



Transcript

Columbia Marionette Theater - Puppet Costumes

Seamstress: [Sound of sewing machine] What I do here at the theater, I'm the costume mistress. Um, I take the puppets...sometimes they bring them in different shapes to me, sometimes....

This one, for instance, is one that's being refurbished. It's an older puppet that's being used for a new show and it needs to be clothed. Um, this'll be a little girl, so we put her in the little flare-leg jeans and, uh, we're putting together a batik top for her so that she'll look kind of hip and, and "with it" these days.

[Sews.] I've been a seamstress most of my life, and I used to do people costumes. And now I'm doing them for little people. And it's not really that different than from doing adult costuming. Uh, puppets still have to have that same flexibility and range of motion, just like an adult would in a shirt. So you have to actually cut, you know, the proper sleeve and the shoulder where they all fit together. And with this one, I've got to leave the cuffs long enough to be able to get her hand up in it. [Sews.] Set the sleeve in, stitch the sides up...probably put some kind of button fly or button closure on it. She'll also need a collar of some sort because the neck joint is not very attractive.

Every time now if I'm at a yard sale or a thrift store or just wandering around, I'll go, "Oh, wow! Wouldn't that be great for a puppet?" And it's just that mindset that, you know, anything can be a puppet prop. Anything can be a, a detail that we can use. And it's just, you know, they're...really, I think puppeteers are a different breed. Um, they're real fun-loving...you know, happy-go-lucky. They just...I think they look at the world a little differently.

[Sews.] OK. So...check him. I've got enough room there to do a nice little hem on the sleeve, so that works out well. There's no constriction in the shoulders, so she'll be able to move her arms and play around like a kid. It's not too tight here, so I'll be able to put some little buttons or something down the front. All I've got to do now is just frame her up a collar...hide that neck joint...and put the finishing touches on it and she'll be ready to go back downstairs and be strung.

End of video.