

Nigeran Masquerade Mask



The Ekpo, Nigerian tribe Christmas Masquerade mask.



For the grass beard/ hair that the mask is mounted on, I decided to use raffia. I used 2 luau table skirts and cut them in half mounting them on a strip of fabric before cutting them. I then dyed them with RIT black dye.



For the upper portion of the mask, I decided to use a green L2 foam. I created the base that can sit on the head like hat with three strips, one the circumference of the head and two creating height in the crown. To create the main upper section I had figured out the basic shapes in a smaller version and then used oaktag cardstock to really finalize the patterns. Once the pattern was figured out I cut it all out of the same foam and adhered it all together with hot glue.



Once the base and the face were created, to adhere the two I ended up using large stitches using hmark thread and then glueing over the top. The buckram and foam adhere really well together on its own but the stitching was an extra support. After connected I worked on covering the top and blending the transition using faux fur that I then slicked it back with acrylic paint.



To create the face part of the mask I knew I wanted to do something that would make it safe for an actor on stage. I decided to use black buckram because it is see through as well as extremely light weight which is a concern for a mask of this size. To create this I had to build a matrix using layers of pink foam adhered together with spray adhesive. Then I carved out the facial features and covered the whole thing in foil before draping the buckram over it and using push pins to make sure the deep creases came through.

