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Playing with dolls: figures in a picture book

The Puppetry Museum's library collection comprises about eight thousand titles. It includes books in Western and non-Western languages: children's books, comics, poetry, pop-up books, novels, performance texts, reference books, and magazines relating to puppet theatre, but also sheet music and songs. Many publications contain comical pictures of puppetry techniques and figures. A page from an old French children's book is depicted above. All these figures invite you to explore the Try it yourself? activity. A Japanese clown puts on his mask and takes it off (numbers 1 and 2). In the paper theatre - with its scenery of a castle and trees - a king, queen, and princess are moved from above by means of strings or rods. A Jumping Jack puppet is depicted on the right of the opera theatre, while a wooden lay figure can be seen on the left. The character with a frilly white collar, sticking out his tongue (numbers 3 and 4), is Pierrot. An open book, with its spine turned up, serves as a puppet theatre for skirmishing rag dolls (number 5). The heads of these hand puppets are a fabric knot, in which the performer puts his index finger.

Tip: cut out the cheerful picture and glue it on a strong piece of cardboard. Now you have a postcard that you can send away.

Would you like to discover more about folk and mainstream puppet theatre? Make an international journey through the wondrous world of puppet theatre on our Dutch-language website www.poppenspelmuseum.nl/onderwijs. On our four-language website www.poppenspelmuseum.nl and our bilingual websites www.geheugenvannederland.nl/poppenspel2 and www.poppenspelmuseumbibliotheek.nl you will find information about the museum, exhibitions, library and collection. The Dutch-language poppentheater-abc (ABC of Puppetry) gives explanations for a wide range of puppetry and theatre techniques, figures and characters. Illustration from: 'Jeux et Jouets du Jeune Âge' (Paris, 1884). Text and project concept: Otto van der Mieden © (2010). 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 Czeeh word dupák. A dupák is a rod marionette and trick puppet. Where the dupák swings his arms with as hints and tips, questions and answers, illustrations and DIY activities. In Slovakian and Hungarian puppet theatre the dupák si called Paprika Jancsi.