

Webs Review

Latex parody

United Kingdom

Spitting Image

<<http://www.museum.tv/archives/etv/S/htmlS/spittingimag/spittingimag.htm>>

Spitting Image was a satirical programme using rubber puppets, broadcast on ITV from 1984 to 1996. This programme created a genre that inspired other programmes parodying political and social events in many other countries. The arrival of *Have I got news for you* in 1990 brought strong competition that gradually displaced it. The programme was cancelled at the start of 1996.

In spite of its criticism of politicians of the time (Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan), *Spitting Image* did not cause too much of a dilemma between decency and free speech. However, BBC Radio refused to broadcast the programme's first hit song, with the puppet of Prince Andrew boasting, "I'm just a Prince who can't say No".

Germany

Hurra Deutschland

<<http://www.hurra-deutschland.de/>>

Hurra Deutschland is one of the German equivalents of this genre, broadcast from 1987 to 1991 by ARD and RTL 2. In 2003 a new version appeared, *Hurra Deutschland - Jetzt erst recht!* ("Long live Germany - Now more than ever!"), but it was not as successful as its predecessor.

Zak

<<http://www.utekrafft.de/index.php?showkategorie=Produktionen%20Inland>>

Zak is a second version of the genre, broadcast from 1988 to 1996 by WDR, the regional channel of North Westphalia, and by ARD, the federation of German regional channels.

Argentina

Kanal K

<<http://www.thefileroom.org/documents/dyn/DisplayCase.cfm/id/47>>

Until the beginning of the nineties, the channel Telefe broadcast the satirical programme *Kanal K*, starring rubber puppets. In one programme, the puppet of Pope John Paul II appeared, using gross language. At one time he used the Italian phrase "va fangullo" ("up yours"), which led to energetic protests by the Argentinean Catholic church. Telefe stopped broadcasting the programme as a consequence of this controversy.

Australia

Rubbery Figures

<<http://www.nicholsoncartoons.com.au/rubbery.php>>

Rubbery Figures was the series of political and social parodies by the Australian TV channel ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation). It was broadcast for six years (1984-1990), during which time it received a lot of criticism and pressure, leading to production being stopped. One of the characteristics of *Rubbery Figures* was the characters' voices: all were done by the same actor, Paul Jennings.

United States of America

D.C. Follies

<<http://www.tv.com/d.c.-follies/show/2840/summary.html>>

D.C. Follies was the North American equivalent, syndicated on various channels in the country between 1987 and 1989. In fact, it was a hybrid between *Spitting Image* and *Sesame Street* because its humour was much softer than its British peer. It was not as successful as expected and only lasted two years. The setting was a bar in Washington capital.

Canada – Quebec

Et Dieu créa... Laflaque!

<http://www.radio-canada.ca/television/et_dieu_crea_laflaque>

Et Dieu créa... Laflaque! is a sarcastic programme by Quebec Radio-Canada TV, conceived by comedian Serge Chapleau and broadcast once a week since 2004. Gérard D. Laflaque is the father of a typical Quebec family who comments on current affairs critically and irreverently. The character of Laflaque was born at the beginning of the eighties and was a latex puppet. Nowadays, like the rest of the characters, he is a computer-generated cartoon.

Chile

31 Minutos

<<http://docs.tercera.cl/especiales/2003/31minutos/index.htm>>

31 Minutos is the comedy news programme broadcast since March 2003 by TVN in Chile and by Nickelodeon in the rest of Latin America. Produced by Aplapac, the programme has found an audience both among adults and children because of its strategy of intense merchandising, particularly the sale of CDs with music from the programme. As a result of this success, a film has been made entitled *La película*, shot in Santiago and Rio de Janeiro and based on the programme.

Colombia

Los Reencauchados

<<http://www.cenpro.com.co>>

Los Reencauchados, a comedy programme on Cenpro TV, broadcast between 1995 and 1998.

Spain

Las Noticias del Guiñol

<http://www.cuatro.com/programas/programa.html?anchor=ctoproent&p=nochehache&s=entretenimiento&type=Tes&xref=20060912ctoulpro_1>

Las Noticias del Guiñol is the Spanish equivalent of *Les Guignols de l'info* broadcast by Canal Plus of France (the Spanish channel is now called Cuatro).

Txokolatex

<<http://www.viravolta.es/venavernos/Diariodenoticias.htm>>

Txokolatex was the Basque version of the rubber puppets, although Euskal Telebista broadcast it for only a short time during the nineties.

Finland

Itse valtiat / Itsevaltiat

<http://www.filmiteollisuus.fi/ohjelma_en.jsp?id=100&f=0&flang=1/>

The weekly show *Itse valtiat / Itsevaltiat* (*The autocrats*) is the Finnish satirical programme, produced by Filmiteollisuus and broadcast since 2001 by YLE. It is in 3D animation.

France

Le Bébête Show

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Z9ZYvQDWDY&mode=related&search>

Le Bébête Show was the first programme of this genre in France, broadcast by TF1. At first, it formed part of the programme *Collarashow*, before having its own slot on the daily programming. Most of the voices imitated were by actor Jean Roucas, who also took part as a "guest artist". The programme started to decline with the appearance of *Les Guignols de l'info*.

Les Guignols de l'info

<<http://www.canalplus.fr/pid20.htm>>

The French classic of satirical humour, work of Canal Plus (format which has been exported to the TV company's subsidiaries, as in the case of Spain). At the beginning, in 1988, it was part of the weekly programme *Nulle part ailleurs*, with the title *Les Arènes de l'info*. At that time it did not follow the news and was not very popular, until the first Gulf War (1990-91). It then started to parody the news of the day and began to eclipse its rival, *Le Bébête Show*.

Nulle part ailleurs is no longer broadcast and *Les Guignols* has its own slot. Since the beginning of the year, the programme starts: "*Nous sommes en 2007 et vous regardez trop la télévision, bonsoir.*" (We're in 2007 and you watch too much television. Goodnight.)

Poland

Polskie zoo

<http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polskie_Zoo>

Polskie zoo was the satirical programme on Polish television (*Telewizja Polska*) broadcast every Saturday at 8pm from 1991 to 1993. The unofficial story is that the prime minister of the time, Waldemara Pawlaka, forced its cancellation when the show characterised him as an ox (symbol of Poland's Agrarian Party) in an indolent attitude.

Hungary

Uborka

<<http://www.mtvzrt.hu/?lang=en>>

Uborka (“cucumber” and “stupid remark” in Hungarian) is a programme on MTV 1, the first channel for Magyar public television.

Israel

Chartzufim

<<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0320847/>>

Chartzufim (or *HaChartzufim*) was the satirical programme from 1996 to 2000 on Channel 2, Israel's main private channel. The name comes from the Hebrew *Parzufim*, “faces”, and *Chara*, “shit”).

Ireland

Bull Island

<http://www.rte.ie/laweb/II/II_stills_b.html>

Bull Island was the Irish parody on RTÉ 1 from 1999 to 2001, made by a team of just seven scriptwriters. The programme was cancelled in 2001, just before the general elections of 2002. Although the political powers that be were accused of applying pressure to remove *Bull Island* from the programming, it is true that its ratings had fallen quite a lot up to that point.

India

Double Take

<<http://www.ndtv.com/tv/programme.asp?progno=201>>

Double Take is the puppet satire broadcast by the Hindi channel NDTV on Mondays and Fridays at 23:30.

Iran

13 Dead End St.

<<http://www.memritv.org/search.asp?ACT=S9&P1=1325>>

13 Dead End St. is Iran's satirical programme, basically aimed at criticising Western politicians.

Mexico

Hechos de peluche

<<http://www.tvazteca.com/corporativo/cultura/peluches.shtml>>

Hechos de peluche is the Mexican caricature that started in 1996 on TV Azteca. However, it has received some criticism for not touching certain themes or issues in the country's social and political life.

Portugal

Contra

<<http://www.rtp.pt/wportal/sites/tv/contra/index.shtm>>

Contra is a daily puppet programme lasting four minutes, broadcast by RTP. At the beginning it was broadcast by SIC under the name of *Cara Chapada*, the leading private channel in the country, but it was not very successful and, in 1996, went on to public television. At that time it was called *Contra Informação*.

One of the characteristics of this programme is that it is broadcast at different times of the evening, at half-time in a football match or during the intervals of special galas.

Czech Republic

Gumáci

<<http://www.nova.cz/>>

Gumáci is the Czech version of the satire made with latex puppets, broadcast by TV Nova, the main private channel in the country.

Serbia

Nikad Izvini

<<http://www.nikadizvini.com/root.php>>

Nikad Izvini is the expressionist-looking puppet on the RTV Pink channel since 2004.

Sweden

Riksorganet

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wgUvb_QhXJg>

Riksorganet was a Swedish latex puppet programme on the public channel SVT until the end of the nineties.

Rumania

Animat Planet

<http://www.antena1.ro/s/content/emisiuni/animat_planet.htm>

Animat Planet the programme broadcast by Antena 1 on Mondays at 8.30pm and repeated on Sundays at 10.30pm.

Russia

Kookli

<<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/97456.stm>>

Kookli was a weekly puppet show till the end of the nineties. The term *kookli* is a transcription of the Cyrillic for the word for *puppet*.