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REVIEWS

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interview with Ben Komets



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Nicolas Rouanet


Welcome to issue 18 of Figure Painter Magazine. Over the past few weeks, we have had some of the biggest painting contests in Europe take place. First, Euro Militaire followed by Warhammer Fest and Scale Model Challenge. I, like many others, was eagerly watching the forums and social media for snippets of news and the odd, usually poorly lit, photograph of some of the painted miniatures on show, but that's not all I found.

For all of the positive comments I read there were a few negative comments and this made me feel pretty sad. People complaining that they felt this miniature or that was over rated, or under rated, even complaints about the judges not doing their job correctly.

For many of us this is a hobby, that means it's a pastime; something to do for the enjoyment of doing it. Now, I enjoy painting contests and have been known to enter the odd one as well, but this is just a personal ego stroke. A chance at a small amount of recognition when I do well or some good advice when I don't; nothing more. It doesn't make my friends and family like me more than they did and it doesn't make me more successful at my job — you know, the important stuff! Rather than complaining about our hobby, I think we should all try to remember what brings us together; that common bond. The enjoyment and fulfilment we get from bringing a bare piece of metal, resin or plastic to life by applying paint.

Shane Rozzell, Editor

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A few weeks ago saw the launch of a new website that showcases historical miniatures. The Virtual Museum of Historical Miniatures was set up by Enzo Macaluso as a place to showcase the best historic miniatures in one place and aims to be the largest source of historical miniatures there is.

Split into five sections, there is already plenty to see and enjoy and it's a very useful reference for both painter and sculptor alike.

For more details, visit the website here, www.virtualmuseumofminiatures.com.



Acrylicos Vallejo, has recently release a set of special effect paints under the Game Color banner. Consisting of 8 paints, the set also includes an instructional step-by-step guide written by Angel Giraldez. More details can be found on the Acrylicos Vallejo website www.acrylicosvallejo.com



Scale75 has recently launched a new Steam Wars crowd funding project titled "Going West". They are seeking funding for three miniatures and a steam train with a scenic base. At the time of writing there is still six days to go and the project is 217% funded, but with the many interesting stretch goals it's well worth a look and you get a chance to pick up some of their other models as well.

For more information click [here](#).



Industria Mechanika has unveiled a new miniature. The concept is by Adrian Smith and the 3D sculpt is by Rishi Nandlaskar, the team that did the Frankenstein and Chrononaut figures. This figure will come with the mushroom base, additional small mushrooms and, of course real chain mail!

More information can be found [here](#).



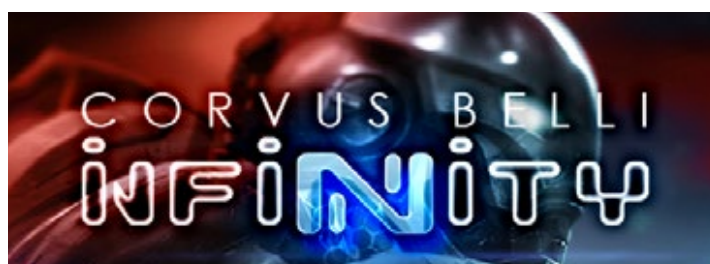
With 22 days still to go, Red Box Games is back again seeking to fund the production of a new range of fantasy adventurers.

Already well known for their expansive line of fantasy adventurers and various monster figures, they now want to expand and update as much of their lines as possible. This means as many new sculpts for the various ranges in the RBG product line as the funding will allow. RBG has sculpted a wide selection of new figures, which are nearly ready to go into production as of the launch of this kickstarter.

More information about this project can be found [here](#).



Scale Games have announced that they will reboot their crowd funding campaign to fund their game Fallen Frontiers next month. The original campaign was pulled earlier this year because of confusion over the scale of the miniatures, but they have been working hard and listening to their critics and are ready to give it a second go. I, for one, am pleased about this and wish them all the best of luck. For more information about the campaign and to keep up to date with their news, visit their facebook page [here](#).



Corvus Belli are now taking pre-orders for the third edition of Infinity (N3). This new edition promises streamlined rules and new profiles and also claims to be the same game, but better.

All N3 books reserved during the reserve period will include the exclusive "Authorized Bounty Hunter" miniature that will never be available for retail sale.

The rule books have a soft cover binding and come in a case and are all full colour. They are estimated to have 180 pages of background and 275 pages of rules. They're also expected to be released around December this year and will cost £59.95. More information [here](#).



A journey to the realm of *Aradia* and back again

Having awoken from a deep sleep, within an episode neither dreamlike nor nightmarish, but somewhere between, I was bathed in sweat and a jack hammer beat pulsing in my temples. I know I had been shown a fragment of a realm that was not ours. I reached for a pen and jotted down what I could remember before my recollections drifted away like contrails in a summer sky.



After having scribbled what looked like the ravings of a madman, I was able to pull further details from my subconscious and began to make more sense of what I had experienced. I remember being shown things by what I can only describe as mischievous fawn like creatures. I recall them calling themselves Stefano and Federico who were, in truth, brothers. I now suspect that their appearance was somewhat contrived, as I believe they held incredible power within the realm I found myself. To them, all seemed a game, but one they took seriously.

With all their gamboling, cavorting and Machiavellian manner I struggled to discern truth from fiction or, at the very least, there was only so much I could fully comprehend; that which I could, I present for you now.

by **Jason
'Red' Martin**



Aradia was born during the summer of 2013, a creative project borne from a joke according to my fey guides. After many years of considering themselves pawns in the world of fantasy painting and modelling, they grew in confidence that the time was now to create their own

universe, their own mythical realm; no 9-5 monotony for these revelers—"we've worked, slaved and painted for many years, let's make the jump and become masters of our own destiny". Nyara the Fox was created, but the realm of imagination was so large this could only be the beginning. Encouraged by their early success and the popularity of the beautiful Nyara, they hatched a plan to further populate Fantasyland; however, they knew they needed help.

There were others that existed. Not in their realm, of course, but somewhere in between; they were called the collaborators. The fawns understood that even their best ideas and their most cunning plans were just that and nothing else; to visualize and realise their dreams, they needed artists and creators called sculptors. I recalled the excitement in their eyes when they told me of these collaborators so skilled at bringing life to their ideas. Each had the ability to understand and interpret their intentions, but most importantly were able to add something of their personal touch to create something unique and instantly recognizable.

I was intrigued to learn of their relationship with the collaborators and how by listening and adapting and working together they were able to slowly bring Fantasyland to life. They told me how themselves and the collaborators became known as Aradia and they believed a



“golden chain” connects their ideas to the hands of the artist and creators. They told me of how they chose different collaborators to bring life to the various creations. Piqui was chosen to create Harley and his mount, as he was able with his quirky, funny style to create a one and only creation. Benoit Cauchies was drafted in to realize the beautiful, female form of Diana and her equine like anatomy. No matter the creation, Mirko Cavalloni brings them to life as he is the “alchemist with colours”, Passion, colour and the fantastical is all that Fantasyland is and hopes to be.



So, who rules Fantasyland? Well a king, of course; a Toad King brought to life by the artist extraordinaire, Stefano Moroni and the creative talents of Allan Carrasco, names of renown in our own realm. As you can see, I have managed from memory to provide you, my dear observer, with illustrations and depictions of the characters slowly populating Fantasyland. What is that I hear you cry, a King with a sickle and not a scythe?

Well, my observant ones, this is Fantasyland and anything is possible and everything must be harmonious. A linear scepter in our Toad King's webbed hand could not be acceptable; better the curved lines of a sickle. So the Toad King was born and something in my conscience, that which is mine in reality, made a connection. It was during the Middle Ages that the toad was considered marked by Saturn; a nice symmetry as we know the sickle (both planet and god) is a powerful incarnation of the archetype of King Toad, or medieval Sabba, the poisonous toad marked by Saturn and beloved of Witches.



Fantasyland seemed an eclectic realm influenced by mythology, magic, sagas of gods and heroes and nature; my erstwhile friends are determined that their creations bring forth one or more of these traits. They are all connected within the "Wood of Aradia", a large cauldron that contains the aforementioned themes, but is also a basic, organic idea that evolves and mutates as Fantasyland grows. They seemed reluctant to give too much away about the future.

Strangely enough I remember talk of playing games, but now in the cold light of day I have struggled to discern its nature. I believe they implied that once Fantasyland had been populated with their creations, there could be a fantastical game on the horizon. Once more they were cryptic, probably a ploy to confuse and keep secret their future intentions.

I recall seeing many interpretations of the Toad King during last night's episode. The collaborator Allan Carasco brought great happiness to the brothers during the creative process, but many artists from beyond the realm of Aradia have portrayed the Toad King in all manner of guises, although I shall always remember him as the King of Aradia's woodland. Looking back, I see now I was not the first to encounter the brothers and their fantastical creations; as great artists such as Roman Lappat, Iguazzu, Sascha Buczek and others,

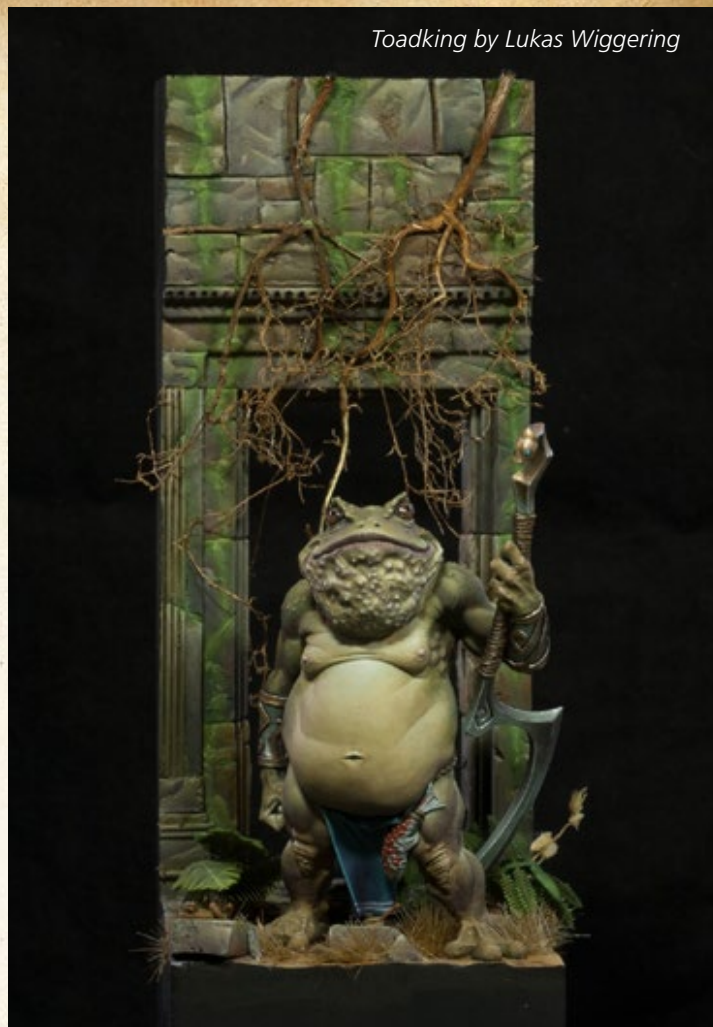


all have perceived the Toad King in their own interpretations. Clearly what I am dealing with here is a realm that freely crosses over between fantastical myth and the





Toadking by Julien Reymond



Toadking by Lukas Wiggering

hobby of miniature painting. Stefano and Federico with their collaborators have gifted each of the creations versatile forms that will find these creatures in ever evolving story telling scenarios, but for me the magic lives on in Aradia. The brothers tell me how their realm and ours survive in a mutual reciprocity; that is a dynamic relationship between their creations in Fantasyland and the paint-jobs of the painting community, forever bringing life to the mythical creations of Aradia.

They told me too of a beautiful place called Stresa, where they spent three days showcasing their creations, immersed in a dreamy atmosphere, full of colours and wonderful people. It was an experience of sights, smells, tastes, friendships forged and future plans and possibilities given substance.

It was an experience that has left them craving more and resulting in a trip to a realm known as Folkestone in the year 2015. I hope to continue my journey with them over the coming years as they hint at creations, bigger and more fantastical than ever (another Carrasco creature, a giant tropical monster) with more collaborators eager to be involved in the world that is Aradia—will you join us?



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INSIGHT

interview with Ben Komets



Place of Origin? Berlin

Years Painting/Sculpting? 18 years, including the very first steps in my basement with some Hero Quest figures and a few "Revell" colours someone gave to me.

Major Awards? 3 Slay-erswords, 4 Best of show Forgeworld, Best of Show in Kulmbach, Gold at Euro Militaire, Gold at Monte San Savino Show and over 30 Golden Demons, but the biggest award are the friends I met through the hobby all over the world.

Future Goals? World domination and a tax reduction for brushlickers.

Ben Komets is one of my favourite painters who over the last few years has been consistently at the forefront of the miniature painting community, not only in his native Germany, but all over the world. The wide range of topics he chooses to paint show a huge versatility and the special care and attention he puts into displaying his pieces always make them a joy to look at.

He has a passion for sharing his knowledge which can not only be seen in the number of painting classes he has done in the past, but with his team mates, Michael Bartels and Mati Zander, who together make up Painting Buddha and are famous for their DVD series of painting tutorials and their online Painting Academy.



Q1: *What got you started in painting miniatures and did you have an artistic background before it?*

I think there are 3 main events or facts that influenced or started my miniature "career".

My brother-in-law trapped me in this hobby of miniature painting. I was always into drawing and painting, but did not know that such a thing as the miniature hobby existed. One evening he introduced me to the world of miniatures by simply showing me the Heroquest figures he painted and lending me some paints ☺

Another big moment was the when I got started with competition painting. Back in 2002, I was not really into Games Workshop minis anymore; it was the time of Warzone and Rackham. I was not thinking about going to painting contests at all. I felt like I was a rather good miniature painter, but actually I didn't know much about the world of international miniature painting. I was one of the good painters in a figure store in Berlin, but one day a friend of mine, Kevin Kosse, came back from the Golden Demon where he had won 2 Demons.

We were painting for the same shop in Berlin and although we were friends, we were also rivals in our small world and I thought, "If he can win, I could do the same." I had never participated on a competition before, so I asked him to take me along to the next year's show in Cologne and so it was. I painted the whole year to have something like 12 entries, one for each category in the contest!

The first Golden Demon ever that I have won was with my most crappy piece of all. It took me about 2.5 hours to paint and I guess my main entry didn't even get a finalist pin. I thought to myself, "Oh no — all of the people will think that's how I paint!" I wanted to come back and defend my honour with a serious entry. That's how it all started — I was hooked.

Last but not least, miniature painting has taken me all over the world where I met so many talented and amazingly friendly people. People from all professions — astrophysicists, dentists and plumbers; all united by the passion for miniatures. Miniature painting changed my view on everyday life. Today I see the world in textures, colours and lights and the fascination for the detail.





I studied and worked for several years as an architect and I would say as much as my studies influenced the way I see the world as much as miniature painting has.

Those are the sole reasons why I started out in this hobby and keep painting ☺

Q2: *The German painting community is pretty healthy and many consider your work to be one of the reasons for this; what do you do to help the German painting community grow?*

First of all, thank you, I didn't know people say that. ☺ I think the German community is as healthy as it is because luckily the new generation of painters are willing to share their secrets. I think there is a Painting Workshop almost every month somewhere in Germany.

Actually, Matt Cexwish and myself started that workshop hype by getting Jeremie Bonamant Teboul from France to give a 3-day workshop in Berlin back in 2007. This event really started the workshop virus. I try to share my knowledge about painting whenever I can and I always try to learn new things and techniques myself.

Q3: *I was looking at your miniature images over on Cool Mini or Not and you have painted things from all different scales and genres. Do you have a favourite scale or genre?*

It's hard to say...I think personally I do not have a favourite scale; I love the different possibilities of different scales, but in general I think you can show a lot more storytelling details, more light and shadows and more personality in bigger figures, in 54mm. I always wondered who actually likes to paint the shoes of models. The fun part, at least for me lately, is busts. I have been painting quite a number of them. I find them nice and easy and a welcomed counterpart to the complex diorama projects I do.

Q4: *You're not afraid to be a little bit experimental with how you display your miniatures. I'm thinking of the Hasslefree Alice, in the watch, The Happy Monk, also in a watch, but this one open with a small oriental style water garden inside and also your Alice and her collapsing Wonderland. Where do you get these ideas from and is it a long process designing such displays?*

I think the most important part of creating "miniature art" to stay open and breathe in every bit of inspiration the world bears. The presentation of a miniature is very important; it's the gateway to the viewer. A good presentation helps you to get people to look at your project for that minute longer. This way, they are willing to "read" the project — to look for details and to look for the story within the piece. A good project is always telling a story and you need to be willing to search for it.



Does it take long to create such projects? I would say it really depends on the project itself. For example, the Alice in the watch was done in an afternoon while painting and chatting with a friend.

Projects like "Jules Verne's daydream" or "Alice and her collapsing Wonderland" take sometimes years from the first sketch. Sometimes you need to be nursing an idea for a while.



Q5: Do you have a typical method when creating the displays for your miniature's? Do you hit the pencils and sketchbook or go straight to the plinth and putty and let the ideas flow?

I have quite a vivid imagination. Usually, it all starts with a simple idea...then I prove if the concept would work with some sketches. I brainstorm my projects a lot with Matt Cexwish who is my nerd brother and we try to maximize the potential of an idea before it's ready to be boiled down to size.

Often, on a scenic base, it's more about what you don't show than about what you do show. The mind often builds the scene for you and by leaving some part of the story for the viewer to complete in his or her own imagination, you get the people emotionally involved.







Q6: *Now you're part of the Painting Buddha team, how did that come about?*

It was in 2013; I was happily working in a great architectural office in Berlin...I had worked for several different miniature companies and collectors, but always alongside my day job, but one day I got an amazing offer. You can make all the projects you ever imagined, together with the super talented Mati Zander and Michael Bartels who would film and document the projects to show the people "how to be a better painter".

I had briefly known Michael from several different occasions over the past few years. Actually, he was one of the participants of that very first international workshop with Jeremie that we organized back in 2007. After an international career in IT Management, Michael Bartels moved to Berlin from Tokyo to start a slightly different miniature company. All he needed was a sculptor and a painter to start his business...

Mati Zander and I are friends and have been for quite some time and we have successfully worked together on various miniature (and non-miniature) projects, including a massive 2 x 2m model project for a permanent exhibition for a museum, so he thought we would make a good team.

The idea of becoming a full time nerd was too tempting to not at least give it a try ☺

I think working for Painting Buddha is great because it gives me the opportunity to share my painting knowledge and produce a high-class product. Now, with our new Painting Buddha Academy it's even easier to access all the painting knowledge and it makes me happy to see how fast people get better day-by-day.



Q7: *Where do you see yourself and Painting Buddha in 5 years time?*

I have no idea ☺
Please don't quote me on that!

Q8: *Lastly, what is on your workbench at the moment?*

At the moment, I'm working on a bust by my friend Alfonso "banshee" Giraldes — the Scale75 Abyssal Warlord. I am trying to give that beautifully sculpted bust an unexpected twist. I also wanted to see how much you can manipulate the volumes with the paintjob without actually transforming the model itself. Lastly, I have been experimenting a lot with different moods and skin tones, so I thought I would try to paint a model with black skin, a kind of weird modern voodoo warlord...we will see how I succeed.

I would like to thank Ben for doing this interview in a very short time while he was very busy. He really did pull out all the stops which just proves what a great guy he really is.







Price: Fairy 30€ (sold out)

Nyara 20€ (sold out)

Diana 37€

Harley 25€

Toad King 30€

The Hangman 30€

Scale: 28 - 32mm

Material: Resin

Available from

Aradia Miniatures

aradiamiatures.webs.com



Unboxing

Aradia Miniatures

Ok, so after our little adventure to Aradia, let's get down to the business of reviewing five of their miniatures. Yes I said five!



So as to not render certain passages redundant through repetition, I will firstly do a general overview before going into specifics with individual miniatures.

They arrived in a box, with packing ample enough to keep all the miniatures safe. Each miniature is packed within ziplock bags inside a blister pack and come with a small piece of concept art. They are cast in high quality, grey resin and I have to say the casting and detailing is near perfect. On one or two pieces some small clean up was required, mainly in the form of shallow mould lines which can easily be rectified with a hobby knife or Flex-iFile. I found a couple of very small air holes, but these can be easily remedied with a spot of super glue and filed smooth once dry.

Nyara The Fox

So, let us begin with Nyara the Fox and she really is quite foxy. She has a playful pose, standing about 55mm to the tips of her ears and was sculpted by George Georgy; as usual concept art by Stefano Moroni.

She consists of five pieces across two little sprues. The sculpt is very delicate and detailed. Some of the details you miss at first glance, due to their tiny size. She comes replete with a rather revealing fur topped “bikini” top that matches her knee high, leather boots. There is a very fine and tiny bejewelled necklace and tiny buckles on her boots, which will require a very steady hand and 20/20 vision or at the very least a visual aid such as headband magnifying glass.

As you can see in the picture, her left hand is held on her hip; what you may not be able to see, however, is how clever the design is regarding how the pieces were cut for casting. Her hand is sculpted onto her waist, so when the arm is attached to her shoulder it fits snugly into the wrist of the hand. Her neck is cut at an angle and this fits perfectly into the cavity of her head, so there is no visible join or the possibility of the parts slipping when gluing. I can not speak highly enough of this miniature. There is a little clean up to do — there’s a mould line down her leg, but thankfully does not go across any of her textured parts, so clean up will not risk defacing any details. The pose is attractive, the details crisp and the casting near on perfect. I can see there being many interpretations of this miniature, with the seasons in nature an obvious inspiration.



Diana

Next up is Diana, sculpted by Benoit Cauchies. After the limited assembly needed of Nyara, my first impression of Diana upon opening the blister is one of panic and disbelief. This is a complex miniature simply due to the number of parts. Let’s have a count...8 sprues, 28 parts and a resin scenic base for Diana to stand upon. Let’s take a look at the larger components first. Her quadruped body comes in two halves that go together perfectly, a little filing along the join once glued will suffice, with no filling needed. The anatomy including musculature is very well done and the prancing pose is particularly dynamic. There are a few mould lines along the legs, but these again are very easy to remove along with the one air hole I found on the back of her right leg.

The upper body, in the form of some enchanting lady of the woods, connects snugly to the lower half via a 3 pin arrangement ensuring there is no slippage when gluing the two together. Once mounted to her base she stands approximately 65 mm high, but this has to do with her mid air leap. The remaining smaller pieces are incredibly detailed, which include her antlers, her beautiful recurved bow, the tiny, delicate flowers and the little owl that is perched upon her antlers. Here again they solve the issue of attaching the owl to the antlers during casting; the feet of the owl are sculpted to the horns and the owls' upper legs simply slot into the feet.

My initial apprehension due to the number of parts has, upon closer inspection, been allayed because each of the pins and their subsequent holes are perfectly formed and drilled and the manner in which the miniature has been cut for casting will make assembly much easier than I first thought.

Harley

Harley and his racehorse are next and he appealed to me as soon as I saw him. Forget about Moroni's enigmatic concept and discard the brilliant and quirky sculpt



by Piqui of Cursed Monkey fame; for me this mini encapsulates the fantastical setting of Aradia and stirs in me some fond childhood memories of the film *The Never Ending Story* (1984) based on the book of the same name by Michael Ende and in particular the Gluckuk (tiny man) who rode a racing snail.

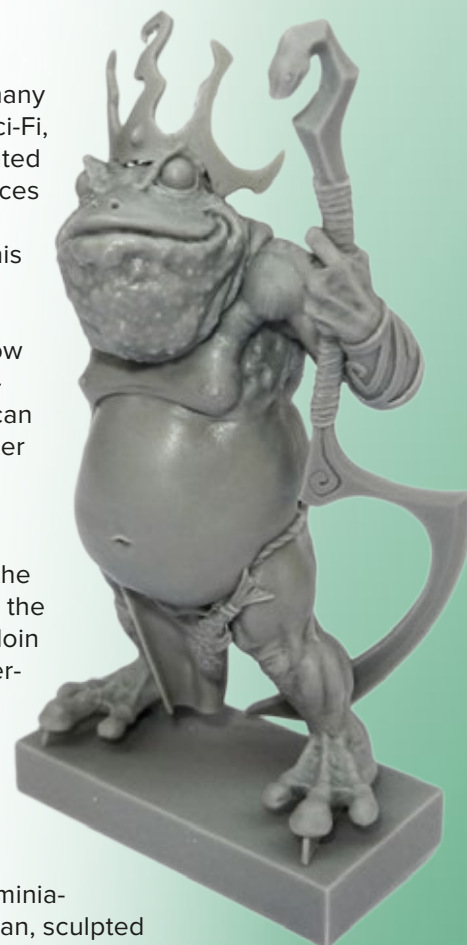
So back to Harley —the sculpting, detailing etc. are unsurprisingly exceptional once more. The resin seems a little different to the previous models and is of a darker colour. There are a couple of burrs on Harley that will need clipping off and filing down along with some mould lines. Harley seems to be wearing a collar or choker of some kind that will nicely hide any join when attached to his body. Harley sits snugly upon the “racehorse” via two pins that align perfectly with the holes in the roof of the shell. Everything I’ve encountered so far is very precise. After a short while of looking at the detail, I realised Harley guides his mount by the means of a set of reins. These are supplied in the form of resin and look a little brittle. If I struggle to fit these, I may create my own with some twine or twisted copper wire of the correct scale. I then realised the loops on the snail’s body for the reins to attach to have snapped. I sent a message to Stefano and Fernando and instantly received an apologetic message back ensuring me the replacement part was on it’s way and within a matter of days I had my new snail’s body. Fully assembled he stands approximately 55mm from ground to the tips of his bunny ears. A rather straight forward build, but this little fellow will provide the painter with so much freedom and I think will be an absolute joy to paint.

Toad King

The Toad King is our fourth miniature and an internet sensation. I have seen so many of these painted and in so many contrasting colour schemes and settings from Sci-Fi, apocalyptic, Mayan, fantasy and so many more. Sculpted by the ridiculously talented Allan Carrasco, the King oozes charisma and charm. It comes in five separate pieces with minimal clean up necessary. Our portly but regal Toad stands almost 60mm high and comes with wonderfully textured skin, in particular around the jowls of his face and head across the top of his neck running down his back.

If you read my article earlier “To the realm of Aradia and back again”, you will know why he has a sickle and not a sceptre; it makes for an interesting anecdote in understanding the creative process and how dialogue between artist and sculptor can lead to changes in anatomy, design and pose for instance, so as to achieve greater harmony in the finished sculpture.

The detailing on his forearm armour is wonderful and the same shapes and symmetry of the crown he wears and, indeed, the curves of his exalted blade match the design. Another clever piece of engineering is how the loincloth attaches around the waist. The tail of the fish is sculpted to the body whilst the rest is sculpted to the loin cloth, so simply “pinning” the tail to the fish means the loin cloth has to line up perfectly, which is another nice solution to ensuring parts align correctly.



The Hangman

The fifth and final miniature is The Hangman, sculpted by Raffaele Stumpo and dare I say it, from a personal taste, this mini didn't instantly captivate me like the others. The others had a charm, a beauty, an appeal leaning towards Mother Nature and fantastical creatures: but here was a brute, a crazed killer. However, once in my hand I could take a proper look at the pieces and I could see the same aspects as the others just portrayed in a more aggressive manner; for instance the dynamic pose, the flowing lines, the organic like armour, the antlers and even similar symbolism on the axe blade. Here was a miniature that gave the painter an unlimited canvas to achieve whichever results they desired.

Frankly, I fell in love with this mini too. It goes without saying the sculpt is amazing, the pose is dynamic, the detailing is crisp, the resin is of a high quality and once again (and believe me it's quite refreshing) the pegs and holes line up accurately and the parts fit together snugly with no need to gap fill. The only mould line I could see was around the antlers of his helm; that was all. The miniature stands head to foot, approximately 65mm high, but is substantially taller when you attach the double bladed axe (measuring 100mm in length) which is carried in front and raised above his head. There are several prominent aspects to this mini and they all help to strengthen the impression that he is a merciless killer — the blade, the armour and shield and the intimidating horned helm. The miniature comprises of eight parts and assembly seems



pretty straightforward. One point to make about the construction relates to the shield on the floor which he is suppose to be standing one foot on. There is no hole and pin arrangement as we have seen on all the others; this can simply be remedied by pinning the mini yourself using a pin vice and a length of copper wire, for instance.

As a painter there are several challenges I can see that lay ahead for me if I have the courage, so this could become an iconic miniature for me in my journey to become a better painter. Firstly, the deep folds and flows of his tunic are crying out for texture to be added. Secondly the armour and axe could be perfect for me to put in place the knowledge I gained from Alfonso Giraldes at his Non Metallic Metal workshop and finally a funky freehand on the shield.

All in all, I love the concept of the Aradia miniatures. I appreciate how collaborating with different sculptors they are producing unique miniatures that all fit perfectly within their realm. The quality of the casting is superb and the customer service is exceptional. There are plenty of new miniatures that Aradia plan to release before the year is up and they have big plans for their project. I, for one am going to be closely following what they get up to and I hope my article and these reviews have whetted your appetites, too.

Thanks for reading and happy painting!



Air Eraser

review

By **Tim Fitch**

I'm always removing paint from old miniatures for the pre-owned section of my shop; to date this has always been via a chemical stripper. However, a few months ago I stumbled on a YouTube video of someone using an air eraser or mini shot blaster. I have to admit I was intrigued. This then, is my experience, thoughts and views on the devices.

There are currently two main manufacturers of air erasers on the market here in the UK, Fengda and Badger.

The most common is the Fengda Air Eraser, which is sold under lots of different names including Fine and Detail, air-eraser and etching tool. It consists of an airbrush like body with a top mounted aluminium cup. The cup is sealed by a screw top with a small thumbscrew right in its centre. Adjusting this screw regulates the amount

of grit, or media, that is allowed through the gun itself. Directly below this on the underside of the gun is the 6mm screwed air intake. The gun comes in a clear plastic topped box with a braided airline, a container of 150g of aluminium oxide grit, a thin facemask and a hook that can be installed to hang the gun on when not in use.

I bought mine from AirBrush Pro for £23.94, who delivered it quickly and without any problems.

I also bought the Badger Mini Sandblaster, also from AirBrush Pro, but this time for £35.94. Badger has an impressive reputation for making excellent airbrushes, so I had high hopes for this device.



Above the Fengda Air Eraser. Right, Badger Mini Sandblaster,



Again you get the air eraser, airline, ¼ inch airline adaptor, container of aluminium oxide grit, and a facemask. Where this differs from the Fengda is its grit holding cup, or in this case, glass jar. It's much bigger than the Fengda, bottom mounted, with the grit being sucked up a small intake pipe into the gun.

Both air erasers need a bit more air than an ordinary airbrush would use, typically 40-60 psi. To power them, I bought an AS-186 mini air compressor with a 3 litre reservoir tank attached.



Having seen YouTube videos of these in action, I decided to copy the modus operandi shown and have a go at blasting a painted mini whilst using a box lid to collect the spent grit. I ought to say at this point that I did also buy a better quality facemask before I started using these tools. The ones supplied in both kits are better than nothing, but aren't great quality. Aluminium oxide and little bits of mini metal and paint aren't a mix you really want to be breathing in.

I also wore a pair of safety goggles and a pair of thin latex disposable gloves. Having got the Fengda first, I plugged it in, powered up the compressor and pressed the button.

It was like sitting in a sandstorm. Yes, a bit of paint was worn off the mini and yes the box lid did collect a bit of the grit. However, the rest went everywhere and in the confined area of my painting station this wasn't good; so much for YouTube videos!

I needed an enclosure to test it properly and so after a few hours in the shed I came up with this. It's not pretty, but it does keep the grit in one place.



I tried again and this time was able to get a real feel for the air eraser. It's well made; the 6mm braided air delivery hose is of good quality. Also the hose has an inbuilt moisture trap; wet or even slightly damp grit won't flow, so this a belt and braces approach when coupled with the water trap that comes with the compressor.



The main problem was the small size of the cup that holds the grit. When filled full it doesn't take long for it to empty. Worse still, as it empties to around one third full, there is a noticeable drop in the amount of grit delivered through the nozzle. This makes for lots of stops to refill the gun, which takes time away from the job in hand, i.e. stripping the mini.

Collecting and re-using the grit caused another problem — blocking. To be fair I did expect this to a degree, after all it now has very tiny pieces of blown off paint in it. However, it blocked on practically every squeeze of the trigger. Not being able to re-use the grit a couple of times makes this air eraser uneconomic to use long term. It was disappointing.



As I mentioned earlier, I had high hopes for the Badger Mini Sandblaster. Their airbrushes have a great reputation and I expected this to be carried over into this product. It was well packaged and they provide much more grit to get you started. However, the airline they provide is just a thin plastic pipe with tiny screw fittings at each end. And then I say tiny, I mean really tiny! They won't connect directly to a 6mm port on a portable air compressor. In fact, I had to send off to AirBrush Pro to get an adaptor that would allow me to use the airline with a 6mm ported air compressor.



The actual air eraser feels cheap compared to the Fengda, something that I wasn't expecting. The handle and most of the body is hard black plastic. The jar that holds the grit is nice glass, but it screws into a plastic fitting. The pipe that delivers the grit from the jar to the gun is also flexible plastic. The nozzle is hardened steel, and is held in place by a knurled locking nut. In fact, these and the tiny brass airline connector are the only metal bits in it. This matters because over time and use

the grit will wear the non-metal bits faster and the gun is more likely to fail.

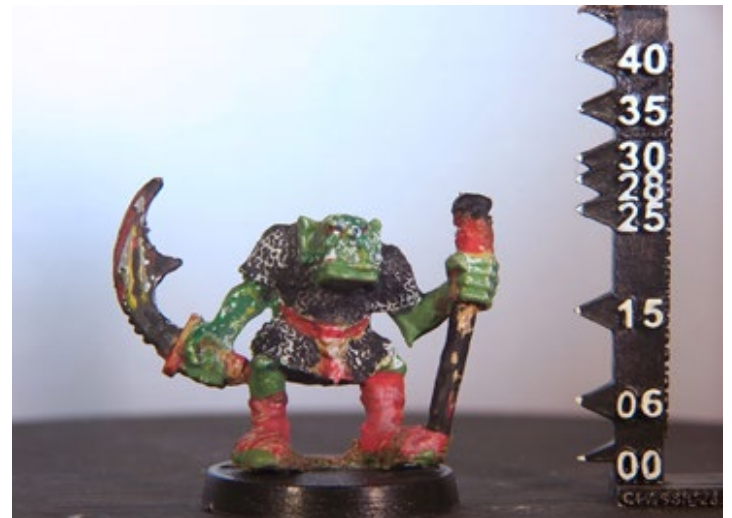


In use, the Badger used more air, so the compressor was working harder. However, the large grit holding jar was brilliant. Just fill it up and you've a couple of minute's of continuous use before the next refill. It fires clean grit very well, and deals with used grit better than the Fengda, though it will still clog. De-clogging requires the grit holding jar to be unscrewed, the thin intake pipe removed and a small rod inserted into the narrow hard plastic pipe that connects the intake to the airflow to dislodge the obstruction. Then re-assemble till the next time.

So, niggles aside, do they strip paint off minis? Well, yes and no. I tested a painted and varnished metal orc, pictured, against the Badger.



A full jar of new grit later and this was the result.



As you can see, it's damaged the paintwork. Indeed little patches have been taken back to the bare metal. But it's a patchy process at best, with most of the paint left on.

So what about weathering something? Well, I dropped a plastic version of one of the Emperor's finest into the fray to see what would happen.



It certainly textured the plastic. Whether this would be enough as a weathering or texture effect I'm really not sure. A good primer would probably deal with most of it before you started painting, so probably not.

Once again I was disappointed. The niggles and clogging I could live with if it actually did what it was supposed to, but it doesn't. However, I decided to give the Badger one last chance. My indoor compressor is small, but the one in my garage running our large scale shot blaster produces 150psi and has a 150 litre tank. Perhaps it just needed more air pressure to work efficiently.



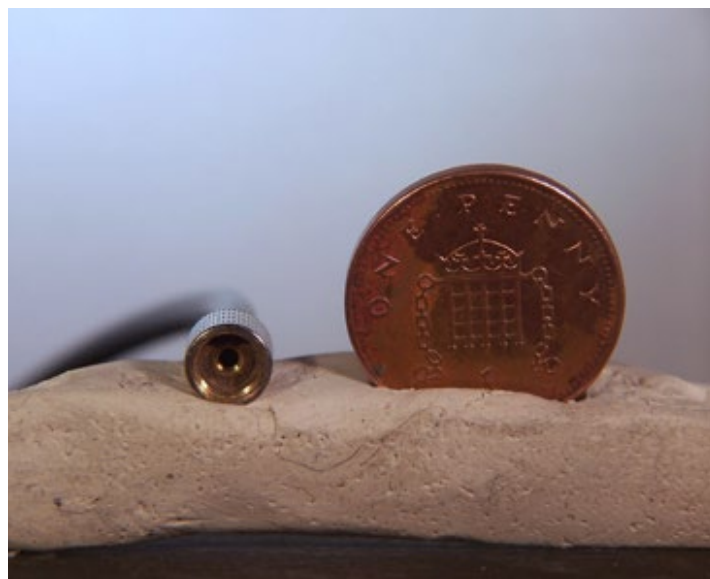


I linked the Badger up, filled it with the last of the new grit and attacked a new orcy volunteer.

As you can see above, there is little difference from the small compressor. I have to say I think the reason for this is the ridiculously small air line that Badger supplies. It's a thin bendy plastic pipe that lacks the internal volume necessary to deliver a decent amount of air.

The Fengda is the better made and packaged of the two erasers. Made of metal it has a nice airline with European 6mm fittings as standard. Sadly, it doesn't hold enough grit in its cup and it loses its cutting power when the grit in the hopper drops to about one third full.

The Badger is slightly better due to its bigger grit holding jar and its better ability to deal with used grit. However, the heavy use of plastic in its construction is a worry for long term use and its feeble airline is laughable. No matter what pressure you put to it, the line will only allow a trickle through. It comes with a ¼ inch adaptor, but nothing for a 6mm mini compressor fitting, which means another separate purchase.



In conclusion, both air erasers failed to strip a painted mini; therefore, I recommend stripping most of the paint off with a chemical remover and the air erasers will clean up what's left, but this is a messy, time-consuming process with more stops than starts.



www.fantasyrealms.co.uk



Price: 63€ (with groceries)

48€ (without groceries)

Scale: 28 - 32mm

Material: Resin

Available from

Tabletop World

www.tabletop-world.com



Unboxing Merchant's Shop

One of the few things that make me proud to be a Croat (especially in this hobby) is a relatively new terrain producing company - Tabletop World. The guys produce a high end range of medieval/fantasy resin buildings for tabletop (or your dioramas, if you choose) and in this issue of FPM I'll be reviewing one of their smaller kits - the Merchant's Shop.

The kit arrived in a plain box for mailing filled with old newspapers; a very cheap and effective way to ship. Since all the parts are sturdy and made of thick resin, there is no possibility of damage during transport. The balcony was placed inside the top storey and the plastic zipbag with the groceries was stuck inside the lower storey of the building.

Immediately upon taking the roof out of the transport box, I noticed that I'm dealing with a high class piece of terrain. Every wooden roof tile is hand sculpted and there are almost no straight lines/areas. The level of detail continued on the other parts, too.

The Merchant's Shop consists of 4 pieces: the ground level, first storey, roof and a balcony. All the pieces fit each other perfectly and there is no need to fill in any gaps should you wish to assemble the house for your diorama. However, if you are planning on using this kit for tabletop wargaming, I strongly suggest you do not glue it together. The level of detail inside each storey is awesome, so it would be a pity to not allow your table-

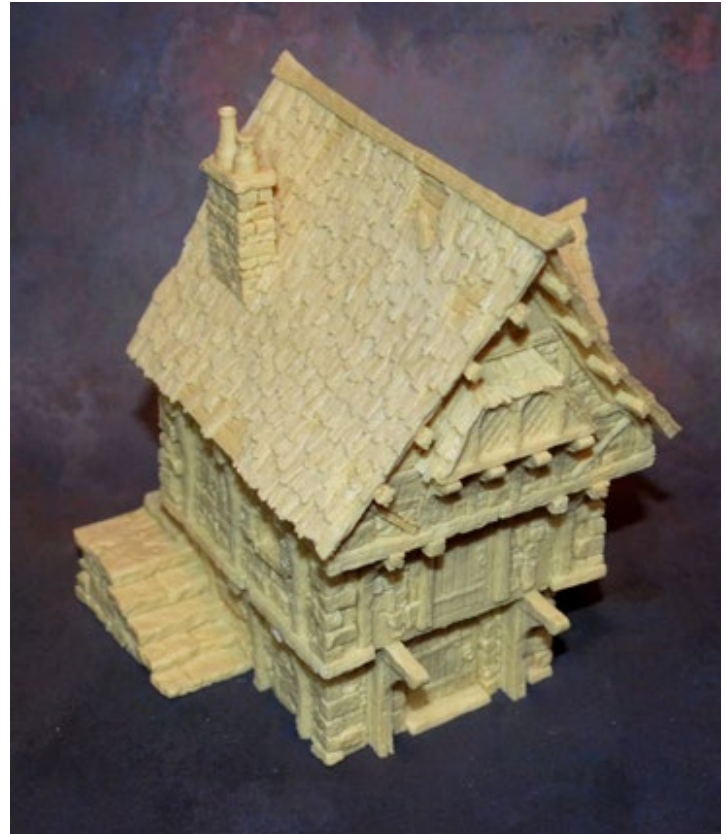
According to their words on the TTW site: Merchant's Shop

This luxurious house is where the town's well known merchant spends his days in peace and welfare. Townsfolk know him as a fair trader and a tolerant man who is always kind and ready to help people in trouble. In his shop, placed on the ground floor, you can find everything you need be it food, tools or even medicine.

Picturesque and highly detailed building, with both interior and exterior. Great addition for any medieval or fantasy table. The model is very easy to use. The kit includes lots of accessories that can make this model a true centre-piece for your gaming table. However, these accessories are optional.

top heroes a chance to battle inside this building. Even without gluing, the pieces stay on top of each other and won't separate unless you knock them over. Even that can be prevented by using small magnets to keep things in place, which would allow you to remove the roof/first storey if you wish to game inside. The balcony, however, needs to be glued and is really my only „bigger“ niggle about this kit. There is no chance of a mini on 20x20mm (standard WHFB/Mordheim base) fitting inside it. The size of those bases would mean that the area of the balcony would simply be too big to be aesthetically pleasing or convincing for that matter, so the guys at TTW (cleverly) decided that the balcony is just there as an extra detail.

So to sum up, the Merchant's Shop is not the cheapest kit around, but the level of detail really justifies the price. When compared to the “more usual” kits you find on an average battlefield like GW's range of plastic terrain kits, you immediately notice the lack of skulls and the much higher level of detail and thought put in this kit. When carefully looking at the building, you can see the architectural sense in all the details put inside; the rooms and storeys actually make sense, unlike the plastic kits mentioned above. To top it all off, the price is not really that much higher.



What really, really impressed me were the optional groceries. They do increase the price of the kit by another 15 €, but are well worth it. The level of detail is stunning. There is a cheese ring, sausages, corn, pumpkins, onions, cabbages and all sorts of barrels, sacks or and crates which can further increase your gaming experience or your diorama. The groceries can be purchased on their own, too.

The Aquila - Hero of Rome 41 A.D

by Roman Lappat, "jarhead"

PRO

 Website



I had a conversation with the UK painter Marta Ślusarska on facebook talking about this bust of mine and I thought this conversation would be a nice add on to the bust's photo. I asked Marta and she is ok with being mentioned in the article. Here you go:

Marta:

"Hello Roman, I hope you don't mind me taking a bit of your time. I'd like to ask about the Roman legionnaire you painted recently (beautiful piece btw) or rather about the cloak he's wearing. I bought myself this piece a few days ago and did a bit of research about the equipment. But tbh I don't have too much time recently to look too deep. And all I found was that the cloaks were fabric. Do you have any info about them using leather or was it just your artistic choice? Thanks in advance for your time."

Roman:

"Hi Marta. Indeed fabric that cloak would be. Wool or a thin tunic fabric if you take it the total serious historical way, but I thought about a Roman that went out to the tribesland of Germanica, who froze his ass off and spilled blood to get that eagle back. On his travels he might have lost his fabric tunic or had to change it with something he got from a killed German warrior, maybe to be more stealthy inside their territory. I am often not going the complete right historical way. I mean historical research is based on the things they found, not more. Often these things limit you as a



PUTTY & PAINT

painter and your painting. I can believe that there were some soldiers or people back in the ancient days that changed their clothing to a better fit of their environment and mission and so on... hope you get my meaning. I decided to paint this an old worn out leather piece, but you could also take it as a really dirty and worn out fabric if you like. Your interpretation, your imagination ..."

Marta:

"Thank you very much. What you say makes a lot of sense."

I need to think about the story behind the bust before I make final decisions about the clothing."

Roman:

"Happy to help...but be warned some historical painters will say such thoughts are wrong. Mainly the older and more traditional ones."

Marta:

"btw I did some digging and apparently they used leather for the coats as well, for colder times."

Roman:

"Yay, very cool news. Thanks for the update on that cloak."



Scottish Gentleman 1860

by Ivan Lesnichenko "DEMOH"



I must say, I really like to paint figures of Scotsmen, although sometimes it is quite difficult because of the features of their national clothing. At the same time it's always very interesting for me and allows me to improve my skills in painting.

This fine white metal figure that was sculpted by Angel Terol for the famous Pegaso Models I painted in my usual way. That means a combination of acrylics for the tartan, plaid, doublet, sporran and the rest of the clothes and oil for the skin and face on top of an acrylic base. I think that oil is really good for painting such things as a human skin.

I decided that the figure will be realized in warm yellow-green colours and the gentleman will be placed in open field, because I had the Celtic cross that had been with the figure. It allowed me to create a gloomy surrounding for him that seemed like a good idea.

I would also like to emphasize the aristocracy of his face and to show the direction of his glance and I think that I have succeeded in realizing this.

I hope you like it.





Old Gnome bust

by Marta Slusarska

PRO

 Website



I like painting busts. I don't know how about you, but for me they're faster and easier than full figures. I don't have to think about the background story too much; I don't have to build and paint a base (which I do like doing by the way. Recently, I just don't have enough time) — just paint it and mount it nicely on the plinth and voilà, the piece is finished and ready for the display cabinet (or competition if you like). While I choose my busts rather carefully, there is always some kind of a story sculpted into the piece. Just a little bit of thinking about colours, types of fabric and the general mood of the paintjob and the full character is born.

This old dude did almost all the work for me. The face is so full of character that it tells the story even without painting. The title of the sculpt is The Old Gnome, but if not for his ears and funny hat, he could be easily mistaken for a slightly cranky grandpa enjoying his pipe in the evening. I thought it would be good to keep him in simple clothes; nothing fancy, no sophisticated freehand, all kept fairly rustic. For the face...liver spots and freckles, lots of them. There is nothing saying 'you're old' like proper liver spots on your (most likely balding) head and hands. I wanted to try this effect for a long time now, after seeing some of the amazing examples of it on other busts. I'm quite sure that the easiest way to do that would be using oil paint on the surface wetted





MYRMILLO GLADIATOR



By **Sergey Chasnyk**

Hi everyone. Here is my new painting guide and this time it's about a historical piece I recently painted. The 54mm Myrmillo Gladiator from TarTar Miniatures.

I have prepared all the parts of gladiator by fixing them on cork wine stoppers and one half-cut door handle for the base. All the parts were previously cleaned and drilled for pinning; left leg to the ground, right hand to the shoulder connection and the head to neck connection. These were then adjusted and filled to hide the joints.



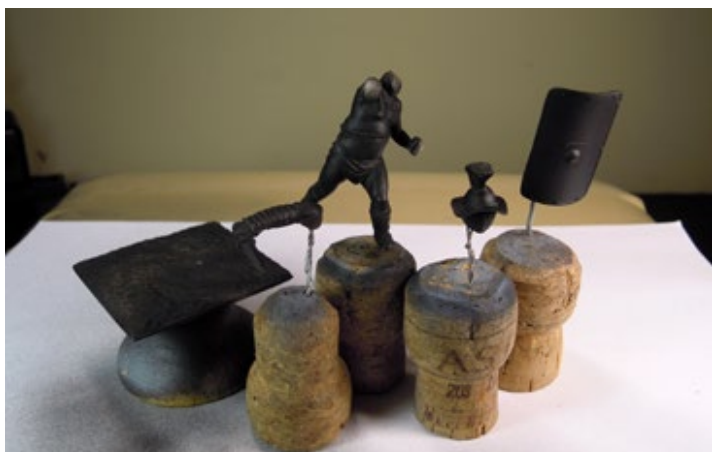
The Base

I have used the old Plasto modelling putty from Revell, PVA glue and bicarbonate soda. You could use just simple sand without any complications, since there is nothing except blood and sand in the arena unless you want to add some severed heads, broken weapons and other realistic stuff, of course. I used this because the finer particles make a better scale than sand does.



Airbrush Part

My standard black primer for the first step. For every primer or mix, I use Vallejo thinner; absolutely on every step.

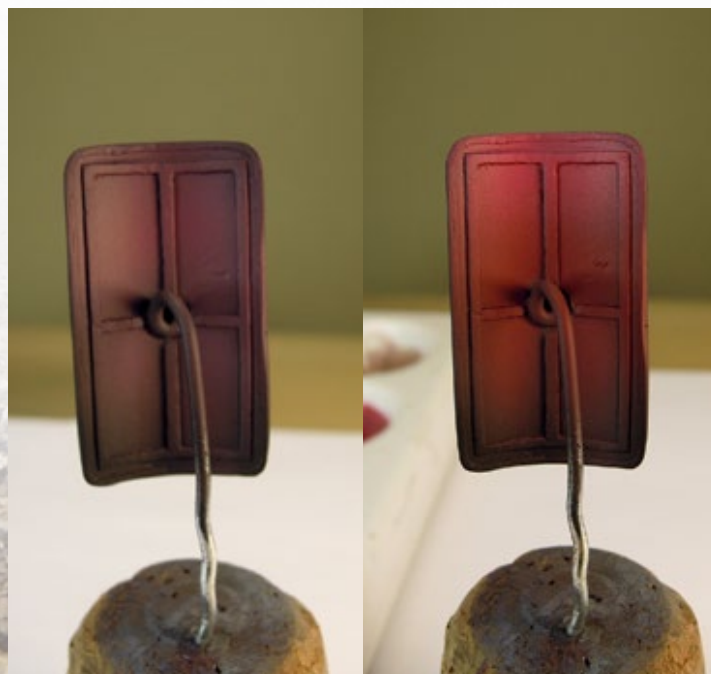
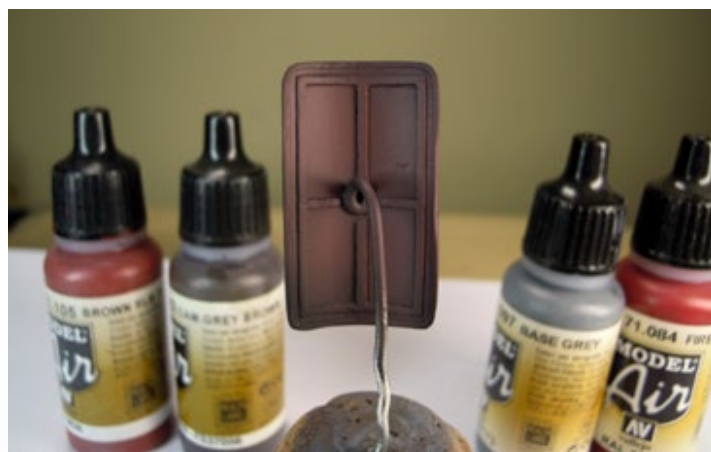


Note that I use 0.4mm nozzle for primers, since they are very adhesive, so they will easily choke up a smaller nozzle like 0.2mm or 0.15mm. I have primed the base with Vallejo Model Air (VMA) Cam Grey Brown and VMA Golden Brown, adding them and mixing with black and grey primers.



Shield's Inner Side Priming

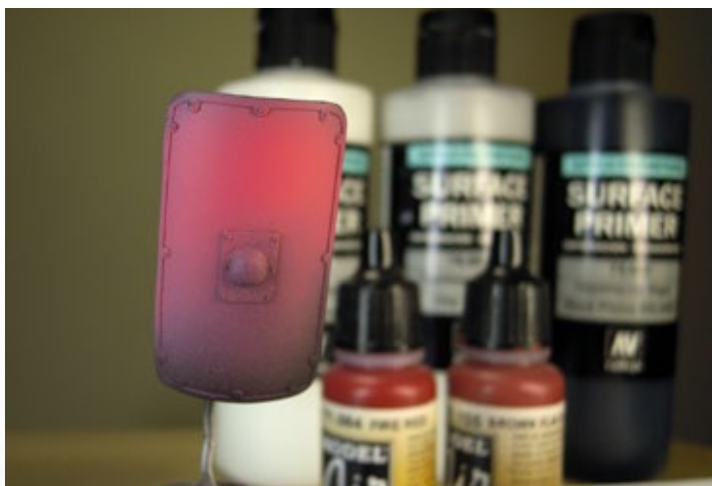
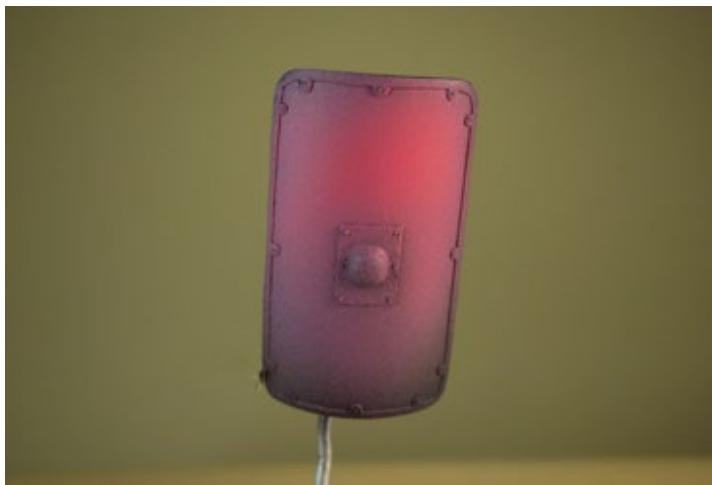
I want to make inner side of the shield look darker than the front side. I have painted the shield in VMA Cam Grey Brown with VMA Brown mix, then more Brown was added in the mix and a drop of VMA Fire Red, then was applied Fire Red, Brown and base grey (very little drop) mix. Finally, a little glazing with strongly diluted Fire Red.



Shield's front side priming

I have used Fire Red, Brown and white-grey-black primers (because they have very strong spreading capacity)

First was black + Brown mix applied, then grey + drop of black + more Brown mix, then grey + Brown + drop of Fire Red, then white + fire red + drop of Brown. Priming was finished with strongly diluted Fire Red glazing.

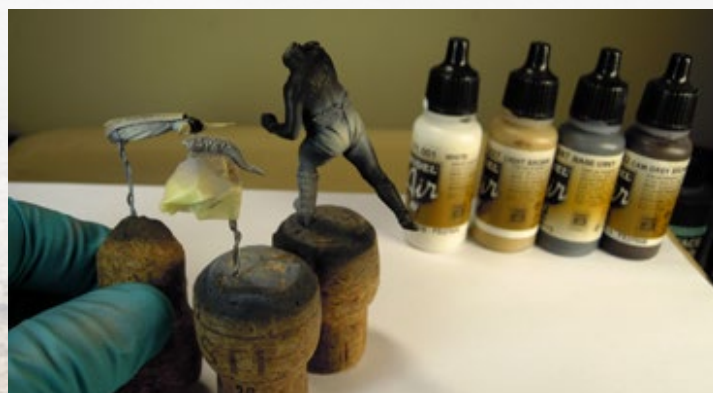


Priming white and grey parts

I have isolated the zones with paint adhesive tape.

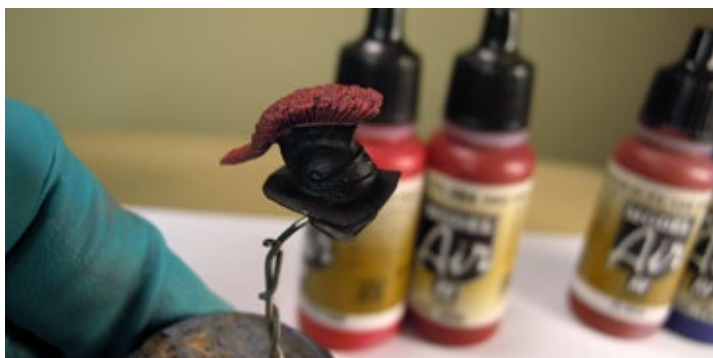


Then was applied grey primer with addition of Cam Grey Brown. Next was applied VMA Grey base + Cam Grey Brown + drop of Light Brown. Then Grey base + Light Brown + drop of white mix. Finishing with strongly (but not so strong as for glazing) diluted white with the addition of Light Brown.



Note that layers were applied as highlights, so with every step painting zone gets smaller and smaller, going to the very top spots of the sculpture relief. Since we have the bright helm's ridge here, it can be easily turned into red.

I have glazed strongly diluted VMA Fire Red on top, then VMA Brown on both sides, then VMA Brown + drop of blue on the lower part of both sides (like underlining). After this manipulation, I have removed the tape and checked the result. If something goes wrong, it can be easily repainted with simple brush for at any time.

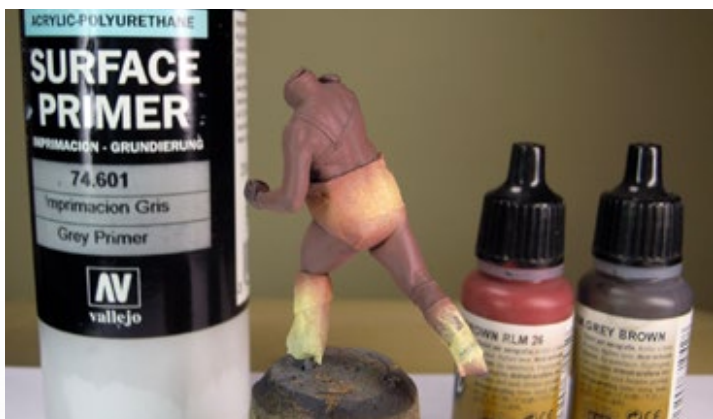


More Light Brown and Golden Brown added to mix.

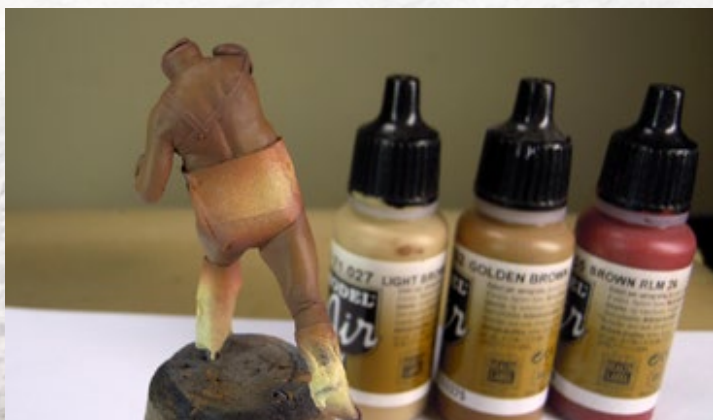


Body

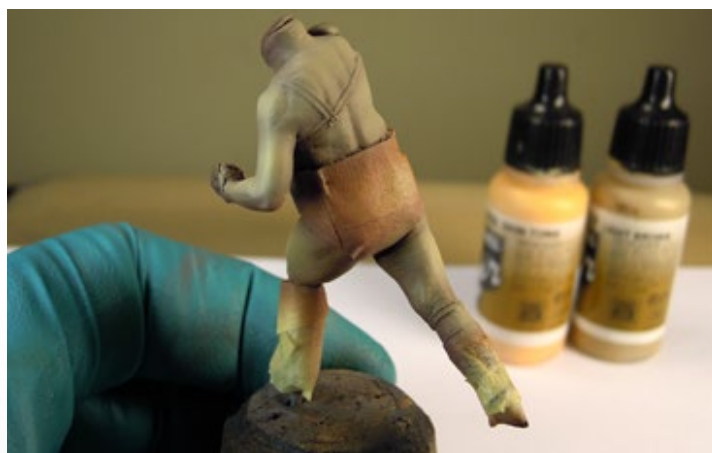
Based with grey primer + VMA Brown + Cam Grey Brown mix. I am still using 0.4 mm nozzle.



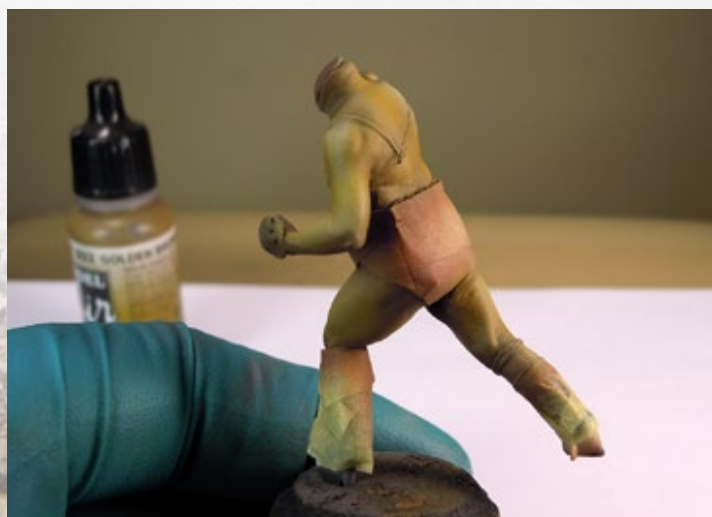
Attention! Here I have changed the nozzle to 0.2 mm, since there is are no primers anymore (I use H&S Silver-line). Don't forget about thinning mixes with thinner. VMA Brown + Golden Brown + drop of Light Brown as first highlight.



Skin Tone + Golden Brown as top highlight on this step. (then I will go to shading). Yes, it looks strange...but I have a reason—since I want bright skin colour, I need a bright base.



First shade with strongly thinned VMA Golden Brown.



Then VMA
Brown +
Golden Brown
as second.
Again, strongly
thinned.



Then Brown + Golden Brown + Cam Grey Brown.



Brown + Cam
Grey Brown
mix as the final
shade.

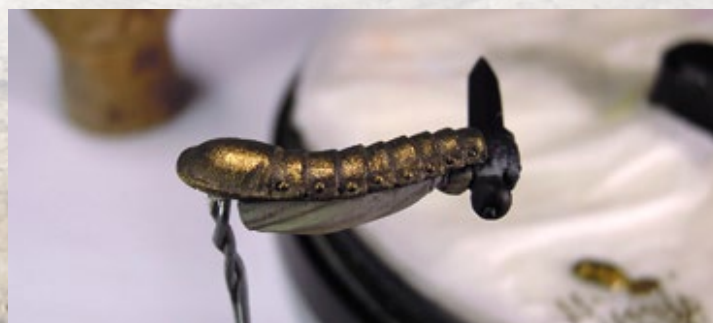
Ok, after airbrushing it needs to be left alone for 24 hours. In the other case, it will be diffused with water, if I will do a final make up earlier.

Meanwhile, I painted the metallic parts like TMM. I'm not sure about how good my TMM looks, especially since metallics are not photogenic. The main problem of usual metallics is that they glitter too much, taking all the attention. Another problem is that they glitter as small objects and we need it to glitter as one big object to make an illusion of the material being simulated, so I use pigments and matt varnish as a base for TMM, which helps us remove that inappropriate glitter the in shadows.

I have mixed VMC Bronze with Citadel Mechanicus Grey for the base.



Then I applied a highlight of diluted pure Bronze.



Then a mix of Bronze and Vallejo Metal Medium and pure Metal Medium on the very top highlights.



I mixed Tamiya Sand Yellow pigment with matt varnish and water. I glazed the midtones with this mix and as you can see it instantly removes excessive glitter from the paints.



Vallejo Burnt Umber pigment + matt varnish + drop of Vallejo Brown Glaze + water mix. Then I have added drop of black colour to this mix and shaded again.



Re-highlight with diluted Metal Medium.



Adding some scratches with black + Citadel Graveyard Earth mix as dark strokes then underlining them with Metal Medium.



The sword was painted just like bronze TMM, but with Steel + gray and black pigments.

It was like a minute ago for you, but 24 hours passed. So final make up of the body. It's wet blending again, don't try to understand, just believe. I am joking, but please read my previous guides for more information.

I mixed all the colours that you see on the body and made up left leg. I have done wet-blending, shading, glazing and highlighting at the same time. It was very fast, since I already have the gradient and I working with diluted (so very transparent) colours. In three words, all this process can be named as "strengthen the contrast".





And then I lay down a questionable moment. I don't like this smooth and clean skin like in Men's Health. Also I have seen all seasons of Spartacus...I wanted to make ugly, whipped and scratched skin, since gladiators were slaves and they took a whip almost every day. They were training and fighting – this is 54mm at the end of all! This skin can hold panorama of Waterloo! I just was forced to add some details, so check them out :)



I have tried to apply this skin damage in very organic way.

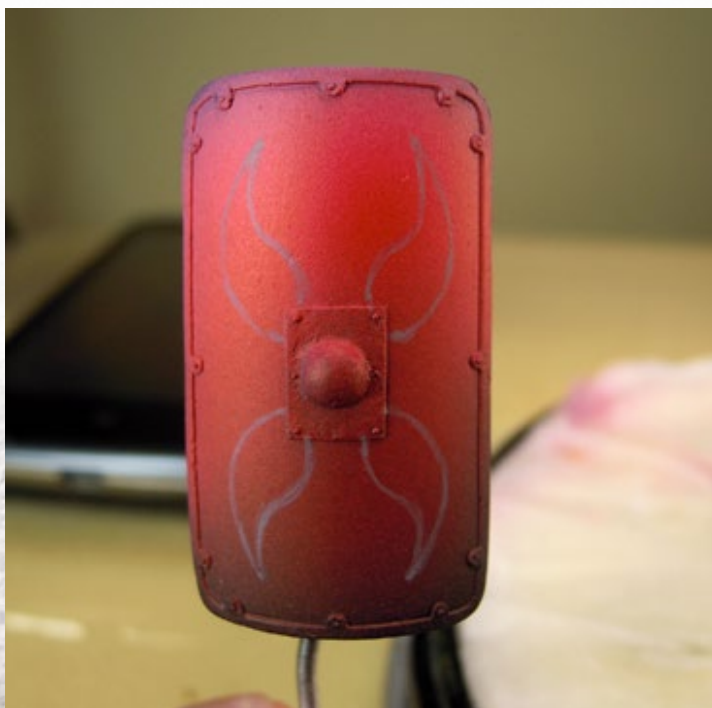
Freehand

Decision time again. I don't want to paint easy diadems or small white horses on the shield. I wanted to paint something more complicated. Someone will say that gladiators can't have shields looking like the legionnaires, but I couldn't find strong evidence on the net about this fact. Anyway, even if I am wrong, my freehand can provide more practice info for you (since you're reading this guide to improve your skills)

First, I have finished the shield's back with battle damage.



Then I have outlined the wings with a Citadel Dawnstone Grey layer. It has a low spreading capacity, so can be easily removed in case of mistake.



Painting and filling all zones.



I have covered grey zones with VMC Yellow Ochre + Citadel Golden Yellow.



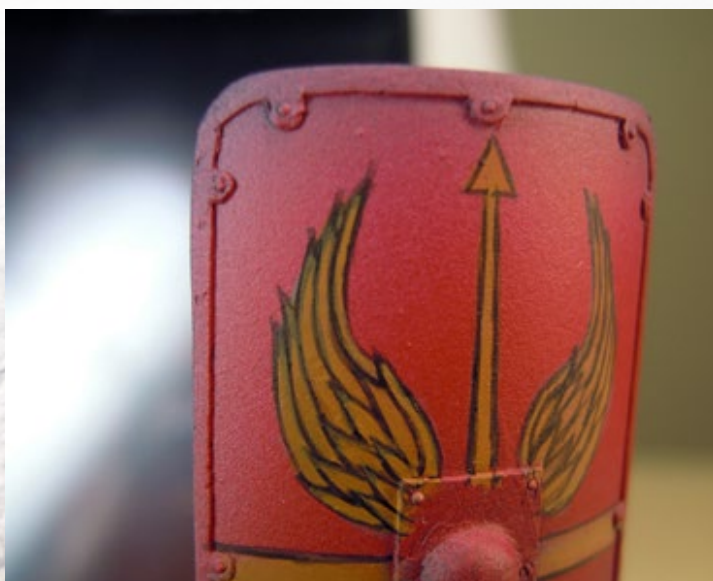
The grey provided a nice uniform flat base for the lighter Golden Yellow colour.

Next I want to add my design by blacklining a pattern over the Golden Yellow. I am purposely keeping this crude because each real Roman shield would have been hand painted, probably by its owner and not everyone, especially in those days was as well practiced with a brush as us :)



I went back and forth between the Golden Yellow and the diluted black until it was neat enough.

Adding white ultra-thin lines and battle damage.



This picture looks like I'm overdoing it, but on overall view its looks normal, since the shield is turned to ground a little and doesn't draw a lot of attention.

Ok, there are already too many photos, so I will skip the leather part. You can find it in my previous guide, but I will go over it briefly.

Dark Flesh (GW) (reddish dark brown) + black mix as base. Then I have added Orange Brown VMC to previous mix and highlighted.

More Orange Brown was added to the mix and highlighted and then pure Orange Brown was used to highlight. Finally highlighted with Orange Brown + Dark Flesh VMC mix and then, with pure Dark Flesh VMC.

The white clothing also is very simple. Just shade it down with Middle Grey and highlight with white.

The base was drybrushed with VMC Desert Yellow and the Sand Yellow and I have painted blood spray on the sand. Don't be over concerned how good it looks; the blood splatter should be random. You can skip this part...or add more blood to everywhere! I have just received Citadel technical blood, so maybe I will also repaint it a little :) In fact, that's a hint: if some place looks bad, just soil it with blood!



Ok, on this happy, but gory note my guide comes to end. See the final pictures and look forward to my future guides :)



by Martyn Dorey

Euro Militaire 2014 Show Report

September is that time of year when many figure modellers here in the UK and from Europe as well as further afield will make their annual pilgrimage to that 1950's south coast seaside resort known as Folkestone.



The final destination being the Leas Cliff Hall and the hotels around the cliff top close by. Unfortunately, these hotels are still in the 50's and many haven't been updated since then. You take pot luck on whether the shower will work or what small rodent or bug you might have to share the room with; but I digress — at least my bed didn't fall apart this year...

Euro-Militaire is a two-day show held at the Leas Cliff Hall. The venue is split over several floors with the competition hall overlooking the English Channel. If you are lucky enough for the sun to be shining, then you could have all your hard work washed out by the harsh sunlight coming through the panoramic windows!

Access for traders starts on the Friday afternoon, but trust me if you think the access for the public is bad, think yourself lucky you are not a trader; one access ramp to the trade hall which can only be used by one vehicle at a time and that vehicle has to reverse down the ramp which, by the way, isn't a straight reverse or short drive down the side of the cliff. If, like me, you don't fancy that, then it is a case of parking on the top level and carrying everything down or come across with a trolley from the underground car park and down the last flight of stairs. At 13:00 on the Friday afternoon they were still setting tables up as traders were arriving.

The show isn't all bad though, why would I go otherwise? What are the good points, I hear you ask? Well, for a start there is that age old excuse to get together with friends made over the years in the hobby, as well as make new ones and share ideas over a beer or two (or more in some cases for some people) and then there is the painting competition and the entries that come in for this from all over the world.

The show opens to the public from around 10:00 on Saturday morning and all entries have to be registered and displayed in the competition hall by 14:00 or there about. The hall is then closed to the public at 15:00, but the show does not finish for the day until 18:00, so plenty of time to do that all important bit of shopping before going back to the hotel.

From 15:00 on the Saturday the judges are gathered together and given their briefing; they are then pointed in the right direction and told to start judging the categories they have been selected for. This means that there are usually three to four judges per category and with twenty seven or more categories spanning the whole spectrum of the hobby, this is not a small task. Judging is done using the open system, which means that there can be multiple gold, silver and bronze medals awarded as well as commended and highly commended awards and all the judges judging a category need to agree on the award. A head judge is available for any final decision should it be needed. Once all the categories have been judged, then the Best of Show model is chosen from the gold medal winners. This means that the judges don't actually finish judging until four to five hours after they started in some cases, depending on the number of entries that year.



Judges are invited to judge in advance of the show and part of the remit for accepting this duty is that the judges are available to answer questions and explain their decisions as to why a particular piece did not get the award the owner felt it deserved or even in some cases the members of public felt it should have received. The judges are available in the competition hall on both days of the show, so if you felt you didn't get the award you should have, but couldn't be bothered to seek out the judges that judged your category, then that is your own fault. Also the judges are chosen from all fields of the hobby and so include sculptors as well as flat and round figure painters, many of whom have a lot of experience in judging at an international level and their own work can be seen in the display cabinets around the completion hall.

Anybody can enter the painting competition at Euro Militaire; it is not just for specific clubs or members like the IPMS Nationals where only the members can enter the competition. In many cases at Euro Militaire, the painter





or sculptor is not actually at the show and his work has been brought over by a friend or colleague and this was the case for this year's Best of Show winner.

With many of the traders releasing new figures for the show, there is plenty to be seen on both days; although as in the past (and this year proved no different), some traders sold out of their new releases sooner than expected. This was certainly the case for the Spanish company Origen Art with their Boudica bust and a beautiful piece it was — it sold out within an hour of the show opening.

In the past, I have turned up at Euro Militaire with a wallet full of beer tokens and half way through the day had to go to the cash point and get more, over the years, though, this tendency has dwindled a lot. This year I somehow managed to fall off the wagon and come home with a large bag full of lovely models; now all I need is the time to sit and splash paint on them.

Sunday is always the quieter day of the two, as is the case with a lot of two day shows. Demonstrations were given by various people on both days, although organisation for these seemed a bit haphazard at the best. It was just a Tannoy announcement and a vague location, which many people were unable to find and therefore didn't see that particular demonstration.

The highlight of Sunday is the presentation of gold medals and Best of Show award. After this the date for the show the following year is given out and the show wraps up for another year. It never seems to end their though, as the various internet forums erupt afterwards with the usual complaints about judging, but this usually seems to be people who never attended or had the balls to ask a judge why they didn't get the award they felt they or their friend should have had.



It feels like Euro Militaire is an old failing dinosaur and the present location does not help this in any way, shape or form; the organisers have mentioned before that Folkestone is the best location for it, because it is close to the ferries and channel tunnel, but then how many actually come across this way these days? Certainly not the Greek, and Maltese attendees (to mention just two) and I wouldn't be at all surprised if a lot more fly into London and then either catch the train down or drive down, so does it really matter if the show is in Folkestone? Shows like ModelKraft organised by the Milton Keynes Club and even the IPMS Nationals have a very large attendance from European and the rest of the world clubs and don't suffer from not being close to the ferry ports.

I feel that I have slated the show this year, but overall it is still a show I enjoy, Having first attended back in 1992 I feel that to survive the show as a whole needs to be looked at very seriously. Year after year many traders drop out, never to return again and many people even here in the UK will not attend because of the location of the show. There is very little advertisement outside of Military Modelling Magazine (which is owned by the organisers) and which many figure modellers have stopped buying or subscribing to because of the content and many traders won't advertise in.

I guess the question could even be asked as to whether the show should be run by a commercial company with interests elsewhere in the hobby and very little investment in the actual show itself. Looking at other shows, this is the only show that has this set up that I know of and if you look at a lot of the European shows such as the SMC Show, (which I will cover in the next issue) it is run by a local Dutch club and far outstrips a lot, if not all, of the UK shows I have attended.



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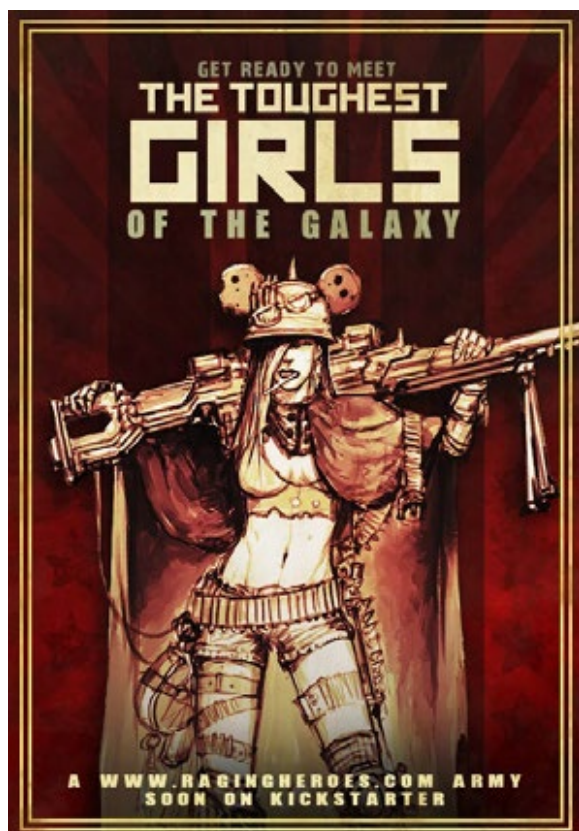


www.modeldisplayproducts.co.uk



By Terry Cowell

In the south of France, there is a city named Aigues-Mortes. It is famous historically because Saint Louis founded the 7th and 8th Crusades from there. In 2010 outside the fortress walls of this ancient city, another crusade began to take shape.



This time it was the turn of Raging Heroes and while there were no political initiatives, the armies of fantasy and sci-fi miniatures they would soon send out into the world would be no less far reaching. In fact, in just 4 short years RH miniatures are now sold in over 80 stores in 18 different countries.

On July 7th 2013 after a legendary kickstarter campaign was successfully funded, RH released 3 more massive armies into the miniature and tabletop community. With two more complete armies of troop, vehicles, commanders and more, the momentum is sure to continue.

This hasn't happened by accident. RH is a well oiled machine and anyone fortunate enough to have sampled their products or anyone with the time to research community reviews and blogs will soon come to realise that their continuing success is fuelled by creativity, quality and efficiency.

The miniature painting and gaming community is already aware who RH is, having produced high quality miniatures for some years now. Please tell FPM readers who you are and explain your role at RH?

I'm Benoit Guerville, co-founder and art director at Raging Heroes. My role is to conceive and supervise all the creative aspects of Raging Heroes. Among other things, this means creating characters and their stories, developing their looks, the visual themes and all the world that goes around it. I do some sculpting, but my job is mostly



to make sure that the work of the other sculptors and artists stay true to the project's original vision.

Miniature fanatics will be aware by now that RH ran a highly successful kickstarter that funded in less than 30 seconds. The goal was to attain at least \$12,000 to get the Toughest Girls in the Galaxy project underway and it closed at \$698,548. This is a remarkable achievement.

Thank you! I think these probably were the most mind-blowing 30 seconds of my life. It's very hard to describe what goes on inside when something like this happens. It's overwhelming.

It brought to 2,748 TGG backers in 53 countries over 85,000 items in the shape of 150 unique female sci-fi miniatures in 3 distinct armies. The Jailbird Division, The Kurganova Shocktroopers and the Neo Prussian Iron Empire.

The armies consist of individual heroine figures, troop boxes, artillery, mecha and motorbike units cast in 28mm scale that can be painted and used for war gaming across a range of tabletop gaming systems.

The quality of the miniatures received by backers during the highly successful TGG kickstarter was both widely and highly credited. A few of the descriptive

terms used by backers include – fantastic, exquisite and magnificent, to name just a few.

There were some concerns before release that RH had chosen to opt for 3D sculpting using a spin-cast resin process. I am pleased to say that the concerns proved unwarranted and post campaign I have seen evidence indicating clearly that RH made the process work with great effect.

Can you tell FPM why you chose to use 3D sculpting

using high quality metal and spin-cast resin techniques and how you made that work so well? Is the 3D process the reason why the units resemble the artwork so closely?

This is a very wide question! Our choice of 3D sculpting comes from many reasons: Mireille (cofounder and general manager) and I come from the film-making industry. We've worked with computer graphics for about 18 years now. The idea of using 3D printing came from an article we wrote for a computer graphic magazine about the making of the movie Coraline.

This movie makes massive use of 3D printing and we thought we could use that technology to make miniatures.





Using 3D sculpting made a lot of sense for many reasons. First, it was a medium we were familiar with. Then, as people working a lot with digital technologies, we've witnessed first hand the rise of movie editing on computers, digital photography, digital cinema and many other digital revolutions. Each time, the use of new digital tools completely transformed what was possible in these fields. We feel the same is happening with 3D sculpting and 3D printing for miniatures.

3D sculpting makes it possible for a small studio like ours to create the equivalent of about 250 sculpts in just a year, which, when you think about it, is pretty insane! It also allows us to approach the work in a very different way: for example, there is not one TGG sculpt that has been the work of only one sculptor. We pass the sculpts along and everyone adds his or her touch, what he's best at, so we refine the sculpts **MANY** times.

Having the characters made in 3D also opens up many possibilities for the future: digital comic books, video games, animated sequences or even little movies...but in the end, if the miniatures are close to the artwork, it's mostly because we are a band of maniacs, nitpicking like crazy to make sure the miniatures look as good as we can realistically make them ☺

Now, the choice of metal and spin-cast resin over injected plastic was a very strategic choice for us. Working

with plastic is a very tough decision to make. The sculpting process is totally different and far less free of technical limitations, but more than everything, each mould for a standard sized sprue can cost around \$10,000! So basically, if something goes wrong, you're screwed.

So we chose to work with our awesome metal supplier, Griffin Moulds from the UK, because a lot of people want metal minis. We also worked for a full year with another supplier to develop a very strong pipeline for spin-cast resin. There has been a lot of R&D involved, but everybody seems to agree that the results are top notch. We are very happy to have stuck with our intuition and to have been able not to move the production to China.

The 3 armies and opposing forces in TGG are distinctly different to each other. Where did the ideas for the miniatures come from? Were some of the armies and individual characters developed from looking at real life sources, current or historical?

The main idea for the TGG was to create a sci-fi world that could be dark and fun at the same time. Most of us at Raging Heroes like B-movies, silly stories of super villains and so on. From the very beginning, I wanted the TGG girls to be characters that you could find in a Tarantino movie: characters that are somehow dysfunctional, yet funny and lovable. Some of them are really dark or serious, but somehow we wanted to keep some light-

ness to it all, like in an 80's action movie.

The first faction was the Jailbirds who are inspired by characters like Vasquez from Aliens, Tank Girl, Cherry Darling from Planet Terror and basically any bad girl from any movie you can think of.

The KST came out as a mandatory force to accompany our 3 Kurganova sisters who have been our biggest hit before the KS. It's an army with a very strong Slavic / communism feel layered with shamanism. The KST is probably the most complex of the 3 armies/people, culturally speaking.

They have many facets and we have barely scratched the surface with them. There were obvious WWI and WWII influences for this army.

The same goes for the Iron Empire, which started as a reference to all these sci-fi stories of zombie Nazis that fled to the dark side of the moon. We put all the clichés we could in this army, having the zombie-like Iron Empire somehow saved by the talismans of an ancient Egyptian-like civilization, the Aegyptians. Then we turned it upside down by exploring what living in this desperate society would be like. The characters were not so much inspired by real life people than by various general references to history or mythology. Some were inspired by key traits of other fictional characters. Several back stories were carefully created a few months before the Kickstarter, but others were crafted during the rush of the Kickstarter when we had to write updates and we were unlocking new characters like crazy and we had not had the time beforehand to fully develop anything beyond their concept art. It was a very exhilarating process to try and tap into one's own creative juices just like that and come out with something exciting and rich in just a few minutes. Some of the best TGG characters have been created like that.

What role did the TGG customer community play in shaping the final product? I have seen during research that communication was transparent and consistent. It seems that feedback was important to RH. Is this relationship something RH consciously decided to encourage prior to start the campaign commencement?

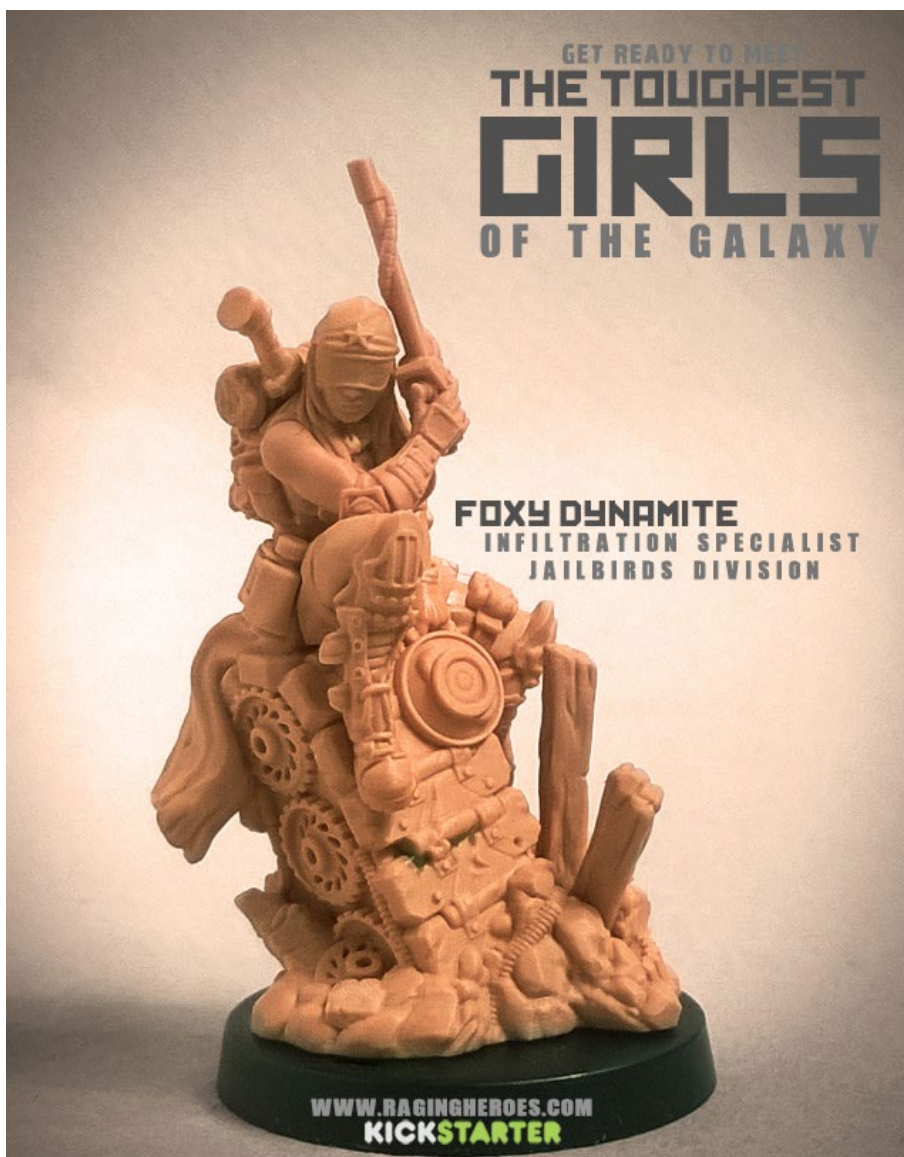
Yes, it is a very conscious choice. We REALLY want our customers and fans to be happy. We get a real kick when we see we've been able to surprise them in a good way, to get them excited by a new sculpt or a new concept. Their positive energy is really what's feeding us, so we are listening to what they want and we will continue to do so. It is something very important for us. Most of the time, they contribute to decisions like what will go in the equipment of a specific character. When we released our pledge manager, we set up a live chat to interact directly with the backers and it has been an incredibly positive experience.

The live chat is still open and running, so you can ask us questions and talk with us here if you wish to.

Last year RH stated that supporters of the project would be helping lay the foundation for an upcoming, unique game system with a lively background. Can you provide further information on this?

We wanted something that would add a different tone to your regular wargame, something that would fit the vibe of the TGG universe. What we are building uses new approaches to the way you can play this kind of game. I think it should be pretty exciting and fun to play. The game will be very cinematic, with a very strong focus on characters. There will be many ways to win in a game, not only through physical force. The personality of each character will have a strong impact on the way they act on the battlefield and things like bravado, cunning or slyness will be weapons to reckon with. You'll be able to pull





the ones led by the Freedom Fighters. The TGG background is purposely pretty dense, so there is plenty to be added.

Can you tell FPM what the multi part ball-joint system is and what benefit this provides to TGG customers?

There is nothing revolutionary there, really. We've just tried to make a very good joint system, so that you get as much flexibility as possible when posing your multi-part minis. Even if parts like shoulder pads and backpacks always tend to limit the way you can position things, you'll have a lot of flexibility in the posing. The most important aspect of it is that all parts from all the troops and support multi-part minis are compatible together. Since there are many extra heads and arms/weapons in the kits, you can mix and match like crazy. You can even mix between armies, so you should be able to come up with pretty unique stuff.

The dropzone idea used to provide a cost effective alternative for kickstarter backers to receive their products was in my view an inspired and creative solution. How does dropzone delivery work and how well was this received?

It was very well received. Everybody liked the idea: the shops, because for once they were not kept out of the Kickstarter loop, and the backers because it meant that with a single shipping fee they were

able to get their models as they were produced instead of waiting until everything has been manufactured and sent to them in one single shipment at the very end of the production schedule.

Here's how it works: we have put together a network of resellers who have agreed to receive our kickstarter parcels in their shops. If you live close to one of them, you can go there and pick up your TGG miniatures when they are sent over. You pay for one shipment, but there are 3 separate staggered shipments to your retailer, so this means that you get 2 shipments for free and you get many of your TGG rewards sooner.

Our only disappointment is that many backers don't read the KS Updates. They just scan through the images but apparently never read a word. A lot of them missed this opportunity to get their minis sooner. Please, when you back a kickstarter, take the time to read the updates and instructions.

up some crazy action moves and the rhythm of the game will be very intense with no downtime. You will never have to spend 3 turns just to make contact with a potential enemy. There will be many different types of settings, missions and game scale that you usually don't find in a wargame.

At this point in time, I can't share much more with you, save for the fact that we are very excited about how it's coming up. Once again, think Quentin Tarantino, James Cameron, John Woo and a hint of Michael Bay for the big explosions.

Regarding the game setting and the TGG universe, you'll soon discover more about our Dark Elves and our Sisters of Eternal Mercy and then we hope to have at least one other army, most likely two the year after that. Of course, we'll continue developing the existing ones to add more flavour to the game. We'll probably also add vehicles, big creatures and more units, especially for the rebel factions,

The Kickstarter creators spend so much time writing them down and there is so much good info you miss when you don't read them ☺

Given the massive success of the kickstarter, I would speculate that there are also many fans who would love to own TGG but missed out. Are there plans to publicly release TGG and can you tell me about this?

Yes, they will definitely be on sale on our website and in shops. Every day we receive letters from customers or retailers who want them. We don't have a precise timetable for that now, but we are thinking about gradually releasing them over the year, although nothing is set in stone yet. If you want to know when they are made available, I suggest you follow us on [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ragingheroes) or subscribe to our newsletter <http://eepurl.com/g1ys>.

You would be forgiven if the creative minds came to a halt consumed by attaining the highest level of perfection possible for TGG, but can you give readers any insight into any potential projects RH have planned for the future?

(laughs) That's very, very nice of you! Well, to tell you the truth, this Kickstarter has been an amazing, but also an incredibly draining experience. We've been recharging our batteries in the last few weeks and are not dead yet. We DO have a lot of very cool stuff coming up.

First of all, our Dark Elves and Sister of Mercy Kickstarter might interest you. Both armies will be available in both sci-fi AND fantasy versions (so that's 4 armies). The concepts we have for this are really wicked! You can see a few of them [here](#).

Then there is our game which, like I mentioned earlier, should be something pretty unique. We've planned a lot of things around it. It's hard to share more at this stage, because we are still exploring many technical options, but there will probably some VERY exciting features that will make the game very much alive! We have another game, a board game that is absolutely top secret. We are super excited about it. It's been in the works since the very first days of Raging Heroes. The theme is totally new, I don't think it has even been done before; it's pretty wicked and fun. The very few people we told about it were like: "This is so freakin' cool!". I think it has great potential.

We already have some concepts done for something special with the Jailbird ladies...Then, there is this idea of...oh, well...the real problem is that we need more time and more sculptors...but we have TONS of ideas!

Finally, as a bit of fun, will the RH staff give the FPM readers a global top 5 ladies who might make it as Toughest

Girls in the Galaxy?

It's hard to select just five, but here are a few that we like, whether they are real people or fictional characters: Sarah Connor in T2 and Vasquez in Aliens as Jailbirds, obviously.

The girls of the music group Crucified Barbara are definitely a band of Jailbirds on the loose, just like The Runaways or Wendy O. William used to be.

Dita Von Teese or Eva Green (Penny Dreadful) would be perfect as high-ranking KST officers.

Angelina Jolie in Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow could either be a great KST or Iron Empire officer too. Tarja Turunen (formerly in the band Nightwish) would make a perfect Iron Empire opera diva and Marlene Dietrich would obviously be an wonderful Iron Empire spy.

If you are interested in seeing more from Raging Heroes, please visit their website at <http://www.ragingheroes.com> and don't forget if you missed out on the kickstarter, there is no need to despair. You will soon be able to join the fight by purchasing products from the kickstarter and additional miniatures already available from the shop if you follow the email address above. I have a feeling that the kickstarter was just the tip of the iceberg and expect we will see even more amazing miniatures from them in future.



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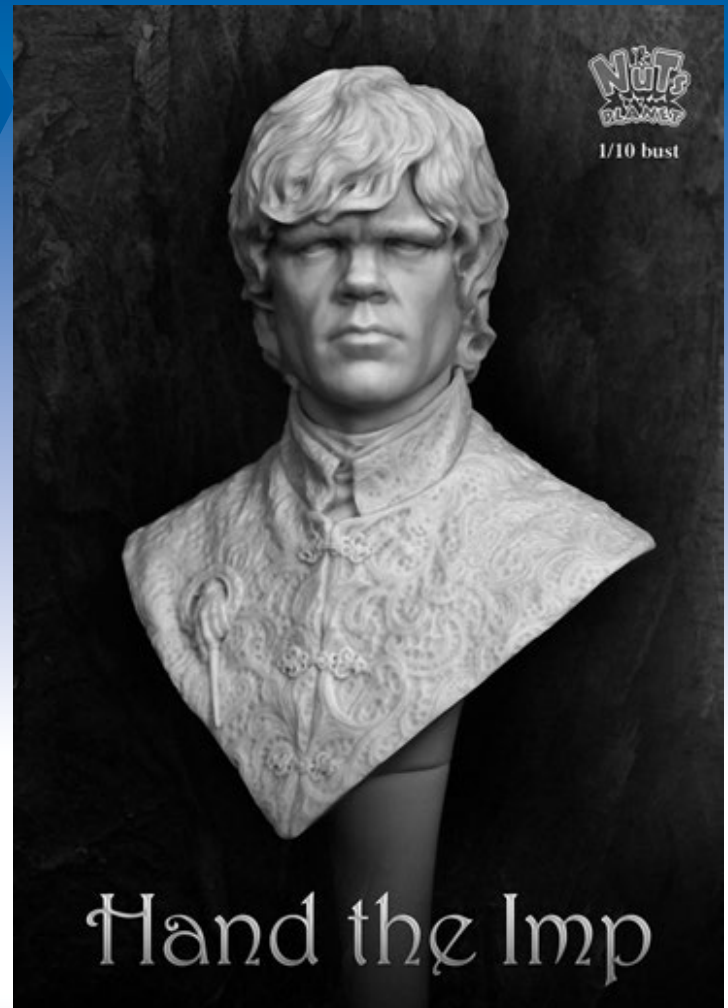
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Mother of Dragons

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Moon Sword

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Company: Andrea Miniatures

Scale: 54mm

Contact: www.andreaeurope.com



Lucypunk

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Scale: 35mm

Contact: www.aresmythologic.com



Price: £40

Scale: 1/10th

Material: Resin

Available from

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Unboxing

The Aquila, Roman Legionary

In this issue there is something a bit different from me. As you probably know, I'm a big fan of busts. I've painted quite a lot of them recently (taking into account the total of my painted minis – loads in fact), so I thought I could review at least one.



To make it a bit more interesting for you, I've chosen a bust that is fairly new on the market and a bit more complicated than one big chunk of resin.

'The Aquila, Roman Legionary' is one of a few busts released by Nuts Planet, a fairly new company known for their comic style miniatures from different eras and awesome, more realistic busts. The company is growing more and more successful and their products prove to be really popular among top painters. You can even see one of the best paint jobs of this bust in the Putty&Paint collaboration article elsewhere in this issue of FPM.

By the way, Aquila is not the name of the guy; it means eagle in Latin (and Italian). It's kind of a weird name for a bust and for me it focuses the whole story of the bust

on the Legionaries' insignia. I guess I could call him 'The Aquilifer', but if I decide I don't want to go this way, I can get creative while naming the piece and preparing the plaque for the plinth.

The Box

As you may know by now, I do like a good box and this one is indeed a good one. A beautiful, secure box with a cool box art painted by Myeong-ha Hwang and in the box, between the foam you can find 9 parts — quite a lot for a bust. You can get big scale full miniatures with fewer parts than our Roman! The parts are securely packed between thick layers of foam. In this case it is more important, because of the hood. This part is almost like an eggshell; not so thin, of course, but due to the shape it could be crushed easily and thanks to a really deep box and this foam, there is nothing (short than destroying the box completely) that could damage these fragile parts...even being handled by Royal Mail!



Quality of the Cast

The quality of the cast is simply superb. All the details are really crisp, beautifully sculpted and cast. All the small features of the armour and cloak are perfect. The details of the face (of a young man, since there are no wrinkles) have been sculpted; even his stubble and teeth inside his mouth. Check out the details on the back of the eagle, where it touches the back of the torso. Every detail is sculpted — you can see the fringes on the straps and even the texture on the fabric. You must admit... it's pretty impressive!

I couldn't find a single serious mould line or air bubble. There are two areas that are less than perfect. The first one is inside the hood; you can see some rough surfaces there and on the left side (picture left). Next to the helmet, you can see a really thin, almost see through one. It's the same on the left cheek guard. These should be easy to fix, especially the cheek guard because these areas are hidden inside where nobody will see them. It's a slightly different thing with the sprues; they're quite big, but easy to remove, at least all except the one at the end of the eagle's feather. There will be a bit of sculpting required to restore the texture here, but in fairness there is really no good place for the sprue of this part.





Assembly

Assembly is very clever. Jun-sik Ahn really did think it through and he did this with us painters in mind. Well, of course there might be other casting issues involved, but I'd like to think that it was all (or at least partly) done to help us poor painters with our never-ending struggle with the deepest recesses!

Normally busts come in one piece or a few at most and if the sculpture has a hat or something like that, it can be separate. Sometimes it's the whole head, or and an arm (if there is any) or some small parts, like a pipe, bits of jewellery, or maybe a shield at the back. If a character is wearing a hood (like our Roman here) or a big floppy hat, we painters are left with horrible recesses and places that are difficult to reach with the brush. Thanks to the design of this bust, we don't have to struggle. We don't even have to think what to glue or what to leave separate. The hood, head and parts of the helmet are all separate and they fit together perfectly; what's most important is that all the joints are hidden, so we can paint it all in pieces and put them together later without any problems. The cheek protectors (or whatever they're called) even have little pins corresponding with holes inside the hood to make sure they can be put in place easily. Seriously — for me it's a dream piece! All parts easily accessible and no problems with gluing stuff together; I'm loving it! Even the eagle at the back fits perfectly, so you can attach it where it supposed to be.

Overall Opinion

There is not much to say; I'm really happy that I bought this bust. In the beginning, I wasn't sure if I should get it. After all, it's a guy in a uniform. There much less space for creativity because there is a strict 'dress code', but after seeing it I changed my mind. The face gives the painter a lot of options and importantly, great surfaces for the metallic parts and a cloak with a lot of potential. Not to mention the great quality and assembly solutions that will spoil me even further.

Where to Buy

It looks like the company doesn't sell retail, so if you'd like to buy some of their awesome stuff, check out the list of the retailers on the Nuts Planet website. The choice is quite big and you can choose someone close to you to minimize shipping costs.





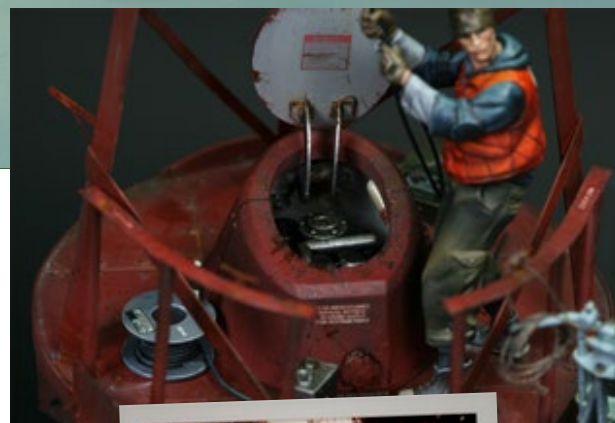
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Sky Mark Buoy



by Nicolas Rouanet

A few years ago, I discovered Ian McQue's artworks and I immediately loved all his flying boats and the universe he developed around those boats.

Not very long after this discovery, Industria Mechanika announced the first collaborative work with Ian McQue: the Remora, then came the Deckhands, the Sky Mark and the Waldo and they've revealed that they will be working on more flying boat kits.

As you may notice when you'll see my works, generally I don't build and paint clean vehicles like if they just came out of the factory, I prefer when a vehicle has lived (often many lives) and is weathered, rusted, covered by dust and/or mud, etc.

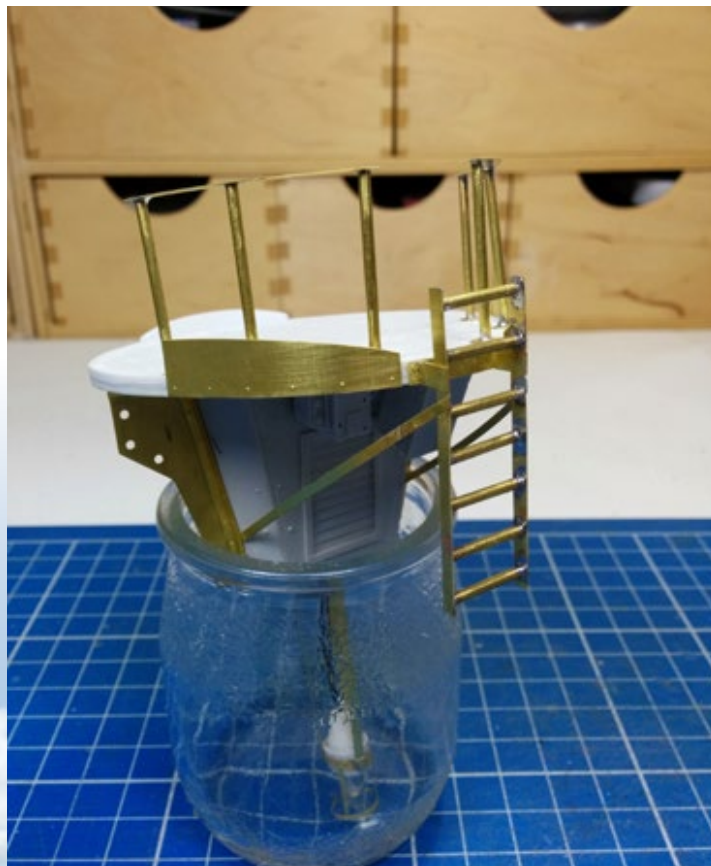
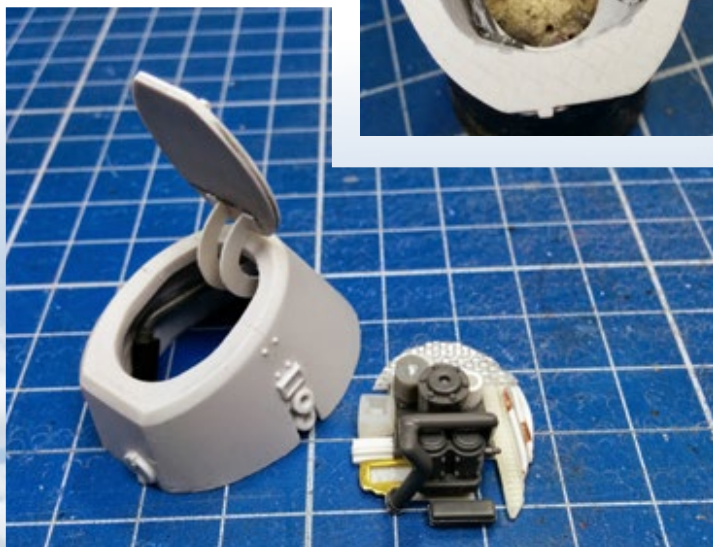
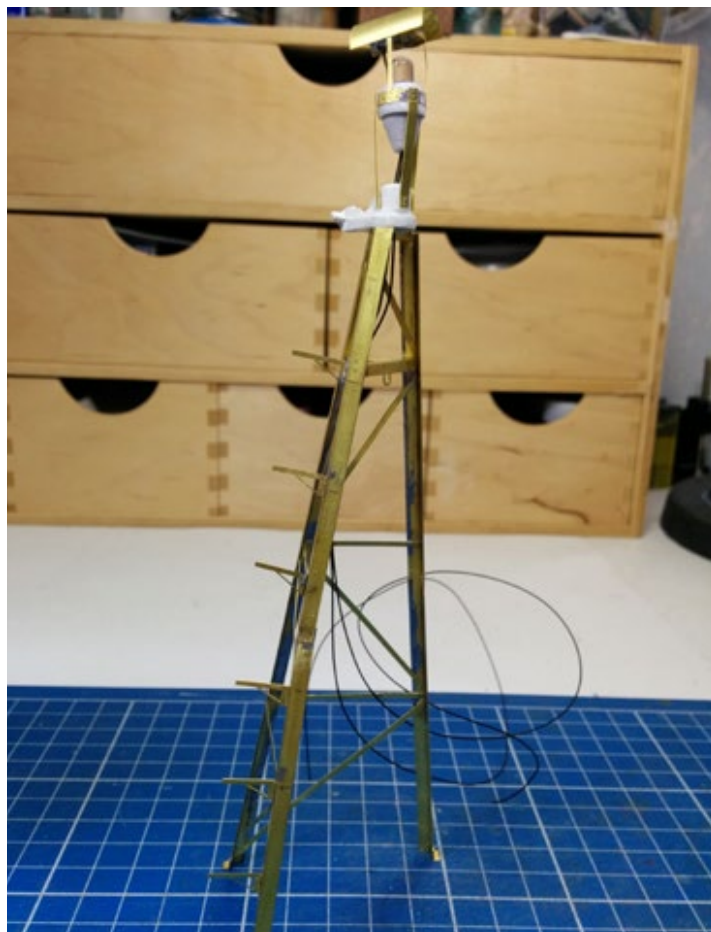
Building the models

First, I had planned to build a huge diorama including the Remora, the Sky Mark and the Waldo, but it would have been too big to transport it safely to shows and especially to the World Model Expo in Stresa with a 10 hour drive. With the deadline approaching, I decided to build a smaller scene with only the Sky Mark.

My idea was to show a guy repairing the Sky Mark with the engine hatch open and some details like a toolbox, a fuel/oil can, etc.

The kit includes 2 photo-etch brass frets with more than 50 parts; it was the first time I have worked with so much photo-etch parts and details. I chose to solder most of the parts, because it creates stronger joints than super-glue. After a few tries on spare photo-etch parts, I started building the model. Sometimes I put too much solder, but it's very easy to remove the excess using a desoldering braid.

Because it's a flying buoy, I wanted to make something aerial and to suspend it on a rod as thin as possible. I tried to remove some weight by hollowing the bottom large resin part using a hobby drill. I did the same thing to the upper compartment, because I wanted to open the engine hatch. I built the engine from scratch using various plastic and metal bits and pieces.

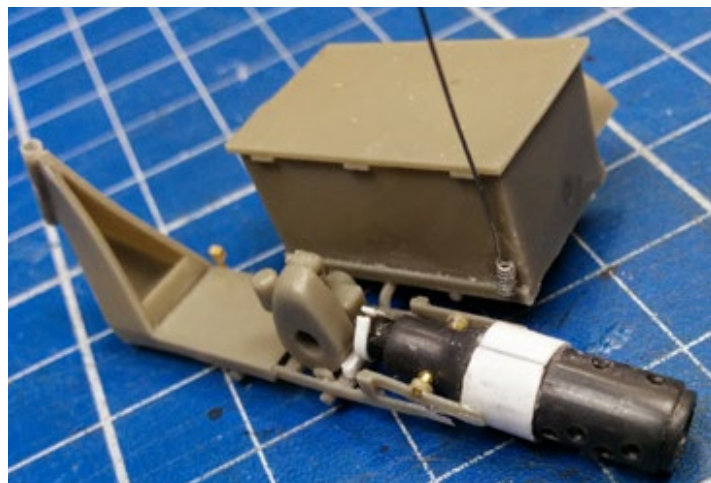


After deciding to put a miniature on the platform, I needed a way to explain how did he went arrived there; he couldn't have jumped out of nowhere...I had the idea of a flying moped or scooter, so I started searching for a 1/35 scale Vespa. I didn't find any, but and finally while searching for detail accessories on PlusModel's website I found a US scooter with sidecar.

The front and left fins were made with plastic card and pipe; the right fin using a plastic coffee stirrer and a spare part from a Dust model kit. The exhaust is made with the tip of a weapon barrel from a Dust kit, too. I liked the contrast between this huge exhaust and the small engine visible through the hole under the seat :)

I added an antenna made of thin wire.

I fixed a thin brass rod in the buoys' platform to support the scooter.



I also prepared little details to add on the diorama: a cable roll made from plastic card and wire, a fuel can and a toolbox from Tamiya with photo etch tools.

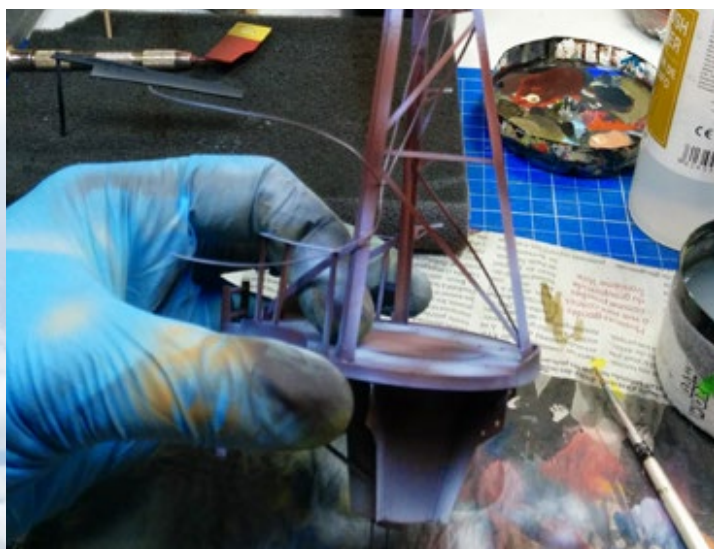


Painting and Weathering the Sky Mark

The painting process of the buoy was quite difficult due to its size; I had to be very careful not to touch the desk, the painting lamps or anything else with the top or the bottom light frames every time I had to manipulate it. I built a support using a cardboard tube, blister foam and

plastic wrap to put down the model and not damage the paint job I had just done. Before beginning the paint work, I masked the light bulbs using masking fluid to keep them clear.

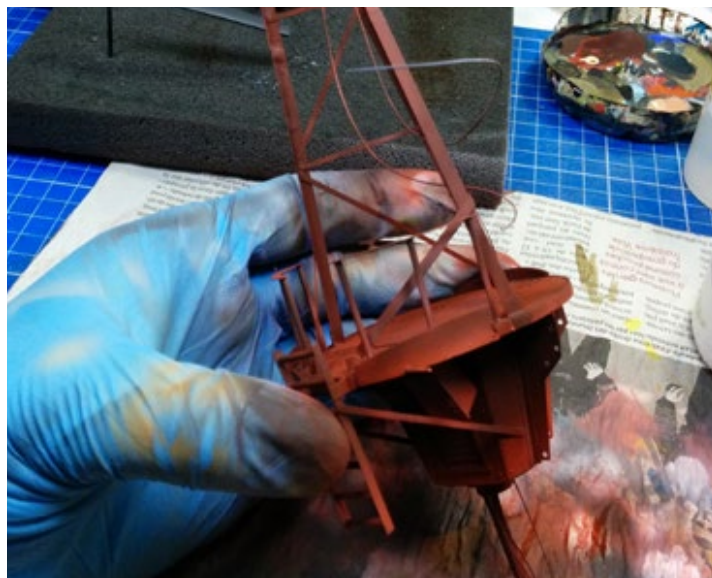
I applied a base coat of Vallejo Surface Primer grey to start then I used a mix of Gaianotes Oxide Red and black to create the base colour of the metal. Gaianotes are lacquer paints; they are more resistant than acrylic paints, so they are perfect to use before using the hairspray technique.



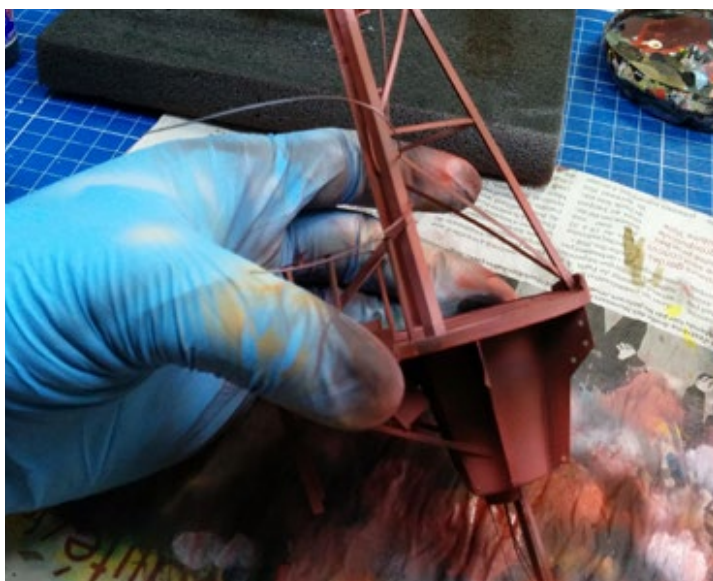
To create paint chipping effect, I used the hairspray technique with a few coats of Scratches Effects from Ammo. Once the chipping fluid had dried, I built my colour using several layers.

First, I place the highlights using white.

Then I apply my red colour in thin layers.



Next, I toned down the red using a mix of red and sand colour on the highlights.



And I finished with a few more thin coats of red to avoid the pink colour due to the previous step.



When the paint had dried, it was time to begin the chipping. Using a flat brush I applied some water on the model and after a few seconds the paint lightly blisters. I didn't want to create very large paint chips, so I mainly used a needle to pull the paint and create fine chipping effect.

You can use various tools with this technique—stiff or soft brushes, needles, toothpicks, etc.

When I was satisfied with the result, I let the model completely dry for about a day.

After that, I could add or retouch the effect using Vallejo Model Colour (VMC) hull red with a brush or with a little sponge.

Using some masking tape and plastic wrap to make a white stripe.



After removing the masks, I blend the stripe with a mix of red and black to create a faded white effect.

That's when I realized I didn't spray a layer of chipping fluid before applying the white paint; I'll paint some scratches using a fine brush and two colours. The first is a mix of red and black (because putting directly red on white would create a too vivid red or even pink) to represent the red colour appearing underneath the white paint and a second step using VMC Hull Red to simulate deeper chips where the all the layers of paint came off and let the bare metal get exposed to the elements and rust.

I used the same process to paint the fins.

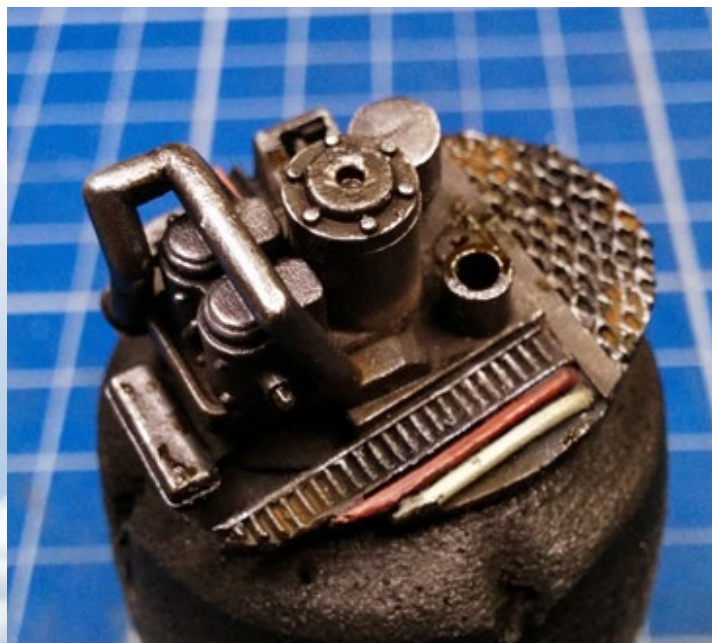
I remove the mask from the bulbs and I paint them using Tamiya Clear Yellow.



The engine is base coated in black and once it has cured I apply a few coats of iron from Mr. Metal Colour. These are polishing metal paints, when you apply them the finish is an almost matte dark grey colour; let it dry for a few minutes and then polish it using a cotton bud, a paper tissue or a soft toothbrush, the more you polish, the more it shines.

Once polished, I let it cure for several hours then I applied several washes of Engine Grime and Light Rust, some drops of Fresh Engine Oil (all from Ammo) and I highlighted the metal with Vallejo Model Air (VMA) Silver.

Now I can glue the engine in its compartment and then glue the engine compartment on the platform to continue the weathering.



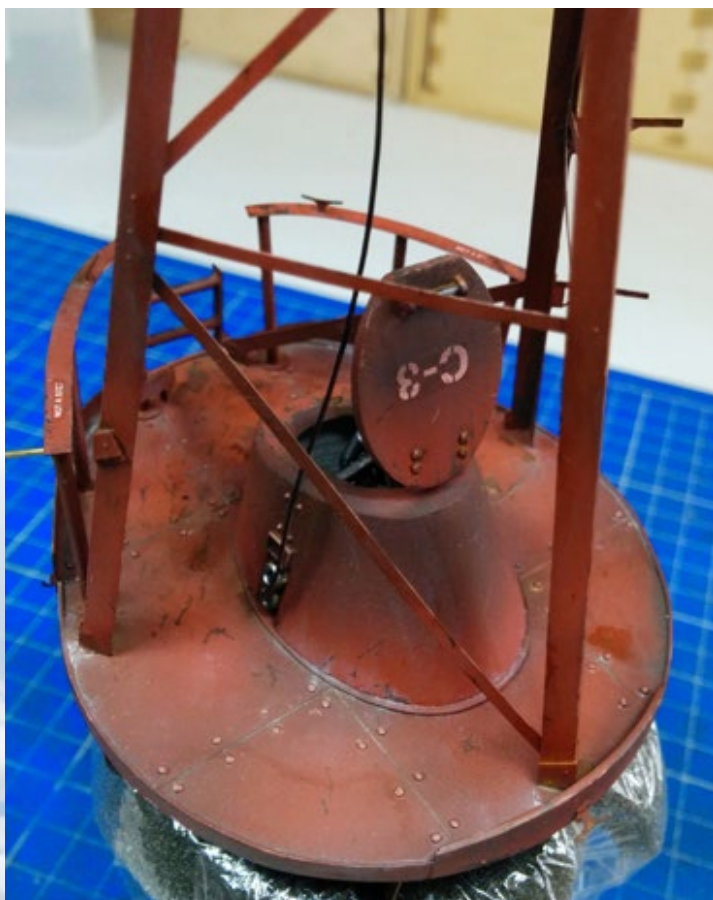
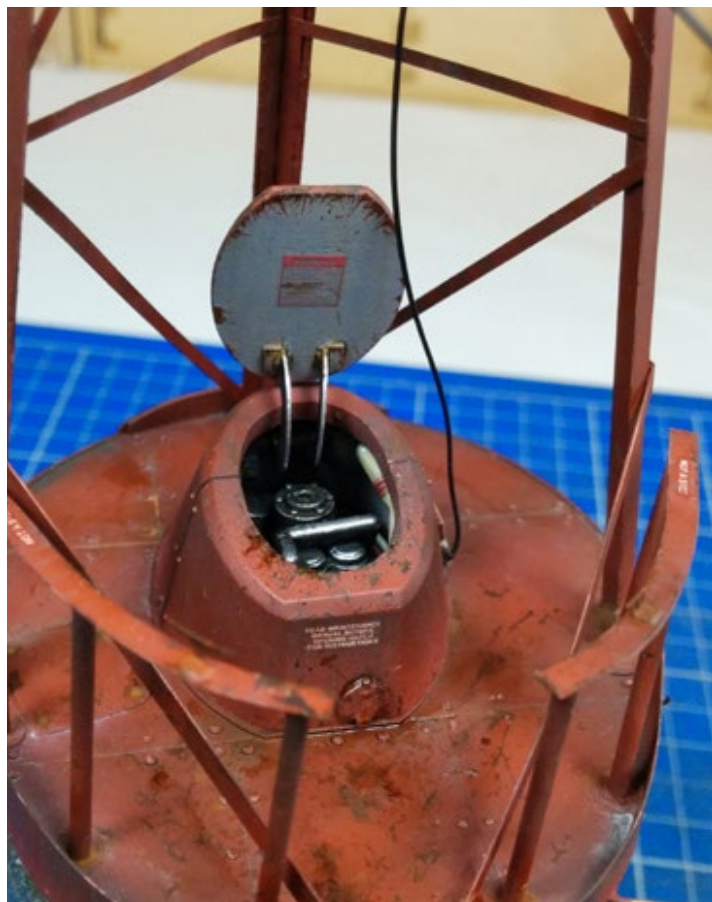
To add some subtle colour variations and simulate the dust streaks caused by the rain, I used Streaking Grime for DAK from Ammo, which is very simple to use:

- » Using a fine brush, create some vertical lines on the model with the Streaking Grime directly from the bottle; it's not important if you don't have perfectly straight lines
- » Let it dry for a few minutes
- » With a flat brush moist, with use white spirit to refine the streaks and blend them with the surface

I also used this grime thinned with white spirit to apply some washes on the platform to create dust accumulations in the recesses. I created oil and grease stains and spills on the platform and on the engine compartment using Fuel Stains and Fresh Engine Oil from Ammo. In the recesses, I applied Light Rust wash to make some rust where the water would naturally accumulate when it rains.

I also added some green moss in a few places using Slimy Grime Dark and Light from Ammo.

To complete the weathering, I added some touches of rust and concrete pigments on the model.



The Scooter

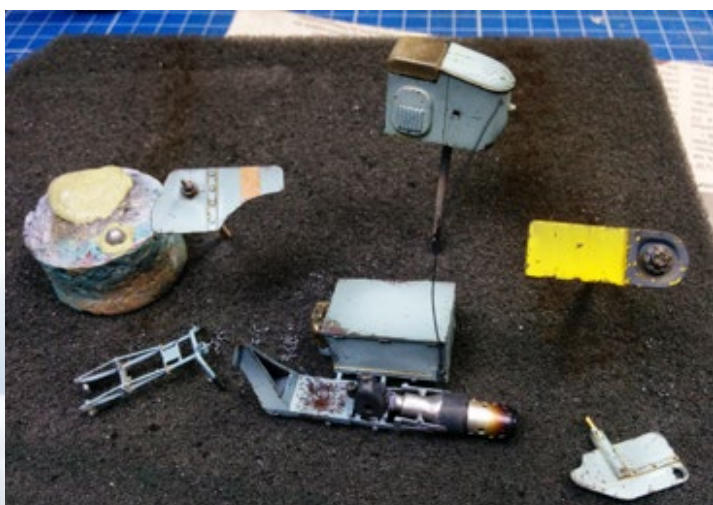
The scooter was painted with the hairspray technique like the buoy.

After spraying the chipping fluid, I painted the shadows around all the details using VMA Blue then I applied the main colour with VMA Pale Blue Grey and some high-lights by adding white in the base colour.

The weathering process is the same as the buoy.



The exhaust was based in VMA Silver and then I created the burnt metal effect using several layers of orange, blue and purple ink. Then I sprayed a light coat of black to create a smoke effect on the tip of the exhaust.



Bob the deckhand

I didn't take the pictures for a detailed step-by-step, so I'll just speak here about the main colours of the figure.

Bob was first base coated in black and then I created pre-shading by spraying white from the top of the figure with an airbrush.

The pants were based in VMA Olive Drab, shaded with black and highlighted with VMC English Uniform.

I protected them with masking tape to paint the vest.

On the vest, I used the same red as the buoy; then I sprayed white from the top and I applied some VMA Light Red to create the highlights. The shades were emphasized using VMC Black Red.

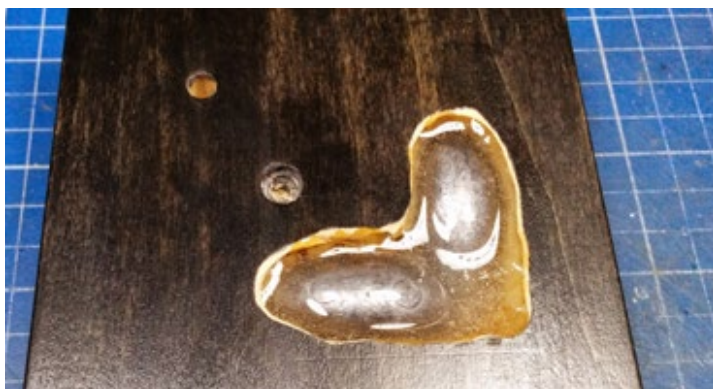


I painted the hoodie and the socks in a blue-grey colour, the sleeves using VMA Pale Blue Grey and the shoes with VMA German Grey.



Assembling everything together

I bought a nice wooden base, but I wasn't sure it would be heavy enough due to the weight of the diorama, so I drilled a hole under the base and I glued two fishing weights of 50 grams each with epoxy glue.



I started with the top fins, as it was the simplest thing to do :)

I then glued Bob in place and put the cable in his hands. I had tested many times if I could slide the cable through his hands without any problem, but every time it comes to the final assembly it all goes wrong. so I had to cut the cable in two pieces, one going in the top hand and the other going through the bottom hand.

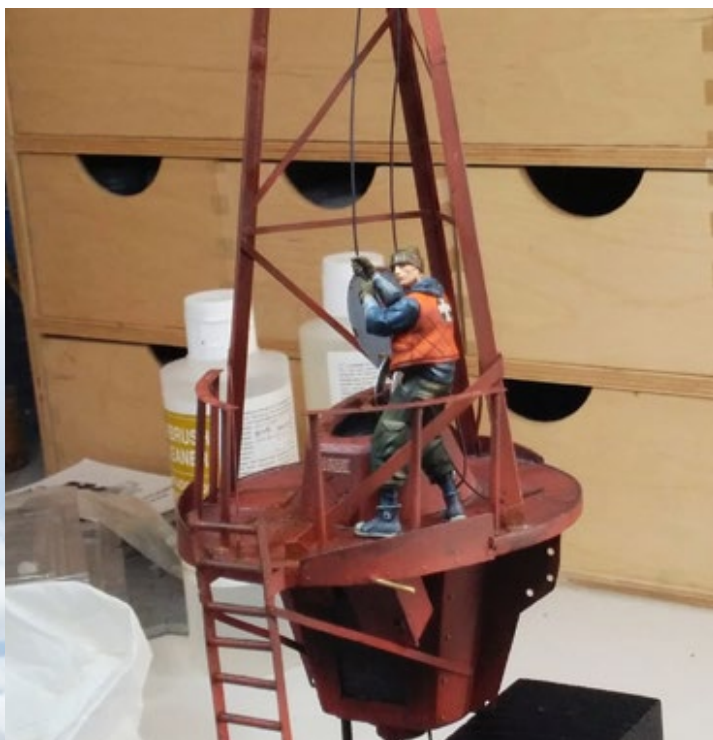
Next came the most stressful moment—the time to glue the buoy on its base. I painted a 2 mm brass rod with several layers of black so it would be very discreet. I first glued it in the buoy using epoxy glue, checking during the curing time that the rod was perfectly vertical. After letting it dry during a the night, I glued the rod in the base again using epoxy glue and I used a paint jar and a wooden cube to maintain the buoy in place while the glue cured.

Finally, I glued the bottom fin, all the accessories on the platform and the scooter in place.

To add a few more details and realism, I added a rope made of sewing thread dyed with inks to attach the scooter to the platform.

Come take a look at my blog for more weathered projects ;)

<http://www.minis-by-juan.com>









An interview with Giorgos Tsougkouzidis



By Terry Cowell



You may not know of Giorgos Tsougkouzidis at the moment, but the chances are you have seen one of his sculptures which are finding their way onto miniature painting sites and into the hands of painters with increasing frequency.

Giorgos is one of those genuinely nice guys who delights in sharing his craft with the miniature painting community and feels as grateful to us as we do to him.



First of all welcome to this issue of FPM Giorgos, let us start by gaining some information about who you are. Where do you live, what is it you love about your life and what is it you do in our hobby universe?

I was born in Russia in May 1981 and my family moved to Greece in 1992. I married in 2010 and we have 2 children. I live in Thessaloniki, which is the second largest city in Greece.

This is an easy one to answer, I love my beautiful family and I also love my sculpting. I have been sculpting every day for around 3 years now and it is easy to do this because I have so much passion for it.

Although I love spending time with friends, I count myself as being in a fortunate position. My work and my hobby are one and the same. Perhaps that's the secret of success; if you do what you love and love what you do, how can you fail?

Do you have a background in art or are you self-taught as a sculptor and artist?

I would say I have studied at least not in an academic sense, although I do spend many hours sculpting every day and one thing I have wanted to do for as long as I can remember is create things and make new things. For a time, I couldn't find the right inspiration or a way of ex-



pressing myself and then when I was at high school I did an interior & exterior design class. At last, I was able to start guiding my creative energy and I found new ways to express myself. The approval from others at this time was the first sign I had that I could create something that others might also enjoy.

Until 3 years ago all my work was related to various projects submitted on request from my employer relating to marquises or models of buildings, decorative areas of shopping centres, columns and that sort of thing.

Have you consciously decided to focus on sculpting busts or do you have plans to sculpt miniatures in the future?

I have focused on busts and this has been a result of loving what I do, but I plan to sculpt miniatures in the future too, so look out for those.

What medium or material do you prefer to work with and what is it you enjoy about it?

My personal favourites are Monster clay and Chavant clay, although I have worked using other materials such as Super Sculpey and Fimo for previous projects. They all have properties that I enjoy and look to find the material that most fits the sculpture that I am working on.

What research do you do before beginning a project and where do you find inspiration for your projects?

I know there are people out there who have routines of conducting meticulous research and this is fine. Personally, I allow myself to become completely inspired by fantasy and movie characters. I don't copy them, but take my inspiration from them. I try to create something new by applying my imagination. I have an emotional attachment to my process rather than one guided by logic.



Talk us through your sculpting process from concept to realisation.

Without going into detail, I take my idea and make a sketch. This is in clay not a drawing sketch. Then, step by step I add to the project until eventually the character or sculpture I imagined begins to take form. It's a process of refinement. Just like some miniature painters, I normally have more than one project on the go. Again, this allows me to have the freedom to work on something and always have the right feeling for it.

Which sculpt do you consider the most important to you so far and please explain why?

The most important sculpt I have done so far is my Alien bust. This was the one that attracted lots of interest in my work. It opened the door for me to meet loads of fantastic friends from all over the world. It is with this one that I started to meet people that share my passion and, of course, it is the absolute pinnacle to see what



another artist or painter can add to your work. If you see you work on the internet after someone else has painted it, you can see they have enjoyed it and that is a satisfying feeling.





Finally, is there any wisdom or advice you would like to share with anyone hoping to become a sculptor?

To become a sculptor (as with any occupation) the way to become better is to work, work and then work some more. What is the cliché, practice makes perfect. Every-day try to work on something that you love and keep focus. I believe by incorporating these two aspects work and love for your work it will eventually lead you to where you need to be.

If you are interested in seeing some more examples of Giorgos wonderful sculptures or talking to him about his work you can find him on [Facebook](#).

What or whom has influenced your evolution as an artist and how do you see your work evolving in the future?

I haven't fixated on the work of a particular artist. The main influence for me is the desire to become better at what I do. This desire is born out of my love for it. I just want to keep improving and refining my skills. I love what I do and feel excited about what I hope to do in future.

Apart from your beautiful work, one thing I appreciate about your interaction with our community is that you always attempt to reply to the many comments you receive on a daily basis. How important do you find the community feedback?

I do enjoy talking to people and value feedback. I find this is extremely important. I feel immensely grateful for their support and this gives me the opportunity to express this back to them. It is their support that allows me to continue doing what I love. Aside from that, I take much inspiration from talking with everyone and it fills me with energy, which I am then able to channel into my work.

Here at FPM we love exclusive news, can you share any information about future projects that you might be working on?

I won't share specific details, because I don't want to spoil the surprises! Suffice to say I have many upcoming projects that I am very excited about. You will have to keep a look out for them and when they materialize you can let me know if you enjoy them, too.





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Price: 29€

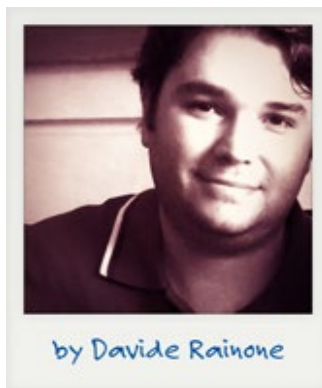
Material: DVD Box Set

Available from

Painting Buddha

www.paintingbuddha.com

In issue 6 Shane gave us his thoughts on Painting Buddha Season 1.1 and then in issue 16, Terry Cowell wrote a review on the Painting Buddha Mega Bundle. Inspired by Terry's review, I wanted to take this a bit further after having a quick look at the contents of the set and then speaking to the people behind them.



by Davide Rainone

An indepth look at Painting Buddha's Season 1.2 Freehands and Banners

You have read about the Painting Buddha guys whose goal was to produce a tutorial DVD with the motto "Be a better painter". Terry's review showed us that the Painting Buddha product is very complete in content; great packaging with videos masterly performed by the likes of Ben Komets, Max Cexwish, Rafael Garcia Marin and Stephan Rath.

In this issue of FPM, I'll be delving deeper into season 1.2. As you can see from the photos, the packaging from Painting Buddha has continued the high standard showed for 1.1; the course consists of 2 DVD's in a beautiful collector's edition fold-out box named "Freehands and Banners" performed by another among the greatest painters in the European panorama and famous about his stunning works: Stephan Rath.





Inside the box there are also two brochures, which present the Painting Buddha philosophy and the training DVD's plus a few little extras like collectible stickers.

Let's talk briefly about the DVD content

The starting idea to have always 3 cameras playing simultaneously is carried on, which I'm pleased about because this, in my opinion, is the best way to watch the painting lesson. The principal camera is on the model, the second is fixed on the colour palette so we see what the painter is doing with paint loading and control and the third is on the painter face so we can see the real time conversation. The audio is in English to maximise the audience; however, there are also many more options available with the subtitles (9 languages in total).

What makes this DVD course so interesting to me are all the themes Stephan Rath approaches. During the complete video of the two banners (one DVD each), he talks about many types of banners and how to build them from scratch; both for game models as well as display models. How to sketch out a freehand design and how to manage the colour mixes in every step is also explained. Stephan says these DVD's are appropriate for beginner and intermediate levels, but I think even the master painters could benefit from these as well.

Unboxing and watching this DVD series, I thought how it could be interesting to talk to the author while he's

painting because the videos are in some way exactly this: a conversation between a speaking voice in the background (Michael Bartels, the President of Painting Buddha) and Stephan. This simulation of a real lecture makes the viewer feel like he's part of the lecture; it's really amazing!

I contacted Michael Bartels and Stephan Rath themselves to ask them some questions and I'd like to thank them very much for granting this little interview and shedding a little more light onto their approach to teaching DVD's.

To Michael

Q1: There are a lot of famous and renowned artists from all over the world who are well known for their stunning freehand painting. Why did you choose Stephan Rath and not someone else?

That's easy to answer. I knew Stephan for quite a while already and decided to visit one of his workshops. I had not painted a freehand in my entire life and under the instruction of Stephan, I painted a banner that I would have thought impossible to achieve. Stephan's approach is very methodical and easy to follow. The step-by-step instructions plus the truth about colour consistency is what we put on our Season 1.2 DVD for everyone to share and enjoy.



Q2: In the very first video in the DVD's you talk about a future project with Stephan and about another DVD on freehand, a part 2 — advanced level. Are you actually working on it or is it still in the planning stage?

Yes, there will be a second freehand DVD. We will focus on curved surfaces and special freehand designs such as tattoos for example, but that's something for 2015; so basically, yes, it's on the to-do-list.

Q3: Stephan Rath seems to share your mind-set and mood of "Share & Enjoy" in the model world. Did you learn some of this from him, as I did from you both? What do you suggest paying attention to while watching Season 1.2, so as to learn something deeper than just painting freehand and banners?

Oh yes, I learned a lot from him! He's the kind of guy that could have invented the 'Keep calm and...paint a freehand' slogans. It's funny, because I would never have tried freehand if it wasn't for him and I learned that I can do it (which means that pretty much everyone can do it). As far as Season 1.2 is concerned, I think that the first 15-20 minutes about colour consistency alone are 'worth the money'. If you understand how to control your paints reliably, you will become a better painter—not only for beautiful freehand and banners.

To Stephan

Q1: Please, introduce yourself and tell us something about your hobby background.

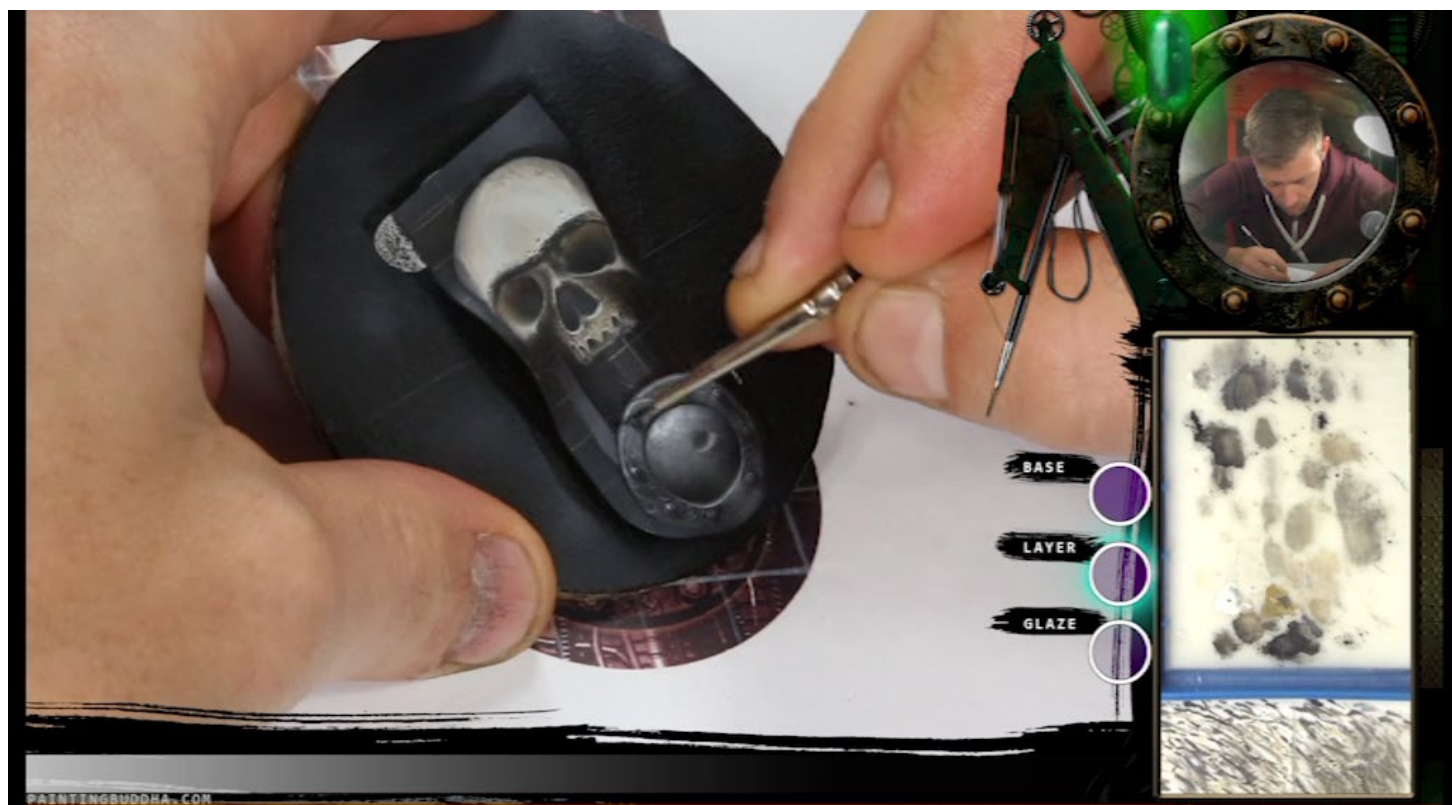
In my normal life, I'm a shift-working technologist in a paper mill. As compensatory for my job in the paper industry, I started painting miniatures in late 2005. Next to my work in the paper mill and the miniatures, I am a husband and father of two children. Meanwhile I'm a semi-professional painter, giving workshops and painting some commission works. I try to separate the professional part from the hobby part. I think, if you are very successful with something, you should share your skills with the community, in any kind.

Q2: How did you feel when Michael asked you to collaborate for the painting DVD?

I met Michael at one of my workshops, where he involved me in his plans of growing a modeller's community friendly business. I was very excited that he wanted me to join the bruddhahood, beside such creative people like Ben (Komets), Matt (Cexwish) and Mati (Zander).

Q3: What do you think, makes your freehand painting DVD so unique?

Well, there are several things. I think the palette camera is something new; I have never seen anything like this before in a painting instruction video. Another thing is



that the viewer can follow also the problems and difficulties I had with the paintjob and how I managed them. This should show the viewer that every good paintjob is hard work and consists of challenges, which need to be solved.

Q4: In the videos, you said a lot about how to build up a freehand project. Certainly your style is unique, but do you expect to find your painting style in future miniature works of other people in contests?

Yes, indeed. I'm staggered whenever I see nice freehand works of former workshop participants on the internet and in competitions. Sometimes I'm astonished, how good they put my instructions in practice. I think this will apply to the instructions coming from the DVD's as well.

Q5: Can you give the readers any final advice not already told in the DVD course?

Keep your mind always open and never stop becoming a better painter.

Conclusion

My personal impressions are:

- » Optimal view and graphic realization into the menu and on the videos
- » Optimal step by step

» Great advice about how to improve the painting skills as well the perspective to hobby modelling

» Great packaging

» It teaches how to obtain a great outcome even with basic techniques

» Proportioned and appropriate selling price

I like the "Share & Enjoy" philosophy; this idea of sharing passion, skills and joy for the model world. This is a product I'm very enthusiastic about and I think every aspect of the product makes it worth while.

Thank you again to Michael Bartels and Stephan Rath as our kind guests and I'll continue this next month with a deeper look at season 1.3.

MALFAUX

A story of a gaming board

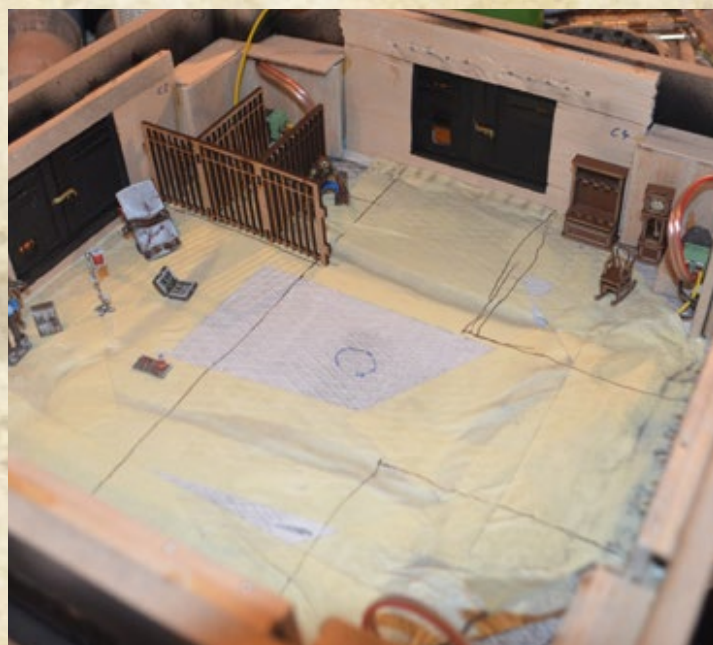


A year and a half has passed and FINALLY my team and I are starting to building the last module; so we are off to the pub to celebrate!

This month I'll continue the explanation (this time the practical application) of the electric circuit that I discussed theoretically last time. The idea behind this is that I would like to show you how and why everything is done, how it looks on paper and how it looks in real life. In high school, I really didn't get the electricity part of the physics and it continued through my university. It was only during one project that a friend of mine showed me what a resistor is, what an LED is and all the other pieces of an electrical circuit are. He showed me the drawings of a circuit and made the circuit using a soldering iron in front of me. Only then did I begin to understand it all. That is my mission with this series (and hopefully I'll manage to get the point through). In the meantime, Ana and Andrija will be doing some more work on the details for this and other modules.

While I was preparing to tackle the circuit, I was also building the final (ninth) module. This one is based around the Guild; more specifically around McMourning, depicting his morgue, but also featuring a gaol and a Sheriff's office. As usual, I first hid all the wiring in the Styrofoam base of the module and once I was satisfied all the connectors had electricity when connected, I

draw a simple outline of the features on this module and also included a couple of bits Ana made and painted for this module.





Marko's Lamentations: One time moulds

Andrija already explained the reasoning behind this method in [FPM#11](#), so I'll just dive into explaining of the how of the process.

I used a big enough wooden plank as a base for the mould and 5 x 5mm wooden slats as dividers between the wall sections I wanted to cast. Since one piece needed to have a hole for a door while the other needed a hole for the window, I made those with balsa wood.

Those two casts would require additional support due to the lack of material, so I used a No.6 paperclip that I inserted into the plaster while it was still wet.

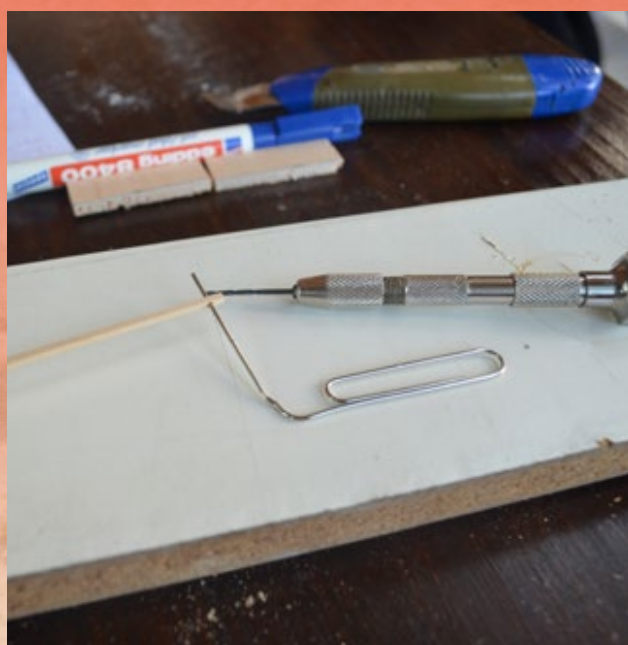


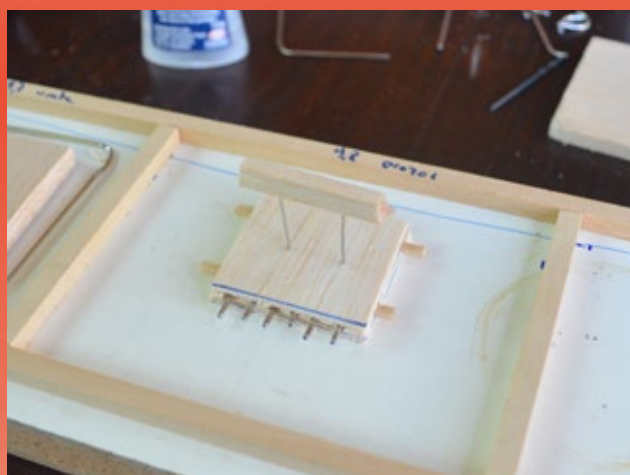
Planning Top Tips: Making a mould for a wall with a barred window

First, I needed to make the construction with bars. For the vertical bars I would use a No.3 paperclip, while the two horizontal ones I'd make out of 2 x 2mm wooden slats.

I then used my pin vice to make six holes 5mm apart on both horizontal bars. I pulled the metal bars through the wooden slats and I had my prison window. Then, I used 1.5mm thick balsa to make a 35 x 35mm window base and I glued it to the base of the mould. I then place the bars on top of it, centred it and closed the whole with balsa leftovers.

Finally, I made another 35 x 35mm balsa bit and made a holder to make removing easier.





The first real job on this module was to make the floors. The McMourning mourge would be covered in ceramic tiles (with a couple of pipelines running between the casts that Ana made earlier just to hide the transition). The floor of the corridors would be stone, made from



Ana's stone wall tiles. I also put a couple of pipelines in the corridors, too. The two smaller rooms would have different floors. I decided to put wooden planks in the Sheriff's office, while the gaol would have simple dirt/gravel floor.



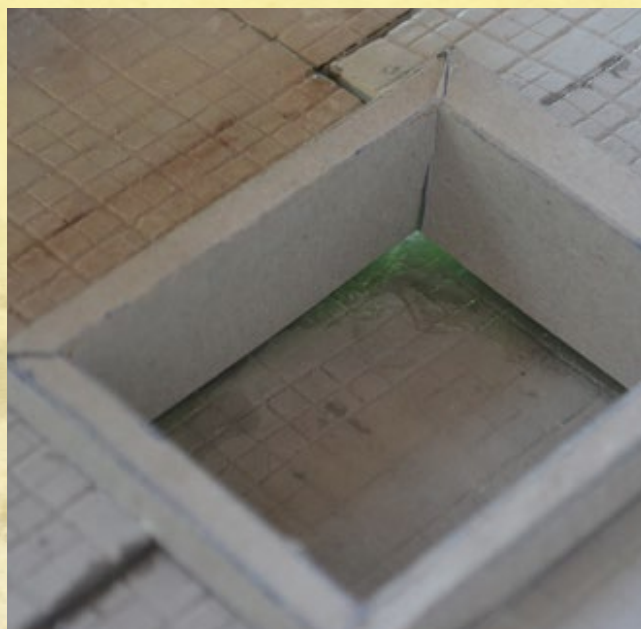
Andrija's Bitz and Bobz: Finishing touches on last month's module

Since Marko would be busy building the electrical circuit and building the last module, I volunteered to finish the detailing on the last month's module.

The job consisted of making metal sheets out of cardboard and making rivets out of PVA glue.

I first cut out the large cardboard pieces to fit the

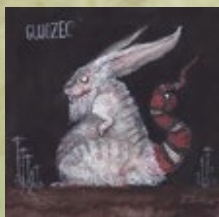
space in between the stone wall features above the doors. Then, I made long 5mm wide strips of cardboard that I cut to size to make the supports that will house the rivets. Once the glue holding these pieces was dry, I used PVA glue to make rivets. I could have used real pin heads for this, but just the sheer amount of them would be too time consuming and the effect wouldn't be that much better once paint was applied.



Next up was making the McMourning part of the module. I decided to have a sort of a cage for the creations he was making in his off-time. For that, I used a left over cage/prison lasercut MDF bit from Battle Flag's Sheriff's office kit. It fit almost perfectly and I incorporated it into the side wall and realised that I had some spare room under those cages. That fit the bill perfectly, as I now had room to place the compartments for the deceased

underneath the cages. I decided to make one half open and to task Ana with finding and painting a suitable leg to be dangling from the shelf. The bottom part of the wall would be also made of ceramic tiles (similar to the the floor) while the upper part would be mortar. I made the mortar using finest grade sand I could find – the sand for chinchillas (found in a pet store).





Ana's Research Wyrd Morgue Accessories

The Morgue Base Accessories set by Wyrd contains some really flavourful bits. there is a bag on a pole with intravenous fluid, a medical kit and a tray with instruments and a flask...

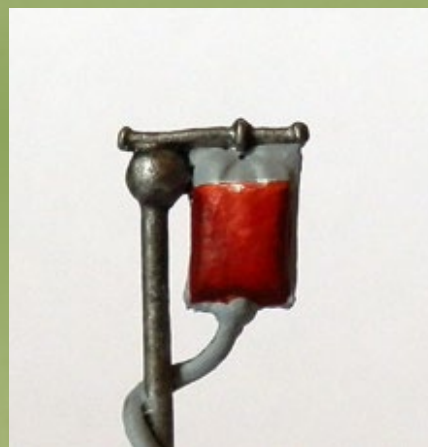
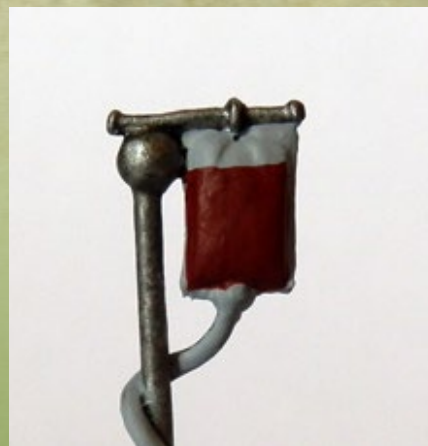
The flask and the bag on a pole gave me the chance to explain a quick and simple way to paint fluid in a transparent container.

» Start by painting the container. I used a light grey for my flask and bag

» Paint the area the fluid will occupy in the container in a solid base colour. I used Citadel Mephiston Red. Make sure the surface of the fluid is horizontal. This requires that you know how the container will be positioned in its environment.

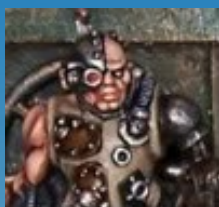
» Add several highlights to the fluid. It should be the lightest towards the surface. The surface itself should be a sharp line. I used Citadel Evil Sunz Scarlet, with a bit of Fiery Orange for the highest tones.

» Finally, add highlights to the container and you're done.



In the end, I needed to engrave the prison walls (inner side only) and use the chinchilla sand method to make the outside into plaster. I also used the same method on

the outside of the Sheriff's office walls. The inside would be done with wallpaper like the whole Hungering Darkness module as explained in [FPM#13](#).



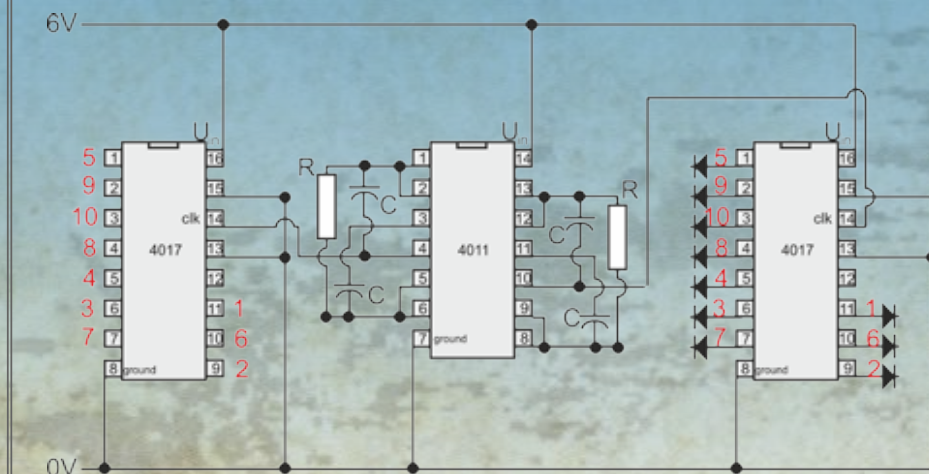
Electronics Top Tips: Running and blinking lights, part II – PRAXIS

Last time I did the theoretical explanation of the running lights and random light effects. This time I'll be explaining it in praxis. The first thing to do to make things easier is to divide the process into manageable pieces.

Those pieces are as follows: voltage drop from 24 to 6 Volts, 4011 IC circuit for timing, one 4017 IC circuit with LEDs set up to as running lights and one 4017 IC circuit set up to run as random lights.

Voltage drop from 24 to 6 Volts

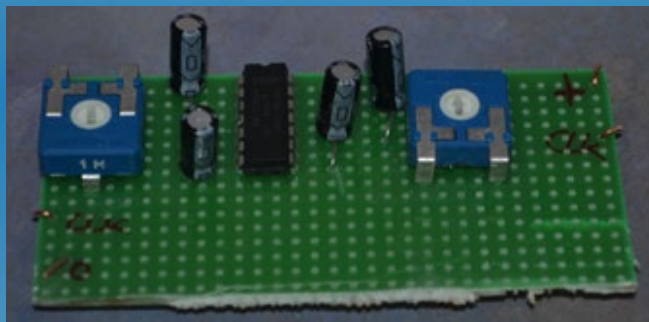
So, the first part is to reduce the input voltage to the 6 Volts needed by the 4011 and 4017 ICs. To do that, I'll be using a buck converter. The theory and praxis of the buck converter was discussed in [FPM#09](#), so I won't repeat it here.



4011 IC circuit for timing

The next thing to do is to connect the 4011 IC to the output side of the buck converter and to make the two timer circuits (one on each side of the 4011 IC). Since I'm using a $1M\Omega$ trimmer, I can set up two various time constants (determined by the resistor (in my case trimmer) and capacitor combination) for the two sides of the 4011 IC.

NOTE: BE CAREFUL when connecting the electrolytic capacitors! They have two pins, one for the input and one for the output and both are clearly marked. However, if you connect them wrong, they might explode. And yes, it is dangerous!



Running lights circuit

First thing I did was to connect the 10 square red LEDs to the 50Ω resistors. Then, I connected the 4017 IC to the right hand circuit of the 4011 IC.



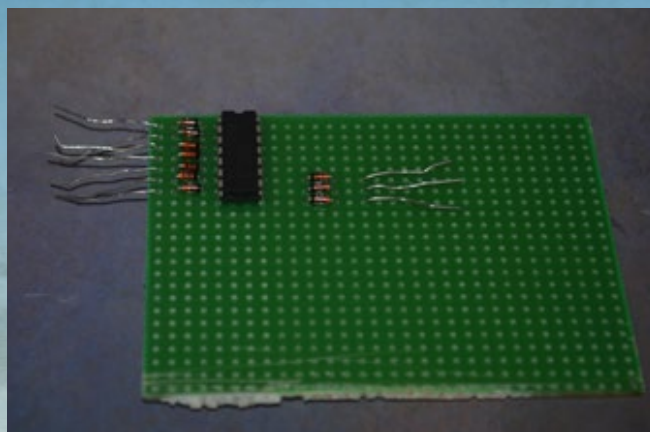
Random lights circuit

I connected the six green 3mm LEDs to their respective 50Ω resistors and the 1N914 diodes to the outputs of the 4017 IC. Then, I connected the other 4017 IC to the left hand circuit of the 4011 IC, as seen in the below table.

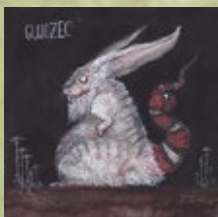
	0.5s	1.0s	1.5s	2.0s	2.5s	3.0s	3.5s	4.0s	4.5s	5.0s
Left 4017	PIN11	PIN9	PIN6	PIN5	PIN1	PIN10	PIN7	PIN4	PIN2	PIN3
Right 4017	LED1	LED1	LED2	LED2	LED3	LED4	LED5	LED5	LED6	LED6



I left the job here as frankly, I ran out of time this month. The upcoming job is a bit tricky and fiddly, so I didn't want to rush things. I needed to connect all the LEDs to their IC units but I also needed to incorporate them inside the Ramos module while I



was soldering them to the circuit. This is really delicate especially with the lack of manoeuvring room left inside the wall sections of the module itself.



Ana's Research – Bio chamber and other bits

Bio Chamber (Empty) by RAFM is an excellent accessory for a mad scientist's lab. It comes in three separate parts: a metal top and bottom and a transparent plastic tube.

With a bit of effort, it can become quite spectacular.

It can easily be filled with clear resin (even better if it's tinted) and a creature of some description floating inside. Installing a LED in the bottom and top would really make it pop. We're planning to put our bio chamber in McMourning's morgue module that Marko is building this month.



Next were some more Outlaw Miniatures terrain that came in the Wild West Exodus Kickstarter: two Iron Horse Charging Stations. Compared to the other WWX pieces I had the chance to work with, such as the mine carts and crates from the Barricade set, this is actually cast correctly. The material is the same, but the shape of the piece doesn't give much chance for nasty mould lines to emerge. I painted it in a grimy metallic scheme, using Citadel metallic paints, dark washes and Typhus Corrosion. I also painted up a couple of crates Andrija made of balsa and thick card.



Next time, I will be finishing the last module and texturing all of the modules that require it. I will also finish the electric circuit tutorial as well. Andrija and Ana will again be checking and completing the bits and pieces left over on all the other modules prepping them for the paintjob. As always, if you have any questions about this build, feel free to contact us at Figure Painter Magazine (terrain@figurepaintermagazine.co.uk) and we'll try to answer your questions.

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