

FIGURE PAINTER

magazine

REVIEWS FROM

Hasslefree Miniatures

Shieldwolf Miniatures

Durgin Paint Forge

Joaquin Palacios

Scale75

Plus a closer look at

Darkstar Miniatures'

Molten Metals

Ultimate

Sanding Sticks

Tiny Leads

INSIGHT

interview with Alex 'Iguazu' Varela



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Alfonso Giraldes
David Powell

Welcome to issue 21 of Figure Painter Magazine and to 2015.

Firstly, let me apologise for the tardiness of this issue. Fresh from battling a post Christmas over stuffed belly, I came down with a nasty virus that's been hard to shake; so no excuses, other than me being ill, but I hope to make up for that with our first issue of the new year.

Spanish painter Alex 'Iguazzu' Varela is the focus of our insight interview and we stick with Alex and his buddies as they look forward to an important year for their new venture with a company spotlight on Tiny Leads. The FPM reviewers have been busy unwrapping all of their presents, so we have a bumper pile of reviews for you to help you spend all of your Christmas money, as well as tutorials from David Powell who continues his Dragoon and Alfonso Giraldes who shows us how he sculpted the recent Scale75 Captain Ahab. Marko Paunovic continues the Malifaux gaming table and also takes time to start on a new series of tutorials about building simple gaming terrain on a budget. We also continue our series on the Best of British; this month we take a look at the work of John Keys.

Anyway, we hope you enjoy this issue and we wish you a Happy New Year.

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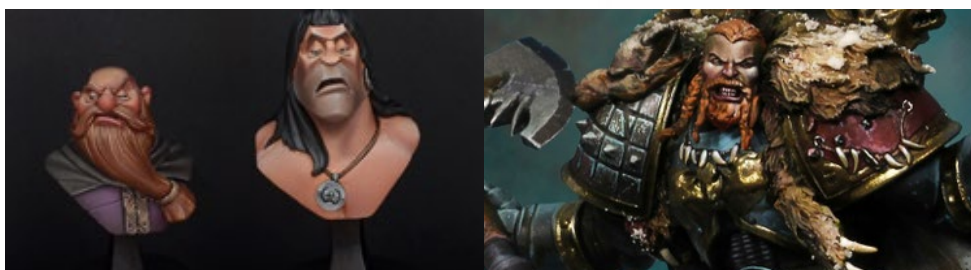
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Hobbyzone. PL is a Polish company that makes all manner of storage solutions to improve our working conditions and keep our workspace clean and tidy. They have a massive range of kits that build up into spectacular work stations and to top off that, they're very well priced. For more information about their ranges, visit their website by clicking [here](#).

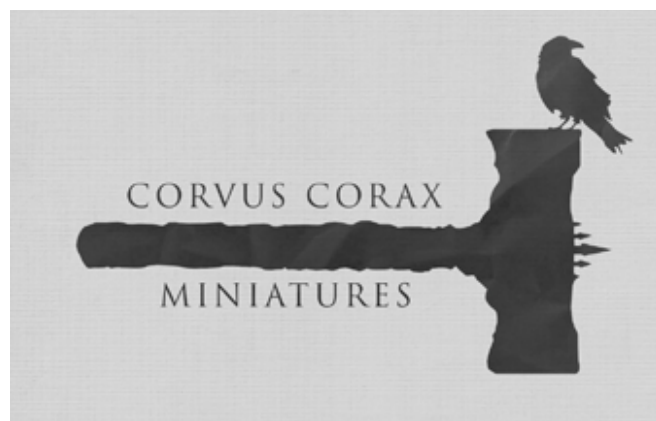


Abyss is a new line of miniatures and busts by Jason Monkman. They have plans on making all sorts of miniatures and other such products in all sorts of scales. Basically, if they think it's cool, they're going to make it. To start things off, here is the first piece Jason

started on. It started off meant as a sci-fi trooper bust, but by request we have decided to turn it into a full sized figure! Once cast, we can cut him up and create a bust of him too, for those who prefer it that way. More details [here](#).



The Coolminiornot annual 2013 is now available. These annuals are a celebration of some of the best the miniature hobby has to offer. Many consider these an invaluable source for inspiration and past annuals have sold out pretty quickly, so if you want to grab yours visit the CMon webstore by clicking [here](#).



Corvus Corax Miniatures is now on [Kickstarter](#). It is a small hobby project that is being developed and managed by a single person; a hobbyist like yourself who now has taken a greater interest in the developing aspect of this hobby alongside of playing, painting and collecting miniatures. It is a project that needs your support in order for it to succeed. This project relies on outside partners (illustrators and concept artists, sculptors and casters) and it's towards the continuation of development that all funds will be allocated. Without a successful funding the project will still proceed, just at a much slower pace.



Scale75 have bolstered their Fantasy & Game range of paints by adding a new blue set called Elven Colours. These paints have a tougher resin medium making them ideal for gamers whose miniatures do actually see battle. Like all the other sets, there are 8 colours and these new paints are completely compatible with their normal ScaleColor range. For more details, click [here](#).



Relive the epic saga of Conan and his companions in a boardgame inspired by the writings of Robert E. Howard. For 2 to 5 players.

New to [Kickstarter](#), Conan is a miniature-based board game that pits one player, the overlord, who controls hordes of savage tribesmen, no-good lowlifes and undead minions against 1 to 4 players who incarnate the legendary Conan and his fellow adventurers. The game-play is asymmetric, as the overlord possesses a large selection of models and objectives which are his own, whereas the brave heroes are played from a first person perspective, much like in a role playing game. An adventure can be played out in 1 hour on one of the beautiful game boards (depicting iconic locations of Howard's immersive Hyborian world) as you pit your wits, daring and tactical acumen against your opponent.



Alessio Cavatore's game company, River Horse, has recently released the above graphic as a teaser of a game they're currently designing, tying it into the forth coming movie release. River Horse have a good reputation and have worked on lots of games from many publishers, so I'm pretty excited about this and hope more information is released soon. You can find out more about River Horse by clicking [here](#).





By Jason 'Red' Martin

Price: €40 + Shipping

Size: 70mm

Material: Resin

Available from

[Joaquin Palacios Studio](#)

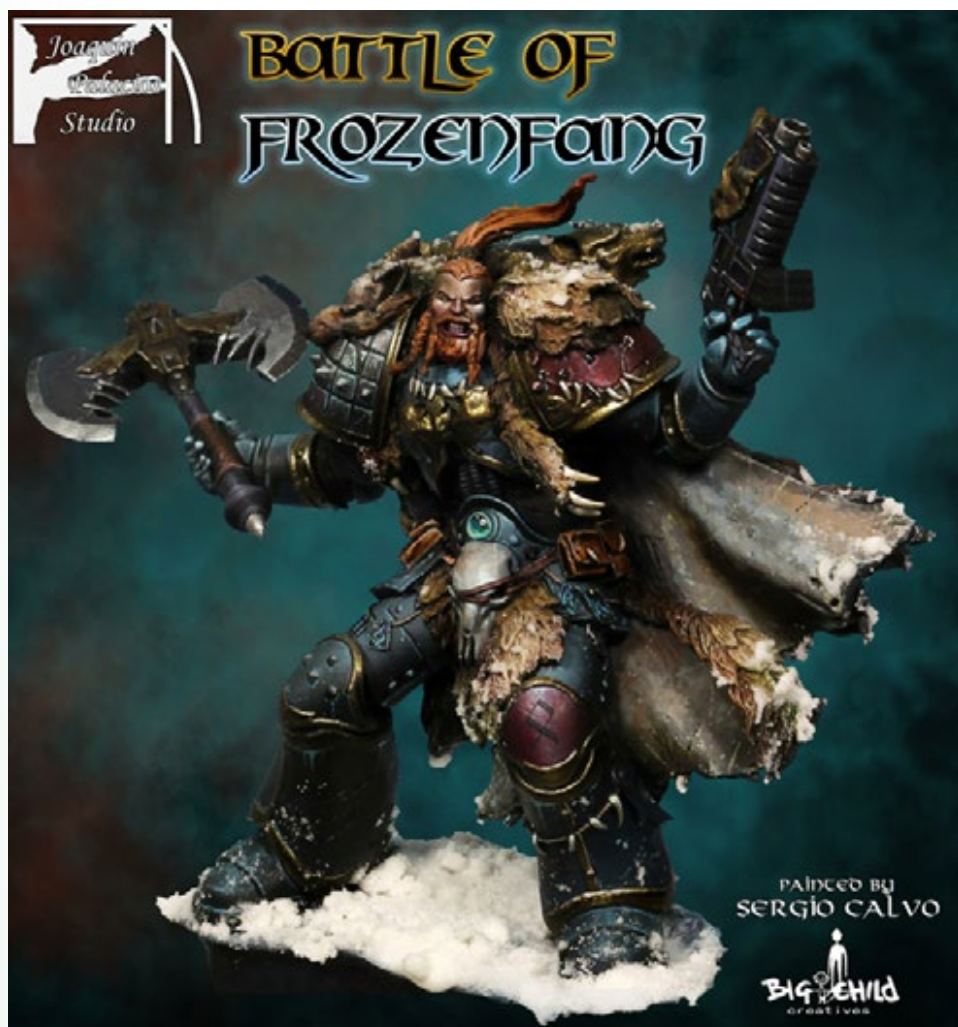
Unboxing

Joaquin Palacios Studio's Battle of Frozenfang

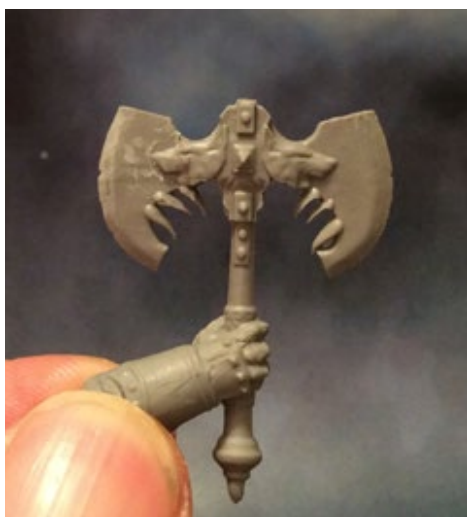
Over the last couple of months, we have seen some amazing sculpts coming to fruition at the hands of some great talents from the Cursed Monkeys and the BigChild Creatives teams, with Tiny Leads, Black Sailors and Rum and Bones projects being a few good examples of a number of collaborations.

Another piece that really caught my eye was the Battle of Fronzenfang a miniature sculpted by a Spanish free-lance sculptor by the name Joaquín Palacios. Joaquín has previously worked for Andrea and Scale 75 and is behind Joaquín Palacios Studio, which has collaborated with the BigChild Creatives team on the Rum and Bones project and the Black Sailors project, both of which have had successful Kickstarters.

The miniature comes in a sturdy, plain cardboard box with a nice colour printed sticker keeping it sealed. Inside the various pieces are cushioned between two lengths of foam; this is another seller that does their best to ensure your kit arrives safe and secure. It is a 1/32 scale (70mm) miniature cast in hard, grey resin and comes in eight parts, plus a small resin scenic base. For all intents and purposes, it is reminiscent of the iconic Space Wolf, but for me, this is what it should look like!!



The two main subassemblies are the torso and legs and the fit is exceptional. There's a naturalness to the fit that just feels right. Although the standing pose could have become static, the bent legged stance hints of a tension in the pose, a coiled spring waiting to be unleashed. Everything points to a figure that is either in mid flow of an attack or is about to commence one, which changes the stance from static to expectant.



The power armour of the legs is rather basic on first glance, but on closer inspection reveals ornate gold trim, studs, teeth and bone fetishes. There are also open, blank spaces that will allow nice, free brush strokes, so you can enjoy the painting process and is also a blank canvas for freehand or battle damage. The legs have sculpted around the waist a portion of the fur pelt that blends in nicely with the rest that's attached to the torso, carefully hiding the join of the two parts. It is evident that a lot of time has been spent sculpting the wolf pelts to ensure they looked more than just convincing and the results are great. The torso is even more detailed and continues the theme associated with the enhanced warriors we are all familiar with; there are lots of runes, teeth, necklaces, skulls and pelts. The right shoulder guard really imposes a sense of weight and bulk with its surface being carved into tiles and studded with short spikes and supports the wolf head and pelt that is draped across his broad shoulders.

The back pack is a single piece and fits snugly onto the back and is rather blocky and brutal looking, which again reflects the sculpt in general. The large bore bolter, held in his left hand, is raised up and away as he brings his axe around



for the killing stroke. It is nicely detailed and replete with wolf's head snarling around the muzzle. When I dry fitted this piece, it could be twisted in any number of directions on the wrist. This may be a good thing, but I feel personally that a hole and shaped peg would ensure easier attachment; this very same arrangement is present to attach the double headed, gnarly battle axe. The three small pieces that come in a sealed ziplock bag are his head and pony tail along with the wolf paw that hangs across his chest plate. The head is adorned with long hair and braided beard, again a nod to the Nordic, giant warriors.



Whenever I write a review, I always have at least one thing that bothers me about the sculpt; the product, the price or something, but I just have nothing negative to say about this piece. The sculpting is delightful, the concept and character design is spot on, the casting is flawless with no major moldlines (actually will take longer to find them than it will to clean them up) or air holes. All in all, I am very pleased to own this piece — my only problem being that I can't start painting it until I've finished a few ongoing projects. I just hope I can do it justice! Thank you Joaquín for a truly remarkable piece and Happy New Year to everybody and thanks for reading!

For more info, please contact
ums.agram@gmail.com



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22/02/2015 - 04/03/2015



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INSIGHT

interview with **Alex 'Iguazzu' Varela**



Place of origin?

Cadiz (Spain), a nice place in the south, next to the sea!

Years painting?

Umm... almost 15

Major awards?

My wife Lolita! Because she supports me in this crazy hobby!

Future plans?

My future plans, right now, are with the Tiny Leads miniatures project.

Hailing from the south of Spain, Iguazzu is a pretty prolific painter. His work speaks for itself and the high demand for his skills is ongoing from many companies all over Europe. I consider him one of the best painters around at this time and love the fact he paints many interesting subjects from all genres. After each new image he posts on social media, I always feel better for seeing it. This is Alex Varela.



Q1 *For those that don't know, could you explain who you are and what you do?*

I'm a special education teacher that during my free time paints miniatures. I love them – no matter the subject! I can paint for many hours just listening to music and the time flies by!

Q2 *You're known on the Internet as Iguazzu, where does the name Iguazzu come from?*

Aaah, that's easy. A long time ago, around the year 2000, I was searching for a nickname to use in the Conf-Federation forum (the "Confrontation" forums). I tried a lot of them, but they all seemed to be used by others. Finally I tried with the name of the waterfalls in Argentina, but I made a mistake and added a double "z". This stupid mistake created Iguazzu.

Q3 You have been a studio painter and box art painter for many companies including Out-world, Origen, Stormtroopers, Scale75 and many more. What are the high and low points of being in such demand?

The good part is that I've gotten a lot of work, which means that my work is well liked. This is the most important thing for me. I feel really good about that, but the low point is that sometimes I have no time for me, my life or even for my own painting projects and sometimes I feel so tired... ☹

Q4 During your time as a professional painter you have painted subjects from all genres which is your favourite?

Uuumm, this is a difficult question to answer. I feel like all of them are my little children, but if I need to choose one, I would say "Why Can't We Be Friends" aka the elephant at the bus stop.





Q5 This is also one of my favourite pieces by you and is a collaboration between you and Antonio Fernandez Lizaso, aka Piqui. The scene depicts an old lady and the elephant waiting for a bus. Can you explain where the inspiration came from for this piece?

The inspiration for this piece came from a nice illustration that Piqui found on the internet. We used it as base to elaborate our own scene, telling a funny story about a unhappy elephant that is waiting for a bus. We also used other inspirations like a scene from the film *Forrest Gump*, that probably you'll remember... hahaha.







Q6 Can you explain to us what a normal day is like for you as a professional painter?

Well, I've two kind of days.

The usual days, when I return back from my usual work at 4:00 pm, I have dinner and start my painting work for about three hours.

The other days, weekends and when I'm on holiday, I work all day, from the 9:00am to 7:00pm.

This work also includes other hobby related tasks; not only the painting, but also cleaning figures, preparing bases, taking photos, searching for references in books...and music – tons of music!





Q7 You said in your bio your future plan is to concentrate on the Tiny Leads Miniature project. Can you tell us about this and how it came about?

Our driving force stems from a mutual passion that Piqui and myself have shared for a very long time. There are plenty of miniature brands out there – all equally as good, yet, just a very few manage to convey what we had in mind. So one fine day, we thought we would give it a try and start doing what we really like to do – the way we love it, by offering a product that would tick all the boxes as customers. In the end we are collectors and, as such, we value product quality, but not only that. We also care about the whole package; that is to say, the very product presentation, the product's design and so forth. Let's say we do what we've dreamt of since forever!



Q8 Over the years, one aspect that stands out in both Piqui's sculptures and your paintjobs, is the element of storytelling. Is this something you hope to convey in the new range?

Absolutely! All our pieces do convey an element of storytelling. We could call it our secret weapon – haha. Surely not every piece will feature the same kind of "depth", but each one will most certainly exude a special allure about it.

I'd like to thank Alex for doing this interview in what must be a very busy time. Also, later in this issue we'll have more about Tiny Leads.





By Jason 'Red' Martin

Price: 40€

Size: 120mm

Material: Resin

Available from

www.shieldwolfminiatures.com



Unboxing Shieldwolf Miniatures' Daemon Warrior Bust

Back in 2013, almost by accident I came across a company on facebook called Shieldwolf Miniatures.

A friend of mine, Paolo Tarkhov, had sculpted some pretty brutal looking orcs for them and if you know me, you'll know that I love my orcses.

Since then, I've been keeping a close eye on the works of Shieldwolf and I wasn't surprised to see that they are planning a Kickstarter in the very near future.

The Convergence

I recently painted my first bust, Banshee's Anonymous bust and enjoyed it so much, I started purchasing fantasy busts from an extremely talented sculptor from Greece called Giorgos Tsoukoudidis. Many of you have probably already seen his work painted by artists such as Petros, Kris Toad, Kyle Cruickshank and myself. Now here's where a convergence happens, that now in hindsight kind of makes sense as both Shieldwolf and Giorgos are from Greece; Shieldwolf have branched out and started

producing a series of busts sculpted by Giorgos himself. This new venture called "Monuments of Glory" sees them releasing two busts to begin with; a goblin and the one you see here the Daemon.

This piece stands 120mm tall and as with all of Giorgos' busts, it is swimming in details. A brief look at the photos straight away confirms this, with armour covered in horns, teeth, skulls, braiding, filigree, iron work, straps and buckles. The daemon has a brooding expression, almost one of sorrow, with hooded eyes, scarred features and a sour countenance. The piece is full of character and the armour and volumes of the sculpt really infer the bulk and the majesty of this demonic overlord and the pentagram symbolism leaves no uncertainty to the daemons credentials.

The bust is cast in high quality grey resin and the level of detail is simply stunning. There are no defects, air

bubbles or air holes, although there is a mould line, but it is so superficial I can almost scrape it off with my fingernail. I imagine it won't take more than ten minutes to prepare this bust ready for priming.

One of the daemons horns is stunted, which is either a deformity or has been broken in battle and he has a rather nice skull cap that covers half of his head and curves over the back of the skull, behind the ear and loops along and under his jaw bone. I believe it offers a wealth of possibilities in relation to how various artists interpret the bust; its mood, the dynamics, the volumes, colour palette and setting. It will be quite a challenge to pull off, but this bust is crying out for a lot of attention and care. I, for one, can't wait to put brush to it; perhaps you may see a step by step in a future issue.

I hope I don't embarrass Shieldwolf, but I will let you in to a little secret, which quite frankly astounded me



at the time. A bust of this size and quality purchased nowadays costs considerably more than this price tag. It was initially put on sale for 60€, but after listening to their current fan base (who are predominantly gamers and not necessarily painters) they dropped their price, this despite already receiving many orders and much interest in the busts. Not only did they drop the price, but they then refunded the difference to all those customers that had bought the bust at the higher price. I mention this because you realise with Shieldwolf Miniatures, they are not there merely to take your money with a 'don't give a damn' attitude. They have an ethos that some, if not all, of the larger miniature companies should take note from. They are hoping to build a fan base, a community who can say that not only do they produce great miniatures, but they care about service standards. They wish to engage with their customers and they are driven and passionate to deliver all of this at great value, too.

What's on the MARKET?

a regular look at hobby tools and accessories

comparison review



by Shane Rozzell

Some people would say I have a thing for paints...I'm sure my partner, Sarah would agree, but I'm more concerned with metallic paints. I'm always on the lookout for that perfect mix, colour choice and ease of use. When Alex Crisp from Darkstar Miniatures asked me to have a look at their new range of metallic paints, I jumped at the chance.



I came to the conclusion a few years ago that I didn't want to go down the NMM route. It's not that I don't like it, it's just I don't think it's realistic (Although the odd piece comes along that challenges this), so true metallic metals was the path for me. Since then, I've been constantly on the lookout for the next great advance in paints, so when a new brand appears on the market I'm eager to try it myself, regardless of what others say about them.

After the initial contact with Alex the paints turned up two days later, tightly sealed and well packaged. The full range consists of 15 colours and I was very kindly sent 12 of them for this review. The first thing you'll notice is that they don't come in the usual dropper bottle that we associate with the most popular ranges. The dropper bottles are the same diameter and fit the same racking as Vallejo, Andrea and ScaleColor pots and they also hold the same amount of paint. On closer inspection, the screw on tops work in a slightly different way. Inside the top, there is a small round recess that compresses the top of the dropper to give the paint an air tight seal. On the Vallejo type bottle there is a similar thing, but instead of the recess there is a half sphere that pushes the rim of the dropper outwards to create the seal. The problem here is that if the top is over tightened, it can split the top of the dropper and we get paint leaks and lots of mess.





Like all acrylic metallic paints, the Molten Metals are made up of three parts: the carrier which is an acrylic resin medium, the colour pigment and the metallic flakes that gives it the shine and like most other brands they tend to separate when left to stand for a while. Darkstar has thought of this and included a small agitator inside the bottle to help mix the paint when it's shaken.

Since I have gotten all these paints out, I thought I'd do a comparison as part of the review. I decided not to put them against the Mr. Color or Vallejo alcohol based paints, because they're not truly water-soluble. These paints have an advantage in that the main carrier agent is thinner than water, so the metallic flakes can be ground a lot finer; the down side is that you need specialist thinners and they're not kind to our brushes. So they'll go up against the new ScaleColor



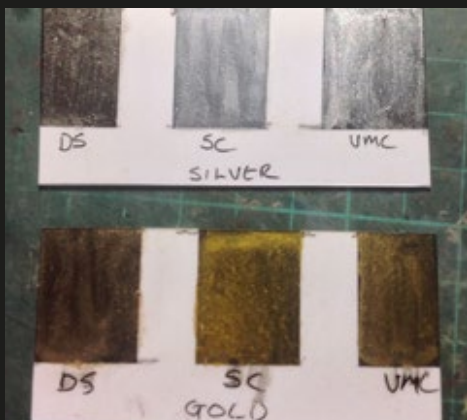
and Vallejo Model Colour which I consider to be the most popular metallic paints. Why not the model air you might ask? Well, I think they have a new formula which I don't have, so again, this would be unfair.



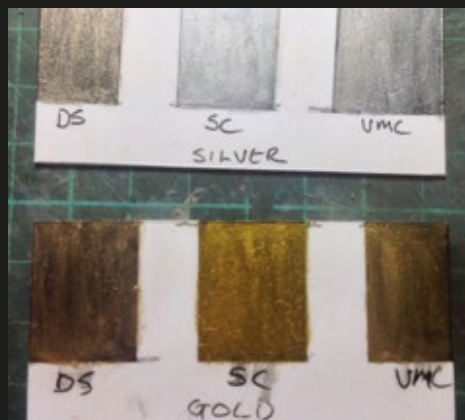
I'll use a couple of pieces of Plasticard that I have under-coated with grey primer and then airbrushed black. To make this fair, I chose two similar colours from each range; silver and gold, which will be equally diluted, with my usual mix of distilled water, Liquatex Flow Aid and Slow Dry. Please note that I'll use a normal brush, because I don't like to put metallics through my airbrush.



Each range has a dilution ratio of one part paint to two parts thinner; the first thing I notice when I mix the paint is that the Darkstar paints act very similar to the Vallejo and also have a similar size metallic flake. The Scalecolor paint is a lot smaller, but this does make them separate in the palette a lot sooner and needing constant re-mixing.



After one coat, all paints react in pretty much the same way. Because they were thinned, the coverage isn't the best and the drying times for each paint is roughly the same.



After three coats, the Scalecolor and Vallejo paints are covering better than the Darkstar, but both are separating in the palette and the VMC is drying up fast, I might have to mix some more...



After five coats, the coverage of the Darkstar silver is just as good as the two other brands, but both the Darkstar and Vallejo golds need a few more layers to get a truly opaque base.

Conclusion

In the test I was very careful not to cross contaminate the paints and to be honest the Darkstar paints worked just as well as the Vallejo. The Scalecolor paints have a much finer metallic flake and this contributed to better coverage with fewer layers, but the Darkstar brand has a lot more colour options than both the Scalecolor and Vallejo. I also think that bottle dropper is better and the addition of a paint agitator is also a good plus. Have I found the ultimate in metallic paints? Not yet, but I think that is more down to my own psyche rather than the paints. For that ultimate shine, there is the Alclad II paint range, but they have to be airbrushed and need specialist primers and varnishes, so are almost impossible for miniature figures. There is also the Mr Color buffable paints, but they need specialist thinners and also the Vallejo alcohol based paints, but again, specialty thinners make them a chore to use.

The Molten Metals range hasn't reinvented the wheel, so to speak. They are easy to use and mix well with other paints. The coverage and drying time is as expected, so there isn't any learning curve you sometimes get with

new mediums. More importantly, they give me a lot more options when choosing colours, which I'm pretty excited about and I have already decided to get the three colours I'm missing and include them in my workflow.

Pro's

- » Lots of colour choice, 15 distinct colours in the range.
- » Good dropper bottle that shouldn't split and become messy.
- » Paint agitator in the bottle to speed up the mixing of the paint.

Con's

- » The metallic flake could be smaller. They're fine for larger scale miniatures, but this could put off those that paint 32mm models.

MALFAUX

A story of a gaming board



Let's start painting – finally. The build has come to the painting stage and I've thought really hard how to cover the basic painting of the modules without it being too boring and repetitive. This article is what I've come up with.



I'll describe how I prepared every module for painting. This has mostly to do with adding wood putty to the upper sides of the modules to even them out.

I'll use one corner of a single module that has most of the textures that are featured in all the modules to explain how I painted each and every one of those.

This module (the Random Canals) is one of the first I made and still remains one of my favourites. It has all the features I'd need to showcase the basic painting of the board. The door frames are wooden, there are some metal plates (above the doors as well as on the walls themselves) and some pipes, there are plenty of brick walls as well as a few stone ones, the floor is made out of stone tiles and there is some rubble and dirt. In short, everything I'll need to showcase the basic painting process.





Planning Top Tips: Wood Putty

Wood Putty is a single-component coloured dispersion agent designed to correct minor defects, damage and uneven surfaces on wood. It can be used to effectively fill and level all uneven surfaces and faults in wood up to a depth of 1mm. I first made a couple of tools for smearing the putty over the

frames. The tools were made by just cutting the plastic that comes on a blister package. I made a narrower one, mostly for picking up and applying the putty, and a wider tool for effective smearing.

Once the putty was smeared and dry, I sanded it all down to get a nice smooth and even surface.



Brick Walls

I used a generic acrylic orange colour (I bought a 200ml tube especially for this project) to bascoat all of the brick wall areas. I decided not to undercoat the modules black, because Ana cast most of the segments in coloured plaster. I wanted to use that effect and it would speed up the painting process as well. Once the bascoat was dry, I used Flesh Wash to wash it all down. And after the wash was thoroughly dry, I used a Mechrite Red to colour

some areas of the wall segments darker. Then I dry-brushed the walls using Ryza Rust and added the final highlight by mixing Ryza Rust and pure white (generic acrylic colour). I should stress that this only concludes the basic painting of the brick walls. In one of the next issues I'll explain other effects – like moisture, moss, dirt, weathering etc.



Stone Surfaces

As the stone surfaces (walls and floors) were all cast in grey plaster, I decided to use that as a base colour to further speed up the painting process. The first step in painting was to wash everything in Vallejo Black Wash. Using my plastic palette, I made two mixtures – one that was almost pure black wash and one that was quite diluted. Since plaster is hygroscopic (meaning it sucks in water), I first applied the diluted wash to moisten the

surface. While still wet, I applied the almost pure Black Wash and it spread into the crevices of the stone pieces and segments.

Once the wash was dry, I drybrushed everything grey and added a final highlight of almost pure white. Same as with the brick walls, I'll explain extra detailing in a later issue.



Wooden Surfaces

With the basic structures painted with these 'messy' methods, I now needed to paint everything else black. 'Everything else' consisted of wooden surfaces, rubble and dirt as well as metal surfaces. Once the black

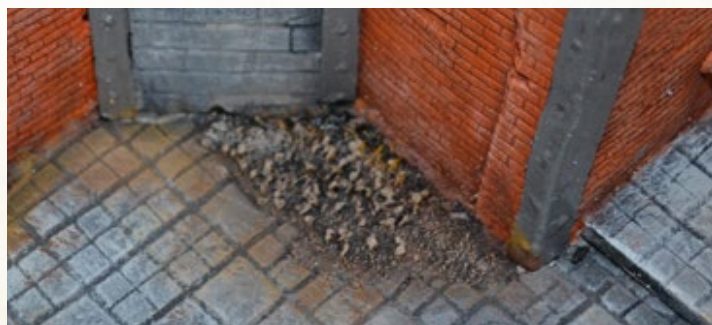
undercoat was done, I drybrushed the wooden surfaces in a generic brown (similar to the old Citadel Scorched Brown). I then drybrushed some highlights using Bleached Bone.



Rubble and Dirt

Same as with wooden surfaces, over the black undercoat I drybrushed a generic Scorched Brown look alike. To differentiate this from the wooden bits, I added an ad-

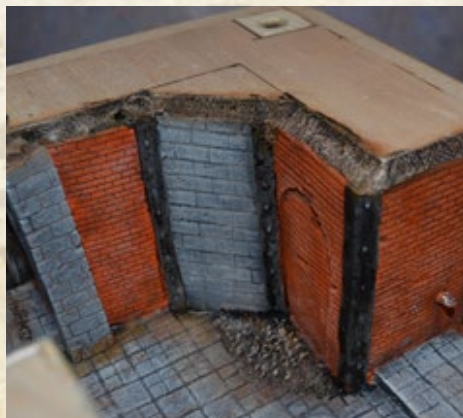
ditional Snakebite Leather layer of drybrush and finished off with Bleached Bone.



Metal Surfaces

After the black undercoat, I basecoated everything with Mithril Silver. Once it was dry, I applied a generous amount of Black Wash. I waited for the wash to dry before I drybrushed some pure Mithril Silver to finish the basic painting of the metal areas. Here, I must again

stress this is nowhere near completed. I intend to put heavy rust effects on almost all metal areas. Some copper ones will get some bronze washes before I apply the verdigris effect. But for now, that all is in the future.





This ends this (a bit shorter) article. The time consumption at this stage of the whole build is immense and the tasks are mostly repetitive. However, in the next issue I plan to showcase most, if not all, the modules at this basic painting level and start with the explanation of the extra features and detailing. As always, if you have any questions or suggestions about this build, feel free to contact us at Figure Painter Magazine (terrain@figurepaintermagazine.co.uk) and we'll try to answer your questions.

Company Spotlight



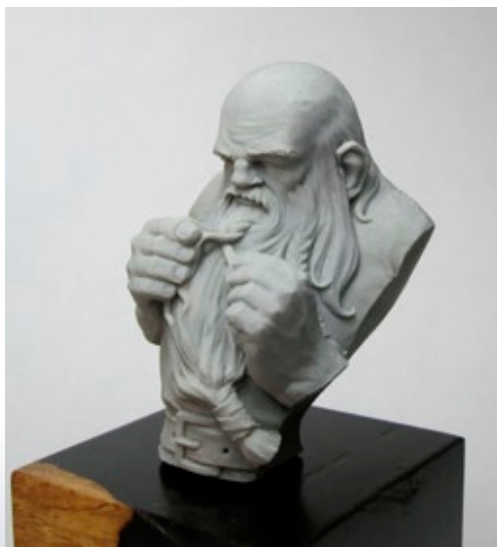
As soon as I saw the Baba Yaga mini on Putty&Paint and facebook, I knew straight away had to get a copy. It didn't matter how, but some way or another, this was a miniature I wanted in my collection.

This piece was sculpted by the ridiculously talented Lucas Piña Penichet of Spira Mirabilis fame. The first thing to say sadly is that the Baba Yaga herself is no longer

available, as it is a limited edition of just 37 casts. In this article, I'll take a good look at Baba herself, but also, I wanted to bring the spotlight to the sculptor and the work he's doing at Spira Mirabilis.



The miniature arrived very nicely wrapped and protected and for this I was very happy, as the box the piece comes in is also exquisite and it would have been a real shame if it had arrived damaged. The box (14x11x7cm) has a slide lid and the Spira Mirabilis name and logo burnt into it and on the underside has the official PEFC (Spanish Forestry Association) stamp, meaning this pale wood was derived from sustainably managed woodland, which as a tree hugger and ecologist is an appreciated gesture.



Inside the straw lined box, you find the miniature itself in two clear plastic bags, comprising three individual parts, along with a signed concept art card, with a Spira Mirabilis wax seal and limited edition authenticity, mine being number 15 of 37.

Baba Yaga, an old, yet rather gentle looking witch, is depicted dropping a hapless frog into her cauldron. The bust is cast in grey resin and the detailing is crisp; the cast itself is flawless, with no burrs or air holes. There's a small amount of mould line to clean away, but this won't be an issue at all. She stands about 40mm from the top of her head to the bottom of bust; this height is extended to about 70mm to the top her raised arm. The arm fits perfectly via a square peg and hole assembly and there is no gap whatsoever. The frog or toad (to be honest, I'm not overly sure which amphibian it is), is nicely detailed, too. My only concern is how delicate the webbed toes look, especially when it comes to removing them from the sprue. The crone's hooked nose, wrinkled skin and mischievous facial expression along with the textures and folds of her hooded robe will provide plenty of scope, opportunities and interpretations in painting. I, for one, can't wait to start this in the New Year! Lucas has sculpted a couple other busts for his own brand and has also sculpted for Voodooorx. For me, the quality in this piece is obvious and I believe he will be a name to look out for and held in revere with the likes of Sergeant BlackArt and Painting Buddha, not only for the sculpt, but the customer service, the value and the principles of trying to deliver something truly special. So my advice will be to keep an eye on Lucas, LIKE his [facebook page](#) and take the plunge the next time you see one of his releases. You won't be disappointed.

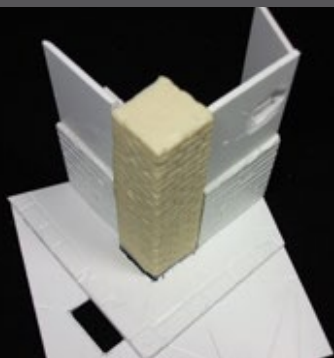


TOMORROW *Belongs to me*

by Javier Molina
(Dragonland)

So this cartoon type vignette came to fruition when I saw a photograph of a German official greeting and encouraging the ground troops defending the city of Berlin during the final days of the war. The troops pictured were just elders and children and they seemed unaware of what lay ahead of them, in those last moments.

So unleashing my imagination, I created the following scene, replacing humans with the robots magnificently sculpted by Antonio Piqui. I was clear from the start in my planning that the scene would be compact and dramatic and would visually represent any street of Berlin during this time. I made the majority of the structure of the corner/intersection with a product called Forex, which is easy to work and shape, which is also very easy to incorporate with the other materials. Both the ground and building were constructed from this material and along with using parts of resin to form the crates and boxes to block off both streets leading to the corner, I



isolated my little scene. The bags were homemade using putty and were integrated into the ground works so as to look as realistic and natural as possible.

All aspects of the vignette were designed to enhance the concept of urban warfare and anything that could be used for defence and barricades. To further strengthen the theme, windows, doors, frames, machine gun, panzerfaust and the caps of large calibre projectiles/munitions are also modelled. Slowly the scene that I envisioned was coming to life, but now I needed to add my fantastical elements to support this in the universe I had created. I used posters depicting not humans but robots. This was a lot of fun to play with and design in Photoshop. I had to retouch each one during the painting process so they fit in with the rest of the paintjob. They were then placed in a chaotic manner to compliment the composition and to appear interesting to the eye.

The detail of the paper boat was a nod towards the innocence and vulnerability of the young soldier, playing in the runoff water whilst all around war is unleashed. All of the painting was carried out with acrylics, initially applied with the airbrush, introducing strong, balanced colours that were at once realistic, but also alive with tonal differences to hint towards the fantastical element. Pigments were also used to make the ground works more realistic and to tie the figures to their landscape. I leave you now with the photographs, as I believe a picture speaks a thousand words, I hope you enjoy my work and can find something to inspire you too!





By Terry Cowell

Price: £21

Size: 8 x 17ml

Material: Acrylic paint



Unboxing ScaleColor Fantasy & Games Paint Sets

This is a general review of 3 of the recently released sets from ScaleColor. Creatures from Hell, Unnatural Flesh and Orcs and Goblins are all sets aimed towards TT gaming. They are totally compatible with the other ScaleColor ranges previously reviewed by my FPM colleagues.

The release of these paint sets was low key and I will point out that to my knowledge there was very little information about how these colours differ from previous sets or even why ScaleColor felt a need to produce a new formula at all.

The good news is that they are excellent and they have maintained the high standards set previously.

So what exactly is different? With the release of Fallen Frontiers and being the perfectionists we know them to be, they realised that the

needs for TT painting vary slightly from what is needed for display or model painting. They didn't cheat either. The alchemist in the Scale Laboratory incorporated blood, sweat and tears along with a little magic and lightning to develop a completely new formula.

They wanted the new formula to have a slightly increased glossy feel, which has been achieved. The need for a matt finish is suited to photography, but a glossy finish on a TT piece gives the colour a sharper, more vivid feel.

They wanted to give us a vibrant range of colours. This has been achieved in abundance. Bright colours indicate intense emotions and this has been captured particularly well in the Creatures from Hell set.

They want the paint to be more durable and, in honesty, I haven't tested this. Elias Alonso Herranz told me that the resin used is more durable and more suited to increased handling. (Acrylic resin is used as a binder to hold the paint pigment to the surface).



It's important to note that while the paints are aimed towards TT miniatures, they work in perfect harmony when used alongside ScaleColor paints. They recognised that it would be useful to have increased gloss when painting sweaty skin, shiny leather, etc.

The attributes retained are the suitability for airbrush and brush. They have managed this to a standard that no other paint company has in my view and in terms of painting for the TT, this will be a huge asset.

Density – as shown in previous reviews, the paint coverage is excellent and the new ranges are no different. I tested them using water and found a 1 paint to 4 water ratio, which is enough to achieve a satisfying opaque coverage in a couple of coats. Here are the colour set choices in summary. The Orcs and Goblin set offers a perfectly balanced set of colours that complement the hue, value and intensity you decide on. Warm and cool greens with a complimentary reddish pink.

The Creatures set is full of passionate colours, full of life and of course the Undead set is the opposite, pastel and putrid tones that somehow retain a vibrant feel.

I did find that at first glance, the Greenskin Flesh looked identical to Misfits Green, but I used a little trick

taught to me by Alfonso Giraldes and dragged both colours through a little white paint. This helps distinguish the properties and you can clearly see the Misfits is a cooler tone.

There are a couple of areas for improvement. The slight paint separation you have with some of the new bottles remains. It's a small issue worth putting up with for such fantastic paints, but it's there nonetheless. I am happy to report that a glass bead in the bottle resolves this without the need for frenzied shaking.

In addition, (someone needs to point it out and it might as well be me) the pictorial painting instructions that come with the sets are not very good. The language perhaps doesn't translate very well and while I admit the idea is a very good one, I don't feel the process lends itself to such brief explanations.

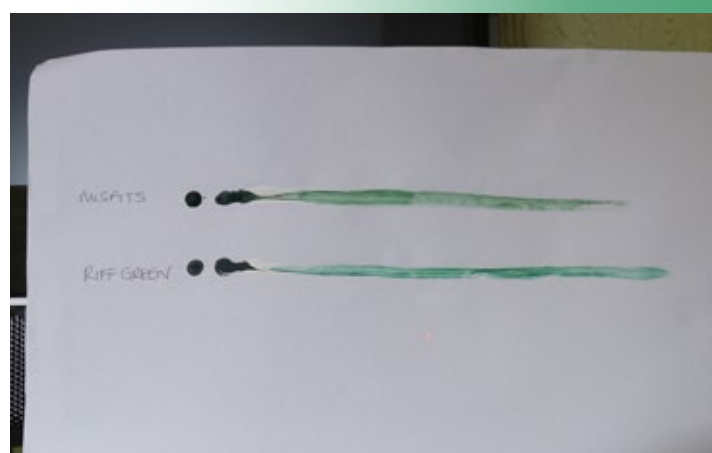
While I'm here. I feel it's my duty to mention the taste. What can I say? Cruelty to brush lickers... yuuuuuuuk!

Conclusion

My final verdict is that Scale Game Color alongside the ScaleColor ranges are without a doubt the best range available. They really do flow through an airbrush as though designed for that purpose and hand brush also as if designed specifically for that. The colours are amazing and the density perfect.

I would suggest anyone who hasn't tried them to do so; even if you use other paints, you may enjoy the results if you try them. If you are at Adepticon or GENCON this year, go and find the Scale stand and ask them for a demo.

As I wrote this article, the set of Elven Blues was released and I have it on good authority we can look forward to some Beast Browns next.





TABLETOP SCENERY ON A BUDGET

Empire Tower for Warhammer Fantasy Battle

I grew up reading White Dwarf magazine, back in the good old days when they were jam-packed with all the hobby goodness.

There were various articles on how to assemble, convert and paint your armies as well as a plethora of articles on building various gaming scenery. Most of my love for this part of the hobby and basic knowledge dates back to this era.

However, when GW started making their own scenery plastic kits, these articles all but disappeared. Now, if you're lucky, you get a huge kit bash of a building for which you'd need to spend a 1.000 quid to build.

What I'd like to do with this (hopefully) series of articles is to show you how to build good looking scenery for your tabletop wargames. The projects here will be based on two principles:

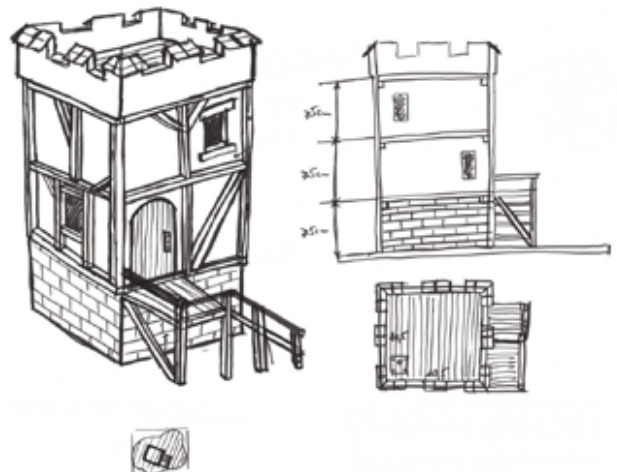
1: Cheapness of materials and their accessibility.

2: Time – most gamers like playing more than scenery building, so I'll try and limit the projects here in what can be finished within a single weekend.

The first terrain in this series is a tower for Warhammer Fantasy Battles I built as a commission last weekend. The client wanted an Empire-looking tower that would be able to fit his units on the rooftop, so I decided to make the flat surface of the tower about 10.5 x 10.5cm. This would ensure that a whole 5 x 5 unit of 20mm

based models or 4x4 unit of 25mm based models would fit snugly. When we agreed on the basic idea of the terrain, I drew a quick sketch I'd used to showcase my idea to the client, but also to make my job of determining the amount of materials I'd need for the build.

As you can see on the sketch, the tower is about 20cm high with a top-down view area of 13.5 x 13.5cm (with the unit area of 10.5 x 10.5 on the roof). To enter the tower, the minis would need to ascend the wooden structure with a staircase.



Materials needed

- » 5mm thick balsa wood (they come in 10.5 x 100cm planks) – 2.5GBP
- » 1.5mm or 2mm thick balsa wood (they also come in 10.5 x 100cm planks – I'd need only a small piece for the detailing) – 1GBP
- » 15 x 15mm balsa wood slat (they come in 1 meter long slats) – 2.5 GBP
- » 4mm thick MDF (size: 25 x 25 cm for the base, as they usually come in 210 x 270 mm sheets. I had already some handy, but if you don't, this material (or really similar) can be found on the back sides of old cupboards. I'm not saying ruin your wife's/mother's! If you don't have access to any old furniture, you can also go to a local art store and purchase a [simple A4 \(or bigger\) glass frame](#). They usually have MDF backgrounds.) – 2GBP
- » Plaster of Paris (but any kind of plaster will do) – 1GBP
- » a small piece of card and a small piece (3cm) of 2mm insulated wire

» some sand and static grass

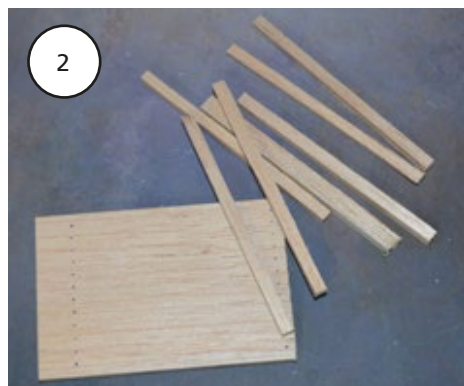
Tools needed (most of you will already have these handy)

- » scalpel blade
- » modeller's saw
- » jigsaw
- » sanding paper
- » PVA glue, superglue
- » water resistant marker
- » ball point pen (old!)
- » paints and brushes (at least one for drybrushing)

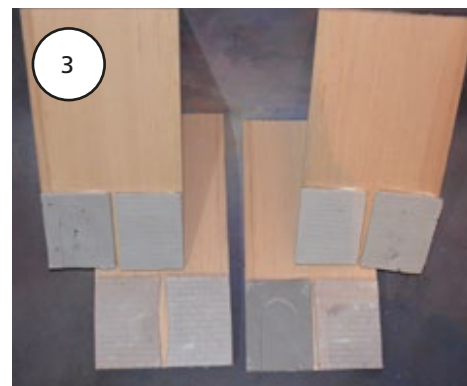
Grand sum spent on materials – around 10GBP.



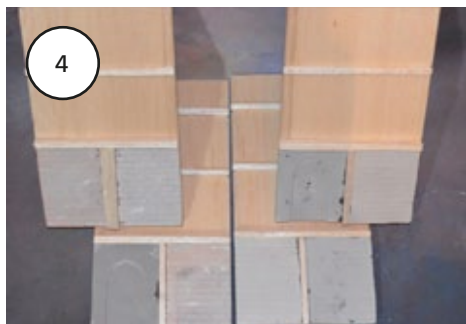
1. First, I cut the 5mm thick balsa wood into four 20cm long and one 10,5 cm long strips. The four would be my walls and the shorter 10,5 x 10,5 cm will serve as the floor of the roof.



2. I then cut the remainder of the 5 mm thick balsa into 5mm wide strips.



3. From the Malifaux table build, I had some plaster walls left over so I glued two of them to the bottom of each wall. I'm guessing you don't have any of those spare, so here is what I would do. A bit later on in this article, you'll see how the planks and wooden slats will form a sort of basin (where my plaster walls are glued). I'd suggest just mixing some plaster and pouring it straight in. You can also, prior to pouring, smear some PVA glue on the balsa wall just so the plaster sticks better. The layer of plaster should be 3-5 mm thick and once it is dry, just use a pick to engrave the stone pattern.



4. Using wooden strips, I cut from the remainder of the 5 mm thick balsa, made the basic wooden beams and glued them to the walls.



5. I drew a basic outline of the supporting beams, windows, doors and crenellations with a water resistant marker.



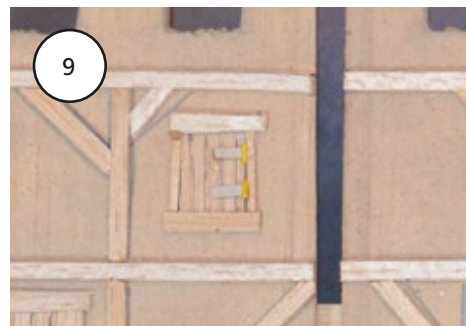
6. Using the rest of the wooden strips, I made those supporting beams. Doors and windows will be closed and will have wooden blinds on them. By using the old ball point pen, I engraved wooden beams into the 5 mm thick balsa wood wall. In the end, I cut the crenellations.



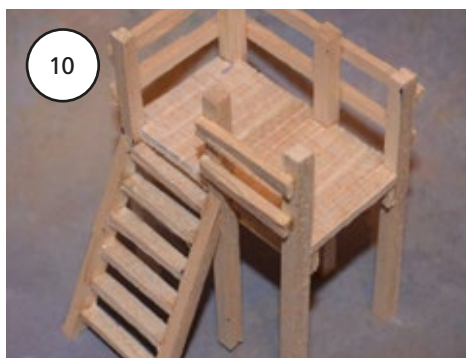
7. Cut the card into 2mm wide strips to represent the metal support for the blinds and the door. Make small blobs with PVA to represent bolts. (Optionally, you could just use stick pins.)



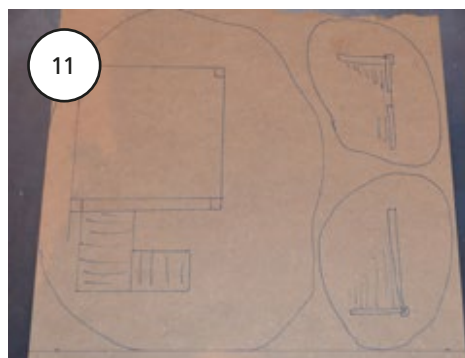
8. Using a small brush, cover the walls with a watered down PVA glue and sprinkle the smallest grain sand you own (in my case, it is sand for chinchillas).



9. Cut the wire into 2,5mm long pieces and glue them to the side of the windows/doors to represent hinges.



10. Using balsa wood strips, I made the wooden staircase structure. It can be glued with PVA glue, but I used superglue just to speed things up.



11. With my marker, I then drew the basic shape of the terrain on the MDF base. I first drew the top-down area of the tower and the staircase so I can get a feel of how big the base should be.



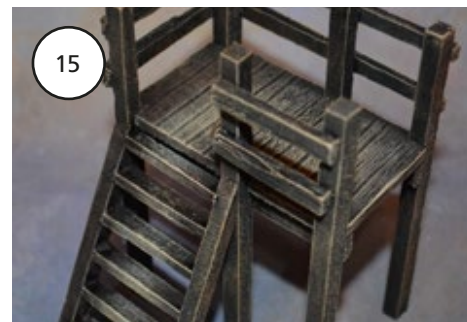
12. I cut the base with my jigsaw and used sandpaper to sand down the edges.



13. As the wooden structure might get in the way of painting the tower, I decided to paint it separately. I undercoated it black



14. I drybrushed it in dark brown (a shade similar to the old Citadel Scorched Brown).



15. The final highlights were dry-brushed with Bleached Bone. Heavier coats were done in the middle of the walkway for extra effect.



16. The rooftop was done by engraving a planked floor onto the 10,5 x 10,5 cm balsa wood. The wooden hatch was done from 1,5mm balsa wood.



17. Once I cut the 15 x 15mm balsa slat into four 22cm long pieces, the tower was ready for assembly.



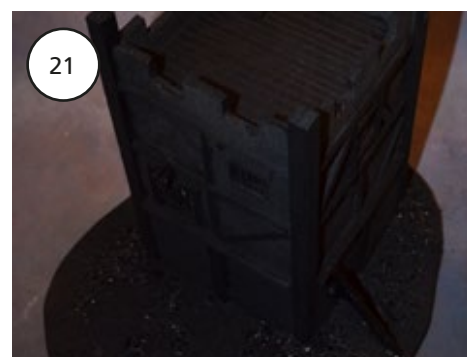
18. When I was satisfied with the position on my base, I glued the whole tower with superglue. Note that there are markings for the wooden beams of the staircase on the base.



19. I then covered the whole base, making sure I miss the markings for the staircase with slightly watered down PVA glue (just so it spreads easier). Once it was covered, I sprinkled several kinds of gravel over it ensuring that the smallest grain formed the path leading to the start of the staircase.



20. I added some GW bits for extra effect.



21. It was painting time. Black undercoat.



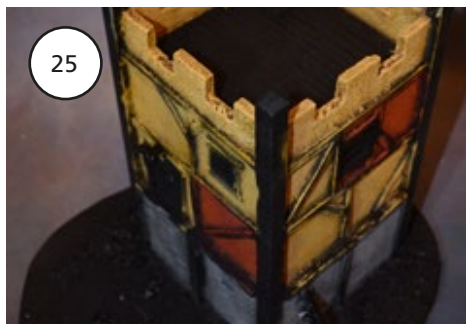
22. I painted the walls and the path brown.



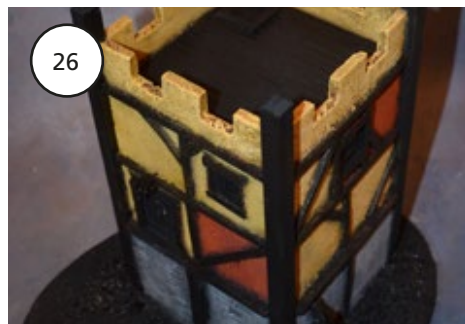
23. Using Snakebite Leather and Mechrite Red, I drybrushed the walls randomly.



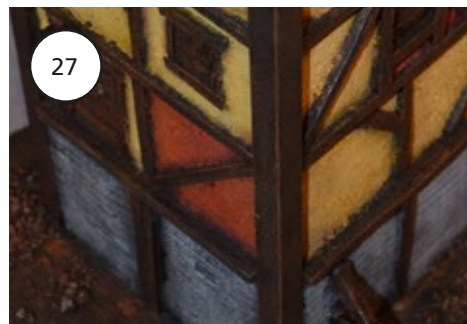
24. I highlighted the walls by adding white to the Snakebite Leather and orange to the red.



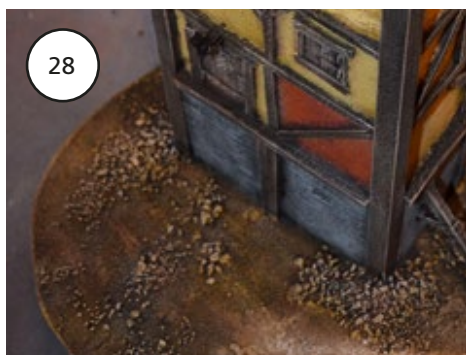
25. With a grey colour, I drybrushed the stone wall foundation.



26. I added white for the final highlight and using pure black I covered all the wooden bits I painted over by accident.



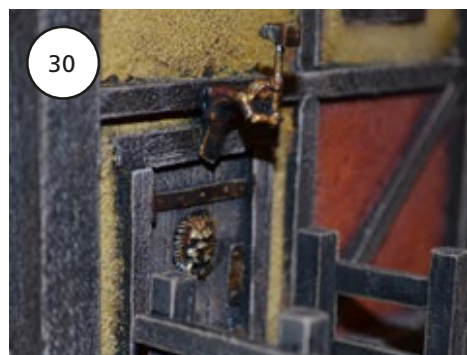
27. I drybrushed brown onto the wooden bits and the base.



28. I added the final highlight to the base and the wooden bits with Bleached Bone.



29. I finally added the wooden staircase and again recoated the metal bits in black.



30. I painted the metal bits pure Mithril Silver and added a couple of coats of Badab Black and finally a coat of Ogryn Flesh Wash.

31. To finish the piece, I added some static grass (gluing it with watered down PVA glue).



BEST OF BRITISH



By Terry Cowell

Welcome back to the 'Best of British.' In this issue, we talk to John Keys. I have known John for a couple of years and feel fortunate to count him as a friend.

with John Keys



John is genuinely one of our hobby's nice guys, but I confess to being a fan of his work before ever becoming acquainted. John has a style that is very individual and the following interview goes a little way towards explaining the reasons for this.

1. Please introduce yourself to the FPM readers. Tell us how long you've been painting and where do you fit into the painting community?

Hi FPM, I'm John Keys, aka Megazord_man and painting has been my passion for a little over 4 years now. Hardly a day goes by without me picking up a brush and certainly a day doesn't go by without me thinking about our art in some way. Having said that, it's a hobby for me; something that relaxes and takes me away from the pressures of work, which as some of you already know is unusual in that I design spacecraft and satellites.

If I take a step back, I like to think I fit somewhere in the outfield of painting; certainly if you look at the British painting scene. The reason for this is that I haven't come from a GW influenced background, which means that I've comfortably taken up a more European style of painting with a strong zenital lighting scheme. Due to that, I've felt quite easy venturing into Europe alongside just a handful of other UK painters. Through this I'm happy to say that I've met many fantastic painters from around the world and am lucky enough to call many of them friends.

2. *Do you have a wider interest in art and what is it about miniature painting that feels right for you?*

I do have a wider interest in art in general and often find myself at Tate Modern taking in the contemporary exhibitions, which are my thing really. One day I'd love to see an exhibition of miniature art there, how crazy would that be! Other than the odd pencil or watercolour sketch, I've not ventured outside of miniature painting myself; somehow our medium just speaks to me. Notice I've used the word art a few times already and for me miniature painting is art, even if it's not in the mainstream sense of the word.

3. *You are affectionately known on some forums as Mega-zord, How or where did this originate?*

Some time ago, I used to sell Power Ranger toys on ebay. Actually, I was recycling toys my son no longer wanted or needed. It took over little by little and before I knew it, I was buying and selling vast quantities. I changed my name on Ebay to megazord_man to keep in with the products I was selling and somehow it stuck. Actually, I wish I'd called myself something different when I started painting, but I guess it's too late now! To see what I was doing, check out my website www.megazord.net!

4. *Tell us about the awards you have won so far which of these has brought you the most pleasure?*

2014 has been very good to me from the awards point of view. This started at Salute with a 2nd in large scale with Sapo just behind Luke's lovely Minotaur bust. Soon after that moving on to a Historic Master bronze with Oddball at World Expo in Stresa, then following that up with a gold medal at Euromilitaire. The end of the year saw me taking a silver medal in the master fantasy section at Monte San Savino. They all have meant a great deal to me, but the silver at Monte gave me the greatest pleasure of all. The standard of the work there was incredible and receiving that recognition when my mouth had been agape with admiration for most of the entries was an incredible feeling.

5. *Your success has definitely meant you have become well known on the competitive circuit. What do these events mean to you? Are they a chance to measure your skills, a way of motivating personal development as an artist or just something to do on a Sunday?*

For the most part there are three reasons I do these competitions: They give me focus and a target to aim for, so from a schedule point they help me a great deal. Knowing that I want to do well and push beyond my current skill level, they also help to develop my learning and ambition. But most importantly they're a great place to



meet friends and to see incredible artwork. As a sideline, they have helped to plot my progress as a painter, but that's really a secondary benefit and for sure I know that I can't become complacent about them.

6. *Do you feel your painting has developed into a personal style and, if so, how would you describe it?*

To be honest, I've not really thought about my style and what makes a John mini into a John mini. Superficially, it's a fairly limited palette with a few spots of contrasting colour mixed with some grime and weathering, but that's mainly due to the dark subject matter of the steampunk or zombie apocalypse pieces I've often painted. I am certainly heavily influenced by Chris Octave / Apa / Monkeyman7x, Massive Voodoo and increasingly David Zabrocki.

7. *Having had the good fortune to visit your home studio (John's kitchen), I was surprised to note that your selection of paints is very modest compared to most artists I have visited. I can't help wonder if this has assisted your development and understanding of colour alchemy?*





Personally I'm not so sure the limited nature of the selection available to me has helped my understanding of colours. Rather (and here's another area where I'm set apart from many other painters) I actively seek out tuition, formally or informally. We're very lucky in the UK as for the last couple of years John Harrison / Dark Messiah has started the painting weekend workshops. I'd recommend these in a heartbeat, as it's through attending these (and hard work, of course) I've developed and pushed myself forward. Via this I've learnt that the greatest painters work with light, more so than I ever thought possible.

8. *Many of our FPM readers that follow you on social media will notice that each time you start a new project you seem to go in an entirely different direction than the project before. From small miniatures to bust, from forced perspective to simple framed display miniatures. Can you provide an insight into your thoughts regarding this?*

As I said before, I paint for pleasure and for learning. Mixing things up is a great way to do both, whilst keeping things fresh. Sometimes I get an idea, like I want to contrast dirty with clean or to mix scales and then I'll find a project that helps me realise this. Jumping from one type of project to another can be tricky and at times frustrating, but I'm sure it's helped me to improve and develop. For example, I recently finished a large scale bust of an Afghan tribesman and then immediately went

on to a 28mm Hellboy goblin. For a few days that really freaked me out as I struggled to adjust between the scales but having done this a number of times already I know that with patience it works out OK in the end.

9. *Would you describe yourself as a disciplined painter focusing on a single project until perfected or do you have multiple projects on the go?*

I'm an extremely disciplined painter, almost refusing to start anything new until the current project is finished. This gets to the point where I even like to finish each section of a miniature before the next. I get away with that as I have a strong idea of what I'm trying to achieve before I start the project. In my mind I'm ticking off sections as I go, normally completing one or more areas in a single session. Yet at the same time, I know it's not good practice in general terms and maybe something I should address in the future.



10. *You are without doubt very generous in the way you share your painting processes. You don't hold back with the WIP pictures and always attempt to fully answer questions about your work. This can be quite a time commitment at times so what's in it for you?*

I know I produce many WIP pictures during a project; it seems that's just my process now and one that's not particularly common. Doing so helps me to see what I've painted in a different way and via the feedback I see things through other people's eyes. It's amazing how often this improves the final result. During that process, I'm often asked questions and try to answer openly and honestly. For me, we're like a big family and sharing helps the soul.

However, you'll probably notice that I rarely give much feedback on other people's work. I'd love to be able to do so but I find it so, difficult and perplexing. My eye sees the passion behind a paint job and my mind focuses in on that, as such I find it really tough to dispassionately see the actual paint that's simply in front of me.

In my mind that's a real failing and I've spoken to a few other great painters about it; for sure it's something I'd like to improve in the future. Maybe some FPM readers can push me for some feedback!



11. *What projects are you currently working on and can you reveal any to look out for that you will be working on this year?*

I'm about to finish Alucard from Infamy miniatures (one of my favourite ranges), with just the base to complete. That was a great miniature to paint, as I really noticed his personality coming out of the sculpture the more I worked on him. Sometimes the character is obvious, but in this case it grew as he was painted. As I type this I can honestly say I have no idea what I'm going to paint next! I want to try something metallic, but what exactly I don't know – I'll rifle through that large box you mentioned to find something suitable, but only when the current project is finished.

12. *Have you set yourself any painting goals for the year ahead or are you going to be a rolling stone and just follow the brush wherever it points you?*

The only goal I've set myself is to continue to improve and enjoy the process. At one level my painting is as simple as that!





13. Finally, what advice would you care to pass on to anyone wishing to push up to that next level? Is there any advice you can recall made a difference to you during your own pursuit of perfection?

There are a few things that I would suggest for anyone wishing to push to the next level. Firstly, have ambition; so many times I see people settling for something within their skill level.

Have ambition and use this to push yourself harder and further than you thought possible. Then seek meaningful feedback, find out what you're doing right and those areas you need to develop. Think about that and then do something different.

I clay pigeon shoot and after you've missed 10 in a row, you realise that you've been pointing the shotgun in the same place each time. Why do you think there will be a different outcome (i.e. the clay pigeon will break) if you simply repeat the same steps each time having missed the first time? Learn that you can affect the outcome if you do something different.

Lastly, learn how you can develop by going on plenty of training courses such as the fantastic ones from Roman / Massive Voodoo or the ones from John Harrison / The Weekend Workshop. Simply put – they help you to improve!



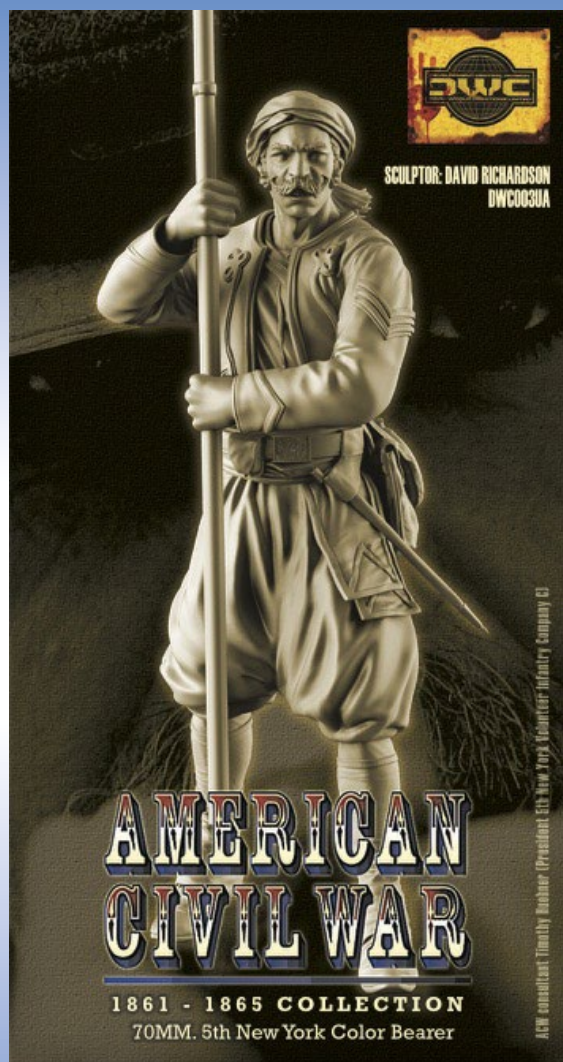
While John Keys has a completely different painting style to last issue's 'BoB', Scott Hockley, it's already becoming apparent to me that something they share is a commitment to the pursuit of perfection, an understanding of an approach that is personal and the resolve to take on fresh challenges with each new project.

Next month we have another wonderful UK artist lined up and I must confess it's becoming a real highlight to scratch the surface and learn more about how each individual goes about making the magic happen.

The very best EXPOSÉ

new releases

50



5th New York Color Bearer

Company: Dark World Creations

Size: 70mm

Contact: www.darkworldcreations.com

Saint George

Company: Michael Kontraros Collectibles

Size: 75mm

Contact: [via Indiegogo campaign](#)



Agustina De Aragon 1808

Company: Scale 75

Size: 75mm

Contact: www.scale75.com



[MJDG12-002] 1/12 Resin bust

DG
artwork

ROMAN CENTURION

AD 9

Sculpted by Dae-Hyeong, Kim(DG-Artwork)

Painted by Man-Jin, Kim



51

SUPER DEFORMED WWII PANTHER TYPE G WITH PANZER COMMANDER



Roman Centurion, AD 9

Company: MJ Miniatures

Scale: 1:12th

Contact: www.mj-miniatures.co.kr

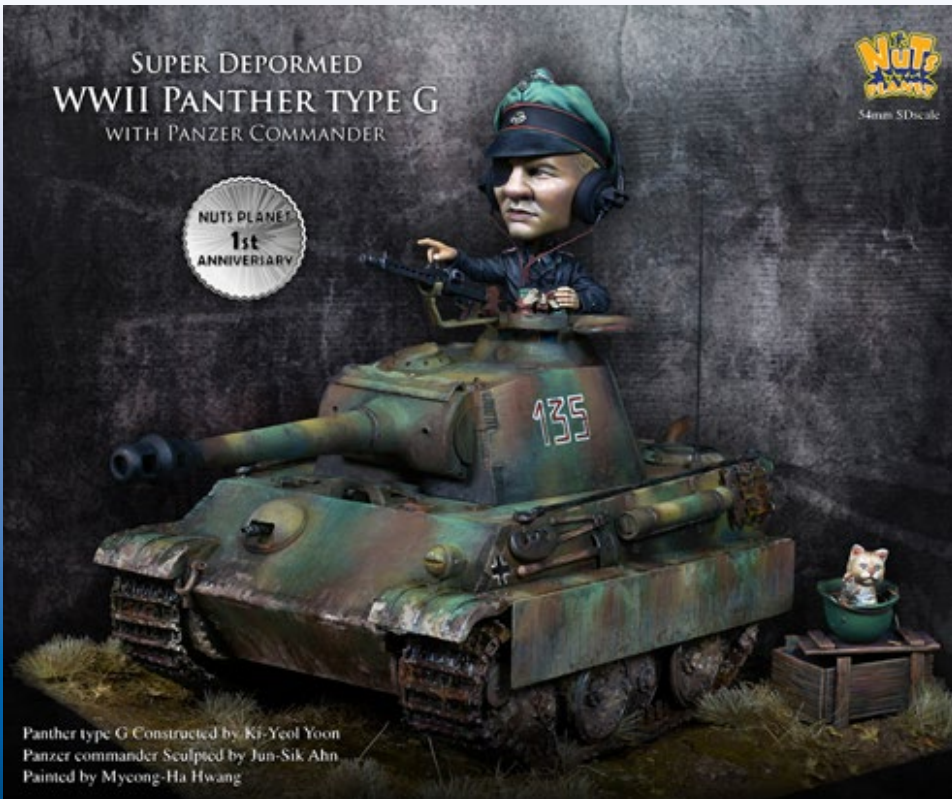
Panther type G Constructed by Ki-Yeol Yoon
Panzer commander Sculpted by Jun-Sik Ahn
Painted by Myeong-Ha Hwang

SD WWII Panther Type G

Company: Nuts Planet

Size: 54mm

Contact: www.nutsplanet.com



Dragon Lady

Company: Andrea Miniatures

Size: 54mm

Contact: www.andreaeurope.com



Citi Def Trooper

Company: Dark World Creations

Size: 70mm

Contact: www.darkworldcreations.com





Itela Justina

Company: [Legendarion](#)

Size: 100mm

Contact: [legendarion.com](#)

Alone in the Forest

Company: [Clay Dreams](#)

Size: 1/10th

Contact: [www.claydreamsminiatures.com](#)



[claydreamsminiatures.com](#)

EXCLUSIVE MODELS



LIMITED EDITIONS

Back in October, I got an facebook invite from Iguazzu to LIKE a new page – Tiny Leads. At the time, the page consisted of a logo and, to behonest, not much else. Over the following weeks more and more clues were slowly revealed as to the nature of this new project.



Maria Fernandez Lizaso



Antonio Fernandez Lizaso



Alex Varela

What I know so far is that this new project boasts the talents of Maria Fernandez Lizaso, aka Cuxi (concept artist), Antonio Fernandez Lizaso, aka Piqui (sculptor) and Alex Varela, aka Iguazzu (figure painter). In addition to this, the project launched on the first of December 2014, producing limited edition miniatures that merge realms of fantasy and history. We have recently been treated to some delightful sketches from Maria and now we are all eagerly waiting for further developments.

I'm lucky enough to count Iguazzu as one of my friends and I thought why not ask if he would like to do a piece for FPM and tell us a little more about Tiny Leads, so let's see what I managed to garner from the man himself.

Q1. Alex, can you take us through what each member uniquely brings to the team and how each of you contribute to the creative process from concept, design, sculpt?

We all try our best to bring about something unique to our brand, although I'd say we basically are one. Brainstorming is key since we all have our very personal and unique way of dealing with the same topic or subject. Maria is our concept artist. She indeed brings about a two dimensional vision to each



piece by using an array of techniques such as oil painting, watercolour, engraving and so on, to narrow the gap between art and the user using the miniature as a nexus. This could well be seen as a bonus for those interested in Tiny Leads, as they will end up with a tiny work of art and not just a miniature piece.

Piqui, on the other hand, is our sculptor. Even though all suggestions are welcome, he definitely has the final say in sculpture, not only on matters relating to his own work, but also on all the freelancers' work. He's a relentless source of inspiration and ideas besides being the creative mind of Tiny Leads.

I'm in charge of the miniature painting as well. Same as with Piqui, my responsibility is to supervise this area, making sure it conveys all the values Tiny Leads is built on and what we are trying to create and express. Last but not least is Raul Varela, aka ShonenCMYK. He is our brand and graphic designer based in London.

Q2. With the plethora of miniatures on the market and an almost overwhelming flood of crowdfunding campaigns, was your decision to merge fantasy/historic genres a conscious decision or one that was natural and spontaneous, taking in the team's mixed influences?

One of our objectives was indeed to offer something different. Given the impressive market supply today, we thought we could vie with other brands by bringing forth something unique that might differ from the all the rest. By eliminating categories and shrinking the fine boundary lines between fantasy and history, we have been doing exactly what we wanted, without having to compromise. Influences? Everything and nothing, really.

Q3. I know you have launched the project yourself without any crowdfunding; how do you envisage Tiny Leads developing in the future?

Tiny Leads has an established business plan for 2015 that also sets the path for the years to come and this is something we'll continue to monitor and work to stay ahead. What is certain is that in 2015, we are aiming to impress you guys and leave our work to speak for itself. It's all down to hard work, something we are not scared of at all!

Q4. Something that seems to work well for some other companies (Blacksmith Miniatures, Aradia, etc) is to collaborate with other artists. Will you have guests working with you in the future and are there any interesting collaborations in the pipeline?

Yes. As a matter of fact, almost all the sculptors collaborating with us are freelancers. Piqui will only sculpt one piece per year. Other works will be created by sculpting masters such as Pedro Fernández, Antonio Meseguer, Dae Hyoung Kim, among others. As for the painting, I will be the one responsible for it, even though there might be some special collaborations in the future.

Q5. We all love going to shows, meeting up with fellow painters, entering the competitions and of course spending our hard earned pennies on our resin habit. Do you have plans for a trade stall at one of the shows in the new year, maybe Salute or Euromilitaire?

Yes, our idea is to take part in certain events as a trader. The main event will be represented by the Leganes Show taking place in Madrid, where we will officially



make our debut as a brand, along with two new releases. Besides that, we plan on exhibiting our work at Euromilitaire and at Scale Model Challenge.

Q6. As it turns out, my own copy of the busts arrived today, so with time on my side, I have added a few more questions. Firstly, I just want to say how impressed I am with the quality of the product, from the beautiful box, to the art cards and the minis themselves. Was that a decision you made early on, to produce a premium product?

First, we are really glad to hear you like our product. Creating something that can be defined as a premium product for the most demanding collectors, like ourselves, is one of the foundations Tiny Leads is built on. We tried our best to make sure every little detail is right, setting high quality standards. We do value our customers' opinion. If we can't provide you with the very best we can do...then we won't even do it at all.

Q7. Piqui's sense of fun and quirkiness as a sculptor really comes through on each bust, they're cartoonish and really stylised. Was this planned from the start, to offer

painters and collectors something different from what was currently available on the market?

As previously said, everything finds a special place at Tiny Leads, from more classic sculptures to cartoonish pieces such as the busts. I can't really delve much more into this without revealing any surprises, but I guess that our busts set proved to be quite unexpected. In November, Tiny Leads will showcase a piece that will break the pre-established "play" rules in the miniature system!

Q8. So what's next for Tiny Leads in 2015? Will the sets of busts be a recurring theme?

No, the busts set was a special edition. For the time being, there's nothing similar to it in the pipeline. What will follow will be mainly 75 mm single pieces and 1/10 single busts. All of them will be limited edition of only 150 pieces coming with a series of accessories.



MINIATURE HEROES

Did you know that we are the largest stockist of
Reaper Miniatures in the UK.

Over 3700 separate products either in stock or
available to preorder.



Look Into The Void

by Christoph Blumenthal



PRO

The concept for a lecture hall in which scientists examine some demon-frog was born in the making of 'Papa Noi-gul's Carnival' in 2013. The building of the hall took some time due to the nature of gluing wood together and I started with the first floor last winter. As the wooden structure took some time, all the figures and details were made in 2 or 3 months. The giant was made by graving plastic and a little putty to smoothen some areas.

The flasks and bottles with creatures are for the most part made of real glass. This was useful, because I could heat them up, without destroying them. I did quite some research to find the right shapes for the distillation flasks. I did not want some kind of "fantasy laboratory" with clustered pipes and stuff, that does not make sense. The spotlight-candle might work that way I build it. I do not know – I never saw one, but the concept is basically like any other electric spotlight I think.

I painted the whole thing basically with wet in wet acrylics (figures) and air-brush (the panelling on the walls). On both I then brought the shades in with brushwork. So I had absolute control of where the light would not shine.

I started painting 10 days before delivering it to the contests. "Look Into The Void" made gold on the Scale Model Challenge and was in my display at Monte San Savino Show which got gold in Fantasy Master Ambience.



For a longer “making of” visit: dievincis.blogspot.de. If you are interested in my works feel free to contact me: paintslayerworks@gmail.com

Regards

Christoph

[Putty&Paint](#) & [CoolMiniorNot](#)



Peace and Tranquility

by Jeff Burns "Tinman"



PRO

When I first bought the kit, it wasn't the geisha that really caught my eye. It was the bridge. I envisioned a complete Japanese garden with a pond, koi fish, the bridge going over with and a cherry blossom tree in the background. One thing I have learned from the painting community is you need a great base to present your figure. It's the story that surrounds the main character and can really take a piece to the next level. I have never done anything like this, so this was going to be a challenge. I have to thank Massive Voodoo for their tutorials and Riusuke Fukahori for his incredible art, for this piece would never have gotten completed without them.

The base took more than a month. I have fifteen layers of resin for the pond where I painted the five fish (at three layers each) at different depths. They are all facing the food the Geisha as dropped in the water for them. I used a slow cure resin seeing I didn't want to have bubbles trapped throughout. I would do a layer in the evening before bed and when I got home from work the next day I could work on the next layer.

The cherry blossom tree took two tries to finish. I used a dried Bonsai tree for the trunk and I was lucky that my wife grows a little flower in our garden called Baby's Breath. The flowers grow in little clusters and have stiff branches (which will become the branches of the tree when we attach the clusters to the bonsai). I took a bunch of the flowers and dried it upside down for 8/9 days. I did this for a few reasons. First, fresh flowers look better initially but only





last 3 days after airbrushed and began to shrink and wilt. So I found this out the hard way and had to start again. Second, being dried, they shrink & hold their shape perfectly so it was easier to see how many clusters to attach to the bonsai so the "tree" looks full. To attach the clusters, I cut most of the branches off the bonsai and drilled little holes to glue the flower's stems into it (gluing dried stems is much better; it holds way better than on fresh stems – they kept falling out when they were fresh). I then went back and drilled more holes carefully to fill the spots that needed more flowers. I am guessing there are more than 400 little flowers on the tree.

The geisha herself was the easiest part to finish, despite changing my ideas for her colors on her Kimono about 4 times. I did have to reposition her body and head (I had to re-sculpt her neck) so she would face towards the front of the pond, but that wasn't difficult compared to the other stuff I had to do.

This piece was extremely challenging but also extremely rewarding when it was completed. I look forward to next challenge... Thanks for looking!

Jeff B.

Aka. Tinman

PUTTY & PAINT

US WWII Paratrooper

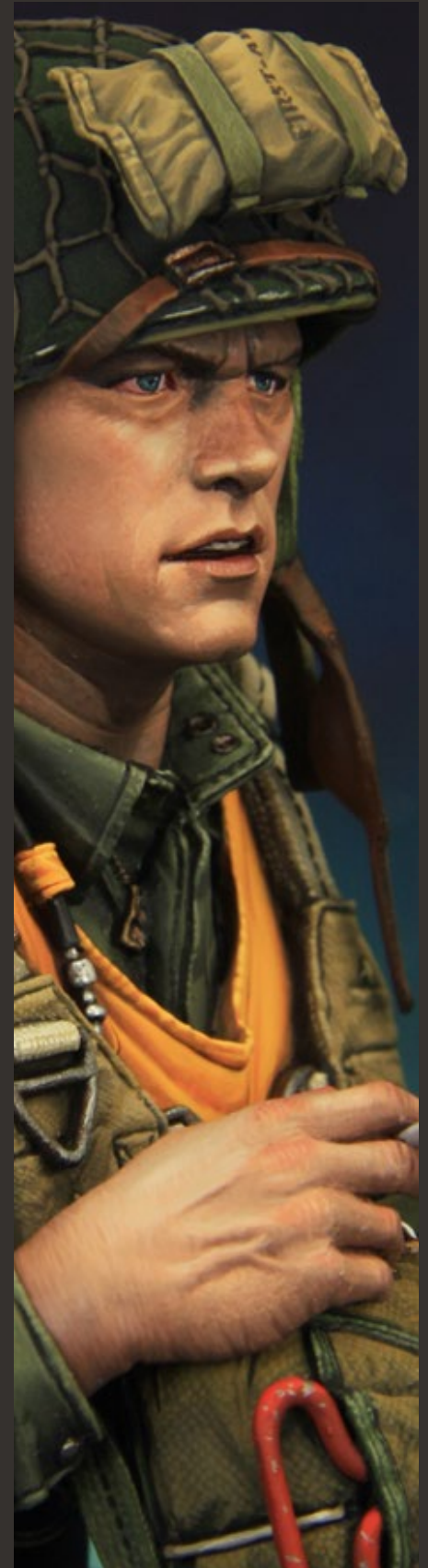
by Kirill Kanaev



PRO

62







Price: £19.40

Size: 17ml

Material: Acrylic paint

Available from:

scale75.com



Unboxing ScaleColor Black & White Paint Set

In this issue, I'd like to take a closer look at the ScaleColor Black and White paint set.

As usual, it consists of 8 pots, again 17ml each and have the same basic features as the previous sets; good covering power, extremely matt finish, good transparency if thinned with water without leaving spots. This is thanks to a very fine pigment. All in all, a very interesting range of colours.

As I have said in my previous reviews, the sets all have some very good features and are very versatile, allowing you to paint a wide range of materials and effects. This is also true of these black and white tones. It would seem unlikely, with a set of paints going from black to white, that they could offer much to an artist; after all you can easily mix various shade of grey, but the reality is very different. They offer the possibility to give life to a very large selection of fabrics, animal skins or furs and human hair. You could even paint some "Sin City" or "black & white cinema" style effects, proving the hues are not

just simply "grayish". They also make it very easy to add depth to our subjects.

As you can see from the [YouTube video](#) (if you haven't watched yet, what are you waiting for?), the Scale75 staff used this set mainly with an airbrush with an excellent outcome and finished look. I'm used to painting with brush only, so before continue, you should read my review remembering that.

Opening and shaking pots for the first time, I had again the problem with mixing, but luckily less than before. Just to be sure, again I added a .5cm ball bearing to make mixing easier, faster and more comfortable.

Let's talk about the colours themselves; in a black and white set you can't miss the obvious...the Black and White colours themselves, of course. I'll move over those quickly and look at the other hues available. There are six various hues, two shade tones, two midtones and two highlights, separated into two cold and four differently



tend to have chalk like finish, while the VMC White is a little satin).

Conclusion

My very first opinion looking at this set was a great big question mark, but now I think it's a very good purchase and I'm happy to have got it.

Naturally, it's possible to add every other colour you want to enrich lights, shadows and mid tones in your paint work to reach the final look you desire (especially for blacks to obtain a more bluish/reddish/greenish hue), but here you have a good and complete starting point for sure. It's my opinion this is a hard set to master in every aspect, but I also think that part of the joy of this hobby is to get better and challenging our limits time after time. For me, it will be a pleasure to measure myself against white tones which I consider the most difficult to achieve a natural look and now I have all the "weapons" I need to face two Templar Knights I have not touched for a time.

warm tones. Petroleum and Graphene Gray are shadows, the first more dark and the latter more neutral/bluish. Brown Gray is exactly what the name suggests and Rainy Gray is the second warm midtone that reminds me of a stone colour. Thar and Mojave Brown are two warm highlights, which resemble a chamois leather colour.

Look at the pictures to better understand what I'm saying.

The two classic colours, black and white, appeal to me not for their tone, but for their finished look and consistency. I think I have in my hand a pure flat, opaque acrylic black for the first time in my life that, even thinned, remains totally black (different from Andrea Color's Flat Black which is opaque, beautiful, but not a very pure black or Vallejo Model Color Black which is intense, but the finish is a little satin/gloss). The white as well works easily for glazes without losing its fine pigmentation (White Andrea Color and GW corresponding paints

As I did in previous reviews, I'd like to point out my favourite three pots: Petroleum Gray and Brown Gray, Rainy Gray. Take a look and have a think about how you could use them.



54mm Napoleonic Figure Step-by-Step

French Dragoon

By David Powell

Part 2

Painting White

There are several areas on this figure that call for either white or near white colours. I already finished the shirt using off whites and the pants with khakis (although I could have continued highlighting and taken those into a near white, too). Let's focus on the equipment straps, which I'm doing in a cool grey white. These slight variations in the colours used to shade the white helps distinguish between the different materials and create more visual interest to the figure.



Reaper's Pure White, Misty Grey, Rainy Grey, and Dusky Skin Shadow



This is the continuation of a step by step on a 54mm Dragoon from Pegaso models. In the previous article, I covered the painting of the face and coat. In this second part, we will go over the remaining work, focusing on the white and black sections followed by an in-depth look at the weathering.

The straps were base coated with Misty Grey and then the shadow areas were sketched on using Rainy Grey and in a few places (bottom edges, creases) Dusky Skin Shadow. This stage is shown in the image on the left. I'm focusing on the rear of the figure, as there's a lot more variation in the shading there. The front is treated in the same manner, but it involves fewer yet more gradual transitions. Using the Rainy Grey (and in a few places with a touch of Dusky Skin Shadow), I gradually blend in Misty Grey to smooth out the shadow transitions. This is shown in the second image. Notice how right above the

bayonet scabbard there is a concave shape, so I'm going from dark at the top to light at the bottom to help define it. In many cases, the Misty Grey colour can be a stand in for white. I wanted these straps to be nice and bright, so I started to mix in Pure White into the Misty Grey to create the highlights (third image). With the primarily Pure White mix, I focus on the upper surfaces and edges. As you continue to brighten the whites, keep an eye on how they look in contrast to the dark colour and those highlights. If the contrast is not extreme enough in the dark sections, a bright white can cause those parts of the

figure to look flat. Either adjust the white down a bit or go back and up the highlights in the dark areas. The last step is to add the metal details. I begin by cleaning up these parts using a dark brown, then I work over them with the metals. I'm using ScaleColor's Metal n' Alchemy paint sets for the metals. I start with their Necro Gold for my base, then Elven Gold for the lower highlights and finally Citrine Alchemy to pick out the edges. As far as water based metallic paints go, these are some of my favourite. They feel very similar to the Vallejo Model Air range of metals, but I like the colour options much more.



Painting Black

There are several components of the figure that should be painted black including the horse hair crest on the helmet, the cartridge box on his back and his shoes and gaiters. Since the approach is the same for all, let's focus on his feet. Although they look a bit like boots, he's actually wearing gaiters which are made from cloth and not leather. This means I'm not attempting to get a high shine as I would on a polished leather boot. I could, however, go for a high shine on the exposed shoe...but when we get to weathering it's likely to be covered up, so why bother? Like white, you can do a lot of different variations with black; here I'm going with a pretty standard grey-black. The paints I'm working with are Reaper's Pure Black, ScaleColor's Anthracite Grey and Graphite, and Vallejo's Glaze Medium.

The shoes and gaiters were base coated black earlier, so I begin with mixes of Pure Black and Anthracite Grey. I work from almost entirely black to pure Anthracite Grey. I try to leave much of the gaiters close to Pure Black and really focus the lighter shades on the highlight areas. This is shown in the first image in the series below. Blending with these dark colours can be tricky; this is more apparent on the first image of the rear of the gaiters. To help smooth out these transitions, I take a glaze of roughly 2 parts Pure Black to 1 part Anthracite



Reaper's Pure Black, Scale75 Anthracite Gray, Graphite, and Vallejo Glaze Medium

Grey and add water and Vallejo's Glaze Medium to create a thin glaze. I apply this over the shoes and gaiters in several coats until the blends look smooth enough. I also use a glaze of Pure Black in the shadow areas to help keep them dark. The middle image shows the figure

after the glazes have been applied. Notice that these glazes have the unintended consequence of darkening the highlights. To fix, this I go back in with mixes of Pure Black and mostly Anthracite Grey and replace my highlights. I wanted to take things a bit further, so I mixed

in some Graphite into the Anthracite Grey and picked out a few spots and edges for brighter highlights. The glaze and re-highlight steps can be repeated as necessary until you are happy with the results.



Weathering

With the brush work essentially finished, we come to the decision of whether or not to weather the figure. After finishing a nice clean paint job, it can be intimidating to go in and mess it up. If your goal is to show off the colours of the uniform, you could easily stop here and there would be nothing wrong with that. However, if you're going for a more realistic finish, you have to ask yourself would this figure really be that clean? For a Napoleonic figure in parade dress, sure; but for one in campaign dress, like this figure, odds are they would be pretty dirty.

Although you can use paint, I find working with pigments to be a much quicker and easier way to get the effects I want. I will be using pigments from Secret Weapon Miniatures, although MIG Productions is also a popular brand. The exact colours aren't important; what's more critical is

that you use several different colours, so there is variation in the weathering. I'm working with Terracotta Earth, Yellow Earth, Violet, and Dark Earth. Basically I've got a nice medium brown, something with a little more yellow in it and more of a reddish brown. I added the Dark Earth tone in later in the process as I wanted another shade of brown for a little more variation. When I apply the weathering to the figure, I try to build it up in layers and in a way that tells a story. It has to make sense — why would there be dirt there? More on that as we go along.

I started out by adding mud to his shoes and gaiters. Weathering can be intimidating, so we start small. A little mud on the shoes? No big deal. Here I want to get both colour and texture from the pigments, so I don't apply them dry. Instead, I mix the pigments with matte medium to form a paste-like consistency. I'm also mixing the different colour pigments together so some mud is a little more yellow, some a little darker with the violet,



etc. I take a brush with frayed ends and apply the mud in a dabbing motion onto the shoes and gaiters. Make sure to give a good coating to the bottom and the very tip, then apply some up the sides and back. Remember the application should make sense and tell a story. As he's walking, some of that mud would get kicked up onto the back of his calves. It's thick on the bottom of his shoes and more spotty as you get higher up. I even put a little on the bottom of his coat.

For the second layer of weathering, I briefly went back to paints. I wanted to add a couple stains here and there, so I used some wash consistency paint. To make some old blood stains, I mixed Tamiya Clear Red with GW's Nuln Oil. I dabbed a little of this onto the strap across his chest and a little more on his coat. I also took a mix of GW's Seraphim Sepia and Agrax Earthshade to create a greenish brown and made a few more stains on the belts and on his shirt; perhaps he spilled some food. If his knees had been exposed, I could have done something similar to make grass stains. This is all pretty subtle, but it hopefully gives a little more history to the figure.

The final and most apparent layer, I went back to the dry pigments. This time I did not mix them with anything. Instead I just take a somewhat stiff flat brush and start to dab them on the figure and then wipe them off. By pushing them into the figure as I wipe them off, I leave



behind some of the colour for a dusty and dirty look. As before, you can mix the pigments together and use different shades to get variation in the weathering. The location and application should make sense. I make sure to get some on his knees and elbows. I dirty up his pants and a little on his shirt. I focus more on the bottom and sides of his coat than the top and I do just a little on the white straps, so they don't look quite as clean and bright. Be careful on the lighter colours, as the pigments can quickly overpower them. You can see from a comparison with earlier pictures that the pants got significantly darker due to the pigments. I added a little dirt to his hands, but left his head and helmet clean.



Work up to a level of weathering that makes sense for the figure and the scene you are creating. This guy is out in the field, so he can be very dirty. If I were to set him in a small rural village, perhaps he's had a chance to clean up and instead subtle weathering would be appropriate. The final result is much more convincing if you put some

thought into how and why the various types of weathering occurred. Remember that the weathering should tell a story. Did he walk through some mud? Did he cut himself? Did he kneel in the dirt? You are creating the figure's history, so think about what might have happened to him.



Finishing the Figure

As I was wrapping up the weathering, I attached the last few pieces to the figure. The sword was painted in the same blacks, whites, and metals as the rest of the figure. For the helmet plume, I had to choose a colour scheme. There seems to be a great deal of variation in plume colours, from solids (white, red, or crimson) to multi-colour schemes (green with regimental colour, red and green, red and white, white and yellow, black and regimental colour, green and yellow). While there was variation within different regiments, there is not necessarily an example of each option for each regiment. To be honest, you'd probably be okay with any of them. I decided to choose the white and yellow scheme which has documentation supporting its use within the 22nd Dragoon Regiment.

The ground was base coated with a medium brown and then painted with pigments. I used the same colours as the dirt on the figure and mixed them with matte medium to create a paint. Make sure to vary the colours a bit so the ground does not look too uniform. I then went in with some dry pigments to add a few shadows. The grass is field grass from Woodland Scenics dipped in white glue and placed onto the base. To break up the colour of the grass, I applied a few green and brown washes and then more dried pigments to help tie them in with the rest of the base.

What's on the MARKET?

a regular look at hobby tools and accessories

single product review



ULTIMATE Sanding Sticks

Let's face it – for many, preparing a miniature prior to painting can be the part that we enjoy the least.

Cleaning mould lines and burrs and flash is tedious, but essential to a fine and smooth paint-job. Unless you're one of the care free few who don't care or merely model so as to game, then you will understand exactly what I'm talking about. We all have an ever expanding collection of tools and materials we use, some more helpful than others and I may have found another useful tool.

We use our craft knife, files, needle files and even the wife's (or husband's) nail file. In fact, the market is afloat with revamped manicure/beauty products in the form of files and sponges, however these don't necessarily solve certain issues and aren't specifically designed for the modeller in particular. Don't get me wrong, the main beneficiaries for these sanders will be for those vehicle and aircraft modellers; however, I believe there is something for everyone and a sander can be found at ULTIMATE to suit our needs as figure painters, too. In fact, sometimes the work we do with our current tools can cause other problems, which can then be smoothed and refined with these products.

ULTIMATE have produced a range of twelve (at last count) different packs of sanders to cover all modelling requirements along with a competitive price. I believe this product is worth investing a few of our hard earned pennies in.





I have three different packs and first up is the Thinny Sponges. This is a five pack double sided, 220 grit multi purpose sanders for your general sanding requirements. They're paddle shaped, slimming for approximately two thirds of their length; the slim area for the trickier, hard to reach areas or raised details and the broader paddle that will be suitable for wider, open spaces that require smooth sanding across its entire surface. This is an advantage over our trusty blades and metal files, with their narrow edges and sides, where poor technique could lead to blurring of detail and/or flattening of a curved surface (i.e. cylindrical shapes such as arms, legs and torsos). There is plenty of flex in the sponges (and indeed the other sanders, too) to allow you to manoeuvre around your model, but not so much that it cracks or damages the sander's surface. The sponges are pretty generic and after use can be washed in warm water to unclog the resin dust from the grit. When an end becomes worn down, it is simply a case of snipping the affected end off with scissors and going again.

The pack of Thinny Sticks contains six sanding sticks, two of each grit (180/240/1200). These are a slimmed down version of the same Thinny Sponge shape and are great for the smaller areas. Choose the grit appropriate for the task at hand or use a combination of the three, using the 1200 last to achieve a smooth finish.



My third pack is the starter set. This is a four pack, with three diamond shaped sanders and one traditionally shaped, round edged buffer board. The sanders are consistently coloured across the range (white is roughest, followed by the medium, light grey and the smoothest being dark grey) and this particular pack consists of 100/180, 220/200 and 240/1200 grit sanders. The buffer is flexible, yet sturdy and really does bring your material up to a nice, smooth buffered shine. The ends of all the sanders are squared off, so your sanding is consistent across the surface. I even found them useful for filing down the edges of resin terrain and the annoying burrs on the rims of GW bases.

As you can see in the photos, I was able to get around the most detailed busts with the larger sanders and the smaller ones will be great for miniatures, though maybe not entirely suitable for 28mm scale. However, ULTIMATE have a wide range and I'm sure they would have something to cover all eventualities. Each sander can be used wet or dry, with wet offering an even smoother surface. In addition to cleaning up the individual parts prior to assembly, joins and gap filled areas can also be sanded and smoothed using these products. The durable, reusable, washable sanders and sponges along with their competitive price and excellent performance may just fill a niche in our hobby that up to now has been fulfilled by the wife's manicure files. I'm very happy with my new sanders and so to unsurprisingly is my wife!

For those wondering, here are the prices of the packs I reviewed; you can find everything on their shop <http://www.umpretail.com>.

Starter Pack – £5.49

Thinny Sticks – £4.99

Thinny Sponges – £4.99



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Price: 16€ each

Size: 30mm scale

Material: Resin

Available from:

[Durgin Paint Forge](#)



Unboxing Durgin Paint Forge's Dwarfs

Some months ago, I was “zapping” about on the internet and I saw something that intrigued me a lot. A new miniature from Durgin Paint Forge, a dwarf, 30mm scale.

I soon fell in love with Drakkol Stoneborn because of his unique and, at the same time, iconic style. I’m coming out from a period in which I have been very interested in painting the new GW dwarven heroes, but I was looking for something new rather from the mass. I decided to buy a copy directly, contacting the owner on his facebook page and from there I found out about a second dwarf that was soon to be released, Denbe Stonefist. My curiosity grew and I decided to write this unboxing review once I received the models. I think that when someone has put so much effort into an initiative like this and with such outstanding results, he deserves a little help to spread the word of his work.

Some of you might remember him from an article in Figure Painter Magazine issue number one; I’m talking about Matteo Donzelli, known also as “Durgin” in the Italian model hobby community.

I ordered my limited edition copy (number 9/200 as you can see from the card included) and a few days later I received my little package, no thanks to Poste Italiane, who it seems tried to destroy it. Thankfully, it’s made of heavy card with a nice design and the miniature inside is contained in a plastic transparent envelope. Honestly, some more protections could be necessary (maybe just a bubble wrap or a sponge is enough), because the box is much bigger than the model and it can shake a lot. It would be a real shame to receive a broken limited edition model, especially one with such small components.

Inside the box, there were also two things: a Durgin Paint Forge pin badge and a Denbe model for free! Thank you very much, Matteo!

Drakkol Stoneborn

In my opinion, he has everything a good dwarf must have, but at the same time he is not the dwarf we are used to seeing: fully armoured, armed with an axe, long and decorated beard, grim expression, but with a subtle oriental feel in many details. Have a look at the pictures:

the helmet, the axe and the book decorations, the shoulder pad and you can easily understand what I mean.

It's a three piece resin kit and every part is full of decorations and very tiny details. Some of them are so tiny that I have no idea how I can paint them or if they will survive to the primer phase! Maybe I will use an air-brush to begin, because it would be a pity to lose them. You can note them on the axe and on the model's right shoulder pad. They seem like photo engravings.

The model is quite perfect; absolutely no mould lines, no bubbles and no broken parts (luckily).

There is only a little problem on the carved base. The decoration fades out towards an edge. It's not a real problem, because during the building and painting of a proper base it is easy to cover with dust or other stuff. Reading on the facebook page I noted many others reported the same, but the author let us know it's something planned. Their idea was to create a sort of smoothed effect, ancient and worn away.

Despite all the runes and decorations, there is still enough free space for freehand and personal characterisations. If you don't like some of the details, they can be easily removed with a sharp knife edge, because after all, it's only resin. A conversion could be hard to do but, honestly, it is a new style of a common dwarf hero and personally, I will leave it as it is. I prefer to have fun with him, practicing with metallics, freehand and basing techniques.





Denbe Stonefist

This five piece resin kit is more complex than the first one. There are two head options: one with horned helmet and one without. The oriental style is much more pronounced as you can see from the symbol on the coat, from the armour design and the demon's heads on the stone hammer and the rope belt. It seems like an exotic dwarf samurai. The typical dwarf elements are still there with a runic dwarf head symbol below his foot and his unmistakable grim and challenging pose. The hammer seems a little bit oversized for a 30mm scale, but he's a hero after all!

I really appreciated this shift of character and I think it fits very well in this new vision and fulfils my desire to get something new. I have to say that looking at him, I have a totally new and positive opinion than what I had from looking at him on the web. I can admire all the details I never noticed before and now my opinion is totally positive.

The casting again is quite perfect and every part fits exactly. Only the places where the sprues have to be removed will need any work.

Conclusion

I certainly think the price for these miniatures is very good considering the quality of the product, especially as it's competitive



with the more famous dwarf hero plastic kits. I am very happy about it and wholeheartedly recommend it. Both of them would be a good purchase for any collector and a must have for dwarf lovers and they're a very good alternative to the usual models for wargamers.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this review, I chatted with Matteo Donzelli both during the purchase and several times before on facebook about painting techniques, so I exploited this occasion to ask him some more about these new waves of models after almost two years of nothing. I even thought it could be nice to invite him here to chat a little, so, Matteo, welcome back to the pages of Figure Painter Magazine.

Hello! Happy to be here again and thanks for the opportunity!

Some of us know you for your painting studio and, of course, for the first models from your company. You stopped the production almost two years ago, but now you seem to be back. What has prompted this return?

Yes, I am. My goal, in early 2015 is launch a new web-site with a pretty new catalogue. In a few years from now, I hope to offer a wide choice of new characters for collectors and gamers alike. We are approaching this work with three brands: Lords of the Forge, which are 30mm scale models, like Drakkol, for collectors and wargamers; The Third Key, models with a new and original design, like Denbe, from which new ideas and products will born; and Bitsdom, a source of pieces useful to modify and convert your 30mm models.

What can tell us about these models that we don't know by simply looking at them?

These models will be necessary to raise enough capital to give the start to all what I said above. I couldn't be more happy because Denbe, who embodied all my favourite topics and was Drakkol's first wave has sold out in only 4 hours and the second wave in a day. I am very fond of him also because his name is a homage to a friend of mine, Fabio "Drakkol" Menegon. The concept was born thanks a collaboration with another great fan of dwarfs, Angelo Di Chello, one of the most famous fantasy painters in the world and winners of several Golden Demon trophies.

Your enthusiasm seems to have taken wings, but you have a lot of competitors; not only from established companies, but also from kickstarters as well, who do you plan to keep ahead of the game?

That is absolutely true; this is a very complex world, but I trust a lot in this project and my purpose is to aim more on a quality job rather than on the quantity of

pieces sold, so I don't need to look at major companies.

I know, all too well, about your love of dwarfs, having released three of them already, but just to know, will you will ever produce any hated pointy ears, an elf?

Hahaahahah – Well, I have to be fair to elf fans too, so I think I should...and I will. Indeed, the next two models to be produced will be quite different from the dwarves. The first, for the Lords of Forge range, will be a vampire. Eckhard Von Veicht is an extremely detailed and complex model with an even more complex included base. The second, for The Third Key range, will be an elf, Ylia Thunder Fang. I'm proud to say it's a personal homage to Masami Kurumada's characters. We are working also on a Dragon, sculpted by Carmine "Thor" Giuliano, mounted by a multi component kit, a second elf character. Of course, I am morally obliged to include a dwarf thing over even a double elf release, so for the Bitsdom range we are working on dwarf basing elements and a banner conversion set for humans or elven armies... and dwarfs, of course.

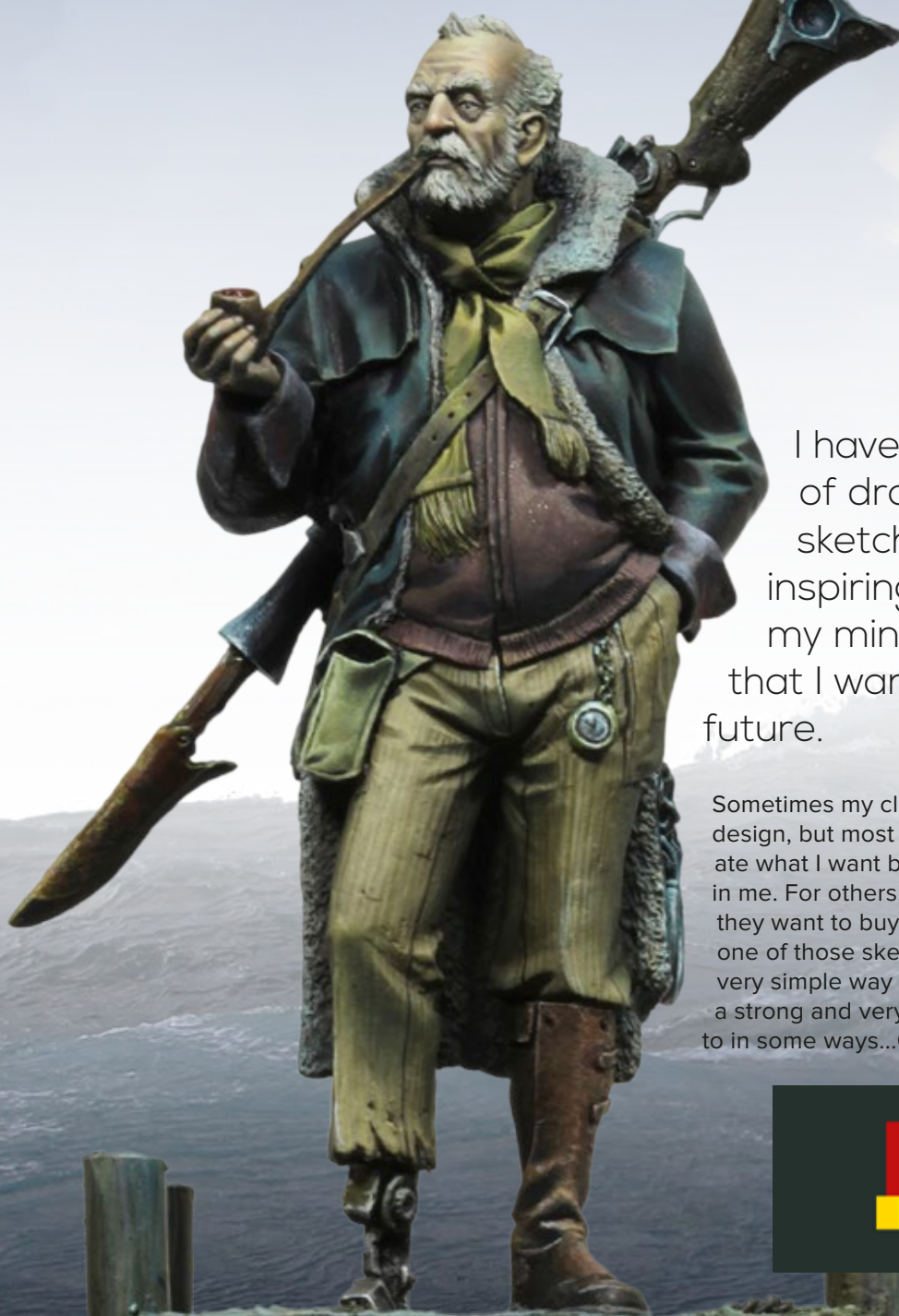


Thanks a lot, Matteo for your kindness and sharing with us all this information. Good luck to your studio and I hope to see your work again soon hosted in the pages of FPM.

Thanks to you, too! See you guys!

Sculpting Scale75's Captain Ahab

80



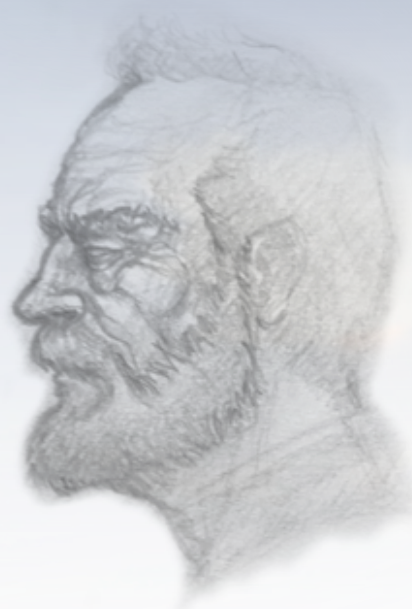
I have many sketch books full of drawings...there are many sketches that are just ideas or inspiring images that I keep in my mind about some character that I want to develop in the near future.

Sometimes my clients ask me about a specific subject to design, but most of the time I am lucky to be free to create what I want because my clients have a big confidence in me. For others, the character is already designed and they want to buy it. A few months ago, Scale75 bought one of those sketches. A drawing that represents in a very simple way the idea that I created in my mind about a strong and very stubborn character which I feel linked to in some ways...Captain Ahab from the novel Moby Dick.

BansheeArt
Studio

"Somewhere my obsessions swim free without my reach. But I know them, I know them well...I know their form, their appearance, their manners, the way I look when I find them and run again...I smoke slow, and I imagine the day that will arrive, the day I will find them, confront them and overcome them for display to the world as my most coveted trophy defeated between my feet. Only then I will be free..."

Here is a small step by step of the sculpting process made with milliput, super sculpey firm grey and green stuff. This was designed, sculpted and painted for Scale75.



01/02. I used a basic resin chest and legs from my waste box and I used some milliput to build a basic anatomy shape to start sculpting on top. I mainly sculpt with Super Sculpey Firm Grey which is similar to Fimo, which can be added either on top of resin or milliput. For doing this, it is better to cover the surface with a thin layer of oil (olive oil, body oil, anything). This will help the super sculpey to stick to the surface.



03/04. I place the head to achieve a human look. This step is important, because by doing this you achieve a bit of the attitude of the figure and you can start to build up the personality. It also is a volume reference. It doesn't mean that this will be the basic shape of the future head, it is just a reference that could be removed at anytime.

You can see that the pose is a classic "contraposto" (def. The position of a standing human figure whose weight is unequally distributed between the two legs, resulting in a slight curvature of the torso and a tilting of the pelvis and shoulders in opposite directions.). This pose is a bit complicated and you must be a real master to control it perfectly. I am not, so this is not a perfect contraposto, but as the figure will be covered by a lot of elements, I think that this will be convincing enough.



05/06. I place a mixture of Super Sculpey Firm Grey (SSFG) basic layer which is 70% SSFG+30% turpentine.

I have several pots of SSFG with different dilutions of turpentine that gives me different textures and densities. Depending on how much turpentine you use, the SSFG will be more dense or more liquid. I paste the clay very roughly at first and then I smooth it with a synthetic brush. I leave it for 3 or 4 hours and the turpentine will evaporate a bit, so then you can start playing around with normal clay without turpentine.



07/08/09. I do a very rough and quick sketch of the character. I also play around the face; however, this will be only a reference. This is to achieve some general features to give him a bit of personality. I place some

elements that represent the general volumes and important items that could give me a path to work on. It is like rough sketching when you are drawing. Both drawing and sculpting are pretty similar, in my opinion.

10. As the SSFG is a clay that you work while wet, you can play around without the fear of losing the chance to change. I made some wrinkles to choose which method would be good for the wrinkles of the coat. I don't have much sculpting experience, so I have to try and fail many times until I find the proper way. That's why my processes are so chaotic and sometimes clumsy at the beginning. I do this very fast to maintain the "freshness".



11. Some hours later, after adding volumes everywhere and starting to smooth...this is my process. I place volumes roughly and then smooth them with a clay shaper or a synthetic brush. The character is starting to appear. I play around with the face to see what I am looking for. Normally I work with concept art done by myself most of the time; my concepts are very free to interpret because I am not a draftsman, but a model designer. I create characterful characters and then I build the detail and the features on the model itself. I would say that the sketching and concept art doesn't end on the paper; instead it continues on the sculpture itself. This is the beauty of creating a character starting from my own ideas. At any time a new volume appears and shows you or suggests to you a new possible path. I encourage you guys to be free and let the accidents appear and guide you sometimes. The difference between a good model designer and another one who is not is not the talent to represent things or the technical skills; instead it is the capability to choose the right path in the right moment. There are many, many moments where you see some volumes or when the miniature suggests that you change something and your decision will make the difference between a great miniature and simply a nice sculpted mini.



12/13. You can see how the position of the arms and the movement of the eyebrows are showing me the character and personality of the character. Those elements will be kept until the end. This is the most important decision I made until this moment. Here you can imagine how a simple and small decision will create the overall effect at the end... from this point I will add, modify or change many things, but the eye expression and the arms' movement and pose will be kept. However, maybe the eyes will be relaxed a bit, to avoid forcing people to interpret him like a cynical character, so I will relax a bit the tension of the eyebrows.

14/15. In the frontal view, you can start to imagine him looking into the distance, thinking about Moby Dick as his nemesis and smoking his pipe. The basic work is done and now comes the technical work.



85



16/17. More volumes now; I start to define the pullover (jersey), the pants and also the face gets a beard to start to build the final character. At this point, my sculpting starts to get slower and more technical and I define everything more carefully. I have left some clear and clean surfaces where I will add the details on top.



18/19/20. The head is fresh and very soft, so don't be worried if everything moves. As much work you do on top, as much expression you add with the tools, the clay gets compact and it will be harder and more dense. By working with small clay shapers, I squash the clay and start to achieve the volumes and make them less geometrically sharp and more rounded.

21/22. Final rounds of the battle. The head is done with detail and expression. I keep the moustache with this half open expression because there is a pipe that connect the hand with the mouth, so I use the moustache to hide the fitting point. You can see how the details are clean and the separation between elements is sharp. However, I have a long road to finish, because there are many elements that are not done. The character design is achieved. Now is time for the boring work. I must detail, clean and create the mechanical items. I show two pictures with two different illuminations. This is useful to see how volumes are working. Try to do this exercise very often to see how the light reacts in different illumination settings.



23. Like a butcher, I separate the miniature into different parts. This part is difficult to explain with pictures, but the good part of super sculpey firm grey (or clays similar to this one), is that you can heat it in a little oven and when is hot, it is also very soft, so you have a few minutes when you can cut it with a sharp cutter and do very clean fitting surfaces. The only problem will be the basic shape that was done with resin and milliput. Milliput will be very hard, although the resin is also soft because of the heat. If you are trying to cut a part of the mini that has milliput behind, you can cut the outer layers of super sculpey firm grey with a cutter and the milliput inside with a little saw. The best way to get a saw is to take a very sharp cutter blade and hit the edge with another blade by smashing it and build your own micro saw, achieving a tooth edge that will be able to saw the milliput surface. It is frightening, but if you get the courage, then you will see how easy it is.



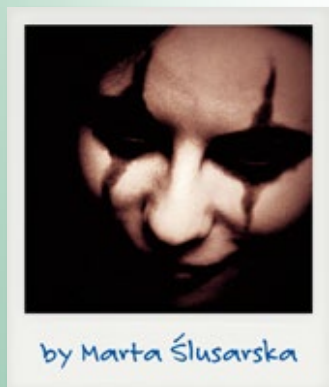
24/25. Separated elements. The hand with pipe was done with green stuff in one step, which means that you do everything in fresh. Here is the completed head as well.



26. This is how the miniature was sent to the client (Scale75).







Price: £18.34 + VAT

Size: 40mm

Material: Resin

Available from

www.hfminis.co.uk



Unboxing Hasslefree Miniatures' Kalee

For my review this month, I have a miniature that might not seem like my usual cup of tea, at least judging by the stuff I normally review. A small mini – hard to believe I actually bought it, but I really like Kevin White's babes, so I decided to give it a go. Besides, it's 40mm not 28, so it's slightly bigger than the regular small scale. We'll see if I'm still able to paint such a tiny thing.



The Box

What box? The mini arrived in a plastic bag with the card label that is normally placed in a plastic box if you buy the miniature on a stand during a show. All the minis I ordered along with Kalee were in plastic bags and then placed in a rigid outer box, so I'm guessing there was not much chance for them to be damaged. I suspect it was done to cut some costs, but on the other hand it kinda feels a bit cheap. Besides, I need to store bought minis somehow, and it would be easier to do that in box – even small plastic one.



Quality of the Cast

At the first glance, it looked really good or maybe I just couldn't see anything beyond the size of the miniature. I forgot how tiny small scale miniatures can be, but when I took a closer look at the photos, I noticed some issues. It looks like the mini will need some serious prep work after all. First of all, there are some small mould lines and imperfections on the surface. I'm not too crazy about the sprue being located at her elbow, but it's not such a big deal. The bigger problem is her right side and hip (towards the back) and the inside of her thighs. This will take some careful work to fix and I'm not looking forward



to doing that, if I may be honest. Dealing with surface issues in such tight spots might be a problem. The other part I'm not too keen about are her boots. There are 4 tiny skulls on each of them as buttons, but the left ones are mostly deformed. I'm guessing the mould used for casting my copy might be already worn a bit, but still it's a pity; those little skulls add to the character.

Surprisingly, the face that looks so deformed on the close-up photo is not really an issue. With the hair so asymmetric and a bit of extra shadow on the right cheek, it all will be concealed.

Assembly

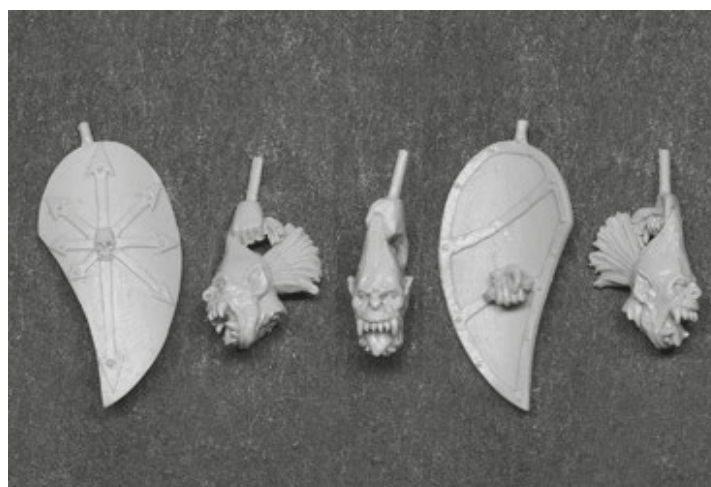
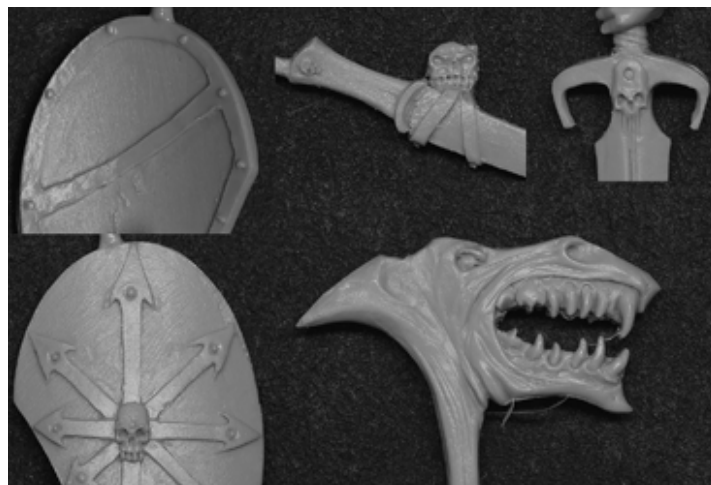
First of all, you have several options on how you can assemble the miniature: 2 heads (with or without a helmet), 2 weapons held in right hand (sword or demonic axe) and 2 options for left her hand (shield or monster's head). It does give you quite a lot of freedom in creating the mood of your piece. Never mind that the full helmet and almost no armour (or clothes for that matter), in my opinion looks kind of weird, but it's fantasy after all!

The assembly itself is really easy. There are only 4 small parts to be attached and all of the joining surfaces are straight, so no problems here. You just need to be careful with drilling holes for pins. You might try your luck without pins if you're not going to move the miniature around too much, but I'd rather be on the safe side, so I'm going to pin both hands and head; the sword that joins to her side won't be a problem.

Customer Experience

I'm spoiled – I admit that. I'm spoiled by the quality of casts I have had a pleasure to work with. Spoiled by the customer care and thoughtfulness of small companies I have dealt with. Spoiled with the time that most of my miniatures bought online arrive at my doorstep. But this time, I didn't feel spoiled at all. It took three weeks before the goods were finally shipped during that time I asked them several times on the status of my order and received one brief message from Hasslefree, which they failed to follow up on. It doesn't look very impressive compared with some other shopping experiences I had recently.

Ok, at the end I received a free mini (also 40mm) and 10% discount for my next purchase, but it doesn't really fix the bad customer service I received. I have no idea why this happened; maybe it's just my bad luck. Accidents happen after all, but if not, customer care is something that Hasslefree should take a close look at and maybe fix one or two things.



Overall Opinion

I don't really have much to say here. Kalee is a nice miniature. Good enough quality, but I've had bad enough shopping experience that it sours the whole experience somewhat. As I have said, it may be just bad luck, but if you like this kind of miniature, she'll be a really nice addition to your collection.

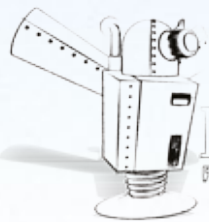
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Detail from my gamingboard by Mattias Nilsson





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