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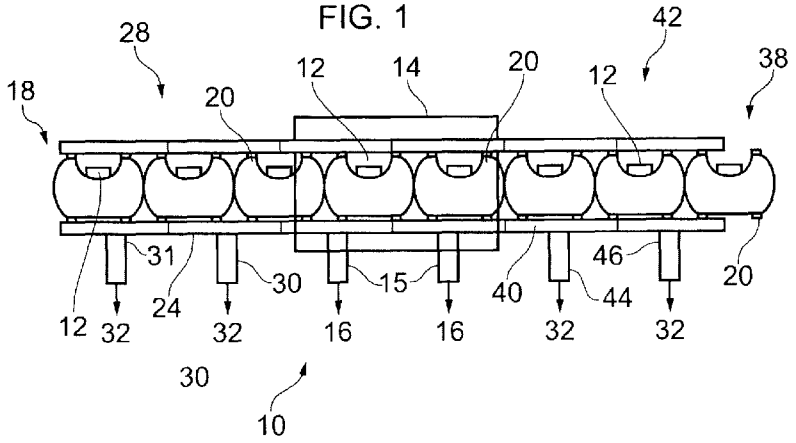
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(54) Title: VACUUM PROCESSING APPARATUS

FIG. 1



(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to an apparatus (10) for vacuum processing articles (12). The apparatus comprises a processing region (14) in which articles can be vacuum processed at a processing pressure and a loading region (18) into which articles can be loaded into the apparatus at ambient pressure. A plurality of article carriers (20) are provided for carrying articles from the loading region to the processing region along an enclosed passage (24) so that articles can be vacuum processed. The carriers (20) comprise respective sealing means (26) for sealing against an inner surface of the passage when carrying articles along the passage. The sealing means (26) resist the flow of gas or vapour past the sealing means along the passage from the loading region to the processing region so that articles loaded at ambient pressure in the loading region and carried to the processing region can be vacuum processed at processing pressure.

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