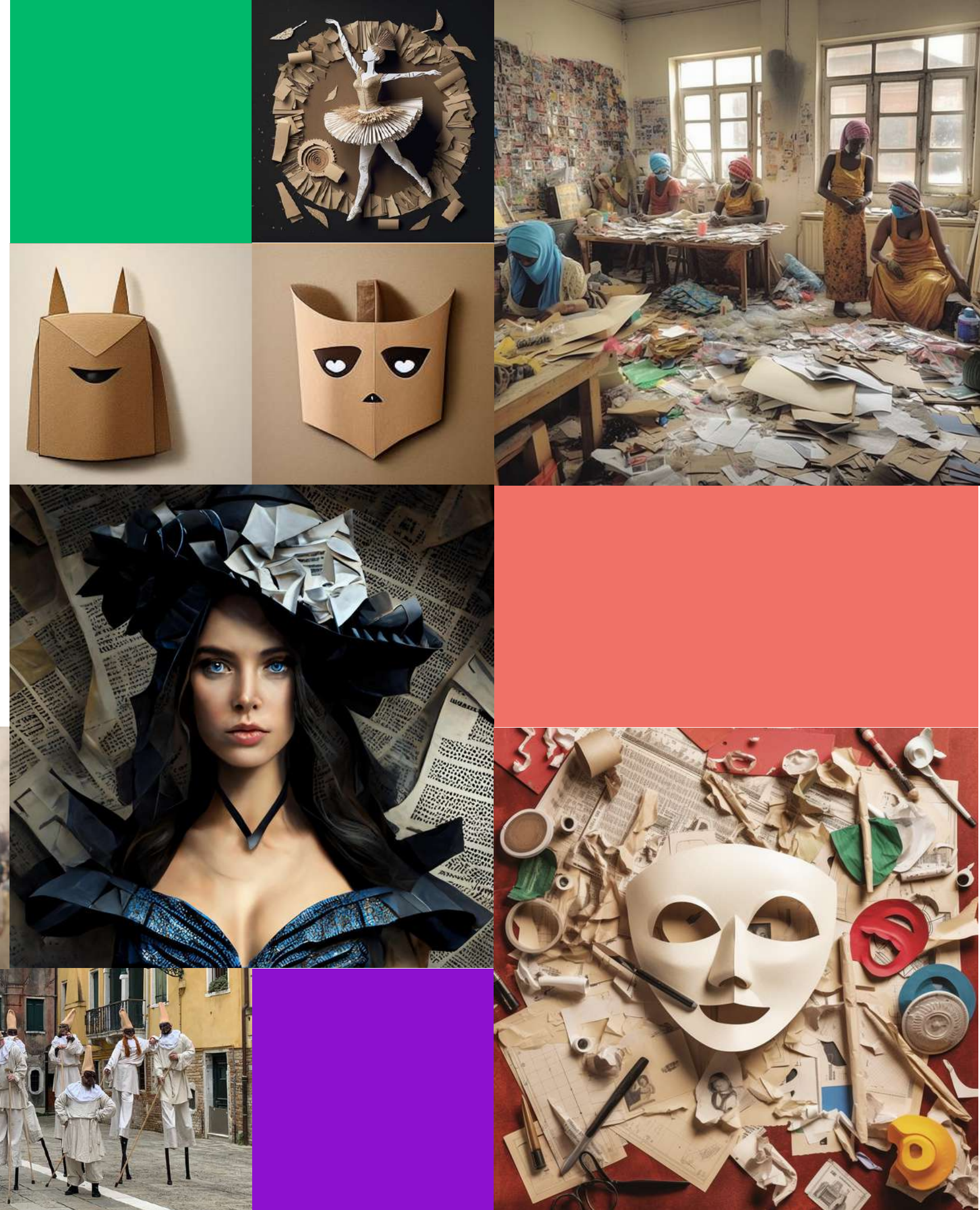


ART NO STOP: THE SOCIAL WORLD AT THE SERVICE OF ART
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COSTUME DESIGN MANUAL

CHAPTER 5: COSTUME DESIGN



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00. INTRODUCTION

Costumes: It depends on what you make of them

Welcome to the costume making idea book for theatre costumes made of paper and cardboard.

Costumes and masks play an important role in theatre as they visualise the character and story and give the audience an idea of who the characters are and what the themes represent. We give the tips and ideas. Just try it out!



This costume making guide covers paper and cardboard costumes. Theatre costumes have a long history dating back to ancient Greece.

In Greek tragedy and comedy, actors wore simple costumes that highlighted their character and acting. They wore masks and robes that symbolised their social position and mood.

The Middle Ages then saw the development of theatre forms such as the English Mystery Play and the French Mystery Play, in which actors portrayed religious stories. Costumes became more complex and detailed to represent the divine characters.



During the Renaissance and Baroque periods in Europe, costumes became an important part of the spectacle in the theatre.

Actors wore elaborate and artistic costumes with sumptuous fabrics, jewellery and accessories. These costumes were often so heavy that they had to be supported by costume bearers.

A costume can be just a box with two holes or it can be more complicated like the example made of folded paper.



A costume can be just a box with two holes or it can be more complicated like the example of folded paper. Nowadays, there are no clear rules for costumes in theatre. Costumes can be minimalist or detailed and actors and directors are often creative in the way they use costumes to tell the story.

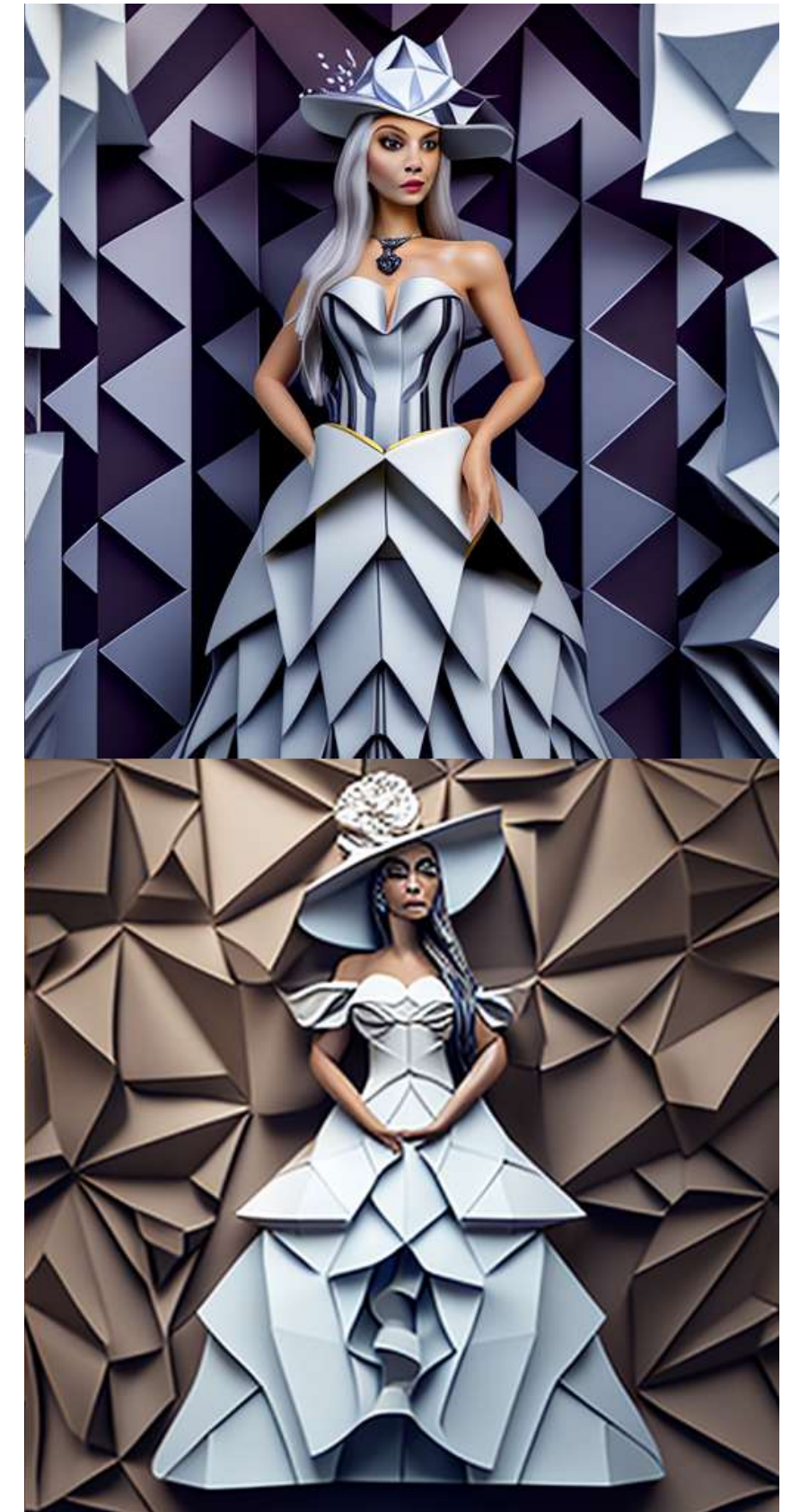
In theatre, the motto "less is more" often applies, as the aim is to tell a story with simple means.



Paper and cardboard can be used to do just that. These materials are cheap and easy to get hold of, and you can create amazing things with them.

In this guide we will focus on paper and cardboard costumes. We will show you what you can do with newsprint and cardboard packaging to create stunning theatre costumes.

We will show you step by step how to create different designs so that you end up with a costume that you can bring to life!



It all depends on
what you make.



Making costumes out of paper and cardboard is an inexpensive and creative way to create theatre costumes. Here are some basic steps and tools you will need to make your own paper costumes:

Tools:

- Newsprint or packing cardboard
- Scissors
- Adhesive tape
- Glue or adhesive
- Paintbrush
- Cloth ribbon or rubber bands
- Hole punch



First writings

- - Start designing the costume. Think about what you want your costume to look like and what materials you have.
- what materials you have. Draw a sketch or make a pattern out of paper.
- - Cut the paper or cardboard into pieces according to the size and shape of the costume. Cut out individual parts, such as sleeves, trouser legs or tops, and stick them together with tape or glue.
- - To make the costume more stable, you can cut newspaper or packing cardboard into thin strips and stick them to the costume parts with glue. Place the strips in different directions to make the costume more stable. Be careful not to apply the paper too thickly as this can make the costume unnecessarily heavy.
- - When the costume is stable enough, you can paint it with colours. Let the paint dry completely before you do any more work on it.

**1. MAKE MORE OF
YOUR COSTUME**

Expand and try out

- Add more details, such as fabric ribbons or elastic bands to attach the costume or create a special shape. You can also punch holes with a hole punch and pull fabric ribbons through them to create a kind of lacing.
- When the costume is ready, put it on and adjust it to your needs. You can fasten it with more fabric ribbons or elastic bands if necessary to make sure it fits well.





With these basic steps and tools, you can make your own costumes out of paper and cardboard.

Let your. Give your ideas free rein and experiment with different materials and techniques.

Also learn from others what they are doing and work together.

Questions about costume design

- - **The goals: What do we want to show, what do we want to express?**
- - **The plot: What is my story and role about?**
- - **Role: What is my role in the story, how should we recognise it?**
- - **Theme: What is my story about?**
- - **Design: What is needed to make my role visible?**
- - **The characters: Who is the story about?**
- - **Conflict: Can I use the costume to show my the outside or inside world, or between two people or with myself?**
- - **Mask: Does a mask make sense? Am I me or a fictional character?**

Dressing a story.

- - Starting point: The idea and the story we want to tell.
- - The choice of theme.
- - Research and documentation:
- - Ideas: Characters, development, what do we need?



Taks

It's very simple!

Try making a mask like this!

You will learn a lot.

Of course it's not as easy as you think!

First cut the cardboard into shape, then the eyes and try it out!

Attach a rubber band at the back to hold it in place.



Every story and every performance is usually divided into three parts:

The introduction (beginning), the development (in the middle) and the conclusion (the end).

This is interesting in that once we have structured the story according to this scheme, we also consider with the order of the acts what meaning the costumes will have.

Should the costumes also change?



2. COSTUME DESIGN

Model making: task

The easiest way is to start with small figures.

Take some paper and build your costume or mask. This can be simple or very complicated.

See what you come up with, try it out and show it to others to see how they like it.



Colours:

It is important what colours you use. If you are only working with cardboard, it is often enough to use only one colour that matches the cardboard, for example red or black and white.

Colours are an important part of any art form and the choice of colours is also crucial when making costumes out of paper and cardboard. The right colours can bring the costume to life and enhance the atmosphere of the piece.

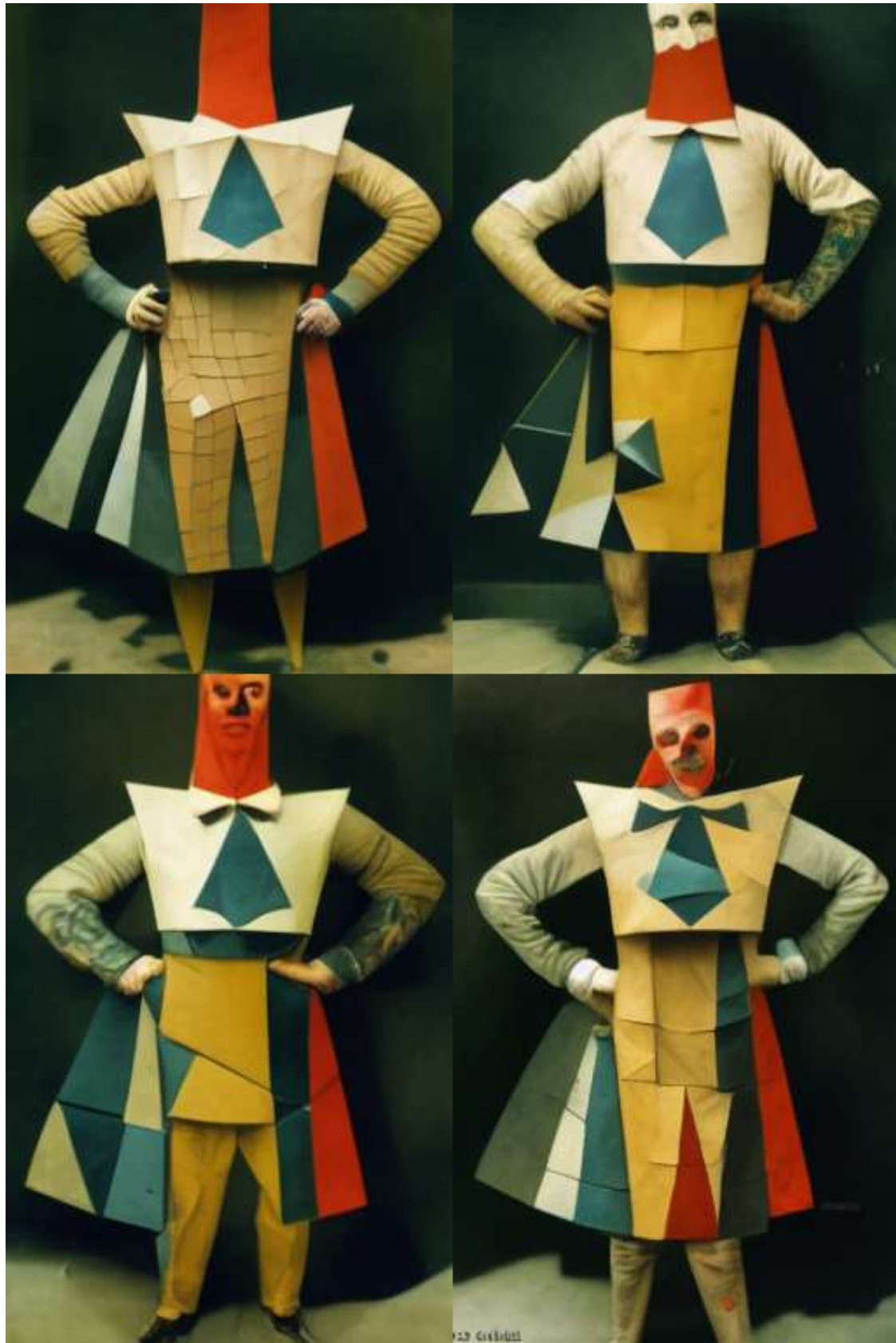
When working with paper and cardboard, there is already a predefined colour palette consisting mainly of brown tones. However, it is still possible to experiment with colours and achieve creative results.

An easy way to add colour is to paint the costume with a single colour that goes well with the brown tones of the cardboard. For example, a red costume on brown cardboard can look very striking and eye-catching. Alternatively, black or white can be used to create contrast and make the costume look simpler and more elegant.

Another way to add colour is to use colour accents and patterns on the costume. This can be done by adding coloured paper or by applying colour to certain areas of the costume.

For example, a hat can be decorated with coloured feathers or a sash with coloured ribbons.





It is important that colours are used judiciously to enhance the effect of the costume. For example, bright colours such as yellow and orange can evoke positive and lively feelings, while dark colours such as blue and purple are often associated with seriousness and tragedy.

A well-planned colour scheme can help support the message of the play and draw the audience deeper into the storyline. Overall, when working with paper and cardboard, it is important to
cardboard, it is also important to use colours consciously to create an appealing and effective costume.

Robot

Okay, let's move on. How do you like a robot? You can do a lot with it and it is easier to build with the angular shapes.

It can also be more complicated, like in the picture on the right.

Look at the patterns: easy to draw and it looks technical!



Weather

One of the most important things to consider is the weather conditions. Especially when it rains or snows, delicate materials like paper or cardboard can be damaged.

It is therefore important to use waterproof or water-repellent materials to ensure that the costume remains in good condition. Also, in strong sunlight, certain materials such as paper can quickly fade or disintegrate. Here it is advisable to use materials that are UV resistant or to protect the colours beforehand.



Hats

→ **Recommendation:** Hats made of cardboard are not only easy to make, but also offer endless possibilities for playing and dressing up.

Whether for a show, a play or just for improvisation - you can create a lot of play situations with hats made of cardboard.



3. TEAMWORK

Teamwork

An important tip for making costumes out of paper and cardboard is to work in a team.

Working together allows you to share ideas and skills and solve problems together.

You can also help and support each other when it comes to trying on or improving the costumes.

When you work as a team, you can also involve the audience. You can encourage them to make costumes themselves or help them to dress up in the costumes and take on the role of the characters.



This can help create a special atmosphere and interaction between actors and audience.

Working together as a team can also help to foster and expand creativity and imagination.

By working with others, you can learn to understand others' perspectives and look at ideas from different angles.

Take a look at the folding work on the left. To build something like this, you have to work well together!



Mode

In the fashion industry, paper patterns are often created to plan the exact measurements and shapes of a garment. These patterns serve as a template for the actual production of the garment and are often printed on paper or cardboard.

By accurately measuring and cutting out the paper pattern, designers and tailors can ensure that the final garment fits perfectly and has the desired style.



Materials:

A box is more than you think!

Cardboard boxes are a perfect example of how our imagination can be the key to creating props and other objects. By using our imagination, we can build wonderful props from simple materials like cardboard boxes and bring our stories to life.

The possibilities are endless if we use our imagination.



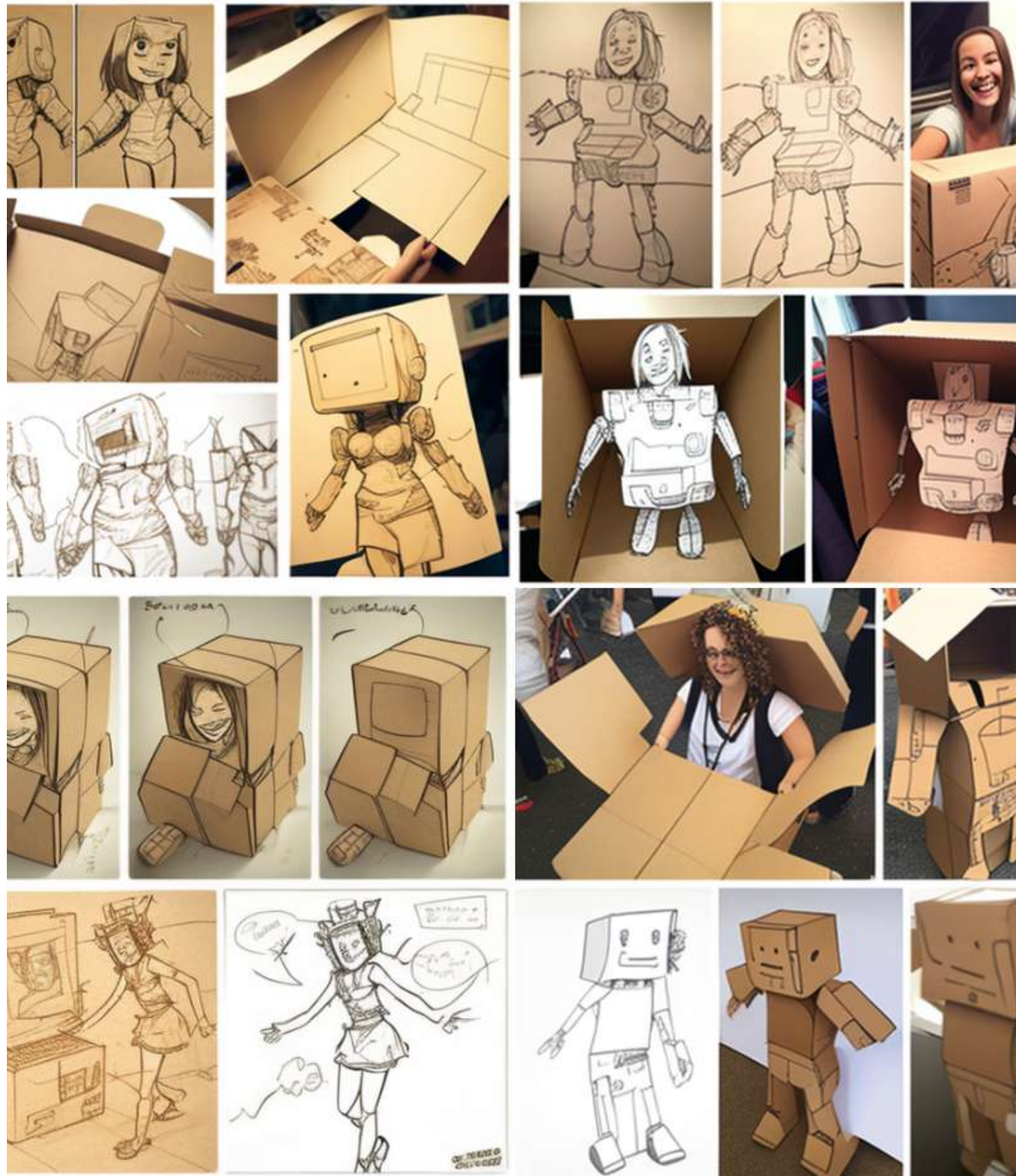
Objekte

→ **Recommendation:** Cardboard boxes and cartons can be used not only for making costumes but also for creating objects. With a little creativity and a few simple materials, you can turn a simple cardboard box into a house, a car or a boat.

For example, you can cut out windows, doors or wheels and glue them onto the cardboard.



4. SKETCHES



Sketches

Making sketches and designs is an important step in making costumes as they help to have a clear idea of the final design. Sketches can be used to visualise different options and ideas before committing to a particular design. A sketch can also serve as a useful reference to ensure that the final costume meets the desired requirements.

Life-size models

The task is to build a knight's armour out of cardboard boxes and test whether you can move with it. You will need several cardboard boxes, scissors, tape and paints to create your armour.

The first thing to do is to make a sketch of what you want your armour to look like. Then you can start cutting the boxes and tape them together. When you have finished your armour, you can try out how to move with it.



Show the costumes to others!

One idea would be to organise some kind of public event or workshop in the city centre, inviting people to make paper costumes.

You could use a public square or green space for this and provide tables, chairs and materials.



Organise a large table

→ **Recommendation:** Different themes could be given, such as superheroes, animals or historical costumes. It would also be possible to have a competition or exhibition with the best creations. The event could not only be a creative expression but also bring people together and create a sense of community.



Light and technology.



It is surprisingly easy to enliven cardboard objects with lighting effects. All you need is a small LED torch and some tape. Simply stick the torch in a suitable place inside the object and turn on the light.

The effect can be amazing, especially at night or in dark rooms. It's a great way to show off your creativity and make your artwork even more impressive. Perfect for a show on the street or for a private performance.

Movabel Objects

To build moving objects out of cardboard boxes, you first need a larger box to use as a base.

Then you can add smaller cardboard boxes or cardboard elements as steering wheels and other controls.

To make the object moveable, it is enough to simply walk. A particularly good effect!



→ **Recommendation:** Take a large cardboard box, they already offer an option to quickly and easily build a moving house.

You can also use an animal, for example a horse, and pretend that you are sitting in the saddle.

And the good thing is that you can drive without a licence!



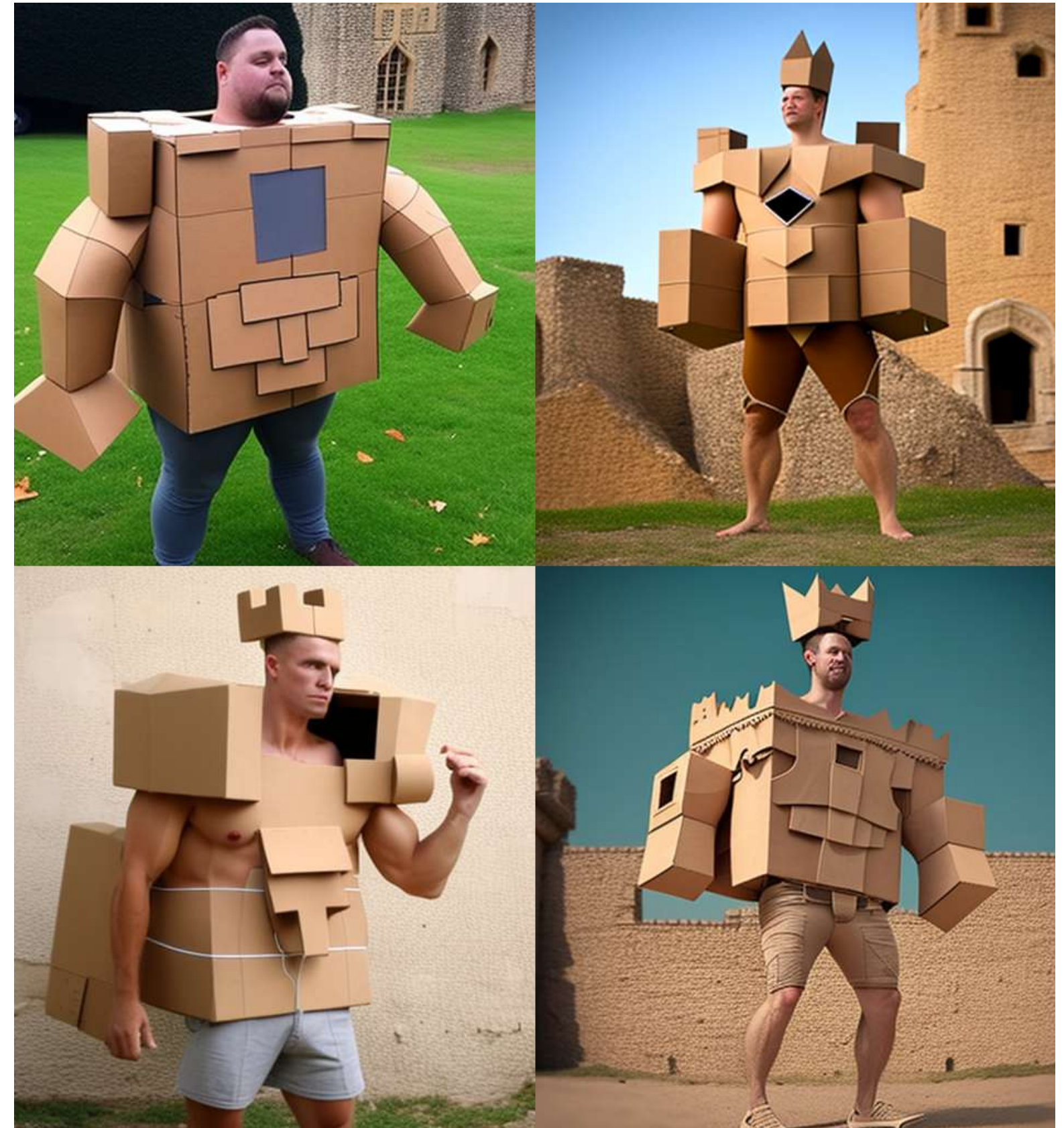
Test of courage

You have already seen the picture of the knight's costume. Now think about it further.

You could build a machine that moves.

There are many models.

Just start and think. Then add new elements step by step.



→ **Recommendation:**

Just start and gradually build better.

Look at the examples.

It looks more complicated. If you look closely - it's just boxes!





→ **Recommendation:**

Try combining different layers!

Create the layers with colours and your costume will become more stable and look much better.

You can connect the layers with string or cable ties.

Stage design

Have fun with paper. Then you can do more and build a city or objects that you will later produce on a large scale.

That's a lot of handicraft work.

But you learn what you can do!



Change

Each costume has a unique power that puts the wearer into a different role and allows them to transform into another person or being. It's amazing how a simple piece of paper or cardboard can spark the imagination and change a person's personality.

→ **Recommendation:**

Observe how you change when you have a mask on.



Change

Playing with costumes and disguises can be very liberating. Often we have a mask on at home without realising it. When we put ourselves in a different role, we can discover and try out new sides of ourselves. Especially outdoors or on the street, costumes can create a whole new effect and inspire the audience. It is a form of creative expression that allows us to live out our imagination and express our personality in unusual ways.



Just start!

Let's go! Get some boxes and all kinds of materials together and get started. The possibilities are endless. It's amazing what you can do with simple materials like paper and cardboard.

Let your creativity run wild and just have fun making something of your own.



You'll be surprised how quickly you can immerse yourself in another world and how much fun crafting and creating can be. So what are you waiting for? Get to work and let your imagination run wild!

Cardboard is a great material for creative projects, and the best part is that it can be found almost anywhere and is often free! Many shops regularly throw away cardboard boxes, which we can collect and use for our artwork and costumes.

It's a great way to get our creative juices flowing without having to spend a lot of money.



→ **Recommendation:**

It is a great idea to invite others and craft together around a table with cardboard and other materials. Especially at a public event like a city festival where many people can come by and get inspired.

Sharing ideas and techniques with each other can lead not only to new ideas, but also to new friendships and experiences.



5. THE MIRACLE OF TRANSFORMATION

Just one bag?

You can make costumes from large bags quickly and easily. For example, you can quickly make a mask out of a paper bag by cutting out the eyes, nose and mouth and then attaching them to a rubber band. A large bag can also be used as a cape or dress by simply cutting it open at the sides and cutting holes for the arms and head.

With a few extra embellishments like paint, feathers or paper flowers, you can make the costume even more individual.



6. STORYTELLING

The animal in you

To make a realistic animal mask out of cardboard, you can use different layers of cardboard or cardboard to model the animal's head. Sharp scissors or a cutter can be used to cut out the contours of the animal's head, and then the individual layers can be overlaid to create a spatial effect.

Adding details such as ears, muzzle and eyes can make the costume even more realistic. It takes a little more effort, but the result is definitely worth it!



Artful masks

Masks can be artfully designed - but they don't have to be for telling a story or playing a role. Even simple masks can have a great effect and make the character or being you want to portray clear.

Of course, you can also make elaborate masks like in the example. Ultimately, it's about using your imagination and creativity to achieve the desired effect



07. OUTLOOK

On the street

Once you've made masks and costumes, it's time to take them out on the street and play! This is the most exciting part, because now we can bring the characters we've created to life and put the stories we've made up into action. So what are you waiting for? Let's hit the streets and play!

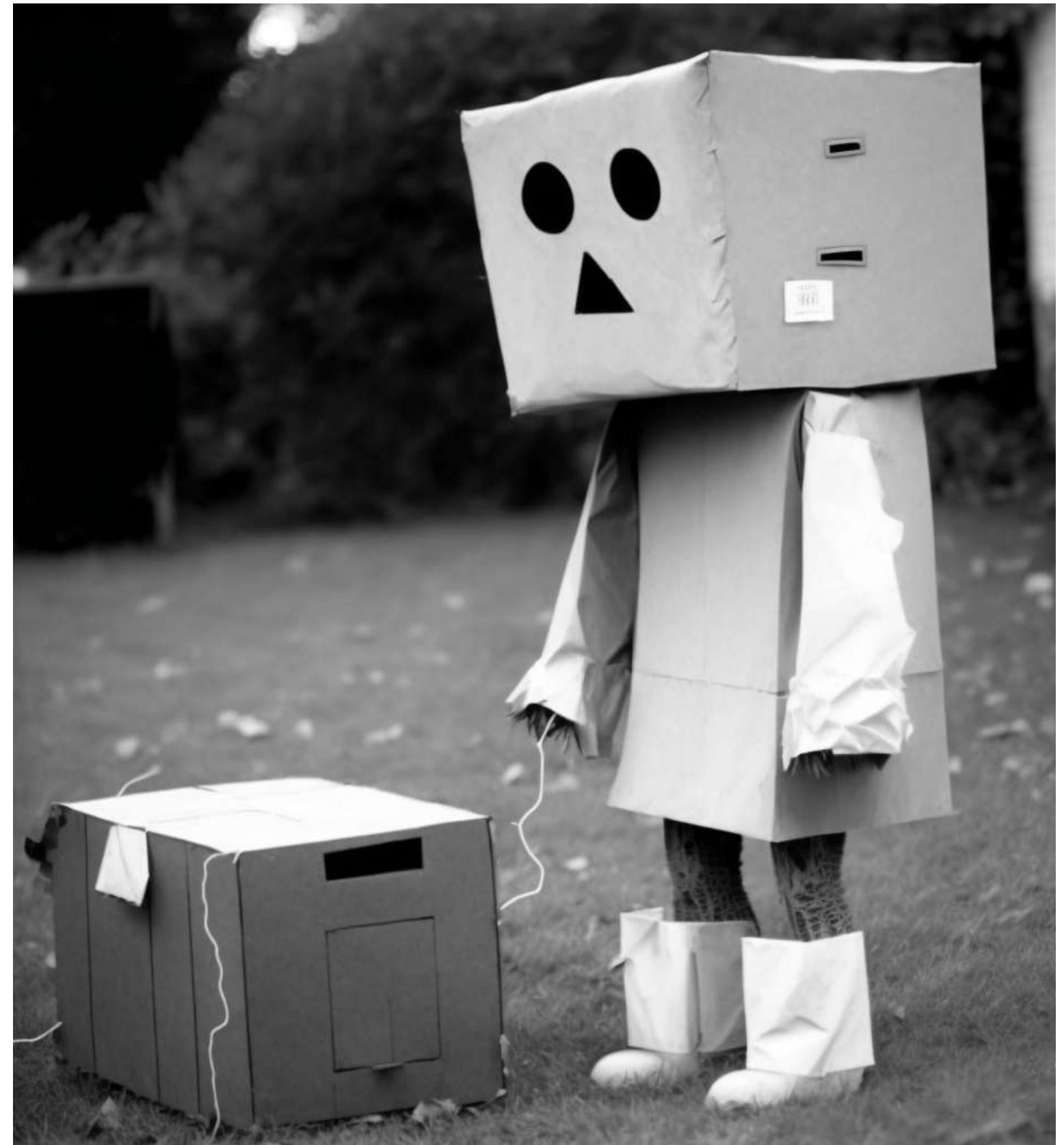


Photo Wolfgang Hauck: Die Stelzer 2023 in Burano, Venice

Back to the catch; less is more!

Playing with costumes is all about the story and the play itself. While an elaborate and expensive costume can impress, it's not essential to telling a good story or playing a great game.

That's why simple costumes that we make ourselves out of cardboard or paper are perfectly sufficient.

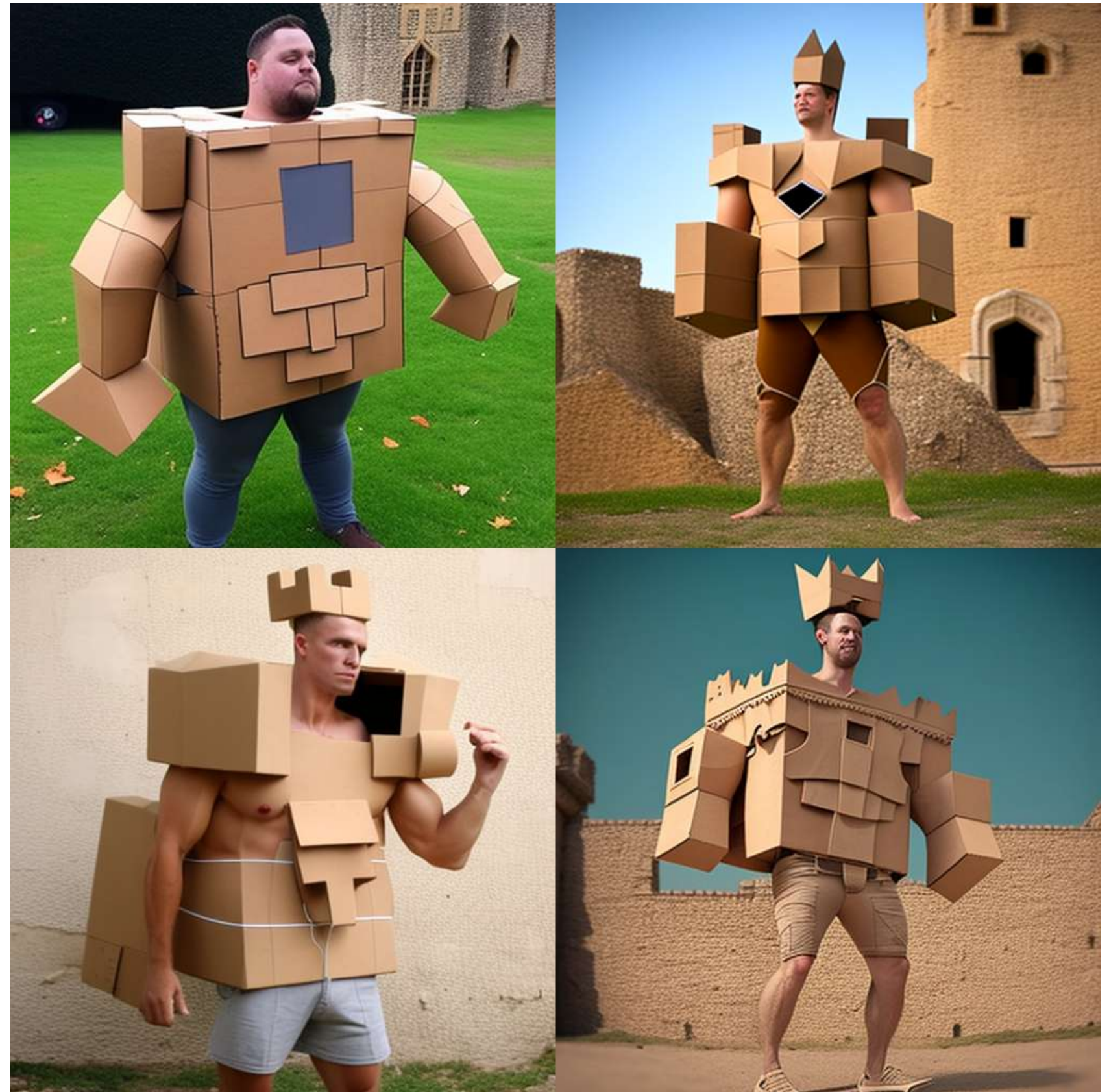


Goodbye!

We hope that our idea book has given you some ideas and a first guide to what can be done and how easy it is.

Just try it out! You can't go wrong. If it doesn't work the first time, no problem, try again. That's how I did it too!

All the best and have fun!
Wolfgang Hauck



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Video:

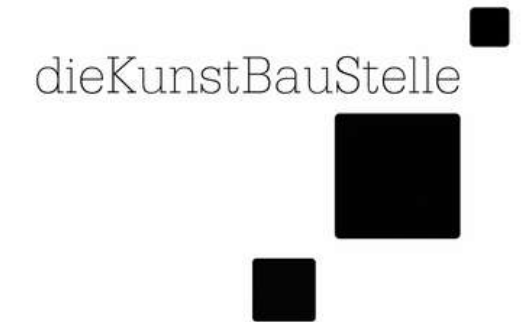
A video of a paper project is available here:

<https://vimeo.com/161285749>

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