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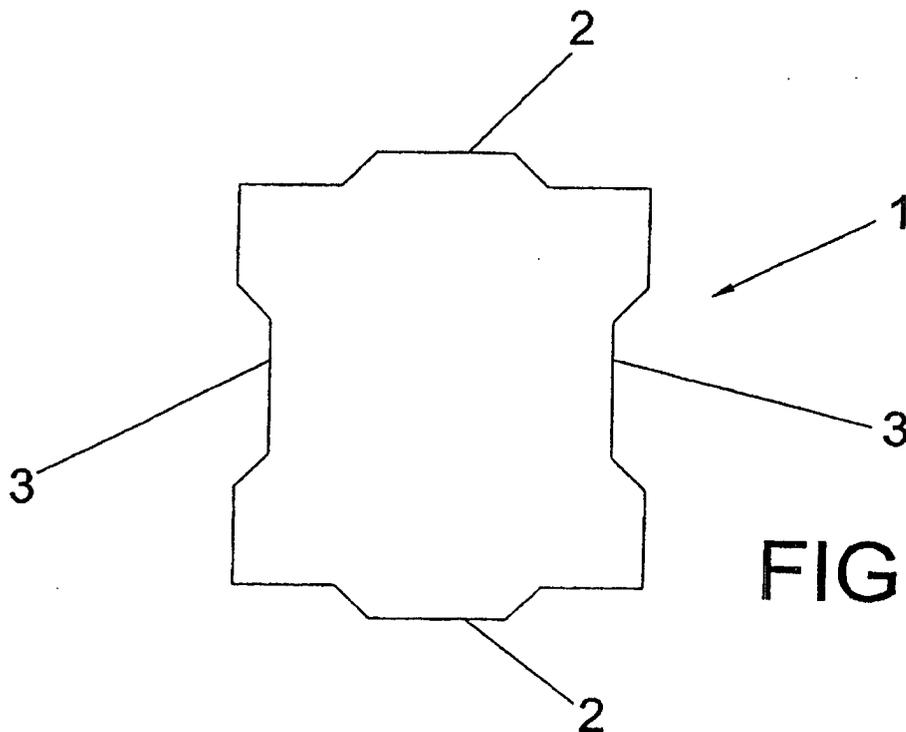
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(54) **IMPROVED TILE-, FLOOR TILE- OR SIMILAR-TYPE CERAMIC PIECE**

(57) It refers to a piece (1) of the kind that is arranged contiguously in rows and columns in the form of a grid. The sides of said piece (1) present certain projections (2) and depressions (3) which can be slotted

together, adapted to the corresponding decorative motif, which break the continuity in the lines of said grid, making it difficult to distinguish said lines and enabling the possibility of ornamentalations in sets of pieces with a non-grid structure.



Description**OBJECT OF THE INVENTION**

[0001] As stated in the title of this specification, the present invention refers to a ceramic piece, wall tile, floor tile or similar, improved, the main purpose of which consists of providing a novel ceramic piece for paving and surfacing which presents a configuration for which important improvements can be obtained at the aesthetic level. This configuration is obtained by means of some tongue-and-groove projections and depressions in the sides of the piece which are adapted to the corresponding decorative motif and which break the continuity of the line of the grid formed by a plurality of pieces, thus making it difficult to distinguish those lines and permitting ornamentalations which could not be achieved with conventional quadrangular pieces.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Ceramic pieces, wall tiles, floor tiles or similar are known that are arranged contiguously in rows and columns by way of a grid. These conventional pieces for paving and surfacing present relative drawbacks in that they leave the lines produced when the pieces are laid next to each other very visible, since they are all completely quadrangular and, once they have been laid in position, a kind of grid can be clearly seen, corresponding to the areas where the pieces join. Since they are all straight, these grid lines aesthetically spoil the continuity of a decorative motif and lessen the impact of the ornamentation effect, whether this be geometric, or one of imitation of marble shapes, imitation of natural stone or others.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0003] In order to achieve the objectives and avoid the drawbacks stated in the above paragraphs, the invention consists of an improved ceramic piece, wall tile, floor tile or similar, of the type that is arranged in contiguous rows and columns in the manner of a grid.

[0004] As a novelty, according to the invention, the said piece presents certain tongued-and-grooved projections and depressions in its sides adapted to the corresponding decorative motif that breaks the continuity in the lines of that grid, thereby making it difficult to distinguish said lines and enabling the possibility of ornamentalations of sets of pieces with a non-grid structure.

[0005] In a preferred embodiment of the invention, these projections and depressions present a trapezoid shape, with one projection being included in the centre of one of the sides of the piece, another projection in the centre of the opposite side, a depression in the centre of another side of the piece and a further depression in the centre of the side opposite to this latter. Nevertheless, in other embodiments, the shape of these projec-

tions and depressions can vary, always provided that the characteristics of their being easily slotted together and that they adequately break the continuity of the lines of join between the pieces are maintained.

[0006] With the configuration that has been described, the advantage of the piece of the invention consists of the fact that it makes possible some much better aesthetic effects in the corresponding pavements or wall surfacings.

[0007] Below, in order to facilitate a better understanding of this descriptive specifications and forming an integral part thereof, some figures are included in which the object of the invention has been represented by way of illustration, and not to be regarded as limiting.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES**[0008]**

20 Figure 1.- Represents a plan view of a ceramic piece produced according to the present invention.
Figure 2.- Represents a plan view of various pieces of the type referred to in figure 1 above, showing their application to an ornamentation imitating pieces of natural stone.

25 Figure 3.- Represents a plan view of an arrangement of pieces of the type referred to in figure 1 above, showing an application to a parquet.

30 Figure 4.- Represents a plan view of a plurality of pieces of the type referred to in figure 1 above, showing an application in which the ornamentation imitates a mosaic with pieces of different geometric shapes.

DESCRIPTION OF AN EMBODIMENT OF THE INVENTION

[0009] A description of an example of the invention will now be made, making reference to the numbering adopted in the figures.

[0010] So, the improved ceramic piece of this example of embodiment consists of an essentially quadrangular piece 1 of the type of a tile or similar, though with the particular feature that its four sides present respective projections 2 and depressions 3, as can be seen in figure 1.

[0011] In this example, the projections 2 and the depressions 3 are trapezoid and are arranged in such a manner that one of the projections 2 is in the centre of one of the sides of piece 1, another projection 2 is on the side opposite to the previous one, one depression 3 in the centre of another side of the piece 1, and the remaining side presents a depression 3 similar to the previous one. This configuration determines that the various pieces 1 can be easily slotted together, since the projections 2 correspond perfectly to the depressions 3. Moreover, when various pieces 1 are laid in rows and columns, the corresponding grid lines corre-

sponding to the joins between pieces become broken up due to the projections 2 and the depressions 3, making it difficult to see them.

[0012] Moreover, if the projections 2 and depressions 3 are adapted to the ornamentation of the pieces, as can be seen in figures 2, 3 and 4, the decoration provided by the pieces 1 will have an excellent aesthetic appearance, as can be appreciated in the said figures 2, 3 and 4. 5

[0013] So, in figure 2 can be seen an application representing pieces of natural stone, giving a sensation of irregularity that is impossible to obtain with conventional quadrangular pieces. 10

[0014] Figure 3 shows an application to parquet in which the strips of wood seem to represent a complex arrangement with an attractive appearance, and it looks as though strips of very different sizes and shapes have been used when in fact just the pieces of this example have been used, all of them equal. 15

[0015] In figure 4 can be seen an application to an ornamentation which resembles a mosaic in which the pieces used are large octagonal pieces, some smaller hexagonal pieces and other pentagonal pieces, also small, when in fact only the pieces like those of figure 1 have been used, all of them equal. 20 25

Claims

1. CERAMIC PIECE, WALL TILE, FLOOR TILE OR SIMILAR, of a kind that is arranged contiguously in rows and columns forming a grid, **characterised in that** sides of said piece (1) are provided with projections (2) and depressions (3) which can be slotted together, adapted to a corresponding decorative motif, which break a continuity in lines of said grid, making it difficult to distinguish said lines and enabling a possibility of ornamentations in sets of pieces with a non-grid structure. 30 35 40

2. CERAMIC PIECE, WALL TILE, FLOOR TILE OR SIMILAR, according to claim 1, **characterised in that** said projections (2) and depressions (3) are provided with a trapezoidal shape, with one projection (2) being included in a central part of one of the sides of the piece (1), another projection (2) in the centre of the opposite side, a depression (3) in the centre of another side of the piece (1) and a further depression (3) in the centre of the side opposite to this latter side. 45 50 55

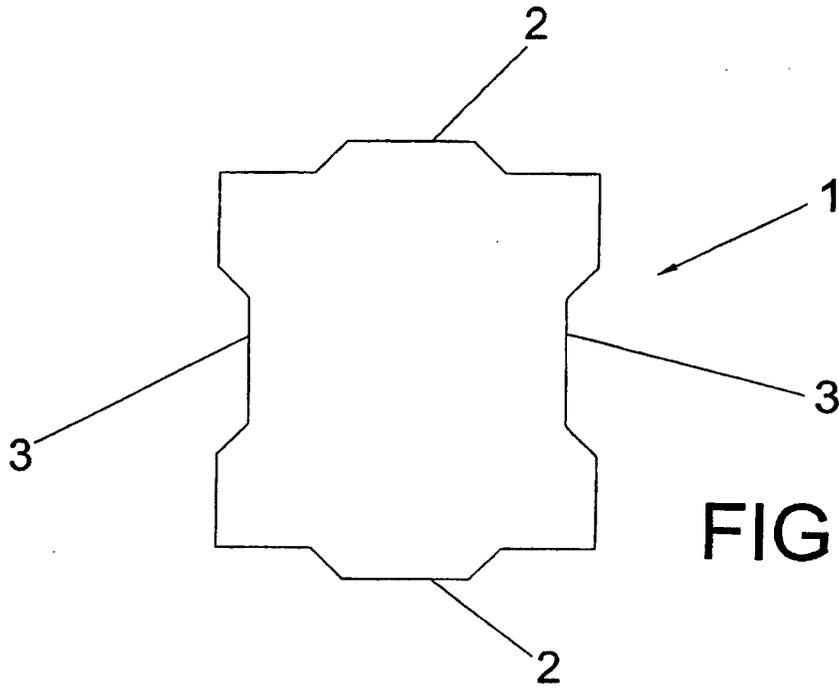


FIG. 1

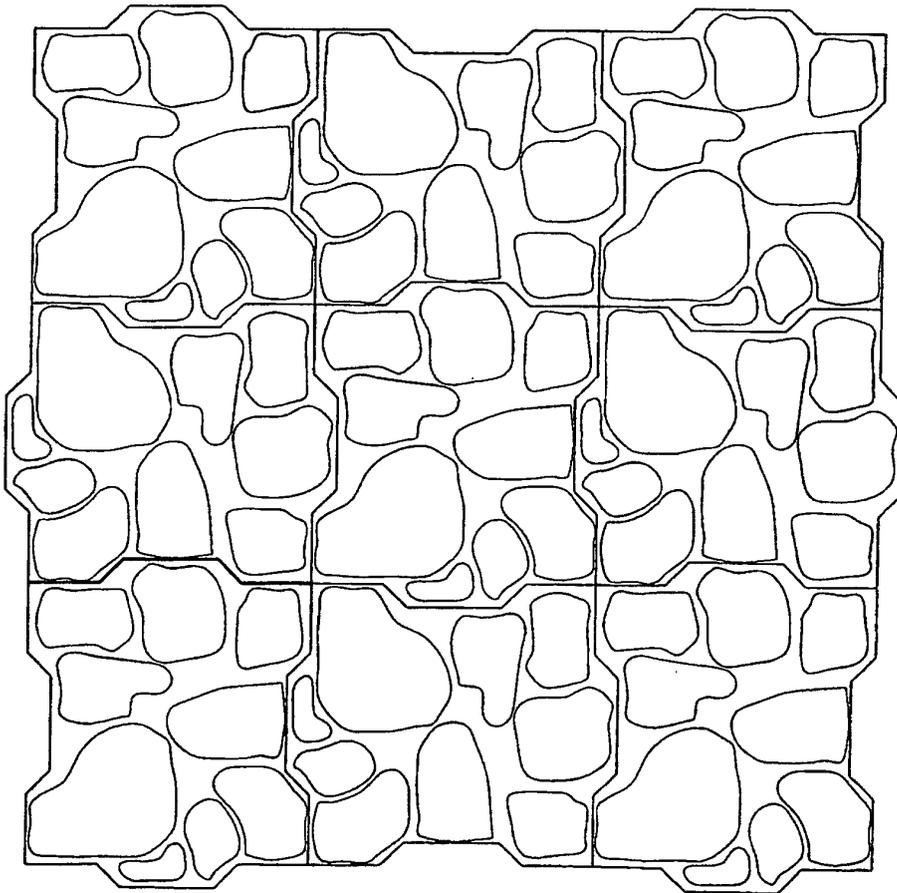


FIG. 2

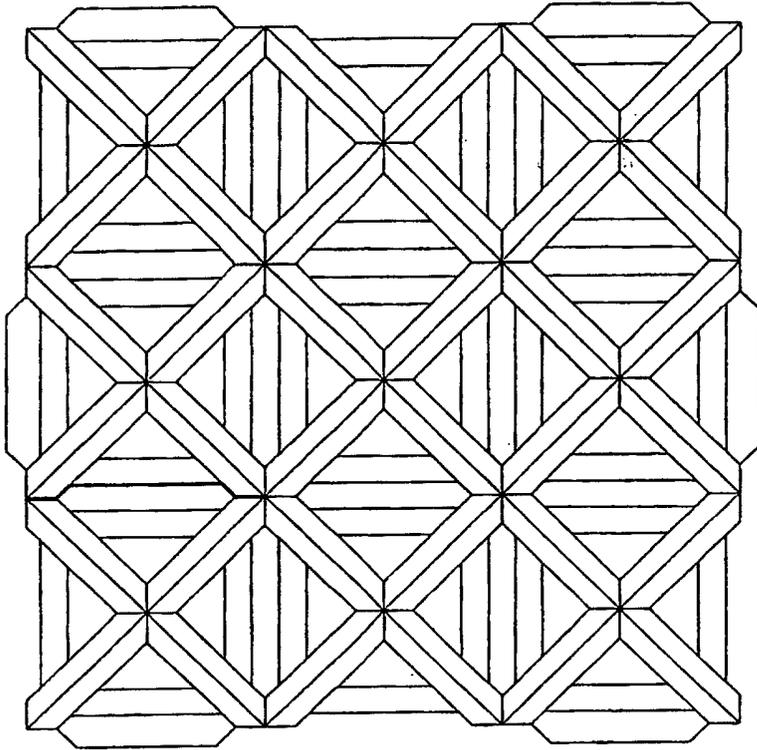


FIG. 3

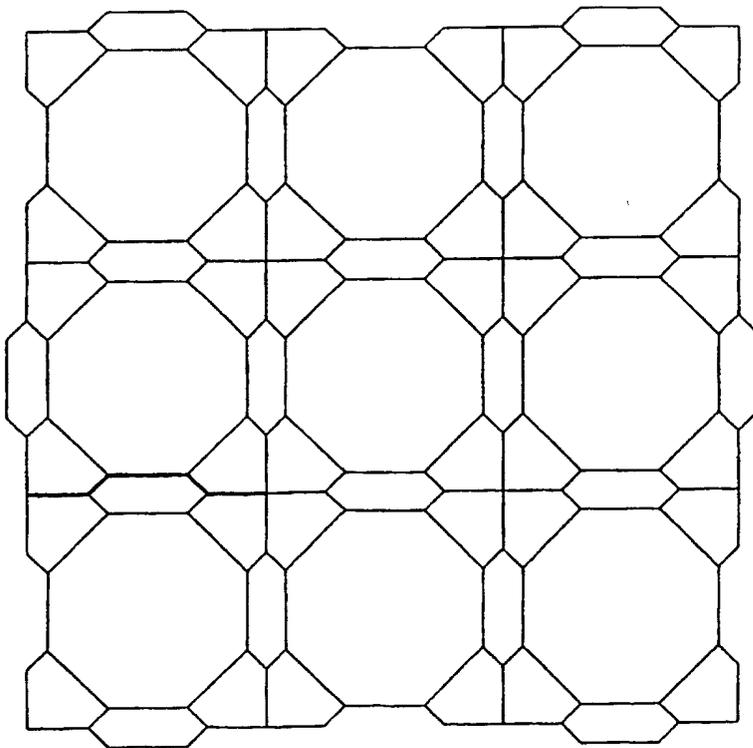


FIG. 4

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/ES 02 / 00361

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER		
IPC 7 E04F 15/08		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)		
IPC 7 E04F, E01C		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)		
CIBEPAT, EPODOC, WPI, PAJ		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	USD 57 111 S (BRUCE) 22 de febrero de 1921 (22.02.1921), The whole document	1, 2
X A	--- USD 44 108 S (PARKINSON) 27 de mayo de 1913 (27.05.1913), The whole document	1 2
X A	--- USD 40 358 S (QUENNARD) 16 de noviembre de 1909 (16.11.1909), The whole document	1 2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.		
* Special categories of cited documents: "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art "&" document member of the same patent family
Date of the actual completion of the international search		Date of mailing of the international search report
30 AUGUST 2002 (30.08.02)		04 SEP. 2002
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ S.P.T.O.		Authorized officer
Facsimile No.		Telephone No.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/ES 02/00361

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X A	USD 243 020 S (INDERWICK) 11 de enero de 1977 (11.01.1977), The whole document	1 2
X A	USD 102 145 S (PARKER) 1 de diciembre de 1936 (01.12.1936), The whole document	1 2

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
Information on patent family members

International Application No
PCT/ ES 02 / 00361

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
USD 57 111 S	22.02.1921	NONE	
USD 44 108 S	27.05.1913	NONE	
USD 40 358 S	16.11.1909	NONE	
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