http://www.halloweencreatures.com/barlow.htm1

A face only a mother could love on payday...

Mr. Barlow is one of horror writer Steven King's most frightening protagonists, but Tobe Hooper imagined him to look like this for his made for TV version of "Salem's Lot."

I was thrilled to find a version of this character as a mask from Death Studios, and I quickly came up with a prop for it. It started out as just a piece of PVC pipe mounted in a coffee can of plaster, which was then kept upright by mounting it in a heavy duty Christmas tree stand.

I built the hands for him, hung some black sheets around him, and he was done, but I always thought I could build him better. For Halloween 2000, I hung him upside down like a giant bat, but he still didn't seem quite finished.

This year I decided to add a more stable base for him to stand on, give him a shot of Monster Mud, and improve his wardrobe by giving him the long coat Mr. Chaney used to wear.

A lot of people have asked about how I built his huge claws, and, although I neglected to take any pictures of this process, I drew a few quick diagrams that hopefully will help explain the construction.

I took several lengths of coat hanger wire and bent them as flat as I could. Looking at your own hands or at an anatomy book, try to envision how and where

the joints in the fingers would bend. Mark the joints with a marker or use some small pieces of tape as guides. I started by measuring a length for the wrist, securing the wire in a vise or clamp, then bent the wire by using some needle nose pliers.

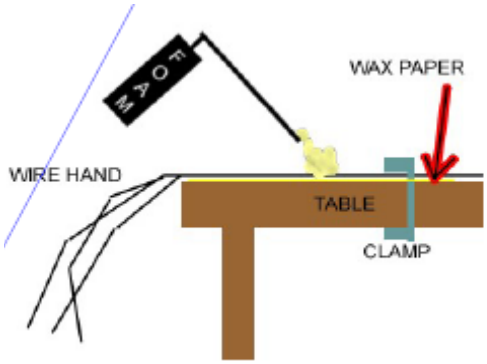
From the wrist, try to imagine how the bones would fan out inside the hand, and bend appropriately. You should now have a group of five long wires, bunched up at the wrist, fanning out in a hand shape, but still flat. Now comes the tricky part. I connected all the wrist pieces together with some duct tape and I laid the hand flat on my workbench on top of a piece of wax paper.

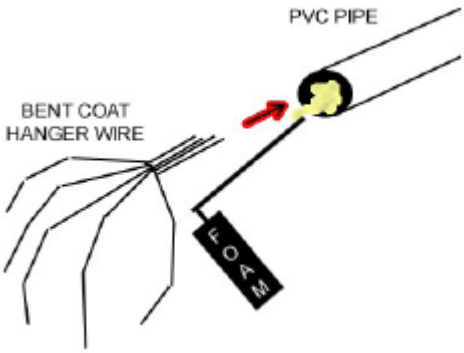
I locked the wire in place by using a small clamp, positioning where the first joint would bend off the edge of the table, and slowly sprayed a line of foam on the wire above the wax paper. Then you need to wait a few hours until the foam cures. This tedious process took a while to complete, as I needed to individually bend, clamp, and spray each joint one at a time, repositioning the hand on the table as I went along.

An easier way you could do this would be to bend all the wire first, run a flat length of painters tape or aluminum foil down each finger, and spray the entire finger at once. Remember, this is not a perfect process - up close, these hands look sloppy, but, from a distance, they look great. It's not the fine detail you are after, but the shape of the claw that makes it look convincing.

When you get to the ends of the fingers, after the foam has cured a bit, but not entirely, poke some fake black novelty finger nails into the foam. When it's completely dry, you can insert the wrist part into a small length of PVC, squirt some foam in to seal it, clamp it together, and let it cure.

Now you have some hand pieces that can be attached to your PVC skeleton easily. Have fun building this bloodsucker!



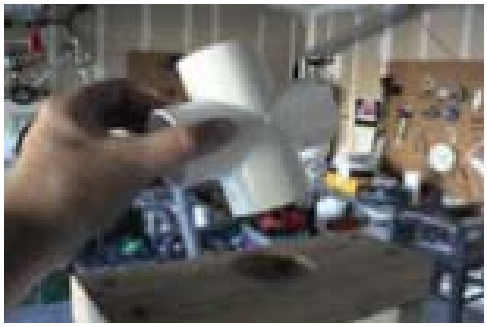


Begin by determining how tall you want your creature to stand. I designed my version of Barlow to be tall and skinny, so I cut two 2 x 4s at about 6' 0". With the additional height of the head being around 1', Barlow stands around 7 feet tall, which makes him look pretty menacing.

I used some 3 inch wood screws to attach the legs to a 2 foot square piece of 1/2 inch plywood, and also attached a small 2 x 4 bracing piece at the top neckline to hold everything together.

At the top of the structure I used a 2 inch wood boring drill bit to create a hole that will hold the head/arms PVC "skeleton." If you use 2 inch PVC and fittings to build your monster, then the whole unit should fit together securely.

Just be sure that you use the right size drill bit which corresponds to the size of PVC that you use.



Experiment with different lengths for the arms and shoulders by using different types of fittings.

I used a cross piece to fit in the hole, which allowed me to place the head on top, and an arm piece from each side.

The length of the arms and shoulders will also be dependant on what kind of coat or cloak the creature will wear.

In my case, I used a long coat that my wife found at a consignment store, and theses kinds of places are great to check for interesting costumes and accessories.

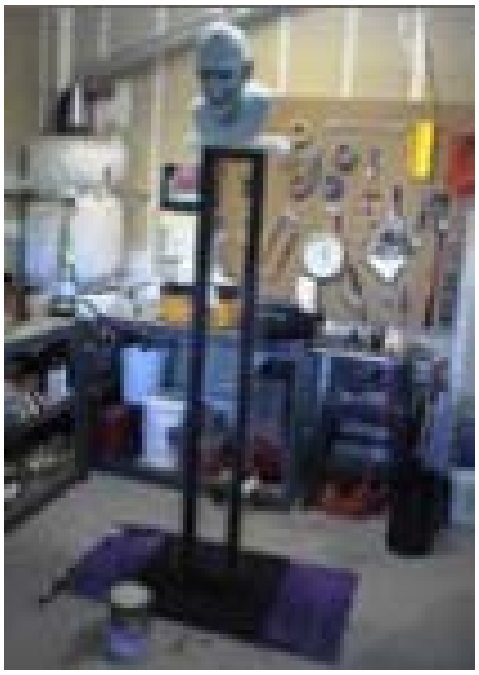
I had to play around with the PVC pieces to come up with an interesting design that would fit the sleeves of this coat.

After figuring out the overall design, I painted the wooden leg structure with black paint.

I then used some wire cutters to cut some long cylinder shapes of chicken wire to add some depth to the legs.

Wrap each chicken wire cylinder around each of the 2 x 4 legs and connect the ends together.

Don't forget to add a pair of feet to the legs. The great thing about using chicken wire is that you can mold and shape it any way you want, and still keep it rigid enough to support clothing or Monster Mud.



Once you have the wire legs in place, start building a chicken wire torso.

Place your mask on a styrofoam wig form, and mount the head on a small piece of PVC that fits the "skeleton."

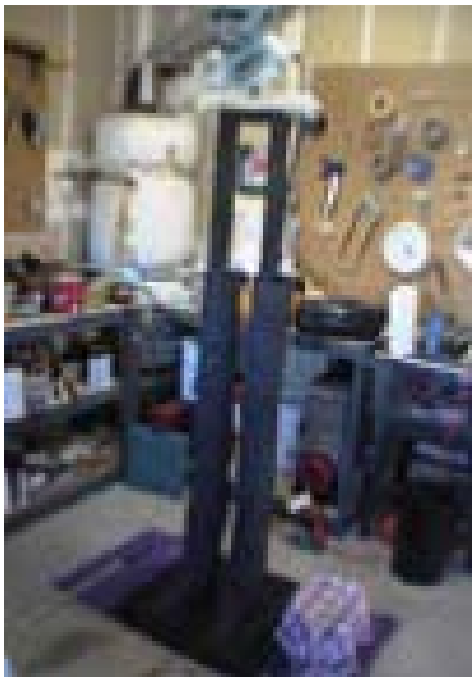
With the head in place, you can adjust the chicken wire torso to have a hunched back, or other distinguishing characteristics.

Now your ready to begin applying Monster Mud to the legs.

Since the torso will be covered by the coat, you don't need to apply the mud there. This way, the entire torso can be broken down and stored away easily after Halloween.

Start by cutting several strips of landscape burlap.

Then mix up a batch of Monster Mud by combining 5 parts joint compound with 1 part black paint.



You may want to wear gloves and put a drop cloth down - this part gets messy.

Thoroughly saturate a strip of burlap into the Mud and work it in well with your hands.

Wring out the excess, and wrap the burlap around the chicken wire as if you were working with paper mache'.

Working with one strip at a time, cover the legs until you reach the top.

Allow this to dry for at least 24 hours, then you can apply a coating of spray paint for color.

I used black for the feet, and a dark green for the legs.

When the paint is dry, you can apply a small coat of polyurethane in a spray bottle to weatherproof it.

Now just place the coat or clothing on the prop, add the arms, hands, and head, place your creation in a dark corner, and watch from a distance as innocent, unsuspecting trick or treaters lose their sanity upon viewing it!