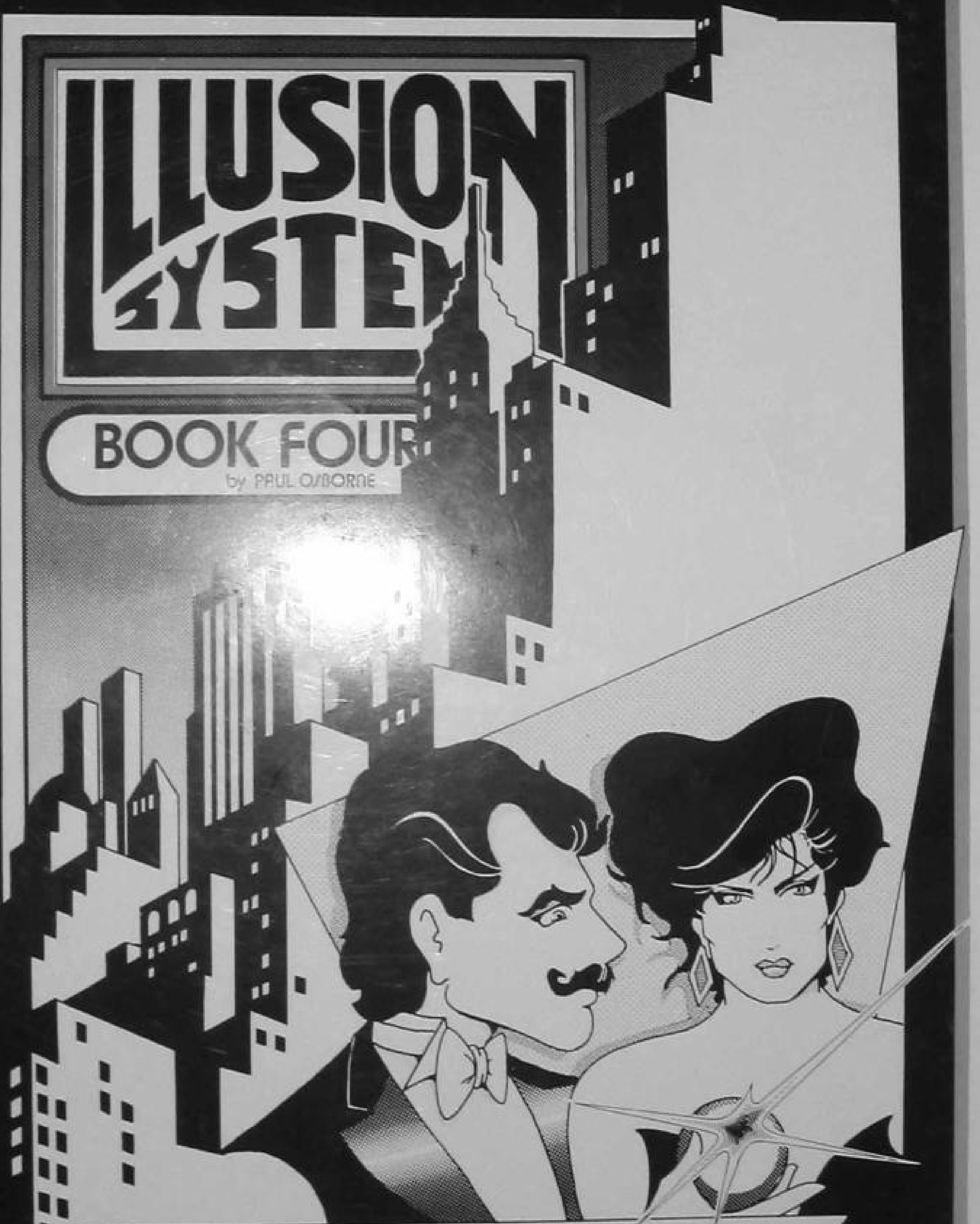


# ILLUSION SYSTEM

BOOK FOUR

by PAUL OSBORNE



with a foreword by DAVID COPPERFIELD

OSBORNE



# BOOK FOUR

written & illustrated by  
**PAUL OSBORNE**

with photos by  
**MICHELLE CHIANELLI**





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FOUR

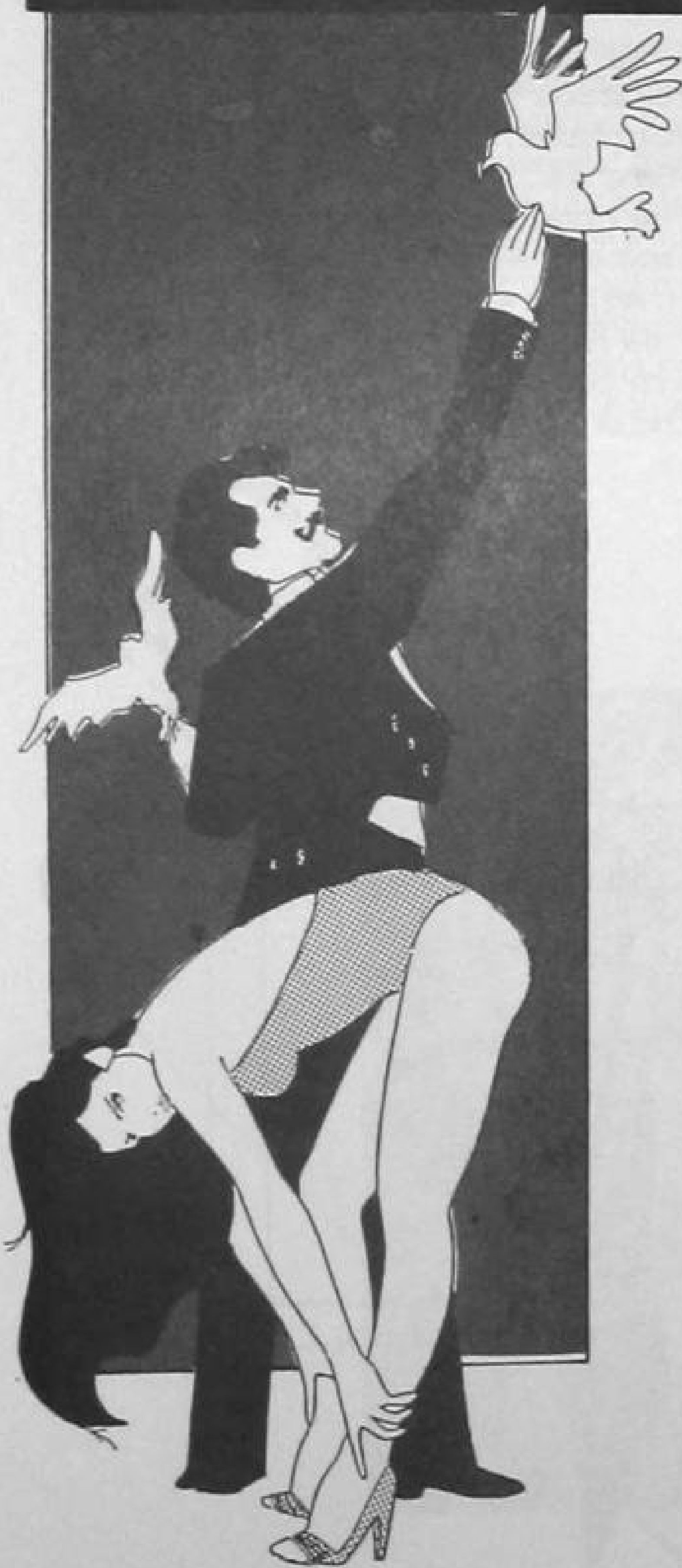
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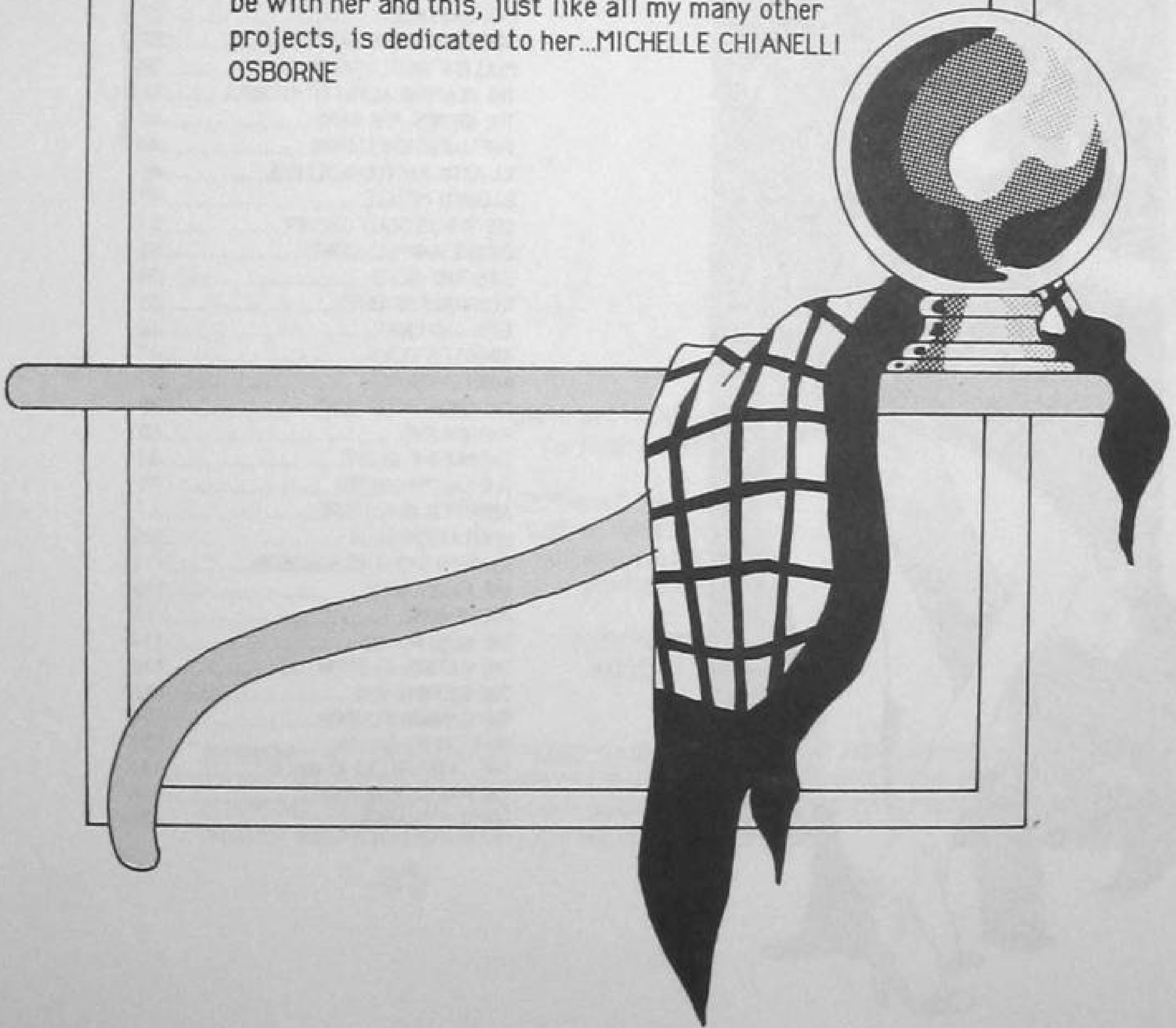
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The most important day in my life was the day I met my wife, Michelle. She helps me coordinate our many projects, she is our bookkeeper, photographer, choreographer, critic and idea collaborator. Her support is the light at the end of the tunnel and keeps me going when I don't think I can anymore. We are together 24 hours a day at work, travel, fun and play. Those of you who know her know how fortunate I am to be with her and this, just like all my many other projects, is dedicated to her...MICHELLE CHIANELLI OSBORNE



Paul Osborne began his magical career at an early age with a magic kit from Mark Wilson. Since those formative days, Paul has managed to mix his other interests in art and small business into a most unusual career. Paul's most dreaded question at a diner party is the well meaning "what do you do for a living?"

Paul and Michelle Osborne operate several successful small businesses out of their home, from publishing to radio programming to amusement park shows to oil and gas exploration. Paul's magical ideas often come from this unique mixture of interests..."I don't think anyone can be creative who doesn't enjoy life, you have to take it all in and use your new found knowledge. Life should be variety, life should be fun, life should be stimulating and it is, but what we aren't taught is that we have to motivate ourselves, nobody is going to do it for us." Paul and Michelle Osborne are always on the go and they make life exciting for themselves and anybody else that happens to be around them.



# INTRODUCTION



So much has happened since I published Book III. I was shocked to find that I completed that publication in 1983. Three years ago! Book Four is my biggest publishing endeavor...more pages...more photos...more art...no wonder it's taken so long!

I am excited to include the thoughts and ideas of many of my amusement park show managers. They offer ideas that are practical down to the last working detail. They are to be listened to because they live with as many as six and seven shows a day in many of our nation's leading theme and amusement parks. I will always insist that parks are the best way to hone your craft and talent. I am honored, as of this date, to be the nation's leading supplier of shows to the amusement park industry. The managers that we work with are experienced, seasoned professionals that can offer literally hours of ideas, suggestions and tips. My only regret is that, due to space, I have to edit their comments. There is so much good material that comes from these guys and gals in the field. They are part of Michelle's and my family and I know that by the conclusion of this book you too will realize how special they are!

1986 also marks a period of time when I think the most important book on professional magic performing has been published. Joan Rivers' "Enter Talking" has finally bridged the gap between the professional performer and their environment. Yes, I have to recommend this book before "Tarbel", "Greater Magic" and "The Jarrett Book". Her book is for the performer who deep down inside wants to make it. It's not for the hobbyist or the part time magician. Her case may be extreme, but I've seen many a good performer discouraged. This book will make you strong.

I couldn't be more thrilled to have David Copperfield's thoughts as a foreword to this publication. For me David is the future of magic. If you've seen him in person you know that he has a special command over his audience that few performers, let alone magicians, have. Since Richiardi, David is the first to bring a concept to magic, he doesn't just do tricks, but rather he concentrates on the overall approach of his impact on the audience as a performer. I admire him greatly also because of his approach to his own career. He is in full control, unlike most performers. He does not surround himself with any of the needless trappings some people think they must have in order to run a successful business. He is responsible and manages his own career. If his tour comes near you, go see him. There is a lot you can learn from the way he does things and I think his upcoming words are informative and inspirational.

The thing that is so exciting to me about the eighties is that we are finally entering an era that encourages you to do what you want to do. There are many people making a comfortable living in magic now. You no longer have to become a lawyer, accountant or insurance salesman unless you really want to. You can become a magician if you want to! At long last magic is becoming a career in many aspects from consulting to publishing to building to performing. If you are considering some form of magic as a profession, approach it with dedication, good sense and above all, focus on your career and don't let anyone tell you that you can't do what you set out to do. I sincerely hope that in some small way our products, publications, thoughts and ideas will help your career. I hope we force you to do something different or try a new approach...take a chance, that's what life is all about!

Finally, I want to address what I think is still the most important issue in magic today. Creativity, specifically yours. Magic is such a wonderful profession to be in to exercise creativity. Creative accountants can face a jail term but in magic anything is possible. I mean, think about it; a magician is supposed to be able to do anything. By the nature of our profession the sky is the limit. Do yourself a favor and in your next show find a new way of performing an effect or debut your own creation. Magic will always be filled with "wonder" so let's take some of our time on this world and fill it with "newness".









# FOREWORD

## David Copperfield

The following foreword is a collection of thoughts derived from conversations I had with David Copperfield. He discusses his inspirations, his goals and his love for magic. We thought it would make a fitting foreword to this, our fourth illusion book:

"When I was a child I would take the bus to New York and sneak into all of the Broadway shows during intermission. Relating all that I saw on Broadway to magic, I realized that magic could go a few steps further than it was at the time. Magic was lacking design - not only in the look, but also in the music and staging.

Everything I saw made me wonder, 'How can I use this?' I even related my magic to movies. Especially Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly movies. Studying Fred Astaire films I realized that he popularized dancing when it wasn't that big. Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly brought dancing to the public's attention because they combined beautiful visuals with a story that people could relate to and music that people enjoyed.

Magic was analogous to dancing for me because it shared that same low public interest. I felt magic needed to be enhanced before it gained in popularity. All of my time was spent working toward that in my own performance. When I felt ready I did everything possible to promote myself. Putting an ad in *Variety* I landed the lead in the 'Magic Man', a musical in Chicago.

For nearly a year after the 'Magic Man' closed I starved in New York.

Every day I knocked on doors, at night I couldn't sleep. I was subletting an apartment from two actresses who had a great record collection. They had everything from the Classics to Broadway musicals. All night staying up and listening to these records I put together an act in my mind. Dreaming and listening to Gershwin's 'An American In Paris', I thought it would make great levitation music. My 1950's routine came from that period because of the 'American Grafitti' album. That was a very formulative time in my career.

Often I'm asked what comes first when I write a routine, the music or the magic. If you would have asked songwriting teams such as Rogers and Hammerstein or Lennon and McCartney which came first, the music or the lyrics, they would tell you, 'There are no rules.' It's the same with magic. The attic routine was created because I wanted to do the DeKolta Chair illusion. Because it's an impractical illusion to perform on most stages, I combined it with another illusionary principle. In order to justify placing the chair on a table, we set the routine in an attic. The illusion came first and the routine and music followed.

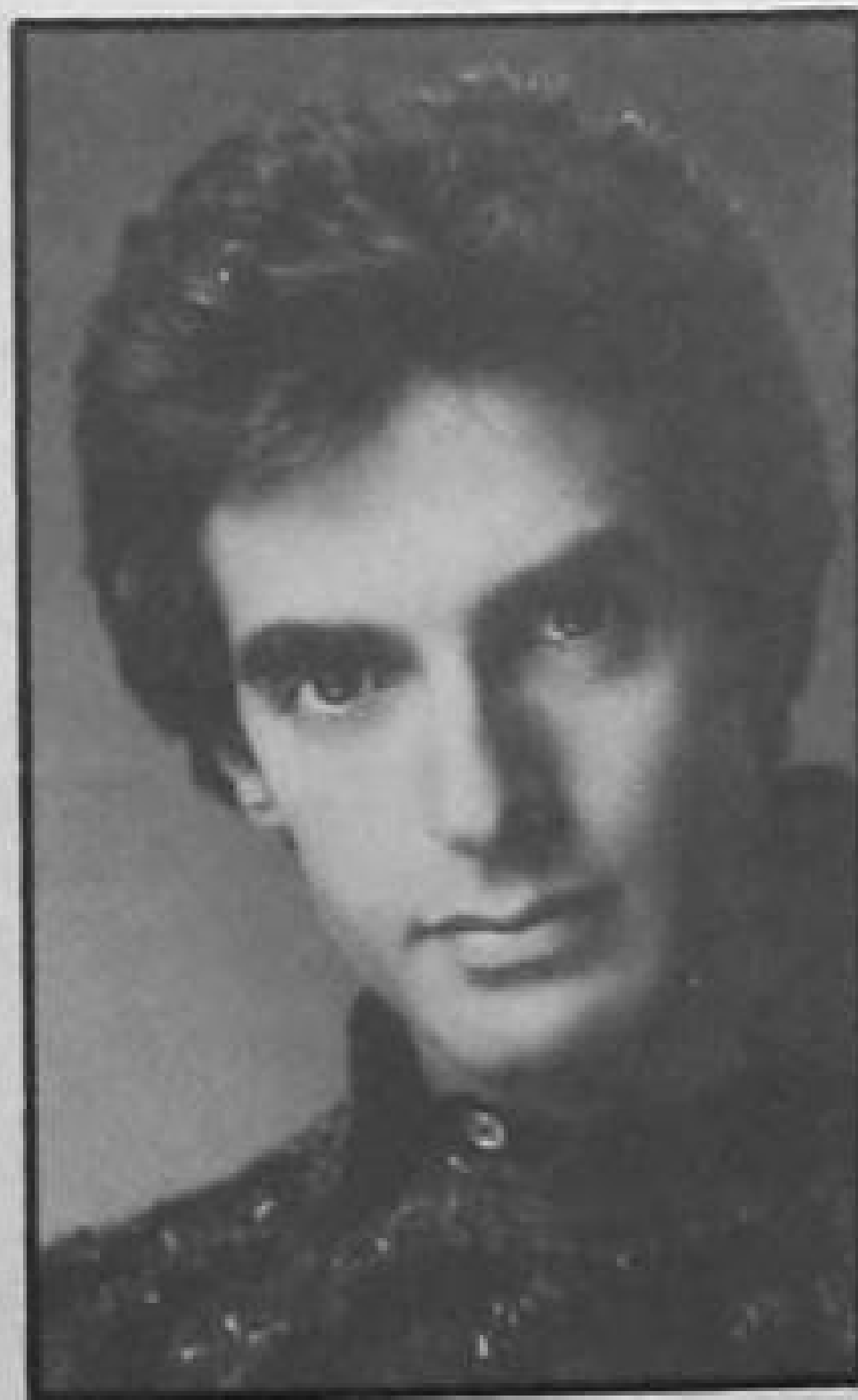
The Gershwin Levitation we perform was developed 'music first'. Listening to 'An American In Paris' I developed the routine around the music. Sometimes a magical method will dictate a routine. Christien Fechner, a renowned French film producer and creator of magic came to me with a method of having a girl 'cut in two' upside down. Don Wayne and I took that concept and created the Laser Cutting illusion in which we cut Catherine Bach in six pieces upside down.

The story numbers we create are important to my style of magic. The illusions are used to advance and complement the story. When Agnes De Mille did 'Oklahoma!' she was the first person to have dance progress the story. Normally, dance was in the middle of the story just to add color. The same thing can happen in magic. Magic can do more than just add color. Magical metaphors are what we look for when we do this type of presentation. We've used magic to solve problems, such as when a child loses a pet or two loves separate. For my last special set in China, an old man's bike gets destroyed. I restored it to help solve his problem.

Magic can also make a statement. The Statue of Liberty and Great Wall of China illusions were socially and politically symbolic. Vanishing the Statue of Liberty was meant to be a lesson in freedom, demonstrating how we take our freedom for granted. By taking away the most important symbol of freedom that we have, I hoped to show how much we would miss it. China is finally opening her doors to the rest of the world. Walking through the Great Wall, a structure that once kept people apart, symbolizes that there are no walls between friends.

Magic will continue to grow in popularity as long as we all continue to do good work. Like any art form we need leadership, collaboration and innovation. Music is popular because there are so many artists creating new material. They aren't so likely to limit themselves to what's been done before. Rules have held art forms back. If the musicians of today had the limitations that magicians place on themselves, we wouldn't have innovative and socially significant works from the likes of the Beatles, Phil Collins or Billy Joel. Music wouldn't be so popular, making such a lasting mark and generating so much excitement.

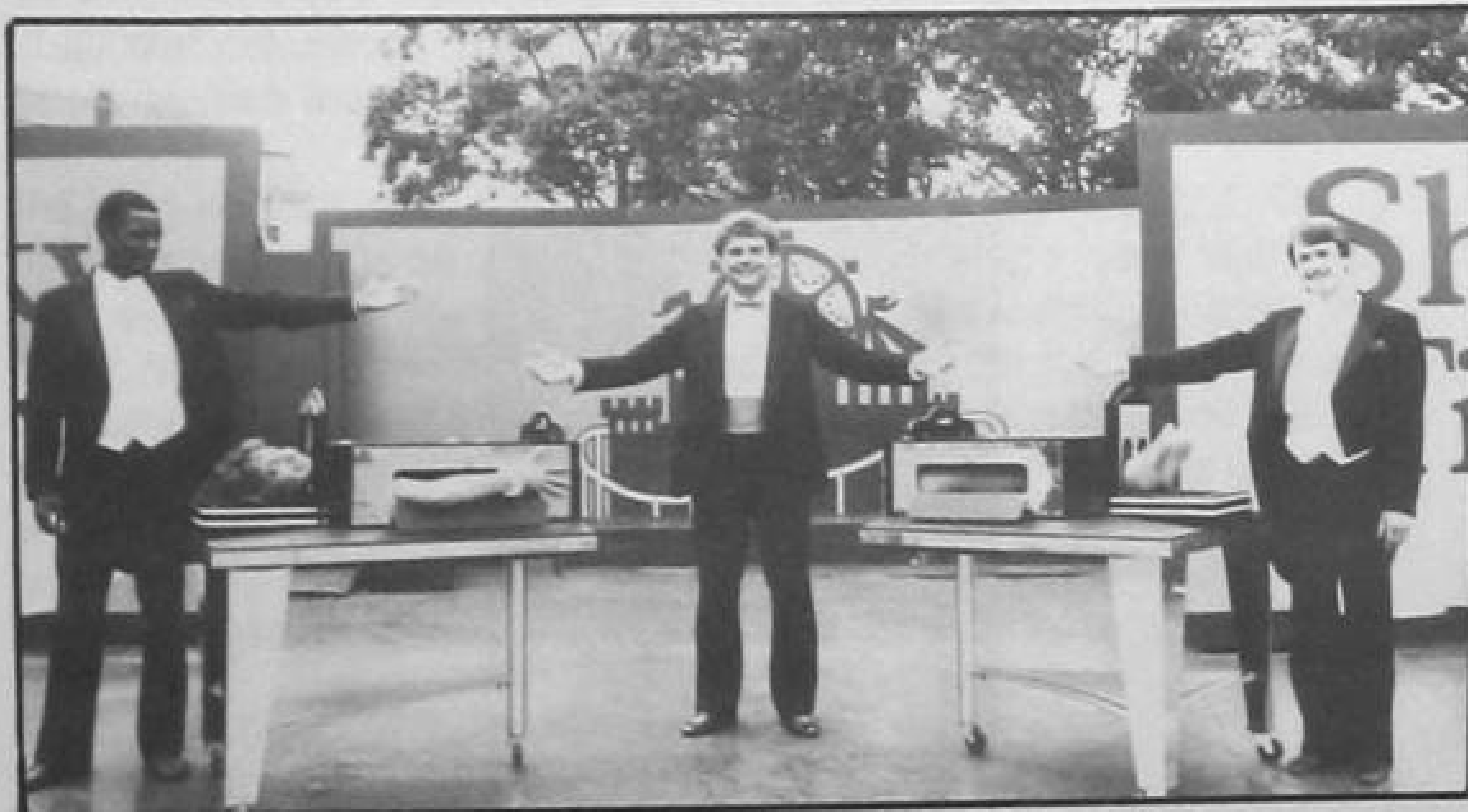
As magicians, we need to search for new principles, new ways of performing and new ways to amaze and entertain. Magic has come a long way and it has long way to go. I'm excited about its future.

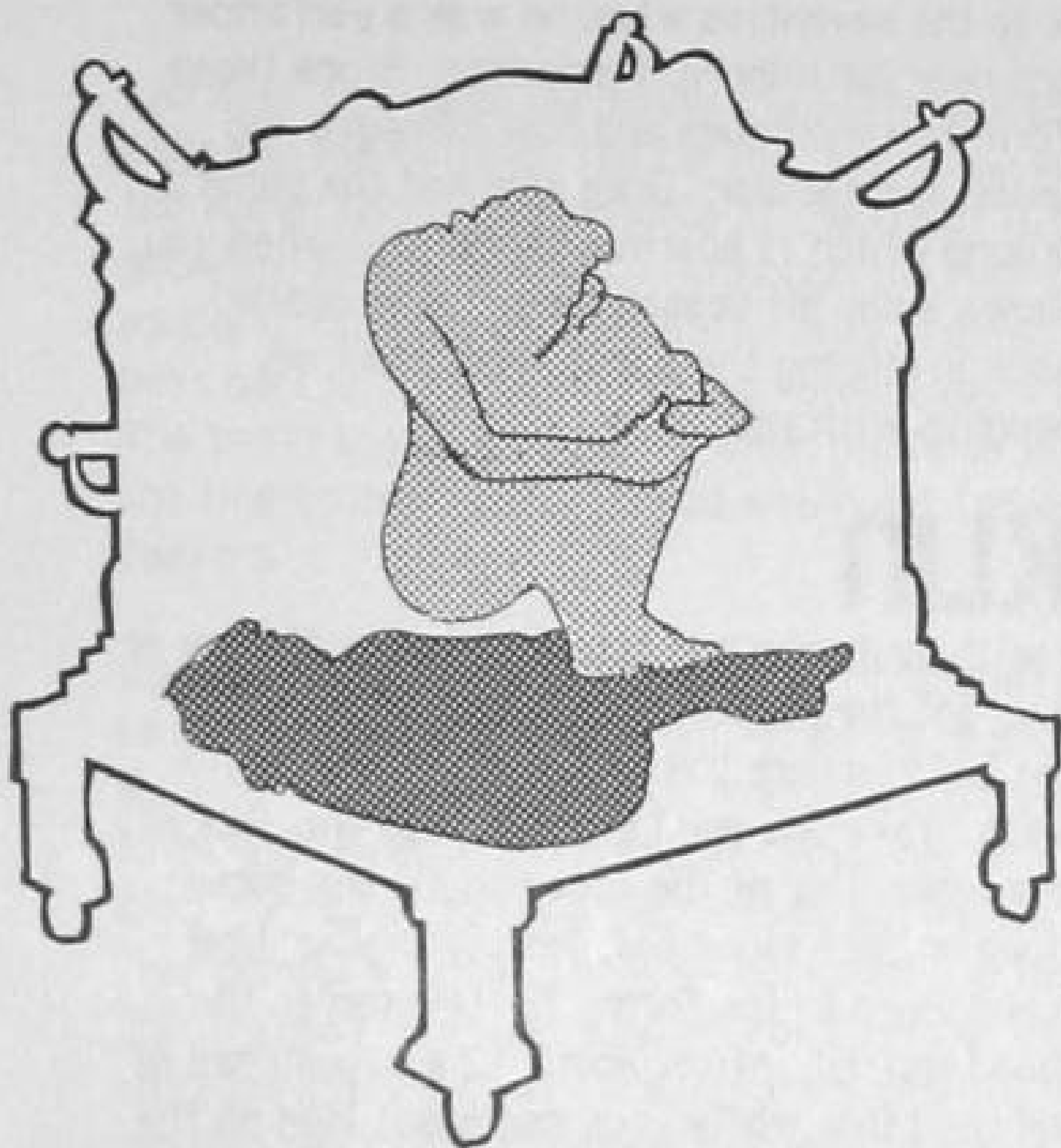


# TIPS & IDEAS

Our amusement park performers are Michelle's and my family. We're always so proud of the progress we see over the typical park season in all of our entertainers, from magicians to singers and dancers. As many of you know, we hire more magicians than anybody to perform in and manage our shows literally around the world. I am particularly excited to have some of our magician/managers contributing to our fourth book. We are putting them under the banner of "Tips and Ideas" and I hope you enjoy their thoughts.

Mark Tripp is one of the most knowledgeable magicians I have ever met. He has told me ways of performing illusions, stage, and close up magic with so many unique twists that I really envy his magical mind. I have encouraged Mark to write down and sell books with his concepts, write columns, go to conventions, do lectures...the whole thing. He has so much to contribute to magic that presently I feel as though Mark is conjuring's best kept secret. But, I feel certain that is going to change and you'll hear a lot more about Mark Tripp. Mark is shown below performing The Thin Sawing in one of our parks in New England. Although Mark has given me literally hundreds of ideas, the one I am particularly fond of is the one he added to our show. I am always interested in new and better ways of performing illusions. Owen's makes a prop called "The Enchanted Temple". We had planned to use one in the show Mark was managing and look what he came up with!....





## MARK TRIPP

In the Owen's "Enchanted Temple" the standard effect is that a small Oriental temple is shown and an ornate, carved Buddah is placed in the obviously empty temple. Swords are inserted and the temple is again shown to be empty...the Buddah has vanished! The prop is revolved to show all sides and suddenly all the sides drop and up stands your beautiful assistant! This is a great

effect but there are some problems. To perform the illusion outside, sometimes the wind picks up and because it is a rubber Buddah, movement can be detected. Plus, we wanted something fast and flashier to suit our performance style. So the double girl method was born. In our version, one girl is loaded into the base and the other into the the cabinet itself, sides are folded back up into position and the swords are carefully inserted into the cabinet, missing the girl.

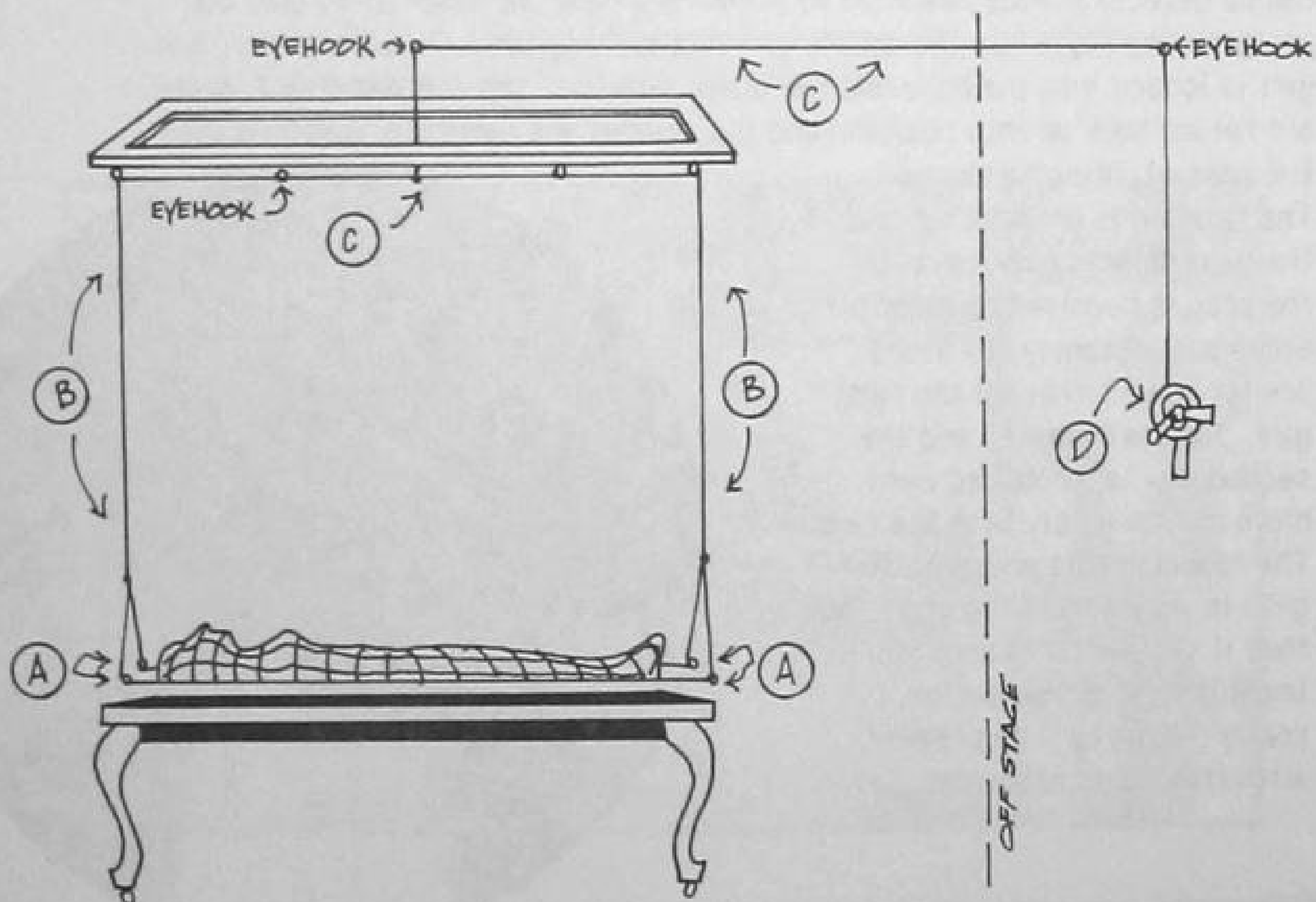
The illusion is brought out and the swords are removed, then the prop is revolved to show all sides and instantly the sides are let down to reveal the first girl. This is repeated and the second girl is produced even more mysteriously than the first. The reaction this presentation gets is very gratifying and I hope that if you own this prop you'll try this new presentation, I really think you'll be pleased with the crowd response.



Greg Franklin and I go way back to the seventies when he was a performer in one of our smaller productions near Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Since those days Greg has polished his performing techniques and now manages and stars in a giant theme park illusion spectacular. Greg also has the benefit of having a woodworking background which is enormously helpful when you are performing illusions five shows a day all season long. I was really impressed with Greg's innovations in rigging the Asrah form and I am proud to be able to share his thoughts with you:

## GREG FRANKLIN

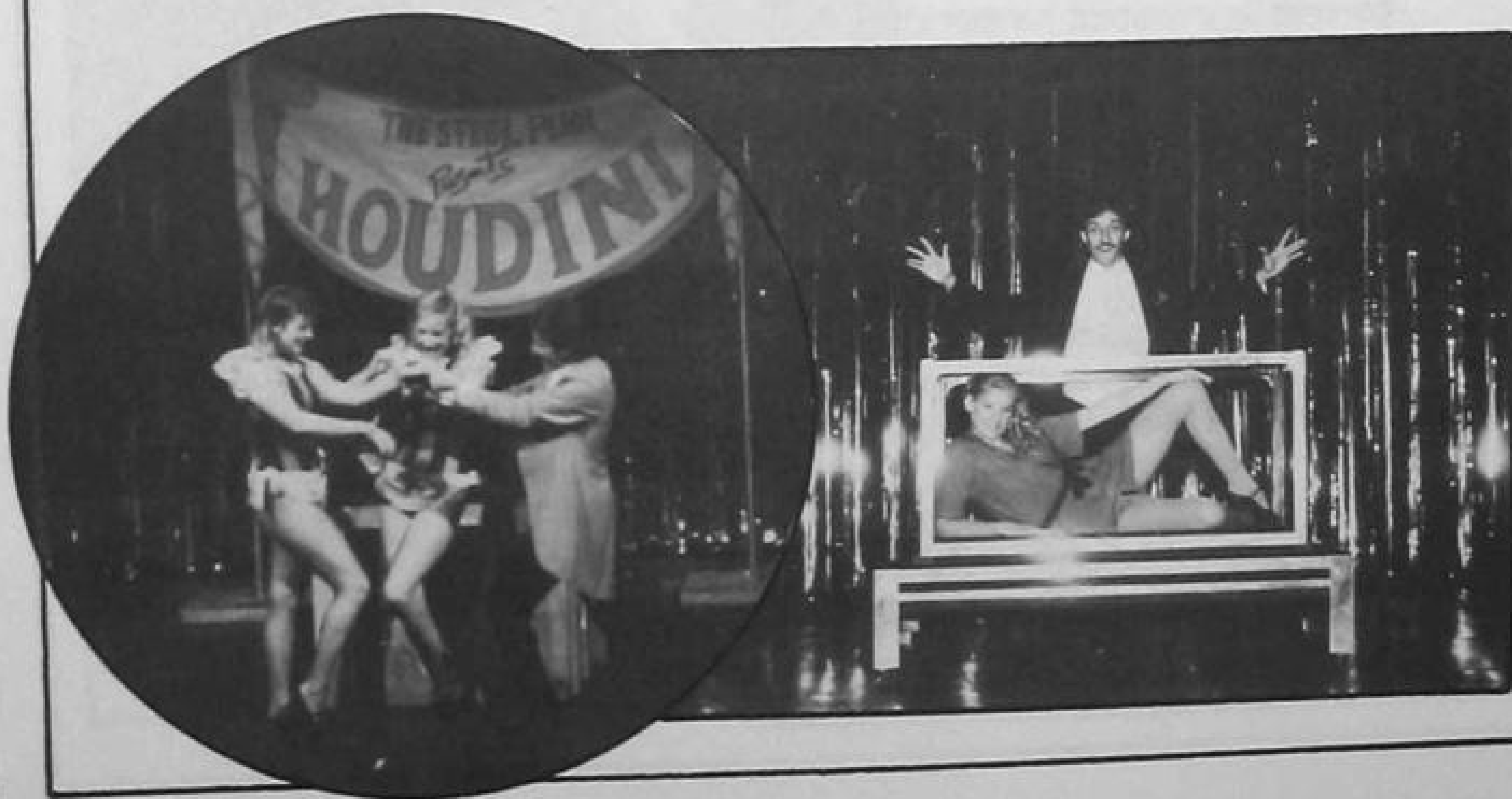
"First, take the wooden frame with eyehooks and attach it to the flyline or to the ceiling of the stage. Next, set the Asrah couch up directly underneath. Put the form on the couch where the girl will be. Cut two lengths of line two feet long each. Take one and tie one end to one side of the foot end and the other to the other side of the foot end. Do the same with the head ends forming a loop on both sides (A). Next, run your line through eyehooks in the frame and down to the form. Tie one end to the feet line and the other to the head end (B). Allow about 12 extra inches of line so the form can rest behind the table while your assistant lies on the couch. Now you can move the couch and the form will remain suspended where it should be during the first part of the performance.



The next step is to tie a line from offstage through your eyehooks to the frame in the ceiling. You tie the line at the very center of the line going to the Asrah form in the middle of the frame (C). The other end, offstage is attached to a kite reel(D). Although the reel was only around \$7.00 and easily obtainable at drug and novelty stores...it works like a dream! The best part of this method is the doing away with the standard bar method. The bad thing about a bar is when the form is up you have all that slack in the line to deal with. Thread would get tangled around legs and illusion casters.

Once you have hung your frame, form, and attached the reel you are ready to go. When you test this you'll notice that the line that holds the form will go through the eyehook in the rear thus doubling the strength and the form will rise nice and evenly. And, you only have one string going off stage! Finally, to hold the form up during the rest of the show wrap the line around a nail in the wall backstge one foot from the reel. We have used this method literally hundreds of times on stage and it is, I believe, the smoothest method of floating and vanishing a girl. Good luck with this rigging and I hope you have a chance to add it to your show very soon!"

Greg Franklin stars in Paul Osborne's illusion spectacular "The Wonderful World of Wizards".

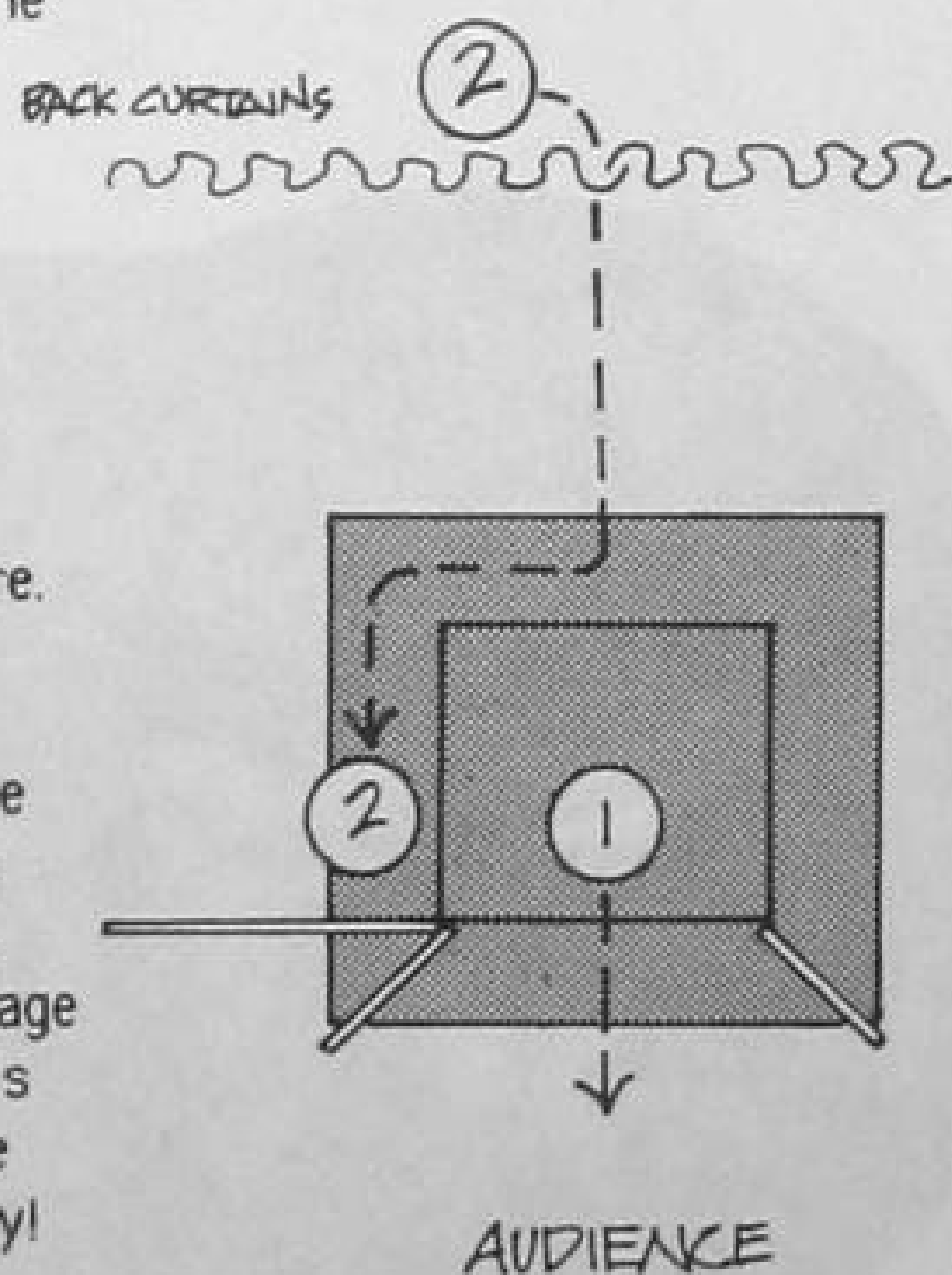




I first met Ron Fitzgerald as we were auditioning for the Six Flags shows in Chicago. I was impressed by his enthusiasm and hired him on the spot to manage one of our productions in New York. Not only being a fine manager but also an excellent performer, Ron has clearly improved each season and is one of our most creative show managers. At another park in New York now, Ron is the main attraction and his magic show is sensational. I know you'll enjoy his comments.

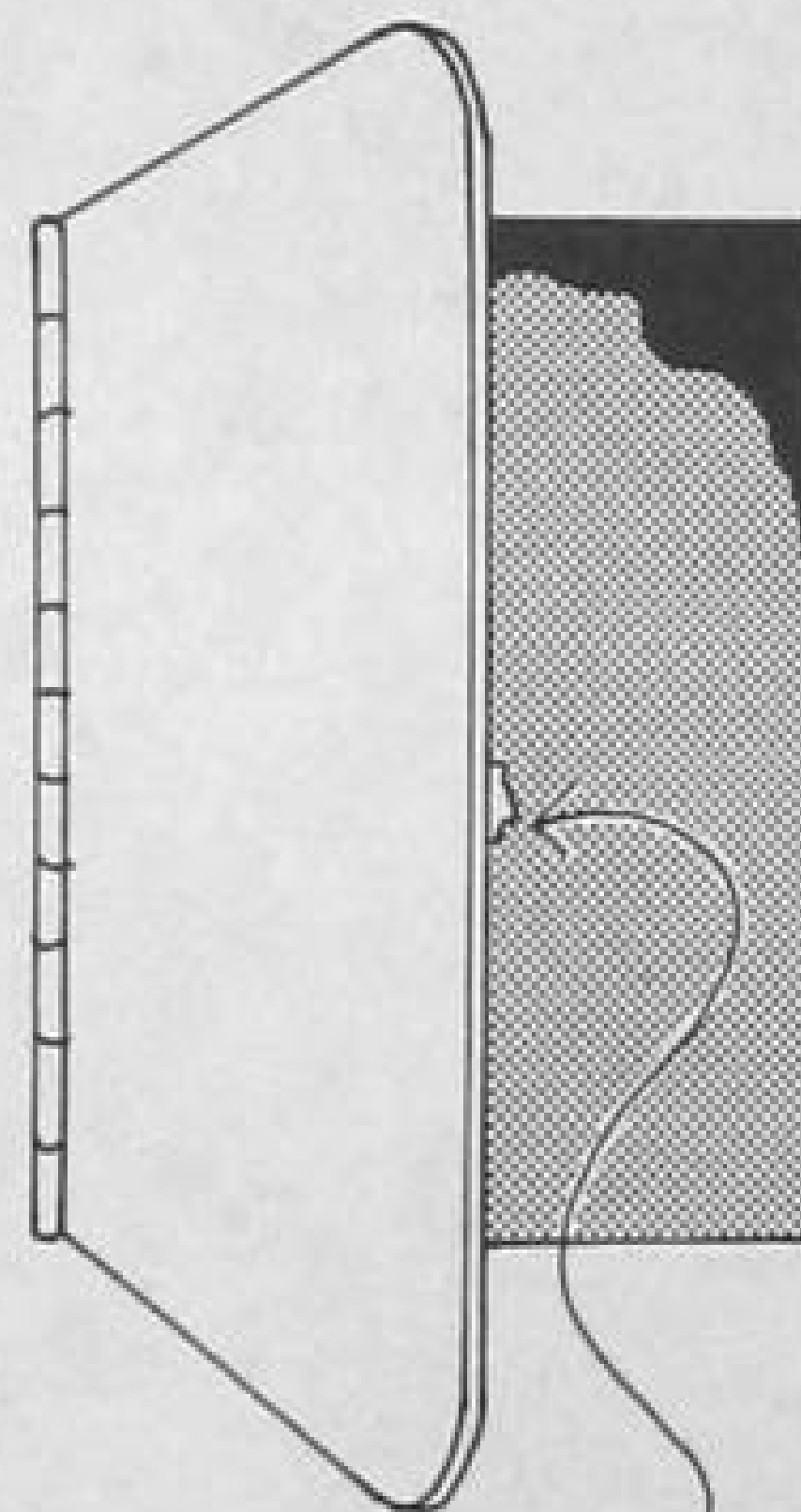
## RON FITZGERALD

"I call this idea "Double your Mummy." Excuse the bad pun for a title, but how would you like to get literally twice as much out of your old Mummy Case illusion? If the answer is yes, then this idea is for you. It is as follows: The magician shows the Mummy Case to be completely empty inside and out, then produces his assistant (as usual). After the first assistant is removed the box is immediately closed up, spun around and re-opened to reveal another person! This method that I'm about to explain is best suited for stage use, as is the illusion, although the idea was inspired by a close-up concept. Think of your Mummy Case as a Chop Cup, meaning make your second load as the audience is looking at the first. When assistant number one is revealed, assistant number two leaves the hiding place behind the back curtains to get into position on the base next to the secret side door. After the first assistant has left the box, the two double doors are closed up. At this point the second assistant enters through the side door and the front is closed. All this is covered by assistant number one's entrance. Now you are all set to produce another. The mummy case is spun around, re-opened and there you have assistant number two. It's very spectacular, even for people who have seen the illusion before. Make sure your second assistant enters directly from the rear of the illusion and steps up onto the base. Once on the base she should move around to the secret side door so she is not seen approaching the cabinet. It also helps to do this illusion as far upstage as possible. Timing is crucial on everyone's part in this method. Try, experiment, have fun. And that's how you double your mummy!



"While doing park shows for Paul I had the opportunity to work with a Zig Zag for the whole season. I Loved it! But you know that little door in the middle, yes the 'belly box'? Well, it kept flopping opened and closed whenever I worked with the other doors or turned the prop around. I hate when that happens! If you've worked with a Zig Zag you probably hate it, too. So here's what to do about it. Go back into the dark corner of seldom or never used magic stuff and get out your "Magician's Wax". It's the perfect solution to this problem. Magician's wax holds the door firmly shut yet leaves it easy to open. Just put a few dabs of it on the inside lip of the little door and you are all set!"

Below, Ron produces his assistant, Ginger, from "The Chef's Nightmare" in Paul Osborne's production of Hocus Pocus. To the right, Paul, Ron and Ginger check out the Zig Zag between shows.



MAGICIAN'S WAX



**Gerald Frenette**



# UTILITY BASE

## Gerald Frenette

I have been doing magic and illusions for about four years now and along the way I have had some new ideas on building and presenting standard illusions.

A little while back it occurred to me that there have been many utility devices in magic such as the Thumb Tip, the Jap Box, the Square Circle, even the Dove Pan that have many practical uses. However, I have never seen a utility device that can be used for illusions. Here then, is such a device.

### THE UTILITY BASE/TABLE

I began with the idea that I would build a base for the Crystal Casket, but it was to be longer than most others so that the girl could lay flat in it. The legs were also much shorter than conventional bases. The trap is merely an open space, covered with fur. There is a split down the middle of the fur over the trap and this is lined with stretched elastic to hold it closed. The girl lays on a shelf at the front half of the top of the table and the back half is the open trap. The diagram will clarify all this.

The plexiglass walls are attached together with hinges. Two diagonally opposite corners have regular hinges while the other two have loose pin hinges. This is necessary because the hinges are on the inside and it would not fold up with all four walls attached together.

Without the walls the table is excellent for the Asrah levitation. The girl simply lays on the front part of the table. The form is behind the table. When we hold up the cloth the girl simply rolls back into the table. It's the

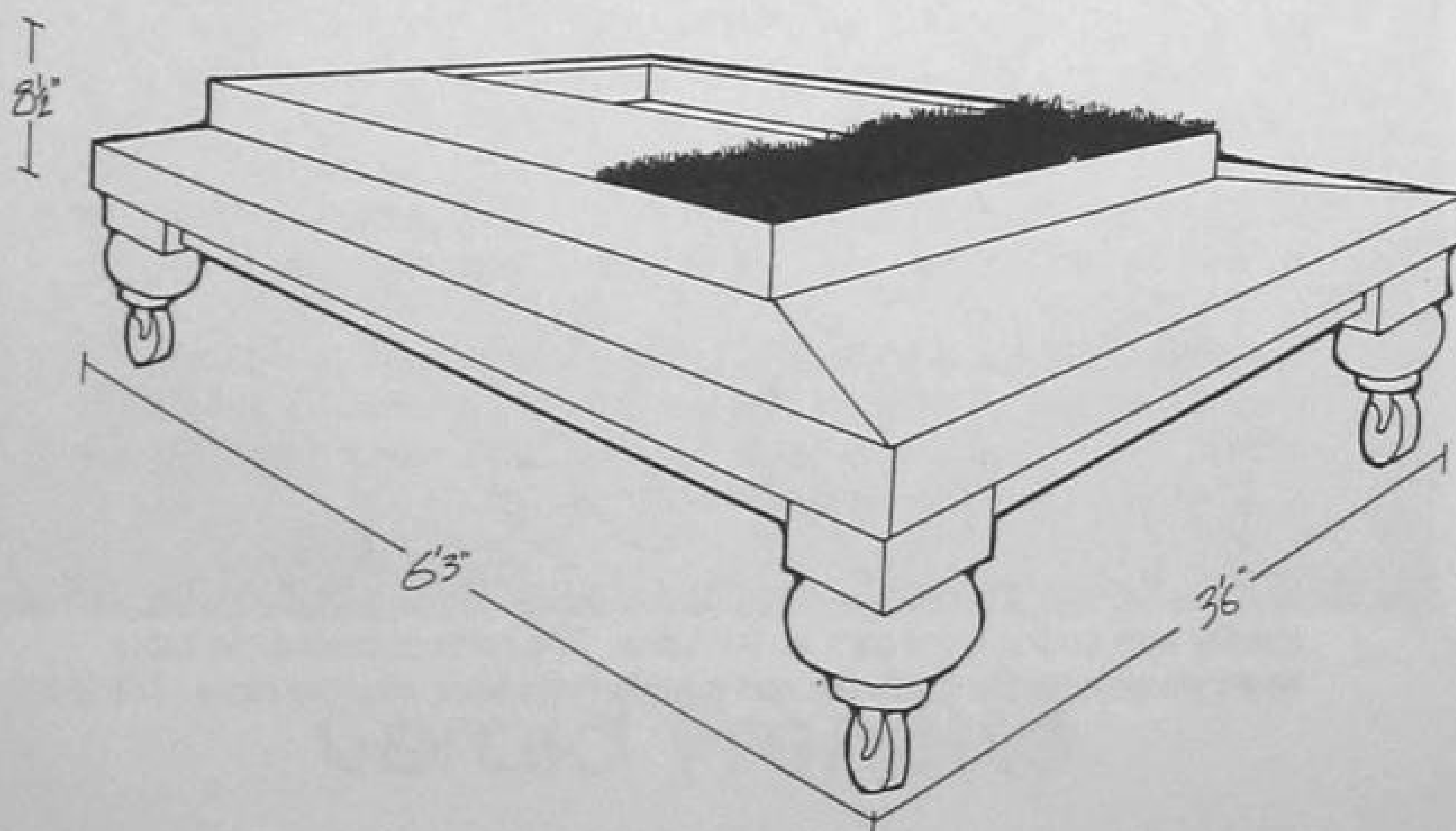
quickest way you'll ever accomplish this. Of course, at the same time the form is brought up into the place the girl once held. Once the form starts to rise, the table is rolled off stage where assistants add the plexiglass to it. When you vanish the girl you can immediately reproduce her from the Crystal Casket using the same cloth you used for the Asrah.

If the walls are assembled before the show, it takes but a few seconds to drop them on the table, so the casket can be rolled out in an instant. Your assistant need never leave her hiding place.

Another good use for the table is for the Phantom Cargo Cage illusion. Simply construct wooden walls and a top, which are put together around the girl in plain view of the audience. The front wall is made up of bars as in the standard Cargo Cage. In the front inside of the top piece is a rolled up cloth which falls just behind the bars when released by the girl. A roller blind could also be used.

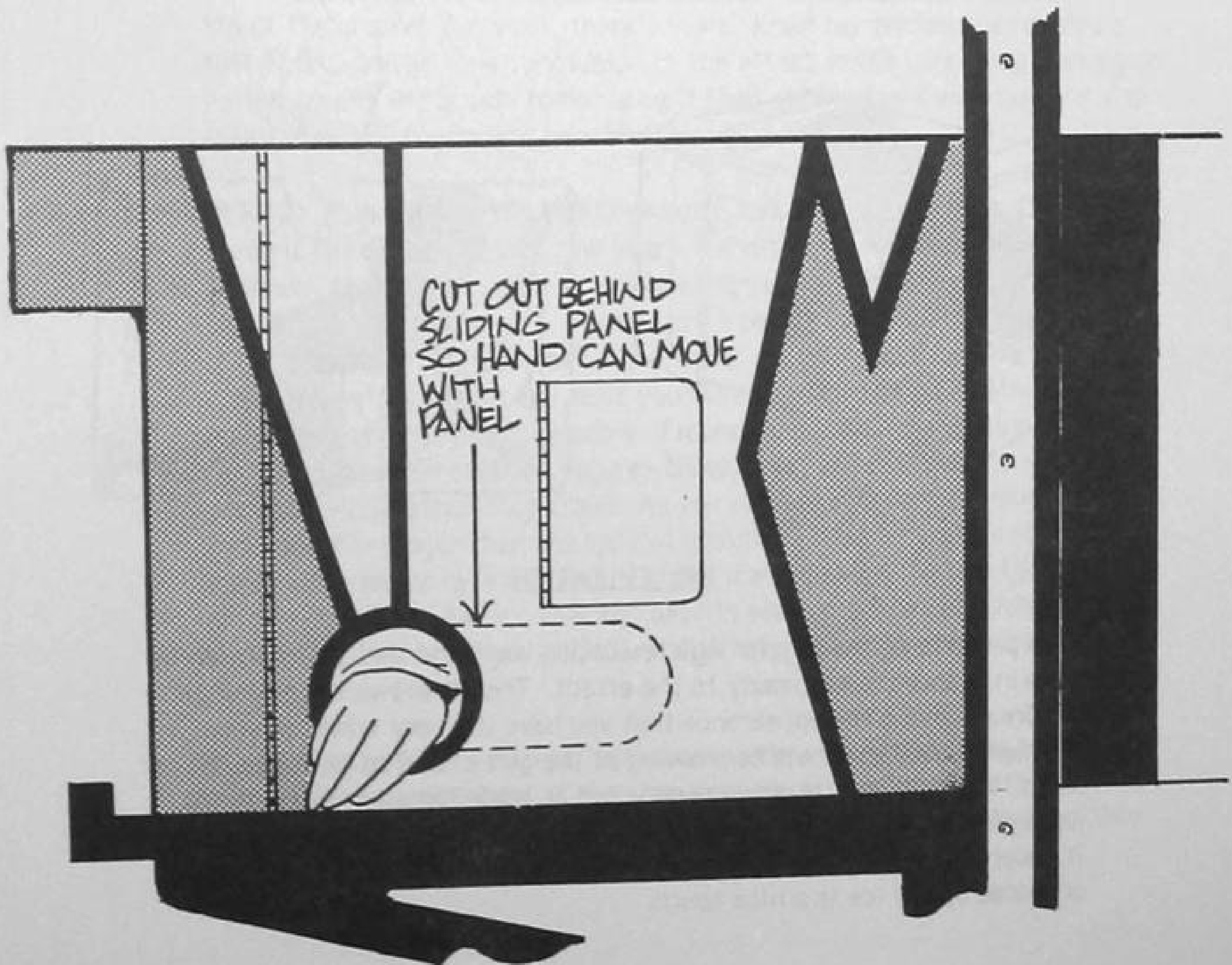
If you are using the former, you should have a flashpot go off at the exact moment of the vanish. As soon as the girl is out of sight, she makes her way into the base, where she remains. The box is then turned backwards, is dismantled, and stacked flat.

Using your imagination, you can undoubtedly find other uses for this table, but even if you don't, you already get three illusions for the price of one, and for much less work. It even saves space in your truck and makes for less equipment to carry. We even change the look of the table for the Cargo Cage by covering the legs with tubes of cardboard brightly painted to match the rest of the cage. These tubes, the legs themselves, and the Asrah form can be carried inside the table for convenience.



## THE ZIG-ZAG

The Zig-Zag has always been a very versatile illusion, but I always felt it had one drawback when we performed it. To me it always looked suspicious when the girl removed her right hand as we slid the center section over. This was unavoidable because there were two separate holes for the hand, a different one being used when the slide was pulled over. I solved this problem by removing the "I" shaped piece of wood between the holes so that I was left with a long oval instead of two holes. This way the girl's hand slides with the slide. She does, however, have to bring her hand back far enough to clear the upright support that goes by, but it remains visible and greatly improves the effect. Since all Zig-Zags are not alike, you will have to be sure that this will work for you. Look it over carefully before doing anything, but by all means, attempt to find a way of accomplishing it.

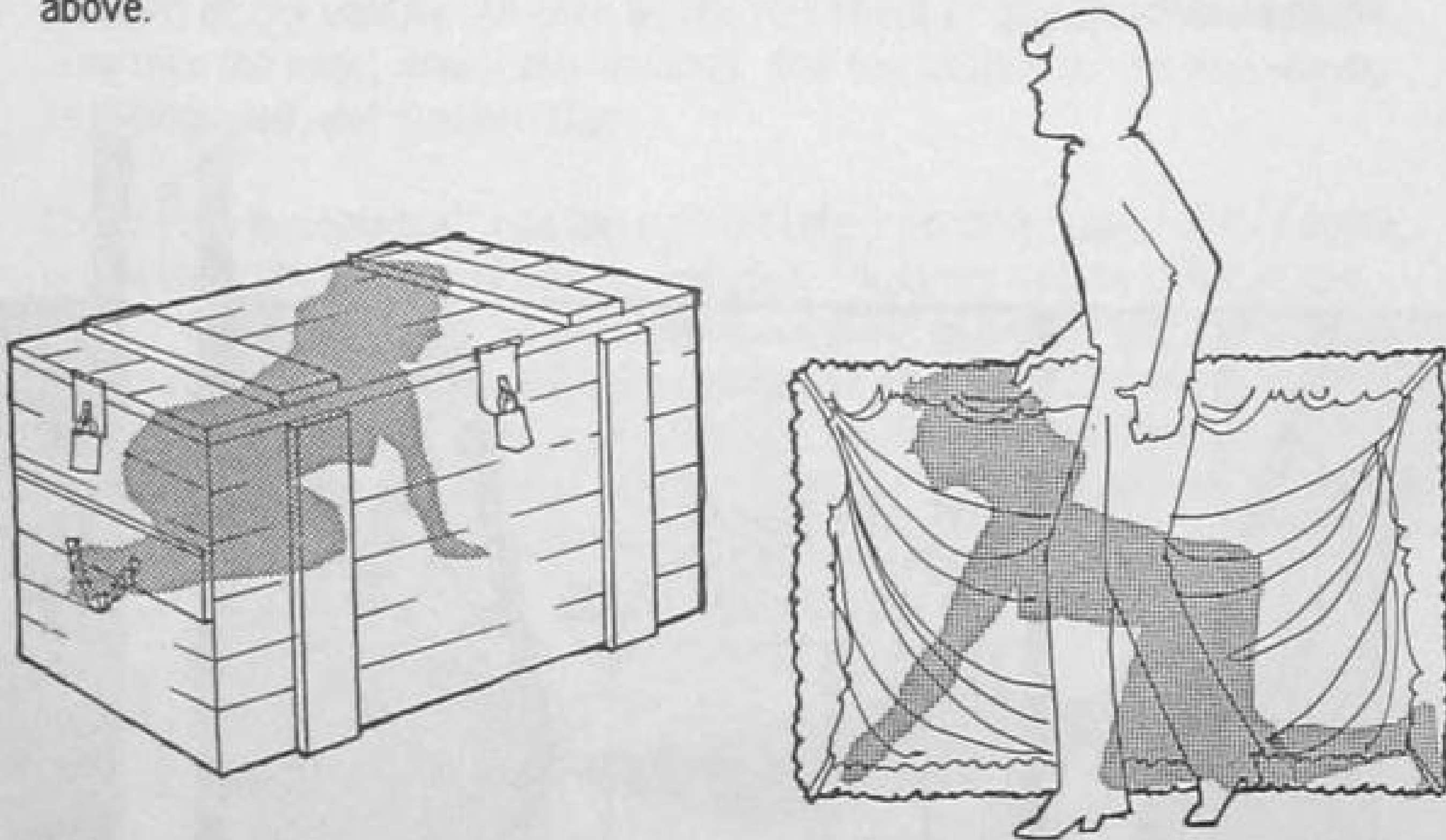


### THE SUB-TRUNK

When performing the Sub-Trunk have a second assistant hidden behind the trunk. When doing the switch, the person who was on top of the trunk goes behind it and the person who was behind it gets in the trunk for a surprise change of assistant.

If you would like, you can do the regular switch then close the trunk, hold the curtain up long enough for the second assistant to get on top of the trunk and drop the curtain. The second assistant has appeared. If the trunk is big enough, both assistants could get into the trunk when the trap is open.

If you like to have the trunk examined at the beginning as we do, then the second assistant could sneak onstage as the curtain is being carried out. She could shuffle along in a crouched position behind the curtain. When the curtain gets to the trunk, she would then slip behind it and continue as above.

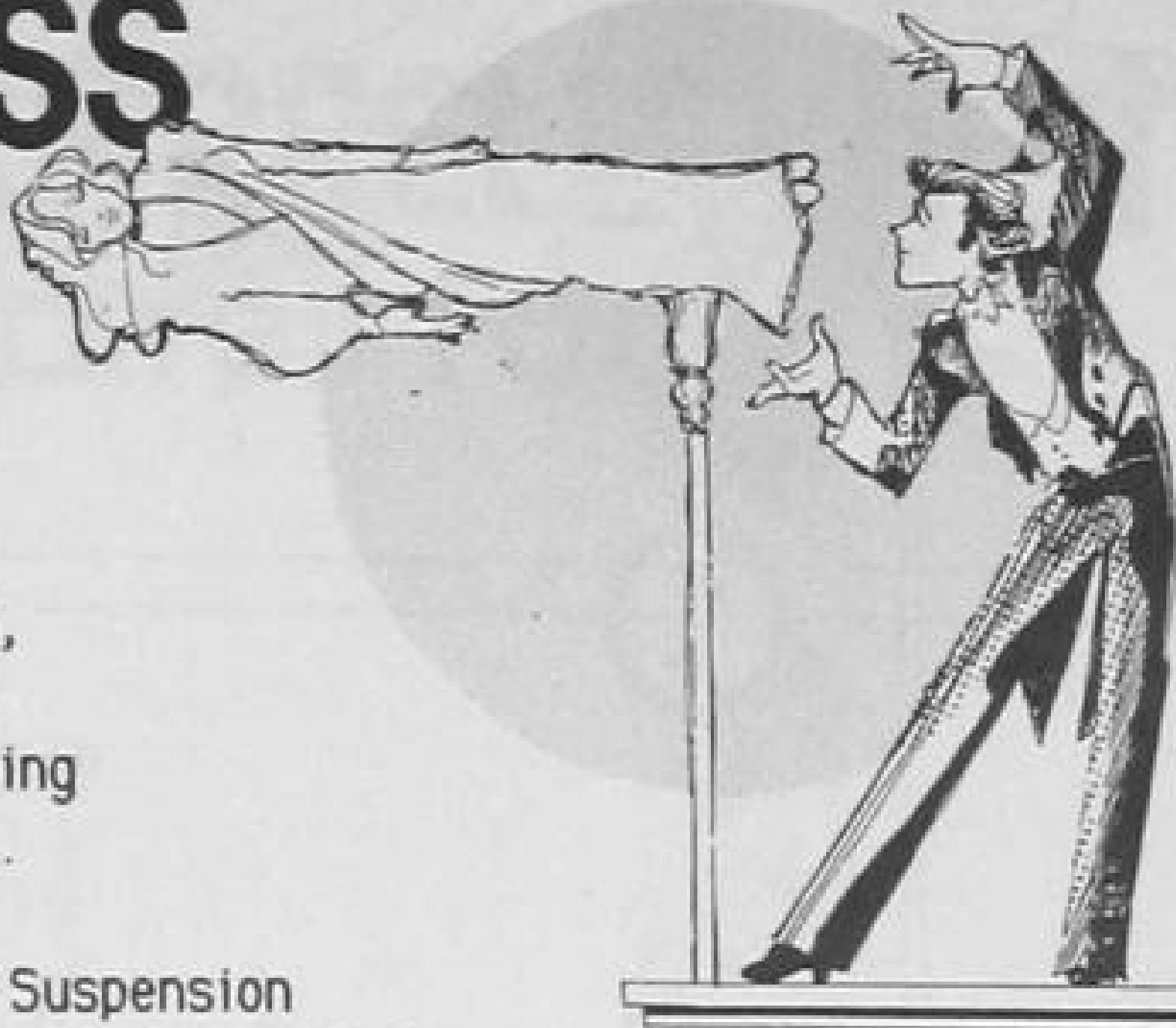


### THE LEVITATION

When performing the regular Aga levitation we found that a strong fan in the wings added much beauty to the effect. The air blows the girl's hair and dress, giving the appearance that you have the very winds at your command. The fan should be blowing at the girl's head so as not to lift her dress. Not only does this add beauty, but it leads the spectators on the wrong track as to the workings of the illusions. It is also nice to perform it under colored lights and with appropriate music. Even stage smoke produced by dry ice is a nice touch.

# THE PULL ACROSS

Here is an idea that I had sometime ago. I must confess that I haven't had time to fully develop it but I think that the concept is there. With a little R. & D., time and money, I think that you could really have something unique, but see for yourself....

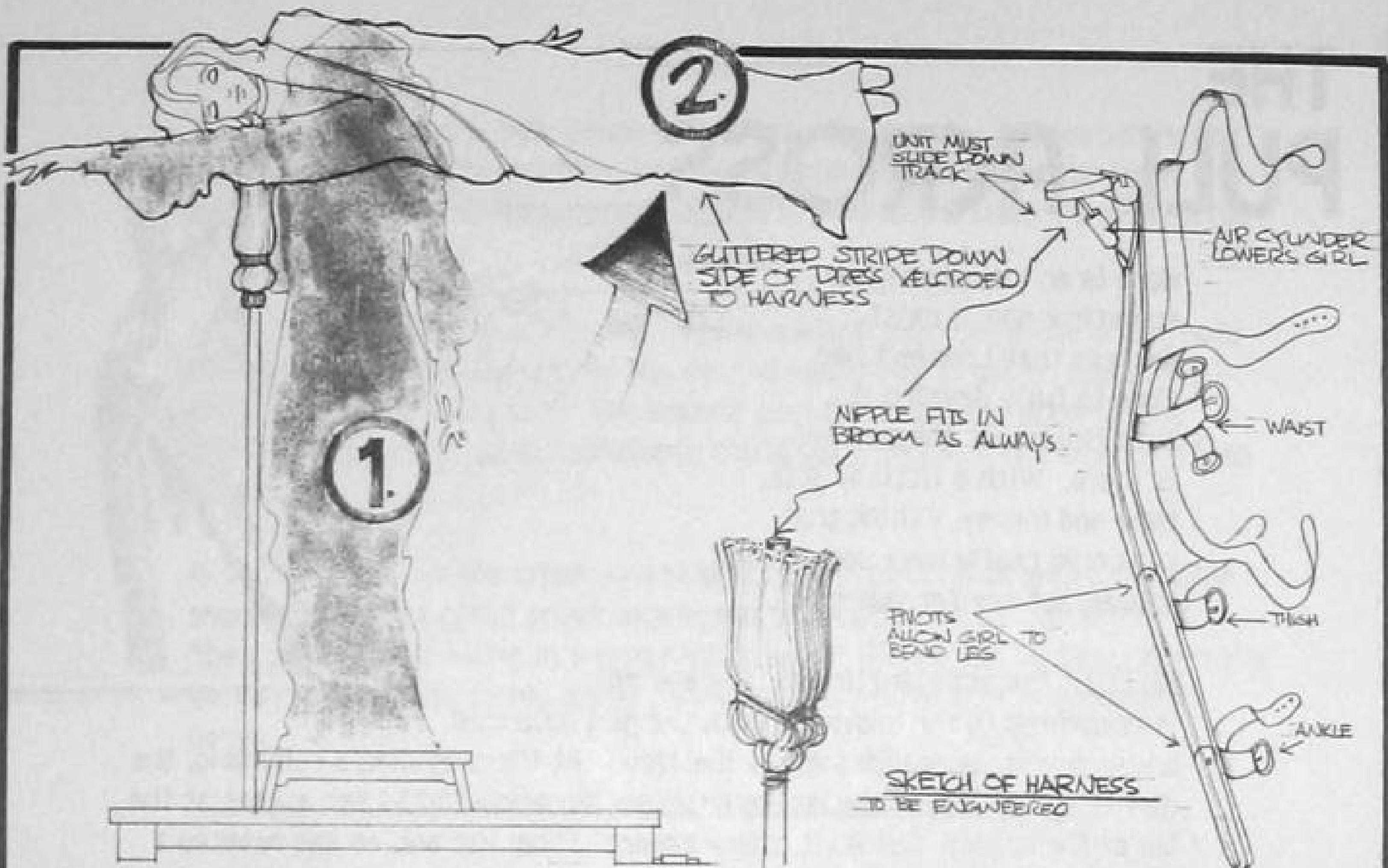


**EFFECT:** The standard Broom Suspension is presented to the audience with the girl balanced on the broom, suspended above the floor. At the magician's command, the girl is pulled across the broom until she is supported by her ankles at the tip of the broom! But wait, there's more. From her ankles she rotates a full 360 degrees! The conclusion of the effect is the girl being once again pulled across the broom to her armpit then slowly lowered enough to step away from the broom and take her bows.

**METHOD:** This illusion has not been built, but I have sure given a lot of thought to it over the last few years. I wish that I was a mechanical engineer, but I'm not. What I am showing you is some concept sketches that outline my basic idea. If you have a background in metal fabrication, then I hope that you can make a go of this. If you aren't familiar with this type of construction, then I hope you have a builder or fabricator that is. Basically our plan tells the story. Figures one and two are the standard Broom Suspension effect. Figures three, four, five and six are what sets you apart from other magicians. As you can see, the harness must be considerably longer than the typical gimmick. Also incorporated in the gimmick is an air cylinder that automatically lowers the girl to her original position. Notice that the base is also unique with a chain drive built in to rotate the girl and the stabilizing foot on the right side that plugs into the floor.

Again, this is just a concept, with a lot to be worked out. But, I think that this illusion has a future, it just requires more development. If you want to work with it, take this plan to your local metal shop and see what they say and don't stop until someone can help you create it.





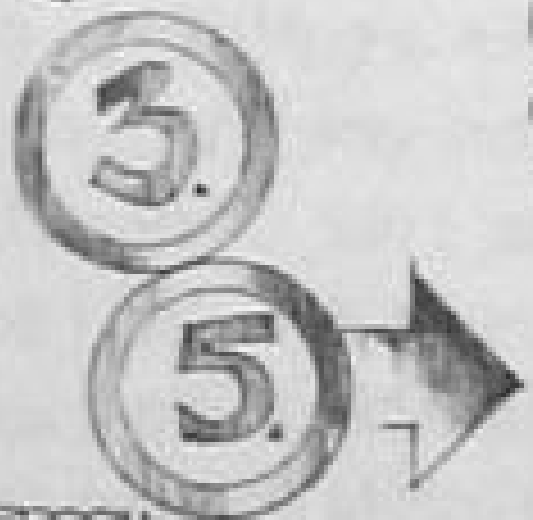
FRONT ELEVATION  
SHOWING SUSPENSION

PULL THRU  
*Broom Suspension*  
CONCEPT DRAWING BY PAUL OSBORNE '85



NOTE SEQUENCE:

- 1 GIRL STANDS ON STOOL AND ON BROOM
- 2 LIFTED INTO STANDARD BROOM SUSPENSION POSITION
- 3 MAGICIAN PULLS GIRL ACROSS TOP OF BROOM
- 4 GIRL REVOLVES
- 5 GIRL PULLED BACK ACROSS TOP OF BROOM
- 6 GIRL SLOWLY LOWERS BACK TO STOOL
- 7 GIRL STEPS DOWN ETC.



BROOM + GIRL REVOLVE 360°

ELEC. MOTOR IN BASE 70 CHAIN DRIVE FROM BEHIND

*PO*  
85



# KARRELLUSION

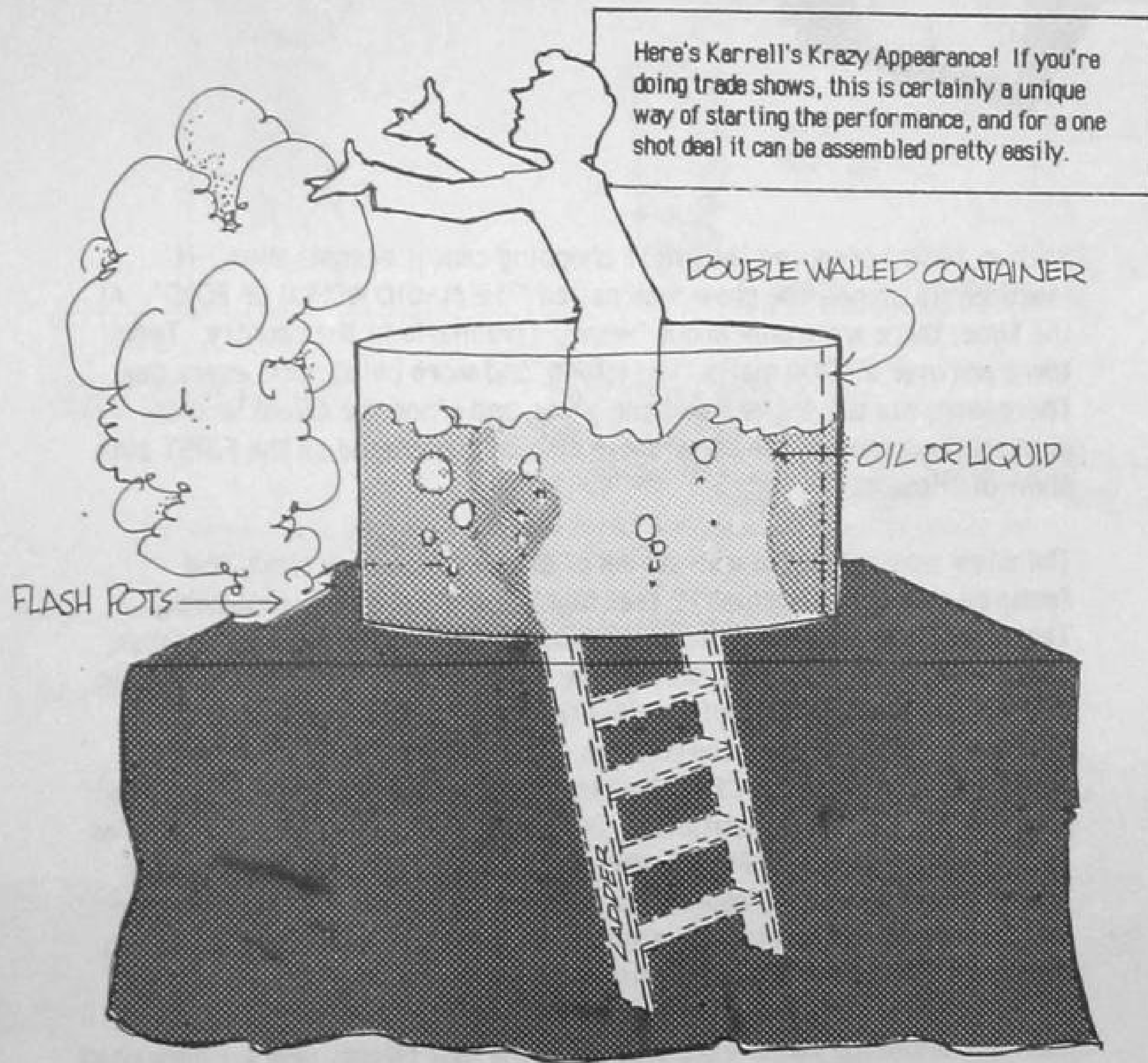
## Karrell Fox

Back in 1950 I produced the FIRST shopping center or mall show. It featured illusions. The show was called "THE MAGIC WORLD OF FORD". At the time, there were only about twenty-five malls in the country. Today there are over 25,000 malls flourishing, and more being built every day. There were six touring units of the show, and since the client was an automobile company, the show could also be considered as the FIRST auto show of illusions.

The show was presented on a series of six separate platforms, and featured a giant Guillotine (12 feet high), the Slick Post, Arrowhead, Temple of Benare's, and a rather unusual opening effect. Taped fanfares, music and an announcement invited the audience to gather round the main platform where they saw a huge five feet in diameter cauldron of BUBBLING, HOT OIL. Six colored flash pots went off and the magician appeared standing in the CENTER of the cauldron of bubbling oil. All this amounted to was the construction, in lucite, of what I laughingly referred to at the time as the WORLD'S LARGEST MILK PITCHER. The huge, double walled cauldron was, of course, bottomless, and on his cue the magician merely walked up the steps of a small ladder from below and appeared in the center of the cauldron. ( see illustration )

Having worked the major auto shows for the last twenty years, I have used a number of illusions. Guillotines, Sawings, Arrowhead, Bladebox, Assistant's Revenge, Hindu Basket; you name it and I've probably used it in one form or another. In the mid-seventies, a young performer from Detroit started working the auto shows, and has certainly made a good name for

himself in the business. He's MARK SWEET. Mark has featured the Thin Sawing, Zig-Zag, Mismade Lady, Substitution Trunk, Light Bulbs Through the Girl, and one year he even floated a FULL SIZE "Chevy" truck!



As for trade shows, many magicians work them now-a-days, but the performers who do illusions are relatively few. The first I can remember a few aisles over from me was MARSHALL BRODIEN (of "T.V. Cards" fame). He usually performed his version of the Blade Box. One of the earliest performers doing illusions at trade shows was TOMMY TUCKER with the woman called "Aunt Winnie". GEORGE JOHNSTONE has worked trades with a beautiful Zig Zag decorated in a card motif. He has also featured sawing a girl's arm with a CHAIN SAW! WALTER ("Zaney") BLANEY has the perfect trade show illusion in his gorgeous levitation and new Sword Box. During the seventies, the king of trade show illusionists was MARK WILSON PRODUCTIONS. Mark had several units on the road with the "Magic Hands" machine. His Robot Girl was also very popular.

Without a doubt, the most used illusion in trade shows was the brainchild of my late friend ROBERT HARBIN, the "Zig-Zag". At one trade show in Detroit there were FOUR Zig-Zags appearing on THE SAME SHOW.

Therefore, the Zig-Zag is not a good illusion for the current trade show. It's just been overworked. Unless you can come up with a good twist on it. The Thin Sawing was also overworked at trade shows until PAUL GERTNER gave it new life by performing it on two fork-lift trucks. After he sawed through the girl, the fork-lifts raised both halves of the box high in the air, at different levels - BEAUTIFUL!

The auto show and trade show field are wide open for something new and different. So, buy all of PAUL OSBORNE'S books, which in my opinion are the finest books on illusions in print, build your choice - and GO FOR IT! GOOD LUCK!





### ILLUSION SYSTEMS' BUILDERS AT WORK!

Peter Mennie checks out his "New Thin Model Sawing" with assistants. Constructed from the Illusion Systems' plans, this prop sits low to the ground, is easy to build and troupe with

Dave Jackson shows off his "Classic Thin Model Sawing". Dave let the natural wood show on his and we think you'll agree, it makes a spectacular prop. This is just one example of how you can customize a prop to make it yours. Dave is currently on tour with David Copperfield and has been an Illusion Systems' plan collector for years.



Arthur Reed constructed a larger version of our "Classic Thin Model Sawing". Arthur builds all his own props and performs in South Africa.



# LIFE CASTING

## Bill Barto

For illusions such as the Disembodied Lady, where an accurate life casting is required, the following may be helpful to those wanting to create a lifelike face:

First there is more than one type of "prosthetic grade cream", (PCG for short) often known as MOULAGE. Moulage is a powder which must be added to boiling water, mixed and allowed to cool to 42 degrees centigrade, then applied. There are two types I am aware of; one being reusable, the other not. Personally, I have never used these. I think having to do the boiling bit and then being sure it is cooled enough to apply to someone's face is a routine that is more trouble than it is worth, since there is an alternative. That alternative is a powder called ALGINATE. It is basically the same thing as moulage, only it is not reusable. This is mixed with water which at varying degrees makes it set either faster or slower. 75 degrees Fahrenheit or 24 degrees centigrade - 3 minutes setting time or 65 degrees Fahrenheit or 18 degrees centigrade - 5 minutes setting time. This is the same powder as dentists use to make dental impressions. The particular type I have used is know as GEL-TRATE. This is just a brand name. There are others. Another brand is SUPER-GEL. This, like moulage, will not stick to facial hair, although there should be some precautions taken there anyway.

The flexible mold needs to be made rigid so when the plaster cast is made it doesn't distort. This is important, otherwise the finished cast would look like the person was hit in the face with an ugly stick. Being a water based substance, the moulage and alginate have a tendency to shrink if

they are left to dry too long, though not appreciably to make a striking difference between the finished cast and the actual size of the person's face. Before applying the moulage or alginate, a latex or plastic bald cap should be applied to prevent the hair from being caught in the moulage and it gives you the opportunity to cast all the way to the top of the head without the hair getting in the way. This way you get exactly 1/2 of the head, the front half that is needed to mount on the revolving panel. Any facial hair, eyebrows, lashes, etc., should be very lightly coated with petroleum jelly to further aid the PCG from sticking. Also the casting should be done in an upright position, maybe slightly leaning back from the shoulders, but no more than 5 to 10 degrees. What occurs if the subject leans too far back is that the moulage or alginate presses the face into unnatural distortions due to the weight. Casting should never be done with the subject laying down. A plastic sheet or drop cloth of some kind should be wrapped around the person to keep the moulage from dropping on them. Also, there should be the consideration of the person's tendencies toward claustrophobia. This is very important. Many people who don't profess it or don't think they have it find it very difficult to have their entire face covered like is done in this type of casting. Discussing with the person the entire process and constantly reassuring them throughout the process is imperative. This process is really like a facial and does really feel quite good when it is done.

Now after the moulage or alginate has been applied to the face, strips of plaster bandage should be applied in such a pattern as to provide support for the flexible mold. This helps the mold and the finished cast to maintain exact facial structure. When PCG has set and plaster bandages have been applied for support, allow this to dry 12-15 minutes or until the plaster bandages go through their chemical changes, become hot and then cool again. Then have the subject lean far forward from the waist and with their hands support the mold. Have them wiggle and stretch their facial muscles and without pulling, the mold should easily separate from the face. At this point you should have an exact duplicate (down to skin texture, wrinkles, etc.) of the subject's face and expression at the time of casting. Be sure the expression is relaxed at the time of casting or applying of the moulage or alginate because the way the face looks before it is cast is EXACTLY the way the finished cast will look. The results up to this point are what is called a NEGATIVE cast.

At this point wet paper towels should be placed inside the negative cast to prevent shrinking while you mix the plaster for the POSITIVE cast. When you are ready to pour the plaster the wet paper towels can be removed and the excess water dabbed out of the negative. Before proceeding you must fill the nose holes that were left so the subject could breathe when you were casting the negative. These can be filled with clay or some moulage or alginate cupped in your hand. This prevents the plaster from flowing out the nostrils when it is poured in to make the positive.

There are many types of plaster one could use, but from experience a product known as DENTAL STONE works very well. The one drawback is that it is very expensive. Therefore, ULTRACAL 30, available at most hobby stores is best. The price is better and durability is superb especially if any baking of the molds will be done for foamed latex purposes. Once the plaster is mixed thoroughly (according to recommended instructions), the first couple of layers should be painted in the negative mold with a large artist's brush known as a JAPANESE BRUSH. It aids in eliminating any air bubbles from becoming trapped in the finished mold and insures getting plaster into every nook or indentation. Then the remainder of the plaster can be poured in slowly after the first few layers have set. To get the plaster built up deeply enough to be flat against the back would require a lot of plaster and tremendous weight. I suggest filling the negative mold so the positive cast is about 1" to 1 1/2" thick all around then dropping in a piece of 1/2" plywood cut to fit, embedding it in the plaster. Then fill out the back of the positive cast with more plaster and then smooth it out flat in the back so it can be mounted on the revolving panel in the head section of the illusion. This gives a more hollow cast, thus less weight. Also with the piece of plywood inside it provides a better base to drive screws into.

Now, when the plaster has set, begin removing the plaster bandages and tearing away the moulage or alginate. There may be some slight imperfections in the plaster but carefully remove them with a small tool (either a small file or knife). This should produce great results. As well, I always carefully carve out the nostrils of the excess plaster and carve or file off the eyebrows. With the application of false eyebrows and lashes trimmed accordingly it makes it look much more lifelike.

That is the technique in its entirety. But there is more. What you end up



with is a duplicate of the person's face you cast but it happens to be in white plaster. You therefore have to think about coloring the face and getting it to look natural. This technique is more difficult especially if you possess no artistic talent. You might have to acquire the help of an artist at this point. Plaster and especially the less dense plasters, cannot be made up with simple makeup products. Naturally, plaster would have the tendency to absorb both water based and oil or grease based makeups of any kind and it would have a tendency to "powder over" or turn color over the plaster. My suggestion here is to do all makeup on the face (i.e. base coloration, skin tone, highlights, shadows, etc.) first. Then add any hair pieces, etc. I suggest varnishing or shellacking with several thin coats of shellack (CLEAR TYPE) then allowing plenty of time to dry. Then when this dries get a can of DULL COAT (available at hobby stores). This gives a dull finish to the cast and makes it easier to apply facial coloring - gives it a dull base that will be more adherent to whatever is put on it. I advise adding a bit of food coloring to the plaster before you make the positive cast, to get a beige tone or darker to the plaster. You might have to experiment here to get the right color. Then when you start to apply color to the face you have a basic flesh tone to begin with. Then go to your local art store and get acrylic paints in tubes. Unless you are an artist you might do well to consult your local artist at this point. For our purposes here painting with acrylic paints with appropriate shadows and highlights as well as any skin coloration imperfections, etc., is sufficient. When you have the coloring done ( and I can't stress enough that it be done as closely as possible to your actual skin color - not what you'd like to look like, but what you actually look like under whatever light you intend to use, is supremel), then spray the cast lightly with Dull Coat. Acrylic paint dries shiny - you are trying to eliminate the shine. Then powder the cast with translucent face powder after the dull coat has dried. Dust off the excess powder. Powder has a tendency to lighten the tone a bit, so be careful. Then add a very, very light coat of KY JELLY. This gives the face a natural sheen when it dries. Finally, add your hairpieces with Elmer's glue which dries clear, but be careful not to over use it to the point of running.

If you want to learn more about this unique magical art form:

Stage Makeup by Richard Corson

Prentice - Hall, Inc.

Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632

ISBN# 0-13-840512-3

(Best book on stage and film makeup there is. The BIBLE of makeup books.)

Techniques of Three Dimensional Makeup by Le Baygan

Watson - Guptill Pub.

1515 Broadway

New York, NY 10036

ISBN# 0-8230-5260-5,

(Very technical but best "Prosthetics" technique book. Follow progressively.)

Sources of materials:

Alcone Co. 575 8th Ave., New York, NY 10018 212-594-3980

Teledyne Dental GETZ APTOW DIVISION 1550 Green Leaf Ave. Elk Grove  
Village, IL 60007 312-593-3334

Research Council of Makeup Artists (RCMA)

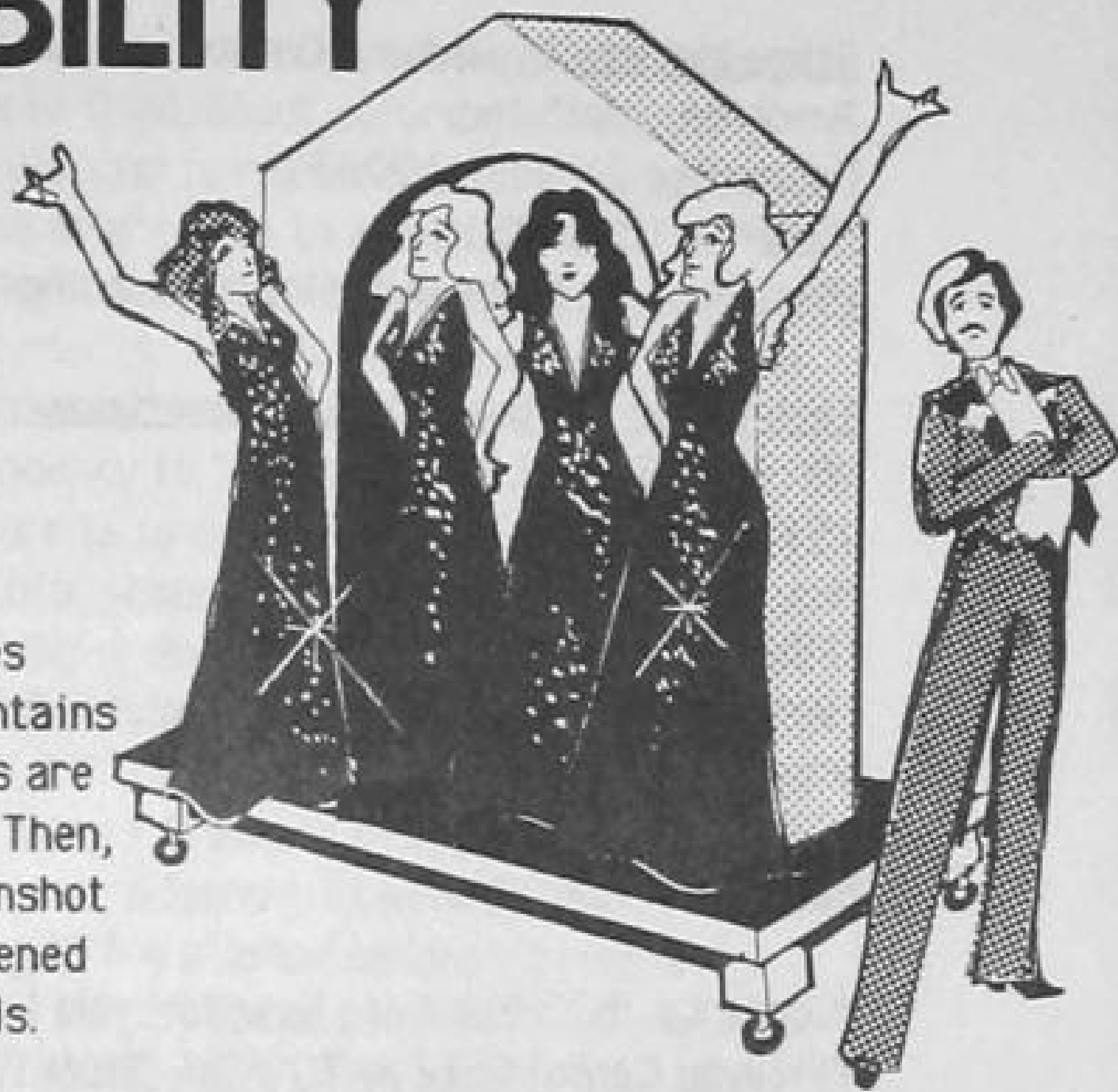
52 Spaulding Street (New Spaulding Street), Lowell, MA 01851  
617-459-9864



# THE ARCH OF IMPOSSIBILITY

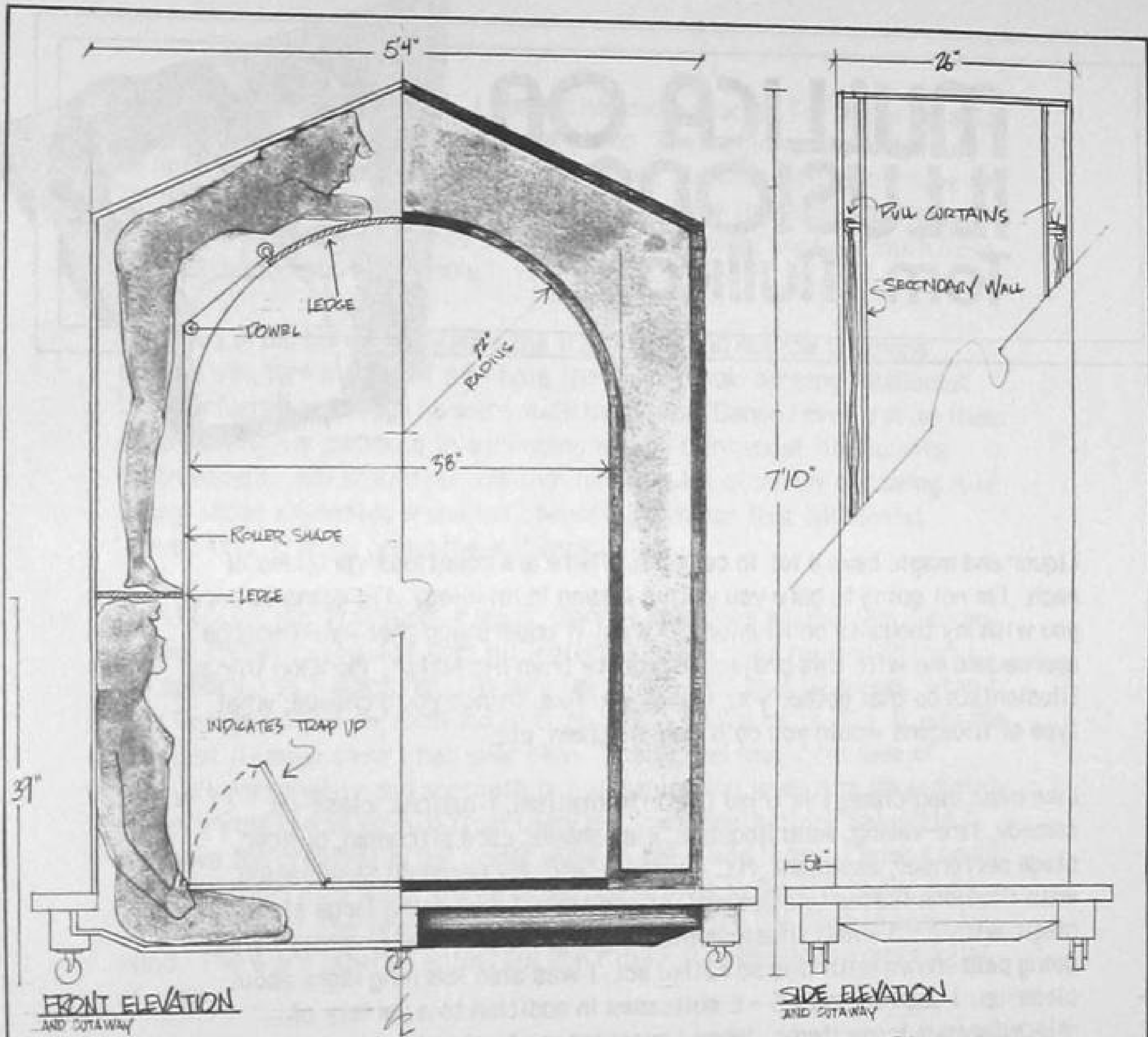
I really like this prop. If you are an upscale illusionist then I know that you will have a use for this. It is a quick and easy way to produce four assistants.

**EFFECT:** The magician introduces a large frame that obviously contains nothing. Front and back curtains are drawn and the unit is revolved. Then, at the magician's command a gunshot is heard and the curtains are opened and out steps four beautiful girls.



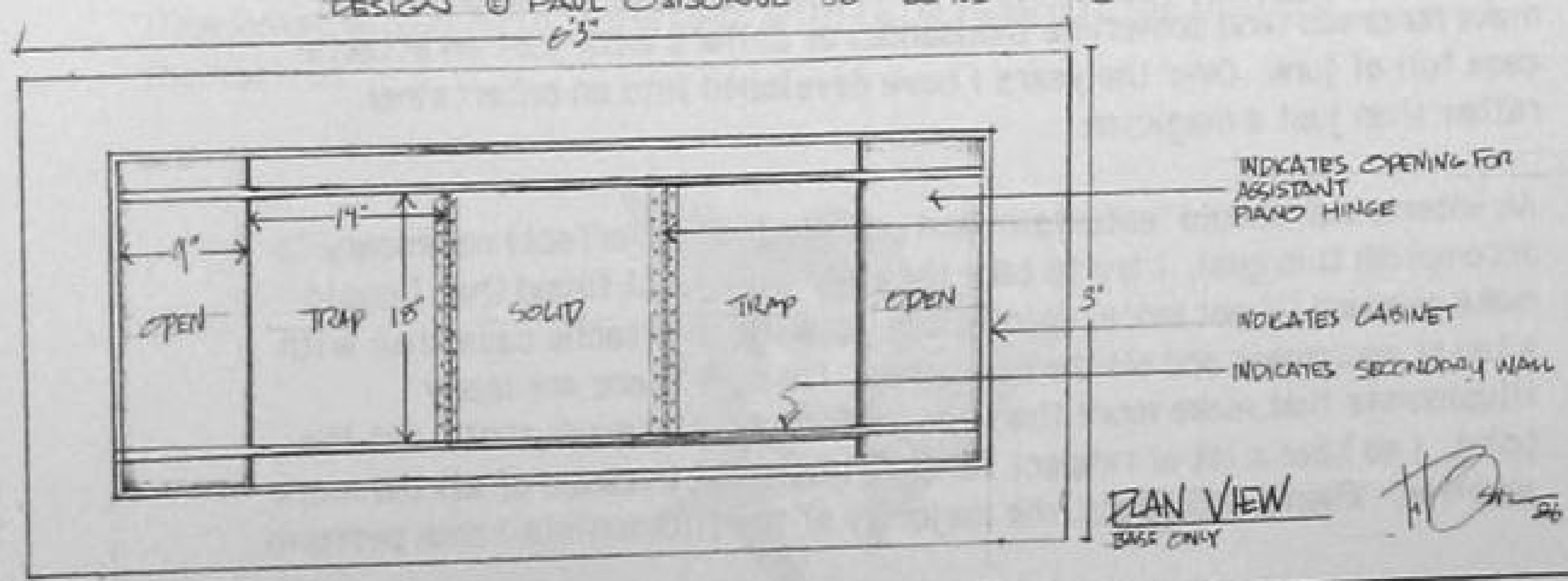
**METHOD:** In looking at our front elevation you will notice that we indicate a cutaway view. Our exposed view shows the two girls in their hiding places. Obviously, there are two more on the other side. The basic unit is constructed from 3/8" plywood and notice the double walls to contain the curtains. Fundamentally the bottom half of this prop is like a Doll House. Our plan view shows the base and trap configuration. As per the Doll House, two of the girls sit in the base. Unique to this prop, two of the girls stand conforming to the roof. To prevent a view into the sides we have installed a roller shade that is mounted in the roof, runs over a dowel and down to be held by the bottom girl. This configuration is shown in our front elevation.

In performance this unit is sitting on stage and obviously quite empty. Once the curtains are closed the four girls assume their position within the cabinet. This process is begun by the two bottom girls releasing the roller shades and the two top girls catching them and guiding them to their origination. It is then just a simple matter of the bottom girls raising the traps and stepping out into the unit. The top two girls jump down from their ledge and join the other two as the curtains are opened to reveal a startling appearance!



# THE ARCH OF IMPOSSIBILITY

DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE '86 SCALE 1/4" = 10"



# MULLICA ON ILLUSIONS

Tom Mullica



Liquor and magic have a lot in common. There are countless varieties of each. I'm not going to bore you with a lesson in mixology...I'm going to bore you with my thoughts on illusions. I want it understood that Paul Osborne approached me with this project as I quote from his letter, "Mention things illusionists do that bother you; things you like; things you'd change; what type of illusions would you do if you did them, etc."

Like most magicians, I've tried it all: Mentalism, illusions, close-up, comedy, fire-eating, ventriloquism, kids shows, card pitchman, builder, stage performer, assistant, M.C., lecturer, etc. My personal association with illusions led me to close-up! At one time, I was doing large stage magic with 2 - 3 small illusions (nothing big) for the finale. While I was doing paid shows with this so called act, I was also learning more about close-up. I used to carry 5 - 6 suitcases in addition to a variety of miscellaneous loose items. When I received my first paid close-up performance, I couldn't believe that I only had to carry one attache case. It was a dream come true! To this day I find it quite amazing that I can make hundreds (and sometime thousands) of dollars with just an attache case full of junk. Over the years I have developed into an entertainer rather than just a magician.

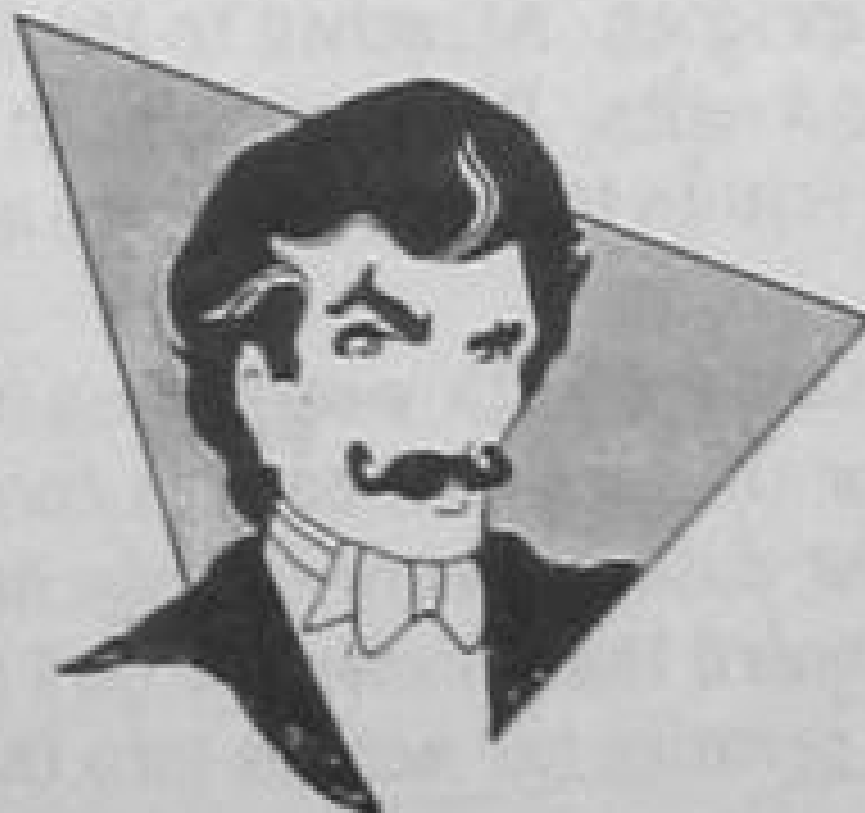
An entertainer should "entertain" and use any tool (or effect) necessary to accomplish this goal. I try to take the easy way out...I found that I could make as much (if not more) doing close-up with an attache case than with a ton of equipment and all the headaches. I'm sure there are many illusionists that make more than I do performing close-up...that's not the point. I do have a lot of respect for the illusionist because of all the work involved. When I was young, the majority of the illusionists I saw perform

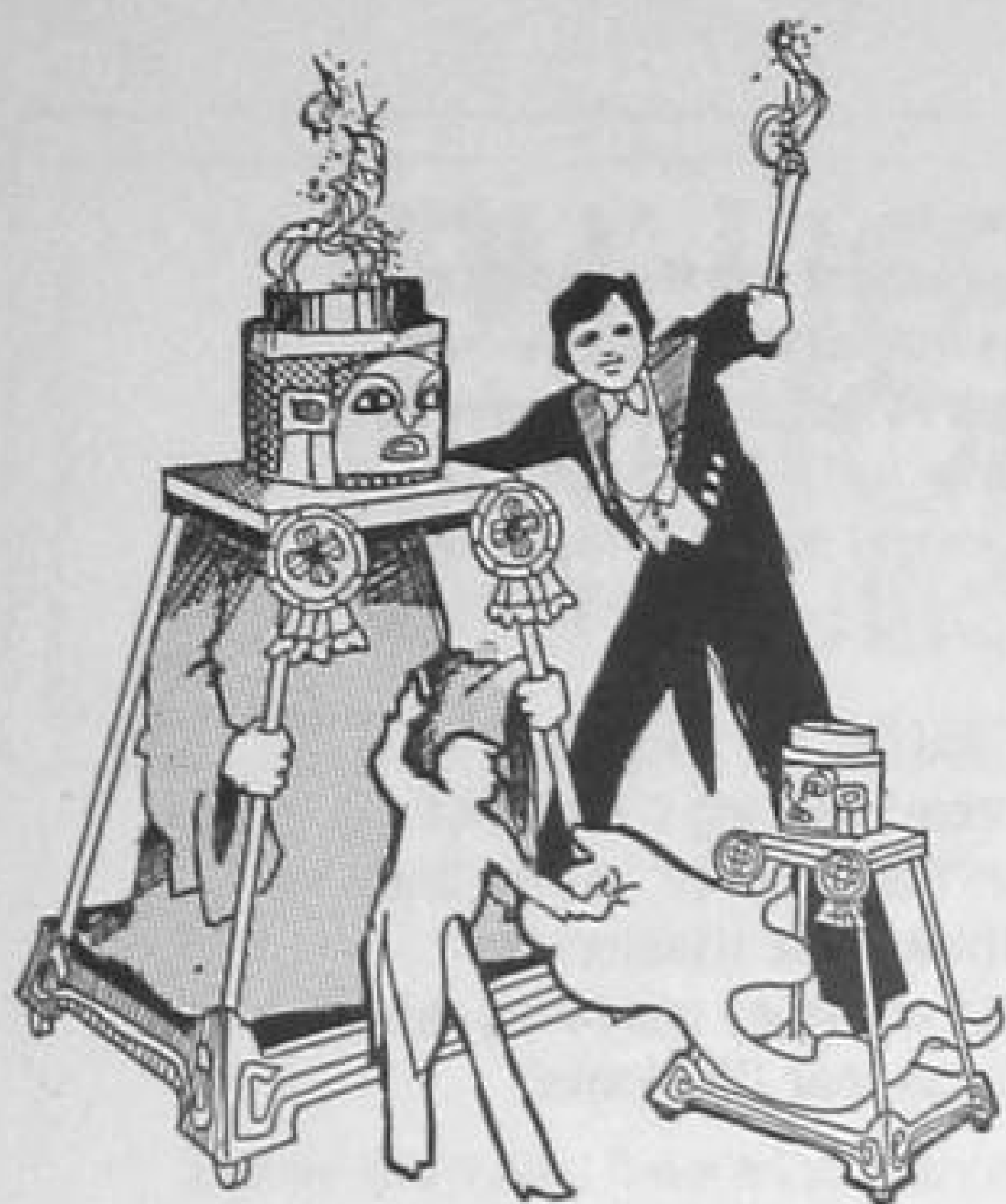
were basically box-pushers. I always had more respect for the assistants that were jumping from one box to another. The magician himself would do nothing but point to something just before the assistant would have to perform the "dirty work". Things have changed due to the physical aspects of today's illusionists. Dance and theatrics in general are used much more by the illusionists of the 80's.

Illusions often bore me because the illusionist and not the illusions themselves turn me off. I just hate the disco break-dancing illusionist that performs as though he were auditioning for "Dance Fever" rather than entertaining his audience in a pleasing way. I think most illusionists (with exceptions) should realize that having a lot of money and being able to buy these expensive props isn't beneficial unless that illusionist "entertains" and not bores the audience.

David Copperfield captures a mood. Harry Blackstone excites you, George Goebel enchants you...but they all "entertain"! You must remember that I am speaking as a magician...I'm sure lay people just love illusions. When I saw George Goebel perform in Colon, Michigan in the early 70's, it was the greatest illusion show I had ever seen. It was real magic because of George's personality and approach to his magic. You loved him immediately and everything was up-hill from there on. I personally think Selgfreid & Roy have the greatest stage magic show in the world today. I wish I could say something nice about the Le Grand David show in Beverly Mass., but I haven't seen it! The few names I have mentioned are the first to come to mind. There are others I enjoy, but don't think it necessary to make a list of 100!

To sum things up, I wouldn't change anything in regard to the illusions themselves...it's the illusionist who needs the improving. The goal for the illusionist should be to "entertain" with little regard to the illusions themselves.





## the flaming alter of **MOCHICA**

**EFFECT:** On an Incan stage setting the magician introduces his beautiful robed assistant. She is hypnotized and takes her place at a stylized alter. Two canisters are placed over her head as a mysterious incantation is heard. A torch is brought out and the magician thrusts it down into the

tube, which instantly bursts into flames. Once the blaze has died down, the inner tube is removed, revealing a view of what was once his beautiful assistant's head. It's now an eerie skull. Quickly the tube is replaced and this time both tubes are removed to reveal no head at all! Instantly, the magician grabs the girl's robe below the alter and pulls it out, proving she has altogether vanished!

**METHOD:** I'm sure most of you are familiar with the Sacrificial Cremation and other type "head" illusions. This concept takes advantage of this "four upright" configuration and combines it with a thick base so you can vanish your assistant at the end. A nice, clean conclusion to an already successful illusion. Other tricks using this "four upright" configuration are the Head Box and Abbott's Life and Death.

As you can see from our plan, the basic design is pretty simple. The three tubes are made from sheet metal as per our lower right drawing on page one. These tubes sit on the table top as drawn in our upper right hand drawing. This table top is constructed from  $\frac{3}{8}$ " plywood, supported by the four  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " wood uprights. Attached to the front of these uprights are two decorative wood cut-outs. Pins run through the uprights to hold the fake hands (contained within the robe) in place on the illusion.

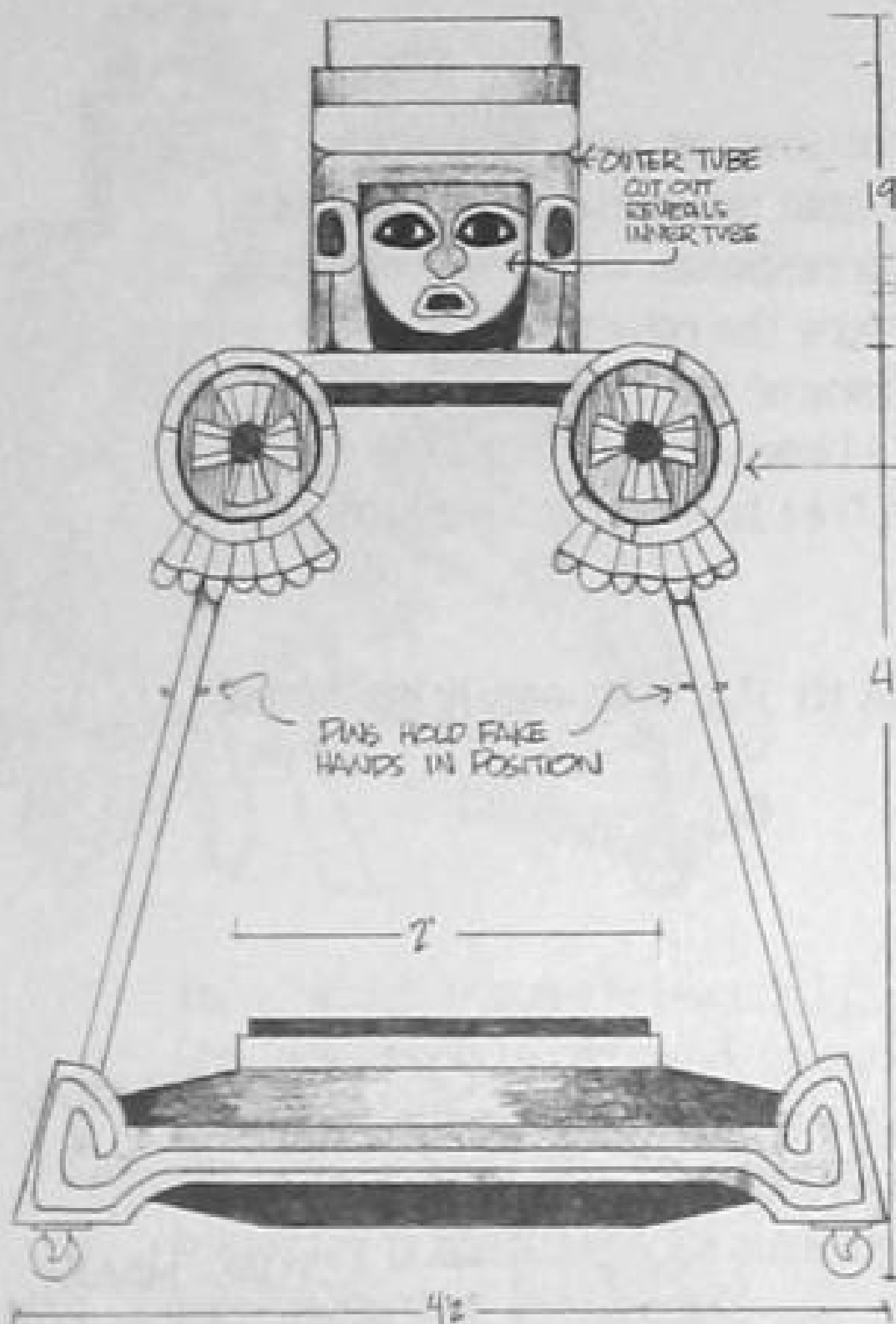
The base is a pretty standard thick wedge base measuring  $4'2" \times 4'2"$  with an  $11"$  space within for the girl. The base is constructed from  $\frac{3}{8}$ " and  $\frac{1}{2}$ " plywood as per our cutaway view on page one. Notice our plan view of the base showing the board that allows the girl space to kneel on and the stretch material that permits her access into the base.

The robe the girl wears should be large and billowy as per our sketch. Within the sleeves are sewn the false hands that grasp the front uprights. Around the neck of the robe is Velcro that corresponds with Velcro placed under the upper table. The magician makes sure the robe's Velcro is connected to the props' once the girl is in place at the alter. Once the magician has placed the tubes over the girl's head, she attaches the fake hands onto the upright posts and she is then free to work her way into the base.

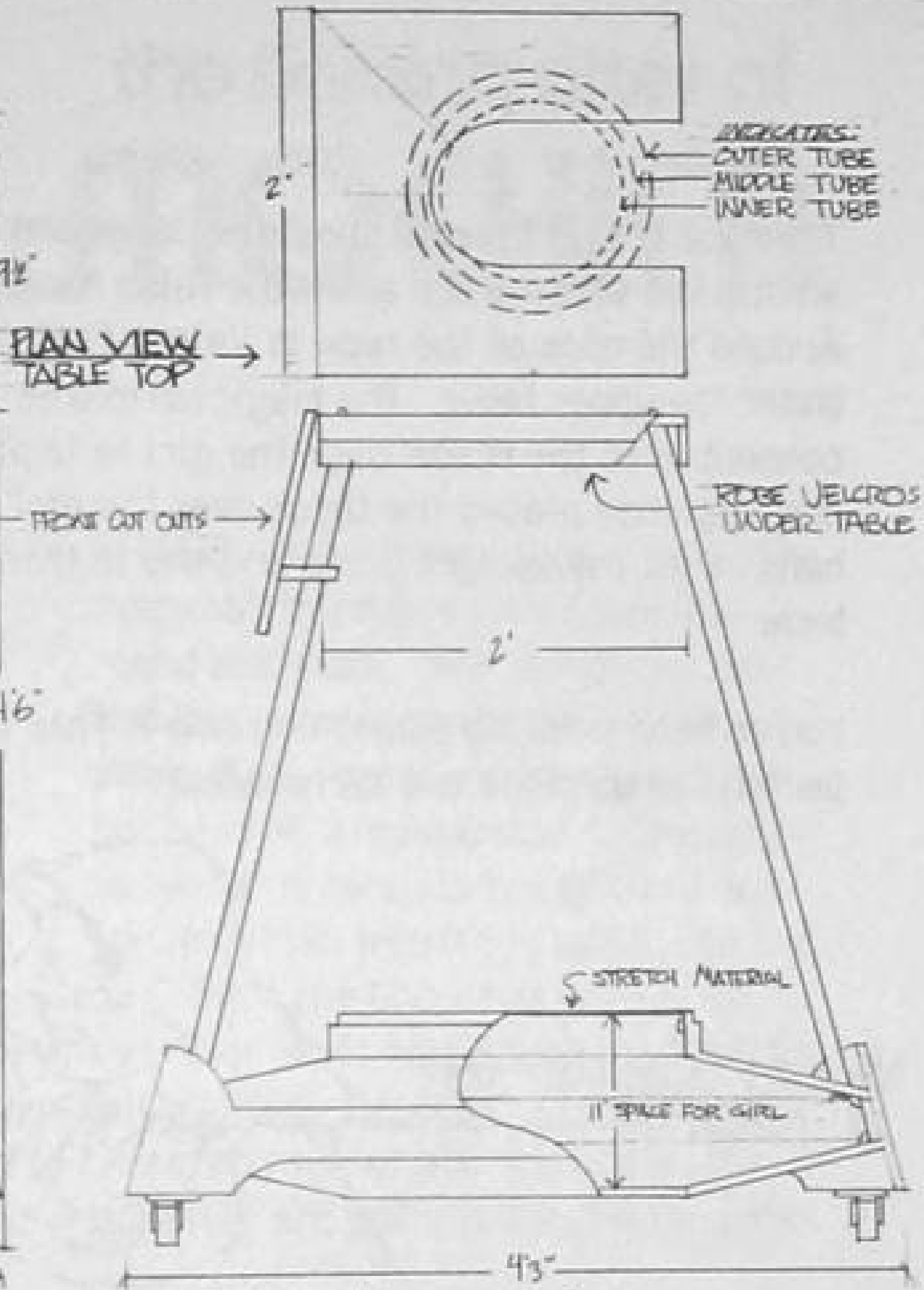
You've been wanting something new? This is it! It can be easily made and performed up close and surrounded!





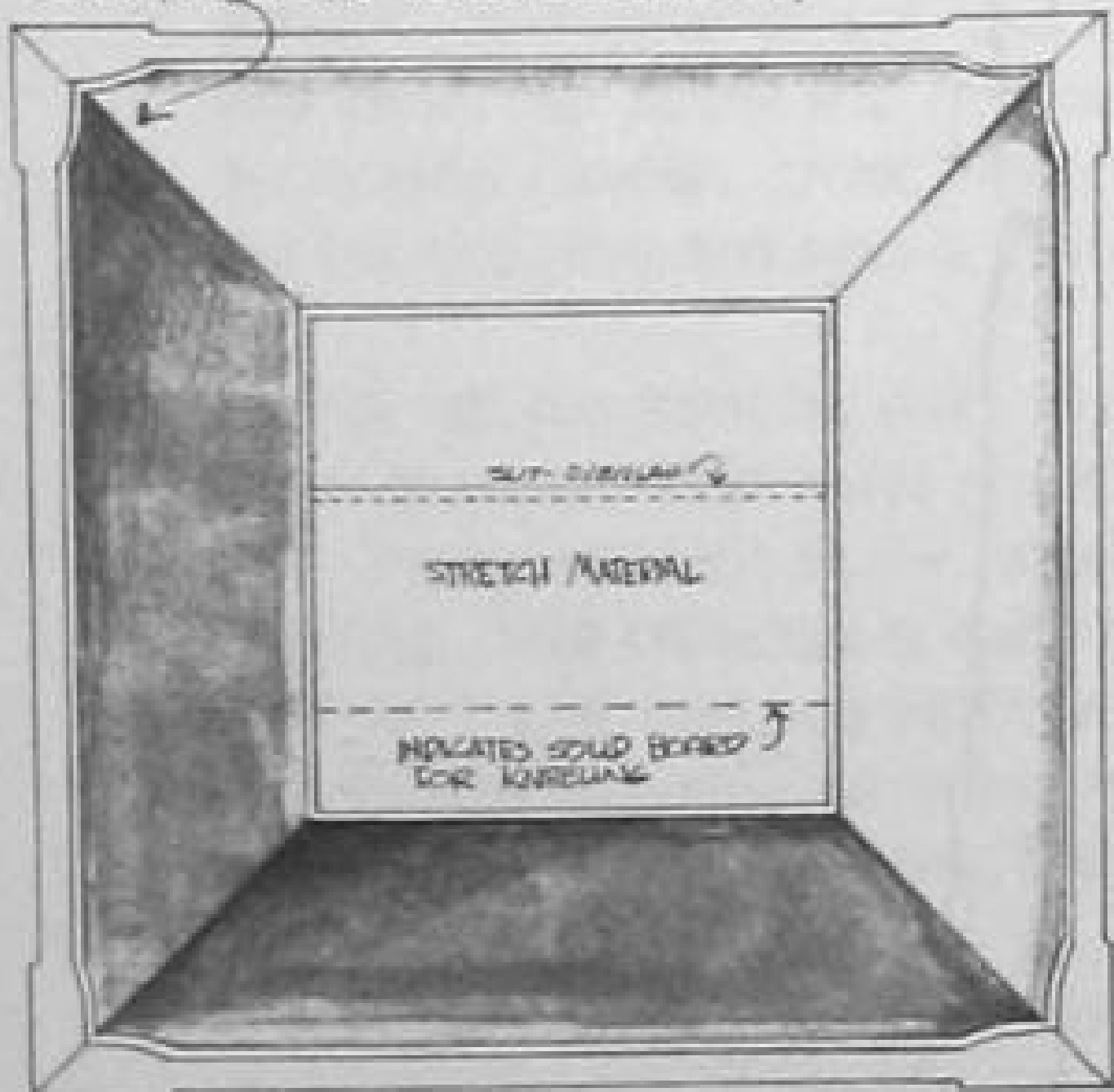


FRONT ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION (CUTAWAY VIEW)

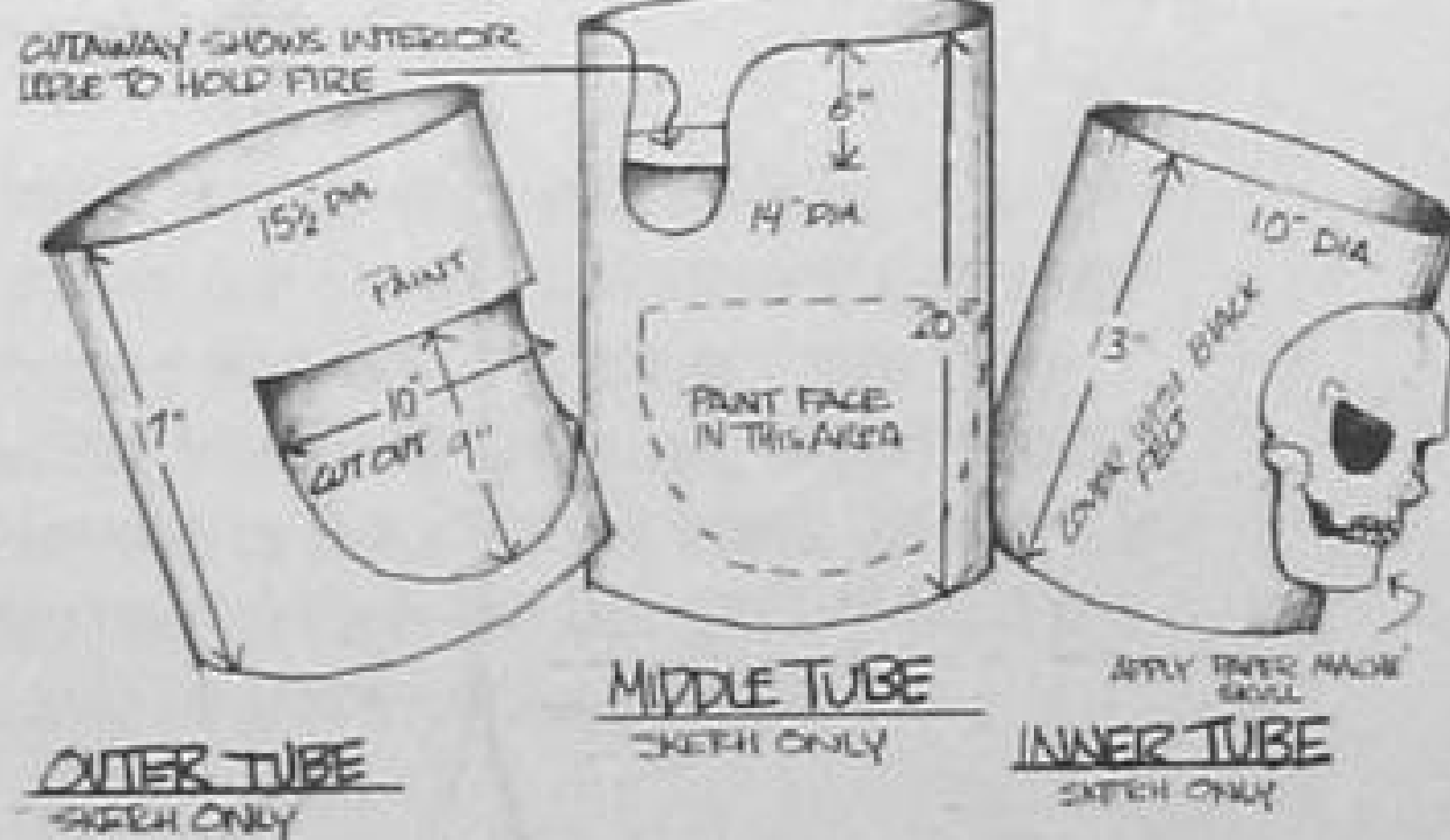
CORNER UPRIGHTS REMOVED FOR CLARITY



PLAN VIEW - BASE

# THE FLAMING ALTER OF MOCHICA

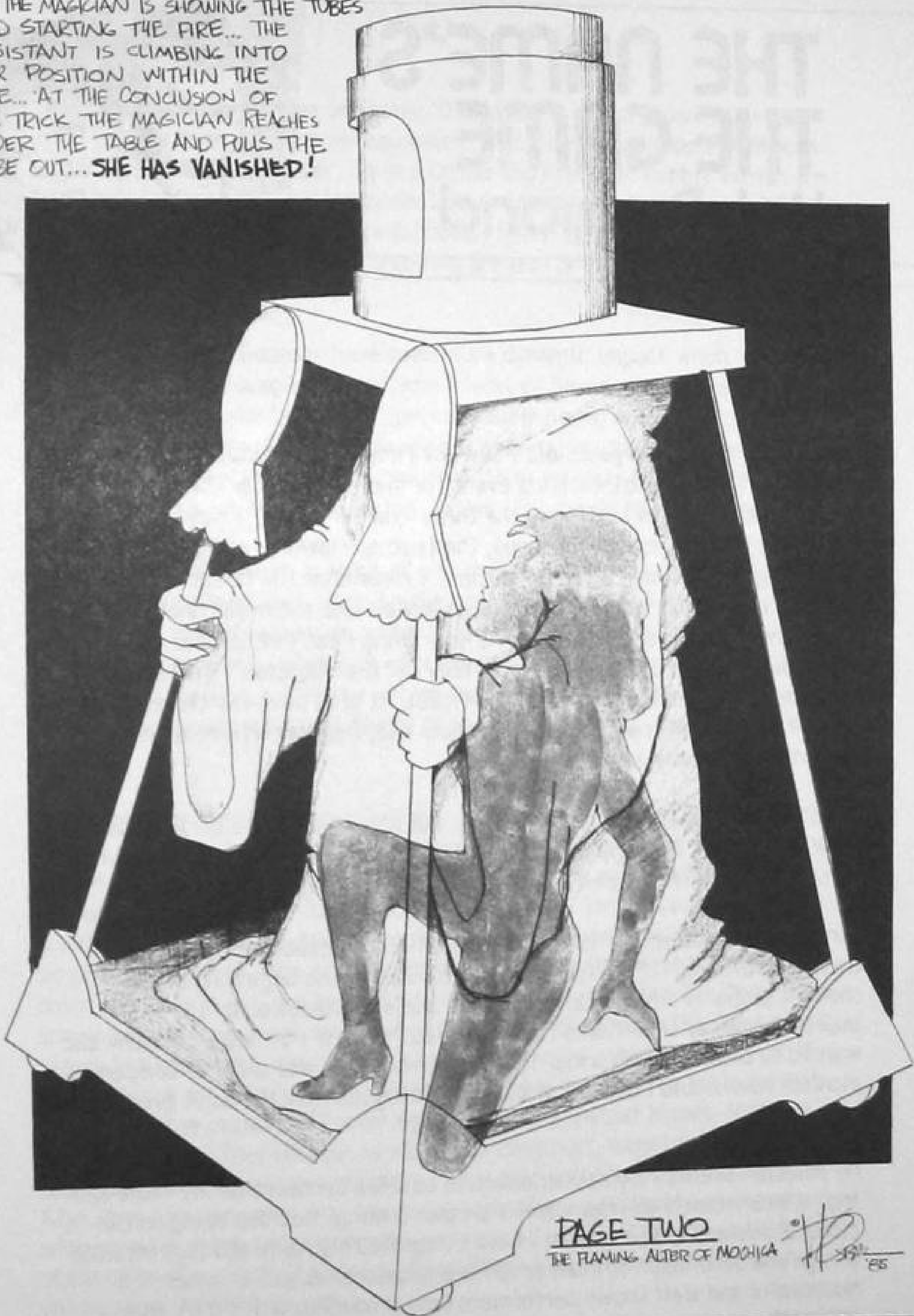
DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE '85 SCALE 1/2" = 10"



PAGE ONE  
THE FLAMING ALTER OF MOCHICA

*Paul Osborne*

AS THE MAGICIAN IS SHOWING THE TUBES  
AND STARTING THE FIRE... THE  
ASSISTANT IS CLIMBING INTO  
HER POSITION WITHIN THE  
BASE... AT THE CONCLUSION OF  
THE TRICK THE MAGICIAN REACHES  
UNDER THE TABLE AND PULLS THE  
ROBE OUT... SHE HAS VANISHED!



PAGE TWO  
THE FLAMING ALTAR OF MOCHICA

*[Signature]*  
1995

# THE NAME'S THE GAME

Hal Diamond



When I was nine or ten years old I saw my first professional magic show. Naturally, it was a most exciting event for me. I remember the theater, a circus-type tent with seating in the three-quarter round. I remember the tricks, the rice bowls, the hip-hops, the feather flowers, and the nail-biting excitement of the Guillotine. I remember the friend I went with and I remember what the magician looked like and his impressive black cape with red satin lining. The only thing I can't remember is...his name. On the billboard he was listed only as "the Magician." There was no program and his name was not on the ticket. (I still have the ticket.) He never mentioned his name during the show and, thus, he will remain known for posterity simply as, "the Magician."

When I was young this didn't bother me, but now that I am older and have a show of my own, it really does. How I should like to thank this unknown sorcerer who so enraptured me over three decades ago.

Herein lies a problem for many magicians. The audience has no idea who they are watching. If the name was announced at the beginning of the show, it probably was quickly forgotten and overshadowed by the impressive array of wonders that followed. What if I owned a company and wanted to book this performer for my open house, trade show or company picnic? How would I stand a chance of calling this guy if I don't even know his name?

My solution to this very real dilemma is to make certain that my name and logo are constantly in view while I am performing. Besides being on the tickets, posters and programs, I have integrated my name and logo into the design and decoration of many props and illusions. A look at other successful and well known performers (and products!) will verify this approach.

It is fortunate for me that the name "Diamond" is also a geometric shape and I employ it on much of my equipment. Small pieces of apparatus such as the Crystal Silk Cylinder, Square Circle and Flip Over Rabbit Vanish are each personalized and unified by design. Granted, your name may not be a geometric shape but you do have initials, right? So use them! Spray painting, stencils and even air brushing are pretty easy to do and the results are super.

Larger tricks and illusions have even more dynamic impact when customized. Many magicians perform a Nest of Boxes. Several wisely elect to have the stacked boxes spell out their name; one letter on each box. This is excellent. The audience not only enjoys seeing a great trick unfold, but also witnesses the construction of a tower of boxes and the clever spelling out of the magician's name. It's really three tricks in one.

I play my Nest Of Boxes in front of a backdrop displaying my name so instead of spelling it out again on the boxes, I have opted to have glittering diamond shapes on opposite sides of each box. The nest is constructed on a base of rolling casters. As I produce each box and place it on top of the last, I give the entire stack a good spin. As they twirl, the dazzling diamonds produce a flurry of rotating sparkles. It's showy and magical

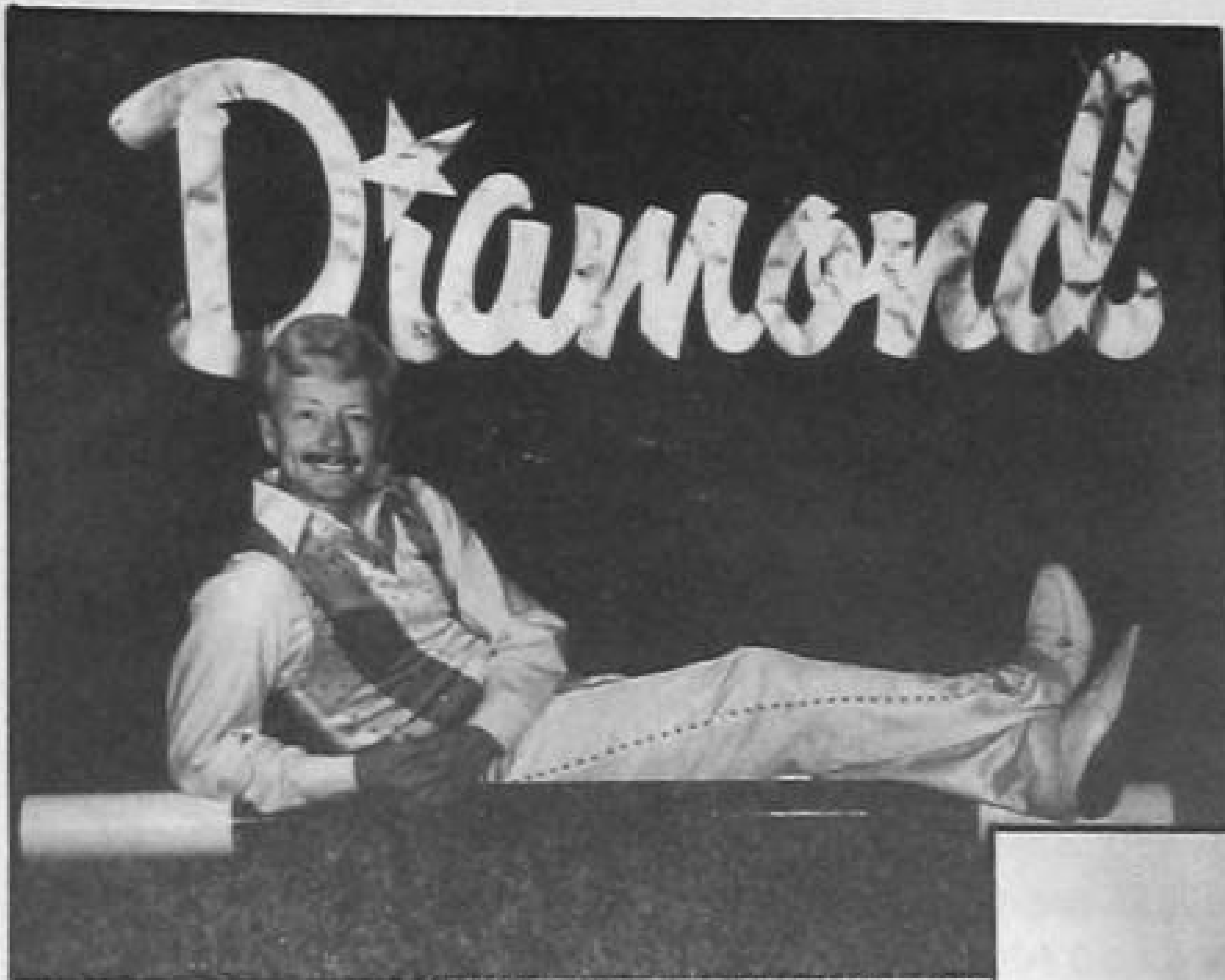
One of my most useful large illusions is a giant box in a box. One big box is lifted out of a larger box, tilted, opened and shown empty. It is replaced inside the larger box and after the magic words are said, voila, popping through the tissue paper tops is the Easter Bunny, Santa Claus, the president of a company, Miss Tootsie Roll or whoever. Basically, it's a large Square Circle. The smaller box's bottom is a trap door that swings down and is held in place by magnets when the box is lifted out, turned and shown empty. The boxes are painted with large diamonds. The front of the bigger box uses a cut out diamond shape with an "H" superimposed over it for the black art. This front panel is detachable so it can be replaced by a Christmas tree cutout, an Easter egg, or for very special shows, the company's logo. This illusion is simple to construct, easy to perform and transport and it plays very strongly. What more could a magician ask for? Also, this is a very easy way to produce a costumed character or someone with no prior stage experience and no time to learn. All they have to do is stand up on cue. I usually have a big countdown and fire a gun. So far, no one has ever missed the cue.

Framing my show and providing background for many illusions are several gigantic, brightly colored backdrops. They make a small act appear large by filling the stage. They also give me an instant "immortality" with my audience. Each drop was made from a good grade of cotton duck and fireproofed. They were painted with acrylic scene paints and sewn with a double hem. Along the top are grommets and ties for attaching to stage battens. I place a bright pink tie in the center grommet; this expediates finding the center when hanging the drop. A chain permanently sewn in the bottom hem adds the necessary weight to pull the banner taut and stretch out wrinkles. The entire backdrop folds flat and packs in a suitcase.

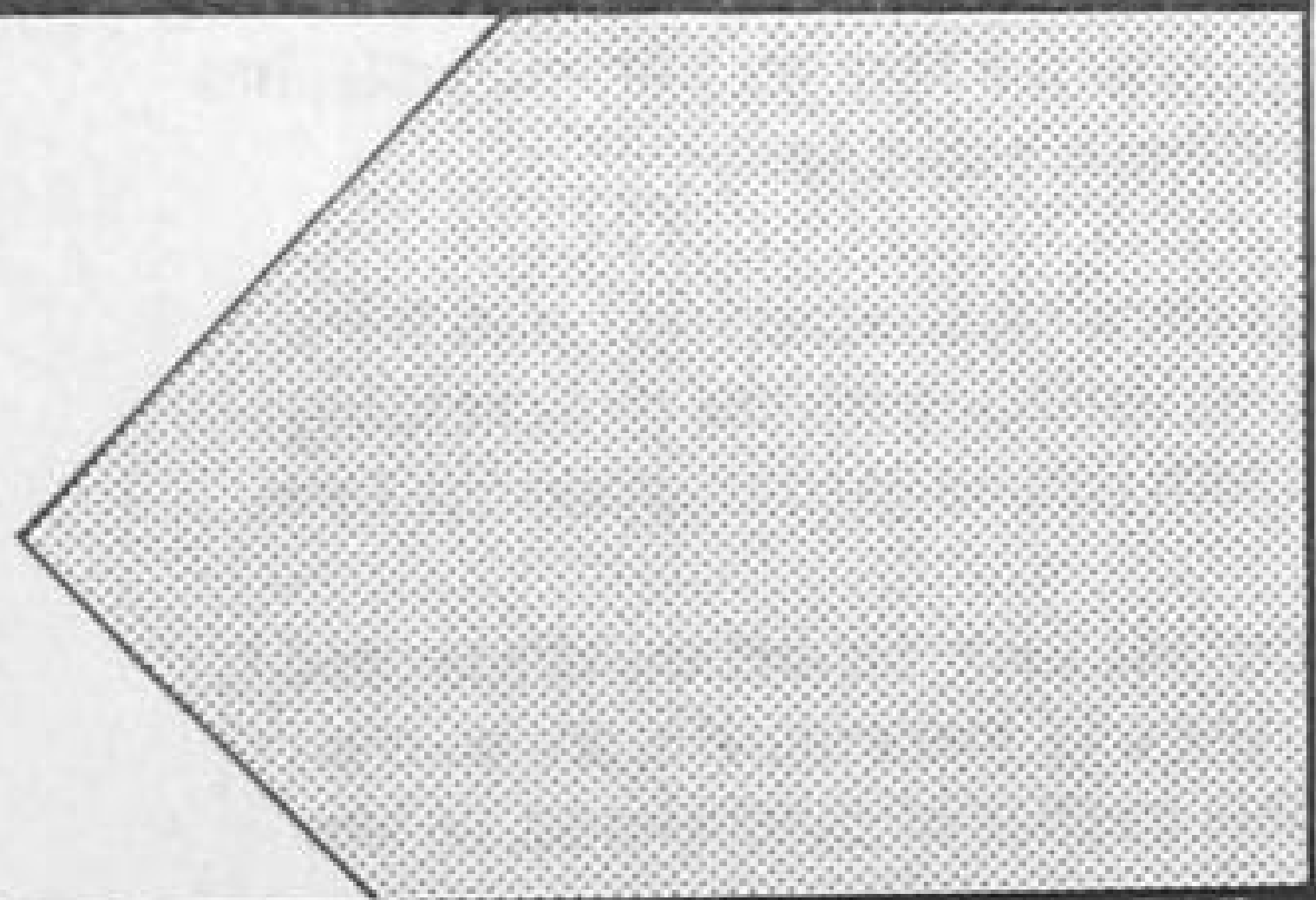
Without question, the most striking theatrical feature of my show is a large, electric rainbow-shaped sign. It measures about nine feet high by fifteen feet wide and contains over 600 individual clear light bulbs that proclaim in a glittering blaze "HAL DIAMOND & COMPANY". It was constructed out of wood and wire by a local carpenter and designed to hang by chains, but it can also stand erect by itself. It's really spectacular, just oozes Las Vegas, and lets the audience know they're in for a great show. For me, it's the ultimate ego trip, and it does impress fellow magicians.

A few may disagree with my entire approach, thinking that all this self glorification might detract from the actual magic. I disagree. You're in show business and as long as it's done with style and taste, this personalization can only add up to added distinction. True, Copperfield and Henning don't have their names tattooed on every piece of apparatus they use, but they get other plugs..such as in the name of the show, opening credits, closing credits, as well as before and after each and every commercial break. That's over fifteen blatant plugs at the very minimum in a one hour show. I'll settle for that any day.





FRIDAY  
ILLUSION



Hal Diamond

# VAMPIRE ILLUSION

An illusion that we, unfortunately don't see much of anymore is the classic "Vampire" illusion. Jack Dean has kindly given me permission to reprint his rare designs on this prop.

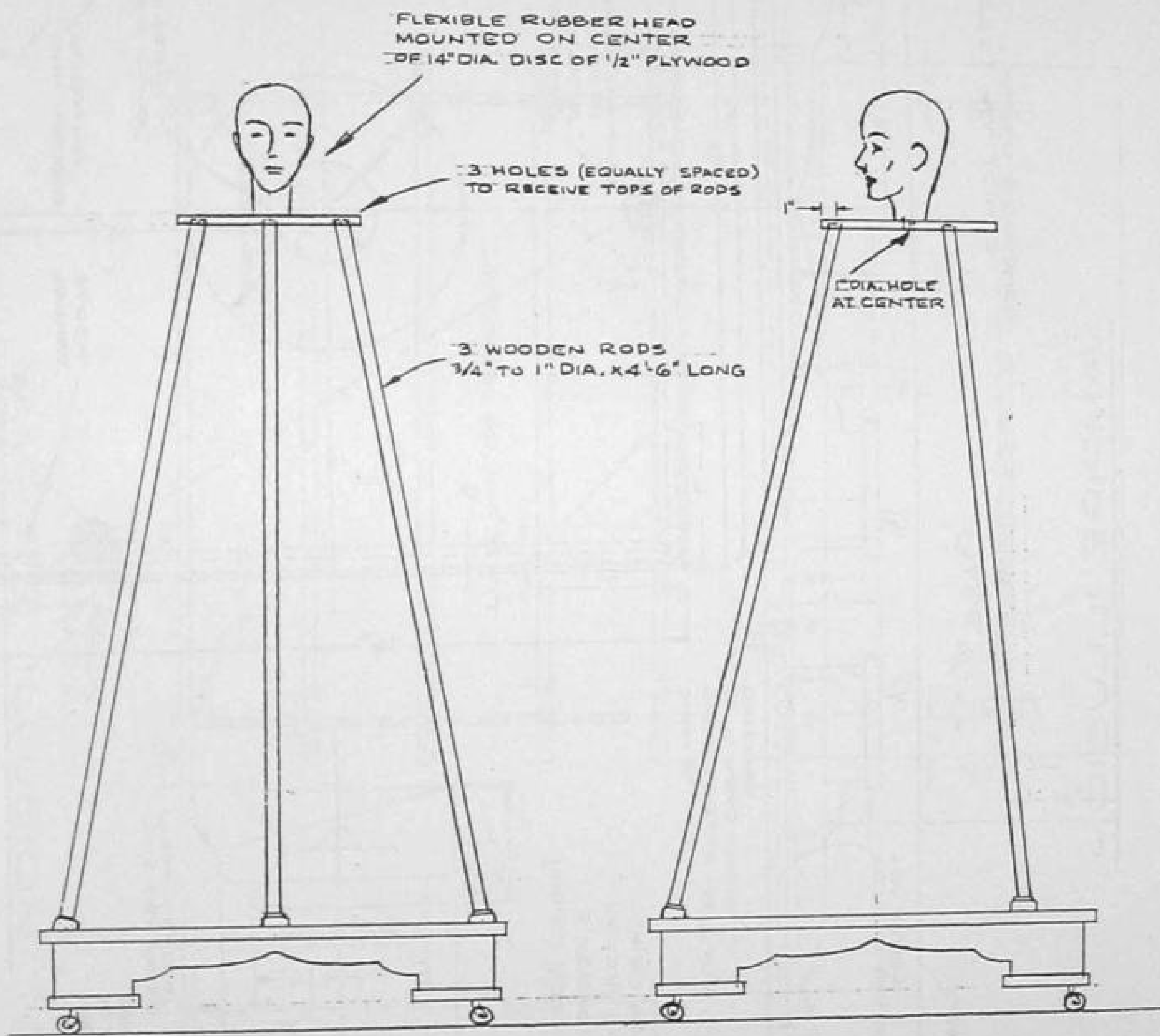


**EFFECT:** A small tripod affair is assembled on stage. A mannequin's head is applied to the top as a wig and robe are also added to the unit. Slowly and deliberately the magician applies make up to the face as, miraculously, his creation comes to life as a living, breathing human beauty!

**METHOD:** Jack's rare, detailed drawings show most aspects of this trick. Basically, this illusion is of the sneak-on variety with the girl creeping into position on the tripod behind the cloth that is used to drape the form.

Initially, the girl is concealed on the clothes rack, behind the drape used to form the robe on the mannequin. Also, the wig, make-up etc. are on the front ledge of the rack. Jack credits this method of concealment to Wm. Larsen Sr. In an effort to do away with the paper-mache head and bust that is usually described, Jack suggests a flexible rubber head attached to the plywood disc. Under cover of the drape and the wig the girl inverts the head assembly and places it into position in the center of the base. She then takes her place inside of the drape and the wig is put on her head. The entire unit has been facing upstage during this, but it is turned 180 degrees at this point and the make-up is applied to the girl's face, wig combed etc. A few magical gestures and slowly the form comes to life.

As you rehearse this illusion you should always be aware of sightlines. Sneak-on illusions can be some of the most mystifying but they can also be tricky to present based on "the worst seats in the house". Check out the side seats or the balcony. Make sure you tape the stage so you hold the drape at the same point each time. Make sure the girl can't be seen as she makes her trek to the tripod. Finally, and this is critical, make sure your girl makes the cross at an off beat moment with perhaps an assistant distracting or misdirecting. Her journey should be fast and accurate, and if you've planned it properly, hopefully no one will see her go!

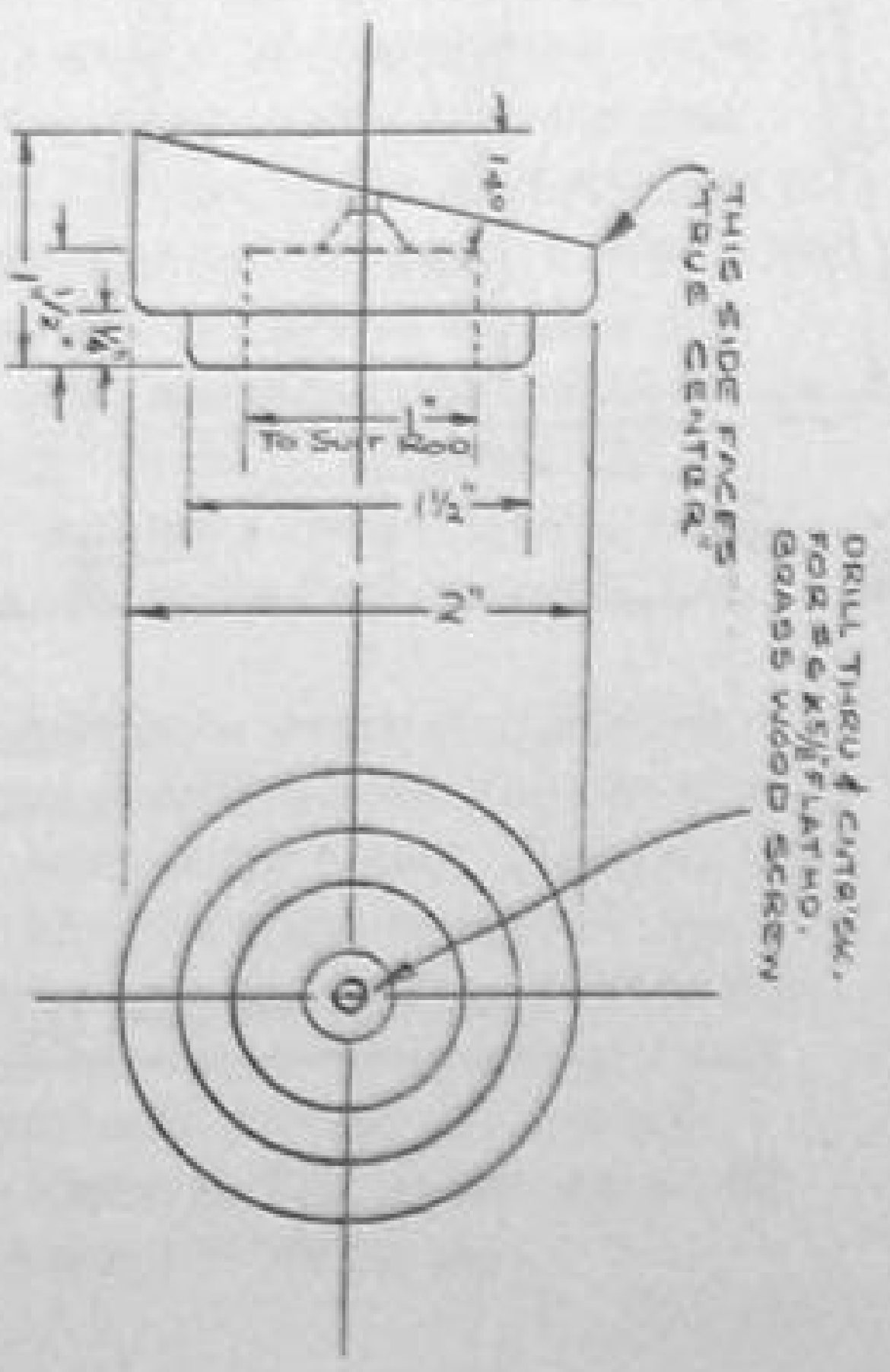
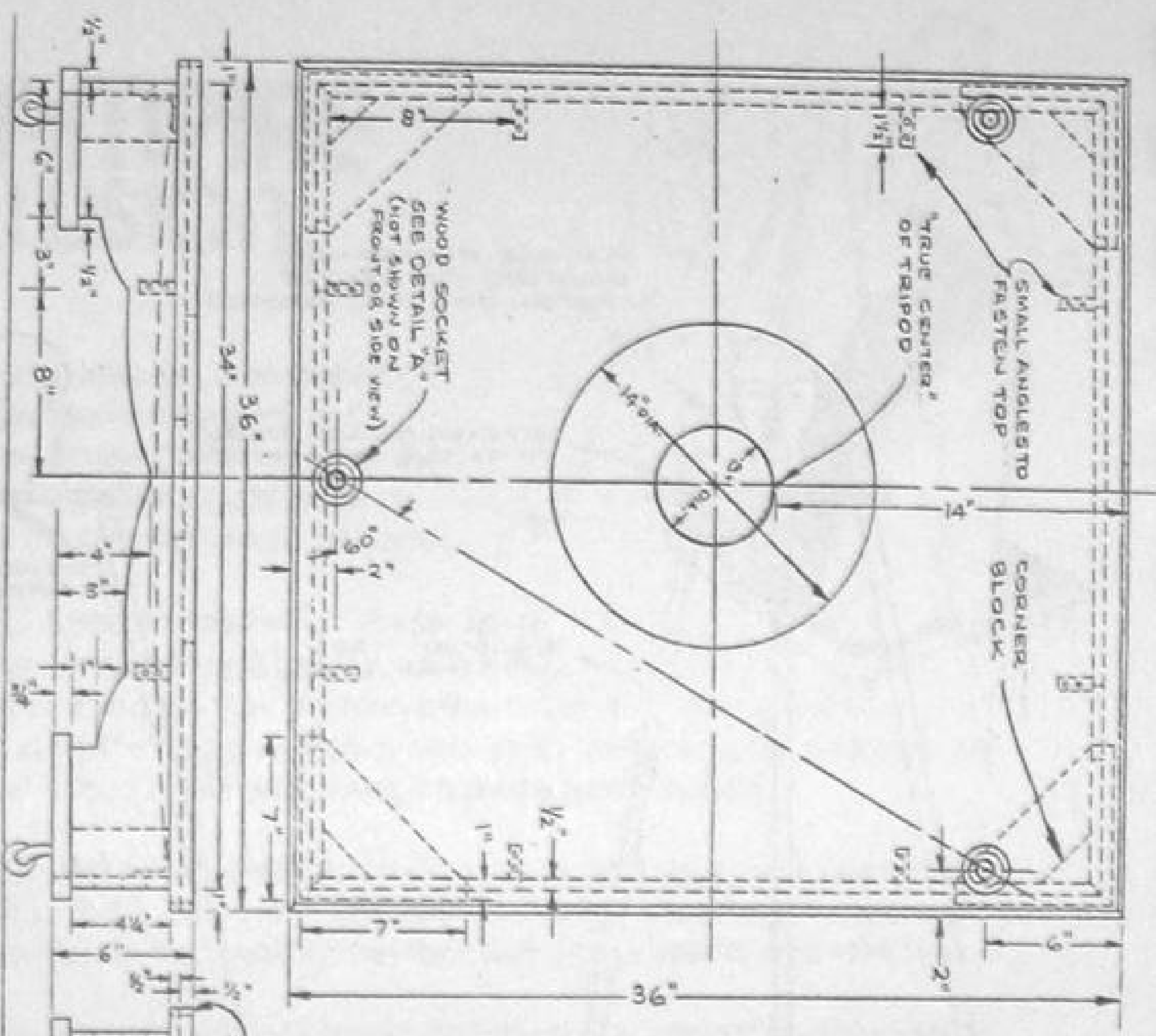


ASSEMBLY

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'

VAMPIRE ILLUSION

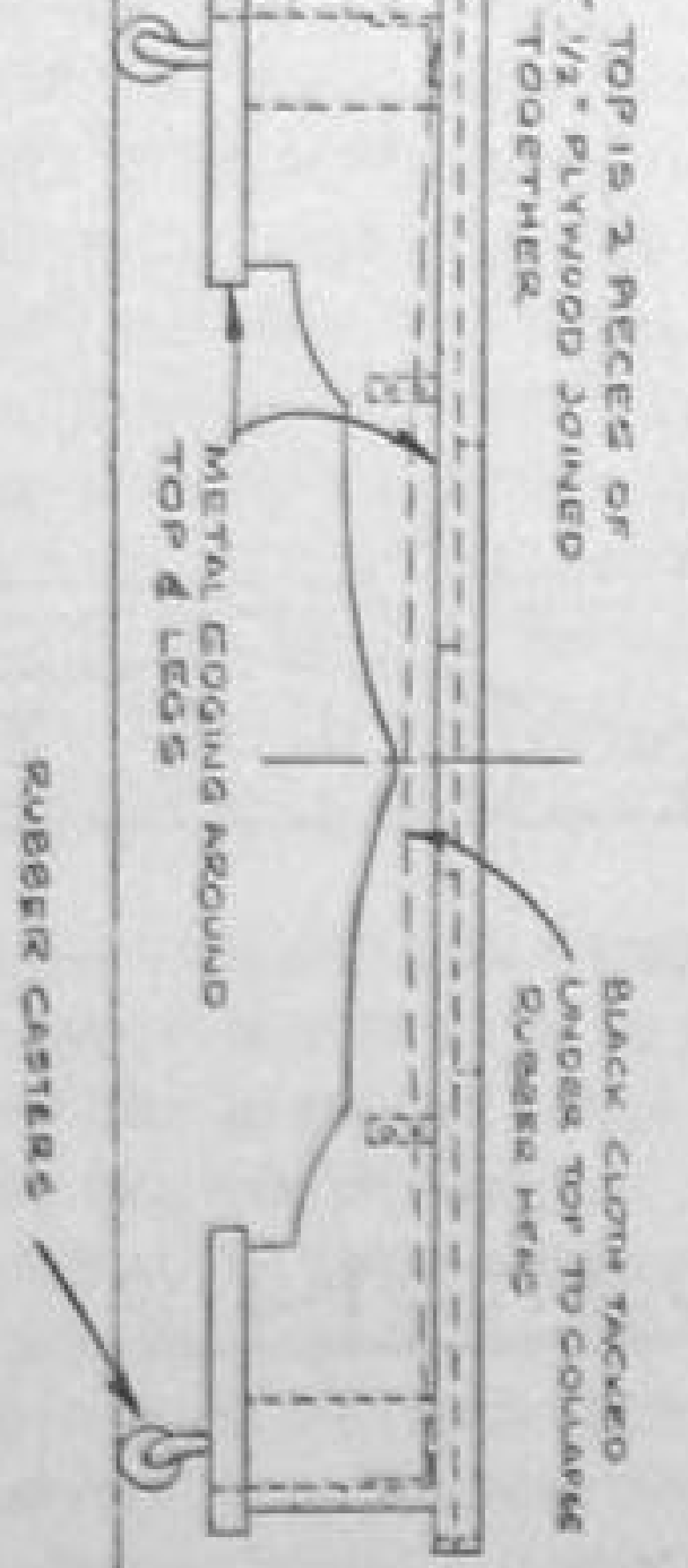




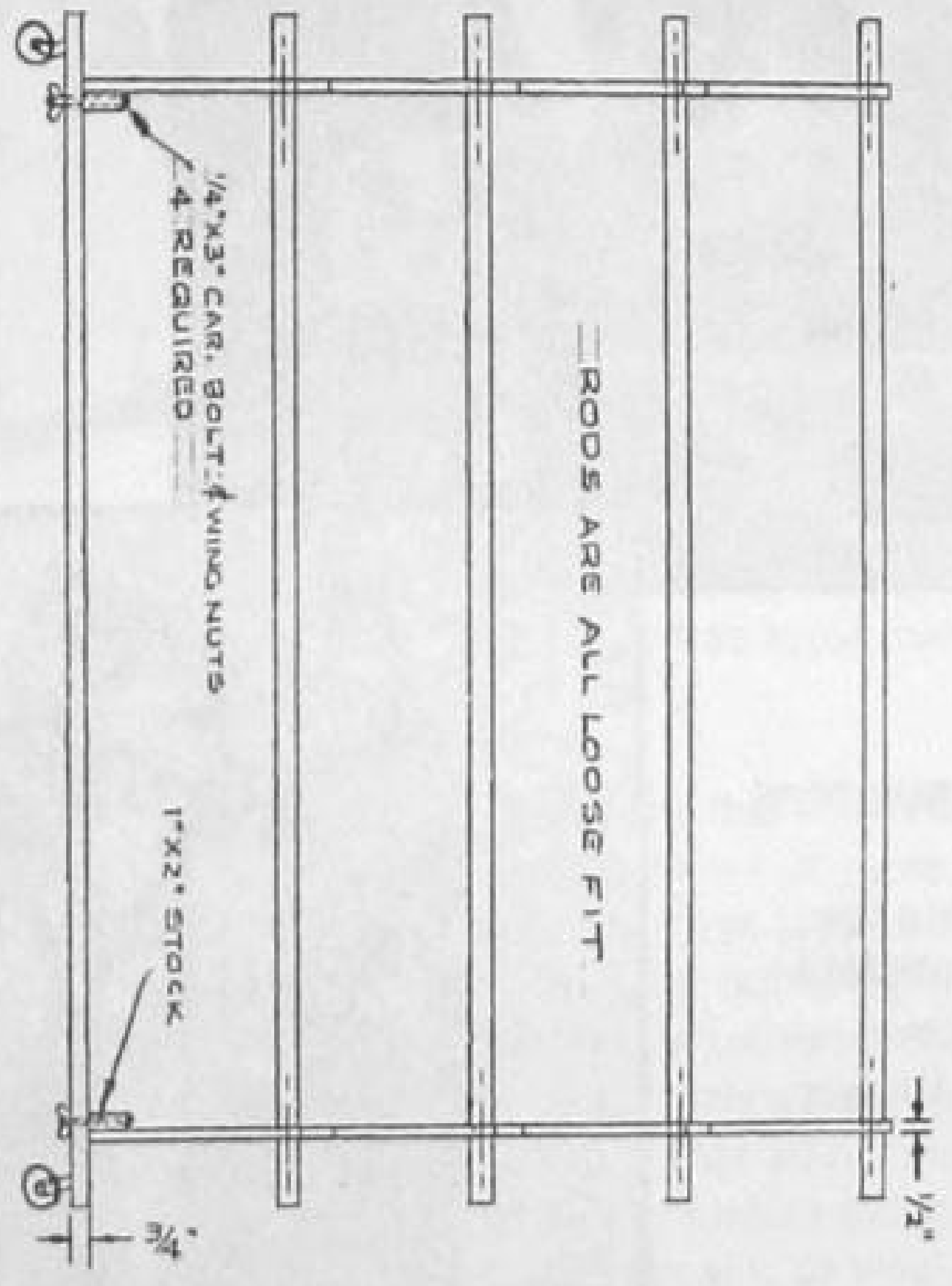
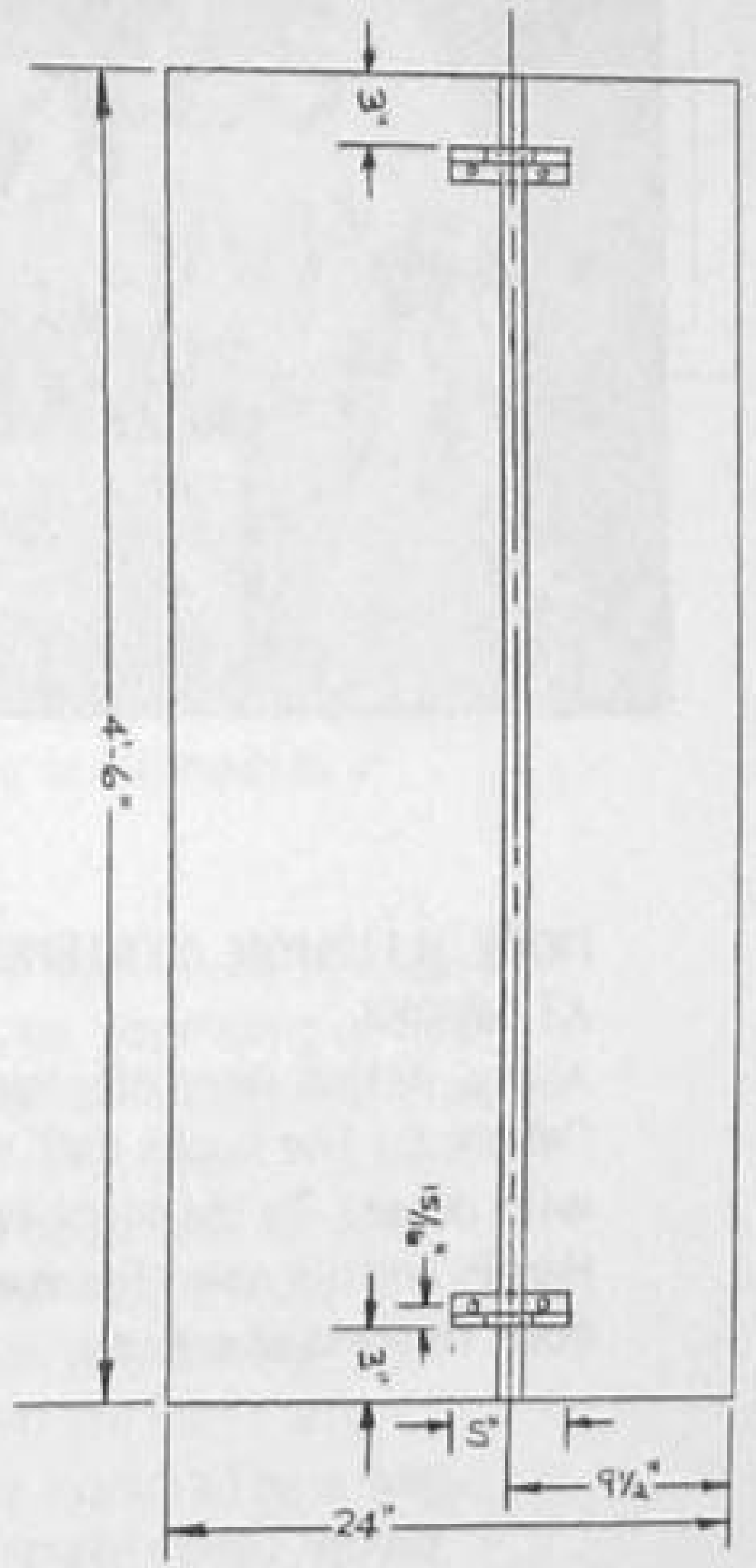
TURNED WOOD SOCKETS  
3 REQUIRED  
DETAIL "A"  
SCALE: 3/8" = 1"

NOTE: ALL JOINTS  
GLUED & SCREWED

BASE  
SCALE: 1 1/2" = 1"

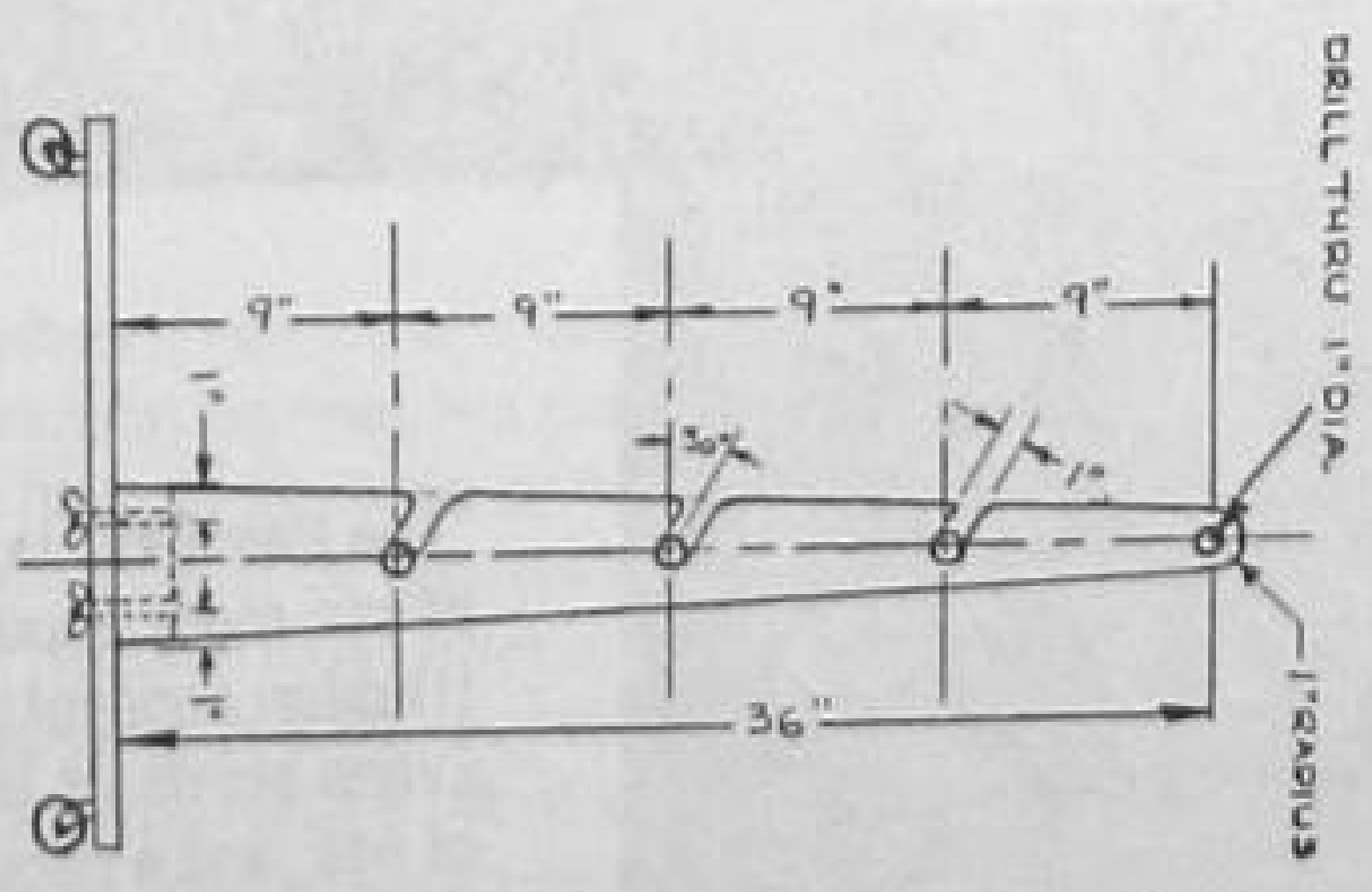


VAMPIRE ILLUSION



RACK  
SCALE: 1"=1'

VAMPIRE ILLUSION



JACK  
DEW



**MORE ILLUSION SYSTEMS' BUILDERS  
AT WORK!**

Above, Arthur Reed displays his new "Where Do The Ducks Go?" - complete with ducks! To the right is Steve Harris and his new "Passkey" Illusion, built by Rand Woodbury.



"The Passkey" is one of our most popular illusion concepts. Mark Evans sends us this photo of his, and a recently completed "Gorilla Cage".



# ILLUSION MODELS

Dennis Fahrig

I would like to offer the following ideas about making scale models of illusions:

1) You as the builder must decide the degree of realism you want to create in your model. Illusion models can be one of three types, depending on how elaborate you want them to be. The first type of model can be described as mostly a toy or decoration for a magic buff's room. In this case, it doesn't require a lot of detail and need not be too exact scale as long as it looks proportioned. For the second type, a more experienced modeler may choose to build on an exact scale so that all his models will belong together and can be displayed on a miniature stage. All the parts will operate just like the full-sized original's, as would be expected by a magic historian or serious collector. The third type, the ultimate model, would not only have the working details, but would also be able to perform the illusion it was patterned after. Actually being able to present it as a trick would justify the extra time and care involved in building it.

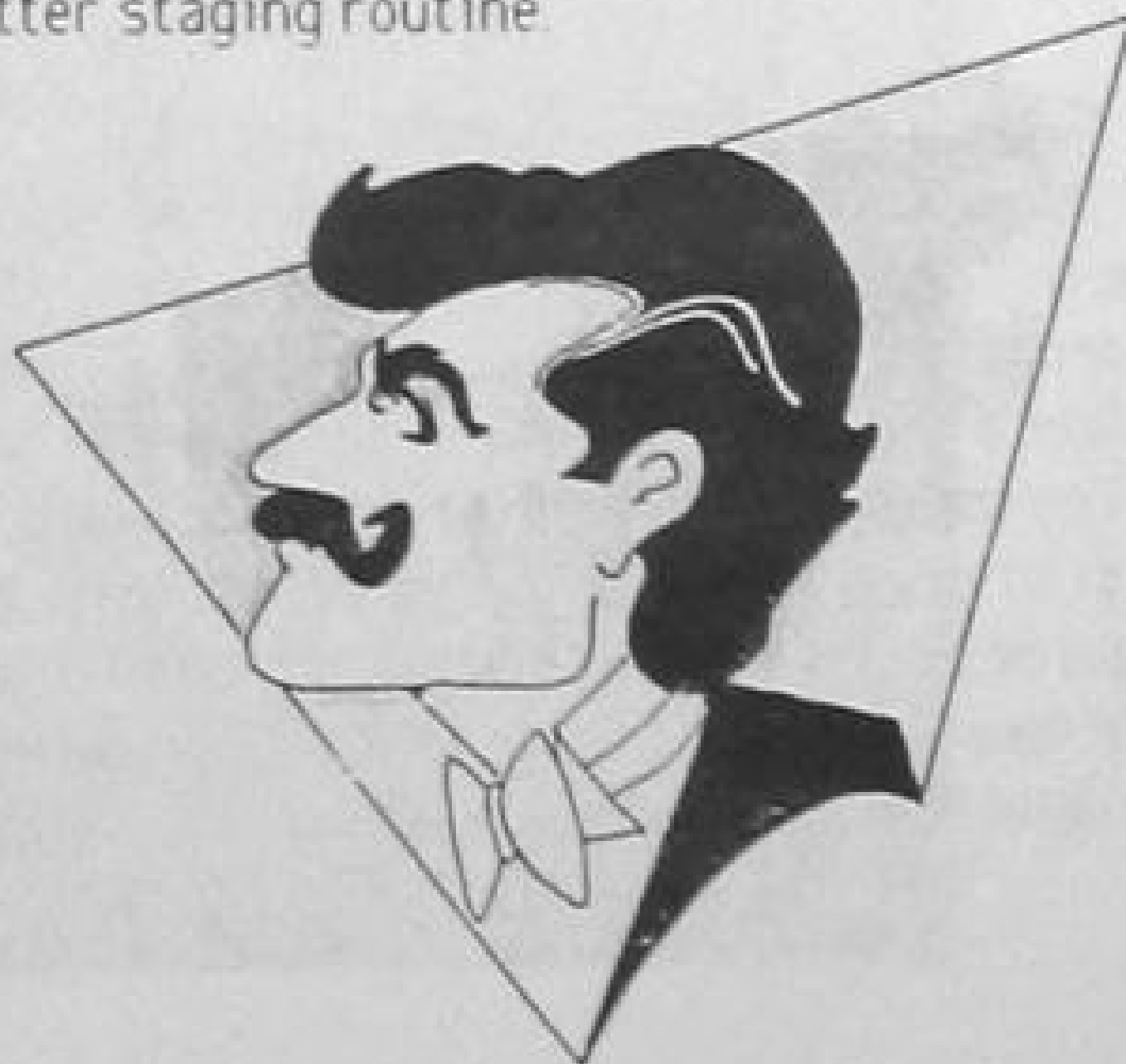
2) When choosing a scale for his model, the builder should take into consideration that his materials must also be scaled down. Metal parts may have to be made by hand if substitutes can't be found. Glass and plastics must be appropriately thinner. Even 1/4 inch plywood used in the real illusion must have a good, easily workable substitute that is reasonably priced. Too small a scale would be hard to work from and would eliminate a lot of detail. Too large a scale would be impractical because then it would be better to build the real thing. I believe 1/4 actual size would be ideal because it would allow good detail, be easy to translate from available plans, and allow materials of a size most people can work with.

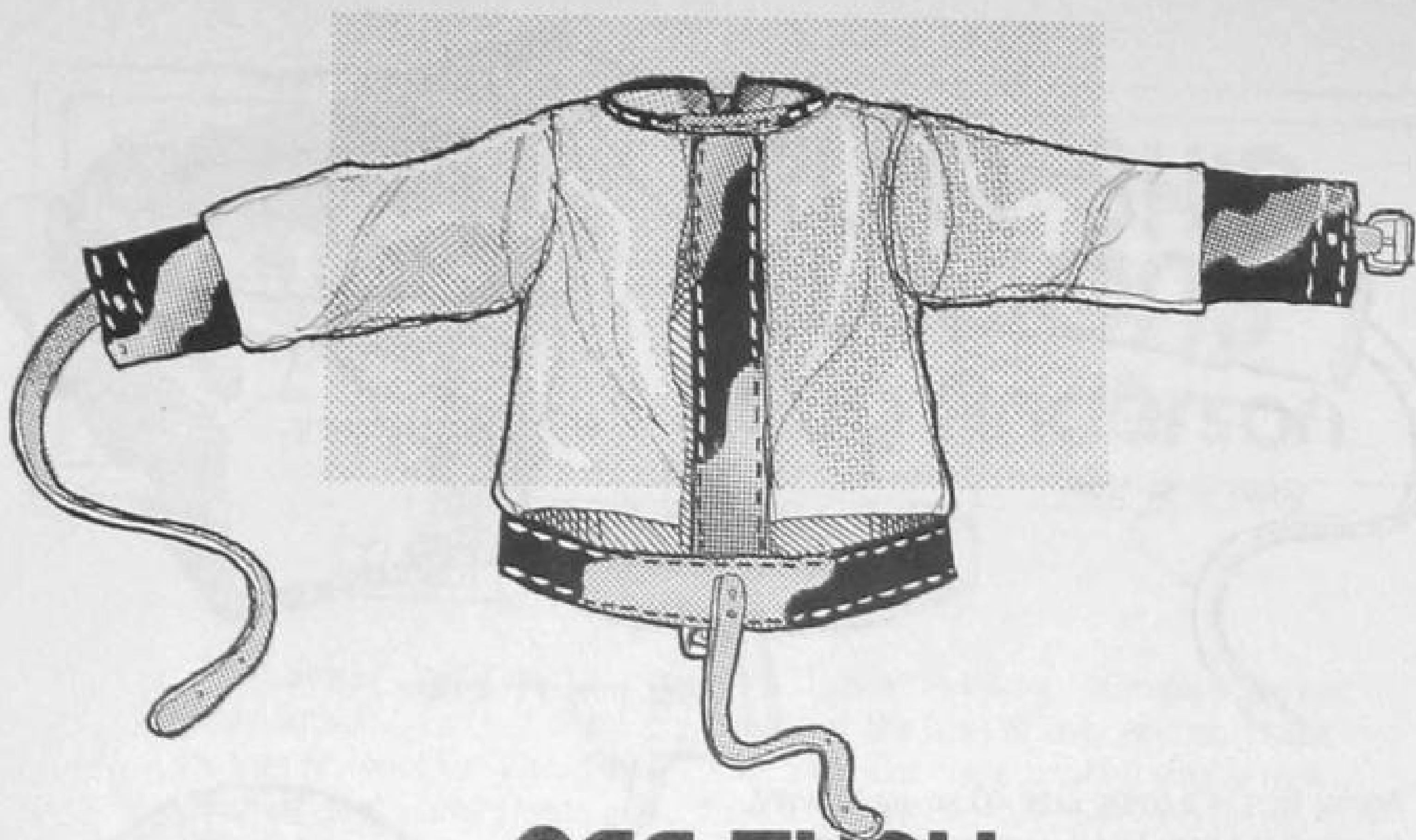
3) Although not necessary, the model illusions would look more realistic if they were accompanied by a miniature version of the female assistant that performs in them. Finding a doll that is fully-jointed, has accurate adult proportions and is within the size range you desire for your model will probably be the most difficult part. For example, if you wanted to

work in 1/4 scale, you would need a doll that was 16 to 17 inches tall to portray a young lady that is 5 ft., 4 in. to 5 ft., 8 in. tall. Fashion dolls such as "Barbie" are roughly 1/6 scale, but are not always realistically proportioned. You may have to adjust your plan's dimensions to suit them. Their advantage is their availability. Extras can be bought so you can make fakes for such illusions as the Mismade Girl or Sawing A Lady In Half

4) In choosing an illusion on which to base the ultimate model, one that can actually perform the illusion it imitates, you have to consider that your miniature assistant will be an inanimate object instead of a talented "box-jumper". Only a few illusions lend themselves to this condition. The Girl Through Glass would work well. The doll could easily be passed through the plexiglass if an undetectable way of raising the glass could be imitated by a model. Small versions of the chopper effects could be duplicated if you are good at working with small metal parts.

5) Models can be used to help visualize how the real illusion would look before going to the expense of building it full size. Seeing it from different angles may reveal flaws and suggest improvements. Trying a different color scheme on your model would be much easier than having to re-paint your real equipment. Playing around with the model might help you plan a better staging routine.

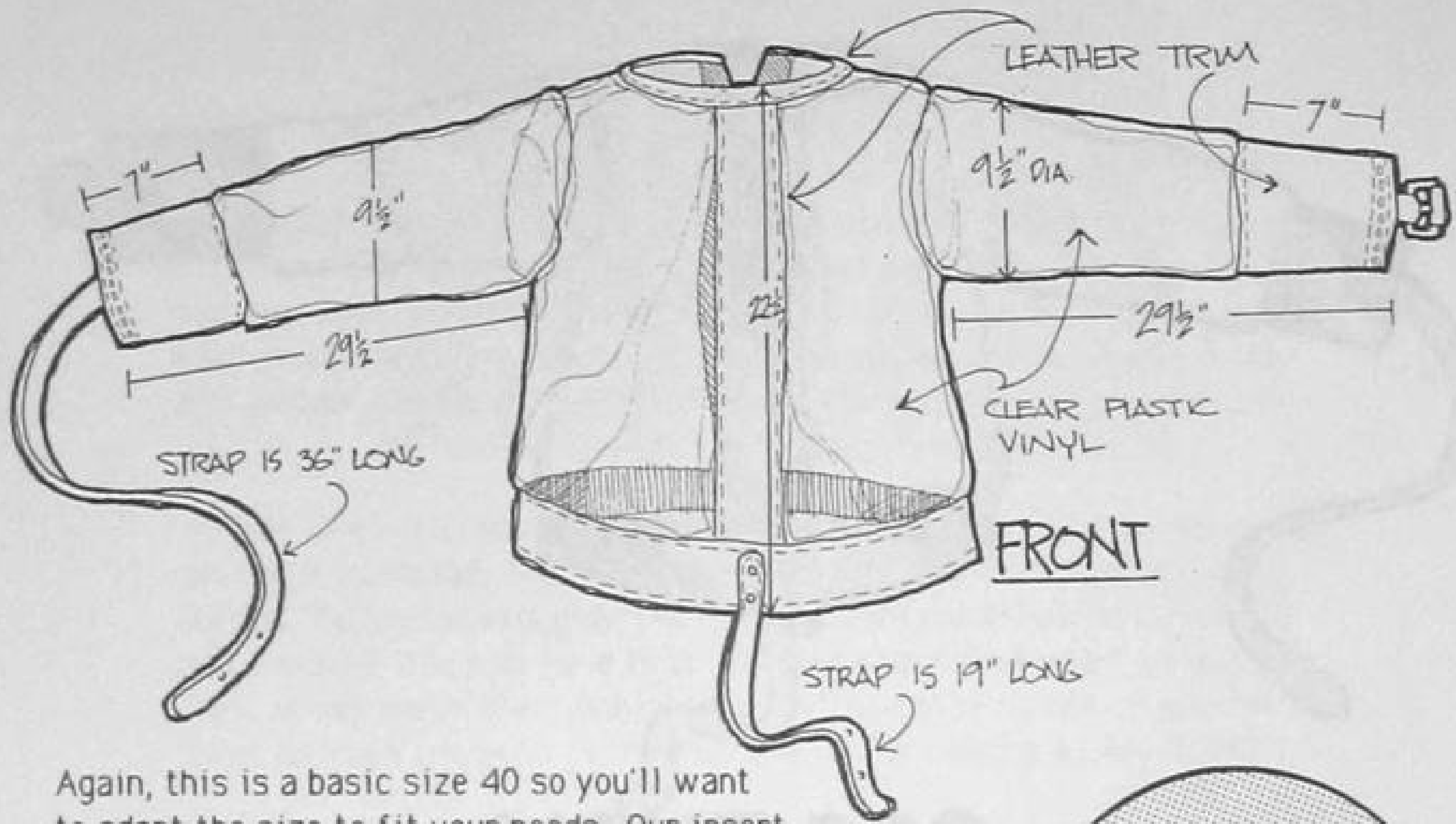




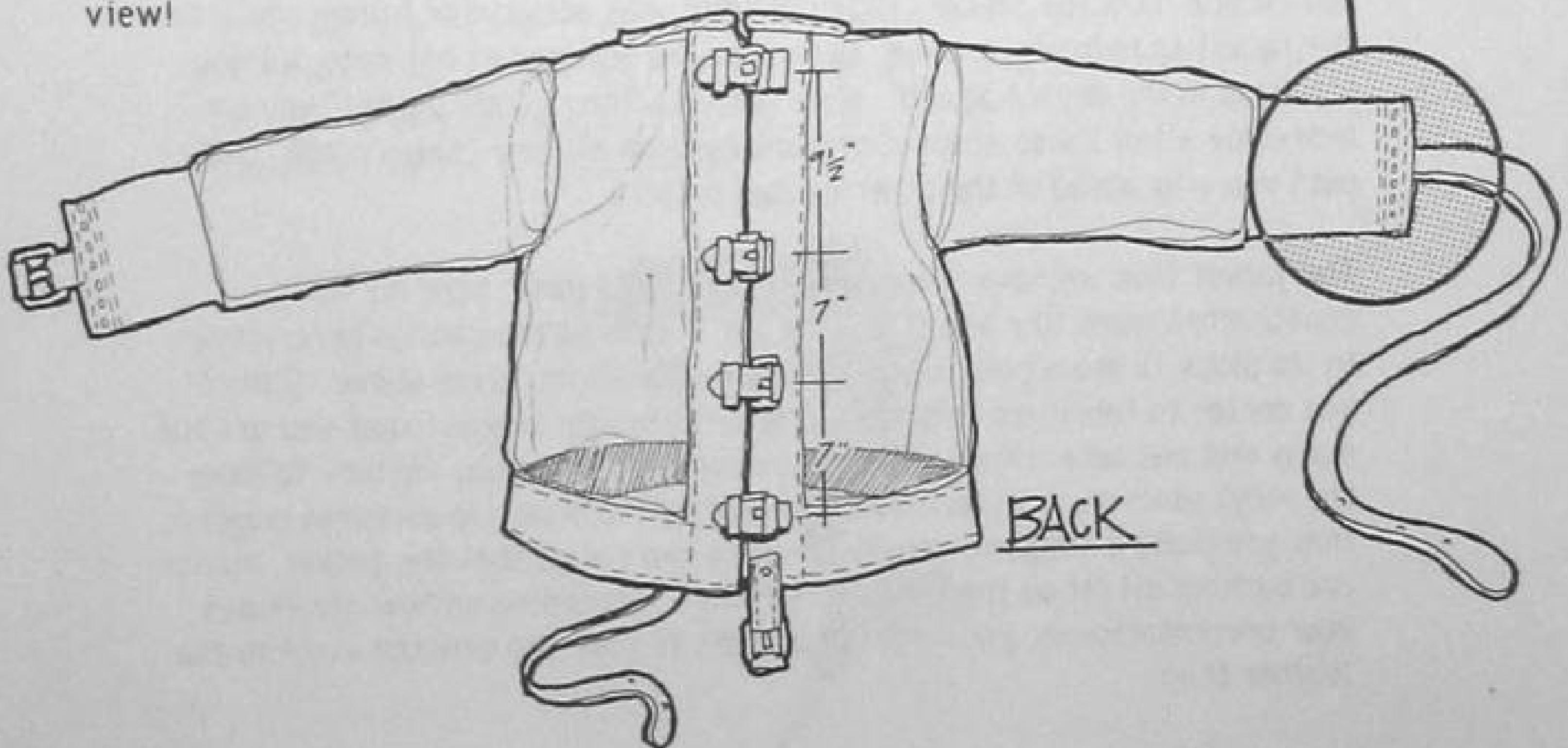
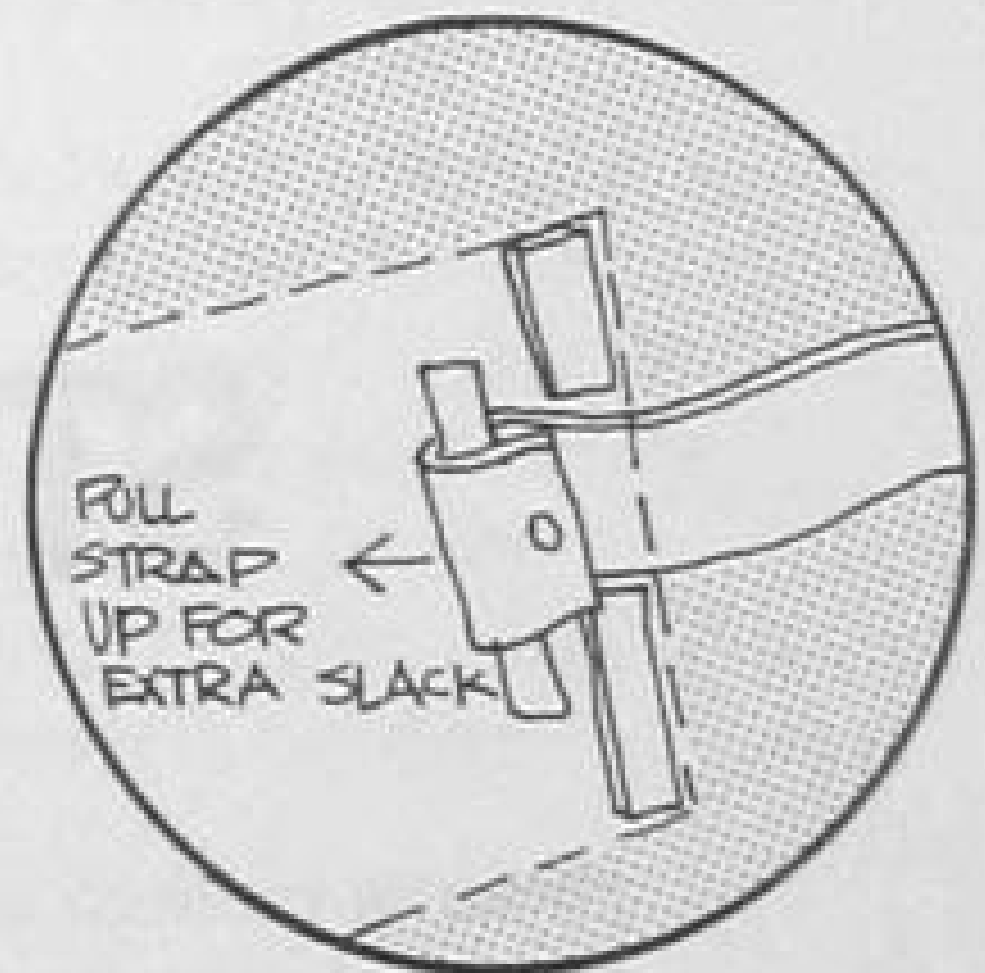
## SEE THRU STRAIT JACKET

Michelle came up with this idea and I think it's fabulous. At last something new in escapes! Imagine out doing Houdini and telling your audience that they... "will have a clear view of your body at all times as you escape from the jacket. Often Houdini was accused of hiding tools in the jacket to help him escape. Often he was accused of not even putting his arms in the device at all!" With the "See Thru Strait Jacket" you can overcome all of these accusations and have an all new "sales pitch" that puts you way ahead of the other escape artists.

The jacket that we have illustrated for you is a basic size 40. It is constructed much like other jackets but of course the canvas is no longer. In its place is sewn clear vinyl much like our illustration above. Should you decide to fabricate this item yourself I would suggest that you get the materials and take them to a costume house or wardrobe factory to have the vinyl sewn on with an industrial quality machine. I would also suggest that you make a simple cloth mock-up to make sure that the jacket, straps and buckles all fit as they should. Finally, depending on how strenuous your presentation is, you might also want to glue and sew the vinyl to the leather trim.



Again, this is a basic size 40 so you'll want to adapt the size to fit your needs. Our insert drawing shows the gimmick that allows you to get extra slack in the restraint. The leather cuff hides from view the fact that you are pulling up the arm strap prior to you being buckled in. Once you are pulled "as tight as possible" into the jacket then you merely release the slack which enables you to separate your arms and reach back, unbuckling the top buckle which gives you enough space to wiggle out of top of the jacket...all in full view!





# CRUISE SHIP ILLUSIONS

Doug Anderson

The name of Paul's smallest books is "Illusion Planning". If memory serves me correctly, (I can't check my copy as at the time of this writing, I'm on a ship en route to Cairo, Egypt!) Paul mentions some locals trying to book a show at a nearby theme park. They wanted to feature the Lion's Bride, but were unaware where to get the cat, where to house it, and if they had enough room on stage and backstage to perform it. The point? The same problems exist on cruise ships...increased ten-fold. Before considering an illusion you want to do on a ship, ask yourself these questions.

- 1) Is it entertaining?
- 2) Is it crated and easily shipped?
- 3) Is it virtually angle-proof 3/4 of the way around you?
- 4) Is it visible from your waist level up?
- 5) Can it be performed with a reasonable amount of safety, even in rough seas?
- 6) Does it require livestock?
- 7) Does it require more than one assistant?
- 8) Does it require special tools, even for minor repairs?
- 9) Is the music on cassette?

You should ask yourself these questions for every illusion up for consideration.

A normal schedule for a ship will require you to do two completely different 30 minute performances. Logically, it would be impractical to do a show with illusions only. Figuring the maximum time an illusion should be allotted is 2 minutes, 30 seconds, you would need a minimum of 24 illusions to fill the show length! With this to consider, is it possible to do illusions on a ship? Yes. Is it worth it? Definitely! Mind you, I'm not talking about flying 48,000 pounds of props to Portugal so you can perform a 12 day cruise, I'm talking about 1-3 illusions to punch the end of a good stand up routine. O.K., let's attack the questions



\*1: Obviously the illusion should be entertaining. If not, you won't get re-hired. Cruise ships cater to adults. Don't gear the illusions towards children.

\*2: Another obvious one. Since you will have to ship the illusions, it is practically mandatory that they be crated. You have got to protect your livelihood and investment. I just had the anvil crate for my Sub Trunk re-built due to a shipping company ramming it with a forklift. I shudder to think what the prop would look like if I had shipped it in a cardboard box. As I sometimes keep the illusions in my cabin, the crates are on wheels to facilitate the moving of the illusions to and from the showroom. I always re-pack the props in the crates to keep them safe from vandalism and prying eyes. I have my home address stenciled on the outside of the crates, so shipping companies will easily find the return spot. A "stick-on" address label takes care of the forwarding address of the ship. For me, I pay the cost of shipping and get reimbursed for the full amount.

\*3: As ships vary, so do working conditions. If you're working the dance floor variety, chances are that some of the audience will be sitting behind you. As a result, you can't do things like the Disembodied Princess or Cutting In Thirds (the mirror version). In fact, I had to re-work my version of the spot card (What's Next) due to people sitting behind me. It's rather difficult to re-work the support mechanism for an Aga Levitation.

\*4: Since a lot of the showrooms have the audience sitting on the same level or only slightly tiered, magic that takes place below waist level is waste level. People sitting beyond the 5th or 6th row will not be able to see the action unless they stand up. If everyone stands up, it blocks the view again. A standard Doll House, Crystal Casket, Headchopper, all fall into this "waste level" category. The Sub Trunk, the Zig Zag, Modern Cabinet, Lion's Bride - all of these have something magical happening above waist level, so the audience can see the effect without craning their necks.

\*5: Here's a doozey of a problem: I had my lunch plate and a glass of iced tea sitting on a table. I looked down at it and, without anyone touching it, it slid off the table! The ship had suddenly lurched and leaned way over to one side. Now, imagine an assistant, supposedly in a trance, with the nape of her neck resting on the point of a sword, and that happens....Anything top heavy or on casters is a potential danger. I'm not saying you can't do these things, only that if you are booked to do a show while at sea, and the sea is rough, be prepared to drop the effect, or suffer the possible consequences. One easily transported effect that doesn't take up much room, is lightweight, and would be great when the ship is docked or in calm weather, is the Broom Suspension. True, it is top heavy, but it's visible above waist level (unlike the Sword Suspension), it is a type of "levitation" (in the audience's mind they don't realize the subtle differences we do), and can be safely performed while docked or in calm weather. It would be difficult to do a Cutting in Half with only one assistant. You can't keep track of the two separate boxes if the ship suddenly leans. Hang onto the head box, and the foot box runs on its own accord into the front row! For practical purposes, if you want to do a cutting trick, I would suggest the Zig Zag. If you think that trick is overdone, (it isn't in the lay audience's mind) then you could do the Cutting In Thirds (base method). It's visible and doesn't have the angle problems. Also, you can have locking casters installed to keep the box from rolling around without hampering the effect.

\*6: If you require livestock for the effect, (Where Do The Ducks Go?, Vanishing Birdcage, etc.) you will have to get forms to take the livestock out of the country. This usually takes a while and you'll need to contact the U.S. Department of Agriculture to get the correct forms. And find out the location of the closest consulate of the country you're importing the animals to. While this hasn't happened to me, I've heard several stories (backed up from several sources) about a magician who didn't have the correct forms, got to his destination, and officials KILLED his doves! 'Nuff said. Now, if you're thinking of doing a Lion's Bride, you'll run into the

same problem as the kids Paul mentioned in "Illusion Planning". There just isn't enough room to house the illusion and the animal. Plus, what will you do if you are a day at sea, with three days at sea to go, and you run out of food for the cat? Feed him the assistant that quit without notice? Too late, she's already gone. Sure, you could probably get some food from the kitchen, but when working ships, it's better not to cause any more work or problems than absolutely necessary, so plan ahead. Crew personnel, for some reason, don't like to do more than their share of work. Can you blame them? They work sometimes 16 hours a day, whereas you only do about 2 hours worth of work (that they see) per cruise. Why should they bend over backwards to get something for you?

\*7: The more assistants you require, the more cabin space will be required, the more plane fares you'll have to pay for, the more money you'll spend on assistants. The ideal situation is to use illusions that only require one assistant, and get that assistant from one of the dancers already on board. True story: I used an assistant on a particular ship. Someone I had used before and trusted. She got a free cruise, free air fare, free room and board, plus \$100.00 per week. All that was required of her was to do the Sub Trunk twice per the 16 day cruise, and abide by the rules of the ship. We were 3 hours from leaving Los Angeles to do Transcanal (Panama Canal) bound for Ft. Lauderdale. She (after causing numerous problems in other areas) quit without notice. She upset a lot of people by doing this and it was a bad reflection on me. She was my employee. I quickly realized the advantages of using someone already on board. They already have their own cabin space, no air fare to worry about, and I pay them one fourth of what I was paying originally. Check with the cruise line or your agent beforehand to make sure this arrangement is O.K.

\*8: If you are relying on certain illusions, what happens if something goes wrong and the prop needs to be repaired? Like finding food for an animal, if you are three days at sea, and your props need special tools to repair them, will you have the tools available? It would be in the best interest if

all your props could be repaired, assembled, taken apart, etc. with normal small hand tools. My Sub Trunk can be repaired with a flat blade screwdriver, dog bone wrench or pliers, and a hammer; all of which I carry in the crate. I also have a small sewing kit to repair the curtain or sack. If, for some reason, a lock jams, I have two extra. If the shackles break (highly unlikely), I have a set of thumbcuffs for my close-up act I can substitute. Illusion planning.

\*9: The cruise director has the authority to shorten the length of your show to best serve the passengers and itinerary of the ship. If you are planning on doing a 30 minute show with all illusions, all taped on cassette, what happens to your music if the cruise director asks you to only do 15 minutes? For this reason, if at all possible, get the music on score sheets so it can be played by the band on board. This has a two fold advantage: A: They can delete music easier if your show is shortened. B: They can "vamp", or keep playing a certain piece over and over again if you get behind for some reason. If you have the music on tape and you would like to get it transferred to sheet music, talk with one of the band members on board. One of them can usually do it for a surprisingly low fee. The main illusion I like to do on ships is, of course, the Sub Trunk. It is virtually angle proof, entertaining, visible, can be safely performed even in rough weather, requires no livestock, is easy to ship and assemble, doesn't require special tools for assembly or repair and uses only one assistant. The routine I do is the same one found in my "Drive 'Em Nuts!" lecture notes, only slightly re-worked to use one assistant. I make it a point to ask passengers (when they come up and tell me how much they enjoyed the show) which trick they liked best. They always say the Sub Trunk. Whether it really was their favorite or the only one they remember doesn't matter to me. At least they remembered it! Have an act together and spice it up with an illusion or two. Of course you can do as many as you want, and if you do only one it doesn't have to be the Sub Trunk, but keep these things in mind. I've mentioned them several times during the course of this chapter, but what the heck, I've a few more minutes before the dinner gong sounds, so I'll repeat myself. I've a few more minutes

before the dinner gong sounds, so I'll repeat myself. (That's a little joke there, in case you didn't catch it.) Keep any illusions you're considering for ships'entertaining, portable, safe, angle proof, and visible. Happy Cruising!

P.S. If you are doing a Sub Trunk or a Zig Zag, you won't have to worry about the trick being exposed when Customs' officials search through the crate looking for contraband. I wonder what would happen if they decided to do a thorough search and came across the feet, crotch and bust of a woman for the Mismade Girl! Reminds me of Mike Caveney's three handed juggling routine with sawn off arms....





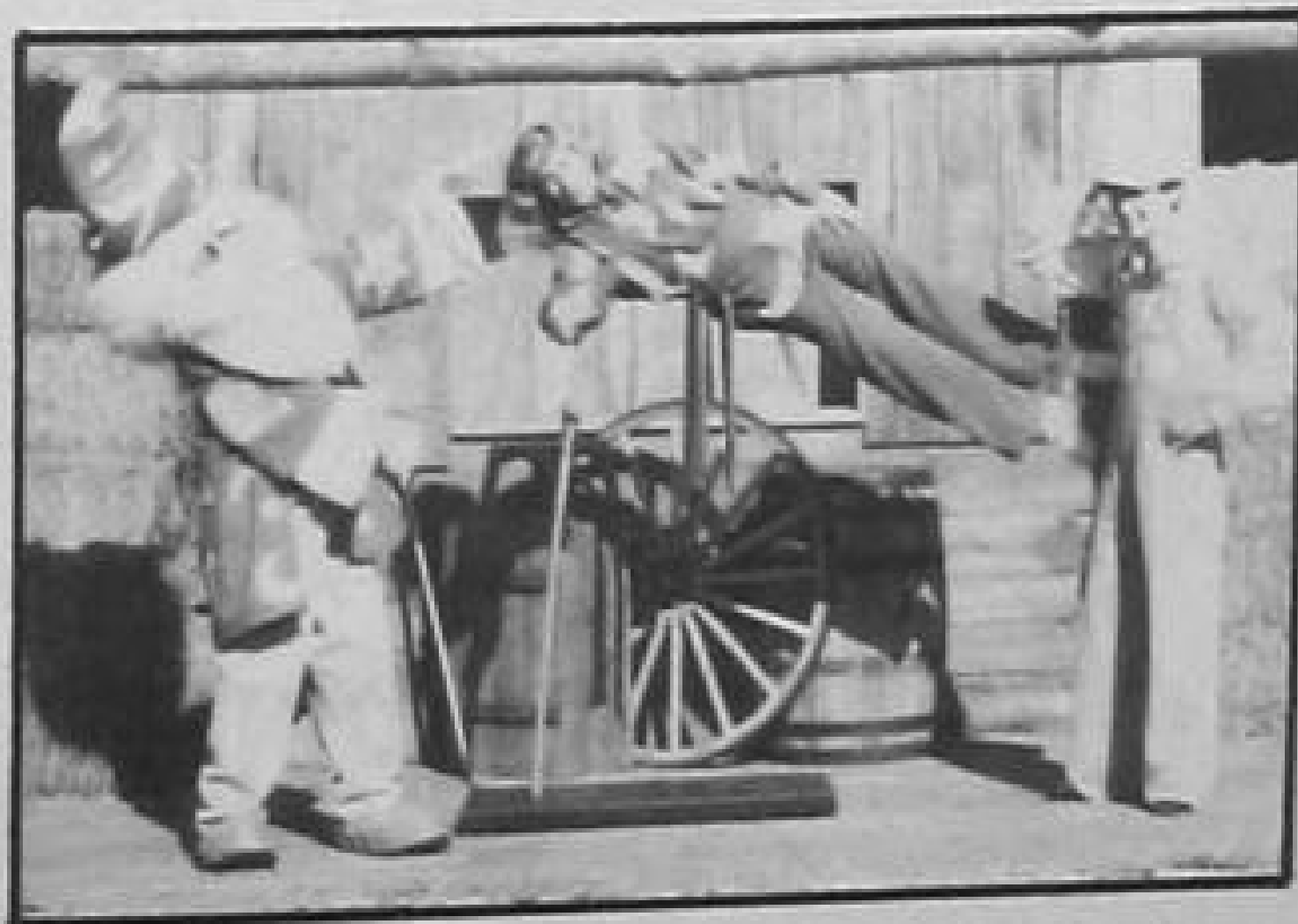
For three seasons "Schroeder" has managed our western styled magic show and Bill Baldwin is new this season managing and assisting in Merlin's Broom Suspension in our "Fantasy Follies" show. Here are some ideas from both of them...

## SCHROEDER

"Always try to buy casters for your illusions that unbolt from the main frame. That way on down the line, you can unbolt the wheel part and remove, hairs, threads and debris that accumulates around the center shaft and slows your casters (and prop spinning) down."

## BILL BALDWIN

"The Broom Suspension is the best trick in our show but once I noticed that I didn't hear the familiar 'click' when she went up and I wasn't sure that she was locked in the top position at the climax of the illusion. If this happens to you, it's a simple matter to remove the plate that conceals the firing pin and replace the spring that is probably worn out. With a new, tense spring the pin will fire into the ratchet every time and once again your girl can feel safe and you can hear that familiar and reassuring 'click'."



TIPS &  
IDEAS



**DAVID SEEBACH**  
MAGICIAN ILLUSIONIST

9709 W METCALF PL - MILWAUKEE, WI 53222 - 414/461-5740



# ILLUSION THOUGHTS

## David Seebach

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky wrote the ballet "Swan Lake". To the best of my knowledge, he never choreographed it or danced it. So, if you are like me, and find that inventing and building illusions is not easy, please don't give up. There is room for those who only perform them well.

Unlike many who will buy this book and immediately attempt to construct a project illustrated herein, I choose to let someone else do that. My illusions (with the exception of a Cannon I worked on back in 1977) are all professionally supplied. So, while Les Smith and staff at Owen Magic Supreme are hammering, sawing and painting, I am concentrating on patter, music, costuming, etc. And that is why when you see me present the Disembodied Princess, it is different than someone else's version even though the prop may be identical.

I have a degree in theatre arts and I strongly believe that it is not what you do, but how you do it. So, not in any particular order, here are some thoughts and ideas about illusions:

Will you save money by building it yourself? If you have the know-how and tools and space, perhaps. However, begin with a reasonable project. Greg Bordner, president of Abbott's Magic Company, has told me he sells more workshop plans for the Shredder than any other illusion. Even Greg's shop foreman, Bud West, doesn't enjoy building that one; how are you going to do it?

By the way, Abbott's has one of the most undeserved reputations in the magic building line. Even though I have spent thousands with the prestigious builders on the west coast, Abbott's is still a prime supplier to my show. They are fair, reasonably priced and always on time. The illusionists must decide how much use each prop will receive. Spend the money on those reputation-makers and educate yourself as to what each



builder does best. Anyone who has seen my show knows how much entertainment comes from my Abbott Giant Guillotine. I bought that prop in 1971. It's about due for retirement and, with thirteen years of experience, I have some ideas for its replacement. Alan Zagorsky of Alan & Associates and I have discussed a superior prop for my unique purposes. So I bought a reasonably-priced prop, gained experience and developed a routine while using it. Now the expensive customized model will be tailored just for my particular show.

Don't choose the Crystal Casket as your first illusion. Any production illusion almost has to be a show-opener and, therefore is probably not a good place to start. A closing-type effect would be much better. After all, your assistant will not want to remain concealed in a cramped base while you juggle those Linking Rings and count six cards four times over.

An effect where your assistant mysteriously disappears would be a better choice. However, after she's vanished, what do you do with her when someone walks backstage to ask for your card, etc.? Please try to preserve the magic; a previously vanished assistant walking around is an illusionist's anachronism.

So, after the Chinese Cabinet breaks apart and she's gone, do not have her walk out two minutes later-especially in the same outfit-to hand you those two sticks with the cords and tassels.

Similarly, a woman who has helped with your dove routine should not step offstage and then magically appear from a Doll House. Select an appropriate outfit for her to appear in and then don't let anyone see her in it until the magic happens. And, except for a complete illusion show with several production effects, her appearance in the illusion should be her first appearance onstage.

What should she wear? Of course that depends on many factors, but here are a few rules to make her look better. Fishnet stockings, worn over regular pantyhose, are a must. Nothing glamorizes a woman's legs more.

Unless her legs are very, very slender, the fishnets should have seams which you have checked to make sure they are straight (perhaps a bother; perhaps a fringe benefit). She may select fishnets with feet for extra comfort, but she must wear shoes with heels. Have your wife, sister or girlfriend stand - while wearing shorts or a short skirt - flatfooted a' la ballet slippers and then on her toes a' la high heeled shoes. You will never wonder about this again.

Of course there may be an illusion or two that heels will not work in. The Hindu Basket comes to mind. But a peasant girl, in a harem outfit with six-inch spiked heels, would look pretty funny in that! Our newest illusion (at this writing; 12/84) is Owen's Geometrick. If shoes make it tough, the girl can always enter and then remove the shoes so her ankles can be cuffed. Obviously, this shoe discussion must be modified also in special situations like the Thin Sawing and the Mis-Made.

Here's a final word about pantyhose. Many pairs have a mid-thigh change of weave that under street fashion is not, or at least should not be noticeable. I have lost count of the number of times I've seen these type show up onstage at a magic show. It's laughable, so don't let it happen to your assistants.

When it comes time to put that illusion together you will always want the required nuts, bolts and hinge pins handy so make a bag or box with the illusion's name on it for all the hardware. This should travel with the illusion in its case. We also carry a tackle-box tool kit with lots of extra hardware and tools.

Before Paul Osborne published any of these books I had a traffic signal bar light that I'd purchased after a show in Las Vegas. One night I put this in the stage manager's area and he could display red, amber or green to me. As long as it glowed green I kept the show moving. Amber meant to slow up and red forced me to stop and sort of "tread water" onstage. Someone else suggested this idea in one of Paul's earlier books and anyone who thinks it's silly has never tried it. We make up a more elaborate model for the nationally touring "Wonders Of Magic" and it's the best helper an

illusionist can have. If you don't think so, just wait until your audience hears someone offstage chanting, "Stall, stall!"

Years ago, most illusions were performed one-at-a-time, with a unique setting for each. Today, many illusionists prefer to routine several together to create an entire sequence. This is certainly more theatrical and to be advised.

I find though, that when it comes to selecting music for these acts that most illusion acts fall miserably apart. If you are only listening to Top 40 tunes, or vapid elevator music, you won't know where to even begin to pick music. The sooner you switch to classical music, the sooner you will have a more educated ear to pick the perfect selection to accompany your latest feat. You need music written to accompany a dramatic scene. It's not too hard to find, but Dick Clark won't be playing it. The answer is often motion picture soundtracks. Whether your illusion is humorous or spine-tingling, chances are there is a record available for a similarly-set film. I don't like using anything too recognizable so, unless you're mounting a burlesque of the actual film and its characters, avoid Star Wars, Raiders, etc. A fast-paced selection must be used for quick effects, but rather than using something off the top ten this week, you should consider the Hooked On Classics series but, again avoid the most commonly-played cuts.

I remember being driven around Louisville by Lance Burton before he became the superstar he is today. We were chatting and I asked about his choice of Vivaldi's Four Seasons for his act. He seem surprised that a magician recognized a well-known classical piece. Remember, this was back in 1981 when everyone else was still using the pop music from Shaft for their acts. Today, I suggest you seek out the wonderful illusion show of Landis and Company. Now there's a show with perfect, appropriate music!

I use reel-to-reel tapes at shows because, by splicing leader tape between cuts, it is easy to cue up to the next selection. This is much harder with cassette. Besides, that portable, boom-box stereo you're using was never designed to fill a theatre with sound.

Well, I could go on and on, but there are other views, which will probably differ from mine, that need to be in this book, too. I do enjoy hearing from and meeting other magicians so please do introduce yourself if I am appearing in your area.

Finally, when you do build your own equipment, the applause is all yours. As for me, every time I take a bow after the Asrah, Modern Cabinet or Alice Thru The Looking Glass, I always privately thank Owen's Les Smith, Abbott's Greg Bordner and Bud West, SKS's Harold Rice and my pal Alan Zagorsky. I don't think they hear me, but they know now that I appreciate their skill and artistry.



# TIPS & IDEAS



STICKS ARE SEWN TO THE BACK OF EACH LEG AND VELCRO IN PLACE



AS THE COVER GOES UP - THE CHAIR IS STOLEN INTO THE WINGS AND THE MAGICIAN SITS ON THE STICKS

I hired Michael Stein for Gene Patrick's and my production of "Rabbitscadabra" at Six Flags Great America in Chicago ( photo below). The show was so successful that we moved it to Los Angeles' famous "Magic Mountain" Amusement park where it plays to this day...starring who else but Michael Stein!

## MICHAEL STEIN

"I have many thoughts on how to accomplish this illusion. The premise is very simple...it's a DeKolts Chair gone wrong. The magician sits on the chair, is covered, and when the cover is pulled off the chair is gone but the performer remains! The drawings below show one way of doing this effect, other methods would be a collapsing chair, or actually pulling the chair down into a stage trap. With any method, I hope you'll see the merit of this idea and plan to use it in your next show!"



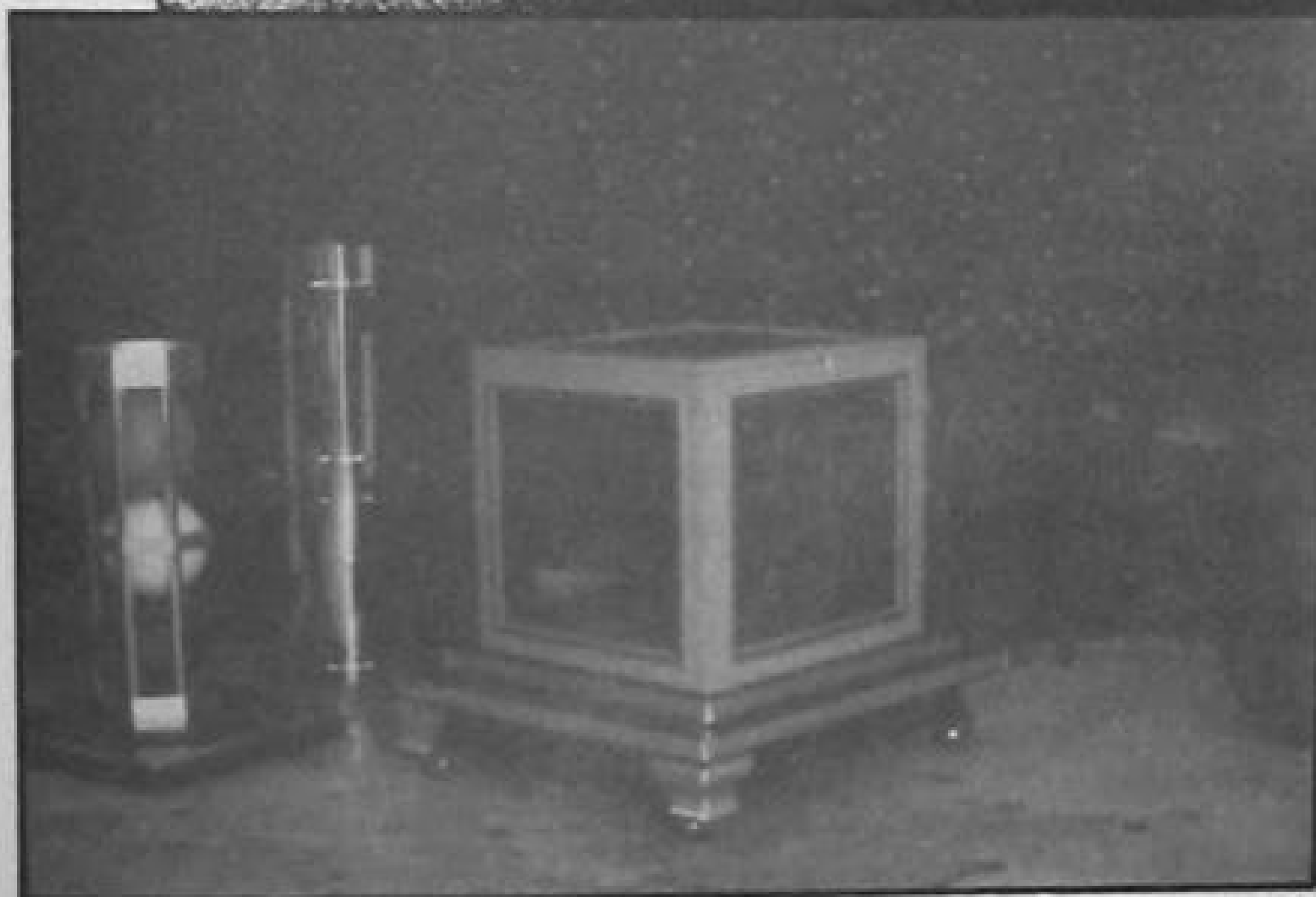


## ABBOTT'S PLANS

For the first time in the history of my books I have Abbott's as a contributor. I was thrilled when Greg Bordner not only agreed to contribute to the publication but also sent stacks of plans with his permission to reproduce them. These illusion concepts are truly collectors' items and I hope that you'll take the time to not only study the drawings but take a weekend to construct one of these effects.

I'll never forget my first Abbott catalogue. It was \$6 and considerably worn when I received it as a hand-me-down from Tom Palmer. I think I memorized the pages and looked forward to every drawing and photo that was on them. Abbott's is, of course, truly legendary when it comes to illusion manufacturing. They have created props for some of America's premier illusionists.

Many people covet their ideas; I try to share them. Abbott's was the first manufacturer to begin building props from my plans and as of this writing they have constructed virtually every one of my ideas for various magician's around the world. Greg has been so loyal about mentioning me that I can't resist the temptation to encourage you to give them a call and check their magic and illusions out for yourself. Or better yet, if you haven't made the trip to the magic capital of the world, I think it would be well worth your time to see the classic facility that Percy Abbot built in Colon, Michigan. This facility, unlike many other manufacturing plants, is virtually self contained. They do everything from paint to printing right there in Colon and it's a regular small town industry...very exciting to see! The next page features some shots of the Abbott plant and just a few of my illusions that they have constructed for others...Thanks Greg!

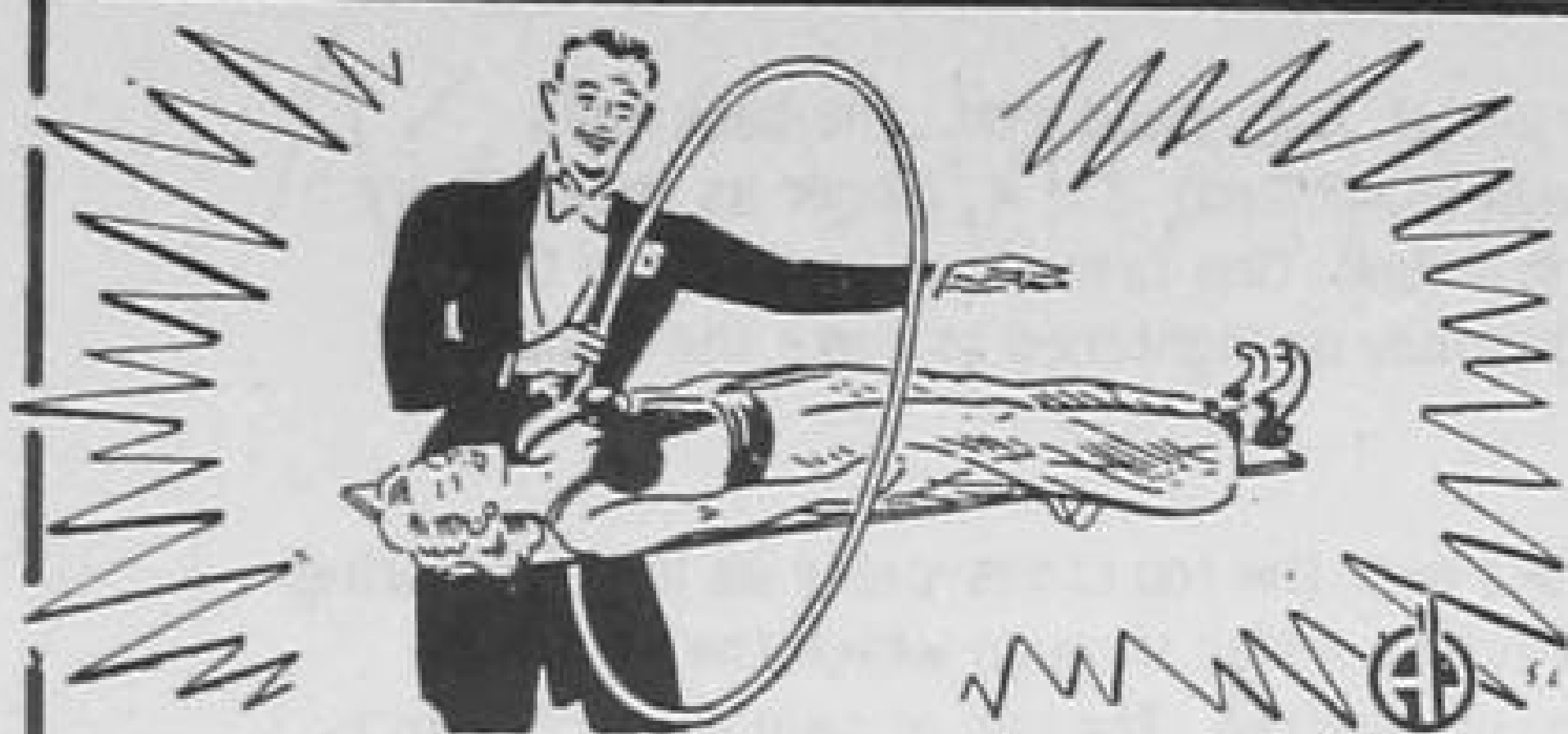


**ABBOTT'S**

Magic Manufacturing Company  
WORLD'S LARGEST MANUFACTURERS OF QUALITY MAGIC  
- SINCE 1914 -

COLON, MICHIGAN

*The Magic Capital of the World*



# AGA LEVITATION

## EFFECT

A young lady is placed on a table and without any covering she rises into the air. The table is removed, a solid hoop is passed completely around her, the table is replaced, and at the command of the magician she slowly descends.

## METHOD

The uprights and cross bar at the top are of 1 1/1" seamless tubing, fastened at the joints by regular pipe fittings. The main side pieces are cut 43", which height is, of course, added to by the pipe fitting at the top (the pipe fitting is 3" long.) The upper ends must be threaded. The lower end of each upright has a "pin" swaged into the pipe and extending an inch beyond the end of the pipe. This fits into the round hole in the floor pieces.

Horizontal tubing across the top is cut in two pieces to permit the "shaft" of the elevator assembly to pass through the center. To the top of this elevator "shaft" is attached a corner pipe fitting which accomplishes the corner. In this is inserted horizontally a 3 1/4" length of 3/4" pipe, at the opposite end of which is fastened a vertical handle or hand-grip. This latter is done by boring a hole through the 3/4" pipe and running a bolt full length from the top of the handle to the bottom of the pipe. A roller bearing just above the pipe-fitting at the center provides for smooth and easy turning of the shaft.

The 15" pipe sections in the elevator assembly are held in place by bolts running full length.

The flat cross pieces at the top and bottom of the elevator unit are of the same material as the floor pieces - 1/2" x 2 1/2" steel. At the intersections of the floor pieces are small reinforcing pieces about 1" x 2 1/2", as per drawing.

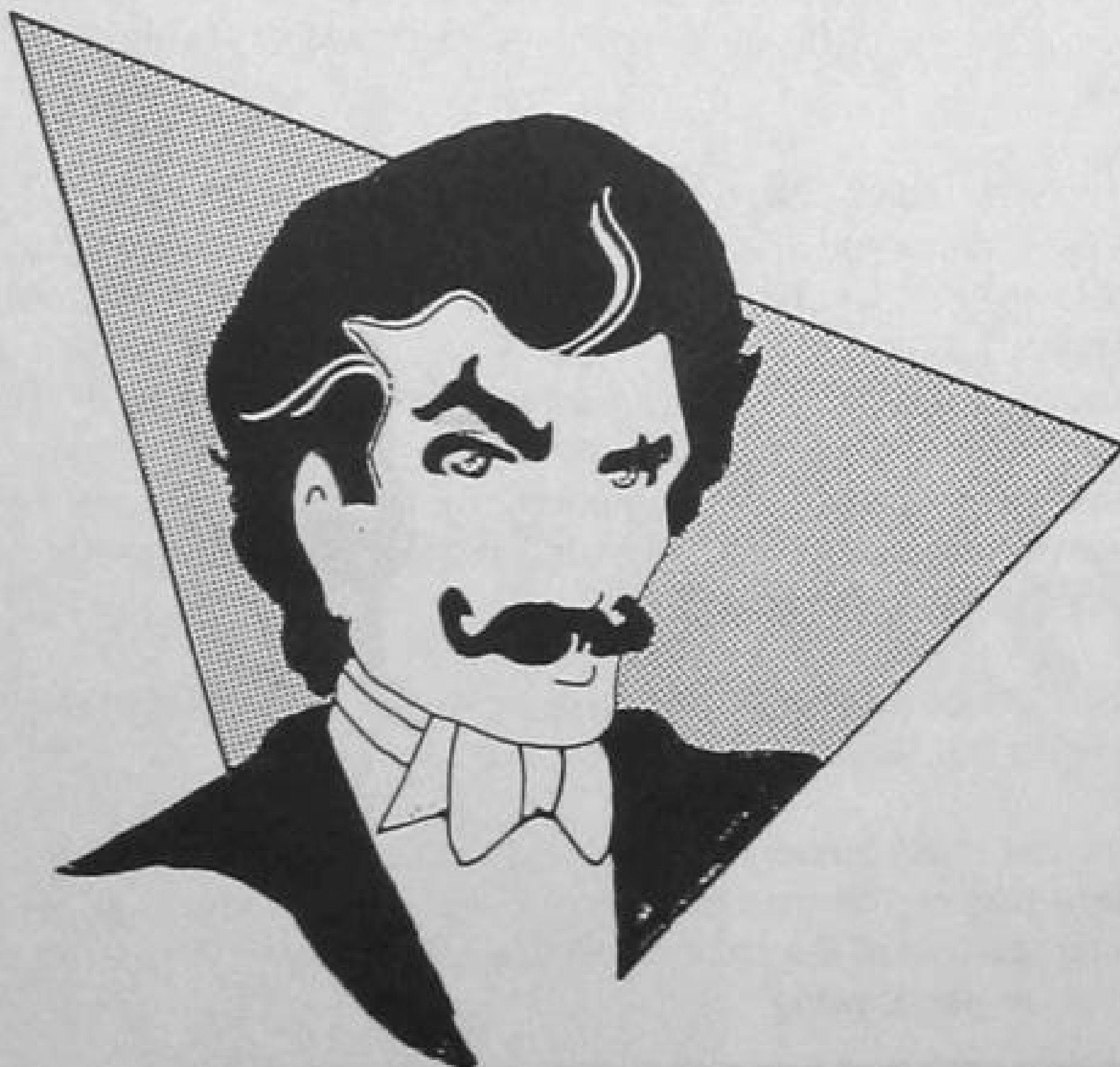


The four rods used as braces are of  $\frac{3}{8}$ " round iron. The back ones measure  $46 \frac{3}{4}$ " and the side ones  $47 \frac{3}{4}$ ". Cut 4" longer as about 2" are needed on each end for making a hook. One is made adjustable by the insertion of a turn buckle. This may be tightened to make the apparatus perfectly rigid.

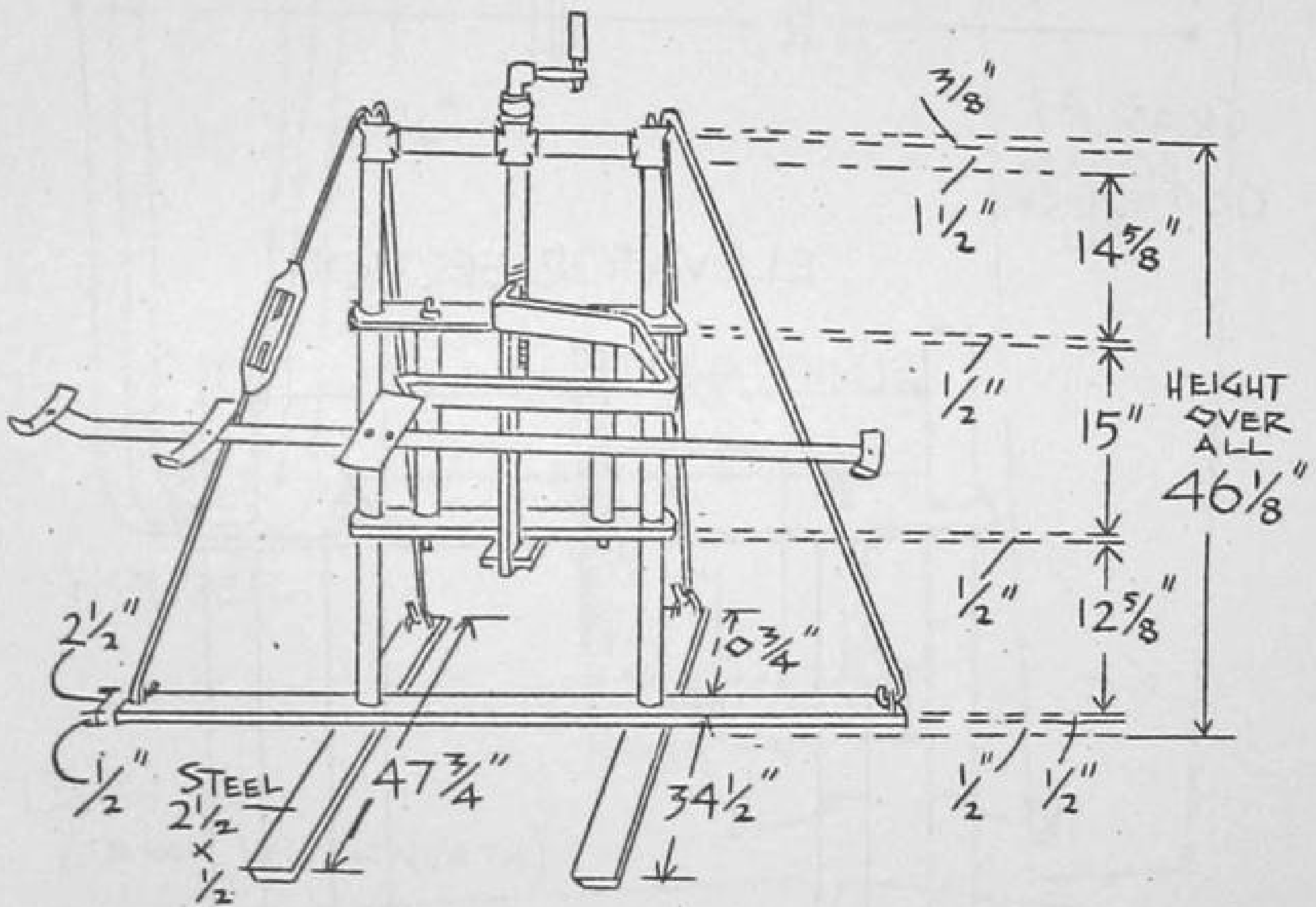
The holder illustrates the hooks over the top cross-piece as in the drawing of the elevator section and provides a slot through which the vertical section of the goose-neck arm is inserted. The end of said vertical arm is held in place by a slotted piece attached to the lower cross-piece and illustrated in detail as "slotted piece". This slotted piece is attached to the under side of the lower cross-piece by two bolts as shown.

The elevator unit is supported on the shaft by a large nut. Between the cross-piece and the nut there is a heavy felt washer. The shaft is  $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter.

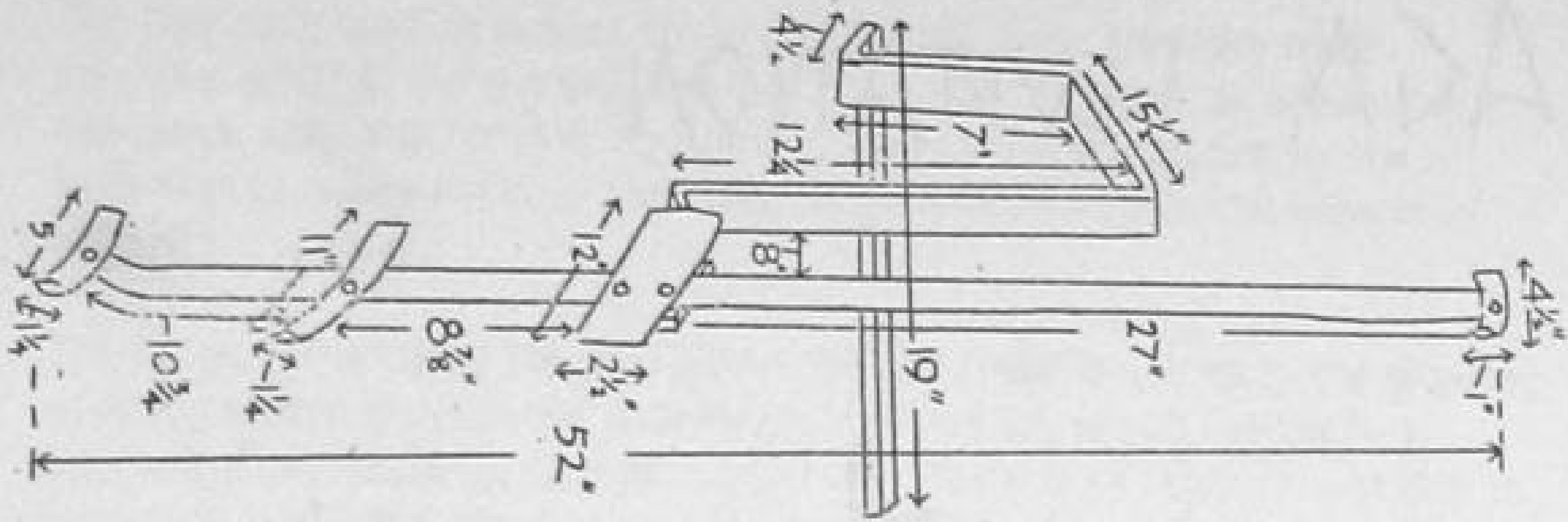
The lengthwise piece of the cradle is of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 2" strap iron. Two cross-strips at the head are of  $\frac{3}{8}$ " x  $1 \frac{1}{4}$ " strap-iron and the one at the foot is  $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 1" material. The center one is of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " or  $\frac{3}{8}$ " x  $2 \frac{1}{2}$ " strap-iron. Of course, these could be varied a little according to the material at hand. The goose-neck piece is of  $\frac{5}{8}$ " x  $1 \frac{1}{2}$ ".



# AGA LEVITATION

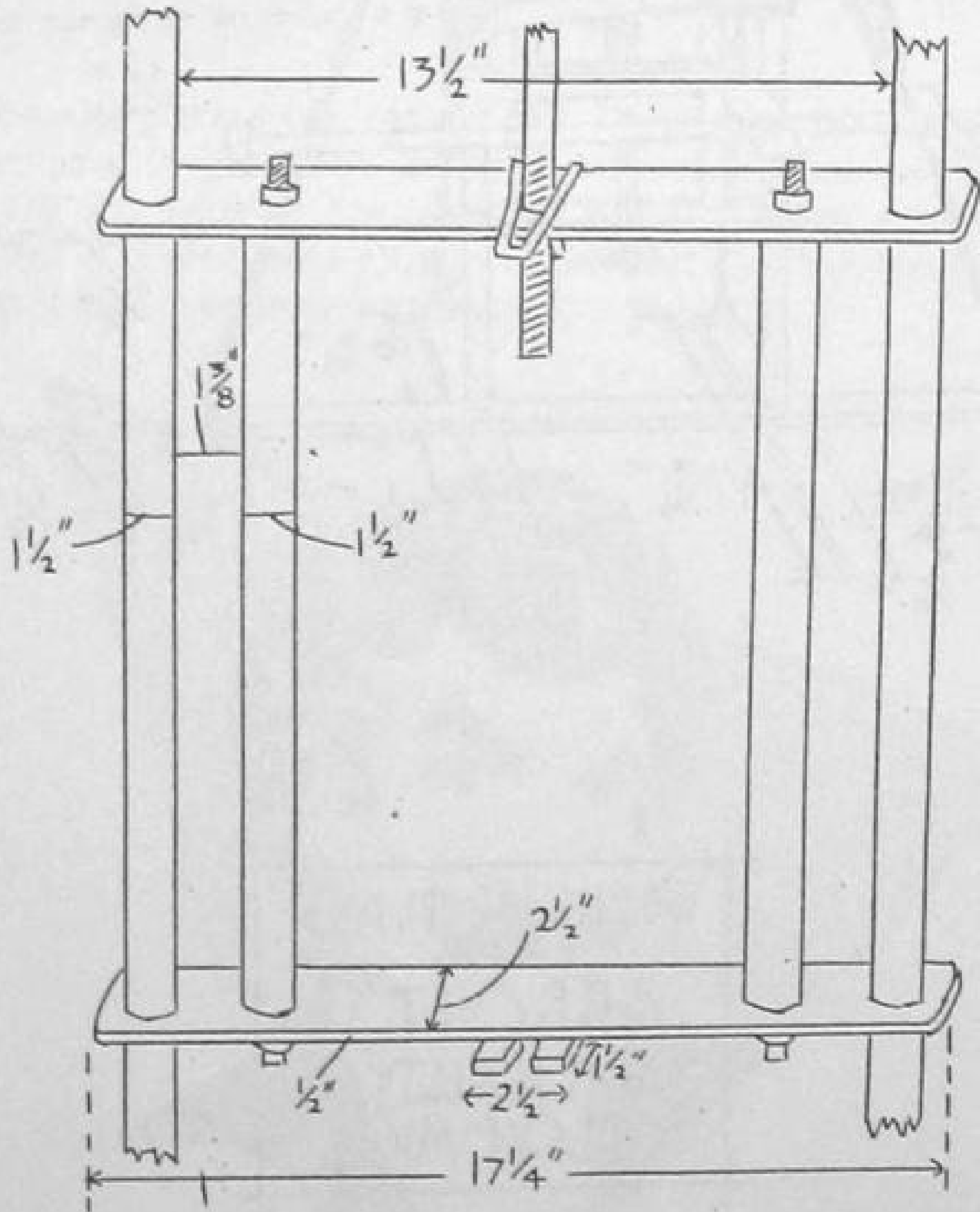


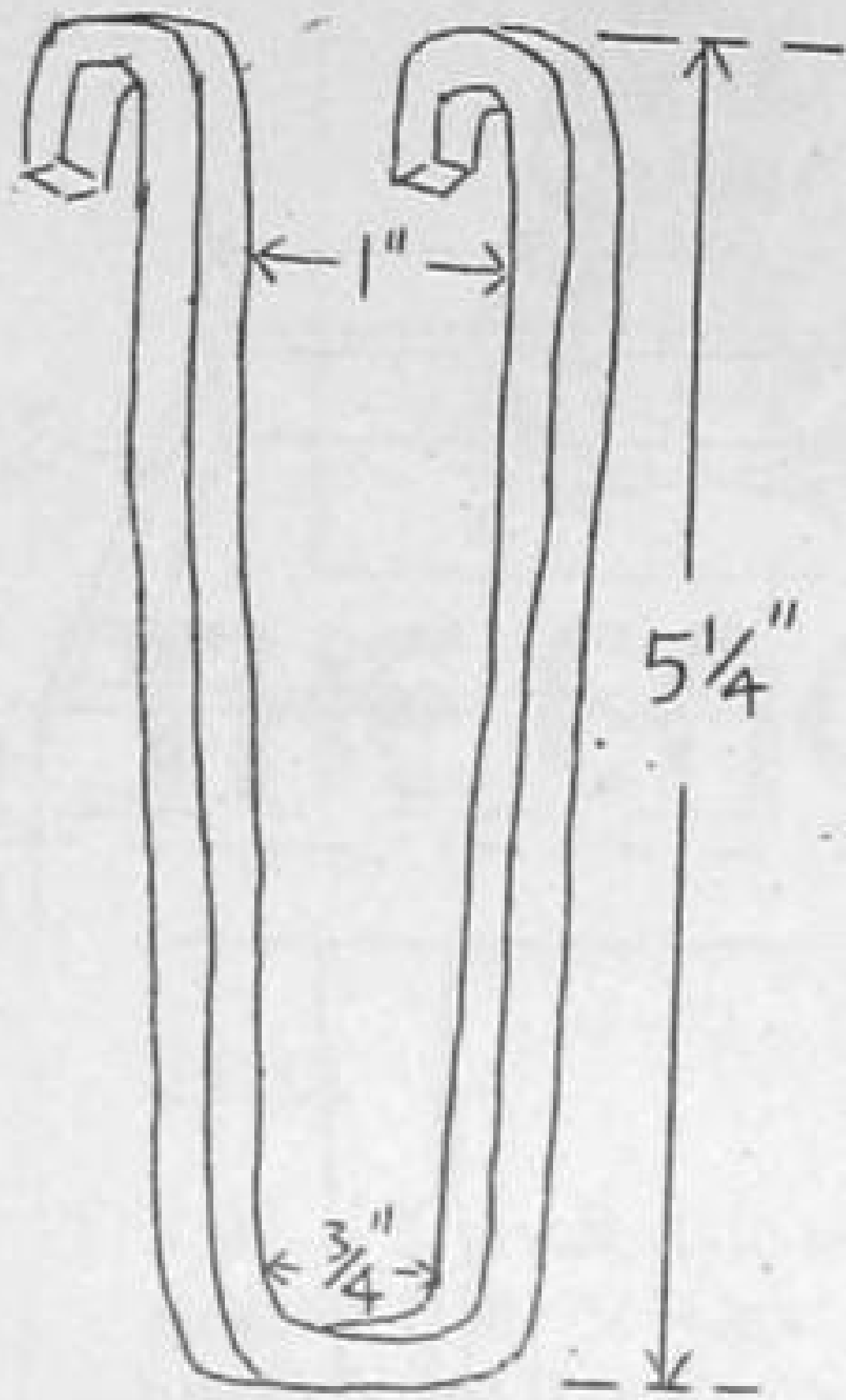
WORKSHOP PLANS  
FROM  
ABBOTT'S  
MAGIC NOVELTY CO.  
COLON, MICH.



CRADLE  
&  
GOOSENECK

ELEVATOR SECTION





HOLDER

SLOTTED PIECE

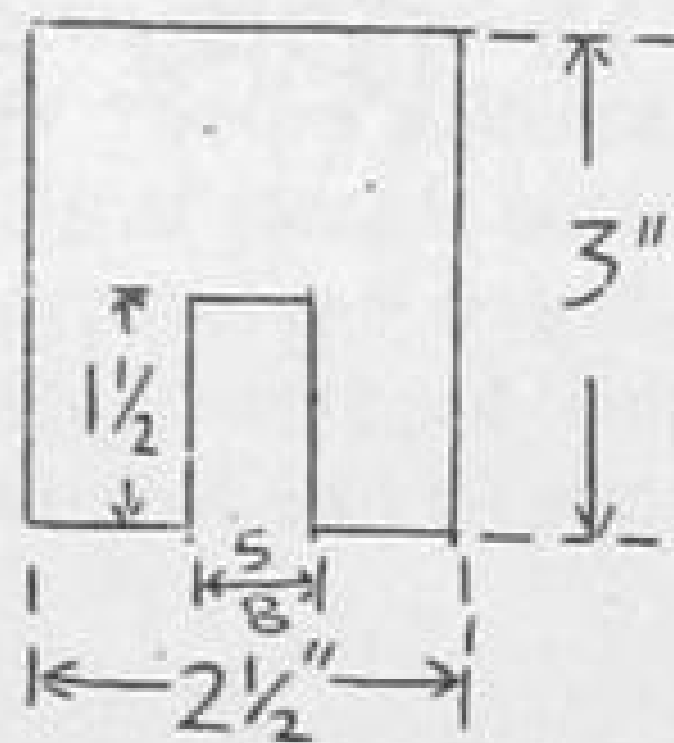
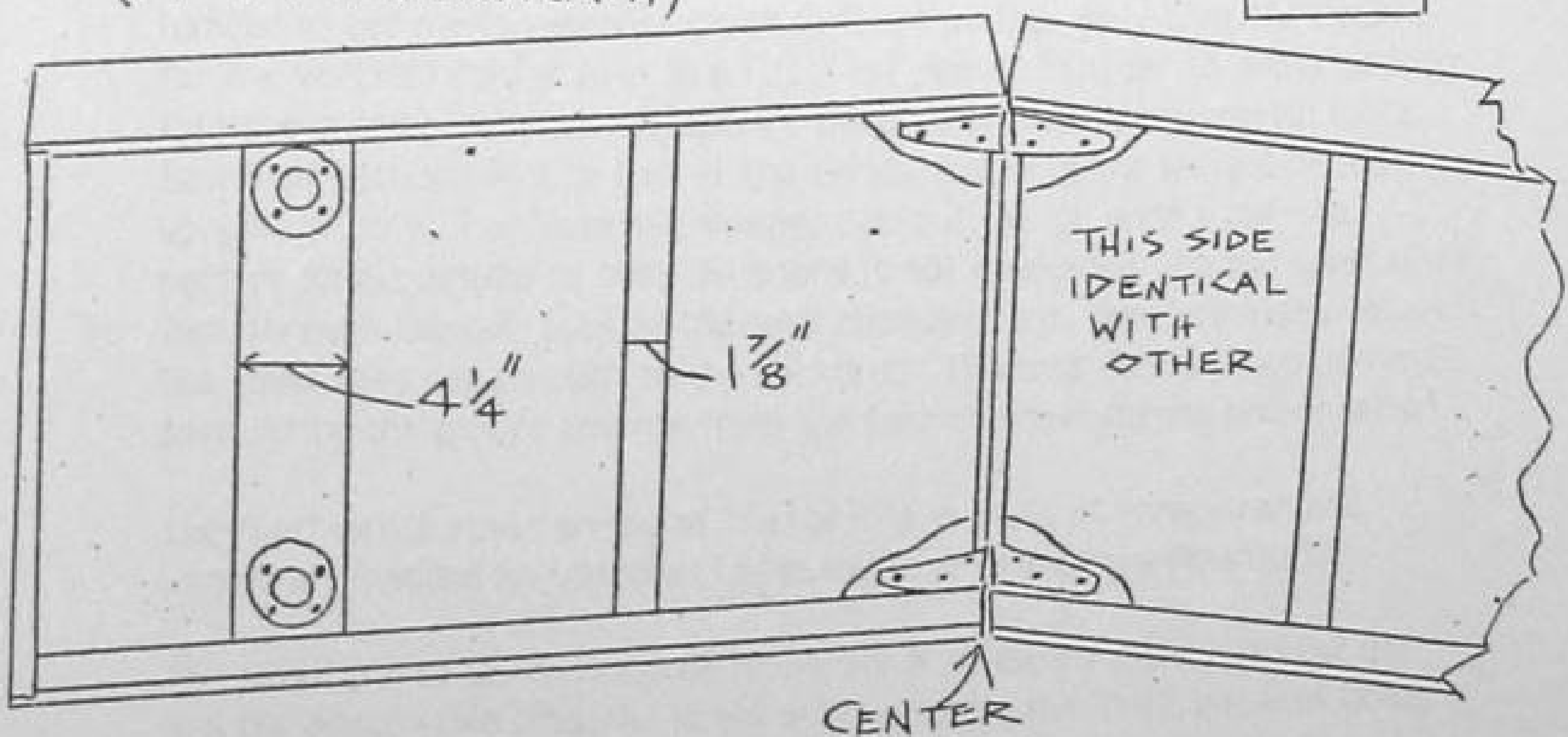
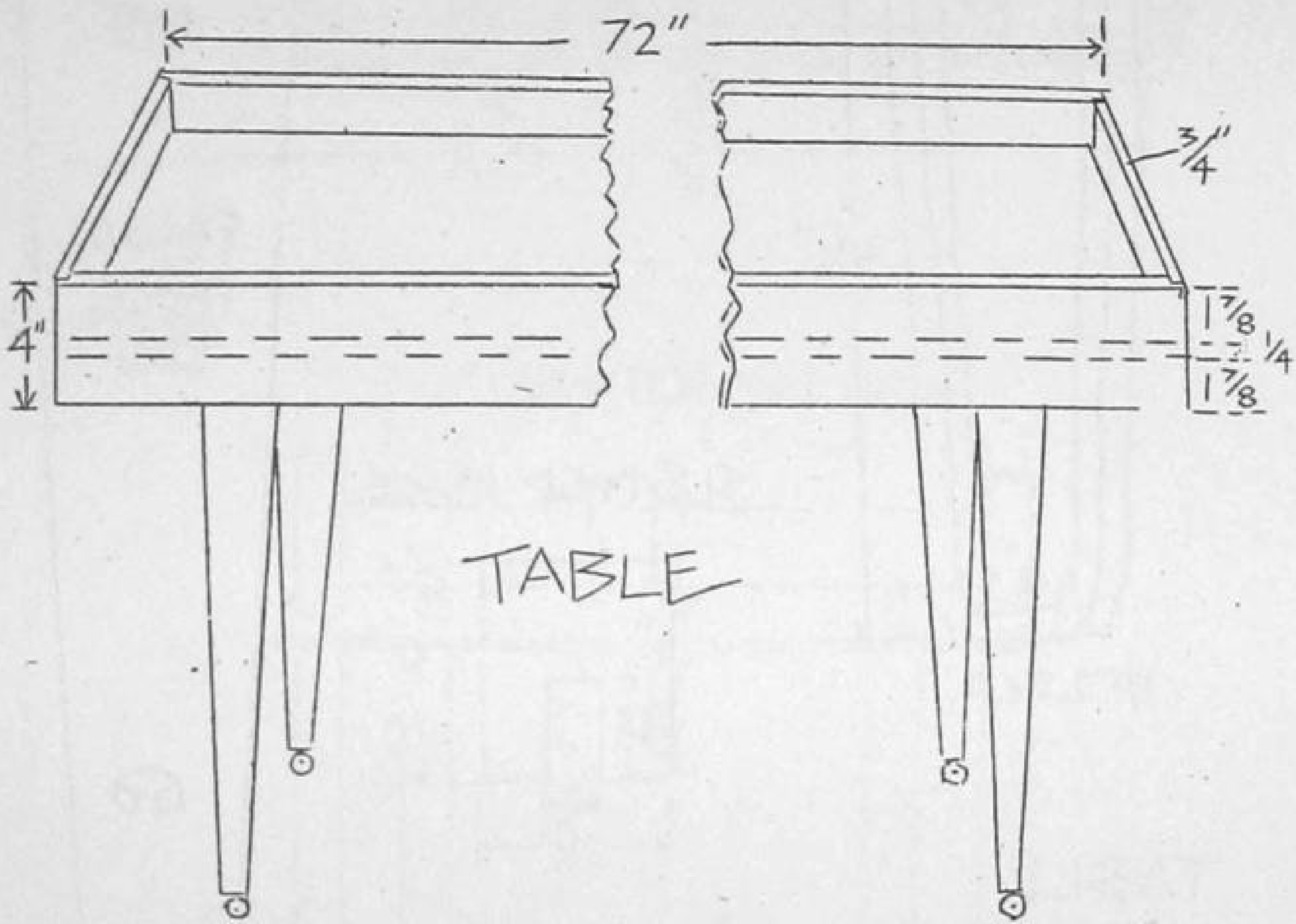
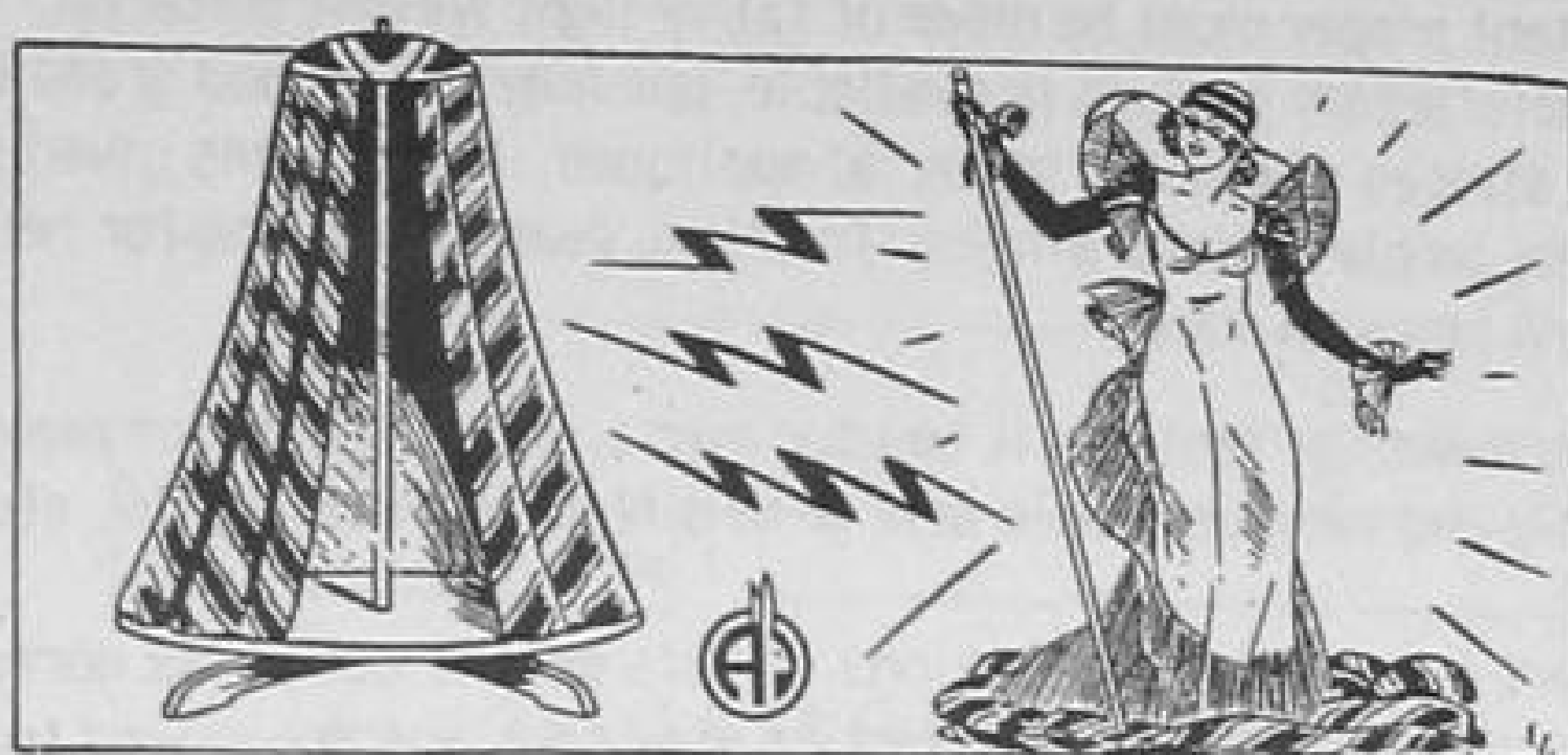


TABLE  
(FROM UNDERNEATH)







# THE ENCHANTED TENT

## EFFECT

A small, Oriental style tent is formed on a round platform which is elevated from the stage. At all times the audience sees under the platform and they are convinced that there is nothing concealed in the tent. The opening of the tent is closed and, on a shot being fired, the tent collapses, disclosing a young lady dressed and posing as per illustration. A most effective illusion and one that will fit any type of show.

## METHOD

The "Enchanted Tent" rests on a platform and base, constructed of 7/8" lumber as per measurements given in the drawing. Note that the socket for the vertical center pole is a little off center in order to avoid cutting into the cross pieces which support the platform. A small, metal plate, fastened with screws to two of the cleats supports the weight of the upright or pole. The base has an easy cut-out design with a cut-out portion small in size so that the board is not weakened. As the spectators look through the cut-outs of the back compartment, they see black velvet, but think they see through to the backdrop. The trap door swings upward, permitting the girl to emerge from the fake chamber during presentation.

The "hat" which rests on top of the upright is built of strap-iron and veneer and padded and covered to resemble an ordinary woman's hat.

The small pin in top of the pole is merely a screw with the head cut off and the edges filed smooth. It not only supports the "hat", but also holds the two top sections of the tent in place.

The tent proper must be made of fairly light weight material. If no cloth of satisfactory pattern is available, one may use a good grade of muslin with stripes of colored material appliqued. In the sizes given for tent pieces, ample room is allowed for firm, deep seams and for necessary narrow hems on edges.

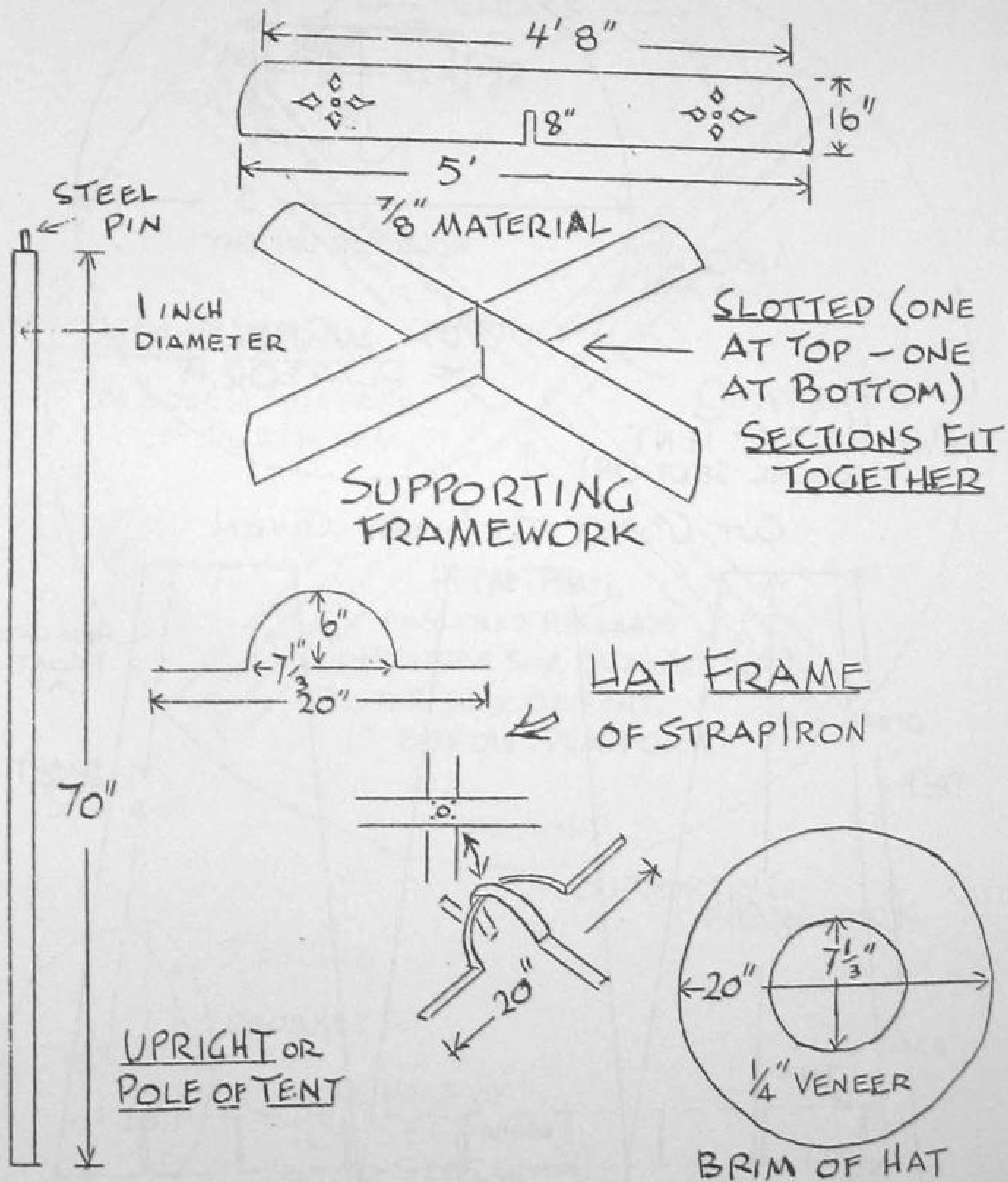
As you make the tent, fit it to your own apparatus as sizes may vary slightly and various people sew with different seam depths, etc.

The tent is made in two sections. It fits best if cut in six gores as suggested in the drawings. The two side sections are sewed together only from the center of the back, downward. Overlap space is provided over the top and down the front, (there should be three or four inches down the front.) The one-half inch holes in the center top are finished with facing, metal grommets, or ordinary button-hole stitch. The "button-holes" in the bottom edge of the tent are button-hole stitched and slipped over ordinary round-head screws in the lower surface of the platform. The elastic strips used at intervals of approximately 12 inches, (and sewn to the black tape) all around the tent, fold eight inches of cloth into six inches, thus providing the "slack" necessary when the girl lifts the center pole to release it.

In presenting the illusion, the magician has apparatus "sets" on stage, with the tent all piled up on top of the hat. He drops the sides, engages the snap in the upper front portion (to prevent a mishap), and proceeds to fasten the lower edge of the tent. He fastens the front first so that the girl may safely be taking her position inside. She stands poised with her left fingers over the edge of the veneer hat brim (toward the back so the audience will not notice), and with the pole in hand and already released at the bottom. In going over the tent for the last time, the magician unobtrusively unfastens the snap at the upper front.

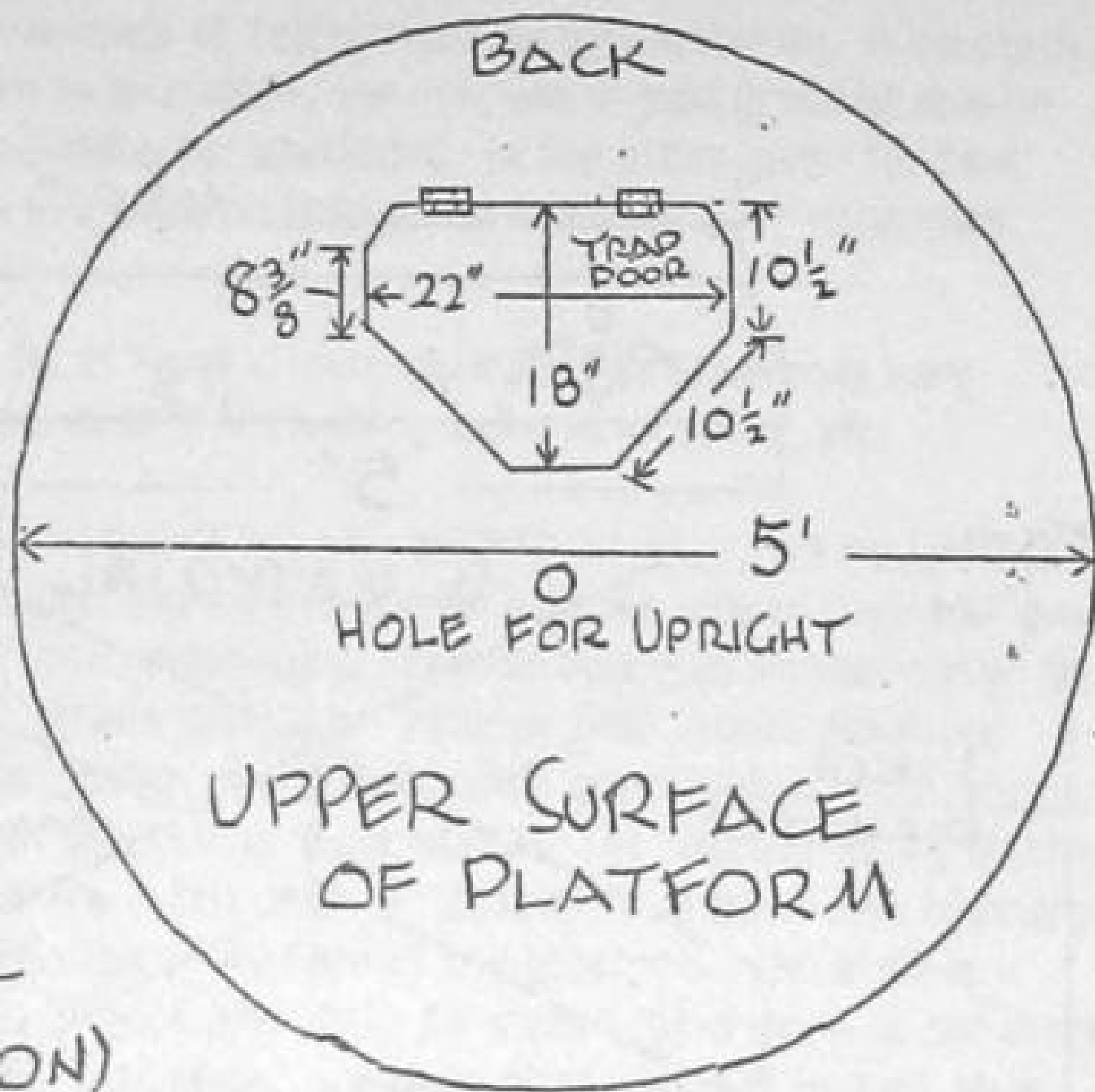
At the sound of a shot or another signal from the Magician, the assistant quickly raises the hat sufficiently to release the sides of the tent, slips the hat onto her head and steps forth with the stick in her right hand.





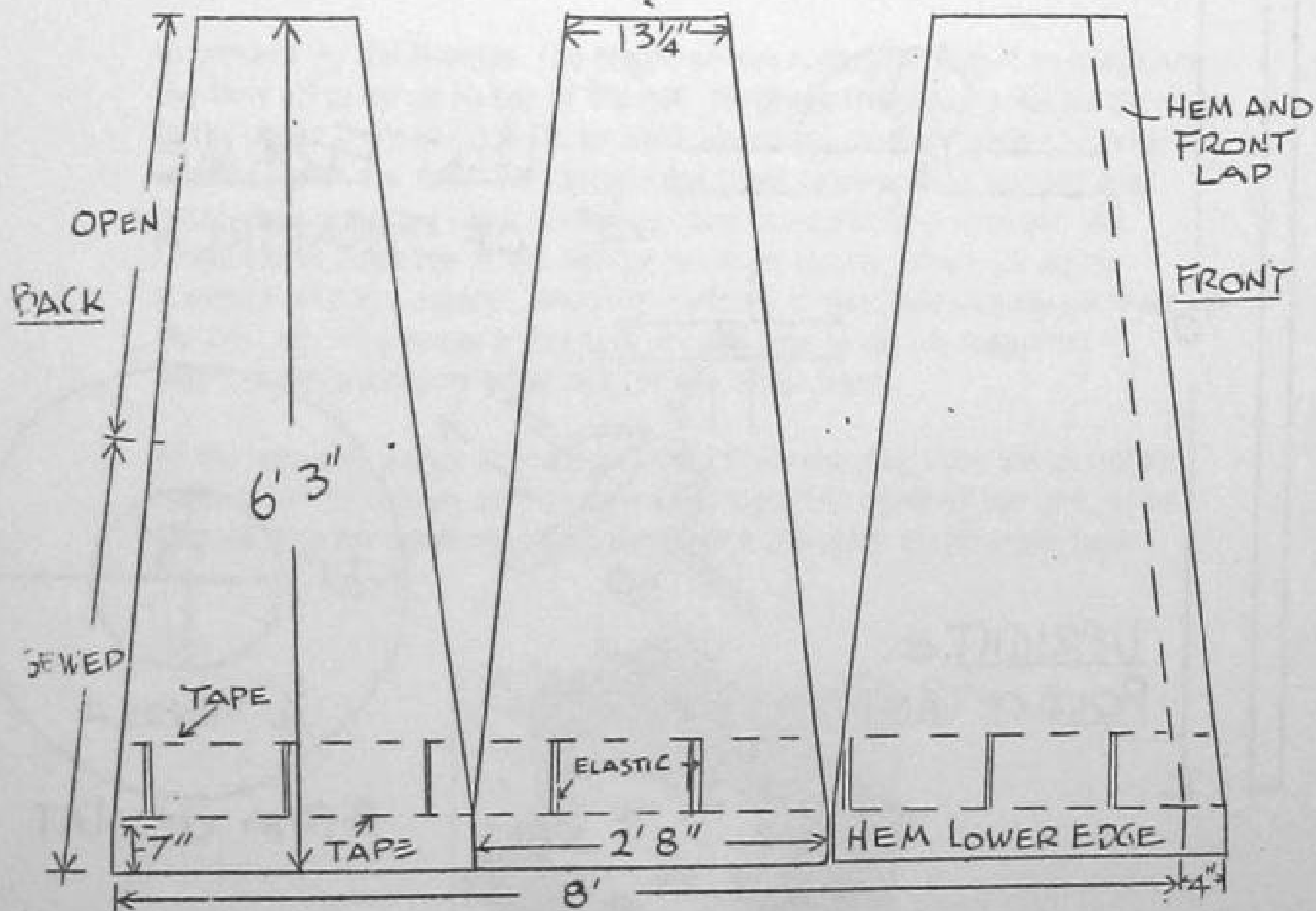


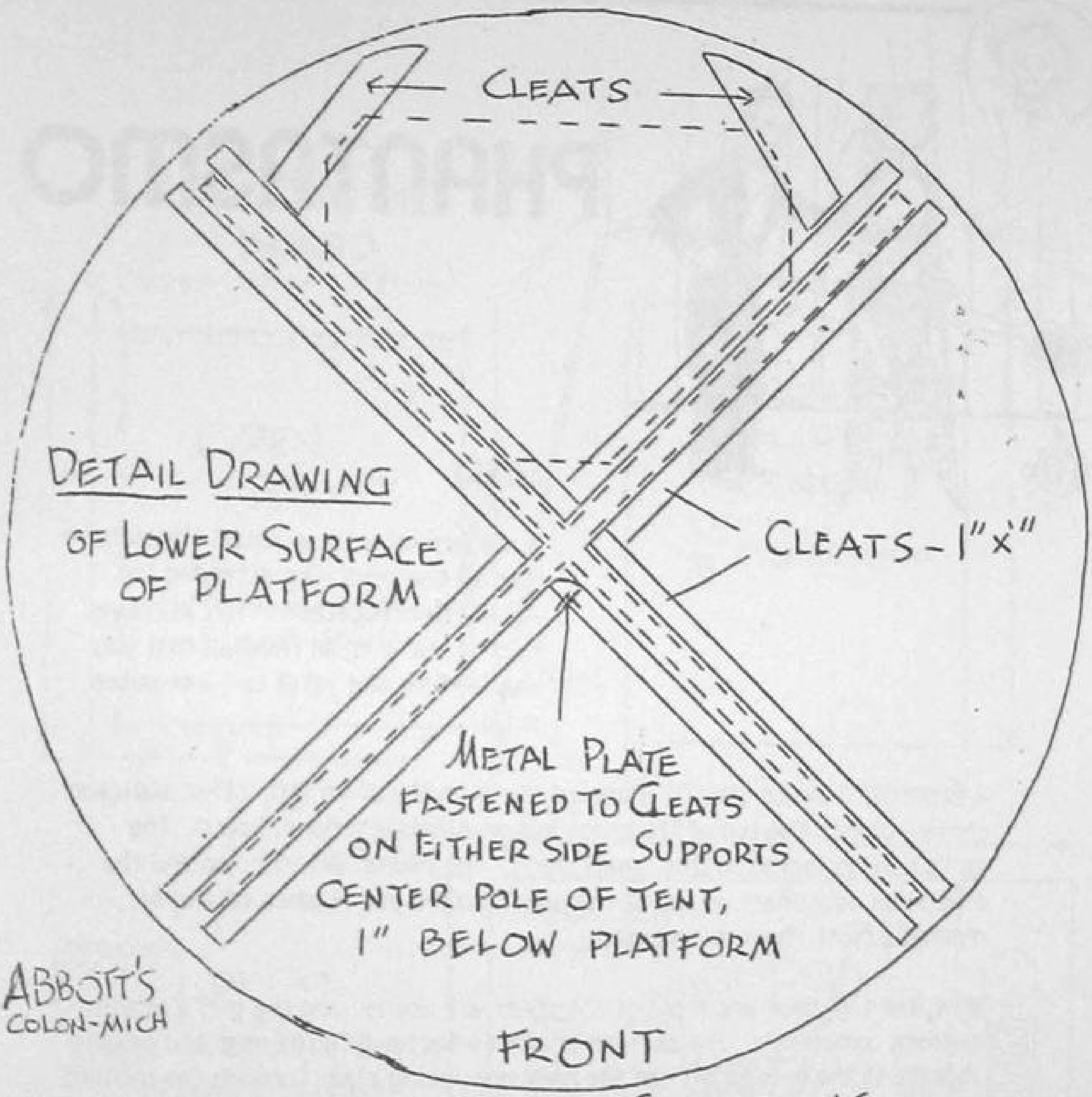
ABBOTT'S  
COLON-MICH



ONE HALF OF TENT  
(VERTICAL SECTION)

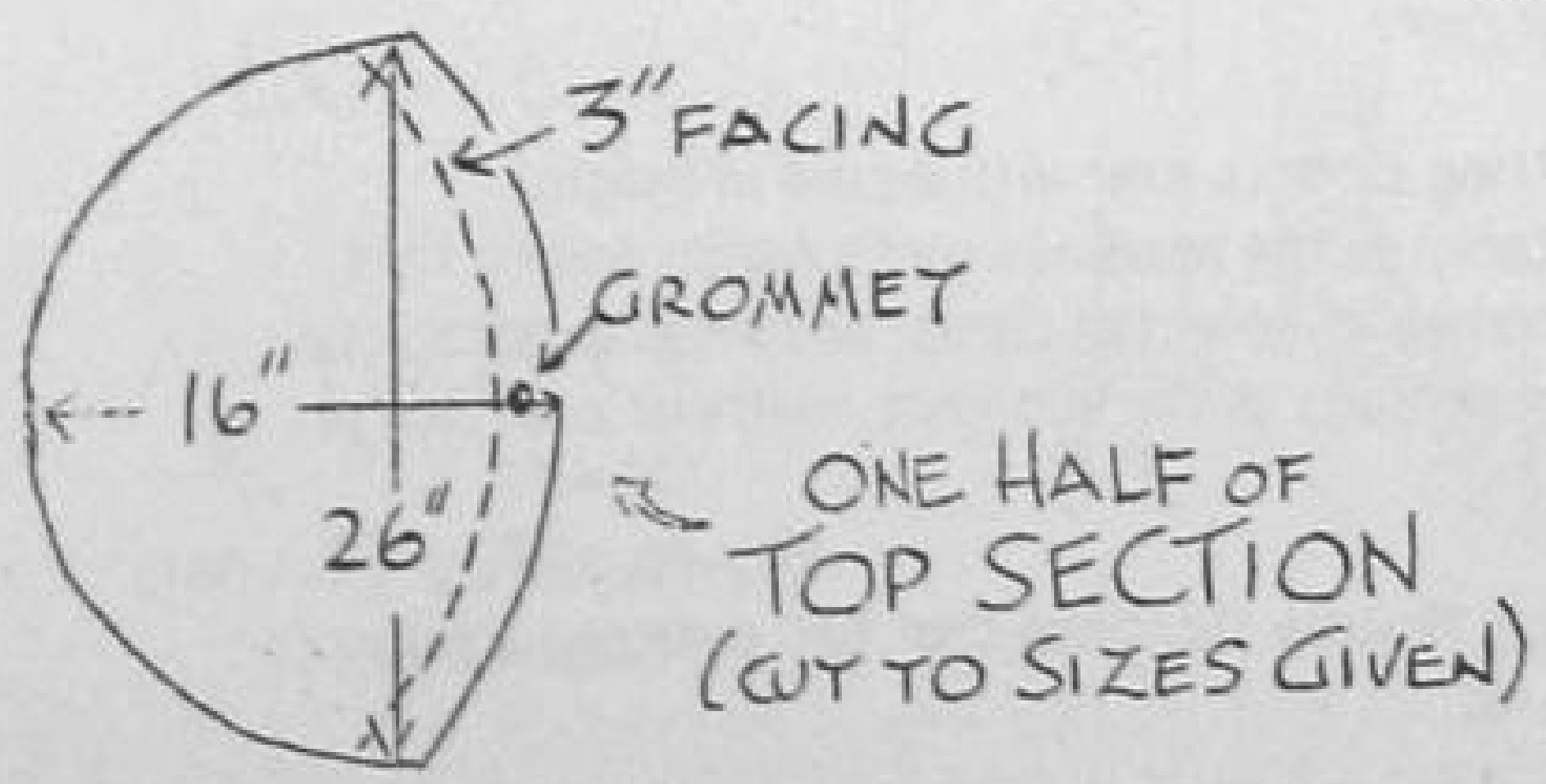
CUT GORES TO SIZES GIVEN

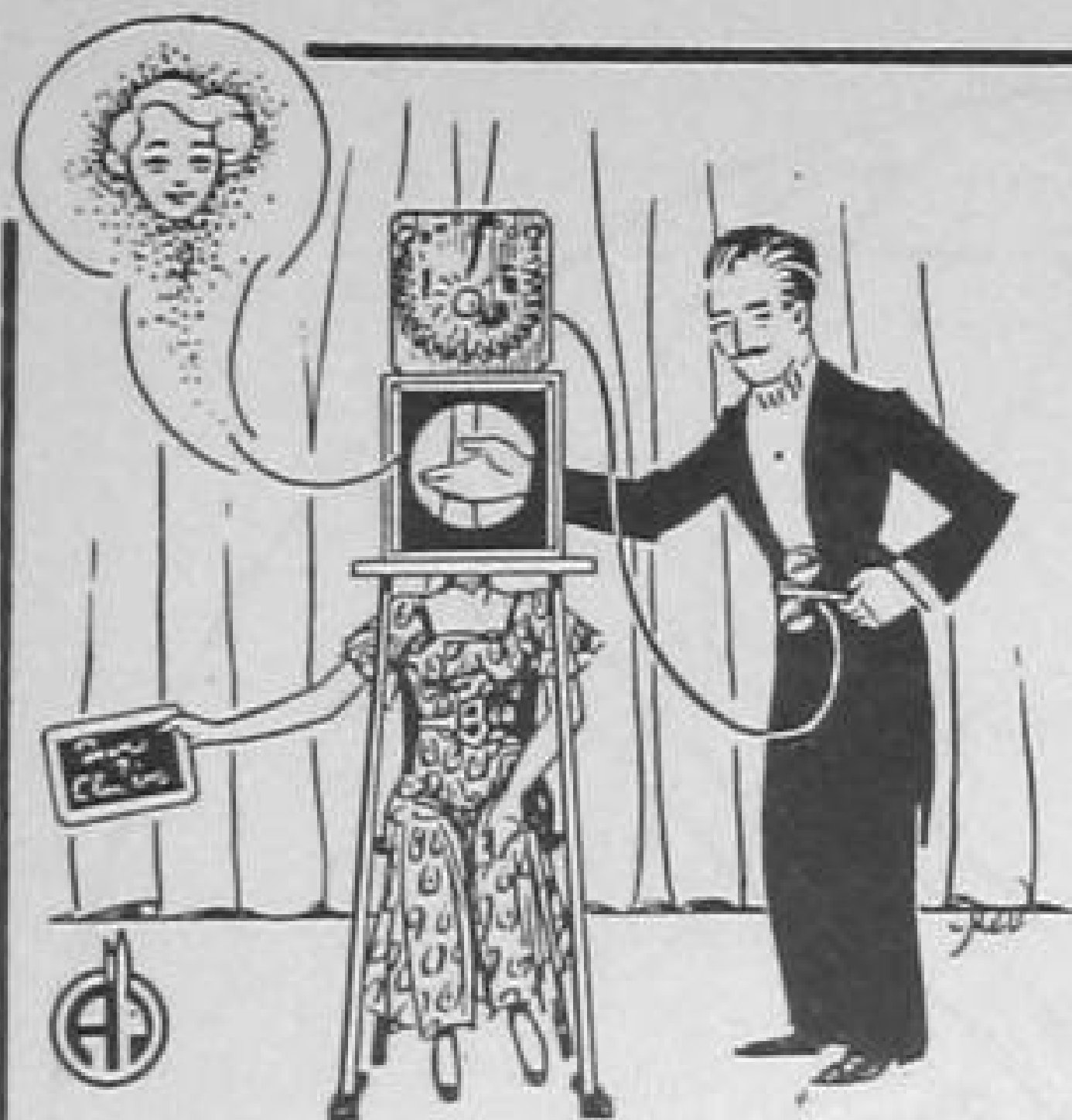




ABBOTT'S  
COLON-MICH

SUPPORTING  
FRAMEWORK





# PHANTASMO

## EFFECT

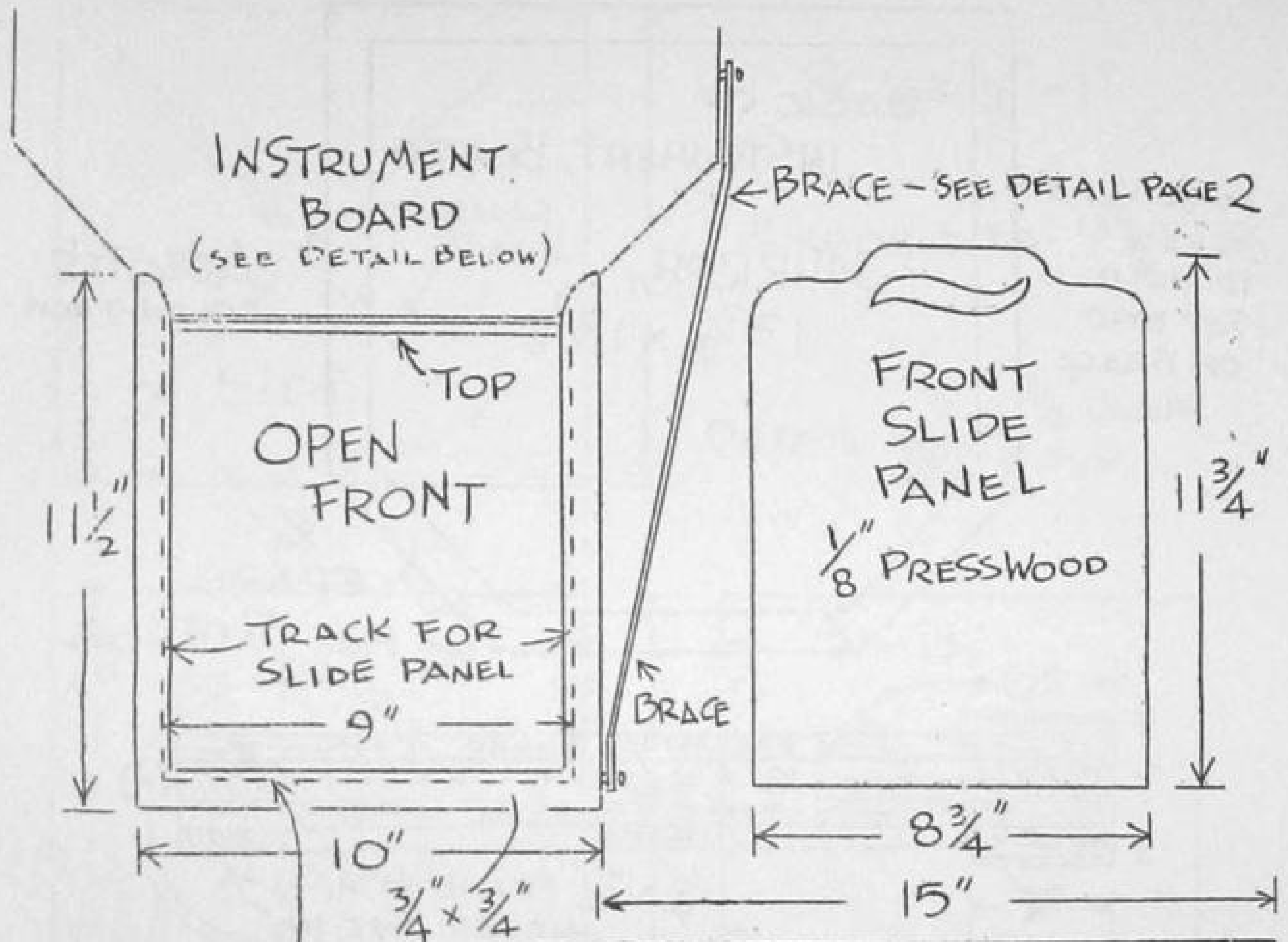
A modern miracle in small illusions. Ask all the boys who attended the Abbott Get-Together. They all raved over it. Here is an illusion that you can feature and get 8 to 10 minutes out of.

A beautiful 12 inch chrome trimmed chest on top of an attractive skeleton chrome stand. The top of the chest has an electrical panel board. The girl's head is locked in this small chest. The power is turned on and the electrical equipment on top of the panel buzzes and flashes on and off, making a most impressive sight.

NOW, the top, back and front of the chest are opened and the girl's head is missing completely. The performer places his hand to the rear and passes objects to the rear so all can see they are seeing clear through the cabinet. If there happens to be a back drop or curtain on stage, pull that aside so all may see the bare wall at the rear.

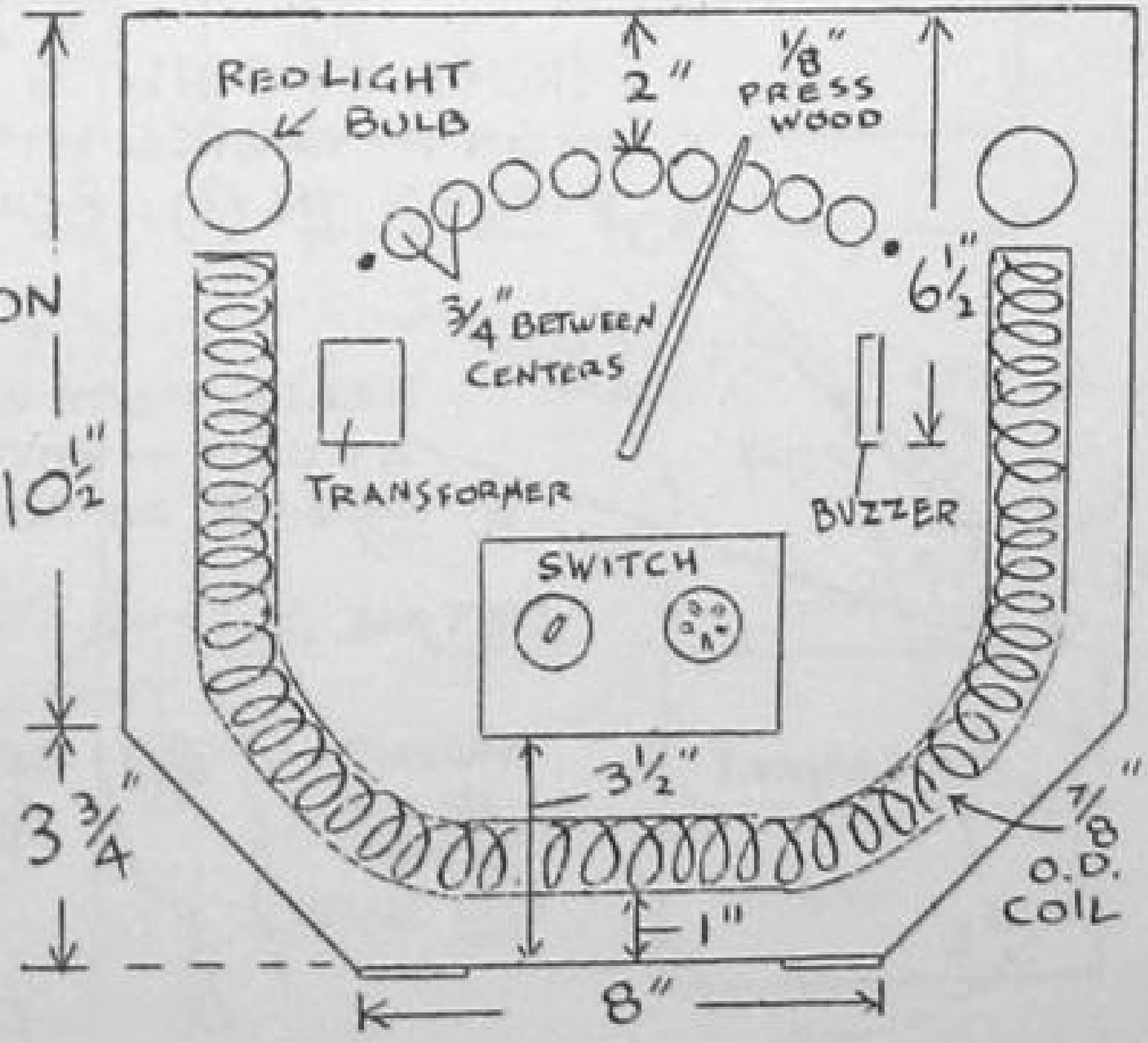
This is one of the most baffling effects ever witnessed in magic. Following this, a slate is placed in the headless girl's hands and on this slate she writes down the names of selected cards, answers to questions, and numbers on bills held by persons in the audience, without practice or codes of any kind.

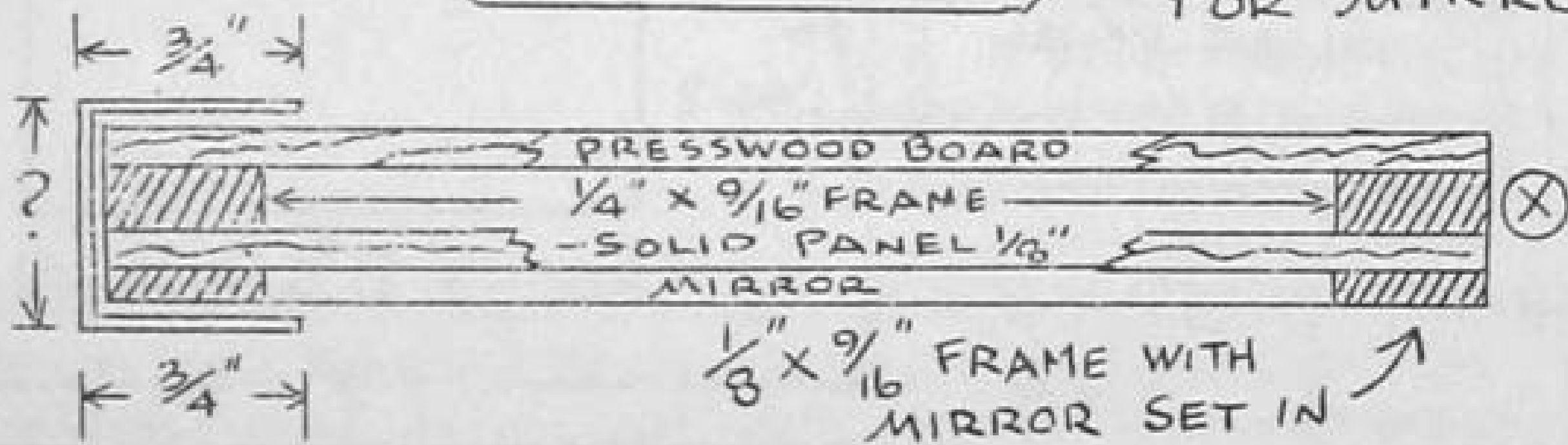
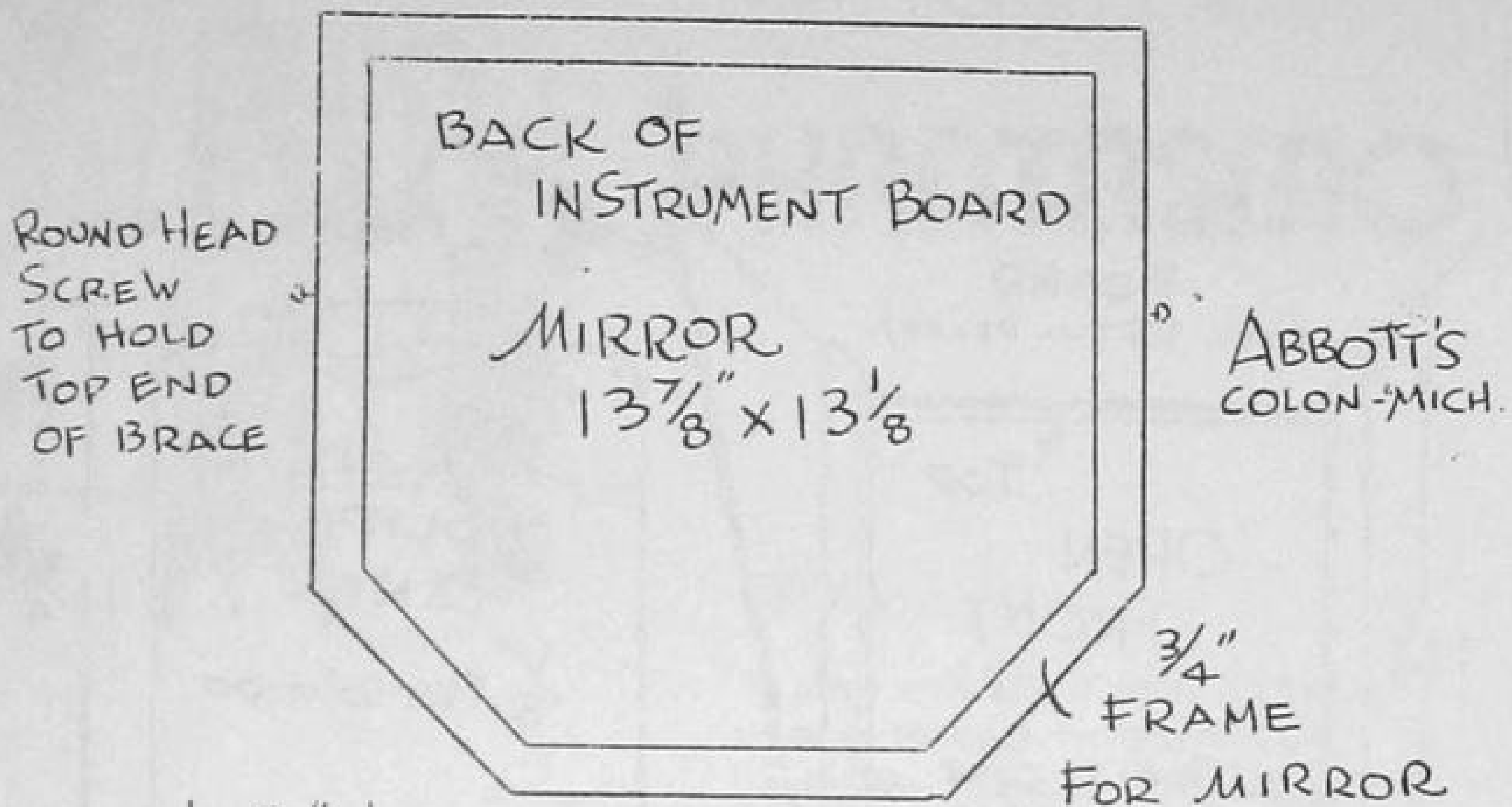
All in all, one of the greatest feature illusions that has ever come out.



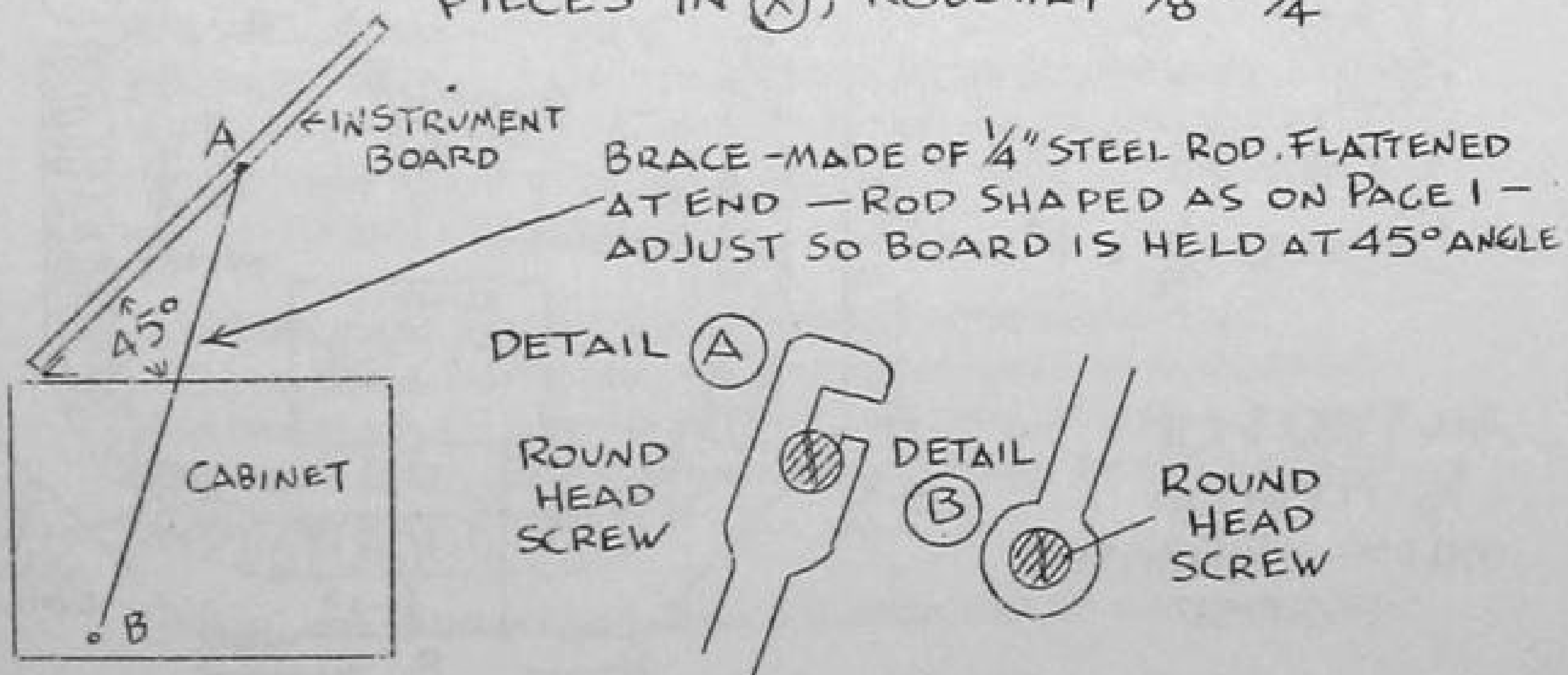
SCALE 1/4" = 1"

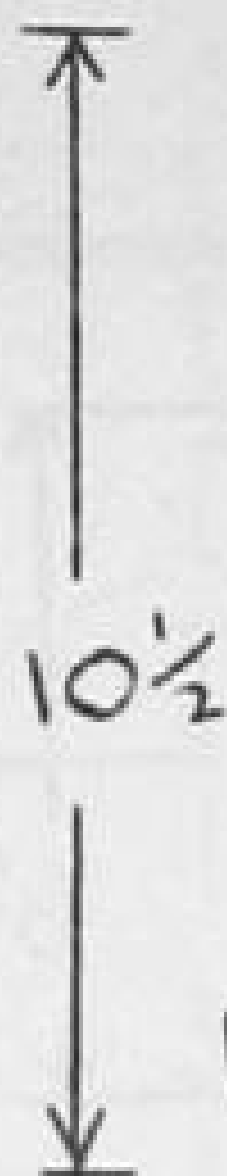
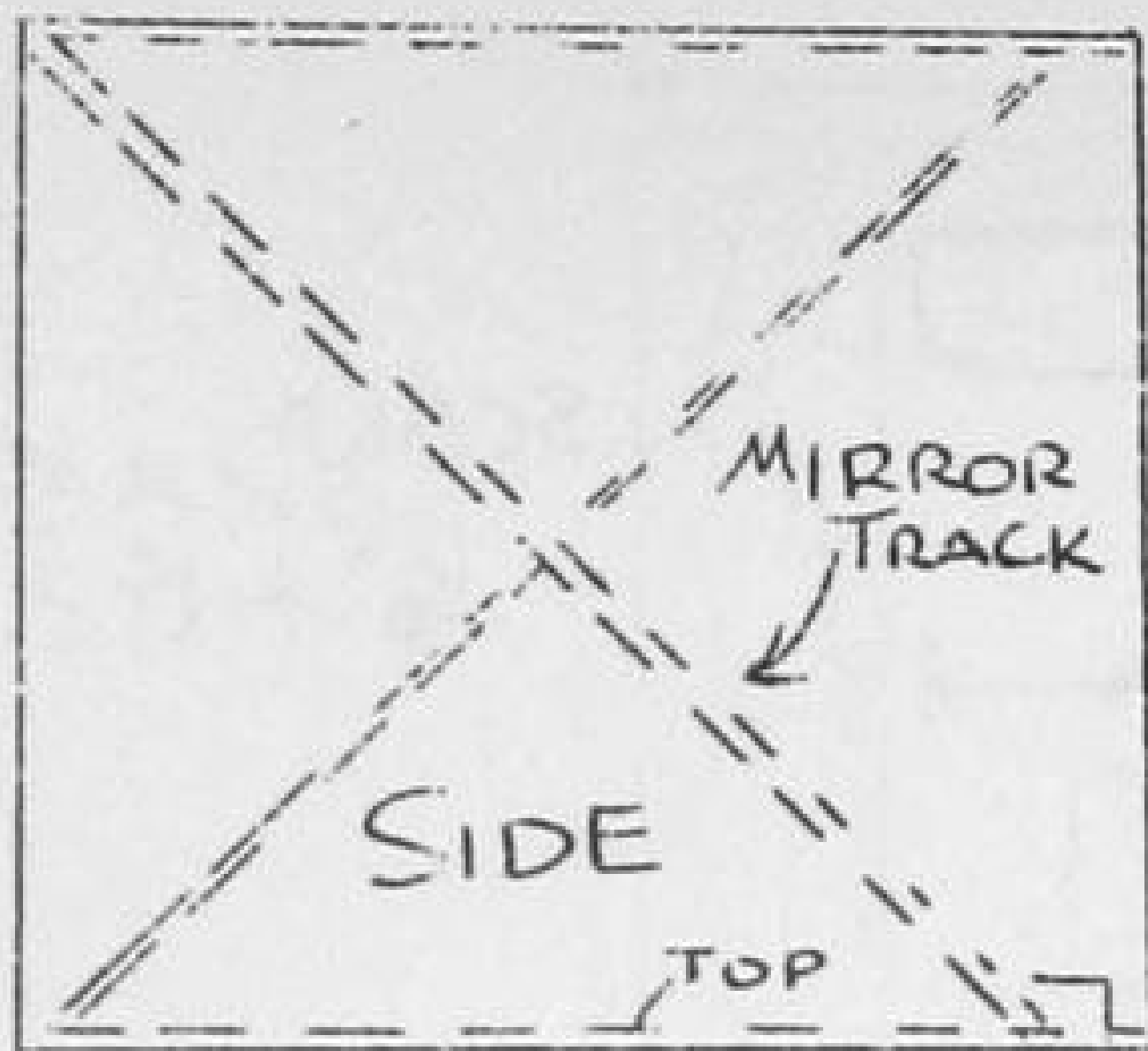
ALL PIECES OF  
3/8" PLYWOOD  
UNLESS OTHERWISE  
SPECIFIED





CHROME BINDING  $\frac{3}{4}''$  ON TOP AND BOTTOM  
 — SIDE VARIES WITH SIZE OF ASSEMBLED  
 PIECES IN (X), ROUGHLY  $\frac{5}{8}'' - \frac{3}{4}''$

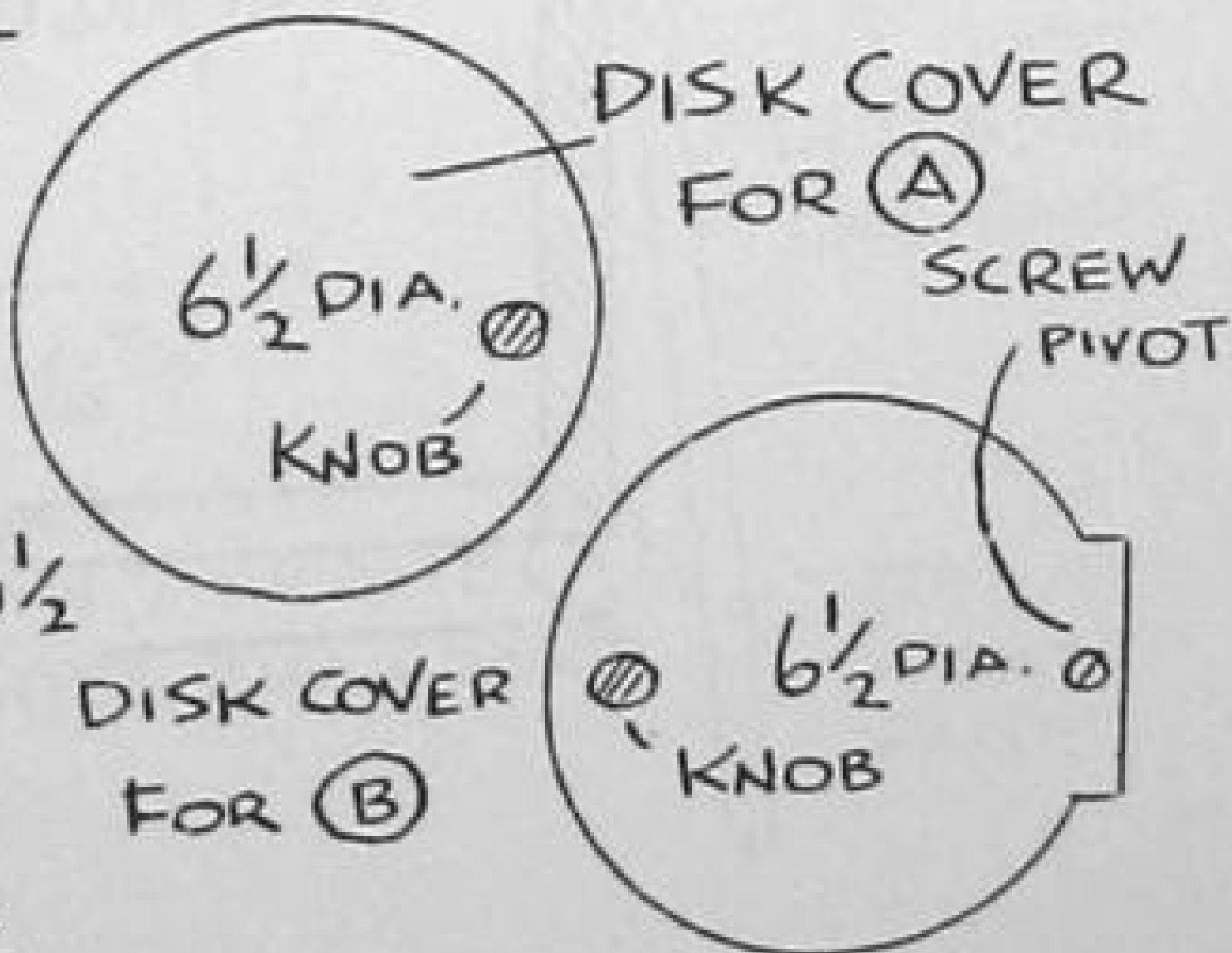
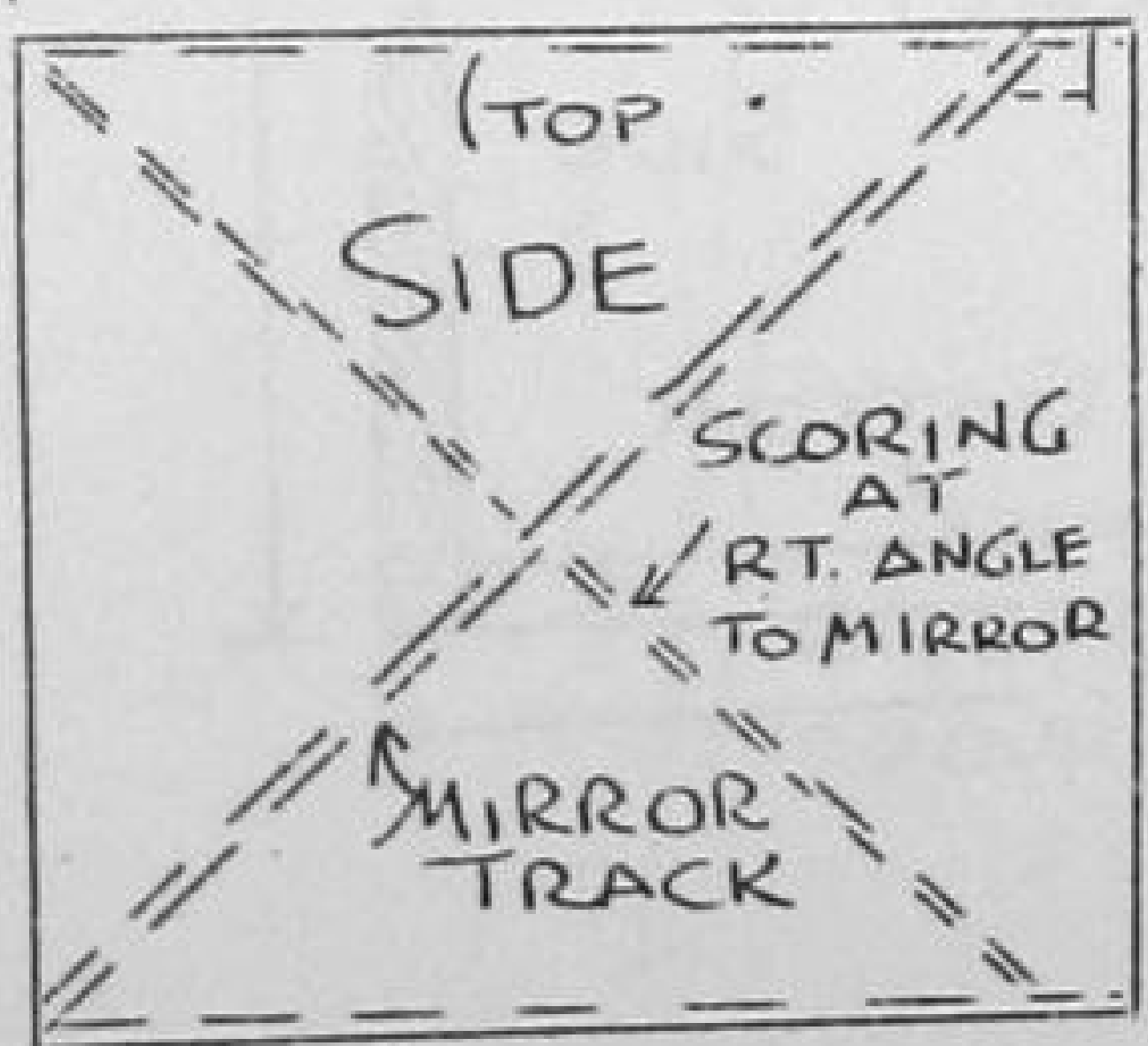
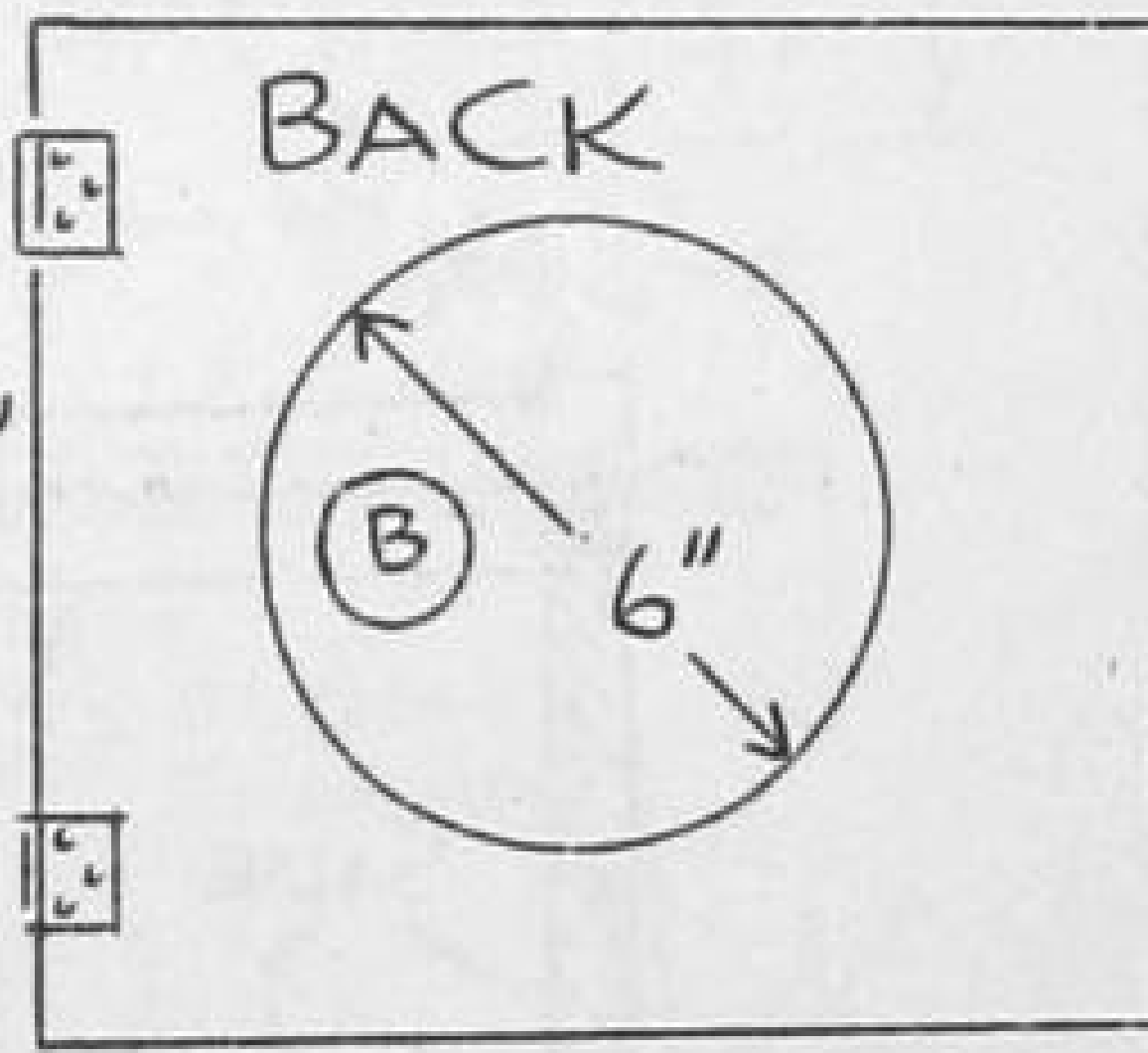
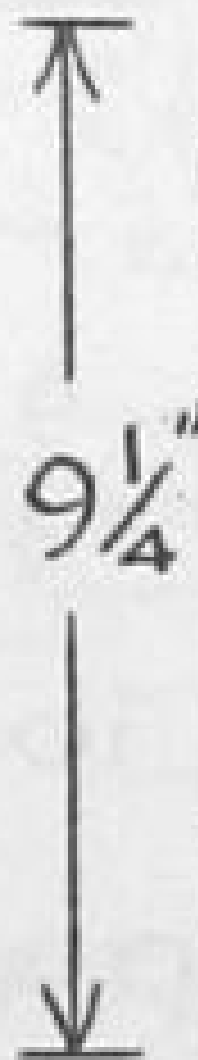
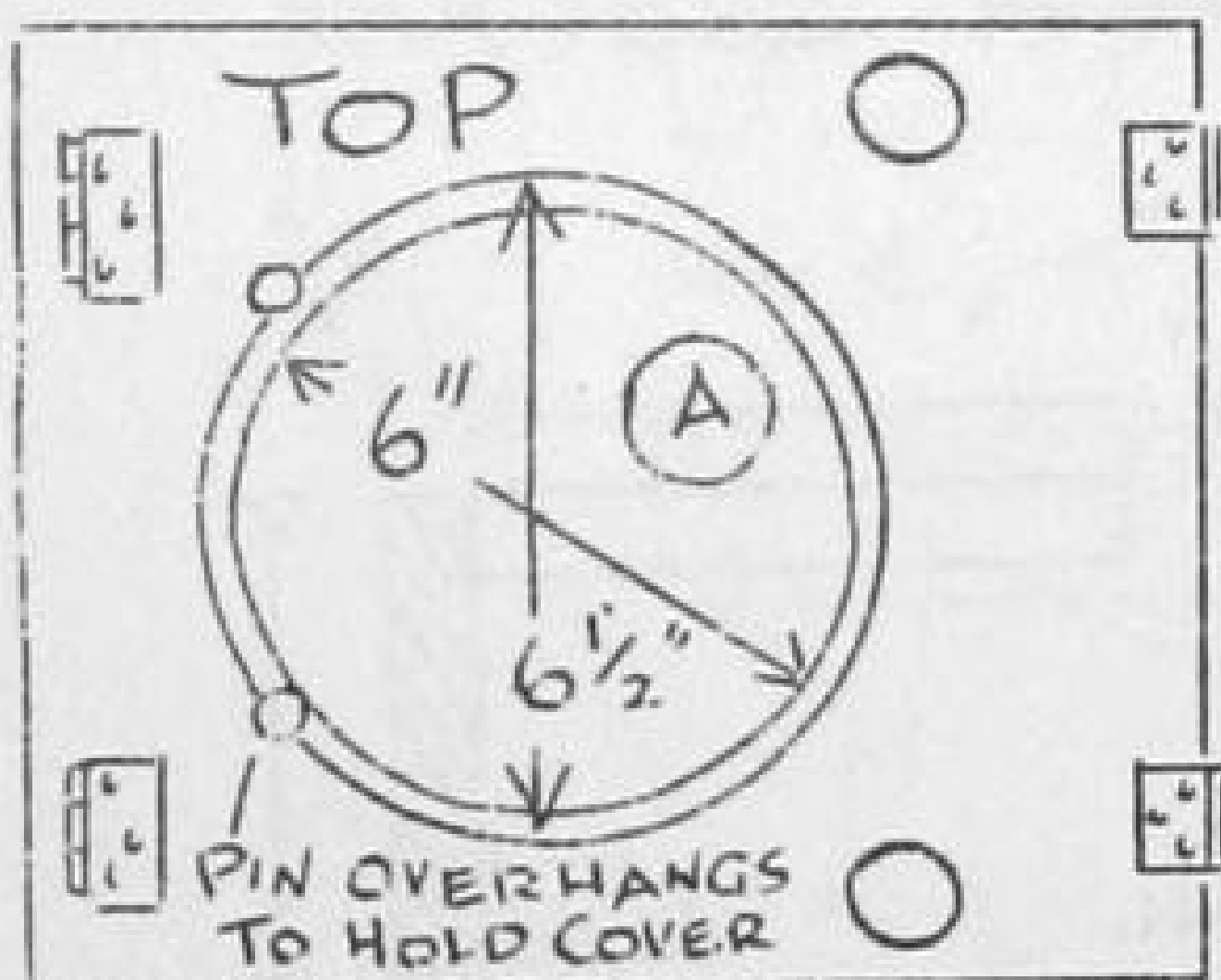


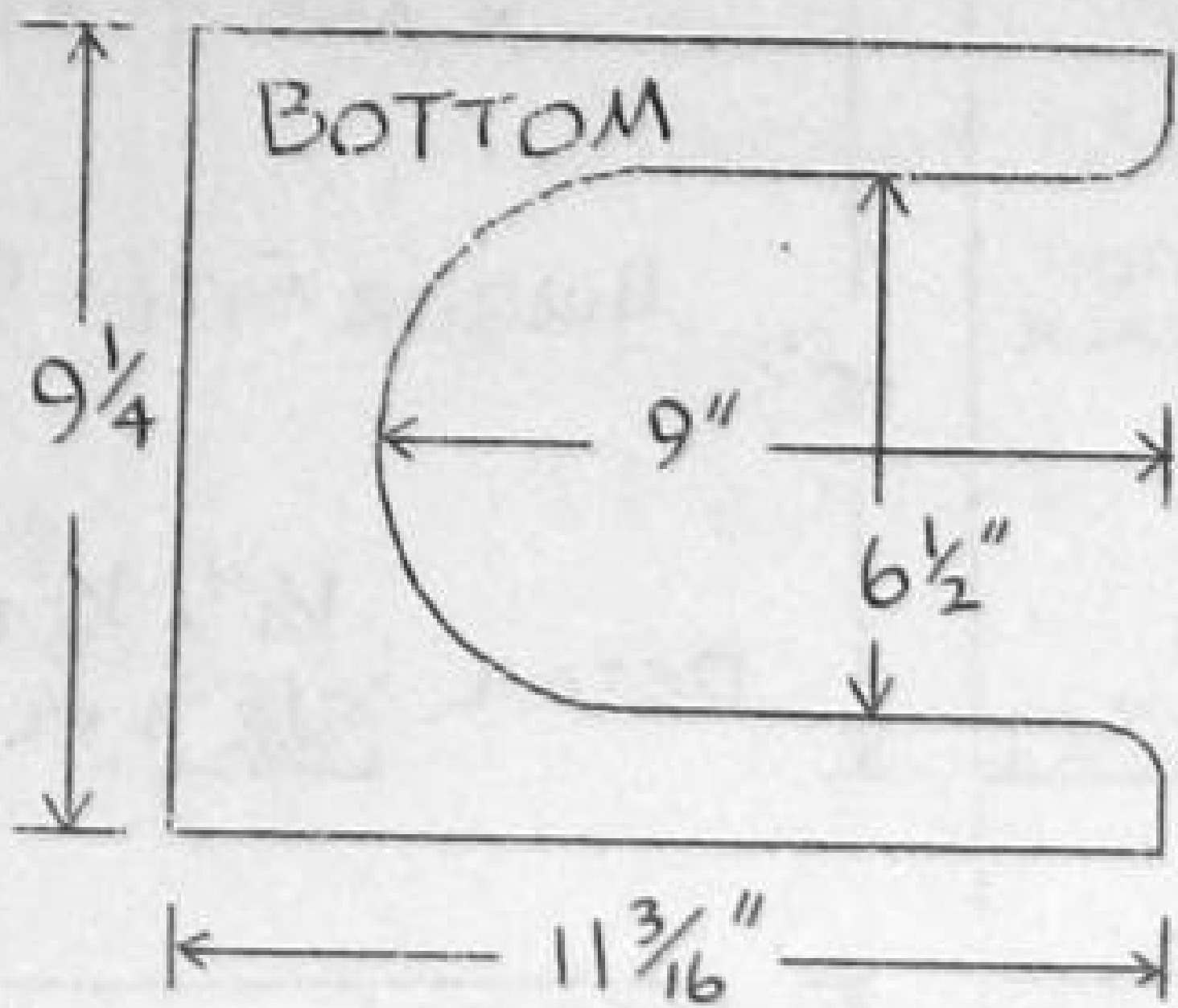


SCALE  $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1''$

MIRROR SIZE -  $9\frac{9}{16}'' \times 13\frac{7}{8}''$

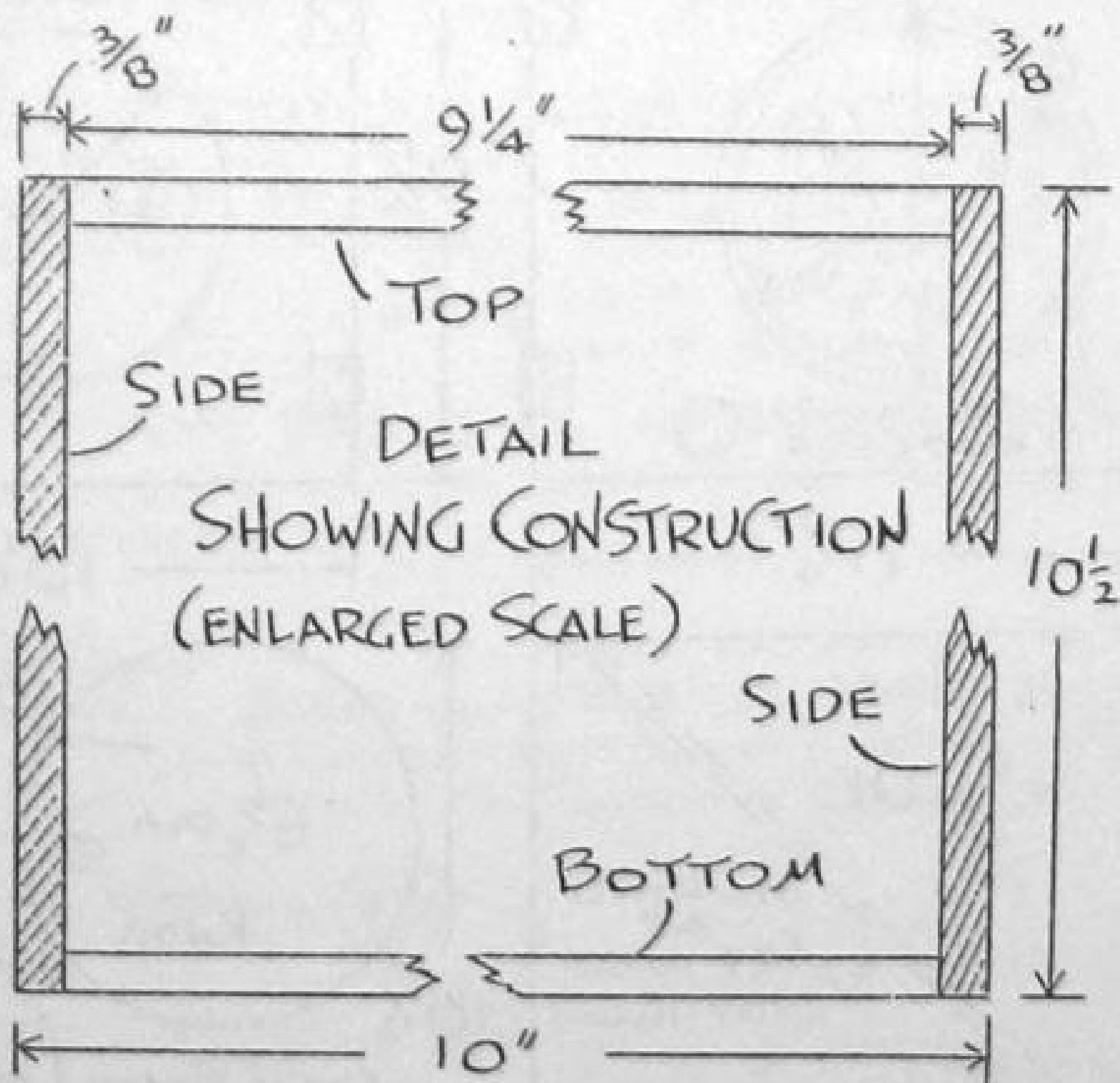
DETAIL  $\frac{1}{4}'' \times \frac{1}{8}''$  DEEP  
3 PLY





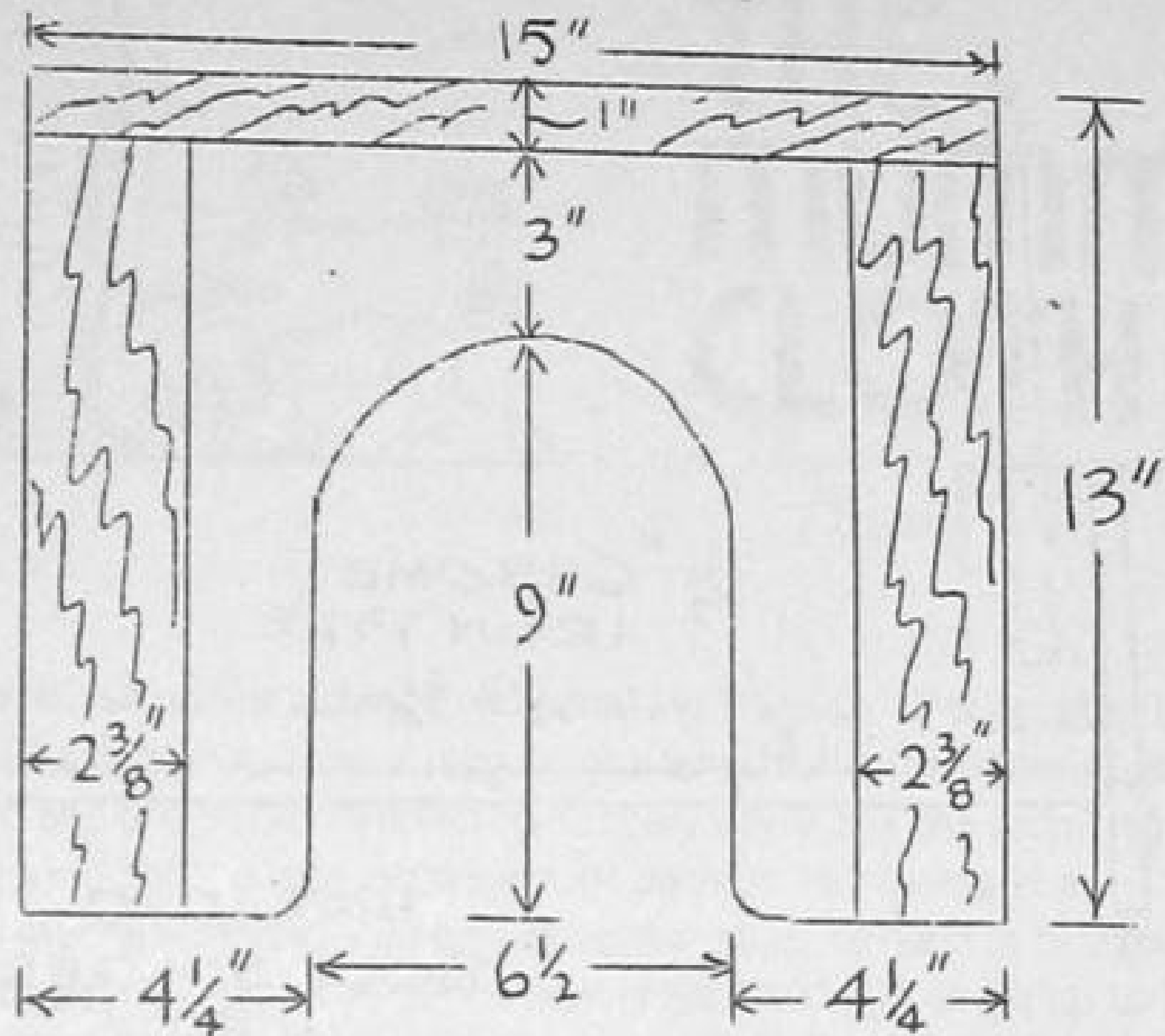
SCALE  
1/4" = 1"

ABBOTT'S  
COLON-MICH.

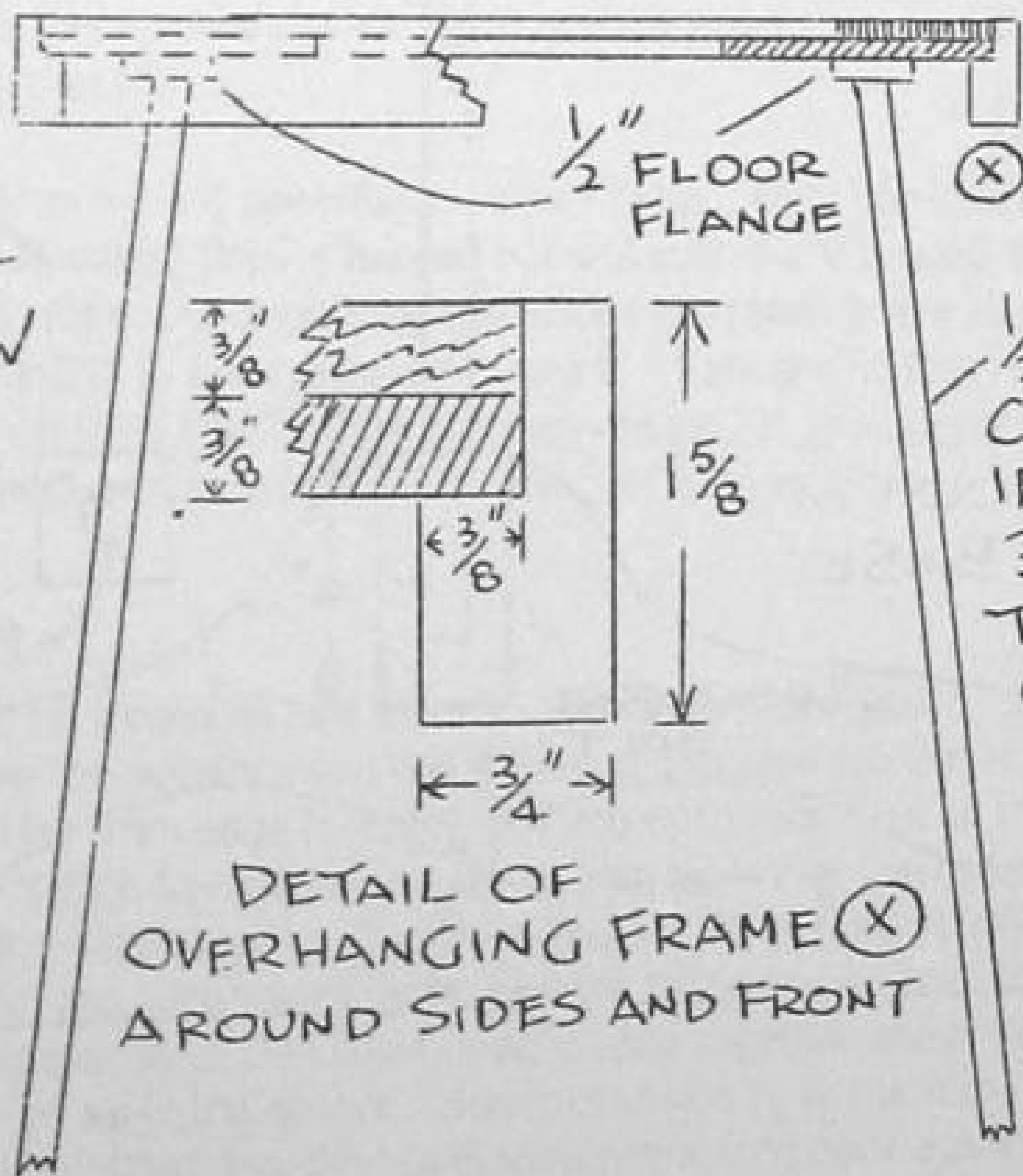


BASE  
STAND

TOP



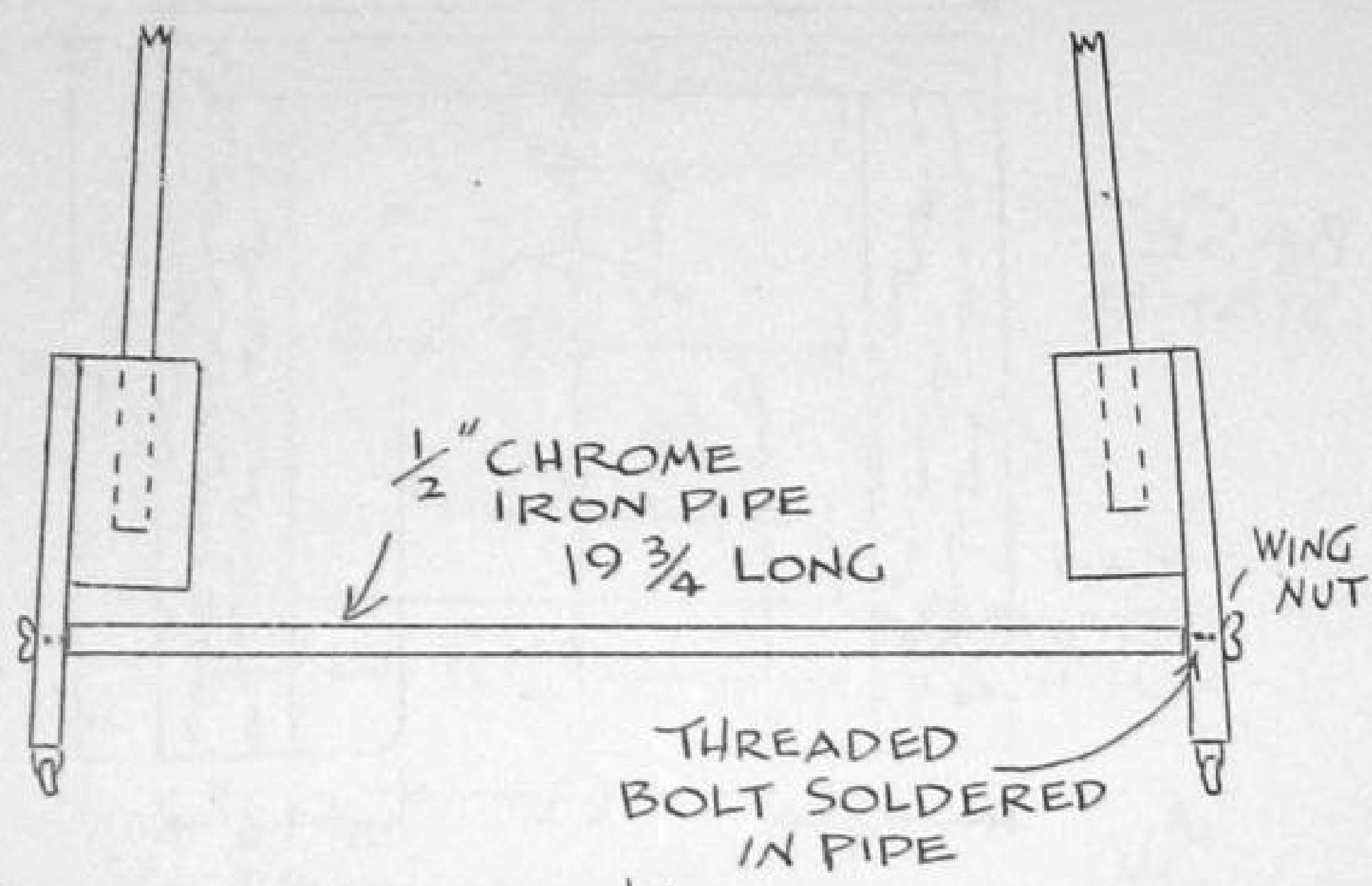
FRONT  
VIEW



DETAIL OF  
OVERHANGING FRAME (X)  
AROUND SIDES AND FRONT

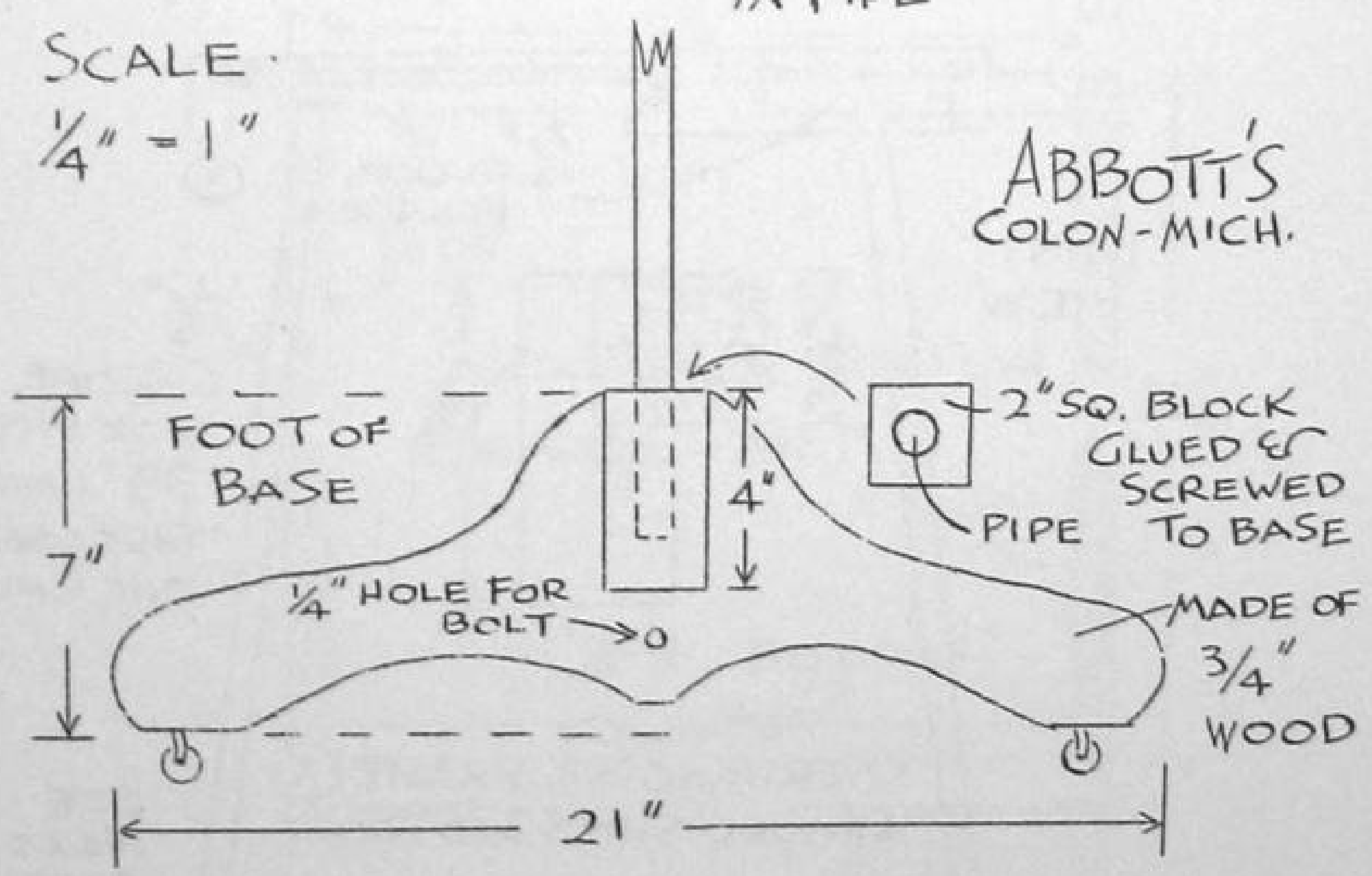
SEE  
NEXT  
PAGE





SCALE  
 $\frac{1}{4}$ " = 1"

ABBOTT'S  
 COLON-MICH.





# THE MUMMY CLOTH

## EFFECT

This is a dramatic, sensational and eye appealing illusion. A spectator is stood on a small prayer rug, then a long single length of wide white cloth is wound around and around the victim in mummy style and the ends tied securely. Following this, a robe arrangement painted to represent a mummy case is tied around the victim's shoulder so as to hang in front and back of the cloth bound body. The performer cries "WATCH", steps up to the person and pulls the wound cloth right through their very flesh and bone. It passes through their body like a ghost passes through the closed door of a haunted castle.

This is the most startling penetration of all times. Only one continuous length of cloth is used. This is handed out and pulled and tugged on by any two spectators. No extra or outside gimmicks are used. There is no set-up or preparation and it is always ready to work. There are no false knots. The person the cloth is tied around in no way helps. It is entirely automatic and packs in a suitcase with the rest of your show.

## METHOD

The tape should be wound on two sticks - one red and one white. Stand the person up facing the audience and the center of the tape (center is indicated by a line from edge to edge), and you with your back to the audience, wind the cloth tape around the person as in Fig. 1, crossed over so the red stick goes on top; No. 3 back to front with the red stick on top; No. 4 to the rear, and here you attach two snap fasteners on the cloth, so instead of going around at this point, snap cloths together and bring the ends back to front as in the sketch. Sketch 5 shows it at the front again and with the red stick on top; Sketch 6 shows it around back again with the red stick still on top and lastly, sketch 7 shows it to the front again and the ends tied together, letting the sticks hang down.

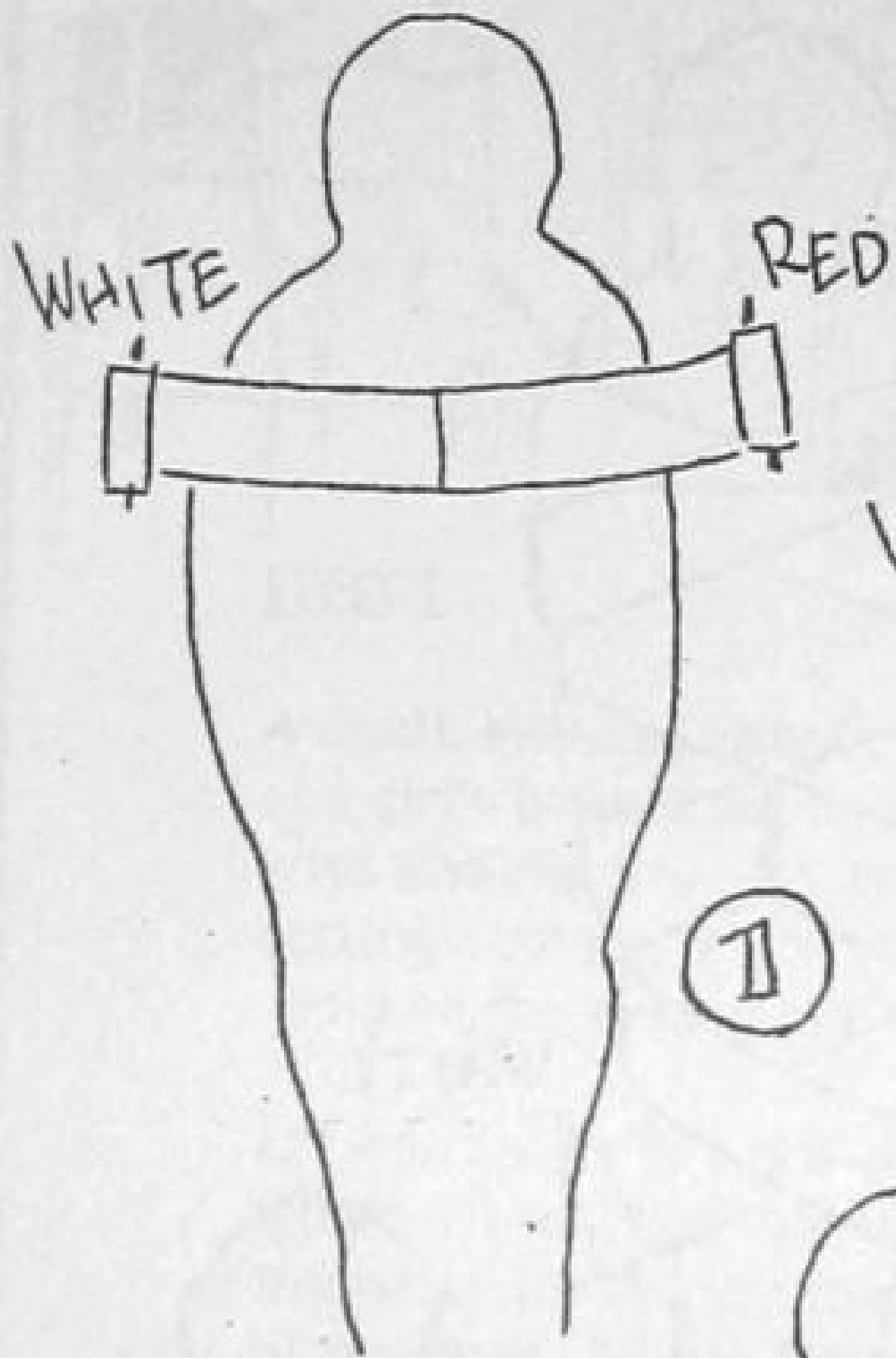
Now, show the robe and tie it around the shoulders of the person. Slide the sticks through the slit at the front. Now, all that remains is to pull on the sticks and tied ends. As you do, tell the person that the tape is tied around to spread his (or her) arms out. By doing this, he releases the snaps and you can pull the tape right through the slit in the cloth and free of your assistant's body because the tape was wound around the body the correct number of times and the one end of the cloth went on top each time on each cross over.

Please note that some prefer to make the cloth draw off the person's body quicker and smoother. In that case, tie a ribbon around the center of the cloth (where the line is), and after the person is tied up, bring the ribbon through the slit in the robe at the top and grasp this in one hand and the sticks at the bottom and pull with both hands--and the cloth comes free of the assistant.

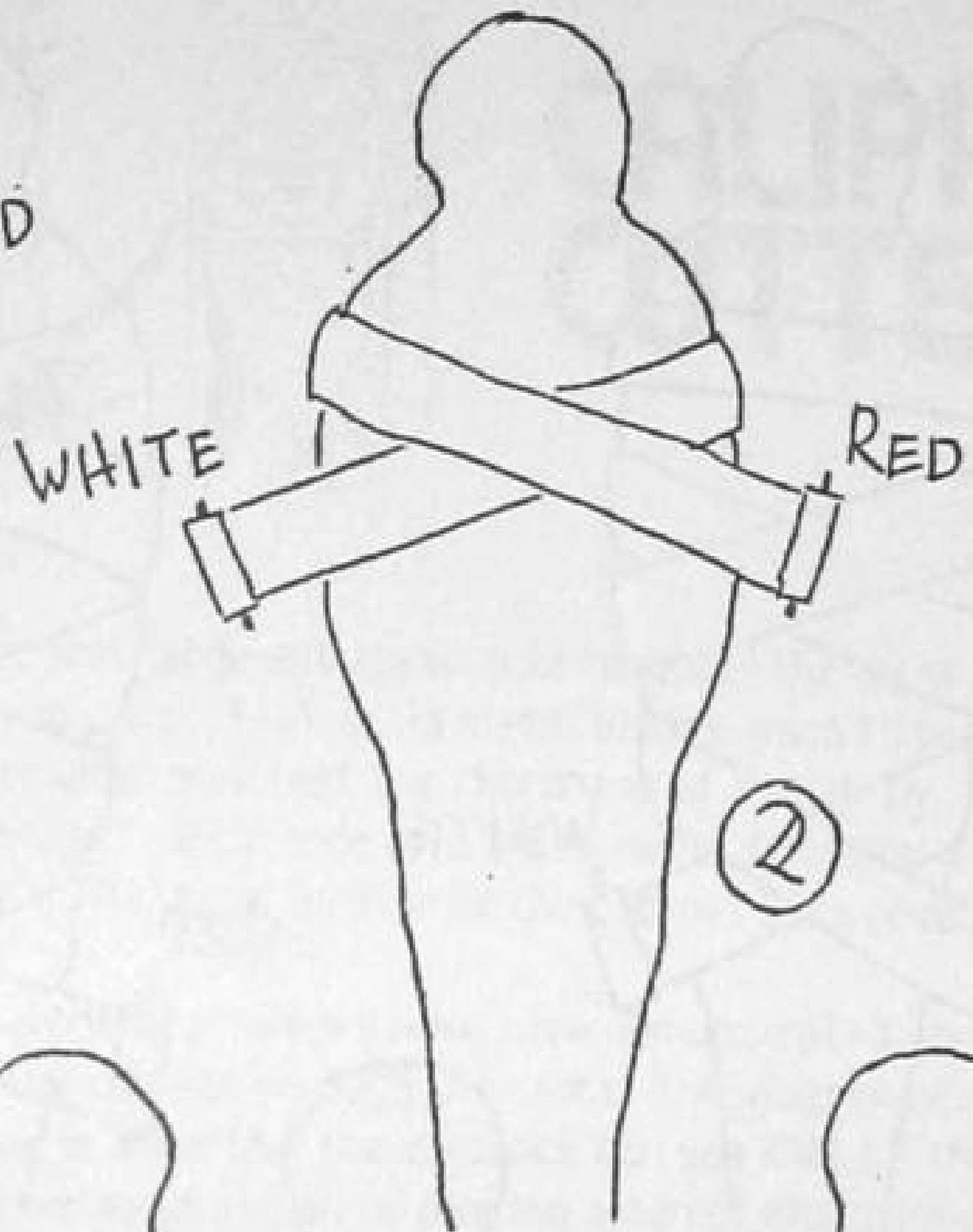
Patter can be to the effect of the beautiful princess who was captured and wound in mummy cloth and encased in a casket with the ends of the cloth sticking through the opening. The girl was left out in the open spaces and, so encased that it was merely a matter of days and she would perish. BUT a famous magician touring that section came upon her. He tried to open the casket, but failed. Then he resorted to his magical powers and took the exposed ends of the cloth and muttered a few mystic words and caused the cloth to penetrate right through the girl's body without pain or injury to the beautiful princess. Then with her hands free, she was able to open the casket from the inside. And...it is said that she married the magician and they lived happily ever after. So this evening the performer would like to present the actual princess, his wife, and duplicate the effect for them in full view without the Oriental background.

See next two pages for sketches.

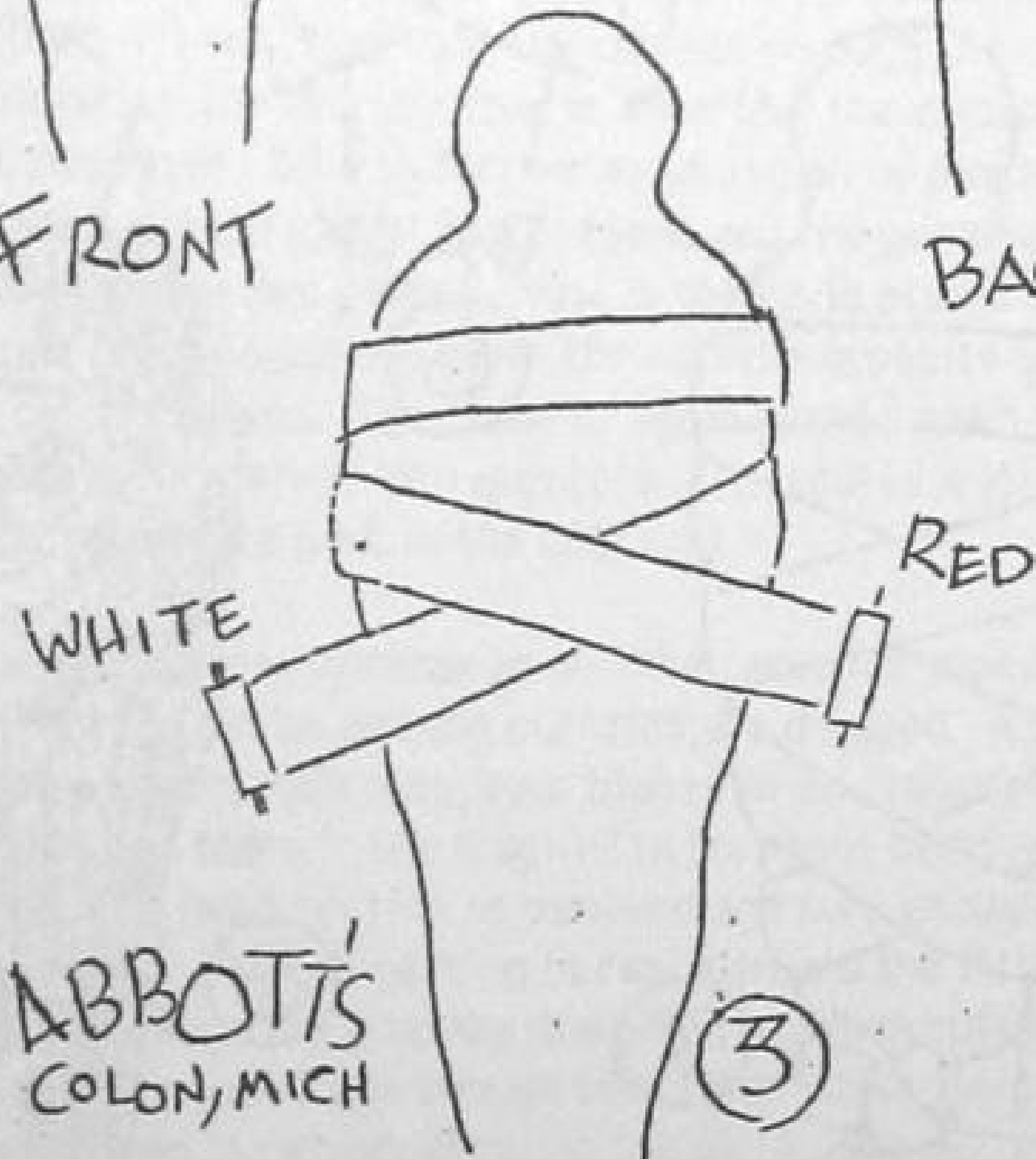




FRONT

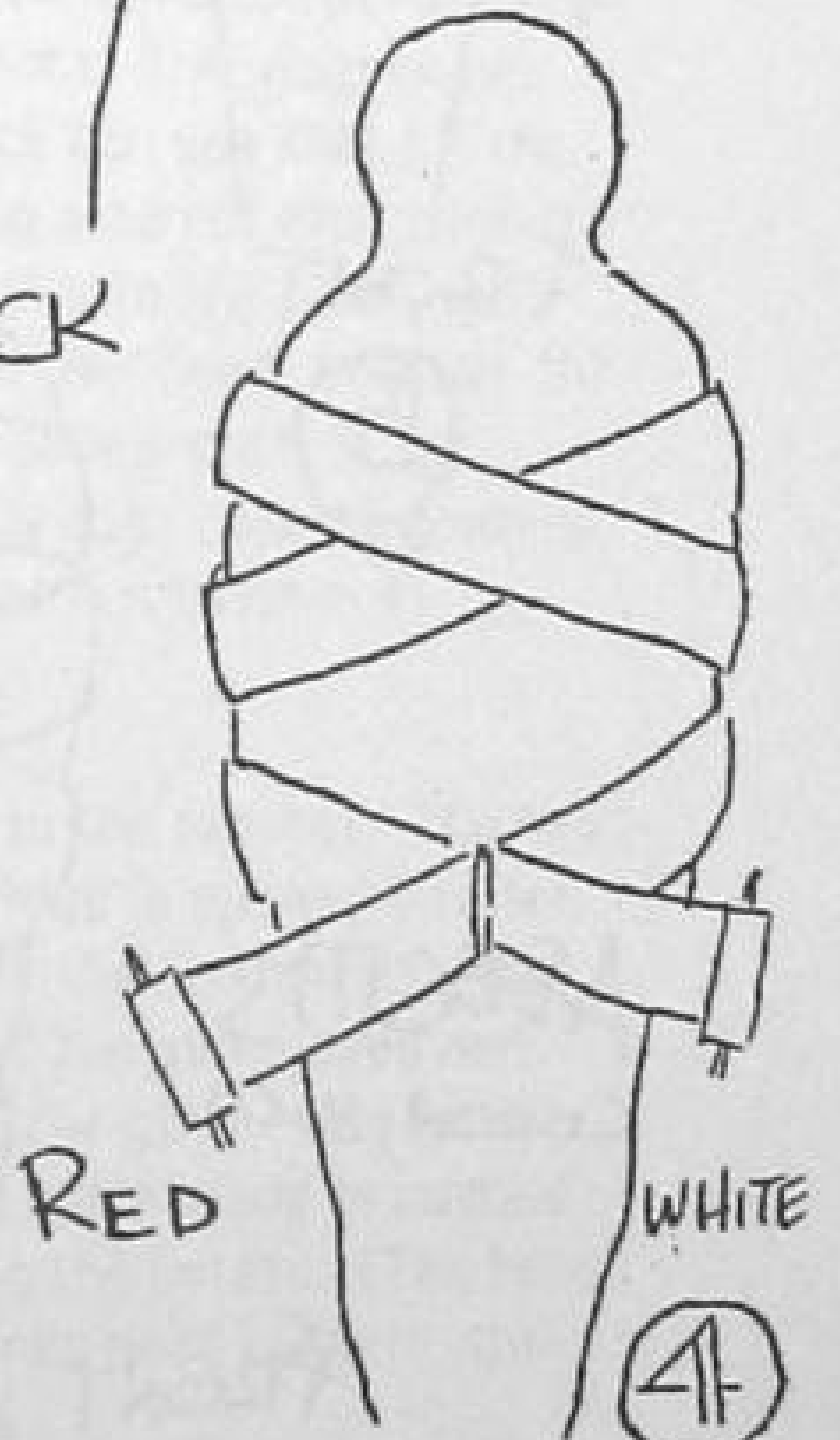


BACK



ABBOTT'S  
COLON, MICH

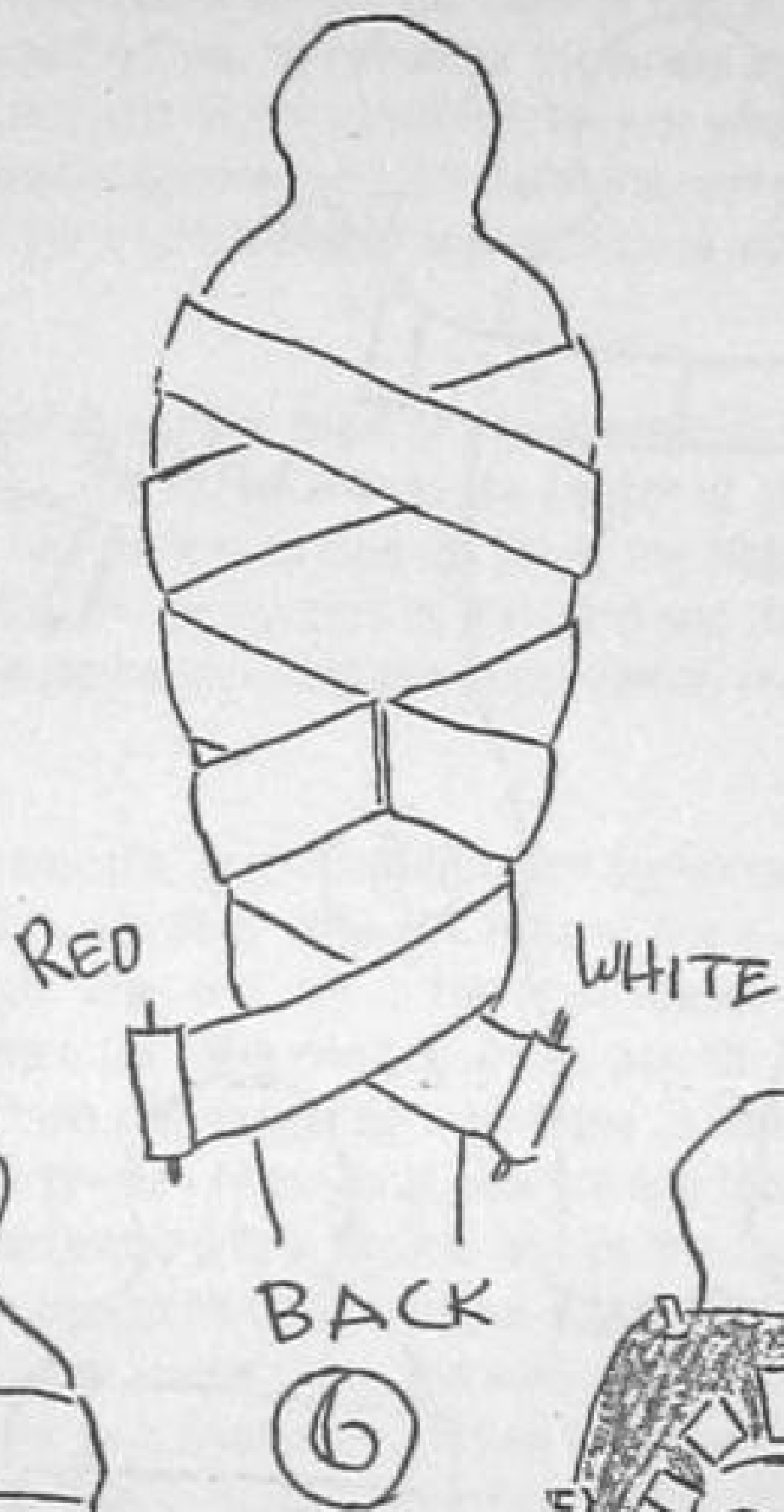
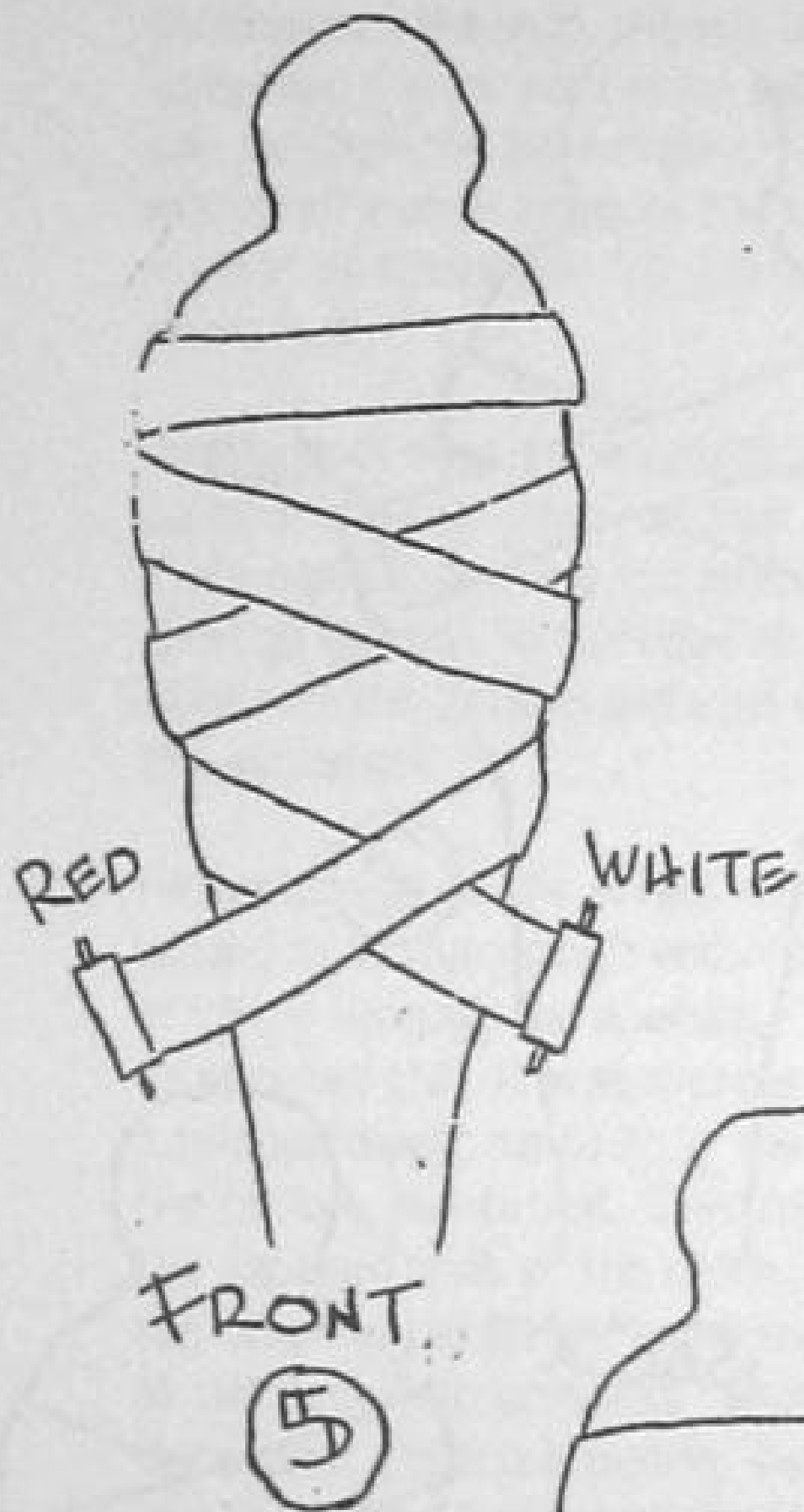
FRONT



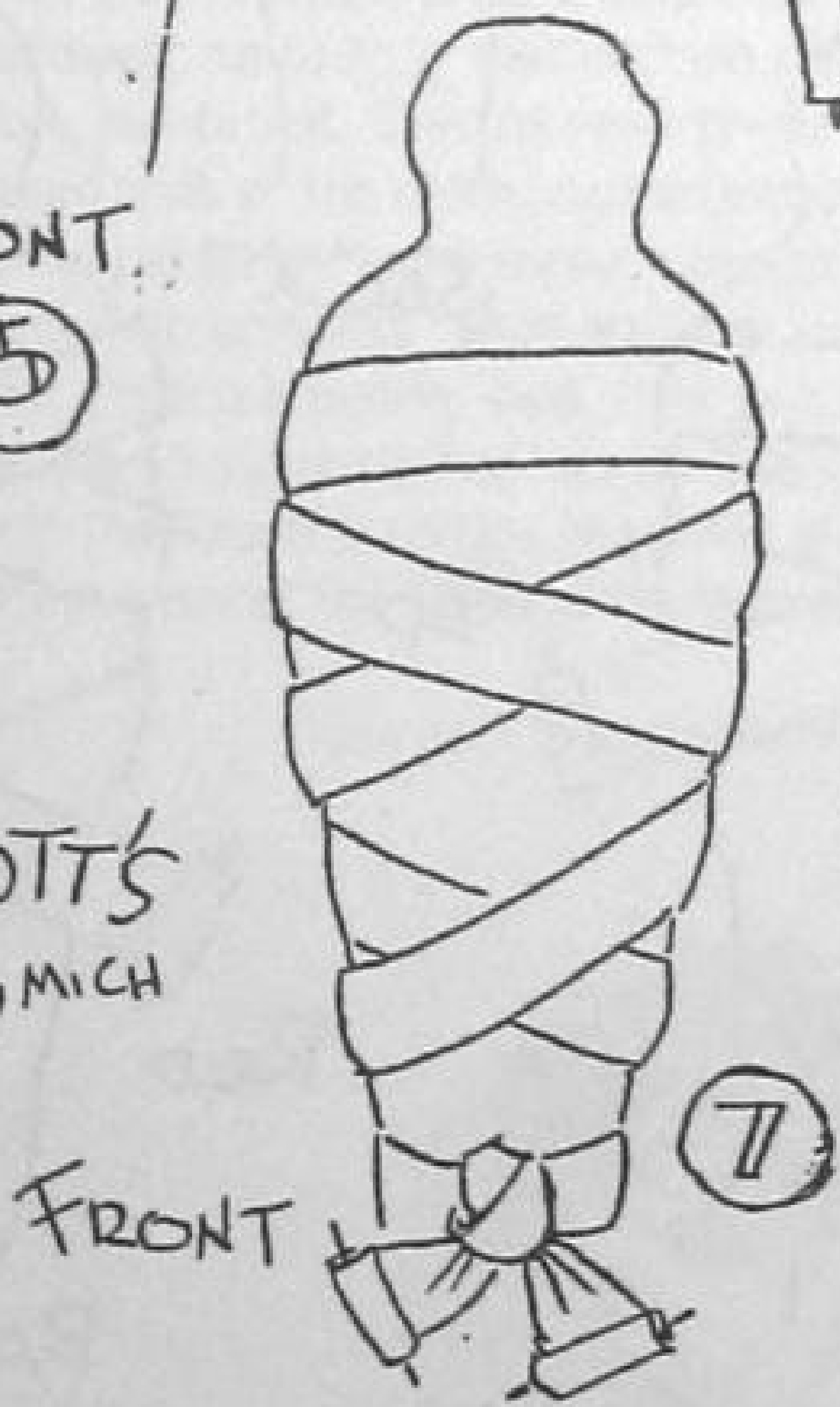
RED

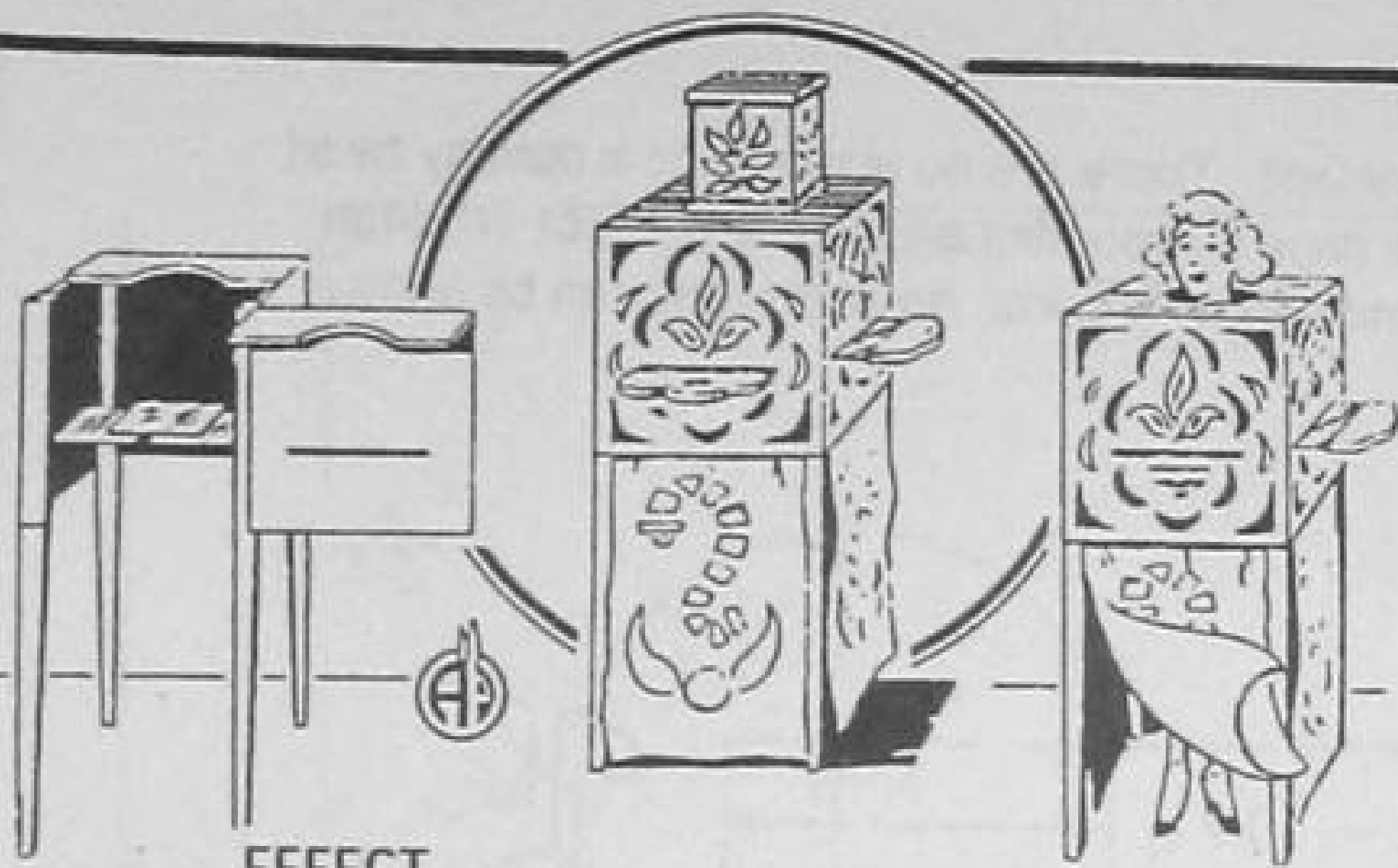
WHITE

BACK



ABBOTT'S  
COLON, MICH





EFFECT

## CALIPH'S CUTTER

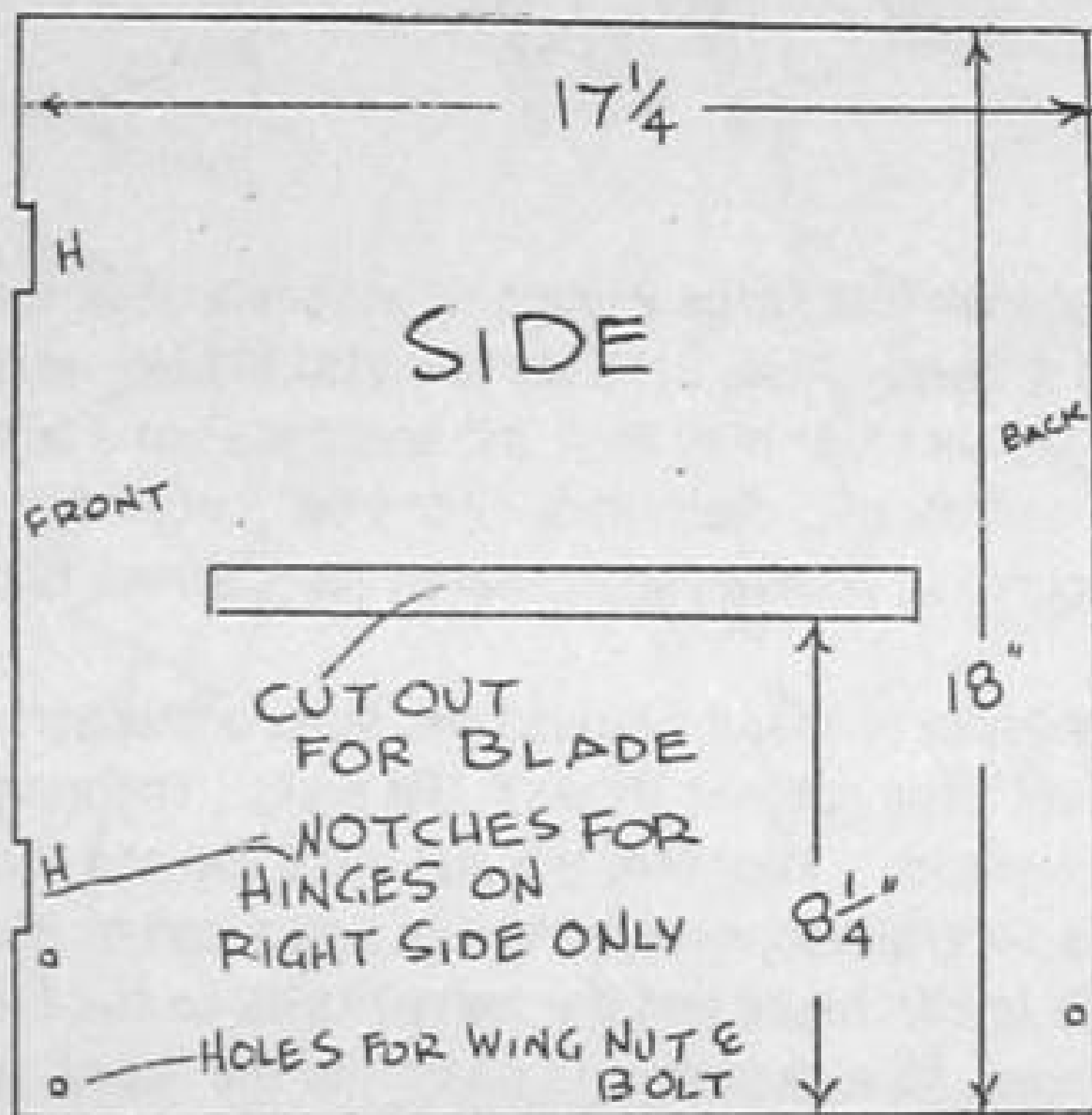
A small, elevated cabinet just large enough to accommodate the upper part of a girl's body is displayed. Also, FIVE solid metal blades, each fitted with a handle grip. A spectator may test the sharpness of a blade by cutting a potato, or carrot, etc. Each side of the cabinet is fitted by a designed dropdown curtain. The head section of the cabinet is removable.

After the solidity and sharpness of blades have been demonstrated, three blades are inserted into the cabinet through the slots. The magi shows that when the fourth blade is inserted, the audience can see that all the blades meet. This is further emphasized by placing a carrot alongside the blades, a push on the fourth blade and the carrot falls to the floor, cut cleanly into two pieces. Now, a potato is placed in the "head" section, the knife blade is pushed down through the opposite grooves, cutting the potato in halves. The blade is again pushed down through opposite grooves, cutting the halves into quarters. (It creates a lot of fun to have a spectator take part in the cutting.)

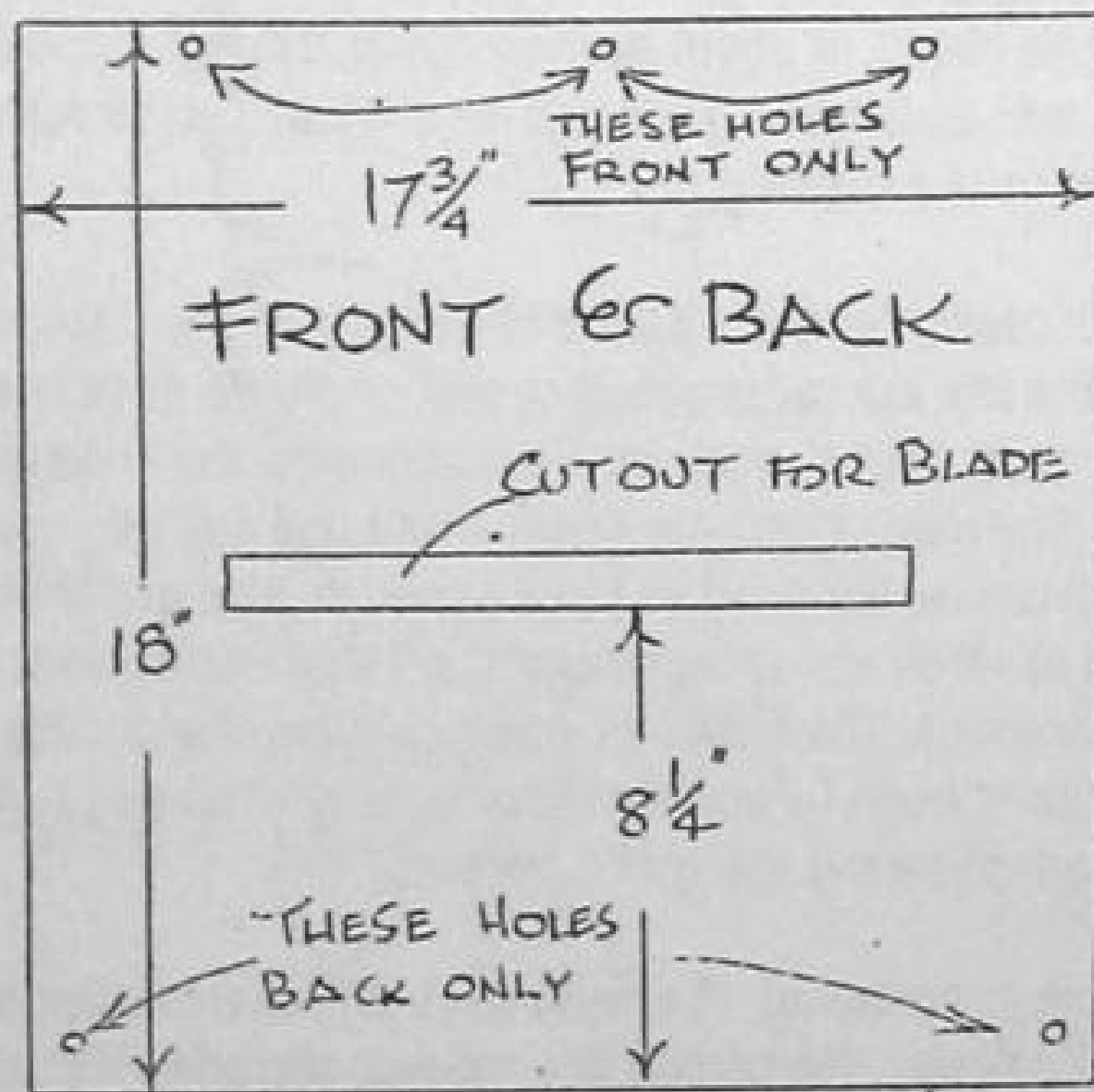
The girl is now introduced and she takes her place in the cabinet. The head section is put on and the curtains are dropped. A blade is pushed into the cabinet from each side, four blades in all. Naturally the thought is, "The girl is not there." The magi lifts the front blind and the girl moves her feet. The head section is removed and sure enough, the girl's head is in full view. The top section is replaced and the fifth knife blade is pushed down through the grooves, the same as when cutting the potato. (The head section is just large enough to accommodate the girl's head.) Again, the front blind is raised, showing the girl's feet.

Now, The head blade is removed, the head section taken away, again disclosing the girl's head. The blinds are raised, showing the girl's legs. Each of the four blades are withdrawn, the cabinet opened and the girl bows to well earned applause.

This is real mystery entertainment. There are no mirrors or a dummy head or dummy legs used. It can be done surrounded and is the perfect illusion for floor shows, club, stage and school shows. An assistant can be shown what to do in five minutes.

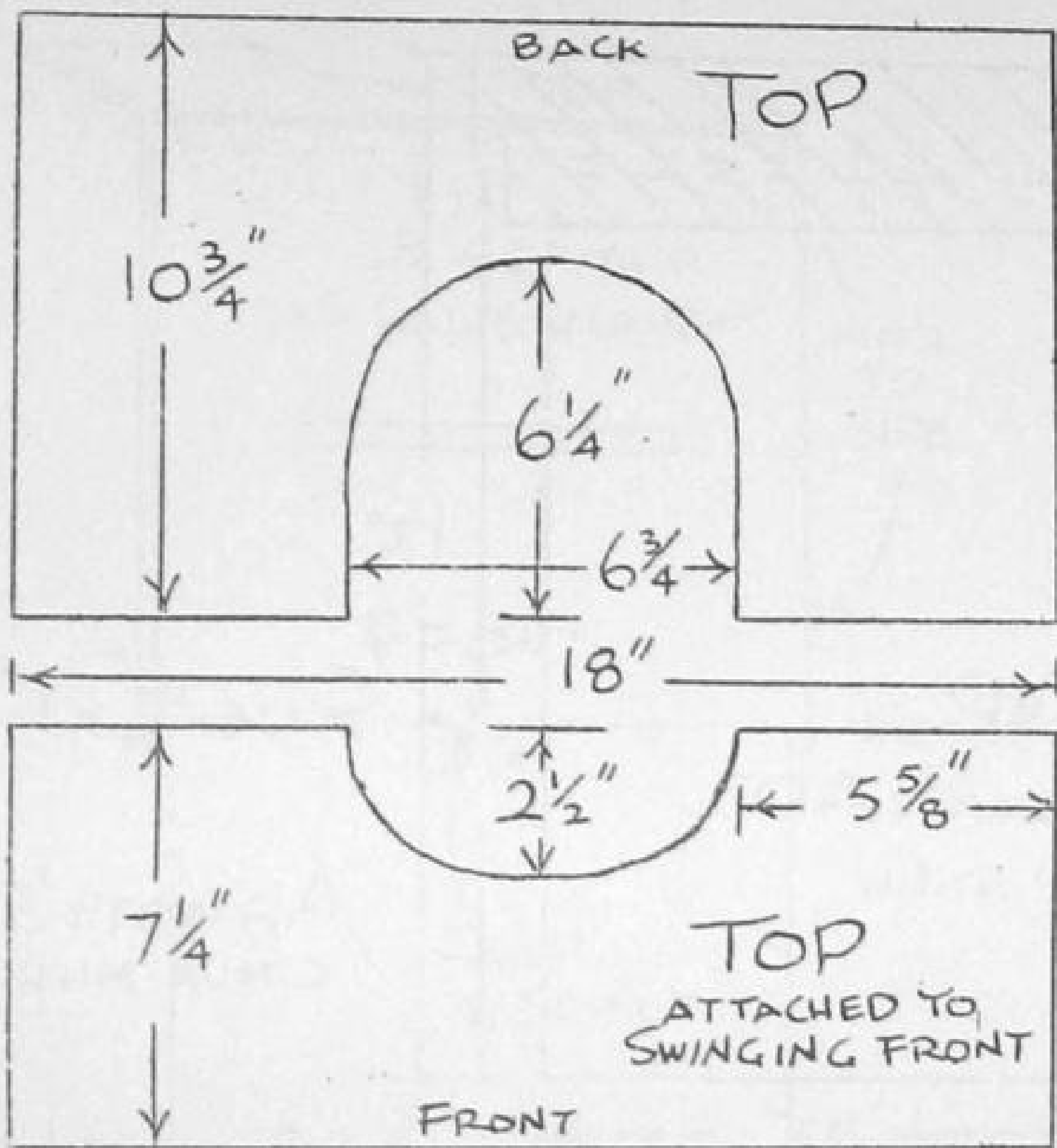


The  
ALIPH'S  
CUTTER

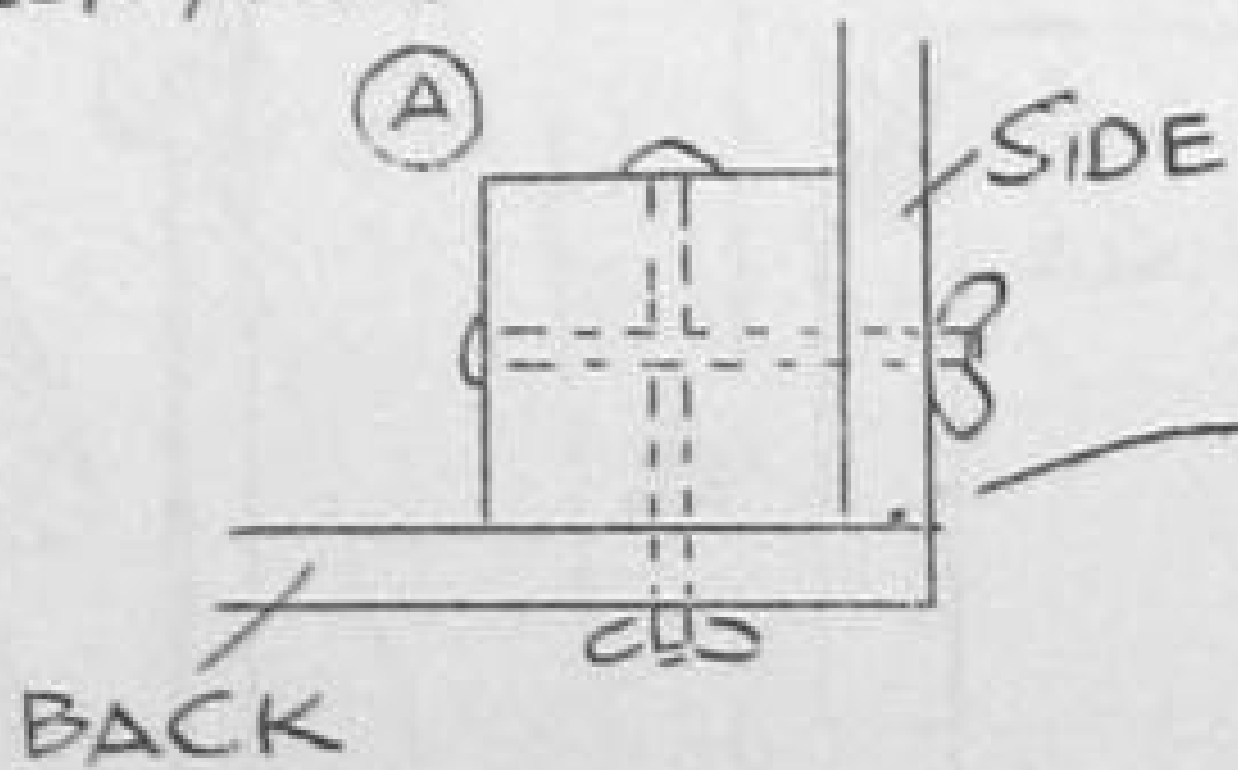


3/8" 3-PLY  
UNLESS  
OTHERWISE  
SPECIFIED

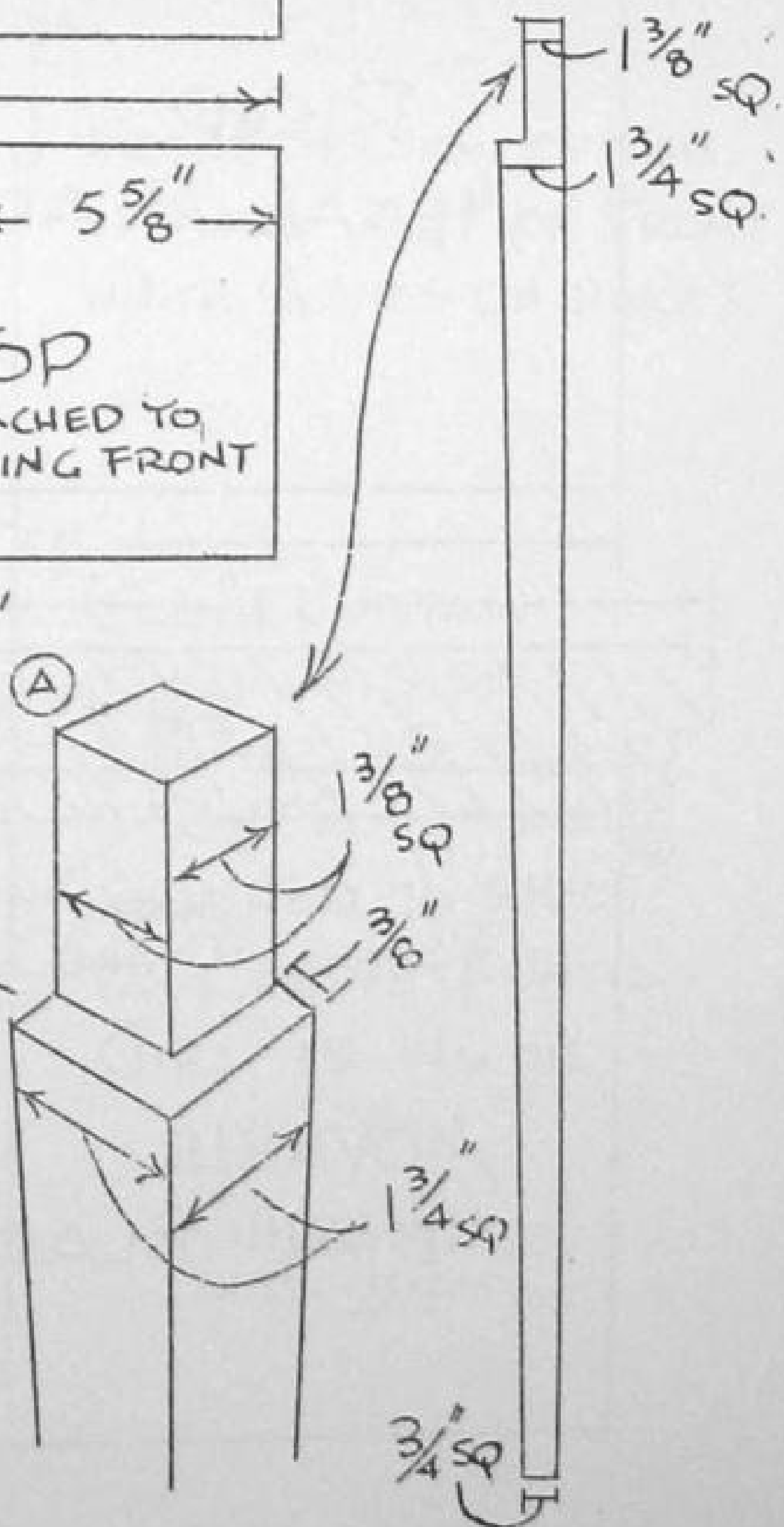
ABBOTT'S  
COLON-MICH.



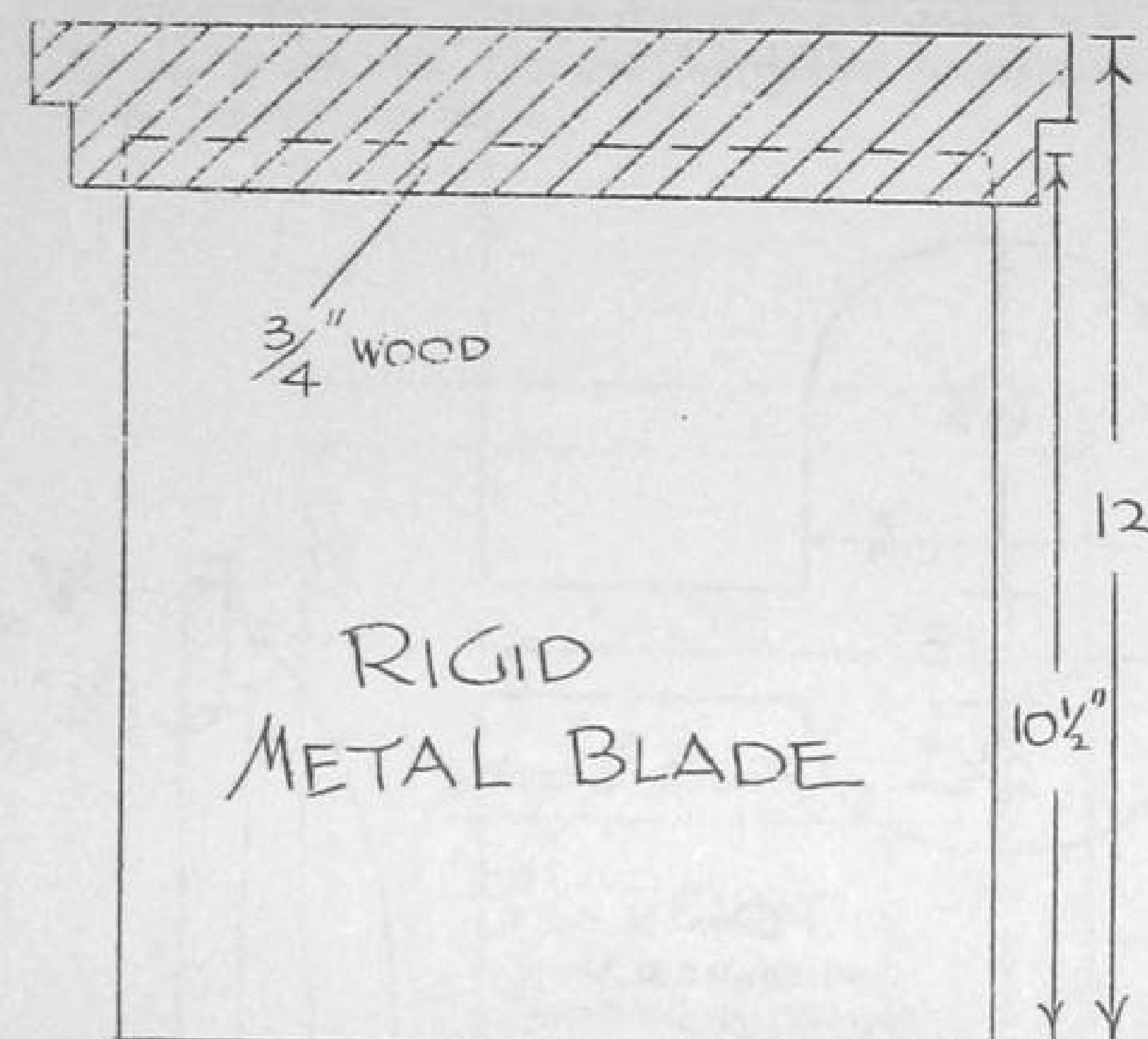
SCALE  $\frac{1}{4}'' - 1''$   
 ABBOTT'S COLON-MICH.



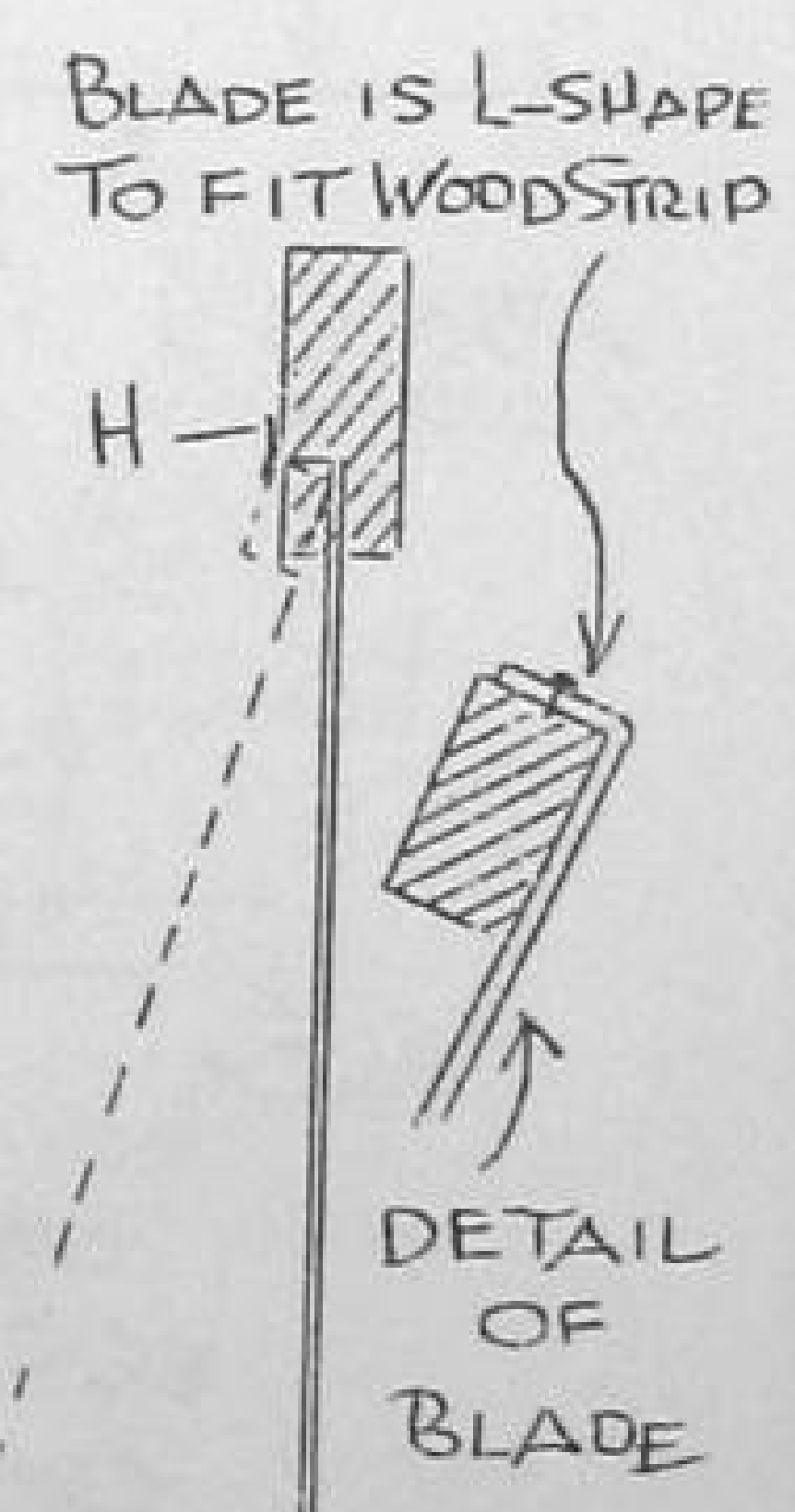
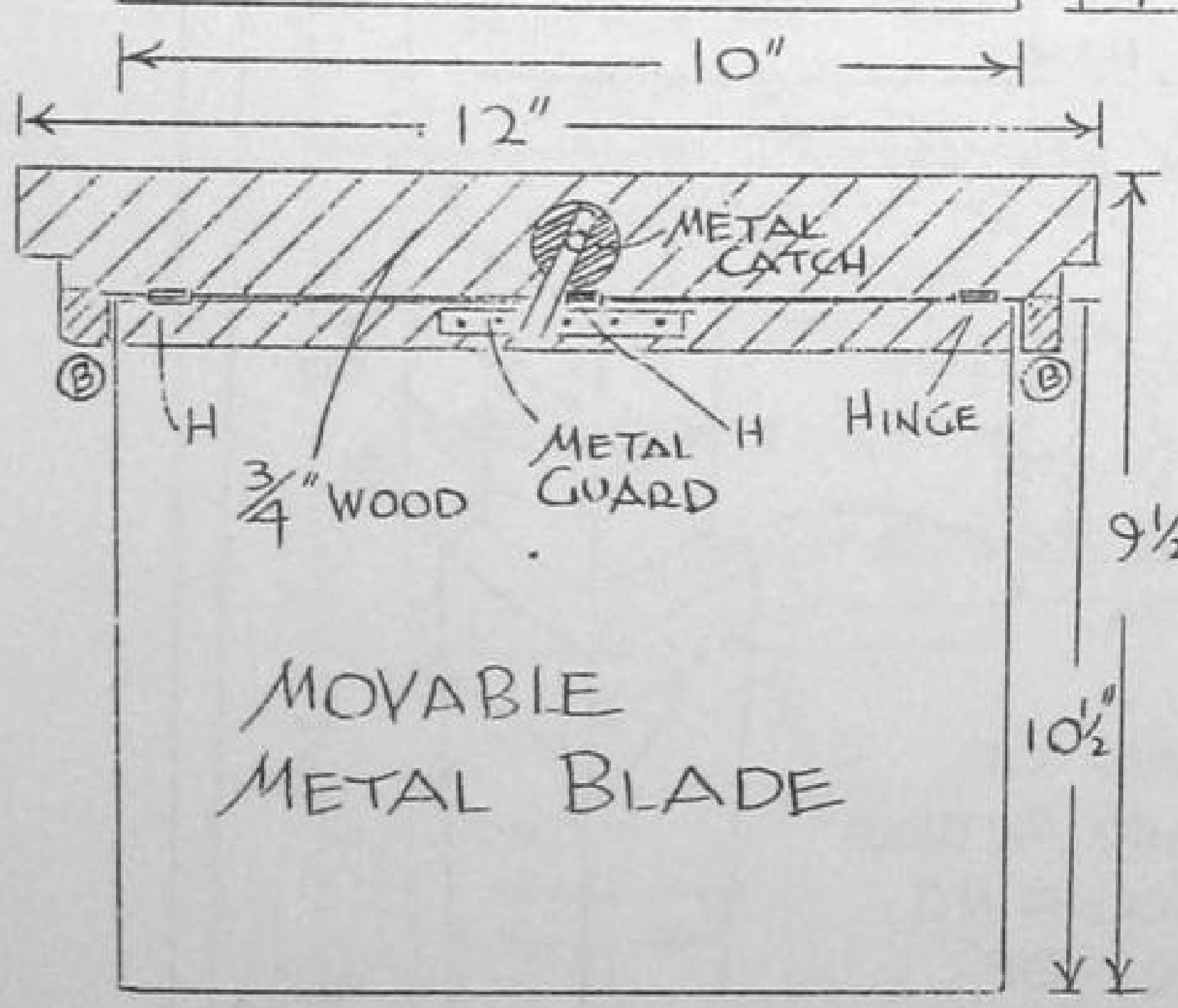
DETAIL OF LEGS AND METHOD OF SECURING SIDE OF CABINET

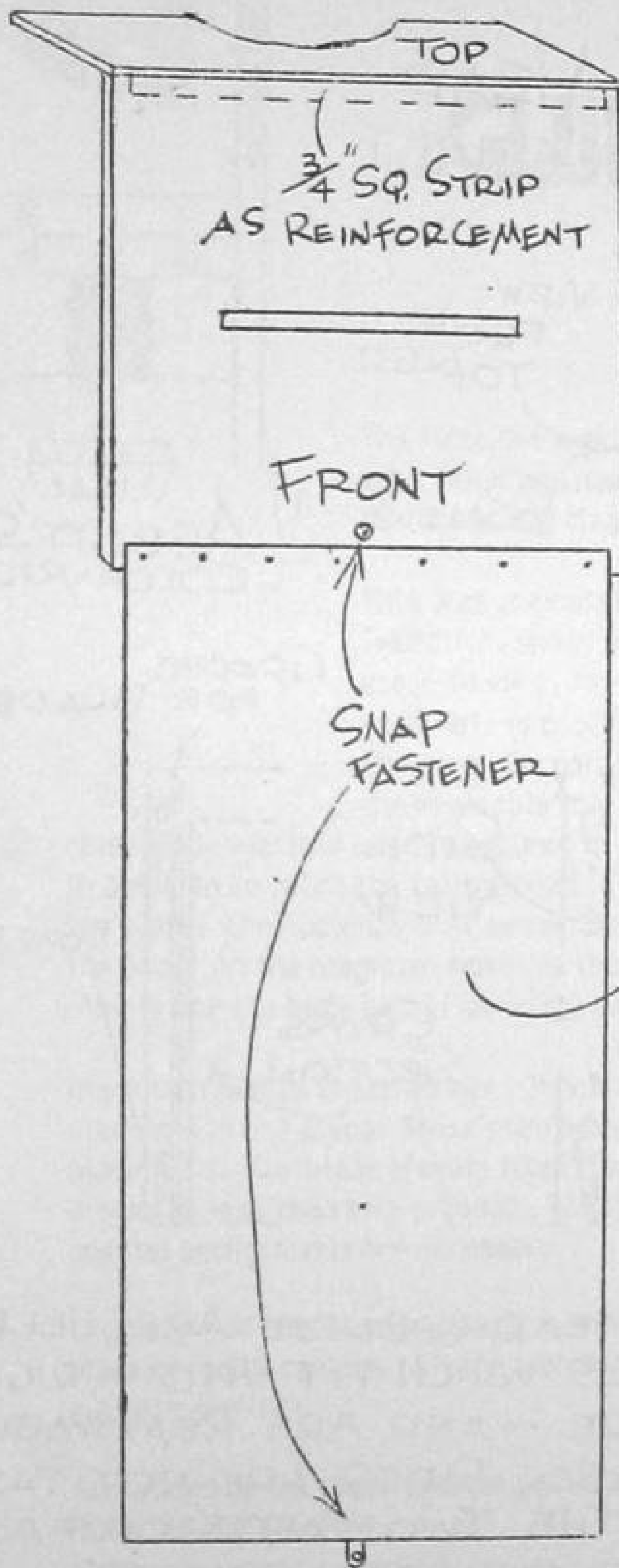






SCALE  $\frac{3}{8}'' = 1''$   
 ABBOTT'S  
 COLON-MICH





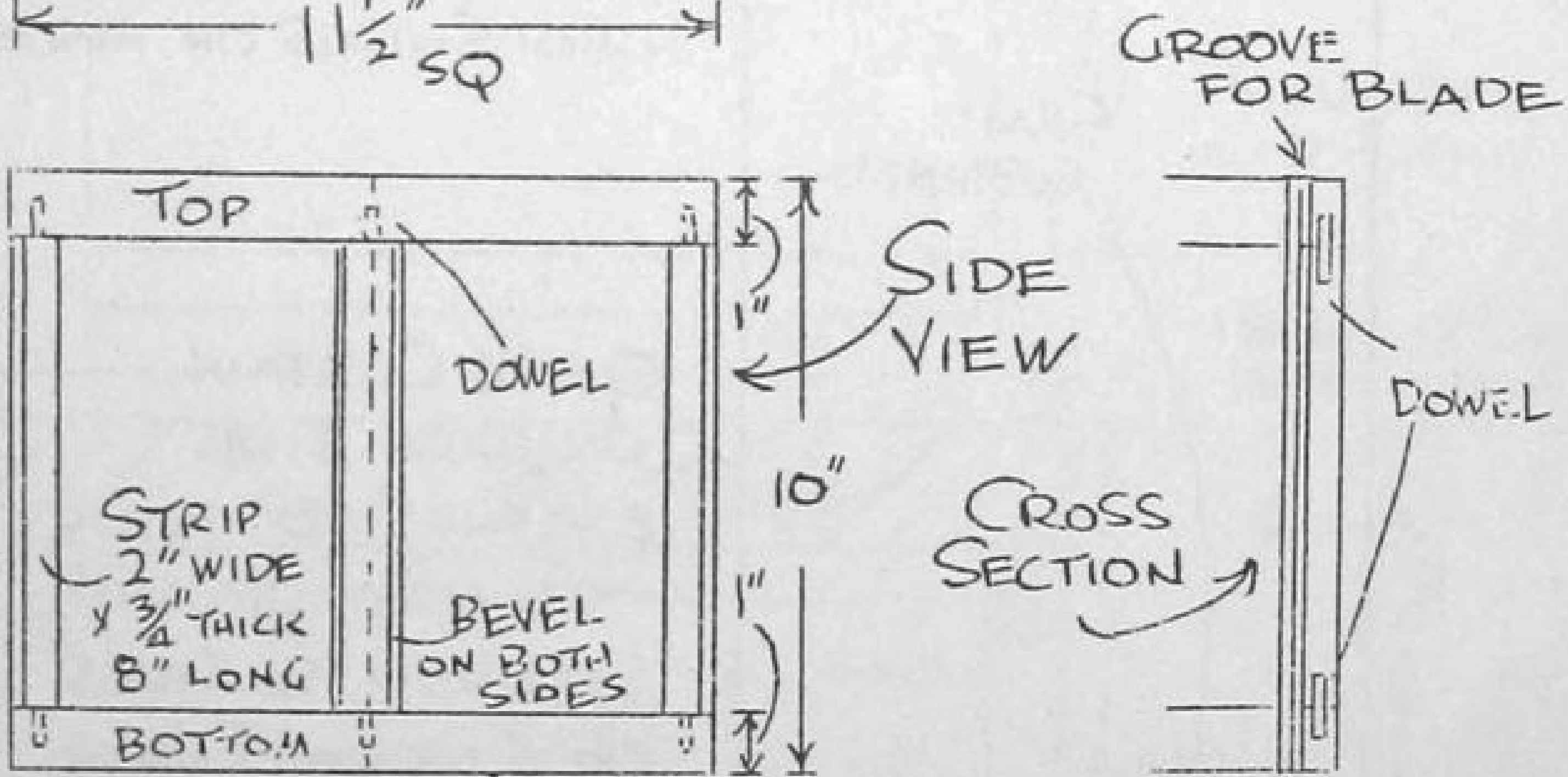
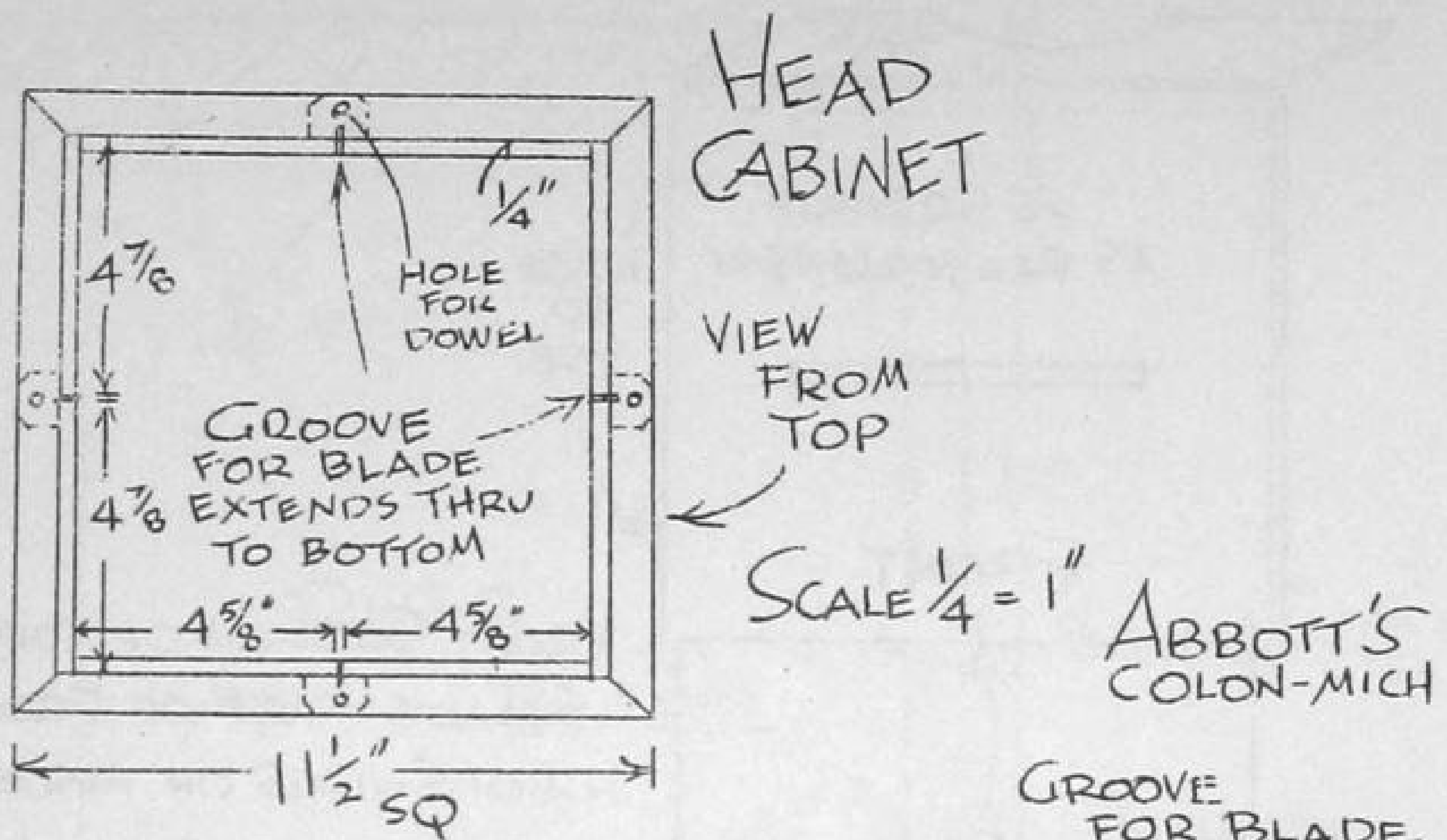
HINGE  
TO  
SIDE

FRONT SECTION OF TOP  
IS MADE PART OF FRONT  
WHICH SWINGS ON HINGES

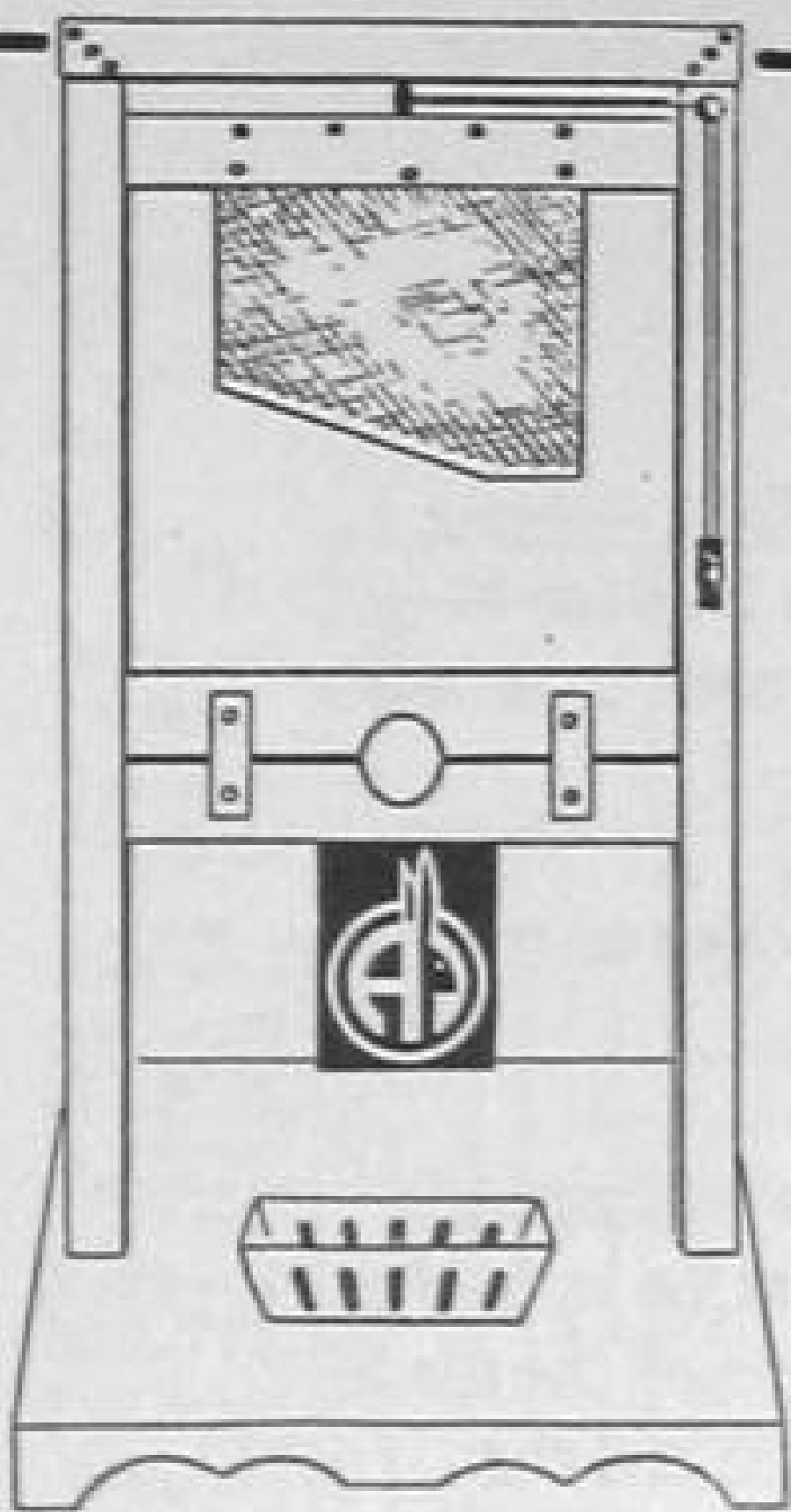
SNAP  
FASTENER

CLOTH CURTAIN  
ON EACH SIDE  
EXTENDS TO FLOOR  
—ROLLED UP AND  
SECURED TO SIDES  
OF CABINET UNTIL  
GIRL IS INSIDE

ABBOTT'S  
COLON-MICH.



TOP & BOTTOM OF HEAD CABINET ARE HELD IN PLACE BY DOWELS WHICH FIT INTO UPRIGHT STRIPS ON EACH SIDE — AND ARE REMOVABLE FOR PACKING. ALSO, SIDES ARE NOT FASTENED TOGETHER, THE TWO PARTS OF EACH SIDE BEING NAILED ONLY TO UPRIGHTS.



# GUILLOTINE

## EFFECT

The first one was developed and made expressly for WILL ROCK and now with his approval, we release this feature to the Magic Fraternity for the first time.

This was the outstanding hit illusion of the WILL ROCK THURSTON show. Prior to the decapitation, the solid steel blade is raised and locked into position. A large vegetable is placed in the head position in the stock. The lever is operated - BAM! - the blade falls, cutting the vegetable into two halves. The blade is again raised, the victim's head is secured in the stocks, a small basket is placed in position to catch the falling head. The lever is operated. Down comes the blade! The audience will swear that they saw the head severed from the body. As the magician removes the head from the basket, they can plainly see the body lying flat on the platform, minus the head.

Important points to remember: Only one blade is used. The blade is solid steel and in one piece. The victim's head is actually in the stock as the blade falls. The blade travels from its position and passes through the stocks in less than two seconds. The illusion is all open frame work. No special backgrounds are necessary.

The height of the illusion is approximately 8'. It is mounted on a shallow platform with castors. All the woodwork is stained to give the genuine guillotine effect.

Acclaimed by the press and the public as being the sensation of the WILL ROCK THURSTON show.

## METHOD

You will understand upon examination of the plans that this illusion is constructed as lightly as possible and at the same time is made to appear massive.

In the regular presentation, the fake part of the stock is hooked to the back and the slide half of the stock is up in position.

The vegetable is cut before the fake half of the stock is pushed back and hooked. In other words, the vegetable is cut when the Guillotine is in the same position as it is at the finish. Now, after the sharpness of the blade is shown in this way, while one assistant wipes off the blade and the blade is more or less masked, and there is other mis-direction, then the Guillotine is prepared as above. That is, the fake half stock is hooked back up and the lower half of the stock is brought up into position and the safety pin put in to hold the blade up.

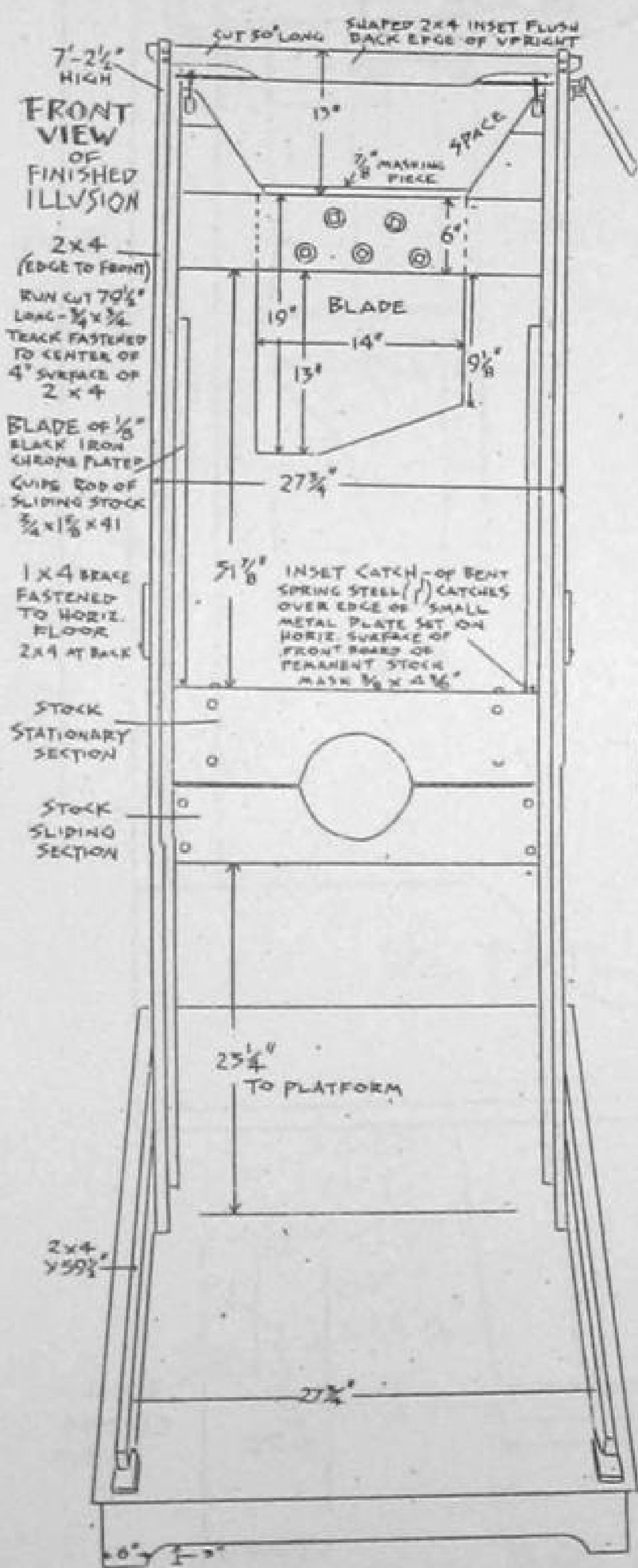
The stocks are now separated to permit the victim's head to be placed in position. The stocks are closed tightly, a spring catch holding same in position. The hook is released at the back and the fake half of the stock is allowed to rest on the victim's shoulders.

Previously, the basket can be casually shown by removing the lid and tipping out the cloth used to wipe off the blade. When the lid is replaced, the release is tripped, which allows the dummy head to fall. Then, just prior to the operation of the illusion, the lid is removed.

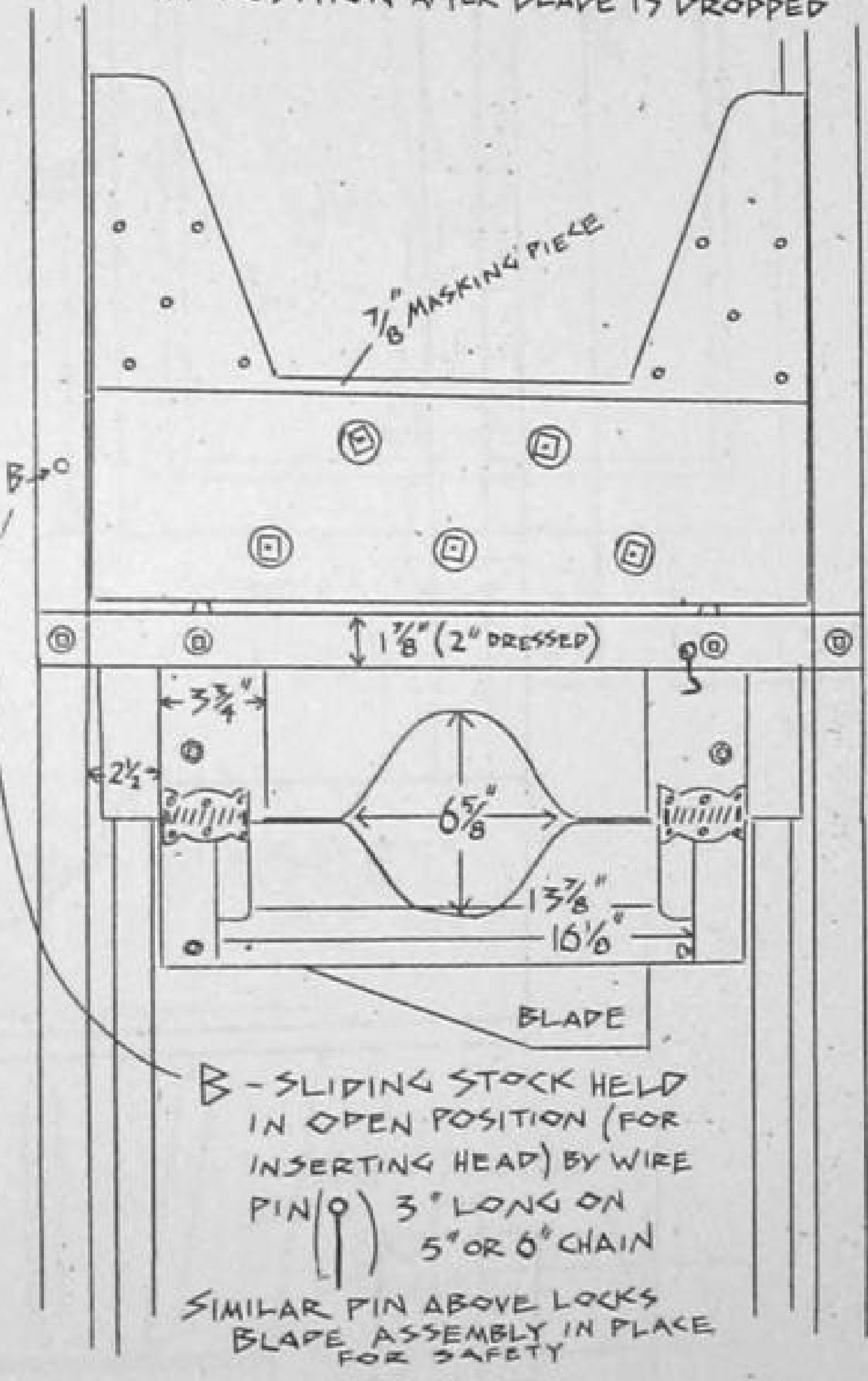
The victim is in a kneeling position with one hand on each side of the opening in the platform. The door of this opening rests up against the basket and is knocked down into position as the basket is removed, when the illusion is operated. Black elastic webbing, stretched across the head opening, acts as a buffer.

When you are ready to release the blade, remove the safety pin, operate the lever and the falling blade forces the lower part of the stock down. All that the victim has to do is to go with it, straightening out his legs as he falls flat.

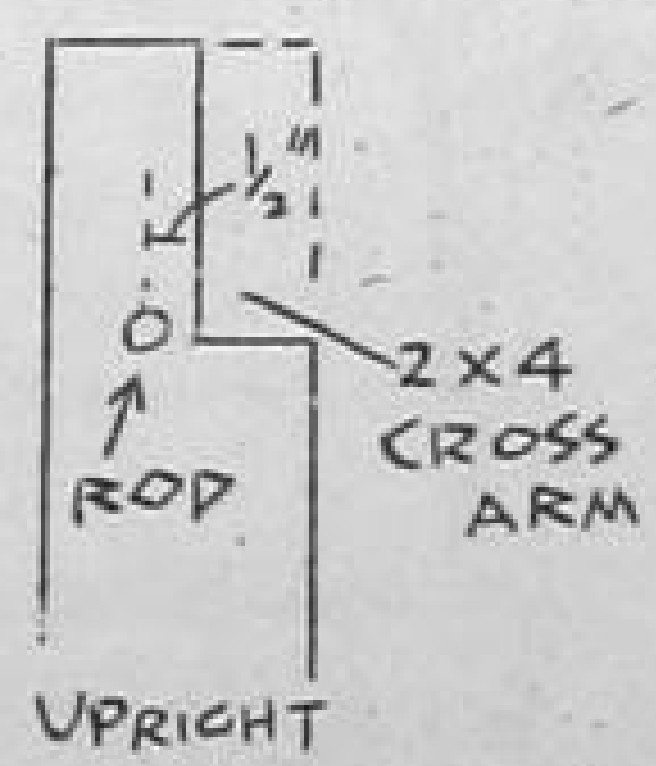
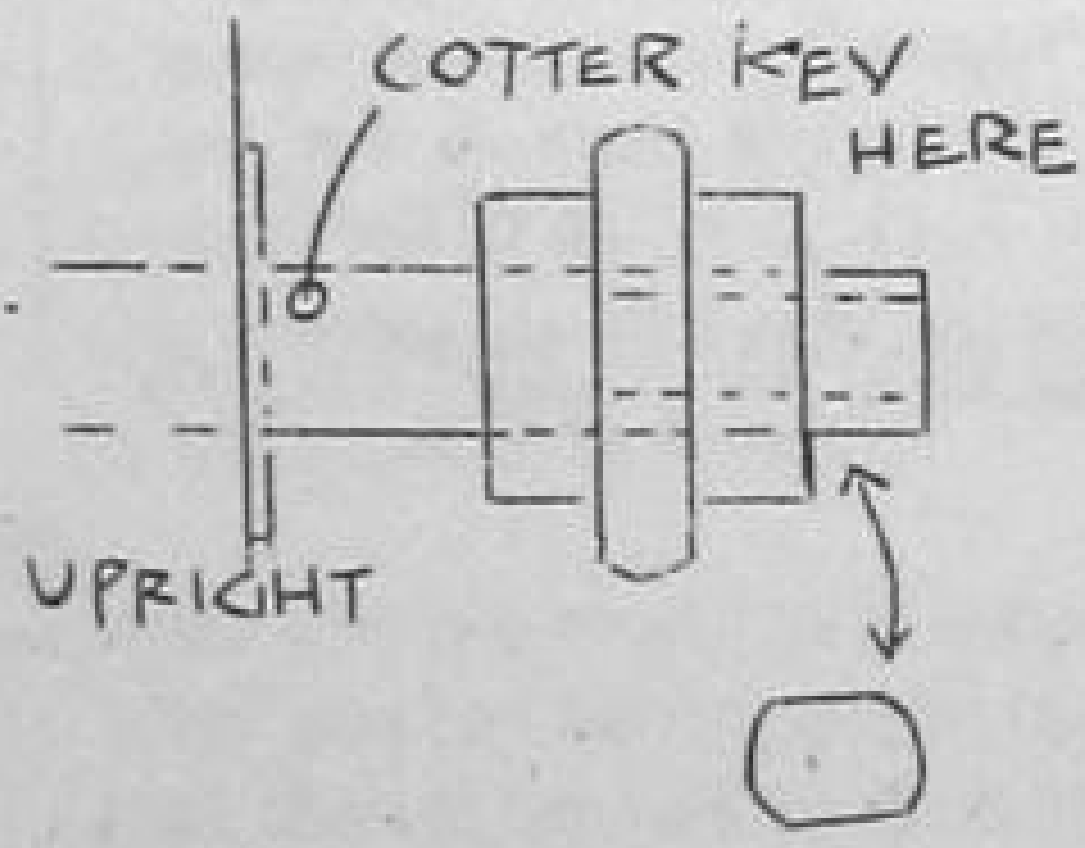
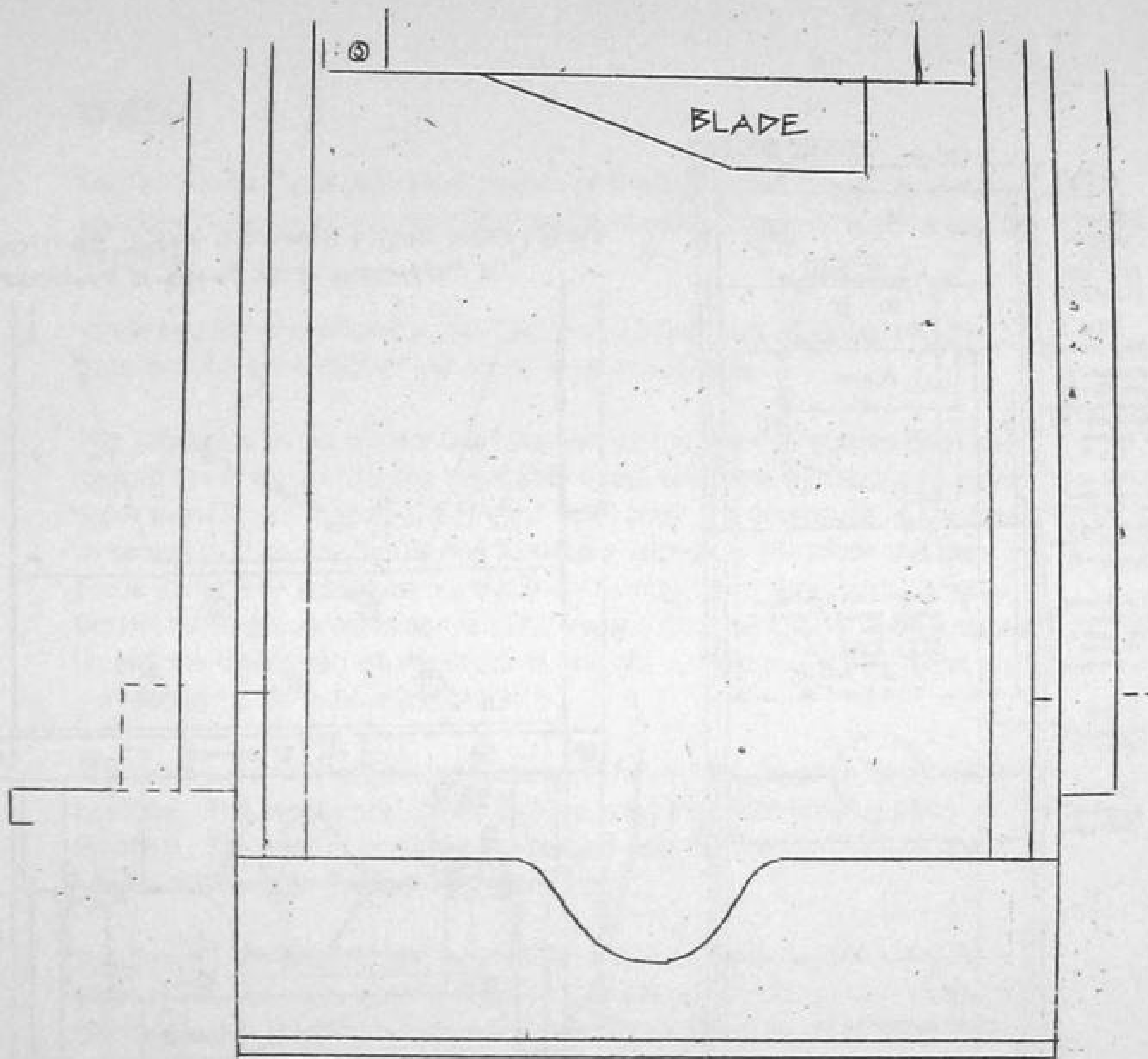
The fake half of the stock swings around into position before the blade has time to reach this point.



VIEW (FROM BACK) SHOWING FAKE SECTION IN POSITION AFTER BLADE IS DROPPED



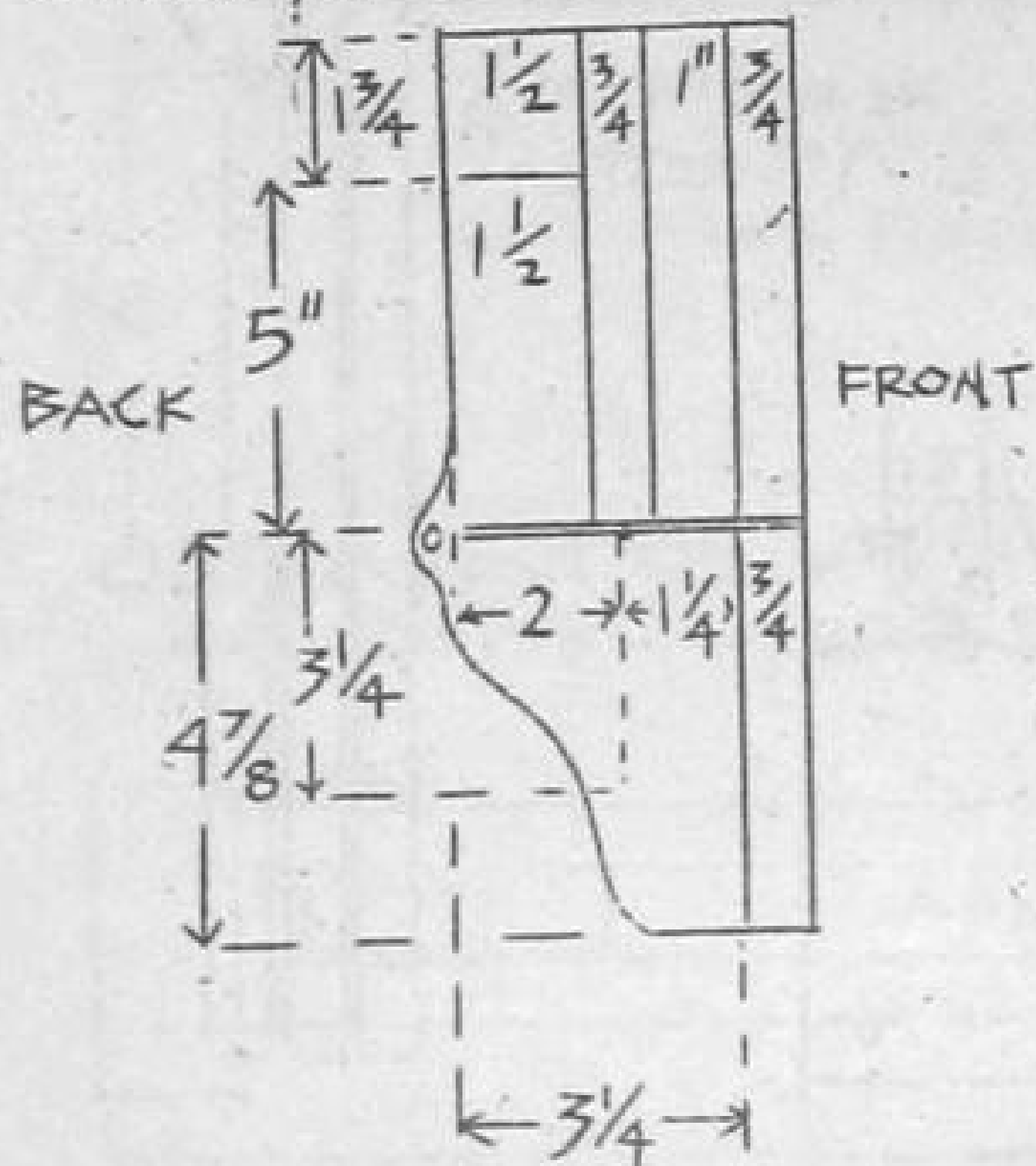
SEE NEXT PAGE



SIDES FILED TO ACCOMODATE SQUARE HOLE IN LEVER ARM. THIS PREVENTS SLIPPING. ARM RESTS ON PROTRVDING  $\frac{1}{4}$  OR  $\frac{3}{8}$ " ROD EASILY MADE (BOLT WITH HEAD CUT OFF).

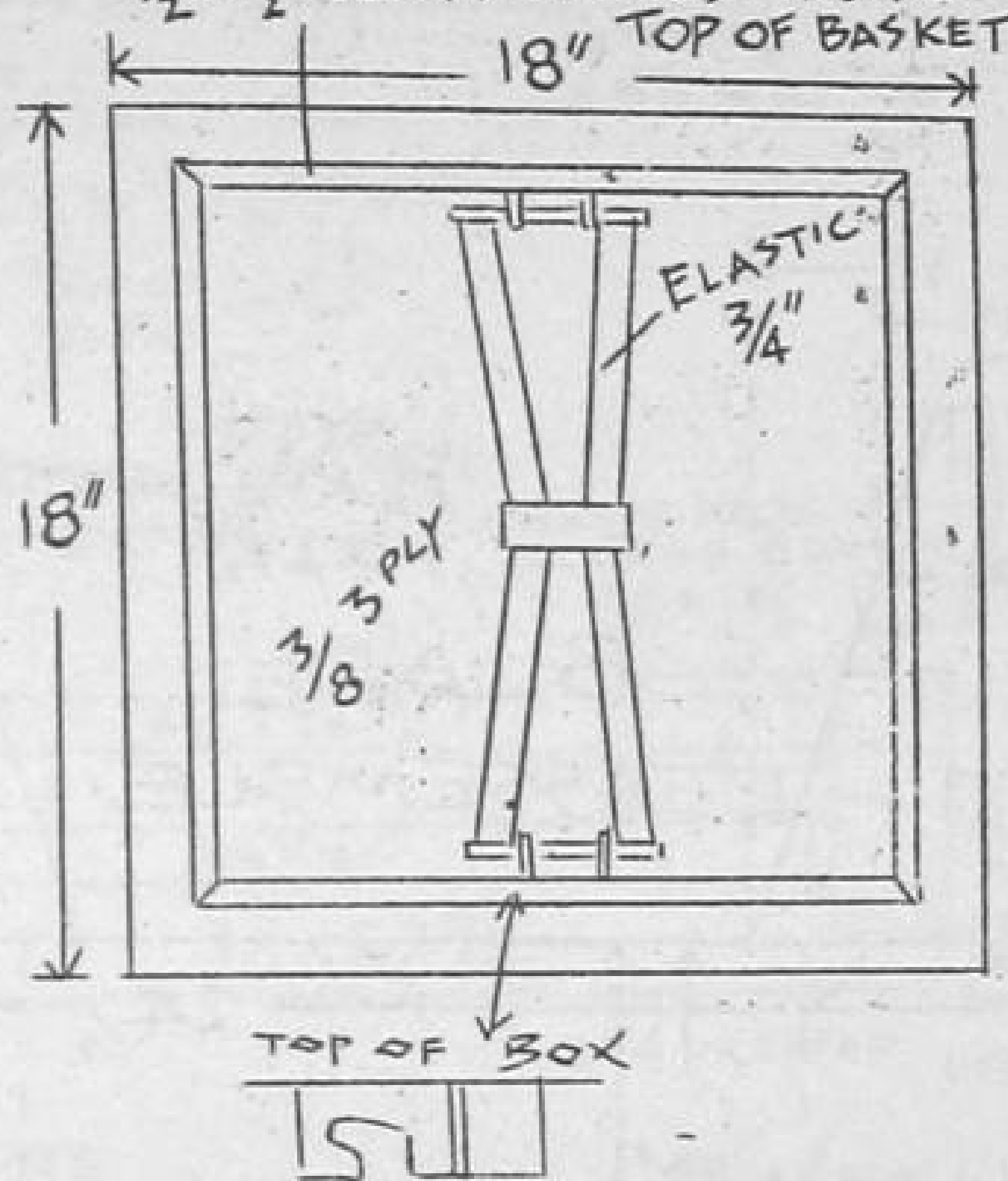
CROSS-SECTION SHOWING WHERE ROD PENETRATES UPRIGHT

CROSS-SECTION - BRACED SECTION ON EITHER SIDE UPPER STOCK & FAKE STOCK

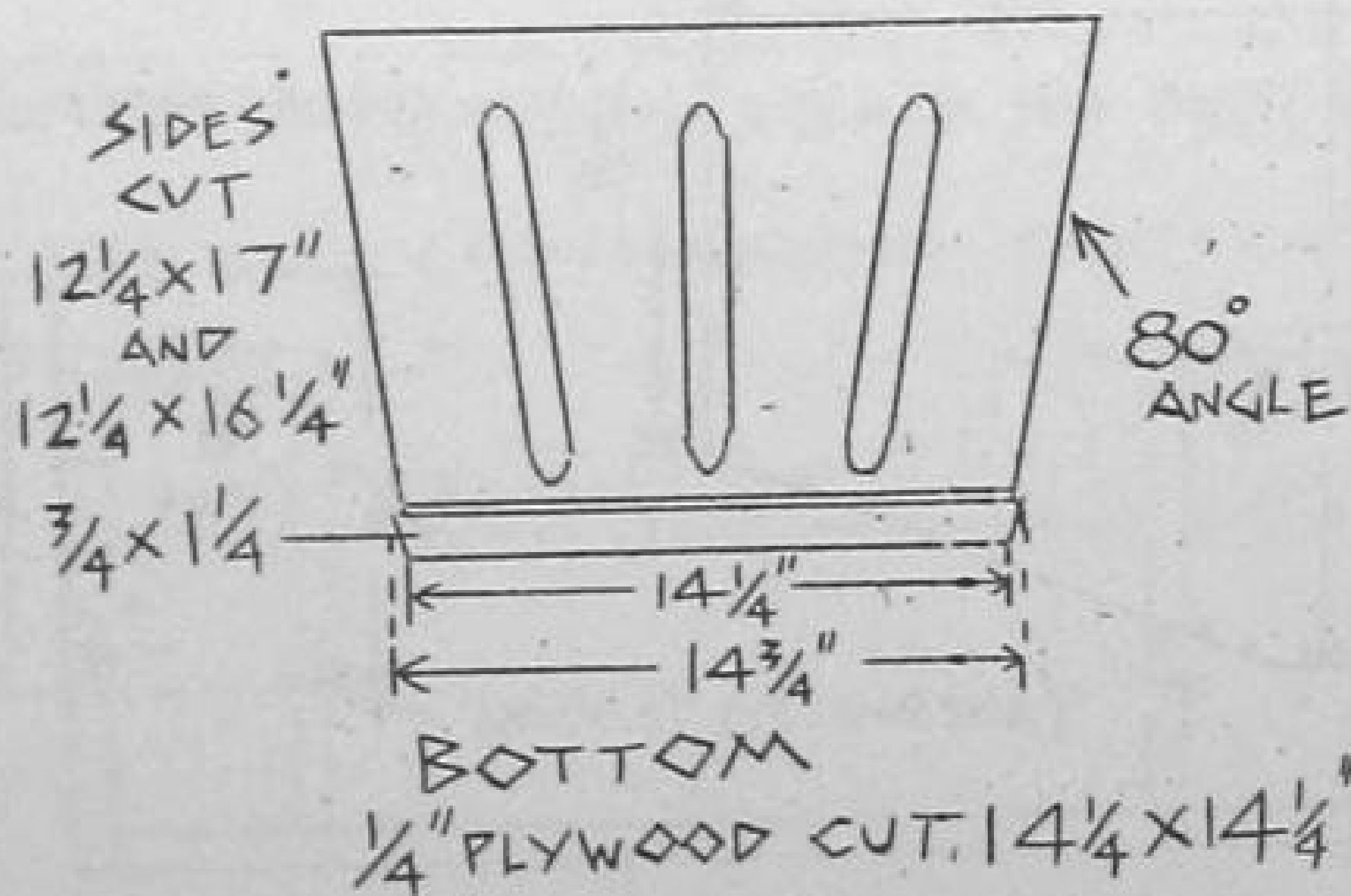


COVER OF BASKET

$\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$ " CLEATS FIT JUST INSIDE TOP OF BASKET



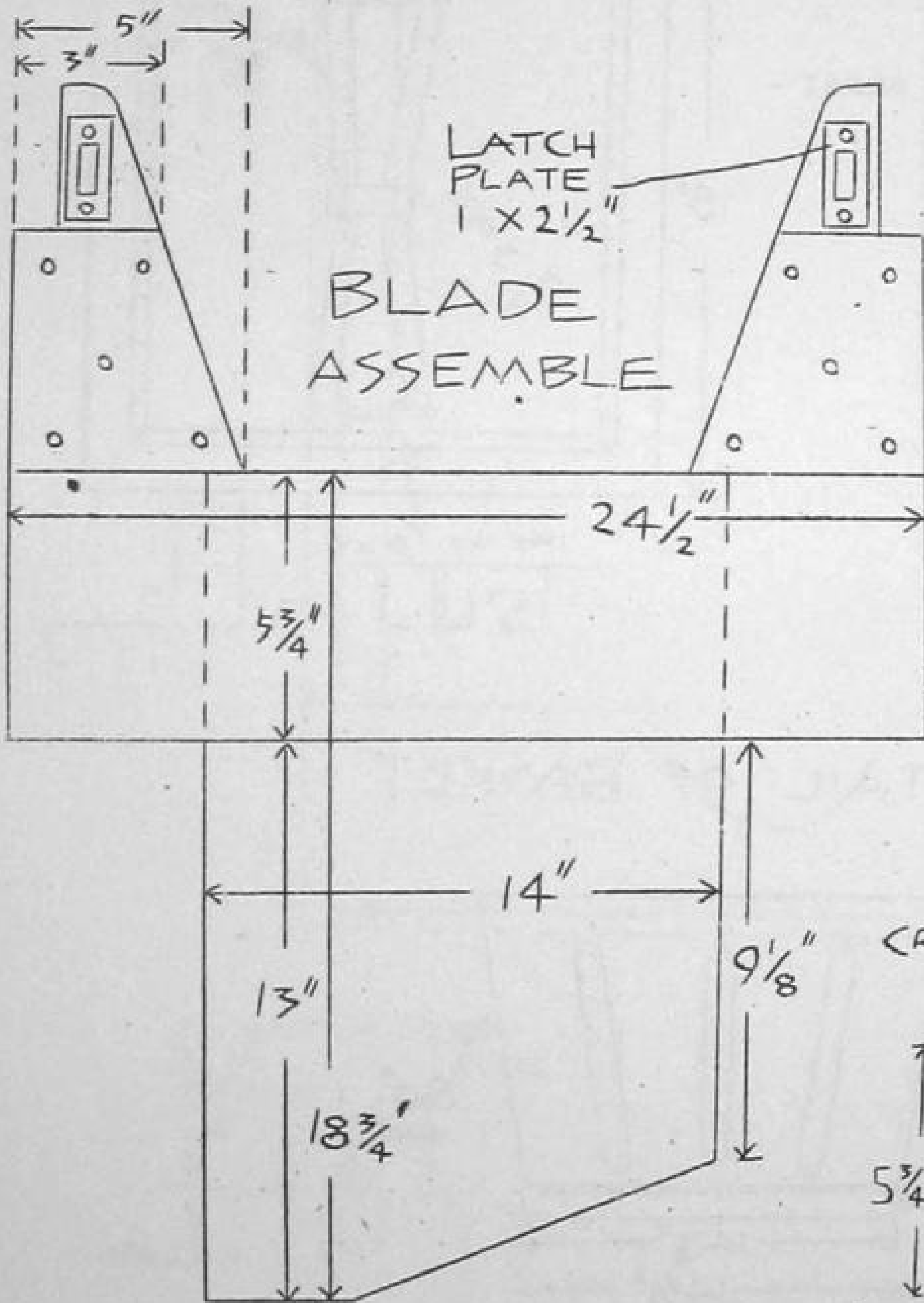
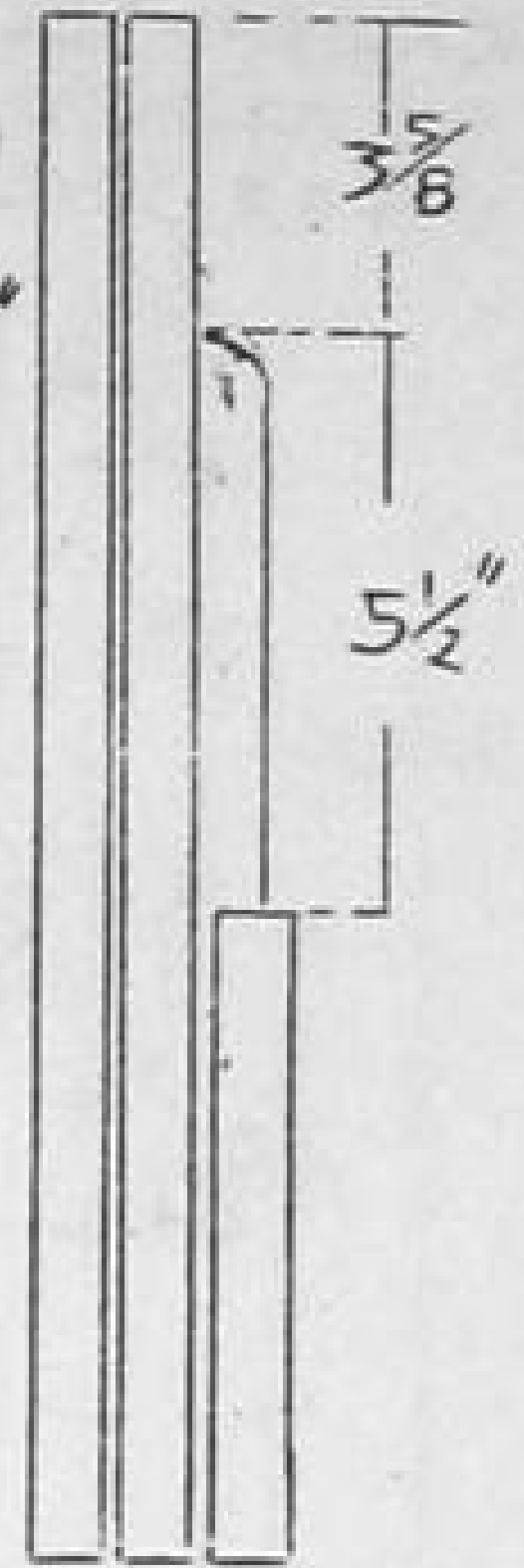
DETAIL OF BASKET



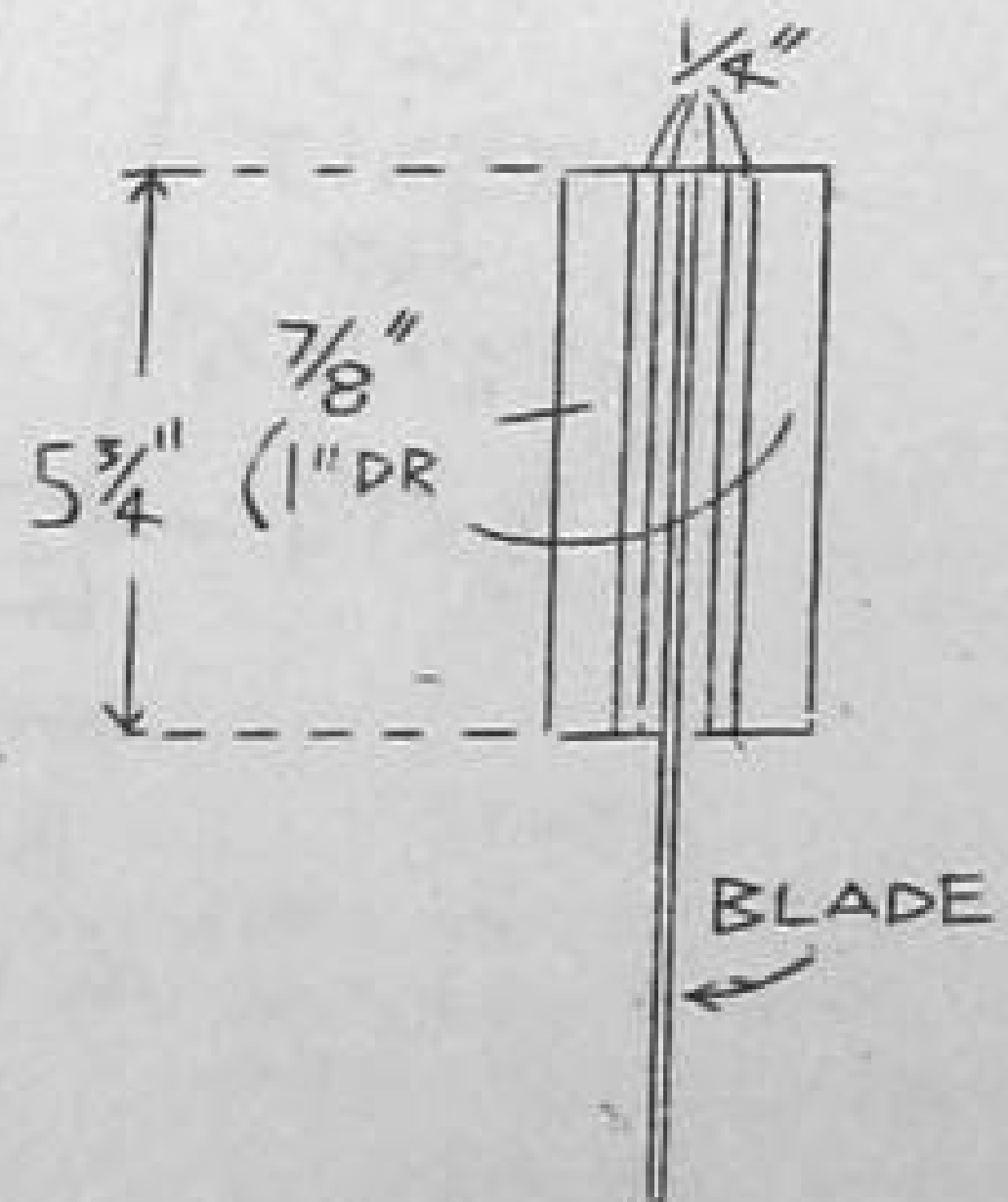


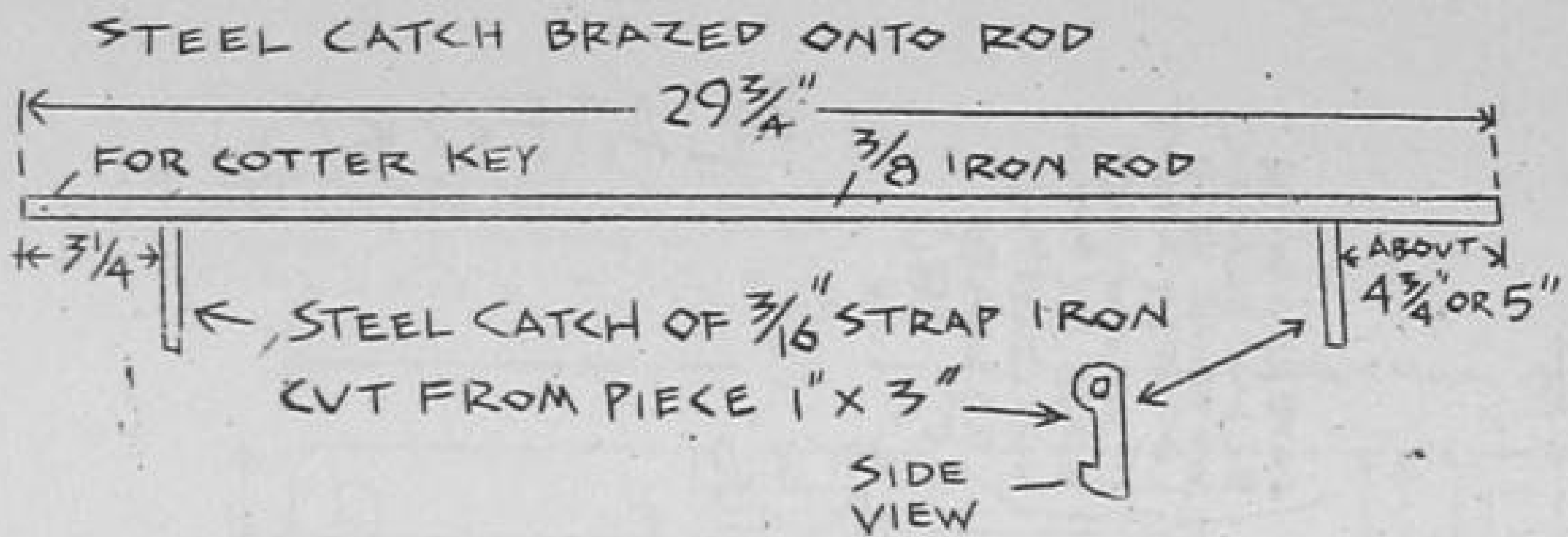
CROSS SECTION →  
 OUTER EDGE OF  
 BLADE ASSEMBLY

HEAVY PIECES  $\frac{7}{8}$ "  
 (BUY 1" DRESSED)

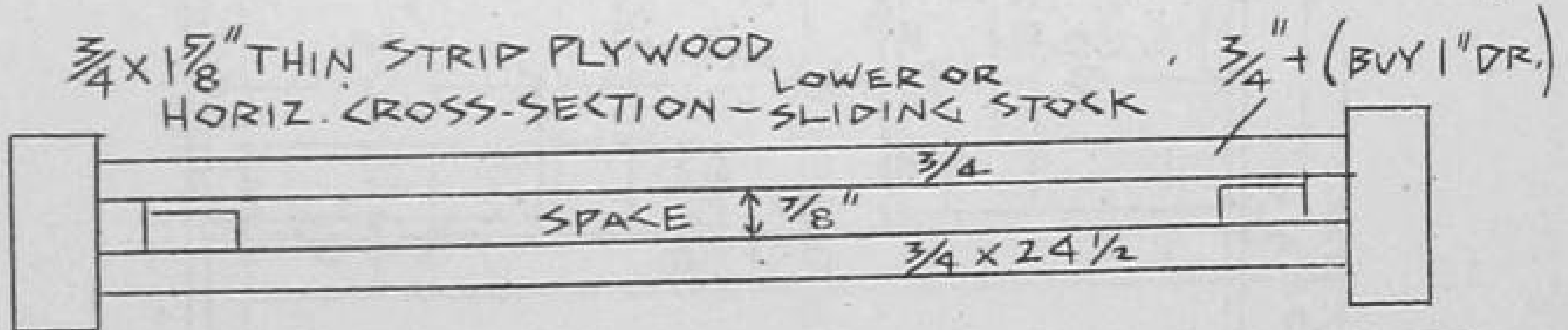
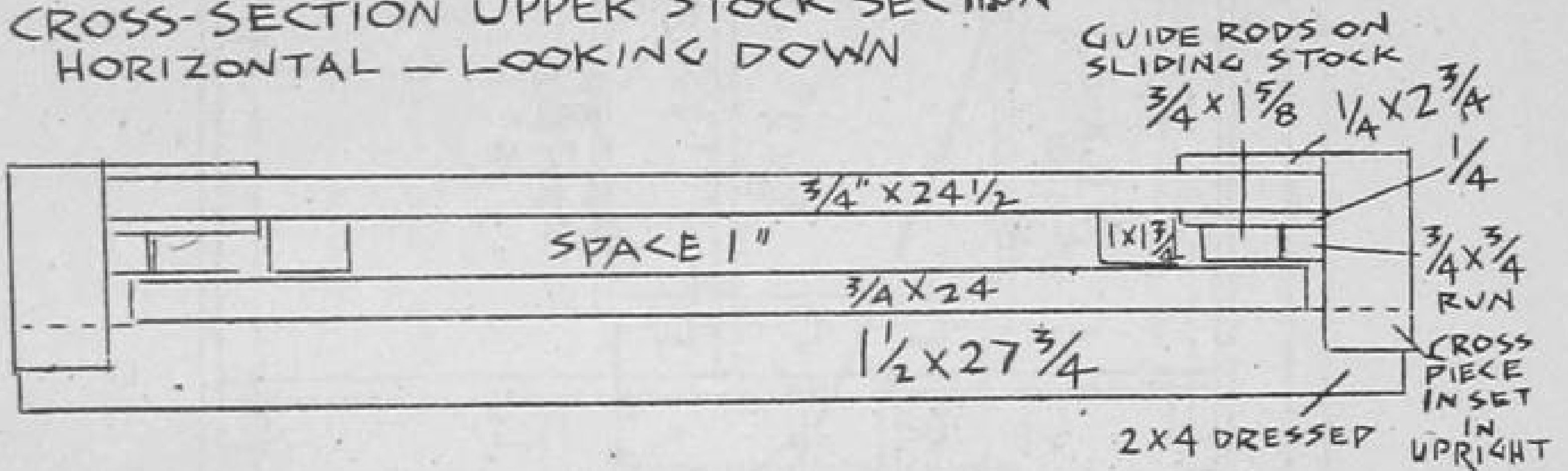


CROSS-SECTION CENTER



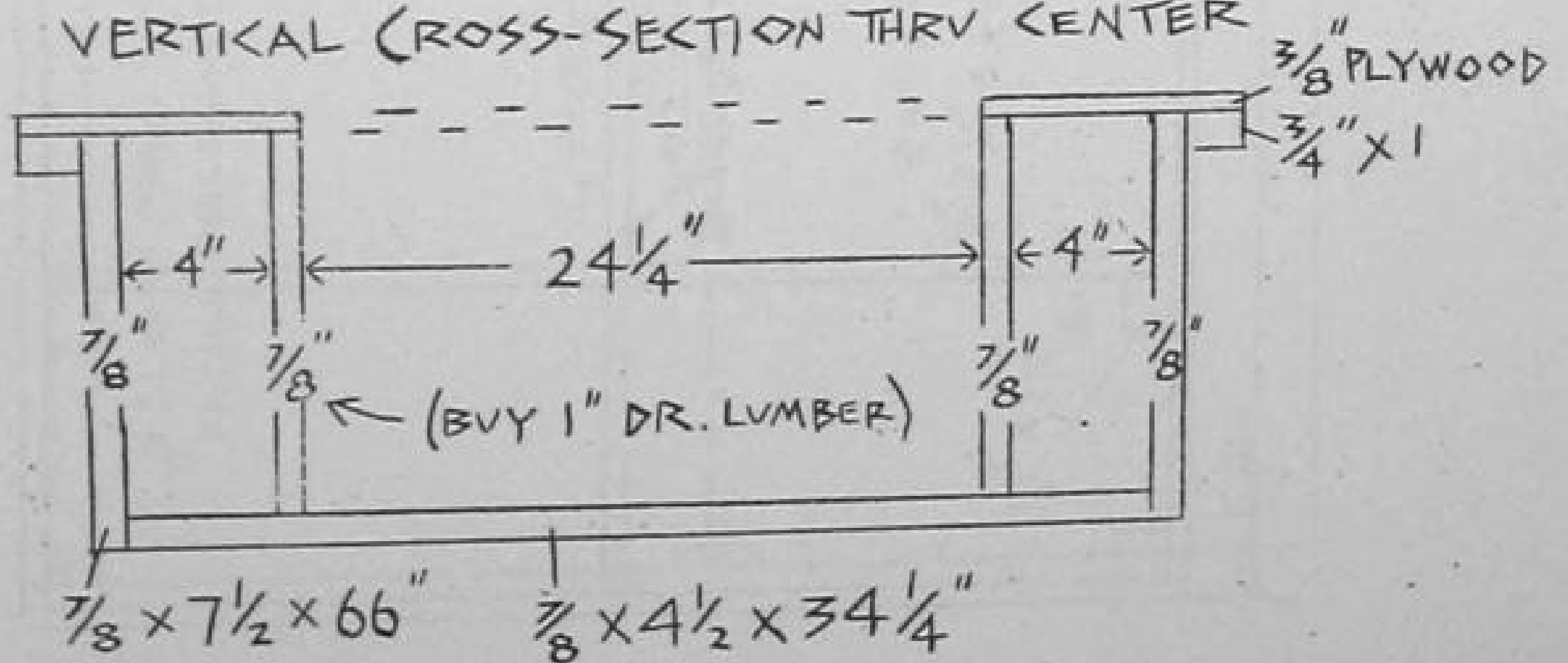


CROSS-SECTION UPPER STOCK SECTION  
 HORIZONTAL - LOOKING DOWN

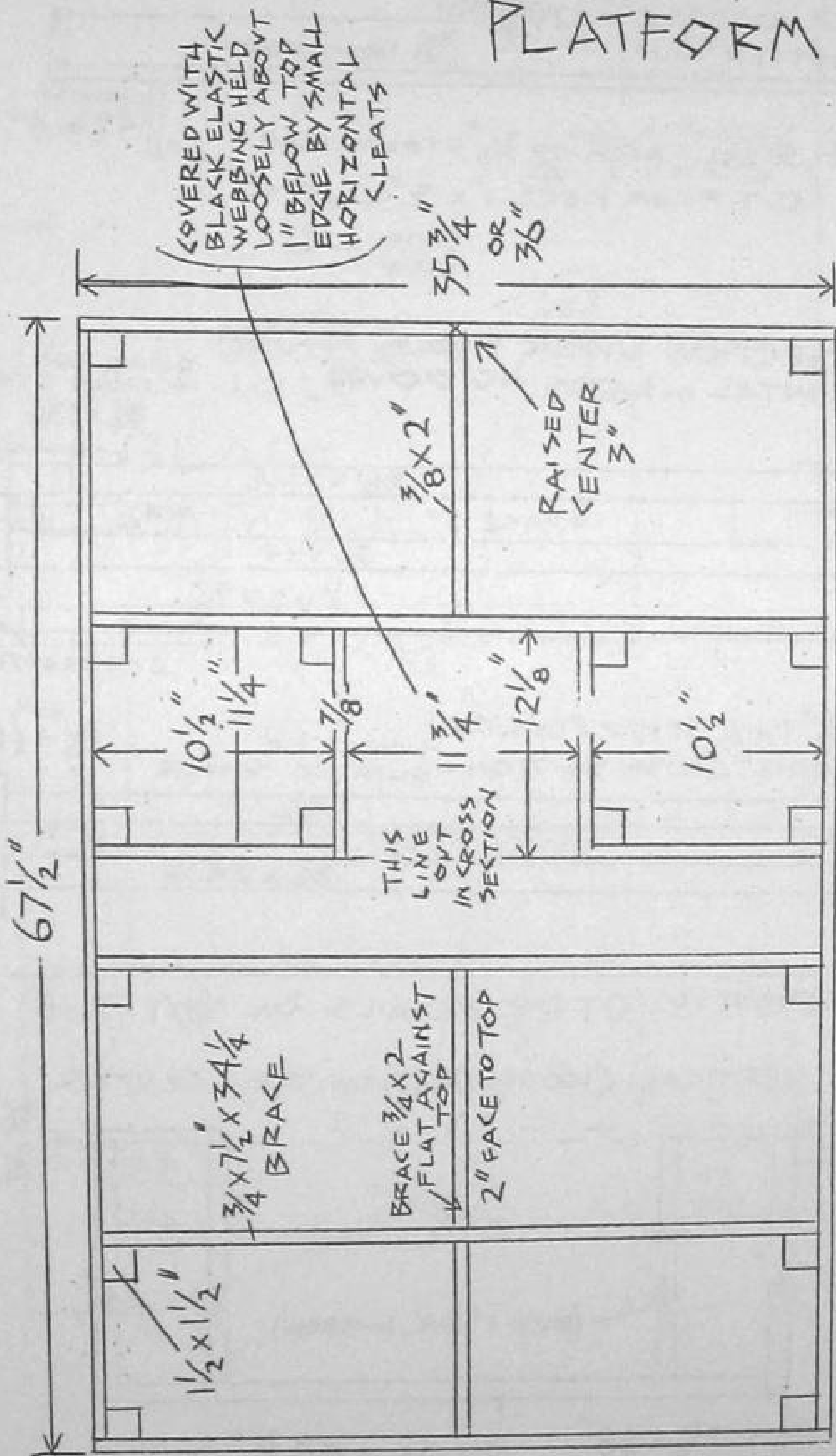


PLATFORM (OTHER DETAILS ON NEXT PAGE)

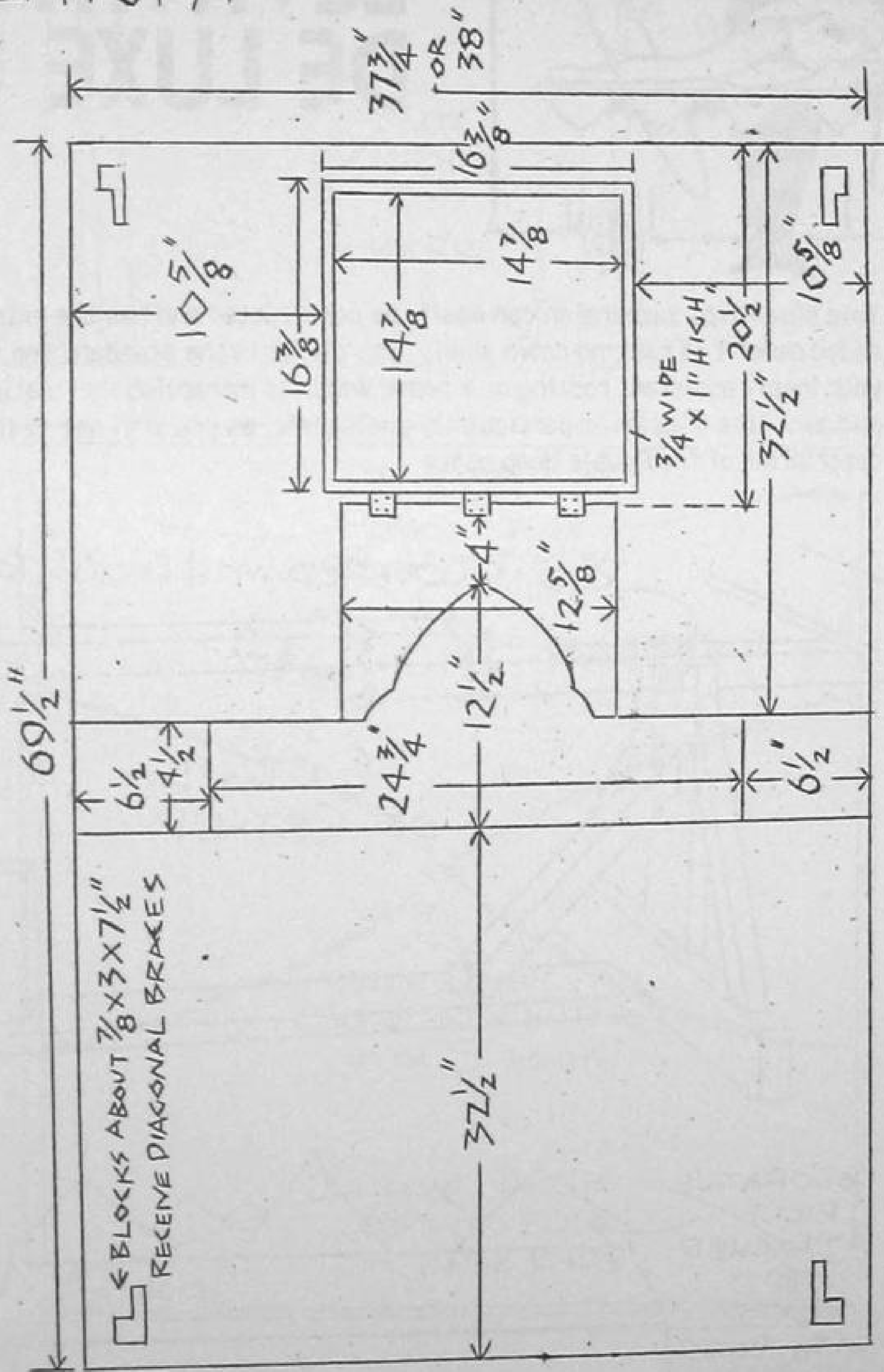
VERTICAL CROSS-SECTION THRU CENTER



# PLATFORM



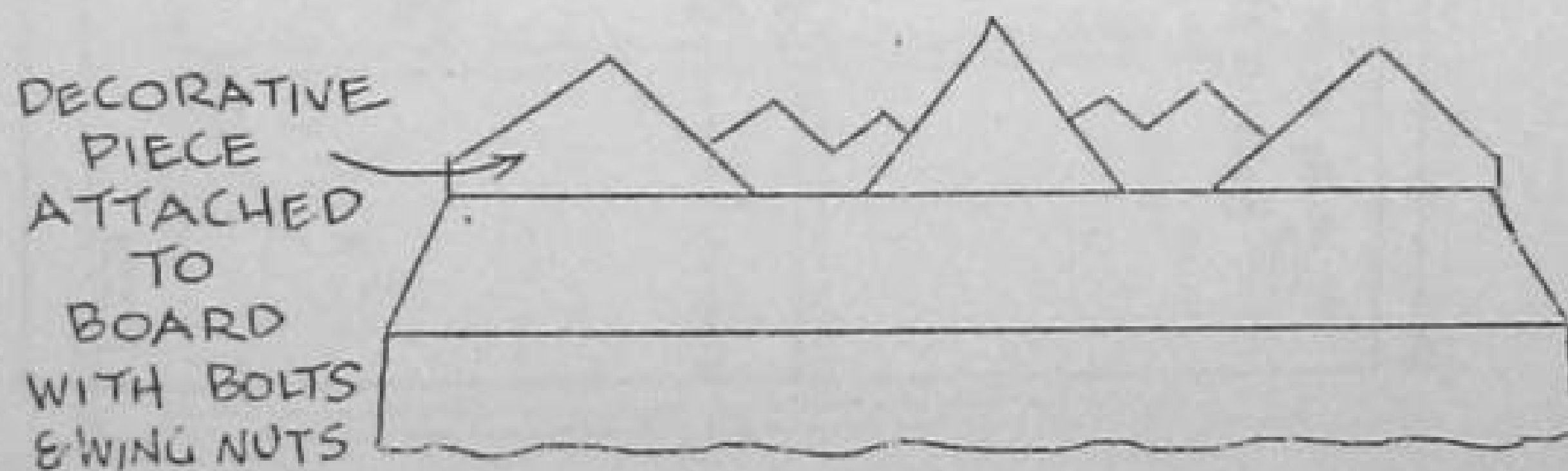
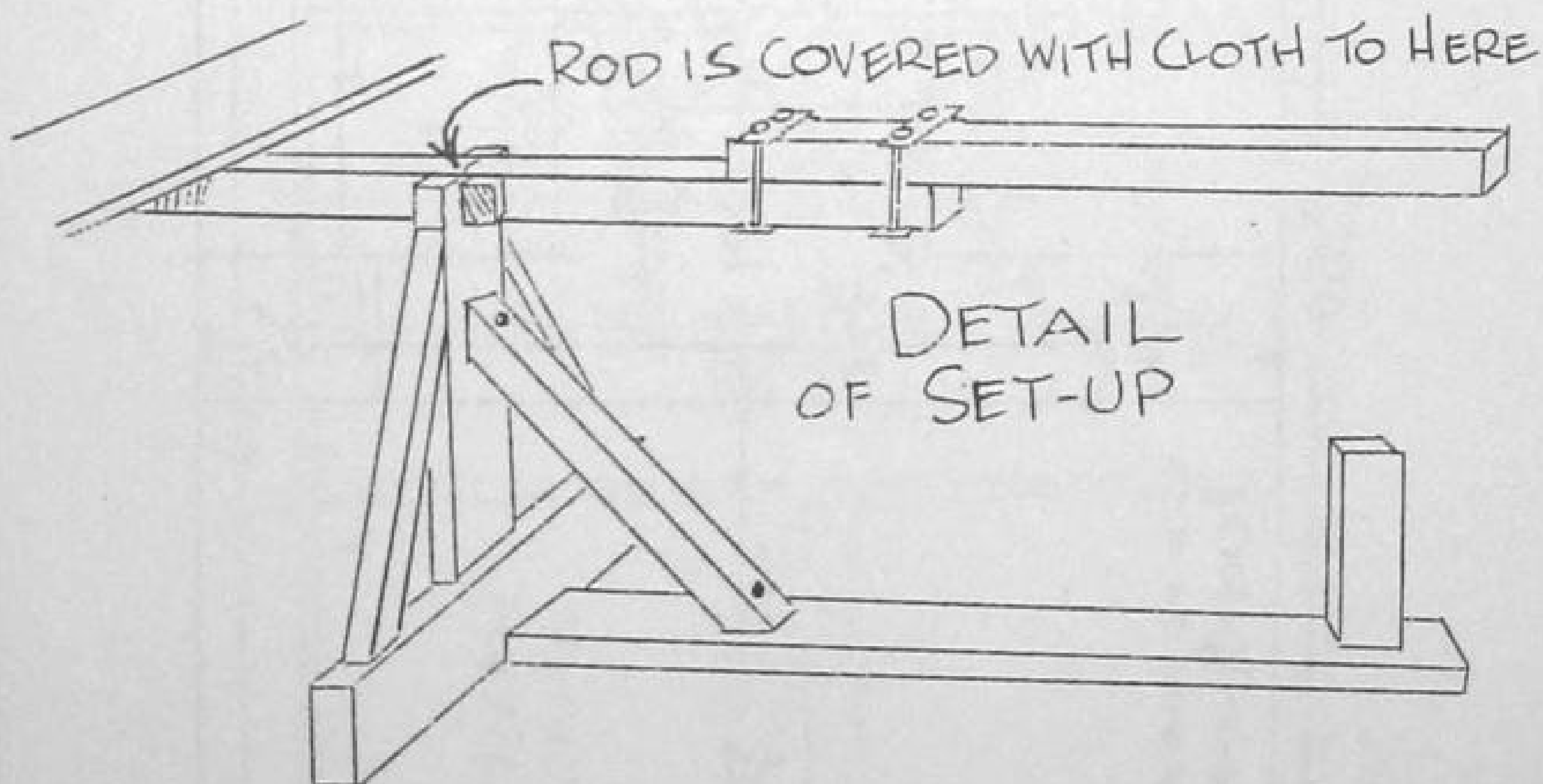
# PLATFORM

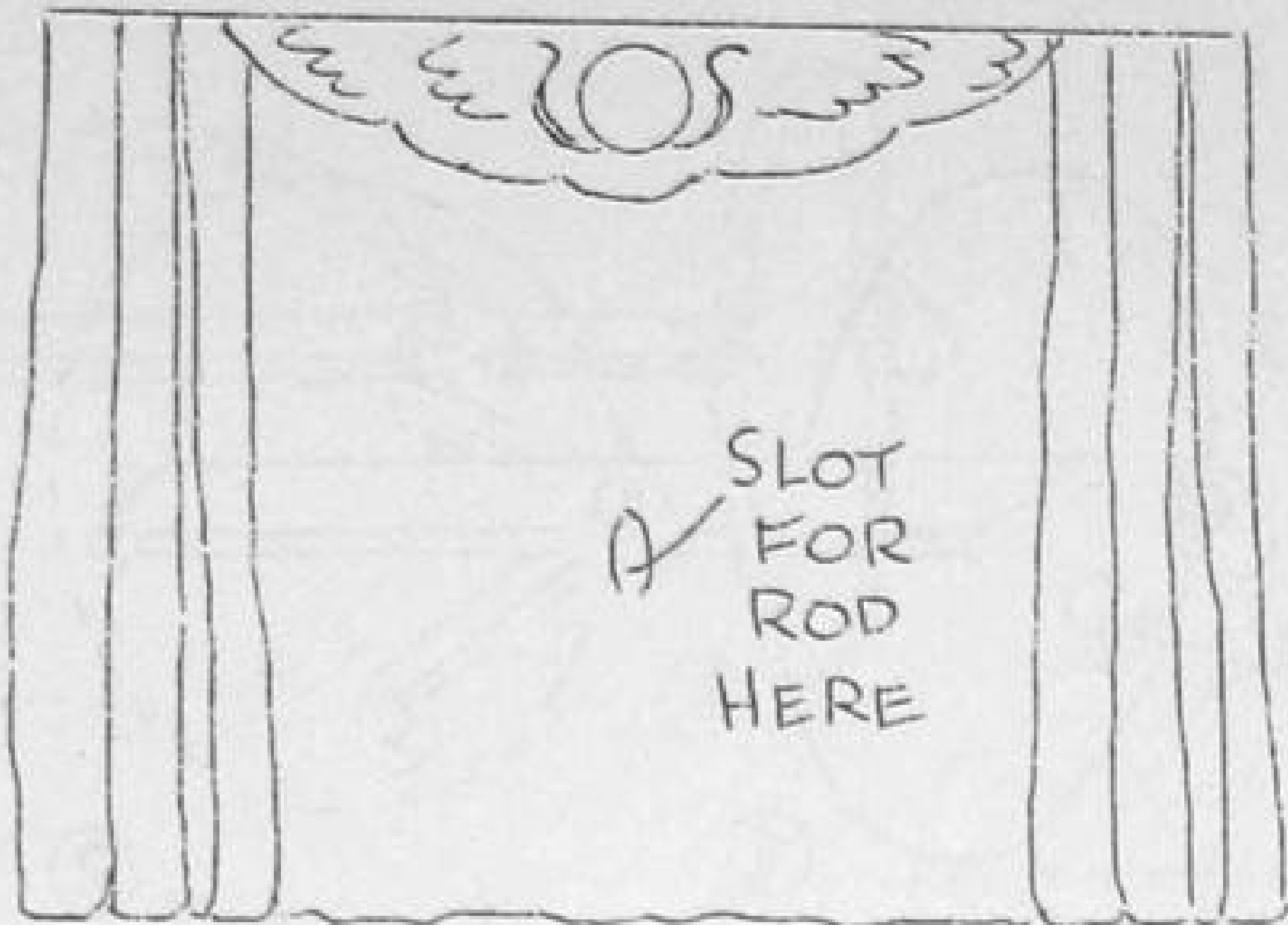




# LEVITATION DE LUXE

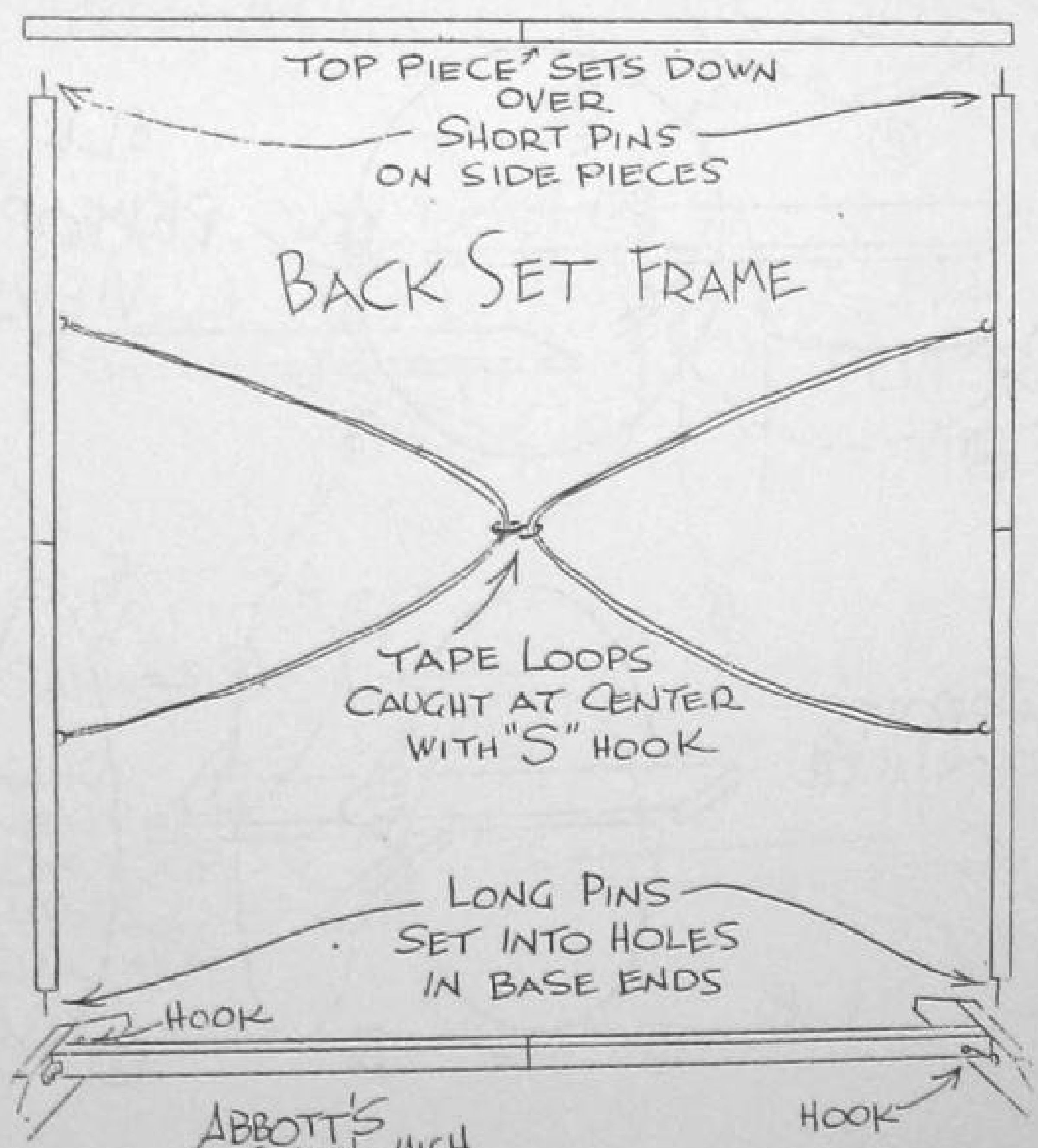
This simplified suspension can easily be constructed and has the extra added benefit of packing down small. The effect is the standard one with your lovely assistant resting on a board which is miraculously floating in mid air. This illusion is particularly photogenic, as you will see in the description of the Double Hoop usage.





SLOT  
FOR  
ROD  
HERE

DECORATIVE  
PIECE  
HUNG WITH  
HOOKS OVER  
TOP OF  
BACK SET



TOP PIECE SETS DOWN  
OVER  
SHORT PINS  
ON SIDE PIECES

BACK SET FRAME

TAPE LOOPS  
CAUGHT AT CENTER  
WITH "S" HOOK

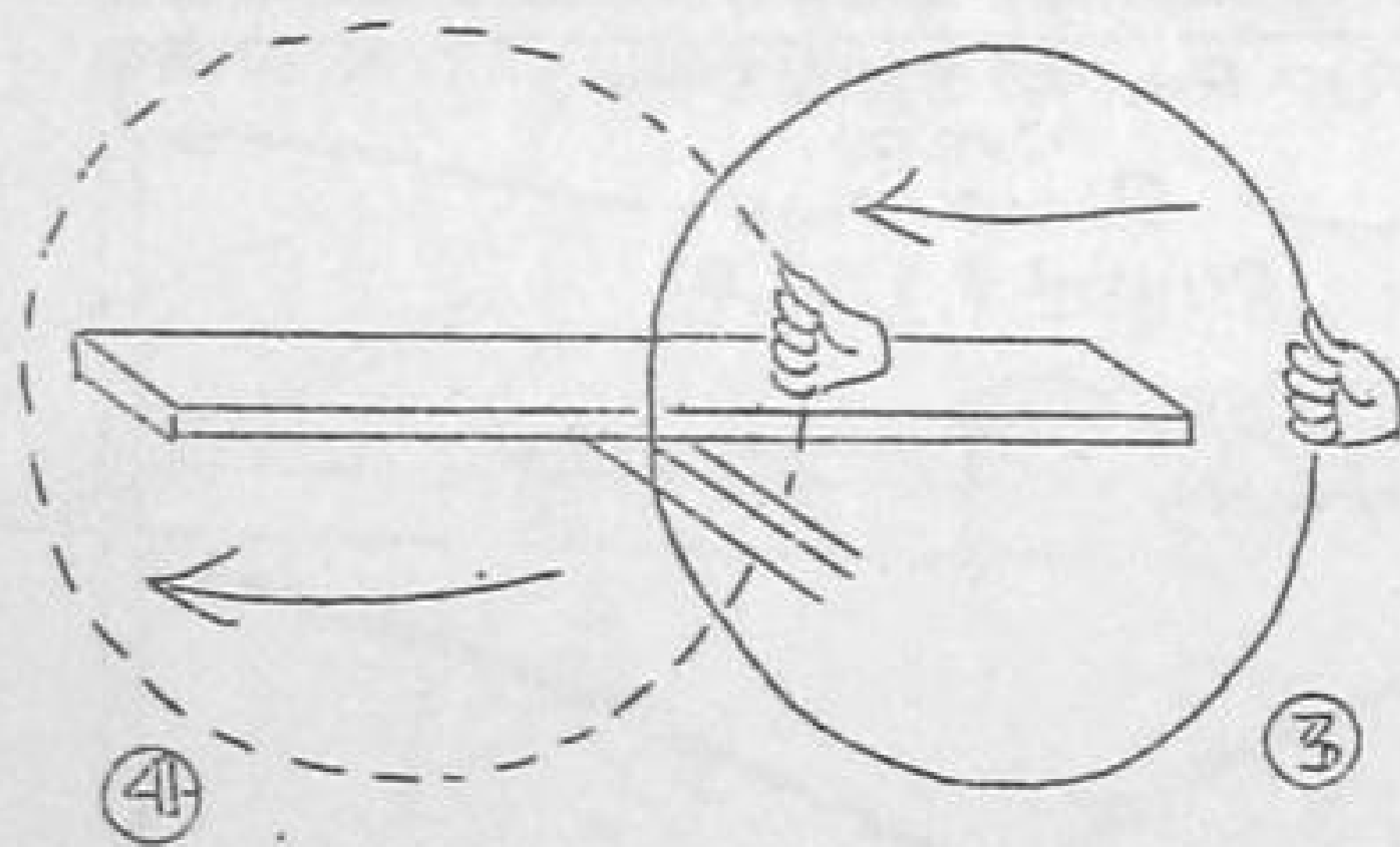
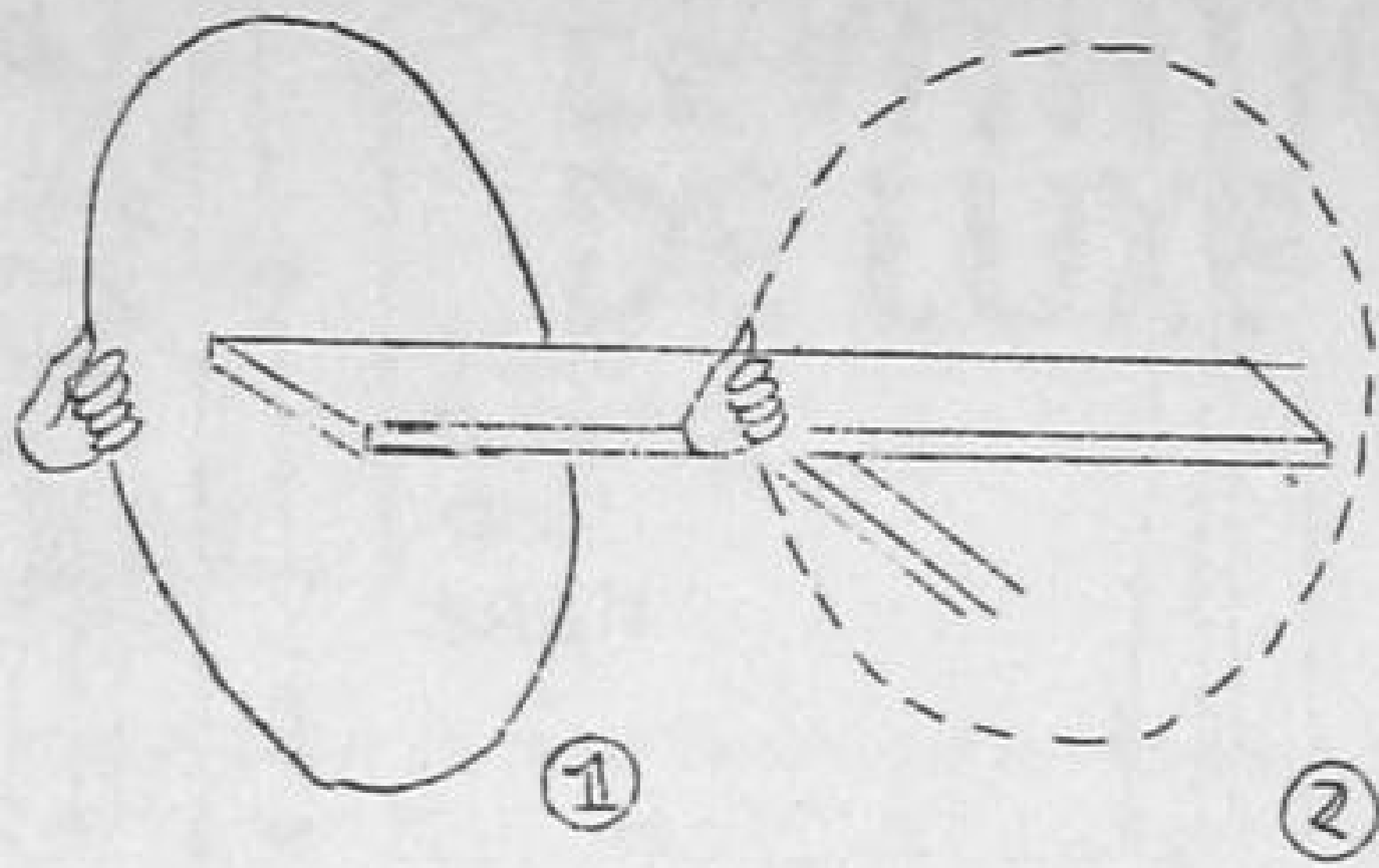
LONG PINS  
SET INTO HOLES  
IN BASE ENDS

HOOK

HOOK

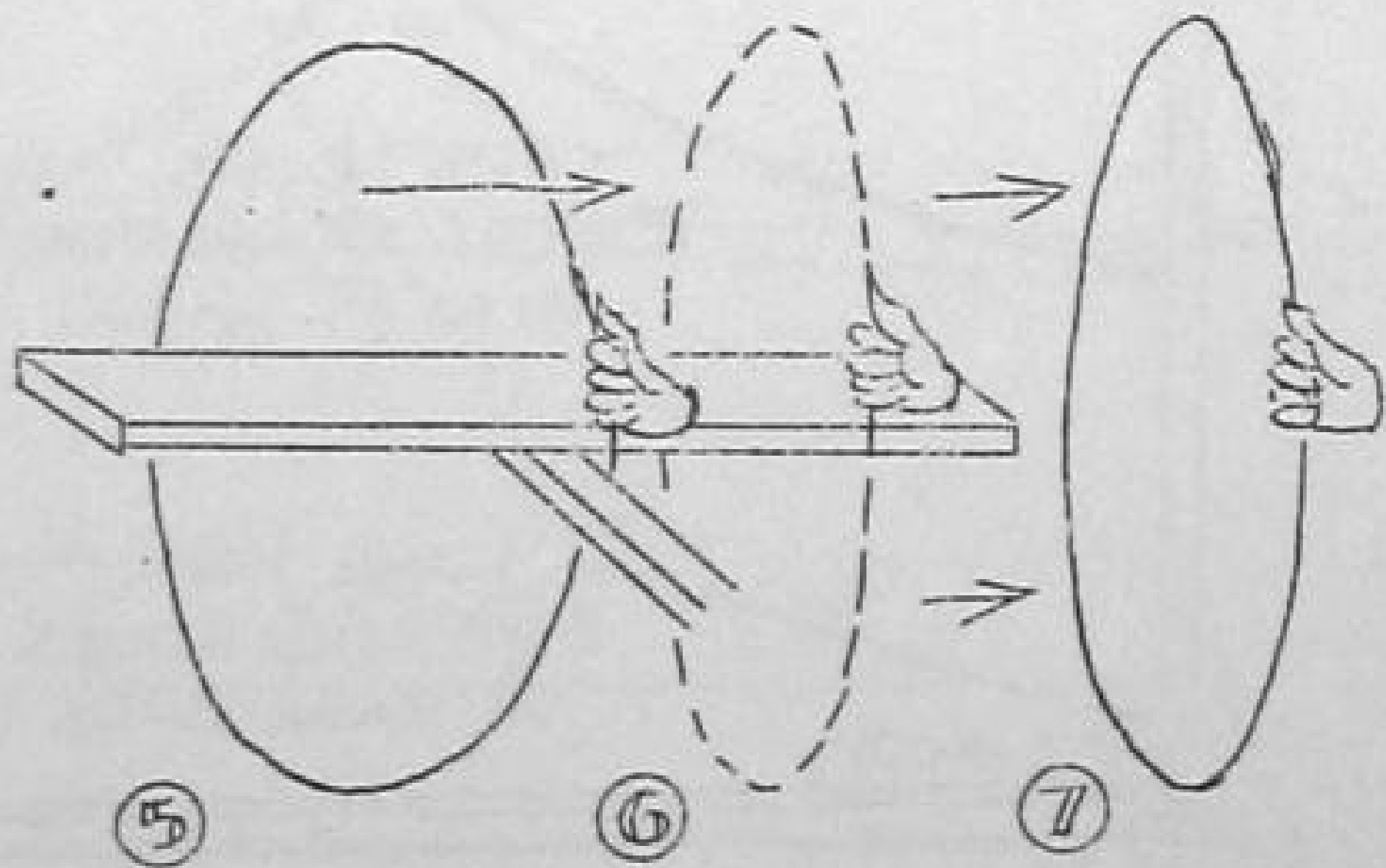
ABBOTT'S  
COLON-MICH.

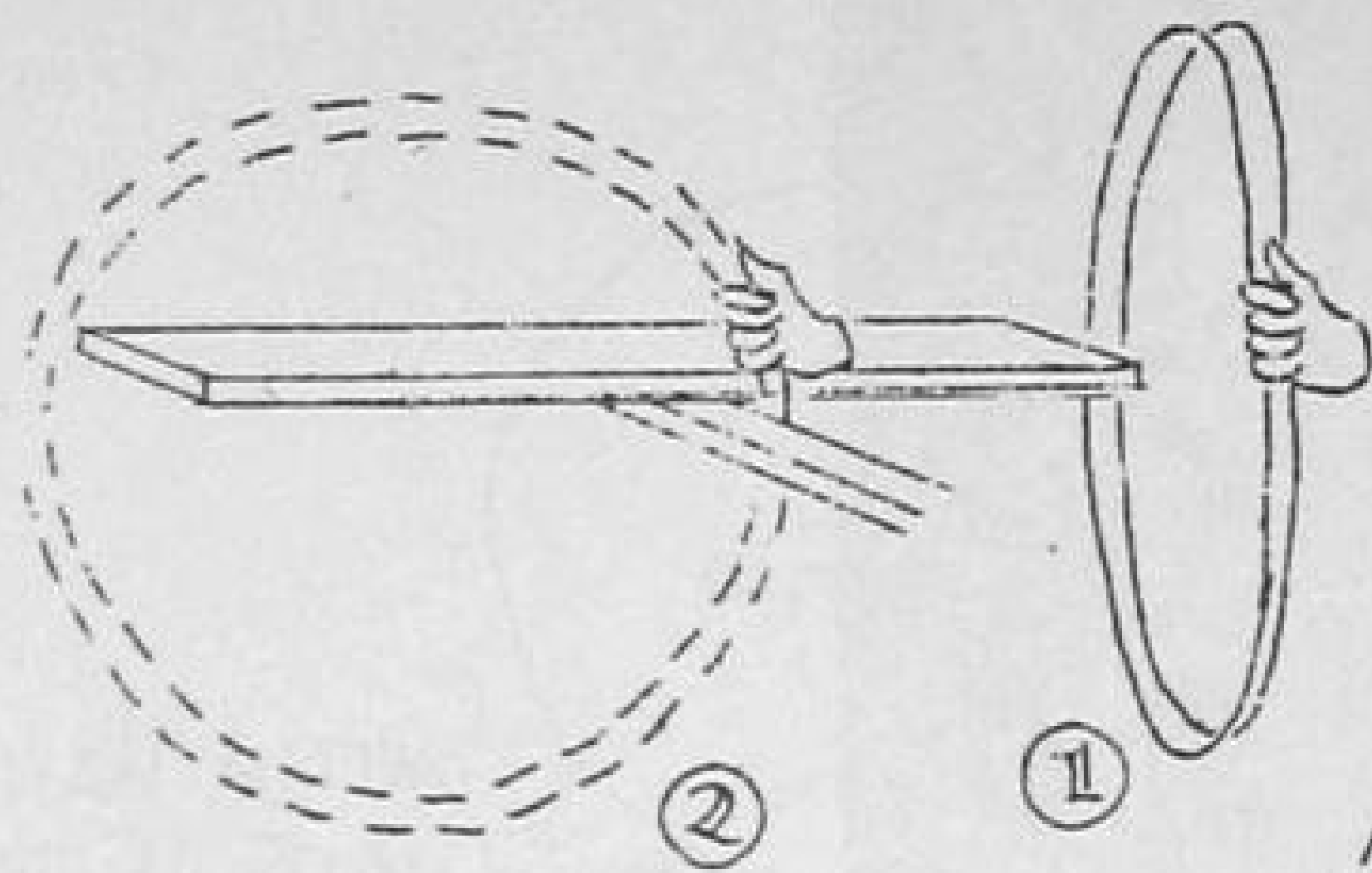
ONE-HOOP ROUTINE



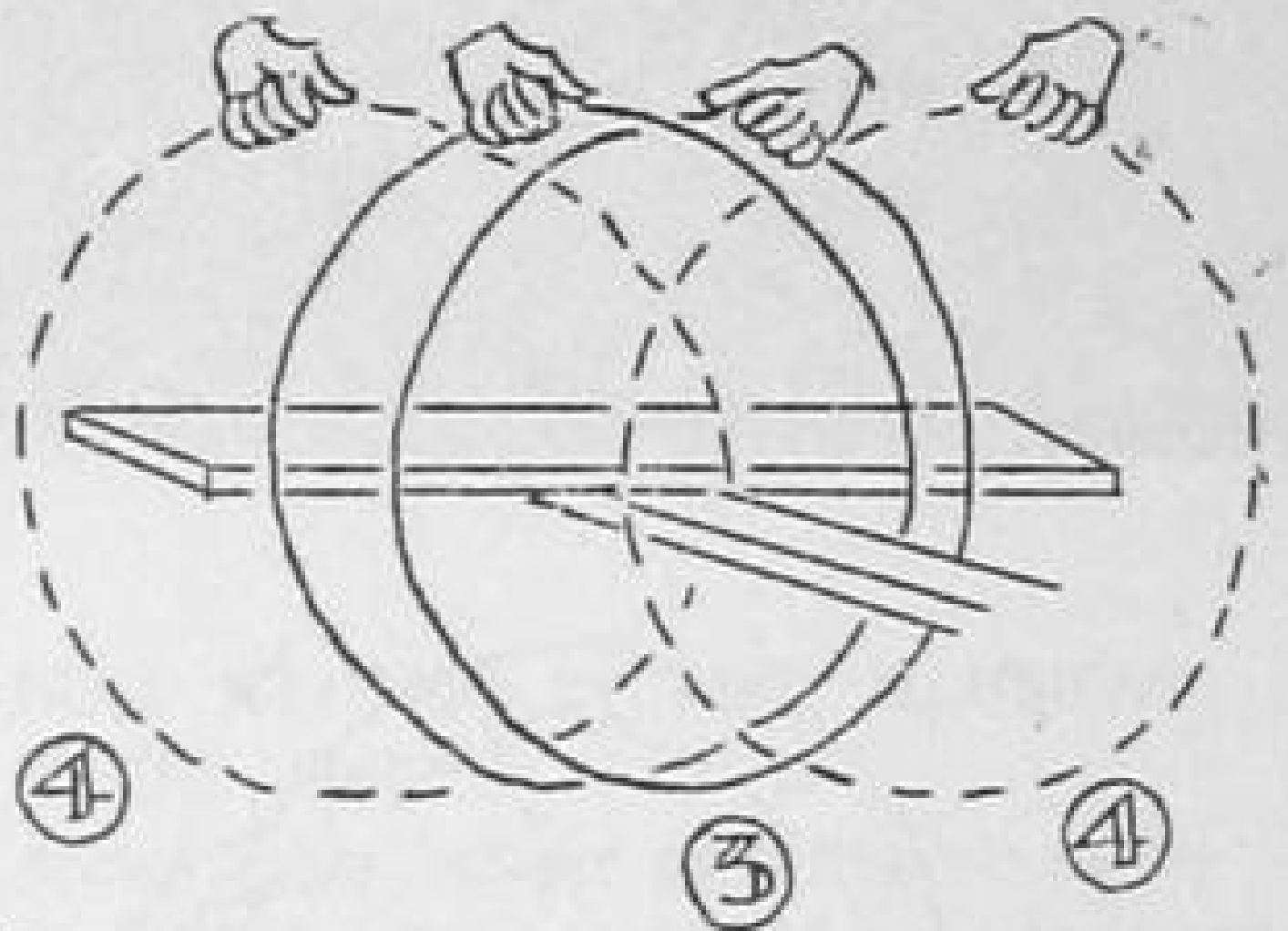
ALL PERFORMER'S VIEWS

ABBOTT'S COLON-MICH.

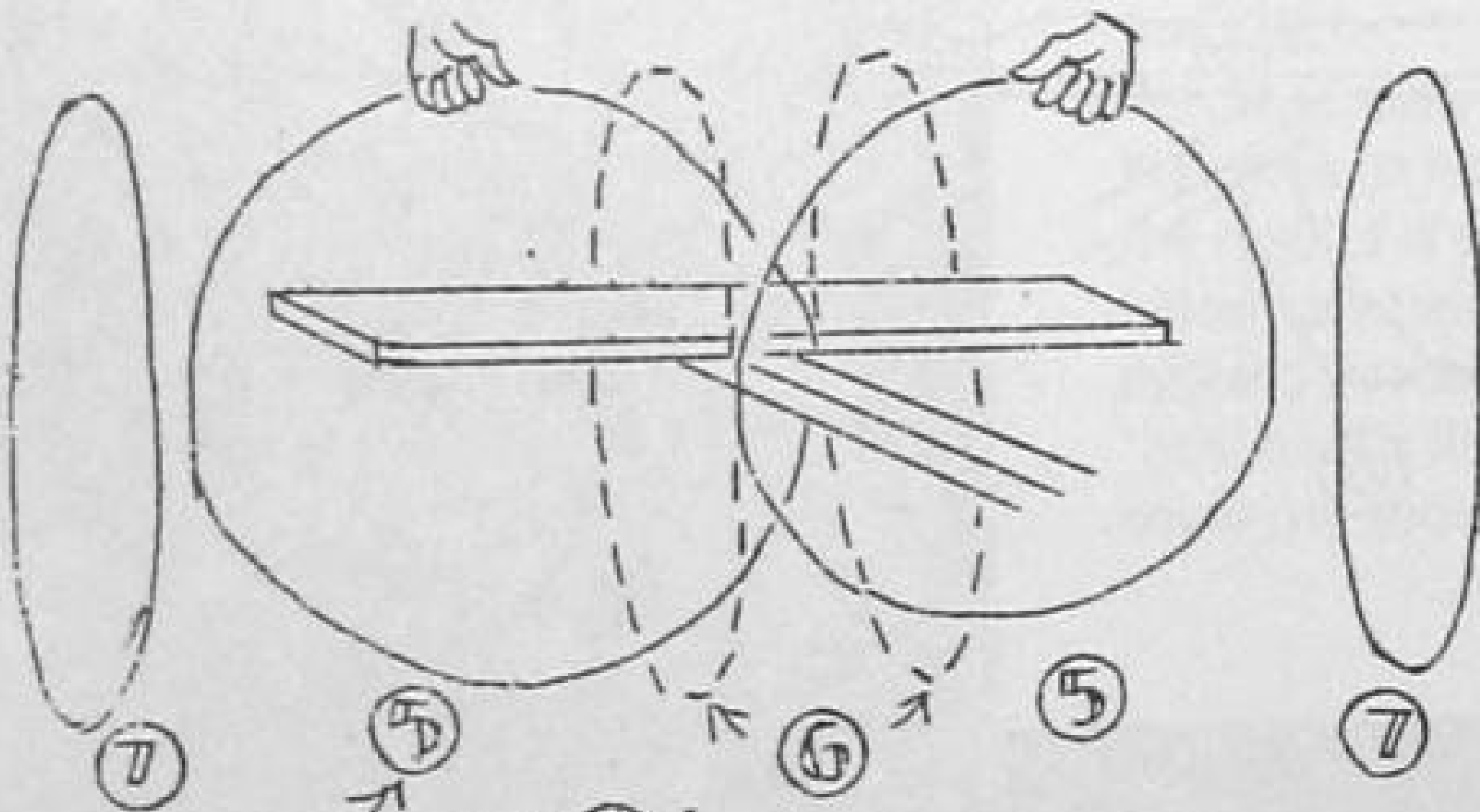




TWO-HOOP ROUTINE

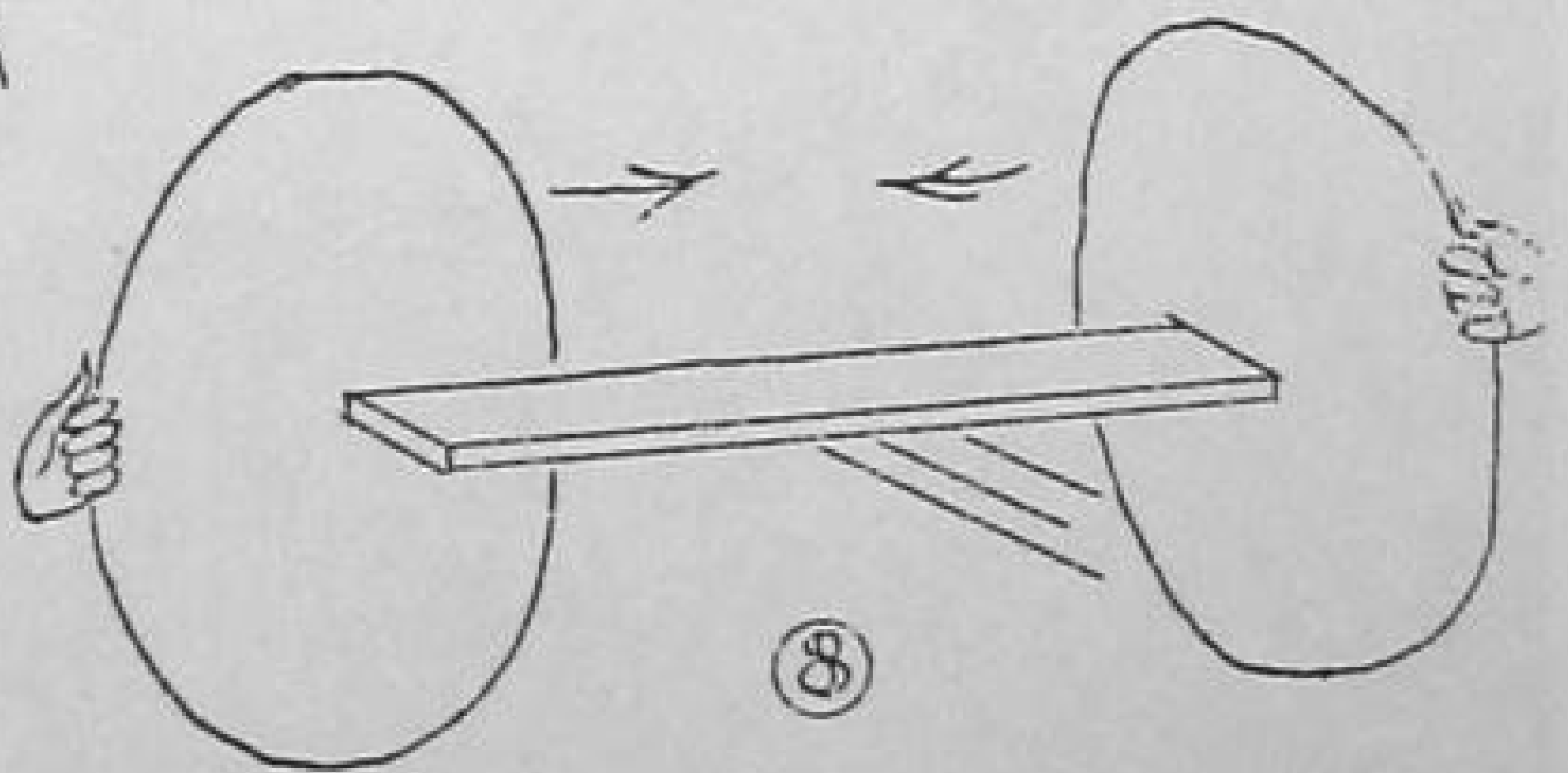


ABBOTT'S COLON-MICH.



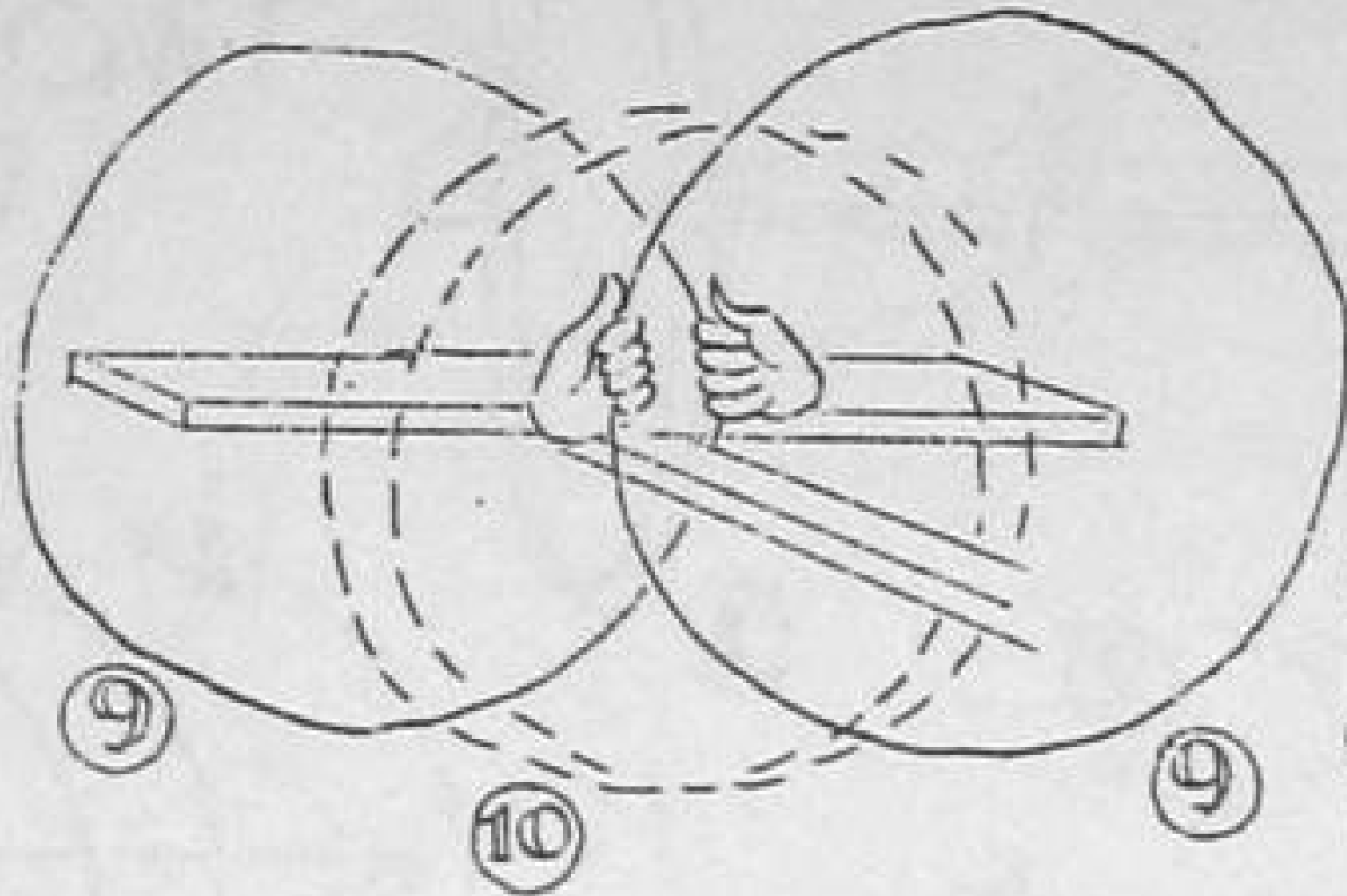
ALL PERFORMER'S VIEWS

SAME AS 4  
 CHANGE HAND GRIPS AS ONE HOOP PASSES THRU OTHER

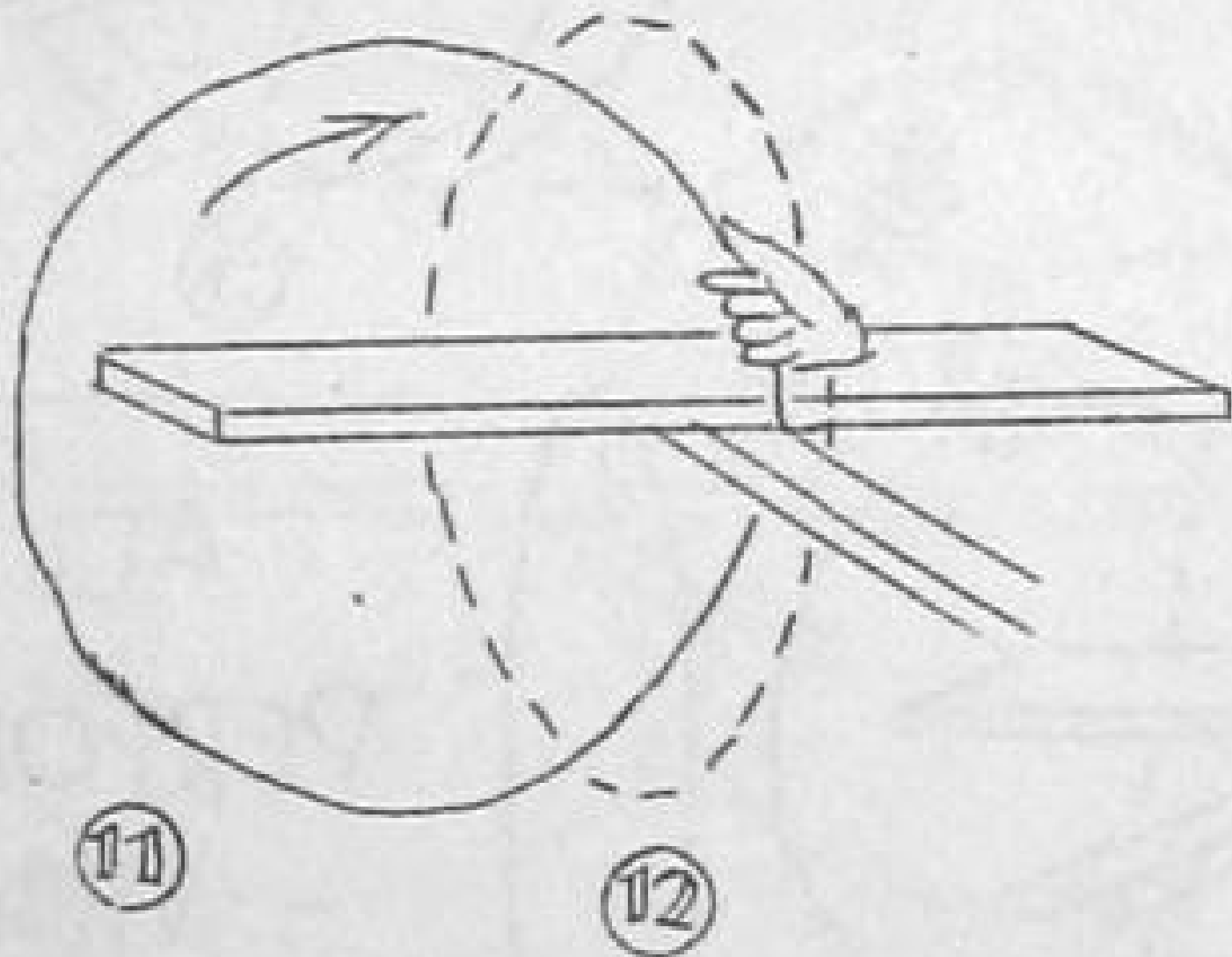




2-HOOP ROUTINE  
(CONTINUED)

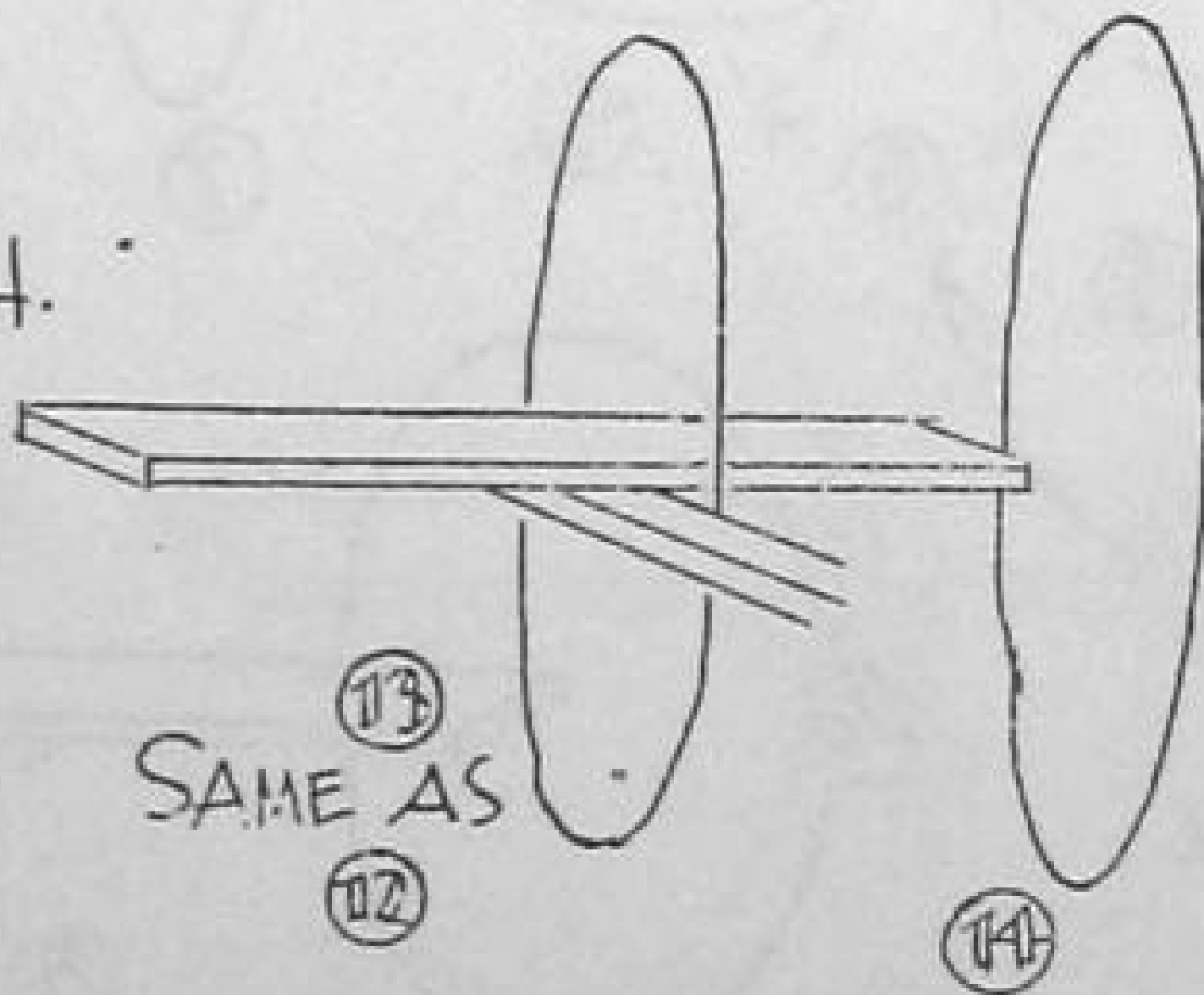


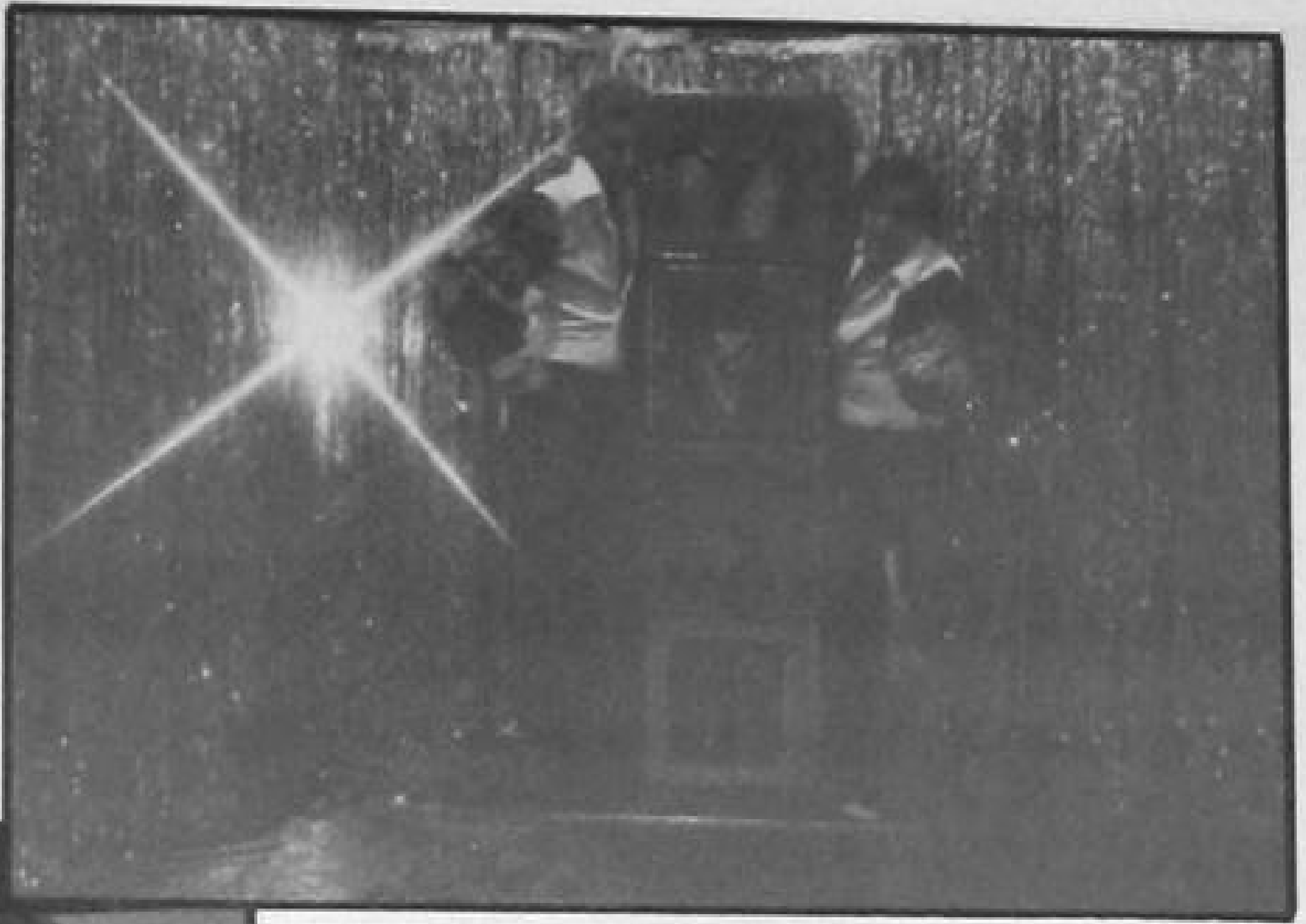
SWITCH HAND GRIPS AS ONE HOOP PASSES THRU OTHER



OTHER HOOP (ONE NEAREST BODY NOW OVER HEAD & RESTING ON ONE SHOULDER

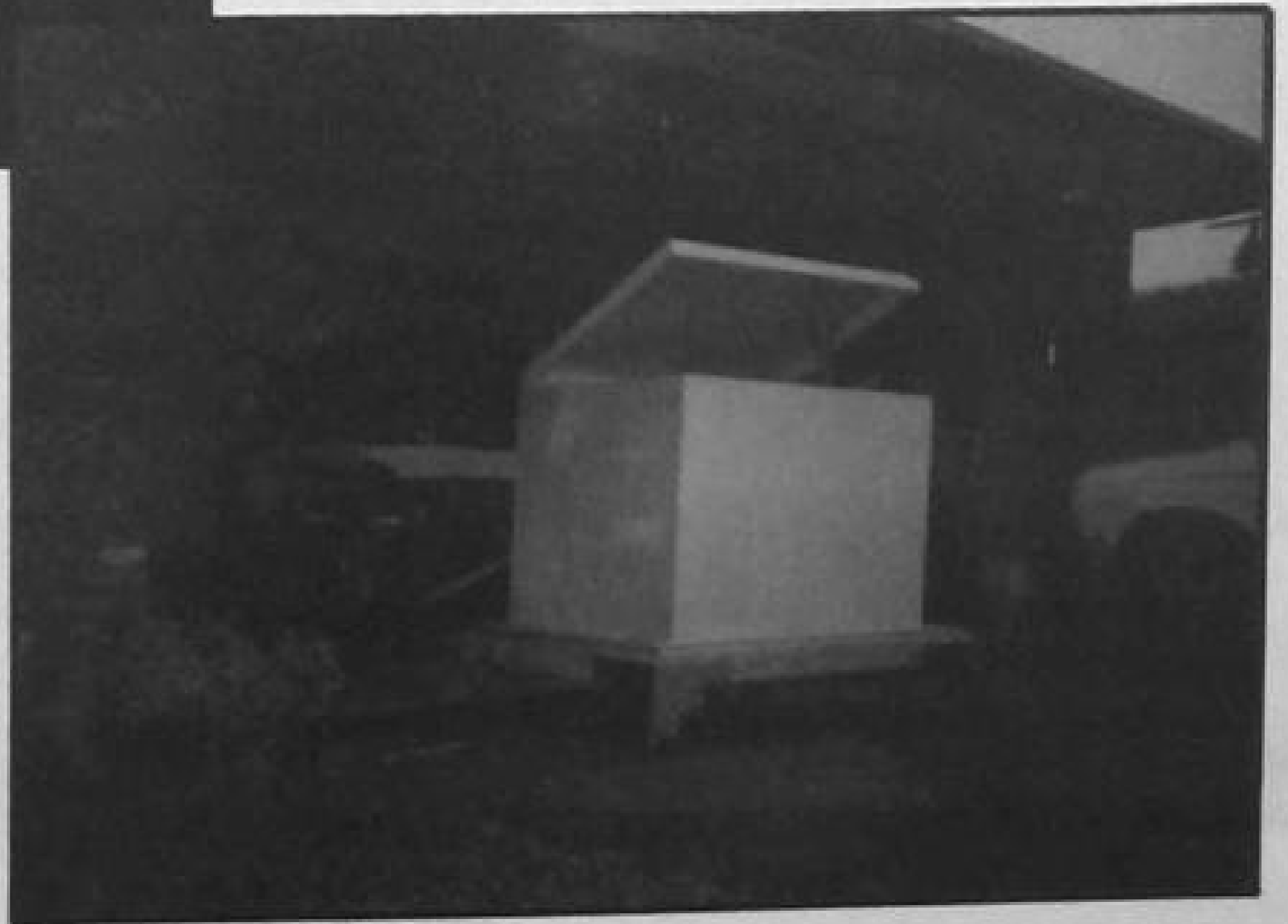
ABBOTT'S COLON-MICH.

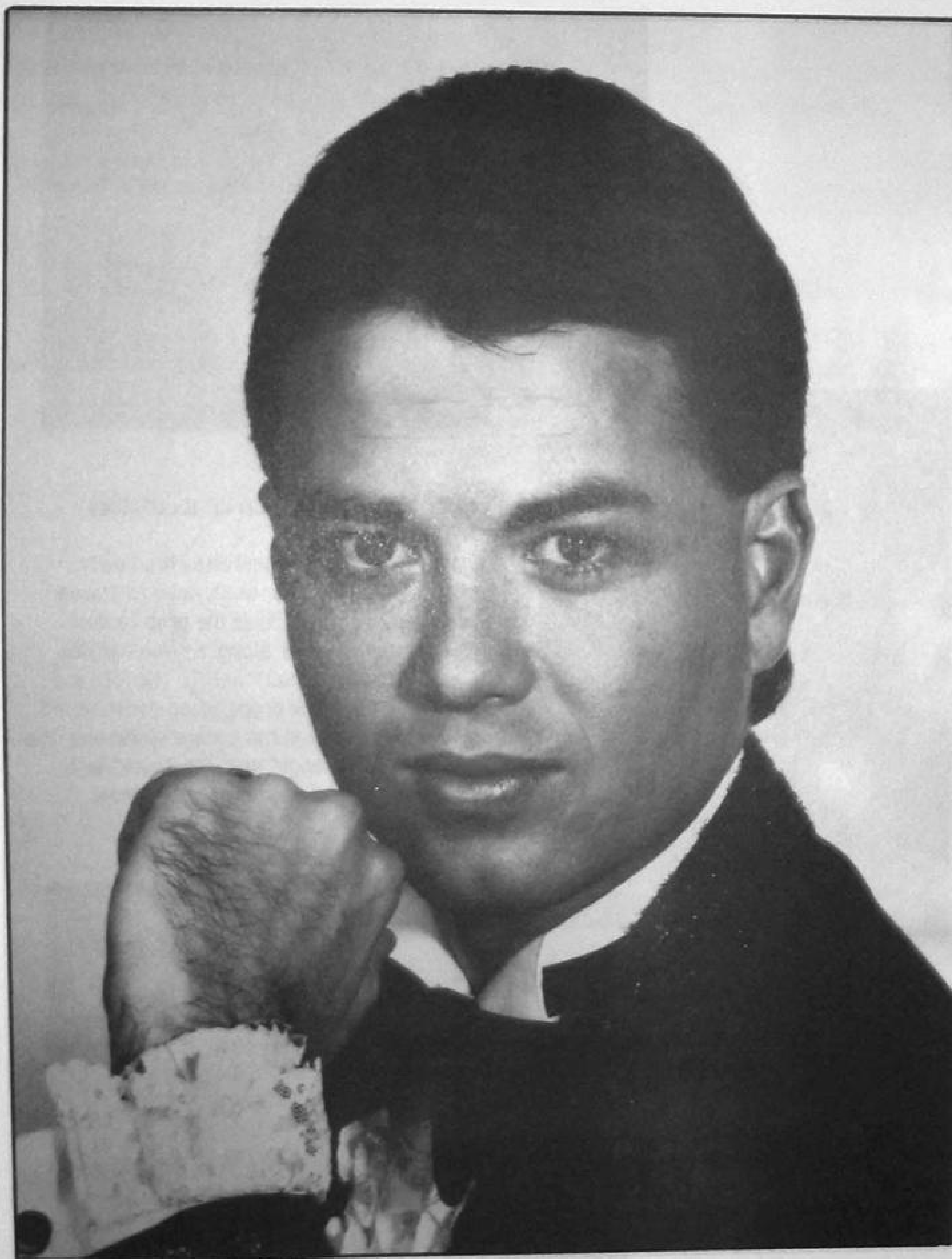




#### MORE ILLUSION SYSTEMS' ILLUSIONS IN THE WORKS!

Above, Dave Jackson performs his newly constructed "Mismade Girl". Dave followed the plans and customized the prop to suit his needs as he went along. As you can see, the results are sensational. To the left and below, are two new props being constructed by Rand Woodbury in his garage workshop. The "Assistant's Revenge" and "Tip Trunk" will obviously soon be added to Rand's show.





***Rick Walker***



# THE ILLUSIONIST

## Rick Walker

I feel that Paul's I, II and III books have all touched well on building tips and creativity for illusions. Now let's discuss you, the performer, and your role as the illusionist. I have learned over the years that personal appearance on stage is a long and lasting impression of you and your show. By this I mean proper costuming, make-up, and well kept props. If you feel good about yourself and your appearance, you're over half-way there. Men over the years have thought the wearing of make-up unnecessary and "sissy", but I bet most of you are the first to criticize another person's "unkept" appearance. When someone looks good they get compliments and when they don't look good, well....

I will begin on basic make-up techniques we use in our show. For the man, we use Max Factor Pan Cake for the base. I have found tan #2 is a good all purpose color to use. With a wet "natural" sponge, apply the pan cake evenly over the entire face, neck and anywhere else lights will hit. Next, the face is powdered with a translucent powder to soften and take away any shiny spots. This also "sets" the make-up and helps to absorb perspiration. Now, place a light red rouge powder on the cheeks evenly (you may appear funny or overdone to yourself, but on stage under the lights you will appear natural). Mascara is used on the eye lashes if you have light or pale lashes. You can even use this on the eye brows to highlight. Above the eye I use a dark brown or greyish eye powder brushed along the crease of the eye lid. This will help the eye to appear bigger. On the lips, lightly put on a pale red lip cover and then clear gloss over that.

Since most women are familiar with make-up, I suggest that you learn to apply your make-up heavier and a little brighter...don't forget those lights

will drain your color. I suggest if you're serious about your appearance that you have a make-up consultant help you with the finals. There are several good ones, Merle Norman Cosmetics being one. Tell the consultant what you need the make-up for and they will go from there.

Before the act begins, the hands should be well manicured. The hands may also be rubbed toward the fingers for circulation. Washing your hands in ice cold water is also a way to relax the performer just before the show.

Your costuming will depend a lot on the character you want to portray. If at all possible, seek someone's help in this area that is well versed in costuming. You can have jewels and glitter added to your present tux, or whatever you're wearing that will greatly enhance your overall appearance. Keep in mind you will want to look good past the third row of your audience. Be a frequent visitor to the laundry with your shirts, ties and suit/tux. As styles change so often, it is also advisable to read fashion magazines like Gentlemen's Quarterly or Esquire and visit "up to date" fashion stores. Do not buy cheap clothes, as they will soon show your attempt at economy.

I have compiled a list of hints and tips we have found useful over the years to share with you on make-up, costumes and show tips:

Make-up mirrors and lights for backstage.

Travel iron

Ample supply of extra hosiery for assistants - a run can really be an eye sore and is very distracting.

Travel bags for costumes, we use the type traveling salesmen have of canvas.

Rolling racks for costumes, etc.

Old sheets to use as "ground cover" to dress on.

Lint brushes, netting is great on felt and velvet.

Sweat guard pads for under arms, if needed.

Sewing kit with extra buttons, zippers, velcro, etc. A supply of cheap tie tacks are excellent for emergency buttons.

Small stapler to use for hems of costumes and curtains.

Pre-styled wigs sprayed extra firm are perfect for assistants' hair. Cuts down on time and money and they store in wig cases.

Polish for shoes - very important.

Have shoes rubberized on the bottom to prevent slips on stage.

Sew clear vinyl along hems of long capes, gowns or anything flowing to protect and prolong its life.

Always rehearse in full costume and make-up including all accessories to be worn to make sure there are no surprises or problems...pierced earrings should be avoided to prevent severe damage to your assistant due to hang ups in costumes and props.

Small fold dollies for carrying cases to save wear and tear on yourself.

Have costumes "scotch guarded" for extra protection.

Use packing crates for tables backstage. They will also double as ironing boards.

Add glitter or confetti to production items, i.e. silks, flowers, etc. for that extra touch.

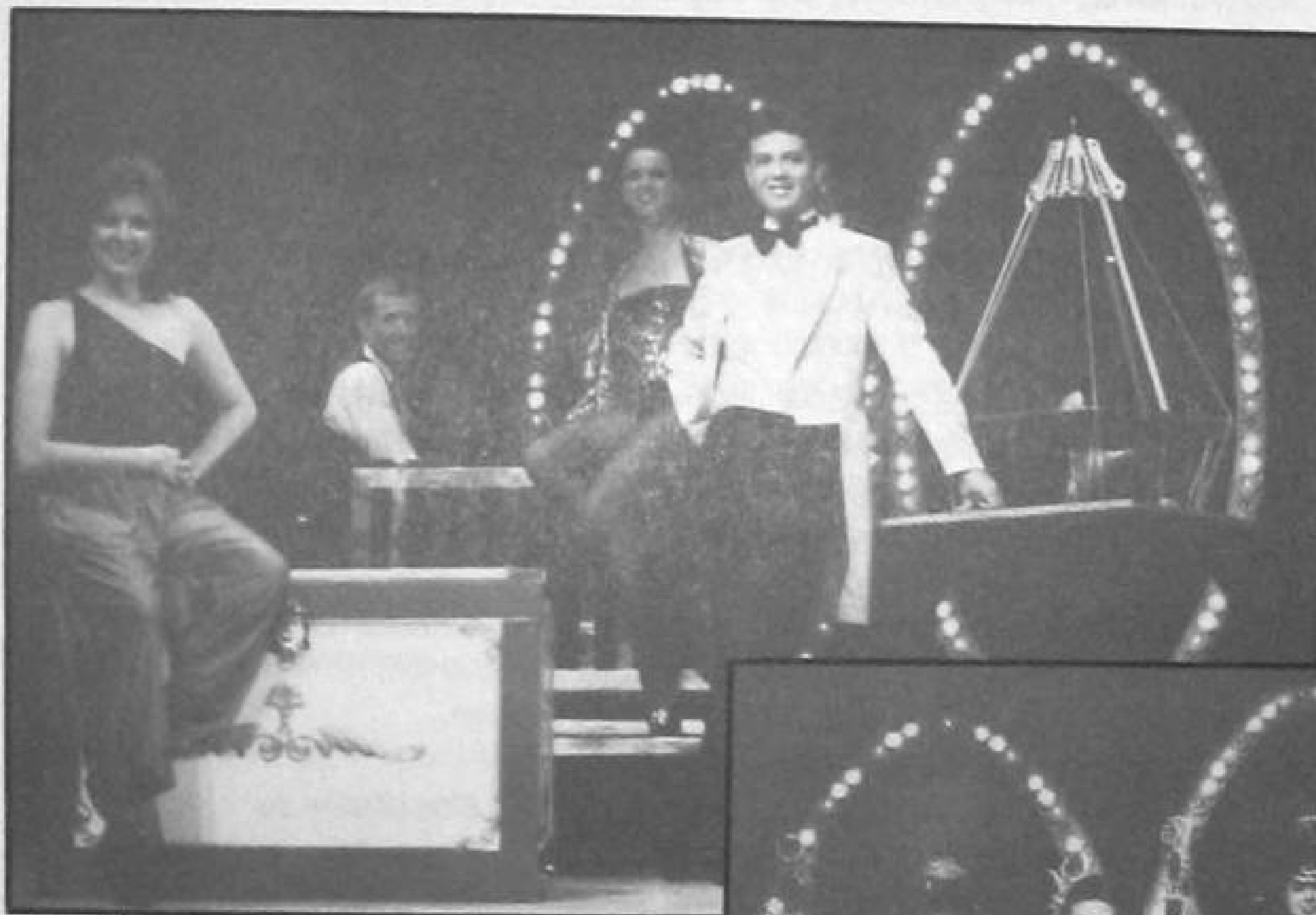
Make sure your silks are pressed, flowers are steamed and aired, and your props are cleaned and polished before each performance.

Have extra and duplicate bolts, screws, etc. for props.

Most of all, don't forget to pamper your assistants, for they are one of your best assets.

In closing, I strongly suggest you consider a choreographer/director to help with your style of show. He will help you learn to walk, stand and move in a smooth and professional manner...it's like the icing on a cake.

We hope you will be able to incorporate some of our learned techniques and hints in order to make you and your show a more professional one.



**Rick Walker**



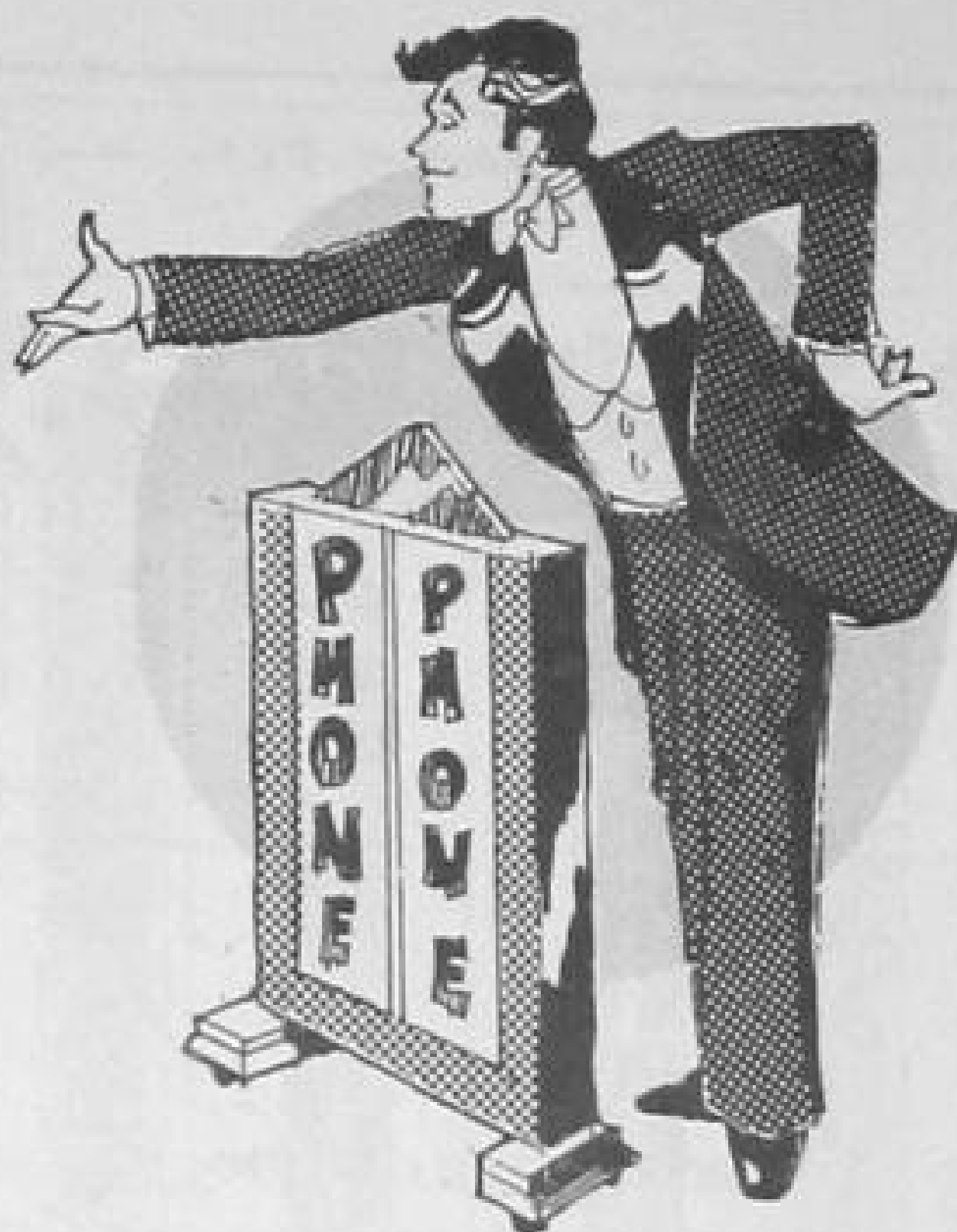
# PHONE HOME

Unfortunately, there are so few illusions for the kid show performer that I thought this idea might be something unique for your next presentation.

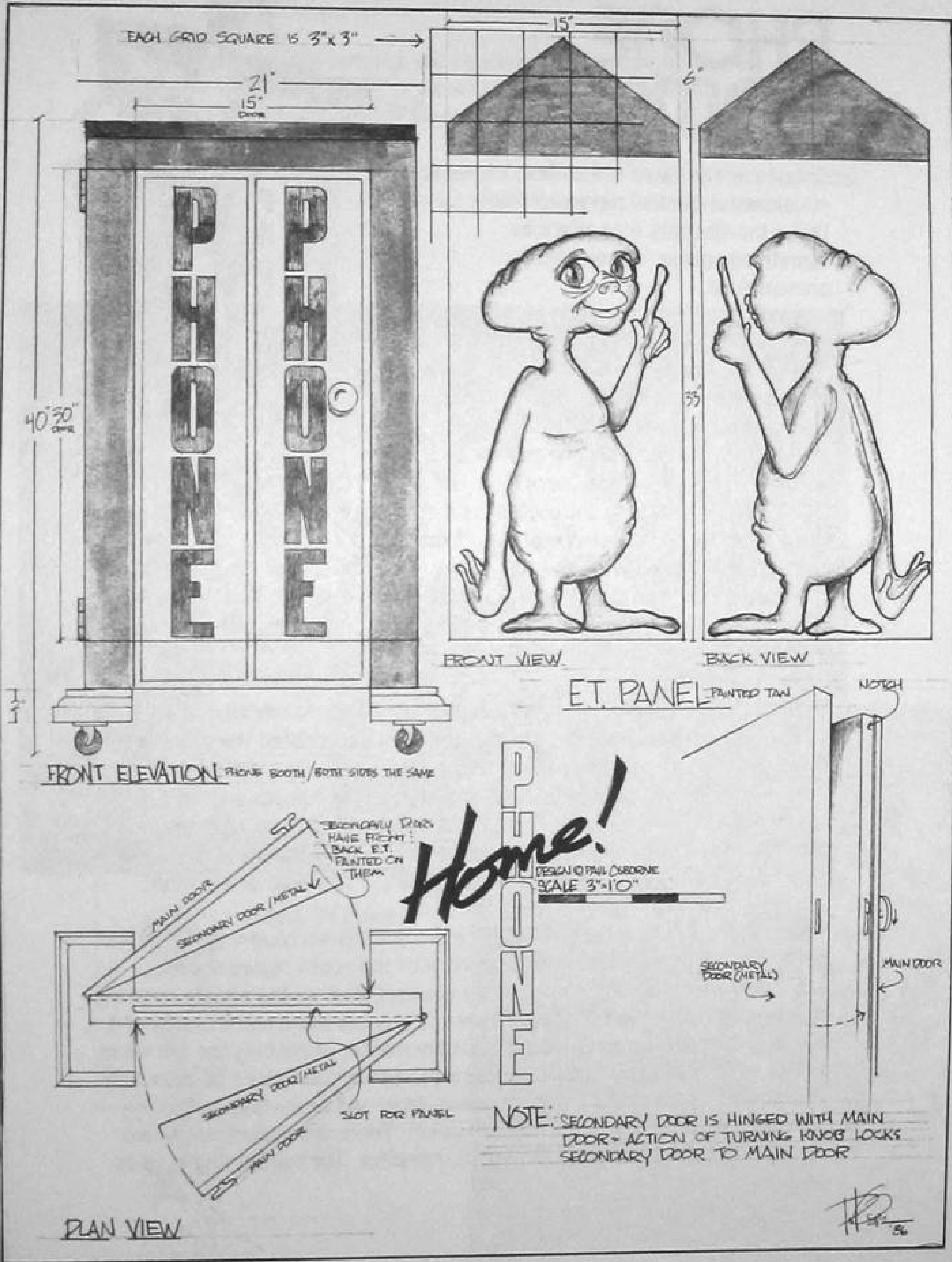
**EFFECT:** This is the old standard "Fraidy Cat Rabbit" updated for today's young audiences. The magician shows a large cutout telephone booth and asks the audience "who could possibly be in there?" It is revealed that, who else but E.T.-"phoning home". A thin cutout of E.T. is shown and placed into the phone booth. The magician explains that, with the audience's help, he will make E.T. turn green with envy. Everbody yells "now" and the phone booth is turned around and the back of E.T. is seen to be green! Obviously, there is some sucker by-play and E.T. does turn green, and with this version he can also turn back to his original tan color.

**METHOD:** By looking at our plans you can see the basic working of this effect. All we have done is enlarged the size and updated the concept. Actually, you could make it any size and still have a terrific trick. Our front elevations show the relative size of the phone booth and the E.T. cutout (front and back). The phone booth is constructed from 1/2" and 1/4" plywood. The E.T. cutout is fabricated from 1/4" plywood and the character is painted tan as per the scale partially drawn on our plan.

What causes E.T. to actually change colors are the secondary metal doors built into the phone booth. Our plan view of the booth shows these secondary doors. Note also, how they are kept shut by the simple rotating of the door knobs. On these inner doors is painted the front and back of E.T. but in green. As you can see, it's a simple matter of putting the tan wood cutout of E.T. into the slot and releasing the two inner doors to make him appear as if he has totally turned green, front and back. Only by pulling him out does he return to his natural color. There are many comedy and sucker routines that can be done with this prop. The routinizing is up to you.









# THE GENII PLANS

In 1979 I had a large collection of illusion plans that I used to construct props for our many theme park shows. Because our park shows required new and different props each season I had lots of props and lots of plans. As a matter of fact, I didn't know how many plans I had until I cleaned out my plan drawer! The thought entered my mind how beneficial these drawings might be to some other performers. I began to give serious consideration to sharing my creations with magicians around the world. I decided that I would release them to the magazine that gave me so much enjoyment as I began my magical career...Genii Magazine. I rolled up a sample plan and wrote a letter to Bill Larsen and asked him if he would be interested in publishing them. For starters, I had enough plans to fill five years worth of magazines. His response was "let's go!" and in the May 1980, volume 44, number five issue of Genii, with Doug Henning on the cover, our first plan appeared... "The Hat Box Illusion".

The choice to share my ideas with magicians via Genii has been the most rewarding decision of my life. I, at last, can feel like I am putting back into an art that has sustained me through some pretty bleak moments. All through my life, times and people have changed but magic has always been there...been there as a career, a diversion, a passion, a success and a challenge. Genii magazine and the Larsens provided me with a forum to share my ideas and hopefully allow me to give as I have been given to.

Since those first days in 1979, Michelle and I have developed a special friendship with Bill and Irene and I have told them that I will always be happy to supply plans for their publication. I am proud to announce that, so far, there is no end in site for the Genii plans. Because of so many requests, beginning with Book IV and continuing with subsequent publications, I am going to chronologically reproduce the plans. The next few pages recreate the plans in Genii from May 1980 through December 1980.

*Presenting the first in a series of illusion plans  
from Paul Osborne and Associates*



## **The Hatbox Illusion**

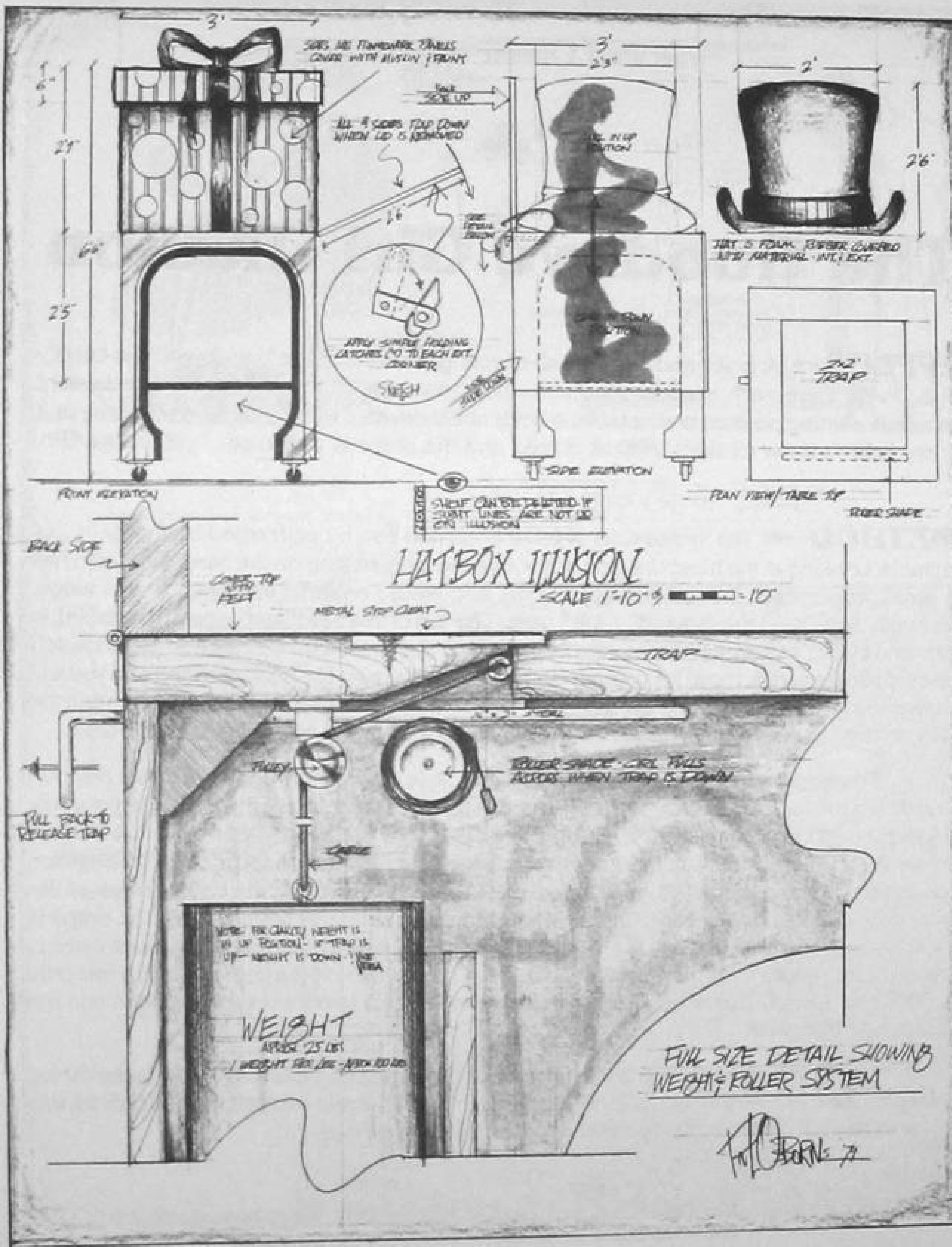
**EFFECT** — Based on the old Mignon illusion, this current updated version features a hatbox resting on an upright 4-legged table with a clear view beneath. The hatbox lid is removed and the four sides are lowered to reveal a large magician's top hat. The hat is taken and shown completely empty. As the hat is placed back on the table top the four sided box is folded back up, and the lid is replaced. The entire unit is revolved to show all four sides.

At the magician's command, the box is once again rapidly lowered to reveal the top hat, but resting beneath the hat as it is slowly removed is your beautiful assistant.

**METHOD** — What sets the illusion apart from others, is the speed with which the assistant can travel above and below the table. This is accomplished by a four way counterweight system, hidden in each of the table legs, as indicated in the plans. When the illusion is first displayed the girl is in the up position. As the sides are being let down, the magician releases the back pin to allow the girl to pass in the newly formed "lower" compartment. She then pulls the roller shade across the base to hide trap hole. The hat is shown empty and replaced. The girl pulls herself up into the hat, aided by her counterweight trap. The sides are then folded back up and the rest is magic.

The speed and simplicity with which this illusion can be performed has always made it our first choice, and it can be performed in the round!

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*This is the second in a series of illusion plans  
from Paul Osborne and Associates*



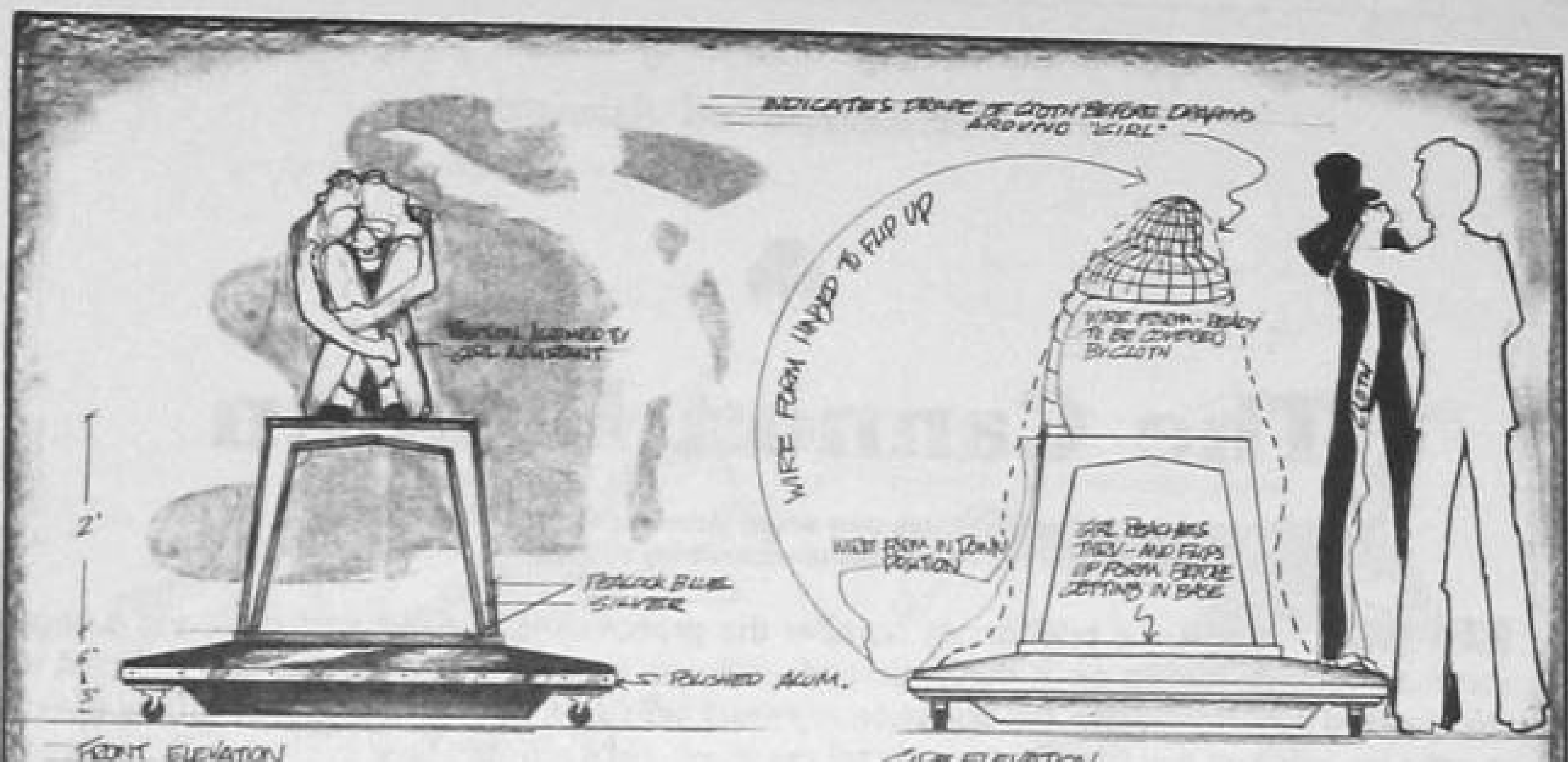
## **The Goodbye Girl Illusion**

**EFFECT** — A quick and easy vanish of your girl assistant, the Goodbye Girl is exactly that. On the stage is a thin modernistic table resting on an unpretentious base. Your assistant assumes a sitting position on the table, quickly she is covered with a cloth and the entire unit is revolved to show all sides. A shot is fired and the drape is pulled-off . . . Goodbye Girl.

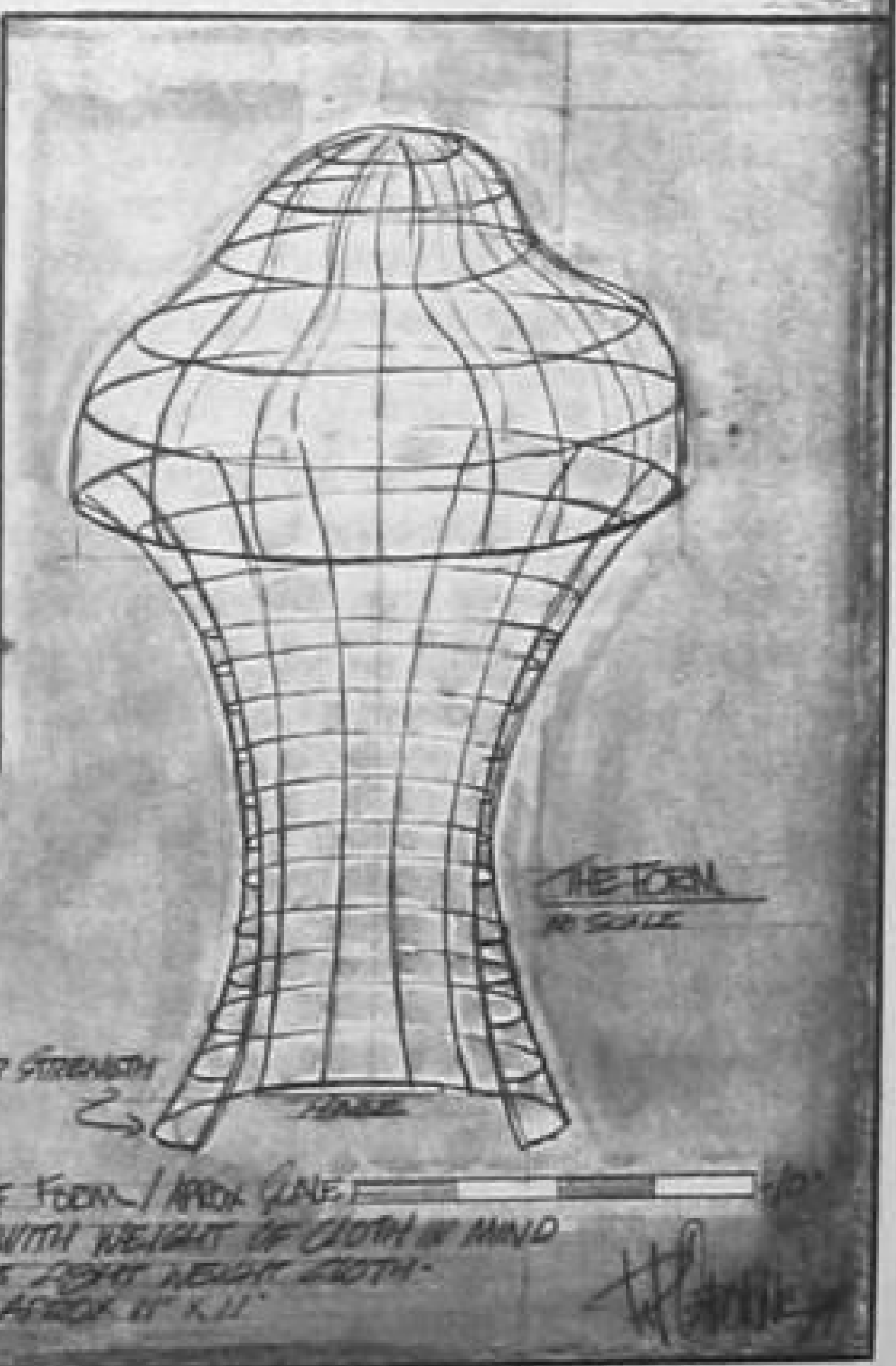
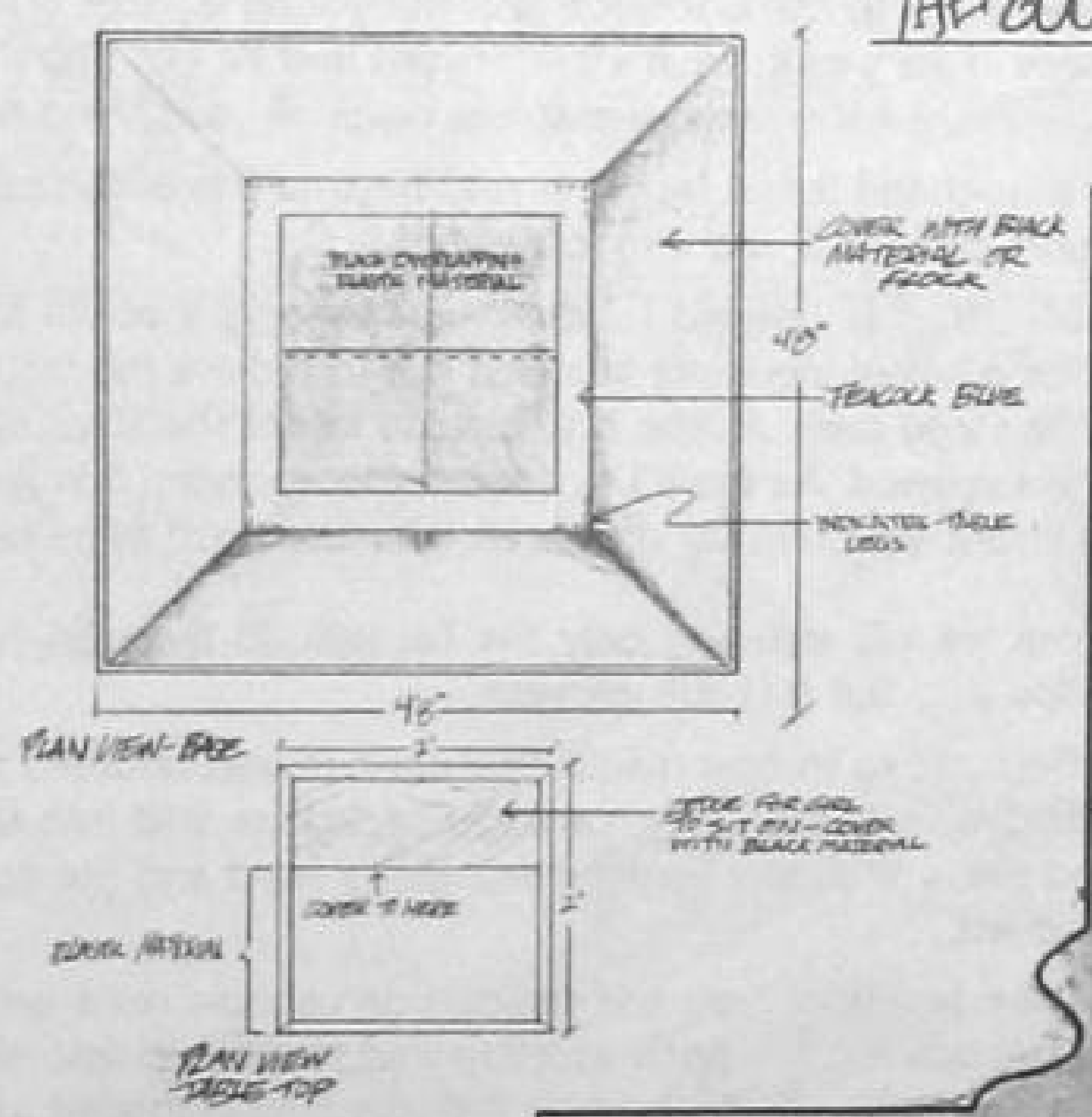
**METHOD** — The speed with which this illusion can be performed is what sells this miracle. Looking at the blueprint, you will notice the table resting on the base. This table has a small ledge which the girl actually sits on, and elastic material stretched to this ledge. Beneath this 2' tall table is a 4'8" x 4'8" base. The top of this base (just beneath the table), is covered elastic material. Although the base is designed to look thin, it has a 9" depth which should allow enough room for your assistant. Refer to the side elevation drawing and you will notice the wire form hanging behind the 2' tall table. The form is made in much the same way as the old Asrah form. This form is permanently hinged to the back of the table.

To perform, first your assistant sits Indian style on the table and assumes a position much like the top of the form. Then the magician and assistant raise the drape, temporarily hiding the girl from view. At this point, she passes thru the elastic tabletop to the bottom base. As she works her way into the bottom base, she flips up the form and the magician covers it with the drape. At this point, the drape is hanging from the form on all 4 sides, all the way down to the bottom base. Once the girl has gotten into the bottom base, the drape is lifted up and gently tucked into the top table, giving a clear view underneath. The entire unit is revolved. When it's time for magic, the magician stands behind the unit and with a fast jerk, pulls the drape off. This action causes the form to fall back into it's original position and the illusion is complete.

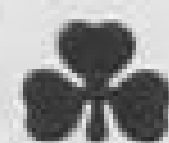
I hope you will include this illusion in your repertoire, as it has been a real fooler for us. I might also mention that normally we perform this effect against a patterned backdrop; this makes the form almost totally invisible from the front row.



THE GOODBYE GIRL ILLUSION  
 SCENE 1-10' [ ] = 10'



This is the third in a series of illusion plans  
from Paul Osborne and Associates



## The Cannon Illusion

This will be the beginning of a three part series detailing the classic "Shooting a Girl Out of a Cannon" illusion, and the various improvements my shop made on our updated version.

**EFFECT** — After a brief dance number the proscenium curtains part to reveal a large chromed cannon, resting on a thinly ramped platform. One of the chorus girls is selected to step forward as a man from the audience is invited on stage. The audience member is asked to write his name or any identifying mark on the lovely girl's arm in black marks a lot, this is for positive identification at a later time.

Once this is done, our volunteer is assisted back to the audience and the young dancer dons a bright red helmet for her flight thru space. Two young men step forward and lift her into the cannon. As this is done, the entire unit is rolled off the ramp that it was originally displayed on. The barrel of the cannon is pointed at a suspended target box over and beyond the audience's heads. At the appropriate time, with a loud explosion, the cannon is fired.

Immediately, the back door of the cannon barrel is opened to show that beyond a doubt the girl is gone. The cannon is left on stage as a set of steps are wheeled out to receive the target box now being painstakingly lowered by the stage crew. As the box hits the top of the step unit, all rigging and straps are undone. Locks are opened. As the lid to the once suspended box flies open, our female cannon ball, with strange but very familiar marks all over her arm, pops out.

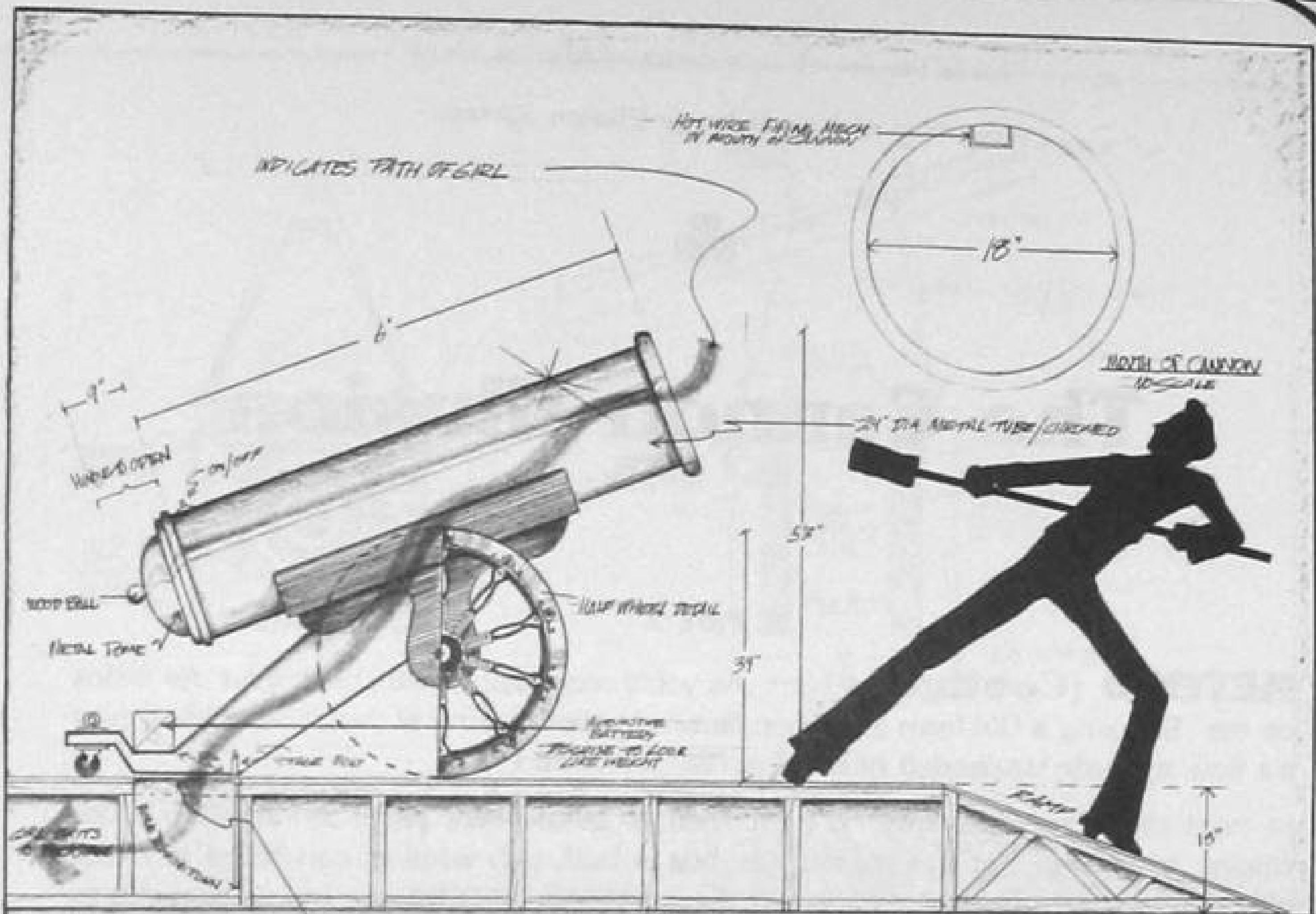
**METHOD** — In the beginning series we will examine only the cannon. In the next two issues, we will detail the box and the steps . . . but first the cannon.

It always bothered me when I saw this effect . . . as to how quickly the cannon was shuffled off stage after its firing. Obviously, the girl had to get out of the carriage backstage and into the steps — so ditch the cannon quick or find twins. With our method one girl is used and the cannon can clutter the stage thru your entire act.

In referring to the effect description and the blueprint, you will notice our cannon rests on a platform 1'8" high. This platform butts up against the back scenery and is worked into the overall scenic design. This platform is what actually effects the girls' escape. She is loaded into the cannon barrel feet first, sliding directly into the carriage and gravity assists her into the platform which has just enough room for her to work her way backstage and into the steps. Once she is into the platform area and closing the trap — the cannon can be wheeled forward and down the ramp to center stage.

In studying the blueprint of our cannon, I believe the above should become quite clear. Next month, we will cover the box she is "shot into" and its rigging.

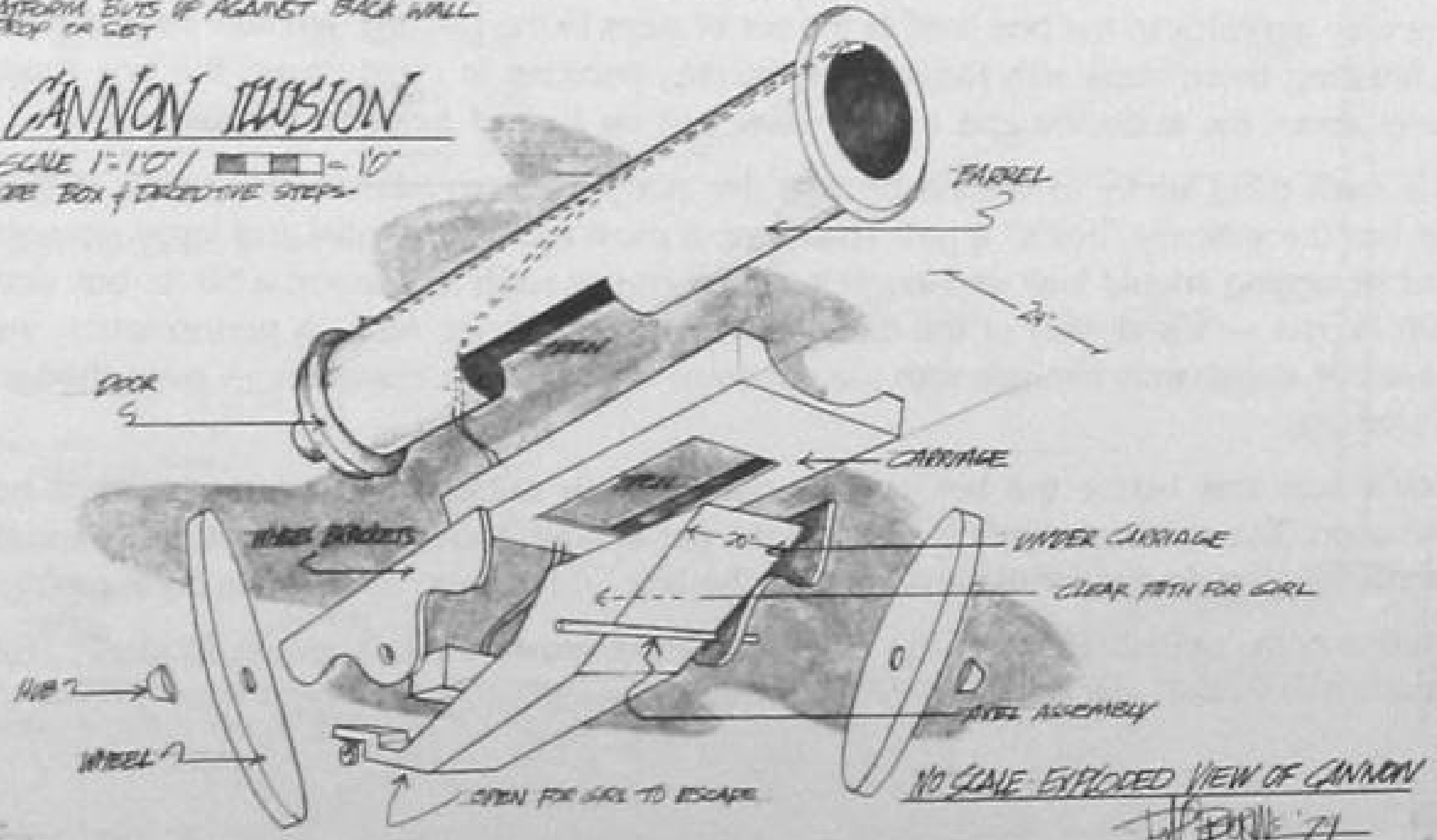
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PLATFORM BUTS UP AGAINST BACK WALL  
 TRIP OR SET

CANNON & PLATFORM  
 SIDE ELEVATION

**CANNON ILLUSION**  
 SCALE 1" = 10" / 10 = 10"  
 - ONE BOX & THREE STEPS -





*This is the fourth in a series of illusion plans  
courtesy of Paul Osborne Illusion Systems*



## **The Cannon Illusion**

### **Part 2**

**METHOD (Continued)** — As you'll recall last month, we began our series on the "Shooting a Girl from a Cannon Illusion". After looking at the cannon itself, now it's time to study suspended box the girl is "shot" into.

In most cases, our "shooting" is performed at amusement parks in various outdoor staging conditions. For this reason, our box is built with weather conditions in mind, although we try to lower it as soon as the conditions look threatening — sometimes it still gets wet.

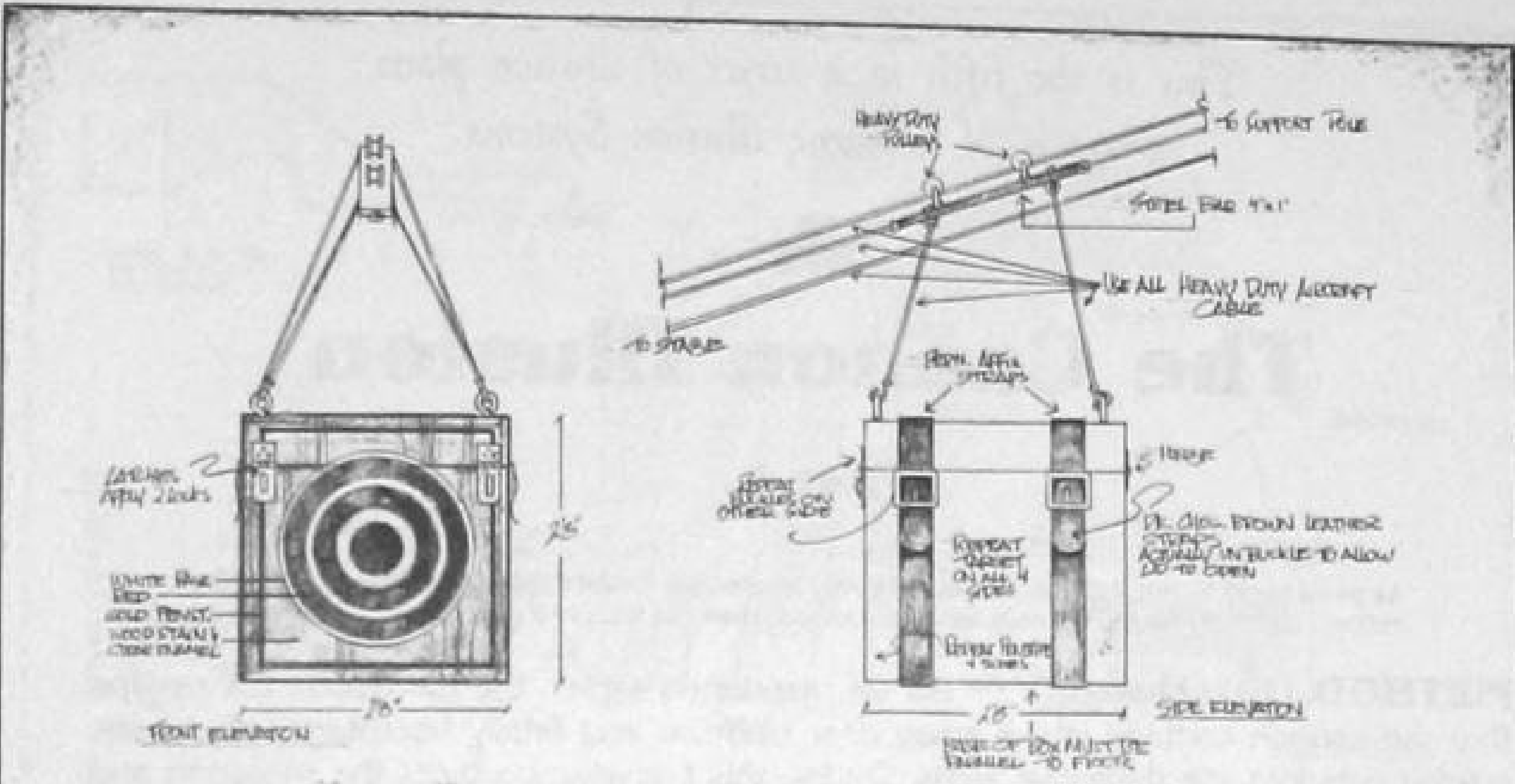
The only gimmick to the box itself is the set of traps in the bottom. We take special care in finishing these traps with hidden hinges, etc., because in most cases, the box must travel above the audience and a clear view can be had of box's underside.

The main thing we try to emphasize with the box prop from this classic illusion, is that the box theoretically "holds" a girl. Therefore, it must look substantial and large enough and its rigging should look as though it was strong enough to support a 50 lb. box and 100 lb. girl — it's all part of the illusion and very important. Also, in performance, we have our stagehands struggle with the apparent weight of the container — even though it's empty.

You'll note that before the box can be opened, four buckles and two locks must be removed. The reason for this is to allow the girl enough time to get from the deceptive steps, thru the double set of traps and into the box . . . however, all must be done rapidly.

Next month, we will examine the deceptive steps used in the "Cannon Illusion", and more specifically, with this box.

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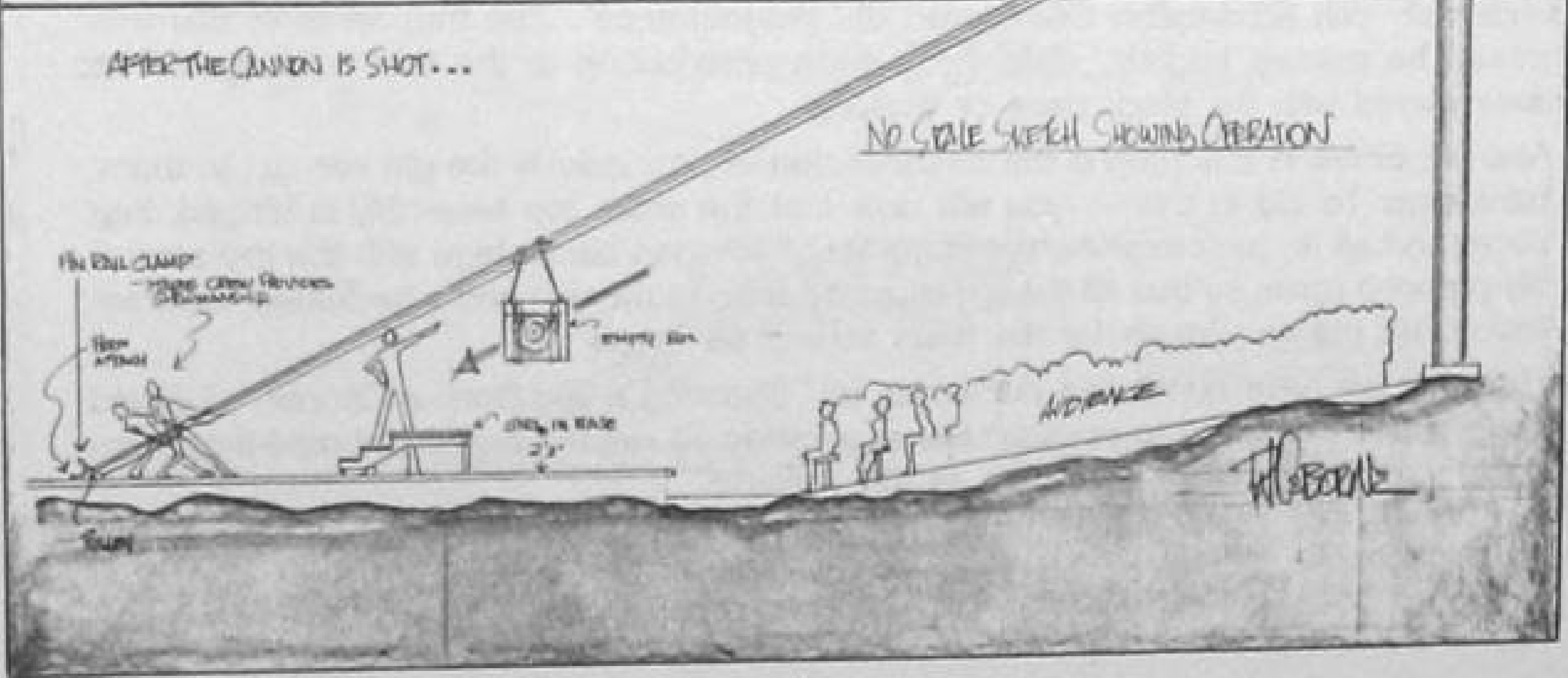
### BOX FOR CANNON ILLUSION

SCALE 1" = 10" / 10' = 10"

TO BE USED WITH DECEPTIVE STRAPS

ALTHOUGH THE FOOD NEVER ACTUALLY  
HANGS WITH A GIRL IN IT - IT MUST LOOK  
LIKE IT WOULD - USE ALL HEAVY DUTY HEAVY  
CABLES, LATCHES, ETC.  
**VERY IMPORTANT**

NOTE: TRAPS ARE 4" LARGER ON EITHER SIDE  
THAN DECEPTIVE STRAP TRAPS  
**BUILD FOR EXTERIOR USE!**



*This is the fifth in a series of illusion plans  
courtesy of Osborne Illusion Systems*



## **The Cannon Illusion**

### **Part 3**

As you'll recall in the last two issues, we have detailed the "Shooting a Girl from a Cannon Illusion". In the first issue we examined the cannon, then the box, and now the deceptive steps.

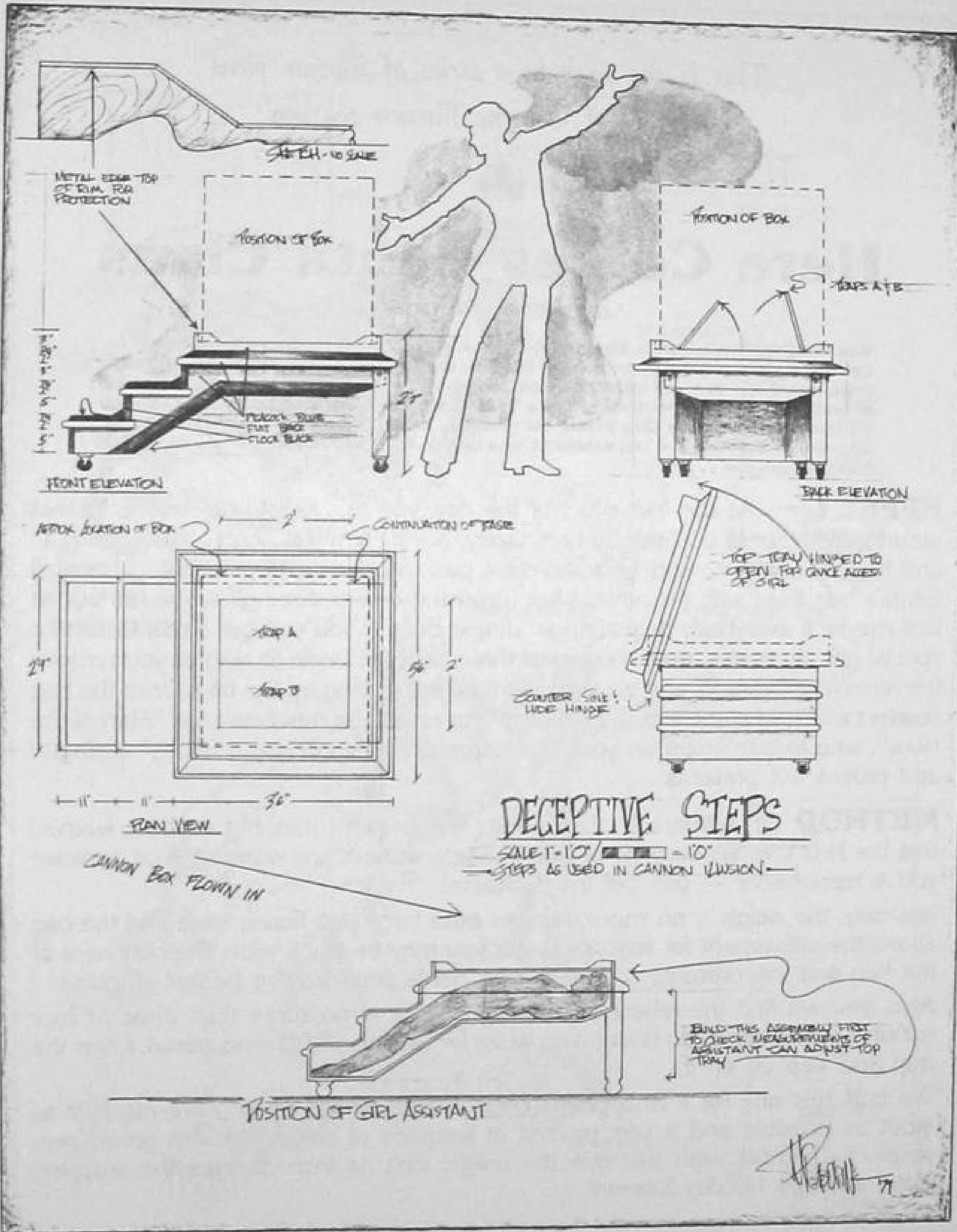
**METHOD (Continued)** — As we mentioned earlier, the girl effects her escape thru the cannon carriage into a small riser platform and finally backstage, where she quickly gets into the deceptive steps. During this backstage activity, the magician and his assistants are rolling the cannon forward, off of its platform to stage center, and aiming it at (last month's issue) the suspended box. Obviously, the steps are critical to the overall effect.

In any good illusion planning, things must have a reason. The apparent reason for the steps is obvious — they provide a platform (with a clear view beneath), for the box to land on, and the steps themselves allow the magician's access to locks, straps, etc., on the box — therefore, to the audience, the steps make sense.

It is most important that the steps look like and be treated like a "utility prop" (i.e., magic tables, etc.). Theoretically, they have nothing to do with the illusion of "Shooting a Girl from a Cannon". For this reason, they must look thin. The paint job and wood beveled underbelly can accomplish this illusion of "insignificance". The thin areas of this unit should be painted brightly, while those areas contributing to the thickness should be down-played with flat black paint or flocking.

Also important in this prop is the consideration of how quickly the girl can get in them, backstage. To aid in this — you will note that the entire top assembly is hinged, trap doors and all. In performance, the steps are positioned back stage with the top assembly propped open, so that all the girl must do is get in the unit and a backstage assistant lowers the top and heads for the main activity on stage.

Now that we have concluded our series on "Shooting a Girl from a Cannon", I would suggest you refer back to previous issues showing all needed props and read thru them again . . . There will be a test on all this material.



*This is the sixth in a series of illusion plans  
courtesy of Osborne Illusion Systems*



## **Here Comes Santa Claus**

**By Paul Osborne**

How many Christmas Parties have you had where good old John Doe has consented to be Santa Claus and give out presents to all the kids, but good old John won't fit in your Volkswagen, much less your doll house? So, you "introduce" Santa Claus and he walks out, steps on your foot and stumbles through some "kiddle" dialogue with you (you try not to notice his breath problem), and then passes out presents, somewhat anticlimactically. Sure, it was o.k., and the kids liked it — but, wouldn't it have been great if you could have produced Santa? Well, now you can . . .

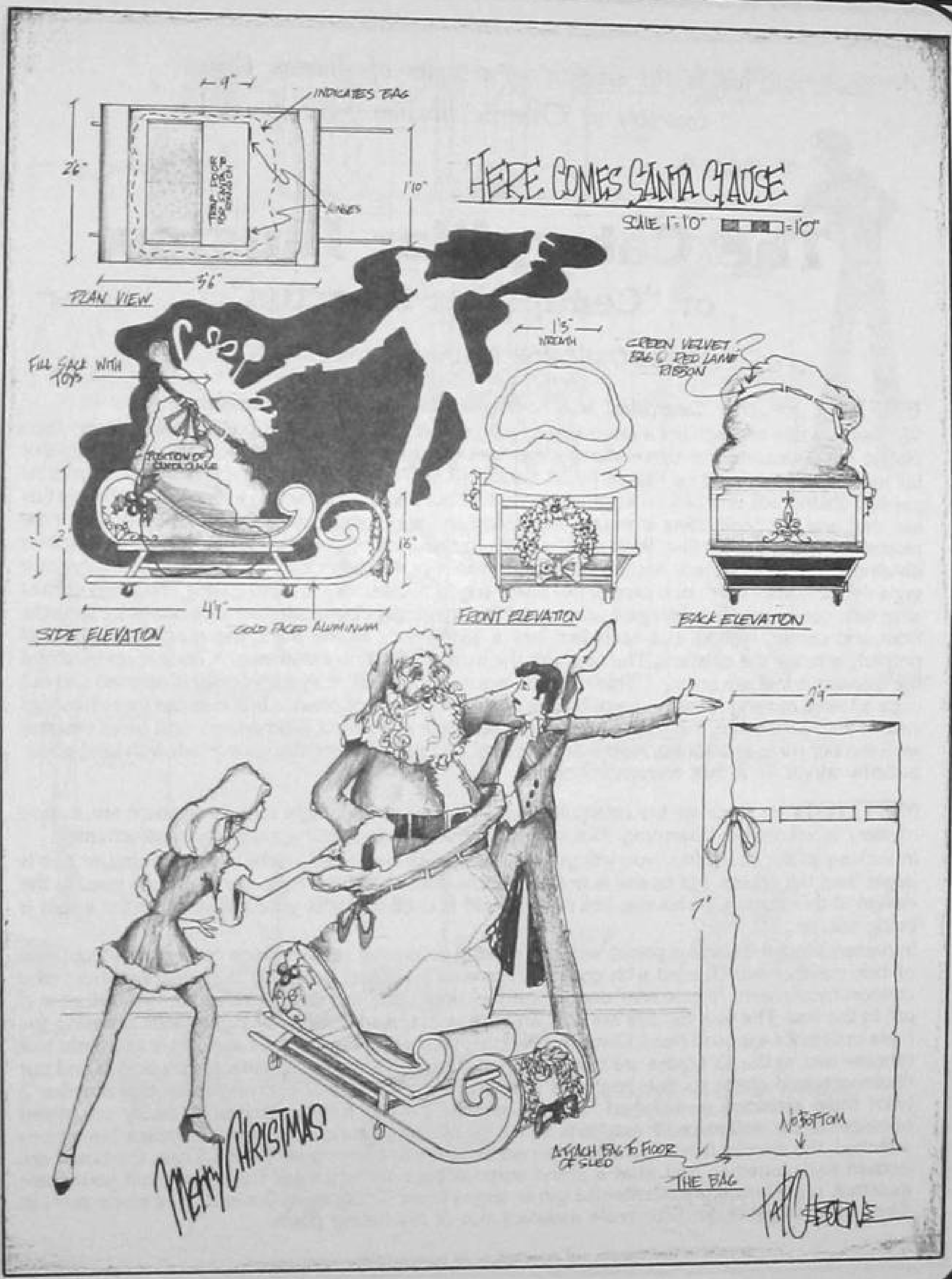
**EFFECT** — As the last effect of the day, you tell your family audience that unfortunately, Santa couldn't be here today, but he sent his sleigh full of presents and here it is! Now enters your assistant pushing a miniature sleigh, containing Santa's bag filled with presents. After removing two or three gifts, you announce that maybe if everybody helps (sings "Jingle Bells"), you can get Santa to send a special gift. By magic, on the count of three, the kids begin to sing as you remove the remaining presents and your assistant begins pulling up the bag. Once the bag reaches a 6' tall height, you quickly drop it to reveal the much-awaited "Man of the Hour", who in turn steps on your foot, stumbles through some "kiddy" dialogue and passes out presents.

**METHOD** — Admittedly, the mystery is somewhat thin, but we have learned that the kids love the surprise of seeing Santa without any warning. And because you're responsible — you get the applause!

Basically, the sleigh is no more than an extra large doll house base and the bag allows the adjustment for any size Santa you may be stuck with. The bulkiness of the bag and the presents stuffed in with Santa provides the perfect disguise.

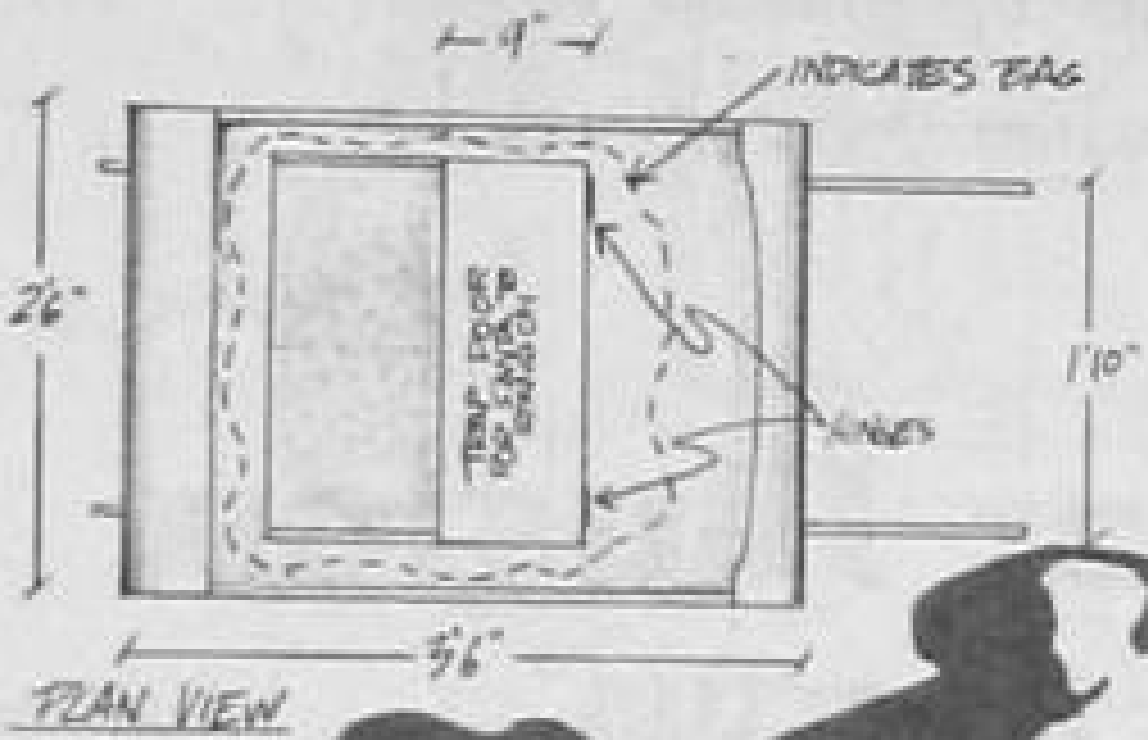
Also, you will find the rehearsal time with Santa is no more than three or four minutes. All he has to do is stand up when he feels the bag being raised, lower the trap and step up on it.

We built this one for a Shopping Center "Santa Arrival Show". We made it as stout as possible and it was painted in lacquers of bright red with green pen-stripe. Remember, with this one the magic isn't as important as the surprise! Have a Happy Holiday Season!

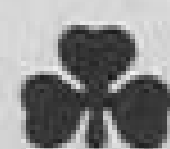


# HERE COMES SANTA CLAUSE

SCALE 1" = 10" 10



*This is the seventh in a series of illusion plans  
courtesy of Osborne Illusion Systems*



## **The Caterpillar Illusion or "Centipedus Disectus"**

by

PAUL OSBORNE & HARDY HABERMAN

**EFFECT** — The "Caterpillar" is a novelty illusion styled in a fantasy theme.

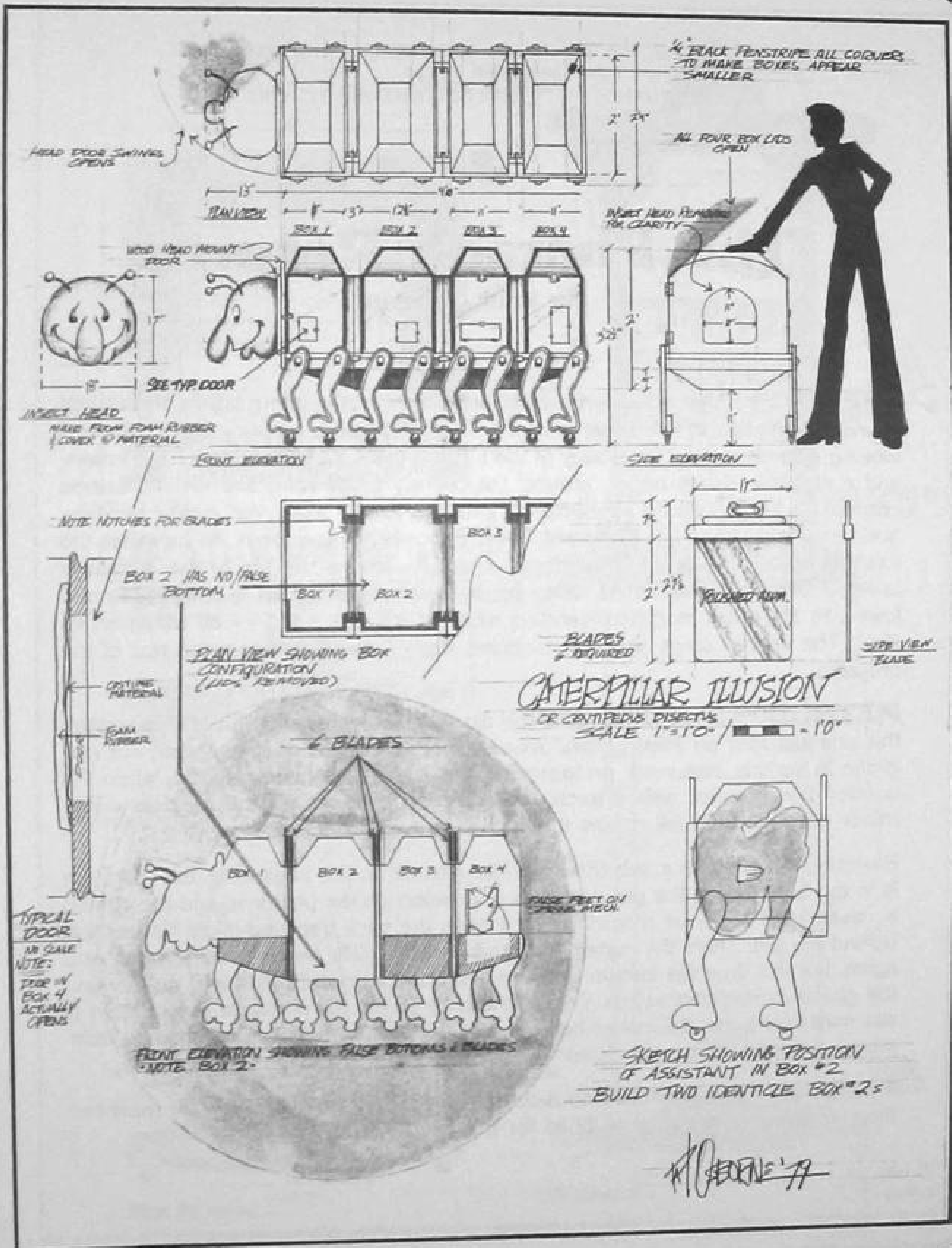
We perform this one against a large scenic painted backdrop of a cartoon forest with larger than life, fat, cut-out mushrooms, tree stumps, etc. The effect begins as the magician hypnotizes one of his male assistants until he begins to fall backward into a trance. He is carried over to a brightly painted oblong box and placed inside, so that all but his head is resting inside. Once the top lids are shut and the head cover is swung into place, the audience realizes that the oblong box now resembles a large caterpillar. With great speed, the magician inserts six "solid steel blades", thus dividing the insect into four sections. Each section is pulled apart and we do a comical Keystone cops dance number with one dancer per box trying to reassemble the caterpillar. The stage comes alive with confusion and disorganization, until the magician commands all four boxes be brought front and center. Noting that each box has a small door in the front, the magician begins to properly arrange the cabinets. The box with the insect head is number one. A door is opened and the assistant's feet are seen . . . This must be box number four . . . Another door is opened and out pops a living, moving hand . . . must be box number two and of course, box number three has legs visible. With all in order, the insect is reassembled, blades removed, lids opened, and we all assume we'll see our male assistant unharmed . . . wrong! Out pops a beautiful young lady with long silken butterfly wings — a true metamorphosis!

**METHOD** — Because the caterpillar illusion is presented in light fantasy atmosphere, its true mystery is somewhat disarming. Not only is it a mutilation, but a surprise transformation.

In looking at the blueprints, you will get a basic idea of this effect. Note that box number two is larger than the others, but its size is not noticeable because of the cartoony approach used in the design of this illusion. Of course, box number two is used to house your assistant, as the insect is being cut up.

In presentation, the stage is preset with the opened caterpillar cabinet stage center and a duplicate of box number two (loaded with costumed female assistant) behind a large stage cut-out of a cartoon mushroom. After a brief dance number, your male assistant is selected, hypnotized and put in the box. The four top lids are shut and the insect head door is swung in place covering the male assistant's exposed head. Once this is done, your well-paid victim is working his way into box number two, as the six blades are being inserted. Then of course, the boxes are separated and our choreographed chase routine begins. It is during this moment of confusion that box number 2 (with male assistant) is switched for box number 2 (with female assistant), totally unnoticed because of the well-planned mayhem. Once all of this is concluded and the boxes have been switched, the smaller front doors are opened to determine what goes where. Then, the boxes are latched back together, and what a grand surprise your audience will have when not your male assistant, but a beautiful butterfly-clad girl emerges from "Centipedus Disectus"! At some point in time, don't forget to let your male assistant out of his hiding place.

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*This is the eighth in a series of illusion plans  
courtesy of Osborne Illusion Systems*



## **The Pharaoh Returns**

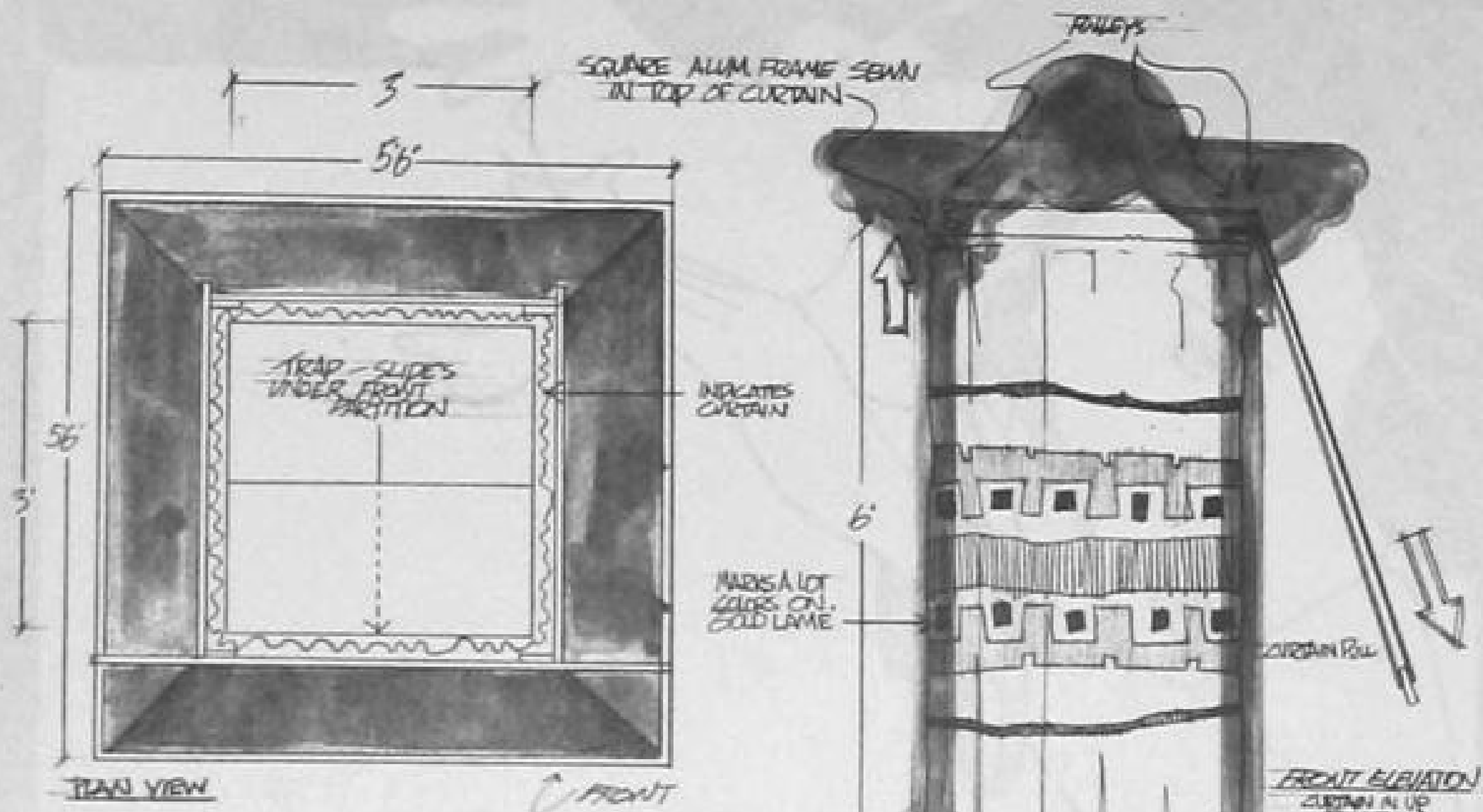
by Paul Osborne

**EFFECT** — After your audience returns from a brief intermission, the distant sound of Egyptian styled music is heard. The curtains open to reveal a mysterious looking altar sitting in "The Valley of the Kings" type setting. The ensemble enters and a ritualistic dance begins around the curious framework. The chorus selects one girl to be "sacrificed". Reluctantly ushered to the altar, she awaits her fate. Suddenly, from stage left a hooded figure enters carrying a torch. As he raises the torch, a curtain raises around the girl; when he lowers the torch, the curtain is lowered. Within an instant, he raises his baton and the curtain quickly raises and lowers to show our magician standing where once was a girl — all within an instant. The curtain drops and the magician steps forward to begin the rest of the program.

**METHOD** — The psychology of this illusion is most important. We always stage this one just after an intermission, because the audience is used to seeing our magician in various costumes, orchestrating the illusions, dancers, etc. So, when the hooded figure enters with a torch, the audience assumes it's the magician. This minor attention to detail makes this trick a real surpiser.

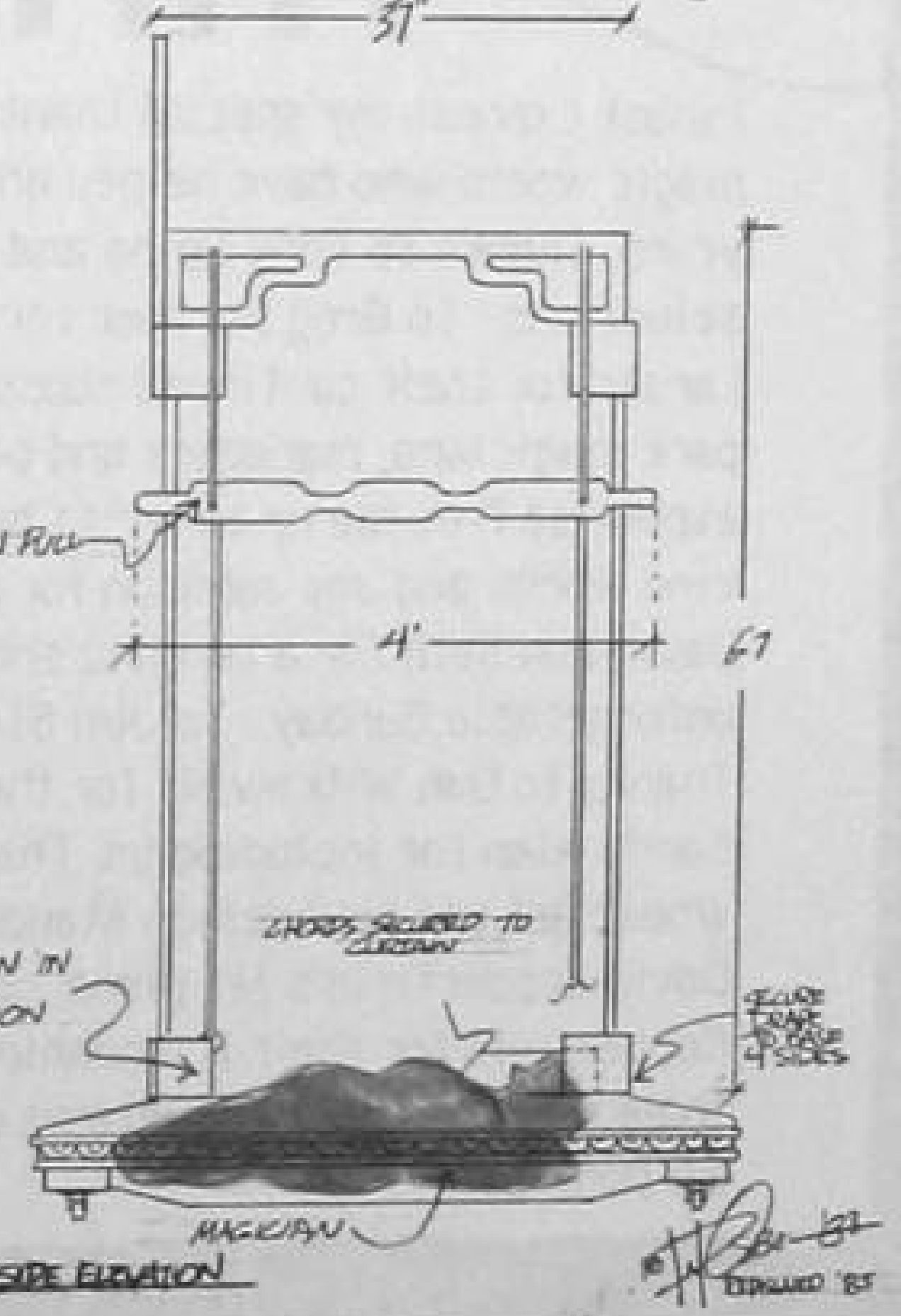
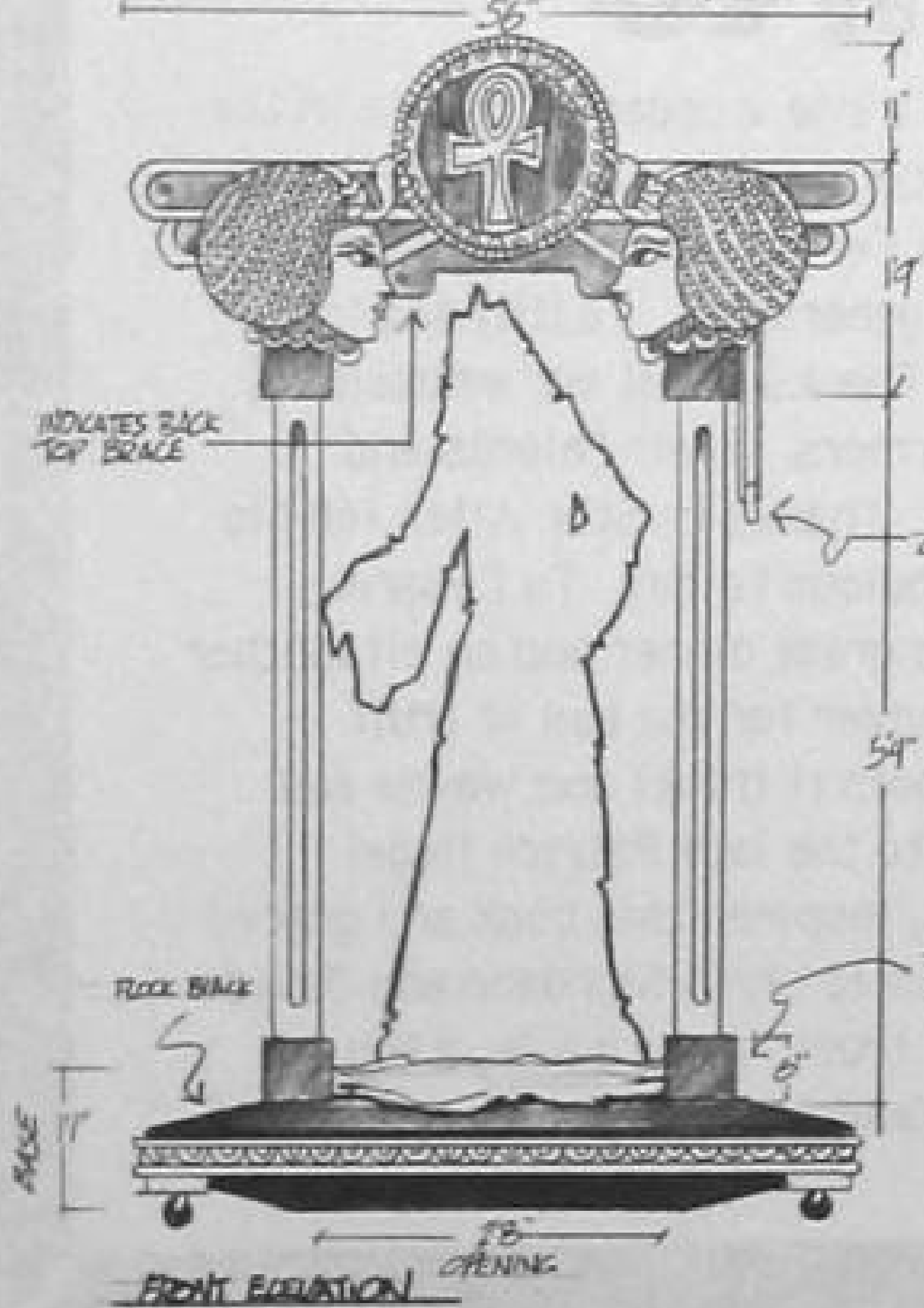
Basically, this effect is a sub trunk without a trunk. In the beginning, the magician is in the base. When the girl dancer is in position on the platform, and the curtain is raised waist high, the magician slides open the back trap and takes his position behind the girl. Then, the curtain is raised past the girl's head — no change. And again, but this time the curtain goes up and comes down (waist high) quickly and the girl and magician switch. During the brief pause for applause (the curtain is still waist high), the girl makes her way into the base and then the curtain is completely dropped, as the magician steps out.

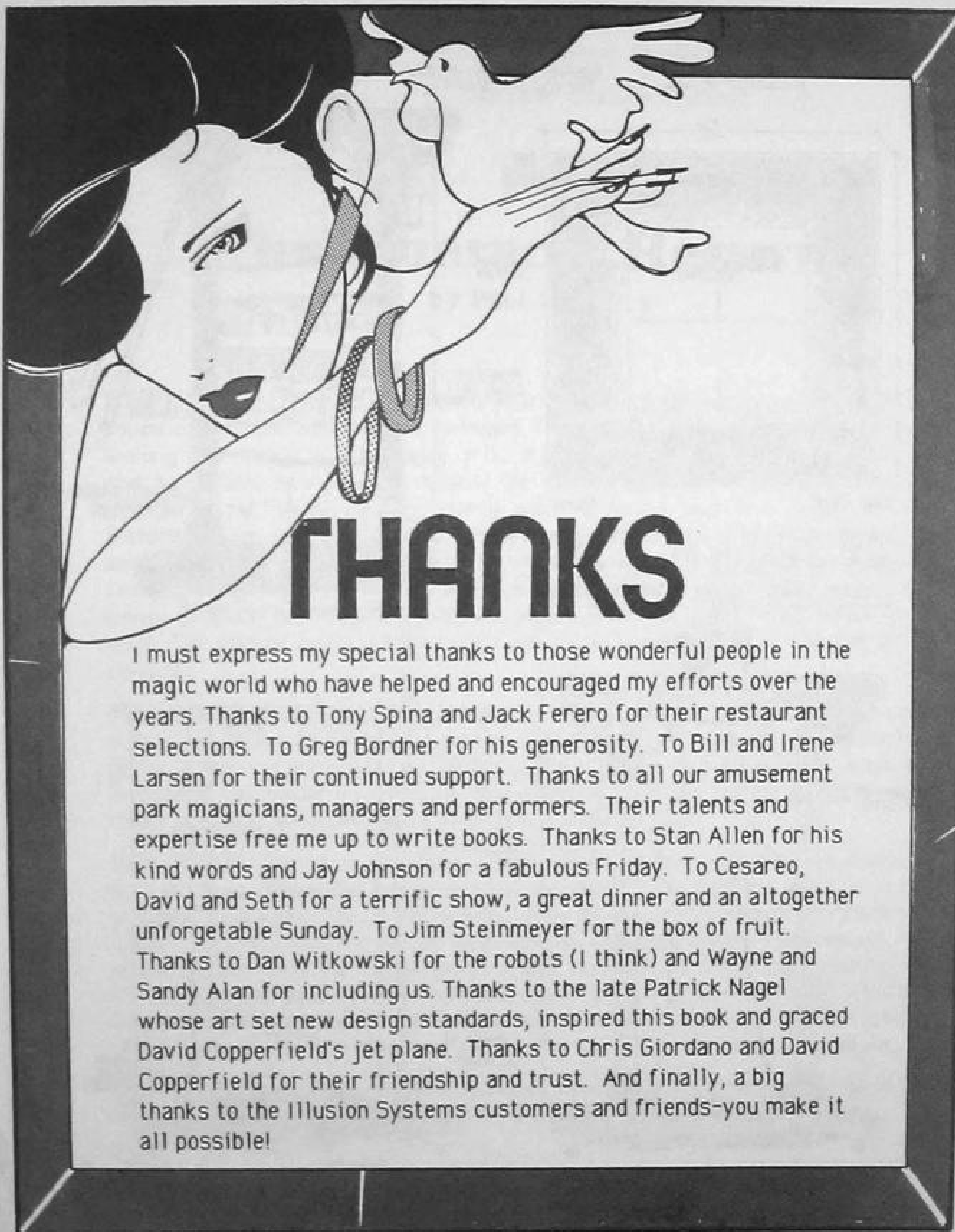
If performed in a well paced and deliberate manner, this illusion can be most baffling, and is relatively easy to build for the effect obtained.



# THE PHAROAH RETURNS

SCALE 1/10" = 10" DESIGN G. PAUL OSBORNE





# THANKS

I must express my special thanks to those wonderful people in the magic world who have helped and encouraged my efforts over the years. Thanks to Tony Spina and Jack Ferero for their restaurant selections. To Greg Bordner for his generosity. To Bill and Irene Larsen for their continued support. Thanks to all our amusement park magicians, managers and performers. Their talents and expertise free me up to write books. Thanks to Stan Allen for his kind words and Jay Johnson for a fabulous Friday. To Cesareo, David and Seth for a terrific show, a great dinner and an altogether unforgettable Sunday. To Jim Steinmeyer for the box of fruit. Thanks to Dan Witkowski for the robots (I think) and Wayne and Sandy Alan for including us. Thanks to the late Patrick Nagel whose art set new design standards, inspired this book and graced David Copperfield's jet plane. Thanks to Chris Giordano and David Copperfield for their friendship and trust. And finally, a big thanks to the Illusion Systems customers and friends-you make it all possible!



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