

A PURE GUNDAM MAGAZINE THAT PROVIDES  
INFORMATION AT THE FOREFRONT OF GUNDAM

Hobby  
JAPAN  
MOOK

# GUNDAM FORWARD

OPENING  
TOPIC

**GUNDAM BUILD METaverse**  
the latest title in the Gundam Build Series

SPECIAL  
FEATURE

**MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM SEED**

# GAT-X

**SERIES GENEALOGY**



# GUNDAM FORWARD

This is the 11th issue of *Gundam Forward*, a Gundam magazine dedicated to reporting on the latest Gundam news, providing professional modelers' Gunpla production techniques, and other useful information from the front lines of Gundam.

The featured topic of this issue is *Mobile Suit Gundam SEED*. In 2021, a life-size Freedom Gundam statue was erected in Shanghai. Additionally, several Gundam plastic models (Gunpla) have been generating buzz, including the ENTRY GRADE Strike Gundam and MGEX Strike Freedom Gundam, which were released from the end of 2021 to 2022.

In our main article, we introduce the popular broadcast and streaming series *Mobile Suit Gundam: the Witch from Mercury*, as well as the upcoming *Gundam Build Metaverse*, scheduled for release in October.



MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM SEED



GUNDAM FIGURE REVIEW



START



GUNDAM BUILD METaverse



MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM FROM MERCURY THE WITCH

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# GUNDAM FORWARD

HOBBY JAPAN MOOK

## CONTENTS

- 4 Table of Contents
- 6 Gundam Build Metaverse coming October 2023
- 8 The latest on *The Witch from Mercury!*
- 10 Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Destiny HD Remaster Complete Blu-ray BOX (Special Limited Edition)

## Special Feature: MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM SEED THE GENEALOGY OF THE GAT-X SERIES

- 14 The birth of the GAT-X Series: How It Changed the History of Mobile Suits in the Cosmic Era (Commentary by Hiroyuki Kawai)
- 16 The Genealogy of the GAT-X Series (Commentary by Hiroyuki Kawai)
- 18 Main Mobile Suits of the GAT-X Series (Commentary by Hiroyuki Kawai)
- 20 GAT-X105+AQME-X01 Aile Strike Gundam (Composition and text by urahara3)
- 28 GAT-X303 Aegis Gundam (Composition and text by urahara3)
- 36 GAT-X102 Duel Gundam (Composition and text by Naoki Kimura)
- 44 GAT-X103 Buster Gundam (Composition and text by Naoki Kimura)
- 52 GAT-X207 Blitz Gundam (Composition and text by Naoki Kimura)
- 60 GAT-01 Strike Gundam (Composition and text by Naoki Kimura)
- 68 GAT-01A1 Dagger (Composition and text by Naoki Kimura)
- 72 GAT-01 Strike Dagger (Composition and text by Naoki Kimura)
- 76 GAT-02L2+AQME-M11 Dagger L (with the Doppelhorn dual recoilless cannon) (Composition and text by Naoki Kimura)
- 80 GAT-04 Windam (Composition and text by Naoki Kimura)
- 84 GAT-04 Windam (Multi-Launcher) (Composition and text by Naoki Kimura)
- 86 Sayaka Mizuno's Mobile Sweets Introduction
- 88 Living a Laid-back Modeling Life
- 90 Gundam Customization Meeting Life
- 91 Gundam Figure Review
- 98 Publication Information

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SPECIAL  
FEATURE

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM SEED

# GAT-X

## SERIES GENEALOGY

The most recent TV series, *Mobile Suit Gundam: the Witch from Mercury*, has been successful in attracting new viewers to the Gundam franchise while still entertaining existing fans. However, about 20 years ago, there was a work that not only captivated the Gundam enthusiasts of the time, but also attracted new ones. That work was *Mobile Suit Gundam SEED*, set in the Cosmic Era and directed by Mitsuo Fukuda, with mechanical design by Kunio Okawara and Kimitoshi Yamane. With more distinctive mechanical designs and character designs by Hisashi Hirai, it effectively attracted even younger followers. However, it was not entirely aimed at a younger audience. The main mecha, the Strike Gundam, is based on the RX-78-2 Gundam, and the first episode pays homage to the original *Mobile Suit Gundam* by showing an enemy attack on a secret MS factory. This focus on existing fans led to its success.

In 2022, the series will celebrate the 20th anniversary of its TV debut, and fans are excited about the upcoming theatrical release, which marks a new stage for the series. Therefore, we will focus on the “GAT-X” series, which includes the main mecha, the “Strike Gundam,” from the first part of the series. We will go through the history of the series, give detailed explanations, and introduce five early MG models of the GAT-X series. This serves as a prelude to the upcoming release and will give fans a better understanding of the series.

# Using Panel Surfaces and Mechanical Shapes to Achieve More Detailed Color Separation

## AILE STRIKE Gundam

In the early days of the GAT-X series, ZAFT managed to capture all but one of the mobile suits - the GAT-X105 Strike Gundam. Like the Duel and Buster, this mobile suit was built on the X100 series frame, but it was an advanced version that incorporated technical feedback from the Aegis and Blitz. What sets the Strike apart from its predecessors is its unique "Striker Pack System," which allows it to swap out different packs depending on the situation and tactics of the battle. Thanks to this added feature, combined with its already impressive power and versatility, the Strike Gundam has achieved numerous victories on various battlefields. Of course, much of its success can also be attributed to the skills of its pilot, Kira Yamato.

The Strike Gundam kit has been completely redesigned as part of the "HD Remaster Project" that was implemented in 2012, resulting in high-spec proportions and superior modeling. In the custom kit created by urahara3, the kit has been further improved by adding intricate details to the panel surfaces and mechanical molded parts based on the original design drawings.



BANDAI SPIRITS 1/100 scale plastic kit  
"Master Grade" Aile Strike Gundam Ver. RM modified  
**GAT-X105+AQM/E-X01**  
**Aile Strike Gundam**

Composition and text by urahara3

urahara3  
She's a modeling expert who works from home as a mom and delivers gorgeous, flawless paint jobs.

GAT-X105+AQM/E-X01

▼▶ Attaching the Aile Striker Pack to the standard Strike Gundam frame results in a more imposing and heroic silhouette. In this configuration, the main weapons of the mobile suit are the Beam Rifle and the Shield, along with the Beam Saber mounted on the Aile Striker. While the Aile Striker Pack is primarily designed to increase the Striker's mobility in space, it also allows for short bursts of flight within the atmosphere.





◀◀ The cockpit hatch can be opened and closed. The Kira figures that come with the kit – both standing in uniform and sitting in a pilot's suit were meticulously painted.



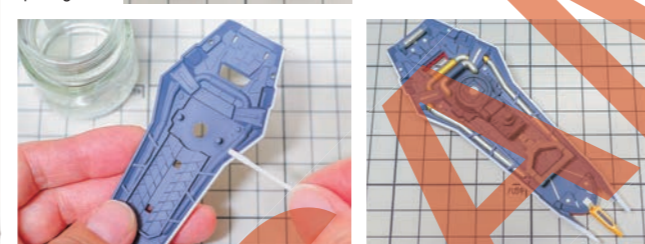
◀ As for the antennas, I sharpened them and used chisels to refine the shapes without changing their original forms.

▲ To improve the Vulcan guns on the sides of the head, I carefully drilled holes using a pin vise. After removing the original molded details, I replaced them with high-quality metal parts – specifically the HIQ Parts EZ Gun Muzzles Short S 1.7 mm.

▶ I noticed that the inside of the frame parts under the knee would be exposed when bent, so I added a plastic plate with engraved lines to add more detail while covering the opening.



▲ After painting the different parts of the back, I masked and painted the whole area with Tamiya Enamel Dark Gray.



▲ I used a cotton swab soaked in enamel solvent to remove the paint from the edges to reveal the white base. Highlighting the white edges creates a more dynamic finish, but it is difficult to achieve with masking alone. The technique shown in this example is much easier and highly recommended.

▲ After removing the mask, this is the final result. While the back of the shield may not be so prominent, it is intricately and three-dimensionally molded. With careful painting and additional detailing, the overall appearance can be greatly enhanced.

My name is urahana3, and I built the MG Aile Strike Gundam Ver.RM. Bringing out the contrast in the panel lines and mold details with paint is my cup of tea, and this time I also added explanations to the photos in the article explaining the method. Rather than modifying the kit itself, my focus is on how to finish complex kits with many highly detailed molds in a cool and stylish way. Painting with color separation means using colors that are different from the original design, so it's important to make sure the new colors don't look out of place and are visually effective.

My typical approach is to highlight the central portion of the moving parts, such as the arms and knees, by painting them metallic. However, painting the entire joint metallic can look unnatural, so I use masking to highlight only a portion of the joint. This allows me to emphasize the complex mechanical structure of the joint and create

a sense of integrated separate parts.

I often modify concave and convex details on the kit, adding color variation to these parts with small applications of paint. This approach creates a sense of complexity and layered textures. The key is not to haphazardly change colors on each part, but to carefully consider each detail and make sure it looks cohesive when viewed as a whole. Rather than applying a metallic color over the entire surface, it is better to apply it strategically in specific areas to achieve a precise and subtle effect without being overly obtrusive. Even for the main color, I prepare 2-3 shades of white with different hues. For red, I use two shades with different hues, and for blue, I use two shades of cobalt and purple. I arrange them according to the details. This makes the kit look more complex by highlighting the intricacy of the structure and allows me to add metallic color accents. This is my approach

to painting.

It takes perseverance and patience to continue masking for several days, but by not sparing the effort, you can drastically improve the result. I hope this is helpful to those who see it!



▲ Using the concave mold on the top of the Aile Striker Pack as an example, I'll show you how to paint complex details. Before adding the panel lining, you can paint the entire surface white, but I'm going to paint in a different color here.



▲ Start by painting the entire surface with champagne gold. It blends seamlessly with white and looks more natural than using contrasting colors such as red or blue. This color can also be used to accent certain joints.



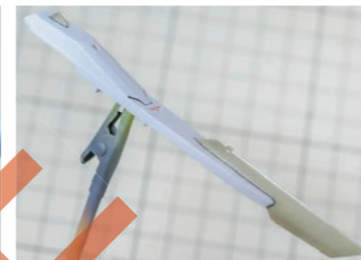
▲ Mask the concave mold. Apply masking tapes of equal width to the top and bottom, making sure to draw visible lines by scoring the left and right sides with a scribe.



▲ Using the scored lines in the last step as a guide, trim the excess masking with a precision knife. Drawing a shape on the masking tape and cutting it on a cutting mat can result in slight misalignment, so cutting directly on the part ensures a perfect result. However, it takes some practice to master the right amount of pressure, so it is not recommended for beginners. (urahana3)



▲ I cut the tape. You can see that it covers all the way to the edges of the concave mold. The method of cutting the tape directly on the part allows you to mask even complex shapes once you get used to it. I'll say it again, I don't recommend this method for beginners. (urahana3)



▲ After painting the entire surface white, mask the flat areas again and paint the raised areas in the front and rear champagne gold. "Even though the concave shape and the raised areas are the same color, I decided to take the more time-consuming approach of masking and painting white first. I felt this would result in a cleaner finish given the shape of the object." (urahana3)



▲ I assembled the Aile Striker Pack and painted the concave shapes and projections on the black parts in the front with champagne gold. I also applied color separations to the main wing flaps to create a flowing image from front to back. When adding color, it's important to use it where it's most effective while keeping the overall picture in mind.



▲ By boldly changing the color of the shapes on the leading edge slats, you can create an accent or add more visual interest. Although it takes some effort to mask, the result is worth it, as you can see in the example.



◀ I'm going to paint the back of the hip armor using the same technique as the back of the shield. Since there are also three-dimensional shapes here, this method creates a much more refined look than simply filling it with a solid color like black, especially when it becomes visible in striking poses.



▲ I found a tiny depression on the back of the projection on the bottom edge of the shield. I covered it with a plastic plate with a slit shape on it.



▲ Armaments include a 57 mm high energy beam rifle, anti-beam shield, two beam sabers, and two armor Schneider blades. For contrast, the beam rifle and the handles of the beam sabers and armor Schneider blades have additional color separations.

▶ Compared to the straight build on the left, the custom kit has much more detail thanks to additional color separations on the existing panel lines and shapes of the kit. This has made each shape more pronounced and easier to recognize. The metallic paint on the frame has become an especially nice accent.

