



5 questions to... Jamie Berard

*Senior Designer
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This time we have interviewed Jamie Berard, one of the designers behind the modular buildings. We have asked him some questions about the Pet Shop, the new set of the modular buildings collection, as a supplement to the review.

- Why were chosen 2 16-stud buildings instead of 1 32-stud?

We've been very careful to make sure the street continues to surprise you guys with a variety of building styles, sizes and themes. The 32x32 layout has worked well for us in that it gave impressive buildings with lots of access to interior space. However, the street was starting to look a bit too 'square' and predictable. By introducing two 16x32 buildings, we can now play around with the look of the street while at the same time delivering a different building experience. It was particularly fun trying to come up with different ways of maximizing interior space. This helped give us the idea for the spiral staircase.

- There are plenty of different shops that can be reproduced. What reason did you have to design a Pet Shop?

The Pet Shop idea came about because of all the new animals which have been developed lately. Harry Potter released new printed owls. Kingdoms gave us chickens and goats. Prince of Persia gave us ostriches and camels. City even had a farm with pigs and cows! Everyone lately seems to be talking about animals. How could we not want to bring some of this fun into the modulars??

- What rules do you follow to choose the colours of the buildings?

We choose to build in a reality-based color palette. It definitely makes life more difficult for us because most elements are available in primary or bright LEGO® colors. However, we really feel it adds to the level of authenticity and also provides a unique opportunity to give fans some bricks in colors they perhaps have never seen before or always wished for.

Each of the modulars is permitted a limited number of color shifts which allows us to use bricks in colors which are not currently being used by other sets. This means we really need

to be smart about which bricks we choose to use to make up the building. We often will go for the most standard bricks because they offer us the most flexibility. The Pet Shop, for example, uses only 4 different shape elements to create an entire building in sand blue.

- In each new modular set the interiors are becoming more detailed, is that the new philosophy for modular sets?

The modulars are developed as an extension of the Creator line. Because of that, many of the Creator guidelines were used in the initial development of the models. Cafe Corner had no interior because Creator houses at the time had no interior. However, as the line has grown in popularity we have evolved the concept so that there is more of a complete experience both inside and out.

Interiors are now a part of the modular concept. We always focus on the exterior first, but then use the remaining budget to fill out the inside as best we can.

- Have you ever thought about a furniture set to complete models like Cafe Corner or Market Street?

Since the Cafe corner, this has been a popular request. It's a bit tricky for us to release a set with just furniture because it would have to take the place of another model. It's tricky to decide: should we make a furniture set or Tower Bridge... furniture or the Winter Toy Shop....Furniture or Emerald Night... It's always a tough choice when we are only allowed to create a limited number of sets each year. So far we've tried to address this suggestion by adding more and more interior to our buildings. From the feedback I've heard, many fans appreciate this.

Many thanks to you and the fans for your enthusiasm for and support of the modular line!

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