1270396

PATENT SPECIFICATION (11) 1270396

DRAWINGS ATTACHED

(21) Application No. 16391/69 (22) Filed 28 March 1969
(31) Convention Application No. 146435 (32) Filed 29 March 1968
(31) Convention Application No. 158328 (32) Filed 8 July 1968
(31) Convention Application No. 166411 (32) Filed 17 Sept. 1968
(31) Convention Application No. 174995 (32) Filed 22 Nov. 1968 in
(33) France (FR)
(45) Complete Specification published 12 April 1972
(51) International Classification F21S 3/02
(52) Index at acceptance
F4R 29X 30X 332 336 357 391 39Y 41Y 437 43Y 449 44Y 456 46Y 473 47Y 541 543 584 599 603 735 743 745 74Y 752 761 80Y
A4H 12A1 17P 32 48 50 61 67 6A 6C 75 79 89 9 90 91 W1X
A4M 4A

(54) IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO DEVICES FOR PROVIDING ILLUMINATION

(71) We, MELUDE S.A. of 8 Boulevard Pérolles. 1700 Fribourg, Switzerland, a Swiss Body Corporate, do hereby declare the invention, for which we pray that a patent may be granted to us, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described, in and by the following statement:—

The present invention relates to devices for mounting luminous sources such as incandescent bulbs, luminous tubes and luminous strip lights, without dazzling or glaring effects, and includes such devices which may be used as a piece of furniture or as a component of multipurpose furniture.

Luminous elements, in particular standard lamps, bed lamps, desk lamps and other similar lamps are known under diverse forms and require a certain number of features and characteristics in order to be satisfactory. Thus, for example, a bed lamp generally requires a foot and a vertical support and must provide correct lighting without dazzling whilst being aesthetically pleasing in a particular environment.

With known types of luminous elements, it is difficult to alter the element to suit different surroundings and a user may have considerably to modify any particular luminous element to adapt it to different surroundings or to obtain different lighting effects. Rather than carry out such modifications, it may be preferable to acquire a new luminous element which is specifically intended for the new use envisaged. Additionally, in view of possible changes of taste on the part of the purchasing public, luminous elements of a given type and intended for a given application can only be made in small quantities which naturally excludes economical mass production.

The present invention proposes a device which, owing to its particular construction, can be arranged or positioned in a variety of ways and its arrangement or position simply changed to a different arrangement or position, and including devices which can also be used as a constituent of multi-purpose furniture or as a piece of furniture such as a table, a bench, or a display piece for displaying and illuminating objects.

According to the invention, there is provided a lamp comprising a rigid elongate shell of opaque or translucent material having a symmetrical transverse channel section formed by a web and side walls defining a light-transmitting face, the channel having a substantially rectilinear middle portion and two substantially rectilinear end portions set at an angle to the middle portion, the middle portions and the end portions being generally coplanar, and at least one light source arranged within the channel.

In the above-defined lamp of the invention, the open face may, if desired, be covered with a substantially transparent material.

The shell can be made in a relatively non-transparent translucent material, whilst the open face is covered by a relatively transparent translucent material or by a transparent material.

The shell can be made of a rigid and mechanically stable material such as sheet iron or aluminium; it is alternatively possible to use for this purpose a suitable heat-resistant synthetic plastics material, to provide a translucent shell. In such a case it

may be advantageous, or even necessary, depending upon the envisaged use, to provide a rigid inner reinforcing frame which can be injected or introduced under pressure and which can serve as a support for the light sources.

The shell advantageously has, on its external side or sides, suitable devices, such as tap holes, internal sleeves and the like, which serve for attaching feet, plates, and pieces for connecting several devices together.

Embodiments of the invention will now be particularly described, by way of example, reference being made to the Figures of the accompanying drawings, in which Figures 1 to 6 illustrate in diagrammatic views an embodiment of the device and practical uses thereof: and Figures 7 to 15 illustrate in diagrammatic views a modified embodiment of the device and other possible uses thereof.

In the embodiment according to Figure 1, a device 21 (hereinafter referred to as a lighting member) is constituted by a shell or casing 22 inside which are positioned light sources 23 (not shown). The shell or casing 22 has a symmetrical transverse channel section formed by a web and side walls defining a light transmitting face. The rigid casing 22 has a flat rectilinear middle-portion 27 and two extremities 24_1 and 24_2 which are set at an angle to the middle portion in such a way that their free ends lie in a plane 25 parallel to the surface of portion 27. This lighting member can thus be positioned by placing its free ends on a support surface, such as the ground, or a piece of furniture.

A plate of glass can be positioned, by suitable means, on the upper surface of the middle portion of the member 21, this plate 26 serving as a small table for arranging various objects. If it is desired to use the glass plate 26 to support an object to be illuminated, for example a curio, it is possible to turn over the member 21, as shown in Figure 2, the member 21 thus resting on the ground or another support surface by its middle part 27 and the plate of glass 26 being laid on the two free ends 24_1 and 24_2.

A particularly suitable use of the just described embodiment of lighting member 21 is for wall lighting, the member 21 being adapted for vertical (in the position shown in Figure 3) or transverse positioning by its two ends against a wall to which it can be fixed by means of ordinary hooks and eyes. For this arrangement of member 21, it is possible to provide, according to the use desired and the direction of lighting envisaged, a screen positioned at one or the other of the side edges of the member 21. It is also possible to position several members 21 in alignment one after the other transversely (see Figure 11), vertically, or in inclined directions. In the embodiment of Figure 4, the lighting member is pivotally mounted by one of the ends of its casing 22 about a vertical leg 29 on a base 28. By this means, it is possible to select the direction of lighting or to impart permanent rotary movement to the lighting element. By means of control contacts incorporated therein, it is possible to obtain various lighting effects during rotation of the member.

In a simple embodiment of lighting member 21 as shown in Figures 3 and 5, the member 21 is constituted by a casing 22 in which the light sources (not shown) are incorporated and which can be optionally provided with a reinforcing frame. This lighting member can be made with dimensions and rigidity to make it suitable for use as a seat, bench and the like.

Figure 6 shows a piece of furniture 34 incorporating two lighting members 35_1 and 35_2 of the type shown in Figure 5. The upper member 35_1 houses light sources which provide a downwardly directed beam 36 with a luminous intensity which can be either constant or variable. A support plate 37, upon which can be placed various objects, is placed on the upper face of the upper member 35_1. The flat rectilinear middle part 38 of the underside of the lower element 35_2 serves as a bearing surface for the piece of furniture 34. An intermediate plate 39 is inserted between the two elements 35_1 and 35_2.

In order to avoid dazzling by the light sources in the lower member 35_2 of this piece of furniture, it is possible simply to switch off the said lower light sources or alternatively remove them. Instead of incorporating light sources in the lower member 35_2, it is possible to incorporate other apparatus 31 such as a radio or loud speakers and the like which can be controlled by an external control button. This assembly is particularly useful as a night table, game table, club table or the like. The members 35_1, 35_2, the plate 39, and the support plate 37 can all be made of translucent material, the "open" or inner face of the elements of course being in a relatively more transparent material to favour the transmission of light.

In the case of the embodiment shown in Figures 7 to 9, the lighting member has a casing 41 of channel-shaped transverse cross-section and which can be either constituted entirely of metal or can be provided with a plurality of metallic elements 42_1, 42_2, 42_3 secured inside the member either inside the rectilinear middle portion 44 or inside the rectilinear end portions 43_1 and 43_2. The metallic elements 42 can have the shape of small discs 42_1, 42_2, 42_3 (Figure 8, right hand side) or metallic strips 45_1, 45_2 (Figure 8, left hand side).

By means of magnetic members attached

to accessories such as cushions 46 or luminous elements 47 it is possible to hold the said accessories to the member 41 in a desired position and replace them in a simple manner thereby making it possible rapidly and easily to proceed to an exchange of accessories according to a desired use for the member. By simply laying a cushion 46 on a smooth surfaced member such as 41 (Figure 7) the cushion could slide. However, by using the previously mentioned magnetic means in combination with metallic element 42, the cushion 46 is secured in a simple manner on the lighting member for use as a piece of furniture.

It is understood that although the metallic elements are shown in the drawings, when the casing is made of metal, magnetic accessories will adhere to it without difficulty.

Figures 10 to 15 show various practical ways of using lighting members of the type shown in Figure 5 and, referring to Figure 10, the lighting member is held in position perpendicular to a supporting wall on which it engages by the free ends of its two substantially rectilinear end portions 49_1, 49_2. Such an arrangement is for example useful for wall lighting employing the member as a bracket lamp with a single light source. A plurality of members 50 can be arranged in line as shown in Figure 11.

Figures 12 and 13 are front or underneath views of a member used as a wall lamp in which the member is provided with an opaque masking plate 53 located, according to the height of the lighting member on the wall, on its upper side 51, or on its lower side 52. In this manner, it is possible to direct the luminous rays upwardly or downwardly. The said masking plates can be made of a magnetic material and be magnetically fixed to a metallic casing, or to metallic elements similar to the elements 42 (Figure 7 and Figure 8, right hand side).

Figures 14 and 15 show other possible dispositions for mounting the lighting members to provide different lighting effects.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A lamp comprising a rigid elongate shell of opaque or translucent material having a symmetrical transverse channel section formed by a web and side walls defining a light-transmitting face, the channel having a substantially rectilinear middle portion and two substantially rectilinear end portions set at an angle to the middle portion, the middle portion and the end portions being generally coplanar, and at least one light source arranged within the channel.

2. A lamp as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the light transmitting face is covered with a substantially transparent material.

3. A lamp as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 in which the shell has a rectilinear middle portion and two end portions extending symmetrically on either side of the middle portion.

4. A lamp as claimed in Claim 3 in which the shell has a rigid reinforcing frame.

5. A lamp as claimed in Claim 3, in which said shell is metallic, said lamp comprising interchangeable and removably mounted magnetic accessories.

6. A lamp as claimed in any of Claims 1 to 4 in which the shell comprises metallic elements therein, said lamps comprising interchangeable and removably mounted magnetic accessories.

7. A lamp as claimed in claim 6, in which said metallic elements are discs or strips.

8. A lamp as claimed in any of Claims 2 to 4 in which the shell is made of a relatively non-transparent translucent material, said open face being covered by a relatively transparent translucent material or by transparent material.

9. A lamp substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as shown in Figures 3 and 5, Figure 4, Figure 7 in conjunction with Figure 8, or any one of Figures 10 to 16 of the accompanying drawings.

10. A lamp substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as shown in any one of Figures 1, 2, 6 or 9 of the accompanying drawings.

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It is understood that although the metallic elements are shown in the drawings, when the casing is made of metal, magnetic accessories will adhere to it without difficulty.

Figures 10 to 15 show various practical ways of using lighting members of the type shown in Figure 5 and, referring to Figure 10, the lighting member is held in position perpendicular to a supporting wall on which it engages by the free ends of its two substantially rectilinear end portions 49_1, 49_2. Such an arrangement is for example useful for wall lighting employing the member as a bracket lamp with a single light source. A plurality of members 50 can be arranged in line as shown in Figure 11.

Figures 12 and 13 are front or underneath views of a member used as a wall lamp in which the member is provided with an opaque masking plate 53 located, according to the height of the lighting member on the wall, on its upper side 51, or on its lower side 52. In this manner, it is possible to direct the luminous rays upwardly or downwardly. The said masking plates can be made of a magnetic material and be magnetically fixed to a metallic casing, or to metallic elements similar to the elements 42 (Figure 7 and Figure 8, right hand side).

Figures 14 and 15 show other possible dispositions for mounting the lighting members to provide different lighting effects.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A lamp comprising a rigid elongate shell of opaque or translucent material having a symmetrical transverse channel section formed by a web and side walls defining a light-transmitting face, the channel having a substantially rectilinear middle portion and two substantially rectilinear end portions set at an angle to the middle portion, the middle portion and the end portions being generally coplanar, and at least one light source arranged within the channel.

2. A lamp as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the light transmitting face is covered with a substantially transparent material.

3. A lamp as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 in which the shell has a rectilinear middle portion and two end portions extending symmetrically on either side of the middle portion.

4. A lamp as claimed in Claim 3 in which the shell has a rigid reinforcing frame.

5. A lamp as claimed in Claim 3, in which said shell is metallic, said lamp comprising interchangeable and removably mounted magnetic accessories.

6. A lamp as claimed in any of Claims 1 to 4 in which the shell comprises metallic elements therein, said lamps comprising interchangeable and removably mounted magnetic accessories.

7. A lamp as claimed in claim 6, in which said metallic elements are discs or strips.

8. A lamp as claimed in any of Claims 2 to 4 in which the shell is made of a relatively non-transparent translucent material, said open face being covered by a relatively transparent translucent material or by transparent material.

9. A lamp substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as shown in Figures 3 and 5, Figure 4, Figure 7 in conjunction with Figure 8, or any one of Figures 10 to 16 of the accompanying drawings.

10. A lamp substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as shown in any one of Figures 1, 2, 6 or 9 of the accompanying drawings.

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