



# **Bloated Corpse** -prosthetic sculpt

## Video Transcript

Stuart Bray

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Sometimes I mumble, talk too fast or you just can't quite hear what I said? Well, hopefully this transcript will be useful to you!

-Stuart

**“Hello, this is Stuart Bray, back with another video this time looking at sculpting again. This is a head that I did, a prosthetic makeup I did for a TV show a few years ago.**

**And it was to be a bloated corpse makeup for a TV show. There's also the bleeding knife gag which you may have seen which I did a reproduction of just to show you the processes in the bleeding knife. That was for the same TV show so if you haven't seen that, may be worth checking that out if you're into that sort of thing.**

This was just a bloated head sculpt, and it was done on a fibreglass core originally, which is what I'm sculpting on top of, this grey head.

I sculpted using a grey plastiline and I used a grey 'gelcoat' with the resin (with grey polyester resin pigment) so the sculpt and the core would be very similar colours, as it can be distracting if the thing you are sculpting on and the thing you are sculpting with are two very different colours.



So for the benefit of the production team who would be approving this sculpt, I decided to make them similar colours so they look more like an entire head rather than two different things.

So, I'm just gonna show you basically the process how I got from the start to the finish and the various things that came across along the way, and the changes and everything that went into the production to give you an idea of what goes on when you do something like this for a show.

The whole sculpt was done in about a week, although to be honest the actual time spent sculpting was only a couple of days - a lot of that was spent doing bits, waiting for approvals, that kind of stuff.

Anyway, on with the sculpting. The first thing I want to show you is the head, the head itself and you can see this is fibreglass. Now, I don't need the ears in this because in my bloated makeup I'm not going to include the ears in the makeup - so there are holes and bits

missing from the ear which are not a problem, because I'm going to get rid of those anyway. I'm going to grind those off, but you can see that there are holes in the ear and there is also a little seam going around the head, you see that line going around and that seam line is where the two halves of the mould were so I need to get rid of that and also the ears.

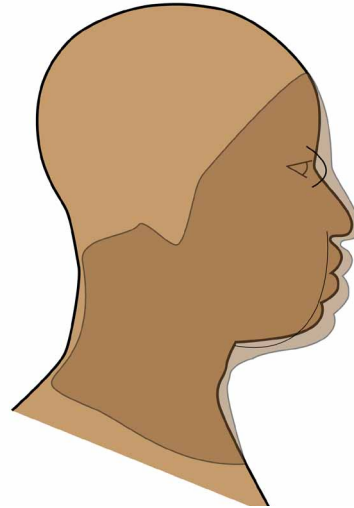


So I'm going to grind the ears off using a file or a 'Dremel', which is a kind of rotary tool, and I'm also going to rough-up some texture on the eyes as well, on the eyelids.

The reason I'm going to do that is because I actually want to build the eyes out, and I'm gonna build the eyes out using a car body filler which is a kind of a polyester resin paste (used for filling minor dents and holes in car body work).



You mix that up, put it onto the eyes, and the reason I'm building these up is so that when I make the final makeup, the final piece, there's actually going to be enough room behind the piece when it's on for his eyes to open and close.



Obviously the eyelashes will brush against the inside of the piece which is quite annoying if you were a makeup all day. So it's a good idea, if you are gonna wear something actually covers

their real eyes to actually build out core that you are sculpting on first so that you actually have some room for the eyelids to blink.

So I put the body filler on and I'm using some cling-film which (if you are not familiar with that term - I know other countries use different words for this) is a thin plastic food wrap over the top. You press that into it before the body filler sets and you basically create a smooth surface.





Just as the stuff sets, you can pull that away and if there are any holes you can fill them, if it's a bit rough you can sand it (using wet or dry paper works best - I prefer 120 grit). It just speeds the thing up because you can smooth it out quite quickly before it sets by using the plastic wrap.

So once I've done the eyes and the ears like this, I'm now ready to sculpt on my smoothed and prepared core. The quickest way I've found to sculpt this stuff really is to melt the plastiline down in a saucepan (one dedicated to this - not to be used for food again!) on a very low heat (I used a gas-hob but if you have a wax melter then more power to you!) until it becomes liquid.



I'm sculpting with plastiline which is basically a kind of wax based sculpting material so when it's heated up, it melts.

Once it's molten, I can brush it on (I used a disposable laminating brush or chip brush) and I'm brushing it onto the head and I'm stopping at this, you can see, a black marker line I've done with a Sharpie. I've marked out the hair line and that's where the performers' actual hair is.

Obviously I don't want my piece to encroach into the hairline because if I cover any of the hair with the piece, that'll obviously show up where the piece is finishing so I'll end up having to replace hair once I've done my application. So I

want my sculpture to stop before I get to the edge.

Basically what I can do is I can brush on roughly where I want the bulk of the piece whilst it's still liquid, and then as it's cools and begins to firm up, I can sort of whack in to block out the sculpture very quickly.



Just by whacking on big lumps of plastiline in the right place while it's still very, very soft - you can see it's very easy to manipulate at this stage and still quite soft. So in about half an hour, basically block out the very rough shape which is a nice speedy way of working with this stuff. 5.08

So once I've blocked out the shape, I'm just gonna refine the edges. Here you can see I'm using a kind of a loop tool that has serrations on one side - little bits taken out. That leaves these little lines, little grooves on the edge. It's very nice to use these tools for shaving down because it takes away enough gradually

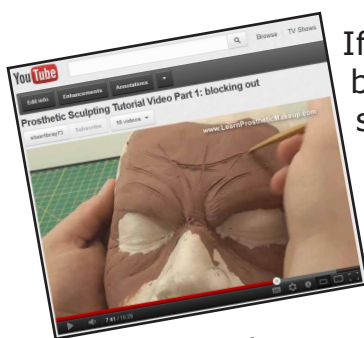


without actually taking huge amounts at any one time. The little grooves can easily be smoothed out afterwards, but it just means you can reduce volumes without changing the form too much, so you're in a lot of control.

Once I've sort of refined and roughed-out the shape, I can start adding a bit more sort of, not quite details, but sort of lines and forms around the lips, that kind of stuff with a smaller loop tool. Just to kind of dig in a little bit and carve in some lines where I want them.



Sometimes these lines can look a little rough, so what I'm gonna use is this sort of plastic brush tool, which is like a cheap sort of workshop brush. You can buy packs of brushes, usually there's a little brash one, a little steel one and a little plastic brush for not a lot of money. I think these were like a pound or something for three brushes.



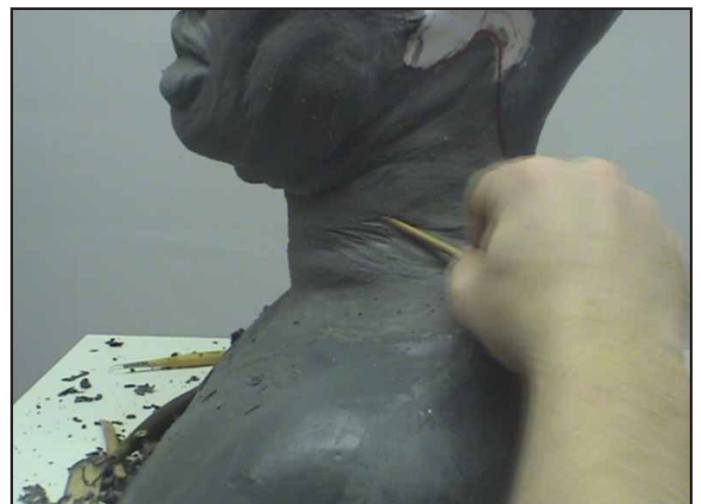
If you use the plastic brush, you can stroke across some of your tool marks to refine them and reduce them. You may have seen my little series of three sculpting videos. If you haven't, and you're interested in prosthetic sculpting, it might be worth checking these out, where I go into a bit more detail in how to use this.

It does a very nice job, as you can see of quickly smoothing out the tool marks. Again, just polishing the surface down

without losing the form so you get rid of the tool marks, and you can start to create a more realistic, smoother finish.

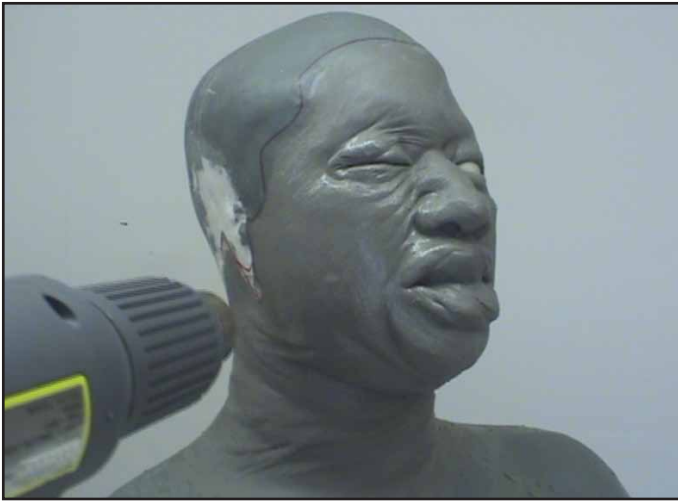


I'm trying to go for a loose skin - they wanted like a kind of, like the skin had become detached like it was sloughing away from the connective tissues between the skin and the fat underneath. It had become dislodged - the skin's kind of sliding around on the skin.



That was the kind of look they wanted so I've put these kind of baggy lines and sort of sagging skin around the neck and stuff to give that suggestion that the skin's kind of become bloated with water (waterlogged, if you will) and is sliding around.

What I want to try and do here is to put in some finer lines in and finer wrinkles. Again, as with before, when it was molten, if you use like a hairdryer or a hot-air gun - here I'm using a paint stripper gun - you can heat up the



both, so this first version had the eyes kind of open.

They wanted more of a kind of puffy swelling, and more of a smoother finish (which I agree with). So I quickly blocked out the smoother finish, got rid of a lot of that detail and I also put a little bit of a tongue inside that mouth just so you can kind of see as if that mouth had bloated and filled with the swollen tongue.

Just to give them an idea of the final look as well (I made a fake tongue for the actor to wear too).

surface of the plastiline and then just kind of smooth it out (the shine fades) with the heat. Once it's become molten, it becomes very soft then you can work some lines into it - here I'm using a piece of plastic and a little wire (home-made) brush tool, and just scratch in there some lines to give it some more wrinkles on the cheek and stuff.



Then I'm gonna start carving into the lips and round the chin and stuff. At first quite crude sort of lines, quite deep lines, then I soften them off, refine them and then they look a little more natural, like they are supposed to be, like folds in the skin.

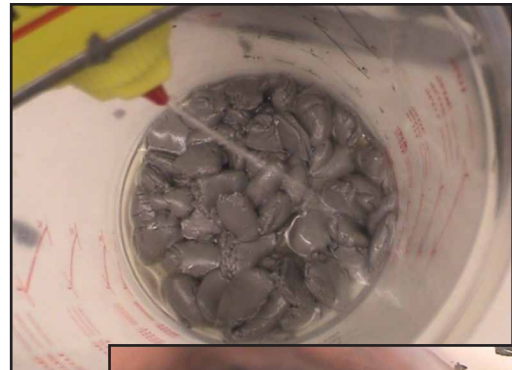
Okay, this was sort of 'Version 1'. What I did was I took photos of this, waited for approval and they wanted something different, they wanted more sort of 'bloatedey' (is that even a word?) kind of bloated face. I wasn't sure whether they wanted the eyes open or closed, they weren't sure either - they wanted to see

That was 'Version 2', which, again they saw this and wanted it even 'more'. It's often the case you sort of show something and whatever you've done, they want more so you end up expanding and increasing it evermore. It didn't help that the guy was quite healthy, quite slim, so once you cover his face in plastiline and build it out, you've kind of lost how much of it is actually him. So they wanted even more, so I had to really pack it on for it to look like it was swollen.





Which is quite easy to do, you know with sanding it back with a brush and stuff so you get a nice smooth finish and also using a heat gun to kind of give it that shiny, smooth finish. That doesn't necessarily look like real skin.



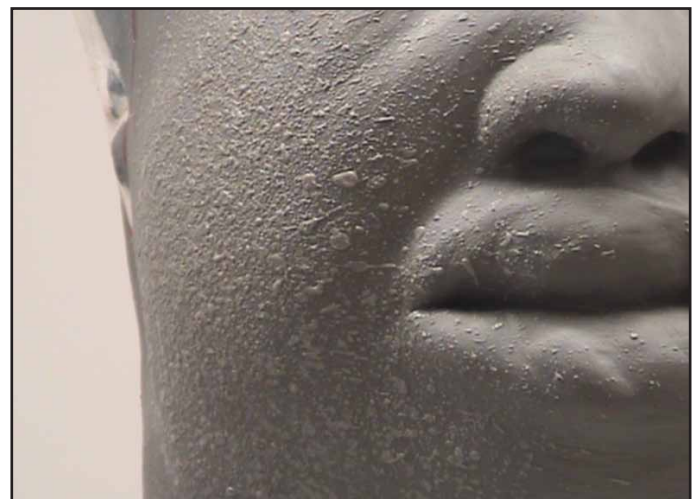
Obviously when you've only got a head and shoulders sat on your bench, you can't see the rest of the body, so it's kind of weird - this disembodied thing. You want to build it out, you know, to their satisfaction but at the same time you don't want it to look like he's got a sort of an oversized football for a head.

So we did pack out the cheeks a lot and I also went with the big, swollen eyelids as well so his eyes are now actually swollen closed which is good because if you have the eyes open, you have to make some kind of eye to go inside. It's a little easier to actually have the eyes closed.

Even though this will be wet and bloated, I wanted it to have some kind of non-descript subtle texture so what I did was I melted some little balls of plastiline in some lighter fluid which is naphtha, kind of a petroleum spirit. I put that in there and leave it to soak for about twenty minutes/half an hour. Mix it up into like a slurry so it becomes a liquid and then you can flick that onto the surface very lightly.



So, again I packed-out the outside, smoothed it out, rounded it off and basically generally polished it and made it very smooth looking, very shiny.

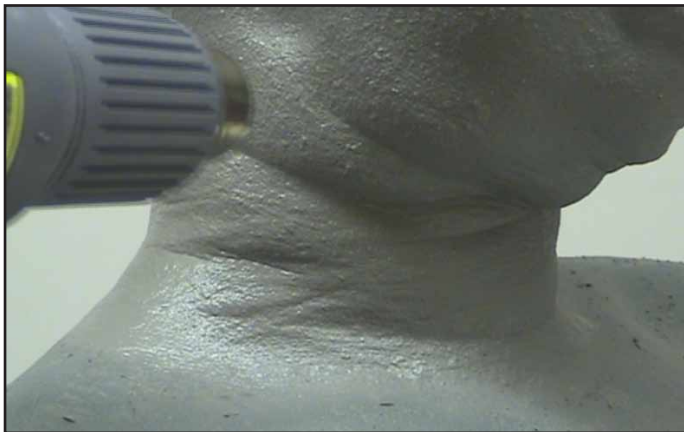




It gives you a nice, kind of natural looking sort of 'dappled' kind of texture, which is not indented, it's instead slightly raised. It looks very natural, and it's very quick to do as well - you can cover a whole head in about ten minutes.

Because a lot of this is actually naphtha solvent, the little raised bumps that you can see will reduce over time. After about twenty minutes/half an hour or so they will reduce in volume so they actually appear as smaller on the face. Even though it looks quite rough now, it actually will shrink back slightly when that evaporates off. Even if it was slightly still raised (for your tastes) you could always polish it back with a little bit of surgical spirit (70% alcohol with some castor oil in it - works well with a soft art paintbrush) or something just to reduce the appearance.

So once that was on there and evaporated off (and I was quite happy



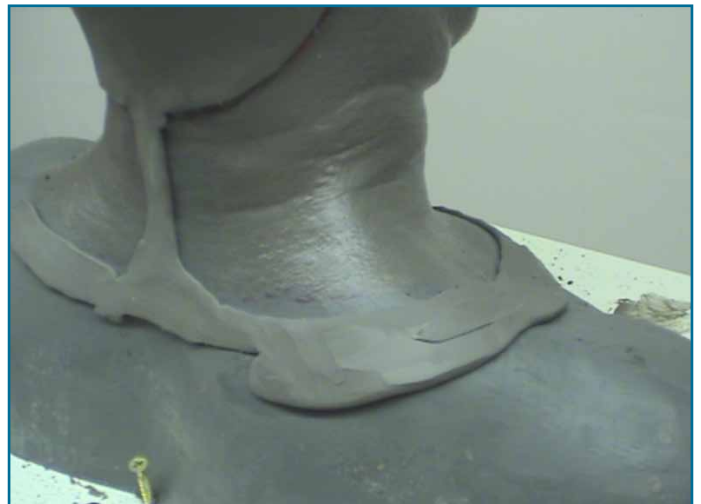
with how it looked), I kind of gave it a quick blitz (very lightly) with the heat gun. Again, this paint-stripper gun from a distance, just to kind of gently melt the surface and smooth it right back.

Once that was done, it was then a case of putting on the cutting edge and overflow which is a very important aspect. Once you finish the sculpt (and I hasten to add it was approved at this point), once they'd approved it I then had to get it ready for mould making. In order to make the mould, we need to make sure that the cutting edge and overflow is done well.

The easiest way of doing this (I prefer) is to roll little sausages of plastiline and push them around the edge. Flatten them out, and then they can be cut back very neatly with a tool, so you can get a nice sharp and crisp edge.



Here you can see I go around the entire head round the edge, and I go back from the edge probably about two inches/fifty mm or so you've got a nice deep kind of overflow that goes way back (from beyond the edge of the piece).



You can see on the back of the neck, I did leave a little gap. I didn't want the neck to join as a complete 'thing', because I want the freedom of being able to overlap the back pieces in case there was a sort of fitting issue.

If it's a complete 'bag' like a complete hoop of silicone and it goes on his head, we're gonna have to stretch it to get over his head. If it's a little bit stretched and a

bit baggy we'd have a problem, whereas if I've got two loose ends like that, I can always overlap one over the other and you would end up with a much more seamless looking finish on the back of the neck.



Once that was done and I'm satisfied that the edges are all smoothed off, I used a little plastic tube (these, incidentally, are from the inside of the plaster

bandage rolls I have) just to cut some 'touchdowns' - some key touchdowns - around the outside.

These will for the bolt-holes so that when we finally fibreglass - remember I made the core in fibreglass and also make the mould in fibreglass.

Once the fibreglass mould is made, this will be the little areas where the mould touches down onto the core. We'll drill through these little touchdowns (usually using a 6mm drill bit for M6 bolts - hex head bolts fastened with wing nuts) so bolts can go through.

The whole mould can be bolted up tight and we can be sure the mould goes together accurately and locks into place.

**There we have it - the completed sculpt, the overflow and cutting edge in place with the keys (bolt holes touchdowns) and that's now ready for moulding.**



**So, remember if you have any questions about prosthetic makeup, makeup effects or any of the things in here or you want to see more, please do get in touch.**

My address is: [mail@learnprostheticmakeup.com](mailto:mail@learnprostheticmakeup.com)

**Thanks for watching!** ”

