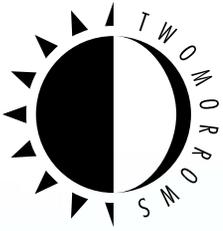


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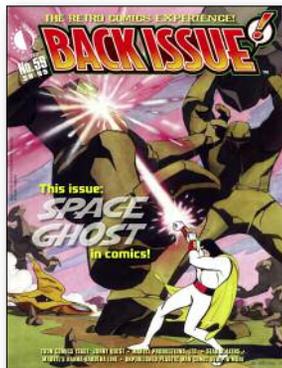
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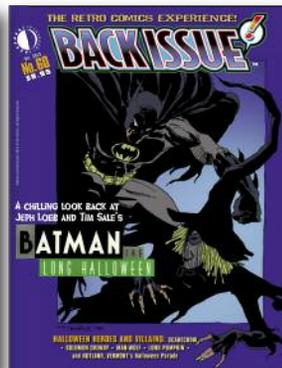
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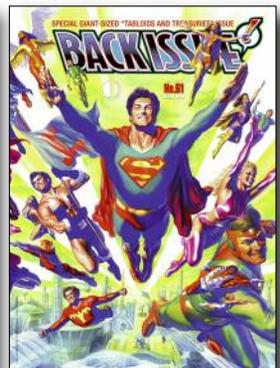
BACK ISSUE #59
"Toon Comics!" History of Space Ghost in comics, Comico's Jonny Quest and Star Blazers, Marvel's Hanna-Barbera line and Dennis the Menace, behind the scenes at Marvel Productions, Ltd., and a look at the unpublished Plastic Man comic strip. Art/comments by EVANIER, FOGLIO, HEMPEL and WHEATLEY, MARRS, RUDE, TOT, WILDEY, and more. All-new painted Space Ghost cover by STEVE RUDE!

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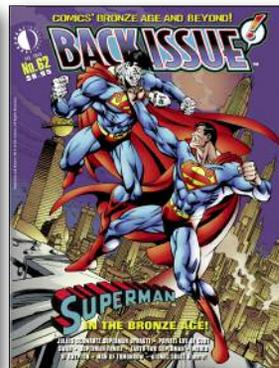
BACK ISSUE #60
"Halloween Heroes and Villains!" JEPH LOEB and TIM SALE's chiller Batman: The Long Halloween, the Scarecrow (both the DC and Marvel versions), Solomon Grundy, Man-Wolf, Lord Pumpkin, Rutland, Vermont's Halloween parades, and... the Korvac Saga's Dead Avengers! With commentary on and/or art by CONWAY, GIL KANE, LOPRESTI, MOENCH, PÉREZ, DAVE WENZEL, and more. Cover by TIM SALE!

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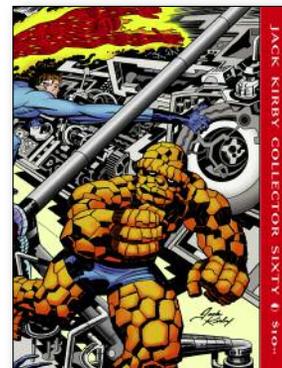
BACK ISSUE #62
"Superman in the Bronze Age!" JULIUS SCHWARTZ, CURT SWAN, Superman Family, World of Krypton miniseries, and ALAN MOORE's "Whatever Happened to the Man of Tomorrow?," art & comments by ADAMS, ANDERSON, CARDY, CHAYKIN, PAUL KUPPERBERG, OKSNER, O'NEIL, PASKO, ROZAKIS, SAVIUK, and more. Cover by GARCIA-LOPEZ and SCOTT WILLIAMS! Edited by MICHAEL EURY.

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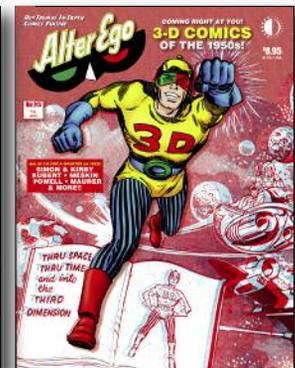
ALTER EGO #113
MARV WOLFMAN talks to RICHARD ARNDT about his first decade in comics on Tomb of Dracula, Teen Titans, Captain Marvel, John Carter, Daredevil, Nova, Batman, etc., behind a GENE COLAN cover! Art by COLAN, ANDERSON, CARDY, BORING, MOONEY, and more! Plus: the conclusion of our LEONARD STARR interview by JIM AMASH, FCA, MR. MONSTER, BILL SCHELLY, and more!

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MARVEL ISSUE on Captain America and Fantastic Four! MARTIN GOODMAN's Broadway debut, speculations about FF #1, history of the MMS, interview with Golden Age writer/artist DON RICO, art by KIRBY, AVISON, SHORES, ROMITA, SEVERIN, TUSKA, ALLEN BELLMAN, and others! Plus FCA, MR. MONSTER and BILL SCHELLY! Cover by BELLMAN and MITCH BREITWEISER!

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ALTER EGO #115
3-D COMICS OF THE 1950S! In-depth feature by RAY (3-D) ZONE, actual red and green 1950s 3-D art (includes free glasses!) by SIMON & KIRBY, KUBERT, MESKIN, POWELL, MAURER, NOSTRAND, SWAN, BORING, SCHWARTZ, MOONEY, SHORES, TUSKA and many others! Plus FCA, MR. MONSTER's Comic Crypt, BILL SCHELLY, and more! Cover by JOE SIMON and JACK KIRBY!

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October 2012

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www.LUGNET.com, www.Brickshelf.com, www.peeron.com, www.brickmodder.net, www.rustyclank.com

About the Cover:

The Batmobile, by Lino Martins.
Photos by Lino Martins.

About the Contents:

Sandy San Miguel's Hopscotch Girl jumps into the Contents page!
Photo provided by Brian Powell
Photography (brianpowell.info)



From the Editor

Cars?

Well, why not?

This issue we wander to the builders of hot rods, thanks to guest editor Lino Martins. Been wanting to do a section on the LEGO car builders, especially since I have seen so many cool car models at BrickCon, which I am going to very soon!

Thanks also to all the other LUGNuts who made this issue so cool! You might

recognize a couple of them from other issues—Ralph Savelsberg is a person who has been in the magazine before and will be back really soon! Guy Himber was guest editor for the Steampunk issue and lights up a car in this issue with Lifelites—shout out to Rob Hendrix!

There's more here too—we have a horse to build (really!) and a look at a tractor through the LEGO Idea House! So get in gear and start reading...

Joe Meno, Editor

P.S. A sad note: As a contact point for LEGO fans and sometimes the company, I have met many wonderful people. Some come from places like Make-a-Wish, where I was introduced to a young man named Evan Coleman a few years ago at the opening of the Raleigh, NC LEGO Store. He was diagnosed with cancer and entering treatments then. He passed away in August. Rest in peace, Evan.

P.P.S. Have ideas or comments? Drop me a line at admin@brickjournal.com. I'm open to suggestions and comments and will do my best to reply.

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Glossary

AFOL (Adult Fan of LEGO)

NLSO (Non-LEGO Significant Other)

MOC (My Own Creation)

TLG (The LEGO Group)

BURP (Big Ugly Rock Piece)

LURP (Little Ugly Rock Piece)

POOP (Pieces—that can be or should be made—Of Other Pieces)

SNOT (Studs Not on Top)

LUG (LEGO Users Group)

LTC (LEGO Train Club)

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BrickJournal and its staff would like to thank the LDraw community for the software it makes available to the community, which we use for making all of the instructions and renderings in this magazine. We would especially like to thank Kevin Clague for his continued upgrades of the LPub tool that is a part of the LDraw suite. For more information, please visit <http://www.ldraw.org>.

Brickworld 2012: An End and a Beginning

*Article and Photography
by Joe Meno*

An End...

In 2006, Bryan Bonahoom and Adam Reed Tucker met over dinner in October after attending IHobbyExpo in Chicago. The discussion was the culmination of many months of online chatter among about 15 people that a LEGO fan event was needed in the Midwest. That evening Bryan and Adam decided that they would start an event, and Brickworld was born.

The Westin North Shore Hotel outside of Chicago was the site of the sixth Brickworld, and hosted an astonishing array of LEGO builders and models. The event took place June 13 through the 17th, with the public display open the 16th and 17th.

Before the public days, there were seminars and discussions for the AFOL, from a meeting for female LEGO builders to seminars on brickfilming, there was something for any curious LEGO fan, including talks with LEGO staff.

The displays were the result of hundreds of builders, from single models that were palm-sized to coordinated layouts that took up tables of space and even robotics game demonstrations. One of the largest layouts was themed to *Alice in Wonderland*, with minifigure scale versions of the White Queen's and the Queen of Hearts' castles. Other characters that were



The White Queen's castle.



Above: A Yankee Clipper plane rendered LEGO style.

Below: The Chipmunks show up to Brickworld.





The USS Missouri, one of many ships that were at Brickworld.



Above: Here's the world-famous World War One flying ace...

Below: The Queen of Hearts' castle.



The penguins... plotting!

in the display included the Cheshire Cat and the Mad Hatter, hosting his tea party!

Other models went to a more whimsical direction, with sculptures of Alvin and the Chipmunks being shown, as well as the Penguins from *Madagascar*. One of the larger sculptures was Snoopy as the world-famous flying ace, which was accompanied by a much smaller scale model of Snoopy and Woodstock at his doghouse.

Brickworld was also a showcase of LEGO modeling of real buildings and vehicles, with train layouts and renditions of planes and ships capturing the attention of both fellow builders and public.

However, this event, as themed to the "End of the World," became the last Brickworld at the Westin. But the question came up: Where would Brickworld go from here?

A New Beginning...

Brickworld Chicago is now one of three Brickworld events. By design, it is by far the largest of the events. In 2012, the event approached 1,000 registered fans for the convention. Of course, Brickworld Indy, starting in 2010, was a step in expansion and Brickworld Fort Wayne started in 2011 as another step. But, now, after six years at the Westin Hotel, it is time for Brickworld Chicago to take it to the next level:

The Brickworld Team is proud to announce that Brickworld Chicago now has a new home at the Renaissance Hotel and Convention Center in Schaumburg, IL.

While this is a big step up in size, the entire coordinator team is still focused on quality. When asked his thoughts on the move, Brickworld Coordinator Roy Cook said, "The move will not only increase the size of the display, but also promises to provide many new opportunities and new experiences, further emphasizing the Brickworld mission: To provide an event where AFOLs share, learn, explore, and discover as a community, growing together as builders and as friends."

Bryan added, "While Brickworld Chicago might be in a larger space, we still want to emphasize collaborative displays as they help enhance the community experience at the event." Adam said, "We really enjoyed the atmosphere of the event at the Westin and we hope that the atmosphere comes into the new space. The camaraderie of the attendees is one of the things I enjoy the most."

Brickworld will also continue to emphasize female involvement in the hobby, led by Female Fan of LEGO (FFOL) Coordinator Stacy Sterling. When asked about the change in location, Stacy replied, "As Brickworld has grown, many attendees have identified the need for more space for this amazing event and the organizers of Brickworld made the move to the new

location with all of us in mind. Having one large exhibit space will allow attendees to interact more than in the separate rooms we had at the Westin. I would also expect to see an increased emphasis in collaborations and group displays now that we have one large exhibit space. This move is one that will allow the organizers and coordinators more opportunities to improve the experience for everyone."

While Brickworld will remain focused on AFOLs and event attendees, the new location is much more central to the West suburbs and a surge in public attendance is expected. The new facility will allow larger aisles to provide better traffic flow during public hours. With all these changes, Kevin Lauer (Logistics Coordinator) is hoping to see continued double-digit growth in attendance (something that was unsustainable at the Westin). Kevin noted, "It will enable us to bring our community closer together, while at the same time allowing us to grow the event and invite even more fans to Share, Learn, Explore and Discover."

Brickworld invites you to join them on the next level as we move to the Renaissance Hotel and Convention Center to relax for one of the late evening discussions during the event next June.

You can learn more about Brickworld at <http://www.brickworld.us/chicago>

See you there in 2013 for the Heroes and Villains-themed event! 



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People

Brick Kids: The Sculptures of Sandy San Miguel

Article by Joe Meno

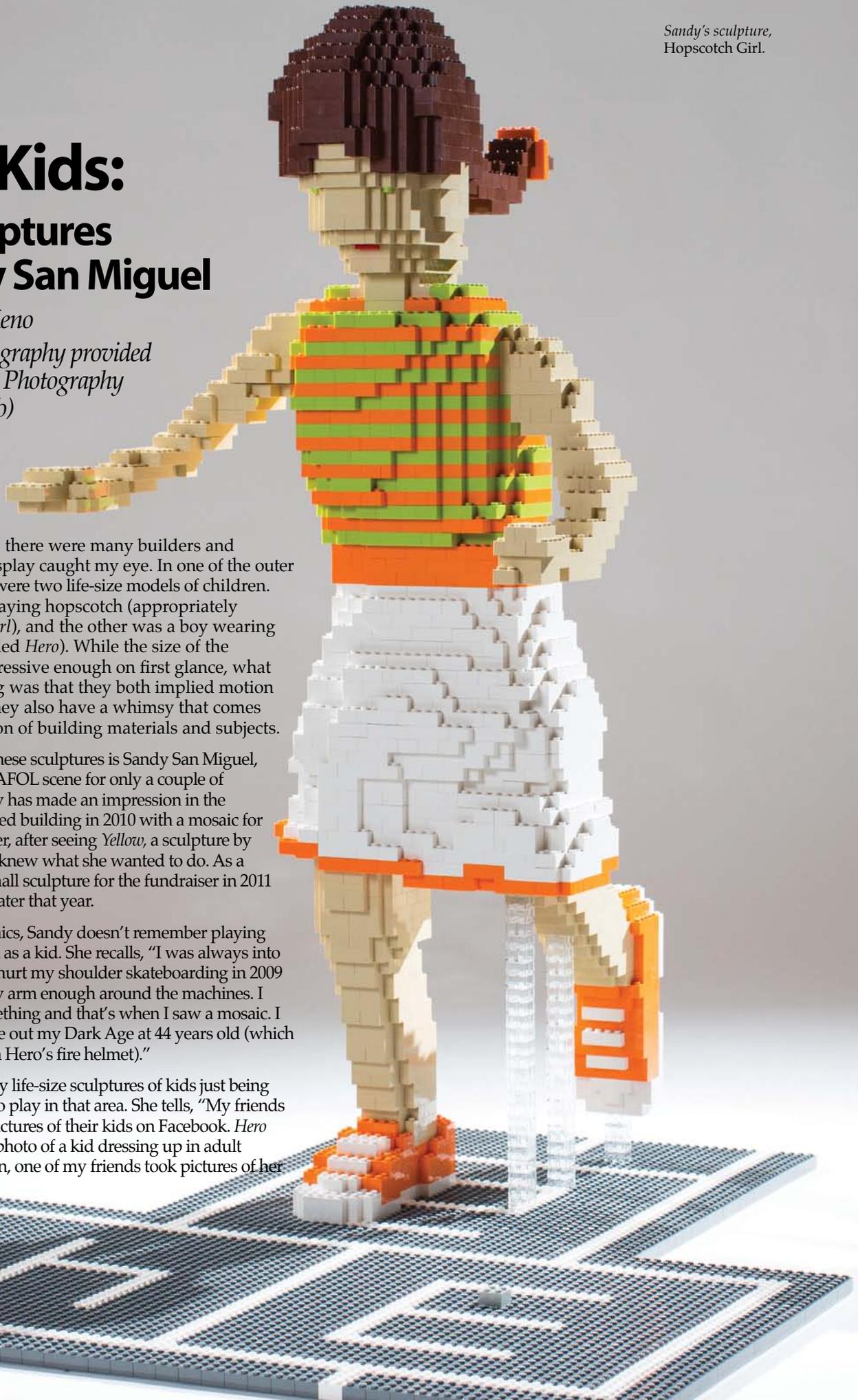
Sculpture Photography provided
by Brian Powell Photography
(brianpowell.info)

At Brickworld 2012, there were many builders and displays, but one display caught my eye. In one of the outer rooms by the doors were two life-size models of children. One was of a girl playing hopscotch (appropriately named *Hopscotch Girl*), and the other was a boy wearing a fireman's gear (titled *Hero*). While the size of the sculptures was impressive enough on first glance, what made them amazing was that they both implied motion without moving. They also have a whimsy that comes from the combination of building materials and subjects.

The builder behind these sculptures is Sandy San Miguel, who has been in the AFOL scene for only a couple of years, but has already has made an impression in the community. She started building in 2010 with a mosaic for a fundraiser. However, after seeing *Yellow*, a sculpture by Nathan Sawaya, she knew what she wanted to do. As a result, she made a small sculpture for the fundraiser in 2011 and then built *Hero* later that year.

Before building mosaics, Sandy doesn't remember playing with bricks too much as a kid. She recalls, "I was always into woodworking, but I hurt my shoulder skateboarding in 2009 and couldn't trust my arm enough around the machines. I needed to build something and that's when I saw a mosaic. I guess I officially came out my Dark Age at 44 years old (which is also the number on *Hero*'s fire helmet)."

Sandy hardly saw any life-size sculptures of kids just being kids so she decided to play in that area. She tells, "My friends are always posting pictures of their kids on Facebook. *Hero* was inspired from a photo of a kid dressing up in adult firefighting gear. Then, one of my friends took pictures of her



son dressing up in his dad's gear for me so I could get the positioning right. I liked the idea of making the kids in motion so I started building *Hopscotch Girl*."

She designs the models by first making a rough sketch of her idea and then trying to find reference photos (or asking friends to take some of their kids). She loves making sneakers, so, as she says, "I always start with the kicks." Then she just builds about 5 rows at a time, stands back about 10 feet, sees what it looks like, then she either tears it apart and starts over or builds another 5 rows until it looks like what she has pictured in her head (or when they fall over and impressively fly apart—at that point, she states, "I figure there is a design flaw and start over."). Sandy draws a top view of each row on regular graph paper periodically. As for what elements she uses, she likes using standard bricks because she thinks it's cool how one's brain fills in the visual gaps (just like how mosaics come together when viewed at a distance).

For 2013, she's going larger. She's working on 3 new sculptures for Brickworld 2013: an athlete, an artist, and a superhero (for the event's theme, Heroes and Villains). So far, she notes, "I just have the sneakers and legs finished." She's also working on a plan to maybe post a project on LEGO CUUSOO.

As for advice to other large-scale builders, she says, "I think I'm too new at this to give advice. I would be very happy if people sent me advice! Brickworld was absolutely inspiring. I am learning so much from other AFOLs and from reading *BrickJournal*." 



Sandy San Miguel.

Sandy's sculpture, Hero.



You can see Sandy's work at www.brickwishes.com or you can jump to her webpage by scanning this QR code!

Building an Adventure:

Putting a new twist on a classic

Article by Hadley Skrowstone

Images provided by Megan Rothrock

The LEGO® Adventure Book is a new 200-page hardcover “unofficial” LEGO book by former LEGO Designer and AFOL Megan Rothrock (known on flickr as megzter1 and megs on Brickshelf) and published by No Starch Press (who brought us *The Cult of LEGO*). Megan has gathered some of the top LEGO builders from around the globe to be featured in what she calls the unofficial sequel to the classic *6000: LEGO Idea Book*, even tracking down one of the former LEGO Designers of the original book. The new book features MOCs he has built since retiring. *BrickJournal* was able to catch Megan at her studio to find out more about the book.

Hadley Skrowstone: What is *The LEGO® Adventure Book: Cars, Castles, Dinosaurs and more* all about?

Megan: This book is all about inspiration, exploration, and building with LEGO bricks! As you read, you follow minifigure Megs and join in on the adventure of meeting some awesome AFOLs and learning some of their closely guarded building secrets. You’ll gain a deeper insight into how each of them approaches LEGO model design with at least one complete model breakdown (photographic instructions might describe this better) from each builder. There’s everything from small brick-by-brick builds to more complex model breakdowns of hard-to-build AFOL masterpieces. Of course, there’s some designs by me as well.



Building up the Idea Lab: A sneak peek at Megs' building spot. Models by: Megan Rothrock

HS: Was it a tough decision for who would be in the book?

Megan: Well, yes, it was very tough, because not only did I need strong, iconic LEGO models, I also needed clean and bright high-resolution photographs, and I needed them fast! Each AFOL needed to send me their images to be able to break-down and photograph one of their models piece by piece. Then I would do the layout, and if needed, break things down further. There are some brilliant LEGO AFOLs out there; I searched high and low drawing from my knowledge of the LEGO Fan Community, attending LEGO events and searching online for them.

HS: Did everyone agree to be in it?

Megan: Oh yes, everyone was excited to contribute, I provided them a brief and they got photographing and, in most cases, building. Some of them had the models already, others updated or adapted existing models and some were inspired to build some new ones.

HS: Did you get everything you wanted to into the book?

Megan: No, due to time constraints and room in the book I couldn't fit everyone who agreed to be in it. I have three more brilliant builders who are waiting in the wings for me to get on with a sequel. Also I didn't get as much unseen models as I would have liked, though there are an awful lot of them in the book.



Since the publisher wanted the book out in time for Christmas, this meant a faster turnaround time, so a few of the models have previously been on the Internet. For any sequel I want to increase the amount of never-before-seen items to as high as possible!

HS: How did you track down a designer from the original LEGO Idea Book from the 1980s?

Megan: I first met Daniel August Krentz in 2007 at the celebration party for the 75th Anniversary of the LEGO Company in Denmark. We got to talking and he mentioned that he was the designer of the LEGO Yellow Castle set! I later contacted him to write a feature article about him for *BrickJournal* issue 8. Since I live in Billund, we kept up contact and I discovered he is still building amazing LEGO models!

Megs on the way: dreaming of the Idea Lab she wants to build.

Featured AFOL Builders (*flickr* names in parentheses)

Are J. Heiseldal (L@go)

Jon Hall (jonhall18)

Pete Reid (Legoloverman)

Craig Mandeville (Solitary Dark)

Moritz Nolting (nolnet)

Peter Morris (peterlmorris,
aka Rival M)

Aaron Andrews (DARKspawn)

Mike Psiaki (Psiaki)

Katie Walker (Eilonwy77)

Carl Greatrix (Bricktrix)

Mark Stafford (Nabii)

Sylvain Amacher

(Captain Smog)

Retired LEGO Designer:

Daniel August Krentz



He was not previously aware of the wider LEGO Fan Community and he has since been very excited to learn all about it and see what is being built out there. One day, after a nice dinner we were looking at the classic 6000: *LEGO Idea Book* and he mentioned he had been one of the designers who had worked on it, so when the opportunity came up for me to design my own idea book, I asked him if he would like to contribute to it. He was happy to do so and let me borrow a few of his LEGO models to photograph, which was brilliant! I had a lot of fun, and even got to make a sig-fig for him since he didn't have one.

HS: Really? He didn't have a sig-fig?

Megan: No, that is something that has come out of the online LEGO Fan Community, he had never considered what a figure of himself might look like!



Sneak Peak: Sig-figs of Daniel August Krentz and Megs.



The Ace of Spades Truck is ready to roll! Model by Are J. Heiseldal.

HS: Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Megan: The reason so many of us have fond memories of the original *LEGO Idea Book* is because of what it gave us access to, a whole world of ideas presented through the adventures of two small minifigures on their travels. It was full of model ideas, interesting ways of building with the bricks. Today the LEGO Group presents a lot less rebuilding in their products, in most cases the alternate builds are no longer on the boxes or in the instructions, even the product brochures have a lot less brick-built backgrounds. It seems like the creativity of building with LEGO bricks is just presented less often. I wanted to restore the creativity, to shake things up a bit, and get some of those who are just collecting to start tearing their models apart and want to build cool MOCs of their own!

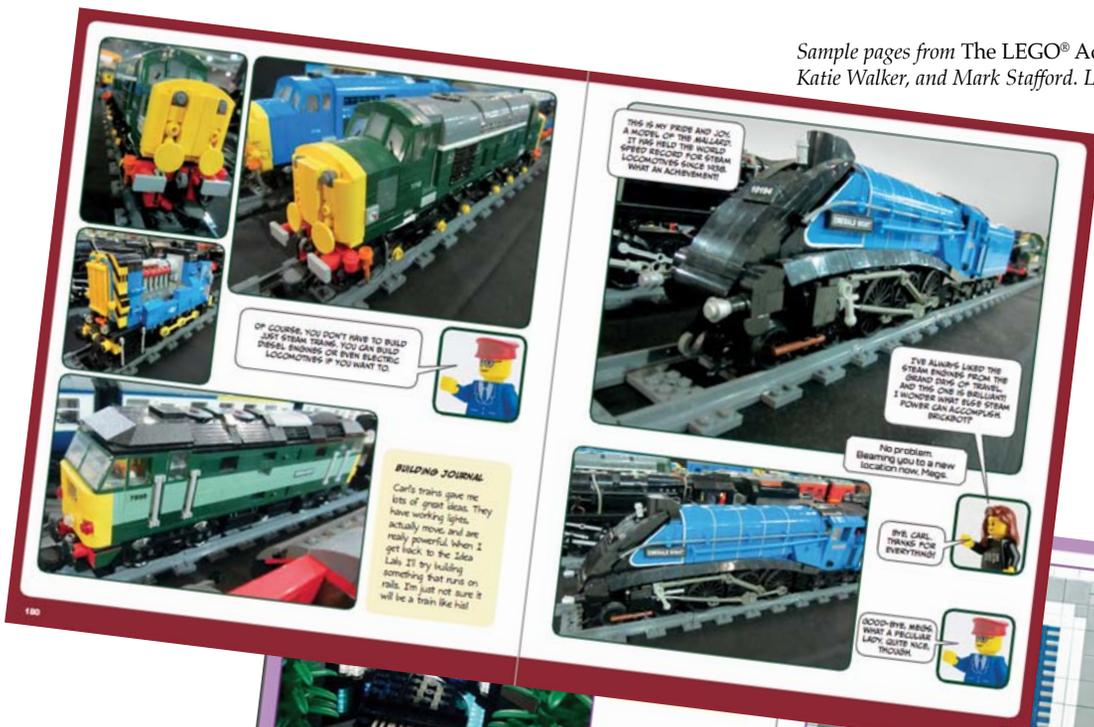
There are some awesome models out there but they can sometimes be hard to find, very difficult to reverse engineer, and the MOCs with tens of thousands of bricks can be intimidating. I wanted to make a jumping-on point for beginners that would also offer some building challenges to those who have been around a while. There are models of varying difficulties, techniques, and sizes in *The LEGO Adventure Book* and my aim was to make sure everyone would find something in there they wanted to build.

HS: It all sounds exciting—thank you Megan for sharing your new book with us.

Megan: It was my pleasure, I hope our readers have as much fun reading and building with *The LEGO Adventure Book* as I did creating it! Happy Building! 🧱



Flying High: the Skyhammer. Model by Jon Hall.



Brickbot: Meg's trusty assistant.

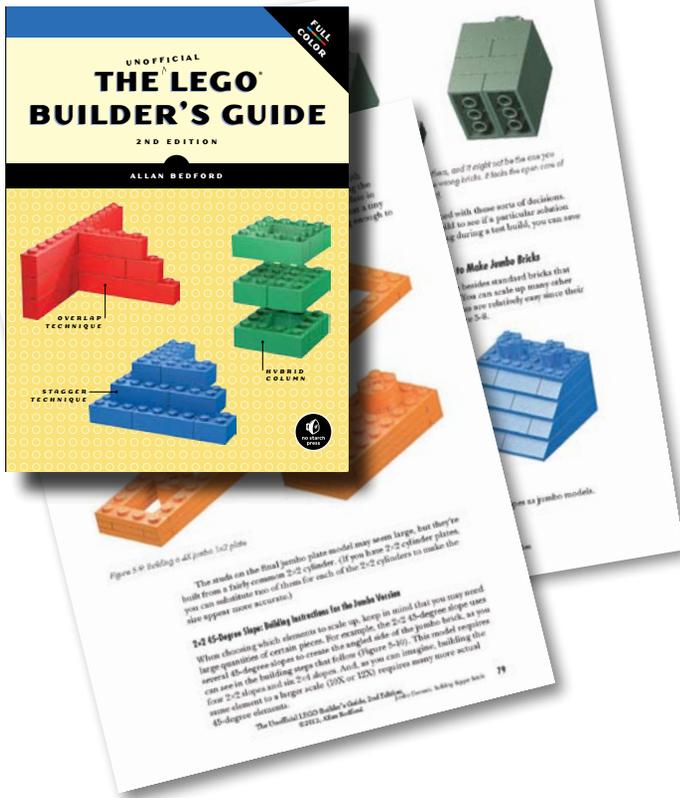


The LEGO® Adventure Book: Cars, Castles, Dinosaurs and More! is now available at:
www.nostarch.com/legoadventure
 (QR code is at the left) or
www.amazon.com/LEGO-Adventure-Book-Vol-Dinosaurs/dp/1593274424/ref=sr_1_30?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1346184134&sr=1-30&keywords=The+LEGO+Adventure+Book

You can also find a LEGO Adventure Book group on flickr: www.flickr.com/groups/2021445@N23/

Coming Soon:

Building Guides for... Brick Beginners



Along with *The LEGO Adventure Book*, No Starch Press is also releasing *The Unofficial LEGO Builder's Guide, 2nd Edition*, which is now in color. The author, Allan Bedford, an experienced builder and former *BrickJournal* staffer, states:

"I'm excited for readers to see the second edition of *The Unofficial LEGO Builder's Guide*. Every image in the new edition has been recreated in full color, giving the entire book a bright and vibrant feel. The text also got a complete cover-to-cover update. I revisited every section of the book, in order to create a leaner, easier-to-read edition. It now focuses even more on the fundamental skills that any enthusiast can use to enjoy the LEGO building hobby to the fullest. And those who love the *Brickopedia* will be happy to know that it looks better than ever before, with more than three dozen new parts added. It's my hope that the new edition of ULBG will continue to entertain and educate LEGO builders of all ages and skill levels."

Both books will be released in November and can be ordered from No Starch Press (www.nostarch.com) or Amazon. (www.amazon.com). 

Technic Beginners



Another book is targeted to the beginning Technic builder, who wants to build machines using gears and axles. This book, by Pawel Kmiec', can also be used by FIRST LEGO League teams as a reference to build their robots. He explains:

My book, *The Unofficial LEGO Technic Builder's Guide*, aims at teaching the reader everything I've learned by playing with LEGO Technic for more or less 20 years. Rather than giving you building instructions for complete LEGO models, this book attempts to equip you for your own adventure with LEGO Technic. It does so by introducing the principles that make LEGO constructions work, and by showing you component mechanisms, such as transmissions or suspension systems, which you can then incorporate into your own unique creations. While LEGO sets come with complete instructions and no explanation of how things work, I decided to adapt the opposite approach. Therefore, the book gives you plenty of tools to explore and it's up to you where you take it from there. After all, creating something of your own and seeing it work the way you intended it to is more rewarding than building even the coolest LEGO set ever released. I hope the book will help you enjoy creating with LEGO Technic.



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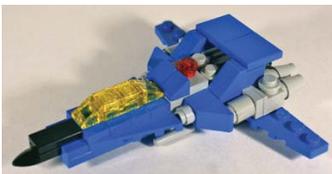


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Lord of the Rings

Article by Geoff Gray



In 1976, I received a set of books from my parents called *The Lord of the Rings*. I was 12 years old. It took me several months to read the entire trilogy (actually the series is six books, but is published as a trilogy with two “books” in each bound volume). Since then, I have read the series numerous times, sometimes as often as twice a year. I started reading many other fantasy books from authors like David Eddings, Terry Brooks, Robert Jordan, R.A. Salvatore, etc., but I always went back to Tolkien’s stories. They were by far the best series in my mind. When the movie trilogy was announced, I was very happy, but also very nervous. I had watched the 1978 animated movie and was gravely disappointed. The fact that a series of movies was being attempted with real actors and live camera shots scared me. I knew that movie technology had come a long way, but I did not think there was *any* way that a movie could do justice to Middle Earth. Boy, was I wrong.

It took several years from the time the movie was publicly announced until I had all 3 DVDs in my hand with the extended scenes, but the wait was well worth it. I was at the opening showing of all 3 movies and purchased the DVDs as soon as they released. I purchased the extended edition collector’s set when it released. The extra footage added so much more depth to the series and also made a huge difference for people not familiar with the story. I remember that I had many debates with friends about the differences between the books and the movies (there are a great many differences), but after watching documentaries and hearing some of Peter Jackson’s reasons for the differences, I am glad that the movies were made the way they were. There are a few things I wish had followed the book more closely, but overall, I think Jackson paid great homage to Tolkien and Middle Earth. Shortly after the movies were released, I bought the unabridged audiobook copy of the *Lord of the Rings*, and *The Hobbit*. This set (released by Harper audio) consists of 46 CDs for LOTR and 10 CDs for the Hobbit. I will listen to these when I take long trips in my car just to refresh my memory on the original story.

I was chatting with Joe Meno about an upcoming issue of the magazine and he told me that LEGO had just announced that they would be releasing a new theme based on the *Lord of the Rings*. I think Joe regretted telling me that because I immediately began hounding him to get me involved so I could do a review. I had no idea what kinds of sets would get released, but I knew I needed to have them. I also started dreaming about LEGO and Travelers Tales releasing a video game. I figured they would have to do that (yep, they did!!!). Unfortunately, due to travel schedules for my other job (the one that pays the bills), I was not able to get the early inside scoop on the sets, but I did finally manage to get a copy of them to play with. As I was building the sets and thinking about how to review them, I realized that there is so much more to this theme than just the basic sets. Just like Middle Earth, the product line offers many different things to many different types of people. So I decided to do a theme review. I am covering the entire theme, not just the seven sets currently available.

This theme will appeal to kids who like to build and then play out the scenes, then rebuild differently. It will appeal to the people who are collectors of LOTR in general. It will appeal to minifig collectors (LEGO nailed the minifigs!); it will appeal to the AFOL castle community who enjoy this type of architecture; and it will appeal to many others. I think this theme could easily outsell many other branded themes like *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Cars*, and possibly even the *SuperHeroes*. I think (and hope) it will rank right up there with Harry Potter (No, I do not think it could outsell *Star Wars*. I don’t think anything can outsell that, but that’s okay, since I like that theme also).

Overall Design:

The sets use good basic colors and a mixture of fancy and plain elements. Overall the items do a good job of portraying the scenes while being very re-usable in other builds. Most of the design is modular so that people who wish to change the sets around can easily do so. The "Uruk-Hai Army" set connects directly to the "Battle of Helm's Deep" set with a couple of Technic pins. Helm's Deep itself is comprised of 9 different modules.

"Attack on Weathertop" unfolds to reveal a trap door area (not really part of the story, but a nice touch for playability) and has a full camp setup with a little fire and food. Aragorn is shown with a firebrand in his hand to fend off the Nazgul. Speaking of Nazgul, their capes actually fold around the bodies by using four holes for the neck instead of the usual two holes with most capes.

"The Mines of Moria" is probably my favorite set. It uses simple SNOT techniques to mount tiles at angles to simulate the stone buttresses around the entrances. It has the tomb of Balin, as well as the book of Balin (which played a bigger part in the books than the movie). It has the well where Pippin accidentally sent the skeleton and bucket crashing into the depths ("Fool of a Took. Throw yourself in next time and rid us of your stupidity!"). The Cave Troll is massive. The doors are held closed with battle axes, like in the movie, and you can simulate the troll hitting a column and having it crash down. This set has great architecture and design, lots of moving parts, and has *nine* minifigs (Yeah!).

Details:

There are many little details that stand out to me. Some of the weaponry appears to be made solely for this theme. For instance, Frodo's sword is available only in two sets, both of them in this theme. The Uruk-Hai have armored helmets, shields, and swords that will most likely never appear in other themes. One has the white hand of Saruman painted on it's helmet. The face paint of the Uruk-Hai berserker (the one who blows himself up at the culvert in Helm's Deep) is very accurate. The detail afforded to Gimli's and Theoden's helmets is superb. They even come packaged in separate bags so they do not get scratched.

The only thing I was a little disappointed in was the number of stickers to apply. They do add a great deal of detail, but I would love to see more of them be pre-printed. I am sure this is not as cost-effective, and I know kids love being able to put stickers on, but I have always preferred pre-printed elements.

The Bottom Line:

I will be getting every set that releases and collecting all of the extra goodies I can. I rarely try to keep up with a theme 100%, but I will with this one. LEGO, you have really done J.R.R. Tolkien and Peter Jackson proud. Keep up the good work!



The detail on some of the minifig pieces is awesome. The Uruk Hai sword and shield conform to the proper shape from the movies. Frodo's blade, called "Sting" is accurate in shape. There's even a gold ring in 3 of the sets.



Shipping Now

- 9469 *Gandalf Arrives*
- 9470 *Shelob Attacks*
- 9471 *Uruk-hai Army*
- 9472 *Attack on Weathertop*
- 9473 *The Mines of Moria*
- 9474 *The Battle of Helm's Deep*
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- 79000 *Mystery of the Ring*
- 79001 *Fleeing from the Mirkwood Spiders*
- 79002 *Attack of the Wargs*
- 79003 *An Unexpected Gathering*
- 79004 *Escape in the Barrels*
- 79010 *The Orc King*

What I'd Like To See

I would be very surprised if The LEGO Group did not come out with more sets in the *Lord of the Rings* line after the release of the *Hobbit* sets. In order to help out the company, I would like to offer a few suggestions. These set ideas are based on things I would enjoy building and also would be reasonable to include in typical LEGO sets. I have many other things I would love to try, but they would be too big or complex to make them sellable. Anyway, in no particular order, here is my wish list:

The Tower of Ecthelion: This citadel of Minas Tirith, introduced in the third movie, sits in the courtyard with the White Tree of Gondor, 7 levels above the fields of the Pelennor. The courtyard and tree are in Pippin's vision when he peers into the Palantir. Later, he sees it in person with Gandalf right before they enter the citadel to talk to Denethor. The tree and fountain are surrounded by a circular walkway with 4 walks coming in, one from each direction. There are four citadel "Guards of the Citadel" watching over the tree. Later, Pippin swears an oath of fealty to Denethor and becomes a "Guard of the Citadel" also.

I picture this set as a facade of the front of the tower and a small courtyard setup with a white tree. There would be two guard minifigs. On the other side of the facade, there would be a dias with a throne and second lower chair, mimicking the interior of the citadel. Denethor would be a third minifig and Pippin, wearing his citadel uniform would be the fourth. This may be a good place to introduce a new Gandalf minifig, wearing white and without a hat.

The Capture of Orthanc—At the end of the second movie, the ents manage to invade Isengard and trap Saruman and Grima in his stone stronghold called Orthanc. At the beginning of the third movie, King Theoden, Gandalf, Pippin, and a host

From The LEGO Group



When you got the home page for LEGO Lord of the Rings, you see a map of Middle Earth with each of the seven sets sitting on it. As you hover over a set, it comes to life. Clicking on it will take you to a page where you can see a bunch of cool information about that set. To the left, you see the page about "The Battle of Helm's Deep"

(<http://thelordoftherings.lego.com>)

of others pay Saruman a visit to try to get information from him. In the movie, Saruman is killed by Grima and as he falls, the Orthanc Palantir slips out of his robes for Pippin to get. In the books, Saruman is not killed until the end of the story, and Grima hurls the Palantir out of a window, trying to hit Saruman with it. Either way, this sets up Pippin's contact with the seeing stone, which leads to his vision of the White Tree of Gondor.

This set is a bit harder for me to picture than the others because the tower of Orthanc is so tall. However, my initial thought is just the platform at the top of the tower with the four spires rising above, with a set of stairs and a watermill at the bottom front. I think Treebeard would be a figure that could be represented by standard LEGO elements instead of a molded minifig. The minifigs would include Saruman, Grima, Theoden, and the set should include a palantir.

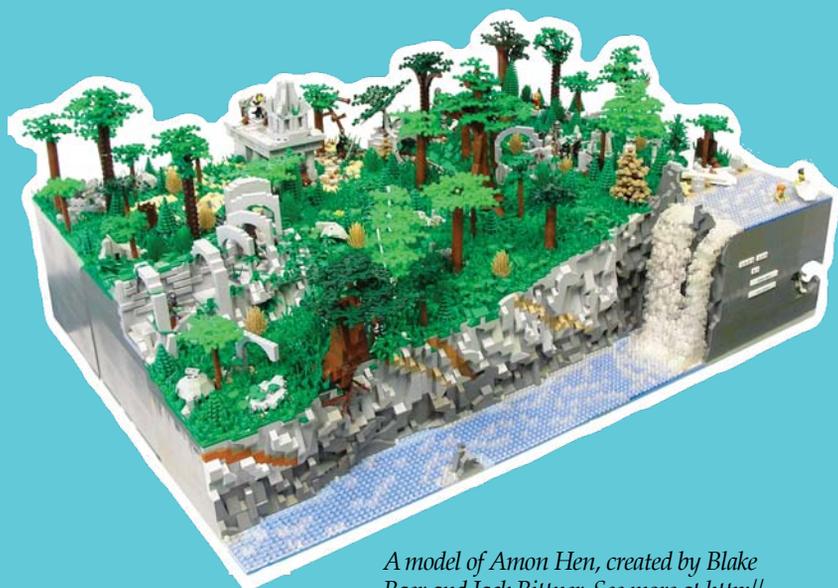
The Corsairs of Umbar—The movies and the books differ in a few aspects when it comes to the characters I want to see in this set. The Corsairs are a race of men who are known for being pirates and thugs. They sail along the coast of Gondor and are sworn enemies of Gondor. Aragorn takes the "Paths of the Dead" to get the aid of an army of undead. The books and movies differ in how the army joins Aragorn, but in both, the army helps Aragorn raid the ships of the Corsairs, preventing them from joining the armies of the Southrons against the siege of Minas Tirith. The other place the books and movies diverge is that the movie has the army helping attack the enemy at Minas Tirith, but in the books, Aragorn releases the army after they get the ships. Then Aragorn is joined by a throng of men from southern Gondor.

I envision this set as a boat, based on the pirate ship hulls. The minifigs for this one would be Aragorn, Legolas, Gimli, a king figure representing the King of the dead, and a couple of skeleton figures for the army. More importantly, there should also be a Corsair Lieutenant, specifically the Lieutenant who gets shot during the encounter with Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas in the movie. That character is played by Peter Jackson.

The Defense of Osgiliath: Osgiliath is (or more accurately was) the main city of Gondor for a long time. It was abandoned in the Third Age and fell into ruin. It plays a major part in several scenes in both the second and the third movie. Faramir takes Frodo, Sam, and Gollum there at the end of the second movie when he goes to re-enforce the garrison there. It is at Osgiliath, when a Nazgul shows up that Faramir decides to release Frodo. In the book, Frodo was released from the caves of the Forbidden Pool. In the third movie, Gothmog leads an army of Mordor orcs on a night attack of Osgiliath and eventually overruns the city. Faramir is able to rally a few of his men and retreat back to Minas Tirith, only to go back on his father's wish and watch every man with him die before he falls to a poison dart and is dragged back to Minas Tirith by his horse.

This would be the largest set in my group, containing a bunch of wall sections, ramparts and broken parapets, as well as a river section with boats bringing the orc army. The playability of this set is huge. There can be ballistas, falling walls, and lots of minifigs. My list for them is Faramir, Madril (a ranger serving Faramir), Gothmog, Gondor soldiers, and Mordor Orcs. I personally would not add Gollum or Frodo/Sam because they were never there in the books, and not there in the movies when Gothmog attacked.

From The Fans



A model of Amon Hen, created by Blake Baer and Jack Bittner. See more at <http://www.mocpages.com/moc.php/284409>



OneLug created a scene called "The Last March of the Ents" and showed it at BrickCon. Read all about this amazing creation on Page 16 of BrickJournal issue 19, released June 2012.

My love of the minifig collection has clearly slowed my mind.

Collecting LEGO minifigs is a bit of a passion for me. I led a discussion on minifig swapping at BrickFest 2004 in Washington DC. At that point, I had about 500 unique minifigs in my collection. Since then the community has continued to collect minifigs, and more recently, the general public has grown fond of these little characters. The LEGO Group has started encouraging collecting with the release of exclusive minifigs, and with the production of so many different and new minifigs. The figures from *The Lord of the Rings* is fast becoming my second favorite series (*Star Wars* figures are at the top of my list, but there are so many of them that I cannot keep up).

Do you have some minifig characters that you'd like to see? I can't promise that I will be able to influence LEGO, but I'd love to hear your thoughts. Send me email (geoffgr@brickjournal.com) and tell me what characters you want to see.

Minifigs I would like to see LEGO release with the next wave of LOTR sets. How many of these characters do you recognize from the movies?

Denethor

White Tree Guard

Gondor Soldiers

Mordor Orcs

Corsair Lieutenant

--played by Peter Jackson

King of the dead

Army of the Dead

Faramir

Madril (Ranger)

Gothmog

Saruman

Grima with the Palantir

Treebeard

Arwen

Galadriel

Celeborn

Eowyn

Butterburr

Rose Cotton

The scan below is from the back of the instruction manual of one of the sets. It shows all of the minifigs that come in the sets. It is clear that LEGO wants to help collectors keep track.





Minifigs pictured above, from left to right, front to back:

Gandalf the Grey

Frodo Baggins

Frodo Baggins

Samwise Gamgee

Gollum

Uruk-hai

Uruk-hai

Uruk-hai

Rohan Soldier

Eomer

Moria Orc

Pippin

Gimli

Boromir

Legolas

Merry

Aragorn

Ringwraith

Uruk-hai — Berserker

Haldir

King Theoden

Uruk-hai

Mordor Orc

Mordor Orc

Lurtz

Frodo Baggins

Bilbo Baggins





Laughter of LEGO

Article by Tyler Clites

Photography provided by Tyler Clites, Bruce Lowell,
Chris McVeigh, and Angus MacLane

Anyone who has spent any time online, or in any other form of text-based communication, has invariably run across that infamous acronym, *LOL*. Simply meaning to *Laugh Out Loud*, *LOL* is easily the most frequent and possibly the most overused acronym of our modern society. However for the purpose of this article, it can mean something slightly different, *Laughter of LEGO*.

Laughter and fun are somewhat expected with a children's toy such as LEGO. Kids giggling over a pile of bricks or cackling when parents scream in agony upon finding stray LEGO bricks with their bare feet, flood our minds when we think of this incredible toy. But what place does humor and laughter have for the adult fans of LEGO? Sure, we all have fun building with or collecting LEGO products. However, simple enjoyment is much different than something that truly triggers someone to laugh out loud.

We have all seen LEGO creations that make our jaw plummet, or that make us feel as though we are unworthy of beholding its splendor. But when was the last time you saw a LEGO creation that made you explode with a thunderous guffaw. True humor is something that is somewhat lacking within the community of LEGO enthusiasts. Of course, there are plenty of LEGO fans that use minifigures to create what could be called the, "Funny Page" style humor. Many of these are delightfully hilarious and are exceptionally well presented, but often, the comical concept could be taken to the next level. What is truly astounding is when an entire creation is built to make viewers laugh so hard that they spritz their computer screen with a nice spray of saliva or whatever happened to be in their mouth. Whether it is

a bizarre twist on an established cliché, or an absurd amalgamation of unrelated objects, they are all bound to evoke a chuckle even from the most cynical of LEGO fans.

Comedy and humor can be very difficult to convey due to the fact that it is so highly subjective. The same joke may bring tears of laughter to one, while offending or disgusting another. So when someone creates something in LEGO that executes a visual punch-line that can make almost anyone laugh, one cannot help but applaud a well-delivered dose of laughter. Another aspect that makes humor in LEGO so difficult is that the entire creation has to be instantly funny. A stand-up comedian and many newspaper comics have time to set up a joke and then deliver a punch line, but in the visual realm of LEGO, the humor has to be an instantaneous visual joke. Gary Larson, creator of *The Far Side* comic strip, is a perfect example of this type of visual humor. This sort of comedy is rather difficult to execute and seeing it presented well in LEGO makes it wildly entertaining.

Irony is something that is known for tickling people's funny bone. Taking expected situations or clichés and flipping them upside-down often end in hilarity. Everyone is familiar with or has taken a magnifying glass and gone on an ant burning spree or seen cheesy films with fifty-story monsters destroying buildings. There is nothing inherently funny about burning ants and monster flicks, (well, maybe the monster movies are funny when they are dubbed in English). However, some clever LEGO comedians have taken it upon themselves to reverse the roles of these conventions.



*Above: Bruce Lowell's ant antics.
Below: Chris McVeigh's skyscraper rampage.*

Bruce Lowell takes us outside the norm by putting his own ironic twist on ants and magnifying glasses. Containing laughter is impossible, when seeing a gargantuan, mutant ant burning people with a magnifying glass. Sure, Bruce has a rather dark sense of humor but be honest; you laughed too. For LEGO fans, seeing minifigures on fire or piles of ash where there was a minifig are terrifying. The magnifying glass is the one detail that takes the idea outside the realm of horror, and puts it back into the world of humor.

Chris McVeigh does a similar reversal as he creates an alternate universe in which a monstrous building is terrorizing a city of little monsters. This outside-the-box thinking leaves the viewers in stitches as they ponder the hilarity of a skyscraper stomping on helpless monsters. The small green piece on the building's foot, representing a squished monster, gives a comical sense of scale to another twisted, yet hilarious creation.

Another aspect of humor that can be comical when done right is that of the absurd. Incongruous mating of unlike things or elements which would never ordinarily combine, are often incredibly funny. This sort of humor is reminiscent of many of the famous sketches of the British comedy troop, Monty Python. Their sketches are renowned for their absurdity and sheer ridiculousness. Whether it is an interview at the Ministry of Silly Walks, or the unexpected arrival of the Spanish Inquisition, Monty Python is the epitome of absurd comedy. While this style of comedy may seem as simple as throwing together unlike things or combining ridiculous elements, there are few who can execute it well.





Chicken Walker.

Angus McLane is someone who has certainly taken a dive headfirst into the realm of absurdity with his *Chicken Walker* and *Chicken McNugget* creations. Barnyard fowl mechs, brandishing machine guns and being piloted by tiny chickens, are absurdly humorous. The large *Chicken Walker* is funny by



Chicken McNugget.

itself, but what really puts these over the edge is the *Chicken McNugget*. The fact that these mechs are so similar to the real thing, makes it that much funnier. The good news is that if you love gun-toting chickens, you can vote for Angus' creations on LEGO CUUSOO and get them one step closer to possibly becoming official LEGO sets...unless you are chicken.

I too have implemented humor in many of the creations I have built. However, while we are on the subject of absurd things carrying firearms, I thought I would share my own, *Flower Power*. I created this as part of a challenge to use the yellow triangle road signs. I thought that they would make suitable petals on a sunflower but I certainly did not want to create an ordinary sunflower. I began thinking of absurd or funny things that a flower would not ordinarily be associated with. Naturally, machine guns were the first thing that popped into my head. Even when I create something that I think is funny, I rarely laugh out loud uncontrollably. However, when I made the flower and put the weapons in his hands, it was all I could do to keep myself from laughing long enough to take the photo.

If you were not moved to laugh, chuckle, or even smile at any of these creations, frankly, there is something wrong with you. I am sure there are other equally hilarious LEGO creations out there. These are just a sampling of what I find to be the most funny and well constructed LEGO creations that I have seen. I hope this article prompts you skip work, take the phone off the hook, lock yourself in your basement, and build some side-splitting, guffaw-inducing, make-liquids-come-out-our-nose funny LEGO creations. The world could use some more laughter, so go put some LOL in your LEGO. 



You can see Tyler's work at his flickr gallery:
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/legohaulic/>
or by scanning this QR code!

My name is Lino Martins...

and I'm the co-founder of the LUGNuts LEGO automotive group. To know my group is to know me, and to know me means to know about dualities. I'm an avid LEGO car builder, yet I don't own a car. I particularly enjoy classic American custom cars and hot rods. Usually an interest like this is passed on from your father, but my dad drives nothing wilder than a Toyota Corolla... and is decidedly not a car guy. The black t-shirts and skull rings I wear may lead you to believe that I'm some sort of tough character... but not really. My online persona may seem bigger than life, loud and rather garish, but I'm quite soft-spoken, really. When people meet me in person for the first time,

SWICIDE KING



Two of Lino's many creations.

BLUE HAWAIIAN



they're surprised, imagining I'd be taller. I look like I could be happy scoffing down an entire bag of potato chips, and believe me, I would... but I eat mostly organic, good homemade food. People might think I'm some kind of edgy dangerous ruffian who lives on the wrong side of the law, but I have no criminal record. I pay my bills on time and have established flawless credit. I read quietly... mostly books on science and nature. I'm a product of two coasts. I was born in New England, on the East Coast, but am laid back enough to be happy living here in Seattle. Occasionally my East Coast attitude resurfaces... okay, more than occasionally.

With the strong presence of Boeing, Microsoft and Amazon, The Pacific Northwest is densely populated with engineers and programmers. As an East Coast transplant, I stand out already, but take into consideration that, as fate would have it, I am an artist, and not an engineer... I stand out even more. They build like engineers, I build like an artist. This distinction has been noted on several occasions... mostly to my advantage.

About eleven or twelve years ago, I was a younger man and newly transplanted to the West Coast. With the advent of LEGO *Star Wars* and Model Team sets, I was just emerging from my Dark Ages... yet at the time I didn't know it had a name and didn't know it was common. I researched online and found that there was a huge worldwide network of very talented adult LEGO builders and I wanted to be just like them... but first I had to develop my own building style. In a LEGO world of train, spaceship, and castle builders I wanted something different. Cars

seemed different enough... edgy, cool... as if building hot rods and customs made you seem slightly dangerous. The Model Team sets of yore were surely an influence but I think I was further influenced by watching shows on the Discovery Channel like *American Chopper*, *Overhaulin'*, and *Monster Garage*. Ahhh, *Monster Garage*! It was a stupid show, really, but they turned VW Bugs into swamp boats and Mustangs into lawn mowers. It was a useless, senseless show but it was helmed by Jesse James... a thug-like character with slicked-back hair, black t-shirts, and a giant chip on his shoulder. He could care less what people thought of him. I was hooked! Paul Senior starred in the show *American Chopper* and was a big, muscle-bound older dude with a walrus mustache and anger issues. They had to bleep every other word out of his mouth as he yelled at his sons and threw wrenches at them. They let these ruffian thugs on the Discovery Channel, no less? Cool! I was hooked! They were belligerent, brooding and outcast men with gruff exteriors but passionate souls... and ungodly



A creepy clown creation by Lino.

talented artists. Everything they produced was just breathtaking and it stirred me and others on some deep emotional level. I could relate. Even though they apparently have been beaten down in the past and seemed to have worn the weight of the world on their shoulders, they came out on top and when all was said and done, they were well-liked, well-respected. This is what I wanted to be... and somehow this is how I got into building LEGO cars.

I developed a little bit of an online presence on Brickshelf for maybe a year, then attended my first BrickCon in 2005. I was the new kid in town and as a car builder I stood out. I stood out so much, in fact, that there was simply no category to place my model cars. They were too big to populate the town layout, didn't fit into the space and castle themes, so they just sort of lumped me and a couple other model car builders into the Art/Other category where we competed for trophies against artful mosaics, seven-foot totem poles, and life-sized statues of muscular men. There were other car builders there. I could tell who they were just by looking... flared sideburns, rockabilly haircuts, tattoos, retro glasses, black t-shirts with skulls and hot rods on them... and big chips on their shoulders... not the usual brick convention fare. We bonded but as there was simply no place for us yet, we won no trophies for our cars. Rightfully, they went to the totem poles and mosaics.

Same story in '06, but there were more of us car builders misplaced in the Art/Other category. After that, I smartened up and figured that if there was no official category for us car builders to win trophies, I'd spearhead it myself. It was called Model Team Motors and in 2007 we won our first trophies... with good timing, too, as in '07 the car builders were a formidable presence. Over the years, I had become good friends with Canadian car builder, Nathan Proudlove, and this same year we decided it was high time to bring our car building success to a worldwide level. By this point, many AFOLs were carving a niche on *flickr* and we knew other avid car builders were out there. In October of 2007, with a clever name and a handshake, what was later to become a wildly successful group and THE cornerstone for LEGO automotive building was born. We were called LUGNuts... the name was thought up by Nathan and it stands for LEGO Users Group and Nuts... as in the lugnuts on your wheels. The misfits, the outcasts, now had a voice, a place to call their own... and now with more than 700 members worldwide and growing, that voice is a big, eight-cylinder, top fuel-injected roar!

By now we have been a successful group for nearly five years, participated in 60 monthly challenges and with over 700 members and growing, we have been the model of success for other online groups to

follow. Even Nathan and I have to sit back and think about that occasionally. It amazes us, even still. Okay, so we're successful. How did this happen? What's our formula? I'm actually not sure if there is a true formula as most things I do, I fly by the seat of my pants, as the cliché goes. But I can give you a few pointers:

Have tenacity. I post a new challenge on the first of every month. Even through good times, bad times, busy times, or slow times, this cannot change. Our members depend on it, they look forward to it. This is what drives us. When this dies, the group dies. We have seen this happen with plenty of other groups... who followed our model, then fizzled into obscurity and oblivion.

Have integrity. I have a sense of humor, seemingly a good way with writing, and a head full of ideas. I fathomed early on that I could write monthly challenges and with exactly 60 to date, there seems to be no signs of slowing down. Writing new challenges are not as simple as saying, hey guys, lets all build '82 Buicks this month... in fact the best challenges, at first glance, don't seem to be car-related at all. They have names like "Fire and Ice", where we had to build cars, trucks or bikes that somehow reflect the elements of fire and ice. Our scary 13th challenge was called "Fear and Loathing"... all about vehicles that somehow represented phobias and superstitions. "The Scuzz And The Fuzz" was basically about criminal vehicles and the all-important police cruisers to bring them to justice, while "Lemons Or LeMans" sported a showing of embarrassing lemons against sleek LeMans racers. See, these challenges demonstrate the aforementioned dualities that I find so very compelling. Other challenges like "Who Is Agent Janus?" revolved around the identity of a mysterious secret agent, "The Stuff Dreams Are Made Of" challenged us to interpret a dream sequence into vehicle form while "Zombie Killfest '09" delved into... well, you know, the world of post-apocalyptic zombie killing machines!

Variety and freedom of choice is key here. I, personally, don't know much about modern cars, European cars, super cars, or the import tuner culture... but there are plenty within the LUGNuts group who do. Keeping the challenges so that they can enable the freedom to express our various interests is vital to our survival. It keeps things fresh and interesting. I think I can speak for most others when I say I learn new things every day from our members. I constantly grow and evolve as a builder. After all, if we were all building nothing but hot rods, this group would have gone the way of the dodo long ago.

Give back to your members. As much as we would try, Nathan and I are not a formidable car group. This takes talent in large numbers. So to thank our members for their participation, we try to give back in various ways. We produce a LUGNuts calendar every year that showcases thirteen (twelve months plus the cover) of the best LEGO cars, trucks, or bikes produced that year. Anyone who makes it into the calendar gets a copy sent to them no matter where they are on the globe. People like prizes, so occasionally we host juried challenges that offers LEGO gift certificates and car-related sets to our winners. Incidentally, of the exactly 60 challenges we've had thus far, only two gave out prizes. The other times we have just been driven to build cars simply for the love of doing so and for the love of the group. We also have a LUGNuts blog. It's



Lino Martins and Nathan Proudlove.

not the most widely read or revered LEGO blog out there, but it isn't without its unique charms. Every month we do a roundup of all of the challenge entries from the previous month. To get into many other blogs, you have to either be the very best at what you do, be on their radar, or be within their own ideals of what they consider blogworthy. But to get into the LUGNuts blog, you merely had to have participated in the challenge... even if your build quality isn't the best and your photos are dark, grainy, blurry, and feature your cat napping in the background. While we encourage a high standard for building and photography, just participate, and you will be featured in the roundup. It's a very social way of blogging. With that said, some challenges have had an upwards of eighty or so entries, so coming up with three to six lines about each of them can be trying, so often I revert to writing seemingly unrelated jokes about my childhood or whatever comes to mind at the time. I use a sort of dark, self-deprecating humor where I poke fun at myself and everyone else who has participated. You'd think this would spark more trouble than not, but the guys (and a few gals) just eat it up! They love it and anxiously look forward to how I will pick on them this time. This wouldn't work for all blogs, but in LUGNuts, everyone gets their fifteen minutes... or rather, ten seconds of fame.

Listen to your members. Give them what they want. They often have good ideas and most are interested in the survival of the group. We have a forum where anyone can post their challenge ideas. Many, like the challenges called "LEGO Set Overhauled!" and "By Random Appointment" have become a reality.

Lead by example. Everyone respects a leader who has climbed the ranks the hard way... a foreman who has worked



The Batmobile, with Batman and Robin.

hard, a general who has been in the front lines. In the LEGO world, they respect someone who is himself, or herself, a good, prolific builder. Sure I write the challenges, but I have also participated in nearly every one of them. Even though I may know a challenge up to a few months in advance, I never start before it is posted. Every month, I am right there, in the firing lines, so to speak, with everyone else... scratching my head and figuring out what the heck to build this time.

For this issue, the good people at *BrickJournal* let us brooding, edgy, car building misfits take over. As you turn these pages you'll find interviews with some of LUGNuts' most interesting members and other LEGO automobile-related fare. If you like what you see, come check us out at www.flickr.com/groups/lugnuts/ and, if you feel a certain kinship to our car building ways, then come join us. We'd love to have you on board. Oh, and before you do, let me ask you a good trivia question. What company produces more tires per

year than any other? In 2011, they produced 381 million tires. What do you think? Goodyear? Firestone? The answer is... LEGO. Yep, its true! So it makes sense we have an automotive group, I mean somebody has got to do something with all those tires! To know me means to know LUGNuts, and to know our members means to know that the name fits us in the sense that we're all just a little bit nuts. This is our issue. This is our story. So take the top down, hit cruise control, sit back and enjoy the ride. 🚗



You can see Lino's work at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/12622904@N03/sets/72157601848628351/> or you can jump to his gallery by scanning this QR code!

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Ralph's Beetle collection.

Ralph Savelsberg: Mad Physicist & LUGNut!

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided by Ralph Savelsberg

In my early days of LEGO building, long before most AFOLs decided that *flickr* was the place of choice to showcase our stuff, Ralph Savelsberg was one of my first influences. Even back in our old Brickshelf days, he seemed bigger than life... he seemed famous. And he is... sort of, within our own tight-knit community of adult LEGO builders... and rightfully so. Ralph is just plain prolific as a builder and well-diversified. Not only is he an avid car builder, but probably the world's leading authority on LEGO military craft. Speaking like a true professor, Ralph educates the rest of us on military tanks, helicopters, and planes from around the world. A stickler for certain details, he has a passion for this stuff that is unmatched by anyone else. He is an admin for our LUGNuts group and among our 700-plus members worldwide, he is surely our most educated. In fact, we should probably be calling him Dr. Savelsberg... but with signature modest grace, he just likes to be called Ralph. Or Mad Physicist, as per his *flickr* name. He really is a physicist... as in test tubes, complex mathematical formulas and... um... time travel. Probably. But is he mad?

Let's find out.

Lino Martins: Ralph, for our *BrickJournal* readers, can you tell us where you live and your age?

Ralph Savelsberg: I am 37 years old (or will be by the time this interview will be published, anyway) and I currently live in Den Helder, in the Netherlands. It is the main naval port, about 100 km north of Amsterdam.

LM: How long have you been a car builder?

RS: As long as I can remember. I used to build (or play) with my LEGO bricks, together with a friend in primary school, and cars featured heavily among the things we built. I'm pretty sure I was building cars before then too.

LM: It's funny that you are an avid car builder, yet, like me, you don't own a car. I hear you don't even have a driver's license. How then have you come to being such an avid car guy?

RS: That is funny, I suppose. Then again, I don't have a pilot's license either and that doesn't stop me from building aircraft. Seriously, cars are great fun to build. They have interesting shapes, lots of details, and bits that open. These are all things I like. My interest lies in building them. I'm not particularly fussed about owning one. I know that in the US crossing the street to go from one shop to another sometimes requires a car, but I live less than a ten-minute walk away from work and only five minutes from a railway station.

LM: What are your automotive influences? What makes you excited?

RS: I think I've built a pretty varied collection of cars, but I have a thing for Volkswagen Beetles, probably because my parents used to own one when I was a child. I also like emergency vehicles—fire engines in particular. However, all in all, I think the biggest influence on the sort of cars I



Mercedes 500K Special Roadster.

build is actually LUGNuts. The monthly build challenges have regularly forced me to take on projects that I probably wouldn't have done otherwise.

LM: What sort of LUGNuts build challenges do you like to see and what has been some of your favorites?

RS: Some of the ones I really liked where those that forced me to get creative and that made me appreciate a type of car that I wasn't really familiar with. For instance, we had a rat rod challenge called "Junkers and Clunkers". Now, rat rods are not my thing, but when looking for rat rods to build, I found out about the Volksrod scene.

Instead of "kandy-kolored tangerine-flake" paint-jobs and expensive chrome-work, these guys take hot rodding back to its roots, taking a cheap and simple car, a Volkswagen Beetle, and turning it into a mean-looking street-machine. That is cool. Another one I really liked was "Sympathy for the Underdog", which involved building a car that simply gets no respect. I chose to build an Edsel, a car that bombed so badly that its name has become synonymous with failure. While I was building it, though, I started to like it more and more.

LM: You're unique in a sense that while many of us favor studs-free models, you unabashedly let all of your studs show. While intricate and well-detailed, your models still look like they were built with LEGO. Can you tell me about this steadfast approach to building? Is this a conscious choice you have made?

RS: There are a few other builders who build using a similar style, Peter Blackert for instance, but we do seem to be a bit of a dying breed. It is all studless nowadays. When I started building cars a long time ago, I wasn't aware of studless building and I wouldn't have had the parts either anyway. I'd build things by stacking bricks and plates on



Another view of a couple of Beetles.



California Highway Patrol Ford Crown Victoria with State Trooper.



Ralph's full car collection.



1958 Edsel Bermuda station wagon, with family.



Jaguar Mark VII, with newlyweds.

top of each other, which obviously meant having studs showing on top.

I still quite like that look, and even though my models now are far more complicated than they used to be, with lots of stuff built sideways or upside-down, I have stuck with it.

LM: What have been some of your favorite automotive MOCs you have built and why?

RS: Besides the Beetles, there are a couple that come to mind right now. The first would have to be my minifig scale London Routemaster bus (seen on page 32). Until a few years ago, I didn't build minifig-scale models, but I got back into it after I joined The Brickish Association, whilst I was living in the UK. The Routemaster is an icon and the model is probably the minifig-scale vehicle I am most proud of. It's also very popular at shows in the UK. The other one is my DAF container truck (on page 31). DAFs are built in the Netherlands and when I built my model, I'd already been thinking about one for several months. At first I couldn't find an example in a colour scheme that I liked, but I came across a picture of a scale model in a magazine and knew that this was going to be it.

Dark red and dark tan make for a nice combo. The model is big, chock full of details and making it all look right required me to dig deep in my bag of tricks. I also think it's an example of a pretty much bog standard vehicle, similar to many other you see on Dutch roads, but that still looks good.

LM: It has been a subject of debate and good humor over at LUGNuts, but you are a stickler for what you call "bog standard" vehicles... meaning factory-made and unchanged. Some of us enjoy highly customized cars but the custom scene doesn't even make sense to you. Is this



DAF XF105 transport and trailer.

something that has been instilled particularly in you or are we seeing a North American vs. European culture clash?

RS: I do think that there is a difference in car cultures between the Europe and the US, but I think what is much more important is that I'm simply not a designer. I look at building with LEGO as building scale models. There is a design process involved in building with a medium such as LEGO in the choices you make and the details you choose to model or emphasize, of course, but designing my own car isn't my cup of tea. There is also another factor: sometimes building an everyday car is more challenging than building something custom. There is less room for fudging things. Mess up a small detail or the proportions, and it will no longer look like what it is supposed to.

LM: Can you tell us about your current occupation?

RS: I currently work as an assistant professor for the Netherlands Military Academy, which is where future officers in the Dutch Military get their training. I teach a number of different physics courses and I also do research—more to do with missiles than with test tubes. I was always interested in military technology, as you mentioned, and now I do this sort of stuff for a living.

I could tell you about the time travel, but then I would have to kill you, obviously!

LM: You have spent a great deal of your life obtaining a level of education most of us can only dream about. This implies an acute dedication to a particular cause. Are you doing exactly what you have set out to do all along?

RS: Fans of LEGO in general are an intelligent bunch and, unsurprisingly, a fair few of them are highly educated. I'm actually not the only member of LUGNuts with a PhD. What my career shows is a dedication to doing something that I find interesting and challenging. I've never consciously had a plan of where I wanted to go in the



1951 Mercury "Lead Sled".



1971 Buick Riviera Boat-tail.



London Routemaster bus.



Minifigure scale wrecker and hot rod.



Shelby Cobra.

future. Everytime I needed to decide where I was going to go next, I chose that which seemed most interesting. I love my current job and I probably couldn't have ended up with a job that suits me more even if I would have made a long-term plan.

LM: Well, you heard it here first... Ralph is an avid car guy without a driver's license, he's a stickler for the studs, he has fond memories of the VW Beetle... and he has obviously time-traveled. This is why we call him Mad Physicist. 

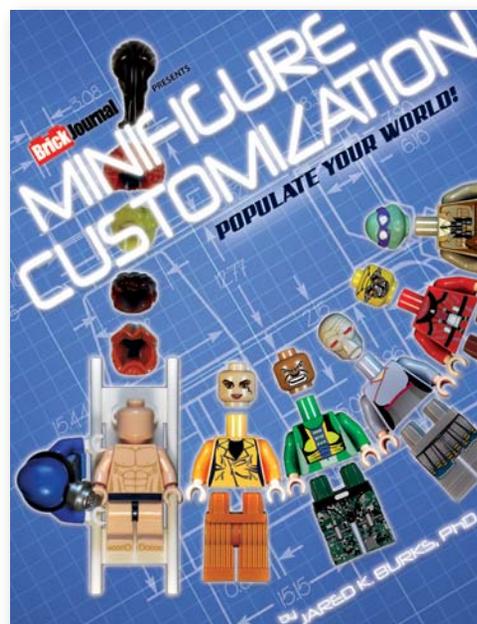


You can see Ralph's work at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/madphysicist/> or you can jump to his gallery by scanning this QR code!

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The E265 MCA Territory, an automobile that Peter worked on in real life.

Peter Blackert: LUGNut in Overdrive!

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided by Peter Blackert

Some time ago, a mysterious stranger showed up in my *flickr* inbox asking to be let into the LUGNuts group. He had no pictures to speak of, in fact, I think he was using his wife's *flickr* account at the time. He said something along the lines of... please let me in, I am just perfect for your group. Yeah, whatever... by this point I hear the same thing from someone or another almost daily. Usually I try to be a little more selective as to who I allow in, but I let the mysterious stranger, with no photos or even his own profile, in if not just to humor him. Shortly after the mysterious stranger acquired his own *flickr* account and started uploading his own photos, we began to learn a few things. His *flickr* name is lego911 but his real name is Peter Blackert, and he's an engineer for Ford. Not only did we soon realize he was indeed perfect for our group, but no one on the planet is more dedicated to LEGO automotive building. Let me repeat that... no one on the planet is more dedicated to LEGO automotive building. Peter is just amazingly prolific... he can and has built 45 LEGO cars within a month. We'll tell you about how many cars he has built from his start, and when we do, know that no one stuttered... no one mistyped... the figure is absolutely real. Not only is Peter the world's most prolific LEGO car builder, he has got to be the world's most prolific LEGO builder... period.

Lino Martins: Peter, for our *BrickJournal* readers, can you tell us your age and where you live?

Peter Blackert: Hi Lino, and *BrickJournal* readers. As for my age, I have just tripped over the big Four-Oh, so now I am officially, a grown-up. I live down-under in Australia, in a city called Geelong, 60 km south-west of the Victorian state capital of Melbourne. Next stop Antarctica.



1966 Ford Galaxie convertible.

LM: Ok, lets not keep up the suspense, how many LEGO cars you have built since your start of LEGO building?

PB: Firstly, it is important to know that I am not a crazy person. Ok? But the total number is in the order of eighteen thousand, or so, give or take. And remember, I am 40 years old and have been doing this for 30 years—that's like ten thousand days, so on average, its not that bad.

Remember, not crazy.

LM: That is just plain staggering! How is it that you can accomplish this?

PB: Lots of time and no girlfriend. More seriously, I have slowed down a lot now that I am a grown-up with a full-time job, with a wife and children. When I was 16 though, I could pretty much do anything with my time. Yes, it could possibly have been spent doing something more useful, but I really wanted to get into designing real cars, and modeling hundreds of cars a year, developing the skills needed was not a bad idea. I might add that I was pretty active in social organizations and had an after-school job.

Finding the time now is much, much harder. It does take some focus, and is an exercise in logistics.

LM: What influences you when building? Where do you go for references?

PB: Good question. For me, this is in a constant state of flux. Within automotive design, there is a school of thought that the cars we design should reflect the movements within society. Things like mobile phones, architecture, fashion, lifestyle, etc. I like to do a lot of historical automotive reading and research to find out "why" things occurred in the past. That said, I find The Brothers-Brick a good place to see how others have stretched LEGO building techniques to achieve different ends (non-automotive). The great thing about taking part in the LUGNuts challenges is that they guide you toward building something that you have not thought about before. That's a great way to look at life—to try something new—you might just like it.

Reference material is everywhere. I have a great automotive library at home, and the Internet is unlimited.



Alfa Romeo 33 Stradale.

LM: How long does it take to finish a LEGO car from start to finish?

PB: It depends how you count. I usually think about a build for a long time before I put two bricks together. Once I start to build though, I try to get it all done in one go, and then let it sit a while before making changes. On average, my building time would be about 2-3 hours. I timed myself once, just to check, and the 1:17 Bugatti Veyron, seen on the following page, which is much larger than my normal miniland scale vehicles, took six hours, go-to-whoa. It has tended to get longer of late, but I am pushing a bit harder to get the models to a higher standard.

LM: As you work so quickly, this implies an amazing system of organization. Can you tell me more about this?

PB: I should repeat again that I am not crazy, nor do I exhibit forms of OCD or autism spectrum. But yes, to be able to build this many cars within a time-constrained environment does take a lot of organization. Many readers may have noticed that as their collections have increased, that they have had to move to higher levels of organization. My collection is not massive, but the number of parts built into models, and recycled back out again is quite high. It has



1958 Impala Sport Coupe two-door.



1:17 Bugatti Veyron.

gone quite beyond raking through a single box, or pile of LEGO on the floor. For common parts I have plastic “fishing boxes” with part types organized into separate areas, this is particularly effective for Technic parts that I use in the suspension and engine systems. I also commonly use plates for the vehicle body, and the technique I use for this is to create “arrays” of parts. What I mean by that is that for each plate-style part, that they are all connected to one another in a way that makes them simple to separate, but easy to identify amongst the other LEGO array assemblies.

LM: As an engineer for Ford, are there any real life Ford cars or features that you are directly responsible for that we might know about? (only if you are allowed to talk about this)

PB: The Ford GT supercar. No, wait. That was someone else. Unfortunately, most of what I have done so far that can be seen on the road is engines and stuff. In my current role, I am now working on vehicles for

2017 and beyond, so it will be a long time before they will be released. The closest to what you have described was my role in designing the power-train installation for the 2011 Ford Territory SUV petrol (gasoline) engine.

LM: As you’re such a prolific builder, I can’t imagine you having time for anything else, but what do you like to do that isn’t LEGO and car related?

PB: I would first mention that I really like my real-life job, it is a great challenge and very rewarding. Outside work and LEGO, I have two great kids who are into exploring their worlds and are full of questions. I have set myself the task of answering all their questions no matter how many they ask, or how hard the questions get. It has meant that I have had to look some things up—which has been really interesting. It’s showing my age, but I like to potter around in the garden, walk along the beach (the water is too cold to go swimming most of the time), reading—you know, all those eHarmony things and watching TV forensic (*Bones*)/



Hot Wheels "Fastgassin."

detective (*Castle*)/ science-fiction (*Dr. Who*), nerdy sitcom (*Big Bang Theory*) and *The Simpsons*. And I love sleeping—a sadly under-fulfilled hobby.

LM: As a die-hard Ford guy, what is your favorite Chevy?

PB: Ooh! Another great question. Chevrolet phases in and out a bit. Arguably its heyday was the 1950s, when Detroit ruled and Chevy democratized horsepower and styling to the common man. Corvettes are pretty (and fast), but they don't have a natural competitor to measure against. As an overall package though, I think I would lean toward the 1958 Impala 2-door Sport Coupe, though I have a soft spot for 55-57 Nomads, 59 Impalas and the 1955 Cameo pickup. Early Camaros are nice too. And left-field, the 1991 Caprice wagon with faux-wood paneling does it for me too.

LM: Well, he's a family man, the most prolific LEGO builder in the world, and as an Engineer for Ford's Australian division, he's actually quite tolerant of a few Chevys. Hear that, Tim? Peter is a good sport. Keep up the good work! 



You can see Peter's work at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/29987108@N02/> or you can jump to his gallery by scanning this QR code!



Ramone from the Disney/Pixar movie Cars.



1955 Cameo pickup truck.



Lancia Beta Montecarlo Turbo.

Dylan Denton: LUGNut!

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided by Dylan Denton

Our LUGNuts members are from all corners of the globe... our scope and influence reaches LEGO car builders in Brazil, Latvia, Australia, Jordan... and even in the center of our own heartland... Lincoln, Nebraska. I imagine Lincoln is not the veritable haven of adult LEGO builders as say, here in Seattle, yet Dylan Denton seems to serve as a lone gem... his star shines bright in the very center of our own country. He's young and aspires to be a car designer. Sure... what young car enthusiast doesn't want to be an automotive designer at one point or another? The thing about Dylan is he has already proven to have the chops to pull it off. He has bewildered even the most jaded of adult LEGO builders. I remember being a teenager, and while quite creative, my own attempts at art, writing, and incidentally automotive design were... laughable at best. So Dylan already has the advantage over me. Let's see what makes him tick, shall we?

Lino Martins: Dylan, for our *BrickJournal* readers, can you tell us your age?

Dylan Denton: I'm currently 19 years old, which feels really old in my opinion.

LM: Is there even a LUG in Nebraska? Do you have many LEGO building friends where you are?

DD: Unfortunately there isn't. At least not to my knowledge. Lincoln is a big town, but there's very little support to the LEGO building community. Omaha's even bigger, yet just as quiet. I don't even have any friends close by that share the same interest. I'd have to travel out of state if I ever wanted to do a collaborative build.

LM: You want to be an automotive designer. What got you into cars and when?

DD: Hard to say. From a young age I had a natural curiosity to identify every car I saw on the road and from there I began trying to draw them in my little sketchpad that I kept in the rear seat of my mom's mini-van. As my drawing ability increased, so did my knowledge of cars. LEGO offered a great opportunity for me to begin designing my own cars in the third dimension. But overall, I think the influences were everywhere: video games, movies, car shows, etc. I first aspired to become a car designer when I saw a car that I thought was hideously ugly and thought "I can do much better. Why am I not the one designing these things?"



1970 Volkswagen 1600 Squareback "Ramona".

LM: What inspires you? What are your automotive influences?

DD: Art and nature are a big inspiration. I like to see natural flowing curves and delicate features on a car. However, I always have a unique twist of industrialized feel to my designs that make them feel like a mechanical achievement. The combination is odd, but fitting to my split personality of grunge rock and sappy love ballads. Currently, my biggest inspiration comes from architecture in foreign countries such as Japan and Italy. I try to incorporate ideas and methods from all corners of the Earth. Also, as should be mentioned, my favorite car designers are Henrik Fisker and Giorgetto Giugiaro.

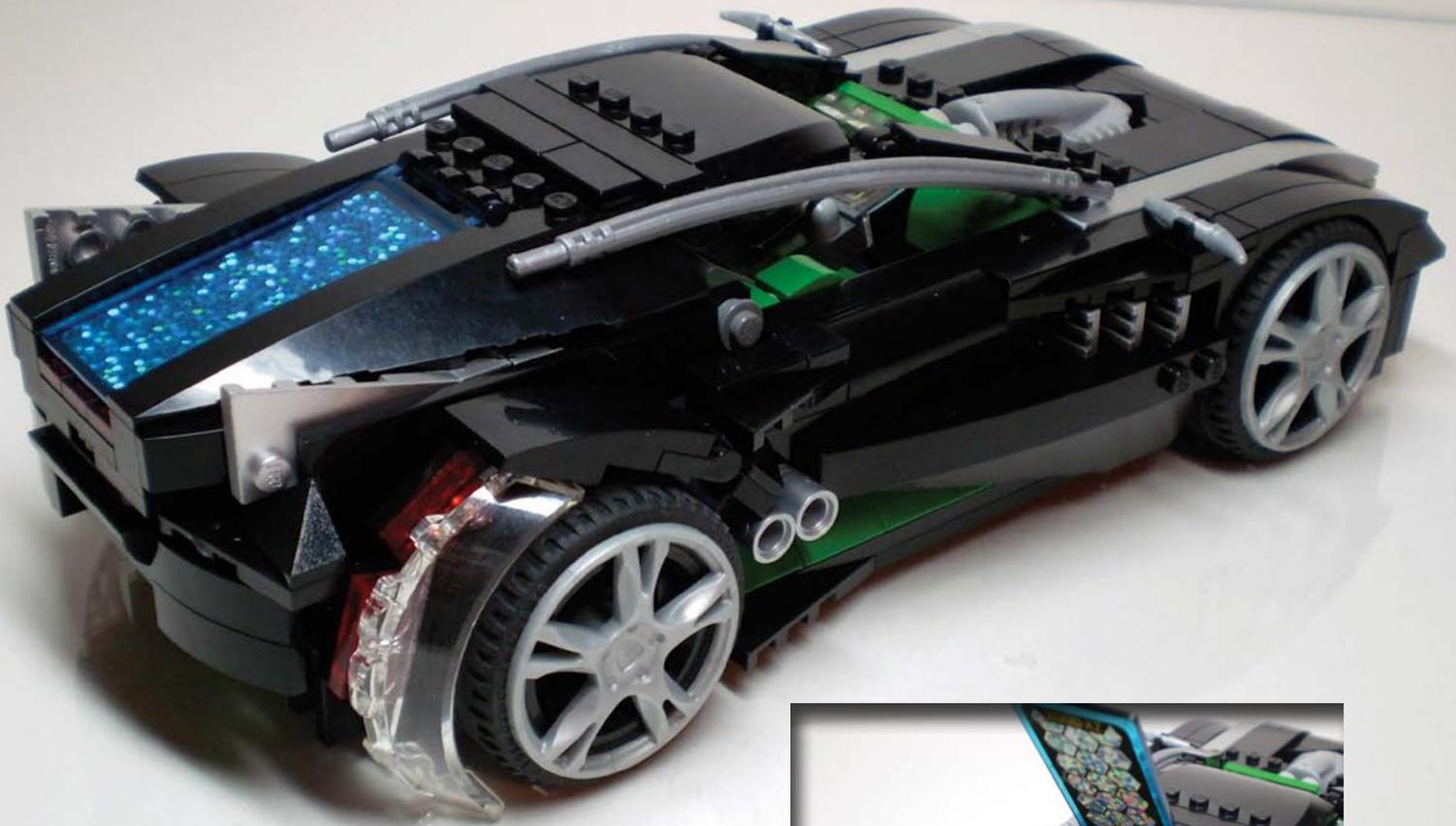
LM: Just so the readers know, there has only been two LUGNuts challenges in all our history so far that involved giving out prizes for the best entries. In the latest one, you competed against LEGO car builders twice your age and with maybe triple the resources, and yet you still took home first place. Can you tell me how you came about conceiving that award winning concept ride?

DD: The "Piranha", as it was called, is a complete enigma to me. I can't even remember building the darn thing, it happened so quickly. I find that in my LEGO building, I tend to have long periods of not being inspired or ambitious, but occasionally I just explode into a cavalcade of creativity. This was a prime example of one of these radical fits. The Piranha was built in one day only. I started throwing together pieces one by one with no regard to the final product, and the result was even a bit

surprising to myself. The reception the car got was proof that I actually had a sense of style and logic applied to it somewhere along the line, and it left me feeling satisfied. After piecing it together, I noticed that the front end looked like a gaping fish mouth, so I dubbed it the Piranha and gave the car some sharp rear fins and gills for air outlets on the side. I think without the aquatic theme, the car wouldn't have been such a success, but all in all was still a fun build and the prizes I yielded reinforced my accomplishment.

LM: Almost anyone can design their own concept vehicles, but to pull it off well requires skill and an understanding for automotive history and design very few of us have. I'm quite good at taking an already established design and running with it, but to conceive my own concept vehicle from the ground up, I admit I fall short. This is where you excel, though. Can you tell us how is a good concept vehicle started? What are your processes?

DD: A good concept car begins when you can escape reality for a moment and let your mind wander freely. It's difficult to throw out the logic portion of your brain, but once you do, your creative side tends to take over at full capacity. You have to not be afraid of the outcome, no matter how radical it may seem, because pushing yourself beyond your own creative limits is the only way you can improve. When I design a car on paper, it's never a pretty drawing either. I start with some lop-sided ovals and scratch some lines from front to back, hoping it will resemble a car of some sort. From there, I always seek



Pirahna Concept Car.

to design some sort of innovative new feature or “gimmick” for each vehicle. Whether it is a special type of door, or a decorative trim piece, I try to make that the focal point of my design. I mostly design my ideas on paper to begin with. In fact, I’ve never had a single page of notes in high school that weren’t covered up in sketches and doodles. But the way it is, creativity is just something you’re born with. Unfortunately, I lack the amount of ambition to drive me further along to a career path in automotive design, though I undoubtedly have the capacity to achieve success.

LM: Your Toyota Tacoma Pikes Peak racer, your '78 Escort Rally car, and your Lancia Montecarlo are among some of my favorite vehicles from you. Can you talk about these specific creations and maybe others like it?

DD: I love doing replicas as much as I like to create something of my own. There’s something satisfying about capturing the tiniest details in a picture-perfect way that leaves onlookers in disbelief. With a good replica, I feel very accomplished and ready to tackle more and more difficult cars. I also tend to build cars that not many people have heard of or haven’t been built in LEGO yet. The Tacoma Pikes Peak is worth mentioning because it is my most realistic and photo-accurate build to this day. I sent in pictures to the actual Millen Works Racing team who created the vehicle and they were thoroughly impressed and even offered to buy the model from me. I haven’t made a decision yet because they want me to name my own price and I’m afraid I won’t ask for enough. Also, I just love looking at that thing on my nightstand every day before retiring to sleep, so it would be hard to give up. And funny you should mention the Toyota, the Escort, and the Lancia, because they are the only three models that I have left that have never been dismantled. The replicas hold too much value to me to let go.



The Pirahna has a battery cell at the rear as well as a DC plug to charge from a wall outlet.

LM: Have others commissioned you to build LEGO car models for them? Tell me about that.

DD: Yes. About two years ago, I had a woman contacted me to build a replica of her boyfriend’s Volkswagen 1600 for a surprise gift. Come to find out that I actually knew the guy who the build was for, so I gladly accepted and got to work. The car was a success, although it took several months to complete. I am also currently working on my second commission project: a Toyota Tercel that’s been hacked into a pickup truck! But as much as I hate to deter an audience, these commission projects slam me into the ground in terms of stress and financial capabilities. I get emails almost every week with requests but I have to turn most people away because I either don’t have enough free time, or I don’t feel like I can afford to build one for them considering it only offers a profit margin of \$200 at most. I’m too kindly to ask for a penny more than \$300.

LM: What LEGO cars or projects would like to tackle in the future?

DD: Whatever comes my way I guess. There are a lot of great builders out there on the rise who’re quickly making big names for themselves that are becoming very difficult to compete with. Even though I’m young, I’ve been around the online LEGO building community much longer than most, so my



1998 Toyota Tacoma Pikes Peak.



1978 Ford Escort Mk2 Rally Car.

skills are a bit rusty. I really want to start building some more advanced and curvaceous vehicles when I get some downtime, but for now I have to stick to my basic abilities. My to do list at the moment is empty, but I'd like to build an Aston Martin someday, and a few other things that I'm not used to, like a giant mech spider tank... thingy... and a functional LEGO ukulele.

LM: What non-LEGO and non-car related things do you enjoy doing?

DD: I love to draw every chance I can get. It's difficult to keep a pen out of my hands when fresh paper is present. I love to draw cars mostly, but sometimes I just doodle random things to waste some time. Occasionally, I can get new and innovative ideas from doing it that. Otherwise, I do what any normal teenager would; I play video games, eat lots of junk food, "try" to play the guitar, and whatever else I can do when my friends are around. Recently, I've found myself getting into anime and

Japanese culture in general, which has led me to start teaching myself the language from the ground up. So far it's going pretty well and one day I hope to travel to Japan so I can nerd out and buy lots of useless souvenirs. But ultimately it would be a great experience for my first cross-continental vacation and the cultural influences I can pick up will be rewarding and inspiring to my hobbies.

LM: Thanks, Dylan. Keep up the good work! 



You can see Dylan's work at http://www.flickr.com/photos/dubba_d/sets/72157624225763320/ or you can jump to his webpage by scanning this QR code!

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Dennis Glaasker: LEGO Trucker

Article by Lino Martins
Photography provided
by Dennis Glaasker

In a LEGO car club full of... well, LEGO car builders, Dennis Glaasker stands apart as probably the world's leading truck builder. You may know him online (on flickr) as Bricksonwheels, and his projects are massive and always with surprising details. Also he chrome plates many of his own LEGO pieces for that added bit of bling. The hours put into just one truck must be staggering. As Dennis and his 18-wheeled, diesel-fueled rigs stand out among the rest of us, he still somehow fits right in with our car building culture. I'm curious to know more about his singular passion for trucks, so let's see what makes him tick, shall we?



Dennis Glaasker.

Lino Martins: Dennis, for the *BrickJournal* readers, can you please tell us your age and where you live?

Dennis Glaasker: You could consider me a true AFOL, being 40 years old. I live in The Netherlands, and am happily married with children. I have been enjoying LEGO since I was around 7 years old, and the ball really started rolling when I got the first Technic supercar set (853) as a gift from my parents in the early '80s from which I am actually still using the wheels today! Over the years, my building activity with LEGO have gone up and down, and at a time almost replaced by building scaled models from plastic kits. Many years later in the late '90s I wanted to do a bit more creative modeling again, and at the same time the web started to open better possibilities for sharing ideas, getting detailed subject information, and just as important, getting the proper LEGO parts without buying full sets. I also got inspired heavily by a buddy of mine: Dennis Bosman, another well-known Dutch truck builder, who started very early with his own website showing MOCs. Nowadays I have a nice collection of bricks and enjoy building mostly trucks, but being a petrol head, I also build many other things that carry wheels.

LM: Ok, now that we have that out of the way, I've got to ask... why trucks? How did you get into it? Are you a truck driver in real life?

DG: I am not a truck driver in real life, though I have a very international job as a sales manager, and I spend a lot of time on the road as well, but that is in my car and not in a nice truck. My passion for trucks started at the same time I started building LEGO models. You should know even at the age of 3 or so I was already a complete car nut, so to get interested in other things with wheels was not hard. My grandparents lived close to the border with Germany in a house close to a main road where trucks passed all day crossing through The Netherlands. When visiting them, I remember that I could stand there till my father could not bear it anymore, just staring at those trucks for such a long time.

That passion just never went away. While cruising the European roads, I still enjoy the sight of nice cars and trucks, and I am still a car nut. There is one clear discriminator within my taste of trucks though that you can also see back in my models compared to the other truck builders around: I like show trucks most. A regular working truck can be very nice but does not appeal enough to me to turn into a model. I guess I like a bit of pimp, also in my cars and bikes.

LM: Tell us about a couple of your favorite truck MOCs. Tell me the thought process and planning behind all of these.

Peterbilt 379 'Eldorado' Dumper



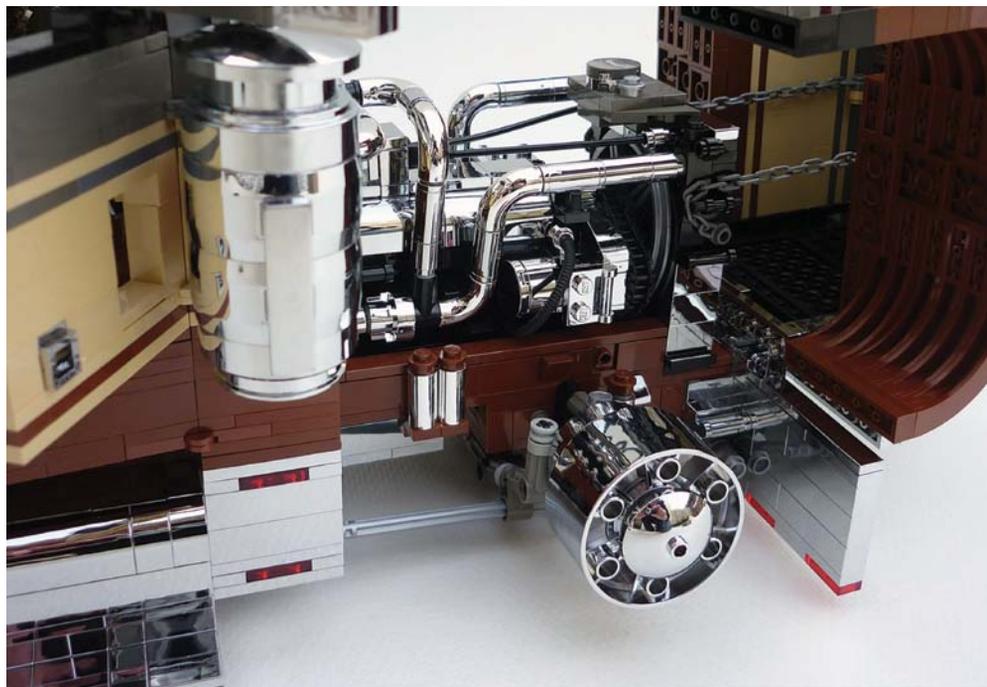
DG: This is one of my favorites. A while ago I bought a book about custom trucks in the USA. Normally I tend to build tractors only, but in this book was a feature on a very nice dump truck, and it caught my attention. I start a MOC by browsing the web for exact dimensions and reference pictures. These are saved on my laptop, which always is on the table when I am building. I also use an Excel sheet for scaled dimensions, where I have stored some formulas to count bricks necessary. I have a nice collection of bricks, but some parts you never seem to have enough, so I often order some bricks on Bricklink. Every 2 or 3 months, I have a batch of bricks chromed, so I make sure I have all I need for a new build.

When all the bricks are in, I start with the chassis and suspension. For the whole build I have always one clear rule: don't sacrifice on detail, even on the areas that aren't seen. That sets my work apart. The next step is the engine and everything attached, like piping, radiator, etc. These are some of my favorite areas. From here on, I start work on the cabin, which is, with this truck, a triangular geometry. I always build SNOT so the interior looks smooth. Another special attention area is the seats: they have to look *real*, not just some hinged plate construction.

What remained was the dump installation, which required many black bricks, but basically was an easy setup. It can be tilted for modeling shows. After finishing I always take an afternoon to look at it and see if there is anything I forgot.

In the meantime, I made some stickers in CorelDraw. Sometimes I use logos from the Brandsoftheworld website where you can download many for free. A buddy of mine prints the stickers for me, so that they are ready to apply. Then there is one step left: take some pictures and put them in LUGNuts!

The dumper above and the engine below.



Scania 143 'Thor' Wrecker



DG: I love classic Scania's. This early '80s 142 v8 type was on my wishlist for a while. It is another big 1:13 scale build, being a wrecker chassis with crane and hook systems. My aim was for show purposes to have everything functional, but none PF (Power Functions) driven in this case. I have built some 1:16 scale PF driven trucks, which I like a lot, but it doesn't really appeal to me for 1:13 scale.

The setup is basically like mentioned before, but the difficulty with this cabin is the relief in the bodywork. I have seen older LEGO trucks from the same type just use a straight brick geometry, but I decided to replicate the real thing with an offset vertical tile construction. That worked out fine, but required some thinking. There is a lot of functionality in this one, including all doors, and two steerable axles.

The cabin doors have a kind of harmonica hinge construction so that they can be opened easily. The cabin can be tilted, when the front grille is flipped, like with the original truck. That grille is composed from door rails, a nice unexpected part that gives a real touch to it. The chassis itself I reinforced a bit, because the truck is very heavy. I liked this truck so much that I later built another classic Scania.



Harley-Davidson FLH1340 Street Glide



LM: You occasionally surprise us with a non-truck MOC. I see at least a couple bikes, a hot rod, and a GMC Sierra sport truck. Can you tell us more about these and how is it to build something out of your norm?

DG: I like cars and bikes a lot. I have always wanted to build a custom Harley, and once I started to chrome bricks, the idea appealed even more. The first one was a chopper, and immediately landed at the Brothers Brick, so I knew I had done something right. Later on I built a Harley-Davidson Street Glide, which is still the most popular MOC of mine online by far. Cars are a nice sidestep, so now and then I build them. Lately I got access to some bigger chrome wheels and built a 1:10 car for the first time. That was the

hot rod that I built for the 50th challenge on LUGNuts. It got 2nd place, and won me some very nice sets.

This was my second Harley-Davidson. I must admit these bikes are a big challenge as everything is so compact if you go into detail. I did a little bit more research than normal with this one. I am not much into bike technicalities as I am with trucks. After having harvested the web, I started off with the frame that I made from a mix of cylindrical parts that allowed for building the engine on top of it. The big chromed wheels defined the scale at 1:10.

The front section took some work, especially to make the fenders elegant which is quite a challenge. With this build I experimented with many slopes and wedges to make the geometry right, especially the fuel tank area. After that I worked on the engine, which I wanted to be a real eyecatcher, and nice to build with the V-orientation.

The last real challenge was the rear suspension with chain. All in all, I am really happy with this model, and it is still standing in our living room. It is also the model that has gotten the most attention on the web.

Building these non-trucks takes a bit more time, but they are not that much different. I still have the wish to build a massive steam engine once, and that would probably give me a headache.



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LM: How long does it take to build one truck?

DG: That varies a bit, but many people say I am a very fast builder. I guess fast is not the right word, maybe experienced is better. The more you build, the more experience you have in solving geometries with certain bricks. Also the number of different parts you own is essential for your progress. Furthermore, the subject is well-known to me. If I would have to build an aircraft, it would probably take me three times longer just to figure certain things out. That can be a nice challenge too though. In general, I guess a truck takes around 2 to 4 months to build. That includes ordering parts and also the sticker work that I do myself as well.

I don't have a building room in our house. I like to build in the living room close to the family. On the weekends I occupy the big table, and just work on the model when I feel like it. I use plastic crates with pre-selected colors and also pre-sorted hard-to-find or rare parts. I just pick what I think I need that day. Sometimes my kids join me, and luckily my wife fully supports my hobby as well.

LM: Just so our readers get a scope on the scale you use, can you tell us the stud width and stud length of your average truck?

DG: Normally I work in two scales—1:16 and 1:13. These are basically defined by the wheels LEGO has produced. That is the starting point. A 1:16 truck and trailer would be 20 studs wide and about 150 studs long. For a big 1:13, I normally build it as tractor only, then make it 24 studs wide, and then the chassis length between 70 and 90 studs. (*Editor's note: 32 studs in length equals 10 inches.*)

LM: I hate to ask this question because when asked of me I get annoyed and I hardly ever know the answer anyway... but any idea on average piece count for one of your trucks?

DG: You're not the first one to ask. I would say it starts at about 4000 for a tractor, and ends somewhere 7000 for a combo, depending on scale and detail of course. I use as many bricks as I need, as I never sacrifice on detail. Now that we are on, let's face the other two mandatory questions: Cost? I won't tell as my wife may read this... and building instructions? Nope, regretfully, I would like to compose one of those once to see how the process goes, but I prefer building if I have the time. Sometimes I also see these nice 3-D renders that would also be great to have for a truck, but I guess it would be a hell of a job to create one.

LM: You live in Europe yet I'm seeing a lot of Peterbilt trucks in your photostream. Any preference between European and American trucks? Can you tell me about the fundamental differences between them?



DG: I have no clear favorite when it comes down to American or European trucks. I have my favorite brands though, which are Peterbilt and Scania. These are the independent drivers trucks that are often the most customized.

That said, I don't mind building other brands of trucks as long as I like the look of the model. European and American trucks differ a lot, although due to international cooperation you see things changing, mostly on the American side. European trucks are forced under heavy regulations and higher running cost. For that reason, Euro trucks have become engineered high-tech pieces with very high efficiency. They share a lot of principles with modern cars. The downside is that the allowed level of customizing is limited. American trucks, and with that I mean basically the big class 8 ones, come from a very traditional old school design. Some types become more aerodynamic lately, but the custom ones are mostly the traditional extended hood ones. The level of customizing allowed is amazingly high. The length of the chassis, the number of lights, there is a lot of room to make something unique for sure.

LM: Such an important part of both car and truck culture is chrome. We all love our shiny bits! Can you tell us about how you came about chrome-plating your pieces?

DG: I have been doing some experiments with home painting bricks in the past, but never liked the results. I had always used gray parts for chrome looks. A few years ago, I saw chromed bricks appearing on Bricklink, and I loved them.

The downside was the price of them. I have asked some of the shop owners for some bulk agreement, but never really managed to get a good proposal. Then I decided to find something myself. The first thing I found out is that there are actually more than one type of chromed bricks for sale. The majority are done with an advanced spray painting system, which looks good. The downside is the wear vulnerability, and it is still not fully shiny. Theoretically, one could chrome every LEGO part with this technique.

The other technique is real chroming, in a process called "plating on plastics". This is what I also use. It can only be done in a special factory. In a few words, it is a technique where the bricks are cleaned, etched, and then applied with a conductive layer to make it ready for applying the real metal layer under conductivity. The result is the big plus for these; they look real, they are really chromed. The downside is the fact that some bricks, due to geometry, cannot be chromed, and some parts don't work due to chemical composition. Another challenge is the layer thickness, which makes building and dismantling a bit harder. I have these done in batches now, and the results are absolutely stunning.

LM: I'm sure the readers would like to know about your Bricklink shop.

DG: My Bricklink shop is not really active. My aim is not to sell the parts, the majority I use myself. I don't have the time to arrange that. To get to the batch sizes, I started working together with Dutch Bricklinker Bricks4all (www.bricks4all.nl), who allows everybody to order parts chromed from his stock or have parts custom chromed. He knows about the do's and don'ts of the process, and can give good service. Every reader is welcome there for sure.

LM: What non-LEGO and non-truck things do you enjoy?

DG: I enjoy being home with my wife and kids. When I am at home, I also like to photograph, a small hobby that I sometimes combine with my LEGO hobby shooting the MOCs. I also like good movies, and watching football on the tv. I guess I am a very normal guy with this one special hobby.

LM: He's a normal guy with a special hobby. Sounds like a lot of us. Thanks Dennis! 



You can see Dennis' work at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/bricksonwheels/> or you can jump to his gallery by scanning this QR code!



Raphael Granas: Picture Perfect LUGNut

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided by
Raphael Granas

Raphael Granas, or Raphy, as we all call him, is one of our most dedicated and outspoken LUGNuts members. In spite of spending half the year in Poland and the other half in Oregon, he barely misses a monthly challenge. He's probably the group's leading authority on Polish automobiles. I see him as a trendsetter, and he's sort of a LUGNuts historian, all the while documenting our facts and figures. But what sets him apart from the rest... is his photography. He is also one of our youngest members.



Jokermobile, built for a LUGNuts Challenge.

Lino Martins: Raphy, for our *BrickJournal* readers, can you tell us your age?

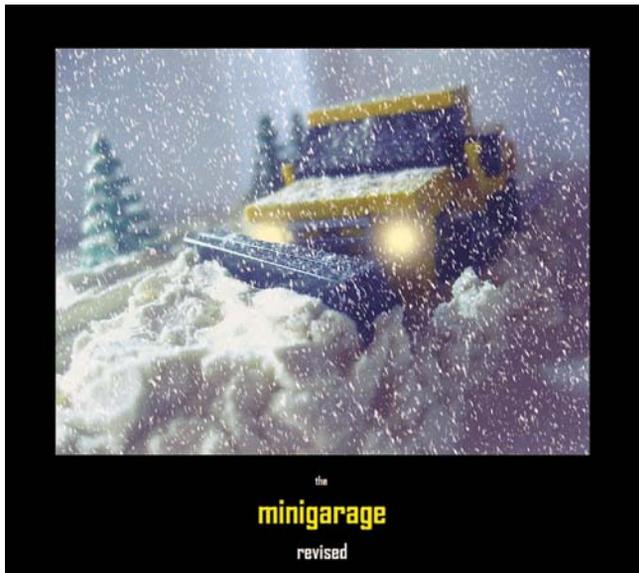
Raphael Granas: I'm fourteen.

LM: How'd you get into cars at such a young age?

RG: I've loved cars for much longer than the years I've been building—my brother and my uncle always loved cars and other vehicles, and I guess I inherited the bug. I loved cars before I could walk.

LM: You have an interesting dynamic to your photography, sometimes using odd angles and forced perspective, but I keep coming back to one photo. Even though I'm a Seattle transplant, I'm a New Englander at heart, and I've been around long enough to see some pretty heavy snowstorms. Everything from the hazy grey sky to the texture of the snow to the soft warm glow of the headlights are spot on. You seem to have an understanding of the world beyond your years. You know I'm talking about your minigarage snowplow. Can you tell me how you set up that shot?

RG: I took an old Town baseplate and stuck some trees on it. The background is actually paper, but it's blurry enough not to see clearly—I piled some flour on the baseplate and pushed it with the truck so it looked realistic. Credit for the headlight effects go to my friend Alex. If you grow up in Poland... you're bound to have a few snowstorms.



Minigarage posters.

LM: Tell me about the other minigarage vehicle. The muddy one.

RG: Not much to say on it—it started out as a table scrap, but then I realized it actually looked pretty cool, so it became the first in the series of minigarage cars photographed outside in specific places to seem as if the environment were to-scale (those spots are VERY hard to find!).

LM: How do you decide what you want to do for a LUGNuts challenge? What are your influences?

RG: When I read the challenge write-up, immediately I get struck by hundreds of ideas, but I only ever get a really good one about the 20th of each month. Then I work nonstop to get it finished, if it's really hard, and almost always get it in on the last day or five days into the new month.

LM: What do you like to do that's non-car or non-LEGO related?

RG: I love reading novels (often about cars, I admit). Usually it's mysteries, classic horror, adventure, novelizations and stuff like that. Biographies are cool too, at the moment I'm reading "Bug" by Phil Patton, a book about the history of the Volkswagen Type 1. I like racing mountain bikes, too.

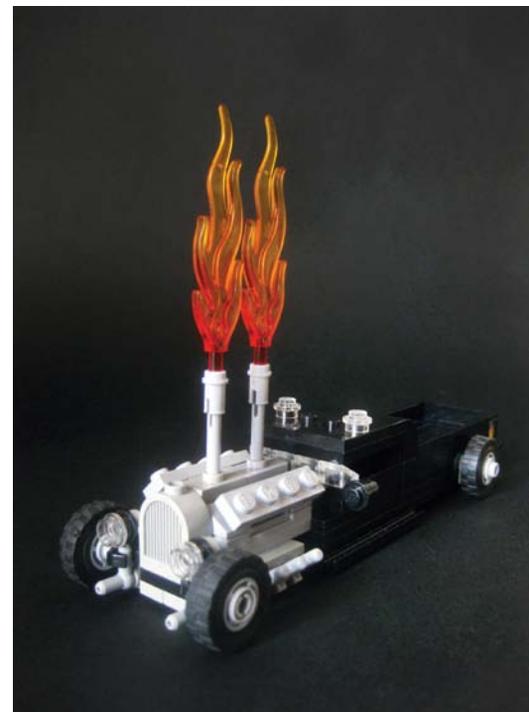
LM: What would you like to do when you get older?

RG: To tell the truth... race car driving.

LM: You heard it here first, the young man has car racing in his blood! This is why Raphy has found LUGNuts and LUGNuts finds Raphy. There is an inherent love for cars amongst everyone in our group and young Raphy has caught the bug before he could even walk. 



Other car creations by Raphy.



You can see Raphy's flickr galleries at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/32278639@N05/sets/> or by scanning this QR code!



1960 Cadillac Coupe deVille named after the card game *Spite and Malice*.

Tim Inman: LUGNut and Greaser

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided by Tim Inman

It was 8 am on the first day of BrickCon09 and somehow I was roped into volunteering in helping the con coordinators unload their goods. I was in the loading dock offloading equipment off the back of a rented truck when a stranger approached me... younger than me and with boyish charm. "Are you Lino Martins?" he asked. "Yeah," I said but my attitude said... what's it to ya? I was gruff. I have been working hard offloading boxes, after all, none of which were my own. It's just how some guys are when they're working... plus I hadn't yet had my coffee. And if this was just another fanboy, I had to keep up appearances, after all. Lino Martins... awesome car builder. It turns out this stranger was one of my most valued LUGNuts admins, Tim Inman. You may know him online as rabidnovaracer. I'd made him an admin but have never met him in person until this moment. I shed my gruff facade, at least as best as I could, and cracked good humored jokes with my admin as he helped offload boxes and equipment. We've been good friends ever since. Tim is what most LUGNuts only aspire to be... he is a real car guy. A greaser. A gearhead. A wrencher. A mechanic. A hot rodder of sorts. He owns a couple of his own vehicles and has worked on them himself... even entered them in car shows. In a LEGO car club a guy like him is invaluable.



Tim's 1938 Bugatti 57SC Atlantic.

Lino Martins: For our *BrickJournal* readers, Tim, can you tell us your location and age?

Tim Inman: I'm 31 and currently live in Fullerton, California, about five miles north of Disneyland.

LM: Can you tell us about the real vehicles you own? What work have you done with them yourself?

TI: I own a 2010 Kia Soul and a 1968 Chevy Nova. On the Soul I have done a few basic bolt ons to kind of "make it my own." On the Nova, I have restored it from the ground up having done everything with the exception of paint and body work myself.

LM: How does being a real car guy translate into being a LEGO car guy?

TI: With LEGO I have the ability to own cars that I would love to own in real life for a fraction of the price. I also get to build them, although in this medium there are much fewer cuts and bruises, and I don't get greasy.

LM: What are your influences and references when building?

TI: I use the many car magazines and books I have lying around along with pictures off the Internet.

LM: How do you decide what to enter into a LUGNuts challenge?

TI: I actually have a list of 30+ cars that I want to build in LEGO. I go down the list and pick a car that best fits that specific challenge. Sometimes there isn't a car on my list that fits the challenge. In those cases I dig through my books and magazines and the cars that I can think of off the top of my head until I find a fit for the challenge that I can get psyched about building.

LM: Some of my favorite cars by you have been your 1938 Bugatti, your '84 Dodge Caravan, your Veilside RX-7, and a custom ride called Spite and Malice. They're as different from each other as can be but somehow still hold your "signature look", whatever that means. Can you tell me about your thought processes for these specific creations?

TI: For the Bugatti, the biggest challenge was trying to capture the classy curves in LEGO. There was a lot of trial and error in positioning curved slopes and arch bricks into just the right spot that best captured the various shapes on the car. The Caravan was a fun tongue-in-cheek build that I tried to make as stereotypical as possible. The actual idea to build a minivan came from my coworker that I occasionally bounce ideas off of. The RX-7 was another tough



1984 Dodge Caravan.

Tim's city development, called Emerald Point, with office space, condominiums, a hotel and a mall.





Tim's rendition of the Veilside RX-7.

build for two reasons, the piece availability in orange and all of the different curves and air ducts in the body work of the actual car. Lots of SNOT was needed to pull that one off. The Caddy was a fun build. I had been wanting to build a classic Cadillac with flames for some time. The toughest part of that build was figuring out the grille. I ended up stacking 1 x 2 grille tiles with a minifig cutlass fed through the grille tiles to hold them in. Besides the flames, I also gave it other classic custom touches like side pipes and Moon dish wheels.

LM: When you're not building cars, it seems you build large city skyscrapers. These are two vastly different passions. Can you tell me how you also got into architecture?

TI: I have always been fascinated with skyscrapers. For a while I actually considered being an architect. Building skyscrapers and other buildings out of LEGO lets me be an architect vicariously.

LM: Does architecture relate to car building in any way?

TI: With both cars and buildings you are working towards a specific aesthetic, whatever that may be. Both also require a strong foundation (chassis).

LM: As a die-hard Chevy guy, what is your favorite Ford?

TI: One that is a hunk of charred metal.

LM: So that's Tim in a nutshell. He's a real car guy, a talented builder of both vehicles and architecture and for the record... he loves Fords. You got that, Joe? Make sure you get this in print officially for the world to know... Tim Inman loves Fords. He can't get enough of them. ;) 



You can see Tim's flickr gallery at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/rabidnovaracer/> or by scanning the QR code here!



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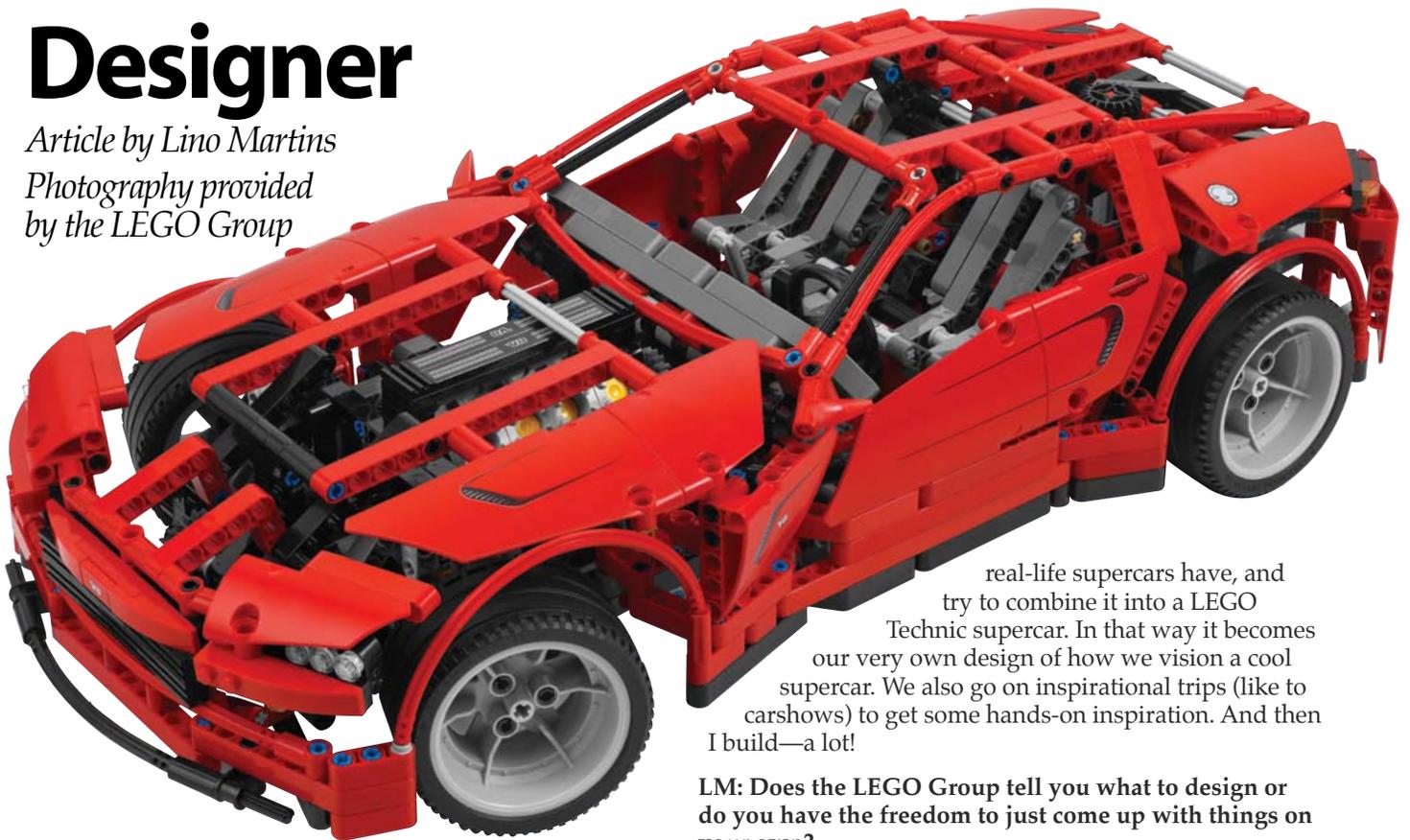




Uwe Wabra: LEGO Technic Designer

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided
by the LEGO Group



The LEGO Group has produced some outstanding car sets, with the most detailed coming from the Technic line. I wanted to know who designed the latest supercar, so I sent some questions to Uwe Wabra, LEGO Technic Set Designer. He had some interesting answers to my questions, as you will see...

Lino Martins: Are you a car enthusiast in real life? If so, what sort of automobiles are you into?

Uwe Wabra: Yes I am. I love older cars and have a couple myself. Especially oldtimers and sportscars in general are my favorite categories.

LM: What is your degree in?

UW: The only formal education I have is as a chef!

LM: What is your process when designing a set? Do you first do sketches? Research? Computer renders?

UW: I do a lot of research looking into all the different supercars of the real world. I try to define all the iconic features and design details that the

real-life supercars have, and try to combine it into a LEGO Technic supercar. In that way it becomes our very own design of how we vision a cool supercar. We also go on inspirational trips (like to carshows) to get some hands-on inspiration. And then I build—a lot!

LM: Does the LEGO Group tell you what to design or do you have the freedom to just come up with things on your own?

UW: It's a mix. It is very much about teamwork in the Technic design team. We look at what we already have on the shelves, do a lot of brainstorming to find new vehicles to build, new functions to look into, and other shaping approaches and color schemes on our concept models. And then we build a lot of concept models during the year to test out the ideas.

LM: Is there a lot of trial and error to your design work or is it perfect the first time?

UW: It is never perfect the first time. There is a lot of trial and error in the design process. To develop a model like the supercar I think I went through at 40-50 different iterations before I was satisfied. And then we also have to put a lot of work in to how to make it buildable by others—we have to be able to put it in to a Building Instruction that everybody else can understand.

LM: What were the difficulties involved in designing the Supercar?

UW: The biggest challenge with the supercar was to nail the right shaping and all the skewed angles on the car AND at the same time incorporating all the functions like



steering, suspension, engine, and the Power Functions without compromising the exterior design of the car.

LM: What do you like to build when not working?

UW: I don't build much with LEGO sets at home, but when I do I like to build characters out of LEGO Technic. I also model characters in other materials—and then I spend a lot of time on my old cars and vintage mopeds!

LM: What is a typical workday like?

UW: Very much about building with the bricks and making new iterations of the model I'm working on. That's more than half of my typical workday. Then I also meet up with the rest of the team to give input and feedback on all the models and concepts we are working on in the team. Research, inspirational trips, and ideation workshops is also something I spend some time on during the year.

LM: What is the timeframe from initial idea to product on the shelves?

UW: It depends on the model itself of course. Size, complexity, amount of new technology etc. can stretch or compress the development time a lot. Everything from 1.5 to 2.5 years from first ideation to the box is on the shelves.

LM: When and how did you get hired by the LEGO Group?

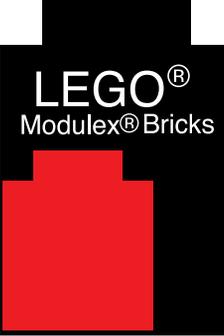
UW: I was hired back in 1996 at our development department in Billund and have been here since—almost only working in the LEGO Technic department. It does take a lot of experience to become an expert Technic designer, and guess what: I'm still learning all the time! Back then I made a video of some of my Technic models to be able to show the functions I had build in to them. That was my entry ticket to an interview and apparently they liked me and my work, because after that I got hired!

LM: Have you designed any other sets? Which ones?

UW: Yes, a lot. Some of the ones that spring to mind are the Ferrari Enzo 599 (8145), the big Black Tow Truck (8285) with pneumatics, and the 2009 Crane truck (8258).

LM: Tell us specifically about the mechanics of the Technic Supercar. Do you have a difficult time making everything work so smoothly or does that come natural to you?

UW: It requires a lot of experience to build a design that will work every time someone else builds it. And it is always a big challenge for a designer to build a model like that; I couldn't have done it without the help and feedback from the rest of the design team—or without the help of the kids that have tested the model for me during the development! A big thanks to them! 



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1940 Ford Truck.

Nathan Proudlove: The Other LUGNut Leader

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided by Nathan Proudlove

Nathan Proudlove is my LUGNuts co-founder and close friend. When I say LUGNuts was founded on a clever name and a handshake, it was actually him who came up with the name. Tall and lanky and usually sporting a trucker hat, cowboy shirt and hip, retro styled glasses, Nathan seems to be the very image of the quintessential car guy... but like me, he is chock full of quirks and dualities. He has an uncanny knowledge of art and design that clearly comes through in his LEGO building. Nathan is a family man, a devout Christian, and an all around nice guy. I am, lets just say... less than devout... but in spite of our differences, we work together harmoniously and have sort of a spooky, almost psychic connection. What do I mean by this? Well, we live in separate countries and separate time zones, but there has been probably two dozen times by now (both documented and undocumented) that we have built, or almost build, nearly identical or very similar things. We both built Santa bikes for one month's challenge, for another we both came up with '60s era drag racers... one month



Nathan Proudlove.

he nearly built a scary clown ice cream truck but nixed it for rightfully predicting I'd come up with the same thing. There was one challenge where he built the iconic Chatterphone, and it was the only challenge in LUGNuts history that I had to bail from. My top choice, had I have entered the challenge, would have been... the Chatterphone! If that isn't spooky enough, what are the chances we'd both come up with a 1966 Dodge A-100 for the same challenge? I mean, of all the oddball vehicles on the planet, we both tuned into the '66 Dodge A-100! While Nathan has stayed at my place a few times and we have spent many a BrickCon together, I still don't entirely know what makes him tick. Hopefully this interview will shed some light on the matter.



The Scooby gang and the Mystery Machine.

Lino Martins: Nathan, can you please tell the *BrickJournal* readers where you live and how old you are?

Nathan Proudlove: I currently live in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. Yes, it's as remote as it sounds. I am a 36-year-old husband, and father of one precocious son.

LM: How did you become a car guy?

NP: I think I've always liked cars, since the days of putting Ferrari posters on my wall as a kid, to owning my first car as a 16-year-old punk (1974 Plymouth Valiant) and beyond.

LM: You seem to favor under-appreciated, underdog vehicles like say the Pacer or the Chevette. How did this come about and does this relate to you in real life?

NP: Maybe because my first car was itself an underdog, though it had a V8 and rear-wheel drive and was crazy fun to drift around corners on the country roads where I grew up. I currently drive a 1989 Volvo 760 Turbo wagon and the rear-wheel drive again makes driving so much fun though the car is nothing flashy. When it comes to building models of cars, I seek out subject material that hasn't been done very often. I don't think many people really care that much about a model of just another supercar, but lots can relate to a model of a car that perhaps they used to own or their family owned.

LM: How do you decide what to build for a LUGNuts challenge? What influences you?

NP: I sort of addressed this in the previous question but I like to seek out subjects that others perhaps wouldn't. I've always

strived to be unique and my choices of cars to build reflects this attitude.

LM: What sort of challenges do you like to see in our group? What has been some of your faves?

NP: The challenges that I like the best are the ones where I can see a way to bend the rules in a surprising and creative way. For instance, the "What A Concept" challenge was for us to build a concept car of some kind. I built a caveman on a stone wheel as the original concept car.

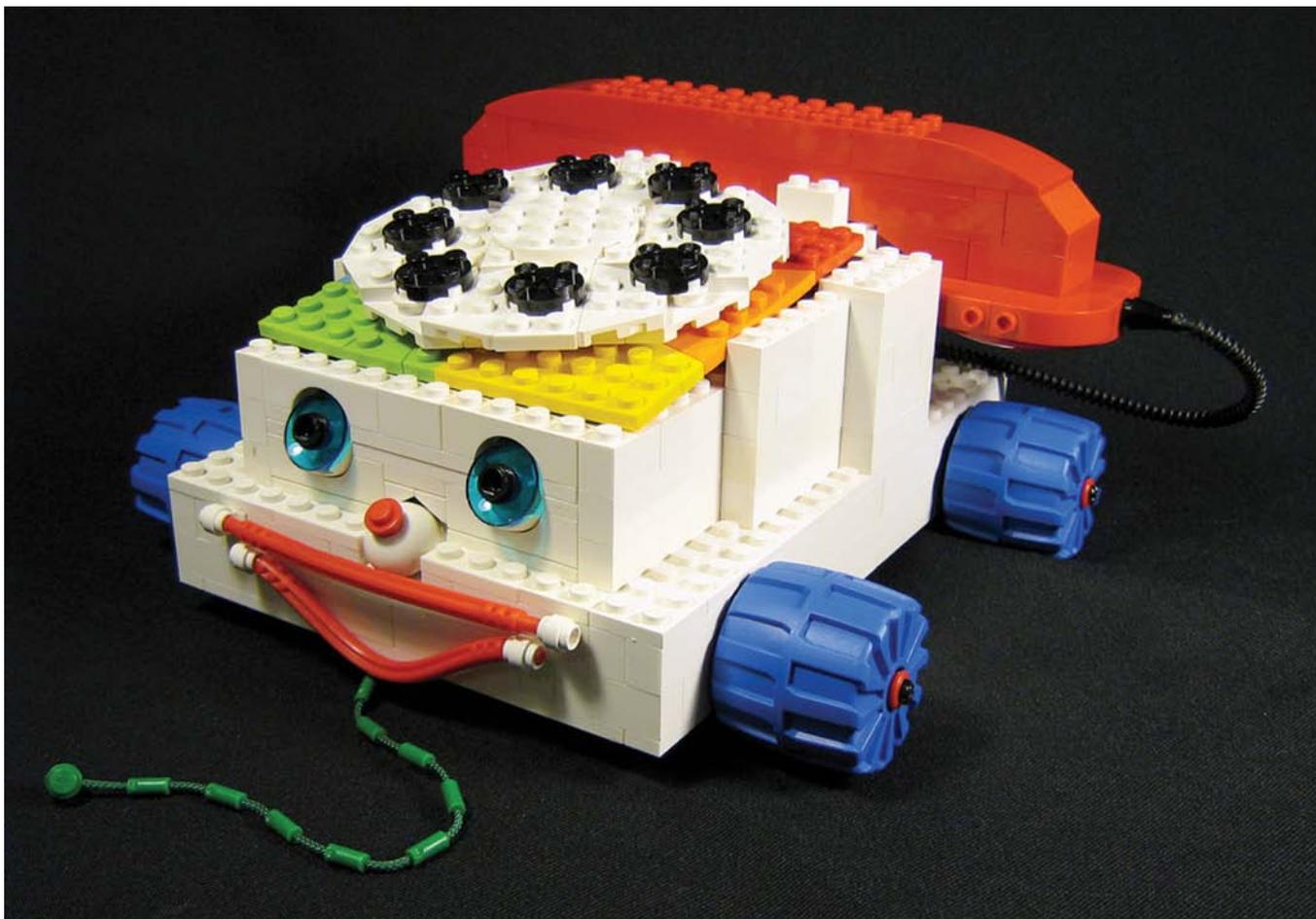
LM: You seem to have a keen knowledge of art history and design. Can you tell us how this came about?

NP: I guess I've picked up most of what I know from being exposed to it in this little LEGO community of ours. I like to experiment with color and design and I guess it shows in my choices.

LM: Can you list a few of your fave MOCs you have entered for the challenges and why?

NP: I think the top favorite of mine would be the 1940 Ford truck that I entered in the "Kickin' It Oldschool" challenge. I am quite proud of being able to render the curves of that classic vehicle so faithfully in the brick. And the favorite of crowds everywhere at shows has to be the Mystery Machine.

LM: LUGNuts is *the* cornerstone for LEGO automotive building and a wild success. Sometimes you just got to sit back and think about that. It still amazes me that this is something we started. Any thoughts on this?



Nathan's Chatterphone.



Santa's new ride, as built by Nathan.



You can see Nathan's work at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/proudlove/sets/> or you can jump to his gallery by scanning this QR code!

NP: I think it's great, and I think the success has to do a lot with determination and commitment to offering quality challenges every month without fail.

LM: What are your thoughts on the uncanny and sometimes spooky connection we seem to have when it comes to building or nearly building very similar things?

NP: Brothers from different mothers man, that's all I can say.

LM: You're sort of known as a jack-of-all-trades. You dabble in plenty of other LEGO themes besides car building and win plenty of awards for it. Can you tell me where all these ideas and influences come from?

NP: When I first started building, I tended to focus on building space and sci-fi creations, but I always tried to expand my horizons and started to dabble in building in all other themes, from castle to steampunk to town and train and large scale cars. I find that after building a few creations that fit a certain theme or genre, I make a deliberate effort to do something new for a while. My entertainment choices definitely lean to the science fiction and fantasy side of things, having recently read *The Windup Girl*, *Neuromancer*, and *Cryptonomicon*, among others. Most of my movie and television choices reflect the same. I think I will always be fascinated by car culture though and continue to build all those cars that I can only dream of owning in real life someday.

LM: Well, there you have it. He's my LUGNuts co-founder, a Christian... and a brother from another mother. We also seem to share the same brain... except his is all Canadian and stuff. Nathan continues to surprise us with his artistry and love for the underdog. We salute you, Nathan! 

Parts List

(Parts can be ordered through Bricklink.com by searching by part number and color)

Qty	Part	Description	Color
3	2431.dat	Tile 1 x 4 with Groove	Blue
2	2540.dat	Plate 1 x 2 with Handle	Light Bluish Gray
2	2555.dat	Tile 1 x 1 with Clip	Black
2	3002.dat	Brick 2 x 3	Blue
1	3004.dat	Brick 1 x 2	Trans Clear
1	3005.dat	Brick 1 x 1	Trans Clear
1	3020.dat	Plate 2 x 4	Dark Bluish Gray
1	3021.dat	Plate 2 x 3	Blue
2	3023.dat	Plate 1 x 2	Light Bluish Gray
6	3794b.dat	Plate 1 x 2 with Groove with 1 Centre Stud	Black
2	4600.dat	Plate 2 x 2 with Wheel Holder	Black
1	6019.dat	Plate 1 x 1 with Clip Horizontal	Light Bluish Gray
2	6141.dat	Plate 1 x 1 Round	Trans Clear
1	44674.dat	Car Mudguard 3 x 4 Overhanging	Black
4	50944.dat	Wheel Rim 6.4 x 11 with 5 Spokes	Black
4	50951.dat	Tyre 6/30 x 11	Black
4	54200.dat	Slope Brick 31 1 x 1 x 2/3	Blue

You Can Build It

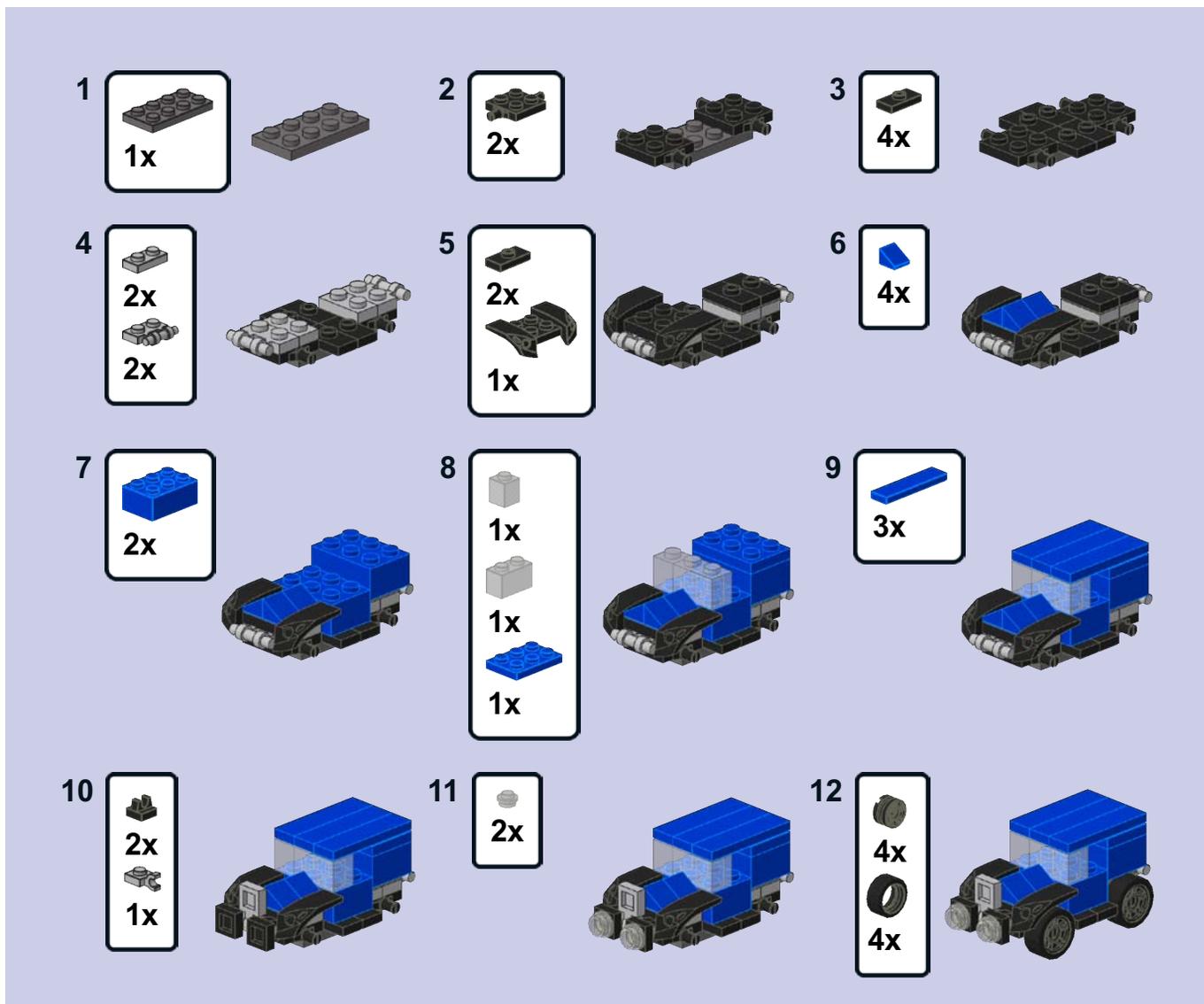
Little Morris

Design by Tim Gould

Instructions by Tommy Williamson

When asked about this model, Lino Martins replied, "Morris was a British automotive company from 1912-1984. It's a little Morris cuz... you know... it's so small."

In this case, the model is in the scale of the Tiny Turbos Racers that are currently being sold by the LEGO Group. Have fun building this small and fast model! 

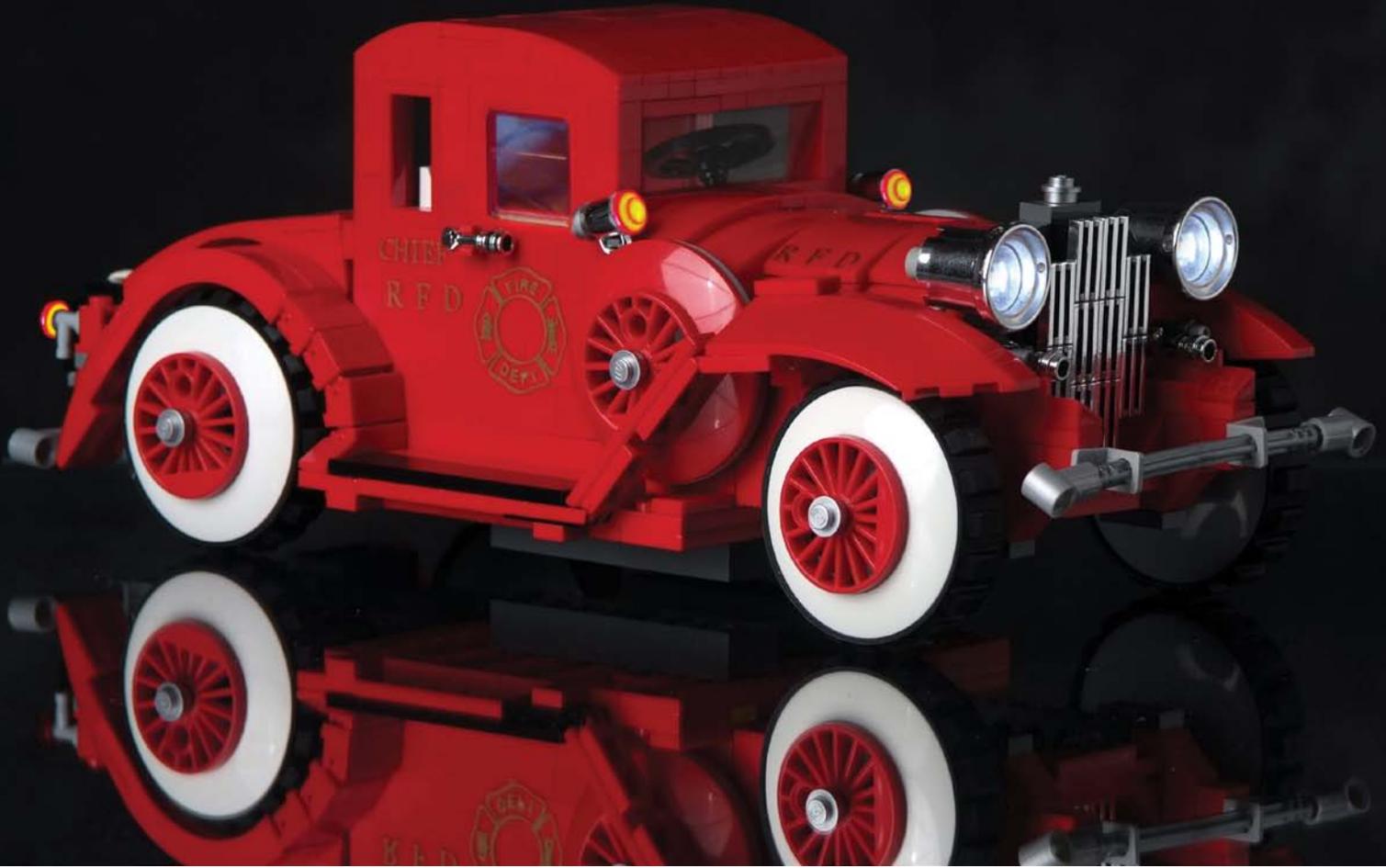


The assembly instructions are presented in 12 numbered steps, each showing a list of parts to be added and a diagram of the resulting sub-assembly or the full model.

- Step 1:** 1x 1x4 Blue Tile with Groove.
- Step 2:** 2x 1x2 Black Plates with Grooves.
- Step 3:** 4x 1x2 Black Plates with Grooves.
- Step 4:** 2x 1x2 Black Plates with Grooves, 2x 1x2 Black Plates with Grooves.
- Step 5:** 2x 1x2 Black Plates with Grooves, 1x 1x2 Black Plate with Groove.
- Step 6:** 4x 1x2 Blue Plates with Grooves.
- Step 7:** 2x 1x2 Blue Plates with Grooves.
- Step 8:** 1x 1x2 Light Bluish Gray Plate with Groove, 1x 1x2 Light Bluish Gray Plate with Groove, 1x 1x2 Blue Plate with Groove.
- Step 9:** 3x 1x2 Blue Plates with Grooves.
- Step 10:** 2x 1x2 Black Plates with Grooves, 1x 1x2 Black Plate with Groove.
- Step 11:** 2x 1x2 Black Plates with Grooves.
- Step 12:** 4x 1x2 Black Plates with Grooves, 4x 1x2 Black Plates with Grooves.

Riverside Fire Chief

by O&A Steamworks



Giving LifeLites to Your MOCs!

Article and Photography by Guy Humber

Project Introduction

Inspired by the fantastic work of LUGNuts legends Lino Martins and Nathan Proudlove, I decided to create a Model Team-scaled model of the Riverside Fire Chief, a classic Chevrolet from the 1930s. I chose it because of its Hot Red paint job and classic “old school” shape. I knew that I would have to do a bit of LEGO brick customizing to take it to the next level, and LifeLites was going to help me get there. The model featured Big White Wall tires which I had already achieved by some serious modification on LEGO Discs (Part 44375), custom vinyl stickers, and some “in your face” chrome headlamps. Early on, I knew that I wanted to light this model and have it all self-contained for ease of display and general COOL factor.

LifeLites Intro

To be fair, if you want to light your LEGO models you can just go down to the local Radio Shack, buy all the needed materials, and spend a few hours wiring, testing, and soldering to achieve something suitable. But why would you? LifeLites has already done all of the hard electronics work for you! They have the perfect LEGO friendly LEDs (Light-Emitting Diodes) picked out and pre-wired and connected. They have a sleek wiring management system that holds everything in place and includes an easy-to-use-and-mount connection block to integrate into your creations. You can even get some of the more advanced kits that will introduce preprogrammed lighting effects and animations to your lights. The standard LEDs come in either a “warm” or “cool” WHITE color. You can further enhance these lights by backing them behind convenient LEGO Translucent parts (see Figures 2 and 3) or you could even buy some commercial light gels or colored plastic to achieve some novel effects.

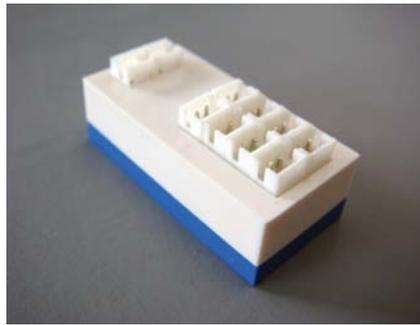


Figure 1. The LifeLites connection block.



Figure 2. Lifelites installed inside headlight bricks.



Figure 3. Lifelites on!

Getting Started

Take a look at your model and determine what your lighting needs will be (Figure 4). A single LifeLites module supports up to 8 individual lights—although you can daisy-chain multiple modules to support up to 24 lights on a single battery pack. As I looked at my model, I determined I needed 2 headlamps, 2 side-mounted lamps, 2 tail lamps, 1 interior roof light, and 1 interior floor/atmosphere light. This would use all 8 available sockets in the standard Elite MCU LifeLites module.

I then set about modifying LEGO elements to make the best use of the LED lights. Unlike light bulbs, which tend to send their light source in all directions, LEDs have an issue of being very “sourcyy”. This means that from the top view of the LED, a viewer sees an extremely strong point of light, but from the sides, the LED doesn’t produce much of a glow. The uni-directional issue can be solved in a number of ways. The easiest is to put a diffuser in FRONT of the LED. This will help soften and break up the “sourcyy” light element. Usually the translucent 1 x 1 round studs and tiles do an excellent job. You can also use reflective and chromed surfaces to “bounce” the light source around and help increase its glow factor. Another trick (for the more adventurous among you) is to lightly sand the shiny outer surface of your LEDs. This trick is effective but does run the risk of possibly ruining your LEDs. Be sure of yourself before you choose this warranty-voiding option.

This is how I chose to modify parts on the Fire Chief. For the rear taillights, it was an easy job of routing the LEDs through a common headlamp brick (Part 4070) and capping it off with a trans red tile (Figure 5). The LifeLites system is composed of perfect elements that fit like a glove into existing LEGO bricks. A little superglue makes sure the LED stays in place. Glue the shrink tubing, *not* the LED itself!



Figure 4. A simple lighting diagram.



Figure 5. Fitting a LifeLite in a headlight brick.



Figure 6. Drilling for the side lamp.

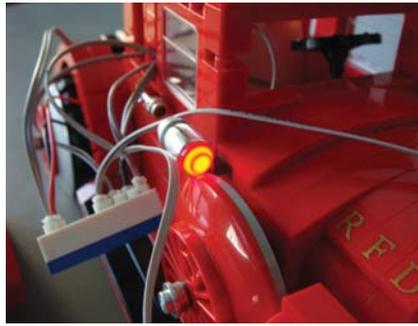


Figure 7. Side lamp placed and capped.

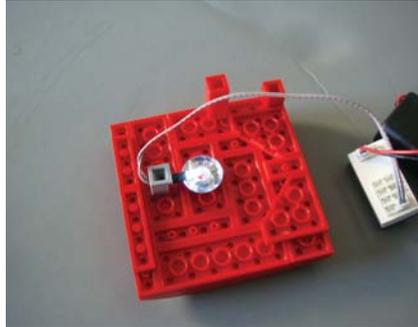


Figure 8. Interior dome light set up.

For the side-mounted lamps, I drilled holes through the bottom of the 1 x 1 stud and chromed LEGO cup (Figure 6). I also drilled a number of bricks within the model to allow for free passage of some wiring and allow for hiding electronics. Choose a drill size that matches the standard LEGO through holes—the type that a lightsaber blade would pass through. I then capped the cup with an opaque RED LEGO round tile (Figure 7). That's right, it wasn't even translucent! The LifeLites LEDs are so powerful that they shine right THROUGH a solid RED part! WOW!

For the interior dome light, I glued the LED in an angled fashion in such a way that it was reflected into a chromed 2 x 2 dish mounted on the roof (Figure 8). This allowed for a nice interior glow that showed off the car's upholstery. There is also a simple light mounted at the floor of the interior with a translucent lens.



Figure 9. Making a holding fixture for the reflector.



Figure 10. Using the holding fixture.



Figure 11. Ground reflector (right) compared to the original.

Lastly, I did a fairly complicated modification to create the powerful headlamps. Using a chromed LEGO bucket (Part 48245) and a chromed LEGO part (Number Part x85 Dish 2 x 2 x 2/3 Light Reflector). I made a reflection system that worked like a charm. By carefully and smoothly grinding the outside of the Reflector (Figure 11), I was able to get it to fit perfectly in the interior of the Bucket. You can see how I made a holding fixture for the Reflector in (Figure 9) and then used a combination of the spinning drill and a Dremel tool to create an even modification of the part for fit and reflection (Figure 10)

Make sure to test each modification individually as you go. The headlamps were a little finicky at first, but once I got them tuned just right (Figure 12), WOW! What a difference it made!

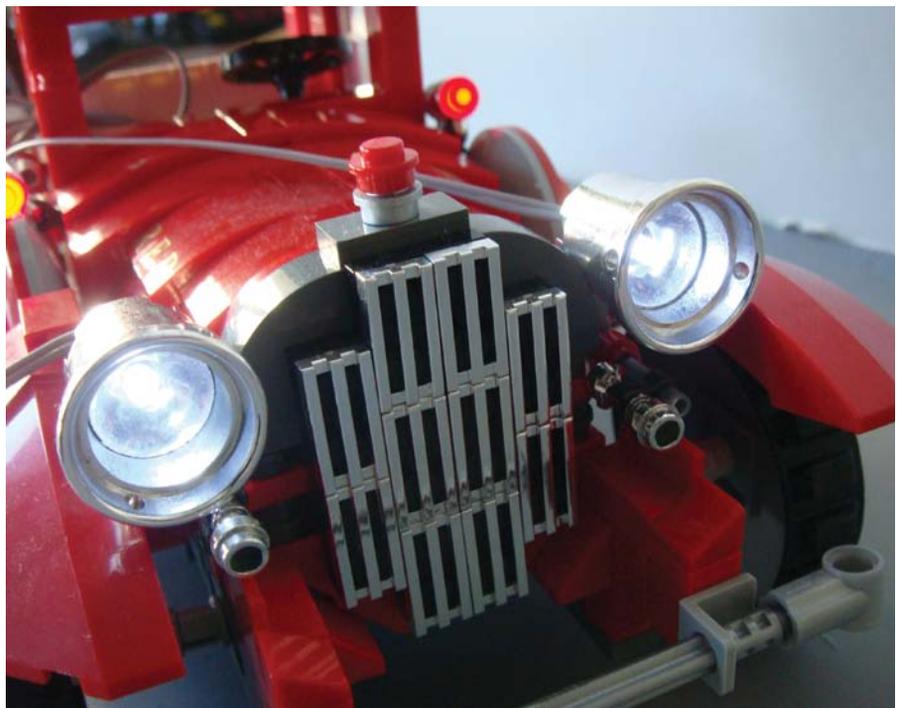


Figure 12. Finished headlights mounted.

WARNING: Do *not* push the LifeLites connecting clips down all the way until you are done! They are designed to hold themselves in place and not fall out. Once you push them in completely, they are extremely difficult to remove without risking damage to the wiring. Be very, very careful if you need to remove a fully seated connection from the block. As you start connecting lights, lightly push in the connectors just enough to get them to work for ease of trial and error and testing. Save the big “click” for your final assembly.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED...

After running the rough wiring, I did a quick test to make sure everything worked together (Figure 14). I then needed to find a home for the LifeLites Connector block and battery box.

LifeLites has conveniently provided an awesome LEGO friendly connection on the bottom of the LifeLites block. It fits a LEGO 2 x 4 tile perfectly and can click anywhere into your model. The battery box was more of a challenge to find a home for. It has smooth, rounded sides and no clear way to easily mount it into your model or mount the switch. With some effort, I was able to “cage” the battery box in the trunk of the Fire Chief, and leave the switch facing downward so it could be switched at the underside of the car.

SOLDER-TIME! I like electronics. I am comfortable soldering wires and running them throughout my model for a clean and organized look (Figure 15). Once everything was placed, I freely cut and extended the wiring to make them custom fit for the model. I do NOT recommend this for the beginning user! If you are not a solder-monkey then please get some of LifeLites extension cables and longer LED cables for your needs.

Flip the Switch!

Having completed the project, the LifeLites system has proven to be 100% worth the time and investment. I can't describe how happy it makes me to see the Fire Chief lit up and ready to patrol the streets of old Riverside. LifeLites has proven to be a convenient and well thought-out LED lighting system that I will be using many times again in the future. I highly recommend that you take a look at their website, which offers some great tutorials and many interesting options for your next LEGO project!

Find them at www.lifelites.com or scan the QR code below.



Figure 13. Battery box in the trunk.

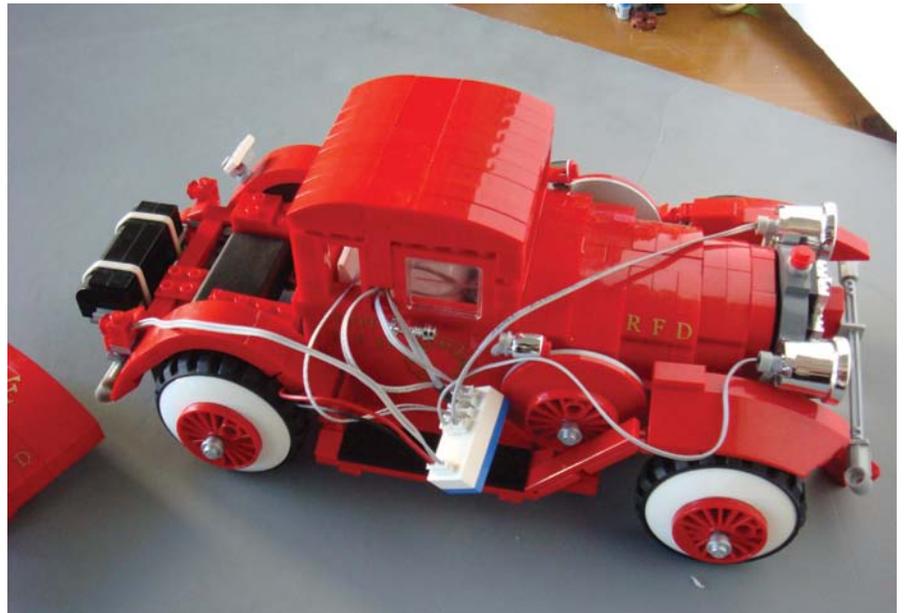


Figure 14. Wiring test.

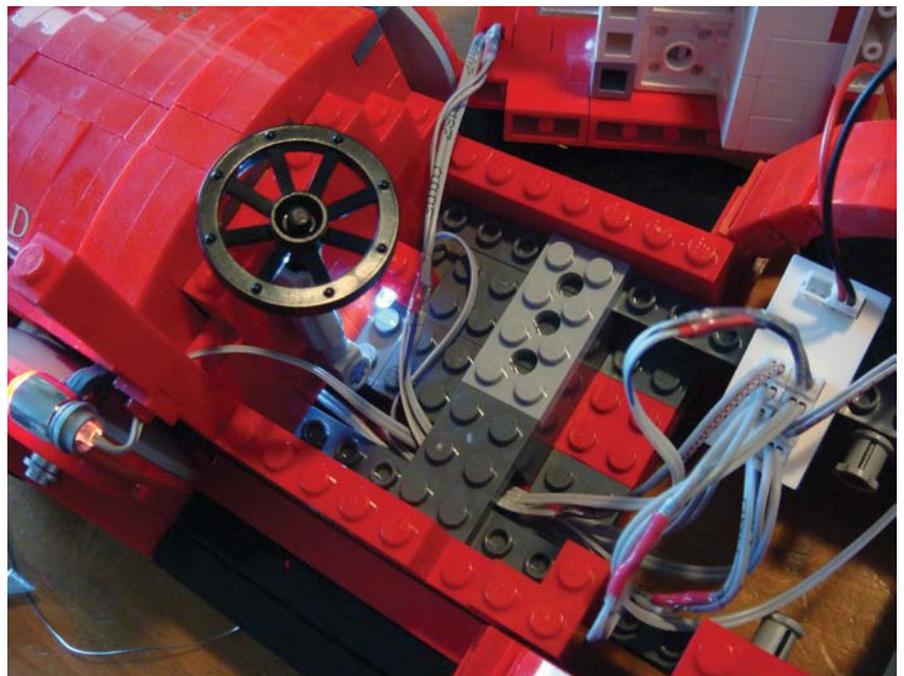


Figure 15. Wiring trimmed and optimized.

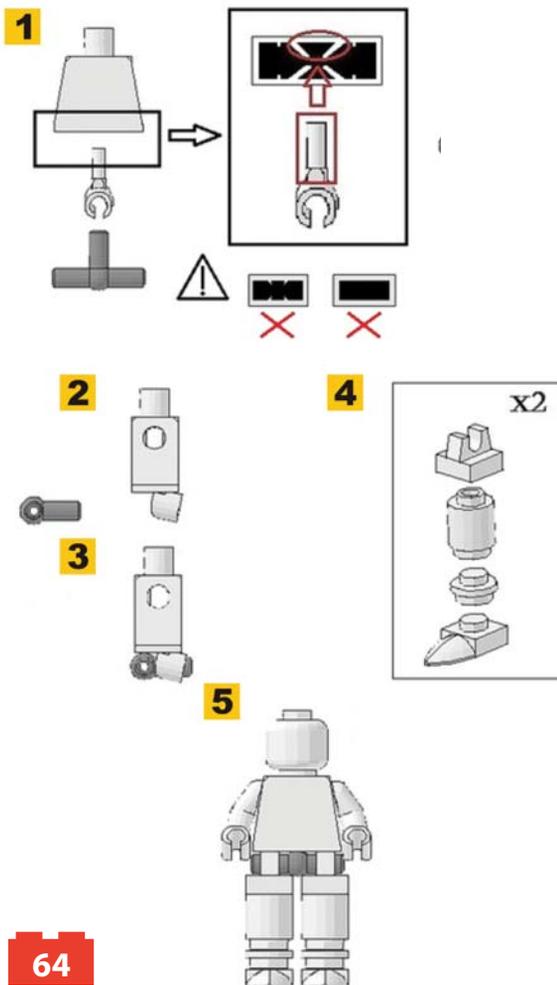
Building

Minifigure Customization 101: Articulated Purist Minifigures

by Jared K. Burks

Basic Figure Instructions

Using this technique Gaetano has been able to attach several genres and we can see how he has applied this simple concept.



Welcome back to the Minifig Customization series. In this article we will discuss the concept of articulation of the minifigure. This has been postulated by many customizers; however, one customizer in particular has expanded this theme. His work has been previously covered when I discussed purist customization; but it deserves a closer look. Gaetano "Tanotrooper" Dooms has created a whole world around the concept of articulated minifigures using the purist approach.

This article will be more of a presentation article where several solutions Gaetano has created will be presented. All of his figure creations stem from this one simple concept, presented in the Basic Figure Instructions. The amazing thing is that this easy customization technique has resulted in an amazing array of custom figures from across multiple genres. He told me his reason for creating these figures was to prove that purist LEGO can be used to create something that is on par with any other small-scale figure used in model building (1/72 scale and so on). He states, "I suppose I've went into the extreme of making minifigs more proportionate and accurate." The result is what I call "TT scale," named after Tanotrooper.

Basic Figure Articulation

From this basic figure, Gaetano has extended his TT theme by creating tons of figures and custom accessories. This is demonstrated in his collection of *Star Wars* characters, but the most stunning of this genre has to be his battle droids.



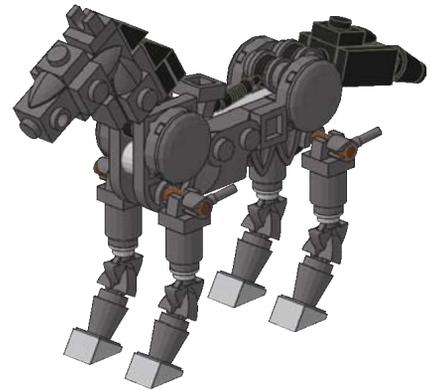


Star Wars Battle Droids.

As stunning as these figures are and the extreme articulation that they can achieve, I believe that his greatest creation and best accessory to these figures has to be his horse.

Horse and Instructions

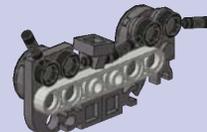
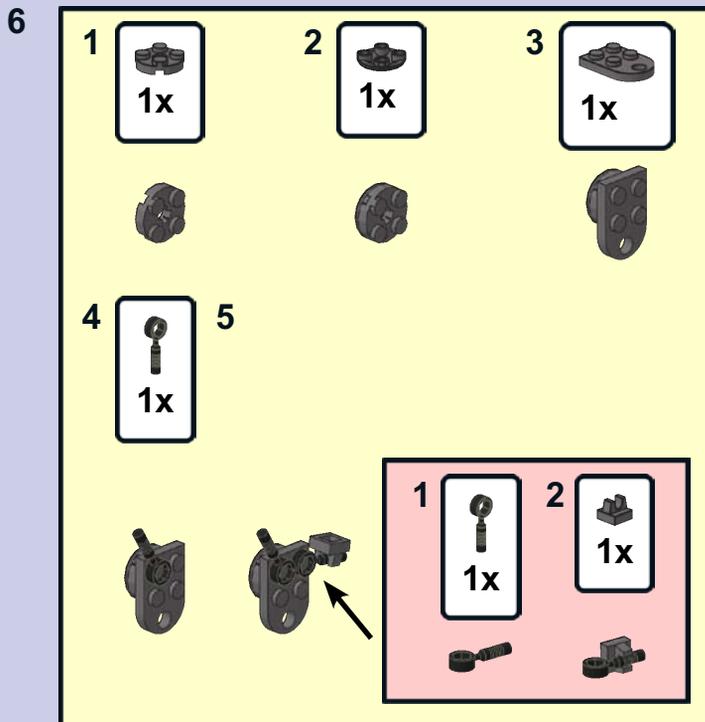
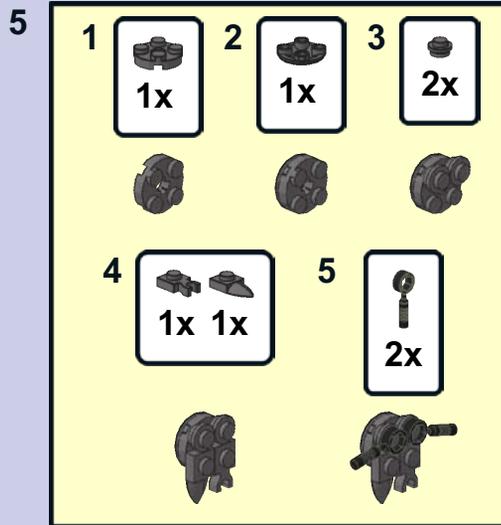
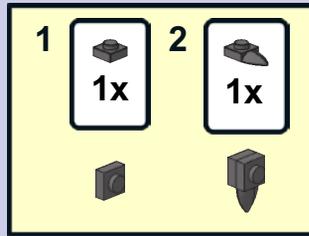
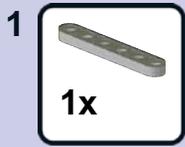
This horse is simply stunning and capable of so many different poses. To truly appreciate this creation, it must be seen with the TT figures it was designed to accompany.



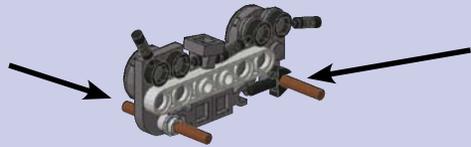
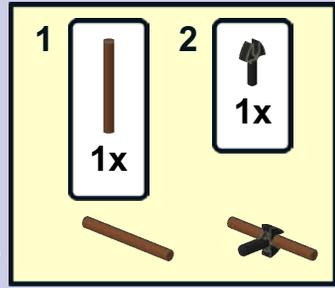
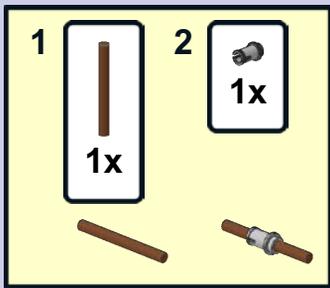
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6	2555.dat	Tile 1 x 1 with Clip	Dark Bluish Gray
1	3023.dat	Plate 1 x 2	Dark Bluish Gray
1	3024.dat	Plate 1 x 1	Black
2	3024.dat	Plate 1 x 1	Dark Bluish Gray
4	3062b.dat	Brick 1 x 1 Round with Hollow Stud	Dark Bluish Gray
2	3069b.dat	Tile 1 x 2 with Groove	Black
2	3176.dat	Plate 3 x 2 with Hole	Dark Bluish Gray
4	3820.dat	Minifig Hand	Dark Bluish Gray
4	4032b.dat	Plate 2 x 2 Round with Axlehole Type 2	Dark Bluish Gray
4	4073.dat	Plate 1 x 1 Round	Dark Bluish Gray
4	4085c.dat	Plate 1 x 1 with Clip Vertical Type 3	Dark Bluish Gray
2	4274.dat	Technic Pin 1/2	Light Gray
6	4274.dat	Technic Pin 1/2	Light Bluish Gray
1	4459.dat	Technic Pin with Friction	Black
1	4733.dat	Brick 1 x 1 with Studs on Four Sides	Black
2	4733.dat	Brick 1 x 1 with Studs on Four Sides	Dark Bluish Gray

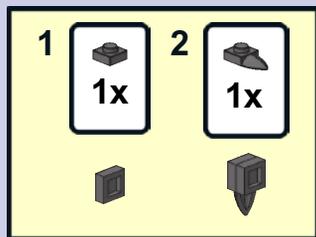
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1	30039.dat	Tile 1 x 1 with Groove	Black
2	30039.dat	Tile 1 x 1 with Groove	Dark Bluish Gray
2	30374.dat	Bar 4L Light Sabre Blade	Reddish Brown
1	32063.dat	Technic Beam 6 x 0.5	Light Gray
2	47457.dat	Slope Brick Curved 2 x 2 x 2/3 Triple with Two Top Studs	Dark Bluish Gray
2	47905.dat	Brick 1 x 1 with Studs on Two Opposite Sides	Dark Bluish Gray
1	48729.dat	Bar 1.5L with Clip	Black
8	48729.dat	Bar 1.5L with Clip	Dark Bluish Gray
1	49673.dat	Plate 1 x 1 with Tooth	Black
9	49673.dat	Plate 1 x 1 with Tooth	Dark Bluish Gray
4	54196.dat	Dish 2 x 2	Dark Bluish Gray
2	54200.dat	Slope Brick 31 1 x 1 x 2/3	Black
4	54200.dat	Slope Brick 31 1 x 1 x 2/3	Light Bluish Gray
4	64288.dat	Cone 1 x 1 with Stop	Dark Bluish Gray
4	55300.dat	Minifig Tool Box Wrench	Black



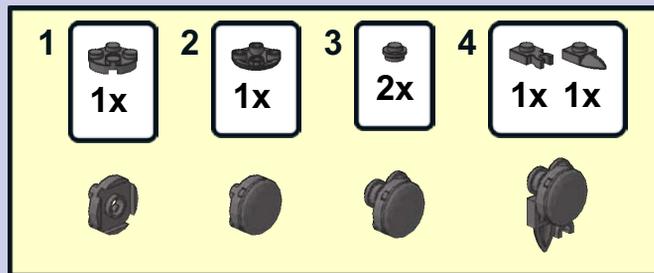
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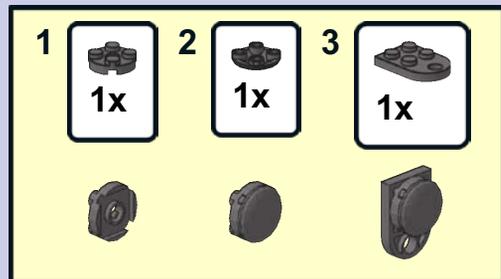
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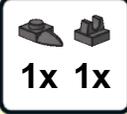
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3  1x

4  1x 1x

5  2x

6  1x 1x

7

1  1x

2  1x 1x

3  1x

4  2x

5  1x

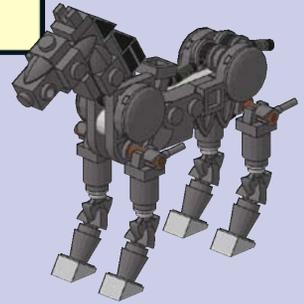


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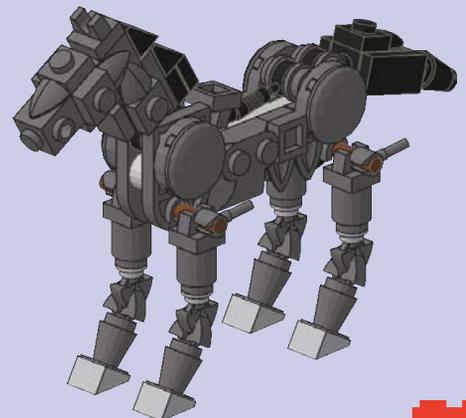
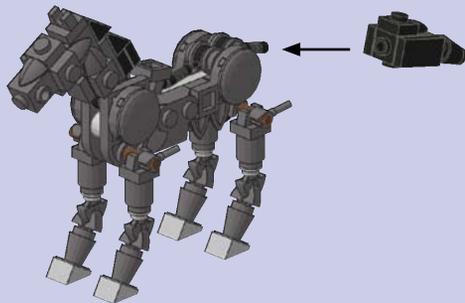
3		4	
	1x		1x

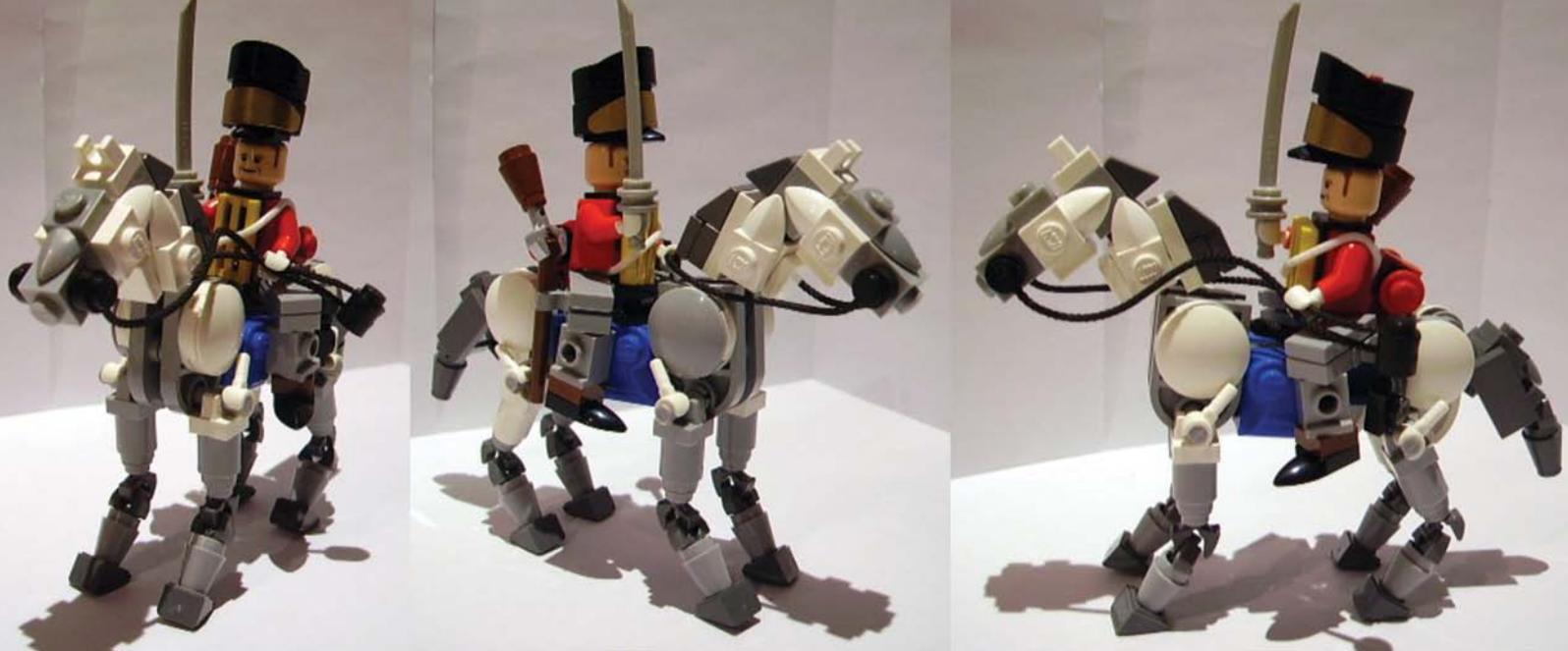
4x



13

1		2		3			4			5	
	1x		1x		1x	1x		1x	1x		2x





Final figure—British Light Infantry.



Top and above: Horse and Rider collection.

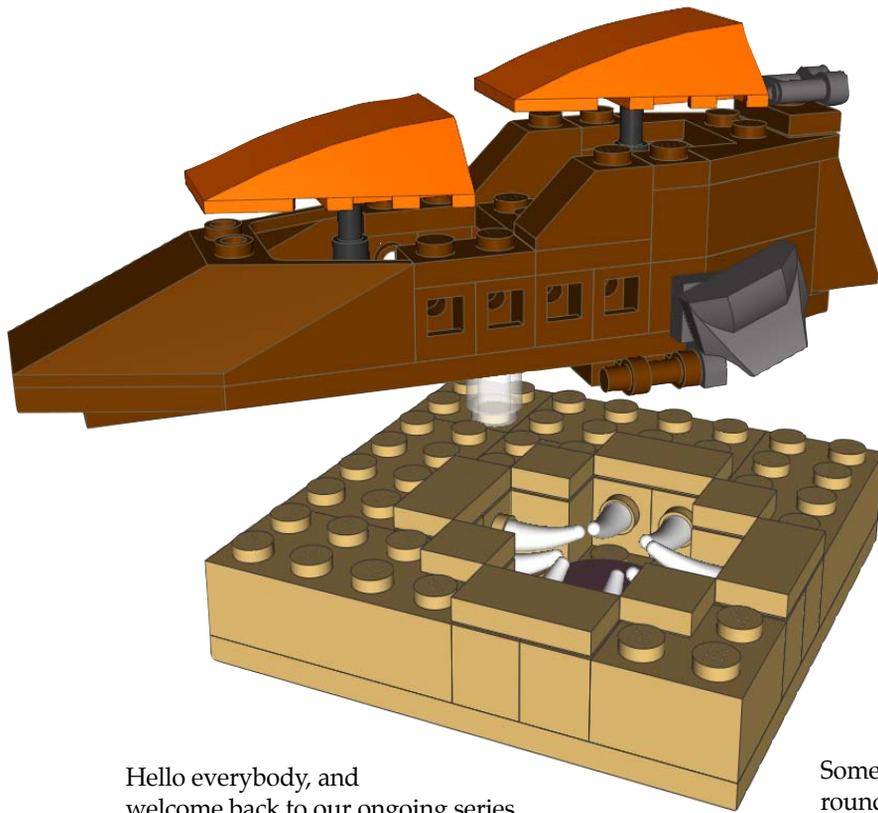
Gaetano has created this world to allow his figures to come to life in more exciting poses. This has allowed for the creation of the articulated horse, which I believe is a feat of LEGO engineering. This theme could easily be altered into any genre. I can see the horse outfitted with mechanical style wings to create a sci-fi horse and rider. The beauty of this work is that it all starts with the foundation of the minifigure; this simple figure is capable of so much customization. [b](#)



You can go to Jared's webpage by scanning this QR code!

Next Time:

Minifig Customization 101—Packaging Your Figures for Display



You Can Build It

MINI Model

MINI Sailbarge & Pit of Carkoon

Design and Instructions
by Christopher Deck

Hello everybody, and welcome back to our ongoing series of mini model building in *BrickJournal!* This time we want to build a nice mini diorama from *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*. One of the most memorable scenes from this movie is Jabba's sailbarge travelling through the dune seas of Tatooine to the Great Pit of Carkoon. With quite simple methods and not more than one hundred pieces, we can build this in miniaturized form.

Some of the newer generation pieces come in quite handy to round up the design, such as the Viking helmet horns used for the Great Pit of Carkoon or the nicely curved wedges and slopes used for the sailbarge's sails and steering vanes. These, in combination with the older brown windscreen piece, results in the sailbarge's unique shape. I hope you will enjoy building this little scene, and I will be glad to share more mini dioramas with you in the future!

Yours, Christopher Deck 

Parts List (Parts can be ordered through Bricklink.com by searching by part number and color)

Pit of Carkoon

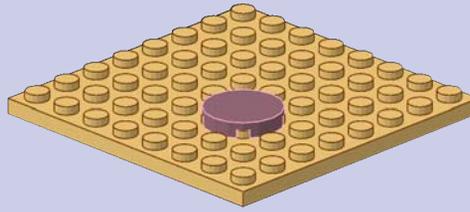
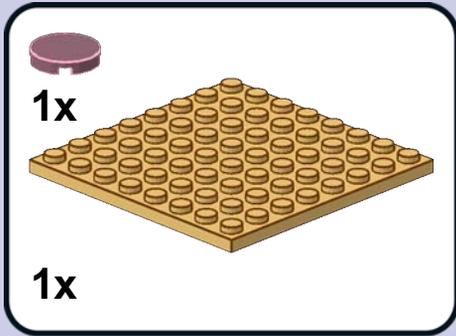
Qty.	Color	Part	Description
1	Trans-Clear	3062b.dat	Brick 1 x 1 Round with Hollow Stud
8	Tan	87087.dat	Brick 1 x 1 with Stud on 1 Side
3	Tan	3003.dat	Brick 2 x 2
4	Tan	3001.dat	Brick 2 x 4
8	White	53451.dat	Minifig Helmet Viking Horn
1	Tan	41539.dat	Plate 8 x 8
4	Tan	3070b.dat	Tile 1 x 1 with Groove
4	Tan	3069b.dat	Tile 1 x 2 with Groove
1	Sand-Red	4150.dat	Tile 2 x 2 Round

Sailbarge

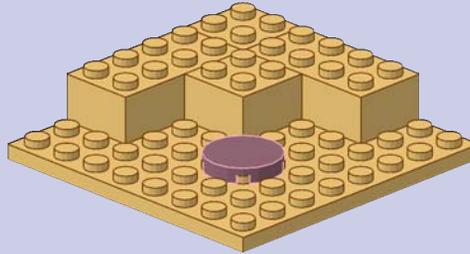
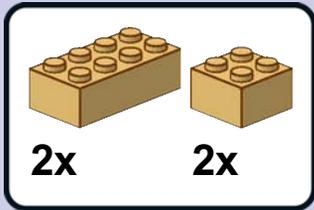
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8	Brown	4070.dat	Brick 1 x 1 with Headlight
1	Brown	3004.dat	Brick 1 x 2
2	Black	64644.dat	Minifig Telescope
1	Dark Bluish-Gray	30162.dat	Minifig Tool Binoculars Town
2	Brown	3024.dat	Plate 1 x 1
2	Dark Bluish-Gray	6019.dat	Plate 1 x 1 with Clip Horizontal
5	Brown	3023.dat	Plate 1 x 2

Qty.	Color	Part	Description
2	Orange	3023.dat	Plate 1 x 2
1	Brown	3794b.dat	Plate 1 x 2 with Groove with 1 Centre Stud
2	Brown	2540.dat	Plate 1 x 2 with Handle
2	Brown	3794a.dat	Plate 1 x 2 without Groove with 1 Centre Stud
1	Brown	3022.dat	Plate 2 x 2
4	Brown	3020.dat	Plate 2 x 4
1	Brown	3035.dat	Plate 4 x 8
2	Brown	3040b.dat	Slope Brick 45 2 x 1
1	Brown	3678b.dat	Slope Brick 65 2 x 2 x 2 with Centre Tube
2	Dark Bluish-Gray	47458.dat	Slope Brick Curved 1 x 2 x 2/3 with Fin without Studs
2	Brown	2399.dat	Wedge 3 x 4
2	Orange	47753.dat	Wedge 4 x 4 Triple Curved without Studs
1	Brown	6152.dat	Windscreen 6 x 4 x 1.333 Airplane
3	Brown	4859.dat	Wing 3 x 4 with 1 x 2 Cutout without Stud Notches

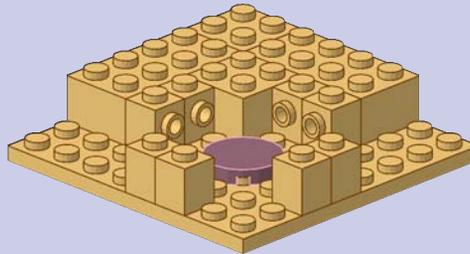
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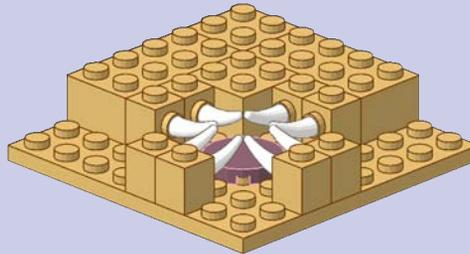
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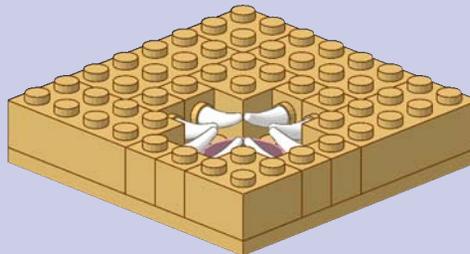
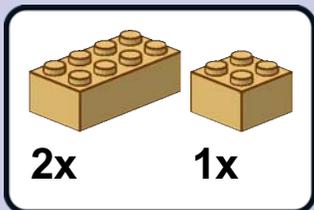
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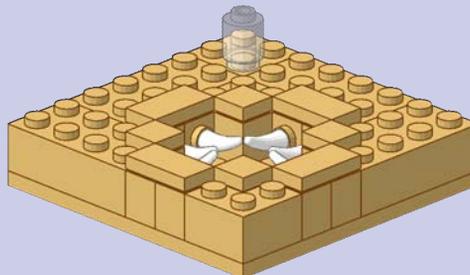
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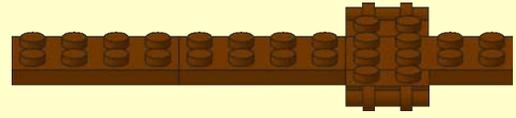
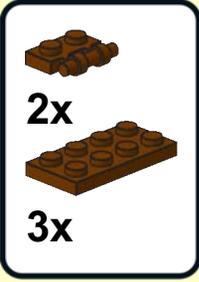
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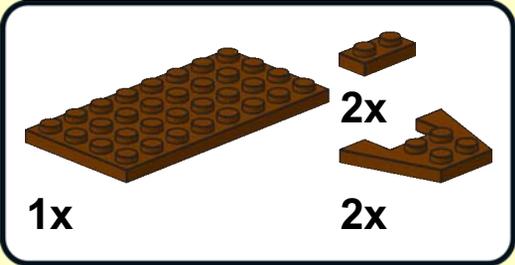
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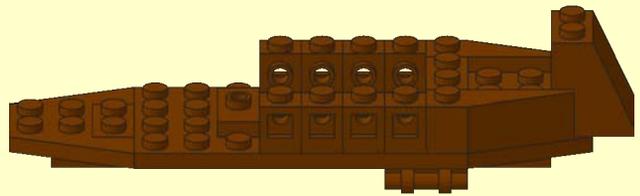
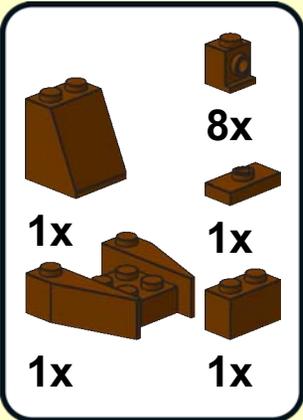
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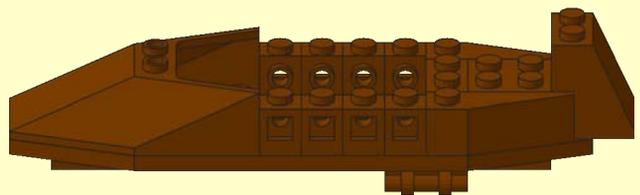
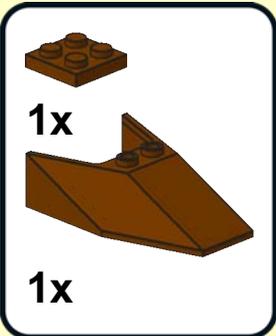
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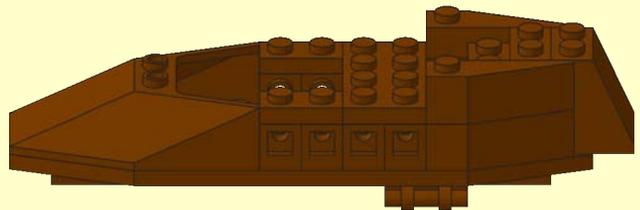
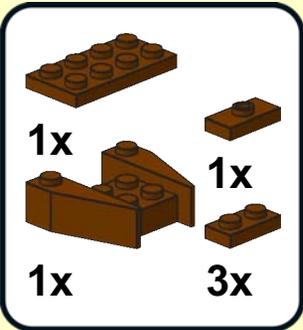
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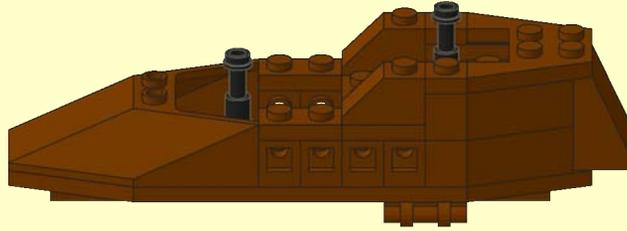
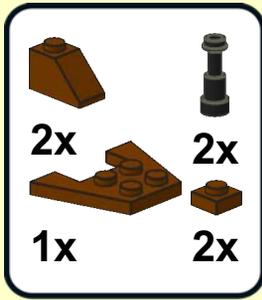
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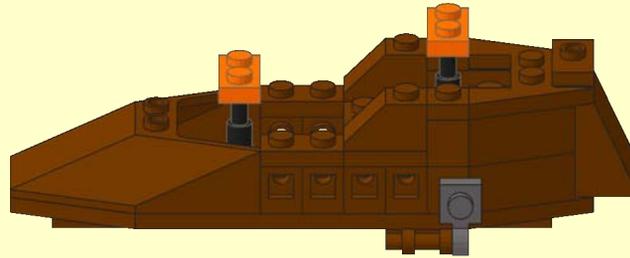
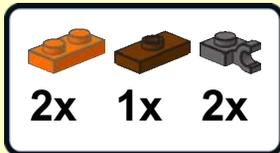
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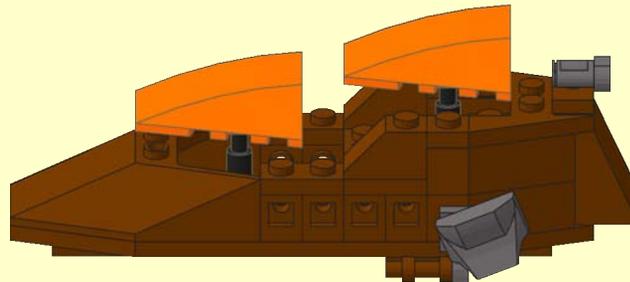
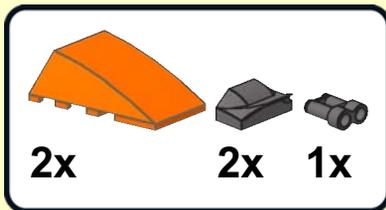
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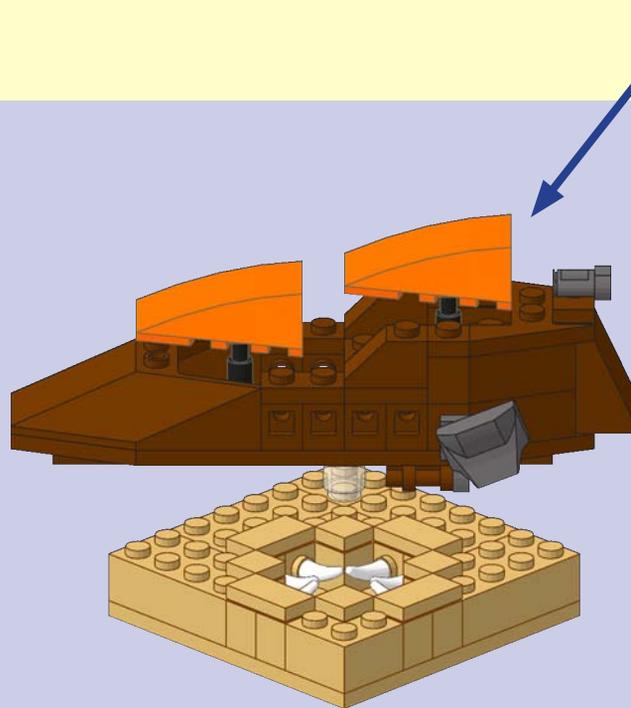
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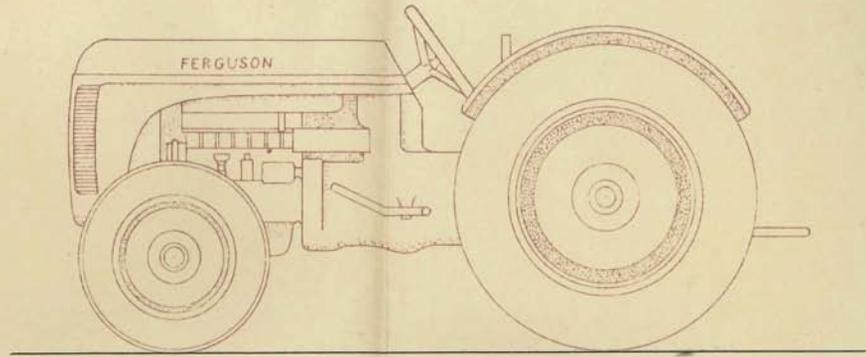
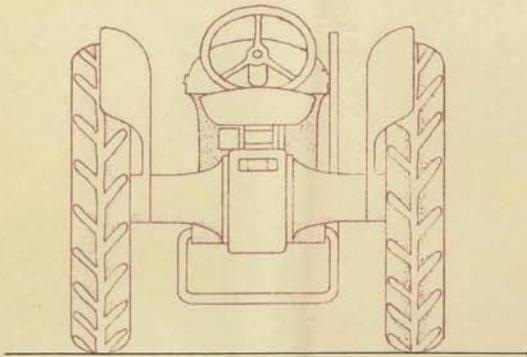


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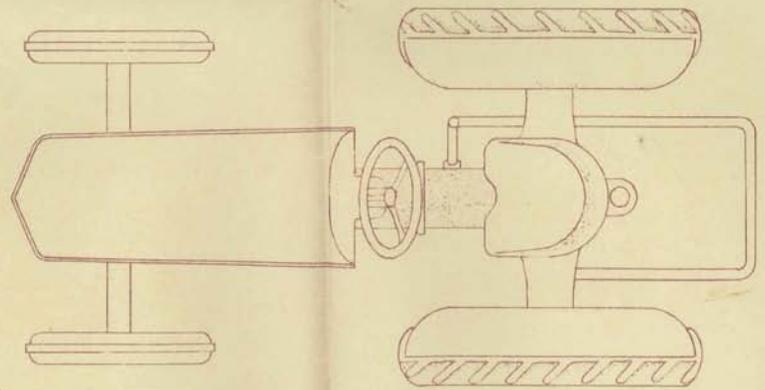


The Ferguson Tractor: Plowing Its Way to Success

Article by Kristian Hauge

Photography provided by the LEGO Group

In autumn 1951, the LEGO Group launched a toy Ferguson tractor made of plastic. The tractor — marketed both as a building set and as a finished model — was a massive success.



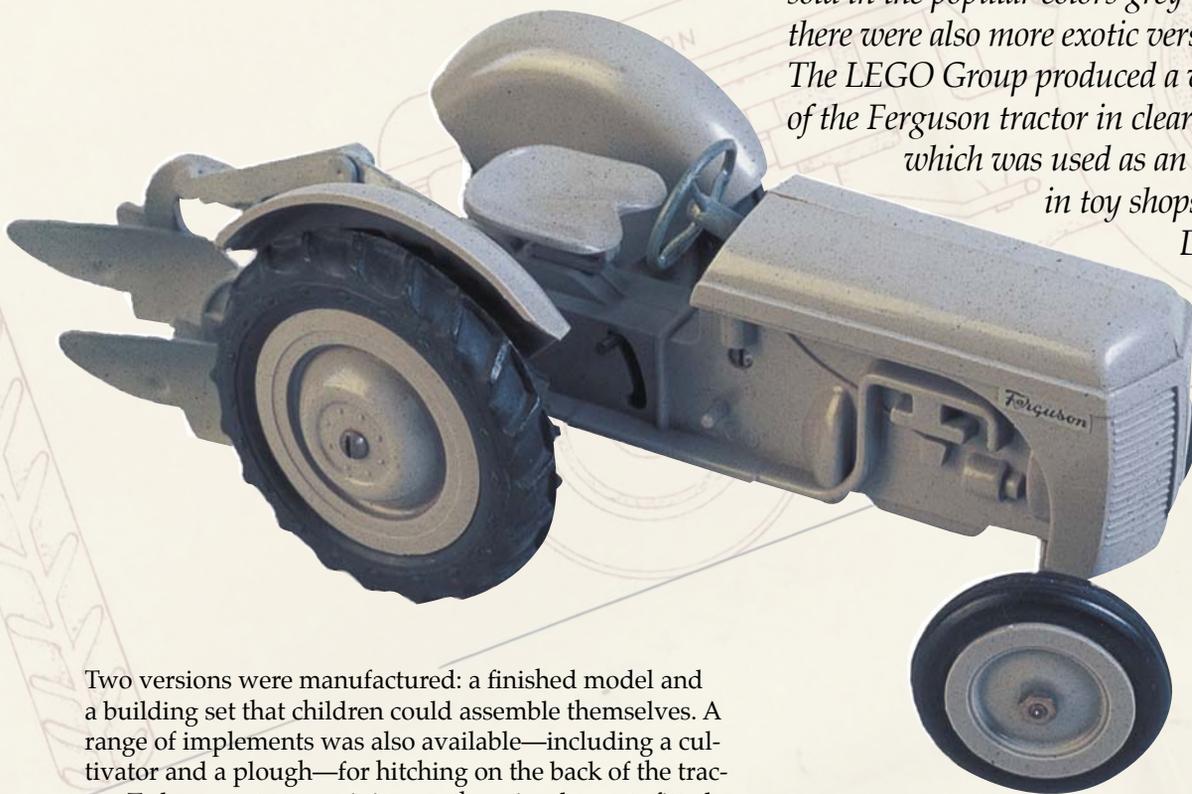
Drawing of the LEGO® Ferguson tractor from February 10, 1950, by Knud Møller — the designer who later invented the LEGO wheel.

During a five-year period from 1948, Denmark received monetary and raw-material aid from the United States under the European recovery programme designed to rebuild European economies. The programme was the Marshall Plan, named after US Secretary of State George Marshall. The funding aid enabled hard-pressed Danish farmers to buy new and better equipment, and in the post-war years Danish agriculture was thoroughly modernised. The compact Ferguson tractor was particularly prized by Danish farmers, who quickly swapped their horses and oxen for the reliable Fergie tractor.

The change was reflected in the Danish toy market. A look at the LEGO Group's many wooden and plastic products from the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s clearly shows that these products were inspired by social change and technological progress. So it was a natural step in the early 1950s for the LEGO Group to set up production of a toy Ferguson tractor in plastic. If Dad had a Ferguson, his young son playing in the farmyard wanted one too!



Although thousands of Ferguson tractors were sold in the popular colors grey (bottom) and red, there were also more exotic versions of the tractor. The LEGO Group produced a very rare model of the Ferguson tractor in clear plastic (above), which was used as an exhibition model in toy shops throughout Denmark.



Two versions were manufactured: a finished model and a building set that children could assemble themselves. A range of implements was also available—including a cultivator and a plough—for hitching on the back of the tractor. To keep costs to a minimum, these implements fitted not only the plastic Ferguson tractor—but also the wooden tractors that were also part of the LEGO® range.

Expensive Model

Developing the toy Ferguson tractor was a slow process, and it took more than a year to manufacture the first model. The cost of producing the technical drawings and moulds needed to manufacture the

tractor meant that the first LEGO toy tractor off the production line cost DKK 30,000 in 1951 terms. By comparison a real-life Ferguson tractor in 1952 cost the farmer DKK 9,180. The new toy was under pressure to deliver—and at a retail price of DKK 13 each it had to sell well to recoup the LEGO Group's investment.

Fortunately, the LEGO Ferguson tractor was a massive success after its launch in 1951. The tractor, which sold until 1959, became one of the most popular LEGO products on the market—and was the first great success for the LEGO Group's plastic-moulding department.

The department was set up in the late 1940s after Ole Kirk Kristiansen purchased a plastic-moulding machine in 1946 and began experimenting with what was for his company a new material.

Success Breeds Success

By 1952 the LEGO Group's plastic products were ringing up higher sales than their wooden counterparts. The runaway success of the Ferguson tractor, launched to coincide with Christmas sales in 1951, made a significant contribution to the success of the company's plastic toys. In the first three years the product was in the shops—from its launch in 1951 to autumn 1954—it sold approximately 100,000 units.

Successes such as the Ferguson tractor also had implications for other LEGO Group products. One of the items that caught the eye of the shopping public was Automatic Binding Bricks, the construction toy the world was later to know as ... LEGO Bricks.

When they launched in 1949, Automatic Binding Bricks added little to the company's profits in the first year or so. But the picture began to change in the early/mid 1950s, when Automatic Binding Bricks—in 1953 renamed LEGO Mursten (Danish for LEGO Bricks)—increased in popularity. The rise in popularity was due, among other things, to improvements in the quality of the brick. The LEGO Group ploughed back part of the profits from its popular plastic products—including the Ferguson tractor—into improving product development. One of the results was better-quality bricks. In 1954, the plastic series was broadened to include new doors and windows as separate building elements.

In many respects, the success of the Ferguson toy tractor helped drive product development in the direction of what was to become the LEGO Group's all-consuming success: the LEGO Brick. This does not mean that LEGO Bricks would not have become the winner they are without the earlier sales successes—the idea was too strong to fail. But the economic leeway generated by the Ferguson tractor undoubtedly helped the company more quickly to develop and establish the Brick. **b**

Calling LEGO Fans and Historians...

As we worked on this article, we realized that we at LEGO Idea House have some gaps in our knowledge of the LEGO® Ferguson tractor. So we would very much like to hear from you readers on the subject. *What do you know about the LEGO Ferguson tractor?*

We are particularly interested in learning more about the teamwork between the LEGO Group and Nordisk Traktor Kompagni A/S/Nordisk Diesel A/S.

We would also be very pleased to hear from you if you have additional information about the Ferguson tractor not mentioned in the article.

We should point out that we are interested only in documented information.

Please contact: Ferguson@LEGO.com.
This email address will remain open until December 1, 2012.

Thank you for your cooperation!

LEGO Idea House

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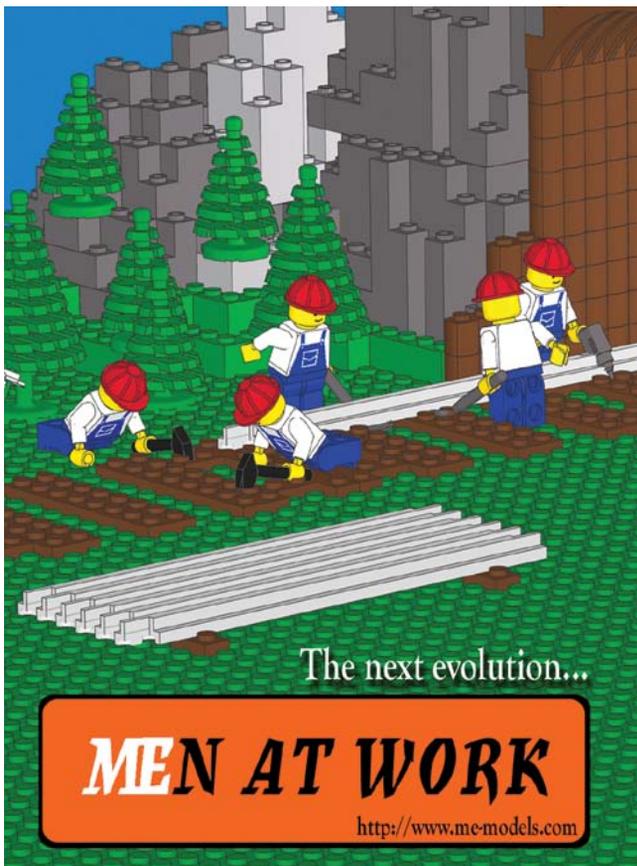
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by Greg (AFOLs) Hyland

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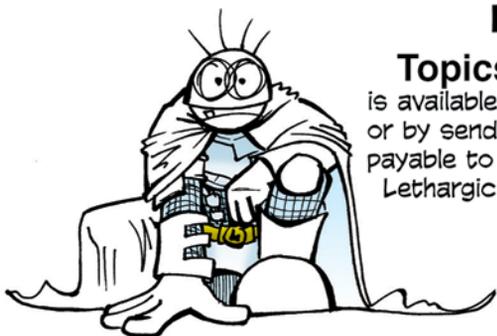
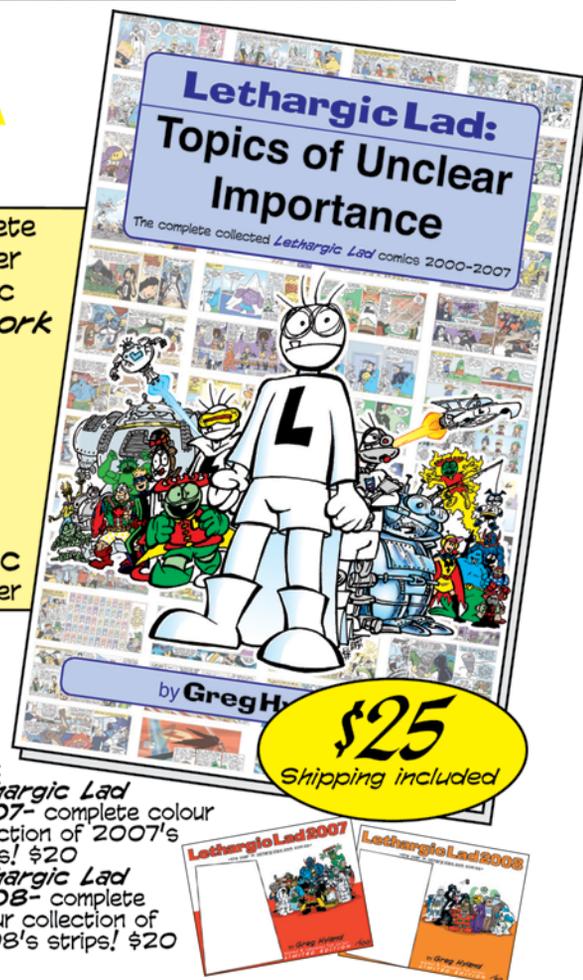
-John Kovalic
Dork Tower

Lethargic Lad:

Topics of Unclear Importance

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Last Word

Some of the crazier photos I get are from the 'other' conventions I attend. You know, the sci-fi / pop culture events. There are a small but growing number of cosplay (costumers) who are using LEGO built outfits. As you can see here, the result can be completely authentic looking (Boba Fett, as built by Simon MacDonald and Dr. Doom, by Norbert Labuguen) to well, let's say off-the-wall (the alien clinger by Norbert).

Have you seen some interesting LEGO costumes? Drop me a line!

Til then , see you next issue! 



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Brick Journal

people • building • community

THE MAGAZINE FOR LEGO® ENTHUSIASTS OF ALL AGES!



BRICKJOURNAL magazine (edited by Joe Meno) spotlights all aspects of the LEGO® Community, showcasing events, people, and models every issue, with contributions and how-to articles by top builders worldwide, new product intros, and more. Available in both FULL-COLOR print and digital editions. Print subscribers get the digital version FREE!

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BRICKJOURNAL #1

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This FULL-COLOR issue spotlights blockbuster summer movies, LEGO style! Go behind the scenes for new sets for INDIANA JONES, and see new models, including a MINI FLYING WING and a LEGO CITY, a lifesize IRON MAN, plus how to CUSTOMIZE MINIFIGURES, BUILDING INSTRUCTIONS, a tour of the ONLINE LEGO FACTORY, and lots more!

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Event Reports from BRICKWORLD, FIRST LEGO LEAGUE WORLD FESTIVAL and PIECE OF PEACE (Japan), spotlight on our cover model builder BRYCE MCGLONE, behind the scenes of LEGO BATMAN, LEGO at COMIC-CON INTERNATIONAL, FIRST LEGO LEAGUE WORLD FESTIVAL, plus STEP-BY-STEP BUILDING INSTRUCTIONS, TECHNIQUES, and more!

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Event report on the MINDSTORMS 10th ANNIVERSARY at LEGO HEADQUARTERS, Pixar's ANGUS MACLANE on LEGO in filmmaking, a glimpse at the LEGO Group's past with the DIRECTOR OF LEGO'S IDEA HOUSE, event reports, a look at how SEAN KENNEY's LEGO creations ended up on NBC'S 30 ROCK television show, instructions and spotlights on builders, and more!

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Spotlight on CLASSIC SPACE SETS and a look at new ones, BRANDON GRIFFITH shows his STAR TREK MODELS, LEGO set designers discuss their work creating the SPACE POLICE with PIRATE SETS, POWER FUNCTIONS TRAIN DEVELOPMENT, the WORLD'S TALLEST LEGO TOWER, MINI-FIGURE CUSTOMIZATION, plus coverage of BRICKFEST 2009 and more!

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We go to the Middle Ages, with a look at the LEGO Group's CASTLE LINE, featuring an interview with the designer behind the first LEGO castle set, the YELLOW CASTLE. Also: we spotlight builders that have created their own large-scale version of the castle, and interview other castle builders, plus a report on BRICKWORLD in Chicago, and still more instructions and building tips!

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BrickJournal looks at LEGO® DISNEY SETS, with features on the Disney LEGO sets of the past (MICKEY and MINNIE) and present (TOY STORY and PRINCE OF PERSIA)! We also present Disney models built by LEGO fans, and a look at the newest Master Build model at WALT DISNEY WORLD, plus articles and instructions on building and customization, and more!

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BrickJournal goes undersea with looks at the creation of LEGO's new ATLANTIS SETS, plus a spotlight on a fan-created underwater theme, THE SEA MONKEYS, with builder FELIX GRECO! Also, a report on the LEGO WORLD convention in the Netherlands, BUILDER SPOTLIGHTS, INSTRUCTIONS and ways to CUSTOMIZE MINIFIGURES, LEGO HISTORY, and more!

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A look at school sculptures by NATHAN SAWAYA, builder MARCOS BESSA's creations, ANGUS MACLANE's CubeDudes, a Nepali Diorama by JORDAN SCHWARTZ, instructions to build a school bus for your LEGO town, minifigure customizations, how a POWER MINERS model became one for ATLANTIS, building standards, and much more!

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Focuses on **STEAMPUNK!** Feature editor **GUY HIMBER** gives a tour with a look at his work, **DAVE DeGOBBI**'s, **NATHAN PROUDLOVE**'s, and others! There's also a look at the history of LEGO Steampunk building, as well as instructions for a Steampunk plane by **ROD GILLIES!** Plus our regular columns on minifigure customization, building tips, event reports, our step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions, and much more!

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LEGO SPACE WAR issue! A **STARFIGHTER BUILDING LESSON** by Peter Reid, **WHY SPACE MARINES ARE SO POPULAR** by Mark Stafford, a trip behind the scenes of **LEGO'S NEW ALIEN CONQUEST SETS** that hit store shelves earlier this year, plus **JARED K. BURKS'** column on **MINIFIGURE CUSTOMIZATION**, building tips, event reports, our step-by-step "YOU CAN BUILD IT" INSTRUCTIONS, and more!

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Go to Japan with articles on two **JAPANESE LEGO FAN EVENTS**, plus take a look at **JAPAN'S SACRED LEGO LAND**, Nasu Highland Park—the site of the BrickFan events and a pilgrimage site for many Japanese LEGO fans. Also, a feature on **JAPAN'S TV CHAMPIONSHIP OF LEGO**, a look at the **CLICKBRICK LEGO SHOPS** in Japan, plus how to get into **TECHNIC BUILDING**, **LEGO EDUCATION**, and more!

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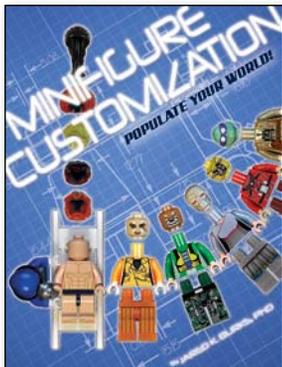


BRICKJOURNAL #19

LEGO EVENTS ISSUE covering our own **BRICKMAGIC FESTIVAL**, **BRICKWORLD**, **BRICKFAIR**, **BRICKCON**, plus other events outside the US. There's full event details, plus interviews with the winners of the **BRICKMAGIC CHALLENGE** competition, complete with instructions to build award winning models. Also **JARED K. BURKS'** regular column on minifigure customizing, building tips, and more!

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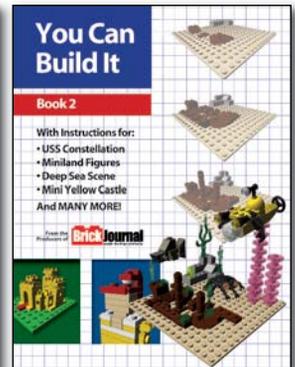
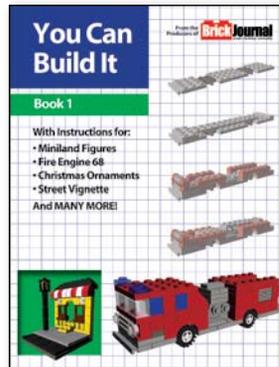
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