ASSISTANT PUPPET MAKER

Reference Number: ST0476

Details of standard

Occupation summary:

Assistant Puppet Makers (APM) support the design, manufacture (making) and performance of puppets for theatre, film, TV, carnival, animation, applied puppetry and outdoor arts. They may work for a single Senior Puppet Maker or as part of a wider technical and performance team led by a Creative Director. They are responsible for contributing to the care of their puppets, including how they are handled, stored, transported and used during a performance/production. They must know how to undertake basic repairs to puppets and choose appropriate materials for manufacture to aid their preservation.

APMs must know how to design basic puppets suitable to the performance/production using appropriate technical drawing methods, and must be able to manufacture puppets to their own or others' designs, selecting the most suitable materials for the conditions the puppet will be used in, for example: weather tolerant if used for outdoor performances, of sturdy structure if used for immersive/audience interactive performances, or resistant to heat and light damage if used in close proximity to theatre lighting. APMs must understand the best application and likely lifespan of different materials and be confident making puppets from a range of materials such as paper, wood, papier mache, foam, wire, metal, rubber, acrylic and soft materials. They must understand the required movement of puppets depending on the performance, and apply design and build methods to ensure said requirements can be met. This may include the application and use of traditional strings, robotics or digital programming.

APMs must be confident in the use and maintenance of hand and machine tools and materials relevant to their puppetry setting(s) such as those outlined above. They must meet minimum Health and Safety requirements associated with puppet making, including how to keep oneself and team members safe, in line with company policies.

Alongside the design and manufacture of puppets, APMs must also have awareness of the performance of puppets for live and recorded productions, and as such must have knowledge of creative performance principles to ensure puppets can be animated in line with performance scripts.

Typical job titles:

Puppet maker, Assistant puppet maker, Puppet technician

Duties

Occupation duties

Duty	KSBs
Duty 1 Make puppets so they have the technical performance functions required to meet the production brief	S2 S3
Duty 2 Make puppets from a range of materials suitable for the environment/type of	K6 K7

performance they are intended for	S4 S5 S6 S7 S8 S9 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6
Duty 3 Design puppets in response to a given brief	K8 K9 K10 S10 S11 B2 B3 B5 B6
Duty 4 Meet Health and Safety compliance requirements in line with company policies and procedures	K11 S12 S13 S14 B1 B5
Duty 5 Undertake basic repairs to puppets to aid their desired longevity and use	K12 K13 S15 S16 B2 B5 B6
Duty 6 Work as part of a team to agreed deadlines	S17 S18 S19 S20 B7
Duty 7 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about puppet making as a craft and puppetry as a creative performance aid	K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K14 S1 B1

KSBs

Knowledge

K1: Understand the history of puppet making and performance including the contexts and cultures within which they have been used and how audiences engage and empathise with puppets, along with the different types of puppet used through the ages such as string puppets, glove puppets, shadow puppets and muppet-style puppets.

K2: Have awareness of the types and scales of organisation that commission, use and/or apply puppetry

K3: Know how to operate as a freelance puppet maker which may include project management, utilising online platforms, networking

K4: Understand the costs associated with different materials, where they're sourced from and how these are selected to meet budget requirements.

K5: Understand how to minimise waste when using materials to comply with the organisation's sustainability policy.

K6: Know which materials to use appropriate to the nature, purpose and frequency of the puppet's use such as paper, wood, papier mache, foam, wire, metal, rubber, acrylic and soft materials

K7: Understand the importance of and variation in protective cases for the safe storage and transport of different puppets before, during and after a performance and how these should prevent water damage, rodent and insect damage, environmental damage, and accidental damage during transport.

K8: Understand basic anatomy and bio-mechanics such as skeletal structure, muscles, and tendons in humans and wildlife and how this influences a puppet's movement

K9: Understand the use of joints and mechanisms appropriate to a puppet's planned usage/purpose

K10: Understand the most appropriate design method(s)to use to best respond to the design brief which may include technical illustration, CAD and/or Virtual Reality design

K11: Understand basic health and safety requirements associated with the environments within which puppets are used such as outdoor settings, film and TV sets, Theatres and other indoor venues, which may include basic audience and staff safety and security, noise regulations, working at height, basic electrics and handling workshop equipment

K12: Show understanding in a range of basic repair and restoration methods that can help prolong the life of a puppet relevant to different materials e.g. wood, metal, acrylic

K13: Know how to safely and appropriately move and store puppets, relevant to their type, to minimise general wear and tear or long-term damage to them

K14: Understand the performance techniques and conditions associated with live or recorded productions, such as performing in front of a green screen, voice-overs, CGI, or hidden puppeteers.

Skills

S1 Build joints and mechanisms suitable for the type of puppetry and performance environment which may include leather hinge joints, wooden pin joints and plastic pipe joints

S2 Demonstrate the basic mechanics of puppetry such as the relationship/separation between puppeteer and puppet, focus, reaction, use of breath and expression to give life to an inanimate object

S3 Show how to hold and animate a puppet based on its type, such as rod, table top, bunraku, glove, shadow, muppet-style, large scale, and digital to ensure it is suitable for its intended purpose and environment

S4 Select and use the most appropriate materials for construction such as paper, wood, papier mache, foam, wire, metal, rubber, acrylic and/or soft materials for the puppet's desired use, weight, balance and desired longevity

S5 Undertake construction methods such as carving, foam patterning, mould casting, soft sculpture, seam-stressing, metalwork, assemblage, large scale construction, animatronics, paints and finishes, suitable to the type of puppetry.

S6 Apply relevant mechanics such as push pull cable and rod mechanisms, basic digital robotics, hydraulics, suitable to the type of puppetry.

S7 Use and maintain hand and machine tools appropriate to the type of puppet making, which may include pillar drills, hand drills, belt sanders, bandsaws, glue and air heat tools, hammers, pliers, grips and vices, knives and scalpels, files and abrasives, spanners, chisels, sewing machines

S8 Make costumes for puppets using appropriate methods that allow for necessary movement and withstand the frequency and environments within which the puppets are used, which may include costumes in fabric, plastic or hand painted attire directly applied to the puppet.

S9 Modify a puppet's build to respond to design and/or environmental changes, such as changes in weather conditions, indoor lighting and heat, or a puppeteer's size, using tools and materials that are appropriate to the type of puppetry.

S10 Work to agreed briefs and/or designs by creating accurate technical drawings of puppets using graphic illustration techniques that are to scale, which may include the use of CAD design software such a Rhino of Fusion 360

S11 Build appropriate maquette and/or prototypes in line with the agreed project timeline to assess the puppet's suitability for the intended performance/environment

S12 Select and use the most appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

S13 Comply with Health and safety regulations including IOSH and COSHH

S14 Apply relevant H&S considerations to a puppet's build to prevent injury and aid safe, comfortable and efficient manipulation of the puppet by the puppeteer

S15 Select and use necessary building and finishing techniques and materials to ensure the puppet's appropriate resistance to damage caused by different conditions such as weather, heat and light, performance wear and tear, audience interaction and pest corrosion

S16 Build basic storage cases using materials such as wood, plastic or metal, to aid puppet preservation before, during and after performances to reduce damage/corrosion, including during transit.

S17 Confidently work alongside and support others as part of a project or permanent team to ensure the successful completion of a brief

S18 Clearly present ideas and methods to aid the design and construction of puppets

S19 Stay focused on the task at hand to fulfil tasks within agreed timeframes

S20 Organise workload effectively to ensure time is used wisely and tasks are completed in agreed priority order

Behaviour

B1: Be pro-active about learning new techniques, ways of working and improving personal knowledge

B2: Work with colleagues to trouble shoot in a methodical way

B3: Respond constructively and maturely when things don't go as planned

B4: Remain calm under pressure

B5: Take and respond to instruction

B6: Seek solutions to problems and takes advice from those with relevant expertise

B7: Friendly and approachable at all times and open to sharing learning

Typical duration of apprenticeship (months):

18

Qualifications & professional recognition

English and Maths qualifications

Level 3 and above apprenticeships

Level 3 and above apprenticeships Apprentices without level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level prior to taking the End-Point Assessment. For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and maths minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. A British Sign Language (BSL) qualification is an alternative to the English qualification for those whose primary language is BSL.

Find an apprenticeship

Postcode (optional)

Version log

VERSION	DATE UPDATED	CHANGE	PREVIOUS VERSION
1	18/12/2019	Approved for delivery. Funding band first published	Not available
1	13/12/2019	Assessment plan first published	Not available
1	06/03/2019	Standard first published	Not available
1	01/06/2016	Initial creation	Not available