

Cameosattik

<http://www.cameosattik.com/maskproject.html>

LATEX MASK PROJECT

This was quite an endeavor for me. I have always been interested in making my own masks, because I make all of my own costumes. So,, now I have the means to do it. The following are a few pictures at various stages of sculpting. I am not by any means an expert, since this is my first one, and I have a lot yet to learn.



I bought a mask making kit from MONSTER MAKERS. This is the beginning stage. I started with some pictures of various facial features just to get some ideas. The clay I used is oil based, it doesn't dry out and is easy to work with.



You can see some facial structure taking shape. By the way, I have never sculpted a face before, so this was a learn as you go project.



I've added some eyebrows and some teeth to the mouth. In the final mask you can see I made a lot of changes, and I still don't have the ears down yet.



Obtained from
Omarshuntedtrail.com



The following pictures are the final mask sculpture. Unfortunately I ran out of time and the weather turned bad and I couldn't cast it. Casting is going to be a messy job and can't be done in the house, unless you have a special room for it. So when the weather breaks, I'll be out in the garage. In the following pages you will see pictures of my progress.

There is a lot of great info out there to be had. Mark Alfrey has some videos about sculpting and casting. There are numerous web sites that sell supplies. You just have to do some internet digging. I have placed a few links on my home page.

Obtained from
Onmarsunitedtrail.com



In this first picture, I've done the casting to the back of the head. It was quite an experience. I didn't get the plaster mixed correctly the first few times and ended up with a door stop in the bottom of my bucket. I also had quite a few air pockets to fill in. I used a syringe to do this. There were also problems with my retaining wall falling off the back of the sculpture. I had plaster everywhere. I really learned a lot from just doing that back half!



Here you can see that the front half is now done. After using the knowledge from the back half, I only made small amounts of plaster and worked a bit faster. The base coat went on better and I also used burlap cut differently, (squares instead of strips) it worked a lot better in covering the sculpture.



Here is an upright view of the casting. With all that clay and plaster it was quite heavy. You can see there is plaster on the armature, fortunately it came right off.



This is after I pried the two halves apart. The back half pretty much fell right off, The front half was a different story. I had to heat the whole thing in the oven (with most of the armature sticking out and resting on the door) in order to get the front half pulled away and then I had to have help. Once it was finally moving, most of the clay came with it. I then had the task of cleaning all the clay out.



In this photo you can see most of the clay is gone. I still have a bit of detail cleaning to do. All of the facial features are now visible. Unfortunately I did find some areas that had been air pockets, so those will need to be repaired before I can cast my first mask.

All I can say is I most definitely learned a lot from this first mask, and will probably have much more to learn in the future.

Latex Casting



Well, here are the two halves, cleaned and ready to go. You can see in the front half, I had some areas that were repaired. I was a bit worried that it would ruin the latex casting, but it didn't turn out too bad.



I first coated the front and back halves with latex using a brush, then put them together using the mold strap supplied with my kit. You have to make sure it is very tight, that way it doesn't leave a large gap in the seam. Once together I then brushed a coat of latex over the seam, this helps seal it. the picture to the left shows the plaster casting with latex in it to dwell. I didn't have quite enough to fill it all the way, so I had to keep brushing and splashing latex up on the neck area. I'm ordering more latex....



I let the latex dwell (sit in the mold) for about 45 minutes. After that time, the latex was dumped out and the mold was set upright to drain. You may have to tilt it a couple of times like I did in order get all the latex out of the nose and chin areas. The draining time was about a half hour.



After all the latex has been drained out, the mold was then put on it's side in front of a fan. I think I'll look for some kind of smaller blower for this step, the big fan didn't work so well. I had to let it sit longer to start to gel. After it got to the gel stage I repeated the process again, to get a thicker mask.



I let the mask sit over night to cure a bit. When it was ready to pull, I took a chip brush and covered the inside with baby powder. This will keep the mask from sticking to itself. In the picture above you can see I started pulling the mask away from the mold. I began at the back of the neck pulling the it free.



Once the back half was loose up to the seam, I removed the strapping and back of the mold. At this point I was pretty darn excited, I carefully pulled the mask out of the front half and all the detail was showing up, I couldn't believe I actually made my first mask!

I filled it with plastic grocery bags and set it to finish curing. The pictures below are what it looks like. Somehow I did end up with a goose egg on the top of it's head, and a thin area in the chin. But overall, I don't think it turned out too bad.... It looks almost identical to the sculpture.



Obtained from
Omarshauntedtricks.com



Now that the casting is done, I can paint. I will also be adding realistic eyes and hair.

Painting



Well, I definitely need some practice with the airbrush, and mixing my colors. This first mask will now become part of a new animated prop for my yard, as it didn't turn out like I wanted.

Obtained from
Omar's Haunted Trail.com

As you can see, this creature looks kind of dead.... My base color was way to light, so I couldn't really do highlights, and the darker colors were too dark. I had quite the purple color going on. I added some black and yellow and then had a mess.. So, this mask will become the Grave Digger..



I did manage to get the veins to stand out some, and the warts on the nose and chin.

I also added some freckling. I hope it won't look too bad when I add hair to it.



You can also see the seams aren't taken down too far. I used a Dremel with a cotton buffer wheel. It flings latex chunks all over the place!

This was my first attempt at airbrushing, and I did try to do some mottling on the top and back of the head. It's a good thing I can make more masks,,, just takes latex and about a half a day...

I think I'm going to need the practice.

HAIR PUNCHING

Punching hair is a very time consuming and tedious job, and if you don't have good eyes like me, you will need some kind of magnifying glass to see.

Below is a picture of the tool I use. I got this from another site and it works great.



In this picture, the short piece could have been just a touch shorter than it is. the long piece is then bent to make a slight hook.

This is what I use. It is an X-acto knife, with the blade removed. I then took a household sewing needle and cut the eye part in half, then cut one side shorter.



Here you can see that I have the hair wrapped around my finger, and I'm grabbing just 2 hairs and pulling them out snug.

Once you pull the selected hairs out, you just punch them thru the latex.



In these pictures you can see my progress. I have gone all the way around the bottom part of his head. He will stay bald on top.

Obtained from Omarshauntedtrail.com



Once all the punching is done, you need to coat it with latex. That way the hairs don't pull out.

Obtained from
Omarshantedtrail.com