

May

An Elegant 18th Century Gentleman

By Raquel Victoria Hicks, TCDM



Raquel Hicks was inspired by her love of fashion history to create May as an 18th century gentleman. Raquel painted the composition body with acrylic paint matched to the overall wash on the head.

An Elegant 18th Century Gentleman

Because my interest in historical costuming extends to modern dolls, I was inspired to create May as a gentleman in the elegant clothing of the 18th century. It should be noted that up until the 18th century it was often the men who dressed more flamboyantly than women. Their wardrobes were filled with laces, bows, and elaborate shoes. George Washington, America's first president, appeared at his inaugural ceremony wearing a brocade jacket, lace shirt, silver adornments and shoes with diamond buckles.

This gentleman I created from my imagination may have engaged in the textile business, which encompassed more than 50% of the occupations in the era. He is wealthy, as evidenced by his costume of brocade and silk and his powdered wig with horizontal curls kept in place with small wires. The epitome of dandyism!

The traditional fine cotton knit undergarment is styled with a back flap and buttons in front. Linen drawers were also worn during this period. The shirt is ivory silk satin with Chantilly lace at the wrist. The silk cravat around his neck is tied in a bow at the front and has a lace jabot.

My gentleman is also wearing a type of three-piece suit comprised of sleeveless waistcoat (vest), coat and breeches made from three different fabrics, a style considered the height of fashion during the period. A suit made in matching fabrics was referred to as a "suit in ditto."

The buff colored taffeta coat, which is a bit shorter in front than in the back, has silk-covered buttons. The traditional brown taffeta knee-high breeches are also closed on each side with fabric-covered buttons. During the period buttons were also made of precious or semi-precious stones such as malachite, onyx, carnelian or agate.

The brown silk brocade waistcoat is embellished with gold stitching and small crystals. In this period waistcoats, the most elaborate article of men's clothing, would have been embroidered, beaded, tasseled or laced. The stockings are silk knit and the brown brocade shoes have small heels.

It is rather fascinating to learn that, just as women suffered through uncomfortable corsets and hoops, men have had their own fashion pains-



The waistcoat (vest), coat and breeches comprise a type of three-piece suit typical of the 18th century. As was quite stylish during that period, each piece of the suit is made of a different type or pattern of silk fabric.

-cravats and shirt collars up around their necks, binding corsets, high heels and powdered wigs. Early wigs were pink or white and styled with cascading curls; later wigs were white and styled closer to the head. Although my doll's wig is made of mohair, 18th century gentlemen preferred wigs of human, horse, goat and yak hair, with human hair wigs the more expensive. In 1795, a tax on hair powder was imposed, ultimately ending the fashion of wig powdering.

Other articles of 18th century attire were tricorne or bicorne hats, muffs, great coats, cloaks, capes, gloves, gaiters, silk stockings, garter sashes, walking sticks, watch fobs and decorative medals.

Casting, Cleaning and Firing

Cast May in Lady White porcelain slip. Do not cut out the eyes if you wish to paint them. Remove imperfections with a small, damp KwikClean Brush. Don't forget to incise your initials and year on the back of the neck. Soft fire to cone 019.

Clean the head following the Dust Free Cleaning technique using a Featherknife, Comfy Scrub, GreenCleen Brushes and Multipurpose Blenders. Fire head to cone 05. Re-examine the head. This is your last chance to check for any tiny pinholes, imperfections, or scratches. The soft-fired ware is so hard at this stage that you can do your final smoothing with the rough side of the Comfy Scrub. Rinse head and place it upside down on fine layer of Firing Sand. Bisque fire. After firing witness cone 5 should be touching the shelf, witness cone 6 should be bent to a 10 or 11 o'clock position and witness cone 7 should not be bent at all.

Sand head with a #220 Grit Scrubber in preparation for china painting.

Upper class gentlemen of the period wore curled and powdered wigs such as this one created by Raquel using white/undyed Mohair Locks.



China Painting

I usually paint the eyes completely before painting the other features and I apply the overall wash near the end because this allows me to fire the eyes in many layers without worrying about the overall wash getting too glossy. I am listing the painting steps in the order I prefer, but ultimately it is your choice as to the order in which you paint the features on your own doll. All china paint firings are to witness cone 018.

Iris

I painted May with side glancing eyes and was pleased with the result. Mix equal parts Chestnut Brown, Eyebrow #4 (Dark Brown), and Golden Brown with Line Medium to a fairly thick consistency. Use a Medium Area Brush to apply a light coat of paint in a perfect circle. Take into account that a small portion of the circle goes under the upper eyelid and possibly a little bit under the lower eyelid as well. Remove the paint in the lower third of the iris with a Mini Contour Brush. Continue building the layers of color in least three more firings, always shading the paint upward with a Mini Angular Shader or Petite Shader so that the top portion of the iris is darkest because it is in shadow. The lower one third should remain light. Use a Mini Detail Brush or Eyelash Liner #1 to outline the iris each firing with some of the brown paint that has been darkened with a few grains of Satin Black. This outline should be thin and crisp. The iris can be fired as many times as necessary to achieve the color and depth you want.

Pupil

Use a Mini Lip Brush and Satin Black to paint a perfect circle in the middle of the iris. Make sure the diameter of the pupil is one third of the diameter of the iris. Hold the head away from you and examine the eyes from a

Raquel painted May using the Dimensional Doll Painting technique. Paint is applied in multiple layers to create shading and dimension that give the doll a lifelike appearance. The warm brown overall wash was applied in three layers. Refer to painting schedule for detailed steps.



distance to determine whether they are in focus. Holding the head up to a small mirror is also useful in determining whether the irises and pupils are even in shape and placement.

Tear Ducts, Lower Eyelid Ridge

Mix Mulberry Kiss with Line Medium. Apply paint in the tear ducts and across the lower eyelid ridge with a Mini Lip Definer. Paint should be very light.

Sclera

Mix 2 parts Slate Blue and 1 part Pink Fawn Shadow with Area Medium. Use a Mini Lip Definer to apply color just underneath the upper eyelid to represent shadow. Blend and soften paint with a Petite Shader.

Highlights

Mix Whipped Cream with Line Medium. Use a Double Ball Stylus to apply a dot of color in the 10 o'clock position where the pupil and iris meet.

Cheeks

At this point I paint the cheeks before proceeding to the overall wash and contour shading. Mix Mulberry Kiss with Area Medium to a thick consistency until all grains of paint are well blended. Use a Super Doll Sponge to apply some Area Medium on the cheek area. Use the clean side of the sponge to apply paint on the center of the cheek. Pounce and blend the color outward with a Small Complexion brush, blending the edges well with another clean and dry Complexion Brush. Lightly over blend the blush with a Large China Mop. For beautiful cheeks avoid overworking the color. Since the wash has not been applied yet, the cheeks will appear darker at this stage than they will be after applying the wash.

Overall Wash

I applied the overall wash in three layers in separate firings. Since we started with white porcelain I applied a base pink layer using equal parts Bisq-Tone #1, Creamy Rose, and Bisq-Tone #3, Apple Blossom. For a tan or light mulatto complexion I applied the second and third layers using 2 parts Miraja Glow and 1 part Cappuccino Glow mixed with few grains of Matting Agent. The Matting Agent will help reduce glossiness. Mix the washes with Area Medium and apply the paint all over the entire head with a Super Doll Sponge. Blend the paint smooth with a Large Complexion Brush and over blend with a Paint Polisher. Use a damp Clean Up Brush to remove paint from the sclera and the brown color from the lips.

Eyelashes

Paint the eyelashes in layers, starting with the upper and lower lash lines. Mix Pink Fawn Shadow with Line Medium. Use an Eyelash Liner #1 to apply a line of paint on the sclera directly underneath the upper eyelid. The line should taper narrower at each end. Paint a very thin lower lash line just below the lower eyelid ridge. The upper lash line should be darker than the lower one, so you might need to apply a second layer in another firing.

Mix equal parts Espresso and Satin Black with Line Medium. Use an Eyelash Liner #1 to paint natural looking eyelash strokes of varying length, spacing and slant in several firings. As a final step apply a light coat of shading across the lower eyelashes using Opulent Brown.

Eyebrows

The eyebrows are also painted in layers, with the shadow brow the first layer. Mix equal parts Espresso with Satin Black with Line Medium to a creamy consistency. Use a Medium Area Brush to paint a light shadow brow on the brow bone. Sweep a Small Contour Brush over the painted area to soften the edges. Use the eyelash mixture and an Eyebrow Liner #2 to paint light, natural eyebrow strokes in subsequent firings. As an option you can apply the individual eyebrow strokes using different colors for a very lifelike appearance.

Contour Shading and Eye Shadow

Contour Shade the face in layers using various tones of brown--Opulent Brown, French Chocolate Shade and Sheer Cinnamon--mixed with Area Medium. Use equal parts Opulent Brown and Sheer Cinnamon for the eye shadow. Apply the shading color in and around the crevices around of the nose, eyes, mouth and ears with a Medium Area Brush. Blend color with a Small or Mini Stippler and over blend with a Small or Mini Contour Brush. It is better to build up the color in light layers.

Lips

Mix Mulberry Kiss with Line Medium. Paint a light coat of color over the entire lip area in the first firing. Use an Ultimate Shader/2 to remove some color from the more prominent areas of the lips. Blend the edges with a Small Contour Brush. Shade the lips in layers in subsequent firings, accentuating the darker areas. A little shading of Mulberry Kiss can also be applied in the upper nostril on top of the brown shading.

Preparing the Composition Body

I decided to use the MB140S composition body instead of the ALB9873 porcelain body for my doll. The composition body has the same beautiful shape as the porcelain body, but is much lighter in weight.

Before attaching the head you must paint the body to match the color of the doll's complexion. I took the head to a local paint store to have it matched with some acrylic paint. Then I took the body apart and sprayed the pieces with a paint sprayer, finishing with a clear sealer coat.

To make things easier for you, Seeley's has a line Body Stains that match the various colors of porcelain slip and can be blended for custom colors. A sealer is already mixed with the paint.

All molds, composition bodies, china paints and media, brushes, mohair, worksheets and tools available from Seeley's.



During the 18th century gentlemen's attire was almost as elaborate as that of ladies. Note the lace and covered buttons.

Materials and Credit

Molds: **MAY** May head mold
ALB9873 Body mold set
Composition Body: **MB140S**
Doll Size: 18"(46cm)
Head Circ.: 10" (25cm)
Eye Size: 16mm for optional glass eyes
Patterns:

CP931 Angel's dress and underwear
CP2301 Dress
CP2302 Winter suit
P029 Costume for Capri

Worksheets:

WSDP5 Doll Project Worksheet for
glass eyed version
GIM1 General Instructions,
Guidelines for Dimensional Doll Painting
GIM2 General Instructions,
Dimensional Doll Painting (DDP) Eyes

Porcelain Slip: **PS-17** Lady White

Mohair Locks: **MOWIGETTE1** White/undyed

China Paints and Media

Chestnut Brown
Golden Brown
Eyebrow #4, Dark Brown
Bisq-Tone #1, Creamy Rose
Bisq-Tone #3, Apple Blossom
Ethnic Collection China Paint Kit
Cappucino Glow
Miraja Glow
Sheer Cinnamon
French Chocolate Shade
Espresso
Mulberry Kiss
Satin Black
Dusky Lilac

Whipped Cream
Slate Blue
Pink Fawn Shadow
Matting Agent
Line Medium
Area Medium

Brushes and Supplies

Medium Area Brush
Ultimate Shader/2
Mini Angular Shader
Mini Lip Definer
Petite Shader
Small and Mini Contour Brushes
Eyelash Liner #1
Eyebrow Liner #2

Clean Up Brush
Large and Small Complexion Brushes
Large China Mop
Paint Polisher
Small and Mini Stipplers
KwikClean Brush Kit
GreenClean Brush Kit
Multipurpose Blender Kit
Super Doll Sponges
Comfy Scrub
Featherknife
#220 Grit Scrubber
Double Ball Stylus
Firing Sand

For Further Study of 18th Century Costumes:

Sirkis, Susan, *The Wish Booklet*, Men's Fash-
ions1776-1850, 1977.
Davenport, Millia, *The Book of Costume; Vol. II*, p.
741, Crown Publishers, 1948.
McClellan, Elizabeth, *History of American Costume*,
pp. 219-256, Tudor Publishing, 1937.

Raquel Hicks is a D.A.G. Triple Crown of Dollmaking and a Doctor of Dollmaking whose research thesis was entitled "Clothing Worn by Empress Elisabeth of Austria (1837-1898)." Her dolls have won numerous rosettes and top awards in D.A.G. competition, including Eva's Choice Award and a Magge for the doll featured here. Raquel, who recently retired as a staff pediatrician with the U. S. Army, lives with her husband in Washington State. If you have questions about this project you may contact Raquel at dollmakermd@comcast.net.



The shoes are made of the same brocade as the waistcoat.