



Review 7051: Tripod Invader

Presentation of the Alien Conquest theme

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Set: Tripod Invader
Set number: 7051
Number of parts: 166
Minifigs: 2
Recommended Retail Price: 19,95€

From a very early stage, space has been a favourite play-theme for LEGO® sets and ever since the classic LEGO Space theme was launched there has not been a single year without some kind of space theme sets in the LEGO catalogues. But this time rather than being 'out there', the aliens have come to visit us.

Laurence Dawes, one of the designers on the Alien Conquest project explains: "The space theme holds an evergreen Appeal. Earlier themes such as Space Police and Mars Mission whisked children out into the farthest corners of the

galaxy and created scenarios out there – but we've never brought outer space down to Earth."

One of the outstanding features of the Aliens in this theme is that, in addition to all being green, their brains play an important role in their design. And it's not just the aliens' brains that are important. They have come to harvest human brains. These space creatures have come with their own very peculiar pets – the so-called 'clingers' – who can wrap around minifig heads and control their minds. Scary? No, great fun!

Another different aspect in this theme is that instead of the usual two sides in this case there are three sides: the aliens, the humans they prey on and the Alien Defence Unit (ADU), dressed in blue uniforms, ready to fight the alien invaders and save the people of Earth.





The theme is comes with an accompanying website, on which you can read more about the personality of each of the aliens and ADU team members, see animated presentation of many of the bigger sets and play games [1]

Tripod Invader

In this edition of HBM we'll have a closer look at the Tripod Invader (7051). This set features a small UFO which sits on a three-legged base. It is piloted by an Alien Invader Trooper who uses his sonic gun to immobilise humans so his clinger (official name Pluuvian Brain-Beast) can control their minds. The UFO can also be detached from the tripod to beam any humans in range up and transport them in its prison pod. The pod is connected to the UFO with a single Technic pin, so in theory a full prison pod could be delivered to the mother-ship and exchanged for an empty one. The cockpit is very simple, but two levers serve as control stick.

Judging from the size of his protruding pink brain it would appear Troopers aren't the most intelligent aliens out there. Other aliens in this theme have much more prominent brains. Even so, human brain power is not used to supplement that lack, but, according to the accompanying website, to power their UFOs.

The lower part of the tripod is built almost entirely with Technic parts, which link the radar dishes that serve as "feet" to the vertical column that holds the sonic cannon. Technic axles are used to connect both elements together and with the UFO.

This also allows the UFO to rotate freely on the tripod. The sonic cannon is built on a ball joint that allows it to be easily aimed, a construction that has been previously used in a number of Star Wars™ sets.

The whole construction reminds me vaguely of the invading tripods in War of the Worlds. The Technic parts used in the construction give you enough flexibility to move the legs and let the tripod walk, although hopping it along is certainly easier.

The set also includes a frightened businessman with attaché case. This minifig features a double printed head, with a 'standard' look on one side and a 'scared' look on the other. Also the torso is printed on both front and back and the suitcase is a nice touch.

The stickers in this set – eight in total: four to simulate controls near the sonic gun and the other four to decorate the metallic rim of the UFO – add another comic touch to the set. On his front bumper the alien has a sticker that reads: "WE'VE BEEN TO EARTH".

Conclusions

Alien Conquest is a space theme with a humorous touch and it is located on Earth. The theme has a slight emphasis on aliens which makes it even easier to combine it with any existing LEGO® City collection, full of brains ready to be harvested. This becomes especially clear if we take a brain-count of the sets: the theme so far (as launched on June 1, 2010) is made up of 7 sets (not counting the battle pack which is not available everywhere or the promotional ADU Jetpack), 2 of which include only Aliens and civilians. In total, these sets include 9 aliens, 3 civilians, and 7 ADU members.

The Tripod is especially interesting as it is the only small set to include one of the clingers. Even though it is not always easy to separate the UFO from the base, this double play option also adds to the sets attractiveness.

The theme will be expanded further in the first half of 2012

[1] <http://alienconquest.LEGO.com>

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