



12

MODULE – 5

Other Mediums
of Painting



Notes

MAKING OF PUPPET

Dear learner, in the previous lesson you learned about the Painting on Wood. In this lesson, you will learn about the Making of Puppet. Puppets are ‘actors’; though not human beings. Nor are they mere bits of wood and rags. Just as a mask is considered ‘the other face of man’, we may consider a puppet ‘the other human being’. Since it has an extraordinary life, it can carry drama to heights sometimes better than human actors. It is commonly believed that puppet theatre originated in India. It is from here that the art and the epic themes migrated to other Asian countries. The Tamil classic *Silappadikaram* was written around the 2nd century BCE, and *Natyashastra*, the masterly treatise on dramaturgy written by Bharata around the same time. We find some references to puppetry. The *Natyashastra* has not dealt with the puppetry. Still, the producer-cum-director of human theatre has been termed *Sutradhar*, which means ‘holder of strings’. The word must have found its place in theatre-terminology long before *Natyashastra* was written. There is no doubt that it came from Marionette Theatre.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the definition of the puppet;
- write in brief the history of puppet makings;
- explain the traditional method of making puppet;
- state about the different kinds of puppets;
- make puppets with simple materials.



Notes

12.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

To begin with, you need to understand the general description of puppet making in brief. The Sanskrit language has also taken a deeper view in naming these inanimate objects. They are termed Puttalika or Puttika, which mean the ‘little sons’. It suggests a ‘life’ in the puppets. The word ‘puppet’ is derived from the Italian word ‘Pupa’, meaning a doll. Pupa, on the other hand, may anticipate animation through manipulation. The meaning of Puttalika has sunk so deep into the mind of traditional puppeteers that they keep the box containing puppets in their bedrooms. It is not just rejected and thrown when a puppet is ‘old’ and cannot stand any more manipulation. Chanting mantra, the puppet to be discarded, is taken to a river and is given to the waves.

Considering the difference in design, mode of manipulation and presentational techniques, puppets are basically of four types: glove-puppet, rod-puppet, string-puppet and shadow puppet. Puppet theatre contacts its audience in two ways when the puppet is moved with strings. First, its hand and body twist and turn in funny ways which look very comical. Still, they look more human when they tell emotional stories, and some magic is created through their expressions.

The other way, when the material structure of the puppet is stressed, its ambition to imitate human beings, to some extent, ridiculed. As a result, it produces a comic effect. Emphasis is put on the puppets’ mysterious origins to create a magic effect and highlight the elements of life in them.

12.2 TRADITIONAL PUPPET MOTIFS

Let us know about the many types of motifs used by puppet maker in India. These are a few examples of these motifs.

1. The head of the male puppet is crowned with a well-designed turban dots, and lines are the main elements of the design.
2. The female head is more elaborated and decorated with ornaments and bindis on the forehead. These motifs are traditional.



Male puppet



Female puppet



Male puppet head



Notes



Female puppet head



Another male puppet head



Turban



Necklace



Earring



Bangle

Fig. 12.1

3. Notice the motifs on the Pagri (turban), which are simple but attractive.
4. The necklace is one of the favourite ornaments of Indian women. The only suggestion of gems is given with a few dots and teardrop form.
5. Earrings are shown with the same kind of suggestive forms in a very simple way.
6. Bangles are used by Indian women since the time of the Indus Valley Civilization. Puppeteers like to embellish the female puppets with a lot of ornaments.

12.3 MATERIALS REQUIRED TO MAKE A PUPPET

Thermocol pieces (can be replaced by wood), two wooden rods (about 12 inches, waste cloth pieces, lots of thread, sandpaper, materials to decorate (mirror pieces, shiny borders, etc.), paint (to paint face), stapler, feviquick, and brushes.

- Thick cloth of bright colour
- Cardboard
- Scissor
- Knife/cutter
- Needle and thread
- Adhesive
- Wool
- Colours



Notes

- A carton box
- Tissue paper
- Black pastel paper
- Cutter
- Wooden stick
- Adhesive
- Electric bulb with wire and plug
- Thin copper wire

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 1

Shadow puppetry is also known as shadow play. This is an ancient form of story telling and entertainment which uses cut out figure. These are held between a source of light and a translucent screen. Various effect can be achieved by moving both the puppet and the light source. It is popular in South East Asia and India.

In this exercise you will prepare a Shadow Puppet.

Step 1: Collect a medium sized carton. Cut a big window on the front side of the carton and a smaller window on one side of it.



Fig. 12.2

Step 2: Cover the front window with tissue paper and make a hole at the top side of the carton to put a bulb inside. Connect the bulb to the power socket.



Fig. 12.3

Step 3: Take the pastel paper and draw a figure. Face should be in profile.

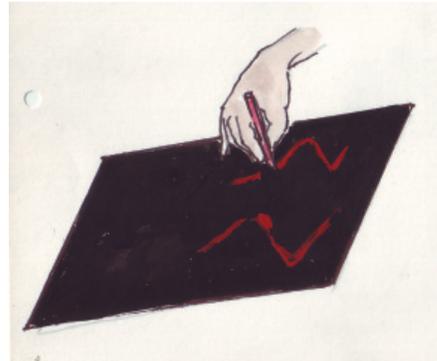


Fig. 12.4

Step 4: Take the wooden stick and paste it on the back of the figure with adhesive or glued tape.



Fig. 12.5

Step 5: Draw two arms and two legs on the black paper. Cut these and attach them to the proper position of the torso.



Fig. 12.6



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Step 6: Attach these limbs to the torso with a copper wire.



Fig. 12.7

Step 7: Put the light inside the carton. Place the figure between the window and light through the side window. Manipulate the figure with hand movement.



Fig. 12.8

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 2

Now you will learn to make a Glove Puppet.

A Glove Puppet is a type of puppet that is controlled by hand. It was originated in China during the 17th century CE. This type of glove puppet became popular worldwide with little modification and alteration.

Step 1: Take a cloth of 5” × 24” size.

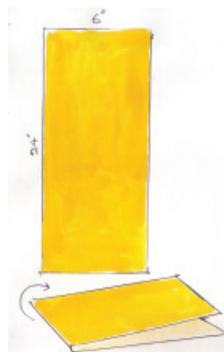


Fig. 12.9

Step 2: Draw the shape given in the figure below on the cloth and cut it with the help of a scissor.

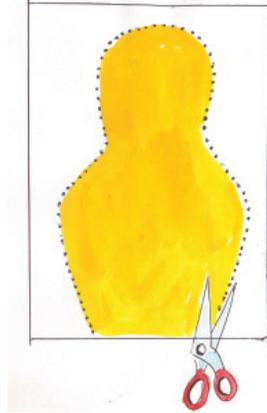


Fig. 12.10

Step 3: Stitch on the marked line, leave the lower part, and turn the glove inside out. Take a soft cardboard of 4'x8". Cut corners to get an oval shape, as shown in the figure given below.



Fig. 12.11

Step 4: Paste a red cloth on it and fold it in half. Take it in your palm and press it to open like a bird's beak.

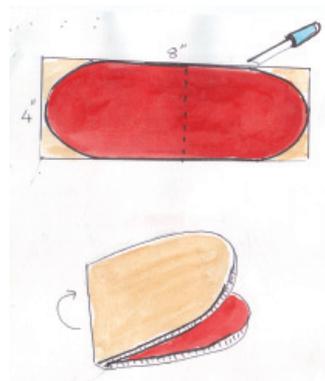


Fig. 12.12



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Step 5: Take the glove and slice one side of it, as shown in the given figure. Put the beak into the cut and stitch or paste it.

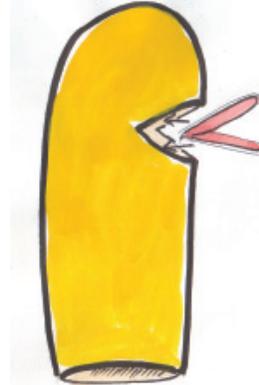


Fig. 12.13

Step 6: Put your hand inside the glove, hold the beak with your four fingers and thumb, and play it.



Fig. 12.14

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 3

In this exercise we will prepare a String Puppet in Rajasthani Style.

Step 1: Make the thermocol pieces roughly into the shape of a face. Do not be very specific here.

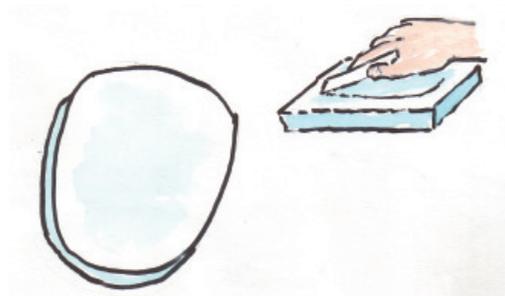


Fig. 12.15

Making of Puppet

Step 2: Make small holes at the bottom of face and insert some part of the wooden rod into it. The face should stand on the rod. The rest of the rod will provide a base for the chest of puppets.

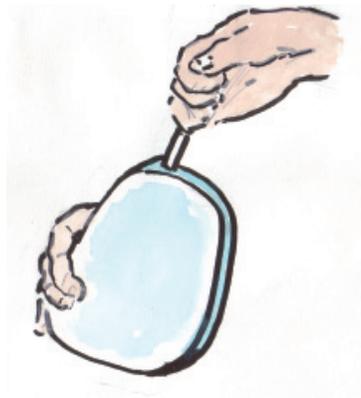


Fig. 12.16

Step 3: Paint the face. Make hair, eyes, lips, moustaches for King/long hair for the queen. Leave the face aside for drying.



Fig. 12.17

Step 4: Take the wooden rod and place some pieces of cloth on it. Tie the pieces together with thread. Repeat this till the chest is big enough. Then repeat the same procedure for arms.

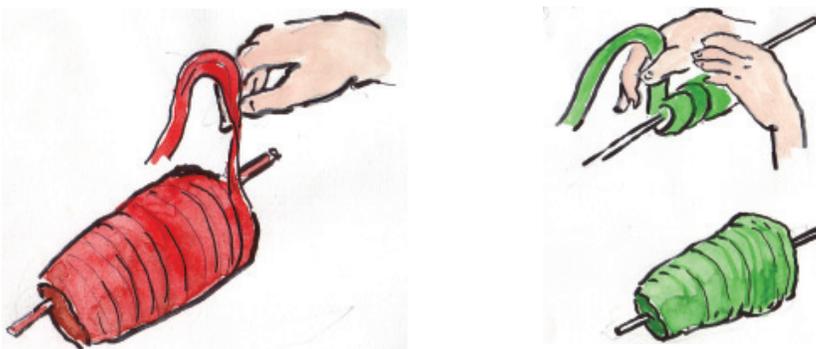


Fig. 12.18

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Step 5: Cover the chest and arms with colourful clothes (preferably traditional print). Use feviquick or a stapler to join the ends. For making the palm, extend the covering cloth and make a fold in the end.



Fig. 12.19

Step 6: Ghagra for Queen (the long skirt): Wrap around and make sure you have some folds to give a bulged look. The skirt should be long.

Legs of King: These should be made by folding the cloth and pinning it to form the two legs. Again, fold the ends inwards to form the feet of the king. Remember, the chest length should be at least one-third of the rest of the part of the body.

Step 7: Decorate with colours, brush and multi-coloured clothes. And it is done!



Fig. 12.20

Step 8: To present a story through your puppets, you will have to make them dance! To achieve this, attach threads from both the hands and legs (4 threads each)

Making of Puppet

to a wooden cross-section (two rods of wood at 90 degrees to each other). By moving these wooden pieces up and down, your puppets will dance in the air, and by moving them laterally in space, your puppets will walk!



Fig. 12.21

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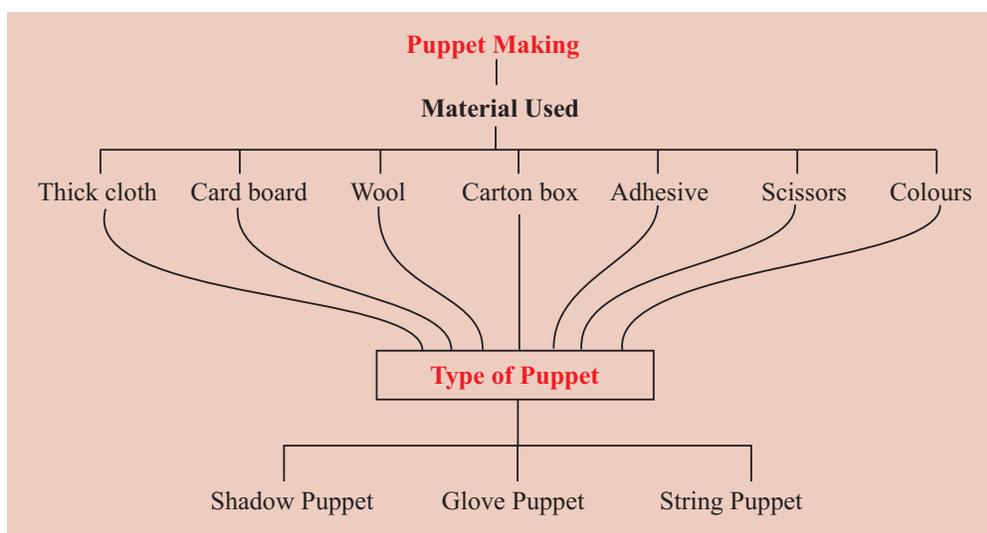
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WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT





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TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. List the materials for story puppet making.
2. Draw and cut the face of a puppet on thermocol.
3. How do you prepare a shadow puppet?
4. List the steps to play a glove puppet.
5. List the materials to be used to make a glove puppet, as it is described in your text.

GLOSSARY

- Natya Shastra : A text on dramaturgy, written by Bharat Muni.
- Glove puppet : Hand gloves are painted or diverted as living creatures.
- String puppet : Puppets are manipulated to move with the strings attached to fingers.
- Rod puppet : A rod is attached to the puppet and makes it move.
- Shadow puppet : The Silhouette of the puppet is reflected on a curtain using light. The puppeteer manipulates the movements.