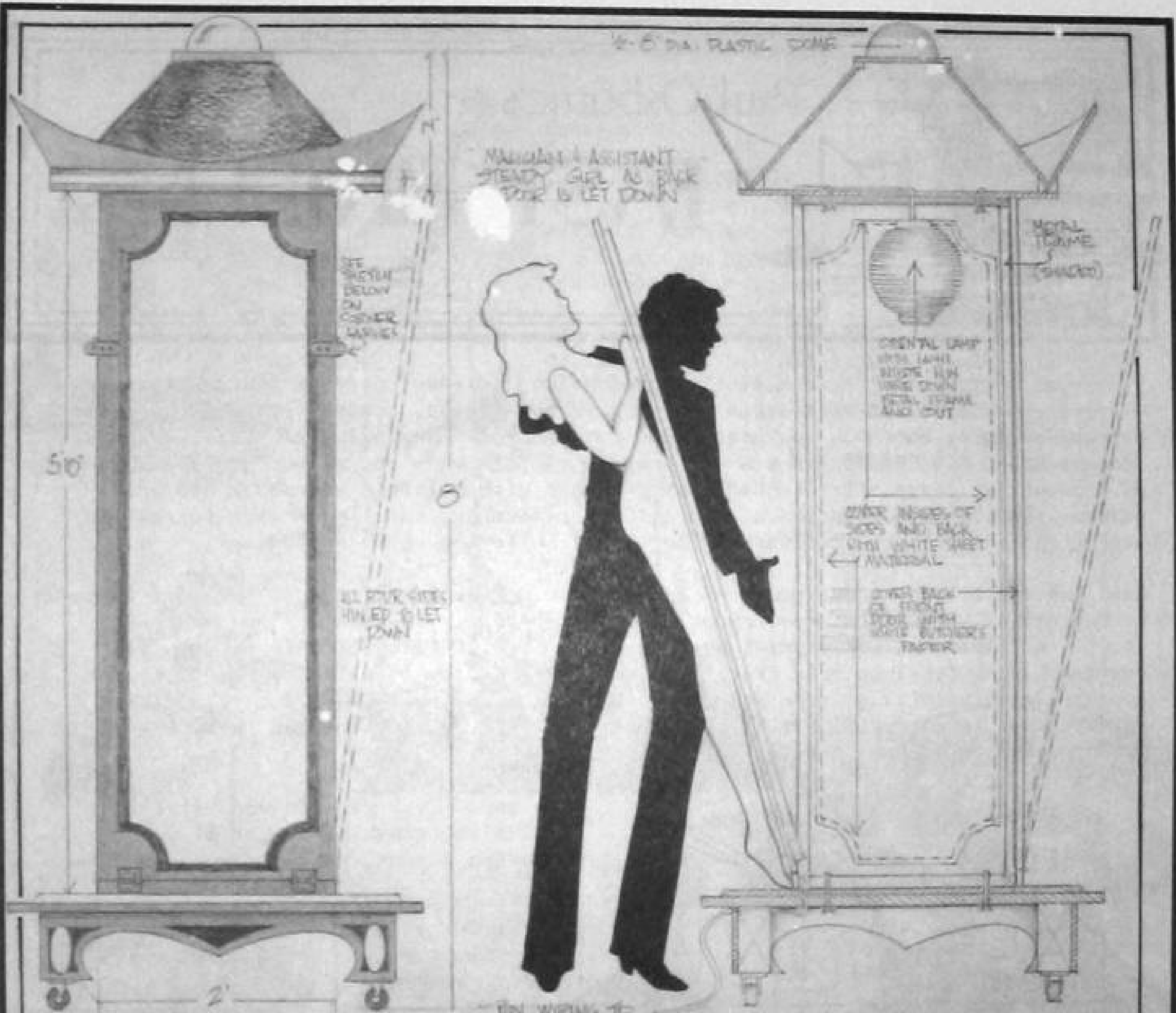
As you can see by looking at our plan, the method is the old tried and true "hang on the back and don't scream" method. Rand began constructing his model by building a 1" square tubular framework roughly 5' 10" tall x 1' 10" x 1' 10" as we have indicated in our bottom right drawing. Although Rand's metal frame doesn't break down, I believe you could construct yours with carriage bolts so that this frame would be more transportable.

This frame bolts to the 1/2" base and all four 3/8" ply sides pin-hinge to the frame. The decorative top also bolts onto the frame. The back and sides are cut out as indicated and covered from the inside with sheeting material. The front door is covered from the inside with butcher's paper. Notice in our bottom left and center drawing how the back door is braced with a metal frame, half hinged to allow your assistant entrance and exits. You should also bolt on at comfortable positions, two handles on the exterior back for your assistant to hold on to during the "tip back", as drawn. Also as a balance suggestion, you may want to build in some weights or sand bags into the front bottom of the base. This counter-balances the unit during the tip back.

The Oriental lamp has a light in it with an electrical cord running out to be plugged in, once you have stopped revolving the cabinet. You could plug it into a rheostated source or you could have the dimmer mounted inside the illusion for your assistant to work. To materialize, all your girl has to do is slowly step from behind the lamp to in front of it. This will throw a shadow on the front panel.

Great idea, Rand!





FRONT ELEVATION

SIDE ELEVATION (CITAWAY)

RAND WOODBURY'S **VERTICAL Shadow Box**

DESIGNED BY PAUL DEBORNE SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

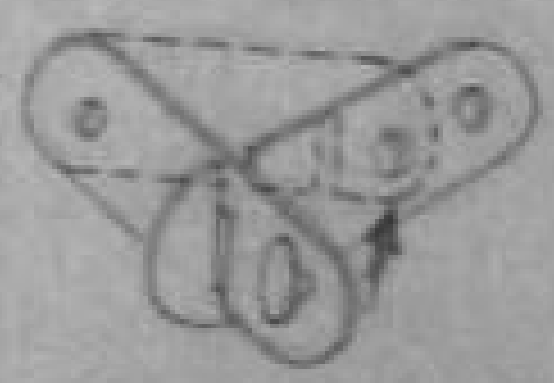
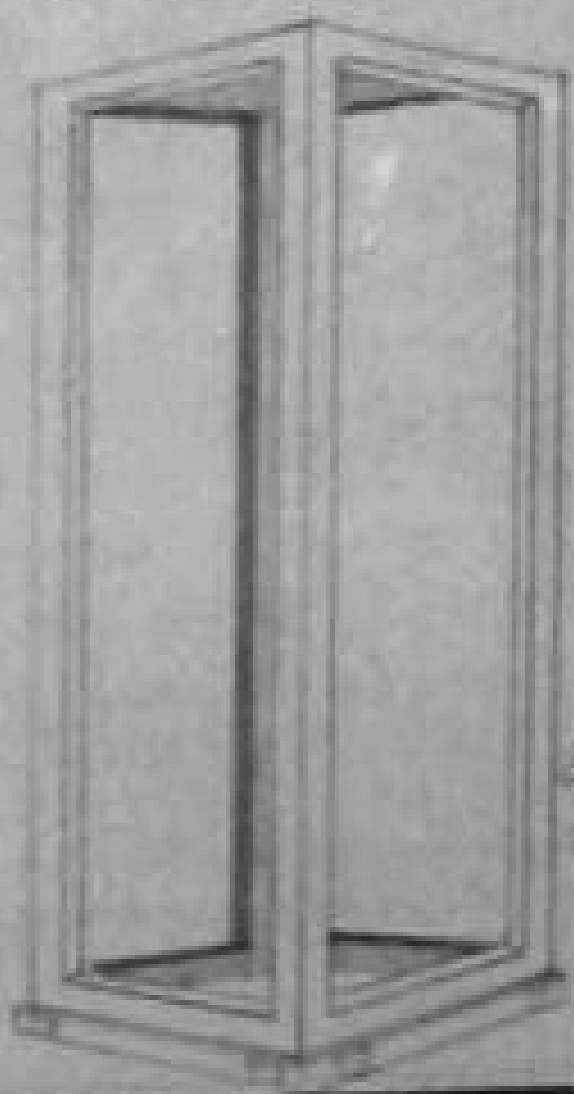
SKETCH SHOWING BACK DOOR



4-5" DIA. SHADOW BOX FRAME IS WELDED TO U-TUBING



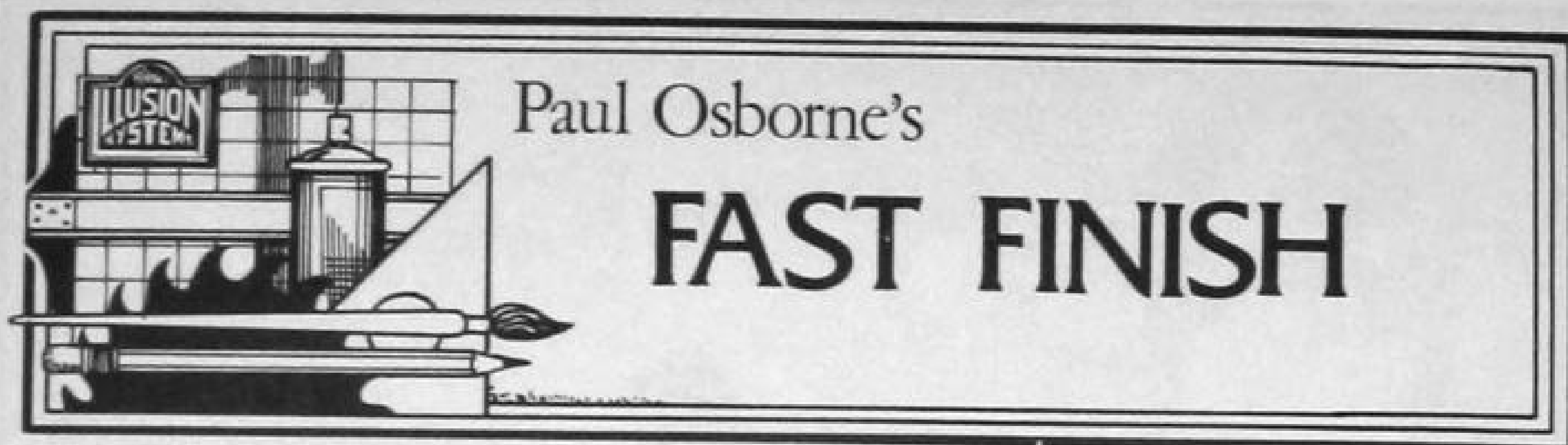
FRONT



SKETCH SHOWING CORNER JOINTS CUT FROM 2x4 ALUMINUM

SKETCH SHOWING METAL FRAME

off [Signature]



For years when I used to look at the "professionally made" props I assumed that to achieve the glass-like finish you had to have spray guns, compressors and large air evacuation spray booths. So when we had our studios I installed all this equipment. It cost about \$20,000.00 and you can imagine my face when one of our employees showed me a beautiful stage trick he had just finished with a little sandpaper and spray paint - a \$3.00 investment. We used all our equipment, but I'm ashamed to say you can get a finish just like "the big boys'" by following these procedures.

Most important is your selection of spray paint. I prefer "Tru-Test" sold exclusively by True Value hardware stores. Stock up on the colors you need. I've used just about every brand of spray paint available, so take it from me; this is the best. If you can't find Tru-Test or a True Value hardware store, the main idea is to find a good grade spray with a large selection of colors and, most importantly, a clear varnish that is compatible with the enamel. In other words, you can spray the clear over the colors without getting a cracked finish.

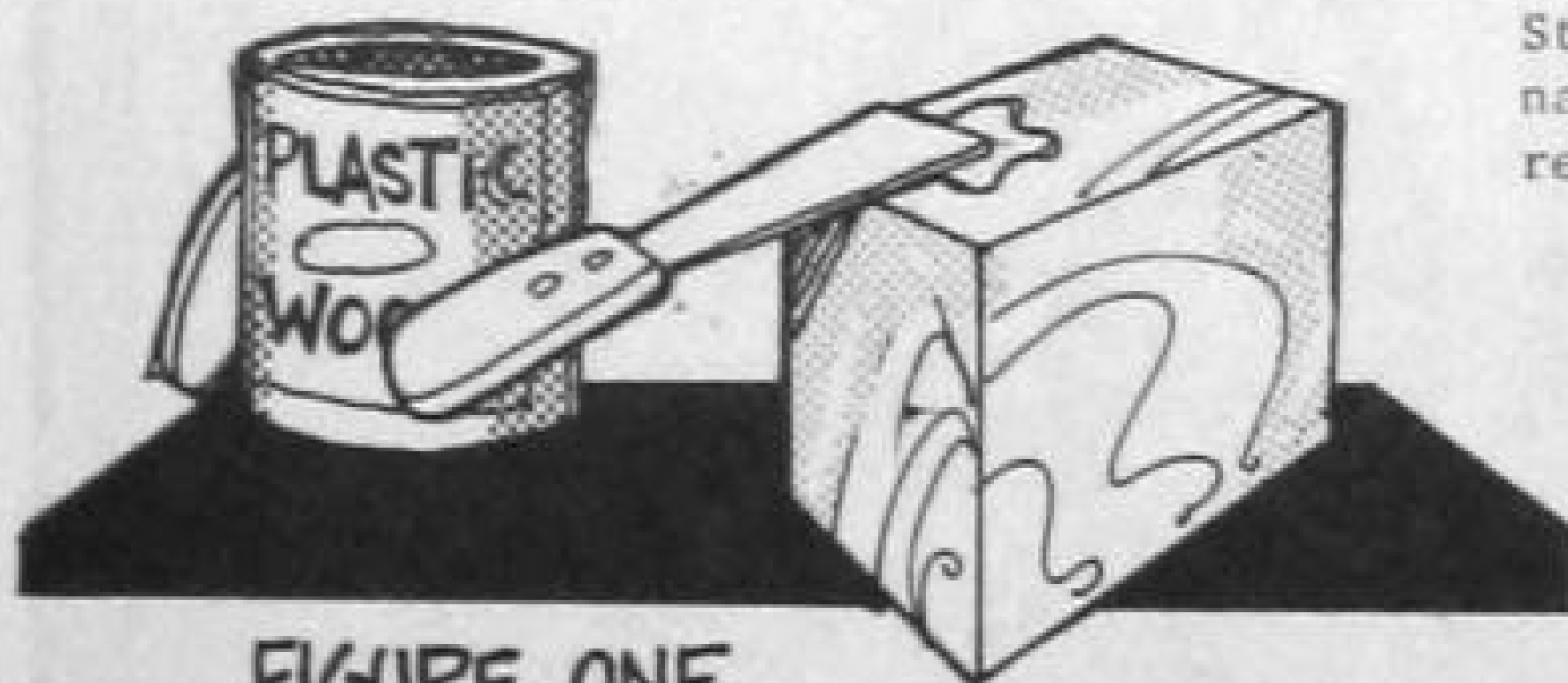


FIGURE ONE

dry, sand with a medium sandpaper. Close your eyes and just feel the prop for any bumps or scrapes you may have missed. Make sure the prop is free from dust, lint, etc. As in figure #3 paint the prop with white enamel undercoater. Let dry several hours. This undercoater will sink into the wood and cause all rough areas to protrude so you can eventually sand them off. Also the undercoater seals the often porous wood so that your prop won't require more than two coats of the final, more expensive colored paint. Any workshop should have a nice large can of white enamel undercoater.

Step one: With plastic wood fill any nail holes, rough areas, or if you're restoring a prop, nicks or gouges. Once



FIGURE TWO

Sand down with "fine" sandpaper, make sure all is smooth and paint again with undercoater. Let dry and lightly sand again. You are now ready to apply the colored base coat of your choice as in Figure #4. Spray once, let dry an hour, spray again,

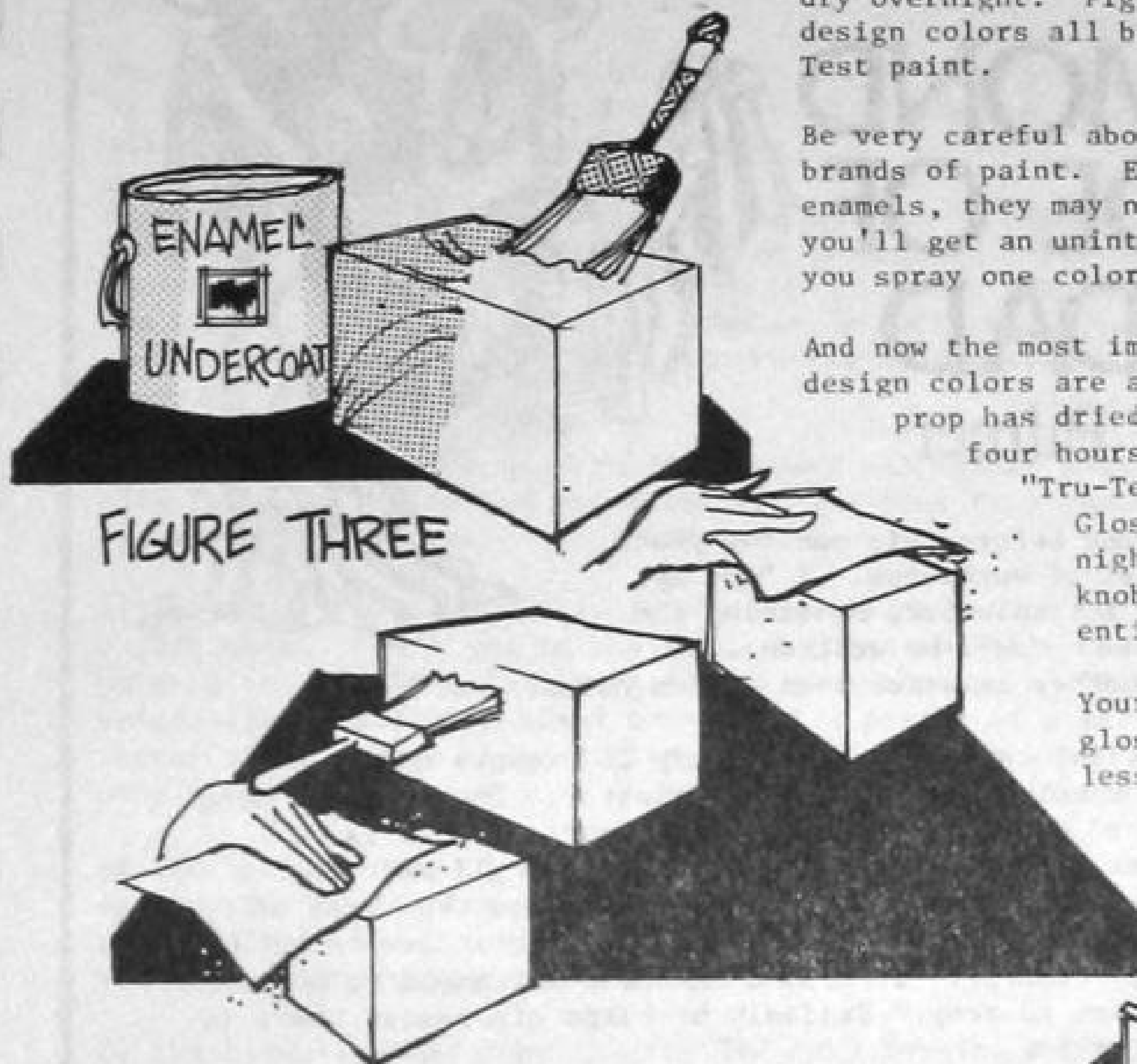


FIGURE THREE

dry an hour and spray one more time, then let dry overnight. Figure #5 shows the stencil and design colors all being applied. Again all Tru-Test paint.

Be very careful about mixing two different brands of paint. Even though both might be enamels, they may not be compatible, so again you'll get an unintentional crackle finish as you spray one color onto the other.

And now the most important part: Once all the design colors are all in place and the entire prop has dried over a minimum of twenty-four hours, spray the entire prop with "Tru-Test Woodsman Polyurethane Gloss Varnish" and let dry overnight. Of course the hinges, knobs, etc. are applied once the entire trick has thoroughly dried.

Your prop should now have a high gloss professional finish for less than \$20,000.00.

Finally let's take a minute to talk about the most important part of achieving a good finish, whether it be on a major illusion or a stage prop... patience on your part. Allow enough time for all the various applications to thoroughly dry. Don't rush any of the above steps and take the proper amount of time to adequately apply your stencil designs. Remember with each color you apply you must also allow enough drying time. So, if it's a fast job, use less colors. Also remember the unfortunate effect humidity has on drying paint...it takes twice as long. Most importantly, you must remember that although you may be anxious to perform your newly completed effect,

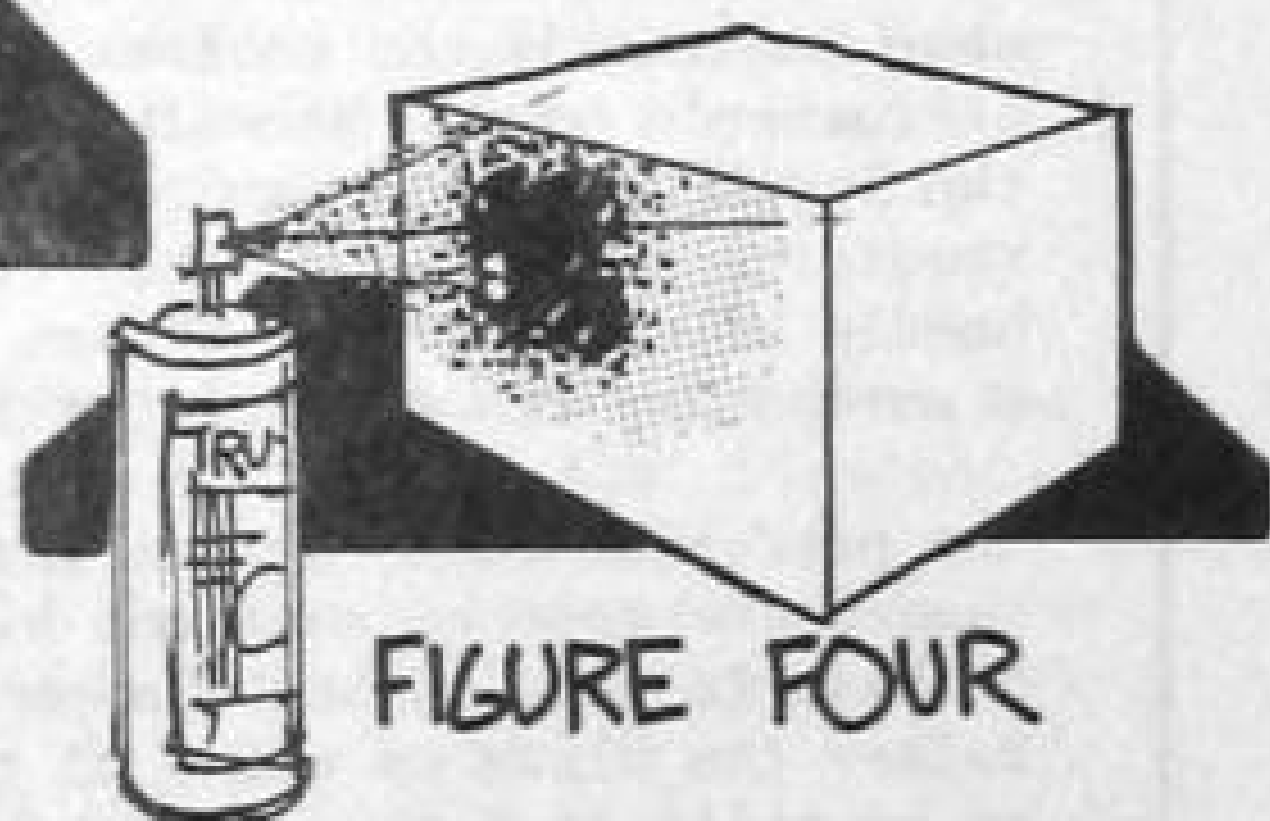


FIGURE FOUR

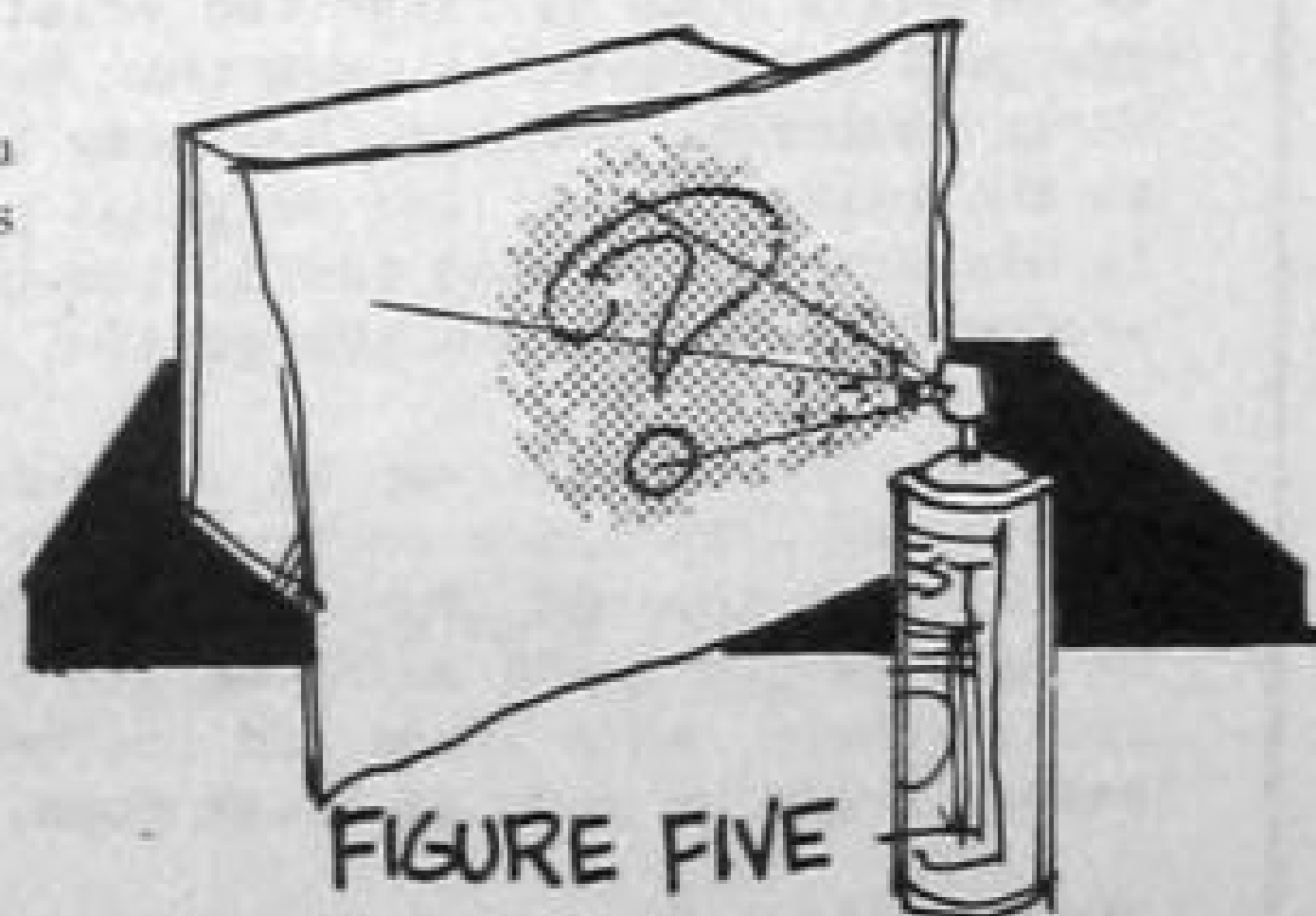


FIGURE FIVE

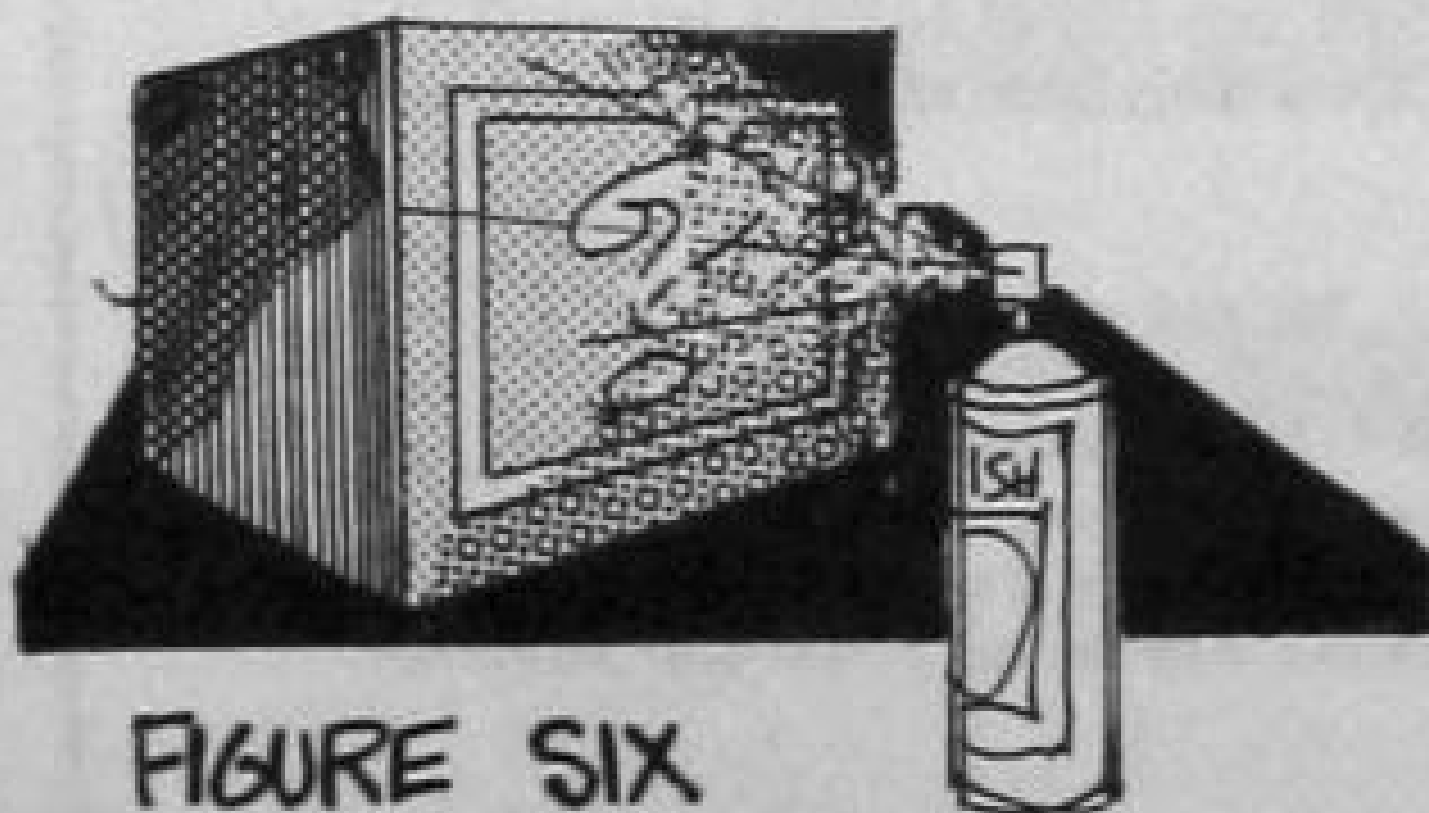


FIGURE SIX

the finish you end up with will probably be what you have to live with, so make it good. So many potentially beautiful finish jobs are ruined by impatience and carelessness. If you take pride in your craftsmanship, go that extra mile and take the time to make your prop really stand out.

the DIAMOND BLADE OF BAGDAD

by Tom Palmer



As I have said so many times before this man for years maintained the most magical of workshops. I "cut my magical teeth" walking in its splendor, breathing the sawdust and glitter. So much could be written...so best you just enjoy yet another creative idea by Tom Palmer:

EFFECT: An open front upright cabinet approximately 28" square and 7'10" tall is seen. Across its opening is hung a huge scimitar. The magician dons an Arabian burnoose and head cloth. An assistant in Houri costume is shackled inside the cabinet. She is "hypnotized" with a single wave of the performer's hand. He walks forward and explains that this is the "Test of the Sheik" and each candidate for his harem must prove their innocence by remaining unscathed by the scimitar. If proven innocent a diamond from the handle of the sword is theirs to keep. Suddenly he claps his hands, there is a scream and the scimitar falls.

The performer turns to see what has happened and then explains that she has passed the test because the blade has dropped in front of her. She appears to have fainted as she slumps in the shackles. He turns to release her. He raises the blade by means of two silken cords, backing away from the cabinet as he pulls them to raise the scimitar. As the blade passes upwards before the girl's body, it is seen that her legs become those of the performer and as it continues upwards, her body becomes that of the magician's! Finally as the blade resumes its original position atop the cabinet, the performer is discovered shackled inside the cabinet and the "burnoosed" figure turns around to reveal it is the girl!

METHOD: The cabinet may be decorated as pictured. Its interior is completely covered with black cotton velvet. At the right side is a roller curtain which, when lowered, permits entrance and exit into the cabinet. The cabinet is made as per our drawing of 3/8" plywood. Note the positioning of the roller shade, back traps and costume holder. By using pin hinges the entire assembly can be made to break down.

The shackles are attached magnetically for easy escape.

The burnoose which the performer dons, with the aid of another assistant has a cellastic shoulder form inside it. The sleeves are long enough to cover the performer's fingertips and are cut very deep beneath the armpits to permit the performer to easily and secretly remove his arms from the sleeves.

Too, the burnoose is of a length that it skirts the floor. (See following costume sketch.)

The head piece, placed upon him by the second assistant also has a cellastic form in it and a trailing rod down the back which is engaged into the shoulder form as the assistant arranges it on the performer.

At the front of the burnoose's form is a short "L" shaped rod, disguised as a decorative "frog" or buckle, which can be engaged into the metal costume holder on the side of the cabinet. Thus it is possible for the form to be hung on the side of the cabinet and the magician to completely doff the costume while his back is turned to the audience and while he is apparently only taking hold of the cords to raise the blade.

While this is being done, the girl lowers the roller shade to permit the magician to slip into the cabinet as she slips out the back trap doors and rounds the corner to get into his burnoose.

All these actions are masked from the audience's view by a roller blind of black velvet which is affixed to the back of the scimitar's blade. On this blind has been painted the nearly nude figure of the assistant in a slightly slumped position. (I originally used a life-sized cut-out of a poster of a stripper which I found in a poster shop!) Over this painting is glued a replica of her gossamer costume and part of a blond wig to give it a dimensional effect. It's really quite deceptive.

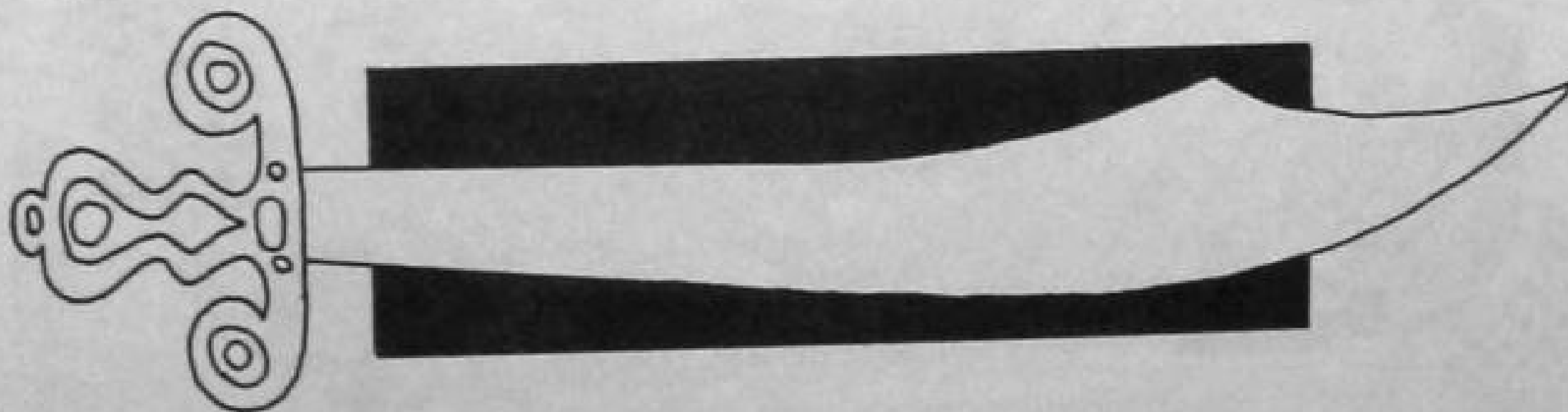
As the blade drops, the roller unwinds downwards substituting the fake image of the assistant. The real assistant has time to free herself and make ready for the substitution. As the blade is pulled up, the roller takes up the blind gradually revealing the performer inside the cabinet.

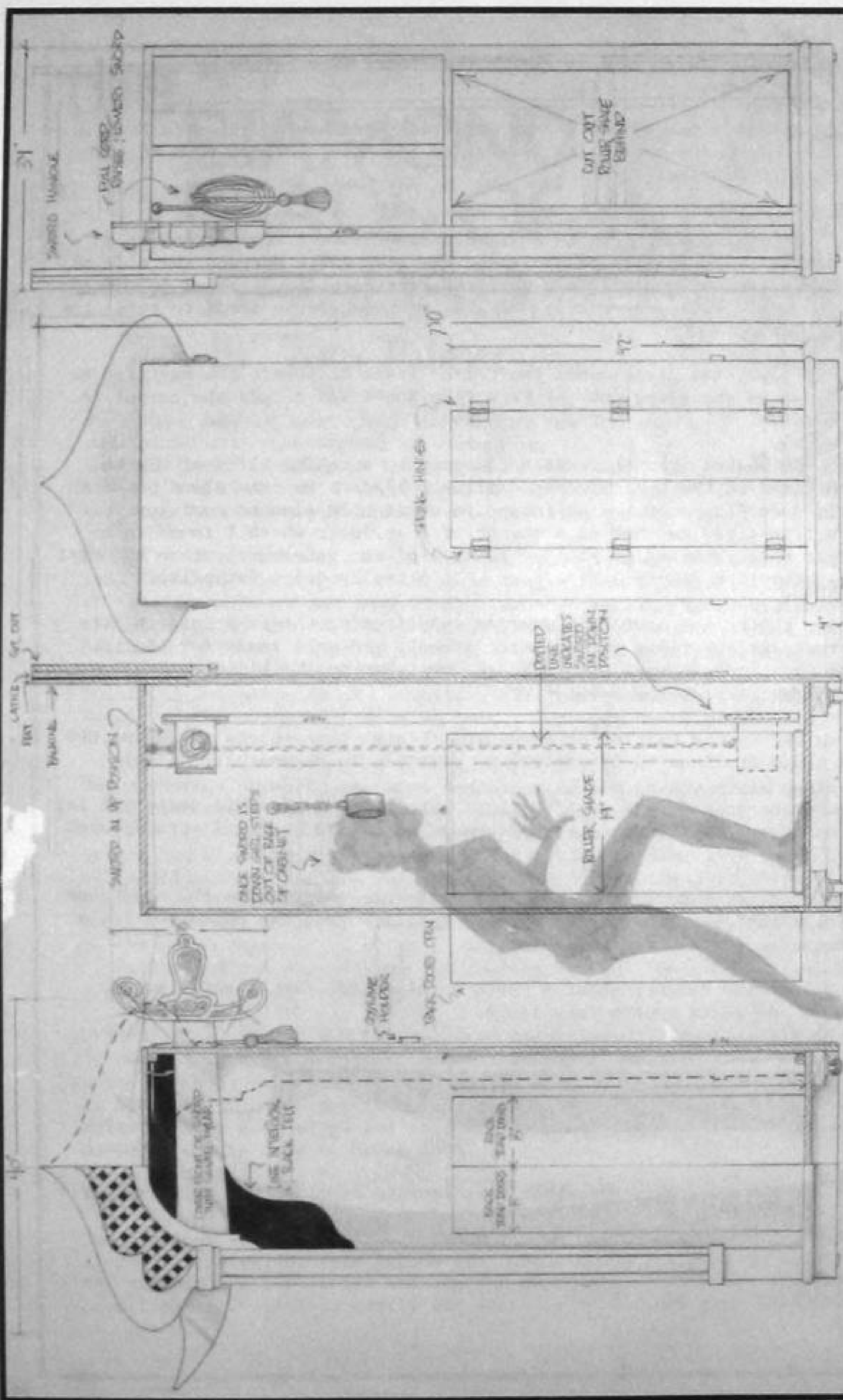
As the blade is raised by the tassled cord running through the eyelets as shown, the performer should stand as close to the roller as possible to augment the illusion.

The performer could put on the costume off stage, but I feel it is more deceptive for it to be donned on stage. My burnoose was of orange and black vertical striped wool and cut with a 70" hem.

If more time is needed for the substitution, the performer could lower the blade and then raise it, but this lacks some of the dynamic action. Too, the performer could effect a costume change for his final revelation.

The roller is set into the cabinet about 6" both to allow for the slightly bulky roller blind and to add depth to the fake image.





SAWED HANDLE

CUT OUT FOUR HAVE BEHIND

SAWED HANDLE ATTACHED TO TOP OF CABINET

IMAGE OF GIRL PAINTED INSIDE TO SHADE

BACK ELEVATION

FOR FINISH SAWED

DATE: 11/20/1935

FRONT ELEVATION / FOUNTAIN

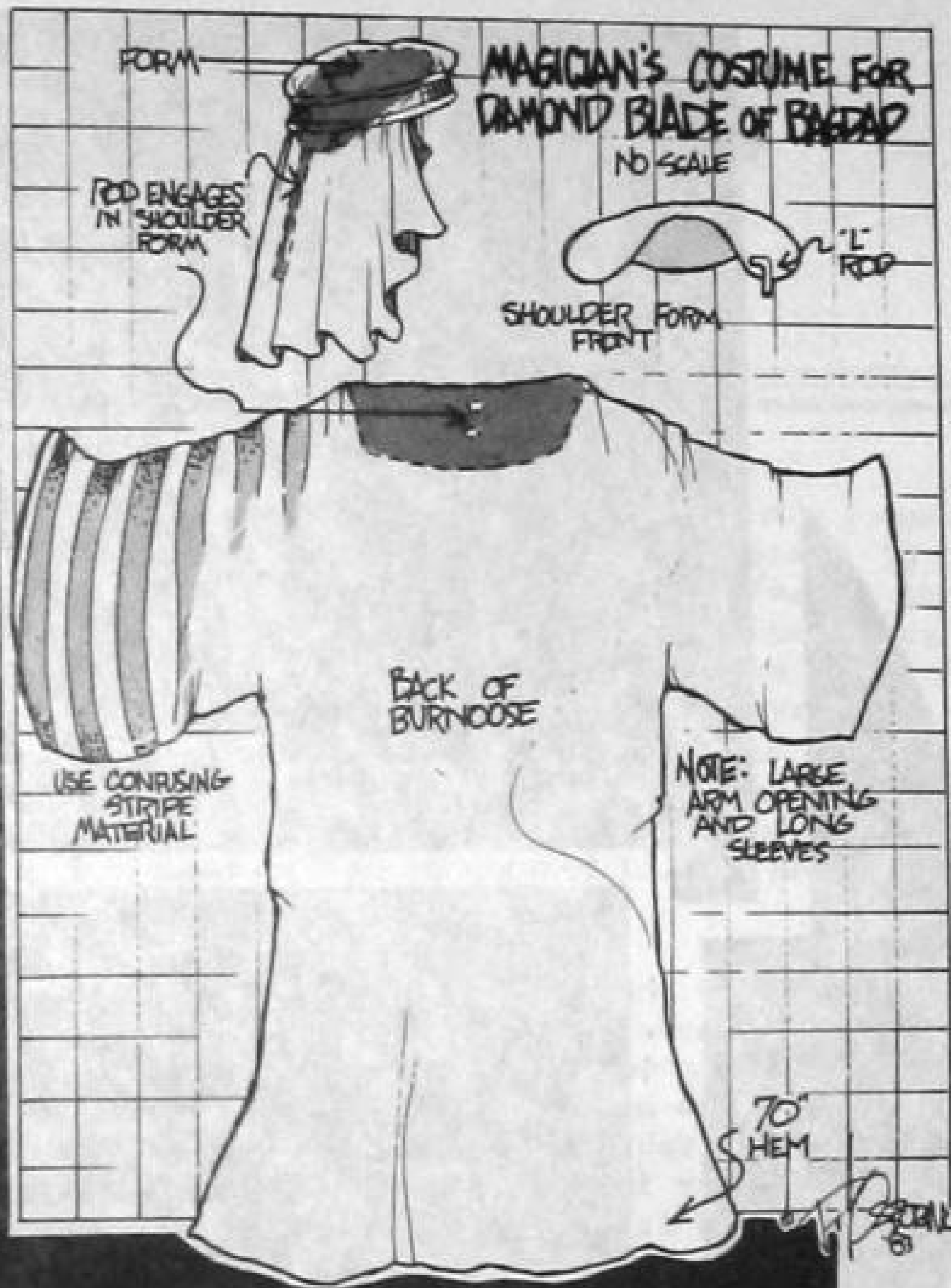
SIDE ELEVATION / FOUNTAIN

DESIGNED BY GUY CAROZZE '35

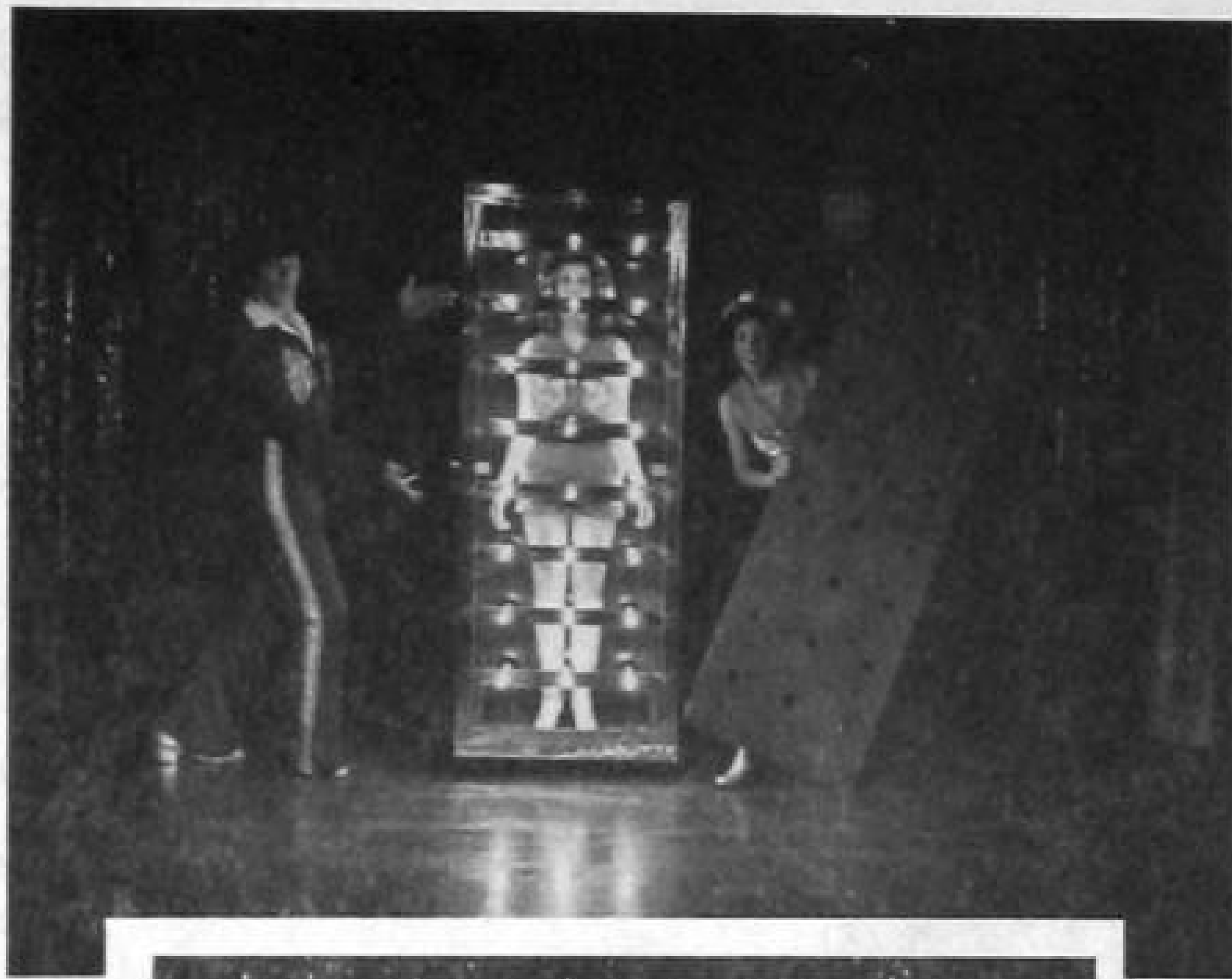
SCALE 3/4" = 1'

TOM PALMER'S
CRANION GRAPES

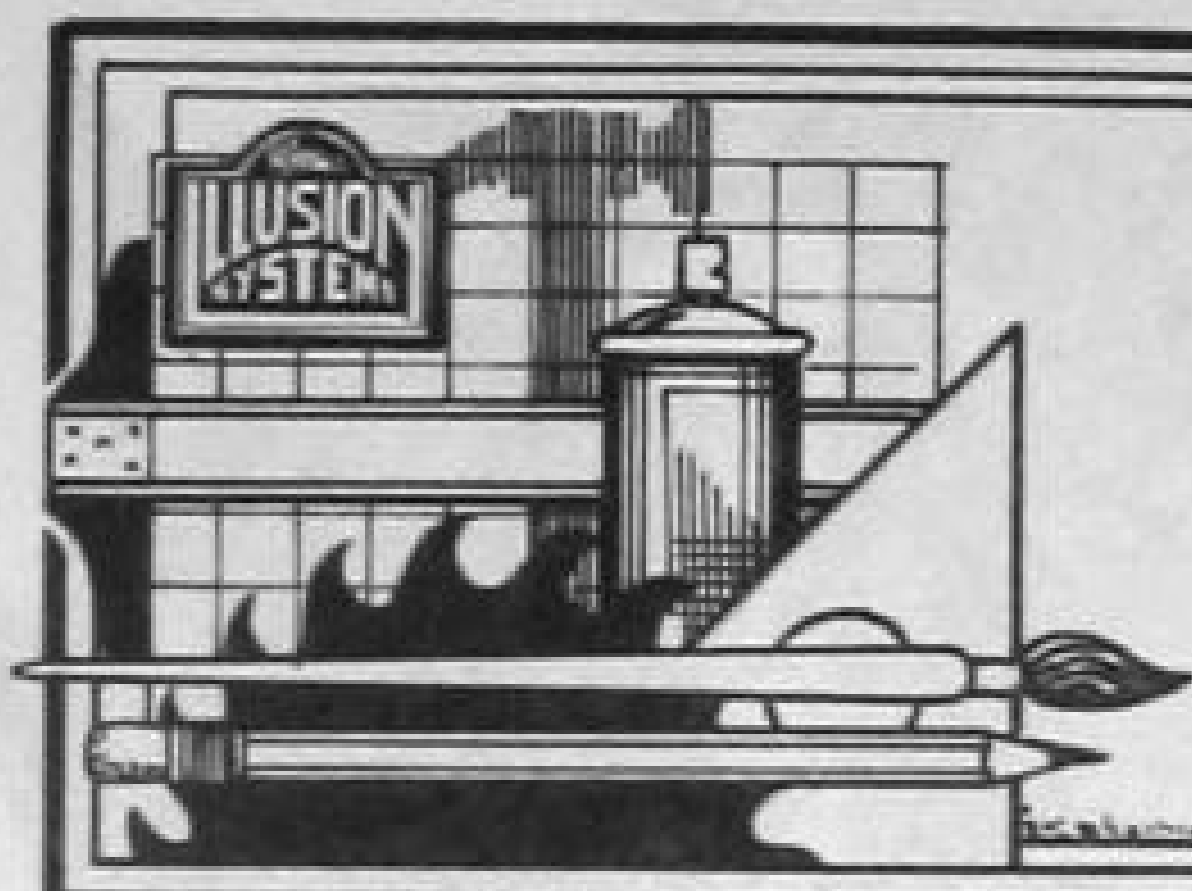
WITH ARCHITECTURAL MATERIAL BY GUY CAROZZE



Tom Palmer



For years Paul Osborne toured this Light Bulb Girl illusion all over the United States. More than just a magic trick, this prop has a history. Read now for the first time about the story and basic working of this classic illusion!



LIGHT BULB LADIES

Since I began doing the Illusions Systems series of plans I have had more requests to do construction documents on the Light Bulb Girl than any single illusion. To this point I have done nothing, primarily because of two reasons: One, I feel as though there is more information about this prop than our plan envelopes can hold and; two, to accurately portray this illusion in plan form would probably require ten to fifteen full size pages of drawings that are mostly technical and not very interesting - from an art standpoint. So, I have decided to hit the high points, give you a little history, a few stories, basic working and a brand new, up-to-date, non-cumbersome version, especially drawn for this volume by the talented draftsman and professional lighting designer, Jack Dean. So for those of you interested in this marvelous illusion...here goes:

My first experience with the Light Bulb Girl was in 1974. We had decided on an all-electrical theme for that season's magic show at the Six Flags amusement park. I flew out to Owen Brothers where Les Smith had just completed improvements on his version. I was very impressed with the mechanics he had obviously labored over to refine this historic prop. I was sold. My check was in the mail the next day. Les refused to sell me his "demo" version, but instead built a new one with yet even more improvements. I believe ours was the second Owen Light Bulb Girl built. It took several months, but the prop arrived in a crate some people would consider a nice home. Only the back "crank wheel" came off, so the rest of the 6'6" tall prop was all intact. Once we pulled the illusion from its case and screwed in all the bulbs, the big moment came. On went the lights...and up went my hair. Les had forgotten to ground it. I called him at home. The problem was easy to solve and we all fell in love with the Light Bulb Girl. It stood up to over six hundred shows at Six Flags, then back to our shop where we revamped it, adding a chaser light system so all the bulbs would flash and two flash pots on the top that were ignited at the moment of "penetration". Tom Callahan of our studio was in charge of this trick. He traveled with it exclusively and constantly ran maintenance on each and every working part. Our illusions clocked literally thousands of shows at Six Flags, Old Chicago and Libertyland, not to mention miscellaneous trade shows and exhibits. It's still alive and kicking, entertaining park audiences and I can safely say it is one of the best made props I've ever owned. Oh sure, we broke bulbs, cut girls and had our share of stories, but this prop performed. I don't believe any manufacturer could charge too much to make this illusion, there is so much tinkering and work involved. Later on I'll give you the basic working, but should you decide to tackle the construction, you'd better have a varied background in metals, lighting design and machine shop... no easy task.

No discussion of this prop would be complete without a few well-chosen words from the man who traveled with the original, George Johnstone. As I'm sure you know, George was a familiar face backstage during Blackstone, Sr.'s traveling show days. I've asked George to tell me a little about the best known version of the Light Bulb Girl.

the BLACKSTONE LIGHT BULB GIRL

by George
Johnstone



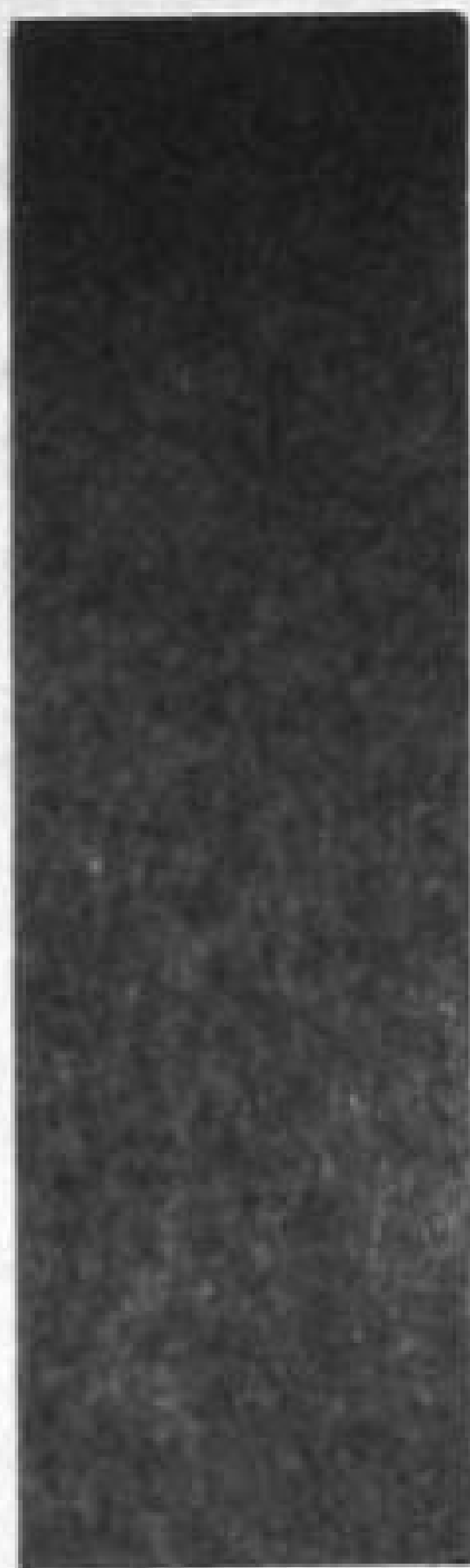
"The light cabinet illusion traveled in a solid trunk about the size of a telephone booth. It was a cumbersome thing that took two men to carry it from the transfer truck into the theatre. The light bulbs themselves were kept in a well padded separate trunk. Since the breakage percentage was high, the word 'Fragile' was painted on all sides.

I have read accounts of the illusion where it was mentioned that the bulbs were 'neon'. Not so. They were clear glass with a filament running the full length. Each fellow on the show was assigned certain illusions. It was his 'baby' and he was responsible for its set-up and tear-down. It was also to be kept ship-shape and minor repairs or paint touch-ups had to be done by him. For major repairs on illusions, Blackstone's brother, Pete, or Frank Luckner the show property man, took over.

The light cabinet was 'the baby' of Bud Doremus, the show stage manager. It was his job to check the bulbs each show before the illusion was brought out onto the stage. It would be a dead giveaway to the audience if a bulb was dead and came to life when it supposedly punctured the girl. Also, vice versa if a live bulb went dead when it protruded from the cabinet and then came back to life when the bulbs were retracted. Bud worked right on stage with Blackstone during the illusion so was right handy for a 'chewing out' if he slipped up on his inspection. Most times, though, the bulb had just become loose in the socket and a twist would turn it back on.

During those years the two sizes of these bulbs were very expensive. We also had to keep an ample supply on hand as they couldn't be found in the smaller towns. We also had to keep an extra supply of sockets as they occasionally gave out. Sometimes a socket hinge would break which meant a fast soldering job between shows. Four shows a day were rough on the old cabinet and Bud often joked, 'The damn thing is held together with baling wire.'

About twice every season the front panel had to be 'flittered'. Bud would paint the panel with glue and then sprinkle on the flitter, little particles of a glass-like substance that sparkled when the spotlights hit it. This job had to be done at night so it would be dry in time for the first show the next day. For a week after a flitter job, every show Bud would come off stage picking splinter-like particles from his fingers. The following page shows Bud Doremus, Mary Martell and Blackstone working the Light Cabinet.



Along with the "Girl in the Tires" illusion, I think the light cabinet was one of the most baffling on the Blackstone show. It was a clumsy, heavy effect as this was in the days before plastic and light metals. In fact, the curtain on the roller, that was drawn when the girl was in the cabinet, was 'oilcloth', an item that was sold in the dime stores and used as kitchen table covers of that day.

There are many humorous incidents that happened with every illusion on the show, but that would take a whole book. Every illusion also had its serious side...We were playing Minneapolis and it was one of those shows where Bud neglected, or was too busy, to check the bulbs before the show...One of the bulbs was broken, which could happen during the hub-bub backstage, and with new theatre stage-hands that handled our props in every town. When Blackstone pushed the bulbs 'through' Mary Martell, the girl who worked the effect, it caused a half-moon gash on the calf of her leg. With blood gushing from the wound she finished the trick. The bleeding couldn't be stopped but real trouper, Mary, finished the last half hour, working all her illusions and was then rushed to the hospital. She had seventeen stitches taken in the leg...Mary had been a Miss Finland in a beauty contest and had a beautiful figure. Later, at birthday parties on the show, Mary would get a few drinks in her and lambaste Bud. She'd point to the crescent scar, 'Lookit this, Bud. Just because you goofed, I gotta carry this for the rest of my life.'

Mary Martell was a pretty girl who also worked the 'Girl in the Tires' illusion. She was a real trouper and loved to 'strut her stuff' on every illusion she worked. Since my days on the Blackstone show, one by one, we've lost most of the old troupers. Mary was the first to go of the old gang. I guess I'm still around because I was the youngest in the troupe. I joined the show when I was eighteen.

George

The stories could go on, I'm sure, but to round out our discussions about the Light Bulb Girl I am honored to have comments from the well-known star of Memphis, Tennessee television, Mr. Dick Williams. His prop was built by artist and craftsman, De Yip Louie.

"'Louie' was visiting in my home in Memphis back in the mid-seventies. We were talking fondly of Blackstone, Sr., with whom Louie had trooped for several years in the forties. During that time Louie copied the measurements of the Light Cabinet for use later in his own show. Louie says Blackstone acquired the Light Cabinet from Marshall ('feather flowers') in Ohio in the mid to late thirties for about \$500.00. It was way ahead of its time and I personally remember seeing it in the Blackstone show during World War Two. It completely baffled me then. Louie said the illusion then was hard to troupe and they were constantly working on keeping it in alignment, etc. I asked Louie if he would build me one. He thought for a while and then said he would. I was elated and told my wife when they (Louie and his wife) had left, that Louie had agreed to build me a Light Cabinet. 'How much will it cost?' asked my practical wife. 'I have no idea,' I said, 'but think of the honor!' She agreed. Two years later the Light Cabinet, number 7 built by De Yip arrived. It was perfect. And the packing case was the best I have ever seen.

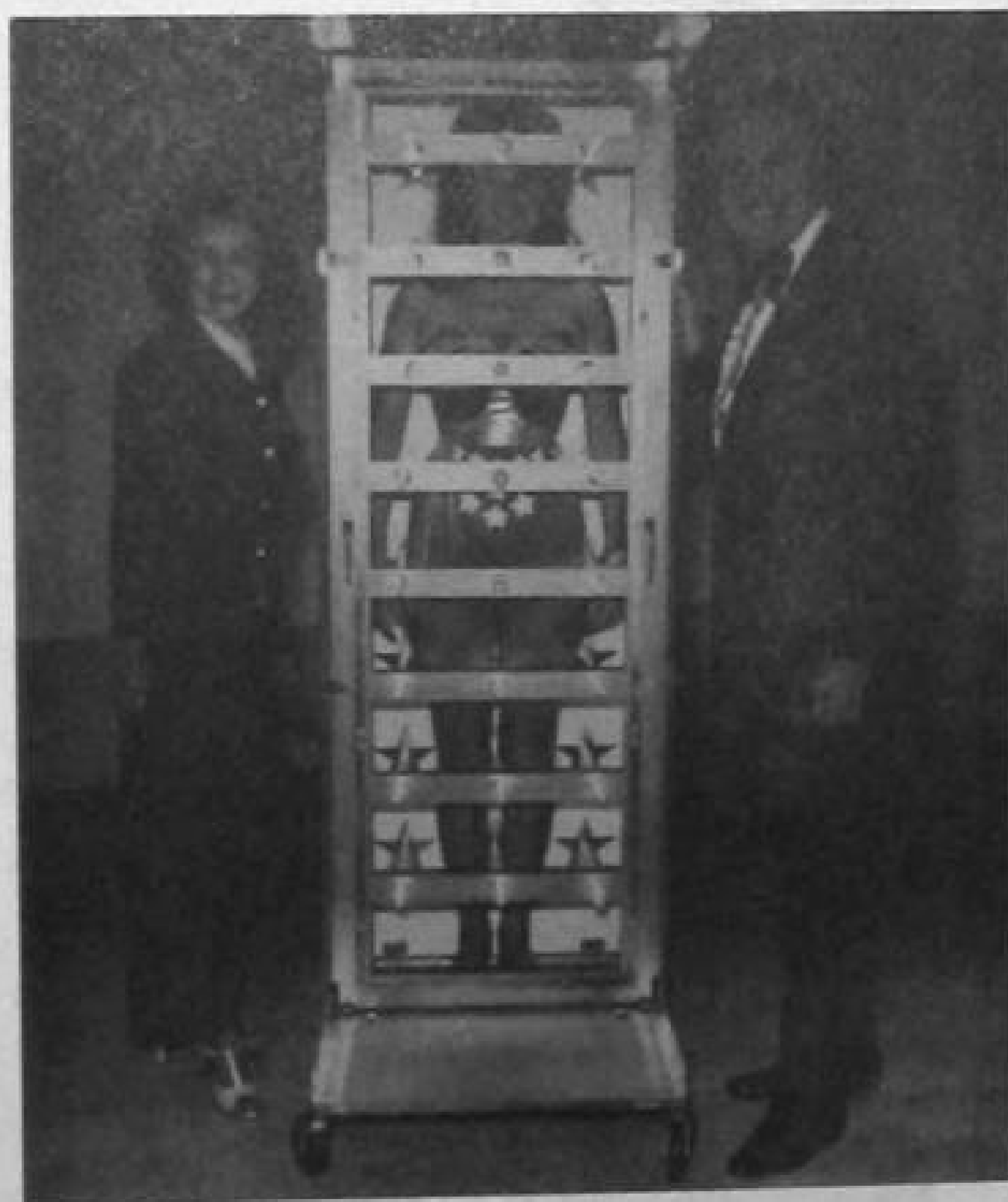


For the girl in the Cabinet we had chosen Terry Alden, sister of Ginger Alden. Ginger at that time was the fiancée of Elvis Presley. Ginger told Elvis that her sister was working on this 'great new trick with long light bulbs' with Dick Williams. Elvis suggested a private showing when the illusion was ready. This never came to be as Elvis died when the illusion was still being learned.

We introduced the Light Cabinet on our Magicland TV show on WMC-TV in Memphis in late 1977. Bob and Nikki Kenney of Tupelo, Mississippi, the owners of Light Cabinet, number 6 from Louie helped us stage it for TV. On the first taping one of the Light Bulbs shattered near the top of the cabinet as I pushed the front panel to the rear. Since it had broken near where her face should be I almost panicked at the thought of what might have happened to one of the most beautiful women in the world. We stopped the taping as I carefully opened the side curtain to discover Terry was fine, the glass having missed her face. I was ready to quit but Terry said to just get another bulb and start taping again. I called a halt to the taping of the Light Cabinet at that time as I wanted to study what happened and have more rehearsals if we were to do it again.

The alignment of the bulbs with the corresponding holes is critical. It must be done carefully before each performance. Also the operator gets the 'feel' of the front panel moves after enough practice. We have never had any difficulty with the illusion since then. (I do remember taking the cute, short gal who did the effect on the Blackstone show for a cup of coffee. She showed me a scar on her leg where several stitches had been taken when a bulb in the Cabinet broke during one of the shows.)

We had difficulty with the lighting of the illusion for TV. Too much studio lights made the lights in the Cabinet look as if they were turned off. Dimming the studio lights presented too dark a scene for what we wanted. Then a flash of light (no pun intended) appeared. The answer: Flash the lights in the Cabinet! We tried hooking in a flashing device but finally settled for the lighting man flashing the Cabinet lights with a rheostat at the lighting board. He thus could keep the Cabinet lights flashing in time to the music. This was the time of the big Disco craze so we called the effect: 'The Disco Light Cabinet', brought in some Disco dancers from a local studio who performed to 'Disco Magic' from the motion picture, 'The Electric Horseman'. Now we had something.



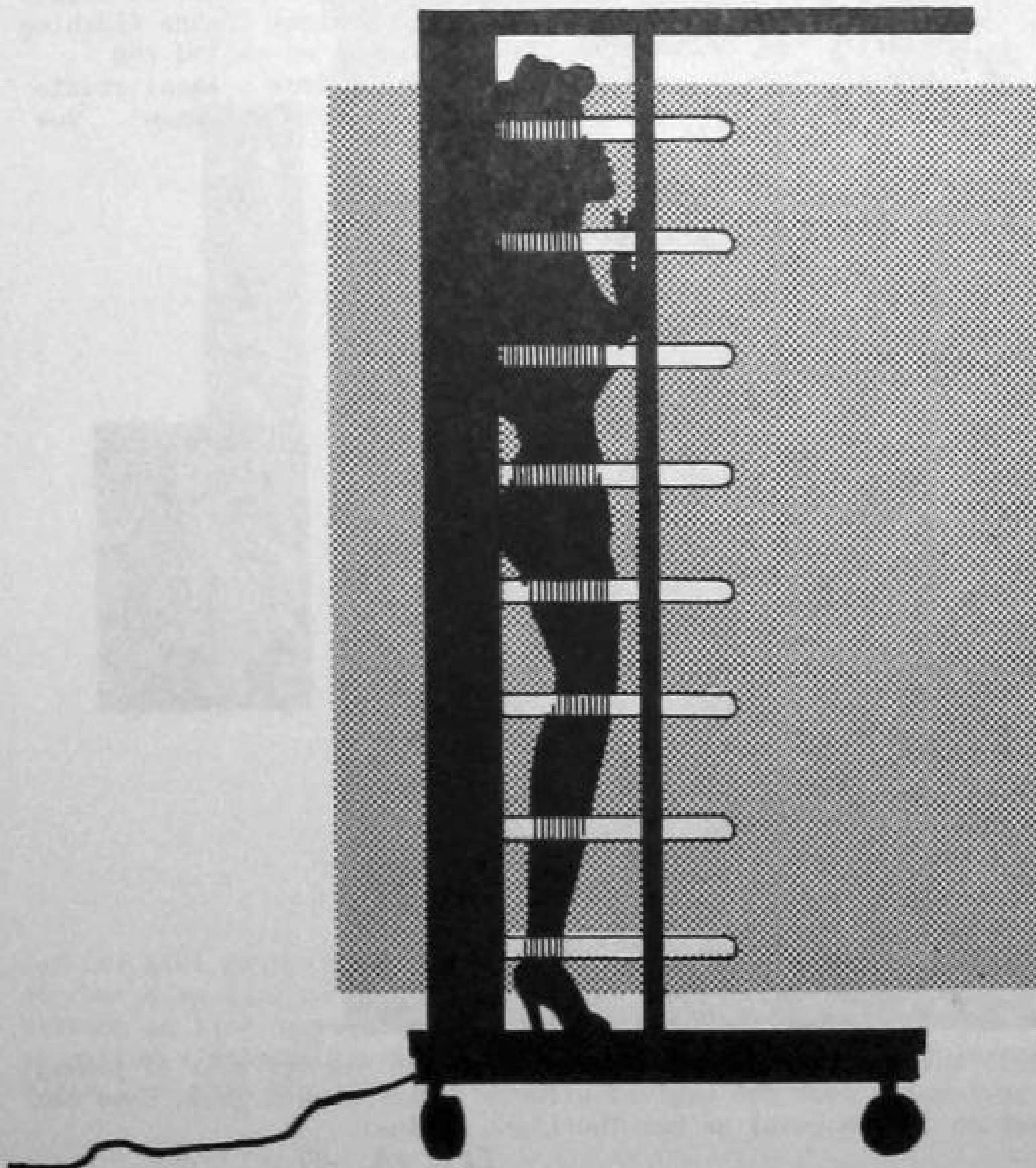
As of this writing (1983) our Magicland TV show has been on the air for over 17 years. And in all that time, performing over 300 magical effects (tricks) each year, none has brought us the exhilaration (or concern) as has The Light Cabinet.

Dick Williams 79

So, thanks to Dick and George you should have a basic idea of the Light Cabinet's workings and idiosyncrasies. In upcoming pages we will give more information on this classic illusion.

I think by now you probably understand the advantages and drawbacks to this illusion. When we were trouping ours I always hoped we could come up with an easier way to get the same effect. Obviously the size would have to be cut down and the mechanics simplified. When I began getting inquiries for plans on this prop, once again I hoped for a streamlined version, knowing most performers would prefer a prop that would deliver the same basic effect without the bulkiness and without being quite so temperamental.

My friend, Jack Dean seemed to be an obvious choice for this task, having logged several years as a commercial lighting designer. I twisted his arm and now within the following pages is a comprehensive solution to my Light Bulb Girl quandaries. It's called the Luminaire 13. I'm excited about it because it's a practical approach to this respected illusion. Please review the following pages closely and if you're interested in building this prop, but aren't that familiar with electrical diagrams, show these pages to someone well versed in lighting and electrical fabrication. This is your opportunity to perform something unique!



Jack Dean's

LUMINAIRE 13



INTRODUCTION

Jim Sommers, the busy Chicago professional, neatly combined Harbin's "Experiment 13" with the "Light Bulbs Through The Girl" effect of Horace Marshall's. The following is based upon Jim Sommers' fine concept, but it uses Lester Lake's "Shredder" principle to not only give a different method, but also a slightly altered appearance since the bulbs are integral with the stocks instead of being a separate assembly.

EFFECT

The plot is simple. A girl is locked into the stocks and thirteen burning tubular light bulbs are apparently pushed through her torso. The lights are pulled back, the cabinet is opened and the girl steps out unharmed.

METHOD

The base is made to fold for packing and the leg support folds to fit inside of it. A latch is provided to hold the base closed when it's folded. Two more latches are provided to lock the base when it's open. The casters are offset for packing.

The support unfolds and pin hinges to the base.

Hinged flap (8) folds down to rigidize the support. The legs clamp into the support and the height can be adjusted to suit the assistant. Once this is determined, marks or stop clocks can be made to reduce set-up time.

With the bulb carrier retracted, the capsule can be raised to its top position by lifting up on the slide extension. The bulb carrier is then pushed forward until the tips of the bulbs extend through their mating holes in the cabinet. The bulbs then hold the capsule in the up position.

The illusion is displayed with the lights on, and then the bulb carrier is pulled back. This releases the capsule which drops slowly to its down position. The counterbalance reels (47) slow the capsule's descent. With the bulb carrier all the way back, the cabinet can be opened for further display and for the entrance of the girl.

Turnbutton (82) rotates 90° to lock the moveable center of the bulb carrier into place. Precision ball bearing drawer slides accurately guide the bulb carrier when it is moved so the lights will line up with the holes. In

addition, the moveable track of the slides is modified to push on the extension of the capsule to move the fake bulbs in the capsule in synchronization with the real ones on the bulb carrier. The small switch inside turns the fake lights on the instant they move forward.

To conceal the real bulbs on the moveable section, black velvet roller shades are attached between the bulb carrier and the moveable center section. The tension on these shades also serves to pull the center section into position in the bulb carrier and to hold it there when the bulb carrier is retracted and the turnbutton lock is released.

Glossy black reflectors are mounted onto the side of the capsule housing. They are designed to fill up the space behind the girl with images of the front row of lights to give the illusion that the lights can be seen behind the girl inside of the cabinet.

Even though the drawings and the bill of materials are quite complete, you should know that this illusion has never been built. Obviously, some "fine tuning" will be required when one is constructed, since this is an untried design. Also, this is no project for a beginner, since close tolerances and precision workmanship are required. Finally, if you do decide to build "Luminaire 13" remember to make allowances for thickness variations if you use metric plywood.

When I build one, and I will, I plan to theme it in "Detroit Modern" perhaps with racing stripes applied. If you decide to add this illusion to your show, perhaps you will prefer a different look. Any way you look at it this is a different illusion, and I hope that you like it well enough to go to the trouble and expense to build one.



Jack Dean

BILL OF MATERIALS

Base & Support

1. Top. (2) pcs. 1/2" x 15" x 24" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size.)
2. Frame, front & back. (4) pcs. 3/4" x 1 1/2" x 14 5/8" white pine. (Cut to length and miter both ends.)
3. Frame, ends. (4) pcs. 3/4" x 1 1/2" x 23 1/4" white pine. (Cut to length, miter both ends and notch 2 for hinges.)
4. Hinge blocks. (4) pcs. 1 1/4" x 2 1/2" x 4 1/2" pine. (Cut to size.)
5. Legs. (4) pcs. 1" x 1" x .049 wall x 40" long square aluminum tubing. (Cut to length, drill 2 holes, polish and spray with clear acrylic.)
6. Support, front and back. (1) pc. 3/8" x 9" x 18" 5-ply birch plywood. (Layout to nest, cut 2 pieces to shape and drill.)
7. Support, end. (2) pcs. 3/8" x 8 5/8" x 10 1/2" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size.)
8. Support, top. (2) pcs. 3/8" x 1 3/4" x 10 1/2" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size.)
9. Side brace. (4) pcs. 3/4" x 1 3/8" x 8 5/8" white pine. (Cut to size.)
10. Center brace. (2) pcs. 3/4" x 1 63/64" x 8 5/8" white pine. (Cut to size.)
11. Leg Clamp. (2) pcs. 3/8" x 3 15/16" x 8 9/16" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size and drill.)
12. Hinge, top. (1) pc. 1 1/16" open x 1 3/4" continuous hinge. (Cut to length and drill.)
13. Hinge, end and corners. (3) pcs. 1 1/16" open x 8 5/8" continuous hinge. (Cut to length and drill.)
14. Hinge, top and end. (2) pcs. 1 1/16" open x 7 3/4" continuous hinge. (Cut to length and drill.)
15. Hinge. (4) pcs. 1 1/2" x 2" loose pin.
16. Casters. (4) pcs. 2" rubber tired, plate mounted.
17. Latch. (3) pcs. draw catch. (Nielsen 200 series, or equal.)
18. Hinge. (2) pcs. 5" strap.
19. Clamp screw. (2) pcs. 1/4" x 20" x 2 1/4" RD. HD. machine screw, flat washer and wing nut.
20. Vinyl, cloth backed (black) - not shown. (2) pcs. 17" x 24". (Fasten on with white glue.)
21. Aluminum trim - not shown. (4) pcs. 1/2" x 1/2" x 1/16" x 15 1/16" long aluminum angle. (2) pcs. 1/2" x 1/2" x 1/16" x 24 1/8" long aluminum angle. (Cut to length, miter one end and drill mounting holes as required. Polish and spray with clear acrylic.)
22. Leg caps. (4) pcs. black plastic to fit 1" square x .049 wall tube.
23. Caster screws. (16) pcs. 1/4"- 20 x 3/4" flat hd. machine screw and hex nut.

Cabinet

24. End piece - bulb end. (1) pc. 3/8" x 12 1/4" x 18 3/4" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size, cut two grooves and drill.)
25. End piece - handle end. (1) pc. 3/8" x 12 1/4" x 18 3/4" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size, cut slot and drill.)
26. Top and bottom - stationary end. (2) pcs. 3/8" x 18 3/4" x 8 1/2" 5 - ply birch plywood. (Cut to size and shape.)
27. Top and bottom - hinged end. (2) pcs. 3/8" x 18 3/4" x 20 3/4" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size and shape.)

28. Front and back - stationary end. (2) pcs. 3/8" x 12 1/2" x 8 1/2" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size and shape, rabbet 3 edges and drill.)
29. Back-hinged end. (1) pc. 3/8" x 12 1/2" x 20 3/4" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size and shape and rabbet 3 edges.)
30. Front-hinged end. (1) pc. 3/8" x 12 1/2" x 20 3/4" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size and shape, cut 9" x 9 3/4" opening and rabbet 3 edges.)
31. Capsule wall. (2) pcs. 3/8" x 3 5/8" x 11 3/4" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size and shape.)
32. Capsule cover. (1) pc. 1/8" x 10 13/16" x 11 11/16" 3-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size and shape and drill.)
33. Hinge. (2) pcs. 3" strap.
34. Latch. (2) pcs. draw catch. (Nielsen 200 series, or equal.)
35. Nut. (8) pcs. 1/4"-20 teenut. (TRW No. SS-58685, or equal.)
36. Screw. (8) pcs. 1/4"-20 x 1 1/2" wing screw. (Make by silver soldering machine screw and wing nut together if necessary.)
37. Washer. (8) pcs. 17/64" x 31/32" x 3/64" fender/plaster washer.
38. Drawer slide. (2) pcs. Ball bearing drawer slide, 20" length x 15" travel. (Accuride model 201 or Grant model 5701. Cut extension to required length.)
39. Reflector. (2) pcs. .032 x 3 5/8" x 3 25/32 aluminum. (Cut to size, bend to shape and paint one side high gloss black. Glue to 40.)
40. Reflector support. (4) pcs. 3/4" x 53/64" x 3 13/32" white pine. (Cut to size and shape.)

Capsule & Bulb Slide

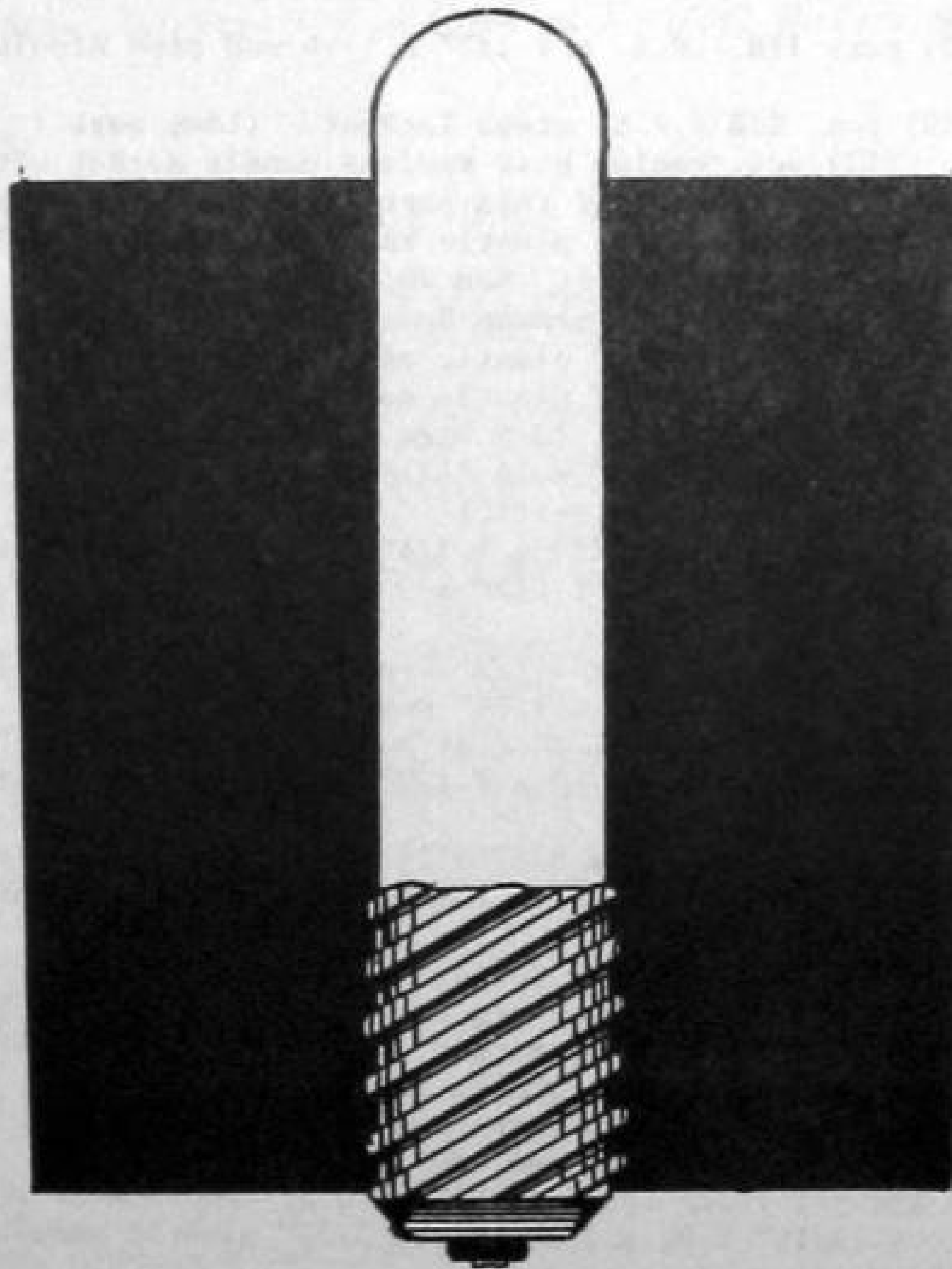
41. Top. (1) pc. 1/4" x 3 5/16" x 9 3/4" 3-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size and drill.)
42. Bottom. (1) pc. 1/4" x 3 5/16" x 9 3/4" 3-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size.)
43. Sides. (2) pcs. 3/8" x 3 5/16" x 10 1/2" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size, two ends and notch two places.)
44. Back. (1) pc. 3/8" x 10" x 10 1/2" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size, rabbet four edges, drill and cut slot.)
45. Slide stop. (2) pcs. 1/4" x 3/4" x 1 1/4" 3-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size, drill and co'sink.)
46. Guide post. (4) pcs. 3/8" O.D. x .014 wall x 3" long brass tubing. (Cut to length and epoxy into 44.)
47. Counterbalance. (2) pcs. torsion spring reel. (White's AF 150 Auto-Fisher or equal. White's Auto-Fisher, P.O. Box 5038, Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71601. Adjust tension to slow descent of capsule.)
48. Screw eye. (2) pcs. 7/32" I.D. eye x 7/8" O.A. length wire screw eye.
49. Bulb slide. (1) pc. 3/8" x 9 3/16" x 9 15/16" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size and drill.)
50. Lamp socket. (7) pcs. candelabra D.C. Bayonet socket, 75w., 125v. (Chicago miniature/Drake #4365-003 or Leecraft #11-225.)
51. Lamp. (7) pcs. 25w., 115 - 125v. candelabra D.C. bayonet clear lamp. (No. 25T8DC.)
52. Switch. (1) pc. Roller lever actuated subminiature switch, 5A. @ 250 vac. (Radio Shack No. 275-017. Epoxy into 44.)
53. Wire retainer. (6) pcs. 1/4" plastic cable clamp. (Radio Shack.)
54. Wire connector. (6) pcs. No. 73-B wire nut. (Ideal or equal.)
55. Guide bushing. (4) pcs. 13/32" O.D. x .014 wall x 1 1/4" long brass tubing. (Cut to length and epoxy into 49.)
56. Slide extensions. (2) pcs. 14 Ga. (.075) x 1/2" x 6 7/8" cold rolled steel. (Cut strip long, bend to shape, cut to size and drill.)
57. Coil springs. (4) pcs. 11/16" O.D. x 2 3/4" long helical coiled steel spring, ends square - not ground. (From brush-type hair curlers. Steel, not aluminum.)

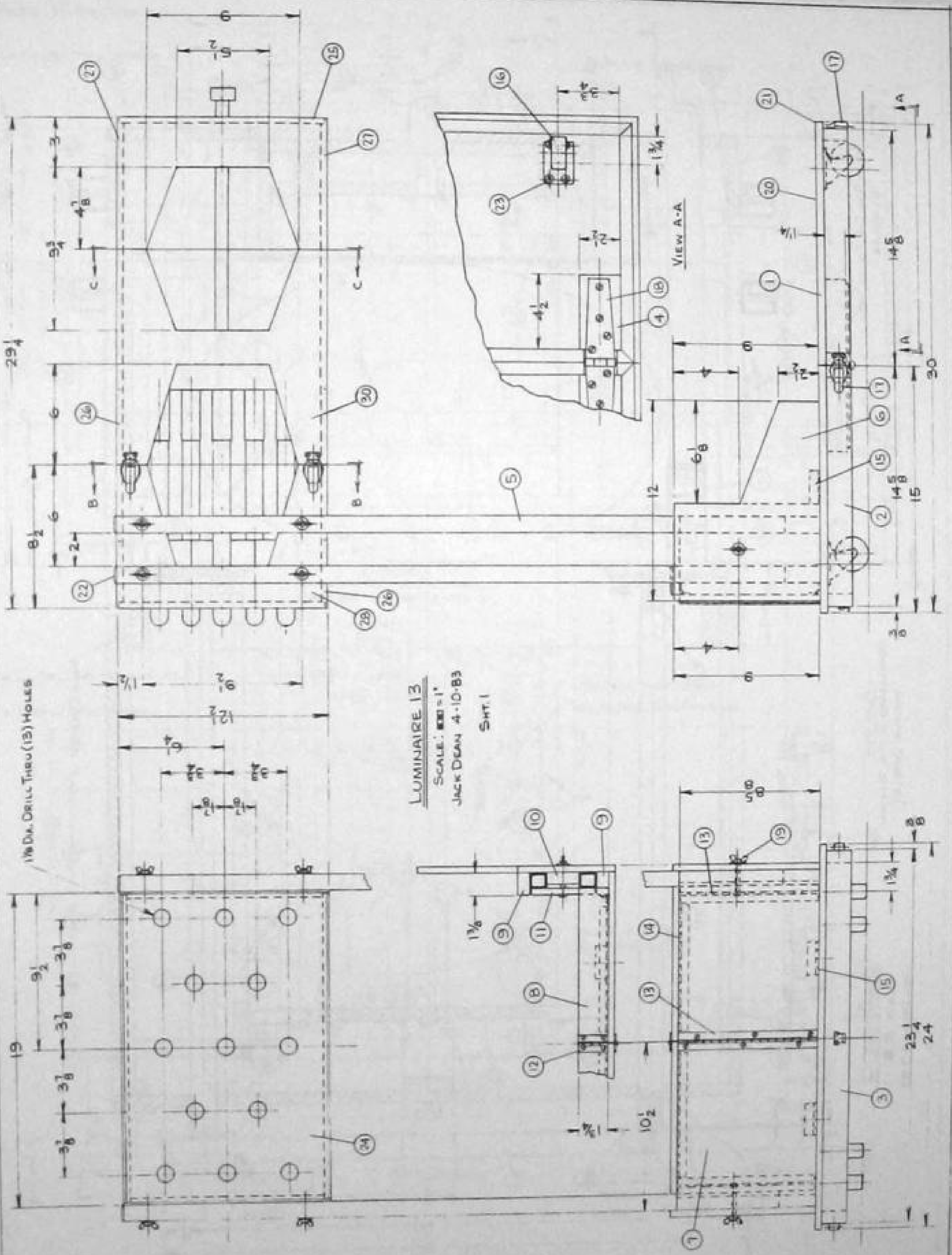
Bulb Carrier & Moveable Center

58. Bulb carrier top. (1) pc. 3/8" x 2 1/2" x 17 1/4" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size, groove and drill.)
59. Bulb carrier bottom. (1) pc. 3/8" x 2 1/2" x 17 1/4" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size.)
60. Bulb carrier front. (2) pcs. 3/8" x 3 3/8" x 10 3/4" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size, rabbet one edge, drill, co'bore and co'sink.)
61. Bulb carrier side - left. (1) pc. 3/4" x 2 1/2" x 11 1/2" white pine. (Cut to length, rabbet both ends and one edge and cut notch.)
62. Bulb carrier side - right. (1) pc. 3/4" x 2 1/2" x 11 1/2" white pine. (Cut to length, rabbet both ends and one edge and cut two notches.)
63. Shade cleat. (2) pcs. 1/2" x 3/4" x 9 3/4" white pine. (Cut to length and drill.)
64. Tubes. (2) pcs. 3/4" O.D. x .049 wall x 17" long aluminum tube. (Cut to length, polish and spray with clear acrylic.)
65. Screw plug. (4) pcs. 3/4" dia. x 1" long hardwood dowel. (Turn O.D. to fit I.D. of 64. Drill screw pilot hole and epoxy into ends of 64.)
66. Screw. (4) pcs. #10 x 1 1/2" flat head wood screw.
67. Handle. (1) pc. 3/4" x 1 1/2" x 16" white pine. (Cut to length and drill and co'sink.)
68. Nipple. (13) pcs. 1/8 I.P.S. x 1 1/2" all-thread pipe nipple. (Lamp part, see 70.)
69. Locknut. (39) pcs. 1/8 I.P.S. steel locknut. (Lamp part.)
70. Lamp socket. (13) pcs. medium base keyless candle socket with 1/8" I.P.S. solid hickey. (Lamp part. Height of this part will determine lengths of 68 and 71.)
71. Plastic tube. (13) pcs. white plastic candles, regular 1 3/16" I.D. x 1 7/32" O.D. x 3 1/4" long. (Lamp part. See 70.)
72. Lamp. (13) pcs. 40w., 120v. medium base clear showcase lamp. (No. 40T8.)
73. Wire retainer. (6) pcs. 1/4" plastic cable clamp. (Radio Shack.)
74. Wire retainer. (3) pcs. 3/16" plastic cable clamp. (Radio Shack.)
75. Wire connector. (4) pcs. No. 73-B wire nut. (Ideal or Equal.)
76. Moveable center. (1) pc. 3/8" x 10 11/16" x 10 11/16" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size, rabbet two edges and drill.)
77. Support. (2) pcs. 3/4" x 1 1/2" x 1 3/4" white pine. (Cut to length.)
78. Support top. (1) pc. 3/8" x 1 1/2" x 3 3/4" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size.)
79. Spacer. (1) pc. 3/8" x 3/4" x 1 1/2" 5-ply birch plywood. (Cut to size.)
80. Washer. (1) pc. 1/2" x 3/16" x 1/16" rubber washer.
81. Pivot screw. (1) pc. #8 x 1 1/2" flat head wood screw.
82. Turnbutton. (1) pc. 1/2" x 3/4" x 1 1/2" white pine. (Cut to length and drill and co'sink.)
83. Reel support. (2) pcs. 1/2" x 3/4" x 2" white pine. (Cut to length.)
84. Wire slack take-up reel. (2) pcs. torsion spring reel. (White's AF 150 Auto-Fisher or equal. See 47.)
85. Roller shade. (2) pcs. spring rollers with 9 3/4" wide x 18" long black velvet shades. (Cross stitch edges to keep from fraying and paint back with flat black latex paint for opacity. Epoxy ratchet pawl in release position. Cut metal/plastic tips to reduce overall length as required.)
86. Shade brackets. (2) pcs. pair face mounting shade brackets. (Cut off bottom flange flush with 76 and drill new mounting hole.)
87. Screw eye. (1) pc. 7/32" I.D. eye x 7/8" O.A. length wire screw eye.
88. Ring. (2) pcs. 5/16" I.D. x 1/2" O.D. x 3/32" plastic annular ring. (Sewing department.)
89. Wire retainer. (6) pcs. 1/4" plastic cable clamp. (Radio Shack.)
90. Wire connector. (6) pcs. No. 73-B wire nut. (Ideal or Equal.)

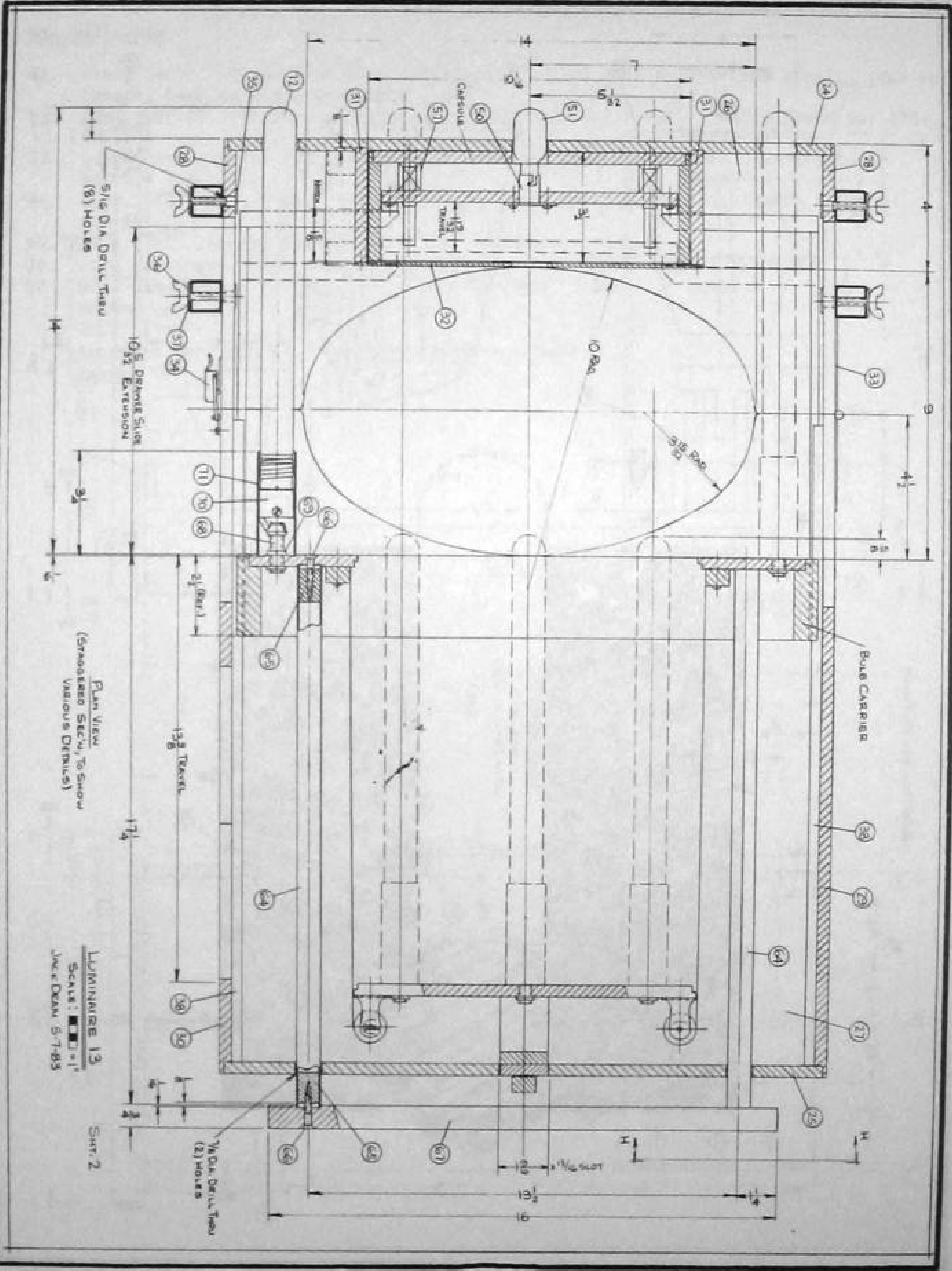
Miscellaneous

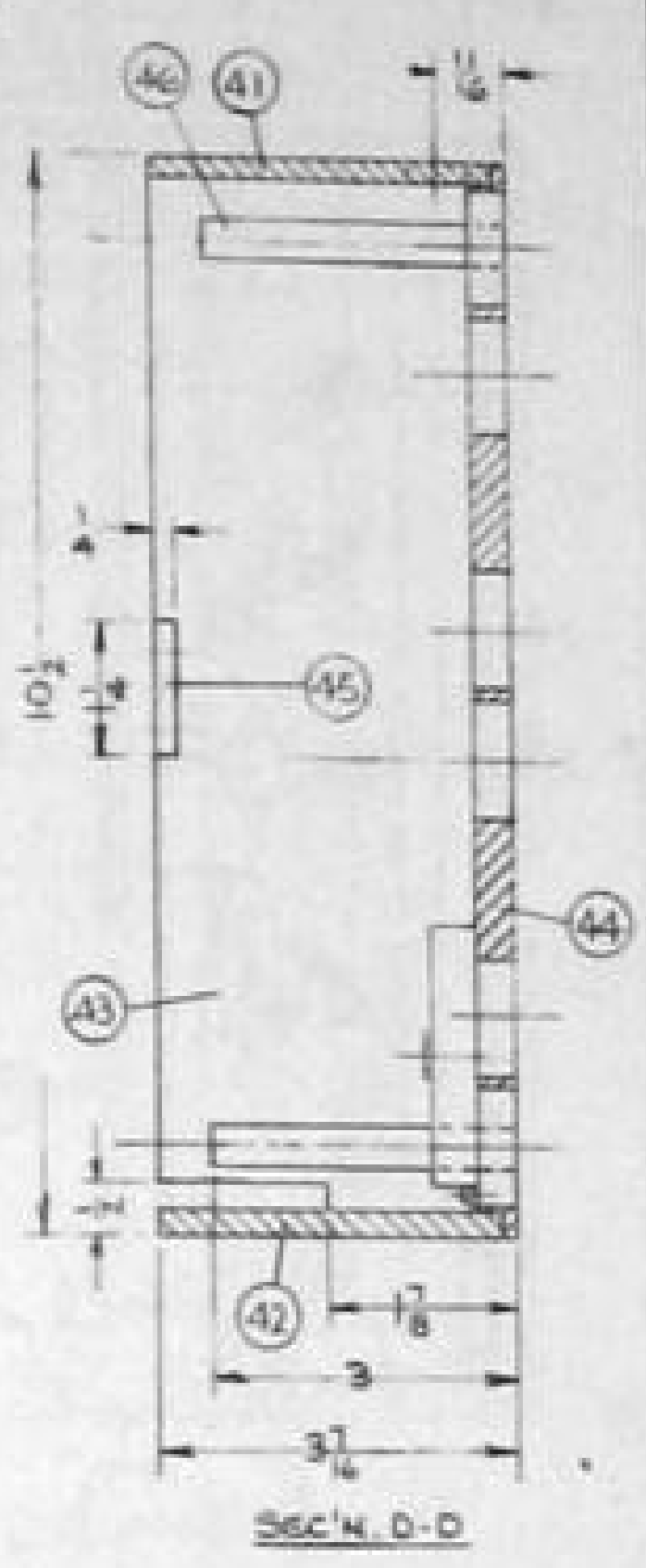
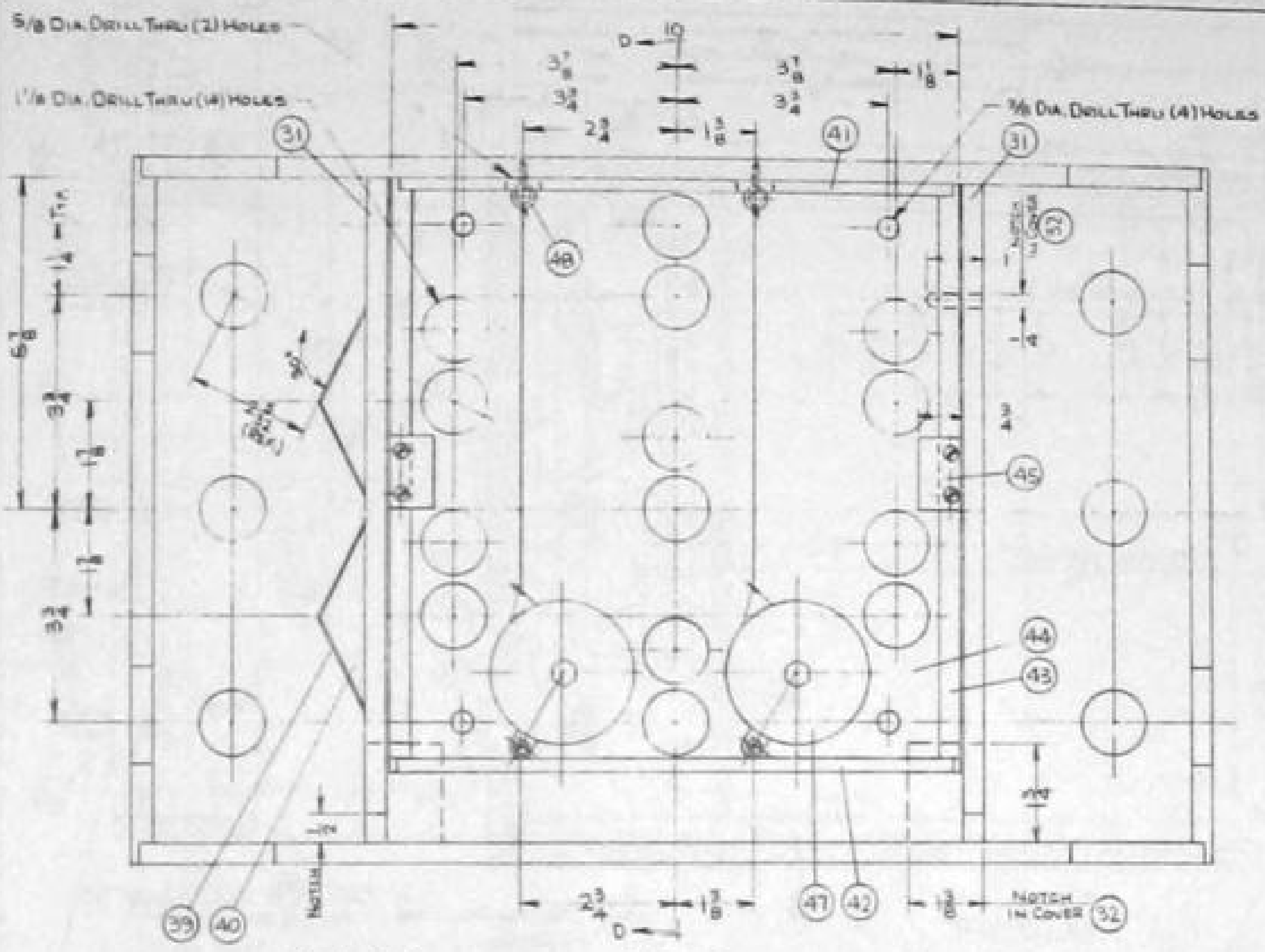
91. Pivot lock. (1) pc. 16 Ga. (.0598) x 1/2" x 1 3/4" cold rolled steel. (Cut to length, bend to shape and drill.)
 92. Line switch. (1) pc. SPST rocker switch, 6A. @ 125 Vac. (Radio Shack No. 275-690.)
 93. Quick Disconnect. (1) set 2-pin male/female nylon connector. (Radio Shack No. 274-222.)
 94. Wire. (30) ft. 18 Ga. stranded 2 conductor SPT-1 zip cord. (Radio Shack No. 278-864.)
 95. Plug. (1) 2-prong electrical plug. (Hardware store.)
 96. Wire retainer. (13) pcs. 3/16" plastic cable clamp. (Radio Shack.)
 97. Wire connector. (2) pcs. No. 73-B wire nut. (Ideal or Equal.)
- Yellow glue
White glue
Assorted wood screws, brads and finishing nails.
Paint



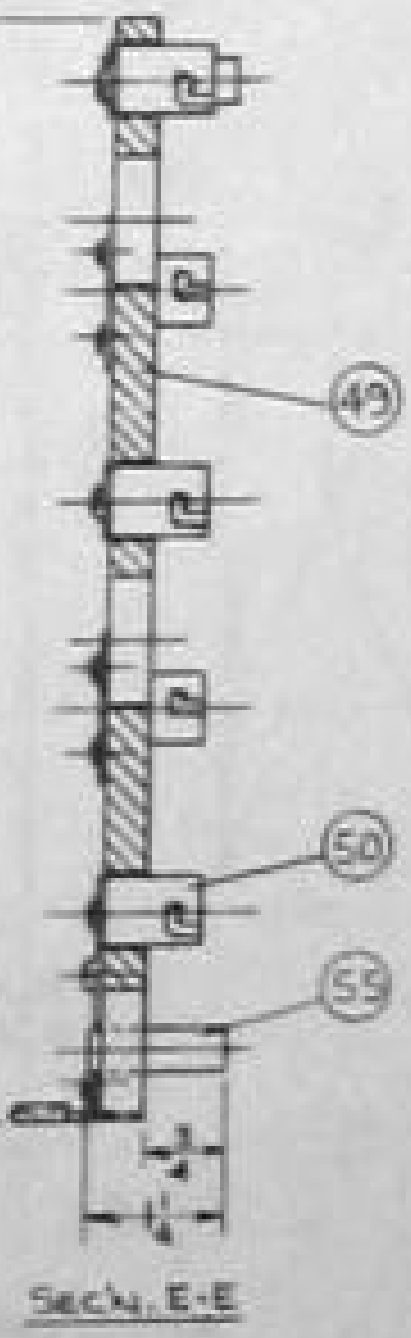
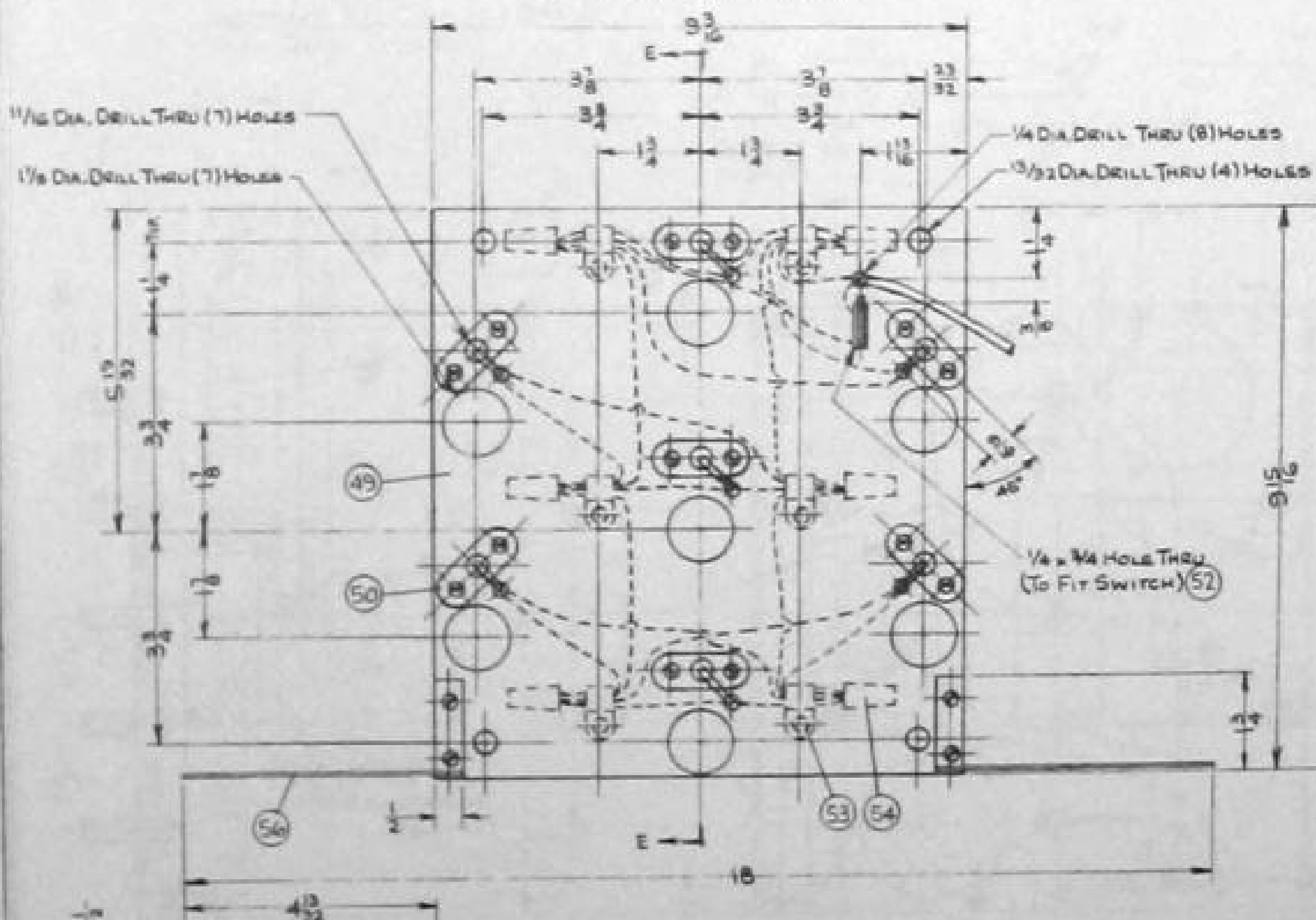


LUMINAIRE 13
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1"
 JACK DEAN 4-10-83
 SH. 1





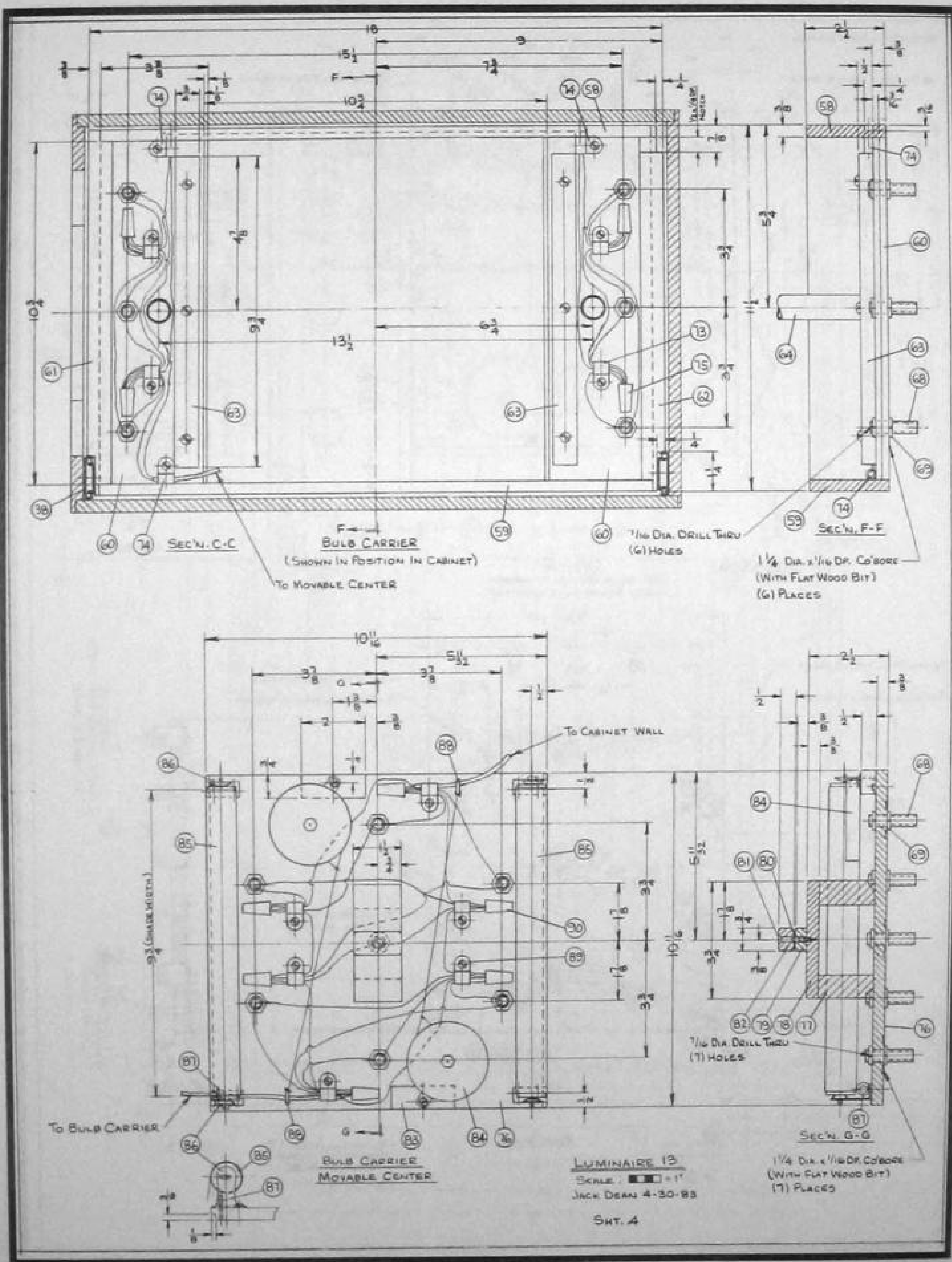
Sec'n. B-B
 CAPSULE
 (SHOWN IN POSITION IN CABINET,
 COVER & BULB SLIDE REMOVED)

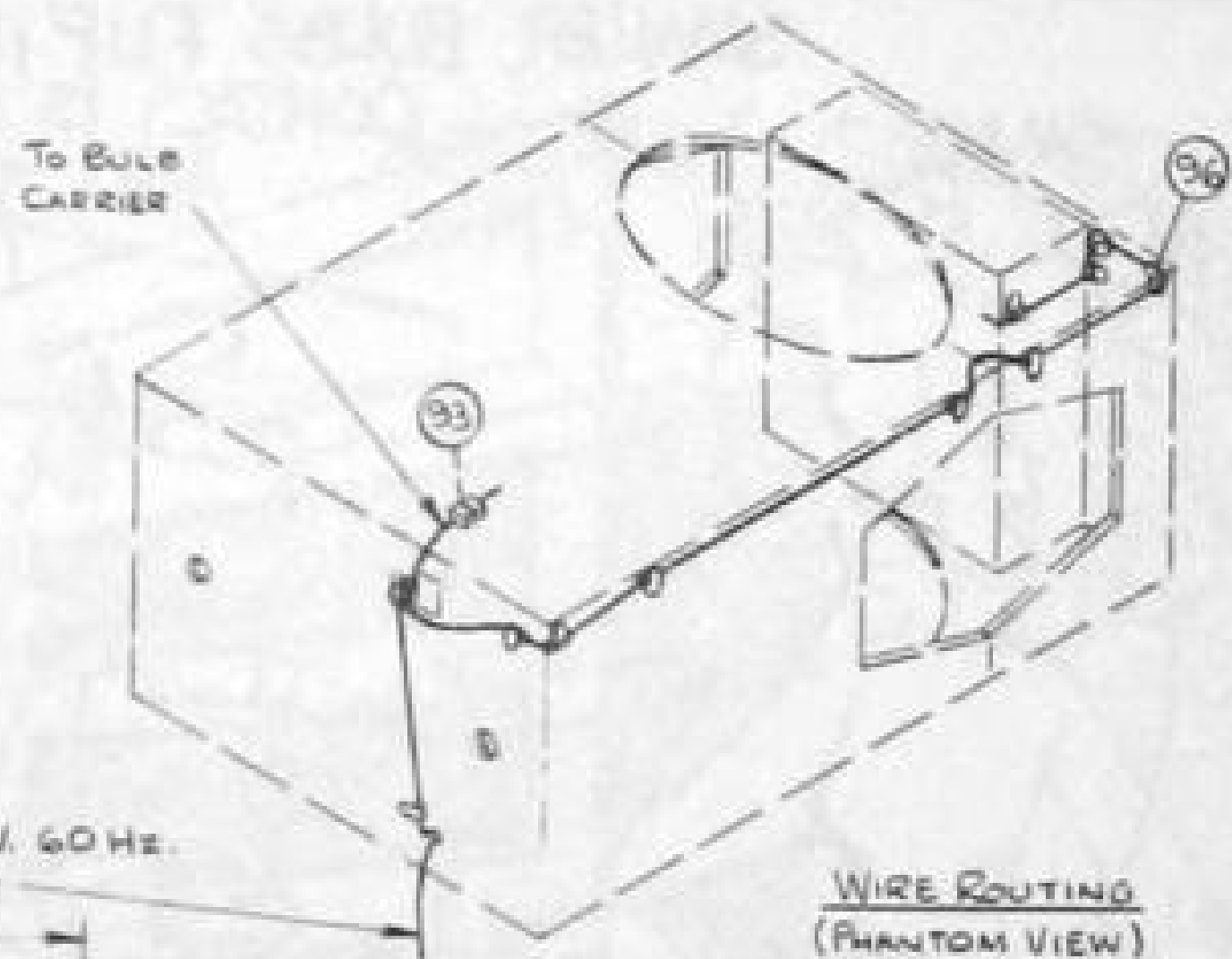
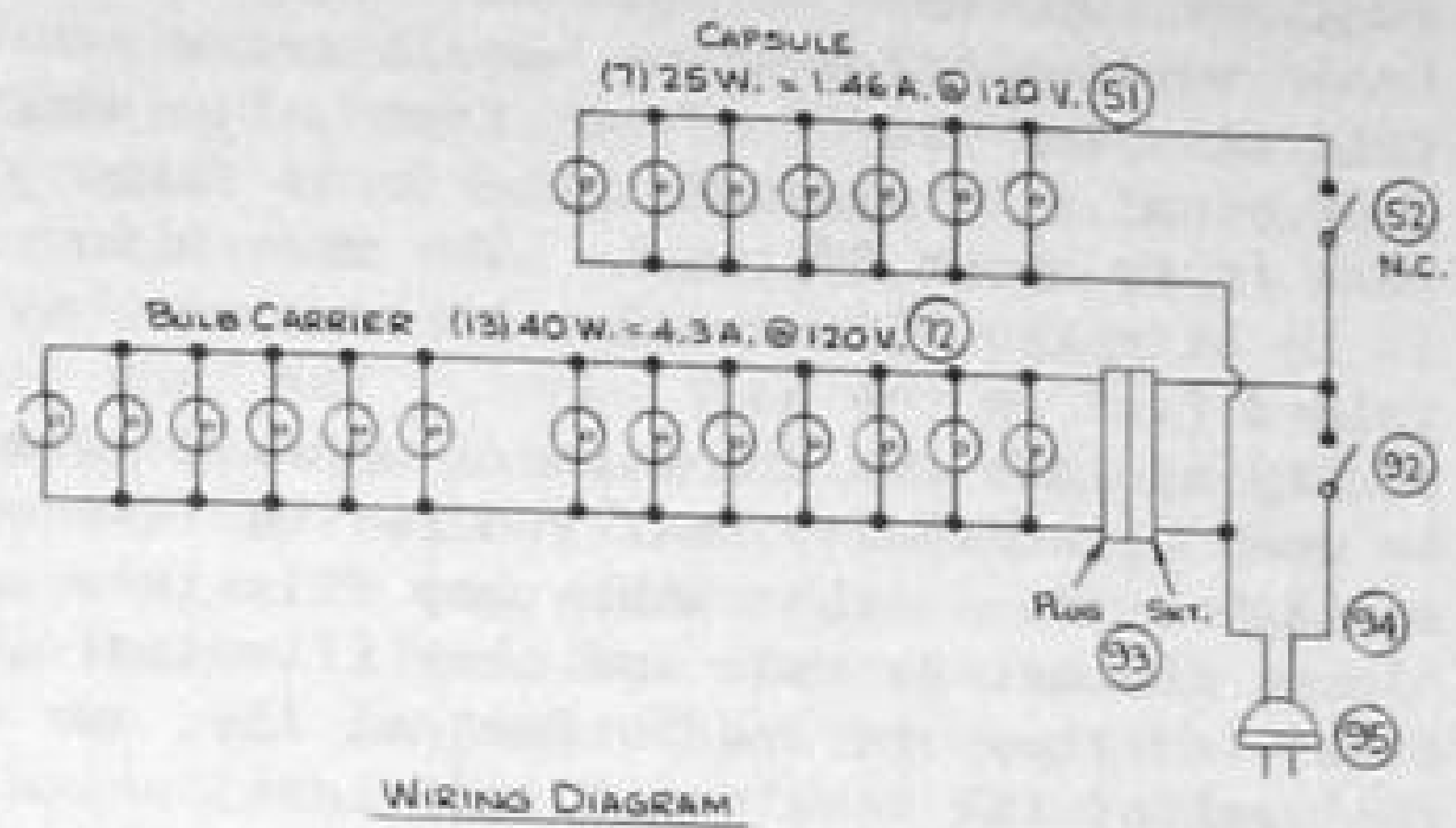
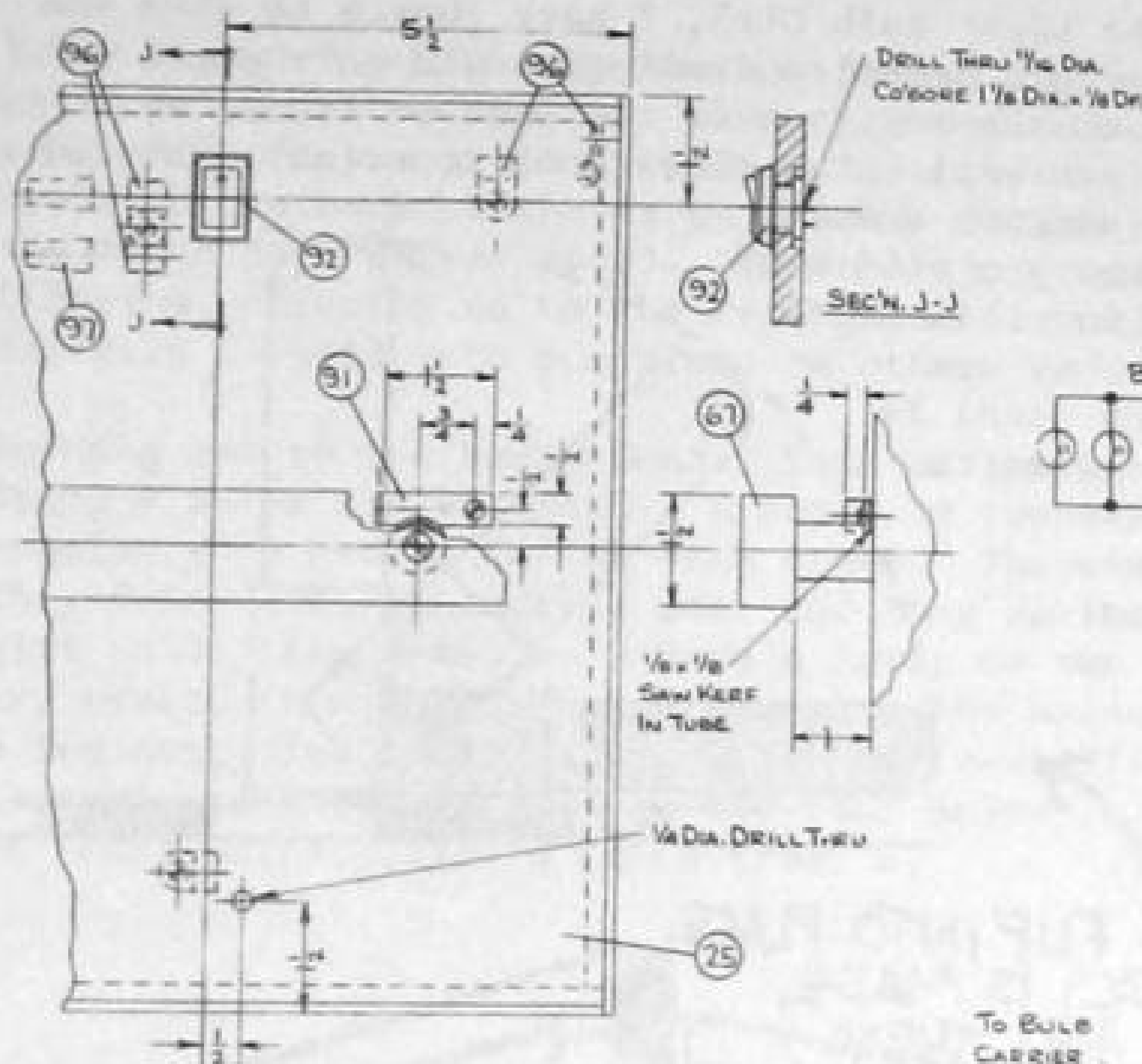


BULB SLIDE

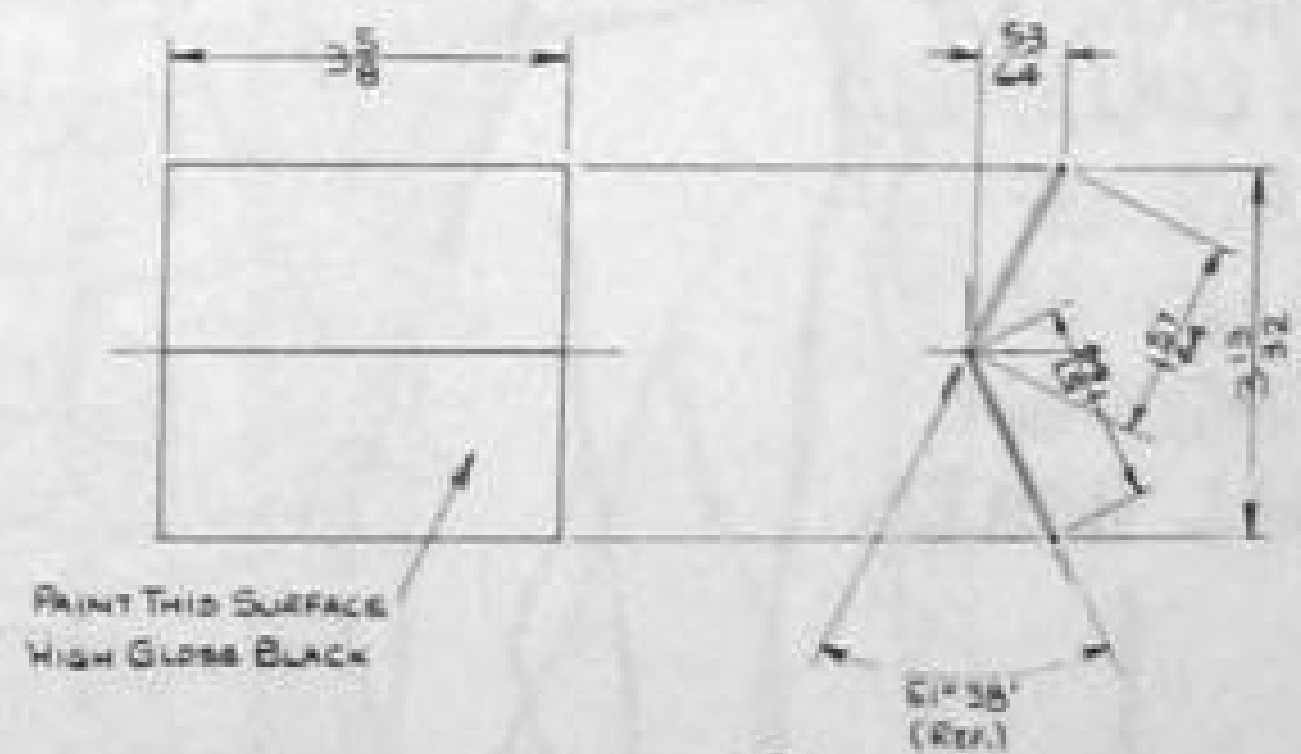
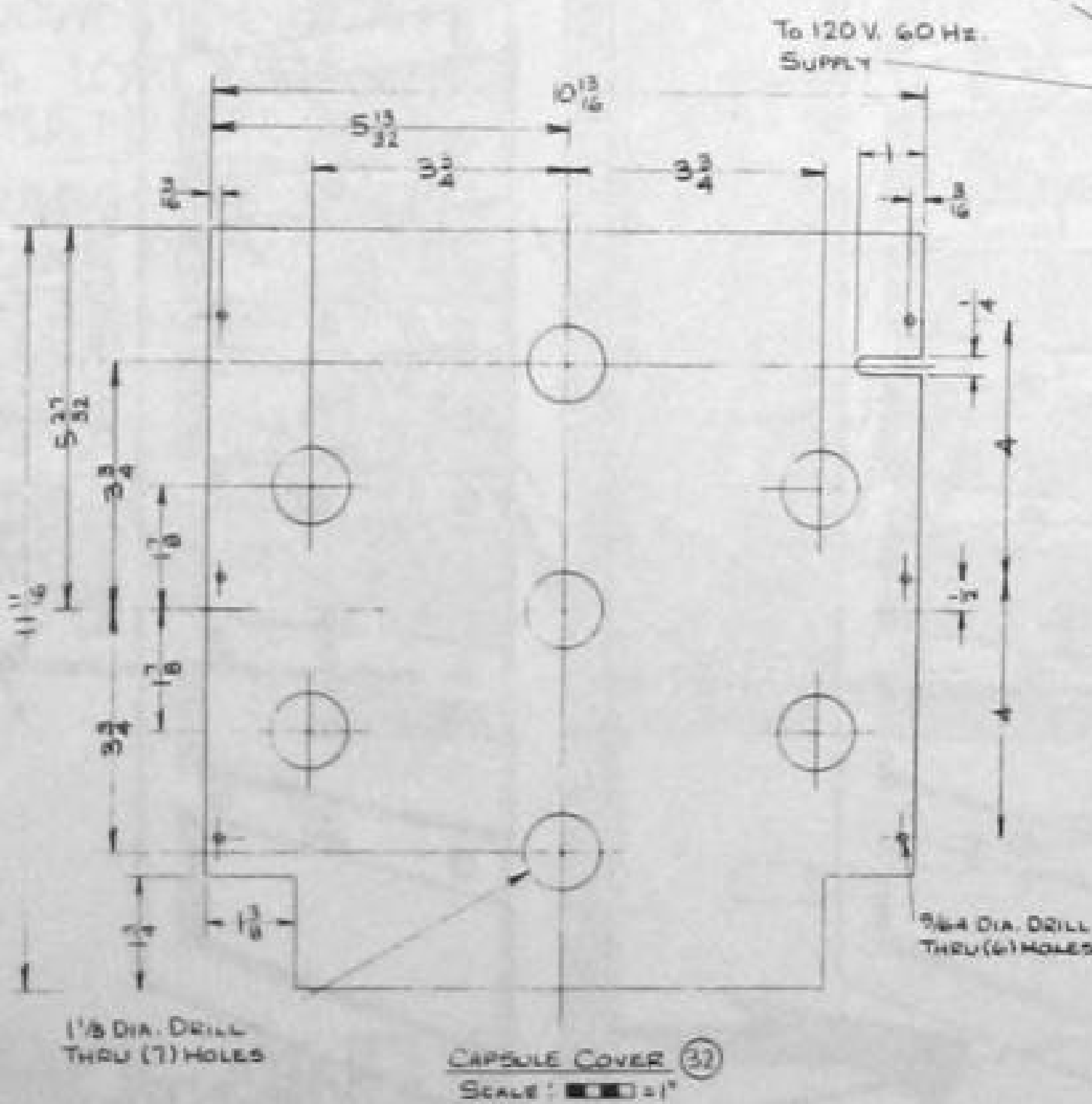
LUMINAIRE 13
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1"
 JACK DEAN 4-1-83

SHT. 3

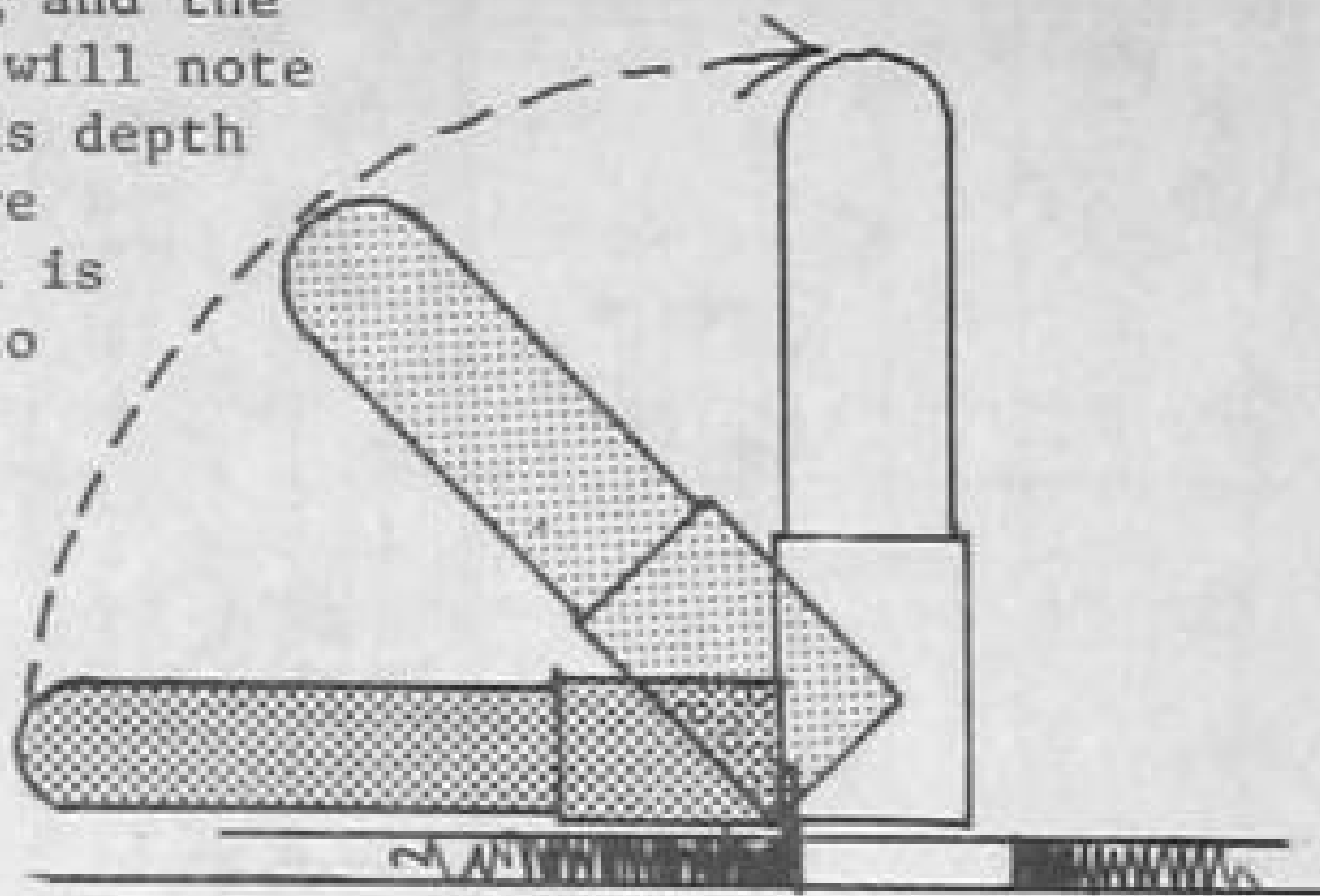




LUMINAIRE 13
JACK DEAN 5-8-83
SHT. 5



Continuing on with our discussion on the Light Bulb Girl, I have chosen to give you the basic workings of this prop. I'm afraid detailed drawings would only serve to confuse. Whether you decide to construct the box type or the push-on front, this basic working information should serve you well. The three most important parts of this illusion are the front frame, its backing and the back panel. In examining the front frame you will note that it is about 3" thick. The reason for this depth is to hide the five smaller bulbs when they are folded flat on the back panel. The back panel is pushed against the front panel and all seems to be one. Electricity must run to the five smaller bulbs so that when they flip into place, contact is made and they illuminate, otherwise they are dead. Customarily, on the back of the back panel is a small



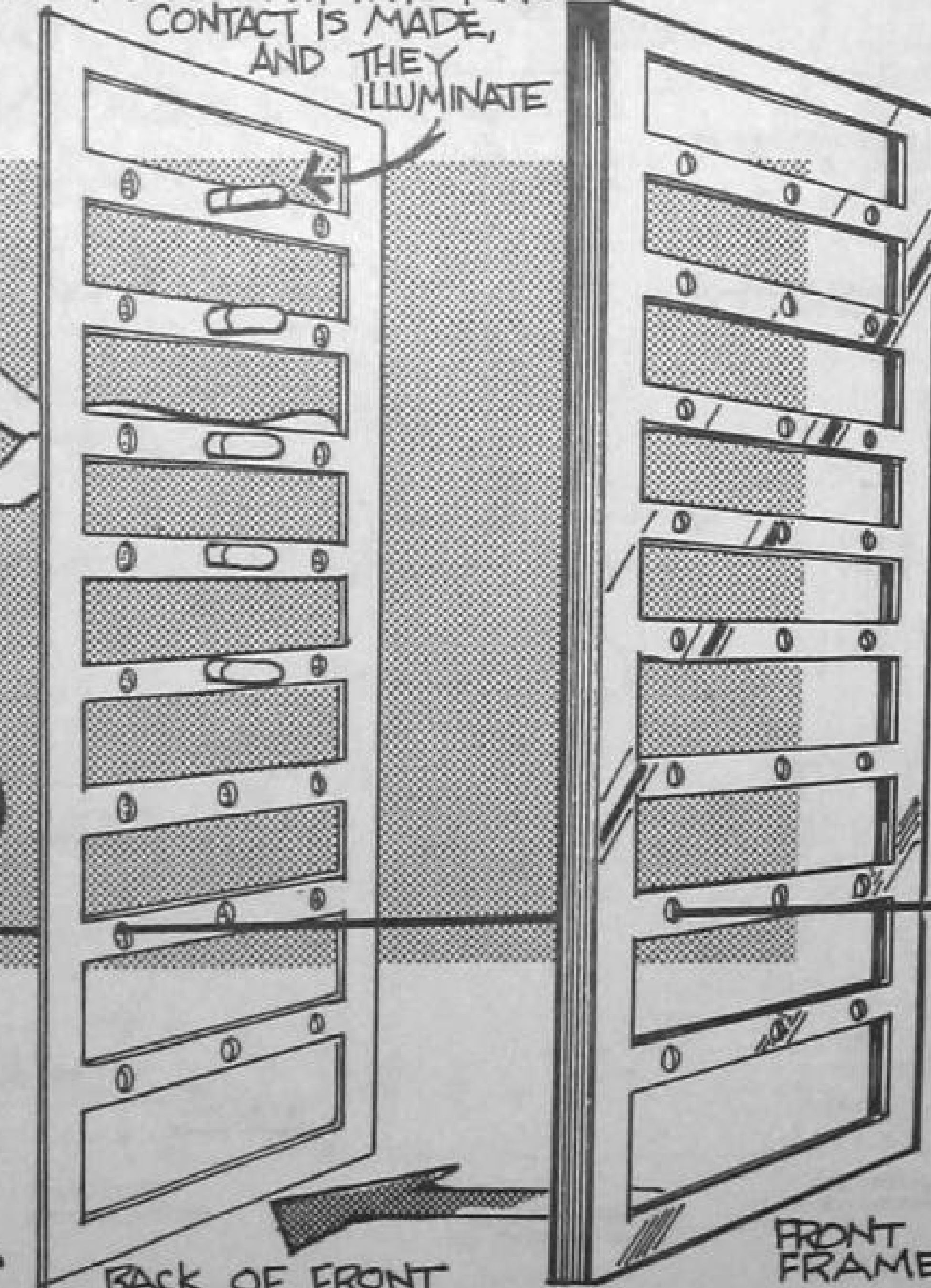
FRONT FRAME

SMALLER BULBS FLIP INTO PLACE,
CONTACT IS MADE,
AND THEY ILLUMINATE

GIRL PULLS SMALL
LEVER— THAT
FLIPS BULBS
INTO PLACE

BACK PANEL
BULBS (EXCEPT
MIDDLE, TOP
5 COLLAPSED)
LINE UP
AND GO
THROUGH
ALL HOLES

GIRL SHOULD
CONTINUALLY
CHECK
BULB
ALIGNMENT



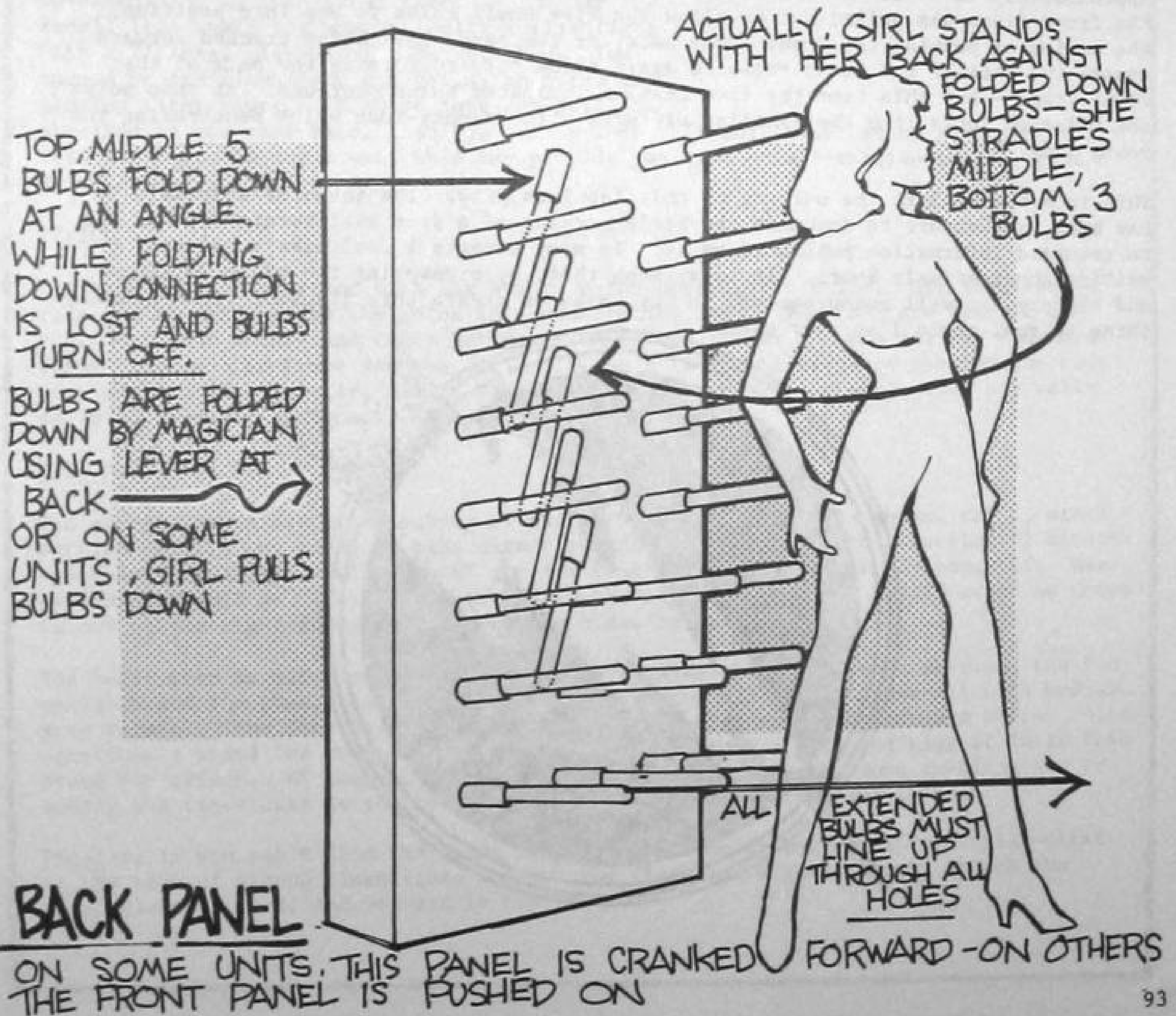
FRONT DECORATIVE
PANEL OMITTED
FOR CLARITY

FRONT
FRAME

BACK OF FRONT
FRAME PULLED OUT
EXPOSING SMALLER BULBS

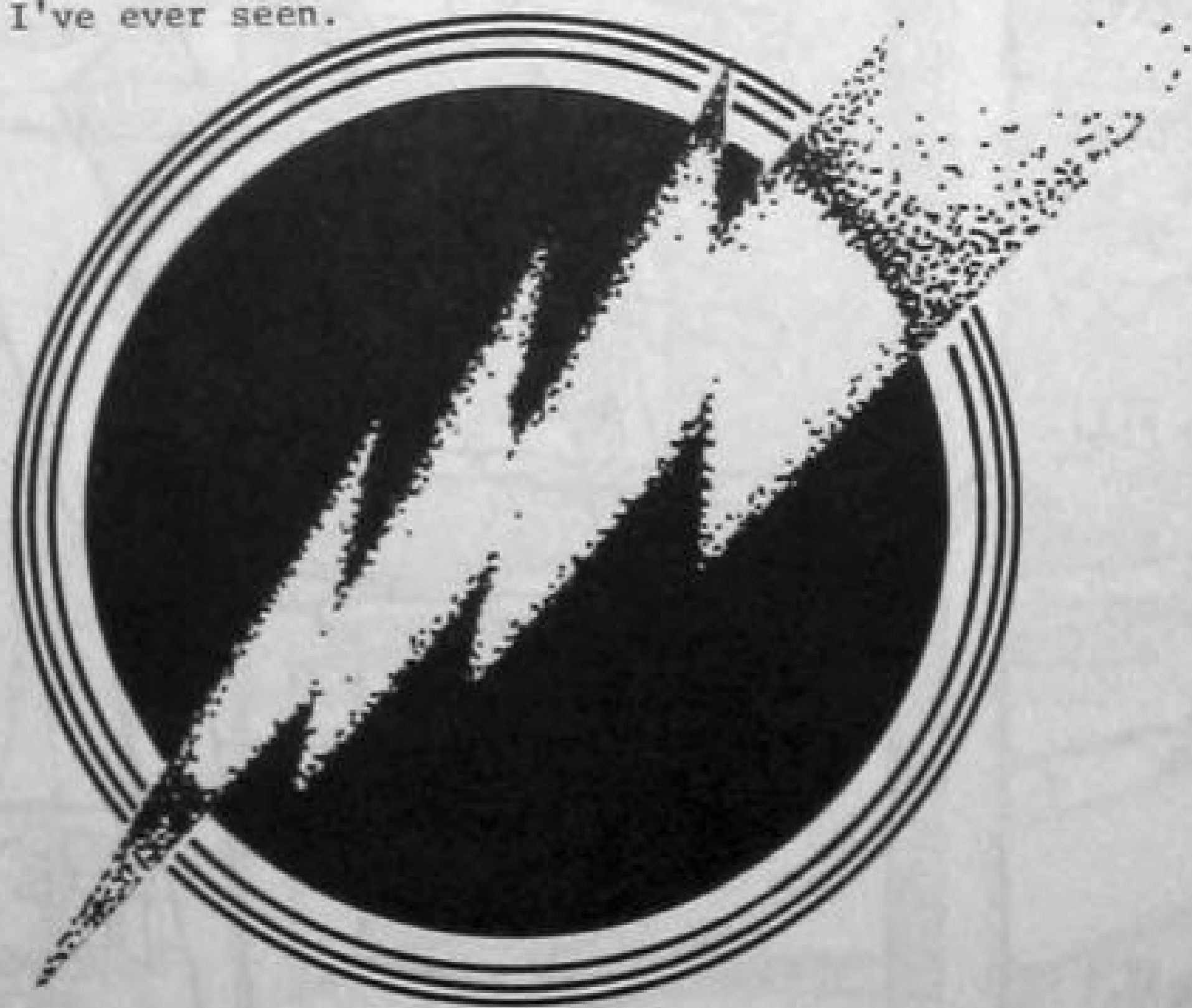
lever the girl pulls once she has pulled the back of the frame out. That flips the small bulbs into place over their corresponding holes. Construction-wise, this is accomplished by a properly placed network of thin cable and pulleys leading to the lever on the back of the front frame. Attaching to the front of the front frame is the front decorative panel. Customarily, roller shades run from the back of the illusion, clipping on to the front frame as well. On some props the front frame assembly is slid into position, on others it's built in as one complete unit.

Turning now to the back panel. This is the back wall to which all the full length display bulbs are attached. A total of twenty-four bulbs, five of which fold down angularly to avoid hitting each other. These are the top middle five bulbs and once they fold down, contact is lost and they no longer illuminate. On some models the girl folds them down, on others a lever on the back is lowered by the magician. In any event, it's important to remember the sequence of this illusion. Generally, first a demonstration is in order, with the twenty-four bulbs being illuminated and run through the front panel's twenty-four holes to prove that, should anyone stand in front of these bulbs...they'd be in trouble!

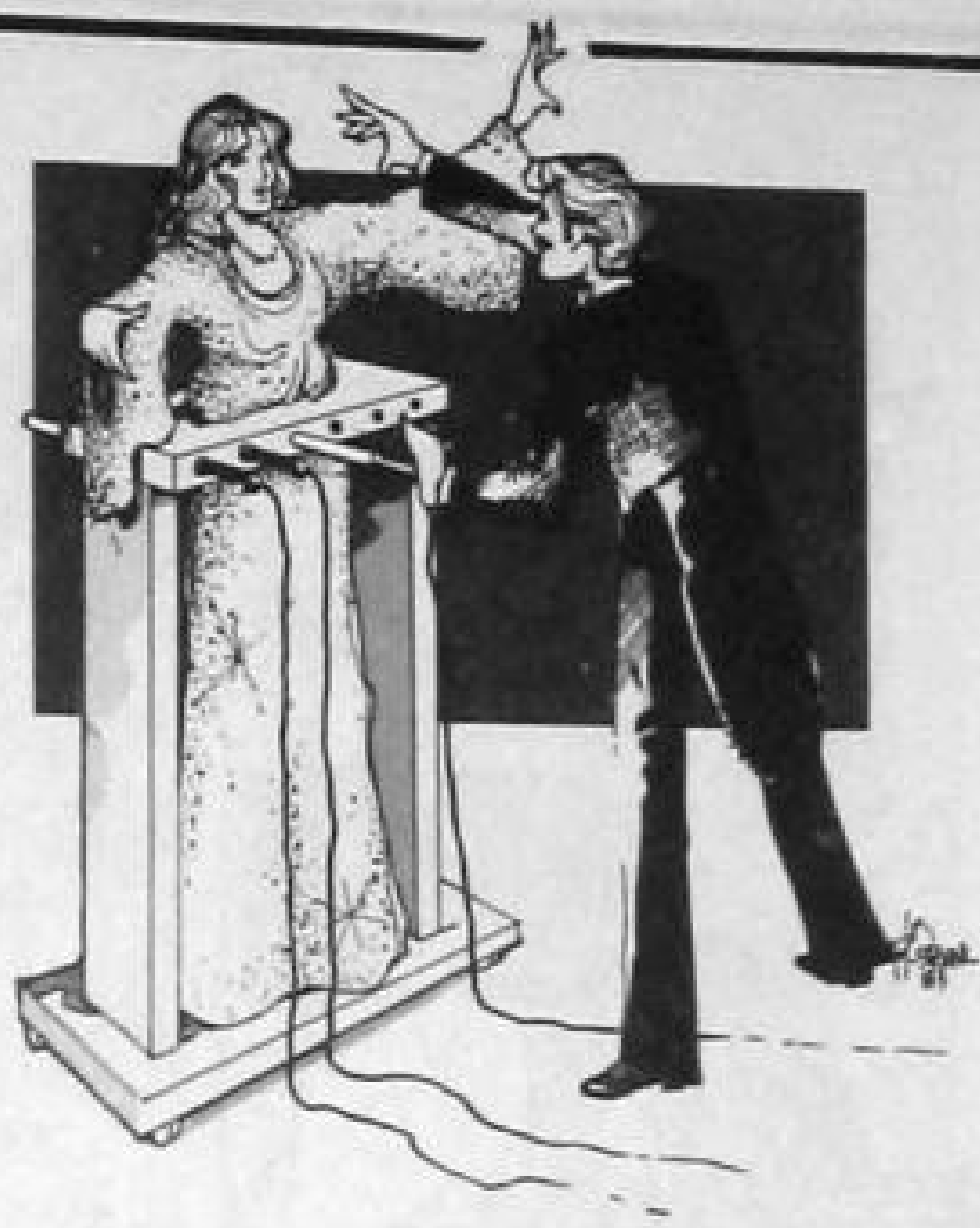


The back panel is cranked back or, on some units the front frame is removed and the girl takes her place in front of the illuminated bulbs. Now the action of encasing her in the unit begins. The decorative front panel is in place and two roller shades are pulled front to back so views into the prop are no longer available through the side. At this point the trickery begins. The long back panel five bulbs are lowered and the girl steps back flush against the back panel and the folded down bulbs. To do this she must straddle the middle bottom three bulbs. Next, she pulls out the back of the front frame, pulling the small lever that flips the five smaller bulbs in place, illuminating them in the process. Now, whether traveling with the back panel or watching the front frame being pushed toward her, the girl must make sure the nineteen long bulbs line up and properly go through the holes in the back of the front frame and finally, the decorative panel. If, for some reason they jam...broken bulbs, glass and stories like you have heard from George Johnstone and Dick Williams. If all goes smoothly, the long bulbs pass through all the holes emerging from the front of the cabinet with the same depth as the smaller bulbs. The illusion is now complete. The decorative front panel can now be removed and carefully, the side roller shades pulled back. The girl must carefully position herself to hide the back panel's five folded down bulbs. Usually a well-placed arm does the job. At this point, the girl is actually sandwiched between the back panel's long bulbs and the five short bulbs, approximately 10" - 12" of space! It should be mentioned that, although the back of the front frame was pulled out to allow the five small bulbs to pop into position, the action of pushing the front frame back, or the back panel being cranked forward causes the back of the front frame to again slide forward forming the back of the front frame - but this time the five small illuminated bulbs protrude. At this point the illusion looks like the familiar pictures with "twenty-four bulbs penetrating the young lady."

This in a nutshell is the working of this fabulous prop. The inventor's dream! It has been my pleasure to document the basic working of a prop that heretofore has had no recorded information published on it. In many aspects I feel like a naturalist writing about grizzly bears. It is my hope that, by presenting the basic workings and history, it will encourage you to buy, make or create this illusion...the closest thing to real magic I've ever seen.



LADY ILUMA



INTRODUCTION

Initially, this effect was designed in the afterglow of Star Wars which brought us such marvelous merchandising as the "Light Saber". You may recall this small toy was basically a flashlight with a 2' long, milk-plexi tube attached. You turned on the flashlight and voila, an ominously glowing Light Saber. If these toys can still be obtained as you read this, then you are in luck. If not, they can be made and we'll tell you how. In any event, this may provide you with an alternative to the Light Bulb Cabinet.

EFFECT

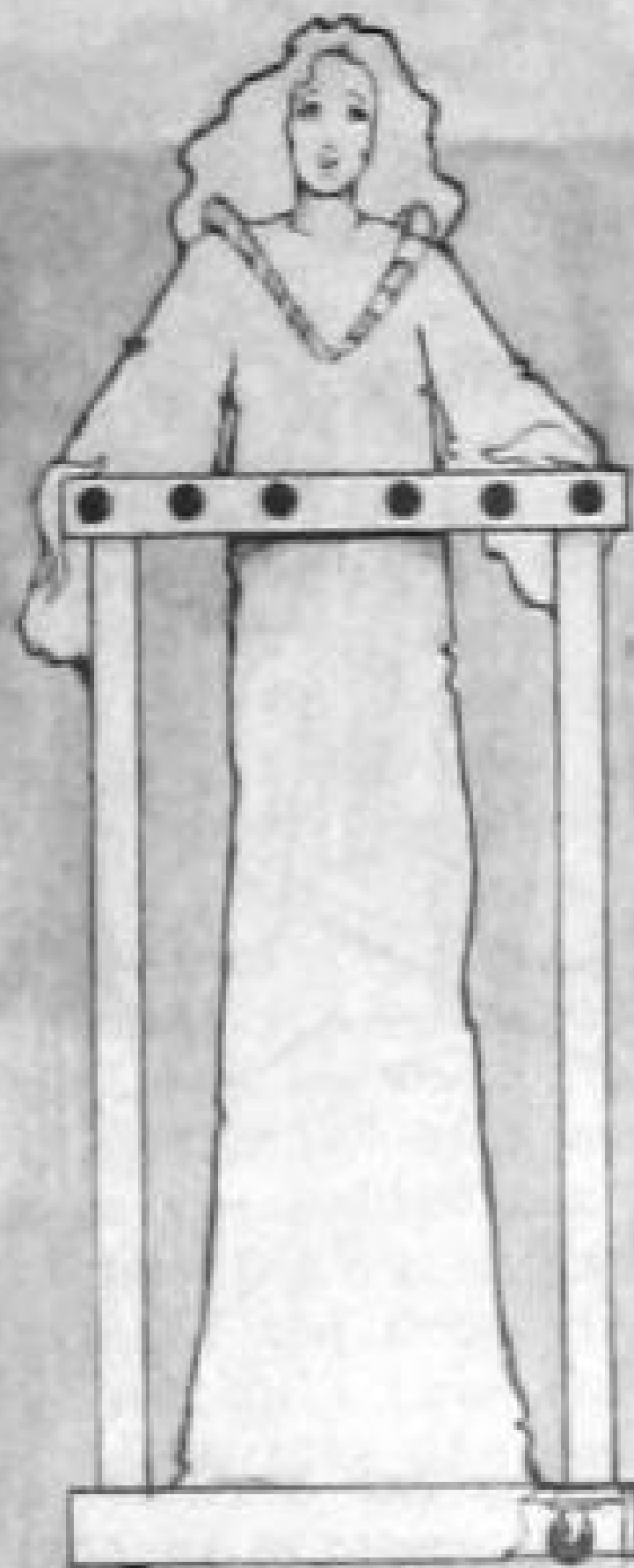
You show an upright stand with six holes in the uppermost section. Six illuminated rods are thrust through the holes in demonstration form. The rods are removed and your assistant enters and takes her position in the stocks. Again all six rods are thrust through the frame and the girl. The unit is turned sideways showing the rods have penetrated. Quickly, all is removed and your assistant steps out to her well-deserved round of applause.

METHOD

The secret is the actual switching of the back stock frames. As shown, the #1 stock section permits the tubes to pass directly through the prop. Stock section #2 directs the tubes angularly to allow an 8" gap for your assistant to take advantage of. Her costuming should be as shown and to aid in the effect, your girl should stand as shown in our bottom right drawing. Her costume hides her stance.

The basic prop is made from 3/8" ply, formed to make the upper stock section, the two uprights and the base, the top of which is made from 1/2" ply. Cover all with medium gray formica. The four basic elements should bolt together with carriage bolts. Also construct a stand for your Light Sabers. Attach to them a wire and plug it in to this stand for effect. Of course, the back should be equipped with hooks enabling you to switch the two stocks as you replace the sabers from the first run-through.

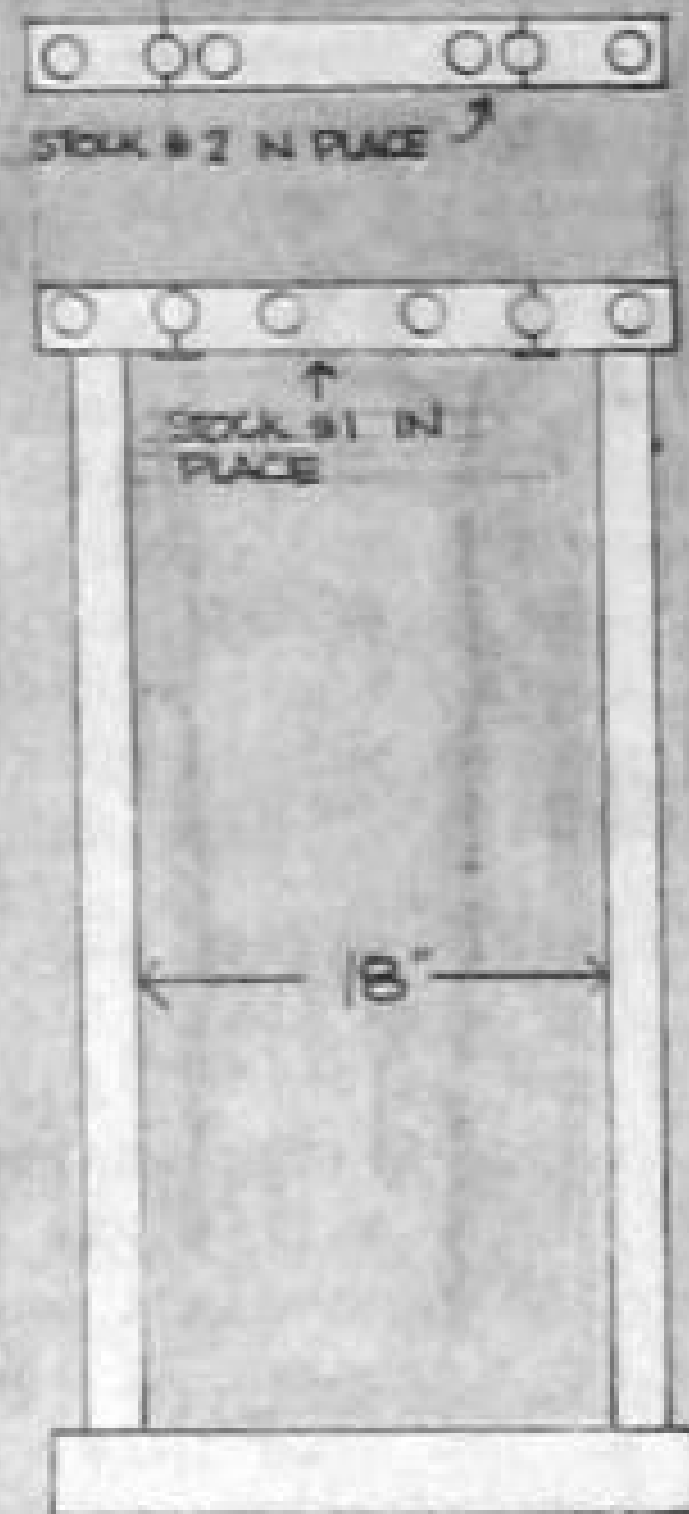
Finally, if you can't find the Light Sabers, make some by bolting 1" o.d. milk-plexi to the tips of strong flashlights. Paint the flashlights gloss black, attach the false electric cord, and you are in business.



FRONT ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION
SHIMING LIGHT SABRE INSERTED

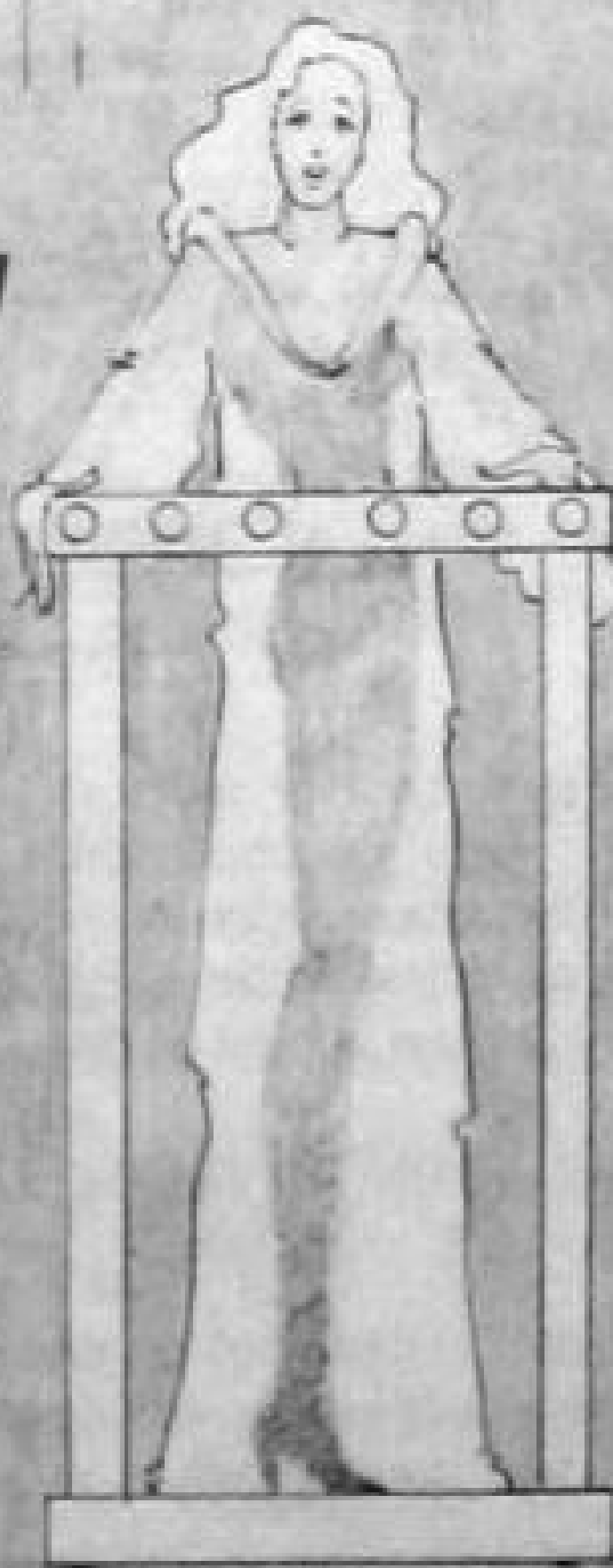
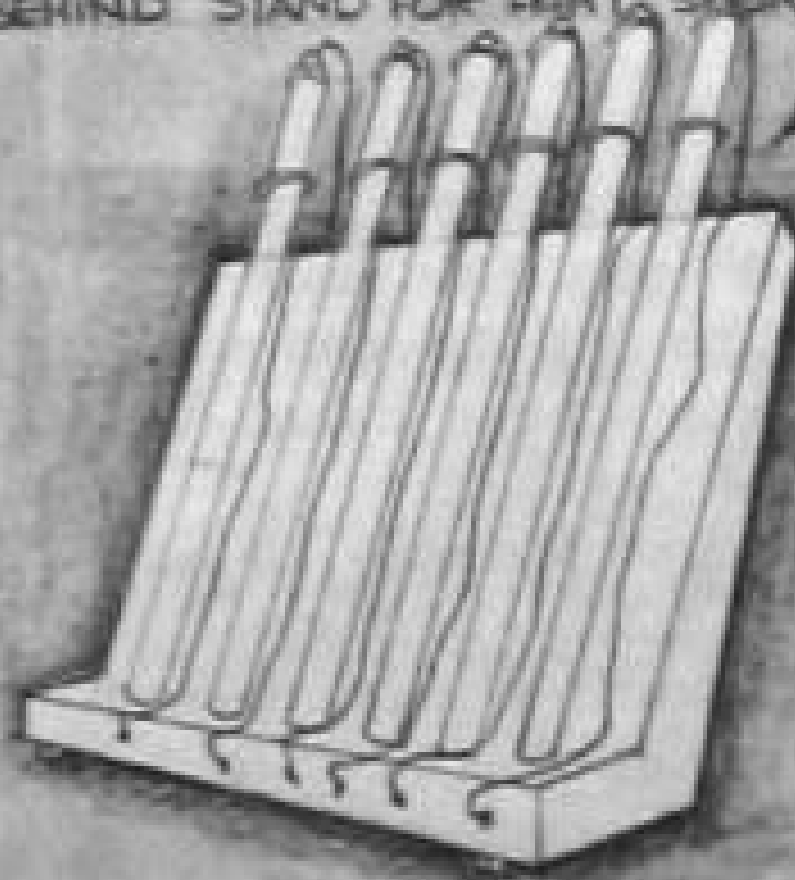
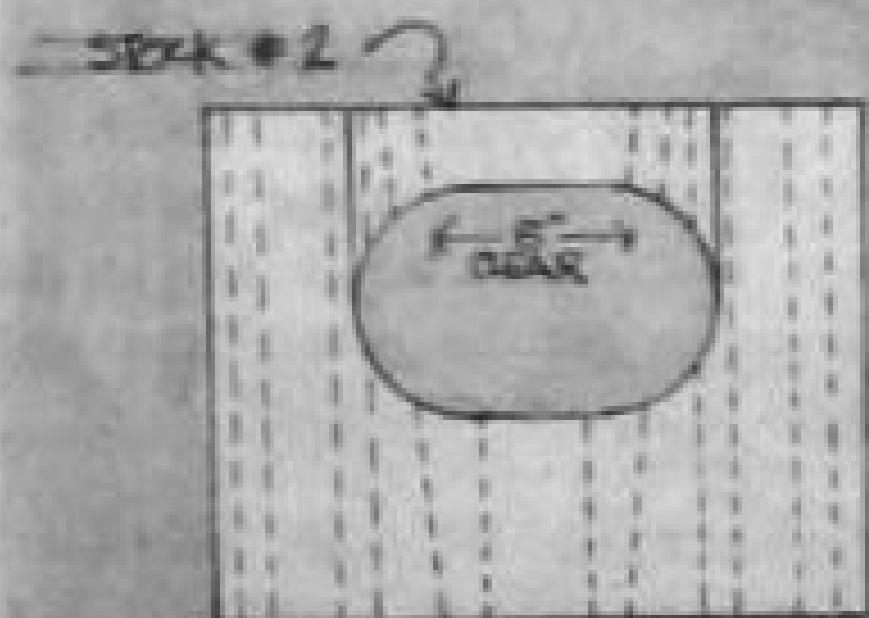
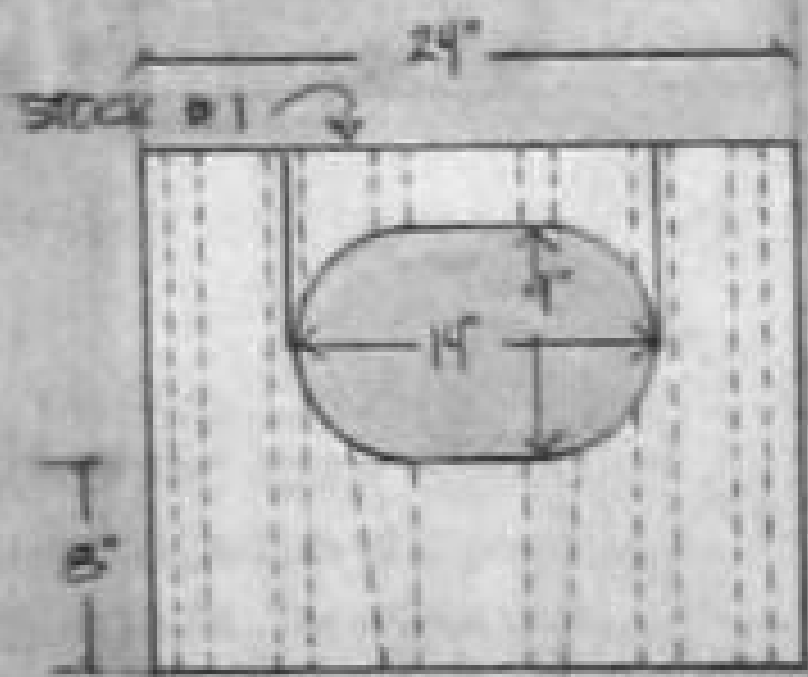


BACK ELEVATION

LADY ILUMA

DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE '83
SCALE 3/4" = 10" 10" = 10"

STOCK #1 IS SWITCHED FOR STOCK #2
BEHIND STAND FOR LIGHT SABRES



SKETCH SHOWS POSITION OF GIRL DURING PENETRATION

the Hade .e. TABLE LEVITATION



INTRODUCTION

The prolific Micky Hades has honored us with yet another miraculous idea! By combining his two most notable areas of expertise - magic tables and levitations - the Hade-E-Table was born. If you do a lot of family oriented shows, this could be just the thing for you. Thanks again, Micky.

EFFECT

"In an effort to get away from the stereotyped suspension and still have something simple to set up and perform, I have devised a rather peculiar piece of magical apparatus that has served me very well for quite a number of years. The unit described and illustrated was designed to 'levitate' a child so it would have to be enlarged if it were to be used for a full grown person. Initially, I used my children as participants. The suspension apparatus is designed to look like a typical magician's back table and, in fact, it is used throughout the act for that purpose. As the act progresses, the items are removed so that the table is clear for the levitation at the appropriate time. This is what the audience sees: A small boy is called on stage and he is placed facing the performer who makes several hypnotic passes over him. Slow, eerie music plays in the background as the performer continues to make hypnotic gestures over the boy. Suddenly the boy stiffens and falls backwards into the performer's arms. He is carried over to the table and set down gently on the table top. The performer continues to gesture hypnotically, the music picks up in tempo - louder, deeper, more exciting. More gestures, and the boy begins to rise up from the table.

The music builds up to a frenzy as the boy keeps rising then, **SUDDENLY**, a crash of cymbals - the table falls flat to the floor and, **JUST AS SUDDENLY**, the music stops and everything is frozen still. The boy remains suspended in mid-air, held up only by the apparent gesture of the performer. Slowly the music fades in again and the performer picks up a ring and passes it over the floating body several times to show that there is no support from above or below.

As the audience ponders this phenomenon, the performer gestures at the table on the floor and it starts to rise up obediently to its original position. Then the boy floats down to the table top whereupon the performer claps his hands and awakens the boy from his 'trance'. As the boy is taken off the table he is presented to the audience for a firm round of applause.

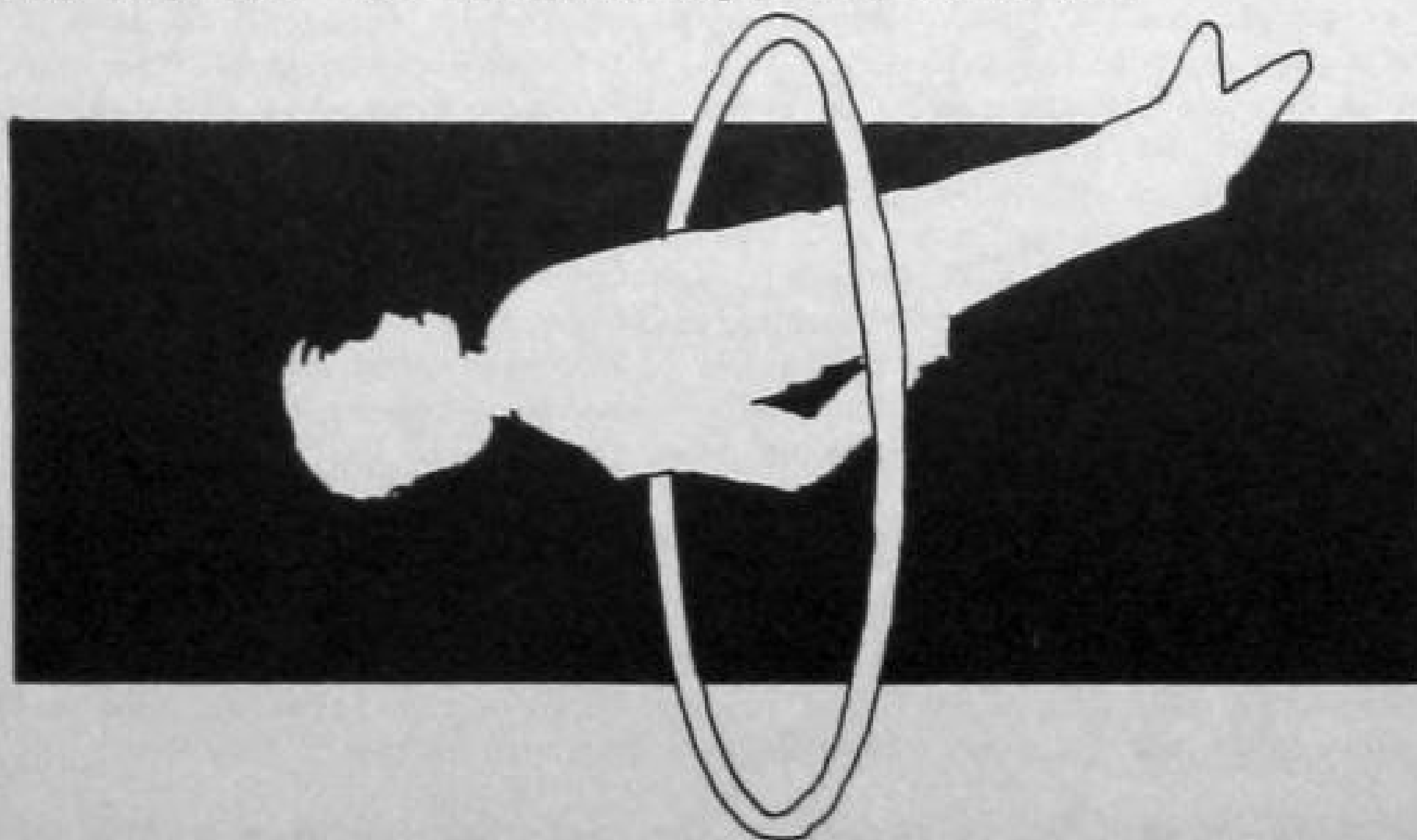
METHOD

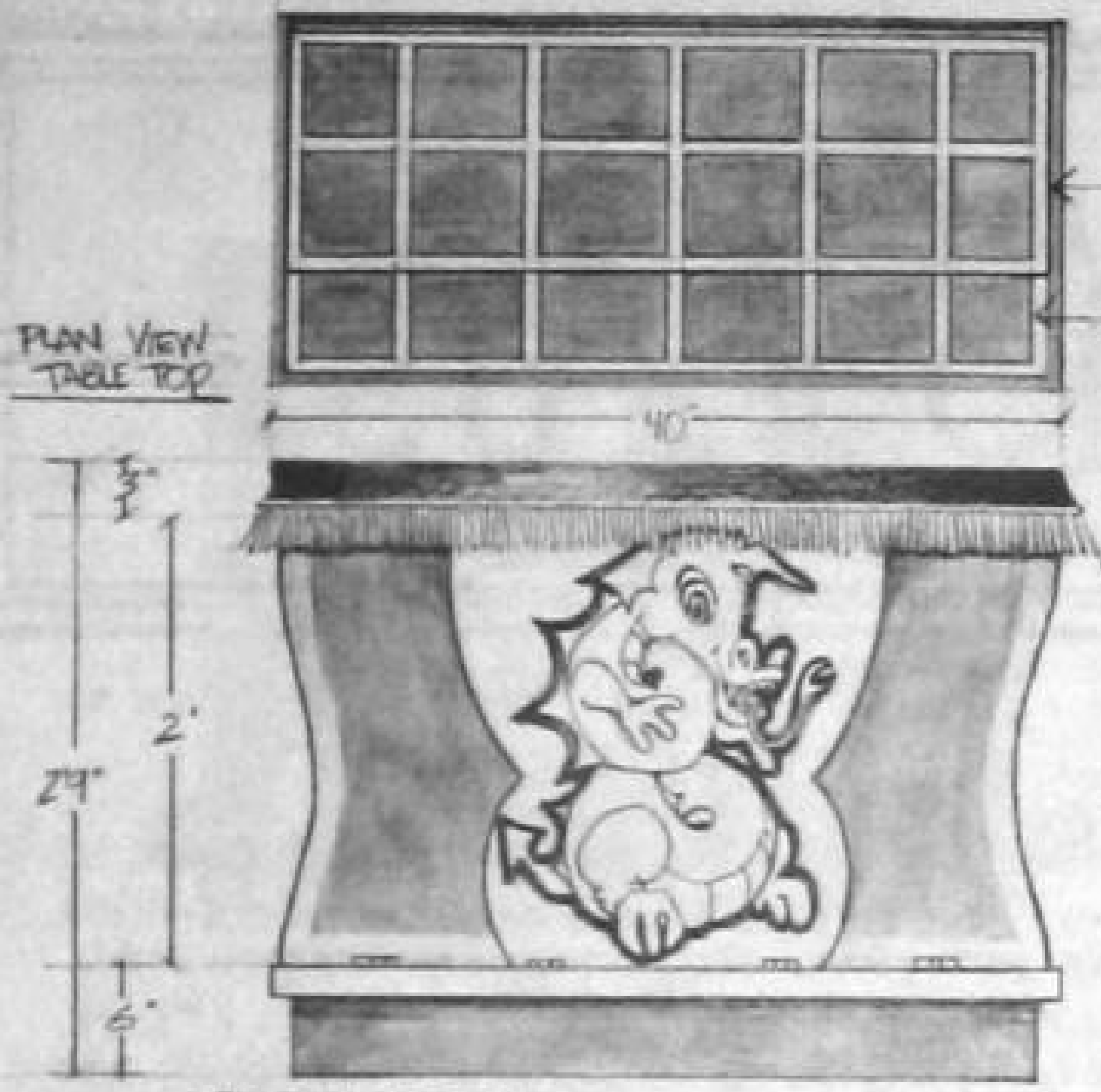
The boy is really an assistant planted in the audience, as it would be risky using an unrehearsed youngster. The table consists of a top and bottom and two hinged panels. Our front elevation gives the basic dimensions. Notice the panel with the dragon design on it is the front panel, behind it, the back panel. Both panels are hinged to the top and bottom with strong pin hinges. A cable connected to the front of the back panel, leading to a foot pedal collapses the table as in our bottom left drawing. A cable connected to the back of the front panel and to another foot pedal pulls the table back up into position, with the added muscle of the connecting spring hinges. Our bottom far right drawing shows this action. So much for the table raising and lowering.

The actual levitation of the boy is accomplished by the traditional method of a support bar running up behind the performer's leg. The support bar is shown best on our side elevation and in our bottom, middle shaded back view. Notice the support bar in relation to the foot pedals. The effect of the boy's initial levitating up and off the couch is accomplished by the magician leaning back with his leg against the support bar. This lifts the boy a few inches off the table before it collapses. The support bar is 'goose-necked' to permit hoop work. And attached to the support bar is the cradle, made from steel to accommodate the boy's body. Also, it's always a good idea to cover the bottom of the cradle with material matching the boy's clothing.

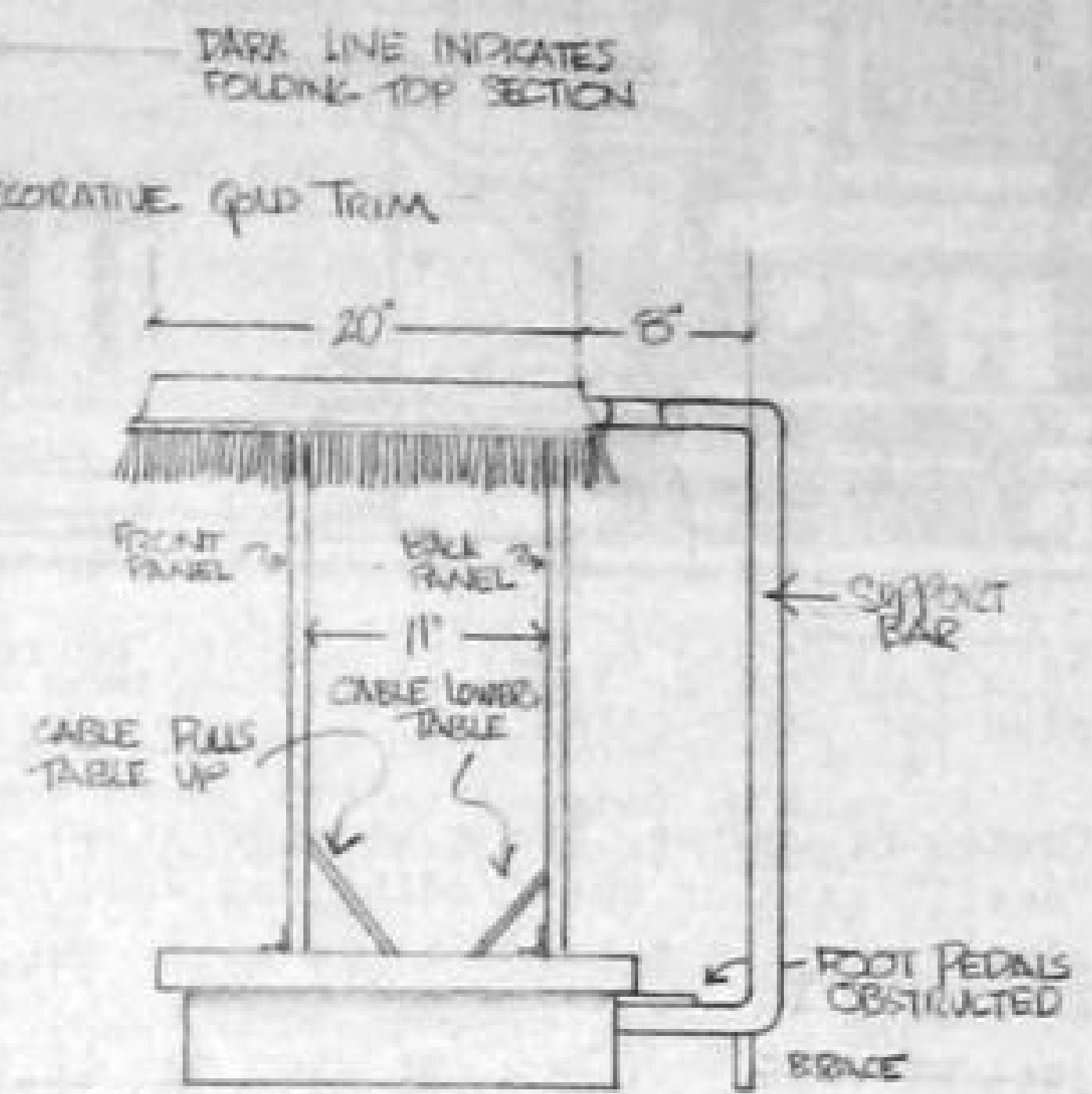
By using a nylon cord attached to the front of the back panel, the table top can lose some thickness to allow for the cradle. Because the table collapses, it is best the audience not be aware of this depth variance so the nylon cord allows the top to spring back into position and then again as the table rises up, the nylon cord pulls the top down to allow for the cradle. This folding top section action is shown in our sketch just below the title block."

As with all of Micky's ideas, this is an extremely clever twist on a standard levitation. Do yourself a favor and consider building and performing a unique illusion like this one. It's not something you see every day.





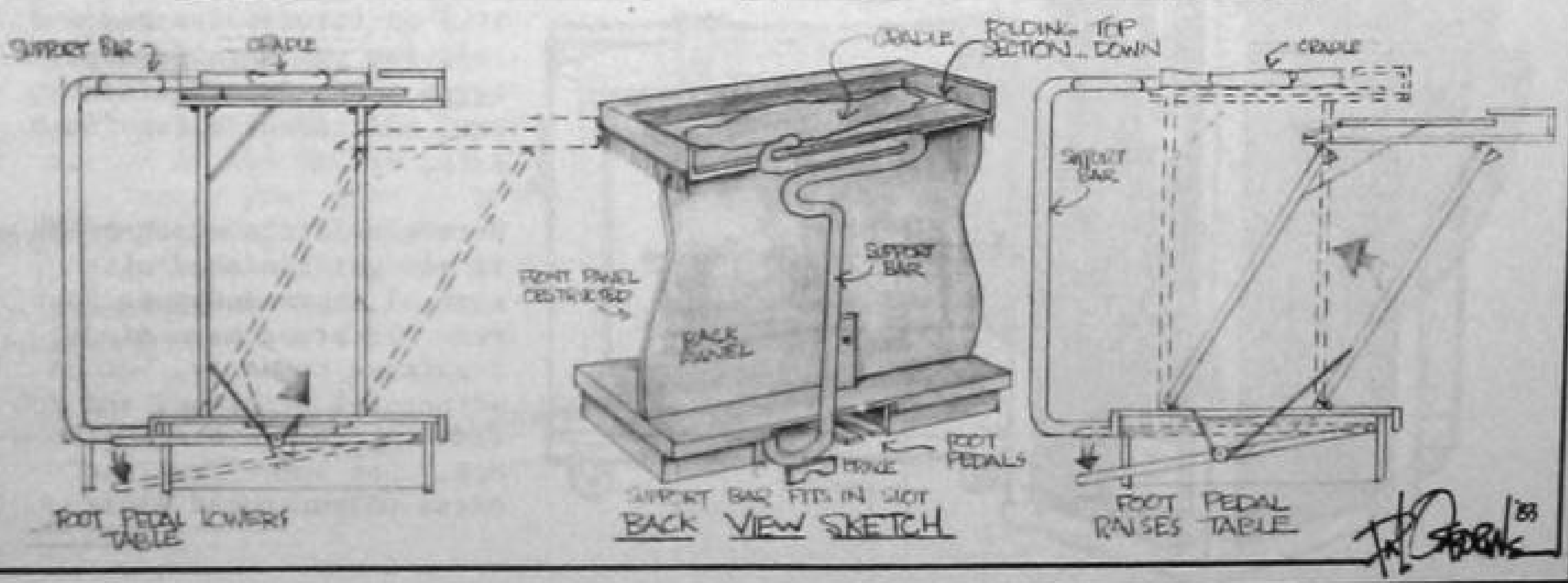
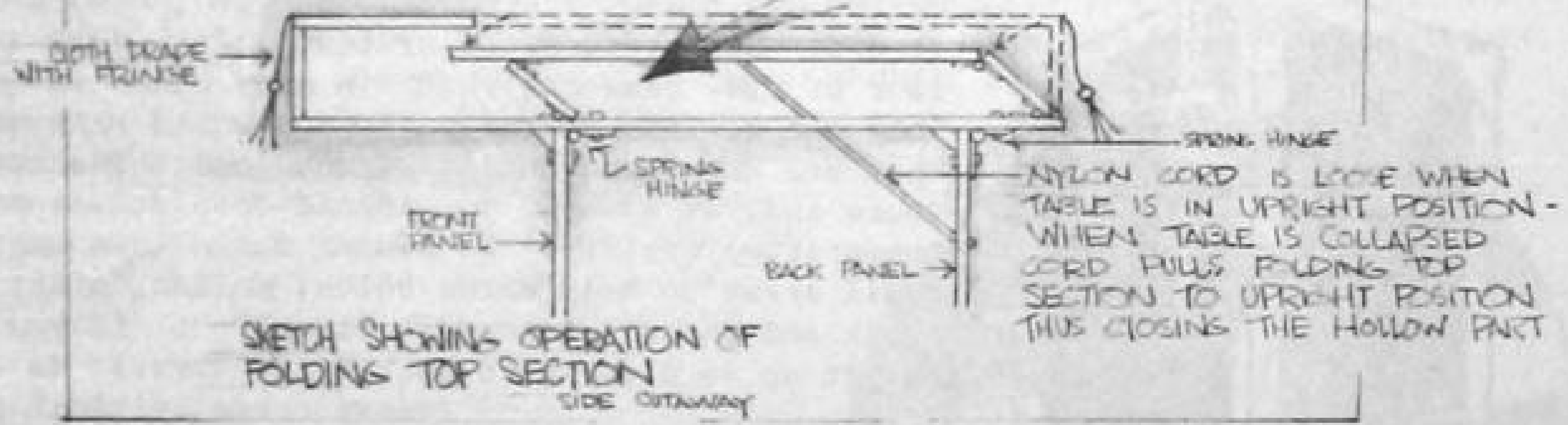
FRONT ELEVATION



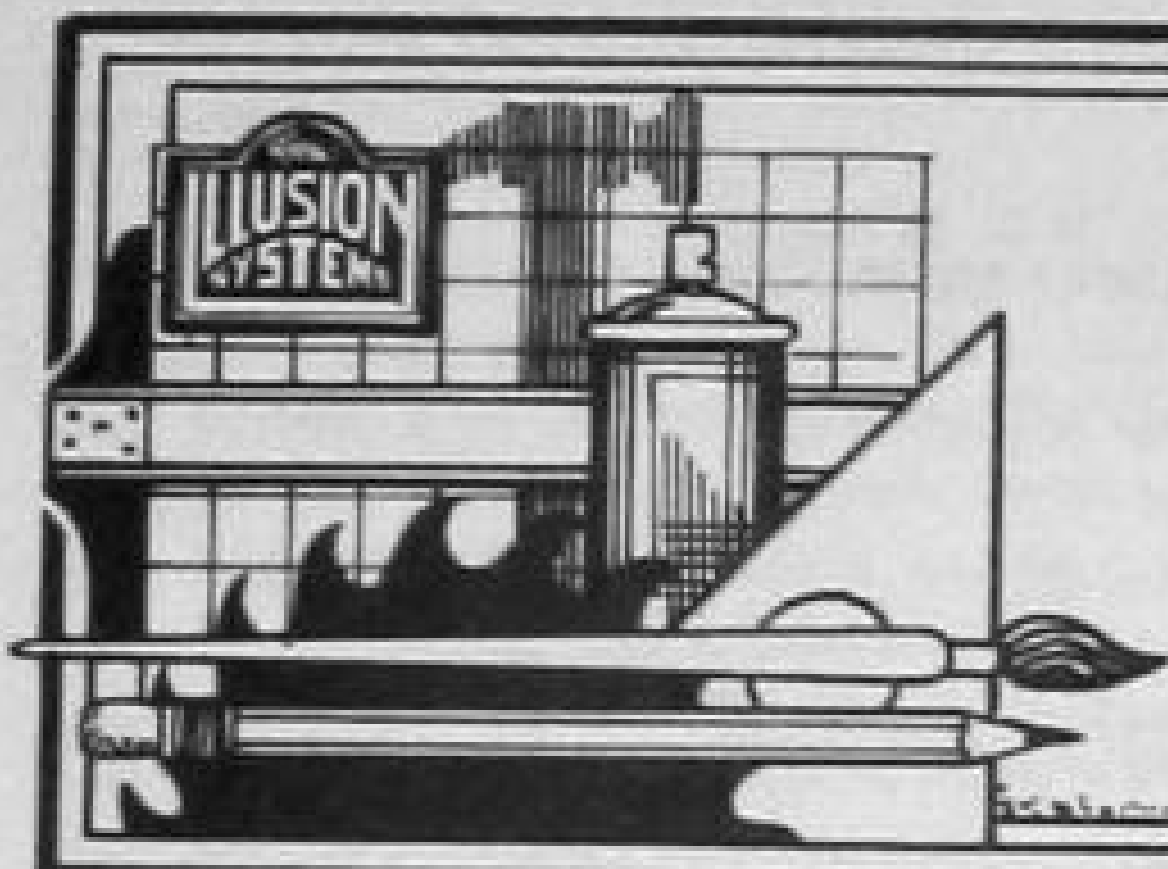
SIDE ELEVATION

THE HADE-E-TABLE LEVITATION

CREATED BY MICKY HADES
DESIGNED BY PAUL OSBORNE
SCALE 3/4" = 1'0" 1" = 1'0"



Handwritten signature and date: P. Osborne '83



AFTER THOUGHTS

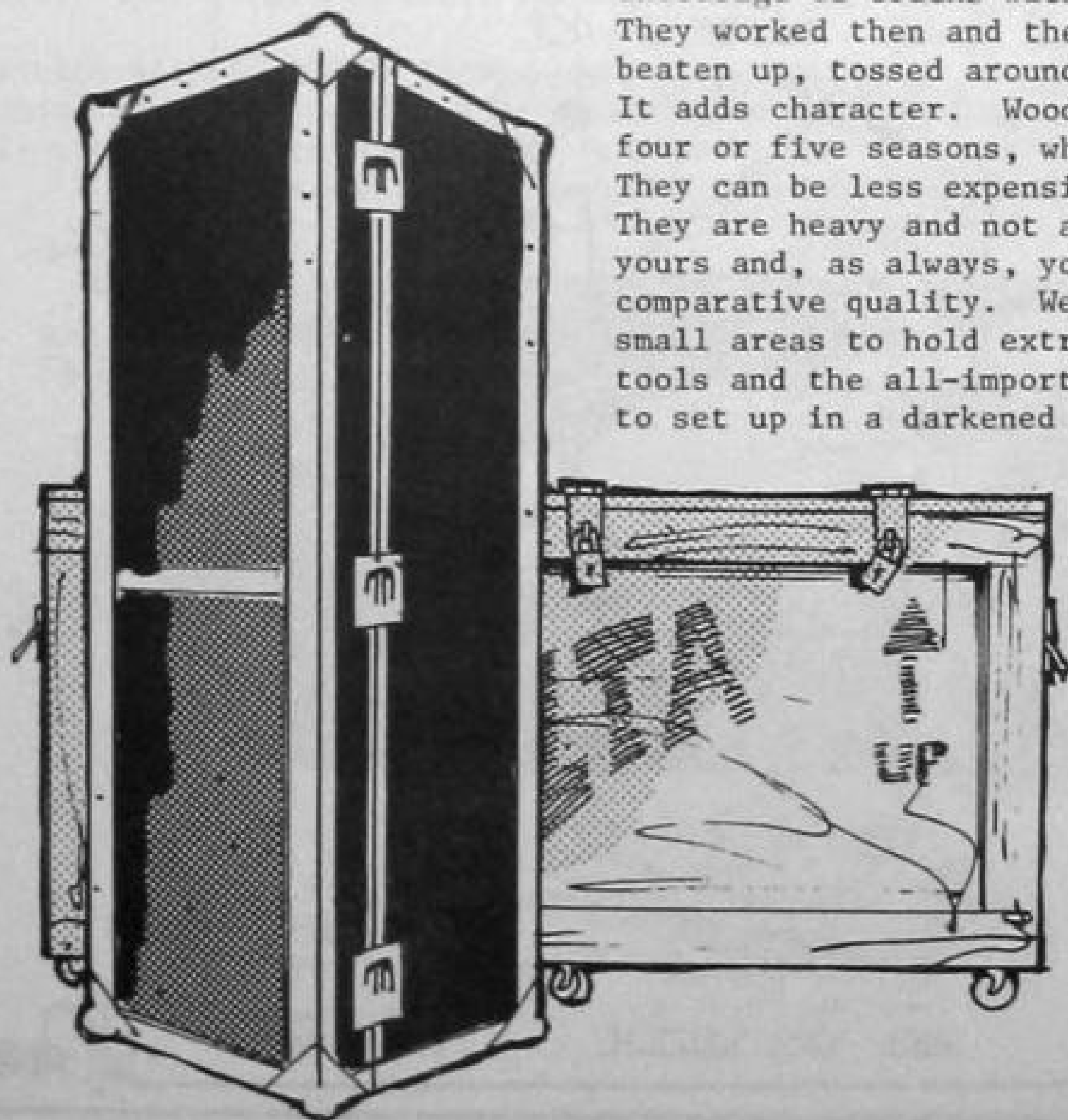
So now that you've built, bought, borrowed or stolen illusions, what better than to plan for their care?

Crates of course, are a consideration. There are basically two types; the fiber "Anvil" case or the traditional wood case. The fiber cases are beautiful, durable, almost air tight and will probably out live you. They are also expensive and must be custom ordered from any number of crate makers. You will feel as though you've just wrecked your new car when one of these babies comes back with a scratch on it. About the only word of warning I can give about fiber cases is that you should shop the prices. And if you decide to go this route, keep an eye on the inner foam lining most case makers use. It has a tendency to rot out after four or five years. This is extremely dangerous because when it begins to decompose, it will stick to your tightly packed prop. Once, when we were unpacking an illusion just to check it before shipping it to one of our shows, this had happened. I had to put two painters and four fans on double duty - so watch out. Wood crates have taken a back seat to the newer, slick cases, but I always enjoy seeing photos of Dante or Blackstone's

entourage of trucks with wood crates piled high. They worked then and they work now. If they get beaten up, tossed around or whatever - who cares? It adds character. Wood crates generally last us four or five seasons, which in many cases is enough. They can be less expensive if you build them yourself. They are heavy and not as streamlined. The choice is yours and, as always, you should shop prices and comparative quality. We always build into our crates small areas to hold extra bolts, polish, pins, minor tools and the all-important flashlight (if you have to set up in a darkened back stage area.) We also

carry extra critical parts, like additional latches and legs for the Thin Sawing, extra bulbs for the Shadow Box, additional clean flash pots, etc.

Here's a little quick trick if you get finished with several shows and your four year old props have minor scratches or dents, but no structural problems, and you want to freshen them up a bit. Get some "Tru-Test" clear polyurethane gloss



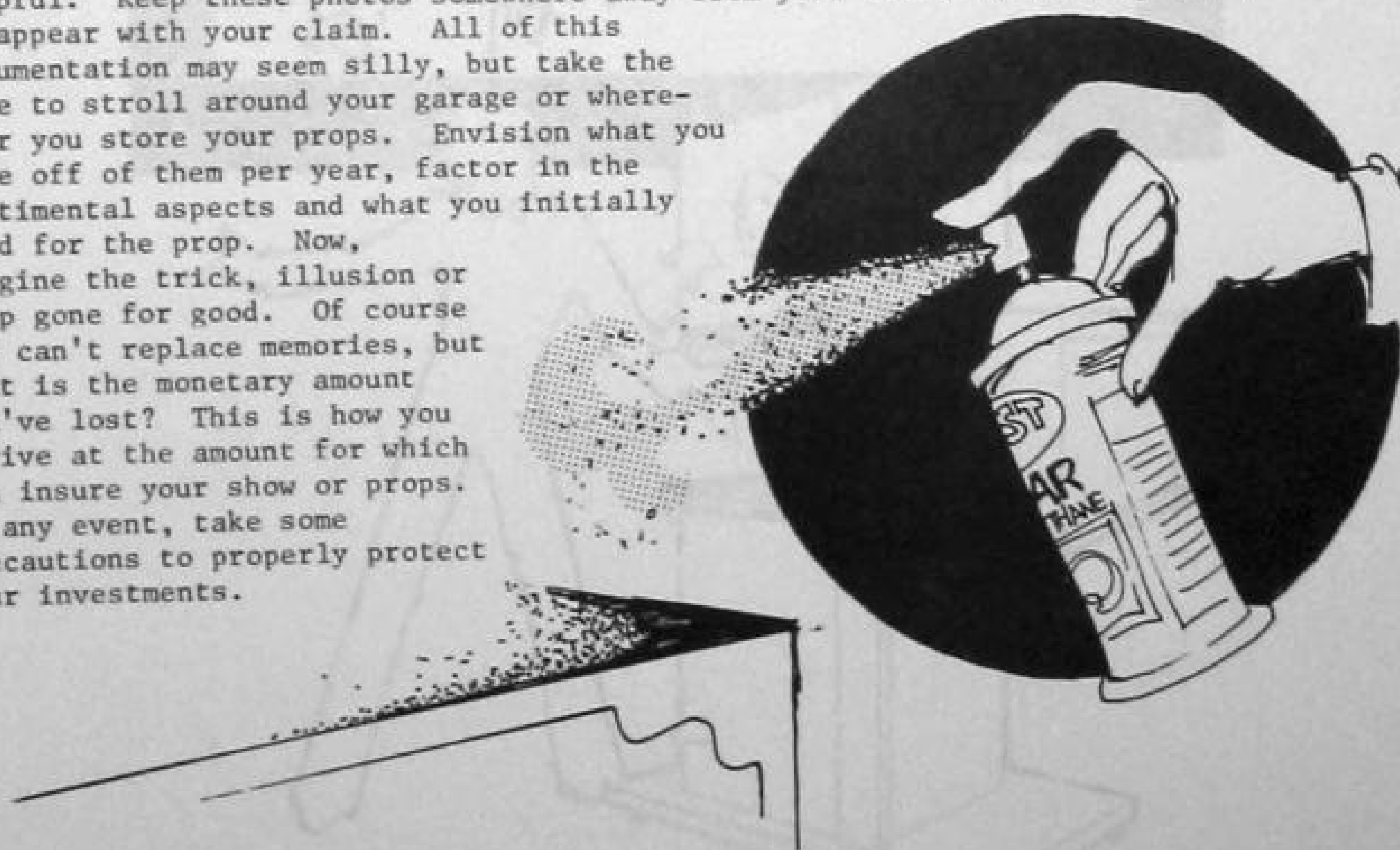


spray. Give 'em a shot and wait twenty-four hours. They'll look brand new and shiny and nobody will notice that scratch.

Finally, a topic associated with illusions that you don't hear much about...insurance. If you're a pro or you have invested a lot in your props, you should investigate protecting them. Be aware that they do "depreciate" and, in most cases, you will have a deductible. Also be aware that, although your props may be insured at your residence or office, they may not be covered at Joe's nightclub where you perform and have your props stored. Ask

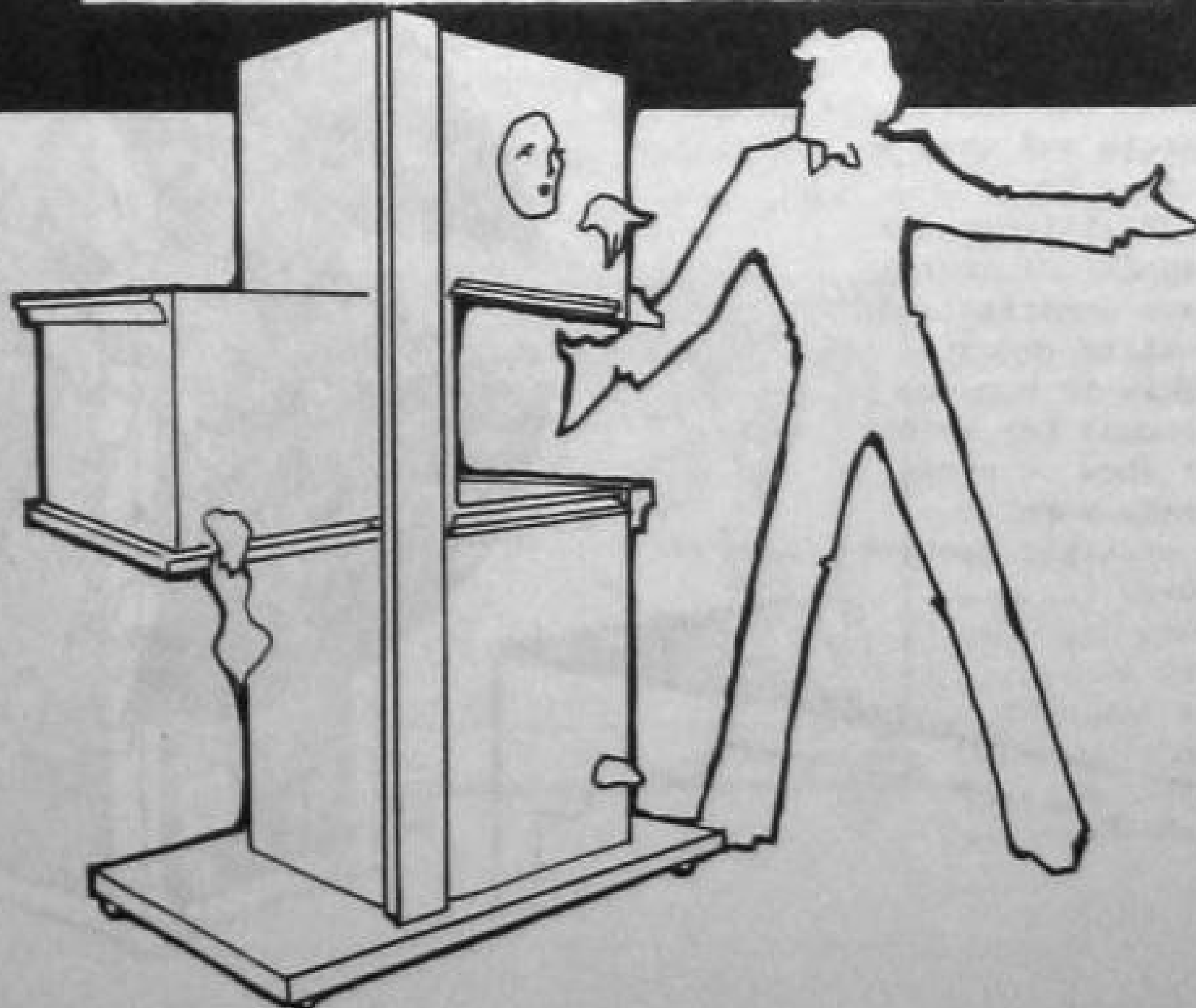
about a "rider" form which will protect your props wherever they may be. Get specifics on what conditions could cause you not to collect on your claim. Fire? Flood? In short, ask questions and see to it that your props are treated with the same respect your other valuables are.

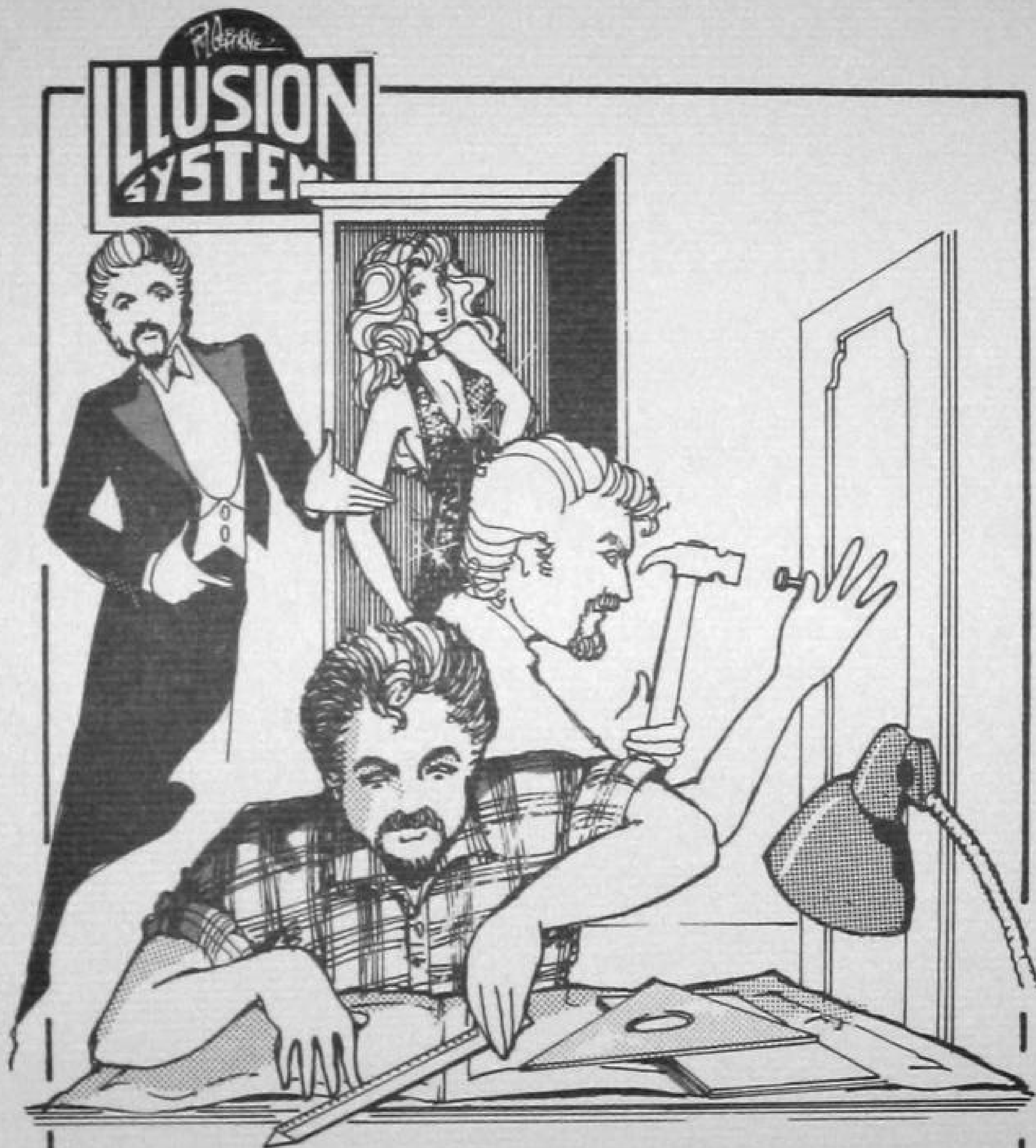
Also coming under the heading of insurance is consideration, on your part, of who you select to transport your illusions. Is it your brother-in-law with the truck, a commercial mover or an air freight company? You'll want to find out if your shipper assumes any liability. Does he carry insurance on your belongings? Under what conditions are you not covered? You'll want to select a carrier you trust to take the best care of your props. It's also a good idea to maintain a separate file of Polaroids of the props, costumes and scenery from your show. Should you get into a court squabble, photos of the damaged or missing props are always most helpful. Keep these photos somewhere away from your illusions so they won't disappear with your claim. All of this documentation may seem silly, but take the time to stroll around your garage or wherever you store your props. Envision what you make off of them per year, factor in the sentimental aspects and what you initially paid for the prop. Now, imagine the trick, illusion or prop gone for good. Of course you can't replace memories, but what is the monetary amount you've lost? This is how you arrive at the amount for which you insure your show or props. In any event, take some precautions to properly protect your investments.



No book on illusions would be complete without expressing thanks to those performers who have recently brought these large props to the fore: Blackstone, Jr., Mark Wilson, Siegfried & Roy, Doug Henning and David Copperfield, just to name a few. Thanks must also go to Bill & Irene Larsen for publishing our ideas every month... To Mark Wilson for the "initial breath of life".. the wonderful contributors who took the time to share and finally, to my wife, Michelle. Now that #III is finished...we're going to dinner!

Handwritten signature: J. S. SPORNE '83





Plans and publications
for the
professional illusionist

