

AK



LESTER PLASKITT



AK. When did you start modelling?.

As with most prolific modelers my modeling began at an early age, inspired by stories from my Grandad about his service in World War II. I began to assemble Airfix aircraft kits at the age of 7, the first one built by me being a 1/72 Kingfisher aircraft on which I used so much glue that the wings melted. At this time there was no quest for accuracy or authentic paint finishes, the main aim of the model was to have it built as quickly as possible to be able to play with the model that afternoon. Once bitten by this modeling bug, there was no turning back. Next came my efforts to paint the models in the correct colors and camouflage patterns with various levels of success. Perhaps the biggest turning point was joining a model club which opened my eyes to a much bigger world of modeling, from which I have never looked back.

AK. What is your favourite subject?

Although my modeling started with aircraft models, the subject I found that inspired me most and has held my interest to this day is AFV modeling. I think the lasting attraction to this area of modeling lies in the opportunities to reproduce realistic and authentically weathered finishes. This aspect of the hobby gives me a great degree of satisfaction, as well as headaches trying to reason how I can produce an effect in miniature. As to a favorite

subject, I always enjoyed painting and weathering late war German vehicles, having a soft spot for Panthers and King Tigers - but recently I have been attracted to more modern vehicles. Perhaps my favorite subject is adding small personal touches to my models in the form of accessories and crew figures, which I think can go a long way to enhancing a model and help tell the story of the time and place the model is set in, which in turn helps to bring the model to life.

AK. When it comes to painting and weathering, which paints do you prefer: acrylics, oils or enamels?

When I began modeling my weapon of choice was enamels, probably because there were no other alternatives. Due to the greater availability of acrylic paints five years ago, I switched over to acrylic paint for all of my painting. Enamels now

are relegated to the weathering stages and are an excellent medium for these stages

with their flexibility and blending properties. I only tend to use oil paints during the pin wash and panel fading stages but as with most modelers today I, am happy to use a combination of mediums which, when used together, can give me a range of different effects and add to my modeling arsenal.

AK. What is your favourite technique?

There are lots of techniques which I enjoy in the process of producing a finished model but I think the two I most enjoy are applying the various pin washes and realistic paint scratches and chipping.

The pin wash I think really starts to add life to a model which at the point before the pin wash can look a little bland and lifeless. The fun part of pin washes is they start to define the look and character of the model by making the detail start to "pop out", by highlighting detail and specific areas of interest on the model in a relatively short time.

Paint chipping and scratches can be great fun and as with the pin washes go a long way to define the direction the model will take and how far the further weathering effects will go. Also this allows me to add some little personal touches of my own in the form of micro chipping. To apply the chips and scratches I prefer to use small pieces of dense sponge

which means I can control where and to what degree these effects are used. This technique has to be approached in a logical way, paying attention to areas of the model that would see the most amount of wear in real life and using, if possible, photographic reference which all adds to the fun of this technique.

AK. When finishing a model does it have to be ultra realistic or can you appreciate some artistic freedom?

In recent years I have always tried to follow reference pictures to try and archive as much realism in my models as possible. This is not to say I don't enjoy artistic freedom in my models but I always try to balance any artistic freedom to try and keep any of these effects both lifelike and logical. But again little touches of this freedom can make a model much more interesting and allow the modeler to add sense of their own personality to a model, which in turn can make the modeling experience a lot more fun which is what this great hobby should be all about.



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