

DOEPAK

Du PAK Doe PAK POPPENSPE(E)LMUSEUMKRUMELKRANTKRABEL Doe PAK Du PAK
Newsletter and Scribblings No. 202d



Jan Klaassen and Plato: reflection

Jan Klaassen – the Dutch Mr Punch – is a reflection of us all, as are the other characters in the traditional, old-Dutch hand-puppet theatre. He acts without thinking, is impulsive and more of a go-getter. Sometimes he does think before acting, but then it is usually too late. But – luckily for us – Jan’s ‘being’ is ambiguous; he is manipulated by a higher body. Jan Klaassen’s shadow is his conscience, but he does not really need this conscience. Like a true philosopher, he knows by nature what is right and wrong. He sometimes embarks on dangerous adventures but always manages to escape by the skin of his teeth.

Jan is unfathomable. Sometimes he is plain bad but he can also be very kind-hearted. He has no double agenda. He is very straightforward and never beats about the bush. The only things he wants in life are cheerfulness and having a good time. Jan Klaassen is never really mean but he likes teasing others. He is surprised and curious. One could say that the traditional puppetry scenes are a reflection of real life: a metaphor to indicate the difference between deception and reality.

Picture: Jan Klaassen is sitting on a stack of books, reading like a bookworm. To his surprise, he suddenly sees his intrusive shadow looming behind him. From Plato the philosopher he has learnt that his existence and the visible world around him are merely reflections of reality and that his soul and the world of ideas are part of it. [Free after Plato, Greek philosopher and writer, ca. 427-347 BC.] Illustration: *Elsje Zwart* ©, Haarlem, The Netherlands (2011/2013).

Would you like to learn even more about international folk and mainstream puppet theatre? You will find information about the museum, exhibitions, and collections of puppets, prints and books on www.poppenspelmuseumbibliotheek.nl, www.geheugenvannederland.nl/poppenspel2 and www.poppenspelmuseum.nl.

Realisation, concept and text: *Otto van der Mieden* © (2013). With thanks to: Natacha de Casparis. For more English information, please refer to:

<http://www.poppenspelmuseumbibliotheek.nl/pdf/pamflet118d.pdf>. Hyperlinks: click on the *green italicised and bold-printed words*.

Have fun. *Applause!*

Doepak presents some unusual theatre forms, far beyond the confines of our own fantasy! Doepak is a cheerful, educational and colourful Dutch-language newsletter packed with background information about folk and mainstream puppet theatre. In this newsletter and scribblings you can also read about all kinds of activities in the Puppetry Museum such as which exhibitions are on show, whether new books were issued, and how the website is developing. The Dutch verbs of ‘doen’ (do) and ‘pakken’ (take) are hidden in the name of the Doepak newsletter. This name was composed for good reason, because you are supposed to ‘do’ and ‘take’ things yourself. The name ‘Doepak’ is also the phonetic transcription in Dutch of the Czech word dupák. A dupák is a rod marionette and trick puppet. Where the dupák swings his arms wide as he twirls around, Doepak embraces the international world of puppetry and related arts with its hints and tips, questions and answers, illustrations and DIY activities. In Slovakian and Hungarian puppet theatre the dupák is called Paprika Jancsi.