

Queen Anne Pansy Poppet

by Christine LeFever



“Poppet” is an old term of endearment for a child or a doll and is immortalized in the nursery rhyme, *A Moppet, A Poppet, A Dainty Darling*, written by doll historian John Darcy Noble. This particular Queen Anne Pansy reflects several aspects of 18th-century dolls.

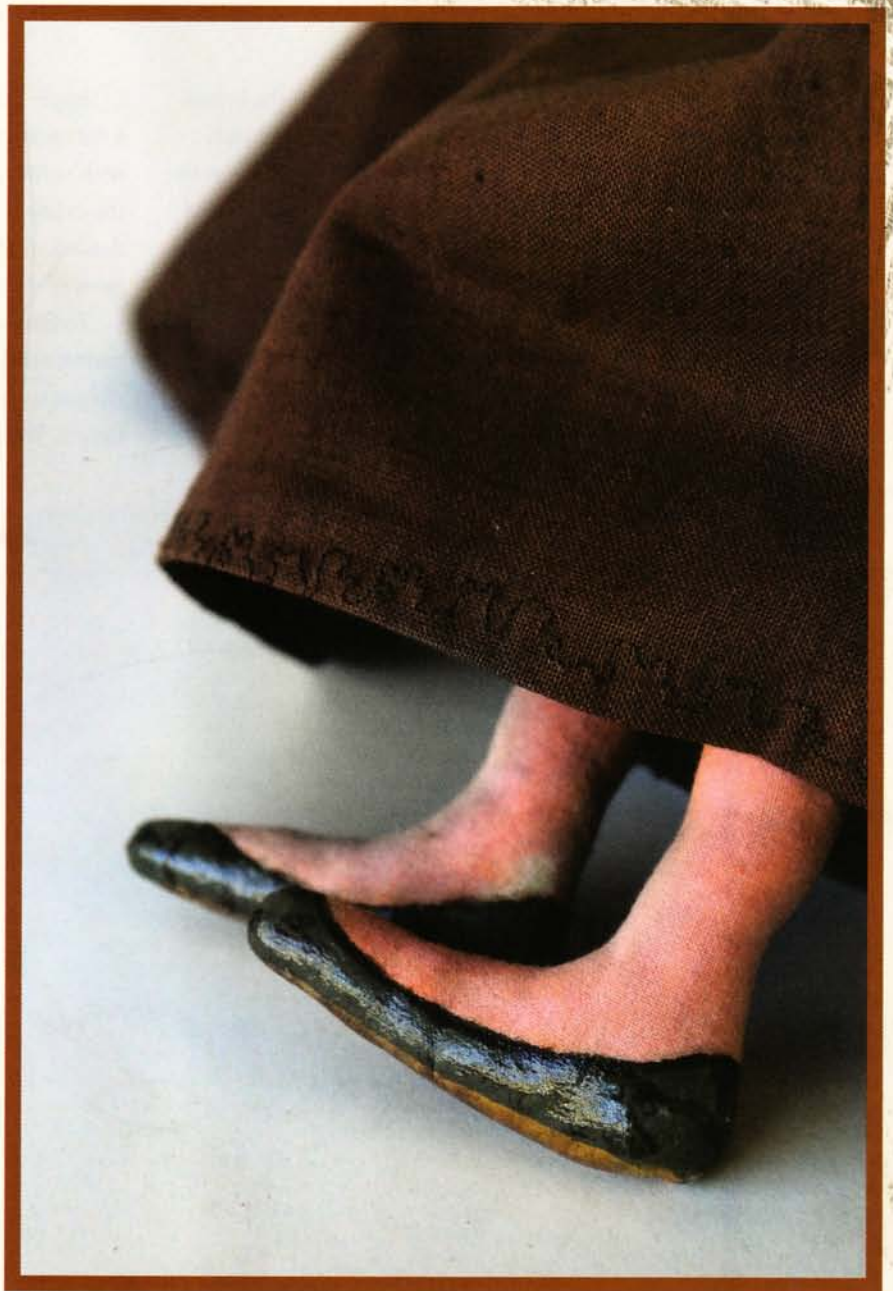
Most early dolls bore the image of a child or adult rather than an infant. “The cuddly toy and baby doll to be nursed and cosseted are conspicuous by their absence,” wrote John Darcy Noble.

Dolls were also playthings of adults as well as children. “If the children of that time were more adult than those of the same age today, their parents were paradoxically more childlike than most adults are today,” John Darcy Noble wrote. “Even the educated and cultured were amused by what we should now consider infantile diversions — crude practical jokes, simple toys like jumping jacks, and paper dolls. This is something I try to remember when confronting what I assume to be a child’s toy from this period, for it might well have belonged to a married man or woman.”

Dolls that survive from the 18th century were usually made of wood. This Poppet is inspired by them, but uses cloth and paint for ease of creation.

Technique

To make the body, trace the pattern onto a double layer of muslin. Stitch, trim, and turn the body. Stitch the arms, stuff to the elbow area of each arm, and stitch across each arm to hold the stuffing in place. Stuff the body, sew openings closed, and sew the arms to the body. Sew the legs and stitch to the body. Use



thread to gently sculpt a little protruding nose. To finish without a knot, stick the needle down beneath the nose and clip it where it comes out.

To age the doll, mix a thin wash of one part burnt sienna, one part yellow ochre, and two parts raw sienna acrylic paint with about one cup of water. Paint this onto the entire doll body. Let dry, then iron the head and body.

Paint the torso and head with flesh-toned paint. When thoroughly dry, smooth the paint with fine-grit sandpaper. Apply a second coat and sand again.

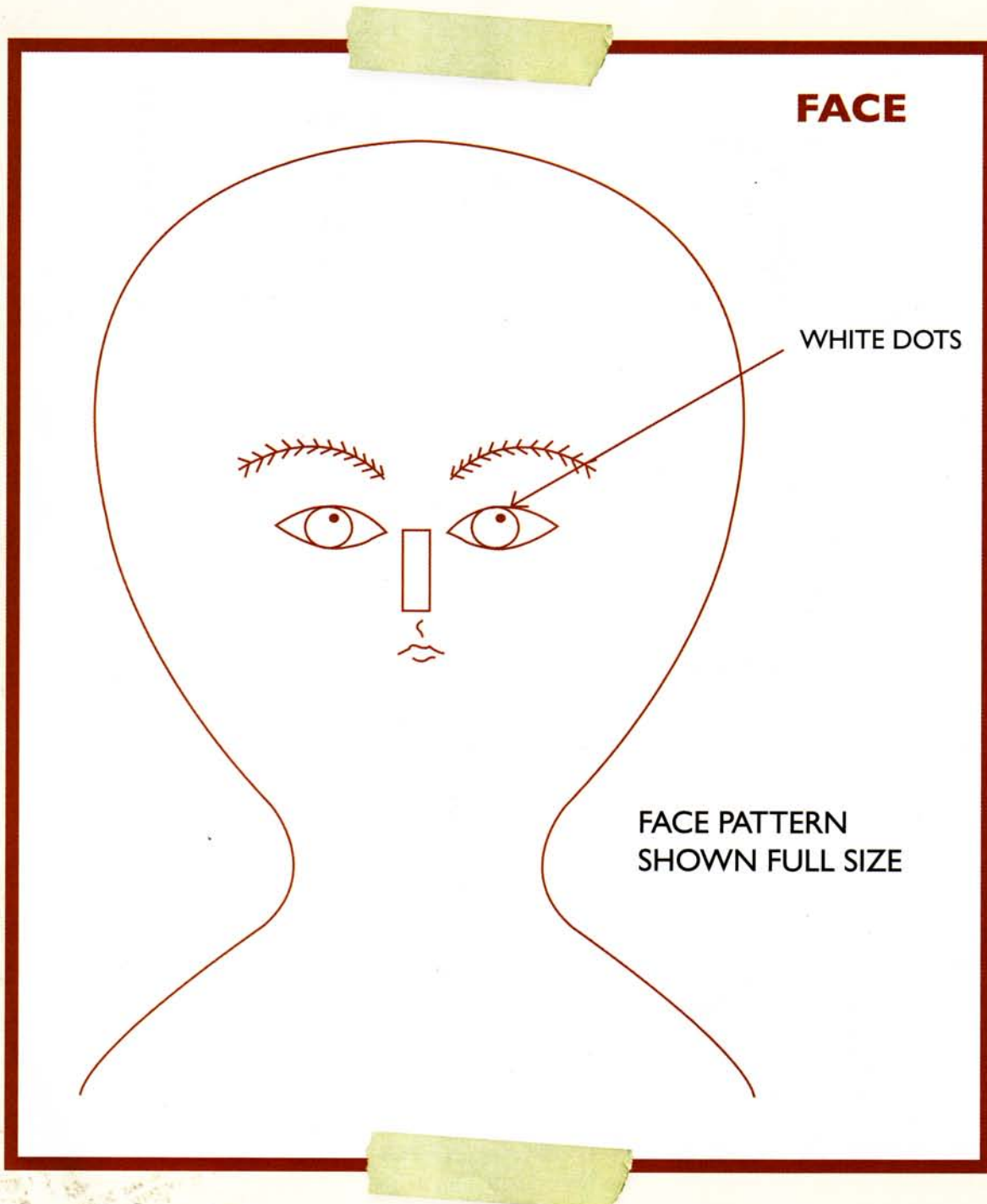
To create the face, trace the pattern onto tracing paper, cut it out (including the little nose area), and place it on the doll. Tape the pattern in place and slip a piece of black graphite paper, graphite side down, under the pattern. Carefully trace the face except for the eyelashes. Remove the pattern and graphite paper. Retrace the lines with a brown Pigma pen.

Using a liner brush, paint the eyes and mouth. Use the brown Pigma pen to add the eyebrows and eyelashes. Dip a dry brush into rouge paint, remove excess on a paper towel, and paint on the cheeks. Add a dot of black paint for a beauty mark where desired. Use a Copic marker to color in the lower legs, or use a wash of paint. With a pencil, draw on the shoes and paint with color of choice, and embellish if desired.

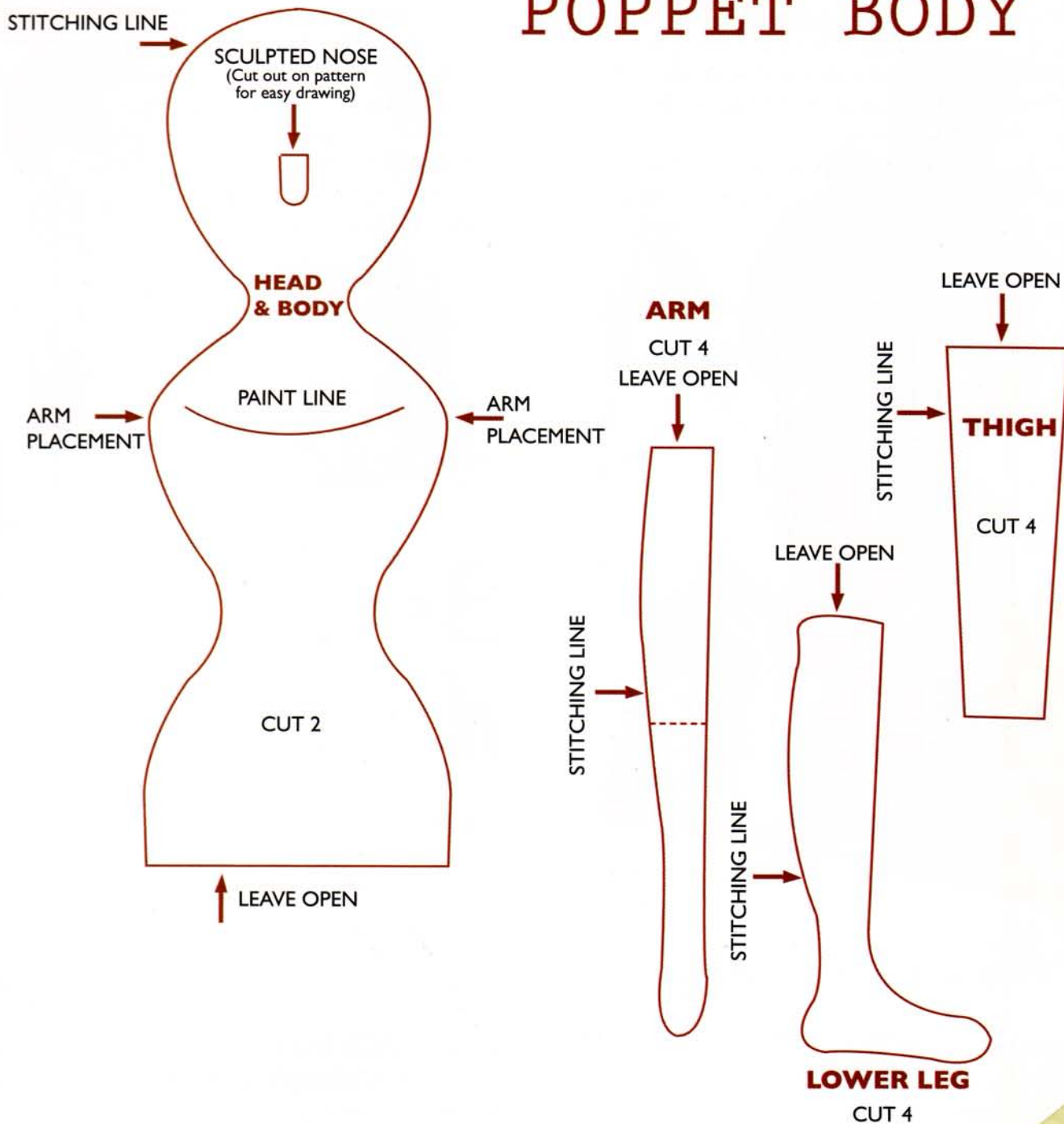
To create her bodice, start by painting a pansy, then draw designs with Copic markers. Create a scalloped edge around the neck of the dress.

Apply spray varnish to the painted areas. When dry, apply a two-part crackling medium. Let dry thoroughly, then spray with varnish again. Apply Distress Ink with a sponge and remove the excess. Let dry. You can apply a final coat of spray varnish if desired. Add a tiny drop of clear nail polish to the white and black parts of the eyes to give them a glass-like appearance.

To create the hair, apply glue over the head and add yarn or roving until it looks filled in. Sew the skirt and tie some pretty ribbon around the gathered waist and around her neck and secure tightly. Voilà! She's done. Enjoy!



POPPET BODY



About the Artist

Christine LeFever lives in Oregon City, Oregon where she is a maker of dolls in early styles. To view more of her work, visit christinelefever.com or view her blog christinelefever.blogspot.com.