



# Great creators of the world: Matija Grguric

*There is no scale or theme in which our guest has not shown to be a master.*

*By Hispabrick Magazine*

*Pictures by Matija Grguric*



**Hispabrick Magazine:** Name?

**Matija Grguric**

**HM:** Age?

**MG:** 28

**HM:** Nationality?

**MG:** Croatian

**HM:** What do you do normally?

**MG:** I am a LEGO® reseller. I sell the sets and pieces on the

Internet and on Kid's Fairs and LEGO exhibitions in Croatia. I studied architecture, but didn't graduate.

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

**MG:** I got my first set when I was 4. It was my favorite toy ever since. I had a regular dark ages that started sometime in high school. I started to build and collect intensively as an AFOL 4 years ago.

**HM:** And your last set?

**MG:** Hmmm... I have to think about that. I think it was Tower Bridge. I got it at 50% off this year on LEGO World Copenhagen. I buy some small sets from myself every once in





a while, but that doesn't count. I also recently decided to stay away from sets and concentrate to buy bricks. I don't like to build sets - I got bored of it. I didn't even put together Tower Bridge, it was bought for bricks. I love to build Technic sets though— as I am still not so skilled at building my own models.

**HM:** Your favorite commercial LEGO® building theme?

**MG:** Do Modular buildings count as a theme? If not, then castle (or Kingdoms as they call it lately), always, and Harry Potter.

**HM:** A theme you seem interested in is architecture. What do you think about the official Architecture theme?

**MG:** It is a really nice addition to LEGO brand. I think the theme is an excellent medium to recruit more AFOLs. I've seen those sets on shelves of the designers and architecture shops where they don't sell toys or LEGO. People can see through those that LEGO is not only for kids – as most of them still think. The design of the box is attractive, and so are the instructions. As for the price, I think the starting price of \$20 is acceptable, but that larger models are too expensive for what they offer.

**HM:** What is your favorite LEGO element and why?

**MG:** Vešmašina (eng. Washing machine) – this is our nickname for the headlight brick. My friend Marin first thought of it, 'cause it reminded him of one. Now all AFOLs in Croatia call it that. I also love jumper plates and cheese slopes. Let's put all those three on the first place.

**HM:** Which part would you like LEGO to produce?

**MG:** Corner cheese slope. Shorter bars – L1 and L2 and bars with different clips to connect. Also a 3x3 macaroni brick, or something similar with that radius.

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

**MG:** Per day? Lately a lot. On average 3 and more hours. But it isn't like that every day. I usually don't get the time to build every day, but when I do, I can build up to 10 or more hours in one day.

**HM:** What do your family/friends think about this hobby?

**MG:** They are all supportive and think that the hobby is nice.



Most of my friends are AFOLs. And so are my family members. My mum collects sets, helps me in the store and love sorting bricks (which I don't, so it's quite convenient). My GF Klementina is also into LEGO®, and with Marin and me one of the founders of our club. Dad likes LEGO, but doesn't have time to build, but my two younger brothers have thousands of bricks – they are 8 and 11.

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

**MG:** Only in my head. I love to build in the head, when I drive, try to fall asleep, or am somewhere where I'm bored. ;) For the smaller MOCs I usually have 80% of design thought of before I start to build it.

**HM:** The topics of your constructions are very different, where do you find inspiration for these MOCs?

**MG:** I guess from all around me. I travel quite a lot, and love to meet new people and visit new places. I've been all over from USA to Russia and Japan, and whole of Europe and I'm quite proud of that. I guess it's quite rare for a person my age.

**HM:** You build both in micro scale and minifig scale. Which scale is most comfortable for you and why?

**MG:** Minifig scale. The LEGO elements are designed around this scale for over 30 years now, so I suppose that is the reason. It is the easiest way to get as many elements to use as you can. And I really love those little people.

**HM:** If you had to choose one among all your creations, which one would you choose and why?

**MG:** Fallingwater by F.L. Wright. It was build quite fast, and I haven't thought it would turn out so nice or become so popular. It was displayed in LEGO museum in Billund and on exhibition in Paris. I love the colors and scenery on both real thing and my model. The architecture of the building is also stunning. I would love to have a house like that. The sad thing about the model is that it was recently ruined while travelling from Paris to Zagreb. Someone forgot to put "This side up" on the box. I am still very stressed from that, and I don't know if I should rebuild it. The model is entirely destroyed. Now I love it even more.

**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?





**MG:** New LEGO ftw. I am not an old school fan, and I think old school should stay in the past. It is like not having a cell phone today, or to live without Internet. We live in a new age with new possibilities and should take advantage of that, because that is the only way to progress forward. And I am quite excited about future. I can't wait for it to happen. Old school is like when people build antique houses today – that is just a copy of the past, and doesn't have any artistic value. Sorry old school fans if I am too harsh on you. I think old school is more collecting than building. And collecting is great, but it's a different segment of our hobby. Why not use new bricks (materials, technology) if they're here for us to harvest.

**HM:** What do you think about the use of non-official parts (stickers, modified parts, non-LEGO® elements,...)?

**MG:** I don't have anything against the use of it, and some of the guys do it really great. But I don't do it myself. I'm not even sure why, but I just can't. It would be like a sin. I couldn't sleep.

**HM:** Tell us a little about the AFOL world and LEGO events in Croatia.

**MG:** Croatia is a country in central/eastern Europe and in transition. As all trends here, we are a bit late from west. So AFOL community is new, and so are LEGO events that we

prepare. But though our club "Kockice" is not even 3 years old, it's like a prodigy. We advanced really fast, and have many high quality builders. I must say I am really proud. You can see lot of our work online featured on blogs like TBB and such. We just had our 4th event, and 5.200 people visited it over one weekend. Our largest exhibition was in Technical museum last year, and was visited by 32.000 people, which was one of most visited exhibitions in Croatia last year. We plan to make another one there next year

**HM:** Your work is related with the LEGO market. Is it easy to find LEGO sets although the official LEGO Shop at Home is not available in your country?

**MG:** For me it's really easy. As I said, I travel quite a lot and have my own store, so I buy sets where I can, and import them from a couple of European distributors. As for the AFOLs in Croatia in general it can be quite a problem. I try to get some Exclusives and themes which our not for our market in my store when I can, but that's not always easy.

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