

Jan Klaassen and the crocodile



Scenes from puppet theatre with characters such as the Dutch Jan Klaassen and an animal are applied internationally. Jan Klaassen originated during the seventeenth century. He resembles the Hungarian Vitéz László, the French Polichinelle, the English Mr Punch, the Italian Pulcinella and the German Kasperl. In addition to a fixed set of puppets, the folk puppeteer generally also has a puppet that represents an animal. It is usually a monster with a large mouth that snaps.

The hand puppet

The puppeteer moves the puppet with his fingers. There is a hole on the inside of the puppet's head and neck, where the puppeteer puts his index finger. His thumb is placed in one sleeve and his little finger – sometimes together with his ring and middle finger – in the other. The hand puppet has no body under his clothes. After all, the puppeteer's fist fills up the body area. In the past, puppet heads with hats were carved from a single piece of wood. The puppets' hands, lower legs, and feet were also made of wood.