

Painting 1/35 Scale Figures in Acrylics

By Chip Rembert

- **Figure Preparation and Construction:**
 - a. Don't be afraid to mix and swap out body parts to make your figures more unique and to fit your vehicle or display better. Dragon figures are a great source of spare body parts – cheap and well sculpted these will go a long way to improve your figure's appearance.
 - b. Heads Up! Use the best head to fit the figure's pose/ body position. For example if figure is wounded – make sure the facial expression shows PAIN! **Make the investment in Hornet Heads they are worth it!!!!!!** Don't be afraid to cut off the hat or helmet off of a Hornet head if needed to fit your figure.
 - c. Hollowing out sleeves can greatly improve the look of a figure. Cut off the hand, hollow out sleeve with a Dremel tool bit and glue hand back on. This is particularly good technique for winter coats or greatcoat sleeves.
 - d. Hands Up! If cutting off hands in step C results in too short of a wrist, replace with wire or styrene, then insert into sleeve. If hands are not realistic, replace them. If hand is holding something, make sure that fingers are wrapped around weapon, etc. You can cut off fingers and replace with putty if you need to.
 - e. Same hollowing out trick works great for heads. Cut off head (if molded on) drill out neck and reinsert the replacement head. This helps gives a much more realistic collar / neck transition.
 - f. PIN IT. Pin your heads and any delicate pieces – this will help figures in transit to shows, and if figures are handled over time.
 - g. ALWAYS Pin your figures to the base – drill thru the feet, super-glue 18 Gauge copper wire and insert into holes in base or vehicle.
 - h. Use a rounded X-Acto blade to “carve” around details to improve injection molded details. This is particularly good technique for Dragon, MB, Tamiya or other nicely injection molded figures that need a little improvement.
 - i. For German WWII equipment that is slung from belts, use a base layer of putty to “mount” the equipment onto. This eliminates any unrealistic gap between the equipment and the figures body.

- j. Replicate equipment straps with super-glue coated paper, lead sheet or rolled putty. The more “3D” you can make these belts and straps look the better they will look once painted.
- k. Rolled out 2 part duro putty can make great looking straps, belts, weapon slings and is great for filling large gaps in figures. Pro-Create putty also works well.
- l. For figures wearing heavy coats use Dremel tool to carve out the flat base of the coat. This creates a more realistic base for painting.

- **Painting Preparation:**

- a. Paint with a wet palette. Greatly improves your ability to paint smooth transitions between dark and light colors with fast drying acrylics.
- b. Wet palette Improves ability to get several shades quickly.
- c. Thin Acrylic paints with Distilled Water.
- d. After preparation and construction of figure, wash in soapy water, let dry and prime with airbrush if you have one. The thinner the primer, the better the detail of the figure is preserved.
- e. Look carefully at the figure after priming. Many times you will see flaws in the figure or blemishes embedded in the primer coat. Remove these prior to painting figure.
- f. I like to prime figures with Tamiya Acrylics “Light Gray”.
- g. Mount Figure and head separately if possible, easier to paint head and face if not on figure.

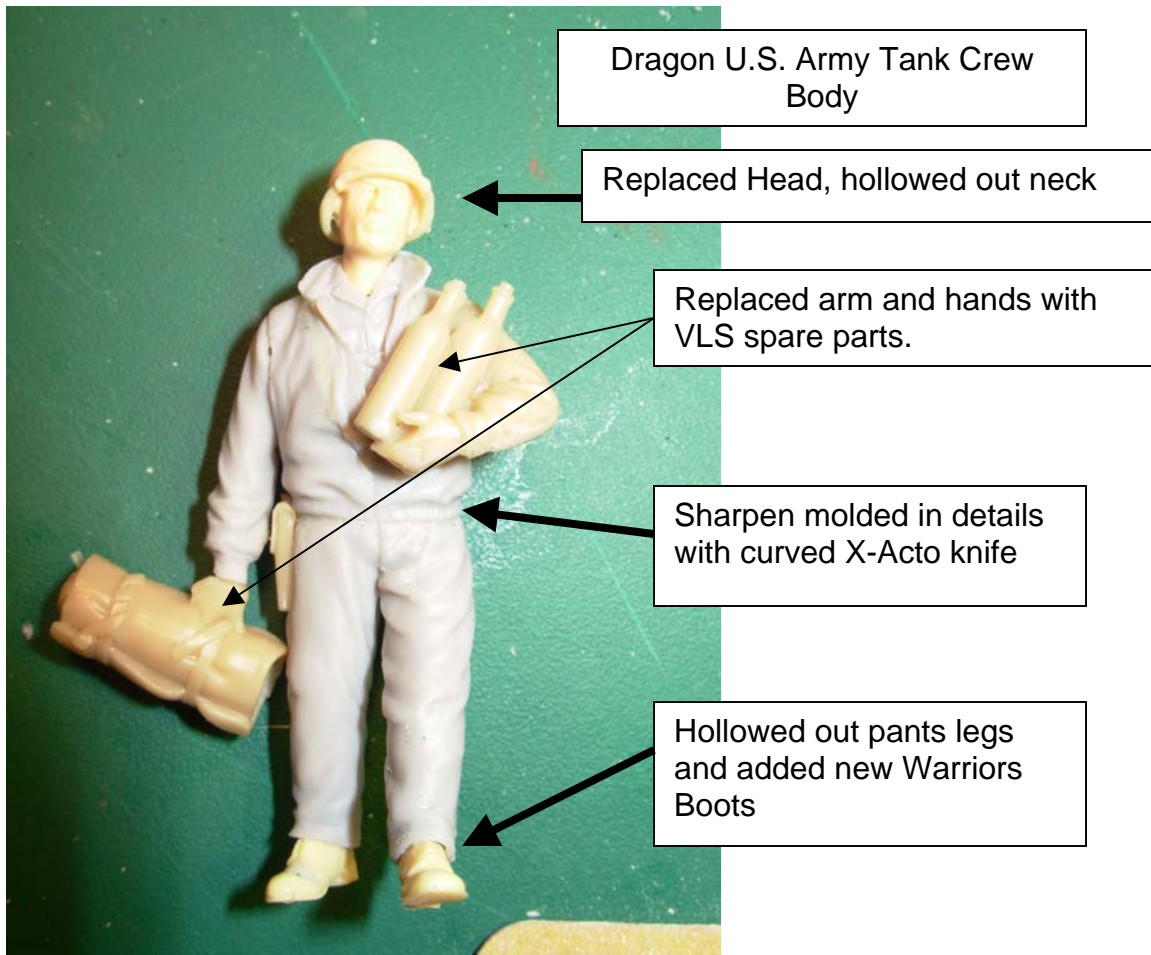
- **Painting Figure:**

- a. **Zenithal or Stop Sign Technique:** This is a popular way to describe painting figures to simulate overhead light source. [See How to Build Dioramas by Shepard Paine (2nd Edition) page 52 for excellent description of this technique.]
- b. I like to paint from the inside out – painting in darkest colors first and working towards lighter colors.
- c. Paint with contrasting colors blending the transitions between light and dark with thin layers of paint. If you think that you have too much color contrast, you probably have the correct amount. If entering your figures into shows, or contests the light sources at these shows are usually poor. Paint your figure to emphasize the color contrasts in this light, not the light of your workbench.
- d. Blending colors with Acrylics is aided greatly with a wet palette.
- e. Avoid pure white and pure black on any figure – usually you won’t see either in reality.
- f. Emphasize seams and edges with lighter colors.
- g. Don’t be afraid to paint in details that are not molded into the figure. Tears in clothing, holes in boot soles, wounds, scratches in leather can all be replicated with paint alone. This works well

with thin seams in clothing, if the seam is not molded in – JUST PAINT IT IN!

- h. I use a 3X Power Optivisor to paint my figures.
- i. Vallejo ink is very useful for outlining and improving details on figures.
- j. **Paint in many THIN layers of paint, not a few thick ones!!!!**

Improvements to Stock Figures:



Notes:

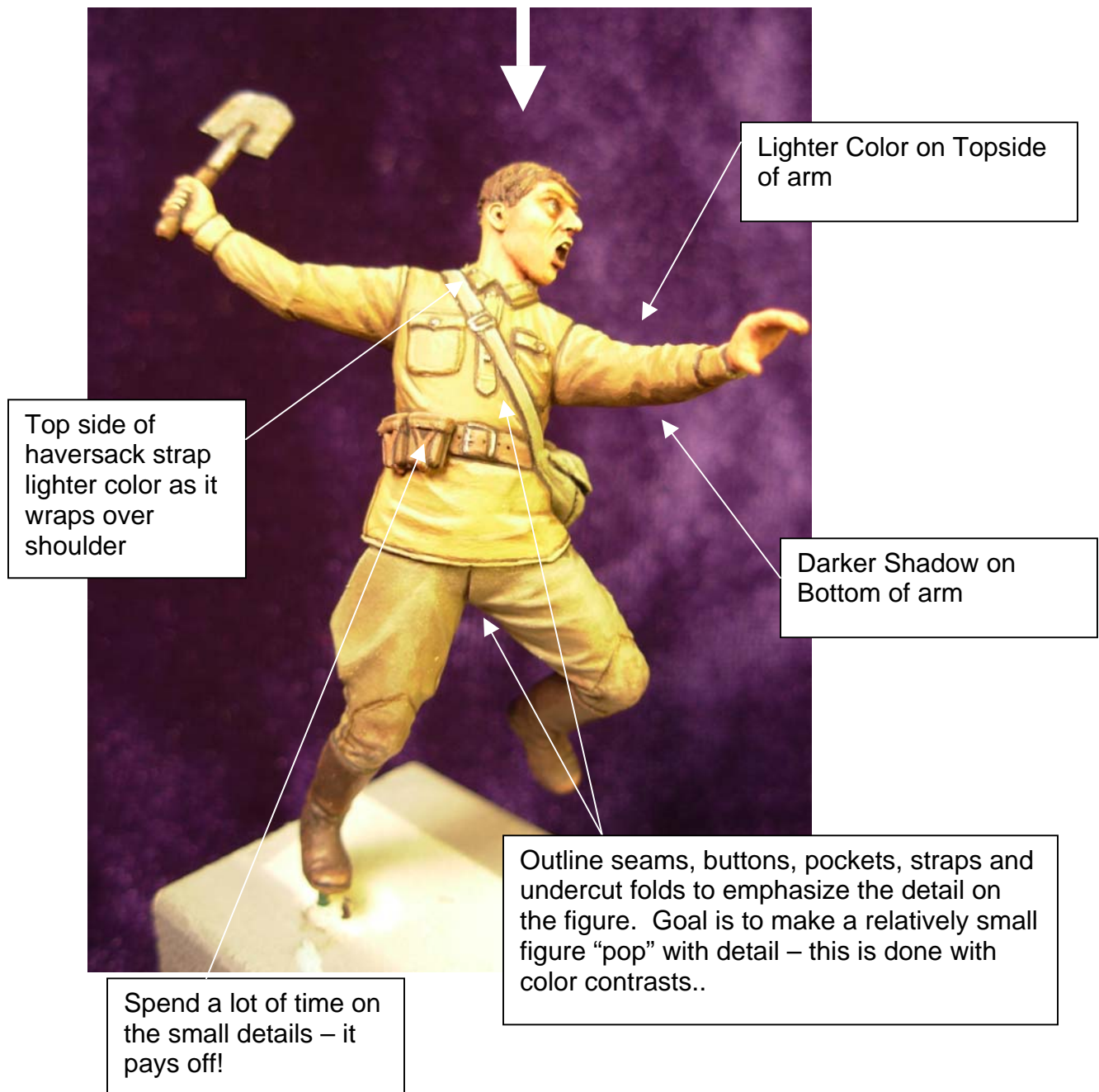
-Verlinden figure spare sets are great source of replacement parts. These are well sculpted and inexpensive.

Look for older bargain figures at shows for spare parts. **MAKE YOUR FIGURE LOOK UNIQUE!**

Keep a book of your color formulas – very handy.

Painting Notes 1/35 Scale MB Figure:

LIGHT SOURCE



Painting Reference Books:

How to Build Dioramas 2nd Edition, by Shepard Paine – The Grandfather of this great hobby! This book is a must have! (Kalmbach Books).

Building and Painting Scale Figures, by Shepard Paine (Kalmbach Books).

Painting Miniatures, by Danilo Cartacci (This guy is good!), (Auriga Publishing International).

Modelling Waffen – SS Figures, by Calvin Tan (Another genius). (Osprey Modelling).

Modelling Fallschirmjager Figures, by Jaume Ortiz Forns & Daniel Alfonsea Romero. (Osprey Modelling).

Getting Started Painting Diorama Figures in Acrylics, by Brett Avants. (Letterman Publications). Excellent book for beginners and seasoned painters alike. Nice color formulas.

Converting and Detailing Plastic Figures, by Bill Chilstrom. (Squadron Signal # 6097) – great figure conversion and detailing techniques.

Sculpting and Body Language by Mike Blank. (Euro Modelismo). Great reference. This guy is one of the world's best!

Military Modelling Masterclass, by Bill Horan. (Windrow and Greene Publishing). Simply the world's best figure painter and sculptor – hands down!