

Mask Making . . .

It's New, Its Hot, And Sooo Easy!

If you can push clay around, mix plaster and do some pouring than you can make professional quality latex masks just for fun or a profitable hobby. The first step is to create a sculpture of a head in clay. If you are not a great sculptor that you can use ArtMolds' Head Casting Kit to create a head mold.

Clay is then melted in the microwave and poured into the mold you created. That is allowed to cool over night then demolded. If you wish to modify the sculpture, add more clay. When you are satisfied with the results you can create a plaster mold to make your latex rubber mask. Once the plaster mold is made pour in 407 Latex Rubber Slip and when dry demold and paint. Once the mold is created you can cast masks over and over again. Painting is accomplished with every day latex based paints. It is a lot of fun and easy to do. See for yourself. This ArtMolds project shows you how it is done.



The original sculpture was created by Anthony Giordano, prop maker for 'Saturday Night Live.' The mask was created using ArtMolds' 407 Latex.

The process begins with a model. In this example the model is a detailed sculpture of a pumpkin head with an attitude. But you don't need to be a professional sculptor to create models, just a little clay, determination and patience.



Step 1

Anthony completes his pumpkin head sculpture created in water-based clay. Water clay makes for easier clean up after removal from the mold.



Step 2

Next parting lines are begun. A block of clay is sliced using a wire clay cutter. The objective is to create parting strips ¼-inch thick and about 2-inches wide to be added all around the imaginary center line.



Step 3

Anthony adds clay strips to the imaginary parting line to create two halves of the model. He adds the parting strips along this line. Note the strips go all the way down to the model stand.



Step 4

Toothpicks are used to hold the parting clay in place. Notice how the parting clay follows the line of the bend in the stem. Creating parting lines takes practice.



Step 5

Pottery plaster is mixed and the first coat is painted on (face coat) making certain to fill all the tiny surface details. Allow this coat to tack up before applying the rest of the mold plaster.



Step 6

Additional plaster is mixed with chopped fiberglass or hemp for strength and applied to the front half of face coat up to the thickness of the parting line – about 2-inches.



Step 7

The front half is turned over inspected. Here Anthony is making repairs to the parting clay so it comes up to the surface of the front plaster mold.



Step 8

Key grooves are cut into the front half of the plaster mold using a plaster rasp. Place several on each side. Just carve them out to make a shallow bowl. When the second half of the mold is created it with key into these depressions and lock the mold into perfect registry when the mold is opened and then reassembled for pouring. This is an important step.



Step 9

Petroleum jelly is painted on the edges and sides of the front mold half. This is a release to prevent the back mold half from sticking. Paint several coats on both the edge as well as several inches down the sides of your mold to catch splashes.



Step 10

The back mold is added in the same way as the first; a painted face coat followed by plaster mixed with fiber to the thickness of about 2-inches. Anthony smoothes the rough edges of the parting line.



Step 11

The mold is allowed to dry over night. It is demolded and all the clay is removed. Since it is water based clay it can then be thoroughly cleaned with warm water.



Step 12

After drying, each half of the mold is painted with 407 Rubber Slip. Press into all the nooks and crannies to prevent air bubbles that can mar the surface finish,



Step 13

The halves of the mold is put together and secured with molding straps. 407 Rubber latex slip is poured into the mold to the top.



Step 14

After 1-hour the rubber slip is poured back out (It can be reused again). The mold is allowed to dry over night then demolded.



Step 15

After demolding the mask is cleaned up and is then ready for paint. Use only latex-based paints to assure adhesion to the rubber surface. ♦