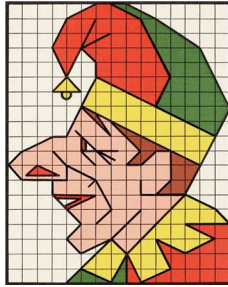


□ The memory of the Netherlands

The *Puppetry Museum* and *The Memory of the Netherlands* (Het Geheugen van Nederland) have joined forces.

From now on (2005), an extensive digital puppetry theatre collection can be seen via both www.geheugenvannederland.nl and www.poppenspelmuseum.nl. Two centuries of Dutch and international puppetry traditions are brought to life in countless illustrations and informative texts.



Colourful characters

In the Netherlands, puppet theatre is synonymous with Jan Klaassen. Young or old, every Dutchman will have seen a performance of the clownesque puppet whose preferred method of resolving conflicts is the use of sarcasm or his club, and who is only afraid of one thing: his wife Katrijn. But puppetry is of course far more than just the comedies of old-fashioned puppet theatre. Worldwide, there are dozens of different types of folk puppet theatre and just as many colourful characters. Jan Klaassen and Katrijn's cousins include the English Punch and Judy, for instance. Or Semar, the clown with the large bottom who is so loved in Indonesian wayang puppetry.

□ Puppetry collection

The puppetry collection on internet provides a good and comprehensive overview of the wide diversity of puppet and object theatre. You will find illustrations of Japanese Bunraku figures, French marionettes, jumping jacks and penny prints from the nineteenth century. Besides these you will find posters of Dutch puppetry troupes from the second half of the twentieth century, including Jozef van den Berg's Puppet Theatre and Triangel Figure Theatre, illustrations of Dutch puppets which enjoy star status (such as Paulus the Forest Gnome/Paulus de Boskabouter) and fantastic photos by Erwin Olaf and Ed van der Elsken. The sites also include a Dutch-language *Puppet Theatre ABC* and a number of essays on various puppetry techniques and the origins of puppetry. So come and take a look at www.poppenspelmuseum.nl (a four-language website in Dutch, French, German and English) and www.geheugenvannederland.nl/poppenspel2 (a site in Dutch and in English). The site will also include an educational section: a *Puppetry Quiz & Game* designed for the Arts & Culture curriculum in the first two years of secondary school.

□ The Puppetry Museum

The Puppetry Museum in Vorchten, in the eastern province of Gelderland, is the only cultural institution in the Netherlands with a puppetry theatre collection that is open to the public. The collection is unique from the point of view of its diversity and international orientation, and it gives a truly representative impression of traditional and contemporary folk puppet theatre.

The Memory of the Netherlands is the national digitization programme of the Dutch National Library (*Koninklijke Bibliotheek*). This programme is designed to digitize the often hidden collections of archives, museums and libraries, and so make them accessible. The ultimate aim is to create a national digital image bank of our cultural heritage. Material included will consist of illustrations, sound, animated images and texts.

- Illustration: Jan Klaassen, traditional Dutch puppet figure (circa 1930/1950).
Artist: A. Tonneman jr., the Netherlands.