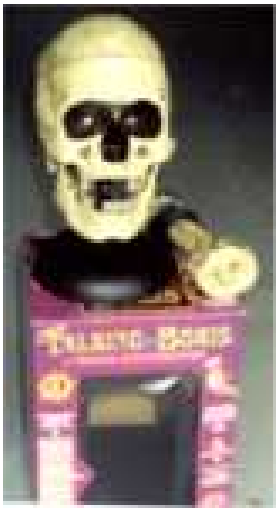
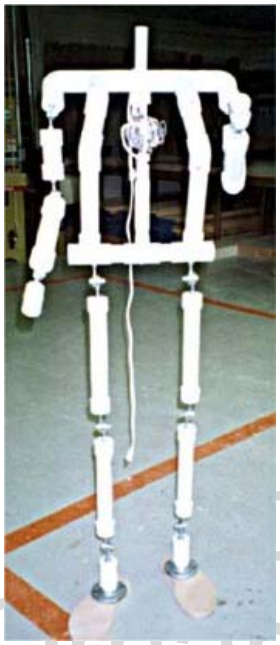
http://www.deathlord.net/LaceratedLarry/lacer.htm

LacERatED LaRRY

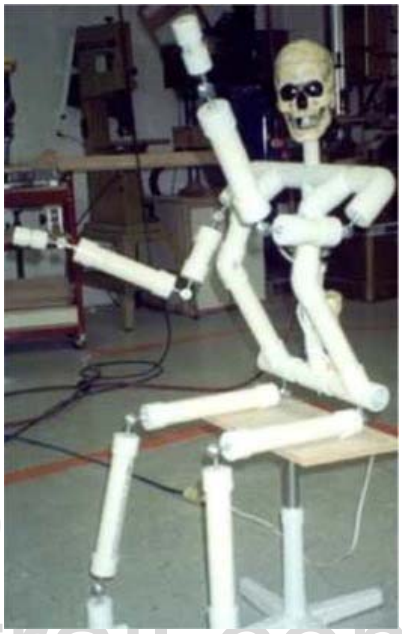




Difficulty Rating: 

LacEratED Larry - 1 -

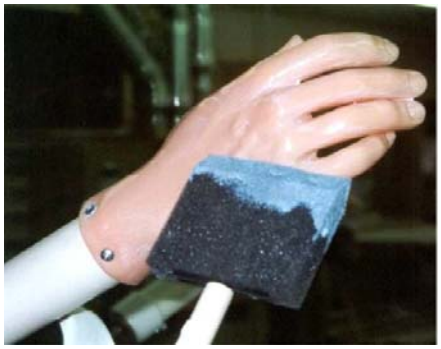


Once I had developed my new dummy, I needed to use him for a new prop that I didn't already have. Lacerated Larry was what I decided on. Above you can see the starting point. I had retrofit him with the alternate shins that bypassed the ankle, since I was planning on Larry always in either a standing or sitting position, but never where his feet would have to pose other than on a 90 degree from his legs.



The next thing I did was remove the head that he was first fitted with, as this dummy wasn't going to need one. What he would need though, was a neck. I cut his neck down to approximately 4" above the shoulder level and using Polycel Insulating Foam (the same thing as Great Stuff) I covered all around it and left it to dry overnight.

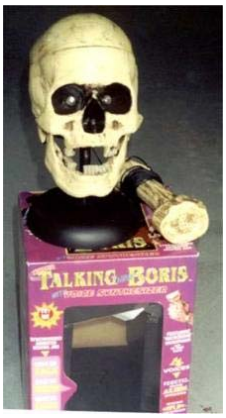
Once dry I carved it with a pneumatic cut-off tool to approximate a neck bone. It wasn't as lifelike as I had hoped, but in the dark of the haunt with the 1" exposed above the neck he will be fit with, this was perfectly fine. I then coated the exposed foam neck bone with caulk to smooth out the surface somewhat.



Next I replaced his articulated wrists and hand and attached human- looking hands directly to his forearms. These are Stage Hands used for props that you can get from a major Halloween supply store like the Halloween Outlet.

Once I screwed them on to his forearm, completely bypassing his wrists since I wouldn't be needing them to articulate, I painted them both with adhesive cement.

Once the cement had dried I painted the hands a skin color that was much more convincing than the orange/pink color they come in. The cement is another trick I picked up from SpookyFX.Com that makes the paint adhere to the plastic without flaking off. However be prepared for this to take a long time to dry. If left in the sunlight to dry fully it may speed up the process somewhat, but these were still tacky for days.



I will be using a Talking Boris for the main effect of this event and will need to modify it to work with

a sound chip that has it's own motion detection. These put out considerably less sound signal than a cassette recorder we used to animate our Crypt Keeper, so we will need to use a different combination of in line electronics to make the head work with the chip.

Once again I turned to the vast knowledge of the chat list folks for help. Luckily there were some techno wizards there that could tell me how to tackle the challenge. After about 40 or more hours of trying every conceivable combination of capacitors and resistors, I learned I would be using the same capacitor as we used on the Crypt Keeper, but instead of a 10K ohm resistor I found success in using a 2K potentiometer I got at Radio Shack that came in a bag of about 20 different pots (potentiometers) for just a few bucks. I don't have a pic of the package here, but below is a photo of what it looks like.

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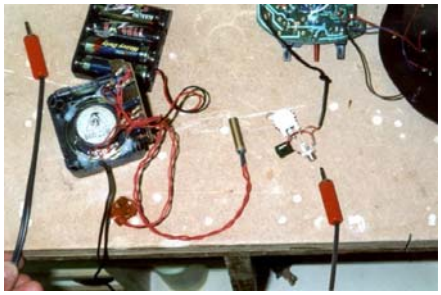

Here you can see the sound chip, which is a small black box that records any message for up to about 8 seconds and then will play it back when the little sensor (the brass tube) senses a change in heat. This particular one came from Terror By Design. We will be talking about this in a moment. The same as we did when modifying the Boris head for the Crypt Keeper, we will once again be cutting off the microphone and soldering our inline electronics to the center wire.

The photo above shows the skull cap of the head, the black cover that holds the batteries and the circuit board removed from the skull. The pot has three legs that come out of the bottom. One leg is on the top side and the other two are both coming out of the bottom side of it. The silver thing you see below the round white potentiometer is an 1/8" phone jack with the square green thing on the left is the capacitor. It is important to get this hooked up correctly so carefully follow these written instruction as the picture is nothing more than a jumble to the eye. The phone jack has two legs that we will be soldering to.

First we will attach one leg of the capacitor to the CENTER wire lead of the phone jack. The other lead on the jack is the ground and contacts the main shaft of the plug that goes into it. The lead we want to attach the capacitor to is the one that contacts with the tip of the plug you will insert into it later. Now, solder the other leg of the capacitor to the center leg of the pot. Now solder a jumper wire to one of the two legs of the pot that come out of the bottom side. The only

other leg left of the pot, the other bottom side leg will be soldered to the red center wire from the Boris skull. Now solder BOTH the jumper from one of the two bottom legs of the pot AND the outside ground wire to the ground tab on the jack.

Once you have this wired it is time to solder on two lightweight wire leads to each connector on the back of the speaker in the repeater chip box. One will be going to the skull and the other to your amplifier and remote sound. For some odd reason you cannot cut the wires of the speaker inside the skull head and have the jaw movement still work. At least this one didn't so leave your speaker connected even if you plan to give your Lacerated Larry a big, life sized voice like I gave mine.

It is a good idea to make the sound line from the speaker to your amp at least 15' long, as you never know how much you will need later to travel to your sound amplifier. The other lead will be zip tied to the PVC pipe chest and down his arm where the talking head will be. On the other end of each wire connect 1/8" male phone plugs. Now test your system with one of the sound leads to the skull and make sure it works. If it does, you can mount the female phone jack in the back of the skull head and close everything up.

On the back of the chest section of my figure I mounted a 1/4" piece of wood for mounting my sound repeater and the battery box as well as the little separate button that triggers the recording onto the chip. The lines out of the box are zip tied to the skeleton, your 15' one down to the bottom of one of his legs, as this will be going into a karaoke machine for our voice. The other to the skull. Finally the heat sensor will be routed out to the end of his free hand, as this must be as close to the TOT as you can get it for it to trigger. I mounted this inside one of his fingers at the very tip and painted it the same flesh color as I painted his hands.

In the same photo above you will see a red light at approximately where a person's heart would be located. This is a night light base zip tied to the back of the chest upright. On the end of the power cord to the night light will be a Blinky that goes between the plug end and the wall socket. Now our unlucky Larry will also have a beating heart radiating through his shirt like the skeleton bride in the Haunted Mansion in Disneyland.

I start clothing Larry with a thick sweater to smooth out the joints of his skeleton and once I have it positioned where I want, I use fender washers and screws to attach it to a couple of places on his chest.

Now I can confidently cut out a peek-a-boo spot for the beating heart to shine through and illuminate behind his white shirt. It is time to dress up for the party. Here I simply cut a section of round cardboard tube used as the core of a bolt of fabric, slipped it around his neck bone and screwed it to his top shoulder rail. Then using a small pneumatic cut off tool I ground hack marks into his "neck". Of course I painted the neck with the same skin colored paint and then highlighted as you can see with blood red. The neck bone was gray with black highlights at the vertebras.

To highlight the turning neck bone, I made a large knife out of some scrap wood and painted it to look realistic. I glued it into a notch I cut out of the top of the neck bone PVC pipe.

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It is time to prepare the skull for our unhappy fella. Fit his ocular cavities with approximately 1/3 of a ping pong ball which can be cut easily with a pair of scissors. Once fitted hot glue them in place. Unlike the skull we prepared for the Crypt Keeper, we will be leaving the LED eyes in place for Larry. I dusted the skull with some gray paint so if any of his skull were apparent after his skin were applied, it wouldn't be quite so white.

Here was my goal. A realistic looking talking head. This is a simple mask from Sav-On or some such place that came complete with hair.

Remember, your skull cap needs to remain removable to replace the batteries inside. So that means the entire top portion of the mask is only attached to the skull cap and also to the Stage Hand that holds

up the head. To achieve this I cut the mask from the corner of each side of his mouth in a straight line back to the back of the mask, just under the ears. Then I placed the top portion of the mask on the skull assembly and drilled through some of the fingers and the thumb of the stage hand, through the mask and through the plastic skull cap.

Then with a razor blade I cut a star pattern on the top of each entry point in the top of the hand so that the head of a screw would pass through. Then I inserted screws into the hand and screwed the skull cap on tight. Next I pulled the bottom jaw section of the mask up around the jaw of the skull and put in one screw through the mask into the back of the jaw.

The bottom of the mask was then cut off just under the jaw and blood was splashed around the edges. Because the jaw part of the mask is pulled up tight to the jaw, and the upper mask is just hanging there, the movement of the lower section isn't hindered at all. Next I painted a small round cornea of black in his eyes and followed that by a smaller round dot of gray to complete the eye.

Here is another close up shot of the head. Even with the neck moving and both arms reaching out forward he was still stable in a standing position.

I dressed him in some black levis, a white shirt and then went over the shirt with a very shredded black sweater. Notice the large hole shredded in the heart area for the red illumination to come through.

For feet I used black rubber boots that I slit down the back and cut a hole out of the sole with a jig saw so it would wrap around the PVC pipe leg. The shredding was accomplished mostly by using scissors. Once I get the general shape of the holes in the clothes I use a wire brush on the edges of the fabric to give it a frayed and distressed look.

On the white shirt I used a small butane torch to tatter the edges of the cut outs here and there to add more color and depth.

For his voice I purchased a small boom box styled karaoke machine from Wal Mart for about $20 that amplifies the sound from the sound repeater chip and also plays it back. I simply placed the machine behind the camo net directly behind his legs. When triggered his voice is now about the

same volume as a man's moaning voice. I find that used karaoke machines show up in flea markets all the time with torn speaker fabric or some other problem like the cassette player in it is broken, ruining it for other people's use, but for me it still does everything I need. It amplifies as well as producing the sound and works with a line in from a microphone or an external sound device.

In the off season I simply position his hands down to his sides and cover him in clear lawn and leaf bags to seal him off from the spiders and he doesn't take up much space at all.