





Great creators of the world: Steven Marshall

Known worldwide for his LEGO® cars, this month we bring to this section this fantastic British builder.

By Hispabrick Magazine

Pictures by Steven Marshall

Hispabrick Magazine: Name?

Steven Marshall: Steven Marshall

HM: Age?

SM: 29

HM: Nationality?

SM: British

HM: What do you do normally?

SM: Machine operative



HM: When did you first start building with LEGO®?

SM: I have been building LEGO since a child, around 1985 I received my first set for Christmas. My first memory of LEGO was when my older brother had the Basic building set (740). Which sparked my interest.

I was very much into Technic at a young age and really only ever built with these bricks which I think helped with more complicated ideas and over coming sololutions. I feel this got me to where I am now with my building style and skill, always challenging myself to come up with new and creative ideas. At around ten years old I developed a fully functional mechanism for landing gear on aircraft which I display in my gallery on Brickshelf.

This is where me and my brothers first forged our own LEGO language. We called 1x1 brick's One-ers and 2x2 brick's two-ers, fat their-ers which are 2x3 brick's. We called plate's, smoothers and loads of bizarre names for virtually every part available. We could produce a Thesaurus of our LEGO language.

HM:Your first set?

SM: As a Christmas present my first set was the Basic building set (550). Me and my twin brother always received LEGO as a joint gift and we would

always built together.

HM: And your last set?

SM: One of the Indiana Jones sets

HM: Your favourite commercial LEGO building theme?

SM: Creator. Though I don't buy the LEGO to build the set's, I feel the Creator line offers the parts I like to work with. I really like how the Creator series looks and reminds me of the Model Team series which was my favourite theme as a child.

HM: What is your favourite LEGO element and why?

SM: Brick, Modified 1 x 2 with Grill - A great element for breaking up a plain, smooth surface. I use this technique a lot, adds texture and is useful for details.

HM: How many hours do you spend building with LEGO?

SM: When I was younger I would spend all day building and now it's when I have the time. I only build now when I begin a moc which is usually the weekend. I don't sit there randomly playing about, I only pick the brick's up when I have a subject to work on.



Steven Marshall...2009



Steven Marshall...2009

HM: What does your family think about this hobby?

SM: I think in the past when I was still buying set's as an adult maybe they saw it as a waste of money. But since I've progressed and they have seen the work I produce, they understand it's more then just playing with coloured brick's.

Also now with my recent invite to Billund my family realizes this is more than just a hobby..

HM: Do you draw or pre-designs before you start building?

SM: I research the subject, gathering images maybe models of the subject as reference. I mentally visualize the appropriate elements required and which complement the shape's needed to form the piece.

I nearly always start building vehicles at the same point. Building the front wings and then the front end, working from the doors to the rear. Chassis next then interior then finally the roof.

HM: Most of your creations are cars. Do you work with the measurements and proportions of the original model or only with visual references from photographs?

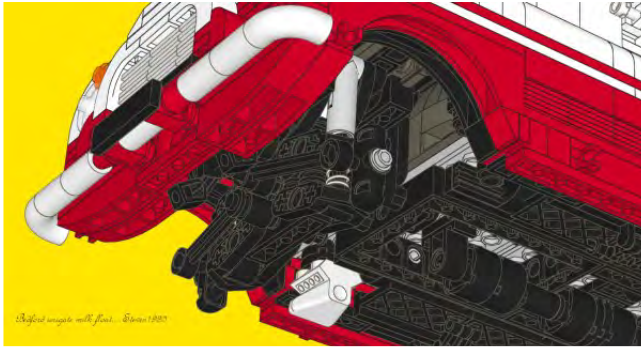
SM: As above but sometimes I buy models but mainly work from photo's. I don't work to proper proportions and scale. If it looks right visually I happy..

HM: How do you face the process of building your ideas? Do you have a fixed and predefined idea of a MOC which takes form during the building process? Or do you start building with parts directly and that brings you to a final design? To sum up: do the parts define the MOC, or does the MOC decide which parts you are going to use?

SM: I can only work with the tools I have in my collection. Bricklink comes in handy for sourcing parts I don't have or need more of. So I pick the best and closest part to represent a shape/part of the what I'm trying to re-create. An example would be the Mini cooper's boot section. I knew I straight away the Triple curved wedge part would be my best choice. Sometimes obviously I'll need to use several parts to create one aspect of my model. If I know that the Triple curve part is going to form the boot section that defines the whole scale/size of the model. Most importantly on say a car/vehicle is the working around the scale of the wheels..

HM: How long does take you to get from the idea to the finished model?

SM: Models like the Bedford vans took around 2-



3days from start to finish. Depending on the level of detail. I can easily put in 10 hours and then I'll come back the next day with a clear mind and make any adjustments. My twin brother will step in and act as a critic, pointing out any issues he has with the build. It's good to have an honest second pair of eyes to keep you on track.

HM: Sometimes you build everyday objects like the pushchair, or come up with the fantastic technique for walls with liftarms. What type of things can keep you away from cars?

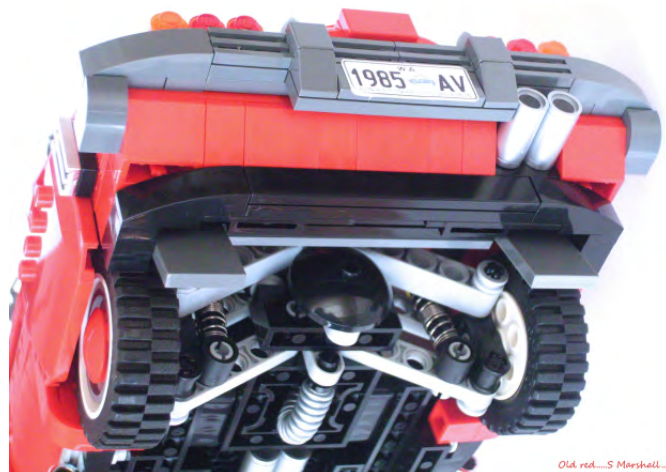
SM: I don't want to always build cars, doing something like the pushchair requires a different thought process from me. Though the pushchair is a simple moc I like to use interesting and different parts to create a different look. i.e using the tack tracks as a seat lining may not be everyone's first thought but it gives it the right look, and I think it adds to the realism which is what I aim for.

Looking at the amazing arvo brothers work, recreating every day objects from typewriters to gameboy's inspires me to think out of the box a little. I'm not a one trick pony as we say over here. Working on something different keeps it interesting and helps your technique.

HM: Surely you have been told many times that your constructions look like they are real models... for a person who is not familiar with LEGO® constructions it can be difficult to identify them as such. Do you think this is a disadvantage?

SM: I just want it to look as close to the real thing as possible whilst using LEGO bricks.

If initially somebody looks at my work and says "hey that's a great looking Mini Cooper" and then on closer inspection say "hey that's LEGO!" all the better. I believe most people have at some point in there lives have played with LEGO and expect a



certain look and finish typical of maybe sets they had as kids. An even someone who has not used LEGO® for years and years will probably understand and appreciate what went into my design. I think if some one does not at first think my models are LEGO, it is a great compliment.

HM: The increase of AFOLs and lines like Star Wars™ create new possibilities not imagined before by LEGO. What do you think about the old school LEGO and the new LEGO?

SM: I would not be able to create most of my ideas if it was not for the newer LEGO bricks being produced. Like the slope bricks. These are the key to the look I'm aiming for. The newer bricks offer a greater range of colours compared to what was available years ago. Building realistic objects always look better in my opinion using a darker pallet.

HM: Any other comments you would like to share?

SM: What got me back into LEGO after years of absence was seeing arvo's work, in particular the Seat 131 as they know he he. I was so inspired by this model that i just had to create my own. This was a huge challenge which and once completed i got the bug back.

Their level of work is my goal. It's something everyone should have, a goal or a target to work or aspire to.

Thank you very much, Steven.■