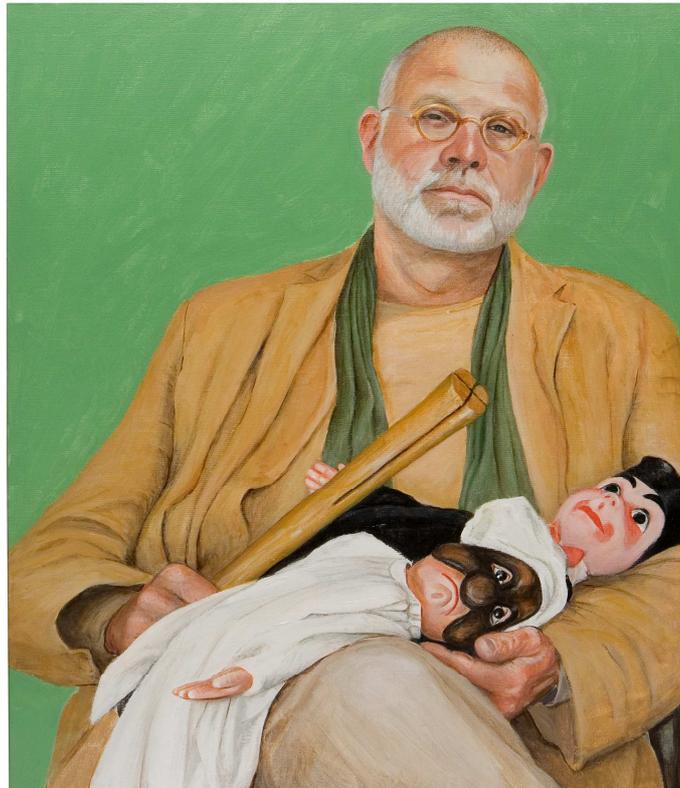


DOEPAK



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Newsletter and Scribblings No. 120d



Three faces: one portrait

Hetty Paërl (Wijhe, the Netherlands, 1931), visual artist and publicist in the field of international folk puppet theatre, painted this portrait at the end of 2007. It is a life-size portrayal of puppeteer *Otto van der Mieden* (The Hague, 1945), director-curator of the *Poppenspe(El)museum* (Puppetry Museum), which was established in 1984. In his right hand, Otto raises a club. This gesture is not without irony, because the club is the favourite batting implement of the two figures that he is holding protectively in the crook of his left arm. Viewed from above, the tip of the stick has been sawn deeply across. This gives an extra clanging effect when the main characters of the national folk puppet theatre rhythmically hit the theatre shelf or the heads of their opponents. *Pulcinella*, the main character of Neapolitan puppet theatre, lies on Otto's lap, and the other figure is *Guignol* of Lyon.

The comical *Pulcinella*, who wears a black mask, is the sixteenth-century forefather of the traditional Dutch *Jan Klaassen*, the English *Mr Punch*, the French *Polichinelle* and many others. His descendants are always dressed in colourful costumes, while *Pulcinella* wears a white suit and a floppy hat. *Guignol* originates from around 1800. He also became popular beyond his native city and ousted *Polichinelle*, who used to play the leading part in French puppet theatre till then. Unlike his predecessor, who has a raised hump and a big pot belly, *Guignol* stands bolt upright and is dressed plainly.

His hair extends into a long braid. Contrary to *Pulcinella* and his descendants, puppeteers hold *Guignol* with their left hand. All the caricatural, funny, jolly and mocking puppet theatre figures referred to above warmly welcome both young and old.

Would you like to learn more about puppetry and expressive theatre? The www.poppenspelmuseum.nl website in four languages and the bilingual www.poppenspelmuseumbibliotheek.nl website provide information about the museum, puppetry and the museum library with its collection of nearly seven thousand books. The Dutch-language and abundantly-illustrated *ABC of Puppetry* gives explanations for expressions, words, puppetry techniques, characteristic theatre and puppet theatre figures, and persons. The bilingual www.geheugenvannederland.nl/poppenspel2 provides a wealth of information about the varied puppet theatre collection. On www.poppenspelmuseum.nl/onderwijs a playful journey can be made through the wondrous world of puppet theatre.

Picture: portrait of Otto van der Mieden, acrylic on linen, 60 x 70 cm. Artist: *Hetty Paërl* ©, Amsterdam (2007). Hand puppets and club: *L'Ateyer de Guignol* ©, Lyon (1990). Also refer to *Doepak* no. 152. Have lots of fun looking. 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.