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Brick Journal

Issue 34 • May 2015
people • building • community

*Behind the Scenes of BrickNerd Studios'
Batman vs Superman*

*Brandon Griffith reveals
ComicBricks*

*Jared Burks builds the
Agents of SHIELD*



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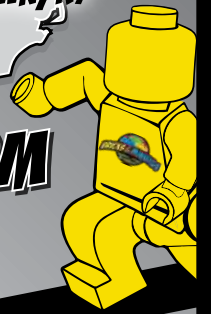
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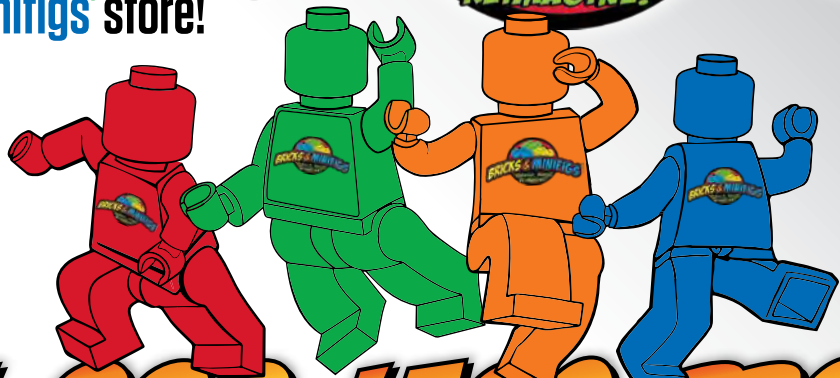
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About the Cover:

Batman meets Superman. This will not end well. Photo by Tommy Williamson.

About the Contents Page:

A photo of the set used in Batman vs Superman. Photo by Tommy Williamson.



From the Editor:

This wasn't what I expected for this issue.

I was planning on doing another theme, but Tommy Williamson's video went online (if you haven't seen it, *see it* on YouTube on BrickNerd's channel!). This led to him getting the cover, which only led to more comics stuff, as you'll see.

I even got into the theme when I asked Facebook fans what model I should try to build. The end result is here, and a model I am pretty happy with.

Other creations came in from all over—from Korea, we have Jared Chan, and from Sweden, we have Michael Lundqvist. A display of LEGO comic book covers is also inside this issue, which is a new idea that will hopefully become popular. One of my favorite comics characters also is in here: Sandman, as built by Tyler Halliwell. And this is only a little of what's in this issue. So what can I say?

This wasn't what I expected. It was a *lot* more! Have fun, both in this issue, and at our own BrickMagic LEGO Festival in Charlotte, North Carolina on May 9-10, where you'll see some of the MOCs in this issue! (Details at www.brickmagic.org)

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.

P.P.S... Yes, *BrickJournal* has a website — www.brickjournal.com! Twitter? Yep, there too — <http://twitter.com/brickjournal>. Facebook? Yup — <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=5872869914&ref=mf>. Or you can scan the bottom codes with a QR reader!

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Glossary

AFOL (Adult Fan of LEGO)
NLSO (Non-LEGO Significant Other)
MOC (My Own Creation)
TLG (The LEGO Group)
BURP (Big Ugly Rock Piece)
LURP (Little Ugly Rock Piece)
SNOT (Studs Not on Top)

POOP (Pieces—that can be or should be made—Of Other Pieces)
LUG (LEGO Users Group)
LTC (LEGO Train Club)
DARK AGES (usually teen years, when you drift away from building)
STUDS OUT (building where the studs on bricks face the viewer)

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One of the camera set-ups for *BvS*.

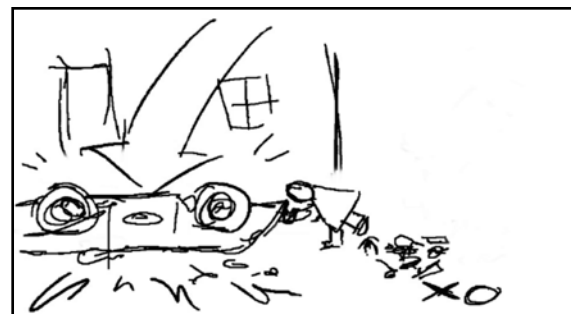
Behind the Scenes of *Batman vs Superman: Flinging Batarangs One Frame at a Time*

Article and Photography by Tommy Williamson

One day back in June 2014 while I was working on *Expendables 3*, the topic turned, as it often does, to geek news. Professionals in the visual effects industry tend to be like me: overgrown kids, and conversations have a tendency to go that way. News about *Batman V Superman* was percolating, and everyone was wondering how Ben Affleck was going to do in the Batman role. But I couldn't stop thinking about what that match-up might be like: just how would that go down? It all seems a bit preposterous of course, debating what might happen if imaginary characters engaged in battle, but I kept thinking about it. And the more I thought, the funnier the concept seemed to be. Then I realized, this would be a funny short, and what better way to tell my little story than with a brickfilm? It's been ages since BrickNerd Studios, the animation division of my company BrickNerd Enterprises, finished the animation for *Beyond the Brick: A LEGO Brickumentary*, and since it's still not out, we haven't been able to share much of it with very many people. So I was keen not only to tell this story, but to also have a bit of a showpiece for BrickNerd Studios. So I blocked out a quick framework, and that night I wrote the script. I showed it to a couple of people and got some good feedback, so I decided I was onto something. It was time to make a little movie.

My years in visual effects and Hollywood filmmaking have given me a really good foundation in the overall production process, and that's how I approach my projects: as miniature versions of full-fledged movies. I start with a script, in industry standard formatting, then I move to storyboards. On this project I decided to do digital storyboards (as opposed to pen on paper) to make production quicker. It also allows for easy reproduction of similar frames, by reusing elements and adding additional detail. Luckily, on this particular project there are very few camera angles, so storyboarding went pretty quickly. Once I finished the boards, I went to work on an animatic. An animatic is essentially a storyboard version of the film, cut to the length of the expected project. My animatics also have dialog, sound effects and music, since I want to get the pacing of the project down, and to find the right feel for the project. Traditionally the dialog for an animated film is recorded first, and this film was no exception. I found a voice artist I really liked on fiverr.com, Chris Lovingood, and he agreed to be Superman. I decided to do Batman myself (a decision that I still question) and while I waited for his dialogue, I recorded my own. I had a pretty vivid picture in my head of the scenery for this project, so while I was working on the animatic, I hired builder Dane Erland to get the scenery started. We did several Google searches for alleys and such, and once I was able to communicate what I was looking for, he got to building. I also designed the set in three pieces, that would allow for all the angles needed by simply rearranging them. If you look at the short closely, you'll see it's just the same three building facades in all the shots, but with careful lighting and composition, it looks like a full environment. Dane worked a full week at the studio, while I wrapped up the animatic and dabbled with the build (like building the fire escape), and when he was done we had two full facades and the beginning of the third. We also had the ground and quite a bit of the details.

I should note that while all the previous activity was happening, there was also quite a bit of other things going on. I took a trip to Hawaii with my family, my son started college, I had guests at the studio for a couple LiveBuilds, produced an episode of BrickNerd for my YouTube channel, and generally... life. This was certainly a side project, despite being a bit ambitious. This was the case for the entirety of the production, just squeezing it in between all the other things I needed to get done. Building proceeded for another few weeks, and by the second week of September, the set was finally done. I started doing the scale lighting with the BrickStuff products I had on hand, including the practical light fixtures on the buildings. I was so excited with how it was turning out, I sent some secret behind-the-scenes pictures to Rob Klingburg at BrickStuff. He was delighted with the progress, and shared a secret with me too: his new round lights. Coincidentally I was struggling with fitting some lights in the practical fixtures on the brick wall. These new lights would work so much better and Rob hooked me up with some to finish the job. Paired with the controller board to dim them, the new lights worked perfectly. In addition to the lighting, set dressing was also needed, so I carefully arranged all the garbage cans, trash and debris for a nice "back alley" look. Then I glued them down (I'll pause here to allow you all to calm down... better?). I should clarify, in my MOC building, I'm a purist, no gluing, no modifying. But as a filmmaker, practicality trumps purity, and stuff that's glued in place (with Elmer's—I'm not a sadist) doesn't move while shooting, ruining an otherwise perfect shot. When it's all done, the Elmer's glue pops off cleanly like it never happened. Now that the set was fully lit, dressed and tweaked, it was time to shoot.



Storyboards for the film.



Set construction.

On September 16, I shot the first set-up, which was also the first shot of the film (this is often not the case) which was done by simply animating my tripod with the set in front of a greenscreen. In case you don't know, stop-motion animation is accomplished by making miniscule adjustments to things in the scene, then shooting a single frame. This is repeated over and over, as many as 24 times for a single second of film. It's a slow and tedious process, but when it's done right the results are magical. The background skyline was shot separately as a single frame on greenscreen, to be composited together later. The next day I shot the second and third shot as well, animating the camera on a slider dolly a frame at a time. The next day was Batman's first shot, which was also a dolly shot, so I was a little anxious. As fate would have it though, one of the best LEGO animators anywhere happens to live here in this tiny town on the central coast of California, James Morr. We've partnered on a number of projects, including the LEGO documentary, and he was willing to help me on this project. I animated the camera and James animated Batman entering frame and pacing. Things went pretty smoothly, despite the fact that the ground was built just a tad too fragile, and had a tendency to drift a bit as animation proceeded—nothing I couldn't fix in the compositing phase though. The next day I shot the side angle of Batman and Superman, including the last shot of the film. Here's a fun little easter egg: if you look carefully at the right side of the frame, you'll notice there's a boat anchor among the bat-arsenal. This is because in the original script the "stupid" weapon was a "bat boat anchor". It wasn't until a couple days later when I was going through and setting up all of Batman's weapons that I came across the plunger in the minifig accessories. All of



*Batman with his many toys—er, props/
Set lighting with Brickstuff LEDs.*





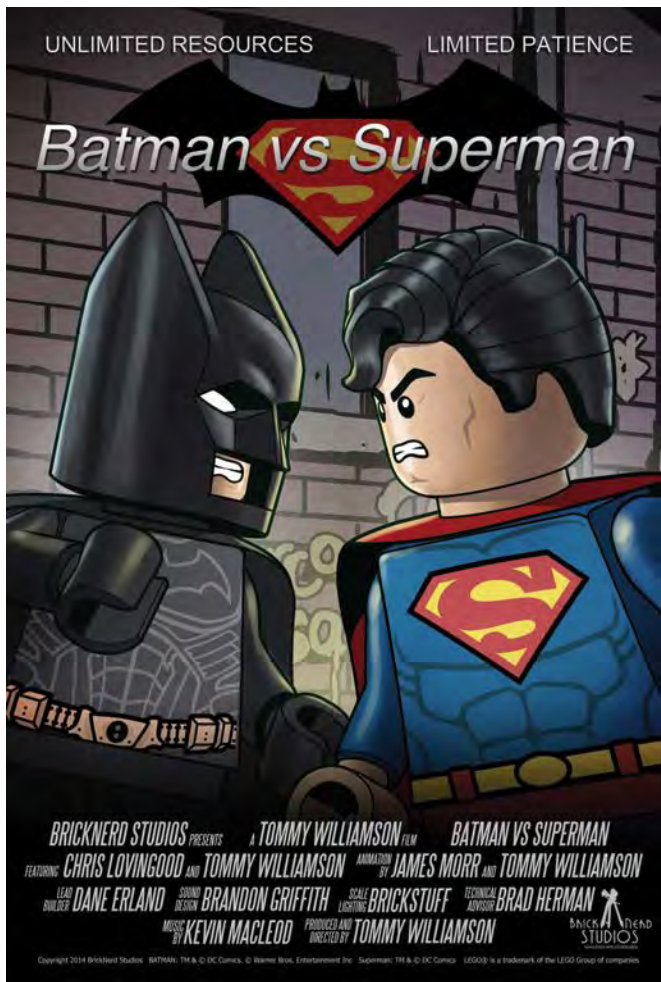
A shot of Superman after Batman has attacked him with more than a few Bat-items.

Batman's arsenal was simply animated on wires; we would just hold them in the frame about where we wanted them and jiggle them slightly during the exposure. The result was a motion blurred weapon flying in. Then in comp I would simply paint the wires out. It became a bit of a running gag here in the studio; I would pick up any random thing and in my silly Batman voice say "bat-coffee stirrer" for instance. And while going through the accessories I was doing it as well, just to discover that there were actually some really funny ones. Bat-snorkel and bat-plunger were two of those. So I added them, but then I had a problem: there was an anchor in those shots. I decided not to go to too much trouble in comp to fix them, I just added the plunger and placed it strategically to make the anchor less recognizable. Next time you watch, look for it — it's totally obvious if you know it's there. Over the next couple of weeks shots were completed one by one, with me doing some shots and James doing others. I would animate during the day (with plenty of other distractions) and in the evening I would drop the shots in the cut, making adjustments to the edit as I went. Even with all the planning, the boarding, the animatic and using the dialogue while animating, the cut is always in flux. And that's the way it should be, continually evolving. I would also do temporary composites and clean-up on shots, to keep them from being distracting while viewing. On September 26th, all the shots were "in the can", just in time to pack for BrickCon.

While in Seattle I was able to show the rough version of the short to a few select people, who all seemed to enjoy it, so it passed the first public inspection from peers that I trust—so far so good. As soon as I got back from Seattle I got a call to supervise the stereo (3D) for *Exodus* so it was off to LA for a few weeks. While I was down there working I filled my downtime and evenings with tweaks to shots, refining the cut, finalizing the composites and doing the logo for BrickNerd Studios. While I was down there I stayed with an old friend Brad Herman, who turned into an invaluable resource for the final refinement of the film. Brad has a wealth of comic knowledge, and his input made this a better movie. It was about this time I also got a huge gift from a dear friend, a poster for the film by Paul Lee. Paul is one of the premiere LEGO Illustrators, you've seen his work in the LEGO



A look at some of the detail added to the set.



Paul Lee's film poster.



A minifig view of the set.



Superman getting a close-up.



Another minifig view of the set.

Superman, Batman TM & © DC Comics.


Club magazine and on the boxes for the TMNT line. To have him do custom artwork for a poster was an absolute thrill. I spent some time adding text, tweaking the aspect ratio a bit and making some minor changes, and I had a magnificent poster. As *Exodus* was coming to a close, I also took advantage of an offer from someone who is no stranger to the pages of *BrickJournal*, Brandon Griffith. Brandon's real-world job is sound designer, and he offered to do the final mix. Brandon had been noodling with the short for a couple weeks with a temp cut, and we spent a full day making final adjustments at his studio. It made all the difference in the world. Sound is half the viewing experience in my opinion, and good sound design and a proper mix took this short to the next level. With proper sound done, it was time to put the finishing touches on this thing and premiere it.

Once I was home from LA, I set to work polishing every single shot. I'm not sure if my background in visual effects helps me or hurts me sometimes. When I went in to make final adjustments I found hot pixels (dead pixels in the camera sensor, they show up as bright dots), stuck grain, matte edges, paint artifacts, obvious loop points, camera wobble, strobing, and all kinds of stuff 95% of the viewing public would never see, yet I spent six



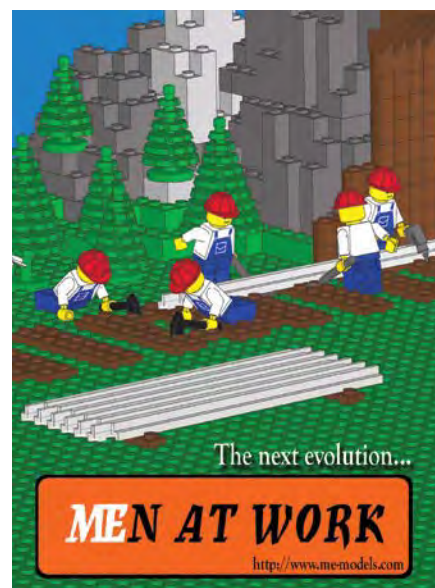
Compositing effects—the background is dropped in the greenscreen to extend the night shot.

long days correcting and finessing. To be honest, I still see a ton of stuff I would like to correct, but as they say, “no film is ever finished, it’s ultimately abandoned,” so I had to cut it loose. Just about the time I rendered what I thought was my final pass for the project, I got an email from composer Kevin MacLeod. I had mailed Kevin a couple weeks before, asking if he was ok with his credit on the film and the poster, and seeing if he was at all available to compose a short piece for my animated logo. I was thrilled to discover he was, and that he loved the film. So I put the release on hold for a few days while I waited for that. I guess he was energized by viewing because later that evening he sent me the first stab at the music. It was excellent! I only had a minor note and within a couple days (it was the weekend) he had a new version to me. Once I dropped that piece of music in, and made some minor tweaks here and there (I can’t help myself!), it was time for the final render and to upload to YouTube.

The reaction was instant and very positive, and I had several hundred views toward the end of the first day. My friend Brad messaged me to congratulate me on the release and positive feedback so far. I told him I’d be happy with 1000 views for the first day. Later that evening I was minding my own business playing with my dogs when my phone lit up. It was Brad with the message that io9 had blogged it, then right after Gizmodo blogged it. Suddenly it was blowing up, and I was stunned. I started getting subscribers and followers and my inbox was filling up faster than I could read it. It was crazy, and by the time I decided to go to bed it was over 4500 views. The next morning I discovered I had been blogged by a number of other sites, and the view count was over 21,000 views! I continue to be stunned and pleased with the views, comments and headlines. Although I do have to admit I’m still holding out for a comment from the biggest Batman fan out there, Kevin Smith. As of this writing it’s at 157k views and still climbing and I’ve written a sequel that I’m starting preproduction on soon. Thank you very much to everyone that has watched and enjoyed! 



Editing—cutting all of the movie shots to make a cohesive story. Here, a shot is compared with an animatic.



People

Ten-Year-Old LEGO® Lover Builds Brick Loot!

Article by Jackie Pilossoph

Photography courtesy of Brick Loot

"It just makes me happy." That's how Parker Krex described the feeling he gets when building with LEGO. The fifth-grader, who lives in suburban Chicago with his parents Erin and Steve, said he has been building ever since he can remember.

Parker's passion for LEGO has led to building something a lot bigger than a LEGO set. The Krex's are the owners of *Brick Loot*, the subscription box business geared towards LEGO and brick lovers, which they launched last fall. "Parker actually thought of the idea," said Erin Krex. "We were having a garage sale and he was selling some of his toys to buy more LEGO sets. We just started talking about it, and we ended up writing a business plan that day."

Krex—who described herself as an entrepreneur at heart, given two other highly successful businesses she owns—said she and Parker actually prepared a mock box and gave a Shark Tank type presentation to Steve, who would be their investor. With Steve on board, the Krex's shipped their first *Brick Loot* box out in December of 2014 to over 500 subscribers, who Krex said were gained solely through social media.

"Subscription box companies have grown significantly in the last three years," she said. "People miss getting mail now that our world is all digital. It's nice for people to get a surprise every month with things they know they are going to love."

Here's how *Brick Loot* works. Customers can sign up for a one-month, three-month or six-month subscription. Once a month, they receive a box at their home, filled with new, unique and custom LEGO and brick-related items, along with other accessories.

"It starts with one idea, and then we begin searching companies that have products that fit our theme," said Krex, who explained that February's box contained *Star Wars* related items, including a light-up lightsaber, capes for minifigures and waterslide decals. "Parker does all the research to find out what companies we should partner with and what should go in the box."

"Testing out the products is the most fun part of this," Parker said. "It's not really work because it's so fun."



A Brick Loot box, with items from BrickForge, Brickstix, a kit from BrickBuildersPro, Liteup Blocks, and many other partners.

BrickLoot.com's boxes cost anywhere from \$23-\$27, depending on the length of subscription, and have an average value of \$50-\$70, according to Krex. Box items come from the company's many partners, which consist of 17 at present (Brickforge, OYO Sports, nanoblock, BrickStix, Brick Popper, Liteup Blocks, BrickBuildersPro, Abbie Dabbles, Brickmania, InRoad Toys, Brickstuds, United Bricks, *BrickJournal*, Cape Madness, Vinyl is your friend, and No Starch Press), a number Krex said is growing monthly.

Ryan Riel is the owner of *Brick Popper*, his Colorado-based company that manufactures a tool which separates LEGO and other bricks. "Erin approached me and I took a look at the website," said Riel. "They were connected to all



these other companies in the industry that I wanted a connection with, so becoming one of Brick Loot's partners made a lot of sense because I knew it would offer my product a lot of exposure."

LG Orlando is a custom LEGO instruction and kit designer, and the owner of his Atlanta-based company, *BrickBuildersPro*. Orlando has designed three custom brick kits for *Brick Loot* so far. "What Brick Loot and I are giving customers is a novelty, a work of art. Something they've never seen and something you can't buy in a store. That's special," he said.

Krex said one aspect of the business that is challenging is making the custom LEGO kits, since LEGO does not sell mass quantities to anyone except LEGO master builders.



Parker Krex.

"We have to purchase LEGO bricks from the secondary market, which for our February boxes amounted to almost 100,000 bricks from more than 60 BrickLink vendors around the world," she said.

With almost 1,000 subscribers to date, *Brick Loot* has hired a full time employee and is opening a commercial warehouse in early spring.

"As long as Parker has been alive, he has seen his father and I as entrepreneurs, and now we are seeing perhaps he's learned from us," Krex said. "He took his building hobby and helped us turn it into a big business." When asked how many hours a day he spends building with LEGO, Parker smiled and replied, "I think 24."

"Why do kids love LEGO? Because they're unlimited on the scale of the imagination," Orlando said. "Every human wants to build. Everyone has a desire to create." **b**



You can go to Brick Loot's webpage by going to <http://www.brickloot.com/> or scanning this QR code!

Building



Minifig Customization 101:

Creating the Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D!

by Jared K. Burks

This is the 40th article in this series. To celebrate this accomplishment, I thought we would take this article back to its foundations in decal design. In order to do this I am going to use *Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* as inspiration for the article. *Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* is a television series created for ABC by Joss Whedon, Jed Whedon, and Maurissa Tancharoen based on the Marvel Comics organization S.H.I.E.L.D. (Strategic Homeland Intervention Enforcement Logistics Division). This organization is a peacekeeping and spy agency populated with the colorful characters from the Marvel Cinematic Universe, allowing it to share continuity with the Marvel film franchise. The

show is in its second season and centered on the character of Phil Coulson, who was introduced in the original *Iron Man* film from 2008. Coulson is an everyman-style character who is fiercely loyal to his team and organization and is now the Director and the heart of S.H.I.E.L.D.

The show chronicles Coulson's team through many trials and tribulations fighting evil baddies and Hydra. While we have a license from Marvel for various super-heroes and the Avengers, this has not included characters from Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. As a huge fan of S.H.I.E.L.D., I was instantly taken by the show and its unique style for the S.H.I.E.L.D. Agents. (My craze started with the S.H.I.E.L.D. comics and I can report that I have had the pleasure of meeting Jim Steranko on multiple occasions; he was massively influential in creating Nick Fury and S.H.I.E.L.D., but I digress.)

In this article, I am going to display the *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* characters I have created in minifigure form and discuss how and why I have outfitted them accordingly. I will point out how I have made the designs cohesive between the Goodies and the Baddies. While I would love to claim the credit for the show's amazing style, this belongs to Ann Foley, the Costume Designer for the show. I merely interpreted her awesome costumes. Through the creation of these figures, I have had the pleasure of conversing with Ann Foley via Twitter. Ann has been gracious enough to answer some questions about the show's style that she has

contributed through the characters' costume design; look for her comments in the insert. I would also like to thank Arune Singh, Executive Director of TV Communications; Marvel Entertainment for his assistance with Ann's participation.

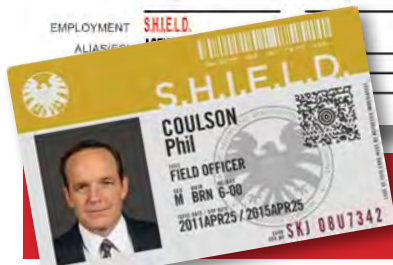
Please note that Ann's participation in this article is not an endorsement of my custom S.H.I.E.L.D. Minifigures or any other content in this issue.

SPOILER ALERT: Please note this article will contain spoilers if you are not currently watching Season Two of the show and are at least up to the Winter break (halfway through) of Season Two.

Agents of SHIELD TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.

		DOB: 1964-07-08
AGENT: COULSON, PHILLIP J.		STATUS: ACTIVE - DIRECTOR
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS: MOBILE	PREVIOUS ADDRESS: THE BUS	
S.H.I.E.L.D.		SSN No: SKJ 08U7342

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP: UNITED STATES	TITLE: DIRECTOR
PLACE OF BIRTH: BOSTON, MA, USA	HEIGHT: 5'9"
RACE: CAUCASIAN	WEIGHT: 174 LBS
GENDER: MALE	HAIR: BROWN
DENTAL: NONE	EYES: BLUE
LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, SPANISH	
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS: STAB WOUND, CHEST - LOKI	
FAMILY: FATHER: Robert Coulson, Deceased MOTHER: Julie Coulson, Deceased	
EDUCATION: CLASSIFIED	
SKILLS: MARTIAL ARTS, EXPERT TACTICIAN EXPERT MARKSMAN, EXPERT SPY	
EMPLOYMENT: S.H.I.E.L.D.	



**Phil Coulson
(Clark Clegg)**

		DOB: 1963-11-20
AGENT: MAY, MELINDA QIAOLIAN		STATUS: ACTIVE - DEPUTY DIRECTOR
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS: SHIELD COMMAND	PREVIOUS ADDRESS: THE BUS	
S.H.I.E.L.D.		SSN No: A 078634

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP: UNITED STATES	TITLE: DUTY DIRECTOR
PLACE OF BIRTH: COLOANE, MACAU	HEIGHT: 5'6"
RACE: ASIAN	WEIGHT: 110 LBS
GENDER: FEMALE	HAIR: BROWN
DENTAL: NONE	EYES: BROWN
LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, MANDARIN, CANTONESE	
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS: NONE	
FAMILY: MOTHER: Lian May, Alive SPOUSE (EX): Andrew Garner, MD, Alive	
EDUCATION: CLASSIFIED	
SKILLS: MASTER MARTIAL ARTS, MASTER ACROBAT EXPERT MARKSMAN, EXPERT PILOT	



**Melinda May
(Ming-Na Wen)**

Coulson is a company man, his style is fairly basic. In Season One he wore lighter colored dark suits, blues more than blacks. I have attempted to capture his style in a black suit with a lighter blue shirt. Black figure parts are a bit more difficult because you have to outline the design in a lighter or darker shade color. On black parts, this isn't completely possible. So I went with a dark grey outline to the suit. When I created this design I went through about 12 different color combinations to get the right mix to get the outline to go well with the shirt color. I also started to unify my agents with their S.H.I.E.L.D badge.

Agent May wears a specially designed suit called a Tactical Suit, that appears to be very flexible for hand-to-hand combat. It features a vest-style jacket that looks to be quilted. She also appears to feature prominent patches on her shoulders; however, after my chat with Ann Foley, I know that not to be the case. Again this is a Season One look with her slight scowl, as she was on the team, yet a bit outside during that time. Notice her badge helps tie her to S.H.I.E.L.D.

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AGENT WARD, GRANT DOUGLAS		DOB 1993-01-07	
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS ROGUE		STATUS FUGITIVE - HYDRA AGENT	
PREVIOUS ADDRESS THE BUS		SSN No A 0849329	

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	UNITED STATES	TITLE	SPECIALIST/HYDRA
PLACE OF BIRTH	BOSTON, MA, USA	HEIGHT	5'9"
RACE	CAUCASIAN	WEIGHT	174 LBS
GENDER	MALE	HAIR	BROWN
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BLUE
LANGUAGES	ENGLISH, FRENCH, ITALIAN, RUSSIAN, SPANISH		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	NONE		
FAMILY	FATHER: Deceased BROTHER: Thomas Ward, Deceased MOTHER: Deceased SISTER: UNKNOWN BROTHER: Christian Ward, Deceased		
EDUCATION	CLASSIFIED		
SKILLS	MASTER MARTIAL ARTS		



**Grant Ward
(Brent Dalton)**

Grant Ward never seems out of place, but also never seems to fit in at the same time. I believe this is due to his training. I have him in a civilian look derived from a modified LEGO design with the belt and S.H.I.E.L.D. badge added to tie him to S.H.I.E.L.D. Please note this is a Season One look. He is wearing a "whatever" grumpy expression as he does what he is told, even if that is to kill his best friend, or so it would appear.

AGENT FITZ, LEOPOLD		DOB 1987-08-19	
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS SHIELD COMMAND		STATUS ENGINEER LV5	
PREVIOUS ADDRESS THE BUS		SSN No A 0947329	

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	SCOTLAND	TITLE	ENGINEER LV5
PLACE OF BIRTH	SCOTLAND, UK	HEIGHT	5'8"
RACE	CAUCASIAN	WEIGHT	163 LBS
GENDER	MALE	HAIR	BROWN
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BLUE
LANGUAGES	ENGLISH, MACHINE		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	BRAIN DAMAGE - APHASIA (GRANT WARD INFLECTED)		
FAMILY	FATHER: UNKNOWN MOTHER: Alive		
EDUCATION	SHIELD Academy of Science & Technology		
SKILLS	GENIUS LEVEL INTELLECT MASTER ENGINEER		



**Leo Fitz
(Ian De Caestecker)**

Fitz is a very interesting character that undergoes a dramatic change from Season One to Season Two, as he suffers some brain damage due to drowning. This is clearly a together Fitz from Season One, complete with interactive computer pad. He is an engineer that always looks a bit disheveled, which is shown in the loose tie. This is a mixed look combining a *Harry Potter*-style sweater with the rest of the figure. Fitz was lost in his own thoughts in Season One, thus his facial expression. In Season Two, he starts mumbling his thoughts out loud as he can no longer internally process them due to the brain damage. His Season Two figure would appear dramatically different and much less polished.

AGENT SIMMONS, JEMMA		DOB 1987-09-11	
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS SHIELD COMMAND		STATUS ACTIVE - BIO-CHEMIST LV5	
PREVIOUS ADDRESS THE BUS		SSN No A 0956307	

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	ENGLAND	TITLE	BIO-CHEMIST LV5
PLACE OF BIRTH	ASBURYTON, ENGLAND	HEIGHT	5'4"
RACE	CAUCASIAN	WEIGHT	105 LBS
GENDER	FEMALE	HAIR	BROWN
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	HAZEL
LANGUAGES	ENGLISH, FRENCH		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	NONE		
FAMILY	FATHER: Alive MOTHER: Alive		
EDUCATION	SHIELD Academy of Science & Technology		
SKILLS	GENIUS LEVEL INTELLECT - 2PHD PHYSICIAN MARKSMAN SPY		
EMPLOYMENT ALIAS(ES)	S.H.I.E.L.D. FITZSIMMONS		



**Jemma Simmons
(Elizabeth Henstridge)**

Agent Simmons' style is the one that changes the least from Season One to Season Two. However, this is a Season One look. Season Two might notice a facial expression change, but she is still a lab rat, even when she goes undercover. She wears her S.H.I.E.L.D. lab coat and badge, all sporting the same S.H.I.E.L.D. logo as her fellow agents.

AGENT	JOHNSON, DAISY (SKYE)	DOB	1989-04
STATUS	ACTIVE - AGENT LV1	PREVIOUS KNOWN ADDRESS	THE BUS
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS	SHIELD COMMAND		
S.H.I.E.L.D.		SSN No	N/A

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	CHINA UNITED STATES	TITLE	AGENT LV1
PLACE OF BIRTH	HUNAN PROVINCE, CHINA	HEIGHT	5'6"
RACE	ASIAN-INHUMAN	WEIGHT	125 LBS
GENDER	FEMALE	HAIR	BROWN
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BROWN
LANGUAGES	ENGLISH, MACHINE		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	NONE		
FAMILY	FATHER: Calvin Zabo MOTHER: Jiaqing (Inhuman - DECEASED)		
EDUCATION	MISSING RECORDS		
SKILLS	SEISMIC ENERGY GENERATION EXPERT HACKSMAN	MASTER HACKER EXPERT SPY	
		EXPERT INTERROGATOR	
		EXPERT PILOT	
		FIELD MEDIC	
		EXPERT SPY	
		S.H.I.E.L.D.	
		TRIP	
		GENERAL JONES	



Skye/Daisy Johnson
(Chloe Bennet)

Skye is a tough character to portray as she underwent a massive change from Season One to Season Two. She was a hacktivist and was attempting to blend in during Season One. However in Season Two she is a Lv1 agent with a vengeance. Recall that Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned. She will be undergoing a new change as she becomes Quake and I expect her outfit to again change. Can't wait to create that version of her character!

AGENT	TRIPLETT, ANTOINE	DOB	REDACTED
STATUS	DECEASED - SPECIALIST LV6	PREVIOUS KNOWN ADDRESS	THE BUS
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS	SHIELD COMMAND		
S.H.I.E.L.D.		SSN No	REDACTED

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	UNITED STATES	TITLE	SPECIALIST LV6
PLACE OF BIRTH	REDACTED	HEIGHT	5'10"
RACE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	WEIGHT	190 LBS
GENDER	MALE	HAIR	BALD
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BROWN
LANGUAGES	ENGLISH		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	GUN SHOT WOUND - ABDOMEN		
FAMILY	GRANDFATHER: Cobe Jones Howling Commando MOTHER: Alive		
EDUCATION	CLASSIFIED		
SKILLS	EXPERT MARTIAL ARTS EXPERT MARKSMAN EXPERT SPY	EXPERT PILOT FIELD MEDIC	
EMPLOYMENT	S.H.I.E.L.D.		
ALIAS(ES)	TRIP	GENERAL JONES	



Antoine Triplett
(B.J. Britt)

Trip is everything Ward is not. Because of this open and genuine quality to Trip, I wanted the character to have a duality to Ward, and likely Ann did as well as she dresses both Ward and Trip similarly. I followed her example and used the same Jacket on both figures, and I noted Trip's lighter personality in a lighter colored shirt. By this point in the show S.H.I.E.L.D. was under attack by Hydra, so Trip does not feature a S.H.I.E.L.D. badge. I could have given him a lanyard, but this was in the between time, so I kept him simple.

AGENT	KOENIG	DOB	CLASSIFIED
STATUS	ACTIVE - ADMINISTRATOR	PREVIOUS KNOWN ADDRESS	CLASSIFIED
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS	CLASSIFIED		
S.H.I.E.L.D.		SSN No	CLASSIFIED

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	CLASSIFIED	TITLE	ADMINISTRATOR LV6
PLACE OF BIRTH	CLASSIFIED	HEIGHT	5'7"
RACE	CAUCASIAN	WEIGHT	185 LBS
GENDER	MALE	HAIR	BROWN
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BROWN
LANGUAGES	CLASSIFIED		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	CLASSIFIED		
FAMILY	FATHER: CLASSIFIED MOTHER: CLASSIFIED BROTHER: Eric (Deceased)	BROTHER: Sam BROTHER: Billy	
EDUCATION	CLASSIFIED		
SKILLS	EXPERT HACKER EXPERT MARKSMAN	EXPERT INTERROGATOR	
EMPLOYMENT	S.H.I.E.L.D.		
ALIAS(ES)	ERIC BILLY	SAM LIGHTING FOOT	



Eric, Sam and Billy Koenig
(Patton Oswalt)

The Koenigs are a mystery: we simply don't know much about these triplets or even if there are only three of them. We do know they are company men, much like Coulson. However, as remote communication agents they feature lighter colors, so I have created the figure in a dark blue suit. Also note that because they don't see as much action I gave them a bit of a pudgy stomach, mimicking the actor that portrays them. The Koenigs would not be complete without a lanyard and new S.H.I.E.L.D. badge. They also know more than you think, being in communications, so they almost always feature a glum expression, as this is hard times for S.H.I.E.L.D.

AGENT **MACKENZIE, ALPHONSO**  DOB 1970-07-01
 STATUS ACTIVE - ENGINEER
 LAST KNOWN ADDRESS SHIELD COMMAND
 PREVIOUS ADDRESS CLASSIFIED

S.H.I.E.L.D. SSN No **NOT AVAILABLE**

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	UNITED STATES	TITLE	ENGINEER
PLACE OF BIRTH	AUSTIN, TX, USA	HEIGHT	6'4"
RACE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	WEIGHT	214 LBS
GENDER	MALE	HAIR	BALD
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BROWN
LANGUAGES	ENGLISH		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	NONE		
FAMILY	FATHER: Not Available MOTHER: Not Available		
EDUCATION	SHIELD Academy of Science & Technology		
SKILLS	MARTIAL ARTS MARKSMAN	ENGINEER	



Alphonso Mackenzie (Henry Simmons)

Mack is a mechanic: albeit a S.H.I.E.L.D mechanic, but still a mechanic. There is a certain style to a mechanic. They wear clothes with patterns that hide oil stains. This is one of the designs that I have followed closest to the actual show content. For many episodes this is all Mack wore. We have to show that Mack is hard at work rebuilding S.H.I.E.L.D's vehicles so he features some sweat stains and his sleeves are rolled up. As he doesn't want the resident Koenig after him, he is wearing his lanyard and badge.

AGENT **MORSE, BARBARA**  DOB 1983-05-06
 STATUS ACTIVE - SPECIALIST LV6
 LAST KNOWN ADDRESS NOT AVAILABLE
 PREVIOUS ADDRESS NOT AVAILABLE

S.H.I.E.L.D. SSN No **CLASSIFIED**

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	UNITED STATES	TITLE	SPECIALIST LV6
PLACE OF BIRTH	SAN DIEGO, CA, USA	HEIGHT	5'11"
RACE	CAUCASIAN	WEIGHT	126 LBS
GENDER	FEMALE	HAIR	BLONDE (BROWN)
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BLUE
LANGUAGES	ENGLISH, JAPANESE, PORTUGUESE		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	MOLE BETWEEN EYEBROWS		
FAMILY	SPOUSE (EX): Lance Hunter, Alive		
EDUCATION	CLASSIFIED		
SKILLS	MASTER MARTIAL ARTS EXPERT MARKSMAN PILOT	STAFF MASTERY EXPERT INTERROGATOR MASTER SPY	



Bobbi Morse (Adrienne Palicki)

Bobbi has many different looks, but none more important than her tactical uniform. As she is strictly a field agent, her field tactical uniform keeps her ready for any outcome. When creating an outfit of this nature it is critical to stay close to the inspirational art. The biggest issue is most tactical outfits feature lots of straps, zippers, pockets—*details*. These details can get muddled if you try and keep all of them. Find the defining features and start there and then you can play with the design and add others to see what works and what doesn't. My design features the color swatches, a belt, zipper, and two gear straps. Simple, but it speaks to the inspirational art. Also note I captured the actress' mole.



Maria Hill (Cobie Smulders)

AGENT **HILL, MARIA**  DOB 1982-04-04
 STATUS RETIRED - DEPUTY DIRECTOR
 LAST KNOWN ADDRESS UNKNOWN
 PREVIOUS ADDRESS SHIELD COMMAND

S.H.I.E.L.D. SSN No **UNKNOWN**

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	UNITED STATES	TITLE	STARK IND SECURITY
PLACE OF BIRTH	CHICAGO, IL, USA	HEIGHT	5'8"
RACE	CAUCASIAN	WEIGHT	121 LBS
GENDER	FEMALE	HAIR	BROWN
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BLUE
LANGUAGES	ENGLISH		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	NONE		
FAMILY	FATHER: CLASSIFIED MOTHER: CLASSIFIED		
EDUCATION	CLASSIFIED		
SKILLS	EXPERT MARTIAL ARTS EXPERT MARKSMAN		
EMPLOYMENT ALIAS(ES)	STARK INDUSTRIES SECURITY		



Maria Hill's outfit is from her days with S.H.I.E.L.D. It is designed after the version in the *LEGO Marvel Superhero* game. Note the zipper, belt, and badge. The game designers have kept it simple and made her instantly recognizable. I merely recreated her in actual form.

AGENT HUNTER, LANCE		DOB 1964-07-08	
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS SHIELD COMMAND		STATUS MERCENARY (SHIELD)	
PREVIOUS ADDRESS THE BUS		SSN No N/A	
S.H.I.E.L.D.			
DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	ENGLAND	TITLE	FREELANCE
PLACE OF BIRTH	LONDON, ENGLAND	HEIGHT	5' 10"
RACE	CAUCASIAN	WEIGHT	175 LBS
GENDER	MALE	HAIR	BROWN
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BROWN
LANGUAGES	ENGLISH		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	NONE		
FAMILY	SPOUSE (EX): Barbara Morse		
EDUCATION	CLASSIFIED		
SKILLS	EXPERT MARKSMAN EXPERT SPY		
EMPLOYMENT	S.H.I.E.L.D.		




Lance Hunter
(Nick Blood)

With Lance Hunter I have done something specific to tie his design to LEGO style. I have used official LEGO legs, which are from the Collectible Minifigure Series 12 Dino Tracker figure. If you have been paying close attention, I have replicated these details on other figures pants, simply in other colors. It is all part of making the designs cohesive. Lance wears a specific old leather jacket and I am betting there is a story behind it; likely it was a gift from Bobbi, but I have no knowledge of this, so it is merely a guess. It has a padded shoulder region that was difficult to capture, but essentially it is a motorcycle jacket. So while there are more zippers, I did decide to make one more prominent. Also as a mercenary, Lance is a bit disheveled, which is noted in his off-white and wrinkled t-shirt and his scraggly stubble beard.

AGENT RAINA		DOB UNKNOWN	
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS TRACKER		STATUS ACTIVE - FREELANCE	
PREVIOUS ADDRESS UNKNOWN		SSN No	
S.H.I.E.L.D.			
DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	THAILAND	TITLE	FREELANCE
PLACE OF BIRTH	THAILAND	HEIGHT	5' 3"
RACE	THAI/CHINESE-INHUMAN	WEIGHT	105 LBS
GENDER	FEMALE	HAIR	BLACK
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BROWN
LANGUAGES	ENGLISH		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	FLOWER DRESSES, QUILLS		
FAMILY	GRANDMOTHER: Alive		
EDUCATION	UNKNOWN		
SKILLS	ENHANCED STRENGTH	ENHANCED DURABILITY	
	CLAWS	QUILLS	
	PERSUASION	GIFTED INTELLECT	
	FLOWERS		




Raina
(Ruth Negga)

Raina is an enigma to the show. Rarely does she have a hair out of place or a speck on her very pretty flower dresses. We don't know her last name, we simply know her as the girl in the flower dress. These characteristics speak a bit to the *Harry Potter* character from which I took her hair, Dolores Umbridge. I merely had to change the color to black. The key with Raina is the flower pattern to the dress. I choose one of the more simple patterned dresses to keep the design less complex and pattern larger. Then the reoccurring nature to the pattern gave me a bit of grief, but I tried different placements till I was happy. Her design is very simple, but the figure is instantly recognizable.



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AGENT PETERSON, MICHAEL		DOB 1979-02-28	
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS UNKNOWN		STATUS ACTIVE - FREELANCE	
PREVIOUS ADDRESS HYDRA		SSN No N/A	

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	UNITED STATES	TITLE	FREELANCE
PLACE OF BIRTH	LOS ANGELES, CA, USA	HEIGHT	6'3"
RACE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	WEIGHT	235 LBS
GENDER	MALE	HAIR	BLACK
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BROWN
ATTACHMENTS, PROSTHETIC:			
SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH			
SUPERHUMAN DURABILITY			
ENHANCED VISION			




**Deathlok
(J. August Richards)**

AGENT CREEL, CARL		DOB 1978-06-09	
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS AIR FORCE PRISON		STATUS PETRIFIED	
PREVIOUS ADDRESS UNKNOWN		SSN No N/A	

DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP	UNITED STATES	TITLE	HYDRA ASSASSIN/BOXER
PLACE OF BIRTH	NEW YORK, NY, USA	HEIGHT	6'3"
RACE	CAUCASIAN	WEIGHT	VARIABLE
GENDER	MALE	HAIR	BALD
DENTAL	NONE	EYES	BROWN
LANGUAGES	ENGLISH		
IDENTIFIABLE MARKINGS	ELEMENTAL MIMICRY, PETRIFIED		
FAMILY	FATHER: UNKNOWN MOTHER: UNKNOWN		
EDUCATION	UNKNOWN		
SKILLS	ELEMENTAL MIMICRY	PETRIFICATION	COMBATANT
	MASTER BOXING		




**Carl "Crusher" Creel
(Brian Patrick Wade)**

Deathlok: how can you *not* like Deathlok? I have had the pleasure of meeting J. August Richards, the actor behind the character, and he is quite nice. I gave him a Deathlok minifigure and he has tweeted photos of it several times—this means I did something right! His tweets are what brought notice of the figures to Ann Foley and Phillip Boutte Jr, the show's costumer and concept artist/illustrator respectively. Again, to keep the feel of LEGO style I have used Shredder's face (from the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* sets) as inspiration to translate the burns on Deathlok's. This is a delicate balancing act as you don't want your figures to appear too gruesome. Using this example helped contain and direct the content to acceptable limits. The next issue is Deathlok's tactical suit. Getting his centipede back presented and the front chest plate was critical, but again I couldn't keep all the details. His character was rounded out by making his artificial leg. You simply have to make the bionic leg shiny, so I started with silver paint and applied a decal over the top. I made sure to keep this simple as I didn't want the details getting away from me.

The bad guys are always the most fun to create, especially when they have a power like elemental mimicry! Carl "Crusher" Creel is as basic a figure as there comes; he could almost be a completely purist figure, except for his arm. Using the new ball and chain LEGO part and a flesh-colored arm, I had to reproduce this superpower. Therefore I had a friend of mine, Michael "Xero_Fett" Marzilli, paint these parts with Alclad II chrome to create the concept of elemental mimicry on the minifigure scale! Funny thing is, look into the ball, it is so reflective you can see my camera set-up. Round out the figure with a big grimacing face and you have The Absorbing Man!



You can go to Jared's webpage by going to <http://www.fineclonier.com/> or scanning this QR code!

Ann Foley's Costumes of S.H.I.E.L.D



Ann Foley with some samples of her work.

Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D Costume Designer Ann Foley was able to take time from her busy schedule to answer some questions from Jared Burks about the 'S.H.I.E.L.D Look'. Here's her thoughts and answers. Hope you have the clearance to read this!

Jared Burks: The world of Shield/Hydra is that of suits. Through aspects of these various suits, do you denote a difference between Goodies and Baddies (LEGO Terms)? How do you tell who is good and who is bad when they all wear dark suits?

Ann Foley: Well, that's in the hands of our amazing writers as well as the actors! That being said, I try and give each character their own small details. Whitehall had his Hydra cufflinks and red ties, Bakshi's shirts all had spread collars, his ties were tied in a full Windsor knot and he always had a tie bar. For Coulson I slimmed his suits and darkened his palette to match the noir tone the show has taken this season.

Is there an evil suit feature? Vests?
Ha-ha! No, not really.

What is the "S.H.I.E.L.D." look? There are two distinct branches, the admin (suits) and the tactical (the OTHER suits).

The S.H.I.E.L.D look for our show has been a mix of suits, civilian—like Fitz and Simmons and tactical, which is what has been established in the films. I try and stay as close as I can to the films to help create a cohesive feeling within our Marvel Universe!

How do you find the limit on the fantastical nature of the costumes—example: Mockingbird. Bobbi's tactical suit is quite cool, and her comic costume is very different... on the other hand, Deathlok wasn't quite astray from



Design for Deathlok's armor and costume.



A preliminary version of May's tactical suit.



A later version of May's tactical suit.



The design for Bobbi More's tactical suit (above), and the finished costume (right).



the comic. How do you determine how true to stay to the comic reference?

I always use the original source material as my inspiration and then go from there. Both of those characters have elements in their costumes that were lifted from their original comic book illustrations. But the goal is always to make sure that the costumes make sense in our *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* world.

How many revisions do you go through before deciding on an outfit, and how many actual outfits do you make? Is this a collaborative process between you and Phillip Boutte Jr. (concept artist)? How does that process work?

Costume Design is always a collaboration! When designing these characters I not only work very closely with my illustrator Phillip Boutte, but also with Marvel's Chief Creative Officer Joe Quesada as well as the writers on the show.

While we are speaking about tactical suits, what can you tell us about Skye (Daisy/Quake)—will she get specific gear/costumes that you can reveal?

Not unless you're Level 8!

Any hidden Hydra elements in the S.H.I.E.L.D. costumes?

This season the Production Designer Greg Melton and I made a decision to only use red when we were in the world of Whitehall and Hydra. So all of the characters at the Hydra facility had hints of red in their clothes, even Simmons when she was there undercover! We also made tiny red Hydra lapel pins that were on all of the black lab coats!

Where do you get your fabrics (such as what was used in the Calvary jacket and Mockingbird outfit) and what are the actual fabrics used? I believe you told me before you custom print your fabrics; were these done that way?

I use a lot of Eurojersey which is an amazing 4-way stretch fabric that prints beautifully!

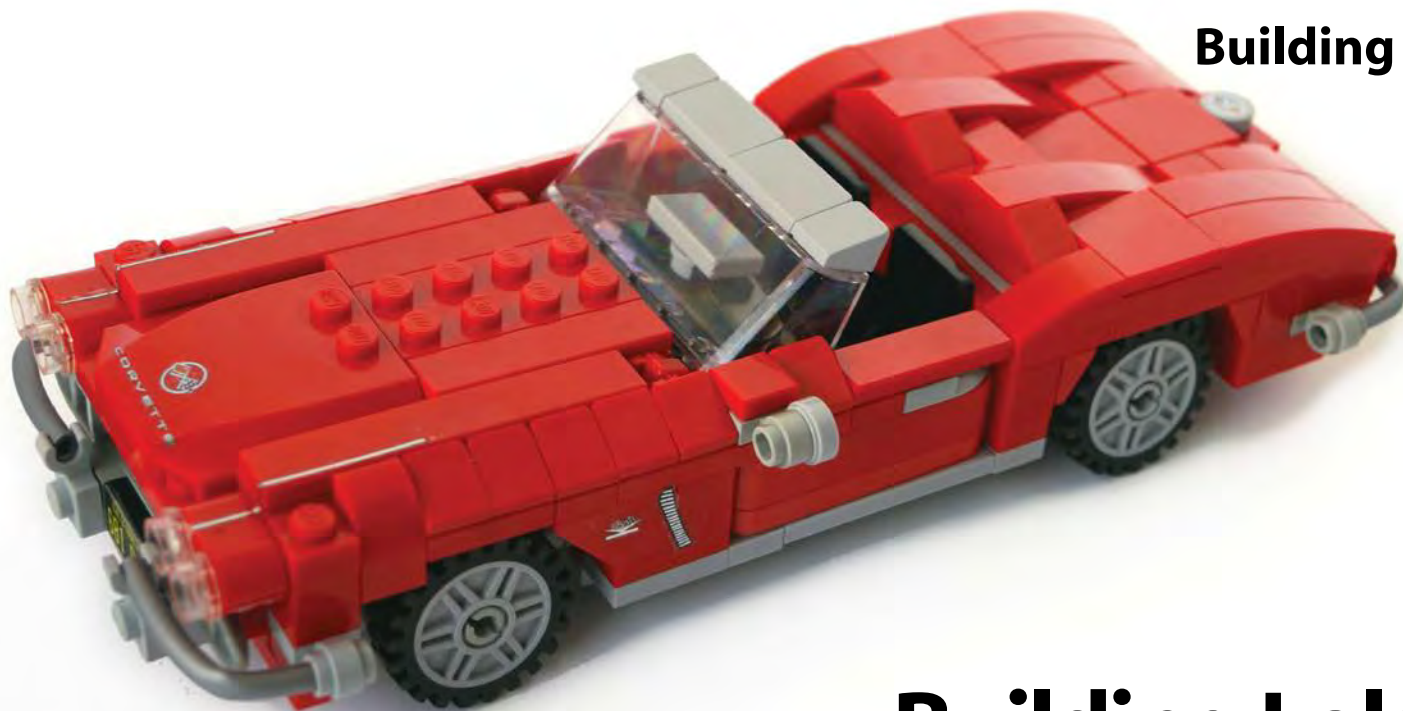
What material did you use on the patches on May's shirt? It appears to be pleather/vinyl on a compression shirt; if this is true, how were they attached? Or were they directly printed?

May's shirt is black eurojersey that has a tiny blue pattern printed onto it, and the patches are also printed directly onto the sleeves.

Note: The reason I asked the last two questions was to get readers thinking about how they would translate these sorts of design elements into LEGO form. These details are important to properly capture the figures. Many times this requires extensive research.

Look in unexpected places for information: the more you have, the better the designs will be. Play with multiple versions of the design, draw, and redraw them. You will have small changes that you can flip back and forth to determine the best options when translating figures into minifigure scale. Best of all, you will end up with your own tiny army of international spies ready to follow your lead into your next arena of creation. **!**

Come back next issue for more Minifigure Customization!



The completed model.

Building Lola

Article by Joe Meno

On the ABC television show *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.*, one of the iconic vehicles that was seen wasn't a tank or motorcycle, but a classic car. This classic car, a 1963 Corvette convertible, was Lola, Phil Coulson's personal vehicle. Restored and radically modified to fly, this car was Coulson's prized possession. I fell in love with car after seeing it at San Diego Comic-Con and posted on Facebook a query to friends: Should I try to build the S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier or Lola? After a few days, it was clear that everyone wanted *both* built, which was a little surprising. I decided to start with building Lola.

Building a model based on a real item has its good aspects and bad aspects. The good is that there is often reference to use, so accuracy can be maintained. The bad thing is that it's easier to see imperfections and building compromises when there are references. This can be a big problem with LEGO models, because minifigure scale is not a truly accurate scale to work with. This can be seen in the minifigure cars that were made a few years ago, as most of them were 4 studs wide—enough for a driver, but not a passenger. Wider cars have been designed since, but for a very long time there were only thin “golf cart” cars.

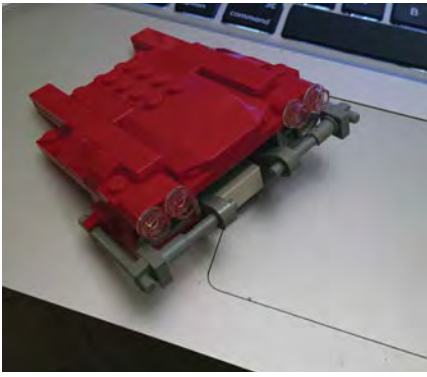
For Lola, I was going to make her hold two figures and be as accurate as I could get her. To do this, I would need as much reference as I could find, which was easy to do—I went online. I looked for images that were as close to top, side, front and back views as possible. I looked for photos of Lola and her original counterpart, the '63 Corvette. All of these photos were downloaded and looked at to figure out a scale.

I don't scale by using absolute calculations, mainly because human proportions and minifigure proportions are so different. Instead, I look for an item on the reference that can be matched up to a part and then scale to that part. For Lola, there were two choices I could use to scale the LEGO model. One was the headlights and the other was the tires. Since the tires are only certain set sizes, it's a good idea to see how they scale compared to a minifigure. I used the common medium wheels and tires for Lola. The headlights made a good measurement point, as it turned out that the gap between headlights matched to four headlight widths. This made the car have a final width of eight studs (good for two seats). From there the length was calculated to be 22 studs. These two dimensions gave me a footprint to start building.

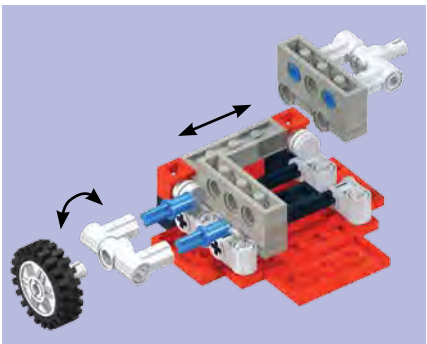
Figuring out the height became another challenge. If I used a minifigure as a scale for height, the car would have been about a brick and a plate or two high, which would not



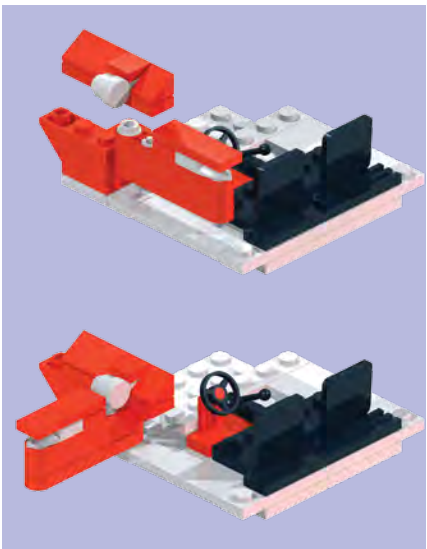
Some screen captures from online searches. Photos came from ABC.com or Marvel.com.



Stages in construction. Upper left: Figuring out the bumper and grille. The headlights are 2-stud long Technic beams. Lower left: Flex tube proves to be a better solution. Above: Adding more to the front, but noticing the windscreen is a bit too high. Upper right: Cracking the windscreen problem and door and continuing to flesh out the body. Lower right: The first completed version, with the top of the windshield being a little less than satisfactory.



A look at the axle frames. The axles are attached to a Technic brick as seen at the top. The holes in the Technic brick allow the frame to slide (upper arrow). The black plate acts as a guide to keep the frames aligned.



The door. Using Technic parts, I made a door that opened smoothly and fit well.

have been tall enough to build a frame. Instead, I built to the scale of the wheel and tire I chose, which made the car about three bricks high. This ended up making the door edge to a minifigure's neck, but it also allowed a full seat to fit in the interior.

At this point it was time to start building. There were two things I wanted specifically for Lola to be able to do: 1) Switch to flight mode, and 2) have opening doors. For a minifigure scale vehicle, there are ways to make these functions, but I quickly discovered that the conventional parts and techniques would not work.

On the show, Lola goes to flight mode by turning the wheels down and spreading the axles. There are already two LEGO sets that have cars with wheels that swivel for flight: the LEGO Delorean from *Back to the Future* (#21103), and a Spider-Man set (#76004 *Spider-Man: Spider-Cycle Chase*) with Nick Fury's car. However, while the tires swivel downwards for flight, they do not extend, so they make their cars look narrower than they should be. I had to think of a way to swivel, then pull out the wheels. It took a few tries to realize that what I had to build was a sliding axle unit.

After fine-tuning the axle units, I started working on the doors. One thing I can say about building a LEGO car: doors are a real pain. There are some LEGO door elements, but none of them were the right size for Lola. I needed a door that was 5 studs long and roughly a brick and plate high at the hinge. There wasn't a choice, I had to build a door.

Making a door that opens only makes this harder. There are two approaches to this: 1) use hinge pieces or 2) build a hinge. While the easy way would have been to use hinges, the issue I had is that the actual hinge would stick out, which wasn't what I wanted. Using the usual bricks and plates to build a door also had another drawback: the square corners made parts fit nice and tight, but they could not rotate easily. LEGO doors have rounded edges on the hinge stud, so they can rotate. The opposite side is thin, so the door can close flush to the side of the car. How could I duplicate a rounded edge?

It turns out that the clue came from looking at some Technic parts. Technic beams are all rounded at the ends, and they have odd-numbered lengths. This was perfect, except I had to make the door a brick and plate high. I found that I could almost match the height by using half beams, and then use half-pins to add some plates to the door for detail. A door handle was made with a 1x1 plate with tooth and then covered with a 1x3 tile. Since the tile had a square edge, it would act as the door 'lock' to keep it closed.

While solving these mechanical problems, I also was working on the body—it had to be recognizable as a Corvette. Looking at photos, the front end had its grilles as a trademark.

The front grille was easy to build (use a SNOT frame and use panels to give it a nice border), but the side grilles under the headlights were a challenge. These were curved and there was no way to make that shape in that space. However, a 1x1 with tooth in reverse approximated the grille, so I figured a way to attach the piece onto the main frame using reverse SNOT, so the stud faced into the car frame.

This led to building the bumpers—since there weren't bumper parts, I made bumpers by using flex tube. The tubing is great for making custom curves, so it was only a matter of making some attachment points on the car frame, inserting the tube, and trimming on the ends. The tubing is a little stiff, so some bending needed to be done. On the frame, I used 1x1 plates with lamp holders on the side, as they kept the tube firmly in place, and a 1x1 tile with clip on the front, as they were less obtrusive.

A new problem popped up while building—how was the windshield going to be built? The Corvette windshield is short and curved, so there are no LEGO parts that would match it precisely. The closest in size was a 6-wide windscreen that was too tall. How could I shorten the windscreen to better match a Corvette windscreen?

I found out that by angling the windscreen, I could match the car windshield angle and shorten the height. The only way to do that in a manner that could be secure would be to use click hinges. The nice side effect is that this also angled the dashboard, which had to be built in the windscreen. This did leave the top of the windshield studded, which I first covered with a tile, then plates, then after those were unsatisfactory, followed a suggestion from LEGO Master Builder Erik Varszegi to add cheese slopes to the top. The slopes were the best option—they gave the top a little height, but not too much.

The rest of Lola was then completed (more like sculpting, since the form is rounded) over the next night. Decals were made by Jared Burks and sent to me to complete her.

Overall, this was a nice, satisfying build. There were some fun challenges that had to be solved, which made Lola one special model.

Just don't touch her. And as for the helicarrier... 



The front end.



Dashboard.



Rear view in flight mode.

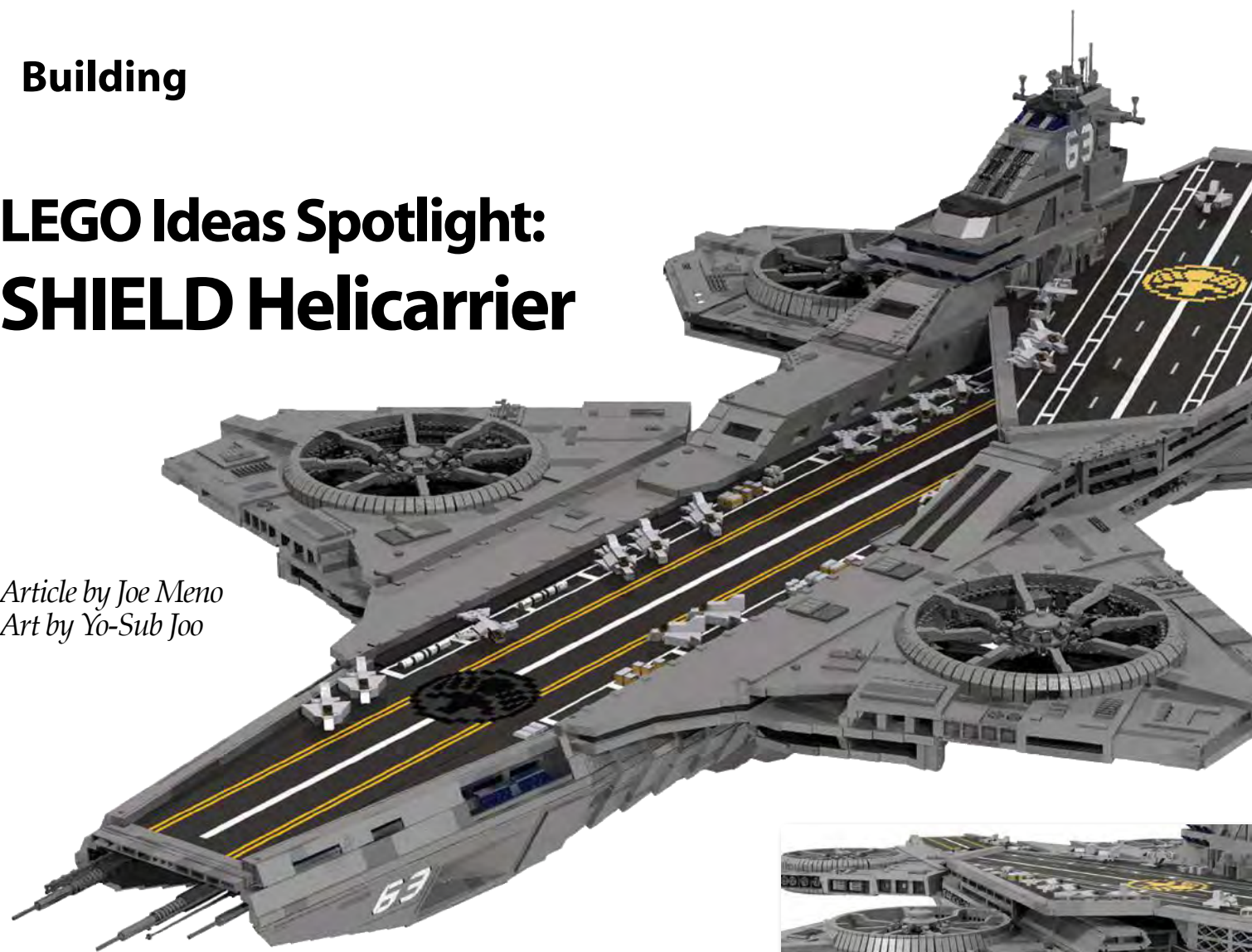
Side view.



Overhead look in flight mode.

LEGO Ideas Spotlight: SHIELD Helicarrier

Article by Joe Meno
Art by Yo-Sub Joo



An overall view of Joo's helicarrier.



A look at the rear.

Yo-Sub Joo is a doctor who is also a LEGO builder. For the most part, he builds architectural models, but one build got him recognition: his rendition of the SHIELD Helicarrier. Built using LEGO Digital Designer (LDD), this virtual model took two months to build on the program.

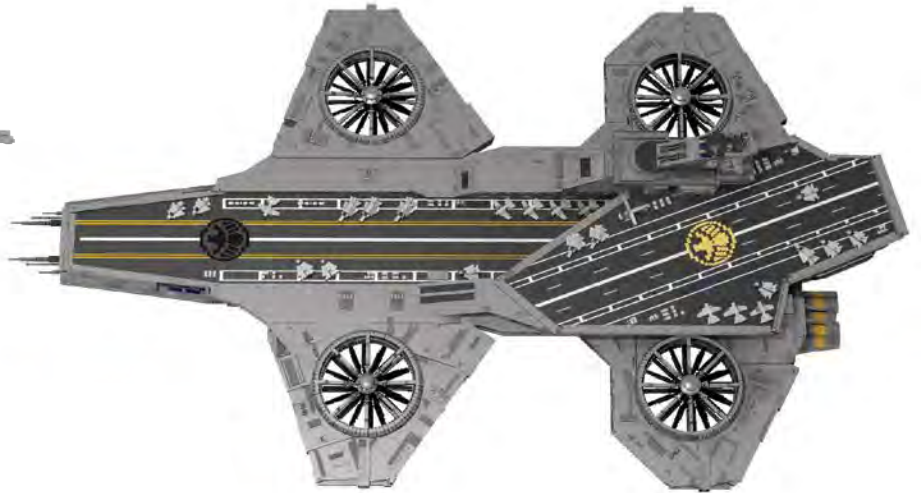
He used reference photos from the *Avengers* movie to measure the helicarrier and scale it to a LEGO model—with the scale he used, the model is roughly 1 stud = 6 feet and is 272 studs (2.17 meters/85.4 inches) long and 144 studs (1.15 meters/45.3 inches) long. By reviewing movie stills and other references, he did his best to match the ship design. The underside of his LEGO helicarrier is different from the movie version, as the movie version was too complex to build.

The hardest part of building the model was working in the angles. Matching the correct angles was tough, so Joo used SNOT building techniques. In total, 22,694 bricks were used to build the model. From there, he converted the LDD file to a POV-Ray file to render. The final renderings were done in POV-Ray 3.7.

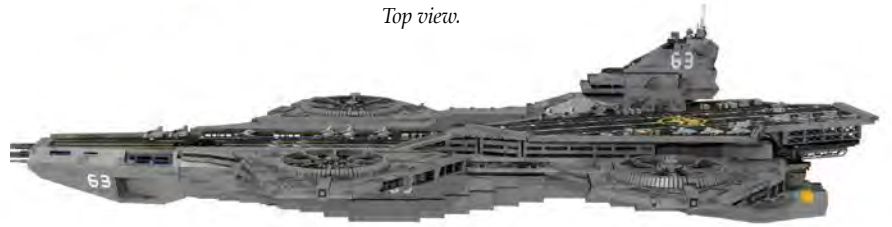
Joo's model actually made it to the LEGO Ideas Review stage by gathering 10,000 supporters on September 8, 2014. Currently, the model is still in review for the third LEGO Ideas Review. Results are due out in Spring 2015.



Front view.



Top view.



Side view.



Rear view.



Another look at the rear, this time from below.



Bottom view.




Viewing the turbine.



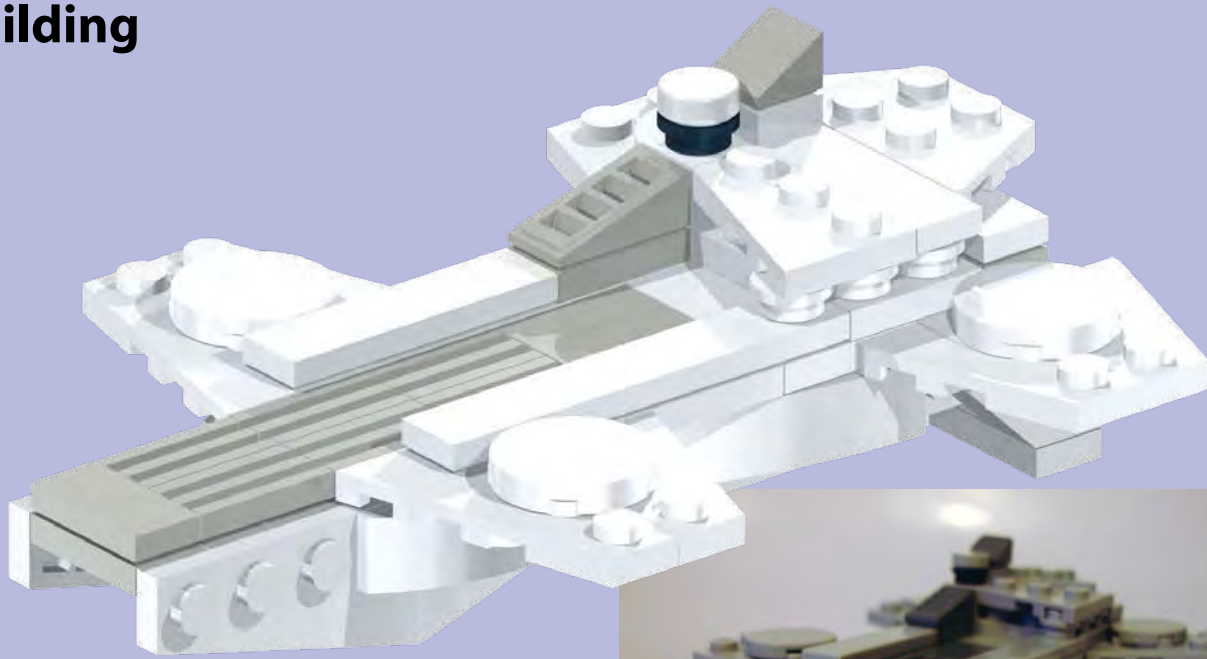
The control deck.



The modified bottom of Joo's model.

As for building models virtually, Yo-Sub Joo offers this advice: "Understanding the function of LDD is important, but I think understanding the types of bricks and their function is more important. Without the deep understanding of what each bricks mean to the whole work, I don't think you can be a good designer." 

Building



Building the Helicarrier in Microscale

Article and Photography by Michael Lundqvist

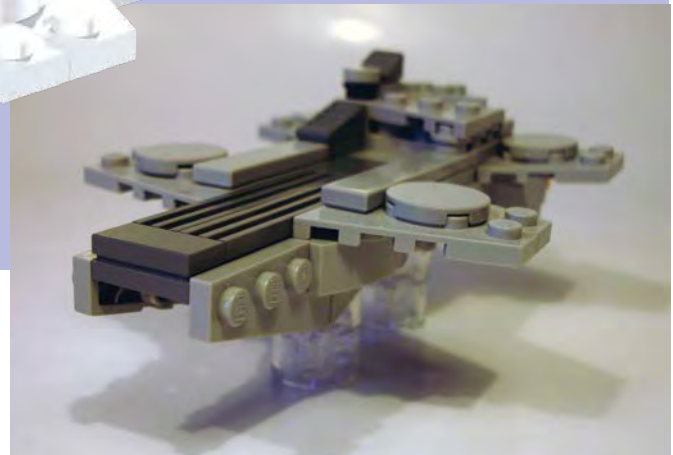
Art by Joe Meno

Hi! My name is Michael Lundqvist. My online name is MBL Designs. Not many know that MBL is actually my initials (Michael Bror Lundqvist) I'm going to school to become a youth worker. The education is over three years and I'm on my first year.

I have been LEGO building for as long as I can remember. The thing about me that I think many can relate to is I see the world in LEGO brick. When I see something cool I immediately think about how to make it in LEGO. I really got into building when I discovered the online LEGO community. I first got on MOCpages.com, and I was there for about a year. I got to know some awesome builders and got a lot of useful feedback about my MOCs. Later I found Flickr, another website, and saw that a lot of the people on MOCpages were on Flickr. As a result, I started a Flickr account and have been there since.

One thing that I love about the LEGO community is that it's for everyone. I'm all the way from Sweden and I have gotten to know people from all around the world with the same interests, which in my opinion is amazing!

When I was growing up I was a big fan of comic books, and I still am. I'm a big fan of remaking famous scenes and vehicles from movies, mostly comic book-based movies and *Star Wars*. My interest of making scenes based on comic books has evolved more and more with every year, as LEGO makes more and more sets based on Marvel and DC comics characters.



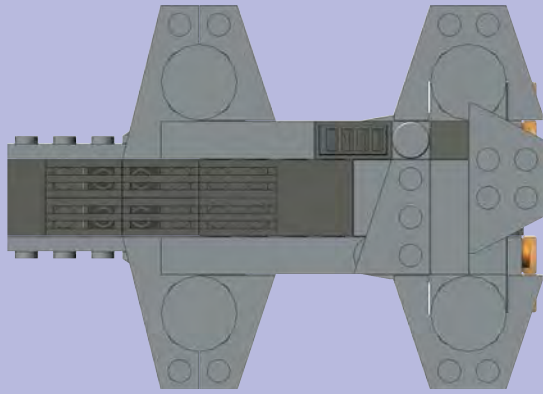
Michael's model.

A couple of years ago, I got a short internship at the LEGO sales office in Sweden, with the people who take care of all sale management in the country. The things I got to do included building LEGO models, folding LEGO boxes for upcoming LEGO sets, and displaying them in their showroom. It was the best LEGO-related experience I have had in my life, because my dream job is to become a LEGO designer. I'm happy to say that to this day, I still have a good relationship with them and visit them from time to time.

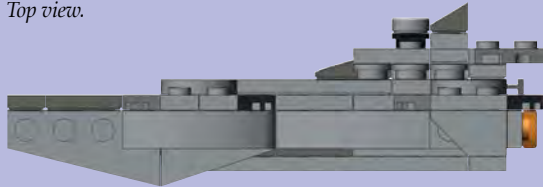
A bit over a year ago I started my YouTube channel. This is where I talk and show my MOCs and upcoming projects. My YouTube channel is probably my second best LEGO-related experience because of the friends I made and the feedback I have gotten.

The micro Helicarrier is based on the flying aircraft carrier from Marvel comics, or to be exact, the *Avengers* movie. My dream project is to make a minifigure-sized helicarrier. Sadly I don't have the room or money to make such a thing. So I decided to make a micro version of it. I thought it would be easier to make a micro version, but in fact it's much harder than I thought, because you have to decide what elements from the real model you want to have in the micro version. That can become tricky at times, but I'm glad for all the details I got into the model.

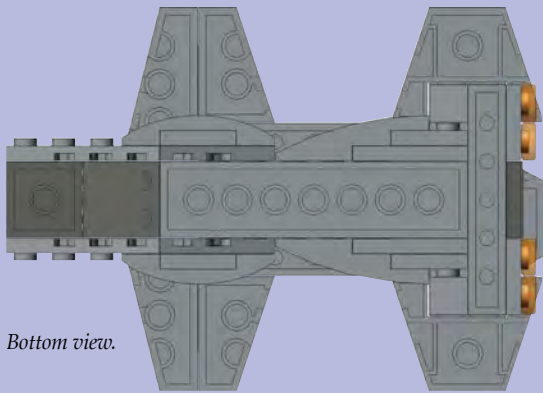
Even though it was tricky to figure out how to make the model look good, it was a fun challenge and I have learned a lot from it.



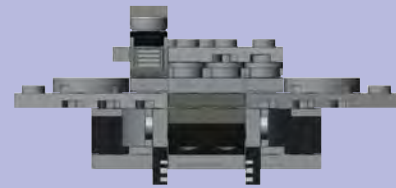
Top view.



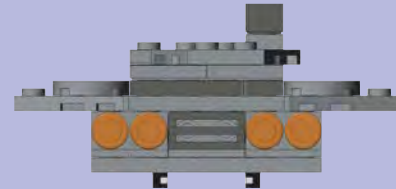
Side view.



Bottom view.




Front view.

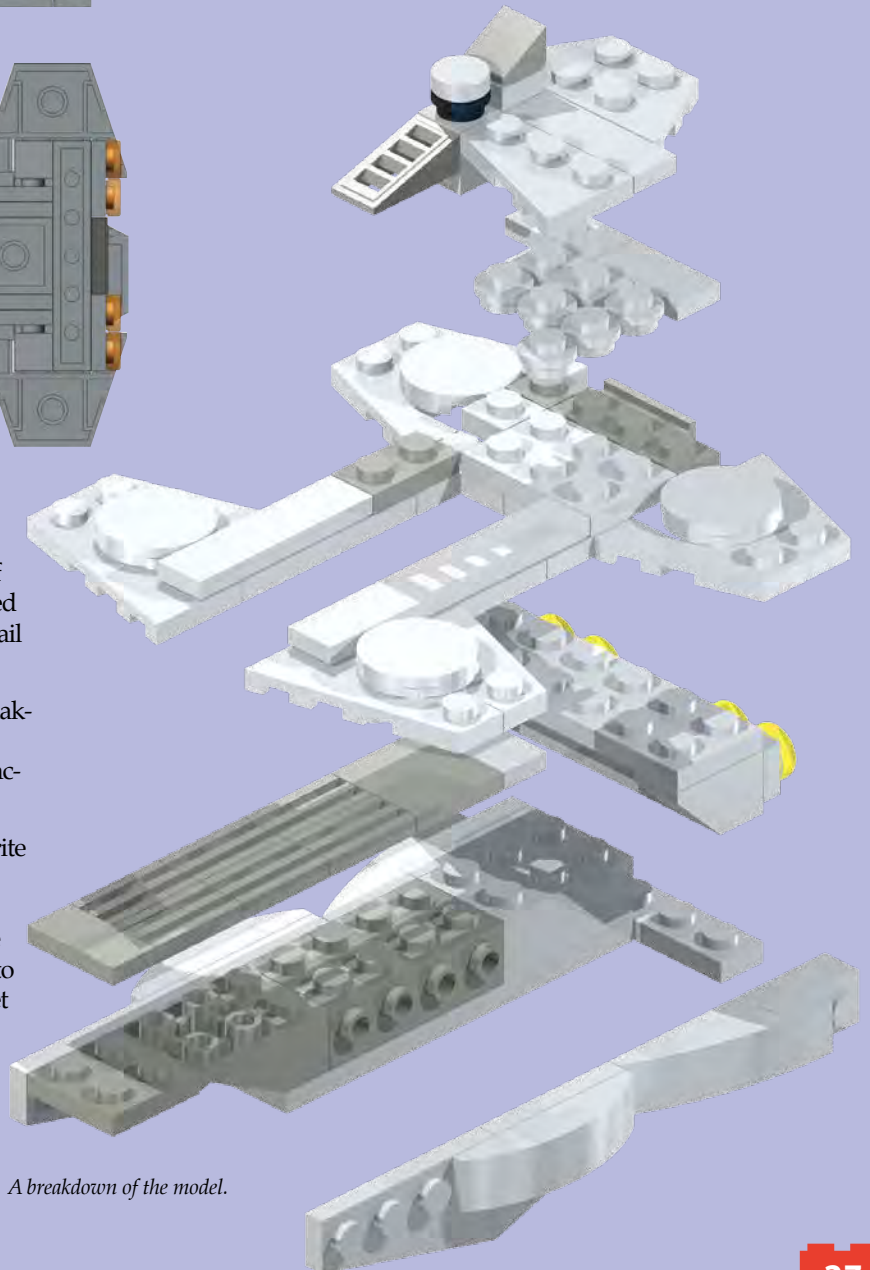


Rear view.

The thing that made this model possible is the use of the SNOT (Studs Not on Top) technique and the use of multiple kinds of angular plates. The sideways studs allowed me to shape the sides and add a detailed tail section.

The angular plates were very helpful in making the wing sections and also the angled upper deck, giving the helicarrier its distinctive silhouette.

My next project will be based on my favorite Marvel character: Deadpool. I'm building a vignette of his apartment, based on his 2013 videogame. The model will be built on a 16 x 16 baseplate, so I will have to focus and make sure the model doesn't get overcrowded. 



A breakdown of the model.



Batman's Tumbler and armory.

Jared Chan: Building for Heroes

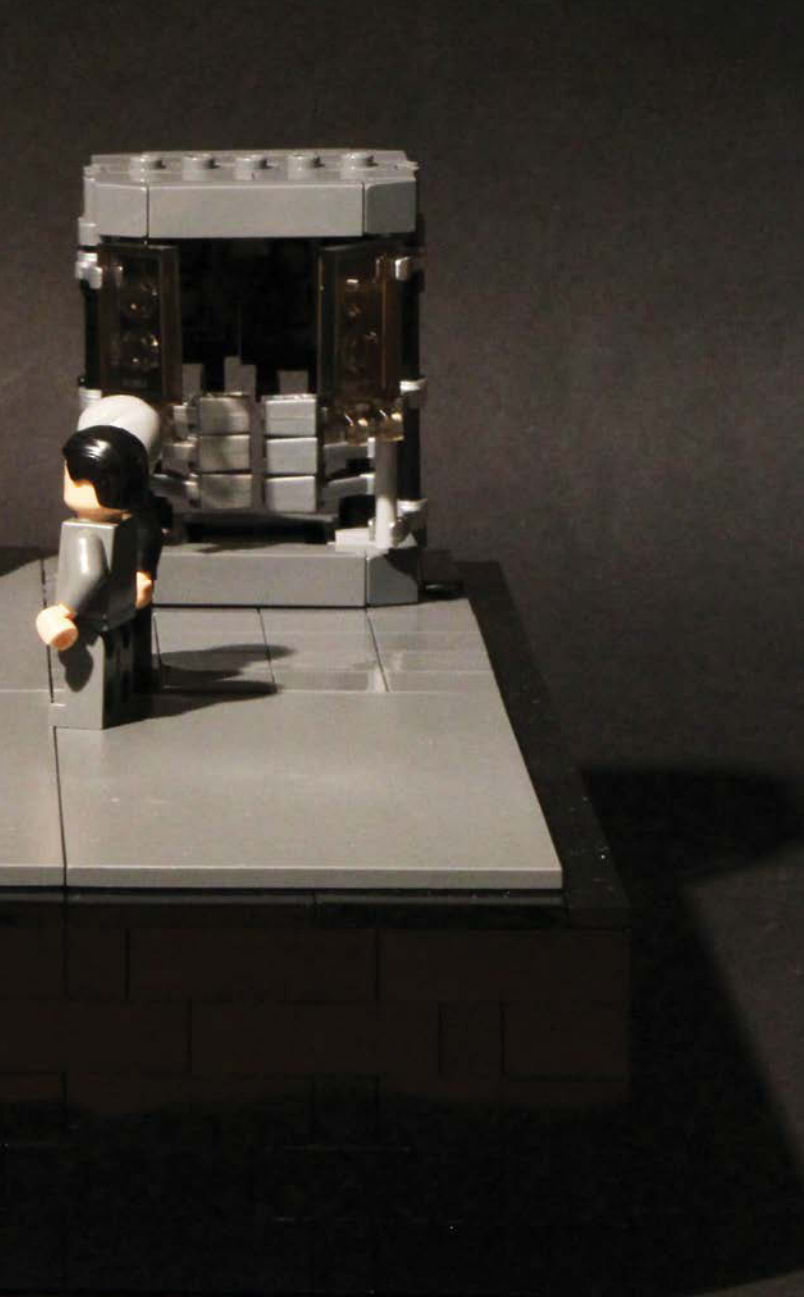
Article by Joe Meno

Photography by Jared Chan

Jared Chan is a 29-year-old certified professional accountant. Currently on a career break and looking for a new direction, he has been building as an AFOL for LEGO Hong Kong Limited in recent years, but as he says, "that's for fun so far." (His work includes buildings of a LEGO Winter Village at Times Square, Hong Kong in 2012, and HK landmark buildings at the LEGO sales area at a Toys'R'us flagship, HK in 2014. These will be showcased in an upcoming issue of BrickJournal).

Jared got his first LEGO set even before he was born and LEGO had always been part of his life (although he did have a semi-dark age). He started doing MOCs 'seriously' in 2007 when the Cafe Corner was released. Jared builds to achieve goals, challenge himself, and fulfill desires not achievable in the real world. LEGO bricks give him a way to release tension and express himself.

Jared talked about his super-hero-related creations with BrickJournal. Here are his comments.



Batman's armory.

Batman's Tumbler, Armory and Batpod

"Does it come in black?"

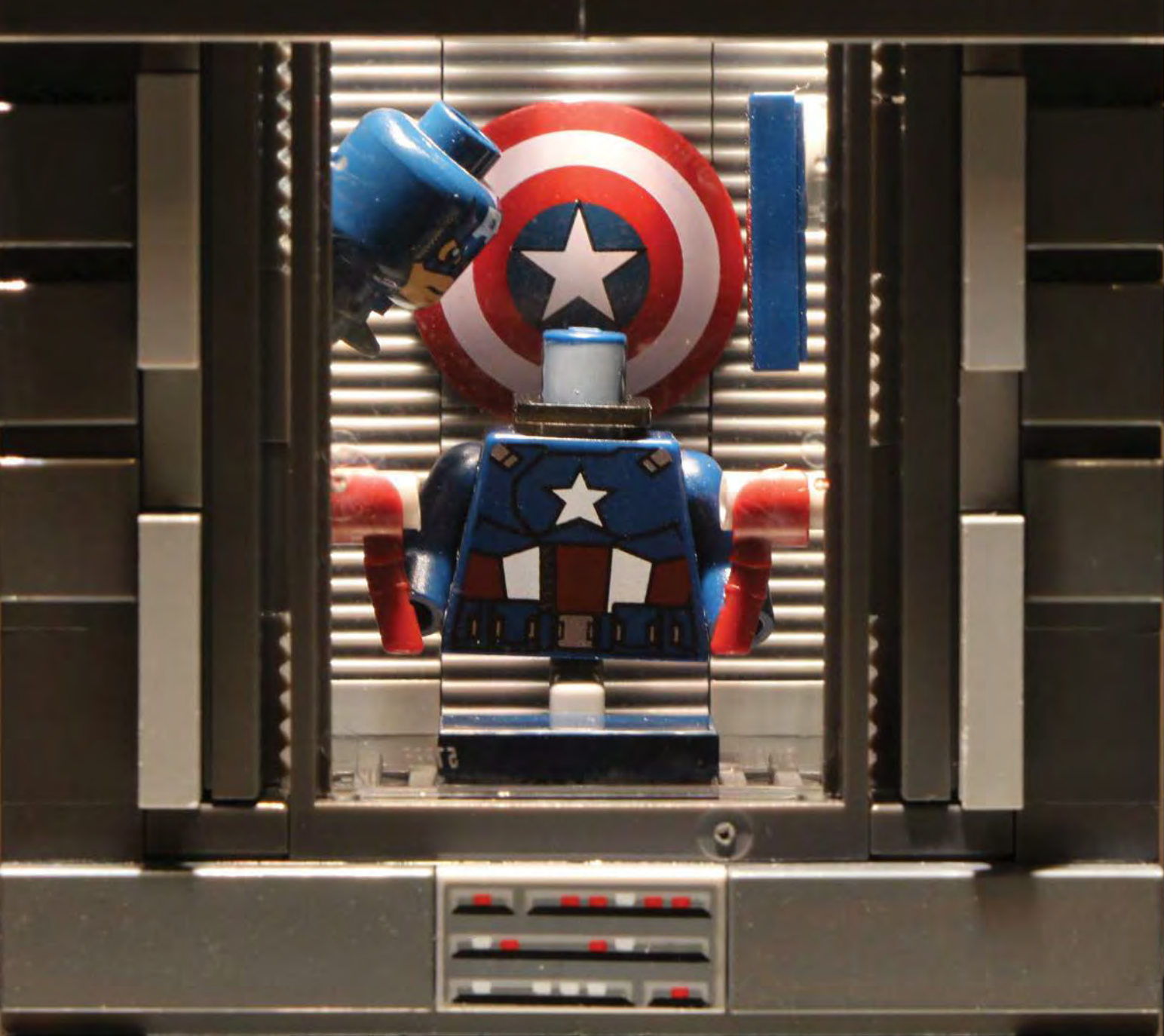
—Bruce Wayne referring to the Tumbler.
Batman Begins (2005)

The Batpod was built in 2012 and is the earliest among these four MOCs. I wasn't a super-heroes fan at the time, but who doesn't love Batman? It was actually my second attempt at making a Batpod and it was for a good friend of mine, so two copies of this Batpod were built, which is highly unusual for me. The Batpod took approximately five hours to build excluding research time, which was going through trailers, set photos, and watching the source movies over and over again! The Tumbler (also a second attempt) and the Armory were built in late 2013/early 2014. They took approximately 16 hours to construct, excluding research. I wanted to build the Bat as well but we have another talented builder in Hong Kong, Vincent Lai, a.k.a niteangel, who has already done it beautifully, so I just moved on to something else.



Some views of Jared's Batpod.





A close-up of Captain America's suit. Captain America
TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.

It was my Batpod friend who introduced me to Marvel's Cinematic Universe. Interestingly, I started out watching the movies in reverse order, from *The Avengers* all the way back to *The Incredible Hulk*. A lot of my friends think I am a super comics fan as I have built quite a few super-heroes MOCs, but no... I just started out watching the movies very recently :-)!

Captain America's Suit Room

".. We've made some modifications to the uniform. I had a little design input."

— Phil Coulson

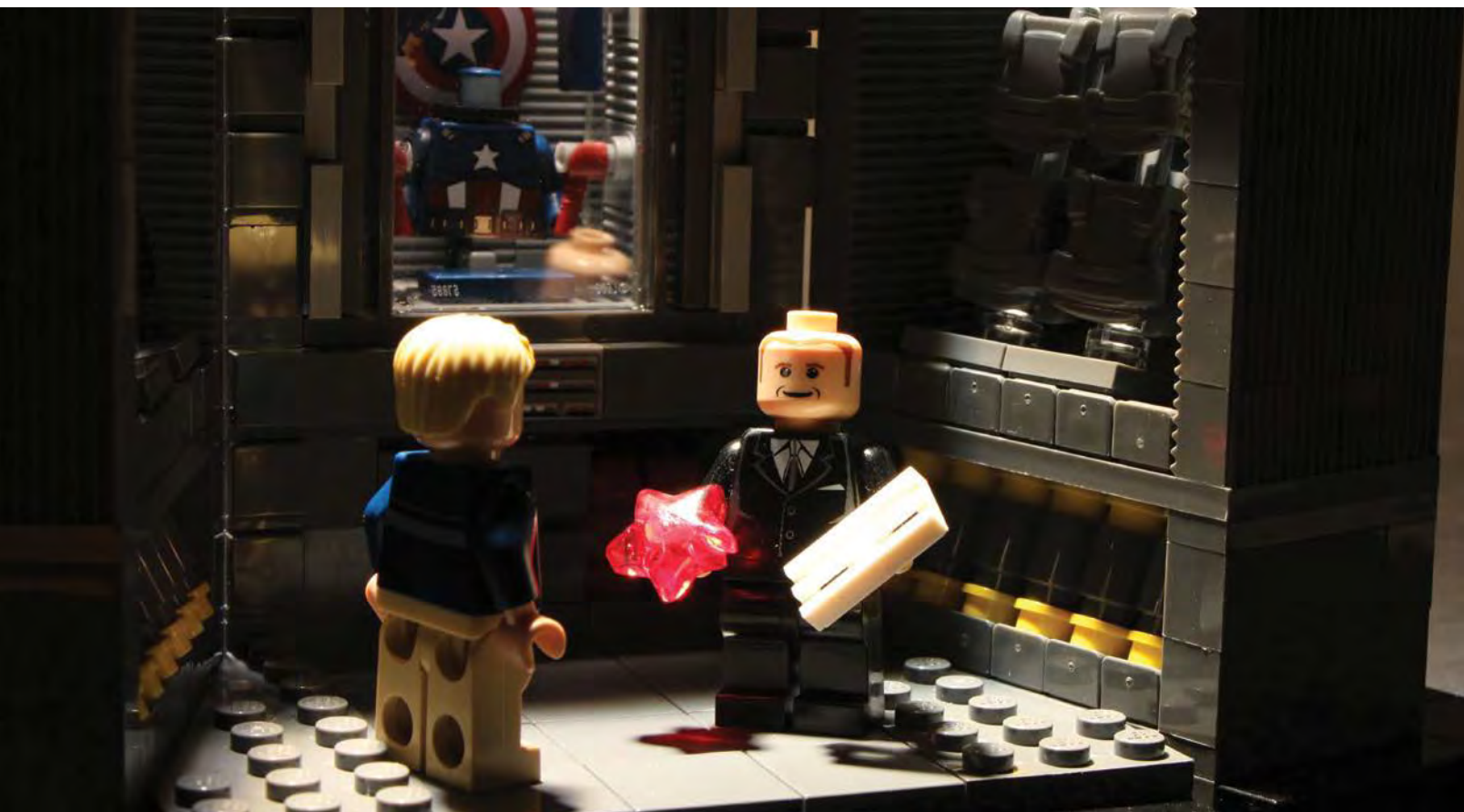
"The uniform? Aren't the stars and stripes a little... old-fashioned?"

— Steve Rogers, *The Avengers* (2012)

I am obsessed with details when I build, so I spend quite a lot of effort to make things look right and complete. For the Captain America MOC, I watched the scene and set photos of Cap's suit room from *The Avengers* over and over again; building the model took approximately three hours, excluding research.



The suit room with Steve Rogers and Phil Coulson.






Tony Stark in the Hall of Armor. Iron Man TM & ©
Marvel Characters, Inc.

Iron Man's Hall of Armor

"My armor was never a distraction or a hobby, it was a cocoon, and now I'm a changed man. You can take away my house, all my tricks and toys, but one thing you can't take away—I am Iron Man."

— Tony Stark, Iron Man III, 2013

Iron Man's Hall of Armor was a bit trickier as it was actually built before the movie *Iron Man III* hit theatres, and I could only use the movie trailers and references from the previous movies. It wasn't a perfect replica but I am quite happy with it anyway! The Hall of Armor took approximately nine hours to complete, excluding research time. 



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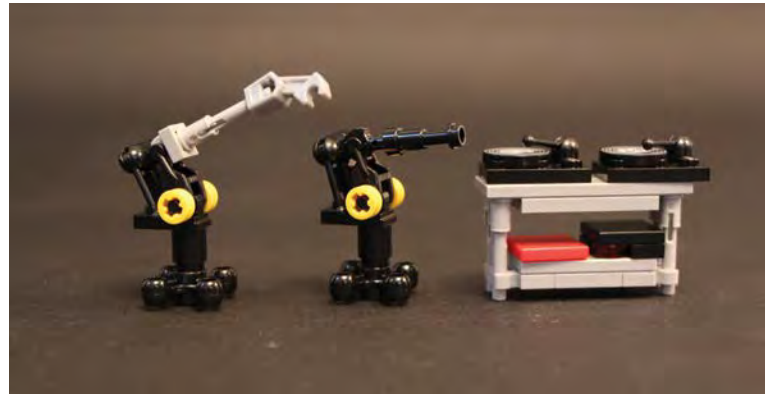




Another view of the Hall of Armor.



Some of the decorations for the Hall of Armor.



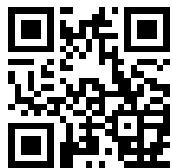
You Can Build It

MINI Model



MINI Batmobile


*Design and Instructions
by Christopher Deck*



You can see Christopher's webpage by going to www.deckdesigns.de or scanning this QR code!

Hello everybody, and welcome back to our mini model building series! I am glad to join again for this heroic issue of *BrickJournal*! Heroic because it's all about famous comic heroes like Superman, Spider-Man, Batman and many more! The Batman theme is particularly interesting for a mini builder because there are many cool vehicles and vessels appearing in that series. For this reason, I would like to build the classic Batmobile from the 1989 movie with you.

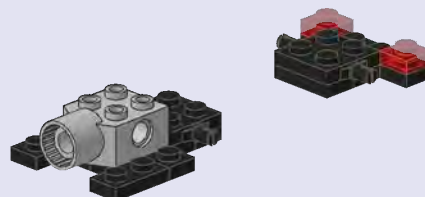
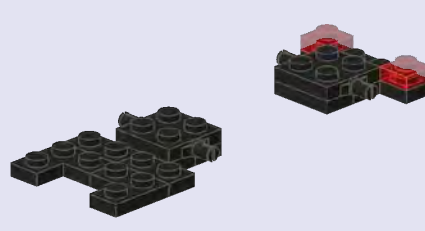
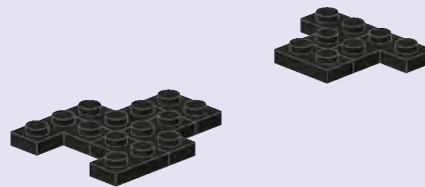
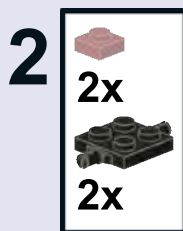
The 1989 Batmobile is a very flat and streamlined racer, requiring many curved pieces which exist in high diversity these days fortunately. There is a narrowing in the middle section of the vehicle which can be best realized by using 4x2 sloped wedges. These are among the most peculiar pieces in my eyes, resembling a mixture between brick, slope, and wedge. Their potential for obtaining a certain shape in mini building is incredible because they contribute a unique curve in one piece.

With that, our Batmobile is ready to start engines and race away! If you would like to have the flying Batwing for a companion, have a look at *BrickJournal* #20, which is about super-heroes and features complete Batwing instructions! Happy building and see you soon! 

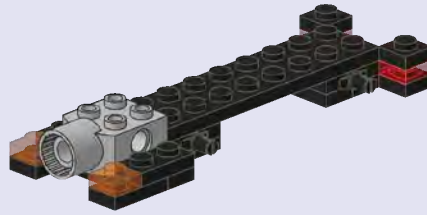
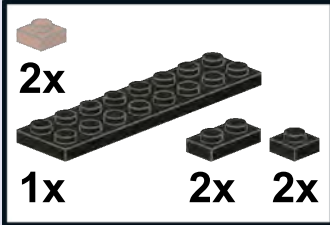
Parts List

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

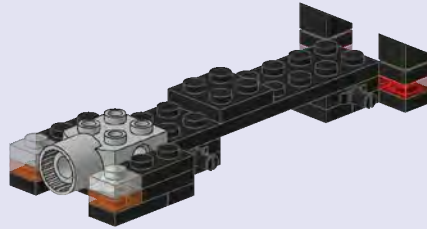
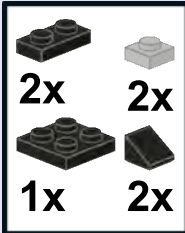
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1	Black	99781.dat	Bracket 1x2 - 1x2 Down
4	Black	87087.dat	Brick 1 x 1 with Stud on 1 Side
2	Black	3788.dat	Car Mudguard 2 x 4
1	Black	85975.dat	Minifig Hat Fez
8	Black	3024.dat	Plate 1 x 1
2	Trans-Red	3024.dat	Plate 1 x 1
2	Trans-White	3024.dat	Plate 1 x 1
2	Trans-Orange	3024.dat	Plate 1 x 1
9	Black	3023.dat	Plate 1 x 2
1	Black	3794a.dat	Plate 1 x 2 without Groove with 1 Centre Stud
1	Black	3022.dat	Plate 2 x 2
6	Black	2420.dat	Plate 2 x 2 Corner
2	Black	4600.dat	Plate 2 x 2 with Wheel Holders
1	Black	3034.dat	Plate 2 x 8
2	Black	61409.dat	Slope Brick 18 2 x 1 x 2/3 Grille
4	Black	54200.dat	Slope Brick 31 1 x 1 x 0.667
4	Black	85984.dat	Slope Brick 31 1 x 2 x 0.667
1	Black	47458.dat	Slope Brick Curved 1 x 2 x 2/3 with Fin without Studs
4	Black	11477.dat	Slope Brick Curved 2 x 1
2	Black	61678.dat	Slope Brick Curved 4 x 1
2	Black	13547.dat	Slope Brick Curved 4 x 1 Inverted
1	Trans-Black	30602.dat	Slope Brick Curved Top 2 x 2 x 1
1	Light-Bluish-Gray	48169.dat	Technic Brick 2 x 2 with Hole and Rotation Joint Socket
1	Blue	4274.dat	Technic Pin 1 / 2
1	Light-Bluish-Gray	32187.dat	Technic Transmission Driving Ring Extension
4	Black	3070b.dat	Tile 1 x 1 with Groove
4	Black	30028.dat	Tyre 8 / 40 x 8 Slick Smooth
1	Black	43721.dat	Wedge 4 x 2 Sloped Left
1	Black	43720.dat	Wedge 4 x 2 Sloped Right
1	Light-Bluish-Gray	30027b.dat	Wheel Rim 8 x 8 Notched Hole for Wheel Holding Pin
3	Light-Bluish-Gray	30027a.dat	Wheel Rim 8 x 8 Round Hole for Wheel Holding Pin
2	Light-Bluish-Gray	3062b.dat	Brick 1 x 1 Round with Hollow Stud
2	Light-Bluish-Gray	87087.dat	Brick 1 x 1 with Stud on 1 Side
2	Light-Bluish-Gray	4073.dat	Plate 1 x 1 Round
1	Black	3023.dat	Plate 1 x 2
1	Black	61072.dat	Plate 1 x 2 with Exhaust Ports
2	Light-Bluish-Gray	98138.dat	Tile 1 x 1 Round with Groove



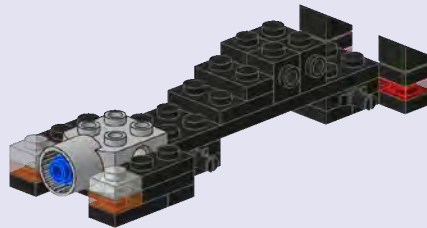
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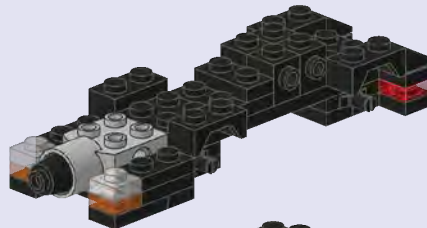
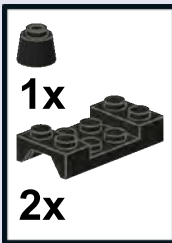
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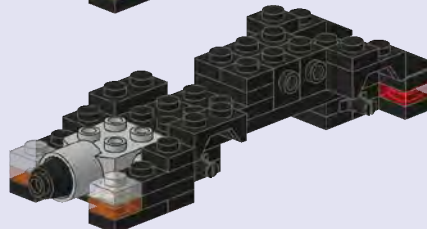
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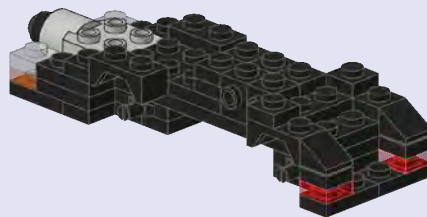
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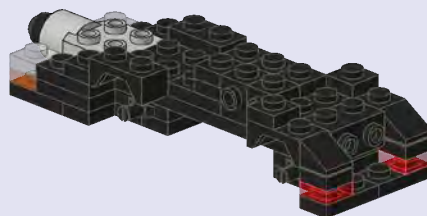
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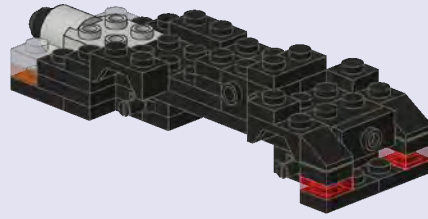
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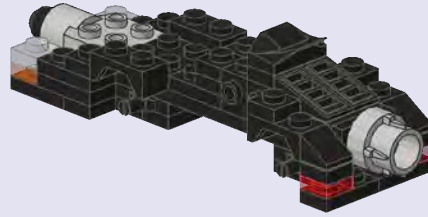
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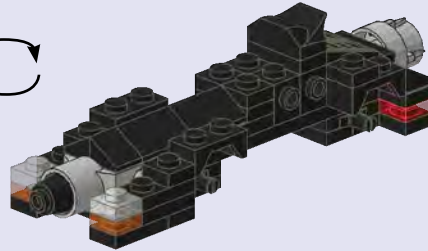
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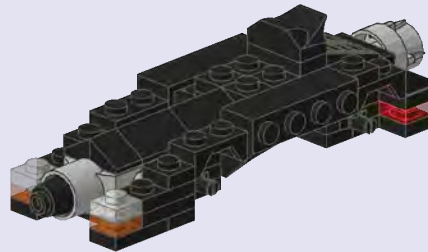
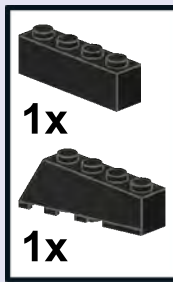
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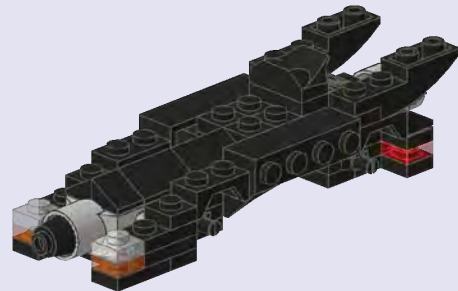
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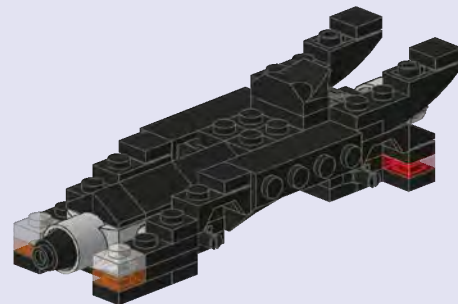
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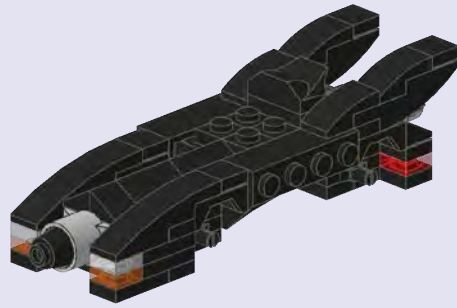
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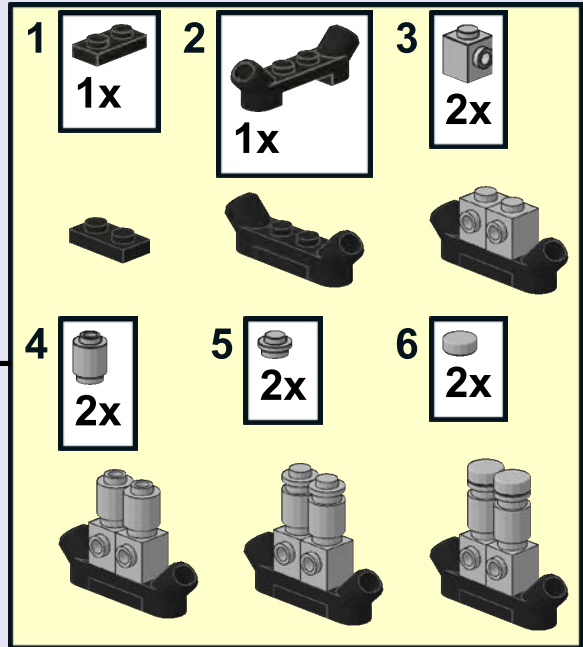
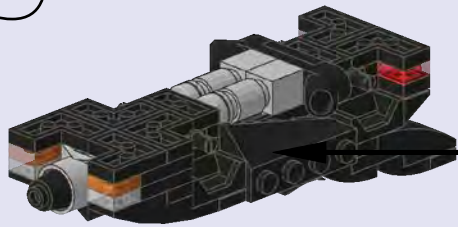
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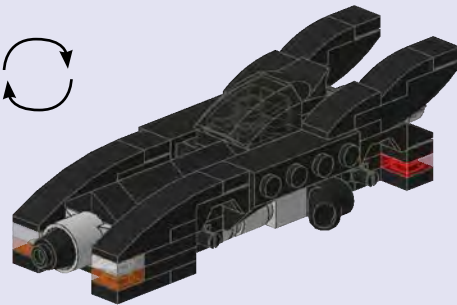
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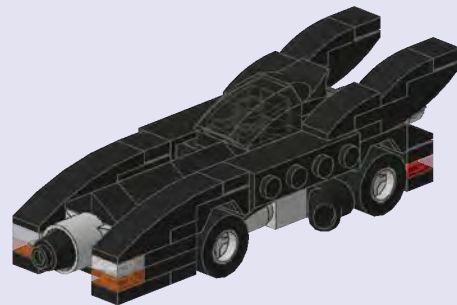
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19



20





Galactus, Fantastic Four TM & ©
Marvel Characters, Inc.

Galactus Strikes!

Article by Joe Meno

Photography by Eric Druon



Eric Druon is better known online as BaronSat, and has been in *BrickJournal* before for his Batman-related builds and previous version of Galactus (both seen in issue #20). He's a French freelance graphic artist who works at an ad magazine.

He started building custom models in the early '90s. Things changed when he discovered LUGNET in the late '90s and early 2000. His first MOC pics published were on *FBTB.net* ("From Bricks to Bothans", a *Star Wars* LEGO website) in 2001.

When asked about why he likes building comics-related creations, Eric replies, "Because they are part of my childhood and teenage years just like *Star Wars* — I just can't help but love them!"

Pressed about his Fantastic Four and Galactus models, he explains: "The Fantastic Four are very positive characters and graphically very interesting, particularly with Galactus and the Silver Surfer. Plus, the action takes place in New York (like Spider-Man, another Marvel character), which is the original place that Stan Lee and Jack Kirby worked. Stan Lee said in an interview that they drew what they saw through their windows."

It must have been one *interesting* neighborhood! **D**

You Can Build It



Iron Man, Hulk TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.

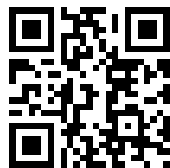
Hulkbuster Armor

*Design and Instructions
by Eric Druon (BaronSat)*

For this issue of *BrickJournal*, Eric decided to build a Hulkbuster version of Iron Man's armor. He tells us his inspiration:

"Well, it's really a special armor and when talking about Stark Industries, the Hulkbuster is one of the most interesting pieces in its inventory. I found the 4529 Iron Man construction set in a shop when it was out of stock everywhere, which I took as a sign of good luck. Of course, it's a nice action figure, but for a minifigure maniac like me, it was the opportunity to get large decorated parts for the Hulkbuster. And until now LEGO didn't produce that armor."

With the release of the LEGO *Avengers: Age of Ultron* sets, there is now a Hulkbuster available. However, Eric shows us here that there are more ways to build a particular creation. 



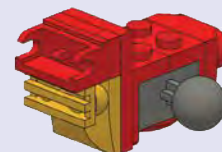
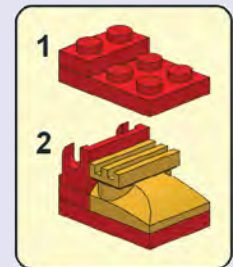
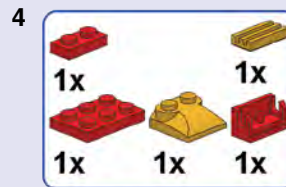
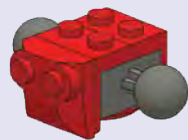
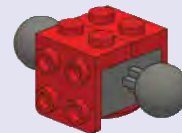
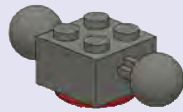
You can see Eric's webpage by going to www.baronsat.net or scanning this QR code!

Parts List

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


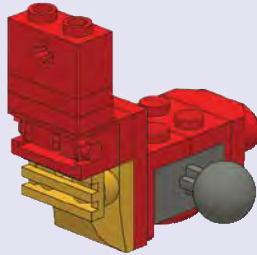
Qty	Color	Part	Description
1	Black	90608	Hero Factory Arm/Leg with Ball Joint on Axle and Ball Socket and Pin Hole
2	Black	90611	Hero Factory Arm/Leg with Ball Joint on Axle and Ball Socket, Short
1	Blue	4032	Plate 2 x 2 Round
2	Dk Bluish Gray	14417	Plate 1 x 2 with Ball Joint-8
1	Dk Bluish Gray	57908	Brick 2 x 2 with Two Ball Joints
2	Dk Bluish Gray	57909	Brick 2 x 2 with Ball Joint and Axlehole
2	Dk Bluish Gray	57910	Brick 2 x 2 with Ball Socket and Axlehole
2	Dk Bluish Gray	99780	Bracket 1 x 2 - 1 x 2 Inverted
1	Dk Red	10907	Minifig Iron Man
2	Lt Bluish Gray	14704	Plate 1 x 2 with Socket Joint-8 with Friction Centre
6	Pearl Gold	2412b	Tile 1 x 2 Grille with Groove
10	Pearl Gold	4073	Plate 1 x 1 Round
1	Pearl Gold	4150	Tile 2 x 2 Round
3	Pearl Gold	47457	Slope Brick Curved 2 x 2 x 2/3 Triple with Two Top Studs
2	Pearl Gold	90639	Hero Factory Armor with Ball Joint Socket - Size 5
1	Red	2654	Dish 2 x 2
2	Red	2877	Brick 1 x 2 with Grille
2	Red	3005	Brick 1 x 1
5	Red	3020	Plate 2 x 4
5	Red	3021	Plate 2 x 3

Qty	Color	Part	Description
4	Red	3022	Plate 2 x 2
12	Red	3023	Plate 1 x 2
1	Red	30414	Brick 1 x 4 with Studs on Side
6	Red	3069b	Tile 1 x 2 with Groove
1	Red	32064a	Technic Brick 1 x 2 with Axlehole Type 1
5	Red	3710	Plate 1 x 4
1	Red	3937	Hinge 1 x 2 Base
1	Red	3938	Hinge 1 x 2 Top
12	Red	4073	Plate 1 x 1 Round
2	Red	41855	Slope Rounded 2 x 2 x 2/3
6	Red	44728	Bracket 1 x 2 - 2 x 2
4	Red	47457	Slope Brick Curved 2 x 2 x 2/3 Triple with Two Top Studs
2	Red	47458	Slope Brick Round 1 x 2 x 2/3 with Flap and No Studs
2	Red	48336	Plate 1 x 2 with Handle Type 2
2	Red	4865	Panel 1 x 2 x 1
2	Red	50746	Slope Brick 1 x 1 x 2/3 Roof Tile
2	Red	50950	Slope Brick Curved 3 x 1
2	Red	60470	Plate 1 x 2 with 2 Clips Horizontal
4	Red	6091	Brick 2 x 1 x 1 & 1/3 with Curved Top
2	Red	64225	Wedge 4 x 3 Triple Curved without Studs
2	Red	85984	Slope Brick 31 1 x 2 x 0.667
2	Red	93575	Hero Factory Fist with Axle Hole
1	Red	98603pb003	Hero Factory Chest Armor Small with Iron Man Reactor Pattern
1	Trans Clear	4150	Tile 2 x 2 Round



5

- 2x
- 1x
- 1x

6

- 1x



7

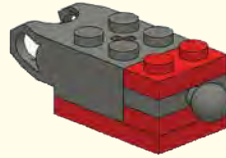
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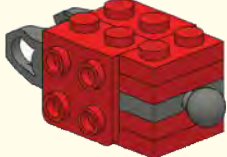
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3

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4

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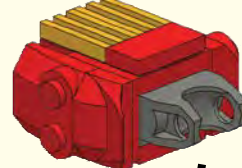
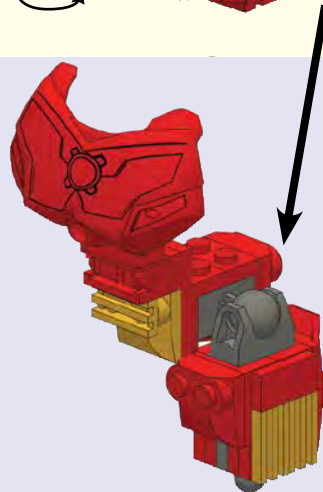
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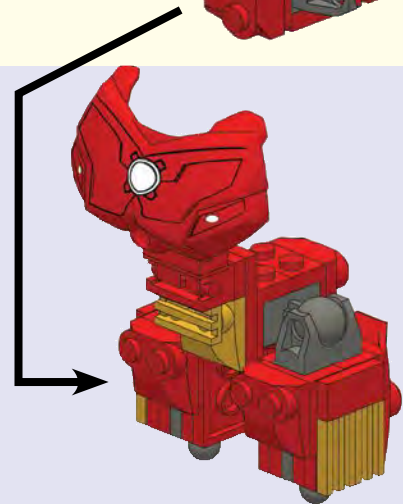
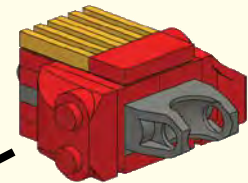
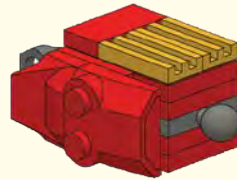
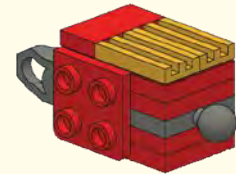
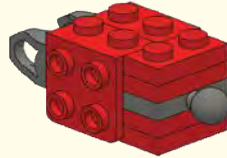
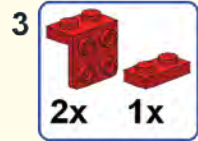
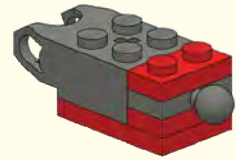
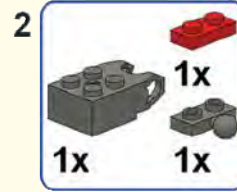
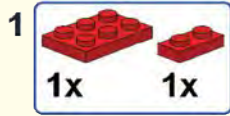


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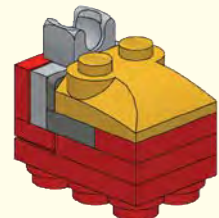
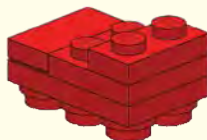
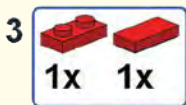
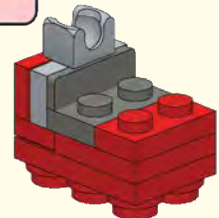
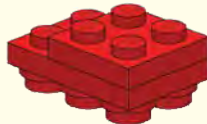
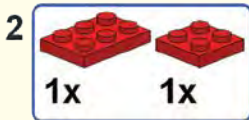
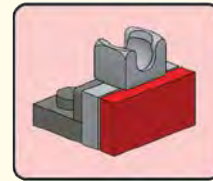
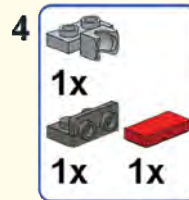
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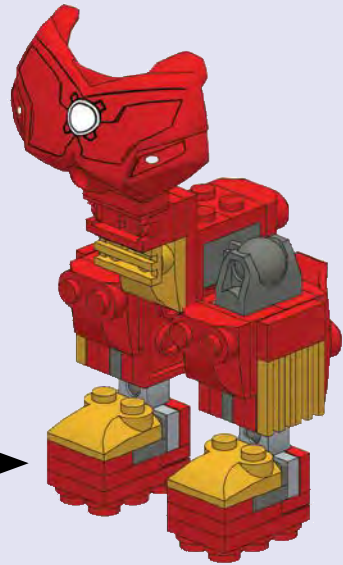



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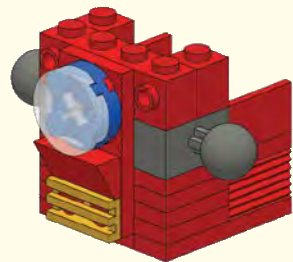
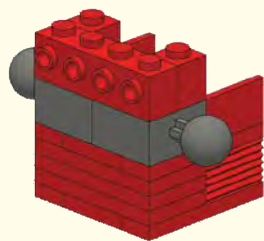
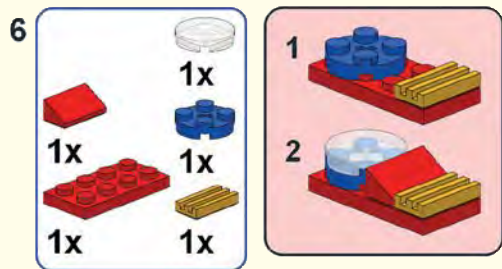
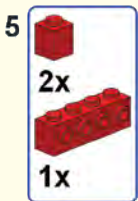
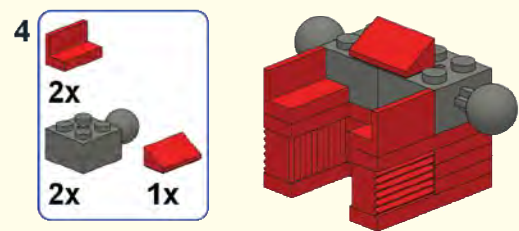
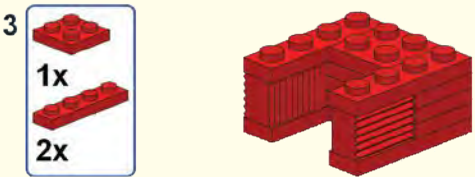
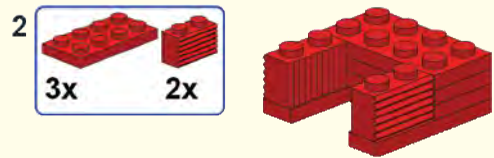
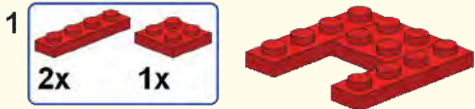


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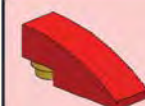
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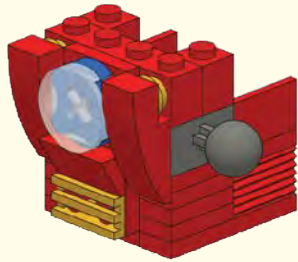


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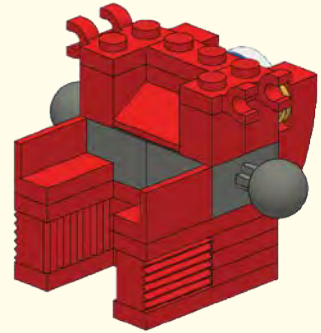
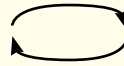
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- 2x 

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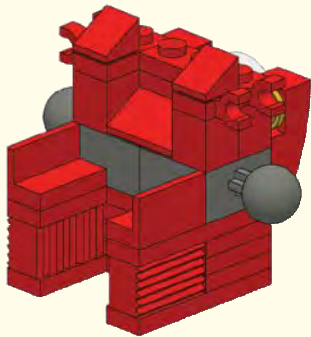
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- 2x 






9

- 2x 






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- 1x 
- 8x 





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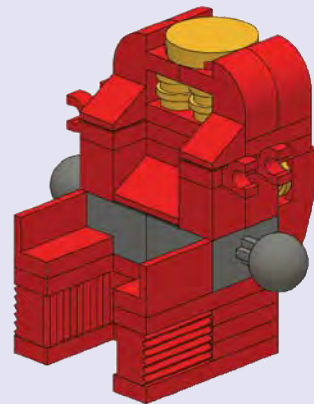
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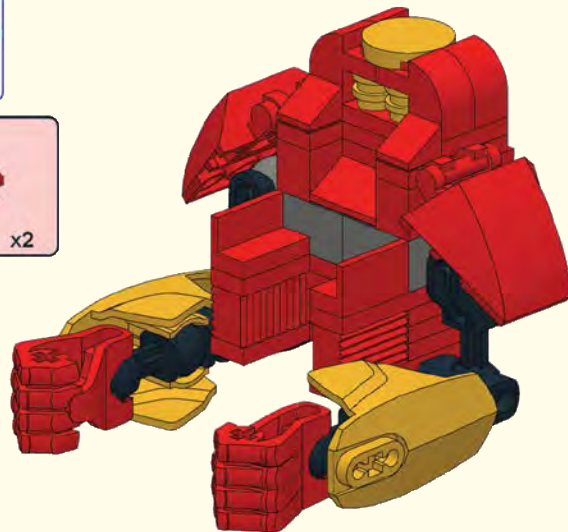
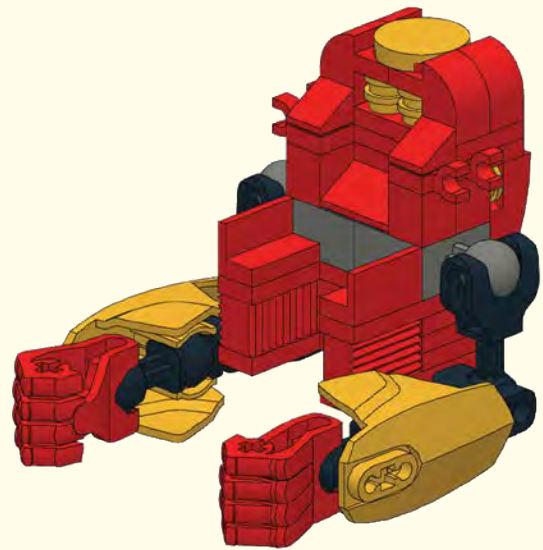
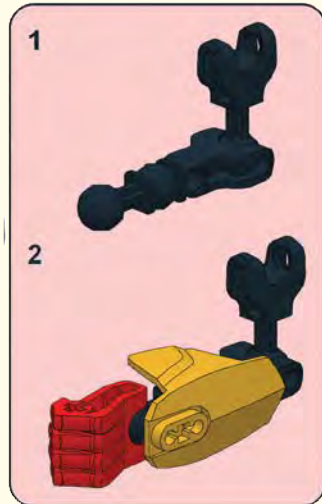
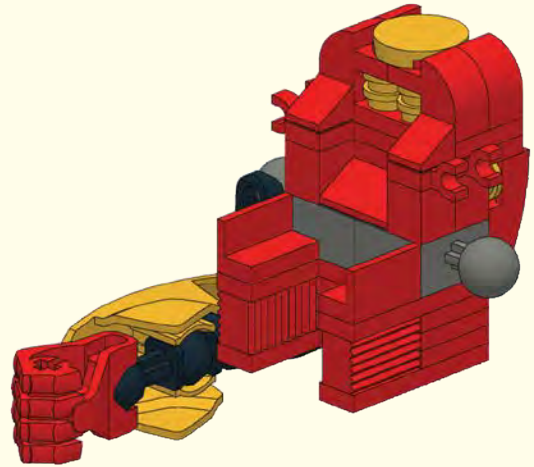
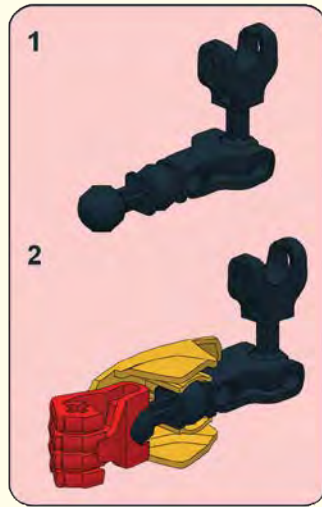


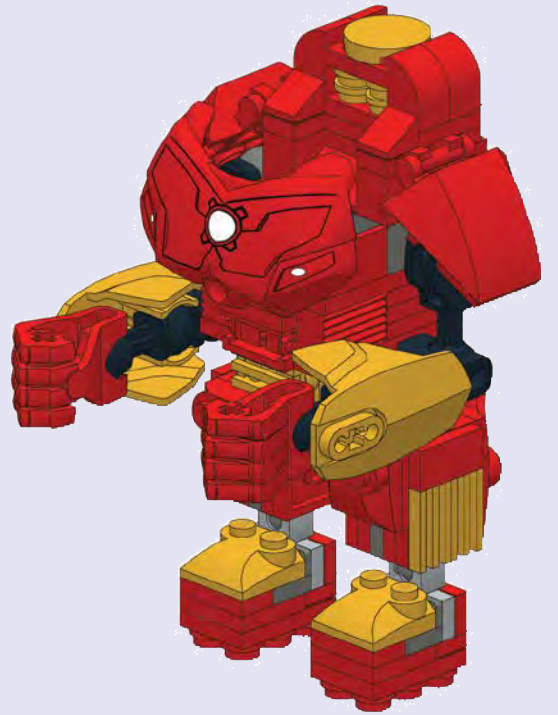
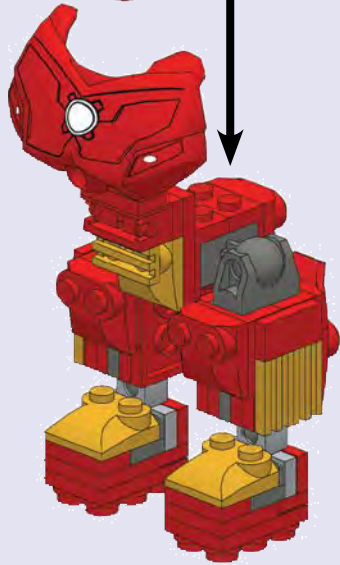
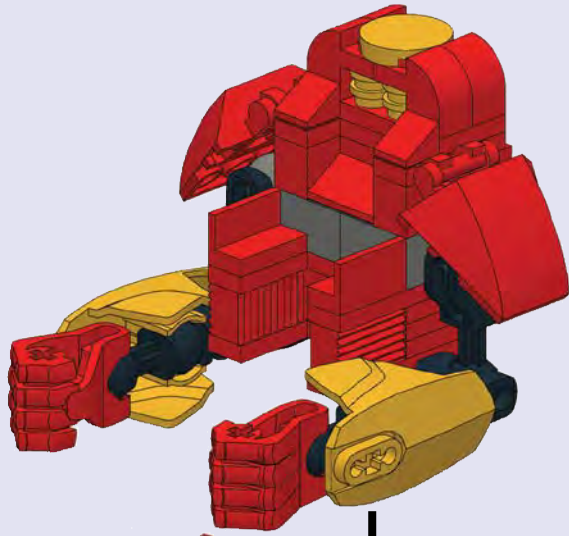
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- 1x 









13



1x



Building

Blackbird Fly!

Article and Photography by Justin Stebbins

While the Avengers and Batman have their own specialized vehicles to travel around the world in, Marvel's X-Men also have a vehicle: the Blackbird. Also called the X-Jet, this plane has been seen in different ways by different artists through the years, including the designers in the X-Men movies. It was only a matter of time before a version of the Blackbird was built by a LEGO fan.

Justin R. Stebbins, known on the web as "Saber-Scorpion" (his website is www.saber-scorpion.com) has been building with LEGO since he was 5 and posting his creations online for about 16 years (he's 28 now). Mostly known for making custom minifigs and MOCs inspired by video games, he also likes to draw and write. Stebbins has self-published one novel and is currently working on a comic book.

"This One's for You, Morph!"

Justin describes his model:

"Kids today are growing up with The Avengers, but I was a '90s kid, so I grew up with the Uncanny X-Men! After watching the newest X-Men film, I felt inspired to build a Blackbird and some minifigs. The 'figs here are all customized with my own custom-designed stickers as usual, plus paint and a few third party accessories from BrickForge and BrickWarriors. Their outfits are mostly inspired by the '90s animated series, which introduced me to the characters in the first place. You may recognize Professor X, Cyclops, Wolverine, Jean Grey, Storm, Beast, Iceman, Rogue, Gambit,

Angel, Nightcrawler, Kitty Pryde, Colossus, Psylocke, and Emma Frost, as well as Phoenix. The Blackbird (or X-Jet) itself is mostly inspired by its appearance in the movies, which I also enjoy (well, most of them anyway). It can seat two pilots and seven passengers, although it's hard to attach the top if anyone has an especially tall hat or hair. The whole thing measures about 20 inches long and nearly as wide. It's even sturdy enough to be swooshable... sort of... if you hold it right!"



The X-Men's Blackbird, with X-Men awaiting boarding.



Front and rear views of the Blackbird.

Building the Bird

"All of the pieces I used are from the sizeable collection I've amassed just by buying LEGO sets over the years. I only ordered four of the parts on Bricklink: four large wing sections. I never plan very far ahead when I build—I just break out my LEGO bins and see what happens. So I always run into plenty of problems I have to work around,

sometimes rebuilding whole sections a few times until they're scaled right and sturdy. It takes a while. I'm not sure how many hours the jet took to build, but it came together over the course of a week or so."



Justin's X-Men: Front row, left to right: Rogue, Wolverine, Cyclops, Jean Grey, Professor X. Second row: Psylocke, Beast, Storm, Gambit, Emma Frost. Third row: Kitty Pryde, Colossus, Ice-Man, Nightcrawler. Rear: Angel. Characters TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.

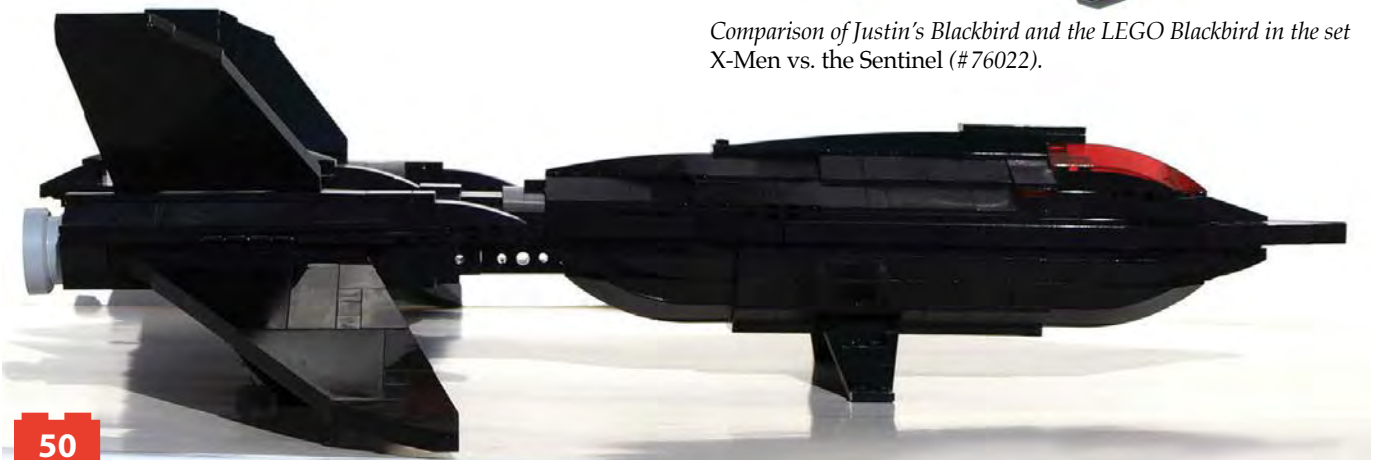
"I'm not sure I'd recommend my zero-planning building method, but I just find it more fun. That's how this project started as 'I'll just build a little Blackbird to go with my minifigs' and ended up being probably the biggest MOC I've built so far, at least in terms of length and width (only my old *Assassin's Creed* "Leap of Faith" tower is taller, at 28 inches). It's been a while since I've built anything big, and that's what happens when you start having fun!" 



Top and side view of the Blackbird.



Comparison of Justin's Blackbird and the LEGO Blackbird in the set X-Men vs. the Sentinel (#76022).





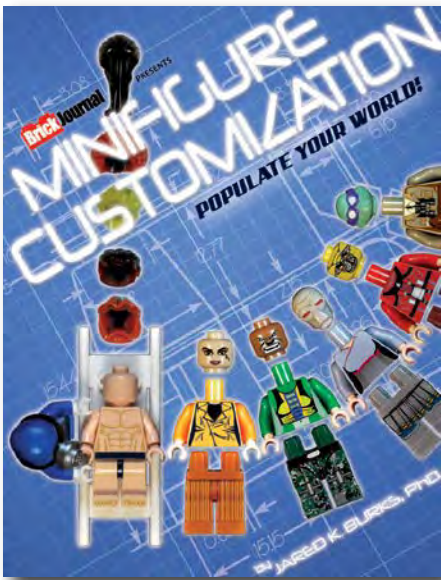
A look at the cockpit of the Blackbird.



You can see more of Justin's work by going to his website www.saber-scorpion.com or scanning this QR code.



Get both books on minifigure customizing!

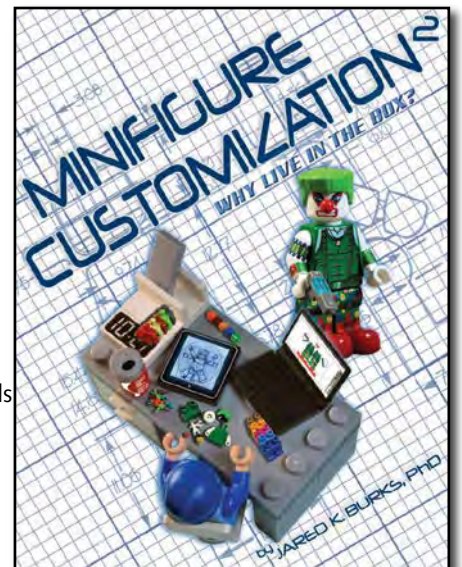


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Building



Building the Endless

Article and Photography by Tyler Halliwell

I was introduced to Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* series in early 2014 and was instantly hooked. After reading the original 10 trade paperbacks as well as some of the spin-offs, I decided that, given my history of portraying other comic book characters (notably Hellboy) in LEGO, I would take it upon myself to make a bust of the title character, Dream, the Sandman. For such a renowned and well-known comic series, *Sandman* is surprisingly under-represented in the LEGO hobby world. Since the making of Dream, I have been slowly but surely trying to remedy that fact. It is my hope that this collection of mine will inspire other fans to build in the theme, or for those who do not know the subject material to give it a read.

Most builders who know me well understand that, for the most part, my best work is done when I am under time constraints. This is mainly due to the presence of my collection at home, and not at school, thus forcing a frantic rush of building whenever I am home with my bricks. Even when I do not have the time constraint of a weekend or break hanging over my head, this seems to have translated into a habit of speed-building. It was one such case when

I built Dream before Brickworld Chicago last year. I built Dream for a few reasons. First, I wanted to build something from *Sandman*, and the main character was the obvious choice. Second, it seemed to me that my Brickworld MOC spread was looking a little thin, and one more bust would round the display out nicely. And finally, as my sister had introduced me to the series, I figured that Dream would be a fun bust with which to surprise her, as she was out of town at the time but would be attending the convention. So, with source material in hand and plenty of motivation, I got to work.

Dream is not the simplest of characters to portray. As the comic series is drawn by many different artists, and the appearance of Dream is meant to be ever-shifting depending upon the viewer, I had to choose an interpretation that I liked and from which I wanted to work. Whenever I build a bust, I choose a feature of the head that I think will be the most difficult and, when I figure out how to go about that section, use that piece to determine the scale of the figure. For Dream, this part was the lower face, consisting of the mouth and cheekbones that give the character much of his aloofness and lack of emotion. I knew from the beginning that I wanted to make the figure's eyes light up, as Dream's dark and penetrating eyes are another important physical feature. This was at first achieved with the LEGO light bricks that came in sets, but have since been replaced with LifeLites (www.lifelites.com), which are far more reliable and allow for convenient battery replacement. This lighting factor made it necessary for the head to be hollow and hinged to allow access to these lights. This forced awareness when placing the hair, as I had to allow for sections to be removed in order to access the inside of the head.



Of the features present on Dream, the hair is what took the longest to get right, and what garnered the most attention when the figure was completed. I knew from the start of the bust that Dream's hair would be a challenge, as it wildly sticks out every which way. In order to keep the hair from looking like a giant mess, I decided to sweep it to one side, which also allowed me to conserve parts, given that the hair required many of the "dinosaur tail" pieces. Using these pieces as well as a mixture of black slopes, droid arms, and all types of black clips, allowed me to create a hair texture that I was very happy with. The only downside of this hair, besides the fragility during transportation, was that it became a standard feature of the busts. This meant for the others I had to order many more "dinosaur tails" in varying colors, so as to keep the hairstyle similar across the three characters. Because of this, I probably own far more "dinosaur tail" pieces than the average builder, but the part is so cool and useful that I don't mind that fact too much. For Dream, I did not want to detract too much from the simple colors of the face and hair, so I decided to keep his robe dark blue, with some flat silver highlights. While the character wears many colors throughout the comic series, and many styles of clothing, a dark robe seemed best suited to the style of Dream that I made.

Dream of the Endless: ah, there's a conundrum.

In this aspect (and we perceive but aspects of the Endless, as we see the light glinting from one tiny facet of some huge and flawlessly cut precious stone), he is rake-thin with skin the color of falling snow...

Dream casts a human shadow, when it occurs for him to so.

—Sandman #25: "Season of Mists Prelude"



At the time, Dream was my most successful build, gaining me a large following through LEGO fan community websites such as MOCpages and Flickr, but also getting the attention of Neil Gaiman, writer of the *Sandman* series, on Twitter, which was awesome. While I personally thought that the build was very cool, I did not expect anything near the reception that it gained. And, as a good number of the people who commented on the build were very happy to see a *Sandman* oriented creation, this was a large factor as to why I decided to build more characters from the series.





The next character from the series that I chose to portray as a bust was Dream's youngest sister, Delirium. Many of Dream's siblings, known collectively as the Endless, have variable appearances throughout the storyline, but this is especially the case with Delirium. As she is essentially the physical incarnation of delirium, her appearance is constantly shifting and, essentially, confused. Much of the time her hair is in some manner of being half-shaved, and so I decided that I would only give her hair on one half of her head. Also, as Delirium often is trailed by a few animals such as butterflies or a school of fish, I incorporated these into her hair as well. Delirium was an odd build, mainly because I had to match the scale that I created with Dream. Since the end goal was to display, at that point just Dream and Delirium, together, I had to make sure that her bust was scaled correctly to reasonably be the size of a younger and smaller sibling in comparison. This was a problem because, as I mentioned earlier when discussing Dream, I usually let certain features decide the scale of each bust. However, with Delirium, I was forced to make her features fit the predetermined size. Because of this, Delirium is the bust I am least happy with. I was just not able to fit as many details onto the surface of the face, and thus she has very little depth. I'm happy with her appearance from the front, but wish more depth could have been added to the cheeks and brow. Overall though, I am not unhappy with how Delirium turned out, and she is scaled well with Dream when they are displayed together.



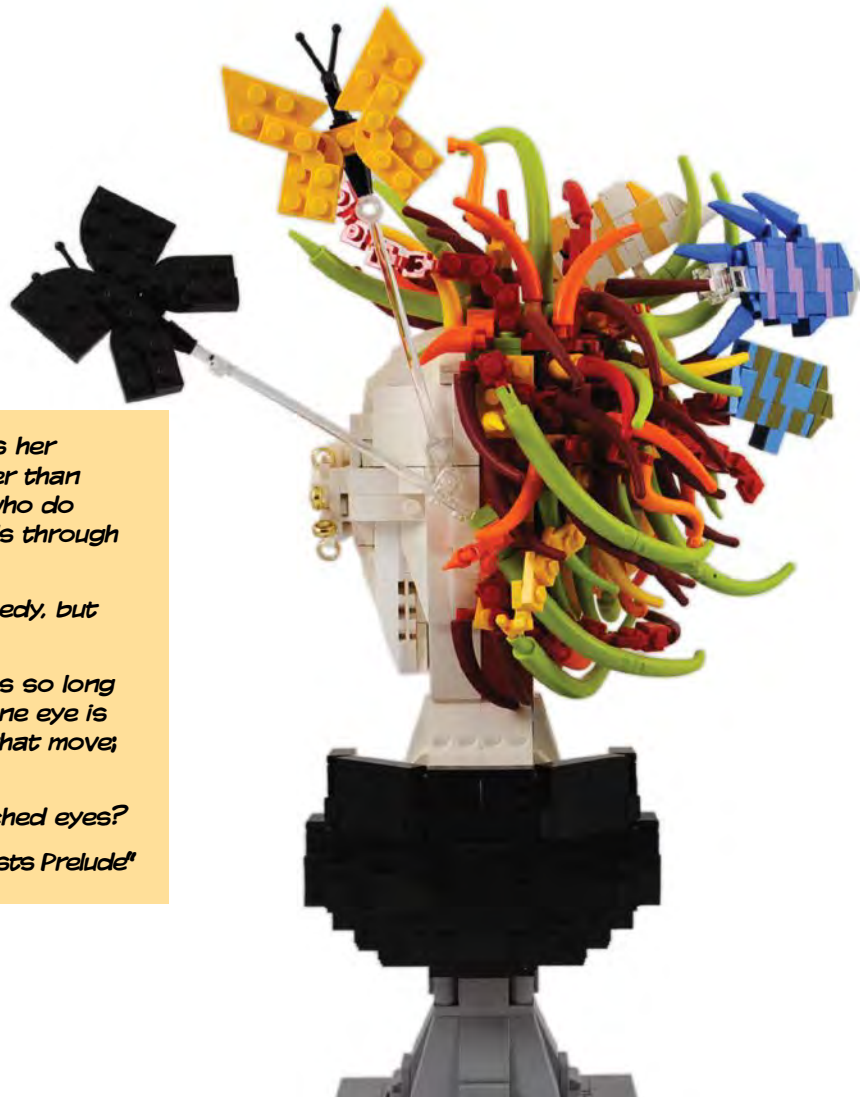
Some say the tragedy of Delirium is her knowledge that, despite being older than suns, older than gods, she is Forever the youngest of the Endless, who do not measure time as we measure time, or see worlds through mortal eyes.

Others deny this, and say that Delirium has no tragedy, but here they speak without reflection.


For Delirium was once Delight. And although that was so long ago now, even today her eyes are badly matched: one eye is a vivid emerald green, spattered with silver flecks that move; the other eye is vein blue.

Who knows what Delirium sees through her mismatched eyes?

—Sandman #25: "Season of Mists Prelude"



The last of Dream's siblings that I made was Death. Death, contrary to what one might think, is one of the most popular characters in the series, and so to me was the perfect choice for the third bust. Death, unlike Dream and Delirium, has a relatively constant appearance throughout the series. When building her, I had to be sure to include her eye-of-horus makeup, ankh necklace, black tank-top, and, most importantly of all, I had to make sure that she looked cheerful. Death was another fun challenge, as I had to keep her somewhat between the scales of Dream and Delirium. Most of the building time was spent trying to get the eye makeup correct, and I ended up using the same eye technique that I used for Delirium, using LEGO rubber bands and string to outline the eyes, which for Death allowed me to attach the lever arm that completed the top of the eye makeup. For Death I was able to make a fuller face, as her mouth did not involve the same SNOT work that I used for Delirium. Thus, I am happy with how the physical fullness of Death's face looks in comparison to the necessary gauntness of Dream. Lastly for Death, I went back to the fun hairstyle of Dream, although her hair had to be more styled than his, which was an odd problem in itself, as I have little experience with the correct styling of female hair. Overall though, I think the hair worked out perfectly in being noticeably different from Dream's, but also similar enough to link the three busts.

I cannot say for certain if I am done adding to this series of busts from *Sandman*. However, as of this writing, I do not have any others on the horizon. All seven would certainly be a unique display, as well as a cool tribute to the series, but before that point I will have to add to my ever-diminishing collection of white slopes and black dinosaur tail pieces. For the time being, I am happy to display just Dream, Delirium, and Death as my tribute to the influential and inspiring series that is Neil Gaiman's *Sandman*. 



When the first living thing existed, I was there, waiting. When the last living thing dies, my job is finished. I'll put the chairs on tables, turn out the lights and lock the universe behind me when I leave.

—Death, Sandman #20: "Facade"

Sandman and all related characters TM & © DC Comics.



You can view Tyler's webpage by going to <https://www.flickr.com/photos/deathly-halliwell/> or scanning this QR code!



Building



The Justice LEGO of America: (left to right) Robin, Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman, and Aquaman. All characters TM & © DC Comics.

Basic Hero Building

Article and Photography by Peter Crone

I'm an AFOL from the Boston area, working full-time at a medical device and pharmaceuticals manufacturer and part-time in a LEGO Store. I came out of my Dark Age in 1999 with the introduction of the *Star Wars* theme... my first set was the 1999 LEGO X-Wing 7140, which was the only *Episode IV* related souvenir I could find at the Tesco (Britain's Wal-Mart equivalent) next door to Elstree Studios in London, where parts of the original *Star Wars* trilogy had been filmed. Soon after this theoretically one-off nostalgic purchase I was back in the fold, collecting LEGO sets, building MOCs and customizing minifigures to display on my shelves proudly.

I've been a fan of super-heroes since I was a kid. Batman and Robin started, as far as I was aware, in a crazy, live action TV show, and somehow made their way to Saturday morning cartoons when they joined *The Super Friends*. It was not much later that I discovered comic books and dozens upon dozens of other brightly colored costumed crime fighters and villains. After a time, like most kids, I could tell you all about the important characters in both the DC and Marvel Comics super-hero pantheons, which characters were the best in each, and why.

Years later, after returning to the LEGO hobby, I wanted to create comic book-inspired models, mostly using customized minifigures and models with playable features for them to fight crime in. That was fun, but I knew there had to be a way to get a wider variety of characters onto my shelf.

The idea was simple enough: build super-hero figures from (mostly) basic brick. I wanted something that could be challenging in the grander design sense, but with each figure being a fairly simple build. Some models would be more detailed than others, but nothing about the basic style would be out of reach for a child. Working in the LEGO Store, I spent a lot of time

showing children the many possibilities available to them in a decent Pick-A-Brick Wall, and I wanted to create recognizable figures that could be created with readily available parts. Each model had to be brightly colored and look cool—like most super-heroes—but they also had to fit in the hands of and hopefully meet—or better yet push the limits of—the building skills of a child. With this in mind, I built my first Superman. In hindsight, this first model was a bit too basic, however, he was the perfect first step. From there I began creating my squad of chunky, 8-bit videogame-style inspired LEGO Super Friends.

Around this time, the LEGO Group introduced the Pickables models to the LEGO Store's PAB Wall. Starting with the Rabbit and the Painter, this was a scale that was fun and less tiny-parts intensive than the better-known Miniland scale. Eventually, the Batman and Robin Pickables model was announced. I took this as a sign that clearly I was on the right track, and opted to explore some of the less obvious characters from DC Comics history.

After completing the main cast of the Super Friends, it only made sense to expand and build the Justice League of America. Mainly I was interested in the line-up I was first introduced to when I discovered comics, the team from the mid-1970s: Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman of course, but also characters such as The Flash, Hawkman, Black Canary, Green Lantern, Green Arrow and the Atom. I then moved on to the Justice League International of the late 1980s, adding characters such as Booster Gold, Blue Beetle, and the gruff Green Lantern, Guy Gardner.

Most of the models were built using supplies from the PAB wall, but many of the decorative touches either came from my collection or were purpose-bought online to add the perfect detail to a character, such as Batman's pointy ears, The Phantom Stranger's amulets, and the wings on Captain America's mask and Thor's helmet.

The Avengers: (left to right) Thor, Vision, Black Widow, Hulk, Captain America, and Iron Man. Characters TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.

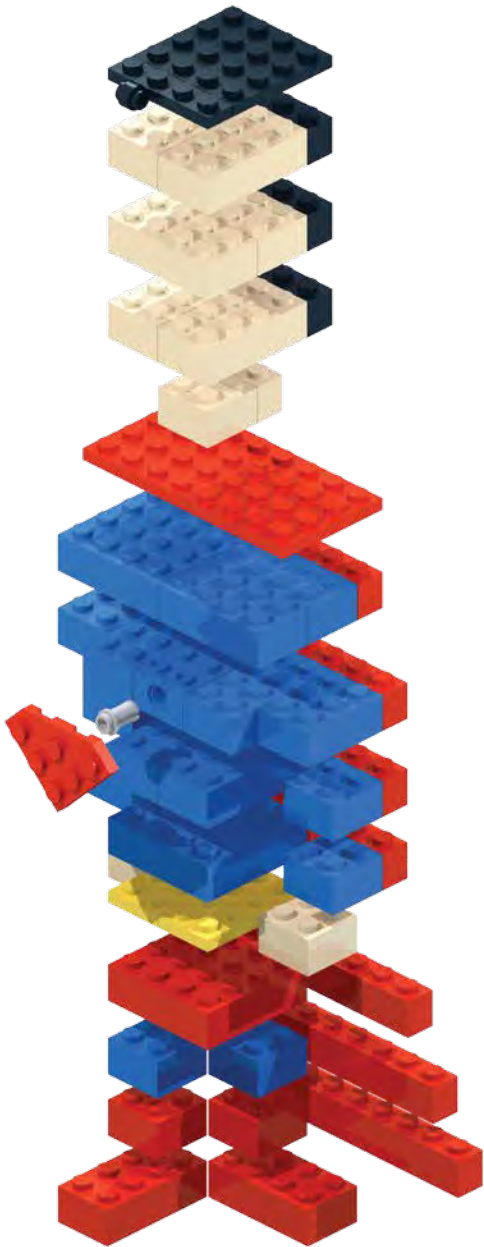


Gleeck and the Wonder Twins: Zan and Jayna. Characters TM & © DC Comics.



The Green Lanterns: (left to right) Guy Gardner, Hal Jordan, Arisia, Kilowog, and John Stewart. Characters TM & © DC Comics.

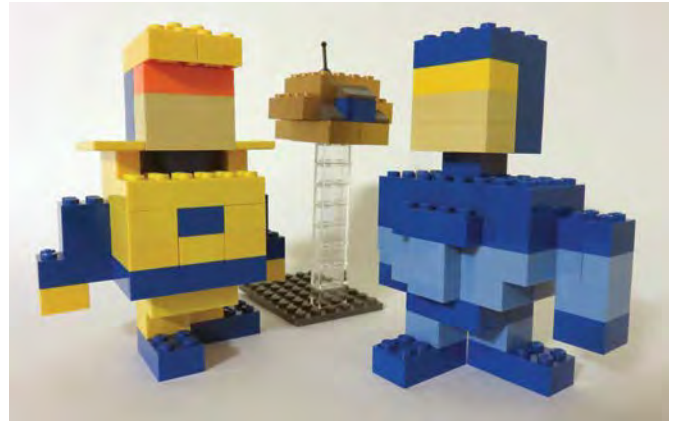




A breakdown of Superman reveals how mostly basic brick is used to define the character's unique features. TM & © DC Comics.



Zatanna, Deadman, Phantom Stranger, and Dr. Fate. TM & © DC Comics.



Booster Gold, Skeets, and Blue Beetle. TM & © DC Comics.



Spider-Man. TM & © Marvel.

While I had built a Spider-Man early on, it wasn't until the release of the *Avengers* film that I decided to move forward with Marvel characters. Much like with my comics reading as a kid, DC represented clean lines and stories that were more fantastic than realistic, but Marvel added a certain amount of realistic grit to their books, which appealed to my maturing sensibilities (which is to say, when I turned twelve and was much more worldly, the Marvel stories seems to carry more weight). With the Marvel MOCs, I opted to build at a slightly larger scale, which started with making the spider on Spider-Man's chest and Captain America's shield look appropriate to the size of their bodies. This increased scale allowed more room for detail and "realism" with the designs, while maintaining the fun "8-bit caricature" feel of the earlier MOCs.

I debuted the forty-three members of the "Justice LEGO of America" at BrickFair New Hampshire in 2013, where they won the Best Use of Color Brickee Award. Since that time I've built this style of character from other sources, such as *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *The Lone Ranger*, *The Blues Brothers*, and a personal favorite, Mork from Ork. These models continue to stay true to my initial vision/parameters of colorful, basic brick modeled into fantastic characters relatable to both AFOLs and children alike. **D**



Green Lantern, Black Canary and Green Arrow. TM & © DC Comics.



The original 31 Super Friends made by Jon. All characters TM & © their respective owners.

When *LEGO Friends* was introduced in 2012, it was to mixed reactions. Some people viewed the news with joy that LEGO was introducing a girls' line, others felt they were pandering by introducing minidolls rather than minifigures, and many loved the introduction of new and interesting colors to the LEGO color palette to build with.

As the line was released, it may have sold far better than The LEGO Group expected, but it also met with resistance by those who felt it reinforced female gender stereotypes too deeply. While STEM and veterinarians were represented in the early sets, they were overshadowed by hair salons and shopping. For those who didn't purchase the sets, they were unaware of the variety of sets and joined in the criticism.

I first looked at the *Friends* minidolls at BrickFair 2012. Having been more familiar with the controversy than the products, I was able to look at them and see what a canvas they could make for some imaginative creations. Unfortunately, with time, The LEGO Group continued the same linear path with the line and I felt I needed to create my own variations on them.

It was during public hours at BrickFair that I decided to explore some new variations on the minidolls and see how they could be made more interesting to those who saw Stephanie, Emma, and their compatriots as stereotypical dolls that don't have the creativity of play that most LEGO sets entail. With Sharpie markers, a collectible minifigure mohawk, and some Brick Arms parts, I created an army and a punk rock Friend, which no one was mistaking for a doll that would say "let's go to the mall." The larger figures gave more space to work in and give a less blocky canvas to create some original minifigures in.

As the line progressed, the sets continued to sell, but were still seen as in the same light, as they released malls and playhouses alongside the more practical and motivating sets. The more I talked to people, the more I wanted to play

Presenting the Super Friends!

Article and Photography by Jon Lazar

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Supergirl. TM & © DC.



Phoenix. TM & © Marvel.



Sue Storm, the Invisible Girl. TM & © Marvel.



Black Widow. TM & © Marvel.



Rogue. TM & © Marvel.



Wonder Woman. TM & © DC.



Elsa from Frozen. TM & © Disney.



Batgirl. TM & © DC.

with people's perceptions of what the line was and what it could be. I wanted to explore how these minidolls could be empowered and how they could be extended into other lines that LEGO released at that time, so I decided on a project taking the Friends and making them super-heroines.

The A-list super-heroines would be obvious, but I wanted to be able to go deeper and do a more extended project than just the most popular female super-heroes. I reached out to people on Twitter and Facebook, asking which heroines were their favorites and got a myriad number of answers. The obvious answers that I was expecting at the time—Wonder Woman, Batgirl, Phoenix, Rogue, Captain Marvel, et al.—were all listed by people, but then there were some ones I hadn't thought of myself. With a solid list to start from, I began to plan out my strategy for this project.

I decided I would create and release one figure a day for the month of July in 2014. I began to make my list of heroines that I wanted to do and began creating them. I was hoping to have seven done before I started releasing them to the public, so I would have a healthy head start due to the amount of time required to create each one.

On July 1, 2014, I posted Supergirl to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google Plus, and Tumblr. The reaction to her was fairly positive, and I got quite a bit of feedback to work with, since it was an introduction to this project and to some an introduction to my work in general. With each day, I continued to release another figure online—Phoenix, Black Widow, Sue Storm—each garnering a response that showed people were interested in seeing what could be done with the minidolls if The LEGO Group expanded it beyond its own silo.

Towards the end of the project, it started to get a little tough to find the last few super-heroines to fill out the roster, but I was able to find 31 to fill the entire month. The amount of work involved in creating 31 super-heroines in 31 days was more than I expected, but I was able to complete it and have them all on display at BrickFair 2014 on August 1.



Marvel's Captain Marvel. TM & © Marvel.



Shadowcat and Lockheed. TM & © Marvel.

The LEGO Super *Friends* project (as I had deemed it) was successful, and I decided to keep it going. Rather than keep the tight schedule I previously kept, it would become a weekly release of a single figure without the super-heroine limitation. By opening it to all pop culture, it allowed me to explore other characters. Doctor Who, Indiana Jones, The Walking Dead, Sailor Moon, and more were created through the end of 2014 as I expanded my project to show what could be done with the minidolls.

It was during this time, that others began to take notice and share the customized Friends. *From Bricks to Bothans*, *The Brothers Brick*, *The Mary Sue*, *io9*, and other outlets began to show my customized minidolls to their readerships. Fairly universally the sentiment was the same, wanting to see The LEGO Group explore more of what could be done, because they were unfamiliar with the Friends line outside of the stereotyped sets that were displayed early in the line.

To me, this project was a success. I was able to explore the gender stereotypes assigned to the toys by showing characters of other genres through the lens of the minidolls and show how they could be repurposed both in the perceptions of them, and in the appearance by painting them to be someone else. **b**



Stargirl. TM & © DC.



Zatanna. TM & © DC.



Catwoman. TM & © DC.



Scarlet Witch. TM & © Marvel.



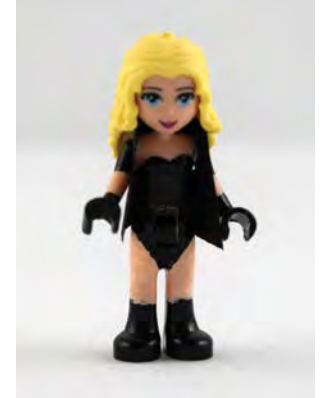
Mary Marvel. TM & © DC.



Psylocke. TM & © Marvel.



Sailor Moon. TM & © Toei.



Black Canary. TM & © DC.



The 9th, 10th and 11th Doctor from Doctor Who. TM & © BBC.



Indiana Jones. TM & © Lucasfilm Ltd.



Wyldstyle. TM & © LEGO.

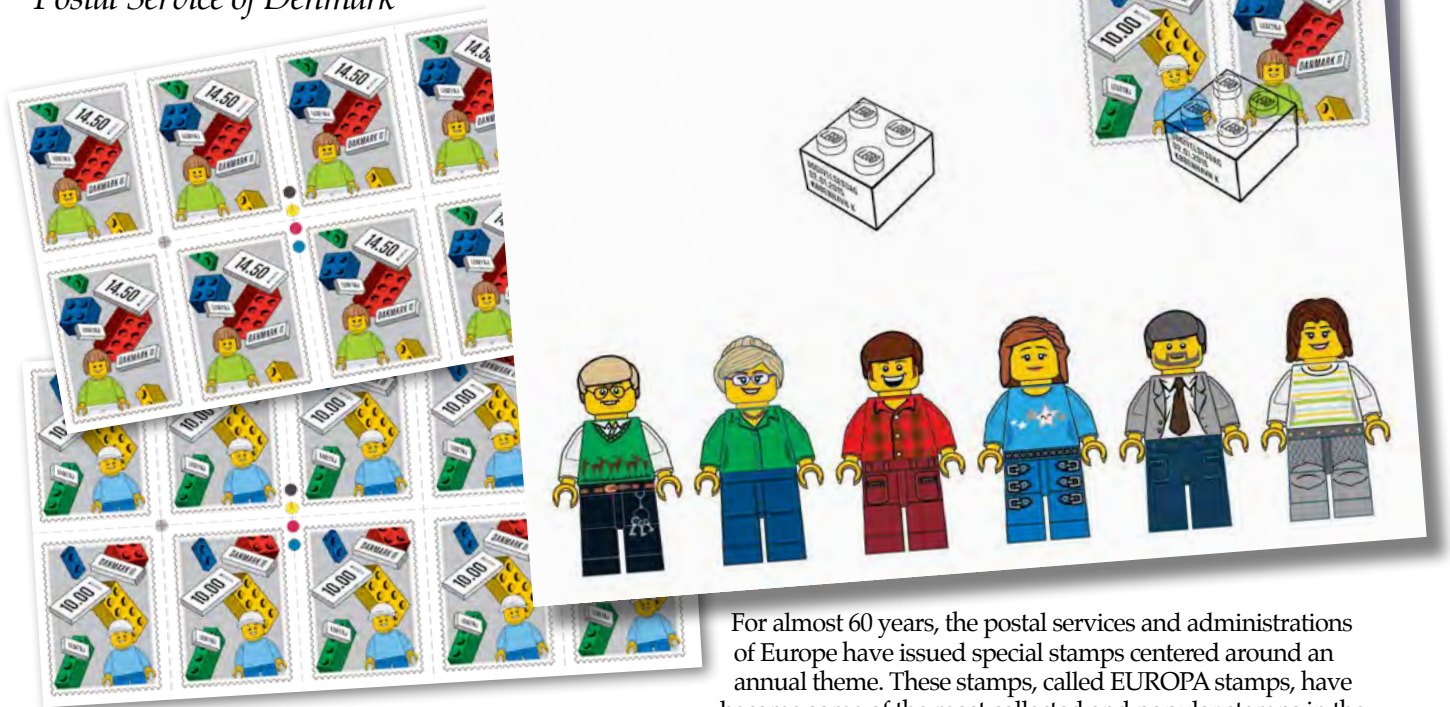
News

Stick a Brick: Denmark's LEGO- Themed Stamps

Article by Joe Meno and the
Postal Service of Denmark



Above: The two stamps.
Below: The first-day cancel.



Stamp Facts

Design: Post Danmark Stamps/
Jakob Monefeldt

Colors: Four-color offset

Paper: Self-adhesive

Method of printing: Offset

Format: 36.6 x 26.5 mm

Perforations: 13.00 x 13.50

Last day of sale: 31 December 2015

Print run: 4,500,000 DKK 10.00
stamps /

2,300,000 DKK 14.50 stamps

For almost 60 years, the postal services and administrations of Europe have issued special stamps centered around an annual theme. These stamps, called EUROPA stamps, have become some of the most collected and popular stamps in the world. 2015's theme is "Old Toys," so it was natural for Denmark to issue stamps that celebrate the LEGO brick and minifigure.

The stamps depict a blue male LEGO minifigure (for 10.00 Danish kroner (DKK), about \$1.45 US dollars) and a green female LEGO minifigure (for 14.50 DKK or about \$2.10 USD), both surrounded by flying LEGO bricks with the caption "legetøj," meaning "play". They also have the EUROPA logo printed by the stamp denomination. The stamps are self-adhesive and are available in 10-stamp sheets, a first-day cancellation with LEGO brick postmark, and a Build Your Own theme sheet, which has 6 stamps and stickers to make minifigures and bricks to decorate envelopes.

These stamps are only available during 2015 and can be ordered by sheet at www.postdanmark.dk/netbutik. Prices are: Blue minifigure stamps—100 DKK (\$14.50 USD), Green minifigure stamps—145 DKK (\$21.00 USD), Minifigure theme sheet—70 DKK (\$10.15 USD), and First Day Cover—35.63 DKK (\$5.17 USD), plus shipping and handling. In the US, you can also go to www.wopa-stamps.com or contact Danish Post agent David Bein at (516) 931-3485 or e-mail at Nordicad@optonline.net. Get them while you can! 



Bricks for Everyone!



iPod Touch 4th Gen.



iPhone 4 & 4S



iPhone 5 & 5S



iPhone 6



iPad Mini & iPad Mini with Retina display

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COMIC BRICKS!

COMICBRICKS.COM

Creating LEGO Comic Covers!

Article by Daphne Lamb

Photography by Brandon Griffith
and Tommy Williamson

Hopefully Marvel and DC got the memo—LEGO is here to put a better spin on what we all know and love, and builders are leading the parade in awesome ways, most notably with ComicBricks, which had its successful premiere in the fall of 2014 at DesignerCon.

What is ComicBricks, you ask? Simply put, it's recreating beloved comic book covers—any comic book cover—and recreating it out of LEGO, in any style the artist chooses, all while being faithful to the original artwork, and put on exhibit to the general public. With the influx of well-known properties getting the LEGO treatment, ComicBricks is the next step in making exciting LEGO art. So where did the idea come from? Perhaps it's best to ask its founder and noted builder himself, Brandon Griffith. I sat down with him at his studio, which is bursting with loving homages to his favorite properties from *Star Trek* to Marvel to Kurasawa films, to get some insight.

"My girlfriend had older issues of *Wonder Woman* comics framed, hanging in her apartment," he said. "The more I saw these, the more I thought about how cool it could be to see these represented in LEGO. So, for Christmas, I built her the cover of *Wonder Woman* #266."

Best Christmas present ever for any fan of LEGO or *Wonder Woman*, but that was just the beginning to



Star Wars #1, as built by Tommy Williamson. TM & © Lucasfilm Ltd.

something that would be an even bigger gift to a wider audience. But what was the next step?

“As my own dormant interest in comic books had begun to resurface, I was making more and more trips to the local comic book store,” he said, “and began going through back issues looking for covers purely to build. I found an issue of *Adventure Comics* #445 (Aquaman) and began to build it. I soon realized that I had something unique. An idea that could evolve and, provided with the right framework, other builders could take it and run.”

Given the immensely talented community of builders that Brandon is not only part of, but helps to highlight their talent with STUDS collector cards, he sent out the call to as many builders around the Los Angeles area that were able to participate. Word got out among various builder circles and soon he had artists eagerly pitching in, building models for the show, building the foundation to what was one of the most talked-about highlights of DesignerCon. Participating builders included Tommy Williamson, Ryan Wood, Dan Rubin, Matt “MonsterBrick” Armstrong, Zach Clapsadle, Peter Abrahamson, Remi and Alyse Gagne, Paul Lee, Ayleen Gaspar, Andrew Lee, Jeff Cross, Peter Aoun, and Eric Tetangco. While it garnered the amount of creative excitement one would expect, Brandon felt it best to lay down some ground rules.



Wonder Woman #266, by Brandon Griffith. TM & © DC Comics.



Captain Marvel #5 Variant Cover, by Zach Clapsadle. TM & © Marvel.



Invincible #63, by Ryan Wood. TM & © Robert Kirkman and Cory Walker.

"I knew that this was something that hasn't really been done before and if it was going to take off, it needed structure," he said. "It needed some boundaries and guidelines so that it would challenge the builder to be more creative while still respecting the source material."

His reasoning was sound. "I enjoy building vignettes because there is a guideline of an 8x8 or 12x12 base," he said. "When multiple builders follow these guides, then bring their work together, a cohesiveness forms among the models simply for having similar base sizes."

He established three guidelines for the artists to follow. The first was that it could be of any comic book, but had to be a comic book cover. The exhibit is meant to invoke the feeling of nostalgia and it's important to preserve the same feeling and format as the source material.

Secondly, it's important to be respectful of the original art, but to also have fun with it. Brandon explained, "It's a LEGO parody of the cover but at the same time, demonstrating the beauty of that original artwork through LEGO."

The builder has the freedom to utilize whatever building styles and methods that he or she sees fit. Brandon's Wonder Woman model was a vignette, but that was his creative choice and he left it to the artists to explore what felt right to them, which is where lies the beauty and art of it. Builders were welcome to create via mosaics,

sculptures, CubeDude, etc. Some builders created some out-of-the-box techniques, such as Matt Armstrong, who went as far as having images of the “Comics Code”, the miniature character symbol, and the price printed on tiles which added an extra layer of detail to the model and really made his piece stand out. Other builders printed smaller versions of the comic book logo onto cardstock and affixed it unto the model. Andrew Lee built a multilayer scene with the comic book frame in the foreground, the main part of the model in the middle, and a detailed background. Tommy Williamson added a mix of Bricks of Character into his model while Ryan Wood expertly detailed an “invincible” cover in a 3-D mosaic style.

“When we finally brought all the MOCs to DesignerCon and set up the display, I was amazed at the variety of building style on display,” he said. “Each builder’s personal style could be seen in his or her own work.”

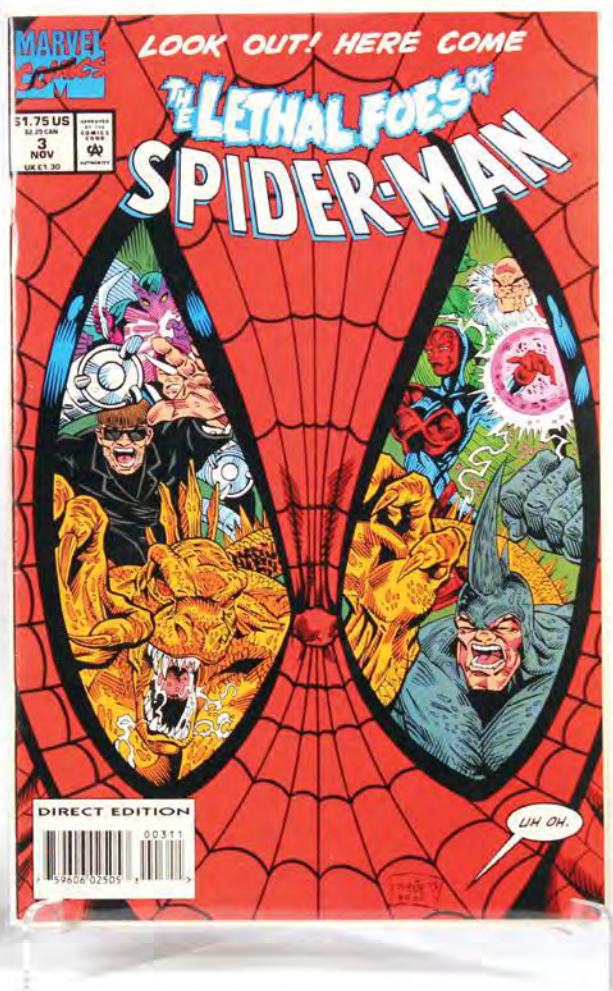
The last guideline is that the MOCs should not be bigger than the comic book cover.

“I am a fan of making huge mosaics of iconic images that I love,” Brandon said, referencing his pieces from *Watchmen* and *The Matrix*. “That is not what this is. The reason for this guideline is for display purposes. “



Ewoks #1, by Alyse Gagne. TM & © Lucasfilm, Ltd..

The Lethal Foes of Spider-Man #3, by Remi Gagne. TM & © Marvel.





Batman #9, by Matt Armstrong. TM & © DC Comics.

“A ComicBricks model should be displayed beside the comic book it represents,” he went on. “The model should complement the comic book, not overshadow it. When you see this combination together, your mind begin to race, wondering what all the possibilities are. You begin to remember comic books you read years ago and begin to form an idea of what they would look like built out of LEGO.”

While most of the pieces displayed were Marvel or DC, ComicBricks is in no way tied to the Super Heroes LEGO line.

“I believe that the Super Heroes line is slowly becoming what *Star Wars* was in the early 2000s,” he said. “There definitely are LEGO sets that act as gateway sets leading teens and adults into the AFOL world. My generation of



Hulk #59, by Matt Armstrong. TM & © Marvel.

builders typically claims the advent of *Star Wars* sets as their main gateway. Lately, I see a lot of fresh faces coming up through the Super Heroes line. And why not? “

He poses a great question. LEGO has access to almost every beloved property, which means comic books for all of those licenses. But the Super Heroes line is the one set of licenses that does not derive all of its material from its parent TV or film license. A good amount of the Super Heroes line sets that LEGO produces is pulled from the comic book source material itself. This also adds an extra layer of intrigue to ComicBricks. People who are only familiar with certain comic book characters because they saw them in the movie could gain a new insight into that character’s world by simply seeing it on a comic book cover. Of course, for the more than average fan of comics, the experience is heightened because of the nostalgic relationship.

“There are amazing sets based off of amazing properties just like *Star Wars* was for us older builders,” he said.



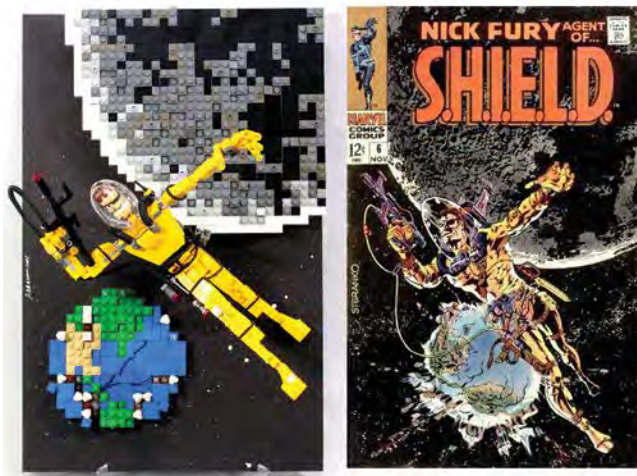
Akira #31, by Andrew Lee. TM & © Katsuhiro Otomo.



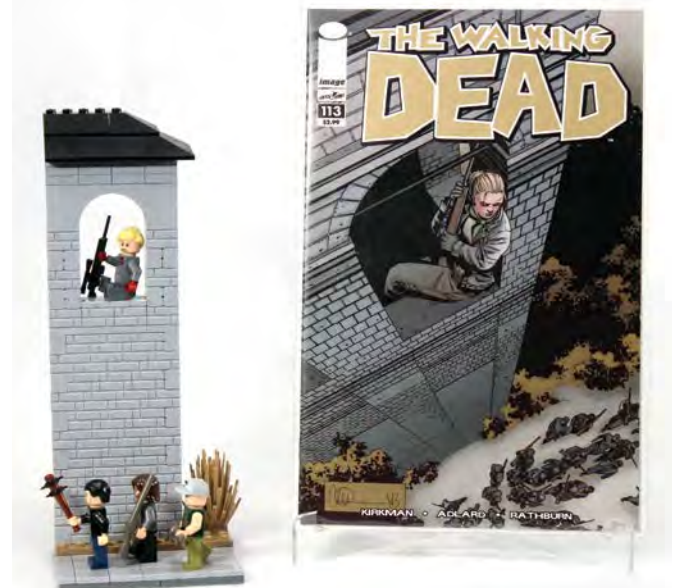
Ghost Rider #1, by Eric Tetangco. TM & © Marvel.



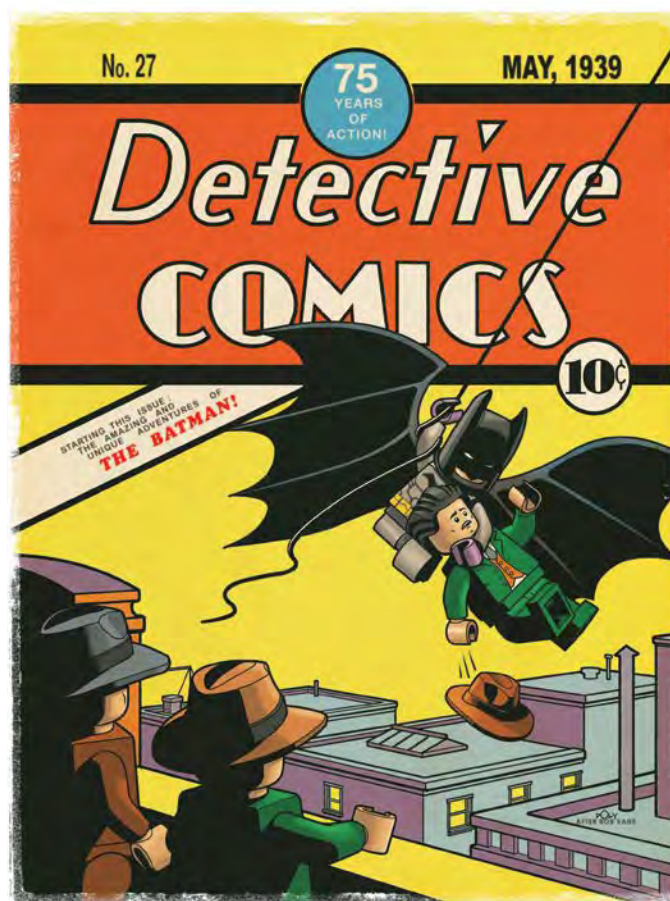
Adventure Comics #445, by Brandon Griffith. TM & © DC Comics.



Nick Fury #6, by Peter Abramson. TM & © Marvel.



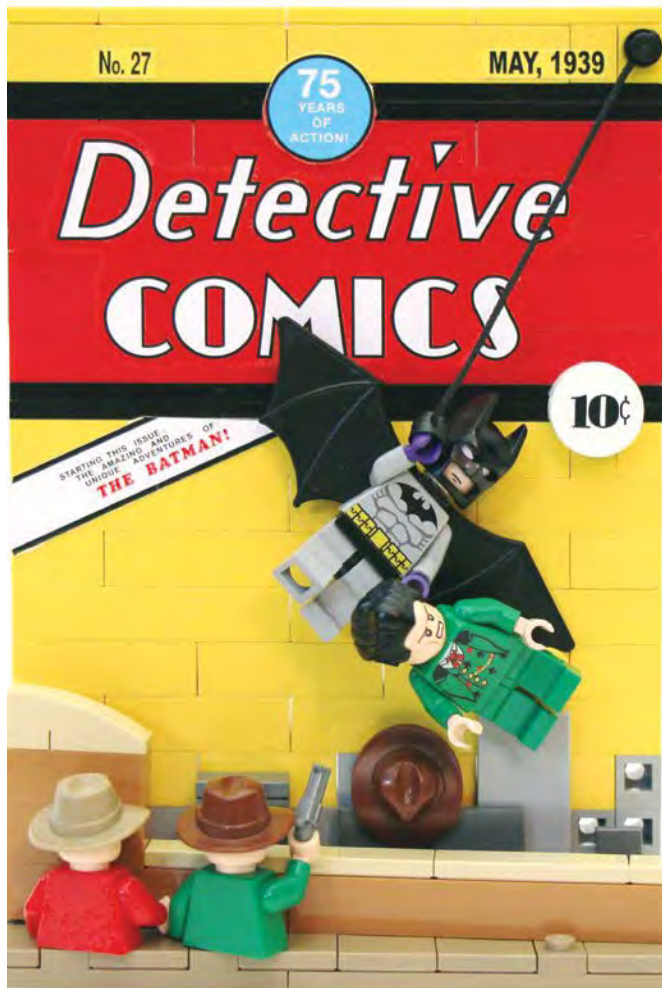
The Walking Dead #113, by Brandon Griffith. TM & © Robert Kirkman.



Top Left: Cover to Detective Comics #27. TM & © DC Comics.

Above: Paul Lee's illustration of Detective #27.

Bottom Left: Paul Lee's ComicBricks version of Detective #27.




The response was overwhelmingly positive, as it became one of the most talked about booths at DesignerCon. It received coverage from a number of sources including i09, Nerdist, and actor Wil Wheaton himself, all expressing enthusiasm for the project, using phrases such as “frameworthy” and “...beyond cool...” Tommy Williamson had this to say: “It’s always a little surprising what resonates with the public. We all knew Brandon was on to something, but we had no idea people would go so nuts for it.”

So what’s next for ComicBricks? Surely with such a successful launch and an impressive mark on pop culture for fans of LEGO and comics, this can’t be the end.

As it turns out, if Brandon gets his way, this is just the beginning.

“I just want to see this theme take off,” he said. “It would be great to have this as an added category at conventions.”

As it turns out, a small *Star Wars* Edition of ComicBricks was on display at *Star Wars* Days at LEGOLand, CA in March 2015. The next larger showing will be at BricksLA in Pasadena, CA, Los Angeles’ first LEGO fan convention. For more creations, check out ComicBricks.com 



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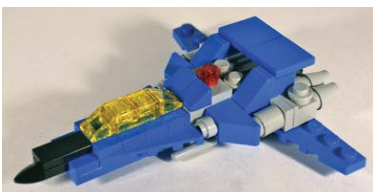
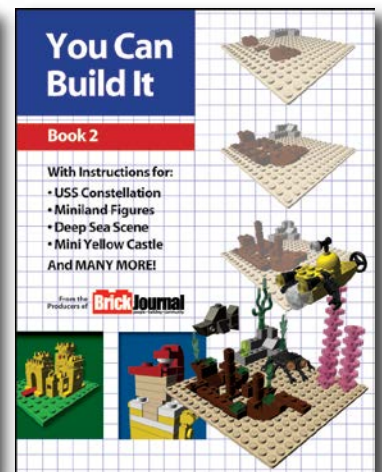
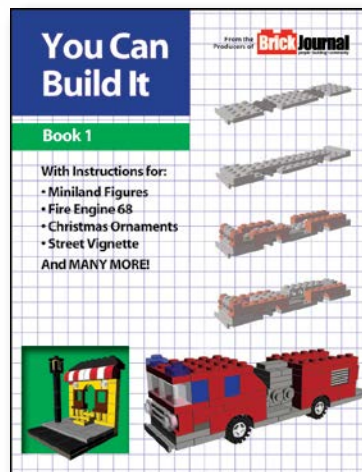
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The cover to Justice League of America #36.

Action Comics #36.

Bricking Comics: DC Comics' LEGO Covers


Article by Joshua Kranenburg
Art provided by DC Comics

All characters TM & © DC Comics.



Last November, Traveler's Tales released *Lego Batman 3: Beyond Gotham* on all major consoles, which I reviewed in the previous issue of *BrickJournal*. To promote the game release, DC Comics designed 22 limited edition LEGO variant covers to their comics. For these covers DC Comics digitally rendered DC characters based on the character models in *LB3*. The covers were rendered by in-house artists, instead of the regular cover artists. The covers are priced the same as regular issues ranging from \$2.99 to \$3.99 but these variant covers are impossible to find in comic book shops since they were released in November of 2014. Now the only place to purchase these variant issues is on eBay or other online stores, usually priced at double what the issue would have cost in a local comic book shop. The whole set of 22 now goes for about \$70 on eBay.

The twenty-two books that received the LEGO treatment include very popular books such as *Batman*, *Superman*, *Wonder Woman* and less popular books such as *Justice League Dark*, *Teen Titans*, *Grayson* and sixteen other books. Each cover features the main hero or heroes from that book, with each hero in a dynamic/dramatic pose that, when it comes to LEGO minifigures, would be impossible. Not only do all these variant covers feature LEGO DC super-heroes, but the backgrounds are based off each book's #0 issue. The Zero issues had the same style where the heroes seemed to be crashing through the cover. However two out of the twenty-two covers do not feature the hero, but instead feature the villain of that book. For instance, instead of having Batman on the variant cover, *Batman #36* has the Joker smiling a huge creepy smile holding his "calling card", a Joker playing card. As a huge Batman fan, this cover is by far my personal favorite, and is even my iPhone lock screen. The other cover that features a villain is *Superman #36*, having Brainiac on the cover posing with his hand to his head, as if he is about to use his mind control powers. Honestly, I like this cover a lot less since Brainiac isn't actually in this issue. For those Batman and Superman fans, don't worry—*Detective Comics* and *Action Comics #36* feature their respective heroes on the cover. Some of the best looking ones include *Justice League #36*, *Aquaman #36*, *Wonder Woman #36*, *The Flash #36*, *Supergirl #36* and *Harley Quinn #12*. Even though I personally have a favorite cover, each

one is great in its own way. The only cover I dislike is the *Catwoman* #36 cover. I feel like DC could have done a better job with this one. Overall these covers are amazing and well-done, and with all 22 covers, there is bound to be at least one for almost any DC Comics fan. 



Aquaman #36.



Batgirl #36.



Batman #36.



Batman and Robin #36.



Batman/Superman #36.



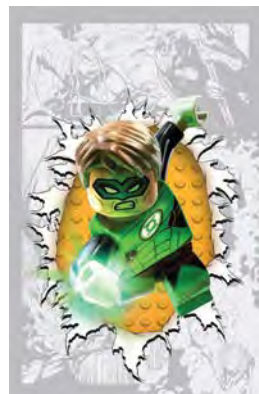
Catwoman #36.



Detective #36.



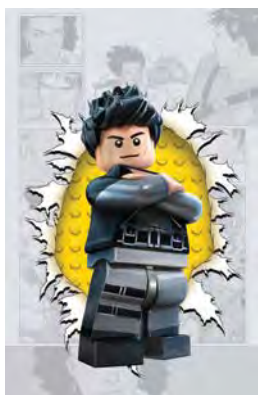
Flash #36.



Green Lantern #36.



Green Lantern Corps #36.



Grayson #36.



Harley Quinn #36.



Justice League Dark #36.



Justice League United #36.



Sinestro #36.



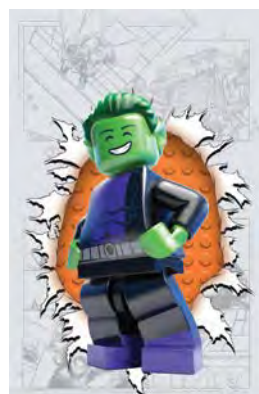
Supergirl #36.



Superman #36.



Superman/Wonder Woman #36.



Teen Titans #36.



Wonder Woman #36.

News

“Everything is Awesome” at the Academy Awards!

Article by Joe Meno

LEGO instruments with their builders (left to right): Stephen Gerling, Paul Chrzan, and Michael Provenzano. Photo by Peter Donner.

2015 was the year that *The LEGO Movie* got an Academy Award nomination for Best Original Song for Tegan and Sara’s *Everything is Awesome*. To showcase the song, the producers of the Academy Awards ceremony contacted the LEGO Group. The reason? To get some LEGO models for the song performance!

Mike McNally, Senior Director of Brand Relations at LEGO Systems in Enfield, Connecticut (the American LEGO office) explained what happened:

“We were contacted by the producers about three weeks before the event, to see about making some props for the production. They wanted something as playful as possible, so some initial ideas were presented. However, with the short length of lead time, and LEGO’s Model Shop in Enfield already working on models for New York Toy Fair, there weren’t enough resources to build anything large-scale for the performance. As a result, the Model Shop built three instruments: a saxophone, clarinet and keytar.”

At the Model Shop, Paul Chrzan directed the instrument building, which were constructed by Stephen Gerling, Paul, and Michael Provenzano. All of these were then sent to California, where they were used by performers on the set piece that composer Mark Mothersbaugh was playing on. Mark also wore a LEGO-built hat that was a homage to his days as a member of the music group Devo. The hat, Batman logo worn by Will Arnett (as Batman), and keyboard stand, also LEGO-built, were not built by the Model Shop.




LEGO Oscars?

During the song performance, some of the attendees of the Oscars received a special gift—a LEGO Oscar model!

Built by LEGO Certified Professional Nathan Sawaya, these statuettes were built under the same timeline as the Model Shop models. In fact, the Oscars were offered to Nathan by the team behind *The LEGO Movie*, as he had done Oscars previously. Phil Lord, one of the directors of *The LEGO Movie*, used one on a tweet he posted in reply to the movie not being nominated for Best Animated Feature.

Nathan only had a few days to design and build the statues, but his newer Oscars have a little more detail than the previous version. A total of twenty were made and were used in the “Everything Is Awesome” performance. Of the total, twelve were claimed by actors and actresses, including Oscar host Neil Patrick Harris, Oprah Winfrey, Emma Stone, Steve Carell, Meryl Streep, Clint Eastwood, Bradley Cooper, Channing Tatum, Lady Gaga, Kerry Washington, Felicity Jones, and Beyonce.

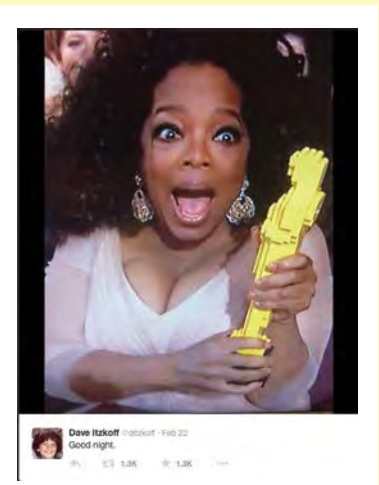
Demand for Oscar instructions became so high, Nathan made a model and submitted it to LEGO Ideas. So if you want an official LEGO set to be made of the award, you can support it at <https://ideas.lego.com/projects/96037>! 



Phil Lord's tweet, which quickly went viral.



*Nathan Sawaya at work building awards.
Oscar statue © AMPAS.*



Other tweets showing some of the LEGO Oscar recipients.





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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!

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

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

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LEGO SUPERHEROES! Behind-the-scenes of the DC and Marvel Comics sets, plus a feature on **GREG HYLAND**, the artist of the superhero comic books in each box! Also, other superhero work by **ALEX SCHRANZ** and our cover artist **OLIVIER CURTO**. Plus, **JARED K. BURKS'** regular column on minifigure customization, building tips, step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions, and more!

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LEGO CAR BUILDING! Guest editors **LINO MARTINS** and **NATHAN PROUDLOVE** of **LUGNuts** share secrets behind their LEGO car creations, and present **TECHNIC SUPERCAR MODELS** by **PAUL BORATKO III** and other top builders! Plus custom instructions by **TIM GOULD** and **CHRISTOPHER DECK**, minifigure customization by **JARED BURKS**, step-by-step "You Can Build It" section, and more!

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LEGO PLANE BUILDING! Top builder **RALPH SAVELBERG** takes off with his custom LEGO fighter models, there's a squadron of articles on Sky-Fi planes by **FRADEL GONZALES** and **COLE MARTIN**, find instructions to build a Sky-Fi plane, plus our regular feature on minifigure customization by **JARED BURKS**, AFOLs by **GREG HYLAND**, other step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions, and more!

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STAR WARS issue, with custom creations from a long time ago and far, far away! **JACOB CARPENTER'S** Imperial Star Destroyer, **MARK KELSO'S** Invisible Hand, interview with **SIMON MACDONALD** about building Star Wars costume props with LEGO elements, history of the LEGO X-Wing, plus our regular features on minifigure customization by **JARED BURKS**, "You Can Build It" instructions, and more!

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LEGO TRAINS! Builder **CALE LEIPHART** shows how to get started building trains and train layouts, with instructions on building microscale trains by editor **JOE MENO**, building layouts with the members of the Pennsylvania LEGO Users Group (PennLUG), fan-built LEGO monorails minifigure customization by **JARED BURKS**, microscale building by **CHRISTOPHER DECK**, "You Can Build It", and more!

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CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL with builders **SEAN** and **STEPHANIE MAYO** (known online as Siercon and Coral), other custom animal models from BrickJournal editor **JOE MENO**, **LEGO DINOSAURS** with **WILL PUGH**, plus more minifigure customization by **JARED BURKS**, AFOLs by cartoonist **GREG HYLAND**, step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions by **CHRISTOPHER DECK**, and more!

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TECHNIC hot rod builder PAUL BORATKO and editor **JOE MENO** diagram instructions on adding functions to your models, shop-talk with **LEGO TECHNIC** designers, and more surprises to keep your creations moving at top speed! Plus Minifigure Customization by **JARED BURKS**, step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions by **CHRISTOPHER DECK**, BrickNerd DIY Fan Art by **TOMMY WILLIAMSON**, and more!

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LEGO ARCHITECTURE with **JONATHAN LOPES**, a microscale model of Copenhagen by **ULRIK HANSEN**, and a look at the **LEGO MUSEUM** being constructed in Denmark! Plus Minifigure Customization by **JARED BURKS**, step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions by **CHRISTOPHER DECK**, BrickNerd DIY Fan Art by **TOMMY WILLIAMSON**, **MINDSTORMS** building with **DAMIEN KEE**, and more!

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BRICKJOURNAL #31

Building LEGO bricks **WITH** character, with **IAIN HEATH** and **TOMMY WILLIAMSON**, Manga-inspired creations of **MIKE DUNG**, sculptures by Taiwanese Brick Artist **YO YO CHEN**, Minifigure Customization by **JARED BURKS**, step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions by **CHRISTOPHER DECK**, BrickNerd DIY Fan Art by **TOMMY WILLIAMSON**, **MINDSTORMS** building, and more!

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BRICKJOURNAL #32

LEGO ARTISTRY with builder/photographer **CHRIS McVEIGH**, mosaic builders **BRIAN KORTE**, **DAVE WARE** and **DAVE SHADDIX**; and sculptors **SEAN KENNEY** (about his nature models) and **ED DIMENT** (about a full-size bus stop built with LEGO bricks)! Plus Minifigure Customization by **JARED K. BURKS**, step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions by **CHRISTOPHER DECK**, **MINDSTORMS** building, and more!

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BRICKJOURNAL #33

LEGO ROBOTS! A talk with **MINDSTORMS EV3** builders **MARC-ANDRE BAZARGUI** and **ANDY MILLUZZI**, designer **LEE MAGPILI**, **CHRIS GIDDENS** with his amazing robot sculptures, plus Minifigure Customization by **JARED BURKS**, step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions by **CHRISTOPHER DECK**, BrickNerd DIY Fan Art by **TOMMY WILLIAMSON**, other looks at **MINDSTORMS** building, and more!

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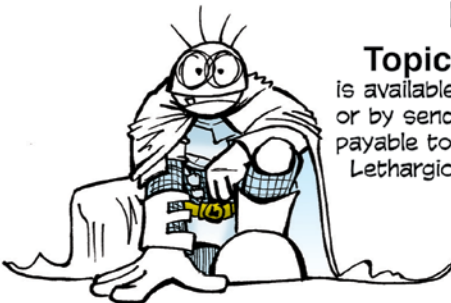
Hey Kids! Comics!

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.

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Lethargic Lad: Topics of Unclear Importance is available exclusively at www.lethargiclad.com or by sending check or money order made payable to "Greg Hyland" to:
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Last Word

Well, this was a fun issue! Got to do some writing, some photographing and some building...what more could there be?

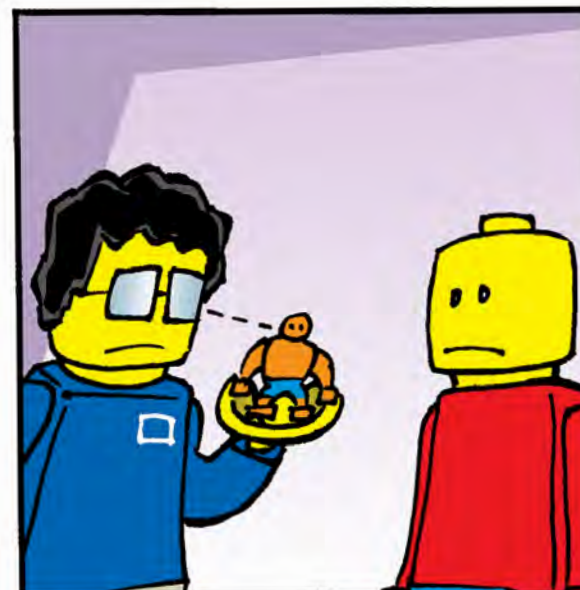
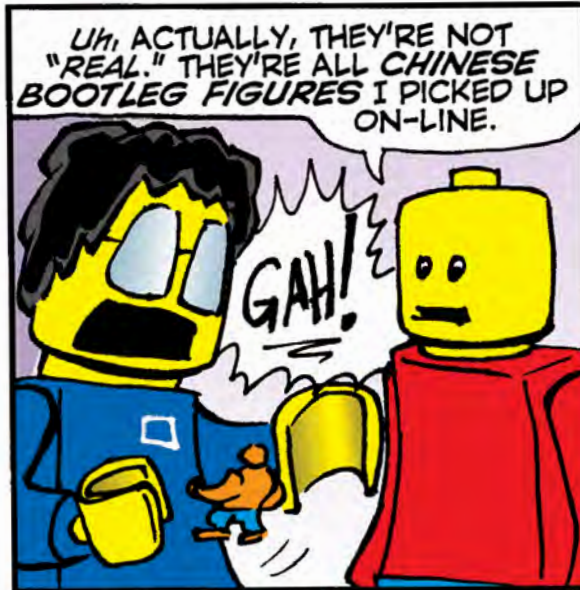
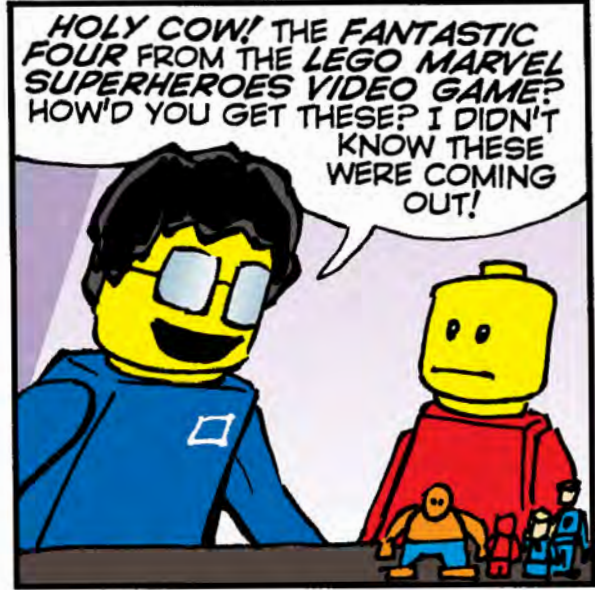
There's a lot more, as you'll see in the next issue, where we go into historical builds in LEGO, with Ryan McNaught and some other builders of the past!

See you then! 

Who is this guy? And why is he in our booth?

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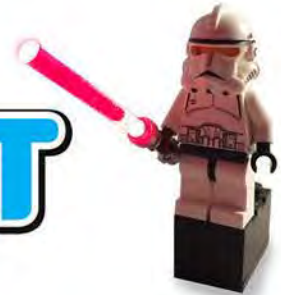
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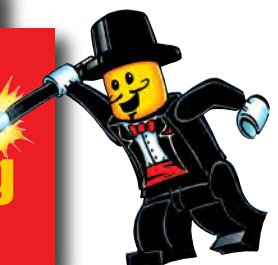


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