

LEGO[®]

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Interview: Adam Reed

By HispaBrick Magazine®

He is the soul behind the Architecture theme. A theme clearly focused on the AFOL that in the recent months has opened to the world in different ways. Adam Reed has been kind enough to dedicate some of his limited time to answer a few questions.

HBM: How did the collaboration with LEGO® for the Architecture theme come about?

Adam Reed: After dissolving my architecture practice about five years ago, I sought a new challenge in an area that combined the ability to use my hands and to teach others about architecture. I determined that using the LEGO brick would allow me to get back into model-making while also using a familiar medium to teach others about the often intimidating topic of Architecture, Engineering and Construction Design.

I began creating large and small scale architecture models of landmarks I admired from around the world. After posting photos of these creations online, I was invited to a LEGO fan convention in Washington, DC. It was at this convention that my work was noticed by TLG attending the event. I was able to speak with representatives from the New Business Group and explain my passion for using the LEGO brick as a medium for teaching others about architecture. Following several meetings, LEGO also believed that there was potential to achieve the goals I had for use of the LEGO brick and an agreement to produce and distribute the "LEGO Architecture" line was born.

HBM: What was its original purpose? To what degree has that goal been fulfilled?

AR: The purpose of the LEGO Architecture line was to reach a non-traditional LEGO consumer audience while using the LEGO brick as a design medium and educational tool to teach about the art, architecture, design and engineering of structures from around the world. I think we are just grazing the surface of meeting this goal, with a multitude of architects and designs still left to explore and represent.

HBM: How do you select the building that becomes a set?

AR: There are several factors that go into choosing landmarks that can be produced in set form. First and foremost, it needs to be determined if the set can be represented properly using the LEGO brick. It also has to be proven that a potential set can reach expected sales forecasts, securing licensing agreements and moreover continues to represent and maintain our motto or celebrating the past, present and future of architecture to inspire all.

HBM: Can you describe the process of creating a set?

AR: The process can vary, but generally I start by going through several design studies using various bricks and plates to explore the best way to represent a landmark using LEGO elements. At this stage we have an idea of how involved the

set will be which in turn will help to determine the overall scale, complexity, style considerations, etc. After completing a model that I feel is the best possible representation, I will send photos and renderings of the model on to LEGO for further study and recreation if needed. LEGO then reviews and determines if the model can be created using the elements chosen or if edits are necessary. As this process is taking place if necessary a licensing agreement for the development and sale of the set will be formalized. Finally, if the set design is approved and necessary permissions are reached to design the building the set we will then go into production.

HBM: What conditions must a set meet to belong to the Architecture theme (number of parts, scale,...)?

AR: A number of conditions must be met for a potential set to become a part of the line. A desired scale or price point is sometimes determined before a set is designed and then a set must be designed to fit these parameters. Often the main requirement of a model becoming a set in the line is determining if the bricks used to create the model are available





for productions and use in a set. If any key parts or color choice are not available, then a set may not be considered. Other factors that apply would be who our target audience will be, will this be a “grab & go” souvenir that can be easily traveled with by thousands of tourists or will this set be a deeper study into a structure that may have a more focused audience.

HBM: Have you ever thought about changing the scale?

AR: There is an interest in exploring landmarks in a larger scale. To do this, it would have to be the right landmark with the final model meeting all requirements for having a set produced. A larger scale would also mean a higher retail price point which is often times discouraged to avoid eliminating anyone from being a potential consumer of our product line.

HBM: Have you ever missed the existence of any LEGO® part for your designs?

AR: I often go over a wish list of parts that could, should and deeply wish would be available in LEGO form. While designing the Robie House model, we were able to create a new element, the concave 33 degree roof slope. So, given the right set of circumstances we are allowed to produce new elements.

HBM: By using such a small number of parts and such a small scale, what is the criteria for choosing the final model? Has any design proved to be too “poor” visually when completed because of these limitations?

AR: In creating a model I generally go through many designs before deciding on a final design that is a good fit for becoming a set. If I cannot determine a scale or design that I feel truly represents any landmark in an artistic interpretation, I will not even present that design for set consideration. In my studio I

would estimate that I have over 170+ concept models, study sections, and an array of details and doodads.

HBM: What has led you to ask the opinion of the fans for the next set?

AR: Fans have always written and voiced their opinions on what landmarks they would like to see represented in the LEGO Architecture line. This effort is really a proactive way to see what landmarks fans would be most interested in seeing as a part of the line in the future.

HBM: Have you prepared ideas of how to build these buildings before asking for the preferences of the fans?

AR: Potential designs will be explored as votes and suggestions are received.

HBM: Will more buildings be used from the list of proposals?

AR: All suggestions and votes will be considered, but the use of any of the proposals can only be determined as product development is outlined and continually reviewed on a yearly basis.

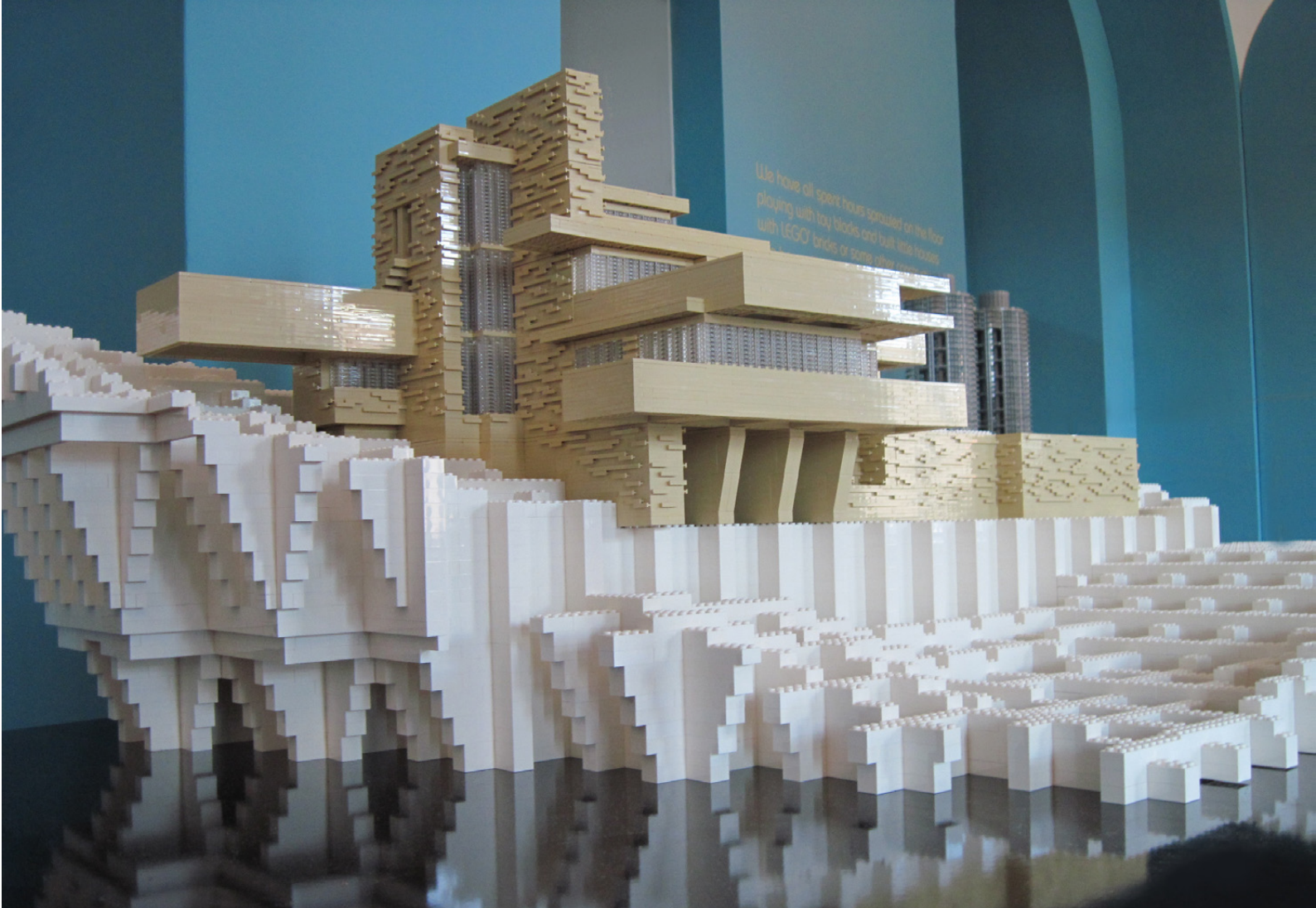
HBM: Have you considered or planned a set of a Spanish building?

AR: We have received many suggestions for Spanish architecture to be represented in a LEGO Architecture set. These suggestions are too being explored and could potentially result in set, only time will tell. I have attempted a few of Santiago Calatrava designs, but no success as of yet.

HBM: Have you considered the possibility of making statues, bridges or other architectural elements that are not buildings?

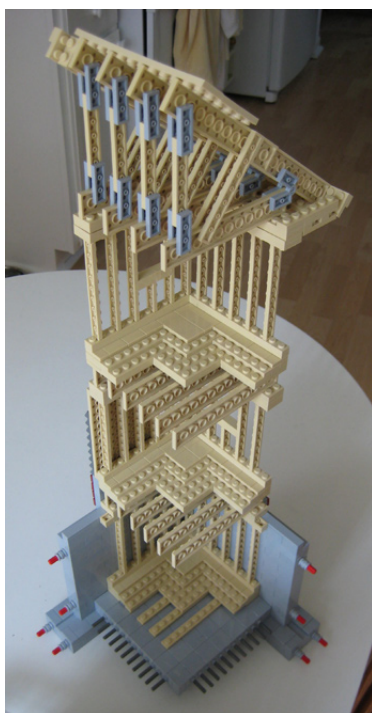
AR: I am very interested in using the LEGO brick to create





other engineering and design feats. The brick lends itself well to architectural models, but it can also serve as a key piece in moving forward and educating about how other design structures are created and celebrating those forms as well. I am very much interested in Dams, Roller Coasters and Bridges, whether or not these areas will ever be up for consideration is still being decided.

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Adam Reed Tucker

