

SCULPTURE AND PAPIER-MACHE CRAFTS

STATUETTE CRAFTS

Statuette crafts are made by moulding a particular material into a cast and then preparing in a variety of ways, including baking, glazing and smoking. The special cast is made based on the traditions of wood, stone and bone engraving crafts. Through this craft, various objects can be made, starting from small decorations to larger religious items. The creation of Buddhist deity figures is an excellent example of this kind of craft.





PAPIER-MÂCHÉ

Papier-mâché is created by pasting layers of light paper on a special wooden or earth cast. *Tsaasan shuumal* or papier-mâché is made with the *ingemel* technique, which is the making of reliefs on objects. *Ingemel* or relief has the following four types:

- a) *khotgor ingemel* (flute relief),
- b) *tövgör ingemel* (semi-fillet relief),
- c) *tovgor ingemel* (fillet relief) and
- d) *büten tovoimol* (sculpture-like relief).



PAPIER-MÂCHÉ WITH CORAL

Shüren shuumal is created by putting a cover of big and small pieces of corals on the papier-mâché. Making of *tsam* religious dance mask demonstrates the unique artistic talent and skills of Mongolian artisans. The *Tsam* mask is made using papier-mâché by casting layers of paper and textile in clay model. After drying the paper mask, the meticulous work to polish and finalize the mask begins, after which the mask is painted and decorated. The mask size is about two times larger than the human head size, and when it is worn, the dancer's eyes peer out of the mouth of the mask. Traditionally, Mongolians use expensive and high-quality materials to make *tsam* dance costumes and accessories. As a result, they demonstrate the wonderfulness and exclusiveness of the design and skill of their artisans. One of the most famous examples of *shüren shuumal* is the mask of the Buddhist deity *Ulaan sakhius* (*Begz* or *Jamsran*), made by *Puntsag-Osor*, which was created by the meticulous inlay of 7,881 various-sized pieces of coral, placed to reflect the lines in the human face. This is a unique and exceptional example of the *tsam* art has been placed on the Mongolian List of outstanding and exceptional heritage arts. Other examples of unique masks of Buddhist deities include a lion-headed *Sendem* and an ox-headed *Damdin Chojjoo*, created by prominent sculptor *Danzan* and now exhibited in the *Zanabazar Museum of Fine Art*.

