



Making the Head of a Wire Puppets using Clay and Plasticine

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Abstract: *This article deals with the method of making and making the mechanism of the Wire Puppet, its performance on the stage, and its dimensions. It is about the creation and method of creation of this doll.*

Key words: *pape-mache, model, face, paper, wood.*

The head of a wire puppet is on average 8-10 cm (in children's art groups, this size can be reduced to 5-6 cm).

Do not make large head parts: this can not only increase the expressiveness of the doll, but on the contrary reduce it. This is because the body of the glove cannot be enlarged, as the body is adapted to the size of the actor's hand. An excessively large head makes a small body look less attractive. In addition, the large head limits the movement of the doll's hands.

The head of the doll is prepared together with its neck, slightly bent forward. In this case, special attention should be paid to the fact that the head does not rise too much in relation to the neck: in this case, the viewer watching the doll will see the doll from the wrong perspective.

If the head part of the doll should be movable, the neck part is not prepared, the neck part is done by the actor's finger, which is inserted into the head part and covered with knitwear or fabric. In this case, the doll's head is controlled as shown in Figure 1. Dolls of animals (puppy, rabbit) are made without a neck. This is because the head position of animal dolls is different from the head position of human dolls in relation to the body.

The head can even be made of a balloon with ears, nose, mouth and eyes attached, with large or small relativity. If the ball heads are in place and skillfully made, they can have a very bright expressiveness (as in the case of S.V. Obraztsov's pop dolls).

It is difficult to give specific instructions regarding the doll's head. However, there are several rules that have been tested by time and theater practice.

The main features of the face are worked on the doll's head, including small details, such as wrinkles, which the viewer cannot see anyway.

The doll on the bed is almost always depicted in profile with respect to the viewer. Therefore, the profile of the doll should be clear and expressive. If the puppet is "without profile", it is not clear to the viewer which way the puppet is facing and which way it is facing.

When embodying a certain symbol in a doll, when creating facial expressions (mask) that show the character of this symbol, it is not necessary to be satisfied with the formation of only one facial expression related to the emotion of the illuminated symbol. It is possible to make a doll



happy, but for this it is not necessary to create its facial structure in such a way that it keeps smiling. A character who smiles throughout the scene can touch the audience's stomach.

The head of the doll can be made mainly of papier-mâché, wood, fabric dense with cotton or knitwear.

Making a headboard made of wood is a very complicated process that requires the skillful hands of a craftsman. Additionally, a wooden headboard is heavier than a papier-mâché headboard. For this reason, wooden head parts are rarely used. Wooden head parts are mainly used when mechanisms need to be placed on the head of the doll, which are difficult to place on the papier-mâché head parts.

In the preparation of the wooden head, mostly dried wood is used. They work with wood with sharp blades and knives. To make the wooden head part light, it is made loose inside, and the hole in the neck part is closed with a hair wig. Otherwise, the wood used for making the head is split in two, hollowed out, and attached with thin and small nails, again with carpenter's glue.

Dummy headpieces made of cotton, covered with fabric or knitted fabric, are used mainly by amateur teams, and are rarely used. The head parts of the doll made in such a simple way do not keep their shape for a long time, and they are not painted well.

Head pieces made of pape-mache are mainly used in theater practice. There are two ways of making them: 1) gluing the head part made of clay or plasticine with paper from the outside; 2) gluing out of the plaster form.

The first method is significantly more robust, but can cause the model to change drastically. It is appropriate to use this method when there are difficulties in casting a plaster mold due to the size of the head; in addition, in large volumes, changes in shape are not so noticeable. External gluing is used to make separate stage decorations and props from pape-mache.

It is recommended to make the primary shape and model from plasticine. The reason for this is that the clay mold must always be kept moist in order to keep it in the right shape.

After the model is ready, it is necessary to boil the glue. For this, flour is mixed in cold water until it reaches a certain consistency. The glue should be stirred constantly so that it does not burn.

During the boiling period, a little liquefied carpenter's glue is mixed into it. After it boils a little and the glue thickens, it is considered ready.

It is not advisable to use pure carpenter's glue to glue the papier-mâché, as this can result in a very fragile head that is difficult to paint.

For the preparation of pape-mache, any unglued paper-newspaper, wrapping paper is suitable. Paper with a smooth surface will not fit.

Before completely gluing the model, its upper parts should be smeared with vaseline or other oil.

Tear the papers for gluing into small pieces (2x2 cm in size). It is not advisable to cut the pieces of paper with scissors or a knife, the edges of each piece should be smooth.

The first layers of paper, which are directly attached to the model, consist of pieces of paper soaked in water. Starting from the second layer, pieces of paper are coated with glue and placed over the first layer. Each layer of laid paper should be straightened so that it does not become wrinkled. The uneven parts of the model, the places where the nose, mouth, and eyes are located, should be carefully pressed with fingers and smoothed out.

In this way, the model is glued with four or five layers. If the paper is thin, the number of layers is increased to 6-7. In order not to get lost in the number of laying times, and not to notice



various unevenness, it is recommended to choose the layers of paper to be laid in two different colors. In this case, it is necessary to alternately lay layers of different colored paper.

When high strength is required (if the size of the head part is large), the number of layers is increased to 8-9.