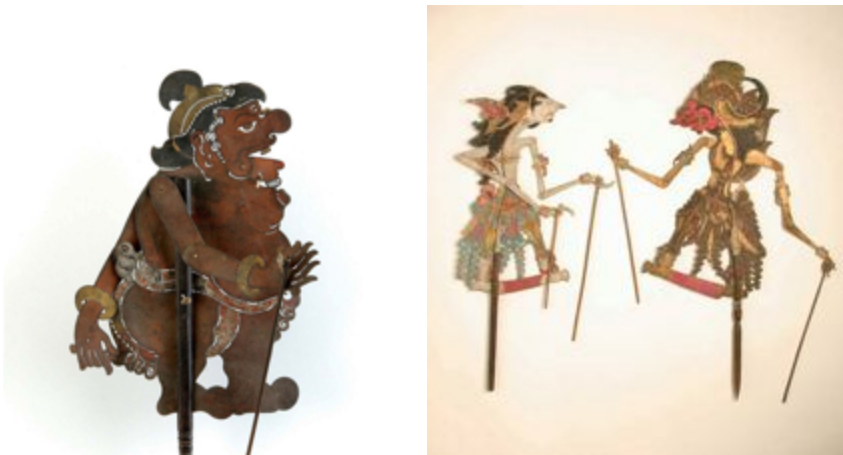


## Shadow Puppet Theater

Shadow puppetry is considered the oldest form of puppetry in the world. It began 1,000's of years ago in China and India. In China the shadow plays are often folk-tales and legends of the past, many based on Chinese opera themes. In Indonesia shadow plays are an integral part of traditional culture. The plays are taken from two religious epics where there is often a struggle between good and evil. Turkey and Greece also have a history of shadow puppetry, where plays are based on everyday life and contain much physical comedy. In Western Europe shadow puppetry enjoyed popularity during the 1800's when the art of cutting silhouettes out of paper was fashionable. In 1926 German shadow puppeteer Lotte Reiniger made the first full length animated film *The Adventures of Prince Achmet*. She hand-cut beautiful opaque silhouette figures that were moved on an animation table.

Traditional shadow puppets are flat and made of leather. Areas within the puppet are punched out with sharp knives. These areas suggest facial features and help define clothing. The puppets are made from separate pieces and joined together with wire or string. They are controlled by long rods and moved behind a white translucent screen made from paper or cloth. A lamp on the puppeteer's side of the stage provides the light: the audience on the other side sees the moving shadows. Cut-out areas within the figures allow light to shine through.

Contemporary shadow puppets may be made combining a variety of materials including paper, plastic, wood, colored theatrical lighting filters, cloth, feathers, dried plants or found objects ranging from silk scarves to kitchen utensils. Shadow puppets have been made with three-dimensional wire heads and cloth bodies. Contemporary shadow puppeteers might employ a host of specialized lighting effects, including various theatrical lighting instruments, overhead projectors, reflected light, projected films, head lamps and hand-held lights.



### ***Indonesian: Wayang Kulit***

Full play

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuN6bluUK1g>

Traditional

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9KoBRGc3\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9KoBRGc3_s)

child

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSd5BZIEjuA>

activity

<http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/lesson-or-activity/create-balinese-shadow-puppets-activity>



***in China:***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lazfPhHS1dc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j26wCBe8pFk>



***in INDIA***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPIRXtWCGuY>



***in Greece***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgoirOjY6NY>

***by kids***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCmFWJjc4RA>

[http://www.schooltube.com/video/490dd2ce3ba44c0b9716/Anansi%20the%20Spider%20Kindergarten%20Puppet%20Theater%202013%20\(Revised/Full%20Version\)](http://www.schooltube.com/video/490dd2ce3ba44c0b9716/Anansi%20the%20Spider%20Kindergarten%20Puppet%20Theater%202013%20(Revised/Full%20Version))

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NK4P5SZ52qw>



**modern:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ovd8GTwKyyI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNrYgeQvyoE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wxcXbN5wls>

<https://www.kcet.org/shows/socal-connected/feathers-of-fire-spectacular-shadow-play>

### Stage/Screen

You will need:

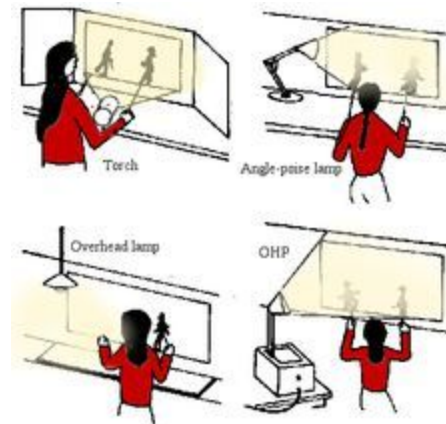
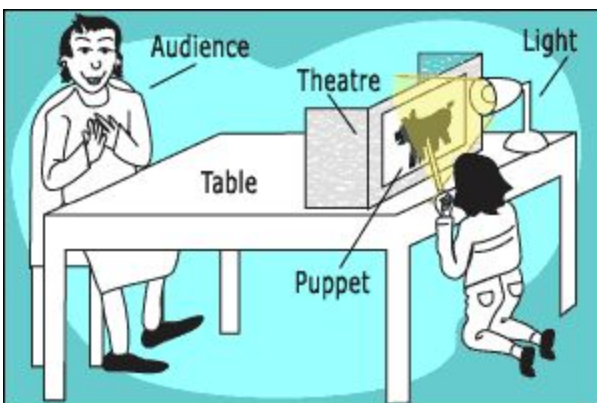
a cardboard box, scissors, tape, sheet of parchment paper & a light source (lamp, flashlight).

Cut the back off the box. Cut a rectangle out of the front of the box slightly smaller than your parchment paper.

Tapr the paper to the outside of the box. ( You may need to add a weight in the bottom of the box to prevent tipping as you animate your puppets.) Set up the box on a table with the parchment paper side closes to you and the open side to your audience. Place your light above and behind the screen. Be sure your head does not



cast a shadow obscuring your puppets.



Puppets may be a simple silhouette on a stick



Puppets may be jointed with a hole punch and brass fasteners. This will require multiple rods to manipulate the puppet's action.



Color can be added with cut outs and tissue paper (more fragile) or plastic sheets (more durable) secured with clear tape.



Interior cuts are usually made with a blade or an exacto knife for better accuracy.



Rods can be created by making a flap of masking tape on one end then securing the rod by the flap to the puppet with either another brass fastener or staples.

