

# Interview with Chris McVeigh

By HispaBrick Magazine®

Pictures by Chris McVeigh

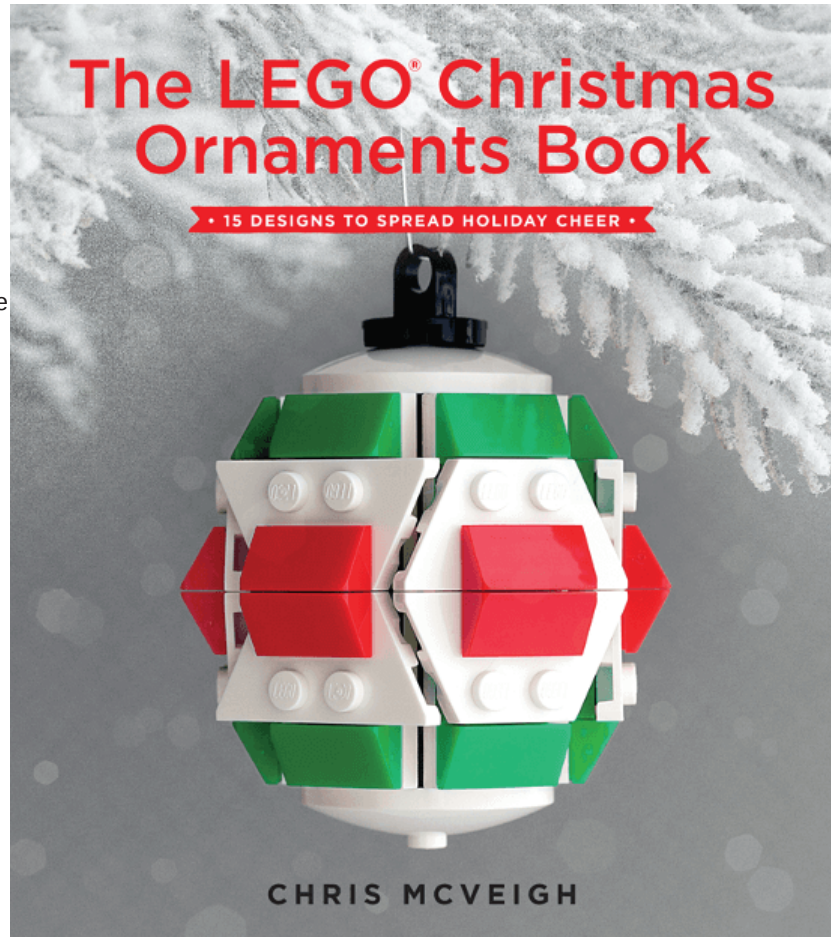
At the start of September we published a review of the The LEGO® Christmas Ornaments Book, a hardcover edition with instructions for 15 festive decorations. [1] For this edition of HispaBrick Magazine we talked to the designer and photographer of the models to learn a little more about his passion for the LEGO brick.

**HispaBrick Magazine:** The instructions in the book are already available on your website. What motivated you to prepare a physical book with these builds?

**Chris McVeigh:** No Starch Press had been pursuing me for a while to do a book, and earlier this year, I decided that it was time! It's been presented as kind of a best-of collection, with a few unique items thrown in there (like the Computer Ornament and the Camera Ornament).

**HBM:** In addition to festive ornaments, you offer a range of other builds on your website. Do you have a favourite theme or set of building criteria?

**CM:** Overall, I think I prefer retro-tech builds like the radio, televisions and computers. Electronics today are flat and boring, but back in the '80s, the limitations of technology encouraged a lot of interesting shapes and aesthetics.



**HBM:** All of the builds you offer on your website are relatively small in scale. Do you also build larger projects?

**CM:** In general, no. Most of what I build is designed for public consumption, and very few people are going to go out and spend \$300 on Bricklink to build a larger model. So, I try to keep my designs bite-sized so that more people can enjoy them. (If I could design anything I wanted, it would almost certainly be modular buildings!)

**HBM:** Is LEGO® “just” a hobby, or has it also become a way to earn a living?

**CM:** At this point, it’s become my livelihood. And I still can’t really believe it!

**HBM:** Another important area of your website features your LEGO Photography. What is your inspiration when you create these photographs?

**CM:** Under pressure from a friend, I joined Flickr in 2007. I quickly fell in love with photography (something I’d previously felt was far out of my comfort zone) and soon purchased a DSLR. I also discovered that I enjoyed creating comical photos featuring action figures. At first it was Hasbro Star Wars figures, but as time wore on, I became frustrated that I had to build props and sets for most photographs. So I started to shoot more LEGO Minifigures, because I could literally build any scene I needed out of LEGO.



**HBM:** Can you tell us a little bit about the process of creating those photographs?

**CM:** I don’t know that there’s a specific process. Usually I let an idea gestate for a few days until I am confident in the concept. Then I’ll get to work, building a set out of LEGO (if necessary). I love using natural light, but recently I’ve switched to flash for many photographs due to the unpredictability of the weather. (I’m so busy, I no longer have time to wait for a nice day!)



**HBM:** The third creative leg of your website shows your Brick Sketches. What got you started on that project and what kind of characters do you enjoy building most?

**CM:** A few years ago, my artist friends Karen Hallion and Crystal Bam Fontan started doing marker sketches and posting them to social media. I thought they were great, but realized I could never match their artistic skills. So one day as a joke I made up a crude Wolverine ‘sketch’ out of LEGO and posted it to Instagram. People loved it, so I decided to do more. By the third sketch, I’d locked down a few basics: always front profile on a 12x16 canvas. And it just kind of took off from there!

**HBM:** Have you posted all of them on your Flickr? I seem to remember a few custom portraits of LEGO reps...

**CM:** A few Brick Sketches are not on Flickr, including the original Wolverine, which can only be seen on Instagram. And yes, I did Brick Sketches for the LEGO AFOL Relations team, which can be seen on Kevin Hinkle’s social media channels. :)  
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Visit Chris McVeigh’s website [chrismcveigh.com](http://chrismcveigh.com) and Flickr account [www.flickr.com/photos/powerpig](http://www.flickr.com/photos/powerpig) to learn more about his work and follow him on Facebook (@[c.mcveigh.photos](https://www.facebook.com/c.mcveigh.photos)) and twitter (@[ActionFigured](https://twitter.com/ActionFigured)).

[1] You can find the review on ur blog