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Biggin Andrew States and States

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Right: One of the layouts from Brickcon's *Big in Japan* display.





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About the Cover:

Setting up for Brickworld.



From the Editor:

It's the wrapup!

Here's an issue that highlights some of the big events of last year - not all, but the ones we could get into this page count!

We have events from all over the world, including the US, France and Indonesia! Also we talk with a person who builds in a theme that hasn't been in *BrickJournal* for a while...Bionicle! Finally, we are looking at classic sets...

We also have a review and the usual departments with their instructions and thoughts on building, so what are you waiting for? Start reading!!!

Joe Meno Editor

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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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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Dirk Denoyelle:

Building a Calling Card

Article by Joe Meno Photography from Dirk Denoyelle

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The LEGO[®] mosaic on the previous page was first seen at LEGO World in Zwolle, the Netherlands and is now on tour in Europe. Built by LEGO Certified Professional (LCP) Dirk Denoyelle and a team of builders, this creation measures 4.26 meters high and 3.47 meters wide, or 12 gray baseplates by 9 gray baseplates. It took them, design time included, almost 500 hours and about 200,000 LEGO plates. It is one of the largest LEGO mosaics ever made by a private team.

The mosaic itself is a parody on one of the most famous paintings by the Antwerp artist Peter Paul Rubens: *The Adoration of the Magi*. It was built in Hoboken, near Antwerp (Flanders, Belgium).

BrickJournal chatted with Dirk about making the mosaic.

BrickJournal: Who requested you to do this?

Nobody, really. As a LCP I focus on making portraits, both 2D and 3D. Now Europe is quite a difficult market, as it is a very scattered one. Being big in Flanders (the part of Belgium where I live) might be one thing, it takes the same effort to become big in Wallony (the region next door) or big in Holland (the country at the other door), let alone France, Germany, and so on. So I needed to find a way to promote my art efficiently and quickly. Thus I decided to make some *verrry* impressive art pieces, and make them show up in as many countries as possible. Which then should inspire people to *A*: Build stuff themselves, and *B*: Buy my art :-) This giant Rubens is just the start of that campaign, really.

How hard was it to plan?

It took me some days to plan, which to my standards is a long time. Usually my ideas come very quickly, and sitting behind my computer for more than 3 hours working on the same thing already gives me grey hair. So the more or less 24 hours I needed to plan and design this one, was a nightmare :-)

Albert Einstein? What's he doing in the mosaic?

The painting is called *Adoration of the Magi*, where the Magi are the 3 kings from the bible coming to honor the newborn Messiah. In Christian tradition, they stand for "wise people" (or so I've always been told); meaning that even the most brilliant and highly ranked people in the world came to pay tribute to the innocent newborn child.

So instead of just copying the original painting, I replaced the heads of the original characters with heads of "wise" people that we still know today, should know or would want to know. I even added a few. I leave it to the viewer to discover them. But there is Ghandi as well, for instance.

What did you use to plan out the mosaic?

I don't like to give away much about how I build things. But I will say that I did NOT use typical mosaic designing software. It was more a Photoshop-like kind of exercise.

Were there any problems that you had with planning or building it?

The main problem is not solved yet: how are we going to make this thing easy to transport. For LEGO World we just taped the baseplates onto a giant wooden panel. But that took 7 hours



Setting up.



Dirk looking at LEGO self-portraits, all his own creations.

and 4 people. Another issue was the fact that the pictures of the "new" heads came from totally different sources, which forced me to be very creative in the way I turned them into a mosaic. I could not just copy and paste my previous actions.

How do you move it?

Aha, we get back to the previous answer. At the moment, we just take it apart and rebuild it elsewhere, base plate by base plate. In the near future the whole thing will be mounted on about 6 large panels, which then are put together on some aluminium frame.

Have you done any other mosaics or models at this scale?

This is the largest one so far. I made a 2m x 2m mosaic once, representing a cow, and a 2.5 x 1.2 m mosaic for the Museum of Science and Nature in Brussels. And then I've made about 100 normal sized ones as commissions.

What are the challenges with building at this scale?

Keeping track of what is where. I think about 15 people have helped me out, each taking 3 boxes with plates home with them. So at a certain point I got two copies of one part of the mosaic, and there was an other baseplate missing (still is, by the way; I rebuilt it).

Another painful point was my stock of very light green 1x1 plates. When I started building, they were regular elements. When I was halfway completed, they turned into Q elements, which means I can not buy them anymore. Which meant I either had to buy them on the internet, which would cost way too much (I needed about 10,000 of them), or I had to swap them for another color in some places, which I did: the sky is bluer on my painting than in the original one.

What's next on your building list?

We're doing a similar art piece for the town hall where I live. About 1/3 of the size of Rubens, and building it with kids from 5 different local schools. The occasion is the 875th anniversary of our little town (which is called Hoboken, by the way: the one after which the New Jersey town was named)

What would you like to build?

Funny question. I am the kind of person who makes his dreams come true. If I want to build something, I don't need much time to dream about it. I just go for it. I'll find a way to finance it, I'm sure. I always have :-)

Dirk Denoyelle's Website: http://www.amazings.eu

Dirk Denoyelle's MOCPages Gallery: http://www.mocpages.com/home.php/29664

You can jump to Dirk's website by scanning the code below:



You can jump to Dirk's MOCPages gallery by scanning the code below:



People

Yul B. Karel: Robot Builder

Interview by Joe Meno Photography by Yul B. Karel

Yul B. Karel is a LEGO builder who created some unique models of robots. Not C-3PO or Robby the Robot, but the robot toys that were made in the '50s and '60s. He 's now a Creative Director of his own studio, Indesian Studios (www.indesain.net), which develops websites, graphics and print media for corporations. He lives in Tangerang, Indonesia, which is a small city on the southern side of Jakarta.

He started LEGO building when he was 7 or 8, and stopped when he went into Junior School because, as he puts it, "there were other things more interesting to me at that time such as girls, soccer, and Playstation!" He returned to the LEGO hobby in 2007, when he started collecting new and vintage sets. He also started building models of cars trucks, and houses. *BrickJournal* chatted with him briefly about his robots.

What inspires you to build?

Basically, I'm a designer that likes to build things from the scratch. This might be a bit silly, but I was inspired by the Miniature Killer in episodes of *CSI* (in its seventh season, starting with the episode "Built to Kill, Pt I")who built the crime scene with absolute details! It flabbergasted me and inspired me to build a miniature of my own house. I got hooked right after that.

And your favorite theme?

My favourite theme is Classic Space. I also like classic town/vintage sets, as they look simple and uncomplicated but playable, and last but not least, I like the Star Wars theme.

What do you like about your robot?

It's a hard question for me. I like it because I managed to create a robot very similar to the real tin robot and I am very satisfied with the result. The part I love most is the face with round eyes and smiling lips with white teeth. The chest that can be opened with a lot of details inside.

Why did you decide on building toy robots?

I always liked vintage/retro toys and I had this kind of tin robot when I was a kid. The first time I decided to build this robot was because I had a commercial project for TV advertising that requested me to create something unique in LEGO. In my mind I suddenly came up with the idea to build a robot, and a retro/tin robot. The project was cancelled (hahahaaa), but by that time, it had inspired me to create another robot.

What else have you built?

I have built a fire truck series, paramedic truck, car, and house.

What else do you want to build?

I still want to build another tin robot and maybe around 3-4 robots but in different shapes.





A look at the interior of the black robot.



People

Norbert Labuguen: **BIONICLE Builder**

Article by Joe Meno and Norbert Labuguen Photography by Joe Meno and Jason Head



Norbert Labuguen poses with Shadow Scorpion.

Norbert Labuguen is a BIONICLE® builder who hit the convention scene this year in the US with a bang - he recieved multiple awards in the first two conventions he has attended for his models. He fits his building in with his job as a In-House Reservations Agent for a large hotel in Long Beach, California and as a staff volunteer with Comic-Con International: San Diego. His education (which has become handy with his building) is a Biology Degree with an option in Zoology from California State University, Long Beach.

Norbert chatted with BrickJournal about his building and his convention experiences.

BrickJournal: Norbert, how long have you been building?

I started building at the age of 6. When I was 18, though, I only had a few sets, so I pretty much only collected until I was 20. It has been 21 years on and off since I started seriously as an AFOL.

Did you start in BIONICLE, and if not, what did you start building in? The first set I collected was the Monorail Transport System (#6990), circa 1987. I also had a few Space Police sets as well. I did not do anything seriously until 1990 when I could afford to buy more sets. These were primarily space and aquatic/ submarine themes.

Kaging Minotaur was inspired by the minotaur in Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief.

Bricks by the Bay 2010 Best Original BIONICLE Creation, (Judges Choice)

What inspired you to go into BIONICLE building?

I was drawn to the strange angular and curved shapes that BIONICLE had to offer as well as the mechanical elements from Technic. Having been an action figure collector, I felt familiar with the weapons, accessories, gears, moving parts, and points of articulation. The inspiration began with the precursor to BIONICLE, Throwbots/ Slizer. I collected multiple sets and built larger versions of some of the models. Then I thought outside of the genre and I built a 12-inch-long yellow scorpion.

What was the first BIONICLE model you built?

I collected all the original six. I think I purchased Pohatu and Onua first. I know that I have more multiple copies of these sets than the other four. I built larger versions of Pohatu and Onua.

Where did you start displaying your models?

At Comic-Con International San Diego 2009, I saw a flier for Bricks By The Bay (BBTB) 2010. BBTB was the first ever first LEGO fan convention I have attended.



Brickcon 2010 Best Large BIONICLE (Judges Choice)

Previously, I did attend two tryout locations in LEGOLAND California's Master Model Builder Search of 2006. I did not make it as a selected participant, but I was entered into the voting for a wildcard spot. Ultimately, I did not win a spot, but I found this experience to be most educational.

How were they received?

They were well received, to say the least. At BBTB, I won 3 of the 5 awards presented in the BIONICLE category. It was rather confusing after I received my first award, when I was asked to stay on stage. It was quite a shock to find that I received a second award and later a third.

I also received great comments from the general public on Exhibition Day.

Who inspired you to build more?

I can't say that I can credit any one single person. I build for myself. I did find encouragement from Bill Ward and my peers at BBTB to continue to build. Now that I think of it, buying and reading my first hard copies of *BrickJournal* at CCISD 2008 influenced my model making. Seeing what other builders have made brought my own creations to the next level. So you (Joe Meno), your fellow contributors, and your featured builders have indirectly inspired me.

Building

What inspires you to build a model?

Coming up with a general theme is often enough to ignite the spark of inspiration. For example, before I thought of MOC

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ideas for BBTB in February/March 2010, I was inspired by the then soon too be released movies *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* and *Clash of the* *Titans*. My personal interest in Classical Studies grabbed onto the idea of creatures from Greek Mythology.

What makes you build in BIONICLE?

Nature and life have very few straight lines. I have an organic aesthetic. To me BIONICLE (that includes the older Throwbots/Slizers and the current Hero Factory) embody that aesthetic. Remember, I have a degree in biology.

What are the things you want to build?

I saw some great themes at BrickCon. I am interested in creating models that would fit into Big in Japan and Steampunk.

At Brickcon 2010, you won another award for Shadow Scorpion.What are your thoughts on winning at two events? It was an awesome feeling having won that many awards (three) on my debut entry at a LEGO fan convention (BBTB). It was a self validating feeling winning an additional award at BrickCon with a previously award winning model (Shadow Scorpion). I learned two things. First, I do not have to keep proving to myself that my work is great. Others definitely agree. Second, the AFOL Community is welcoming and generous. I made many new friends at BrickCon.

The Next Thing

What is/are the next model(s) you want to do?

BIONICLE is definitely a comfort zone, but I want to build using standard brick and plate elements as well as sloped and contoured panels. I've been working currently on a spaceship that will hold anywhere from 4 to 8 minifig crew members. It has been a challenge to get it to what I want.

For those who want to build BIONICLE, do you have any advice?

Based on my own personal experience, I recommend thinking out of the box (non-humanoid, vehicles, tools/weapons) or think large (larger than Toa size) or really small (smaller than Turaga size). I estimate that 95% or more of the BIONICLE MOC often based on the BIONICLE mythos. That is great for those of us who know the characters and stories, but I find this topic too limiting.



Models at Brickcon 2010.

Norbert's Notes from Brickcon 2010

Here is a listing of recognized models and creators from BrickCon 2010 including characteristic that I think made the MOC stand out from the others.

Best Small BIONICLE: *Fire Ant by gifboy99* This was a tiny, but well executed design.

Best Large BIONICLE: Shadow Scorpion by Nobert Labuguen

My model fully extended was 3 feet long. It was nearly all black and utilized some unique geared parts. My design was anatomically comparative to a real scorpion.

Best Use of a Piece: Frost Cycle by Brickthing

A vast majority of creations were humanoid and less than 5% were non-humanoid creatures, but this was a vehicle. This was a small model that used a Hero Factory part in an unexpected way. This well executed model of a motorcycle had translucent ice blue wheels.

Underappreciated MOC Artist: Assassin Weaponry by Arkov AND multiple MOCs by Kopakanui

These were throwing stars, daggers, and a gun/rifle. Weapons are cool except when they are used against you.

Best Overall BIONICLE MOC: Velonese by Czar

This model stood maybe 2 feet high. It was a great design with fine detail that also had a cape and spear as accessories.

Honorary Mention: Bronze Kirop by Inferna Firesword This model would not normally be considered for standard voting as it was made of bronze. I am guessing that the creator used bronze casting techniques using a BIONICLE model that he



created. It obviously was recognized because it was not even made of real LEGO parts, but of metal.

The blog *BZPower* has descriptions and pictures of the winning models and trophies at this link: http://www.bzpower.com/story.php?ID=4868 or you can scan the QR code at the left.



Frost Cycle.



Velonese.



Assassin Weaponry.

Fire Ant.

Jesper Jørgen

is an Advertising Photographer who has worked with LEGO® products for Advance agency since 1984.

The Blacktron[®] shots were on one of the largest sets we ever made for the LEGO Group. It was built and shot in June 1990. The final photo, took 14 trick exposure shots through different glass-masks in front of the camera on the same 5x7" film.

Set:

The Orange Planet was made in transparent acrylic with a diameter of 4 feet. It was painted with airbrush in orange, yellow and red tones and then lit with spotlights from behind. The small Green Planet was a card paper globe painted in 3-4 green tones. Painted in brown tones, the Rocks were made of Lava from Iceland and were hanging on tungsten wires (extremely thin wire). The Stars were made from poking small holes in the black paper background that were exposed in another camera on the same film.

Lighting:

Lighting the set required approx. 25 small theater tungsten spots, 1 big flash spot from above (with orange, neutral and blue filters mounted), and 12 different types of flash placed around the set. Two smoke machines were used to make fog which was lighted with spotlights that had blue and orange filters.

No computer work was done on this photo, which became a poster that was printed in 1991.

Setbuilding and Photo: Jesper Jørgen Agency: Advance AD: Alex Stougaard



Classic Set Spotlight



Set 6786: Blacktron Alienator

Article, set art and interview by Huw Millington

Additional photo provided by Bjarne Tveskov

Name:	Alienator (US), Strider (UK), Space-Rider (Germany)		
Theme:	Space/Blacktron		
Pieces:	82		
Minifigs:	1		
Availabilit	y: 1988 - 1991		
Brickset User Ratin	g: 4.6/5		

Hi, I'm Huw Millington, owner of Brickset.com. This is the first in a series of articles in which I'll be looking back at much-loved classic LEGO sets. I'll tell you why I've chosen them, what Brickset users think about them and, hopefully, we'll track down and interview the set designers to find out about them from LEGO's perspective.

With so many to choose from it's obviously going to be a difficult task selecting which sets to feature. For this first article, I've chosen one of my personal favourites, the Blacktron Alienator or Blacktron Strider as it was known in the UK.

The original Blacktron sets were released in 1988 and were the first space sets that weren't white, blue or grey. Although they were black and yellow spacecraft, and its all-black minifigs with black visors looked menacing, there was no mention in the 1988 catalogue that these were 'baddies' however I suspect many kids thought they were. It was not until 1989 (when the original Space Police sets were released) that it became apparent that they were, in fact, the bad guys in space and were being pursued and captured by galactic law-enforcement agencies for crimes unspecified.

The Alienator was the smallest of five sets in the original Blacktron space sub-theme (one of which, the Renegade, was released only in North America). In my view, it is the best of the theme. The Alienator is a heavily armed bipedal walker and it did not take much imagination to picture it plodding over dusty planet surface leaving a path of destruction in its wake.

As well as introducing a new colour scheme, Blacktron sets also included another cool feature: modular design. They all split into multiple sub sections which were held together with Technic pins. Not only could you recombine parts from the same set to make different vehicles, but if you had more than one set you could combine parts from them all to make all manner of spacecraft and wheeled vehicles.

So, what makes this a classic? As well as the great colour scheme, minifigs and modularity shared with other Blacktron sets, what makes this one special is its design and selection of parts. There had been several two-legged space walkers released previously but this was the first that actually looked as if it could walk. It was



probably inspired by AT-ST walkers from Star Wars, which of course LEGO didn't license for another 12 years.

It looks functional, efficient and intimidating. The low-slung cockpit overhanging its legs gives it the look of a plodding beast. Its legs move forward and backwards and with the aid of the 'hand of God' (user's hand - Editor's *Note*) it can walk across the floor. The rear section is hinged to reveal a cache of weapons. It's heavily armed with rockets and ray guns. And that's just the main model...

Back in the '80s LEGO took the time to illustrate other models that could be made with the parts on the back of the box. They didn't provide instructions, merely inspiration. The parts selection in the Alienator was so flexible that all three of the alternate models were good enough to be main models in their own right.

So, the combination of colour, design, flexibility and parts selection are the reasons that this set deserves to be called a classlc.

Here's what Brickset users have said about the set in their reviews:

"It's amazing what can be made with this. Even the alternate models are just as good ... So much flexibility and intimidation in one set. It's great how you can interchange parts with other Blacktron sets." – Snake

"All the parts in this set are just superb.



Designing the Blacktron Alienator: An Interview with Bjarne Tveskov

BrickJournal: Blacktron was a radical departure from the space sets before it in that they were black and looked 'evil'. How did it come about? Did you design them as bad guys? How did you end up with the black/yellow colour scheme? Did you try others?

Bjarne Tveskov: The company Tyco was quite aggressive in the US construction toy area in the mid-eighties and I think it's fair to say that Blacktron was somewhat of a response to the market situation at the time. The first three Blacktron sets were designed during the summer of 1986 by three different designers plus our boss Jens Nygård Knudsen.

I guess the colour combination we used was done to signal danger like a wasp or some kind of mechanical insect from outer space. I can't recall if we tried other colours, we were in quite a hurry working during the summer holiday. But we usually did try different combinations. For instance, Space Police 1 was supposed to look like Futuron, only with green transparent parts, looking 15

somewhat similar to German police cars. But this was changed to the black/blue/ red combo quite late in development.

Yes, I think Blacktron was designed to feel like bad guys. In fact, the asymmetrical 6954 Blacktron Renegade, which I also designed, was deemed "aggressive" by a group of concerned mothers in a focus group test and as a result it never came out in Europe. As you know, only bad guys are asymmetrical (think pirates, The Terminator and so on) whereas the good guys are always symmetrical.

BJ: What influenced your design of the Alienator?

BT: As on the 6954 Renegade, I quite liked using the big castle corner elements in a horizontal position. They look very "spacey" when placed that way (you can also see this design used on the 6925 Interplanetary Rover). The walking mechanism had already been used on several earlier Space sets so this was pretty much a case of copy/paste. Also it seemed appropriate to include the modular snap system even in a rather small model like this one. It was a tough challenge to get the Alienator down to the right price since the basic structure of the model has a lot of "given" elements. So in terms of fittings and styling, the model is quite bare-bones compared with, for example, the 6954 Renegade, where I may have gone slightly overboard with regards to small fittings. But I have to say that the Alienator is one of my favourite sets, it has a lot of functionality for such a small model, and the overall proportions works quite well. On the other hand I have to say that the later 6878 Sub Orbital Guardian is probably one of my least favourite ones I ever did: it is sort of like comparing the movie "Speed" to the Speed sequel... :-)

BJ: The modular design of Blacktron was new, wasn't it? How did that idea come about?

BT: We had already included the modular snap idea in some of the Futuron models and it seemed like a nice touch to have a common system for the Blacktron theme. Not sure how attractive the combo-models really were, but as I recall you can do some OK combos with the modules included in the 6954. Some may have noticed how the 6894 Invader has the snap-system in the opposite direction compare to the other Blacktron models, but as I said we were in quite a hurry. There were no new parts done for the Blacktron theme, but obviously a lot of new colours and a lot of new decorations.

BJ: The parts selection is versatile, as demonstrated by the alternate models. Did that happen by accident, in that you designed the main model and then saw what could be made with the parts, or did you choose cool parts to start with?

BT: The part selection was chosen exclusively for the main model which is almost always the case (although different story for Creator type products). The alternative models were often done as rush-jobs fairly late into the process of finishing the set, but I agree that the models shown on the back of the box of the Alienator are quite varied and versatile. Also I like how the box design department put little "footprints" onto the landscape: that is really something since the model is not really able to lift its feet at all!

More Information

You can read more about the models Bjarne worked on at <u>http://gadgets.boingboing.net/2008/02/11/interview-bjarne-p-t.html</u>

The Blacktron Alienator can be found here on Brickset: <u>http://www.brickset.com/detail/?Set=6876-1</u>

Parts list at Peeron: http://www.peeron.com/inv/sets/6876-1?withpics=yes

You can use a QR reader for the sites below:

Bjarne's models: Brickset



Peeron listing:



It's hard to believe such a small set has so many good and varied parts!" – *Anonymous*

"This is a real classic among Space sets. No Space collector should pass this set up!" - Nova Hunter

"LEGO's 'walking machines' are usually good, and this one is a classic amongst smaller space sets. With its well-thought-out design, its legs can be moved in a 'walking' motion..." -*StormSworder*

One of the first web pages I published back in around 1997 was the 'Blacktron Alienator home page' which extolled its virtues and featured LDraw renderings of the alternate models, plus a few that I made from the parts in the box. To coincide with the publication of this article I have resurrected the page and you'll find it, and the LDraw files, at http://www.brickset.com/miscellaneous/ alienator/.

You can use a QR reader to access this page by using the code to the right.



Building

Jordan Schwartz: Losing the LEGO® Aesthetic

Owlet.

Article and Photography by Jordan Schwartz



As someone who has built hundreds of MOCs in the past five years during my time in the LEGO fan community, I have developed objectives and goals – mostly subconscious – that I try to accomplish with each and every creation I devise. These objectives range from the obvious (i.e. wanting to make each creation as accurate as possible) to the obscure (i.e. wanting to encompass some strange technique, element, etc.). Unfortunately, it is not possible to achieve everything I want in every MOC simply because there are way too many variables in any given model. However, as I am sure you have experienced before, when you have accomplished what you set out to in your creations, there is no better feeling.

But in those past five years I have been sharing my MOCs with other fans, through all of the feedback I get [from praise to constructive criticism] there is one comment that rises above all the rest in my opinion. And that is when people say that my creation does not look like LEGO. Think about it – the experienced fan of LEGO knows the elements well. They work with them on a regular basis. They have been building with them for years and years. If you can fool them and make them have to look at your MOC intently so that they can figure out how you realized the shape or texture of it, that is a job well done in my book.





Most of the time when I achieve this type of creation, it is by accident. But I have noticed a few different ways to produce un-LEGO like textures and shapes. The first way is via literal texture, the second via color and the third via unusual elements and unorthodox connection points. Although the builder really needs to know the basics before he or she can get to this level, I believe anyone can reach this echelon of building. Let us look at some case studies to see what I mean.

Probably the easiest way to make a model not look like LEGO is by using the non-plastic elements – those being the rubber elements (like tires) and the cloth items (like capes.) These are fairly common and inexpensive, and create an actual, physical texture. One MOC that comes with me to every event I attend is my Octopus. Recognize what the body is made of? Tires (flipped insideout.) While giving it the rubbery and stretchy

texture, is also gives it the proper, bulbous shape. An example using fabric is my Owlet. The wings are the fabric elements from set #8038 Battle of Endor. Also, look closely at the face. By using capes, I not only create the proper form, but I also drop the typical plastic feel of LEGO, which helps the MOC transcend into something else entirely, as if it is going to fly off the page.

Another way to add texture is by color. One of the most basic ways to use color this way is by mixing old and new grays – this especially works for rock formations or old castle walls. Hand in hand with mixing old and new shades is one of the most clever and practical ways I have seen - mixing bricks that are simply faded with new, bright bricks to create an aged building wall. But in my example, Tyrant of the Glen (a steampunk-themed elk-like automaton), I am using many different colors – golds, bronzes, coppers, browns and so on – to give it a rusty quality. When mixed, we get a faded, corroded and tarnished appearance, which not only forms a rather mysterious aesthetic, but also gives it character.

My last tip is to use either strange elements or elements in strange ways. Using elements the viewer simply does not know exists is obvious, and not as fun as using elements is usual ways. Most people use studs as connection points - and yes, while we can create SNOT (studs not on top) techniques that have the studs going every which way we need, it is still a textbook way of building and therefore not particularly original. In my last example, a 14" tall Tanuki Samurai, his paddy hat is built using twentyone modified 1 x 2 plates with angular extensions and flexible tips. How are these all connected? Official LEGO string, of course! This is only the second time I can recall using string as a means of connecting elements, but it certainly works well, and I look forward to exploring the possibilities of string used in this way in future MOCs. My Tanuki Samurai also uses four of my new favorite element the DUPLO Cloth Bearskin – to create a furry feel and help further convey the animalistic nature of this samurai. He also utilizes two of the large black capes from TECHNIC set #8010 Darth Vader as pants - one for each leg. Furthermore, he uses tires for his abdomen and arms. This creation truly sums up everything I am attempting to say here!



In summation, I think I will close how I often find myself closing – it all comes down to knowing your elements! The trick is being familiar with them and knowing how to use them just a little bit better than the person looking at your MOC. So go out there and see who you can stump!

You can see more of Jordan's models at his website: http://www. brickstud.com/ and at his Flickr gallery: http://www.flickr.com/ photos/sirnadroj/

If you have a QR code reader on your phone, you can scan the code to the right to go directly to Jordan's website.



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Building

Minifig Customization 101: Minifig Displays!

Article by Jared K. Burks and Matt Sailors (theinformaticist) It has been some time since this article series has started and if you have been following along since the beginning you likely have quite the collection of custom figures to display. If not, you likely have quite the collection of official figures and perhaps you want to display these as well. How can this be done? Well, there are multiple products out there and multiple ways to use them. In this article we will visit the ones I am aware of and the ways I use them. If you know of others please log onto my forums and share your options (www.fineclonier.com/Forums) and we can all compare notes. I will also disclose a few ideas I have had to create some new options.



Collectible Minifigures base.



Minifigure display base minifigure sets sold in 2000 (Star Wars, Rock Raiders, Ninja, and City) and 2003 (Sports).

Let's begin this review of the available display options by looking at what the LEGO[®] Group has given us to use to display our figures. I bet there are more than you realize and these options are typically the ones that best integrate into our LEGO collections.

The most recent display stand that the company has given us accompanies the new "Minifigures" line. This simple little plate (Tile, Modified 4 x 3 with 4 Studs in Center: http://www.bricklink.com/catalogItem.asp?P=88646) which is quite effective for displaying figures and is economically priced around twenty cents on Bricklink.

This plate is also similar to the display plates that LEGO gave us a few years ago. These tiles (Modified 6 x 6 x 2/3 with 4 Studs and Embossed Letters: http://www.bricklink.com/catalogList.asp?pg=3&catString=38&catType =P&v=2) came with a few sets and had the embossed words "Star Wars," "Sports," "Rock Raiders," "Ninja," or "City." These came in various colors and all but the "Star Wars" versions can be found for pennies on Bricklink making it an economical way to display your figures. This little stand features a card slot which means you could display your figure with a nice little printed backdrop or figure schematic. When displaying my collection I use many of these stands along with a special board I had made (seen below). The plates slide into a special slot cut into the board that makes display shelves for the figures.



Display board using the minifig display bases.

Let us not forget that LEGO has also supplied us with magnetic stands (Magnet, Brick 2 x 4 Sealed Base with Extension Plate with Hole: http://www.bricklink. com/catalogItem.asp?G=74188). These are likely the most economical currently as they are in high supply on Bricklink. They are also available in several colors.



Minifigures magnet base.

Much like my display boards described above these could be used in several creative ways to display figures. Just think of what could be done with these and a magnetic dry-erase board. To take it one step further, there are now magnetic paint primers. You could paint the wall of your LEGO space with a magnetic primer, use a colored paint over the primer and then display all your figures without placing a single nail in the wall by using these magnetic stands.



Magnetic dry-erase board.

Using bricks and tiles you can create individual displays stands, risers, and even display boxes.

Many of these have been built and displayed. With a Google search, the instructions can sometimes be found. Get creative and you can build all sorts of displays to house your figures.



Photo by Larry Lars.



Photo by Ace Kim.



Built base for minifigure.



A built minifigure display pod.





Vignettes Photo at left by Matt Sailors.



Minifig plates Photos this row by Matt Parker.





Minifig cases. Photo at left by Matt Sailros, right by Don Reitz.

The best LEGO brick-built display for a figure I can think of is a vignette. These are small scenes that capture the nature of the figures housed inside.

There are many commercial options available to use to display your figures. There are small plates available from Minifig World (http://www.minifigworld.com/) as well as a few variations available from some other manufacturers on the secondary market. If you want to keep your figures dust free there are small acrylic boxes and domes available to complete protect your figures. These can be combined with the brick built LEGO stands to house your figure. Larger versions of these can also be found that allow for small groups of figures like a baseball box, seen at left.

There are a few larger acrylic boxes that are quite useful and widely available from the Container Store (http://www.containerstore. com/shop/collections/display/ cubesCases). One that I particularly like has internal dimensions of 6 by 36 studs. This makes it perfect to display figures, especially if using the embossed LEGO plates mentioned previously. This is what I use to house my autograph collection.



These clear boxes with the black bases are from AMAC Plastics (www.amacplastics.com). These are in the Showcase Series from AMAC Plastics. AMAC Plastics sells wholesale with a \$100 minimum order, however the cases are available at some retail outlets online. The figure boxes shown are models 802C (the 3 x 3 insert size) and 805C (the 4x4 insert size).







Above: The 805C box with a 4 x 4 insert base. Left: The 802C box with 3 x 3 insert base. Below: Small Cubisto displays.

These round window displays are Cubisto brand, which are available in 3 sizes. In the US, they are distributed by Basic Fun and are available from various online retailers including vendors in the Amazon Marketplace program and Buy.com. The ones with the figures are the small size, although there is medium size, which is shown on the product packaging.



As you can see there are many ways to display and protect your figures. Get creative and look at some of the options above and try to think outside of the box. The best displays are the ones that are a touch creative. This article only scratches the surface of the options. You could include a mirror in the back, special graphics, or even lighting effects. Mirrors could be added to any of the above box options. Special graphics can be created much like the decals used to create the custom figures. Lighting effects could be easily incorporated using Brickmodder's Lifelites lighting systems (http://www.lifelites.com/). What can you come up with? Show us your figure displays at the K.A.M. Forums (www. fineclonier.com/Forums).

You can also go to fineclonier.com by scanning this code.



Next Time:

Minifig Customization 101 – Purist Customization!!

You Can Build It

CIS Armored Assault Tank

Design and Instructions by Christopher Deck



Parts List

Hello everybody, I'm glad to join again for this wonderful issue of *BrickJournal*. In this article I'd like to present a well-known ground vehicle from the Star Wars universe which many of you might have seen in one of the Clone Wars episodes or know from the official LEGO[®] sets of this vehicle.

The Armored Assault Tank (AAT) is a medium-sized repulsorlift tank originally used by the Trade Federation. Its first appearance is in Episode 1 – "The Phantom Menace" in the Trade Federation's typical tan/brown colour scheme. Shortly before the beginning of the Clone Wars, the Trade Federation joined the Confederacy of Independent Systems (CIS) – also known as Separatists. As a result of this, the Federation's assault tanks were incorporated into the Separatists' growing ground forces using the typical blue/gray colour scheme of the Confederacy. It is now an integral part of almost all Clone Wars resources.

The mini-model seen here comes with all necessary details including a fully rotating top turret with adjustable folding squares. For the perfect floating effect in your shelf, boat studs have been attached on the underside.

With that I am done for now. I wish you happy building, and see you next time!

Yours, Christopher Deck.

You can see more of Christopher's designs at: http://deckdesigns.de/ or you can scan the code to the right.



Numb.	Color	Part	Description	
1	Black	3957	Antenna 4H	
2	Dark Blue	3062b	Brick 1 x 1 Round with Hollow Stud	
2	Light Bluish Gray	4070	Brick 1 x 1 with Headlight	
2	Dark Bluish Gray	87087	Brick 1 x 1 with Stud on 1 Side	
3	Black	54196	Dish 2 x 2	
1	Blue	4740	Dish 2 x 2 Inverted	
1	Dark Bluish Gray	3937	Hinge 1 x 2 Base	
1	Light Bluish Gray	6134	Hinge 2 x 2 Top	
1	Light Bluish Gray	30553	Hinge Arm Locking with Dual Finger and Axlehole	
1	Dark Bluish Gray	30383	Hinge Plate 1 x 2 Locking with Single Finger On Top	
2	Black	30162	Minifig Tool Binoculars Town	

Numb.	Color	Part	Description
1	Blue	6141	Plate 1 x 1 Round
2	Dark Bluish Gray	6141	Plate 1 x 1 Round
1	Dark Bluish Gray	3023	Plate 1 x 2
1	Blue	3794	Plate 1 x 2 with 1 Stud
1	Dark Blue	3176	Plate 3 x 2 with Hole
1	Light Bluish Gray	2419	Plate 3 x 6 without Corners
2	Dark Blue	30565	Plate 4 x 4 Corner Round
2	Dark Blue	54200	Slope Brick 31 $1 \times 1 \times 2/3$
1	Blue	3660	Slope Brick 45 2 x 2 Inverted
1	Light Bluish Gray	44675	Slope Brick Curved Top 2 x 2 x 1 with Dimples
2	Light Bluish Gray	4599	Tap 1 x 1
2	Dark Blue	2412b	Tile 1 x 2 Grille with Groove
1 Darl	k Bluish Gray	2412b	Tile 1 x 2 Grille with Groove



Review

Harry Potter™ Sets:

Hogwarts Castle and The Burrow

Review by Jennifer Joy Poole Photography by Jennifer Joy Poole and the LEGO Group



A look at the floor plates.

Jennifer Joy Poole has been building and displaying LEGO® scenes from all seven Harry Potter books for some time, so it only makes sense that she review a couple of the new HP sets that just came out. Known as the "Harry Potter Girl" on the East Coast, she reviewed the sets from two points of view: that of an adult builder and also an avid Harry Potter fan. Following are her comments.

A couple years ago I was told by a LEGO contact that the Harry Potter license would never again grace store shelves, so the about-face on the company's part was cause for celebration. I had gotten used to the notion that I would have to customize minifigs and pick my own scenes to make sets. I am overjoyed that I have a vast array of new flesh-colored characters to use, though I will have to continue to make do customizing Dean Thomas since he is dark-skinned. There is still a lack of diversity in the LEGO minifigs, and this is a case where a more balanced approach to them would be really appreciated.



Hogwarts Castle

The newest Hogwarts Castle is a very good playset. I think it would be great for boys and girls and most AFOLs. There are rooms for Gryffindor's common room, Slytherin's common room, the Room of Hidden Things, the restricted section in the library, the Great Hall, Dumbledore's office, and the Astronomy tower. Kids can reenact what they read in the book or watched in the movies. AFOLs can marvel at the design of the castle itself and secretly plot to make a full castle in their spare time - or perhaps I'm the only one?

Hogwarts Castle is large and some took some time to build. LEGO has gotten so good at bagging their sets that it's very easy to build one section at a time. The outside of the castle seems to be very similar to the original HP castle (4709) stylistically. It looks cleaner with no plastic shingles on the Great Hall. The new 10 X 10 octagon modified plate makes the "tower" a far more interesting shape.

However, there are architectural problems with the great hall. The four 4X12 grey plates that create the base do not connect perfectly. To create more stability, the designers could have used an 8 X 12 or even a 16 X 12 plate. The large table must be attached in order to reinforce the plates, otherwise the bottom grey plates will detach from the rest of the building when moving the great hall.

The castle walls are also rickety. Although the 1 X 2 dark tan bricks near the base of the great hall create a good decoration, they cause the 1 X 2 tan pillars to be less structurally sound. The walls do not tighten up until the top two 2 x

8 brown bricks are attached. This causes the brown bricks to meet at an odd an-

gle. As the build continues, the walls get stronger but there is no hope for the bottom if, again, the table is not attached.

There is another minor complaint: Having read the HP books several times, there is an internal logic where rooms are in the castle. When I was building the Room of Hidden Things and the Room of Requirement on the ground floor, it was confusing before I reminded myself it was a LEGO set. From the books, I know that the Room of Requirement is on the seventh floor near Dumbledore's office and the library is on the fourth floor, but that does not make for a fun Harry Potter LEGO set to play with. The fact that those areas were included, though, was great.

There is a very good collection of characters in this set: Harry, Hermione, Dumbledore, McGonagall, Snape, Voldemort, Flitwick, Filch, Mrs. Norris (the cat), and the Dementors. I am personally most excited about Mrs. Norris since I have always wanted to make a scene from the 2nd Harry Potter book with her in it. Harry, Hermione, and Dumbledore all feature two different faces. I am a huge supporter of always providing two faces to every minifig head. However, the Dumbledore head seemed a bit confusing, as one side has him with glasses and the other without, with no expression change. I also didn't understand why a Ron minifig was not included. I know he is in other sets, so his absence felt weird to me. On the other hand, the inclusion of Harry's invisibility cloak is an awesome little touch that shows this is a Harry Potter set, not just a one-off Castle set.

<image>

Above: The castle exterior.

Below: Closeups of the interiors.









An aside: All the new minifigs of the

Harry Potter characters from the most recent sets are almost straight out of the HP LEGO video game. I personally thought that was very cool. Since you can see the minifigs in action in the video game, it seems to bring more life to the real minifigs.

If you have collected the former Hogwarts castles, here are my suggestions to make an almost complete Hogwarts. Combining the new castle with selected elements from the previous castles will enable you to have a more complete and realistic Harry Potter castle. Take the Clock Tower from set 4757 and the greenhouse and small building from set 5378, and the resulting creation will look much more complete. I purchased a second castle to be able to create Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff, as they can be built with the same set. You just need blue and yellow chairs and banners or shields. I am having some banner stickers made based on the HP keychains from the HP LEGO video game.





Bellatrix and her hair.



The Burrow

I must start by saying that this set is from a scene from the 6th Harry Potter movie that does not exist in the books. The whole tossing fireballs seemed very gratuitous...but it is a playset. Playing out that scene from 6th movie would require the external brush area. I did enjoy the fact that they created a Burrow since it is a huge location in the Harry Potter universe.

The Burrow set is exciting in that it is the only original set produced so far in this recent release. However, the first thing I thought when I saw it was, "That is not the Burrow!" The Burrow is supposed to be so misshapen that an outside observer would know it was only held up by magic. After that initial impression, I then acknowledged that it did resemble the Burrow from the 6th movie. I give the designer credit for the optical illusion the roof pieces and the pillars create. Hats off to them, because I tried and failed. The house does look wobbly, but that wasn't enough for me — I went through and tried to take the same materials and make it appear more off center and unstable. Trying to make something look unstable while keeping its stability is very difficult. I ended up trying to do major changes, but I started to use too many of my own building materials. If I decided to make my own Burrow, I would add at least one or two levels. I did end up creating a version of the Burrow that is more visually unstable, and only used about 20 extra pieces (see next page). The set uses a great deal of the new medium orange color throughout the house. The inclusion of the dark tan & dark red is such a departure from LEGO's normal color scheme that is visually unique. In terms of parts, I really like the new 1 x 3 x 2 arch that was employed as well as the 10 x 10 octagon plate.

The minifigs that were included with this set are all well done. LEGO minifig faces are rarely aged so I was pleased when the Arthur and Molly characters had wrinkles. Ginny Weasley is my favorite HP character, so getting an updated version with two faces, pleasant & angry, made my day. Having created my own version of Bellatrix & Fenrir for my sets, I was pleased with the details LEGO added to those characters by including the double faces. I have to say the new hair created for the Bella character is one of the best hairpieces created. Period.

While I give the LEGO Group a great deal of credit for trying to add details to make the set fit the Harry Potter movies and books, there were things they just missed or were confusing. The floo network connection piece should be through the living room fireplace, but is set as a standalone part.

In the HP books, the Weasley Family clock is important in the story but barely touched on in the movie. Therefore it was odd to include a prominent clock in the set, and yet not make it magical. The Weasley Clock has nine hands for each member of family, and the clock face has no numbers, just descriptions like 'home,' 'school', & 'lost' to indicate where the family members are. It wouldn't have been hard to have the top position say 'Mortal Peril' and then just show several hands. Using a custom sticker for the clock is most likely the best bet for getting this detail more accurate to the book.

Another random thing that would have been an easy fix is the location of Ron's room. Ron's room is just under the attic. Changing the location of the Chuddley Cannon poster to the top bedroom would have worked. The fact that they included Chuddley Cannon & Quidditch posters indicates the effort toward HP details.

In the end, anything Harry Potter in LEGO form is going to bring a smile to my face. It is the perfect marriage of two of my favorite things, good literature and LEGO. The fact that I once again have the opportunity to build LEGO Harry Potter sets is a wonderful feeling. I get more official figures, more interesting designs, and new inspiration. I will continue to do what I always do - design scenes from the Harry Potter books that are interesting enough to get kids to re-read the books or create their own models.







Jenn's Burrow

Jenn, as mentioned on this page, built her version of the set using some additional parts. While the exterior (left) has some subtle differences, the interior upper floor rooms are quite different.

Both of these sets are available in stores and online at LEGO.com



Iain Heath: Bricks of Character

Article by Iain Heath Photography by Iain Heath, Tommy Williamson, Micah Berkoff, Lino Martins and Joe Meno The LEGO[®] community has two main strengths: *fanaticism*, and *diversity*. It's also very large. Ok, so it has three main strengths: *fanaticism*, *diversity* and *largeness*, and an unshakable loyalty to the LEGO Company and its products. Four! Four main strengths: *fanaticism*, *diversity* ...ok, let's quit while we're ahead, and just focus on that *diversity* part, shall we?!

Since you're holding an issue of *BrickJournal* in your hands (or tentacles) then it's fair to say you're a LEGO fan, and that you *didn't* just get your first LEGO set from Granny this past Christmas. And as a LEGO fan, you probably have a particular "thing" that you like to do, right? Maybe you love collecting Star Wars sets, or having huge Medieval battles with your friends, or creating Steampunk vehicles inspired by your favorite anime. Or a hundred other things. And that's my point - we're a very diverse bunch!

Within the LEGO community you'll find many "hubs" centered around different themes like these. Some are pretty well known, such as Space, Castle, or Trains, while some are less well-known, like Microscale, Caver Racers, or Frogspace (don't ask). If you've ever been to a public LEGO exhibition or attended a LEGO convention, you'll have seen special areas devoted to these themes.

So what do you do if your creations don't fit into one of these categories? Which table do you put them on? This was the conundrum that faced me when I got involved in my first LEGO convention!

In the Beginning

So how did I get into this pickle?

I've been collecting and building LEGO sets all my life. Back in the day, when people still wore Brylcreem, LEGO bricks were pretty basic. You had about 6 colors to work with, and even fewer shapes. The humble cheese wedge was but a twinkle in some future LEGO designer's eye. So playing with LEGO bricks required a lot of imagination! A yellow brick stacked on a blue brick was Mr Spock. It was that simple.

Then one day, the LEGO Group invented the minifig. And they liked the minifig, and saw that it was good. And we kids



thought it was pretty cool, too. Now we had Space and Castle and Town and Pirates, and a couple more colors to work with, and things were swell. Swoooosh! Ka-pow!

Then one day, the company said to the minifig, "Go forth and multiply into about a million different themes, most of which shall fizzle after about a year." And the minifig said, "OK, but I'm going to need a lot of complex specialized parts for each theme, for no apparent reason." And the LEGO Company made it so. And almost went out out of business. But then LEGO discovered licensed themes, and balance in the Force was restored.

Dumbing Things Down

So that's the situation I found myself in by the end of the 90's. Minifigs and themes were two of LEGO's greatest innovations. But I found it very hard to do anything with LEGO outside the scope of minfig-based, theme-based play. As an adult, I wanted to find something more creative to do with my collection. But it was comprised largely of minfigs, minifig accessories, and horrendous "one use" bricks such as the *bathtub* brick. And there was no Internet-based LEGO community to inspire me yet.

When I had kids, I decided to turn my LEGO collection into the 'family' collection. And I tried an experiment. I removed all the minifig-related parts, and those bathtub bricks, reducing it to just basic bricks. But as a compromise, I kept a couple of minifigs (a wizard, a spaceman, an explorer, etc.). I figured these would give the kids a focal point for building. But instead they just used the minifigs like action figures, and ignored the regular bricks.

...welcome to Surprised-ville. Population: me!

I quickly realized I'd have to lead by example, and build stuff that was way cooler than those stinking minifigs! I began with small models of my favorite mythical creatures. Then I moved onto characters from our favorite TV shows. And soon the kids started to get the idea. But by accident, I had also finally discovered what I wanted to do with LEGO. I had a purpose.

Brickcon 2010 in Seattle, Washington.

HALO[®] Spartan built

by Shawn Snyder.



Iain Heath's first Bricks of Character model, Stephen Hawking.



Soren Hixenbaugh Sad Keanu is Sad

Bricks of Character

Adventure Time Characters by Iain Heath.



But when, just for fun, I built a LEGO version of Stephen Hawking, that purpose evolved into a mission!

From Tiny Acorns

I had been posting my creations on various LEGO fan sites, to get feedback from other builders. But one day a friend called me to say that they'd spotted my Hawking model on a non-LEGO web site. The photo rapidly went 'viral' as it passed from friend to friend, coworker to coworker. Even to this day, Stephen continues to pop up in the most unexpected places.

It was then that I realized there was an entire *planet* full of people who had all grown up with LEGO but were completely unaware of what was possible with it or of all the amazing things that LEGO fans were creating. I decided I had to produce models that would capture the imagination of nonfans, make them more aware of the LEGO community, and perhaps inspire them to join in the fun. I remember an email I got from one mom after her kids saw my Last Airbender figures; they got so excited, they immediately dragged her to Target to stock up on bricks so they could create their own!

The key to evoking a response seemed to be building models that people could relate to on a personal level. I enjoy following the creations of great Space and Castle builders; but to a non-fan, one spaceship or castle looks pretty much like the next spaceship or castle. You have to choose your subject matter very carefully. The things that seemed to draw the most attention were either models of popular characters and people, or models that used a million bricks. And I didn't have a million bricks.

So that's how it started. I never meant to be a missionary, or a nonconformist, or a minifig hater. I was just trying to be creative!

Way Out West

So let's go back to that first convention.. It was BrickCon 2009 in Seattle. I had a bunch of 'character' models that didn't fit into any of the available

Lino Martin's Martian from the movie Mars Attacks!



categories. At first I was directed to the "Art and Sculpture" section, which did include some character models, but they were all about 4 feet tall, and the barriers were set about 10 feet away! My tiny figures would be invisible in this context. So I carved out a little niche for myself at the far back of the hall on one of the 'overflow' tables, and set up my stuff. And after a while, to my delight, similar creations started to appear in the same area. Tommy Williamson, another first-time attendee, had recreated the entire set of *The Colbert Report* in miniland scale, and this seemed to be suffering from the 'size' issue of the Art section, so I coaxed him over to my area where we found a much better spot for it. Then fellow character builder Angus MacLane showed up with his first batch of CubeDudesTM, a concept that he had unveiled just the month

before. During the public exhibition it was fun to see the reactions from the crowd whether it was the pointing fingers of the kids, or the wry smiles of the grown-ups as they recognized familiar characters.

> Tommy and I were very pleased with the results of our "break-out" at BrickCon, so when we signed up for *Bricks by the Bay* a few months later, Tommy decided it was time to define our style of building as a proper theme. He christened it "Bricks of Character" and got us on the roster as an official part of the display, including dedicated table space and even the honor of being able to give out awards for the best creations!

Of course, that meant actually *coming up* with award categories, and building some trophies (LEGO-built, of course). Instead of e "Best Large Ship" or "Best Small

predictable categories like "Best Large Ship" or "Best Small Ship", we went with off-beat categories that seemed more in keeping with character building such as "Most Funniest", "Most Dramatical" and "Most Realisticness". Of course, our deliberate bad grammar got us into trouble with the organizers when the time came to get the trophy bases engraved!

Because this was an entirely new theme, we encountered some initial confusion among the community about what models would or wouldn't be a good fit. Sometimes it was an easy call... "that's a ship, put it over in Space". But other times it was less obvious. The rule of thumb I give these





Far letf: Tommy Williamson's Jedi Mickey.

Above: Angus MacLane's CubeDudes, which were featured in Issue 12 of BrickJournal.

Left: Ragdoll, by Micah Berkoff.



Machines and creatures peacefully co-existing on the Bricks of Character table.

days is, "it should have some kind of discernable face." There was also confusion about whether minifigs were "allowed", since many other themes were already very fig-centric, while ours was more about building characters from scratch. So in the end, our alternative rule of thumb became "is it based on characters from film, television or videogames". Size was also a consideration. Character creations can often be quite small (often "miniland" scale, like in the theme parks), so any models over 2 feet tall will tend to dwarf everything else. In the end we just arranged things by size, and directed the bigger pieces over to the Art area.

Organizing a table at a LEGO convention was a wonderful experience, especially for a couple of rookies running a renegade theme! We'd estimated our space requirements based on the models we knew about in advance, but in the end way more stuff showed up than we could have hoped for in our wildest dreams! A bunch of LEGOLAND builders brought their creations, and Angus also swung by with an even larger spread of Cube Dudes than before. By the time it was all laid out, we had 14 feet of tightly packed display, featuring over 100 models (...and that's counting the Cube Dudes as one model!)

Of course, this meant the display became the victim of its own success. Character models usually have human proportions, being quite tall relative to their footprint. So as the models became more densely packed, it was a challenge to present each one in its best light. But I don't think that dampened the crowd's enthusiasm (despite the fact that the weather had significantly dampened their clothes). After all, what could be cooler than seeing your favorite comic book character honored in LEGO, or seeing your most reviled political figure mocked in LEGO?!

Rinse and Repeat

Since the official debut of *Bricks of Character* at Bricks by the Bay had been such a success, I figured we needed to keep the momentum up and develop it into an established theme. So I approached the organizers of BrickCon and got permission to stage a Bricks of Character section at BrickCon 2010. Unfortunately, Tommy's work meant he would be overseas during the event, so I would have to run it solo. However, Tommy was still able to contribute in his own unique fashion, creating a wonderfully "characteristic" logo to go with the name. Bricks of Character was becoming a brand!

As the convention approached, I waited with apprehension to see how many builders would sign up to bring something to the table. This was a new category, so it was unclear whether people would get it. I created a Flickr group to provide examples and guidance, and by convention time we had about 100 models registered.

At Bricks by the Bay, overcrowding of the table had made individual models harder to see. So this time round I decided to construct a set of "tiers", with models laid out on different levels, so that things would not overlap as much. Several planks of wood, bed sheets, plastic storage tubs and one staple gun later, and the *Bricks of Character* table was now divided into three layers. This made an enormous difference, since now you could clearly see each model in all its glory. In fact, it worked so well that BrickCon's organizers are considering using this approach on other tables in the future.

Best Scene

Bricks of Character awards.


I also decided to experiment a bit with the awards, this time going with seemingly simpler categories such as "Best Human," "Best Non-Human" and "Best Scene". But to my surprise (and endless amusement) these categories still seemed to create confusion for the judges! The most frequent question went along the lines of ,"Robots and aliens are *humanoids*, so does that mean they're human or non-human?". To which my typical answer would be "well, if it represents something of the *human species*, then it's human, otherwise it's non-human, for crying out loud!". Ironically, the model that eventually won "Best Non-Human" was a Transformer, and unfortunately when I came to photograph it for the award ceremony, it had morphed irreversibly back into its truck form! Which I guess is about as non-human as you can get. But it got a good laugh during the presentation.

I mucked about with the judging process too. Instead of having a panel of theme coordinators secretly argue it out among themselves, I created voting slips and a ballot box and opened up the judging to all of the convention attendees. At first I wondered if we'd end up with a bunch of fifty-way ties. But in the end some clear favorites did emerge, so I didn't have to resort to a more 'corrupt' system to pick the winners!

Of course, the trophies are just a bit of convention fun. Every builder that brought something to the Bricks of Character table was a winner in my book. Each of them received the very modest memento of an engraved "Bricks of Character" badge brick, in the gorgeous new "medium dark flesh" color (from the Prince of Persia Sets). Big thanks also go out to the Bricks of Character posse, who hung out with me during the long public hours to keep things in order: Micah Berkoff (morale), Victor Bartolomei (camera), Michael Swanson (lighting) and Jason Ruff (official puppeteer).

The Bricks of Character elves "hard at work" during BrickCon 2010 (from left to right, Jason Ruff, Micah Berkoff and Victor Bartolomei).

"Gazebo", the official Bricks of Character puppet; photobombing and model destruction a speciality!





Mystery Science Theater 3000 by Micah Berkoff.

You can go to http://thelivingbrick.blogspot.com/ by scanning this QR code.



Bricks of Character is going to be a regular theme at BrickCon and Bricks by the Bay from now on, and Tommy and I would love to see other LEGO conventions introduce a Bricks of Character section too. If anyone out there is prepared to host one at their local convention - hey, we've already saved you the trouble of coming up with a name and a logo!

Go Forth and Multiply

Even if your LEGO passion revolves around building vehicles or buildings or frogs, I strongly encourage you have a go at building some characters once in a while. They don't have to be large, which is why it's perfect for folks like me with limited bricks and even more limited time.

Modeling 'organic' things like people and creatures out of LEGO might seem hard at first, but it's really no different to any other building style - just a matter of patience, practice, and a little imagination. A good place to start would be CubeDudes, which gives you a basic 'pattern' to build to, and there are now hundreds of examples of those you can study online. When Angus introduced the CubeDude design, I was heartened to see so many builders from other disciplines all having a go and all producing great character models. They all had it in them, and Cube Dudes was a great way to draw it out.

There are also many LEGO web sites and blogs you can visit for inspiration. My own blog, *The Living Brick*, was created with the express purpose of showcasing great character-based LEGO creations from around the globe.

So, if you want to get a great reaction out of your friends and relatives, or you just can't stand the stupid grins of your minfigs any more, put them to one side for a while and have a go at creating some *Bricks of Character*!

You can go to http://thelivingbrick.blogspot.com/ to see Iain's blog. His language is a little raw on some entries, so this site is definitely PG rated.



Keith Goldman: Remembering Nate 'Nnenn' Nielsen

Article by Keith Goldman Photography from nnenn, Paul Lee, Zander Cameron, and Joe Meno In April of 2010, the LEGO fan community lost one of its most talented and prolific builders, Nate "nnenn" Nielsen, to a tragic car accident in his home state of Washington. Of course, this isn't the first time we've lost one of our own; in years past we've had to say goodbye to Travis Kunce, James Jessiman, Lawrence Livesey, Gaetano Notaro, Peter Parsons and Erik Brok, to name a few. Each of these builders gifted us unique and astounding MOCs, and Nate was no exception. Although Nate was only an active member for 4 short years, he produced hundreds of unforgettable designs and made an indelible impression on builders around the world.

It is difficult to begin a discussion of Nate's models without mentioning the space-fighter, which was the form he returned to time and time again throughout his building life. Inspired in large part by his father and the jets he flew for the US Air force, his Flickr screenname 'nnenn' became synonymous with futuristic fighter-craft.

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Vic Vipers + November = NoVVember

A huge fan of the "Vic Viper" space-fighter design from the video game *Gradius*, Nate inspired legions of builders to put their own unique spin on the deceptively simple design in his yearly Vic Viper NoVVember build challenges. At the end of the month Nate would gather the images and design a poster featuring the models of each participating builder. This annual building challenge has continued since Nate's untimely death and the official poster has become more crowded with the now familiar design.



Sci-Fi Builder

Although the Vic Viper was a significant influence on Nate's style, he certainly was not limited by it as he stretched the scifi genre in every possible way. Perhaps the best example of just how far he pushed the envelope is the popular spaceship he called "Ogre." This ship has all the hallmarks of a great 'nnenn' construct: unconventional design, advanced building technique, unique color scheme and slick presentation. Fellow builder Ley Ward (Professor Whateverly) had this to say about the Ogre:

"This is a prime example of Nate's 'beyond the box' approach. He didn't just think outside, he cut that box down, added some tape and discarded any bits that didn't fit his vision. Then he put together a colour scheme that even made him uncomfortable causing everyone (himself included) to reconsider what works for a spaceship. More telling though, is how the discussion on that design morphed into a tutorial on developing a design."

Above: The Vic Viper poster for Novvember 2008. Below: The "Ogre."



To say that Nate was limited to spaceships does a disservice to the depth to which he plumbed the sci-fi genre. Just a casual perusal of his flickr-stream reveals that Nate had an equal command of terrestrial vehicles, mecha, robots, or anything else he put his mind and hands to. Neither was Nate limited to one scale as many of us are; he produced many fine examples of micro-scale and an in-between micro and minifig scale that is often referred to now as "nnenn-scale." Many of us have often wondered what he might have done outside the genre, what amazing models might have been.

Beyond the studs and tubes of building, one of the things that set Nate apart as a builder was his command of color, both in the model itself and the background. Where many builders are able to master their genre, Nate went a step beyond with impeccable photography and in the case of his starfighters, he presents many views of the same fighter within one image.

Nonconventional LEGO Builder

When Nate broke into the online scene, it wasn't without controversy. A discussion of Nate's building style would not be complete without mentioning his tendency to include non-LEGO elements in his designs and to modify official elements. Whether it was a piece of black tape to help define a canopy or a clone-brand nose-cone, Nate wasn't afraid to reach outside the box for the right component to get the job done.

Ley Ward was on the scene when Nate broke in, and he provides a little perspective to the controversy:

"He definitely caused us to question our assumptions. Going beyond this example, one of Nate's gifts to us was a chance to reassess the boxes we choose to be in, whether they be of long standing or freshly constructed. Wherever we end up, the boxes and challenges we choose are now consciously decided rather than blindly adhered to. I will always be grateful for that gift of self-knowledge. The fact that he freely gave us many design tutorials seems like particularly good icing on that cake."

Strong original designs, delivered at a rarely-matched pace ultimately silenced most of the detractors and quickly gained him a dedicated following on Flickr, the newly emerging home of the online community. LEGO set designer Mark Stafford was influenced by this controversial aspect of Nate's LEGO career:

"Nnenn helped me get my job as a LEGO Designer. He never knew it, and neither do my bosses at LEGO, but he did. When Nate arrived on the LEGO space building scene in early 2006 his inventive shaping and awesome colour use instantly made me a fan, great stuff from day one. But I was disturbed, because I was a LEGO purist. Here he was, with these amazing creations but incorporating some non-LEGO elements, bits of tape, gluing and cutting or carving of parts. It shook my sensibilities.

But it also made me consider my creations and if I was pushing the boundaries as far as I could. I realized I was in danger of stagnation, and so I took my first tentative steps into none standard parts, cutting stickers, using non-LEGO stickers and I even bought a Mega-set (it was still rubbish though and I've never used the parts).

But when in October that year I was asked at my interview if I would have problems cutting, painting, gluing or otherwise modifying bricks to make new parts I had no reservations about doing so. A year earlier I



Above: One of Nate's land crafts. Below: A multi-view of one of his starfighters.







Above: A build for Nate's sons. Below: Tutorial screens from his flickrstream.



Nate's avatar for his flickr account: A LEGO rubber band holder.



might have given the fan answer of never mutilating a part, but Nnenn's creations had made me confront the issue and get over it, it helped convince them I was able to step away from being a fan and I'm sure was one of the reasons I got the job. I wish I'd had a chance to tell him this, but that was not to be."

Father and Teacher

The Nielsen family has reached out to members of the community to express their appreciation for the outpouring of condolences and praise for Nate's talent. It was important to the family that we understand that Nate's love of building was inseparable from the love for his two sons. Nate was known to comment that a rainy day spent building with his boys was one of his favorite things in life. Often times he built specifically for them, designing in durability and playable features they requested.

The other aspect to Nate's life that the Nielsen family wanted to pass on was Nate's passion for teaching. Helping others to achieve their scholastic and artistic potential was a great source of pride for Nate. Indeed a thorough perusal of his Flickr-stream reveals several postings that in effect teach about color, creativity, the building process, and technique. Although he was notoriously private, a common theme in comments by builders after his death was to relate Nate's frequent encouragement and constructive criticism. Nate simply chose to do most of his teaching in a private way, although as seen here, he would occasionally post tutorials for new builders who wanted to know how he achieved such a polished look with his model presentations.

Fellow builder Peter L Morris shares his thoughts on the teaching aspect of Nate's character, and the loss to the community in general:

"I don't think Nate set out to have the kind of influence he ultimately had on the LEGO community. Although I never got to meet him in person, I always got the sense that he cared more about helping people push through their limitations rather than how much influence his MOCs had on others. His comments sometimes left people wanting, I think, but he never hesitated whenever I asked him for private, specific advice. And I've heard similar stories from others.

I think that's also what makes his passing especially tragic for our community. We didn't just lose a great MOC builder, but a teacher. And he wasn't one of those teachers just waiting to make tenure, either, but he honestly pushed others to grow, not only in their building, but in their overall lives as well. This is the mark of the "everyday hero," I think. They don't search for ways to leave their mark on the world. Rather, the world around them is transformed because of who they are."

The eulogy posted on The Brothers Brick fanblog generated an astounding 328 responses, a number that nearly doubles if you take into account comments on the most recent photo in Nate's flickr-stream, Flickr groups and individual blogs reacting to his death. For someone who was around for such a short window of time, and worked in a relatively narrow genre within the hobby, Nate's impact on the community is remarkable. Within hours of the announcement of his death, fan tributes began popping up all over Flickr, MOCpages and Brickshelf. Not all of them were limited to Vic Vipers or spaceships; many simply featured the official LEGO rubber-band holder that served as his avatar.

Viper = VPR

Of all the tributes built by LEGO fans, maybe the coolest one was LEGO designer Mark Stafford's Raid VPR (#5981), which pre-dates Nate's untimely death. According to Mark:

"Then of course there are the 'Vic Vipers' originally from a computer game. Nnenn and Peter Morris boiled the fighter down to a few 'essential' components, a single tail fin, duel forward prongs and small stubby wings at the rear. This simple formula has led to an outpouring of creativity by space builders that is pretty much unprecedented, and deciding to concentrate the builds into 'Novvember' each year has made it an enduring event rather than a fad.

November is also an interesting time of year for LEGO Designers; it's when we're finalizing the appearance of the LEGO sets, before we settle down to making them buildable by kids. Two years ago while trying to create a \$10.00 set for the Space Police theme it was the Viper formula that was in my mind and I built a very compact spacecraft that would fit into the rules. This was a hit with my Design Lead and the sketch model ended up developing into the Space Police Raid VPR. It wouldn't have existed without Nnenn, I miss his creations, I miss his comments about mine and I feel for his family.

Will there be more space sets influenced by Nnenn or Novvember? Space is an evergreen theme for LEGO, it will be reinvented and rejuvenated every few years and it will undoubtedly be influenced by what the fans are building. That's really all I can say, except watch this space!"



Above: The LEGO set (Raid VPR) inspired by Nnenn's Vic Vipers. Below: Paul Lee's art, used in LEGO BrickMaster magazine.



Artist Paul Lee had an unusual opportunity to pay tribute to nnenn. Here he talks about the page he drew that was printed in the June/July issue of *BrickMaster* Magazine:

I had learned of nnenn's passing shortly before I got the assignment for a Space Police comic. The script called for depicting a traffic jam of space ships in a space highway. In a rough layout of the scene, I had drawn in older Space Police sets, and other space ships from official sets from the past. The editorial feedback I got was to not draw old Lego ships but to make up new ones. Since there are a lot of members in my LUG who are great space ship builders, I put a call out to my club to see if anyone wanted me to include their mocs in the scene. It definitely made it more fun for me to draw the comic, knowing I was getting to showcase the work of some of my friends. Around then, it occurred to me that one of the most famous space builders was of course nnenn, who had tragically passed. I checked with his friend Peter Morris who thought it would be OK to add one of nnenn's ships into the mix. And, while I was drawing the planet in the background, I worked nnenn's name into the design of the swirls of the planet.

> When the magazine was published, the reaction caught me off guard. AFOLs immediately recognized the mocs. Since I included a couple of my own ships in the mix, someone actually emailed me to let me know that it was drawn into a Space Police comic, not knowing that I was the actual artist. It caused a little stir in the community until I let the cat out of the bag that everything was done with permission. In the end, I think the AFOL community appreciates the tribute to one of their own.





Final Flights

One of the final models Nate posted isn't terribly remarkable when compared to his body of work, but a look at the numbers for *Otinya* speaks to the ongoing influence of the builder:

The photo has 14, 559 hits, and a whopping 225 comments, the most recent of which was posted just hours before I began composing the article. When all was said and done, Nate had over 1,300 contacts on Flickr who enjoyed his seemingly daily dose of refined style and Sci-Fi cool. To say that Nate "nnenn" Nielsen will be missed is an understatement; he left all of us wondering what was next. Fellow builder Ley Ward perhaps put it best when he said: "There is another gap at the centre. I look forward to seeing what our many talented people do to fill that gap."



Event Report

British Bricks: The Great Western LEGO Show at STEAM

www.aisteam.com

Article and photos by Tommy Williamson

One of the perks (or curses) of my job is occasional travel, sometimes for extended periods of time. It's hard on the family but it can also be a great adventure. My travels have recently brought me to England, where I have been for two months and expect to be for at least another seven. I've already discovered I can't be without at least a small LEGO collection, and have already begun decorating my flat with LEGO creations. I've also discovered there is a booming AFOL community here. I've joined my first LUG, The Brickish Association, and I've already attended my first event here, The Great Western LEGO Show (GWLS) at STEAM in Swindon. The GWLS is the largest fan-organized event presently in the UK. Originally started in 2002, this year marks the 8th year of this fantastic show.



The Great Western LEGO Show's venue.

GWLS is a partnership between The Brickish Association and STEAM, one of England's (if not the world's) finest rail museums. The event always draws a huge attendance, and this year was no exception. Over the October 2-3 weekend, over 7,500 members of the public, young and old, weaved their way through both the museum and the LEGO displays.

For me the event started early Saturday morning. I made my way from my hotel to STEAM and met up with a few of the organizers. I officially signed up for The Brickish Association and got my exhibitor pass. I brought three small MOCs to display, Alice and Hatter as well as my first micro spaceship. I found some space to display them and set about meeting people and taking pictures. The



Ed Diment's collosal USS Intrepid.

GWLS isn't a convention so much as a large display event. There are a few additional elements, but for the most part, this event is very public-oriented. Apparently there has never been what they call here an "American-style LEGO convention" in the UK (with events and activities for convention exhibitors only), so this was going to be a different experience for me than BrickCon or Bricks by the Bay.

It wasn't long before smiling children and amazed adults were filing into the large display area. After walking around for a while it was time for the first presentation, The Greatest LEGO Sets Ever, presented by David Tabner. David showed pictures and gave descriptions of what the Brickish Association has voted on as their favorite sets of all time. Next I visited the store setup by Simply Bricks. It was amazing how





popular this little shop was, with a queue out the entrance all day long and people having to be allowed to enter as others left. They had a great selection of new and used sets as well as minifigures. The next presentation was *Being an Intrepid Builder* by Ed Diment and Ralph Savelsberg. This was on the construction of the positively epic *USS Intrepid* aircraft carrier. The amount of work, detail, blood, sweat, and tears is incalculable -- let's face it, LEGO was staggering! Over a quarter of a million bricks were used and it's absolutely breathtaking. Ed went into the backstory of its construction and how it took over his life (and house). Ralph designed the aircraft for the boat and showed the process, from research to assembly line (spearheaded by Ed's wife Anne), of the over forty planes that occupy its decks.



David Tabner highlights the ten greatest LEGO sets ever, as determined by the Brickish Association.

After grabbing some lunch it was back to check on the show. I took more pictures and decided it was time to make my contribution to the colossal LEGO mosaic being built. I went to the construction area and was given a 32x32 green baseplate and the instructions for tile 106. I happily constructed my small piece of the puzzle and was rewarded with a LEGO Harry Potter travel card wallet. There was also a presentation from TT Games with a little behind-the-scenes look at LEGO Harry Potter. I'm afraid I missed this while I was having lunch, but I hoped to catch it Sunday. Then it was time to do some more shopping. The LEGO Store at Milton Keynes was kind enough to set up shop at the back of the room and had a huge stock of all the latest and greatest sets. Next up was another presentation, Time And Relative Dimensions In LEGO by Andrew Summersgill, AKA Doctor Sinister. The good Doctor showed off his mad building skills with a thoroughly enjoyable presentation of how to build a TARDIS, the infamous blue police box from Dr. Who. He also showed off his special version with engraved bricks and lighting from LifeLites.



Andrew Summersgill (Doctor Sinister) shows off his TARDIS.

After another round of picture taking I headed upstairs where Ann and Andy from minifigforlife.com had one of the most spectacular LEGO collections I've ever seen. Spanning the length of three tables, over 2400 Minifigs were on display. It's an amazing accomplishment and a heartwarming walk through memory lane as you spotted familiar figures from a long time ago.



A very small portion of the gigantic collection of minifigures on display.

This being a LEGO event, there was a throng of children crowded around a small table, excitedly riffling through small bins. This could mean only one thing, BrickArms! I still don't quite understand it, but BrickArms have an almost magical effect on kids, mostly boys. Of course I am far too old and sophisticated to care...OK, I bought three weapons packs, but only three and I can stop anytime I want.



The always popular BrickArms table

Next up was the last presentation of the day, Creating LEGO Models from Scale Drawings by Gary Davis. Gary shared his experiences building real-world objects from reference materials and accurate scale drawings. His account of building London's landmark 30 St Mary Axe (better known as 'the gherkin') was especially interesting. The building's unique shape and surface details made for a very challenging build. After the presentation, I was invited to the Brickish dinner and happily accepted.

The remainder of the afternoon was spent taking pictures and walking around. I even spent a little while taking stereoscopic 3D pictures with my iPhone. The public turnout was great and the place was bustling from opening to closing. I mingled among the public watching mums and dads gingerly pull back enthusiastic little hands. It's not hard to imagine why the kids want to just grab these models and play, as everything is just so colorful and inviting. I stopped on a number of occasions during the day to make a small repair to a model or right a minifig.



This picture is in 3D. To view cross your eyes until the images merge.



After closing, we all moved through the space to do a quick tidy up, and everyone dispersed to different locations to await dinner. I opted to head across the way to Starbucks to have a drink and get on the internet. At 7:00 everyone made their way to the upper levels of STEAM for an excellent dinner and great conversation. We also enjoyed a pub quiz (we lost), I joined a team of four for a speed build (we lost), had a hilarious auction (I lost) and had dessert (win!). We all said our goodbyes after dinner was completed, and I walked back on a damp late England night to my hotel.





The Brickish Association dinner and speed build event.

As the day wore on, the giant mosaic gradually took shape and just before 3PM the last tile was put in place and it was complete. STEAM has a perfect vantage point for the mosaic and the public flocked to the balcony to take pictures.



Peter Reid's amazing animated robotic turtle factory.

Sunday was an almost carbon copy of Saturday. As I walked around sipping my tea I took a lot more pictures and listened in on the conversations of the families as the children gleefully moved from table to table. There were two large displays with hidden characters on them. The kids had a blast scouring the model looking for the likes of Spiderman and Spongebob (what a great idea!) Again, I went to lunch and missed the presentation on LEGO Harry Potter (doh!) It wasn't very long after the completion of the mosaic when it was time for me to pack up. I bagged my MOCs and stuffed them into my already stuffed backpack and headed out to catch a cab to the train station. I shook hands and said goodbye to a few people on the way out, but not nearly all of them...I wish I could have. As the rolling green hills and hedgerows of the English countryside rushed past my train window I found myself very tired, but very content. My first event as a member of the Brickish Association was over. I had finally met faceto-face a lot of people I've known online for some time. I had made some new friends and I had sampled life as a UK AFOL.

I like it - I think I'll have some more. 🚺







For more information on the Brickish Association visit www.brickish.org or scan the code on the left!



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BrickMagic 2010: Capturing the Magic

Article by Joe Evangelista Photography by Joe Meno

Top: Cinderella Castle from Walt Disney World.

Below: Crowds make their way through the displays during public hours.

Think back to a time when clowns making balloon animals was funny; when magicians could amaze you with simple sleight of hand by making a coin disappear and then pulling it out from behind your ear; and a time when a simple shape could be turned into just about anything that your imagination could conjure. This feeling does not last forever though, usually just as long as your childhood will allow. But there are times that make you feel like a kid again where everything is magical and everything you see is new. This past May was such a time thanks to the new LEGO[®] fan convention *BrickMagic*.

It's a good time to be an Adult Fan of LEGO (AFOL), or any aged fan of LEGO for that matter! There is so much positive news coming from the company these days, and that excitement is carrying over into the growing number of LEGO conventions that have begun tapping into that enthusiasm. There has been a vast increase in the number of people attending conventions. To answer the growing demand, BrickMagic was held on Mother's Day weekend (May 6^{th} – May 9^{th}) at the North Raleigh Hilton in Raleigh, NC. Although it is brand new to the convention circuit, it has perhaps made one of the strongest waves in quite a while. The event allowed fans to return to a familiar place – their version of the *Cheers* bar: a place where everyone knows your name. The convention floor became a walking version of Facebook. You could see what everyone was working on (similar to a live picture album), view their current status (progress or lack thereof depending on how they had packed for the trip), and randomly talk with friends that you have seen only once before whose names you still struggle to remember.

Running a convention in today's LEGO fan environment is not an easy thing to do. While years ago fans were content to simply gather together and be in the same room talking shop about their favorite hobby, today there are many expectations that need to be met in the minds of most AFOLs. We as fans have gotten spoiled in the past with lavish hotel settings, immersive panel discussions, challenging build competitions, great prizes, and official set unveilings. With all of that (and more) to live up to, how can a new event meet the bar that has been set by all of the conventions that have come before it? Know your audience and know what makes them tick (or at least tickles their fancy). BrickMagic also had an ace up its sleeve in the form of an organizer, Joe Meno, who is no stranger to conventions and has run them for the community in the past. And while he won't tickle anything for you, he will regale you with stories of conventions past and find you a place to call your own in any setting.



Meno, John Morrow, and the rest of the organizers were able to successfully incorporate all aspects of a great show and still maintain a healthy balance between the exclusive AFOL convention and the public showcase. The private convention for fan exhibitors became home for 95 fans who filled a 10,000 sq. ft. Hilton hotel ballroom with amazing creations. The 8,000 public visitors rushed through the doors all weekend long to see what fans had brought to share. From pirates to western, numerous train layouts to Harry Potter, castles to spaceships, and everything in between, there was something for everyone at the show. And if 95 fans can fill a space that large with that much variety, just think what they'll do with even more space for next year's event!

In addition to the main convention hall, BrickMagic featured the standard array of 'brick vendors' selling everything from basic LEGO (both new & used) to custom LEGO compatible gear. Conventions in general are a great way to stock up on retired sets and pick up some fun custom parts to add some variety to your collection. Custom part makers BrickForge and BrickArms were both in attendance to cater to some of the fans' more realistic demands – historic weapons & armor, farm animals, Vespa scooters, modern weaponry, and of course mushrooms (because nothing speaks to the fact that you've been up all night building better than a mushroom patch).

But the real show started on the night of Wednesday May 5th, just before more exhibitors had even arrived. Thirty minutes away from the convention space at the xyz theater in Durham, the BrickFlix event not so silently kicked off the festivities for the long weekend. With a sold-out family show and a well attended late show, audiences were able to view a variety of LEGO stop motion animation films in an actual theater! No more small computer monitors to squint your eyes at – BrickFlix showcased high quality videos at a larger than life size! David Pagano, well-known in the Brickfilms world, was in attendance to answer questions from young fans and showcase some new films he had just finished shooting. Expect to see this event to return at future BrickMagic conventions.

BrickMagic also saw the launch of a new book - LEGO: A *Love Story* – written by newcomer fan Jonathan Bender. His book chronicles how he came out of his "Dark Ages" (a period of time when LEGO is buried in the closet because it is seen as un-cool) and came to fall in love with the simple act of building creations with the little bricks that helped to define his childhood. "I could not have asked for a better first event to launch the book. The crowd was enthusiastic and interested in finding out more about what was inside the book. A few AFOLs really helped me out by keeping me company and talking about the book on the public days. I really enjoy conventions, it's a chance to see what people have built in person, talk about different building techniques - it's kind of a dream LEGO vacation. The only thing I would have changed (thankfully) is that I would have brought more books. We sold out by lunch on Sunday." In the book, Jonathan chronicles his early experiences in finding the LEGO fan community. Apparently he has been to quite a few conventions, as BrickMagic did not seem to intimidate him at all. "The adult fan community is incredibly welcoming. Something about playing with LEGO bricks just seems to attract nice people. And although I'll admit it's a bit strange to be coming to a convention with a book about the world of conventions, any worries about fitting in disappeared when I found myself helping Joe Meno carry in some of Nathan Sawaya's sculptures just a minute or two after saying hello."



Jonathan Bender with his book.



The Pennsylvania LEGO Users Group (PennLUG) tends to its display. Other user groups that participated included the Washington, DC Metro Area LEGO Users Group (WAMALUG) and the North Carolina LEGO Users Group (NCLUG).

Below: David Pagano takes questions at the Brickflix Film Festival.







Top: Nathan Sawaya building his peace sign. Above: One of his sculptures on display. Right: Hugman at the Brickmagic signpost.

Nathan Sawaya has become a household name for anyone talking about LEGO thanks to the copious media coverage from his traveling art show and commissioned works. His vision of LEGO as art has become infectious, and inspired countless people around the world. He came to BrickMagic as the Guest of Honor and brought with him an array of his creations, and gave the public a chance to work with him on a large sculpture designed specially for BrickMagic 2010 - a large peace sign. When asked about the build, Nathan had this to say: "The attendees really seemed to enjoy seeing the sculpture grow over the course of the event, and it was also a great opportunity to interact with people and talk to them about the artwork." Nathan has certainly made a name for himself as a LEGO artist, and his LEGO Certified Professional title only further reinforces how impressive his creations are. While you won't see him at every convention, it is good to know that he doesn't set himself on a high pedestal. "I like that we are all AFOLs. With my schedule I don't get to attend as many conventions as I'd like to, but by far one of my favorite parts of conventions is just hanging out in the after hours and getting to know people. I love seeing people's creativity on display. There were some fantastic layouts."

Nathan enjoyed many aspects of the show and contributed to one of the more popular photo-ops for families. "There were so many highlights that it is hard to pick one. I enjoyed the people of Raleigh who really rallied around the event. I also enjoyed speaking with all of the kids who attended and told me about their LEGO adventures. The highlight however might have to be the 'Hugman' I placed on the sign outside the hotel. My 'Hugmen' are my form of LEGO graffiti. It is a monochromatic figure built out of bricks that stands with his arms hugging something. I have placed these all around New York City and I love looking out there and seeing people interact with it. Several times I saw whole families posing for photos with the little guy."



What sets BrickMagic apart from other LEGO fan conventions is the close-knit family-like atmosphere that all convention exhibitors enjoyed. For many it became a convention of firsts – first time attendees, first ever brick film festival, first time a significant other came to support a show, and the first time someone almost cried during the closing remarks. There is a lot of passion and spirit in all those involved in the event and it's hard not to jump right in and get lost in the fun. There are plans to expand and grow the event so that it will reach and inspire even more people.

Be ready for even more at next year's BrickMagic event again on Mother's Day weekend May 5th through 8th.

You can find out more information on BrickMagic by visiting www. brickmagic.org or scanning the left code. Information on Brickflix can be found at www.brickflix.org or scanning the right code.





Top right: A dragon burns a field. Right: Minifig model based on a local bridge. Below: Another element of the castle layout.









The BrickFlix Film Festival was founded in 2010 as part of the first annual BrickMagic LEGO convention. Held at the historic Carolina Theatre in Durham, North Carolina, the festival is the first of its kind – showcasing LEGO stop-motion movies where they should be seen – **on the big screen!**

Filmers of the brick can submit their clips to: http://brickflix.org/submissions/ for consideration for the 2011 show. Deadline is March 1, 2011. For details, go to www.brickflix.org.



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Community

Brickworld, Brickfair, and Brickcon: A Scrapbook

Article and Photography by Joe Meno

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For the United States, LEGO fan conventions have been around for about a decade. In that time, the events have gone from small, fan-exclusive meetings to large conventions with public and private days. I was able to attend the three largest conventions in the US, and rather than make an event report for each one, I wanted to show what goes on. So here's a scrapbook with pics and a quick feature from each event.

Brickworld

Location: Chicago, Illinois Convention Coordinators: Adam Reed Tucker, Bryan Bonahoom Theme: Space Keynote Speaker: Lisbeth Valther Pallesen, the LEGO Group The weekend of June 21st was the time that LEGO fans took over the Northbrook Westin and filled it with models of all types and sizes.With an event theme of "Space," there were more than a few spaceships and layouts. Over 800 LEGO fans attended Brickworld and the public came out in the thousands.

However, there were other displays to see too, including a minifig-scaled model of the Neuschwanstein castle, built by Bob Carney, seen above.



It's not too often that a layout is a model, but this is certainly the case with this Quantas Airbus A380 model, built by LEGO fan Ryan McNaught. This model, built to minifigure scale, is 7 feet long and is 6 feet wide. It also was cut away so the interior could be seen and was powered. Using a laptop, a user could operate the landing gear, control flaps and landing lights. With a LEGO remote control, a user could power up the jet engines!





Another large-scale display (it wasn't just one model) was the Monster Chess set, a collaborative model built by a team of MINDSTORMS experts in the US and Canada, including Steve Hassenplug, John Brost, Rob McRae and Bryan Bonnahoom. This is a fuly functional chess game, usinng 38(!) MINDSTORMS NXT programmable bricks. The gameboard itself is about 12 feet by 12 feet, allowing for pieces to move off the chessboards when lost. Users could play against each other or the computer, with movement carried out by the pieces themselves. The pieces were smart enough to move out of the way of an active piece, or to move off the board when lost. The senior pieces could also do additional movement: for example, the legs of the knight's horse moved as it moved.



With so many attendees, it's hard to show off all the wonderous models and creations that were displayed. Some of the models came from ateendees that have gone to the event since it started, including the layout to the right by Nannan Zhang and Tyler Clites, the moonbase built by Canadian LEGO fans below it, Deborah Higdon's Russel House model, with moving roof section, and Alex Taylors lit and motorized crane at bottom left.

But there many were new things too, such as the Terminator T-1000 model below. With the all the new people, Brickworld was a true event, and an indicator of what's to come for other conventions.











Brickfair

Location: Washington, DC Convention Coordinator: Todd Webb Theme: Music

Brickfair took place the weekend of August 7 in Dulles Expo Center. A much larger place than the previous venue, there was more than enough room to display and for the public, build! Over 700 LEGO fans attended this event and a whopping 19,000 public visitors came to see the layouts and displays!

The event's theme was celebrated with some models from fans, including the concert scene and electric guitar shown at left. The model that won awards for best music model and mos inspirationa was of a cello, and was spotlighted in *BrickJournal* 12.

Below is a wind turbine and two cranes built by Alvin Brant. These models are huge - the wind turbine is taller than a man!





The top sci-fi based layout was done by Nick Kappatos and Dan Rubin. The teacups on the right were motorized to spin and were pretty neat to watch in operation.

Below, Vipers could be seen; at bottom the gingerbread house could be seen at PennLUG's display, along with a trolley, buildings and gas sation. On the bottom right is a hotel model that was also displayed at Brickfair.











Brickcon

Location: Seattle, Washington Convention Coordinator: Wayne Hussey Theme: Tales of the Brick Keynote Speaker: Connie Kalcher, the LEGO Group

Brickcon took place the weekend of October 1 at the Seattle Center. A familiar place to LEGO fans, this venue held over 400 LEGO fans and 10,000 public visitors.

The event's strengths were the large collaborative displays. While there was an overall theme of *Tales of the Brick*, there were two other coordinated displays: *Big in Japan* and *Bricks of Character*. *Big in Japan* was coordinated by The Brothers Brick website and was a celebration of anime and Japanese culture, and *Bricks of Character* was helmed by Iain Clifford Heath and Tommy Williamson and is featured elsewhere in this issue.

Those attending wer able to see the castle to the left and the plane below which was fully operational from the cockpit!





Above is a miniland scale version of the '60s Batmobile, built by Lino Martins — one of many of his automobile models. To the right is a look at how big the crowds were, in this case, at the *Bricks of Character* display. At the bottom is a view of half the harbor layout from the Vancouver LEGO Users Group. With this layout, there was a lighthouse, a harbor, ships, and a coast town and fort. What isn't seen is the maelstrom and undersea area that they built, complete with deep sea beasts and a ship graveyard.







Some of *Big in Japan's* models can be seen above and to the bottom right. Mechagozilla was built by Brian Cooper. Below is a Mardi Gras layout built by Paul Hetherington which actually was a corner - you're looking at one side of it. On the top right are two shuttles. One is in a shuttle assembly center built by Scott Fowler and the other in the foreground has a crawler and launch pad built by Carlyle Livingston.



With these and other conventions, one thing is very clear: The community is growing, and so is public interest. So the big question to ask is:

Which one are you going to? 🚹





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Community

Fana'briques 2010: Five Years of Success!

Article and Photography by Thierry Meyer



Fana' briques, a French LEGO fan event, celebrated its fifth year with 89 exhibitors, 2,500 square meters of display space devoted to the Danish brick, and 5,150 visitors. Exhibitors came from six European countries.

Everything was prepared on Saturday, June 26, 11:30 AM to welcome local officials Mr. Philippe Meyer, General Councillor, Mr. Michel Herr, Mayor of Rosheim (the host town), and his assistants. The General Manager of LEGO France, Mr. Eric Maugein, was also in attendance with Mrs. Anna Mockers, Junior Category Manager and Mr. David Alain, Sales Manager for LEGO Eastern France.

During his opening speech Thierry Meyer, Organizer-in-Chief, welcomed the officials and thanked the exhibitors (including those who braved a long commute to Rosheim) for coming and bringing their displays and models. Thanks were also given to the teams of volunteers and for those who participated in each of the five previous Fana'briques in the form of a special commemorative brick. Kayser Benoit, association volunteer and an integral

One of the town layouts at Fana'briques.

part of Fana' bricques, was presented with a golden brick for his service.

At 1:00 pm the doors opened to the public, who were already waiting to see all the displays. For newcomers there was a Visitor's Guide that showed all the main points of interest. This guide also was an invitation for children to explore the displays by having questions for them to investigate various places at the event.

A 40-meter long big top tent covered a layout with a 33-meter-long train line specially designed for high speed, where high-speed trains and other competitive vehicles tried to beat the speed record for a LEGO train. Also under the big top was a life-scale Bugatti T35 (built with 33,000 bricks), a TruckTrial (obstacle course) competition area for LEGO-based vehicles and a lot of tables with bulk bricks provided to the visitors who wanted to build. There also was a table that filled on Sunday with children's models for a building contest.

Beside the big top, the main room had an exhibition of more than 1,200 square meters. Inside there were a large number of different models such as cranes, cities, layouts, ships, trains, a large Ferris wheel, a rock concert, castles, Great Ball Contraption modules, and a carnival with more than 2,500 minifigs. Every layout, model, and construction was a showcase of the talent of their creators.

At the exit of the main room, visitors could find refreshments outside, stores selling new and used LEGO sets, an enormous yellow LEGO pig that was a drop-off point for used visitor guides, LEGO basketball sets for play, and many display cases showing LEGO themes from the past 50 years.

The town of Rosheim welcomed the exhibitors with open arms. During the whole weekend all breakfasts, lunches and dinners were offered to the exhibitors by Fana'briques: small warm dishes prepared by five cooks. Saturday evening was when the local specialty, La Tarte Flambee (a singed tart), was served. During the dinner, which was livened up by games, tombolas (raffles) and building competitions, 140 people were able to savor this famous tart. Thanks to Eurobricks for the organization of a very funny game — building a small set arm-in-arm with both right and left neighbors — and to Daniel Stoeffler for puzzle entertainment.

Based on this year's success, the theme for 2011 has already been selected and the dates scheduled. Fana'briques 2011 will be June 24 to June 26, 2011, with the theme of "Fire Brigades."

More info about Fana'briques 2011 is on: www.fanabriques.fr

You can go to FreeLUG, the French LEGO Users Group, at http://freelug.org/

Note: This site is predominantly French.

You can jump to Fana'brique's website by scanning the QR code at right:







Top: The giant pig at the exit. Right: Bugatti T35, guarded by Jango Fett. Below: A minifigure scale ferris wheel.









Event Report: LEGO® Architecture Show

Article and Photography by Patrick Seet

August marked the celebration of Indonesia's independence, and what better way to celebrate this nation's birthday than with a LEGO display held in the heart of Indonesia's capital, Jakarta? From August 13 to September 19, 2010, Grand Indonesia Shopping Town played host to the firstever "LEGO Architecture Show "in Indonesia.



The LEGO Archiiechural Show at Grand Indonesia Shopping Town.

The LEGO Architecture Show was composed of two main displays, a "LEGO Architectural Building Competition" and "MOC replicas of Jakarta's landmarks." The event was initiated by the local LEGO Distributor for Indonesia, PT ALJ Trading Indonesia, and endorsed by the LEGO Group.

Build the Future of Indonesia was the brief given to over forty design students from local Universities "UMN" and "UNINDRA". The result after two months of building was 15 magnificent works of LEGO Architectural MOCs. Each met the brief given and more, incorporating into their design a piece of Indonesia's unique cultural heritage.

The MOCs were truly amazing when you consider that most of these students aged between 19 - 25 years, and had never laid their hands on a LEGO Brick before this competition.

The creations were both detailed and massive in size, each covering an area space of 1m x 1m and the tallest MOC standing at 1.8m high. All the MOCs were built only with white and clear LEGO bricks, a favorite choice among architects for concept modeling.

Speaking to both the University lecturers and students, one could see that they truly enjoyed their time building these

MOCs. The lecturers, from an educational point of view, had never imagined that LEGO bricks could be used as an alternative media to designing and modeling. The students, on the other hand, simply enjoyed just building with LEGO. When asked what the most difficult part in the project was, a student answered: *"The most difficult part was coming with ways of creating complex shapes that we wanted for our design, so we explored with the different types of LEGO bricks available and methods of joining the bricks. This was my very first time playing with LEGO and it's very interesting and fun - I look forward to more projects with LEGO."*

It was easy to see the beginnings of some very talented architects and designers in Indonesia at the event.

This Page: Some examples of the student's work from UMN and UNINDRA Universities.















MOCs of the Jakarta's landmarks were beautifully and accurately rebuilt with LEGO to minifig scale - LEGO minifigs could be seen rushing to catch the trains at "Stasiun Kota"- Jakarta's old Train Station, or sitting down for a drink at "Cafe Batavia" or cycling their bicycles and exploring the old city buildings which have now be converted to museums such as the old Indonesian post office "IndoPos" and "Bank Indonesia."

The event was an outstanding success, drawing the attention of thousands of visitors to the mall. With this display as a start, the organizers are looking forward to the next upcoming LEGO event in Indonesia.





This Page: Some of the buildings from Kota the Batavia display.



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It is very important to us in the LEGO Group, to work together with the LEGO Fan Community and we look forward to continuing our cooperation with you in the future.

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Thank you! nrxon/

Jørgen Vig Knudstorp **CEO & President** LEGO Group



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Tribute



Daniel Jezek, 1977-2010: Bricklink Founder

Article from Bricklink.com Photography from the Jezek family



On October 27, 2010, the following announcement was posted on Bricklink.com:

We regret to announce the sudden and unexpected passing of Dan Jezek, owner and founder of BrickLink.com. Dan will be greatly missed by all of his family and many friends at Bricklink and around the world. A memorial fund is being set up and will be announced at a later date. If you wish to send condolences, you may do so via e-mail to *condolences* (at) *bricklink.com*.

The website will continue under the ownership of the Jezek family. Eric Smith, owner of Northstar Computer Systems, will act as BrickLink Administrator. Northstar has been the host for BrickLink for the past decade. The current BrickLink moderators for the various aspects of the site are all continuing in their roles. Troy Ceferatti is resuming his role as Community Overseer.

The site will continue operating without interruption and all Bricklink users – buyers and sellers – can be reassured that the policies and fee structures will remain as before. Please remember Dan in your thoughts and prayers.

Eulogy for Daniel Jezek

Delivered at services on October 22, 2010 by long-time family friend Larry Hawthorne

We honor the life of Daniel Jezek, who departed this earth September 24, 2010. A life cut tragically short; a potential with so much more to be realized. We mourn the loss of a loving son, a young man who even in his short time with us, gave much and had so much more to give.

Dan's book of his life had too few pages, 33 to be exact. But those pages were filled with love, compassion, giving, and a lot of accomplishment.

Daniel was born June 25, 1977, in Prague, in what was then Communist Czechoslovakia. He was the only child and son of two very accomplished parents. His father, who still teaches at Charles University in Prague is a world-famous mathematician, who by the age of 25 had already solved a centuries-old mathematical hypotheses that no one else could solve. That's a little like already knowing the answer empirically, but not knowing how to get there mathematically.

Dan's father did it when no one else could. His mother held a PhD in law from Charles University in Prague and was an intellectual figure in her own right. (I might add that his father is very ill right now and we wish him well.)

With that parentage was it any wonder then that Dan was absolutely brilliant? And he demonstrated that mental acuity early.

At the age of three he was introduced to LEGO. LEGO bricks are those little plastic bricks that children – and plenty of grownups – use to build practically everything, limited only by their own imagination. If you were trying to find a world-wide movement, certainly love of all things LEGO would be among them. As an infant Dan began piecing together LEGO works of art.

Brief escapes from behind the Iron Curtain while Dan was growing up were made possible by his father's visiting professorships at universities in the West. Summer teaching assignments in West Germany, Canada, Berkeley in California, Vanderbilt in Nashville, the University of South Carolina, and, of course, the University of Hawaii. On one of those summer escapes, the family bought a computer. One of the very first personal computers ever made. It was a leading edge with a clunky keyboard and a monochrome monitor. Few had ever even seen one behind the Iron Curtain.

It was manna from heaven for Dan. Playing with his father's primitive computer at the age of nine, he finally found something he loved as much as his LEGO. It wasn't long before he learned to program that computer and to build, quite naturally, a computer game.

Thus was this meld of an inquisitive mind, with a love for LEGO who was literally a virtuoso with a computer in his hands.

When the Wall fell in 1989, what followed was the Americanization of Daniel Jezek.

The family moved to Hawaii in late 1990 and while Dan's father eventually returned to the new Czech Republic, Dan and his mother stayed.

They struggled for quite a while, but Dan and his mother made the most of an immigrant's life. Dan attended Kalaheo High School and eventually graduated in 1996, with a love for American sports and all things computer. By this time Dan was an American in every way, and fluent in English as well as his native Czech language. And in 2002 it was made official when Dan was naturalized as a U.S. citizen.

Dan continued his education in computer sciences at community college and the University of Hawaii and came to work as a computer programmer for Alltel, running First Hawaiian Bank's computer system and defending them against the feared ravages of Y2K.

The final decade of his all-too-short life began in an unusual way. This is very anecdotal to me, because around 2000 I suggested that he look into catching on with an up and coming new web-based business here in Hawaii. Dan did look into it.

In his first interview for a job he was told he would have to learn new web-based computer languages like Visual Basic and JavaScript, take a test, and then, maybe, they'd talk.

Typically, Dan went home learned those languages and few more fluently. He did this inside of about a week and went back and aced the company's test. A couple of things intervened and Dan didn't get that job after all.

But the real lesson here is Dan didn't go home and mope or dwell on what might have been. Instead, he took what he had just learned and developed his OWN web-based business. This budding entrepreneur looked at eBay as a model. He saw that if a website like that could do well just getting people to sell stuff, Dan would do the same for people who wanted to sell and trade LEGO bricks.

His business, Bricklink was born. For the first couple of years he called it BrickBay, an obvious reference to the eBay format. eBay got jealous when Dan's site began to grow in leaps and bounds and made him change his name to Bricklink two years later.

Ten years later and more than 51 million visitors and counting, the business that Dan dreamed has become a reality. There are nearly 200 million websites on the Internet. Dan's website is in the top 50,000, literally one of the most successful websites in the world. It is still running today and will forever be a living monument to Dan's vision, his hard work and his brilliant

ability to bring together his love of LEGO and his gift with computers.

He was unabashedly generous in his success, donating to many causes including relief to Haiti victims and those devastated by Katrina, and many more. It just speaks to what a compassionate, giving person Dan was.

In closing, let us remember Dan. And let his memory stay with us. A life lived fully, but ending prematurely. His accomplishments impressive, but his potential with so much more to give. We say goodbye to you loyal friend, to you loving son, and we know you sleep peacefully now in the arms of our Lord.



Dan building.

Editor's note:

The effect of Bricklink to the adult LEGO building community is immeasurable. Thanks to Dan's work, builders were able to buy parts previously nearly impossible to find in volume or availability. This had led to many of the large models that can be seen at displays, online, and in *Brick-Journal*. In fact, it can be said that Bricklink was the one thing that allowed AFOLs to build what they wanted. The community is indebted to his work.

BrickJournal offers its condolences to his family and friends. Dan's legacy is in not only a website, but also in the displays, models, and events that the AFOL community has done. Simply put, they would not have been possible without him.

Rest, Dan. You did well.

Community

Inside the LEGO® Inside Tour

Article and Photography by Megan Rithrock



The Inside Tour Group for June 2010, including LEGO designers and coordinators.

Have you ever wondered what goes on at the LEGO[®] Headquarters in Billund, Denmark? Do you desire to go behind the scenes at the LEGO factory? Want to build LEGO models with LEGO designers, meet LEGO employees and experience life at LEGO? The LEGO Inside Tour may be for you! I had the opportunity to accompany the LEGO Inside Tour in May and June this year in Billund.

I knew of the LEGO Inside Tour from talking with some AFOLs who had gone to it, and it fascinated me. A few years ago, I had the opportunity to visit the tour at the end of the final evening to meet with those who had just completed it. I could feel that I had missed something very special and exciting, as everyone was in high spirits and had bonded over the experience and highly recommended it. So naturally, when I was invited by The LEGO Community team to be a 'fly on the wall' this year, I jumped at the opportunity!

I was able to meet with Camilla Torpe, LEGO Event Manager, beforehand and find out some of what I could expect on the LEGO Inside Tour. She excitedly explained all:

"The LEGO Inside Tour first began in 2005 and has now grown to having three tours a year. Each tour group has only 20 spaces. This limited number allows us to show the visitors parts of the company that are not open to the outside world. We created the tour to give the opportunity to have a true 'LEGO' experience, to learn how the company really is, and share with them LEGO values. We work very hard to make it a special and unique experience every year, and it has become a favorite event of ours. Everyone involved with the LEGO Inside Tour is there because they want to share how they contribute to LEGO and its core values. We always like to provide for our special VIP guests the chance to meet and interact with our best and brightest."

"Of course it would not be complete with out a unique LEGO set made only for the tour. this year by our own LEGO Designer Steen Sig Andersen in collaboration with Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen. There are lots of surprises!"

If you are in a LUG or LEGO Club that has visited the LEGO headquarters and factory before and think you've seen it all, I have to say the LEGO Inside Tour is jampacked with much more — more insider knowledge, people and locations normally kept restricted from outside eyes, some of which I'm not even allowed to put in this article, as one of the things that has to be completed before entry is a nondisclosure form (NDA). This exclusivity does come with a price tag. The price of the tour in 2011 is 12.000 DKK per person, (approximately \$2,003 USD, €1,613 Euros or £1,350 GBP), excluding travel to Billund. On the surface it might seem expensive, but I soon realized how much is included in the whole experience, and it seemed much more reasonable, as everything is included in the price.


The highlights of the LEGO Inside Tour include:

- Two nights accommodation at the four star Hotel LEGOLAND[®] (including breakfast lunch and dinners).
- Meet, greet and build with LEGO model designers and use some of their legendary parts drawers.
- Visit to the Historic Ole Kirk's House and the LEGO Idea House private museum.
- A behind-the-scenes tour of the LEGO Factory.
- Backstage access to LEGOLAND and the LEGOLAND studio.
- Transportation to all of the events.
- A special gift of a exclusive LEGO set commemorating the tour.
- Season Pass to the LEGOLANDs worldwide and many more surprises!

From the moment I arrived in the Hotel LEGOLAND lobby for the meet and greet, it felt like I was in for a very special treat. There were participants from all across the globe, including USA, UK, Portugal, South America, Russia, and Ireland. This was a tour for everyone and families were encouraged to attend. We had 11 kids, moms and dads and also a former United States Ambassador to Denmark. After everyone built their own specially printed LEGO Inside Tour special minifigure and made an exclusive badge we gathered for a group portrait, then were led to a conference room in the hotel. Even though everyone attending came from different countries, it seemed they already had something in common.

Steen Sig Andersen presents the Inside Tour exclusive set, designed by both him and Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen, owner of the LEGO Group, to the tour group (above).

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The LEGO Inside Tour is an exciting experience not just for its attendees, but also for those who are involved in it. I asked the new Online Community Lead, Peter Espersen, what his first impressions were.

BrickJournal: What was the experience of presenting to the group like in comparison to other presentations you have made?

Peter Espersen: The group was very enthusiastic, and had more questions than groups usually have. They have some great input for me, and everyone of them had in-depth knowledge about the LEGO Group and our initiatives.

Are the main benefits of this that these are very international groups, and you get a very wide range of feedback?

It's great that the Inside tour group is so international, but the most important thing is, that they are LEGO fans, and have that passion for LEGO.

Do you think you would like to do another presentation for the Inside Tour in the future?

Yes, I would like that very much, the fans provide me with a great amount of input and I always get reminded of why my job is so great when I meet the fans.



Matthew Ashton passes out collectible minifigures to the tour group.



Tim Ainley shows off preliminary concepts for an Atlantis set.

No matter the ages of the participants, spread from 7 to 99, everyone was the same age when it came to LEGO.

This tour opened with a welcome speech from Connie Kalcher, Vice President of Consumer Experiences Group, followed by a short speech from Camilla. After that, a short introduction was given to the LEGO designers, before Tormod Askildsen, Senior Director, Community Engagement and Communications, gave a special presentation on a top secret project currently in development.

After Tormod spoke, LEGO designers Andrew Woodman, William Thorogood, Jamie Berard, Astrid Graabæk, Pierre Normandin, Tim Ainley, and Steen Sig Andersen were onhand to give a presentation describing the LEGO Design process, and gave an exclusive preview of an upcoming LEGO set!

They then introduced a special building challenge for the night, and while we broke for dinner many of the more enthusiastic were already starting on their builds. The dinner was fantastic and I really enjoyed getting an opportunity to meet some of the guests. I spoke to a boy and his family who were on the tour because it was a donation for the UK 'Make a Wish Foundation." He and his brother were both avid young LEGO builders and jumped right into the building challenge. Eventually everyone had to build something ("everyone has to build") or the next night they would face the designer's penalties!

The next day we went to LEGO's private museum, the LEGO Idea House, and met director Jette Orduna. She gave a presentation on the history of LEGO and LEGO values. We walked around the museum, and then met up with Niels-Henrik Horsted, Senior Integration Manager from LEGO Universe. He gave a presentation and exclusive sneak peak at the then-new LU commercial and gave an exclusive gift to everyone!

As if the day could not get any better, we then experienced a tour though Kornmarken, the production area, where LEGO bricks are molded, and then to Minifigure decoration, and a packing area of the factory! After a full LEGO day, we all went to LEGOLAND for a western-style dinner with some of the LEGO designers, and Design Director Matthew Ashton, who had brought along some of the then brand new Minifigure line to give out to the special visitors! All of the kids were over-joyed and instantly started to swap them around to get their favorite. After dinner, we went back to the hotel and everyone presented their building projects from the previous evening to the LEGO Design Team. The awards were presented to the winners by Andrew Woodman, William Thorogood, and Jamie Berard.



Some large maquettes of Atlants minifigs.

The Friday was a chance to go behind the scenes at the LEGOLAND Park, including a visit to meet some of the LEGOLAND Master Model Builders! We all had a great time behind the scenes in the park and were given a tour through Miniland before a very nice lunch in the LEGOLAND Castle. Afterwards, we went back to the hotel. There everyone was surprised with a very special gift, an exclusive LEGO set designed by Kjeld Kirk Kristensen and Steen Sig Andersen!

Before we knew it the event was over. With new friends made, many adventures had and huge smiles on their faces, the final afternoon wound down, with everyone saying their goodbyes and going their separate ways. The LEGO Inside Tour is an amazing experience! I met such great people, and had so many wonderful adventures while on the tour, I'm actually not allowed to give away all of the surprises tour attendees take part in, for that you will have to come and see the tour for yourself. I can say everyone who took part was not disappointed, and many would like to return and go again and have another new experience. I highly recommend this experience for our readers out there, it was brilliant. Thank you to Camilla and everyone involved with the Inside Tour for making this truly a magical LEGO time to remember.



A couple of creations done for the tour building challenge.



Community



AFOLCON

A New LEGO Event on the 'Block!'

Interview by: Megan Rothrock Photography by: Warren Elsmore BrickJournal is a proud sponsor of a new LEGO event coming in April 2011 to the UK! Last year while meeting up with Warren Elsmore I had a discussion about LEGO events and we have pooled our resources to bring you a new type of event. This will be a chance for AFOLs to meet and have a chance to see behind the scenes with professionals who either work for LEGO or for partners of LEGO.

Warren Elsmore is an AFOL living in Edinburgh in the UK. He's the chairman of the Brickish Association (the British LEGO Users Group), though he's keen to point out AFOLCON is not a Brickish event. His most recognized creation is probably the minifig-scaled St Pancras station he's taken to LEGO fan events in the UK and Europe.

BrickJournal: AFOLCON seems a little different to the other European LEGO events?

Warren Elsmore: It is, yes. We've got two days of conference-style sessions open only to attendees, then a three-day public event: "The LEGO Show."

AFOLCON will be in the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry, with the LEGOLAND Discovery Centre just around the corner too. I think MOSI (as the museum is known) will work really well. We're expecting a lot of people over the public days, as the venue is able to hold the convention as well. Along with AFOLCON, there is the whole of the museum to see whilst you're there.

Other European shows are currently all free to attend but for AFOLCON you're charging attendees £60 each. Why?

Warren: Good question and believe me, we've been asked already! The idea is that our speakers also get to hang out with AFOLs, which they are looking forward to. We also were really keen that AFOLCON would be open to anyone the age of 16 or over to meet these guys.

We've announced some of the speakers already, including Mark Stafford, LEGO Designer, Carl Greatrix a TT Games Designer and Duncan Titmarsh a LEGO Certified Professional. Some of the topics are still under wraps and we are working on more surprises.

There really will be things at AFOLCON that have come straight from Billund and won't be available anywhere else. We also will have a great goodie bag of things for each attendee that is probably worth £60 anyway!

AFOLCON will run from the 28th April to the 2nd May 2011. The 28th/29th are private AFOL days and the 30th/1st/2nd it will be open to the public. This is also the weekend of the royal wedding of Prince William so it'll be a great time to be in the UK!

Register online now for AFOLCON and receive an extra 10% off the event as a special pre-pay discount for *BrickJournal* readers!

Go to www.afolcon.com Enter: "Brickjournal10" into the code box.

(Offer is good from now until April 1, 2011.)

Each AFOL Con attendee will receive:

- 1 kilogram bag of LEGO bricks!
- A goodie bag of LEGO goodnessconfirmation of contents pending!
- souvenir 1x8 brick
- lanyard and conference badge
- discount at the LEGO Brand store (which will also be at AFOLCON)
- Talks by LEGO Designers and other LEGO professionals
- a hot lunch
- More to come as we get closer to April!







The LEGO® Group

A Duck Tale: The Story of a Symbol

Article by Kristian Hauge, LEGO Idea House

Photography by Megan Rothrock and the LEGO Group

When the LEGO® Group celebrated its 75th anniversary in August 2007, the now classic LEGO wooden duck was used as its symbol. This year the duck celebrates its 75th anniversary, and BrickJournal spotlights this important toy!

One of the LEGO Group's best-selling wooden items and the icon of the 75th anniversary of the company, the wooden duck, was designed by the founder of the LEGO Group, Ole Kirk Kristiansen. Besides the duck's popularity, there was another very good reason for choosing a wooden duck as the company's anniversary 'mascot.'

Over the years, the wooden duck has become the embodiment of quality by becoming one of the symbols of the LEGO Group's motto, "Only the best is good enough." To find the reasons behind this, we have to go back to 1935, when the wooden duck went into production.

A Duck's Tale

Ole Kirk firmly believed that high-quality products would sell themselves, and therefore he insisted on high quality in everything – not the least from his own children. In an interview from 1982, Godtfred Kirk Christiansen shared the following story about his father Ole Kirk's focus on quality:

Once Godtfred took a consignment of painted wooden ducks to the station for dispatch and happily told his father that he had saved the company money. "How did you do that?" asked Ole Kirk. "I only gave the ducks two coats of paint rather than the usual three!" answered Godtfred. His father's response was swift and to the point: "Go and get the ducks immediately, give them their last coat of paint, repack them and take them back to the station. And do it all yourself – even if it takes you all night!" That day, Godtfred said, he really learned not to compromise with the quality of the LEGO products. Godtfred took the lesson to heart and since then always continued his father's focus on quality.

A Huge Investment

To further illustrate how dedicated Ole Kirk was to making quality toys, you just have to look at the time when Ole Kirk bought a milling machine. The machine was bought in the mid '30s and it was extremely expensive. Ole Kirk paid DKK 3.000 (about \$600 USD)for it. At the time, a house could be bought for 4.000-5.000 DKK, so it was a huge investment. In fact, it was a bit of an economic gamble for Ole Kirk because the amount was *one third* of the LEGO

LEGO Ducks in a Row

This row represents a selection of LEGO ducks produced from 1935 to 2009.



Group's whole annual turnover from the previous year. Despite the price of this milling machine, though, Ole Kirk never hesitated to make the investment for one reason - this machine would increase the quality of the wooden toys!

This large machine is the reason why the wooden duck came to look the way we know it. The milling machine was used to make the duck's rounded (beveled) edges. The edges meant that the toy would be safer for children to play with. Ole Kirk also knew that this machine would not only improve the quality and safety of LEGO Toys, it could also improve productivity — after the purchase of the milling machine it was possible for an employee to make a larger quantity of toys per day. Previously, the toys were cut out and shaped with a hand saw!

It was also on a milling machine that Godtfred milled out the famous LEGO motto "Only the best is good enough" and hung it up in the woodworking factory. A copy of this sign hangs in the LEGO Idea House.

A Tiny Relative

Over the years, the LEGO Group has produced several plastic and wooden ducks in the product lines. Even today you can find a plastic duck among the many LEGO products. In the LEGO Creator Line's Family Home – set number 6754, you will find a tiny duck in the pond in the front yard. This tiny duck was designed by Megan Rothrock, and its inclusion in the set was because the LEGO Creator team at the time wanted to pay homage to Ole Kirks' wooden duck and continue the tradition of LEGO ducks.

There are not many similarities between the two ducks, one is tiny and built out of LEGO bricks and the other is large and made of good old-fashioned air-dried wood. But even though they are not very similar they still have one extremely important thing in common; they are both LEGO products and as a result are both of very high quality!



Ole Kirk's milling machine.

Duck Facts

- Between 1932 and 1947 the LEGO Company solely produced wooden toys.
- From 1947 onwards the LEGO Company produced both wooden and plastic toys before switching solely to plastic in 1960.
- The original duck was designed by LEGO founder Ole Kirk Kristiansen.
- The wooden duck went on the drawing board in 1935 and was produced until 1960.
- Through the years, the duck has been produced in various sizes and shapes.
- The most popular duck was the "talking" duck. It had a moving beak which opened and closed when the duck was pulled back and forth.

Community Ads





www.brickmania.com

Hey Kids! Comics! by Greg (AFOLS) Hyland

Lethargic Lad: Topics of Unclear Importance is a complete collection of seven years of Lethargic Lad comics! Presenting over 350 strips from the lethargiclad.com website and all the Lethargic Lad three-page comics that originally appeared in the pages of *Dork Tower* comics.

"Greg just gets it right: the situations, the ongoing storylines, the characterizations, the understated but gut-busting payoffs... Fans of the Lad are fans for life!"

-John Kovalic Dork Tower



Lethargic Lad: Topics of Unclear Importance is available exclusively at www.lethargiclad.com

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 or by sending check or money order made

 payable to "Greg Hyland" to:

 Lethargic Lad: Topics of Unclear Importance

 60 East Ave. N.

 Hamilton, Ontario

 Canada

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Another issue is completed, and it's been a challenging one. Looking back at the last year, though, it's all been pretty challenging.

The community has been experiencing growth with new conventions, such as Bricks by the Bay and BrickMagic, and also with higher attendance numbers at the older events. But the community has also had some losses too, as noted in our tributes to nnenn and also to the founder of Bricklink. Both of these people made lasting contributions to the community and leave behind a legacy with us.

So what does the year hold for us? I see a lot of fun, a few challenges, and as always seen here, many smiles! I wish all of you a great year!

'Til next issue, laters!

Joe Meno Editor





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Kaminoan's Fine Clonier. For all your minifig decal customization needs.

Last Word



by Greg Hyland





THE MAGAZINE FOR LEGO® ENTHUSIASTS OF ALL AGES!



BRICKJOURNAL magazine (edited by Joe Meno) spotlights all aspects of the LÉGO® 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!

LEGO, the Minifigure, and the Brick and Knob configurations are trademarks of the LEGO Group of Companies.

Brick Journal

BRICKJOURNAL #1 The ultimate resource for LEGO enthusiasts of all ages, showcasing events, people, and models! FULL-COLOR #1 features an interview with Certified LEGO Professional NATHAN SAWAYA, car designs by STEPHAN SANDER, step-by-step building instructions and techniques for all skill levels, new set reviews, on-the-scene reports from LEGO community events, and other surprises!

(84-page print magazine) SOLD OUT (Digital Edition) \$3.95



BRICKJOURNAL #2

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 an 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!

(84-page FULL-COLOR magazine) \$8.95 (Digital Edition) \$3.95

PRINT SUBSCRIPTIONS: Six issues 57 US (575 Canada, 586 elsewhere) DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$23.70 for six digital issues



BRICKJOURNAL #3 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 INSTRUC-TIONS, TECHNIQUES, and more!

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BRICKJOURNAL #4 Interviews with LEGO BUILDERS including cover model builder ARTHUR GUGICK. event reports from BRICKFAIR and others, touring the LEGO IDEA HOUSE, plus STEP-BY-STEP BUILDING INSTRUCTIONS and TECHNIQUES for all skill levels, NEW SET REVIEWS, and an extensive report on constructing the Chinese Olympic Village in LEGO!

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BRICKJOURNAL #5 Event report on the MINDSTORMS 10th ANNIVERSARY at LEGO HEADQUARTERS. Pixar's ANGUS MACLANE on LEGO in film making, 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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BRICKJOURNAL #6 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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BRICKJOURNAL #7 Focuses on the new LEGO ARCHITECTURE line, with a look at the new sets designed by ADAM REED TUCKER, plus interviews with other architectural builders, including SPENCER REZKALLA. Also, behind the scenes on the creation of POWER MINERS and the GRAND CAROUSEL, a LEGO BATTLESHIP over 20 feet long, reports from LEGO events worldwide, and more!

(84-page FULL-COLOR magazine) \$8.95 (Digital Edition) \$3.95



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, ands still more instructions and building tips!

(84-page FULL-COLOR magazine) \$8.95 (Digital Edition) \$3.95

BRICKJOURNAL #9 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! (84-page FULL-COLOR magazine) \$8.95

(Digital Edition) \$3.95

BRICKJOURNAL #10 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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'Racers" theme issue, with building tips on race cars by the ARVO BROTHERS, interview with LEGO RACERS designer ANDREW WOODMAN, LEGO FORMULA ONE RACING, TECHNIC SPORTS CAR building, event reports, instructions and columns on MINIFIGURE CUSTOMIZATION and MICRO BUILDING, builder spotlights, LEGO HISTORY, and more!

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BRICKJOURNAL #12 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 morel

(84-page FULL-COLOR magazine) \$8.95 (Digital Edition) \$3.95



BRICKJOURNAL #13

Special EVENT ISSUE with reports from BRICKMAGIC (the newest US LEGO fan festival, organized by Bricklournal magazine), BRICKWORLD (one of the oldest US LEGO fan events), and others! Plus: spotlight on BIONICLE Builder NORBERT LAGUBUEN, our regular column on minifigure customization, step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions, spotlights on builders and their work, and more!

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BRICKJOURNAL COMPENDIUMS



wealth of information and building tips on all things LEGO²¹ (NOTE: These are DIFFERENT ISSUES than BrickJournal #1-16 shown on this flyer.) QUANTITIES ARE LOW: ORDER SOON TO PREVENT FURTHER SELL-OUTS!

COMPENDIUM 1

Features interviews with LEGO car builder ZACHARY SWEIGART (showing his version of the time-traveling Delorean from the movie Back to the Future), JØRGEN VIG KNUDSTORP (CEO of LEGO Systems, Inc.), Mecha builders BRYCE McGLONE and JEFF RANJO, paraplegic LEGO builder SCOTT WARFIELD, BOB CARNEY (LEGO castle builder extraordinaire) and RALPH SAVELSBURG (LEGO plane builder), REVEREND BRENDAN POWELL SMITH (author of the LEGO version of the Bible), NASA Astronaut Trainer KIETH JOHNSON, JAKE McKEE (Global Community Director for The LEGO Group), JASON ALLEMANN on recreating the spaceraft from 2001: A Space Odyssey and 2010: The Year We Make Contact, features on the BIONICLE universe, how to make your own custom bricks, plus instructions and techniques, and more!

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BRICKJOURNAL #14 Discover the world of stop-motion LEGO FILMS, with brickfilmer DAVID PAGANO and others spotlighting LEGO filmmaking, the history of the medium and its community, interviews with the makers of the films seen on the LEGO CLUB SHOW and LEGO.com, and instructions on how to film and build puppets for brick flicks! Plus how to customize minifigures, event reports, step-by-step building instructions, and more! (84-page FULL-COLOR magazine) \$8.95

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BRICKJOURNAL #15 Looks at the LEGO MECHA genre of building, especially in Japan! Feature editor NATHAN BRYAN spotlights mecha builders such as SAITO YOSHIKAZU, TAKAYUKI TORII, SUKYU and others! Also, a talk with BRIAN COOPER and MARK NEUMANN about their mecha creations, mecha building instructions by SAITO YOSHIKAZU, our regular columns on minifigure customization, building, event reports, and more!

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BrickJournal



BRICKJOURNAL #16

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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Don't miss our own BrickMagic Festival, May 2011 (in Raleigh, North Carolina) and Summer 2012 (in Orlando, Florida)! For more information, go to: www.brickmagic.org





COMPENDIUM 2

Features interviews with MIKE WILDER (about using a Mindstorms robot to film a 3-D documentary) and MARK LARSON (creator of the Fabuland Housewifes online comic strip), ALBAN NANTY on his LEGO-based Star Wars® film, plus features on LEGO character sculptures, tutorials on LCad software for creating projects, an examination of LEGOLand's history, behind the scenes at a LEGO factory, building big with LEGOs (from castles and rollercoasters to ships and skyscrapers), creating custom minifigures, instructions and building techniques, and more!

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COMPENDIUM 4

Spotlights a Lego art show, building a larger-than-life Yoda, an interview with LEGOLand builder GUY BAGLEY and a top LEGO Star Wars set designer, how to build a DROID STARFIGHTER, a LEGO POKÉMON character gallery, a look at the POWER FUNCTIONS electric building system, a visit to an amazing STAR WARS LEGO DISPLAY in the United Kingdom, coverage of the 75th Anniversary celebration at the LEGO headquarters in Denmark, LEGO event reports, building instructions and techniques, and more!

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