

History

Käthe Kruse at her
75th Birthday

Model for Doll I head



The Doll Maker:

“A Doll has to be something to be loved!”

eyes or a speaking module. All this, especially when the doll is undressed, is quite embarrassing and alarming for the child.

The development of the Käthe Kruse doll coupled with the progressive education movement of the 20th century created the best of Käthe Kruse. In lots of different places, artists, parents and teachers, all independent of each other, wondered about toys made to be loved and awaken a child's motherly and fatherly feelings. Especially cloth dolls were very important in their thoughts. A doll should be more like a child than an archetype. Käthe Kruse once said, “From the beginning I wanted to make a child for a child.”

For Käthe Kruse, a doll had to feel soft, she had to cuddle nicely in the arms and be comfortable to carry like a real baby. Her opinion was that the human being felt a sense of loving, not through the eyes but through the hands. Therefore, a doll had to correspond to the hand of the child. So, she made different sizes for different ages and the various needs of children. She knew that feelings of the heart were comprehensible to children all over the world. We see that firsthand in the exalted letters we still receive from around the world and that Käthe Kruse received over the years.

An important point also was the education of taste, “a toy could be simple and a toy could be less expensive, only trash, a toy was not allowed to be.” For her, success was always tied to the challenges she experienced in her work. She never got tired of developing new ideas and was always busy making her dolls a little bit better. About Käthe Kruse's success as doll maker, her youngest son Max Kruse once said, “The workshop was small, but her name was big. There was always a gap that Käthe Kruse filled with her personality.” Vitality, assertiveness, tirelessness and endless heartiness, all of these she had in abundance.



Doll V - Träumerchen

The stories behind the Christmas 1905 Käthe Kruse doll, called the “Egg of Columbus” at the first World Fair exhibition of Käthe Kruse's dolls and the impetus for the first shipment of 150 dolls to America for New York's FAO Schwarz, are well-known to all those that love and collect Käthe Kruse dolls.

From time to time, the doll maker struggled to correct certain creative difficulties like droopy eyes, crooked noses and so on. The basis of each Käthe Kruse doll is the handwork, the softness and the loving charisma. “A doll that is not beautiful but soft can be loved. However, a beautiful but cold and stiff doll is unattractive to a child forever. Only the right form will awaken the right feelings.” That's why Käthe Kruse never made her dolls with joints or hinged, sleeping



Doll VIII - Ilsebill & Friedebald