



ALEX CLARK



AK. Hello, Alex! Among the modelers you are known for super-detailed and professionally finished 1/72 AFV models. How did you choose the Braille AFVs instead of more common 1/35th scale?

I used to build both scales, in fact also other subjects such as aircraft, helicopters and more. The switch was gradual, perhaps partly due to cost as I started quite young. As I started to convert and cross-kit parts, the cost became more of a factor. But probably even more than that, I like the intricate, almost jewel-like quality of something that can fit in the palm of my hand.

AK. It seems that you mostly focus on post-war Soviet armor. Why do you prefer T-72 & T-80s over other subjects?

Yes, these have long been passions of mine since the mid-1980s. As a boy growing up during the later part of the Cold War I found them a little mysterious and fascinating. There were few good references and a lot of secrecy, especially around the T-64 and T-80. I have built other subjects too as for many years there was very few good kits of these. My other interests are German WW2 and modern Israeli. I'll probably return to these at some point.

AK. What is more important for you: scratch-building small details or painting and weathering?

That's a tough one! Both are important and I enjoy them too but I tend to switch back and forward over which I like best. I usually feel a bit nervous painting when I've spent months on a complex piece of detailing or scratch-building. A few days can then make or break the project. But a good paint job really brings a model to life so when it goes well, I get a real buzz from that.

AK. Which specific tools and techniques do you use for building and finishing your 1/72 models to look as 1/35? What is your know-how, tools and paints of choice?

For tools I prefer a just a small set and spending time getting proficient in their use, rather than having a very large range. A scalpel and homemade sanding sticks are probably what

I use 90% of the time. I like the finesse and delicateness of a scalpel. I use a lot of white styrene for scratch-building and I work on a small piece of black plastic. This gives very good contrast which is really needed when working with very small parts. For painting I used to use Humbrol enamels for both the main colours and weathering. This was down to what was available at the time, but several years back I switched to Tamiya acrylics which are also readily available here in the UK. I still use Humbrol for weathering but have also collected quite a few specialized weathering products over the years from different companies.

AK. In recent years more high quality 1/72 models appear on the market and the topic becomes more popular among modelers. What do you think about that?

Yes I think that's true. Many years back we had Esci and Hasegawa in 1/72 and the likes of Matchbox and Airfix in 1/76. There were some nice kits but many were quite basic and lacking in detail. Revell and Dragon then started releasing some very nice kits in the 1990s and by the end of that decade there was talk of a



► Golden Age of small scale armour modelling. I think that's continued and we have more manufacturers and some superb models. Often, we see turned barrels and photo-etch in kits too. Some of the best kits are from Flyhawk. Their Luchs and M1A2 Abrams rival some of the best 35th kits for accuracy and crispness of detail. The engineering is outstanding too and they assemble very well.

AK. What can you advice to modelers that switch to 1/72 tanks after 1/72 planes or 1/35 armor?

There is so much choice out there now that I'd suggest picking a subject you like and then doing a bit of online research on the best options as many subjects can be found duplicated across different manufacturers. Only the more obscure subjects are now unavailable in

plastic kit form, and even then, many can be found in resin. Modelcollect have released a large number of kits over the last few years, starting with post-war Soviet and Russian subject, then moving to Panzer 46 and now sci-fi Panzer kit. They go together well and some of the kits can be bought with additional etched and turned metal parts for those who like an additional level of detail (and challenge!) ■

