

# MASKS ON PARADE

Resource booklet for cheap  
and easy ways to make  
effective, durable masks and  
how to dress them up!

Arranged and compiled by Kim Merry and Jane Fisher.

Not to be sold or traded. Any enquiries about its use, contact Nelson Arts Festival: [festivalenquiries@ncc.govt.nz](mailto:festivalenquiries@ncc.govt.nz)

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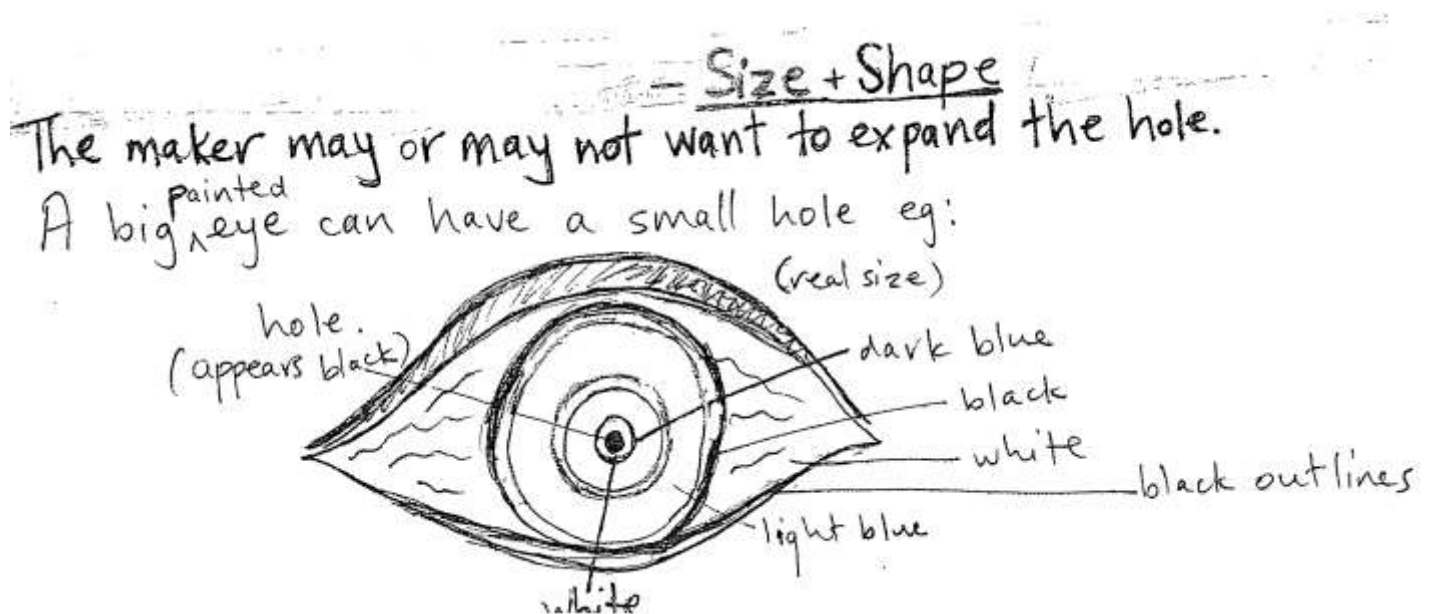
# Fitting the Mask to the Face

## Eye-holes - Position

With older students this process can be done in pairs.

Younger students can line up with their masks in front of the teacher who has a felt tip pen and a nail or other pointed object.

- 1) Helper/teacher takes mask.
- 2) Wearer measures the distance between their eyes by placing the first and second fingers (like a peace sign) gently on top of the eyes.
- 3) Keeping fingers at this distance, wearer removes them briefly while the helper places masks at the desired position on face. Wearer replaces fingers on outside of the mask where they want the eyes to see through.
- 4) Helper puts dots where fingers are.
- 5) With a nail or other object, push a small hole through each dot. Check that eye holes are in a good spot by looking through them.



## Eye-holes continued...

If a bigger hole is wanted, the handle of a paintbrush can be pushed through the starter hole and twisted to the desired size.

To cut large eye holes, draw shapes around starter holes then use scissors or a Stanley knife.

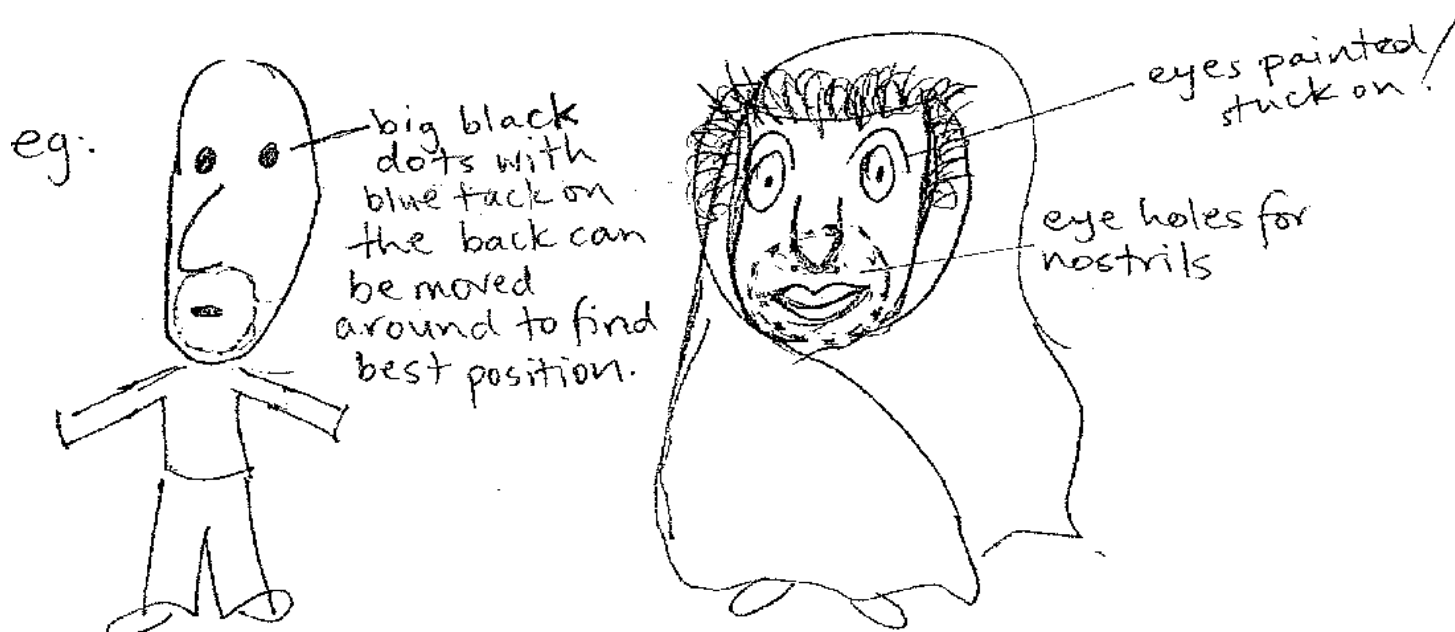


NB: Masks that extend more than 6cm below chin will hit the chest and restrict movement.

Place the face low inside a tall mask.

Eye holes can be disguised as a mouth, nostrils, missing teeth, pimples etc, or hidden in patterns and detail.

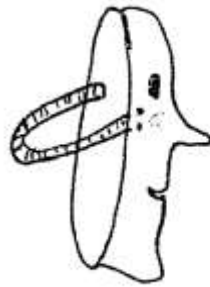
Make the false eyes large and strong in appearance to distract from the hidden holes.



## **To make the mask wearable,**

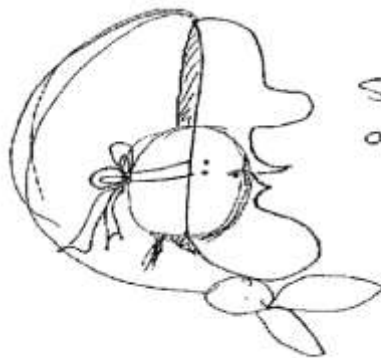
you can use any of the following fittings.

### Elastic Strap



Stitched on at the weaver's eye level through two needle holes.

### Material Ties

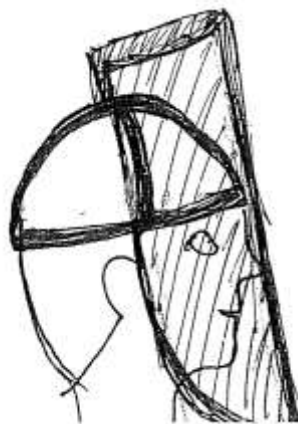


Stapled or stitched on at weaver's eye level.

NB: It is handy to have some sponge handy or an old sock to push in between the face and the mask if there is uncomfortable pressure.

### The Helmet

(Instructions next page)

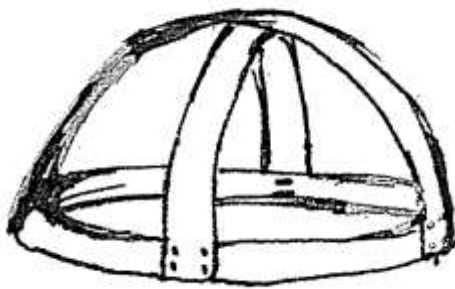


Can be attached to a balloon, clay mould, shield or helmet extension

# **THE HELMET MASK FITTING**

- Stiff cardboard strips, approximately 3cm wide
- Stapler + staples

- 1) Take three measurements: (can use cardboard strips)
  - i. Around head
  - ii. Centre back over top to front to eyebrow height
  - iii. Ear to ear
- 2) Cut three cardboard strips longer than these measurements
- 3) Staple strips to fit neatly, not tightly, taking care to make staples face flat side in, bent ends out.
- 4) Cut extra length off strips



staples flat side in,  
bent sides out.

For added strength, paper maché one or two layers around strips and joins. This will shrink the helmet size, so make strips slightly longer to compensate.

NB: 'Plier Staplers' are recommended for easy stapling.



These can be purchased from shops selling office or packaging supplies, or perhaps you could borrow some from an orchardist.

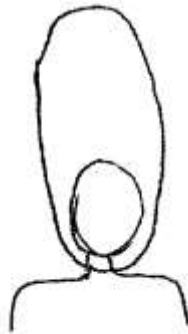
# SHIELD MASK

- Stiff cardboard (corrugated cheap + effective)
- Staples
- Stanley knives / scissors
- Decorative materials

- 1) Roughly measure from top of forehead to chin and from ear to ear. Make marks on the cardboard to show the minimum size of the mask.
- 2) Sketch a 'shield shape' of any kind around the head markings, then cut it out.

The shape can be tall or short:

bends to  
curve around  
face from  
ear to ear.



NB: Wear long masks  
at the bottom of the  
shape.

- 3) Add eye-holes (see p.3)
- 4) Decorate with paint, collage, bits + pieces **OR**
  - 4a) If added features are desired, 3D shapes can be paper maché-ed straight onto the cardboard (1 or 2 layers). A layer of paper maché over whole mask will then strengthen additions but is not compulsory.
- 5) Attach to helmet  
with staples
- 6) Add costume.



A piece of material  
attached with staples  
or glue gun hides  
head + looks great!

# **BALLOON MASK**

- 1 balloon per mask
- Paper maché
- Paint and other decorative additions

- 1) Inflate balloon to head size
- 2) Mark a dotted line around the balloon to indicate half-way.



- 3) Paper maché 6-9 layers to 3cm past the half way line.



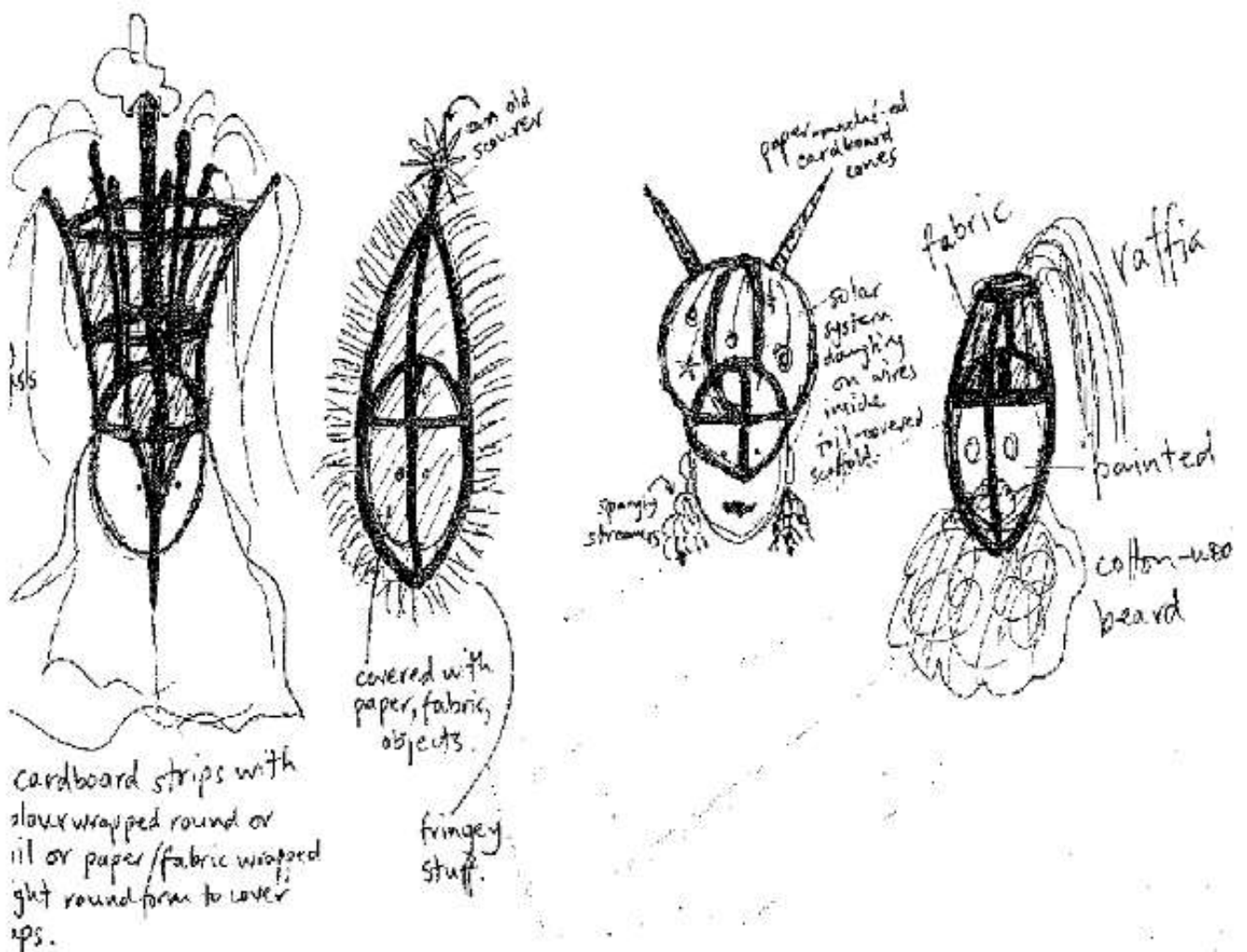
- 3a) If desired, build shapes onto the mask by attaching objects with paper maché (1 or 2 layers) eg: egg carton cheek bones/chin, cardboard cone nose
- 4) Pop balloon and cut mask back to half way when dry.
- 5) Add eye-holes (see p.3)
- 6) Decorate with paint (one white coat first) /collage/odds + ends
- 7) Attach strap or helmet fittings (see p.3)



# **HELMET EXTENSION MASK**

- Stiff cardboard strips, approx. 3cm width
- Stapler
- Decoration materials (Paper, fabric, pipe cleaners, recycled objects, wire, wool)

- 1) Make helmet fitting (see p.6)
- 2) Add stiff cardboard strips to make a 'scaffold' for decoration. Some examples below.
- 3) Paper maché 1-2 layers around strips and joins to re-inforce scaffold.
- 4) Add decoration

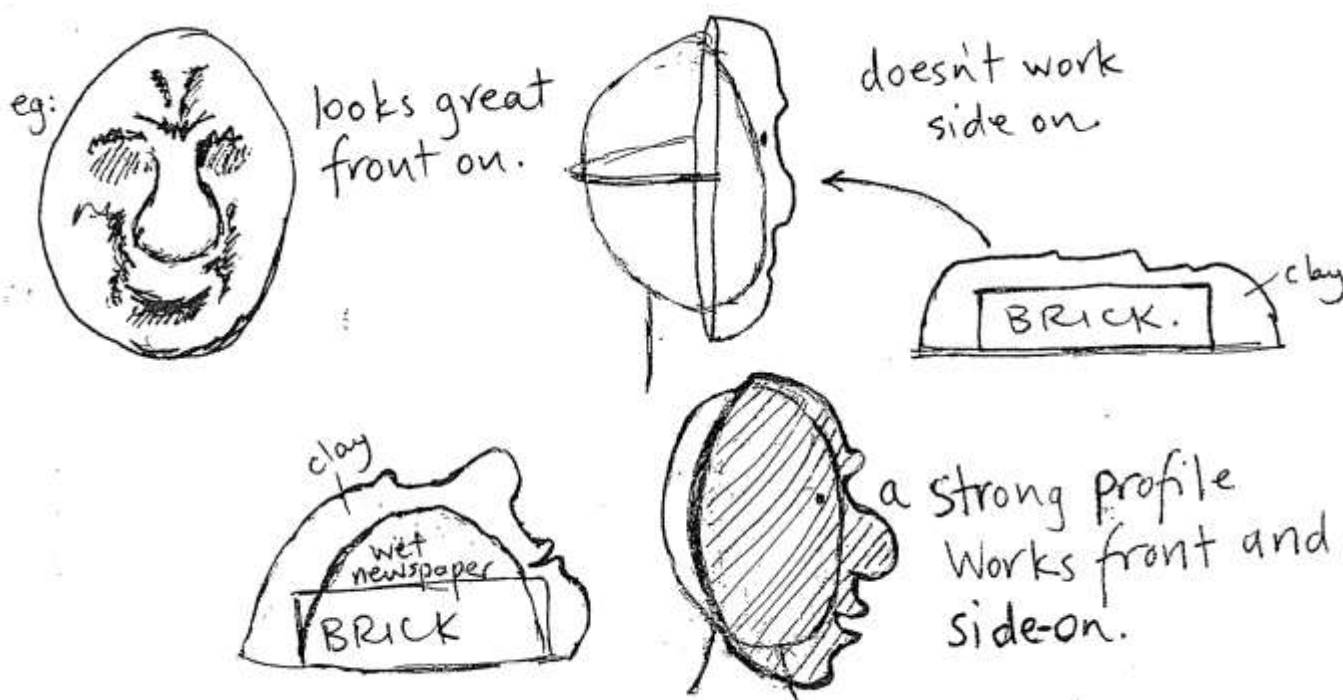


# CLAY-MOULD MASK

- Head shaped object (the bust). This is to save on clay, can use a brick, rock or wet newspaper.
- Clay
- Vaseline
- Paper maché

- 1) Create an imaginative face by modelling the clay over the bust. This is the mould for the mask.

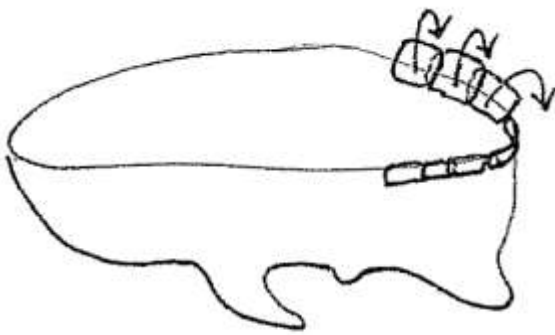
NB: Make sure the mould has depth!



Bold features work well! Don't be afraid to exaggerate and accentuate nose, chin, eyes, eye-brows, forehead, pimples, horns, wrinkles, eye balls, lips, cheeks, cheek bones, furrows, laugh lines, cats eyes, hooked nose, round chubby face, long pointy face.....

## CLAY-MOULD MASK CONTINUED...

- 2) Apply Vaseline over the surface of mould to act as release agent.
- 3) Apply 6-9 layers (8 to 10 best) of paper maché (see p.12)
- 4) When dry, turn mask upside-down and take out bust. Remove clay (clay can be saved for further re-modelling but cannot be fired).
- 5) Wipe Vaseline from back of mask.
- 6) Edge the mask



small squares of paper glued on one side, slightly overlapping.

Half stuck to inside then folded over to stick other half on outside surface.

- 7) Optional - smooth with sandpaper.
- 8) Paint/decorate the mask.
- 9) Put in eye holes (see p.3).
- 10) Add strap/helmet.

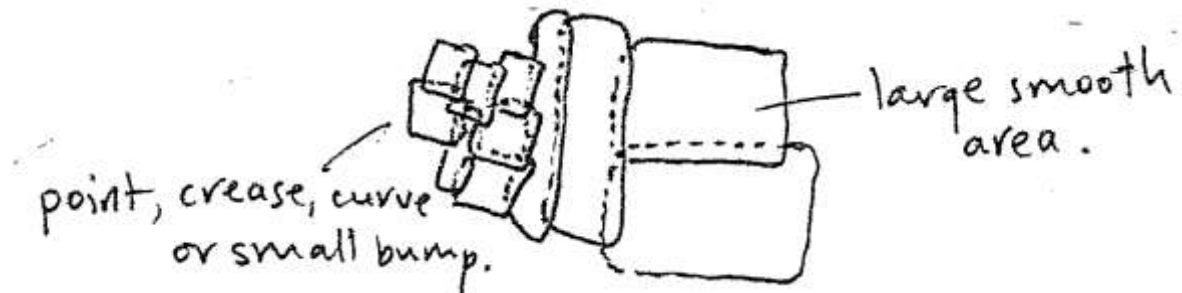
NB: The clay must remain moist in order to take it out when the mask is finished.

If it does dry out, turn mask over, score clay and drip water into holes.

# **PAPER MACHÉ INSTRUCTIONS**

- Newspaper (pref. coloured + b/w)
  - Wallpaper paste (good with a splash or two of PVA woodwork strength glue.)
  - (Optional) hair dryer or fan heater
- OR a week between each 3 layers build up

- 1) Newspaper is torn to appropriate shape – strips for flatter surfaces, smaller shapes for details.
- 2) Using a brush, completely cover one side of the paper piece with glue. Ensure brush isn't dripping. Make the paper pieces moist but not soaking – wet masks can take ten days or more to dry.
- 3) Complete one single layer of paper maché by sticking paper pieces on so that edges overlap slightly:



Wipe away excess glue with a cloth as you go.

- 4) Make sure the completed layer is dry before the next layer is started.

DRY meaning dry to touch. The top-sides of the paper pieces are dry but the undersides are still damp.

Damp, not sodden and dry but not bone dry.

## **PAPER MACHÉ INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED...**

If the paper pieces are glued on systematically (ie – starting at one end of the mask, finishing at the other, e.g: forehead to chin), then by the time a layer has been finished at the chin say, then the forehead should be just dry enough to be covered by the next layer.

If by the time the mask has had one complete layer of paper maché applied, the forehead is still not dry enough for the next layer to be put on, a fan heater or hair dryer can be used to hurry things along.

NB: be careful not to let the layer go bone dry. If it does the next layer will not stick on so well and the mask will be weaker.

4a) If it is more convenient, three layers could be applied (without drying in between), then left to dry for a week before applying the following three layers. Bear in mind that if the next three layers are sodden they will re-wet the existing layers, which might then take weeks to dry.

To keep track of which layer you are working on, differentiate between the paper used, or the colour of the paper.

e.g: Alternate layers of black and white newsprint with layers of coloured newsprint, OR

Lightly paint a coloured wash (very watery paint) over the finished layer.

- 5) Continue layering as described in steps 3 and 4
- 6-9 layers minimum for a mask (8 to 10 best).
  - 1 or 2 layers to reinforce cardboard strips.
  - 1 or 2 layers for adding facial features.

# **Costuming / The Whole Look**

We are only limited by our imaginations!

A quick brainstorm brings up the following ideas:

- 30 brown paper bags with holes cut for eyes and rubbish bags for costume would be a strong image.
- Bucket masks
- Cardboard boxes with eyes cut out wearing newspaper costumes
- Purple, red and orange
- Triangles and squares
- Lampshades
- Old hats with bits attached
- Tin foil masks and silver spray-painted bits + pieces.
- Paper folded into fans (large or tiny)
- Long grasses

## **TIPS – Tried and true!!**

- Anything with its own incidental movement looks great e.g.: streamers, feathers, billowy fabric, raffia, springs....
- You can't go wrong with a big piece of black or white cloth.
- Carry something: a crook, a staff, a puppet, a decorated drum, a fish on a stiff wire lead!
- Wire in fabric seams makes them do what you want.
- Stuffing can be used to mask the body shape.
- Keep it simple!

## **Costumes/ the whole look cont.**

"Even when costumes look like pieces of moving sculpture, usually they have been collaged together. The principle is the same as Picasso used in taking a bicycle saddle and a pair of handle bars and turning them into a goat. Often the process is ruled by the demands of colour. Schwitters used a faded bus ticket in a collage - only later do you realise it is a bus ticket, initially it is just a rectangle of particular size, colour and texture." <sup>1</sup>

"[Our] costumes are almost never tailored garments made from recognisable fabrics. Rather, they are assembled – tied in, on, around, glued, stapled, even welded or soldered." <sup>2</sup>

"... an open brief case becomes a cow's head; an artificial chest strapped to the head becomes a bishop's mitre; a vinyl seat cover from a scrapped car becomes a fireman-angel costume when sprayed gold. Costume can thus work on many levels, making a multiplicity of meanings. A melted plastic bucket may be fashioned into a very beautiful crown, creating an ambivalent attitude to the role of King and making a clear statement about the imaginative re-cycling of rubbish." <sup>3</sup>

Notes: Taken from "Engineers of the Imagination". Eds. T. Coult and B. Kershaw. Methven 1983. 1. p.118, 2.p.120, 3.p.121



# Something to Carry



flags

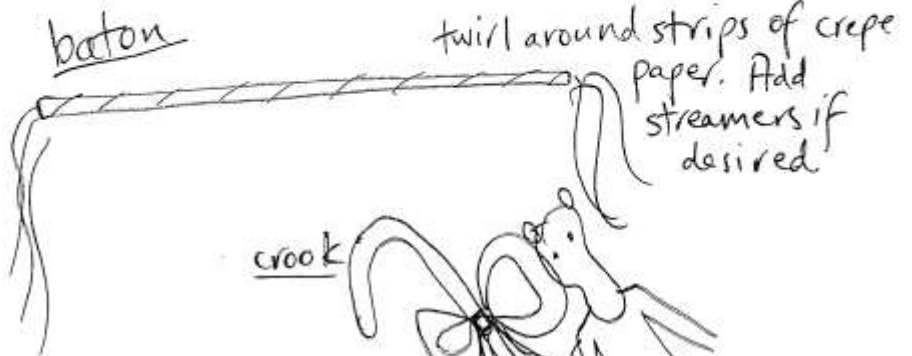


sceptre



broom stick with decoration attached

baton

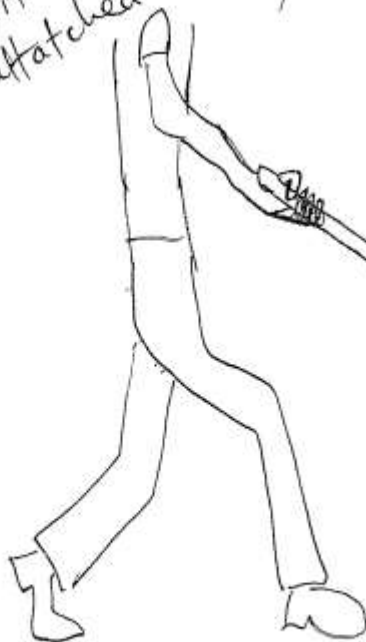


crook



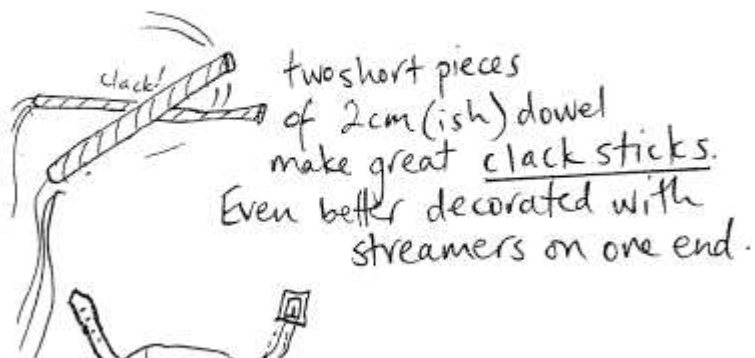
fake pet

coat-hanger wire or thin dowel.





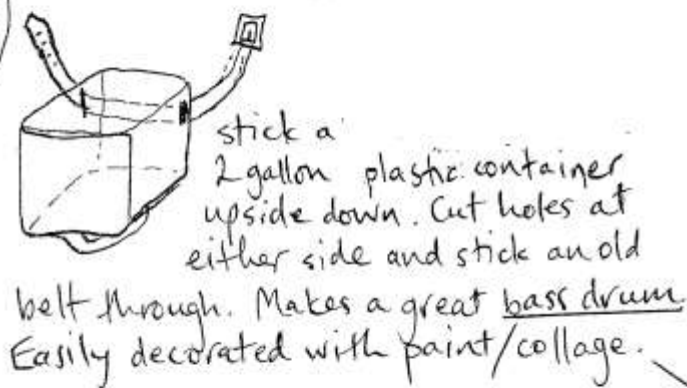
# MAKE A NOISE!



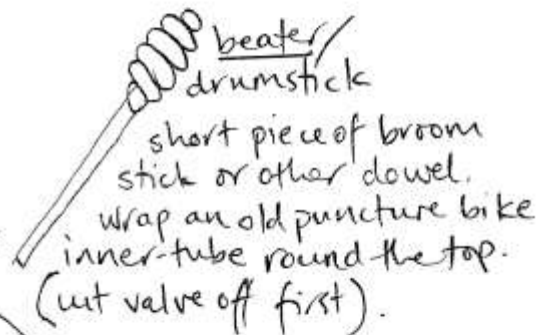
two short pieces of 2cm (ish) dowel make great clack sticks. Even better decorated with streamers on one end.



maracas  
fill an empty aluminium can with small pebbles or other.  
Decorate + add streamers.



stick a 2 gallon plastic container upside down. Cut holes at either side and stick an old belt through. Makes a great bass drum. Easily decorated with paint/collage.



beater / drumstick  
short piece of broom stick or other dowel. wrap an old puncture bike inner-tube round the top. (cut valve off first).

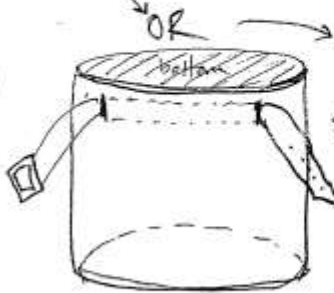


lagerphone

hammer beer bottle tops to a broom handle.

Turn it into a sceptre / crook / other... Makes a jingly noise when pushed on the ground.

sports whistle



OR

upside down cardboard storage containers.



go-go bells

two empty tin cans of different sizes put together with 2 rubber bands. Played with a stick.



hand held drum

upside down flower pot. played with a stick with a super ball stuck on it.

OR



upside-down drink container with the lid off.

OR



upside down paint tin.



a hubcap played like a gong. or old tray or thin metal lid.

# **RESOURCES**

|                  |                                                                          |                                                                                             |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Helmet           | Corrugated cardboard                                                     | Fridge boxes etc                                                                            |
| Helmet extension | Staples                                                                  | School supplies                                                                             |
| Shield mask      | Heavy duty stapler<br>(plier stapler)                                    | Orchardists                                                                                 |
| Paper maché      | News print<br>Wallpaper glue<br>PVA glue                                 | Hardware<br>Hardware                                                                        |
| Balloon mask     | Balloons<br>Paper maché                                                  |                                                                                             |
| Clay mould mask  | Clay<br>Rock/brick<br>Wet newspaper<br>Paper maché                       | School supplies                                                                             |
| Decoration       | Fabric<br><br>Coloured paper<br>Paint<br>Odds + ends<br><br>Old clothing | Recycle centre,<br>Op-shop<br><br>School supplies<br>Recycle centre,<br>op-shop + elsewhere |
| Elastic          | Old waist bands                                                          |                                                                                             |





158 Mask of a slave's head  
from Tarentum, Terra  
Height 26.5cm, (10 1/2 in)  
to first century BC. Tarr

## **MASKED PARADE MUSIC**

Our aim is for every group in the masked parade to make a sound!

Percussion, horns, chanting or just clack sticks.

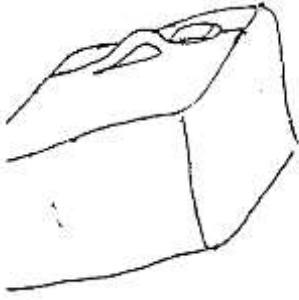
If you make music, even better!

Inside:

- How to make all kinds of percussion instruments
- Some percussion music
- Tips for using melodic instruments

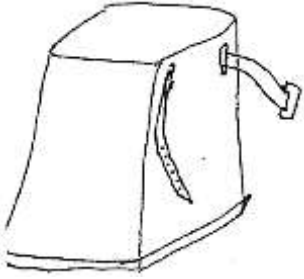
P.S.: It is ok to use portable sound systems for the parade

# **LOW SOUNDS**



## **Bass drum**

Stick a belt/tye through the handle of a 2 gallon plastic container. Clean it out and play it with the lid off so the sound can escape. Decorate it with paint, collage, or streamers



Cut holes for a belt in the top of an upside down bin, wear it round the waist. Strike it on the top and sides.

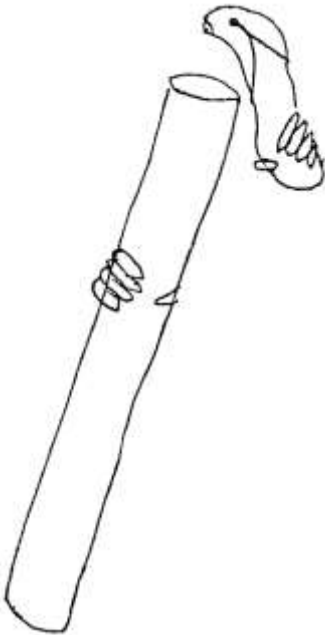
## **Beater**

A piece of dowel with a bicycle inner-tube wrapped around the top. Tie with a knot, cover in gaffa or other strong sticky tape.



## **Bass thongaphone**

Hit a long-ish piece of PVC pipe with a jandal



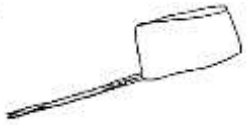
## **Bang a staff on the ground**

Wrap bicycle inner tube round, or hammer in a piece of old tyre.



# **MID-RANGE SOUNDS**

## **Hand drums**



Pots/pans



Flower pot



Paint/Ovaltine tin/  
plastic storage container

## **Cymbals**



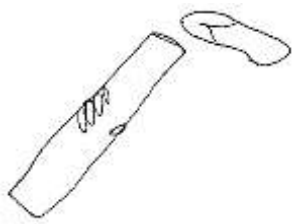
Stainless steel mixing bowl



Hubcap on a string



Juice bottle with the lid off



Shorter length thongaphone

## **Beaters**



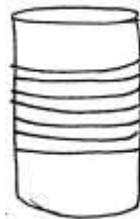
Wooden spoon



Stick with a super-ball  
stuck on it



Piece of dowel or hard  
wood stick



Dog food can +  
scraper: plastic  
chopstick or  
knitting needle



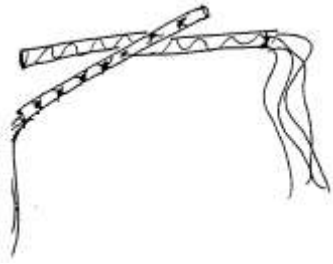
Plastic bucket



Napisan container

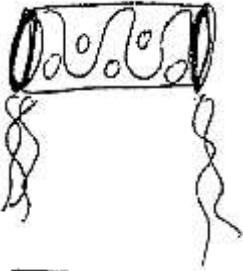


# HIGH SOUNDS



## Clack sticks

2 short pieces of dowel approx. 2cm diameter or other hard wood, bamboo sticks. (20-25cm length)

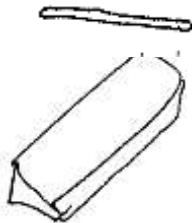


## Marraccas

Fill an empty aluminium can or other small container with pebbles or dry beans/rice.

Ball bearings inside a tin/can are loudest.

Plastic drink container with its own lid is easiest.



## Woodblock

Piece of hardwood + stick or bang two blocks together.

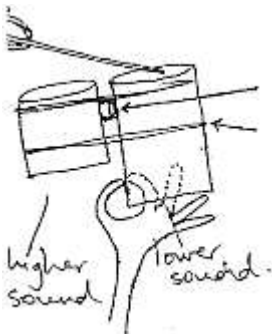


## Cowbell

Small saucepan hit with a comparatively thin stick.

## Giro

Washboard scraped with a knitting needle or thimble.



## Ago-go bells

Piece of cork, rubber band 2 different sized tins separated by a 1/3 of a cork, held together with 2 strong rubber bands.

Strike with a thin stick, like a chopstick.

## Lagerphone

Broomstick with bottle caps nailed loosely to it.

Bang it on the ground + hit wood with a stick.



# Some rhythms to try

low:  $\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times \quad \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times$  | ~~boom~~ :  
boom boom

high:  $\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array}$  |  $\begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ \approx \end{array}$  :  
cha cha cha

med.  $\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times \quad \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times$  |  $\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times$  :  
whack a-thack!

ow  $\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array}$  |  $\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times$  :  
boom boom

2  $\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times \quad \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times$  |  $\begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ \approx \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ \approx \end{array}$  rpt:  
boom boom

d.  $\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times \quad \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times$  |  $\begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ \approx \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ \approx \end{array}$  rpt.  
home and a-way

$\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times \quad \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ 4 \end{array} \downarrow \times$  |  $\begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ \approx \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ \times \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \uparrow \\ \approx \end{array}$  rest 2 bars then rpt.  
ho-li-day ho-li-day go-nna have fun to-day



# SAMBA BATUCADA - GROOVE

$\text{♩} = 108 \text{ bpm}$

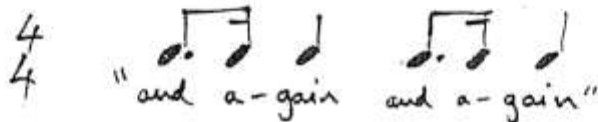
LARGE DRUMS



MEDIUM DRUMS



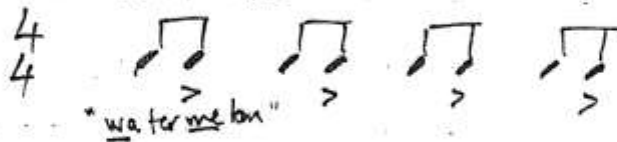
SMALL DRUMS  
& WOOD BLOCKS.



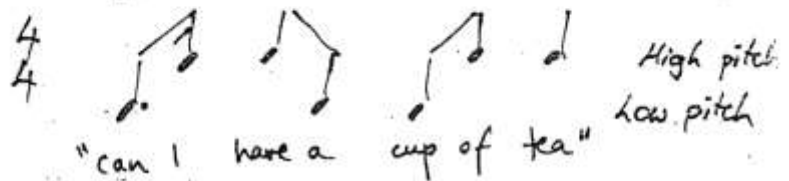
SHAKERS



SCRAPERS



AGOGO BELLS  
& METAL BELLS.



SIMON SAYS

: LISTEN TO THE LEADER PLAY A RHYTHM,  
THEN REPEAT IT.

# **MELODIC INSTRUMENTS**

Loud portable ones are the best!

Make music that is simple, memorable, and repetitive. Build in lots of spaces to breathe – you need more breath when you're walking.

Think about the shape you want to walk in. Have a band leader who calls cues and put them in a dominant position.

Have fun! This is not about technique, it's about enjoyment.

Keep it simple, then if one player is absent on the day or has to drop out, the music still stands.

Ideally, practice playing and walking in costume as early as possible, to iron out technical difficulties before the big walk.

**HAVE FUN!!**