



SPACE FAN

by Carlos Méndez, HBM Editor Emeritus

My "love story" with the Space line began in 1979, the year the line debuted in Spain, and lasted until... who are we kidding, it still lasts. I guess that's what happens with first love (I hope my wife doesn't read this...) I was lucky to have a mother who was more than understanding of my hobby. Although she sometimes took a bummer at me because all the space in the room that I occupied with my baseplates, I think deep down she was happy to always know where I was and what I was playing. When I was little I played interchangeably with my Town and Space sets, separately, together, mixed... They were innocent stories, where policemen protected citizens from natural phenomena, firefighters from fortuitous fires and astronauts explored the vast universe in search of resources for space colonization. Sometimes I made "crossovers" between the two lines better than those that are so fashionable now in the superhero series.

I was only seven years old when the Classic Space sets started to fill my Christmas gift list and gradually displaced the Town sets. I guess they gave my wild imagination more freedom. Many times I have wondered why, being so fond of science fiction, only this classic line (and later Star Wars) was able to earn a place in my heart. Maybe because of the age at which we met or maybe because later the lines about space changed their orientation towards more disputed stories, they became more "dark" in my eyes, to say the least. The classic line is undoubtedly more innocent than the later ones. You had your astronauts dressed in red (for me they were pilots), white ones (female astronauts) and yellow ones (scientists), and with them you lived adventures of colonization, accidents, rescues and discoveries. It is true that when the time came you could use some parts as improvised weapons, but at no time did the sets or the images that accompany them induce you towards violence, they emerged from my own stories, I guess influenced by what I saw on television. The

ships followed a classic triangular profile, which looked like the logical evolution of jet aircraft to spacecraft, which made them look very plausible. The vehicles had much more possibilities than the Town vehicles (more linked to their function in real life), while in space the imagination was the only limit. The ships used to bring compartments with bases, containers or vehicles. The vehicles had scanners, clamps, radars, or even rockets. A whole world of possibilities. And if you needed something, you invented it, nobody could tell you that that vehicle did not fly or that it violated any of the laws of physics. I was in space, in my space.

It is difficult to highlight a set from that time, almost all of them were wonderful, and for each person they can have more or less emotional value, but for me the ships of the LL900 series are legend. Especially the 928, a marvel of a set from all angles.

You can always find different opinions about when the Classic line ends, since there were certain changes in the aesthetics of the line. The first scheme was gray/blue/trans yellow and it

is the one that most people follow today. When gray/white/trans blue was introduced they coexisted without problems and can be seen together in most dioramas. Later other schemes appeared (gray/black/trans green, white/blue/trans yellow...) that in small doses did not clash in dioramas either. So when did it end? In my opinion the line disappeared when the minifig's classic astronaut uniform was replaced. That was the breaking point for me.

Until the internet became a phenomenon with global access, you might think you were a little crazy to keep thinking about a long-lost line, but a glance at the networks is enough to discover the number of people that keep the line alive. Not only that, they have made it evolve towards current parts and techniques, maintaining its spirit and colors. In the end, evolving is the way

to survive. The LEGO company seems to have figured it out too, and has taken advantage of the umbrella from The LEGO Movie movies to launch some sets about the line. Perhaps the success of the only Classic Space LEGO Ideas set ever released (21109 Exo Suit) gave them a sign that it wasn't dead to fans. Also occasionally casts a nod to the line by putting their logo on minifigs not related to the line.

During all these years I have been gradually completing the sets that I could not get in my childhood. Always used, most of the time in good condition, others incomplete but still valuable. And in the events in which I have exhibited I have always participated in the Classic Space diorama. I must also say that the new sets that LEGO has been launching, such as the famous set featuring the pink astronaut (70841 Benny's Space Squad),

belong to my collection. . . and in more than one copy. And I am one of those who dream of new sets of the line.

Now you can find three trends, which can even coexist within the same fan depending on the mood in which he is. There are those that build models exactly following the canons of the line, there are those that adapt other constructions to the livery of the Classic Space, and there are those that have concentrated on modernizing the line and bringing it to modern times thanks to the Neo-Classic Space. And I say they can coexist because I, for example, have participated in all three disciplines.

So far my little story about the Classic Space. After so many years, writing this article, I am able to move back to my childhood, where I lived incredible adventures with my little astronauts. . .



