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Star Wars

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YEARBOOK 2021



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Welcome...

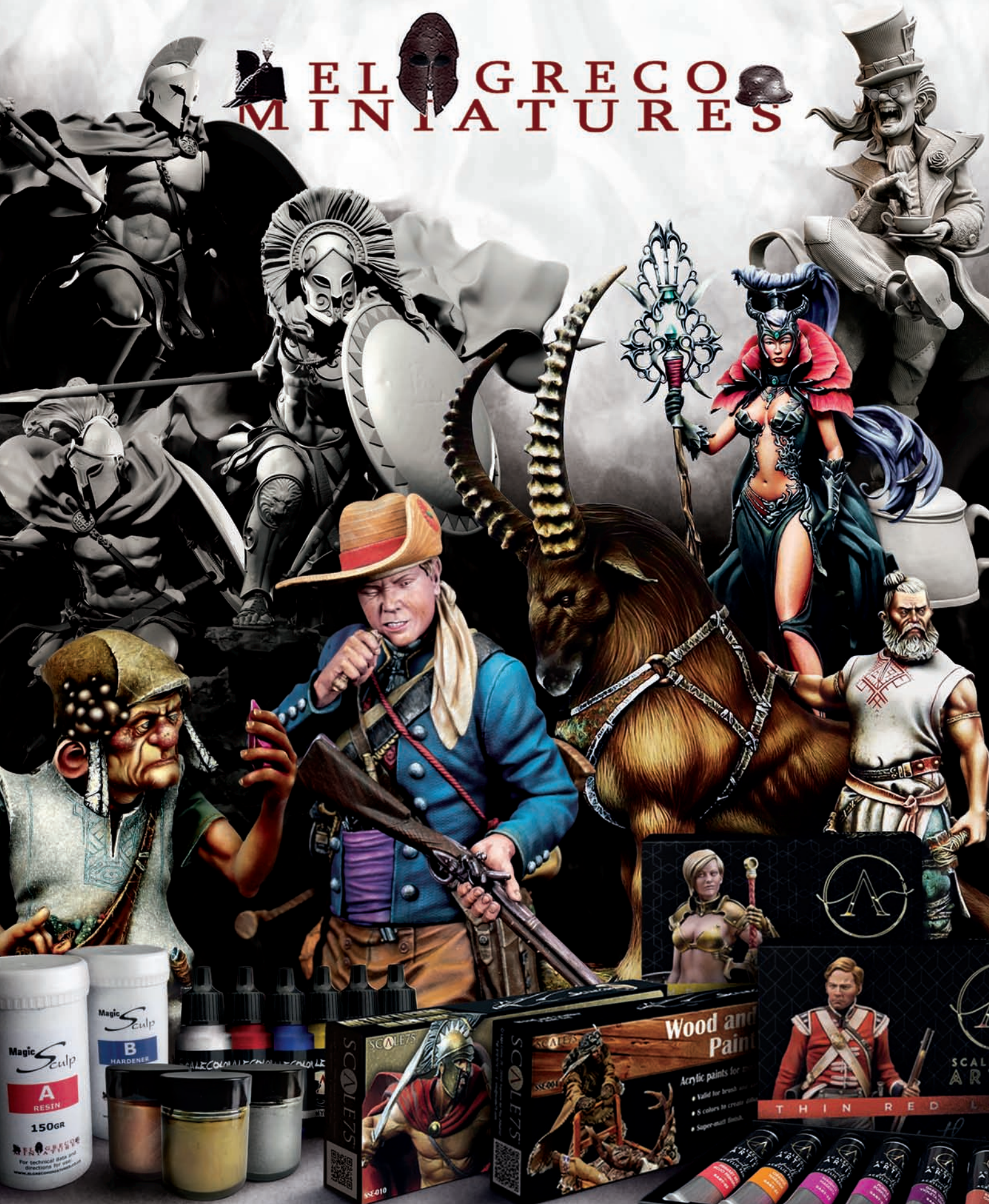


Welcome to the first *Fantasy Figures International Yearbook*. *Fantasy Figures International* is celebrating its first year as the number one independent magazine for all aspects of Fantasy and Sci-Fi miniature painting and modelling. When we launched the magazine in the autumn of 2019 we were acutely aware that although there was plenty of stuff online, there was very little available in print that catered for miniature painter and modellers in these genres. Given the huge amount of interest in Gunpla, Maschinen Krieger, and science fiction modelling more generally, not to mention the huge growth in popularity of both fantasy and science fiction miniature painting, we thought the time was right to offer modellers a regular high-quality print magazine that catered for these interests. A year or so, and seven issues, later we could have had no idea of the enthusiastic support the magazine would receive from hobbyists all across the world. A measure of that success is that five of our first six bi-monthly magazines have now completely sold out. With that in mind, and aware that new readers were discovering our magazine all the time, we made the decision to gather together some of our favourite articles from the first year of the magazine in this special collectors' edition *Yearbook*. In it you'll find a good selection – we hope – of the articles from the across the various genres and modelling styles that we have featured in the first six magazines. I know that many of our readers missed these articles first time around so it's a great opportunity to get your hands on some classic articles from the likes of José Brito, José Luis Lopez Ruiz, Don Suratos, Roberto del Cima and Alex Varela. For those readers who have been with us from the very beginning – thank you – we also have a brand new article from the master of Maschinen Krieger, Bryan Krueger.

The first year of *Fantasy Figures International* has been a real team effort and we'd like to thank all of our contributors and advertisers and especially you, our readers and subscribers, for making it all possible. We've got some big plans for the next year and remain entirely committed to bringing you the very best in Fantasy and Sci-Fi miniature painting and modelling for many years to come. So, please do enjoy this *Yearbook* and look out for issue 8 of *Fantasy Figures International* which is also now available.

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Fireball SAFS

(*Super
Armored
Fighting
Suit*)

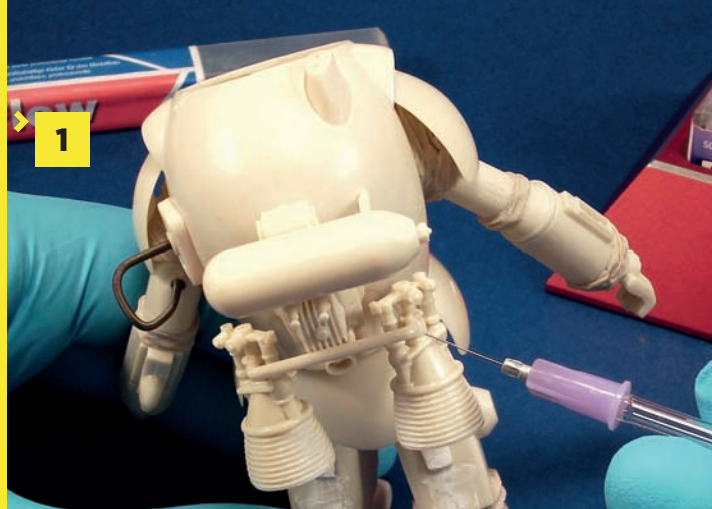
José Brito explains his
Ma.K project step-by-step.

As some of you may know, I am, first and foremost, a diorama modeller, usually working in military subjects. I have published regularly in FFI's sister magazine, *Military Modelcraft International*, and my projects invariably include a vehicle, figures, groundwork and buildings. I fancied a break from military, historical subjects and my interest was piqued by the futuristic (and highly militaristic) world of *Maschinen Krieger*. The background to this modelling genre, and its origins in the world of Japanese Manga publications, has already been explained in Matteo Nobilii's article earlier in these pages. *Maschinen Krieger* has two distinct subjects it seems to me: big robots and futuristic armoured fighting suits. I wanted to have a go at one of the latter for my first *Ma.K.* project and decided on Nitto's classic 1/20-scale Fireball S.A.F.S. released in 1997. ➤

BE INSPIRED

Nitto 1/20 Fireball S.A.F.S.
Space Type (Series 7)





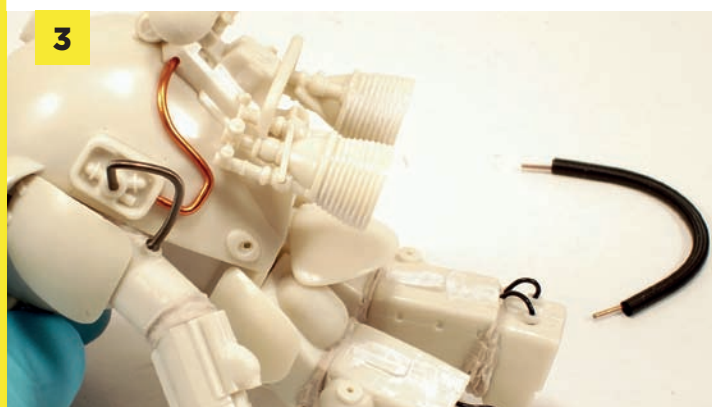
1

Nitto's 1/20-scale Fireball S.A.F.S. kit is classic Maschinen Krieger. Construction is straightforward and the fit first class. Deluxe Materials Plastic Magic glue is applied with a 'pin flow' applicator.



2

Scratchbuilt details are glued into place with the help of Rocket Rapid and Rocket Hot glues.



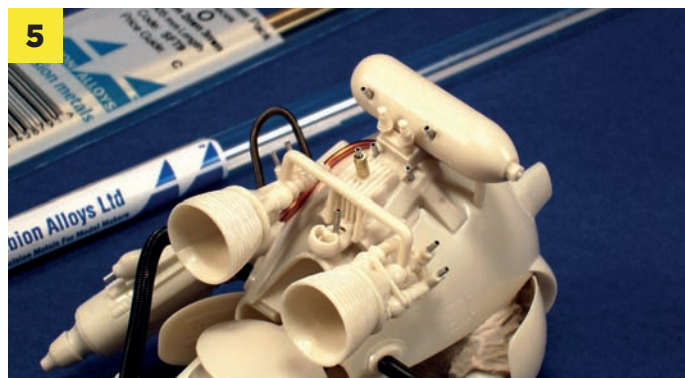
3

Metal tubes from Albion Alloys are cut to length using a Master Tools cutter and the power cables are added after consulting reference materials.



4

Lead Wire from Plus Models is used for the canopy rubber sealer.



5

A periscope is assembled from more metal tube, for strength. The periscope is raised to add interest to our model. Fine-detailing like this improves the final look and adds an extra touch of authenticity.



6

The model is airbrushed in Vallejo 73.601 Grey Primer and then airbrushed in Vallejo 73.600 White. This will be the base colour.



7

To ensure a smooth surface for decal application, the model is airbrushed in Vallejo Gloss Varnish and the decals are applied with the aid of setting & softening solutions. Once all decals are in place, the model receives a coat of Vallejo Matt Varnish.



8

The cockpit area is brush painted in various Vallejo colours and finishing touches added, such as the photograph.

9



Chipping and scratches are applied in Vallejo 70.822 Camo Black Brown and with the help of a sponge, for a natural look.

10



The metal parts are painted in various shades that combine to achieve a more convincing look.

11



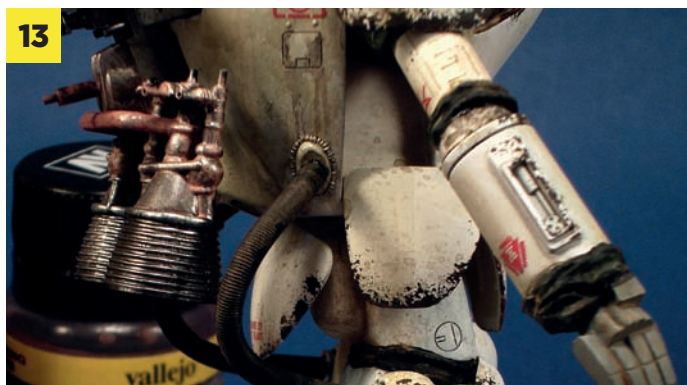
Various colour washes are applied to the model. Several different washes are necessary in order to achieve a convincing colour variation. These washes are diluted in order to increase the flow and transparency.

12



Several Vallejo Pigments are mixed and applied well thinned with water. Once dry, any excess can be removed with the help of a brush, sponge or cotton bud slightly moistened in water. If necessary, we can repeat the entire process.

13



Vallejo engine and wash colours are mixed and applied around the desired spots. Simple details that make a huge difference in the final model.

14



The cockpit hatch finished and ready to be glued into place.

15



The head provided in the kit does not fit very well into the cockpit. So, some work is necessary. Using Eze Putty the shape was modified and carved to fit precisely.

16



The head is airbrushed in Vallejo Model Color 70.876 Brown Sand. >



17

Once well dry, a mix of Vallejo Model Color 70.876 Brown Sand and 70.815 Basic Skin Tone is airbrushed using the Zenithal Light method.



18

Later, the entire face is brush painted in tones from Vallejo.



19

As usual, I use a wood base and insulation foam for the terrain. This is my first mock up for the diorama composition.



20

Insulation foam is lightweight, easy to cut and cheap. Ideal for building or terrain work. The parts to be removed are marked and easily carved with the help of a medium size X-Acto blade.



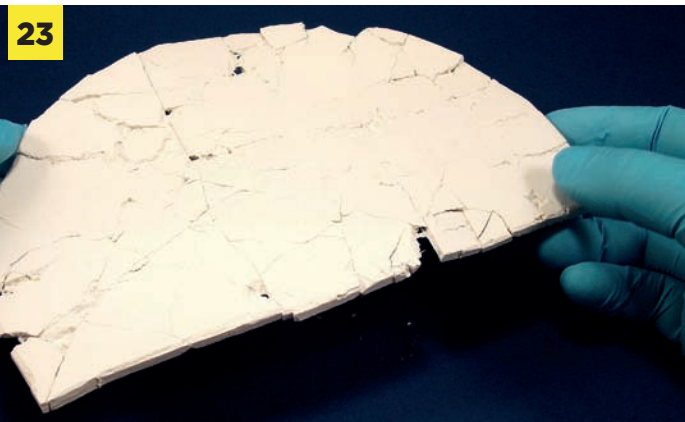
21

At this stage, another compositional element is made. The ping-pong ball will be a crash landed and abandoned droid.



22

A paper template is made in order to define the pavement. A fibreglass net (used in civil construction) is cut to shape and plaster, water and Deluxe Materials Speed Bond white glue are mixed into a jar and mixed very well to a mousse-like consistency. A mould is then made over an acrylic sheet and the plaster mix placed into it. The fibreglass net is placed into the mix and entirely covered.



23

Once dry, the base is rock hard. A small hammer is used to break it. The fibreglass net reinforcement holds the cracked pieces together convincingly. The broken effects are realistically random.



24

Deluxe Materials Speed Bond white glue is applied to the base and left to dry for about five minutes. It is pressed into position and left to dry. A thin coat of Deluxe Materials Speed Bond white glue is applied over the plaster base in order to keep small parts in place. Once dry, it's totally invisible, with no texture.



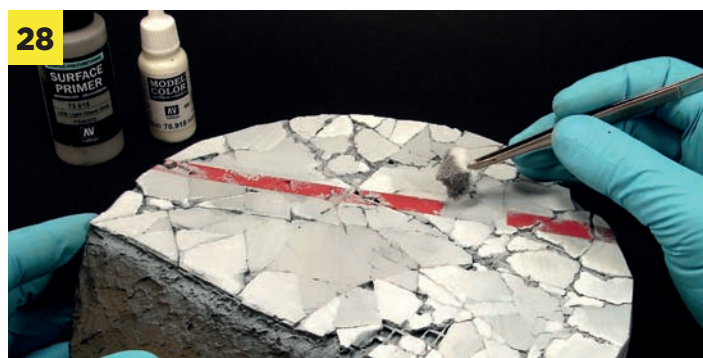
Vallejo 26.807 European Thick Mud is applied directly over the insulation foam with the help of a spatula. The adhesive properties are amazing and water can be used as thinner in order to increase the flow.



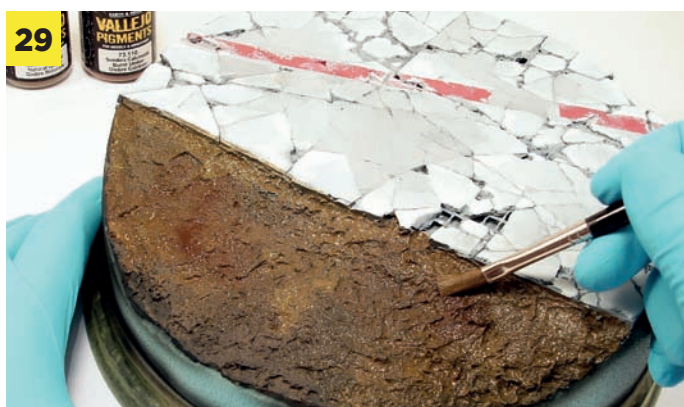
The entire base is airbrushed in Vallejo 73.603 German Panzer Grey surface primer and, later, the pavement area is airbrushed in Vallejo 73.615 USN Light Ghost Grey surface primer.



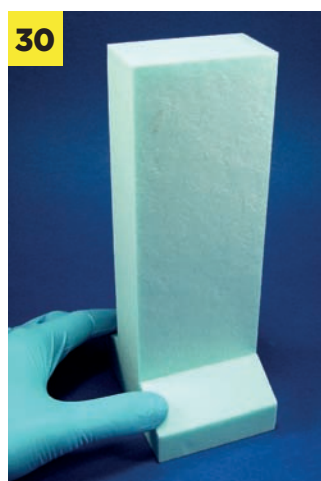
To add visual interest to our pavement, a red stripe is airbrushed in Vallejo 70.624 Pure Red surface primer. The surrounding area is protected with masking tape.



An extremely thinned mix of Vallejo 73.615 USN Light Ghost grey primer and Model Color 70.918 Ivory is applied over the pavement and in a random way. The same mix is also applied with the help of a sponge, in a random way, over the red stripe. This will add a faded look to it.



Several Vallejo Pigment colours, thinned in water, are randomly applied over the terrain area. Colour variation is very important in this step.



A road block is made in insulation foam. Several parts are made and will be assembled together. Deluxe Materials Foam-2-Foam glue is used to bond the various parts. Soon, the road block is fully assembled and ready additional details.



A small portion of wire is cut and bent over the Small Shop Tools metal cylinder, this allows consistent, reproducible results. The bent wires are ready to be placed into their final spot. The spots where the wires will be placed are marked with a red marker (just in case!) A small hole is gently made with an appropriate size drill and they're inserted into the holes. Vallejo Ground texture 26.215 Grey Sand is enough to bond them into the insulation foam.



The road block will show signs of battle damage and a red marker is used to define it. An X-Acto blade is used to carve the foam and shape the damage previously drawn with the red marker. It's then gently cut in half and a metal net, representing the interior structure, is inserted into it. This can be bent to represent the battle damage. The two halves are glued together and the net is now fixed in place. The road block ready to be textured. The combination of metal wires and net really improve the final look.

33



Vallejo Ground texture 26.215 Grey Sand is applied over the entire road block. A spatula or a brush can be used and water added to improve the flow. Its adhesive properties are amazing and once dry it's rock hard. It's first airbrushed in Vallejo 74.602 Black Primer and then in Vallejo 73.601 Grey Primer. A mix of Vallejo Model Air 71.119 White Grey and Model Color 70.918 Ivory is then airbrushed from above as a highlight.

34



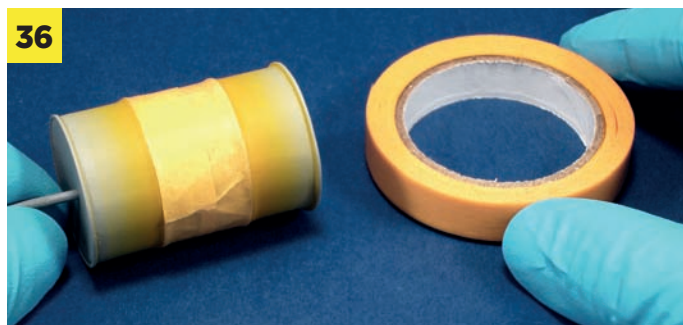
An Orlee stencil is used to paint Banksy graffiti on the road block and held in place with masking tape. The graffiti is airbrushed in Vallejo 74602 Black Primer. Simple and very effective. When the stencil is removed, the final result is impressive. It adds interest to the final diorama.

35



The rusted parts are painted in Vallejo Camo Black Brown and 70.851 Bright Orange. The entire road block also received several well thinned layers of Vallejo Wash colours. The rust parts also received the same treatment with thinned Vallejo Wash rust colours.

36



Alternity Miniatures resin drums are used in this project. They are flawlessly cast. It's airbrushed in Vallejo Game Air 72.721 Magic Blue, and highlights are added with Vallejo Game Air 72.723 Electric Blue. The other drum has two colours: Vallejo 73.601 Grey Primer and then Vallejo Game Air 72.707 Gold Yellow. Once dry, masking tape is used to protect the parts painted in yellow.

37



The rest of the drum is airbrushed in Vallejo 70624 Pure Red primer. Once dry, the masking tape can be removed.

38



The weathering started by applying tiny scratches with the help of a sponge, using Vallejo 70822 Camo Black Brown.

39



In preparation for the decals, the drums are brushed in Vallejo 70.510 Gloss Varnish. Dan Models decals are applied with the help of Decal Fix and Decal Medium. Once the decals are set, the drums are brushed in Vallejo 70520 Mall Varnish. This will seal and protect the decals from the upcoming weathering work.

40



The drums received several coats of thinned Vallejo Washes. Once the wash colors were dry, the drums were treated with thinned Vallejo Pigment colors and the excess removed.



The excess pigment is gently removed with the help of a cosmetic brush slightly moistened in water. Pigment is only left around recessed and raised parts.



The wash and pigment work really improve the drums. Now, they are ready for some grime and oil stains.



Several Vallejo Engine, Environment and wash solutions are placed into a wet palette and mixed with each other. Vallejo Airbrush Thinner is used to increase the flow and transparency.



The oil stains and grime are applied in several layers.



The red drum received the same treatment and the final result is very convincing. Now the drums can be placed in the desired spots.



The same colors and mixes are applied to the pavement around the drums. As usual, they are applied in several layers.

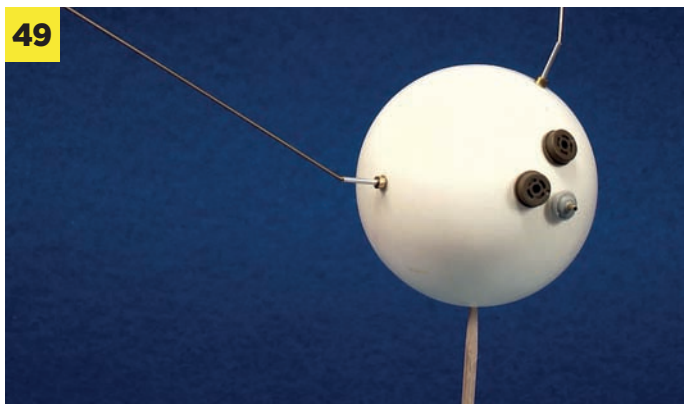


A ping-pong ball is used to make a droid.



Vallejo Masking Tape is used as guidelines for the scratch work.

49



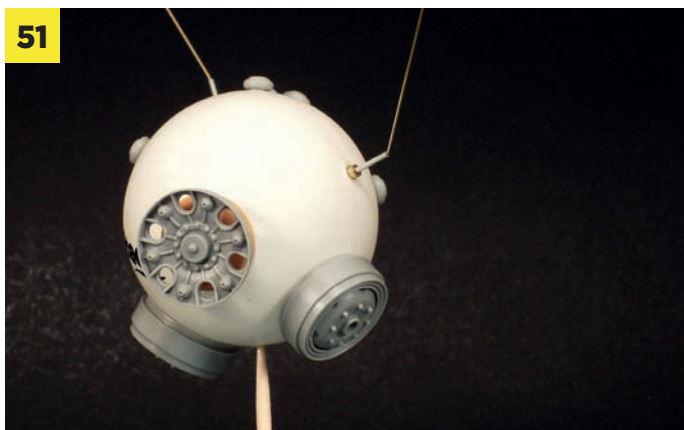
Several plastic parts from the spare parts box are used for detailing. At this stage, Albion Alloys metal profiles are also used to detail the droid.

50



Clear lenses from AK Interactive are used for the droid sensors and optics.

51



At this stage, more surface details are added to the droid. Soon, is ready for the painting process.

52



The droid is airbrushed in Vallejo 74.602 Black Primer and then several Vallejo Metal Color shades are airbrushed over it in order to achieve a more interesting colour variation.

53



The droid is weathered by applying several layers of washes and pigments.

54



In the spot where the droid has crashed, a small portion of Vallejo 26.807 European Thick Mud is applied with the help of a spatula. This will act as a glue and will strongly bond the droid into the desired spot.

55



The droid is placed into the desired spot and more Vallejo 26.807 European Thick Mud is applied with the help of a brush.

56



Once the paste is dry, several types of pigments are applied around the droid and surrounding terrain.

The pavement received the same pigment treatment. The excess can easily be removed with the help of a cosmetic brush slightly moistened in water.

57



58



Final detail work is achieved with more pigments.

59



The model is placed into the final spot and worked into the surrounding area. The pavement around the model is weathered in the same fashion, and the diorama is finished.

Conclusion

I really enjoyed my first Maschinen Krieger project. It was refreshing to break free from the usual constraints of modelling factual and historical subjects. There will definitely be more projects like this on my bench in the future! ■



Queens'

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

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

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

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

The majority of the instructions build out a basic MK44

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

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

1



2



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

3



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

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

Painting

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

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

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



4



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

5



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

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

Making it Real

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

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

like a complete mess when I was done but the colours add slight tonal variations to the following paint layers. Over this mottled base, I airbrushed very thin layers of light buff until I was happy with the opacity. Enough of the mottled foundation colour was showing thru to add some interest. After this had dried, I applied a couple of coats of hairspray over the whole thing. Next, I airbrushed the blue camouflage pattern over the main body and the green stripes on main gun. Using an old brush and warm tap water, I worked over the camouflage colour until the buff began to show representing worn paint. The ammunition drums and fuel tank were painted in different colours to add some variation. Smaller details like hoses and smoke launcher caps were

6



7



8



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



9

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



10

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

Final Thoughts

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

BE INSPIRED

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

Hasegawa 1/20 Maschinen Krieger 44 Type Mk44B Ausf. B Hammerknight (ref. 64110).

© Kow Yokoyama 2020



Ma.K.

Z b V 3 0 0 0



1:20 Antigravity Armored Raider
Pkf.85 FALKE "BOMBER CAT"
Item:HA64119



1:20 Space Type Humanoid Unmanned
Interceptor Grober Hund ALTAIR
Item:HA64105

1:20 Humanoid Unmanned Interceptor
Großer Hund DACHSHUND
Item:HA64120



The complete HASEGAWA Maschinen Krieger range of detailed plastic model kits are available to order through all good model shops!

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Sphinx

Bryan Krueger models one of the more unusual Ma.K. designs.



The Schwerer Raketenwerfer 85 Sphinx is one of the lesser-known designs from the S.F.3.D. series. The Sphinx is a 13.3m long, catamaran-style hover tank armed with sixteen 19cm rockets and designed act as a mobile heavy artillery unit. It weighs 120 tons and has a crew of three: commander, gunner, and driver. The original 1/35 scale model was scratch built by Kow Yokoyama using lots of styrene sheet, auto body filler and a multitude of donor kit parts. Some recognizable parts are the upper hull and turret from the 1/35 Tamiya Flakpanzer Gepard, a 1/72-scale Macross Battle Pod head, as well as details from Tamiya's 1/35 Churchill. The original also uses parts from an 1/8 aircraft engine, a 1/12 motorcycle kit, and even bits from the big 1/9 scale ESCI Kettenkrad.

It was published in the January 1984 issue of Hobby Japan magazine. An injection moulded kit has never been released of this unique design but in 2012, Rainbow Egg, a small Japanese garage kit company, accurately recreated Yokoyama San's original model and released it as an all-resin kit.

In 1/35 scale the Sphinx is nearly 380mm long and was almost too big for my cluttered workspace (**photo 1**). The two major pontoons are spun-mould hollow resin so there are no major pieces to clean up and join. The central hull and turret are each moulded in two-piece halves. The rest of the model is a few loose detail pieces and all the rocket tubes. For a model this big, the part count is surprisingly low. The kit is expertly cast with the only exception being the rocket tubes. They were slightly warped and had a mould seam running down the middle on both sides. The kit also includes printed step-by-step instructions, waterslide decals and colour profiles, as well as a CD with reference photos of the original build.

Aside from the resin kit tubes, the casting

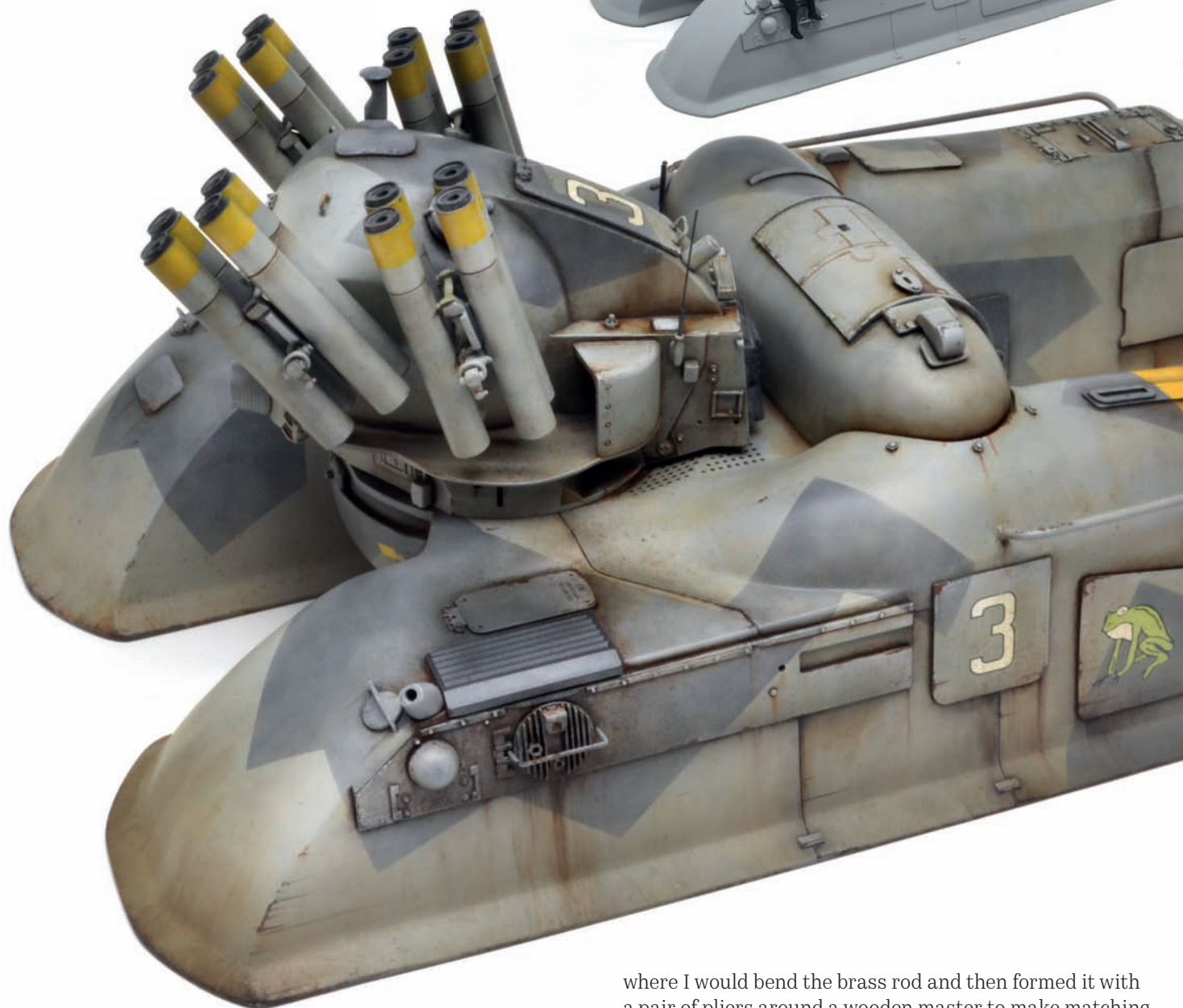


Some sense of the size of the Sphinx is given by this image of it next to a 1/35-scale World War II Soviet tank.

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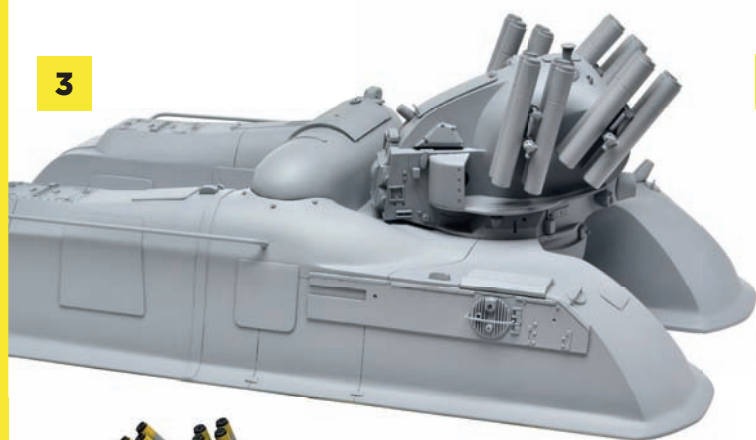
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on the kit was almost perfect. Despite the size, the build was pretty straightforward. I used five-minute epoxy to glue the central hull and pontoons instead of Superglue. The extra working time allowed me to make sure everything was aligned properly. The instructions were easy enough to follow and in a few days I had the majority of the kit assembled, puttied, sanded and cleaned up. The build required a few grab handles and lifting rings to be added. The thin ones were no problem to bend from 0.5mm brass rod, but the larger 3mm ones running down the side were a little trickier. I used a propane torch to anneal the areas

where I would bend the brass rod and then formed it with a pair of pliers around a wooden master to make matching pairs.

The area that needed the most attention was the sixteen rocket tubes. Clean-up was going to be a chore but fortunately Rainbow Egg anticipated that someone might want to scratch build their own and included instructions on the website to recreate the rocket tubes using styrene tube. I made four unique fixtures to cut, sand, scribe, drill, and align all four pairs of tubes. It took a bit of effort and I had to start over twice, but eventually I got them all assembled square and symmetrical. I capped each end with road wheels from a 1/35 Tamiya Matilda like the original (2).



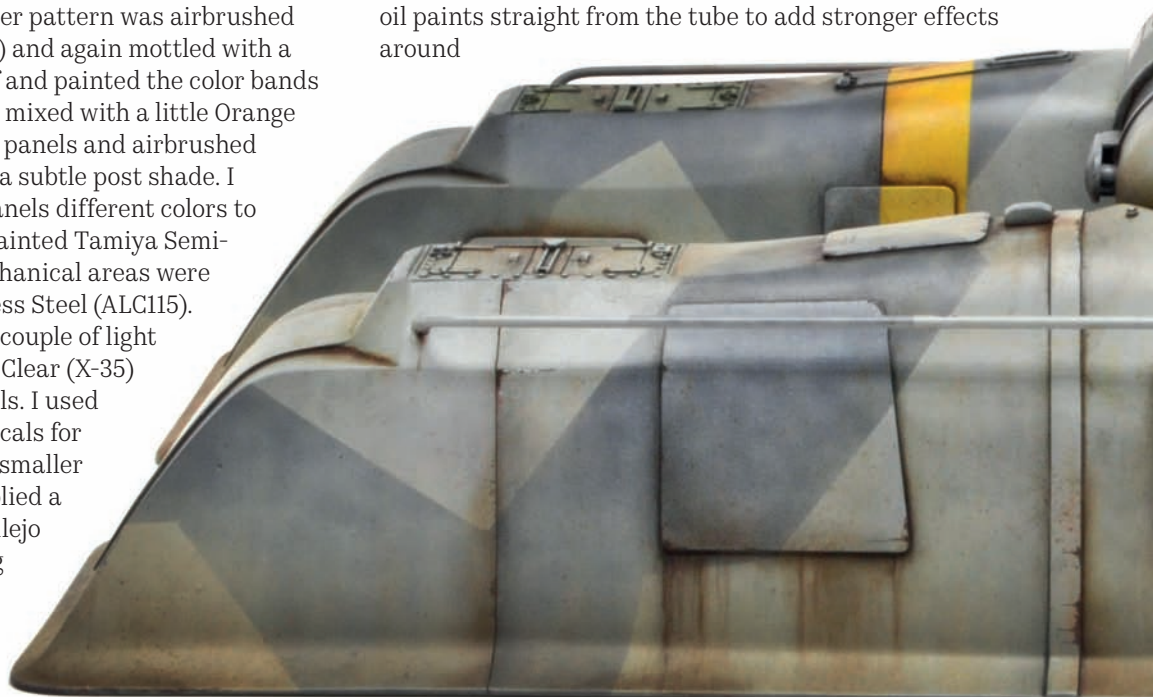
Painting and Weathering

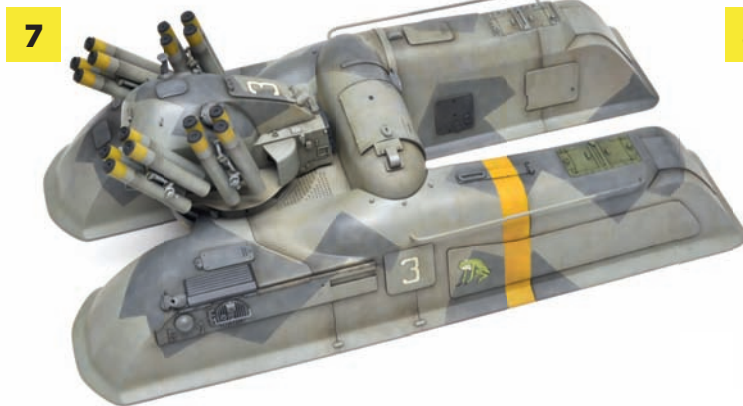
After a good scrub with warm soapy water, I sprayed a couple light coats of Mr. Surfacer 1500 grey primer from a rattle can (3). I wet sanded the whole surface with an 800 grit foam sanding pad to clean up any small imperfections. Next I applied a color primer of Mr. Hobby Red Oxide Primer also from a spray can. I pre-shaded all the panel lines and nooks and crannies by airbrushing thinned Tamiya Flat Black (XF-2). The base color light grey was a custom mix from a few different Tamiya acrylic paints. Over this I airbrushed a mottled a lighter grey to add some interest to the finish. To create the splinter pattern, the model was masked with FrogTape for Delicate Surfaces (4). It behaves very much like Tamiya masking tape but for nine dollars you get a sixty yard roll. The splinter pattern was airbrushed with Tamiya Dark Grey (XF-24) and again mottled with a lighter color. I then masked off and painted the color bands with Tamiya Flat Yellow (XF-3) mixed with a little Orange (5). Next I masked off edges of panels and airbrushed Tamiya Smoke (X-19) to act as a subtle post shade. I also airbrushed a few select panels different colors to add variety. The bottom was painted Tamiya Semi-Gloss Black (X-18) and the mechanical areas were airbrushed with Alclad Stainless Steel (ALC115).

The whole thing was given a couple of light coats from Tamiya Semi Gloss Clear (X-35) to smooth the surface for decals. I used the kit-supplied water slide decals for the larger markings and a few smaller ones from the spares (6). I applied a few scrapes and chips with Vallejo acrylics. Once I started getting into the detail finishing, the size of the model started to become a real challenge to hold while working on it.

Because of all the handling some of the worn paint around the bottom edge is actual paint being worn off down to the primer color. I guess it adds an authentic finish.

After all the chipping and detail painting the real fun began, the weathering. There aren't exactly a lot of reference images of pontoon shaped hover tanks are there? Well none actually, so I drew some inspiration from modern tanks and LCAC hovercraft. I started with an oil dot filter to cut back some of the contrast on the base paint colors. Next I applied more localized filters with oil paints to change up adjacent panels to add some variety. I then shifted from filters to washes to accent all the panel lines and details. This was especially useful around the turret since it has a lot of densely packed details compared to the hull. I then applied oil paints straight from the tube to add stronger effects around





the appliqué panels and mechanical details. Some of the shadow and worn areas were reinforced by airbrushing a very thin brown-black to accent panels and create false shadows **(7 & 8)**.

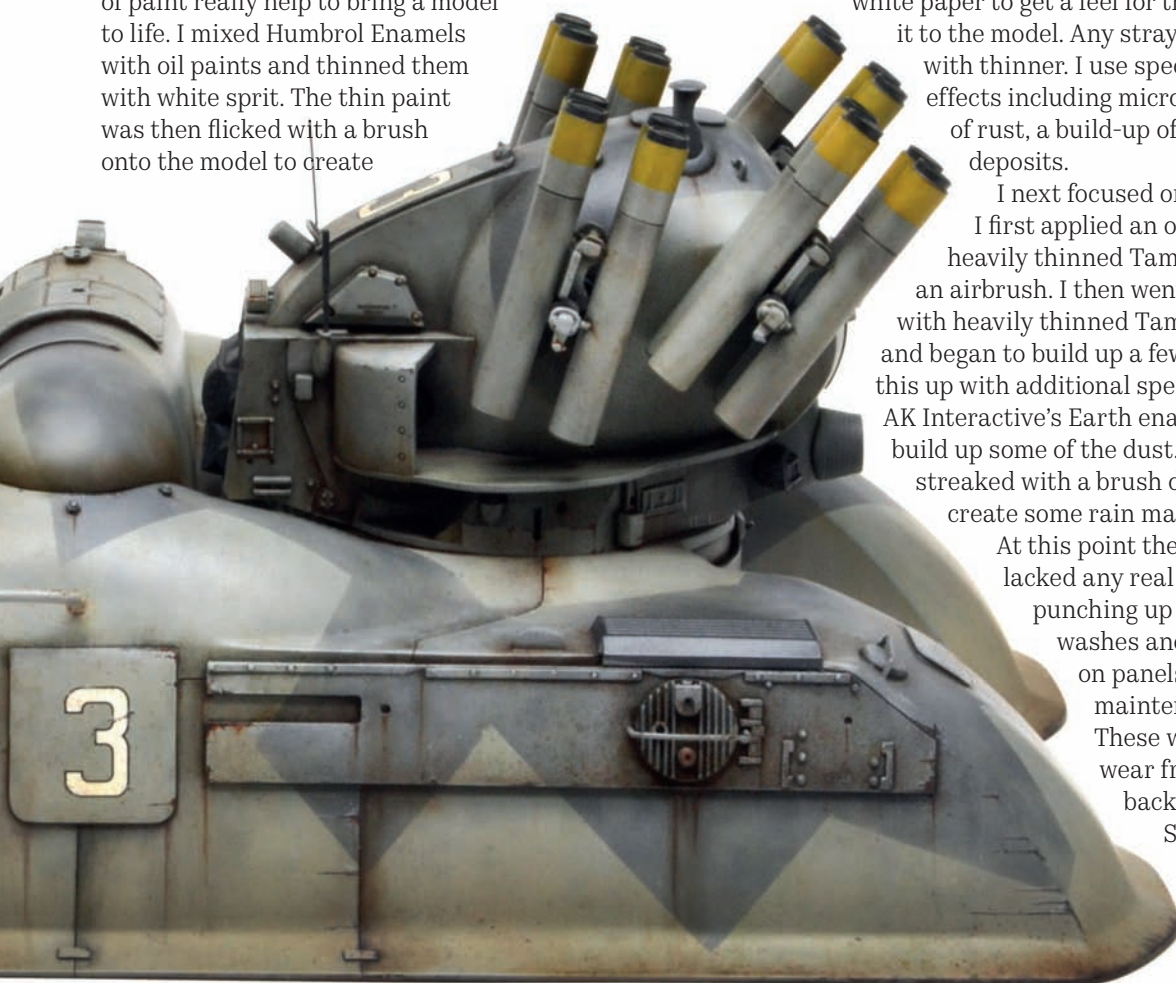
Next came the speckling effects. These micro applications of paint really help to bring a model to life. I mixed Humbrol Enamels with oil paints and thinned them with white sprit. The thin paint was then flicked with a brush onto the model to create

tiny specks of paint. The trick is to control the size of speckles and make them scale appropriate. The best way is to unload most of the thinned paint onto a paper towel and then drag the brush against a toothpick, skewer, or another brush handle. I find it best to practice on a piece of white paper to get a feel for the effects before applying it to the model. Any stray specks can be cleaned up with thinner. I use speckling to add a variety of effects including micro paint chips, small specks of rust, a build-up of grime, stray fuel and oil deposits.

I next focused on the dust and dirt effects.

I first applied an overall light dusting with heavily thinned Tamiya Buff (XF-57) using an airbrush. I then went over the lower portions with heavily thinned Tamiya Flat Earth (XF-52) and began to build up a few select areas. I followed this up with additional speckling effects using AK Interactive's Earth enamel wash (AK4063) to build up some of the dust. In some areas this was streaked with a brush dampened with thinner to create some rain mark effects **(9)**.

At this point the model was okay but lacked any real areas of 'pop'. I started punching up the effects with additional washes and oil paints. I focused on panels that might be used for maintenance or for crew access. These would have more grime and wear from usage. I then came back with AK Interactive's Streaking Grime (AK012) and MIG Productions' Standard Rust (P411) enamel wash to add streaking effects **(10)**.



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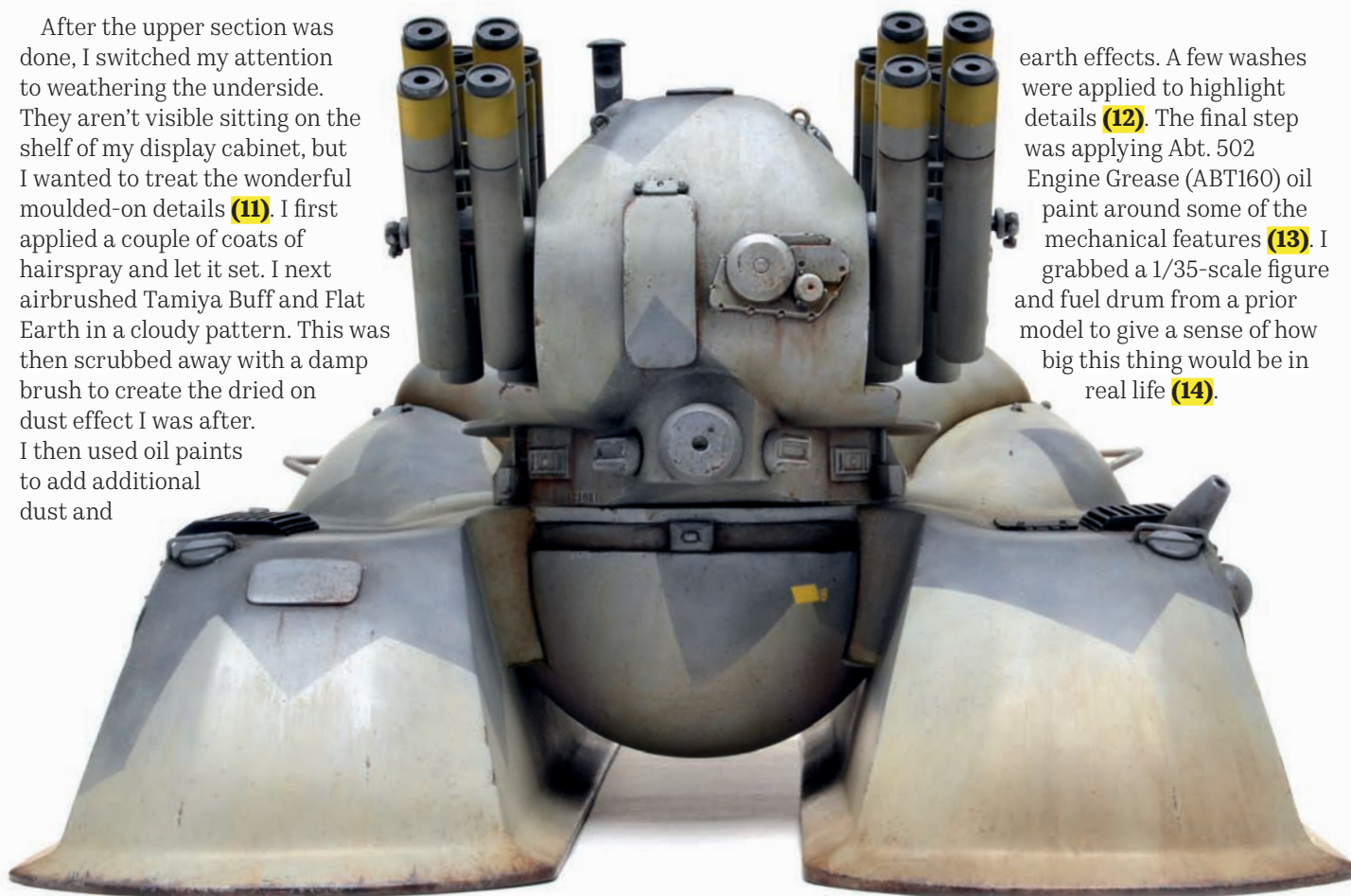


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After the upper section was done, I switched my attention to weathering the underside. They aren't visible sitting on the shelf of my display cabinet, but I wanted to treat the wonderful moulded-on details (11). I first applied a couple of coats of hairspray and let it set. I next airbrushed Tamiya Buff and Flat Earth in a cloudy pattern. This was then scrubbed away with a damp brush to create the dried on dust effect I was after. I then used oil paints to add additional dust and

earth effects. A few washes were applied to highlight details (12). The final step was applying Abt. 502 Engine Grease (ABT160) oil paint around some of the mechanical features (13). I grabbed a 1/35-scale figure and fuel drum from a prior model to give a sense of how big this thing would be in real life (14).



Final Thoughts

The Sphinx is one of my favourite S.F.3.D. designs. It's not well known but is a perfect combination of sleek lines and a lumpy detail that really captures the genre's aesthetic. Rainbow Egg did a fine job of capturing the details of the Sphinx which is fortunate as it's the only kit made in the original 1/35 scale. Unfortunately, it had a very limited release and is long out of production. I picked this one up a couple of years ago from a friend thinning his stash since I missed out in 2012. The weathering was a bit of a challenge as there aren't any useful references but in the end I'm very happy with the final result. ■

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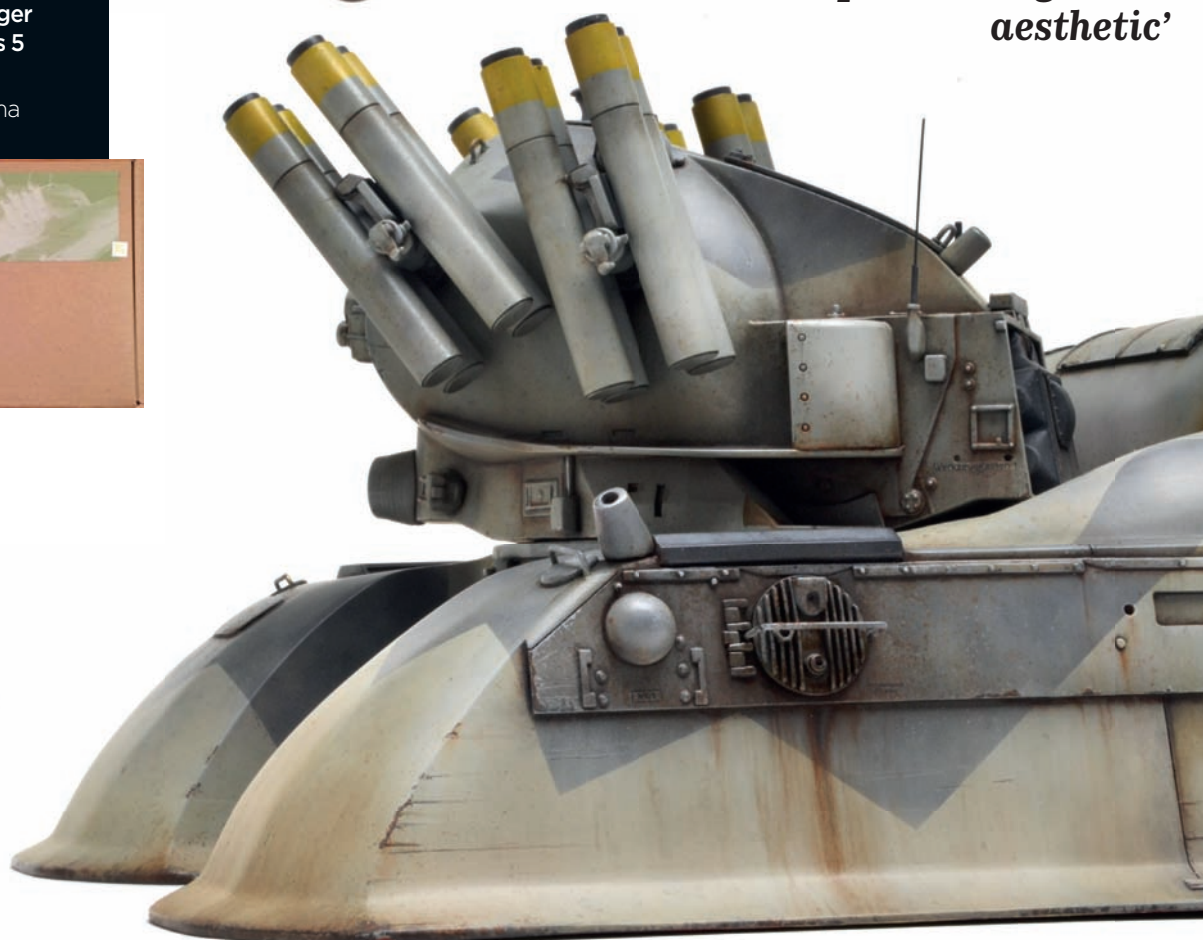
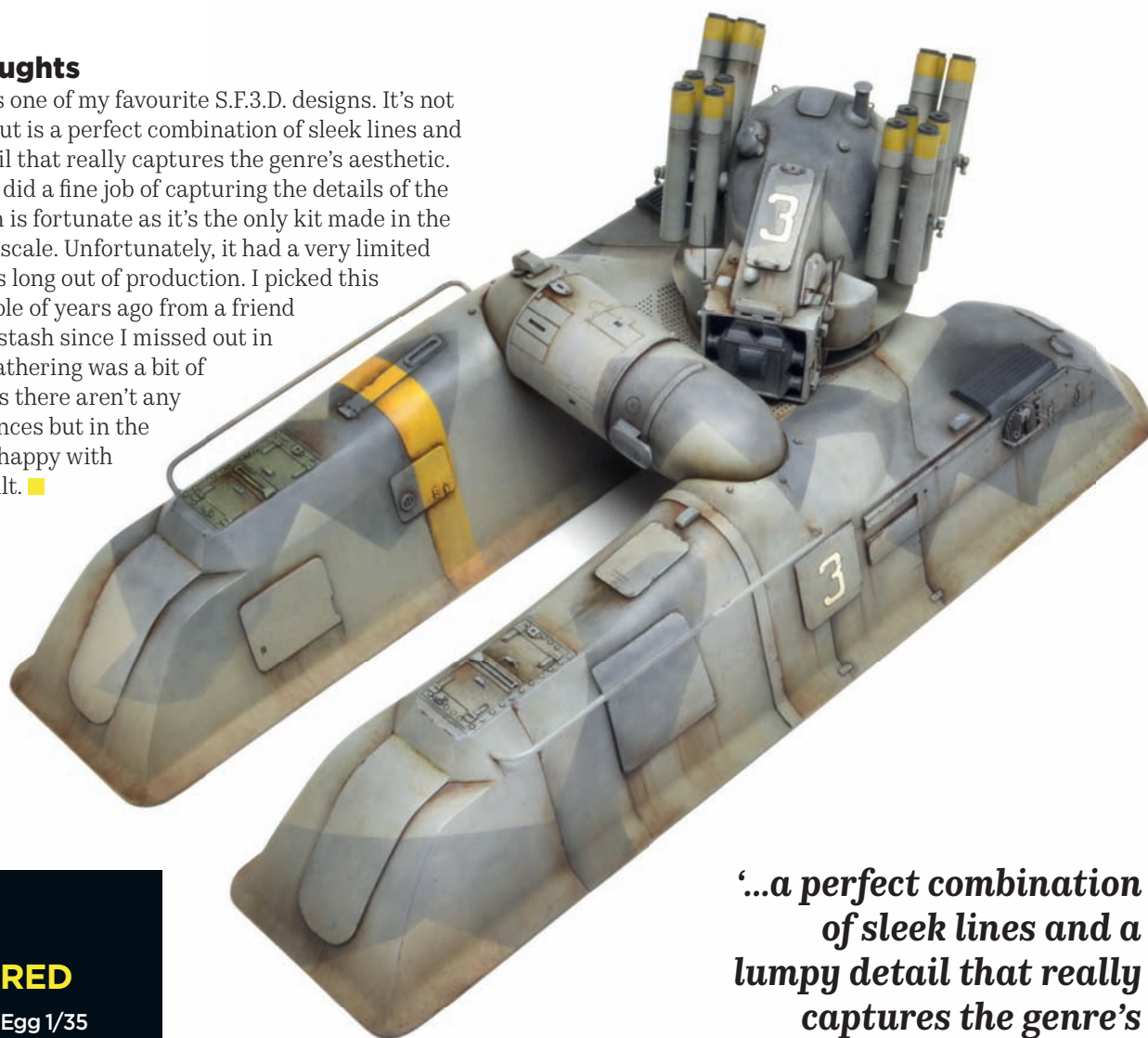
Rainbow Egg 1/35
Maschinen Krieger
Zbv3000 Series 5
Sphinx

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*'...a perfect combination
of sleek lines and a
lumpy detail that really
captures the genre's
aesthetic'*

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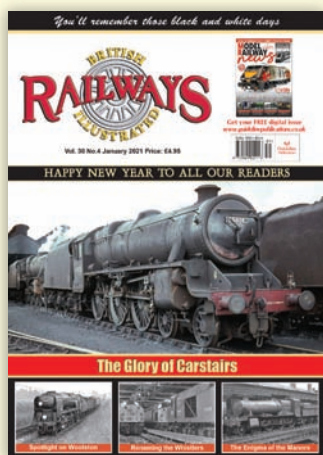
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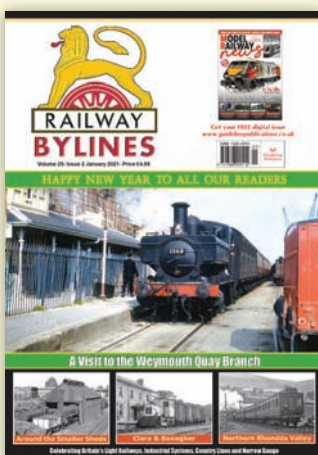
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LOCK

N'

**Alex
Varela**

paints the
stunning
RobotRocket
Miniatures'
bust.

From the moment that Matty (owner of RobotRocket Miniatures) gave me a sneak preview of this bust, sculpted by Charles Agius, I was totally gobsmacked. I told him, without hesitation, that I wanted to paint a version although there were still several weeks to the launch date. I still had no idea how big it was, but just knew I needed to paint it. I had just enjoyed a private painting tutorial with Arnau Lázaro, a great painter and the best teacher, and I really wanted to put what I had learned into



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➤ practice. Arnau (@arnau.lazaro) had unlocked my own mental limitations regarding painting and I felt energetic and eager to tackle a complex project.

I must admit that the size of the piece was a bit of a shock, it is certainly larger than we are used to in terms of miniature busts. It measures around 200mm, so is basically 1/9 scale. But where there is a challenge, there is also an opportunity and this is very much the case when working in this large scale. The possibility of working on details, such as tattoos, is made much easier than when working with smaller scales.

First Things First

The first thing I had to do before I started was to plan exactly what I wanted to show with my version of what was bound to be an immensely popular piece. Arnau had already published his version of the piece, an impressive interpretation based on the concept artwork produced by Abrar Khan (@abrarkhan.90). I then had to try something very different; besides this piece lends itself to so many interpretations, why do the same as others? That said, we are all inspired by other artists and I decided to take as my starting point the wonderful version that Magnus Fagerberg (@fagerberg.magnus) was painting.

Magnus had chosen to use a familiar digital camouflage for his piece. That gave me a starting point for my own interpretation. I decided that I wanted to do a cold-warm contrast; that is, the organic warmth of the soldier against the inert cold of the metal that covers her. (Wo)man and the machine face-to-face. Magnus used more greenish shades and gave a forest or jungle feeling, so I opted for a desert-themed camouflage, but kept the digital



pattern. That would also help give the outfit even more warmth. It's important to point out here the need for visual references, especially when we try to recreate elements recognisable from our own reality. Whenever you are going to undertake a project that involves something like this, you should first obtain a range of references to serve as a guide. Nowadays, with the Internet, it is possible to find photos of almost everything, and for this project I had to get hold of two collections of images, one for painting digital camouflage and the other for tattoos. In addition, I collected firearm references for the rifle. The more references we have, the easier our work will be later on.

The Bust

The bust comes in six pieces that hardly need any work before painting can begin. The casting is excellent; there are hardly any mould lines or irregularities. Everything fits perfectly, which is a relief for the painter! To make things a little easier, I decided to leave the arms separated from the torso to facilitate the painting of the tattoos, but this was a personal decision and each painter decides what is most comfortable for themselves. Once the piece was prepared, I began with a coat of primer. I used Ak Interactive's new Microfiller Primer. This primer, applied with an airbrush, has an incredible grip capacity, with a very fine pigment and a matt finish that really reveals the depth and quality of the sculpting. I usually

use a black primer first as this allows me to apply a lighter second primer to accentuate the volumes and mark out the main highlights. For this second primer coat I used Liquitex White Ink as a 'zenithal' light source. This helps to define the shape of the piece better and will help us understand the highlights and shadows that I would paint later.

To paint the skintones, I created my own colour by mixing the three primary colours from Scale75's

'Scalecolor Artist' range to which I added Titanium White, Naples Yellow, Primary Magenta and Mars Black by Golden and some Rose Pink by JoSonja, as well as Liquitex Deep Violet Ink. With this range of colours I highlighted and shaded the basic fleshtone, adding real depth to the areas of unadorned skin. It is important to note that I work with a wet palette, which is essential for my style of painting. I do not paint in a unidirectional way, that is base, highlight and shadow. Instead I work in a free way after applying the base colour. This means that I can start by adding some highlights and shadows, continue with midtones, go back to highlights, go to the darkest shadows and so on. In other words, I don't work in a specific order, so I need to have all



the shades of colours available on my palette at all times. **Photo 1** shows my palette during the painting of the skin tones. There are really no proportions for this type of mix. The idea is to mix some red with yellow, until you obtain a salmon tone, to which I added a touch of blue. From there it is a matter of playing with colour and looking for what you want to achieve. Do we want a more reddish tone? Paler? More greenish? The tones of natural skin are almost infinite and the limit is our imagination. Don't be afraid to play with colours. If you don't obtain the colours you had imagined at first, you can always start with a new palette until you find what the shades you really want.

Once I was clear about the shades I wanted, it was time to create a wet palette containing these colours. I added violets, blacks, blues, whites, but always started from my base color. I put each new range of shades to a different side, so that I had access to them when I needed to. When I started painting the skin and to avoid inconsistencies in shades across the piece, I bluetacked the arms to the torso. In this way I could be confident that I would have a consistency of shades across the face and

arms and onto the torso. Since the arms would be completely covered in tattoos, I simply added some basic highlights and shadows. The first step was to apply a general coat of our basecoat all over the skin using my airbrush. The use of the airbrush means that some of the colour intensity will be necessarily be lost, but this step is only to quickly and uniformly cover the entire surface. Then I repeated this base layer again, but with a brush and using very diluted paint. This way I recovered the original intensity of the colour.

Then, once again with an airbrush and from the lower part of the bust, I applied a soft shadow. I added a purple to my base colour, using the airbrush to take advantage of the natural depth of the piece. This helped establish a first shadow that will serve as a reference for later stages. Picking up the airbrush again, I did the same, but from above and using one of the mid highlight shades already prepared on my wet palette. This was the same process I had performed earlier with the white ink primer. With these simple steps, I had both a consistent fleshtone base and the first set of shadows and highlights **(2)**.

I no longer needed the arms attached to the body, so I detached them and put them aside to await their turn and focused on the face. Now it was

time to pick up my brush, playing with all the shades I had previously prepared on my wet palette. When painting the face it was important to keep in mind her feminine appearance; the features should not be harshly defined but rather hinted at. When working under a strong source of artificial light, as I do, it's also advisable to check from time to time the progress in more natural lighting. It's important to understand that your figure will be seen in a variety of different lighting conditions, especially if you plan to display your pieces at a show or enter a competition **(3 & 4)**. Sometimes the artificial light can highlight an area that looks problematic, but under natural light that can disappear. I decided to paint the piece without any make-up. This was a personal decision: I have seen other versions of this piece wearing makeup, but it didn't make sense to me that a soldier who seems to be crying for the loss of her partner would be made up for a night out! If do

you choose to paint makeup, however, it is as simple as working on fine glazes to tint the skin colour with the makeup colour of our choice.

Painting Hair

Simulating very short or shaved hair is always a challenge for miniature painters. There are many techniques, such as stippling or coloured glazes. The main problem I have experienced is simulating the hairline in a realistic way. On this occasion I opted for an



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simple, yet effective, technique. I used a liquid Talens mask to protect the work done on the face to this point and with the airbrush set at a low pressure, sprayed a mixture of Vallejo English Uniform 70.921 and some very diluted Tamiya Black (5). Because of the low pressure, the paint comes out in tiny droplets, which simulates the hair really well! This process must be repeated several times, so that each round of

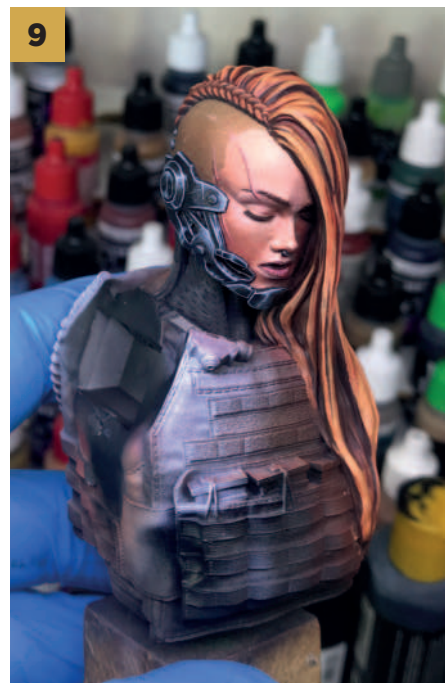
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stippling is random and covers the work area. I recommend testing on a napkin or something similar before committing to the figure, to ensure that it is the effect we want and that the pressure of the compressor is neither too high nor too low. Once finished, with the help of a little Blutack I removed the mask. Then with a brush I painted a fine glaze with the base fleshtone over the hair area to blend it in a little better. To finish and give it even more realism, I used a shade lighter than the base fleshtone to trace some marks on the scalp, showing small scars where the hair has not grown back (6).

To paint the hair itself I first marked the most important highlights clearly. Since I wanted her to be a redhead to keep the overall appearance warm, I used a light yellow on an orange base as a highlight. At first I sketched this out roughly, without caring too much about colour, since I was basically looking to mark the highlights to refine them later. I applied a layer of Scalecolor Orange

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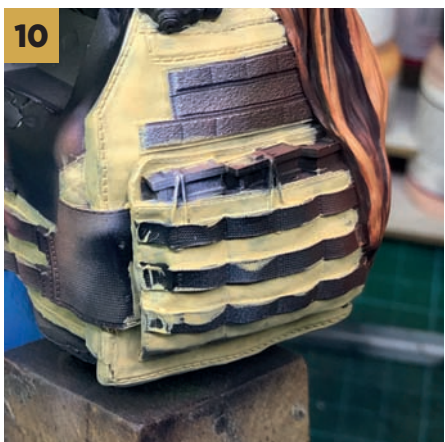


over all the hair and while it was still wet, I applied strokes of Naples Yellow from Golden, blending it with the Orange but trying to keep the extreme highlights as yellow as possible (7). Once the highlights had been established, I airbrushed all the hair with a thin layer of orange. This allowed the previously applied highlights to remain apparent (8). I could then begin to define the different strands of hair with a brush. If I began to lose some of the colour intensity, I applied a light wash of red or even violet Liquitex ink.

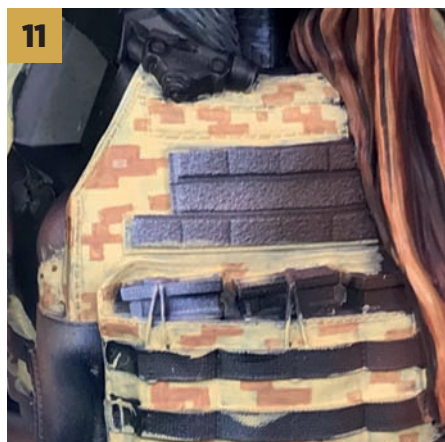
Heavy Metal and Camouflage

All the metallic parts were painted using the non-metallic metal (NMM) technique and using exactly the same palette of colours: Titanium White, Deep Blue and Black. So how do we paint some metal parts lighter and others darker? It is simply a matter of modifying the proportions of each colour. But the most important thing for

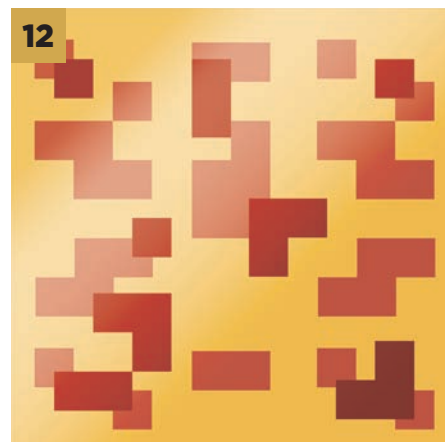
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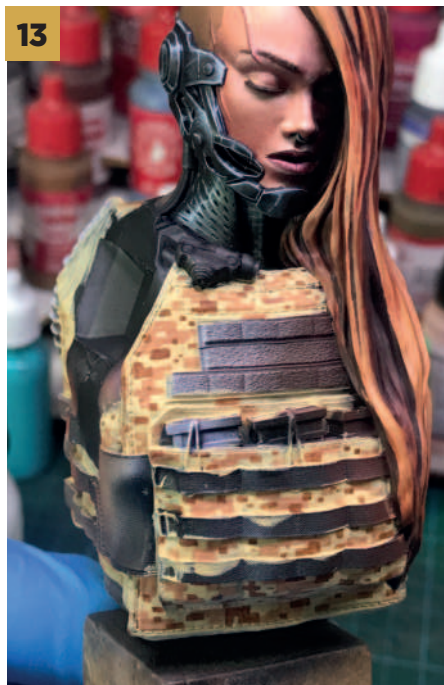


FIGURE PAINTING LOCK N' LOAD

the NMM technique to work effectively is the definition. Without definition, something painted with NMM will only appear as a grey surface, nothing more. And to get this definition, there is nothing more complicated than properly profiling each item. These profiles, both those reflecting light and those in shadow, is what will give us the definition so that our brain can interpret that element as a metallic surface (9). We can play with other colours to modify the hue of our metals, for example mixing a little more blue, or yellow, but profiling is something we should never skip on. To get a more interesting finish, I applied subtle washes of black ink in the shadiest areas of our NMM. This gives them greater depth and realism, especially when we have the figure in our hands.

Painting the vest was not difficult, but it was quite tedious. As I said at the beginning of the article, it is very important to have good visual references of what we want to recreate. I would even say that 80% of the success of a project like this may rely on having those references or not. Once this is clear, the process is not complicated, but it does take time and patience. Analyzing a

basic digital camouflage, it's clear that it is made up of three superimposed layers: a base, a medium-sized first pattern and a second, darker and smaller pattern. Obviously this is a simplification and in reality patterns can be much more complicated than that, but in the scale we are going to work in, it is more than enough. First, I applied the base colour of the vest, in my case a mixture of Vallejo's Sand Yellow 70.916 and

Japanese Uniform 70.923 (10). When the base was covered in a uniform way (achieving this with a light colour is not easy), I proceeded to the second step. Patiently I began to draw the first camouflage pattern with a mixture resulting from adding a reddish brown to the vest's base colour. This is where the references come into play and I thought how to simplify the pattern and adapt it to our purpose (11 & 12). The next step consisted of drawing, with a darker colour, small patterns on top of the the previous one. Once again, it's important to follow the references and try and be as random as you can (13). The final phase consisted of applying a tan-coloured wash to integrate all the previous work. In addition, I outlined all the seams with a mixture of tan and black and highlighted the edges with



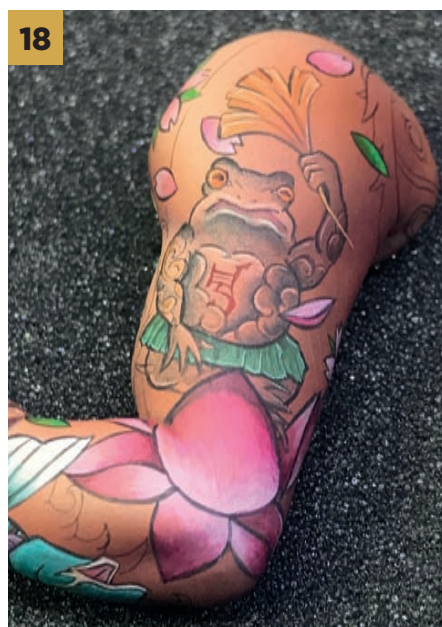
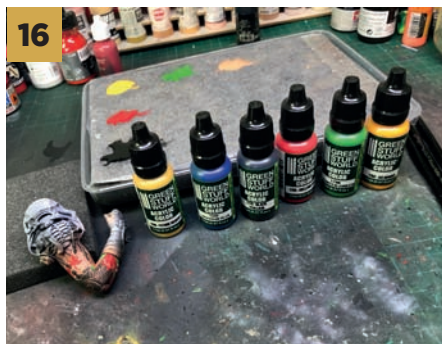


'It's important, however, before starting to draw, to have a clear idea of what you want to achieve'

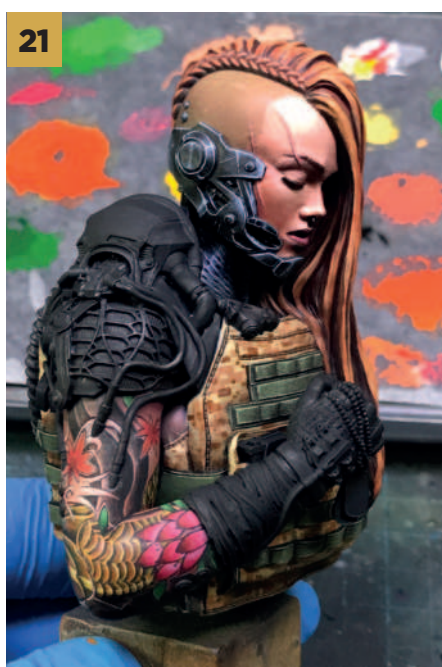
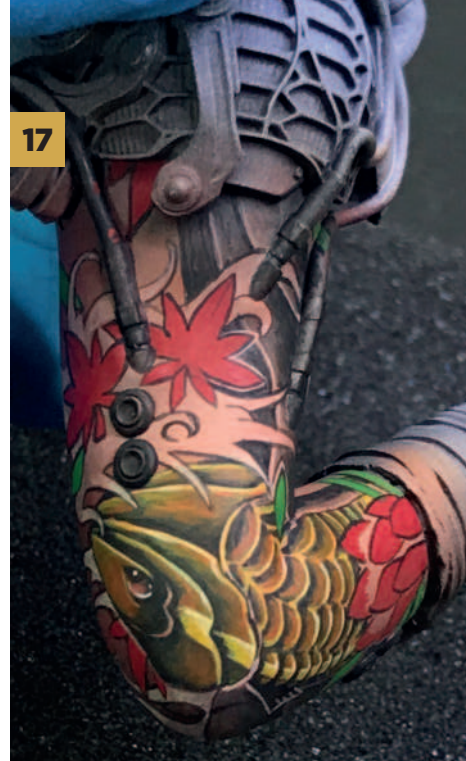
➤ a light sand colour, to give further definition to the vest (14). It may seem complex, but actually it was very simple. You just need patience, and if it doesn't work out the first time, just repaint with the base colour and start again! For the rest of the vest, I opted for a military green that complemented the reds of the hair and skin (15).

Tattoos

With all this work done, it was time to move on to the icing on the cake. The tattoos! Choosing the theme was not an easy task and it took me several days of preparation, since there are many styles of tattoos: old school, realistic, fantasy, Russians, Maori, Japanese. I finally opted for a Japanese theme. In the past I had finished two pieces with tattoos, one with Russian tattoos and the other with Hispanic tattoos, so this was an opportunity to close my 'tattoo trilogy'. Once again the search for references was very important. I was inspired by a tremendous tattoo artist named Jee Sayalero (@jeesayalero) who tattoos a style called 'Neojap'. I recommend you take a look at his work! The tattoos I painted on the piece were not based on a single design, but I composed them by taking images from here and there. It's important, however, before starting to draw, to have a clear idea of what you want to achieve. Unless you are a good cartoonists (and I am not) improvisation can be close to artistic suicide. Yet with a clear idea of what you want to achieve, you can have the right colours in the palette and start drawing using a fine and sharp



brush, well thinned but not too liquid paint and lots of patience. You should also have to hand a little of the base fleshtone to make those corrections and adjustments that will inevitably be necessary. With the arms still separate from the rest of the figure, I could rest them on a sponge and imagine I was drawing on a sheet of paper. As with



drawing, the idea is to first make an outline of the design and then fill in the colour. I never used a pure black when drawing them, as it tends towards green. For the tattoos, I used paints from Greenstuff World, which due to their pigment, gave me the intensity of colour that I needed (16, 17, 18 & 19). Unless you are blessed with a rare artistic talent, care and patience are the name of the game. You know what they say about prior preparation and planning ...

As the arms were still separate from body, it was important to temporarily attach them at stages to make sure everything was looking good (20 & 21). I was really pleased with the way the tattoos turned out. It was not nearly as difficult as you might imagine; there was certainly no deception or magic ➤

22



► involved. Do try it, you will be surprised how easy it is to achieve good results.

The rest of the figure does not deserve much more explanation, as I simply repeated many of the processes explained above. Once all the details were complete, it was time to tackle the gun. Here I thought about complicating my life a little more. I am a big fan of the Call of Duty game and I thought about decorating the assault rifle with a bizarre camouflage or some other pattern. I decided against it as I came to the conclusion that it would generate too much visual 'noise', detracting from the rest of the piece. I already had the digital camouflage and the tattoos and to decorate the weapon, being so close to the face, would have distracted the viewer from the main focus of attention. This is something that too often is not taken into account by miniature painters. Sometimes you have to know when an idea gives and when it takes away. That said, I couldn't resist adding

a little 'easter egg' to the gun: can you see it **(22 & 23)**?

Final Thoughts

I sincerely hope that you have found this article interesting and that it has inspired you and help remove any fear of dealing with freehand or camouflage patterns. And remember, you can follow me on Instagram (@iguazzustudio) or on my YouTube channel.

About Me

My name is Alex, from Cadiz (Spain) and I've been a professional miniature painter for more than 10 years now. My passion for the hobby began with the Lord of the Rings miniatures that Games Workshop released a long time ago! From there, I've worked for several private collectors all around the world and I have also painted boxart for companies like Scale75, Aradia Miniatures, Tommy's War, Troop54. I was also co-owner and Art Director

23



in Tiny Leads. I've been won several medals in some of the leading miniatures competitions and I've been a judge on several occasions at Monte San Savino, Scale Model Challenge, and the Moson Show. Now I'm working as freelancer, mainly for collectors and a few friends' companies, as well as trying to share my knowledge with masterclasses and workshops. You can contact me at iguazzu@gmail.com or can check my Instagram Account @iguazzustudio

Enjoy and #sharingthehobby ■

Road Girl



Patrick Kamsma
takes us on a post-apocalyptic road trip.

It's the year 2027. Chaos rules the world after a pandemic virus outbreak which crumbled civilizations, turned cities into ruins and made natural resources scarce. Then the gangs took over and governments and states were overthrown. It's everyone for themselves now. During 'The Purge' Evelyn's villa was attacked by the Bay City Gang, who killed her husband and eight-year-old son. She barely survived the attack herself and was left for dead. After waking up she realized everything was gone, her life, her past and her future. Now driven by revenge, she fights to survive in this hard and desolate country in search for the killers of her beloved family. She is.... Road Girl.

So every now and then a miniature comes along which makes you want to drop everything you're working on. In 2019 I was visiting the Scale Model Challenge show in Eindhoven and came across the stand of Journeyman Miniatures. They were a relatively new company which had this new release – 'Road Girl' – and she immediately drew my attention. The detail on this 1/10-scale scale bust, sculpted by Charles Agius, is amazing and she is full >



1

From this angle you can appreciate the different textures sculpted into the piece by the very talented Charles Agius, especially the hip bag and pilot's helmet.

of character. Her hair and cape blown to one side makes it very dynamic and her left eye and hand are covered in bandages making you wonder what she's been through. The sculptor not only tells a small story through the details of the bust, but he really did his best trying to simulate different kinds of fabric. This helps make the bust suitable even for those relatively new to miniature painting. It's probably comes as no surprise that I instantly had a Mad Max vibe went I examined the bust and ideas instantly started popping in my head. Once I had the bust at home, needless to say a lot of inspiration was found in George Miller's movie *Max Max: Fury Road*. I was especially interested in the choice of colour used in the movie artwork, with the contrast of vibrant oranges and bright blues. A lot of cool artwork related to Mad Max can be found on Pinterest, but also in the book *The Art of Max Max* by Abbie Bernstein (Titan Books) which helped me understand the vision of the film's director.

Getting to Work

I loved the idea of painting the bust using the colour palette of Charlize Theron's character Furiosa: off whites, cool browns, greens and dark oranges. But I also needed something to make the whole scene pop a bit more. A trend which has entered the fantasy painting world in the last couple of years is the use of painted backgrounds to display models. These are basically a 2D canvas, but I find it a great addition in our hobby. It can add a lot of atmosphere, sometimes even a complete storyline.

As a base I used a simple straight 5x5 cm wooden block and two pieces of plasticard, both cut to the same size. I glued the first strip against the back of the base and then glued the second strip against the first and let it curve onto the top of the base. The gaps on the sides were filled with Miliput, which was allowed to dry and sanded straight. Miliput has the tendency to shrink a little as it dries, so two small imperfections appeared but I tried to minimize this with my airbrush techniques. This was a small lesson learned though, to leave some tolerance



2



The vivid red hair and the darker oranges of the trousers really complement the rest of the palette chosen for 'Road Girl'.

between the two strips of Evergreen plasticard. With the construction complete, the base was set aside.

The bust itself consists of seven parts and the fit is almost flawless. Only the cape has a small gap on the back which is easy to fill if you want to. Because I used a backdrop, and didn't notice this at the time, I left it for what it was. You can barely notice it, although if you mount the bust solely on a base where it can be viewed through 360 degrees it's a small detail you need to take care. The head was glued in place before painting. The other details were kept separate

3



The sense of the wind blowing through her cape and hair will be accentuated by the backdrop.

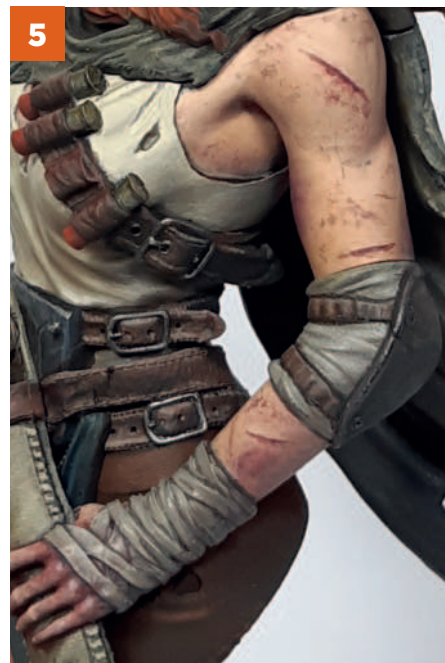
and painted before assembly, otherwise you can't reach everything properly to paint it.

This was my first female figure and a bust, albeit a three-quarters one. The big difference between a male and female is the fact that a woman's face is rounder and therefore much smoother. It's best not to overdo the first sketching of colours but blend in the transitions right away. As for a basecoat I used Fairy Flesh with a tip of Reddish Flesh, both from Nocturna Models' Fairy Flesh set (ref. 7401). Fairy flesh is a nice warm yellowish skincolour. After applying two coats I highlighted the basecolour with Vallejo's Basic Skintone 70.815 and Ivory 70.918. For shadows I added Vallejo Burnt Cadmium Red 70.814 and Scale 75 Arbuckles Brown SFG-34 to the basemix. It's important to use shadow colours cautiously and thin the colour well as you want to preserve the facial characteristics.

For the arms I basically used the same mixture, except the basecolour was a tint redder and with hardly any of the Ivory White. In my story the arms are more exposed to the sun and therefore have a much more tanned appearance. The hair was done using Andrea's Dark Orange XNAC-36 mixed with Dark Sea Blue 70.898 and worked my way up with Dark Orange 70.981, Flat Red 70.957, Flat Yellow 70.953 and Ice Yellow 70.858.

At this point you'll notice that the facial expression flattens and you will need to add some extra tones to the face to keep things harmonious with

5



Note the carefully achieved impression of dirt ingrained on 'Road Girl's' bandages, as well as on her skin.

the strong haircolour. I added further shades of orange mixed with the skin colour and some Oxford Blue 70.807 to the cheeks and painted the eyebrows using the same colours as her hair. The pilot's hat was painted with Chocolate Brown 70.872 and highlighted with Buff 70.976. The same colour were used on top but in reverse. I then added some German Camo Brown Black 70.822 for the deeper shadows.

Post-Apocalyptic Fashion

I was really looking forward to painting her top. I love to paint white, because, like skin tones, there is no single recipe but warm whites and cooler whites. White really sets the tone of the overall appearance of your miniature. It's a bit of a challenge to get to the right chroma, but the trick is to follow your gut feeling and progress in small stages.

I started with a warm brownish cream colour and worked my way up to the desired white colour, or in this case more of a beige. As a base colour I used the darkest colour of the Andrea white paint set (ref. ACS-003), a drop of Andrea Burnt Sienna XNAC-52 and a drop of Andrea Beige XNAC-42. For the shadows I added extra Burnt Sienna and for the deeper parts I mixed in German Camo Brown Black. I love this colour as it's not black, but yet is still dark, and has lots of violet purple tones in it. You can use it for almost everything. For the highlights I only added more and more Andrea Beige to the base mix to get to the point where I was satisfied. Finally,

► I placed some Vallejo Ice Yellow dots on the frayed ends of the shirt.

The cape was another challenge. It's a large piece mainly only visible from the back, but I still felt the need to paint it properly. I wanted a darker more saturated colour in contrast to the orange and off-white top. I mixed a base colour of Brown Violet 70.877 and German Camo Brown Black, adding more Camo Brown Black and a bit of pure black for the shadows. As for highlights I added Japanese Uniform 70.923 and Camouflage Beige 70.821 to the base mixture. To add some interest and wear, I painted the highlights in small dots and fine lines. Don't worry if you overdo this. You can tone the effect down by glazing over the highlights with a thinned-down basetone. To add some extra interest and to break down the monotone appearance, I randomly applied some orange and dark red washes.

By now the main parts are done. The trousers were painted in a variant of the hair mixture except that I added a bit of Flat Brown 70.984 to tone down the brightness of the orange. It didn't need that much attention as it's a small part and I didn't want to have too much focus on it. The sculptor did a great job by sculpting some extra details on the trousers. The metal parts were all finished in metallic paints. I started with Scale 75 Black Metal SC-63, highlighted with Trash Metal SC-64 up to Vallejo Natural Steel 70.864 and Silver 70.997.

The metal on the gun was done in the same manner except from the silver. I didn't want to draw too much attention to this part, so I used some heavy black and blueish ink washes to tone the metal parts down. The wooden part on the gun was Brown Sand 70.876 and black mixture as a base. The black killed all the colour and made it weary-looking and old, highlighted with Brown Sand and a bit of white, and glued the gun in place. The bust was nearing completion. It was now time to shift focus to the backdrop and tie things together.

Backdrop

As mentioned, I got my inspiration from the Max Max posters. They used a bright orange and red at the bottom and worked their way up to cooler colours, light blues, green and black. This created the illusion of a sandstorm in a

desert location. I used an airbrush for this part, as I don't have to worry about details on the two-dimensional canvas. I started at the bottom with a bright orange mixed with red. I need some warmer tones at the bottom, just enough to get that contrast with the dark orange pants. From there I brightened the tones with orange through to sand yellow. As the backdrop is curved there are no hard edges. This works in your advantage if you want to portray a wide and far horizon.

Half way up the backdrop I drew an imagined horizon, shifting from the warmer tones to the cooler tones, like Turquoise, Caspian Blue and Sky blue on the left side, and Dark Sea Blue and black on the right side. I loved the idea

of a dark storm raging over the land, thus making a connection with bust and explaining why the wind is blowing through her hair. It was a constant comparing the bust to the backdrop. I wanted to have the lower darker half of the bust at the height of the brighter colours, as well as her beige top all the way to her orange hair at the same level as the cooler colour. I thus tried to maximize the contrast between hot and cold, as well as the complementary colours. Finally, I painted the back and the wooden base in a mixture of burnt umber with a bit of black, which is a bit less harsh than just black and more pleasing to the eye. The letters were cut out of frisket film and airbrushed onto the base. This was done in the same manner, and as a small ode, to the Fury Road artwork.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, this was a really fun project. The bust is, as mentioned earlier, amazing and it was made even more so (to me at least) by portraying the Mad Max look I had wanted to do for ages. This was my first large fantasy project and it took my creativity to a whole other level as I wasn't imprisoned by any historical correctness as I am by my usual diet of historical miniatures. Painting this piece, I really understand why this category of miniature painting and modelling has taken such a leap in the last couple of years. I hope you enjoyed this article as much as I enjoyed this project and that it inspires you to pick up those brushes and get creative. ■



BE INSPIRED

Journeyman Miniatures 'Road Girl'. Check them out on Facebook for more great stuff.



Angela's Hammer Time

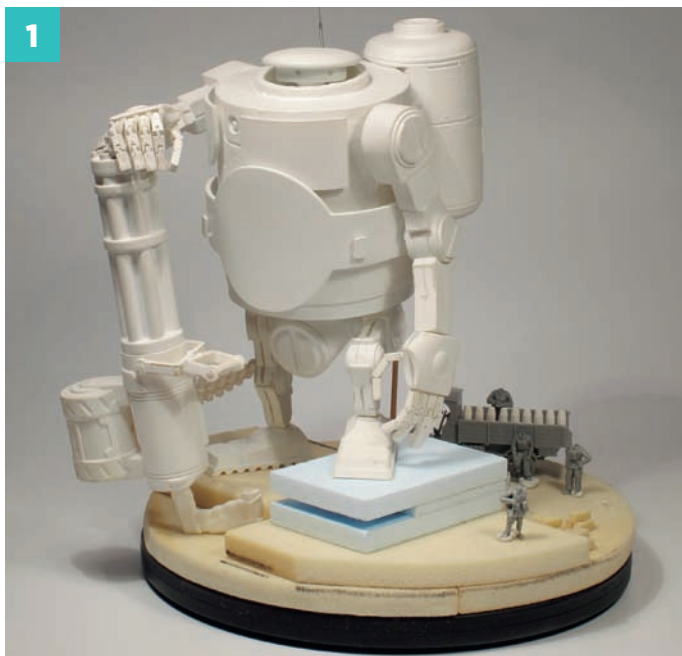
Marcel du Long introduces his 'Snowcamp 1919',

The winter of 1919 was extremely harsh and it was time to take some decisive action to break the deadlock on the western front. The Australian Military Expeditionary Force just received one of the new 'Big boys'; a World War I-themed robot called 'Angela'. Angela's sole mission was to hammer the front and force a final

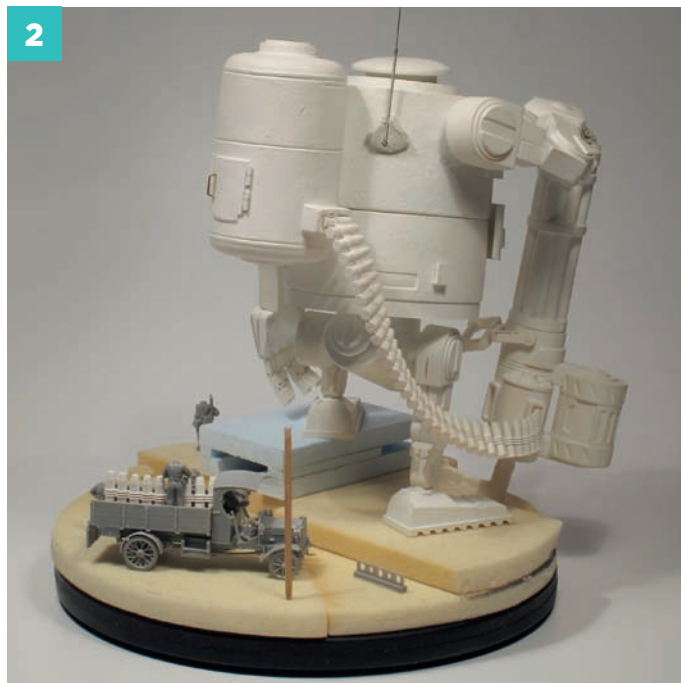
breakthrough. After a very successful first week of downing five bogies and destroying three armoured cars during four assault raids the enemy was hammered from the front back to the east.

'Snowcamp 1919' is based around a World War Robot from 3A. World War Robot is a graphic novel series illustrated

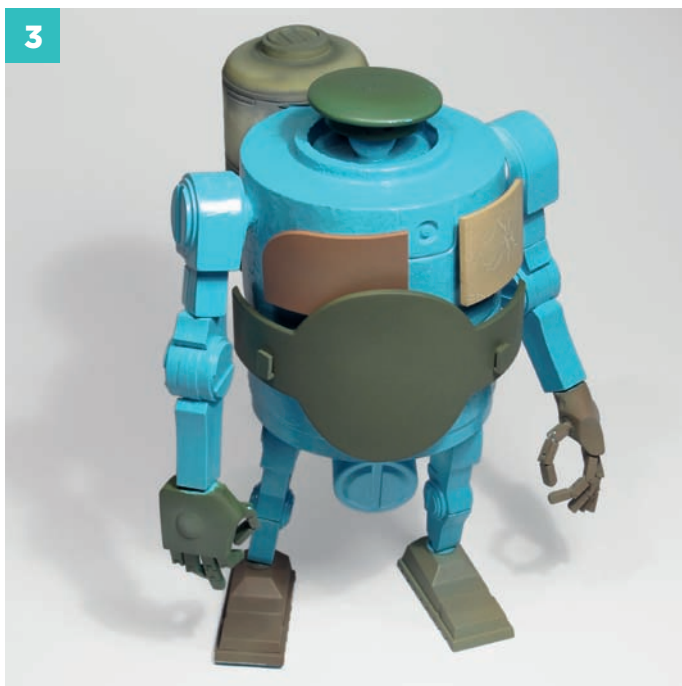
by artist Ashley Wood and written by both Ashley Wood and TP Louise. This very rare model is not a regular kit but more like a designer's toy or action figure. The accompanying figures and vehicle are superb 1/76 scale models from W'D Models (www.wdmodels.com) and like the World War Robot are a joy to paint! ➤



1 With all the key model elements assembled, the optimum composition of the diorama is finalised prior to completing the groundwork. Photographing the piece at this stage was important as reference for placing and fixing items onto the finished scene.



2 An essential reference shot of the rear of 'Snowcamp 1919', vital for placing the truck and figures naturally in such a compact diorama.



3 Angela, a.k.a. the 'Bramble Mk.2' robot from 3A, in its basic colour scheme. Varying the colours on the armour plates adds visual interest and serves as a good base for the weathering techniques to come.



4 The look of Angela is beginning to evolve, using the hairspray chipping method to reveal underlying paint and metal, plus brush and sponge chipping on surface details. Decals have also been added.

► Snowcamp in the making

This project was probably my biggest yet. Not only does the World War Robot consists of multiple parts but the whole scene was built up using different elements. I started this project building a mock-up from foam on top of a circular rotating base. To emphasize the size of the robot I chose 1/76 scale figures instead of the regular 1/35 scale ones. This was a perfect plan since the W^D Models truck and figures are splendid

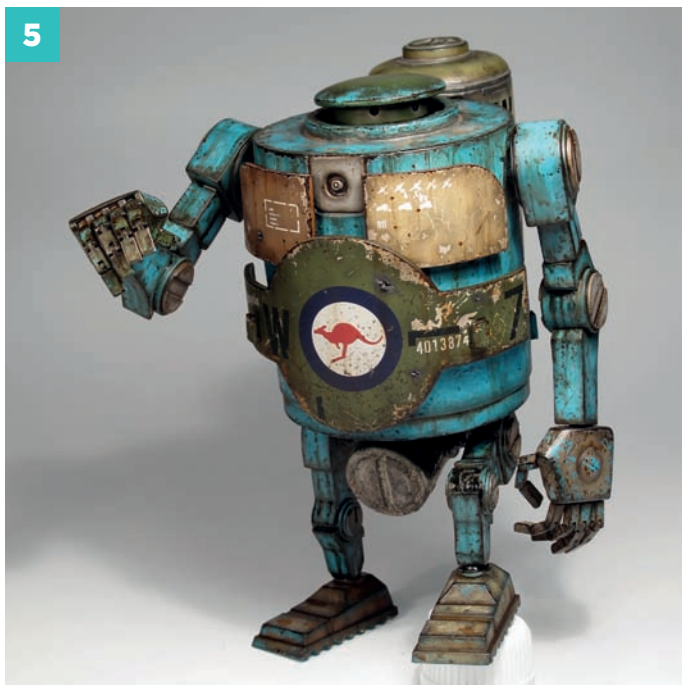
and the World War Robot rises above the tiny little men below.

Next, I started the World War Robots' extensive paint-job using Tamiya TS-41 Coral Blue (straight from the spray-can) as a base. After some hairspray effects to some areas, I covered the complete World War Robot with a postshade. I then finished weathering the robot using acrylic inks from Liquitex and some pigments and pencils touches.

The Gatling gun

The Gatling gun was first pre-shaded in blue over a white base followed by some green layers (all Tamiya acrylics). After a coat of Purity Seal (an aerosol can-based lacquer varnish) the weathering was done using Liquitex acrylic inks and Tamiya X-20A thinner, pigments and pencils. The weathered rust effect was achieved using acrylic paint sponge stamping, a light coloured ink wash and some graphite penciling. The gun barrel

5



Angela in all her grubby glory, after a full round of weathering with inks, pigments, and pencils... posed ready for final placement.

6



The ammo drum for Angela's Gatling Gun is quite a large piece, so I chose to make a bold statement with decals and pronounced weathering to give it more visual interest.

7



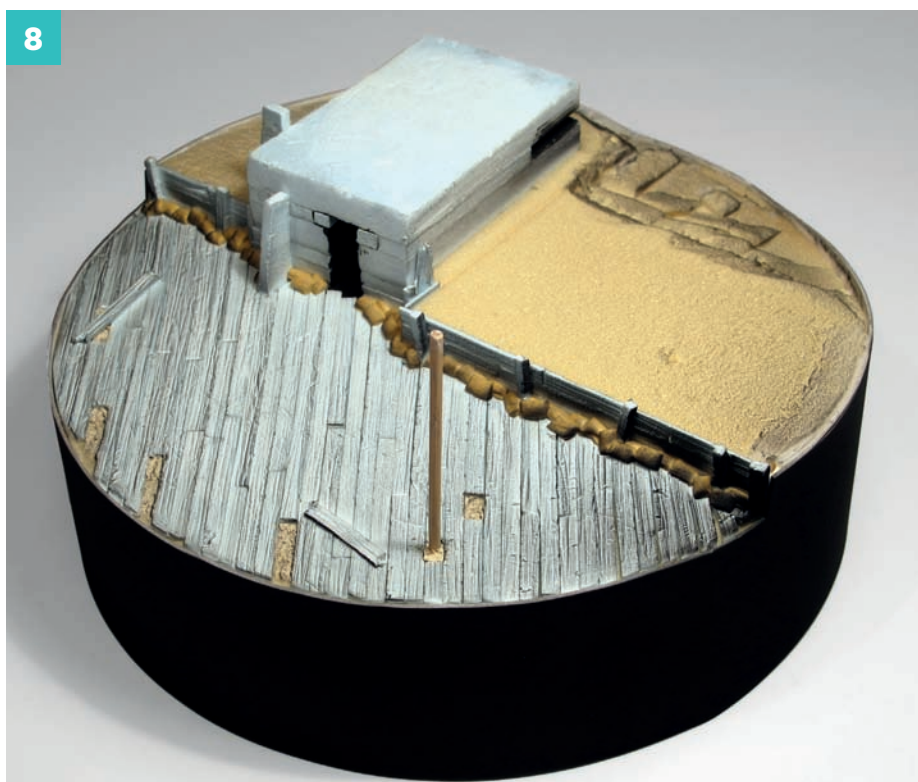
The scenery begins to shape. All elements, including the duck-boards and bunker were made from various grades of craft modelling foam.

received a gloss black base and was rubbed in with metallic powder from Uschi Van Der Rosten metallic pigments. Some matt black pigment powder was used for the barrel ends. Finishing touches were done using Tamiya X-19 Smoke for wet oil effects.

The Australian Military Expeditionary Force & base

The W^D Models truck and figures were base-coated black. I started with a medium green and ended up with a light green at the top to enhance the model lighting. After a seal of varnish, a thinned AMMO dark enamel wash was applied, and since those figures are so well moulded, every tiny little detail already

8



With tiny epoxy putty sandbags in place, to shore-up retaining walls and contrast against all the straight lines, some initial shading is sprayed in areas of detail as a basis for further painting.

popped up after a simple wash and a subtle drybrush.

The front of the foam base was covered with plaster, some fine sand and some airbrushed layers of colour. Little tree trunks were placed and barbed wire rolls made from mosquito net were added. The wooden planks were made out of blue styrofoam as well as the bunker. Two-part epoxy putty from Tamiya was used

to sculpt the sandbags. The wooden floor received a pre-shade with Tamiya acrylic paint. Finally the snow was done using salt and thinned pva glue. The wet effects on both the World War Robot as well as the base were achieved with Vallejo Gloss Varnish and Tamiya X-19 Smoke. make a bold statement with decals and pronounced weathering to give it more visual interest.

9



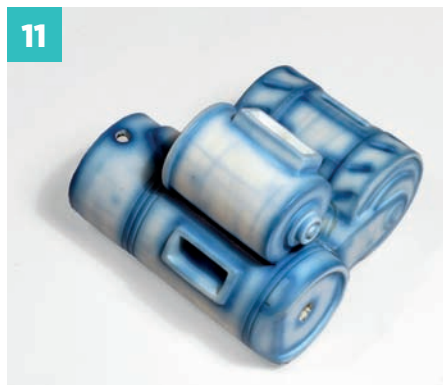
The W^D Models figures are superb especially for such a small scale. Popping the details with a dark wash helped to bring out the features/equipment and make them easier to view at a comfortable distance.

10



The Gatling gun was fun to paint. I chose to contrast a well maintained barrel assembly – with a burnished metal finish – against more worn and weathered painted surfaces in areas of heavy use.

11



Pre-shading the breech end of the Gatling with blue over white paint. These effects will be barely visible after final painting but do add a subtle modelling effect that heightens scale.

12



With light applications of the final green shades applied, the cumulative effect of the pre-shading process can be seen.

13



With all base and model element painting finished, everything is grouped in its final position and secured prior to the addition of the all important titular snow.

14



The diorama from the rear, prior to the application of snow. In this view it is clear how careful weathering throughout has helped to harmonise the disparate elements into a single cohesive scene where everything has been subject to the same environmental factors.



15

A close up of the W^D Models truck and figures. The sense of scale they impart is central to the diorama's story.



16

The extreme weathering effects on the robot are evident here. In a project like this your imagination is the only limit on the effects you want to achieve. ■





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

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

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

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

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

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



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



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



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



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

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

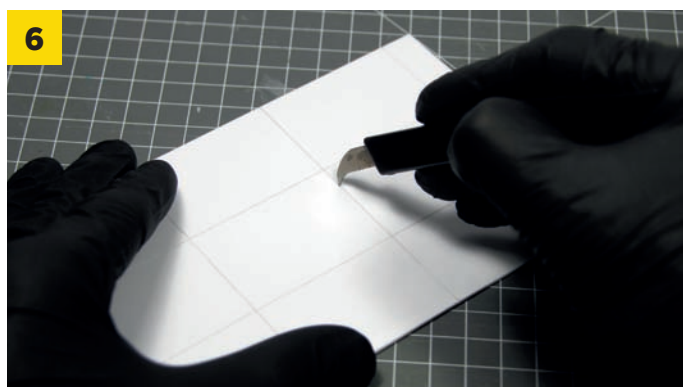
personal belongings and a certain amount of food, just in case, with you. The senior executives of public and industrial facilities of the city has decided on the list of employees needed to stay in Pripjat to maintain these facilities in a good working order. All the houses will be guarded by the police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

By 15:00 most of the inhabitants

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



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



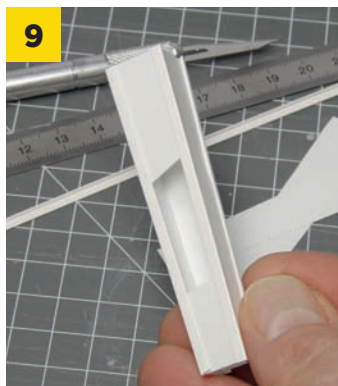
The base of the bumper car arena started life as a humble piece of plasticard into which I scored the pattern of the different plates.



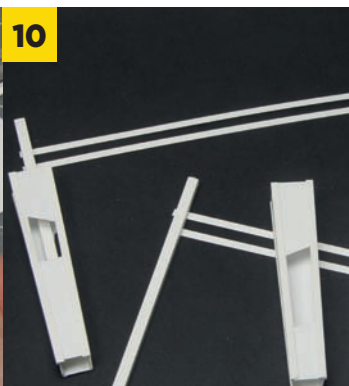
The base plate was primed with black primer and then painted with different rust tones, including 'Old Rust' and 'Rot Braun' from AK Interactive. You don't have to be too specific about the exact shades at this stage.



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



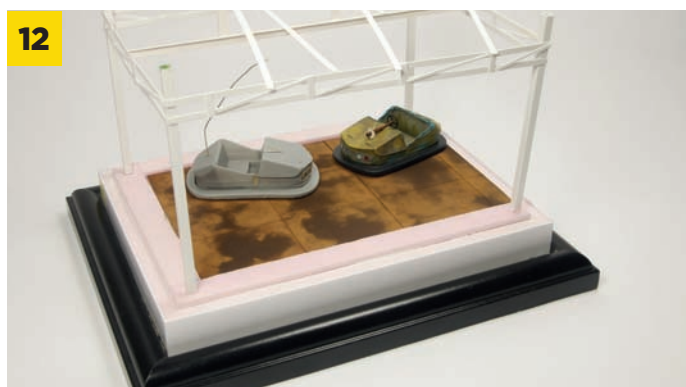
The corner pillars were constructed from 0.2mm plasticard.



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



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



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



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





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



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



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



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

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

exclusion zone by disaster tourists.

The Model

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

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





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



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



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



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



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



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

BE INSPIRED

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

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



Razgor



Roberto del Cima returns with a lesson in Object Source Lighting.

Have you ever jumped into a project headlong without knowing or being sure about how it will end? This is what exactly happened to me with this project... I had this bust for a while, but I wasn't sure what to do with it. I wanted it to be something special and something that little bit out of the ordinary. The decision was made when a friend said to me: "Do something special, which will attract attention." So that where the idea came from: Object Source Lighting. The idea of Object Source Lighting is to paint a figure in such a way as if one or more

imaginary light sources are shining on the subject. This can be a source depicted on the figure or base – such as a fiery sword- or, less commonly, one left to the viewer's imagination. I had never dealt with the double lighting technique before, and to do so on a bust as well made me feel a little afraid, but at the same time I like a challenge and in addition I love to experiment. It was decided, let's go!

The Bust

The beautiful bust, Razgor the Warbringer, by BlackSun Miniatures

is beautifully sculpted by the very talented Joaquin Palacios and cast all in one piece, apart from some accessories such as the hands that support the weapons, the sword, the skulls, and the fur cape. The breakdown of parts, eleven in all, is excellent and makes the painting easier, they are no casting lines to clean up and the joints are perfect. The resin is also excellent quality.



The resin arms and weapons are quite heavy, so it's a good idea to insert some steel pins to secure the joints to the torso.



The sculpting and casting is beautifully done on this piece from BlackSun Miniatures and a coat of Black Primer shows it off.



4



An initial shading with the airbrush, transitioning from white, through various greys, to black, defined the basic areas of the piece.

Planning, Preparation and First Steps

As I usually do before I start painting, I study the piece closely and plan how I will progress through the project, so as to avoid making mistakes further down the road. I assembled the various pieces without glue, to test the fit and to see if the piece can be painted as one. In fact, it's a good idea to immediately identify any recesses that would be difficult to reach with the brush once the piece was assembled.

So with careful initial planning it is possible to move on to the next phases of the work. I always begin by giving the piece a short wash with warm water and washing-up liquid, which cleans the resin surface and helps improve the grip of the primer. I opted to pin with metal wire both arms as the weapons are quite heavy. Before moving on to the primer, I protected the surfaces that would be glued with liquid mask.

I decided on a black primer, which would help me in the subsequent painting stages. With the airbrush I then created three large macro areas: one at the top with white, one in the middle with gray and one from the bottom in black, all acrylic colors. In this way I already have a sketch of the ambient lights and their shadows.

'The idea of Object Source Lighting is to paint a figure in such a way as if one or more imaginary light sources are shining on the subject.'

► Object Source Lighting

Before detailing the various steps of painting, let's spend a few words on this technique. Object Source Lighting or OSL consists in painting the piece as if it were illuminated by one or more light sources other than the classic 'zenithal lighting' where the 'light' comes from an imaginary overhead source. In this case it would perhaps be more correct to speak of the 'Lighting Effect' since the light source(s) are not in the scene. There are no particular constraints, so let your imagination run wild, yet the important thing is to adhere to some fundamental rules. Remember, light always travels in straight lines and never curves (therefore objects are illuminated directly); the illuminated areas must always be brighter than the surrounding areas and that the object that illuminates must necessarily be brighter than the rest; the colour of the illuminated areas will be influenced both by the ambient light and the

alternative light source. We must also study how materials behave according to the type of lighting chosen

5



The first airbrushed coat of Liquitex Turquoise Ink mimicked the appearance of moonlight falling across Razgor's body.

(for example, metals are very reflective). Finally, something that may seem trivial, but is important: we must remember that the further you move away from the light source, the more its power will weaken, just try it at home, in the dark with a candle light for example.

Before I began to paint in earnest I searched online for some photos and tutorials of examples, and found inspiration in the splendid works of master painters such as Roman Gruba and Kiril Kanaev. The effect I was looking for was a double source of lighting, as already mentioned: a more general, environmental one, provided by moonlight; the other more limited in space, but more intense and direct, just like a light coming from a bonfire. The

6



The areas defined by the airbrush were then further refined and accentuated with a brush.

idea was therefore to have an almost single-colour piece, set at night, with large areas softly illuminated by a soft bluish light, with other large areas in the dark (but still highlighted with small touches of colour), and a fairly restricted area in stark contrast, both tonal and chromatic, illuminated by fire.

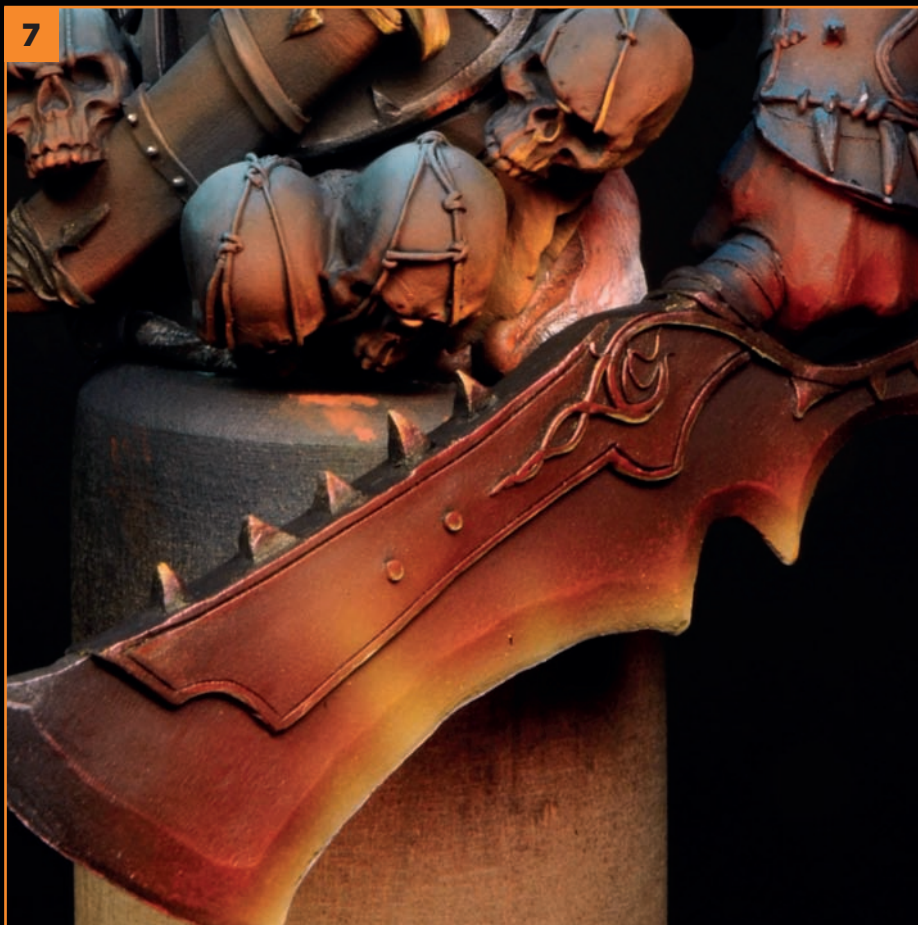
I decided to exploit the lower right part of the orc for the most dramatic lighting, thanks also to the large sword in the foreground. Once again, careful planning is very important before putting your hand to the brushes. To help me do this I again searched the Internet for reference photos of objects at night, in the light of the moon or illuminated by fire, to observe and study how light behaves in these cases.

Painting

I started with an airbrush laying down the main light source on the subject, an ambient light such as that provided by moonlight. For this I used Liquitex

Ink Turquoise. And, again using an airbrush, I simulated the light coming off the fire from below, this time with Naphthol Crimson and Red oxide Liquitex ink. I added a bit of Red Crimson Scalecolor

Artist to make the paint slightly more opaque and full-bodied. For these two steps it's not necessary to be precise; it's only a sketch of what will come later, and serves to give a first approach to the actual painting. So with this done,



The second stage of airbrushing defined the imaginary firelight falling on the warrior's sword.

I picked up my brushes and prepared a palette from Liquitex Turquoise ink, Prussian Blue, Black and White from Scalecolor Artist. With this I went to work, using thinned glazes, on all areas not affected by the light of the fire. To



My 'wet palette', showing how I blended the colours to show the transitions from one light source to the other.

vary the tones a little, I added the base colour of the material to be painted to this mix. For example, for the various laces I added a brown, therefore leaving everything in the same shade, but slightly varying the colour to differentiate the different areas and materials.

The was time-consuming work, simply because the bust is big and is very detailed, but it's worth it in the end. On some areas I added a more marked light/shadow effect, while on others I was more subtle. I did this to vary the final appearance more and make it more interestin to the viewer.

At this point, I moved to my 'Firelight' palette: Crimson, Aldebaran Red and Mars Orange from Scalecolor and Basic Yellow by Andrea Color. At this point it's important, on the palette, to also create a transition zone, which will serve to paint all those areas where the two sources of illumination meet. As you can see, the colours used for the light of the fire are very saturated and bright, to show how intensely the light of the fire reflects. I then followed this as before with glazes in the areas concerned, trying to create a 'light



As I started work with the brushes, I constantly angled the figure to look at it from the direction of the light source to ensure that the highlights and shadows were falling naturally.

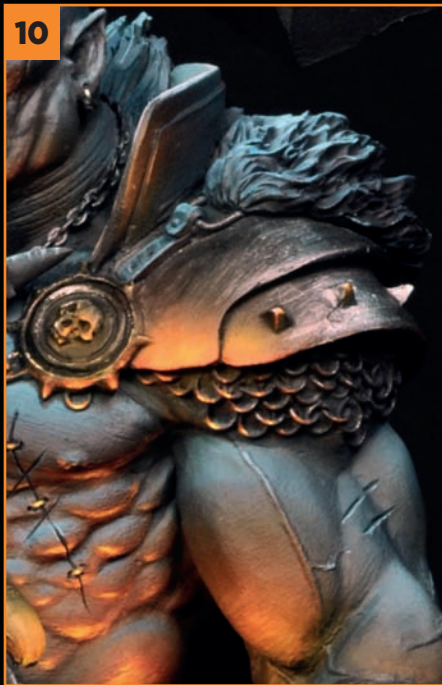
► design' imagining how the light of a bonfire would play on Razgor.

A little trick that helped me in this phase involved turning the piece and looking at it from the point from which my imaginary light originates; in this way you can see if the painting of corresponds to the linear direction of the light. The final phase involved the airbrush again, this time softening some of the stronger contrasts and accentuating some of the highlights.

Metals

At the beginning I had imagined painting the metal parts of the figure in a different way. However, as the project progressed I changed my mind. I decided to use true metal technique, which I prefer to the 'non-metallic metal' method. For this part of the project I used Scalecolor's metallic paints, starting from a very dark base and then progressing towards the lighter shades in a very

10



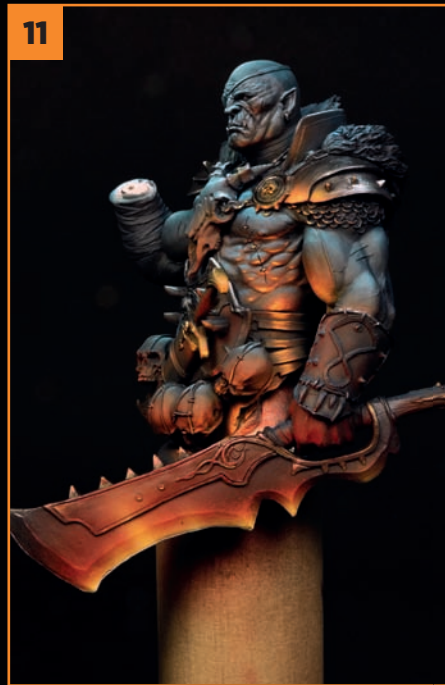
With the main parts of the figure complete, I turned my attention to the metal areas, using Scalecolor's metallic paints for a real metal effect.

gradual way, up to the very brightest highlights in a very few areas. This is because metals with this type of lights reflect a lot, but never as much as in broad daylight, and only in limited areas. For weathering, I applied several washes using sepia, black and brown. A separate word about the sword: here I wanted to take a slightly different route, that is a metal base, followed by the reflections of firelights applied using the airbrush with the same colours as in the previous palette, while creating some intense reflections with yellow.

Final Thoughts

With this all done, it was time to assemble the finished piece and attached the figure to its base with some pins. At this point, it's also worth leaving the piece for a day or so and then coming back to paint those last little details and refine the final appearance to your satisfaction. This project was quite a challenge for me. It was the first time I had dealt with this Object Source

11



Here you can see the use of yellow to mimic the reflection of the dancing flames on the sword's blade.

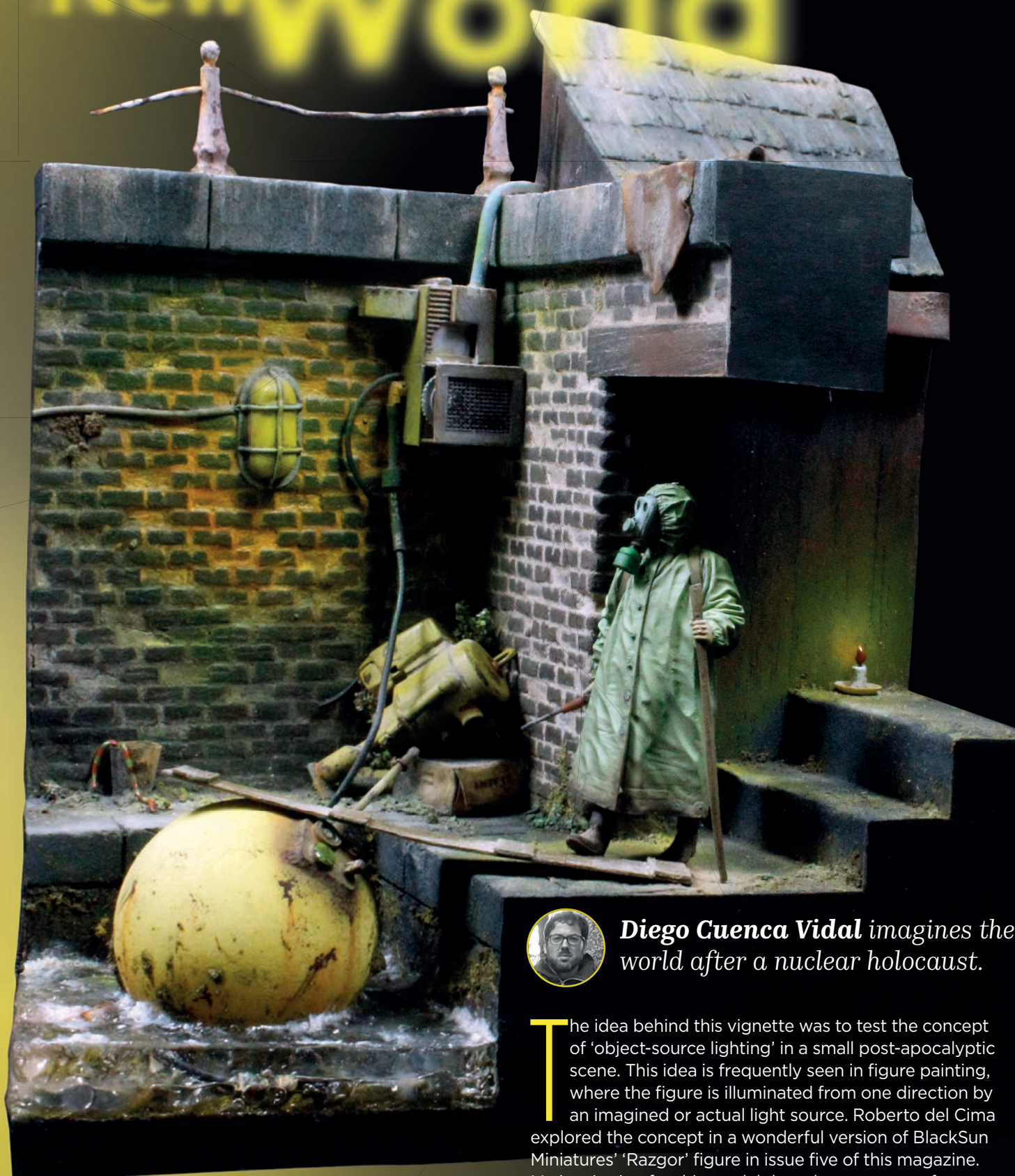
Lighting technique in quite such an involved way and it required several hours of study and planning. But I have to say it was lot of fun and certainly different from the usual zenithal-light technique. I would urge you to experiment and try new things in every piece you paint. You will be surprised. Give it a go! ■



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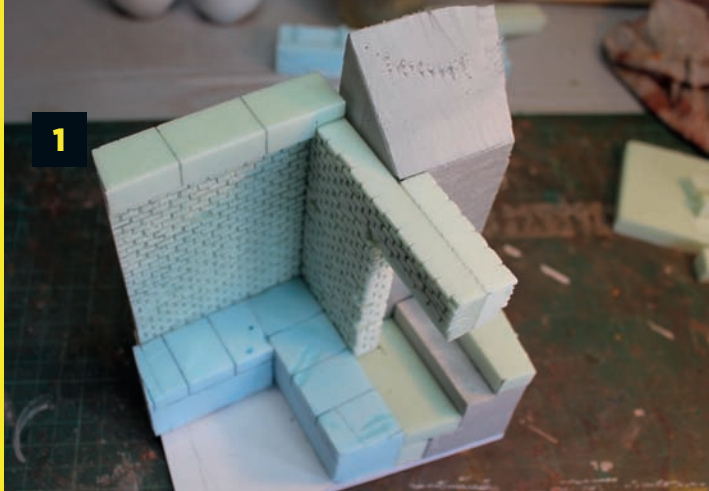
BlackSun Miniatures 1/12 'Razgor the Warbringer'. See www.blacksunminiatures.co.uk for further details.

Exploring the New World



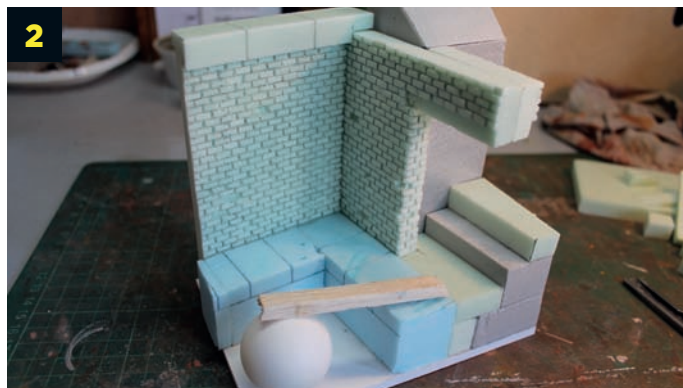
Diego Cuenca Vidal imagines the world after a nuclear holocaust.

The idea behind this vignette was to test the concept of 'object-source lighting' in a small post-apocalyptic scene. This idea is frequently seen in figure painting, where the figure is illuminated from one direction by an imagined or actual light source. Roberto del Cima explored the concept in a wonderful version of BlackSun Miniatures' 'Razgor' figure in issue five of this magazine. My inspiration for this model though was a scene from the book *The Rise of Fantasy* by Juan José Barrena where a candle illuminated part of the interior of a car. >



1

The basic shape of the vignette was roughed out from pieces of polystyrene.



2

The position of the figure and the drone were tried and tested.



3

Once the position of the buildings was fixed, I applied the AK Interactive Corrosion Texture to the sea floor.

- With this idea in mind and knowing that I wanted to make a post-apocalyptic scene, I determined that the vignette should feature the following:
- it would take place in a sewer or somewhere similar;
 - it would include a 'Stalker'-type figure;
 - it would include various types of materials, such as concrete, brick and wood, as well as a body of water;
 - it would be painted in very dark tones to simulate a night scene;
 - and include a light sources to illuminate the scene.



4

The tiles on the roof were made from balsa wood, roughened with a wire brush.

The vignette is divided into two areas: the one on the right, narrower, illuminated by a candle and with a predominance of wood, where the roof of the house looms large; and the area on the left, entered through an opening or door in





the wall that divides the two areas. The area on the left is much larger, with more depth and three distinct levels: the one closest to the viewer, the water; the sidewalk area; and the highest and most remote, the upper part of the wall with the broken railing and the bushes in the background. Concrete, and especially brick, predominate in this last area, which is illuminated by an industrial-type emergency light.

The central element of this area, and of the entire vignette, is the figure of the Stalker, who is preparing to climb a plank supported by a drone that has been dropped in the water. The idea is that these two elements, the drone and the figure, fill the viewer's eye, both due to their central position and proximity to the viewer and their light colours, that stand out against the dark background.

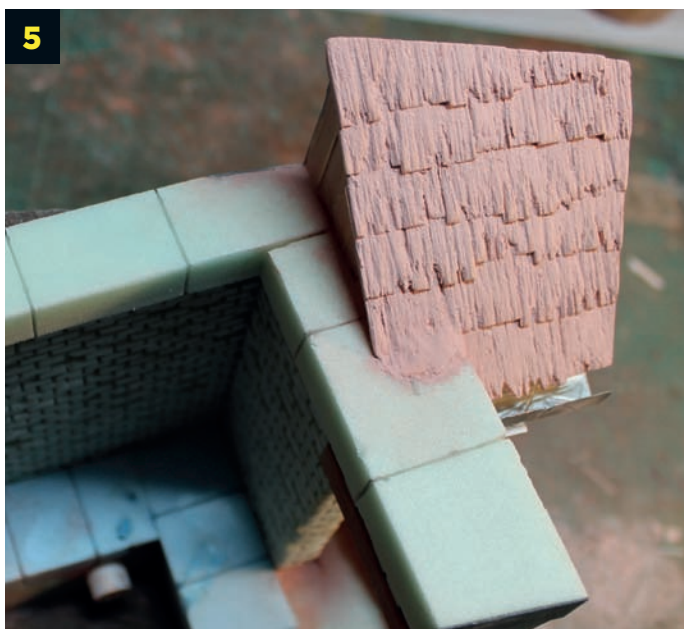
Constructing the Vignette

The principal material used for constructing the vignette was polystyrene insulation board, which is easy to cut and shape. The main drawback in using this material is the need



to be very careful when using solvents for subsequent weathering as they can melt the polystyrene. It's possible to protect the polystyrene with paint or varnishes, but better still to use acrylic weathering products.

For this project I used three types of polystyrene, with differing densities, with the idea of seeing the small differences that could exist between each one. For the general structure of the wooden house I used a grey polystyrene, which I personally found more difficult to work with, especially on the details. For the sidewalks at the bottom I used a blue polystyrene and for the brick walls a green one. In reality there was hardly any difference when cutting, carving or sanding these last two. For the wooden façade I used the miniature wooden planks used in ship modelling and for the wooden tiles, balsa wood textured with a stiff wire brush. The guttering was made from tin foil.



The tiling on top of the walls was covered with DasPronto clay diluted with water and white glue.



The gutter was made from tin foil.



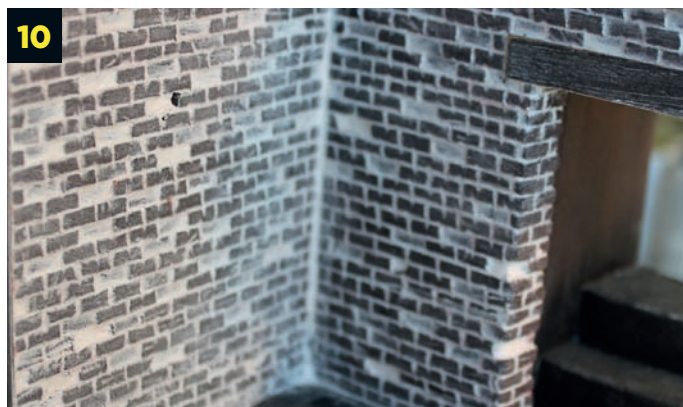
The groundwork was airbrushed with a mixture of Black and Ammo's Russian Brown.



The brickwork was then refined with a mixture of Black and Hull Red.



Plaster was then smeared over the brickwork with a spatula...



...and wiped off with a damp cloth to make a realistic representation of the mortar between each brick.



Various colours were used to pick out individual bricks, giving it a much more realistic and random feel.



An overall wash of diluted Vallejo Light Brown Thick Mud and brown and black acrylic paint was all that was necessary to weather the brickwork.

➤ Adding the Details

In this vignette, the many details help create the desired effect by telling the story that links the main elements (the drone and figure) to the background (the buildings). The spherical drone was simply the plastic ball from a roll-on deodorant embellished with a few leftover pieces from old plastic kits. Both the old, abandoned robot and the mechanical wall installation were made from leftover kit parts. The emergency light was part of a blister pack originally containing tablets to which I added the bars using thin wire. The railing was made up of lead wire and the parts from a MiniArt plastic kit. The candle in the background was made from two-part epoxy putty, with a thin wire running through it for the wick, around which a putty flame was formed.

Painting, Vegetation and Water

Since this was intended to be a night scene, all the colours would need to be muted. To accentuate and facilitate this,

I airbrushed a mixture of Vallejo Black 71.057 and AMMO Russian Brown A.MIG.020 as a primer across the whole vignette. I then painted the brickwork with a mixture of Vallejo Black 70.950 and Hull Red 70.985. When this was dry I applied a coat of plaster, which I then wiped off with a damp cloth, leaving the plaster as a mortar between the bricks. To give some variety I picked out some bricks in varying mixtures of Black, English Uniform 70.921 and Orange Red 70.910, adding shadows and highlights with various proportions of the three colours. The white plaster was then coloured with a general wash of Vallejo Light Brown Thick Mud 26.810 and some diluted light brown and black acrylic paint.



13 The concrete areas were airbrushed in predominantly bluish shades to make a contrast to the brickwork.

The concrete areas were airbrushed with a mixture of Black, AK Interactive Dark Sea Blue AK3103 and Scale Color Artic Blue SC05, and the corresponding shadows and highlights made by varying the proportion of these colours.

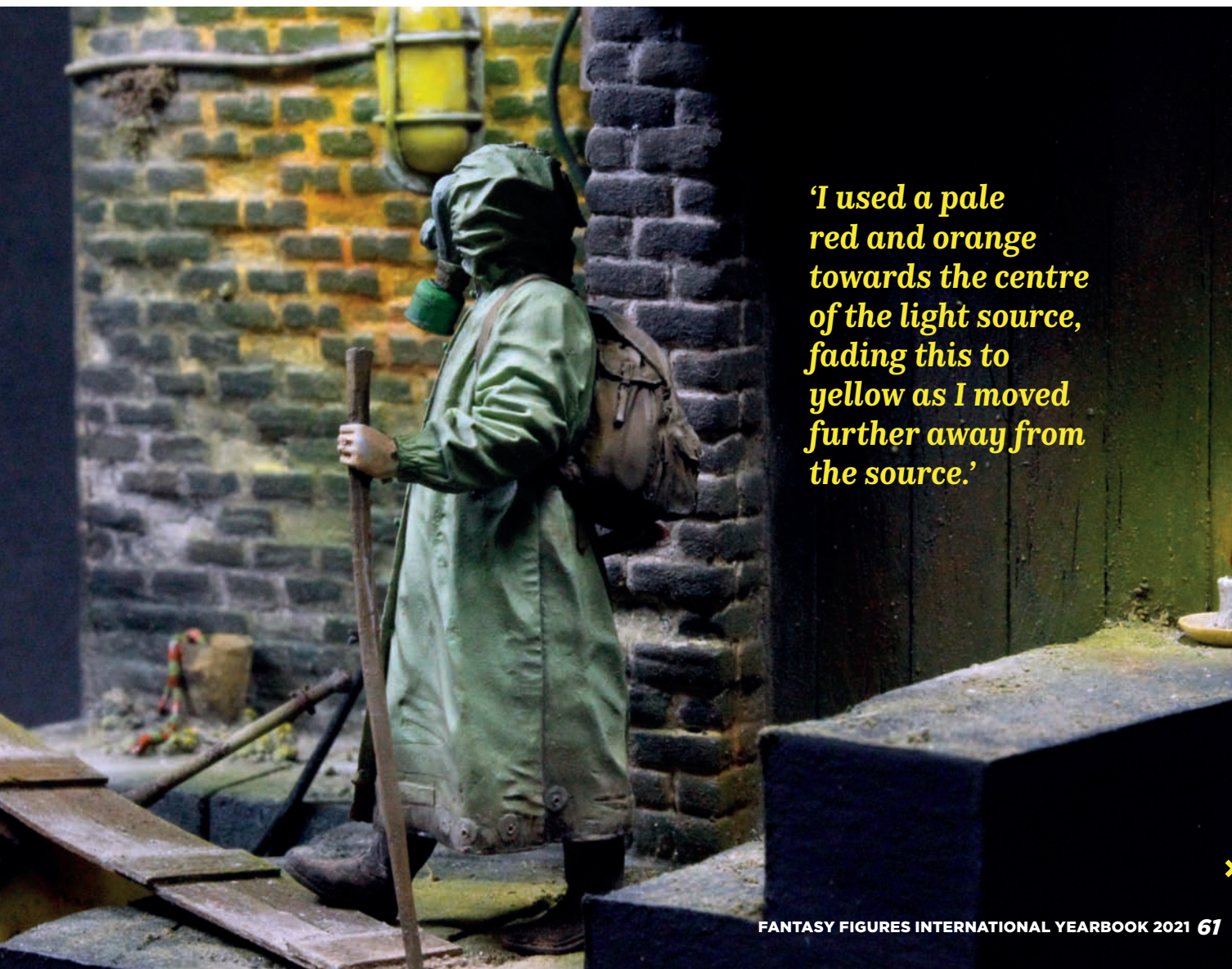
I applied a dark brown base to the roof with a brush, lightening it towards the top with ochre, yellow and even white tones and darkening towards the bottom with black. To highlight the details of the tiles, I applied a wash of black oil paints and vertical streaks of water and dirt were painted with dirty white and orange paint blended with white spirit. Finally, I applied pigments to specific areas of the roof. On the upper ledge of the wall, which is made of concrete blocks, I made vertical lines with white and



14 As you can see from this image, the contrast was very pleasing.

light grey oil paint to replicate runs of dirty water and bird droppings, blending the oil paint into the surface with White Spirit. The wooden walls of the building on the right were painted with a mixture of dark brown and red, adding some very subtle highlights with red and darkening the corners with more black.

I used various techniques to simulate the effects of the light sources, alternating between acrylics applied with the airbrush and oil paints. I used a pale red and orange towards the centre of the light source, fading this to yellow as I moved further away from the source. To suggest the projection of light on other walls or objects, I simply airbrushed very dilute light yellow in the direction that the light fell.



'I used a pale red and orange towards the centre of the light source, fading this to yellow as I moved further away from the source.'

15



Here you can see the highlights (using white) and the shadows (using Ochre) applied to the otherwise monotone drone.

17



A detailed image of the scratches and rust on the body of the drone.

- ▶ Since I wanted the drone bobbing in the water to stand out, I placed it in the foreground and deliberately painted it in a light colour in contrast to the dark background. I chose Scale Color Tenere Yellow SC10 as a base, which I lightened with Hataka Lemon Yellow A290 and white. It was then shaded with Vallejo Transparent Yellow 70.937 and English Uniform. All this was done with the airbrush to make the transitions as smooth as possible. The details were then painted in their specific colour, and I also added some rust chips with a sponge. From these chips, I also added some rust stains, thinking carefully about their direction. Once dry, I applied an overall dark brown oil paint washes, adding some black around the details. Finally, I spattered mud in the support area of the drone using a brush and air blown through my airbrush.

16



Vallejo's Transparent Water Texture formed the basis of the water that the drone floated in

18



The application of various mosses and lichen to replicate the limited vegetation evident in the aftermath of the Apocalypse.

Making the Water

The base of the area to be covered by water was given a coat of AK Interactive's Corrosion Texture AK8040 and painted dark brown. I then added mud and various objects, such as boxes, a gun, pieces of magazine and plates. On top of all this, I poured the Creative Green Stuff World Transparent UV Resin 2020, which was instantly set with the ultraviolet light flashlight. I then applied several coats of Vallejo Transparent Water Texture 26.201 to form the water ripples. Finally, I created some areas of foam with Vallejo Snow 73.820. Once dry, I applied a gloss varnish across the entire surface of the water.





Evolution Miniatures' figure was a joy to paint and was the perfect centrepiece for this little scene.

The mud at the waterside was created using a mixture of sand, potting soil, some small cut pieces of sea grass, pigments, glue and water. I used the same pigments throughout the vignette, essentially various browns mixed with grey. In order to break up the monotony in some areas of the vignette, I strategically placed some objects or additional accumulations of dirt or mud. In this case, I added a piece of cloth over the arch that connects the two parts of the vignette, painting it in dark shades so that it did not stand out too much.



To maintain the appearance of a post-apocalyptic landscape, I added very little vegetation. I placed some Green Tall 'Tall Shrubbery' branches behind the fallen robot, and glued some moss from the Action Press 'Landscapes in Detail' range to some parts of the walls (mainly under the ledge). The moss was washed with black and dark brown oil paint to add some shadows. In the upper part of the wall and next to the wooden roof, I added some accumulations of leaves and plant remains made from crushed oregano and pigments.

The Stalker

The figure was from the Evolution Miniatures extensive range of post-apocalyptic figures. The figure was beautifully sculpted and cast with no mould lines and I assembled and painted it without modification. It was first painted with an airbrush, using a range of acrylic paints from AMMO, Vallejo and Scale Color, and then the shadows and highlights added with a brush. The base shade for the gas cape was a mixture of Scale Color Spring Green SC-47, AMMO Protective Green A.MIG.023 and Vallejo Artic Blue 71.071, shaded with black and red brown and highlighted with Scale Color Tenere Yellow and Spring Green. The backpack was simply Vallejo English Uniform and Scale Color Artic Blue, highlighted with Khaki and shaded with Black added to the base colour. I weathered the lower areas of the gas cape and the figure's boots with oil paints and pigments. ■



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Evolution Miniatures
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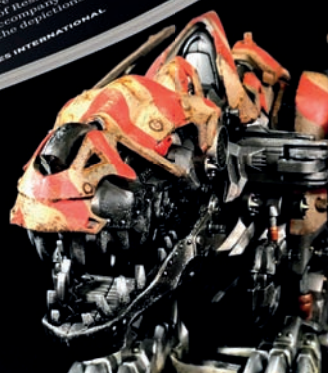
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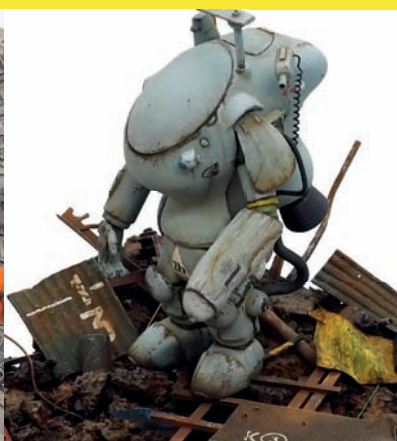
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José Luis Lopez builds
a Star Wars classic

First seen in 'The Return of the Jedi' (1983), during an unforgettable chase on the forest moon of Endor, the Aratech 74-Z Speeder Bike soon became an immediate favourite among Star Wars followers, including me! I've even got the original Kenner toy. Later, we discovered that the speeder bike was previously used during the Clone Wars as well as among Jedi Knights and Bounty Hunters, but that is another story from 'A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...'

According to the book 'Star Wars - The Blueprints', Fred Hole's drawings of the 'Scooter', as it was initially called, were based on designs by ILM artist and designer Nilo-Romis Janero. In the first drawings, the speeder bike had camouflage and a more bulbous front. A total of six speeder bikes were made for filming the movie but just two were required for operation in front of the blue screen. They measured approximately 2.70m in length and were equipped with several

suspension points for the movie, as well as a removable engine cover. The most exciting scenes were filmed using these props and a blue screen. The point-of-view shots for the speeder bike sequence were achieved by having a camera operator walk through the Crescent City forest (California) at normal speed with a camera filming at one frame per second. When the footage was played back at twenty four frames per second, it gave the appearance of flying through the forest at high speeds.

Designed as a fast and high maneuverability reconnaissance unit (although somewhat unstable), this bike could reach up

to 500km/h, but offered the rider no protection whatsoever from impact or attack. Armed with a ventral laser cannon and with a communication jamming device, 74-Z Speeder Bikes were widely used by the Empire for scouting, reconnaissance missions and surveillance of their strategic bases and installations.





The Kit

Many years ago, MPC released a nice kit (at least for the era it was released), much loved by Star Wars modellers and, for many years, it was the only way to model this subject besides a full scratch-build. However, in 2015, the Japanese brand Bandai released a 1/12 model kit of this mythical bike including a multi-pose Scout Trooper figure, and that is the kit I used for this article.

The quality of the kit is exactly what we have come to expect from Bandai: multi-colour sprues that allow you to achieve a good looking result without any assembly issues. So perfect, in

fact, that it doesn't need glue - it is a snap fit kit!. Don't be fooled though, Bandai kits are not cheap toys and have a wonderful level of detail. They are crispy moulded with almost no seams or flaws. A word of advice though, this is a complex kit to paint and careful planning of sub-assemblies is required to make the task easier. I am unsure how well the delicate parts and snap-fit joints would survive if disassembled for painting.

As you can see in the picture **(photo 1)**, I painted the different parts separately and only fully assembled everything during the weathering stage. Even though I was eager to see it in one piece and might have let my imagination run away a little bit, when it was!

Painting the Speeder Bike

As I said before, it is very important to paint the different parts separately: hull, engine, seat, rear bag and stabilizer. Depending on the part, I applied different techniques and paints. But, first of all, I applied an even coat of Tamiya Primer all over the pieces **(2)**. During this step, you should take care to eliminate dust or any trace of orange-peel effect you find on the primed parts, with special attention to metallic parts.



3



4



5



I then airbrushed a coat of gloss black from Alclad before applying any metallic colour. This is a really important point or your Alclad paints will not look as vibrant as they should be. After applying the gloss black layer, do not forget to polish it before painting. You have to make sure it is dust-free and 100% smooth (3). Metallic paints are very unforgiving and need faultless application to achieve convincing results. For painting the engine and various other metallic parts, I started by applying a coat of Dark Aluminum all over them. Adding Polished Aluminum to the initial colour, I started to highlight different areas to create contrast. This is the foundation of my painting style: creating contrast (4 & 5).

6



7



Contrast is, in my opinion, the key to achieving a good result when you're painting and weathering a kit, but, when I say contrast I'm not talking about random shades or overdone modulation. I'm talking about carefully chosen variations of the same colour for a realistic but noticeable enhancing effect. For example: if you mix Dark Aluminum with increasing amounts of light Polished Aluminum, you will have a nice palette of metallic colours to use on different parts and accentuate the details of each piece. Later, you'll have time to blend effects together with oils and washes if the contrast needs bringing down. However, it is important to create all your basic contrast effects at this initial stage as it is difficult



to add more when you are further along the painting and weathering process. Using AMMO metallic paints and a fine brush, I painted all the small details of the engine area for maximum contrast (6). When I was happy with the result, I sealed it all using Tamiya Clear (X-22) mixed with X20A Thinner from the same brand. For the body work, I airbrushed Polished Aluminum from Alclad and created contrast, this time using Dark Aluminum. Again, I protected my work with a nice coat of varnish (7).

I then applied a generous coat of AMMO's Chipping Fluid over the body work (8). For the base colour of the speeder

bike, I used a mix of AMMO's Earth Brown, Olive Drab and Black airbrushed over the pieces without thinner (9). Once the paint was visually dry, using a brush dampened in plain water, I started to carefully wear away the red brown colour until the Aluminum began to show through (10). I added heavier scratches, chips and scuff marks using dampened sandpaper in some areas, simply to represent the continuous wear of the Trooper mounting/dismounting. Some blaster impacts were also added, using an AMMO tool intended just for this purpose (11 & 12).

11



12



13



15



➤ After deliberation, I decided to rework some areas where I felt the chipping wasn't quite how I wanted to look. Using some of the Red Brown mix, areas of excessive chipping were hidden, whilst other areas received the full treatment with a fresh layer of Chipping Fluid before trying again. This is sometimes the reality of using techniques that involve an element of chance or randomness, as opposed to brush-painting chips by hand (13).

Once I was happy with the result, I added some variation to the body colour, by mixing in some additional black, thereby creating a more attractive colour variation on the body of the bike. Then, I started to paint details such as the console, the seat and the rear bag. There are many pictures of the speeder bike on the internet, but not too many of the console. Only the big red button was discernible in photographs, so I used artistic license for the rest of the controls. The seat and bag were painted using Tamiya acrylics. For the seat, I started airbrushing a really dark grey colour over it (90% Black XF-1, 10% White XF-2). Adding some pink (Red and White) to the mix, I added some highlights to the seat details. Then, with a light grey marker, I painted a rough texture on the seat and sealed it with matt varnish from Marabú, I applied and blended some Sepia colour oil dots to create a sense of used and dirty leather on the sides and center of the seat (14 & 15).

17



14



16



The bag was painted following a typical figure painting procedure with the airbrush. I started with a general base colour made with a mix of Brown (XF-72) and Black (XF-1). Then, I started to highlight the folds of the bag adding some Buff to the mix (XF-57) as well as Yellow and White. Final highlights were made with very diluted paint. The straps were painted with Vallejo Leather (70871), with some Light Orange (70911) for the highlights (16). I sealed it all with a nice coat of Clear. This avoids reactivating the Chipping Fluid again in later steps, and protects the various layers of paint from aggressive weathering agents like oils and washes. Washes also flow more smoothly over a sealed surface.

For washes, I used AMMO Wash for Spaceships. I think this colour is a real asset for Sci-Fi modelers as it really matches with the dirt colour we're used to seeing in the movies. Starship Filth and Grime are other colours from AMMO that are well suited for weathering spaceship (17). Using a fine brush, I applied the wash over various surfaces and let it run along the panel lines and recesses of the kit - with an emphasis on fine details and rivets. After letting it dry for 5 to 10 minutes, any excess can gently be removed or blended. Washes can also create nice streaking and dirt effects! (90% of my most successful weathering effects are 'happy accidents' and it can be hard to reproduce them on other model kits!)

18





Once dry, I applied a coat of Marabu matt varnish over the kit except for the metallic areas of the engines (18).

Using the well-known oil dot technique – simply adding small dots of various oil paints and blending them into the surface with a brush moistened in thinner – I added some depth and a faded appearance to the speeder's surface. I used the fantastic 'Oilbrushers' from AMMO for this - dabbing small spots of colour over the model. After a few minutes they are dry enough to blend them into the surface with a soft medium brush without coming off entirely (19). You'll see how the colour of the surface changes as each small dot acts as a colour filter. For the streaking, dirt, rain marks and so on, I used AMMO Streaking Oilbrushers in various suitable colours (20). Grease, dirt accumulations, engine grime, all these effects were made with oils using the dot technique (21).

As I wanted to weather my speeder bike as if in a desert area (not the forests of Endor), I decided to add some dust. At this point, it is very important to check real references and just apply dust where it naturally accumulates: such as on

horizontal surfaces. So, I masked vertical or sloped areas with tape and just applied a thin layer of dust using Tamiya Buff XF-57 lightened with a little bit of White (using my airbrush and lacquer thinner for this task) (22). When dry, I sealed it with Marabu matt varnish and recreated some mud effects, once again using the oil dot technique and some Dark Brown colour, for realism.

Epilogue

Painting and weathering a Sci-Fi model like this is not so different from painting an AFV except perhaps for the metallic parts. It is something well within the reach of most modellers. Whatever you choose to model, it is important to create a believable sense of scale and contrast through effective painting techniques. Sci-Fi subjects do offer far more creative freedom than factual subjects though, so don't be shy of exploring various techniques and creating your own unique effects! ■



STEP BY STEP

How To Use

by Don Suratos



Vallejo Weathering Effects

The innovative range of Weathering Effects offers the modeler a new medium for depicting the effects of exposure to weather and extreme climates on vehicles and armor. The references of the range are formulated with permanent pigments and water based acrylic resins, and offer a great variety of scenic possibilities such as the creation of spilled fuel, engine grime, lichen and humidity, crushed grass, mud splashes and fuel stains.



AV Weathering Effects come in two categories -Environment and Engine - but you can use them as you see fit.



AV Mecha Satin Varnish (69.703), thinned 2 parts varnish to 1 part thinner, was hand painted over the toy. Let this dry for 10 to 20 minutes.



AV Model Wash Light Grey (76.515) and Dark Grey (76.517) were applied along the panel lines and crevices. You may thin with water, thinner or mediums for more subtle effects.



Clean excess Model Washes with a wet cotton swab. Water easily cleans even dry washes over Satin or Gloss varnish.



Use a dropper for Weathering Effects paints. You may add a couple of drops of AV Flow Improver to retard the drying time while on the mixing dish.



Oil Stains (73.813), then Wet Effects (73.828) were applied over the lenses, vents and cables.



Diesel Stains (73.816), Streaking Grime (73.824), Rainmarks (73.819) and Engine Grime (73.815) were applied by stippling.



Streaking Grime (73.824) and Rainmarks (73.819) were used for the streaking. These paints create very realistic results.





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Juanjo Domínguez Calvo builds the sublime Bandai AT-ST.

SCOUTING *for trouble*

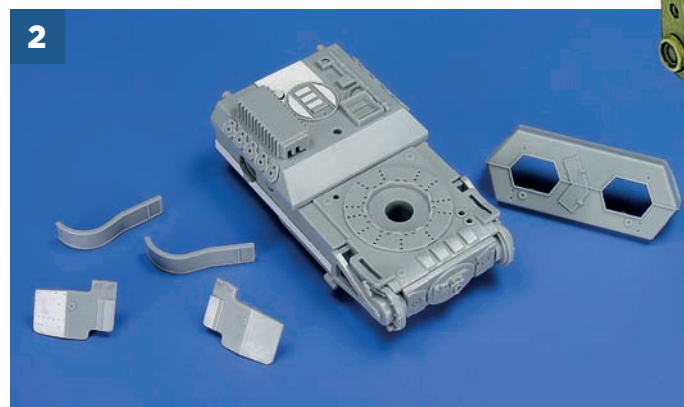
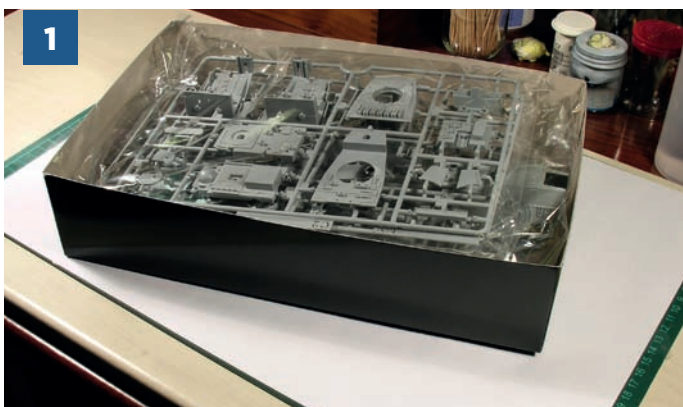


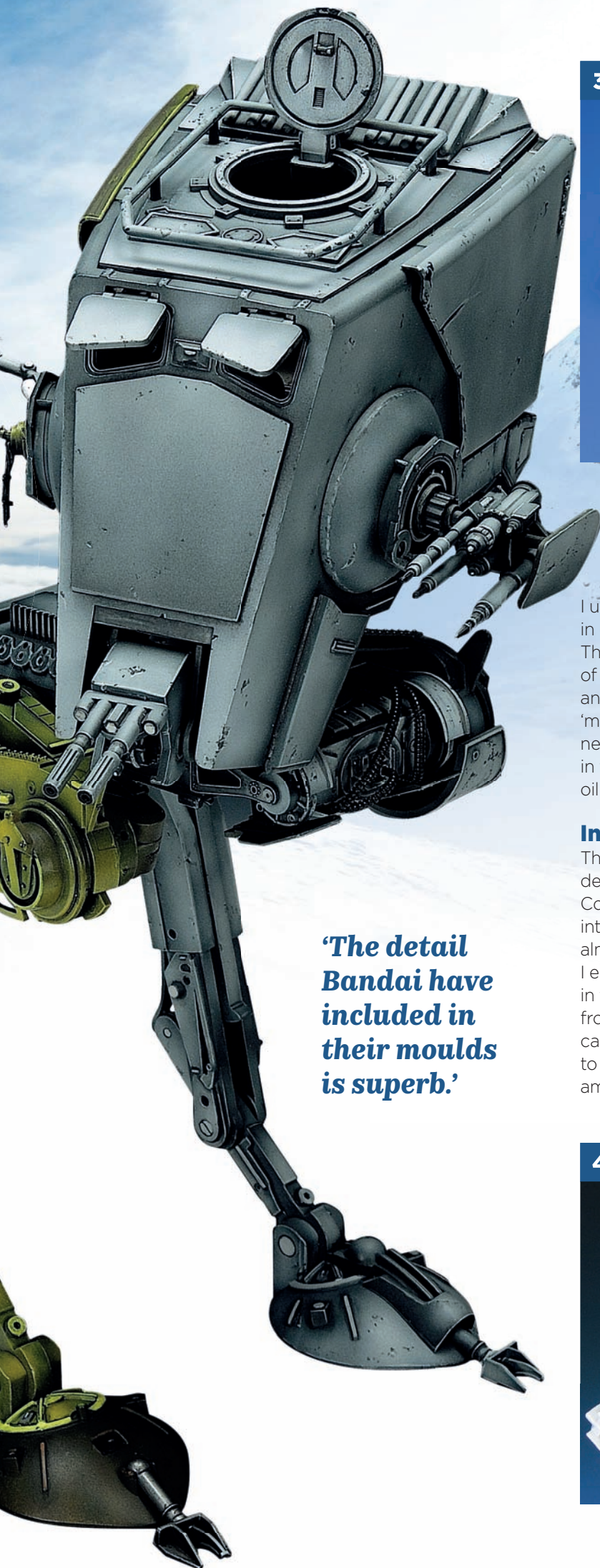
1/48-scale All Terrain Scout Transport (AT-ST) that was seen for the first time, albeit fleetingly, during the Hoth battle in Episode V, 'The Empire Strikes Back'. It is probably best known, however, for its part in the battle on the forest moon of Endor during Episode VI 'Return of the Jedi'.

The Kit

The first thing we observe when opening the box is the large number of sprues it contains; it is quite literally packed to the brim **(photo 1)**. When you have made as many models as I have, there comes a time when you have seen almost everything in terms of kit quality: from the models of Tamiya, in which it seems that if you shake them inside the box they almost assemble themselves, to short-run plastic aircraft kit in which if you manage the landing gear correctly you want to go out and celebrate with a few beers. Well, that being said, the Bandai model plays in another league: it's the first time I have seen a quality injection-moulded kit that does not need glue to join the pieces. Yes, we all know the 'Snap-Tite' style of kits, but they are usually more toys than models, designed for younger hobbyists or for wargamers. This, as I said, has an impressive level of detail. The moulding process is also designed to hide all the inevitable injection mould marks. As if that were not enough, the model

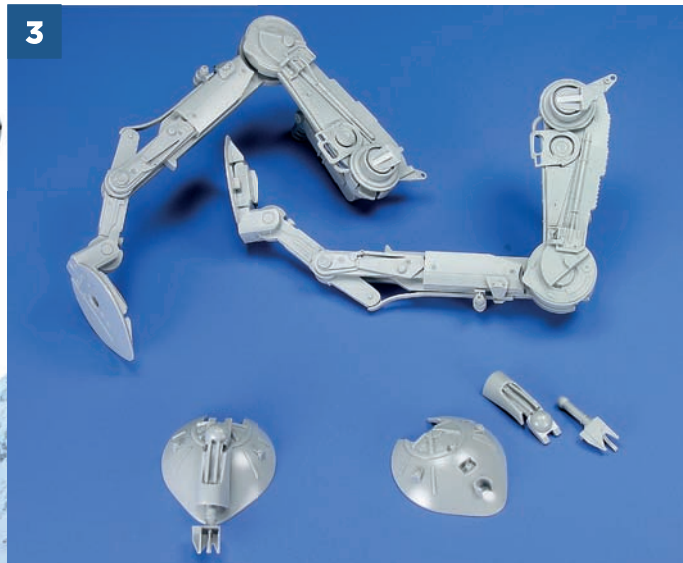
I've always been a fan of Star Wars. I watched the original Episode IV in the cinema, on its opening day, something which now only reveals my age! My love for the Star Wars spaceships, characters, and universe came from the very start of the movie saga. It had been a long time since I made a Sci-Fi subject so I decided to start Bandai's





'The detail Bandai have included in their moulds is superb.'

3



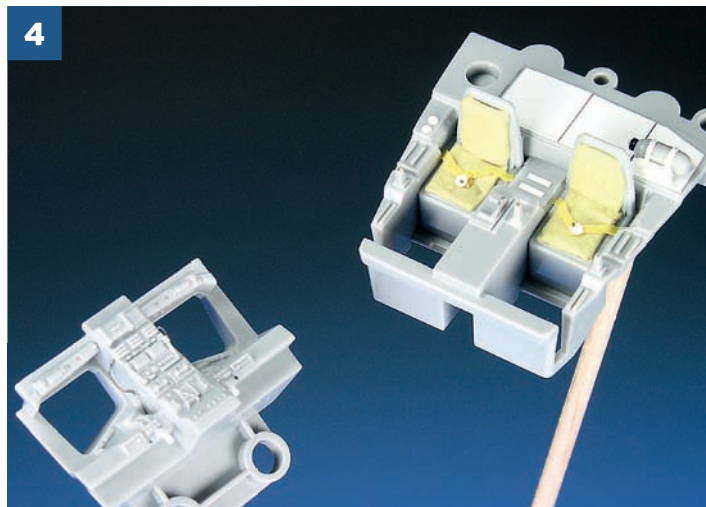
is fully articulated and you can change its position, once finished, without any problem. A 10 out of 10 for Bandai for this one! **(2 & 3)**

To cover the very few joints that were exposed, I used Evergreen plasticard to simulate new details, in order not to have to use putty (photos 3613-3614). There is really very little else to say about the assembly of this excellent kit. All you have to do is follow the clear and complete instruction booklet (in colour) to have our 'mechanical chicken' upright on its hind legs. My only negative concerns the type of plastic Bandai have used in this kit. I found it had a tendency to react adversely to oil paint and aggressive solvents, but more on that later.

Interior

There is little to add to the interior of the AT-ST. The detail Bandai have included in their moulds is superb. Comparing the pieces with the very few photos of the interior of the AT-ST that have been seen in the films almost nothing is missing. For a personal touch, I eliminated the prominent 'connectors' for the crew in the seats and replaced them with padding made from two-part epoxy putty. Also, in the back of the cabin, I covered the floor with Evergreen plastic sheet to simulate the floor plates and added some small amounts of debris **(4)**.

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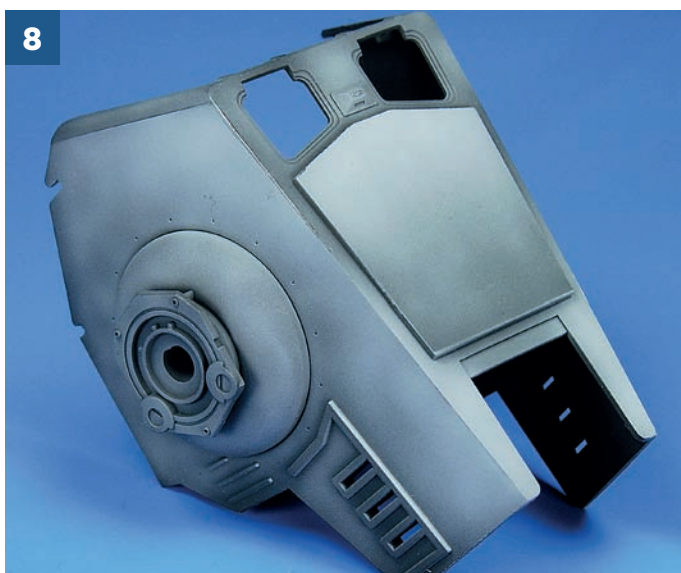
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► It is worthwhile, although soon afterwards it will be only be seen from the outside, to dedicate some time to paint the interior with care. For this, I first airbrushed all the interior with a very dark gray, almost black, and then highlighted it with Gunze's Grey (H307) and Matt White. The details, profiles and washes were applied with a brush using Vallejo acrylics. To give it a little more life, I added pieces of decal simulating indicators, screens, and other instruments and then protected everything with a coat of AMMO's Satin Varnish (5 & 6).

Painting

This is one of those models that while it has very attractive shapes, the painting options are, to say the least, limited. The only known scheme is, of course, Grey. In order not to die of boredom during the painting process, I decided to use modulation – the process of artificially enhancing the contrasts that would be made by light and shadow on the real thing – on all the surfaces to provide more contrast and create a visually more attractive model. I started by airbrushing all the pieces with Tamiya's NATO Black (XF-

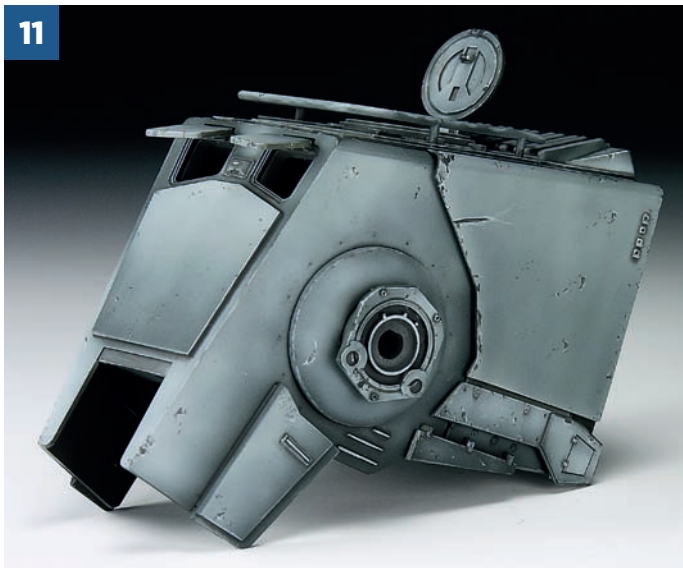
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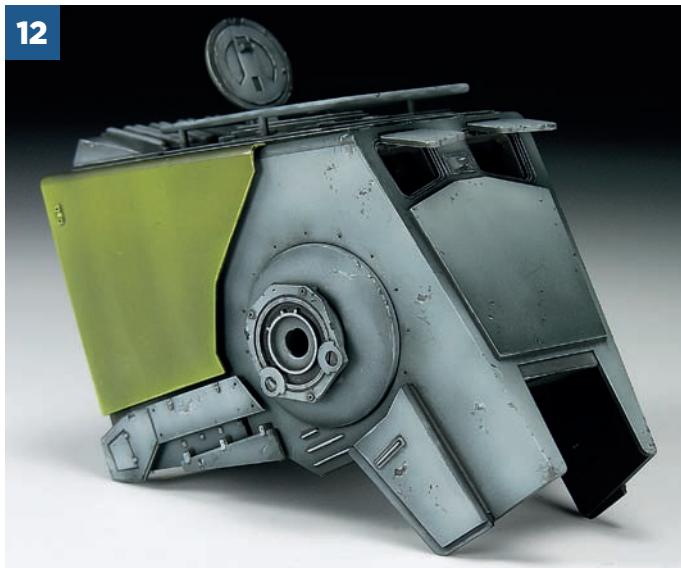
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Sky Grey (70.089). I applied this with a very sharp brush and trying to give the whole an aspect, comic style, with very sharp edges and exaggerated shadows (10). To give the model a suitably worn appearance, I added chips made with a sponge and more Vallejo's German Grey, improving them later with a brush and adding the edges of the chips with Sky Grey (11 & 12).

Primed Leg

Although I was happy with the appearance of the model at this stage, I felt I needed to add something of a personal touch. For that, it occurred to me to paint one of the legs as if it were only primed in green, choosing an 'Interior Green' shade. This is something I've done in other models (even finishing complete models in these primer

14



69) and then modulating, panel by panel, each part of the model with Medium Sea Grey (XF-83) and adding the final highlights with the addition of with Flat White (7 & 8). For those who do not know this technique, the issue is to imagine a different light source for each panel. However unrealistic and artificial it may seem at first, the final result it offers is very attractive, in my opinion. Of course, to do this, adjacent panels have to be masked and it can be complicated if the panels are circular or of 'odd' shapes. In any case, it is much more fun than the pre or post shading following panel lines and gives a suitably dramatic appearance to the model (9).

Shading and Profiling

As I said at the beginning, in this model the use of oil paints to weather was very problematic due to the way they react with the plastic (this is found in many models in fact). As always you have to try to learn something new with each model, at least that is what I try to do, so I decided to apply all the washing with Vallejo's German Grey (70.095). It takes a bit of time and practice to get the washes to be defined and not show drying marks but, once the technique is controlled, the results are very satisfactory. The profiling, adding highlights to the edges of armour panels and the like, was carried out with Vallejo's

15



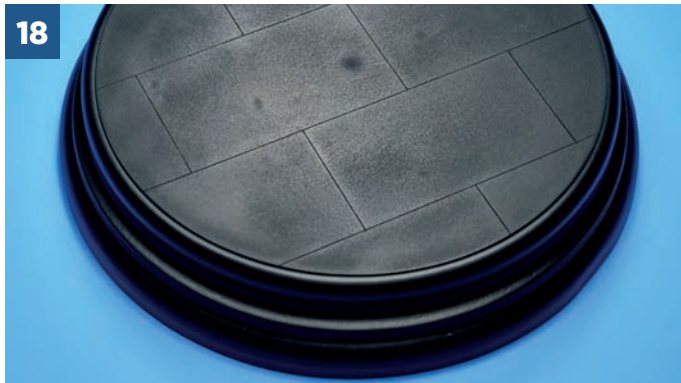
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colour) and it always produces a very striking appearance. To further enhance the idea of a piece that has been replaced, perhaps because of battle damage, I opened up one of the panels of the leg and scratchbuilt that area of the leg (13).

For the primer colour, I wanted to use a colour not used elsewhere on the model, what we might call 'a spot colour'. The procedure followed for the primed pieces was to airbrush with Gunze's Chocolate Brown (H406) and Black and then highlighting with Cream Yellow (H34), Orange Yellow (H24) and Yellow H329, in this order, and always using the modulation technique to contrast the different areas. I again applied a wash with Vallejo's German Grey and added some final highlights with an intense yellow also from Vallejo. As you can see from the pictures, at the end, I was so pleased with the appearance of the primer and ended up painted several pieces on the right side of the model. The 'hoof' of the green leg was painted with a base of Chocolate Brown and Black, and highlighting with Chocolate Brown and Orange (14).

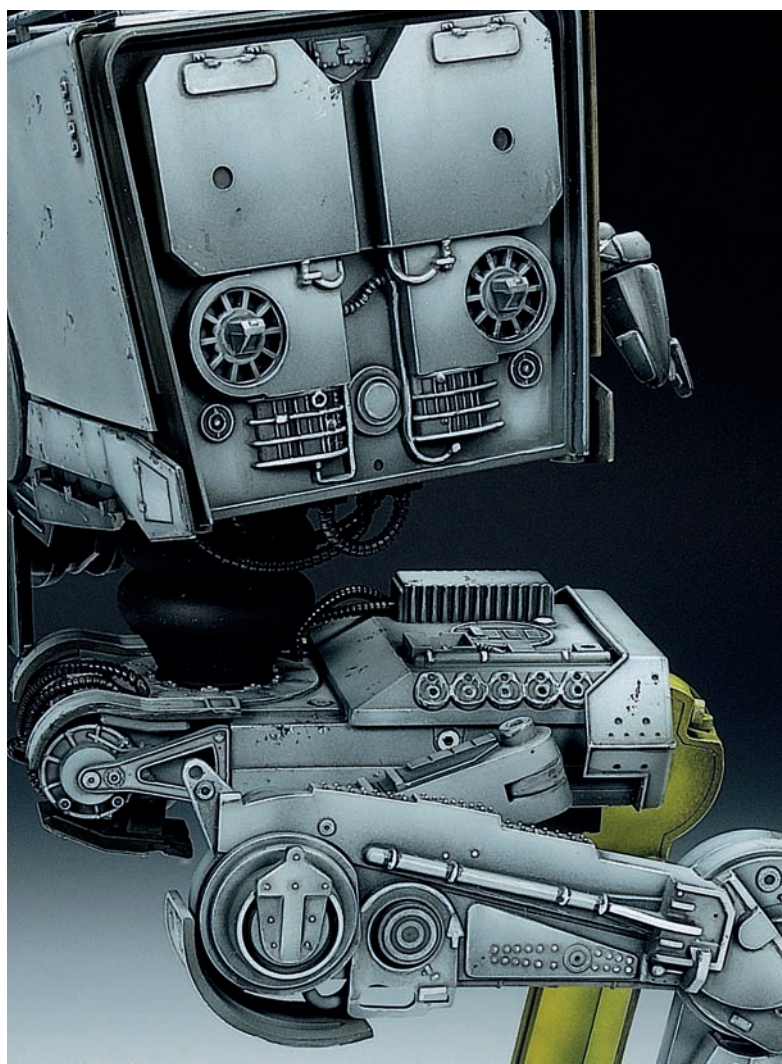
The Droid MAC-444

Taking the idea of a battle-worn AT-ST one step further I built a MAC-444 droid with pieces taken from spares and a little imagination. It is based on the INS-444 window installation droid, sometimes referred to as an installer droid, a fifth-degree installer droid produced by Publictechnic during the time of the Galactic Republic, which has the ability to levitate through repulsors (nothing less!). I wanted the droid's eyes to be the focal point, so I added some circles of metallized red paper cut with a Waldron punch-and-die set (15 & 16).

Stand

Although the kit includes a base simulating typical terrain, with some great connectors for the legs, I preferred to make a small wooden base with a sober black surface

reminiscent of the Death Star. I cut a circle in black plastic and engraved the slabs with a Hasegawa scribe, then I airbrushed with Black Alclad primer (17). I then added some texture with various grades of wet-and-dry paper before finish off with some Vallejo Black Wash to emphasise the texture (18).



'Undead Giant',
a conversion
of the Games
Workshop kit



The work of Chris Clayton needs no introduction from me. His sculpted and converted pieces, beautifully painted, are of the highest standard. I first became aware of how good Chris was when wandering around looking at entries after I had finished judging my assigned class at Euro Militaire in 2008. Scanning the tables, my eye was drawn to 'Giant Killer' a piece that Chris had sculpted. The composition was very effective with the Giant Killer standing on the head of his latest victim. The workmanship was excellent, the realism of the disembodied head uncanny and the detail on the full figure was stunning; however it is the synergy between the head and its executioner that makes this piece for me. Working on two subjects that are, in essence, of a different scale but share the same space, is very problematical but through his skilful application of paint he had tied them together making the whole scene believable.

I met up with Chris at Sale Model Challenge and discussed this article. We both wanted to include thinking and concept when approaching a subject rather than a 'how to' Q & A session. Once home, I pinged some questions over to Chris and he was very generous in giving time to thinking about the answers.

I started off with how Chris got into the figure modelling world.

"I came to figure modelling from two different angles. Seeing a display of historical miniatures from various periods of antiquity in a local model soldier shop and also staring in wonderment at a cabinet of fantasy miniatures

'Bring Down the
Beast', a fully
scratchbuilt
vignette in 1/35
scale



Chris Clayton

Master Craftsman

Robert Lane speaks to one of the biggest names in the hobby.

in a shop selling role playing games. I was relatively young at the time but I knew that these were not toys and I think the duality of the fantastical and the historical caught my imagination and I knew I wanted to be involved somehow. It was a little later before I first started to actively model and paint figures, Citadel Miniatures were the most readily available but also I was converting Airfix multi-pose military figures into fantasy and sci-fi subjects. Reading both White Dwarf and Military Modelling my influences were from both sides, the illustrations and paintings of John Blanche, the exquisitely painted figures of Fraser Grey and the scratch



'Clan Rat', a full scratchbuild in 1/15 scale that Chris completed in 2011.

built figures of Bill Horan. I also used to attend a local annual model show where I met Derek Holmes. He was a huge source of knowledge and taught me a great deal about sculpting figures from scratch."

I was interested in the initial process Chris uses at the beginning of a project.

"Nearly all of my projects begin with a definite mental image of the finished piece. This image is then recorded and expanded upon in one of many sketchbooks I always carry with me. I'll break the image down into why does it look like this, how does this piece of equipment work, what is the background or purpose of this character etc. Then through intense research into materials, armour, artefacts I can support the idea and in most cases, even though it's a fantasy subject, real-world references create a credible character and convey a convincing 'reality'. Once this is done the sculpting/realisation can begin and even throughout this process there may be some minor changes to pose and smaller details or colour and painted finish it will rarely deviate from the original vision."

Chris has sculpted pieces commercially, some for his own purposes. I asked whether working on commercial pieces placed limits on his creativity or freed him up enabling him to focus purely on the sculpting.

"I try not to let working on commercial pieces place any restrictions on the way I approach or create a piece. Obviously some thought has to be given to the way a piece is broken down for the production process but as I handle all of my own casting I can take a few more risks than a production outfit would. I look at casting as a process not dissimilar from sculpting or painting. There are materials, chemicals and hardware involved that all have the capacity for experimentation and innovation. I approach



Dragonslayer, a full scratchbuild in 1/15 scale won Chris Best of Show at Euromilitaire in 2010



'Fight or Flight', another full scratchbuild in 1/15 scale from 2007

casting and production from a research and development angle and like to push the capabilities of what is possible from the materials involved. This ultimately can be time consuming and expensive which is why I produce infrequently and in very limited numbers.

Producing commission pieces for other companies to handle the production is a slightly different matter. I have to be mindful of their production process and try to make the piece as painless as possible to produce while trying to minimise the compromises on design and sculpt. I have been fortunate however to work with individuals who are happy to give me full control of design and sculpt and who are able to handle some of the more challenging elements of my sculpts."

Chris has gained awards in national and international competitions, I have also had the pleasure of moving to the other side of the table and judging with him. I wondered whether he thought that entering work in competitions pushes him to keep improving.

"Entering competitions for me is like having a 'bonus ending' to a piece of work. By that I mean I never really set out to create a piece of work specially for a competition. When creating a piece it usually exists in its own span of time, it takes as long as it takes to complete. If its completion should coincide with a competition then I will enter it if it's appropriate. Creating solely for competition puts too much pressure on me and there is a level of 'expectation' then placed upon the piece, I will certainly not rush a piece for a competition, if it's not finished to a standard I am not satisfied with then it doesn't get entered.

Standards, fashions and styles change so frequently on the current international competition scene that to improve your work based upon these criteria just for competitions may put you at risk of being too concerned with following trends and creating work that loses some of its individuality. Personally I seek to improve my work through innovation, research and some isolation from the ever present 'noise' of social media. Looking to other disciplines (not just confined to model making) is always a good

way to improve, learn new skills and experience new ways of thinking."

In 2010 Chris was awarded Best Of Show at Euromilitaire for this Dragon Slayer. This was the first fantasy entry to win this accolade and I asked him whether he thought it had altered the way figure modellers looked at fantasy and sci-fi models.

"I'm probably not the best person to answer that, but winning any award at Euromilitaire was always a huge privilege for me. Winning best of show with a fantasy piece was a very significant event in my personal timeline.

For me, the competition at Euromilitaire had always been a benchmark for excellence in military and historical figure modelling, let alone the incredible levels of scale modelling on display. Entering the competition had always been a passion, but the level of work was always so high and a little daunting. When fantasy subjects were given their own separate categories I knew that there was no reason not to enter. Interest in the fantasy categories grew over a couple of years and by the time I won best of show there were some significant painters and sculptors entering.

I would like to think that winning best of show in a competition that was considered to be the very best in military and historical subjects helped to change peoples' perceptions of what a fantasy piece could be and that it could be accepted amongst other more traditional works. It



'HU2H', a fully scratchbuilt bust in 1/6 scale, completed by Chris in 2017



'Horticultural Slimux', a 2018 Games Workshop project

up a reference library which aids my own work on an almost daily basis. My favourite aspect of Japan, however, is its impenetrability. Having visited and travelled around Japan it is a realm of contradictions and juxtapositions, old and new, spiritual and secular, simple and complex. It is a puzzle of which I will never tire."

Finally, I asked Chris what it was that kept him in the world of figure modelling.

"The endless stream of projects and ideas still to realise is my main motivation to continue working as I do. I have said before that I keep a sketchbook with me at all times as I'm always thinking of new projects and new ways to work or problem solve. As a result I have many, many of these books filled with ideas and potential projects. I'm never without a project and work on several at the same time, each one problem solves or enlightens another. I also like to build bridges when I can and frequently crossover into other model making and craft-based disciplines. This keeps me fresh and I invariably find techniques that will crossover from one genre to another and knowledge that will transfer.

Figure painting, modelling and model making in general has grown and expanded so much that we live in a time of great choice, resource, and enthusiasm. We literally have a world of knowledge at our fingertips and I believe if this knowledge can move freely and encouragement can be given to younger generations then there is no reason why we can't all enjoy the world of figure modelling for years to come." ■

'Laputa', a Fine Molds kit conversion finished in 2013



is great to see how fantasy subjects have captured the modellers imagination over the past decade or so. The sheer breadth and choice of figures, kits, tools and paints that are now available to anyone wanting to start, continue or improve in the realm of fantasy and Sci-Fi modelling is astounding and demonstrates a real health to the hobby."

I know that Chris has a great love of Japan and has visited the country several times. I was interested whether this had influenced his work.

"I have had a deep interest in Japan, its history and its culture for as long as I can remember. Obviously it wasn't long before my interest in Japan and my interest in model making crossed and this opened up a lifelong path of inquiry and research. Over the years I have become a serious collector of Japanese 'garage kits' and Maschinen Krieger (Ma.k) as well as some more mainstream mecha kits. The works of Takayuki Takeya are especially cherished pieces in my collection as I believe he displays one of the most creative minds and storytelling abilities of a generation.

These influences are incorporated into my work in a more indirect manner though. I am fascinated by the approach that Japanese model makers take to their pieces along with their methodology, tools, materials and techniques. I have sought to build

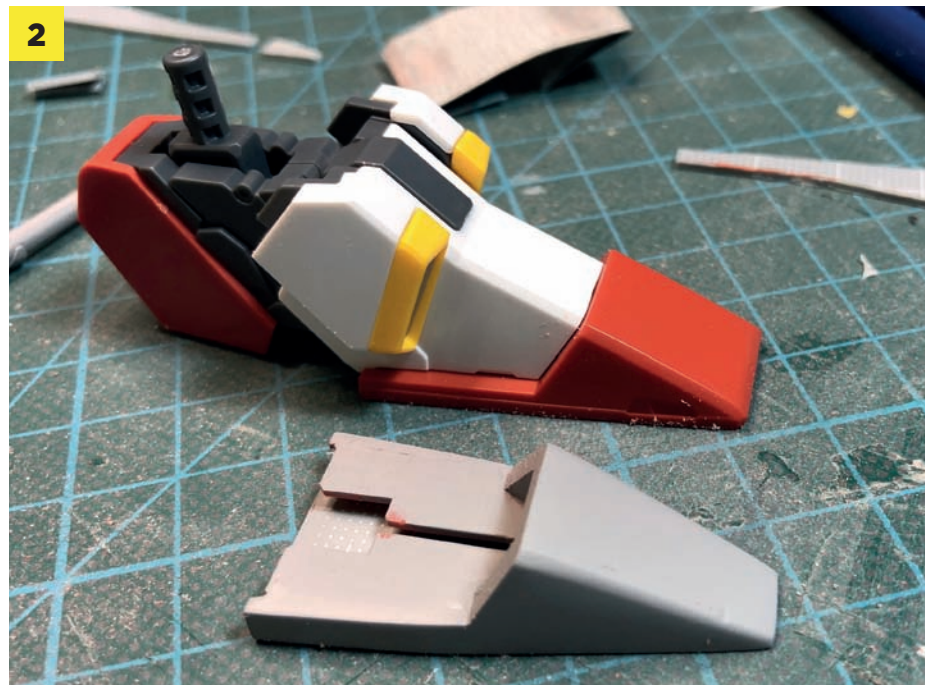
Diego Risiti joins the FFI team with a wonderful Gundam Armor Girl.

This project was born as my entry for the annual GBWC competition. What is GBWC? Well, the GBWC (Gunpla Builders World Cup) is the official worldwide Gunpla contest organized by Bandai each year, in which sixteen nations participate from Australia to the United States (including Italy). Each country has its own national contest of which the winner goes on to take part, together with the other fifteen finalists, in the Grand Final at the Bandai's Gundam Headquarters in Odaiba, Tokyo. >



**PROJECT ARMOR GIRL:
CODENAME
NANAMI**

GUNPLA PROJECT ARMOR GIRL: CODENAME NANAMI



► Big Decisions

Well, after evaluating several options, I decided to make a Gundam Armor Girl. What exactly are Armor girls? Armor Girls consists of young female figures with detachable Mecha armour from the Gundam universe. They originated in the MS Girls artwork which first appeared in the Gundam Ace monthly magazine in 1982. They are based on designs by Sunrise Studio's Mika Akitaka and Hajime Katoki, two of the

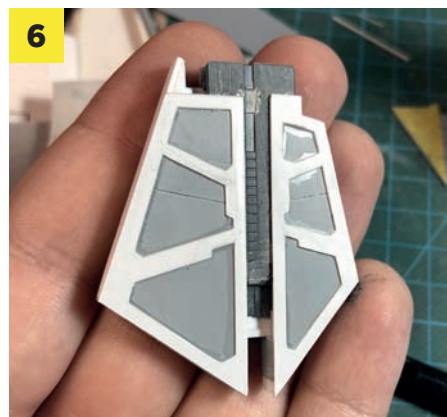
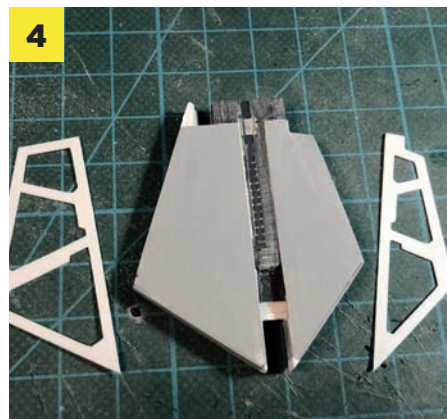
best known Japanese Mecha designers. After many fan art releases over the years, Bandai decided in 2012 to start a series of action figures dedicated to these armoured girls. Among these we find Armor Girls from Gundam Wing, Gundam Unicorn, and Gundam Sentinel story series.

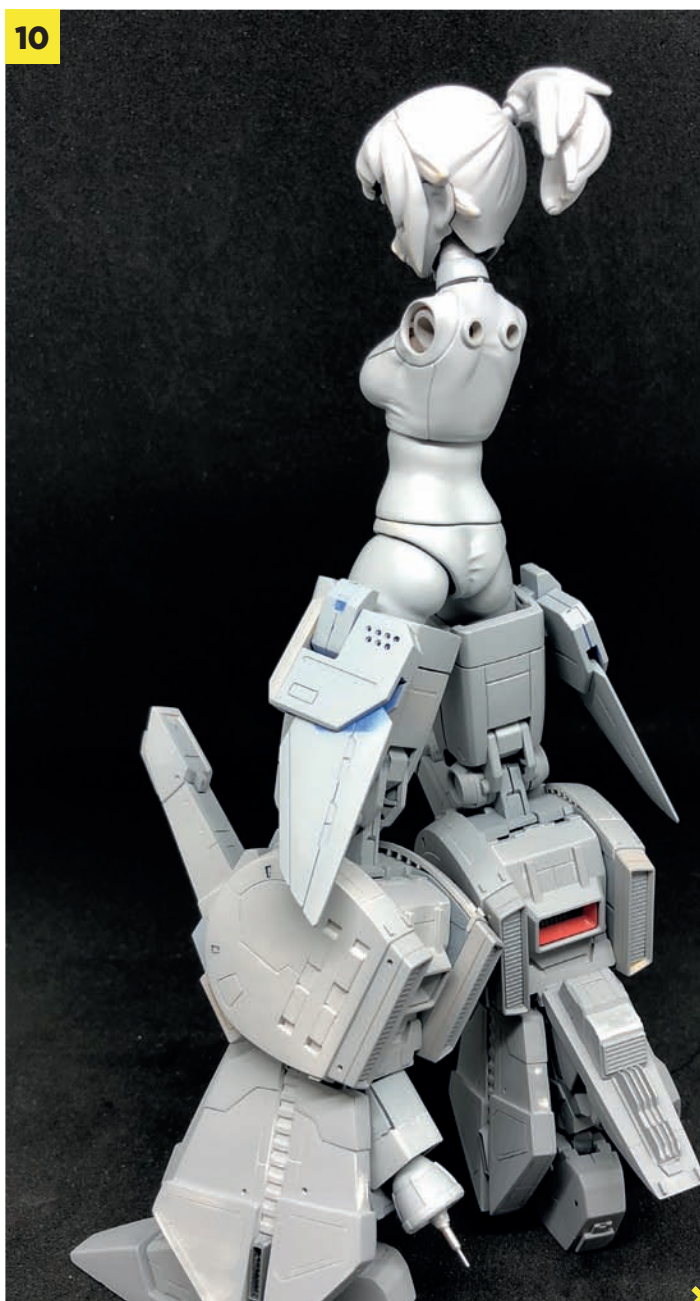
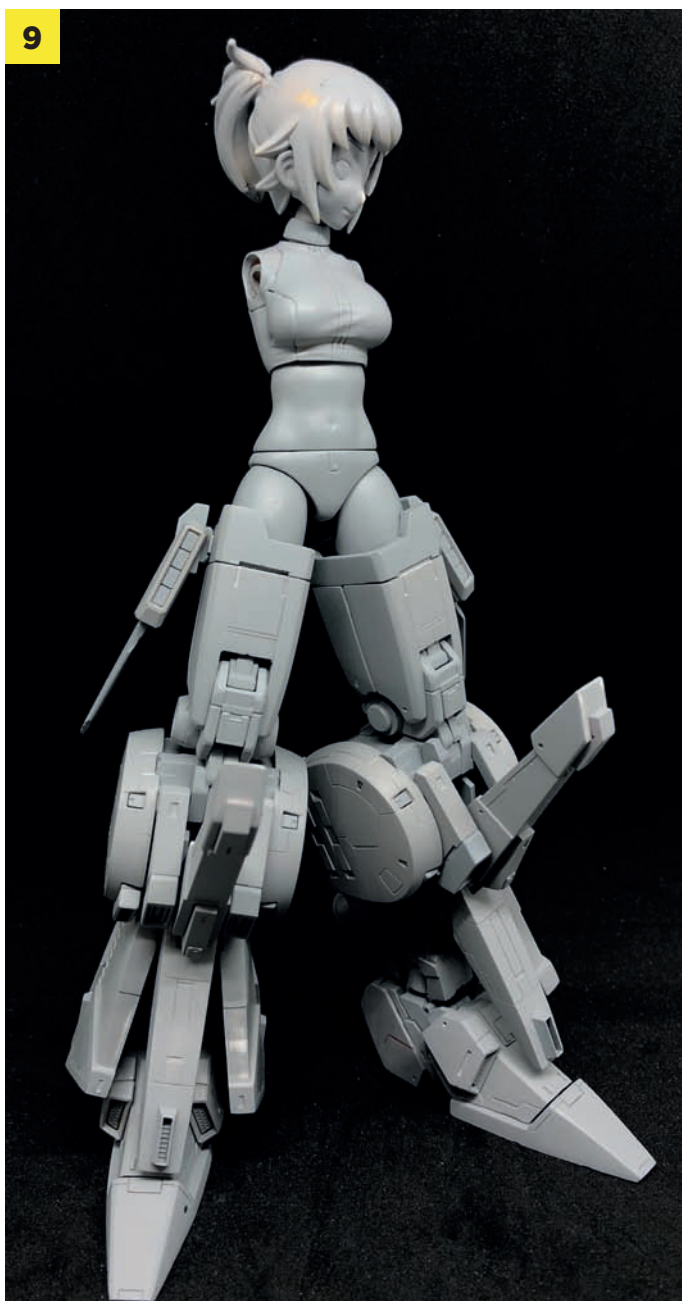
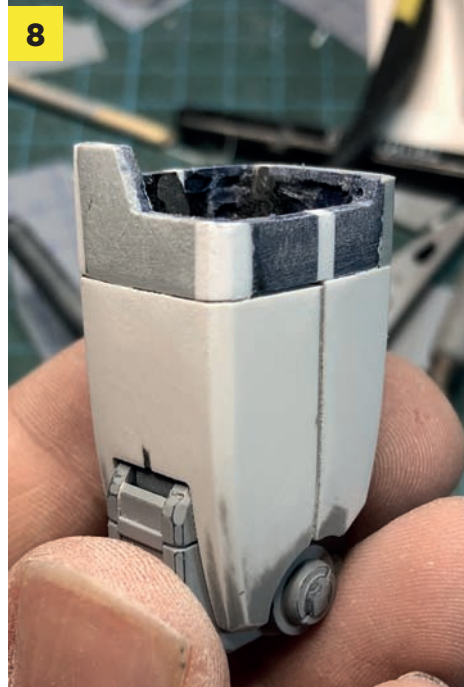
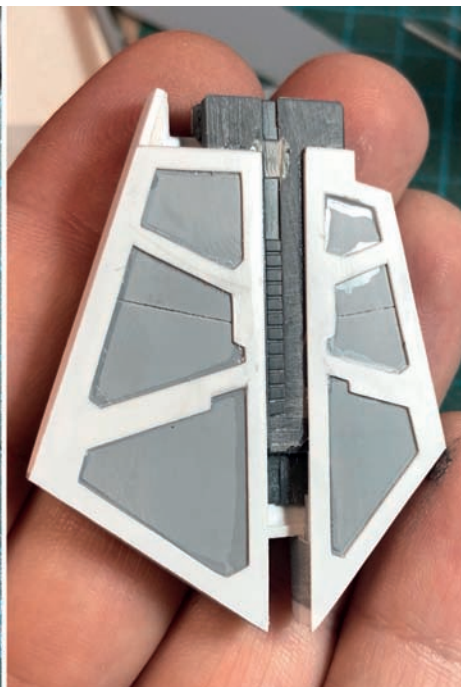
For my custom Armor Girl build I chose to base it on the ZZ Gundam, one of my favourites, and especially the newly tooled 'Ver.Ka A.E.U.G. Prototype

Transformable Mobile Suit, released in September 2017. This makes it even more beautiful. It's worth noting that the 'Ver.Ka.' indicates the line of models that, since 2002, have been redesigned by Hajime Katoki himself.

To the Bench

Now, it's time to get to work. In all, for this custom build I used four kits: the aforementioned ZZ Gundam MG ver. KA (1/100 scale), HG Universal Century ZZ Gundam A.E.U.G. Prototype, HG Build Fighters Winning Fumina and Figure Rise Standard Diver Nami (all 1/44 scale). After the basic assembly of the ZZ and the Winning Fumina I understood more or less what the final custom build would look like, and was pleased to realise that the armour of the ZZ suited the body of the Fumina very well (**photo 1**). Next I turned my attention to the legs. After thinning the feet (**2**), I modified the side panels of the legs to make them squarer (**3**). To add details inside each leg, I made a drawing and then, with the help of Silhouette Cutting Plotter software, I cut 0.25mm plates from plastic card (**4**). After marking the visible areas in pencil (**photo 5**), I added details inside before gluing the previously cut pieces (**6**). I think these additions really enhanced the appearance of the leg armour (**7**). The fit of the human leg in the armour didn't look right, so I set about it again with the plasticard and modified the thighs borrowed from another kit, enlarged and shaped to be in line with the girl's thigh (**8**). And with that the leg armour was complete! (**9 & 10**).





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as the 1/100-scale was simply too big. With some putty and new panels the backpack was also finished (13). For the head I chose the one in the 'Diver Nami' kit because it was much more beautiful than Fumina's (14). I modified the ZZ V-fin to adapt it to Nami's headband, added magnets and enhanced the appearance of the hair.

Orange Yellow 025; Bright Red 003; and the full range of Neutral Greys 071/072/073/074/075. With some careful masking, painting progressed apace (16). For the skintones I used a three-stage process, beginning with a white base, then adding a dark skintone for the shadows, and then finishing with a medium skintone to harmonise the appearance (17).

► I then moved my attention to the chest. Here I used the 1/44-scale Gundam ZZ and combined it with the bust of the Winning Fumina (11). The shoulders of the 1/100-scale Gundam ZZ were too big, so I shortened them and, to add further detail, inserted an air intake on top (12). The backpack was taken from the 1/44-scale Gundam ZZ kit

Painting

I chose to paint this custom Gundam in the Japanese style, using Gaia Notes' excellent lacquer Gundam paints. As you can see, the paints cover wonderfully well with a really vibrant colour (15). I used the following Gaia Notes paints: Cobalt Blue 024;

With painting complete, it was time to add the waterslide decals (18). I enhanced the panel lines with black Tamiya Panel Line Accent Color (basically an enamel wash) and, finally, applied a coat of Gunze's Mr. Super Clear 'Mat'. Looking over the Armor Girl, I decided that since the Nanami waist

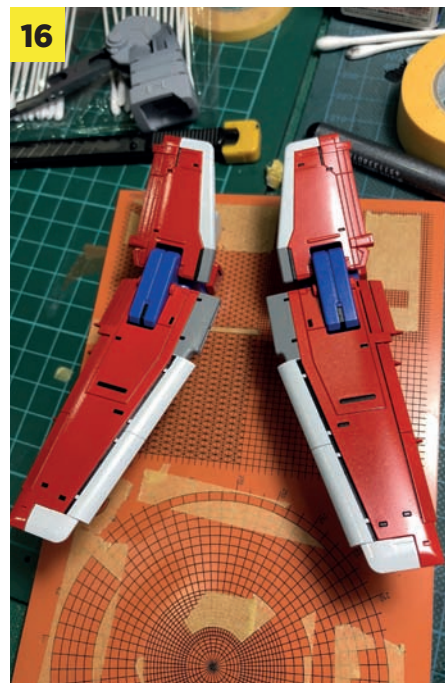
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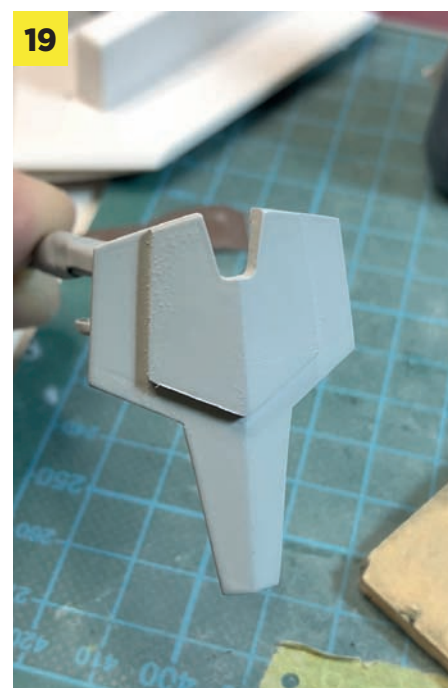


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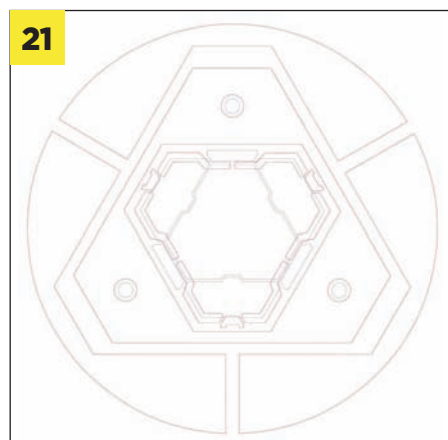
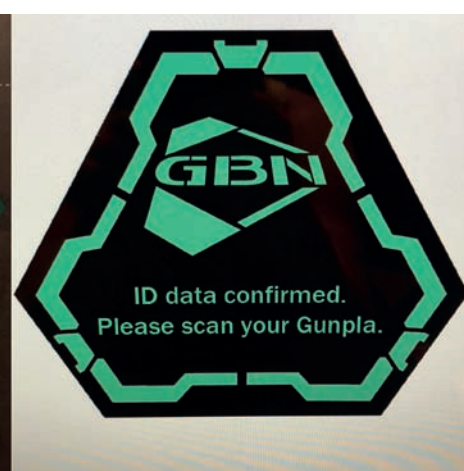




was bare, I would create a small piece of armour for both the front and the back (19).

The Base

The base is inspired by Sunrise Studio's Gundam Build Divers anime TV series. With this base the Gundam is scanned from the console and used by the player in the virtual game. From a screen shot frame of the first episode (20), I started to design my own console using my cutting plotter software (21). The central part of the base was made with laser-engraved transparent plexiglass, painted with clear green and illuminated thanks to a LED strip (22).





BE INSPIRED

Bandai 1/100 Master Grade MSZ-010 ZZ Gundam Ver.Ka. A.E.U.G. Prototype Transformable Mobile Suit (ref. 0224519)

1/44 High Grade MSZ-010 ZZ Gundam A.E.U.G. Prototype Transformable Mobile Suit (ref. 0163276)

1/44 HG Build Fighters Battlogue Winning Fumina Minato Sakai's Mobile Suit (ref. 0219551)

1/144 Figure-Rise Standard Build Divers Diver Nami Nanami's Diver Look (ref. 5055333) ■



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NEW RELEASE

The original inspiration behind this project was simply to have an excuse to use the new Vallejo Scenery Tufts. It's as simple as that! I just wanted

to use the new tufts on a base.

They are fun to use and you must combine different tufts to create a convincingly realistic look. The scenery tufts have their own adhesive, but I apply a small amount of wood glue for more durability. Once I got underway with the project, however, I decided I would experiment in creating a heavily weathered Mecha, using multiple layers of paint chips and the new Vallejo Stencils.

Concept

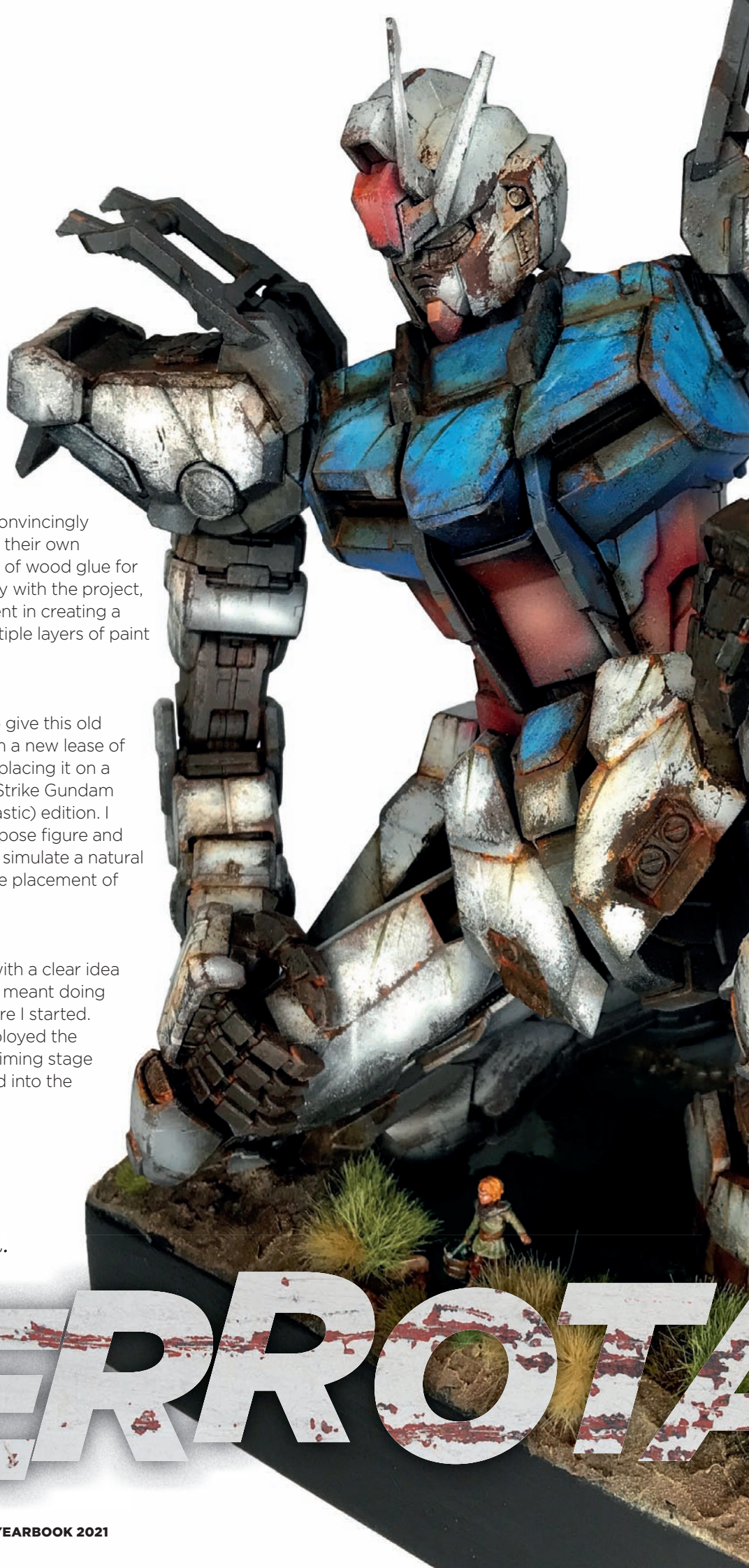
The concept was simple: I wanted to give this old Bandai Perfect Grade Strike Gundam a new lease of life and enhance its presentation by placing it on a well-modelled scenic base. This PG Strike Gundam is actually the clear armour (clear plastic) edition. I assembled and painted it as a fixed-pose figure and used the Zenithal Light technique to simulate a natural light source in order to determine the placement of the highlights and shadows.

Painting

I began the painting of this project with a clear idea of the final appearance in mind. This meant doing a series of preliminary sketches before I started. I decided on the fixed pose and employed the Zenithal Light technique from the priming stage through the base colour painting and into the weathering steps.



Don Suratos
*builds a heavily
weathered Mecha.*



DERROTADO



1



2

The list below shows the different steps in the painting and weathering process for this Mecha:

1. Prime
2. Vallejo Chipping Medium (73.214)
3. The first layer of base colour and paint chipping
4. A second layer of Vallejo Chipping Medium, followed by a second layer of the base colour using Vallejo Stencils and paint chipping
5. Vallejo Mecha Gloss Varnish (69.701)
6. Vallejo Mecha Matt Varnish (69.702)
7. Weathering with washes
8. Weathering with Vallejo Weathering Effects paints
9. Painting and Weathering the Base

Prime

I glued the PG Strike Gundam to the wooden base, then primed it with Vallejo Mecha Black Primer (70.642). I thinned the primer to a ratio of 1:1 with Vallejo's Airbrush Thinner (71.261). I also added a couple of drops of Vallejo's Flow Improver (71.262) to prevent the paint drying in the



DEFEATED



➤ airbrush tip. These two products make a big difference and are important for hassle-free spraying of Vallejo paints. I then sprayed Vallejo Mecha Dark Red (69.011) and Vallejo Mecha Orange (69.007), concentrating on the top areas of the whole piece. I thinned both the Mecha Dark Red and Mecha Orange at a ratio of five parts paint to one part thinner and also added a drop of Flow Improver for smooth airbrushing (**photo 1**).

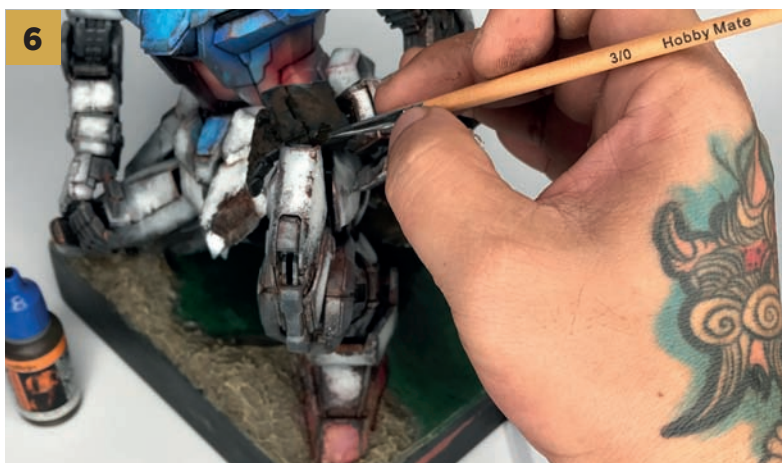
The Zenithal Lighting technique means the Mecha Dark Red and Mecha Orange is concentrated on the upper parts of the Mecha, leaving the underside and tight corners ranging from black to a really dark red, creating instant and realistic shadows. I now applied the rust undercoat using Mecha Rust Texture (69.821) and the same Zenithal Lighting principle. Fresh rust is bright orange and this is mostly seen on the topmost exposed areas. Personally I think what we might call a 'Zenithal Rust' undercoat works really well. I let the Mecha Rust Texture cure for 24 hours. Vallejo Mecha primers and paints are designed to cure to a fully scratch resistant finish after 24 hours.

Base Coat and Paint Chips

Vallejo's Chipping Medium (73.214) is a very effective way of achieving a quick and easy replication of chipped paintwork. It is very thick out of the bottle. I always thin it – two parts Medium and one part Thinner – for smoother airbrushing. It's also a good idea to add a couple of drops

of Flow Improver to prevent it drying on the airbrush tip (especially if you are spraying in hot or humid conditions). I airbrushed the Chipping Medium all over the kit and the base and let it dry for around ten minutes. Make sure you apply a thin coat as this means that the resulting paint chips will be smaller and finer.

After allowing the Chipping Medium to dry for ten minutes (it will remain tacky after this but don't worry), you can airbrush the base colour over the Mecha and Base. This time I used Vallejo's Model Air paints. I normally paint with Vallejo Mecha but those are more scratch resistant, so I tend to use Model Air and Game Air over the Chipping Medium. I thinned the Model Air and Game Air at a ratio of five parts paint to one part thinner and airbrushed using a .2 needle airbrush at 20psi. I left this coat to dry





for thirty minutes, then reactivated the Chipping Medium using a brush wet with Airbrush Thinner. This chipped the basecoat off revealing the rust undercoat underneath. This is a fun process that is easy to overdo, and I usually overdo it! After chipping off some of the base colour I sealed the Mecha with Mecha Gloss Varnish (69.701) and then Matt Varnish (69.702). I let the varnish cure fully for another 24 hours **(2 & 3)**.

More Chips and another Base Colour

Once the varnish had cured for 24 hours I airbrushed another layer of the Chipping Medium. I thinned this with Airbrush Thinner at a ratio of 2:1, much like the first one, and let it dry for 10 minutes. I then sprayed a lighter shade of the base colour. I also used the new Vallejo Stencils to create patterns and add more interest to the paint work. The stencils are made of a flexible material that makes it very easy to wash the overspray off after use. I was very happy with the stencils and think they will now be an integral part of my approach to painting and weathering Mechas in the future **(4 & 5)**. Once the stencilled second layer of the base colour had dried for around thirty minutes, I reactivated the Chipping Medium again with a wet brush. This time it revealed the previous layer, which was a combination of both the base colour and rust undercoat. The process of doubling up on the Chipping Medium and base coats, as well as the stencil work, created a very nice weathered look without too much skill or time required. It was certainly fun watching the very realistic result emerge in very little time.

I then sealed the whole kit with a thin coat of Mecha Gloss Varnish, followed by the Mecha Matt Varnish, again letting it cure for 24 hours. Strictly speaking, I don't think you have to let the paint cure this long before applying washes, but it's just that I like to let paint cure between stages. It always gives me a nice strong finish, removing any fear of the paint lifting. ➤



11



12



► Weathering with Washes

My top six Vallejo weathering paints I use in all my projects are:

1. Mecha Weathering Rust Texture (69.821)
2. Mecha Dark Rust Wash (69.507)
3. Mecha Light Rust Wash (69.505)
4. Game Effects Dry Rust (73.216), a more yellow version of the Mecha Rust Texture
5. Mecha Black Wash (69.518)
6. Model Color Clear Orange (70.956)

All the washes behave in a similar manner. You can add water, which will mean more surface tension, or you can add Airbrush Thinner, which means a thinner version with less surface tension. Less surface tension means it glazes the surface better. I thin both with water and Airbrush Thinner depending on the result I want to achieve. I also use water and a brush to blend them, much as I did when doing watercolour illustrations when I was a kid. The Vallejo Game Effects Dry Rust and the Mecha Rust Texture also behave similarly and have the same consistency. Both are very opaque and have a nice fine texture. The Game Effects Dry Rust is yellowish brown, while the Mecha Rust texture is a reddish brown. Both dry to a very nice matt finish and can be thinned with water or airbrush thinner (6 & 7). The Model Color Clear

Orange is a clear orange – no surprise there I guess – but as a transparent paint it is more opaque than the washes. Newly oxidized rust looks very orange and I tend to apply this only on flat areas and in dark, tight joints where I want to create fresh rust effects. This effect can only really be achieved with normal paints or with the Clear Orange, but for a more subtle effect, I mix the Model Color Clear Orange with the washes. I find this a really effective way of adding fresh rust effects to my models (8).

The Base

I worked on the base while the paint on the Mecha was curing between the various steps. I added some more relief and interest by supergluing some small pebbles in place (9). I painted the groundwork with Vallejo Dark Earth Texture (26.218) and then poured in Vallejo Still Water (26.230) and let it cure for 24 hours (10). Some Mecha Weathering Oil Stains (69.813) were applied around the edges of the stream to create a darker, glossier look. And then the thing that had inspired me to tackle this model in the first place: I glued various Vallejo Scenery Tufts on the groundwork to add a sense of scale and realism (11). To provide a further sense of the size of the Mecha, I added a little WizKids Pathfinder child figure fetching water from the stream (12).

Conclusion

And that's it! This was a fun weathering project. The two passes of Chipping Medium and the use of the new Vallejo stencils really added additional depth and interest to the weathering effects. As usual, the application of the washes and rust effects really helped to achieve an ultra-realistic finish. I hope you liked this little project, so, until the next article, saludos! ■



BE INSPIRED

Bandai Spirits 1/60 Perfect Grade GAT-X105 Strike Gundam (ref. 0131413).

Vallejo Hobby Stencils Splash and Stain (ref. ST-TX003) and Wood Texture No. 1 (ref. ST-TX006). See www.acrylicosvallejo.com for details of the extensive range of hobby stencils and scenery tufts.



ENGINEERED CURVES



Sylvain Aubut returns
with a very special figure.

Hey fellow painters! As you know the world is changing and the world of figure painting is too. We see a lot of sculptors now going live and selling their figures on the 'net as .STL files (the downloadable files that allow you to print the figure on a 3D printer). This gives us the opportunity to have

in our hands a range of figures that otherwise would have taken weeks or sometimes months to realise. With a click and a good printer, we can do marvellous things. From superheroes to plain cats, we have now everything we want to paint at the end of our fingers. And that was how I discovered the British-firm Ritual

Casting. Ben, the guy behind Ritual Casting, makes these marvellous girl figures. So now let's get straight to business, painting 'Engineered Curves', a large 1/10-scale full figure featuring Private Saskia Williams of the UniCorps Private Mechanised Contractors.



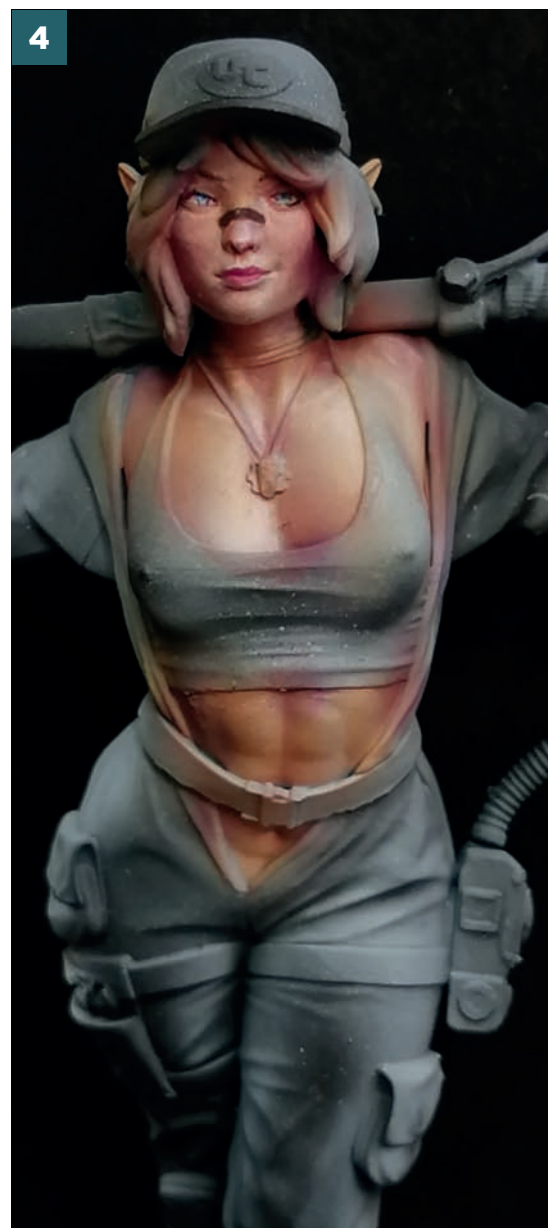
► Inspiration

Now, why don't we talk about inspiration? The way I work is always to have reference material near to hand, so before I paint anything I do a search for what I would like to see on my completed miniature or an idea that will fire my imagination. For this one a friend of mine was playing Final Fantasy and I happened to see Cindy Aurum (one of the characters in it). I thought that 'Engineered Curves' looked a lot like her, so I decided to base my colour scheme on the computer game character. For projects like this, Cosplay conventions are a great source of inspiration. Always keep your reference near to hand when painting, it will certainly help during the project **(photo 1)**!

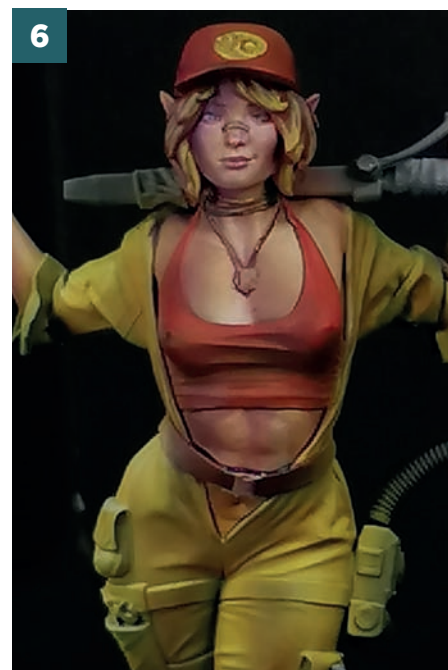
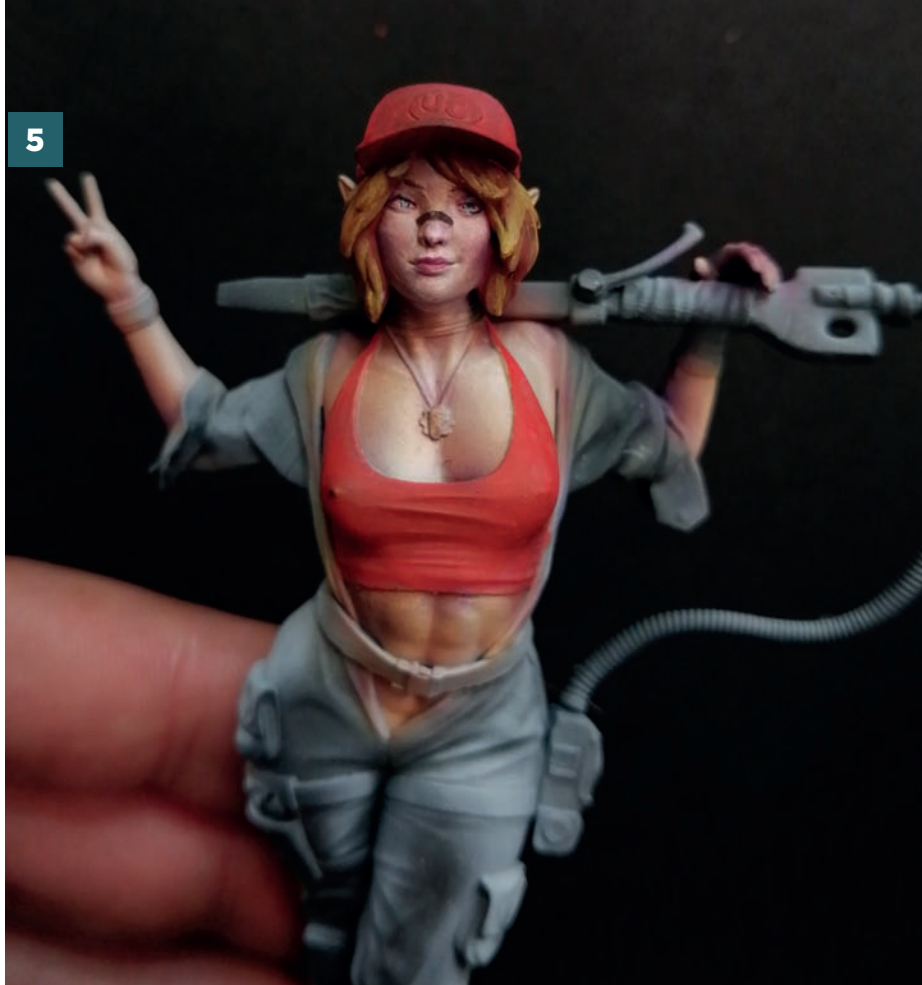
Getting Started

Let's start with the basics of pre-shading. I always start my figures with a basic black primer. Currently I use Green Stuff World Matt Surface Primer. I really like this as it gives a really matt finish. The basic starting point for any primer is to have a clean figure, so I always wash mine in lukewarm soapy water and clean it thoroughly with a toothbrush. That way you can be assured that the primer will stick correctly and won't peel off during the painting process. The next stage is to choose a direction for our imaginary light source to determine where the shadows and highlights will naturally fall. As you can see from the photographs, I pre-shade my figures with white, as this helps me visualize the direction of the light and at the same time it helps to bring out the different details on the figure (which I don't always see at first) **(2)**.

Once I have decided on the direction



of the main light source, I chose a second imaginary source to obtain a more 3D effect. Zenithal light, coming from above, is a good start but it is in one direction, adding another light source gives a more natural look. Remember, when you walk around



you don't only have the sunlight on you from above but also the reflection of light off surrounding objects, in that way light comes from different angles not just from one. You can also emphasise the shapes and details on your figure with an additional shadow or another light source, a technique often used in traditional painting.

With the basic applications of shadows and highlights, it's time to consider the all-important skin tone. I love to play with colours in my skin tones. My approach is to start with a basic mapping following the highlights and shadows added in the pre-shading stage, then work with my airbrush to ensure smooth transitions

(3) The principle is really simple: I move from dark to light colours with my brush, then go from light to dark with the airbrush using very diluted paint so I cover the brushstroke but do not completely obscure the colours **(4)**. In this I take advantage of the one of the most important properties of acrylic paint: its transparency.

Once my basic skin tones are complete, I move onto the detail of the face: the eyes, lips and eyebrows, which define the face's expression and its character. I try to put in as much expression as I can, as the face is naturally the first part of the figure that catches the viewer's eye. For



'add blues and browns to add shadows, keeping the base yellow as your lightest shade'

➤ this figure it was doubly important to catch her smirky smile.

Once I was happy with her expression, it was time to progress to the rest of the figure, her red top and cap being the starting point. As I said, she was based on a character from a computer game, so I already had some idea of what she would look like and my choice of colours – simple reds and yellows – was therefore somewhat constrained. Although incredibly common, reds and yellows are among the hardest colours to work with on a miniature. When I work with reds I incorporate skin colours and oranges into it for the highlights. There is a natural instinct to add white to the red to lighten it, which, of course, makes pink. Adding skin colours and oranges will give a richer, more natural look and since those colours already have red in them it helps with the continuity and balance of the palette of colours you are using. As I do with the skin tones, I begin with mapping the main areas of shadow and highlights and once that is complete I again use my airbrush to blend them together. The key to successful airbrushing of figures is to work with very diluted paint and build up the layers gradually (5).

Now it was time for her jumper. Many miniature painters seem to struggle with yellow but the important thing is to remember the basics.

8

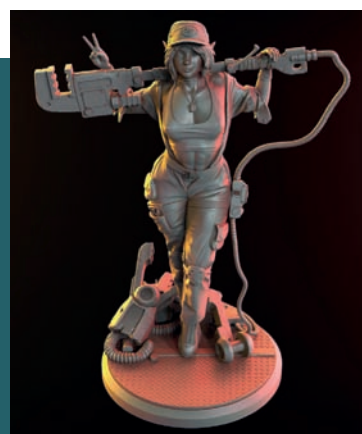
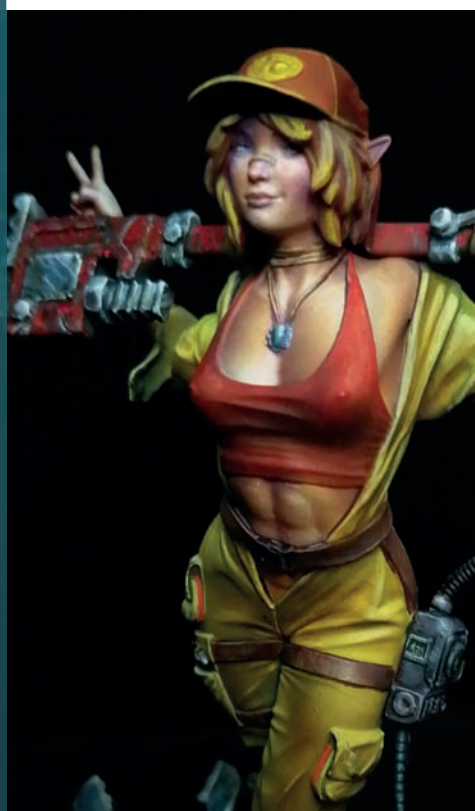


'For 'Engineered Curves', I wanted her face to be the central focus, so I went heavy on the shadows'

To maintain a really bright yellow, contrast is the key. Don't add white to highlight the yellow as you will lose that brightness; instead add blues (opposite yellow on the colour wheel) and browns to add shadows, keeping the base yellow as your lightest shade. In effect, you are only working with shadows to ensure you lose none of the brightness of the base yellow (6 & 7).

Once the large wrench and other details had been painted, it's time to harmonise the figure. By that I mean having a basic shadow colour to apply across the figure. With a very diluted dark colour, I apply shadows across the whole figure, using my airbrush, in the opposite direction to the main light source. This adds what I call a 'micro tone'. In nature colours are never pure; blacks are always blue/black or green/black for example, so by adding a very dilute shadow shade (a dark blue, purple or green) you harmonise the different colours across the figure. For 'Engineered Curves', I wanted her face to be the central focus, so I went heavy on the shadows; in fact she is kind of lost in

the shadows. The appearance of the finished figure is very dark, except for her face, which draws the viewer's attention. So there you have it, 'Engineered Curves' complete! I hope you enjoyed this short reflection on my painting technique and, as always, have fun whatever you paint (8). ■



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Ritual Castings 1/10 Engineered Curves. Check out Ritual Castings on Facebook or find them at www.ritualcasting.com.

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