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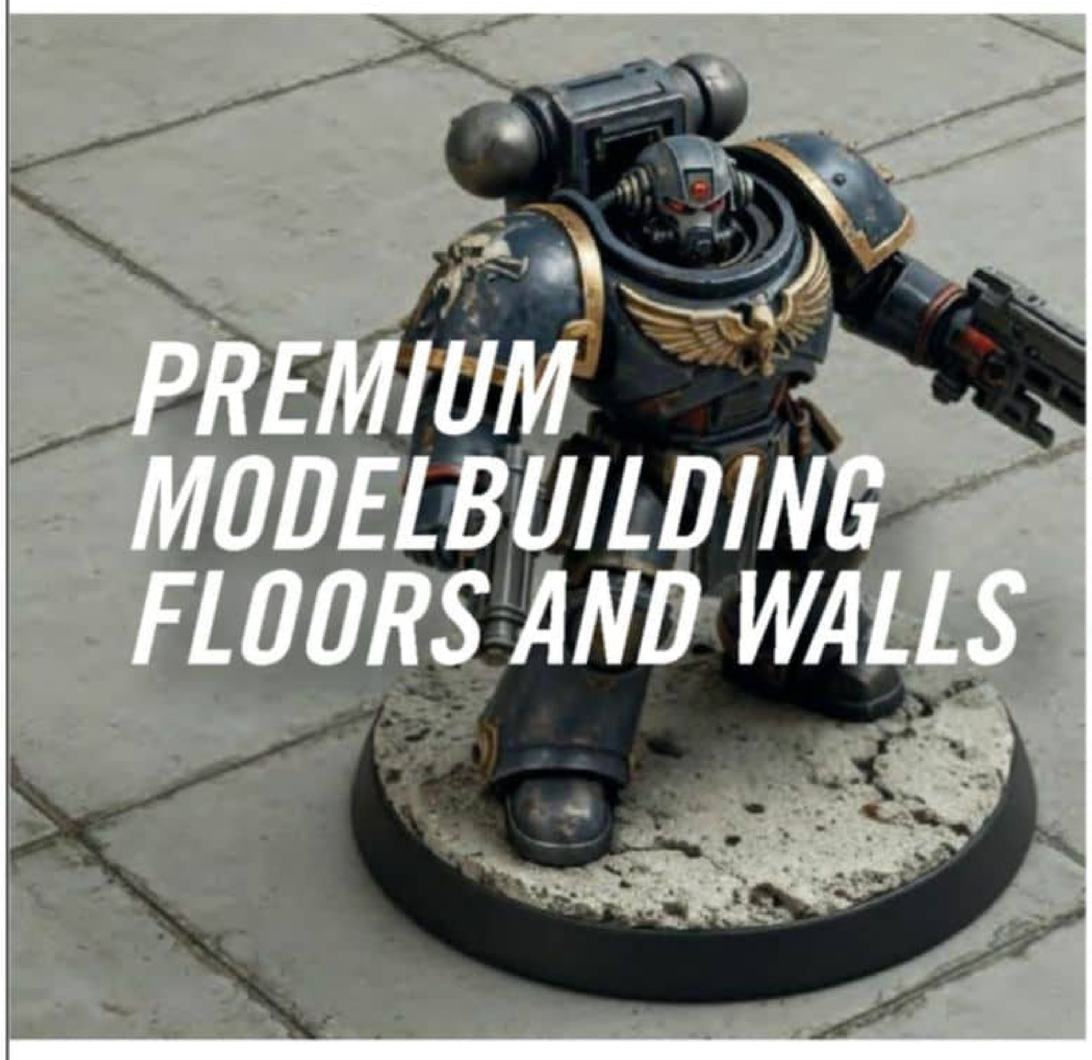
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Pointer Patrol

Managing Editor:
David Grummitt

Sales & Marketing Director:
Tom Foxon
(tom@guidelinepublications.co.uk
Tel: +44(0) 7540153368

Contributors:
Dan Brooker, Miguel Jimenez, Jaffe Lam, Fet Milner, Javier Molina, Paul Mackay, Scott Taylor, V.G. Thorne, Rubén Torregrosa and Maciej Wiertolorz

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Andy Whittaker

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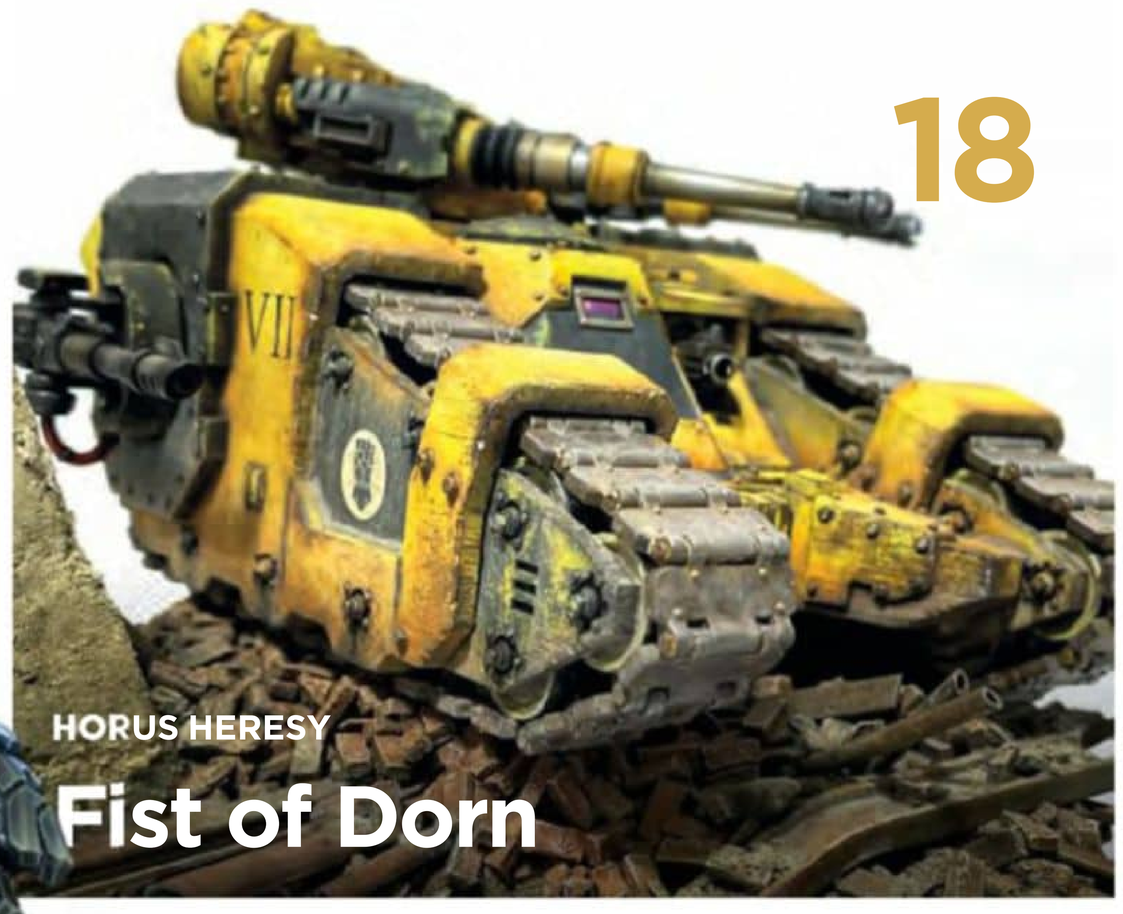
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Welcome...



David Grummitt
Managing Editor
Guideline Publications
davidgrummitt942@hotmail.com



Tom Foxon
Sales and Marketing Director
Guideline Publications
tom@guidelinepublications.co.uk
+44 (0)7540 153368

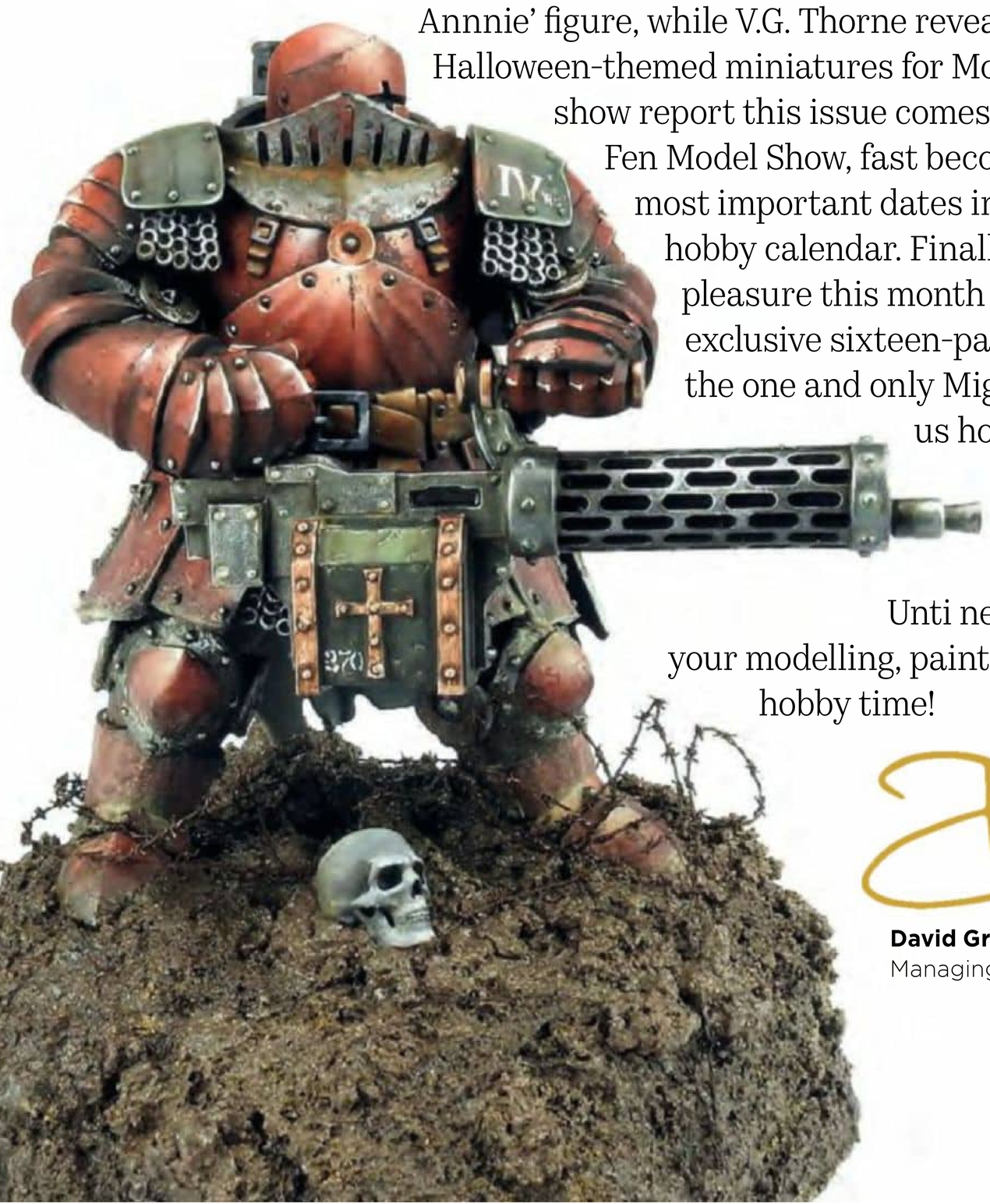


Andy Whittaker
Design
Guideline Publications
andy@guidelinepublications.co.uk

As a magazine editor, the vast majority of my time is spent trying to source the best content to fill our pages. *Fantasy Figures International*, like all our Guideline Publications hobby magazines, is filled with editorial that reflects what hobbyists are spending their money and time on. We don't have a studio or team of 'in-house' contributors, and more often than not I'll either approach someone whose work I've seen on social media, asking them if they'd like to contribute, or regular contributors will share with me what they've been working on. We're also lucky to have friends in the hobby industry who want to promote their work or share news of their latest releases. I would really like to diversify our content and contributors further and use *Fantasy Figures International* as a vehicle to reflect and shape trends in the hobby, but also to shine a light on its little-known corners. So, if you'd like to see your work in these pages or share news of a new product or service you're offering to fellow hobbyists, then do please get in touch.

This month features old and new contributors, as well as some mainstream, and more esoteric, aspects of the hobby. It's a pleasure to welcome back our friends from Polish painting studio Den of Imagination as they explain the process of realising a customer's dream in the form of a custom Ultramarines army. Sticking with the Warhammer theme, Rubén Torregrosa shows he how painted a pre-Heresy Night Lords Assault Squad with IONIC acrylics, while Dan Brooker debuts in these pages with this stunning Sicaran battle tank. In a slightly different vein, Javier Molina showcases his Ork Jetfighter, painted and weathered with Green Stuff World products. It's a pleasure this month to welcome Scott Taylor who shows us how he painted and weathered a Maschinen Krieger armoured fighting suit, while Japanese pop culture is also the theme of Jaffe Lam's build of a Pointer patrol vehicle from the Ultraseven TV series. Miniature painting is not forgotten as Paul Mackay tells us about his award-winning 'Pirate Annnie' figure, while V.G. Thorne reveals the latest Halloween-themed miniatures for Moonstone. Our show report this issue comes from the UK's Fen Model Show, fast becoming one of the most important dates in the European hobby calendar. Finally, it's a great pleasure this month to feature an exclusive sixteen-page pull-out as the one and only Mig Jimenez shows us how to paint a Trench Crusade miniature with IONIC acrylics.

Unti next time, enjoy your modelling, painting and gaming hobby time!



David

David Grummitt,
Managing Editor









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News and Reviews



Project Torc

News this issue of another start-up in the world of miniatures: Laurent Verschaeve of Torcs Painting. Laurent, from Belgium, explains: 'I started painting miniatures about a decade ago. I was no stranger to fantasy at all through video games, movies, comics and life-size role-playing. I began by presenting my paintings in various fantasy oriented events, and then, in 2019, I discovered 3D printing. This resulted in an activity selling licensed figurines and ultimately, the desire to design and produce my own range. I have always oriented the ranges I sold towards humorous, poetic miniatures, as opposed to the battle poses that we more commonly find being offered for sale. I therefore wanted my own miniatures to continue in this genre, while using typical fantasy characters (Dwarves, Orcs and Elves.) This is why the first miniature, Torc, is picking his teeth, looking pensively towards the horizon, and why a future figure could very well just be taking a nap.'

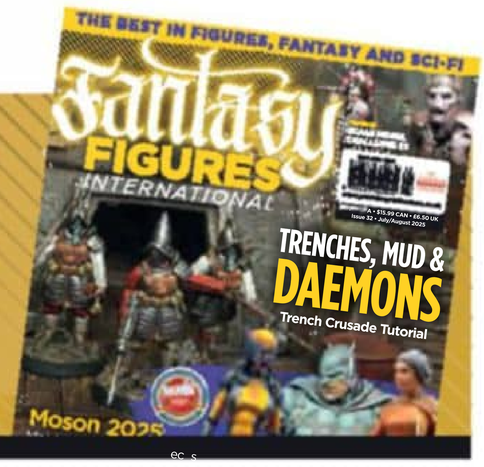


A Short History of Torc

Basically, Torc (that's his name) is one of the individuals who never found his place in life. So, he decided to leave home at an early age. He wanted to travel the world, to meet people with diverse talents and beliefs. He came warrior order, a shaman who listens to nature, a brotherhood of assassins and even a few religious fanatics, but their way of life simply wasn't Torc. Finally, in the middle of a market, facing a fire eater, spinning the fire around him using magic, he chose his destiny ... Yes, Torc will be a dwarf battle mage. You can tell he has travelled a lot; he has few ties. The only real friend he has never had is called Fred, a fire lizard, who's a bit crazy and talks ... a lot.

The miniature has been sculpted by Sara Glezart and printing tests will begin soon. The figure will be available in 90mm. A copy will be sent to hrminiatures to paint the boxart. A few copies will be available in advance at Scale Model Challenge in October and the Kickstarter campaign will begin early in November. If all goes well, Valquiria Studio will take care of production after the conclusion of the Kickstarter starter campaign. The pre-launch page is already available here or just search for 'Torc.'

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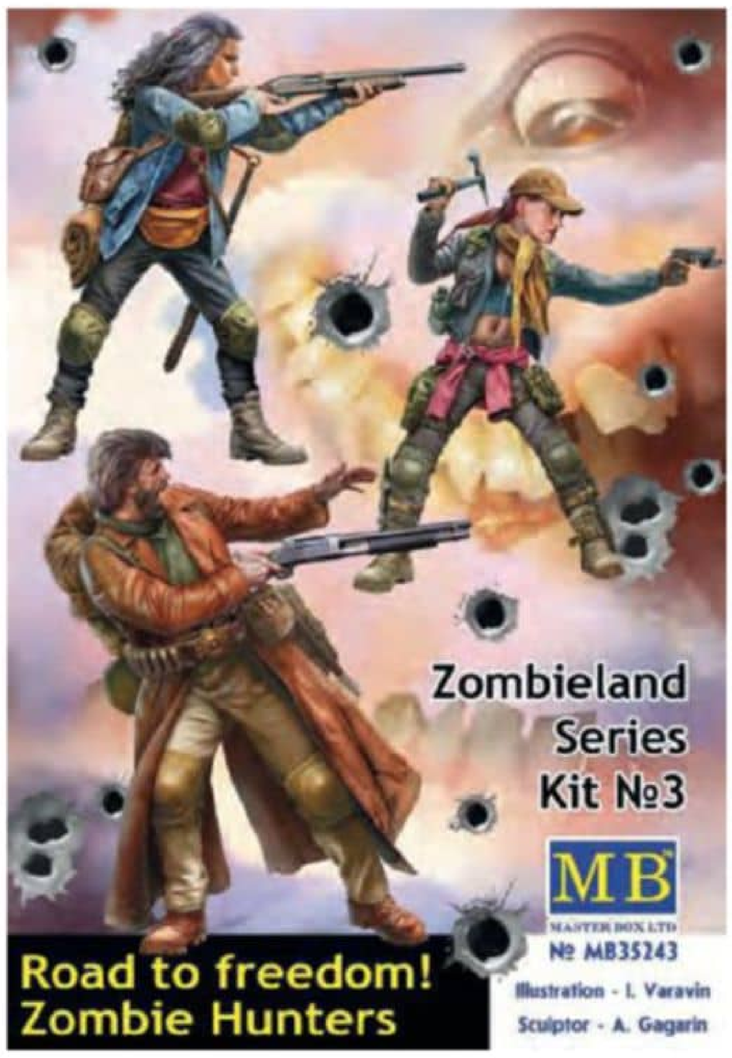
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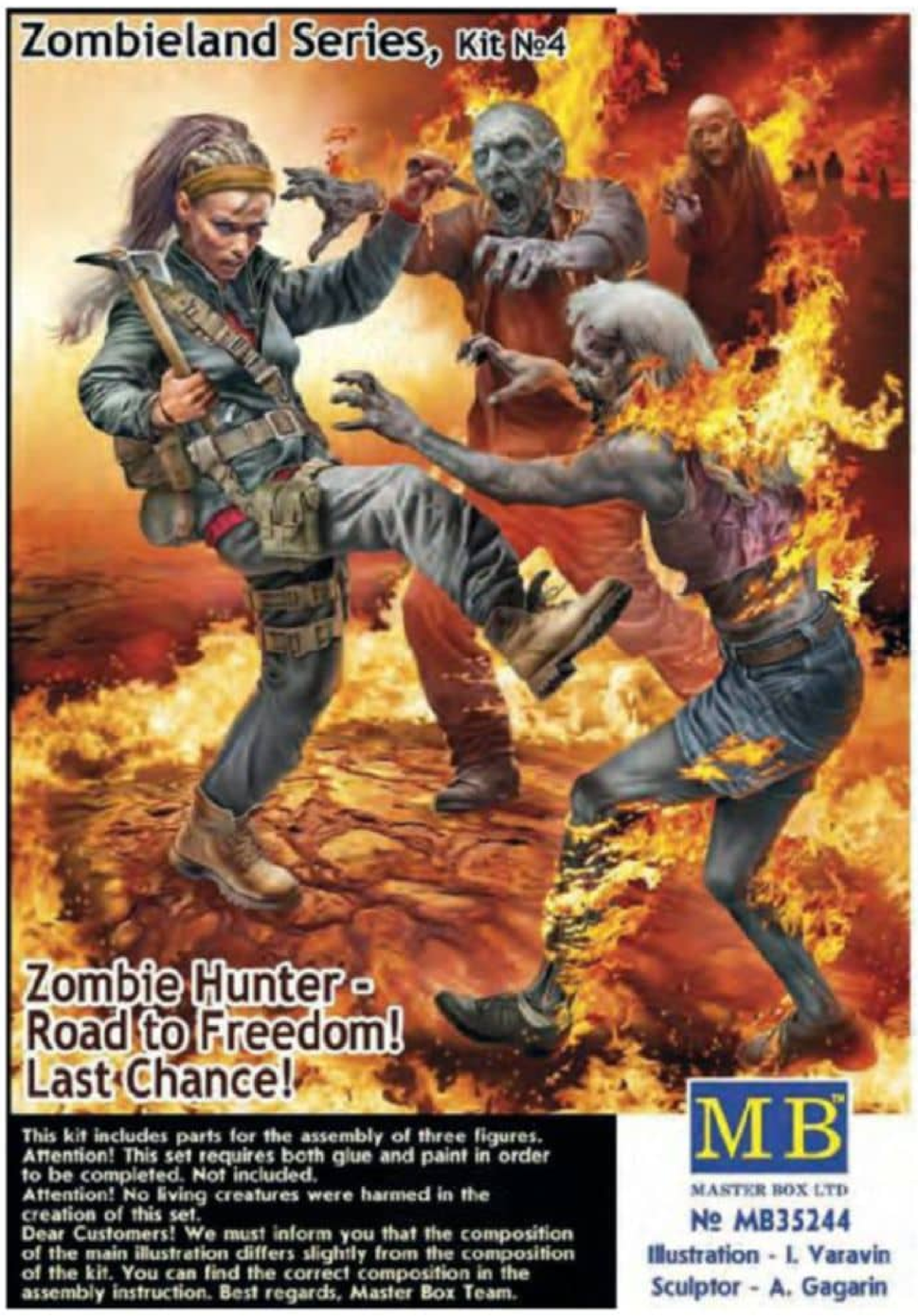
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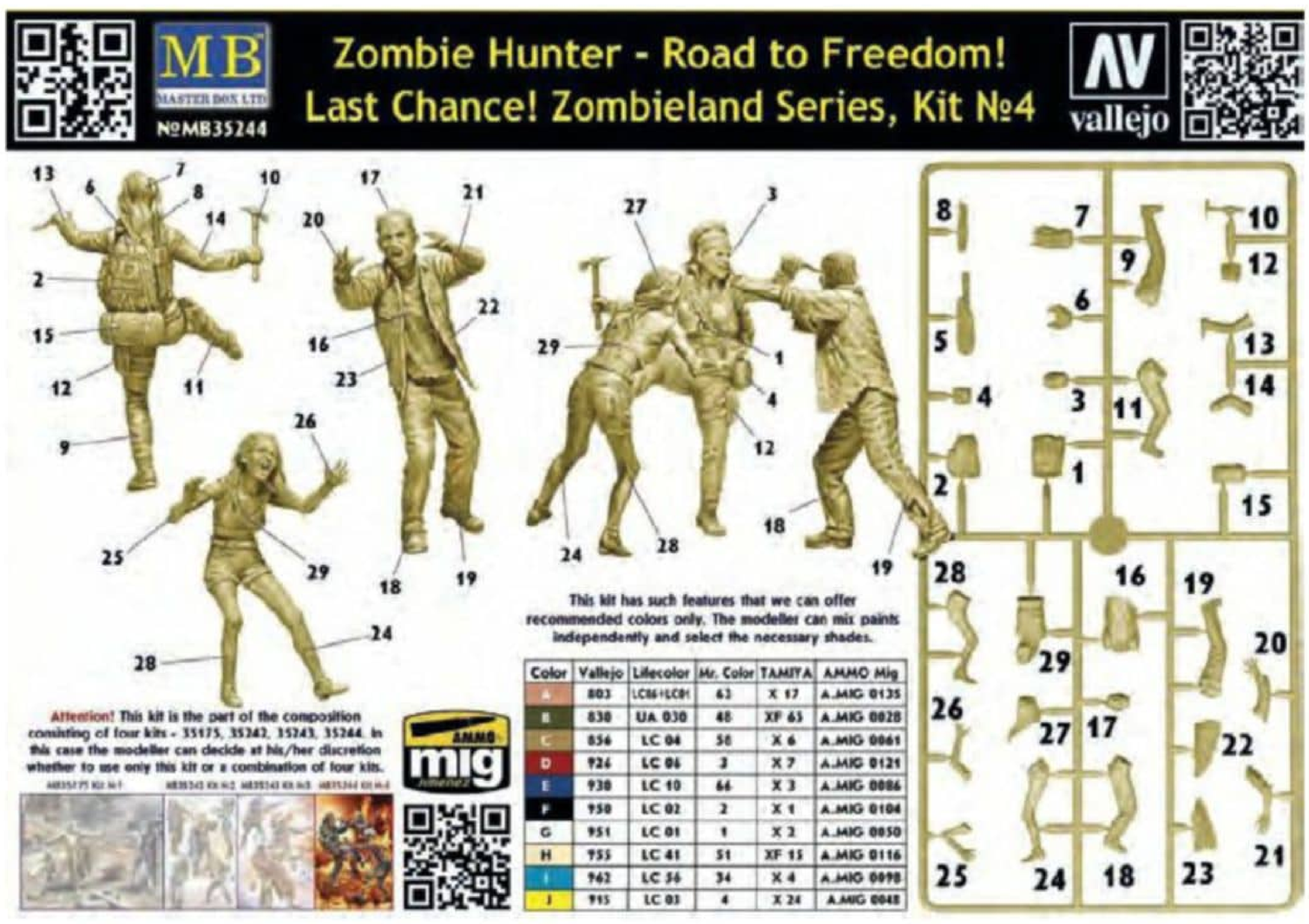


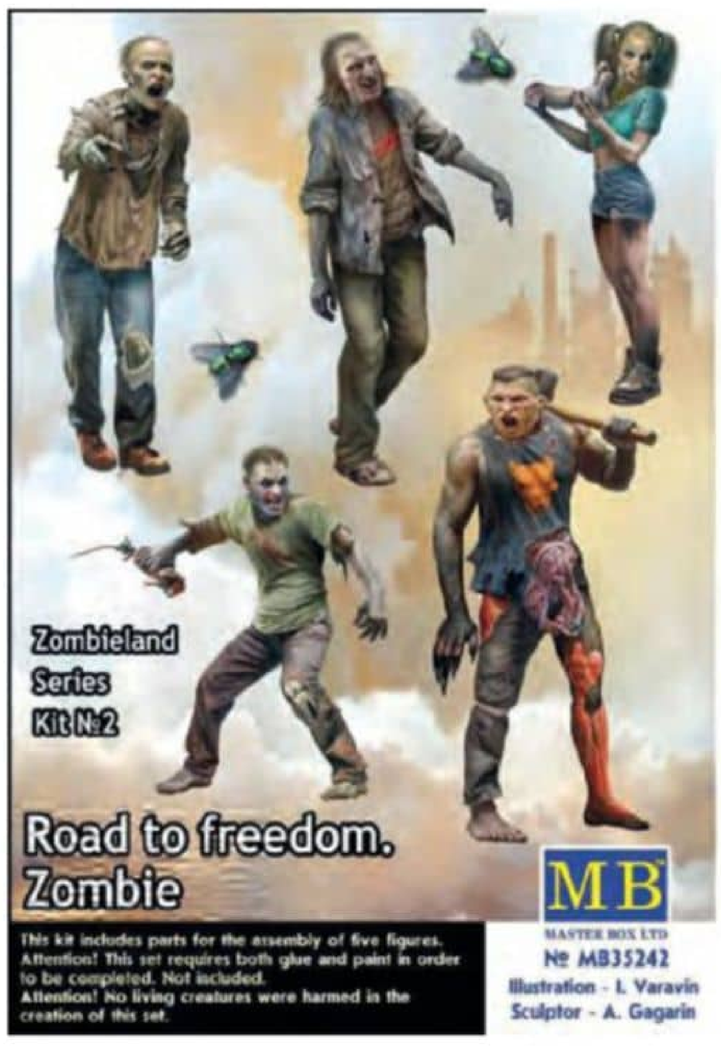
Masterbox

Everyone loves a good Zombie movie, right? The Undead and the tribulations of survivors in a Zombie Apocalypse have become one of the iconic cultural phenomena of the twenty-first century. Comic books, like *The Walking Dead*, spawned (in your pardon the pun) the genre, and the theme has been carried through into film and television and, not surprisingly, the world of miniatures. Ukrainian plastic kit manufacturer Masterbox are well known for their sci-fi and fantasy figure kits, usually in 1/24 scale, alongside their more traditional 1/35-scale military kits.

Their **Zombieland** series has four Zombie Apocalypse-themed kits which contain both the walking dead and the hard-pressed survivors. **Zombieland Series, Kit No. 2. Road to Freedom. Zombie (ref. 35242)** contains five undead. These look a little more like the super-animated Zombies from *Black Summer* than the shambling 'Walkers' from *The Walking Dead*. Two are shown advancing, a third (a four-fingered mutant by the looks of things) stands with a sledgehammer – why not? – a fourth brandishes a piece of limb, while the fifth and the only female Zombie is about to tuck into someone's lower leg.

Road to Freedom. Zombie Hunters. Zombieland series, Kit No. 3 (ref. 35243) contains three Zombie hunters: two female figures and a man. The man wears a long trench coat and wields a shotgun, as does one of the women, while the third figure carries a pistol and an ice pick. **Zombie Hunter - Road to Freedom! Last Chance! Zombieland Series, Kit No. 4 (ref. 35244)** is the most dynamic set of the three. It contains another female survivor fighting off two Zombies, an emaciated-looking teenage girl and a man. The survivor is armed with a knife and ice pick. The quality of the moulding and the sculpts themselves are excellent and with some careful assembly and a good paint job, these will be the equal to any of the 1/35-scale resin Zombie miniatures available. The sets can be combined to make a post-apocalyptic diorama or will work well as separate projects. Masterbox kits are available from all good model shops.







Ancients.



Wild West.



Modern Era.

Scale 75 Historix

In FFI 33 Mike Hilleary presented his rendition of Scale75's Swordsman bust. The Swordsman is from Scale75's Historix range and if you are looking for something sightly whimsical and a lot of fun to paint and collect, the themed sets are worth a look. Five sets, each including four busts, are available: **Wild West Pack, Pirates Pack, Middle Age Pack, Modern Era Pack** and **Ancient Pack**. They vary in size, gender and topic across each and are eminently collectable. Each bust is also available separately. Scale75 have also produced a special **Historix Paint Set**, containing 24 colours specially selected to paint these pieces. You can see the whole range at www.scale75.com.



Middle Ages.



Pirates.

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Carnevale

Carnevale is a small-scale skirmish game focused on freedom of movement combined with brutal combat and impressive magical abilities. Jump from rooftop to rooftop to hunt your opponent's gang, or dive deep into the canals to drown your enemies. The game is set in an alternative reality: in 1795, a mysterious Rent shattered reality, submerging much of Europe beneath the sea, leaving only Venice untouched. By day, the city thrives as a renewed hub of trade and power, but by night it transforms into a darker realm. Rival gangs and secret societies stalk the canals, vying for dominance in the shadows. More ominously, the Rent has unleashed magic and beings from beyond the veil, servants of ancient gods who revel in Venice's growing empire and the chaos that follows, twisting the city into a stage for both commerce and terror. The rule set is written by *New York Times* bestselling author Gav Thorpe and Lewis Clarke. There is a 48-page softback rulebook which provides an easy way to get stuck into the world of Carnevale. It contains an introduction to the game, Venice itself, and to each of the factions fighting for control of the City of Canals. Then we get stuck right into the rules! There is also a full-size rulebook contained in the basic game, but also a smaller ruleset that contains everything you need to start playing, including the basics, actions like jumping and drowning, Equipment and Agendas.

The game is supported by some wonderful miniatures, available in small box sets based around the different factions, magical and otherwise, that populate the Carnevale world. Each box contains four or five miniatures and, as you can see, they are full of character for either gaming or collecting. The miniatures combine fantasy and the historical context of eighteenth-century Venice, with Ottoman-inspired gangs, underwater explorers and knights drawing on the city's medieval heritage. It's well worth checking out at TT Combat (www.ttcombat.com).

New Kit Releases





Manufacturer: Aoshima
Title: Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S. MFS-3 Mechagodzilla
Kit Reference: GO-02
Scale: N/A



Manufacturer: Aoshima
Title: Godzilla
Kit Reference: 068656
Scale: N/A



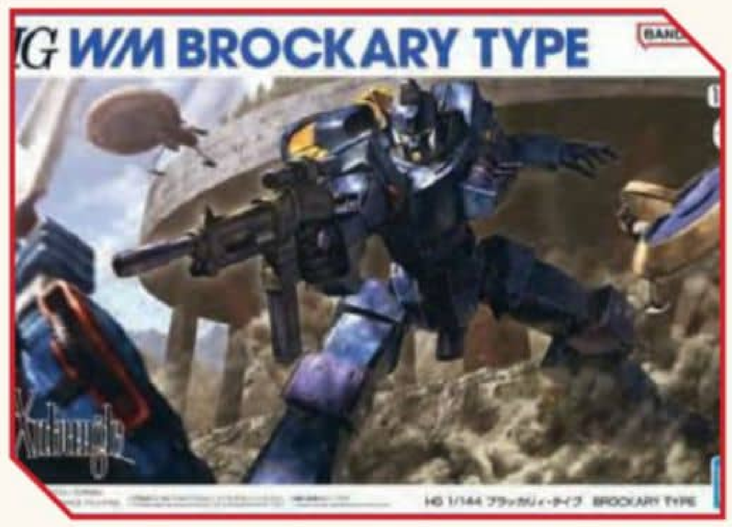
Manufacturer: Bandai
Title: Katakana Model Hedorah
Kit Reference: 2782254
Scale: N/A



Manufacturer: Bandai
Title: Katakana Model King Ghidorah
Kit Reference: 2782253
Scale: N/A



Manufacturer: Bandai
Title: Katakana Model Godzilla
Kit Reference: 2782252
Scale: N/A



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HG WM Brockary Type
Kit Reference: 5068604
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HG Gundam Seed Freedom Infinite Justice Gundam Type II [Clear Color] Limited Item
Kit Reference: 5068527
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HG After Colony OZ-06MS-SN3 Leo-N
Kit Reference: 5068606
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: Entry Grade RX-93 v Gundam (Axis Shock Image Color) Gundam Side F Limited
Kit Reference: 5068549
Scale: 1/144

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Title: HGUC Zeta Gundam MSF-007 Gundam Mk-III [Clear Color]
Kit Reference: 5064243
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: 30MM / 30 Minutes Missions EXM-E7sv Spinatia [Saint Valkyrie Type]
Kit Reference: 5068697
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HG Calvary Temple Hellmeene
Kit Reference: 5068689
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HG Gundam Eight EES-001 Gundam Zirius
Kit Reference: 5068600
Scale: 1/144
Insert 5068600



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HGUC Hathaway Me02R-F02 Messer Type-F02 Minelayer
Kit Reference: 5068857
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: Master Grade RX-93 ν Gundam Ver.Ka [Mechanical Clear] Limited Item
Kit Reference: 5068540
Scale: 1/100



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: HG GQuuuuuuX MS-09 Gaia's/Ortega's Rick Dom (GQ)
Kit Reference: 5068868
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: Master Grade MSR-00100S Hyaku-Shiki Kai Z MSV
Kit Reference: 5069232
Scale: 1/100



Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits
Title: Zegapain Altair
Kit Reference: 5067483
Scale: 1/72



Manufacturer: Baoshan
Title: MSZ-006 Zeta
Kit Reference: N/A
Scale: 1/72



Manufacturer: FangDajing
Title: RX-78-2
Kit Reference: N/A
Scale: 1/35



Manufacturer: FangDajing
Title: GM Moroccan
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Kit Reference: N/A
Scale: 1/72



Manufacturer: FangDajing
Title: RX-0 Unicorn
Kit Reference: N/A
Scale: 1/72



Manufacturer: Feida(CN)
Title: GF13-050NSW Nobell Berserker MOOEA Special Edition
Kit Reference: N/A
Scale: 1/144



Manufacturer: Good Smile Company
Title: Brave Bang Bravern! Bang Bravern Moderoid
Kit Reference: 207929
Scale: N/A



Manufacturer: Good Smile Company
Title: Vandread Dita Moderoid
Kit Reference: 205239
Scale: N/A



Manufacturer: Hasegawa
Title: Macross VF-1J Super Battroid Valkyrie 'Max'
Kit Reference: 65894
Scale: 1/72



Manufacturer: Kotobukiya
Title: Evangelion:3.0 Evangelion Production Model-02'β
Kit Reference: N/A
Scale: 1/400



Manufacturer: Kotobukiya
Title: Rockman X (Mega Man X) Zero 1st Ver.
Kit Reference: N/A
Scale: 1/12



Manufacturer: Kotobukiya
Title: Heavy Weapon Unit 59 Alnair Rod [Yukumo Color]
Kit Reference: MH59
Scale: N/A



Manufacturer: Kotobukiya
Title: Heavy Weapon Unit 60 Wing Edge Black Ver.
Kit Reference: MH60
Scale: N/A



Manufacturer: Kotobukiya
Title: Heavy Weapon Unit 61 Orbit Circle Black Ver.
Kit Reference: MH61
Scale: N/A



Manufacturer: Wave Corporation
Title: Gucker Panzer Kampf Anzug Ausf G4/R1
Kit Reference: MK-024
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FIST OF DORN



Dan Brooker presents a Horus Heresy Sicaran Battle Tank finished with real-world weathering techniques

As a historical military modeller, I have always looked at fantasy and science-fiction vehicles with an eye to how they might be treated with real-world painting and weathering techniques. The idea of crossing over skills from both disciplines has long appealed to me.

For many years the Forge World range of tanks particularly caught my interest. These designs had a bulkier, more purposeful presence than their Warhammer 40K plastic counterparts, but their resin construction and eye-watering prices always put me off. More recently, however, with the advent of the third edition of the *Horus Heresy: Battles in the Age of Darkness* Games Workshop has begun producing these vehicles as plastic kits at far more accessible prices, finally allowing me to take the plunge.

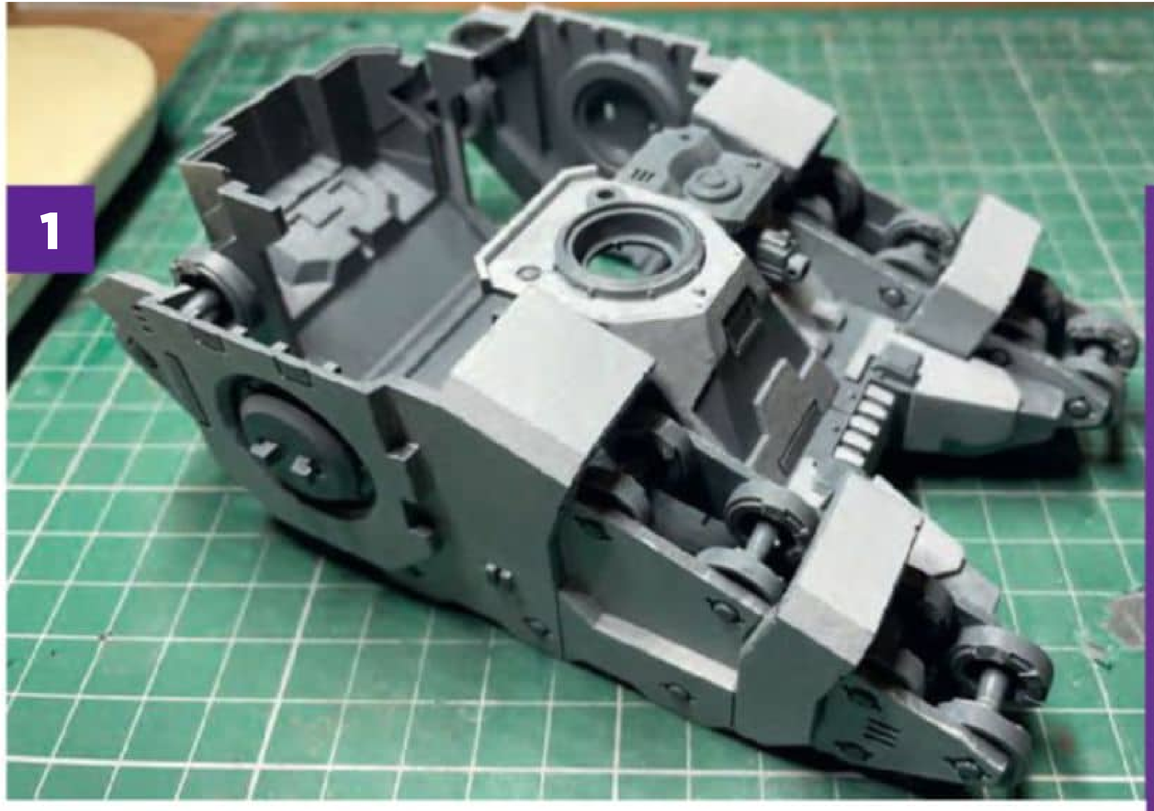
My specific inspiration came from Martin Kováč's version of the Sicaran main battle tank. His striking use of colour contrast, heavy chipping and real-world weathering convinced me to try something similar. What followed was both a surprise and a delight: over 90 hours of rewarding modelling work, with a kit that proved to be far better than I ever expected.

The Build

Opening the box revealed several dark grey sprues, laid out differently to those of typical historical kits. Warhammer sprues use heavier gates and a more compact arrangement, but what immediately impressed me was the crisp detail, with very few ejector pin marks or seam lines. Construction was straightforward, very reminiscent of the best modern plastic military kits, with the main assemblies clipping together cleanly and requiring minimal clean-up.

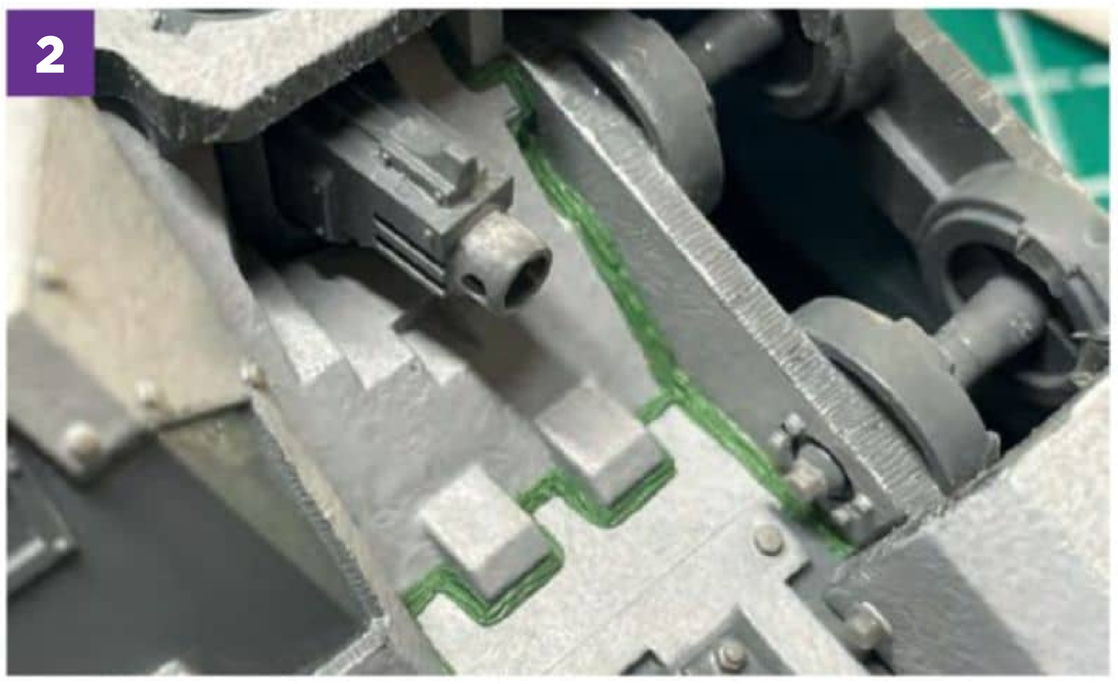
Once the hull and turret sub-assemblies were complete, I turned to improving the surface texture. Using a mix of Tamiya Epoxy Putty (87143) and Tamiya Extra Thin Cement (87038), I stippled a rough cast-metal effect across the armour plates, sanding lightly once cured to blend the finish. Flame-cut edges were reproduced by scoring with a scalpel and softening with cement, while weld beads were added with fine rolls of Green Stuff epoxy putty impressed with a homemade tool. Extra bolts from styrene rod enhanced the suspension and sponsons, adding a more industrial feel.

With the construction complete, it was time to move to the stage we all look forward to painting.



1

With the main assemblies complete and the surface texture applied using Tamiya Epoxy Putty, the model begins to take on a cast-metal look.



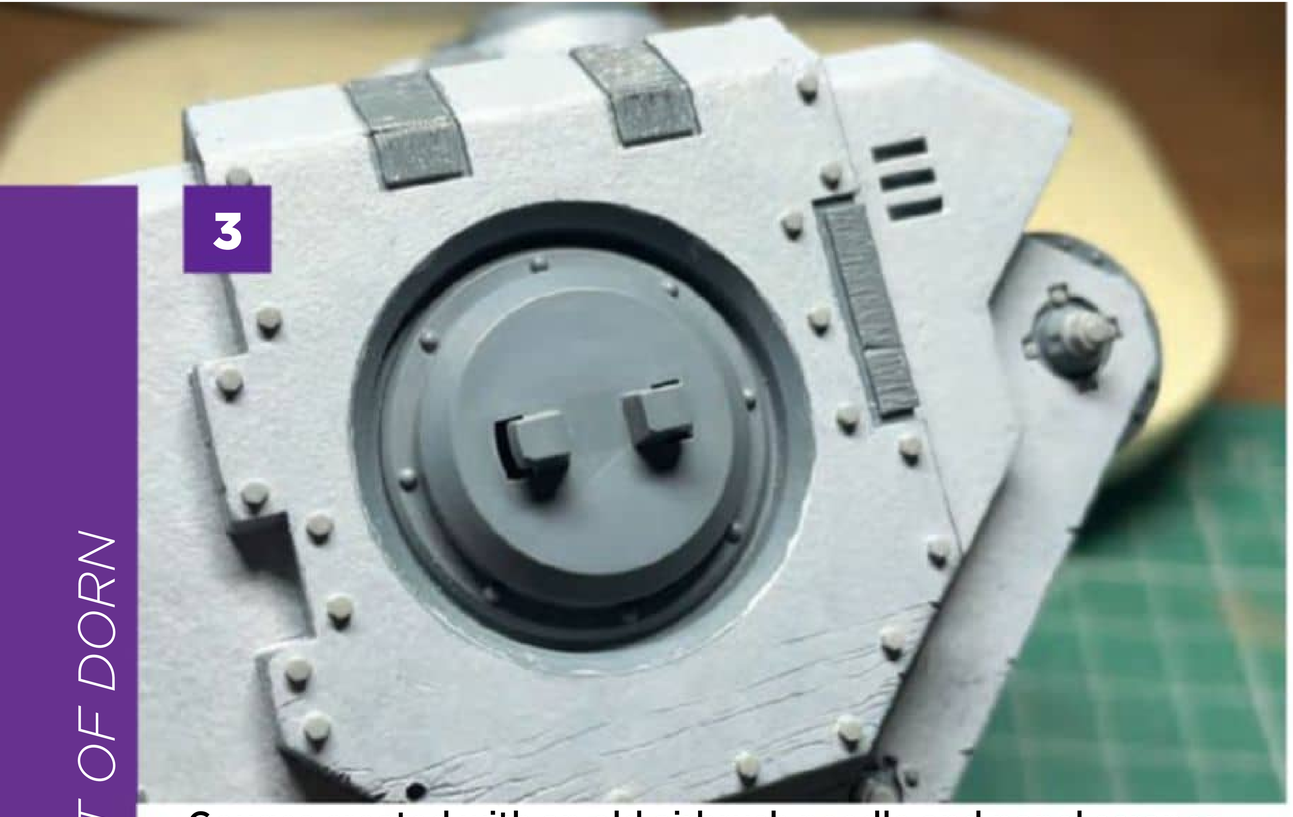
2

Epoxy putty welds pressed with a homemade tool, and I added bolts and casting numbers for realism.

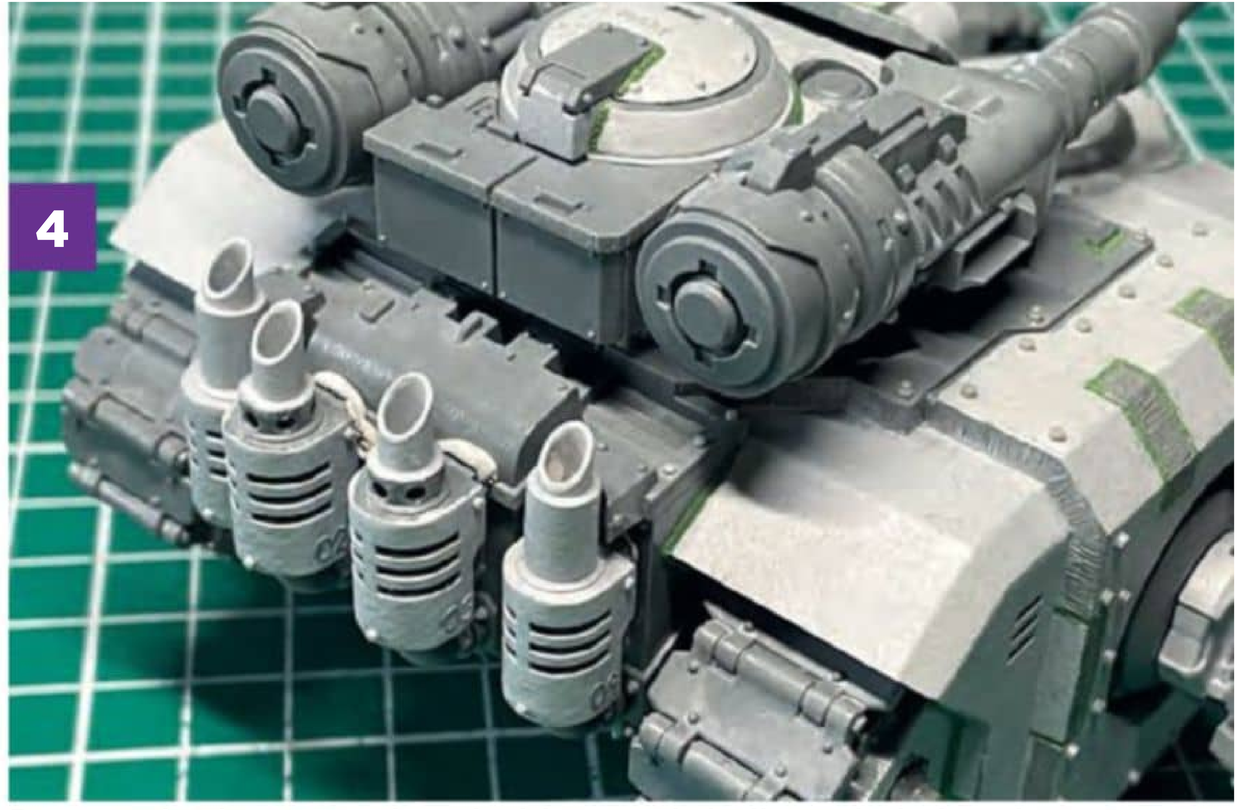


Painting and Weathering

The entire model was degreased and primed in Mr Surfacer 1000 Mahogany (SF289), thinned with Mr Color Leveling



Gouges created with an old airbrush needle and panel scraper add convincing battle scars.



Damaged exhausts replaced with scratch-built angled pipes in styrene tube, inspired by heavy lorries.



The assembled model. The model was then primed in Mr Surfacer 1000 Mahogany, thinned with Mr Color Leveling Thinner.

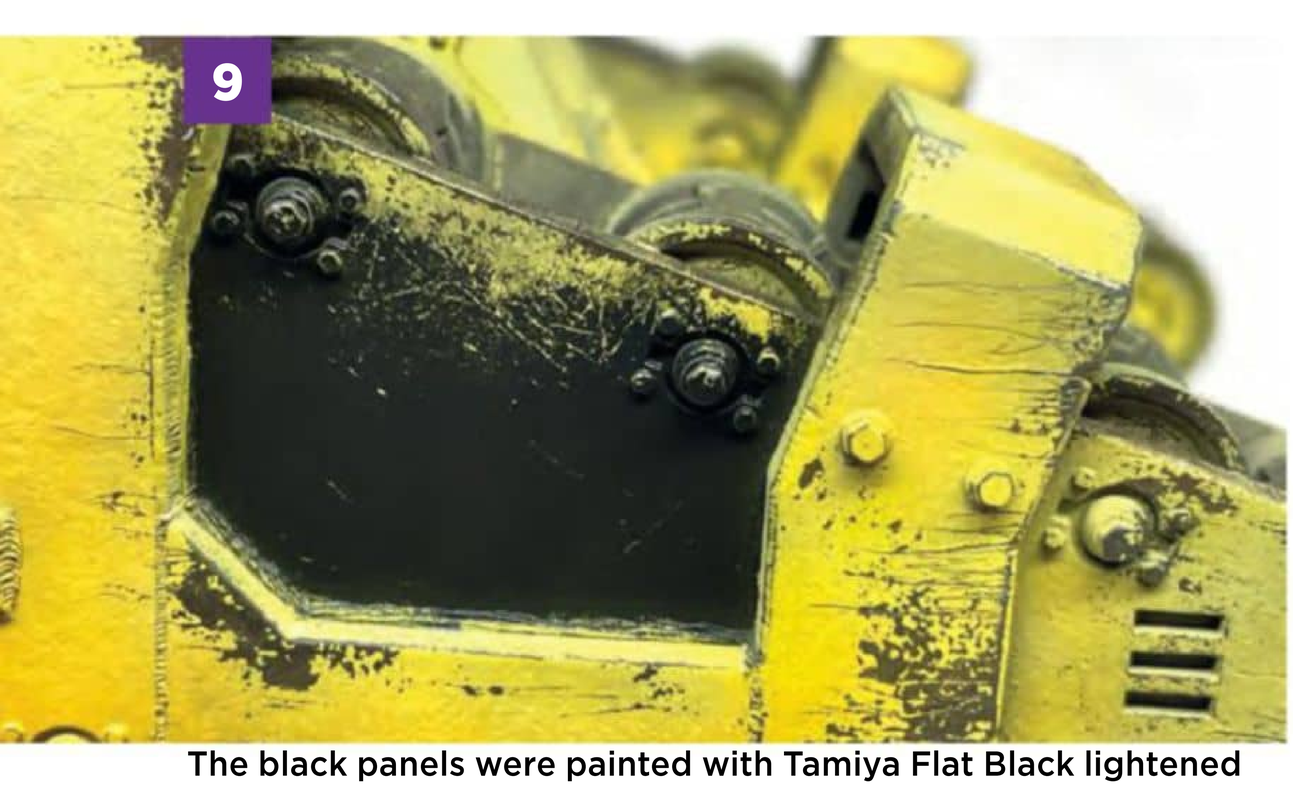


A simple raised styrene base was built to support groundwork. I formed the base contours from aluminium foil and XPS foam, creating a rocky foundation.

Ruined factory scene developed using foam pillars, plaster bricks and styrene beams.



A pale yellow topcoat of Tamiya Flat Yellow and Flat White was applied over AK Worn Effects, then chipped back. The lower hull received an orange coat of Tamiya Orange, similarly chipped back to add tonal contrast.



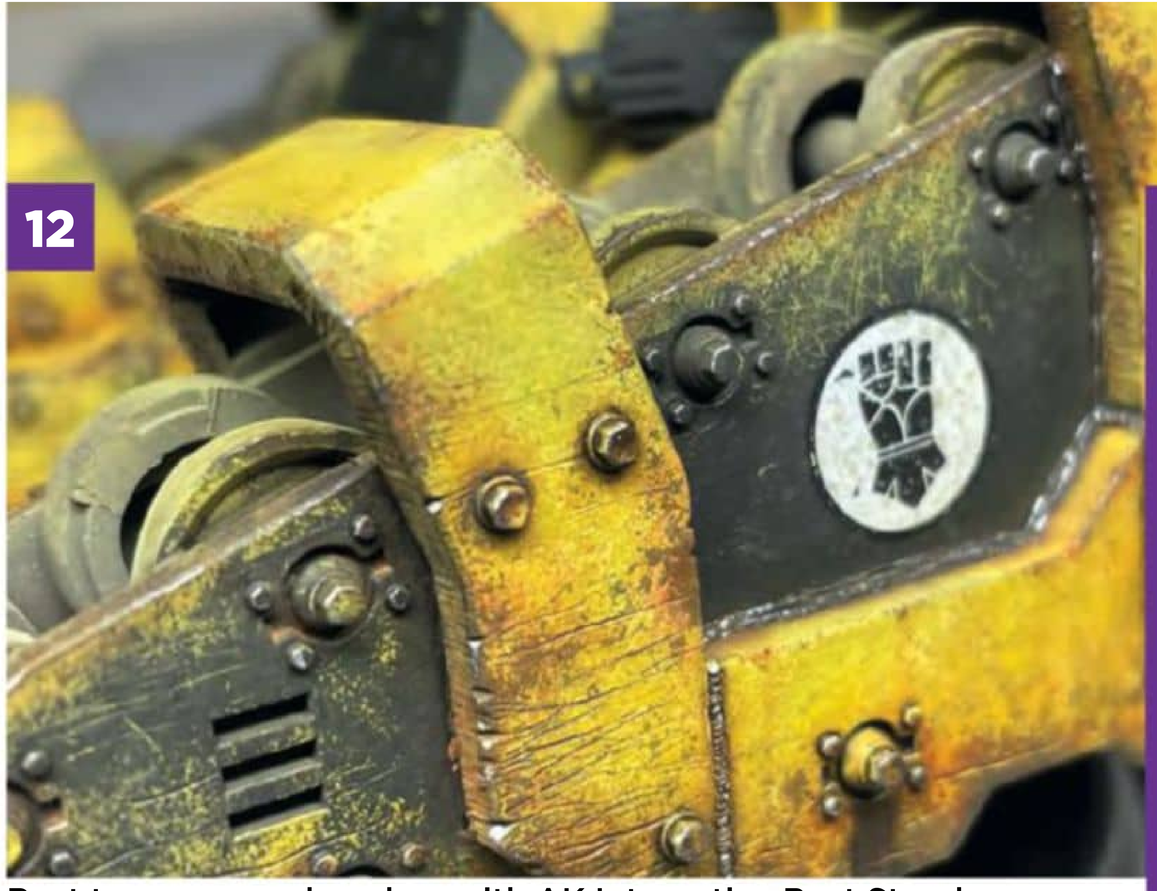
The black panels were painted with Tamiya Flat Black lightened with grey, then chipped back. The decals followed.



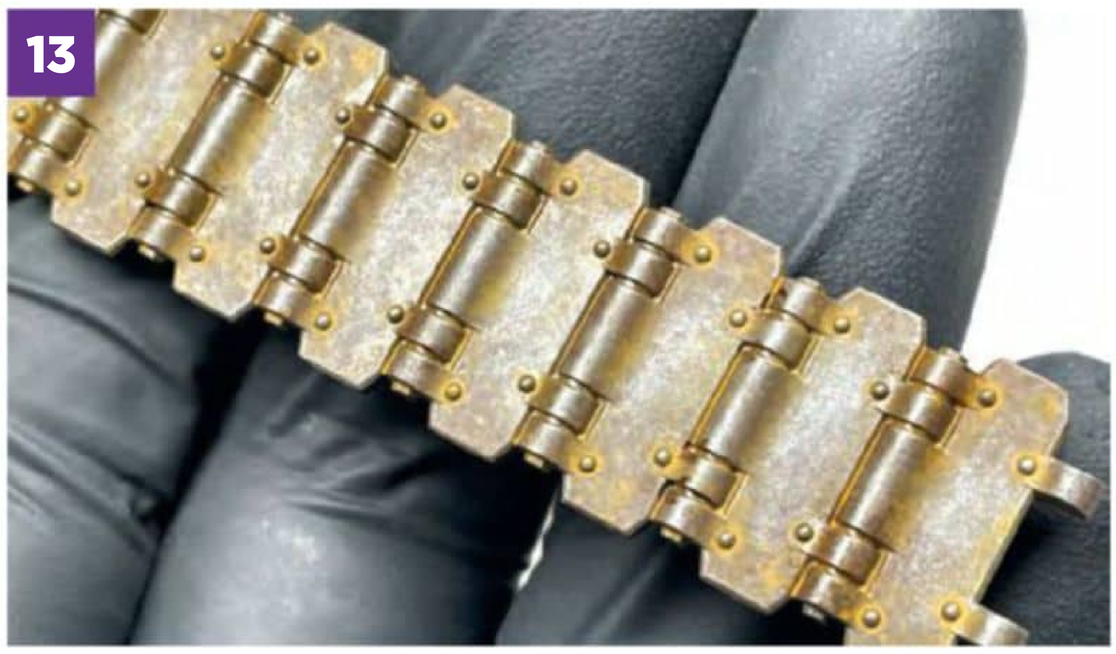
I added a general wash of Burnt Sienna oil paint followed by an Abteilung 502 Industrial Earth pin wash.



Extra grime was added with dry brushed dark oil paints blended with clean brushes.



Rust tones were glazed on with AK Interactive Rust Streaks, layered with oils for depth.



The tracks were treated with Vallejo Rust, dry brushed with AK Interactive True Metal Steel, and washed with Vallejo Game Rust.

Thinner (T-108) for a smooth finish. From here the project developed organically, with my plans changing as inspiration struck.

I applied a generous coat of AK Interactive Worn Effects (AK088), followed by a pale yellow mix of Tamiya Flat Yellow (XF-3) and Tamiya Flat White (XF-2) to capture the characteristic armour colour of the Imperial Fists Legion. Using warm water and stiff brushes, I wore this layer back to reveal the primer beneath, achieving a fast and convincing chipped effect. A second application with orange tones (a mix of Tamiya Orange (X-6) and White) added warmth and contrast, especially along the lower hull.

The Imperial Fists' trademark black panels were painted not in pure black but a softened mix of Tamiya Flat Black (XF-1) with a touch of grey, again chipped back with fluid for consistency. A few kit decals provided Legion markings and other details, after which I began the weathering stages in earnest.

I used a wash of Burnt Sienna to unify the finish, adding warmth and depth to the yellow armour. This was refined with pin-washes of Abteilung 502 Industrial Earth (ABT-093) around bolts and panel lines. Oil paints were also dry brushed and blended to create subtle dirt and grime. AK Interactive Rust Streaks (AK013) were glazed over the most heavily chipped areas, building convincing patina through layered effects.

The exhausts, damaged during drilling, were replaced with scratch-built angled pipes from styrene tube, inspired by heavy lorry and tractor references. These received layered rust and soot finishes.

Tracks were treated with restraint compared to my usual historical armour. A rusty acrylic base of Vallejo Model Color Rust (70.302) was applied with a sponge, followed by light metallic dry brushing using AK Interactive True Metal Steel (AK457) and selective rust washes with Vallejo Game Color Rust (72.138). I deliberately kept the dust effects to a minimum, preferring to keep the focus on the chipped yellow armour.

The turret weapons were finished with metallic dry brushing and contrasting washes, while the gunsight lens was treated with iridescent glazes and finished with Tamiya Clear Gloss (X-22) for a convincing glass effect. A late decision saw one side sponson painted as a bare steel replacement, weathered with layered rust to suggest a field repair.

The Base

To display the model to best effect, I built a raised base from styrene sheet, topped with aluminium foil, XPS foam and rubble to create broken ground. Plans evolved once more, and I constructed a ruined factory setting with plaster bricks, foam concrete pillars and twisted styrene steelwork.

The groundwork was painted in dark, dusty tones to complement but not overpower the model. Orange-brown bricks were toned with dark washes, pigments fixed in white spirit provided dusty earth effects, and rusted steelwork tied the scene together. For pigments I used AK Interactive European Earth (AK042).

A custom nameplate bearing the Imperial Fists logo, created from a scanned decal, was weathered to match and fixed to the base. Finally, the model was secured in place with construction adhesive and blended with further track mud and dust.



The turret weapons were dry brushed with gun metal and brass



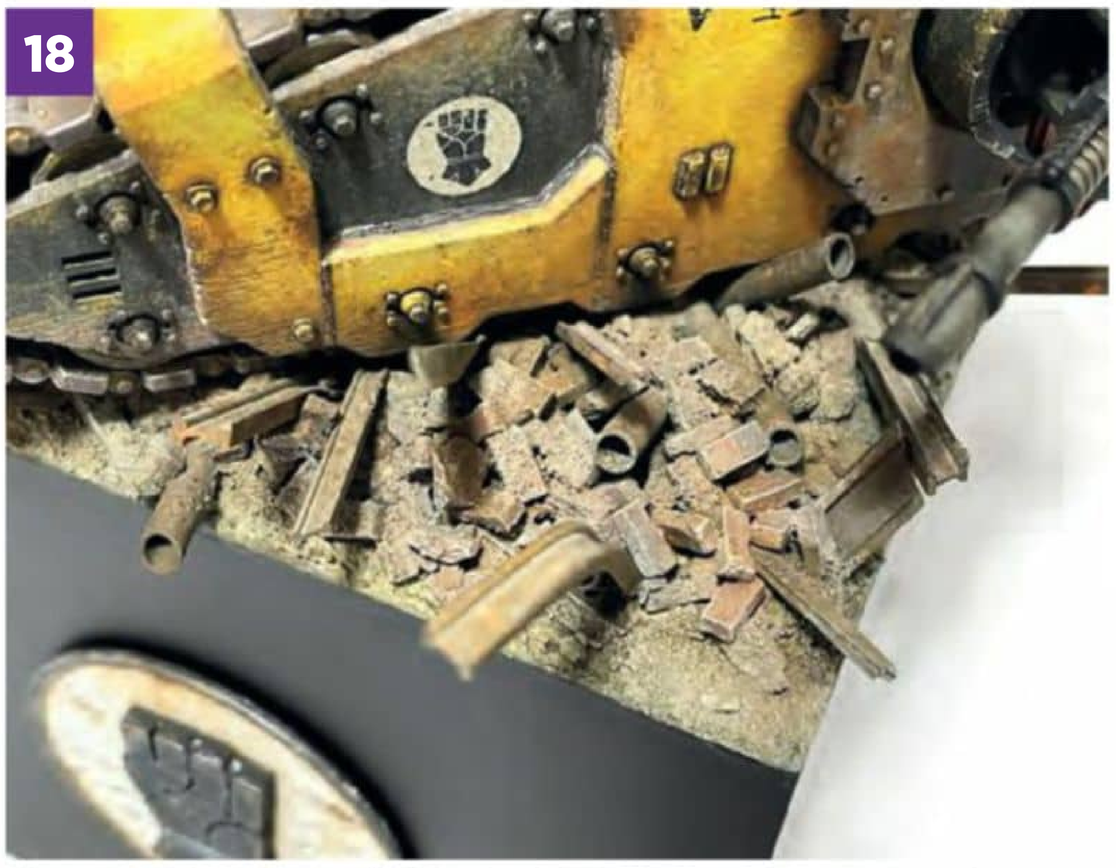
The gunsight lens was glazed in multiple colours and finished with Tamiya Clear Gloss for a convincing glass effect.



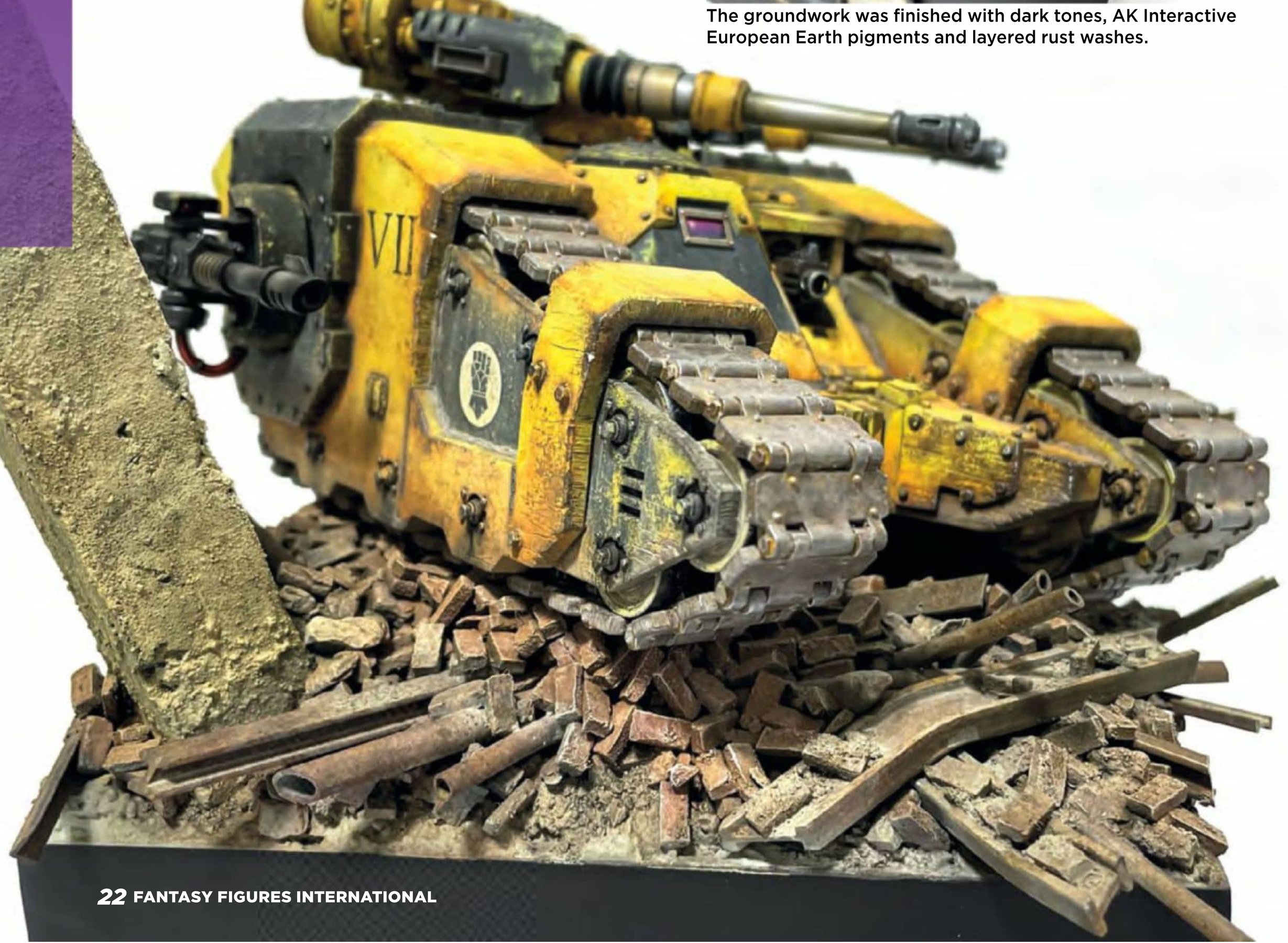
One sponson was left in unpainted steel, chipped and weathered to suggest a field repair.



A few final oil stains and metallic dry brushing added life to worn edges.



The groundwork was finished with dark tones, AK Interactive European Earth pigments and layered rust washes.





A custom nameplate bearing the Imperial Fists emblem weathered to match the base completed the project.

Conclusion

Stepping back from the finished piece, I was struck by how successfully the historical and fantasy approaches had blended. The Sicaran tank, though a product of the Warhammer 30,000 universe, had been brought to life with the same weathering techniques I would apply to a World War II vehicle.

The result was one of the most enjoyable projects I have undertaken. The quality of the kit was a very pleasant surprise. It is a project that has convinced me to further explore the crossover between fantasy armour and historical modelling, and I look forward to tackling another such challenge soon. ■

IONIC

SMART COLORS

BY AMMO

A NEW EXPERIENCE IN MINIATURE PAINTING

IONIC

IONIC is the latest range of paints from AMMO, designed with both beginner and experienced miniature painters in mind. After nearly four years of development, it was launched in September 2024 with an exclusive formula designed specifically for painting figures and tabletop miniatures. It uses the same 20ml bottle as the ATOM line but is distinguished by its white cap and modern label design. Although it debuted as ATOM Smart Paints at AdeptiCon 2024, it was ultimately renamed IONIC to avoid confusion and to give the range its own identity, reflecting its unique formulation.

The “SMART” Concept

The IONIC range has been carefully designed to transform the painting experience, making it both easier and more enjoyable for hobbyists of any level. Whether it’s a beginner seeking reliable results from the first brushstroke or a veteran painter demanding consistent, professional performance, IONIC offers a solution perfectly suited to any project.

This philosophy is shaped by the “SMART” concept, meaning IONIC Smart Colors aim to deliver a versatile, consistent product with outstanding technical performance. Their exclusive formulation addresses the most common challenges faced by miniature painters, ensuring smooth application and a uniform, durable finish. This allows painters to focus on creativity and enjoyment, rather than having to fine-tune their paints before use. In short, IONIC adapts to the needs of the painter—not the other way around—resulting in a practical, reliable, and superior-quality paint.

IONIC PROPERTIES
HIGH COVERAGE AND SELF-LEVELING



1. *IONIC Smart Colors are the perfect consistency for brush application.*



2. *Even light tones provide full coverage in just one or two layers.*



3. *IONIC's exclusive formulation offers excellent self-leveling properties.*



4. *This means the paint dries to a smooth, uniform finish without brushstrokes or obscuring details.*

IONIC stands out from the very first brushstroke with its excellent coverage, rich pigmentation, and smooth consistency, making it ideal for painting large surfaces while preserving fine details. Thanks to these qualities, even traditionally challenging tones such as yellow or white remain vibrant and solid when applied over dark surfaces.

IONIC adapts to any painter or style, with its unique formulation allowing for smooth gradients and transitions. Its self-leveling properties ensure a uniform finish without visible brush marks, a feature that is especially valuable for beginners seeking fine, even coats without concealing their miniatures' details.

IDEAL FOR ANY TECHNIQUE OR APPLICATION



5. *IONIC can be combined with any technique, including drybrushing.*



6. *With proper dilution, IONIC performs perfectly with an airbrush*

The IONIC range is designed for brush use straight out of the bottle and, with proper dilution, performs just as well with an airbrush. Highly versatile, IONIC can be combined with any painting technique or application method, allowing painters to take full advantage of its unique properties, no matter how they choose to paint.

HIGH SATURATION



7. *The IONIC range offers a wide variety of saturated tones.*



8. *A feature that Antonio Pulvirenti expertly takes advantage of in his work.*

The IONIC range includes a wide variety of highly saturated colors, from bright, intense tones to dark, vibrant shades, and everything in between. In the examples shown in the photographs by Antonio Pulvirenti, colors of varying light values were used, yet the saturation remains consistently high throughout.

SEMI-MATTE FINISH



9. *IONIC's semi-matte finish strikes the perfect balance between color, saturation, and finish, avoiding unwanted sheen or chalkiness.*

IONIC provides a semi-matte finish, striking the perfect balance between true matte and satin without compromising color intensity. Designed for both beginner and experienced painters, this finish delivers a uniform result that preserves the paint's intended color—free of unwanted shine or chalkiness, and without any loss of saturation. With IONIC, you can paint confidently, enjoying full control over your colors with no unexpected surprises.

SELF-HYDRATING PAINT



10. *IONIC paints stay wet longer on a wet palette, giving you more time to work with your mixes.*



11. *They also remain homogeneous, without separation, making them perfect for long painting sessions.*

IONIC's self-hydrating properties are designed to optimize a painter's working time. Its exclusive formulation keeps paint workable for longer, preventing premature drying or separation on a wet palette. This ensures mixtures remain fluid, keeping colors fresh and ready to blend without losing intensity or altering consistency. It also minimizes waste by extending the lifespan of your paint mixes—especially valuable during long painting sessions or when using techniques that require multiple layers and smooth transitions.

LARGER BOTTLES AND SMART LIDS



12/13. *With larger quantities for the most demanding painters, IONIC bottles also feature a smart lid designed to prevent clogs and spills.*

IONIC comes in 20ml bottles, providing you with more paint and fewer interruptions. This higher volume allows you to get the most out of each color. Each bottle features a smart lid designed to prevent clogs and spills, and can be opened with just one hand. The flexible, clear plastic allows precise control over the amount of paint dispensed while letting you see the exact color at a glance. This combination of volume, performance, and quality makes every painting session more efficient and enjoyable.

IONIC SMARTCOLORS

THE FUTURE IS SMART



AMMO

IONIC

IN THE TRENCHES

BY MIG JIMENEZ

In the vibrant and ever-changing world of wargaming, Trench Crusade has captured the imagination and attention of hobbyists thanks to its unique combination of immersive lore, grimdark aesthetic, and engaging tactics. Trench Crusade isn't just another game, it's a community-driven narrative experience where every faction, unit, and figure tells its own story, creating a rich battlefield and offering players and hobbyists endless creative possibilities.

Westfalia's Red Brigade stands out amongst the faithful factions, renowned for its military discipline and grit. These qualities not only impact gameplay but also inspire painters and modelers, with every brushstroke and color adding to the narrative of this battle-hardened cadre.

This tutorial focuses on a Mechanized Heavy Infantry figure, brought to life by Mig Jiménez and printed at a larger scale to make it a truly engaging display project. Mig combines the vivid IONIC Smart Colors with AMMO by Mig Jiménez weathering products to capture the grimdark aesthetic of the Trench Crusade world, creating narrative through rust, mud, and grime.

Throughout this article, you'll see how IONIC and AMMO complement each other effortlessly, using innovative and effective techniques that open up endless possibilities for painters. Each technique can be applied to any wargaming or display miniature, making them a valuable addition to any painter's arsenal.



1. PRIMING

The figure was thoroughly cleaned before assembly to remove any residues or imperfections from the 3D printing process. Once assembled, the miniature was primed with One Shot Primer Black (A.MIG-2023).

The primer was applied with an airbrush to create an even coat. Thanks to its strong adhesion and fast-drying properties, painting could begin almost immediately.

It is also helpful to photograph the primed model under strong lighting.

These images can serve as a general guide for applying highlights and shadows to establish volume. Keep in mind, however, that different materials reflect light differently, so the photos should be used only as a base reference, with adjustments made as needed throughout the painting process.







2. AIRBRUSHING THE ARMOR

The defining feature of this character is his heavy metal armor. Mig chose to keep the figure faithful to the Red Brigade's official color scheme. Thanks to IONIC's high saturation and coverage, working with red, a traditionally challenging color, was both easy and enjoyable.

The armor was first basecoated with Dark Violet (IONIC-0074) using an airbrush. As a dark tone, it provides the ideal shadow color while providing good saturation. A few drops of IONIC Thinner (IONIC-0321) were added for smooth application.

Volume was built up with successive layers of Wine Red (IONIC-0055) and Red (IONIC-0054), applied directionally from above.

The previously primed photos served as a guide to identify the areas most exposed to light. The application of Red was focused on these areas to enhance the armor's volumes and deepen saturation, ensuring that subsequent highlights would stand out rather than appear muted.

It is important not to over-apply highlights, leaving some of the underlying colors visible to maintain depth and to create smooth gradients. Where necessary, shadows were corrected using Wine Red.



3. ADDING DEFINITION WITH A BRUSH

The volumes were then further defined using a brush. Although the method of application changed, the goal remained the same: to continue applying highlights and shadows, this time focusing on creating contrast between individual armor plates and their details. This visually strengthens the previous work and clearly defines each element of the sculpt.

Three colors were used for this process: Deep Grey (IONIC-0201) for shadows, and Light Orange (IONIC-0046) and Light Golden Flesh (IONIC-0025), mixed in varying amounts, to build and define highlights.

Deep Grey was used to draw fine dark lines between armor panels, and around details such as leather straps, the crucifix, rivets, and other raised or recessed areas.

This allows the viewer's eye to easily distinguish different elements, sharpening the overall definition of the piece.

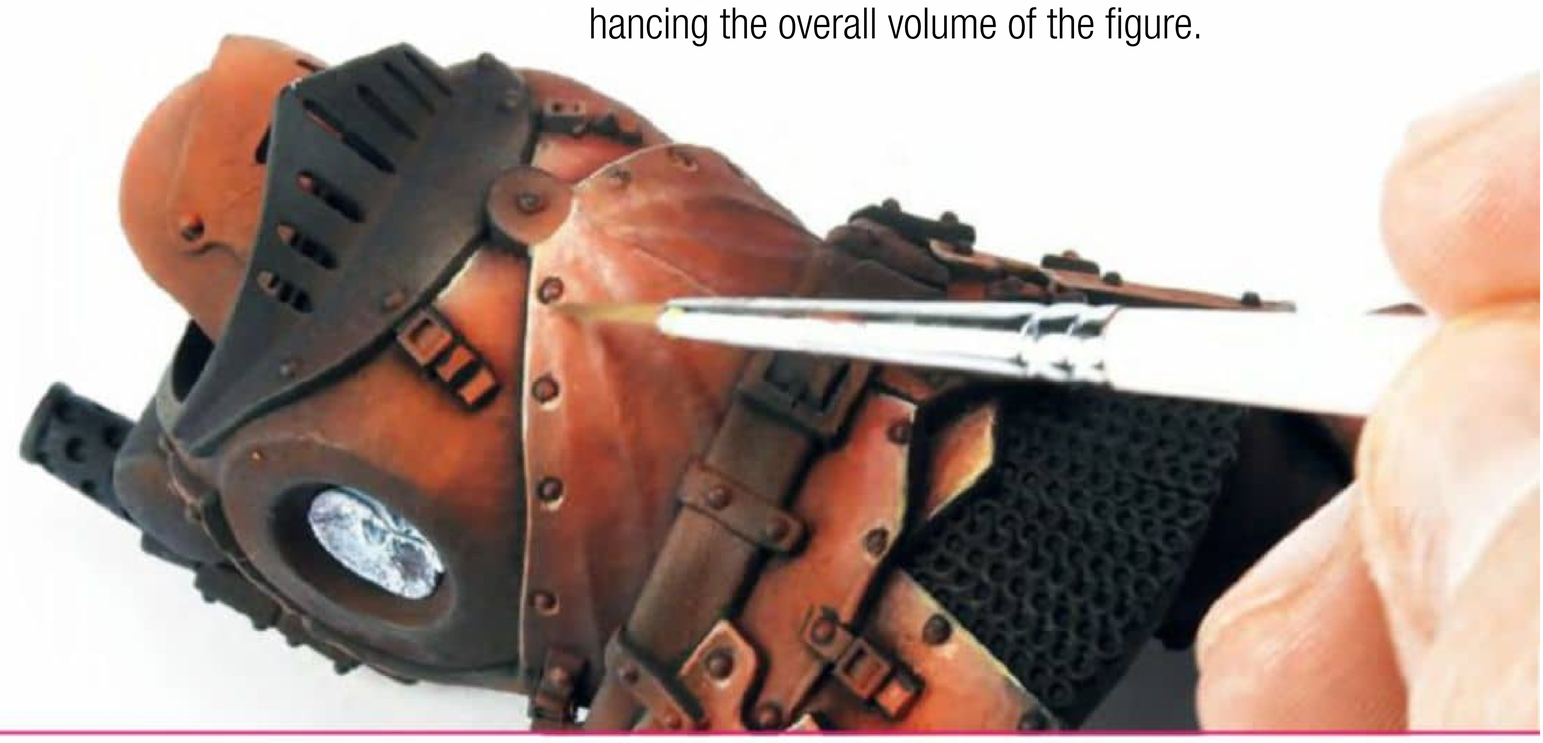
Small amounts of Light Orange and Light Golden Flesh were applied as fine highlights over the areas previously highlighted with an airbrush. Successively lighter mixes were applied to create a gradient of lighter tones that maintain strong saturation and help define edges.

For the best results, multiple layers of intermediate tones should be prepared on a wet palette, mixing in the original Red (IONIC-0054) where needed, and applied progressively to smaller surface areas, gradually building up the highlights as a smooth gradient.

Finally, the finest edge highlights were added using the lightest mix, with controlled brushstrokes, using the body of the brush where possible.

These highlights add significant contrast to the edges of the armor plates, further defining each individual element and enhancing the overall volume of the figure.





4. ENHANCING THE HIGHLIGHTS

This next step again involved the use of an airbrush with the goal of reinforcing the highlights on key areas of the armor, such as the helmet, breastplate, and other prominent surfaces.

The same highlight colors used in the previous step were applied, this time in a very light and thin mixture. The paint was carefully built up in thin layers to create smooth highlights.

When applying highlights in this way, it is important to work precisely and in a controlled manner, focusing only on the areas most exposed to light to achieve the smoothest and most aesthetically pleasing result.





5. PAINTING CHAINMAIL

The chainmail was painted using the drybrush technique with AMMO Dio Drybrush paints, which are specifically formulated for this simple yet highly effective technique. Despite its simplicity, drybrushing is an excellent way to quickly add definition and volume to highly textured surfaces.

The black primer applied earlier served as the shadow tone. Dio Drybrush Panzer Grey (A.MIG-0604) was first applied across the chainmail. Once this layer had dried, a second drybrush was applied using Dio Drybrush Light Metal (A.MIG-0621) on the areas most exposed to light. This second pass was concentrated more heavily on the central areas and applied more subtly along any edges, creating natural variation and a convincing light-and-shadow effect.

Before drybrushing, it is essential to unload most of the paint from the brush onto an absorbent paper towel. The brush is then lightly dragged across raised details to create subtle highlights. This technique is particularly effective on highly textured areas like chainmail and is a quick and easy way to achieve a realistic metallic sheen.

For this technique, an AMMO Drybrush Technical Brush was used. The AMMO Drybrush Technical Brushes have been designed to provide greater control and smoother application of the drybrush technique compared to other brushes.



6. PAINTING LEATHER

Leather is a material commonly found on miniatures of every genre, from fantasy and historical to sci-fi and everything in between. Because different types and colors of leather reflect light in unique ways and age differently, there are many valid approaches to painting it. For this reason, it's always advisable to consult reference images or illustrations for inspiration.

On this figure, all leather elements were first basecoated with Burnt Umber (IONIC-0161).

Once the basecoat had dried, a series of fine lines were painted using mixes of Burnt Umber, Light Orange (IONIC-0046), and Light Golden Flesh (IONIC-0025). Varying the proportions of these colors produced different tones, which were layered to replicate the subtle, irregular texture of leather while also adding volume and highlights. To keep the effect convincing, the pattern should not be entirely random; it needs some sense of direction and flow, while still allowing natural variation. Reference images are especially helpful to guide this technique.

As a finishing touch, the edges of the straps and belt were highlighted by adding more Light Golden Flesh to the lightest mixture used in the previous step. Small scratches and dots were also painted with this color to suggest wear and tear, enhancing both the realism of the material and the narrative of a battle-hardened warrior.



7. DETAILS

Focus then shifted to painting the remaining details with IONIC Smart Colors.

The figure features numerous metallic elements, which were basecoated with either Black Metal (IONIC-0173) or Bronze (IONIC-0178). These tones were applied to areas such as the gorget, the decorative crucifixes, and most of the weapon.

The shoulder pads were painted using Dragon Green (IONIC-0141) as a base, followed by highlights created by gradually mixing in Ogre Green (IONIC-0140). The highlights were concentrated on the upper sections of each plate, with edges defined through careful edge highlighting to further increase contrast and definition.



8. CHIPPING AND RUST EFFECTS WITH ACRYLICS

The next step was to begin weathering the figure, so that it would fit perfectly with the grim dark aesthetic of the Trench Crusade universe. This started with adding chipping and rust tones using acrylics, concentrating on edges and armor joints likely to have been affected by impacts, friction, or exposure to the elements. A fine brush was used to gradually build up the effect until the desired intensity was achieved.

Black (IONIC-0172) was applied first as a series of irregular dots to simulate wear on selected metallic areas, including the gorget, as well as on the red armor plates. Within these areas, smaller chips and hints of rust were added, using Rust (IONIC-0156) on the gorget and Graveyard Earth (IONIC-0148) on selected sections of the red armor.



9. RUST AND ACCUMULATED GRIME WITH ENAMEL WASHES

AMMO Enamel washes were then used to reinforce the weathering effects created with IONIC paints, simulating rust, dirt, and grime accumulations, while also adding additional definition.

Light Rust Wash (A.MIG-1004) was applied to any areas where rust would accumulate. The wash was applied directly to the surface of the model and allowed to accumulate in corners and recesses. Once touch-dry, the effect could be blended, refined, or even removed entirely using a brush dampened with Enamel Odourless Thinner (A.MIG-2019).

Dark Brown Wash for Green Vehicles (A.MIG-1005) was then applied to the deepest recesses of the figure, as well as around selected details where more contrast was required. This wash not only adds shading, but also simulates the build up of dirt and grime. Any excess wash was easily removed using a brush dampened with Enamel Odourless Thinner.



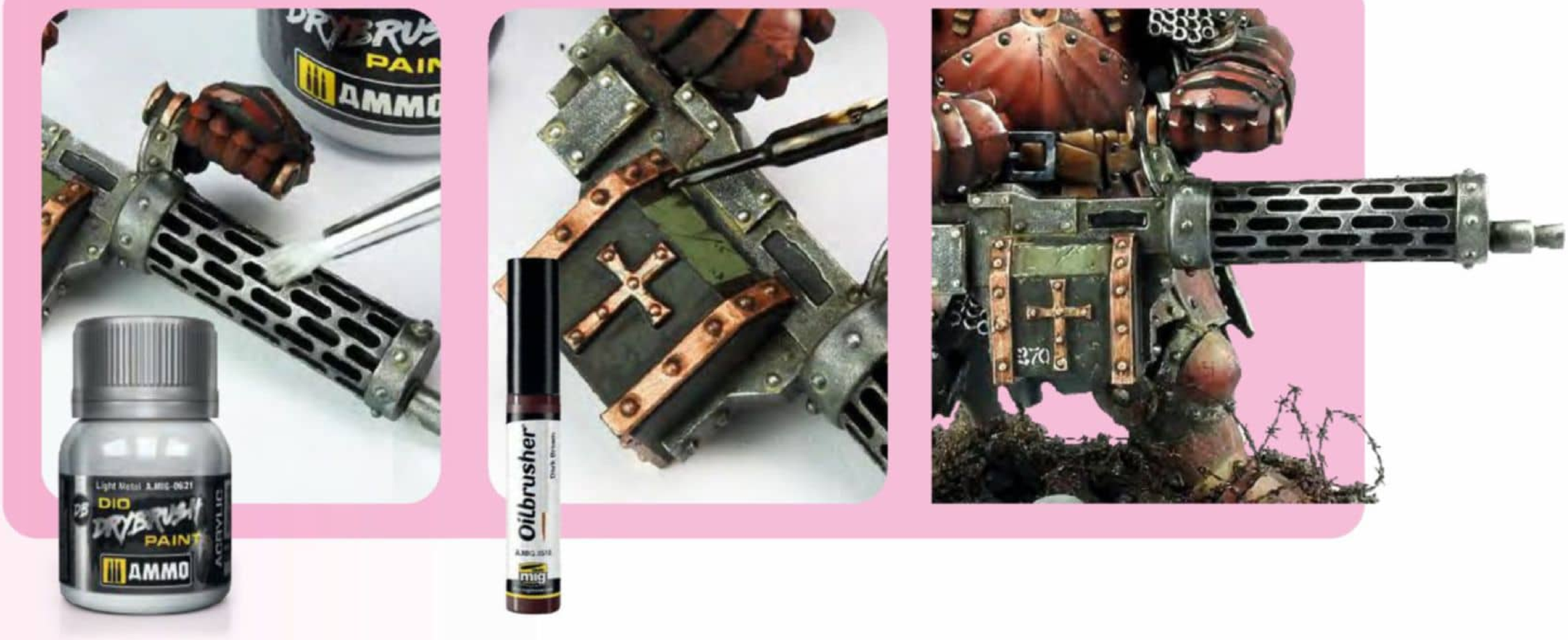
10. MACHINE GUN

Work then shifted to the machine gun. A touch of dirt was added using Nature Effects Kursk Soil (A.MIG-1400). This enamel simulates a realistic accumulation of dust, further adding to the figure's Trench Crusade narrative. Small spots were applied to the desired areas, and blended as required using a brush dampened with Enamel Odourless Thinner (A.MIG-2019).



Highlights were added to the barrel with a light drybrush of Dio Drybrush Paint Light Metal (A.MIG-0621).

Finally, Oilbrusher Dartk Brown (A. MIG-3512) was applied in any recessed areas and around details to create shadows. The paint was allowed to dry for ten minutes before being blended with a brush dampened with Enamel Odourless Thinner. Oils and enamels are perfect for creating subtle transitions and blending due to their long drying times.



11. OIL AND GREASE EFFECTS

The weathering was further enhanced by adding oil and grease stains, which not only create additional texture and weathering, but also increase contrast thanks to their shiny, wet appearance. The dark brown pigment, Russian Earth (A.MIG-3014) was applied, followed by the enamel, Fresh Engine Oil (A.MIG-1408). This was left to dry before applying additional layers of Fresh Engine Oil until the desired intensity was achieved.

Finally, the edges of the armor plates were highlighted with a mixture of Light Orange (IONIC-0046) and Light Golden Flesh (IONIC-0025).



12. DEEP SHADOWS

Deep shadows were added to the armor plates using Oilbrusher Dark Brown (A.MIG-3512). This was allowed to dry for a few minutes before gently blending using a brush dampened with Enamel Odourless Thinner (A.MIG-2019).



13. MUD AND SPLASHES

The battlefields of the Trench Crusade universe inevitably leave their mark on even the cleanest armor, with a soldier's legs particularly exposed to mud and water in the trenches.

Adding splashes of mud not only reinforces the narrative but also helps integrate the figure with its base. Splashes were created using the enamel product Splashes Dry Steppe (A.MIG-1751). A small amount of enamel was loaded onto an old brush and flicked onto the model—either with a toothpick or by blowing air through an airbrush. The splashes were left to dry for around 15 minutes before gently dragging some downward with a brush lightly dampened with Enamel Odourless Thinner (A.MIG-2019), simulating humidity dragging the mud down across the armor plates.





Fresh, thicker mud was then applied directly to the figure using an old brush and Heavy Mud Wet Mud (A.MIG-1705).

This darker, thicker, and shinier enamel realistically replicates wet, freshly accumulated mud.





14. BASING

No figure is complete without a base, and this battle-hardened veteran required one in fitting with the Trench Crusade universe. A piece of polystyrene was first shaped using a modeling knife and a lighter to create dynamic contours.

Texture was then applied using an AMMO Acrylic Texture, Vignettes Muddy Ground (A.MIG-2155). This was applied using a spatula. For variation and additional texture, the acrylic product was mixed with sand, although gravel or real soil could also be used.

Once the desired texture was achieved, additional decorative elements were added, including a skull and barbed wire.



FINAL PICTURES



IONIC SMART COLORS GALLERY

IONIC Smart Colors are perfect for painting any theme and any style, as shown on these incredible models from the IONIC community!



Arnau Lázaro
@arnau.lazaro



Martín Mateos
@martin.mateos_feral



Nathaniel Phillips
@warmasterpainting



Rubén Torregrosa
@heresybrush



Iván Sanz
@isanz.minis



Marwin Lasuardi
@brushwarrior



Tamer Widerspan
@tamer.widerspan



Giuseppe Chiafele
@chiafele_giuseppe



Brennan Baker
@bb_miniatures



Emilio García
@ekkius









-40% STOREWIDE

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CHANGE THE GAME









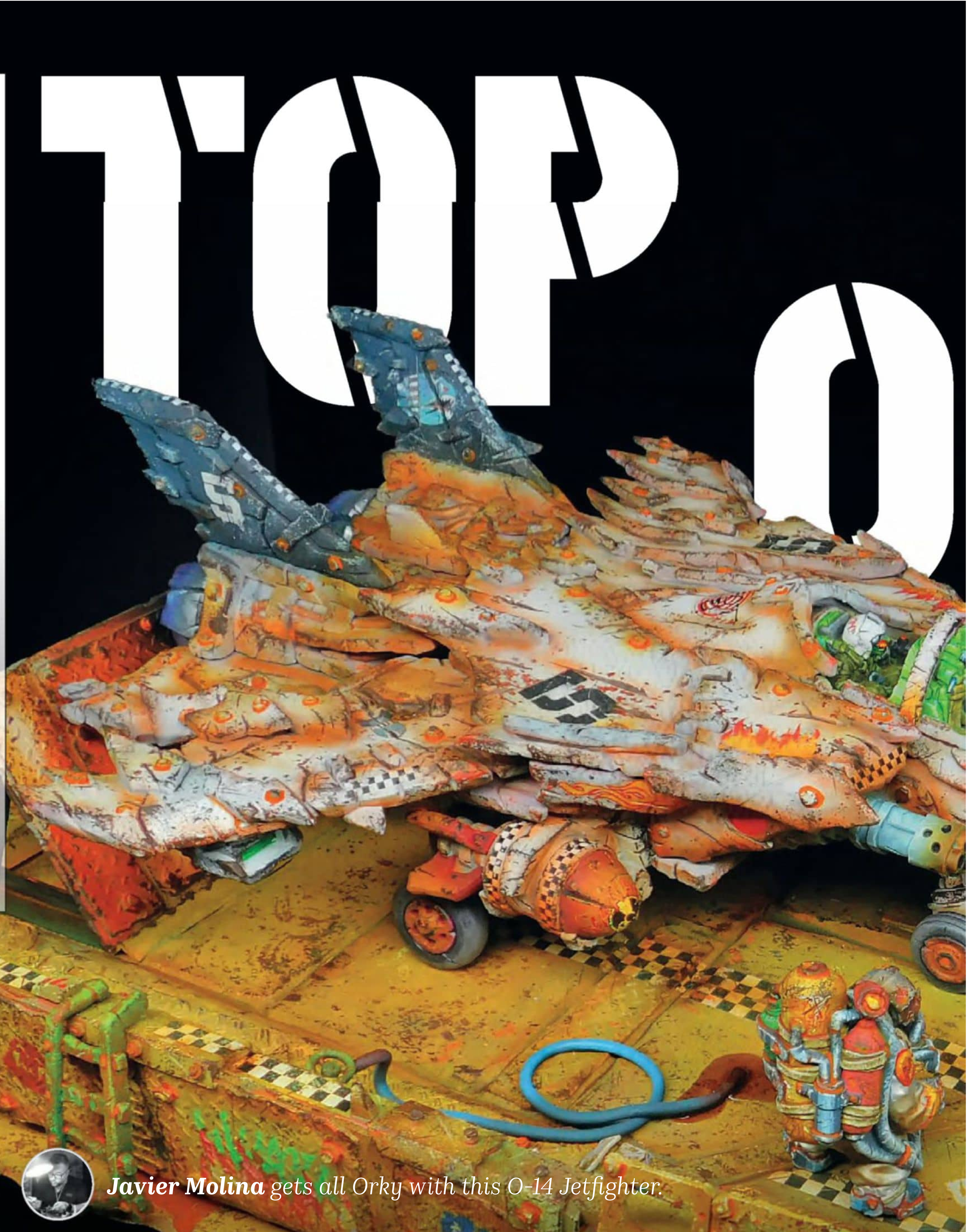


WILDMESH

myminifactory.com/users/WildMesh

TOP ORK





Javier Molina *gets all Orky with this O-14 Jetfighter.*

Few projects have tested my patience, skill, and appetite for degradation quite like this beast from Puppets War. This massive resin vehicle is one of the largest scale models I have tackled— in 32 mm scale no less—but it turned into a journey I would recommend to anyone who loves weathering, rust, grime, and the wild, brutal spirit of Ork machinery. If your green-skinned friends are not known for treating their gear well, this is the machine that demonstrates why. Over the course of a few days, I pushed my tools, paints, and imagination, and here is how I built, painted, and weathered this Orkish contraption.

IF YOUR GREEN-SKINNED FRIENDS ARE NOT KNOWN FOR TREATING THEIR GEAR WELL, THIS IS THE MACHINE THAT DEMONSTRATES WHY.

ORK





1

The scale of the vehicle as soon as you open the box is enormous. Even in 32 mm scale, this platform and its superstructure tower. I recommend gluing every part carefully, using cyanoacrylate glue with an activator. It speeds curing and secures seams, so they hold through all the handling and weathering ahead.



2

For the primer, I used a red-tone base. The idea is to let rust show through after chipping, so I shaded edges to vary rust depth. The red underlayer gives warmth when the top-coat is chipped away.



3

I first applied a generous coat of a chipping medium or similar product; let it dry fully (at least two hours). I applied it with an airbrush for even coverage over large surfaces.



4

For the main vehicle body (especially aircraft-style panels), I adopted a paint scheme echoing naval aircraft on carriers: a triad of greys and whites. I airbrushed in light to mid greys then accentuated lighter tones in the centre of panel faces to create contrast.



After the colour layers, I moistened large surface areas and rubbed them with a stiff-bristle brush. I used Green Stuff World's weathering brush (plastic bristles) to reveal the chipped paint effect. The technique reveals underlying primer and base colour, creating natural wear.



Next came decals. Green Stuff World offers a good catalogue of decals suitable for Orks and Grimdark war machines: runes, hazard stripes, numbering. I placed them roughly where battle wounds or exposure would make them likely to survive (or ruin) the finish.



I used a sponge (sponge pencil) to add scratches, using two shades of rust. These scratches crossed the decals too to integrate them visually into the worn surface.



For shading and streaking around panel edges and joints, I applied Intensity Inks from Green Stuff World's Set 1. This set of Intensity Inks from Green Stuff World includes Swamp Brown, Crimson Magenta, Viridis Green, Hydromiel Yellow, Phoenix Orange, and Sanguinem Red. These were applied into recesses, bolt heads, rivets, and trailing edges to add grime and colour variation.



I then used liquid pigments (pigments mixed with a fixative) to pick out every rivet, screw, seam, and bolt. This loaded the metal framework with contrast with dirty metal catching light over dull corroded areas.

10



For the aircraft nozzles / exhaust pipes, I primed in glossy black and applied a chrome paint. Green Stuff World's Metallic paint line (Neptunus Blue, Sirenscale Green and Caesar Red) includes mirror-like chrome effects.

11



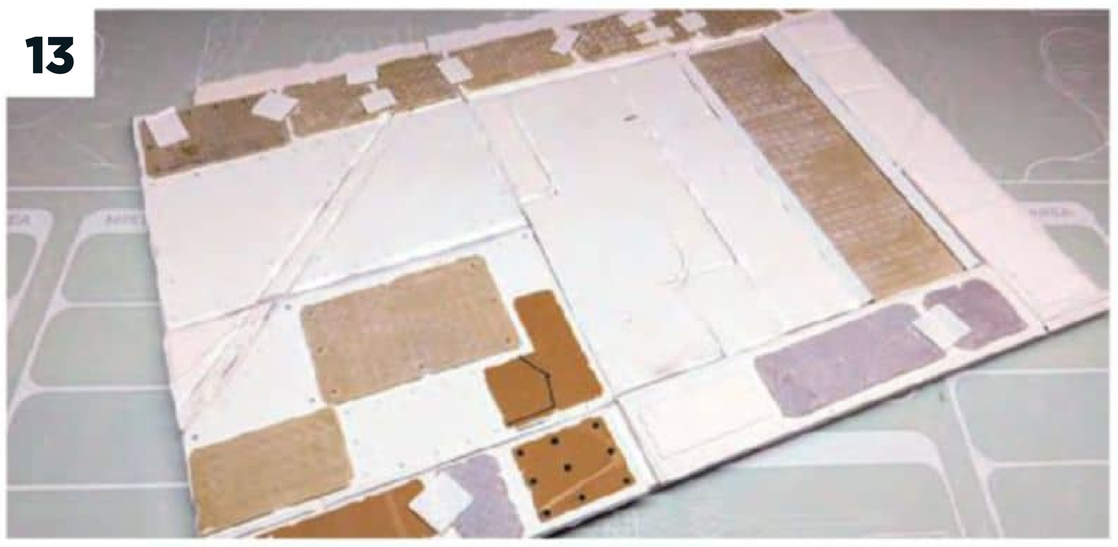
I used Dipping Inks to simulate burnt metal around those pipes. The high pigmentation and fluidity of the dipping inks let me create smooth colour gradients from deep grey/black through blues and oranges, simulating heat-staining.

12



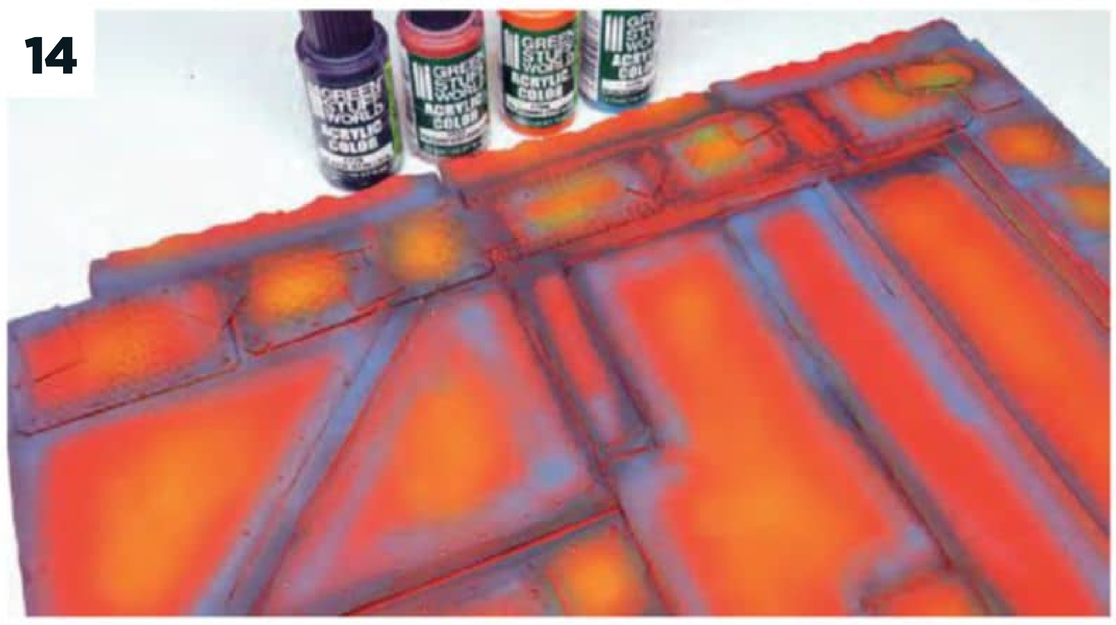
The platform under the vehicle needed to be strong yet workable. I used 2 mm foamed PVC sheets for main support and overlay-elements, plus superstructure built from PVC sheets overlapped and joined with PVA glue. This gave rigidity and ease for detailing.

13



To texture and modify surfaces, I used Thermoart (a malleable plastic medium under heat) combined with foamed PVC. Heating allows Thermoart to be rolled and pressed, forming shapes like patchwork metal from scraps, then hardens. These combined surfaces evoke the scavenged machine parts from which the Orks fashion their warmachines.

14



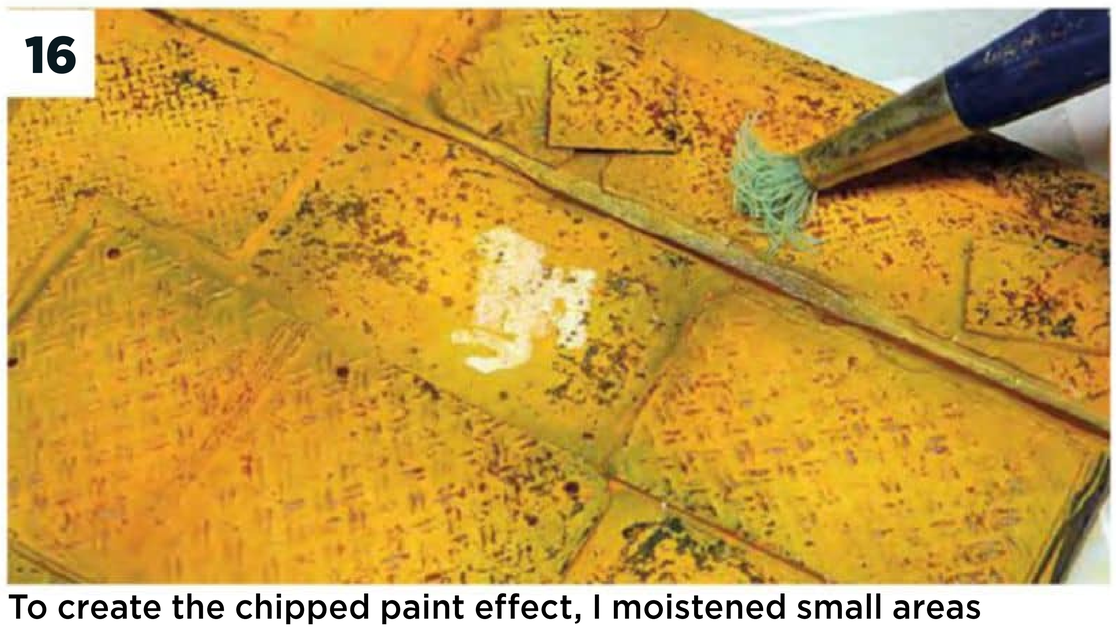
Over the textured and prepared base, I laid down a first coat combining several shades that show through once chipping medium is removed. These are mostly earth / rust tones mixed with dark metal tones.

15



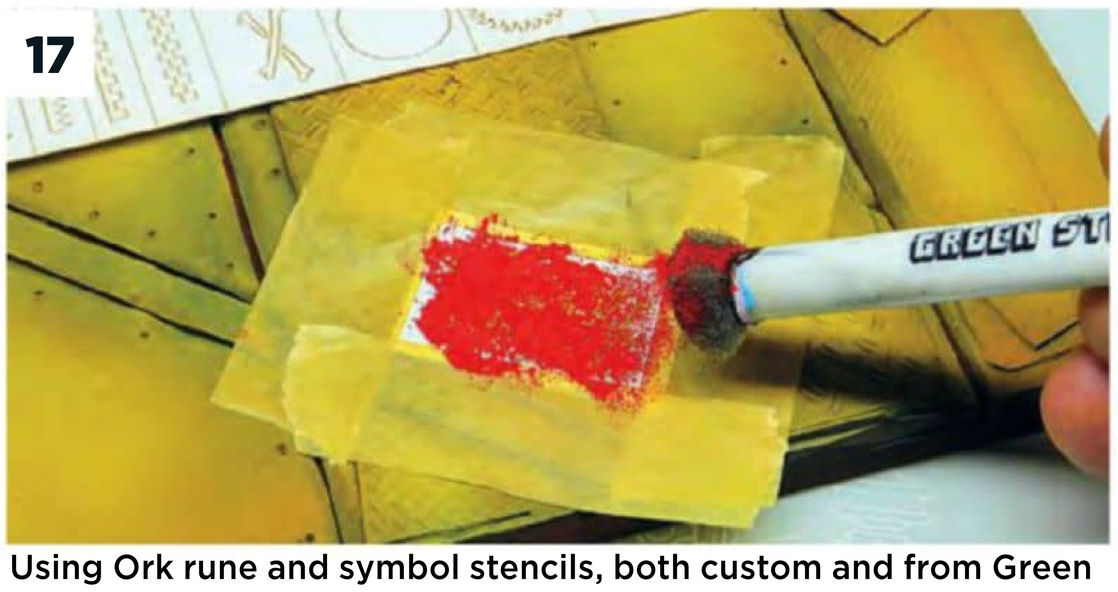
With chipping medium in place, I then used two shades of yellow for the top surface of the launch pad. Though restricted, these yellows pop against rust and dark metal once effects are layered above.

16



To create the chipped paint effect, I moistened small areas and gently rubbed away top yellow coat, revealing base layers beneath. The effect is random and organic, just like battle damage or weather exposure.

17



Using Ork rune and symbol stencils, both custom and from Green Stuff World decals and custom masks, I marked runes, silhouettes, or other decorative motifs. Orks love their signage, anything that seems threatening or festive. I applied these over the chipped surface, so they appear scratched in or worn.



I applied Rust Textures (a thick, brush-on acrylic effect medium) in areas of heavy corrosion: on the corners, plate overlaps and under vents. Because it's acrylic, it's quick and easy to apply and you can clean brushes with water; it gives a tactile build-up of rust, not just colour.



I repeated many of the techniques used on the aircraft parts, inking in rust tones into joints, shading recesses and emphasising panel borders, so that the platform and vehicle have unified weathering.



I next painted the diorama scatter: crates, rubbish, waste bins.



Over red primer, I dry-brushed white (or off-white) over raised textures to simulate rough, worn surfaces.



I used dipping inks to layer dirt, rust, moisture on these pieces—mixing wet or layering in stages to control saturation and variation.



All visible elements of the diorama must share a consistent visual finish. If a surface is dirty, every object on that surface should show comparable wear.



Tanks, valves, ladders all had the same process: rust textures, pigment built-up and scratches.



For the ladder (a heavily used item), I exaggerated wear: more rust exposed, more chipping, almost raw metal showing through yellow or main colour.

GREEN STUFF WORLD TUTORIAL *TOP ORK*



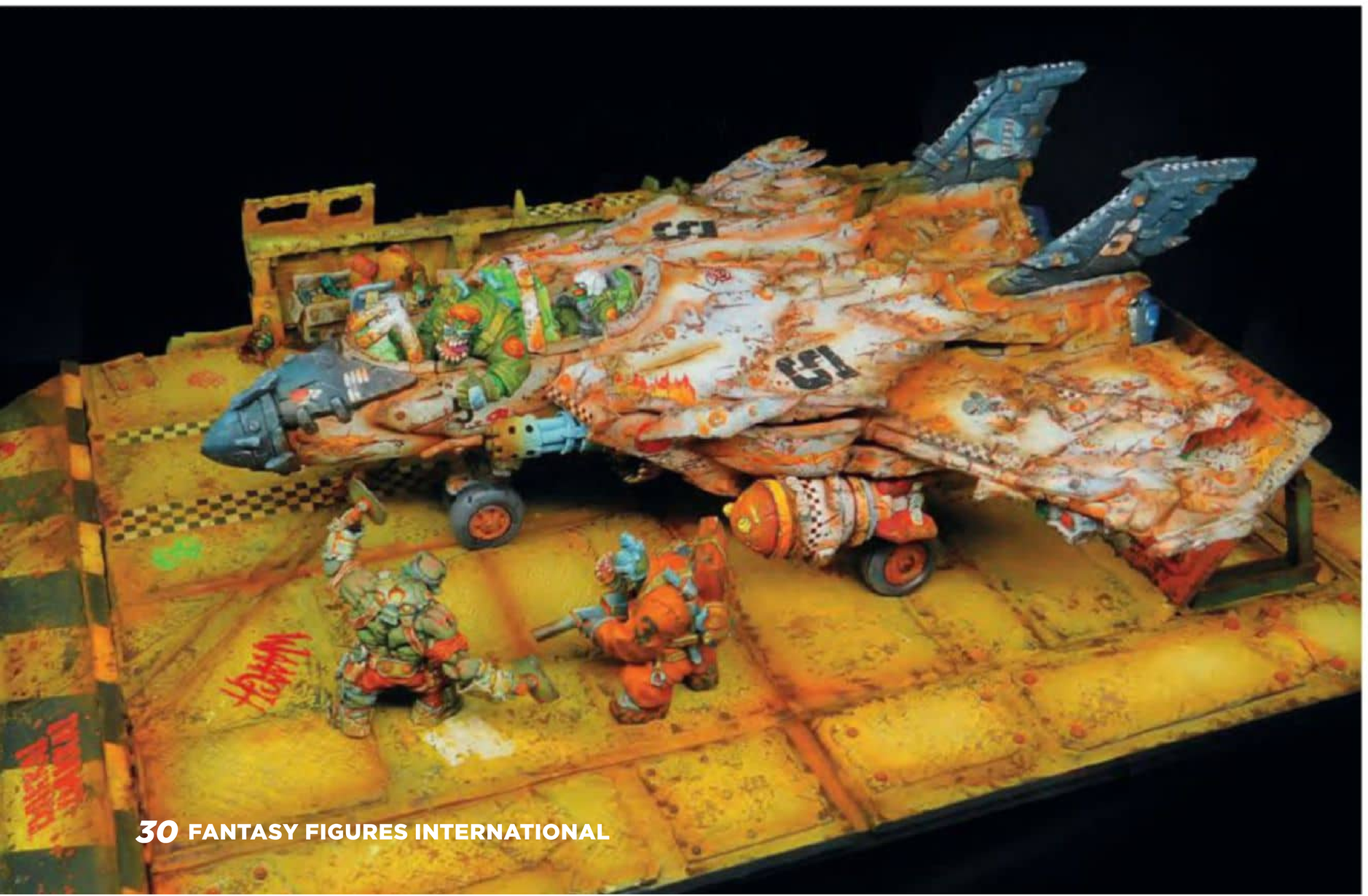
I used the Dipping Inks again for accumulating pigment in crevices. This ensured colour continuity across the piece.



Even parts painted in different base colours tie together via shared weathering and rust tones.



For one final trick, I used a Vomit Effect', a gloss resin supplied as a clear-gel medium, to simulate spillage, supply hoses leaking fluid or fuel. It's shiny, clear, disgusting in the best way, and provides contrast with matt dusty, rusted metal.



Final Thoughts

This massive Puppets War vehicle stretched my skills: in construction, consistency, and imagination. I wanted every mark, paint chip, rust stain, and symbol to add to its character. When the viewer steps back, they should see more than rust and rusted metal. They should sense a history of battles, neglect, brute force and Ork cunning. If you undertake something similar, expect to spend many days of work, but know that every hour is rewarded by layers of realism and story. ■

IONIC SMARTCOLORS

THE FUTURE IS SMART



AMMO

IRON SKIN



Scott Taylor *textures, paints, and weathers a Maschinen Krieger classic using SMS paints and washes.*

Few science-fiction modelling settings have captured the imagination quite like Maschinen Krieger (Ma.K). Originally conceived by Kow Yokoyama in the 1980s, this universe blends industrial design, gritty realism, and retro-futurism into a distinctive visual language. Its weather-beaten power armour suits, hovering tanks, and bulbous spacecraft seem futuristic yet oddly familiar, often recalling the functional design of mid-twentieth-century aircraft and armour. For many modellers, Ma.K represents a perfect meeting point between sci-fi creativity and historical authenticity.

It had been some time since I last tackled a Ma.K subject, so I decided to return to the genre with Hasegawa's 1/35-scale Melusine armoured suit. This particular kit has been a favourite among fans of the setting since it was first released by Hasegawa in 2011. There are relatively few Ma.K kits in this scale, the most popular among military modellers, and it provided an ideal canvas to demonstrate some traditional Ma.K finishing methods, particularly when paired with paints from The Scale Modellers Supply (SMS).

Construction

The Hasegawa Melusine is a straightforward kit, engineered with clean moulding and precise fit. Assembly progressed quickly, with only minimal seam lines requiring attention **(photo 1)**. Yet, while the kit itself is relatively simple, the real artistry comes in giving the suit that characteristic Ma.K appearance: heavy, industrial, and lived-in.

One hallmark of Ma.K modelling is the illusion of cast, textured armour. I used SMS Extra Thin Cement for this, exploiting the solvent's ability to soften the plastic surface. After brushing the cement across the armour plates, I stippled the softened plastic with an old, stiff brush **(2)**. This process created a subtle, irregular texture reminiscent of cast steel. The finish was perfectly in scale and immediately transformed the otherwise smooth plastic into something that felt more mechanical.

This technique demands speed and confidence, as the softened surface can quickly set, but the result was well worth the effort. Even before paint touched the model, the Melusine already looked more like a miniature machine than a styrene kit.

Painting and Colour Work

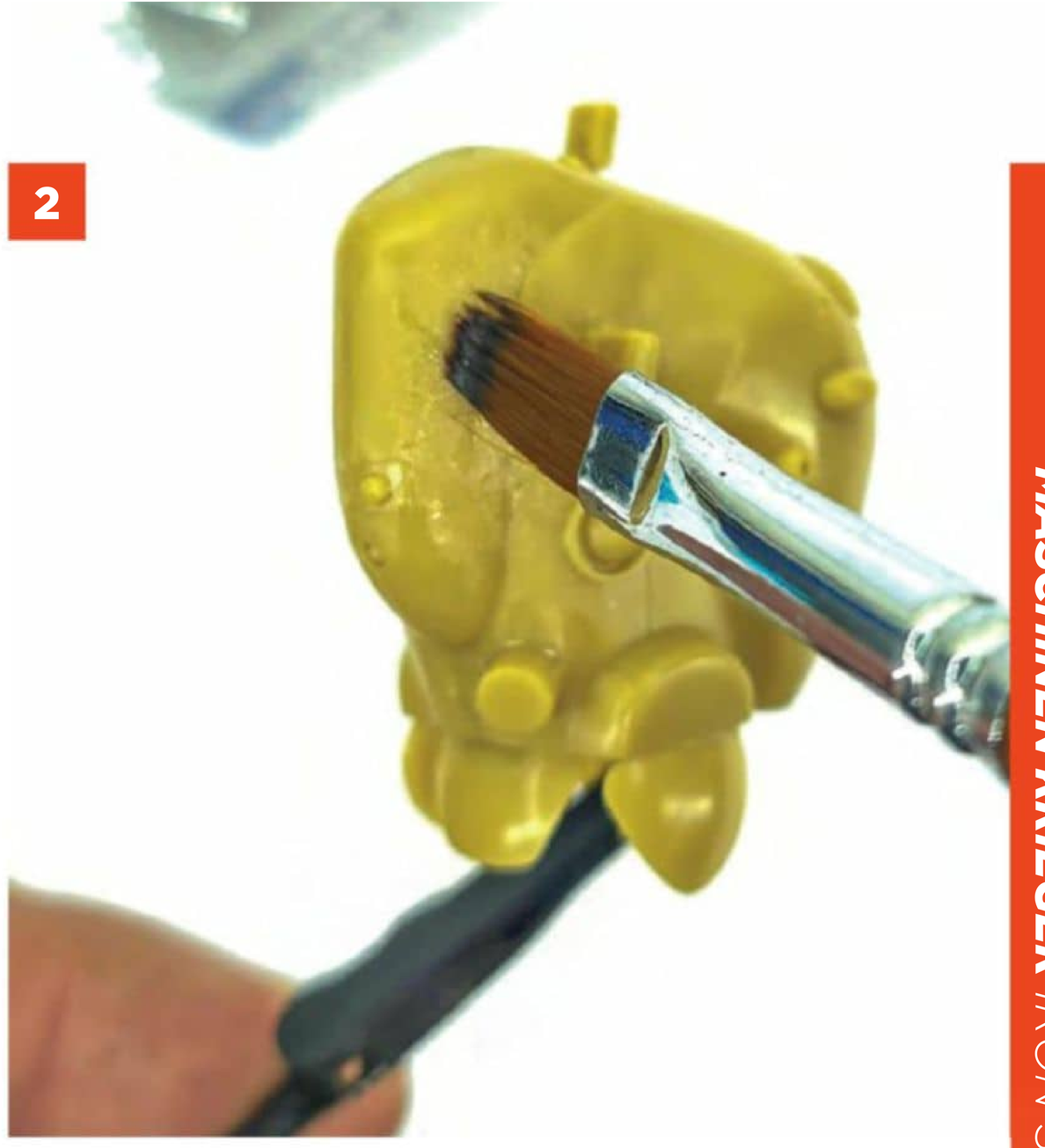
With the texture complete, I primed the suit with SMS Surfacer Black (SP001) **(3)**. This not only provided a solid foundation but also helped accentuate the cast surface detail.

For the base colour, I sprayed SMS Olive Drab SCC No.15 (PL175), establishing a military tone suitable for a battlefield exosuit **(4)**. Over this, I airbrushed a mottled layer of SMS RAF Sky (PL152), introducing tonal variation and suggesting a patchy, time-worn finish **(5)**.

Ma.K kits have traditionally been painted by hand, and the best exponents of the genre still use these well-established techniques So, returning to traditional Ma.K techniques, I applied SMS German Olive (PL176) with a stippling brush **(6)**. This hand-applied texture added depth and irregularity, breaking up flat panels and enhancing the sense of a rugged, field-maintained machine.

To avoid monotony, I masked off several areas and applied accent banding. Within these masked sections, I stippled SMS Marigold (PL131). The warm yellow provided a visual counterpoint to the dominant greens, catching the eye without overwhelming the palette **(7)**. Subtle but effective, the banding suggested unit markings or field repairs, adding narrative interest.









Weathering

Of course, no Ma.K subject feels complete without weathering. These machines are imagined as practical battlefield tools, and their finishes should reflect service wear.

For paint chipping, I employed SMS US Light Gull Grey (PL221) and SMS Black (PL02), applied with a fine brush to exposed edges, hatches, and joints. These small chips suggested constant handling and abrasion.

Next came grime and streaking. SMS Dark Brown Wash (WP101) settled beautifully into recesses, enhancing depth. By dragging the wash downwards with a fine brush, I achieved realistic rain marks and oil streaks. The effect unified the finish, conveying a sense of age and hard use while avoiding over-weathering.

Diorama Base

Even the best-finished figure or suit benefits from a context, so I constructed a simple diorama base to ground the Melusine. The base began with a block of XPS foam, framed with thin veneer. Onto this I spread fine sand over PVA glue. To fix it securely, I misted the surface with isopropyl alcohol (to break surface tension) and then applied a diluted PVA solution. Once dry, the sand formed a tough, realistic soil surface. For colour, I used layered SMS Browns over a Surfacer Black (SP001) undercoat. Varying the tones produced a convincing earthy depth.

To finish the groundwork, I added small rocks and pieces of wood, then introduced 3D-printed jungle plants. Painted in SMS Greens and shaded with Dark Brown Wash (WP101), these foliage elements lent the scene a sense of place—perhaps a humid jungle battlefield or a derelict industrial site slowly being reclaimed by nature. The Melusine was pinned securely to the base using a metal rod through the foot, ensuring stability for display.

Conclusion

The Hasegawa Melusine proved a thoroughly enjoyable project, offering just the right balance of straightforward assembly and creative finishing potential. By applying

5



6



7



classic Ma.K texturing and weathering techniques, enhanced with the excellent range of SMS paints, the model came alive as a worn, functional fighting suit.

For anyone curious about the Maschinen Krieger universe, or for modellers simply looking to branch into something different while still applying armour and aircraft techniques, this kit provides a perfect introduction. The combination of imaginative design and gritty realism makes the Melusine, and Ma.K in general, a unique canvas for experimentation and storytelling. ■

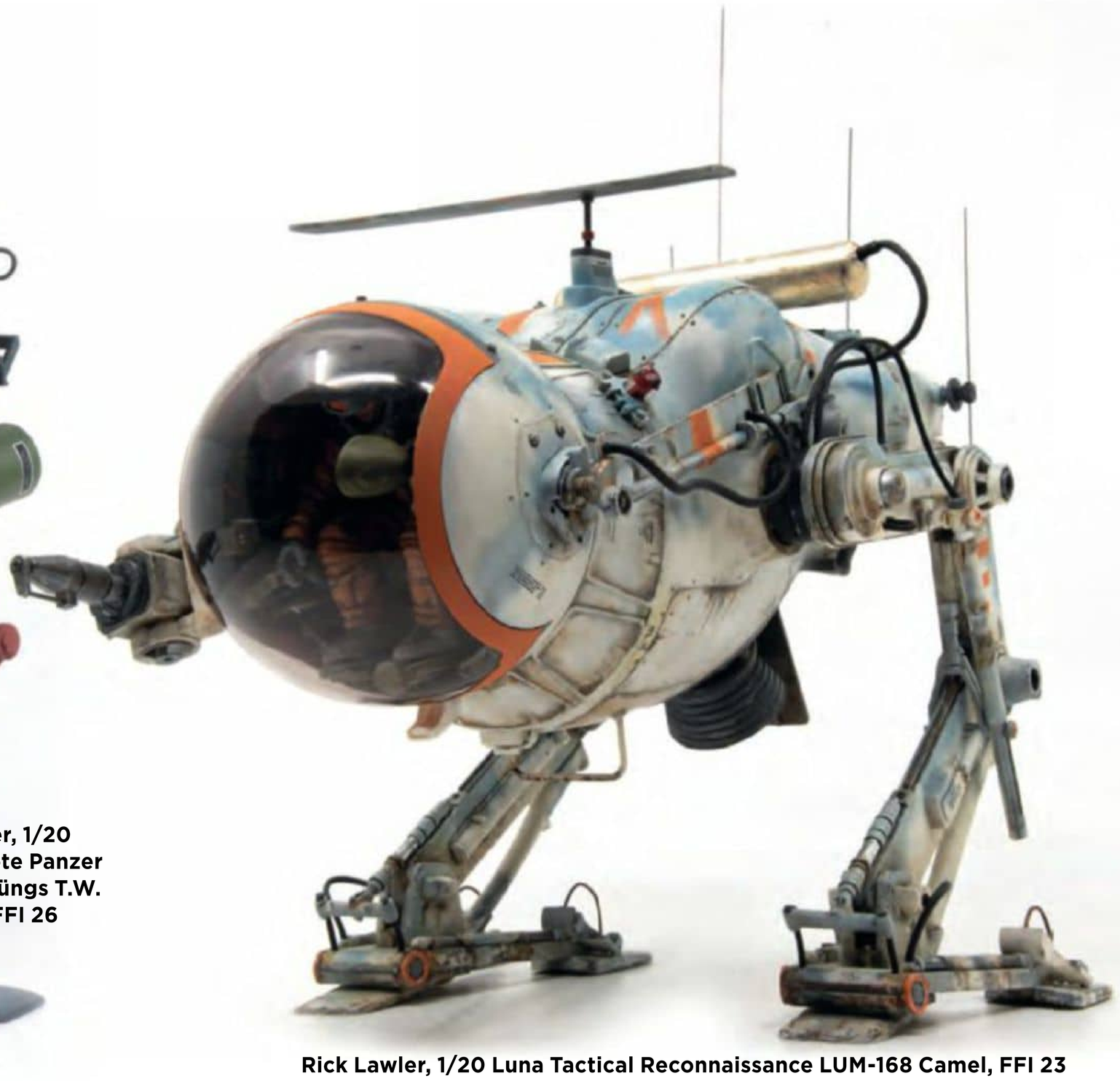


BE INSPIRED

Hasegawa 1/35 Panzer Kampf Anzug Ausf. M (ref. 64103)
© Kow Yokoyama



TJ Haller, 1/20
Pak Kröte Panzer
Aufklarüngs T.W.
47/P1, FFI 26

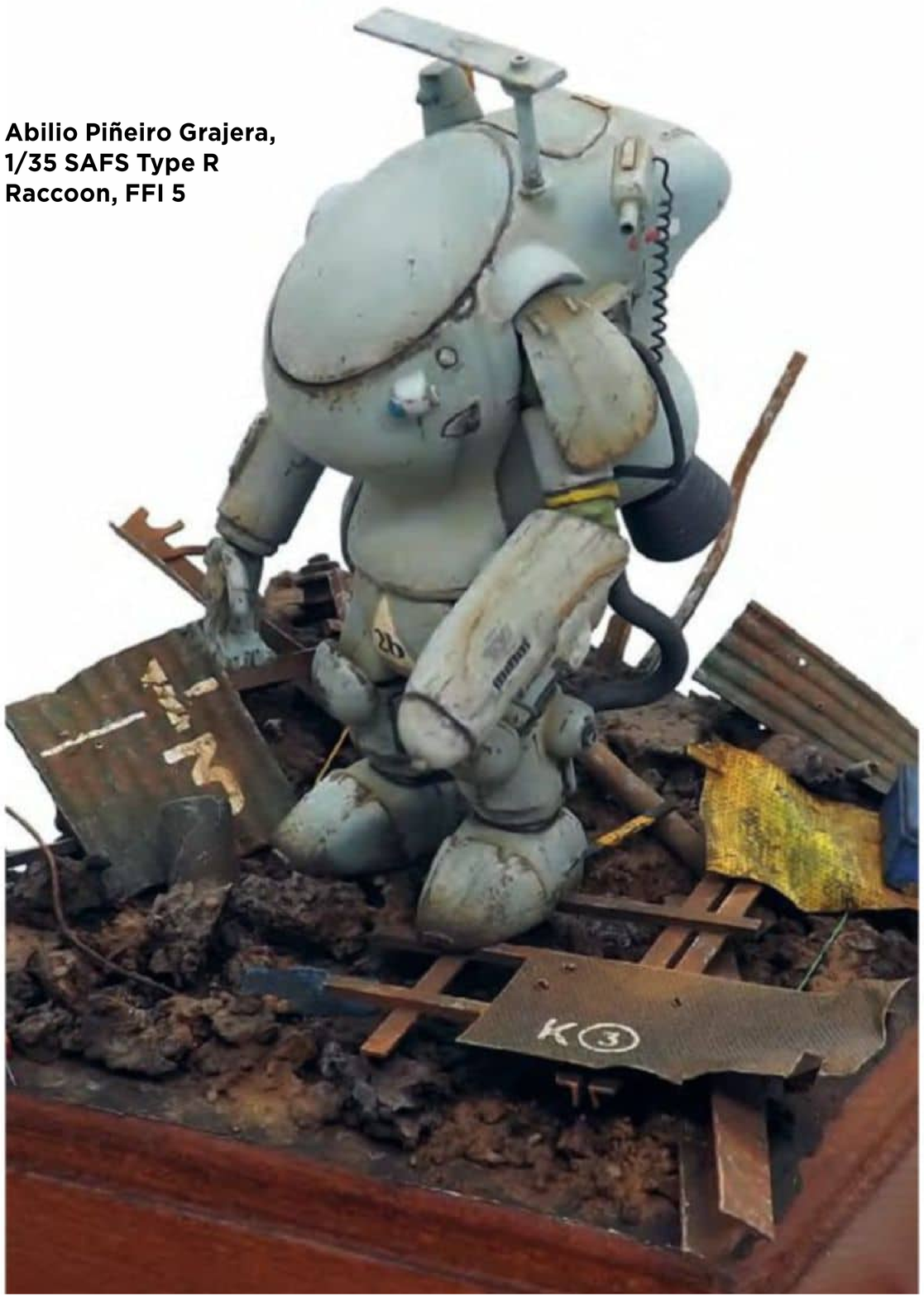


Rick Lawler, 1/20 Luna Tactical Reconnaissance LUM-168 Camel, FFI 23

MASCHINEN KRIEGER GALLERY

Fantasy Figures International *has a long tradition of publishing Maschinen Krieger article. Here are some of our favourites.*

Abilio Piñeiro Grajera,
1/35 SAFS Type R
Raccoon, FFI 5



Ilya Yut, 1/20 Mk.44
Ammoknights
Smartgun, FFI 15



Bryan ‘Maschinen’ Krueger is one of the US’s foremost Ma.K. builders and his work has graced these pages in FFI 3, 4, 12 and 32, as well as our 2020 Yearbook. Here is some of his work that hasn’t been seen here before.











Located in Cork, Ireland.

mithril MINIATURES 32mm The LORD of the RINGS

New MZ732 UV Resin Vignette

King Eomer accepts the submission of the Dunlendings

Mithril has a 20 year tradition of accepting novel ideas from our customers in the Fellowship club, via a voting system every month, that results in amazing miniatures and vignettes.
The most recent release was in August, showing a complex vignette with four figures, a detailed throne and a decorated base with assorted weapons.



King Eomer became king of Rohan after his uncle King Theodan was killed during the Battle of the Pelennor Fields against the Witch-king on his flying monsterous beast, near Minas Tirith.

All sculpts created by Chris Tubb.

King Eomer Vig was released in August

Changes to the Fellowship



A new chapter in the Fellowship begins as we go back to the start of the Lord of the Rings story and work our way forward slowly every two months or so. Chris Tubb dictates the story sections that people vote on, and add three ideas himself and the members suggest the other two, over two months.
The total of five then are completed and can be collected within a month approximately of the final vote.
Then we move on to the next part of the story.
So we started in The Shire....

https://mithril.ie/fellowship-club/newest-fellowship-releases/

Ships worldwide

MIDDLE-EARTH ENTERPRISES

Fen Model Show '25



Dan Brooker *reports from one of the UK's most exciting modelling events.*



The Fen Model Show, now in its fourth year, drew record crowds and an exceptional standard of entries over the weekend of 26–27 July 2025. The event, staged at The Maltings in Ely, has traditionally centred on fantasy and sci-fi-themed miniatures, but in recent years the show organisers have begun to branch out, actively inviting scale modellers to participate alongside the established community of hobbyists.

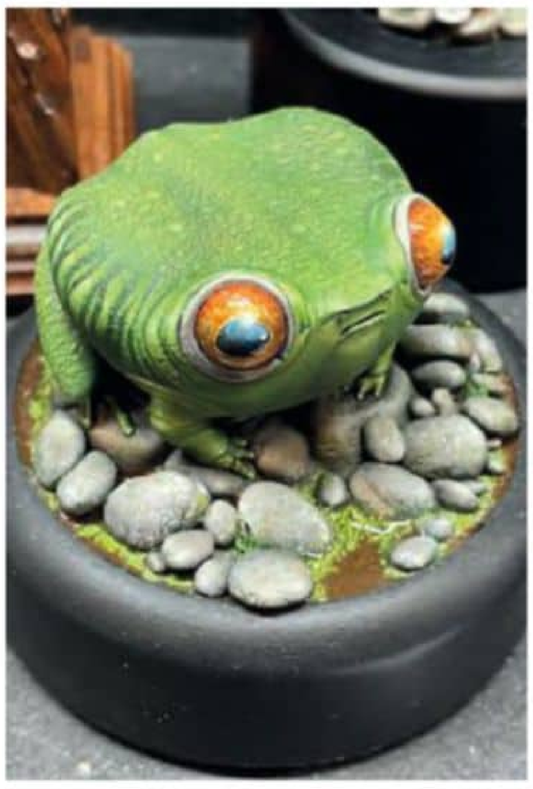
On arrival, I was struck by the professional presentation of the show, which many compared to leading European events. The main exhibition hall featured tiered, well-lit shelving, designed to showcase models under daylight lamps, ensuring that every detail could be viewed to its best advantage. The backbone of the show was once again its competition, judged under the open system format. Organisers reported 420 visitors, 192 entrants and an astonishing 802 models on display, spanning the Junior, Standard and Master categories. With minimal competition classes, I really liked the way entering the competition was made straightforward and stress-free, encouraging broad participation across the hobby.





The standard of work was widely acknowledged to be exceptional, with many observers noting that the level of craftsmanship on display would rival some of Europe's leading shows. Awards included precision CNC-milled aluminium medals for category winners, while the distinctive 'CORRRR Award' was presented to models that delivered an immediate visual impact, exactly as the name suggests. The most prestigious prize, the "Mega CORRRR" for Best of Show, was awarded to David Soper, whose work drew particular acclaim from both judges and fellow entrants.

For those who have yet to experience the Fen Model Show, organisers are already looking ahead to next year. The fifth edition will return to The Maltings on 25–26 July 2026, and with momentum clearly building, it is fast becoming a fixture in the UK modelling calendar.







FEN MODEL SHOW '25

FANTASTIC FANTASY

















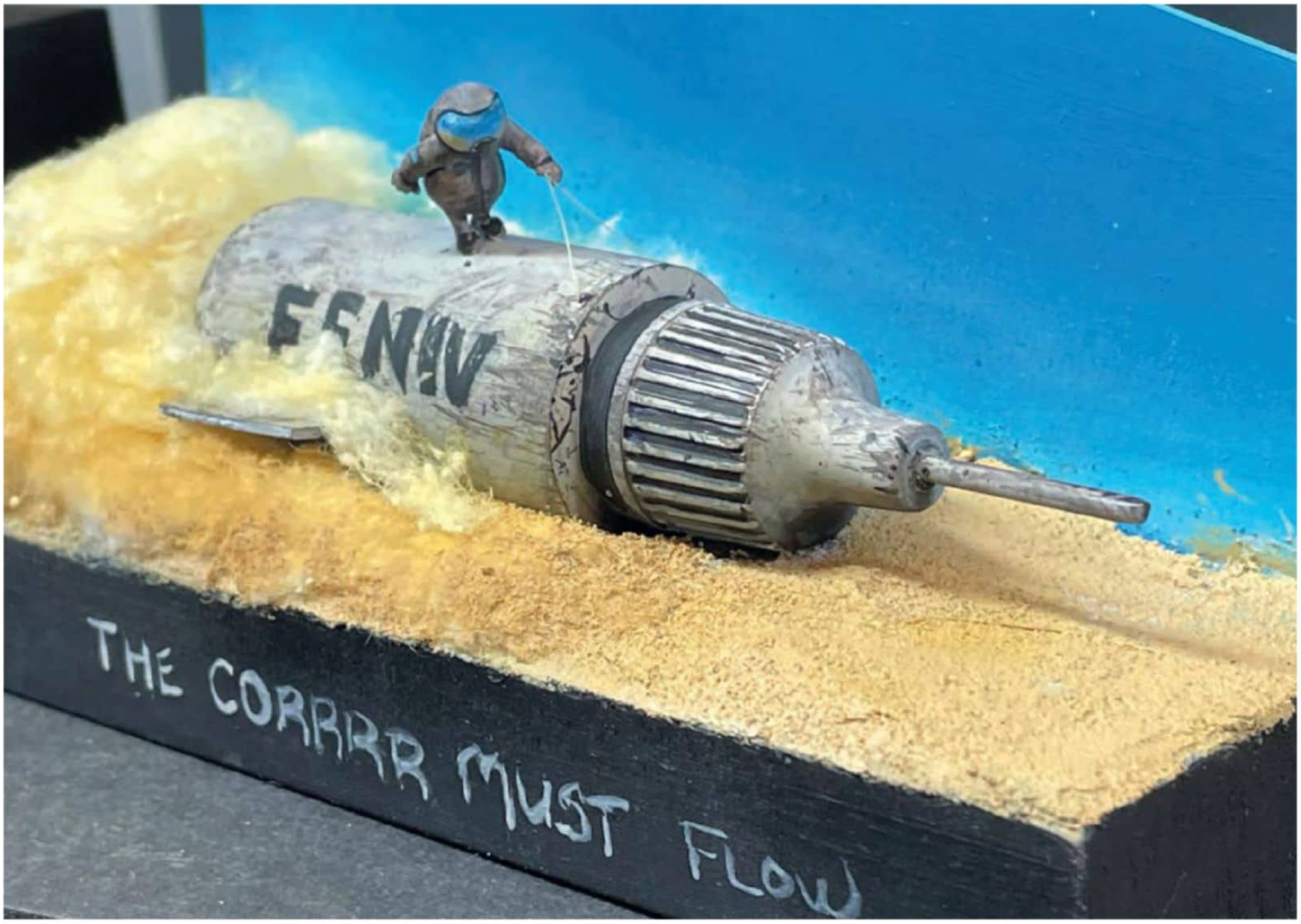




FMS fen model show

FEN MODEL SHOW '25

SCI-FI AND MODELLING


THE CORRRR MUST FLOW




89







FMS fen model show

FEN MODEL SHOW '25

THE GRIM DARKNESS OF THE FAR FUTURE








COPPERFIST BROTHERHOOD
IRONHEAD SQUAT PROSPECTORS



Best of Show
- David Soper

Best of Base
- Oliver Pratt

People's Choice
- Katie Seedwell

CORRRR
- Lee Winnett
- Margot Crombeecke
- Christoph Klingshirn
- Lee Hebblethwaite

Junior Bronze
- Lemuel Modi-Bay
- Ayiko Modi-Bay
- Ailsa Owens
- Sophia Priest
- Alfie Bowker
- Elodie Gotch

Junior Silver
- Hannah Kelly
- Oliver Parkinson
- Eryn Hayden-Evans
- Violet Hayden-Evans
- Simon Chetwind-Chatwin
- Cayden Owens
- Harriet Priest
- Jayden Kingsley

Junior Gold
- Faith Kelly
- Linus Klingshirn
- Thomas Watkins
- Elenie Owens
- Flyn Croger

Junior Best of Show
- Flynn Croger

Standard Figures Bronze
- Ben Nequest
- Eric Lang
- Russell Offord
- Jason Chetwind-Chatwin
- Joshua Alderson
- Andrew Grech
- Kieran Pinney
- Helen Miles
- Matthew Adams
- Chris Parsons
- Matthew Margerison
- Dave Convery
- Richard Newing
- Drew Cuttle
- Brian Douglas
- Paul Gillespie
- Mike Parkinson
- Duncan Weatherhead
- Phil Nunn
- Jon Maisey
- Ben Gotch
- Robin Snelson
- Justin Warns
- Jason Sumner-Kalkun
- Liam Blaney

Standard Vehicles Bronze
- Kieran James
- Ian Christmas
- Nicholas Buckle
- Jade Nicole

Standard Figures Silver
- Mark Rodgers
- Jason Sherwood
- Jo Orlebar
- Katie Seedwell
- Chris Howell
- Dave Kelly
- Lee Winnett
- Stuart Waddicor
- Meirion Evans
- Craig Bucknall
- Tyler Scott
- David Ashbury
- Alessia Amitrano
- Alan Paul
- Phillip Chapman
- Adam Noon
- Winnie
- Alex Bray
- Sam Frith
- Ben Counter
- Mike Brown
- Lee Rushby

Standard Vehicles Silver
- Ben Jarvis
- Craig Bucknall
- Christopher Billing

Standard Figures Gold
- James Phillips
- Sam Ryman-Tubb
- Kieran James
- Paul Larkins
- Alex Cowles
- Ted Coleman
- Rui Esteves
- Ken Cotter
- Damon Boycott
- Julien Bauer

Standard Vehicles Gold
- Dawid Branski
- Mikkel Morild

Best of Standard
- Rui Esteves

Masters Figures Bronze
- Matty Pearce
- Robert Crombeecke
- Adam Chance
- Simon Mitchelmore
- Pascal Rooze
- Ben Jarvis
- Paul Davies
- Richard Sharp
- Lee Hebblethwaite
- Patrick Kamsma
- Mark Windle
- Dave Roberts
- Guillaume Chardon
- Tom Pitcher
- Terry Neesham
- Rowan McConkey

Masters Vehicles Bronze
- Bjarni Dali
- Fletcher Giles

Masters Figures Silver
- James Taro
- Jared Clifford
- Tom Wren
- Thomas Coltau
- Chris Perry
- Aaron Clark
- Rosie Williams
- Nathan Cartwright
- Matt Kennedy
- Fletcher Giles

Masters Vehicles Silver
- Oliver Pratt
- Daniel Brooker

Masters Figures Gold
- Joe Wilson
- James Southernwood
- Andy Wardle
- Andrew Jones
- David Soper
- Adrian Bay
- Ross Tovey
- David Ugolini
- Jordan Toner

Masters Vehicles Gold
- Thomas Coltau
- Ross Tovey

FMS fen model show

FEN MODEL SHOW '25
AWARDS

FMS 2025



Fet Milner, *one of the hobbyists behind the event, reflects on this year's Fen Model Show.*



After four years of running FMS, we think we've got the process mostly down. But, of course, we can't leave things alone, so we're always introducing new ideas and approaches to see what works. And, naturally, no show survives its encounter with the real world, no matter how much planning you put into it!

Something we discovered last year is that – quite by accident – FMS has become the largest competition in the UK by number of models entered. This doesn't mean we dwarf shows like the IPMS Nationals in Telford or get more footfall than Salute in London, but it does show that there's a great deal of interest in the UK once again having a major competition that can sit in the calendar alongside the big European shows like Scale Model Challenge, Monte San Savino and Kontrast. This is reflected in the increasing number of people coming over from Europe for the show – and they're returning each year with more and more of their friends! Hopefully that will continue so British modellers who don't have the opportunity to travel to the other big shows get to see the best that Europe can offer.

Naturally, however, not everything went as well as we'd like ...





Accursed Wi-Fi

Our biggest issue this year was undoubtedly the Wi-Fi. Ely is notorious for having pretty rubbish mobile connections – I guess that's to be expected in a town dominated by ancient medieval architecture that seems almost custom-made to block out 5G – and this is exacerbated by running the show in another large stone building ... in the part of town with the worst reception. So we rely on the venue's Wi-Fi, which in the past has worked more or less (mostly on the side of less, really), but this year it was a significant issue. One of the main causes was that the venue never seems to have changed its login info, so anyone who'd been to the show and managed to get onto the Wi-Fi previously was getting automatically logged on by their phones...

While that might not be a major issue at most venues, the traders at the show obviously needed to access the Internet to make sales. So, I spent much of the show running around asking the venue to reboot the Wi-Fi when it got blocked up by all the connections and making announcements asking people to turn off their Wi-Fi. Next year – because the trauma this caused is absolutely not worth repeating – we'll be bringing in a dedicated Wi-Fi network just for the traders!

The Good Stuff

Obviously, that's not a very sexy thing to think about when you're talking about model shows, but honestly it was the worst thing that happened. In terms of the positives, we've found that a few things really, really work:

- The ease of registration
- The lights and stands
- The demonstrations

The registration is run through an app my wife developed and has been amended and adapted each year to take into account changes we make around the competition and a few other things. This year, we were able to have multiple people doing registration simultaneously, which meant that we could keep queues to a minimum. Because we also don't charge separately for the competition, people entering their models didn't need to faff about and could get straight to getting their models out.



David Soper's Best-of-Show-winning display.



Our lights and stands are really one of the things we're proudest of: they make sure that you can see what the models really look like; you don't need to struggle against dim lights, interference from the sun shining through a window, oddly textured fabrics or glaring white tables, etc. They create a great environment for looking at the models without distraction.

The demonstrations are something we really enjoy offering because it's very easy to get burnt out at a show – there's only so much time you can spend looking at the stands, and if you spend the rest of your time at the bar, you'll not remember much of the show! The other advantage is that it means the exhibition area has some competition for attention, which makes sure there's regularly space to get in and see all the models. A lot of shows we've been to end up with areas that you just can't get to because of the crowds, so offering a constant stream of (FREE!) demonstrations to tempt the crowds away helps prevent that from happening.

The Future

This year, we included a separate category for vehicles because we want to encourage people to bring models that aren't just figures – we like the whole range of modelling! That seemed to bring in a few more vehicle entries, although we'd still like to see more people engaging with it and bringing their vehicles along.

Meanwhile, we saw that the figure painting category had a really strong vein of creativity and storytelling, which is often neglected when judging things purely on the basis of technical painting skill. To reflect this, we'll be adding a storytelling category next year!

Because we obviously aim to keep things as simple and obvious as possible, we'll produce some more info about each category, what it means and what a 'good' entry might look like. This should mean that anyone who wants to come will have a good idea of where they should enter their models and how they might get on.

And, of course, next year is our fifth, so we have a few plans to make it more special, but we need to be realistic about what we can actually achieve in the time available – the whole show is run by only a handful of people, after all! ■

POINTER PATROL



Jaffe Lam *builds Fujimi's 1/24 scale TDF-PO-1 from the classic Japanese TV series Ultraseven.*

Ultraseven was one of the defining Tokusatsu television dramas of the 1960s, broadcast by Tokyo Broadcasting System in 1967 and produced by Tsuburaya Productions. It introduced Japanese audiences to a new ultra hero from the Land of Light in Nebula M-78, the same home as Ultraman and his kind. Sent to Earth as a cosmic observer, the character assumed human form as Dan Moroboshi, played by Kohji Moritsugu. Inspired by the courage of humankind and alarmed by the threat of alien invasion, he joined the Terrestrial Defence Force (TDF) as a member of its elite Ultra Guard. This special unit stood as Earth's first line of defence against alien incursions and Kaiju, giant monsters that became a hallmark of the series.

Among the team's futuristic arsenal was their distinctive patrol vehicle, the TDF-PO-1 'Pointer.' Sleek and modern, it embodied the high-technology image of the Ultra Guard, its streamlined shape lending a sense of speed and authority. The filming car itself was based on a Chrysler Imperial Crown Coupe, an American luxury vehicle almost nineteen feet in length. This donor car, renowned for its lavish interiors and sheer size, was stripped down and refashioned into a machine of science-fiction drama. The result combined 1960s' automotive style with imaginative futuristic embellishments, creating one of the most memorable screen vehicles of the era.

The Pointer was armed with an impressive suite of equipment, including integral missile launchers — a signature element of the Ultra Guard's armoury — extendable antennae, dual fender mirrors, radar systems, newly designed laser weapons and police-style patrol lights. For many young viewers in 1967, the Pointer was as iconic as the heroes themselves, its appearance on screen signalling action and adventure.

To emphasise the nostalgic aspect of this build, I displayed the model with a 1/24 scale laser-printed image of Anne Yuri, played by Yuriko Hishimi, the team's medical officer and communications specialist. As the sole female member of the Ultra Guard, Anne was a popular character, often seen alongside the Pointer in promotional photography. In my display, the printed image was digitally enhanced to reproduce a well-known pose from the original









publicity material, creating the effect of Anne reunited with her vehicle after several decades. Even today in Japan, enthusiasts continue to celebrate the Pointer, and you can even see replica vehicles driven on the streets!

Construction

Fujimi first released its 1/24 scale Pointer kit in 1998, and the version built here is a reissue from 2001 under the 'Perfect Model' label. While it lacks some of the engineering refinements of modern kits, assembly was straightforward provided that parts were carefully dry-fitted before cementing. The box art was a nostalgic treat in itself, brightly illustrated in comic-book style, perfectly capturing the period feel and appealing strongly to collectors of Japanese domestic kits.

Inside the box, the contents were equally evocative. The sprues were moulded in several colours, in the fashion of late-1990s releases, with chrome-plated elements for trim and weaponry, clear parts for glazing and lights, rubber tyres for realism,

















and two decal sheets for markings **(photo 1)**. This provided a satisfying mix of materials and ensured that the finished model had the necessary presence. This particular release was intended for the Japanese market only, and I was fortunate to acquire it during a trip to Tokyo ten years ago.

What distinguished the 'Perfect Model' edition was its inclusion of a fine fret of etched-metal parts. These covered dashboard details, front grille, windscreen wipers, door handles, power-window switches, and even a tiny ignition key with its holder. Such additions elevated the model well beyond a simple curbside kit, transforming it into a genuine collector's piece. The decal sheet was expanded to allow the builder to reproduce not only the TDF-PO-1 but also other variants seen in the series, such as PO-2 and PO-3. Another option provided was for clear or green-tinted glazing; I selected the latter, which conveyed a convincingly futuristic look. The body shell was relatively simple in form but benefited from the separate chrome accessories **(2)**. These were left unattached during painting so that their finish could be preserved. Overall, while the kit's origins were apparent, the inclusion of upgraded elements made it both rewarding to build and historically significant as a piece of modelling nostalgia.





Painting & Weathering

With construction complete, I turned to the finish. Work began inside the vehicle, as the interior was the emotional heart of the build. The moulded seats were painted in a custom mix of Tamiya Medium Blue (XF-18), Tamiya German Grey (XF-63) and Tamiya Light Grey (XF-66), creating a cool industrial blue-grey tone. The seat centres were picked out in Tamiya Olive Drab (XF-62), providing contrast and depth **(3)**. Behind the rear seats, visible through the large windows, I applied a lighter shade mixed from Tamiya Flat White (XF-2) and Tamiya Medium Blue (XF-18), enhancing a sense of transparency **(4)**.

The dashboard was finished in the same family of blue tones and carefully detailed with AK Interactive Natural Steel (AK 674), which convincingly represented the metallic controls **(5)**. With the interior complete, attention shifted to the striking exterior finish. To create a smooth foundation, I primed the body with Mr. Finishing Surfacer 1500 Black (SF289) blended with Tamiya Gloss Clear (X-22), producing a glossy black basecoat. Over this I sprayed a custom purple-grey mix made from Tamiya Pure Blue (LP-6), Tamiya Purple (X-16) and Tamiya Light Grey (XF-66) **(6)**. Highlights were introduced gradually by misting on lightened coats with Tamiya Flat White (XF-2), adjusting the tone in successive passes until the desired balance was achieved. When the finish became too pale, a further blend of purple-grey and Pure Blue was applied to restore depth **(7)**.

For subtle metallic accents, I sprayed AK Interactive Natural Steel (AK 674) in two passes: first sparingly for understated highlights, then more heavily to enhance brilliance **(8)**. Once satisfied, I sealed the finish with Tamiya Gloss Clear (X-22). The decals were then applied using Tamiya Mark Fit Super Strong (87264), which allowed them to conform snugly to the surface. After drying, several coats of Tamiya Gloss Clear (LP-9) were applied, building a deep gloss finish **(9)**. Finally, the body was polished with Tamiya Polishing Compound Finish (87070) and #10000 Liquid Rubbing Compound to achieve a mirror-like sheen **(10)**.

With the main finish complete, I added a distinctive functional feature: working LED headlights. These were magnetically controlled, powered by coin-cell batteries, and mounted within the chassis using Blu-tac. Testing confirmed they worked reliably, and their illumination under low light added a dramatic touch **(11)**.

Detailing continued with the photoetch metal grille, which I carefully installed at the front. The wheel hubs required slight adjustment for a snug fit; once in place, the raised rings were hand-painted with Vallejo Red (70.926), contrasting sharply with the Vallejo White (70.951) wheels **(12)**. The MP-spec patrol light was given its characteristic glow using Tamiya Clear Orange (X-26). At this stage, the chassis, wheels, radar equipment and laser weapons were all brought together, creating a striking assembly **(13)**.

Weathering was applied with restraint to avoid overwhelming the glossy finish. A dark brown pin wash defined the wheel hubs, while AK Interactive Sand Yellow



13



14



15



16

› Dust & Dirt Deposits (AK 4061) and AK Interactive Rainmarks (AK 074) were feathered into the tyres and lower body using thinner, leaving subtle traces in the treads and along the sills. The underside was further treated with controlled streaking, while the nose of the vehicle was dusted more heavily to suggest high-speed operational use **(14)**.

The chrome-plated parts, including the missile launchers and laser weapons, presented a challenge due to seam lines. To maintain authenticity, I stripped several of these elements with diluted bleach, re-primed them in Mr. Finishing Surfacer 1500 Black (SF289), and refinished them in Vallejo Steel (70.864). This restored their shine with a realistic, metallic appearance **(15)**.

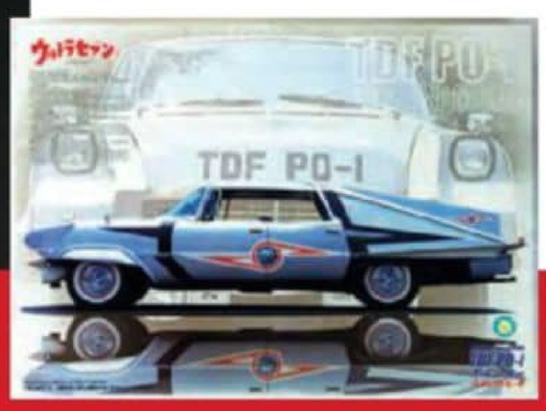
Finally, I placed the 1/24 image of Anne Yuri beside the Pointer. Digitally enhanced for clarity and scale, it was printed, mounted on card, and displayed proudly alongside the model **(16)**. The result evoked the familiar images of the 1960s while offering a nostalgic reunion of character and vehicle.

Conclusion

The completed Pointer perfectly captured the style and excitement of the 1967 series. Though not a modern ‘shake-and-bake’ kit, it assembled well with careful preparation and rewarded patience with an eye-catching display. The photoetched parts, functional lighting, and companion figure image added further character, elevating it beyond a straightforward kit build into a miniature tribute to Japanese television history.

In the end, building Fujimi’s Pointer was not only a modelling project, but also a journey back to my childhood. For those who remember Ultraseven, the model recalls the thrill of alien invasions thwarted at the last moment by the Ultra Guard. ■





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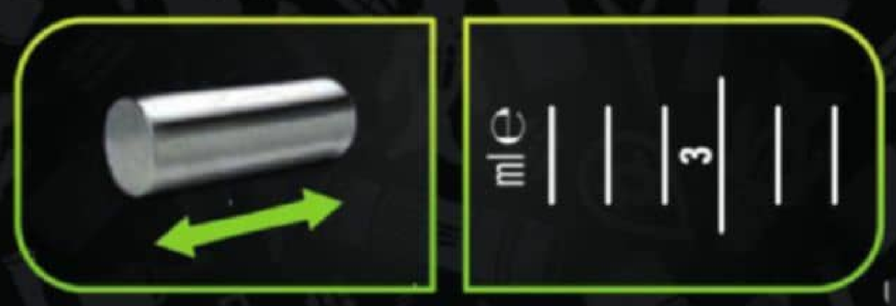
Perfect for freehands and intermediate fills. Also for use in the final phase of gradients.



CAP HOLE
for pumping paint

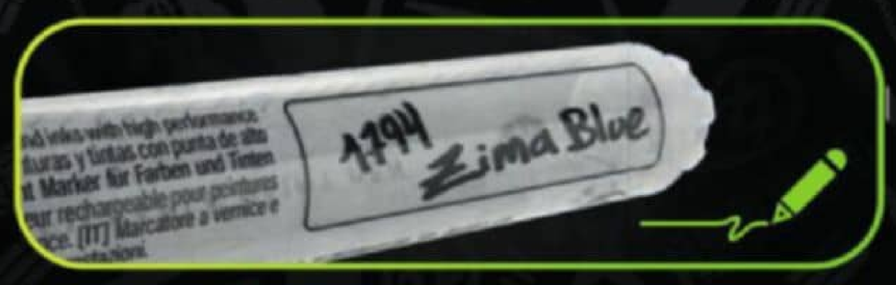
Refillable Paint Pen #1 & #2

Insert the tip into the hole of the cap and gently pump: press the tip down about 1–2 mm, hold for half a second, then release. Repeat this motion gently at a slow rhythm, keeping the marker upright so the paint flows down. Stop as soon as the tip looks saturated and writes smoothly, avoiding excessive pressure or over-pumping.'



MIXING CYLINDER
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CAPACITY LEVEL
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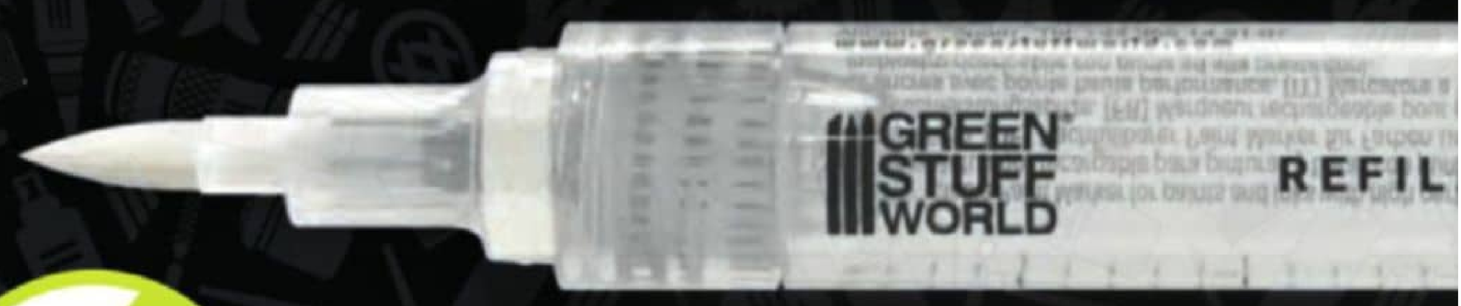


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AVE DOMINUS NOX



Rubén Torregrosa *paints a pre-Heresy Night Lords Assault Squad with AMMO IONIC acrylics.*

The Horus Heresy, the colossal civil war at the heart of Warhammer's 30,000-year narrative, has once again taken centre stage with the launch of the most recent edition. With new units, revised rules, and an array of ways to build armies and relearn the ever-shifting meta, this is an ideal moment to revisit one of my long-running projects: a pre-Heresy Night Lords force. Of course, it must be said that aesthetically the Legion does not look greatly different after the Heresy, but in either era they remain one of the most sinister and striking factions in the Warhammer universe.

On the surface, painting blue armour appears straightforward compared to the notorious pitfalls of white or red. However, finding the correct balance of shades is a more nuanced task than it may seem. The challenge lies in achieving a blue that is distinctive without becoming too bright or too dark. If painted too light, the armour risks looking like that of the Ultramarines; if taken too far in the other direction, it appears flat and lifeless on the tabletop. The Night Lords demand a particular balance: the colour must retain depth and vibrancy while still exuding menace.

In this article I will demonstrate how to strike that balance, using the new **IONIC acrylic range** from AMMO by Mig Jimenez as the foundation. I will also cover methods for painting battle damage, metallic textures, bone, leather and flesh details, as well as the Legion's distinctive 'bat' heraldry and trophies. By the end, the reader should have a complete process for recreating the VIII Legion in a way that feels both faithful to the lore and visually arresting on the tabletop.

MIDNIGHT CLAD

When working with armoured miniatures, especially sci-fi figures with broad flat surfaces, the airbrush proves invaluable. It provides speed, consistency, and an excellent basis for further refinement with brushwork. For this project, I used an Iwata HP-BH airbrush set at two bar pressure, which provided both control and even coverage. The process begins with the darkest base tones, gradually building up highlights in controlled layers. Rather than simply moving to lighter blues, I chose to introduce a dark turquoise. This gave the Night Lords a unique greenish-blue tint that echoes comic book art depictions of the night. This tone feels well suited to the sinister identity of the Legion. To increase interest and balance, I also considered the use of a secondary colour (black) and a tertiary colour (steel).

1



The first step was to clean all the pieces using modelling knives and files, with particular attention to the removal of mould lines. The miniatures themselves were the Warhammer 30,000 Assault Squad from Games Workshop, though I introduced some additional flavour with resin-printed proxy parts. Heads and lightning claws were taken from DMS Miniatures, while siege shields were sourced from OHM. The mixture of plastic and resin parts was assembled using cyanoacrylate glue. At this stage the shields and jump packs were deliberately left unattached for ease of painting. Once assembly was complete, I applied a thin coat of TITANS HOBBY Black Matt Primer (TTH100) from a rattle can to provide a consistent foundation.

2



To achieve the chapter's signature dark blue, I began with Abyss Blue (IONIC-0099). The paint was thinned by 50 per cent using Thinner (IONIC-0300) and applied in a smooth, even coat through the airbrush. By spraying from a near-vertical top-down angle, the primer remained visible in the recesses, giving natural shadows and depth.

3



The next stage introduced Dark Turquoise (IONIC-0104), again thinned by 50 per cent. This was applied more selectively to the upper and frontal sections of the armour, focusing on a zenithal highlight. By restricting the coverage compared to the previous layer, a gentle and convincing transition was achieved.

4



To produce stronger contrast, I then moved to Sky Blue (IONIC-0092), which I mixed with 10 per cent Dark Turquoise (IONIC-0104) to maintain harmony. This was applied only to the most exposed areas, such as shoulders and upper chest plates, ensuring that earlier layers remained visible and transitions remained smooth.

5



At this stage the armour looked somewhat too bright overall, lacking the sinister depth associated with the Night Lords. To correct this, I applied a filter composed of Abyss Blue (IONIC-0099) mixed 50 per cent with Dark Turquoise (IONIC-0104) and thinned around 70 per cent. This was sprayed as a translucent glaze, restoring depth and creating smoother bridges between highlights and shadows.

6



The same process was followed on the shields and jump packs. For large flat surfaces such as the shields, the highlight was restricted to the upper sections, leaving the lower parts darker to preserve contrast. When placing highlights, it is important always to consider the final orientation of the piece once attached to the miniature.

8



To enhance definition, I carried out a light drybrush over the miniature using Sky Blue (IONIC-0092) with a small addition of Dark Turquoise (IONIC-0104). This picked out raised details across the blue and black armour while also creating subtle chipping and scratch effects.



7



With the blue areas established, I introduced black as a secondary colour. This was particularly effective on parts of the shields, certain armour panels, and the jump packs. Areas to be painted black were masked with tape to create sharp separations. Black (IONIC-0172) was sprayed onto the masked sections. A single highlight of Neutral Grey (IONIC-0169) was then applied to the upper planes to break up the flat black. Once the masking tape was removed, minor imperfections or paint bleed were visible. These were not a concern at this stage, as later weathering and battle damage would easily disguise them.

9



Larger edges such as the gorget, kneepads, and claw fingers were refined with a precise edge highlight, using the same mix thinned with around 20 per cent water. This combination of dry brushing and controlled edge highlighting gave the armour a crisp finish.

10



Remaining elements were blocked in with Black (IONIC-0172), slightly thinned with water. This stage tidied the model, organised the painting process, and revealed any areas of blue armour requiring touch-ups. The final tertiary colour, metallic steel, was then introduced. Dark Metal (IONIC-0173) was carefully applied with a fine brush to weapons, trims, and mechanical details. Care was taken to avoid spilling onto the surrounding blue armour.

DECALS

Once the armour colours were complete, the next step was to apply the VIII Legion insignia and markings. Decals remain the most reliable way to achieve clean, crisp designs, but they require careful handling to avoid silvering or frosting. To create a smooth surface, I airbrushed two thin coats of Gard Rock Glossy Varnish (A.MIG-2070). Each coat was allowed at least 15 minutes to cure before moving on. While the varnish dried, decals were trimmed from their sheets. For this build I used designs from Forge World and Scumb4g Kustoms. Larger emblems were chosen for prominent areas such as shields and torsos, while smaller motifs decorated secondary locations. As much carrier film as possible was removed during trimming.



The decals were soaked and carefully transferred with a damp brush. While still wet, their position could be adjusted until correct. Keeping tools moist at this stage prevented tearing or premature adhesion. To secure the decals, I first applied Ultra Decal Set (A.MIG-2029), followed by Ultra Decal Fix (A.MIG-2030) to soften the film and help it conform to surface detail. After each application, I gently pressed the decal outward with a cotton swab. Several applications of Decal Fix were made until the decal lay flush with the surface. Once fully dry, another layer of Glossy Varnish (A.MIG-2070) was airbrushed to protect the finish.



DARK WASH

The next task was to define panel lines and recesses with a wash. Rather than an acrylic wash, which dries too rapidly for easy clean-up, I chose an enamel wash, which provides hours of working time.



I used Dark Brown for Green Vehicles (A.MIG-1005) applied as a pin wash. This was brushed carefully into the recesses only, avoiding broad coverage. After 30 minutes of drying, excess wash was removed with a brush moistened in Odourless Enamel Thinner (A.MIG-2059). By wiping away in the opposite direction to recesses, shading was preserved while surfaces were cleaned.

Finally, to remove the gloss and restore a realistic finish, I applied two thin coats of Ultra-Matt Lucky Varnish (A.MIG-2050) through the airbrush.

BATTLE DAMAGE

The Night Lords are renowned for their ferocity, and their armour rarely appears pristine. I therefore introduced battle damage in two stages: superficial scratches and deeper chipping.



Using Sky Blue (IONIC-0092), I added irregular edge scratches and fine surface marks, applying the paint with the body of the brush rather than just the tip for natural wear. I then used Black Brown (IONIC-0160) to place deeper chips alongside some of the lighter marks, creating a layered effect suggesting worn paint and exposed material.

BONE

Bone details, from helmets and trophies to skull motifs, were painted in a layered progression from beige to off-white.

15



I applied Graveyard Earth (IONIC-0148) as the base coat.

16



A first highlight was applied with Warm Grey (IONIC-0163) and a 50/50 mix of Warm Grey (IONIC-0163) and Bone (IONIC-0009) added further volume.

17



Pure Bone (IONIC-0009) was applied to the most exposed areas and a final sparing highlight of Ivory (IONIC-0002) added sharp definition.

BAT AND DEMON MOTIFS

Decorative wings and bat-like motifs were painted in a sequence of reds and magentas to harmonise with the otherwise cold palette.

18



Grape Red (IONIC-0057) was used as the basecoat and Dark Magenta (IONIC-0069) was applied to raised areas.

19



Highlights were created with a 50/50 mix of Dark Magenta (IONIC-0069) and Coral (IONIC-0038). Pure Coral (IONIC-0038) was applied as thin glazes for smoother transitions.

20



A mix of Coral (IONIC-0038) and Light Coral (IONIC-0036) produced sharper points, and a final brighter pass anticipated later filters that would otherwise darken the finish.

FLESH

The Legion's macabre habit of displaying flayed flesh was recreated with purplish tones to suggest decay.

21



Areas were blocked in with Grape Red (IONIC-0057). The base was progressively lightened with Undead Skin (IONIC-0039), first in a 25 per cent mix.

22



A further 25 per cent Undead Skin (IONIC-0039) was added to the mix for subsequent highlights. Additional layers increased the proportion of Undead Skin (IONIC-0039), building a rotted effect.

23



Pure Undead Skin (IONIC-0039) was used as the final edge highlight, applied irregularly to suggest texture.

LEATHER

Leather elements such as holsters and ropes added warm accents across the miniature.

24



A base of Burnt Umber (IONIC-0161) was applied directly over the primer, and this was mixed 50/50 with Leather Brown (IONIC-0152) to add texture.

25



Pure Leather Brown (IONIC-0152) was then used to define edges and simulate scratches. A further highlight of Leather Brown (IONIC-0152) with Vanilla (IONIC-0012) was applied to corners.

26



A thin filter of Brown (IONIC-0154), thinned heavily, restored chromatic balance.

GRENADES, EQUIPMENT AND BLACK SOFT JOINTS

Grenades and minor gear were painted in cooler tones to complement the scheme without drawing excessive attention.

27



The base was Cold Black (IONIC-0170). The first highlight was a 50/50 mix of Cold Black (IONIC-0170) and Admiral Grey (IONIC-0166).

28



Pure Admiral Grey (IONIC-0166) refined the edges. A final highlight mixed Admiral Grey (IONIC-0166) with Vanilla (IONIC-0012).

29



The black flexible joints were highlighted in three stages by progressively mixing Black (IONIC-0172) with Vanilla (IONIC-0012). The highlights were applied to raised textures using the body of the brush for a controlled drybrush effect.

EYES

30



The lenses were base coated with Red (IONIC-0054) and Light Coral (IONIC-0036) was added as a bright spot.

31



A glaze of Inktense Red (SC-85), thinned with water, enriched the colour and tied it to the surrounding decoration.



STEEL

32



The darkened metallics were restored with Black Metal (IONIC-0173) and highlights were introduced with a 50/50 mix of Black Metal (IONIC-0173) and Steel (IONIC-0174).

33



Pure Steel (IONIC-0174) was used for the upper edges, while Dio Drybrush Light Metal (A.MIG-0621), thinned, provided the sharpest accents.

34



Rust (IONIC-0156), thinned with water, was used as a filter to weather the metal.

35



A final pass of Dio Drybrush Light Metal (A.MIG-0621) restored shine to raised areas. The shields and jump packs were also painted using the same sequence before final assembly with cyanoacrylate glue.



BASE

36



The bases were constructed from layers of cork sheet cut into shapes and textured with PVA and sand.

37



Once dry, the bases were primed black alongside the miniatures.

38



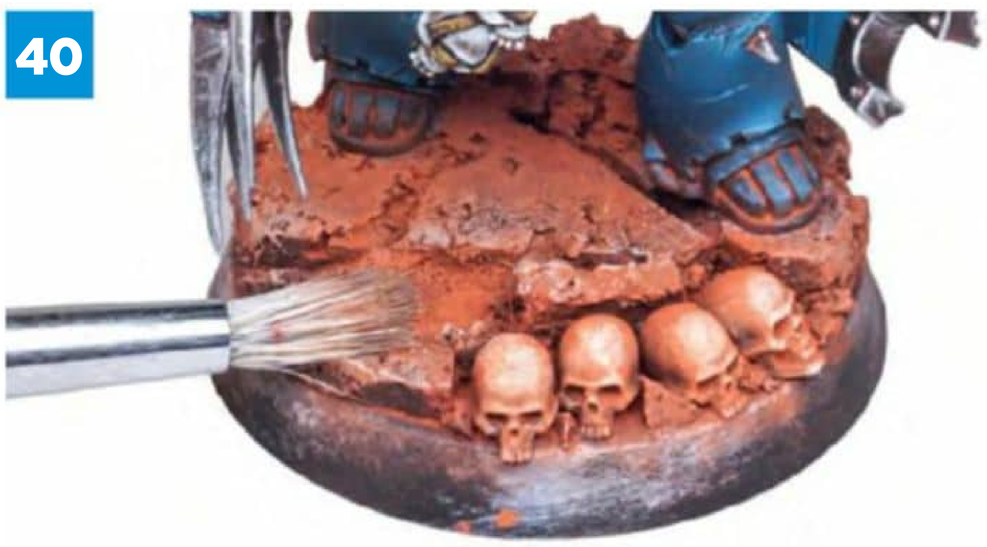
A first drybrush was applied using Dio Drybrush Chipping (A.MIG-0618), followed by Basalt Grey (A.MIG-0603), and a final highlight of Light Grey (A.MIG-0601) picked out edges.

39



Skulls on the base were painted with Dio Drybrush Light Sand (A.MIG-0616) and finished with Dio Drybrush White (A.MIG-0600).

40



The figures were pinned to the bases with cyanoacrylate glue and reinforced with metal rods. I applied pigments as washes, allowing them to dry overnight, and then blended to create a realistic iron-rust effect contrasting with the blue armour. ■





Paul McKay
places a pirate in a seascape.

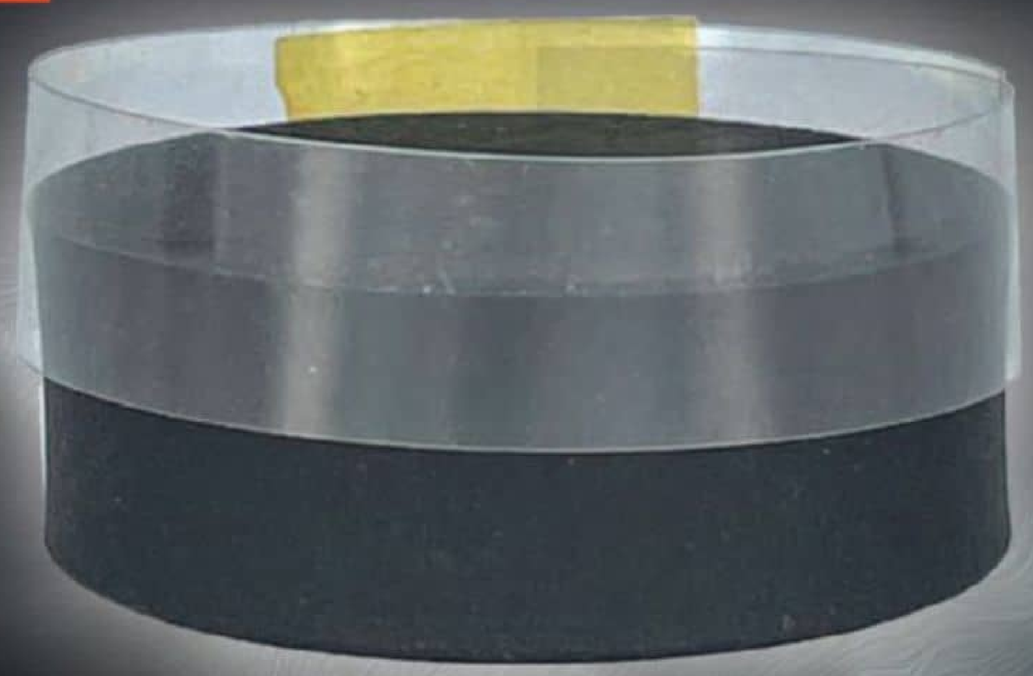
Stormin' Annie

I decided to enter the Salute 52 painting competition held at the Excel Centre in London in April. This year, for a couple of reasons, I could only enter one mini, so I decided to have a shot at the Salute 51 Figure category. Every show a figure is handed out free (with some other goodies) to the first few thousand people who get through the doors early, and it is this figure from every previous show which you have to paint for this entry. The figure given away free in 2024 was 'Stormin' Annie', The Pirate Queen. Every year the Salute figure is painted by well-known artist Kev Dallimore to advertise the miniature.

I made quite a few alterations to the basic figure. The model is a white metal sculpt, and I changed it by increasing the size of the raft with balsa, drilling holes around the cast on tentacles that come attached to the base to make them look more realistic, drilling holes through the flag to represent musket ball damage, and finally drilling out the pistol Annie carries. I then modelled a couple of tentacles using a Milliput/Green Stuff mix under the base and attached them to the cast-on ones. The tentacles were formed around a paper clip core. Bits of paper clip were left protruding from these tentacles at either end to enable them to be attached to the model's base and the plinth through drilled holes. My Wowstick mini hobby drill was a huge help here. I then modelled an additional four larger tentacles of the Kraken/Squid that is attacking our hero.

Using Resin

When done well resin pours can look fantastic. You would be hard pressed not to be impressed with work such as Chris Clayton's Slayer Sword winning 'Kraken-Eater Mega-Gargant' duel (2022) or Erkka Marrtio's 'Saga of the Seawolf' diorama (Games Day Gold Diorama and Duel 2024). Those of you who watch content creators on YouTube will be familiar with resin pour disasters and my little tutorial also contains more than one glitch. I had a vague idea in my head that I wanted Annie on a raft in a rough sea being attacked by the creature with writhing tentacles surrounding her. While I had used resin before on bases it was with limited success and the resins I had





used were really only designed for shallow pours. Well-known painter Andy Wardle recommends Pebeo Gedeo Crystal which is a two-component epoxy resin, saying he has obtained fabulous results using that. So, I placed an order and for the amount I purchased, I did not think it was too expensive. Other products I bought I will mention as they are used in the tutorial. Talking of tutorials there does not seem to be that many good ones about explaining how to make bases like this or how to use all the products I purchased, even from companies like AK Interactive and Vallejo. However, I did find some useful content and got some good ideas from blogs.

Preparing the Base

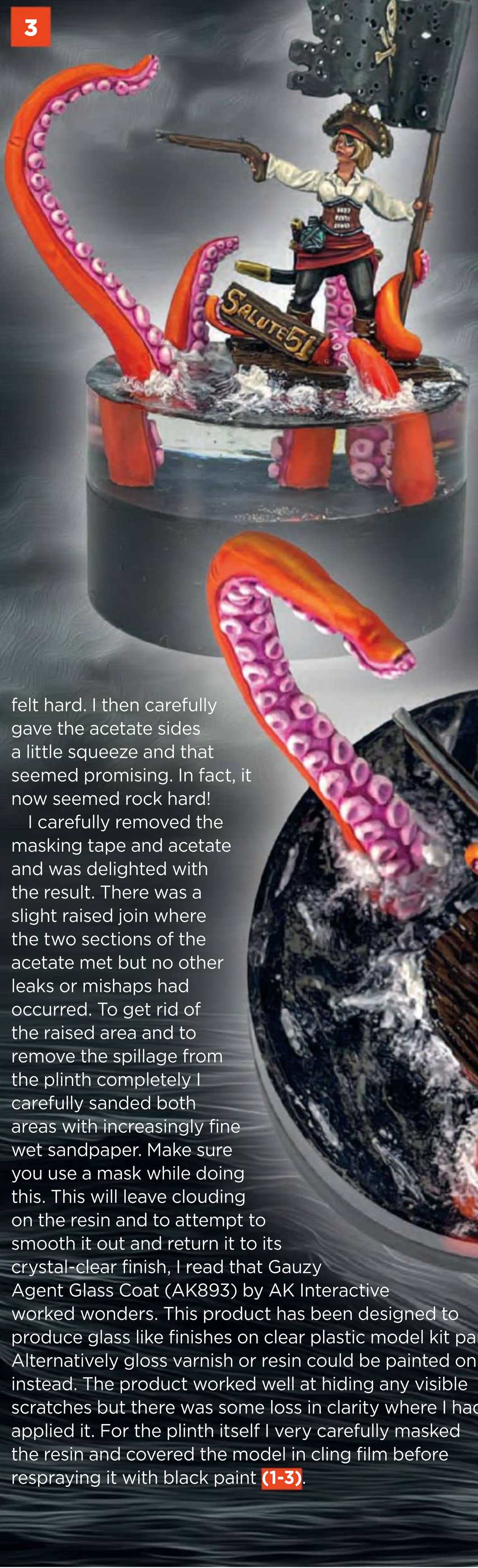
This is not the actual base I used but I have mocked one up for the article to help illustrate the process. It's also good to practice a new technique like this on an expendable piece rather than your latest masterpiece! I used thin acetate sheet of the type you use for overhead projectors and cut a strip to size. I then wrapped it tightly around the base and secured the part where the sheet overlaps with Tamiya masking tape **(photo 1)**. The same tape was then used to surround the sheet and base to securely attach it and to get a tight join **(2)**. The inside of the base where the sheet meets the base can then be lightly covered with resin to prevent any leakage. While adding an extra stage like this is more time consuming, as you must wait for the resin to dry, it may save you from having to sort out messy leaks.

Mixing the Resin

It was here that I made my first mistake. The instructions clearly state you need to mix two parts resin to one part of hardener. I mixed these in a disposable plastic measuring cup and stirred till I thought they were thoroughly mixed as the resin now looked transparent (more of this later). I carefully mixed the two components to try and minimise any bubbles forming. I thought about adding a tiny amount of blue ink to tint the resin but since this was the first time I had used it I decided against this. The mixed resin was then carefully poured into the reservoir I had made.

This was where I made my second mistake as I had inadvertently poured some resin over the acetate lip and it had leaked over the side of the base and onto the plinth. The plinth had been previously sprayed black and even with quickly wiping it off I would need to remove the gloss bloom and uneven surface that now remained.

I left the resin for twelve hours (it is supposed to be touch dry at this point and fully cured after 24 hours) and carefully touched the surface with a cocktail stick. It certainly was not touch dry! Neither was it after 24. At this point I did a bit more research. The maximum depth recommended is two centimetres. My pour was quite a bit lower than this, but it was when I read about making sure resin is mixed properly was when I started to doubt what I had done. Best practice is to mix the resin for three minutes making sure you scrape the bottom and sides of the cup, then to transfer the mix to a second cup and to mix again for a further couple of minutes. I am not sure I mixed mine for anywhere near this long and I had not used the two-cup method. I did a bit more research and it was suggested that applying heat could help with the chemical interaction. Other things I read simply stated that if it had not shown signs of hardening properly after 24 hours it was unlikely to do so. I placed the model carefully on an electrically heated air-drying rack and hoped for the best. Having left the model for a further twelve hours over night I tried the surface again with a cocktail stick and it



3

felt hard. I then carefully gave the acetate sides a little squeeze and that seemed promising. In fact, it now seemed rock hard!

I carefully removed the masking tape and acetate and was delighted with the result. There was a slight raised join where the two sections of the acetate met but no other leaks or mishaps had occurred. To get rid of the raised area and to remove the spillage from the plinth completely I carefully sanded both areas with increasingly fine wet sandpaper. Make sure you use a mask while doing this. This will leave clouding on the resin and to attempt to smooth it out and return it to its crystal-clear finish, I read that Gauzy Agent Glass Coat (AK893) by AK Interactive worked wonders. This product has been designed to produce glass like finishes on clear plastic model kit parts. Alternatively gloss varnish or resin could be painted on instead. The product worked well at hiding any visible scratches but there was some loss in clarity where I had applied it. For the plinth itself I very carefully masked the resin and covered the model in cling film before respraying it with black paint **(1-3)**.

4

Making Waves

I then began to work on the sea to try and replicate waves and foam. For ripples and small waves, I used AK Interactive's Water Gel Transparent (AK8002). I applied a generous layer with a brush and used a straw to blow the waves to where I wanted them to be. This is an easy product to use and left a nice effect that was also very transparent. Do not be put off by its initial PVA/ wood glue appearance. For the foam effect I tried Vallejo's Foam Effect (26.231). I could not find any decent information anywhere about its application. I initially sort of glooped it on and it looked terrible. Thin applications with a damp brush exactly where I wanted it worked much better. I applied it where I thought foam would naturally occur around the raft, bubbling through the holes where tentacles had burst through the cast raft, around the larger tentacles and on the crests of the waves I had made with the Water Gel. Other flecks of foam were created by dipping a bit of sponge packing material in the Foam Effect and dabbing it randomly. Do not over do this





as you do not want to obscure the scene below the waves. For larger areas of foam Vallejo Foam Effect worked very well.

In this photo you can see more clearly how I tried to seamlessly blend the balsa around the cast raft making it look larger and more realistic **(4)**. Water (resin) can also be seen flowing from the hole punctures and down the raft. This also illustrates more clearly how I used the various products to create the waves and foam. The distortion of the resin and how it makes objects (in the same way as refraction works with water) look larger is clearly also evident here. Where the supporting tentacles meet the cast on ones their diameter is exactly the same **(5)**.



Other Thoughts

For square plinths, I would recommend you use smooth plastic card to make barriers and where any sides of the card meet, seal the join with hot glue. An application under the card will also stop any resin leaks passing beyond the glue barrier and dripping further down the plinth. After the resin pour any bubbles that do make their way to the surface can be popped with a lighter or pin. I did not have any troubles with this resin, but a massive bubble ruined a previous base that occurred after I thought the resin had settled when I used the UV variety. After you have poured the resin cover the model to prevent dust or hairs from settling on the surface and ruining the finish. AK Interactive has recently released a video showing how you can use their Snow Microballoons (AK8010) to represent foam flecked water so that may be of interest also.

Conclusion

Using water effects on bases can be a fun and rewarding hobby experience and I was delighted that my efforts resulted in a silver award. I hope some of my thoughts are useful, especially if you have not made one yourself before. My biggest tip would be to carefully read any product use instructions and to not rush the process. ■

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks to Kev Dallimore for allowing me to use the image of 'Stormin Annie.'



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A DAY AT DEN OF IMAGINATION

Maciej Wiertolorz *describes the workings of Poland's premier painting studio.*

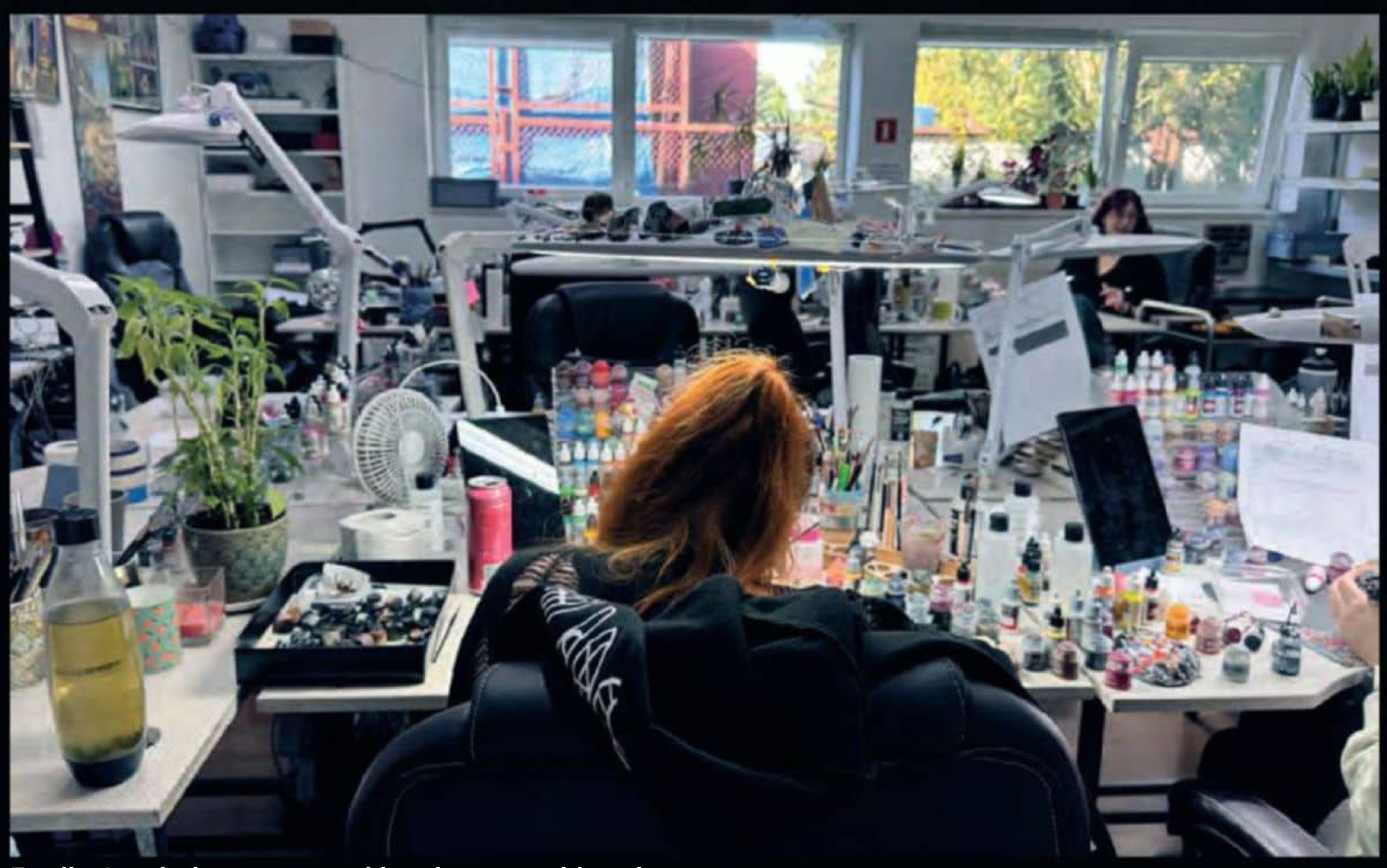
Monday morning, 07:00. For what feels like the thousandth time, I step into the studio, and yet it still feels like the first. On the left, I pass the client service office, where the team is already immersed in dozens of enquiries about bringing visions and dreams to life. Opposite their desks rises a towering shelf stacked with ongoing projects: each box precisely labelled, catalogued, and constantly replenished with new models and fresh ideas.

A few steps further on stands a wall reaching well above my head containing row upon row of carefully packed commissions, sealed and ready to be shipped. I move past this obstacle, and the last remnants of morning drowsiness vanish under the sharp hit of freshly brewed coffee drifting from the social room.

A few steps later, I hear the hum of the first painting hall: Magda's team, already debating details of their current project. "Are these ork buildings ork enough? Maybe more rust?" they argue in good humour. Passing the airbrush workshop, I peek into the assembly room. On the tables stands a towering Warlord Titan, over twenty inches of resin bulk. At the next ten desks lie neat rows of models, patiently disassembled and waiting for their turn in the process. From the speakers overhead flow the first notes of the day's playlist.

Across the hall lies Ewelina's room, whiskey poured





Ewelina's painting room: catching the team mid-project.

into glasses on the tables, cigars dying in ashtrays, cards forming a straight flush on green felt. Her team is wrapping up a commission of several hundred figures for a western-themed RPG. Before reaching my own office, I glance into the 3D and marketing department. Computer fans hum in protest against enormous render and video files, while the air is punctuated by rapid mouse clicks.

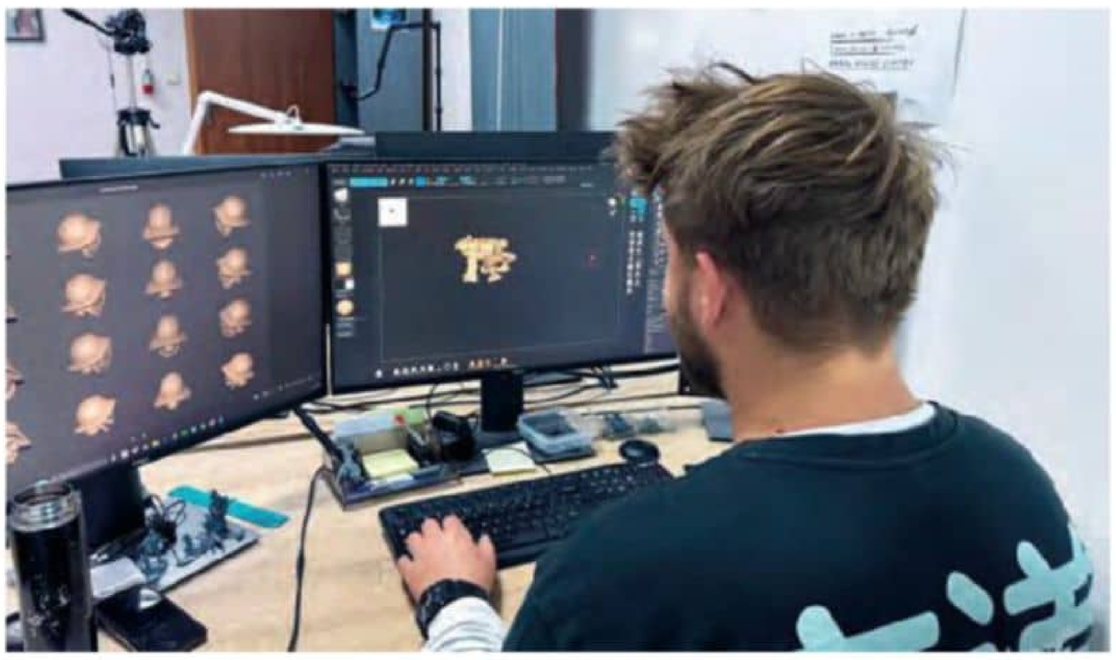
I reach for my office door handle but, as always, glance first at the three other doors nearby. The first leads to the 'incubator',

Studio Profile: Den of Imagination

Location: Toruń, Poland
Founded: 2011
Specialism: Professional miniature painting, conversions, 3D design, dioramas and hobby services
Scale: Over 50 full-time artists across painting, assembly, 3D sculpting, and support teams

Den of Imagination is Poland's largest, and one of Europe's leading, miniature painting studios. Established in 2011, the company has built a reputation for combining industrial-level organisation with artistic craftsmanship.
The studio offers a wide range of services, from tabletop-standard painting through to competition-level display pieces. With in-house 3D sculpting, printing, and conversion teams, it delivers bespoke projects tailored to each client's vision.
Each year, thousands of miniatures pass through Den of Imagination's halls. Every commission undergoes multiple quality-control stages – assembly checks, painting inspections, and final gallery approval – before being carefully packed with the utmost care to ensure models arrive safely in the hands of their new owners. The result is a blend of creativity and precision: armies and display pieces that reflect the client's imagination while carrying the studio's hallmark of professional finish.

Motto: From the vision to reality – your story, our canvas.



Damian, 3D team leader, deep in the flow of creating 3D files to customise the miniatures.



Klaudia, team leader, keeping spirits high while making sure everything is top-notch.

the place where new recruits wrestle with their first days of work. Only a few survive our demanding recruitment process, but those who do are forged into professionals. In the background, I catch the steady buzz of 3D printers: the print workshop at the corridor's end is already running at full speed. The last door leads to Klaudia's room ... but we will return there later.

In my office, the operational hub, more shelves await me, each mid-process: projects waiting for assembly, assembled ones undergoing quality checks, models ready for painting, and others being inspected after painting for consistency. Each is lined up neatly, waiting for its turn in the pipeline. Among these projects sits one I would like to share today, from its first spark of an idea to the final stages of packing.

The Commission Request

Some time ago, we received a request to create an Ultramarines army at the very highest painting standard, enriched with 3D-printed elements and conversions, personalised, and anchored in a unique narrative. It was a true opportunity to unleash creativity and employ the full scope of our workshop's capabilities.

Every client communicates their vision differently, and our task is to translate that into a story the studio can follow. Sometimes it is a short email with only basic instructions; sometimes an extensive Excel sheet with columns of requirements; sometimes elaborate narrative backstories for each character in the collection; and occasionally just a rough concept accompanied by full trust in our interpretation. The team led by Basia takes on the challenge of weaving this information into a clear roadmap for the rest of the studio. As Basia, our CRO and client service manager, explains: "The heart of our collaboration is a shared vision. Artists notice technical nuances: colour, light, the number of highlights. Clients see things from another angle: they want models that are beautiful, true to their imagination, and practical in use. My



Agata. **Antionia.** **Basia.** **Damian.**









role is to uncover what matters most to them. Should the models tell a story, or be a competitive tournament army? Maybe there's a specific detail we should emphasise. Sometimes it's even about recalling something the client mentioned in passing and turning it into a pleasant surprise. That's how the result not only meets but often exceeds expectations."

This time, based on the client's initial guidelines, we prepared what we call a 'narrative package', a set of solutions designed to enhance the message and visual impact of the Ultramarines collection. It included details of the colour scheme, unit markings, base concepts, suggestions for additional 3D elements, potential conversions, and optional model equipment.

Working on the Project

Once the client chose specific solutions from this set, we went full steam ahead. We simultaneously began 3D work on unique elements while preparing a sample model and a set of test bases. From the outset, Klaudia's team oversaw the project. Developing the scheme's details is a time-intensive process that begins with brainstorming, sketches, and colour testing. Over to Klaudia, one of our team leaders: "We often use spare bits for testing instead of painting directly on the model. That way, it doesn't matter if something fails. Usually, we end up with a whole pile of paints to try out—you never know which shade will work until you test it." Only after these trials does the sample model take shape, guided by the carefully developed plan.

On the 3D side, we sculpted a set of unique shoulder pads and vehicle elements for this collection. The goal was to breathe more life into the models. But collaboration between sculptor and painter is full of nuances that require balance, as Damian, our 3D team leader, explains: "A sculptor has to understand the painter's techniques—not to overdo details that make painting difficult, while still keeping clear shapes, sharp edges, and deep enough





recesses to catch washes. Another key factor is how the model is divided for printing, so painting remains convenient. It's a series of challenges, but the real skill is finding the golden mean that allows both sides to shine and creates the best possible final effect."

This approach ensures that models are rich in detail yet still paintable and coherent in their finish. Edges support precise lining, surfaces allow clean glazing, and recesses provide the depth needed to build convincing shadows.

Meanwhile, assembly is already underway. Some might think of it as a trivial task, but our assembly team treats it with passion and precision, breathing life into each set of miniatures. Szymon is our assembly team leader: "When we begin work on a high-level set, we always bring ideas to give the models a unique character. We might reference models the client already owns, adding trophies or bits from other armies, weave in lore from the universe, or even slip in subtle pop-culture Easter eggs. Each project is treated individually, so every miniature becomes truly one of a kind. If the situation calls for it, we introduce new methods or tools to ensure the final effect is unrepeatable."

After the sample model and 3D elements were approved, the team moved on to painting the rest of the army, a task that consumed hundreds of hours. With projects of this calibre, every stage demands precision and care. Painters unanimously stress that it is not flashy final techniques but strong fundamentals that determine the quality of such finely crafted work. Antonia, a master painter, observed that "the hardest technical challenge was balancing the level and intensity of highlights across the armour on all models. With such smooth, clean surfaces, there's no room for errors or corrections." Klaudia, a team leader, adds "cleanliness, balanced colour placement, saturation, and the right amount of light and shadow. On larger surfaces this becomes especially demanding, because the paint behaves differently—each element requires an individual approach."

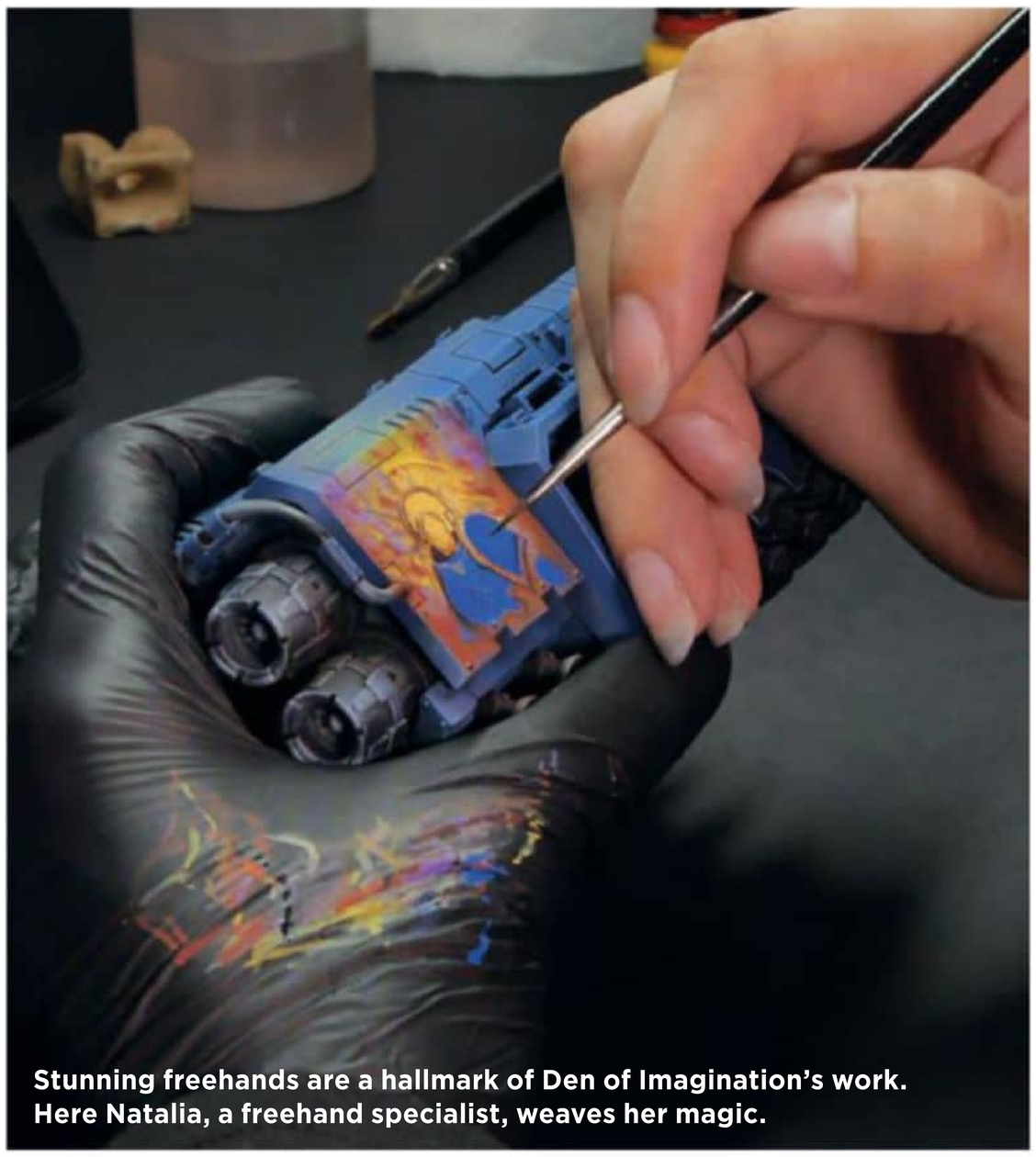


It is this commitment to fundamentals that ensures the army looks cohesive, even after hundreds of hours and many hands working together.

Lifting the curtain further, there is one secret weapon that helps our artists achieve smooth transitions and flawless finishes. As Antonia, one of our experienced painters, explains "Makeup brushes, especially for eyes—they're perfect for soft blends and highlights." Klaudia, team



Asia, one of our marketing specialists, showcasing our premium packaging.



Stunning freehands are a hallmark of Den of Imagination's work. Here Natalia, a freehand specialist, weaves her magic.

leader, adds, laughing, "yes, makeup brushes. The best ones are slightly worn out, frayed, ideal for effects you can't get with regular miniature brushes."

And then the cherry on top of every commission: freehands. Our studio takes pride in freehands of the highest quality. It is a craft honed at Den of Imagination over years, and one in which our team excels. This time, the task fell to Natalia, one of our most seasoned freehand specialists. Natalia explains that "two things are really demanding. First, symmetry: even a fraction of a millimetre off is immediately visible, and if you miss it at first, fixing it often means repainting everything from scratch. Second, larger scenes, battles or multi-character compositions: at this scale, you can't capture every detail, so you have to paint smart, making sure the scene remains clear and visually strong despite the limited space."

Quality Control

Or rather, quality controls. Every project passes through several verification stages.

Information check: before anyone touches the models, we verify the client's data. Each project gets an information card, which a designated team member reviews before it moves forward. We confirm both the clarity of instructions and the feasibility of the vision—for instance, whether a box contains enough arms of the right type or if more need to be sourced.

Assembly check: once models are built, we prime



them. It is only under primer that subtle flaws, gaps, and irregularities emerge—details that raw plastic does not reveal. The same applies to 3D prints—primer shows leftover print lines or support marks after sanding. Only when we are satisfied with the assembly quality do the models move on to painting.

Painting check: this final inspection is led by Edyta. In the language of a fine-dining restaurant: if the painting room leaders are the section chefs, Edyta is the sous chef—ensuring every plate (or in this case, every model) is flawless before it leaves the kitchen.

Edyta, our painting hall manager, adds "When it comes to top-level quality checks, I look for a few key aspects. Painting: no slips, streaks, or messy transitions; smooth blends throughout. Assembly: tight fits, no glue marks or mould lines, smart posing, and thoughtful bits or effects. Colour and concept: the miniature must be cohesive with its base, with highlights, reflections, weathering, contrasts, and textures forming a complete whole. And finally, individualisation: details that reflect the client's wishes, touches of personalisation, sometimes freehands that elevate a model into a true piece of art. In the end, what matters most is that the client is delighted with both the collaboration and the final piece. For some it may be a product, but for them (our clients) , it can be the fulfilment of a dream." This multi-step control guarantees consistency across the entire army and ensures it is ready for presentation and final packing.

Final Gallery, Packing, and Shipping

Once Edyta gives the green light, the project returns to Basia's department. There, the final gallery is prepared, and, of course, another check, sometimes prompted by details revealed in the photos themselves. The ultimate judge is the client. Only their approval of the gallery marks the commission as complete.

And when that long-awaited "yes" arrives, one more crucial stage remains, a stage rarely seen but vital for guaranteeing the client's satisfaction: packing. Packing models is an art in itself. Years of experience have taught us how to prepare them to withstand both the inventiveness of couriers and the unavoidable hardships of travel. At the competition level, every detail counts,



The finished Wizard model nestled in its custom packaging.

including this one. That's why, for top-tier commissions, we rely on custom-made boxes crafted by bookbinder Magdalena of "Pracownia Bulanda" - her artisan workshop in Poland. She splits her time between restoring antique volumes and designing unique boxes for our models, using papers, fabrics, and linings sourced from across Europe – from Spain to the Czech Republic.

Each box is finished with a specially designed foam insert. Every project gets its own template, with shapes laser-cut to match the models. This way, miniatures are not only safe but beautifully presented; an elegant final touch to the entire process.

Conclusion

At Den of Imagination, we always strive to go one step further. It's what drives artistically. Whether it is refining a colour scheme beyond the client's request, adding subtle personalisation, or creating bespoke packaging that reflects the artistry within, each commission is treated as more than just work. It is an adventure. Need a model sculpted from scratch for your RPG character, perhaps a wizard with lady's legs and intricate freehands on the cloak? No problem! Want your Tyranid Exocrine to unleash a spectacular energy splash? Absolutely, why not! We'll sculpt it in 3D, magnetise it for ease of transport, and enjoy every moment of making it. In the end, your story isn't just finished, it's fulfilled, and so is ours.

As Agata, one of our senior coordinators, sums it up: "Each commission is a new adventure for me. You never know what will come your way—and that's where the magic lies." ■



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Ooky-Spooky Moonstone



***V.G. Thorne** reveals the latest Halloween-themed miniatures for Moonstone.*

Moonstone is known for being whimsical and fun, but there are spooky corners that *things* creep out from too. Given o ur influences - British comedy, Brian Froud (particularly *The Labyrinth* and *Dark Crystal*), and global folklore - this shouldn't really come as a surprise! Let's have a look at some of the most Halloween-y miniatures among our collection ...



Negroli.

Igor the Servant.

The Shades

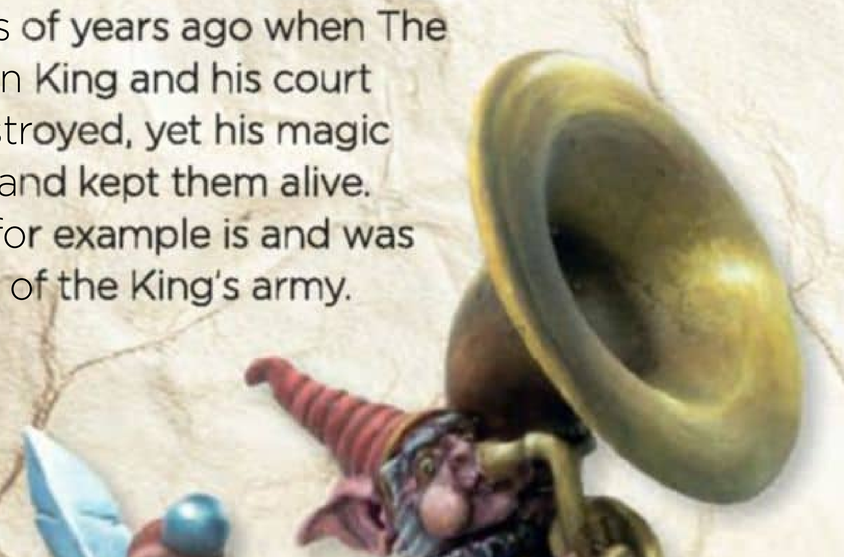
We have four Factions for players to choose from and it's fair to say the Shades give off the most Halloween vibes, because most of them are – or work with – undead. The Shades Faction is split into a few keywords or types. The first, **Risen**, are mostly characters who were buried hundreds of years ago when The Forgotten King and his court were destroyed, yet his magic lingered and kept them alive. **Negroli** for example is and was the head of the King's army.

Then we have **Spirits**, which have been brought back from the Deadlands – our equivalent of the afterlife / underworld – or may have always existed on Tauber, finding kinship with the strange Shades so are seen more frequently. **Igor** is the King's servant, unwillingly brought back from the Deadlands to serve yet again (when all he wants is to rest).

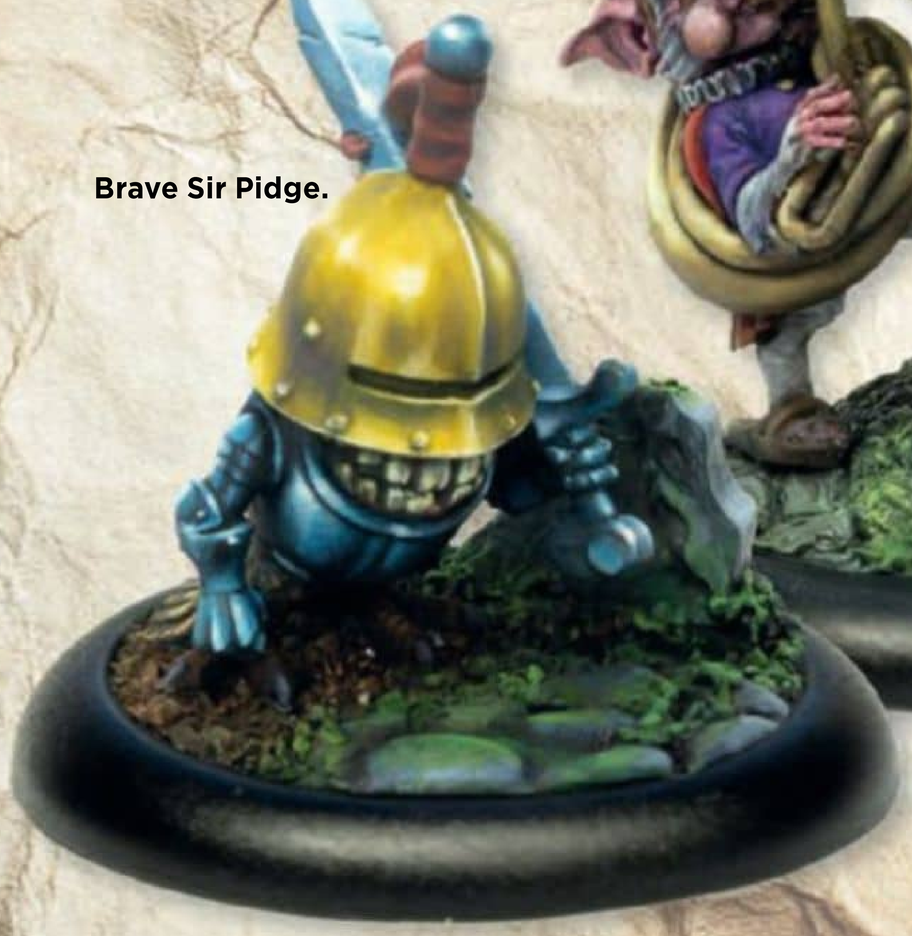
Finally, there are **Psychopomps**. As people are brought back from the Deadlands, the tide of magic accidentally



Urchin.



Terrible Musician.



Brave Sir Pidge.



Abra Cadaverous.



Brigid.

Barnakelle.

Chezapeaky.

Commodore Delahaye.

drags Psychopomps into the land of the living too. These little critters are guardians, aids, entertainment, and maintenance for the spirits in the Deadlands, so being brought to the Livelands means they have the Best. Day. Ever. Psychopomps were first inspired by the artwork by Renaissance Dutch painter Hieronymus Bosch, as we wanted to have lots of unusual looking little *things* running all over the battlefield. That inspiration has certainly made them all pretty unnerving!

Souls of the Deep

Belonging to both the Shades Faction and Dominion Faction is a band of undead-ish pirates. **Barnakelle** is a troll who drowned, yet has been reanimated to sail the seas again. **Commodore Delahaye** is less solid than Barnakelle. He's a ghost who has been returned from the Deadlands to lend his skills. **Brigid** is a Faerie who has turned to piracy, yet has an affinity with poor unfortunate spirits, so works well with her undead crewmates. Finally, there's **Chezapeaky:** a sort of Psychopomp, formed from a spirit in the Deadlands who has been there so long he turned into a large, crab... thing. He used to be a gnome. We think.

Dominion Nobles

Among the Shades are several characters that also work with the Dominion Faction. These are often humans, some of which are Risen or Spirits, but others are **Nobles** left-over from the time the Forgotten King ruled. These people have been kept alive by the King's life-lengthening magics, so must hide their faces to mask the decay and dead eyes behind.

Claudia Duvel.

Creep.

Duchess.



Antonia.

Danica.

Zorya.

Anya Bartol.

Striga Anya.

Revenant.

The Beast.

The Duchess is their de facto leader, forming alliances and working with people from across Tauber. **Cladia Duvell** is The Duchess's sister and is the name she gives her Highway Robber persona, stealing and murdering to alleviate the boredom of a long life. Then there's their servant **Creep**, who lives up to his name. For example, he counts soap making among his hobbies and although we've not shared the source of the fat he needs, you can probably use your imagination ...

Witches and The Cursed

Among the Dominion Nobles are a group who have been **Cursed**. **The Beast** was once a proud and handsome man, but now ruins furniture with his shedding. **The Revenant** isn't undead; he has been cursed to look (and smell) that way. And little **Anya Bartol** is a precocious brat most of the time, and some of the time she is possessed by an evil clamouring spirit. Why? Because she was rude to a witch.

The three **Witches** are Spirits, beings that have existed on Tauber forever, and are playable in the Leshavult alongside their Cursed companions. **Zorya**, **Antonia** and **Danica** usually keep to themselves, but if they are betrayed, slighted, or simply bored, then they will seek vengeance. We've drawn on a lot of sources to create these three - e.g. Macbeth, triple goddess, time, Three Fates, Terry Pratchett, The Witcher, Baba Yaga - and we wouldn't want to meet them on Halloween night!

Wild Things

The Leshavult Faction revolves around the theme of nature, but not just pretty flowers and soft summer days, but also death, entropy, and the chaos of a stormy night. The **Fauns** are a good example of the split of types of Leshavult characters, as some embrace the balance found in nature - reflected in their associations with the Commonwealth. While others are drawn from the shadows of a dead tree, like **Gloom** and **Wendigo**.

Similarly, we have Treefolk that are the harmonious combination of Dendrite spirit-parasite and a normal tree. Yet **Snag** has been corrupted, embracing entropy and death that's found around the Shades.

Creepy Faeries

Finally, some **Faeries** have also embraced darkness, with Brigid and **Banshee** playable in both Dominion and Shades troupes. Other creepy Faeries are separate from the Shades however, bringing their own brand of creepiness with them. **Dentia** is a tooth faerie who will collect a tooth whether it has already fallen out or not, so we need not say more! But their Queen, **Diana**, is also fearsome. She draws on willing members of her own court to sustain her and extend her life.

Want More?

Head to MoonstoneTheGame.com to find out more about the game, miniatures and lore. If you want to dive in and read more, you could start with The Arising which begins a trilogy of stories exploring many of the characters mentioned in this article. In the meantime, we hope your Halloween is filled with tricks and treats and many games of Moonstone! ■



Wendigo.



Gloom.



Dentia.

Banshee.

Diana.

Community News

Moonstone May

Goblin King Games' annual painting competition returned for its fourth year in May. There were over 200 entries at an incredibly high standard, making the judging even harder than usual. The GKG team managed to whittle down entries to a shortlist in each of the four categories, which were shared with the public for final votes. Congratulations to all the winners! We've shared their Instagram accounts so you can give them a follow:



Best Original Concept

@mikeg_minis won with this beautiful 75mm Jayda







Best Single Miniature

@mezzmerize won this category with his version of Negroli

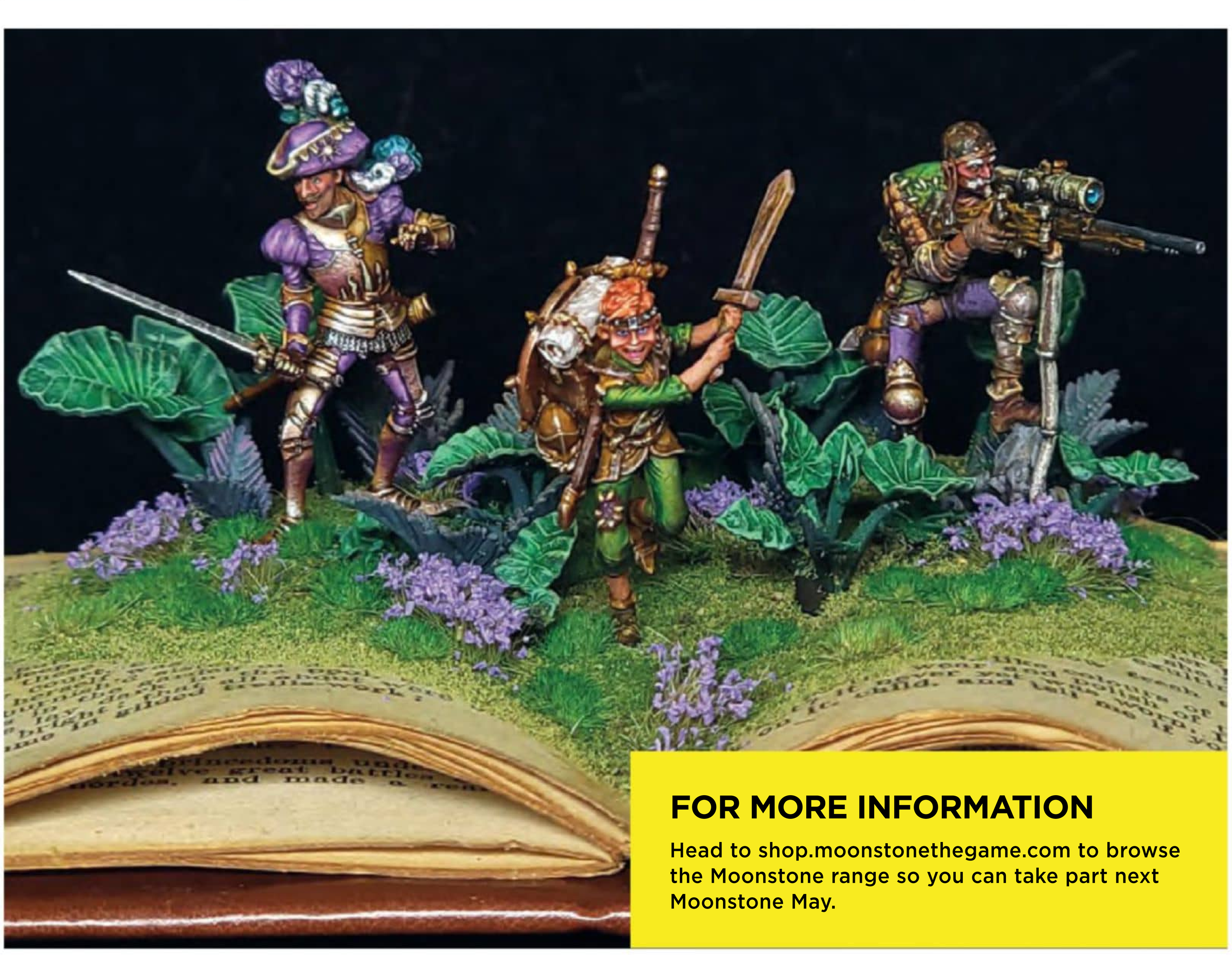


Best Boxset / Troupe

@schaafslabyrinth won this category with three stunning Treefolk

Best Commission Painter

@stevenwayneminiatures won this category with this unique take on The Barony



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2025 is turning out to be an exciting year for Fantasy Figures International. World Model Expo in Versailles had been and gone, as has the Fen Model Show in the UK, and we're looking forward to catching up with readers and contributors at Scale Model Challenge in October. Our readership around the world continues to grow, and we are so grateful to all our readers, subscribers and friends in the hobby for making *FFI* the number one English-language magazine for fantasy and sci-fi modelling and miniature painting. We'd like to thank all our subscribers, readers, contributors and advertisers for all your support. *Fantasy Figures International* is published six times a year – that's over 500 pages of the very best in miniature painting, sci-fi modelling, collecting and tabletop gaming. We're always looking for quality content, whether that be news of new products or articles. If you are a manufacturer or retail outlet and want to have your brand seen by new customers and hobbyists, drop us a line; we'd love to hear from you. If you're a reader, have you considered subscribing to *Fantasy Figures International*? Cover prices may have to increase further, but if you have a subscription in hand, it won't affect the magazines you will already have paid for. Remember if you Subscribe & Save to the UK's number one fantasy and sci-fi modelling and painting magazine, you'll get the six next issues delivered to your door in advance of the newsstand copies. Remember, our North American readers can order individual copies and subscriptions of all our magazines directly and pay in US dollars. Check out our US-based website, www.guidelinepublicationsusa.com, or email tom@guidelinepublicationsusa.com.

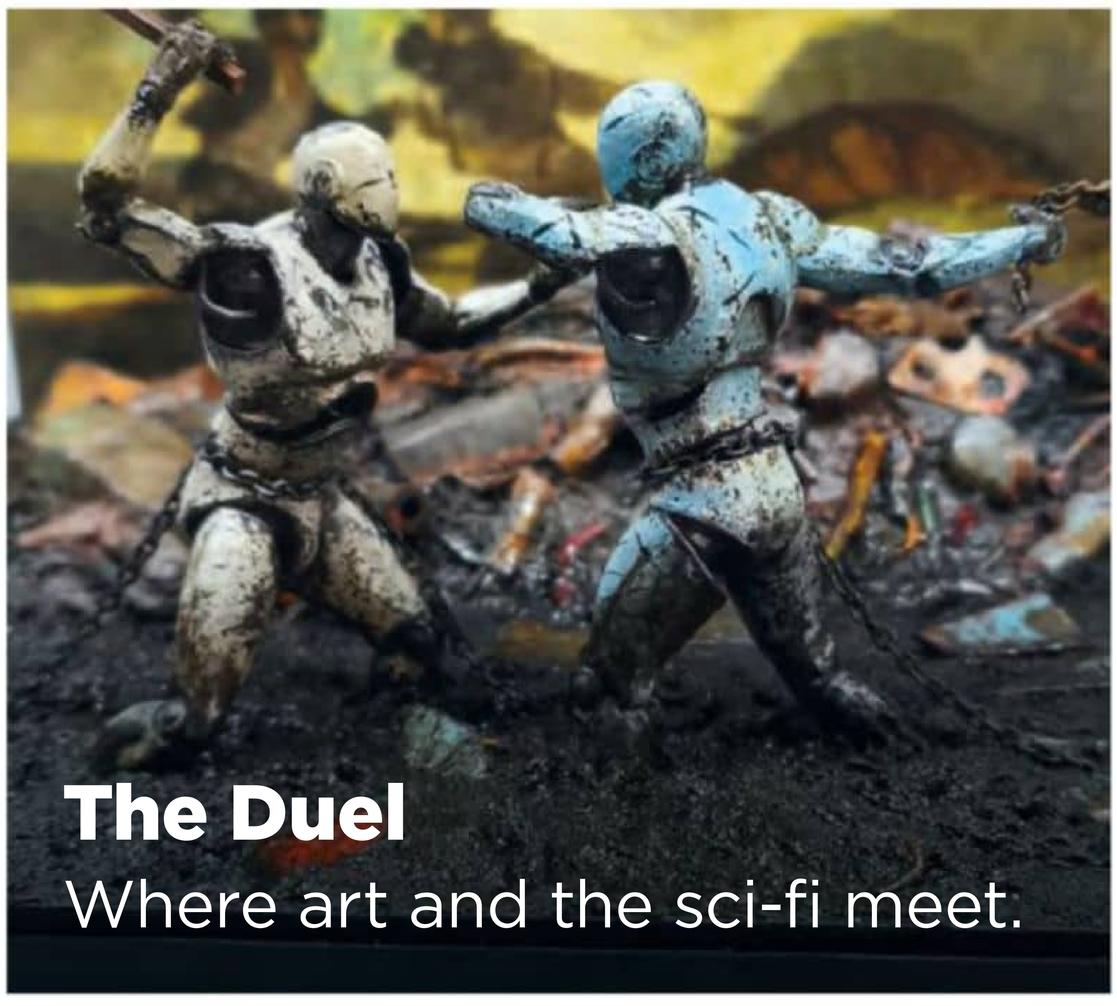
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