

 SCHOLASTIC

# art

See masks  
from the  
Broadway  
musical  
*Spider-Man:  
Turn Off  
the Dark*

## MASKS: Working With Form

Featuring:

- Maurizio Cattelan
- Elizabeth Catlett
- John Federov
- Tony Oursler
- Ron Mueck
- Faith Ringgold
- Julie Taymor
- Gillian Wearing



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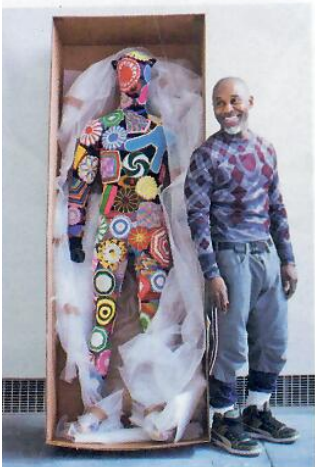
Cover: @Jacob Cohl

**ART NEWS + NOTES**



◀ This Soundsuit is made from tin toys and crocheted pot holders. What sounds do you think it makes?

# SOUNDING OFF



▲ Nick Cave

**O**n the right is artist Nick Cave inside one of his Soundsuits. Cave has made hundreds of suits like this from materials such as sticks, fake fur, and even human hair. Each suit makes a different sound when the person wearing it moves.

Cave trained as a dancer at the famous Alvin Ailey dance studio, but he was also interested in visual art. He made dance costumes from found objects. "I grew up without much money," he says. "I learned to make the most of things I found around the house." The resulting Soundsuits are sculptures that come alive through dance.



**WEB LINK:** Watch video of Nick Cave dancing in his Soundsuits: [scholastic.com/art](http://scholastic.com/art)

► The distorted digital photo at right inspired the grotesque mask at far right.



## Making Faces

**A**rtist Mark Pernice was playing around with Photo Booth, a program on his computer, one day. The software allows users to manipulate photos to look like images in a funhouse mirror. The bizarre pictures gave Pernice an idea.

"I wanted to take the 2-D image from Photo Booth and create a 3-D mask," says Pernice. "Then I wanted to take that 3-D mask, photograph it, and turn it back into a 2-D image." Sculptor Christian Hanson made the mask. Hanson first used clay to sculpt the mask, then created a mold of it and used liquid latex to fill the mold. He painted the mask with acrylic paints. Photographer Scott Altman photographed Pernice wearing his strange new face. The team plans to make a series of Photo Booth masks.



©Mark Pernice. (2)

**CHANGE TO WIN!**  
Nintendo DSi XL  
and the new  
Art Academy  
game



▲ Design a mask for a chance to win these great prizes!

## DESIGN A MASK CONTEST

**T**his issue of *Scholastic Art* is all about masks. If you could design your dream mask, what would it look like? Share your design with us for a chance to win a Nintendo DSi XL system and the new *Art Academy* game.

With *Art Academy*, you can use the Nintendo DS to learn the fundamentals of drawing

and painting. Using it is like taking a digital art class. Best of all, you can use the DS as a digital sketchbook and carry it with you wherever you go.

To enter the contest, go to [scholastic.com/art](http://scholastic.com/art) and download the official entry form. Then draw your mask and mail in your design. Three readers will win. Good luck!

Deadline: 02/28/2011 • [scholastic.com/art](http://scholastic.com/art)

# Sculptures On Stage

Find out how Julie Taymor used traditional sculpture techniques to create masks for two big Broadway shows!



The way the Mufasa mask is designed gives the character an air of balance and power.

**A** new rock musical recently opened on Broadway. *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*, based on the Marvel comic book and featuring songs from U2's Bono and the Edge, is a spectacle full of amazing visual artistry. Julie Taymor co-wrote and directed the show. She also sculpted the masks worn in it.

## Lion of a Task

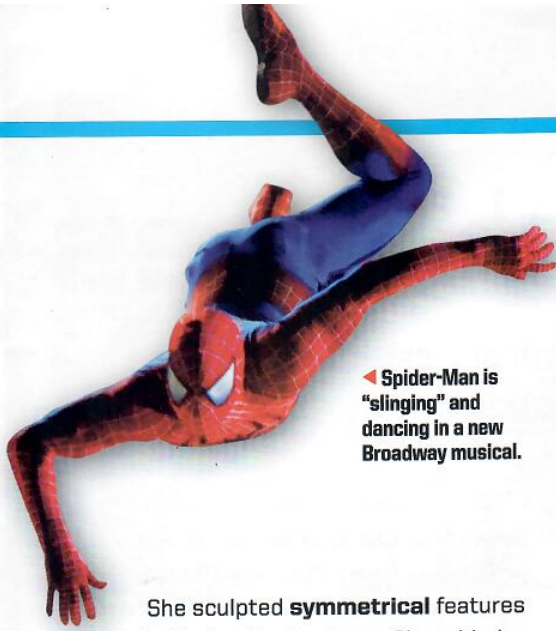
It may seem like a tough job to make a 3-D stage show from a 2-D comic book, but Taymor has experience with similar projects. In 1998, she won a Tony Award for adapting the cartoon film *The Lion King* into a hit Broadway musical. She didn't use furry costumes or cartoonish colors. Instead, she created a sophisticated **aesthetic** that appealed to people of all ages.

Masks are an important element of *The Lion King*. Taymor designed them herself. She **modeled** clay to sculpt the mask forms.

Taymor sculpted each mask to reflect the essence of its character. The lion Mufasa (left) is a leader and has an even-keeled, balanced personality. Taymor focused on the word "symmetry" to represent his essence.

**“A mask has a single expression. The sculptor has one chance to show the anger, humor, or passion of a character.”**

**-Julie Taymor**



◀ Spider-Man is "slinging" and dancing in a new Broadway musical.

She sculpted **symmetrical** features and added a circular mane. She added **texture** to make the clay look like carved wood, a reference to African masks. A flexible silicone **mold** was made from the sculpture and the final mask was **cast** in carbon graphite. The actor wears the mask on his head to allow him to sing easily.

### Staging Spider-Man

The story of Spider-Man centers around Peter Parker, a teen who is bitten by a radioactive spider and gets superpowers. "Spider-Man is a genuine American myth," says Taymor. She didn't want to stray too far from the superhero's iconic red-and-blue costume. Instead, she focused her creative imagination on creating masks for an army of supervillains known as the Sinister Six.

### The Sinister Six

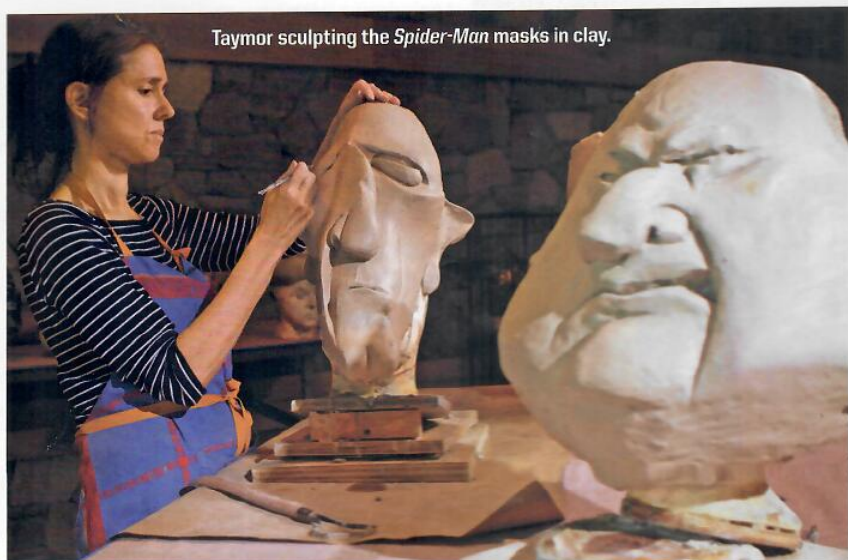
The main villain is Green Goblin (above right). The green color, pointed ears, and long face draw from folklore about goblins. Another villain is Swiss Miss (above right, inset). Her metallic body is made of Swiss Army knives. She wears a drill bit headpiece.

These villains both have **sharp, angular** features. Taymor sculpted all of the masks, and Eiko Ishioka designed the costumes. "Julie wanted elements of crazy fantasy to create a dangerous world," says Ishioka. Taymor agrees. She says, "I wanted to do something ambitious that has never been done before."



▲ The villain Swiss Miss has angular features and a drill-bit headpiece.

Green Goblin's long face, pointed nose and ears, and spiky hair give the character a sinister appearance.



Taymor sculpting the Spider-Man masks in clay.

# Making Unreal Faces

These four contemporary artists challenge conventional ideas about what makes a mask.



Maurizio Cattelan's stylized Picasso greeted visitors to a famous museum.

Maurizio Cattelan, *Untitled (Picasso Mask)*, 2000. Photo: ©AP Photo Images / Lefteris Pitarakis.

All of the masks on these pages have something in common. They were created by artists working today. These artists are updating classic mask-making techniques with new and exciting ideas.

## ◀ Pranking Picasso

Italian conceptual artist Maurizio Cattelan (mar-EET-zee-oh Cah-tuh-LAHN) often combines sculpture and performance. His artwork shows his sense of humor. In 1998, when he was invited to create a work for the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, Cattelan played a joke on the museum.

The artist had an oversize, stylized mask of the artist Pablo Picasso (left) made. He hired actors to take turns wearing the mask in the museum lobby. To the delight of visitors, they ran around, danced, and

played tricks. Cattelan has said that the project was meant to create a collision of high culture (art museums, Picasso) and low culture (oversize character costumes).

## ▼ Strange Family Portrait

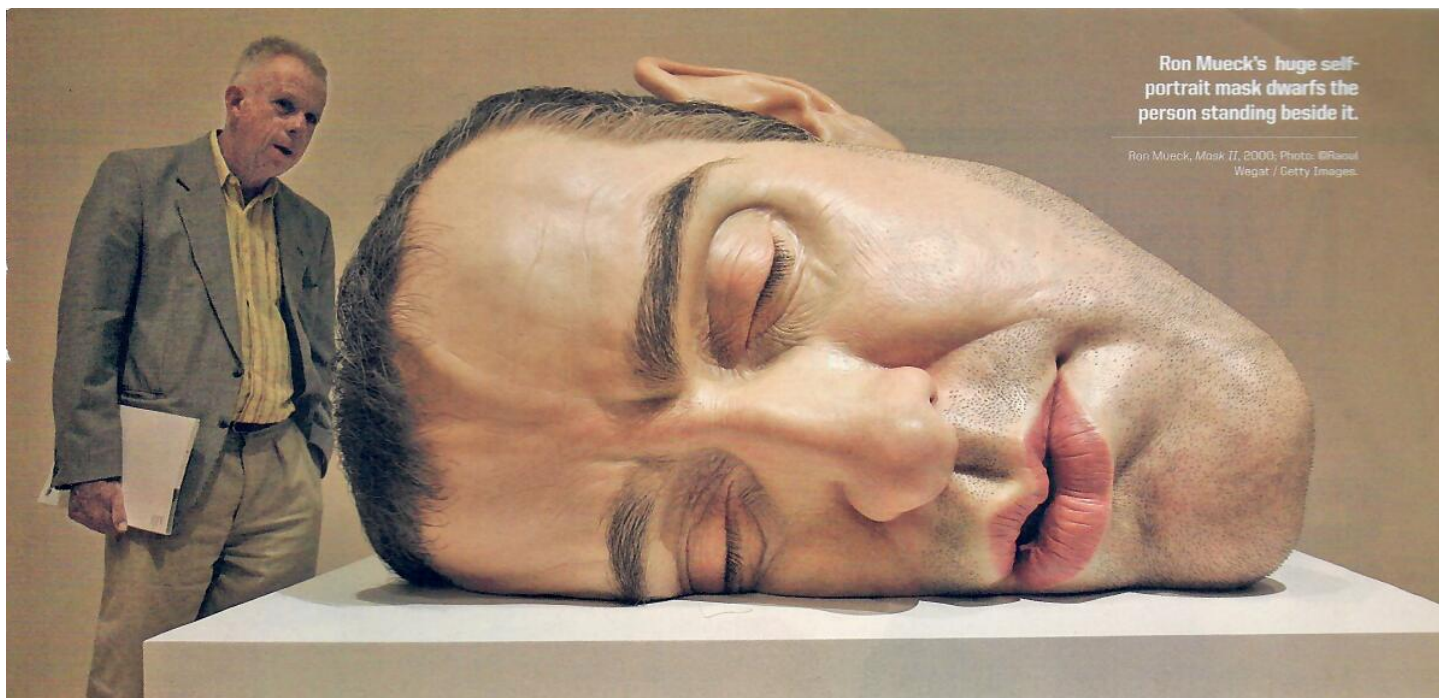
Take a look at the image below. It seems like an old photograph of a young woman. But if you look closely, you can see holes in the face around the eyes. The person in the photo is wearing a mask.

The photo is of conceptual artist Gillian Wearing. She used **silicone prosthetics** to make a mask of her own mother's face. She donned a period hairstyle and outfit to recreate an old family photograph.



This isn't an old photograph. It is conceptual artist Gillian Wearing disguised as her own mother!

Gillian Wearing, *Self Portrait as my Mother Joan Gregory*, 2003. Black-and-white print. Framed: 59 x 51 5/8 in. Unframed: 53 1/8 x 45 5/8 in. (MP-WEARG-000011). Courtesy Maureen Paley, London.



Ron Mueck's huge self-portrait mask dwarfs the person standing beside it.

Ron Mueck, *Mask II*, 2000. Photo: ©Rafael Wegat / Getty Images.

### ▼ Making a Mutant

Multimedia artist Tony Oursler is well-known for combining digital video, sculpture, conceptual, and performance art. He has said that his approach to art is like, "playing with digital clay." To make his 2006 piece *Blue* (below), Oursler shot video of a man making funny faces. He used **projection** to play the video on a fiberglass form. The shape of the form, lack of nose, blue color,

**Tony Oursler created a digital mutant using video of human facial features.**

Tony Oursler, *Untitled (Blue Classic)*  
Fiberglass, resin, projection,  
30 x 45 x 20 in. Courtesy Lehmann  
Maupin Gallery.



and **distortion**, make the image appear like a digital mutant. To add to the unsettling effect, there is audio of a woman speaking in a low voice, which draws viewers in close.

### ▲ Tipping the Scale

Australian sculptor Ron Mueck is known for making incredibly lifelike sculptures of human beings on either a very large or very small **scale**. "I never made life-size figures because it never seemed interesting," says Mueck. "We meet life-size people every day."

Mueck's 2000 *Mask II* (above) is a huge self-portrait mask. The head is 2½ feet tall and 6 feet long. Every detail, from the wrinkles around the eyes to the texture of the beard stubble on the chin, is **realistic**.

To make the piece, Mueck first sculpted a clay **maquette** of the mask. He used this along with sketches in planning the larger work. Next he worked with chicken wire and dental plaster to make an **armature**, or framework, for the full-size mask. He applied clay over the framework to model the mask.

Mueck made a plaster mold of the clay sculpture. He then used layers of fiberglass resin to cast the mask from the mold. When it came out of the mold, he painted and fine-tuned the mask to add blemishes and realistic skin tones. To complete the mask, he individually added each hair.

# Masks That Shout!

Meet three contemporary artists who create masks to make statements about society.

**A**rtists throughout history have used their work to comment on society. They believe that art has the power to change people's minds and open up new ideas. The artists on these pages make masks that support various forms of social justice.

## Dolls That Speak Out

In the 1970s, Faith Ringgold made a series of **soft sculptures** called *The Family of Woman Masks*. She wanted to use the sculptures to promote civil rights and gender equality.

*Mrs. Jones and Family* (above) is one of the sculptures. It shows a group of women of different sizes, representing different generations. The African kente-cloth bodies show the women's African-American heritage as well as their individuality because each fabric is different. The faces each have vertical strips of fabric pointing toward the open "talking" mouth, a feature of masks in many African cultures. The



mouths represent the need for African-American women to have their voices heard.

## Making Abstract Statements

Does it surprise you to learn that the work above right by sculptor Elizabeth Catlett is called *Mask*? The artist is known for making art that celebrates African-American women. What do you see when you look at this mask?

To create the sculpture, Catlett first made a plaster model. Then she chose a piece of

▲ Faith Ringgold made this soft sculpture. What do you think the women are saying?

Faith Ringgold, *Mrs. Jones and Family*, 1973. 74 x 69 in. ©Faith Ringgold 1973.





textured orange onyx. Working with the patterns of the stone, she began **carving** simple, rounded shapes into the solid block. The **open spaces** in the **closed shape** work together to suggest strong and proud features set in an **abstracted** face.

### Totems to Teddy Bears

Most people wouldn't use teddy bears to make a political statement, but mixed-media artist John Federov did. He made a series of **assemblages** (compositions of **found objects**) called "Totem Teddies" to reclaim the bear as a symbol of power for Native American cultures.

"I felt that Western consumer culture had taken away the power of the bear—made it cute and cuddly," says the artist. He started with stuffed teddy bears and added shells, feathers, fabric, and other found objects. He covered the bears' faces with masks. The teddy at right has **positive white** features set against a **negative black background**, giving it a fierce and mighty appearance.

“I enjoy working with my hands. To me, sculpture is a way of life.”

**-Elizabeth Catlett**

◀ Elizabeth Catlett carved this mask from orange onyx. What would it feel like to touch this sculpture?

Elizabeth Catlett, *Mask*, 2007. Orange onyx, 15 1/2 x 10 x 8 in. Courtesy June Kelly Gallery, New York. Art © Elizabeth Catlett/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

▶ John Federov assembled this fearsome bear as a response to the cuddly teddy bears made for kids.

John Federov, *Totem Teddy*.



# 5

## SPOTLIGHT MASKS

# Things to Know About Masks

## 1 EGYPTIAN MUMMY MASKS ▶

Masks were an important feature of ancient Egyptian mummies. Only if the mask was done right would the dead person be equal to a god in the afterlife. To create this idealized image, priests layered cloth over the face, then **modeled** plaster on top. Painted details made this mask ready to be worn through eternity.

▶ Mummy masks were made from a material a little like papier-mâché.

Gilded cartonnage mummy mask, Egyptian (Greco-Roman Period), late 1st BCE-early 1st CE. 17 1/8 x 11 in. Inv. EA 29472. Location: British Museum, London, Great Britain. Photo: ©The Trustees of the British Museum / Art Resource, NY.



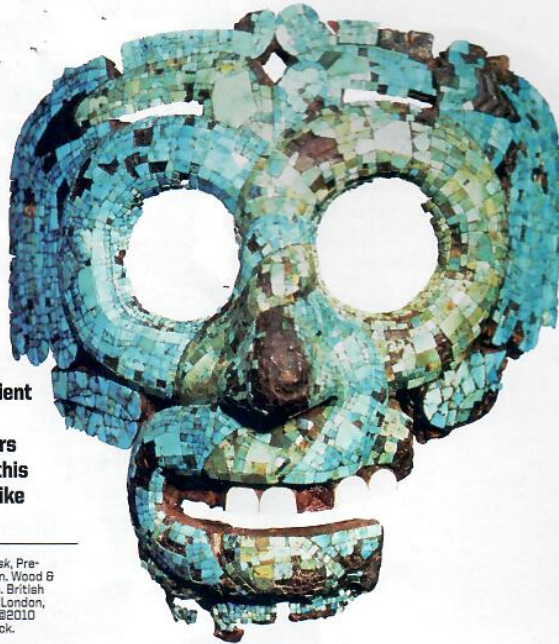
## 2

## AZTEC GODS ▶

This skeletal mask, created to look like the powerful Aztec serpent god, has circular snake-like shapes surrounding the eyes and mouth. Dancers and priests wore the mask in sacred ceremonies. The **carved** wooden base is decorated with blue-green jade and turquoise. These **mosaics** were meant to sparkle and shine as the wearer moved in the flickering firelight.

▶ Ancient Aztec dancers wore this skull-like mask.

Aztec Mask, Pre-Columbian, Wood & turquoise. British Museum, London, England. ©2010 SuperStock.

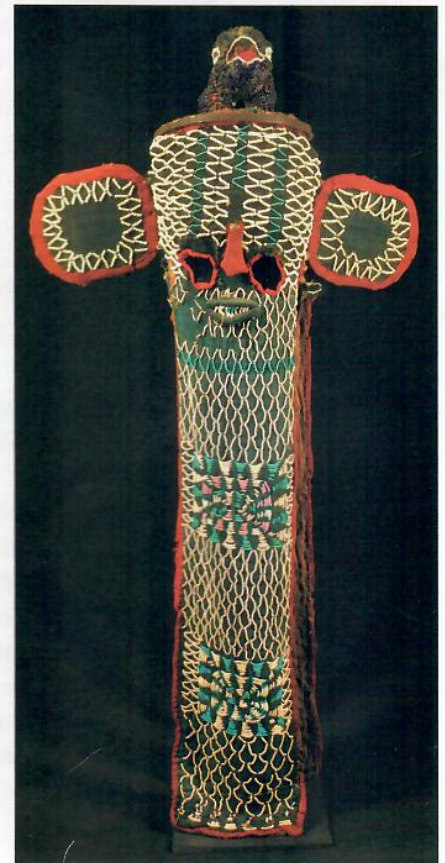


## 3 AFRICAN ANIMALS ▶

Representing the largest animal in Africa, this mixed-media elephant mask was **assembled** by stretching fabric on a framework and covering it with thousands of beads. The circular bead patterns and the mask's great height were symbols of the priests' power.

▶ This tall elephant mask was worn by African priests.

Bamileké Elephant Mask, Cameroon, early 20th Century. Cotton, glass beads, 15 X 17 X 11 1/2 in. Photo: Stan Schnier. Courtesy Joseph G. Gerena Fine Art, NY.





**WEB LINK:**  
Learn more about  
masks on  
our Web site:  
[scholastic.com/art](http://scholastic.com/art)

▼ **Metal faceplates like this one kept samurai soldiers safe during the civil wars that raged in medieval Japan.**

*Mengo, Japanese, Edo period, ca.17-18th Century, 6 x7 x 7 1/4 in. Photo: Stan Schnier. Courtesy Joseph G. Gerena Fine Art, NY.*



## 4 JAPANESE WARRIORS ▲

Designed to protect medieval Japanese samurai warriors and scare opposing armies, this iron mask covered a soldier's face below the eyes. To make the mask, the mask maker heated the metal and hammered it into a thin sheet. He cut and bent this **flat metal plane** into a hollow, **concave** mask shape. He then hammered out scary **convex** features and cut a fierce, gaping mouth to terrify the enemy.

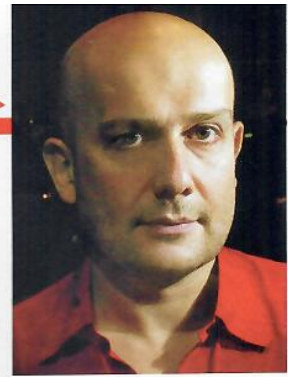


## 5 NATIVE AMERICAN BIRDS

**Carved** by a Pacific Northwest Coast tribal artist, this wooden mask represents a bird monster called "Crooked Beak." During ceremonial dances, the wearer of this bird-spirit mask can open the beak, adjust the direction of the eyes, and change the impression of **sound and movement**.

▲ This mask was carved from a single wood block then hollowed out.

Mask in the form of Crooked-Beak-of-Heaven. Collected Blunden Harbour, 1874. ©Werner Forman / Art Resource.



# Great Art or Gross Out?

Artist Marc Quinn makes self-portraits using his own blood. You decide if his art pushes the limits too far.

**T**his year, British artist Marc Quinn is due to make a cast of his own head. It will be the fifth time the artist has made such a sculpture. Since 1991, Quinn has cast a new self-portrait every five years as a way to document the aging process. Quinn uses an unconventional material to make the sculptures—his own blood.

Quinn draws the blood over a period of one year. He uses nine pints to make one “blood head,” freezing the mold to set the blood. The finished work must be kept frozen in a temperature-regulated display case to keep it from melting.

Quinn says he wants to make “extreme portraits” that “not only show what I look like, but are actually made from my own flesh.” The work has brought Quinn a lot of attention—and a lot of controversy. Some people praise his work for pushing the boundaries of portraiture. Others criticize it as a stunt meant to shock and disgust people.

What do you think? Should artists use any materials they want—even their own blood—as long as they aren’t harming themselves or others?

▶ **What Do You Think?**

Post your opinion at:  
[scholastic.com/art](http://scholastic.com/art)

**YES**

**Artists should use any materials they want. Here's why:**

- ▶ Art should be provocative and make people think. The blood heads certainly do that.
- ▶ As long as no one is being hurt in the process, it doesn't matter what materials an artist uses.
- ▶ The blood heads are interesting and cool. Without the blood, they would be boring.

**NO**

**Artists should not use any materials they want. Here's why:**

- ▶ Art shouldn't be all shock value. After the shock wears off, where is the art?
- ▶ Blood is a hazardous substance. It isn't appropriate for artwork.
- ▶ Blood banks are in desperate need of blood. Artists like Quinn could donate their blood and save lives. That would be a better statement.



▶ Marc Quinn made his first “blood head” in 1991. He makes a new one every five years.

Top: ©Toby Meachville / Reuters; Bottom: Marc Quinn, Self, 1991. Blood (artist's), liquid silicone.

# Creativity From Cardboard

Jonathan Cuba used simple materials to construct a series of elaborate wearable sculptures.

**A**ll Jonathan Cuba wants to do is create sculptures. "I can't imagine doing anything else," he says. But he doesn't want to make static pieces. "I want to make pieces that you interact with, feel, and experience," he says. Jonathan, 18, is currently a freshman at Cooper Union School of Art in New York City.

**How did you first get involved in art?** I've always loved drawing. At Dreyfoos School of the Arts in West Palm Beach, Florida, I also studied architecture and sculpture.

**What inspired your award-winning portfolio?** My junior year, I attended an art program in California. A visiting artist spoke to our class. The artist gave us a large piece of cardboard and asked us to make something to wear. I liked working this way so much, I made this series of wearable sculptures a few months later.

**Why did you create the two sculptures that are connected?** I wanted to see what would happen when two people needed to rely on one another. Each person has to tell



How would it feel to wear one of these masks? How would it feel to move around inside it?

the other what he or she can see and remember so they are able to move around.

**How did you create your sculptures?** I began with sketches. Then I cut out cardboard strips. I bent the strips into shapes and connected them with zip ties. For the connected sculpture, I made a chain out of rubber bands to connect the two sculptures.

**What was the most challenging part?** Making sure the sculptures were stable. Sometimes the zip ties tore through the cardboard. I had to adjust pieces and retie them to make sure they held steady.

**Do you have any advice for aspiring artists like yourself?** Get out of your comfort zone. Experiment with ideas, materials, and different types of art.

## Scholastic Art & Writing Awards

Jonathan's sculpture portfolio won a silver medal in the 2010 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. To find out more about this program, ask your teacher to call 212-343-6882 or go to [artandwriting.org](http://artandwriting.org).



▲ Jonathan Cuba

# Make a Mask

Use what you've learned in this issue about form to create your own mask that represents a person, animal, mythical creature, or idea.

**Y**ou've seen how masks have been used by many cultures throughout history and how contemporary artists are making masks today. In this workshop, you'll design and build your own mask using papier mâché.

## MATERIALS

- Kraft paper cut in 3/4" x 20" & 1/2" x 20" strips
- Elmer's Glue-All
- 8 1/2" x 11" used copier paper
- Scissors and/or X-Acto knives
- Florist wire, mat & foam core scraps
- Flat 1/4" and 1/2" brushes
- Tempera or acrylic paint
- Paper towels, newspaper, and/or facial tissue
- Scrap fabric
- Containers for water/glue
- Variety of personal low-relief human-made & natural materials
- Large headband or scarf
- One-liter soda container to support mask
- Old shirt
- Masking tape
- Hair dryer

▼ Start with a sketch of your mask. You can make changes later, but this will help guide the process.



## STEP 1 Design Your Mask

Before you begin building your mask, you'll need a detailed concept to work from. Think about what you want your mask to represent—a person, animal, natural element, superhero, etc. Decide what forms, colors, patterns, and decorative elements you will use to create your mask. Flip through the pages of this issue for inspiration or do additional research. Make a detailed sketch of your mask. Write a 50-to-100-word summary of your concept.

**TIP:** Keep it simple—you need to be able to make what you design.

▼ Build a frame with paper, then begin the papier-mâché. Be sure your partner can breathe easily.



## STEP 2 Build Your Mask

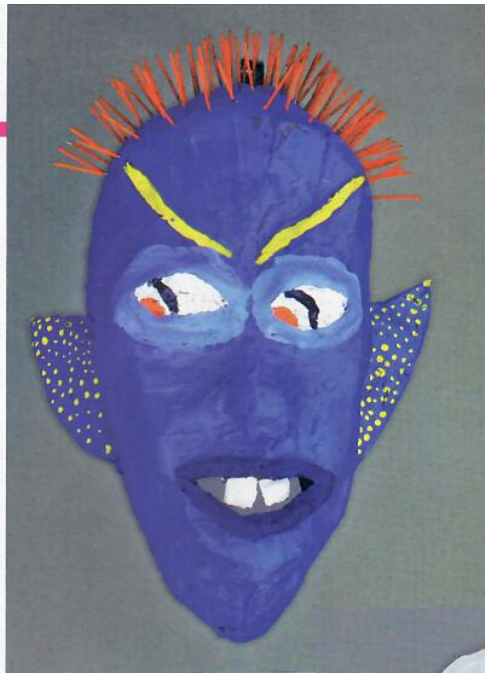
You will work with a partner to construct the mask. Cover your partner's hair with a cloth and secure it with a band of masking tape. Attach three long 1"-wide strips of paper to the tape band to form the mask's sides and center. To this "frame," using dots of glue, attach more strips vertically and horizontally. Follow the facial contours. Cover the paper strips with kraft paper dipped in a glue mixture. Remove the mask and allow it to dry.

**TIP:** Make sure to leave small spaces around the eyes and nose as you work.

► Janae's long, pointed, symmetrical mask suggests an air of menace. The angular lines, pointed ears, diagonal eyebrows, spiky hair, and blue skin all heighten this mask's frightening appearance.



**WEB LINK:**  
See more student work examples on our Web site: [scholastic.com/art](http://scholastic.com/art)



▼ Decorate your mask with paint and add found objects. Refer back to your original sketch.



▲ The asymmetrical features of Brandi's rounded, oval mask give it a playful look. The texture and color of the red fur framing the mask make its smooth green head appear to pop.

◀ By adding long, hanging "hair," Randee has extended her mask beyond its solid, closed head. Attaching these strings of beads to the mask adds color and motion to the somewhat grim white face.

### STEP 3 Paint & Decorate

Use paint, feathers, raffia, or found objects to decorate your mask. You can prop your mask up on an empty plastic container as you work. Refer to your concept sketch and try to execute your design—but feel free to make changes if you need to. Follow the contours and shape of the mask and highlight expressive facial features. Consider building shapes or hanging objects from the edges of the mask.

**TIP:** Make sure your mask can support the weight of any objects you choose to add to it.

► Colin's convex elephant head seems to emerge from between a pair of large, flat ears. The mask's long trunk and two tusks project diagonally outward to visually symbolize the animal's size and power.



Prepared by Ned J. Nesti, Jr., Art Instructor, Morrison Junior High School, Morrison, IL. Assisted by Jamie Harmon, Art Instructor, Polo Community High School, Polo, IL & Adam R. Heusinkveld, MA, High Education, University of the Pacific, Morrison, IL. Artwork by Collin R. Goodman, Randee F. Mennenga, Brandi N. Hosford, & Janae E. Nardi.

# Sculpting Celebrities

Stephen Mansfield creates realistic figures for a famous wax museum.

▼ Stephen Mansfield sculpting Britney Spears in clay.



**SCHOLASTIC ART: What is your job?**

**STEPHEN MANSFIELD:** I am a principal sculptor at Madame Tussauds. We make wax figures of celebrities and historical people that are displayed all over the world.

**SA: How do you start making a figure?**

**SM:** With celebrities, we sit with the person and decide on a pose and a facial expression. Then we take lots of photographs and measurements. To get a good sense of the person's head, we pin the hair back and put little dots on the person's face. The dots give us points of reference to measure.

**SA: What are the next steps?**

**SM:** First, we sculpt the figure in clay. Then, we mold the clay body in plaster, and the clay head and hands in wax. The wax head and hands are colored to match the person's skin tone. The hair, eyes, and teeth are added—we have trays of eyeballs here! Finally, the figure is dressed. From start to finish is about four months.

**SA: Do you use any computers or machines in your work?**

**SM:** No, the figures are all done by hand—the same way it has always been done.

**SA: What is challenging about your job?**

**SM:** Making the figures convincing. I want visitors to the museum to feel like they are really standing next to Robert Pattinson and taking a picture with him.

**SA: How do celebrities react when they first see their figure?**

**SM:** They're delighted—and intrigued. A lot of people say they're not used to seeing the back of themselves. Also, people usually only see their faces in a mirror, but that's a reverse image. A wax figure is how you really look.



► Mansfield's sculpture of Robert Pattinson looks just like the real person!

**SA: What is your training?**

**SM:** I went to art school for drawing. I got sculpting experience once I started working. My first job was making puppets and models for a sci-fi TV show. I couldn't believe I got paid to do that!

**SA: What is the best part of your job?**

**SM:** I love it all! I used to come to Madame Tussauds as a kid. I remember thinking, "Somebody must create the figures, so why not me?" Now I'm doing it. I feel very lucky!

**CAREER PROFILE**

**SPECIAL-EFFECTS SCULPTOR**

**Salary:** First-year special-effects sculptors make an average of \$30,000, depending on location, project, and experience.

**Education:** Most special-effects sculptors have a bachelor's degree in sculpture or a related field, such as puppet arts.

**Getting Started:**

- Work with clay. Practice modeling heads and realistic figures.
- Learn to draw. Develop an ability to draw faces.
- Attend sci-fi conventions. Learn about new developments in creating models and puppets.

Courtesy Merlin Studios. (2)