



<http://www.hauntershingout.com/home/FCGPuppet.asp>

## Merlin's FCG Puppet



The first prop that I ever made was a "fake FCG". It was my first year helping with our local Jaycees haunted house and they gave me a room of my very own. I thought about painting my room black and making a Flying Crank Ghost that would float over the people as they walk through. Everyone loved the idea. Most of the workers had heard of or had seen a FCG at other haunted houses.

The fact the the FCG was so well known made me soon realize that a FCG would be cool but would it be scary? If the workers had seen it before then the patrons probably would have too. What if I could make it "attack" them as the walk through my room. They would not be expecting that.

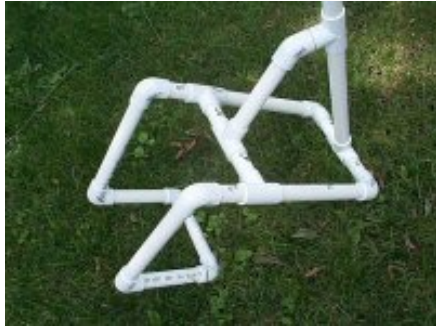
So I built my first fake FCG puppet. The idea was to dress in all black and stand in the back of the room as the patrons entered. The puppet would be worked in a very mechanical way as though it was hanging from the ceiling. I even brought in a small loud sounding motor that I knew the patrons would hear to give the illusion that a motor was controlling it. A black light was positioned in the middle of the room facing the patrons. This would blur their vision and help hide me from their view yet gave off enough light to illuminate the puppet.

On opening night as the patrons filed in to the room I could hear them commenting on how cool it was. No one was scared of it and many commented to their friends that they had seen ones like it before. Some knew it was worked by a motor and was hanging from the ceiling. As they moved to the center of the room the puppets arms suddenly stretched out and with a loud scream I lunged toward them.

To make a long story short, it worked great! I had people falling to the floor in fear. At one point in the night a mother barreled over her two children to get out of the room after only seconds earlier assuring them that it was just hanging form the ceiling. I even had to stop at one point because five young lady's were pasted to the floor too afraid to get up Two of them then admitted that they had wet them selves.

That was the only night I got to work the puppet. I had every worker begging me to let them do it the next night. It was definitely the hit of the haunt.

## Making the frame.



The frame is made of PVC. In most of the ones that I have made I used 3/4 in PVC. This one is made with 1 inch PVC. The larger PVC will make the frame stronger but will add to the weight of the puppet. I'm a big guy so the extra weight will not bother me but if you build one think of the finished weight when deciding on the size of PVC.



In the picture to the left you can see the sizes of PVC are printed on the frame. Your frame needs to be made to fit your body so some adjustment in the lengths may be needed.



The rod that the puppet is built on can be any length. The longer the pipe the higher in the air the puppet will be. Longer, will make the puppet move more distance as you move your body as well. If the pipe is too long, the frame will get more uncomfortably to wear.

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Here you can see that a small hole is drilled into the PVC connector and a decking screw screwed into the hole. This is how I secured the frame. Cement could be used but the frame tends to take a lot of abuse and the cement did not seem to hold up as well.

### Making the puppet.



A cheap blucky chest is cut down the length in the back. This will allow you to slip it over the PVC. Also where the arms attach to the chest is cut out.



Take the the two pieces of PVC for the arms off and slide the chest over the PVC. After the chest is on the frame. Insert the PVC for the arms back on the frame.





If you want to add a bit of gore to your puppet you can corpse the chest as I did here. It's just latex and cotton that is applied to the chest.



The rods are connected to the arms by drilling a hole in the arms the same size as the rods and then using a deck screw to secure them.



The arm joints are made by drilling a hole into each piece of PVC and then inserting a bolt in each. Heavy twine or a light rope is used to connect the two pieces.



With this puppet I wanted to use a talking skull. Here you can see how I put it on the puppet. After the stand was placed into the pvc I used a screw to secure it.



In the past I have used cheap skulls from Big Lots for the puppet. The first puppet that I made used a wig head. The wig head made the puppet look more like a traditional FCG.



Holes are drilled in the back and screws used to secure the PVC.

I lightly sanded the frame with sandpaper and then painted the frame with flat black spraypaint



You can make this puppet with or without hands. No hand would be more like a FCG. Just drape cloth over the pvc. If you want to add hands then check out this Page on how to make the hands. It is just like in the How-To except that you will be making a complete lower arm

Here you can see the arms. I used pipe insulating foam to give the arms some girth. The chest was painted with nut meg craft paint. After the puppet was finish I felt that the skin was too dark for the room that it would be used in. I later painted it with a light coat of white.

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On this puppet I over exaggerated the arms by making them longer than normal. This will give the puppet a farther reach.



You will need to make two arm rods to control the arms of the puppet. The length of the rods are determined by the length of the pipe that you build the puppet on.

Here is a picture of the puppet to this point. All that is left to do is to add the cloth. Any cloth can be used. In the past I have just picked out cloth from the fabric section of walmart. This puppet I used cheese cloth. I really like the way that it looks.



Here the arm is wrapped in cloth. Without doing this I could see the PVC and foam under the rest of the cloth. I just used staples to fasten the cloth to the puppet.



Cut a shroud out of the cloth and dress the puppet. Rip the ends of the cloth to give a weather effect to the puppet. Keep adding cloth till you are satisfied with the look.



Pipe insulation was used as padding for the frame. Just cut it to size and then glue it to the frame. You will be glad that you added this padding after wearing the puppet for a few hours.



### **A Few Tips.**

This puppet works great in a black room. Try to place a black light between you and the patrons and face the light so that it is shining at them. Aiming it at them will help to hide you. Get someone to help you set it up. Have them stand where the patrons will stand

and adjust the light so that you are hidden, but the puppet glows. With them watching you move toward them and then back again to get an idea of how close you can get to the people before you will be seen.

Wear dark cloths. You can get a cloth mask at walmart to hide your face.

As the patrons walk into the room, work the puppet in a slow mechanical manner. Slowly lift the arms and lower them again. Stand in one place and try to make your puppet look as much like a FCG as you can. Take your time. Let them admire the prop. Have a spot that they need to get to before you get'm. When they get there, attack! The puppet is on a long pole so your movements are magnified. A slight turn of your body to the left or right will cause the puppet to seem to fly across the room.

Have fun!

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