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(54) **FREE-STANDING, MOUNTABLE OR PORTABLE ROTATABLE JEWEL TREE**

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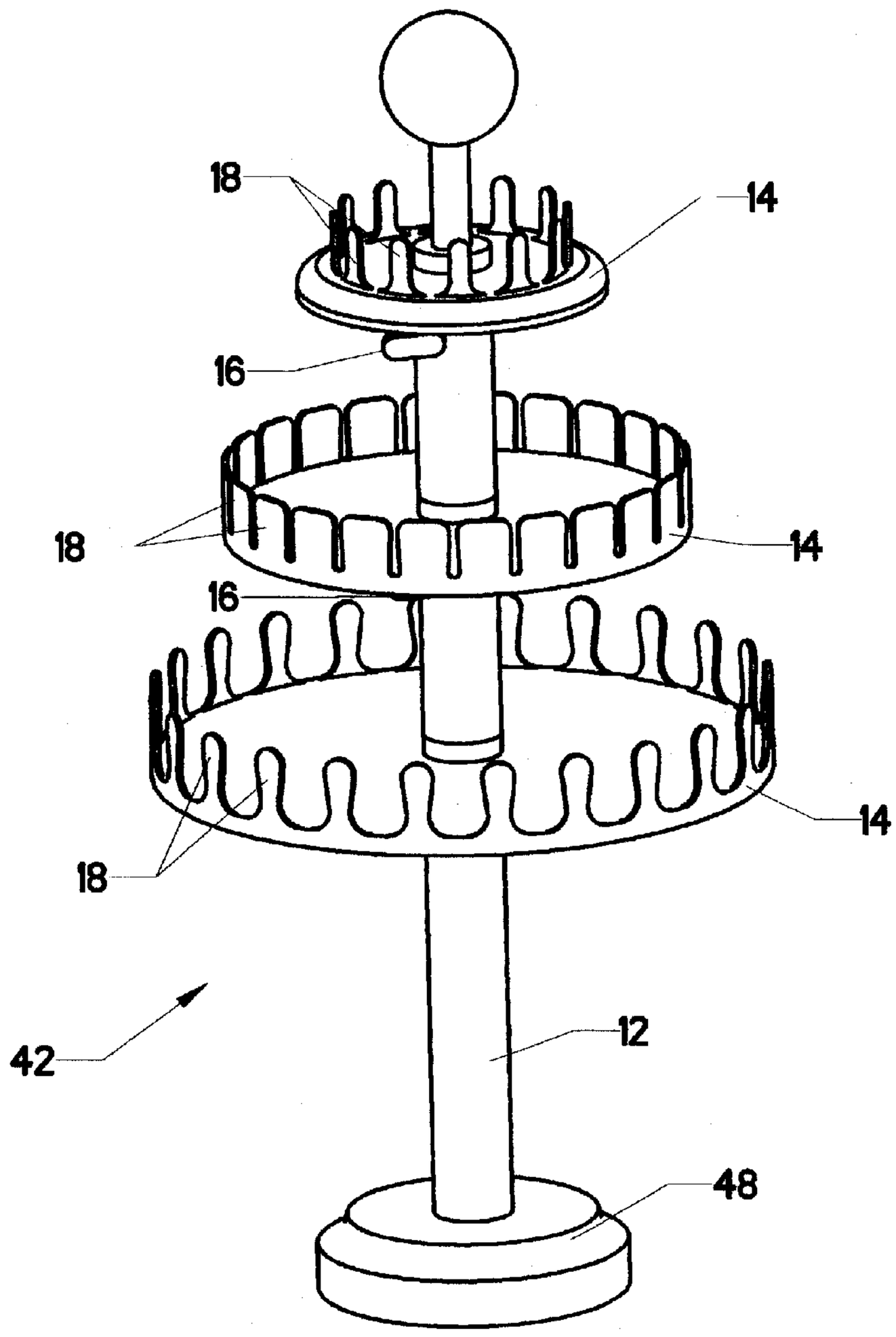
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A jewelry holding device with a base, a lower rack, a middle rack, and an upper rack. Each of the three racks has a plurality of jewelry-holding fixtures. The racks are free to rotate with respect to one another so that a user can align the jewelry to his or her liking. Once the desired position is achieved, locking mechanisms are provided which allow the user to lock the three racks together. Portable and wall-mounted variants of the device are also disclosed.



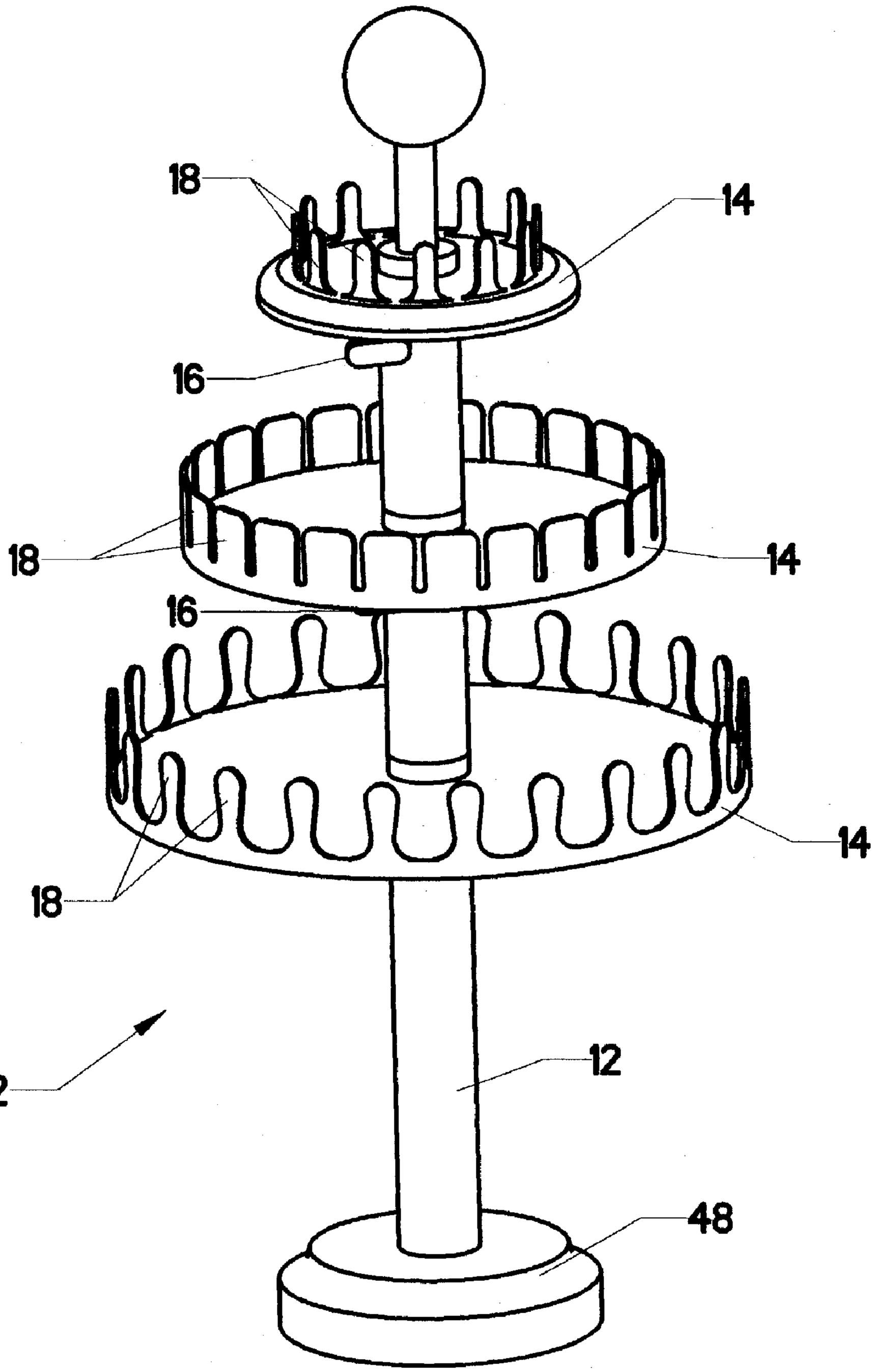


FIG. 1

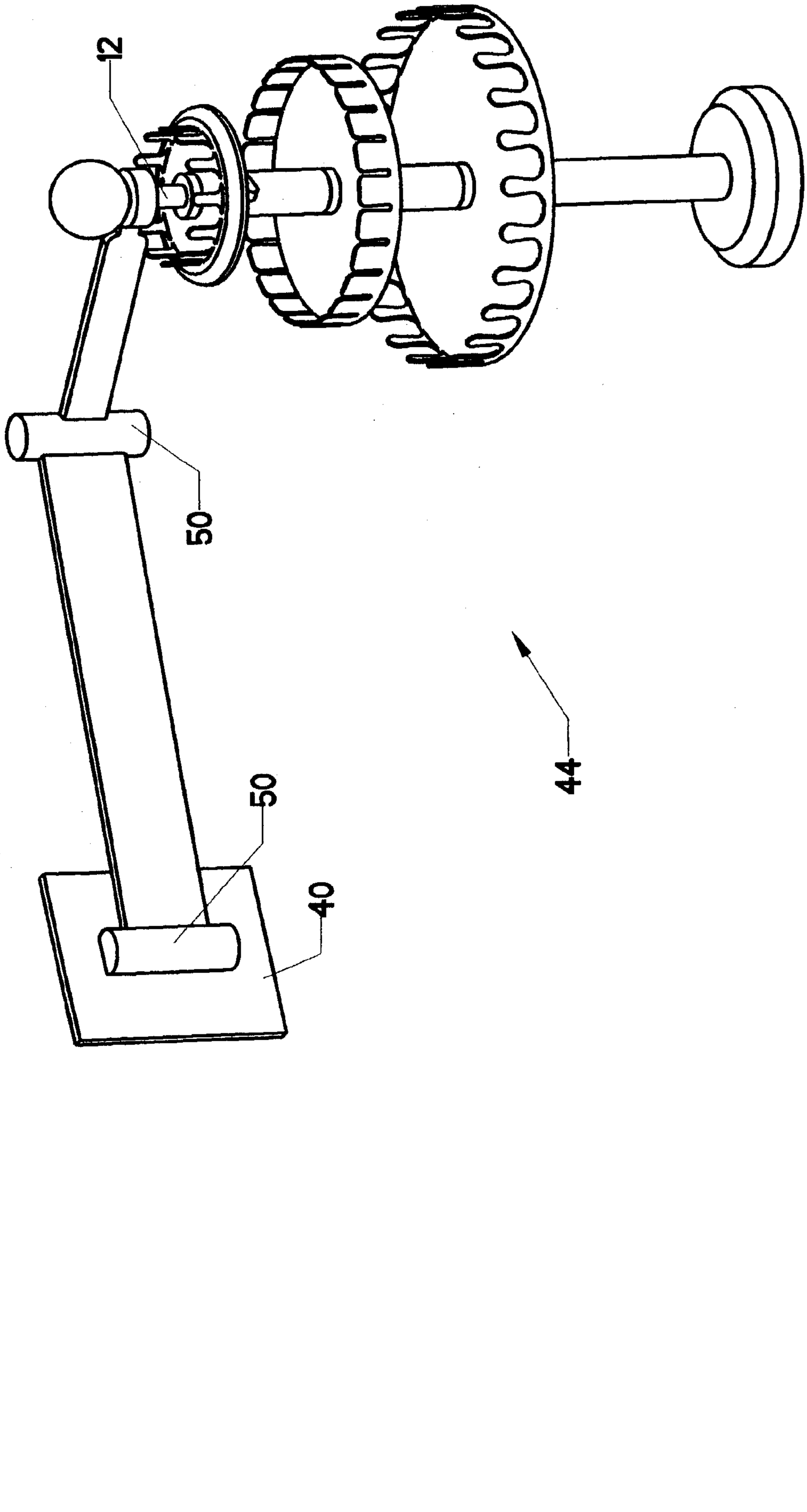


FIG. 2

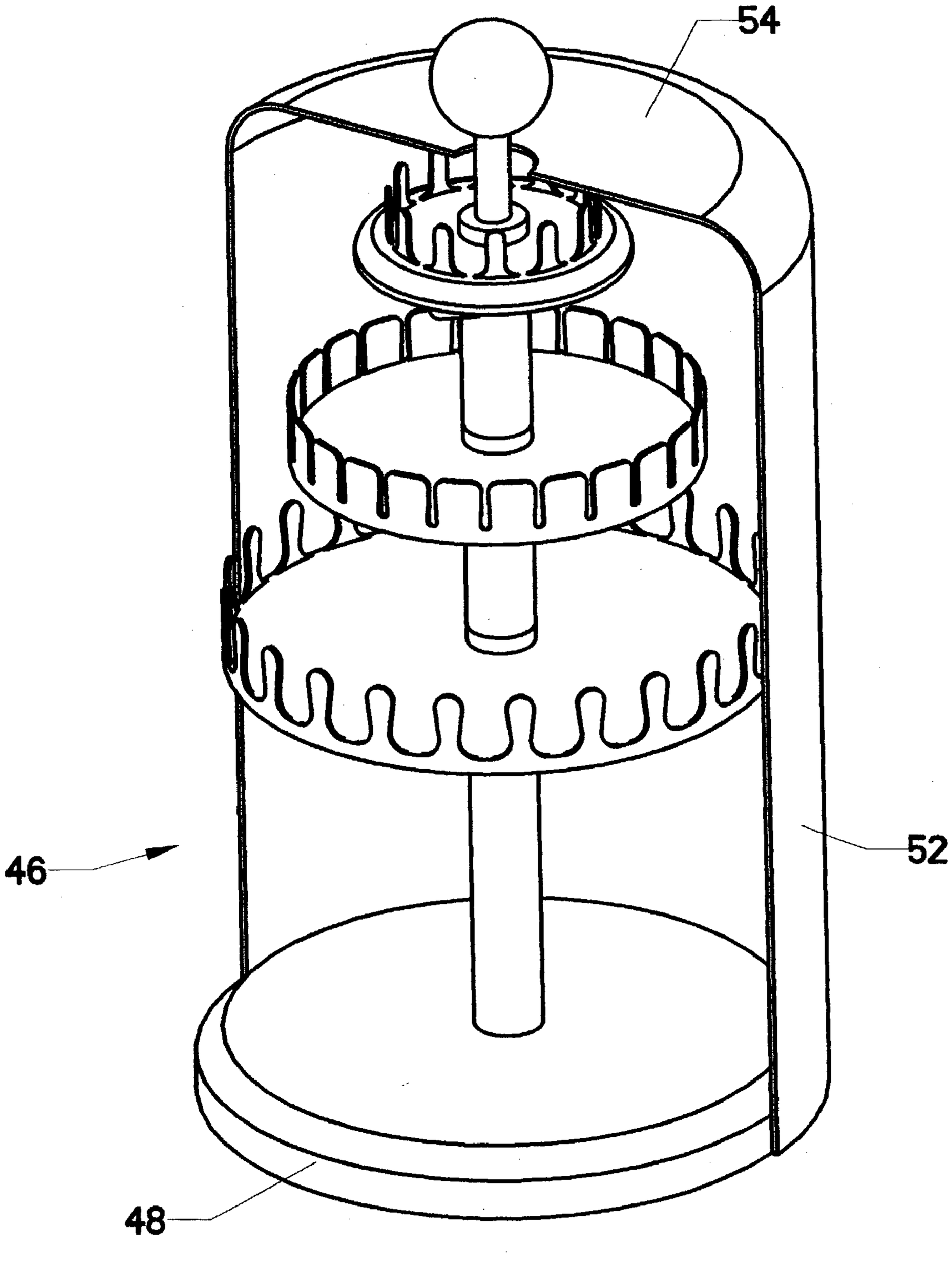


FIG. 3

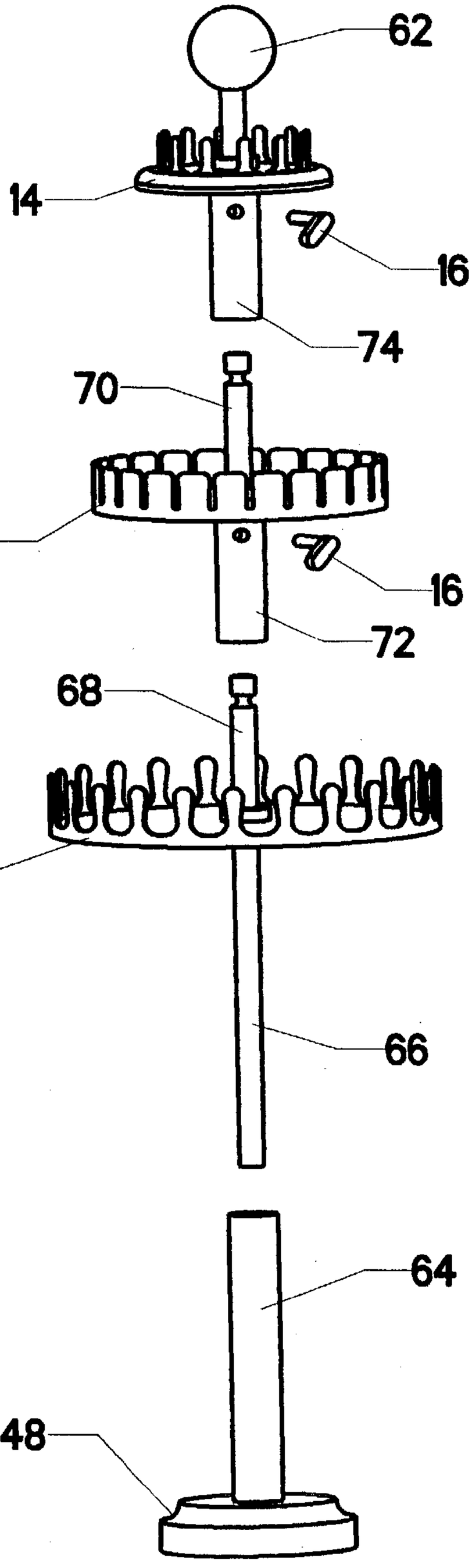


FIG. 4A

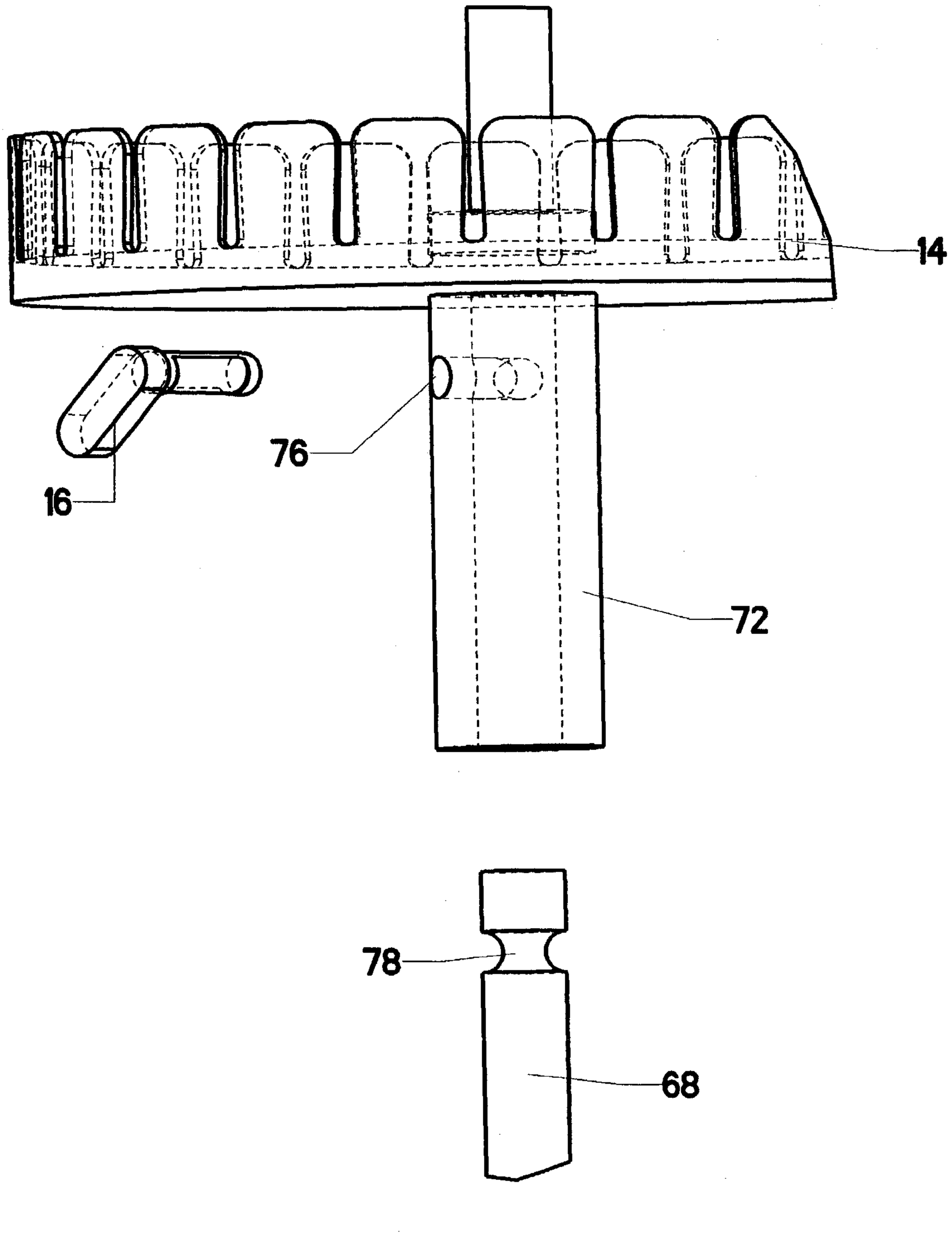


FIG. 4B

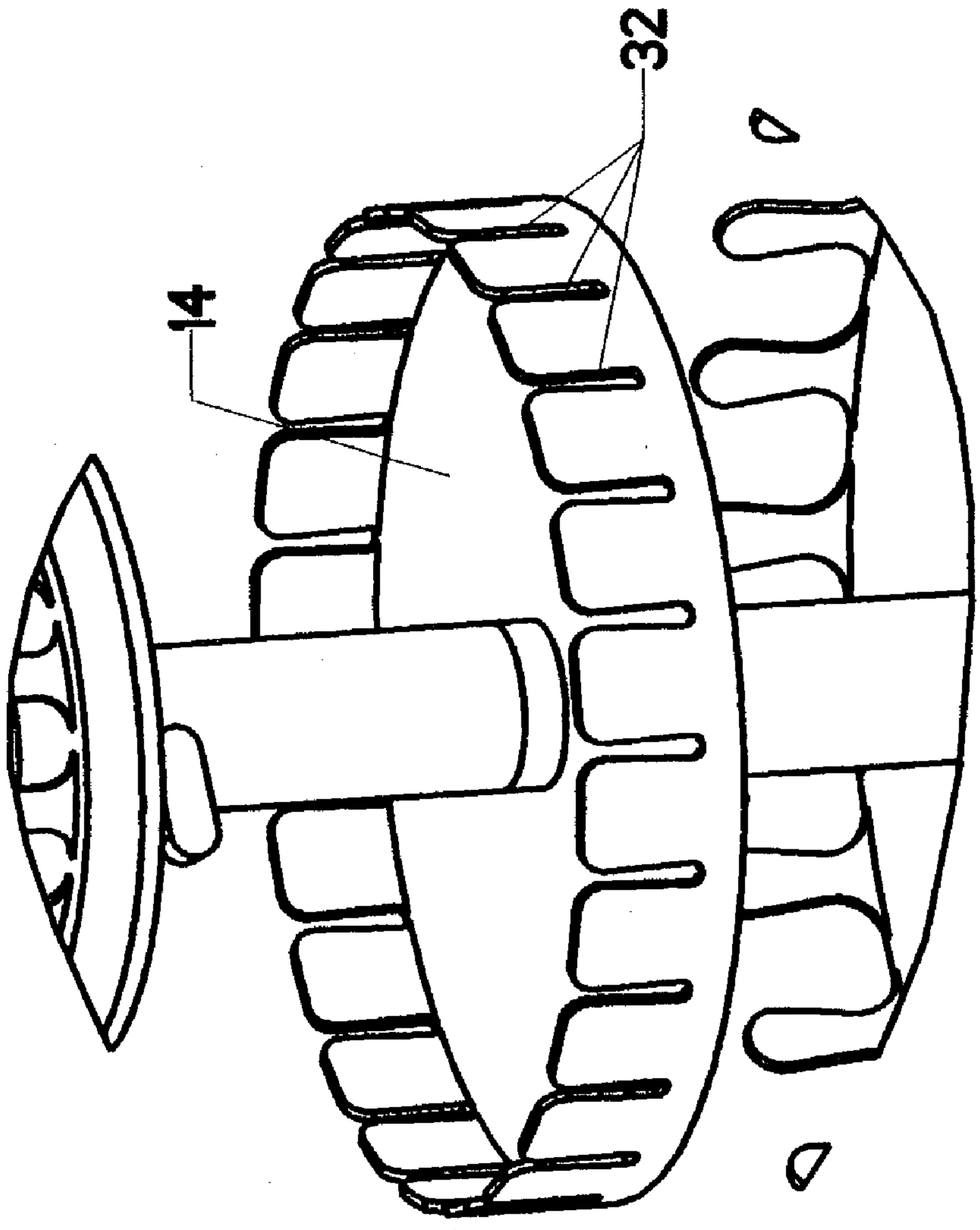


FIG. 5

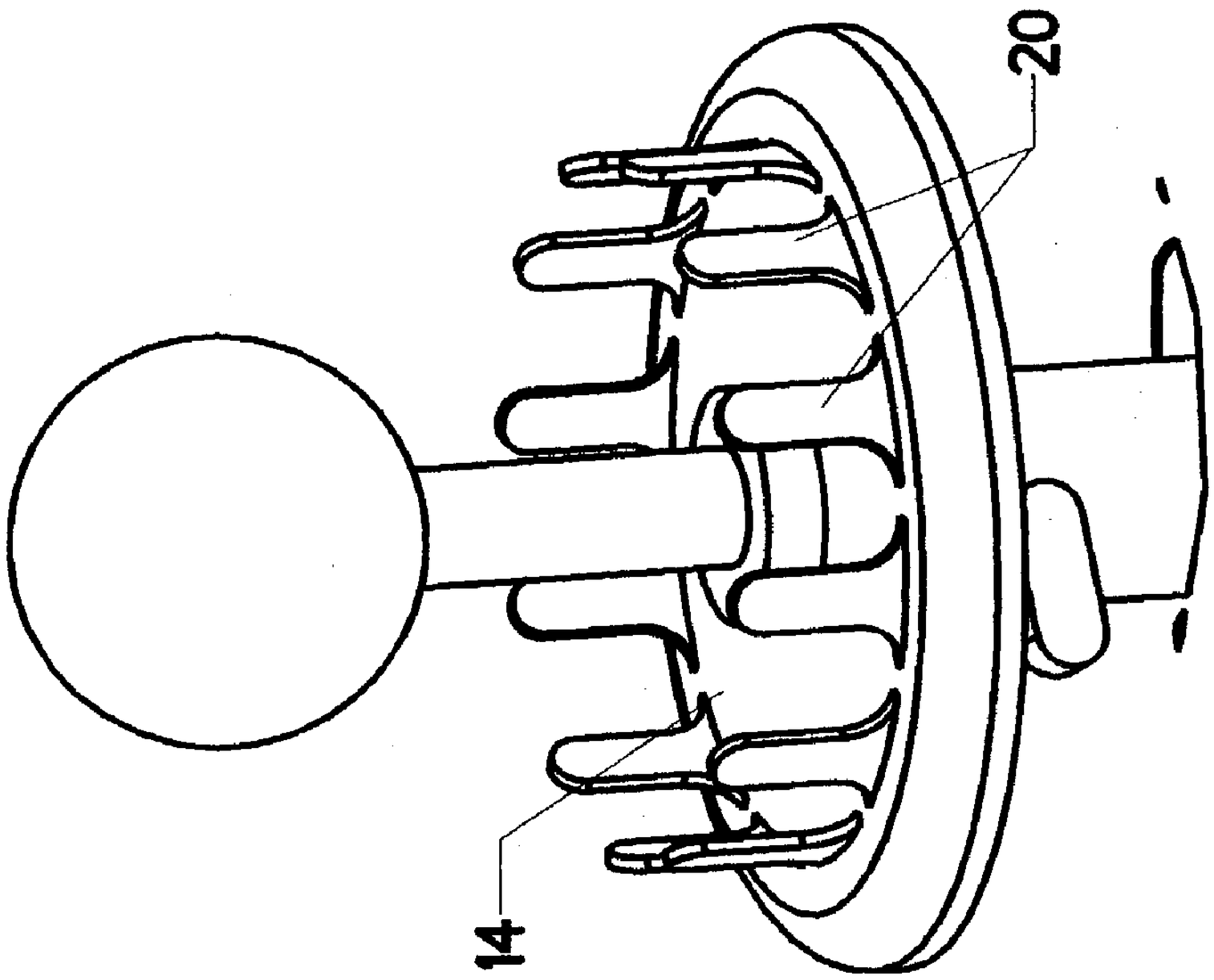


FIG. 6

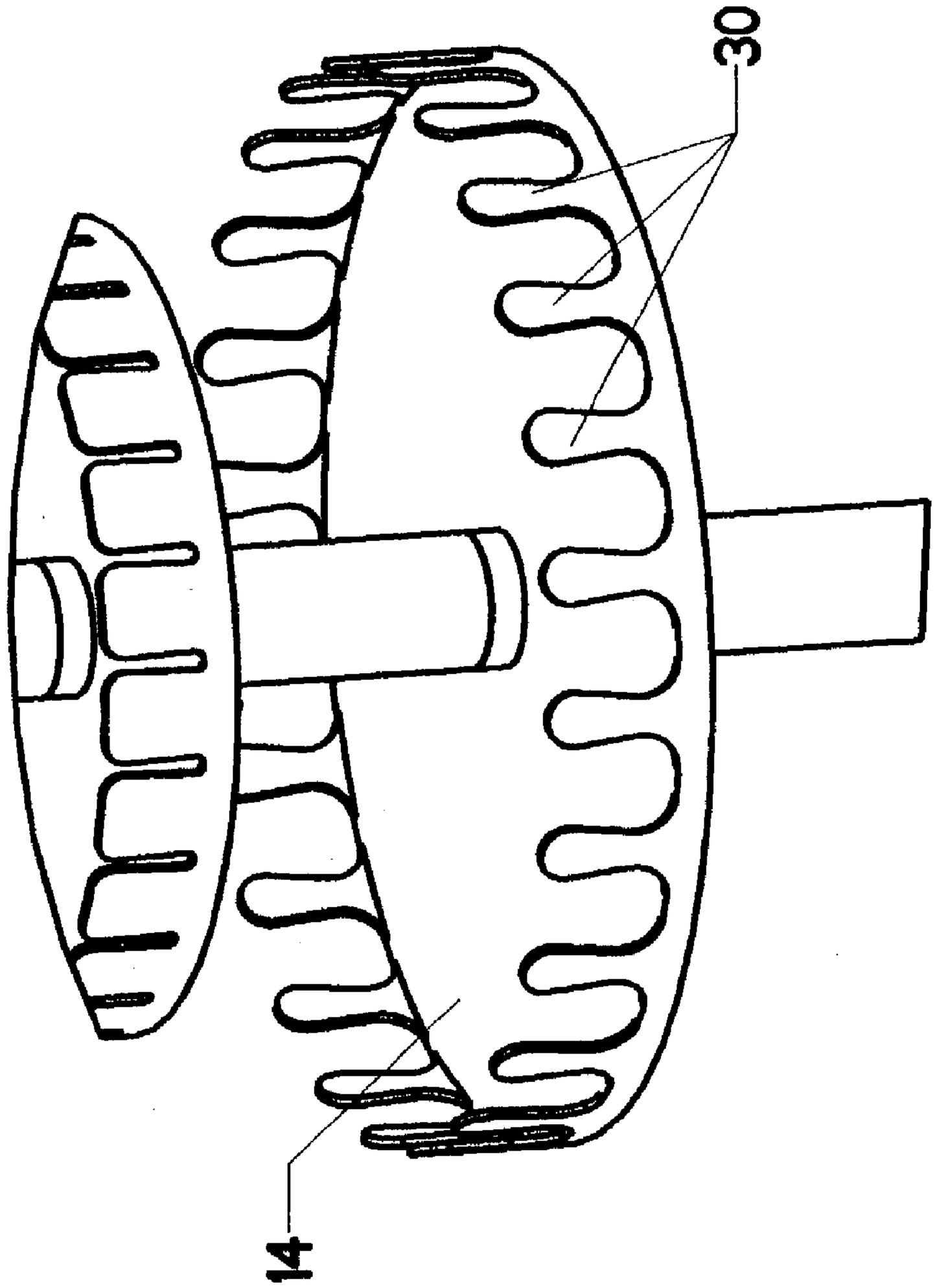


FIG. 7

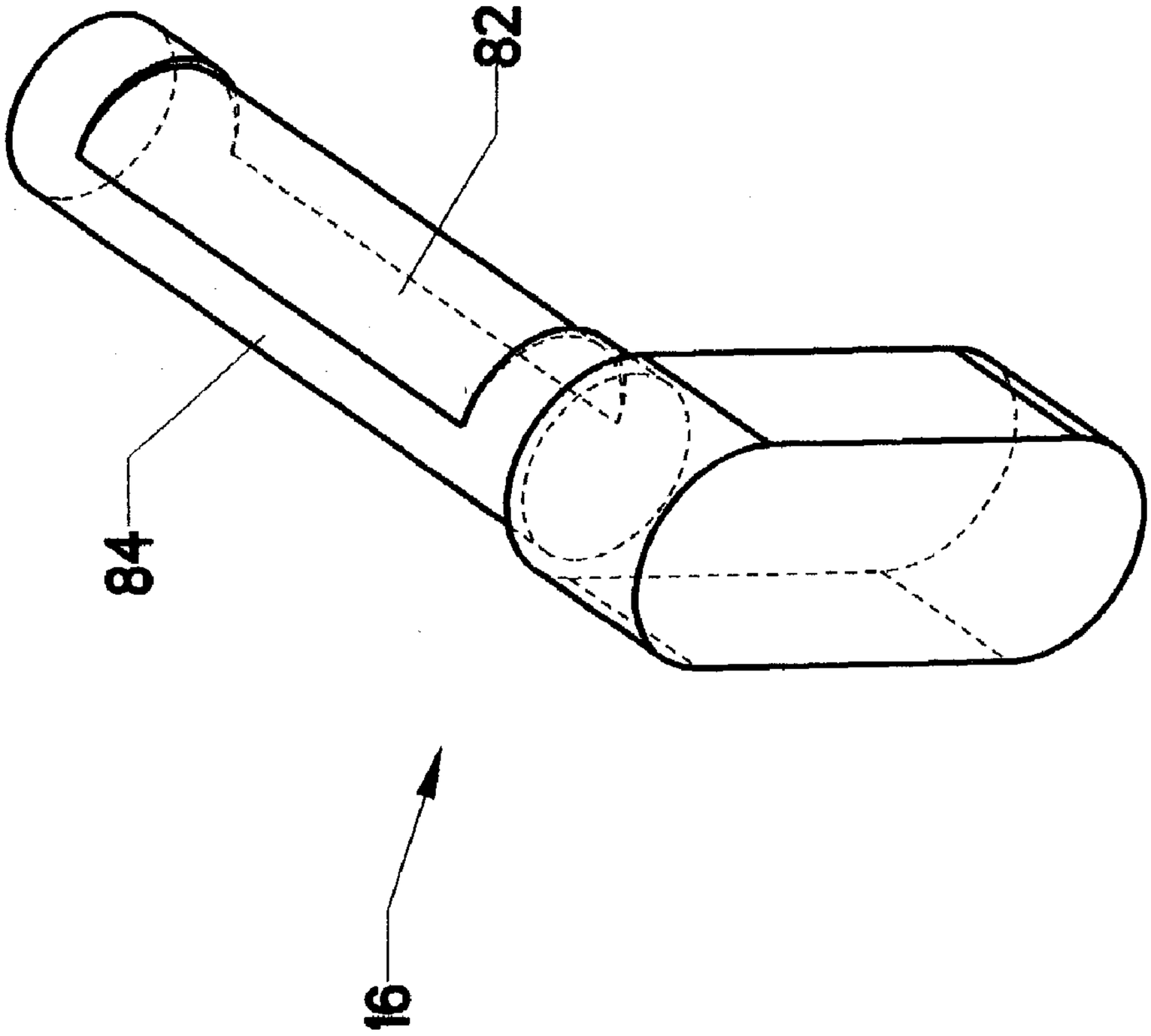


FIG. 8

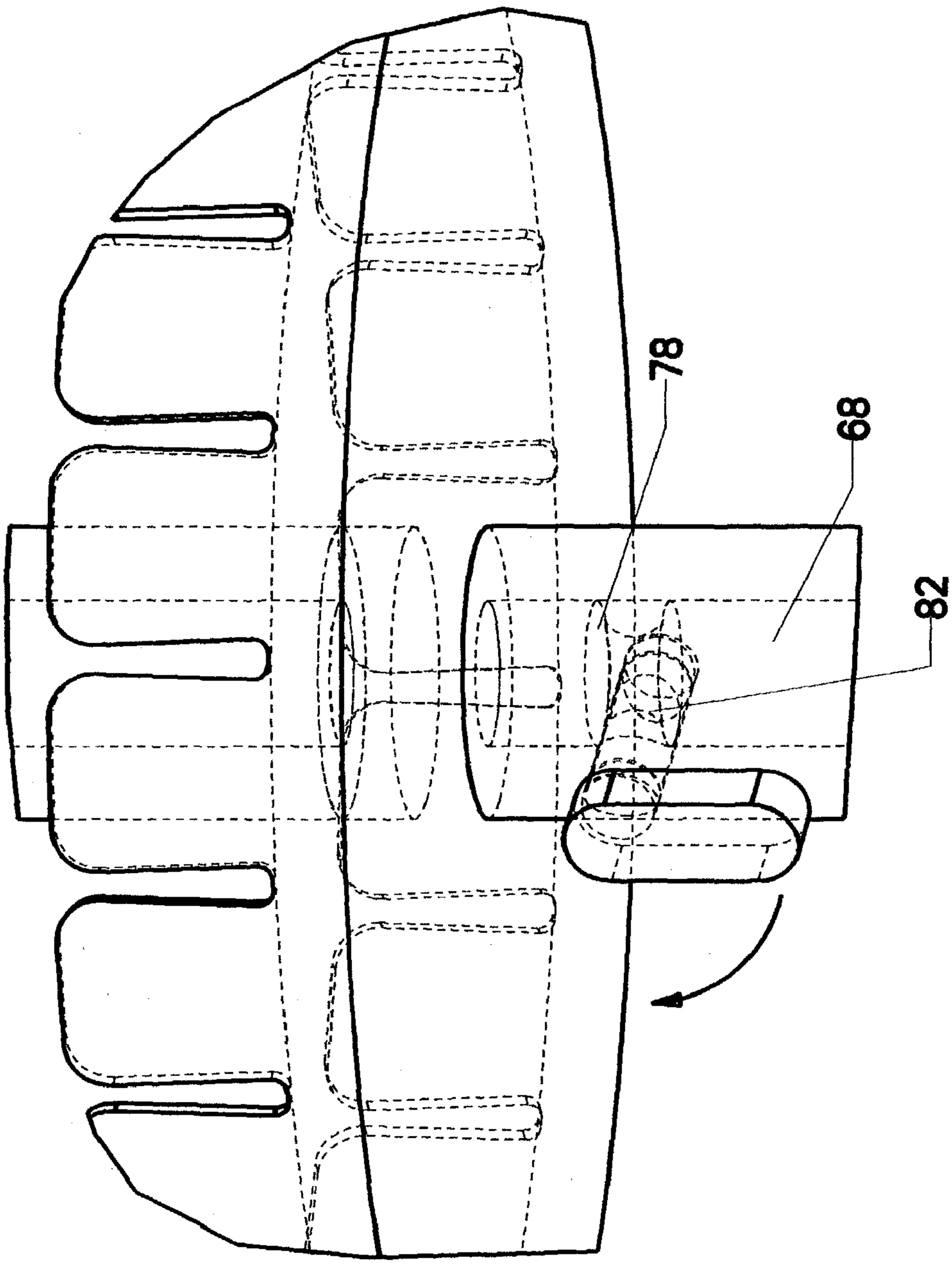


FIG. 9

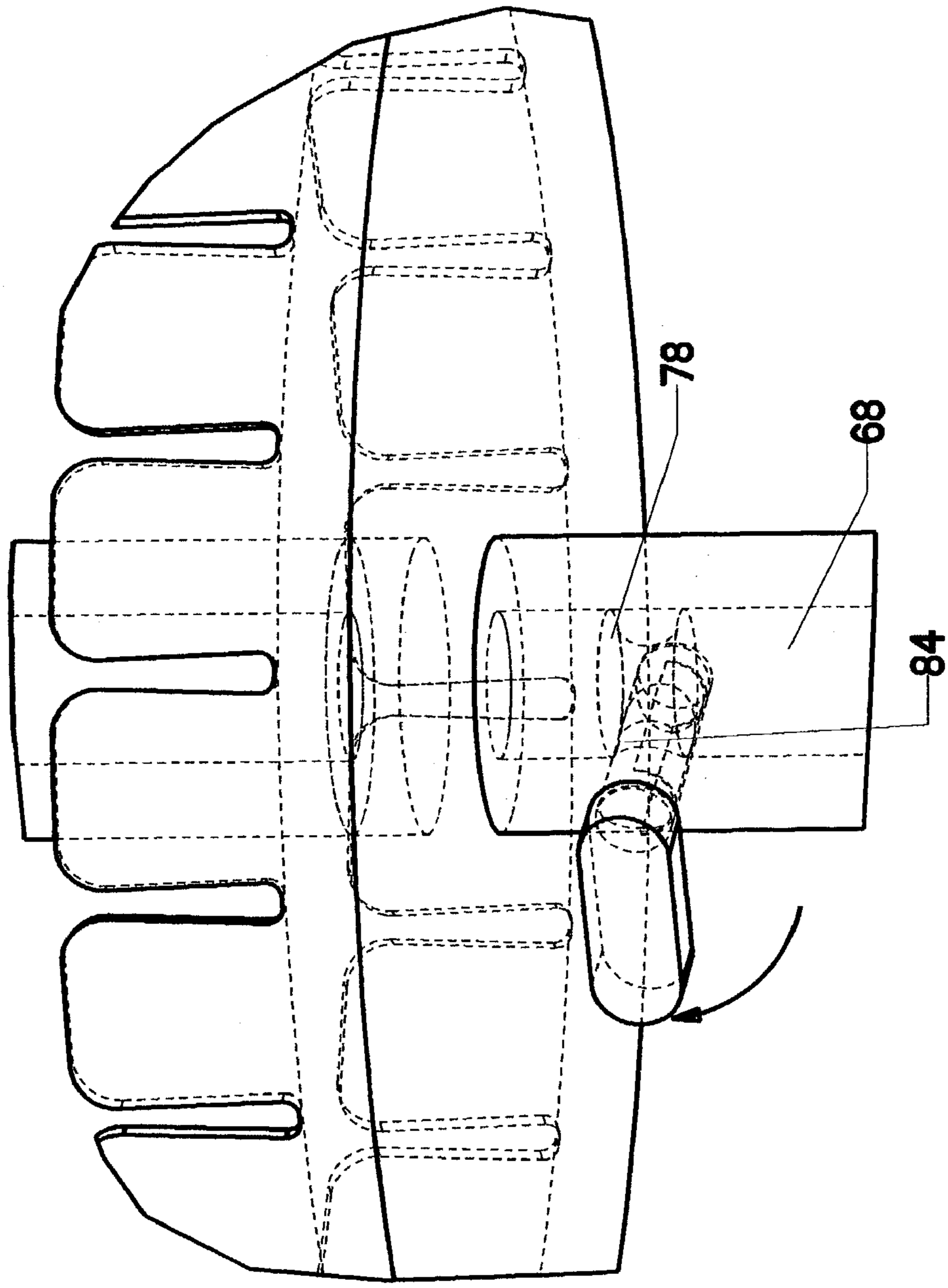


FIG. 10

FREE-STANDING, MOUNTABLE OR PORTABLE ROTATABLE JEWEL TREE

CROSS REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This is a non-provisional application claiming the benefit of an application previously filed under 37 CFR 1.53 (c). The previous application had identity of inventorship, was filed on Apr. 2, 2002, and was assigned application Ser. No. 60/371,838.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

[0002] Not applicable.

MICROFICHE APPENDIX

[0003] Not applicable.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0004] 1. Field of the Invention

[0005] The present invention relates generally to a novel and unique free-standing, mountable or portable rotatable JewelTree apparatus and more particularly to a user friendly free-standing, mountable or portable rotatable JewelTree apparatus which is versatile, practical and one that is particularly suited for holding earrings, rings, bracelets, pins, necklaces and brooches or the like.

[0006] 2. Description of the Prior Art

[0007] Jewelry display stands are well known in the field and have been used not only in the jewelry industry, but in the home as well. To this end, numerous devices have been developed. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 5,487,600n issued to Griffin discloses a covered container for earrings and small jewelry. This device is comprised of an upstanding fastening column designed to receive vertically stacked tray elements. Though efficient for earring storage, this assembly is limited in use by providing an apparatus that would be unacceptable for displaying and storing all kinds of jewelry.

[0008] Another example, U.S. Pat. No. 4,141,453 issued to Hanan discloses an earring display rack.

[0009] Yet another example is seen in U.S. Pat. No. 6,241,105 B1 issued to Pomper wherein disclosed is a jewelry display stand comprised of a vertical post assembly mounted on a base with a plurality of arms radiating from the post to serve as jewelry hangers.

[0010] Though these patents as described above may have proven successful for jewelry display, they are limited in their scope and use. What is needed is a jewelry display apparatus that will adequately and efficiently display and store all types of jewelry for use in the jewelry trade industry, as well as at home. Such a device should be efficient and substantially traditional in appearance so as to provide for a final product that is simple in design and structure and which will prove successful in achieving the desired results.

[0011] Hence what is needed is an apparatus that will adequately and efficiently display and store jewelry in an organized, easily visible and accessible fashion. Such an apparatus should be versatile, simple in construction, so as to provide an apparatus which is successful and that can be used with a minimul amount of training.

[0012] Accordingly, it is seen that none of these previous efforts provide the benefits intended with the present invention, such as identified above. Additionally, prior techniques do not suggest the present inventive combination of component elements as disclosed and claimed herein. The present invention acheives its intended purposes, objectives and advantages over the prior art through a new, useful and unobvious combination of component elements, which is simple to use with the utilization of a minimum number of functioning parts, at a reasonable cost to manufacture, assemble, test, and by employing only readily available material.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0013] The present invention is a novel and unique free-Standing, mountable or portable rotatable JewelTree apparatus that is designed and configured to display and store all types of jewelry for use in the jewelry trade industry, as well as in the home. The device of the present invention is aesthetically pleasing and provides the user instant organization, visibility and quick and easy accessibility to ones jewelry as well as the option of portability.

[0014] The jeweltree organizer apparatus of the present invention is comprised of a plurality of rotatable holding racks. Each of the jewelry holding racks are designed to rotate independently or simultaneously of the post for viewing from all sides of the device via the ratchet design and configuration. The apparatus of the present invention provides for the following features. 1. Organizer, 2.ability to rotate each individual holding rack independently or simultaneously, 3.provides a novel and unique organization and display system for rings, 3a.Slide on ring post, 3b. a grooved felt device wherein the ring slides in between two cushioned felt units, 4.provides a novel and unique organization and display system for necklaces in order to enhance the organization and display features of the present invention. The device also provides for the ability to organize and display combination necklace and bracelet on the same level. Then present invention provides for this feature by a design and configuration which establishes a necklace post at a predetermined height based on the normal length of a necklace, 5. Provides for a novel and unique organization and display system for earrings. This earring holder design provides for a novel and unique holder for post or wire earrings which is designed to enable the earrings to hang or be clipped on this holding rack, 6.provides for a shelf designed and configured for pins, brooches and charms.

[0015] Accordingly, it is the object of the present invention to provide for a free-standing, mountable or portable rotatable jeweltree organizer apparatus which will overcome the deficiencies, shortcomings and drawbacks of prior jewelry display devices and methods thereof.

[0016] Another object of the present invention, to be specifically enumerated herein, is to provide a jeweltree organizer apparatus in accordance with the preceding objects and which will conform to conventional forms of manufacture, be of simple construction and easy to use so as to provide a device that would be economically feasible, long lasting and relatively trouble free in operation.

[0017] Still a further object of the present invention is to provide for a portable organization device which is specifically designed and configured to enhance the coordination of clothing and jewelry during the dressing process.

[0018] Although there have been many inventions related to jewelry display devices, none of the inventions have become sufficiently compact, low cost, and versatile enough to provide the benefits associated with the present invention. The present invention meets the requirements of the simplified design, compact size, low initial cost, ease of installation and maintainability, and minimal amount of training to successfully employ the invention.

[0019] The foregoing has outlined some of the prominent objects of the present invention. These objects should be construed to be merely illustrative of some of the more prominent features and application of the intended invention. Many other beneficial results can be attained by applying the disclosed invention in a different manner or modifying the invention within the scope of the disclosure. Accordingly, a fuller understanding of the invention may be had by referring to the detailed description of the preferred embodiments in addition to the scope of the invention taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0020] **FIG. 1** is a perspective view of a free-standing rotatable jeweltree apparatus.

[0021] **FIG. 2** is a perspective view of a wall mountable rotatable jeweltree apparatus.

[0022] **FIG. 3** is a perspective view of a portable rotatable jeweltree apparatus.

[0023] **FIG. 4A** is an exploded view showing how the components of the invention relate to each other.

[0024] **FIG. 4B** is an exploded view showing details of the ratchet mechanism.

[0025] **FIG. 5** is a perspective view of an earring holder.

[0026] **FIG. 6** is a view of style **1** ring holders with rings placed in a horizontal place via posts and saucer.

[0027] **FIG. 7** is a view of necklace and bracelet holders.

[0028] **FIG. 8** is a perspective view of the ratchet mechanism.

[0029] **FIG. 9** is a hidden line view showing the operation of the ratchet mechanism.

[0030] **FIG. 10** is a hidden line view showing the operation of the ratchet mechanism.

[0031] Similar reference numerals refer to similar reference parts throughout the several views of the drawings.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0032] In reference to the drawings, in particular to FIGS. **1-10**, the free-standing, mountable or portable jeweltree organizer apparatus which represent the three preferred embodiments of the present invention, denoted by reference numeral **10** will be described herein. The present invention is a free-standing, mountable or portable jeweltree organizer apparatus **10** which is designed and configured in the preferred embodiments to be aesthetically pleasing and provides the user instant organization, visibility and quick and easy accessibility to ones jewelry.

[0033] Preferably, the jeweltree apparatus of the present invention **10** comprises three embodiments. Preferably the first embodiment comprises a free-standing jeweltree apparatus **42** as illustrated in **FIG. 1**. The second preferred embodiment comprises a wall mount jeweltree apparatus **44** as seen in **FIG. 2**. The third embodiment is designed and configured to provide for a user-friendly travel jeweltree apparatus **46** as seen in **FIG. 3**.

[0034] As seen in FIGS. **1-10**, each of the preferred embodiments of the apparatus of the present invention **10** are comprised of a vertical post assembly **12** designed and configured with a plurality of rotatable holding racks **14**. The free-standing jeweltree apparatus **42** and the travel jeweltree apparatus **46** each provide for a weighted or non weighted stand **48** which receives the vertical post assembly **12** in order to act as the base and support of the apparatus of the present invention **10**. Furthermore, the base may be weighted to provide stability to the jeweltree apparatus. Each of the jewelry holding racks **14** are designed and configured to rotate independently or simultaneously of the post assembly **12** in order to facilitate viewing from all sides of the apparatus **10**. Simultaneous or independent rotation of the jewelry holding racks **14** is selected via ratchet device **16**, as will be explained subsequently. The three preferred embodiments of the present invention **10** are designed and configured to enhance organization and selection of the jewelry for the user by providing for a plurality of rotatable holding racks **14** which are designed and configured to rotate jewelry holding features.

[0035] The upper rotatable jewelry holding rack **14** mounts a plurality of ring holders **20**, as illustrated in **FIG. 6**. Each ring holder **20** holds one or more rings in place when a user slips the center bore of the ring over a particular ring holder **20**. Ring holders **20**, as well as the upper portion of the holding rack, are preferably covered with a soft material such as felt so that the jewelry will not be scratched. Therefore, this design will provide for the ring to be securely retained while the rotatable holding rack **14** is turned by the user.

[0036] **FIG. 5** illustrates the center rotatable holding rack **14**. It mounts a plurality of earring holders **32**. These are designed to receive the post commonly found on an earring. The earring back is then placed on the other side to secure the earring in place.

[0037] The apparatus of the present invention **10** is also designed and configured to provide for earring holders **32** as seen in **FIG. 5**. The present invention **10** provides for the ability to hold and organize two styles of earrings **32** which are post and wire. A felt covered material or the like to protect the earrings from chafing will also be provided. In addition the present invention **10** provides for combining necklaces and bracelets on the same bottom holding rack.

[0038] **FIG. 7** illustrates the bottom rotatable holding rack **14**. It mounts a plurality of necklace and bracelet holders **30**. These will accommodate the hanging of various lengths and styles of necklaces and bracelets. The necklace and bracelet holders **30** will be comprised of a felt covered material in order to protect the necklaces and bracelets from chafing.

[0039] The present invention **10** also provides shelf space for pins, brooches and charms (not shown) on the three rotatable holding racks **14**.

[0040] In the second preferred embodiment, as illustrated in **FIG. 2** the apparatus of the present invention **10** provides for a wall mount jeweltree apparatus **44** which is secured to the wall via a wall mounting fixture **40** and provides for a hinge **50** which is secured to the wall mounting fixture on one end and to the jewelry tree on the other. The hinge **50** provides for the ability to extend the device of the present invention **10** in a plurality of directions in order to facilitate accessibility and visibility for the user. The wall mount jeweltree apparatus **44** is otherwise designed and configured in the same fashion as that of the other two preferred embodiments.

[0041] **FIG. 3** provides an illustration of the third preferred embodiment of the present invention **10**, the travel jeweltree apparatus **46**. The travel jeweltree apparatus **46** provides for a clear plastic cylinder **52** with a removable top **54** (These two elements may be optionally made as a single piece). The cover allows for the transportation of the device without the fear of jewelry articles falling out. The user can pick up the device and carry it using knob **62**, even when top **54** is in place.

[0042] Options which are provided in other embodiments include a lighting for the present invention **10** and a motorized turning unit.

[0043] The operation of the ratchet mechanism will now be explained in detail. **FIG. 4A** shows an exploded view of the device. First hollow post **64** extends upward from base **48**. It contains a hollow throughbore. The lower rotatable holding rack **14** has first shaft **66** descending downward therefrom. This fits within first hollow post **64**, where it is retained by a retaining ring, nut, or similar prior art fastener. Whatever fastener is employed, the lower rotatble holding rack **14** is free to rotate with respect to base **48**. It also transmits lifting force. In other words, if a user lifts the lower rotatable holding rack **14**, base **48** will come with it.

[0044] Second shaft **68** extends upward from the lower rotatable holding rack **14**. Second hollow post **72**—which is attached to the middle rotatable holding rack **14**—slides over second shaft **68** to rotatable mount the middle holding rack to the lower holding rack. Likewise, third hollow post **74** rotatable mounts the top holding rack to the middle holding rack by slipping over third shaft **70**.

[0045] Two ratchet devices **16** are employed to allow the user to selectively lock the rotatable holding racks to each other. The operation of these devices is straightforward. When the upper ratchet device **16** is in the unlocked position, and the user turns knob **62**, only the upper rotatable holding rack **14** will turn (Note that if the user lifts upward on knob **62**, the entire assembly will travel upward no matter what state the ratchet devices are in). When the upper ratchet device **16** is in the locked position, and the user turns knob **62**, both the upper and middle rotatable holding racks **14** will turn in unison. The lower ratchet device **16** performs the same function with respect to locking and unlocking the middle and lower rotatable holding racks.

[0046] Thus, the reader will appreciate that a user can set the rotatable holding racks to rotate independently or together. This fact is significant to the utility of the device. A user typically organizes necklaces/bracelets (on the bottom rack), earrings (on the middle rack) and rings (on the upper rack) so that matching sets are vertically aligned according to the user's tastes. Then, a the jeweltree is rotated, matching sets tend to come into the user's view. However, as the alignmentmay need to change periodically (such as with seasonal jewelry), the device allows the user to unlock the trays, reposition them, and then lock them into a new configuration.

[0047] **FIG. 4B** shows more detail of ratchet device **16**. It is placed in bore **76** through second hollow post **72** (in the case of the lower of the two ratchet devices). The reader will observe that ratchet groove **78** is cut into the upper part of second shaft **68**. **FIG. 8** shows ratchet device **16** in more detail. A generally cylindrical shaft is attached to a handle. Locking surface **84** has a slightly larger diameter than the diameter of ratchet groove **78**. Relieved surface **82** has a slightly smaller diameter than ratchet groove **78**. **FIG. 9** shows the ratchet device inserted in the same orientation it had in **FIG. 8**. Relieved surface **82** rests within ratchet groove **78** and prevents second shaft **68** from pulling out of second hollow post **72** (meaning that when the jeweltree is lifted, the middle and bottom trays will not pull apart). However, because it is a loose fit, the two trees are free to rotate relative to one another. Thus, the ratchet device is in the unlocked state.

[0048] **FIG. 9** displays an arrow indicating the direction in which the handle should be rotated in order to lock the ratchet device. **FIG. 10** shows the ratchet device after it has been rotated to the locked position. In this position, locking surface **84** has rotated into ratchet groove **78**. The slightly larger diameter of locking surface **84** frictionally engages ratchet groove **78** in a camming action that locks the two trays together and prevents relative rotation. The other ratchet mechanism works in exactly the same fashion.

[0049] While the invention has been particularly shown and described with references to an embodiment thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes in form and detail may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

Having described my invention, I claim:

1. A rotatable jewel tree allowing a user to store and view articles of jewelry, comprising:

a. a base;

b. a lower holding rack rotatably mounted to said base, wherein said lower holding rack includes a plurality of jewelry holders;

c. a middle holding rack rotatably mounted to said lower holding rack, wherein said middle holding rack includes a plurality of jewelry holders;

d. an upper holding rack, rotatably mounted to said middle holding rack, wherein said upper holding rack includes a plurality of jewelry holders;

e. a first selectable locking mechanism allowing said user to selectively lock said upper holding rack to said middle holding rack so that said upper and middle holding racks will rotate in unison; and

f. a second selectable locking mechanism allowing said user to selectively lock said middle holding rack to said lower holding rack so that said middle and lower holding racks will rotate in unison.

2. A rotatable jewel tree as recited in claim 1, further comprising a wall mount fixture allowing said user to attach said rotatable jewel tree to a wall.

3. A rotatable jewel tree as recited in claim 2, wherein said wall mount fixture includes a hinge and a swingable arm which allows said user to swing said jewel tree toward and away from said wall.

4. A rotatable jewel tree as recited in claim 1, further comprising a cylinder and a top which attach to said base and which cover said lower, middle, and upper holding racks so as to contain said articles of jewelry.

* * * * *