

MAN with a dream



Radek Pituch talks to Roberto Aguilera about his extraordinary scale model collection

It was early 2013 when after logging into my Face Book profile I noticed a message from a unknown contact in Mexico City. His name was Roberto Aguilera and he went on to invite me to visit him on the other side of the globe (I live in Warsaw, Poland), bring my models and spend some time with him in the city. I was rather surprised and suspicious of this tempting offer, but some quick enquiries with my friends David Parker and Adam Wilder reassured me as both had visited Roberto recently. Time passed and couple of months later, in November 2013, I was flying to Paris to get from there to Mexico City, carrying a custom-made box containing 3 of my most recent dioramas (yes, it's possible) having had sent the first one via international mail in a secured box. After a 13 hour flight, early in the morning, I arrived at Aeropuerto Benito Juarez in Mexico City D.F. where Robert was already waiting to greet me. During the next few days I was able to fully enjoy the warm sunny weather, good food and Roberto's company sightseeing in the city. We also visited Roberto's Gallery which is housed in a separate apartment and where he keeps his collections of Star Wars, (which he is a huge fan of), and of course,



This is an example of team work: Adam Wilder's uparmored M4A1, figures painted by Sang Eon Lee and base done by Per Olav Lund.



Mike Rinaldi's D9 Caterpillar dozer and Murat Ozgul's Lanz Bulldog.

what interests us here the most – scale models, most of them being of WW2 era. In his remarkable collection he has managed to gather so far examples of work from such names as Adam Wilder, Beto Barba, Brett Green, Darryl Dancik, David Parker, Man Jin Kim, Miguel Jimenez, Mike Rinaldi, Murat Ozgul, M Workshop artists i.e. Chef Lim, Per Olav Lund, Sang Eon Lee, Staf Snyers and Tony Greenland. Latest addition to the collection are the works I brought with me from Poland. During my stay in Mexico I convinced Roberto to do an interview with him, here are some parts of the interview that in full version should be soon available on youtube.

By profession Roberto is a film director, with 20 year long career, working with many companies from North America, Mexico and Europe. Modelling is his passion for many years now but just recently he had this idea to assemble a collection of the most

exquisite models from around the world.

"Everything started because I found a model on ebay from a very well known modeller, Mike Rinaldi, which he was selling on ebay, a Panzer IV E, a desert one, the one from the Lifecolor box art..."

Roberto turns back and shows me the model now standing on a base made by Per Olav Lund accompanied with figures painted by Man Jin Kim, that were used for the Alpine Miniatures boxart.

"I was surprised by the quality of the work so I purchased the model – says Roberto – and it was the starting point. In the beginning I was thinking of collecting only few pieces because I had so many science-fiction models and I wanted some military, like 10 nice tanks. Then I went to Euromilitaire and saw Staf's (Staf Snyers) 3.7 Panther (Bergepanther with 37mm Flak) and I was just amazed by the model and I said to myself I



Staf Snyer's winterized PzKpfw II Ausf. L "Luchs"



Roberto's Schwimmwagen accompanying Rinaldi's Tiger II Ausf. B



This is the diorama I asked Roberto to show me for a closer inspection, it was also done together with several talented people i.e. Mike Rinaldi (the panzer), Per Olav Lund (the base) and Man Jin Kim (the figures)



Sit back, relax and watch the details.

have to have that one! I admire the artistry – modellers are artists in many ways, tears fall from my eyes when I see this and I'm not exaggerating, this is the truth."

Later on Roberto invited Staf Snyers to become a judge in the annual IPMS Mexico show.

"At that point I realized that I can buy more models. By now I have pretty much most works done by Michael Rinaldi, I also acquired Spencer Pollard's works among them the Workshop diorama but I haven't got them yet here. I decided to set up this place" – Roberto takes a look around in the room where we're sitting that shelves filled up with various models from different artists from around the globe – *"and now I feel responsible for the people and their works that they bring here."* -*Robert had a dream* – says Roberto laughing – *after the response of the community I said to myself, you know what Robert, this is all about sharing, and life's all about sharing and love is about sharing too, about not being selfish. I want to turn this gallery into a modeling museum, the first one ever, and I will do this. This is very nice to have this collection at home but I want to share. I'm proud to being able to collect all this. I have pretty much all works from David Parker, Brett Green, Adam Wilder, Mig Jimenez, the guys from M Workshop and Radek Pituch* – Roberto turns to me and smiles. - *I also have most of the works of Staf Snyers, Per Olav Lund, Sang Eon Lee, all the Alpine Miniatures boxart, also done by Man Jin*

Kim. It's all very nice to have it here, but it's not what I want it to be, it's about sharing with everybody, it's about setting up a Museum, I was thinking that New York would be the place because NY has a lot of visitors. I will keep on building this collection, Roger Hurkmans is coming in March 2014, than later that year Ivan Cocker, they are both bringing their collections. Then Franck Oudin (Contributor to Air Modeller) he's bringing some planes since I'm planning to expand this collection to planes. I'm also planning to acquire works from some Spanish Modellers and Japanese Modellers too. I want this collection to grow up to a point where I can say ok I have 10 times more than I have here now. Then I will gather all the information about the modelers, all the profile pictures, reference materials. In the museum when the people will walk in they will see the flags from each country where the modelers come from. I want to place a room there where people will be able to follow the whole process of model making, because people not familiar with the hobby don't know what it is – when you see a finished model most people think it comes like this. People don't have a clue. So we will show them not only the process of building and painting a model but also the whole industrial process that is involved in creating the kits. I also want to show where modelers find the inspiration from their works to show people how it works. I just have a dream of a great modelling museum that we don't have now because I've seen modelers just passing away, they do incredible work and they die, many times their families don't know what to do with their work, they just throw the models away!"



David Parker's classic, and one of my personal all time favorites, the mighty Tiger I portrayed as a vehicle of the sPzAbt. 503 Operating during operation Zitadelle.

Left hand side section of the WW 2 blue models room



This is Staf Snyers' extremely beautiful Jagdpanther in 1:35 scale.

Roberto posing next to one of his dioramas!





There is still room for more works in the Gallery, here are mine!



Roberto owns many of the Alpine box art figures painted by Sang Eon Lee from Korea.



David Parker's 1:16 Tiger II Ausf. B



The best of the best, van Goghs of modeling – the works of Adam Wilder and Mig Jimenez,

I also asked Roberto about other eras, are they of interest and does he want to include them in the museum?

"We will begin this museum with World War II – says Roberto - and hopefully we will expand it to Medieval, Napoleonic era, Ancient times, whatever, even modern warfare too. We'll probably get there very soon but now I'm concentrated on World War II subject because it's very, very extended. - People outside think these are just toys and I want to elevate it to art level."

In the last words of the interview I asked Roberto to give a message to the

community and so he did:

"I would like to invite you to participate in this endeavor which is time-consuming but delightful as well – Roberto smiles – not to mention the investment you have to put to make this real."

The collection now totals around 100 pieces including figures. After reading this article I hope you can understand why I choose the title.

Roberto is not only a collector that builds a gallery of internationally renowned modellers' works that he's going to turn into a Museum of Modelling Art. He is also an active IPMS Mexico member, giving the

modelling society in Mexico the opportunity to meet with the most talented people from around the globe in the hobby and to take part in their lectures. Having the support of his friends I am sure he can achieve his goal in a few years and that one day we will all be travelling to see the first ever modeling Museum. For me my stay in Mexico was an unforgettable experience. Seeing all those astounding works in one place gives you the impression there's nothing more a modeller can dream of, just to sit back, sipping a drink and enjoying surely the most impressive collection of models in the World.