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04

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features
& reviews*

Boba Fett

Stars Wars' most enigmatic villain

The Rescue

A dramatic Ma.K. diorama

Conrad Mynett

An exclusive interview

Nuclear
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Bumper Cars in the
shadow of Chernobyl

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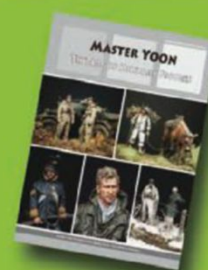
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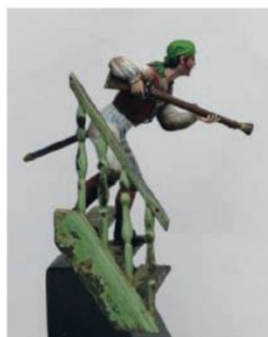
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throwing things about



Inside **Issue 4**

CONTENTS

66



At the Bench
**Conrad
Mynett**

**Nuclear
Playground**



34

52



**Songs of
the Old
World**



Rescued...?

71

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20

Crystal Dragon 2020



46

Tetsujin 2020



57

Boba Fett

COVER
FEATURE



06 Editorial

08 Let's Meet The Maker
Tim Daniel Jonker of Ouroboros Miniatures

10 News and Reviews
We review the hottest releases from across the hobby.

14 New Kit Releases
What's new on the market.

18 'The Workshop'
by Creative Green Stuff World

20 Crystal Dragon 2020
Trent Denison reports from Australia's premier miniature painting event.

28 You Go First ...
Dave Oliver joins FFI with an atmospheric diorama.

34 Nuclear Playground
Mirko Brechmann debuts with a reminder of a nuclear near-miss.

40 Maquina Antigua
Don Suratos updates an older build with Vallejo Mecha Paints.

46 Tetsujin 2020
Don Suratos reports from Singapore's top Mecha modelling show.

52 Songs of the Old World
Robert Blokker builds a Manuru Neko garage kit.

57 Boba Fett
Matteo Nobilii returns with everyone's favourite Stars Wars villain.

60 Templar Sergeant
Sergey Popovichenko paints a knight of one of the most enigmatic orders of chivalry.

66 At the Bench: Conrad Mynett
Robert Lane with some wizard reflections from the depths of Norwich.

71 Rescued...?
Peter Usher presents a dynamic Ma.K. diorama.

76 Queens' B
Bryan Krueger returns with a classic Ma.K. design.

82 Facebook/Next Month

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Who would have thought things could change so dramatically in the space of a month? When I sat down to write the editorial for *Fantasy Figures International* issue 3 it was business as usual: going to work, the children going to school, wondering what we were going to have for tea tonight and, in the words of Paul Weller, thinking about your holidays. Covid-19 has turned all that upside down and it's now trying to think about how this will affect us all in both the short and long term, while trying to homeschool the kids and worrying about elderly parents who live hundreds of miles away. For many of us though our hobbies are a lifeline, a way to forget about the uncertainties of the present situation for an hour or two. Modelling is one of those hobbies, of course, that lends itself to situations like this and it's clear from Social Media that many of us are using the opportunity to explore forgotten corners of our stash and dust off those half-finished miniatures. On a more serious note, I know the situation has had a dramatic and immediate economic impact for many of our readers, advertisers and contributors. Small businesses, ourselves included, are particularly hard hit and you'll have noticed that we have temporarily reduced the page count this month. Most of our magazines sales are through High Street shops many of which are closed because of government restrictions. We are committed, however, to continue publishing the best hobby and modelling-related magazines during the crisis and we're so grateful to all our readers and subscribers who continue to support us through direct website sales and online subscriptions and single issues during this time. If you are able to, I'd urge you to support smaller retailers and manufacturers as much as you can during the present crisis; it all counts. This will pass and I can honestly say I've never looked forward more to my next model show! Until then, stay safe and keep painting.

Our cover miniature this month is instantly recognisable: Boba Fett, Stars Wars' favourite villain, beautifully modelled by Matteo Nobili. We've got some real treats this issue for Science Fiction modellers: Peter Usher presents his dramatic Maschinen Krieger diorama 'Rescued' while Bryan Krueger builds a wonderful 'Queens B' Mk.44 suit. Post-apocalyptic modelling seems a little close to the bone perhaps at present, but it is still very popular and we have some wonderful examples this issue. Mirko Brechmann leads the way with a wonderful study of the abandoned theme park in Pripyat, near the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. Dave Oliver builds a very atmospheric post-apocalyptic vignette, while Robert Blokker paints a beautiful large-scale resin Garage figure. We also promised you more Gunpla last issue and we deliver in the shape of one of Don Suratos's wonderful Mecha builds and a report from the recent Tetsujin show in Singapore. For fans of Fantasy and historical miniatures, Sergey Popovichenko presents another wonderful medieval figure in the form of Pegaso's Templar Sergeant. With model shows across the world currently on hold, it's a pleasure to review the wonderful work displayed at the recent Crystal Dragon show in Australia, while Rob Lane interviews one of the most talented painters on the UK scene at present, Conrad Mynett.

David

David Grummitt,
Editor-in-Chief





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Yes, you read that right, we are indeed holding an extremely limited time one-off sale of a staggering number of products. Given the current world situation with the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, our ability to produce new figures has been impacted and there will be some significant delays to getting new products to market. So during this time we have decided to thank our loyal customers with a one-off sale of over 800 different products with discounts ranging from 25-50%! We want there to be something for everyone, so we have discounted products in almost every figure series that we make, so if there is a series that you have always wanted to get into, now is a great time to get started. If you have never collected First Legion, this is a wonderful opportunity to start and see first hand the quality of our figures at amazing prices. The sale will run for a limited time after which pricing will return to normal for whatever inventory remains. Act fast while supplies last and the sale is on as this will literally be a once in a lifetime opportunity to get First Legion figures at a fraction of their normal prices!

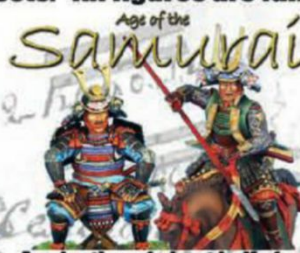
The figures listed below are just a sample of the various sets on offer. Please visit our website for a complete list and discounted price of particular sets. All figures are fully warranted.



American Revolution
British 5th Foot, British 22nd Foot, Haslet's Delaware, British 38th Light Infantry, British Foot Artillery, and Continental 3rd Light Dragons!



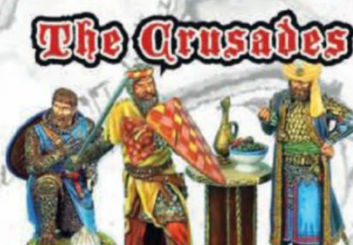
Anglo-Zulu War
British 24th Foot, Zulu Warriors, British 17th Lancers, and Mass Battle British 80th Foot!



Age of the Samurai
A selection of about half of the series including Mounted Samurai, Personalities, Standards and more!



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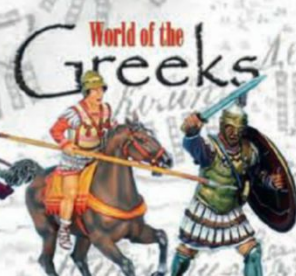
The Crusades
Crusader Knights and Mamluk Warriors, Mamluk Trebuchet Crew, Mamluk Sultan, Staff, Command Tent, and more!



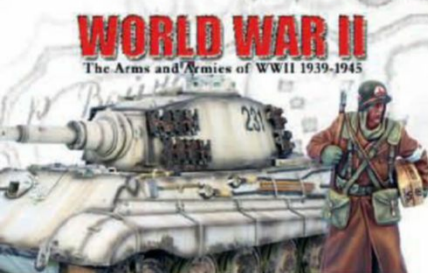
THE CIVIL WAR
Buford's Cavalry, Confederate 13th Alabama, Union Artillery, Iron Brigade, and Union 56th and 147th Infantry!



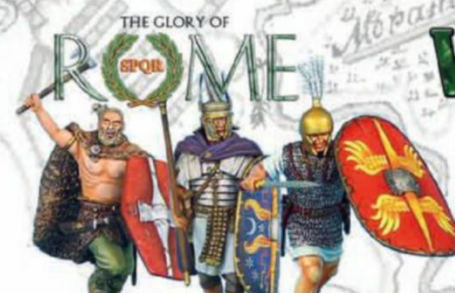
Great War
WWI French, WWI Germans, and WWI British!
First Legion Exclusive only available directly from FL



World of the Greeks
Greek Hoplites, Macedonian Cavalry, and Macedonian Phalanx!



WORLD WAR II
The Arms and Armies of WWII 1939-1945



THE GLORY OF ROME
Ancient Germans, Roman Praetorians, Roman Senators, Caesarian Roman Infantry, Auxiliary Archers, and Gallic Warriors!



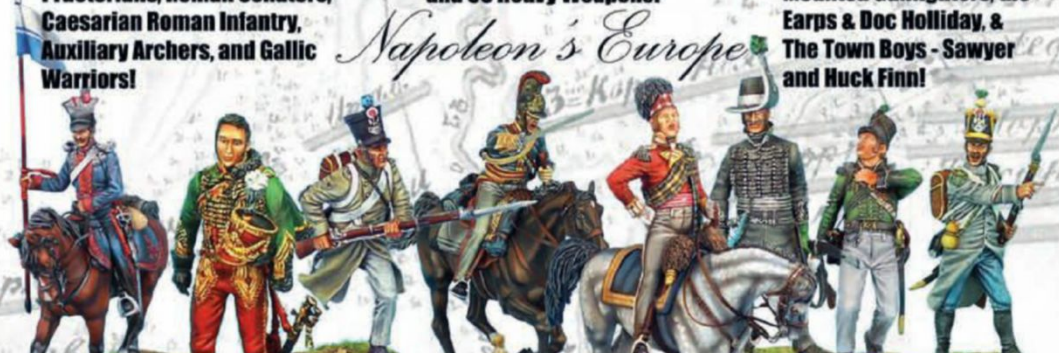
Vietnam
US Infantry, NVA Infantry and US Heavy Weapons!



Wild West
Gunfighters on foot and Mounted Gunfighters, the Earps & Doc Holliday, & The Town Boys - Sawyer and Huck Finn!



FANTASY
First Legion also produces incredible 75mm "Femmes Fatales" Fantasy figure kits in unpainted resin and fully painted!



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As our flagship figure range and with so many new releases for this series in the works, this is the series that will see the greatest number of sets on offer. French 18th Line, French 45th Line, Gordon Highlanders, British 95 Rifles, Polish Line Infantry, Bavarian Line, Russian Staff, Litovsky Uhlans, British Royal Horse Guards, French Legere, Austrian Grenadiers and so much more!!

Let's Meet The Maker

Tim Daniel Jonker of Ouroboros Miniatures

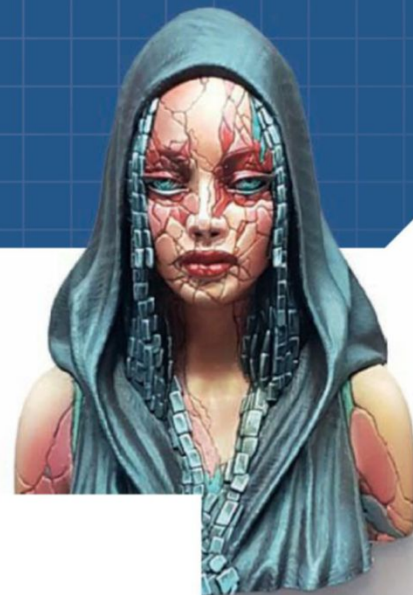
The Editor meets the man behind some of the most eye-catching miniatures of recent years.



Tim Daniel Jonker

How did you get into modelling? What miniatures did you build and paint when you were younger?

When I was young I was really into comics, especially fantasy titles such as *Elfquest*, *Thorgal*, *Storm*, *The Black Moon Chronicles* and a bunch of others. One day I met this guy who was missing a certain issue from his *Elfquest* collection and I knew where to get it so I got it for him. We began hanging out and he mentioned something about a game with miniatures. This peaked my interest and we went to his house where he showed me his collection of miniatures. That was my introduction to Warhammer and... I was hooked!



Sculpted by Oleg Aleinikov and painted by my good friend Antonio Rodriguez. Together with CP New Skin, it remains one of our most popular products. Antonio really captured the same feel as in the original art by Oleg and it is one of my personal favourites.

The miniatures I liked most, and have fondest memories of, were the Chaos ones. Chaos Dwarfs (pre pointy hat era!), beastmen, thugs and Chaos warriors and basically anything else as long as it was Chaos. Man, I couldn't get enough of them and remember painting one each day if I could.

What inspires you as a designer? What was the idea behind Ouroboros Miniatures?

From an early age, I have always been a bit of a daydreamer, always with my head in the clouds, dreaming away and thinking up stuff. My mind is filled with ideas, more than I will ever need and be able to use and I guess my brain simply reached overload. In the beginning, as a young man, I didn't know how to deal with this and just couldn't get the ideas out of my head. So it just stayed in there, stored away for whenever. Then something cool happened. I grew older and my daughter Lynn was born. Somehow, suddenly it got easier for me to get my ideas on paper and communicate them to other people. I had always wanted to start something for myself so that's how Ouroboros Miniatures was born. Christoph Eichhorn aka Trovarion is a good friend of mine and a fantastic sculptor. He kindly helped me by doing some sculpts, which were thankfully well received and the rest, as they say, is history.

Your miniatures cover a wide range of subjects, how do you choose a subject for a new piece?

The way we come up with what bust or miniature to produce is really a bit random to be honest. At any moment, something

When we saw the art of CP New Skin by Dave Keenan we just knew we had to try and get permission to turn it into a bust. Thankfully Dave really liked the idea and gave us his permission.





We wanted to something different than another fantasy or Sci-Fi release and decided to take a risk and do some modern day women. It was a bit of a gamble as we had no idea how well they would be received. In the end the gamble paid off as the Kickstarter campaign was one our most successful ones so far. Dave Colwell did a great job on the box art and really brought the pieces to life. We have two more pieces ready and planned for release later this year.

creeps into my mind. And if that idea keeps me occupied for a while, then I know that is the one I want to do next. That probably also shows why we do so many different themes and genres in our range. It pretty much happens at random so the theme could be Fantasy and then Cyberpunk or Sci-Fi. I guess it's ultimately whatever I'm in the mood for!

Can you describe how you go about transforming an idea into a piece that others can paint and enjoy?

It's hard to describe this as I probably don't go at it in a very set-in-stone way. An idea forms in my mind and I start gathering things that I need to communicate that idea across to the sculptor. I create a mood board and write down some thoughts. I get a concept artist to filter out this mess and they start drawing. Usually it takes a few tries before we end up with something that is close to what I had in mind. I then give the artwork to a sculptor and they get to work. We like giving the sculptor lots of freedom and the sculpt will often differ slightly from the art. I call this the 'magic phase', where the sculptor puts his own touch to the subject. Sometimes it turns out even better than what I had imagined.

What can we expect in the future from Ouroboros Miniatures?

More of the same I guess. I tend to make stuff that I would also like myself and enjoy doing. I think that works best for us. Right now we are working on a few sisters for our CP New Skin models called CP True Face and CP Mother. But we are always busy and we are working on quite a few other projects for this and next year.

What would your personal message be to hobbyists reading this?

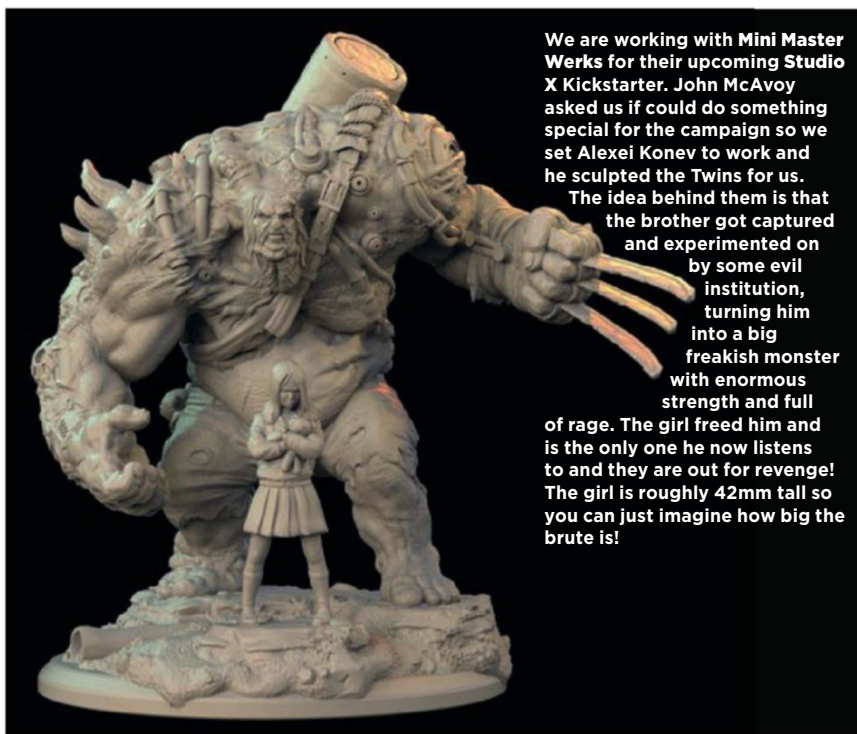
To stay safe and healthy; the Coronavirus has hit the world hard and it's important



Here's an example of one of our concept drawings. Daniel Ciorba, who sculpted the piece, went to work with the rough sketch and refined it. Adding his own touch and finally turning it into the final product which you see painted by Artem Romanov.



that we look out for each other. I would also like to thank everyone who has supported us during the last few years. It's thanks to you that we are able to do what we do. I hope we can keep designing cool stuff for you to enjoy for many years to come! ■



We are working with Mini Master Works for their upcoming Studio X Kickstarter. John McAvoy asked us if could do something special for the campaign so we set Alexei Konev to work and he sculpted the Twins for us.

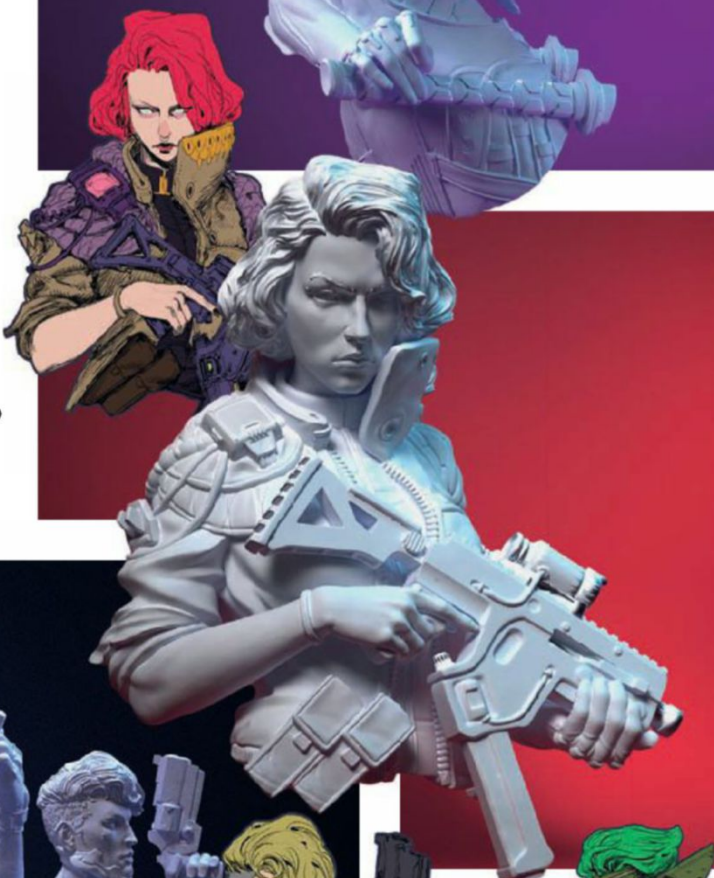
The idea behind them is that the brother got captured and experimented on by some evil institution, turning him into a big freakish monster with enormous strength and full of rage. The girl freed him and is the only one he now listens to and they are out for revenge! The girl is roughly 42mm tall so you can just imagine how big the brute is!

News and Reviews

We review the hottest releases from across the hobby.

Mr Lee's Minis

Exciting news from Mr Lee's Minis, one of the UK's leading retailers of boutique fantasy busts and figures: Operation Knox is a series of busts (well, half-figures really) that are the brainchild of the man behind Mr Lee's, Kyle Cruickshank. The excellent concept art has been developed by the very talented Dubai-based artist Ibrahim Swaid, while Kenton Moore has come up with some background narrative. Brazilian-designer Joao Paulo Ferreira has done a super job with the digital sculpting, as you can see from the 3D render. There are five characters in all: Fox-Jupiter, Neutrino, Arbiter, Silgaire and Phantasma. Led by the aristocratic Arbiter, together they form Operation Knox, a band of renegades, pirates, deserters from the Terran Instellar Forces Commando, and mercenaries. The half-figures are all cast in resin and from the pre-production samples I've seen are works of art: Arbiter, for instance is cast in six parts (head, torso, arms, gun and bag). As with all resin figures, especially those that come from 3D-printed masters, there is a little clean-up to do, but nothing complicated and nothing that will delay you in getting your brushes out for very long. Each retails for £40, with the complete set of five figures available for £160. This is a great concept and it's great to see the creativity of artists that Kyle had involved in this project. Check out www.mrleesminis.com for details on how to order Operation Knox and a whole range of exquisite boutique busts and figures.





The quality of the casting is evident from this pre-production sample of 'Road Girl - Rat Bike'.

carrying everything she needs to survive the apocalypse. The 3D renders (like most figures such as this, she is digitally sculpted) reveal the insane level of detail and, to judge from Journeyman Miniatures' previous releases, the quality of the resin casting will be flawless (as we'll see in next month's *FFI*). It's available to pre-order now for £52, a 20% discount on the normal retail price of £65, and you can find further details on their Facebook page. Journeyman Miniatures are also one of the ranges stocked by Mr Lee's Minis.

Journeyman Miniatures

Another exciting new release this month that caught my eye was 'Road Girl - Rat Bike' by Journeyman Miniatures. If you don't know, Journeyman Miniatures are a UK-based company that produce high-quality resin figures, as well as running painting workshops and producing some very helpful online tutorials. As you can see from the images, 'Road Girl - Rat Bike' is a very cool post-apocalyptic model: 'Road Girl', a *Mad Max*-inspired character riding a very large motorbike and



The level of detail is clear from this 3D render.

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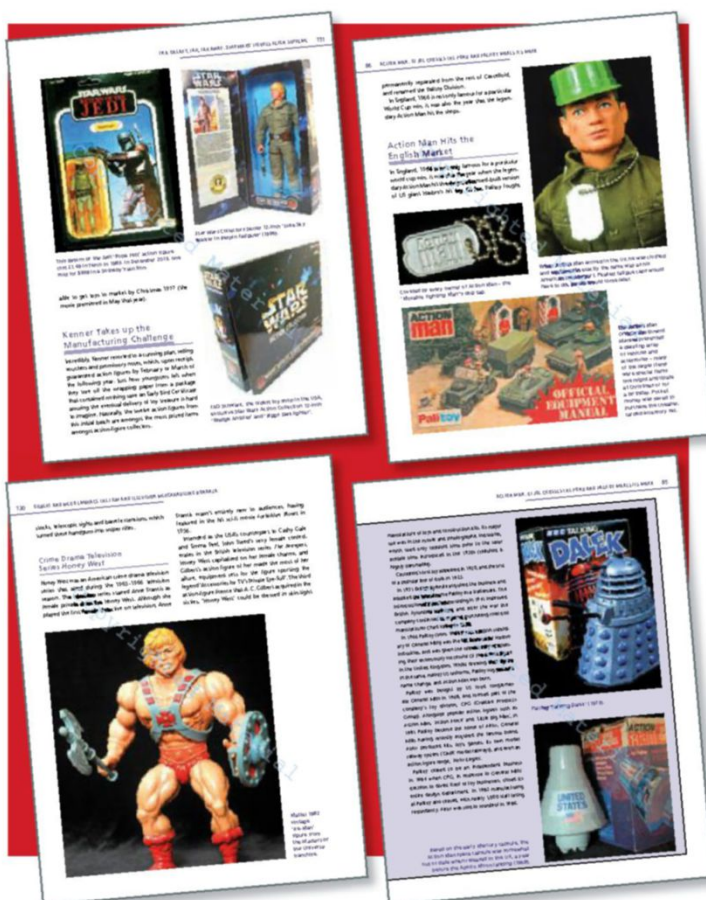



Crowood Collectors' Series, Action Figures: from Action Man to Zelda

There will be few of us reading this who did not have a youth shaped by 'Action Man' or, if we're under fifty, Stars Wars figures. Just as much as Lego and video games have shaped the playtimes of our own children, these action figures allowed us to explore our love of both history and Science Fiction, acting out the adventures of Luke Skywalker *et al* or recreating the *Commando* stories. In a new book from Crowood Press, Arthur Ward charts the history of the Action Figure, from the first release of 'GI Joe' back in 1964 to 'Fortnite'. This book really is a trip down memory lane and is an excellent read both for the serious collector of Action Figures and those who enjoy a bit of nostalgia. It is very well written and beautifully illustrated with excellent, clear photos. The text held some real gems for me: I well remember playing with 'Micronauts' back in the late '70s and early '80s and was interested to learn that David Abrams, the man behind Mego who produced the 'Micronauts' figures, rejected a Star Wars licensing deal arguing the company would go bankrupt if they produced toys based on every 'flash-in-the-pan' Sci-Fi B movie! This is a great read and a really attractive book that will delight and inform in equal measure. Very highly recommended.

AMMO by Mig Jimenez

Some interesting products this month to make your modelling life easier from the Spanish-firm AMMO by Mig Jimenez: 'Shaders' are basically transparent and very fine pigmented paints that can be airbrushed to produce a range of effects. From fading effects to wear and tear, shadows and highlights, altering the colours to different hues, this new range can even be applied to effect base colours like a filter. The idea is to allow modellers to create effects that until now could only be achieved using more complex techniques such as glazes, washes, or filters. What is interesting is that they have a much longer working time than most acrylics so there is the flexibility here that usually only oil or enamel-based paints provide. After using these Shaders the airbrush can also be simply cleaned with water which is a bonus. The range of colour appears to lend itself especially to large-scale figure, aircraft and Science Fiction. You can see how effective they are in producing a stocking effect on one of the promotional images and I can equally see how they could be used to create a variety of interesting effects for Gunpla modellers. Check out the AMMO site for the full range of products. They are also offering 15% off all direct sales during the current situation (correct at the time of writing): www.migjimenez.com.





film, *Wonder Woman 1984*, due to be released this summer. The figure is made from Polystone, a mixture of liquid plastic resin and powdered stone additive. It is probably the most popular material for these kind of large-scale collectible figures as it retains detail so well and that crispness of detail is certainly evident on this stunning figure. The complete figure will stand 317.5mm tall and is hand-painted, coming with a choice of helmeted or bare head. It's available to pre-order now from www.ironstudios.com.



Iron Studios

Iron Studios produce a range of superb 1/10-scale fully-painted statues of DC and other superheros. Their latest release is called 'Wonder Woman Deluxe' and it is based on the likeness of Gal Gadot, the former 2004 Miss Israel, as Wonder Woman in the Golden Armour she wears in her new



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- 222 Horse tone - Roan
- 223 Horse tone - Chestnut
- 224 Horse tone - Bay
- 235 Horse tone - Brown
- 236 Horse Tone - Grey
- 225 Khaki
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- 229 Dark Sand
- 231 Mid Grey
- 232 Bronze
- 233 Linen
- 234 Dark Earth
- 237 Russet Red
- 238 British Scarlet
- 239 Bavarian Blue
- 240 Unbleached Wool
- 241 Rust

Fantasy Range

- 106 Enchanted Silver
- 107 Bright Gold
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- 109 Chainmail
- 110 Royal Blue
- 111 Dark Elf Green
- 112 Bone
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- 123 Elven Flesh
- 124 Dwarven Flesh
- 125 Putrid Green
- 126 Festering Brown
- 127 Enchanted Blue
- 128 Enchanted Green
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- 131 Brass
- 132 Aquamarine
- 133 Ink wash - Flesh

- 134 Ink wash - Green
- 135 Ink wash - Blue
- 136 Ink wash - Brown
- 137 Ink wash - Chestnut
- 138 Ink wash - Red
- 139 Matt Varnish
- 140 Gloss Varnish
- 141 Grey Primer
- 142 Gun Metal
- 143 Dwarven Bronze
- 144 Shocking Pink
- 145 Ruby Red
- 146 Dusky Yellow
- 147 Burnt Orange
- 148 Marine Blue
- 149 Angel Red
- 150 Shadow Grey
- 151 Lupin Grey
- 152 Scorpion Green
- 153 Ink wash - Armour
- 154 Ink wash - Black
- 155 Angel Green
- 156 Leprous Brown
- 157 Warlock Purple
- 158 Jade Green
- 159 Golden Yellow
- 160 Amethyst Purple
- 161 Deadly Nightshade
- 162 Nauseous Blue
- 163 Beaten Copper
- 164 Emerald Green
- 165 Hawk Turquoise
- 166 Fester Blue
- 167 Hideous Blue
- 168 Ink Wash - Yellow
- 169 Super Wash - Black
- 170 Super Wash - Green
- 171 Super Wash - Red
- 172 Super Wash - Blue
- 173 Super Wash - Yellow
- 174 Super Wash - Purple
- 175 Super Wash - Light Brown
- 176 Super Wash - Mid-Brown
- 177 Super Wash - Dark Brown

WORLD WAR II

- 501 British khaki
- 502 Field drab
- 503 Military green
- 504 Panzer grey
- 505 Green grey
- 506 Desert Sand
- 507 Sea grey
- 508 Olive drab
- 509 Brick red
- 510 Mid stone
- 511 Tank blue grey
- 512 Tank green
- 513 Faded olive
- 514 Pale green
- 515 Black green
- 516 Iron grey
- 517 Desert Yellow
- 518 Field blue
- 519 Chocolate brown
- 520 Red Brown
- 521 Army green
- 522 Pale sand
- 523 US dark green
- 524 Tan earth
- 525 Uniform grey
- 526 Tank Light grey
- 527 Tank drab
- 528 Russian brown
- 529 Beige brown
- 530 Russian green
- 531 Japanese uniform
- 532 Italian red earth
- 533 Slate grey
- 534 Dark Leather
- 535 Jungle green
- 536 Forest green
- 537 Faded khaki
- 226 Olive
- 227 Field grey
- 230 Camouflage green

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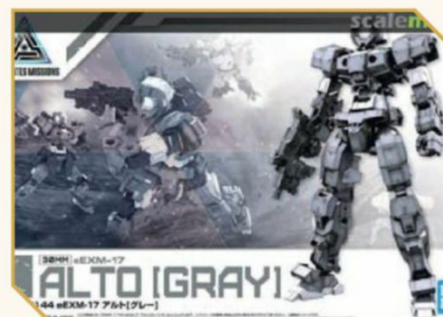
New Kit Releases



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: 30MM / 30Minutes Missions bEXM-15 Portanova (Marine Type) [Purple]
Kit Reference: 5059020
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: 30MM / 30Minutes Missions bEXM-15 Portanova (Space Type) [Gray]
Kit Reference: 5058871
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: 30MM / 30Minutes Missions eEXM-17 Alto [Gray]
Kit Reference: 5059014
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: 30MM / 30Minutes Missions eEXM-17 Alto [Purple]
Kit Reference: 5059003
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: RG Evangelion Unit-01 DX Transport Platform Set
Kit Reference: 5059015
Scale: n/a



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: High Grade Gundam Marchosias: Iron-Blooded Orphans
Kit Reference: 505670
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: Hyper Function LBX Odin
Kit Reference: 5058875
Scale: n/a
 Insert 5058875



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HG Sakura Wars 2 Koba-Kai (Ichiro Ogami Type)
Kit Reference: 5058878
Scale: 1:20



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HG Sakura Wars 2 Koba-Kai (Sakura Shinguji Type)
Kit Reference: 5058877
Scale: 1:20



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HG Sakura Wars 2 Koba-Kai (Sumire Kanzaki Type)
Kit Reference: 5059019
Scale: 1:20



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: Hyper Function LBX Nemesis (Lucifer)
Kit Reference: 5058932
Scale: n/a



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: SD Gundam World Sangoku Soketsuden Lyu Bu Sinanju & Chituma
Kit Reference: 015248
Scale: n/a

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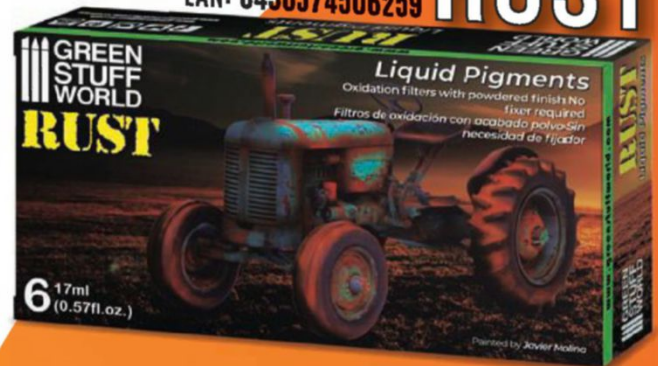
»» PERMANENTS

»» NO FIXER NEEDED



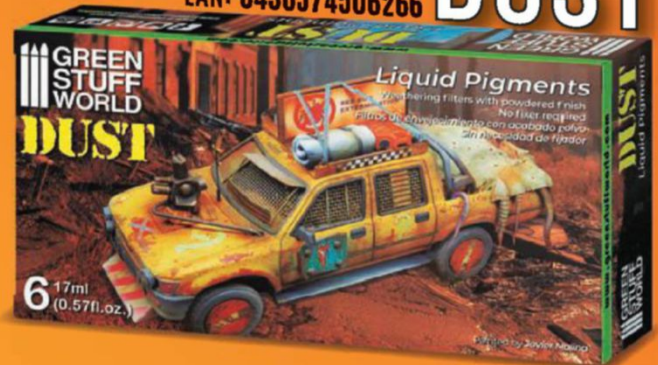
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RUST



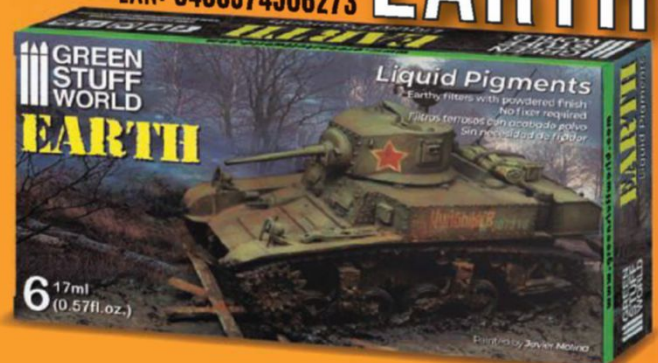
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EAN: 8436574506266

DUST



Ref: 10128
EAN: 8436574506273

EARTH



New Kit Releases *(continued)*



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: Mazinger Z Infinity Version
Kit Reference: 5058391
Scale: 1/60



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HG Build Divers:R Mercuone Weapons Support Weapon
Kit Reference: 5058926
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HG Gundam The Origin RX-78-02 Gundam E.F.F. Prototype Mobile Suit
Kit Reference: 5058929
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: 30MM / 30Minutes Missions Option Parts Set 2
Kit Reference: 5059021
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: RG Evangelion Unit-01
Kit Reference: 5058925
Scale: n/a



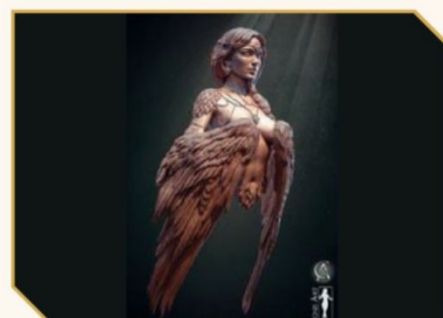
Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: Figure-rise Standard Masked Rider Kuuga Mighty Form
Kit Reference: 5059022
Scale: n/a



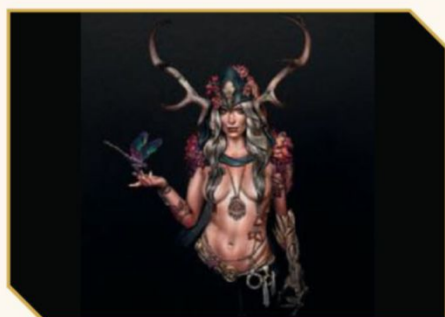
Manufacturer: Doll and Hobby
Title: Lost in Space: Cyclops and the Chariot
Kit Reference: 1420
Scale: 1/32



Manufacturer: Hasegawa
Title: Galaxy Express 999 Another Story Ultimate Journey Space Pirate Battleship Arcadia Third Ship
Kit Reference: 64780
Scale: 1/500



Manufacturer: Ignis Art
Title: Alkonost
Kit Reference: IAS002
Scale: 1:10



Manufacturer: Ignis Art
Title: Lesza
Kit Reference: n/a
Scale: 1/10



Manufacturer: Kimera Models
Title: Domina Victoria
Kit Reference: KDO-009P
Scale: 1/9



Manufacturer: Kimera Models
Title: ina The Fire - The League project (Limited Edition)
Kit Reference: LE-K003
Scale: 1/12



Manufacturer: Kimera Models
Title: Pulvis Horos
Kit Reference: KPU-011B
Scale: 1/35



Manufacturer: Kotobukiya
Title: Frame Arms Girls Hand Scale Stylet
Kit Reference: FG064
Scale: n/a



Manufacturer: Kotobukiya
Title: JX-25F/S Ji-Dao SAF Custom
Kit Reference: FA113
Scale: 1/100



Manufacturer: Kotobukiya
Title: Megami Device Bullet Knights Lancer Hell Blaze
Kit Reference: KP528
Scale: 1/1



Manufacturer: Kotobukiya
Title: RMZ-11 Godos Former Republic Ver.
Kit Reference: ZD130
Scale: 1/72



Manufacturer: Revell
Title: AT-AT (The Empire Strikes Back 40th Anniversary)
Kit Reference: 05680
Scale: 1/53



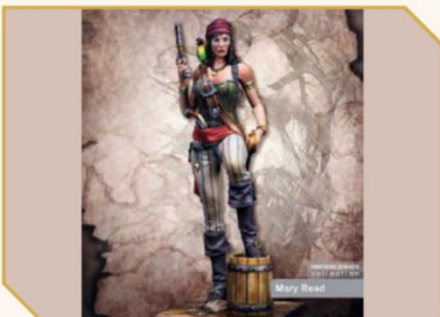
Manufacturer: Revell
Title: Slave I (The Empire Strikes Back 40th Anniversary)
Kit Reference: 05678
Scale: 1/88



Manufacturer: Scale 75
Title: Fallen Frontiers Bianca Carlson
Kit Reference: SFF-008
Scale: 1/24



Manufacturer: Scale75
Title: Scale World Fantasy: Heather Crowley
Kit Reference: SCF-023
Scale: 1/24



Manufacturer: Scale 75
Title: Heroes and Legends: Mary Read
Kit Reference: SCH-011
Scale: n/a



Manufacturer: Scale 75
Title: Scale World Fantasy: The Adventure Begins
Kit Reference: SCF-022
Scale: 75mm



Manufacturer: Wave Corporation
Title: ATGHQ64 Berserger WP
Kit Reference: BK-213
Scale: 1/35



'The Workshop'

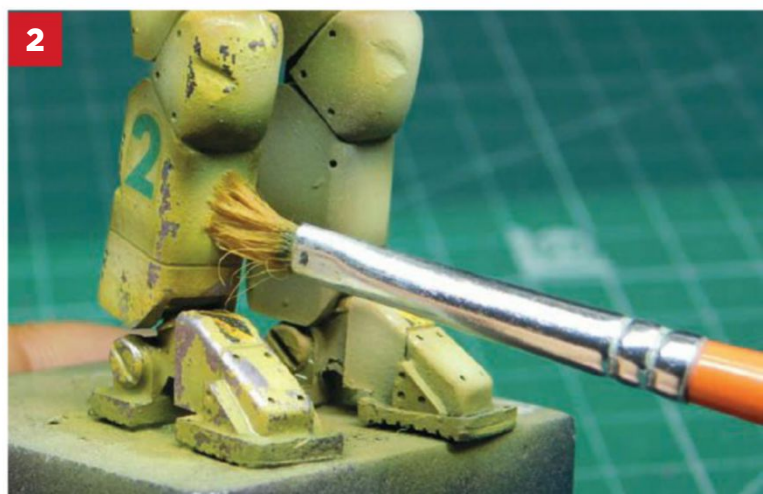
by **Creative Green Stuff World**

When I start a diorama, cartoon or scene, I always try to ask myself the same question: "What is this for?" It's the question that I've heard dozens of times asked by non-modellers to modellers with no appreciation of the hours of work that go into a project. So I'll tell you a little bit about what this scene was for, apart from giving me hours of satisfaction in every element I added. With it I tried some materials, like Candy Inks, that I don't often get to use as a Sci-Fi modeller. I had to be clear where I was going to apply each technique and how I wanted to apply it, so I could use it again in future works.

The Robot is a 1/20-scale Korean-firm NutsPlanet resin

kit, and I wanted to depict it with many layers of paint, chipped and worn away to expose the bare metal. To do this, I sprayed an initial layer of Green Stuff World's Chameleon Color Shift Metal Pinky Blue (1672), and over it, a base of Chipping Product (photo 1). I then started painting it with various acrylics, which I then chipped away with using a cut-down brush and water (2). I wanted our cybernetic mechanic to look really well-used. After all, he is a mechanic, not a catalogue model, and the chips give him personality.

The bike is another high-quality resin kit from NutsPlanet (3). Our mechanic wants to imitate the famous bike from a Japanese Manga series, but he doesn't seem very happy with the final result, or ... who knows what a robot thinks! I wanted the bike to have a much more pristine appearance than the robot and so tried the new Candy Inks from Green Stuff World. These inks have a number of unique properties. First, they are very transparent, so they can be used as filters on other colours, especially over the Chameleon metal. I sprayed Amethyst Purple (1738) and Ruby Red (1756) over Metal Color Caesar Red (1874) (4). Another quality is their extreme gloss, which allows some





very curious 'lacquering' effects to be achieved. It's much better to apply these in thin layers with an airbrush which allows for a much quicker drying time. However, they can be applied with a brush without any problem, for lenses, spotlights, small crystals, to decorate gems, etc.

The background came with the futuristic motorcycle kit. I just added the back wall, built with plasticard and other things we all have in the toolbox (5). I then simply studied photos of workshops, to see what colours predominate, the type of dirt that accumulates and where, what kind of wear can occur, and above all, what tools appear and in what state of order or disorder they are in. I had free rein to add all sorts of washes and pigments to replicate oil stains, lubricants, fuels, accumulated dust, and rust (6). Don't be tempted to over do this; my advice is always that it is easy to add, but not to subtract. That is to say, add effects, balance them in the most logical areas (if there is a drain expect dirt to accumulate there rather than on the flat areas), and then leave it a day or so before returning to assess your work. Don't be tempted to rush!

The tools were an involved part of this project. Each one of the components involved a lot of thought on placement, colour and it was not until the final moments of the project that I really had a good idea of where everything would

go. Most of the stuff came from a 1/24-scale workshop kit, simply because there isn't much about in 1/20 scale and the difference is minimal (7 & 8).

Finally, I printed most of the signs and posters directly onto blank decal paper (9). They are an essential part of the general atmosphere, and of course, tell part of the story. In a project like this self-designed decals allow you an interesting means of telling your story, clarifying various aspects of the scene. I hope you found this one project as fun as I did and I hope you enjoy the pictures. Thank you! ■

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*Trent Denison reports
from Australia's
premier miniature
painting event.*

Christopher
Tsang's
'Necroph the
War Dragon'.

Crystal Dragon 2020

The Crystal Dragon Painting Competition takes place at CanCon every year held over Australia Day weekend in Canberra, Australia at EPIC Center. This year's event, the fifth such meeting, took place over the weekend of 26 to 28 January. The painting competition welcomes all levels of painters to compete and all types of models, miniatures, kits, are welcome. As the show organisers put it, 'If you are a nerd and you make art, we welcome it!' The event also plays host to

painting seminars throughout the weekend, as well as providing a Painter's Lounge where people can rent a space to sit and paint (or pursue whatever creative endeavour they wish) alongside other artists. As you can see, there were some amazing pieces on display and the awards for Best of Show went to Sebastian Archer for 'Persephone' (Judges' Choice), David Colwell for 'Alaana' (People's Choice) and the junior best of show was given to Chelsea Whittle for 'the Trinket Knights'. ■

Casey Hasting's 'Urk'Ta' had some amazing colours and beautiful blending.

Adam Oakson
'Orc Female'

Sebastian Archer won a well-deserved accolade for 'Persephone', chosen as Best of Show by the judges.

Jamie Downward's
'Shennay'.

Adam Oakson
also painted this
bust, 'Romero'.

► Jamie Downward's 'Infinity Diorama' was wonderfully composed and painted.

Christopher Tsang's 'Sentinel'.

Kara Nash's 'Forest Troll'.

David Colwell had some fantastic pieces on display, including 'Dahlia' (above, right), 'Goneya' (far right) and 'Queen of Midnight' (right) as well as his People's Choice Best of Show, 'Alaana' (above).



Neale Talbot's Leviathan-pattern Dreadnought was sublime.



Vincent Venturella's Knight Castellan had some exquisite freehand work.



Shannon Paterson's classic 'Orc Bust'.





Thomas Williams's 'Keeper of Secrets' was painted using a suitably magical palette.

Vincent Venturella's excellent 'Pharaoh Bust'.

Nathan Staff's rendition of 'Artemis', a Deathwatch Space Marine.

► Chelsea Whittle's award-winning entry 'The Trinket Knights' displayed real imagination.

Steve Quinn's
'Ragnork'.



Tobias Hancock's 'Druid Guy'.

Natalie Szymczak's
'Gendris'.



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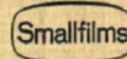
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- TCP-1286 Azure Blue
- TCP-1287 Ocean Grey
- TCP-1288 Sky Type S
- TCP-1289 Middle Stone
- TCP-1290 Interior Grey-Green
- TCP-1291 Extra Dark Sea Grey
- TCP-1292 Dark Slate Grey
- TCP-1293 P. R. U. Blue
- TCP-1294 Light Earth
- TCP-1313 Light Green
- TCP-1314 Matte Yellow



Spitfire painted by Lyn Gorton, member IPMS/USA Phoenix-Craig Hewitt chapter. Curtis Hawk II with pantoons painted by Darren Cohen, North Valley Trains.

Tru-Color Paint is a solvent-based paint, which uses an acrylic polymer to bind our finely-ground pigments to the model being painted. Tru-Color paints are intended to be used by airbrush, right out of the bottle, at 28-35 PSI and a medium tip. Clean up of the air-brush equipment or paint brush is easily accomplished with acetone (which is unscented nail-polish remover.) If thinning is desired of any paint Tru-Color produces, we recommend using our TCP-015: Thinner, at 5%-15% (maximum) concentration. For hot (>90° F) or humid areas, we recommend adding TCP-310: Retarder to the paint to slow down drying time. If spraying of any of the brushable colors is intended, we recommend up to a maximum of 40% of TCP-015: Thinner be added to the paint. All of our paints- military, automotive, structure, brushable, and railroad, are available in standard 1-ounce & 2-ounce bottles. 16-ounce (and greater) quantities are available- just call or email for prices. See our website for a complete list of our paints, or email us for a brochure for any of the series.



Dave Oliver joins FFI with an atmospheric diorama.

Inspiration for this diorama came from an unlikely source. While scrolling through Facebook an advert for one of Evolution Miniatures' post-apocalyptic figures appeared in my news feed. I had seen several similar figures advertised, but these two individual resin miniatures very much piqued my interest. The post-apocalyptic setting appealed to me, having played many dystopian video games over the years, including STALKER and Metro 2033, as well as having sat through the gripping but somewhat grim Chernobyl TV series. I thought these Russian and Eastern European subjects would make the ideal subjects for a small diorama or vignette.

Survivors

The first two figures I purchased were superbly cast with a wealth of surface detail to work with, their suitably wary poses formed the basis for the ensuing project, a group of rag tag post-apocalyptic survivors coming across a potentially lucrative but

equally dangerous subterranean path with a rather foreboding pulsing light illuminating the way ahead...

Two more of the Evolution Miniatures figures were purchased to make up the other members of the party, while a suitably decayed section of concrete base from Fields of Glory models and some rats from MAIM were also acquired to complete the scene.

The first figure, holding the Geiger counter, was assembled with a minimum of neatening or revisions required, the model was then Primed with Citadel Chaos Black and then pre-shaded with Citadel Space Wolves Grey. The leather coat provided a unique challenge, as I was determined to try a different way of painting this well-worn item of clothing, rather than use my usual technique for painting leather. A video on The Last Cavalry YouTube Channel (<https://youtu.be/d4GX999xlVU>) proved invaluable, with Dave Lonquist providing a simple but effective method. First, a base coat of Vallejo German



Camouflage Black Brown (70.822) was applied as a base coat, and a diluted application of Vallejo Burnt Umber (70.941) was then stippled on to provide a subtle colour variation in the material. Various highlights were then added using Vallejo Mahogany Brown (70.846) on areas of wear such as the cuffs and collar, while a final highlight of Vallejo Beige Red (70.804) helped complement the previous colour. The final step in the process was adding an overall wash of diluted Vallejo Smoke (70.939) to act as a filter, unifying the underlying shades used when painting the coat.

The trousers were then painted with a heavily diluted coat of LifeColor Dark Green (UA001). Vallejo paint retarder was added sparingly, this allowed subsequent shadows and highlights of the base coat to blend together naturally during the drying process. A final wash of Vallejo Burnt Umber (70.941), applied when the paint was still wet, helped add some worn in grime to the clothing. The hood was painted with LifeColor Vulcanised Rubber (UA732) which gave a realistically grimy effect, while the boots were painted LifeColor Worn Black (UA731) with the laces receiving a subtle highlight using some

old Citadel Bleached Bone White.

The figure peering cautiously into the tunnel was painted in much the same way as the first, with the leather coat receiving a darker colour to provide some contrast. The gas mask was painted initially with Lifecolor Light Blue (UA074), with highlights of the base coat being added. An overall wash using MIG Oilbrusher Starship Filth (A.MIG. 3513) was then applied and provided a suitably grubby appearance. The viewing ports on the mask were given painted with Vallejo Light Flesh (70.928), then some eye pupil decals from Archer were utilised, the advantage being that they could be repositioned to make the gaze of the miniature look more realistic. Once their position was satisfactory, a diluted coat of Tamiya Smoke (X-19) was painted on to give a translucent look to the glass and, although they were quite obscured by the paint, the eyes were still visible enough to add some character to the face. All the weapons on each of the figures were painted with LifeColor Burnt Black (UA736) before receiving a wash of Citadel Nuln Oil. The weapons were then chipped and weathered with a soft 6B pencil making sure that the edges of the guns and areas such as



This figure with the Geiger counter was the first to be painted. The quality of the sculpting meant that no revisions to the pose or neatening of the model were required. Painting the leather coat was a time consuming but ultimately rewarding process.



The cautious pose of this figure inspired the composition of the diorama. His wary demeanour provided a focal point for the whole scene.



Creating a suitably varied finish to the figure with the gas cape took successive stages of highlights and shadows. The pre-shade, applied after the model was primed, helped form a guide for the subsequent paint coats.

the magazine received extra attention to show signs of wear and tear. Shoulder straps, made from sections of scalpel packet foil were cut to length rolled and creased to provide a suitable worn appearance, they were then glued in place and painted Lifecolor Dark Earth (UA092) and weathered with a wash of Citadel Devlan Mud.

Painting the gas cape on the third figure proved to be an involved process. Trying to attain some variation in tone to provide some contrast in the large item of clothing required quite a bit of work. LifeColor Interior Green (UA116) was mixed with a generous helping of paint retarder and applied all over the cape, subsequent lightened and darkened coats of the base colour were added along with several washes of diluted Vallejo Burnt Umber for weathering. Finally, a wash of Vallejo

Green Wash (73.205), diluted with Vallejo Satin Paint Medium (28.451) was applied all over to give a subtle gloss effect to the cape. Further highlights and shadow were subsequently added to accent any highlights lost when the wash was applied and a final mud wash of Vallejo Burnt Umber was applied to the lower part of the cape.

Achieving a realistic winter camouflage finish on the fourth figure took some trial and error. As with all the other figures, the use of Paint Retarder helped blend the areas of shadow and light seamlessly, to avoid painting hard edged highlights and shadows once the paint had dried. Several washes of Vallejo



4



Painting a grubby, white item of clothing was quite a challenge. The use of paint retarder, allowed the different highlights and shadows to be blended in seamlessly. Vallejo Burnt Umber and German Camouflage Black Brown helped add a degree of ground in dirt to the uniform and was applied throughout the painting process.

German Camouflage Black Brown were used to further accent the shadows, while pure Vallejo White (70.951) was used on the more pronounced creases to provide extra highlights. A heavily diluted wash of Vallejo Black (70.950) was then applied around the intricate straps and webbing on the miniature to define the edges of the detail, while the straps themselves were painted different colours to differentiate them from each other.

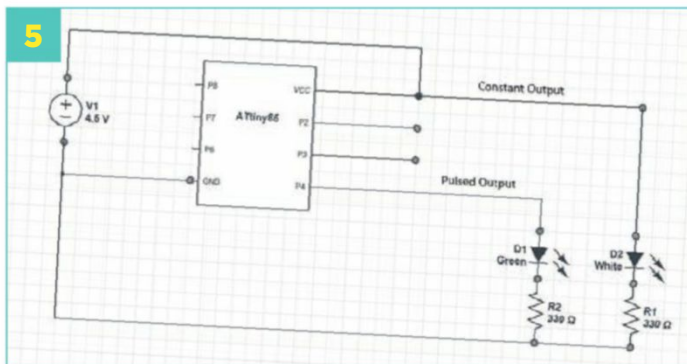
Down the Pipe

With the figures finished, attention turned to the diorama. The Fields of Glory broken concrete base provided a great piece of groundwork on which to place the figures. The area was given an overall coat of Citadel Dawnstone Grey, this was applied with a large brush and deliberately painted in an uneven fashion to provide a basis for further painting and weathering stages. AK Interactive's Concrete Texture (AK8014) paint was then stippled on with some areas receiving extra coats to provide more pronounced texture to the concrete base. Once dry, an overall wash of Ammo Oilbrusher Starship Filth was

used, with subsequent, more specific pin washes being added to provide contrast to the grey base coat. Ammo Oilbrusher Light Green (A.MIG. 3505) was then used in selected areas to provide of moss and lichen effects to simulate damp where the area had once been flooded. I thought the grey of the concrete still looked a little too monochromatic so a pin wash of Ammo Streaking Brusher Cold Dirty Grey (A.MIG. 1257) was added strategically to provide some contrast. A pin wash of Ammo Oilbrusher Medium Soil (A.MIG. 3522) was applied to provide some shadow at the back of the scene and the cracks in the concrete, while the metal rebar supports were given a concentrated wash of Ammo Oilbrusher Rust (A.MIG. 3510), with streaks being added to the base. The final step was adding some water effects from Woodland Scenics in the cracks of the concrete, this had to be applied in layers and left to dry overnight, with the final application of some Woodland Scenics Dirty Water Effect providing a dank appearance to the areas.

The rather foreboding concrete pipe was fashioned from a section of Kitchen roll insert, with a pair of sprue cutters being used to create cracks and holes in the concrete. The steel rebar in these areas was fabricated from 1/35-scale steel tow cable wire, cut to shape, then superglued in place. Once the construction was finished the pipe was given a generous coat of AK Interactive Concrete Texture paint then weathered with the same Oilbrusher shades used on the base, with the Oilbrusher Green being concentrated towards the lower part of the pipe. The metal rebar had a generous application of Oilbrusher Rust which was also blended in to the surrounding areas. Once the pipe was secured in place, several strands of Aries photoetched ivy were used to hide the join and cover the subsequent wiring circuit. These had to be carefully bent into shape to create a natural, organic appearance and proved to be somewhat fiddly as many of the strand became tangled up. Once this step was complete, they received a primer coat of Tamiya Grey Surface primer and were then airbrushed with subtly different shades

5



The wiring diagram for the lighting circuit. Both constant and pulsing lights were given as an option, the latter was used in the end as it provided the most realistic appearance.



The finished scene hopefully created a convincing snapshot in time, with the rather pensive members of the party looking to their leader for direction. The placement of the figures proved very important in creating a believable diorama.

of LifeColor green and brown. The separate strands were then secured in place with Superglue, with care being taken not to bend the strands too far out of shape, before a wash of Oilbrusher Dark Brown (A.MIG. 3512) was used. Several sections of the ivy had to be repainted after all this had been done as the underlying brass could be seen through the paint finish. It almost seemed that different sections became apparent long after the model was finished, requiring further remedial work!

The lighting circuit was custom made by Warren Monks of Tirydium Models with the pulsating green light providing a focal point for the whole scene. Warren kindly provided the option of a constant light but once placed on the diorama, the former option produced the most realistic effect. The wiring for the bulb passed through the back of the pipe, with a hole having to be drilled into the base and a recess for the circuit and the battery being chiselled out of the underside of the wood to avoid any unsightly wires that would distract from the overall scene.

Final Touches

With the scene almost complete, several 1/35-scale rats, produced by MAIM models, were added to provide another area of interest at the front of the scene along with some random items of clothing at the entrance to the pipe. With these last-minute additions, the diorama was finished. It had been an interesting project that had stretched my modelling skills and had required learning and mastering several new paint techniques. Possibly the most important factor in making a realistic scene such as this was ensuring that the composition of the diorama was satisfactory, to this end, the figures positions were altered several times, with countless photos being taken and the opinions of my fellow modellers being invaluable in setting the scene. Having each figure either focus their attention either on each other or the light helped give the vignette a self-contained structure that helped achieve an effective display that appeared both convincing and realistic. ■



BE INSPIRED

Evolution Miniatures 1/35 Stalker (EM-35150), Stalker (EM-35151) and Stalker Metro (EM-35183) are available from good model shops. See www.evolution-miniatures.com for details of the full range.

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Mirko Brechmann debuts with a reminder of a nuclear near-miss.

Life effectively stopped on the evening of Saturday, 26 April 1986 in the Ukrainian city of Pripjat. On that evening a safety test on the RBMK-type nuclear reactor at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant went disastrously wrong. An unexpected loss of power, combined with unstable conditions and flaws inherent in the

design of the RBMK-type reactor led to an uncontrolled nuclear reaction and a steam explosion which shot radioactive steam and debris into the atmosphere. The ensuing fire of the reactor core, now open to the elements, released more radiation into the atmosphere. 36 hours after the explosion a 10km-radius exclusion zone was established,

ten days later this was expanded to 30km, and which led to the complete evacuation of the city of Pripjat.

The first buses arrived at 11:00 in Pripjat and the inhabitants, many of whom had already fallen ill with nausea, vomiting and dizziness, began to leave. The message to the people of Pripjat was clear:

'For the attention of the residents of Pripjat! The City Council informs you that due to the accident at Chernobyl Power Station in the city



The Bitz Workshop bumper cars are excellent, but I added a canvas cover made out of some paper and a mix of water and wood glue.



Using acrylics paints, I painted different graffiti on front of the cars, copying it from my reference photos.



3 The result of the completed bumper car and the array of different paints used.



4 The cars were then weathered using various enamel- and acrylic-based products, as well as oil paints.

of Pripjat the radioactive conditions in the vicinity are deteriorating. The Communist Party, its officials and the armed forces are taking necessary steps to combat this. Nevertheless, with the view to keep people as safe and healthy as possible, the children being top priority, we need to temporarily evacuate the citizens in the nearest towns of Kiev region. For these reasons, starting from 27 April 1986, 14:00 each apartment block will be able to have a bus at its disposal, supervised by the police and the city officials. It is highly advisable to take your documents, some vital

personal belongings and a certain amount of food, just in case, with you. The senior executives of public and industrial facilities of the city has decided on the list of employees needed to stay in Pripjat to maintain these facilities in a good working order. All the houses will be guarded by the police during the evacuation period. Comrades, leaving your residences temporarily please make sure you have turned off the lights, electrical equipment and water and shut the windows. Please keep calm and orderly in the process of this short-term evacuation.'

By 15:00 most of the inhabitants

of Pripjat, some 53,000, had been evacuated. Of course, the three days' evacuation they were originally told to prepare for turned out to be permanent and over the course of the next year over 150,000 people were permanently removed from the irradiated zone. The legacy of Chernobyl remains today, with some 5% of the population of Ukraine in 2000 claiming benefits as suffering from the effects of radiation released as a result of the Chernobyl disaster. After 1986 the only people walking the streets of Pripjat were the so-called 'Liquidators', the civilian and military personnel who



5 The finishing touches were the addition of a few dried leaves and branches, all adding to the abandoned look.



6 The base of the bumper car arena started life as a humble piece of plasticard into which I scored the pattern of the different plates.



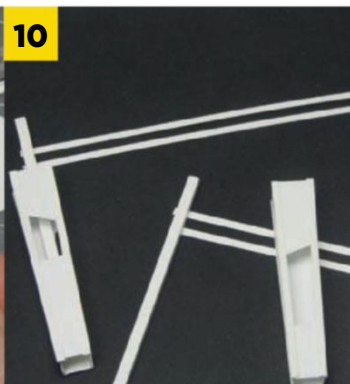
7 The base plate was primed with black primer and then painted with different rust tones, including 'Old Rust' and 'Rot Braun' from AK Interactive. You don't have to be too specific about the exact shades at this stage.



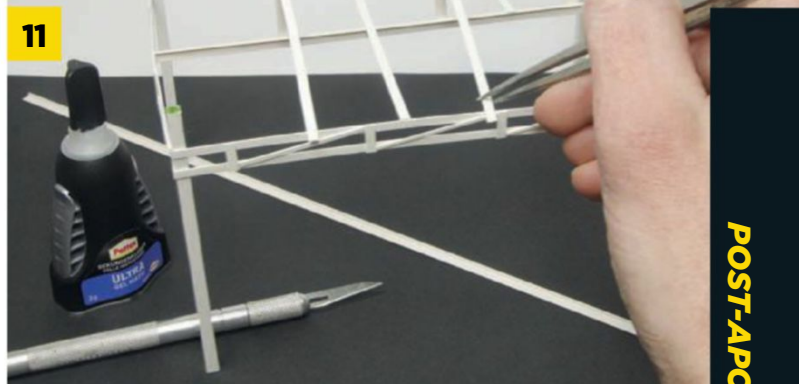
8 After painting the base plate in a dark rust tone, an even more realistic weathered finish was achieved with different rust-coloured pigments. The pigments were fixed in place with Odourless Thinner.



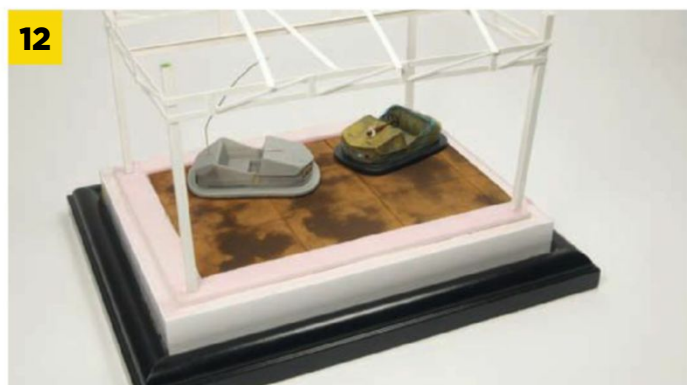
9
The corner pillars were constructed from 0.2mm plasticard.



10
The basic structure of the bumper cars ride is taking shape.



11
For the construction of the ride's roof I used a variety of different plastic profiles. It's easiest to assemble this using slow-drying Superglue.



12
The construction of the roof was finished and the structure test-fitted to the base. I didn't paint it at this stage as it was easier to do that separately from the base.



13
The wooden cladding that surrounded the actual bumper car track was painted with acrylics and then given a wash of oil paint to weather it.





14 Different Vallejo pigments, such as Burnt Umber and Old Rust, were mixed with Airbrush Thinner and applied to the pre-painted roof structure to create a realistic rusty surface.



15 This leaf punch from PK Pro was the perfect way to produce dozens of wonderful real leaves to give the diorama that autumnal feel.



16 Various materials such as moss, leaves and dry branches were added to give the ride a suitably abandoned and overgrown appearance.



17 Wet areas and puddles were replicated using AK Interactive's 'Puddles'. They are a variety of acrylic mediums available all very good for producing this effect in scale.

➤ worked into the next decade to limit the damage caused by the Chernobyl disaster. One of the most iconic features of Pripjat was the 'Park of Culture and Rest', an amusement park due to be opened on May Day, five days after the disaster. Of course, it never did and it is now famous as a landmark in such video games as *S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: Shadow of Chernobyl* and *Call of Duty 4*, as well as featuring on the itinerary of illicit visits to the

exclusion zone by disaster tourists.

The Model

When I saw photos of the amusement park in Pripjat for the first time, I really wanted to show this scene in a diorama. The park had five attractions: a large Ferris wheel, a 'paratrooper' ride, swing boats, a shooting gallery and bumper cars. I decided to build the latter. At this point, I was unfortunately still missing some

materials for the construction and a suitable idea. When I discovered that a company called Bitz Workshop produced some gorgeous resin models of the bumper cars of Pripjat Amusement Park and I received two beautiful figures from my friend Marco Riolo, my project 'Nuclear Playground' could begin. The inspiration was the photo of the abandoned bumper car arena from the front of the Bitz Workshop kit box. ■



18



I found what I was looking for with these mobile steel barriers (ref. C35105) from Yenmodels. The lasercut barriers were perfect for the scene I had in mind.

19



The barriers were first painted with a rust-coloured acrylic paint and then sprayed with Chipping Fluid. I then applied a coat of Vallejo Ivory White and, once touch, I used water to chip it away in a pleasingly random fashion.

20



I wanted to highlight the ride's Soviet heritage and found what I was looking for at Yenmodels with this shield with hammer and sickle (ref. YML35004).

21



After applying the rust-colored primer and the base paint, the paint was chipped away using the same technique I had employed on the barriers.

22



The hammer and sickle were then picked out using Vallejo Game Color 'Glorious Gold'.

23



The two figures - 'Mounie' and 'She She' - from Alternity Miniatures were perfect to impart that eerie feeling to my diorama. They were painted with acrylics.

BE INSPIRED

Alternity Miniatures 1/35 'Mounie' (ref. AM26) and 'She She' (ref. AM28) are available from Alternity Miniatures (www.alternityminiatures.com).

Blitz Workshop 1/35 Prypiat's Bumper Cars (ref. BP3501) are now out of production, but Modern Armies in Miniature produce a 3D-printed kit of the Prypiat bumper cars in 1/35 scale (ref. MAIM35421).



Maquina Antigua



1 The 1/48-scale Zaku prior to adding more damage and repainting. This project was originally finish with Vallejo Game Air back in 2015.



3 The base and leg of the Zaku was given the same treatment. The black primer and zenithal lighting approach can be seen to good effect here.



Don Suratos updates an older build with Vallejo Mecha Paints.

This 1/48-Mega Scale Zaku from Bandai was a project I completed back in 2015. At the time it was a quick, fun project depicting an abandoned Zaku in the aftermath of the war. I didn't do a great deal to the kit, but modified the head armour and scratch built the crotch armour with branded plastic sheets. This build was gathering dust on my shelf and instead of simply cleaning it, I decided to update the paint job. I had originally painted this with Vallejo's Game Air paints back in 2015, but the company's release of new products and a host of new weathering ideas and techniques over the last five years prompted me to revisit my Zaku.

Before embarking on the repainting project, I added some additional details to the Zaku's damaged parts. I melted the chest area with a soldering iron to depict a fatal blow to the pilot. I also added some wires from a broken headphone and phone charger to the severed arms and legs. I re-damaged the edges of the armour plates as I thought that my original attempts at damage were too cartoon-like. I was into tabletop miniatures back in 2015, thus my groundwork and modelling style in general, tried to simulate the cartoon feel of my miniatures. I added a few more pieces of general damage to the kit with a soldering iron and a sharp art knife especially on the shield and other areas that made sense to



2 After the model had been primed I applied a coat of Vallejo's Mecha Light Rust Wash. This was mixed with translucent Matt Medium in a 2:1 ratio for better airbrushing. The rust appearance was then post-shaded with Dark Rust Wash.



4 Here you can see the Mecha Color Green over the rust undercoat.

me. The addition of all this extra damage would certainly justify the extreme weathering I planned to do with the repaint.

Painting

This repaint project involved a great deal of experimentation. I decided not strip the old paint but simply primed the model with Vallejo Mecha Black Primer on top of the old Game Air paintjob. I like playing and experimenting with my Vallejos which are so versatile and constantly surprise me with the effects that can be achieved. It is so much more fun painting when you try different techniques and methods during the process.

I applied a 'Zenithal Priming' approach to this project. This involves first spraying the entire model black and then applying a lighter shade of primer, usually white, from above, angling the spray as if it was coming from an imaginary light source. I favour Zenithal Priming on most of my projects these days, especially on dioramas and vignettes. It is a technique employed by top-notch miniature painters. Zenithal priming and painting is the fastest way to depict natural 'environment lighting and shading' in miniature. Since the kit was glued to its base already, Zenithal Priming was perfect. The black areas underneath the piece remained dark throughout the painting process and these dark areas should look like natural shadows once the painting is done.

Santaly

FIGURES

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BE INSPIRED

Bandai Hobby 1/48 MS-06 Zaku II (ref. 0165663)
is available from good model shops.

5



The final appearance of the paintwork was refined with some careful brushwork.

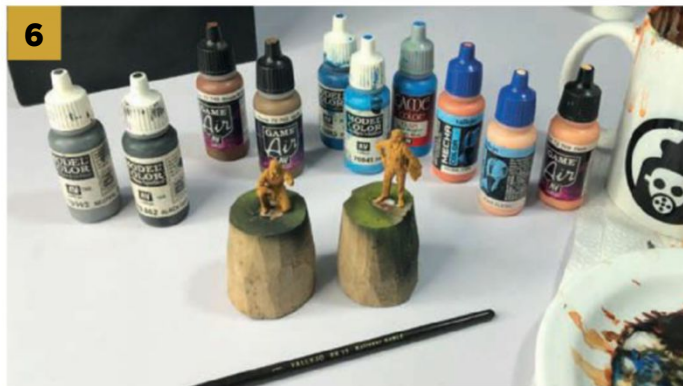
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The rather ramshackle scaffolding under construction. This was a rather last-minute addition to the scene, but really adds to the diorama. It was stained and weathered with a collection of Vallejo inks and washes.

- Once the primer was dry, I textured and painted the kit with Vallejo Mecha Colors using my Harder & Steenbeck airbrush. I also used my airbrush to apply Vallejo Weathering Washes. First, I applied the Light Rust Wash (69.505) and then shaded this using Dark Rust Wash (69.507). I then painted the bright oranges using Vallejo's Game Effects Rust (72.131) dabbed on with a piece of sponge. I like starting with bright and vibrant colours as these will always be toned down after filtering and darker coloured washes. It is always better to start light to dark, as the reverse is more difficult. I built up the colours and washes with thin layers of transparent Vallejo paints until I got the result that I wanted. I then painted the base colour, using Vallejo Mech Color Green (69.026). I mixed this with Thinner (71.261) and Airbrush Flow Improver (71.562) at a ratio of 2:1:1 (paint: thinner: flow improver). I airbrushed this on, making sure parts of the rust undercoat was still showing. I also used Mecha Dark Green (69.030) in the same ratio on some of the other armour parts and Mecha

6



My busy workbench! Here are the paints I used to complete the figures, essential to tell the story of this fallen Mecha.

Phantom Grey (69.040) for the grey parts. Once the airbrush work was done I refined the appearance of the chipped paintwork and rust with a brush. In all it took me around three weeks to build up the weathering effects on my Zaku.

Setting the Scene

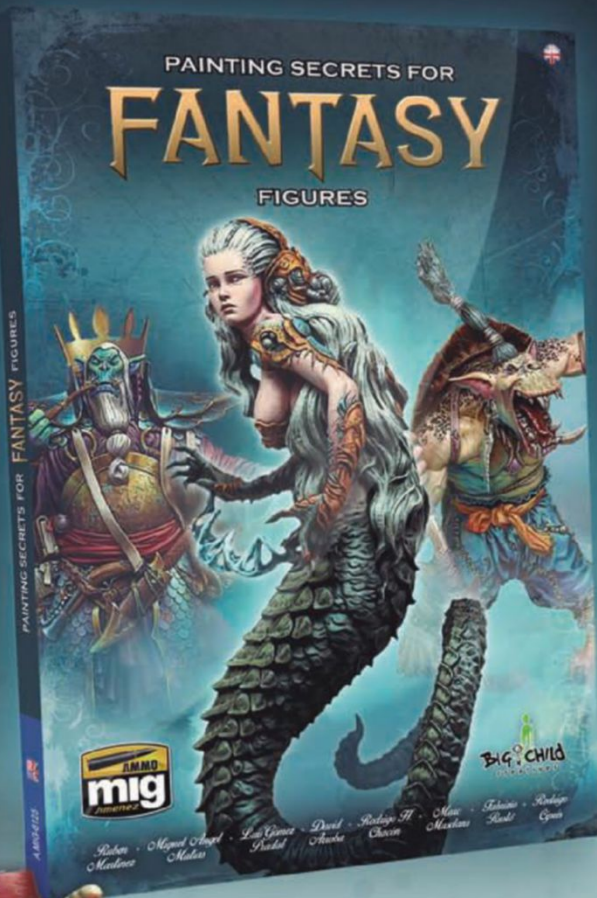
When showing the newly painted Zaku to a friend, he suggested to me that I could add more credibility to the heavily weathered finish by adding more details to the diorama. I agreed and decided to add some 'post-apocalyptic' scaffolding and a couple of figures to give this piece a nice story. This diorama depicts a post-war Zaku, hundreds of years after the last great Mecha war. Severed legs and arms and a big gaping hole at the chest area tell the story of how this great warrior met its end. The wooden scaffolding and the ropes around the mecha allude to the scarcity of resources after the great war, while the uniformed figures (researchers?) reveal something of the still-struggling society of that time. I'm afraid I rushed the wooden scaffolding a little and the figure painting, as I had to fly to Tetsujin 2020 show in Singapore the next day. But I think I somehow pulled off the extra diorama details.

And with that my 'Maquina Antigua' (Ancient Machine) was complete! I hope you like this heavily weathering Mecha. I think I was able to justify the insane rust accumulated on the torn-down warrior, with all the extra details to add to the overall feel and story of the project. More detailed step-by-step videos and photo tutorials on how I painted this project and others are available through Acrylicos Vallejo printed and online platforms. Saludos fellow Mecha Designers and painters! ■



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Tetsujin 2020



Don Suratos reports from Singapore's top Mecha modelling show.

Tetsujin is the brain child of Ms. Joyce Teo, the owner of Hobby Art Gallery at Singapore. Her partner is Sam Lim, and they also own Hobby Art Workshop and together they own one of the best hobby shops in Singapore. The competition's main objective is to provide a Mecha competition by Mecha modellers for Mecha modellers. The competition is led by the top



Mecha modellers, Kenny Lim, Eday Ng and Leon Ku. The judges this year included Kenny Lim (aka 'Toymaker') of Singapore, Eday Ng (aka 'VerEd') of Hong Kong, Leon Ku of Singapore, Eric Yap (aka 'Erix93') of Malaysia, Seth Tuna of Vietnam, and Sam Lim of HAW Singapore. All are established and legendary modellers in their own right and among the pioneers of Mecha modelling in Asia.

There were a ton of sponsors and partners of the event. These included Edmund Teo's HobbyMate, the best shop for hobby tools in Singapore, Jaef Liang, a multiple Bandai-sponsored competition champion, Acrylicos Vallejos, the leading worldwide hobby paint brand, Harder & Steenbeck airbrush, DSPIAE tools, SMS paints, E7 paints, Kotobukiya, Genesis Frontier, Asabi!, Good

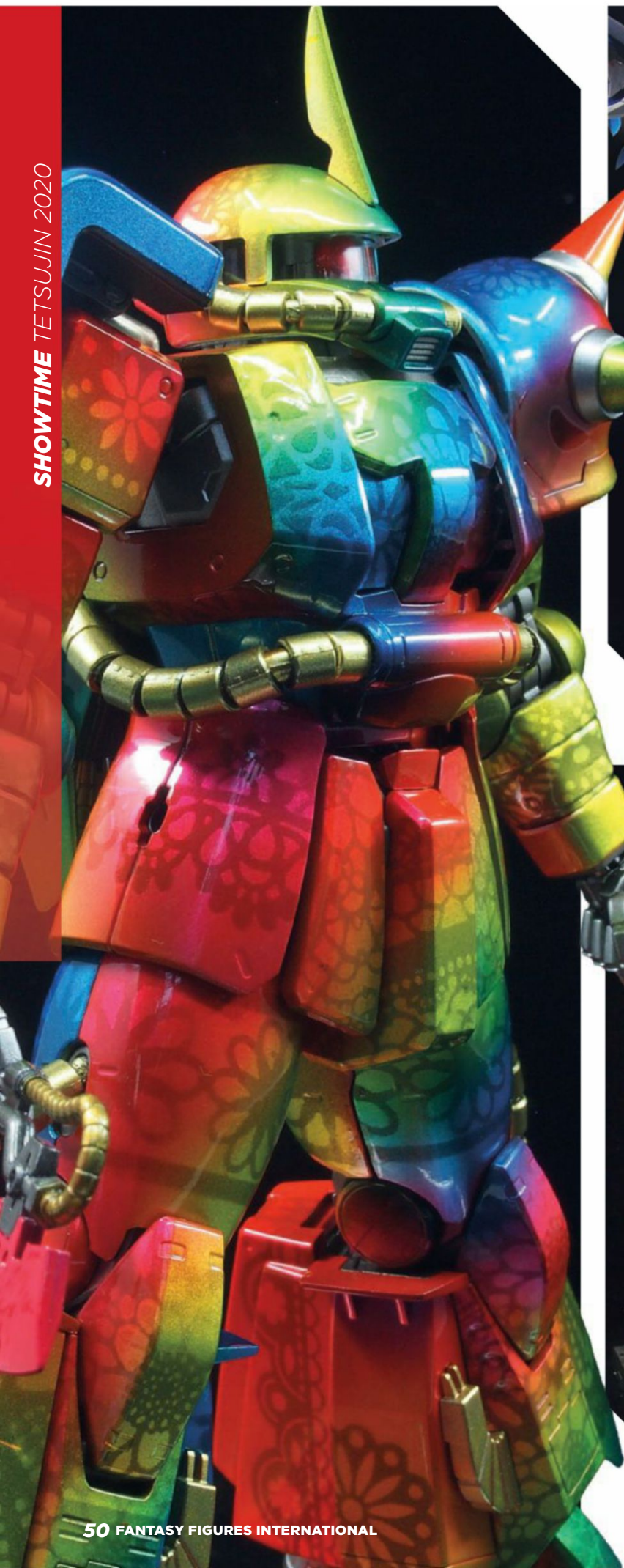


Smile Company, MM Events Singapore, Alclad II and Sozo. Tetsujin 2020 is in its fourth year of competition. Local support has been getting stronger and the event is getting more and more support internationally. Top Mecha modelers from Malaysia, Indonesia and other nearby countries are now flying in to compete in the competition.

I flew in with my daughter Nico to Tetsujin as an official Acrylicos Vallejo painter. It was actually a 'business four-day, three-nights trip', but reuniting with old friends and meeting new ones was an experience of a lifetime. I hosted a couple of live painting demos at Tetsujin, but also talked to a lot of people before and after my demos, regarding the merits of Vallejo paints, diorama composition and competition-level work. I met some really talented









► modellers who are very passionate in their hobby. It was an awesome experience talking to everyone. Leon Ku also did a live painting demo with skin tones at the event. I think he amazed many with the speed and skill of his painting. Seth Tuna also did a mind-boggling live demo on how to install LEDs into kits, while Eric Yap talked about his awesome GBWC 2019 entry and a live demo on how he did the 'chain effects' in his diorama.

I found these talks truly inspiring.

There were fewer entries this year, mainly due to the threat of the Coronavirus, but the entries I saw in person were all of amazing quality and oozing with creativity. All the entries were winners in my book. I will make sure the Tetsujin competition every year is on my itinerary and I am looking forward to seeing more creative entries in the coming years. Congratulations to Hobby Art Gallery, its sponsors, partners and all the participants of Tetsujin 2020. It was indeed a Mecha competition for modellers by modellers. All the participants rock! I'm certainly looking forward to Tetsujin 2021 and beyond! ■

'the entries I saw in person were all of amazing quality and oozing with creativity. All the entries were winners in my book.'

Songs



Robert Blokker builds a Manuru Neko garage kit.

My main schtick is that I build dioramas, usually with a World War I theme, but every now and then I like to paint a large-scale bust or figure.

This often ends up being an obscure Japanese garage kit. These are usually first presented at Wonder Fest in Japan. This is an event, held twice a year (in winter and summer), where garage kit manufacturers come to showcase their products. For those not versed into the concept of garage kits, they are generally short run kits in larger scales and because they are big, made of resin and short run (limited quantities available) they are pricey. Most of the figures are of Manga and Anime subjects, but every now and then a couple of manufacturers create realistic looking figures with such great subjects and poses that you can't help but fall in love with them. This figure is a pretty fine example of that. For the past couple of years the Japanese-company Manuru Neko has released a series of survivor-themed large-scale figures, many from the brilliant hands of master sculptor Ohata Masato. As soon I saw 'Survival05: Singer' I was hooked and I emailed a Japanese friend, who is also a big collector of garage kit figures and who I knew was attending Wonder Fest, to see if



he had managed to score one and if he was willing to sell it. Some tough negotiations later, I was the lucky owner of this resin beauty and waited eagerly for her to land on Dutch soil.

The Kit

'Survival05: Singer' (not the catchiest title in the world so let's call her 'Guitar Girl') is a 1/8-scale figure of a girl strumming a guitar while sitting on the remains of a Japanese shop sign. The kit consists of 32 parts and a length of copper wire. The parts are very cleanly moulded and well detailed, requiring little clean-up. Assembled, she stands an impressive 26cm tall (**photos 1 & 2**). When everything was assembled I sprayed everything in Tamiya Light Grey primer straight from the rattle can and then, with my airbrush, shot a layer of Flat Black Tamiya acrylic from below. A similar layer of white from above provided an instant guide as to where the highlights and shadows would

naturally fall. It was now time to break out the brushes and paint the figure with Humbrol enamels and oil paints, an adventure which, as you'll see, had its ups and downs.

of the
Old
World



Flinging Paint

I always begin a figure with the eyes. These give a figure soul and I really like painting eyes. At this point I had already decided that Guitar Girl was going to be a fair-skinned red-haired maiden. The obvious choice, then, was to give her green eyes. The base colour was done with Humbrol 147 Light Grey which I highlighted with 34 White and some very diluted 70 Brick Red in the corners of the eyes. I painted a very thin line of 33 Black on the underside of the top eyelid and painted the iris with a variety of greens ranging from dark to a very bright green. I finished with a black pupil and two reflection dots in pure white (3).

Next came a layer Brick Red diluted

with thinner 1:1, applied a thick wash, formed the basis for the skin. Because Humbrol enamel is slightly transparent when thinned it allows the airbrushed highlights and shadows to show through and act as a guide for the subsequent brushwork. Subsequent layers of paint were applied 'wet-on-wet', meaning that the previous layer of paint was not yet fully dry before I applied the next colour. I also thinned all the paints to allow them to blend a bit where the brush strokes met.

I used 70 Brick Red as the main shadow shade: it was mixed with 63 Matt Sand for the lighter layer, and the same mix with more 63 added for the mid tone. Then I applied a layer of pure 63, and some highlight layers which were 63 with

a bit of 147 Light Grey Matt added. The final highlight layer was a little 63 with 147. I decided to keep the shadows at a minimum as heavy shading would make her look old (4). Her hands received the same treatment. I completed this in one sitting to make maximum use of the wet-on-wet technique.

With that done it was time for the fun stuff. Natural skin rarely has a smooth transition in colour; look at your own skin and you'll see it is a big collection of coloured flecks and swatches. In smaller scales this is very difficult to bring to life but in figures the size of Guitar Girl it's a bit easier. Armed with a variety of sponges and thinned oilpaints, I set about giving 'texture' to the face and finished

7



8



9



10



11



➤ with some freckles painted with a 10/0 brush and Burnt Umber oilpaint. I painted the hair in a variety of colours ranging from Chocolate Brown 98 as a shadow base, through Brown 160 to Orange Brown 62, to Orange 100 and Sand 94. I like to work from dark to light because that means you are layering the highlights rather than trying to paint in shadows later. Here the wet-on-wet technique has another advantage: as real hair is very shiny, placing the figure directly under a light source means the wet paint will show you where to place the highlights. I decided to keep it to three highlight layers with the last one being almost pure white to give the ginger hair some really nice shine (5 & 6).

Clothes

With the head and hands sorted, I focused on the clothes. I wanted the shirt in a woodland camouflage pattern so I started laying down the base colour which I first darkened with some dark grey for the shadows, and then brushed the medium tone quick and dirty. Highlights were done by mixing some white into the sand which was again applied in a quick and dirty manner as 80 per cent of it would be covered by the camouflage pattern anyway. The green and brown flecks were done in the same way, except I first completely painted the flecks in the base colour and painted shadows and highlights after by adding respectively black or white into the mix

(7). Everything was painted with a 10/0 brush while occasionally holding my breath. The camo was finished off with the black squiggly lines (8). One of the hardest things was to keep a repetition of the camouflage pattern. It isn't called a pattern for nothing; the same bit of design is copied onto a roll which prints the same blocks of pattern onto fabric and from there the various bits of clothing are cut.

I wanted the jeans to look like very faded denim, with almost no blue left. I started off by doing (again) a rather quick and dirty application of various shades of blues ranging from a dark blue to baby blue to give an overview of where the shadows and highlights would be. The result was very dark, but also very smooth which I didn't really like at all (9). I wanted to have the stipply fabric texture evident on the jeans and while contemplating on how to achieve this I suddenly remembered I still had some micromesh fabric laying around in one of my drawers. It is a woven fine-mesh fabric used in printing companies to create lightweight indoor banners. I cut out a bit, pulled it around the leg and airbrushed pure white over it, varying the degree of coverage of the paint. This resulted in a nice representation of real denim texture and also gave me the faded look I was after (10).

The Coat

To set off all my paintwork so far I wanted to have the coat as dark as possible. That way the face, whatever was still visible of the shirt behind the guitar, the guitar itself and the jeans would really 'pop'. So

12



black it was. Only the shadows were pure black, the base colour and the highlights were done by adding progressively more skin tone into the mix, creating some very warm greys. At this stage, while it looked good, it was incredibly dull (11). I decided to pay a little homage to a band that I really love. With the help of some white, fluorescent green, bright orange and black paint, I recreated the logo of 'Flogging Molly', a folkpunk band that plays punky Irish music (12).

Shoes and Socks

The shoes and socks were the last items of clothing to be painted. I decided to bring a splash of colour into the scene by painting the socks red. Again, as with all the other clothing items, the shadows

13



14



were done first by mixing some black into the red. This created a really dark brownish tint, which was followed by a layer of Bordeaux 20 and finished with a layer of Scarlet 60. The tan parts of the mountain shoes were painted in Khaki Drill 72 with Sand 63 highlights. The leather bit as finished with variety of dark and medium greys, finishing with a wash of black oil paint (13).

Painting a Guitar

Here I have to start off by thanking my good friend Rene Duret. To a man who has never owned a guitar, he patiently answered all my questions. Without his help the end result would be nearer to mediocrity than I would like to admit. The visible interior was painted first in Sand 63 with the wood grain achieved by a reddish brown wash applied with an old brush with split hair. At this point I decided to make it a Martin. I wanted a label inside the guitar as well, so I cut a square out of a sheet of thin paper. I drew by hand the label of a Martin's guitar found on Google and weathered it by soaking in tea. The back and sides of the guitar were painted in a thinned reddish brown first using an old brush in a rather sloppy fashion, overlapping strokes to create the colour variations. When dry I added irregular stripes with thinned dark brown, emphasising some

15



➤ with very diluted black oil paint. Finally, the thin black grain was added with a 10/0 brush to give the final appearance (14). The front plate was simpler: a light cream colour with a very thin streaking of Burnt Umber oil paint. The rosette was a bit of a challenge as I was not very confident that I would be able to create rings that were evenly spaced. I solved this by cutting out a ring from very thin styrene and painting that instead. First, I applied a sloppy mix of white and several shades of light blue to give a mother of pearl appearance and then blocking it into squares as if it were laid in. I then painted the other details, such as the black strengthening bands around the body, the duct tape, and the pick guard. The neck received more or less the same treatment as the back of the body. Finally, I sprayed a coat of satin lacquer and stringed it two thicknesses of copper wire (15). Now it was ready to be played!

16



The Gun, the Backpack and the Base

And slowly the final stages of this project came into sight; only a few more pieces before I could call Guitar Girl finished. I started with the gun as any sensible post-apocalyptic traveller knows they need to be able to protect themselves and, if necessary, to shoot danger right in the face. Guitar Girl has a nice Western-style rifle. The stock was painted in the same manner as the guitar, several shades of Humbrol browns ranging from reddish to an almost black brown. These were applied in a thinned state with an old brush. When that had dried thoroughly, I sprayed some satin varnish straight from the Tamiya rattle can.

For the metal parts I used Humbrol Metalcote Polished Steel 27003. This has a very heavy metallic pigment, which dries really fast and, when dry, can be polished with a cloth to get a realistic metallic appearance. Finally, I applied a pinwash with black oil paint to emphasise the

17



details and a light drybrush of silver (16).

The backpack was painted in a variety of greens with shading and highlights. The canvas webbing on the shoulder bands was painted in a dirty greyish khaki and I painted thin sand yellow stripes on it to simulate the weave of the fabric. The leather parts were painted in a variety of browns. In one of the backpack's pouches there is a little teddy bear, which for whatever reason has a skull for its face. This was another nice opportunity to bring some colour to the model. The fur was painted in a very dark blue, then highlighted with medium blue and then with medium blue mixed with a lot of white. I first painted the skull in a dirty brown colour, highlighting it with Linen 74 and white (17).

The Base

The girl is sitting on the remains of what was once a shop sign. I painted it in various shades of grey, followed by some light drybrushing with a lighter shade and some pinwashes with black oil paint. The red details were applied with a bit of sponge, first a layer of Bordeaux Red and then a bit more sparsely with Bright Red to impart the feeling of worn paint. The metal bars were first painted matt black, then gold, followed by a lot of rust. I started by applying dark brown paint with a sponge to simulate where the gold paint had flaked off the bars. I thus had a starting point for the further steps and, with Matt Leather 62 and German Camouflage Red Brown 160, I again used a sponge to create colour variations across the rust base. I added some rust streaks from thinned Burnt Umber oil paint and finished it off with some rust pigments from MIG Productions. I mixed this with thinner to form a thick wash and again applied it with a piece of sponge. Last but not least, I painted the ground black brown and stippled on a variety AMMO mud products. Taking a deep breath, I finally glued everything together and carefully placed her in the display cabinet where she will sit, silently strumming a melancholic song about the Old World. At least.... I like to think she does. ■



Matteo Nobilii returns with everyone's favourite *Stars Wars* villain.

Boba Fett

For those of us of a certain age the original *Stars Wars* trilogy defined our childhood. Boba Fett, the galaxy's coolest bounty hunter, first appeared in *Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back*, winning his prize, Han Solo, and returning him to Jabba the Hut. In *Episode VI: Return of the Jedi*, Fett appeared to have met an unfortunate end in the Sarlacc's Pit. In 2002 *Episode II: Attack of the Clones* introduced Fett to a new generation of *Star Wars* fans. Fett helps his father, Jango, escape from Obi Wan Kenobi before witnessing his death at the Battle of Geonosis at the hands of the Jedi master Mace Windu. Subsequent appearances in the animated >



The figure is beautifully moulded and perfectly apportioned. The plastic is multi-coloured meaning you don't have to paint it, but it's better to do so for a realistic finish.



Assembly is very simple and straightforward. Well-engineered designs and Bandai's skill as model makers make this a pleasure to build.



All the main joints are fully articulated, so I played around with different poses until I found one I was happy with.



Here you can see the gaps necessary to allow the figure to articulate, betraying its action figure origins. These will need to be filled once the pose is settled upon.



The rock on which the Bounty Hunter stands was made from plaster using one of the Woodland Scenics' excellent moulds.



Once I had settled upon the pose I used Milliput to fill the gaps at the joints, carefully sculpting the putty for a seamless transition.



The main paint chips were simply painted by hands, carefully following my references.



I also added a cloak from Milliput to further personalise my Boba Fett model.

➤ *Clone Wars* television series and the revelation that he had survived being eaten alive by the Sarlacc cemented Boba Fett's reputation as the 'most notorious bounty hunter in the galaxy' and everyone's favourite *Stars Wars* villain.

The Kit

Bandai's 1/12-scale Boba Fett is, in common with almost every kit released by the Japanese model giant, absolutely superb. The box

contains five sprues moulded in different coloured plastics (grey, black and sand) and perfectly bridges the gap between model and action figure. The figure builds up perfectly and every joint is completely articulated, allowing you to pose him in your favourite bounty hunter stance (looking menacing is best!). For us modellers though, once the build is complete things start to get serious. This is first and foremost an action figure/toy, so if you want to paint

and display it as a model, you'll need to decide the pose and fill the gaps caused by articulation, which are very obvious and unnatural.

I imagined the pose as him standing on a rock, somewhere in the wastes of Tatooine, looking down on Mos Eisley Spaceport, searching for a possible quarry and the subsequent reward. Once I had decided on the pose, I used Milliput two-part epoxy putty to fill the gaps behind the articulating knees, shoulders and elbows,

9



The kit contains waterslide decals allowing you to exactly reproduce the appearance of Boba Fett in the films.

10



The rock was painted with acrylics, using the same palette to weather Boba Fett's boots and lower legs, and finished off with a few clumps of vegetation.

sculpting the putty to fit seamlessly with the plastic.

I painted the figure using Gunze Sangyo's Mr Color lacquer paints. These spray very well through the airbrush and give a superb, smooth finish. I started with some preshading on the armour plates and then applied the main colours. The most distinctive feature, in some ways, of Boba Fett's appearance is his extensively chipped armour plates and helmet. This I did by brush, painstakingly recreating

the chips and scuffs I could see on my reference photos (of which, thankfully, there are plenty). I then applied an overall filter, to mute the appearance of the bare metal chips, and applied some washes using oil paints.

The rock on which Boba Fett surveys his hunting ground was simply made from Plaster of Paris, using one of Woodland Scenics' excellent rubber mould. This was then painted and weathered with a view to achieving a harmony between the groundwork and the figure.

Final Thoughts

Boba Fett is an iconic figure for so many of us and one of the most popular characters in the entire Stars Wars universe. Bandai's 1/12-scale kit (6") is superb and really much more than a simple action figure. I recommend it without reservation. ■



BE INSPIRED

Bandai Hobby 1/12 Boba Fett (ref. BAN201305) is available from all good model shops.

Templar

Sergeant

Sergey Popovichenko paints a knight of one of the most enigmatic orders of chivalry.

This project probably began about eight years ago. I decided to paint the then recently released sergeant of the Knights Templars from Pegaso Models. I planned to place this on a base showing a fragment of wall destroyed during the siege. For one reason or another, the project was shelved, but recently I was asked to paint this figure by a collector and decided to revisit and finish the figure I had started some years ago.

The Knights Templars

The Templars are one of the best known and mysterious of the medieval Orders of Chivalry. They're properly known as the Order of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon and were a spiritual and chivalric order founded in the Holy Land in 1119 by a small group of knights led by Hugo de Payne in the aftermath of the First Crusade, the second such order to be established some twenty years after the Knights Hospitallers. The Templars took part in many of the battles in defence of the newly established Crusader States against their Islamic rivals. In 1163 they took an active part in the battle of Al-Bukaye with the army of the emir, Aleppo Nur al-Din Zangi, which ended in victory for the crusaders. In 1177 the Templars participated in the Battle of Montgisard and made a significant contribution to the defeat of Saladin there, but two years later, on the banks of the River Jordan, they were defeated by Saladin and concluded a truce with him.

In 1187, Saladin invaded the Crusading Kingdom of Jerusalem and defeated the Christian armies. Many of the Templars were led into captivity, including their Great Master Gerard de Ridfort. Some historical sources claim that the Great Master bought his own life by converting to Islam and consenting to the execution of all the Templars taken prisoner with him. In 1191, after a two-year siege, the crusaders managed to seize the fortress of Acre. The Templars, who took an active part in the siege of the fortress, established their Temple (headquarters) in the city. In the thirteenth century the fortunes of the Order declined further and in 1312 the Pope, Clement V, ordered them to disband. Our sergeant, however, depicts the Order at its height, standing on the walls of Acre back in 1191 looking over the conquered city.



Preparing a Figure and Creating a Base

The figure of the sergeant, by sculptor Andrea Jula, is beautiful, with the Templar appearing gloomy, tired after the battle. It is a classic figure and is cast in metal in a 90mm scale. Like all Pegaso figures, it has great posture and details enhanced with high-quality casting. In common with all metal figures, he required some preparation: removing casting lines, drilling holes and installing pins from steel wire into the shield, legs and sword. I assembled the figure completely before applying the primer. I didn't place the sword as the manufacturer suggests, at a distance from the figure, but glued it directly to the folds of clothes. This made it more durable for subsequent transportation. To prepare a metal figure I use small files, a modelling knife, drill bits of different diameters, and fine sandpaper. To assemble the figure I used, as always, a two-part epoxy glue from a builders' merchants. Once everything was together, I primed the figure with AK-Interactive Grey Primer (AK1010) (photos 1 & 2).



The base on which we install the painted figure is of great importance. By base I don't just mean a wooden stand, but the groundwork, an imitation of a fragment of a natural landscape or architecture. A painted figure mounted on a quality base looks so much more impressive and spectacular. The process of making a fragment of nature or architecture is no less exciting than painting the figure itself. A fragment of the fortress wall perfectly complements this figure and tells the story of this moment in history.

To simulate masonry, I used a fine-grained cork, which can be found in building supermarkets or through online model shops (3-5). The pattern of the stone was drawn in pencil. Then I cut the pattern into the cork with the sharp edge of the needle file. Cork is a convenient material to work with: old, weathered

stonework is easy to make, picking off slices of cork with a knife, scratching cracks in the stonework and imitating chips. I then gave the cork a rub over with fine sandpaper to remove any loose bits. Everything was assembled using superglue and also primed with AK-Interactive Grey Primer.

Base Painting

I began the project by painting the base first. The Holy Land and the Crusades are associated with fortresses made of sandstone, with dusty desert shades. For the base I used Chocolate Brown (AK3021) and Tan (AK3026) mixed together in different ratios. To diversify the appearance of different stones, I added Golden Sand (AK3111) and Brown Leather (AK303). Abteilung 502 Bitume (ABT004) oil paint, which I diluted with normal white spirit, was used to highlight the joints of the stone masonry, small cavities and cracks. For highlighting, I used Highlight Flesh (AK30130), Desert Yellow (AK3112) and White (AK3027). I used the 'dry brush' method

over large areas to add texture and highlights to large areas and used a thin brush to highlight the edges of the cracks with a very light mixture of the previously mentioned colours. This drew attention to the different angles of the stones and horizontal surfaces (6).

Face Painting

As usual, I used a mixed technique of acrylics and oils (12-16). The base for the flesh areas was Vallejo Model Color Beige (70.917), Cavalry Brown (70.982) and White (70.951). With this in place, I then proceeded to shade and highlight the face with Abteilung 502 oil paints: first shadows were Ochre (ABT 092), Flesh Shadow (ABT 215) and some Shadow Brown (ABT 015); second Shadows, Shadow Brown; highlights, first shadows and Sunny Flesh Tone (ABT 145); final highlights, Sunny Flesh Tone and a bit of Light Flesh Tone (ABT 135). The facial



hair was completely painted using brown acrylics. I used bold, light shades to highlight individual strands of hair (7).

Chainmail Painting

Having first painted the figure's face, I always move on to paint the chain mail, armour and helmet. In this figure the area of chain mail is relatively small and painting chain mail is not difficult. It's easiest to start with a dark base with the subsequent highlighting of the chain with a dry brush. The base was Vallejo Model Color Black (70.950) and I then dry brushed with Silver (70.997) and Natural Steel (70.864), with the final highlights in the most illuminated places pure Silver.

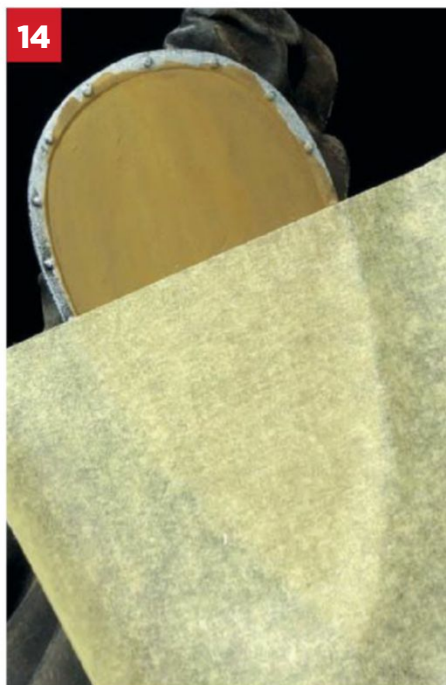
Painting the Coat

Many painters consider white and black the two most difficult finishes to recreate effectively. However, over the years I have gained enough experience that painting black and white doesn't fill me with the same trepidation as it once did. The most

important thing is not to begin with either pure white or black. I began painting the white coat with the intention of replicating a rather dirty piece of fabric, as well as depicting some sharp contrasts of light and dark. Fortunately, the folds are very crisply sculpted and cast and this creates room for experimentation.

The base was a relatively dark blend of White (AK3027) and Chocolate Brown (AK3021). For the shadows, I gradually added more Chocolate Brown and then Black Rubber (AK3007). The darkest places, the undercuts, were painted pure Black Rubber. I added more White and a little Desert Yellow to the base mix for the highlights, and finally, with the lightest places and very sparingly, pure White. I made a point of highlighting the edges of the material to demarcate the shape of the figure clearly.

A few words should be said about the painting technique when approaching the fabric. I did not try with heavily thinned coats of acrylic as I would normally, almost like glazes, in order to get smooth transitions. Instead my goal was to obtain the rough texture of the fabric. So, I worked with a brush using jabbing



movements. I started a wide old brush and gradually, as I 'came into the world' I took 1.5 brush and worked on drawing small dots more accurately in place. The edges of clothes and tears on the fabric were also worked with similar strokes and dots (8).

The Shoes

The key to painting the shoes was again textures, an imitation of the deterioration and wear of an old pair of shoes with a fairly strong contrast, achieved through spot work with a brush (9). The base was Brown Leather (AK3031) and some Black Rubber. Then, details were gradually added with White and a little Tan (AK3026) added to the base mixture. The folds are sculpted into the shoe and these assist in painting the shoes with some big contrasts of highlights and shadows. The socks of the boots the boots were similarly highlighted to look dusty and worn out, while the shadows and the impression of dirt was added with Black Rubber.

The Cloak

Next, I made a start painting the cloak. I employed a similar technique to that used when painting the coat and the boots. This was designed to achieve a rough texture. The base was Black Rubber with Chocolate Brown and a little bit of White (10). This was highlighted by gradually adding White and a little Desert Yellow, up to the most aggressive highlights. Again, the transitions in shade were obtained by point touches of the brush. The shadows were painted with the addition of Pure Black (AK3084). Dirt and dust on the coat and the cloak were added with Chocolate Brown and Desert Yellow, heavily thinned with water as well as with a thicker paint mix, stippling with an old flat brush. Finally, I added several filters of Shadow Brown oil paint, heavily thinned with white spirit (11).

The Sword

The base coat for the sword was painted Vallejo Model Color Natural Steel and some Black. The shadows were added with



19



20



▶ a mixture of Black and Gloss Varnish (70.510). The highlights were Natural Steel and Silver. Now the almost finished figure was beginning to look very impressive (12).

The Shield

As one of the main aims of this project was to create the impression of a battleworn warrior who has survived another encounter with the enemy, it was important to spend some time on the shield, an integral part of his equipment and a focal point of the finished figure. Contemporary images often show the Templars with a white and black shield with a red cross on the white part of the shield. As a base, I used a mixture of Desert Yellow and White, with some Golden Sand (AK3111) (13). I protected the lower half of the shield with masking tape and

using a foam sponge, I gently sponged on a very light mixture of White with a little Desert Yellow (14). I applied this in such a way as to not completely cover the base colour and leave more gaps in the central part of the shield (15). The lower part of the shield was painted in the same way (16), using a mixture of Pure Black and a little Golden Sand.

The cross was neatly painted by hand with a not very bright mixture of Red (AK3048) and Chocolate Brown (17). I then gently sponged on small amounts of the base colour, concentrating these towards the centre of the cross. Then I painted on the marks left by the blows of the enemy's sword and other areas of damage. The metal edge of the shield was painted with Vallejo Natural Steel and some Black. I then applied a light filter with Shadow Brown oil paint. Finally, the rivets and edges of the shield were

highlighted with Silver (photo 18).

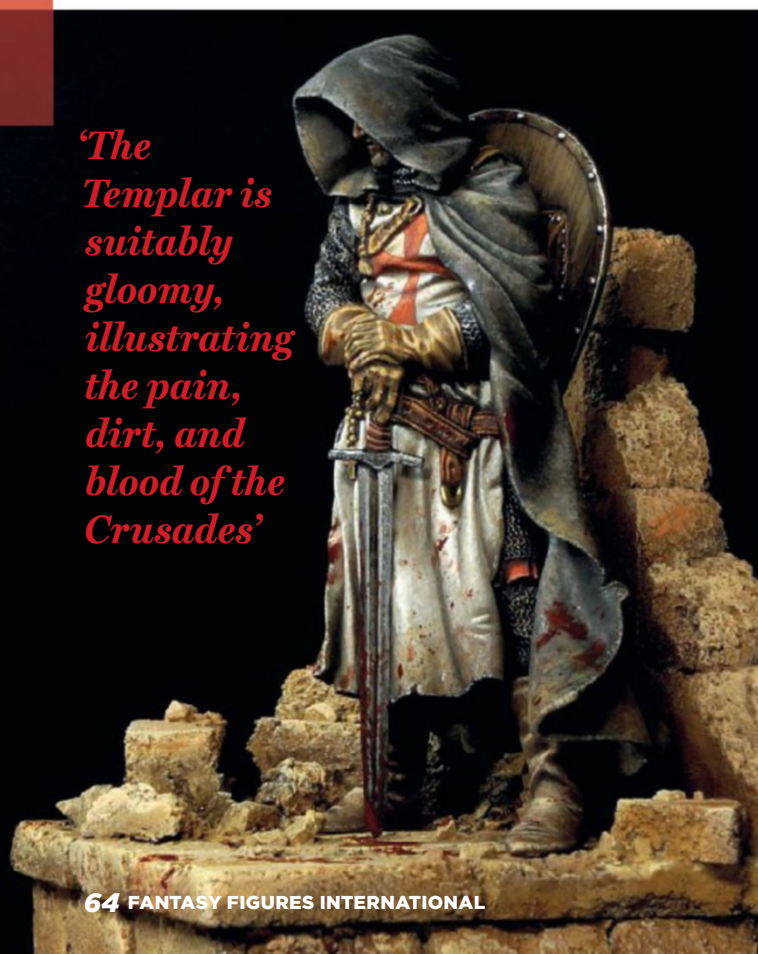
Blood

The spots and traces of blood on the figure were imitated with oil paints. For representing blood the gloss, color saturation, and transparency of oil paints are very useful properties. I used A Warm Red (BT025) with a bit of Bitume (ABT004). On the shield and sword the paint was applied undiluted (19 & 20). However, when applying blood effects on the fabric it is worth diluting the oil paint with white spirit. First, the spots will not look so bright and will diffuse a little on the surface as if absorbed into it. Second, the white spirit will help matt down the appearance of the dried oil paint.

Conclusion

I was very pleased with the final outcome, a suitably impressive finish to this imposing figure. The Templar is suitably gloomy, illustrating the pain, dirt, and blood of the Crusades. The base perfectly complements the story told by the figure itself. You have probably noticed that I painted this figure with a very limited palette of colours, regardless of the effect I was trying to achieve. This allowed me to obtain a fairly balanced and restrained appearance on the finished figure as a whole. Muted tones and textures and broad contrasts within a limited range of colours all added to the overall effect I wanted to achieve. This is a great figure and I would without hesitation recommend it as the centrepiece of any collection. ■

'The Templar is suitably gloomy, illustrating the pain, dirt, and blood of the Crusades'



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Pegaso 90mm Templar Sergeant XIII Century (ref. 90-038). See www.pegasoworld.com for more details. It's available in the UK from Historex Agents (www.historexagents.com).



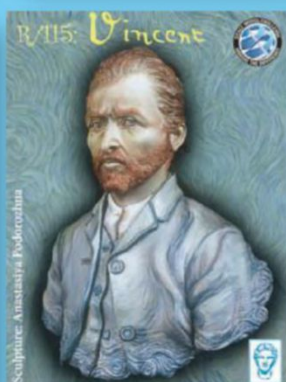
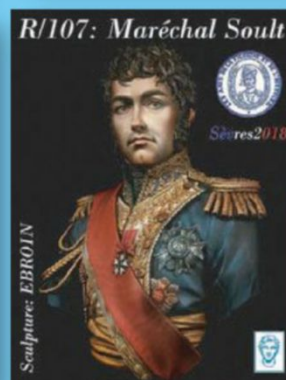
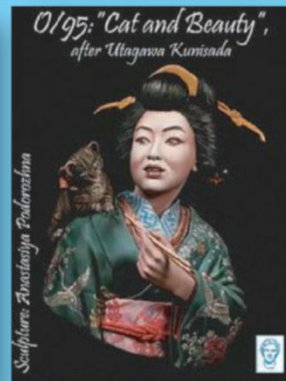
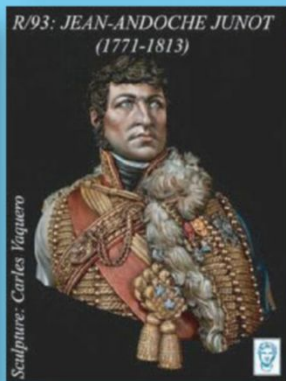
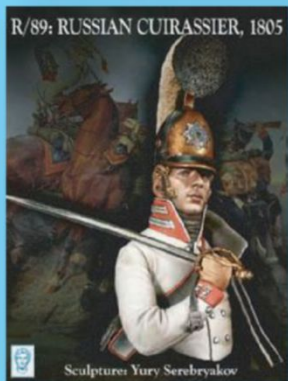
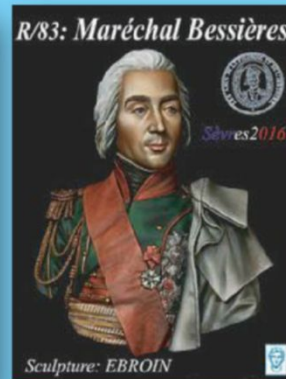
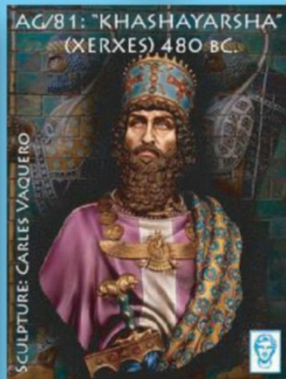
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At the Bench

Conrad Mynett

Robert Lane with some wizard reflections from the depths of Norwich.

I originally met Conrad through the, now sadly closed, Basement Forum. I have had the privilege of knowing him for several years and through that time his enthusiasm for figure painting has never diminished. Although he is a multiple gold medal, Golden Demon and best of show winner he is always happy to share his methods and ideas with others and ask for opinions on his own work. There's many a time I have had a beautifully painted figure shoved, unexpectedly, under my nose whilst setting up the trade stand and I feel honoured that he still thinks my opinion is worth hearing!

I asked Conrad about his entry into figure painting. I knew that roleplaying and computer games are important to him and wondered if his interest and participation in these had an influence on his figure painting:

"In a way the role playing led directly to figure painting. Before that, my introduction to modelling started with Airfix kits and moved on to Tamiya which might have had a figure or two with them, but it wasn't my focus. Role playing led to the whole world of 30mm figures from Games Workshop, Ral Partha and Grenadier.

Meanwhile a general interest in fantasy and sci-fi, whether it was books, comics or movies led to a focus on those sorts of figures in preference to historic subjects. Then when I moved to Norwich for university, the local games store also had some larger scale historic figures from Almond and Post Militaire. Years later it was another games store that revived my interest in the hobby when I came across some of the Rackham miniatures.

Now it is hard to quantify exactly how much this influences the final result with most of my pieces, but I do find that it helps me build the scene and my own story for a piece. For instance, right now there is a piece on my desk of a wizard walking down a step with his staff held before him, and I can imagine him descending into some ruins, the steps slippery with damp and moss, just as if it is a situation in a game.



Conrad Mynett



'Black Magic', a one-off figure sculpted by Chris Clayton.

Also, all the cover art and interior art in the rule books I have read must have had an effect, along with all the comics and the varied art styles they use. It doesn't tend to be anything direct, but it sits at the back of my thoughts and probably directs small touches one way or another. The exception to this would be the Lucas Pina sculpted bust I painted at the end of last year; about half way through the work on the face I realised I was drawing very heavily on the style used by Cam Kennedy in the graphic novel I'd just been reading, *The Light and Darkness War*."

The figures that Conrad paints are varied both in scale and subject. I was interested to find out what he looked for when choosing a figure to work on:

"I think it starts with a general reaction to the figure, does it catch my eye, is it 'cool'? I tend to have a preference for a casual pose or something less common, so if doing an historic figure, I'm more likely choose a civilian instead of a military piece. That said, I did a German soldier because of his casual pose; just walking down the street wearing a great coat with his hands in his pockets. And the latest piece I did



'CCCP' from Hangar 18 Miniatures.

Games Workshop's recent Ambull figure.

was a barbarian just standing and leaning on his axe, although I'd replaced the axe with a spade so he could work on his vegetable patch. Beyond the initial reaction, I like to make sure the cast is good and the details are crisp where they need to be. But nothing too busy, it's good to have space to interpret the figure my own way.

Obviously the sculpting of the face is very important, unless you are working on an unusual composition, as this will probably be the focal point of the piece so I like to be able to show some character, especially with larger scale pieces and busts. Maybe a few wrinkles around the eyes or a turn to the lip; it can be harder to add focus with a young smooth face. Another situation would be where I have an idea for a piece such as the American dust bowl figure I did, where I already had the concept in my mind, but needed to find a figure to fit it. On a couple of occasions, I've had an idea on seeing a figure and need another to complete the scene. In these situations, the available options tend to be more limited and I might need to do some minor conversion work as the 'perfect' figure just isn't available."

Conrad's figures tell stories, for some of his single figures ➤

'Bolshevik', sculpted by Yuri Serebryakov for Castle Miniatures.



'Cornelius in Yellow' from Smart Max.

Cornelius
In Yellow

'One Sword, One Soul, One Strike' from Gigantic Miniatures.



Elan 13's
'Ogre'.

▶ he uses backdrops to stage the piece. My favourite piece of his work is called Sky Surfer, which depicts the surfer in front of a wall painted to look as if she is moving rapidly forward. I asked Conrad how important is setting and story to him when working on a figure:

"I tend to have a strong idea of the scene and setting for the figure, so I have always paid a great deal of attention to the basing. Even with a simple piece of, say, a desert, you can add the slope of a dune, maybe a piece of pottery being covered by the sand or a lizard scurrying away from the figure. A simple patch of grass would vary in height, a few weeds and flowers, perhaps a rock or even taller grass growing around a fallen branch.

I remember seeing some pieces by Andrew Norman at Euro Militaire, a soldier walking out of a book, a man working the garden next to his air raid shelter. The soldier wasn't just pinned in front of the book, the modeller had extended the page into the path the soldier walked upon. The gardener and his garden were emerging from a plant pot. I know this sort of approach is no longer uncommon, but it was innovative at the time, and completely new to me.

A backdrop isn't necessary to set the scene, but it can be a very useful tool. The first time I used it was for a sky surfer, an idea taken directly from the pages of 2000 AD. I could have built a detailed building front for the figure to be flying past, but it would be static detail; a flat panel allowed me to paint a steaking effect as if the wall was going past in a blur. Next was a monotone piece, with a figure standing in a hallway. The wall forming the backdrop, covered in peeling wallpaper, the holes clearly indicating a house long fallen



'Jack Frost',
another Chris
Clayton piece.



'Faster Renfield',
a Spira Mirabilis
Miniatures' figure.

into disrepair. After this I did the dust bowl piece. I wanted to convey the desolation that the drought had brought to the land, and for that, a small patch of dusty ground at the feet of the figure seemed inadequate. So, thinking of the way scenery can be used at the theatre, I built a background in three layers, the foreground with a half-buried car, the mid ground with an abandoned house and the far distance with a cloudless sky.

Later I would do a piece where the backdrop, was literally theatre scenery. Two flat pieces painted to look like buildings leaning close to each other, with support struts at the back and a note attached to say which scene they were for, the figure now becoming an actor on a stage.

But not all backdrops need to be flat panels. The World

War I Tommy standing at the bottom of trench, the wood, dirt and sandbags forming the wall behind him. The barbarian I mentioned earlier with his spade is standing against a fence with some trees to provide a dark backdrop and give a sense of autumn. There are many ways to adjust the composition of a piece and provide setting, backdrops are just one, but with careful thought they can be a very strong tool."

Conrad has never been afraid to experiment with style and methods of paint application. I talked to him about the experimental approach he has used over the years, for instance painting a bust almost entirely using one colour or using a palette knife instead of a brush. I wanted to know what he had learnt from these experiments:

"The standard approach to fantasy painting owes a lot to Games Workshop, a smooth graduation and a strong focus on edge highlights to show off the detail of the figure. Although display painting takes this a step or two further, my initial work owed a lot to this approach. Then over time I slowly pushed myself to try different things.

I've always liked impressionist painting, Monet, Turner and the like, especially their use of colour and lighting. This is what led me to my first attempt at a stippled sort of effect, something where you could actually see the brush strokes. I will have to admit the first couple of attempts failed. I found it really difficult to prevent myself reverting to my standard painting techniques. So then I tried once again, but this time using a set of flat brushes and I found this worked; the change in tools allowing me to change my approach

The 'palette knife' experiment was an extension of this approach, motivated by some examples of portrait art on canvas; wondering if it would be possible to actually have some physical texture to the paint finish. Judged on those concepts it probably wasn't a great success, although I did learn that a rubber tipped clay shaper seemed a much better tool to cope with the hard surface and sculpted detail than the harder implements I'd tried initially. Towards the end I did manage to obtain some of the texture I'd been looking for. With a better knowledge of the heavy body artist acrylics now available it might be worth revisiting this idea if I can find a suitable bust without too many sharp edges.

The other area where I experimented was with different methods of contrast for shading, in part, brought about by the same study of the approach various people had been taking with portraiture; quite often you can see great use of green and blue tones in the shadows. Not the obvious colours you would expect to see on a face. The first time, I focused on saturation to provide the contrast. The shadows were a little darker, but also very desaturated, shading



'Agrarian Dude', a conversion of a
Klukva Miniatures piece.



'Black Paladins' from Rackham.

'Green'
from Life
Miniatures.

'Sky
Surfer'
from
Corvus
Belli.

▶ everything to a mid-grey. The face going through a warm grey while the green jacket went through a colder grey before both settled to a darker neutral grey for the deepest shadows. By doing this the shadows became softer, far less of a change in brightness, but it seemed quite natural, similar to the way shadows can lose colour as the evening draws on.

On another occasion I chose to shade everything to green, using the Vietnam war photographer bust from Life Miniatures. The brown hair, the face, the white scarf, the camera, all was shaded with green, though in hindsight I should probably have had a bit more tone and value contrast on the green coat. Shading the black camera body with green was definitely an unusual experience to deal with, it may be more accurate to describe it as reverse lighting.

In all I think this has taught me that a variety of approaches can work successfully, and it is fun to attempt different things. I find this an important part of maintaining my interest in the hobby. It might not produce an award-winning masterpiece every time, but it can teach you a lot about how colours interact and provide other options that you can call upon in future projects."

To continue the discussion on styles of painting I asked Conrad whether he thought that there is a danger of painters following an on-trend style to be successful in competitions and therefore the entries end up as imitations of each other:

"When I returned to the hobby there were several forums that provided excellent feedback, and with the multiple Golden Demon events across Europe at the time it was possible to see trends within different countries. The Spanish seemed to have a more realistic look while many of the pieces at the Italian event would have the most intricate baroque freehand, and their forums would reflect this. Now

there is a lot more individuality across the hobby with blogs and personal Instagram accounts as well as many painters having Patreon campaigns you can follow. I can see that if you focus on following a couple of painters via their Patreon campaign then that will influence the way you paint, and it will be inevitable that similarities in style will occur. Maybe in the short term you will have several similar entries; but if this initial training forms a foundation from which people proceed to develop their own style it has to be good for the hobby as a whole.

On the issue of painting for competition, I would like to add that a competition can be a good method of giving yourself a deadline, something to push your abilities and drive you to improve. But if figure painting is your hobby, it is important to remember that it has to be fun, and you should select pieces that you like, it makes the whole painting process so much easier and prevents the final stages or refinement from becoming a thankless chore."

As I mentioned in the brief introduction, Conrad has been successful in competitions in the UK and the European mainland. He is also an ace at hobnobbing and knows everybody! To finish our discussion, I was interested to know what was the best piece of advice he had been given that's helped to improve his work:

"I would have to go right back to 2007 when I returned to the hobby. I had painted a couple of the Rackham figures that had lured me back to my brushes, and I was looking forward to a project to really push myself. A set of three undead warriors that stand on individual bases that slotted together to form a miniature diorama. I checked other forum posts and came across a thread by Sebastian Archer and plucked up the courage to message him and ask how he had achieved the weathering and rust effects on his piece. His reply was friendly and helpful, and as the project progressed he posted often on the thread. Eventually I'd worked through the piece, all the highlighting and shading was done, the bases were ready and the three of them were the best pieces I had ever done. And I balked at the idea of adding the rust and verdigris to the armour, worried I would spoil what I had already achieved.

He told me to go for it, reminded me that the purpose of the project was to push myself. That even if it does not work, you can still learn from it and take a step forward.

And the other thing he used to say ... "MORE CONTRAST!"■

Rescued...?

Peter Usher presents a dynamic Ma.K. diorama.



After working on some long historically accurate military projects, which I massively enjoy, I find that they can become a little draining, with masses of reference material and minuscule detail. Once my latest large project was finished, I decided to diversify my modelling with other areas of the hobby. One area I find great fun is the world of Fantasy and Sci-Fi. My military modelling is very much based around an actual campaign or battle, with vehicles being as historically correct as possible, down to the uniforms

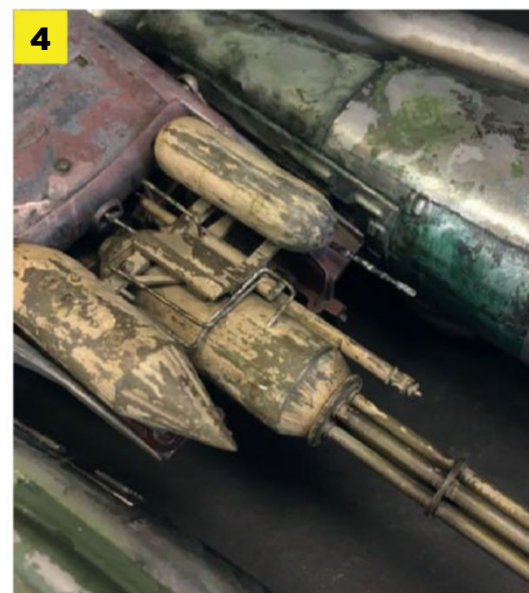
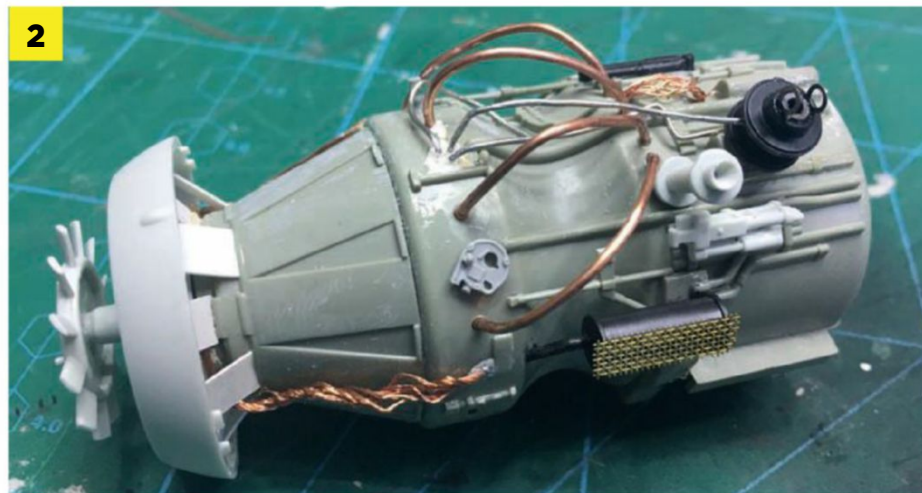
and insignia of the units painted onto sleeves of the figures. Sci-Fi and Fantasy lets my artistic flare come alive, but as George Lucas said, Sci-Fi must have one foot planted in reality to be believable. With this in mind, my Sci-Fi projects are as realistic as possible, and this Maschinen Krieger diorama was a great combination of my military work with the freedom of my imagination.



BE INSPIRED

Hasegawa 1/20 Maschinen Krieger Falke Antigravity Armored Raider (ref. 64101)

© Kow Yokoyama 2020



► The Story

Two things make a diorama work: composition and a clear story. The composition is the arrangement of the buildings, vehicles and figures. You must have a balance between them. I convert and scratch build both a fair amount to get things to harmonise. The story is the other essential part of the diorama. The viewer should almost instantly understand what's going on. There is nothing worse in modelling than a muddled dio. If I look at a diorama and ask myself "What's going on there?" then the modeller, in my opinion, has missed the point.

In this dio I wanted to create lots of

drama, but harder still I wanted the diorama to be about what's just appeared nearby or on the horizon. It looks like the characters in the scene now need rescuing. The downed pilot thought his prayers had been answered when the rescue team turned up. Yet from the body language of the figures and the expressions on their faces they were just about to get into a lot more trouble and their day was far from over!

The Build

The diorama began with the conversion of the Ma.K. Falke from 1/20 scale to 1/35 scale. I changed the scale for two reasons. First, I thought it would be great

to make the ship appear much larger, allowing it to be a two-man ship – pilot and navigator/gunner – just like an Apache gunship. Second, I tend to work mostly in 1/35 so my spares box and figures would work well for this scene.

I started with the cockpit. The kit goes together beautifully, and to be fair a lot of armour modelling companies could learn a lot from Hasagawa. Two seats were taken from a 1/35 pick-up truck, and I added some seatbelts that were scratch built from sticky-back aluminium foil (photo 1). I then added some small spares to give some 1/35-scale detail to the cockpit. The interior was painted with a very dirty and dusty theme, just like I would with the interior of a modern vehicle. I used nothing but acrylics from the Vallejo range and finished the area off with some granite powder to give a slight sheen and bare metal finish. Most of the cockpit would be out of view, but with a close inspection of the diorama I'm sure you could see inside, so it's nice to show the extra level of attention in the interior to reinforce the point that this is a real



aircraft. The only other place I enhanced the kit was the external rear engine and the large gun on the front. I added brass wire and small parts from old kits to add that extra layer of detail, allowing my imagination to run free (2).

Painting

Painting the kit was great fun. I used the hairspray technique to create several layers of faded paint. This is a fluid and random method that can give some outstanding effects. I did have a strange reaction between the Tamiya undercoat, the hairspray and the Vallejo paints on the top layer. I suspect that the undercoat was not 100% cured so Tamiya Base Red softened a little when it came into contact with the hairspray. Years ago, I would have panicked at the sight of the red undercoat coming away and blending with the grey topcoat, but now I'm more interested in the effect it creates. I was pleased with the outcome, and even added a few more coats of hairspray and layers of different shades of grey to further enhance the weathered effect.

The bare metal was a chrome aerosol made for automobiles. I masked off the worn grey areas and sprayed two layers of the chrome paint. Once this was dry, I moved back to using the hairspray effect for different, worn shades of green and brown which gave a fantastic patchwork looking vehicle, telling a story of its own (3 & 4). This craft had been involved in a prolonged conflict in a harsh environment, and the shabby paint reflected that fact.

Figures

The next step was the figures. This consisted of two elements, the battle droid and Marine and of course, the pilot of the downed ship. The battle droid was an Ma.k Polar Bear, again in 1/24 scale, but easily converted down to 1/35. I did not change the suit very much, simply adding some detail inside the area where the head would be sticking out. I have always liked the Warhammer 40K Space Marine aesthetic, so I played around with this idea. To keep one foot in reality, I made this a complete robot with a droid head. I reasoned that the supporting humans the robot would work with would naturally react better to a human-like face. I went for a bald head from the 1/35-scale Hornet range as these heads are by far the best on the market. They come in a multitude of expressions, and I made a few options, but in the end, I went for the 'screaming and snarling' set (ref. HH-14).

The robot was painted in the classic 'rescue yellow.' I used the Andrea paint Yellow Paint (ref. ACS-011). I went for a colour paint set as being a military modeller, yellow doesn't really feature in my normal repertoire, plus paint sets give you the highlight and lowlights without too much messing around. Once the basic colours were down, I added chips and scrapes with a 00 Series 7 pointed brush. The damaged areas were first painted in the highest highlight in the set, and then a black-brown colour was placed in the centre of the light colour, a little bit like a fried egg, the yoke being the

black-brown colour and deepest part of the scratch. This can be a slow process, but it builds up a nice natural-looking appearance of wear and tear. The whole robot then received some bespoke dark brown washes to tone down any areas that didn't blend in with the overall theme (5).

The Humans

The Marine came from the Live Resin company, their attention to detail is fantastic. The only variations I made was the addition of a Hornet head from the same set as the droid and a 1/48-scale Mini Gun also from Live Resin. This exact replica of the real thing was a mini kit in its own right and also came with an ammunition storage box. Once complete, I positioned the weapon in his hands and attached the ammunition box on his back. A yellow number five was added to his chest plate to visually connect him to his buddy, the Rescue Droid.

The pilot figure is an injured figure from a 1/35-scale Russian tank crew set which needed lots of converting to fit into his awkward position clinging onto the front of his crashed ship. I used Magic Sculpt over a wireframe to position him correctly. I added his hair using the same putty. I painted him in Vallejo acrylics and added a small amount of blood to his face to show a small head injury from the crash landing (6). I usually avoid blood on figures, but if it is applied, it must be used very sparingly and avoid bright red, at this scale a red-brown colour works very well.



► The Diorama.

I decided to make the landscape a ruined city, with a mass of shattered concrete and steel. I placed the vehicle on a slight slope and angled from left to right. The central point to the diorama is the marine looking up, flanked either side by the pilot and the robot. Happy with the composition, I created the base out of blue Styrofoam, carving the foam so the ship sat naturally on the base.

The base was covered in cured broken plaster of paris which I had poured into a plastic 'takeaway' tray about 5mm thick the evening before. Working front to back, I placed the shattered concrete slabs on the base, continually setting

the vehicle back on the base to ensure a good fit. The base was sprayed black then the sides masked off. The concrete was sprayed in several shades of grey using Tamiya acrylics. Once that was dry, watered-down earth paints from the Wilder Aqua-ILne range (Dark Earth AL03, and Black Smoke AL 10) were washed over the concrete to blend and merge the greys and give them a super matt finish. The final stage was some subtle dry brushing with some light grey Humbrol enamels to highlight the concrete surfaces. Everything was then glued into place and any glue marks were painted over and blended.

Final Thoughts

This has been a very enjoyable project, using 1/20, 1/35 and 1/48-scale parts on the same diorama. This diorama was lucky enough to get a Gold medal at the world-famous Scale Model Challenge model competition in Veldhoven in the Netherlands. This was a great result considering this was my first real attempt at a Sci-Fi diorama. I'm sure it won't be my last sci-fi project, that's for sure. Finally, thanks to my son Harry for being my wingman throughout the project as always. ■

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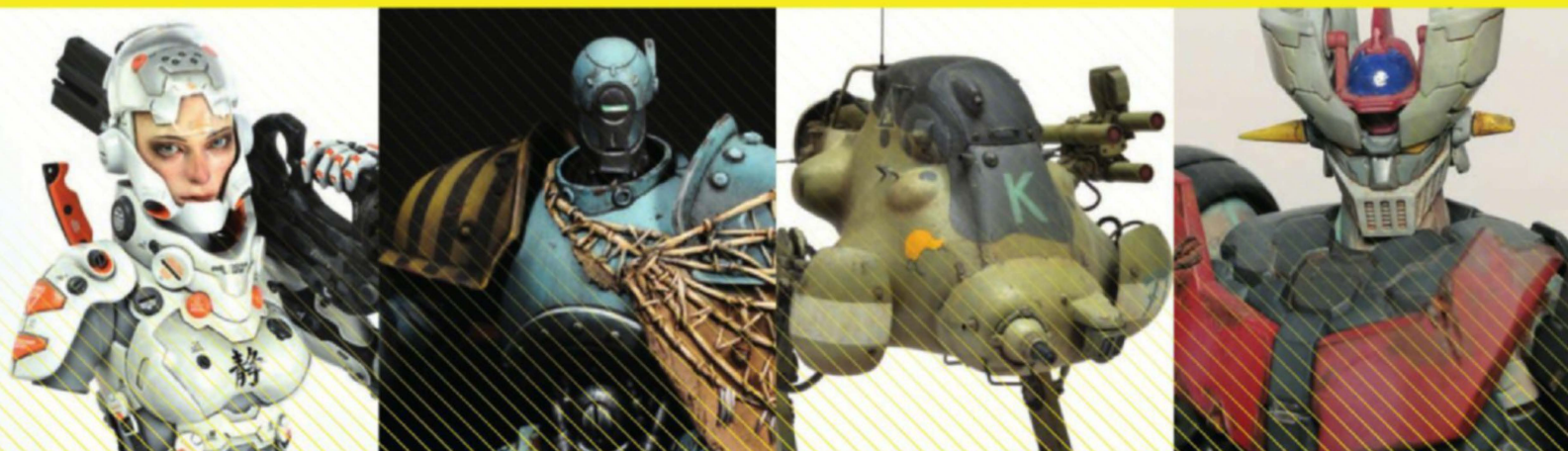
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Queens'

*Bryan Krueger
returns with a classic
Ma.K. design.*

When Hasegawa first released the 1/20-scale Robot Battle V (Five) MK44 AmmoKnight in 2014, I have to admit, I wasn't that keen on the design. It looked like a robot-frog with bath slippers. Only after really studying the kit and seeing photos of finished builds did I realize how wrong I was. The intricacies and uniqueness of the design really grew on me until now it's one of my favorite Kow Yokoyama designs. Since 2014, Hasegawa has released six different versions of the MK44 kit, mostly with different weapon configurations or special equipment for space use. I've completed seven MK44s so far and have two more on the bench as of this writing. It's such a great kit to build out of the box but also a good base for endless scratch builds or garage kit conversions. One of the garage kit conversions I recently built is called the MK44 Ausf. G Queens' B' Knight and is the subject of this article.

The Queens' B' Knight is an original design created by Takaaki Saito based on the space-based MK44 WhiteKnight design by Kow Yokoyama. Takaaki took the Hasegawa WhiteKnight kit and bulked it out with some spare parts and lots of putty to create the unique shapes. The conversion kit is released by LoveLove Garden/Saito Heel, Takaaki's garage kit company that offers some really unique resin kits. Takaaki has collaborated with Kow many times over the years so he has a really good eye for the aesthetic and can create unique designs that look like they belong which is more challenging than it sounds.

The Queens' B' Knight kit was a limited run kit released in October 2017. It's out of production and unfortunately very hard to find now. The kit includes the sprues from a Hasegawa MK44 WhiteKnight Prototype kit along with cast resin parts needed to make the Queens' B' Knight. The resin pieces are cast in baby blue to match the injection molded parts so the presentation is very professional for such a limited-run kit. The kit instructions look very similar to the ones included in the Hasegawa kit, matching the style and paper quality. The only items not included from the Hasegawa kit are the camouflage card and decals. Fortunately, I had spare decals from prior MK44 builds so it was easy to find something that worked. The majority of the instructions build out a basic MK44

'The intricacies and uniqueness of the design really grew on me until now it's one of my favorite Kow Yokoyama designs'



WhiteKnight with a few exceptions. The feet need to be trimmed down to fit the larger resin hover-feet and some plastic needs to be trimmed off for a proper fit of the add-on face sensor block. The rest of the resin add-on bits are direct replacements for the kit parts or simply glue onto the main body to form the large bulbous torso sides and rear badunkadunk or whatever it is. I wanted to change up my build a little so I added additional armour plates to the side bulges and replaced the resin hand with a menacing looking claw. Both were from the spares bin. The only other changes were drilling out a couple of the smoke launchers, replacing kit hoses with braided metal sleeve and adding wire for the launchers. A cast texture effect was added to some of the parts to add some variety. For >

1



2



The Love Candy box looks very professional and inside you'll find a nicely packed Hasegawa Mk44 kit as well as the resin conversion parts.

3



The instructions are equally well produced, mirroring the Hasegawa ones and making this one of the best limited-run resin kits I've made.

the plastic parts I dabbed on liquid cement with an old brush. For the resin pieces, I used Gunze Mr. Surfacer 500. With the kit complete, this menacing looking beast was ready for paint.

Painting

My setup doesn't allow for step-by-step photos (my work bench is the kitchen table and my paint booth is an un-heated garage) so I'll try to be as descriptive as possible

where necessary. The first step before painting was applying a grey primer. I used this to check for any flaws and give the colour coats a solid foundation on the multi-media build. After the parts were cleaned up, I applied a mottled base of multiple colours with an airbrush. Purple, blue, white, green, yellow, whatever were airbrushed in squiggly spots over the whole model. I've seen Max Watanabe use this technique with great results on his hand-painted models so I attempted something similar with an airbrush. It looked

My collection of Hasegawa Mk44s: the Queens' B conversion in the centre certainly look distinct from its fellows.



4



The assembled Queens' B: note the Mr Surfacer stippled onto the resin armour plates for an effective cast texture.

5



hand painted with acrylics. The whole thing was then given a coat of satin clear to seal the paint prior to decals and weathering.

The decals in the Hasegawa MK44 kits are some of the best I have ever used. The colours are solid and the film is very thin. Using Micro Sol and Set, I was able to get the decals snuggled down on the tightly curved and textured surfaces. The decals were airbrushed with another coat of satin clear to seal and eliminate any chance of weathering effects catching an edge of the decal film. A little light work with super fine sand paper and a sharp blade was used to distress the decals.

Making it Real

The first weathering step was a rusty-tan enamel filter to cut back some of the contrast and warm the colours. Next, a dark brown wash was used to accent all the various details.

Chipping was applied with a torn piece of sponge or a fine brush and I applied a lot more than I normally do because I wanted a well-worn looking suit. The chips down to bare metal were accented with rust colour enamels and oils to show the effect of operating in a harsh desert environment. Additional details were picked out with oil paints. The oils were applied straight from the tube and blended in with a flat bristle brush just damp with thinner. Next, I applied speckled effects using oil paints mixed with enamels. Several colours were used: black-brown, rusty-brown, buff and an off-white. These were applied with an old short bristle brush and flicked in short strokes. Any stray marks were cleaned up with a small pointed brush and clean thinner. Washes, straight oils >

6



7



8



The first coats of paint applied. The buff over a mottled finish, applied at random using an airbrush, and then the blue camouflage applied over the buff makes for an arresting and very different-looking suit.

9



Hasegawa make some of the best decals in the business and they settled down perfectly over the textured armour.

10



The overall filter toned down the rather garish camouflage pattern, while the application of a myriad of tiny chips and scratches begins to tell this suit's story.

and speckle effects were applied several times to achieve a finish I was happy with.

Since I was envisioning this suit operating in a desert environment I next focused on the dust effects. The first step was airbrushing a very light buff over the majority of the model, I focused on the lower surfaces like the legs and the armour panels but also blended it up the body. Next I used buff and light tan oil and enamel paints to create washes and accent areas where dust would accumulate. Darker earth tones were then speckled onto the feet and lower surfaces to add some contrast to the buff colour base colour. Over this dusty base, more dark-brown

speckle effects were applied for variety. A large fluid leak was applied to one of the hose connection points with burnt umber and grease effects oil paint. The grease effect oil paint was also thinned and speckled onto the model to simulate grime and fuel stains.

The base started with a small block of pink insulation foam stuffed into a five sided box made from .04" thick styrene sheet. I've built a number of these boxes so most of my MK44s have a consistent looking base. The groundwork is made from Sculptamold, a paper pulp blended with plaster. I added a little water to form a thick paste and spread this onto the pink foam. While the mixture was still wet, it was sprinkled with fine sand and small pieces of gravel. This was gently pressed into the surface and then the feet were pressed into this. When the Sculptamold had partially cured, the model was lifted off and thin white glue was carefully

applied with an eyedropper to the sand and gravel. After this had dried, it was airbrushed with earth tone acrylics. Small clumps of grass fibers were applied and airbrushed to represent dry grass.

The model was glued to the surface with thick acrylic gel medium. A small mixture of acrylic gel, fine sand and pigments was mixed and used to fill in any gaps under the feet. As a final step, dry pigments were applied to blend the groundwork and the model.

Final Thoughts

The Hasegawa MK44 kits are such a great kit to build. Well engineered, easy to assemble, sharp details, excellent decals, clear instructions and a decent sized kit to work with. The Queens' B' Knight add-on allows an already odd looking suit to become a bit more menacing looking. LoveLove Garden has released a few different conversion kits for the basic MK44. Some are available as full kits like this one and others are released as resin add-ons for any of the Hasegawa releases. Unfortunately, these resin kits are produced in very limited numbers and usually sell out quickly. If you are not lucky enough to find one, you can always scratch build your own unique variant with some spare parts and lots of putty. ■

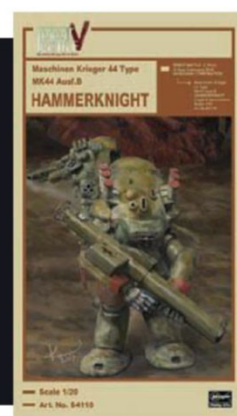


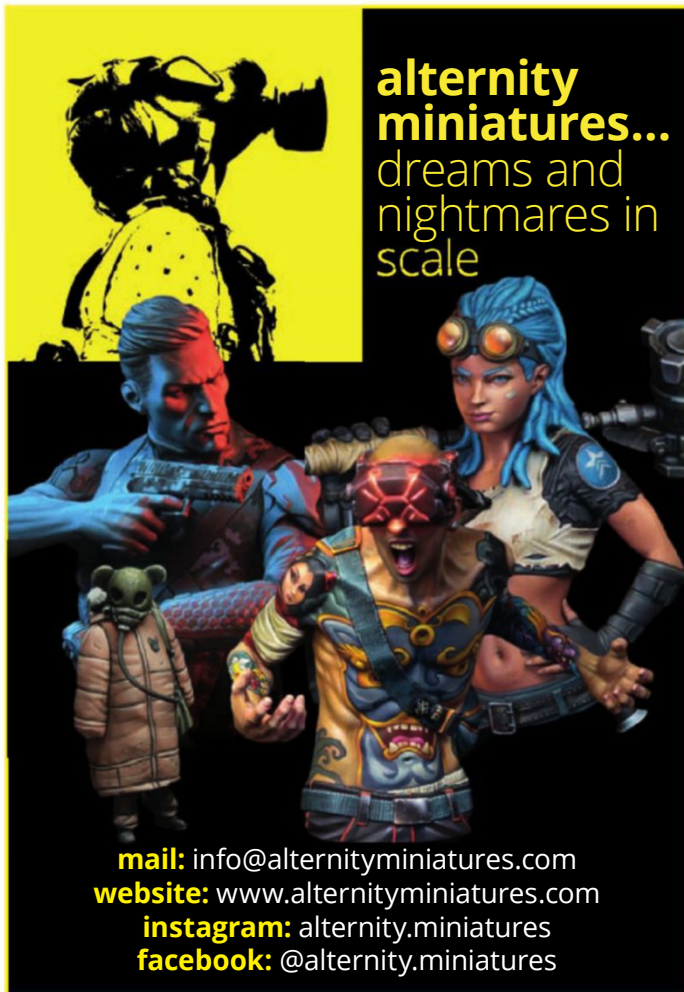
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LoveLove Garden/Saito Heel
1/20 MK44 Ausf. G Queens' B'
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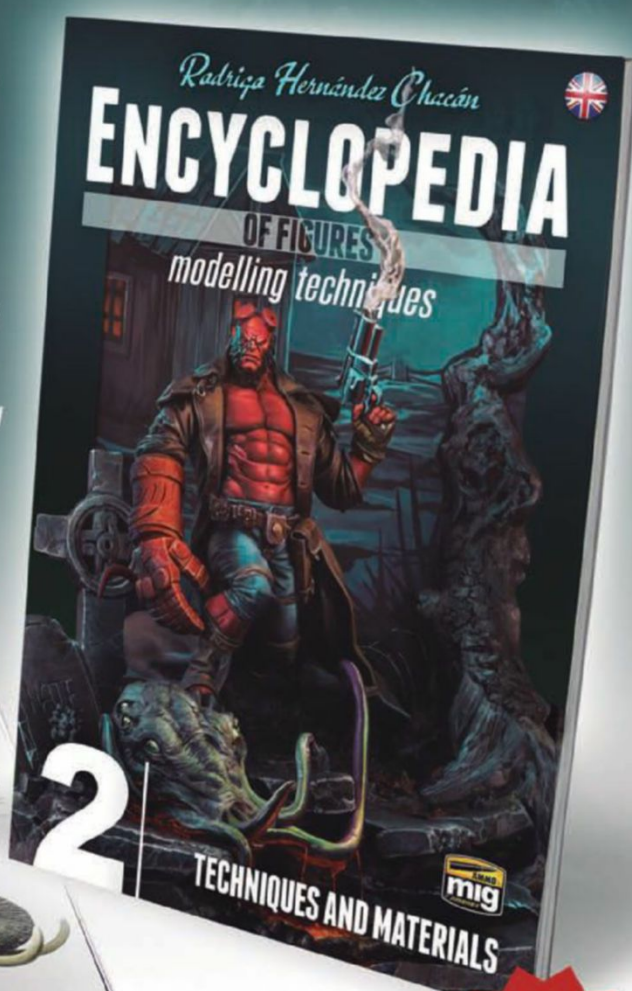


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