

FIGURE PAINTER

REVIEWS FROM

Michael Kontraros Collectables

La Meridiana Miniatures

Blacksmith Miniatures

Sergeant BlackArt

BriK A BraK


Scale75




INSIGHT

interview with Kirill Kanaev




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Ian Succamore
Damon Drescher



Welcome to issue 23 of Figure Painter Magazine.

It's times like these that I'm really thankful I have managed, through, guile, cunning, bribery and kidnap, to bring together a really great team to help me produce FPM. This issue is more down to them than any work I put into it and I'd like to thank them and dedicate this issue to them. They really went above and beyond and put a lot of hard work into it. I really appreciate that and the net results is that we have probably produced our best issue to date. Not only is it huge (128 pages), but it's packed full of fantastic articles and things for every level of painter.

For beginners (or more advance modellers wanting to improve), Marta Ślusarska begins a new series of tutorials showing the basics of miniature painting. We also have chat to Scale75 about their new Smog Riders intro models. For the intermediate and advanced painters we also have the second part of Ian Succamor's Puritan Preacher and Damon Drescher tells us about his fabulous Hannya Knight and Jason Martin begins a new series showing us how light toe exploit light and colour.

We also have a details of the best new miniatures on the market as well as a close look at gaming and modelling accessories with our market place pieces and unboxing reviews, but to kick this off, we have a brilliant insight interview with non-other than Kirill 'Yellow one' Kanaev.

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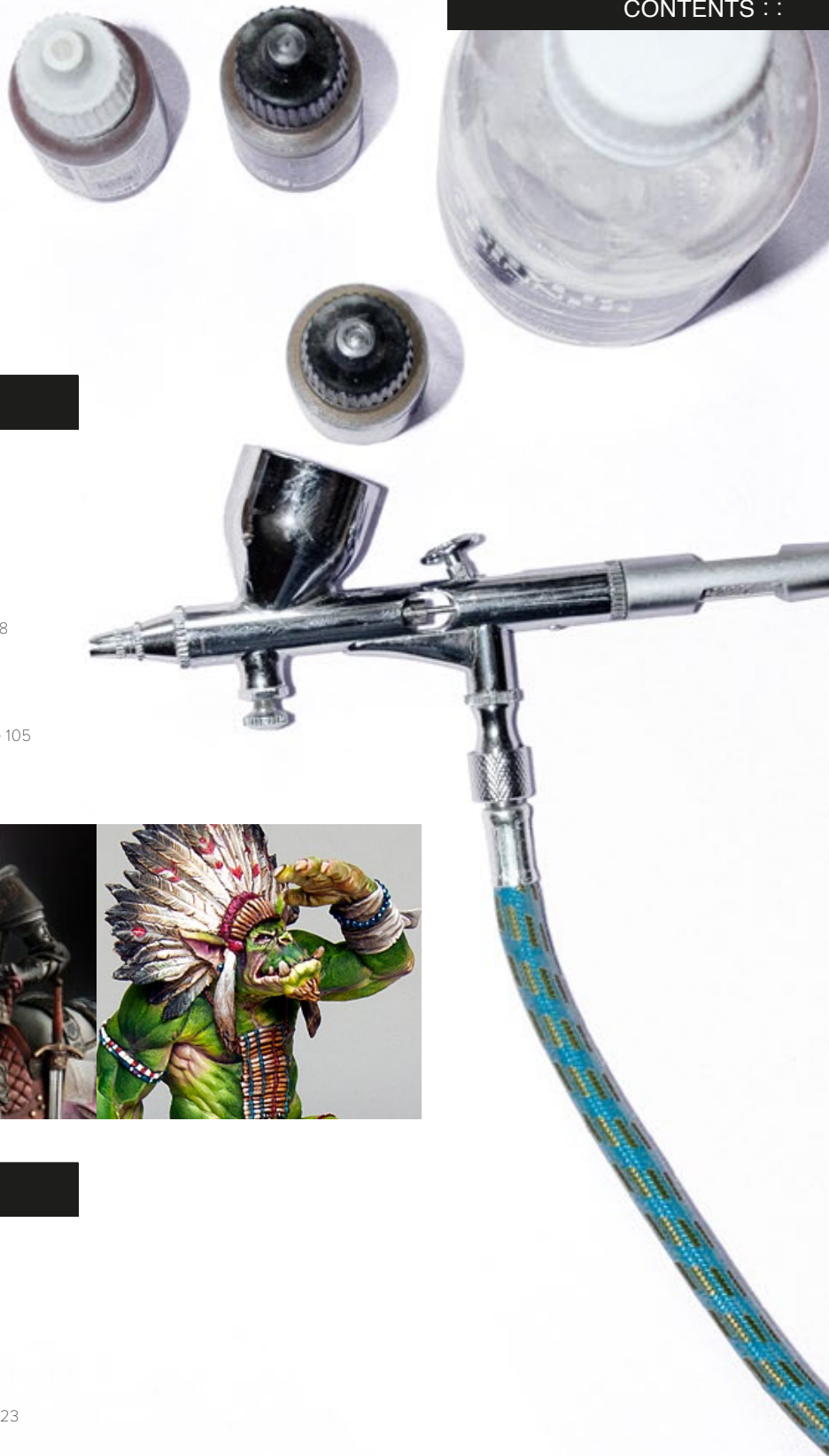
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MYSTICAL WORLD Miniatures



A new Spanish company, Mystical World Miniatures, have previewed some fantastic concept art for their range Fantasy Worlds. They have teamed up with artist Pepe Valencia of Illustralia to design and create 54mm collectable miniatures and I, for one, can't wait to see them. For more concepts and details about their upcoming Indiegogo campaign, click [here](#).



Build the miniature city of your dreams! Dwarven Forge, makers of fine gamer and dungeon terrain, present our new City Builder System.

Dwarven Forge's City Builder System is now live on Kickstarter. The City Builder System is fully modular, 25mm scale, hand-crafted terrain that unshackles your game from the dungeon and takes you nearly anywhere you want to go. These beautiful and nearly indestructible pieces – which are available fully hand painted – will inspire a lifetime of adventures on your gaming table.

There is still plenty of time to get involved with this, so if you're interested, visit their crowdfunding page [here](#).

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The Scale75 Oompa Loompa have gone mad and decided to hide a Golden Ticket in one of the Smog Riders miniatures! You will recognize it because they have also put a coloured dye so the figure will not be gray (The Oompa Loompa hate gray). The lucky one who finds the Golden Ticket won't have an exciting and dangerous tour in the Scale 75 factory, but will be rewarded with a Smog Rider miniature of his choice and all the paints necessary to paint it!



Nocturna Models are pretty busy at the moment. Not only do they have two new releases that you'll see in the Exposé section, but they're also releasing a 1/12 female bust minikin to help budding sculptors realise their own creations. No details on the price yet, so if you're interested keep checking the [Nocturna Models web-site](#).



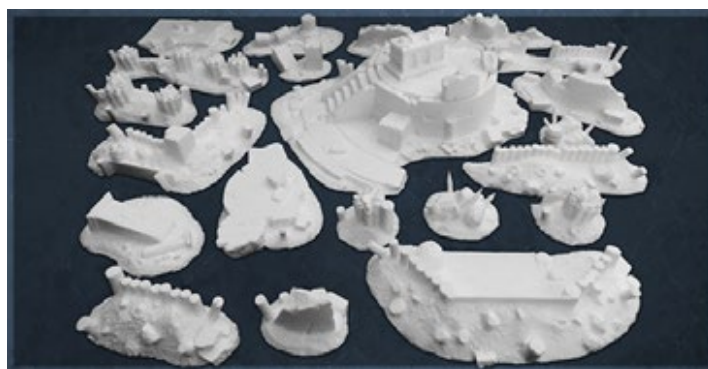
Russian company Live Resin, who design and manufacture resin figures and accessories in 1/35 and 1/16th scale, has recently previewed their new M252 81mm Medium Extended Range Mortar. If you're into your modern military miniatures, then they are some of the best designed and cast miniatures I have ever seen and are well worth a [look](#).



New Canadian company THMiniatures, owned by Thierry Husser, who is a multiple Golden Demon winner and Ex Illis Art Director has taken his new miniature scenery terrain for tabletop gaming project to Kickstarter.



Talk to any wargamer and all of them will agree; a superb battlefield adds a special dimension to the gaming experience. Why should you settle for a simple game table that doesn't reflect your expectations and that won't do justice to the magnificence of your armies?



THMiniatures presents a wide range of high end resin scenery items for your 25 to 32mm tabletop miniatures games! These pieces are cast in the best resin available on the market, making them shock resistant as well as easy to paint and to carry around. They feature an impressive amount of details and are also modular, so that you can create varied and awesome looking battlefields! The various elements are adaptable to every setting and you can paint them the way you want to and create a uniform atmosphere throughout your game table.

Here's an example of the same model painted differently in order to represent many terrain types. Let your imagination run wild and give a cohesive look to all the sceneries.



To check out the full range and information about this campaign click [here](#).



Unboxing

Brik a BraK's

Gob 'z' heroes



By Jason 'Red' Martin

Price: see below

Size: 30mm

Material: Resin

Available from

www.skullsmini-shop.com

If you haven't been living in a cave under the mountain of some vast Mongolian stronghold, then you've probably seen some diminutive Gobs look to become heroes. The brainchild behind the Brik a BraK Gob 'z' heroes is Antoine Roffe AKA Antoniooooh from Caen, France. Let me give you a little background behind the people involved and the project itself.

Antoine has teamed up with several big name collaborators including sculptors MIKH, Valentin Zak, Benoit Cauchies, Patrick Masson, Christian Hardy, Tom Hughes and Stephane Camosseto. Despite all these different sculptors, the whole project maintains a very united feel to the design of each miniature. In addition to Antoine being an excellent painter himself, we also have paintjobs by Maxime Corbeil (on

the Gob'Rabbit), others by Massimiliano Amon Richiero; there's even a painting tutorial perk within the campaign by Julien Casses!

There's no questioning the passion and drive that Antoine has invested in making this a reality; literally shedding blood, tears and sweat to bringing the campaign to fruition, especially when the campaign was deactivated by Indiegogo because of a copyright dispute with Marvel. It is a tribute to Antoine's desire that he was able to put forward a compelling defence of his project and get it funded by 286% with 247 backers, raising over €17,000 in the process!

Antoine was kind enough to provide six samples of his Gobz, which I now present to you: Big Red (the baby Gob sitter), Gob'Tectiv



(Columbo gob), Wonder'Gob, Gob'Ninja (the executioner), Dragon gob (the stupid burglar) and Tazzar'Gob (electro defensive gob). The inspiration for these is clear for all to see).

Bearing in mind that these goblins are of a reasonable size as you can see in the cutting mat picture below, not only will they be fun to play with, they were designed and created with painters in mind too. The miniatures are cast in France by GRX Creations who have an excellent name for quality in our little hobby world. Antoine told me there were two main reasons for casting the miniatures in resin: 1) the level of detailing is superior to those cast in metal and 2) the shipping costs are a fraction of the cost, too.

A lot of the collaborators will be familiar with you; many of the original concepts were brought to life by the pencil work of Stephano Moroni, of Aradia fame, a company we covered in some detail a few issues back. Jean Michel Brisset was heavily involved with the art right from the beginning and Adrian Prado will be involved in episode 2 of the Brik a BraK project, so watch this space for more details.

Ok, so as to alleviate redundancy in any of our comments, each cast is very crisp and clean. There is almost no clean up to carry out. That which there is literally very simple to remove with a small file or some fine wet 'n dry paper. Each of my samples arrived in a ziplock bag, tucked away in a little Skulls Mini white cardboard box; there was no extra padding other than the bubble wrap envelope, but there were no breakages or accidents. I am unsure how the Gobz will be packaged for those who backed the project, so I can't comment on that; all I can say is that my samples arrived in excellent condition. The detailing is super sharp and I can't see any air holes or discrepancies in the cast. Each one is packed full of fun details and are easy to assemble with no gap filling required. Each is a parody on a well-known super hero and display that hero's characteristics in a hyperstylised manner. I haven't worked out why Wonder'Gob has oranges stuffed down her latex top, but even as an ugly goblin, there's still an appeal that I can only put down to

childhood recollections! Dragon'Gob, who has a striking similarity to Gotham's caped crusader, is a three piece mini and again is packed full of details with quirky touches such as the catapult on his utility belt and his patched up cloak.

Gob'Ninja is slightly larger and bulkier than the others and there is a mould line that looks like care will be needed to remove it without obscuring the sculpted detailing in the leg muscles. All the expressions on the faces are great, adding a lot of character. In this instance you need to attach his left arm, but there is a nice, snug fit due to the way the arm and torso have been cut to accom-



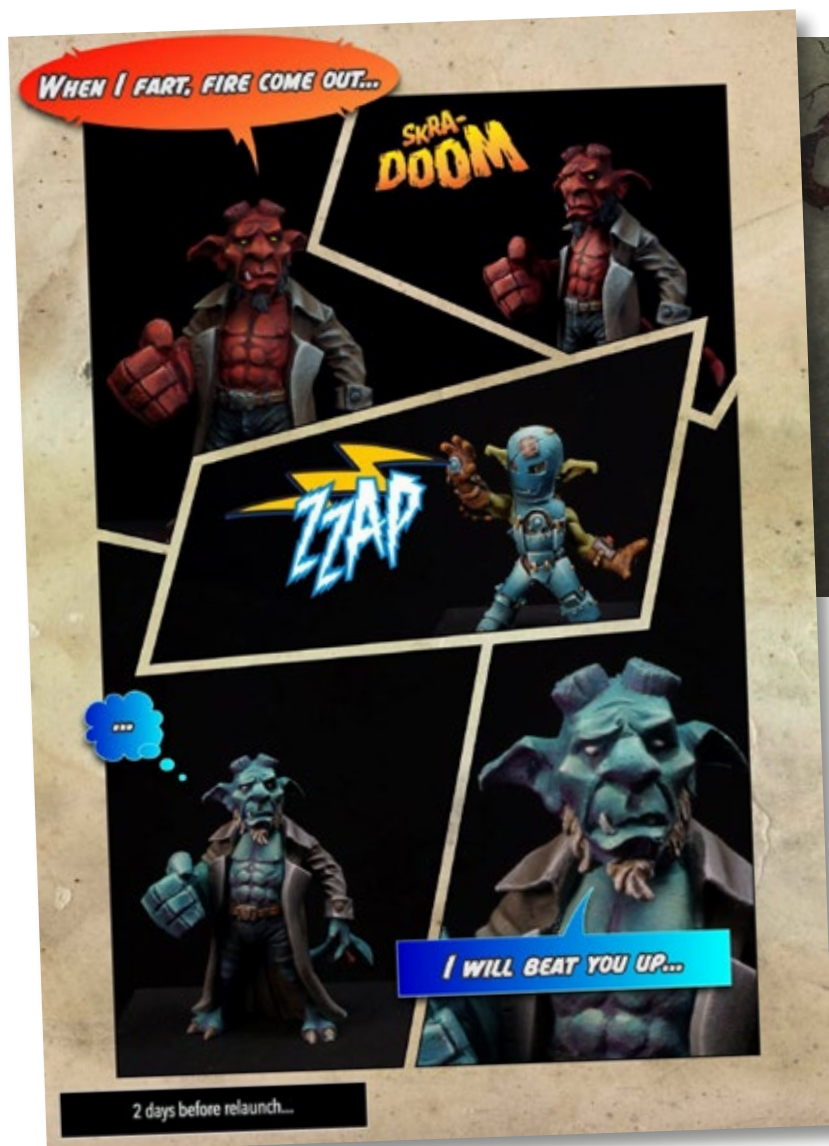


modate each other. The blades are nicely detailed and surprisingly are not warped, so they don't even need to be re-shaped with the trusty hairdryer or a bowl of hot water.

Tazer'Gob is my personal favourite of the samples I was sent and I have to say I am really impressed with the level of detailing I find on this Gob, there's a cable to attach between his arm and the generator in his back and it fits perfectly once again. The armour reminds me more of the early versions of armour "Stark" had developed. It is a bit more cumbersome and bulky, which just adds to the appeal. I simply love Gob'Tectiv who comes replete with cigar, oversized fist and tail, all trademark characteristics of one of my fave comic book heroes. Again, it's going to sound too good to be true, but there's nothing to clean. I would imagine each would take approximately five minutes to prepare, base and prime. A great leveller if you're a gamer and want to get to the fun stuff of painting and playing!

Eh up?! I have mould lines on my very last mini sample, Big Red. There are mould lines down the arms, legs and along the ribs, but these are subtle and should not pose any problems! The arms attach snugly and he's ready for paint. As with all the samples, the detailing is great even down to bulging veins on his chest muscles. I am so glad the campaign went ahead and was successfully funded, I'm guessing we will be seeing a lot of these at shows and on the Internet through 2015 and later!





To conclude these are high quality, finely detailed, fun little sculpts at an affordable price; the only downside for me is the scale. I would love to paint one in a larger scale! Now don't despair if you didn't back the campaign, as Antoine has confirmed they will be in the www.skulls-mini-shop.com beginning in May at a cost of 9€ for the gobs and 25€ for the trolls, with free shipping over orders worth 80€. So enjoy — I think these will be great fun to paint and although initially they were not designed with BloodBowl or any other system in mind, with a few tweaks along the way there's no reason why these fellows won't be appearing in games of your choice. Enjoy and have fun!!

What's on the MARKET?

a close look at gaming accessories

single product review



by Marko Paunović

DESIGNED FOR MALIFAUX by Plastcraft Games Part 1

In the next couple of issues, I'll be dealing with some nice looking sets of terrain that come to us directly from Spain courtesy of Plastcraft Games.

I'll be doing the regular unboxing, looking into the assembly and painting, discovering how to improve the sets and playing a game of Malifaux, all in an attempt to review the product from all angles.



At the end of 2014, a Spanish company announced a release of their new range of terrain sets – the Designed for Malifaux range. As with their other ranges (Designed for Infinity, Designed for Carnevale, Designed for Kensei), the sets were made from what they call Plast Pre-Cut. Like most of us, I had no idea what Plast Pre-Cut is. Luckily, their internet site has an in depth explanation not only of what that is and how it's made, but also what the material's properties are.

What is Plast Pre-Cut?

It is a foamed PVC sheet that is flexible, strong and light weight. Laminated PVC is physiologically and chemically inert, so it does not require any special safety procedures for its manipulation.

Furthermore, its properties are:

- » Light.
- » Flexible.
- » Stainless.
- » Durable.
- » Hygienic.
- » Fire-proof.
- » Self-extinguishing.
- » Rot-proof.
- » Weather-resistant.
- » Non-toxic.

The production and manufacture of the finished parts is done by numerical-controlled cutting blades and not lasers, which means there is no toxic gases emitted during production, as well.

Packaging

When the parcel containing the entire range of their scenery arrived, I was immediately amazed at the size of it. Knowing how large the buildings and sets are when they are assembled, expected something much bigger and heavier.



Prices

Downtown Building	35€ + P&P
The Tower	37€ + P&P
Graveyard Set	19€ + P&P
Sewers Walkway Set	37€ + P&P
Downtown Walkway Set	35€ + P&P
Suburb Props (Resin)	15€ + P&P
Undertaker Props (Resin)	16€ + P&P

Link: www.plastcraftgames.com

Material: foamed PVC sheets (unless stated otherwise)

Individual boxes are truly small and compact; the choice of material makes the weight of the boxes to be at least half of what same-sized MDF lasercut buildings would be. The design of the boxes is also clever with really nice box art as well. On the back of the box, there is a clear picture of what the box contains with a QR code linking to the assembly picture on their internet site. All their sets (not only Designed for Malifaux) have instructions online. This saves space in the boxes but I imagine it also saves them money. QR code is a nice touch, although I don't think I would assemble these sets in places where I have only my smartphone with me. I chose to go online, download the assembly instructions on my laptop and print them.



Assembly

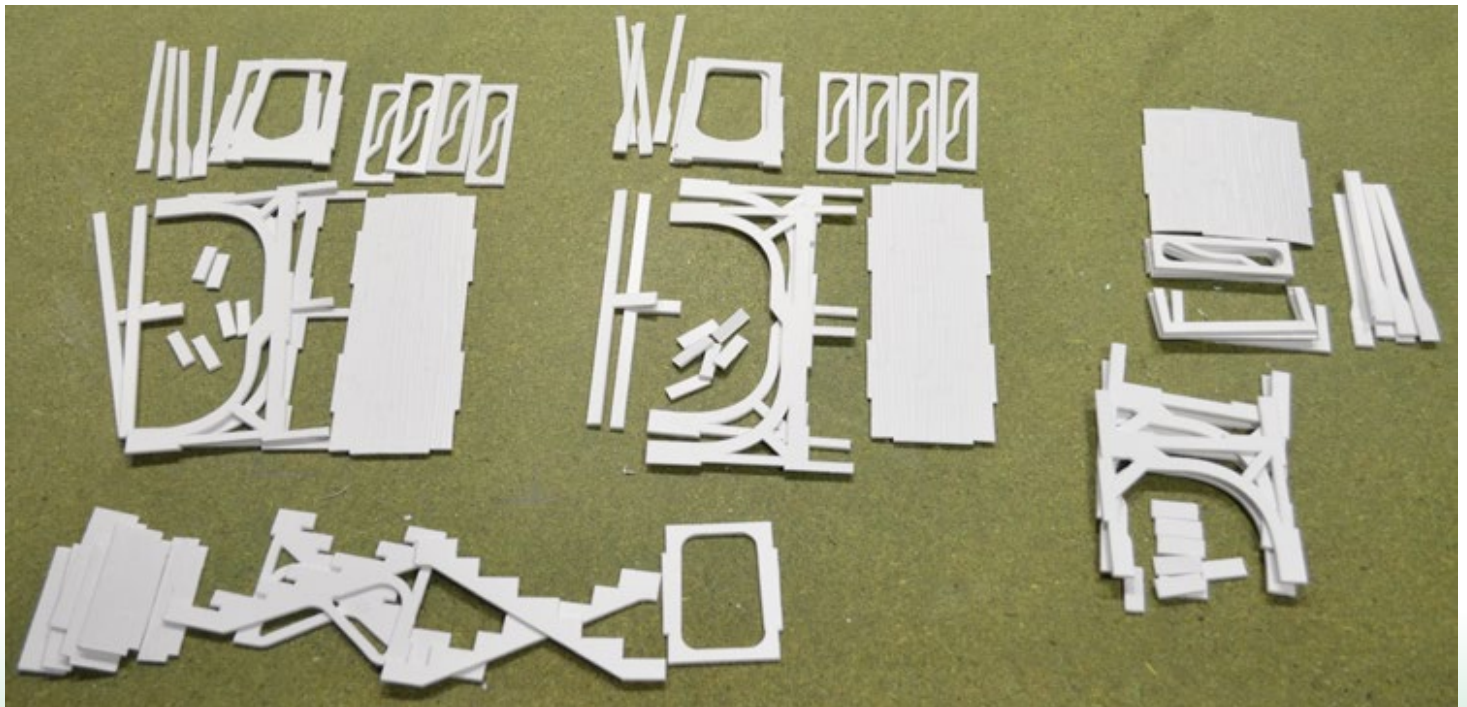
The sets come with several pre-cut sheets of laminated PVC, depending on the size of the set. There is a large number of parts per set, but the assembly (in general) is relatively easy. It might seem a bit overwhelming at first, but once you get the hang of the idea behind the assembly, it runs really smoothly.

The pre-cut parts need to be removed from the PVC sheet; in some places it is easy to remove, but elsewhere you will need the aid of a scalpel blade.



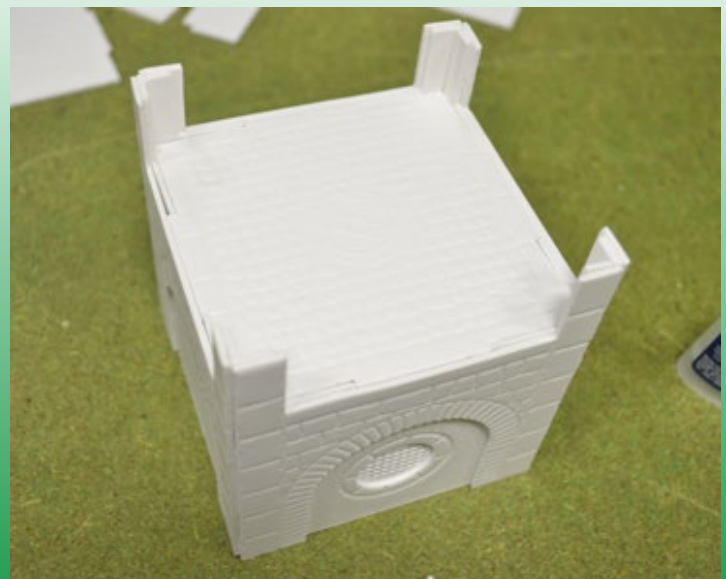
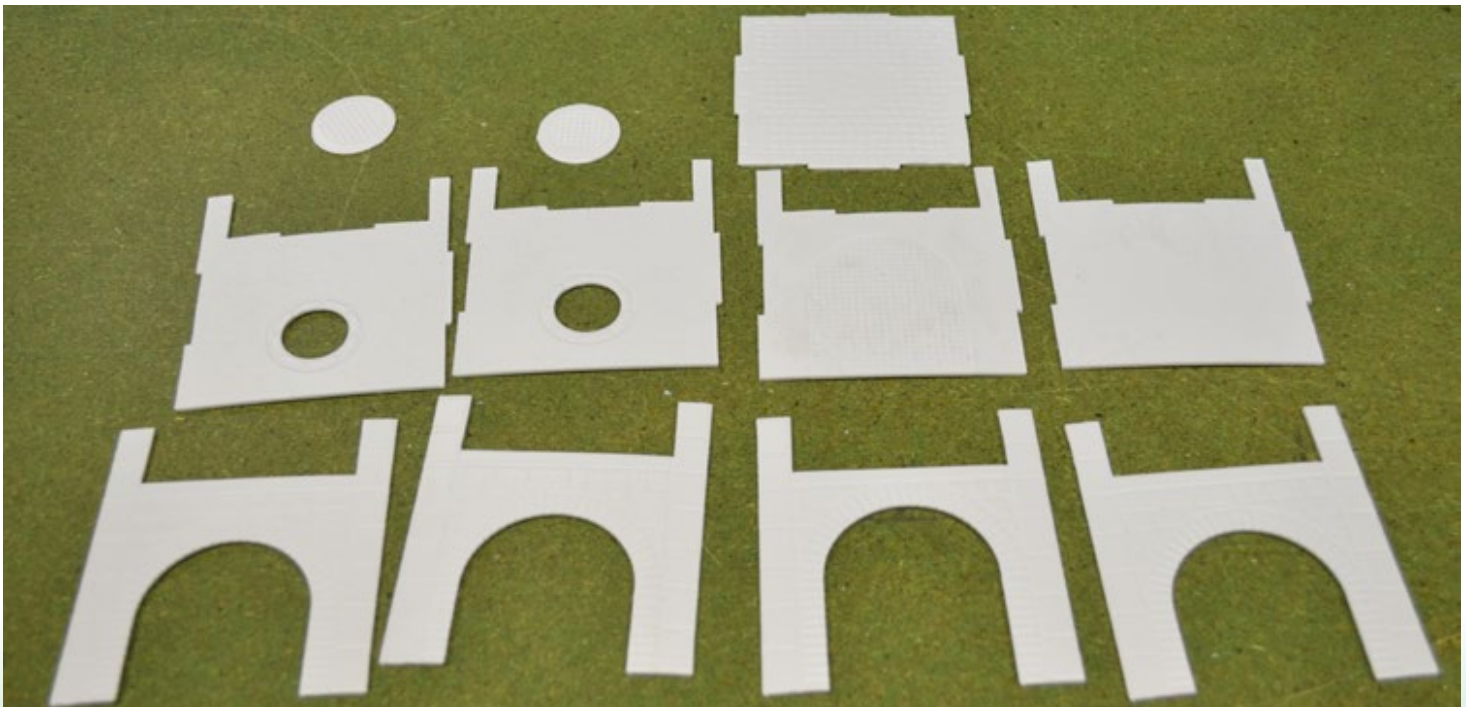
The parts generally fit perfectly and since the individual pieces are relatively thin and bendable, they can be made to be curved instead of straight. It is a cool feature, enabling this somewhat Tim Burton-ey effect to the buildings.

The best method to glue is to use superglue. However, the surfaces are really, really smooth so you will need a LOT of superglue. For some reason, I've used the entire 10g package to assemble these sets.

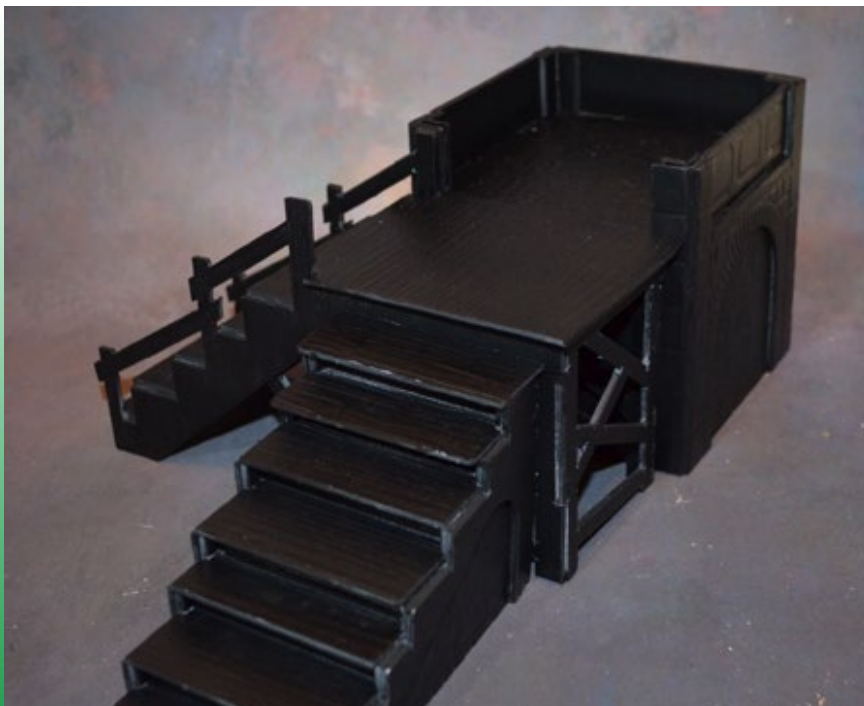
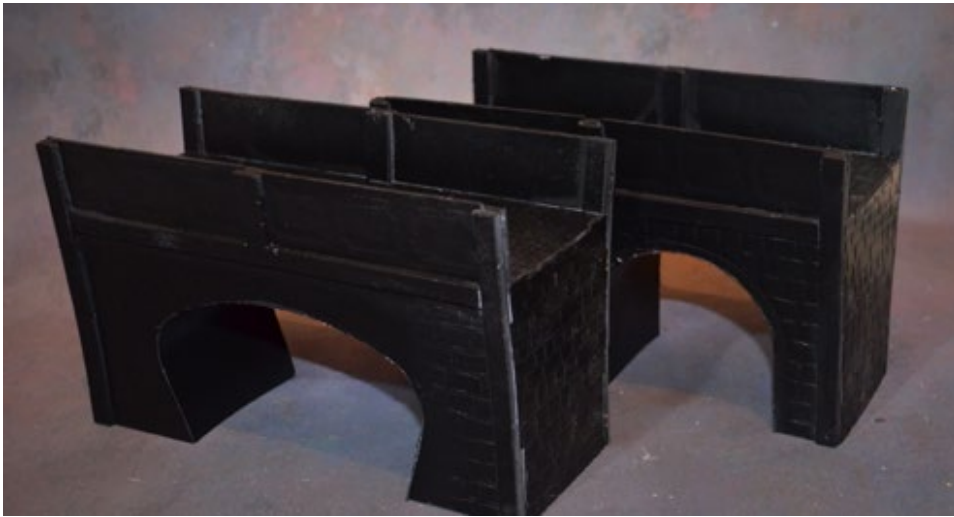
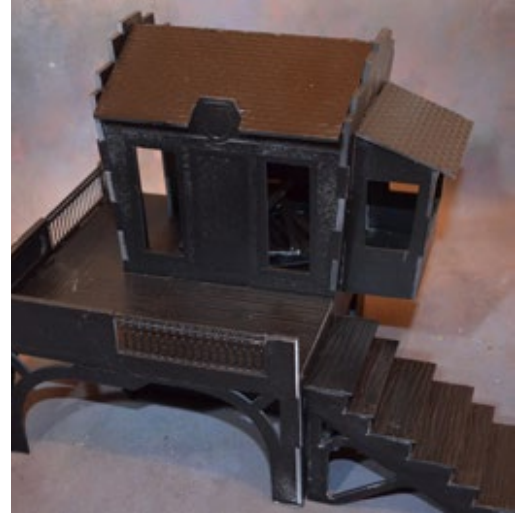
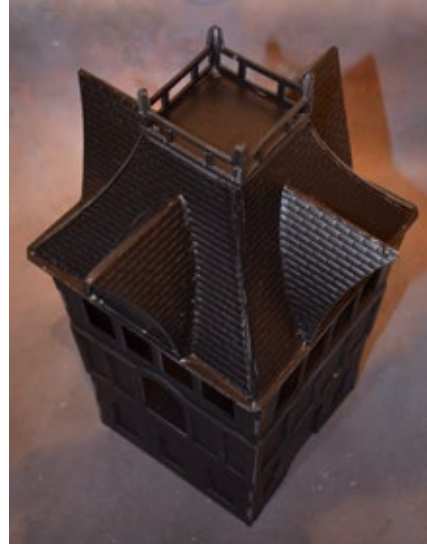


Overall feel after assembly

First impression is the sets are huge — with only five sets, they cover most of the standard 3' x 3' Malifaux board. I used the normal acrylic matt black spray to undercoat the items and the paint sticks to the material really well. I wouldn't agree completely about the level of detail, although the boxes say it's a "highly detailed surface. It is detailed, but some other manufacturers (Games Workshop or Tabletop World) do have more details and more pronounced details. However, the level of detail will be judged after the painting is done in the next issue.



Next time, apart from showing how the painting of the sets goes, we will take these sets and make a couple of alterations and modifications to make them look even cooler and make the final judgement after we've played a couple of games on the terrain. Furthermore, we will be taking a closer look at the two resin kits that are also a part of the range. So far, I think the average wargamer would be really satisfied with these sets for gaming. The sets are easily built, large enough to cover a lot of the table and provide ample character for a Malifaux game.



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Dear friends, it is time for the

13th AGRAM ARENA SUMMER TOURNAMENT

Location: MS "Cvjetni trg", Prolaz s.Bakovic 3, Zagreb, Croatia

Agram Arena Summer is going to be held over two weekends:

11-12th July 2015 for the 40k International tournament and Black Queen Hobby and Miniature Painting Competition.

18-19th July 2015 for the Malifaux International tournament and Demo Games/Open Play (Infinity, LOTR SBG/Hobbit on Saturday 18th; Flames of War and Warmachine on Sunday 19th)

ENTRY: FREE!

Refreshing drinks for all players will be free during the tournaments

Accommodation for Saturday night is also free for the 1st timers, read more about this in the rules! Lunch is available at the price of 10€ for both days!

MORE INFO AND RULESPACKS TO BE FOUND [HERE](#)

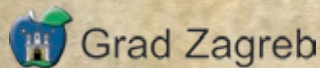
*Official languages of the tournament will be **English and Croatian.***

If you need any other information please contact us at

ums.agram@gmail.com



sponsors



Want to sponsor the event? Contact us at ums.agram@gmail.com

INSIGHT

interview with **Kirill Kanaev**

Questions by Jason Martin



Place of Origin: I'm living in Russia. My city is called Balashikha, on the outskirts of Moscow.

Years painting or sculpting: I can't remember exactly; my first toy soldier I had painted in 1985 or 1986.

Major awards: My first major and most fun award is the Slayer Sword from GD UK 2005. That was my first time I was out of Russia and my first time at an international hobby competition. After that, there were several Golden Demons from GD France. In 2013, I had received a

best of show award in Monte San Savino. In 2014, two gold and two silver medals at the World Model Expo in Stresa.

Future plans: Stay alive as long as possible! Did you mean my plans for life or plans within the hobby? Next year I would like to visit several hobby events in Europe; in Ingolstadt and Siena, for instance. I am also planning to collaborate with one miniature company. I can also say that I have no plans to make my own miniature company.

Last year, I contacted this artist to ask him to adjust his facebook privacy settings, so we could share some of his amazing work on the FPM newsfeed. He was humble, pleased and a little taken aback that we were interested in sharing his work with others. We had a little chat and I asked if he would be interested in appearing in our magazine. I put his name forward for an Insight interview with the editor. I am not going to lie; I have been familiar with his work for many years on CMoN as "Yellow One" and I'm a bit of a fanboy of his. In fact, I hold him at the top of his game alongside other greats. I am very happy to present that interview to you now and I hope you find it as interesting as I did during the long process of putting it together going back to November last year! This is Kirill Vladimirovich Kanaev.



"Barbarian's Destiny" - I had sculpted the giant and the barbarian in his hand was also sculpted by me, early on for a the Russian Alternative company.

Q1: *Starting out in the hobby when the USSR was still in existence must have been very hard in the beginning, with limited access to the kits and tools the rest of us take for granted. How did you find and maintain the motivation to keep at it?*

I was born in the USSR. It wasn't an "evil empire", but there weren't good miniatures, just "toy soldiers". My father was a hobby modeller and he had painted soldiers for me. He had used oils and car enamels. Oils were too difficult for me, so I used car enamels for painting. At the same time, I had started to sculpt soldiers from plasticine. It wasn't serious, just for amusement. Afterwards, I began checking uniform books and tried to paint them ac-

curately. My favoured period was the War of 1812, so I made minor conversions from plastic cavalry and plasticine, transforming Russian Cossacks into British dragoons or French chasseurs, etc.

From the foreign hobby magazines, I had learnt that it was possible to paint shadows and highlights. My skills started to improve, but I understood that enamels were not the best choice. In 1992, I tried tempera for the first time and in same year I started to accept commissions. Sculpting (not including for a child's amusement), wasn't my favourite branch of the hobby until 1998. When I tried green stuff from a GW store, I understood that it's a nice thing and sculpting didn't pose

as many problems anymore. Later were collaborations with several miniature companies such as Darkson Designs, Black Tree Design, Urban Mammoth and Zvezda. I could say that my painting stages are very long.

Q2: *So your baptism goes quite a long way back! Was your dad your inspiration to become a great painter or was it a natural progression?*

I guess it was my own progress. He had shown me just the basic techniques. He was a member of Moscow Club of Scale Modelling and liked to make WWII planes in 1:48 scale; later he started to build 1:35 tanks. My interests involved tanks



Triumph of Jomarth Bay won gold at Monte San Savino in 2013.

and miniatures; the polishing of a plane's fuselage was boring in my eyes. In the mid-80's, painting techniques were very simple, with prevailing miniatures called "traditional". This meant they were not perfect sculptures and just basic colours, with no shadows nor highlights. In the foreign hobby magazines, sometimes toy soldiers would appear that had a different look; they were more vivid and spectacular. They had blended shadows and I tried to repeat this technique; that was the point when I had started my progression. Soon I understood that enamels were not the best choice for blending and in 1992 I started to use PVA tempera. These paints also were not perfect for me. Wet colours look bright, but when dried, they lose saturation. In 1994, one commissioner of mine had shown me acrylic paints, which were Grumbacher artistic paints and then I understood that this was really my choice. They were much easier to work with than oils or tempera. The better materials had improved my technique and from this point on my progress seemed unstoppable.

Q3: *Your historical painting is very realistic and accurate. Other than from a painting perspective, do you have an interest in history?*

Yes, sure. In my childhood, I enjoyed looking at albums of art, especially renaissance painting. There were knights!



Cadwalon minotaur, 28mm.



The introduction and development of the knights' armour was my favourite piece in history and it's the reason why I started to check historical books and not only those concerned with the medieval era. Full plate armour was my childhood dream. Another of my dreams were robots, probably because sometimes they look like knights 😊 Now I understand why I like WH40K space marines – they are a mixture of knights and robots 😊

I must also say that in the former USSR there was just a limited assortment of toy soldiers. Mainly they were semi flat plastic figures of medieval knights and Russian drujinniks, Napoleonic era, Russian civil war, cowboys and Indians, WWII and post war Soviet infantry. In the 1980's, 1:32 scale full volume Romans, Vikings, pirates, Egyptians and others. Also there were large 1/12 scale figures of Neanderthals, American trappers, Soviet WWII infantry and Vikings began to make their appearance. These were copies of American toy soldier sets, as I would become familiar with later. A real child's treasure was pre painted toy soldiers from DDR and Poland. I tried to paint these figures in authentic colours based on historical books; I compared the models and was very disappointed. Sculptors had a worrying number of

Landsknecht Soldier, 75mm
from Pegaso Models.



inaccuracies, so I started to correct these wrongs with plasticine and paint them with enamels. A layer of enamel helped to protect plasticine a little, but these figures weren't really "toy soldiers". They stood alone as "collectibles". In these formative years of practice, I felt I lacked some vital information. Most of the books that I had read weren't specialised on uniform and armaments, they contained just a few illustrations; here my father helped me again. As I had said before, he was a member of Moscow Club of Scale Modelling and I need to explain this occurrence. It was a large community of hobbyists that united all kinds of modellers—plane modelers, ship builders, figure collectors, re-enactors, etc. Each week, they arranged a flea market of hobby commodities, a kind of "black market". In the former USSR, the hobby did not count as something important; it was just for children's amusement. Therefore, in toy stores there was just a very limited choice of scale models. Model kits from DDR were a real joy in that time. Books about uniforms also were a rarity and were imported from ex-socialistic countries such as Poland, DDR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. However, in Moscow a self-organised community of hobbyists grew their very own kind of "black market". All of a sudden, it was possible to buy model kits and books from outside of the "iron curtain". Revell, Monogram, Esci models, Osprey publishing books! Humbrol paints and other good stuff! As with every "black market", the price tag was terrifying and it was for all intents and purposes a luxury in Russia! My father bought me sets of Airfix and Esci 1:72 figures and also cheap copies of these sets from Poland. It is exactly from this community that I had received best information about historical authenticity and the more advanced painting techniques of that time.

Frederick the Great's Black Hussar
1/10 scale bust from Young Miniatures.



Q4: *You mentioned that your favourite period was the War of 1812. Are you referring to the war of 1812 between United States of America and Great Britain or the Russian Patriotic War? I'm sure Napoleon will be in there somewhere!?*

I meant the Russian Patriotic War of 1812 against the Napoleon invasion. That was Napoleon's biggest mistake. It was during this period he would lose the main part of his great army. He entered Russia with 554,000 soldiers and after his forced winter retreat, just 79,000 French soldiers left Russia. The casualty figures of this period always look spectacular to me and my interest for this time had been growing since the late 80's. At this time was printed several sets of postcards with illustrations from Oleg Parhaev, a very talented Russian artist. These sets included postcards with the uniforms of Russian army at the 1812 Russian Patriotic War. The first set was infantry, second cavalry, third Cossacks and irregulars and fourth were items of armament and equipment. For me, these illustrations were like a blast! I was so inspired that I made conversions of almost all the soldiers from this sets.

Q5: *You won your Slayer Sword a decade ago in the UK with your stunning Dark Angels land raider, which for many is an iconic piece and recognisable, seen many times on CMoN, White Dwarf and I believe in the Space Marine codexes of yesteryear, but for me the bronze you won the same year in the open category is the mini that is instantly recognisable as a "Yellow One" paintjob! Are you ever surprised about judging decisions at these competitions?*

When I was only a competitor, I was curious why this model deserved (for example) silver, but this work won a gold. After I had judged several painting competitions, I could say why. A piece that a judge sees



Grey Knight Paladin (one from the squad of ten).

and a piece on the display or photo are almost always different things. In the photo, some works looks like crap and it's a problem of the photo. When you view the display stands at the event, you see it from a distance and, sad but true, under very bad light. Judges have the ability to hold every model in their hands,

seeing it from different angles under better light. They can see things that are invisible for most of the people at the show. Also, the main trait of the judges is a lot of experience in painting. They may not be perfect painters, but in every case they have seen many very good works for comparison, which creates a "sense of taste". If you ask me why that Revenant Titan had deserved only bronze, I guess he just wasn't perfectly executed. Freehand and the whole idea was nice, but the level of painting wasn't clear and flawless.

Q6: *Can you summarise your emotions and feelings say at Golden Demon compared to what many now consider the special*

shows such as Monte San Savino and Stresa?

It's just a different kind of event. The Golden Demon is just a small part of Games Day, where there are quite rigid limitations. There are limited possibilities; must use only GW models and they have to be on their bases, too. In the late 90's going into early 2000's, it was a great event for fantasy painters. The other shows at that time focused primarily on historical figures and scale models; fantasy and sci-fi was just a small appendix of the hobby. However, since around 2005 the focus was beginning to move away from history. Now I can say that already fantasy and sci-fi are starting to prevail. In Monte San Savino, where I was on the judging panel this past year, the fantasy part of competition looked more interesting and better executed than the historical part; that's not only my opinion. Golden Demon has lost a level of quality in the past several years and I believe this is due in no small part of the policies of GW.

Q7: *Can you explain some of the painting techniques that you use to achieve your stunning results?*

It's simple. I just look around and try to repeat what I see. I look at human faces and check the details, colour of shades and highlights. I look at leather and try to repeat the crackles and wrinkles. I try to repeat what I see.

Q8: *You recently collaborated with the passionate and crazy guys at Painting Buddha, to create the step by step painting video of the Highland Clansman by Young Miniatures. Can you tell us about the experience itself and the difficulties involved in producing such a video?*

That was a great and fun experience! For myself, it gave me an insight into my own actions during the process of painting. Some things I do automatically without thinking about it. When I need to explain for people what I do, first I must explain it to myself inside of my head. For example, with the squares of tartan there was a first time when I had painted each square separately without one base colour for the whole tartan. The difficulty of filming is that I am sitting in an uncomfortable position under a blinding light and I must do very high quality painting, because all of my mis-

Highland Clansman 110 scale box art bust for Young Miniatures.



All that I do when I paint a model is to try and create authentic flaws. You could paint a face with perfect skin tone, make a perfect blending, smooth shadows and highlights. However, the model still looks "plastic"; it is too flawless. To make it mimic life, we need to add flaws such as pigmentation spots, scratches, capillaries, bristles, etc. The same I can say about leather, clothing and metal. In 54mm size, we could see just major flaws such as dirt and worn clothing. In larger scale, it's like a zoom lens; we could see smaller details and more flaws.

takes will be visible immediately in HD. ☺ My hair always obscures the camera and hides the model. Also it's difficult to hold a model in the centre of focus, I want to turn a model to another angle and it's immediately going out of camera range, view or focus. Michael had to pull me up every time: "Head! Centre! Head! Centre!"

Q9: *For myself, I believe you have spearheaded the pursuit of reproducing hyper realistic textures, for instance in hair, fabrics and textiles. What drove you to perfect these particular techniques?*

My objective that I try to reach in painting is to create the illusion of life. One of the traits of life is flaws.

Q10: *Do you enjoy your collaborations with the different companies? What pressures does it bring when you are responsible for so many box art projects?*

Working with companies, there are always restrictions, time limits and sometimes misunderstanding or miscommunication. In any case, it's an experience. My first freelance collaboration was with Zvezda from Russia. I had to paint box art of 1:72 figure sets and after was their fantasy wargame "Ring of Rule". I had to produce sketch designs, illustrations and box art. After this as a freelancer, I had work with Darkson Designs from the USA. I would like to say many thanks to Robert and Crystal Kingery. They are very kind

WWII paratrooper bust.



Roman general 1/10 scale bust box art for Young Miniatures.



people and working with them was a pleasure for me. Now I do box art painting only for Young Miniatures. It's a friendly collaboration, because I don't receive money for painting; instead I keep the painted busts for myself and can sell it later. In my opinion, it's the best possible form of collaboration.

Q11: *Can you tell us a little about the process behind painting the recent WW2 paratrooper bust?*

This guy looks a bit like a Matt Damon. Firstly, I watched "Saving Private Ryan" again and took several screenshots for understanding how light would fall on this kind of face. It was the main part of work; the rest is just a question of technique. On the particular screenshot I had, I could see that his forehead and eyes were in shadow from the helmet, but the bottom part of

his face was lit by a soft light from above. When I understood this rule, I had to try to repeat the effect on the bust. For painting of the uniform and equipment, I had to find a lot of photo references on the internet. In the books that I have, it is possible check colours, but a real view and the textures I can see only on hi-res pictures of equipment. For example, I found photos of his knife. It's a special model of M1918 trench knife that was used only by this airborne division.

Q12: *Would it be safe to say your true love is historical figure painting or has the rise of fantasy and sci-fi market turned your head, so to speak?*

I can say definitely that without skill to paint a real historical figure, it is impossible to paint well a fantasy or sci-fi model. You could say that "these glowing runes on his battle

axe are magic", but in any case you must understand how light falls on this model, how a worn-out leather jacket looks, scratched wood, rusty iron or unshaved human face. I like to make things alive and for me, it is not as important if it is a medieval knight or space marine. Fantasy and sci-fi give wide possibilities to create something "completely different", but I still love to paint historical models and finding details that stay behind this model, because it's real. When I started to paint fantasy in 1994, it was GW wood elves. I wondered how bright and funny they could be, but afterwards I understood that they looked like cartoon heroes. Blood Angels are nice and red but I can't believe in them. Soon I understood why. All this stuff looks unbelievable because they have no flaws. Armour is too clear and the clothing too bright. They have a legendary background, but have no real story about their equipment. I started to bring them to life, adding dirt and dust to the elven boots, scratches to space marines' armour, etc. I just tried to imagine how all this stuff could be made, used in battle, scratched and damaged and...I had returned to history. Nobody see elves in wool cloth, but we know how an English bowman looks in wool clothing. Nobody sees an Ultramarine battle brother, but we know how scratched tank armour looks. It's a trait of the human mind; we can believe in any fantasy, but only if it has some details that we already know.

Q13: *Bearing in mind that you've done conversions many years ago with plasticine and then you created sculpts for your personal projects, is there a chance we could see a full sculpt from "Yellow One" as a commercial kit in the future?*

As you say, I have done some things previously, such as the sculpts for Russian Alternative company. There were several sets of barbarians, elves and dwarves. In the past, I

28mm female vampire master model sculpted for "Russian alternative" company 10.



RAF WWII bomber pilot 1/10 scale bust from Young Miniatures (third version of this bust that I have painted for a commission).

have sculpted for Urban Mammoth (the Myrmidons and Pit Beasts), Black Tree Design and Darkson Designs. I'm not sure about my own miniature company, but I think that in the future it may be possible that I sculpt a large scale kit.

Q14: *I like your future plan to stay alive as long as possible! As a massive fan of your works, I would love the chance to attend a "Yellow One" painting workshop; is that a possibility in the future?*

I guess it's possible. I have plans to visit several events in Europe this year and probably I can give a master class there.

Kirill, it has been a massive honour for me to conduct this interview with you and I have found it thoroughly interesting and absorbing, I hope our readers will too. Thanks for talking!



54mm Inquisitor (sculpted for French Golden Demon 2009, open competition).



SMOG RIDERS



SCALE75

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You have two successful crowd funding campaigns, a store full of busts, fantasy and historical miniatures plus a paint range which, in my opinion, is the very best and most versatile. What do you do next? In true miniature hobbyist family spirit, the Scale team have decided to give back to the people that support them.



This exciting new project is one that reminds us that Scale Games the company consists largely of fans of miniature painting – just like us!

They have released a new range of miniatures ‘called Smog Riders’ and the emphasis will be to help the people who want to improve their painting skills. (That’s all of us, right?)

Scale will be providing painting guidance in the box with each miniature; in addition, there will be online tutorials and access to specific advice on the blog. The idea is that the people who follow the advice will be able to ‘level up’ their skills as they follow along. This really is an opportunity for many of us. They will be painted using the ScaleColor range of paints, including the initial range the and new



Colonel Clayton



Kitty Reimer



Amelia Steam



Matt Darcy



Fantasy & Games colours. You can also buy the miniatures with the required paints, so if you haven't tried the paints yet, this would be a perfect time to invest.

While speaking to Elias Alonso, I did mention that I felt the painting guides needed to be concise and easy to understand and he assured me that this has been given consideration. They aim to make the painting guides as good as possible.

I was given an opportunity to inspect 4 of these miniatures up close and under a magnifier and the quality is fantastic although, without doubt, this is something we have come to expect from the Scale team.

They are created using high quality resin and retail at a price that makes me feel this is not a profit project. At €12:39 or £8.82 it occurs to me that they are a fantastic foundation for new painters to start dabbling away, simply because it's a minimal investment.

We should make no mistake, though; these figures aren't just for beginners. There will be some stunning paint jobs done on these miniatures because they look fantastic.

For the beginner, they are a good place to start; if you are expert, they are a wonderful and quick platform to showcase your skills. Not all amazing paintjobs start with a complex subject.

They are created in a very cute Chibi style, which in anime terms means they are created with oversized heads. They are currently characters set in the steampunk genre and fans of the Scale75 Steam Wars range will instantly recognise Kitty Reimer in Smog Riders form. I am hopeful that other characters from the Steam Wars range will follow Kitty.



The design of the miniatures is such that features are open and easy to access with a brush, The eyes are big enough to not be off putting for a beginner and considering the 4 miniatures already released, there will be a chance to cover hair, cloth and materials including leather, glass, metals, smoke, its all there. The concept of level ups suggest the initial the box guides will teach us how to paint to a basic standard and then having achieved this, if we wish to go further, we can access the online support and tutorials.

Daniel Serrano, the Community manager of ScaleGames, was happy to take time out to clarify a few points for FPM.

How did the idea of Smog Riders develop?

The idea came out from the typical comments that people make as painters "How can I paint those eyes when they are so small? Do I need to slow down my pulse for what you do? Will I need a one-hair brush?"

We think that for many people who love miniatures, the size can be a big barrier at first. The lack of knowledge in many other areas is a great enemy to the ongoing development of the community of painters. When you've painted many figures, you realize that the size is much less important than it seems, because you get used to different scales. On the other hand, we think that for everyone who wants to start, the larger miniatures can be a useful platform to begin with. So that's the way Smog Riders be-

gan; simple figures with a 'friendly' geometry that removes barriers for miniature lovers that are a bit 'scared' to get going. In addition to this, they have a charming aesthetic. Later when they are painted, you can put them proudly in your display cabinet.

Will the online support cost anything and where will it be found?

It will be free and we will post updates on the Smog Riders [community page](#) and in a blog that is currently being fed with content: www.smogriders.com

Will all the tutorials be done using ScaleColor paints and in particular the new Fantasy & Game colours?

We will be using both the normal range and the Fantasy & Games one, explaining where and why we use each of them in the painting guides.

Will the online support include a Q&A facility so that specific questions can be asked by the community?

Yes, that's why we are building a blog, as it's one of the best ways to give that support. With people's questions, we'll be completing the original information to build up tutorials that can satisfy every visitor.

Do you have plans to release further figures in this range in future?

Yes, there are some more figures planned.

Is it a possibility that they may become a tabletop game at some point in future if they are successful?

It depending on the success and reception, Basically, yes, there's an idea to make a game about Smog Riders, but it needs significant investment, so it will be a medium or long term goal. We don't want



any more crowdfunding campaigns, as we have Fallen Frontiers in production and we won't detract dedication from it. For this reason we prefer to release the figures gradually and see how well they are received.

That last point is an important one. When you see these figures up close, I imagine you will feel as I do. These are not mass produced tabletop pieces or fillers for a board game; they are individual display pieces. That said, I wouldn't be disappointed if they were so successful they made a transition to the tabletop. There are currently only 4 available through the Scale75 store and at the current price they should also appeal to collectors.

I will purchase the miniatures myself to support an idea that supports the community and to learn a few more painting tricks along the way. In the meantime, look out for the next issue of FPM, which will have a figure review from Davide Rainone with even more information about the miniatures.

If you are interested in buying these miniatures direct from the Scale 75 site, go and visit www.scale75.com where you will be able to view the complete range available.



By Jason Martin



Recently, I was approached by the guys (Matthew Pearce and Kieron Clarke) behind the 'Eavier Metal facebook page, who told me they were planning a speed painting competition down at Salute in April of this year.

What we have come up with is this introduction piece, then next month a follow up article after the show, discussing the show and the competition etc. Firstly, though, I wanted to delve into the murky depths that are the genesis of 'Eavier Metal, so let's see what they had to say for themselves.

The original 'Eavy Metal facebook group was created by painters from the official Games Workshop 'Eavy Metal team. It ran for a good few years without much incident, and had roughly 6500 members, though the contributing number was much lower. As would be expected, the standard of painting on the page was particularly high.

On the 23rd of May 2014, a new admin was added to the group. His first action, immediately after being made admin, was to change the group setting to secret. For those not familiar with facebook groups, this setting stops anyone who isn't already in the group from seeing the group even exists, without an invitation from an existing member. The active group members protested, but soon after followed the announcement from the new admin that the group was being shut down and that people should leave or they would be removed. This was greeted with a great deal of bad feeling from the community and they were quite vocal about it. In some ways it is understandable that they perhaps wanted to maintain a particular standard or close knit community, but that, in many people's eyes, should have been done from the start; not at a later date when many people were actively involved in the group.

As time moved on, it became apparent that a replacement group would be needed and indeed several were set up as the mass exodus commenced. One such group was created by Kieron Clarke, who chose the rather tongue in cheek group moniker: 'Eavier Metal, to convey

the sense that this group would aim to be even better and open to all people regardless of standard. Kieron saw that this group would embrace everybody with a passion for painting miniatures and a desire to improve their own painting skills. The 'Eavier Metal admin team are proud of the friendly, mature atmosphere of the group. It's a great place for painters of all levels, from complete beginners to seasoned experts to come and share ideas, techniques or seek advice and tutorials.

Having learned to play Dungeons and Dragons with his brothers in the 70's, then onto the likes of Traveller and later Rogue Trader and beyond, Kieron has a long history as a fan of painting and miniature wargaming and role-playing. Kieron began to gather the 'Eavy Metal refugees to the newly created 'Eavier Metal and it grew rapidly, reaching over 2000 members in the first day.

Since then the group has continued to grow, now standing at just shy of 4500 members, with an extremely active user base of all skill levels. To aid in managing the continuing growth of the group, Kieron brought in Dave Taylor and Matthew Pearce as admins, both of whom were active community members and talented painters. With their assistance and input, the group is now looking to expand beyond facebook, acting on an idea from Dave to bring 'Eavier Metal to Salute 2015. This takes us nicely to the crux of what this introductory piece is about!

The 'Eavier Metal team has put together a speed painting contest in the Main Hall at Salute. Sponsored by Army Painter and Cool Mini or Not, the painter's challenge is to paint a zombie within a specified time frame; pictures and a video will be taken on the day and uploaded to facebook. So, if you fancy your chances, just seek them out on the day and throw down your gauntlet. What have you got to lose?



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EXHIBITION OF MINIATURES AND TABLETOP SCENERY

AGRAM 2015 *22nd February 2015 - 4th March 2015*

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For the better part of a decade, the Croatian club UMS Agram has been organizing their annual exhibitions of miniatures and tabletop scenery in celebration of their birthday. Tradition dictates it is held in the Vladimir Horvat Gallery in Zagreb's Community of Technical Culture on Trg žrtava fašizma 14, Zagreb, Croatia.

As usual, the exhibition shows a retrospective of the club's work; their programmes like tabletop scenery workshops, wargaming schools and miniature painting workshops, as well as gaming events like their two international wargaming tournaments Agram Arenas – Summer and Winter.



The emphasis of the exhibition is on the fantasy, sci-fi and steampunk miniatures assembled and painted by their members all assembled on a great number of some of their best terrain pieces. There were even two whole scenic gaming boards. One gaming board that is used for their Mordheim games is, in fact a single huge model of a ruined convent with base dimensions of 80x80 cm and an impressive height of 85cm. The other gaming table is made for Malifaux and its step by step build has been covered in [Figure Painter Magazine](#). On that board during the exhibition, there were also organized demo sessions of the Malifaux tabletop wargame. To accompany the demo, this year a whole glass case was dedicated to Malifaux, which is a cool game set in a 19th century parallel world that mixes Victorian London, the Wild West and Orient all wrapped up in a cool steampunk setting.

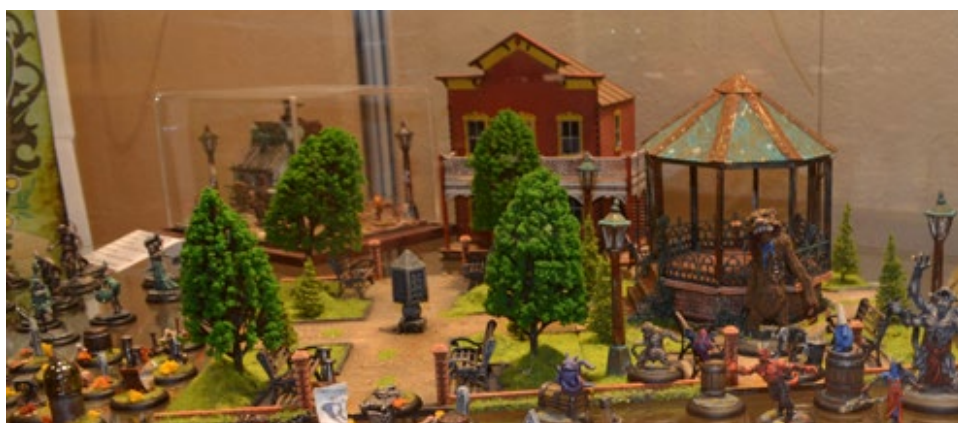


As the club's sponsor, Figure Painter Magazine was also present in form of printed issues of the magazine that the spectators could read.

One of the other main features was the [Gardens of Hecate](#), a blog by their and FPM's Ana Polanščak where she describes how she makes her wonderful scenery and miniatures set in a dark middle ages ravaged by plague and various mythological creatures inspired by the crews of Malifaux.

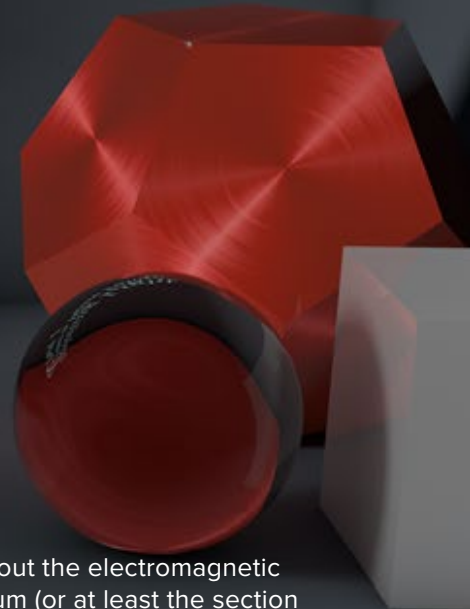


Besides the Gardens and the games already mentioned, there were miniatures and tabletop scenery from other games played in the club, such as Warhammer Fantasy Battles, Warhammer 40,000, Infinity, Warmachine and Firestorm Armada.



Exploiting Light & Colour in Figure Painting Part 1

Over the last twelve months, I have paid more and more attention to the various theories regarding figure painting and so I thought it might be a good idea to share my rather primitive understanding with you, our readers.



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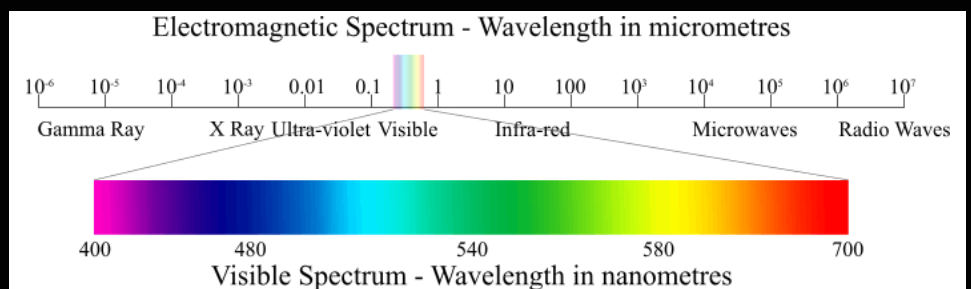
By Jason 'Red' Martin

This will by no means be an exhaustive account, nor will it be written from a professional point of view; I am, after all, finding my own way along the journey to become a better painter. There will be omissions and probably errors — please feel free to mail us at Figure Painter Magazine and let me know where I have gone wrong. If I help a few people understand a little better the complexities of painting miniatures and/or instigate a theoretical discussion on the subject, then I consider what I have written to be

worthwhile. Hopefully, we will learn a little about such aspects as light, colour, composition and maybe some things about atmosphere and story telling too.

When we are asked to describe something, we invariably mention its colour, but colour is not a physical attribute of that object. You can say a “lead ball” is dense, hard, cold to the touch perhaps, spherical but you can’t describe it as innately having a colour. Our eyes perceive the colour as an interaction of light upon the object in question. From an artist’s point of view, red is red but coming from a science background, I felt that this was a good place for me to start. Let’s briefly

talk about the electromagnetic spectrum (or at least the section that is visible to the naked eye) and how colour is perceived. Visible radiation (light) travels as rhythmic waves, but also has certain properties of particles. The distance between the crests of the respective waves is termed the wavelength and the complete range of radiation is the electromagnetic spectrum. The particles (photons) have a fixed amount of energy, which is inversely related with the wavelength, thus shorter wavelengths contain photons with higher energy e.g. blue light has more energy than red light. White light consists of the entire range of wavelengths, which form the visible light spectrum.





Rembrandt: Self-Portrait

When certain wavelengths of white light are eliminated (absorbed) by a surface and others are reflected (transmitted), a variety of colours can be produced by subtraction. The reflecting surfaces appear white when all wavelengths are reflected or black when all are absorbed (hence why black and white are not termed true colours). Colour production can arise by two methods; reflection of certain wavelengths by the physical conformity of the surface known as physical colour and/or through the absorption and reflection of certain pigments, i.e., pigmentary colours, which brings us nicely back to our more comfortable ground of colour as we know it.

When we talk about light and colour in miniature painting, we generally have two views; in my opinion, both are correct depending on what it is you wish to achieve with your painting. There is the more generic approach, probably used for army painting and gaming purposes (basic painting with washes to shade, or generally adding black and white to shade and highlight, along with an edge highlight) and then there are those who have begun and some who, with time, have mastered the effect of “chiaroscuro”. This is the theatrical employment of light and shadow in traditional painting on canvas, derived from Caravaggio and mastered by the greats such as Rembrandt and others considered masters. In partnership with this more advanced understanding of light and shadow comes an expertise of colour and its manipulation to produce eye catching, complementary colour schemes, contrasts of colour and temperature and the ability of storytelling to place our figure into an imagined setting.

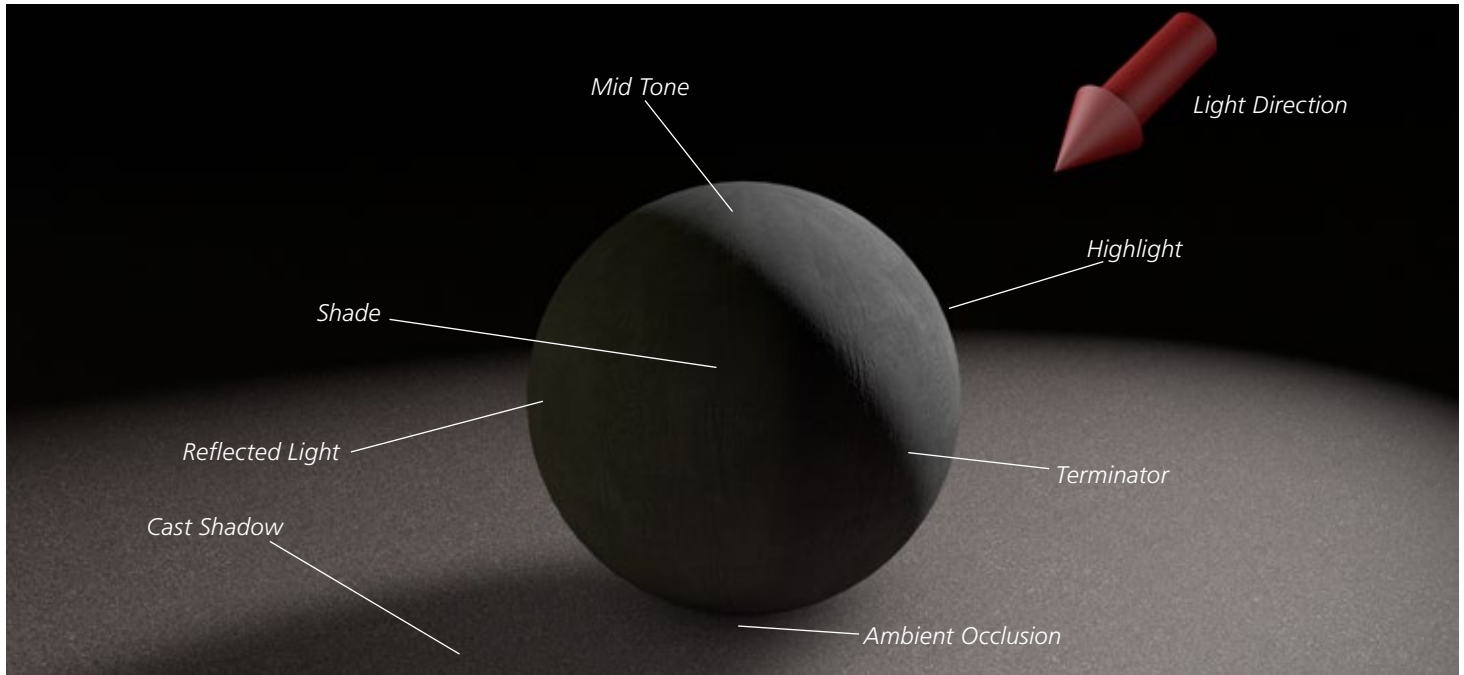
I believe the moment we as miniature painters choose this path, we are on a journey to become better painters; it's that desire to learn and our fight to strive for better results and the perfection that invariably leads us to ask the question whether figure painting has become an art form in its own right. In this first part of my musings and rambling thoughts, I want us to think a little about light and how it influences our painting.



Caravaggio's Saint Jerome

An important factor to consider, regardless of which light source we choose for our miniatures, is something traditional artists call “The Form Principle”. This is when “light striking a geometric solid such as a sphere or a cube, creates an orderly and predictable series of tones”. James Gurney, the creator of *Dinotopia* and author of *Colour and Light*, states “learning to identify these tones and to place them in their proper relationships is one of the keys to achieving a look of solidity”. For miniature painters that means, placing shadows and lights in their correct places, with use of contrast to help us define the various volumes of our miniatures and help bring them to life. Any miniature, when viewed as a series of different elements, can be broken down into a set of geometric shapes; for instance an arm can be described as a cylinder or an abdominal muscle a sphere. By the accurate placement of the tones depending upon the light source and its position, you can realistically bring volume and depth to your chosen subject.

In addition, accurately representing light and shadows upon your miniature to define volumes and (as already touched upon) to create atmosphere or to develop your figure's “story”. You can also use light to draw the observers' eyes to the parts you wish them to focus upon. In every case, the attention of the observer must ultimately be drawn to the figure's head and face and so naturally by default this becomes the lightest tones. You can draw the eye in by arranging your colours and



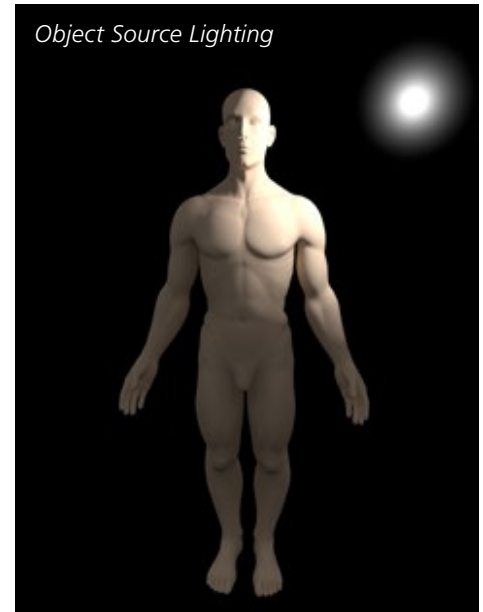
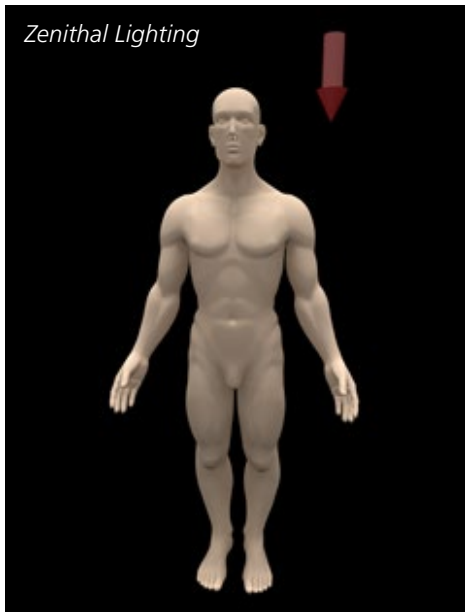
highlights around this area to further strengthen the effect. It is important right from the off to think about your light source before you even pick up a brush. Look at your miniature; is there a particular detail that you want to emphasise to tell your story? A useful tip to help you determine where to place your various tones, is to use your priming stage to help you pinpoint where your lightest areas and subsequently your darkest areas will be. For instance, regarding zenithal lighting I usually spray with a grey primer first; just two or three passes — don't over spray, or you will start to obscure your details. I then make one or two passes from above about 45 degrees, front and back with white primer. This white primer acts as your source of light and will represent your brightest lights, hopefully the head, nose, chin, shoulders, etc. The same technique can be used to help you choose any direction of lighting.

For myself, there are three main types of lighting: zenithal, directional and object source lighting (OSL), which is caused by another object, such as a torch or lamp. Depending on the pose or dynamic of the miniature, you may want to force the direction of light so as to strengthen the atmosphere or force the observer's perspective; this approach can lead to bright highlights and dark shadows. Now to take this further, your shadows don't have to be shaded with black. I will cover this in more detail in a later issue, but let's consider the saturation or desaturation of a colour hue with shadows. The more black or white you add to your colours, the more vibrancy they lose and so they become desaturated (in itself not a bad thing, if that's the style you're looking for) but they will begin to take on a "grey" quality. These tones of shadows can be made more appealing to the eye by creating them with the complementary colour of

your chosen colour choices, i.e., the colour that appears directly opposite on a colour wheel. You can think about your setting too, such as is it a hot or cold climate, dusk or dawn, etc. Colours, as you know, have properties of temperature, too. Cold blues for night-time and warm yellows for daylight depending on climate; but I digress a little, so let's return to our lighting.

Zenithal lighting is by far the most frequently used method; the zenith or source is an imaginary point held directly above the miniature, resulting in highlights and shades to the various shapes of the miniature from top to bottom. Chris Octive spoke to me about treating the figure both within a global aspect and with focus on localised elements too. I believe he may have learnt this from European painters such as Jéréémie Bonamant Teboul and Alfonso Giraldes. To briefly explain this, first think about your miniature from a global viewpoint. The top nearest the light source will be brightest, depending on the various shapes and elements, there will be various tones moving down the body away from the light. You invariably achieve a gradation of colour from top to bottom and realistically you can make this as stark or subtle as you wish, depending on your painting style.

Now on a localised perspective, each element within the global scheme should go through a gradation as well, so as to bring about volume to your figure. Let's take a series of muscle groups going down the arm; the arm of which is lighter at the shoulders, has a mid-tone around the bicep area and is going into a shade around the wrist (assuming the arm is flat against the side or at least pointing down). The shoulder muscle will have a light, mid and shade, as will the triceps, biceps and forearm, but each will be subtly different. Indeed, the preceding



colours within that element can be shaded with the tone that immediately follows in the next element and vice versa to highlight, i.e., highlight the top of the bicep with the light colour of the shoulder, the forearm with the lighter tone of the bicep and so on. This will result in a smooth transition of tones, carefully placed to hint at volume, as we mentioned earlier when talking about James Gurney's "Form Principle".

Always remember there are exceptions to the rule, though, regarding the transition from light to dark from top to bottom. For instance, consider a raised leg perpendicular to the light source; this will be lighter than the other standing leg and possibly as light as the figure's chest or shoulders.

I think too much theory can frazzle one's brains, so I will stop here for now; but I hope I have provided you with some food for thought regarding how you approach figure painting in the future. Next time, I will try to delve deeper into the world of light and also start to talk about exploring colour theory. In the meantime, look around yourselves in your daily business. Look at how light and shadow fall around you, if you get the chance look at the works of some of the great masters such as Rembrandt and if you love your theory I can recommend Figopedia Light and Colour (Theory and Practice) by Jeremie Bonamant Teboul, which is being reviewed in a future issue by the talented figure painter Marta Slusarska. So until the next time, happy painting!



Examples of directional lighting painted by myself.

Perfect example of zenithal lighting by Chris Octive.



PUTTY & PAINT

Arabian Sea Pirate

by Fesechko



PRO

This pirate bust was made from the Bashibuzuk bust from Pegaso models. I very much like eastern themes and always find inspiration in 19th century oriental paintings of Lecomte du Nouÿ, Charles Barye, Jean-Léon Gérôme (by the way, the concept of this sculpt is based on his Bashi-Bazouk painting), but I wanted to make something more special and uncommon. First, I needed to add a beard. I tried to sculpt it, but the result was unsatisfactory. Instead, I just glued up Long Grass from Scalerama, cut it, then fixed with very diluted white glue. For his clothes, I was looking for inspiration in Indian fabric patterns. To make clothes with patterns, at first I usually work in oils to make smooth lights and shadows on drapery, then cover it with matt varnish and then draw patterns with acrylic paints. Though the shirt was made only in acrylics with pointillism technique. The leather texture on his knife cover was made by applying very diluted oil layers (don't forget to wait until each layer is dried!) over an acrylic ivory colour layer and then some work on the lights with heavy oil paint (not diluted). The bone texture is made the opposite way. First, I used a heavy oil layer close to impasto with a hard brush (I used a small sable brush and sometimes a bristle brush) for lights to make texture, then after drying I applied very diluted oil paint for the darks. One Small tip – you can always remove excessive oil paint with your finger!





PUTTY & PAINT

LIFE/DEATH

by Max "Amon" Richiero



PRO





PUTTY & PAINT

Weaver Widow's Eve

by Christoph Blumenthal



PRO

paintslayerworks@gmail.com

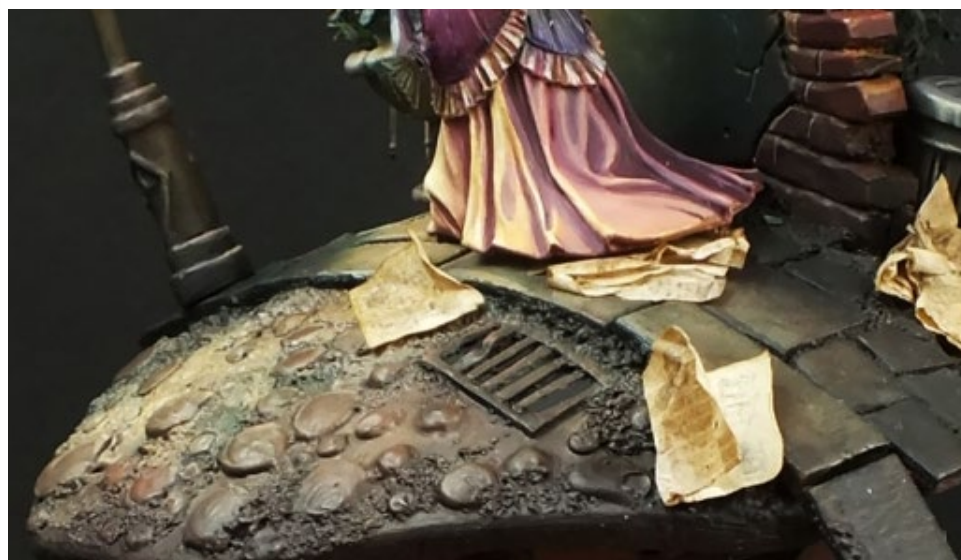
This one was really fun to make. I used the metal 'Weaver Widow' and the Malifaux basing set; the cat, lamp, trashcan – I threw basically everything in there. I am very happy with the result, though and this is one of my favourite minis of mine.

At this year's Monte San Savino Show she was in my display of the Fantasy Master Painting category, which got silver.

Comments are always welcome.

Regards

Christoph





MALFAUX

A story of a gaming board



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What happens when you're chasing deadlines on Friday the 13th?

Well, the resin flows, the electricity doesn't and if you're lucky, you don't burn down your flat.

In spite of that, I managed to finish one module; my favourite one – the random canals.

What I did this month was mostly doing the water effects and finishing off the painting of some cool effects as well as adding various bits that Ana has been doing throughout this build.

The first thing I did was make small dams at the end of each canal. I used Extra Heavy Gel from Vallejo to make those dams and I let it dry.



Planning Top Tips: Adding Character to the Module – Part 1.



The difference between an ordinary board/terrain and an exceptional one is often just a detail or two.

Lamps

This is probably the coolest bit that we did during this build. Ana first sculpted the bulkhead light, then I made the Siligum mould and cast about 50 of them in Vallejo Still Water resin. Ana

then painted the metal bits. Now it was time to finally install 8 of them on this module. Even if I do say so myself, it looks really cool!



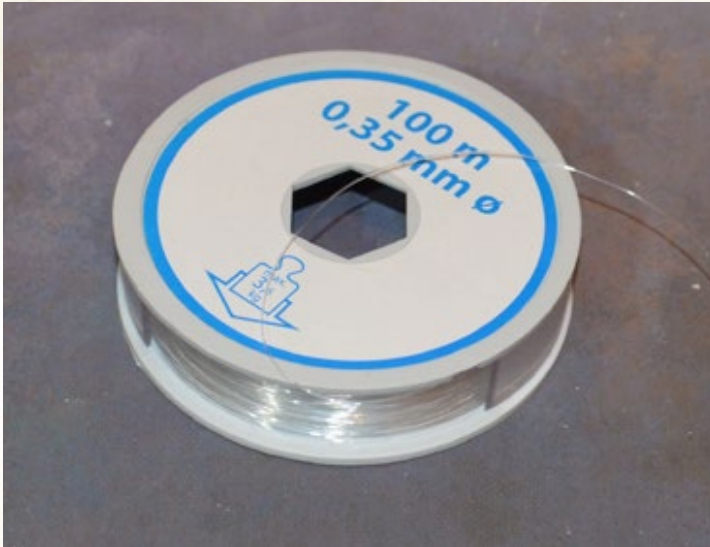
Posters and Adverts

The posters I made last month found their purpose this time round. After finishing the painting, I applied a layer of watered down PVA glue to the

backside of the posters and glued them to the wall surfaces of the module.



You may remember when I was building this module, I made some holes inside the stone blocks with the suit signs of Malifaux and I put an LED inside the pillar in the middle of the module. The idea I had was to add some clear fishing line as streams of fluid flowing into the canals around the pillar. One end of each stream (fishing line) I would glue to the LED and the other inside the canal to form a curve as a water stream would. Theoretically, once the LED was lit, the light would flow through the stream and would light up where the stream ended.



Planning Top Tips: Adding Character to the Module – Part 2.



Some other details I put on this module:

Paper Litter

Once the first layer of resin was poured, I dunked some newspaper/litter I made last time. Other litter that was not in the

canals I glued down with watered down PVA glue.



Rats

Some time ago (about a year ago, if I remember correctly), Ana painted up a couple of blisters worth of Malifaux rats that Wyrd Miniatures kindly donated for this build. Three of them finally found their spot on this module. I tried to put them close to the walls in order for them not to be in the way. One rat that is in the middle of a passage is there

to cover a hole in the floor that unfortunately got melted by a resin spill. Normally, I would have used static grass to cover that sort of damage, but this being an underground table, it just wouldn't do. I also added some crates and other bits Ana made and painted.





Marko's Lamentations: Old Metal Finish Effects

If you remember a couple of issues back, I explained how I roughly painted metal, at least silvery metal.

ing period, I used a Q-tip to remove excess rust. With the moist side of the Q-tip, I covered the entire surface and using the dry side of the Q-tip I removed the excess effect, especially on the rivets.

After the metal was painted, I added a layer of Model Mates Rust effect. After a ten minute dry-



However, on this module I decided to also use brass pipes. After a black undercoat, I used two paints from my new Scale 75 Metal n' Achemy Golden Series: the Dwarven and Viking Gold paints. Two successive layers and my brass pipings were done.

It was time to add the verdigris effect. Once again, I turned to Model Mates and their Blue Verdigris paint. I applied one layer and was happy with the result; so much so that I didn't even remove the excess paint.



Unfortunately, it was only in theory. Still, as you can see on the first picture in this article, the LED inside the pillar still lights up and makes a cool effect. After the streams were glued, I used some green wash to give some greenish colour to the canals. I mixed some Vallejo Still Water with green ink and using a pipette, I carefully placed the mixture into the canals.



This ends another article. As the time-consumption at this stage of the whole build was too immense and the tasks are mostly repetitive, I decided to tackle the rest of the build another way. From now on, I'll be doing one module at a time until it is finished. As always, if you have any questions or suggestions about this build, feel free to contact us at Figure Painter Magazine (terrain@figurepaintermagazine.co.uk) and we'll try to answer your questions.





Price: €40

Size: 75mm

Material: Resin

Available from

www.terriblekidsstuff.com



Unboxing

Sergeant BlackArt's

Splitting Bones



Sergeant BlackArt a relatively new, small 4 man company that have putting out some completely amazing models, in both very small limited and larger unlimited runs in various scales both 35mm and 75mm. Their miniature lines are marketed under the name of Terrible Kids Stuff, but as you'll see this model is far from terrible. ;)

I have seen this company rise from one mini to the small, but excellent catalogue they have now (can you guess I'm a fan?). This was my 2nd purchase from them; the first was Red Ace, which I will show in another issue.

When I first saw Splitting Bones on the net, I just had to have it. I'm a big fan of Allan Carrasco sculpts (who isn't) and it was one of those rare moments when I saw a model and knew exactly how I wanted to paint it (a tutorial for a later issue, too). Ok, on to what you get.



I don't know about you, but I love it when you open a parcel and you first see the packaging. The Terrible Kids' range comes in such a unique box that, to me, I just know the contents are going to exude quality.

On opening the box, you get your first glimpse at why this model carries a premium price; you get lovely little wallet with your limited number and a really nice small piece of artwork. Oh, and a sticker to remind you who you got it from — but it doesn't stop there.

Once you remove the top layer of protective foam, you are confronted with an OCD curing packaging arrangement (I should know) and you can tell care has been taken in this model.

All of a sudden, the model becomes a complete bargain. The resin is crisp and well detailed. Now, prep work is my favourite part of the hobby and I was almost disappointed that I had hardly any to do to the individual pieces. There were almost no mould lines and certainly no stray bits of moulding flash. The only work that is going to have to be done is a very small amount of filling, as the pieces on test went together so well.



Now with this stuff they always add a little bag hidden under the bottom bit of foam; well, they have in both of the minis I have purchased. Here I found a cute little badge and a little bag of bits! The bits were not only small details for Splitting Bones, but some rather nifty basing items, too. To be honest, I will not probably use all of them, but when I saw the model at the show thought they were cool, so was glad to see them included.





You can see how well the miniature goes together as this is just bluetacked together at this stage.

Conclusion

This is another fantastic figure by a great boutique miniatures company; if you're lucky enough to be able to get one, do so, you won't be disappointed. It has been conceived by one master Paolo Parente and sculpted by another master Allan Carrasco. Now all that is left is to enjoy the finished box art.

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Click [here](#) for more information

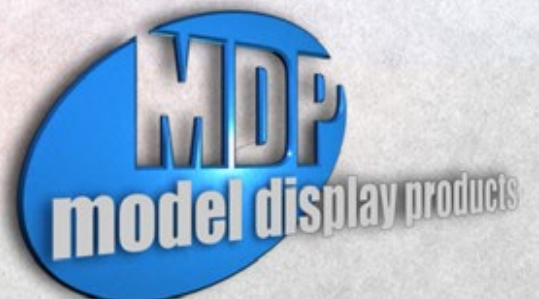
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Singulari Augusti

Company: Ares Mythologic

Size: 75mm

Contact: www.aresmythologic.com



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Bust Carlos

Company: Savaged Forge Minis

Scale: 1/10

Contact: www.savageforgedminis.de

French Dragoon 18Reg

Company: Tiny Leads

Size: 75mm

Contact: shop.tinyleads.co





'Retreat to Victory'

Company: Life Miniatures

Scale: 1/10

Contact: lifeminatures.kr



Viking Raider

Company: Youngs Miniatures

Scale: 1/9

Contact: www.young-miniatures.com



SPANISH MUSKETEER

Company: Scale75

Size: 75mm

Contact: www.scale75.com

Goblin King

Company: Aradia Miniatures

Size: 54mm

Contact: www.aradiaminatures.com



Overwatcher

Company: Nuts Planet

Scale: 1/24

Contact: www.nutsplanet.com



Anne Bonny

Company: Nuts Planet

Scale: 1/10

Contact: www.nutsplanet.com

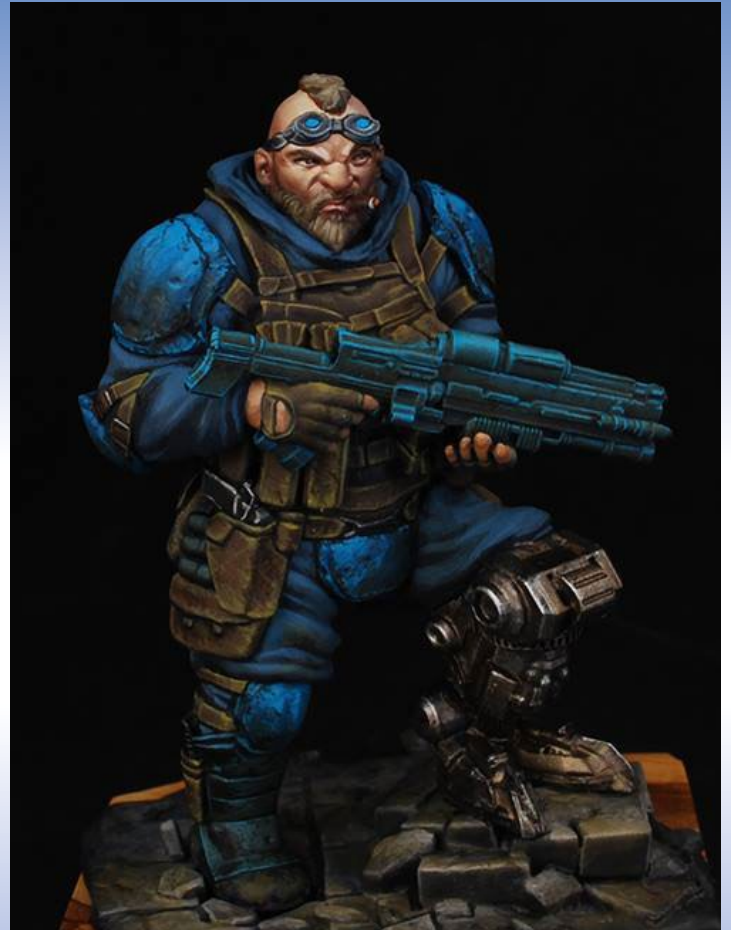


Autumn Fall

Company: Nocturna Models

Size: 70mm

Contact: nocturnamodels.com



Sergeant Frank Goat

Company: Nocturna Models

Size: 70mm

Contact: nocturnamodels.com



Lyhsria Shade of Darkness

Company: Draconia Miniatures

Size: 75mm

Contact: www.aresmythologic.com

INTERVIEW WITH

Patrick Masson



I stumbled on this interview purely by chance. While feeding my addiction for purchasing miniatures that awaken some creative spirit within me and satiate my need for new shiny things, I purchased 3 miniatures sculpted by Patrick from different miniature outlets. (Patrick can clarify how this came to be). Once I realised they were all created by the same person, I knew it was an interview I wanted to do.

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By Terry Cowell

1. Hi Patrick, welcome to FPM. Please tell us a little about yourself and how you fit into our hobby?

Hi, thank you very much for the invitation to this interview.

I am French and am 39 years old (oops! Already — only one remaining and it is another milestone). I am married and have 3 boys. We live in “Les Vosges” in France.

I have been a freelance sculptor since May 2011.

I don't know how to paint, but I would definitely like to learn if I find some time.

2. You have an endearing nickname. Please tell us what it is and how it came to be?

Hehe, thank you, my nickname is ‘The Small’ and it is linked to my size. Yes, I’m not that tall and this is the secret of the nickname which is really not one when you meet me. By the way, I have been very small since I was young and always the smallest of my class, thus I was receiving all kinds of nicknames and if I remember well my father gave me this nickname when I was about 13 or 14 and it stuck.





3. Have you won any awards for your work?

I have won several silver and gold medals in different miniature contests like Painting Crusade, Salon de Montrouge, FiMaJe and World Expo and a best of sculpture at the Ravage Mix Open in 2009.

4. When did you first start sculpting and how did you make the transition into sculpting professionally?

I started sculpting as a teenager with different kinds of clay and then I did some more interesting stuff in 1989-1990 for a school art project; but the real revelation for me was in 1993 when I discovered Fimo from one of my brothers. I used to draw and often the same character (a caricature of myself) and I wanted to do it in 3D. I still consider this guy (about 70mm) as the first step into sculpting. I remember well when and where I did him and I still have him (even though I think this not worth seeing).

In the beginning, I was doing characters from time to time as a gift for family or friends. These were more often adaptations of French comic characters like the Fourreux or Fol de Dol from Régis Loisel. In 2000, I did some dragons for Fenryll Games; these were my first professionally produced pieces.

I had a less creative and productive period, when I was kept too busy with my work as an engineer and with my family life, so did not have a lot of time for this passion. In 2006 I did meet Arnaud Saran (illustrator), Arnaud Gerard (story writer) and Frederic Chollet (webmaster), and together we have created a website <http://ltdk.free.fr> and a blog <http://latribudek.canalblog.com>, where we were presenting our work.

This was enough to encourage me back with delight into the sculpting of characters and fantasy creatures... my first 3 first 30mm commissions in 2007 for Dungeon Twister.

Based on a concept by Arnaud Saran, I have created the figurine of Mr. Bone in 2009, which earned my first silver medal at the Salon de Montrouge. Ezop the Werewolf (from a concept by Arnaud) and BRN-EE "Barney" the Steamthing (from a concept by Thierry Masson) were the 2 pieces I had shown at the Ravage Mix Open in 2009. The feedback I received encouraged me; it really changed my mind and made me believe there was hopefully an opportunity to make a living from that passion.

I was not enjoying my work as an engineer anymore and I was starting to receive more commission work. In 2011, I decided to start as a full time free-lance sculptor.



5. You have your own company 'Artik Toys'. Tell us about the work you produce for this company?

Artik Toys is my own company to sell my personal work. I was intending to do 4 different lines of products:

- Black Powder: comic book characters from the universe of Arnaud Saran, in which you can find Mr. Bone and Santos.

- Artik: fun and cartoony characters from another uni-

verse of Arnaud Saran, in which you can find Bubulle.

– ‘In the Mood for...’: a completely different style based on a universe by Thierry Masson, in which you can find BRN-EE “Barney”, The Steamthing

– Others: for every potential idea I may have, in which you can find Satine.

Unfortunately (or fortunately I should say), I have not had enough time to work on personal projects and therefore increase the number of references, even though a lot of concept material is already there.

6. *I know you have sculpted for other manufacturers, please mention some of them and tell us which projects outside of your own company have been your favourite so far?*

Since 2011, I have been working for different companies such as Ammon Miniatures, Smart Max, Studio McVey, Eden, Mierce Miniatures, Arena Rex,



Twisted, Carnival, Big Child, but my main client is Cool-MiniOrNot and the game Dark Age.

So far I think my favourite commissioned projects have been Abigale, Clío & Erato and Tumarukh the cartographer.

7. *You have mentioned previously that you sculpt from 20mm up to life-size. This is intriguing. What is the largest sculpt you have worked on and where can this be found?*

The largest piece I have done is a dragon head of Saphira from the film Eragon for a stand in a DVD store. It was in 2007 and it was about 60cm long. There maybe some pictures still on my old website.



I have also done some ½ scale busts in clay and from one of them I have done my first bronze casting recently. The second copy is ongoing.

I really would like to have more time to work on big scale sculptures, as it changes the perception and the way to proceed.

8. *Given complete freedom and without financial restraint, consider how you might like to express yourself, what would you like to create?*

Probably a life size sculpture of a woman, because woman's body is so beautiful and it is also a very big challenge.



9. *Do you have an art education or are you self-taught?*

I am self-taught but since I began doing it professionally I have done different training courses to try to improve faster.

10. *Taking the previous question into account, which artist has influenced your work and where do you go to try and find new inspiration?*

A lot of different artists are influencing my work. As I am self-taught in art and sculpture, I do not have a huge knowledge in the history of art, but some masters like Rodin, Bernini or Michelangelo are really inspirations for me. I can spend hours looking at one piece from them.

In the world of miniatures, I would say Remy Tremblay, Allan Carrasco, Jacques Alexandre Gillois, Pedro Fernandez and Joaquin Palacios; I am always amazed by their pieces.

There are also other sculptors in bigger size like Mark Newman, Cyril Roquelaine, Simon Lee, Jose Ismael Fernandez, Edward Eyth, Philippe Faraut and so many others.

Influences are coming from illustrators like Thierry Masson, Arnaud Saran, Brom, Frazetta, Regis Loisel.

I will say that every day on the internet there are plenty of amazing artists (sculptors, illustrators, painters, photographers) who bring me a lot of motivation and inspiration.

11. *How satisfying is it to see something you have created painted by someone else and when has this given you the most pleasure?*

For certain, seeing one of my pieces painted always brings me great satisfaction, because it means at least the model has some interest for a painter and this is really the aim of my work — making models that people want to paint.



I then follow the same steps as with commission sculpting. Sometimes when it is based on an awesome drawing, it is much easier and faster to get started (like it was for Barney or most of the Artik Toys products).

13. How important do you find social media. Does your workspace incorporate a computer?

Yes, a computer is in my workspace. It is always on, especially as it is also a source of inspiration and references.

Most of my pieces are for DarkAge and as it is a game not played much in France, I have not often had the chance to see my pieces painted by players. Fortunately, the studio paintings are now done by BigChild Creative and I must say the paintings are awesome and it is always a pleasure to see them.

For a personal piece, my greatest pleasure was when I discovered my Barney painted by Tony Cabaye was chosen as the cover for the Paint Demonium 2012.

12. Tell us a little about your creative process. When you are working on your own creations, for example, do you start with an iPad or a sketch pad? In steps how might this process look from concept to production?

For commission work this is quite easy, as most of the time I have a concept sketch. This is always open as a reference on the computer screen. I adjust my armature to the scale of the model, put it in place and then the work begins. I always start sculpting from the feet up to the head, naked (the sculpture, not me). After the anatomy is done, I can add the clothes and finish the hands and weapons.

For personal creations, this can be a much longer process; ideas are quick to come (and I have plenty), but from idea to realisation can be quite long. Research begins on the 'net to find references (anatomy, clothes, etc.). I define the pose with rough sketch, even though it is now easier for me to do this directly with the armature.

Social media is very useful to show my work and without facebook, deviantart, putty & paint, etc, I would surely not have the same amount of work and you probably would not have bought or seen my Barney, as an example.

It is also a great way to be in contact with the friends I have in this hobby/work. Even if we are not located in the same place in France or in the world, we have the opportunity to discuss together when we want and this is great to keep contact when you work alone at home.



14. Do you prefer physical sculpting or digital? Do you feel there is a place for both?

I prefer the physical sculpting for sure, nothing will replace the contact with the true material; but digital sculpting is a fantastic tool and I will use it in the future for sure.

I am pretty sure there will always be a place for both as there is still a place for traditional painting or drawing. It is a tool we have to know and use for its benefits. Use the best of both.

15. Which piece of art or sculpting gives you the most satisfaction to date and why?

I will say the Eel Walker by Mark Newman. The first time I saw this sculpt it was love at first sight. Everything is perfect about it, elegance, poetry, beauty and balance in harmony and an awesome sense of poise. It really speaks to my heart. Hopefully I will be able to afford one in the future.

16. Please tell us about any plans you have in the future with Artik Toys and any other projects you will be working on?

Hopefully, I will find some time to add new references to my Artik Toys products. There are at least 3 concepts ready, but I have no idea about when I'll be free to work on them.

For other projects, real personal ones and unique pieces, there are several, but at least 2 that should be done for the 2015 Monte San Savino, so stay tuned!



Here are different ways to follow my work:

www.artiktoys.com

<https://www.facebook.com/thessmall>

<https://www.facebook.com/thessmallsculpture?ref=hl>

<https://www.facebook.com/ArtikToys?ref=hl>

<http://the-small.deviantart.com>

Conclusion

I will be making an effort to purchase work from Patrick. I am starting to feel that France is my favourite place for miniature sculptors at the moment. Despite his use of social media, I suspect that many people will be more aware of his sculpts for other miniature traders and therefore the connection is often not made. I hope that everyone who reads this article takes time to visit his webpage because for me it was a hidden bag of gemstones.

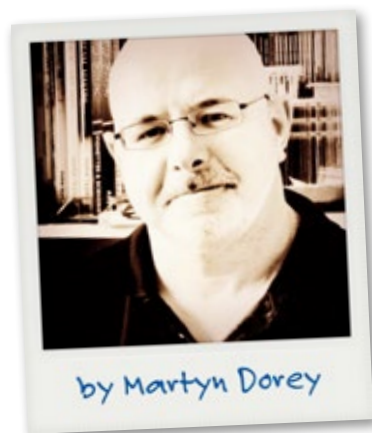
Reviewing Clio and Erata this month has been an absolute pleasure and having already purchased Pa March from Infamy and Steamthing my collection of Patrick Masson sculpts is sure to keep growing.

What's on the MARKET?

a regular look at hobby tools and accessories

single product review

Albion Alloys' Connect+O



As a lot of you may already know, MDP has been stocking the Albion Alloys range of tubes and wires for quite some time, but we have only taken it to the shows due to the problem of how to ship it out without the various postal services rendering it unusable.



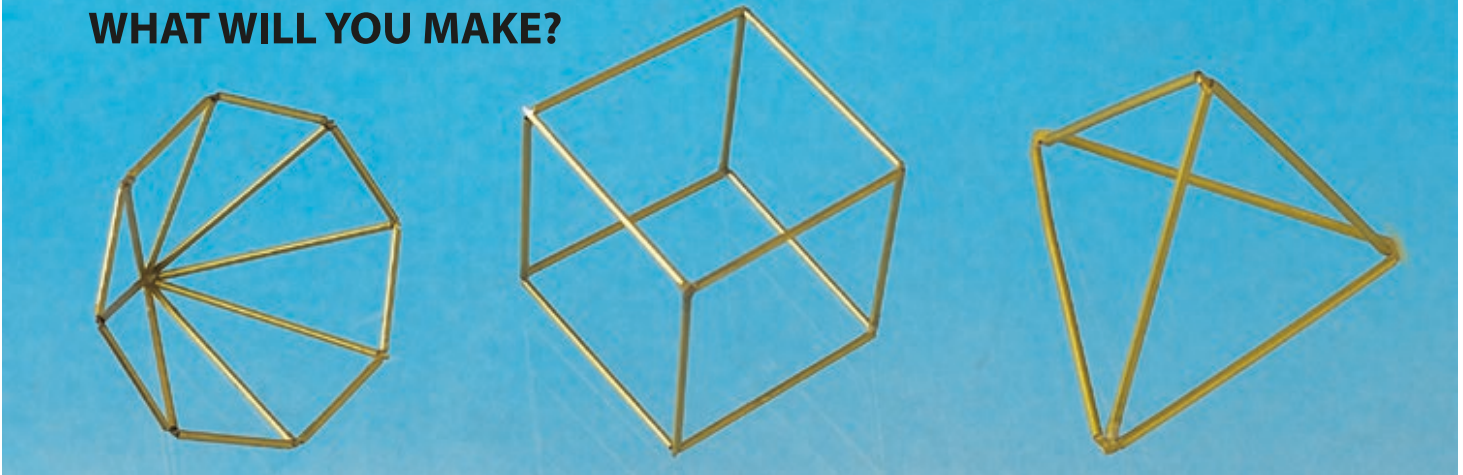
The range itself is quite extensive and includes metric as well as imperial sizes of tube and rod/wire in brass, aluminium, copper and nickel silver and includes a slide fit range of tubes as well as sheet material.

In October last year, I bumped into Matthew from Albion Alloys at the Fleet Air Arm Museum Model Show and he had with him some connector pieces that they were planning on releasing at a future date. They also had these at the IPMS Nationals in the November where the Connect+o as they were being called was voted the most innovative product at the show. They were finally launched at the Nuremberg Toy Fair last month, but I managed to get my grubby mitts on some early :)

The possibilities with these connectors is really only limited by your imagination and although aimed towards the scratch builder, I can see them being used for all sorts of things; want to add a ladder to a bulkhead for the sci-fi base you are building or some pipe work to that steam punk base and bending the tube always kinks it? Not anymore — these connectors can make life a whole lot easier; besides aerials for that WWII diorama or for model ships, scaffolding, ship's rails, the possibilities are endless...the more I type this, the more ideas I come up with. Perhaps you even building your own armature to sculpt onto, rather than twisting bits of wire together...

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WHAT WILL YOU MAKE?



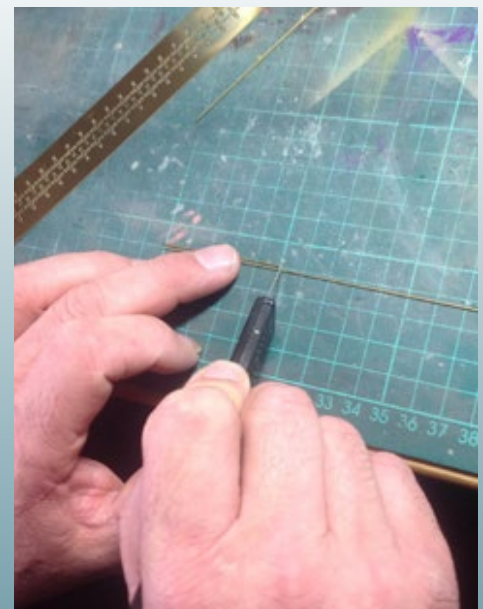
They come in a variety of sizes, each matching a specific tube size ranging from 0.4mm outer diameter (OD) up to 1.4mm OD. The smaller sizes have 90 assorted pieces, ranging from 3 way up to 8 way connector pieces so there are plenty of shapes you can make and any tabs from the connector that you don't want to use can be snipped off. The 0.4 to 1mm OD sizes can be used with brass, aluminium or nickel silver tubing whereas the larger 1.1 to 1.4mm sizes can only be used with the brass tubing. They are also coded with the code informing you of the size of tube they can be used with; for instance, C07 means it is for the 0.7mm OD tube.

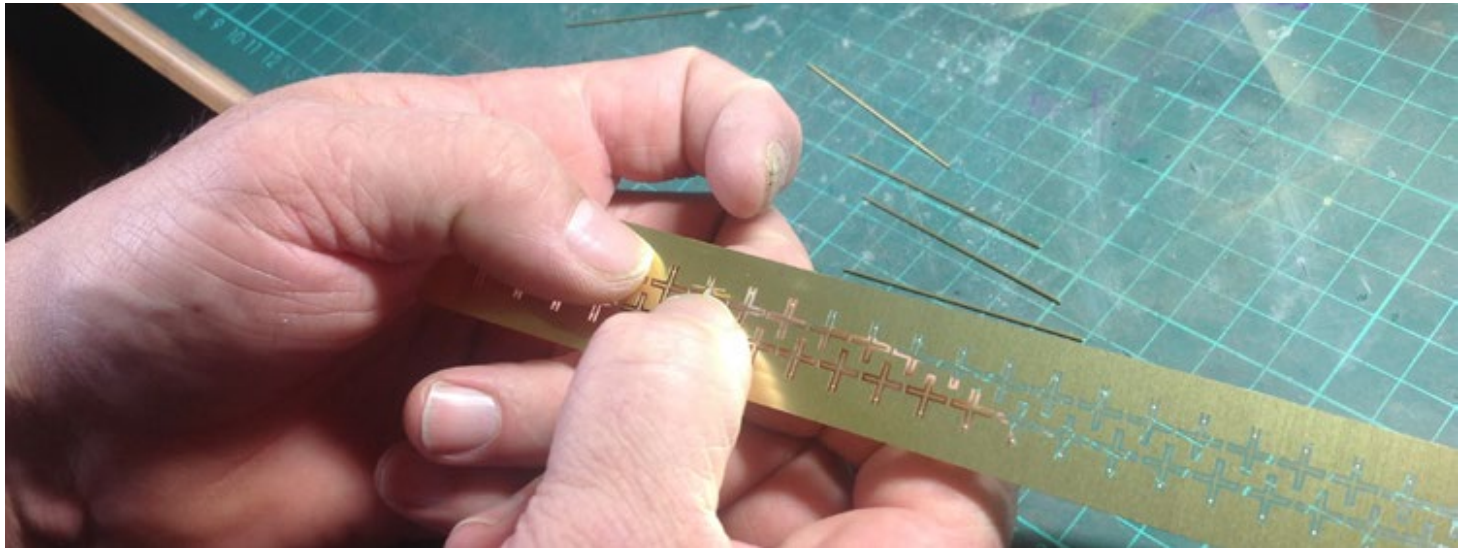
Using the Connect+O pieces

Using these is actually quite simple. The set I have to play with is the C07 set, which is also a pre-release set, as it only comes with the 4 way connector pieces. As you can see by looking at the pieces on their sprue, they are just like brass etch and therefore can be removed by either using a scalpel to cut the notch or poking the piece with the tip of a pen or piece of tube and then bending it off with your fingers, they come away quite easily once bent up from the sprue.



Once you have worked out what it is you want to build and how many connectors you are going to need, you then need to work out the size you want it to be and cut the tube lengths to the relevant sizes needed. The easiest and most accurate way of doing this is with a tube cutter such as the one Albion Alloys show in their videos; using one of these will give you the exact length every time. If you don't have one of these then measuring the first one and placing a scalpel blade on the line where you want to cut, apply slight pressure and roll the tube, this will cut the tube neatly and you can then use this first piece to cut the other pieces needed.

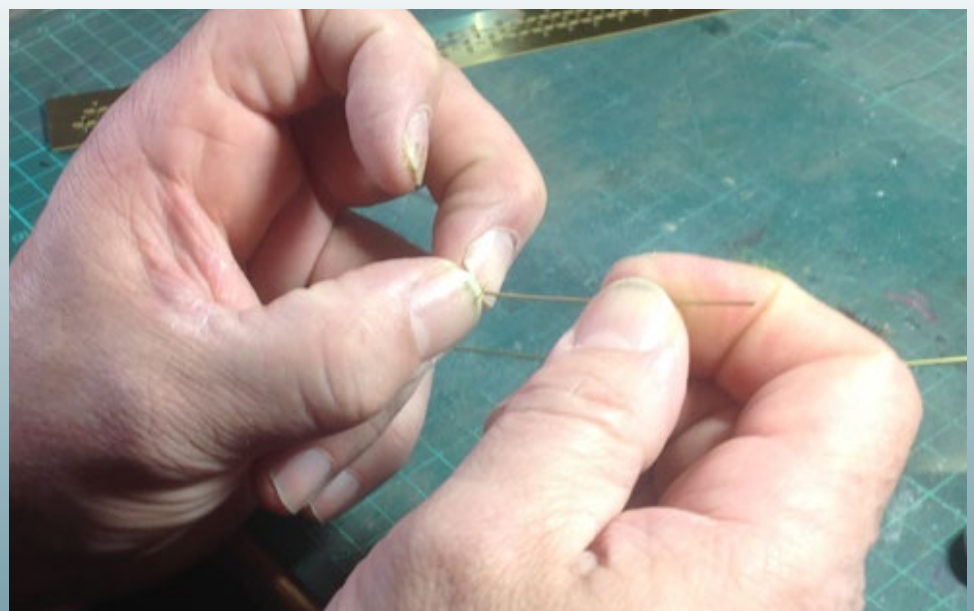
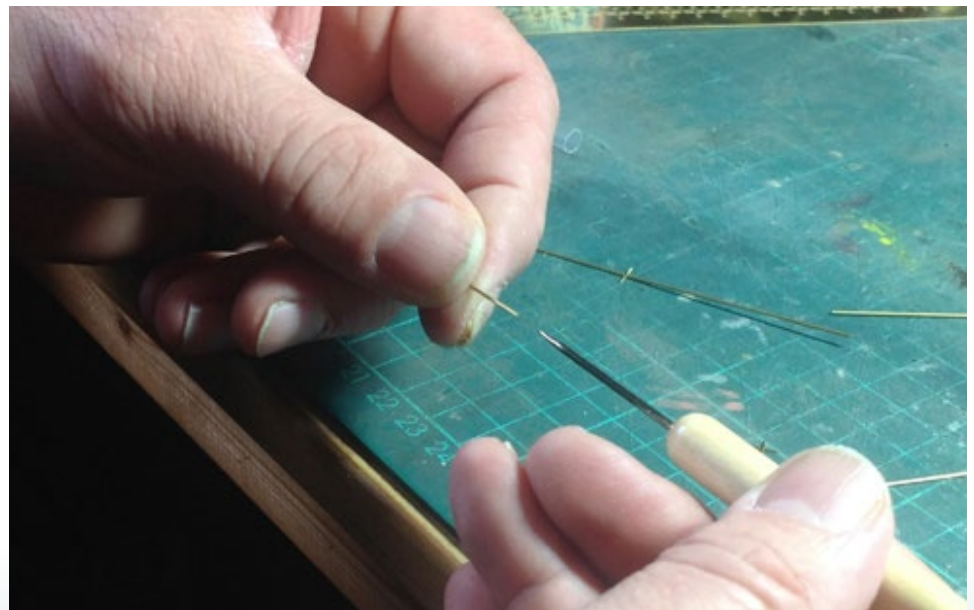


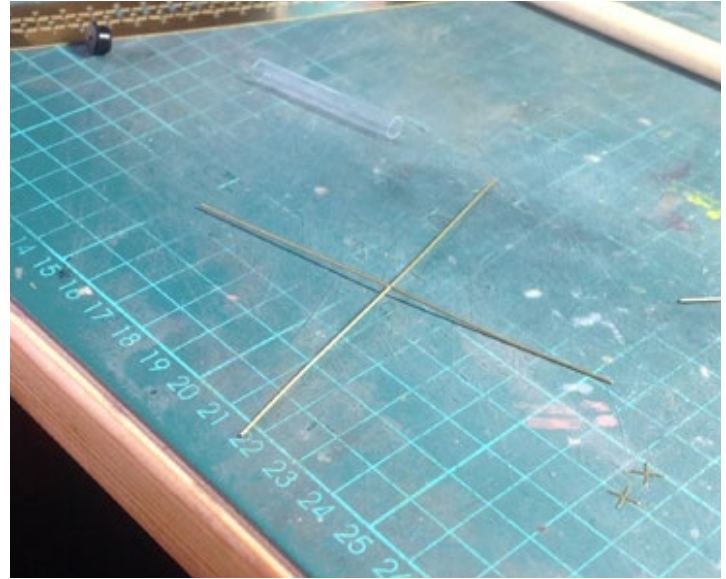


Although as with any tube cutting method, this will make the ends of the inner diameter slightly smaller and you will need to put a pointed instrument such as a scribe point into the end of the tube in order to open it back up a bit. Dry fitting the pieces together either bit by bit or as a whole is recommended before permanently fixing it all together. It is not recommended that you solder the aluminium tube unless you are an expert with this type of material, (even as a trained welder I used to hate welding aluminium — one minute it was there, the next it wasn't....).

Once you are happy with the shape you are building attaching the pieces so that they are permanent and don't fall apart can be done with either a good super glue (cyanoacrylate glue) with a little being applied to each tab of the connector in turn and the tube being slid into place or you can solder the joints together.

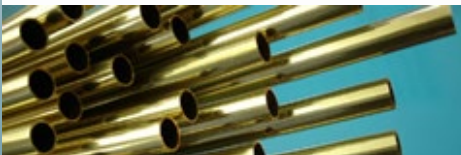
For a demonstration piece, I just wanted something simple such as an equilateral triangle to show how easy these really are to use. The hardest part was picking up the bits of tube with my sausage fingers to put the first couple of pieces together, but after that it really does get easier and once everything is glued in place it is quite robust so





things such as air frames and even tent frames could be made and then a suitable material draped and glued over the frame.

For a video on how Connect+o is used, click on the Albion Alloys logo below.





Price: €35

Size: 43mm

Material: Resin

Available from

www.blacksmith-miniatures.com



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Unboxing

Blacksmith Miniatures' Clio et Erato



Clio and Erato arrived in a beautiful stylised box with the front of the box depicting the characters assembled, but unpainted and the back of the box showing the various parts pre-assembly. There are 9 parts available and 7 will be needed. The 2 additional arm pieces are included to give you the option to complete the kit, as they are shown on the box closed together or as separate miniatures. This is appreciated, since they will work as well standing alone as they will paired together thanks to this addition. There are no pictures of them standing separately on the box, but I found examples easy enough on their [facebook](#) page.

They are sculpted at a size of 43mm from head to toe; this might seem unusual at first, but if you consider that they look like young teenagers it actually means they are accurate

for a 54mm scenario. They are cast in grey resin which has a quality feel. The body proportions look anatomically perfect and at first inspection there are no obvious flaws, for which I am very happy.

Under the magnifier, I can see that the attention to detail is astounding. The sculpting work is clean and precise. Mould lines are there, but they are faint and strategically placed for easy removal. There is very little flash to remove and no unwanted bubbles or bumps (this is great!)

The arms are all attached to two sprues. 4 are joined to the sprue at the top of the arm which is perfect for removal, but the two interlocking arms are joined to the sprue at the back of one hand. This will require a little more care but they had to leave us something to do ourselves!



Conclusion

You can guess by now that I rate the production of these miniatures highly, but I must return to the detail and emphasise this. The folds in the clothes, the wrinkles in the pockets and the texture in the bird feathers are just a few of the highlights. The muscle definition, the perfectly sculpted fingers and the tread on the bottom of the trainers — I really could go on.

This is a high quality kit and one I would easily recommend.

by Juan Ignacio Corujo



Figure Painters also Wear Cowboy Hats

Lone Star Figure Show (Dallas, Texas, March 12-14th)

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When I moved from Spain to Texas in 2008, the first thing that I heard was: "Everything is big in Texas". It didn't take long to realize that the statement was right; Big houses, big highways, even big vacuum cleaners...

Well, one thing was very clear on the latest edition of the Lone Star Figure Show, held in Dallas on March 12-14th. You can find great BBQ and cowboys in Texas, but the state is also big in figure painters and especially in hospitality.

The show started on Thursday morning with two workshops: One for beginners painters, with Bob Bethea and Henry Nuñez as class instructors. Bob and Henry are well recognized figure painters in the US, having won many awards, judged at national shows and given many figure painting seminars.

The second workshop was designed for intermediate and advance painters, with Julio Cabos (from Andrea Miniatures) as the class instructor. Julio is a world class master painter known for his quality work, being a pioneer in using airbrush in figures, winning multiple awards globally, writing books and providing hundreds of seminars around the world. This was the third seminar I have attended with Julio Cabos and every time I have been amazed with his skills and humble personality.



The two courses ran non-stop from 9 am to 6 pm both Thursday and Friday and one thing was very clear: when you're having a good time, time flies...Two thirds of the participants in Julio Cabos' class came from different parts of the US and Mexico. All had a terrific time learning new techniques and getting Julio's personal advice and coaching on every step of the painting process. Seeing Julio painting two different tattoos on the arm of a 54mm pirate flawlessly in one single attempt and his airbrush demonstration on skin and trousers were amazing!!

The figure show initiated registration on Friday afternoon and the arrival of miniatures continued until Saturday morning. One thing that was clear from the beginning was the great work displayed by many painters in three categories: Junior, Basic and Advanced (Ordnance, Historical and Fantasy). The advanced category was divided into painters and open.

Having attended several shows in the US in the last couple of years, I have seen great pieces of work in the ordnance category, a bit heavily inclined toward tanks,





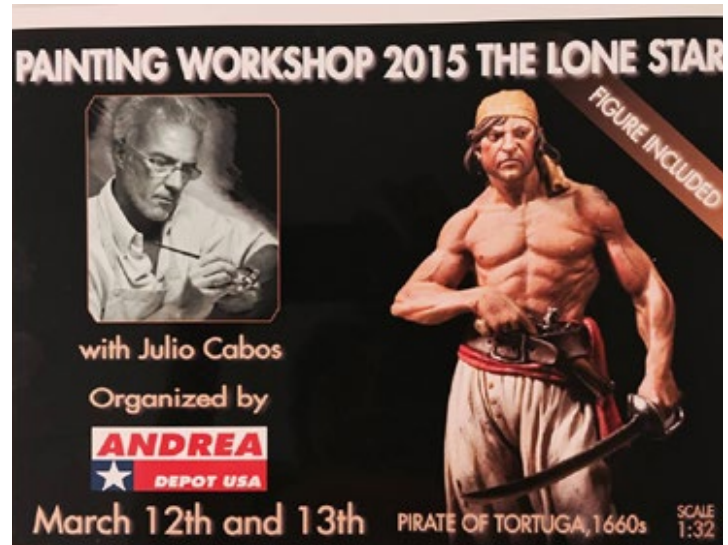
planes and ships. WWII and the Vietnam war are common themes in the American shows. However, at the Lone Star Figure Show it was clear the quality of many figures, especially in the historical section (as you can see in some of the pictures). I was especially amazed with the detailed work in several dioramas containing samurais.

As in many other shows, there was a commercial area where several vendors from around the US set up a great display of products. Andrea Miniatures USA took advantage of their location in Texas to present their latest products, and had with the most customer attention.

Also, there was the opportunity for local clubs to display their work and share experiences with other painters from out of town. Several members of the "North Texas Figure Club" were present during the show, always eager to meet new painters and provide information on the club and their activities.

Finally, the figures were judged using the open system, awarding medals for overall quality of work to the painters. The Best of Show was awarded to Anders Heintz for his piece "Steady Lads" and Julio Cabos was honoured with the Grand Master award, joining the ranks of Bob Bethea, Doug Cohen and Alex de Leon. This award is presented to individuals who have had a great contribution to the hobby during their lifetime and Julio was the perfect candidate for the honour.

Well, that's all folks!!! I'm looking forward to a new edition of the Lone Star Figure Show next year, hoping that you can join us and experience first-hand the great Texan hospitality...and don't forget to bring your cowboy hat!





by Davide Rainone

Price: 24.80€

Size: 17ml

Material: Acrylic paint

Available from:

scale75.com



Unboxing ScaleColor's Metal N' Alchemy: Gold Paint Set

Finally, we arrive at the end of our unboxing Scale75 paint set review series – in this last episode we are going to have a look to the Metal 'n Alchemy Golden Series.

For the last time, it's right to remember the following is only my very personal point of view, which is my way of painting and looking at the materials. Also remember I don't use an airbrush, so all my opinions come from my experience and from my skill with brush use only. The steel series' price and features are continued in this set, as well as the leading ideas it was conceived under.

There are 8 pots (4 metallic colours and 4 alchemy colours); the first ones are, from shadow to light, a dark gold, a reddish gold, a shine and a light gold. The latter pots are a strong and clear light (Citrine sc75), two reddish and a greenish based nuance colors to use as a mixing tone to diversify the metallic colours or that can be used independently.

» They have a very thin and bright metallic pigment which helps for using them with many techniques. However, even if painting only war gaming models, one will be forced to give at least two base layers, which will extend the time of work on single models, because of their reduced covering power



paint job destined to a game table; my intention was to create a warm gold, like a copper effect. I used Necro Gold, Viking Gold, Elven Gold, Citrine Alchemy and Peridot Alchemy. I think the test has been a success, because the effect is very bright and natural. Do you agree?

For the last time, here are my three favourites:

– Viking Gold because it has a light reddish base tone from which I can obtain a fantasy or historical gold or use it as starting point to create a copper tone.

– Elven Gold because it is a very bright and clear gold.

– Peridot Alchemy because I can use it to make a very cold gold, which I definitely prefer to a warm one.

» They're excellent quality

» Their extended drying time; I found out they dry on a wet palette much more slowly than GW or Vallejo of these metallic colours

This set is perfect for every kind of gold you can imagine (cold and natural as well as a warmer), but in my opinion it's lacking a tone similar to Vallejo/Andrea Copper or to an old GW Tin Bitz. It's possible, of course, to create it by mixing colours, but I think it's very useful to have it already done and use it as starting point to mix it into others which would create other possible effects.

Using them every day and knowing them better, I'm also finding out additional possibilities by mixing them with the steel series tones, something I couldn't do with a non-metallic colour, to obtain a much larger range of metallics...I can't wait to explore this new world which is opening in front of my eyes — painting a model entirely with only metallic colours! In the meantime, I've tested this set using them only on a new GW Dwarf Engineer for a commission



In my opinion, this set is a little more difficult to understand and make the most of, but as with the steel series you have great potential as well. While I'm hoping to have helped some of you to make the better choice, it's time to tell each other goodbye. The journey into the Scale75 paint set reviews has come to an end, but now comes the fun part — painting!

I'd like to see your models in the readers' submissions pages painted with Scale's colours and to know your impressions about them so...paint, paint and paint again!

Remember to never fear trying new products or techniques and doing experiments! Share your impressions, ideas and opinions!

BEST OF BRITISH



Brian Snaddon is a miniature painter who has been around for a while now (I hope its okay to say that Brian). Research revealed to me that like a true gentleman, he is more than happy for the younger generation to step forward and take his place on the podium.

with Brian Snaddon



The only problem with that is he hasn't yet finished producing amazing work and if the younger generation want to step up, they have some mighty big shoes to fill.

1. Hello Brian, welcome to FPM. Please tell us about yourself. Where are you from, your age and how long have you been painting. Also what notable awards or medals have you won to date?

Hi. I was born in Stirling in Scotland and have moved about a bit, including serving in the Royal Australian Air Force as a dog trainer/handler for 9 years, but have now settled in a small village called Stewarton in Scotland.

I'm 68 yrs old (with a 30 year olds brain). I've been painting figures for about 30 years, and have been fortunate to have received awards for most of my figures/busts at shows including Euro Militaire, Sword and Lance and a couple of shows in the USA.

I don't really count how many awards I have received, but the first gold I won at Euro about 15 years ago and the gold i won at last year's Euro were a bit special. I've been awarded quite a few gold medals at Sword & Lance in Darlington as well as BOS last year. I've also been

awarded quite a few silvers and bronzes at these shows. I've never travelled to the top shows in Europe or the U.S., although for awards I received in the U.S. I had a friend who took some of my figures over for me.

2. How did you find yourself in the world of miniature painters and where did it all begin for you?

I have always been very interested in history and after building and painting AFV's for a while, I eventually moved on to figures and have never stopped since.

3. Would you describe yourself as a competitive painter or do you personally find the joy of the hobby more important?

The greatest joy I get from the hobby is when I'm on my own and ready to start a new paint job. Pure bliss, but when I first started competing with my figures and was fortunate to be awarded for my work, I caught the competitive bug, especially when it came round to the Euros in September. However, that was only part of the buzz of a special weekend spent with like-minded friends and meeting new friends from all corners of the World, checking out all the new figure releases and adding them to my grey army, plus the liquid refreshments in the evenings while shooting the breeze with your mates.



Once I had achieved a certain standard, I no longer bothered too much about competitions, although I still enter them. At the end of the day, it's 2 or 3 judges who merit your work. I get a lot more pleasure out of receiving comments (good or bad) from my peers in the hobby especially with the advent of the social networks that we have nowadays.

4. I notice you work with oils. Has this always been on your palette of choice or have you progressed from painting using acrylics. Do you find that oils are easier to paint with?

I've always painted with oils with an enamel undercoat, or sometimes straight over a grey primer. It all depends in what effect I'm looking for.

5. Please explain to FPM readers what is the wet on dry technique?

When I use the wet on dry method e.g. on a face, I mix up a basic skin tone and establish the highlights and shading until the face looks to be close to being finished. I then put the palette paper with the oil mixture I've been using in the freezer, where it will remain workable for days, if not weeks and allow the face to dry. With oils, you tend to lose a bit of contrast when it dries, so out comes the paint mixture that I had previously used and start emphasizing the highlights and shading until you achieve the contrast you're looking for. I apply the paint at this stage either with a touch of thinners or just neat and using a dry brush just blend it in to the area you wish to enhance. The thing I love about oils is that they give you time to correct things as you go and if all is not going well, you can just take it all off and you're still left with the original painted face. In my opinion, I find by using wet on dry makes a reasonable face into a really good realistic face. This method can be used on all parts of the figure.



Although I like to be subtle with my style of painting, I can't but admire these acrylic painters. For me, it's all a bit too fast and that's got nothing to do with my age! LOL

6. You paint a nice selection of fantasy and historical models; do you have a preference for any particular range?

I prefer historical figures as my style of painting doesn't really suit the fantasy stuff; although some of the fantasy lads blow me away with the effects that they can achieve. I like any figures or busts that yell out "paint me", no matter who the maker or what period of history it's from.

7. Most miniature painters store various sources of material for inspiration; do you have any favourite artist, music or literature to help keep you motivated?

I have a reasonable selection of Osprey books and other reference material, including books by some top figure painters. I use them as a guide only, as I like to develop my own style, but I will use an idea from any painter that could enhance my painting.

I like all types of music but I don't listen to any when I'm painting.

8. In what ways would you consider that miniature painting has changed over the years and what has this meant to you?

Miniature painting has changed considerably over the years. There was a time when everyone in the hobby was concerned where the young blood was going to come from, as it seems that it was stagnating, but with the emergence of young fantasy painters and the advent of acrylics, it brought an injection of new and talented painters into the hobby. There is now a crossover between fantasy and historical figures, which has the hobby in a much healthier condition than it has been.

The choices of numerous and stunning sculpted and cast figures is at an all-time high and it's just not the big manufacturers who are producing them. Some of the smaller companies have raised the bar with quality figures and that keeps the big companies on their toes, which can only be good news for the future industry.





9. An Optivisor is a must for me, what tool or piece of equipment could you not live without when painting?

I also couldn't live without my Optivisor as an aid, because I would struggle to see finer details on a figure otherwise.

10. Has your art been focused solely on miniatures or have you ventured into other areas of art expression?

My art is solely focused on miniatures, although I can get inspiration from much more talented artists who paint on canvas, etc,

11. Do you still feel you have much to learn and, if so, what would you like to improve?

I reckon I could learn more about this hobby of ours, but I'm at the age now where I just plod away with my own style of painting. I'm always willing to experiment with different techniques and especially facial tones, so long as it's in oil.

12. What are you currently working on and what plans do you have for the rest of the year?

I'm about to start another bust from WWII after finishing the Berserker bust from Nutsplanet. I will be attending Sword & Lance show in Darlington in April and Euro

Militaire in Folkstone in September, where I will no doubt add to my grey army and give my wallet another fright!

13. Thinking about all your wonderful painted miniatures is there one that stands out as a personal favourite? If there is, please elaborate for us.

I like most of the figures and busts I've painted, but the ones that stand out for me are not the award winning ones, but rather the comic figure of Albert Einstein. This was a nice change from what I usually paint and I gave this figure to my son as he's the clever one in the family, or so he thinks. LOL

14. Finally, what words of wisdom can you pass on to the up and coming painters?

To all up and coming figure painters, my words of wisdom would be this. Firstly, no matter what standard of painting you are at, enjoy it. Secondly, keep painting and learn from other figure painters (i.e., ask questions and watch their techniques and try what techniques suits you best and thirdly, hopefully you will eventually adopt your own style of painting.

Anyone who wishes to see more of my figures, just go to the Putty&Paint site. It's one of the best sites to see all the best painted figures there are.





Conclusion

Given that I found my way to our wonderful hobby as a latecomer, gentlemen like Brian give me hope that I have plenty of years to go yet. All of us painters who haven't yet won a single award should also take heart from the poignant fact that Brian feels more joy from pleasing his fellow painters than a panel of judges! Brian, you're an inspiration!



MINIATURE HEROES

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



MSP Triads



THE HANNYA KNIGHT

ON THE ROAD TO THE CRYSTAL BRUSH

Every October or early November for the last few years, I've started working on my Crystal Brush entry for the following year.



What does Hannya mean?

In Japanese mythology, Hannya are evil demons of jealous women. In traditional Japanese theatre, they are represented by the red mask. Damon has plans to add another two Knights to his first, all piloted by female characters, a trio of daemoniac sisters.

I find I have free time over the holidays that lets me really dedicate time to a project. I achieved success with my Contemptor Dreadnought last year in the Sci-fi Monstrous Creature category, so for 2015 I decided to stay in that category with an Imperial Knight as my entry. My Knight project was born from a new event planned for this year's AdeptiCon – Knightfall: The Grand Tournament of Draconis III. The event is being developed and hosted by AdeptiCon perennial David Pauwels. I met David at my first AdeptiCon five years ago and I've been lucky to be associated with him and some of the finest guys and gals in the hobby ever since. David brought up the idea of a Knights duel at AdeptiCon where we paint up Knights – both loyalist and heretic – and have them battle it out mano y mano, just like the knights of old. I thought this would be a great project and something I could really get into. Initially I planned it just as a gaming piece but then, as the project progressed, it became clear this would be my entry for the Crystal Brush. My hope is they'll let me check it out of the Crystal Brush display case early on Sunday morning on the last day of the competition, so I can put it on the table to play in the tournament. If not, I'll bring it next year.

Background Idea

I knew my Knight would need a backstory, something to make him different from all the other duellists. I always develop a background for my models as I work on them. I started looking for inspiration in all the Games Workshop Imperial Knight artwork and felt the European knightly style wasn't for me. I looked into the Freeblades for inspiration, but none of them was quite right, so I pushed on for a different concept. Recently, I took a business trip to Japan and found my inspiration there. I

would give my Knight a Japanese feel and background. A Samurai Knight could be fun, but wasn't right either. A Yakuza-inspired Freeblade Knight – now this was something I didn't think had been done before. The idea started to form and solidify. The Knight would be a Freeblade from a planet lost to "Old Night" that had fallen back on the model of the feudal Japanese society. A clan of mercenaries had been placed in charge of the Knights, to protect the world from all threats.

Developing the Imagery

I imagined that many of the planet's gang members decorated themselves with irezumi (traditional Japanese tattoos). I decided that after taking over the planet's noble houses, the mercenaries took to covering their Knights with artwork inspired by these. Next, I decided the Knight's mask needed to be different as well. I contacted Chris Borer (a multiple Slayer Sword winner) to discuss ideas. I even initially approached him to sculpt the mask for me. I sketched up several ideas and shared them with him, but before he could get started on it I chose to give the sculpt a try myself. I applied grey stuff to the existing Knight mask, using it to give me the basic form. Soon, I had something I thought could be workable. After many chats and discussions with Chris and other sculptors, I found a way to smooth out and finish the mask to my satisfaction. The trick was 600-grit sandpaper super-glued to the end of a toothpick. It allowed me to get into all the tight spots on the mask and smooth out the rough edges. The mask was also based on a traditional Japanese element: the mempo mask. A sashimono (samurai back banner) would add a striking vertical element to it and a place to add a bit more freehand. Everyone made fun of me for adding a banner, as its one of those things that I often like to do on a model to add interest.

Next the Knight needed a colour palette. Wanting a red mempo mask meant that it needed to have a strong contrast to make the mask pop. Green is the strongest contrast to red, but this raised a real concern because red and green are often associated with Christmas (a Santa Knight wasn't exactly the look I was going for). After searching the internet for images, I found a green samurai with a red mask. The greens were all accented with bluish shades – this seemed perfect. The project began to take shape and depth in my head and on the work table.



Realising the Concept

Assembly of the Knight kit was easy enough, with lots of cleaning and scraping required, as always. The scale of it was, at first, intimidating but was something I found I really liked after a while. I posed the model over and over till I got an interesting pose figured out. I used Blu-tack to get it just how I wanted and then glued the joints to fix the positions. The project was making itself easy; it was one of those that just flowed. I could get into all the areas of the substructure easily enough.



I assembled it without the armour plating and airbrushed a base of silver on it. I then shaded and toned each separate assembly, paying close attention to each part. I even gave some MIG washes a try and was very happy with the results.





Armour plating was next. Working with Minitaire paints from Badger, I mixed a green that I immediately loved. To make the paint job seem a bit more realistic, I used a technique I learned at AdeptiCon a few years ago from Sebastian Archer: staining the model with another colour to help blends. In areas where the greens were darker, I tinted the area between transitions with a dark brown. The gold trim was done with an airbrush after masking out all the armour plates with liquid mask. I used Vallejo metallics for the most part and really liked the quality of them. I tinted the golds with greens and purples. I'd not tried that before, but found it to be a huge time saver.

I researched a lot of irezumi to find the right inspiration for the armour panels. Amusingly enough, I didn't really draw out the tattoos. I just made a rough sketch of them on the armour with a pencil and then started painting them. I looked back to reference pics for the right

finishes. With the curved plates I sort of had to make changes on the fly to get the panels filled and looking right. Finally, I added lots of nicks and scratches to the armour to provide interest.

After all this, I needed a base to put the model on. I kept with the Japanese flavour and tried to replicate a Shinto graveyard. Wanting to keep it in the 40k universe I added Mechanicum details, like mecha-dendrites and hoses of brass and copper all acting like roots coming from a grave marker beneath the Knight. This gives the impression he's protecting this place, even as he knocks over one of the stones. I added some red earth pigments to tie in the red of the mask and plenty of greens to unify the overall look. The model was finished in early January, which gave me the opportunity to tweak some elements here and there before packing him up for the journey to AdeptiCon 2015 and the Crystal Brush.





Conclusion

All in, the project was about three solid months of work. I really enjoyed it and I recommend the Imperial Knight kit from Games Workshop. I'm planning to get a ForgeWorld Imperial Knight (or two) next to add to my collection.



Price: €40

Size: 200mm

Material: Resin

Available

www.meridianaitalia.com



Unboxing La Meridiana Miniatures' Apache Lipan



I bought this bust a while ago during a show and, to be honest, I forgot I had it. I found it recently while going through my 'stash'. I've only seen 2 or 3 painted versions, so I'm guessing it's not the most popular miniature, or even company for that matter. This is a pity really, because going through their range I found several nice pieces, all of them historical and mostly depicting characters from the 'wild west', both Native Americans and settlers. I can only hope that this review will encourage some of you to check out what they have to offer and maybe even buy a piece or two.

The Box

As you can see, the miniature is secured by a rather sturdy cardboard box with many layers of bubbly wrap inside, making sure that parts are safe. Inside, you can also find a piece of paper with company's contact details and information about the piece. Unfortunately, it's all in

Italian, and the Google translator is not making it easy, but you do get an idea about the history of the tribe.

Quality of the Cast

At first glance it is very nicely cast bust, but under more scrupulous inspection I can say there is a difference between the main piece and feathers. The bust itself is very good quality. All the details are crisp, there are no mould lines I could find and the entry points for the resin are all under the piece, so removing them won't be a problem. The underside of the bust is a slightly different story. As you can see on the photo I took, there are several serious mould lines and with the shape of this part it might be a bit difficult to remove them. I'll be getting rid of the chunk of resin under the bust for sure, so I might just apply putty to this part to make it even without the cavity.

The feathers are a completely different matter. The texture representing the feathers is crisp and precise, but there are some issues. First of all, there are some resin residues around the feathers and the details at the top of each element. Where there should be thongs securing the feathers to the hat will require some fixing/re-sculpting. It's not a massive problem, but will add some prep time for sure.



Assembly

You may say that with busts, there should be not much assembly required and normally that is the case. Most of the busts come in one piece; some have a separate head, hat or other parts. This one is a bit trickier to put together. The main part is just one piece, head and shoulders. However, on top of that there are feathers...and even though there are holes in the hat to make it easier, this is not a simple task. It took me a good few minutes before I figured out which feather should go where. I took a photo in case any of you would like to know for future reference.

Customer Experience

I bought this bust during a show from a vendor that wasn't the producer, so there is not much I can tell you about dealing with La Meridiana. This is a good occasion to tell you why I love buying my miniatures during shows so much. The main reason is that usually you can see the cast. Most of the vendors have no problem with opening the box and letting you inspect the quality of the cast. Of course, there are some miniatures sold in boxes shrink-wrapped in foil, but this is a minority. The other reason is just the amount of different miniatures you can see and buy during a show.



Even the biggest online stores selling miniatures won't stock so many producers.

Overall Opinion

Overall, I think this is a very nice bust. The described issues with the feathers aren't that big of a deal and enough to put me off, so I hope I can get to painting it soon. The piece is different than anything else I have painted so far; I find the combination of an Apache face and 'European' clothing quite intriguing. I'm sure it would be a great addition to every collection, and I can't wait to get some paint on it.



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The new BrokenToad Conditioning Brush Soap is made using natural plant and vegetable oils. Our soap will help not only clean, but also revitalise tired brushes by adding back the essential oils that brush hair loses during its lifetime. Our soap is completely none abrasive to gently clean brushes and contains no harmful chemicals or unpleasant odours. Simply use room temperature water to work up a lather in the pot with your brush, once the brush is clean reshape the tip using the soap and leave in the hairs for 30 minutes before rinsing to help condition and moisturise.



PURITAN PREACHER *Part 2*

By IAN SUCCAMORE

Following on from last issue, I get to work painting the Puritan Preacher.

96



Photo 22

PAINTING

The cast version of the figure arrived in the post and I could not stop myself from getting the pieces out and photographing the finished item. This is the first figure I have sent to be casta and I was proud of the outcome. The mould lines were miniscule and the detail had all been captured how I would have wished (photo 22).



Photo 23

After cleaning up the mould lines and removing the casting blocks, I went about offering up the arms and the head to the main torso. At this point, I realised I had removed a bit too much of the resin as the head and arms did not fit as snugly as they would have done if I had not been in so much of a rush to get on to the painting stage. This was by no means any sort of problem, only a bit annoying and it is not beyond the skill of any modeller to fill the gaps left behind by the removal of too much of the casting blocks. This is an issue I feel I shall need to address the next time I attempt to sculpt a master for casting. I shall endeavour to leave the different joints as flat surfaces, to avoid this problem.

With the head and right arm separate to ease the painting process, I went about priming the figure using Citadel Skull White from a spray can. When this had dried, I began painting the face. On this occasion, I wanted to change the way I painted faces. I wanted to continue using the Lifecolour (LC) Flesh Set that I had become comfortable with, but this time I wanted to add further colours to create different effects and to get a better finish than my previous efforts. The Flesh Set used on its own tends to leave the skin with an orange type of hue, almost like a fake tan. I also wanted to try and change the levels of contrast I could achieve. This was to be a predominantly black and white figure; I therefore wanted to get as much interest into the areas with colour as possible. The base colour was painted using the Flesh



Photo 24

Sets second base colour mixed with LC Terracotta about 50:50. This gave a nice dark base coat onto which highlights could be gradually built. I tend to find that when I'm painting I get to the lightest highlight too quickly. I am therefore unable to push these further than I would like, so I figured I would start with a darker base coat and this would solve the problem.

The eyeballs were painted in using the Flesh Sets lightest highlight. The irises are a mixture of Andrea (AC) Napoleonic Blue and AC Prussian Blue. The catch-light was painted with a dot of Vallejo (AV) Off White. The eyes were deliberately painted off centre to the left, firstly because it is harder to spot whether the right and left eye are looking in different directions when placed slightly to one side and secondly the left side is where his head is turned towards, so the eyes would be naturally turned this way too. Getting eyes to look directly ahead is very difficult to do and can take a number of tries to get right. One rule that is always paramount though; if you are right handed, start with the figure's right eye, as your hand will not obscure what you have already done when you attempt the other eye (for left handers, the vice-versa is true). This way it is easier to make the eyes match as you can see the eye you have already painted as a datum. When the irises were painted, the upper eye lid was picked out with a thin line of AV Burnt Umber to represent eyelashes.

This brings us up to photos 25 to 29 and the painting of the highlights. Each photo in the series represents the addition of a new highlight. Bearing in mind that the faces of 54mm figures are the size of a small fingernail; adding 5 levels of highlights is quite daunting. When I began adding the highlights, however I started adding them in very gradually using thin washes. These washes were applied a number of times to build up the colour density until I was happy to move onto the next colour up the scale. Using this method, the changes in colour were only very minimal. The first highlight was a mix of the Flesh Sets primary base with LC Terracotta. The second highlight was painted with the neat primary base colour from the Flesh Set. Next, the first highlight from the Flesh Set, followed by the second highlight from the Flesh Set. The last and most extreme highlight was painted on using the second highlight from the Flesh Set with some AV Off White added. Hopefully, the areas they were painted onto are clear from the pictures.



Photo 25



Photo 26



Photo 27



Photo 28



Photo 29

The shadows were painted in a very similar method using the Flesh Set with Terracotta added to the initial shadow colours, which tend to have more of an orange tint to them. Again, the transitions are barely recognisable; however, the last photos have some tints added to them. Photo 34 has some rouge added to his nose, cheeks and lips. Photo 35 has a 5 o'clock shadow and is the completed face.



Photo 30



Photo 31



Photo 32



Photo 33



Photo 34



Photo 35

Painting some colours fill us painters with excitement, while others fill us full of fear. Personally, I love to paint reds. Blacks on the other hand, I do not particularly enjoy. The temptation and the tendency when painting blacks is to overdo the highlights. For this reason, I began with a dark base coat of LC Black with only a small amount of AC Wood. To this basecoat I added very small amounts of AV Off White, so that the first highlights were nothing more than a stain. The subsequent highlights were painted in the same manner, with nothing more than a stain, so that the highlights were built up over a number of layers, as represented by the series of photos from 36 to 44. I used some of the highlight colours mixed with AC Wood to paint some frayed edges to the coat. However, with some feedback from the Military Modelling Website, I fear I had overdone this (thank-you David). After toning this down with a couple of washes of LC Black, I moved onto the shadows, using more washes of LC Black (photos 45-48).

When the coat was finished, I then painted the buttons using AV Gun Metal Grey as a base coat. Highlights were painted at the top of each button with AV Silver. A wash of black over the lower half of the buttons realised the shadows.



Photo 36



Photo 37



Photo 38



Photo 39



Photo 40



Photo 41



Photo 42



Photo 43



Photo 44



Photo 45



Photo 46



Photo 47



Photo 48

The bible our preacher is holding was painted whilst the arm was separate. I wanted to paint this a subdued colour. Any bright colours I feared would stand out too much against the monochromatic background. I decided on a basic leather cover in keeping with the puritanical ideals which did not involve lavish gold work or bright, flamboyant colours. The base coat was AV Burnt Umber. Highlights were added with increasing amounts of AV Yellow Ochre, until neat Yellow Ochre was used on the edges to make the bible look used and worn. The pages were initially painted with a beige colour – the mix I used escapes me now, but the worn and

well-thumbed pages of a book do tend to go darker. A few thin lines of Burnt Umber or even black were then randomly streaked down the sides to represent pages.

When the book was finished, the right arm was glued into place. Unfortunately, due to the earlier misdemeanour's with the scalpel, I needed to fill the gap at the shoulder my heavy handedness had left behind. This meant a subsequent touching up of the black paint. This did not present any difficulties and allowed me to paint in the seams of the coat using a thin line of pure black and thin line of the highlight colour underneath it.

My attention now turned to the white areas. The trick to painting white and black areas is to not start with white and black. The black areas, as described, were actually a very dark brown; this meant that pure black could be used to paint the shadows. Conversely, to paint the white I started with a very light brown. A base coat of AV Off White, AC Wood and a dot of LC Black was painted over all the white areas. I tend to start with dark base coats these days. This is intentional so that I can maximise the levels of highlights I can paint on. This is even more important with painting whites. The final highlight used should be pure white and using this on the first or second highlight feels too soon for me when I paint. I like to paint three or four highlights if I can, with the last one obviously being the lightest. To paint the highlights on white is just a matter of adding more white to the base colour. Conversely, adding more black to the base colour will give you the shadows. Photos 49, 50 and 51 show the highlights and 52 shows the shadows.



Photo 49



Photo 50



Photo 51



Photo 52



Photo 53



Photo 54

Photo 53 shows the hands painted using the same method as the face. Photo 54 shows the hat and trousers. Photos 55 and 56 show the completed paint job. The hat, shoes and trousers were painted using the same black mixes as the coat; although the shoes had some wear and scuff marks painted over the toe area using washes of AC Wood. The black laces on his shoes, his gaiters and his hat band had a slightly different black mix. Instead of using AC Wood mixed with LC Black, I used AV Napoleonic Blue mixed with LC Black for the base colour. A small amount of Napoleonic blue was used for the first highlights and then mixing in AV Off White was used for the remainder of the highlights. Using the light blue changed the black enough to make it separate from the other black areas.



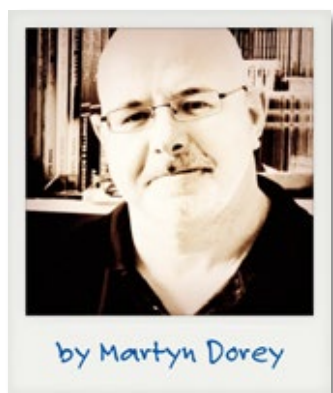
Photo 55



Photo 56

The last photo shows the figure mounted onto a base and photographed in front of a cloudy backdrop. I bought a new camera half way through this project, hence the differences in the qualities of the photographs. I then sent these photographs to Robert Lane for the boxart, as he wanted to sell this figure as a part of his range at Elan13 Miniatures.





Price: €92 on Indiegogo/€107 retail

Size: 75mm

Material: Resin

Available

www.mkontraros.com



Unboxing Michael Kontraros Collectables Saint George

Whenever St. George is mentioned, I immediately think of St. George and the Dragon from the tales of my childhood (shut up, editor). When photographs started appearing from last year's World Expo of the Michael Kontraros' figure St. George I immediately wanted it.

As I wasn't at the World Expo, I had to suffer looking at the painted models that appeared in the competition room at Euro Militaire a few months later and hope that it would be released as a commercial kit.

When it went up on the Indiegogo campaign page I was the first to back it and (as per usual) when Michael puts his stuff on a crowd funder, it shipped straight away as soon as the funding period ended; but when it arrived, I can't help but wonder how many other people that backed this were as disappointed as I felt on opening the box?

When you think of St. George, you think of the legend St. George and the Dragon and how a knight slew a dragon to protect a princess and make a city convert to Christianity. This depiction however, has St. George on horseback with the dragon's head and that of a broken statue on the base with the main emphasis being on St. George himself.



As usual with the Michael Kontraros Collectables, it comes in a silver coloured tin with all the contents sandwiched between several layers of foam and the smaller parts in grip seal bags to stop them being lost.

The first thing I noticed was that the resin was a different colour that which has been used on previous kits such as the Elf Dragon Lord and the Vampire Queen and from there it sort of went downhill rapidly. I dry tested a few of the parts together, such as the horse halves and head, etc. I know it isn't easy to cast a horse at the best of times, but I got the impression this wasn't originally going to be a commercial casting by the way it had been cut and finished and that it was later produced as a kit because of the popularity at the World Expo and other shows.

A lot of the gaps will be covered as the parts are assembled; however, it still leaves the modeller with a lot of work to do not just in gap filling and mould line removal, but also the need to heat and re-bend parts to how they should be. For me this is no big deal, but having a couple of the collectable range already and being familiar with the standard of these kits, this one left me very disappointed; so much so that I can't help but wonder if I would buy anymore.

The rider doesn't look as if he belongs on a horse and certainly looks uncomfortable. The face is that of a young person, but has the beard of an old man. On the left knee pad there is a part of the upper detail missing and a nasty mould line that almost looks like a double mould line. Although there is plenty of detail in places, there is a lack of detail in others and some detail that will be easily covered when painted, meaning it would need a better than average paint job to not obliterate this detail and to enhance it to make it stand out. There is also an air hole in the axe blade that will need to be filled.



I mentioned earlier that I thought that this was produced as an after thought and my reasons for thinking this are in some of the unfinished details that can be seen from parts that may not be seen when the kit is fully assembled. There are areas that are very rough and unfinished such as the gaps between the saddle and horse and the area between his legs that just look like a bit of putty has been pushed in to fill the gap. It is almost like a lazy sculpt and not the usual high standards that could be expected from Michael.



Overall for me, this kit is a disappointment and will need more than several hours of prep work just in filling gaps before mould line removal and putting back in line bent parts. I know that working with resin means you will have to spend time heating and bending parts back to shape; it is just one of those things, but I also know from looking at this kit that it is going to take at least 6 hours of my life correcting everything and bringing it to a stage whereby it can be primed ready for painting. It is certainly a kit for the more advanced modeller.

Back to Basics

Part One: Preparing Miniatures



by Marta Ślusarska

In this new series of articles, award-winning painter Marta Ślusarska is going to explain how she prepares her miniatures for painting. Over the last two years, FPM has had lots of inquiries about the basic methods of 'prepping a miniature', so we thought we'd cover them in more detail.

Many of the techniques described in this and the following articles, are already known by many, but there is always someone new to the hobby; someone who's struggling with the basics or has never been told about them. We all assume everyone knows these methods.

Preparing a miniature for paint is a process that many of us don't really like. It's time-consuming, laborious and keeps us from the fun part...sadly, it's also very crucial to the final effect. If we shave some time on this part, skip some points thinking it will do, we will pay for it dearly. A badly prepared miniature will take its revenge either during painting when we'll be fighting rough surfaces or missed mould lines, or at the end with finished piece being not as good as it could be.

In these articles I will be describing my own processes for prepping miniatures to be ready for painting; I will be using photographs from various miniatures. Some of them are at a more advanced stage than others, but I decided that as long you can see the steps clearly it's not important if I'm actually prepping one mini or several at the same time.

I'm not saying they are the best, but they work well for me. I know some people will have their own methods of doing things and you may also have methods that I haven't heard of, so please feel free to let us know either via

email or on the FPM facebook page. As we have planned to do a whole series of basic articles, it is our intention that there will be a tips and tricks Q&A at the end of each piece. Below is a list of all the tools needed.

Modelling knives, and cutters/snips

As you can see, my selection of cutting utensils isn't that great; just one hobby knife with an exchangeable blade. You can buy various types of blades to better suit your needs and preferences, but I find this one good enough for everything I have encountered so far.



Next are two sets of cutters. One small, used for cutting thin wires, cutting out vents and other excesses of material and other things as needed. The other one (Pliers, not even proper cutters, just a tool used around house) is big and bit rusty, which I use only to cut thick wires. I guess I should buy proper cutters for thicker wires, but so far this tool has worked fine for me.

Pin vice

This tool is used mostly for drilling holes in parts of your miniatures you want to pin, sometimes you may also use it to drill a hole in a barrel of the riffle, if the producer didn't take care of this. I use Games Workshop one, but simply because I bought it ages ago, when I didn't know any better, but honestly there is no reason not to buy a generic one in any of the hobby stores.



A Selection of Drill Bits

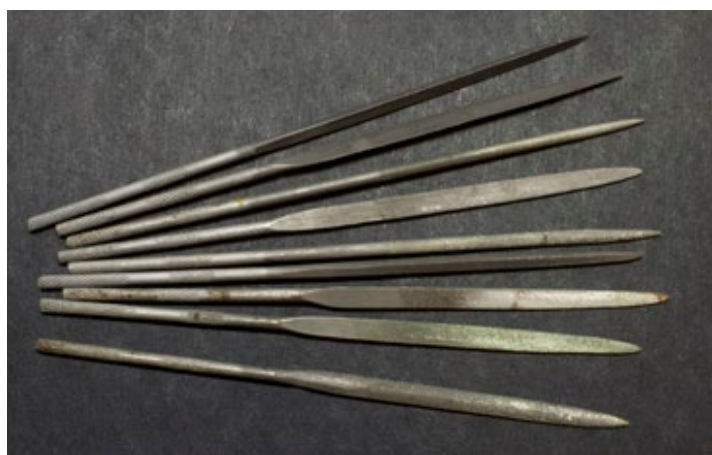
When dealing with smaller/bigger parts, different size of drill bits might be required. It's good to buy a set of various sizes (matching your pin vice of course), just in case you need to drill something not standard size.



Needle files

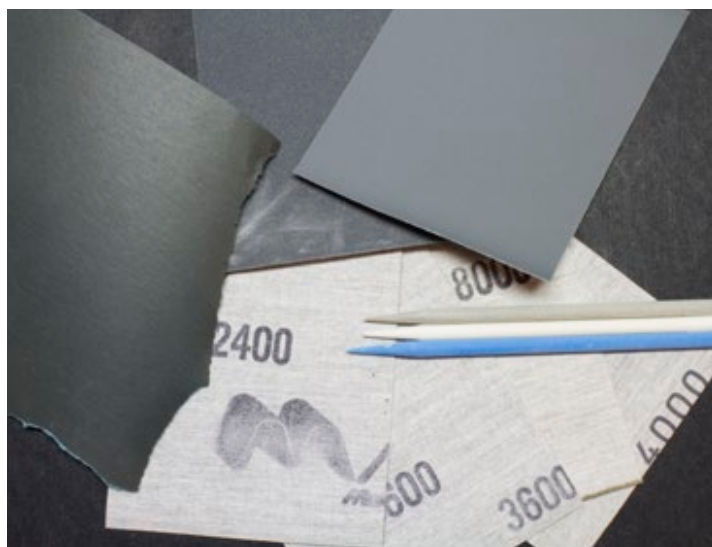
One of the basic and most important tools we use. Combined with various sanding products, needle files are used to remove mould lines and other imperfections. Needle files come in different shapes to make it easier to work with.

As you can see on my photo, tiny bits of filed surface can get stuck in the file, so it's good to give them a good cleaning with metal brush or special gummy thingy you can buy good hobby stores. It's really called an Abrasive Cleaning Disc from Albion Alloys. It works well cleaning plastic and resin from files, but metal filings will ruin it.



Sandpaper/Sanding sticks

Sandpaper, sandcloths (wet or dry), sand sponges and sanding sticks come in various grades, and are used, like needle files, for removing excesses of material, mould lines and other imperfections. Due to more flexible surface, they are more comfortable when working with complicated shapes. The most delicate ones can be used for final polishing.



Wire Wool

Wire wool is a very good tool for final smoothing of metal parts and getting rid of too shiny/sleek surfaces of resin miniatures. Usually it comes in neat rolls or small balls, but during use, fibres break into dust, just gather it up and keep using it. As you can see on the photo below, mine is pretty used, but still doing its job.



Glue

Depending on your preferences and the type of material that needs to be glued, you can use various types of glue. Personally, I use mostly all sorts of super glue for the majority of my miniatures. Sometimes, when I need to glue some big and heavy metal parts, I use 2-part epoxy glue (poxipol in my case, as you can see on the photo). Those two glues cover all of my needs, but if you want, you can buy all sorts of specialist glues, such as resin cement or plastic cement. I never felt the need to use them, but never say never; maybe someday I'll find a need for them.



Modelling Putty

For filling any gaps and masking join points we use various types of putty (chemically hardening, not the baking ones). Depending on the task at hand, some of them are more recommended than others. But at the end it is very personal choice, and I encourage you to try few of them to find the one that suits you best.



Pinning wires

Depending on the thickness of the part you want to pin, different size/gauge of wire is needed. Below you can see some of the things I use for pinning my miniatures. The biggest paperclips you can see in the photo I use only for pinning bottom of big metal miniatures. Of course, you can simply buy thicker wire, and when I ran out of my paperclips, most likely I'm going to do the same.



Optivisor

This is not really an essential tool. You can very well prepare and paint miniatures without it, but ever since I using it for the first time, I find it very helpful. Many of you might think: 'Why would I need it? My eyes are perfectly fine.' Mine are too, but with the Optivisor I can see all the small flaws much better and because of that, I can better deal with them



If you're like me and hate preparing miniature then you should keep an eye out for out What's on the Market articles because they show in detail all the cool tools that help make prepping mini's easier.

Types of Material for Miniatures

These days miniatures are manufactured out of three main materials: metal, resin and plastic, oh and Finecast!

Metal: For many years, metal was the most popular material used and still is by many today. In the early years, lead was added to the mix of metal because of its low melting point, which helped produce a superior finish to the figure. These days, however, due to health & safety legislation, lead can no longer be used which has resulted in some of the issues we will talk about later.



Resin: For many, resin has become the first choice for figure painters and manufacturers alike. It is easily worked/cleaned up and also holds superior detail when compared to metal figures. It is also a lot lighter than metal and so can help cut postage costs.



Plastic: Plastic miniatures have been around for many years in various forms. These days, however, when people talk about plastic figures they automatically assume war games miniatures from companies such as Games Workshop, Perry Miniatures and Wyrd Miniatures, which are at the forefront of plastic miniature production.



Finecast: Finecast is a resin/plastic mix that Games Workshop introduced briefly when they stopped doing metal figures. This was not very well received by the majority of gamers and modellers alike due to its very poor quality and quickly nicknamed 'failcast'. Personally, I wouldn't touch this stuff, as I value my mental health too much to want to struggle with fixing all the issues this material has (this is one of the reasons why GW introduced liquid green stuff and a mould line remover tool).



Mould lines – a natural by-product of the casting process, most of them are small and easy to get rid of, but can be a bit more tricky when they happen to hide in places that are hard to reach. A completely different thing is when they appear over fine details. In this case, they're mostly a sign of lazy mould making/assembly and are very difficult to remove. Sadly we have to deal with them anyway, so just take your time and don't give in; any mould lines left on the miniature can ruin the final effect.



Most Common Issues

Air bubbles – these tend to happen only with resin miniatures. They can be open (whereby, you can clearly see the hole or missing detail) or closed with air trapped just under the surface. In both cases, we need to get rid of them. Even those hidden under the surface will most likely open during cleaning or under the primer.



Mould slip – far more serious than a mould line, this occurs when the surface separates along a mould line. This is much more difficult to fix, often requiring careful filing, putty to fill the gap and sometimes even re-sculpting to restore the shape of the part. This is normally a fault associated with two part moulds that are not keyed or assembled correctly.



Rough metal surfaces/pitting – a result of metal cooling too quickly or at different rates having been removed from the mould too soon. A royal pain to fix, at least for me, requiring careful application of liquid putty (milliput juice) or Mr. Surfacer and lots of sanding, which can be tricky if they happen to appear in recesses.



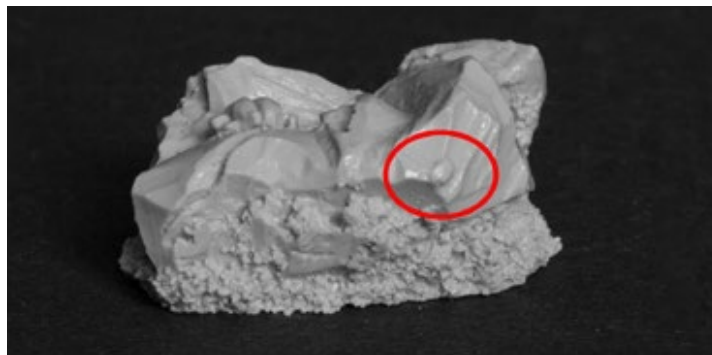
Soft or damaged details – a result of old moulds, which are worn or damaged and in need of replacing.



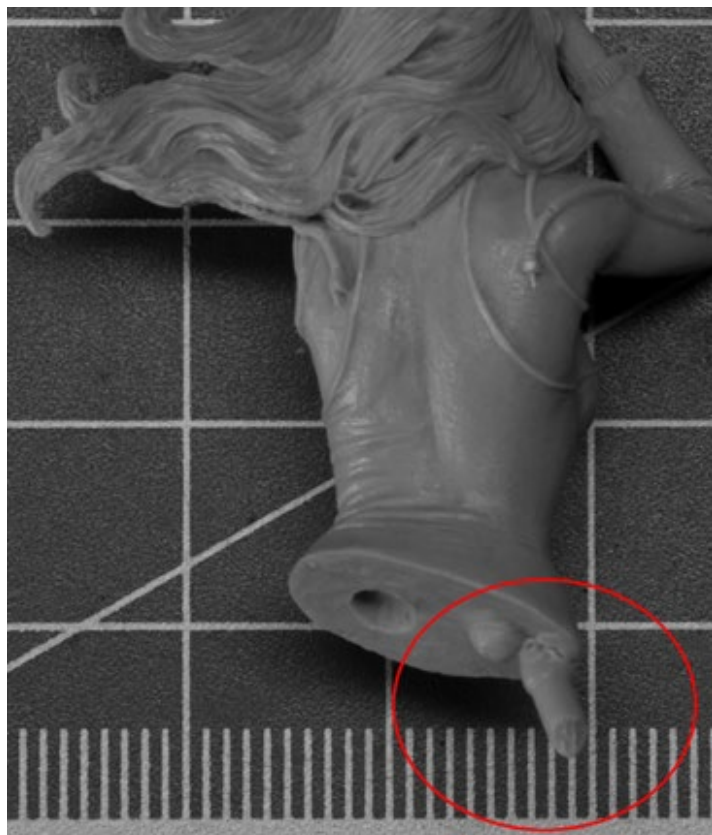
Flash – a leak of the liquid material getting between the joins of the mould. This, more often than not, can be easy to remove with sharp hobby knife or by rubbing your finger along the seam.



Blobs of resin or metal – this can be caused by several factors on both resin and metal figures/models. It might be a result of damaged moulds, whereby a part of the mould has broken or been torn in a previous casting run and not noticed straight away. With resin castings, it may also be due to the air not being fully removed from the rubber before it cures to form the mould.



Entry points/vents – they are necessary, but annoying. Most of the time, when placed in reasonable locations, they're pretty easy to remove. Sometimes, though, they can happen in less fortunate places, i.e. hair, fur, or other details. In these cases, they can be really painful to remove and some re-sculpting might be needed to restore the desired shape of the part. I can understand that sometimes there is no good spot to place an entry channel, but in some cases it looks more like lazy mould making.



To be perfectly honest with you, some of the issues on the pictures come from parts that were later exchanged (not all though — I couldn't be bothered with exchanging a Gamezone piece, I just tossed it into deepest chasm of my 'never gonna be painted' drawer). Most of the companies have good quality control in place, but every now and then a faulty part can slip through the QC net. The good thing is most of the companies care for their quality and reputation enough to exchange damaged parts for good ones. If you find a part in really bad shape, it's always a good idea to approach a company and ask them if there is a chance they will replace it. After all, a happy client will most likely be a returning client. I wouldn't try that with GW's Finecast though...there is no point, in my opinion. Their customer care will exchange it, of course, but the new one will be as bad as the old one. There are no good Finecast minis!

When using cutters, you're not risking cutting yourself, which is why I recommend using these. Just remember to place cutting edge away from the piece you try to cut off. If you face it towards it, you run the risk the piece will break and damage the part you are cutting out. As mentioned before, it's better to remove excess material with a file or sandpaper than re-sculpt missing bits.



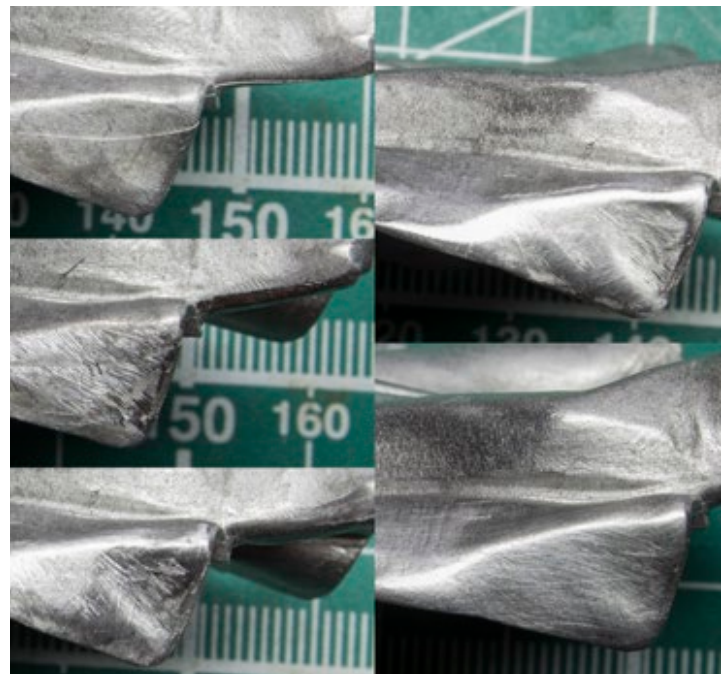
Cleaning

With all this knowledge, it's time to start preparing our miniature for painting. Depending on the material and casting process, first we need to remove it from the frames (in the case of plastic and failcast miniatures) or cut away all the entry points/vents. We can do this using either a hobby knife or cutters.

Next we need to remove mould lines and other excesses of material from our miniature (vents, flash, weird bits of material). With plastic and resin pieces we can start removing them by scraping them gently with hobby knife. With metal pieces we usually start with needle file. Then we proceed with sanding accessories, moving from roughest to more delicate ones. It's good to choose rather gentle grade of sandpaper from the beginning, we don't want to damage the piece. My starting grade is 1200, and then I move sometimes up to 8000.

When using a hobby knife, place the miniature or its part on a cutting mat (or other suitable surface) if possible and make the cut. If you can't put it down, cut the piece in your hands; just don't hold it too close to the area you're going to cut. Make the cut by moving the blade of the knife away from you, never in a direction towards you. Don't cut too close to the part itself. It's better to file it later, than cut too close and damage the part.

As you can see on the photo below mould line disappeared rather quickly, and from step to step metal is getting more shiny and polished. There are tiny scratches on the surface of course, but they're really tiny and primer will take care of them.



If the mould line is too deep (mould slip) or in difficult place, it might be better to add than to remove. In this case we won't file the mould line but we will add putty to match the shape of the part. When the putty is dry, we need to sand whole area to make sure the join line is undetectable and added part has right shape.

In case of photos below, the mould line is not deep, just uncomfortable to remove (as you can see, I tried that), so I decided to go with putty to make it go away. Once it's dry, a bit of sanding will take care of any imperfections I might have left



In case we find air bubbles on our resin miniature, no matter closed or open, we need to deal with them. In both cases it's necessary to use tip of the hobby knife to open the bubble. Even if it was open to start with, there is a big chance that the opening isn't the widest part of the bubble and more is 'hidden' inside the miniature, and it will be difficult to get rid of it this way. When it's done, we need to simply apply putty into the hole we created. When it's dry, with a bit of sanding and polishing, there should be no trace of the bubble.

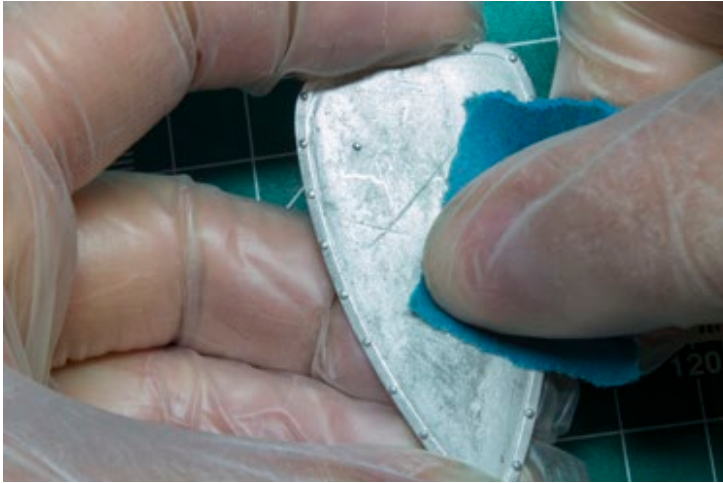
Please keep in mind that the photos of this step were taken just for informative purposes, I have no intention of painting this miniature any time soon (if ever), so any other steps weren't taken here. I'm just dealing with some of the air bubbles I have here.



The modelling putty you use while cleaning your miniature is entirely up to you, just remember that Liquid Green Stuff reduces in volume when dry, so you may need to apply few layers of it before you achieve right shape.

Smoothing the Surface of the Parts

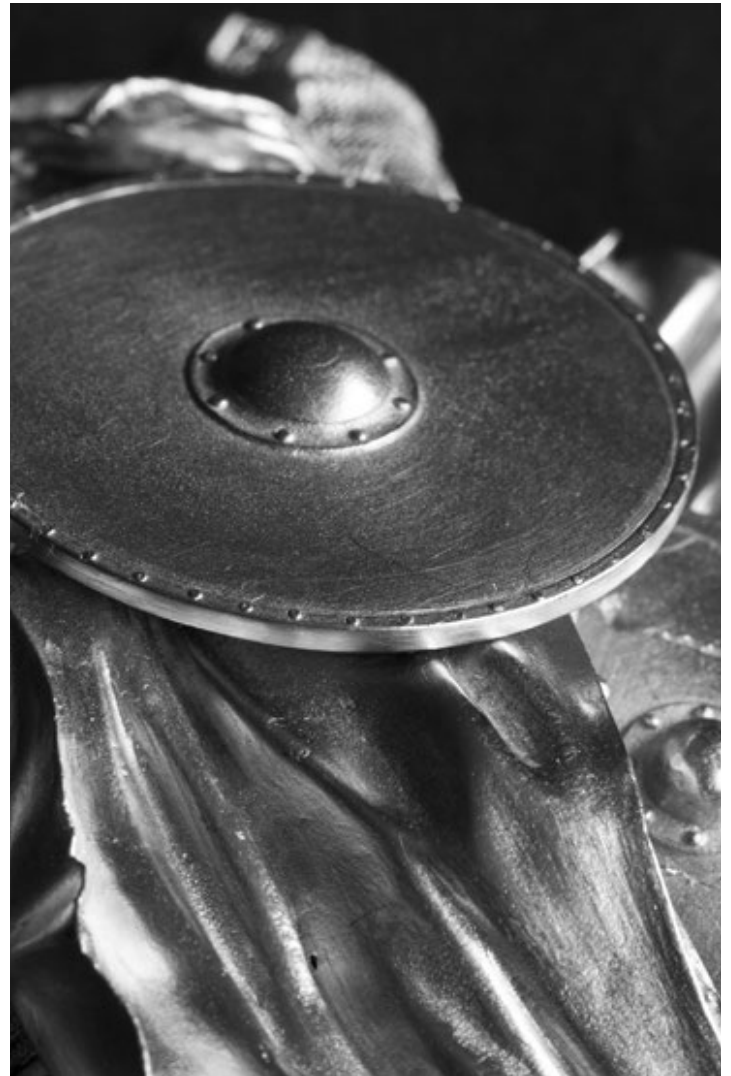
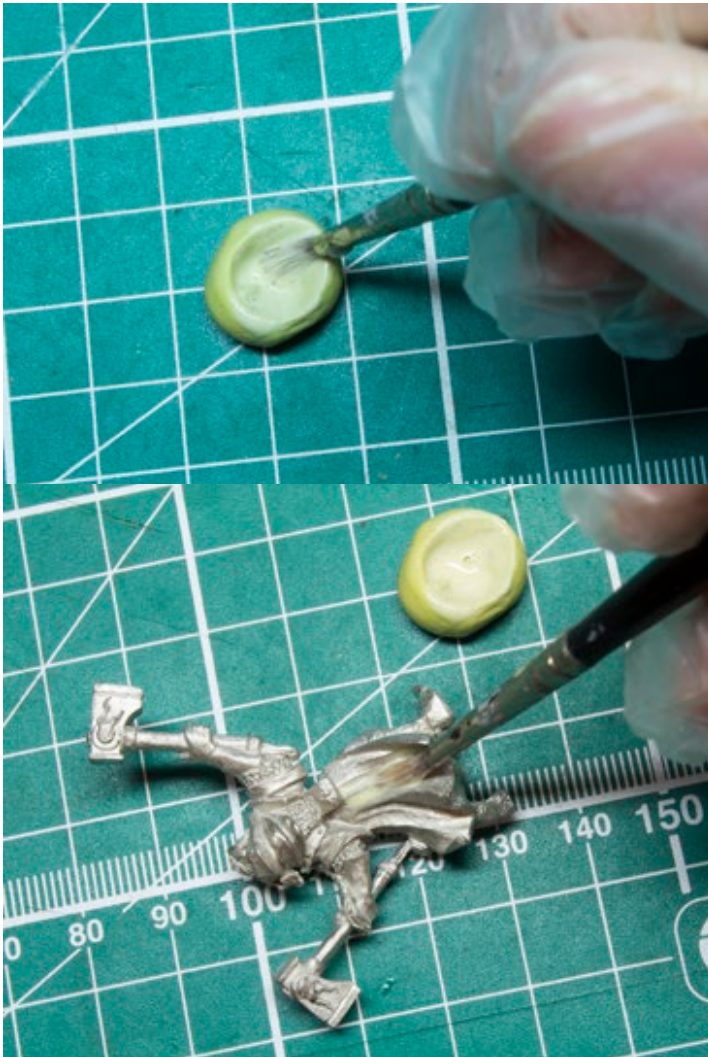
When all the issues mentioned in the previous steps are taken care of, we can proceed to smoothing the surface. Most of the miniatures made out of plastic or resin won't need this step, but sadly most of the metal ones do. Using various grades of sandpaper, sanding cloths, sanding sponges or standing sticks (depending on the shape of the part you're working on) sand the surfaces of each part gently, making sure that you're not damaging any details.



Sometimes the surface of the metal is rougher than normal and sanding is not enough. In this case you can use diluted liquid green stuff, 'milliput juice' or Mr. Surfacer in a bottle to fill the micro holes and then sand it again. Milliput juice is a very wet mix of milliput and water (magic sculpt also works) mixed into a kind of slip that is brushed on and, when cured, sanded smooth.

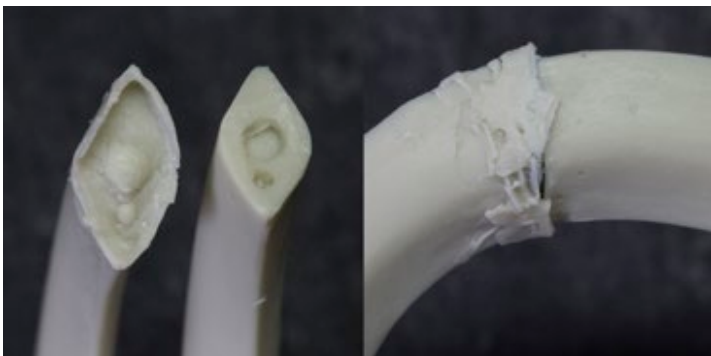
Using fine grade sanding cloth on resin miniatures will help us to get rid of the shiny surface some of them have, which can sometimes be too sleek for primer to adhere to.

Below you can see photos of some miniatures after this step. Check out how shiny metal minis can be.

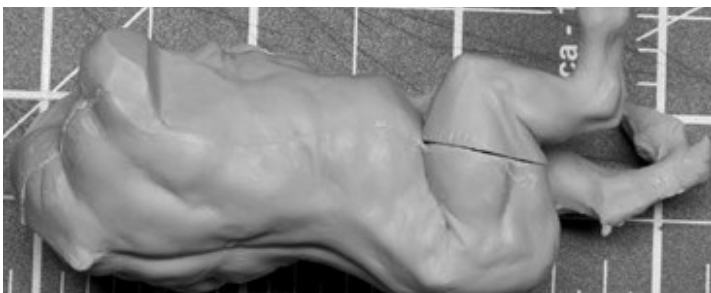


Dry Fitting the Miniature and Making Necessary Corrections

When all parts are cleaned, sanded and ready to be glued together, it's a good idea to dry fit them before we start applying the glue. We need to make sure that both surfaces (especially when they aren't flat) fit together perfectly and that we don't need to remove any extra material to make them meet.



Sometimes, the shape of both surfaces isn't the same, especially when it comes to limbs for some reason. We then need to make a decision if we are going to sand/cut the excesses or add a bit of putty to make up the needed shape. In the case of the werewolf leg shown on the photos below, I opted for sanding, but sometimes it's more reasonable to use putty to sculpt the needed shape.



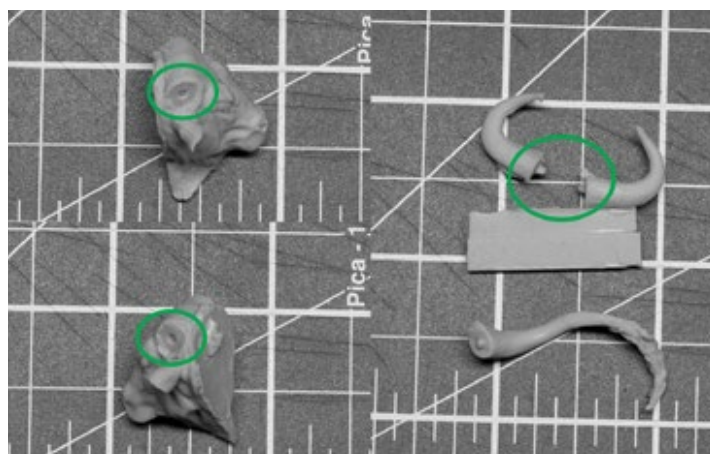
Sometimes when the joining point will be partially obscured (by parts of equipment, for example) and I know I'll glue them before painting, I'm not crazy about making the fit perfect. I can always use some putty after they're assembled and glued together; it is much easier at that point. The same goes for when I know I'll have to conceal the joint. I'm just making sure that the parts match.



Pinning

To pin or not to pin...some people say there is no need to pin miniatures if you're not going to play with them. The argument is that if minis just sit in your cabinet, there is very little chance for models to fall apart, but I wouldn't agree with that. Even display pieces, especially metal or big ones, are at risk. While I don't pin every single part of my miniatures, I always pin what I feel might be vulnerable.

Of course some of the miniatures, especially newer ones, come with the 'pins' already in place. They have some sort of protrusion on one part matched with a hole on the opposite part. Usually they are fitted properly, but in case they aren't, we have to remove the protrusion, fill the hole and start over with normal pinning.



Sometimes the construction of parts ensures that there is enough support for the joints. Take a look at the photos of the demon from Evil Miniatures, both arms (one already with a pin, the second without) when glued to the body will have additional support from the armbands, so there is really no point of drilling holes for pins in the arms.



With plastic and resin miniatures where there is a large surface contact area, I sometimes leave these alone and don't bother pinning these parts. Another case that might go without pinning is when parts don't fit perfectly and some sort of putty is required to fill the joint. Adding putty reinforces the join making it stronger, but in the case of small joining surfaces such as wrists, arms and mostly heads I prefer to pin them to make sure my miniature won't lose a head or limb just before the competition.

With metal miniatures I tend to pin almost everything, even small accessories when possible, if the manufacturer didn't provide a small bump to hang the part more securely.



Sometimes I use the second hole, without a pin to glue longer wire to hold piece more comfortably. I don't use much glue to secure wire, so when I'm ready to glue parts together, I can simply remove extra wire carefully and I'm good to assembly parts together. In the photo below, you can also see the pin ready for the hand holding the shield.



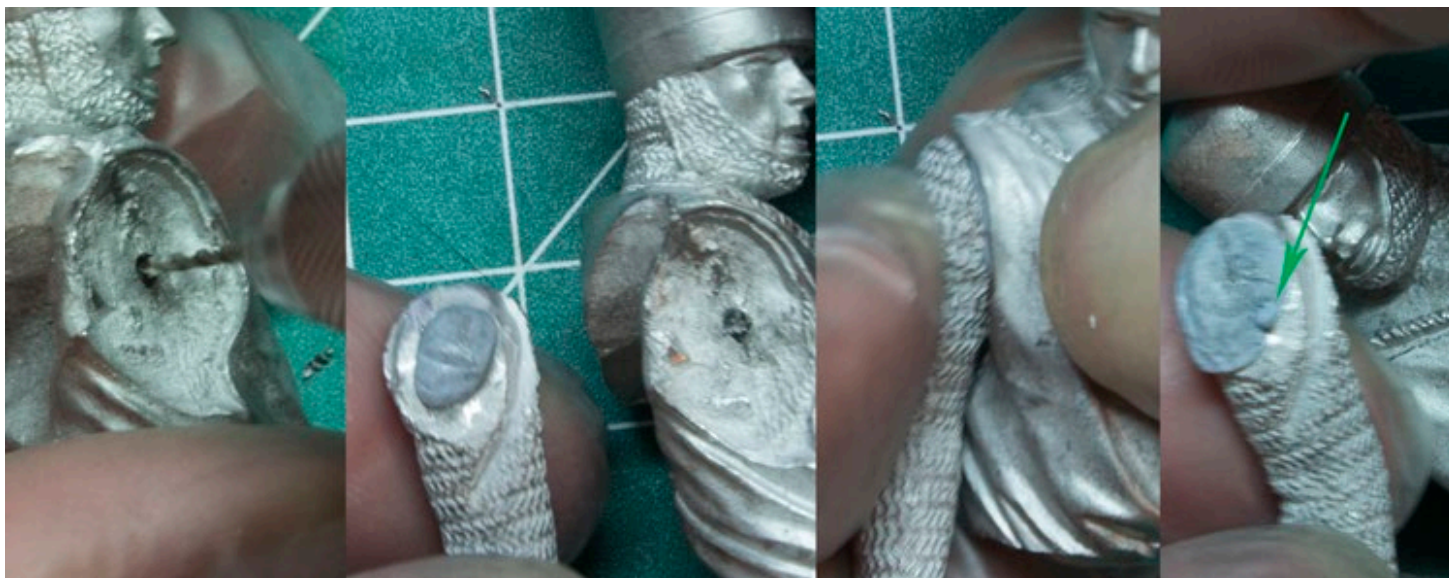
Pinning the bottom of the miniature to a base is a completely different thing. I will always do this, even if a miniature has massive bolts under its feet! I started doing this when my Templar Knight met the floor after a bumpy flight...not to mention it makes life much easier when you're trying to attach the miniature to the temporary holder, so you can hold it comfortably while painting. For the holder itself I mostly use chunks of cork, but some people prefer paint pots and blue tac or a dedicated holder/clamp.



There are a number of methods to drill in the right spot, blue tac or paint being two that are regularly used.

The process of pinning is pretty simple. You just drill holes in both parts you want to secure, using the correct size drill bit for the size of wire that you intend to use. You then glue a short piece of wire in one of the parts, cut it to the desired length to make sure both parts are touching. You can then glue the parts together or paint them separately and glue at the end. The only trick is to make sure both holes are in the right spot and that the parts fit perfectly together. There are a few ways you can achieve this:

Drill one of the holes bigger than the diameter of the wire to give some room to move parts while gluing. For me this is especially handy when I'm gluing big metal parts; I use 10 minute epoxy glue anyway, so if I put enough of it into the bigger holes I still have enough time to make sure both parts fit perfectly.



After drilling the first hole, put a bit of blue tac on the other part and cover it with a bit of water to prevent it sticking into the part with the hole. Press both parts together in the right position. When separating them, you should have a bit of a bump in the blue tac marking the drilling point.

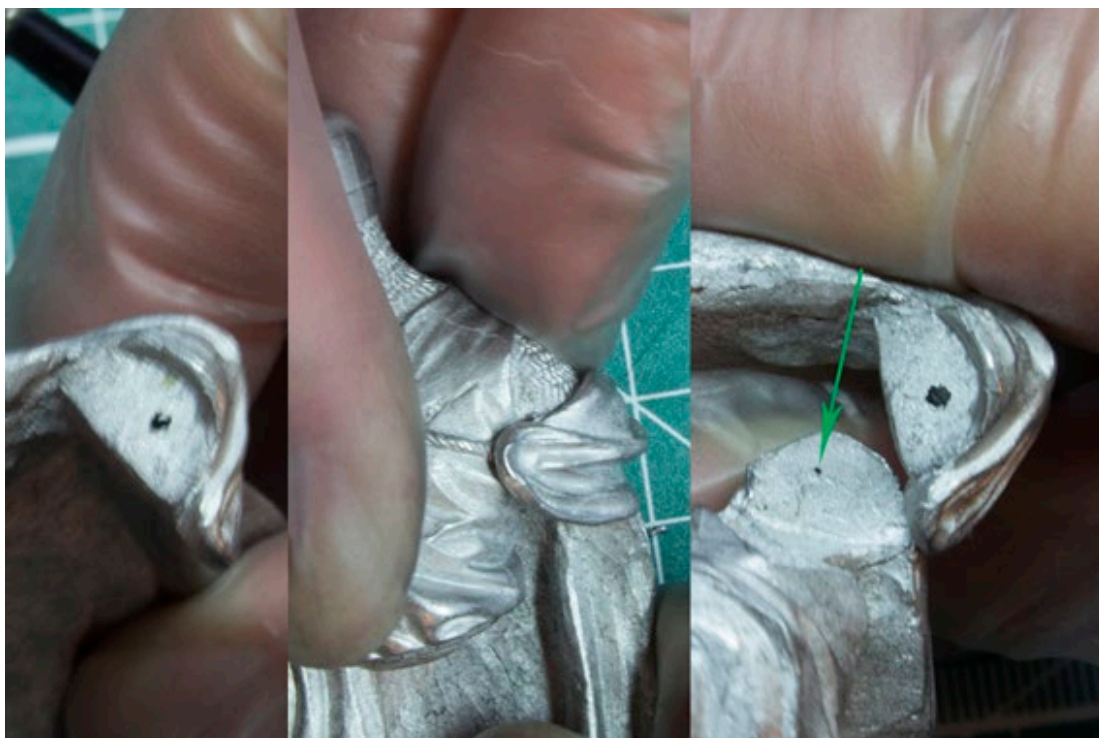
This method is my least favourite one and doesn't always work for me. Before you start drilling at all, put a small dot of thick paint on one part, quickly press both of them together firmly and in the correct position and hope that the paint crosses to the other part too. As you can see it can be tricky sometimes, so I prefer to use blue tac to mark the right spot.

There is yet another method. I have never used it myself, but a friend of mine (fellow writer for the magazine Martyn Dorey) likes to use a very short wire placed in the drilled hole of one part to mark the surface of the other part while pressing them together firmly. I guess it can work with resin and plastic pieces; scratching metal parts might be a bit trickier, but if you use enough force you should be ok.

Assembly

Gluing miniatures is mostly a straightforward process; with the pins in place it's easy to do it right. You just need to pick the right kind of glue and you're good to go. Personally, I use super glue for almost everything. For plastic miniatures, I use Tamiya plastic cement (unless I forget), but it's stinky and pretty toxic, so I don't always bother with it. For big metal pieces, I usually use two part, 5-10 minute epoxy glue (Poxipol in my case). The slower drying time gives me enough time to make sure both parts are aligned perfectly and the bond is really strong.

Deciding when and what to glue, though, can be quite tricky. With simple miniatures where everything will be easily accessible, it is a no-



brainer. Just glue everything together and save yourself the risk of damaging finished painted areas with glue and the trouble of masking joining points. Sometimes it's not so easy, however. Big, complicated pieces where some parts are obscuring others, you need to think what you need to glue together and in what order, as well as what needs to be painted separately. I wish I had taken some photos my Templar Knight before he was fully assembled; this was a truly complicated miniature and gluing it in the correct sequence was crucial for the job. If I remember correctly, I decided to paint it at the beginning with only the legs, torso and head assembled, then both parts of the tunic were added (painted inside) and the rest was painted and kept separate almost to the last moment (with cloak glued into one piece, of course). This approach gave me the best access to all surfaces, but at the same time was pretty tricky with final assembly. The big and heavy cloak was a major pain in the neck in this situation and ended up being heavily sanded to fit the stairs.

Here, you can see a few photos of some of the decisions I have made. Here, Figone's pirate was fully assembled (all the parts were easily accessible) and Pegaso's Viking painted without parts of the cloak, shield and other accessories. The Smartmax miniature was painted in pieces just because all joints will be hidden by parts miniature itself.

Ultimately the decision is yours. Whether you prefer to paint miniatures in pieces or fully assembled and glued together, just keep in mind what are the pros and cons of both approaches.



Filling Gaps Between Parts, Smoothing the Join

Even if we pay a lot of attention to preparing the surface, dry fitting, pinning and gluing parts, most of the time the joining line is still visible. Sometimes it is not a problem; for example, when both glued parts, in real life would be two different objects held together, such as a shield, or weapon held in the hand or when the joining line is where a belt holds clothing together. In these cases the extra separation might even be desired (provided that there are no unwanted holes).

In most cases though, especially when both parts are representing the same object (arm attached to the body, for example) and the joining must be as smooth as possible or when there are some unwanted gaps, filling is needed. The process itself is rather simple. Just apply some putty of your choice (not the baking putty though) into the gap and smooth it out, making sure you're preserving the natural shape of the parts you are joining. Some sanding and polishing might be required when the putty is dry. Just remember, if you're filling holes in recesses (like between clothes and belt, arm and armband) make sure that the shape of the join is not too round and looks natural.



Smoothing the Surface Again

Everything should be smooth and ready for cleaning at this point, but it's good practice to give a miniature another go with fine sanding cloth or steel wool, to make sure everything is perfect. A very fine grain of the sanding cloth won't damage the surface smoothed before, but all unwanted putty from previous steps will be taken care of. In my opinion, it is better safe than sorry.



Washing the Miniature

This final step is to get rid of any oily residue from your hands (some resin miniatures are quite oily already from the silicone mould or feel waxy from mould release being used), dirt, dust, and grease (if you have used wire wool for polishing). We need to wash the miniature in warm, soapy water. I usually use an old toothbrush with washing up liquid and then wash it again, for the second time, with toothpaste. I find this combination the best way to remove grease. Then, with as little touching as possible, I place the miniature on paper towel for a few hours so it can dry thoroughly. After this, the miniature is ready to be primed.



Well, that's all when it comes to preparing a miniature for painting. The next step will be to prime the miniature, which means applying a thin coat of primer (under paint) to ensure that the subsequent layers of paint will adhere to our miniature. We will talk in depth about this process and checking for imperfections after priming in the next article.

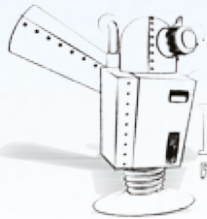
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