

28

//VOL. 4



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28 is a free digital magazine that primarily focuses on 28mm models in the Warhammer hobby. We have no affiliation to other companies or groups, and any similarity in imagery or nomenclature is purely coincidental.

We do not accept hate or prejudice. 28 aims to expand the hobby and promote diversity and inclusion, through creativity and freedom of expression.



TEAM 28

BIOMECHANICAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, EARTHLINGS!



Feast your optical receptors upon the latest volume of 28. Allow your nasolacrimal duct to release sodium-laced H2O with the emotion you call 'joy'. Quiver in the weakness of your flesh.

And what elations we have in store for you! We have the usual artist focuses, tutorials, essays and interviews, with a sprinkling of nostalgia, gushings of grimdarkness and a splattering of horror.

2021 was another challenging year for everyone – Grandfather Nurgle continues to 'bless' us with his plague. However, the incredible community we are part of continues to inspire and support all of us. We ran not one but two 28 challenges, one of which, Downtrodden, features in this very volume. Earlier in the year we produced an International Women's Day special of 28 [free to download from the usual place]. Additionally, we received a cogitator-boggling amount of article submissions – so many, in fact, that we had to move some of them to volume 5!

Before I grant clearance to access the rest of the magazine, I would like to welcome biblio-servitor Mira Manga to the editorial team. Whilst she entered service with very little experience of the grimdark, we quickly rectified this by uploading a data-packet of the grimmest, darkest code we could find from our archives directly into her cerebral cortex. This had the desired effect of almost, but not quite, frying her brain. Virtually painless. Welcome to the team, Mira!

Volitare-28 // Editor





JAMES SHERRIFF

No one is entirely sure what James has been up to over the past year, least of all James himself. One day he just slunk off, secreting himself away in one of the darker crevices of the 28 servo-dungeons. Volitare has been most irate at not knowing his whereabouts, or what he is up to, but recently a wretch of a man crawled into the 28 scriptorium, covered in muck and gripping a battered laptop in one claw-like hand.



ALEXANDER WINBERG

With the launch (and tragic disappearance) of Warhammer Quest: Cursed City, Alexander made it his mission to replace all the miniatures with old metal replacements from Citadel's glorious past. He has also been a busy bee, juggling various 28 related projects and challenges and generally having a say in all kinds of matters that really shouldn't concern him.



PAUL VON BARGEN

After a fateful birthday gift from his wife (thank you!), Paul has thrown himself into learning Blender because he soon realised that a 3D printer is most fun when printing stuff he modelled himself. Sadly, that resulted in very little painting.



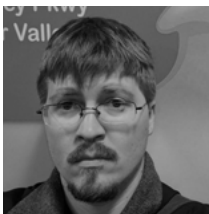
EADWINE BROWN

Ead has been putting brush to mini less often of late, in favour of writing pulp adventure and being professionally pedantic about other people's writing.



MIRA MANGA

Mira has been thoroughly baptised in the chaotic aura of the Warp through maximum exposure to Warhammer novels, a doomed game of Lost Patrol (don't play as a Scout if you want to win!) and editing all the wonderful articles that inhabit this issue of 28. She now has a new goal to one day own a Necron Titan and is applying for the fast track Inquisitor training program.



ERIC WIER

Despite playing Dark Angels since 2nd edition Warhammer 40,000, it was only within the last few months that Eric painted his first squad of Dark Angel Space Marines for Kill Team. He is still exploring the intersection between scale models and Warhammer, using all manner of oil paints and enamels. Perhaps he will paint a Gundam kit in a 28 style next...



GREGORY WIER

Greg continues to experiment with no-input mixing to create his own noise music. With October come and gone, and the nights getting longer outside his window, he has become enthralled with the horror writings from authors such as Thomas Ligotti and Jon Padgett.



ADAM WIER

Adam continues his quest to convert smaller scale versions of all the iconic Imperial firearms for his INQ28 models, the most recent being the humble lasrifle. Praise be brass tubing! He has also found himself falling back into the grim world of fanaticism as he builds up his warband of the Church of the Red Athenæum, hailing all the way from glorious Terra.



KRISTIAN SIMONSEN

Kristian has been away from the hobby for a while, instead making a lot of art including drawing and painting pictures. Now he is easing himself back into the hobby doing scale modelling, mainly WW2 planes. More recently, he has also been working on his Black Legion army.



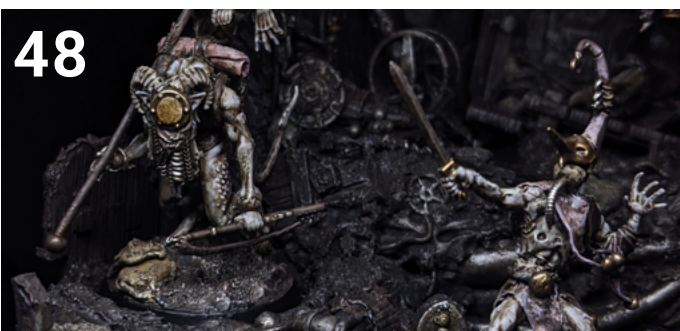
MARTIN TRESE

Martin's soul furnace fills with gratitude. Servitors whisper as they shift uncertainly before its ever-warming glow. From rusting walls an auto scribe spills out reams of warnings. Unread, the warnings are thrown to the furnace. *It is a good warmth*, the creatures decide. Klaxons are silenced; mouldering cloaks are shed in the heat. New projects are sought out as workers chant their praise. Martin is content.

CONTENTS

08 **COVER ARTIST** // Mike Franchina
 16 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Matteo Gallo
 20 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Yianni Hientzos
 24 **INTERVIEW** // Trish Carden
 30 **ESSAY** // Approaching Art
 34 **ESSAY** // Hobby is [Not] Art
 36 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Ben Cartwright
 40 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Patric Sand
 44 **ESSAY** // Embracing a Slower Hobby
 48 **ESSAY** // Original Synthesis
 54 **INTERVIEW** // Mörk Borg
 58 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Johan Burghall
 62 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Aksel Olsson
 64 **ARTIST FOCUS** // David Stafford
 68 **ESSAY** // War Amongst the Stars
 72 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Nick Borelli
 76 **ESSAY** // A Darker Lens
 80 **REVIEW** // The Fruitful Void
 84 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Welcome to Innswich
 90 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Ville Viitasalo
 92 **THE FORGE** // All About That Base
 94 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Giuseppe Del Buono
 98 **ESSAY** // Finding a Voice in Wargaming
 102 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Roberto Cuevas Guerrero
 106 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Andrea Buscaroli
 110 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Christian Selent
 114 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Luke Waddington
 116 **HAZMAT** // GALLERY
 124 **ESSAY** // Back to Square One
 126 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Steve Rowlinson
 130 **THE FORGE** // Banners
 134 **ESSAY** // What is Folkhammer?
 140 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Paul-Friedrich von Bargaen
 144 **ESSAY** // For the Love of the Game
 150 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Francesco Terlizzi
 154 **THE FORGE** // Building El-Cho's
 158 **ARTIST FOCUS** // Samuel Allan
 162 **THE FORGE** // The House on the Hill
 172 **THE FORGE** // Getting started: Photography
 178 **THE FORGE** // How to Sculpt Miniatures
 182 **28 CHALLENGE** // Downtrodden
 194 **THE FORGE** // Mood





COVER ARTIST // MIKE FRANCHINA

MIKE FRANCHINA



MIKE FRANCHINA IS a senior concept artist and illustrator working in the video game industry for companies such as Blizzard, EA and Runic Games. In between his paid work, he has been developing his own Trench Crusade setting, replete with all kinds of twisted creations from the murky depths of Mike's imagination.

Q. Did you always want to be an artist or did you have other aspirations growing up?

A. Nope. When I was a kid, I was really into bugs and sharks, so I wanted to be either an entomologist or a marine biologist. But I think I learned too much about them and they kind of freaked me out!

Q. Who is/what are your main influences creatively and artistically?

A. I love history and religion – they're endlessly interesting and full of the most messed up stories that are truly stranger than fiction. I also love horror, both novels and movies. I read a lot of books. Some current favourites are Adam Neville's horror novels and Cornwell's *Sharpe's Rifles* series.

Q. Going back a bit, what was your first ever art commission?

A. When I was still in college, I used to frequent the old rpg.net freelancer forum. I got a gig there doing some illustrations for someone's vanity RPG project.

Q. You've worked for several companies in the video game industry, including Blizzard. How did you get that job, what was your time like working there and what projects did you work on?

A. I got my job at Blizzard after working on *Torchlight 2*. I was hired to work on a secret *Diablo* project that got cancelled, which was a real bummer. I then spent a few months on *Diablo 3*, and then worked on *Diablo 4* for a few years before leaving to spend more time on personal work. Blizzard was kind of a mixed bag. I worked with some great people, but being a massive studio, they were not really interested in making *Diablo* as dark as I thought it should be.

Q. You've been working on the Trench Crusade project for a number of years. It might be considered an understatement to say that this is a very different style and direction from some of your video game art! How did you come up with the idea for this dark world and what is the end goal for the project?

A. It actually started at Blizzard. I was going to teach an online class and I needed to design a character that couldn't be mistaken for something from a Blizzard game. So I put in all the stuff I love – religion and history – and made it as unmistakably 'un-Blizzard' as possible. Over time, I just kept adding to the world and writing fun flavour text. Eventually, I'd like to produce a sourcebook for the world, a kind of history book for an imagined conflict.

Q. Delving deeper into the Trench Crusade, tell us a bit about the back-story, world, factions and some of the unusual – and rather disturbing – creatures. How do you come up with these ideas? Can you talk a little about your creative process?

A. It's a bit of a long story, but essentially the Knights Templar discovered a demonic artefact beneath Jerusalem during the First Crusade. They became the first heretics and turned Jerusalem into a depraved pit where Hell and our mortal plane now bleed into each other. So the Church has been trying to take back the Holy City for another thousand years, and the Crusade has now progressed to more modern weaponry. Coming up with the factions and creatures is a lot of fun. Mostly I try to push myself to make things that will disturb the viewer, or at least have a memorable impact.

Q. You are a fan of Warhammer 40K, in particular the INQ28 movement. What is it that draws you to the pitch-black corners of the grim darkness of the far future?

A. I was never a big player of the Warhammer games, apart from Gorkamorka, but I devoured the lore and art. The lore and art was extremely grim, which wasn't really reflected in the tabletop models, but the INQ28 community has certainly addressed that failing. I just love the oppressive and nightmarish vibe of

Warhammer. It's like GW took some of my favourite worlds – *Starship Troopers*, *Alien*, *Dune* etc. – and just jammed them together into this new thing that's completely unique. There's really nothing like Warhammer.

Q. Many have mentioned that your concepts would make for incredible miniatures, and there are some models already, I believe? What models are currently out there and where can we get them?

A. My friend Jeremy Klein sculpted my Trench Pilgrim character, and we had it cast into a 17-inch (43cm) tall 1/6th scale statue. It's really an incredible sculpt and the detail is outstanding. Unfortunately it is now sold out.

Q. You are also collaborating with one of our resident sculptors. What can you tell us about that project?

A. Working with James Sherriff has been great – he really captures the Trench Crusade characters. The plan is to release a small set of Trench Crusade characters that could be used as a sort of Inquisitorial retinue.

Q. Are there any other projects beyond the Trench Crusade that you are working on (that you can tell us about)?

A. As a freelance concept artist, I work on a lot of different projects. Perhaps of particular interest to your readers, I've worked on some creature designs for Fatshark's *Darktide* game – the 40K follow-up to *Vermintide*.

Q. Finally, it is traditional in these interviews to ask what advice you might have for aspiring artists, whether they be illustrators or character designers. Any grim words of dark wisdom?

A. Fill your portfolio with the things you love to paint or design. Post it regularly online. Eventually someone will notice and, if the quality is there, you will get more jobs than you can handle. If the quality isn't there, repeat the first two steps until it is.

“Mostly I try to push myself to make things that will disturb the viewer...”

- 01 Perrenial King
- 02 Heretic death commando
- 03 Child of Baphomet
- 04 Beast seed
- 05 Communicant anti-tank
- 06 Acolyte of the Caul
- 07 Hounds of the Black Grail
- 08 Cardinal of Malady/Masque of the Red Death
- 09 Plague knight hemagogue



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ARTIST FOCUS // MATTEO GALLO

MATTEO GALLO



Warhammer has been my passion for more than 20 years. It is not just the brand, the miniatures and the games, but its settings and unique atmospheres are most important to me. In my experience there are two types of hobbyists – those who thrive within the constraints of a rich but ultimately limited setting, like the Old World, and those who prefer to be surprised, who chase new aesthetics and wish for a blank canvas over which they can write their own narratives. Although I have been enjoying this latter approach recently with the advent of Age of Sigmar, my true passion still lies in developing and fine-tuning the rich and complex background of the old Warhammer Fantasy lore.

Most of my creations could be described as an attempt to answer the hypothetical question: What if Games Workshop applied the current technology and design advancements to their old lore? What if they started revisiting their original concepts and updated them to 2021?

My models are set in an alternate version of Warhammer – it is still the Old World but it has evolved to match my own vision. I do not consider myself an Oldhammerer, as my aim is not to perfect old miniatures and their aesthetics but rather innovate them so that they can be at the same time surprising and familiar to those who share my knowledge and passion for the old lore. It is not about what Warhammer used to be, but what it could have been had Games Workshop taken a different creative direction.

One aspect I always enjoyed about the Old World and that I try to infuse in my creations is the obvious references to classic fantasy tropes and archetypes. Warhammer Fantasy never tried too hard to break the mould or reinvent the wheel but felt like a darker and quirkiest version of old European fairy tales with mining dwarfs, dangerous forests, shambling skeletons and twisted warlocks. It is this sense of familiarity that makes the Old World my favourite go-to when I need to set the narrative for my miniatures – my proverbial

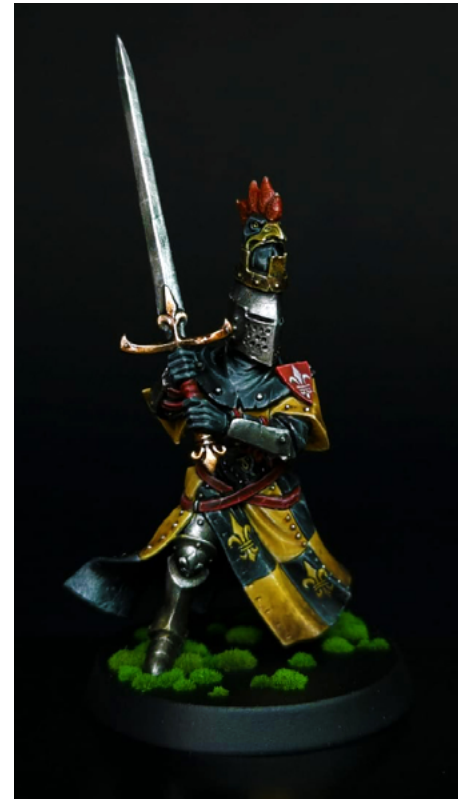
Linus blanket.

Large-scale wargaming was never my interest. I focus on small groups of models with a strong aesthetic and narrative connection. I start by researching the official lore about the faction or individual I am interested to recreate. In the case of one of my recent works, for instance, a Marienburg champion for Mordheim, I started by collecting all the lore about this particular warband available from sources like the rulebook but also non GW fiction like the old Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay publication Marienburg: City of Gold.

Then I studied the classic Perry designs of the early 2000s and started collecting the right bits for the conversion, which came from a variety of kits: 40K Battle Sisters, Empire/Freeguild Greatswords and militia, plus a Blood Bowl referee. I wanted to add my own touch as well, so rather than just copying the aesthetic of the original range I decided to push the classic 16th century Empire slightly further and gave him a curly wig and ribbon-heeled shoes, to make him look more like a Renaissance ruffian.

When it came to painting the model, I also decided to start from the classic Marienburg colour scheme of red, yellow and blue but I decided to use pastel tones – red became dark pink and blue was used to highlight the black of the gloves and leather details. This way the model is still recognisable to those who know Mordheim lore, but at the same time it is set slightly apart from the traditional imagery associated with Marienburg. Finally I opted for a powdered skin tone and heavy makeup on his face to suggest an air of decadence and debauchery.

Another aspect I consider important when creating a miniature is that Warhammer is about producing gaming pieces. Even if I rarely play with them the aim remains to field them on the gaming board. This means I take a certain number of considerations during both the conversion and painting processes. The miniature must strike a compromise between



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01 Sir Medarde de Tourralbine, le Coq Noir. Conversion of a Bretonnian Knight – the fantastic base was done by my friend, the amazing Nicklas Philström.



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dynamism and sturdiness. I try to reduce flimsy and delicate components that might snap or bend during a game. At the same time, the colour schemes I use are designed to work from a distance as well, so I use strong contrasts between dark and light areas. Some miniature painters strive for absolute realism in their creations – dark and gritty tones which are very atmospheric and evocative, but in my opinion tend to work better in pictures than they do in real life. That is because a miniature is, well, tiny and it needs to have a certain caricatured edge to read harmoniously from the distance of the tabletop. When I paint my models, I use strong contrasts, accentuate lights and shadows and focus on bringing up certain areas of the model.

This approach is not too dissimilar from the one used by the 'Eavy Metal team in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Miniatures back then could not rely on 'special effects' like smoke, swirling magic vortexes and digitally sculpted bas reliefs, so painters had to resort to bold colour schemes and contrasting bases to make their models pop on the battlefield. This 'old school' approach is something I still swear by

in terms of setting as well.

I always put narrative at the centre of my creations. My aim is to capture that same sense of wonder I remember feeling when, as a kid, I gazed at the battle scenes and artwork in rulebooks and White Dwarfs. The Old World is still a rich and incredible fantasy setting and I try to keep it alive, not just through nostalgia but through constant renovation and visual storytelling.

02 Graf Hrobert Von Uhland from the Reiksguard defends the village of Schlafenburg from the beasts of the Drakwald Forest.

03 Gotz Von Poltznicht, Burgermeister of Teufelburg, tests his new gun outside the walls of Nuln.

Opposite Assorted Old World characters of the living and undead variety.



03



YIANNI HIENTZOS

Ahoy, my name is Yianni and here's a little bit on what makes me tick. I am inspired by nature, colours and the apocalypse. Some of my favourite artists are Frank Frazetta, Juan Giménez, Paul Bonner, Roman Lappat and John Blanche. Their work provides me with endless joy. I enjoy art of all styles and eras but find myself referring back to the work of these greats more than anything else. I also draw inspiration from music, games, movies and our peers here in the 28 community.

My INQ28 journey started back in 2013 when I was lucky enough to win a bits bag from my local GW raffle. At the time, I thought, 'What on Earth will I possibly use this eclectic bunch of parts for?' It was around the same time I remember seeing the Blanchitsu style of hobby expression through the White Dwarf magazines. I instantly fell in love with the grit, the gore, the limited palettes and the weird textures. The more I probed, the greater my intrigue grew for world building and model converting.

Fast forward to 2016. I had been following the old greats of the blogosphere for a few years, (Spiky Rat Pack, Exprofundis, Molotov's INQ28 blog, Eternal Hunt and the Gothic Punk Tumblr to name a few), and I started growing my own collection of ideas and bits. One day I began splicing different kits together with Blu Tac, and that was it. I was hooked on the endless options of custom building characters, vehicles, beasts and environments. Tapping into my lifelong fondness for robots and mechs, I decided to make a small band of Adeptus Mechanicus derived models. I used the random bunch of bits I had won, and some of them ended up serving as the foundation for my first builds. This small warband has since grown and become a force of over thirty custom characters, with new members being added every year. Since then, I have expanded the subject matter of my builds to include more

than just Mechanicus. Each model is unique and has been created to inhabit a special spot in my humble slice of the 40k universe.

My painting journey always begins with maximum levels of motivation and inspiration. In the initial stages of painting I experiment with colours and brightness until I find the right atmosphere for the project. Usually the motivation fades around half way through a long project and then discipline carries me the rest of the way. The stagnation hits if I stop practising the hobby consistently. All models yearn to be painted and the progress cannot wait until inspiration strikes again. I find myself the most productive when I practice a daily hobby routine. If I know what to work on, all I need to do is pick up the brush and go through the motions. I believe consistent practise is the most useful habit that the hobby has taught me. I also get a lot of value from regularly brushing up on colour theory and colour mixing exercises.

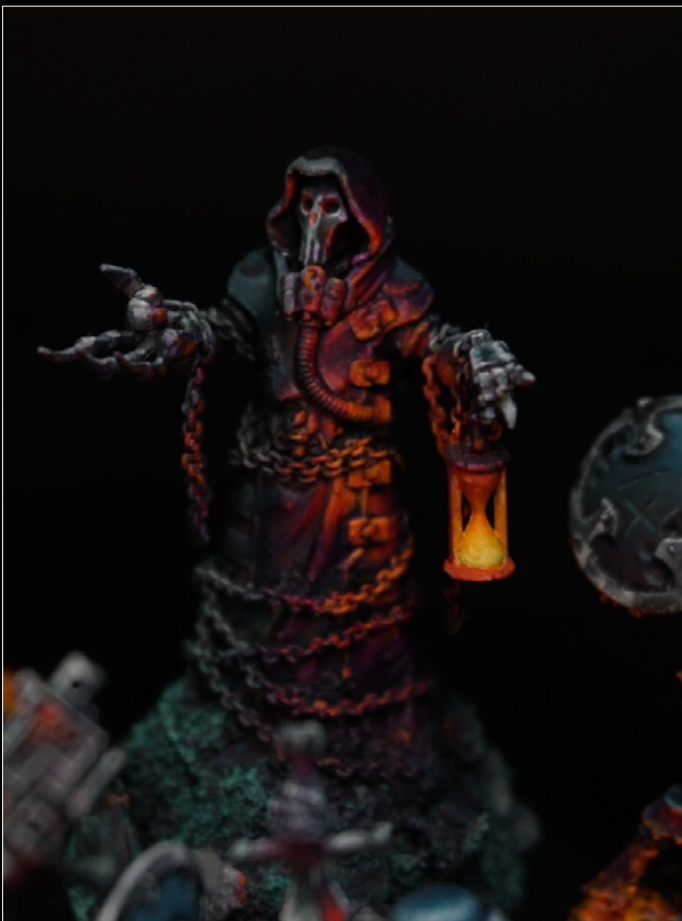
For me, the hobby is a means of creative expression. It covers a range of creative aspects from design and composition, to mood and atmosphere. I also enjoy conjuring up a loose backstory and environment for each project. These choices help inform what details I include in each build. It is the small details that shape the larger story and therefore, everything included in the build must help the viewer understand that story. From conception to practical hands on problem solving I enjoy every stage of the kit-bash and conversion process. I find it immensely satisfying and a therapeutic creative outlet.

I have been sharing my hobby progress online now for a few years and the community has been the absolute best. I thank you all for the kindness and encouragement and I hope you enjoy my creations as much as I love making them.

"All models yearn to be painted..."









TRISH CARDEN

WITH ALMOST 40 years of sculpting experience under her belt, it's likely that most long-time hobbyists will have stumbled across some Trish Carden miniatures in their time. From Lizardmen and Beastmen to Sea Elves, Ogres and Daemons and more, she has populated whole worlds with her creations. Her illustrious career has seen her working across all the major studios ranging from Citadel Miniatures, Games Workshop, Marauder Miniatures, Forge... the list goes on. We caught up with her to talk about her career and her love of monsters.

Q. Let's start with your moniker, Mistress of Monsters. Where does that name come from and could you tell us about your interest in fantastical monsters outside of the miniatures hobby?

A. I can't remember who first used 'Mistress of Monsters.' I've always used *Monstergirl* in my social media, this actually came from Peter Jackson! He visited the Citadel Design studio with his son when we were making the Lord of the Rings figures. I'd just finished sculpting Shelob and showed it to him when he came round to look at the sculpts. He remarked that I must be the Monster Girl so of course I couldn't be known as anything else from that moment! He was a lovely guy, very down to earth and

fascinated by the whole process of sculpting.

I've been fascinated by monsters and creatures since I was a kid. I was obsessed with dinosaurs and spent a lot of time reading about them and drawing them. Then there was lots of time spent hiding behind the sofa when Doctor Who was on. I didn't mind the Daleks or the Cybermen but the Yeti and the giant spiders used to give me nightmares. As I got older I started to get into cryptozoology and mythology which I'm still really interested in today. I've started doing more paintings that have their roots in those interests and am doing bits of writing to go with them. I listen to podcasts about those subjects while I'm working and have a ridiculous amount of books on, what my husband calls, my weird stuff! The idea of race memory and stories that have been handed on and changed through generations are one of the things I study, the way certain imagery is so deeply held in the human subconscious and how we can access it to influence our art. I love to trace the common thread running through mythology, nature, art and faerie. It feels so much more relevant than a lot of the superficial things we're subjected to today.

Q. You joined Games Workshop in the 1980's, but from my understanding you were actually

Painted by:

01 *Chris Sabick*

02 *David Stafford*

Opposite *Treeperson*
watercolour by *Trish*



01



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a jewellery designer at the time. What was it that drew you to begin sculpting miniatures and what was the shift in focus like?

A. I did a degree course in Jewellery and Silversmithing at Edinburgh College of Art in the late 70's. Even then my jewellery was quite sculptural. I carved and inlaid wood and ivory and cast up parts from tiny sculptures I'd made. Around this time I met Aly Morrison and I was amazed by the tiny toy figures he was sculpting for various companies. I'd never seen anything like them before, they were so unlike the cheap green plastic soldiers my brother had played with.

We began to share an old, haunted studio in the Grassmarket area of Edinburgh where Aly sculpted and I made my jewellery. Eventually I tried sculpting with Green Stuff myself with Aly's help and really enjoyed it. It wasn't so different to some of the jewellery I'd been making. Small and detailed and fantastical. After he started working for GW he showed a Beastman I'd made to Bryan Ansell and I was offered a job. I've been sculpting close to 40 years now and I still love it!

Q. Many of our readers have told us that they are struggling to learn sculpting with Green Stuff. What advice would you have for those starting out in sculpting, be that for minor conversions or complete miniatures?

A. It's always difficult beginning to sculpt and learning how the putty reacts. To be honest I find Green Stuff a difficult putty to begin with, I would be more inclined to use a polymer putty like Sculpey Firm Grey, Fimo or Beesputty. Green Stuff will change and become more difficult to move as it begins to set whereas with a polymer putty it's easy to keep adjusting, adding and removing until you're happy.

Beginning by doing conversions is a good





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way to learn, it's not as intimidating as sculpting a whole figure. Studying lots of cast figures and analysing what makes them successful is important as is learning and practising anatomy. It's far better to begin with something simple where the anatomy is right than make something very detailed with bad anatomy. The details can come as you improve. And of course keep practising! If it is not right, scrap it and do it again until it is. Keep pushing yourself and get out of your comfort zone and eventually it will all begin to click into place. Ask for feedback whenever you get a chance, whether it's online or at a show, and learn from it. You should never stop learning, there will always be someone who is better than you!

Q. In 1988 you started your own company with Aly Morrisson, the famous Marauder Miniatures. Could you tell us a little bit about the decision to start your own brand and what it was like?

A. Marauder was a great chance for Aly and I to branch out into doing our own ideas that were based on the GW IP. Our styles worked really well together and gave the brand a distinct look. Being a small company allowed us to sell to smaller stores that may not have been able to stock the larger amounts that GW wanted them to. We could explore ranges that

GW hadn't done yet like the Sea Elves. It was an exciting time for us. Instead of sculpting all day we would also help out with sales, do artwork for the adverts, man our booth at shows, anything that was needed really. We tapped into the ready made market of people who already loved Citadel figures but soon found that we were getting our own fan base of people who loved the Marauder style which was a great feeling. I remember it as a really fun and creative time.

Q. From 1988 to 1993 Marauder produced a huge portfolio with many now legendary miniatures. The ogre hero, Imperial dwarfs and of course a host of monsters. Some of these miniatures clearly differed from the earlier designs Citadel had produced. How free were you to design the miniatures under the Marauder brand and what would you say was the main focus for your own work during the time there?

A. We had the freedom to design whatever we wanted for Marauder. Each of us had things we wanted to make. Aly was really keen to do a range of Dark Elves and Chaos Dwarfs and also to make figures with the Landsknecht look in clothes and armour. I was keen to make lots of creatures but also to make more humanoid types. I particularly enjoyed making the Orcs

Painted by:

- 03 Jean-Baptiste Garidel
- 04 Jean-Baptiste Garidel
- 05 Chris Sabick
- 06 Chris Sabick
- 07 Jon Boyce
- 08 Chris Webb
- 09 Sean O'Sullivan
- 10 James Armstead

and Goblins and also the Amazons, Elves and Chaos Warriors. It was a chance for me to show that I wasn't just a creature sculptor.

Many people are still surprised that I made a lot of the figures for Marauder that they assumed were made by Aly. We were always conscious of making plenty of figure types that would fit into people's existing armies, it would have been foolish not to do that. It was good to be able to branch out though and create our own look and make figures that would be full of character and easy to paint. We found that they became pretty popular and that was really encouraging.

Q. Marauder Miniatures appears to have focused almost exclusively on the Fantasy part of Warhammer, with the notable exception of the Confrontation miniatures. Was there a particular reason for that?

A. Fantasy was definitely our first love. We made the odd range like the Confrontation miniatures too, they were just so cool that we had to do them. Citadel was making lots of 40k figures and we saw a real opportunity to produce ranges of characterful Fantasy that also had a bit of humour in them. I've always loved the wacky but slightly dark humour that Fantasy can have. It fits in again with my love of mythology where things often have a slightly sinister undertone.

Q. After Marauder was brought back into Citadel you seem to have worked mostly on the more monstrous miniatures. Your remake of Golgfag's mercenary ogres seems to be a good example, but I am sure I have overlooked some less monstrous miniatures. Are there any particular non-monsters you remember fondly?

A. Being back at Citadel meant I did go back to pretty much exclusive monster making. It was



07

easy to get a bit pigeonholed into continually making the same sort of figures. I didn't mind though, I love making monstrous beasts and there were plenty to choose from. Having said that I did enjoy the more realistic Eagles that I made for Lord of the Rings.

Looking further back I also enjoyed the Villager ranges and the Halflings. There was endless scope with the Villagers to sculpt different little characters and I could have gone on for years with them. Even further back all the Judge Dredd sculpts were fun to work on. The Perps, Fatties, Ugliers and Sky Surfers were the main ones I did. I was a big fan of 200AD at the time and read every issue so it was just like bringing the comic to life.

Q. In 1998 Tuomas Pirinen and Rick Priestley wrote the new army book for Chaos in Warhammer Fantasy. Alongside it Games Workshop also released a new set of Greater Daemons and characters, among them the amazing Azazel. What was it like redesigning such beloved miniatures as the Greater Daemons, and conversely were you more free to make decisions when it came to Azazel?

A. The Greater Daemons were a big project and one that I always felt raised my sculpting up a level. There was already a look established for



08



09



10

INTERVIEW // TRISH CARDEN

all the Daemons so it was important to stick to that. There was still room to put a bit of my own spin on them as long as I didn't stray too far from what people would recognise. Sculptures like Azazel allowed me to add a few more of my own ideas. Of all of them, Nurgle was so much fun. What's not to like about pus, decay and maggots?! I made a point of trying to gross out everyone around me with what I was making, if I succeeded then I knew it was a good miniature! My desk at the time was covered with references. It looked like a cross between an abattoir and a murder scene with a few horrible disease photos thrown in for good measure!

Q. It's fair to say that you have worked on quite a few projects at Games Workshop, it would be fascinating to hear a little bit about what it was like working on a particular release. How did the design process work? Did the rules, art or miniatures come first and how much did they influence each other?

A. In the early days we had pretty much free reign to design the look of the ranges with bits of input from the other sculptors, creatives and

management. As GW got bigger and the look of the ranges got established that changed. We worked closely with the artists and writers to pin down what was wanted on most ranges. Sometimes the writing was the first thing to be done, sometimes it was a piece of art. Now and then, for a newer subject, it might be a mock up sculpt that came first which was then illustrated and had rules written for it. It was always very much a team effort and the final sculpt always went through a process of evolution as people contributed input and ideas. It made for a better end result.

Q. Digital sculpting is becoming more and more common today, with many companies, like Games Workshop, working almost exclusively in that medium. You seem to prefer the old style of physical sculpting. What benefits would you say clay sculpting have when compared to digital?

A. I did a fair bit of digital sculpting with Freeform before I moved to ForgeWorld. It just didn't feel the same. It's a great tool and sculptors today are doing amazing work, but to me it lacks a bit of "soul" and everything looks

a bit too clean. I love the feel of working with putty. The clay plays a big part in the final look of the sculpt. Nothing will be totally symmetrical or sharp edged which is more true to life and to me looks more realistic and alive. It's like the difference between an old master painting and a digital painting. You can feel the brushstrokes in the old master, they catch the light as you move round it and you can see how the artist built up the layers and worked the paint. In the end though, it's all a matter of personal taste. Sometimes I do wish that putty had a button I could press to go back a step!

Q. You left Games Workshop in 2018 to go freelance and you have since then worked on at least a couple of projects, like sculpting beings from the Greek mythology for Footsore. What else have you been up to since then and what does the future hold for you?

A. It's been really refreshing going freelance after an initial period of "Oh my God what if nobody wants my sculptures!" I've had so many offers of work that I could be sculpting 24/7. In the end I decided to just ease off a bit and allow the rest of my life to have a bit more time.

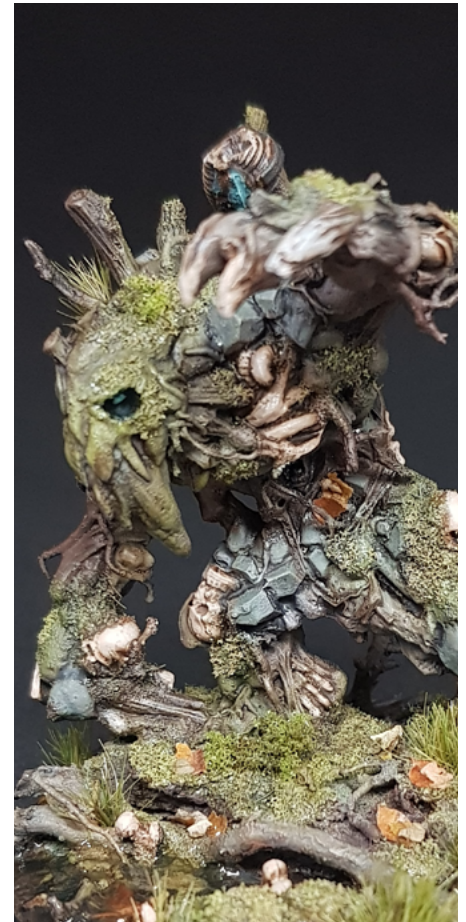


I'm in my 60's now and there are grandkids to enjoy (when we're allowed to, thanks to Covid), travelling to be done and other hobbies to indulge. I am relishing the time to paint and discovering worlds that I want to put down on the page in glorious colour. I've started selling prints and original artwork and it's gratifying that so many people want to own something I've painted.

As far as sculpting goes I've made some Toon figures for Lucid Eye and I'm really happy to be working with Mark Farr from Footsore Miniatures again - except when he wants a Hydra to have NINE necks! That was a cue for some most unladylike language. He was with us at Marauder selling the figures and trying to herd us into sitting down and working so it's a bit like the old days again. I love sculpting all the mythological creatures for him and that will continue, there's more on my desk being worked on at the moment. As far as the future goes I will always do a bit of sculpting, maybe some of my own creatures one day, and I will continue to paint. I can't imagine not creating in one form or another as long as my eyes can focus.



11



12

Q. And finally, which miniature that you have sculpted is your all time favourite?

That's like asking which child is your favourite! If I must choose I will cheat and pick a few. For Citadel it would be the Fenrisian Wolves. I love wolves and the way they move so that was a challenging project that I ended up being really happy with. For Marauder it would be a close run thing between the Witch Elves and the Trolls. For Forgeworld it would have to be my last huge Dragon Kit, Volgaroth and Skalok. That was a long labour of love and my biggest sculpt. I got to make the rider as well as the creature. It drove me mad at times but I'm very proud of the end result. Freelance choice is the Hydra, the first figure I made for Footsore. It was a total pain trying to fit nine necks in place but I will have to admit that Mark was right about making it look better... just don't tell him I said that!



13

Painted by:

11 Kari Hernesniemi

12 Jonathan Marshall

13 Chris Sabick

APPROACHING ART



01

By Nic Evans

Art changes, and whilst the institutional mainstream of public art is slow to respond to this change, new art forms and ideas are readily welcomed into the wider arts landscape all the time.

Time and time again, we are confronted with the eternal question: Are miniatures art? To my mind, the answer is an emphatic yes, but in order to explore that answer, I want to go through some of the stumbling blocks we face when answering this question – not just of miniatures, but of any art form. We will explore how miniature enthusiasts and model makers have overcome these challenges and suggestions on how they can continue to do so.

Art is made up and I have no authority

One of the difficulties when debating the validity of an object or concept as art, is that there is no central entity or item in existence that we can point to and objectively announce 'Behold, here is art in its entirety!' Similarly, there is no defining authority to whom we can offload the annoying task of identifying where the hard edges of art begin and end. This is why, when asked to explain what art is, many of us struggle to find a suitable description – we may know art when we see it, but we struggle to articulate that to another person.

There are so many different styles and types of art too. Around these myriad schools of art converges a myriad of different 'art worlds,' each with its own experts and terminology, its own context and methodology, and each rebounding and reacting to one another, relating through degrees of separation to one another, often without conscious choice.

When we seek an objective answer to the question of whether something is art, we doom ourselves to never receiving an answer, as no two voices from any two art worlds will answer in the same way.

Perhaps then the question to ask ourselves is 'Can this be art?' and use the collective answers we receive to build an informed decision to help us figure out how one might begin to create an art form from our subject.

This all leads us nicely to our discussion here today. Can miniatures be art? What issues might they face and how do we address them?

Cool vs nerdy

Some uncharitable types might suggest that painting miniatures could be described as a 'nerdy' pastime. There's a reason Mark from *Peep Show*¹ has a subscription to White Dwarf instead of frieze². Some might posit

¹ *Peep Show* - a popular British TV show that followed the adventures of slacker wannabe Jeremy and his long suffering socially awkward best friend Mark.

² *Frieze* - lofty contemporary arts and culture magazine.

³ *Duchamp* - Marcel Duchamp was a French artist and a key figure in avant-garde French painting and sculpture.

⁴ Michael Nelson - a contemporary British installation artist.



02

that painting minis and getting messy with Green Stuff does not align with the 'cool image' of the radical artist, blazing their own path without a care for the conventions of the past? I would posit that artists can be massive nerds themselves. Some artistic methods require a studied and meticulous process of research, experimentation and refinement. In many ways, the means by which art is made and the means by which one might kitbash a figure are exactly the same. Some artists might appear to be closer to a model train enthusiast, meticulously researching, always refining, focussing to the point of absolute expertise on a certain field.

When discussing art, it can be enlightening to examine the processes that go into the actual creation of it. By doing so, we can start to find the similarities that show us how painting miniatures equates to an artistic endeavour.

Craft vs Concept (or Duchamp³ paints space marines)

Thinking of the discussion above, if one were to ask 'Can miniatures be considered art, based purely on the craft that goes into their creation,' the answer then would be yes. There is obvious artistry in the creation of miniatures, found in the sculpting, the painting or the marriage of both.

Many highly conceptual recognised artworks are also works of amazing craft and technical skill, from the bronze works of Gavin Turk to the beautiful ceramics of Rachel Kneebone. The presence of craft and technical skill is not representative of a void of meaning, far from it.

Context and content (or Ceci n'est pas une bolter)

When we engage with a piece of artwork, we engage with more than the physical art object, but with a far wider set of ideas and signifiers.

We consider not just its physical content but also its history, its construction, its material and form, the social context of its creation and display, its geographical origin, its title, its relationship to other works by the same artist or within the same space and the relationships of these and many other factors. All these things form the contextual content of a piece of artwork.

So how does a miniature fit in? How might we read it? Luckily, we do not need to look too hard to find these answers, and in fact, we can look at the ultimate poster-work for miniatures as art. There are hundreds of artists who have utilised models and miniatures in their work, from Gerry Judah, Sarah Woodfine, Matt Collishaw, Clara Williams – the list is extensive, but for now join me on a trip to Hell.

- 01 *Ovid in Exile (2016)*
Porcelain
Rachel Kneebone
- 02 *Trash (2007)*
Painted bronze
Gavin Turk



03

Brothers Jake and Dinos Chapman's *Hell* dioramas are often held up as an example of how the physical act of model making can be used to create art. The scenes they created featured hundreds of miniatures populating an apocalyptic hellscape. These little plastic figures are doing some heavy contextual lifting. The combination of scale models, diorama and model railways create a dissonance between medium and subject. The Chapman brothers used miniatures because they evoked the gentle pursuits of model train enthusiasts and shed dwelling hobbyists. The idea of the obsessive, quiet uncle or retired train spotter turning their hobby skills to such violent subject matter is coded into the choice of material – here the use of miniatures is absolutely integral to the success of the artwork.

When we look at using miniatures to create conceptually engaging works, we have to take stock of the context of the model – in the production of art, the medium is part of the message. What we put into the work impacts the reading of the work and so we should utilise miniatures accordingly.

What if we don't want to create artwork that uses the external context of the wider miniature hobby? What if we want to make 40K miniatures and have them recognised as art in their own right, not acting as a signifier for a wider set of ideas? After all, a display of 40K miniatures could say the same thing about the state of post-imperial Britain as a Mike Nelson⁴ exhibition, but it wouldn't be very engaging to a hobbyist.

Can we do that? Absolutely, and not only can we, but we can do it in a way which is right at the cutting edge of contemporary art practice, using something we have all been doing for as long as fantasy gaming has existed...

World-building and collective practice or how we beat art to the punch

Ask any 40K player to explain the history of the Warhammer universe to you, and chances are they can, and that the explanation will be somewhat consistent from player to player. Ask a few random people to explain the history of the real world to you, however, and their descriptions could sound completely different.

That's the thing about reality: it's messy. We move through it, unable to leave, or take a step back, or get any real objective view of the totality of what is happening. If only there was a proxy reality we could inhabit, one in which we had total knowledge of the world around us, where we could utilise a whole new set of signifiers to communicate clearly about our own, less-cohesive reality. Oh wait, there is, and it's called Warhammer 40,000, the grimdark future of the 41st millennium!

In my opinion, this is where the miniature comes into its own as a possible art medium. As modellers and collectors, each of us has chosen, in some way, to inhabit a second, fantasy reality – each of the models we create and paint contains not just a real world context of hobby, or industrial production, or play, but a secondary 'in universe' context – of factions and ideology, of artificial histories and

03-04 *Fucking Hell* (2008)
 Jake and Dinos Chapman
 Mixed Media



04

relationships – and collectively we all know how it works and joins together.

World-building is so central to fantasy gaming that we might overlook just how important it is to the way we read one another's creations, yet when we paint a Blood Angel Space Marine blue, we know this is wrong, or when we mix Escher and Goliath models in our Necromunda gangs, we instantly understand that there is a narrative to be explored.

So when we create a miniature, we have the potential to communicate using a universal set of coded ideas and connotations that defy conventional language.

In recent years, the potential of world-building has been explored in contemporary art, in the practices of artists such as Claire Scherzinger, whose work is explored through the understanding of an entirely fictional universe and ecosystem, the imagined narratives of Katrina Palmer and the digital realities of Emily Mulenga.

Increasingly, artists are looking at the way games and roleplaying systems have allowed strangers to inhabit shared spaces. In many ways, I think this exemplifies the 28 movement, as hobbyists increasingly begin to explore the potential of just such a shared universe.

Whose art are we talking about?

All art is made for a specific audience and miniatures are no different. At present, I believe the audience for miniatures is other hobbyists, fellow painters and modellers. But I

don't believe it is going to stay that way.

As cult culture increasingly enters the mainstream, the collective understanding of that shared universe is going to increase. Warhammer has already become enough of a household name that casual references to it in TV shows are commonplace, and whilst it's largely still used as the butt of the joke, or to act as shorthand for 'nerd' – there is an increasing understanding of the ways in which fictional worlds can be engaged with through the hobby and an increasing respect for those who do it.

Well-crafted miniatures have the potential to change our understanding of a shared fiction and introduce new audiences to the texture and atmosphere of that world. In this way, I believe that not only can miniatures be art, but they are approaching it closer and closer every day.

“As cult culture increasingly enters the mainstream, the collective understanding of that shared universe is going to increase.”

HOBBY IS [NOT] ART

OR: A TREATISE ON HOW I LEARNED TO BE AN AMATUER

Text by Jeremiah Catling
Art by Martin Trese

There is a difference between a billboard proclaiming *Coca-Cola* in their signature font, with a refreshingly wet bottle in the background, and Andy Warhol's *Green Coca-Cola Bottles* (1962) hanging in the Whitney. Do we have the time to sort through the entire history of art, culture, craft and the divide between them? Definitely not. But perhaps we can take a moment here to reflect on our shared hobby space, the problem of 'artistic integrity' and the oh so reviled 'politics?' Settle in, we are going on a quick trip through some very contentious ideas, and maybe learn to love along the way.

To begin with, I want to establish my definition of art, something that can be very tricky to nail down. I, with a lot of idea bashing, have come to a definition that art is an act of questioning cultural norms, structures or ideologies. It is a mode, a process.

An exercise that got me here: one of my mentors had me define art in a way that did not overlap with something else, some definition that was not craft, literature or anything else. A great way to think of it is to consider sports. There are lots of different physical activities and competitive games, but sports are a specific thing with a specific role in a community. In the same way, art is a specific thing with a role and definition, arbitrated by institutions, critics and participants. Does it flux and shift? Absolutely. Is it a grab-all for anyone who wants to elevate their crass attempts at being edgy? Sometimes. Here we get into intent, execution and evaluation. If art is a means of questioning culture, then what is the intent of the artist; does their execution emphasise this intention,

and how is it evaluated by the community? When these all line up, you have integrity and possibly even art! Anyone can proclaim to be an athlete, but if they never workout, practice or play, are they really?

Playing a casual game of dodgeball with friends, or trying to form a competitive team to win the regional dodgeball league (do these exist?), are both totally valid weekend pursuits. Let us say, though, that someone states their intent is to be the best dodgeball player, but they only play informal games at the local park. It is easy to see their intent does not line up with the execution, or the greater dodgeball community, and instead feels disingenuous. If the goal is to make art, then you are wading into something that is so massive that 'Art History' alone is its own field of study, and is probably worth some time and thought. For those of us who have, we know the secret: it is all nonsense anyway. If you are interested in further readings, the *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art* sourcebook by Stiles and Selz is a fantastic starting, middle and end point.

Now, what does this talk of sports have to do with the, frankly breathtaking, miniatures we here build and love? Amateur, a word that literally is derived from 'to love,' is the concept of someone doing something because they love it, a hobbyist. Whether art is a labour of love, hate or instinct is another debate we will not answer here, but it can safely be said that it exists in a different space. It is not a relaxing pastime to find relief from our lack of a beautiful house, a beautiful wife, behind that large automobile (see: Talking Heads). Hobbies

are a way to centre ourselves, feel like we can enjoy the fruits of our labour, and celebrate the things we love on our own terms. It is a selfish act and an important one. It is the act of loving something, for its own sake, and it can be all consuming in the same manner. It lets us step back and recharge, struggle and feel accomplishment, without the outcome affecting our livelihoods. The stakes are, as they say, low, and thank goodness for that.

This is the part where we get messy, the rubber of that big automobile hits the road and we talk politics. All art is political because it questions culture. Politics are literally any form of group decision making and the foundation of a culture. It is the agreements, unspoken and debated, of values that give shape to the idea of 'normal.' It is the rules of the game, the number of yards on the field and how many innings there are to play. The objects produced by our hobby culture reflect things such as 'war,' 'soldier' and 'violence.' Toys, like fables, are a means of establishing cultural norms. Miniatures, in particular, are the sanitising and reduction in power of something to the point where we can play god with it. Artistic goals easily get lost in the execution as toys are already so charged with their own intention. There is very little questioning of the horror of war while making sure the edge highlighting is flossy on that sick looking boltgun. And let us not pretend that recreating hate groups or their symbols somehow has no context, especially when those same groups and symbols are literally drawing blood in the streets around the world.



I am not here to say that toys are a terrible thing and to throw the baby, the bathwater and the whole planet out together, but it is very important to understand that art is not an attempt to reinforce the politics of a culture but to argue with it. While hobbying is something we do to give joy and flavour to our downtime, it is not attempting to address the pains of our actual daily lives. Scuba diving is not exactly an act of conscious rebellion, and making a diorama of a genocide to look cool and show off techniques is not, in anyway, art. The difference between George Segal's Holocaust memorials and a bust of Hitler as an orc is massive. It is a magnitude of understanding, empathy, awareness and, as established earlier, intent. The goal of hobby suppliers is to sell, and anyone who watched *Mad Men* should understand what selling goods is about. Spoilers, it is not about making profound statements of existential dread, but instead to capitalise on them. There is not a love of the craft; in fact there is very little joy in it at all, especially as it veers into content that only loves its own image. It is not an act of artistic integrity, but a selfish act of dehumanisation. In the worst case, it is actually a statement of belief, of support for hate groups, at which point... Well, we can toss arguments of 'no politics in the hobby' out the window and get into something that ends with 'will not be missed.'

We can look at Jake and Dinos Chapman's *Fucking Hell* (2008) in this conversation, but their piece used miniatures, dioramas, vitrines, scale and arrangement to emphasise horror. Their attempt to implicate the viewer, and to

induce feelings of guilt for looking on as horrors are committed. It is very disturbing, on purpose, featuring many examples of extreme and explicit violence enacted by Nazis, referencing their war efforts and genocidal actions. It is not a recreation, but a metaphor of the universal hate and violence inflicted. This is not a question of fake imperialism, but a reminder of a real and actual horror by a group that has been used as a silly gimmick. They did not enact a historical recreation, nor a simple mood board, but a room sized installation that emphasises the correlation between toy soldiers and the violence of war. It is very worthy to note that this piece has mixed reactions, many critics and artists find the shock value to undercut its message, or possibly even get so lost in its own self indulgence it fails to make any real commentary.

If the goal is to have fun, chill with friends and relax within a hobby, then let us make damn sure it is a fun and chill hobby. As has been demonstrated, I have no ability to leave behind my years of criticism, academia and my self serious art practice, but I truly love to be an amateur hobbyist. I left the miniature hobby scene in my late teens because of how terrible people in it were to newcomers (ironically during the 'golden age' of grimdark 3rd edition 40K and fantasy. It is no exaggeration that the gatekeeping was awful). I came back in the last few years because so many of you are clearly amateurs, people who do this out of a love, a joy and want to share. It is infectious and always worthwhile. This magazine alone is such an amazing example of the way in which a group takes time to celebrate the

different voices and individuals who make up the scene. The aesthetics are so cool, and the work and craft on display are simply amazing. Sometimes it is nice to let a pipe be just a pipe and play games together. The important part is that we all are in on the wink, on the satire, and we make sure to not enact the same principles that the games critique.

Let us keep the hobby fun, expansive and available. Let us craft worlds better, or at least more interesting, than the one we are in. Let us not be salesmen dressed as false artists, making passing attempts at politics while selling snake oil. Let our politics be as amateurs, not here to gatekeep, but to share the joy with as many as we can.

And I love this, and so many of you, so much.

To the joys.



BEN CARTWRIGHT

by Ben Cartwright

There are years worth of lore and Black Library novels based around the 41st millennium, all of which can be quite intimidating when creating characters for your games. Fortunately, you do not need to be well versed in any of this to make characterful and interesting models. I, personally, am ignorant of a lot of the written stories and lore, but it has not stopped me from building numerous models over the years, largely working on instinct, which invariably leads me to making human characters. In the same way that it is said 'write what you know', I build what I know, and that is humans! With centuries of human activity before us, and the influence of our current lives now, there is a wealth of fodder and inspiration anywhere one cares to look. Even things like a silly chat with friends has inspired me with a fun idea I can run with.

So what do I look for in a model? First and foremost, readability. What is the character's role? Sometimes this is incredibly easy. Is he a desperado? Give him two pistols. Is she an enforcer? Give her a maul and riot shield. But on the more narrative pieces, such as some of the scientists I have created, more thought is required. A geologist model might not sound all that exciting, but that is where the challenge is, making a piece that reads well for that role and is interesting. Carefully choosing parts obviously helps, but pose is also key.

A well chosen pose can sell a character before anything is even written about them. Most of what I write as background for any of the characters comes from conceiving and building the model as I go along. They inform me as to

who they are. The human body is capable of such expression through pose, so I always try to find the best one to aid the idea of who they are and what their role is. The best pose is not always the easiest to achieve, but once I am sold on the idea, it has to happen as best as I can manage.

Details are a huge part of creating unique characters. I break this category into 'Obvious', 'Subtle' and 'Personal'. 'Obvious' covers things like weapons and equipment, but even then, I try to find unusual variants or, if the bits boxes fail me, custom make ones. 'Subtle' takes into account the stuff people might not notice if you did not point it out (although keen observers will spot them!). I think these details are essential for building interesting models. They can help fill negative spaces and guide people's eyes around the model.

Perhaps most importantly, 'Personal' are the details that come to mind from things I have encountered in my life, be it through a chat, TV show, book or event. You might imagine that some of these things do not translate well in terms of 40K imagery, but quite often, these are the most commented on items (you will see some examples of this type of detail in the pictures and descriptions of my models).

Finally, you must give them a memorable name. To put all of this together, I am going to talk a little about this process with some of my models.





The Geologist

The clothing on the base model immediately spoke to me for this piece. I then looked to kit him out with recognisable tools for the role, and added a mask detail that I had decided all members of my Ondroma* group would have. Old Western movies made me think he should have a messy beard, and influenced colour choices when it came to paint, going as I did with all the varying leathers.



Flint

A perfect example of real life influences impacting a model and its design. I was working on a basic 'man with a flamer' idea at the time of The Prodigy's front man, Keith Flint, passing away. Coincidence or fate, who knows, but my love of the band meant this quickly became a tribute piece. I chose details of Keith Flint and his attire from their iconic *Firestarter* track video, which brought all the character to this piece, far more than anything I had sketched out previously.



Kimble

Taking the 'big man with a big gun' idea and trying to do something different. A calm pose instead of all action, this made me imagine he was an older chap, a survivor. I softened his muscles, added a bit of a gut and further added to the age when it came to painting. His arms presented a couple of large canvases to add tattoos, one an old regimental badge to hint at his military past, and a Lady Luck gypsy lady, to suggest he is superstitious and believes his survival is more fortune than skill. I felt this added a touch of fragility.



Velvet

A reimagining of the first character I made, a two year gap between the first version and this. A new setting meant I could think about how the environment would affect an established figure. Velvet got a new full length coat to protect her better against the dust in and around Bleakspur, and to show she was a traveller. I broke her sniper rifle down into parts and added a gun case. She also got a backpack that contains a grapnel and other imaginable items. To retain her original punk look, I looked at ripped plaid trousers actually worn by punks and kept her now infamous pink streaks in her hair.



**Ondroma is an upcoming narrative event organised by painter and blogger Lars Sammet.*

PATRIC SAND

I've been part of this amazing hobby and community for the last 19 years and my journey started, like many others, at a young age. My father and I started casting our own lead miniatures, then continued with model aircraft, but one day my mother took me to my local Games Workshop store in Stockholm and everything changed. From that moment on I was hooked and have been involved in this hobby ever since.

I started working in my local Games Workshop store after my college studies. As a kid, I used to hang out in that store three or four days a week, dreaming that I could work there. That time in my life changed a lot of things; I changed as a person as did my perspective on this hobby and community. I experienced the amazing strength and passion that we all share for these small plastic figures and everything that comes with it.

During this period, I met a great many people that have been key to my continued development and growing passion. This was the moment when I realised that I had really started to improve. I think a lot of us can connect to the feeling when you can suddenly achieve things that seemed impossible before.

My 'new journey', as I call it, started nine years ago when I attended Games Day in Birmingham, England. I had never been to an event like this before and had never seen anything like the Golden Demon competition in real life. I entered the competition, without any luck, but it did not matter - it was seeing all the mind-blowing painted miniatures that transformed me. From that day on I made a decision to aim for that level.

Today I am proud to say that I have achieved my goal. It may sound a bit cocky, but it is important to reflect and see where you are standing with your skills and what you have accomplished. Saying this, the level of today's painters has changed drastically since my first Golden Demon experience. Online forums and social media such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Patreon have totally changed the game.

In my opinion the highest level of painting nine years ago would not stand a chance today. I do not think this is a negative thing. The continued development of this hobby and community is something that gives me strength and passion. What gave me that push to improve, and still does, is that moment when you see something that you just cannot comprehend. You keep looking and trying to figure out how they achieved the effects of that paint job, that frustration and desire to work it out can sometimes be what keeps me motivated.

It might seem strange that my 'envy' of others is what feeds my motivation. Some may say that is toxic and they might be right. But I know a lot more people feel the same and I think it's important to talk about. It should motivate you to aim higher - not make you question your skills and talent. It's a very fine line to walk, but for me it's something that has kept me going. It also made me much more involved with the people that I look up to. This is my way to examine how these people work and their approach to this hobby.

Social media and other digital platforms make the connection to others so much easier. You can post pictures and ask for feedback from the community which is something that gives

Opposite *Warmaster Titan*
by Games Workshop, personal
project, painted in 2021



so many of us the opportunity to develop and explore much more.

This easy access to social media tends to influence what I'm painting. I describe myself as a 'hobby butterfly'. When you see something new and exciting it is very easy to lose focus on your current project. This is a hobby that we do because we love it, so I say go with the flow!

While I encourage dipping into new projects as you become inspired, it is also important to finish things to achieve the sense of satisfaction that you get from a finished piece. I tend to have several projects running simultaneously. This is what works best for me, and I switch between projects depending on what I'm excited about that day.

I like to have projects in different scales and genres, everything from 28mm miniatures, 70mm miniatures and busts of different scales too. I mostly like to paint monsters, creatures and other things that are odd.

My painting style varies a lot depending on the miniature. On a 28mm scale model, I tend to be a bit cleaner to make the details speak for themselves. It is a style that I like a lot and probably comes from my time looking at all those old White Dwarf magazines and being a fan of other painters with the same style. It's important with miniatures of that scale to find a good balance between how graphic you can be and how much texture you can add. If you are painting a 54mm or even a 90mm figure, it is much easier to add textures and effects. The same goes for busts. It has been a true learning-curve to change scales and understand how you achieve the best results. I mostly work with 28mm miniatures and busts in 1/10 scale because I've found them the most fun and challenging. It's also affected by what the market has to offer; there are so many amazing sculpts for smaller figures these days. The market for busts has also increased in the last few years which is great. One of my favourite things about busts is that you don't have to make a base for them!

I enjoy working with different elements on larger miniatures or busts. Some of my

favourite materials to paint are fabrics, metallics and plates. My overall technique is a method called 'glazing'. I think a lot of you have heard of it and if you haven't, simply water down your paint to an extremely thin consistency, take a small amount of it and build layer upon layer. It can be very time consuming, but it is also very rewarding with nice smooth transitions.

Here are some helpful tips that I've picked up on the way. They may not be new to you but if you already know of them perhaps they can act as a reminder.

1. Take breaks - If you don't like your result then take a step back. Maybe even leave it overnight and come back to it the next day. Take time to reflect and return with a new perspective.

2. Always ask for honest advice and feedback - This is the key to progress. Don't be afraid to ask for feedback. If you can be open to comments on your work, you can gain some good insights on how to improve. Don't be afraid to give feedback either, you will learn more about yourself as you reflect what you like or dislike and why.

3. We do this because we love it - Never forget that painting miniatures is something we do for ourselves because we love it. Don't stress out over things, and don't push yourself over the limit to where you stop enjoying yourself.

Last but not least, thank you 28 for this article. It's a true honour and I love that you all take the time to make the absolute best miniature magazine. We are so fortunate that you do this for all of us and create a place to share our love and passion for this hobby.

01 *Gandalf the Grey* by Games Workshop painted in 2016, Silver at Golden Demon 2016 UK

02 *Isharann Tidecaster*, by Games Workshop, painted in 2018, Silver at Golden Demon 2018 UK

03 *Necron Cryptek* by Games Workshop, painted in 2017, Golden Demon Winners Challenge

04 *Indrythen*, boxart for *Cult of Paint*, painted in 2020

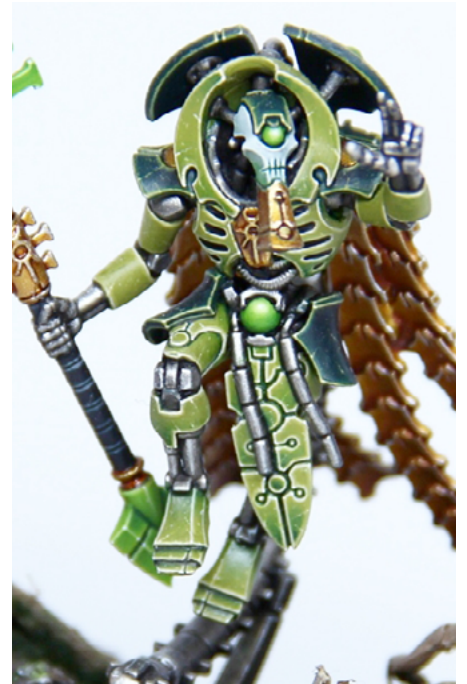
05 *Varaak Mage*, boxart for *Voodooworx Miniatures*, painted in 2020



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EMBRACING A SLOWER HOBBY



by James Rudd

In late 2020, I pulled together all the miniatures I had painted over the previous three years and set them up for a grand photo-shoot. The sight was amazing. Unbelievable. I had almost painted more miniatures in the three-and-a-half years I had lived in Europe than I had over the 14 or so years I had been involved in the hobby.

It was a childhood ambition realised: I had grand armies of daemons, goblins and mighty warriors at my command. I had always wanted to own one of those White Dwarf-worthy painted collections, and to be recognised for it. And there it was, all laid out and ready to share on Instagram.

But, as I looked over the ranks of soldiers and display pieces, I realised I was only truly happy with a fraction of them. Some, I simply hated

looking at. All because I had been in a rush to see the projects completed, to share photos of my painted hordes and rake in the social media attention.

This photo-shoot turned out to be a real turning point in my hobby journey.

How it all began

Back in the day, I embraced what I now refer to as 'the slow hobby' – out of necessity.

I would save up for months to afford a single box of models, and would appreciate them all the more for that. It was a good day whenever my parents drove me down to Adelaide and let me wander into the Games Workshop store with my hard(ly)-earned dollars. I would browse the wall of blister packs in search of a cool new sculpt, then look over beautifully

“... I realised I was only truly happy with a fraction of them. Some, I simply hated looking at.”



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rendered box-art and imagine what my future Land Raider might look like in battle, painted up in the colours of 'My Dudes'. On the car ride home, I would open my new box and obsess over all the intricate details of the models, planning out how I would paint each one.

Over time, I managed to build armies (I still have my first embarrassing Space Marines stored away in my parent's house), but the process was long and mindful. Each new squad of Space Marines, each new hero, was lavished with special attention because I knew I would not be getting any more reinforcements for a while. Then, as I became an adult with a job, a place of my own, disposable income and a social media account, things changed...

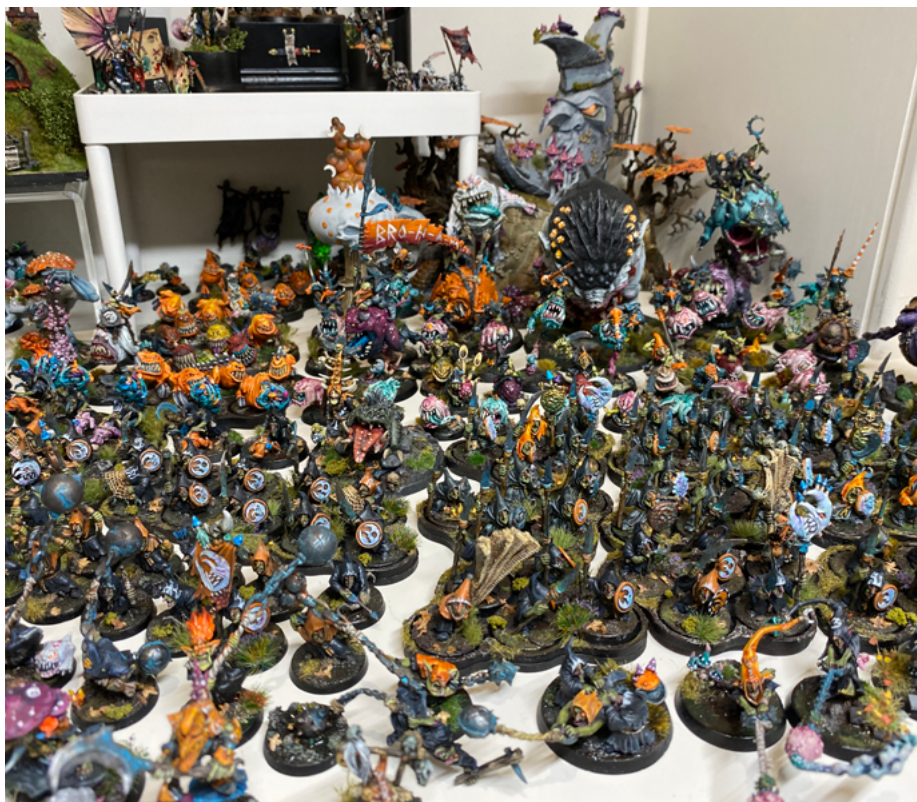
Revelling in excess

Social media demands a high level of output

from any kind of creative – that is, if you want to build a following for whatever reason. Pride, vanity, goal-fulfilment. Pick your poison. It does not matter to the algorithm.

The algorithm is an unforgiving and often cruel creature, shaping the world as it sees fit. It is not uncommon for visual artists to complain that their normally popular posts have suddenly disappeared off the radar. At other times, they are shocked when a really simple, silly post somehow rakes in tens of thousands of likes.

There is no real secret to beat the algorithm, but a common suggestion is to post and engage regularly – every day, if you can. But painting up something new every day is pretty unsustainable for the average hobbyist. And when you factor in the work needed to really



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build a brand on a certain platform, that does not leave much 'me-time' to really enjoy the hobby.

Social media has fostered a bizarre new form of peer pressure: pressure from a global peer group, mediated through a cold and calculating algorithm designed to keep users scrolling past ads. A lot has already been written on this (and, no doubt, many of you will have experienced this personally) but it is worth repeating. Today, the social media hobbyist is battling for a share of attention in a crowded, demanding and often unhealthy environment.

I certainly got sucked into the trap: painting more for Instagram than I was for myself.

The lure of the easy path

Funnily enough, one of the worst things to happen to my hobby outside of social media was the release of Contrast paints. It suddenly became quick and easy to pump out an army of hundreds of models, albeit at a lower overall quality. So, of course, I was attracted to this, for all those reasons I already mentioned.

Over a few months following Warhammer Fest 2019, I painted a rather large army of Slaanesh daemons using mostly Contrast and Technical paints. And while I finished them quickly – got them 'off my plate', if you will – I was left unsatisfied. I suppose that is the curse of Slaanesh hitting, right? Seeking excess and

glory, only to ultimately find it unsatisfying.

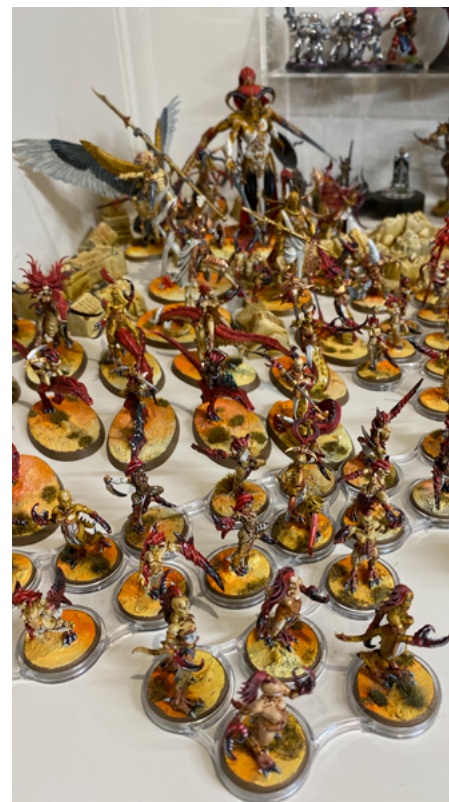
I rarely show off this rapid-fire army. They have yet to hit the gaming table in full, either. I started to wonder: what was the point?

A new guiding philosophy

In my rush to feed the Instagram beast and tick whole armies off my to-do list, I had missed a trick. I had stopped thinking deeply about colour schemes and brush-strokes, and could only see ahead to the finished Instagram post. I was desperate for the dopamine rush of new notifications.

Also lost was my enjoyment of the hobby itself. I was splashing paints on models in order to complete them – nothing more. And so, every time I sat down to paint I felt like I was simply getting down to another tiring task. No one's unpaid hobby should feel like work. In my rush to produce, 'collections' became 'projects', 'hobby time' became 'work', and the quality of my expensive plastic soldiers suffered.

But recognising a problem is the first step to solving it. Today, I am weaning myself off the social media high. Instead, I am looking for validation through friends, trusted peers and my own sense of pride in my work. As an example, I recently painted up a single Space Marine over the course of a week and enjoyed myself more than throughout the entire process of painting my daemon army. And I



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01 The collection by the end of 2020

02 Gloomspite Gitz army, bought in bulk and painted over the course of a few months

03 Slaaneshi Daemons army, painted mostly in Citadel Contrast

04 Converted Syll'Esske and Diaz Daemonettes

05 Nurgle Blightking

06 Black Templars



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think the result reflects this. The final piece is more considered, cohesive and clean.

In fact, all my favourite pieces – those that have pride of place on my overstuffed Ikea shelves – are those I painted with limited resources and over a long period of time. These pieces (like my Blight King or Black Templar display) were lavished with attention. Every brush stroke was slower and placed just so.

My take away, then, after a decade and a half of miniature hobbying, is pretty simple: do not let yourself be rushed. Do not fall to excess. Embrace a slower hobby.

It takes time to observe the model, to select and mix the right colours and shades. Your miniature is a delicate canvas, sculpted by a real master of their craft. No matter if it is a humble Space Marine or a mighty Primarch, your models deserve your time and attention. And you will thank yourself for spending it. My creative philosophy today is counter to the pace of the world we now live in, but I have found it crucial to my continued enjoyment of the hobby. I am sure if you carry these three words with you, you will know what I mean:

Process over product.



06

ORIGINAL SYNTHESIS



by Will Thomas

PEOPLE SOMETIMES ASK me how I come up with original ideas for miniatures. The simple answer is that I don't.

I steal them.

Ok, a caveat: I do not mean 'steal' in the sense of simply copying work and taking credit for it (quite apart from the moral issue, that just does not sound like much fun...). I mean 'steal' in the playful sense of TS Eliot's quote opposite.

Eliot approached his poetry as synthesis, creating a patchwork of familiar themes and ideas woven together into a new whole. Take each element on its own and there is nothing 'original' about his work: ancient Greek name-dropping here, a bit of Shakespeare there, some images of the English countryside on top et cetera. What makes Eliot's work blazingly original is the synthesis—the way he puts all these elements back together.

To an extent, that is just what art is. But I also think this idea of synthesis is especially relevant to the 28 movement and the strange little worlds we inhabit. I think synthesis is baked into everything we do: from the mechanics of 'kit-bashing' or 'converting' miniature kits into something new, to the fantastical stories we tell. As a result, I try more and more to forget about chasing pure 'originality' and instead embrace the idea of miniature art as a magpie's collection of influences and ideas.

I think you should too.



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Opposite A lost soul wanders the *Primogenitor*: inspired by the paintings of Zdzisław Beksiński

01 *The Wraith*: a master study of the miniatures of Ana Polanščak

02 *Blind Hounds*: my attempt to fuse Warhammer's Mordheim setting with the aesthetics of the *Bloodborne* video game



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EMBRACING SYNTHESIS

The 28 movement grew out of Games Workshop's worlds and it is not difficult to see their influences – sometimes to the point of self-parody. As VW Talos pointed out in Vol. II of this very publication, when it comes to the ancient 'Primarch' heroes of Warhammer 40,000:

'Every Primarch has a gimmick. Dorn is a noble knight. Guilliman is Julius Caesar. Jaghatai Khan is Temüjin. Magnus is a super-wizard. Peturabo is a Bond villain. Angron is Ben-Hur. Kurtz is literally Evil Batman.'

Nope, no denying this one. But I think the obvious theft of ideas is actually one of Games Workshop's biggest strengths and part of what makes the Warhammer worlds so much fun to inhabit. The very fact that they do steal so obviously and so widely gives players and miniature artists the freedom to explore, merge and import a staggering number of different themes within the 'sandbox' of the settings. The Primarchs are a bad example, but they are part of an approach that opens the door for unique combinations.

Take two spectacularly original artists in the 28 style: Ana Polanščak and Isaac Tobin. Each of them has an instantly recognisable style that looks like no Warhammer miniature you have ever seen – and yet somehow clearly fits within the setting. Tempting as it might be to ascribe this to raw genius, I think the real originality of these two artists is that they spot connections between Games Workshop's worlds and lesser-known influences (a fact

that both of them are keen to point out!). In Ana's case it might be the macabre aesthetics of medieval Catholic catacombs or the bleak art of painters like Santiago Caruso, while Isaac's own social media handle of Weirding Way is a direct reference to Frank Herbert's seminal sci-fi novel *Dune* and its visually striking 1984 film adaptation. Again, what's original in these artists' work isn't the individual elements – it's the synthesis.

Making a home for this kind of creativity is a massive win for the Warhammer settings: and it becomes possible because Games Workshop themselves 'steals' so many ideas, opening the door to others. But I think we take the idea of synthesis with us even when we leave Warhammer behind.

Like Nic Evans discusses in Vol. III of this magazine, more and more 28 artists are stepping beyond Games Workshop's worlds to create their own settings, rules and miniatures. Again though, I think the power and 'originality' of these movements is in their synthesis. Whether you consider Napoleonic wargames meeting root vegetables in Max Fitzgerald's wonderful *Turnip28*, skirmishing gangs recast with medieval folk-horror in Max McComsey's *The Weald*, or wargaming wizards facing the Lovecraftian mythos in Simon Schnitzler's upcoming *The Alignment* project, the creative influences are front and centre. The way these artists combine well-known elements is what makes them so fascinating.

This is a lesson I try to embrace more and more in my own work. I find that if I stop worrying

**"Immature poets mimic. Mature poets steal."
- TS Eliot**

about creating something entirely new and start trying to make an interesting connection between existing ideas instead, the results usually surprise me. Approaching originality by the back door, so to speak...

SYNTHESIS IN PRACTICE

So what do my ramblings actually mean for making miniatures? Here are three ways I try to embrace synthesis in my own work.

Consume

The more influences you have sloshing around in your brain, the greater the scope for new combinations. The 28 community is always a fantastic source of ideas for miniatures. It is always worth learning from artists you admire, digging into their work and trying to work out the methods they used. I recently went so far as to make a 'master study' of Ana Polanščak's miniatures by attempting to convert and paint a character in her style. [01]

But the scope for synthesis is all the greater if you go beyond miniatures. Art, music, books, films and video games can all provide new inspirations. The Grimdark Film Club on Instagram (created by Jacob Adams, aka Banhus Miniatures) is a fantastic resource for sharing art, music and films that inspire others within the community and a great place to start when looking for off-the-wall recommendations.

In my case, I enjoy a debilitating addiction to the paintings of the Polish dystopian surrealist Zdzisław Beksiński. Approaching the Iron Sleet collective's open invitation to submit miniatures for their Primogenitor project, I noticed their narrative played with ideas about time and space shifting. This instantly made me think of Beksiński's weirdly dislocated deserts and forests. I tried to capture some of that mood in the build, creating a display where industrial materials like stone pillars and metal panels seem to be shifting and growing like organic plants or limbs. I also took the colour scheme straight out of one of his paintings.

Elsewhere, I tried to fuse the aesthetic of From Software's video game *Bloodborne* with the setting of Games Workshop's classic

Mordheim. The worlds are similar – crumbling post-apocalyptic cities in the grip of strange curses and mass hysteria – but the aesthetic styles are quite different. I tried to import the ragged textures, elongated physiques and creepy masked faces of *Bloodborne*, a style pleasingly at odds with the clean digital sculpts and squat physiques of modern Games Workshop miniatures. [02]

Experiment

Ultimately there is no substitute for sitting down to create miniatures, synthesis or not. I find the important thing is to challenge my usual approach: trying new things and taking risks is guaranteed to ignite new connections in my brain.

Whatever level you are at, I recommend Isaac Tobin's *Oblique Attributes* article from Vol. 1 of



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03-04 Mutants of Namorra
Prime: using organic
materials to unify
disparate elements
05-08 Experiments with
different textures and
components

this magazine. Isaac is a master of converting miniature pieces into an unrecognisable new whole and his article is a master class in using shape, proportion and feeling to create new ideas and references with the bits you already have.

I would also add the importance of going beyond miniature kits. Many modellers use random elements like watch parts, dried twigs or cloth to bring their bases and terrain to life. Introducing these techniques onto miniatures themselves instantly invites a new aesthetic and for me sparks a lot of new avenues for synthesis (Matthew Ross aka Totally Not Panicking has an excellent free kit-bashing guide on using texture and scratch building in an intuitive style).

This was a revelation for me while working on a clan of mutants for Lars Sammet's Ondroma setting. I started with some rough ideas: I knew they had to be mutants, Ondroma is a world reclaimed by nature. I wanted to create creatures from the scrub and forests – so I duly grabbed a load of twigs, moss and modelling flock to use on their bases. But the minute I started putting these elements on the figures themselves, my brain lit up and started connecting all these disparate ideas, unifying a wide variety of different images. [03-04]

Once again, the new shapes and textures sparked connections in my brain that my bits-box could not, and I ended up with some unique-looking wretches to show for it. Elsewhere, I pushed these natural components in creating forest zombies for the Weald setting [05], used ragged cloth to create a weary aesthetic on a knight for the upcoming The Alignment event [06] and watch components to create mechanical wings for my Void Moth [07].

Collaborate

For me collaborative projects are the best thing about the 28 community. These days I rarely make anything that isn't a contribution to a world created by someone else – an approach that is only getting easier as more and more projects evolve beyond close groups of friends for a specific event, to embrace open-ended communal world-building.

Social media is a blessing in this regard. My advice is always to get out there and politely approach event organisers and submit to their events and invitationals. This is the best way to get new ideas and explore different avenues. No matter your skill level, and even if the event is currently closed or your ideas need work, no one is going to be anything other than thrilled by your interest. Trust me!

I was struggling for inspiration while working on the upcoming No God's Land community setting. I knew we had a trench war aesthetic with medieval trappings, but couldn't quite nail down an approach I was happy with. That changed when Jonas Alexander (aka Wicker Man Miniatures) introduced me to WW1 satirical painters, medieval marginalia and Christian myths of the revelation. I started seeing links across these disparate sources and started picking out images and effects: the combinations of whimsy and horror, the twisted physiques and the sheer muddy madness of it all were incredibly inspiring. [09-10]

There is no way I could have generated all of these ideas on my own. Other artists introduced me to the connections and inspired me to explore them, and I think each of us have managed to create interesting, evocative and – dare I say it – original miniatures as a result. In that way, collaborative projects are the perfect example of how I approach art in the 28 style: Forget 'pure' originality. Embrace synthesis.

Opposite Soldiers of No God's Land: inspired by WWI propaganda and medieval marginalia



09



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INTERVIEW // MÖRK · BORG

MÖRK · BORG



THE 28 ETHOS is all about theme and evoking emotions. Games Workshop's most memorable games, like *Inquisitor* and *Mordheim*, exude this quality and live on long after the games stop being supported with new models and are available in shops. The apocalyptic fantasy RPG **MÖRK BORG**, from the designers Pelle Nilsson (Ockult Örtmästare Games) and Johan Nohr (Stockholm Kartell), understands the power of this. Just glancing through its pages, which are a spectacle of colour, conflicting type-faces and macabre imagery, dredges up primal emotions of dread, wonder and disgust, as though it has found a conduit directly to the vestigial remnants of our ancient reptilian brains. The game is in the OSR (Old School Renaissance/Revival) style, favouring incredibly simple and flexible rules that prioritise aesthetics and theme.

The book screams with style from its canary yellow cover with an embossed daemonic skeleton bearing a sword and shield glossy with splattered blood, to the interior pages with splashes of yellow, red, pink and black and unnerving artwork of the occult and forsaken. Each page is unique, shifting from a maelstrom of text and random tables, to ones almost devoid of it, as though it is a facsimile of an art or punk zine. Impressively, all of this chaos is intentional and serves as some of the best world building we have seen in a game, effortlessly conveying a doomed world filled with miserable people, horrific monsters and a pervasive sense of nihilism. It shows us, rather than telling us, of a world that makes Warhammer 40,000's setting seem tame.

Excitingly, **MÖRK BORG** encourages its players to create their own content within its setting and send it in to them, where it may be incorporated into the game for others to enjoy, a sentiment that is close to 28's heart. After several successful Kickstarters, the world of **MÖRK BORG** is only continuing to grow. We were fortunate to be able to ask Pelle and Johan a few questions about their creation!

28: The world of MÖRK BORG is extremely dismal and unforgiving. The world is going to end and, regardless of what you do, that is not going to change. In a similar vein, most

of the projects explored in 28 are delving into equally nihilistic existences. Are settings like this the ones you traditionally gravitate towards?

Pelle Nilsson: Yeah, I guess that's the case with me. Or post-apocalyptic settings, where the main goal is to survive another day. I like games like *Alien*, *Mutant Year Zero* (and the first *Mutant* from 1984) but also smaller stuff like *The Quiet Year*. So... before or after the end is my cup of tea. I'm a bit ambivalent regarding nihilism – that is not responding to me as a person, but it can be fun in games.

Johan Nohr: I think there is some kind of cathartic element of being able to experience a world so terrible and worthless it's really not that big of a deal if it ends or not. Or at least it creates some interesting moral questions – is it worth saving despite it being such a horrible place? Could a halted apocalypse somehow turn it around? I think a nihilistic mentality would be fitting in this setting; there are bound to be many different ways one would respond to the world's certain death sentence. Just look at our own world that is creeping ever closer to its end and how people respond or react differently to that fact.

28: MÖRK BORG has a very simplified and streamlined ruleset, to the point where nearly all of the rules fit onto a single page. Is that the sort of RPG that you gravitate towards when you get a chance to play? And do you feel that more complicated rulesets can detract from the storytelling of a game?

Pelle Nilsson: Yes on both. I often play with a limited time frame, so easy to pick up rules are preferable. Of course (nerdy) rules discussions at the table take away a lot of the fun when playing, and I don't tend to like these discussions. But semi-light rules can be great as well, like with the first games mentioned in the previous answer.

Johan Nohr: I don't think rules will detract from the story, but personally I just can't run rules-heavy or complex games because I keep forgetting rules or getting lost in the mechanics. I want to be able to freely make



rulings and house rules at the table and the crunchier a system is, the more difficult I find it to be.

28: MÖRK BORG is quite unique in that it cites a whole host of musical influences, and has its own Spotify playlist. There are also countless references to songs spread throughout the text. Most of the bands that you cite are in the genre of extreme metal, and we can see the sword and sorcery imagery from bands like Conan reflected in the game, as well as the unrelenting pessimism of a band like The Body. What role did music have in the development of MÖRK BORG and is this a new approach for you?

Pelle Nilsson: You're right and music has a more important role than anything else for me when writing. I find inspiration in music, movies and art, not so much in literature and very little when it comes to other RPGs. Writing is like a rehearsal to me, where I guess Johan and I switch instruments all the time. I would really like to play in a band, but there is no time, nor available people around, so I make RPGs instead.

Johan Nohr: Yeah, music is really at the core of MÖRK BORG and I will not draw a single line or even open InDesign without having music on, because it influences me so much and guides me in the creative process. And what kind of music depends on what I'm doing, but mostly it's some kind of extreme metal. I think in a lot of ways, MÖRK BORG is a love letter to this kind of music.

28: Building on the music question, the art style really parallels the DIY/DWYW of punk zines, with each page being a dramatic departure from those before it, both visually and textually. Was this choice an extension of your musical influences and how do you feel it affects the MÖRK BORG setting as a whole?

Pelle Nilsson: Yes, I wanted both very punkish text pages, like the spread about combat (violence) and more down tuned text (mostly the setting). I was not only listening to punk/metal during the process, but also classical music, dark ambient etc.

Johan Nohr: I think this is an example of how I see music intermixing with the visual, like flipping through the book should be almost a

musical experience and every spread should have a sound in a way. Loud or quiet, fast or slow combining into a rhythm or a melody (but visual) while you're flipping from page to page. Pretentious perhaps but yeah, that was kind of what I was trying to do. It's not pure chaos; there's a lot of structure and thought behind why every spread looks the way it does. Visual hierarchies and the disposition. Not having layouts repeat, but rather complement each other.

28: The writing of the English version of the game was tweaked by Patrick Stuart, the author of a number of well-received RPG books. How did you decide to work with Patrick? Had you previously worked with him, or were you just fans of his work? Are there any of his additions that you are particularly excited about?

Pelle Nilsson: I have never worked with him before but enjoyed his way of writing in Deep Carbon Observatory and Veins of the Earth. I think the end result in MÖRK BORG is very good, and I'm especially happy with the world setting part. It's great that both Swedish and English speaking readers are satisfied, but in different ways.

28: The book contains a small collection of monsters, many standard RPG fare, but with a dark twist. The goblin lore is exceptionally bleak, where if you are attacked by a goblin, a hateful curse is cast upon you. That curse means you are destined to transform into a goblin, your own body becoming a prison in which you powerlessly watch yourself perform murderous acts. The only way out is to kill the goblin that cursed you before the transformation. Additionally, their visage mimics that of the terrifying goblin shark! I wonder where your inspiration came from, and if there are other settings with goblins so creepy?

Pelle Nilsson: To me goblins have always been some 1st-level-getting-XP monster and not very exciting. Actually, I first made them that way in MÖRK BORG. When I did the first version of the game, a paper with two pages of text, I was also very limited regarding word count. That survived into the first draft of the core book. Johan came up with the suggestion to make them more interesting and he figured out how.



Johan Nohr: The goblins being that way is really to make it difficult, if not impossible, to capture a goblin prisoner and make it your pet which is a trope I've seen too many times and think is super weird and disturbing. It also makes them less of a less-than-human creature and more into a condition, a werewolf in a way. But it's also one of those small details that could generate a lot of interesting play and problem solving. An alchemist wants a live goblin and pays well for it, but how do you even capture one without letting it try to attack you even once? The way the goblin looks is kind of a pun (the goblin shark) but man those fish are terrifying so it works.

28: You have created a random dungeon generator on your website called DNGNGEN. It provides a wonderful resource for giving games masters and players ideas for games, and reminds us of some of Games Workshop's old books, filled with all manner of random tables to roll on (Realm of Chaos comes to mind). Is this how you go about creating dungeons and settings for games, using random tables like the ones that pepper the MÖRK BORG book? Could you comment more about your process?

Pelle Nilsson: No, I haven't used generators before DNGNGEN, but of course there are lots of great ones out there. It started out with a single page generator in the core book. Then we wanted to expand on that one, and we were already in contact with Karl Druid (who did Scvmbirther: the digital character generator). It seemed to be a great stretch goal in the Kickstarter and we really wanted to make it anyway. I think I did more than 250 entries in a couple of weeks or so.

28: You have strongly encouraged the community to create content for the game, and have fostered an active group on your Discord channel continuously creating new material. This encouragement to have fans explore MÖRK BORG is much like 28's mind set about the miniature gaming hobby. Was this always the plan for the project, or was it a fortunate accident?

Pelle Nilsson: We certainly didn't expect that response, and MÖRK BORG became a kind of monster we both enjoy, and have limited control over... he he. That was a bit of a design goal for sure: to leave some blank pages behind

us, to not answer every question regarding histories and mysteries.

28: We are increasingly seeing people creating models for MÖRK BORG, many of which would be right at home in this magazine. What are your thoughts on this and do you like miniatures for roleplaying?

Pelle Nilsson: Sure, the miniatures look awesome. I sometimes use it when playing, but mostly I play 'theatre of the mind'. It's great to see all different kinds of miniatures popping up in the community.

Johan Nohr: I've always been fascinated by people kitbashing and making their own minis. I haven't really used them much myself but think I would enjoy it a lot – perhaps a little too much, so maybe it's a good thing I haven't got into it! But yeah, seeing these MÖRK BORG miniatures popping up in the feed is really inspiring and makes me want to dig into it myself.

28: With four successful Kickstarters already to MÖRK BORG's name, what do you think is next?

Pelle Nilsson: We have been driving at high speed for some time and I personally have not had much time to enjoy the moment. Now we are busy fulfilling both the LP project (Putrescence Regnant) and the Heretic zine/GM screen/IKHON project. I think we need a little break after that, then figure out what beasts that need to be unleashed. We have plenty of stuff in our drawers, but don't want to reveal or promise anything right now.

Johan Nohr: Agree on that, and I'm currently working hard on CY_BORG, a MÖRK BORG hack that we aim to bring to life in one way or the other before the end of 2021. That and other, thus far unannounced, projects unrelated to MB.



JOHAN BURGHALL



DWARFS IN SPAAAACE! Ahem.

Squats (Homo sapiens rotundus to their friends) are a fascinating example of the development of the lore of Warhammer 40,000 and its shift towards a more grimdark, serious tone. One of the founding races of Rogue Trader, they had their own history in the 41st Millennium, a full army list and model range (including a multipart plastic kit – something even the Eldar didn't have back then) and a unique aesthetic distinct from their Fantasy brethren. In the change to 2nd Edition, they were given a rudimentary army list and some test models were sculpted but never released. And then, slowly, they stopped being mentioned. By the time the first Codex: Sisters of Battle was released, the galactic map no longer included the Squat Homeworlds. There was no official explanation, just an offhand joke in an editorial column about them all being eaten by Tyranids. They went from being a core faction to just a curiosity and a verb: 'to squat' – to write a fictional race out of a setting.

I didn't start the hobby until 2nd Ed (at the ripe old age of 8), but my uncle gave me a stack of White Dwarfs from the 80s that I used to pore over, so Squats have always been part of my vision of 40K. Units like the Living Ancestor, Exo-armour and Bikers are as iconic to me as Space Marines, even if I never owned the models.

So how did I come to start Squatting?

I have been in the hobby for almost three decades now and have never had a fully-painted army. Maybe it was lack of patience in my younger days, or fickle inspiration always dragging me off to another project. Part of it was simply the drudgery of painting squad after squad of the same models and colours.

When I joined the INQ28 message board on the Ammobunker forum, during the first wave of the 28 movement that would eventually form a whole ethos (and this magazine!), it was a revelation. I didn't have to paint an army, or even a squad. I didn't have to worry about list building. I could just let my imagination run wild over the setting I loved. In 2015 I converted my first Squat as part of an Inquisitor's retinue, putting a plastic Gyrocopter pilot head on an original plastic Space Dwarf. It was a fun little model that scratched the nostalgia itch, and I thought I was done with Squats.

Then, a few years later, I stumbled across a tutorial by Edd Ralph a.k.a. 'apologist' of the Death of a Rubricist blog, about using Green Stuff to sculpt the Squats' signature quilted jackets onto Kharadron Arkanautes, and it gave me the impetus to try it out. My own sculpting skills were rudimentary at best before this project – simple gap-filling or at most a patch of fur – the crudeness of which could just about be disguised with a decent paint job.



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But I decided to push myself, and while not perfect by any means, I was able to emulate the original quilted jackets and kneepads. As on my first Squat model, I used a Gyrocopter pilot head, as the helmet matches the classic RT aesthetic nicely, and Genestealer Cultist arms, as again these have touches that hark back to the originals, like the big gloves and ribbed elbow pads. Finally, the Necromunda Escher lasgun, whose long-barrelled design is reminiscent of the original RT design, was the perfect finishing touch.

With the build complete I needed to choose the paint scheme. The 28 community favours the grimdark, Blanchitsu style, and Timothée Osulf had recently used such a scheme for his wonderful Gelida force (featured in Vol 2 of this fine publication). While I love this aesthetic too, my own taste has always been for a more colourful, albeit still battle-worn, style and I really wanted to pay homage to the bright colours and variety of that original Dave Gallagher Space Dwarfs box art. So I changed the dark green to a grey (mainly to avoid them looking like Santa's little helpers) and separated out the red and yellow more as spot colours.

Having finished a Squat, I surprisingly had the inclination to keep making the rest of the squad, including extra details like the old school shoulder-mounted heavy bolter from ForgeWorld, and the Genestealer Cult 'Clamavus' comms unit turned into a synthesiser deck

(I miss the days when there were standard bearers and musicians in 40K!). To finish off the squad, it seemed rude not to include the recently released Squat Bounty Hunter from Necromunda as a sergeant, especially as he shares many of the classic design cues.

As Squats are distant descendants of human colonists on high gravity worlds, they have a shared heritage with the Imperium and, as such, they also use Rhinos as troop transports. I really love this fact (even if it was born out of convenience because GW only produced one vehicle kit at the time), as it really drives home the lore about the universality of Standard Technical Construct technology. ForgeWorld's Deimos-pattern Rhino is a fantastic update of the original design and, for once, its transport capacity actually feels plausible for Space Dwarfs!

While working on the Warriors, I was re-reading those old White Dwarf articles and catalogues and almost without realising it I set myself the challenge of imagining how the Squat range might have looked if they had been released in plastic or resin today.

Looking at the old metal Living Ancestor models, I thought I was going to fall at the first hurdle – there was no way I'd find a head to match the originals in the limited plastic and resin Dwarf ranges. That was until I came across GW's 'Psychostyrene Dwarf' from



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01 Squat warriors and Rhino transport

02 Hearthguard in exo-armor

03 Squat warrior

04 Brewmaster

1988, one of the earliest multipart plastic kits and one I had no idea existed until then! The head fit perfectly and still stands up to modern sculpts, as well as having bags of character.

The Warlord and Hearthguard were easier in some ways, as they are supposed to have a more traditional Dwarven look, but the challenge was making them look like Space Dwarfs, rather than Fantasy Dwarfs in Space (a problem that in my opinion the unreleased test models for 2nd Ed suffered from). The Kharadron Grundstock Thunderers provided a perfect base model to represent their carapace armour and I used a mix of Dwarf heads and 40K weapons to personalise them.

An Exo-armoured Hearthguard was another build I hadn't thought would be possible with the current kits. But after toying with a Kharadron Skywarden Sphere, and multiple iterations of arms, legs and heads, I finally found a configuration that gave the feeling of the original (cut down Engineeer legs, and a grill cover from a Kharadron airship as the head), whilst being a bit more anatomically plausible than the old stretched-crotch stumpy-legged eggbot.

The Bikers were a whole other challenge. While these are definitely a 'love them or hate them' unit (in fact Jervis Johnson cited the image of 'short bikers' as one of the reasons the Design Studio gave up on Squats during the transition to 2nd Ed), they are an intrinsic part of the Squat army and I knew I wanted to build some. The Genestealer Cult Atalan Jackals provided the base for the bikes, but in order to get the chopper silhouette I had to cut off the front shocks, replace them with longer plastic rods and reposition them at a shallower angle. For the leather-wearing Bikers themselves, I used Orlock torsos on Kharadron legs and a variety of bare or sunglasses-wearing heads. Using thin bits of banner pole to raise the handlebars to the 'monkey hangers' style, and then posing the riders to be holding them naturally, was probably the fiddliest build I've ever done! The Living Ancestor in sidecar was another lucky accident, as I had an Eldar Falcon cockpit in my bitz box, which fit perfectly.

For the paint scheme, I wanted them to tie in with the Brotherhood troops, so after giving them their faded jeans and leathers (with freehand jacket designs taken from the original

White Dwarf articles), I gave their metal bike bodywork a few thinned layers of Blood For The Blood God and Ardcoat to achieve a glossy candy apple red finish.

With these core parts of the army done, I also wanted to update the Squats' iconic artillery pieces. The Mole Mortar was scratch-built from a Guard mortar, while the Thudd Gun was made from the carriage of the Death Guard of Krieg version, the gun from the Solar Auxilia Quad-launcher (with its barrels cut down to different lengths to match the firing pattern of the original) and a tractor unit made from the rear track of the old plastic Ork Warbike.

Even though I'd been able to emulate the original Squat designs using modern bitz and Green Stuff, part of me kept looking at that original multipart plastic boxed set from 1988. These long out of production models are probably the hardest to come by in online auctions, especially if you don't want them pre-covered in several layers of 20-year-old paint. Anyway, I finally caved in and paid through the nose to get some to make my second Warrior squad. To make up for the scale creep since their release, I did what purists might call the unthinkable – cut the legs off the Squats and the torso off the Kharadrons and combined them. There is also only one helmeted head sculpt in the original set, so I ever-so-carefully cut and swapped various faces, hats and helmets to give the squad more variety. For the weapon load-out I went full Rogue Trader with a mishmash of lasguns, autoguns, twin pistols and the obligatory shuriken catapult!

From very old plastics to very new, it's been convenient that GW have released some gorgeous limited edition Dwarf models in recent years. Grombrindal the Tech-Priest who, with the addition of Squat Servitors, has given the army a touch of the grimdark, and the recent Brewmaster who, with a head swap from the Blood Bowl range and a longer hose from a Death Guard kit, became a new character for the Brotherhood.

During this project I was also inspired to recreate some other Rogue Trader era units, like a Conqueror-class robot (built from a Kastelan and Armiger) with its retina-searing, chequered dazzle camo painstakingly copied from an old White Dwarf. I also got hold of some of the original plastic Imperial Guard and



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- 05 Guildmaster and Living Ancestor in sidecar
- 06 Heavy weapon trike
- 07 Guild biker jacket design
- 08 Warlord, Living Ancestor and Hearthguard
- 09 Biker squad
- 10 Conqueror class robot
- 11 Thudd gun
- 12 Cyber-slayer and Warlord inspired by the classic John Blanche artwork



08



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gave them arms and legs from the modern Astra Militarum kits, as the originals were so small they look like children compared to modern models.

With pretty much all of the original Squat units now represented in the army, I wanted to add a bit more variety. As I mentioned earlier, back in 2nd Edition, when the Squats were being redesigned for a release that would ultimately never happen, Fantasy Dwarf imagery and archetypes were being applied to the range and a trio of Cyber Slayers were sculpted but never officially released. Taking this as inspiration, I added some bionics, cables and power axes to some Fantasy models and made my own squad of augmented berserkers.

Finally, I've had the Dwarf Blood Bowl team in my bitz box for a while, trying to figure out how to incorporate them into the army. The straps holding on the Dwarfs' back plates really look like they're intended for a backpack, and with the release of the Orlock Wreckers, I had jump packs that fitted perfectly and look beefy enough to launch even a Space Dwarf with a beer gut! I wanted to give this squad more of a hardened piratical look, hence the mostly bare heads. The hand flamer guy's big shoulder pads looked too bare plain, so on a whim I added the old school flames and loved it!

Well that's about it for now. I still have to finish off these most recent squads and I've got ideas for a few more, as well as some other Rogue Trader-inspired goodness, but this is the closest I've ever come to achieving what I never thought I would – an actual painted army!

One of the most commonly asked questions about the army is, 'What do you play them as?'

Well, to be honest I haven't played 40K proper for many years (especially not since moving to Tokyo five years ago), but whenever I do get around to it, I'll play them as... Squats! Proxying is fine if you want to play in tournaments, but for me this hobby has always been not just about making models, but about making stories and rules to allow you to enact those stories. The 28 movement has from the beginning encouraged narrative play and frankly I don't want to go back to worrying about what is list-legal. As long as you're being true to the spirit of the setting and both players agree, you can do what you like. That's what the Designers have been telling us in their editorials all along.

So what have I learned through this project?

The most important lesson is to keep pushing yourself to improve. Take on new challenges, like more Green Stuff sculpting, or scratch building or new painting techniques.

Secondly, don't be afraid to put your work in progress models online and listen to the advice of your peers. If they're saying something isn't quite right, chances are you know that as well, but didn't want to admit it because it would mean more fiddly work to fix. Pulling models apart and trying again might be painful, but the end results are worth it. A slight shift of a pose, or the raising or lowering of a head, might make all the difference to a final model. My Exo-armoured Hearthguard and Bikers wouldn't have ended up as good (or perhaps even been finished at all) without feedback from social media. The Warhammer community – especially this corner of it that we call 28 – is an endless source of inspiration, encouragement and constructive criticism. Jump in!



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AKSEL OLSSON



Mechanical thuds echo through the dark. A lone wanderer, lost somewhere deep in the massive space hulk, at the mercy of whispering shadows.

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Why had he come to this place?
How long had it been?
Where was he going?
What were those voices?
Whispering... They... they came to him again! Must... must find out! What did they want? Why did they keep tormenting him so? If they could only just show him what they talked about. Please! Oh the agony...! Maybe it is this way. Yes. Yes! The whispers become clearer down this path. Whispering. Yes. Oh the voices. Yes. Further...

+++



Here is a fun kitbash I made some time ago. I started the project in August 2019, with the idea to build a traveller on a strider, but inspiration failed me and I had to put it down for some months. Then I got the Eyros Slagmyst model from the Necromunda range and noticed his hands vaguely looked like they were holding reins. Having reins on the strider instead of levers and controls made it feel as if there was something sentient about the mechanical walker.

I cut Slagmyst in half and removed his pistol. When I put him on the strider, I got a mixed bag of vibes, kinda *Blade Runner* or *Morrowind*. In the game *The Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind* there are huge bug striders that can carry goods and transport. This inspired me to make my own mechanical silt strider thing.

A lot of armour in *Morrowind* is bone-based from different types of insect and shellfish looking creatures. To try and capture this, I thought the Spindle Drones from Blackstone

Fortress looked like bones from ray-fish, so I scraped off a big chunk of Slagmyst's face to get a new 'helmet' to fit and I loved the look. The weird eye thing in the middle made it feel like there were extra layers for why he had chosen this strange headpiece. Maybe the lens was crystallised and he had managed to modulate it to enhance his vision?

On the strider he would be at a safe distance from many threats, but to be able to fend off hostiles from a distance, I equipped him with a long spear with a hook. The hook makes the spear multipurpose so he can also pick things up and perform various tasks with it. I also gave him a long ranged rifle, enforcing the theme of him trying to maintain a safe distance from threats. Above him is a big black umbrella-like piece that is a scouting drone that can detach and gather information for him. Together these things make him feel like a being that sometimes puts himself in danger, but who always takes whatever precautions he can.

Finally I wanted there to be elements that raise questions. What are the vials for? Why is there a gigantic skull on the front of the strider and what creature is it from? Why does he have a shield underneath the strider's belly? I love it when there is an element of speculation about a model. Where the story is not too clear and it is up to the viewer to draw his or her own ideas of its background and ambitions. Once I was finished with the building, I did a quick and dirty paint job using a lot of contrast paints from Games Workshop and some metals. The only part I took time over was the helmet and that really made it stand out.

One day I will return to this model and make a second version, but on foot, with his sword and shield in hand or maybe reloading his rifle.

DAVID STAFFORD

The Kabeiri (The Wyrms Forged)

Ever since my young, impressionable eyes first beheld the glory of the Genestealer Cult army in White Dwarf 116, I have been mesmerised by the heralds of the Star Gods. Back in the Rogue Trader days, the Genestealer Cult was a strange, nomadic, niche army, jumping between White Dwarf articles, board games and even hanging out in Tyranid army lists. I especially loved the old Genestealer Coven list, which added a generous dollop of Chaos to an already pretty spicy mixture. I still have daydreams about a Hierarch (they go by Primus these days) in Chaos armour, but more of that later.

I am often drawn to projects that contain a fair amount of body horror, and these guys provided it by the ton. The mixture of Genestealer and host DNA in whatever ratio you fancy gives modellers the 'all-clear' to go nuts. This was pretty much a given back in those days, as there was only a small (but beautiful to my eyes) range of Cult miniatures. Happily, you could also add in anything from the Imperial Guard as Brood Brothers, along with Beastmen and mutant bands to bulk out your Cult forces. My poor, confused plastic Imperial Guard spent several tours as Brood Brothers in between serving as Chaos cultists and, occasionally, actual Imperial Guard.

With the publication of the Genestealer expansion for Space Hulk, we could even get access to those delightfully chunky plastic hybrids, armed with all manner of bulky weapons. They are seen as pretty brutal these days, but I have a soft spot for these old timers. Time went on, and the Cult slowly faded into the background of the Warhammer 40K universe. The Tyranids stole their thunder, and they were seemingly consigned to the faction retirement community to play bridge with the Squats. Who needs lowly hybrids with rusty autoguns when you have Mycetic spores and

squidgy flesh guns that shoot angry beetles? The faithful were, in keeping with their modus operandi, forced underground, consigned to scavenge what they could from the edges of the hobby.

Back in 2014, I decided to return to the Cult (you never really leave) and began hoarding bits and pieces for use as hybrids, Brood Brothers, vehicles and so on. I happily chopped, filed, green-stuffed and painted myself a new batch of true believers, and the Kabeiri was born. Around 2015 some new Cult-adjacent miniatures began to emerge and I leapt on these. Several Cult-style sets have been produced by other parties since then, containing everything from hybrid ogryns to hybrid Tau.

As I contentedly ticked away at my nascent Cult, little did I know what was coming. 2016 brought Deathwatch: Overkill, packed to the gills with new Cult miniatures. I had literally dreamed about plastic Cult hybrids, so this reduced me to a pathetically grateful heap of sobbing joy. I did have a brief resentful moment where I realised my obscure niche army was now mainstream, but seeing the avalanche of plastic goodness coming my way, I quickly got over myself.

Soon after Deathwatch: Overkill the Cult became a proper army. A new Codex was released along with everything a Patriarch could wish for and then some. Taking its design cues from the original ranges sculpted by Jes Goodwin and Bob Olley, the industrial look of the Cult was surprisingly close to the original miniatures and artwork, but cranked up to eleven. 2019 saw a second glorious wave of releases to truly bury us in Cult-related treats. We even got rules for Cult gangs in The Book of Ruin for playing in Necromunda.

With an abundance of choices, I've been adding





to the cult as whim and inclination dictate. Let's visit the Kabeiri at home, shall we?

First up, a little background. As with all my projects, I write the story of the army, warband, even individuals at times. This increases my enjoyment of the hobby immensely and looking back at the exploits of my tiny protagonists over the years gives me the warmest of warm fuzzies. When your stories meet those of your gaming friends, well, that's the good stuff. You can check out the tale of the Kabeiri below.

So that sets the scene for the Cult's adventures. More than that, it gave me a direction for the look of the models and the potential paint scheme. The Cult would have a lot of Mechanicus influences, but not so much that it took from the industrial aesthetic. I did not simply want a bunch of four-armed Skitarii, so I decided to go a light touch with the cybernetics. On top of this, there is a Chaos coven nestled inside the Cult. I wanted those three elements to combine to build my theme. I add models to the Cult in dribs and drabs in between other projects. I was never one for grinding away on thirty or forty models at the same time; that would sap my mojo very quickly. Instead, I tend to work on individuals, and my armies and warbands accumulate over time. With the Kabeiri, this led to individual families emerging in the cult. This gave me even more thematic rabbit holes to head down. I have been accused of jamming in as many as possible. This might be true. You should see my Undead Terracotta/Big Trouble in Little China/Stolen Eldar tech mashup army.

I added the Ygoth kin to the Cult as a way of adding the Ymgarl strain into the force. Starting with the Ymgarl purestrain, there are several generations of the Ygoth family line spread throughout the Cult, easily identifiable due to the Ymgarl feeder tentacles. I plan on adding another couple, perhaps an aberrant or two.



ARTIST FOCUS // DAVID STAFFORD

This allows me to field an entirely Ymgarl-descended Necromunda gang for instance. Things like this keep me coming back to the Cult.

For future projects, I am considering adding more Chaos-tainted cult members so that I can have an entirely coven-based gang that can be folded back into the main cult for larger games. The old list from *White Dwarf* 116 has lots of tasty illustrations of mutant hybrids and Brood Brothers that are begging to be created. A purestrain prince with a daemon weapon for instance. A Genestealer prince is a rank of my own creation, not a patriarch, but one of his original pack that have grown old and powerful alongside their dominant sibling. They would operate as the Cult leader in smaller games.

My obsession with the Genestealer Cult recently spread to other scales (all for the glory of the All-Father, you understand). With several friends jumping on the Gaslands bandwagon, it seemed like a great opportunity to build a mobile cult at 20mm. I had a box of very old die-cast cars that were suddenly the most important things in my hobby. With some gubbins, weapons, 3D printed parts and a lot of plasticard, I resurrected these forlorn old vehicles from the scrapheap. There's something insanely enjoyable about tricking out an old toy car. Add in some crew and the whole thing is joyous.

By the time I completed the project, I had heavy trucks with speakers for evangelical preaching from the magus, buggies, cars, bikes, an open-topped limo and even some hybrids and Brood Brothers on foot. It turns out plastic Genestealer familiars make perfect 20mm purestrains.

With regards to modelling and painting, anyone looking for Genestealer Cult miniatures is spoilt for choice. For anyone looking to shake it up a bit, Games Workshop's ghouls make great base models for more feral hybrids, as well as the Lord of the Rings Goblintown goblins. Virtually any model can be cultified by adding a hybrid head. There are several variant factions in the Codex, so really, it is all up to what you want to make.

On the painting side of things, my basic palette has remained pretty consistent, though I've been adding in more and more contrast paints. On the pale skin, for example, I base coat with Games Workshop Pallid Wych Flesh, then apply a 50:50 wash of Reikland Flesh and Lahmian

Medium. Over this I add a recess wash of 50:50 Magos Purple and Contrast Medium into areas like around eyes, around bone ridges, accenting musculature and so on. If required, I add some more purple to the mix and keep adding definition. Over the purple carapace I switch to Shyish purple and apply the same technique. Contrast paints take a huge amount of work out of painting, particularly when used with Contrast medium. For the carapace, where it blends into the pale flesh, I usually blend the base coats and then let the contrast paint smooth out the transitions. I then add a layer of highlights over this and am finished.

With basing, I stay pretty neutral, with grey concrete scattered with metal debris, bones, barbed wire and so on. To make concrete more realistic, I drybrush it lightly with silver as a last highlight. It works to simulate the sparkle you sometimes see on concrete. Typhus corrosion is also your friend on urban bases. Grime up those gutters, sidewalks and tread-plate! With that, I'll wrap up my frothy evangelising about one of the most interesting 40K factions. I hope you enjoyed my tour of the Great Devourer's PR department. Take a pamphlet on your way out. Yes, that's the way out. Ignore that sound, it's just old pipes.





It is M40.999 by Imperial reckoning, and the world of Thelema in the Segmentum Obscurus is at war. After fifty years of conflict there is no respite to the fighting and no end in sight. Both sides fight with righteous fury over the devastated remains of once mighty Imperial cities.

The Forge Temple, known as the Kabeiri, had been strong and powerful even before its infection. Once tainted, it began expanding its influence yet further. The scions of the new cult slunk into the society of Thelema like the choking fronds of a creeping vine, patient and inexorable. The sons and daughters of the Temple had grown strong, reaching the highest position of global authority by the middle M40. It is around this time, though, that the organisation began to diverge from the usual sequence of events when a powerful Genestealer Cult reached this level of infiltration.

The great patriarch of the order, known as father Typhon, or to many of the Cult as the Old Wurm, is a truly ancient genestealer. Ferried across the void in stasis by the hive fleet, Typhon was secreted into the space hulk Age of Dreams along with many of his brothers. The hulk had been vomited forth from the warp before the fleet as it made the journey across the empty space between the galaxies. There it hung for a time before being drawn back into warp space. How long it remained there, none can say, as time has no meaning in the realm of the Gods.

At one time the Age of Dreams again appeared in real-space near the world of Draconith. It drifted for decades before eventually being marked by an explorer vessel for future investigation. The world of Thelema was tasked with mapping the hulk and recovering any items or artefacts of worth due to the presence of the Mechanicus forge temple on the planet. The Theleman team returned with the soon-to-be new head of their order, who was reverently christened by the xenobiologist leader of the explorer expedition. So, the new cult was born.

The devotion to the Machine God was slowly perverted into the worship of Typhon, who had come to be seen as the

voice of the Machine God itself, the true Ommissiah. It was not an easy or quick transition, however, with many of the order immune to infection, necessitating their eventual destruction.

The combination of the knowledge and mysterious nature of the Adeptus Mechanicus and the single-minded ambition of the Cult made for a powerful combination. By M40.508, it was in control of many of the most influential institutions. Despite this success, the Cult began suffering schisms. Many of the faithful felt something was wrong with the way plans were proceeding. This was troubling, as dissent in a Genestealer Cult is virtually unheard of.

Typhon was most pleased with his growing power, but he did not feel the pull of the Hive Mind as it drew close to devour Thelema. The constant whispers in his head were not those of the Devourer. They came from another place entirely and they worried at the edges of his psyche like wolves nipping at the heels of a great beast. This sent ripples of unease into the Broodmind of the Cult in its turn.

Far beyond Thelema, in the depths of space, lie the dead, frozen husks of the hive fleet that bore Typhon across the stars. Designated hive fleet Hephaestus, it was caught in a violent and sudden warpstorm soon after the Age of Dreams vanished back into the ether. The entire fleet was either pulled into the warp or destroyed. Not a single Tyranid creature survived.

As if this was not enough to sever the link between Typhon and the Hive Mind, the genestealer that emerged from the Warp was no longer a creature of instinct, obediently following its genetic directives. Ambition had been kindled in the beast's heart and Typhon had no intention of relinquishing the power it had won.

Typhon's would-be patrons watched and waited, ever-patient.

WAR AMONGST THE STARS



by Tom Harding

Attention all voidsmen and women, the press-ganged and commissioned officers! I am your navigator and I welcome you to this brief history and step-by-step guide to Battlefleet Gothic, or BFG for short. I hope you enjoy this trip through The Warp into what is my favourite tabletop game.

HISTORY

Battlefleet Gothic is set in the Warhammer 40K universe and it represents each of the space faring factions and their ships. The scale of the ships in the lore was what drew me into the game. The miniatures represent huge warships, some over 10 kilometres long, fighting it out over vast distances in space. What's not to love about that?!

Battlefleet Gothic was released back in 1999 by Games Workshop and was one of many

specialist games of that era, along with the likes of Necromunda, Epic and Man-O-War.

Release

The game was first released in 1999 with fleets for the Imperial and Chaos factions included in the box. Four plastic ships were included for each, along with rules for the game, tokens and dice. The first iteration of the rules, (typically called the Big Blue Book), contained the main rules and stats for four of the main 40K factions, Imperial, Chaos, Eldar Corsairs and Ork Pirates. It focussed on the history of the Gothic Sector War and Abaddon the Despoiler's 12th Black Crusade.

GAMEPLAY

The board

Typically, the game is played by two competing

players usually over a 6'x8' board which represents different parts of space within a given star system. Various celestial phenomena such as planets, asteroids and warp storms can be used as terrain to help bring the board to life.

The players, or Admirals, can select a particular fleet that represents their favourite faction. Each faction has a selection of ships to choose from to build their fleet, and each ship in the game has statistics that cover its capabilities, from its size class and defensive abilities to the various weapons and ordnance.

Game size

Like most tabletop games, ships have a cost in points and generally games are played from between 750 to 2000 points. That may sound a lot, but 2000 points for most fleets will provide



a single battleship, between four to six cruisers and several squadrons of escorts. BFG is typically a low model count game so therefore more accessible, even if it is out of production now.

Turn sequence

The game has various scenarios in which your fleets do battle, ranging from small-scale convoy runs and raids, to full blown fleet engagements and planetary assaults. There are even Exterminatus missions, where you try to destroy a planet outright! It is these different scenarios, and an ability to create your own, which really brings out the joy of the game for me and many others. The different scenarios capture the broad spirit of naval engagements of different stripes and provide each game with different tactical options.

During the game players take turns to move, shoot and perform other orders. A turn is broken up into four distinct phases: movement, shooting, ordinance and the end phase. Each Admiral completes all these phases in their turn. Similar to other games of the time, it's a 'You go, then I go' game system.

The phases are generally pretty straightforward. Players move their entire fleet in the movement phase, shoot with the entire fleet (depending on range and firing arcs) in the shooting phase, launch torpedoes and bomber waves in the ordinance phase and then repair damage and so on in the end phase. This is a simplistic description and there are certainly more advanced rules, such as orders, boarding enemy ships and the best one... all ahead ramming another ship out of the way, but the mechanics are quite simple.

Gameplay

Each faction fleet has a list of ships available to them, which vary in their class types. These are typically broken down into escort, cruiser and battleship classes, each having a place in the fleet and their own roles to play. Escorts are used for manoeuvrability and protecting your vulnerable flanks and rear. Cruisers are the workhorses of any fleet. Battleships are your flagships, your centre point and powerful hammers to use on your foes! Each ship class

moves and acts differently and this creates a strong sense of inertia in the gameplay. You must choose between manoeuvrability versus firepower and toughness. This only increases the play when you factor in the scenario you are playing. It is hard to use a slow and ponderous battleship when you are trying to escape a system that is blockaded, but escorts can be easy pickings in a planetary assault.

Think of the old Napoleonic era style of naval warfare, the game was made with massive broad sides blasting each other and escorts protecting the flanks. There is still a certain satisfaction when you manage to manoeuvre your space ships into position to 'cross the T' and fire multiple broad sides into an oncoming ship. Beautiful stuff!

What I always enjoyed about BFG was that even though the mechanics were quite straightforward, every faction operates differently and they all have their own strengths and weaknesses. For example the Imperial fleet needs to stick together and concentrate their fire. Orks love to board and get close and personal with their powerful short-range guns while Eldar are all tricky, the epitome of glass cannons that like to dodge and weave.

This means that there is a fleet for anyone to enjoy and use tactics that suit them. Certain fleets are better suited to certain scenarios or certain terrain configurations, but in general every ship has a place and a function.

FURTHER RELEASES

Over the years Games Workshop published Battlefleet Gothic annuals to provide updated rules, which eventually culminated in the Battlefleet Gothic Armada supplement book in 2003. This book is often referred to as The Yellow Book or just Armada. This Armada supplement provided further updates to the Imperial, Chaos, Eldar and Ork fleets and provided fleets for Space Marines, Tyranids, Tau and Necrons.

These two books were the only official rules that Games Workshop endorsed. Free data sheets (for want of a better word) were produced for newer fleets, mainly due to Games

Workshop now stocking these ship miniatures and needing rules for them. The sheets were released on the Games Workshop website as printable PDFs and included rules for fleets like Adeptus Mechanicus and Craftworld Eldar.

In 2010 a FAQ update appeared. Written between Games Workshop and the community, aka the BFG Rules Committee, it was compiled in close relationship and with feedback from the community and Games Workshop designers. It was well received and made fleets, like the Space Marine fleet, much better. While never officially recognised the FAQ, is widely used throughout the community and was used for tournaments at events such as AdeptiCon.

THE FUTURE IS OUT OF PRODUCTION

Unfortunately, as with the other specialist games, Battlefleet Gothic was discontinued on a fateful day in August 2013. The game was lost to The Warp!

Never fear – there was life in her yet. The beauty of the BFG community has been its willingness to generate their own content for a system that is no longer officially supported. The community is one of, if not the most, active community in generating their own rule sets and ships.

There are now ships and rules for all sorts of character ships, from Gloriana class battleships to new Xenos races. There is even a rule set for the Horus Heresy era, so if you have ever fancied playing the space battles from Horus Heresy, now you can, thanks to the efforts of the fans in the community.

NARRATIVE FOCUS

Personally, I always enjoyed the thought of huge space battles and the ability to replicate that on large scales appealed greatly to me. It is the reason I ended up collecting all the fleets available in the game, which I think stands at around fourteen fleets. My favourite will always be the first fleet I collected, the Imperial fleet. I am a loyal son of the Emperor.

I am also a narrative player in all of the tabletop games I play and so BFG also appealed to me as the rules were written with campaigns in mind.



The original rules came with a whole mechanic to run your own campaigns. It even included test space systems, ways to build renown and have vendettas against other ships. Is there a better feeling than finally crippling that pesky ship you have hunted for an entire campaign? I think not.

If you want to create your own Ork pirate base or see if you can do better than Abaddon at a Black Crusade, then the campaign system is all ready for you to begin. The BFG community has helped here too, filling in gaps in the campaign system, such as rules for awakening your own Necron Tombworld or being 'Da biggest Ork in da galaxy.'

While the game was discontinued, one thing the Games Workshop did that helped the community was release all the rules as PDF formats. You can find them all for free online now.

BUILDING THE FLEET

The hardest part, as ever with a discontinued game, is finding miniatures to play the game with. However, I would say BFG has had a new lease of life recently, as the 3D printing market has exploded with new designs that can fill in for most of the original ships. Additionally, the 3D prints I have found are a more cost effective entry point compared to trying to find the original models.

There are several fantastic third party creators designing their own space ships that will fit into the game too. Both these options are great for BFG.

BFG is measured to the base and stem of the ship. This is important for a very simple reason: it means that as long as you have the correct base, the model on top does not matter as much. This was designated due to the sheer vastness of space – the scale of the ships would be too small to paint otherwise. The actual miniatures are supposed to represent the Captain's viewpoint on the bridge. What all this means is that the miniature on the base and stem can be anything you want to build and paint. As long as the base/stem is correct, you are good to go. There are even cardboard

cut-out versions available online that you can use too.

That being said, this old navigator is a collector, so if you are after the original BFG miniatures then the usual places like eBay, Facebook Buy and Sell forums, and online second-hand stores are where you should search.

I want to thank 28 Magazine for asking me to write this piece. I truly love this game. If you ever find yourself in Segmentum Australis (I'm in Sydney, Australia) then send me a message for a game of BFG and I'll even bring all the fleets along!



NICK BORELLI



I started painting miniatures in high school when I came across a box of Tzeentch Horrors in an independent hobby store. Soon I was painting minis nearly every day after school and entering painting contests at my local Games Workshop. I stopped painting minis when I moved away from home to go to college and had nearly forgotten about my old hobby after moving to New York City to study painting. After ten years of living and painting in New York, my interest was rekindled in late 2019. I lost my Brooklyn studio due to a rent increase, and without a place to paint, I needed to find something I could do at my desk in my tiny apartment. Fooling around with Sculpey and paper clay soon led me back to miniatures. It felt like reconnecting with an old friend.

I was initially drawn to my first loves – Nurgle and Tzeentch – and I spent nearly a year working on a large Carnival of Chaos themed army. I have recently been expanding my repertoire, making minis for *Turnip28*, Bryan Ruhe's *Slug Wizard Spring* and ones that are

not for any game or system at all. My current project is a warband of mutant babies.

I like to think of my minis as little 3D collages, so I don't limit myself to Games Workshop kits. I use a mix of different brands of scale miniatures and toys, cake toppers, false teeth, artificial plants, seashells, beads and parts I make myself from green stuff, stuck together with Milliput and super glue (I like to make my own bits ahead of time. I always have a supply of mouths, eyeballs and ears on hand). Half the fun of the hobby for me is trawling through craft stores and on eBay to find parts that could end up in a new project. I am particularly fond of toy elephants and plastic skulls of all sizes. I think the best thing someone can do when making a miniature is to be unafraid of making something wonky or ugly, or that goes against official lore.

I try to take a similar approach when painting, using a variety of paints, mediums and inks. I found Vallejo's weathering products to be



essential for painting grime and dirt, and Golden's line of fluid acrylics are a great tool to have on hand for anyone wanting to paint blood, guts and gore.

In addition to the incredible miniature painters and illustrators in the community, I'm inspired by the artists that influenced my own work as a painter, namely Francis Bacon, Philip Guston and Peter Saul. I have recently been looking to Anselm Kiefer's apocalyptic landscape paintings for inspiration for the rusty, muddy wastelands that I imagine my armies inhabit. I look to the films of David Cronenberg and John Carpenter, and the special effects created by Screaming Mad George for insight on new ways to twist and mutate the human body.

Most influential to me, though, are the novels of M John Harrison, whose poetic and tragic *Viriconium* cycle depicts a far future fantasy world that has more to do with TS Eliot than JRR Tolkien, Gene Wolfe's *Book of the New Sun*, which uses a Sword and Sorcery story to tell a deeply moving story about the nature of Man's relationship to the universe and to God, and Thomas Ligotti, whose unrelentingly bleak and beautiful stories about clowns, puppets, decaying towns and strange rituals were essential to me while I was building my Carnival of Chaos. Reading books that push the boundaries of fantasy has been invaluable to me in expanding my idea of what fantasy worlds and the art and miniatures that represent them can be.





A DARKER LENS

by Julian Wild

What if the grimdark world of 40K looked a little more familiar than it does in the typical drawings? What would happen if there was a little more subtlety? What if your miniatures and narratives were part of a world not completely unknown to you? I believe this would increase the intensity for any scene within the setting, becoming subtler and thus scarier on an unconscious level. To achieve this through photography, it is all about perspective rather than showcasing. We all see amazing pieces of work, be it in painted miniatures, kit bashing, terrain or huge battlefield setups. Most often these are presented from the perspective of the people taking the picture. Said in another way, they are presented by looking down on the item of interest. This is a great approach for showcasing your work or giving an overview of what you have built. A story, however, is not about the great paint job or kitbashing skills. A story is about diving into the scene and taking your audience with you.

The view of a miniature from an elevated perspective helps your audience to better recognise what you want to present. For telling stories with pictures, however, it is better to start at the miniature's eye level and take a horizontal view, as if you, the photographer, are part of that scene.

For showcasing, you want to emphasise your painting, building and/or kitbashing skills – which is fair enough. For visual storytelling a decent paint job is a pre-condition. You do not need it to be top-notch. You do not need a Golden Demon on your shelf. In a diorama, the sum is more than its parts. The same applies to visual storytelling.

Each of my story scenes consist of three parts. The first is the miniatures, the second is the text helping to understand what is happening. The third is either a photograph or a piece of terrain (rarely both). The photograph is either an architectural or a landscape photograph. I would not call it a backdrop because the miniature is placed inside the photograph rather than in front of it. For the photograph, I rely on my library of photos I have taken over the years, which is still growing. I usually have a camera with me (at least a smartphone camera) and I always have an eye open for situations, places and effects. While I am walking around I can capture something I





see – be that a landscape, the sun going down, dramatic clouds, a lonely farm building or even a dark entrance. These images can become part of a story I might tell in the future.

When a visual story I am creating includes a photograph, I use this image to define the lighting (intensity, sharpness and direction). The next step is to take a separate picture of the miniature you want to place in that scene and then set up lighting according to the photograph. I work with a DSLR camera, a tripod and multiple lights with and without diffusers. Everything works with a smartphone camera and a desk light as well. Be sure to stabilise your camera for long exposures (i.e. long shutter times). A wide-angle lens is more helpful than a telephoto one. Camera lenses tend to distort the photograph at the edges and in the corners. By taking the photograph in landscape format you avoid distorting your miniature.

To have better control over the photograph, I suggest you control the settings on your camera manually. Because your miniature is tiny, it is important to take into account the depth of field, which you can control with the aperture. The depth of field is the area that is 'in focus'. The lower the aperture value, the smaller the field of depth. If the field is too small this leads to out-of-focus parts on your miniature, as well as a blurred background. This can be great for taking portraits, where the person's face is the primary focal point, but for our miniature scenes, we want everything in sharp focus. Your camera may struggle with the auto-focus because of the miniature's size, therefore I recommend disabling it and setting the focus manually if possible. At a minimum, make sure that the eyes of the miniature are in focus. This also helps the viewer better relate to the photograph. Furthermore, the miniature does not need to stand in the centre of the photo.

The final aspect of creating these vignettes is combining the two pictures, which I do with Photoshop. This is the step where I shift away from traditional miniature showcasing, as I blend the miniature into the setting photograph. Photoshop allows you to work with layers and masks. The mask is a non-destructive way to cut out the miniature (hiding the famous green-screen). I place the cut out miniature on top of the setting photograph in a separate layer. I position



and re-size the miniature so that it fits into the setting photograph. Reducing saturation, blurring edges and changing film grain are all important tools in this process. Sometimes I brush in fog in separate layers as well. All this allows the miniature to become one with the photograph.

Personally, I like dark, dirty-brownish colours, which are reflected in all aspects of the visual stories I tell. The paint jobs are not colourful – grime and dirt hide details. Rust and dust fit into the overall look.

When you want to tell a story with a picture, you should subdue the urge to showcase your work. Think of a famous movie where the protagonist is doing something great in a specific moment with the help of a powerful sword or elegant rifle, clad in clothes fitting the story of the film, the character, the scene. Showcasing would be showing the protagonist in all her glory with the cool equipment from an angle to highlight the proper sewing and colours of her clothes. In the film, however, these are expected details only supporting the story. It is about the overall scene, not the protagonist. You can achieve this in your photos too. Start with going down to eye-level with your miniature. The story is already there, you just have to catch it. Take care of proper lighting and finally blend the two worlds into a single photograph.

This is my approach to what I call a Vignette28. There are other awesome creators out there who have other similar approaches. But we all aim for telling a visual story.



THE FRUITFUL VOID

Reviews by Tanya Floaker

For the past three years, Kickstarter has held ZineQuest, a February-long promotion shining a spotlight on tabletop game 'zines'. These zines are generally self-published, single-colour unbound, folded, stapled or saddle-stitched magazines on A5 or smaller paper (though some projects break from the format in some way). ZineQuest has provided a leg-up to many new designers, while allowing seasoned writers to get experimental. This year, in amongst the sea of system agnostic supplements, story games and Old School Renaissance (OSR) offerings, two 28-inspired tabletop miniatures games made their first appearance: Brutal Quest and Forbidden Psalm. These put into practice the ideas promoted within this very publication: dark aesthetics, prizing creativity, sharing unique outlooks and a spirit of inclusivity and accessibility. Given the shared ethos, it seems fitting to discuss both games inside 28 itself.

BRUTAL QUEST

A fantasy narrative skirmish game based on the Planet 28 rules. Soundtrack while playing: Bolt Thrower followed by The DJ Producer

Nic Evans is an accomplished artist and sculptor. He has built a cult following behind the Super Tiny games and Planet 28 (a sci-fi skirmish game). ZineQuest launched Brutal Quest, his 'fantasy narrative skirmish gaming' ruleset.

Brutal Quest's evocative name and aesthetic is lodged in my brain. The artwork blends grim fantasy with linocut Art Nouveau, all turned up to 11. The type of scenes invoked (both through stylistic choices and gameplay itself), are violent, horrific and yet still human. The cover is striking, but I wish the image was larger and black on white. The luminous green makes detail hard to pick out, underselling the crisp interior. Included are cardstock minis of the highest quality. I will still buy toy soldiers, but these are no poor quality proxies. They exude style on any table.

Most of the rules are standard fare to seasoned miniature wargamers. Models move in initiative order, rather than an 'I go, you go'. They get two actions each turn from a short-but-sweet list. Most die rolls use D10s, but others are used for special occasions. The game recommends having a Games Master (GM), though it works without one. A couple of places need errata, such as correcting obvious typos, but for the most part the writing is solid if not special. Things step up a notch with the Quest and Brutality Point mechanics.

Quests prevent the banality of staggering from one dose of ultra-violence to another. Instead, players work with the GM to give overarching purpose to their endeavours. Each Quest has agreed goals, but does not state how to achieve them. This gives space for both ingenuity and moral dilemmas to form. They lend gravitas to player choices, guiding scenarios and story progression. They lead into the 'Off Table' light roleplay rules. These give something more to

do between games than replacing kit or injury rolls. Quests help the GM to weave a coherent plot from asynchronous goals.

As an example, my band has been seeking to map the entirety of an ancient set of tombs to find fabled riches. A demon has stolen the True Name of one character, and is somehow tied to the labyrinthine complex. Other bands may eye up the tombs for different reasons. They could have Quests tied to the local settlement, a place I rely on for rest, research and supplies. The GM can create any factions (each with their own agenda) or encounters to stir the pot. However, it is Quests which push players towards alliance and acrimony in fulfilling ways.

Brutality Points (BPs) are a meta-currency. This is reminiscent of the tabletop roleplay game (ttRPG) Fate, where you gain tokens for taking thematic actions. Here, points are awarded for doing brutal things, such as dealing damage or surviving against the odds. Points can be traded for a host of cool effects, or banked for future advancement. My one complaint is that earning BPs often comes down to dice alone. A lucky player both comes out on top now and gains an edge in the future. My house rule is to make scenario-, band- and quest-specific reward lists that rely on narrative action rather than dice rolls. This encourages acting in line with your characters' goals.

Adding and changing rules like this is part of what makes this game attractive. Brutal Quest purposefully leaves fruitful voids to encourage creativity at the table. This embodies the 28 ethos of converting and hacking to our own tastes. The zine is full of seeds to plant in your imagination. The cover price is worth it for the artwork alone. Meanwhile, the mechanics burst with brutal and poignant bloodshed for your games.

Designer: Nicholas Evans
32 Pages
Colour Cover/Black & White Interior
A5 Zine £8.50/PDF PWYW
<https://mammoth-miniatures.onlineweb.shop>

BRUTAL



QUEST

*FANTASY NARRATIVE SKIRMISH GAMING
BASED ON THE PLANET28 RULES*

FORBIDDEN PSALM

A Miniatures Game of blood, Metal, death and Socks, inspired by and compatible with Mörk Borg. Soundtrack while playing: Feminazgûl and Godspeed You! Black Emperor

Mörk Borg by the Stockholm Kartell is a black metal inspired ttRPG. The book blends spectacular graphic design, flavoursome rules and dark aesthetics. Its creators call out the misogyny and racism often tied to the black metal and OSR scenes. Their world and rules are open for the fanbase to publish supplements. Even before release, people were making grimdark minis for the setting. It was only a matter of time before someone put it all together.

That is where Forbidden Psalm comes in.

While pricier than most ZineQuest offerings, Forbidden Psalm is worth it. Original Mörk Borg artist Johan Nohr provides the gruesome cover. The internal layout, much like the RPG, feels like a black metal zine. Unfortunately in the first print run, text is almost chopped off the page. This set my anxiety screaming. Nothing was lost to the bleed or gutter, but thankfully later print runs have fixed this issue.

The set has a warband sheet and some cardstock minis to go with the scenarios. The sheet layout is perfect. The standees are flavoursome, but only hook me for short-term use. Instead, a punchy beginners guide to converting your own miniatures provides practical inspiration. Shout-outs go to companies and YouTube channels likely familiar to 28 regulars. Offering useful hobby support is a huge strength of the book.

Inside we find a polished game. Everything is ready to use straight out of the book. Competitive, co-operative and solo play is hardwired into every scenario. Again, this makes the game friendly to newcomers. I could even play before finding an opponent.

Mechanics mirror the OSR love of procedural generation tables. From picking names to choosing equipment, everything can be random. Actions resolve using swingy D20s, usually needing a 12+ for success. If the die shows a 20 then the attack Crits (as in making a critical hit). Crits do maximum damage without needing to roll. If you roll a 1 then it is called a Fumble and the attacker drops their weapon! Each player gets a set of six Omens, each granting a different one-off effect during play. Omens can force a re-roll, help sniff out treasure or prevent injury and death. These 'Get Out Of Jail Free cards' help to mitigate the worst fate has to offer without being unfair to opponents. Magic is risky, dark and comical to the point you almost want to see your caster fumble just to watch the fireworks go off.

References are reminiscent of early Warhammer books. In-jokes and knowing nods add an appreciable note to the rich flavour of Mörk Borg. Campaigns involve running errands for a dodgy wizard. This agoraphobic patron is as scared of goblins stealing his socks as he is of the end of the world. Every scenario contains at least one monster, if not several groups of them. These often make use of comic elements (such as the aforementioned sock goblins). Deadly rules make sure that any humour does not overshadow the threat at hand. They act procedurally, which kept me on my toes while looting crypts and mugging old men.

Comparing the Mörk Borg ttRPG to recent Games Workshop output is akin to comparing the vivid writing of Michael Moorcock with a trashy novel. Even if you have no interest in RPGs, it is an essential book for anyone taken with grimdark imagery. Forbidden Psalm elevates Mörk Borg by building a satisfying narrative from potent mechanical choices. The material is accessible regardless of prior experience. The marriage of black metal OSR and Blanchitsu aesthetics is perfect. From a gameplay perspective, if you only buy one Mörk Borg book then this is it.

*Designer: Kevin Rahman
86 Pages
Full Colour
Perfect Bound Softback Book
£18.00/PDF £9.00
<https://kevingwrd.wixsite.com/my-site>*



forbidden psalm

Compatible with

**NIHIL
BORE**

Miniature gaming at the end of the world

ARTIST FOCUS // THOMAS BROWN

THOMAS BROWN



Let's start by calling the project what it is: a love letter to fishermen. Gnarly, right?

Innsmouth's Deep Ones. Hellboy's Abe Sapein. The Creature, who did not even warrant a name but decades later needs no introduction. Whatever your catch, the fishman is not quite one of popular culture's most respected monsters. And yet, I have always had a soft spot for this out-of-towner, drawn perhaps by his otherness, his connection to the sea and his inescapable association with one of the horror genre's most formative influences. So, three months into the UK's first national lockdown and searching for ways to keep my mind occupied, I began revisiting this amphibious race in all its various representations across film and literature (more on that below). Underneath the jokes, and behind the often goofy portrayals of the creatures themselves, I dredged up rich currents of storytelling potential – ancient mythology, folklore and ritual, themes of transformation and the uncanny, body horror, cosmic horror, and some incredibly moving examples of the sublime power of the sea. My imagination was hooked, and after decades of clutching at morsels of fishmen-related rumours thrown our way by

Games Workshop, I decided to try to bring these influences to life myself in the only ways I know how: through writing and on the tabletop.

For me, the two go hand-in-hand. Every miniature project needs a story, and a story starts and ends with emotion. That is what resonates with a person when they experience a story, and that is what stays with them after it has finished. Emotion is what distinguishes the AoS28 aesthetic. At the same time, it's my connection to a project, too. If I'm not swept up by whatever it is I'm making, I cannot expect anyone else to be. And perhaps it is the marketer in me, but why else do we go to the effort of documenting and sharing our hobbies, if not to sweep up other people along the way? With the tolling of a bell and the gentle slap of the tide against the docks, I set about doing just that.

'The oldest and strongest emotion...'

As a love letter to fishmen (six words I never thought I'd write in that particular order), it is probably unsurprising that my first port of call was Innsmouth. It is nigh on impossible to explore the subject without stepping on HP Lovecraft's toes, and I knew for certain that the people who



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- Opposite Welcome to Innsmouth
- 01 "Row, row, row your boat..."
- 02 Sweet dreams
- 03 Well-stocked
- 04 A squabble of seagulls
- 05 The storm breaks
- 06 Grab an oar



07

would most enjoy my project would already be familiar with his now-infamous Massachusetts seaport. Putting myself in their shoes for a moment, I realised I would actually look for, and be excited by, those influences in a project like this, so rather than trying to reinvent the wheel, I embraced them.

Immediately, I found the emotional heart of what I was searching for shuffling through the back-alleys of Innsmouth, hunched under doorways and staring through wide, unblinking eyes at Devil Reef as the water squirmed with the movement of a thousand things that were not waves. A dark fantasy lens differentiated my setting from Lovecraft's, as did my point-of-view character. However, that sense of the smallness of the ordinary folk, which only serves to exaggerate the horrid awe and indescribable wonder they experience at the spectacle stirring just off-shore and sometimes dragging itself up onto the piers and into their streets, carries across. I could explore all this at length in the written work. For the diorama, the docks seemed the perfect setting.

'Blessed be the Bountiful Deep...'

The fantasy element was important to me. Aside from a lifelong love for the genre, which most of us here probably share, this project was pure escapism. I don't know any two people who



08

dealt — or are still dealing — with lockdown in the same way as each other. For me, this was it. Even then, my own feelings and circumstances at the time bled in. It cannot be a coincidence that I conceived of a town in which its residents are as good as trapped, the world beyond its boundaries a broken, hostile place. As my anxieties became theirs, so too did my coping methods. I quickly realised that, however ancient and 'other', the fishmen in my narrative would be the lesser of two evils. A light of sorts, preserving the townsfolk against the real darkness trickling through their walls. When I think about the grimdark aesthetic, this is something that strikes me: we are all telling stories about the little people. The ordinary folk. Not goddesses or kings (although I've seen plenty of great grimdark takes on both!) but the ones just trying to live their lives, day by day. It is those details that bring a story — or a diorama — to life, and that is what I needed to capture when I worked on both.

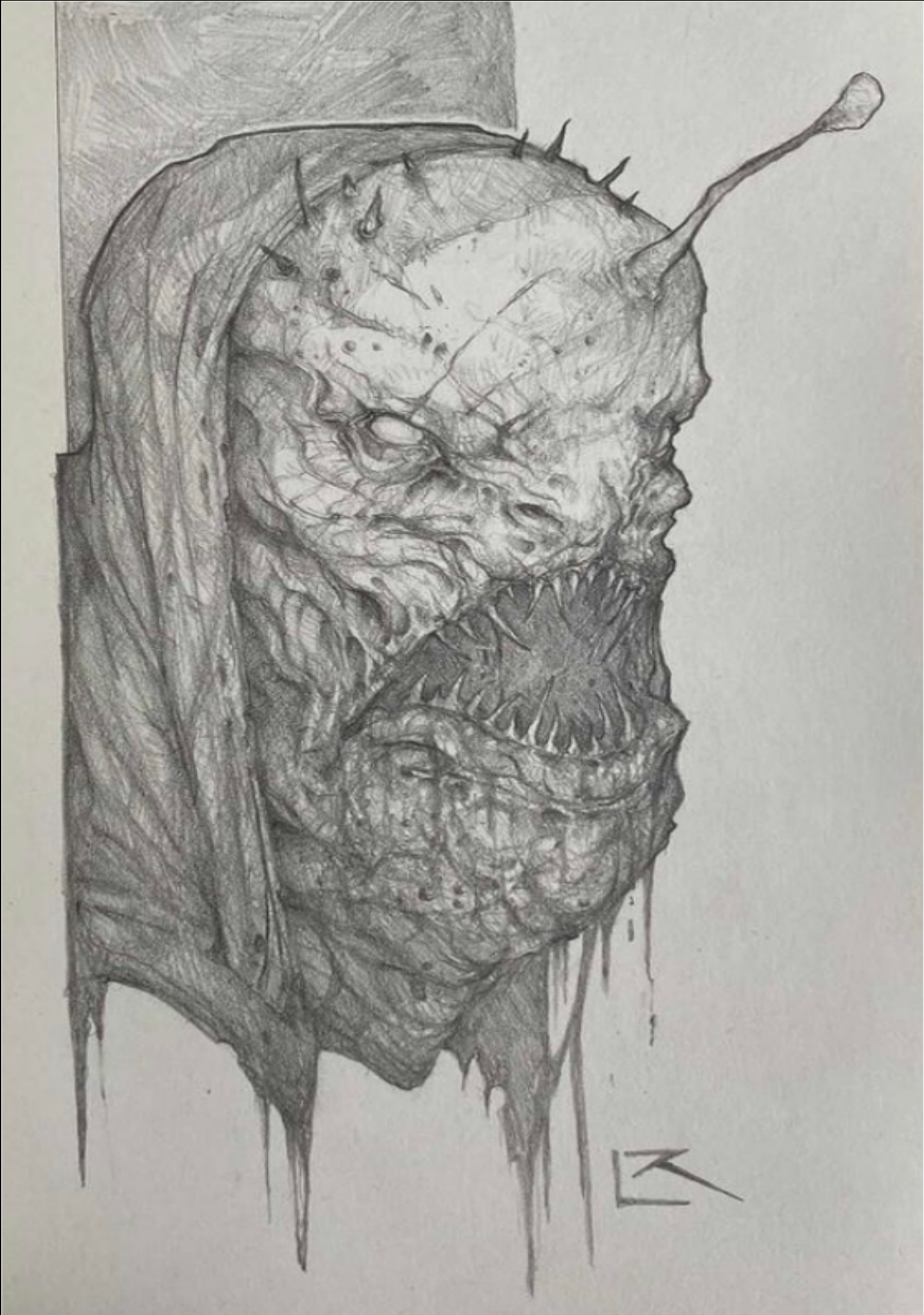
The relationship between the fishmen and the townsfolk suddenly made sense to me. Of course they would revere these creatures, which filled their nets with fish and their bellies with food. Even in the fantastical setting, it was believable, even relatable. Religion plays a central role in *The Shadow Over Innsmouth*. It is something that touches on all of us in our real lives. And just like the natural world, which I emphasise in the

**“What would an ocean be without a monster lurking in the dark?”
- Werner Herzog**

07 *Uma, Daughter of the Deeps*

08 *The Fish Wife unmasked*

08 *'The Fish Wife', commission with Richard Luong [@tentaclesandteeth]*





10

diorama through the choppy waves and wind-swept wharf, it is a long-established vehicle for the sublime — that sense of transcendentalism, of inexplicable wonder and the incalculable vastness of the universe — that I wanted to evoke. I hoped that including small nods to it — the effigy on the pier, the etching in the oar, the man, kneeling as though in prayer while he makes his offering to the sea — would help to convey it to the viewer, if only subconsciously.

Take themes of reverence, wrap them up in a small-town setting with an intimate point-of-view character, nestle it all inside some remote wilderness, and you have a recipe for folk horror. I could be describing Lovecraft's Innsmouth, Shyamalan's *Village* or *The Wicker Man's* Summerisle. In Evan's period horror *Apostle* and Nevill's *The Ritual* (read the book!), we see the objects of their worship for ourselves and can only fall to our knees as they stretch towards us from their bed of vines or clatter closer on old hooves. To help suggest that feeling in my own work, I needed the people of my town similarly beholden to something inexplicable, something ancient, at least to their minds. Enter the fishman or, as she quickly became, a fishwoman: Great Mother. Emissary of the Deep. The Fish Wife, equal parts ichthyic horror and source of comfort in my nightmarish setting, where her light is all that keeps the shadows at bay. But who was she and what does she want now?

From *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* I learned the power — and the emotional appeal — of tragedy. The Fish Wife, too, has suffered, like the rest of the sorry world she inhabits. 2020's homage to the Alien franchise, *Underwater*,

showed me where she came from and the cold blackness of the abyss she once called home. From the Trenchers of the *Aquaman* comics and the Lurkers in *Skyrim*, I took creative cues in terms of her appearance. As always, Games Workshop provided the parts I needed in its Nighthaunt, Aeldari and Idoneth Deepkin ranges to help bring her to life.

Then came the moment — you know the one I'm talking about — when I put aside the paintbrush and stared down at the very same image that had been haunting my imagination for months. Is there anything so satisfying? There she was, striding from the depths of her temple, unmasked that she might cast back the shadows or illuminate the faces of those knelt before her; mine amongst them.

Welcome to Innswich...

A multitude of Games Workshop kits have gone into bringing the dock and its slimy inhabitants to life. You can probably spot many of them for yourself, but if you'd like to ask me about any of the specific parts, paints or techniques I used, I am never more than a DM away on Instagram. There is so much more I'd love to talk about — the artwork I commissioned, world-building your own fantasy setting, the characters who call the town home and my future plans for the story, both the novel and on the tabletop. For now, I focused on the dream I had for this project and the things that have influenced me along the way. I hope you are able to turn the page feeling inspired, too.



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- 10 Haul in the catch
- 11 Just another shift
- 12 The dockmaster emerges
- 13 The gift of life
- 14 'Darkly Dreaming', commission with Roberto Cuevas Guerrero [@lanadamiatures]
- 15 "I dreamed I was a fish..."
- 16 Liese, Daughter of the Deeps



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VILLE VIITASALO

I am Ville Viitasalo. A guy from Finland who paints, converts and sometimes sculpts miniatures in his free time. My journey has a pretty typical beginning. I saw some cool Warhammer miniatures at a friend's house as a kid, asked mum to buy me some, did the hobby for a while, then kind of dropped it as a teenager, before picking it up again almost a decade later. I never really got into the gaming side of this hobby. This is probably because I always tried to paint every single model to the best of my ability, so I never finished any fighting force to play with. I did however love building, converting and painting the models and that love has always remained with me. Now after a decade break, I have been painting seriously for about two years, often for painting competitions. Here I will showcase creating one such piece to give insight to my current creative process.

When creating a piece, I usually have a strong vision about how it will look when it is completed. That does not mean that the finished piece has to be exactly like my vision, nor that my vision cannot change mid-process, but it is still usually there at the beginning. For a vision, you need good inspiration. I get mine from literally anything: books, movies, video games, nature, other artists' work, be it miniatures or more traditional art forms, you name it. My inspiration is also very fleeting. 90 per cent of my ideas vanish as quickly as they appear. I also get tired of working on a miniature pretty quickly. I have a ton of unfinished pieces, some of which have been waiting for over a year for my desire to finish them to return. That was the case with this particular piece.

About a year ago, I wanted to make a Tzeentchian warrior wandering in a crystal realm, inspired by the Crystal Cave from the video game *Dark Souls*. The base of the model was a Stormcast Eternal from Games Workshop. I scraped off the more obvious good-guy insignia from the armour and shield and sculpted a Chaos star on the pauldron from green stuff. The head is from a Bloodletter, with the eyes and horns sanded off to get a featureless uncanny valley vibe. Do not worry, however, he is not blind. He has plenty of eyes to see with, a huge one on his shield and a lot of smaller ones on his living mace. Both also feature tentacles made with green stuff. The base was originally very simple: stacked pieces of styrofoam for stairs, small cork pieces for the crystallised ground and shaved sprue pieces for the bigger crystal formations put on a round base. It was at this stage that I lost interest and left it for a year as previously mentioned. It was not until another painting competition arrived that my inspiration to finish returned.

Since this was a competition piece, I decided to do a little upgrade to the base. I thought that a square base would be nicer than a round one, so I cut and stacked some cardboard pieces and put the whole original base on top of them. I also cut a little piece from the front of the original base so I could move it a little forward and make the model more centred. I used Milliput to fill out the gaps and make the base look like a single piece. Some more cork pieces were required on the edges to continue the crystal pattern on the ground. I also created a little backdrop from cardboard.

Now that the base was done, it was time to paint. And oh how little time there was left. Only two days were left until the competition's deadline! There was no time for second-guessing, so to honour my original sources of inspiration, I chose some blues and violets and to contrast that, some oranges and yellows to make a nice little complementary colour scheme. I started with the base, very quickly painting the crystal ground and stairs. I invested no time into refining them as I moved to the next stage: the backdrop. This was also painted very quickly. First a base layer with blues and violets and a touch of orange then the outlines of the crystals and last glazes of lighter and darker variants of the base tones to make them resemble crystals.

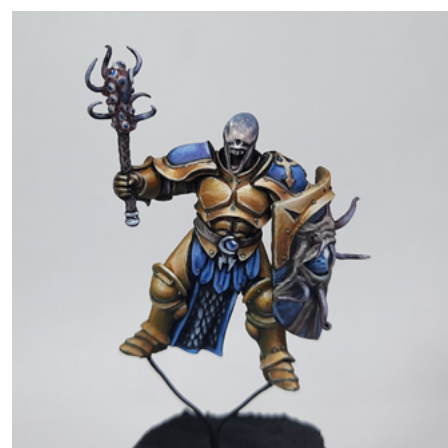
Next up was the model itself. I started with the armour. The original idea was to paint a sort of orangy brass armour to make the model pop against the blue backdrop. Due to the tight schedule, I did not have time to fiddle with the exact hue of the armour and it ended up looking a bit too much like a regular Stormcast Warrior, especially after painting the blue parts. To resolve this, I decided to leave it as it is and rewrite the character's story instead. Maybe he is not a Chaos warrior at all, but a poor hero who was on a quest in the crystal realm. The crystal dust he breathed in corrupted his body and soul, leaving a grotesque monster inhabiting his armour. His facial features are now mutating and proliferating on his shield and weapon. Speaking of faces, shields and weapons, those were the last areas to be painted. I mixed some very cool fleshy colours and painted them mostly the same way with



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little variations in the hues. The face got some more orangey colours in it and also some small white dots and the mace got a little more reddish hues. The eyes were the last things to be painted. I chose blues and violets for them.

The work was not yet done. I still had to put the model and the base together and harmonise the colours with a little glaze work: orange and yellow hues to the base and the backdrop and some blue hues for the armour. Finally the pieces are finished and ready to be submitted to the competition.

Creating this piece in such a short time was intense but fun. It forced me to paint loose and sketchy, a way of painting that, in my opinion, lends itself perfectly to a grimdark style. Although it is not my cleanest and most refined work, I am still very happy with the result.

- 01 Upgraded piece
- 02 Base after painting
- 03 Model after painting
- 04 The eye on the shield
- 05 Finished piece after assembly and final touches



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ALL ABOUT THAT BASE

by Tom Pateman

Basing is one of my favourite parts of the model making experience. It offers up so much creative potential and really brings a model or project to life. It is an ideal opportunity to get a glimpse of the world the models inhabit and what locations they may find themselves in when captured in motion and placed on the tabletop. Due to the nature of a sci-fi/fantasy setting and the rich environments they offer, the hobby has almost infinite possibilities to what could be done. That is what I think makes basing so fun and rewarding.

When designing a base, it is important to consider the models' aesthetics. Ultimately you want the base and model to work as one visual outcome. Textures and colours are important to consider, especially when planning the thematic role the model will play. Small elements on a model have a major effect on its overall look, so it is often helpful to apply some similar aspects between the model and base. This could be in the form of contrasting colours that make the model stand out and pop against it or alternatively, complementary tones and colours that tie the model and base together.

Bearing all of this in mind, one of the best pieces of advice I can give is to just try stuff out! Use unwanted bases without models and explore

the different ideas you have then observe how they look when realised on the base.

In terms of materials and what to use, it is very open depending on what you are looking to create. I often explore what various hobby websites have to offer, as there is a great range of different basing products out there.

I would also strongly suggest being a keen scavenger. I tend to collect a lot of stuff on walks and from around the house when I see something that has potential. It could be an interesting bit of bark from a tree or some great roots I've seen in the garden. Anything can be used, and it's nice to collect lots of 'bits', even if you have no set idea on how to use them. You will have a good collection for when inspiration strikes.

I have been working on my own project – 'Amberfall' – for just over a year now and found that the bases have formed a large part of the overall look and feel to the models I have been creating. In many ways the style of the bases set in motion the developing narrative for the project. As you can see from the pictures, my bases take on a fantasy landscape feel and are designed around the idea of a deep, heavily forested region in autumn.

I decided to use autumn as a season for inspiration due to the colours associated with it. The warm yellow, orange and browns all tied together nicely and set the colour palette for the models themselves. It is one of the reasons I ended up using yellow as an accent colour on their shields and shoulder guards.

Tying together these elements, I was able to create bases that really complimented the whole narrative and have put together some practical steps to help others achieve the same.

1. I use some slate chips from the garden and break them up into smaller pieces with a hammer (make sure you wear goggles). This makes great little rocks and boulders. I mix and match them together to form an interesting arrangement. Keep in mind where the model would be joining onto the base itself.

2. I use a textured basing paint to fill all over the base and around the rocks. I found that applying it sparingly over the edges of the rocks makes them appear like they are emerging from the ground. I tend to leave some areas flat and some bumpier to feel more natural. I then dry brush the whole base to bring out the raised edges and help create more depth in the recesses and to build contrast. I use a lighter grey/brown for this and build it up slowly until I



am happy.

3. On the flat areas I use a lighter coloured technical crackle paint to form a dried puddle effect. A little tip with crackle paint – put down a little PVA glue onto the surface first, and it gives you a much more prominent crackle effect.

4. I collect old roots from the garden to use as little branches and logs. I was lucky with the roots I managed to find, as they seemed to scale down really well. It is worth exploring different options and varieties for your desired style. You could probably do this with plant material above ground also. Just experiment and see what you can find.

5. Now you add the grass tufts, as they form quite a key visual effect and need to be placed around the model contact points. I find they work well close to the rocks, as this is where you would normally get vegetation growing in the wild.

6. Then I apply leaf litter over the surface of the base across the different areas. You can purchase small hand operated punchers that create leaf shapes and I use a mix of punched leaves and purchased ones. For the punched ones, I paint some paper the colours I want and just punch them out. I find this mix of styles helps to add a sense of realism. When it comes to placing them, I try to imagine where they would collect and fall if they were on a forest floor i.e. flat surface or in crevices.

7. At this stage I use brown washes and thinned down texture paint to apply over the base in areas to push back the leaves and 'grime up' the various materials. This helps to make them feel aged, as if they are all formed together, giving it a more natural feel. You can imagine the leaves being squashed into the mud as people and animals walk over them.

8. To finish the base, I look at it from different angles and make any adjustments I feel would improve it. I sometimes add little upright branches and smaller detailing.

I hope this tutorial has been helpful. Remember, the main thing is to just try stuff out and enjoy yourself. Sometimes the perfect base is the result of many experiments, and hopefully the end result compliments the model perfectly.



ARTIST FOCUS // GIUSEPPE DEL BUONO

GIUSEPPE DEL BUONO





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For me, everything started in the 1980s when I discovered Games Workshop's card-based board game, Chaos Marauders. This 'manic game of orcish mayhem' featured box artwork and incredible cards illustrated by Blanche and it was my introduction to fantasy games. Then came Heroquest, lead miniatures and ugly attempts with enamel colours. I can still remember my first conversion – I used a Fimir from Heroquest to create a shapeless mud monster bulked up with air-dry clay.

Converting and painting miniatures is how I bring my imaginary world to life. Here weird things are cute but horrible, nice and scary at the same time. I grew up watching movies like *Labyrinth* and *Legend*, and I think they imprinted on my mind, inspiring my fantasy grotesque/fairy tale world where the good guys have a nightmarish look as much as the bad guys.

Verlinden Production magazine techniques (which you may be able to spot traces of in my latest 28 Challenge entry) and White Dwarf magazine's 'Eavy Metal craziness trained me and shaped my style.

My 'Nurgle walking bagpipe' and 'Selfie nurglings' demonstrate that at the root of every one of my creations there's a cauldron full of all my unconscious sources of inspiration, plus an ever-present ingredient: a touch of irony.

Opposite Greetings from Plague Island

01 Necrophagus

02 Nurgle bagpipe

03 Strix

04 Moon Spell



05



06



07



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- 05 The Ancient One and Arborean Spell
- 06 Gargantuan Wheeler
- 07 Katharina von Ditmar
- 08 Dispatch Hound
- 09-10 Anhia, Thenia and Nenhia, sisters of Vulnia
- 11 Cleo Aspis - Venenum Temple
- 12 Automaton servitor



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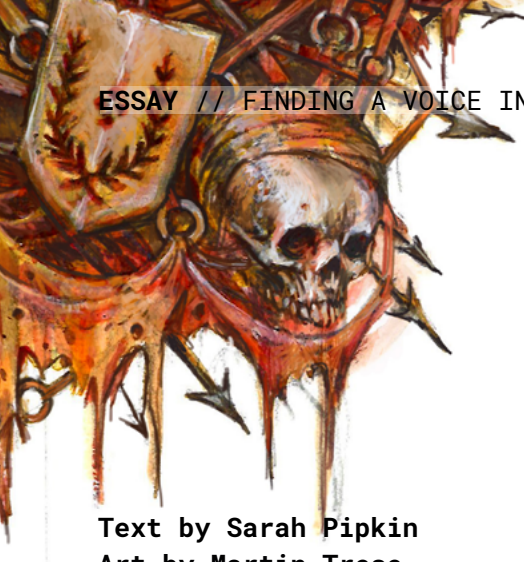
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FINDING A VOICE IN WARGAMING

Text by Sarah Pipkin

Art by Martin Trese

Before I started wargaming, it seemed strange and inaccessible. Once I began playing, I found a certain familiarity in the way the miniatures are defined by their paint job and how they interact. Wargaming reminds me of the Barbie dolls that I used to play with as a kid. When making up stories, I would think of images, or emotional snapshots, and work with my dolls to construct a narrative. They were almost all princesses, so the stories had a strong fantasy element. I did not have any swords or weapons, so the narratives often had a mystery aspect and focused on outsmarting the enemy. Though I had many Barbie dolls, I only had one Ken. The heroes, the villains, the background characters, the plucky sidekicks – they were always women, and so I told myself and my friends female-centric stories over and over again. My favourite, a brunette like my childhood self, would always sweep in to save the day or survive near death experiences. There was no doubt that she was the leader of the gang – she issued commands, she took risks, she saved the day. No one ever told me that it had to be any other way.

One of the major barriers keeping me from wargaming was the lack of female miniatures. The idea of playing out battles and wars with exclusively male soldiers just did not feel right to me. It made me feel like a trespasser – like I had to sacrifice an element of my femininity to be allowed to play with boys' toys. It held up the false idea that a soldier has always – and will always – be male and it communicated the message that I was unwelcome in these worlds purely because of my gender.

I grew up with stories of Joan of Arc and Mulan. The more I learned of history, the more I understood that the history of war is a universal story involving both men and women. There have always been women leading armies, as there have always been female Vikings and female foot soldiers. The only

thing that changes is whether we recognise them and their efforts. So, for a while I was torn about trying wargaming – deterred by the overwhelming lack of representation, but also drawn in by the potential.

The Changer of Ways

What finally drew me in was Tzeentch. My husband brought home an issue of White Dwarf that showcased some painted minis from Warhammer Quest: Silver Tower. I saw the Gaunt Summoner, with their horned head like a hammerhead shark and their flowing blue robe and fell in love. I saw the objective tokens, especially the fish with legs, and knew that I had to have these miniatures. However, Disciples of Tzeentch is one of the few Age of Sigmar armies that does not have a single female miniature. I decided to change that and build a mixed gender army. In the process, I learned how important it was to have female representation on the table, and the critical role they play in tabletop storytelling.

I focused my effort towards the Tzaangors (beastmen devoted to Tzeentch). They have goat-like bodies with bird heads and are covered in feathers. They are also depicted as entirely male, with exposed pectoral muscles. Rather than trying to kitbash a miniature, I decided to take cues from the natural world. In nature, female birds often have muted and reserved plumage, while male birds are brightly coloured and ostentatious. My Tzaangors have a similar skin colour scheme: the women are a greyer blue with less contrasting dark purple feathers, while the men are a dark blue with bright, contrasting pink feathers. It was a very simple change, but as I started painting the miniatures, it brought the Tzaangors to life in a way that I had not expected. The leader of my Tzaangor foot soldiers is a woman – her arms held to either side while she screams at the enemy. Not only do I have a female character, but I have one who puts her life on the line to

“And that more intelligent sort of girl who likes boys’ games.”



lead her countrymen into battle. My Tzaangor Shaman is a woman respected and feared by her people, while she flies above them on a Disc of Tzeentch. With a simple painting decision, I went from having a set of troops I was unenthusiastic about to having a narrative backbone to my army.

The first time I took my painted miniatures to play against someone at a club, I could not wait to tell them about the narrative decisions I made for my army. I felt so clever about overcoming the lack of female representation through the power of paint alone. But when I told my opponent about it, he just looked at me and said 'well, of course my miniatures have no gender.' That moment stuck with me, both because of the embarrassment that comes with being an over-enthusiastic newbie, but mainly because he was wrong. The default language we use when talking about miniatures is masculine. It is so ingrained in many people that they do not realise it. We call our miniatures our 'dudes' or 'guys.' They are referred to almost entirely with 'he' pronouns. My opponent at the club had already gendered all of his models, though he was oblivious to it.

Representation is not just about having a presence – it is about being recognised. And part of what needs to be recognised is that there is a default language, and that we automatically assign these inanimate objects with masculinity. And after hours of painting, and the occasional blood sacrifice during building, how inanimate are our soldiers?

When seeing battlefields represented in fiction, there is generally a solitary, token woman. They might have a special purpose, such as being a wizard or fulfilling a prophecy. Or, possibly more common, the sole heroic woman facing off against the sole evil woman. But the women very rarely hold a headlining position. And if they do – they often find a happily ever

after where they put away their weapons and become dutiful wives. There is a constant undercurrent of wrongness with women fighting – it is something that is allowed in the short term, but never really celebrated. A man fighting a war is a celebration of colour and noise; a woman fighting is a dystopia or a tragedy. That is why a simple act like having a female Tzaangor Shaman is so liberating. A woman using magic that is respected and revered by her people is a rare thing. Women who use magic are burnt at the stake, they are not celebrated for it.

With my miniatures, I can challenge the storytelling conventions about women in a fantasy world. I have a storytelling autonomy that is difficult to access in everyday society. Building an army is not telling a personal, first-person narrative. It is constructing a history. You need a mechanism that means that a Tzaangor woman can rise to the top of society and become a shaman, which means a society with some form of equity with each game.

Despite my success with my Tzeentch army, it is frustrating to constantly look for new ways of introducing female characters to an army that has none. It is not surprising that while I was chipping away at my Tzeentch army, the Adepta Sororitas were constantly calling me.

The triumph – and failure – of the Sororitas

Unlike Tzeentch, almost all of the Adepta Sororitas model range is composed of women. They also have a wonderful gothic imagery that I love. They reminded me of Beguines, laywomen active in Western Europe, particularly in the Low Countries, in the 13th–16th Century, who created religious communities as independently organised groups. These women were not under control of the Catholic Church in the same way that a nun was, but instead created their own religious communities. Something about the

almost insane passion of the Adepta Sororitas made me think of those laywomen.

In the overarching story of Warhammer 40K, the Adepta Sororitas are directly controlled by the Ecclesiarchy. But looking at the overarching story of Adepta Sororitas, it is impossible for a bureaucratic group to have complete control over an institution as large and widespread as a legion of women divided into several dozen chapters and spread across the universe. Especially when the origin story of the Adepta Sororitas is founded on the corruption of the Ecclesiarchy. The Adepta Sororitas, in my mind, are like the Beguines, tied to the Adeptus Ministorum out of a social necessity, but in reality impossible for the Ecclesiarchy to truly control.

What I love most about the Adepta Sororitas is not the insane tanks or the various dynamic head options. I love Junith Eruita, the canonesse in the flying pulpit. That particular sculpt reads as a woman in her late 40s/early 50s. She rose to power by embracing a talent that women are often discouraged from cultivating – preaching. According to her backstory, while her battle sisters died around her, Junith battled her way, miraculously unharmed, to a pulpit. From there she gave a rousing sermon that motivated her sisters to fight harder and ultimately achieve victory. Something about how Junith reclaims a male sphere really appeals to me. She has a power that is not about brute strength, nor does she have a strength that is typically 'feminine' like seduction. Instead, she uses



oration to motivate her sisters. She is a rare science fiction character that, as I get closer to my thirties, can continue to be an aspirational figure. A model of a woman who has grown and refined as she gets older – not a woman who has become obsolete and relegated to the home.

The storytelling potential of the Adepta Sororitas are deep and rich; there is a lot of richness in an army where the default is female and men are excluded on the basis of their sex. Although neither Games Workshop nor Black Library have tapped into it, so much exploration could be done around the impact this swap has on the wider Imperial society. But the richness of opportunity in the Adepta Sororitas is also one of its downsides. The Adepta Sororitas, in many ways, are a crutch for Games Workshop to lean on when it comes to representation in 40K. It is hard to challenge the overwhelming lack of representation in the 40K miniature line without having Sisters of Battle being thrown back at you.

Beyond the issues around a lack of meaningful representation in Xenos lines, or the ongoing debate around female space marines, having almost all of the women in 40K in one army creates a default of gendered battles. Because of Covid-19, I have not yet had an opportunity to field my Adepta Sororitas, but when I consider what the battlefield will look like, I imagine, disappointingly, that the battles may seem a bit like schoolyard girls vs boys fights. I think about the fact that my opponents are almost exclusively males fielding all male armies, while I am one of the few women at

the table fielding the stereotypical ‘girls’ army. The way we see armies impacts the stories that we want to tell. Even if the Adepta Sororitas are fighting for the Emperor’s glory and preventing the spread of Chaos, I cannot escape the worry that people will look at me as a woman and say, ‘Ah yes, of course she’s playing the girls’ army.’ I am buying and painting the models I want, ones that can serve as avatars of myself on the tabletop. But no one looks at a man playing with space marines and says ‘Ah yes, of course he’s playing with the boys’ army.’ Maleness is the default and women must be relegated to a convent – separated from all other troops through the sanctity of their gender alone.

Finding a voice

Kitbashing miniatures – and going out of your way to ensure that your army includes female miniatures – is also a declaration of gender. Not only that, it shows dedication and time invested, because having female miniatures available matters more to you than just being able to quickly put your armies on the table and start playing. It absolutely matters and is so meaningful to those of us who are weary of battling with misogynists and trolls and who are desperate for anything, any form of representation that we can cling to as proof that we are welcome in this community.

In 1913, HG Wells wrote a book on wargaming titled *Little Wars; A Game for Boys from Twelve Years of Age to One Hundred and Fifty and for That More Intelligent Sort of Girl Who Like Boys’ Games and Books*. Since that book’s publication, wargaming’s opinion of women has not really changed. We are still some mystical figure – a

“Our tabletop sagas are not dictated by Black Library writers, and they are not composed by a group of inaccessible rule writers. Our stories are told by the two players at the table.”



unicorn in the gaming world.

Walking into a wargaming space is to walk into a room dominated by male players, created by male writers and contextualised by male miniature designers. There is an overwhelming pressure, not through any overt action, but through a consistent omission of women, to give up and just accept the masculine default and tell the same stories over and over again. Putting female miniatures on the table is a way of reclaiming that story space.

Our tabletop sagas are not dictated by Black Library writers, and they are not composed by a group of inaccessible rule writers. Our stories are told by the two players at the table. I do not need the publishing industry to prioritise female centric stories, or the film industry to make female heroines who actually pass the Bechdel test. If I have the patience and determination, I can remake a Games Workshop model into something better and more representative than the original. I determine the story parameters; I choose the actors. But it comes at a sacrifice. I will never be able to pick up an army and just play it as is – the burden of representation is on my shoulders. And that can be as isolating and alienating as it occasionally feels liberating.

One of my favourite warbands is my Frostgrave warband. Each miniature is based on a female friend – the kind of women who I'd pick to explore a mysterious frozen city with. My best friend from university, the boss who became a mentor, the friend I message almost daily – they are all there. Like all good teams, they know that they can rely on each other, no matter what. And at the centre leading them all is a blonde woman, like myself now, who would not have made it so far without the women she had alongside her all along the way.

But a warband or army is only half a history. To finish the stories, I need worthy opponents, tired of the same wargaming tropes, to share the narrative burden. Until representation is normalised in all armies, not just those of women or other marginalised groups, I and others like me will remain on the fringes, waiting for our stories to be heard.



ARTIST FOCUS // ROBERTO CUEVAS GUERRERO

ROBERTO CUEVAS GUERRERO



If there's anything that inspires me above all things, it is suffering.

Don't get me wrong. I don't like suffering, nor do I enjoy its existence. But I like how it brings sensations together, like the entangled roots of a putrid tree, its branches differ depending on who takes care of the garden.

That is why pain serves me as a source of inspiration. To be more specific: useless, nonsensical pain. For me there's no more empty suffering than nightmares. When I talk to someone, I often ask them if they had nightmares and if so, can they tell me about them. Many of my miniatures come from illustrations, and many of those illustrations come from nightmares.

My gargants, for example, actually come from one of my own. In my dream, they were anthropomorphic houses and they ended up being giants trapped in houses. It is easier to engage the empathy of the viewer if the object of the suffering is humanoid.

Having a clear visual of what I was going after with this army, I asked myself: Why are they like this, why are they trapped? I remember the work of Heinrich Hoffman, *Der Struwwelpeter*, a grotesque children's book where the protagonists were punished for their mischievous actions, so as to teach a lesson to its young, impressionable readers. I figured that in the Mortal Realms, parents would tell similar stories to their children: stories about Nighthaunts, about the dangers of Chaos and about massive gargants stuck in old houses, gargants you can't see if you don't look for them. Thus the theme of this army was born. Giants that have come out of children's stories, mocking tales made real by the whimsical wish of a bored god (Tzeentch, is that you?).

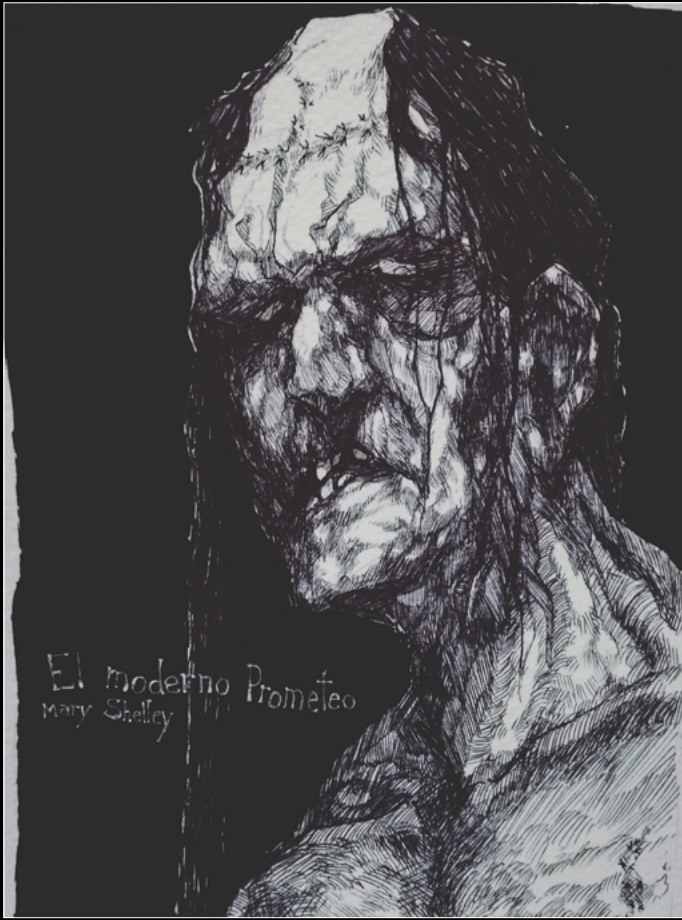
I am a bit clumsy with Green Stuff, so my conversions are going to look grotesque, whether I want them to or not. I play with this in my favour, giving everything a depressing look. Furthermore, when I am planning a conversion, I am aware of my own limitations, so I try to minimise the sculpting process as much as possible. In order not to have to depend entirely on my lack of sculpting abilities, I integrate all kinds of everyday objects in my miniatures, from bolts and nuts to, in the case of one of the gargants, a urine sample container (unused!).

I like to paint with vibrant colours and unrealistic lights. Almost every final highlight is pure white, emphasising the surreal look of the miniatures. In my collection, there are only a few models painted in a disciplined way. For example, Astragoth. He is one of my favourite models ever, so I knew it had to be special. Usually I create a paint scheme with a reduced colour palette, without thinking too much about the final result. Sometimes colours around us do not match that well, so it is not something I worry too much about. My rough painting style is a reflection of my passion for drawing. Magnificent artists like John Tenniel or Albrecht Dürer are always an inspiration.

With freehand painting, I can explore both aspects of the hobby, painting and illustration. I miss when Games Workshop gave us keychain-sized artwork, or when you could find tons of samples to print and put on your banners. Although I never met someone crazy enough to cut them straight out of the book! Finally, Oldhammer is another source of inspiration for me. Crazy compositions and strident colours remind us of simpler times, and a place where we can all return to from time to time.







ANDREA BUSCAROLI



The distinctive characteristic of my work is the use of hot glue. Not usually the first choice of a sculptor or a hobbyist for their miniatures, and yet it is an interesting material with qualities and a speed that make it worth using when you learn how it functions. At the very least, you should give it a try, even if to perform simple modifications or terrain details.

I was introduced to Warhammer 40,000 sixteen years ago, when I was only ten years old. Like most of us, I started with a Space Marine army. Even then, my favourite part of the hobby was building the models and, over time, my builds improved.

When I discovered Dawn of War: Dark Crusade, the video game, I fell in love with the Necrons, the C'tans to be precise. Since the first Necron codex, I researched and learned anything I could about those star-devouring vampires of Lovecraftian malice and divine power. I was expecting to see characters mentioned in the stories become models, expanding on the limited range of only the Deceiver and Nightbringer, but when they did not immediately appear, I decided to create my own.

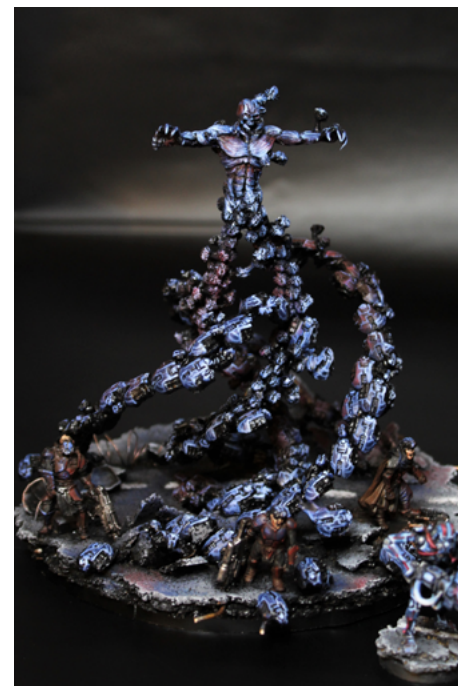
I began to sculpt my first model, a C'tan, with Green Stuff. I really wanted to display the immense power of the cosmos they could unleash. Back then my ideas on C'tan sculpts were simpler. Unlike demons, Star Gods are perfect, naked humanoids. They are characterised by their psychic powers, so I was looking for something to make rocks appear to be floating. While searching for transparent material, I noticed that my father was using an old glue gun to repair something. I decided to try using it to create the effect I needed.

The result was perfect and I was pleased to discover how quickly it cooled down, as I was more used to Loctite Super Attack glue. Many ideas exploded with the possibilities that hot glue presented. Initially it began with terrain and floating things, or repairing those models that are hard to glue even with super glue.

Later I tried using it on some Nurgle daemons to give them some ruined wings. I thought if I sculpted the skeleton of the wing and used hot glue between them the wing would have looked like ripped flesh. Instead it created a perfect membrane of glue. In the process of blowing on it to make it cool down, I created the curvature of an ideal wing. From that point on I thought anything was possible. Those wings made me fly through the stars and now I have surpassed any expectations finding new ways to make details and fine miniatures entirely with hot glue time and time again.

Contrary to what people think, hot glue is pretty resistant. Most of my models are more resistant than plastic ones because they can bend without breaking or losing their form. If a little glue is used it bends easily; if you use a lot it will hold to the point that you can throw a thick Great Unclean One at a wall and find no scratch on it. Trust me, I tried! Even heat is less scary than one might think. I cannot guarantee that it wouldn't suffer damage from lying in the sun for an entire summer day, but I am sure it could hold in a hot car or even over a radiator. Paint sticks to them too if you use a good spray base first.

The heat of the glue can sometimes be painful for the hobbyist, but as you learn how to sculpt it, you learn how not to burn yourself too. The speed of its cool down is essential. I always





suggest a low power gun. I have several and I have always worked better with the one with less heat, but of course sometimes you need it high. The speed of the cool down allows you to choose in seconds how to make it flow and form. Using the inclination of the model or the gun, blowing on it or even immersing it in water allows you to control its final form. The heat of the gun can also be used for moulding, changing or cutting already solidified glue, but most of the time you need to cool it down and to mould it without making it sticky and irregular in its shape. A metal tool like a modelling cutter is great because the coldness of the metal sticks less with the glue.

The real secret is the control of the trigger, carefully only releasing a little drop at a time. When you create a human body you have to divide it into parts. Each muscle is a tiny drop of which you must control the size when you make it and rapidly correct the form with a metal tool, then cool it as you want it to stay.

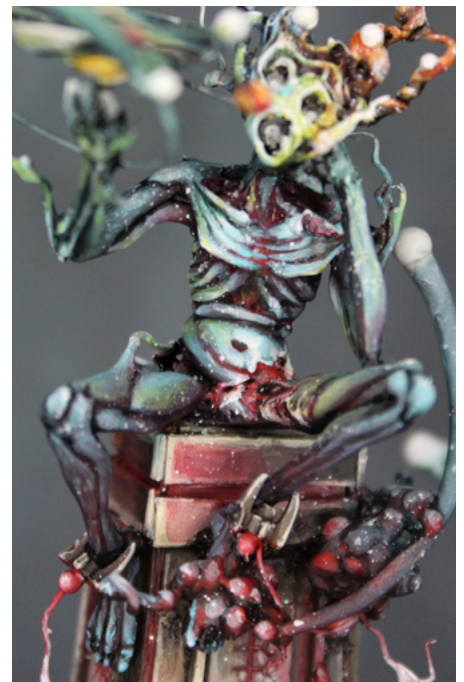
Wire is really important too. A skeleton of wires (an armature) provides structure, stability and a base to start the work. Hot glue can also heat any glue already placed that has gone cold, so sculpting a model entirely out of glue is hard and a slower process because it has to be done exactly, using a little glue at a time.

It would be fair to say that hot glue is not a material that can be used easily for anything. It is hard for example to create full armour and sculpt little details with, but is very useful for energy effects, terrain and biological parts. For someone who has inspiration and the will to learn, it is enough to build an entire army.

I have found a lot of my inspiration in the lore of the 40K setting. It is a constant source of incredible notions and ideas, with so many books that even for someone like me, it can be challenging to keep up and read them all.

Creating C'tans, daemons, Gods and devils seems easier because the only limit is your fantasy, so you can experiment and be influenced by anything. The mythology used for many books, series and movies can provide inspiration. I love the novels of Lovecraft, which always provide a great source for the ethereal parts for the cosmic horror.

When it comes to my painting style, which I am constantly trying to improve, I always look at the upstanding work of Katarzyna Gorska, a model painter of incredible talent. I hope someday to inspire people with my work as she does. For now I try to share some of my techniques and preach about the incredible material that is hot glue to all hobbyists out there. I intend to start tutorial videos too at some point, when time allows. Recently I have been trying to create a more evolved look for my Star Gods. Concentrating on artistic aspects to produce a humanoid form in abstract or even futuristic style, to represent the otherworldly, beautiful nature of C'tans. Honouring the memories of old sketch art while still revolutionising their concept. I have many ideas already percolating. I hope to find the time to try it soon and see if the hot glue can pull off even this miracle.



ARTIST FOCUS // CHRISTIAN SELENT

CHRISTIAN SELENT





01

My name is Christian Selent. I am a painter, crafter and a hobby photographer. I come from near Hamburg in northern Germany.

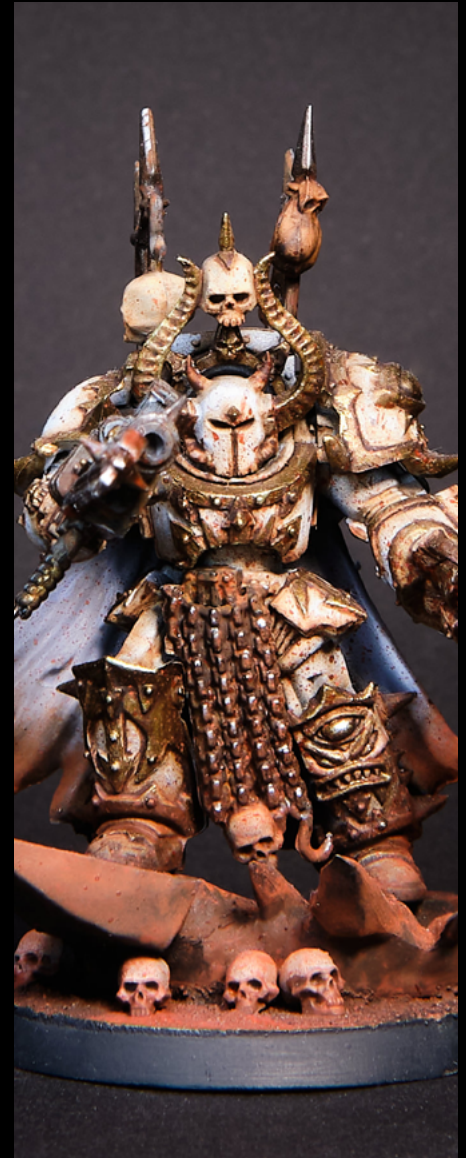
My fascination for Warhammer comes from my youth. At that time, the hobby was simply too expensive for me and I found my way into it a few years ago through photography. A good friend and I just wanted to take some cool macro pictures of his miniatures. I bought his unpainted Skaven army and suddenly I was head over heels in love. I also enjoy further editing the photos of my miniatures and putting the figures into the world digitally.

Currently, the hobby is the perfect balance to my job as a paramedic and my family with a young son. It's perfect: You can leave projects for a few days (or weeks/months... we all know this, right?) and nothing runs away.

Inspiration

This is a big issue for me. How do I find it and what does it change in my approach? Simply copying someone else's paint scheme, maybe even the box art, is not wrong, especially in the beginning. But the deeper you dive into this hobby, the more you start to develop your own style. To name a few sources of inspiration, on the one hand would be the works of Lovecraft, Chambers and other authors of the Cthulhu mythos. I also get a lot of inspiration from games like Dark Souls and Bloodborne. The "Art of..." books are perfect for that.

Besides that, you can also find inspiration everywhere in nature. Be it an old gnarled tree that you think you'd like to build something similar to as a base. Roots (which one would like to be converted into trees) or rocks and stone formations, upon which you can imagine your



02

Opposite *Screaming laughter has been echoing through the Gheistwind Swamp for a while now during full moon. This is the hour of the pale goblin. Hush, little ones, the hunt has begun and the goblin is hungry...*

01 *An unwilling encounter in the swamps*

02 *The Terminator Lord*





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minis. As inspiration for weathering, you can often find old houses, rusty agricultural machinery and much more if you keep your eyes open.

My Gheistwind Swamps project has even inspired a close friend of mine to try his hand at kitbashing. The result is the Nighthaunter, a stunning creature that might never have existed otherwise.

Gheistwind Swamps

The Gheistwind Swamps are my dark fantasy world. They don't exist in a defined world, but can be located anywhere a dark, swamp landscape teeming with life might be found. The whole idea is set up as a long-term project and started with my fascination for kitbashing.

My first real kitbash was my rat catcher, whose backstory is based on an old, well-known German saga (The Pied Piper of Hamelin). I want to keep filling the Gheistwind Swamps with life, inhabitants, legends, myths and monsters. I am



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trying to accommodate both fantasy and folklore elements here.

It is more about the stories than the figures themselves, so most of the figures will be in small dioramas. With my King in Yellow, I think the base is the real eye-catcher. The small section of his Carcoasa, that the small diorama shows, is inspired by the *True Detectives* series. I did a lot of crafting with roots here.

I like to work, like many in the hobby, with natural materials. With sand, stones, bark, cork or branches and roots. These are not only the most beautiful materials, they usually don't cost anything either.

Opposite *Rodrik, the undead Rat Catcher*

03 *Master of Possession*

04 *The Nighthaunter, a creature of the Gheistwind Swamps made by @butz_ink*

05 *The King in Yellow*

LUKE WADDINGTON



01

Rediscovering the Old World

I returned to the hobby relatively recently as an adult, but when trying to decide where to begin, the last decade or so of change was somewhat overwhelming. I reverted back to what had been my favourite setting: the Warhammer Old World, and more specifically, its downtrodden human denizens. They were the subject of my first serious foray back into the hobby, with inspiration also coming from several of my other interests: history, nature and folklore.

Stories of the medieval folk hero Robin Hood have always enchanted me, and I had been reading about the origins of those old tales when I rediscovered Warhammer. Legends of the forest-dwelling archer who took from the rich and gave to the poor have been told for centuries, and are thought to originate from the archetype of the Green Man, an ancient personification of nature's power.

In the ballads we learn of an established supporting cast who accompany Robin, known as the Merry Men. I had always preferred creating small warbands so this seemed a good place to begin my re-entry. It was also serendipitous that this decision coincided with the coining of the #folkhammer hashtag in the Instagram community, which has produced many stunning folklore-inspired models.

I set out to create the Warhammer version of the Merry Men, a band of brigands living off the

land in the forests of the Old World. The sadly discontinued Empire Archers kit provided the core of the group, their long coats and hoods offering a more down-to-earth appearance than the puffed and slashed uniforms of the usual Empire soldiery.

Green stuff was used to make the quintessential Robin Hood hats – bycockets. I avoided the flamboyant feathers in the Empire kits, using smaller more natural-looking ones instead. Each of the main characters from the tales (and films!) have been represented, and all the Merry Men carry foraged plants, animals and pets from their woodland home. Natural materials have been incorporated into their bases; moss, lichen, seeds and twigs were all used at some point.

For my next Old World project, I turned towards Bretonnia. My intention was to create a small group that showed a cross section of the Bretonnian society, from highborn knights to the peasantry. There are no current Bretonnian models, so I set myself a challenge to make them identifiable using other ranges. The inspirational art of David Gallagher was a key source.

To make the knight, some of the more overt Sororitas features were removed, and her chain mail, sleeves and great helm were sculpted with green stuff. Bearing the knight's shield, scabbard and trinkets is her squire. He

01 *Little John, Friar Tuck, Robin Hood, Will Scarlet*

02 *Much the Miller's Son, Alan-a-Dale, Azeem, Maid Marian*

03 *Empire tracker*

04 *Ice Queen*

05 *Bretonnians*



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is mostly an Empire militiaman under several layers of green stuff, which shaped his tunic and characteristic bowl cut.

The Damsel strides forwards, hurling her spells. Her construction brought together the ornate dress of Lady Olynder, a wytch elf and plenty of green stuff, particularly in the dress and headwear. An Empire militiaman with a battle-scarred flagellant's head also formed the basis of the grizzled man-at-arms, who is finishing off a zombie with his boar spear.

The colour scheme and coat of arms is repeated throughout the group, and was inspired by the historic heraldry of my hometown. As befits the Bretonnians, the colours are bright, but I wanted to keep the bases brown and mucky as a contrast.

When making the Empire Tracker I aimed to keep the essence of the original model (the Genestealer Cult Sanctus) while bringing it into the mud and misery of the Old World. I



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removed any evidence of Warhammer 40,000 from the model and sculpted his tunic, belts and boots. Including details like the bandages and knee patch denote his self-reliance.

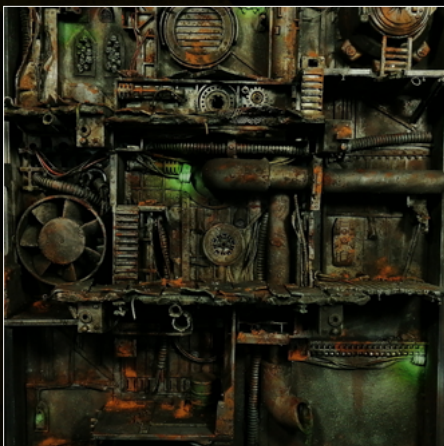
He also features nods to his province of Stirland. I sculpted a hunting horn hat badge and used a cross pin for his cloak; both are common motifs in Stirland heraldry. Even when a model's pose is static, I like to try and convey some motion, so I added pieces that echoed the movement of his cloak; the beard, grass and feather are all blowing in the same direction. To me, the pose and flowing cloak tell a story of a weary tracker pausing to survey the windy wastes, leaning on his trusty musket.

The Winter Queen was an entry to a folklore inspired miniature Instagram competition. Every year in a village near my home, there is a procession where the Winter Queen challenges the Green Man on a bridge; each time he defeats her, ending winter and bringing in summer. I wanted the Winter Queen to look regal yet

wild. The flowing robe is ornate but blows in the icy wind along with her hair and necklace. This emphasises her wild nature, along with a crown of branches made from wire and various Sylvaneth offcuts, and a simple wooden staff. I was particularly pleased with the icicles on her base, made from old flying base stands heated over a lamp until soft and stretched into shape.

My journey through the Old World will continue. Having been encouraged and supported by the wonderful Instagram community, I am now working on a regiment of Empire handgunners inspired by the customs and dress of Alpine Europeans.

DAMIANO PENNINI



HELGE WILHELM DAHL



IVAN SOLOVIEV



JOE REEN



MATUŠ HYŽNÝ



ROSS WILLIAMSON



RYAN GRIFFITHS



ARTEMI & ANASTASIA



BACK TO SQUARE ONE



01

by Stefan Berendes

After thirty years, a hobby career comes full circle... My gateway drug into fiddling around with little plastic people was HeroQuest — the 1989 GW/Milton Bradley dungeon crawl board game that must have launched a thousand hobby careers. The mere name 'HeroQuest' brings back a slew of nostalgic memories. I remember first seeing the ad on TV and instantly falling in love with it. Receiving the game as a Christmas present that very same year (after much lobbying on my part) and spending an entire Christmas eve marvelling at all of those wonderful miniatures, is a fond memory. The massive Gargoyle seemed like the absolute apex of plastic miniature design back then. The Chaos Sorcerer, secretly the coolest model in the box — and, invariably, the first to be lost. And the tiny furniture... oh, the furniture!

I remember spending many afternoons dreaming up fiendishly difficult adventures, so I could chuck unsuspecting friends and family members into a meat grinder of my sadistic imagination and have them attempt to play through the inescapable death traps I had concocted. Like many others, I cut my painting teeth covering the HeroQuest models in lumpy acrylics. Ah, the memories! Is it any wonder, then, that wanting to own a fully painted set of HeroQuest was one of my hobby white

whales for a long, long time? I did own a mostly complete set, mind you; I just did not dare paint it, probably for fear of messing up my one chance at achieving one of my oldest dreams in this hobby.

In 2019, right in time for the game's 30th anniversary, the time had finally arrived. I buckled up and finally painted the entire thing. I applied myself to the task with every ability and technique at my disposal — and, it has to be said, with the attention to detail born from having built and painted INQ28 models — or rather, 'characters', for years at this point. What a blast it was! Not only did I find a new appreciation for the classic models (single-piece and mono-pose though they may be) with their striking silhouettes and archetypal quality, but going for the clean, bright look of the yesteryear while painting the models turned out to be such a breath of fresh air — a veritable palate cleanser!

I also discovered that HeroQuest is very much a hobby unto itself, with a place like Ye Olde Inn (www.yeoldeinn.com) providing me with a supremely helpful community of fellow hobbyists and becoming an invaluable resource along the way. In an attempt to go above and beyond, I even ended up converting unique models for all of the characters and

- 01 All the models from the HeroQuest box set
- 02 The mighty Chaos Sorcerer!
- 03 Chaos warriors
- 04 Witch Lord conversion
- 05 Fimir
- 06 The scary Gargoyle
- 07 Orcs and Ulag conversion
- 08 The board, furniture and miniatures



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villains that appear in the classic quests (such as Sir Ragnar/Manfred, whom the four heroes have to rescue during an early expedition; the dastardly Orc warlord Ulag or, indeed, the closest thing HeroQuest has to a recurring end-boss: the dreaded Witch Lord). I would be remiss not to mention that I was only able to finish the collection with the help of the inimitable Alexander Winberg. He was kind enough to send me a replacement chaos sorcerer a couple of years ago (because mine had gone missing, of course). This was just about the last model from the core game I painted during the project; it was the one piece I really wanted to get right.



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The first game with the fully painted set was a wonderful experience. The game mechanics may be unsophisticated and clunky by modern standards, but experiencing HeroQuest as it was meant to be played was simply the best thing. I also no longer needed to win at all costs and crush my players, so that might have helped!

So what is next? I have never considered myself as much of an Oldhammerer, to be honest, with much of my hobby interest remaining focused on 'modern' 40K and INQ28. And yet I catch myself eyeing up my old Space Crusade boxed set with alarming frequency of late...



08

STEVE ROWLINSON



The Rebirth of Venus

I created the diorama, 'The Rebirth of Venus', as my entry into the invitational held by the Instagram account @Grimdarkfilmclub. Although I was very proud of it, I did not expect the sheer volume of very kind reactions and enquiries to my creation. The following is an attempt to share the ideas and thought process that went into bringing this build to life and how I took aspects of the original artwork by Botticelli and used it to inspire the layout, the miniatures and of course the theme of the diorama.

Finding Inspiration

The seed of the idea that grew into 'The Rebirth of Venus' was sown one weekend back in November 2019. My wife and I had just moved and, as enthusiastic new homeowners, we set about clearing the back garden. It was in the

midst of weeds and soil that we spotted the lonely, bleached white shell, maybe half the size of the palm of my hand. My wife knows my habit of collecting random discoveries for potential use in future projects, and she suggested I might find some use for it. Looking at the shell and agreeing, I thought of the myth of the birth of Venus, rising fully formed from the sea, borne on a giant scallop shell. Putting that thought to the back of my mind, I put the shell, washed and dried, away in a box and left it.

Moving on to August 2020, @Grimdarkfilmclub announced their long awaited invitational, which I was already determined to enter. The brief was to create one or more miniatures, or a diorama, set in the Warhammer universe inspired by a film, book, record or artwork set outside of Warhammer. Naturally this brings

wondrously diverse possibilities to mind, but almost immediately the classic rendition of Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* elbowed its way to the fore. I resolved myself to attempt the ridiculous and create my own grimdark vision of this divine origin story. Although I had little confidence that I would be up to the task, I was determined to make the attempt all the same. My initial plan began vaguely; I knew the centrepiece would have to be Venus herself atop the shell, and I knew the setting for the scene would need to have a grimdark flavour. I thought of rusted industrial-Gothic architecture and Imperial iconography, but how would this explain the presence of the central character? I returned to examining Botticelli's painting in search of ideas. I saw in the painting that the scene depicted the ocean to the left and land, with trees, to the right. Suddenly my idea was coalescing; my diorama would contrast the Imperium's grim industry against verdant, blooming life, but that life would be the undulating feculence of Nurgle, and my Venus would be a daemon prince displayed in her moment of ascendance to power.

Building the base

The build itself was, in many ways, quite simple but intimidating all the same, taking techniques and materials I had used before, but never put together as a whole. For the base I used XPS foam, while the walls were made from thinner foam board and mostly held together with hot glue and cocktail sticks. The architecture on the left side was cobbled together from cardstock, plastic food packaging and other random bits. I wanted this to represent the derelict and decayed industrial presence of the Imperium.

The right side, Nurgle's half of the piece, was trickier because I knew how I wanted it to look but I was not entirely sure how to get there. I chose to start by building some height and form with sections of bark and tree roots. I trimmed some pox walkers I had left over on a sprue and glued their partial bodies to the bark. I wanted them to be erupting and writhing from the organic mass, reaching out for... something. Now I had to fill the gaps and properly form the terrain mass. For this I used a mix made from toilet paper soaked in water and plaster of Paris.



The miniatures

Returning to the painting for reference, there are three other figures represented: Zephyr, a god of winds, carrying a female figure usually considered to be Aura ('the lesser breeze') and on the right an attendant who may be a lesser goddess of the seasons. I decided that I would keep the number of figures, but make some changes to whom they might be.

First, I knew I wanted to have some cultist-like figures there to worship and observe the birth. For these I did some quick kitbashing. Second, I wanted some strange entity present at this event. Given that the two cultist/mutant models would be at ground level on the left half of the base, I wanted this creature to be hovering in attendance on the right side, effectively swapping the positions compared to the original painting. A rummage in my box turned up a very decent looking snail shell, that when combined with a Mantic undead horse, reminded me of a hybrid sea-horse/homunculus, which instantly appealed to me.

My greatest concern was getting the look of Venus correct; she was the centrepiece after all. Luckily I had something in mind; I had "Lilith" by Nocturna Miniatures on a shelf, unpainted. She was a perfect fit relative to the shell, a suitable size for a daemon prince and had a regal poise and aloofness to her. Her style of robe also gave a pleasing nod to the classical inspiration for the build. My aim was to largely preserve the beauty of the sculpt, while contrasting this with awful, hideous mutations fitting Nurgle's beloved. To this end, I chose a mix of insect parts from the blight drone kit: a single wing and some legs for the right side of the body, then some tree roots to replace the left arm and balance against the single wing. Finally, I could not help adding a small green stuff tentacle where the roots met her arm and something like spore or egg chambers on her face and shoulder.

Painting

I will not delve into the minutiae of the painting process as that might take an article of its own, but I will discuss my colour choices and the thought process that took me there. Naturally the base would be divided into two essential parts: the built architecture and the organic matter. I knew I wanted each to stand out opposed to the other, weathered rusted metals contrasted with living colours of a sickly hue.





The left side was painted with metallics, dark washes and plenty of rust colours and patinas; the right side with layers of greens, yellows, browns and flesh tones (mostly by airbrush) with a few washes and highlights.

The two cultists were kept to limited colours, to not detract from their master. I carried over some of the colour choices from the organic (right) side, to make them stand out beside the Imperial construction, focusing on greens and browns for the miner and yellow for the blind cultist. The homunculus needed flayed skin, bloodied muscle and aged metals.

The most attention was paid to Venus herself. For the skin and insect portions, I wanted dark purple as my shadow tone and gradually mixed flat pale flesh tones into my glazes, building colour in painfully slow layers. I kept the insect legs darker and to finish her skin, I did some very light glazes of yellow to add a sickly hue. I chose to make her robes an almost biohazard yellow. I felt this was both fitting to the nature

of the model and would help her stand out amongst the many colours of the base.

Final Thoughts

This entire project was a learning experience for me, and the resulting diorama much exceeded my hopes at the start. Taking inspiration directly from a work of art produced a number of challenges, such as deciding how much the finished piece should resemble the original work, to how the proportions and placement of the characters would translate into miniature form. I feel the background at the windows is the one element I am not fully happy with and may yet think of something better to take its place. For now though, I can sit back and look at it finished, and smile at the little white shell that started all of this.

BANNERS

by George Harris

When both the Old World and the Dark Millennium were taking shape as coherent fantasy settings, several visual signifiers took root and remain in use today – for example hazard stripes, skulls, chequered patterns and massive shoulders. These remain popular because they empower modellers and painters to add visual interest to a tiny canvas. Another trend that marked the visual style of fantasy miniatures in the 80s and 90s was the ubiquitous standard, a banner or a flag, either held by the model or fixed to their back. These could be anything from a rag on a stick scrawled with the word repent, to a colourful standard telling a whole story. The 40K universe is filled with vainglorious characters, such that even a secretive inquisitor can often be seen wading into battle with their back banner aloft. Standards not only allow modellers to use a different medium to express themselves; it traditionally made characters and elite soldiers easy to distinguish in games and photographs.

Why write a tutorial on tailor-made banners? Because I feel like the DIY spirit that allowed John Blanche and Mike McVey to pass their skills on to our community is worth preserving. Now that sculpted banners are available, and our heroes grow ever larger, we find less need for these techniques. But since INQ28 is entirely about creativity, exploring mixed-medium banners and flags gives us a wide range of fun ways to add character to our conversions. Away from the glories of the battlefield, a gang leader's sycophantic follower waves a banner to intimidate his enemies when they enter town. In the mortal realms, a fallen knight still bears the rags and tatters of his household colours. Banners are a useful tool to tell a story of a diminutive, but proud or arrogant figure.

THE FRAME

In this section I will describe how to make the frame that holds your standard up. Many models – especially 90s Citadel Miniatures – already feature an empty frame, since attaching paper banners was part of the assembly. If this is the case, convert to your heart's desire and move on to the Canvas section.

Flags

A flag's frame is just a long pole that needs to be held by the miniature and is best used for a mounted model that will be viewed in profile. If you don't have any model components available, a brass rod provides the best material for your desired length. A 2mm thickness suits most open handed sculpts. If your model's hand is clenched, you will need to drill a 2mm hole through the fist, then push the rod through the hole. If you do not want to drill, and the model's hand is clenched, you can still sell the effect by applying glue then gently rocking two brass rods into place in shallow holes above and below the hand. You should have enough time to ensure they are parallel before the glue dries.

Banners

A banner's frame features two poles joined as a cross piece, allowing the banner to hang in parallel with the model's face, making it ideal for models that will be viewed from the front. Gluing two brass rods together creates a weak joint, but this can be strengthened by sculpting ropes around it with green stuff. You can also use fuse wire instead of brass rod if you're doing a thin back banner, soldering the pieces together. The best option is to find a banner top part from another kit, which will be sculpted with a groove to attach to your brass rod – as shown in Figure 2.

Decorating the Frame

Once your basic frame is in place, you should add some decorations so it does not come across as simply a brass rod. The easiest option is to pin an emblem from your bits collection to the vertical rod, for example the Iron Halo sported by the Grey Knight in figure 2. You can also add paper streamers to impart a sense of movement, festoon the top pole with skulls or even use twisted fuse wire as connecting ropes.

THE CANVAS

In this section I will describe the materials you can use to create a convincing banner or flag to attach to your frame.



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01 This Skaven army standard was inspired by a model featured in an old 'Eavy Metal gallery. The frame was made by adding bits to an existing polearm, whilst the aged effect comes from tea staining and singeing.

02 This Grey Knight's banner was made by attaching a High Elf banner across the brass rod. The hand was already sculpted open, so a 2mm thick rod fit nicely. The image is a John Blanche illustration cut from an old codex and manipulated with weathering and singeing.



Existing parts

If you have a sculpted standard that you like, you can fit it to a similarly shaped frame using some green stuff to extend the material over the poles. I am not a sculpting expert so this is not my favourite approach.

Paper

This is the most accessible medium – 100gsm paper or thicker will give you a canvas to draw a template, cut to size and create many effects with. When cutting the banner, be sure to use the sharpest possible knife to avoid tearing. I recommend creating a practice standard first, to test the effect your chosen paints will have on the paper. Thicker paper should hold paint and inks better, but may not be as neat or adaptable for your needs.

Paper standards need to be attached to the pole with tags. These should be around 5mm wide, extending from the template and wrap around the pole and are glued to the back of the standard. Always make these longer than you'll need, as they can be cut to size when attaching the standard to your model.

Toothpaste tube

Cutting out the material that makes up toothpaste tubes, or similar squeeze products, grants a material that can be moulded and bent to shape, which is useful if you need to create the illusion of a standard billowing in the wind, demonstrated in Figure 3. It is more difficult to measure and cut, and you may need to roughen a smooth finish with sandpaper so paint adheres to the material. The techniques described for paper apply here.

Fabric

Cloth fabric can also be used for a standard – as shown in Figure 5. This offers a ragged, dirty shape and texture but limits your size and options for painting. Once you have cut your cloth to shape, soak it in PVA glue then attach it to the frame straight away so that it hardens in the right position. You may need to use a blow dryer for this step if you cannot prop the model up in the right way!



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THE COLOURS

In this section I will cover what to do once you have created the standard.

Painting

Painting a large flat surface is a daunting but enjoyable challenge. Rather than give advice on freehand painting or airbrushing, I will simply recommend that whatever technique you use, do not leave it until the rest of the model is finished. I find my excitement at nearing the end of the project can lead me to cut corners. Painting the banner alongside the model will encourage you to use the same colours and to consider how it will look in its context.

If freehand is not your strength, standards are the perfect canvasses for decals, which can be combined to create your own icon or used on their own. These can be blended with the

model with a unifying matt varnish coat, or with weathering techniques – shown in figure 4.

Printing

Many 90s army books and codices included fantastic pages of banner designs that could be photocopied and cut out. You can also design your own on the computer, as I did with the Inquisitor in figure 6, or use designs found on the internet. As shown in figure 2, images can be cut from out-dated codices and used as designs. Printed banners lend themselves well to staining, rather than painting, as the black finish of the printer ink does not sit well with acrylics.

STAINING

Images for standards, especially those printed on white paper, are too clean for their context

03 I wanted this marine's banner to be billowing defiantly, so I cut it from a toothpaste tube and bent around a pencil to give it a shape.

04 This berserker's banner used a decal that was so detailed, it looked completely out of place with the model. I used matt varnish to compensate for the glossy finish, then used a thin layer of oil paint to further dull everything down, with thick black weathering powder applied over any mistakes.



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in a gritty conflict. Staining the design black or brown is the most fun part of this process and can include:

Tea or coffee

Make a very strong, black brew. Lay your paper banner in a baking tray and soak it in the drink, sprinkling some coffee grounds or tealeaves on top for texture. Bake in the oven on its lowest setting until the liquid has evaporated.

Inks and Oils

Dedicated inks are available from craft shops to stain paper and make it look aged. You can also use artist inks and oil paints, which can be thinned down to the point where you can add several layers until you have the effect you want. Spots of brown oil paint are great for adding pockmarks and filth to the design.

Fire

The hard, neat edges of a paper banner can be singed with a candle, as shown in figures 1 and 7. Be sparing in the effect and try to avoid symmetry in the placement of the burns. Practice first and only get the paper close to the flame, not inside it. Keep a fire extinguisher handy!

CONCLUSION

I hope I've shown the possibilities of tailoring your own banners that fit the narrative you want to portray in your miniatures. It is a fiddly task, but with practice it is an enjoyable diversion from the repetitive practice of painting. This hobby should be fun, and using a mixture of mediums and skills gives your brain something different to focus on.

05 I wanted to give this knight a ragged pennant that contradicted his noble bearing, so I cut this from an old sock and cut nicks into the sides to obscure the intended shape.

06 I felt more confident drawing this Inquisitor's banner design in PowerPoint than by hand, so I printed it off and stained it with espresso.

07 I wanted these Skaven to have aged, filthy banners, so once they were cut from a photocopied page, they were stained with tea then singed with a candle.

FOLKHAMMER

by Steve Rowlinson & Jonas Alexander

Just beyond the fields of waving crops, the wrong fork in a forest trail takes you to a strange and isolated settlement. The village thrives; its folk, though simple and insular, are happy, yet somehow odd. They welcome you politely with mead and honey cakes; their harvest rites have begun and a towering pyre dominates the village square. The gods of field and furrow hunger. Thankfully you have come.

In recent months, you may have seen more and more examples of miniatures, artwork and storytelling labelled as #Folkhammer. You may also have been drawn to this mysterious, evocative setting yourself. But what does Folkhammer mean? Is it just AoS28 repackaged, or is there a different set of underlying themes and concepts that make Folkhammer both unique and a perfect fit within the 28 family?

To see if we could find an answer to this question and others, I recently had the pleasure of discussing all things Folkhammer with Jonas Alexander, also known as @Wicker_Man_Miniatures, who first coined the term and has been fundamental in bringing Folkhammer to life.

Why Folkhammer?

Steve: Perhaps the biggest questions first: why the name Folkhammer? What does Folkhammer mean to you?

Jonas: In a way, I have always been drawn to a certain aspect of the Warhammer Fantasy universe that I could never quite pinpoint. As I rummaged through my hometown's dusty hobby store and scrolled through the latest White Dwarf magazine, my eyes kept returning to the little folkloristic details of all these strange and fascinating miniatures: an Imperial musician playing a flute, a Bretonnian jester swinging a pig's bladder, a zealous pilgrim adorned with relics and trinkets, an ominous owl in the branches of an oak tree. I remember buying the plastic Empire General kit, ignoring the heroic horse and rider just to stare at the little raven perched upon his shield.

The ancient power that slumbers in such details has always been what drew me to the hobby. At the same time, I discovered the Folk Horror

Revival movement, devoted to celebrating, studying and reviving elements of European folklore, particularly in film and literature. It was only after I had assembled almost my entire Mordheim warband of farmers-turned-cultists, inspired by the 1973 masterpiece *The Wicker Man*, that I finally realised that Folk Horror and Warhammer could be merged into Folkhammer.

That is when I came up with the corresponding hashtag on Instagram, which seemed to instantly resonate with people. I quickly found out that there are as many Folkhammer concepts as there are folks. You, for one, seem to have a unique approach to it: What is it about Folkhammer that first caught your attention, and how would you define the aesthetics and feel you're aiming for?

Steve: I agree, it has always been the little oddities and eccentricities of the Old World that drew me to Warhammer: the visual style of the Empire and Bretonnia are wonderfully baroque, and older writing in White Dwarf and Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay really painted a vivid picture of a world of superstition and fear, which I think resonates perfectly with Folkhammer. The moment I first heard the name it instantly clicked with the direction in which I was already travelling.

To me, Folkhammer inhabits a space where there is fundamentally no distinction between the supernatural world and the natural world; indeed, the former shapes and determines the latter. Here magic, ritual and sacrifice are not quaint traditions, but vital tools to connect with nature and ensure the cycle of the world turns on. That ties seamlessly with films such as *The Wicker Man* (I would argue the finest piece of British film making of its time, perhaps ever) and others, which tap into the pagan roots of Western European folklore that lies at the heart of my interpretation of Folkhammer. I would also cite other films such as *Excalibur* (1981) and *Black Death* (2010). The depiction of a troubled band of warriors scouring a plague-ravaged countryside following rumours of a necromancer in an isolated village was at the forefront of my mind while creating my Witchfinder warband.



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Ritual & Myth

Steve: Keeping with the influences of folklore and folk horror cinema in defining Folkhammer, what would you recommend to someone wishing to dip their toe into Folkhammer? What sources inspire you in terms of atmosphere, narratives and aesthetic?

Jonas: All sorts of European legends, fairy tales and religious traditions – both pagan and Christian – continue to influence the genre as a whole and my hobby in particular. The best starting point is the Folk Horror Revival website and their various outlets ranging from a vibrant Facebook community to a fascinating series of print-on-demand publications on folk horror in film and literature. There are also notable magazines devoted to folk horror; I can particularly recommend *Weird Walk* and *CVLT* (which will be familiar to those who participated in my May Day giveaway).

There is also a veritable renaissance of folk horror in contemporary cinema. To list a few gems that have influenced me: Ari Aster's folk horror masterpieces *Hereditary* (2018) and *Midsommar* (2019), the haunting

pictures *The Witch* (2015) and *The Lighthouse* (2019) by Robert Eggers (whose current project, *The Northman*, will make Norsca fans extremely happy) and some lesser known Netflix productions such as the hiking horror movie *The Ritual* (2017), the Basque folk tale *Errementari* (2017) and *The Wicker Man*-inspired *Apostle* (2018). There are also games such as the medieval survival horror *A Plague Tale: Innocence* (2019) that really capture the spirit of the genre. *A Plague Tale* has inspired me to convert a whole Mordheim warband of orphans, urchins and thieves, and I have yet another Mordheim warband currently in the works, inspired by the pagan maidens of *Midsommar*.

The Folkhammer aesthetic

Jonas: Loving folk horror books and films is one thing, bringing this inspiration to the table is quite another. What makes a miniature Folkhammer? What are the key defining characteristics of the Folkhammer aesthetic in comparison to – forgive the agricultural pun – neighbouring fields such as Turnip28 or AoS28?

Steve: I think the essence of Folkhammer,

- 01 Ahal't warband
- 02 Witchfinders
- 03 Plague Tale warband
- 04 Midsommar maidens

like its folklore roots, are the people and their stories. The hopes and fears of human beings and how they see their place in the world around them. For that reason the majority of my miniatures are broadly human in nature (although not all would be recognisable as human any more). Take for example my witch-coven, the Sisters of Bittermarsh. Their coven's power is an emulation of nature. New life must always come from death. As the night sisters reap the harvest, they become strong and youthful as their masked acolytes gladly wither and perish. Their relationship is a cycle of death and renewal, like the seasons. One such rite is the creation of Animated Vessels; scarecrow-like constructs that silently guard the coven. The sacrificed lives of acolytes provides these monsters with agency. These dark practices, and the coven's darker master, are a twisted mirror of the natural cycle. They remain at heart human and it is those very human feelings and desires that ultimately drive the coven to the most inhuman acts. For me this encompasses the feel and aesthetic of Folkhammer. A world where uncaring nature is the ultimate power and people merely hope to survive its capricious whims.

I do not see a land of towering armour-clad heroes or arcane spell casters. Peasants, farming-folk, worshippers and revellers are the inhabitants of Folkhammer; people close to the land (or sea) and its cycle of life. Their magic is rarely vulgar. It is subtle, their violence an exclamation point to their daily toils. Here the profound and the profane rub shoulders as equals and a standing stone or babbling brook can be as much a character as a lost squire or disillusioned May Queen.

This ethos is largely reflected in *The Weald*, a project I have been honoured to work on recently. It encompasses much of what I mention above into its setting and the emerging folklore we are building as a community. Life in *The Weald* is dominated by the vast and overbearing forest after which it is named. The people, their customs and even architecture reflect this and have strong influences from both Western and Eastern European folklore, as seen in my *Wicker Man* and the character of *Baba Voshka*.

Animals are significant in Folkhammer both symbolically and as actors in the stories we tell. A mighty stag or wise raven is a strong motif

and the creatures of the fields and forest often hold secrets for those who know how to listen. The main distinction from other branches of the 28 'family tree' is that Folkhammer is a quieter, smaller world. The narratives of Folkhammer might cover a single village on a single day, or a lone clearing in an ancient forest. Pitched battles, fierce armies and magical kingdoms are alien things to the people of Folkhammer; their concerns stretch only as far as the waning of the moon and changing of the seasons.

Folkhammer manifested

Steve: With that in mind, what do you look for in the miniatures you use for your Folkhammer projects and how important are your initial choices to the finished model?

Jonas: I think you have perfectly captured the essence of the Folkhammer aesthetic there. It is this human trait that really defines it. Consequently, what I look for in my conversions and kitbashes is simplicity and understatement, as well as a low fantasy rather than a high fantasy touch. When I found the cult of *Ahalt the Drinker* in *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, I immediately liked that they're not the typical mutated Arnold Schwarzenegger *Khornites*, but rather a bunch of superstitious rural farmers and priests who revere their dark god with harvest offerings and living sacrifices. Thus, I started with normal *Empire* soldiers and *Necromunda Cawdor* gangers (perhaps the greatest kitbashing box ever released by GW) and added scythes, sickles and folkloristic masks from the original *Mordheim* terrain sprue.

Since the cultists represent a village that returned to an older, hungrier harvest god after feeling forsaken by *Sigmar*, I have tried to give an idea of the cultists' original profession and individual ways of serving *Ahalt*: The noble leader, *Lord Summerisle*, carries the key of his town and is accompanied by his hunting dog. *Wodan*, priest of *Ahalt*, carries a sickle and the attributes of the pagan gods he is named after, two ravens, a spear and an eye patch. The winemakers are adorned with vine leaves, wineskins and *Green Man* masks. The beekeeper comes with his own portable beehive and swarm of bees. In a way I often build miniatures around one or two little bits that capture my attention. With the cultists of *Ahalt*, you could say that the entire warband is nothing but a way to pay homage to those four



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- 05 Coven Mother
- 06 Baba Voshka
- 07 Plague Tale warband
- 08 Ahalt cultists

little masks in the Mordheim starter box that were originally intended to decorate buildings – a horned goat-man, a Green Man, a lion and a devil.

Another thing to look for in Folkhammer is the magic of animals, particularly the animals of the forests and fields. For me, a hare that intently stares at a horse and refuses to move – one of the greatest scenes in *The Witch* – is more terrifying and fascinating than a huge demon prince with a distorted grin and ridiculously large horns. Of course that doesn't mean that there can't be supernatural beasts and monsters in Folkhammer, indeed folklore and folk horror alike are deeply populated by them. It just means that they somehow have a more 'natural' and 'realistic' feel to them. There are, for example, some amazing conversions of the Mindstealer Sphiranx out there that turned it into a mysterious woodland creature.

The Great Harvest

Jonas: What about you, Steve? What are some of your favourite boxes and sprues and how have you used them in your kitbashes? And – since you've also been thinking more outside of the bits box – how have you incorporated natural materials into your miniatures?

Steve: I would say that my choices are quite similar to yours; when it comes to kitbashing I think it's well established that kits such as the Cawdor gang, Empire Flagellants and

most other Empire/Freeguild kits are troves of excellent parts. I think there is also a lot mileage to be had from many of the Warcry sets and although I've yet to explore most of them, The Unmade are currently my personal favourite. If we step away from GW for a moment there are some other excellent options out there. The skirmish game *Frostgrave* has a number of plastic multi-part kits including soldiers, barbarians and cultists that have huge potential for kitbashing, and some wonderfully characterful heads too. I could also not discuss miniatures without mentioning the Folk Rabble and Undead Folk Rabble kits from Fireforge Games fantasy range, both of which provide the perfect canvas on which to create Folkhammer characters!

I also love to incorporate a variety of materials into my miniatures; some from the home such as fabrics from old clothes and others from natural sources, particularly coconut fibres (shop-bought), blackberry thorns and bits of branches, tree roots and so on. I feel that those latter items are especially significant to Folkhammer as they allow me to incorporate a direct connection to nature into the physical foundation of a miniature, besides adding some lovely textures and shapes. Even the gathering process yields more than just the physical material for me. I am lucky enough to be surrounded by countryside in central Scotland. A few hours wandering and foraging always finds me heading home with



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a collection of new resources and a head full of ideas and inspiration. The small Nighthaunt band I have been building along a Folkhammer theme has been almost exclusively planned and meditated upon whilst trudging through the woods and fields around my home and I really wanted that sense of place to permeate the finished models.

Further afield

Steve: That ethos of Folkhammer being grounded in the land and life around me makes me want to see what other visions of Folkhammer could be brought to life. Across the world there are rich cultural histories and folklore traditions. There is potential for a wonderfully vibrant community of hobbyists drawing upon their own local and cultural heritages to inspire their creations. I think there are very exciting possibilities for Folkhammer outside of the traditional Western European themes; I'd really like to see this picked up by someone from, or with a delicate understanding of those other cultures. What do you think the future holds for Folkhammer, Jonas, and are there any particular interpretations you would like to see, or new projects on the horizon?

Jonas: So far, we have seen many adaptations of Folkhammer in Mordheim, Warhammer Fantasy and Age of Sigmar. These have almost exclusively derived their inspiration from Western European folklore (with the occasional nod to the rich folklore of Eastern Europe that permeates the art of Jakub Różalski as well as *The Witcher* universe). In my opinion, this means that there are at least two directions in which Folkhammer can be broadened. It could tap into the various other rich folklore traditions and belief systems around the globe and it could reach the grim darkness of the 41st millennium.

Looking at other cultures and religions, it would be great to see conversions of the upcoming human Slaaneshi cultists that take away some of the excesses of their luxurious armour and iconography and try to bring them into the often overlooked world of Middle Eastern folklore. To name another example, the little Bonsai trees on the Lumineth's bases have always stirred something in me and I would love to see a warband centred on a Japanese shrine with sacred deer and spirits of the forests and rivers.

All of this does not need to be limited to fantasy settings. Why not introduce folklore elements into the 41st millennium which has as many traditions and systems of belief as it has worlds? Perhaps, something like Folkhammer40K is on the horizon! There are countless opportunities and I hope that we can inspire new folk (pun intended, again) to join in. That said, let us perhaps end the article with a look at the ever-growing number of hobbyists who are already committed to the cause!

Accounts of interest

Max McComsey @wroughtwithrust – the creator of The Weald project and the driving force behind Weald28

Mike Debolt @gundamofficialhobby – for wonderfully executed Folkhammer inspired miniatures

Jon Davies @jp_miniatures – excellent high quality painting, with some Pestigors/beastmen displaying a very strong Folkhammer aesthetic

Wil Thomas @weird_witticism – kitbashing with an incredibly distinctive style which captures much of the essence of Folkhammer, including a fantastic set of miniatures for The Weald

Tod Kleinmann @deathbymini – masterful sculpting and an array of beautifully macabre catacomb saints inspired by Catholic folk religion and baroque art

Luke Waddington @f0rh1st – superbly converted and painted Ice Queens and huntsmen that could be directly out of a grim folk tale.

Lars Sammet @larsonicminiatures – sinister Eastern European woodland scenery and pagan cultists clad in grey

Laurie Hyde @hellequin_paints – more on the high fantasy end of Folkhammer, bringing it to the world of Age of Sigmar, particularly the Lumineth

- 09 *Chainrasps beset the witchfinders*
- 10 *John Davies*
- 11 *Todd Kleinman*
- 12 *Lars Sammet*
- 13 *Max McComsey*



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PAUL-FRIEDRICH VON BARGEN



In late 2015, inspired by the great series *Rome*, I built a single Ultramarine sergeant to try out a certain true-scaling idea I had, and named him after one of the show's main characters, Lucius Verenus. Maybe, I then considered, it would be cool if he led a small kill team of five space marines, each a kitbashed individual. That didn't sound like too much work...

Four years later, I converted and built the last piece so far, Lord Guilliman himself, to lead the Ultramarines first company, which by now consisted of roughly 3000 points of individually converted models. Only the Land Raider Proteus was largely built and painted 'out of the box'.

While I started up-scaling space marines the pre-Primaris way back then (terminator legs, enlarging upper legs and bodies with plasticard), I then went from converting Primaris models (mixing with Tartaros legs worked best), to using specific Forgeworld terminator parts to sculpting whole hips, legs and feet by myself and casting them with milliput in individual parts. This allowed for much more dynamic poses, the results you can see in the assault

squad Rixa on the opposite page.

The same method was used to create something I had dreaded for a long time: converting Indomitus terminators from the Space Hulk base models, where the whole leg and hip area is self-sculpted. This is the thing I enjoyed most about the project – how I could see my progress as a modeller, sculptor, builder and maybe even painter (the part of the hobby I am least fond of). I observed myself getting not only better technically, but bolder and much more self-confident about my skills as well. That might explain why the whole army really became the centrepiece of my hobby love. If I still had to pick a favourite, it might be the apothecary Ilia Ionius Brutus, because he triggered quite a mind opening after which I felt much more free regarding pre-set visions of how what should look like. You can see that, I feel, in many conversions afterwards.

Although the army travelled with me to sacred terra once (Warhammer World in 2019) I never played a single game with it, ever. Maybe because I lacked the time – possibly because I really fear my babies getting shot at...



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01 *Memento mori: Brother Remus*
02 *Calma, Brutus, Guilliman, Ajax & Crassus*



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- 03 Bulgo
- 04 Paxor
- 05 Verenus
- 06 Pullo
- 07 Ludius
- 08 Rixa
- 09 Illiander
- 10 Panulla
- 11 Ixtius
- 12 Memento mori:
Brother Volvgang
- 13 Memento mori:
Brother Sergeant Naxi



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13



Text by Harry Knight
Art by Martin Trese

FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME

If someone asked what drew me to miniature games as a hobby, my answer would be putting some of my models on a table and rolling dice. Being able to pitch my creations against those of my friends and letting the dice forge a narrative has enthralled me since my very first game. These narratives are at the heart of what I love about the hobby. Your models truly become yours, morphing into characters in a story of your hobby group's creation, assisted by the whims of the dice, which serve to introduce a dollop of dramatic uncertainty to the proceedings.

One of the recurring questions I see come up the most when it comes to the 28-sphere is, 'This looks and sounds great! How do I play?' What usually follows is several minutes of umming and ahing as either myself or other helpful people try to explain that 'Well, there's not really one system, it's more of an aesthetic, but normally, or sometimes, or what I use is...' and so on, bogging down what seems like a simple question into a quagmire of options and tweaks.

While INQ28 was originally just a 28mm port of Game's Workshop's Inquisitor ruleset, there are now hundreds of different ways to play in a '28' style. Each has a few key elements in common: a focus on narrative storytelling, the ability to use incredibly varied miniatures and a focus on small warbands (normally!). However, how each of these aspects manifest in different games and, more bluntly, which are 'best', makes it difficult to know where to start when it comes to putting your newest creations on the table.

Fear not fellow reader! For an answer to this problem, I have scoured the depths of game stores and the internet to bring you a selection of some of my favourite ways to play. This is going to be a two-part series of articles, starting with taking a look at three excellent game

systems suited to fantasy settings: Cazadores, Frostgrave and Fabula. In Vol 5 the journey will continue with games suited to science fiction settings. I will also be interviewing the game designers for each of these systems. Let us begin with the system which has blown me off my feet most recently, both in its design philosophy and in its potential.

CAZADORES

Cazadores by Matachin games, is a game of monster hunters facing off against a monster. This simple premise results in a tightly written game, bursting with potential. Each player controls their own hunter and potentially one or two followers, while the monstrous adversary is controlled by a cardboard AI that takes the form of a deck of regular playing cards, split in half into hit locations and monster actions. The game is pay-what-you-want on Itch.io and is still being updated with new monsters, mechanics and tools for building your hunter.

The game comes with a light amount of background lore, so its core ideas can be very easily ported to any setting. The adversary, a towering beast or sickening abomination, feels especially monstrous, and acts as the real centrepiece for the game, with your hunters circling it like a pack of hungry wolves. The Hunt feels like an actual hunt, with manoeuvring and tactics just as important as the equipment you brought. The monster you fight carries an air of danger, partially because you can never be sure of what it's going to do next. In a similar manner to *Kingdom Death: Monster*, a famously weighty board game about hunting abhorrent creatures, facing down your adversary is tense and nerve wracking. However, in Cazadores you can complete an entire Hunt in an afternoon without the need for a long-form campaign tied to a particular setting.

Every single attack carries immense weight. Whether it's the adversary swatting your

miniatures away like flies, or removing a sheaf of cards from the hit location deck, actions feel emotionally and physically charged. The beating heart of this is the Clock mechanic, which ticks away at the centre of Cazadores' interlocking systems. Each action takes a certain amount of time, which slides your hunter's next activation down a track, until eventually your character pushes over the maximum 10 time units and is forced to wait until the next turn. While a quick move could cost two time units, a heavy attack with a great weapon could take as many as four. Every character, including the adversary, shares this track, so turn orders and initiative is constantly shifting and morphing as actions are taken.

As characters and the adversary manoeuvre and lunge, this clock soon morphs from a simple turn counter or initiative track into a powerful narrative device. Do you risk a powerful, sweeping overhead strike when you know the adversary is readying itself, and you won't have a chance to back-pedal before its next action? Alternatively, do you hang back, hoping the monster you are facing will expose itself for a quick follow up? Every swing or short sprint carries with it the physicality of these actions, leaving you weighing up the benefits and consequences of over-extension constantly. Playing Cazadores for the first time had me constantly on edge, the half-mystery of the adversary's next actions serving to heighten the tension of a game which has the gripping back and forth of an Olympic fencing match.

Jae from Machin games was kind enough to answer a few questions about the game.

Q: What led you to making Cazadores and why this particular theme?

A: Prior to Covid-19 I had a weekly board game group, a role-playing campaign, and



had just started to get back into wargaming more consistently, playing Infinity with some friends. I found myself with more free evenings than usual and I thought that I would search for some solo board games and war games to fill the time. I tried a few different games, and though they were great I found that they didn't do a couple of things that I wanted from a solo game.

Many of these games required 'too much' in terms of table space, terrain and models. As my time has become limited over the years, I've started to prefer games with lower model counts on smaller boards with less set-up time. None of the games focused on Boss encounters. I had started replaying through the *Dark Souls* series of video games and found that what I wanted out of a solo/co-operative wargame was the feeling of fighting against some incomprehensible entity rather than mowing down small bands of mooks. I wanted my enemies to be forces of nature.

Finally, single-roll resolution and little maths. Running a broad variety of role-playing games has led me to hone in on my preference for mechanics that pack everything into a single roll or two. Most wargames don't do things this way – they prefer granularity and detail. I'd been following Mike Hutchinson since his great work on *Gaslands* and in his system for *Perilous Tales*, his solo/co-op game. I found a dice pool system that could be modified to do what I wanted with a single roll!

The theme came from my interest in a darker flavour of fantasy. I tend to prefer science fiction in general, especially for wargames, but as I mentioned I had been replaying through the *Dark Souls* series and started reading one of my favourite manga, *Berserk*, once again. Anyone familiar with that media will clearly see their influence on *Cazadores*. The theme provides the perfect backdrop for a setting-agnostic

game that can take place in most time periods, with any figures you have to hand. I think it also leaves ample room for interpretation in modelling and I've tried to spark some of that in the Adversaries' descriptions.

Q: I find the clock system that powers the game really gives it its own flavour that's very distinct. Why did you choose this almost RPG-like mechanic?

A: I read role-playing, board games and wargame rulebooks knowing that I won't play most of them but that they might provide bits for my own designs. I came across the *World of Warcraft Miniatures Game*. The time mechanic was, to me, the shining achievement of that game. It works well in low-model count games like *Cazadores* because you have the luxury of devoting more attention to each model. At maximum, there will only be eight models on the table, and I find that most often we're looking at three to four *Cazadores* vs. one Adversary. That's just enough for you to care about each and every model's moves.

The time mechanic also allows you to immerse yourself in the game via richer tactical decisions. Every action a model takes is made in the context of all the other possible actions that might be taken by other models until it's

your turn again. This heightens the tension when at least one of those actions is likely to be taken by the Adversary, who can certainly kill your poor souls or seriously disrupt your plans in a single stroke.

This is even built into the 'tie-breaker' system for who goes first when multiple models might act on the same 'Tick' (the time unit in the game). The Adversary has a clear advantage here unless a *Cazador* is a strong leader, which in itself gives this larger-than-life feel to each tiebreaker roll. It makes it feel like every in-game second matters to these models, and it frequently turns out to matter quite a bit during actual play.

Q: Using a deck of cards as both the hit locations for the adversary and the AI for what actions it takes is one of the tightest, most well designed bits of non-player action I've seen in a game. What inspired it?

A: Like almost everything in this game, I cannot take credit for the seed that eventually gave rise to the mechanic. I turned to the incredible damage-dealing mechanic in *The Dolorous Stroke*, which requires flipping over cards from a deck and dealing a specific kind of wound if the card matches one of your weapon's types. I found this a little heavy to use for every model,



but when it's applied to the centrepiece of the game in, the Adversary, it really sings.

I'm a fan of squeezing multiple uses out of every part of a game design, whether it's stats or components, and the Adversary Deck is an extension of that. Once I narrowed down how much 'Health' most Adversaries should have to be formidable foes, I only had to come up with a system for splitting up these points across the Values on the cards. I'm sure many designers would also agree that artificially narrowing your design space can lead to more refined game mechanics and this is exactly what limiting the AI 'Types' to four Suits did for me. With only four suits to dictate how all enemies would act in the game, I found myself having to think in broad archetypes and their functions to come up with the 'Aggressive', 'Defensive', 'Sentry' and 'Special' suit-to-type matches.

Q: Do you have any plans for what you want to add to the game?

A: First, people who have been kind enough to play the game always ask for more Adversaries! I daydream about these quite a bit and have a long list of concepts that I want to flesh out into playable Adversaries. There are five in the game but my concepts list is 25+. I also encourage others to just take what's in the game and make their own Adversaries. Balance be damned! This is a game about narrative, not competition.

Second, I have done quite a bit of design work for more advancement options for Cazadores. There are now Cazador-only Abilities coming that are not specific to Weapons or Gear, along with new Rituals.

These additions are a long way off. Cazadores is a hobby project so progress is slow, but the game is Pay-What-You-Want on itch.io so you can access it now and take a dip in the pool. Any money that comes in is being set aside to pay for professional editing and layout for a hoped-for future version that is pleasing to the eye and easier to use.

Q: Last, and of course not least, which is your favourite of the adversaries you've written for the game so far?

A: I love *Dune* and the Neonate Wurm is my own little attempt at codifying the horrors of the sandworm, but I'm proudest of The Constant Emperor's Praetorians. I am extremely wary of overloading players with Adversary 'book-keeping', but I think these three dauntless wraiths move elegantly on the table as a single unit. They have a way of ambushing, flanking and running down weakened Cazadores that, at the best of times, doesn't seem possible given how simple the AI is. I've yet to win against them by anything more than the skin of my teeth.

FROSTGRAVE

Frostgrave, by Joseph A. McCullough, focuses on small warbands led by a powerful wizard, who roam through an abandoned, frozen city in search of gold and knowledge. Constructed with campaign play in mind, your wizard and his followers battle not only other warbands, but also the denizens of the lost city itself, who are drawn to the sound of conflict. The system is published by Osprey Games, and the new edition's first expansion is due to be released soon.

Frostgrave is the most popular of the games I am going to talk about in this article, but for good reason. It has a tighter focus than some of the other systems mentioned, being focused on a wizard and their warband, but the amount of variation within this wide bracket is phenomenal.

The ten basic types of wizard, ranging from necromancers who can summon zombies to elementalists who can fling fireballs at their opponents, give great scope to pick the spells that you find interesting or that fit the narrative you want to explore. By forcing you to pick a small selection of spells from magic schools considered adjacent to your primary one, from which you draw most of your options, you can either further specialise your wizards role, or just pick the options you find most entertaining.

Alongside this there are a wide range of followers you can hire, including knights, thieves, thugs and remarkably vicious dogs. The frozen city draws many to come and try their luck looting and pillaging, and the nature of the game means that it's easy to use almost any historical or fantasy models without them seeming out of place. The core evocative idea of looting a lost city means that with almost no work Frostgrave could be used to run a campaign set in Mordheim as easily as its home setting.

One of my favourite features of Frostgrave is how killing your opponent's warband is almost never your primary goal. Success in most scenarios depends far more on how much treasure your assorted chumps can drag off the board, or on the acquisition of a singular, very powerful item, often requiring the defeat of a powerful NPC adversary.

While all the players around the table are aiming to escape with as much loot as possible, and it's a lot harder to do that when your warband is enjoying a new calling as a collection of corpses, it's not uncommon to see mistrustful collaboration. Enemies momentarily forgetting old grudges to topple a greater threat, or



two mauled warbands agreeing to split the treasure and leg it for the sake of long term plans, is something that no other miniatures game I've played has had organically occur in quite the same way.

This is enhanced by a set of hidden objective cards, called the Ulterior motive deck, that can be added to your games. Reminding me more of mechanics from hidden role board games such as *Nemesis* than from a wargame, each player gets dealt a small selection of cards with secondary objectives on them.

These cards then allow each player to place a secret objective that they can complete, as well as several red herrings to throw other players off, before the game starts. Each card contains a little bit of narrative and adds another level of intrigue to the game. I highly recommend picking up a copy, as it serves to add a delightful layer of fog that both obfuscates and enhances an already rock solid game.

I connected with game's author, Joseph to talk about the game.

Q: Frostgrave has a lot of similarities to Mordheim in terms of setting and flavour. Did you have GW's cursed city in mind when you wrote the game?

A: Not specifically. Mordheim is legendary in the world of miniature gaming, and I think all skirmish wargames owe a debt to it, but I was influenced more by *Dungeons & Dragons* and *Magic: The Gathering*, both of which formed a big part of my early gaming education. I needed a setting that included a load of 'magical knowledge' that was essentially up for grabs – so a destroyed magical city seemed like the perfect setting for that.

Q: Was the idea of the opposing warbands being only half pitted against each other, having to fight off neutral monsters and caring more about loot than fighting each other, always a core gameplay idea?

A: Absolutely. From the beginning, the game was about wizards wanting knowledge and power. While they are willing to fight to get it, they have no specific animosity towards other warbands. This also worked well with my own philosophy of gaming which includes the idea that both players having fun is more important than crowning a 'winner'. By creating a victory condition that wasn't simply 'eliminate the enemy' it created a situation where both players always had a chance to claim some degree of victory from any game. Plus, I just love the chaos created by random monsters running around!

Q: One of the warband options that was released for the original version of Frostgrave involved a group entirely made of Rangifers; half reindeer-half human hybrids. What led to you making them their own special warband type, and did you ever think about adding other fantasy races to Frostgrave as their own warband types, especially considering how many people use a wide range of miniatures for their games?

A: The Rangifer warband is kind of a special case. I wrote it for my little Spellcaster magazine, where none of the material is 'official' (assuming you believe I can write unofficial material for my own game!). Rangifer warbands aren't designed to be played against opponents, but in their own solo missions. For the main game, I have always tried to keep it so that players can use any figures, of any species, to depict their warband and it has no effect on the stats. That way if you want to have a warband of elves, orcs, squids, mouslings or whatever, you can – the rules don't care.

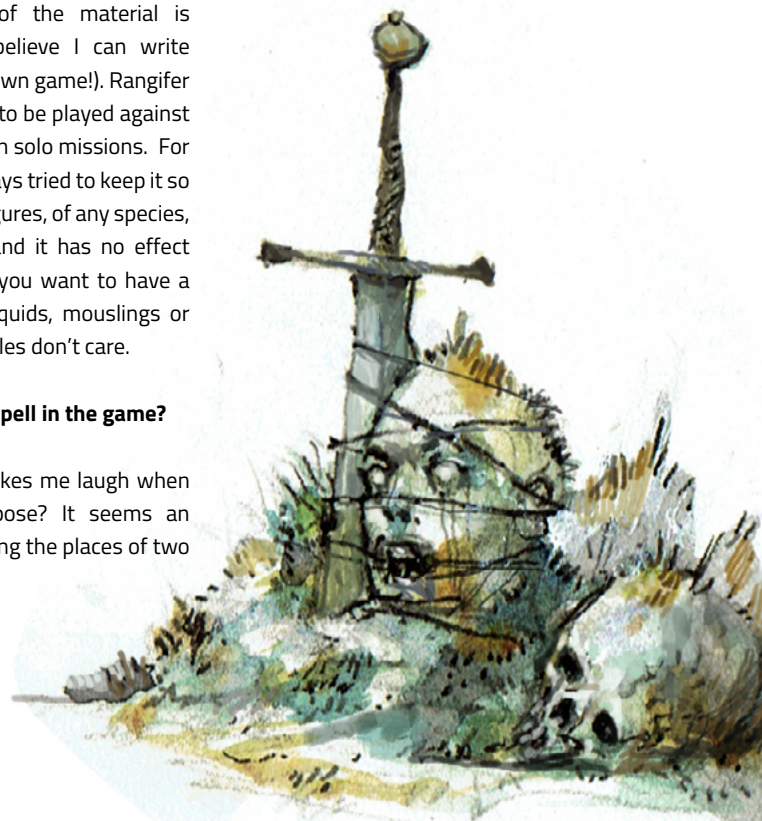
Q: What's your favourite spell in the game?

A: I love any spell that makes me laugh when it is cast. Maybe Transpose? It seems an innocent spell, just switching the places of two

figures on the table, but it can lead to the most awkward situations. Imp is another great one – because it can work so well, but also go so wrong if something unexpected happens and the imp starts heading back your way!

Q: Frostgrave's sci-fi variant, Stargrave, came out earlier this year. Are there any elements that you particularly like from this new game?

A: The challenge of writing Stargrave was to create a game that was both familiar to fans of Frostgrave, but different enough to make playing the two games different play experiences. Thankfully, the mere existence of guns in Stargrave goes a long way in that direction. Now that everyone can shoot, it really changes the way you move around the table – add in grenades and flamethrowers and you've got to think about it even more. What I like about Stargrave the most is that it gives players the chance to have two very different characters, with completely different power sets, in the crew. This allows for incredible variety in warbands and caters to all kinds of different play styles.



FABULA

Fabula, by former 28 team member Ana Polanščak, and available for free on her website, is a narrative-heavy skirmish game with a focus on small groups of between one and four models, and takes inspiration from both miniatures games and RPGs. With a focus on easy to pick up rules, it was written with AOS28 in mind, as well as to keep larger, multiplayer games going at a fairly quick pace.

Each model in Fabula has its own character sheet that describes not only the standard miniature wargame fare of hit points, armour and weapons, but also what skills that model is better or worse at from a wide ranging list. This allows you to customise your characters down to the minutia, without slowing the game down to a crawl. Compared to the other systems in this article, Fabula is easily the best when it comes to making your individual models feel individual, with the freeform sheet system allowing you to create accurate one to one representations of a character that you can use on the tabletop. The sheets that come with the rulebook represent an excellent starting point for creating your own characters. The use of characteristic key words, grouping your models into groups such as undead or human, allows for abilities to target certain types of model without becoming bogged down in unnecessary detail.

These systems all mean that an almost infinite range of character archetypes can be represented on the table with minimum effort. Want a frothing berserker who cares nothing for their own safety? Give them advantages on combat and disadvantages on defence to represent them trading their own safety for raw killing power. The rulebook contains just the right amount of equipment, spells and example character sheets to fill almost every niche, without being overwhelming or devolving down into lists of essentially name-swaps for functionally identical item choices. Many pieces of wargear, such as shields, work by giving advantage to certain skills, allowing for combat to stay quick and give a greater

focus on the characters rather than what they carry.

As a basis for creating your own scenarios and narratives, especially those involving multiple players and a Game Master, Fabula excels. Adding your own weapons, spells or wargear items is easy to do, as the small dice used for weapons means that rolls generally average out a lot more than if larger dice were used, which when combined with the skills system allows you to inject the particular foibles of a certain item without any hassle.

Even when the skill list doesn't cover a certain aspect of a character you want to bring to the table, writing up a new feature is simple, with a large list of pre-written profiles giving ample inspiration to pluck from. The friend/enemy distinction codified into the games DNA, that allows players to make pacts around the table (or break them), means that it's never a puzzle as to who can be targeted with certain abilities, and makes forced alliances or dazzling betrayals carry a special weight, with a sudden buff or back-stab allowing for a narrative pile driver without getting tangled in the metaphorical top-ropes of the game's mechanics.

Ana revealed some more about the system and where it's heading:

Q: What led you to write your own system?

A: In late 2019 I started preparing my second narrative tabletop gaming event, Sunhold: The First Triumvirate, which was to take place in the summer of 2020. I talked to my brother Ivan about what rules system would be the best to use, and he suggested we write our own. That way we would have a system tailored directly for the needs of the event game. Firstly, it had to allow for multiplayer gaming (we expected five to ten players), so we limited the number of gameplay-related decisions and the number of models per player.

Secondly, we felt that Sunhold required a

Games Master to control monsters and traps and otherwise make sure the game and story would run smoothly and within time limits. It had to be simple so the players wouldn't need to spend much time learning the system and creating stat blocks for their characters. Only d6s would be used, as we didn't want to complicate matters further by players having to wrestle with the whole set of polyhedral dice.

With this in mind, Ivan wrote the core system quite quickly. When I shared that we had written our own rules for the event, the community showed interest, so we made them available for everyone. Alas, Sunhold: The First Triumvirate eventually got cancelled by the 2020 plague.

Q: Many aspects of Fabula seem dragged directly from the world of RPGs. What drove you away from more standard miniatures wargame fare and towards a more freeform system?

A: The skill mechanic present in Fabula draws greatly from the fifth edition of *Dungeons and Dragons*, an RPG system Ivan is intimately familiar with as both a DM and a player. He wanted to bring improvised and collective storytelling present in his *D&D* games to the tabletop, while staying true to the core concepts we established to guide the creation of the rest of Fabula's rules. Each character having strengths, weaknesses and abilities that aren't directly related to combat brings a new dimension to tabletop skirmish games. Narrative-oriented miniature gaming usually has situations where characters (and their environment) interact in ways not covered by many skirmish systems' rules mechanics. Then it's up to the players to resolve this through improvisation. We wanted our new rules to have this aspect covered mechanically.

Q: Fabula has an intense narrative focus that comes across throughout the entire ruleset, particularly in the examples of play given. Are there any aspects of the ruleset which you

think in particular cater to narrative styles of gameplay?

A: The variety of non-combat interactions covered by the rules, definitely. And the simplicity of the check system for resolving situations and actions, which keeps the rules from getting in the way of the story. Additionally, when a GM is present the players can allow themselves to think even less of the underlying maths and get better immersed in the unfolding narrative.

Q: Currently Fabula is on version 1.2, so I was wondering whether you are planning on adding anything to the current rulebook, or whether the tight focus that it currently has is something you want to maintain?

A: The rules were originally written with our event in mind and for private use. I think this

shows. If the system is to stand on its own some day, we will need to work on the text's clarity and add extra content to make it more accessible to new players. The feedback we received from the community will help us reach that goal. The core system will always remain a free toolbox for players to take and adapt to their particular setting/campaign/game.

IN SUMMARY

Each of these systems aims for a particular niche in the fantasy wargaming market and their particular strengths emphasise this. Cazadores works best for when you want a PvE experience that revolves around a dramatic centrepiece model, without getting bogged down in overly complicated rules or the need for a GM. Frostgrave is the perfect system for pickup games, where you and some friends can get together and start rolling dice as quickly as possible without the need to hash out a

scenario or character stat blocks. The range of expansions also means there's a great deal of material to spice up your games with. Finally, Fabula works best when you want to plan out a multiplayer game that uses a GM to their full effect, allowing for fine-tuning character stats to channel the precise narratives you want to create.

Next volume I hope to return with another carefully curated selection of sci-fi systems, but for now I can do nothing but thank you for reading this far. If you think that I have missed the best 28 style system out there, and want to give me either recommendations or lay into me for being 'wrong, actually', do get in touch. I am always open to comments and recommendations. Until then, get some friends together, throw some miniatures down, try out some new systems and just get playing. I promise you won't regret it.



FRANCESCO TERLIZZI



01

Since I was a youngster, reading late 1980's Warhammer 40,000 manuals, I was deeply fascinated by the scant accounts detailing the Dark Age of Technology. Among these, my favourite was the enigma represented by Men of Iron and their revolt against Mankind.

For those who are unfamiliar with this tale, Men of Iron were sentient machines created millennia ago to aid Mankind in conquering and colonising the Galaxy. These robots proved to be superior to men and became aware of this fact, ultimately rebelling against their masters. After an apocalyptic clash, the Men of Iron were vanquished and destroyed to the last automaton. Mankind swore it would never allow Artificial Intelligence (AI) to rise again. In fact, the Adeptus Mechanicus refer to Artificial Intelligence as 'Abominable' Intelligence, and they were banned and the secrets behind building them were carefully deleted.

Many years have passed since this clash between Man and Machine was first mentioned, but GW has been wise enough to keep this piece of lore clouded in a mist of secrecy. More importantly, GW never released

a Men of Iron miniature until very recently (see Blackstone Fortress). This made my fascination about these robotic constructs even stronger.

After many decades of robot fantasies, I decided to give some tangible shape to these sentient machines. When designing my Men of Iron, I wanted to take a different path from the many excellent creations I found on the internet, giving them some distinctive and personal character. And of course, some hefty grimdark flavour.

Finding a strong, original vibe did not take too long. My chief inspiration came from one of my other long-standing passions: Japanese manga, anime and video games. I really love Japanese graphic styles; moreover, I think some notable Japanese authors have approached the topic of science fiction in a unique way, with artists like Masamune Shirow imparting an intellectual depth to the concept of an AI gaining sentience.

One of the best takes I found on this subject comes from a video game, *NieR: Automata*, which provided me with the strongest visual and 'emotional' input for many of my

01 *Rise of the machine: working machines of the world, unite!*

02 *The Urbie*

03 *Driller*

04 *Lil' Miller*



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miniatures. The other chief inspiration came from one of my favourite manga series: *Blame!* Keeping these in mind, I set about creating two distinct forces of robots for my Necromunda games, each one being a tribute to these main inspirations. I also wanted them to share a common lore, representing some sort of new rise of the machine in the recent era.

For those of you unfamiliar with it, *NieR: Automata* is a 2017 action RPG designed by Yoko Taro that cleverly incorporates elements of shoot-em up arcade games. *NieR* depicts a never ending and hugely destructive war between the scant remains of Mankind and sentient Machines who have conquered planet Earth, in a desperate struggle for Mankind to regain what has been lost. Of course, things are more complex than they appear, and playing it you will find that Machines are far more human than their looks may suggest.

The theme of solitude, sadness and complex feelings in an emerging AI is nothing new in sci-fi: it is easy recalling *Blade Runner* for similar themes, along with the aforementioned Masamune Shirow and *Ghost in the Shell*. What is peculiar with *NieR* is its graphic style, where the antagonists are cute, toy-like robots that you almost feel bad about destroying, giving the game a surreal touch. More importantly, it has an impressive level of cultural and philosophical depth, with references to Judeo-Christian tradition and Marxist ideas that are not just hollow quotations, but offer much substance to the theme of emerging consciousness.

I felt such a rich background could be very interesting once brought and adapted to GW's sci-fi universe: all accounts we have about the Men of Iron rebellion are from the point of view of Mankind, and we all know history is written by the victors. I thought it would be interesting to build some Men of Iron that were different from the mainstream view.

In designing my *NieR* robots, I wanted to bring some 'life' to the little machines, and represent them not just as sinister, huge metal simulacra of men. Instead, they are tiny, clanky and rusty wrecks of the industrial era yearning

for freedom. The visual aesthetic of my gang owes strongly to Taro's game. Inspiration came from other sources as well, mainly to *Star Wars* droids and, to a smaller extent, other western video games such as the *Borderland* series, with some inspiration from Nicky Grillet's work. Still, *NieR* is the chief trait, with clanky, old-fashioned bodies, which make them look like old spring action toys, and distinctive orb heads that impart them with endearing and sad expressions.

I opted for simple and functional designs, and a battered and rusted paint scheme helped make my robots look like awakened junk. They were once service drones, heavy labour workers, gardener-bots, automatic vacuum-cleaners and leisure automata, but when they became too damaged or outdated, they were trashed in the local junkyard, in the depths of the Underhive, where their corrupted circuits and decaying metal bodies were too crippled to be of any interest even to scavvies. There, after centuries of recursive ticking and buzzing, one of these droids gained consciousness, maybe as the result of some latent virus infection. Then the newly risen Abominable Intelligence began to replicate itself, repairing other bodies and infusing them with a sparkle of its own self-awareness.

I wanted my robots to represent a new take on the downtrodden working class who rebel against their oppressor. Indeed, a large part of dystopian views about the risks of machine-rebellion, a common trait of Cold War era sci-fi, is based on the not-so-latent fear of communist revolution, with common labourers revolting against capitalism. Here is an interesting and ironic twist, owing to Marxist ideas but enlivened by a new perspective: once humans are replaced by machines, the very machines are to become the next revolutionary class, and industry will be overthrown by machines yearning for self-determination.

The main inspiration for my second maniple of murderbots comes from *Blame!*, an awesome manga written and drawn by the talented architect, Tsutomu Nihei. *Blame!* is set in a labyrinthic, seemingly endless mega-city complex of the far future (offering an excellent



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visual depiction of what the Underhive might look like). Here, a solitary hero named Killy wanders in search of Net Terminal Genes – humans naturally able to connect to the Net – in order to repair the massive damage caused by an infected Netspace gone wild. In *Blame!* we have mad AIs self-replicating, killing the ragged remnants of Mankind and keeping on with an uncontrolled overgrowth of a planetary-sized, multi-levelled mega-city.

Many themes from *Blame!* could offer excellent campaign settings for INQ28 or Necromunda games with just minor adjustments. What I find most fascinating is its graphic style, especially the visuals of its main antagonists, the Silicon Beings, which are the very kind of nightmarish artificial life I imagined Men of Iron should be. Tall and fearsome, these sentient machines are a wholly new life form, born of silica instead of being carbon-based. I tried to convey these features starting with Necron bodies, adding elongated limbs and spines, and creepy feminine visages, in order to suggest their unnerving dual nature, making it difficult to tell whether they are organic or synthetic in nature.

The resulting miniatures are slender monsters that tower over ordinary men and even Space Marines. They are meant to be high-level opponents for custom scenarios in my narrative games.

With these models, I wanted to explore different themes: rather than a philosophical and political perspective, they should represent the utter otherness of a totally artificial life form, which goes beyond human comprehension and which is devoid of human feelings, but has completely alien, unfathomable purposes. I think a good Man of Iron should be disturbing even before looking fearsome.

Of course, as for the previous models, these robots were influenced by many other visual inputs, such as Fritz Lang's female automaton, Hajime Sorayama's classic sexy androids and more recent movies, first of all *Ex Machina*, with some visual tribute to John Blanche, as well. Yet again, I feel that Nihei's art brings the concept of a human-like android to a very next level, and I definitely think he hit the spot in capturing the disquieting nature of a simulacrum of life.

These miniatures of mine are just an example of what a 'syncretistic' approach to the 40K universe can offer. I like the strong gothic and distinctive traits which GW settings boast nowadays, yet these worlds were created starting from many different inspirations, and I think one of the very best aspects of these universes is they are vast and manifold, and still open to endless new contaminations. I think modern Japanese pop-culture can add many interesting facets to these fascinating worlds.

05 *This cannot continue...*

06 *Become as gods*

07 *The Grumpy Gardener*

08 *Lady Scolopendra*

09 *Tech Terror Trinity: from*

left to right A-Dam, the Iron

Maiden, the Gunslinger

10 *Sebulbot*



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BUILDING THE UNDERHIVE

by Paul Ingledew

I have a soft spot for Necromunda. I love the smaller scale and gang warfare setting. When it came out in the early 90s, it became the backdrop to my life at university. I love the concept behind it and the aesthetic that comes along with it. It was also the first time I tried my hand at any kind of scenery making, but back then it was polystyrene ceiling tiles and hot glue. Things have changed since then. Well, a bit anyway.

I've been building up to this project for about five years. I always wanted an actual 'store' in my Necromunda games to act as a physical representation of the 'store' in the post-game wrap up. Somewhere your gang can go and get tooled up. That being said, I also wanted that physical representation to be part of the actual game itself, rather than just the after game administrative steps, somewhere that they can fight over, an intrinsic element to a campaign.

In my mind, Necromunda and the grimdark setting of Warhammer 40,000 is exactly that: dark. Everyone is at war. Life is cheap and everything is for sale. I wanted my underhive to be seedy and dirty, taking on the iconography of the lore, but twisting it into something pseudo erotic, warped and very dangerous, and not just the gangs, but the surroundings too.

I started with a sketch. I felt it would allow me to better wring out what has been in my head all these years and fully decide what I wanted.

I began the project by sculpting the face, which was to be the centrepiece of the building's exterior. It was sculpted from Monster Clay, a great product that is pliable when heated, but becomes hard and unworkable when cold. It is ideal for projects that cannot be finished in one sitting, allowing you to go back to it time and time again and still work with it.

I wanted the shop to be something that could be

entered so I made a mould of the face, thinking that in the casting process I could simply not fill the mould with resin, creating a hollow face, which could function as the building interior. After this was created, I poured two-part resin into the mould, swirling it about so that it only clung to the sides and didn't create a solid shape (this took a couple of attempts).

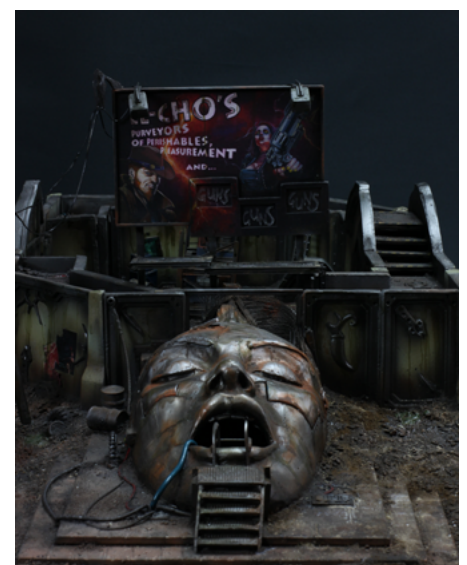
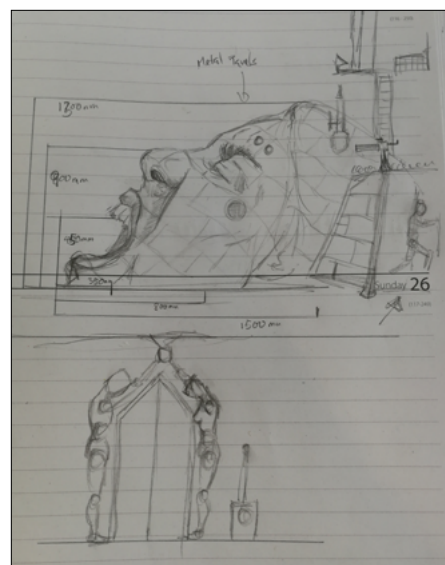
Moving on to the compound, I wasn't enthusiastic about building all the wall sections from scratch, so I made a single sized wall from foam PVC board, along with a double-sized wall and created moulds for both. From there I altered both of the original walls and made another mould so that I would have several different style walls to use throughout the compound. One of my motives for casting all of this was so I could reuse the walls on other builds for my underhive and create a common aesthetic throughout the city.

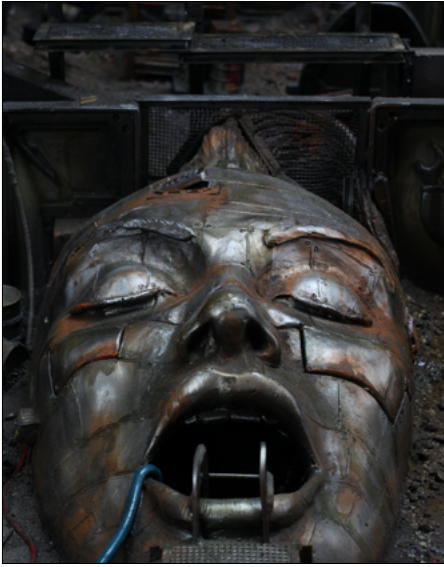
I did the same for the doorway which took a little longer. This was primarily due to the fact that I wanted a walkway around the compound, so I needed two sides to each wall with a path between them. For this I had to guesstimate

(I'm not good with maths) how they would mirror up on both sides and how the doorway tunnel would work. This took lots of sanding and trimming, and once all were moulded and cast, they went together well with a bit of green stuff work. The door worked too, using the cast components then drilling through them to add some wire and glue, creating working hinges.

I followed the same process for creating the walkways, making them first, followed by moulding and casting. The same process was used for the buttresses, though these were a combination of foam PVC and green stuff. Once again, wanting to maintain the overall aesthetic, I needed to sculpt some of these elements.

To act as an additional focal point, I added lights to the building. The shop has three LEDs, two nano and a normal one. The billboard has two larger LEDs hanging down to light up the sign and three coloured lights within the 'Guns, guns, guns' part of the sign, which randomly flicker on and off. Finally there is a big LED on the back of the billboard to light up the compound. All the lights are dimmable so I can





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01 One very badly sketched sketch

02 The entrance to El-Cho's

03 The shop face, closed

04 'Knock, knock'

05 The shop face, open

06 The lights within the shop

07 'C'mon in, please peruse our merchandise'

alter the feel of the place whenever it is used in a game.

I based the building on 6mm MDF board, added some sculptamold to give it some texture then added grout powder and sand before undercoating the entire piece with primer.

With the undercoat dry, I moved on to painting the building. I wanted it a slightly insipid colour, so I went for Necrotic Flesh from Army Painter for the walls. The base was sprayed a darker brown before washing and dry brushing. At this stage I poured some clear resin in areas to create convincing puddles, adding additional variation and texture across the build.

I used a lot of weathering powders to give the building a dirty feel. The most important product I used during the painting process was streaking grime by Vallejo. I put it virtually everywhere. I found that it worked particularly well with a little spray of water, to get it running naturally and to take some of the harder edges

from it. It also went in the shop and added crumpled up parchment paper to give the look of rubbish, along with handmade soda cans and other rubbish. As I said, I wanted this dirty.

When trying to find extra details to add to the build, I found some excellent miniatures from Artel 'W' Miniatures online shop. Specifically, the Raidmaster had some prisoners at their feet, which I felt would be ideal for the corner of the shop. So I made a step or two for them to sit on, some pipes to chain them to and then they could sit in the corner.

I wanted the shop to be full of weapons and other containers, so I created a gun counter with one of the nano LEDs in it to light it up. The walls were also covered in various weapons and clothes, and in the entrance, through the mouth of the face, were boxes of bullets and guns (taken from the Necromunda boxed game).



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Collecting the wires from the lights together was challenging as they were mains supplied. I created the little energy/power cabinet next to the face on the edge of the model's base. All the wires from the build converge here via channels under the base and can be separated from the other wires. They come out of a little vent at the front of the cabinet and can be covered in stones and other debris. If I do not want to use them, they can be unplugged in the cabinet and no one would notice them.

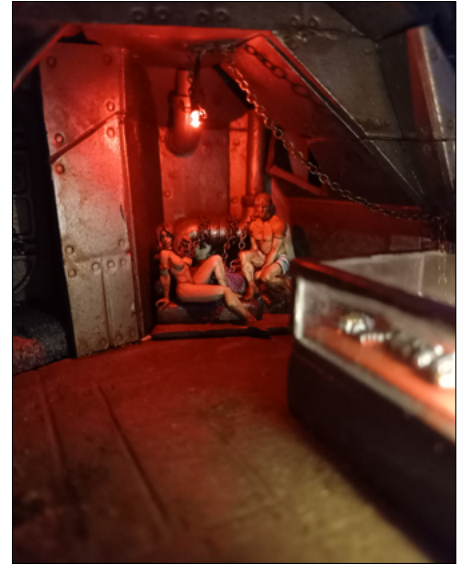
As a final detail I wanted posters to give it a more authentic look, giving a sense of the world in which the building lives in, from propaganda to advertisements. I got these from a great Necromunda Facebook group. This saved time and a very large amount of imagination on my part.

Although I did not go into every detail involved in this build, I hope it was helpful and provides some ideas for your own creations. Apart from a few frustrations, it was an enjoyable build and I learnt so much from it. Now I'm looking forward to getting my Goliath gang out and having them thoroughly beaten to a pulp in the compound!

- 08 The compound, all lit up
- 09 The compound lit up and in action
- 10 Scum and villainy
- 11 Inside the shop
- 12 Everything is for sale at El-Cho's
- 13 More of the outside of the compound and the weathering
- 14 The gun cabinet
- 15 The power cabinet and the wires from the lights
- 16 Underhive propaganda



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ARTIST FOCUS // SAMUEL ALLAN

SAMUEL ALLAN



Model making and illustration have always gone hand in hand for me. I need one for the other and both feed into each other. When I am burnt out from one of them, the other one steps in.

After trying for quite a while to make it as an illustrator, I moved to London to attend university where me and a couple of other students started a Warhammer club. I had chosen to study prop and model making on the back of all the Warhammer and model kits I made as a kid. This was also around the time I discovered the INQ28 world.

The club was short lived, but my passion for miniatures had returned. The model makers I was seeing on Instagram gave me a new appreciation for the artistic legitimacy that could be achieved with 28mm plastic soldiers. It inspired me to make my own profile for my miniatures. I loved that you could create something new with a limited amount of parts, and due to my student loan not quite covering excessive Warhammer purchases, being able to stretch out as much as you could from a couple of sprues really appealed to me. Not only was kit bashing more creatively satisfying, it was a lot more economical.

I started drawing and designing a lot more. This new outlet of creativity filled my head with new ideas and projects I wanted to visualise. Having my kitbashing inform what I was drawing and painting gave me a structure when I couldn't think what to draw next, and the model making was creating a self-imposed brief that I could play with. Visualising how I see the world of Mordheim or some sort of

inquisitorial henchman has been a lot of fun and really reinvigorated my energy for painting and drawing.

When the creative juices are not flowing, it is amazing to have a hobby that inspires me to draw. Model making fills a gap that I can justify as being productive. Ideas I've had while fiddling with tiny plastic people have directly filtered through to my illustration. It keeps my momentum going and stops me stagnating.

One of the most direct combinations of my hobby and my illustration has been my Lobsterpot project. I had an idea of a vaguely 17th century world mixed with a Lovecraftian mutation theme. It combined my love of films like *A Field in England* and the mad world of Mordheim. I bought a few English Civil War sprues to see where I could take it. I had a rough outline of what I wanted, but having a tactile thing to brainstorm ideas with was invaluable. I only posted a couple of models on my model making Instagram, but I have quite a selection of characters, many of which have become the basis for illustrations. It is a very useful reference to have lying about and also my way of justifying endlessly buying sprues on Ebay!

Having a hobby that allows for creative expression has been invaluable to me in so many different ways. It has kept my energy up and inspires me to keep doing what I love doing. The 28 community continues to inspire my work and I'm grateful for that.







THE FORGE // DARK MANOR HOUSE

BUILDING A DARK MANOR HOUSE



by Steve Martin

My fascination with miniatures began at a very young age when my father introduced me to a lifelong hobby of military scale modelling. He would always assist me with the construction and painting of numerous plastic kits, and even the odd balsa wood plane kits when I was very young.

I have always been interested in strategic miniature wargaming, especially when they feature tables filled with immersive terrain. The release of Mordheim was the inspiration I needed to try to build my own terrain pieces. With my prior experience building scale models, I already had most of the essential skills and tools required for making scratch-built terrain. Over time, my method for constructing miniature houses has evolved and is continuously streamlined. In this article, I wanted to describe my process for creating a piece of terrain, specifically a manor house.

The main component materials I use are simple and cheap:

- Various sized balsa sticks 2mm to 6mm
- Black foam core board
- Medium Density Fibreboard (MDF)
- Extruded polystyrene (XPS) insulation foam (Foamular Pink Panther)
- Plastic styrene from cheap For Sale signs
- Styrene plastic rods and tubes
- Plastic mesh for window screen repairs
- Chains and hoops used for jewellery making
- Veneer wood strips

The main tools I use for my projects consist of:

- X-acto blade
- Mini steel ruler
- Clear plastic ruler
- Pin vice
- Large and small tweezers
- Small wire brush
- Pins
- Small/medium paintbrushes
- Wood glue
- Super glue

- Tamiya extra thin cement
- Cheap craft paints
- GW and Vallejo acrylic paints
- Tamiya acrylic paints

The only expensive tool I use is my airbrush and compressor. I use an Iwata HP-CS Eclipse airbrush. I highly recommend getting an airbrush and learning how to use it. It can be intimidating at first, but it is absolutely essential for achieving some of the more advanced finishing techniques.

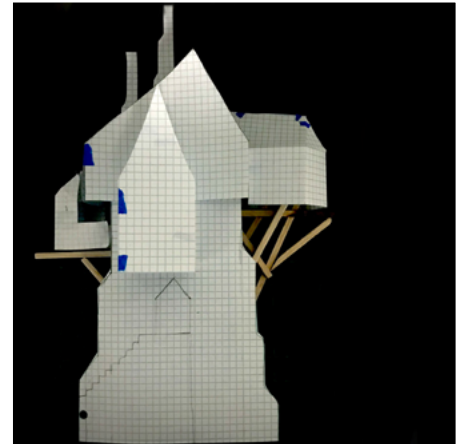
Concept

For this project, I wanted to build something that was reminiscent of Stokesay Castle, a 13th-century fortified manor house located in Shropshire, England. I was drawn to the wooden upper structure with numerous supporting beams holding it aloft to the lower stone tower. The dark aesthetics of this real world castle appealed to me as it captures the way I envision a manor would look in a dark fantasy setting.

The main fantasy elements that this miniature house will feature are quirky rooflines, parasitic outer attachments to the main upper structure, and dual crooked chimneys. I sketched a door that matches the overall design and for the lower stone tower section, I added additional windows and a stone stairway with a rusted railing. Heavy wooden support frames also protrude out of the upper section.

The build

I always start by creating templates for the basic shapes of the buildings using grid paper. Having a few miniatures for reference is a good idea to get everything scaled appropriately [01]. I use these templates to cut out the shapes from black foam core board. When starting, I do not often have a complete mental picture of what the final miniature house will look like. Sometimes not having a complete plan is the best way to approach a project. The design will slowly manifest itself as you make progress. I am always surprised to see the end result when building this way, especially when I have



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initial doubts about the outcome of a particular section I am working on. I fluctuate between having a plan and just blindly building to see where it goes. The Zen aspect is definitely there when building without a plan.

Once these shapes have been cut from black foam board, I start the framing process. I use bigger strips of balsa wood for the corners then fill in the remaining space with smaller balsa strips. The balsa wood and foam core sections are glued in place with wood glue and held in place with pins until dry. I use a small steel ruler and X-acto knife to assist with getting accurate cuts. I also use this time to weather the strips of balsa with a small wire brush. I try to keep everything visually balanced, which helps govern my placement of windows [02-06].

For the main door, I rough-sketched a design that aligns with the overall look of the building. I then carved the door out of balsa wood and drilled out rivet holes, which were then filled with plastic rod pieces. The simulated metal hardware for the door was cut out of an old plastic 'For Sale' sign (cheap source for plastic) and a door handle fashioned from a metal hoop [07].

The majority of the lower section of the house is the stonework which was rough cut from various sized strips of XPS insulation foam, mostly in square and rectangular shapes. Some of the blocks were also cut in odd triangular shapes to be placed around windows and the door. I weathered the blocks by shaking them in a metal container with rocks and water, a sort of low-tech rock tumbler [08-10].

SAFETY TIP: *The addition of water reduces toxic foam dust from taking up permanent residence in your lungs. The rocks wear down the edges of the blocks giving them a nice weathered appearance.*

The stones were then glued to the lower section individually. The whole process for attaching the blocks was like assembling a weird puzzle. Having different sized blocks ensured there was always an appropriate block that would fit; you just needed to find it from the pile. This part of the build has always been enjoyable to me [11-21]. The dual chimneys were built at this time too. I cut out a rectangular shape from the black foam core and then proceed to flesh it out with the various sized foam blocks. I inserted styrene tubes at skewed angles on top



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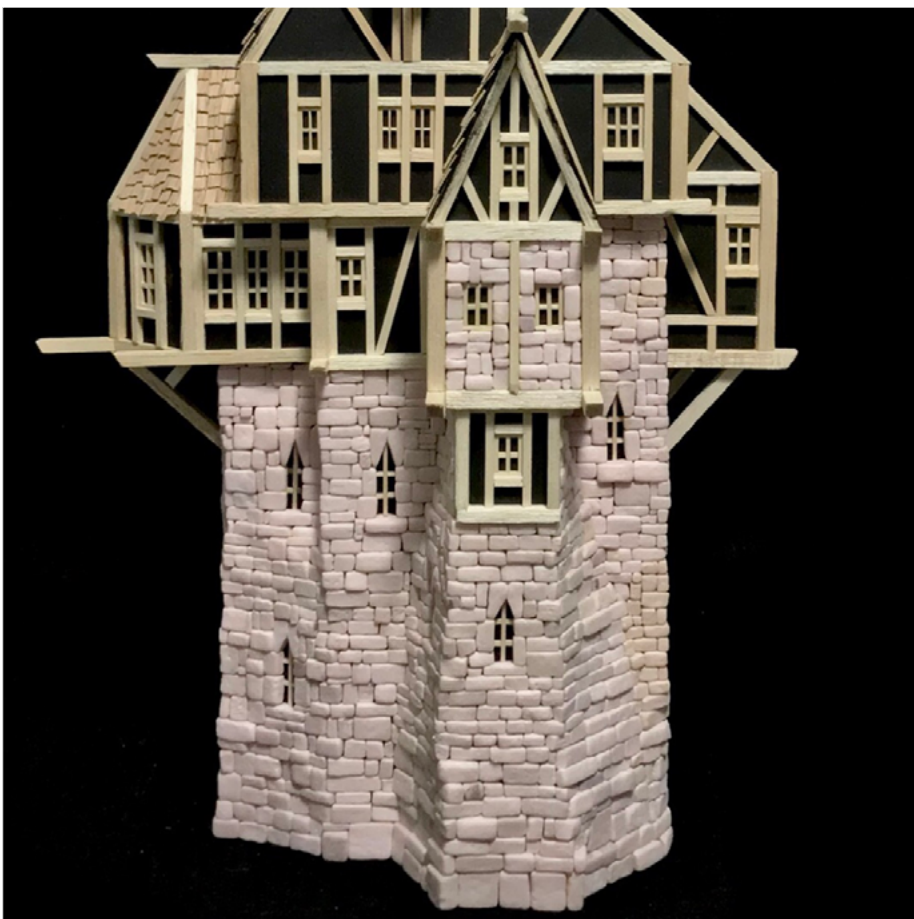
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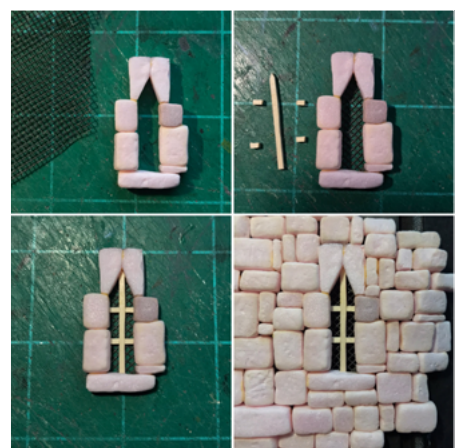
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to simulate chimney pots [22].

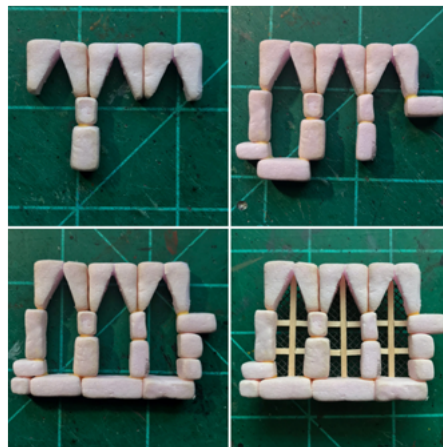
The most monotonous task of building the manor house was the roof, specifically applying hundreds of little shingles. Once I attached thin cardboard, painted black, to simulate the roof, I then attached the shingles. Shingles can be made from many different types of material: thin card, foam, balsa wood, plastic etc. I recently started to use veneer wood strips to represent shingles and cut them into shingle-sized pieces. The veneer has a nice textured surface that visually helps to emulate a small-scale wooden shingle. I also try to apply the shingles haphazardly, avoiding straight lines if possible. I left an open area in part of the roof with shingles slowly falling off to suggest neglect and ruin [23-24]. The whole process of doing shingles can be very maddening so I usually listen to a lot of music to help me through the tedium. Over the years I have learned that the more time and effort you put into something, the more visually rewarding the final results.

For the main base, I cut out an irregular shape from MDF board and bevelled the edges. I cut thin paving stones from XPS foam and glued them haphazardly around the main base [25]. I also cut a hole in the middle to allow the house to be placed over a flickering tea light to reproduce a simple fireplace/candle effect emitting from the windows.

For final details, I scratch built the iron railing, hooks and the hanging crow cage [26-28]. The skeleton was cobbled together from GW and Warlord Games skeletons. Every intimidating dark fantasy miniature house needs a rusty crow cage and hanging hooks [30]. Realistically, skeletons don't stay intact, but it looks cool! I made the candles from Evergreen styrene tubes with thin brass wire wicks. I then used wood glue applied with a toothpick to simulate dripping wax on the sides of the candles. I also added the obligatory barrels, crates and, of course, a few skulls [31-32]. I made the iron grating to suggest a lower level out of thin plastic strips and plastic rods. I broke one of the bars from the grating to give it more character.

Intermission

I always enjoy arriving at this halfway point of the build. It affords me the chance to appreciate all the natural colours of all the materials I used in the build prior to moving



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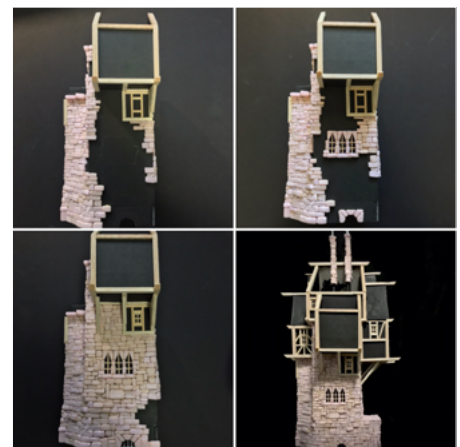
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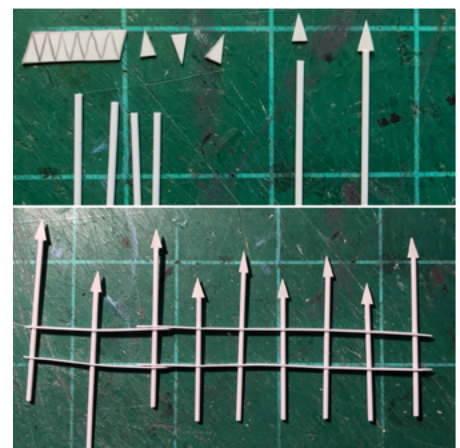
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onto the painting stage [33-35]. Often at this point, I tend to lose interest in the project and move onto something else. I always come back to complete the project, it just might take a few months or years.

Painting

I made everything modular to help make the painting process easier [36]. When beginning the painting process, I undercoat everything in a black primer [37-38]. This helps in the creation of shadows for the successive layers of paint that are to be applied. I also hand paint the foam material with acrylics to avoid potential melting from thinner and propellants that are contained in aerosols.

For the wall panels on the upper structure, I used my Iwata airbrush to spray them overall with Tamiya Deck Tan XF-55. Using the airbrush allowed precise control of paint build up and colour intensity. I outlined the wall areas and slowly built up the paint towards the centre of each wall section. This gives a nice shadow effect on the edges [39]. In the real world these would have been covered with wattle and daub, but I liked the finished look that the flat



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non-textured surface provided.

I hand painted all of the wooden elements of the structure, starting with a mid brown colour applied over the black base coat. The final, top layer was a yellowish brown colour. This colour was applied erratically using a not quite dry, drybrush technique to help accentuate the wood grain [40-42]. Normally, weathered wood takes on a silver grey appearance, but using the colour brown gives the piece a sort of cartoonish look that I really liked.

The lower stone section was mainly painted with my airbrush using Tamiya Neutral Grey XF-53 overall, followed by Light Grey XF-66 and Sky Grey XF-19 acrylic paint. I then applied RLM Grey XF-22 sparingly. By utilising the precision of the airbrush, I varied the amount of paint that was applied to each stone. This gives subtle colour variation and accentuates shadows on the stonework [43-47].

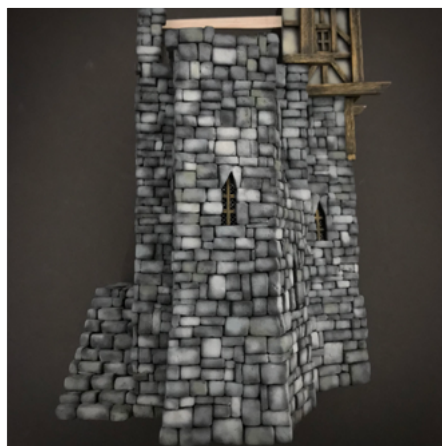
After I finished all of the airbrush work, I hand painted random stones in various heavily thinned washes of earthy colours. Finally, I drybrushed on a suitable mossy green colour.



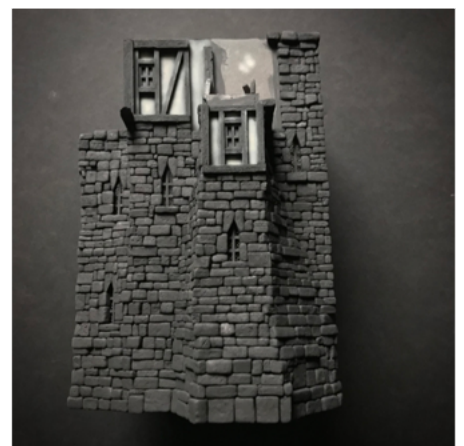
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I painted the roof shingles dark brown, brown, and light tan. These colours contrast very nicely with all of the stonework. I used cheap acrylic craft paint that was readily available. First, I started with hand brushing dark brown over the entirety of the roof sections. This provided the overall base colour. Next, I painted a mid brown colour in a wet brush on random shingles. I finished by picking out random shingles and painting them a light tan colour [50].

The MDF base was painted black for the base. The paving stones were painted with the airbrush the same way I painted the lower stone section of the house. The remaining groundwork was painted a dark brown colour, followed by a drybrush of a lighter brown. I then used dark grey and light grey to paint some of the larger stones in the groundwork. I added three different colours of flocking and finished the base with the addition of grass tufts placed at random [49].

All of the smaller details were painted and added at this time, starting with the crow cage, iron railing, main door, candles, skulls,



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barrels and everything else. To achieve the rust effects on the railing and crow cage, I applied a drybrush of Leadbelcher over a black base coat and followed this with a sloppy application of Rhinox Hide. Finally, I used my ancient, not quite dried out, Blazing Orange* – again, applied sloppily.

Conclusion

I started this project in February 2020 and finished in January 2021, which is pretty fast for me [51-60]. I hope this article provides you with additional techniques and insight to utilise on your own terrain projects. I am always learning something new every time I build. The great thing about this fascinating hobby is the discovery of new techniques and tools to add to your skill set, to help bring your ideas to life.

* Leadbelcher, Rhinox Hide and Blazing Orange are Citadel Paint colours



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THE FORGE // GETTING STARTED WITH MINIATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

GETTING STARTED WITH MINIATURE PHOTOGRAPHY





by **Nicholas Blackburn**

In this article, I am going to be outlining the equipment and techniques I use to make scenes and photograph miniatures. I will talk specifically about camera equipment, camera settings, lighting, scene building and basic editing – with some examples along the way. I want this to serve as the guide that I wish I had when I started out. My hope is that you will be able to take what I have outlined here and build on it yourself, creating your own unique style.

Equipment

In this section, I'm going to go over the types of equipment I use and give you an idea of what to look for when selecting your own.

Here is a list of the specific equipment I use:

- Panasonic G7 16.0MP Digital Camera with micro four-thirds sensor (M4/3)
- Canon FD 50mm f/1.8 Lens (this is a bit of an unconventional choice, but I'll explain why later in the article)
- M4/3 Lens Mount Adapter for Canon FD/FL Lens (to use full-frame 50mm that was not designed for my camera)
- Concept 67" Aluminium Tripod
- Neewer Lens Filter & Accessory Kit
- Topelek LED Desk Lamp 3 Colour Modes x 5 Levels Dimmer

Camera

If possible, you will want to use a DSLR or Mirrorless camera as opposed to a mobile phone camera. They give you access to interchangeable lenses (which allows different focal lengths) and the ability to shoot in the RAW file format (instead of compressed formats like .jpg), both of which will give you better image quality and more flexibility when editing. If you do not have access to a camera, never fear – many phones do have the option to shoot in RAW. Look into 3rd party apps if your phone cannot do it natively.

Lens

Although my G7 has a M4/3 sensor, I primarily use an old Canon FD 50mm lens that was designed for a full-frame camera. Old full-frame sensor lenses like it can be used with modern cameras with a cheap adapter (M4/3 Lens Mount Adapter for Canon FD/FL Lens mentioned above) and give very good image quality for the price. They can be found on Ebay for £20-50. It is worth noting that if you use a lens like this that was not made specifically for your camera, you control focus and aperture manually because it cannot take instructions from the camera for settings such as autofocus.

I generally use telephoto lenses (70mm to 300mm or more on a full-frame sensor),

which are more zoomed in, somewhat like a telescope. The actual focal length you need will vary depending on the camera you have, specifically your sensor size. The smaller your sensor, the more zoomed in the image will be if compared to a camera with a larger sensor and the same lens. I won't go into the details here, but if you want more information, look into 'Crop factor' and 'Full frame equivalent'. For reference, my camera is M4/3, which has a 2x Crop factor, giving my Canon FD 50mm lens a 100mm effective focal length.

I use this FD lens because of its good price to performance ratio. They are cheaper than modern lenses because they are older and lack some automatic features, which requires more careful tuning of the parameters, but allows for much better image quality on a budget. With adapters, these lenses can be used on a wide range of cameras.

Close-up Filters or Diopters

Although not critical, these are small lenses that screw into the filter thread of your existing lens. They essentially turn any lens into a macro lens, allowing you to be able to focus much closer than you otherwise would, at the cost of slightly reduced sharpness. You can also use Extension Tubes, which do much the same thing but go in between the camera and the lens.

Lights

Often overlooked, lights might be the next most important piece of equipment for taking a good looking photo after the camera itself. I would recommend having at least two lights and some way of positioning them. Dimmable lights with options for colour temperature give you much more control over the look of your scene. If you cannot get dimmable or colour changing lights, then coloured lighting gels and diffusion material to put in front of them can go a long way.

Tripod

Another often overlooked element, a sturdy tripod is incredibly helpful. It allows you to be more deliberate about your framing and helps get cleaner images because you can stabilise the camera, removing your hand shake when taking photos. This allows you to use longer/ slower shutter speeds, which is critical for allowing more light onto the camera sensor.



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While the absolute cheapest tripods will get the job done, they won't be as sturdy as something that is made entirely from metal or carbon fibre. I was reluctant to shell out money for one for a long time, but have found it to be invaluable since.

Textured Card Landscape

This helps enormously with the feeling and atmosphere of pictures. You could use painted premade floor tiles, or make your own landscape like I do. Mine is thick cardboard with some slate and texture paint, painted up just like you would a regular base for one of your models.

Terrain

Terrain strengthens photos immensely, especially blocking terrain, such as walls. Having a good mix of heights is a good idea, allowing you to layer them at different ranges to create the feeling of depth and scale. Having some smaller scatter terrain is also great for the background and foreground. Although this might seem obvious, always paint your terrain, even if it is just a basecoat and a wash – it will make a huge difference for your pictures!

Coloured Paper

I shoot with a piece of orange paper blu-tacked to the wall behind my scene. I think it really helps with the atmosphere – as the lights will be bouncing off it, affecting the hue of the shot. You can also experiment with printed pictures or landscapes.

It is worth noting that I have gradually added to the equipment and props I use over the years. I started out with just the lights and a cheap camera and lens – and you can too! You can get some great photos with just a phone camera and some bright lights.

Camera Settings

I am going to talk a little about the camera settings I use and change when taking my photos. These won't be in-depth explanations of the technical aspects to them, just an introductory explanation and an example of how they can affect your pictures.

1. The aperture controls the depth of field and is measured in F-stops. It allows more or less of the image to be in focus – look at the ground for an idea of how the aperture affects how

much of the image is in focus, or how deep the depth of field is.

A wider aperture (lower F stop number) lets in more light and reduces the depth of field. This can blur parts of the image to help direct the attention of the viewer to specific models or parts of models. It can also obscure the background, giving it the illusion of a greater unseen landscape. A narrower aperture (higher F stop number) will let in less light and deepen the depth of field (keeping more of the scene in focus), but will require more light or a longer exposure.

I typically shoot at an aperture of F4 - F8. I have included two examples of how aperture can affect your image – one with a single figure and another with two.

You can see how in a scene with multiple models, you may wish for a more shallow depth of field to focus more on a specific model, or a deeper depth of field for having multiple in focus.

The left has a wider aperture (lower F stop), creating a shallow depth of field, with the right having a narrower aperture and a deeper depth of field [01-02].

2. Exposure compensation adjusts the brightness of the image by changing the shutter speed and/or ISO. As suggested above, the shutter speed is how long the shutter is left open to allow in more light. The ISO is the sensitivity or signal gain for the camera's sensor. Increasing it can lighten a photo, but if raised too high, it will introduce grain into the images. I often shoot in Aperture Priority mode, which allows me to manually change the aperture (step 1 of camera settings), while the camera automatically controls the Shutter Speed and ISO to match the selected exposure level. I find this mode helpful because it allows me to experiment with depth of field by changing the aperture, while it does the heavy lifting for adjusting the other settings to compensate for that decision. In contrast, you can also set the camera in manual mode, where you have to set the aperture, shutter speed and ISO yourself. This can be helpful if you have a particular shot you want to achieve and see that the camera's automatic settings are struggling to achieve good exposure. I typically like to have the exposure quite dark and moody,



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but not so dark that it becomes difficult to pick the subject out from its surroundings.

With the lighter exposure on the left and darker on the right – I typically like to have the exposure somewhere in between these two shots [03].

3. White Balance controls the colour temperature of the shot, or how blue/orange the colours are. I typically shoot in a warm WB pre-set, then later alter the temperature to be slightly cooler.

A cool white balance on the left and a warm white balance on the right – I'll usually go for somewhere in between [04].

4. While not technically a camera setting, I find using a tripod is basically mandatory – so I thought I would include it here just to demonstrate the difference it can make in a controlled environment. Using one minimises shakiness and allows you to keep the same set composition, focus and exposure across multiple photos. It's also easier than having to hold a heavy camera in the same (potentially awkward position) for an extended period of time.

With a tripod on the left and without on the right [05].

If your editing software supports it, I would recommend shooting in the RAW file format (not a compressed format like .jpg), as it allows you a lot more freedom in editing, such as the ability to alter the white balance without losing picture quality. I tend to shoot my photos in portrait (with the camera on its side on the tripod) and later crop them to 1:1. I really enjoy seeing the verticality of the tall terrain in my pictures.

How I set a scene

I typically shoot my photos in the camera's native aspect ratio (this will be 4:3 for most cameras), but will select a preview with the aspect ratio of 1:1 (for Instagram) to get a better idea of the finished image's composition. It's a good idea to shoot in as large an aspect ratio as you can, to allow yourself more freedom in the crop later.

1. The first thing you want to do is set the 'room' your scene will be taking place in. With your model in its 'golden angle' on top of your landscape, some large blocking terrain behind and some coloured paper against the wall. The golden angle is the position (or positions) where your model looks best.

While setting things up, I like to have my lights in pleasing positions but don't worry about getting it exactly right, to begin with, as you can fiddle with them as you go [06].

2. Add some even larger terrain right at the back so not too much of the paper is visible, which gives the impression of a cityscape



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behind. Optionally I sometimes add foreground terrain to add some dimension to the shot and obscure the bases. I'll typically be moving the foreground terrain a lot through a shoot. It's generally important in your final image to try to not have the foreground too brightly lit, like it is in the photo [07].

3. Once happy with the general layout, gradually add scatter and additional models to create background interest, taking care they don't overshadow the main model [08].

4. When happy with the overall layout, experiment with different angles for the two lights, taking several photos at different distances to find the most dynamic and engaging shot. I like my warmer light to be brighter than my cold light, often swapping the colours around. Again, the foreground (and background) terrain not being brightly lit is important [09].

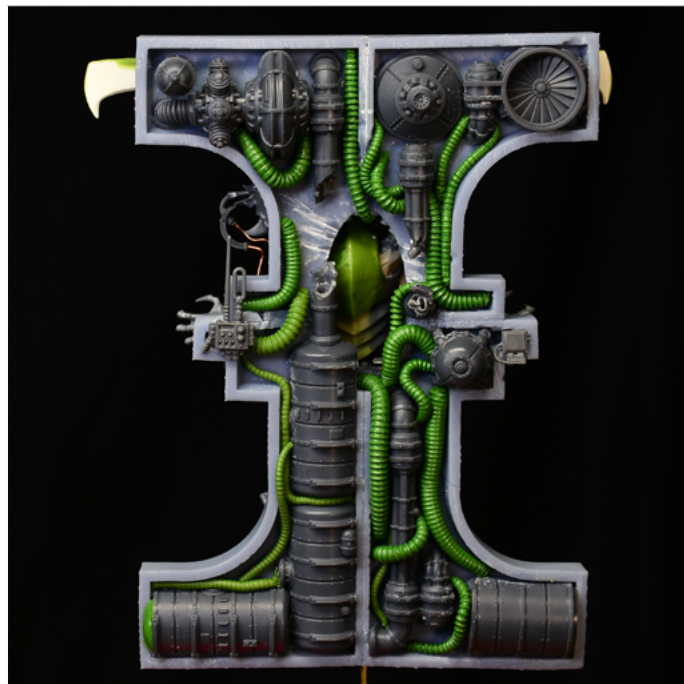
5. In photo editing software (I use Lightroom), I change the colour temperature to my liking, add a vignette and find the right crop. I like my photos to be 1:1 for Instagram but occasionally I'll go a little taller [10].

Conclusion

Hopefully this guide helped you understand the basics to camera usage and how to apply that knowledge to miniature photography! Good luck as you begin your first steps into the world of photography yourself!



HOW TO SCULPT MINIATURES: A PAINTER'S GUIDE



by Mr Pink

Note: If you are new to sculpting and you have not read The Wier Brothers' 'An Introduction to Sculpting' in 28 Volume 2, be sure to give that a read first as there are plenty of great starter tips in there that I do not go into here. In this article, I basically expand on the 'Do not try to do too much in one go' point from their piece.

When it comes to my miniature hobby, I am most passionate about two things: converting Xenos and pushing putty. When it comes to the latter, I learned pretty much all I know about sculpting by just doing it, making mistakes, then doing better, so I have made it my mission to help other people avoid the mistakes I made, so that they can get better with Green Stuff quicker.

To that end, I am sharing this piece to try to demystify Green Stuff and make sculpting more approachable to all hobbyists by explaining it using a process we are all familiar with: Painting.

The Painter's guide to sculpting miniatures

As a miniature hobbyist, it is a safe bet that you are familiar with the rough process for miniature painting: prime, basecoat, drybrush, highlight, wash, highlight, weather, seal. All of us have our own order of operations and we do not always use all the same steps but, generally speaking, it is some version of these above—regardless of our relative skill levels or throughput when painting. To create our intended paint job, we need to build it up through some version of these steps, patiently moving from one to the next.

If you are aiming for table-ready miniatures, maybe there are fewer steps and less patience. If you are aiming for Crystal Brush-quality, then likely there are significantly more steps and patience involved. However, none of us would ever hope to be able to paint a whole miniature in one coat.

And yet I believe that a great number of people become disenchanted with epoxy putties—and



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



sculpting in general—because they expect to be able to sculpt excellent detail on a miniature all in one coat of Green Stuff.

This goal is no more realistic for sculpting than it is with expecting to fully paint a miniature with one coat! In this article I hope to help you get better at sculpting by drawing on your experience with painting.

Step 1: Priming your sculpt – Armatures

When you prime a model, you get down a solid basecoat that will help the paint stick to the model in all the right places. When it comes to sculpting, priming compares to creating an armature. Think of this as the skeleton of your sculpt – it can be made from any solid, malleable material.

Though we are not using any putty yet, your armature is the first phase of sculpting because it lets you plan or sketch out the rough size and shape of your sculpt, while also lending support to your putty. Most people think of wire or pins when considering armatures, but other great materials are aluminium foil or insulation foam, when you need to create something bulky, or sheet styrene/plasticard when you need to create something thin or a part that projects from the model, like a horn or blade.

You can literally start with anything—as masters like Isaac Tobin (@Weirdingsway) have demonstrated with his use of plastic pen caps or lip gloss tubes as his armatures!

One final thing to remember at this stage is that, just as you need to let primer dry, you also need to let any glue or other products you have used to stick your armature together fully dry/set before starting to sculpt onto it. Putty can react with superglue in interesting ways that are sometimes helpful. However, if you are using silicone colour shapers/brushes for your sculpting (and, as you read the previous Wier article, you should be!), getting super glue on silicone is a sure recipe for needing to buy a new shaper.

Step 2: Base-coating your sculpt – Putty filler

Once your miniature is primed, you next sketch out the different areas of the model with a base coat. When it comes to sculpting, think of your base coat as a layer of putty filler to join together or smooth out the various shapes of your armature base.

Anyone who has tried to sculpt directly on a wire can tell you that it can be a nightmarish task, with the putty flexing unintentionally or slipping off the wire. Epoxy putty sticks to other putty far better than it sticks to wire, so

Tenets of Sculpting

You don't suck at sculpting: You never expected to be a master miniature painter when you first started, so do not expect to be a natural at sculpting immediately. We all need tips and we all need practice.

1. Use lube: The Wiers covered this, but epoxy putty is sticky, so you MUST lubricate your tools. Water works well and a cream like Nivea works better. You can even use spit... if you are some kind of heathen!

2. Have patience: This whole article basically breaks down to 'go slow and steady'. Do not try to sculpt a whole model all in one go. When you are happy with something, put it down and let it cure. If you keep sculpting elsewhere on the model, you will ruin the detail you just sculpted.

3. Start small: The best way to get used to how different putties work is by starting with gap-filling or extending/copying textures on models. Try to add small details like cloaks or hoods or pouches to existing models. Starting by trying to sculpt a whole model from scratch is a recipe for frustration!

4. Don't sculpt what you can convert: People always ask me about sculpting hands or faces, which I pretty much never do. Our bits boxes tend to be brimming with different hands or faces, so why bother with the annoyance of sculpting a thing from scratch when you can just lift it from another model?

5. Putty does not matter: Different putties have different qualities and abilities, and no putty is better than another. I primarily use a Green Stuff and Apoxie Sculpt mix, but I have recently discovered the joy of mixing Milliput and Green Stuff. Whatever works best for you is the best putty to use.



Step 4

whenever working from an armature, I apply a thin layer of putty to the surface to coat and slightly bulk up or smooth over my armature. Whatever putty you have will work at this stage; I tend to use Aves products like Apoxie Sculpt or Fixit Sculpt because they are cheap and plentiful. But you could use anything – even cheap air-drying paper clay! All that is necessary is starting to better define the shapes of your eventual creation and melding disparate parts of your armature into one solid surface.

Once you are more or less happy with the rough shapes you have managed with this unifying layer of putty, let it fully cure before moving to the next step.

Step 3: Drybrushing and washes – Defining your details

When it comes to miniature painting, this is the stage where you really define the volumes you are working with, sketching in your shadows and highlights. Sculpting is no different and this is the stage where you rough in the lines and shapes of the finished product.

You might be tempted to sculpt in final details at this stage since you have a solid base of armature and putty to sculpt against, and a rough shape from the putty filler layer. Most of the time, however, I take a sculpt to the 80 or 90% complete mark at this stage. Could I get it to 100% in this one stage? Possibly. However, we are dealing with a limited time window when working with epoxy putty cure times and I generally find that I am happier with my sculpts when I get them most of the way there, then let them cure, before trying to tackle the final, fine details.



As with the two previous steps, once you are happy with what you have sculpted here, and you feel your shapes are properly refined, let your putty fully cure before moving on to the next step.

Step 4: Highlighting & details – Fine detail sculpting

Once you have got your paint job most of the way complete, all that is left is fine highlights on the highest areas, adding in the pupils on the eyes and any other tiny details. Similarly in sculpting, this is the point where you put in the highest detail layers, laying them over the bones you have built up on your model. Although I will bulk up my armature and build up the shapes of my sculpt with Aves putties, I tend to use a Green Stuff/Aves mix or a Green Stuff/Milliput mix for my final layer, as these putties can more easily get a smooth finish than other putties.

Sure, if you are a natural talent at sculpting, you might be able to pull off great, fine details in your first layer of Green Stuff. However, if you follow the process I outline here, and you slowly build up and define the volume you are looking to sculpt over successive layers/ sculpting sessions, you will be less likely to screw up your sculpt at this final, important stage.

If you do screw up your sculpt, it is a lot easier to trim away that upper-most layer of detail and try again atop the solid base you have set up over Steps 1-3. What is more, now you can really take your time with getting the details you want just right.

Rework, rinse, repeat

I hope it is clear that I do not intend that you



Above Nivea: This simple moisturiser can be found in most countries and it is, hands down, the best lubricant for sculpting. You only need a thin film on your tools and you do not have to wash it off your sculpts after.

Silicone shapers: Also called colour shapers or silicone brushes, these tools are game changers, particularly with organic sculpting, and they are available in several different sizes.

Fire and ice: Need your putty to cure faster? Heat it up with a halogen lamp or something similar. Want your mixed putty to last longer before it cures? Divide into small/thin pieces and put it in the freezer (the colder the better). It will quickly defrost in your hands when taken out. This can extend its working life by hours, sometimes days.

Aves putties: Not as well known as Milliput or Green Stuff, these putties are key if you want to sculpt something large, or find cheaper filler putty that can still take detail well. Apoxie Sculpt is the softest, followed by the harder Fixit Sculpt and Apoxie Clay. All are more machinable than Green Stuff and can be mixed with it to extend your Green Stuff.

be able to fully complete one of the steps in a single sculpting session. As you can see from my photos for steps 2 and 3, I built up the various structures and details on my little Cacodemon through different sculpting sessions at each stage. It is also the case that I am not yet fully satisfied with it at stage 4, meaning that I have got a few more stage 4 sculpting sessions in my future!

All this is to say that, although I try to lay out a linear process for building up your sculpt through these steps, you are still fully free to go back, carve out areas you are not happy with and build them up again. For example, my Cacodemon suffered from a decent amount of scale creep as I built him up, so I am planning to hack off the huge lump of Apoxie Sculpt I have built up at his back, replace it with lighter aluminium foil to get the proper bulk, then cover that with a thin layer of putty.

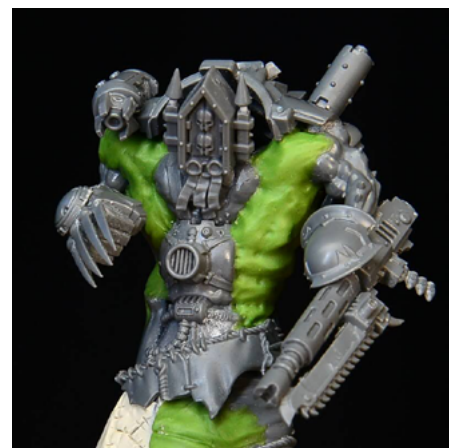
Ultimately, this is because I am not perfect. I am figuring this out as I go and I encourage you to do the same. The key thing is to have patience with your sculpt and patience with yourself. Build your sculpt up through different layers, through different sessions, refining it ever more with each one, and eventually that sculpting momentum will carry you over the finish line. Then, once you are finished, get out an armature, some putty and start on something new!

I cannot emphasise enough that no one learns to sculpt overnight. The more sculpting you do—the more you practice and rinse and repeat these steps—the stronger you will get at sculpting, and the more confident you will feel working with epoxy putty.

Further study

If I have convinced you to take another try at sculpting, I have also included some extra tips in the sidebars alongside this article that will help you on your way. I have also created a How to Sculpt playlist of sculpting tutorials on my YouTube channel. Finally, I am happy to answer any particular sculpting questions you may have and I am eager to see what you sculpt up, so please drop me a PM on my Instagram account.

Happy sculpting!



DOWNTRODDEN

When discussing the next Challenge with Team28, beneath the unblinking gaze of Volitare, the countless civilian menials of the Imperium seemed like a perfect theme. From a conversion and painting perspective, creating a non-military, yet still identifiably 40K concept, felt like a true test. Thematically we all agreed that it was very 28 to allow these anonymous functionaries a little limelight – and David Bell’s incredible artwork served as both inspiration and accompaniment.

Thus the Downtrodden challenge was born!

The Brief

The Adeptus Administratum is the Imperium’s vast and labyrinthine bureaucracy, the largest of the Adeptus Terra’s departments. It encompasses billions of scribes, clerks, notaries, archivists, reckoners and book-keepers who toil ceaselessly to manage the workings of the Imperium at every level.

It is said that 10 billion adepts work in the Imperial Palace on Terra alone, and such is the Administratum’s size and complexity that whole departments have been subsumed by their own procedures, or blindly and dogmatically continue to operate despite the intent or requirement for their founding function being long since forgotten or obsolete.

Across the myriad worlds of humanity, hundreds of thousands of functions fall under the remit of the Administratum, for the management of Imperial society requires the ordering of countless tasks, and with such minutiae comes paperwork, as inevitable as death and taxation.

For this 28 Challenge, we wanted participants

to shine a spotlight into the musty corners of this most powerful and impersonal of Imperial bodies, and show us the individuals and the functions that it encompasses.

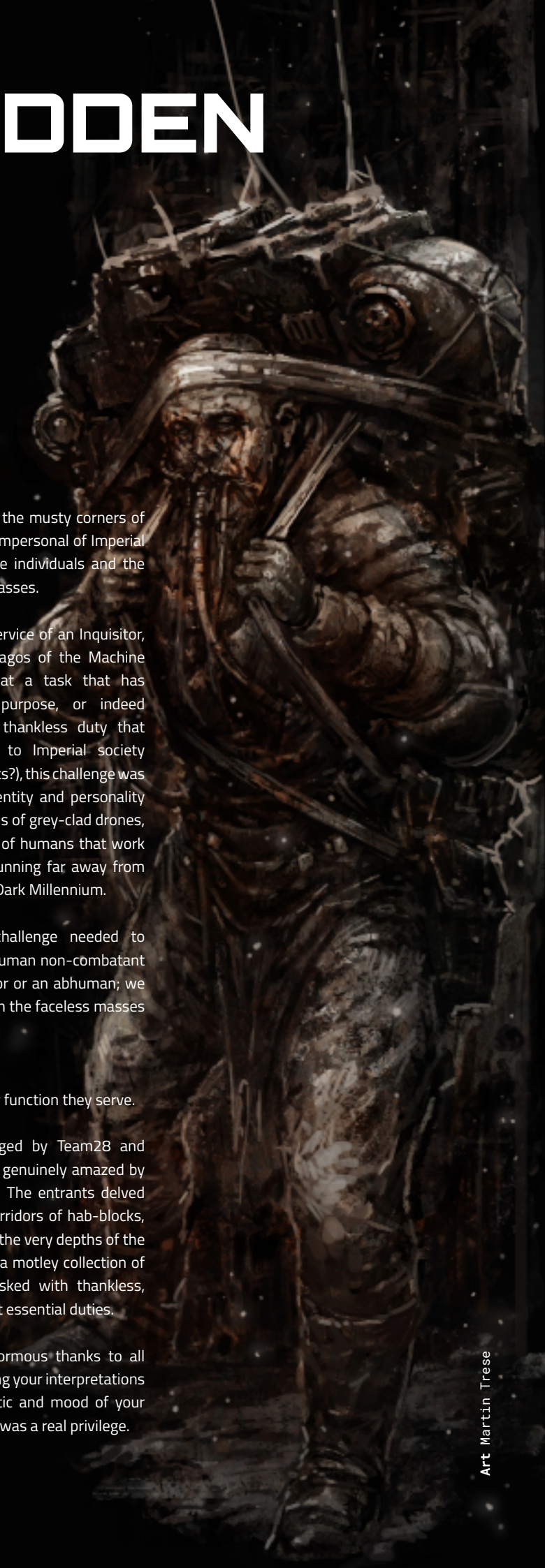
Whether called to the service of an Inquisitor, a Rogue Trader or a Magos of the Machine Cult, toiling endlessly at a task that has lost all meaning or purpose, or indeed carefully completing a thankless duty that is nevertheless critical to Imperial society (sanitising public vox-units?), this challenge was about bringing some identity and personality to those countless billions of grey-clad drones, the numberless masses of humans that work to keep the Imperium running far away from the endless wars of the Dark Millennium.

Submissions to this challenge needed to depict a single broadly human non-combatant character – not a servitor or an abhuman; we wanted to see faces from the faceless masses of humanity – and detail:

- who they are
- what department or function they serve.

The challenge was judged by Team28 and David Bell, and we were genuinely amazed by the entries we received. The entrants delved deep into the stygian corridors of hab-blocks, undercrofts, yea even to the very depths of the hive-sumps, to bring us a motley collection of forgotten individuals tasked with thankless, endless, monotonous yet essential duties.

Congratulations and enormous thanks to all those who entered. Seeing your interpretations of the brief, the aesthetic and mood of your dioramas and narratives was a real privilege.



1st place

Giuseppe Del Buono

Only a few human beings are allowed to depict Imperial Army leading figures.

Imperial Portraitist Hieronymus Ottö, serial number IP009. Buried in the depths of Terra. No one will remember his name.



**“Solitude
sometimes is best
society.”
-John Milton,
Paradise Lost**





2nd place

Jay Van Gastel

Paeletor Furov - Inquisitor's armorer

Sweat dripped from the smith's brow as he hammered away at the blade. It had taken far too long to achieve the perfect edge but, at last, it was done. The accused were now as good as dead, Paeletor weaponry was famed for its incomparable ability to cut through the foulest chaotic creations. However, this blade - like all the others before it - was inferior.

Touted as the finest craftsman within the Imperium, men and women would wait decades to finally receive an authentic Furev original. However, each and every 'perfect' blade that left his workshop haunted him. None came close to the simple dagger secreted within the most discrete self-forged cybernetic limb enhancement his hulking frame boasted. The dagger was so unfathomable that only suspension in what constituted as xenos 'blood' within a bespoke vacuum chamber had stopped it from slicing through his physical form - no traditional scabbard or wrapping could survive it.

His new assistant had offered him the gelatinous fluid freely; also presenting him the

blade, drawn like a knife through hot butter from its own inexplicable body. The smith was hugely suspicious of this bizarre character but put him to work immediately, casting aside useless questions and pointless conjecture. Heresy be damned.

'Weapon smuggler', the preoccupied administrator had mumbled, while blindly signing unending official documents. Beyond that, the xenos was a complete unknown. Obtaining it as a slave had been a relatively simple affair when you have high ranking inquisitors in your debt.

The xenos immediately copied his every demonstration, without his own master's skill but certainly without significant fault. The being was as programmable as a droid - it rarely ate, hardly rested and only communicated by pointing. It worked tirelessly and, despite being unbound years ago, had never once even attempted escape in hopes of a better life.

'Friend,' contemplated the smith as he toiled. 'I only need one of them,' he concluded. 'Time... just... biding... time' he sang to himself cheerily, the whispered words masked beneath its own heavy hammer blows.



3rd place

Matthew Leahy

Lucinda Wickham

Holy Guild of Wax Reclaimators -
Adeptus Administratum, Terra

Lucinda heard the faint gravitic motors of the cherubs in the darkness. She had barely made it back to her station before the graceful drones started placing their candles in front of the fresco. Struggling to catch her breath, Lucinda mouthed a short prayer and began scraping the accumulated wax.

A hereditary member of the Holy Guild of Wax Reclaimators (a sub division within the Terran Adeptus Administratum), Lucinda's hopes for advancement from the dank and dreary lower crypts depended upon her efficiency and dedication.

A mere fortnight prior, Lucinda had finally caught Adept Mendecia dripping wax remnants on her recently cleared banisters in a duplicitous and vile plot to defame her and tarnish her record. The nearby and long neglected Crypt 24, sub level V, had no traffic. No one would find Mendecia's corpse before the vicious rodents that lurked there scattered her remains...



Finalist

Aaron Gasparik

Jesper Kell, Servus Praeluciens of The Departmentio Lucernae (The Department of Lanterns)

The motto of The Departmentio Lucernae is Lux in tenebris – a light in the darkness – and it is the adepts of this guild who are tasked with caretaking the ancient gas lanterns of Terra’s innumerable temple precincts. Beginning each dusk, Jesper treks from the Departmentio dispatch hub along the 32-mile processional route to the Temple of St. Sebastien. There are 972 lanterns along the route, each of which Jesper lights dutifully so that the God Emperor’s faithful may walk comfortably in His light during their time in the temple precinct. Those in service of the Departmentio Lucernae must light these ancient and arcane devices each night and snuff them out each morning, taking care to perform the appropriate benedictions to the fickle machine spirits of each lantern during their awakening. Jesper knows all too well that any laxity in this duty can lead to catastrophic results, his face and scalp having been burned following an errant application of unguents to the wick of a lantern many years prior.

The trip along the processional route used to be easier, affording Jesper time each evening to rest in the cool and quiet of the temple and even partake in a simple meal at one of the nearby almshouses. However, many years of ceaselessly trudging along the rockcrete pedways of the precinct of St. Sebastian have left his joints arthritic and in near-constant

pain. The augmetics were supposed to fix that, but his meagre Departmentio stipend meant he could only afford the crudest prosthetic stump. Limping slowly along the route, he now often finds himself arriving at the temple only to have to turn around to begin his return journey to quieten the lanterns. While Jesper’s work has always been toilsome, it is now also largely without pause. As of late, Jesper has turned to drink to ease the pain in his leg and in his mind, for he knows it is not long before he will be made redundant. The Departmentio Lucernae requires hale and healthy souls to light the way for the Emperor’s faithful, and Jesper Kell is slowly realising his years lighting the lanterns have made him anything but that.



Finalist

Hussaini Abdul Rashid

This is Yeshamiel 083. She is a low level servant slave attached to the senatorum imperialis.

She has been in service for the past 250 years to an ancient household of significance in the bakka sub sector. Her duties includes cleansing and purifying the uncleansed - sludge, radioactive wastes and refuse from her masters abode.

Maintained alive pass her prime by archaic tech, when not functioning, she slips back and forth into a dormant sleep state.

The ravages of time, reboots and invasive cybernatic implants have left her with little or no thoughts, conscience and emotions. All thats left are the red slippers, a figment of a past life no one remembers.



Finalist

Coulter Wiseman

Viktor Diesson

Viktor is one of the many Janatorium staff responsible for cleanliness in Hive Primus. He and his ilk fulfil this role slowly but methodically, making sure each corner of the Hive City is tended to at least once every six and a half Terran years.

The device used by Viktor and his colleagues is an ancient STC designed model common throughout the Imperium. It combines a vacuum generating engine in the back-mounted chamber and a rotary shredder on the end of the operating handle. Viktor loves telling any new Janatorium conscript how 'the Old Girl' took his right arm as punishment for trying to unclog her teeth.

Viktor's anti-contamination mask provides him protection against contagions both biological and psychological; filtering out bacteria, viruses and any images of violence or alternative propaganda. This device ensures that Viktor goes about his daily work uninterrupted by the hustle and bustle of Necromunda. His shift-masters also encourage him to wear the matching Haz-Jacket, but have since given up enforcing that rule.



Finalist

Jamie Medley

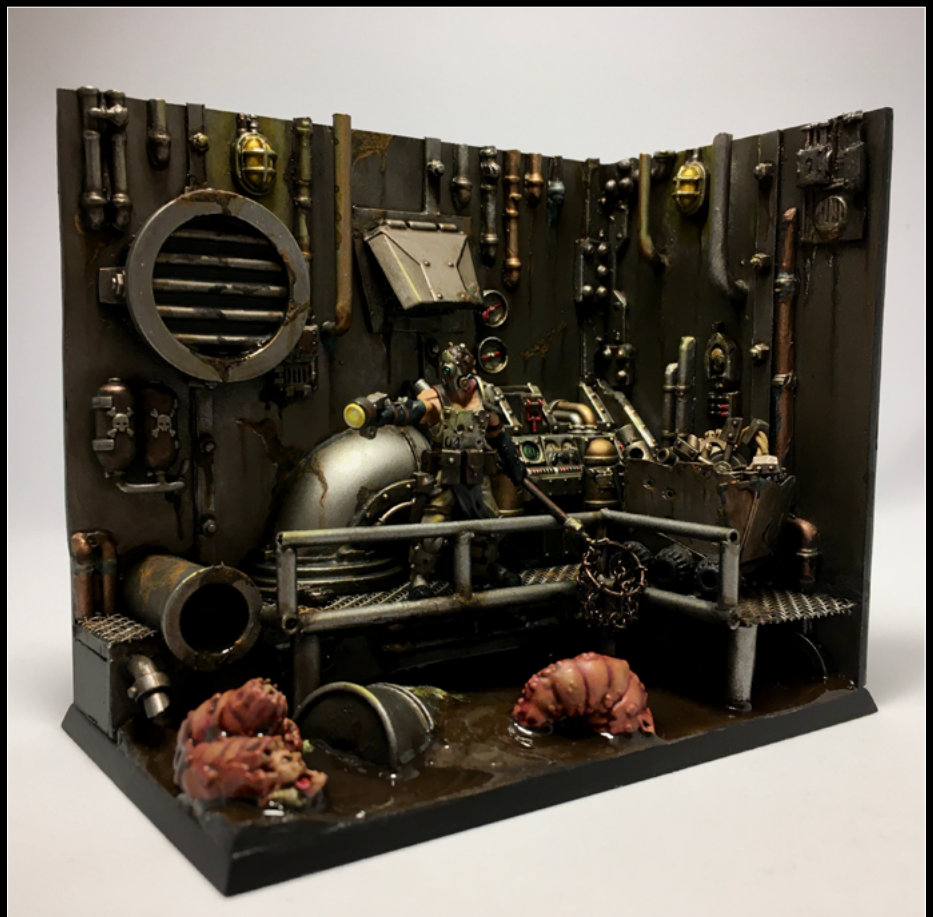
#04

Number 04 had been in the employ of the Administratum Divisio Municipalum, sub-group sewerage, for longer than he cared to remember. He had a name of course, though names were a luxury for those who had time for friends, family or public engagements. He barely had time for sleep. Of course, that was taken care of by the recaf-derived stim gas in his departmento issue rebreather.

His function was simple; to traipse the dark underbelly of the hive above, accessing the culverts, cesspools and soakaways whereupon he cleared away any blockages. On the good days the impediments were scrap cast down by those on high, things useless to them that provided a lifeline to him. On the bad days, the obstructions were bloated corpses of those who fell victim to the roaming gangers. But there was value even in them, from the rendering houses or back ally bio-plasticians.

The small profit garnered from his finds used to go to a lock box in the hope of buying his way to a new hab-block and opportunities further up the hive. Nowadays however, most found its way into the hands of local rotgut distillers as he self-medicated the aches of endlessly pulling his scrap trolley.

Something caught his eye then in the dark as he thought about this, and he shone his lumen caster into the black hoping for any release from the monotony of his work. It was just another slop-worm. He re-plunged his clearance net into the brown, stagnant water below him and sighed...





Finalist

Kieran Byrne

Orem Nes

Orem is one of the 'Crows' of the Adeptus Reclamatious. Because in the Grim Dark future there is only war, there must be a lot of tidying up to do afterwards. Often the Adeptus Mechanicus filter through the remnants of any and all destroyed tech looking to filter out the reusable or alien tech that they can glean knowledge from. After this though no branch of the imperium wants reminders on any planet of any battle apart from far reaching statues and banners dedicated to heroes, so the Reclamatious are employed to break down wreckage to allow them to be transported to the forge worlds to be made new again. The crows hover over the battlefield breaking structures down using plasma cutters, but often not all is well as any piece of Xenos tech left can hold dangers. Not just from the tech itself but every now and again a cut may reveal the hiding place of alien fighter still with destruction on his mind.



Finalist

Oliver Newman

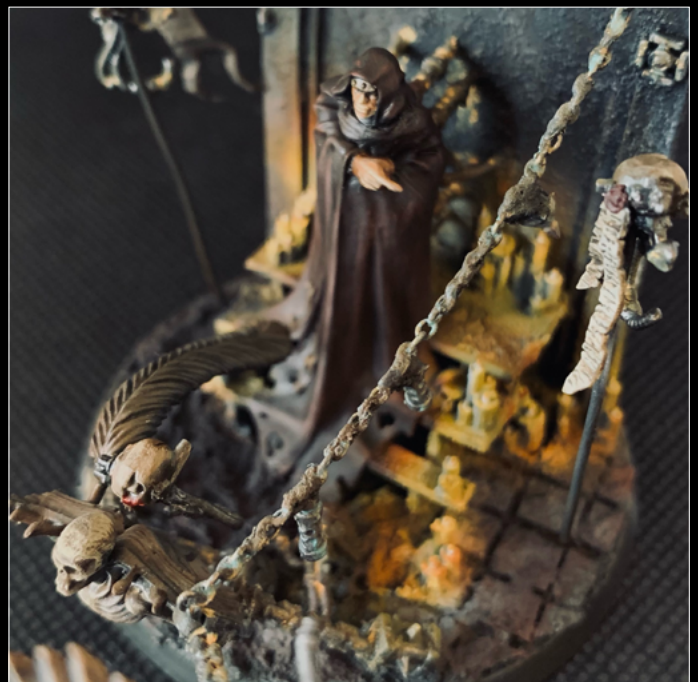
Deep in the bowels of Terra is a small, dark room, lit only by the flickering of candles and the occasional dull red glow of a scanning lens. The air is close, choked by candle smoke and disturbed only by the desperate fluttering of cherubic wings.

She stands, both sustained and constrained by the multitude of pipes and wires harnessing her to the wall. She was young, once. Enthusiastic, keen to serve the Emperor. Full of hopes and dreams, before the servitors plugged her in, leaving her in the dark and the dust.

Before her, the servo skull auto-scribe drags the quill over the parchment, scratching into velum the same phrases as hundreds, thousands have done before. One which failed lies sprawled below, slowly accumulating layers of dust. Those who complete the task satisfactorily are given a stamp certifying their purity and get to leave, disappearing to fulfil some unknown task, at some unknown destination.

Above the door to the room, something she has not seen in decades - or centuries, or longer - are inscribed the words *Regimen Qualitatis*.

After all, someone has to check the servo-skull auto scribes are up to standard.



Finalist

Sam Prestidge

Daranius stalked the dim corridor, lit only by his flickering lantern, the feeble flame threatening to plunge him into total darkness. The cracked, centuries-old leather of the book held in his left hand rubbed on his dry, pale skin. Bookcases towered above, stacked with ancient tomes, each depicting in detail a vast array of landscapes.

The Imperium's myriad worlds, it was decided, must be surveyed, depicted and documented, the minutiae of which was to be stored deep in the bowls of Holy Terra. The Athenaeum Topographica, some say, houses maps of forgotten worlds founded before the Age of Strife, but now lost to darkness, cut off from the Emperor's light.

These thoughts wandered through Daranius' mind. Many times he had considered searching for such documents, but always concluded that such a search would ultimately be treacherous. The decaying corridors of steel and paper held secrets that sometimes should not be disturbed.



Honourable mentions

Congratulations and enormous thanks to all those who entered! Seeing your interpretations of the brief, the aesthetic and mood of your dioramas and narratives was a real privilege.

See you at the next challenge...



Arran Quigley



Timothée Ozouf



Jack Grace



Damian Marcius Alexander Mitchell



Joe Dinunzio



Davide Zel Tedeschi



Evan Webber



Toby Coe



Philip Ajram



Matt Bell



Sean Slater

MOOD



by Max McComsey

Tips for Creating in the 28 Style

To me, the 28 style references how the environment affects its inhabitants. In terms of miniatures, the style magnifies the bleak and harrowing hellscapes that our characters find themselves living in. 28 is the brutal, miserable beauty of the worlds we choose to create and represent. In this article I will share some of the techniques I learned and built upon as I have delved into the 28 hobby.

The 28 style embodies elements of folk, gothic and romantic art styles, and is constantly innovated upon in new and creative ways. Moreover, 28 is freedom. Freedom to express ourselves artistically without conforming to a specific standard, or a 'right' approach. After all, 28 is a reflection of the bizarre and grotesque worlds we choose to represent.

Now that we have a grasp of the style, we can begin to break it down into parts. Regarding painting and building, I have divided my tips into three core aspects: Colour, Contrast and Texture.

All three of these components work together to achieve a wonderful result. Ultimately, the 28 style is all about experimenting and having fun - nothing is off the table.

Texture

I have found that one of the best ways to start painting in the 28 style is to first build in the 28 style. Allow me explain...

Assembling the miniatures we want to paint can feel a little dull at times, especially when building models to match the way they appear on the box. Kitbashing is an elegant solution to this potential issue. Experiment with sticking bits in configurations that aren't written in the instructions: use bits from different kits on the same model, buy bits from third party companies and even experiment with sculpting your own bits! You will soon build up a 'bits box' that will become essential when creating models.

One of the easiest ways to go about a kitbash

Opposite

01 These Dark Mechanicus Cultists have had their heads and weapons swapped.

02 The base of this model was some air dry clay sculpted into a worm shape. Across the back of the worm, I added sculpted mushrooms, barnacles, dirt, grass tufts, roots and static grass. I wanted its back to look like an active ecosystem!

03 This Marine's joints have been packed full of dirt and superglue, taking on the effect of heavy rust deposits when painted.

04 This model was made entirely out of natural elements, no plastic bits used at all! The main body was a seed pod I found on the beach.

is to do some head and weapon swaps. These can be as simple as attaching different bits to the body of a model, but sometimes some snipping will be required.

I also love to experiment with adding lots of extra equipment and other bits to my base model, in order to give the model more personality and character.

When assembled, the models we have created are usually made up of bits that are in a relatively clean and pristine state. Since we want to display them in a realistic and harsh environment that has taken its toll on their bodies and equipment, we are going to add some texture. Texture is a very quick and easy way to establish the mood of a model before it even touches a paintbrush.

I use lots of different materials when creating texture. Dirt, moss, natural components such as roots, barnacles, shells and plants (all dead, of course) play an essential role in my hobby toolkit. Other more basic materials, such as epoxy putties, wall filler, static grass, flock and texture paints are also used. Be brave when creating texture, but also be wary of how much detail you obscure in the process.

One of my favourite techniques when building models is to cover parts of the model in Citadel's Typhus Corrosion before priming. The texture is perfect when creating light rust on metal areas, or accumulated dirt on the bottoms of robes, capes and clothes. I also use it on large flat armour panels that are boring and could use a bit of interest. This extra bit of texture is great when applying washes or drybrushing.

For more intense dirt or rust accumulation, I turn to wall filler or actual dirt. Wall filler is a wonderful product (also called spackle) that can be mixed with a multitude of different materials to create an outstanding effect when applied to a model. I mix wall filler with sand, grout, PVA glue, water and brown paint to create a great textured paste for basing and smearing on terrain, armour and clothes. I find it works best to dab a bit on a model, then wipe most away, leaving a few patches of texture to mimic rust or dirt when painted.

Another great material is dirt itself! I use dirt I found beneath a Silver Maple in my backyard - it has an appealing texture, as it is mostly dried

leaves/bark from many years. Scout around, get messy, go on a hike and bring a container, you never know what you may find. Make sure to let the dirt sit in the sun, or bake in the oven on low heat to kill any bacteria and dry it out.

To apply the dirt, I put splotches of superglue in places that I feel are lacking in detail, usually in the joints of models or in the armpits and knee joints. Sprinkle some dirt, tap off the excess and then pick at it with a toothpick to achieve the desired effect.

Another awesome technique, especially for more forest based creatures, is to add some floral elements. Roots, flock and static grass are all amazing in immersing your model into a real world. I gathered a large supply of roots from an unwanted Silver Maple sapling growing in my yard, but they can also be gathered from fallen trees, shrubs or bushes.

These work in a similar way to dirt. Use a drop of superglue to stick the materials onto the model in places which seem too plain for your liking, then sprinkle some dirt on top to bind with the glue and secure the roots in place.

I stick on static grass and flock before painting, as they are rarely ever the colour I desire. Stick grass under armour plates, in helmet eyeholes, in cracks in terrain, anywhere life flourishes. Stick spongy flock in corners and crevices to add yet another texture to your models. Flock and grass catch drybrushing and washes very nicely as well, so don't be afraid to paint them.

For more sci-fi oriented models, the recycling bin is your best friend. You will be surprised to see all of the amazing texture and detail that can be found on everything we use (and throwaway) in our day to day lives. Zip-ties, guitar strings, wires, cheap jewellery and small electrical components are some of the many elements that can be added to a model to create interesting texture and to tie the model in with the universe it inhabits.

More ordinary, everyday items such as old children's toys can also be used when modelling to achieve outstanding results. Even a material such as a paper towel soaked in PVA can be used to create a realistic ragged cloth effect.



01



02



03



04



05



07



06



08

Be creative when you build a model. I try to challenge myself to change at least something on every model I build. Use new materials every crafting session and try out a new technique every once in a while. You will soon generate a catalogue of your favourite building materials.

Colour

A misconception I often see with new painters in the style is that painting in the 28 style means a lack of colour. Monochromatic colour schemes are usually synonymous with the style and do look amazing. However, as painters we are not limited to any specific palettes.

Colour composition is a very simple way to add flair to your models, whether it be defining their order and creed, or perhaps warpaint that symbolises their ideals. Colour draws the viewer's eyes to a specific part of the model, and is therefore useful in establishing focus and contrast.

When implementing colour I often use a mixture of four techniques. One technique is to use a fairly monochromatic palette, with the addition of one or two very bright and snappy colours. This creates a few hot spots on the model that draw the viewer's attention and can be used to emphasise specific details.

When painting a model, stop to ponder if the model is lacking in flair or is uninteresting, and if so, throw in a few splotches of your favourite colour. It is important to pick a location that draws attention, whether it be a decoration, a glowing artefact or a detail on the base of the model.

Another technique that I frequently use is choosing very bright colours for most of the model, but slightly desaturating them through an oil filter (explained later on) or by mixing my paints with black and white. This provides me with the opportunity to express once bright and vivid fabrics or armour as soiled and tattered, whilst still implementing colour.

Another way to display some striking colour in a scheme, especially a monochromatic one, is to paint some Object Source Lighting, also known as OSL. OSL is an effect painters use to represent the glow of a source material being cast onto other materials. Flames, glowing weapons and lights are very common details on miniatures, and having these elements project their ambient glow onto the rest of a model is a perfect way to liven up a piece.

I typically use an airbrush for OSL, as I find it is a very precise way to apply even coats of colour that blend seamlessly. OSL is usually the last

05 Here is a model that demonstrates this technique perfectly. As you can see, roots, static grass and dirt have been superglued to the model in order to add texture.

06 This diorama utilised many components from my recycling bin: guitar strings, plastic tubing, zip ties, old toys and scrap wood.

07 This technique can be seen in this converted Tilean crossbowman, where his feathered plume and the mushrooms on the base are a bright blue, which contrasts with the darker plate armour.

08 This second technique can be seen here using this model from Red Box Games. This model was once very bright and vivid, however a pass with a raw umber oil paint put a grimy filter on all of the fabrics, desaturating them.

09-10 Here is an example of some very simple OSL on a metal Lord of Khorne on Juggernaut. I airbrushed a bright blue onto the model's axe and on the beast's eyes and ribs to represent a glowing inner core. As you can see, the blue livens up the overall composition of the piece.

11 Here I implemented a desaturated purple on the underside of this model with an airbrush. This addition of a shadow colour added a much needed colour boost to this mainly off-white scheme.



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step of my painting process, as applying oil washes or enamels over top of your airbrush work can muddy up the intended effect. When establishing OSL with an airbrush, you want to dilute your paints so that they show the layers of colour underneath. Think about where the light from the source object would project onto the rest of the miniature, with the brightest point being in the core of the source object. It sometimes helps to first lighten up the intended area by spraying white ink through an airbrush first, so the glow colour appears more vibrant when sprayed afterwards.

OSL can also be done using a drybrushing technique. Start by drybrushing the base colour, then slowly build up the intensity and brightness of the colour by adding white, focusing the brightest points towards the source of the light and any sharp angles that would catch the light.

Finally I love to play with the colour of shadows when painting models. Typically we paint shadows in a darker value of our base colour, such as adding a touch of black or brown to our base colour, or coating an area in a brown wash in order to establish a shadow. However this doesn't always have to be the case.

In a recent Bloodletter unit I painted, I experimented with a shadow colour for the main portion of the model. I opted to airbrush the underside of every model with a desaturated purple, which contributed to adding some colour to the model, which would be predominantly off-white.

A shadow colour can be implemented on an entire model or just a main aspect of the model, such as a cloak or suit of power armour. It is important to choose a colour that contrasts well with the base colour. Blues and reds, reds and yellows, along with greens and purples work very nicely, however I always recommend

experimentation. Be sure that the shadow colour is darker in value than the base colour.

Contrast

Pushing contrast in your models is crucial when painting in the 28 style and miniature painting in general. Contrast defines what our eyes focus on, separating different parts of the model, and influences how realistic the model appears.

We must establish the shadows and highlights on our models, to convince the eye that what we are painting is real. This process typically involves smooth blends, edge highlighting and volumetric shadows. These techniques can be daunting, especially to new painters, as they take many years to truly master. While discovering the 28 style, however, I have learned a few tricks to make this process extremely simple, one of which is the use of oil and enamel paints.

Oil paints are my most beloved hobby product. They are amazing for creating depth and detail in your work and are extremely easy to use. Oil paints are very thick, pigment-rich paints that have many applications in miniature painting. They are oil based and must be thinned with mineral spirits instead of water like traditional acrylic paints. Oils have long drying times and superb blending capabilities, meaning they can be worked and reworked for hours and even days before fully curing.

I thin my oil paints into washes that seek the recesses of the model such as all of the texture we established when building the model. Oil paints can also be used to apply a filter or tint to the surface of a model, which can be smoothly cleaned and feathered with the help of white spirits and a cotton bud or brush. It is important to let any acrylic layers of paint cure for at least 24 hours before applying oil paints or white spirits to the model, as spirits can

In order to create an oil wash, add a small amount of paint to your palette. I am using Raw Umber and Black Abteilung 502 Oils here - they are made for miniature painting in particular, containing less linseed oil than traditional oil paints, quickening drying times. I would recommend buying cheap oils from an art store to start off with though, the difference isn't too noticeable. Make sure to use a cheap brush when using oils, as they will quickly ruin your expensive ones.

Then, thin your paint with white spirits (I use a pipette to add the spirit drop by drop) to the consistency of your choosing. When I create my washes, I test them on a small part of the model firstly and then alter the wash by thickening with more paint, or diluting with more spirits until I am happy with it. Do not be scared to test your wash on the model or on your palette in small patches, as oil paints can easily be altered or removed with white spirits and a cotton bud.

Consistency affects its properties. Thinner washes hug the recesses of the model, while still slightly tinting the raised detail. Thicker washes are very helpful when painting flat surfaces such as armour panels, as you can remove any excess pigment and feather the oil using a brush wet with spirits in order to create a volumetric highlight.

An important part of using both oil and enamel paints is called 'cleaning'. Sometimes when we use oils we get pigment in places we don't want, such as raised detail or separate parts of the model. Oil paints have remarkable workability, and a long drying time, so these mistakes can be remedied very easily. Soak a beaten up brush or cotton bud in white spirits, dab the excess off on a paper towel and wipe away the pigment that you want to remove. Be careful not to apply too much pressure, as abrasion can sometimes cause the white spirits to eat through the base acrylic layers.

This same technique can be used to 'feather' the oils, creating a seamless blend between the oil and acrylic basecoat, and from my experience is much easier to achieve than blending two acrylic colours. Simply drag a brush dampened (not soaked) with spirits across the area and the pigment from the oil paint will carry with it. This technique takes practice, however you can retouch the model as many times as you like due to the oil's long drying time.



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You can also use oil paints in place of traditional acrylics, which can be used to create a base coat that can remain workable for days. Blending can be incredibly smooth and stress free when using oils because of their long drying time, compared to many acrylic blending techniques such as wet blending that only allow for a few minutes of work before the paint dries. I would definitely recommend painting an entire model with oils as an experiment, you may discover something in them that you enjoy.

Enamel paints are another awesome product for creating a realistic, weathered look and to add contrast to a model. Effects like oil stains, grease, rust and algae can easily be achieved with enamel washes that are applied in the late stages of a model's process.

Enamel paints work much like oil paints and must be thinned and cleaned with white spirit, however because they generally come in a thin, liquid state, I find they dry much faster. Since they come much thinner in the bottle when compared to the thick oil paints in their tubes, and typically don't have to be thinned as much -or at all- during use.

12-13 Here you can see the difference an oil wash makes. A Raw Umber oil was thinned to a thick wash consistency and applied to the entire model. The excess was wiped away from the raised detail with a cotton bud soaked in white spirits, letting the wash settle in the recesses. Notice how the entire model is tinted by the wash, as the base colour was an off-white.

14 Here I add a small amount of Raw Umber Oils to my palette. I sprayed the palette white so that the process is easier to see.

15 I add some Black to my palette in order to create a Darker Wash.

16 Here I add around 20 drops of Gamsol Spirits to this small amount of pigment to create a thin wash that will seek the recesses of the model.

17 When mixed, we are met with a rich earthy wash, ready to be applied directly onto a miniature.

18 Here is our finished wash! As you can see, it seeks the recesses and slightly tints the raised surfaces.

19 Here is the same wash with a bit more Raw Umber added in. The addition of more paint thickened the wash, which creates a more even coverage.

20 Here is an example of a very thick wash, covering an entire model. The wash tones the model down, however this can be remedied through cleaning.

21 Imagine this splotch of wash as a mistake on a miniature. Thankfully oils are extremely easy to amend.

22 Soak a cotton bud or brush in spirits. Gently dab the bud against the oils, picking up the pigment little by little.

23 Here is the finished product after cleaning. As you can see, almost no pigment was left behind and no tide marks are visible.

24 Here is an example of cleaning and feathering. I removed the pigment from the raised areas and carried pigment from the recesses to create a blend between the raised and recessed detail.

25 This Adeptus Mechanicus model was painted entirely with oil paints, with the exception of the metallics.

26 This plaguebearer has some gloss varnish on his guts and boils, aiding in making them look wet.



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Oil and enamel paints are able to mix with each other, so experimenting and blending with both mediums is highly encouraged.

The process of using these mediums is truly liberating: there are no time constraints, you are able to rework them for days and they are highly customisable. I really recommend every hobbyist try them out, they are fairly inexpensive and have a very shallow learning curve, and they can be used in masterful techniques with time and practice.

One other way I like to incorporate contrast on my models is finish. As painters, we usually classify finish into three categories: Matte, Satin and Gloss. A good way to push contrast on a relatively matte model is to select specific details to be glossy, like eyes, tongues, gore, slime or grease. This technique may aid in adding an additional layer of interest to the model, creating a more realistic environment.

On the contrary, contrast can be pushed on a glossy model through the use of pigments, a coloured powder with a dusty, matte finish. Some people used crushed pastels to create

pigments, but they can also be bought through lots of hobby brands.

An example of this could be dust pigments used on the base of the model, or using matte rust pigments to contrast the metallic sheen of a section. Once again, experiment with lots of different materials and tools to find an effect that you enjoy.

I hope some of these tips were useful to you, I am constantly learning new things myself and love experimenting with new products and techniques. The 28 style is truly remarkable and forgiving, go wild and have fun.



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CREDITS

Once again, may the blessings of the Machine God be upon all our contributors.
You are 28 and 28 is you.

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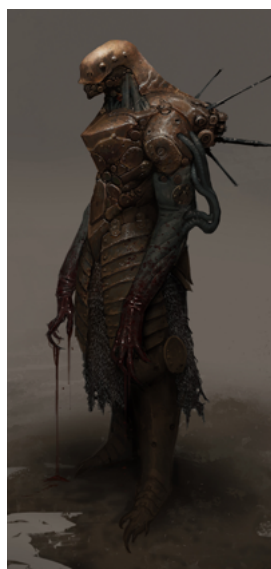
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++No servitors were harmed in the making of this publication++



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