

Great creators of the world: Vesna

by HispaBrick Magazine®

pictures by Vesna

HispaBrick Magazine®: Name?

Vesna.

HBM: Nationality?

V: Slovenia.

HBM: What do you do normally?

V: I am a biochemist and I do research in oncology with a specific focus on cancer cell biology. Normally I get up early to be at work on time. Then I rush home to spend the afternoon with my two children, and in the evenings it's time to relax from the daily stress – either by building or sorting LEGO®.

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

V: I built and played with LEGO® from a very young age. Apparently, I already started discovering LEGO® at the age of one year, as I was taking them from my older sisters. During those early years, I played with a limited amount of bricks, as I got a hand-me-down box from my older sisters which I also shared with them. Interestingly, I never had a set as a child, just a mixed box of random parts, so I was making my own creations all the time.

As an adult, I got back into building with LEGO® in December 2009 when I got the Creator 3-in-1 set 4956 House as a gift from my partner. At that time, I was living alone away from family and friends, and had much more free time. Slowly, building with LEGO® became part of my de-stress routine.

HBM: When did you start posting your models online?

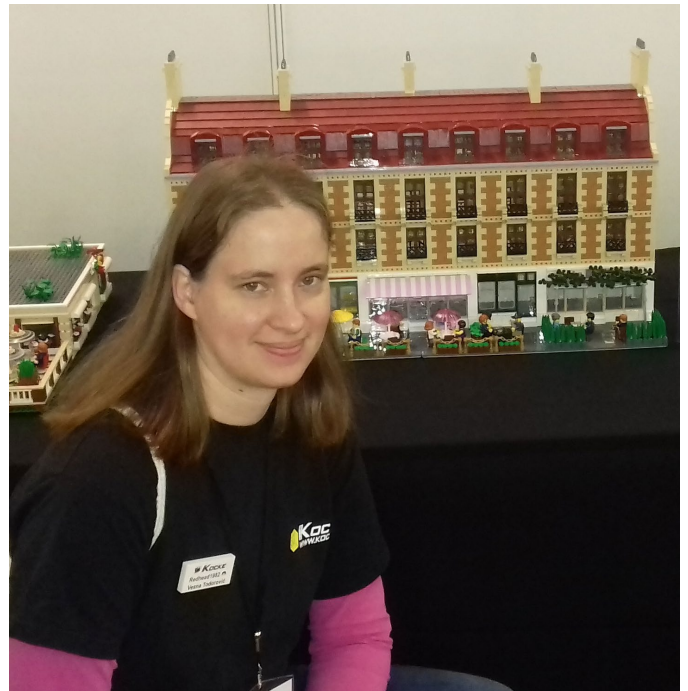
V: I joined the Slovenian LUG Kocke Klub in January 2010, and started by participating in different discussions about LEGO®. Later in 2011 I started posting MOCs, when I was also more actively building after discovering Bricklink and the many, many new parts. At that time, I was spending a lot of time online, discovering MOCs, sets, and parts I did not know existed. I was also very keen on reading comments from the online community, so it was an easy decision to go online.

HBM: What is the most recent set you have purchased?

V: My last purchase included 70830 Sweet Mayhem's Syster Starship!, 75955 Hogwarts Express, 41193 Aira & the Song of the Wind Dragon, 41196 The Elvenstar Tree Bat Attack, and 70618 Destiny's Bounty.

HBM: What is your favorite commercial LEGO® building theme?

V: That is not an easy question considering that I like different themes, and sets from different themes. Some of my favourites

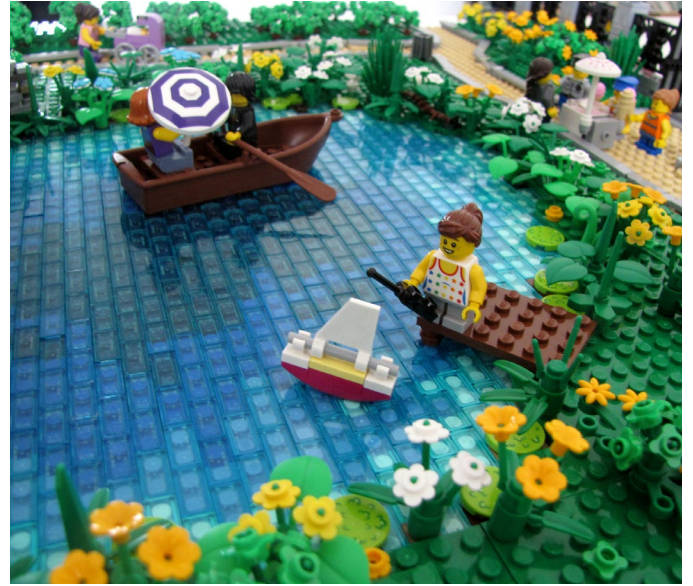


are Friends and Elves, mostly for the wide selection of colours and some interesting parts, but not the minidolls. I enjoy LEGO® Architecture as well, as the sets explore many different techniques at microscale. However, my all-time favourite theme is Modular Buildings. Set 10185 Green Grocer was my first modular building, and after building it I was more or less hooked.

HBM: What is your favorite theme for building?

V: I try to build in different themes, including scenes from Elves, City life, or microscale. However, my favourite themes for building are still houses, interior details and landscaping. But this doesn't mean I won't try other themes. I am constantly thinking about building outside my comfort zone, such as building a boat or a spaceship. But it takes time and more effort to get more comfortable with that.





HBM: If you had to choose just one from among all your creations, which would you choose and why?

V: It is hard to pick out just one creation, as many have a special place in my heart. I was proud of my first proper modular building MOC, a corner building from December 2011, built with a limited selection of parts from a small LEGO® collection. To choose just one creation, I would say Kingdoms Joust Day. This was my first larger creation, and also the only creation I built together with my partner. In addition to learning lots of useful tricks, like ordering more parts than planned and building modularly for easier transport, it was also a fun



challenge to plan and build with him.

HBM: What is the largest creation you've done?

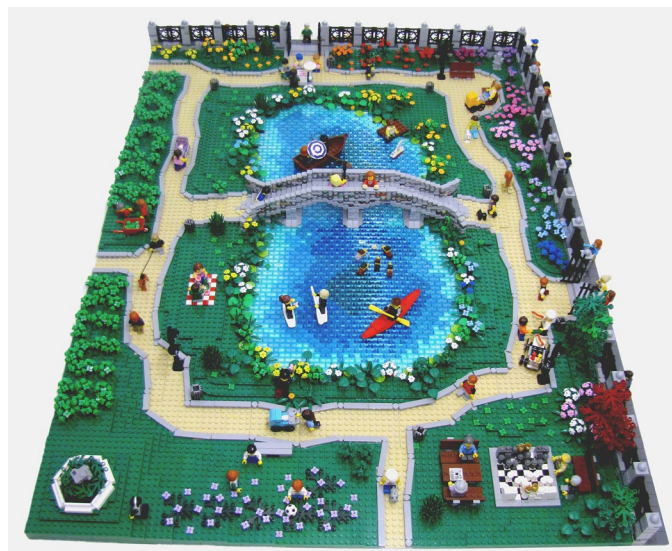
V: The largest creation I have built alone was a Train Station with tracks in the back and a small square at the front. Its dimension were 96 x 128 studs. Considering the limited space I have for the hobby, I do not know when or if I will build



anything bigger than that.

HBM: What is your favorite LEGO® element and why?

V: I can not pinpoint just one single element, but some of my favourites are the different foliage parts. I like that the selection of plants has expanded in the last year to include some of my favourite parts, such as Flower Stem with Bar and 6 Stems (19119), grass stem (15279) or Plant Plate, Round 1 x 1 with 3 Leaves (32607). I used many of these in my Rainbow Park and would love to use even more in different colors.



HBM: Which part would you like LEGO® to produce?

V: I would certainly enjoy more new plant parts, as well as new recolours of the existing plant parts. I would also like a corner brick with masonry profile, and a trans-clear glass for Window 1 x 2 x 2 2/3 with Rounded Top (30044).

HBM: How many hours do you spend building with LEGO®?

V: I don't keep track of time when building, so I can only guess at the number. In general, I build more during the winter months as I spend more time indoors due to the bad weather. On the other hand, Slovenian LUG Kocke Klub holds at least two exhibitions per year, so I am forced to build all year round. When I am actively working on a project, I easily spend 2-3 hours each evening building and planning. Having small children and building MOCs can be challenging, so I generally build in the evenings, until I am too tired to continue.

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

V: I am glad to say my family is supportive of the hobby. My parents find it a bit of a strange way to relax, but they see LEGO® as a great construction toy for grandchildren. I do not discuss this hobby with my friends outside the AFOL community much, but they find it interesting, and some have even visited exhibitions where I've participated. On the other hand, I have made some great friends within the AFOL community, and we all agree this is a great hobby.

HBM: Do you draw or create predesigns before you start building?

V: Honestly, I am terrible at drawing. Sometimes I make some sketches for buildings or landscape to get a glimpse at the basic shape. More often I try predesigns with digital LEGO® software. However, the majority of my creations are built on the table from scratch with lots of trial and error.

HBM: What do you think about the use of nonofficial parts (stickers, modified parts, non LEGO® elements, etc.)?

V: I do not mind using nonofficial parts. Especially custom stickers, printed or even chromed parts which can have a great effect on the final creations, and I would use stickers for my creations. On the other hand, I am not a fan of modifying parts. So far, I have only cut a few flexible tubes I used for different

heights of trees. As for using non LEGO® elements, I have not tried any, but if made in sufficient quality they can be a nice addition. On the other hand, being limited to official parts can boost your creativity to work around a problem and still make a great MOC without nonofficial parts.

HBM: What inspires you to create your layouts and MOCs?

V: I find inspiration for my buildings both in real life as well as online in the AFOL community. Sometimes I see interesting façade detailing that I want to recreate with bricks, while other times I see interesting building techniques I want to try out. I also get inspired by some sets, wanting to expand them further. One of my last MOCs, Modern Villa, was inspired by an old raised baseplate (6092px2) I got as a gift from another AFOL. Another recent creation was built for the Eurobricks event in the style of LEGO® Architecture, a Skyline of my hometown Domžale.



HBM: What plans do you have for future builds?

V: I want to try different themes and different subject matter to get more out of my comfort zone. As mentioned, I am thinking about building a boat and a spaceship in the near future, but I also want to try a different approach to building more houses. However, I am currently actively working on a Ninjago City-inspired layout.

HBM: How do you see the evolution of the FFOL (Female Fan of LEGO®) phenomenon over the last couple of years?

V: Honestly, I never paid too much attention to the FFOL phenomenon. I do not even see it as something out of the ordinary. In general, I do not know many FFOLs and I would say the reason for this is that women in general have other interests than men, perhaps not being familiar with LEGO® in their childhood and then being less prone to start this hobby as adults. There are definitely less FFOLs active in the online community. I am one of the few women active in the Slovenian LUG Kocke Klub and I have never felt different from the rest of the AFOLs. This is also the reason why I would not tag myself with FFOL specifically, as I do not feel the need to emphasize my gender. My experience from international exhibitions is that many FFOLs come as visitors but not exhibitors. Mostly because they like building sets and seeing MOCs, but do not have confidence or time to make their own creations.

#

