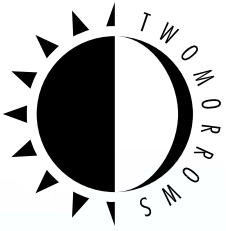


The Magazine for LEGO® Enthusiasts of All Ages!



**\$8.95**  
in the US

# Brick Journal

Issue 21 • October 2012

people • building • community

## The **LUGNUTS** Issue

*How Lino Martins and Nathan Proudlove took on the LEGO® Automotive World!*



**Features  
Instructions  
and MORE!**



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## People

# Brick Kids: The Sculptures of Sandy San Miguel

Article by Joe Meno

Sculpture Photography provided  
by Brian Powell Photography  
([brianpowell.info](http://brianpowell.info))

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

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

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

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



# Lord of the Rings

Article by Geoff Gray



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

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

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

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



## Overall Design:

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

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

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

## Details:

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

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

## The Bottom Line:

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



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





# Laughter of LEGO

Article by Tyler Clites

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

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

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

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

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

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

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





*Chicken Walker.*


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



*Chicken McNugget.*

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

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

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



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



*Ralph's Beetle collection.*

# Ralph Savelsberg: Mad Physicist & LUGNut!

*Article by Lino Martins*

*Photography provided by Ralph Savelsberg*

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

Let's find out.

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

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

**LM:** How long have you been a car builder?

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

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

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

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

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





*Ralph's full car collection.*



*1958 Edsel Bermuda station wagon, with family.*



*Jaguar Mark VII, with newlyweds.*

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

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

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

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

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

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





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

# Peter Blackert: LUGNut in Overdrive!

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided by Peter Blackert

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

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

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





Lancia Beta Montecarlo Turbo.

# Dylan Denton: LUGNut!

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided by Dylan Denton

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Dennis Glaasker: LEGO Trucker

Article by Lino Martins  
Photography provided  
by Dennis Glaasker

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



Dennis Glaasker.

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

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

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

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

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

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



## Peterbilt 379 'Eldorado' Dumper



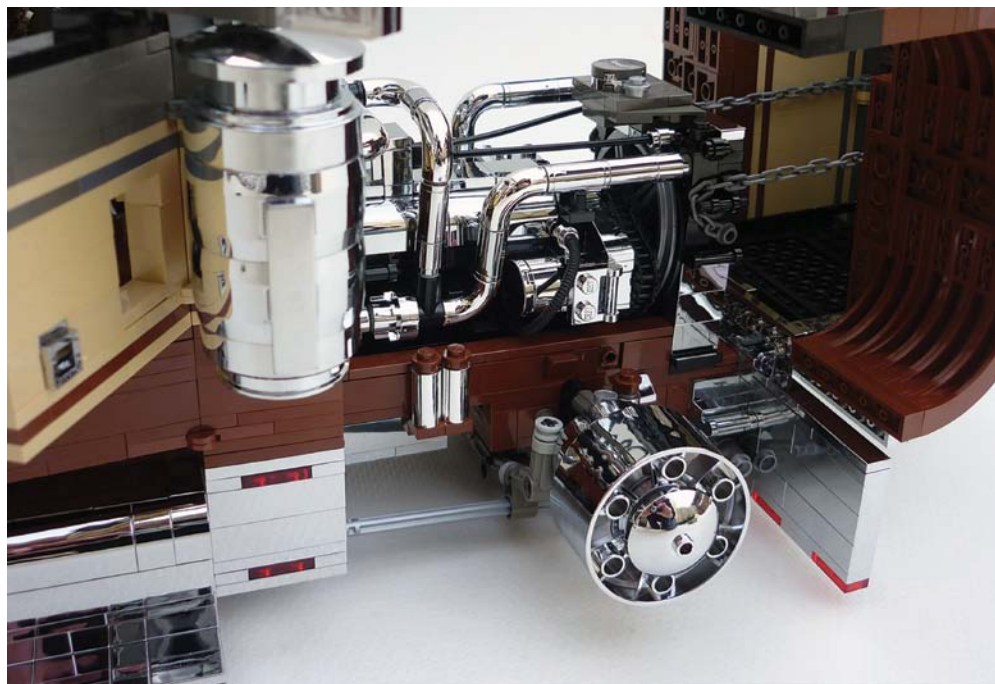
DG: This is one of my favorites. A while ago I bought a book about custom trucks in the USA. Normally I tend to build tractors only, but in this book was a feature on a very nice dump truck, and it caught my attention. I start a MOC by browsing the web for exact dimensions and reference pictures. These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

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

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

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

*The dumper above and the engine below.*





# Raphael Granas: Picture Perfect LUGNut

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided by  
Raphael Granas

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



*Jokermobile, built for a LUGNuts Challenge.*

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

**Raphael Granas:** I'm fourteen.

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

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

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

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





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

## Tim Inman: LUGNut and Greaser

Article by Lino Martins

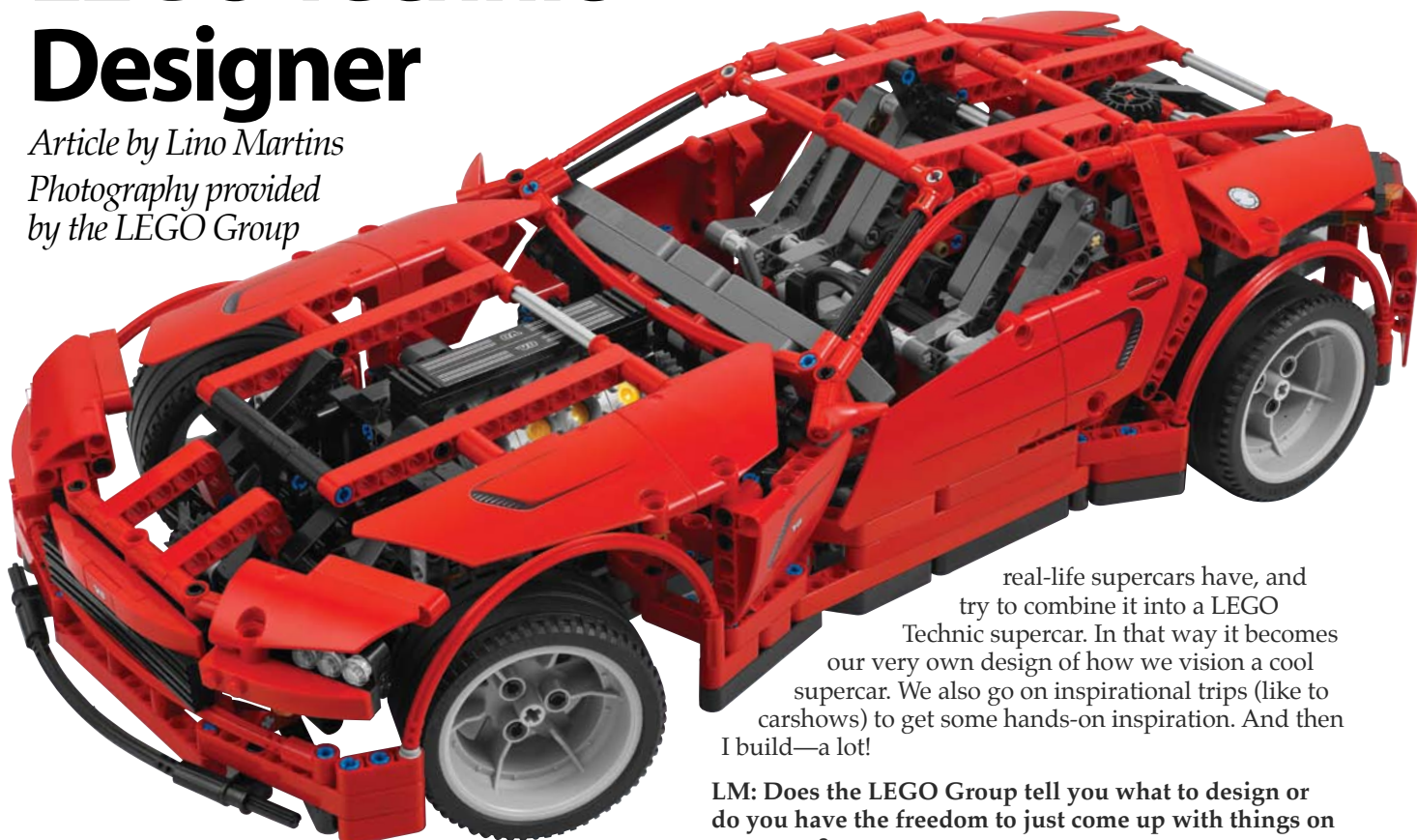
Photography provided by Tim Inman

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

# Uwe Wabra: LEGO Technic Designer

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided  
by the LEGO Group



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

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

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

**LM:** What is your degree in?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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





1940 Ford Truck.

# Nathan Proudlove: The Other LUGNut Leader

Article by Lino Martins

Photography provided by Nathan Proudlove

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



Nathan Proudlove.

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



*The Scooby gang and the Mystery Machine.*

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

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

**LM:** How did you become a car guy?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

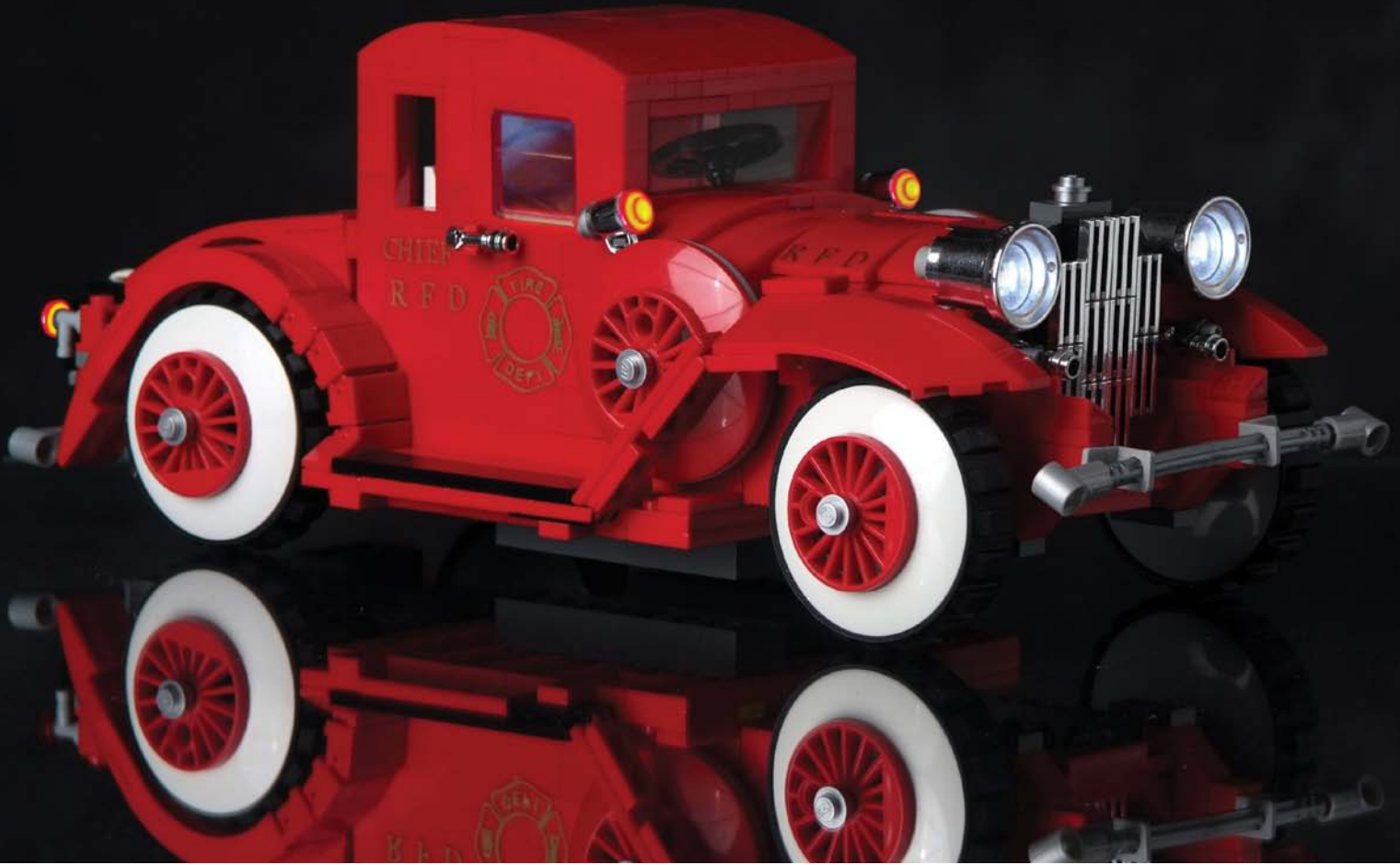
**NP:** I think the top favorite of mine would be the 1940 Ford truck that I entered in the "Kickin' It Oldschool" challenge. I am quite proud of being able to render the curves of that classic vehicle so faithfully in the brick. And the favorite of crowds everywhere at shows has to be the Mystery Machine.

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



# Riverside Fire Chief

by O&A Steamworks



## Giving LifeLites to Your MOCs!

*Article and Photography by Guy Hember*

### Project Introduction

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

## LifeLites Intro

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

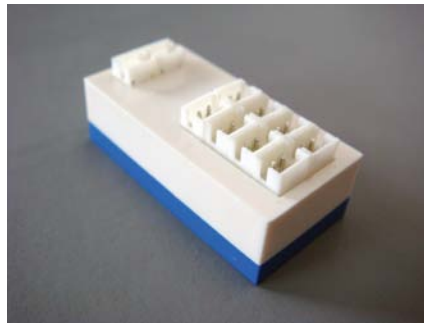


Figure 1. The LifeLites connection block.



Figure 2. Lifelites installed inside headlight bricks.



Figure 3. Lifelites on!

## Getting Started

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

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

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



Figure 4. A simple lighting diagram.



Figure 5. Fitting a LifeLite in a headlight brick.



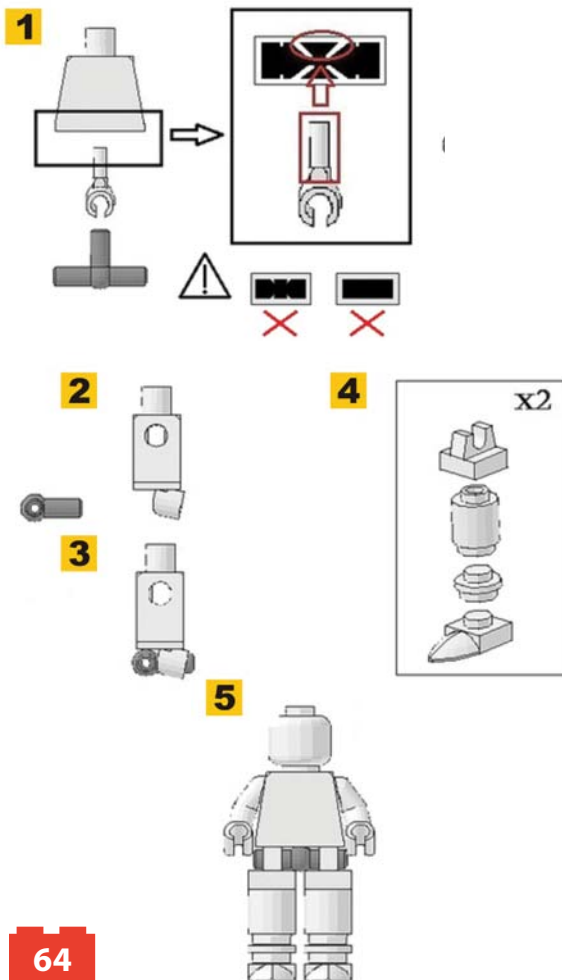
## Building

# Minifigure Customization 101: Articulated Purist Minifigures

by Jared K. Burks

### Basic Figure Instructions

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



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

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

### Basic Figure Articulation

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



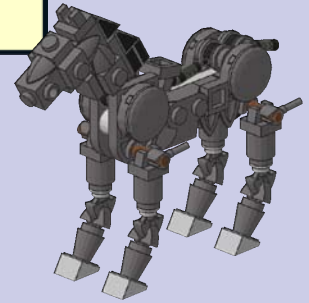
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1 1x    2 1x

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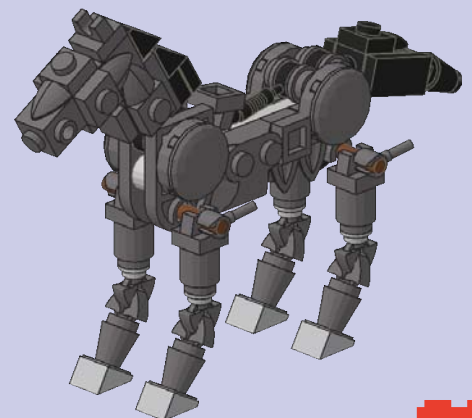
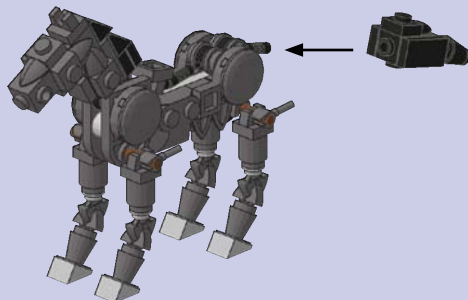


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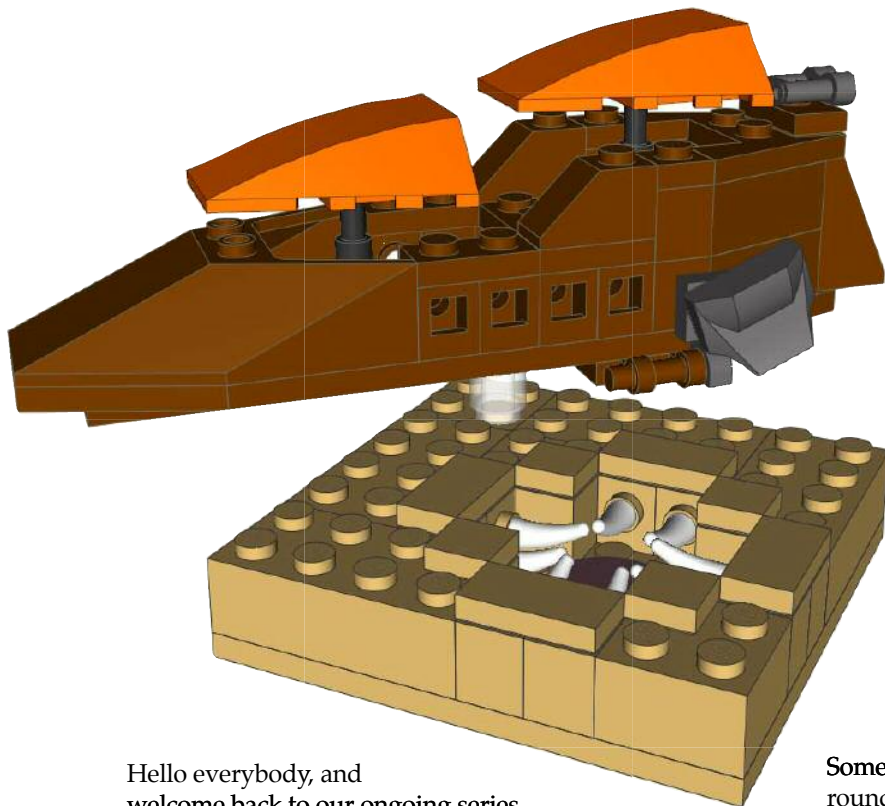
1 1x    2 1x    3 1x 1x

4 1x 1x

5 2x







# You Can Build It


MINI Model

## MINI Sailbarge & Pit of Carkoon

Design and Instructions  
by Christopher Deck

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

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

Yours, Christopher Deck 

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

#### Pit of Carkoon

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

#### Sailbarge

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

Qty.	Color	Part	Description
2	Orange		
1	Brown		
2	Brown		
2	Brown		
1	Brown		
4	Brown		
1	Brown		
2	Brown		
1	Brown		
2	Dark Bluish-Gray		
2	Brown		
2	Orange		
1	Brown		
3	Brown	4859.dat	Wing 3 x 4 with 1 x 2 Cutout without Stud Notches

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