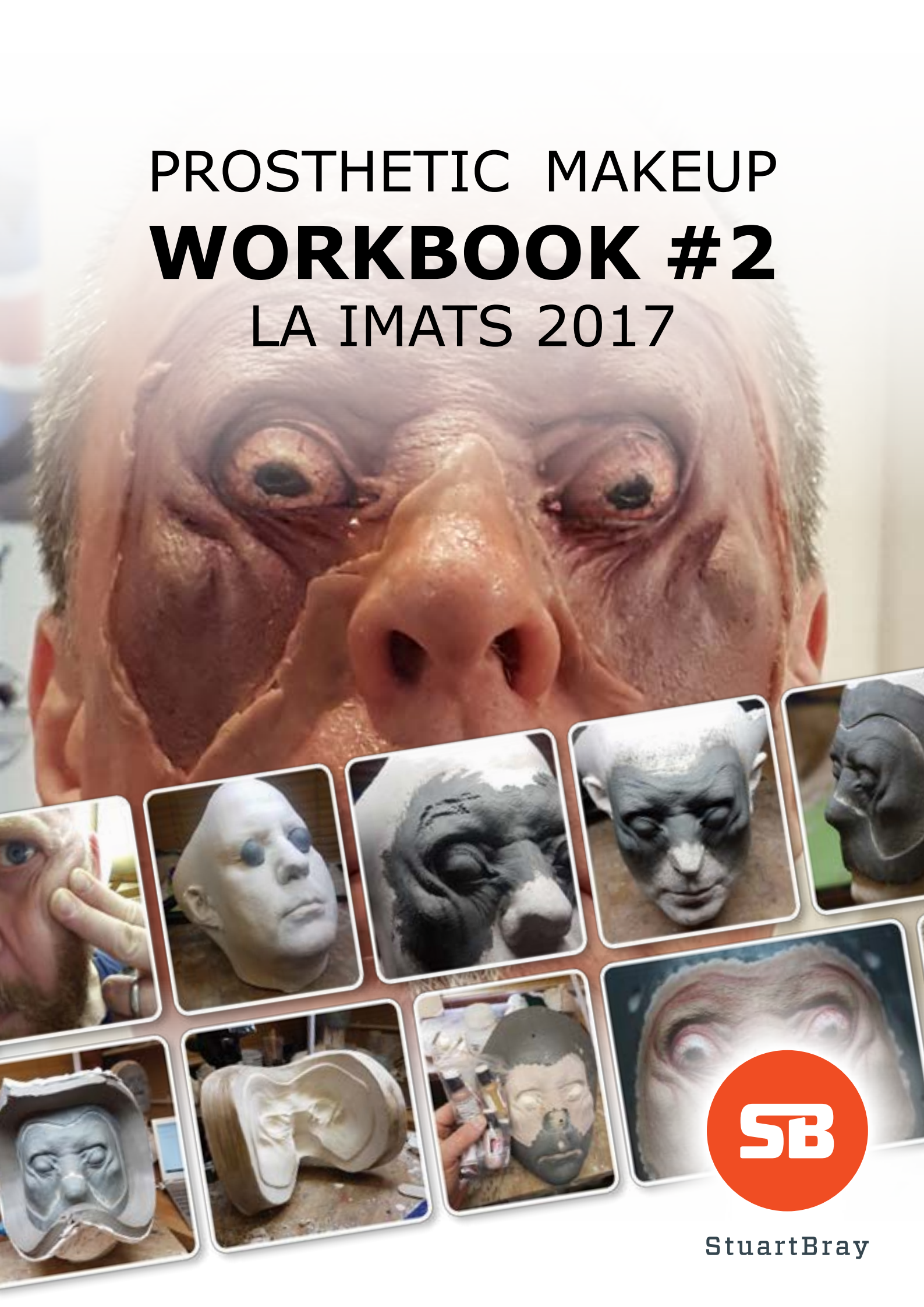
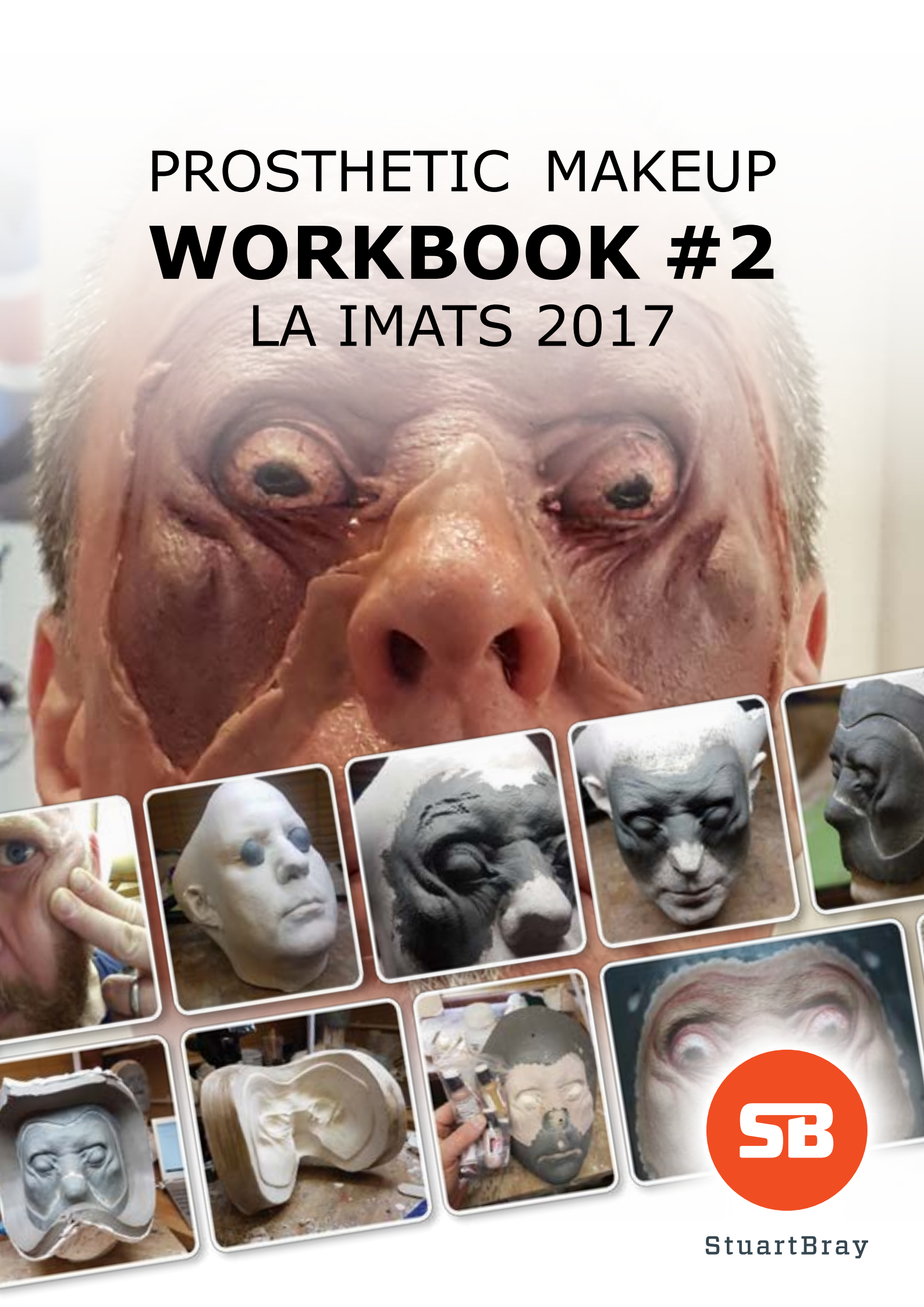


PROSTHETIC MAKEUP  
**WORKBOOK #2**  
 LA IMATS 2017

**SB**

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**T**rade shows like IMATS are a wonderful opportunity for artists to have some fun creating things that they might not otherwise get to do.

For some people, it's to show off a skill or technique or new material. For others, it's a chance to take chances, experiment and play with some ideas. To indulge in a little playing, pushing some envelopes or exploring with methods which a show schedule just wouldn't allow.

This was my plan with this makeup, which uses mostly latex and some silicone pieces made from flat moulds. On a *really* tight budget, you could do the same thing without the silicone blenders - the edges of the straight silicone piece were not bad at all.

Latex is often overlooked as people perceive it as this lethal material which has epidemic proportions of allergy. Whilst it is true that latex allergies exist, it's also true to say that most people don't, and those that do usually know about it. That said, it is sensible to check and do a patch test to make certain if in doubt.

**Safety is paramount!**





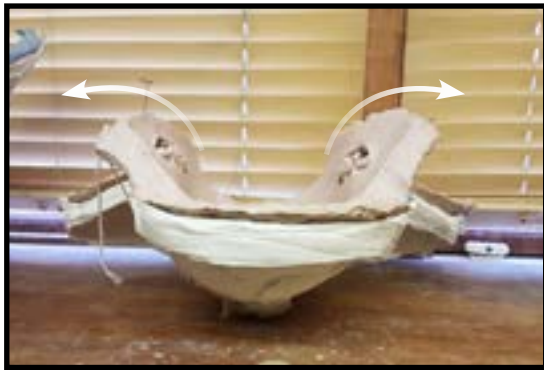
# CORE BLIMEY, GUV'NAH!



**No more puns in this workbook. Honest.**

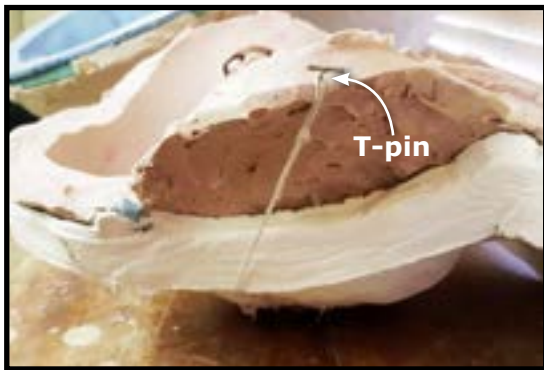
**The core is the first thing we need to start sculpting. In keeping with the spirit of this makeup - that is to spend as little money as possible - I am utilising an existing silicone lifecast**

The front half is silicone, and I left the ears clear of plaster bandage purposefully to allow the ear area of the silicone to be pulled forward to aid removal.



By sticking a couple of T-pins into the silicone edge, I secure some points from which I can attach string and pull the ears forward. This means when I take the resulting plaster core out, it will have the ears and sides of the face flared out, as you can see in the picture below.

I am using a hard plaster available readily here in the UK called Crystacal R. I used three layers of jute scrim to reinforce it, and made a handle from an offcut of aluminium pipe which was in my toolbox.



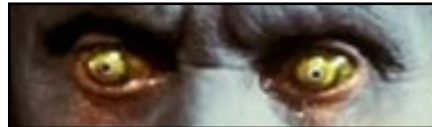




The idea of the makeup is a mishmash of several trains of thought, but the main effort was to squeeze the eyes up closer together and make them look smaller and strange. I first thought of the idea years ago inspired by a lyric in a Nick Cave song, *John Finn's Wife*:

“ *It was a warm and very ferocious night  
The moon was full of blood and light  
And my eyes grew small and my eyes grew tight  
As I plotted in the ear of John Finn's wife* ”

I also liked how Reggie Nalders eyes bulged as The Master/Barlow in the TV movie of *Salem's Lot*. I think that was in part to do with huge contact lenses, but I liked the effect regardless.



To start, I popped a couple of acrylic hemispheres I had in my tool box (*that toolbox is quite the bounty of FX goodies, you know!*) and I sanded them lightly to make them matt and obscured.

I had to grind away some areas to make them sit closer to the face, and secured them with blobs of plastiline until I was happy with the position.

Pushing up my skin around my eyes for reference, I began to block out what I thought would be a rough shape. I played with various ideas for an hour or two until I found something that felt like it would work. Feeling counts for a lot to me at this stage.







The eyeballs were built out a touch to stop them being perfect spheres, more like squashed spheres. The cheekbones are pushed up tight and the skin stretched up to create tension on the cheek.

I wanted the eyes to be at a sight angle as well as too close together. Not evil, but benign and just odd.

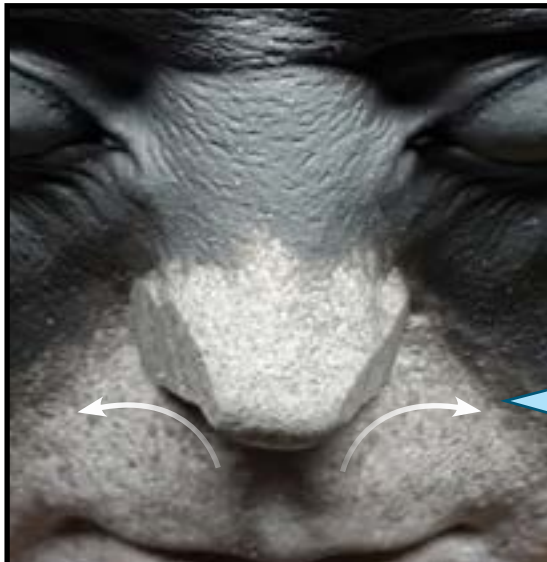
I whacked a quick skin texture on there with a variety of loop tools, buff them back with a coarse sponge and finish quickly with a slurry of plastiline mixed with naphtha (*lighter fluid*). It is flicked on with a cut down brush.

**To see some videos and more on sculpting skin textures, check out:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2hAEQlhuc\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2hAEQlhuc_Y)

**Also check this blog post:**

<http://www.learnmakeupeffects.com/sculpting-prosthetics-skin-textures>



I shaved down the wings of the nostrils to take out the undercuts and make the moulding process much easier. This is why I love plaster so much, because these kinds of changes can be made directly on the core easily.

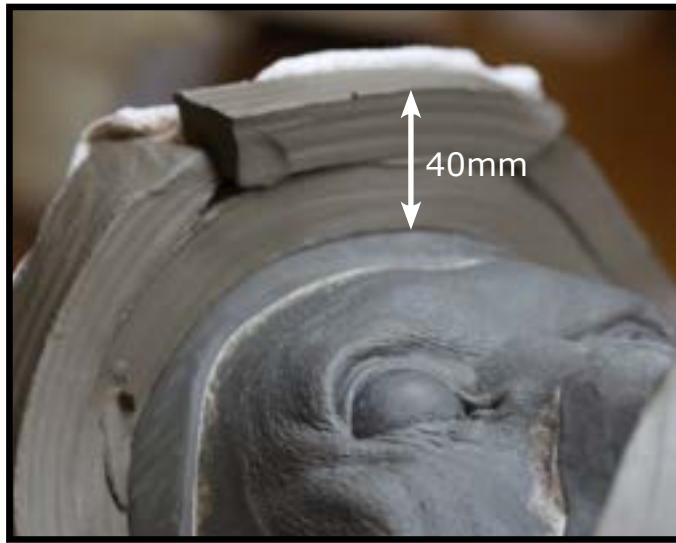


Once the sculpt is totally finished, I added a thin overflow and cutting edge. A blanket of plastiline about 3mm thick is laid on, I usually apply them as a series of sausages, starting from the edge of the piece outwards.

Flattening them with a thumb as you go, each successive layer works outwards and is blended so the flattened sausages form a continual sheet.

By applying as a series of sausages, it is easier to navigate the curves etc. of the face and follow them more closely rather than applying a flat single sheet. The plastiline overflow almost touches the sculpt but not quite.





I want to make a plaster mould, so I build a clay wall around the outside edge, around 40mm wide. I slice clay neatly using a clay cutter straight from a bag of clay.

It's a good idea to drop the closed bag of clay gently onto a hard surface to flatten and smooth out the sides to make it into a neat rectangular block, making it much easier to cut neat slices off.

The clay is sliced around 18mm or  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch thick. I used water based clay - no need for WED clay which takes longer to dry out - this is just to make a mould so standard water based clay is fine.

**For more on this particular technique, check out the extensive blog post with video and another workbook here: <http://www.learnmakeupeffects.com/using-fibreglass-part-1/>**



A plaster bandage support is placed on the outside to keep the wall secure. The clay is smoothed using a steel tool, and a couple of coats wax release is sprayed in to ensure a clean removal later and to stop plaster core from sticking to plaster mould. I used Macwax spray wax.



We don't have quite the same plasters here in the UK as the US, and I am envious of the *Ultracal 30* which is available there. This being the case, I am using [Crytacal R](#), a relatively hard plaster with a few layers of scrim fabric for added strength.





Left for an hour, the plaster is well set but a touch warm still, softening the wax and making the clay come away clean. Peeling the supporting bandage away.

It's no trouble to remove the clay strips, and the clean finish means less time messing about.

I don't want to separate the mould and core yet, as I'd like the plaster to reach full strength so I leave it overnight to be safe.



The mould opens easily, and is simple to clean out. It is popped open with a screwdriver to lever the plaster apart. Most of the sculpt remained intact on the core, so cleaning what little remained in the mould is easily done with a little naphtha and cotton wool pads.

Once the mould has been left for a few hours to allow any naphtha to fully evaporate, I start making the latex piece inside. No release is needed for latex from plaster, and acrylic paint is mixed to a flesh tone and mixed with latex to achieve a workable base colour.



I use cotton swabs to apply, and make it with a feathered edge. I like to use cotton swabs to create this wavy edge as I think it helps to avoid a continuous or straight edge, making it easier to blend the appliance off.



The plan is to make it several layers thick so it is strong enough, but tapers down to only a couple of thin layers at the blending edge.







The eyeball was the first area done in latex, and I mixed a pale yellow colour and stopped at the edge. Letting that dry, I proceed with the flesh coloured latex.

This means when the piece comes out, the eyes will be bright and pale, rather than having to add an eyeball colour to what would otherwise be the darker flesh tone.



Once the first layer has dried (*which takes a few minutes at most*) I can apply the next layer. I go close to the edge, and you can see the paler, wet latex applied. I mimic the shape, but stay a few millimetres back.

Each successive layer will creep back a few millimetres so the edge will naturally be thinnest, and gradually become thicker towards the middle of the piece.

The first layer of latex dries quickly as the moisture is readily drawn out, but successive layers will take a little longer to dry. I would avoid using a hair-dryer to speed it up as it can cause the latex to shrink in it's haste.



I apply about seven layers this way, allowing maybe 15 to 20 mins between layers. The last couple of layers are combined with tissue paper to stiffen the piece.

Keeping back from the edge to avoid thickening it, a stippled layer has a single ply of tissue paper (*toilet paper or paper kitchen towel as here*) is laid on and sponged smooth, applying another layer over the top to ensure the latex soaks in.

Two layers of tissue are applied, again on a smaller area on each successive layer so the piece is thicker in the middle.

***Many people have asked me how one can make a thick latex edge thinner - the simple truth is you can't after the fact (other than filling the edge once applied). The whole idea is to make the edge thin during this casting process.***





The piece is left overnight to thoroughly dry, and is powdered and peeled out. Latex should come out of plaster moulds relatively easily, and naturally the first thing I will do with the unpainted piece is put it on my own face for a laugh.

It's on a bit squiffy as I can't see through the eyes - an issue which we will address further on in the process. It needs some holes putting in the pupils, and I will do this with a sharp pair of scissors.



The appliance was made with a latex I pigmented with acrylic paint, so the base is already there in the material.

I will paint the appliance using *Thomas Surprenants'* range of prosthetic paints. These will be applied in layers of washes to build up a mottle of realistic colours. Real skin is slightly translucent, whereas latex with pigment is usually opaque and flat in appearance.

The task of creating translucency is best done using washes of colour, allowing the various colours built up over time to be visible.

These layers of colour approximate quite well the effect one sees on real skin - layers of tissue which reveal hints of veins, blood vessels and the variations in skin colour observed on a natural surface.



Where there are creases and wrinkles in the skin, I shade darker in the recesses and highlight the raised areas. The eyes are shaded at the edges using veins painted in as thin lines, more heavily concentrated at the edges making the centre of the eye paler. The pupil is painted in black, feathered slightly at the edges.





The eye is painted in several layers, allowing each to dry. Being water based, the prosthetic paints need to dry before the next layer is placed upon it for fear of disturbing the layer beneath.

Blood colour veins close to the surface are criss-crossed with paler blue veins and then a wash of yellow here and there to make the eyes appear more natural, not too clean.



Normal eyes are not perfectly white, and when they are made so often look stark and artificial.

**Looking up close is good, but be sure to step back and witness the overall effect of a paint job. It is easy to be consumed with a small detail at the cost of it's efficacy as a complete piece.**



The paint washes go close to the edge and follow the feathered finish. The colours I used to start with are red tones to create the effect of blood under the surface of the skin. Mottles or dabs of thin red washes stippled on and allowed to dry can built up over time.

Also thin washes can be flicked on using a cut down chip brush, and stippled smooth with a clean piece of sponge.



I also make a sheet of cap plastic encapsulated silicone appliances which I had previously moulded. The idea is to create various blender pieces which have excellent edges tapering to smooth skin one side. On the other side is a ripped skin/jagged flesh texture.

As these pieces are various shapes (*some straight, some curved, some at an angle*) they can be combined and stretched to make pretty much any shape, and as such will be used to cover the join between the latex piece and the skin. **The latex piece has good edges, but they will not be as good as a silicone equivalent.**





**Fast forward to the application.** Todd wants to wear it, and it suits him rather well. Offering it up to check fit, all seems well and the piece is good to go.

Holes are cut using small sharp scissors in the pupil areas which are painted black, so the hole is not obvious. I also paint the back of the eye area of the piece to stop reflected light from bouncing around.

Alex Falk lends a hand and helps me apply the piece. We take a side each and use Pros-Aide adhesive to stick the edge down. Being a hollow appliance, we need only glue the edge, around 6mm/¼ inch all around.

The edges blend in pretty well. Over this we stipple a couple of layers of **Thomas Surprenants' Prosthetic Paints** to help the piece blend into the skin.



Remember I painted this latex piece in advance without Todd being present so the colour was a best guess. As I intend to create an edge using the silicone pieces over the top, it's not essential that the edge of the latex be perfect. This is the beauty of combining materials to create an overall effect which utilises the best of each material. Cheap, lightweight latex mixed with the skin-like blending of small silicone appliances.





The blender appliances are placed over the edge of the latex, overlapping skin and latex. We used Pros Aide again which bonds well to latex and skin, and then apply alcohol colours to match Todds' skin tone.

We use *European Body Art palettes*, favouring the **SFX** palette which has some great reds/blood tones as well as primary colours which are most effective for tweaking flesh tones using basic colour theory to correct base tones of



appliances which are unlikely to be perfect when first applied to the skin. Once the skin is right next to a blended appliance, you can make much better judgements as to what needs to be added in order to match the piece to the skin.

As you can see, Todd's skin is darker and warmer than the appliance, so a yellow/brown and red washes are stippled gently on to add the shades missing from my appliances.



As the piece gets close to the skin, we feather the colour off so we don't paint the skin. His skin is already the colour we are trying to achieve. I always try to avoid touching the skin in the first instance.

I just want to colour the appliance and make it the same as the skin upon which it sits.





The final touch was to use a **Mac lip gloss** which Alex Falk recommended as a shine effect for the eyes.

Glossy eyes could have been achieved through a number of ways, either by using a painted layer of epoxy resin glue (*a trick courtesy of Jordu Schell - [his audio blog 'Freelance Horseshit'](#) is crammed with amazing stories and creative tips like these!*) or a layer of KY Jelly, although this has a habit of drying over time.



The gloss was applied carefully with a brush, and some blood coloured alcohol colours from the *European Body Art* range was applied with a brush to make the eyes look like they had wept bloody tears - just because....ew.

The overall effect was great - a creepy staring face with bug eyes too close together, bulging eyeballs all peering through a face which looks like it was tearing through skin.

It was a pretty inexpensive makeup, and one which didn't use a huge amount of material or create moulds which occupied too much space.

I have a pretty small workshop myself, and so the amount of mess, moulds and accumulation of processes is an issue of which I am very aware.

It can often be a deal breaker to have to acquire so many items before even taking the first step, so demonstrate using latex and plaster and some small flat moulded pieces felt like a useful endeavour. **I encourage you to share this work book with anybody else**

**who you think would find it useful.**

**-Stuart**





# THE PODCAST ABOUT MAKING PROSTHETICS

## Battles<sup>📶</sup> with bits of Robber

**Stuart  
&  
Todd**

email the show  
**[stuartandtodd@gmail.com](mailto:stuartandtodd@gmail.com)**



Available on  
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