

This handbook was created as part of the project *Culture Bridging* with the aim of providing partners with help with realization of performances for children and young people in the territory of the Pirot district.

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# What we need to know about plays for children



**A HANDBOOK**

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## THEATER ART

*Theater possesses an almost incredible power to embody problems that are fundamental to existence but which often defy solution because, historically speaking, theater is more a medium of emotion than rationality, it can find language and environment in which to express what would otherwise have to remain hidden. or suppressed. The theater occupied areas of existence, lands of the mind, which are by nature resistant to rational investigation, and it did so that it could be confined there, not destroyed, nor analyzed. When the actors and the audience come together and surrender together to a collective experience, the necessary mystery takes place . (Harwood 2020: 8)*

Searching for a definition of theater art is futile since theater "is like life and because it deals with life, it can never be reduced to some simple formula" (Harwood 2020: 7). The term theater itself is ambiguous: it can mean a theater building, a place where a play is performed, or a performance, a concrete performance by actors on stage. Another aggravating circumstance in specifying the phenomenon of theater art is that, unlike other arts (literature, fine arts, music), it is syncretic, i.e. it includes various artistic expressions and unites them in one aesthetic framework of the theater. First of all, a literary text - a dramatic text - is necessary for theatrical art. It differs from other literary types of drama in that it does not end with a text, but instead makes a request for realization in an acting performance on stage, radio or film. The double realization of dramatic art takes place through the literary text and the laws of the theater . It can be said that the dramatic text has a double potential since its realization is read or seen in the theater. Often, by reading and imagining the action, one cannot convey all the beauty and value of the work in an appropriate way as when watching it in the theater, but many times in the theater one cannot experience the poetry of the dramatic text in the same way as when reading it. When reading, one perceives primarily the literary qualities of a dramatic work, while during the reception of a theatrical play, one perceives theatrical values that can only be presented on stage. Nevertheless, drama should be understood as a unique artistic phenomenon and always take into account that it is a literary work intended to be presented on stage, and that its means of expression is not only language (a literary text as a subject of study by literary theorists and critics), but also everything that is at the disposal of the actor's art in different media (the subject of study by teatrologists) and the author of the drama must take this into account in advance. For the aforementioned reason, it is necessary for the playwright to have a good knowledge of stage means. The stage means are *the actors* (characters in the drama), *elements of scenography* and *the director* . Actors play roles in theater, film, television or radio. In addition to the most important elements of scenography, lighting and decor, music, costume, mask and make-up are indispensable. Director is an artistic profession in the field of performing arts (theatre, film, radio and television). He is invisible on the stage, but a decisive factor, because he leads, directs and controls the preparations and realization of the entire performing activity in an author's way.

## DIRECTING A THEATER PLAY FOR CHILDREN

Adolphe Appia, the author of the capital part of the aesthetics of modern theater, *Music and the Art of the Theatre*, devoted a lot of space to the problems of dramatic art for children. According to him, the essence of a theatrical act is to receive and to give. For him, art is similar to science and morality, it is equal to love, an act of spiritual exchange, and the artist does not live for himself, but works for others, for the audience. A very important moment for Appia is spontaneity, which is a gift of nature, that's why he believes that a child is a born artist. Children's dramatic play is always discussed from the same positions that apply to dramatic art otherwise. Just as a child is not a diminished human being, so there is no diminished art either. "Directing for children means achieving a total artistic, aesthetic and technical creation as usual in drama, opera, film, radio or television directing creativity." (Petrović 1994: 15) The specificity of directing for children is contained in the artistic conditioning of the ideological and aesthetic foundations of creativity for children, in the phenomenon of play, which leads to a distinct dynamic of the dramatic action, rhythm and melody, the poetics of brevity, the simplicity of the subject of the dramatic statement, to more simplified characters, strong contrasts, quick gradations, unusual metaphors, quick turns, i.e. towards elliptical forms of directorial brevity. An important aspect of directing for children in certain forms and types of dramatic directing (drama, opera, puppet theater, children's theater, animated film, children's radio play, children's TV play, etc.) is to examine aesthetic values, which can not be established without a thorough analysis of dramaturgy, direction and acting, as well as the act of reception.

Directing involves choosing the text, working with the actors, collaborating with the scenographer, costume designer, composer and/or sound engineer, as well as talking the matters of the audience. The initial ideas and concepts also come from the director since his first task is to choose a specific dramatic text or to write his original play. It is often the case that the director chooses a dramatic text by another author, and then modifies and adapts it according to his own ideas, in accordance with his ideology and in accordance with his dramaturgical style, where he must especially take care not to leave out the essentials and not to desecrate its aesthetics. . The reasons for changing the dramatic text can be caused by the ensemble and its possibilities, as well as by a certain type of stage and the way it is performed on stage.

It makes a big difference if the performance is performed on an open or closed stage, in a theater building or in the hall of a school, in the yard of a kindergarten or in the town square. Theater boards, studio radio drama or television/film presentation have very different requirements. Also, it is not the same to prepare and perform a puppet show and a live actors' show. The director must decide on all this within his preparatory studies, in the so-called analytical phase, before gathering his team with whom he will work together on all other dramatic activities.

The director is expected to have acting abilities, which does not mean that he has to be an actor, but it is understood that he would have to know a lot about acting, to have a special feeling for the spoken word and the movement. As the dramatic text is "realized" in space and time, the dramatic art often unites and includes expressions of fine arts and music. That is why it is considered that the director must have a sense for painting and sculpture, for shapes and colors, and be musical, so that he can accurately determine the color, intonation and melody and duration of each spoken word. As for cooperation with actors, the director must know each of them well, their skills, potentials, but also their shortcomings. It is concluded that, in addition to talent, education, skill and experience, the director must have something of an actor, writer, painter, musician, must be a good psychologist and pedagogue, organizer, as well as a person of authority.

In most cases, one person who "monitors" the entire work of dramatic creation is in charge of directing. Given that the director is expected to fulfill multi-purpose tasks and possess a large number of skills, it is not inappropriate to consider the option of involving a larger number of people in the director's work who will be in charge of individual tasks, at the same time monitoring the entire work on the play and taking care of its consistency and coherence. Directing duties in our Drama Club were performed by professors of literature and foreign languages, professors of fine and musical arts. Before the work on the play begins, groups of professors and students are formed: 1. to select the dramatic text; 2. for acting; 3. for composing and singing; 4. for making costumes and scenography; 5. for the production of promotional material.

## SELECTING THE DRAMA TEXT

The first stage involves the selection of a dramatic text. Educators, teachers and other educational workers who are interested in directing for children must be able to valorize and select texts, which would mean that they have a good knowledge of literary culture. When choosing a dramatic text, one must take into account the age of the audience being addressed to. There is a big difference between the interests and reception possibilities of preschoolers and children in the stage of puberty or adolescence. The selection of a dramatic text will be dictated by the subject matter that the potential audience and the director like and by the linguistic, stylistic and semantic features of the text as well. In the case where the director is not the playwright and decides to choose a play by another author, a large number of interesting dramatic texts for children can be found on the website „Званични форум Камерне сцене Мирослав Антић Центра” (<http://www.mikaanticforum.org/viewforum.php?f=27&sid=4cf92fd160f8f5d0bd1823d30999a135>).

If he is not sure about the aesthetic qualities of certain dramatic texts, he can always orient himself towards authors who have been subject to the judgment of critics and have been favorably evaluated. Among the dramatic pieces for children, you can find a wide variety of original dramatic texts, but also numerous adaptations and dramatizations of well-known prose or poetic texts. The stage fairy tale is the most common subgroup of dramatic texts for children around the world. The fairy tale genre is very suitable for "translation" into a dramatic form thanks to its fantastic scenes, interesting characters, dynamic plot, intriguing plots and unambiguous semantics. When approaching the transformation of a fairy tale into a dramatic **form\***, the most common methods are updating and innovating the original text. Among the playwrights who proved their skill in writing dramatic fairy tales from our region, Ljubiša Đokić, Boško Trifunović, Aleksandar Popović, Miodrag Stanisavljević, Ljubivoj Ršumović, Stevan Pešić, Igor Bojović, Milivoj Mladenović, Milena Depolo and Željko Hubača should be mentioned.

Plays of our Drama Club are based on the texts of different authors. Some of them are: *A singing fairy tale*, (Распевана бајка) based on the text "The Little Princess" by Ksenija Stojanović, *Invitation to a birthday party* (Позив на рођендан), based on the text "The Blue Rabbit Celebrates a Birthday" by Nataša Ilić, *Something like Little Red Riding Hood* (Нешто као Црвенкапа) based on "Little Red Riding Hood" by Milivoj Mladenović, *New Year's Left and Right Socks* (Новогодишња лева и десна чарапа) and *Happy Vegetables* (Весело поврће) based on the texts by Radmila Knežević, *A Funny Fairytale* (Смешна бајка) and *Sleepy* (Uspavana), based on the texts by Toda Nikoletić, etc.

In children's theater, the text is often just an occasion for a stage play. For example in an animated film for children, the role of the dramatic script text is often negligible, while in puppet theater movement is more important than words. However, when we talk about directing, the story of the text as a pretext or subtext is indispensable. In our region, the repertoire of dramatic texts is not particularly rich, which is why one of the basic tasks of directing for children is to revise and modernize the texts. Educators and teachers in order to design drama workshops and work with children often perform dramatizations, adaptations and illustrations of appropriate artistic texts or create dramatic texts themselves, while they must keep in mind aesthetic and pedagogical

It is necessary for the dramatic/puppet text to be functional, emotionally colored, didactically unobtrusive, psychologically convincing, witty, poetic and rhythmically diverse, to break the framework of standard themes and to be characterized by expressiveness and brevity of phrasing. The action should have a clean and simple form, without unnecessary accumulation of conflicts. The events in the text should follow a logical sequence, and surprise effects should be introduced. On the other hand, it is necessary to avoid excessive repetitions, stereotypes, too much sweetness and sentimentality, rude puppet conflicts, excessive caricature, etc. The requirements for dramaturgy for children are that it should be complete, dynamic, transparent and interesting .

Under the direction of our Drama Club, we sometimes decided to adapt certain dramatic texts, which, for example, was the case with the plays *Something like Little Red Riding Hood* and *Fairy Tale from the Park* . The theater play *Something like Little Red Riding Hood* was played based on the motifs of "Little Red Riding Hood" by Milivoje Mladenović. The dramatic text itself did not undergo major interventions, but due to the introduction of a new face, another character of Little Red Riding Hood, it was enriched with new lines in English. The dramatic text "Fairytale from the Park" by Đurđa Lili, a stage cocktail-fairy tale, seemed very suitable for realization on our open stage in the school yard and it was appropriate in terms of the number of characters. The main features of this text, a combination of well-known characters from fairy tales, short and concise lines, simple and lively humor, fully meet the requirements of the audience for which the play is intended - preschoolers and children of younger school age. What was especially important for our idea of a musical, the text itself contains enough rhyming and rhythmic segments that can be composed and sung. Our changes to the "Fairytale from the Park" text were not extensive and did not affect the semantic layer of the original: only a couple of lines were removed, and some of them were partially reformulated to make it easier and more natural for the actors to achieve the character-actor unity. Also, the Prince spoke his text with a French accent, so several lines in French were added (in the form of comments and in the dialogue between the Prince and the Fairy), and the song sung by the Prince was in French as well.

As for the plays that were performed according to the original texts of individual members of our Drama Club, we can name four: *New Year's Spells* and *The Case of Božana*, by Professor Dr. Ivan Stamenković, *Upside Down Fairy Tale*, by Professor Jelena Veljković Mekić, and *Who is the Real Santa Claus*, by student Uglješa Nikodijević.

Let's conclude. When choosing a potential text, it is necessary to take into account how suitable it is for a stage performance, how well it is adapted to the age of the children to whom it will be performed, whether the act of dramatization can take place playfully and creatively, and whether it is suitable and of high quality for working with children. It should be emphasized that the role of children is very important and that pre-school teachers, teachers and educators who take on the role of a director are obliged to motivate children to actively participate in all the preparatory work that precedes the realization of the play.

\*The process of reshaping a fairy tale into a dramatic form is determined by the following terms: dramatization, adaptation, drama based on motifs, modernization, de-fairymaking (Cvijetin Ristanović), departure from fairy tales (Branka Jakšić-Provčič) and transmission of the epic into drama (Miodrag Stanisavljević).

## WORKING WITH ACTORS

The second phase involves the creative work of those who will perform the dramatic event in front of the audience through their actions. So, in the second phase, the work with the actors begins, most often in the rehearsal rooms, that is, in the classrooms, if it is a school play. At the first reading rehearsals, roles are assigned to the actors and this is a very important, even decisive event for the play in all its segments and in the final act. The roles are assigned according to the requirements of the text, on the one hand, and according to the possibilities of the ensemble, on the other. The first few rehearsals the selected actors read the text, checking the text for accuracy and potential shortening. Text processing is sometimes approached already in the first phase, but in our practice the text was most often changed simultaneously with the reading rehearsals. Interventions in the text are mostly reduced to shortening, without omitting the most important segments of the pretext. Deletion of text must always be justified and it is accessed only for reasons of economy, i.e. if the performance of the original version of the text takes too long, or because of the scenic nature, that is, if a certain event takes too long and reduces the dynamism.

In the beginning, it is important to pay attention to simple speech actions that are aimed at accurate, clear and correct pronunciation. Later, as the rehearsals progress, the actor empathizes more and more with his character, which results in the speech becoming more nuanced and complicated. Speech acts depend on the personality of the character, but it is important that the actor adapts to the character, e.g. in the pitch, but not going completely out of his own register, because that would lead to strain and unnaturalness. The pitch of the voice will tell us whether the character is sincere and natural, closed and suspicious, mischievous, etc. The melody of speech reveals different dialects to us. By the melody of a phrase we can guess the origin of a person even if he normally speaks a literary language.

If we want to highlight something that is particularly important in the sentence, we will use the means of emphasis or highlighting, by making the voice louder or quieter, whereby the principle of contrast is dominant. The same effect will be produced by changing the tempo (faster or slower) and changing the color of the voice (sharp, soft, cold, excited). Short pauses serve to emphasize something as well. If the pause precedes the act of speaking, it acts as a warning, drawing attention to the viewer to pay particular attention, and if it follows the speech, it requires subsequent observation in the receptive act and creates the possibility that what was said will resonate additionally in the listener-viewer. If the pause is present both before and after the speech, the dramatic part is even more strongly separated and highlighted. It should be noted that passive speech acts include listening, that is, receiving someone else's speech by listening. Speaking must not be mechanical- the actor should always bear in mind the meaning of what he is speaking. However, listening is also a speech activity, an action. The actor must carefully follow what his teammates are saying and "respond" with non-verbal expression, facial expressions and gestures. Non-verbal communication is as important in stage art as verbal, even in the case of a stage puppet, movement takes precedence over spoken segments.

The third, predominantly synthetic phase, assembles all the components into a whole work of art and takes place on the stage or space provided for the performance of the play. Then, in addition to reciting lines, movements are rehearsed and mise-en-scène rules are determined.

By mise-en-scène we mean the arrangement of people and things on the stage, that is, the mutual position of people, things and their movement. Mimicry and gesture merge with speech actions, and so speech actions become stage acting. Some moments of the mise-en-scène were already marked by the author of the dramatic work in didascalia (indications or remarks). The director approaches them more freely and adapts them to the concrete possibilities of the ensemble and the theater. The mise-en-scène can be: 1. pre-defined, 2. subsequently planned in cooperation with the actors, 3. a combination of the two, 4. free mise-en-scène when the actors are arranged differently according to their will, which allows for the greatest naturalness and freedom. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages. Of crucial importance are the positions taken by the persons on the stage, their distance from each other and their position in relation to the overall space. It is necessary to pay particular attention to the principle of balance, as well as the position of the actors in relation to the audience. Beginners often make mistakes that the actors spontaneously group together unjustifiably in one part of the stage or turn their backs to the audience, which results in the audience not hearing what they say well enough .

Movements depend a lot on the situation and the character. They have their own scope, strength, duration, which depends on their pace and rhythm (eg movements can be fast, slow, frequent, clumsy, natural, and the movement decisive, uncertain, rectilinear, zigzag...). It is especially important to understand that no movement or position on stage must be unjustified. The movement is justified if it arises from an internal impulse and from motives arising from the given circumstances. (For example, in the children's musical *Fairy tale from the Park*, the Wolf moves slowly, cautiously and somewhat uncertainly; Hansel and Gretel's movements are disorientated and quick; the Prince slowly, proudly with occasional bows and hand gestures when flirting with the female characters; the Fairy moves gently, but also energetically when resentful; therefore, in accordance with the characters and the current happenings on the stage.) Superfluous movements must be deleted because they distract the viewer's attention from the essential to the unimportant. The positions must also be justified and conform to all the principles of mise-en-scène.

Changing the position and arrangement is achieved by special external actions: the movement of the face, sometimes also by moving objects. That movement can create an effect of approaching or moving away, interfering or encircling. A rapprochement is needed to bring people from a group together or to oppose each other. Distance means the weakening or termination of such a relationship. Interference (intervention) can serve reconciliation, but also the separation of conflicting or united persons. Not only an attractive face (a beauty, an artistic painting), but also an enemy can be surrounded. We usually get up when we are getting ready for action or when we are excited, and sit down when there is a break. However, this also can depend on the nature of the action, e.g. sit down at the table to eat, etc.

In kindergartens, schools and higher education institutions, drama activities are of an amateur nature. However, this does not mean that you should strive for better direction and acting. As for the director, it has already been said what qualities he should possess, while the actors should aim for the so-called actor-character unity. Actor-character unity must be achieved in voice, mime, and movement. The actor knows the entire text of his role and thus he is informed of what will happen in the fifth act, while the character he plays does not. That's why an actor is like a tightrope walker - he has to act on the audience, which would mean that at no moment does he stop acting concretely as a character in the play. The specificity of the acting activity is that the actor is the creator of his own work, a virtuoso and an instrument at the same time.

## THE STAGE EFFECTS

The stage effects are older than the direction itself. The task of the sound and light effects is to complement the actions of the actor so that we achieve the impression of a real event through stage acting. At the same time, it is necessary to keep in mind that these effects form only the background of the event, that they do not distract attention from the performance of the actors and that they do not appear as independent elements. If they are too strong and intrusive, their artificial character is highlighted, so it is better if they are only hinted at and in harmony with the events on stage. As an integral part of the performance, all effects must perform their function accurately and coherently.

### Lighting

Lighting is very important in today's theater. Without lighting, it is impossible to accurately identify the components of what is happening on the stage: decor, costume, mask, mise-en-scène. Also, all other effects should be adjusted to the lighting. Different materials and fabrics look completely different under different lighting. Even the way of speaking and moving changes depending on the lighting.

Stage lighting has multiple tasks. First of all, it allows the venue, faces, objects and decor to be visible to the viewer and to be unified into a harmonious whole. Adequate lighting highlights certain details as important, and hides superfluous ones that disturb the dramatic action on stage. Light creates an atmosphere: calm, restless, opulent, bright, cold, mysterious, etc. Also, it evokes the time of events as well as the weather. Last but not least, lighting serves to command the audience's attention.

In order to fulfill these tasks, it is necessary to determine the properties of light for each performance: strength, quality (color) and direction. The light sources in the theater should be such that the lighting characteristics can be changed quickly. When adjusting the lighting, contrasts play a big role, as well as intensity. The light on the stage must not be too strong, but also not too weak that you cannot see what is happening on the stage. It is very important to know that lighting can make the dynamics and rhythm of the drama more understandable, the tension between the characters, but also the inner state of the characters. Colored light (filters) can be used to bring the scene to life. Color can additionally evoke a certain mood and events on stage.

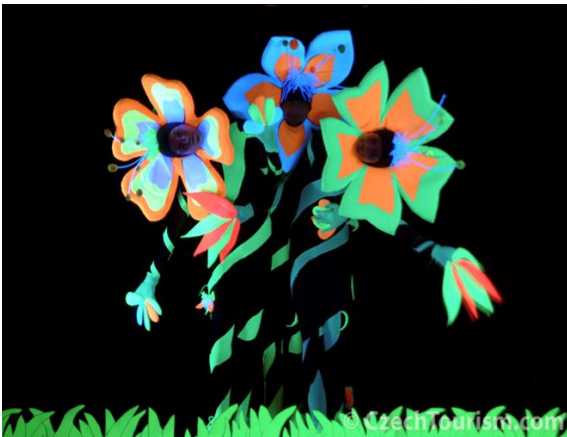
Light sources can be reflectors, projectors, diasscopes, overhead projectors, which can additionally enrich the scene with projected images. The depth and spaciousness of the scene is achieved by lighting the back of the scene.

In the theater of shadows and in the black light theater, lighting plays a primary role. Shadow theater requires a frame (frames or boxes of various sizes), a thin canvas (paper or tracing paper) and a light source. Shadow puppets are most often animated in the background of a screen onto which only the figure's shadow is projected. Light effects, i.e. by moving away from and approaching the light source, the puppets increase and decrease in size. In the black light theatre, the stage looks like a big box covered mostly with black velvet. Trick masters wear black suits with black hoods and black gloves, while trick puppets are often striking and brightly colored. That's why the lighting technique is particularly important in this type of theater: it hides the animators, and brings the trickery of the puppets to the fore.



Theater of Shadows

From the play "Recycled Dreams" directed by Aleksandra Jelić based on the text by Bogdan Španjević



Black light theater Prague

## Sound effects and music

Music is an essential element of every play, including plays for children and puppet shows. This is quite understandable if we consider the strong emotional power of music. Music accompanies the events on stage or evokes a certain atmosphere, emphasizes the action and mood of certain characters or a certain group. Sometimes it's just sound effects, and sometimes the action is explained with music during the entire performance, as in opera, operetta and ballet. Sound effects can convey a lot and are not limited to the visual dimension of the stage. Thus, with them we can conjure up thunder, wind, rain, recess in the schoolyard, a battlefield, a noisy street, etc. Hugo Klein observes that with the help of sounds we build the stage space. An important sound effect is silence. Silence on the stage does not mean the absence of sound, but on the stage it must be heard. Pauses exist for a reason, and silence can also be evoked by some sound effects such as the ticking of a clock, a soft distant song, the barking of dogs in the distance, the crackling of a fire, etc.

In order for the sound effects to respond to their task, they must be coordinated with each other, as well as with the entire scene. They must be synchronized with the spoken text, accents in the text and music, thesis-arza must match, agogics and diction are equally important both in adults and in preschool children. They must not cover or suppress things, but highlight them even more. An example is the gradation in the strength and length of the sound of breaking the window panes (three times) when the princess resents her father's single-mindedness in the play *The Singing Fairy Tale* or a dull, ringing sound that evokes a blow to the head when Hansel, engrossed in the game, engrossed in his monologue, stumbles upon a tree. Another example is the sound of chirping birds for the purpose of comic effect and reminding of similar situations from cartoons (*Fairy tale from the Park*).

There are several ways in which music can be incorporated into the scenery: 1) an actor or animator performs a song, 2) musical acts appear as an element of direction and are performed by musical performers, and 3) sung segments are recorded and played with the help of musical devices. In our previous work, we mostly used the last method, and included sound effects, vocal and instrumental compositions in performances with the help of laptops, mixers and speakers.

The first play of the Drama Club, *The Singing Fairy Tale*, was an ambitious undertaking when it came to sound effects and music. Students and professors wrote original author's texts that they sang according to the arrangement of popular songs. It was hoped that the children in the audience would recognize some of the melodies and that the sung segments of the piece would be more interesting for them. The following artists and their songs were selected: Gwen Stefani "What You Waiting For?", Rihanna "Stay", Psy "Gangnam style", Christina Aguilera and Alejandro Fernández "Hoy Tengo Ganas De Ti" etc. The audio recording of the students' vocal performance was recorded in a radio studio and edited on a selected musical background.

A special challenge in terms of music was the musical *Fairytales from the Park*. The music that had to be composed had to be in harmony with the psychophysical and musical abilities of the audience for whom it was created, which is children from 3 to 7 years old. Guided by the musical abilities of the children, and by the principles of music pedagogy and set the goal that the melody should not have a range higher than a fifth or possibly a sixth, that it should be singable, easy to remember and in harmony with the character it represents. The tempo of the composition also determined the character for whom the melody was composed. Depending on whether it was an angry witch or a gentle fairy, the melody had to depict the emotional state of the character, so students created the task and easily learned about character, major and minor, slow and fast tempo, diction and agogic, and the ratio of emphasis in speech and music, i.e. accents in the pronunciation of the sung text that appeared during the creation of the melody. Students encountered the problem of dividing syllables in text and music, especially with the example of "ecological hearing" and other examples that have a different number of syllables in the previous verse. Then, regarding the rhythm, the request was that it should also be adapted to the middle group, that it should be simple and with repetitions so that the children could possibly repeat the rhythmic motif during the performance. The sung voice is also an integral part of this joint project, with the goal that the voice should be adapted to the character it represents, which the students took very seriously and undertook to adapt their voices to portray, sing and represent Gretel, the angry witch, the gentle forest fairy, the prince and Little Red Riding Hood. All samples created for this musical were played by students.

## Scenography

Set design represents the decor and equipment in a theater piece or film. A scenographer is a theater painter who creates decor and props depending on the scene. It can be realistic or highly stylized. In contemporary theater, it is often reduced to a symbolic indication of the setting. Decor represents the environment in which the action takes place, suggests a certain atmosphere, and sometimes participates in portraying the personality of the main character. It's also used to evoke the time and place of the action. Scenography represents an art unity in which the rules of the composition apply. The scenography should summarize functionality and artistic values.

It needs to be a well-composed background, without superfluous details. In order to achieve a certain goal of the play or the character of the dramatic piece (dramatic, playful...) the scenographer in the theater uses the basic elements and principles of artistic expression and composition: contrast of colors, shapes, lines, light. The decor can be painted or made of different materials: paper, cardboard, wood, cane, canvas... The scene can be deep (with multiple depth plans) or shallow (frontal, in one plan). The backdrops represent part of the scenography in the form of a moving wall. There are front, back and side scenes on the stage. Only things that are necessary for the successful performance of the play should be on the stage. The decor in the theater does not always have to be fixed. It can come to life, be part of the action and dance together with the actor's body on stage.

The scenography can be a means to transform reality, an element of the game subject to change and different interpretations. During the creation of the scenography, it is important to take into account psychology, symbolism, associations that would help in understanding and discovering images, action, characters and in order to improve mutual understanding between the actors and the audience.



Elements of scenography for the play "Fairytales from the Park"

## Costume and mask

Costume and mask are elements of stage art. A costume refers to an actor's clothes and shoes on stage that help bring the character they are portraying to life. It indicates a social position, geographical or national affiliation, or the costume resembles other forms of the living and non-living world.

The preparation of a stage performance represents the creation of a personal artistic image. For the successful implementation of this process, good cooperation and a common vision of the director, scenographer and costume designer is necessary.

The costume, as well as the scenography, should fit into the overall visual concept of the performance. Functional, aesthetic and ergonomic requirements are considered in the costume creation process. Functional requirements determine the degree of suitability for the main role of the costume: revealing the character, his features, habits, character, mood. Aesthetic requirements are related to artistic composition, elements of harmony, stylistic unity with time and performance style. Ergonomic requirements are determined by the degree of comfort and adaptation of the costume to the actor and they must also be satisfactory. The costume must be comfortable for various movements, light to wear and adapted to the weather conditions in which the performance is played.

An important task in creating a costume is its modernity and relevance. In order for the actors to feel comfortable and confident and for the audience to accept the message of the dramatic performance in the right way, the costume needs to be stylishly interesting and fashionable and correspond to the trends.

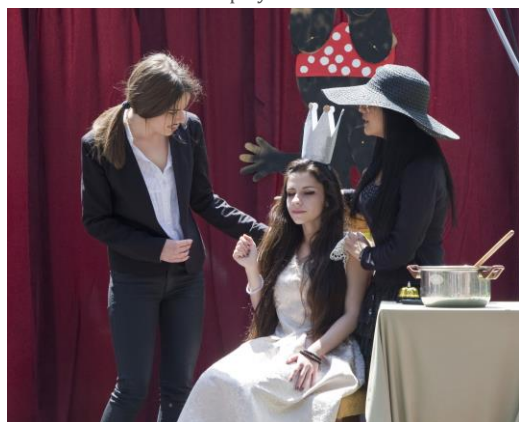




From the play " Invitation to a Birthday Party"



From the play "Old Forest".



From the play "Upside Down Fairy Tale"

The mask belongs to all eras and all times, all peoples and their cultures. There is almost no human community that does not know mask and disguise. The mask as an object establishes a boundary or a line of transition between this world and the world beyond, the one who wears the mask and what the mask represents. These can be gods, supernatural beings or nature spirits. The ancient peoples considered the mask as an object equivalent to the face, that is, it denoted both the face and the mask equally. Thus, the mask can serve as a transmitter in communication with spirits or ancestors. The mask or face is the "other face" of the actor. It stands at the very beginning of the theater's life.

Ancient forms of theatrical make-up stem from religious performances. Ritual masks and body painting exist in many parts of the world: in India, China, Japan, in the Balkans, in Africa... Masks can be classified according to the time and place of appearance, the characters they depict, the meaning they have in processions, the impression they cause on the observer, the origin and content they have in relation to religion or to artistic expression and visual representation. In Australia and Africa there are gigantic totemistic masks covering the whole body. Such masks can also be recognized in *Kurenti* in Slovenia and *Kukeri* as part of the Bulgarian tradition.



The play "Sleeping girl"



The play "Sleeping girl"

Masks were made as skillful carvings in wood. They can also be made of leather, with various decorations made of multi-colored beads, shells, fibers of plant or animal origin... Different facial treatments (face shape, size and appearance of eyes, eyebrows, mouth, forehead, chin) present a wide range of emotions and moods.

Masks are often part of carnivals related to the beginning of the year. Various monsters and creatures from the wilderness appear with great noise to drive away the darkness and gloom of the winter period and summon the light of new birth in the spring.

From the stage of ancient Greece, we know tragic and comic masks, grotesque masks and make-up from mimes and pantomimes from ancient Rome, stylized Japanese masks with moving parts of the face, masks of devils, fools, dragons from Christian mysteries and miracles, Pantalone, Pulcinella, Arlecchino and Colombina from the Italian Commedia dell'Arte.

In contemporary theater, the mask represents a good material for research and experimentation in the field of creative artistic expression. Avant-garde artists of the twentieth century: Surrealists, Dadaists, the Bauhaus movement, experimented with theatrical forms and often used masks and puppets in their work in the theater itself. Jacques Lecoq, an acting instructor and mimic, introduced the so-called neutral mask at the initial stage of actor training. The mask and the actor himself go through different stages of growth, character complexity, through the larval stage, then expressive mask, comic mask (comedia dell'arte), half mask to the smallest mask, red clown nose, in search of his authentic expression and acting fantasy.

Contemporary theater uses the experiences of the past. Traditional theater forms merge with new possibilities and needs, and puppets and masks are combined with new audio-visual forms.



Koledari mask  
Source: Ethnographic Museum Belgrade



Kukeri  
Source: National Geographic

A quick mask can be made of paper or cardboard packaging (box, paper plates, egg cartons, paper bags...). For more complex masks, the lamination technique (paper strips) or papier-mâché (paper pulp/ground paper) is used. Several layers of paper with glue are applied to the Styrofoam or clay base, which is shaped according to a certain character. The face can also be built on the surface of a metal strainer, which is big enough to cover the face. If the cheek is made on the face itself, newspaper should be avoided and flour and water should be used as glue. The base on which the tapes are applied can be made of aluminum foil. In order to have the necessary strength, several sheets of foil are taken. Foil is a soft material and easy to shape. It is shaped on the face. The resulting mask (print of the face) is then covered with crepe strips, which additionally strengthens it and gives the possibility of further shaping with the help of paper strips. Plastic packaging or a balloon can also serve as a basis for building a character with the help of the lamination/papier-mâché technique. During the work, parts of the face are added (nose, cheekbones, eyebrows, mouth, or parts characteristic of certain animals).

Neutral bases obtained in this way can be painted, they can get details from beads, stones, leaves, twigs, various ribbons and laces, twine, etc.



## PUPPET SHOW

*Puppetry is the art of a holistic theater. Stage puppets express the world of play, the spirit of form, the mysterious animation of objects, images and sounds; sign language on stage. Puppetry is a theater of brevity, lapidary imagination, laconic expressiveness. Puppet theater is "haiku" theater reduced to an essential audio-visual expression. Puppetry transforms still life into a sumptuous work of living stage art.*

Radoslav Lazić

The basic function of a puppet is to be a reanimated representation of a being (puppet-double of the anthropomorphic-human, animal-animal, floral-plant world), a representation of gods, spirits, demons and angels or a virtual puppet. It can also be an appearance in experimental research such as color, sound, object, material, line, touch, smell... The world of puppets is an invented, stylized world of fantasy. In the puppet theater, inanimate matter becomes the bearer of the action, accomplishes what is unimaginable and impossible in the real world, thinks, speaks and feels, flies, disappears, creates a special kind of magic in the color and light that accompanies it.

The puppet has a rich history. We can follow the stage and the "other self" manifestations from the shadow on the cave wall, magic puppets in the function of a cult, through folklore at fairs and carnivals, religious mysteries and ritual processions, to the theater of great social truths and absurdities. A puppet is both a game and entertainment, an educational and psychological mechanism for discovering and showing inner drama and knowledge about the world. This type of theater is in the purest connection with the visual arts. The puppet and its stage are artistic creations that become symbols, stylized, expressive or abstract events of dramatized figures in motion in contemporary theater.

The puppet can be shaped according to old patterns, taking forms from its history, from its own tradition and culture or meanings from old epics, as well as applying new forms of presenting/projecting digital landscapes of today with an unlimited choice of techniques, materials, forms and meanings.

The puppet is also the arm itself, the shoulder, the knee, the foot, the stomach or the whole body of the one who moves it. There are several types of stage puppets that are classified according to their appearance and the technique of making and guiding them. We can distinguish the following types of puppets: glove puppets (yawning and muppets), finger puppets, ginjol puppets, marionettes, Javanese puppets, shadow puppets, paper puppets, black theater puppets, objects and bunraku puppets.

## Hand(s) and glove(s), yawning dolls and muppets

The hand itself, without any accessory, can conjure up different characters with its mimicry. It can twist, bend, intertwine, creating shapes and beings. It can dress up, dress up its hair, get a tail and wings, make up or get a new face with ping pong ball eyes.

Simply tying the material together, puppets can be made of gloves, socks, bags or scarves. By sewing a sock in the toe area, the puppet can have a mouth. A head is formed by inserting a cotton ball or sponge into the heel.

**The Muppet** \* is special for its convincing "chattiness". Its head is made of two parts: upper and lower. The upper part has space for the hand, the lower part for the thumb. The mouth is animated by moving the thumb. If it is made of sponge, then it will be very comfortable and light. The head is shaped by cutting the sponge to the desired appearance (human figure, animal...). The head is divided into the upper and lower part of the head. In the upper part, the space for the hand is hallowed. The lower part is divided in half again and the space for the thumb is hallowed into it. The mouth itself is the joining part. They are shaped according to the shape of the lower part of the head and can be made of cardboard, canvas, or leather. After joining, the head is covered with fabric and it receives other parts of the face (traits of the character).

A Muppet can have a simple body/jacket that slips on the arm. It can be of larger dimensions. In this case, the entire body of the doll with arms and legs is made of soft material (canvas and filling made of cotton wool and rags). The animator carries the puppet over a loop on one arm, which he places in the puppet's head. He slips his other hand through the empty sleeve of the puppet's costume. This way the animator can handle the prop.

Eyes, nose, lips and ears are glued, sewn, or painted. They can be made of buttons, plastic, natural material, leather, etc. The hair, which gives a special charm to the puppet's expressiveness, is made of wool, raffia, felt, plastic, sponge, etc. Threads of different materials can be glued or sewn onto ribbons, which are then attached to the puppet's head as whole strands. Strands of hair can be cut from pieces of cloth, leather, skein or jute. Curly/twisted strands can be made from woolen threads or twine with the help of a plastic rod on which threads coated with glue are wound. They can also be glued as ready-made braids. An eye gives a powerful expression to the puppet, so it is good that the eye has all parts, sclera, pupil, eyelid, eyelashes and eyebrows. The position of the eyelids and pupils determines whether we have "evil" or "good" in front of us, whether the puppet is scared or angry.

\* The name of the puppet was created by combining the words marionette and puppet (stage/theatre puppet). This name originated from Jim Henson (Jim Henson), the author of the puppets in the famous children's show "Sesame Street" (Sesame Street) and the unique "The Muppet Show" programme.



Muppets from the play "New Year's Left and Right Stocking"

## Finger puppets

These are puppets of small dimensions but wide enough that they can be put on the fingers, or eyes and mouths can be drawn on the fingers themselves. The puppet's head can be just a ball of sponge or Styrofoam. It is enough to wrap the hand with a cloth and add some caps, hats or hair to get ready-made puppets that are ready to play. The fingers can also walk and then the "body" of the puppet is further built on the legs-toes using paper, cardboard, small boxes or gloves with various accessories.



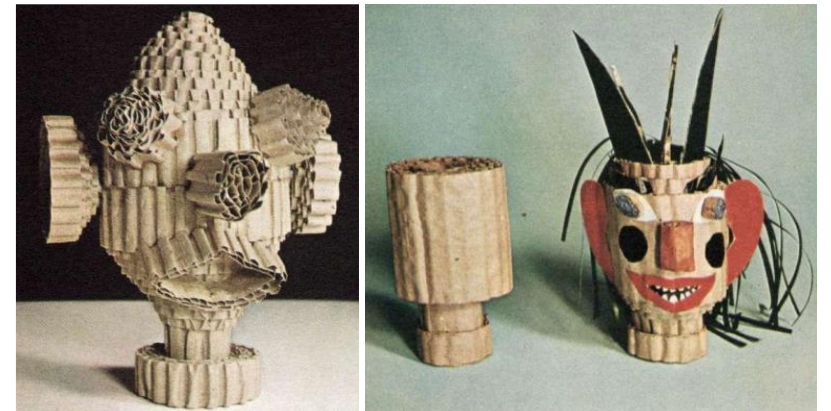
Building the character/character of the puppet (placing elements/parts of the head, face...)

Online source: <https://www.instructables.com/id/Make-a-Traditional-Hand-Puppet-With-DYI-Materials/>

## Guignol \*

It consists of a head and a simple body. It has hand speed and is capable of carrying the prop. It is usually legless. If it has legs, they are moved over the screen towards the audience. The doll's head can be made of different materials: wood, sponge, styrofoam, plastic mass, paper, cardboard, paper pulp. It can also be the head of a ragweed. The body of the guignol consists of a shirt that is sewn from ordinary cloth. A costume comes over her. The index finger is inserted into the doll's neck, and the thumb and middle or little finger are inserted into the doll's hands. Hands (paws, etc.) can be made of sponge, laminated paper, fabric with filling. The tube for the doll's neck as well as the reinforcements for the hands can be made from cardboard or rubber/plastic hose. These reinforcements are attached to the part that is pulled over the fingers, in the sleeve of the "glove" shirt. It is important that the head of the puppet is light in order to allow for accurate animation.

A grand guignol, or large puppet, is carried by the animator on his head or on his shoulders. Special reinforcements for the head are made from cardboard strips or wire, or it is attached with chest straps. The head, hands and feet can be worn separately or it can be a single body-suit.



Puppet heads made of corrugated cardboard  
Source: Lotar, K. (1972). *Creating with Puppets*. New York.

## marionette\*

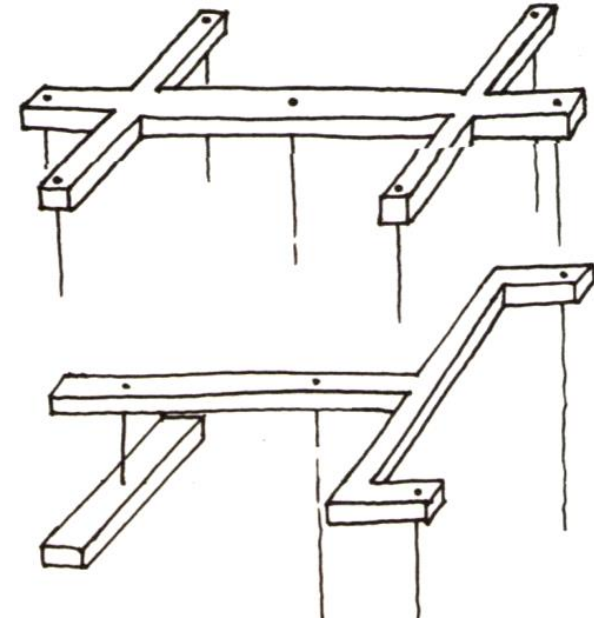
A marionette is known as a puppet on a string. At first these dolls were very simple with minimal movements. They are animated by a rod-stick that goes from the head. Legs and arms were free to make free movements. The puppet moves by swinging its body, a "duck" walk. Only occasionally two or three threads were used for hand animation. These puppets were preserved in Sicily. Over time, it got more threads and a control (wooden support), to which all the threads are tied. A marionette has the closest anatomy to a living being. Its body consists of: head, trunk, arms and legs.

The basic material for making marionettes is wood, but it can be made from plastic, rubber, paper pulp (paper-mâché), Styrofoam, paper, cork, wire, various waste materials. All parts of the doll's body have movable joints (shoulder, elbow, hand, hip, knee, foot). When the puppet is dressed, special attention should be taken that the textile/costume does not hinder its movement. A classic marionette has nine strings, two each for the puppet's arms, legs, head and shoulders, and one string for the back. The threads are connected at one end to the puppet, and the other to the holder, the controller, which animates the puppet.

One of the ways to make the head and body parts of a marionette involves sculpting shapes with clay and making molds. A mixture called papier-mâché is poured into plaster molds. Papier-mâché is a mixture of ground paper, water and glue. When this mixture dries, the paper is separated from the plaster and the parts are joined together as a whole. Such a doll can then be painted or covered with fabric (gauze, nylon tights). Parts of the marionette's body can be made by masking in a similar way, but more simply. Laminating refers to the creation of objects/shapes by covering a certain surface with paper pulp or pieces of paper soaked in glue. It is necessary to install the armature for the puppet made of wire or string. The string or wire is then covered with strips of paper with glue in several layers. In each "joint" it is necessary to form loops for connection.

The marionette can move in all directions, but with slow movements if it is guided by strings. The ability to play with props is also limited.

\* The word marionette originated, most likely, from Marion, a diminutive of the name Maria. Biblical stories with puppets, of which games about the birth of Christ were especially popular, date back to the 9th century. "Little Maria" or "Marionnette" performed among them. Edi Majaron, Faith in a doll, Novi Sad, 2014. p. 29.



Marionette control

Source: Lotar, K. (1972). Creating with Puppets. New York.



## Wayang \*

In the wayang puppet, a long stick passes through the body and moves the head. The arms have shoulder joints, fists and are moved by two sticks attached to the fists. In Europe, it appears in a different visual form, but retains the animation technique. Hands often have three pairs of joints. The whole hand is usually made up of a piece of string. The wayang may have legs, but then the support rod is extended. The puppet's body is made of a linen jacket that is elongated. Care is taken that the animator's hand can be placed in it if the doll is legless. Over the shirt comes the costume. Softer materials are chosen for the upper part. The lower part can be made of a rougher material. Dolls representing animals in Javanese technique have a slightly more complex animation system. There is a main support stick for the doll's body and auxiliary sticks for the head, tail, wings. Anatomically and proportionally, it is close to a marionette. He has the ability to move freely on stage and has a precise gesture.

The stick, the puppet's head can be made of hard or soft material. The sock head or patch head is filled with cotton wool. Shapes by tying or stitching parts (nose, chin, ears) with thread. The paper/pulp head is made by making a base for the head from crumpled up newspaper, then putting the paper pulp on top and forming the facial parts. The head can also be made of Styrofoam, which is shaped by cutting.

For a puppet on a large stick, the balloon masking technique can be applied. The balloon is covered with pieces of paper or fabric soaked in glue in several layers. Parts of the face (nose, eyes, ears, mouth) can be obtained by adding smaller balloons that are attached to the base of the head with adhesive tapes and then masked together. It can also be pieces of cardboard, Styrofoam or string. If thin, white paper is used for laminating, and lace, construction paper, leaves, etc. are inserted between the layers. different shapes and colors are obtained which will be seen and provide a special effect when the doll's head is lit from within.

\* This name for stick puppets is accepted all over the world and comes from their place of origin, the island of Java. Wayang (bayang-bayang) means shadow. Indonesian wayang-kulit puppets are made of painted parchment of transparently tanned buffalo hide. These are precisely made puppets whose silhouettes are projected onto the screen. Wayang klitik dolls have a flat wooden, embossed body. They are painted in gold, red and blue. The articulated arms are made of leather. Wayang golek is a real carved doll with wooden hands, dressed in cloth. Edi Majaron, Faith in a doll, Novi Sad, 2014, p. 40.



## Shadow puppet

The traditional theater forms of Chinese, Indonesian or Turkish "Karadjoz" shadow theater have meticulously crafted puppets, filigree processed and dyed thin skins. Shadow puppets can also be made of opaque paper, cardboard. Also, important here is the coloring, or hollowness of clear forms, which create an atmosphere of wonder, the magic of the screen that is close to children today. If non-transparent materials are used (cardboard, cardboard), the shape should be clear (always in profile). The figures can be colored by gluing pieces of colored foil (cellophane) to the incisions, similar to stained glass. Shadow puppets can be shaped from wire and then covered with colored cellophane. You can use transparent substrates that can be painted or drawn on. A shadow puppet can have movable limbs just like a *wayang kilit* puppet. The parts are connected with a thin wire, threads or thread.

Transparent materials, colored foils, tracing paper, colored papers should serve in the process of playing and exploring the puppet itself, the scene and the space in the creation of shadow theater.



From the play "The Singing Fairy Tale"

## Paper dolls

Puppets of thin masses, flat/flat puppets inhabit the paper theater. They are made of paper and cardboard. They can have movable limbs. Small and large in size, they are driven from above or below with a main stick leading to/from the head and/or auxiliary sticks used to move the limbs. They can borrow their character from magazines or faces from photographs of the puppeteers themselves. As well as *wayang klitik* dolls, they can appear as relief surfaces in this form made using different techniques of gluing, collage of different materials.

## Black theater puppets

They are made of sponges, wires, springs, textiles... They can be different objects: umbrella, bag, pot, shoes, etc. Sometimes they are constructed like puppets, marionettes that are not moved by strings or hand puppets. They have one or more holders (for the head, for each arm and leg) with horizontal guidance. One puppet can sometimes be animated by three actors. The theater in black is a theater of fantasy where everything is possible, where real magic happens with flying and transformations. Objects become living beings, a chair moves, a teapot, ties, umbrellas, houses, dolls disappear and appear in unexpected places.

## Objects

In the object theater, the "puppets" of the object or object theater are exclusively "ordinary" objects: accessories, tools, dusters, umbrellas, hats, etc. They become the main actors, without any accessory to hint at the face or figure of the puppet. The characteristics of the object itself are the bearers of meaning, along with the dramatization of the movements and mutual relations of the actors. It can be pure object play where the actor/ animator and the objects undergo different metamorphoses.





Source: <https://neworleansgiantpuppetfest.wordpress.com/workshops/>

## Bunraku\*

Bunraku is a specific type of puppet theater originating from Japan. One puppet is guided by three people. The puppet guides are not hidden. The main animator carries the puppet with his left hand and uses it to animate the movable head. He guides the puppet's right hand with his right hand. The other animator controls the left hand. The third animator moves the legs and ends of the clothes. Helpers wear black hooded clothing to remain invisible. As with black theater puppets, they have horizontal guides/holders for animation, i.e. moving the head, arms and feet.

Bunraku puppets are traditional, highly stylized puppets with rich costumes. They can change facial expressions with the help of a special mechanism that is located in the puppet's neck. However, the animation technique of this kind of theater can be performed with the presence of a much simpler paper puppet.

A paper puppet like this requires two pieces of wrapping paper of the same length and width. Due to the better mobility of the puppet and the need for more actors to participate in the animation, the paper needs to be a little longer. Both pieces of paper are creased lengthwise. The first piece of paper is folded in the middle, the size of the head is determined and in the neck area it is wrapped and glued with crepe tape. The second piece of paper is also folded in the middle, inserted into the space under the neck of the already existing piece and glued with crepe tape on both sides (in the part where the shoulders are). The length of the trunk is determined and the two halves of the paper are connected in the waist area. The paper is additionally "worked out", bent and "broken" in the parts where there are joints (elbow, knee, hand, foot).

A human figure or an animal figure can be shaped in this way. The figure can be given a character/face, clothes, and other characteristics depending on what we want to represent. Care should be taken to ensure that all parts (arms, legs, head) are movable so that the animation could be successful.

\* It owes its name to the puppeteer Uemura Bunrakuken from the 19th century.



## The stage in the puppet theater

Door frames, a table, a box, a chest, a small screen or a stage in a free space can make a stage for puppets with hand puppets. Outdoors, it can be placed between two trees. The elements of the stage are: an external facade with a portal (opening) and a curtain, on the stage there are curtains or blinds, in the upper part there are ceilings or small curtains that cover the ceiling or technical means. The horizon (painted or simple colored fabric) appears as a special element. The stage opening or portal can be of different sizes. The width provides more possibilities for puppet play and more decor. On the lower edge of the portal, on the inside, you need to find a shelf for puppets and props. Lighting (bulbs, reflectors) can be placed on the upper edge of the portal if necessary. Reflectors can be placed behind the blinds (curtains) or in front of the portal, in the auditorium.

Puppet handling takes place above the stage. The stage should have galleries (scaffolding or supporting bridges) for the actors (animators). In front of the animators gallery and the podium for puppets, there is an external facade of the stage (portal). On the left and right there are blinds (curtains) to cover the side walls. There are ceilings in the upper part. Behind the gallery for animators there is a curved (round) or flat horizon. It is also possible to set up simple screens that either reach up to the animators' waist or completely hide them. The stage is lit by light bulbs and spotlights placed below the gallery, and above the puppet-stage. Illumination is possible both from the side (aperture) and from the bottom edge.



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/GyrAndGmbl/photos>

The shadow stage has a simple construction. It can be a simple frame covered with white transparent canvas. The puppets are in the background of the screen on which only the shadow of the figure is projected. The decor (scenery) can be rich. Making backdrops is similar to making figures. These are perforated opaque silhouettes or transparent, painted surfaces. The size of the figures depends on the distance of the puppet from the canvas. If the figure is further from the light source, it appears smaller and vice versa. On the stage you can find several "screens" on which ready-made images are projected. It can combine a shadow puppet and a live actor, with or without a mask that is adapted to this type of theater.

For theater in black, the most important thing is the lighting technique that hides the animators. A wall of light is created using spotlights that are placed sideways so that the beam of light illuminates only the actors of the play which can be live actors, puppets and objects. The background of the stage is covered with black matte fabric (non-glossy). Actors/animators are dressed in black velvet or wool hooded blouses with only eye holes, covered with black tulle. They wear black gloves made of non-shiny material. The functioning of the black theater rests on the impossibility of the human eye to perceive black objects on a black background. Using UV light allows only fluorescent objects to be visible. Fluorescent colors are used to paint decor elements, parts of costumes or props. It is often used in combination with dance, mimicry and acrobatics.

The look of the stage should match the time, place and style of the play and most importantly, the story we want to tell. When setting up the stage, care should be taken to ensure that the playing area is visible to all the audience so that it is not placed too high or too low.

The stage can also be a table, a chair, boxes, crates, suitcases, fences, a tree stump or a bench. Plays can be performed without special sound systems, spotlights, with simple instruments and voices, stories and songs that follow the movements of the puppets. The backdrops can be simple, from handy materials, found there, at the very place for the game.



Theater du Poulet

## Artistic and aesthetic requirements in shaping a stage puppet

The artistic value of a stage puppet has an aesthetic and artistic message that it sends from the stage. The most important features of a stage puppet in this regard would be: simplicity, functionality, proportions, styling and material/s. The artistic expression of the puppet should be simple, without superfluous details and "decorations", a clear and eloquent symbol in itself. When making it, you should take into account the functionality of the puppet, the possibilities of stage movement, i.e. animation. The construction, weight and dimensions of the puppet should not hinder the work of the animator on stage.

When creating a puppet show, it is necessary to determine which type of puppets and which form of scene correspond to the proposed text. The puppet should be unique, complete and with harmonized proportions in relation to the other puppets or characters in the play and the scene itself. Puppets act with their appearance, their shape, mass relations, rhythms and colors. The puppet should be in its "character". If the face is rounded, so should the hands and feet. If the face is pointed or bumpy, the hands and feet should match that look. Respecting the certain stylization of the puppet as a symbol, one should avoid excessive caricature, ugly deformation of the characters or enhanced expression that can lead to the character not being recognized.

When choosing and using materials for making puppets, you should take into account all other requirements, functionality, proportions or harmonious relationships between parts and the whole, and the aesthetics of the puppet itself on stage. It is recommended to use the same materials and certain styling for all the puppets on stage. Clothing must not restrict the movement of the puppet. The choice of materials gives special effects when walking: silky materials give the impression of floating and lightness, rigid materials rigor and stiffness. The clothes and details on the clothes (cut, decorations, jewelry...) place the puppet in a certain period and it is necessary to study them before making the costume itself.

## Accessories, tools and materials

For the great adventure of making theater, one needs necessary means, accessories, tools and materials: for drawing (pencils, felt-tip pens, markers, chalks...), for painting (paints, paints and varnishes, brushes of all sizes, rollers, sprays), for cutting (knives, scissors, scalpel, saws), for sewing (needle and thread, sewing machine, crochet needles...), for drilling (awls and drills). You also need sandpaper, glues for various materials (wood glue, wallpaper-glue, silicone), adhesive tapes, links, staples, rivets, hammers, nails and files. From the materials already mentioned in the text, one will need: paper, cardboard, corrugated cardboard, wool, twine, jute, sponge, plastic, styrofoam, pur-foam, natural and waste materials.

## Puppet animation

Movement is a stage element that brings the puppet to life. A puppeteer/ animator should have a sense of rhythm and have certain motor skills. While working with the puppet, he gets to know the expressiveness of the puppet and finds a specific rhythm that distinguishes the puppet as a special stage character. He needs to recognize and feel the inner life of the puppet to which he gives movement and voice. Animation of multiple puppets on stage should also follow the rules of good rhythm on stage and mutual respect of all characters on stage. While one puppet speaks, with its voice or movement, the animation of the other puppets should be "muted" so that the audience's attention is not divided between several different events on stage. It is important that the audience knows which puppet is speaking at all times. The movement of the puppet should be clear, stylized and symbolically emphasized. Small movements and nuances should be avoided. Puppet animation must be related to the character of the puppet, the action on stage and the general style of the play.

The principles of animation are different for each type of puppet. The marionette is animated using strings, from above, the ginjol puppet with a fist or hand from below. Naturalistic animation of the movements of living beings in puppet animation is not desirable. The puppeteer should feel the characteristic rhythm of movement that corresponds to the puppet itself. Each puppet has its own stage movement in its character (sad prince, curious princess, mischievous rabbit...). The rhythm of the speech should be matched with the movements of the head. In doing so, you should avoid excessive head swaying back and forth. To achieve the illusion of walking, the puppet should be rhythmically moved forward with barely noticeable bouncing or swaying. The puppet can jump onto the stage, peek out, or gradually appear and leave the stage.

Puppets can use different objects on stage (glasses, book, cutlery...). In order to be more visible on stage, these stage props used by the puppets are not proportional to the puppets, they are actually a bit bigger. Puppets can also use real-life objects. The puppet can read a real book or newspaper, drink from a real glass. Preferably, props are made in three dimensions or in low relief.

The doll's voice should be adapted to her character. A stage character is created by the synthesis of voice and puppet. One should take into account the emotional coloring of the dramatic puppet work itself.

Considering the dimensions, the puppet does not support a full human voice, so voice characterization is necessary. It implies nuances of speech pitch, volume and tempo changes, voice color, melody and accents. Each character should have their own distinctive voice. Flat and monotonous tones should be avoided, as they can cause boredom and loss of attention in children. The puppet can speak its own language by performing various language games. The puppets can sing, dance and move with certain music or sound effects.

## AUDIENCE

There are two constants and indispensable segments of theatrical art, namely the performance and the audience. The crown of dramatic creativity is the performance of the play in front of the audience. Only if all three mentioned factors are present: stage event, action and audience, one can speak of a theatrical performance. The audience is therefore a necessary factor: without it, there can be no play, just like without stage events. Every actor knows well that the performance depends on the audience. Actors sometimes feel carried away only performing the play and only then do the characters come alive. Laughter, tears, lack of interest, applause, all of that has an effect on the actors and the entire performance. A performance is not only the performance of a stage event on the audience, but also the reaction of the audience to that event.

Children are a different audience compared to adults, and these differences need to be put into advantage and create better quality direction and dramaturgy for children. Preschool age is the period when children are psychologically, socially, and aesthetically constituted as a theater audience. However, children of this age still do not understand the theater ramp as a boundary, there is still too strong a connection between the staging and their symbolic play and too much desire to put themselves in the center of all events. Therefore, children of preschool and early school age need an unconventional theater: a theater that will meet the demands of its audience for their own participation, intimacy and creation of a story in which they will not only identify with the heroes but also be part of the drama. Hence, children's reactions to theatrical performances are invaluable. Dialogue with the actors during the performance, reactions such as laughter, applause and any positive interaction of a verbal and non-verbal nature, will mean a lot to the actors on stage and those who had a part in the director's work: scenographers, sound masters, puppeteers, lyricists and others. . As a rule, our performances ended with children and actors (students) dancing talking and taking photos together on stage. Nevertheless, theatrical performances leave a deeper mark, and sometimes it takes several days to be able to more precisely formulate and communicate the impressions from the performances. That is why it is necessary to talk to the children-spectators about it a little later and use their experience for improvised drama and puppetry workshops and keep them in the magic circle of drama games for a while longer.



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