

Poetry Interpretation- Binder Tech

There are some who look at a requirement for an event and see it as crippling. There are others that see it as an opportunity. To a limited performer the binder can turn one arm into stone; to another it provides a unique way to tell a story.

Your arm CAN move. Believe it or not, a Prose or Poetry Interpreter who is holding their book CAN use the arm which holds the binder. Shocking, but true. Do not assume because that arm is being used to hold something that it must remain at a fixed location. It cannot shift around too much or risk looking peculiar, but pretending it is a missing arm of the *Venus de Milo* is not the solution.

Cradle your book. Before you can do any motion with your holding hand you need to have a firm grip so your Poetry or Prose binder will not fall and go SLAT! Hold the spine near the bottom at a comfortable "V" shape. Support the cover pointed towards the audience with your fingers; support the cover pointed towards you with your thumb. To add extra support the cover pointing towards you can be nestled in the crease of your elbow--or roundabouts--at times you are moving that arm around.

Extend out. If you have a a very large gesture that would look best with both arms do it. Extending your book away from your body creates massive space. Not only are you open but the extra matter of the binder adds visual weight and makes the gesture look larger. Use sparingly because this is such a WOW! factor gesture.

Hug your book. Sometimes you might want to give the impression of drawing into yourself and hiding. Or you might want to look like you are fond of an item/moment/person/etc. and wish to embrace that moment lovingly. Cradling your Prose or Poetry binder close to you in a hug like gesture is a perfect method to accomplish this goal; again, to be used sparingly. Pair with the right facial expression and "The Hug" can achieve many atmospheres. For an extra touch, take your gesturing hand and place it on your binder to fully close the space and show fondness or closing yourself off. Side note, many Prose and Poetry Readers naturally hold their book in a dominate hand with the gesture hand grasping the opposite cover (the side from where you turn pages) to avoid a dead, hanging arm waiting to gesture.

Levels. Your binder can also move up and down in elevation. NEVER block your face. Try to keep the book at one constant level throughout, but if there is something in the interpretation that cries for a gesture of varying height do attempt.

It must be noted that a Prose or Poetry book is NEVER to be used as prop. That would be completely against protocol and result in lose of

rank. However, taking advantage of a natural extension of your hand is not wrong. In fact, it adds depth to a performance. Embrace the Prose and Poetry binder. Make it a part of yourself. The more comfortable you are with your book the better your performance will be.