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(54) **DOME THEATER RIDE SYSTEM AND METHOD**

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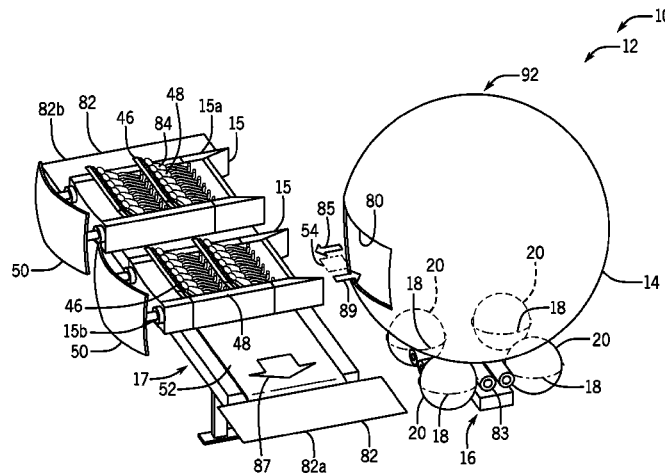
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A dome ride system includes a dome, a cartridge, receptacles of the cartridge configured to secure users, a media system configured to communicate a narrative to the users disposed within the cartridge utilizing an interior surface of the dome to display a visual aspect of the narrative, and a drive system. The cartridge is configured to be disposed within the dome, the dome is engaged with the drive system and configured to rotate in multiple directions about a center of the dome in response to input from the drive system, and the cartridge is configured to be coupled to and rotate with the dome.

21 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



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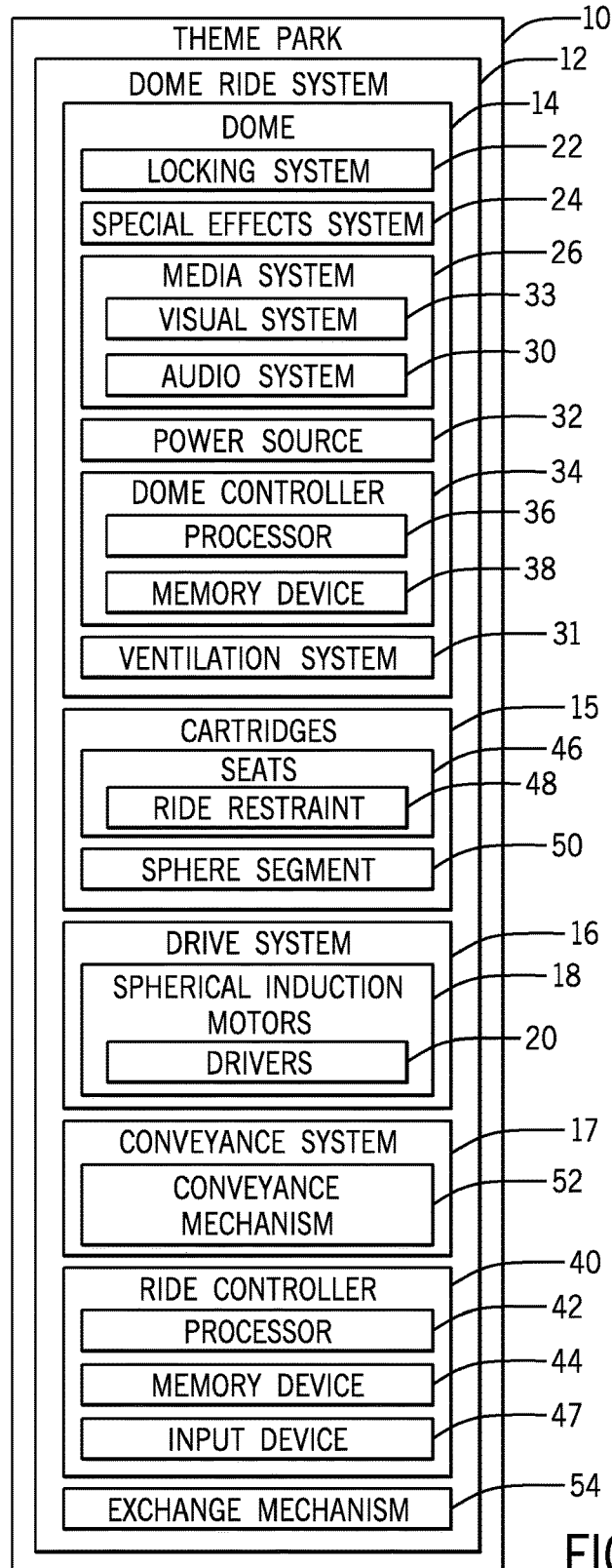


FIG. 1

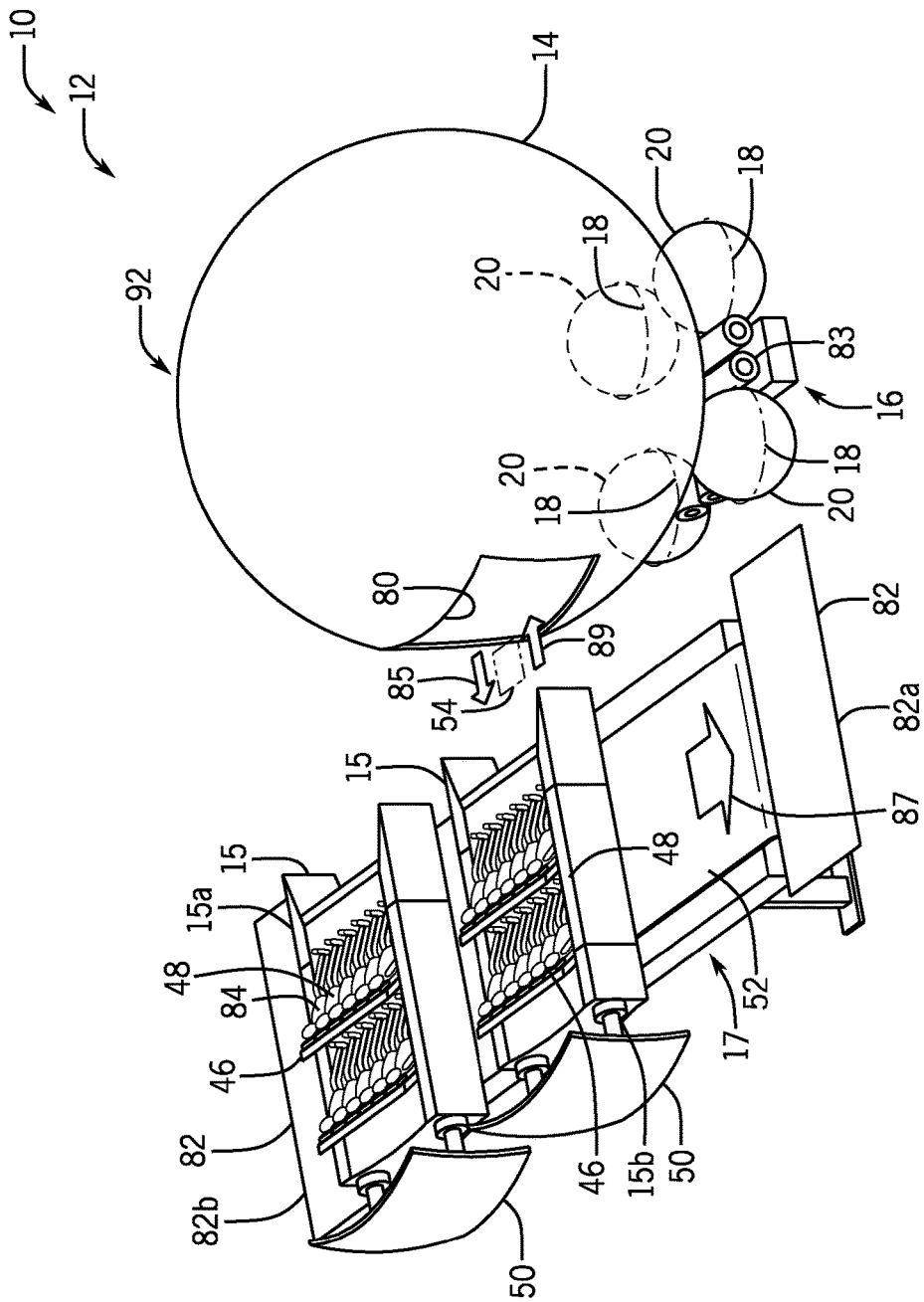


FIG. 2

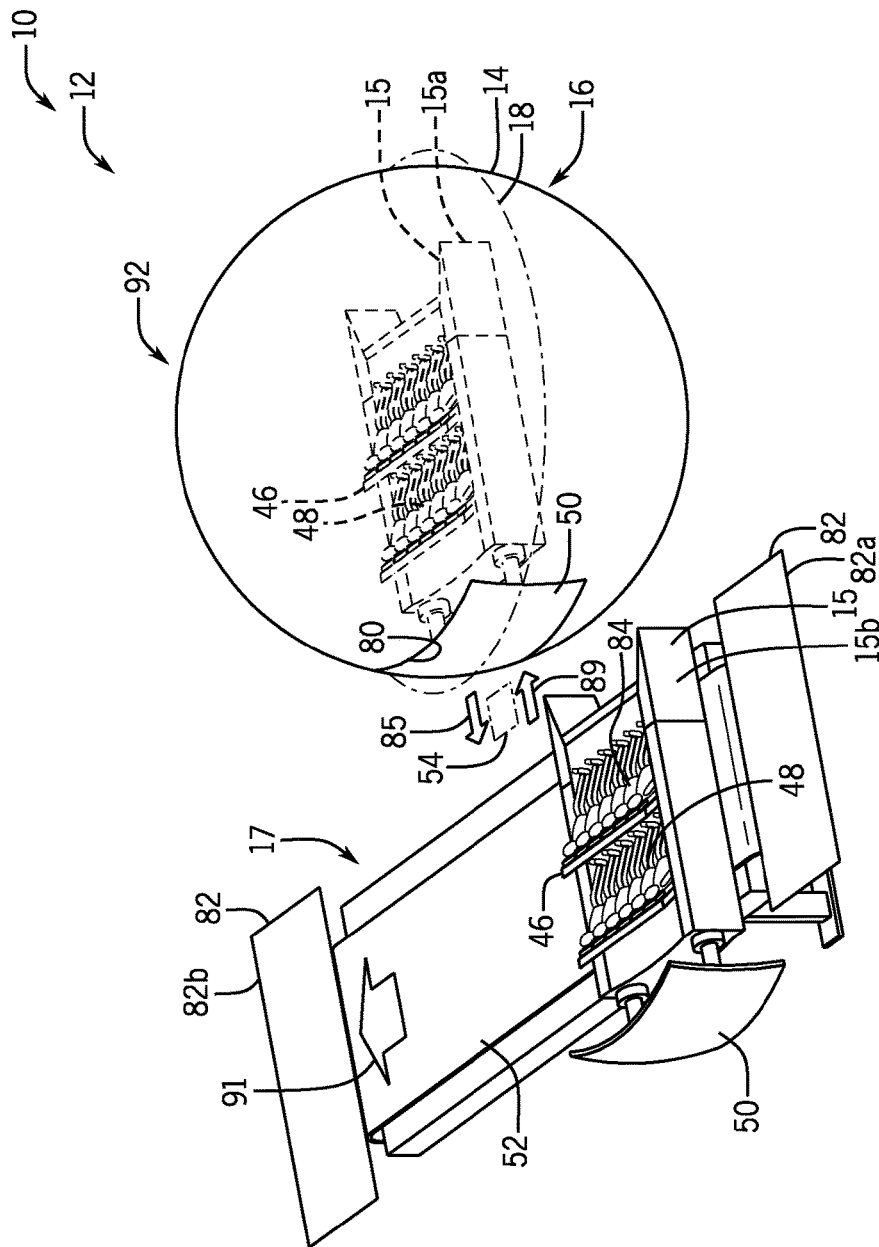


FIG. 3

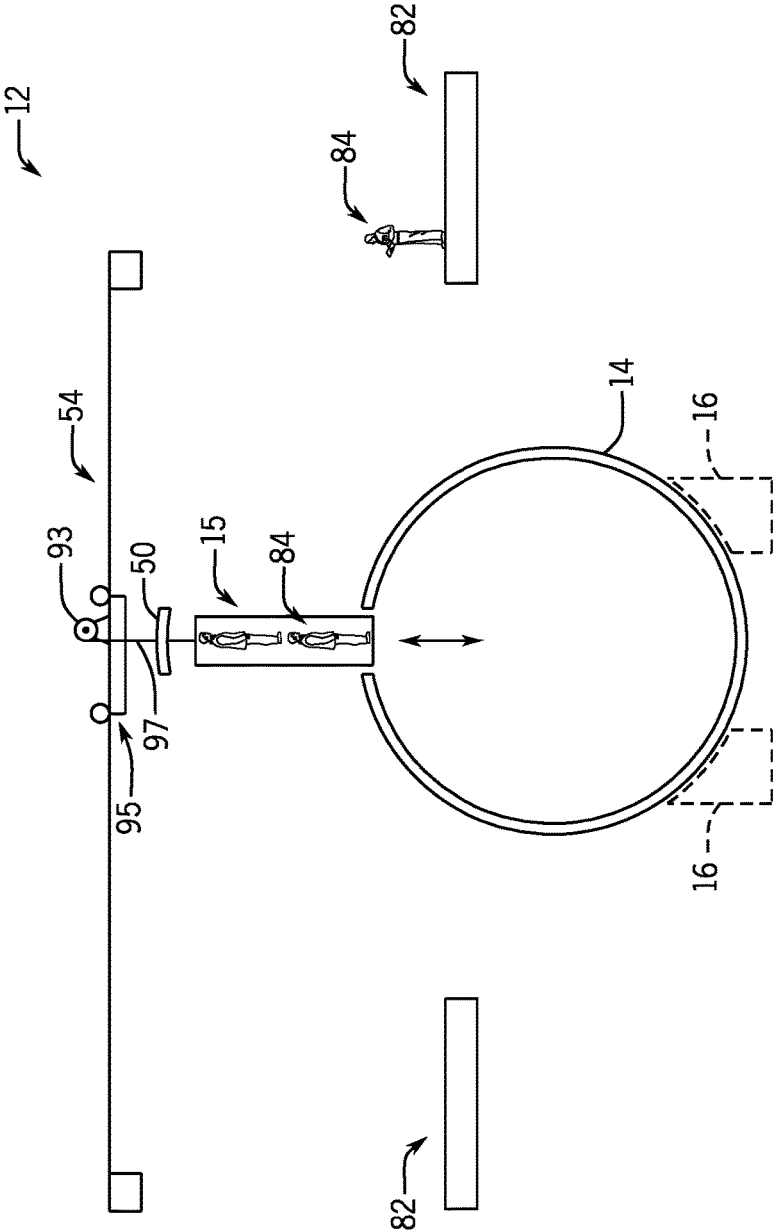


FIG. 4

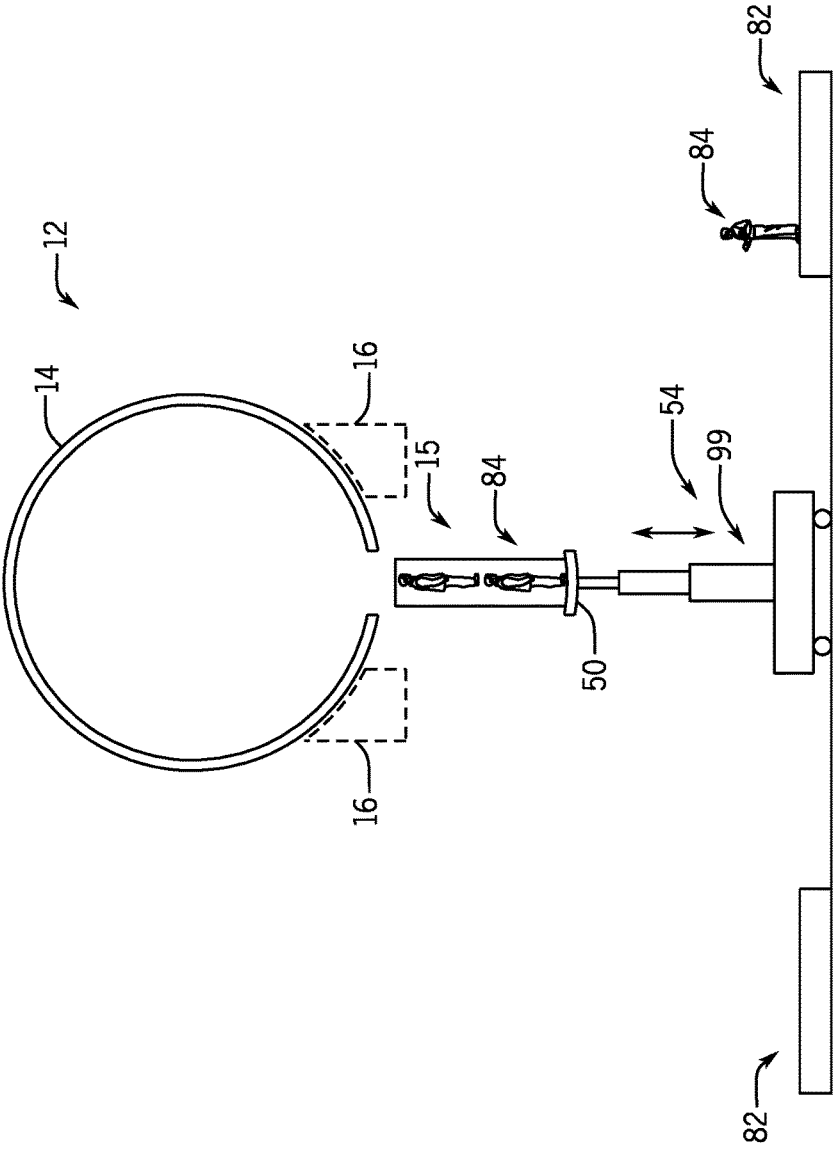


FIG. 5

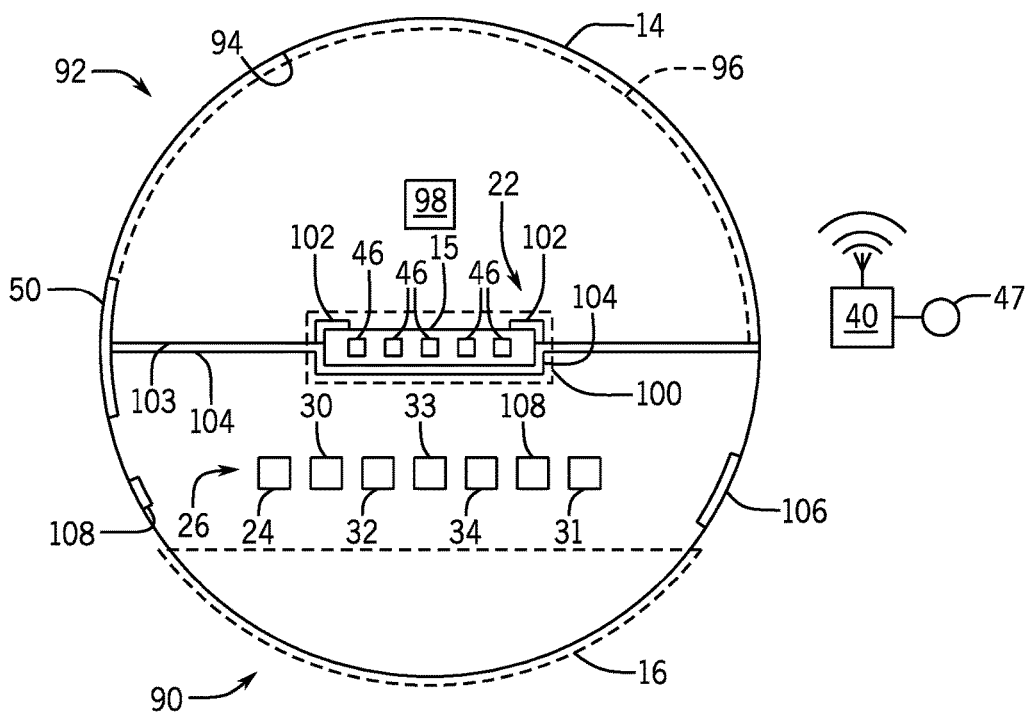


FIG. 6

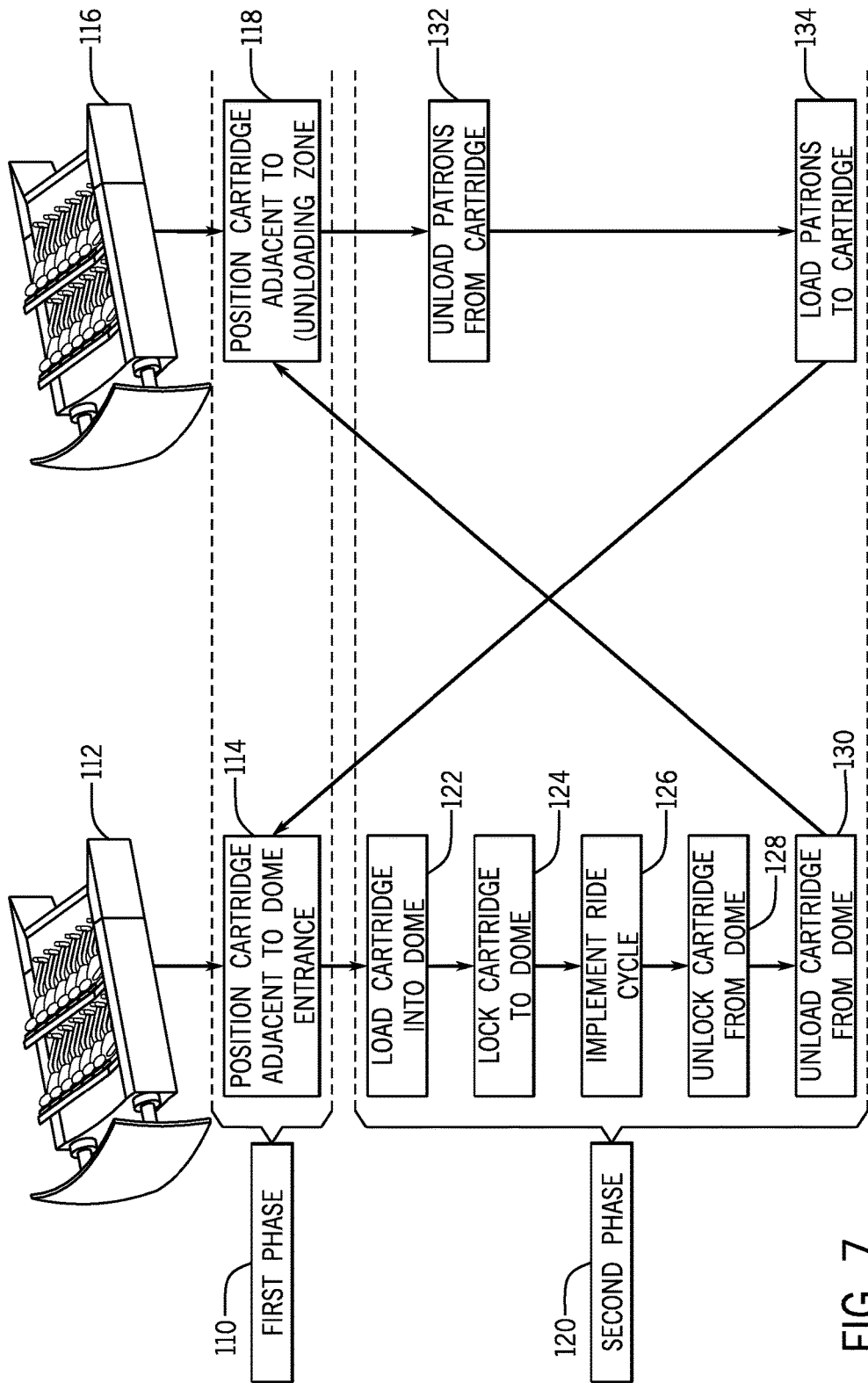


FIG. 7

DOME THEATER RIDE SYSTEM AND METHOD

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This application claims priority to and the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 62/490,933 entitled "DOME THEATER RIDE SYSTEM," filed Apr. 27, 2017, which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety for all purposes.

FIELD OF DISCLOSURE

The present disclosure relates generally to the field of amusement parks. More particularly, embodiments of the present disclosure relate to systems and methods for amusement park rides with a theater component.

BACKGROUND

Recently there has been a growing interest in immersive theater experiences. For example, a user may wish to physically feel as though they are experiencing a narrative of a theater in addition to simply watching the narrative on a screen. Some systems have attempted to enhance the experience of the user via slight actuations (e.g., vibration, tilting, etc.) of the user's seat while the user is looking forward to view the narrative on a two-dimensional screen. However, these slight actuations and narrow viewing angles provide a limited immersive experience for the user.

SUMMARY

Certain embodiments commensurate in scope with the originally claimed subject matter are summarized below. These embodiments are not intended to limit the scope of the disclosure, but rather these embodiments are intended only to provide a brief summary of certain disclosed embodiments. Indeed, the present disclosure may encompass a variety of forms that may be similar to or different from the embodiments set forth below.

In accordance with one embodiment, a dome ride system includes a dome, a cartridge, receptacles of the cartridge configured to secure users, a media system configured to communicate a narrative to the users disposed within the cartridge utilizing an interior surface of the dome to display a visual aspect of the narrative, and a drive system. The cartridge is configured to be disposed within the dome. The dome is engaged with the drive system and configured to rotate in multiple directions about a center of the dome in response to input from the drive system, and the cartridge is configured to be coupled to and rotate with the dome.

In another embodiment, a system includes a dome substantially spherical in shape, a ride vehicle configured to secure one or more users disposed within the dome, and a media system configured to display images to the one or more users via an interior surface of a first hemisphere of the dome. The system also includes a drive system configured to rotate the dome in all directions about the center of the dome. The ride vehicle is coupled to the dome such that the ride vehicle rotates in conjunction with the dome.

In another embodiment, a method includes positioning, via a first translation of a conveyance system, a first cartridge adjacent to a dome entrance of a dome. The first cartridge comprises a first ride vehicle. The method also includes positioning, via the first translation of the convey-

ance system, a second cartridge adjacent to a first loading zone. The second cartridge comprises a second ride vehicle. The method further includes inserting the first cartridge within the dome, implementing a ride cycle, withdrawing the first cartridge from the dome, and transferring users between the second cartridge and the first loading zone.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

These and other features, aspects, and advantages of the present disclosure will become better understood when the following detailed description is read with reference to the accompanying drawings in which like characters represent like parts throughout the drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a theme park with a dome ride system, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the dome ride system of FIG. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the dome ride system of FIG. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. 4 is a schematic view of the dome ride system of FIG. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. 5 is a schematic view of the dome ride system of FIG. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional schematic view of the dome ride system of FIG. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure; and

FIG. 7 is a flow diagram of throughput of users within the dome ride system of FIG. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The present disclosure provides systems and methods for fully encompassing users within a dome during a theme park ride to provide an immersive experience for the users. For certain types of theme rides, users may be disposed within seats positioned toward a substantially flat screen to view various media. These theme rides may attempt to enhance a thrill factor of the theme ride by actuating (e.g., vibrating, tilting) the seats in accordance with a narrative of the media displayed on the screen. However, such features are becoming commonplace and may provide limited enhancement to a thrill factor of a typical user.

Accordingly, in certain embodiments, an amusement park dome ride, or dome ride, is provided that may enhance a thrill factor of one or more users by enabling full rotation about all axes in accordance with a narrative of the dome ride. Specifically, the users may be secured within seats rigidly coupled to a dome of the dome ride. The dome may also be coupled to a drive system, which may include, for example, one or more spherical induction motors to enable rotation of the dome about all axes. To enhance a thrill factor of the users, the users may be disposed within and secured to the dome such that, as the dome rotates, the users rotate in conjunction with the dome. Indeed, in some embodiments, the users may be rotated, inverted, horizontal, vertical, etc. Specifically, the users may be secured within the dome and face a particular hemisphere of the dome that may display a narrative via one or more media systems such as a display screen. That is, the users may continuously observe the narrative of the media system on the particular hemi-

sphere while also rotating in accordance with the narrative. The one or more media systems may also include a special effects system and an audio system. For example, through the rotation of the dome, the display of the narrative, audio from the audio system, and special effects from the special effects system, the users may feel as though they are in a boulder gaining speed as it rolls down a slope, while in reality, the dome is simply being rotated faster and faster by the drive system and the users' sensory systems are being stimulated by the media systems.

In certain embodiments, the users may be disposed within a cartridge configured to be inserted into and retrieved from the dome. Accordingly, the dome ride may contain multiple cartridges to enable a higher throughput of users experiencing the dome ride. For example, a first set of users in a first cartridge may be within the dome experiencing the narrative of the dome ride while a second set of users in a second cartridge is positioned adjacent the dome and poised to be inserted into the dome. Once the narrative concludes for the first set of users and the first cartridge is removed from the dome, the second cartridge may be inserted into the dome shortly thereafter.

Keeping this in mind, FIG. 1 is a block diagram illustrating features of a theme park 10 that may include a dome ride system 12 (e.g., a dome theater ride). The dome ride system 12 may further include one or more domes 14, one or more cartridges 15 (e.g., ride vehicles), one or more drive systems 16, and one or more conveyance systems 17. Each dome 14 may be coupled to, disposed atop, or disposed partially within the drive system 16, which may rotate the dome 14. For example, the drive system 16 may include one or more spherical induction motors 18 which may rotate the dome 14 in any direction about a center of the dome 14. Particularly, in some embodiments, the dome 14 may be at least partially disposed within a spherical induction motor 18, which may directly rotate the dome 14 in accordance with a narrative of the dome ride system 12. In other embodiments, multiple spherical induction motors 18 may each rotate respective drivers 20 (e.g., roller balls, roller tires) which may then transfer rotational motion to the dome 14 to rotate the dome 14 in accordance with a narrative of the dome ride system 12. In some embodiments, a narrative may be defined as a story, or scenario, that the dome ride system 12 may convey to users, for example, through communication of media (e.g., pictures, sounds, etc.) and actuations (e.g., rotations) of the dome 14. Specifically, the users may be immersed in the narrative of the dome ride system 12 during a ride cycle, or a period of time in which the users are within the dome 14 and experiencing the narrative.

The dome 14 may also include a locking system 22, which may secure one of the cartridges 15 within the dome 14, a special effects system 24, which may administer a variety of special effects to the user while experiencing the dome ride system 12, and a media system 26. The media system 26 may further include a visual system 33 (e.g., display screen, projector, etc.), which may display a series of images (e.g., a visual aspect, a movie) in accordance with the narrative of the dome ride system 12, and an audio system 30, which may emit audio (e.g., an audio aspect) related to a narrative of the dome ride system 12. Further, the dome 14 may be supplied power from a power source 32, which may be any suitable power source. For example, the power source 32 may be a battery disposed within the dome 14, an electrical grid from which the dome 14 draws power, a generator, or any combination thereof. The dome 14 may also include a ventilation system 31 (e.g., a heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system), as described below.

Further, each dome may also include a dome controller 34, which may control certain features of the dome ride system 12. The dome controller 34 (e.g., a programmable logic controller (PLC)) may be any device employing a processor 36 (which may represent one or more processors), such as an application-specific processor. The dome controller 34 may also include a memory device 38 for storing instructions executable by the processor 36 to perform methods and control actions described herein relating to the dome ride system 12. The processor 36 may include one or more processing devices, and the memory device 38 may include one or more tangible, non-transitory, machine-readable media. By way of example, such machine-readable media can include RAM, ROM, EPROM, EEPROM, CD-ROM, or other optical disk storage, magnetic disk storage or other magnetic storage devices, or any other medium which can be used to carry or store desired program code in the form of machine-executable instructions or data structures and which can be accessed by the processor 36 or by any general purpose or special purpose computer or other machine with a processor.

The dome controller 34 may be communicatively coupled to a ride controller 40. The ride controller 40 may utilize a processor 42 and a memory device 44, which may be similar to the processor 36 and the memory device 38 of the dome controller 34. Particularly, a ride operator may control various functions/elements of the dome ride system 12 through one or more input devices 47 (e.g., buttons, knobs, touch screens, computer, etc.) of the ride controller 40.

As mentioned above, the dome ride system 12 may also include the one or more cartridges 15, which users may be secured to, and one or more conveyance systems 17, which may provide for an efficient throughput of users through the dome ride system 12. Each cartridge 15 may also include one or more receptacles, such as seats 46, each fitted with a ride restraint 48 (e.g., a traditional rollercoaster ride restraint), and a sphere segment 50, which may be a portion of a sphere with a curvature substantially matching that of the dome 14. The conveyance system 17 may include a conveyance mechanism 52, such as a belt or track, which may move the cartridges 15 through the dome ride system 12. Further, the dome 14, cartridge 15, and/or the conveyance mechanism 52 may include an exchange mechanism 54, which may provide for the insertion and the withdrawal of the cartridges 15 into and out of the dome 14.

FIGS. 2 and 3, herein discussed in parallel, are perspective views of the dome ride system 12. First, it should be noted that, in some embodiments, there may be multiple dome ride systems 12 within the theme park 10. In certain embodiments, each dome ride system 12 includes, among other features, at least one dome 14, at least two cartridges 15, and at least one conveyance system 17. The conveyance system 17 may be disposed adjacent to a dome entrance 80 of the dome 14 and one or more loading zones 82. Particularly, the conveyance system 17 moves the cartridges 15 via the conveyance mechanism 52 for positioning the cartridges 15 adjacent to one or more of the loading zones 82 for loading and unloading users 84. The conveyance system 17 also moves the cartridges 15 via the conveyance mechanism 52 for positioning the cartridges 15 adjacent to the dome entrance 80 for insertion of the cartridges 15 into the dome 14. For example, the conveyance system 17 may position one of the cartridges 15, which may contain users 84 from a previous ride cycle, adjacent to the loading zone 82. The users 84 from the previous ride cycle may then exit the cartridge 15 onto the loading zone 82. After the users 84 from the previous ride cycle exit the cartridge 15, users 84

which may be waiting on/near the loading zone **82** may board the cartridge **15** to start a new ride cycle. In one embodiment, multiple cartridges **15** may be maneuvered along a single conveyance system **17** and may each interact with multiple domes **14** as the ride progresses.

For an efficient throughput of users **84** through the dome ride system **12**, some users **84** may be loading/unloading from a particular cartridge **15** while the users **84** of another cartridge **15** are experiencing the narrative (e.g., a ride cycle) within the dome **14**. To illustrate, a process of efficient throughput of users **84** through the dome ride system **12** is shown in FIGS. **2** and **3**. In FIG. **2**, the cartridge **15a** may have just been loaded with users **84** while the cartridge **15b** may have just finished a ride cycle within the dome **14** and has been transferred out of the dome **14** to the conveyance system **17** as shown by arrow **85** via the exchange mechanism **54**. Once the cartridge **15b** has moved to the conveyance system **17**, the conveyance system **17** may translate both cartridges **15a**, **15b** in a direction as illustrated by arrow **87** such that the cartridge **15b** is adjacent to one of the loading zones **82** (e.g., loading zone **82a**) and the cartridge **15a** is positioned adjacent to the dome entrance **80**. Once the cartridge **15b** has been moved to a location adjacent to the loading zone **82a** as depicted in FIG. **3**, the users **84** within the cartridge **15b** may exit the cartridge **15b** and new users **84** may board the cartridge **15b**. Further, once the cartridge **15a** is positioned in the location adjacent to the dome entrance **80**, the cartridge **15a** may enter the dome **14** as shown by arrow **89** via the exchange mechanism **54**. Indeed, in some embodiments, the exchange mechanism **54** may insert and retrieve users **84** from the dome **14** in a substantially horizontal direction.

Once inside the dome **14**, the users **84** of the cartridge **15a** may experience a ride cycle as described below. Indeed, while the cartridge **15a** is being transferred into the dome **14** and/or is experiencing a ride cycle, users **84** may be exiting and/or boarding the cartridge **15b**. After the ride cycle is complete for the cartridge **15a**, the cartridge **15a** may once again be transferred to the conveyance system **17**, as shown by arrow **85**, via the exchange mechanism **54**. After the cartridge **15a** has been transferred to the conveyance system **17**, the conveyance system **17** may shift the both of the cartridges **15a**, **15b** towards the other loading zone **82b** as shown by arrow **91** such that the cartridge **15a** is positioned adjacent to the other loading zone **82b** and the cartridge **15b** is positioned adjacent to the dome entrance **80** as depicted in FIG. **2**. Indeed, once the cartridge **15a** is adjacent to the other loading zone **82b**, users **84** may exit and/or board the cartridge **15a** while the cartridge **15b** is loaded into the dome **14** as shown by arrow **89** via the exchange mechanism **54**. Once the cartridge **15b** is finished with a ride cycle, the process of efficient throughput of users **84** through the dome ride system **12** may start again, for example, with the cartridge **15b** being transferred out of the dome **14** to the conveyance system **17**, as shown by arrow **85**, via the exchange mechanism **54**.

To transfer the cartridge **15** between the conveyance system **17** and the dome **14**, the dome ride system **12** may utilize the exchange mechanism **54** as discussed above. In some embodiments, the exchange mechanism **54** may utilize a telescoping section that may extend into the dome **14** to insert and retrieve the cartridge **15** to and from the dome **14**. In some embodiments, a section of the conveyance system **17** may function as the exchange mechanism **54**, which may rotate and/or extend toward and/or into the dome **14** to retrieve and/or insert the cartridge **15** from the dome **14**. Similarly, in some embodiments, the dome **14** may include

a section that may function as the exchange mechanism **54**, which may extend to the conveyance system **17** to receive and/or retrieve the cartridge **15** from the conveyance system **17**. More particularly, in some embodiments, the dome **14** and/or conveyance system **17** may include one or more systems configured to engage and disengage the cartridge **15** to facilitate transference of the cartridge **15** between the dome **14** and the conveyance system **17**. For example, the exchange mechanism **54** and/or the cartridge **15** may include a hook/loop, one or more magnets, or any other suitable mechanism to engage the cartridge **15** such that the cartridge **15** can be pulled or pushed to and from the conveyance system **17** and/or the dome **14**.

In some embodiments, the conveyance system **17** and/or the exchange mechanism **54** may actuate in response to one or more signals from the ride controller **40**. For example, the ride controller **40** may send one or more translation signals to the conveyance system **17**, which may cause the conveyance system **17** to translate one or more of the cartridges **15** in a direction as illustrated by arrow **87** and/or **91**. Indeed, a translation of the conveyance system **17** may be defined as a movement of the conveyance mechanism **52** in a single direction, which in some embodiments, may translate the cartridge **15** towards either the loading zone **82a** or the loading zone **82b**. Similarly, the ride controller **40** may send one or more exchange signals to the exchange mechanism **54**, which may cause the exchange mechanism **54** to transfer the cartridge **15** between the conveyance system **17** and the dome **14** in a direction as illustrated by arrow **85** and/or **89**.

Further, as mentioned above, the dome **14** may be substantially spherical in shape. In some embodiments, a portion of the dome **14** that the dome entrance **80** covers may be exposed to allow insertion of the cartridge **15** through the dome entrance **80**. Therefore, each cartridge **15** may be coupled to the sphere segment **50**, which corresponds to the (exposed) portion of the dome **14** at the dome entrance **80**. Particularly, an end of the cartridge **15** may be coupled to the sphere segment **50**, which may substantially match the curvature of the dome **14**. Therefore, when the cartridge **15** is inserted into the dome **14** at a start of each ride cycle, the sphere shape of the dome **14** may be completed by the partial-sphere shape of the sphere segment **50**. Additionally, or in the alternative, the dome **14** may include a partial-sphere shaped door (e.g., hatch, sphere segment door) that may be opened and closed (e.g., via hinges) to allow the cartridge **15** to enter, exit, and be closed within the dome **14**. Overall, the section of the dome **14** through which the cartridge **15** may traverse (e.g., the dome entrance **80**) may be covered (e.g., sealed) by the sphere segment **50** and/or the partial-sphere shaped door such that substantially no external light (e.g., light pollution, light intrusion) extends into the dome **14** while the cartridge **15** is disposed within the dome **14**. Indeed, in some embodiments, the dome **14** and the sphere segment **50** may substantially be formed by an opaque material to prevent light pollution from entering the interior of the dome **14**. Further, the sphere segment **50** may serve as a surface for image presentation (e.g., projection).

During a ride cycle, the cartridge **15** may be coupled to the dome **14**, which may rotate about its center in accordance with the narrative of the dome ride system **12**. In this manner, the cartridge **15** may also rotate in conjunction with the dome **14** in accordance with the narrative of the dome ride system **12**. Particularly, the drive system **16** may rotate the dome **14** and the cartridge **15**. In certain embodiments, as illustrated in FIG. **2**, the drive system **16** may include three or four spherical induction motors **18**, each having the drivers **20** (e.g., roller balls) disposed at least partially within

a respective spherical induction motor **18**. In such embodiments, the spherical induction motors **18** may be disposed in a substantially horizontal plane relative to one another with a portion of each of the drivers **20** exposed in the vertical direction to contact the dome **14**. In this manner, each spherical induction motor **18** may rotate its respective driver **20** in any direction, which in turn transfers rotational motion to the dome **14**, which sits atop and is in contact with each of the drivers **20**. In other words, the rotation of the drivers **20** may rotate the dome **14**. Indeed, in some embodiments, the drivers **20** may include a frictional coating to prevent the dome **14** from slipping relative to the drivers **20**. In some embodiments, although the drivers **20** provide motivation for rotation of the dome **14**, the weight of the dome **14** may be at least partially supported by three or more supports **83** such that the spherical induction motors **18** experiences a limited amount of the weight of the dome **14**. Each support **83** may contact the dome **14** with one or more roller bearings, or other friction-reducing elements such that each support **83** imparts limited frictional resistance to the rotation of the dome. Further, in some embodiments, the dome **14** may rotate in any direction about its center through contact with three or more tires (e.g., one or more toroids, wheels, etc.). However, unlike the drivers **20**, each tire may rotate in a respective singular rotational plane. Indeed, in such embodiments, the direction of rotation of the dome **14** may be a combination of the respective singular rotational planes of the tires, which therefore also enables the dome **14** to rotate in any direction about the center of the dome **14**.

In certain embodiments, as illustrated in FIG. 3, the dome **14** may be at least partially disposed within a spherical induction motor **18** of the drive system **16**. Particularly, the spherical induction motor **18** may directly rotate the dome **14** in any direction about the center of the dome **14**. Further, it should be noted that each spherical induction motor **18**, whether rotating the dome **14** directly or rotating a respective driver **20**, which in turn transfers rotation to the dome **14**, may be a three or more degrees of freedom bearingless induction motor. For example, in some embodiments, each spherical induction motor **18** may include three stators with either, one of the drivers **20** (FIG. 2) or the dome **14** (FIG. 3), as the rotor. Indeed, the drivers **20** and/or the dome **14** may be at least partially composed of a conductive and/or magnetic material such as stainless steel to promote induction.

In the current embodiment, users **84** disposed within the cartridge **15** may be in a leaned back position. Particularly, the seats **46** of the cartridge **15** may enable users **84** to face a generally upward position during a ride cycle. In this manner, once inside the dome **14**, the users **84** will have a view of an upper hemisphere **92** of the dome **14**, which may display images in accordance with the narrative of the dome ride system **12**. Each seat **46** may also be associated with one of the ride restraints **48**. Each of the ride restraints **48** may secure one of the users **84** to one of the seats **46** such that, regardless of the orientation of the cartridge **15**, the user **84** will remain secured to the seat **46**. Additionally, or in the alternative, the one or more users **84** may be lowered or raised into the dome **14** (e.g., while in a cartridge and/or a ride vehicle) and disposed within the dome **14** in a substantially vertical position (e.g., standing position) looking substantially forward to start a ride cycle.

To illustrate, FIGS. 4 and 5 are schematic views of embodiments in which the users **84** may be lowered or raised into and out of the dome **14**. For example, as shown in FIG. 4, the exchange mechanism **54** may include a winch **93**, a bogey **95**, and a cable **97**. The bogey **95** may travel between

the dome **14** and the loading zones **82** such that the users **84** may load and unload from the cartridge **15** and be inserted and withdrawn from the dome **14**. Particularly, the winch **93** may raise and lower the cartridge **15** via the cable **97** to pick up the users **84**, insert the users **84** into the dome **14**, retrieve the users **84** from the dome **14**, and allow the users **84** to disembark from the cartridge **15** to the loading zone **82**. Further, as shown in FIG. 5, the exchange mechanism **54** may include a hydraulic stand **99**. The hydraulic stand **99** may travel between the dome **14** and the loading zones **82** such that the users **84** may load and unload from the cartridge **15** and be inserted and withdrawn from the dome **14**. Particularly, the hydraulic stand **99** may raise and lower the cartridge **15** to pick up the users **84**, insert the users **84** into the dome **14**, retrieve the users **84** from the dome **14**, and allow the users **84** to disembark from the cartridge **15** to the loading zone **82**. Indeed, in some embodiments, as shown in FIGS. 4 and 5, the exchange mechanism **54** may insert and retrieve users **84** to and from the dome **14** in a substantially vertical direction. In other embodiments, different lifting/lowering mechanisms may be used. For example, the winch **93** and cable **97** in FIG. 4 may be replaced by hydraulics. Further, various mechanisms for adjusting the cartridge **15** may be used to facilitate entry and exit of the cartridge **15** and the users **84**.

While inside the dome **14**, the cartridge **15** may be disposed such that a center of the cartridge **15** is located substantially at the center of the dome **14**. For example, as seen in FIG. 6, which is a cross-sectional schematic view of the dome **14**, the cartridge **15** is disposed within the dome **14** separating a lower hemisphere **90** from an upper hemisphere **92**. In other words, the cartridge **15** may bisect the dome **14**. In this manner, during a ride cycle, users seated in the cartridge **15** may have a view of an interior surface **94** of the upper hemisphere **92** of the dome **14**. For example, a substantial portion, or all, of the interior surface **94** of the upper hemisphere **92** may be utilized to display images to help provide an immersive experience of for the users. Particularly, the upper hemisphere **92** may include one or more screens **96** or projections of the visual system **33** that users may view to see images (e.g., a movie) in accordance with the narrative of the dome ride system **12**. The one or more screens **96** may utilize light-weight, flexible, self-emitting (e.g., does not require a backlight), and/or electroluminescent displays to present the images to the user. For example, in some embodiments, the dome **14** may utilize an organic light emitting diode (OLED) screen (e.g., wallpaper) and/or a curved light emitting diode (LED) screen that may be used to display the images. Additionally, or in the alternative, the dome **14** may include one or more projectors **98** to project the images onto the interior surface **94** of the upper hemisphere **92**. In some embodiments, the interior surface **94** of the lower hemisphere **90** may be viewable in the illustrated orientation via an open or transparent floor.

While viewing the narrative of the dome ride system **12** on the interior surface **94** of the upper hemisphere **92** of the dome **14**, the drive system **16** may rotate the dome **14** in line with the narrative. For example, the dome **14** may rotate in line with a narrative of a boulder slowly gaining speed as it rolls down a slope, a narrative of a plane rotating (e.g., pitching), and/or a narrative of a ball rolling through an environment. As discussed above, the cartridge **15** disposed within the dome **14** may rotate in conjunction with the dome **14** as the dome **14** rotates. However, in some embodiments, the cartridge **15** may rotate independently of the dome **14** via one or more internal rotational mechanisms **100**, which may function similarly to a gyroscope. In such embodiments, the

images being displayed to the user may rotate relative to the interior surface **94** of the dome **14** such that users always have a clear view of the images. Further, while every user within the cartridge **15** may rotate within the dome **14**, a portion of the users may also revolve about the center of the dome **14**. For example, the users may be disposed within the seats **46** of the cartridge **15**, which may vary in radial distance relative to the center of the dome **14**. Therefore, as the dome **14** rotates, users that are seated radially further away from the center of the dome **14** may experience more movement and centripetal force than users seated radially closer to the center of the dome **14** and the cartridge **15**. Regardless of the rotational means, the users and/or the dome **14** may be configured to rotate 360 degrees about all axes.

Further, in some embodiments, the drive system **16** may receive one or more drive signals from the ride controller **40** and/or the dome controller **34**. The one or more drive signals may signal for the drive system **16** to rotate the dome **14** such that the rotations of the dome **14** are in accordance with the narrative of the dome ride system **12**. For example, the one or more drive signals may cause the drive system **16** to increase rotational speed of the dome **14** if the narrative involves rolling down a slope, or to oscillate about an axis if the narrative involves pitching of a boat or aerial vehicle.

While inside the dome **14**, the cartridge **15** may be locked in place via a locking mechanism **102** of the locking system **22**. The locking mechanism **102** may be any suitable device/mechanism that may secure the cartridge **15** within the dome **14**. For example, in some embodiments, the locking mechanism **102** may include one or more latches configured to engage with a portion of the cartridge **15**. In some embodiments, the locking mechanism **102** may be one or more magnets configured to engage with the cartridge **15**. Further, while locked within the dome **14** via the locking mechanism **102**, the sphere segment **50**, which is coupled to the cartridge **15** via an extension **103**, may be aligned with the surface of the dome **14** to form a complete sphere with the dome **14** and substantially prevent external light from entering the dome **14**. In some embodiments, a platform **104** may support the cartridge **15** and/or the extension **103** while the cartridge **15** is disposed within the dome **14**. In some embodiments, the platform **104** may separate the upper hemisphere **92** from the lower hemisphere **90** of the dome **14**.

As discussed above, users of the dome **14** may view the interior surface **94** of the upper hemisphere **92** to experience the narrative of the dome ride system **12**. Therefore, several elements of the dome ride system **12** may be disposed within the lower hemisphere **90** so as not to obstruct the users from viewing the interior surface **94** of the upper hemisphere **92** of the dome **14**. For example, the lower hemisphere **90** of the dome **14** may include the special effects system **24**, the audio system **30**, the power source **32**, the ventilation system **31**, and the dome controller **34**. The dome **14** may also be equipped with several other entertainment enhancing features. For example, the dome **14** may utilize virtual reality (VR), alternate reality (AR), and/or mixed reality (MR) systems to convey the narrative to the users, for example, via headgear sets associated with each user.

As mentioned above, the special effects system **24** may administer a variety of special effects within the dome **14**. For example, the special effects system **24** may administer smoke/vapor/smog, various water effects (e.g., mists, sprays, etc.), vibration effects, scent effects and so forth. Further, the ventilation system **31** may provide conditioned air to the dome **14**. Indeed, in some embodiments, the ventilation system **31** may draw external air through one or

more vents **106** disposed along the interior surface **94** of the dome **14** and may cool and dehumidify the external air. In some embodiments, the ventilation system **31** may recycle internal air within the dome **14**. The special effects system **24** and the ventilation system **31** may operate based on one or more signals received from the dome controller **34** and/or the ride controller **40**. For example, the special effects system **24** may administer the various special effects discussed above based on one or more special effects signals received from the dome controller **34** and/or the ride controller **40**. Similarly, the ventilation system **31** may control airflow (e.g., flow speed) and temperature based on one or more ventilation signals received from the dome controller **34** and/or the ride controller **40**.

Indeed, in some embodiments, the ride controller **40** and the dome controller **34** may be capable of performing similar functions, and in some embodiments, functions of the controllers **34**, **40** may be carried out by a singular controller. However, in some embodiments, ride controller **40** may receive input from a ride operator through the one or more input devices **47**. The ride controller **40** may then communicate the input via one or more signals to the dome controller **34**. The dome controller **34** may then carry out various functions based on the signals received from ride controller **40**. For example, the operator may send one or more signals to the dome controller **34** through the ride controller **40** to activate a ride cycle.

Various elements such as the special effects system **24**, the media system **26**, the power source **32**, the dome controller **34**, and the ventilation system **31** may also add a weight to the lower hemisphere **90** of the dome **14**. In this manner, the dome **14** may be in equilibrium when the dome **14** is in a start position, which may be defined as the cartridge **15** being at a horizontal position and the upper hemisphere **92** disposed completely above the lower hemisphere **90**. For example, in some embodiments, a majority of the weight of the dome **14** may be in the lower hemisphere **90** or the upper hemisphere **92**, which may cause imbalances in the dome **14**. Accordingly, the dome **14** may be weighted via weights **108** such that the dome **14** is biased towards the start position. Additionally, or in the alternative, the dome **14** may include additional weights **108** to suitably distribute weight about the dome **14** for kinematic purposes.

FIG. 7 is a flowchart illustrating throughput of users through the dome ride system **12**. During a first phase **110**, a first cartridge **112** (e.g., cartridge **15**) is positioned adjacent to a dome entrance (block **114**) (e.g., via the conveyance system **17**). Also during the first phase **110**, a second cartridge **116** (e.g., cartridge **15**) is positioned adjacent to an unloading/loading zone (block **118**). Indeed, blocks **114** and **118** may occur simultaneously during the first phase **110**. During a second phase **120**, the first cartridge **112** may be loaded into the dome (block **122**) (e.g., by the exchange mechanism **54**) from the position adjacent to the dome entrance and locked within the dome (block **124**) (e.g., via the locking system **22**). Once the first cartridge **112** is inside and locked within the dome, the dome ride system **12** may implement a ride cycle for the first cartridge **112** (block **126**). The ride cycle may consist of rotating the sphere and the first cartridge **112** in accordance with a narrative of the dome ride system **12**. Once the narrative, and more specifically, the ride cycle, is complete, the first cartridge **112** may be unlocked (block **128**) and unloaded (block **130**) from the dome.

Also during the second phase **120**, users that were in the second cartridge **116** may unload from the second cartridge **116** on to the unloading zone (block **132**). Once the users have unloaded from the second cartridge **116**, new users may

board the second cartridge **116** from the loading zone (block **134**). After the second phase **120**, the first phase **110** may start again with the second cartridge **116** being positioned adjacent to the dome entrance (block **114**) and the first cartridge **112** being positioned adjacent to the unloading and loading zone (block **118**). In some embodiments, the first and second cartridges **112**, **116** may be positioned adjacent to the dome entrance (block **114**) and/or adjacent to the unloading and loading zone (block **118**) via a single translation of a conveyance system (e.g., conveyance system **17**).

While only certain features of present embodiments have been illustrated and described herein, many modifications and changes will occur to those skilled in the art. It is therefore to be understood that the appended claims are intended to cover all such modifications and changes that fall within the true spirit of the invention.

The techniques presented and claimed herein are referenced and applied to material objects and concrete examples of a practical nature that demonstrably improve the present technical field and, as such, are not abstract, intangible or purely theoretical. Further, if any claims appended to the end of this specification contain one or more elements designated as “means for [perform]ing [a function] . . .” or “step for [perform]ing [a function] . . .”, it is intended that such elements are to be interpreted under 35 U.S.C. 112(f). However, for any claims containing elements designated in any other manner, it is intended that such elements are not to be interpreted under 35 U.S.C. 112(f).

The invention claimed is:

1. A dome ride system, comprising:
 - a dome;
 - a cartridge, wherein the cartridge is configured to be disposed within the dome;
 - receptacles of the cartridge configured to secure users;
 - a media system configured to communicate a narrative to the users disposed within the cartridge utilizing an interior surface of the dome to display a visual aspect of the narrative; and
 - a drive system, wherein the dome is engaged with the drive system and configured to rotate relative to the drive system in multiple directions about a center of the dome in response to input from the drive system, and wherein the cartridge is configured to be coupled to and rotate with the dome.
2. The dome ride system of claim **1**, wherein the drive system comprises one or more spherical induction motors.
3. The dome ride system of claim **2**, wherein the one or more spherical induction motors comprises three or more spherical induction motors, wherein each spherical induction motor of the three or more spherical induction motors is configured to rotate a driver, wherein the driver of each spherical induction motor is configured to at least partially support the dome, and wherein the dome is configured to rotate in response to rotation of the driver of each spherical induction motor.
4. The dome ride system of claim **1**, wherein the dome is at least partially disposed within a spherical induction motor, and wherein the dome is a rotor of the spherical induction motor.
5. The dome ride system of claim **1**, wherein the media system utilizes an upper hemisphere of the interior surface of the dome to display the visual aspect of the narrative, and wherein the media system comprises an audio system disposed in a lower hemisphere of the dome and configured to output one or more audio aspects of the narrative.

6. The dome ride system of claim **5**, comprising a power source disposed within the lower hemisphere of the dome, and wherein the power source is configured to supply power to the media system.

7. The dome ride system of claim **1**, wherein an exterior of the dome is substantially a sphere, and where the cartridge is coupled to a sphere segment, and wherein the sphere segment is configured to complete the exterior of the dome when the cartridge is disposed within the sphere.

8. The dome ride system of claim **1**, comprising a conveyance system, wherein the cartridge is a first cartridge and the dome ride system comprises a second cartridge, and wherein the conveyance system is configured to translate the first cartridge and the second cartridge to one or more positions within the dome ride system.

9. The dome ride system of claim **8**, wherein the conveyance system is configured to position the first cartridge and the second cartridge adjacent to an entrance of the dome and adjacent to one or more loading zones of the dome ride system, wherein the one or more loading zones are configured to support additional users.

10. The dome ride system of claim **8**, comprising an exchange mechanism, wherein the exchange mechanism is configured to transfer the first cartridge and the second cartridge between the conveyance system and the dome.

11. A system comprising:

- a dome substantially spherical in shape;
- a ride vehicle configured to secure one or more users disposed within the dome;
- a media system configured to display images to the one or more users via an interior surface of a first hemisphere of the dome;
- a drive system configured to rotate the dome in all directions about a center of the dome, wherein the ride vehicle is coupled to the dome such that the ride vehicle rotates in conjunction with the dome, and wherein the drive system comprises one or more spherical induction motors configured to rotate the dome.

12. The system of claim **11**, wherein the drive system comprises three or more wheels, each of the three or more wheels configured to at least partially support the dome and to rotate in a respective rotational plane to rotate the dome.

13. The system of claim **11**, wherein the ride vehicle is configured to coordinate with an exchange system to transfer the one or more users into and out of the dome.

14. The system of claim **13**, wherein the exchange system is configured to transfer the one or more users into and out of the dome in a horizontal direction or a vertical direction.

15. A method, comprising:

- positioning, via a first translation of a conveyance system, a first cartridge from adjacent to a first loading zone to adjacent to an entrance of a dome, wherein the first cartridge comprises a first ride vehicle;
- positioning, via the first translation of the conveyance system, a second cartridge from adjacent to the entrance of the dome to adjacent to a second loading zone, wherein the second cartridge comprises a second ride vehicle, and wherein the first loading zone is separate from the second loading zone;
- inserting the first cartridge into the dome;
- implementing a ride cycle;
- withdrawing the first cartridge from the dome; and
- transferring users between the second cartridge and the second loading zone.

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16. The method of claim 15, comprising:
positioning, via a second translation of the conveyance
system, the first cartridge adjacent to the first loading
zone; and

positioning, via the second translation of the conveyance 5
system, the second cartridge adjacent to the entrance of
the dome.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the first translation
of the conveyance system is in a first direction and the 10
second translation of the conveyance system is in a second
direction, and wherein the first direction is opposite to the
second direction.

18. The method of claim 15, comprising:
coupling the first cartridge with the dome via a locking
mechanism when the first cartridge is within the dome. 15

19. The method of claim 15, wherein inserting the first
cartridge into the dome comprises utilizing an exchange
mechanism to transfer the first cartridge from the convey-
ance system into the dome.

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20. The method of claim 15, wherein implementing the
ride cycle comprises communicating a narrative to users of
the first cartridge via media and rotation of the dome.

21. A dome ride system, comprising:
a dome, wherein an exterior of the dome is substantially
a sphere;

a cartridge, wherein the cartridge is configured to be
disposed within the dome;

receptacles of the cartridge configured to secure users;

10 a media system configured to communicate a narrative to
the users disposed within the cartridge utilizing an
interior surface of the dome to display a visual aspect
of the narrative; and

15 a drive system, wherein the dome is engaged with the
drive system and configured to rotate in multiple direc-
tions about a center of the dome in response to input
from the drive system, and wherein the cartridge is
configured to be coupled to and rotate with the dome.

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