

Interview: Adrian Barbour

By HispaBrick Magazine®

Images by Adrian Barbour (aka BrickMonkey)

HispaBrick Magazine®: Name?

Adrian Barbour (aka BrickMonkey)

HBM: Age and nationality?

AB: 39 and I'm a Kiwi (New Zealander)

HBM: What do you do for a living?

AB: I've spent most of my working life teaching (EFL and primary), but I'm now splitting my time between freelance proofreading/editing and commissioned LEGO® design.

HBM: When did you first start building with LEGO®?

AB: I had plenty of Town, Classic Space, and Technic LEGO® as a kid, but only got back into LEGO® as an adult around the time that the Star Wars and Ferrari sets were first released. So that was 1999 and 2004 respectively, but at that point I was mostly just collecting sets.

HBM: When did you first start posting models online?

AB: It was only with the discovery of LDraw and then BrickLink that I really became active building and posting MOCs online. My first proper models were military designs, as these were the one thing I couldn't purchase as sets. I had a presence on BrickShelf from around 2004, but it was only when I moved to Flickr in 2009 that I started posting the models which I have kept built and on display, and for which I continue to distribute instructions online.

HBM: What is your most recent set purchase?

AB: I recently bought the 75172 Y-Wing, and the very impressive 75144 UCS Snowspeeder. But my most recent purchase is the LEGO® Ideas 21309 Saturn V rocket – such an amazing set in every respect, from building techniques to functionality, sturdiness, and display value.

HBM: What are your favourite themes for building and collecting?

AB: Though I tend to spend more on BrickLink now than on sets, I still like to collect Star Wars models (mostly OT vehicles and UCS) and quality display models like the Creator Expert sets and some LEGO® Ideas releases. Some personal favourites are the 10213 Shuttle Adventure, 10248 Ferrari F40, and 21303 WALL-E.

When it comes to building MOCs my favourite genres are military and cars/motorsport – basically anything that goes fast or blows stuff up. I definitely have a preference for modelling existing vehicles or objects over building entirely original creations, as I enjoy the challenge of finding the best way to capture a fixed existing shape with LEGO® parts. My more recent commissioned work has also had me broadening my horizons in the areas of electric trains and microscale architecture.

HBM: How did you become involved in commissioned work?

AB: In 2016 I set-up a website (www.bm-mocs.com) with the goal of streamlining the distribution of PDF instructions, which I had been giving away through Flickr and email for several years. Prior to this I had also been asked a few times to produce commissioned projects, and once I had the website in place I started to receive a lot more requests. I don't have a huge collection of spare parts, at least compared to many AFOLs, as I do most of my design digitally using LDraw and then LPub for instructions, using what spare parts I have mostly for testing mechanisms and connections.

HBM: What is your favourite/largest LEGO® creation?

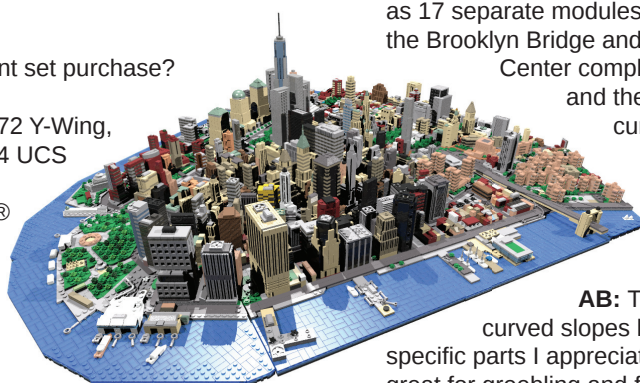
AB: I have three favourite personal MOCs – the Scud B TEL truck, my minifig-scale AC-130U Spooky II gunship, and a fictional Ferrari LMP1 race car. However, my largest designed model, produced on commission for Blue Brixx (www.BlueBrixx.com), is a 20,000 piece modular microscale architecture set of lower Manhattan. To be produced and sold as 17 separate modules, the full model covers everything from the Brooklyn Bridge and Tribeca, through the new World Trade Center complex and Wall Street, to Battery Park and the South Ferry terminal. I am also currently working on a series of trains and WW2 armour for the same client.

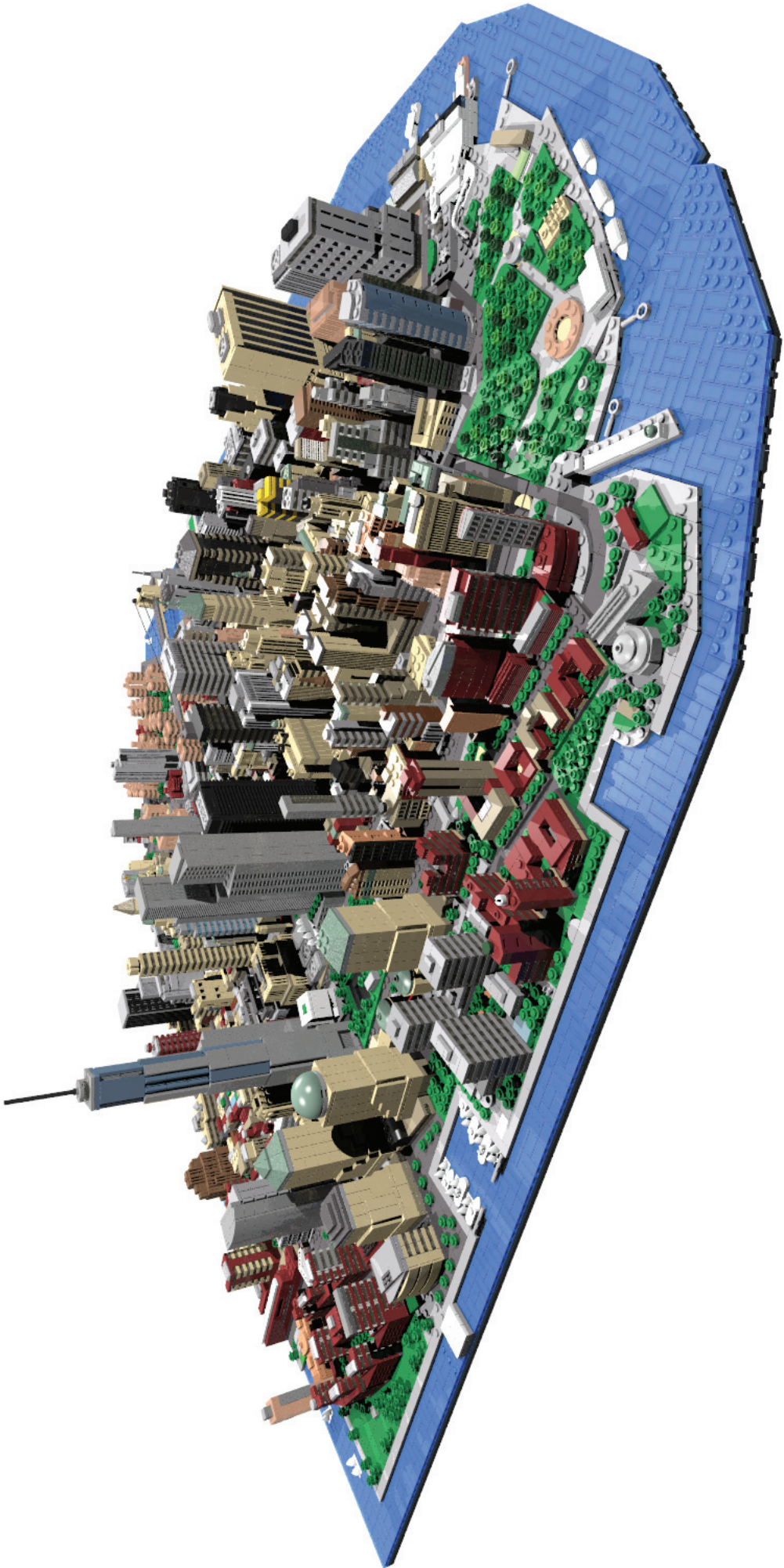
HBM: What is your favourite LEGO® element?

AB: The 1x2-1x2 brackets and various curved slopes have transformed MOCing, but the two specific parts I appreciate most are the turntable top (3679) – great for greebling and for connecting plates in limited space – and the 1x2 ingot (96910), which is my favourite part for greebling detail. I'm also very grateful for the printed versions of the 1x1 round tile (98138) and double cheese slope (85984) now available.

HBM: How much time do you spend building with LEGO®?

AB: With the website and commissioned work, most of my time is now spent on LEGO®-based activity. However, I also





balance this out with my other passion which is martial arts (I train in karate and jiu jitsu).

HBM: How did you become involved with HispaBrick Magazine@?

AB: I completed a proofreading and editing course in 2016, with the goal of supplementing my income post-teaching, and asked the HBM editing board if they'd like some assistance with their English-language translated material as a way of building up some proofreading experience. With my knowledge of LEGO® it was an ideal match, however I'm just part of a team so not all remaining errors are my own!

HBM: Are you involved with any LUG?

AB: I have been a member of LUG4/2, the New Zealand LUG, since 2011 and was on the committee responsible for organizing and running our major event – the Christchurch Brick Show – in both 2013 and 2015. I am less involved now after relocating out of Christchurch, but I did attend our latest CBS 2017 show on July 15-16, and some pictures of this amazing event are included below.

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