

Kevin Townsend



The Empress And The Unicorn

Figure Modeling Vol 40



THE EMPRESS AND THE UNICORN

This piece was done just to do something “pretty”. No weapons, fighting, splattered gore, or desolation. At the Long Island Show in 2024, Greg DiFrance gave me a bare horse kit sculpted by Bill Merklein—an amazing sculptor, and a master at creating horses. I immediately decided to turn it into a unicorn. Why? I was very pleased with the unicorn I made for my “Lifebringer” vignette featured in Volume 35... but I was never quite satisfied with the final piece. Everyone else was—it was popular at Long Island, and it earned a gold medal. But something about it... maybe the “live” part of the trees weren’t full enough. Maybe I’ll address that before I show it again. At any rate, I decided to do another unicorn.

The horse seemed a bit on the small side... maybe closer to 1/35th than 54mm. As luck would have it I have had, for many years, in my spares box, a plastic woman figure in that scale. I do not know the maker or source. My initial thought was simply a minor conversion to put her in some sort of medieval-style fantasy dress, and pose her in a floral setting with a blossoming tree. I happened to have a great basis for a good tree in an old Andrea Miniatures piece from their “Robin Hood” figure I had built over 20 years ago and had already broken down for parts.

Anyway, that’s where I started. For the unicorn and tree, the plan stayed consistent throughout. But the woman? The conversion ended up being so extensive I would have been served just as well to have made her from scratch and saved the plastic piece for some future product.

In this volume, we’ll look in-depth at the conversion of the horse into a unicorn, the major conversion of the woman into a fantasy-style geisha, and the creation of the tree and surrounding garden. We’ll also look in some detail at the unique aspects of this piece’s painting.

All in all, this was an extremely enjoyable project, and is, perhaps, the prettiest miniature creation I have ever perpetrated.

In many past volumes of this series that deal with sculpting (notably 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 26, &34) we have covered my conversion and sculpting methods in depth. Generally, we can break my process down into four steps.

We can call Step 1 "Planning". Here, we research our subject, decide what we are going to do, do our basic composition, work out needed poses and expression, and so on. This likely includes sketches and possibly even mock-ups. Step 2 is "Building our Armature/Mannequin" Here, we compose and pose our figure, making sure pose, proportion, and anatomy are correct, natural appearing, and appropriate for what we are trying to achieve. We can either convert/repose and existing figure or create one from scratch, posing it as needed. Thirdly, we "Flesh it Out", locking in the pose by creating the naked form and sculpting all the basic forms. Finally, we detail our figure with appropriate clothing and equipment.

But, perhaps, I haven't been entirely honest... or at least complete. There is a fifth step. One that we haven't discussed directly, even though we've alluded to it or hinted at it. It is a step that begins with the original idea and continues until we put the finished piece in our display cabinet. It is a step in which we do absolutely nothing with the figure, but a step that is vital nonetheless. A step that often takes up half or more of the time I spend on each piece I create. That step is... "nothing"

Well, maybe not absolutely nothing, but nothing actively with the figure. The step is passive. We can call it "reflective", or "contemplative", "strategizing" or just "observation". Most fine art teachers will tell you only 40-60% of your time is spend actually "doing". The rest is just considering. The four steps mentioned above are "active". We are actively doing something each step. In our fifth step, we are just thinking. We consider what's working and what's not. Just looking, and keeping our mitts off, allows us improvise, adapt, and plan any course corrections we need to make. It also gives us time to just study our work—look at in the mirror, in different rooms, under different light—to find any flaws and figure out how best to correct them. Maybe we get a new idea. We can pause to figure out if and how to pursue it. Are we stuck at a certain point? Leaving it set for a day or two to let the thoughts percolate may be just the ticket. Taking this route is nearly always better than charging ahead and maybe doing something we will come to regret. For me, it often takes the form of working out how I want to include or approach a small detail. I nearly always spend a great deal of time thinking about color and how I want to use and incorporate it. Not only color, but also light is something I think a great deal about—direction of light, intensity of light and shadow, colors of light, and so on.

This piece is an example. A lot of thought was put into colors and patterns. A lot of consideration also went into the conversion of the woman. What originally was going to be just a conversion to alter the blouse and short skirt into a one-piece ground-length dress turned into something much more extensive including even the pose. In fact, only the face remained unaltered, and some parts—such as the arms and

hands—were discarded altogether.

So, yeah, as we have discussed before, spend as much time as needed on research, planning, and composition. But don't hesitate to take a lot of time just looking at the model or perhaps just thinking about it during meals, in the shower, driving to work, or just whenever. It will nearly always be time well spent.







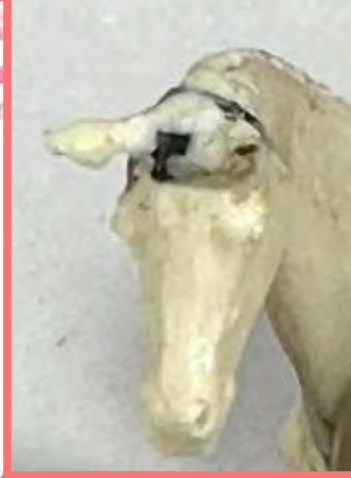


Above we see the parts of the Merklein horse. As far as size, it is similar to a Historex horse, although perhaps a bit wider. Breakdown is also similar with the difference that the neck and head are cast with one half of the body. The mane is molded in place, but the ears and tail are separate parts. Detail is, however, much better. Two examples of this detail are shown at right. Detail is present on the underside of hooves. Both Airfix and Historex hooves are flat on the bottom. The horse is also male, and anatomically correct. This is appropriate for this project as unicorns are traditionally male. Not shown is the included base, although the keys molded as part of the three hooves that rest on the ground are quite apparent.

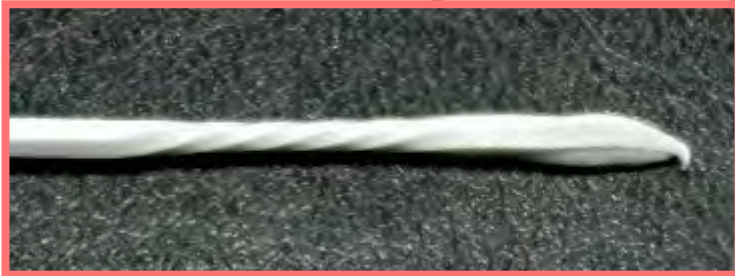


Assembly and painting of horses are detailed in Volume 7. Here, we'll look at how I approached this horse. First, I carved off the molded mane and added a groove along the top of the neck in which to fit a new mane. Although the horse halves are well keyed, I drilled mating holes and added pins to the keys. I also drilled some additional random holes. All this was done to ensure a strong and positive epoxy joint of the horse halves. Pins were also glued into holes drilled up into the legs of the three hooves in contact with the ground. When gluing the horse halves together, I used two-part epoxy, and I squeezed some excess out and smoothed it to help hide and disguise the joint.





Where needed, the joint was further hidden by an application of Magic Sculpt epoxy putty applied and smoothed. The ear part likewise had the hair removed and was glued in place, putted as needed.



Several unicorn horns were made, and I chose my favorite. I used hex rod stock from Evergreen. This was first heated and twisted as seen above. Next, it was heated again and stretched into a point. The longest one at right was the one I thought came out best. It was the one I used.

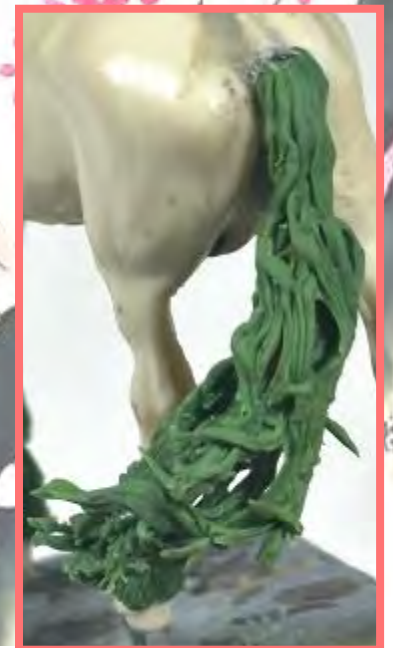


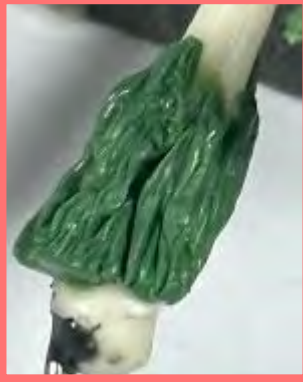
The mane and tail were made using the same methods seen in Volume 35, "Lifebringer". The method works great. I start by rolling out segments of Kneadatite epoxy putty thinly on an old credit card blank. These were then trimmed to shape, width and length. This is seen above left. Then, using the point of a hobby knife, each strip is cut into fine strips—near the top they are only cut part way through so they can be removed in one piece. The bottom about three quarters are cut all the way through. This is seen above. Then, as seen at left, using the tip of the putty spoon shown, the individual strands are teased and shaped into the desired form.





While the pieces were still soft and not fully cured, they were peeled up (with the assistance of a razor blade) and applied one piece at a time, superglued into place and teased into final shape. I started by drilled a hole and inserting the horn and putting the first piece of hair around that as seen at top left. Next, one segment at a time, I started at the top of the mane and worked down, gluing the pieces into the groove cut earlier. We see this process at middle and right above. The final result is seen at left. I used Kneadatite as even, once cured, it remains somewhat flexible and pliable. It is not the least bit brittle and will not break—not even the finest strands. As seen below, the tail was also done the same way. I started with a brass rod, bend to shape and glued into a hole drilled above the horse's butt. Then, starting at the bottom and working up, the various bits of shaped putty were wrapped around the main wire form and teased to shape. The final result is seen below right.





The longer hair on the fetlocks was applied in somewhat different manner, but still exactly the same way as we did with "Lifebringer." The putty was put in place on the model and only then was the hair sculpted in place. Three of the hooves sit on the ground so the hair hangs straight. The fourth hoof is lightly raised and tilted, so once the hair was applied and textured, it was gently manipulated with the putty spoon to hang at a natural angle.

Below we see two views of the finished unicorn.



The conversion of the woman was much more extensive. The piece, as it started, is shown at far left. The lower torso and legs, upper torso and head, and both arms had originally been separate pieces glued together. Initially, I had planned to change her to wear a simple medieval-style dress as seen in the sample (from Etsy) at center. This would have been a very simple conversion. But it soon snow-balled.

First, I decided her pose looked too stiff. She did not have the counterpoise (see Volume 12) that would look more natural and fluid in this position. So, I started by cutting her apart and raising the right hip (the weight-bearing leg) and lowering the right shoulder. This required the head to be repositioned to maintain its proper upright appearance. This required most of her hair to be cut away. I completely removed her arms as I decided I didn't care for their poses, either. By this point, she was little more than an armature to sculpt a new figure on top of. In fact, it would probably have been quicker to simply make an armature from scratch and save this piece for some other, future, project.



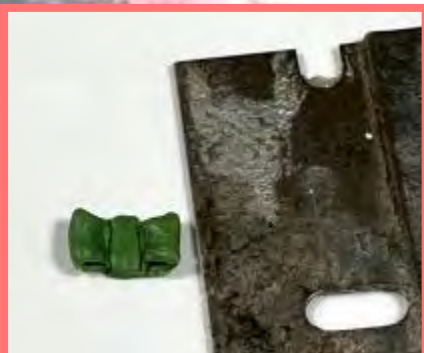
I started by filling the space between the heels and bottom of the shoe with Magic Sculpt epoxy putty. While the high heels are OK, I didn't think the stilettos would be an appropriate choice for a medieval subject of any culture.



After more consideration, I changed my mind on costume. Rather than a medieval dress, I determined to go with a fantasized geisha-like look. Hours were spent on the net conducting Google image searches. Even more time was spent deciding the exact look I wanted and planning a way forward. I first removed all molded detail from the torso and skirt. I started with the upper torso, as this was the quickest and easiest. Using a strip of Kneadatite, I created the collar and upper front opening of her kimono. More kneadatite was added and shaped into an obi (sash). Needed folds and creases were pressed into this with my favorite toothpick sculpting tool, and a groove pressed into it for the tie. A bow was sculpted separately on a piece of card from a single piece of Kneadatite. The basic shape of the bow was pressed into this and detailed. To create the look of a looped piece of fabric, I pressed into the top and bottom sides of the bow using a putty spoon.



Using Kneadatite mixed from the same batch as the bow, a piece was rolled out for the tie rope and glued in place. Extra pieces were formed into the tie and hanging ends. Two small balls of Kneadatite were pressed into place and fashioned into the tassels.



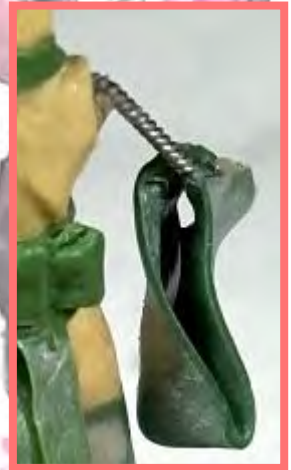
Before the bow had completely cured, it was peeled up from the card using a razorblade, bending each end out. This was then superglued into place on her back—and the sash was, for now, complete. The hanging ends of the bow were added later as we shall see.



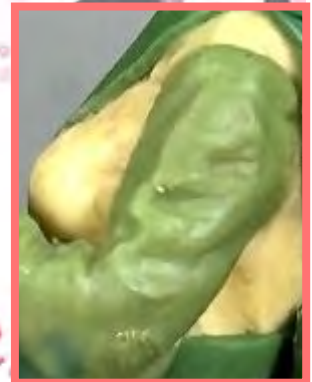
For the skirt, I would normally apply a mixed batch of putty directly to the figure and shape it in situ. This was what we saw in Volume 12, "Poissarde de paris". Here, since the skirt would be partly open at the bottom, I wanted it to be hollow. I also did not need to sculpt the entire skirt—the figure's skirt was good, as is, to about the bottom of the butt. Therefore, I made a paper pattern of the right size and used it to cut a piece of Kneadatite that had been rolled out very thin. While this was still soft and flexible (I let it cure for only about 30 minutes), it was super-glued in place below the figure's butt and gradually worked around both sides, adding the large folds and wrinkles as I went. This process is shown in the two above middle photos. On the front, once the putty had fully cured, additional strips of Kneadatite were added to create the front opening trim, matching that that had been applied to the torso previously.



This only took the skirt to about the 75% solution point. After curing, as seen above left, additional work, adding more folds and wrinkles, and smoothing needed portions, was done using Magic Sculpt epoxy putty. With the skirt complete, the hanging ends of the sash bow were added using strips of rolled-out Kneadatite that had been allowed to mostly cure before putting them in place. New arms were made from twisted wire, posed as needed, and glued into holes drilled in the shoulders. Hands were selected from resin pieces in the scrap box.



The next part of the arms I attacked were the hanging portions of the sleeves. Again, I made a paper pattern and cut pieces of rolled-out Kneadatite to match as seen above left. One end was glued to the inside of the arm as seen in the second photo above and it was folded over and the other end glued to the outside of the arm as the third photo shows. I did not worry about joining the ends as this would be done when the remainder of the sleeve was sculpted. The hanging ends were then shaped as needed. I took care to leave enough room for an arm to fit inside the loops. This is seen in the photo at right above. These pieces were then allowed to fully cure. Finally, a mix of Kneadatite and Magic sculpt was added to the wires to create the arm and remainder of the sleeve. This was done precisely as seen in previously volumes that discuss conversions and sculpting. The result is seen at right. Note that where I wanted flexibility or wished to bend the putty into final shape after curing, I use straight Kneadatite. Where a more solid form is needed, or where brittleness is not a factor, Magic Sculpt—or a mix of Magic Sculpt and Kneadatite—were used. Each putty has its own strengths and weaknesses that can be exploited to good effect.



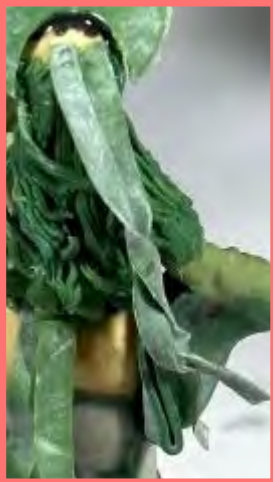
Additional details were added. The base of the crown was a piece of rolled-out kneadatite, punched out to a circular shape, and allowed to cure on a ball so it had the proper rounded shape. After curing, it was further trimmed. The umbrella-like spindles were made from lengths of styrene rod. The "sunburst" in the center was made from a couple of old photo-etched pieces from the scrap box. The spindles were cut to length before gluing it to her head.

The butterfly on her finger was from the scrap box. To ensure it did not fall off and get lost, a tiny drill bit was used to drill tiny mating holes in the butterfly's body and woman's finger and a small length of tiny wire glued in place. The bug was then epoxied to her hand.





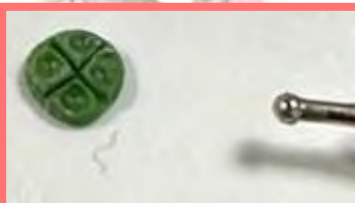
The woman's hair was made in the same way as the horse's mane. Above left we see the piece making up the back of her hair and in the second photo we see this in place. Yes, she has a huge bald spot at this point, but that will later be covered with a hair bun (she has A LOT of hair). In the third photo, we see the piece for the front of her head. Note the part is in the middle and it hangs down both sides. The fourth photo above shows this pieces in place.



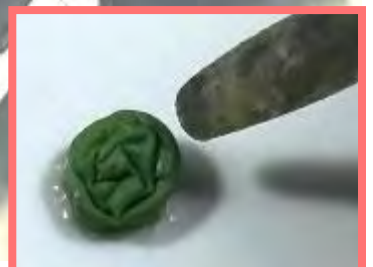
The hanging ends of hair bun ribbon, made as seen previously for the sash, were glued in place. The bun was a blob of kneadatite superglued in place and textured as needed. Another piece of ribbon was added over the top of this, and "pins" to hold it in place were made from lengths of styrene rod pushed into the still soft putty



I couple different types of flowers were made. One type was made as shown at left. At top left, we see two cuts made in a ball of kneadatite. Below that, we see the petals pressed outward by pressing into them with the rounded end of a stylus. At near left top, the ends of the petals were curled up, and, below near left, the center portion of the flower was added using a tiny bit of putty. Note that this flower is only about 3mm across. I made several with four, five, or six petals.



The second type, representing roses, were made by pressing individual petals into the top of a ball of kneadatite.





My flowers, along with a couple from the scrap box (unknown source) were glued in place on the ribbon above the bun, and the woman was finished. At right are two views of the finished figure. Note how little she resembles my starting point. Only the face, her ample bosom, her butt, and the top part of her shoes remain from the original.

To find flaws, she was primed grey, and areas that needed additional work were identified and repaired. This can be seen below. She was then zenithal primed: black overall after which she was sprayed white from 45% above all around. This clearly shows areas of light and shades.





With the unicorn and figure ready for paint, I turned my attention to groundwork. I like to create my ground after the figures have been built, but prior to painting. That way I can use them without risking damage to fragile paint schemes. For the tree, I used an old metal tree from Andrea Miniature's Robin Hood figure. As seen at top left, I drilled out the ends of the branches to fit additional branches into. I also repaired joints, and the area keyed to accept the Robin Hood figure, with epoxy putty textured to match the bark. Using strips of rolled-out Kneadatite, tabs on which to hang the streamers were glued in place. This is seen in the photo above. Left: Using clumps of Joefix "Seafoam" (a dried floral material), additional branches were glued into the holes previously drilled. Below: the streamers were cut from a piece of freshly rolled-out Kneadatite. These were separated, bent into various shapes, and allowed to cure. This process is seen in the two left photos below. Once the tree had been painted (see next page), the cured streamers were glued in place as seen below. Again, Kneadatite was used for this as it cures very flexible—they can be bent double and still will not break, yet they will hold their shape well.





The tree was first airbrushed with various browns and greys—lighter in highlight areas and darker in shadow areas. This is seen above left. Next, on the textured bark portions, light dry-brushing was done to bring out the texture. This was not done on the “seafoam”, as the material is somewhat fragile. Finally, various washes and filters of oil paints (Black, Burnt Umber, and Sap Green) were added to provide shading, variations, and a hint of moss. This is seen above right.



Additional moss was added per my normal method, reviewed here. First (above left), white glue dyed with green acrylic paint was painted on those areas where moss was desired. Next, (above center) while this was still fresh and wet, Woodland Scenics “Snow” was sprinkled on, after which it was allowed to dry. Next (above right), the moss was given a wash of English Ivy Green paint. This was mixed very thin, loaded into a brush, and simply touched to mossy areas, allowing the paint to wick into the snow material, turning it green. Finally (left), once it was COMPLETELY dry, it was LIGHTLY dry-brushed with a straw yellow color to bring out the texture. Making moss this way is quick and easy and results in a realistic, textured, product.



I could have purchased pre-made paper leaves such as the Scale Leaf product I normally use for foliage... however, I have never before needed pink leaves and will likely rarely, if ever, need them in the future. So, rather than spending the money to buy way more than I will ever use, I punched my own using a few sheets of slightly different colors of pink construction paper using the punch shown. Prior to applying the leaves, I painted the streamers that had earlier been glued in place. The leaves were applied by first spraying the branches with hairspray, and, while this was still wet, sprinkling on the leaves. I built up the foliage in multiple layers of hairspray and leaves. Once complete and dry, any leaves stuck in unwanted places were simply plucked off with a damp toothpick. Once happy, the tree was given several airbrushed coats of AK's Ultra Matt Varnish. The result is seen above right. I was extremely pleased with the final look of the tree. I think the key was using three very similar but slightly different colors of leaves to provide a very realistic variation. The streamers, to me, add a nice touch, too.



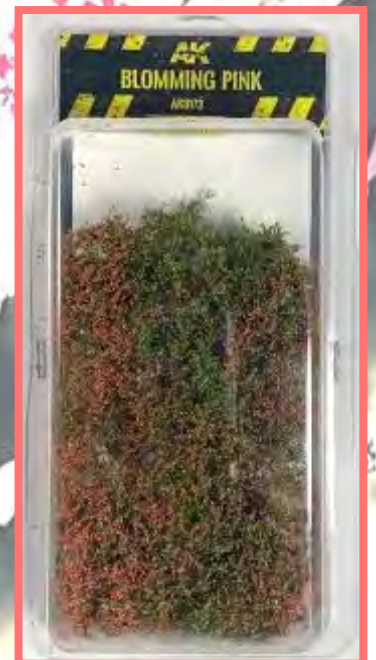
The stone walkway was made from polymer clay rolled out flat and textured by pressing real stones into the surface. After baking, it was cut into various stone shapes and glued, using epoxy glue, in place on the base. Note that a wooden form to slightly elevate the tree has also been glued in place. The pins protected the holes drilled down into the tree (which has pins extending down from the bottom). To fill the space between the stones, these areas were painted with white glue and then thin sand and gravel pressed into place. After the glue cured, the excess was brushed away and the stones painted.

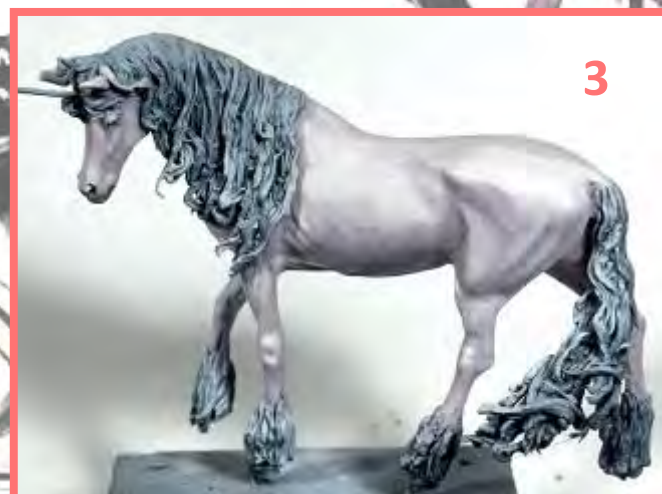


The stones were painted in various colors of greys, grey-browns, and grey-greens. They were lightly dry-brushed with a lighter color to bring out texture, and then they were further colored, shaded, and weathering using washes of dark grey, dark brown, and green oil paints. Finally, edges were carefully picked out with the lightest colors. The dirt between the stones also received a light dry-brushing and dark oil wash. Finally, a few bits of Woodland Scenics "Coarse Turf" were glued into the dirt areas between the stones. Holes were drilled down through the stones into the base into which would fit the mounting pins of the figure.



The remainder of the groundwork was completed using my normal methods. The ground was Celluclay, mixed with white glue, acrylic paint, and water. While this was still wet, static grass tufts were glued in place—both plain green grass tufts and floral tufts with pink flowers. The taller flowers are AK's "Blooming Pink Brush" (seen below). Finally, some random fallen leaves were glued in place on the ground. The finished ground is seen at left.





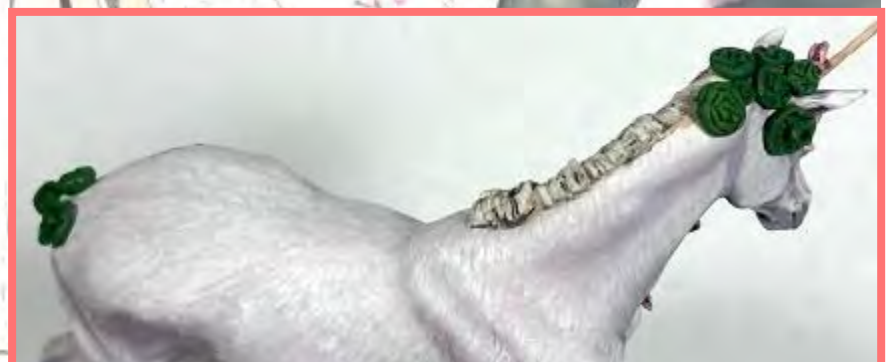
Painting started with the unicorn. Methodology was basically same as we saw in Volume 7 on horses. **1.** First, the animal was zenithal primed. **2.** Two base colors were applied and wet blended. The top portions were painted with a mix of Warm White, Country Grey, and a touch of Magenta. Lower areas used the same mix with Dusty Purple instead of Magenta. **3.** The first highlight used the same colors with more Warm White added. This was applied normally using glazes applied to the appropriate areas. **4.** The second and third highlights were painted using small lines and dashes of color to represent hair texture. The second light was Warm White and the final light was White. **5.** The first shadow was added using the same texture method and consisted of the darker base color with Elephant Grey and more Dusty Purple added. The second shadow was applied as a normal glaze consisting of the first shadow color plus Pavement and more Dusty Purple. The final light added more of these colors. Hair areas (mane, tail, and fetlocks) were painted in this darkest shadow color, too.



6. The mane, tail, and fetlocks used slightly different colors—more cream than white. Over the shadow color, which was left visible in recesses, the mane was painted using the light base mix with Antique White replacing the Warm White. The tail and fetlocks were painted with the dark base replacing Warm White with Antique White. These were highlighted first with Antique White, next with Antique White plus White, and finally White. The two replacement colors are shown at far left. A VERY thin wash of Dusty Purple was the final step. 7-8. Pink areas on the mane were given first a dark wash of a mix of Pavement and Magenta. This was highlighted first with Gypsy Rose and next with Pink. Pink colors are shown at near left. 9. The Kanji symbol (for Cherry Blossom) was painted Magenta highlighted with Pink.



At this point, after looking at the unicorn for a couple days, I decided to create more putty flowers and add them to the tail and the top of the head. There were made as seen previously and superglued in place once cured. This photo also shows the painted hair texture to good effect.





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The roses were given a very dark wash of the unicorn deep shadow color. They were then coated with, in order, Magenta overall, Magenta plus white highlights, more white added to edges of petals in highlight areas, and finally, for variation, a few touches of pink. The horn was painted light tan, highlighted with Antique White, and the twisted area given a glaze of Chestnut ink. Other details were painted as described in Volume 7. Pink skin areas were painted Rose Mist, highlighted first with Gypsy Rose and then by adding Pink. Shading added Pavement to the Base Color. Eyes were first painted black. A tiny hint of eye whites was painted using Antique White. The Iris was highlighted using Ocean Reef Blue with a small White catchlight. Clear Satin was applied to the eyes, in the nostrils, and randomly around the mouth. Visible portions of the hooves were painted Territorial Beige highlighted Khaki.



Above we see two views of the finished unicorn. At left we see the animal attached to the groundwork. I can only hope that when he sees it in person at the MFCA show if not sooner, Mr Merklein forgives me for going all "My Little Pony" on his magnificently sculpted horse. After this photo was taken, I decided to glue a couple fallen leaves onto the animal's back. Those can be seen in the photos of the finished piece.

With the base and the beast done, it was time to turn our attention to the woman.



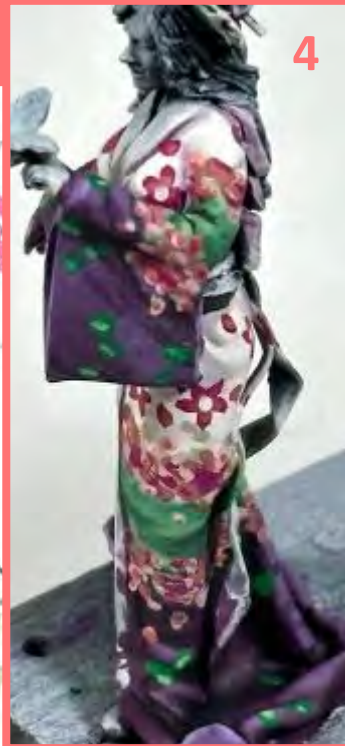
1. I started by painting the dress and crown in a few different base colors. White areas were base coated using Warm White with a tiny touch of Magenta. Highlights were Warm White followed by White. The first two shadows added progressively more Dusty Purple and the final shade added Pavement. These colors are seen top center. Purple areas were based in Dusty Purple, highlighted by adding progressively more Petunia Purple for the first two highlights and adding White for the final highlight. Shades added Pavement. These colors are shown center right above. Dark Green areas were based using a mix of Dark Green Grey and Dark Green. Three levels of highlight each added more Sage and the final highlight was Sage. Shadows were first Dark Green Grey and then Pavement. Lighter green areas were Sage, highlighted with White and shaded using Dark Green Grey. These colors would form the basis of the floral pattern.



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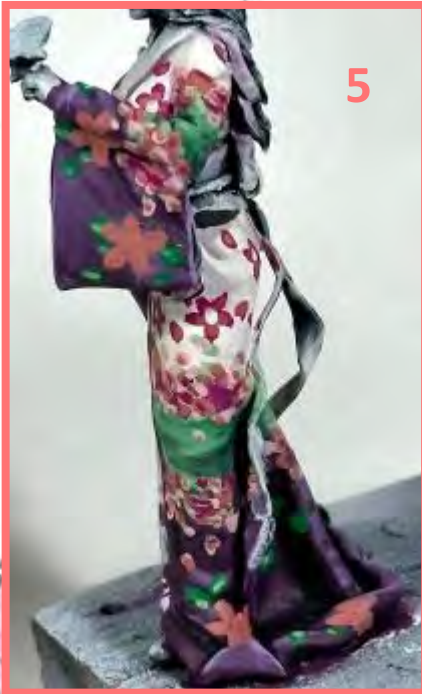


2. The first flowers consisted of dots of pink inside the light green areas and dots. The first layer was Magenta, followed by Gypsy Rose, and finally Pink. These colors are seen above. 3. The flowers on the white portion were Magenta highlighted with Rose Mist (seen at the top of the next page) and then Warm White. The centers were dots of Warm White.



At far left are additional colors used for the floral pattern that have not already been seen.

4. Some green leaves were added in purple areas using Deep Green with Sage centers. 5. Large flowers were first added in their basic shape using Gypsy Rose. 6. Petal ends were painted Antique White. 7. Details (lines dividing the petals, a shadow down the center of each petal, and the centers) were added using Dusty Purple. More large flowers were added simply reversing the Gypsy Rose and Antique White Colors.



8. Some final, smaller, flowers were painted in the purple and dark green areas. These were painted Magenta with Pink centers. 9. The crown had been painted using same colors and patterns. The flowers in the hair were painted the same colors as those on the unicorn.





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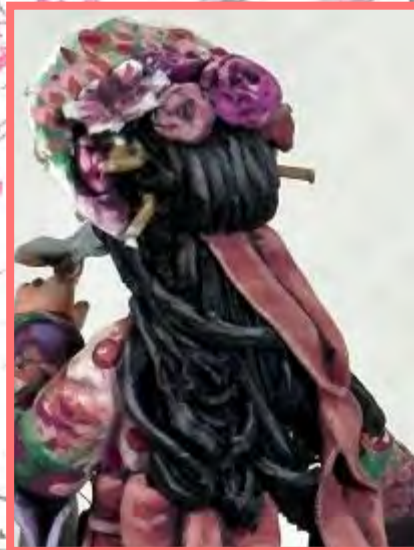


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10. To reinforce the highlights and shadows, much of which had been lost when painting the floral patterns, thin glazes of Pavement or Dusty Purple were added to shadows. Highlights were brought back out using thin glazes of White, Sage, Petunia Purple, or Pink. **11.** Trim on the Kimono was painted Dusty Purple plus Rose Mist highlighted first by adding Gypsy Rose, then Pink, and finally even more Pink. Shades were Dusty Purple followed by Pavement. **12.** The obi (sash) and streamers were painted Magenta plus Gypsy Rose, highlighted by adding progressively more Pink and then White for final edging. Shadows added first Dusty Purple and, for deepest shadows, Black was added. Finally, all appropriate areas and items were outlined in Black. With that, all the clothing was complete. Not shown, the tops of the shoes were painted Magenta highlighted using Rose Mist and shaded using Dusty Purple. The soles were painted Pavement highlighted with Elephant Grey.



Flesh was first painted normally, although I used paler colors (left). The base color was Salmon Rose. This was highlighted first by adding Light Flesh, next with Light Flesh, third by adding White, and finally with White. The first shade was Brown Rose, followed by Brown Rose plus Burnt Red, then Burnt Red, and then Burnt Red plus Black. Details were, for the most part, painted normally. Fingernails were painted using Magenta to represent painted nails.



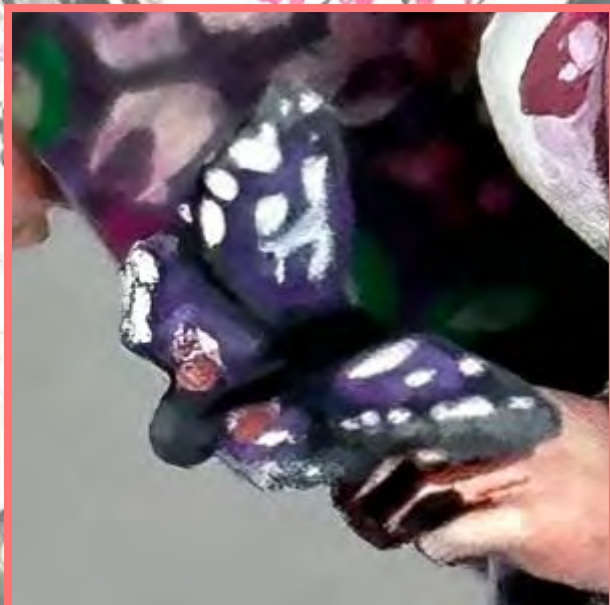
The makeup was applied using thin glazes which allowed underlying highlights and shadows to show through. Colors used are shown below left and included Antique White followed in highlight areas by White. Eye shadow, makeup on cheeks, and lipstick was created using Magenta, highlighted where needed by adding Rose Mist. A dot of Magenta was added to the forehead.

Hair was painted using the colors shown at bottom left. The base color was Black. This was highlighted first, paying attention only to basic shapes and forms, using Black plus Dark Blue Grey. Next highlights picked up sculpted texture and was applied using Dark Blue Grey. A final highlight to sculpted texture only on upper surfaces was added using a mix of Dark Blue Grey and White. Thin glazes of Black Ink were then applied to visually blend the various colors and provide a tiny bit of sheen to the hair.

For the butterfly, below, I chose to paint an Emperor Butterfly as it is indigenous to Asia and it had similar colors to those used in the vignette. Please keep in mind it is less than 5mm in size. It was painted using appropriate colors.



Although I really don't have a preferred genre, scale, or historical period (I pretty much make, build, and paint anything that strikes my fancy), this piece was still out of my normal range—there is no military, no weapons, no fighting, no splattered gore, no violence, no destruction, and no desolation. I had great deal of fun with this piece—which is, of course, the whole point of a hobby in the first place! It has also proven quite popular with those who have viewed it. So, I enjoyed it, I like the final result, my viewers are happy with it. Complete Success!





Kevin Owens

Figure Modeling Vol 40

The Empress And The Unicorn

- Sculpting
- Horses
- Groundwork
- Painting