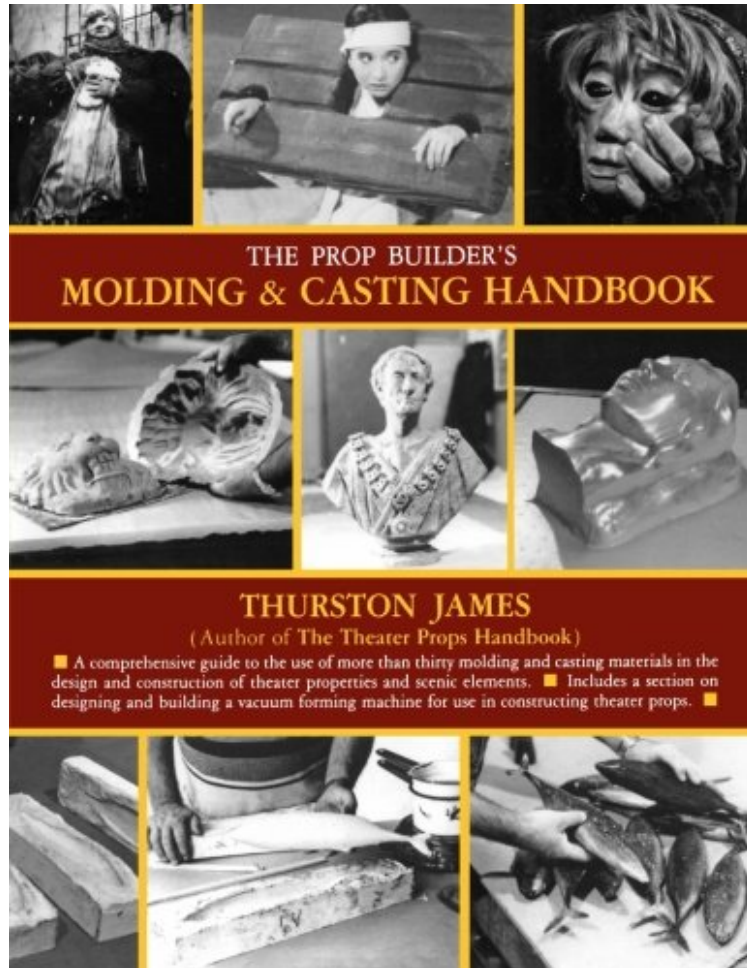


The Prop Builder's Molding Casting Handbook

Thurston James

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Thurston James : The Prop Builder's Molding Casting Handbook before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Prop Builder's Molding Casting Handbook:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Start HereBy Michael D. SweeneyThe main reason -- as unfair as it is -- I am not giving five stars is the age of the book. There are so many products being offered to the young artist today, with various inflated and contradictory claims, one wishes there was a book this calm and straightforward that could cut through the marketing gloss and get back to what the basic processes are, what the chemicals do, what will probably work and what to watch out for. This book is solid and good, but the materials it refers to are not so often found in their original form in the shopping mall crafts stores of today.Anyhow. Read this book. Whether you are about to pull a resin cast for the first time, or whether you (like me) got a basic familiarity back in college but have forgotten many of the details, this offers grounding in How Casting Works in a more-or-less step-by-step, from simple

to complex, way. Of the many things to salute Thurston James for, is the extremely practical viewpoint. Thurston is THEATER. If you haven't done theater, you may not understand. It is about letting go of "the usual way" and doing what gets it on stage by opening night, under budget, without anyone getting hurt and in a way that will hopefully stay in one piece until the show closes. Some books might artificially limit themselves, saying "here's how to cast in resin, here's resin." Thurston says "Here's resin and how to do it right. And here's some cheaper substitutes if that works better for you." If he was writing today he'd almost certainly say "And you can just skip all these steps and have it 3d printed -- but here's the downside to that, and here's resin for when that just plain works better." Right at the very start, he tells you it will be messy, you are going to be dealing with chemicals that could damage your health, and you WILL fail; sometimes a mold will break or a fresh batch of resin refuse to cure. It happens. You have to be prepared for the mess and for the occasional "learning experience." Which are words which should be at the front of EVERY "how to" book. What this book is not, is a step-by-step hold-you-by-the-hand. It does go into detail, and it does basically follow a complete cycle from original model to duplicate (over and over, with different methods) but it isn't a tutorial in book form. What it is, is nearly encyclopedic. Now, I learned theater crafts at a high school shop that believed in touching on everything. The first show of my first season was wing-and-border and we got to play with cut drops and roll drops. The next was a box set and we built standard and hard-cover TV flats. The next was sculptural and we carved blocks of styrofoam and covered them in glue and cheesecloth. Before we left that school we'd worked with hot melt, celastic, vacuiform products (we didn't have our own machine)... For decades after, I'd be working on a set or prop and I'd say "Hey, there's this material I used once in high school that might work here. Lemme see what I can dig up on it." Well, that is this book. Plaster molds. Dental alginate. Silicone RTV. Latex casting. Slipcasting. Fiberglass, celastic and paper-mache. Paraffin, sugar glass, expanding foam, and Durham's Rock Hard. And vacuumforming! If you've read through it, then you will be -- despite the age of the book -- prepared to go into your local store and actually make sense of the packaged casting and molding products being offered there. And you will be much better prepared to actually use them.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The BEST prop builder's guide on the market By Reasonable Reviewer This is the best guide to casting that I have ever read. Mr. James is a master of producing props for film and theater, and he brings his many years of experience and superb teaching skills to this book. The book covers all the major casting techniques, and all but one of the methods described can be used by amateurs as well as professionals. This book is solid gold for those involved with props whether you are a gamer, a theater person, or a film set maker! I highly recommend this book!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. so cool because By Lionheart Glassworks This book is so cool because it shows you how to use materials from the hardware store. The pictures are a little dark but the information is priceless. I'll bet you take your time and figure out what is in the pictures. I'm very happy I ordered this book. It's one of my top books in my art studio. I really recommend it if you are trying to reproduce something in a small studio or at home.

The Prop Builder's Molding Casting Handbook This is the first book to contain, in one comprehensive volume, every molding and casting procedure of use to the theater props builder (no matter what his or her level or proficiency). The author demonstrates the techniques involved in using more than thirty different materials ranging from papier-mache to breakaway glass. While the use of some materials plaster and polyester resins, for example is covered to some extent in other publications, information on the selection and use of rubber materials (latex, neoprene, silicone, and the urethanes) and the procedure for making breakaway windows and bottles is available only in The Prop Builder's Molding Casting Handbook. Written in an easy, conversational style, the book will be useful to anyone involved with theater properties, puppetry, and costuming (as professionals or amateurs). It will also serve admirably the needs of students taking classes in those subjects. Completing the book is a special section on designing and building a vacuum forming machine suitable for use in constructing theater props. More than 450 photographs illustrate the step-by-step procedures explained throughout the entire text.

From Library Journal The sequel to James's The Theater Props Handbook, this is the second book in the author's crafts trilogy. Properties master of the UCLA theater department, James provides concise, step-by-step instructions on molding and casting procedures using some 30 different materials from papier mache to the new rubber materials. Some 450 illustrations enhance the text. LJ's reviewer called the previous volume "a marked improvement" over earlier efforts on the topic and an "extremely clear, comprehensive manual" for the professional and novice (LJ 3/15/88). Be on the lookout for a third book on mask-making in the fall of 1990. -Francine Fialkoff, "Library Journal" Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc.