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(54) Decoupage method and apparatus

(57) A method of producing a découpage article (10), including providing a sheet of material (22) which has a backing layer (26), and a découpage lamina (28), the découpage lamina (28) and the backing layer (26) being releasably adhered to one another by a releasable ad-

hesive, the method further including cutting a découpage element from the découpage lamina (28), leaving the découpage element attached to the backing layer (26), and enabling at least the découpage element to be separated from the backing layer by peeling the découpage element from the backing layer.

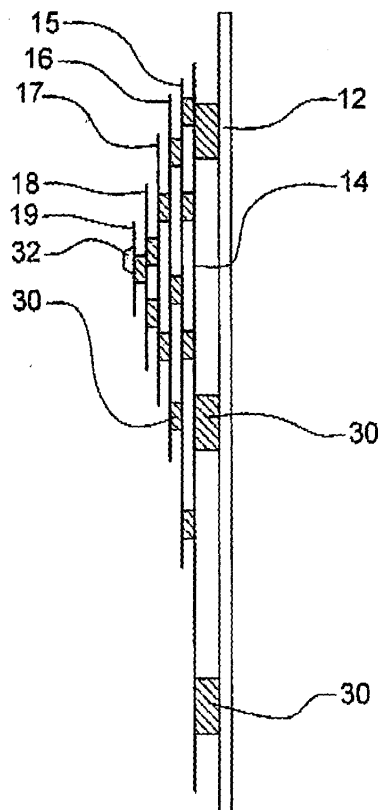


FIG 2

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Description

[0001] This invention relates to apparatus for producing a découpage article, and a method of producing such an article.

[0002] The craft of découpage is well known, and involves the layering of materials such as paper or card, to create a three-dimensional article. The layers of material are separated by spacers to enhance the three dimensional effect.

[0003] Découpage kits which include at least one sheet of material, from which one or more découpage elements is/are cut or punched, are known. The sheet may be printed such that the découpage element(s) is/are coloured or bear a pattern, which may add to the three dimensional effect.

[0004] It is known to provide a sheet of material on which one or more découpage elements are provided, the user being able to cut around the perimeter of the or each découpage element using a cutting device, for example scissors or a craft knife. Another known type of découpage kit is one in which one or more découpage elements are pre-cut from a sheet of material, a proportion of the perimeter of the or each découpage element being separated from the remainder of the sheet, and the découpage element being attached to the sheet by one or more frangible connecting portions or tabs. For example the perimeter of each of the découpage elements may be perforated to enable each découpage element to be removed from the sheet by pressing the découpage element out from the sheet. So that the découpage elements can easily be removed from the sheet, without damaging them, the sheet of material is thick, for example the sheet of material is often card. In découpage, it is advantageous for each of the découpage elements to be as thin as possible, so as to enhance the appearance of the découpage article.

[0005] Découpage kits may also include a plurality of spacers for layering the découpage elements so as to build up the desired three dimensional article.

[0006] According to a first aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of producing a découpage article, including providing at least one sheet of material which has a backing layer, and a découpage lamina, the découpage lamina and the backing layer being releasably adhered to one another by releasable adhesive, the method further including cutting a découpage element from the découpage lamina, leaving the découpage element attached to the backing layer, and enabling at least the découpage element to be separated from the backing layer by peeling the découpage element from the backing layer.

[0007] An advantage of providing the découpage elements in this way is that each découpage element is initially held on a backing sheet which protects the découpage element from loss or damage. Each découpage element can easily be peeled from its respective backing sheet, enabling each découpage element to be mounted

and layered in the desired manner to produce a three dimensional article.

[0008] A further advantage of the present invention is that each découpage element is completely separated from the remainder of the découpage lamina, i.e. each découpage element is separated from the remainder of the découpage lamina around its whole perimeter, whilst the découpage element remains attached to the backing layer. The advantage of this is that it is not necessary to provide frangible connecting members or tabs which, in known découpage kits, need to be trimmed or abraded to remove remnants of the connecting member so as to improve the appearance of the découpage element. It will be clear that in the present invention adjustments to the shape of the découpage elements after removal from the backing layer are not necessary.

[0009] The method may include adhering the backing layer and the découpage lamina to one another such that once separated from each other, neither side of the découpage lamina and neither side of the backing layer is adherent. This enables the découpage elements and the backing layer to be handled without damage.

[0010] The method may include cutting a plurality of découpage elements into the découpage lamina of the sheet of material.

[0011] The or each découpage element may be die-cut from the découpage lamina.

[0012] The method may include printing one or more colours and/or a pattern on the découpage lamina to enhance the découpage article.

[0013] The method may include cutting découpage elements into an upper layer of dry peel material.

[0014] The method may include mounting the or each découpage element on one of a mounting member and a previously mounted découpage element, so that the découpage element is spaced from the mounting member or the previously mounted découpage element to create a three dimensional article.

[0015] According to a second aspect of the invention, there is provided a sheet of material for use in a method according to the first aspect of the invention, the sheet including a backing layer and a découpage lamina, the backing layer and the découpage lamina being releasably adhered to one another, the découpage lamina including a découpage element for inclusion in a découpage article, wherein the découpage element is cut from the découpage lamina and is separable from the backing layer.

[0016] The backing layer and the découpage element may be separated from one another by peeling the layers apart by hand.

[0017] The découpage lamina may be paper. A further advantage of the invention is that thin paper découpage elements may be provided, to enhance the appearance of the découpage article. Paper découpage elements produce a more delicate découpage article than card découpage elements.

[0018] According to a third aspect of the invention there

is provided a découpage kit for producing a découpage article, the kit including at least one sheet of material according to the second aspect of the invention and a plurality of spacers.

[0019] The kit may include a plurality of sheets of material according to the second aspect of the invention. Each sheet includes one or more découpage elements.

[0020] The découpage kit may include a mounting member upon which one or more découpage elements may be mounted to produce a three dimensional découpage article.

[0021] The découpage kit may include at least one accessory for embellishing the découpage article.

[0022] The découpage kit may include instructions for producing the découpage article.

[0023] The invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, of which:

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a découpage article,

FIGURE 2 is a side view of the découpage article, and

FIGURE 3 is a plan view of a sheet of découpage material, including a plurality of découpage elements, one of the découpage elements being partially separated from a backing layer of the sheet of découpage material.

[0024] Referring first to figures 1 and 2, there is shown an example découpage article 10. It will be appreciated that the découpage article may take any form as required. The découpage article 10 includes a plurality of layers which are spaced from one another to produce a three-dimensional article.

[0025] The découpage article 10 is mounted on a mounting member 12. For example, the mounting member 12 may be cardboard or fibre board, although it will be appreciated that any suitable material may be used.

[0026] The découpage article 10 includes a plurality of découpage elements 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. Each découpage element 14-19 forms a layer of the découpage article 10. It will be appreciated that any number of découpage elements may be provided to create the desired découpage article 10, and that more than one découpage element 14-19 may be used to create a single découpage layer. It will be appreciated that one or more découpage elements 14-20 may be connected directly to the mounting member 12.

[0027] In this example, each of the découpage elements 14-19 is a different size and shape, to enhance the appearance of the découpage article 10.

[0028] As shown in figure 3, each of the découpage elements 14 - 19 is a part of a sheet of material 22. The sheet of material 22 is preferably a standard sized sheet, although it will be appreciated that the sheet 22 may be any size as appropriate to the size and quantity of découpage elements 14-19 required for a particular découpage article 10.

coupage elements 14-19 required for a particular découpage article 10.

[0029] The sheet of material 22 has a backing layer 26 and a découpage lamina 28. In the present example the découpage lamina 28 is paper. However, it will be appreciated that other suitable materials, for example thin card, could be used to produce the découpage lamina 28. The backing layer 26 in the present example is also paper. The découpage lamina 28 overlies the backing layer 26 and is attached thereto by means of a releasable adhesive. The adhesion of the découpage lamina 28 to the backing layer 26 is easily overcome by peeling the découpage lamina 28 away from the backing layer 26 by hand.

[0030] One side of the backing layer 26, in particular the side of the paper to which the découpage lamina 28 is attached, has a waxy or glossy texture. The waxy or glossy texture may be provided on the side of the backing layer 26 to which the découpage lamina 28 is attached by coating the paper with wax, resin or a plastics material, to enable the découpage lamina 28 or a part of it, in particular one or more of the découpage elements 14 - 19, to be easily separated from the backing layer 26, by peeling the backing layer 26 and the découpage lamina 28 apart. The sheet of material 22 is preferably a sheet of dry peel material, wherein the découpage lamina 28 and the backing layer 26 are adhered to one another by a dry peel or "fugitive" adhesive. An example of a suitable adhesive is Magna-Cryl 6551 which is available from Beacon Adhesives, Inc.

[0031] The sheet of material 22 may include one or more of the découpage elements 14-19. The outline shape of the or each découpage element 14-19 is cut into the découpage lamina 28 of the sheet 22. The découpage element(s) 14-19 are preferably die-cut into the découpage lamina 28 only. The backing layer 26 remains intact, i.e. the découpage element(s) 14-19 are not cut from the backing layer 26. It will be appreciated that the découpage elements 14-19 may be cut into the découpage lamina 28 by any other suitable method, for example by laser cutting.

[0032] The découpage lamina 28 is preferably provided with a design to enhance the découpage article 10. For example the découpage lamina 28 may be printed so as to provide colour or a pattern on all or part of the découpage lamina 28. The colour may be printed only on the découpage elements 14-19, whilst the remainder of the découpage lamina 28 remains blank, for example. The pattern or colours may be selected so as to enhance the three dimensional effect of the découpage article 10.

[0033] The sheet of material 22 may include a plurality of découpage laminae 28, each of which may include one or more découpage elements 14-19.

[0034] The découpage article 10 also includes a plurality of spacers 30 to separate the découpage elements 14-20 from each other and from the mounting member 12, in order to produce a three dimensional article as described in more detail below. Each of the spacers 30

has two faces which are substantially parallel to one another, and which are separated by a quantity of material, for example foam, to give the spacer 30 depth. Preferably the two substantially parallel faces of each of the spacers 30 includes an adhesive layer for adhering to a découpage element and/or to the mounting member 12. Each of the adhesive layers may be covered by a backing sheet (not shown) to protect the adhesive layer until the spacer 30 is ready to be used. The dimensions of each spacer 30, including its depth, may be the same as or different from the corresponding dimensions of other spacers 30.

[0035] It will be appreciated that other types of spacer 30 may be provided, for example pieces of cardboard or other, similar material may be provided, to which adhesive is applied by a user in order to attach the spacer 30 between adjacent layers of the découpage article 10, or to the mounting member 12.

[0036] The découpage article 10 includes an accessory 32. In this example, three accessories 32 are shown, although it will be appreciated that any number of accessories 32 may be included and it is not necessary for the article to include any such accessories 32. The or each accessory 32 may be a flower, a feather, sequins, beads or any other adornment to embellish the découpage article 10.

[0037] A découpage kit for producing the découpage article 10 includes at least one mounting member 12, at least one sheet of découpage material 22, the or each sheet of material 22 bearing one or more découpage elements 14-19. The découpage kit also includes a plurality of spacers 30, and a set of instructions for producing the découpage article 10. The découpage kit optionally may include one or more accessories 32.

[0038] To produce the découpage article 10, the user removes a first découpage element 14 from the backing layer 26. Each of the successive découpage elements 14-19 is easily peeled from the backing layer 26 by hand. A part 24 of the découpage lamina 28 which does not form a part of a découpage element 14-19, and which surrounds the découpage elements 14-19, remains adhered to the backing layer 26, although this remaining part 24 is also removable from the backing layer 26 if desired. It will be appreciated that the remaining part 24 may be removed as a manufacturing step.

[0039] When any part of the découpage lamina 28, for example a découpage element 14-19, or the remaining part 24, is separated from the backing layer 26, neither side of the part of the découpage lamina 28 which has been removed from the backing layer 26, is adherent. Furthermore, neither side of the backing layer 26 is adherent.

[0040] The découpage element 14-19 is not re-attachable to the backing layer by means of the adhesive which initially held the backing layer 26 and the découpage lamina 28 together. Thus the découpage element(s) 14-19 is/are permanently removed from the backing layer 26.

[0041] The first découpage element 14 is mounted up-

on the mounting member 12, either by applying an adhesive to one or both of the mounting member 12 and the first découpage element 14, or by applying one or more spacers 30 to the mounting member 12 and then fixing the first découpage element 14 to the spacer, so that the first découpage element 14 is spaced from the mounting member 12.

[0042] The découpage article 10 is built up by separating each of the remaining découpage elements 14-19 from the backing layer 26 of the sheet 22, and mounting them in a desired sequence on the mounting member 12, or on to another of the découpage elements 14-19.

[0043] Positioning one or more spacers 30 between each découpage element 14-19 and an adjacent découpage element 14-19 or the mounting member 12, enables a three-dimensional article 10 to be produced.

[0044] One or more accessories 32 may be added to the découpage article 10 as required.

[0045] The kit may include instructions for producing the découpage article 10, including the preferred sequence for mounting each of the découpage elements 14-19.

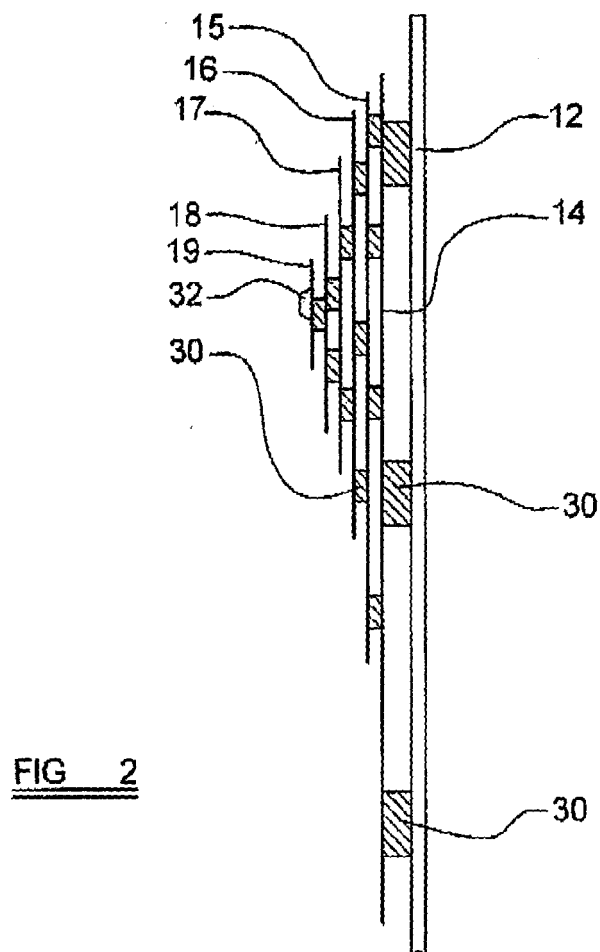
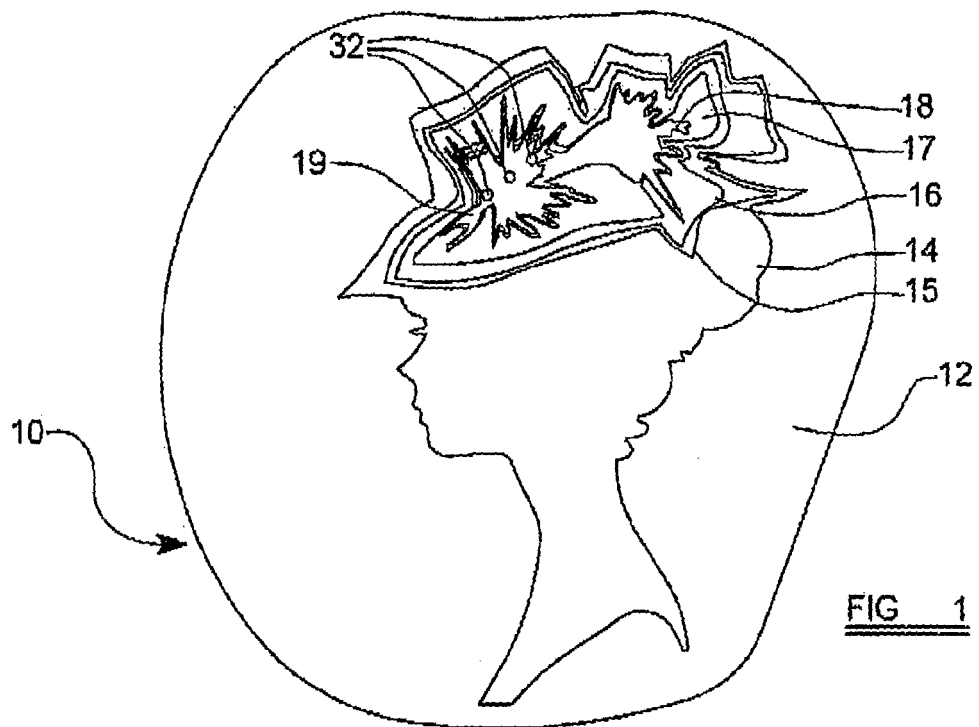
[0046] The features disclosed in the foregoing description, or the following claims, or the accompanying drawings, expressed in their specific forms or in terms of a means for performing the disclosed function, or a method or process for attaining the disclosed result, as appropriate, may, separately, or in any combination of such features, be utilised for realising the invention in diverse forms thereof.

Claims

1. A method of producing a découpage article, including providing a sheet of material which has a backing layer, and a découpage lamina, the découpage lamina and the backing layer being releasably adhered to one another by a releasable adhesive, the method further including cutting at least one découpage element from the découpage lamina, leaving the découpage element attached to the backing layer, and enabling at least the découpage element to be separated from the backing layer by peeling the découpage element from the backing layer.
2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the backing layer and the découpage lamina are adhered to one another such that, once separated, neither side of the découpage element and neither side of the backing layer is adherent.
3. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 including cutting a plurality of découpage elements into the découpage lamina of the sheet of material.
4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the or each découpage element is

die-cut from the découpage lamina.

5. A method according to any one of the preceding claims including printing one or more colours and/or a pattern on the découpage lamina. 5
6. A method according to any one of the preceding claims including cutting the or each découpage element from an upper layer of dry peel material. 10
7. A method according to any one of the preceding claims including mounting the or each découpage element on one of a mounting member and a previously mounted découpage element, so that the découpage element is spaced from the mounting member or the previously mounted découpage element to produce a three dimensional article. 15
8. A sheet of material for use in a method according to any one of claims 1 to 7, the sheet including a backing layer and a découpage lamina, the backing layer and the découpage lamina being releasably adhered to one another, the découpage lamina including at least one découpage element for inclusion in a découpage article, wherein the découpage element is cut from the découpage lamina and is separable from the backing layer. 20 25
9. A sheet of material according to claim 8 wherein the backing layer and the découpage element are separable from one another by peeling the layers apart by hand. 30
10. A sheet of material according to claim 8 or claim 9 wherein the découpage lamina is paper. 35
11. A découpage kit for producing a découpage article, the kit including at least one sheet of material according to any one of claims 8 to 10 and a plurality of spacers. 40
12. A découpage kit according to claim 11 including a plurality of sheets of material.
13. A découpage kit according to claim 11 or claim 12 including a mounting member upon which one or more découpage elements may be mounted to produce a three dimensional découpage article. 45
14. A découpage kit according to any one of claims 11 to 13 including an accessory for embellishing the découpage article. 50
15. A découpage kit according to any one of claims 11 to 14 including instructions for producing the découpage article. 55



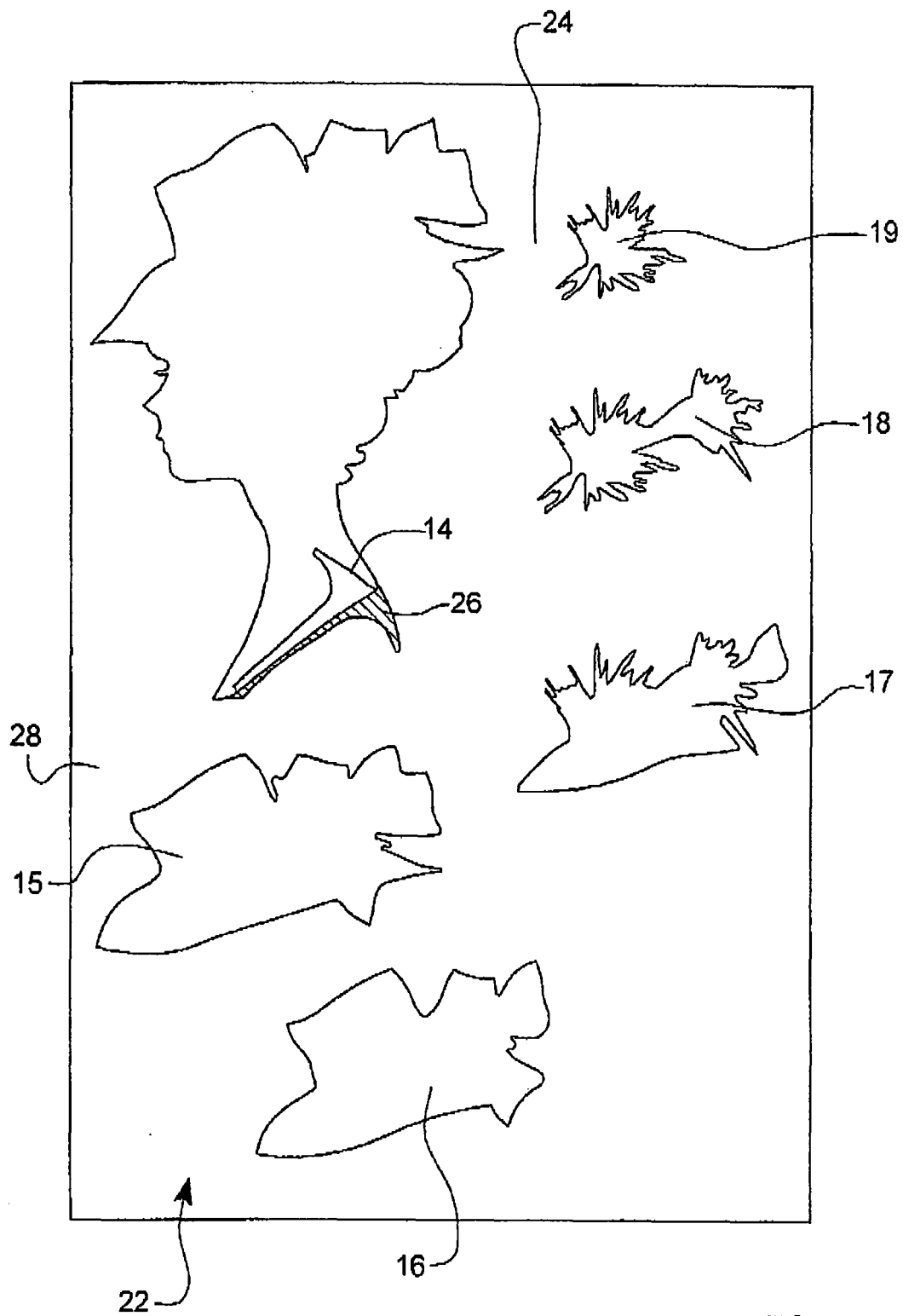


FIG 3