

Hobby

MECHANICS 04

HOBBY JAPAN MOOK



SAMPLE

SPECIAL FEATURE

HISTORY OF GUNPLA TECHNIQUES

Guide to Past Model Kit Reproduction • Hasamoto Details • Kondo Version Mobile Suits • Max Painting • Candy Finish • Seira-Masuo Details Electrical Decorations and Motorized Crafts • Color Modulation Painting • Easy Finish • 3D Digital Modeling • Latest Weathering Technique

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* All prices listed are exclusive of tax.
All prices are current as of November 2019.



MONTHLY HOBBY JAPAN 50TH ANNIVERSARY X
GUNPLA 40TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL COLLABORATION

SPECIAL FEATURE

HISTORY OF GUNPLA

TECHNIQUES

This year *Monthly Hobby Japan* is celebrating its 50th anniversary, and 2020 will mark the 40th anniversary of Gunpla. In other words, four-fifths of Hobby Japan is the story of Gunpla. Throughout its long history, many building techniques for Gunpla suggested by Hobby Japan have evolved into trends. We will share some of these techniques with you, along with the latest examples of custom builds and how-tos by professional modelers. From nostalgic to the latest and greatest, we will show you the history of Gunpla techniques.

SKILL 1	Guide to Past Model Kit Reproduction
SKILL 2	Hasamoto Details
SKILL 3	Kondo Version Mobile Suits
SKILL 4	Max Painting
SKILL 5	Candy Painting
SKILL 6	Seira-Masuo Details
SKILL 7	Electrical Decorations and Mounted Crafts
SKILL 8	Color Modulation Painting
SKILL 9	Easy Finish
SKILL 10	3D Digital Modeling
SKILL 11	Late Weathering Techniques

SAMPLE



Guide to Past Model Kit Reproduction

In July 1981, a book was published that contributed enormously to the Gunpla boom. That book was called, *How to Build Gundam*. It sold significantly more copies than its parent publication, *Monthly Hobby Japan* and accelerated the growth of Gunpla's popularity. The series of works that incorporated AFV-like modeling techniques into Gunpla had delighted elementary school kids of the time. Many of them bravely took on the challenge of rebuilding, changing the color, and weathering their models. The second volume, *How to Build Gundam 2*, published the following year in May 1982, introduced more advanced techniques with model examples. It featured a wealth of different models from MSVs to those with original modifications, including several masterpieces that fans still remember today, such as the recreated Federation hatch Gundam from Shoji Kawamori's illustration for *GUNDAM CENTURY*, Katsumi Kawaguchi's diorama titled "The Desert Prison of Zeon," and the Jungle Zaku II with four color camouflage by Masahiro Oda.

Invasion! Special Forces

SAMPLE

BANDAI SPIRITS 1/100 scale plastic kit
MS-06 ZAKU REAL TYPE conversion

MS-06J ZAKU II WETLAND

Modeling and text by Kei Tadano

Back then, *How to Build Gundam 2* was the bible for the Gunpla Kids

HOW TO BUILD GUNDAM 2



The second volume was published after the success of the first book. The cover featured a 1/60 Full Hatch Open Gundam (referred to as a Maintenance Hatch Open back then) and became a lively topic. Many boys must have been amazed by the diorama trilogy that began with "White Base Launching Bay." The content shifted from custom builds imitating the anime settings to models with a lot of original elements. The cover had a mainly black background that gave it a more grown-up and chic style.



▲ "Invasion! Special Forces" by Masahiro Oda is among the Diorama Trilogies. It shows a scene in which the Zaku Special Forces invade the Amazon. He used a 1/100 scale model for the commander's Zaku in front and 1/144 models for two Zaku in the background, creating a splendid work of art with a dimensional layer effect.

MS-06J Zaku II Wetland Type

BANDAI SPIRITS
1/100 scale plastic kit
MS-06 Real Type Zaku Modification
Modeling and text by Kei Tadano



Guide to Past Model Kit Reproduction

Following the style of Masahiro Oda's diorama "Invasion! Special Force," I assembled a Zaku with a frame of an MG Zaku II to modernize/renovate it. I used both new and old techniques, like angling the shoulders, soldering the power pipes of the head, adding a flashing mono-eye and a battery in the backpack to finish it.

TYPE



Zaku Real Type

- Manufacturer: Bandai Spirits Hobby Division
- 700 yen, on sale ● 1/100, approx. 18cm
- Plastic kit



▲ Comparison with a straight build (left). It retains the original kit except for the implanted internal frame of the MG Zaku II and cut-out shoulder parts, showing the exceptional quality of the original 1/100 kit from back then.

BANDAI SPIRITS 1/100 scale plastic kit
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HISTORY OF GUNPLA TECHNIQUES Guide to Past Model Kit Reproduction



▲ I forcibly glued a 1/100 kit Mono-eye rail to the MG head. Then I covered it with a helmet part from the 1/100 kit. For the Mono-eye, I opened the rail of the 1/100 kit and inserted the Mono-eye recycled from the MG kit. I placed a red LED inside with the wires being led through the torso.



▲ The wiring from the head leads directly to the backpack, which serves as a battery box. To prevent light from leaking, I attached metal tape to the back of the Mono-eye rail.



◀ I inserted the inner frame into the torso, the shoulders of which had been cut off at an angle, and then secured the front and back together. I attached a cut-out plastic plate to the shoulder opening. I attached the waist side armor of the 1/100 kit to the one of the MG, filled in the gaps with epoxy putty and plastic, and smoothed its shape.



■ Good ol' Zaku

When I had heard the then project was to reproduce Masahiro Oda's camouflage Zaku from *How to Build Gundam 2*, I could hardly wait for the kit to arrive, trembling with nostalgia. For various reasons, I did not have much time to build this model, and they allowed me to assemble the kit in a fixed pose. Surprisingly, however, preparing a kit in a fixed pose can take just as much time and effort. The same applies to the addition of joints with aftermarket parts. I tried to find a way to solve all the problems by meditating in front of the test build and the MG Zaku II. It took me a while to figure it out. Finally, it came to me! I found a remarkable compatibility between the MG Zaku II and the old kit! So I decided to use all the old kit parts and integrate the MG parts into it.

■ The charm of the old kit

Looking at the test build of this kit, I had the feeling that the designers and craftsmen had fantastic skills in converting a character model into 3D. I think this set could surpass the modern ones in terms of volume, surface texture and scaling. The more I looked at the kit, the more I could tell. So I decided to transplant the joint parts alone and apply only minor changes. Let's move on to the real work. I cut the shoulders at an angle so they could fit nicely, and then cut all the parts of the MG frame that got in the way to attach it inside the torso. I put it inside with the waist armor and glued the exterior. Afterwards, I disassembled the waist armor, filled in the gaps, and reinforced the crotch peg. I cut the front skirt in half and attached the MG armor parts to the back to make use of the ball joint.

I shaved the MG thigh section with a rasp rough grain file to fit it into the thigh section of the old kit, and then glued it in firmly. After minimizing the double joints of the knee, I hollowed out the thigh area and adjusted it so that the joints would fit in. As for the shin frame, I treated it in the same way to get rid of the unnecessary parts and then layered them between the parts of the old kit. For the ankle, I just implanted the joint parts and put five glass beads in the shoes and glued them together. In the same way, I embedded the whole MG arm into the old kit's arm (only transplanting the forearm joint) and made it movable.

■ Mono-eye illumination and more details

I cut out the MG kit head, combined it with the Mono-eye part of the old kit, and modified it to mount it like a helmet. I modified the Mono-eye to fit the clear parts of the MG kit and installed a red

▼ I have modified the MG kit's arm pieces to fit everything into the 1/100 kit's outer skin, from the shoulders to the upper arms, elbows, and forearms. I also used the polycap of the wrist from the MG kit. The handpieces are from the 1/100 kit, and I carved them to have an angle on the wrist and with clenched fingers.



▲ The legs contain the entire thigh part of the MG kit, and there is also an MG frame in the lower leg. I have carved the joints shaped to fit the smaller joints into the 1/100 exterior.

▲ After assembling the kit, the joints moved exactly like the MG kit, but it looked the same as the old kit. Apart from the energy tubes and parts and the backpack, I did not have more to improve on the details.



◀ All weapons from the 1/100 kit. I attached a handle to a holder for the Zaku machine gun. You can detach the bazooka from the rack as well.



▼ I added line engravings on the power pipe with a feather edge file so it would blend well with the head. I cut off each joint of the legs and removed the inner connecting pins. I inserted lead wires of corresponding diameter through them, then added an O-ring taken from a disposable lighter in the middle and glued it to make it mobile.



▲ I enlarged the backpack with sheets of plastic and the like, adding details with scraps. I made an antenna by gluing a sharp 0.8 mm brass wire to the nozzle of a disposable lighter. I used store-bought parts for the thruster nozzle. I added support for the bazooka in the upper right corner and installed the switch for the Mono-eye LED in the upper part.



LED light inside, leading the wires through the torso to an exposed plug at the back of the head. I hollowed out the inside of the back to accommodate an enlarged backpack. I integrated a CR2032 button battery box and a microswitch into the backpack. During the kit's assembly, I connected it to the plug of the head, which reduced the amount of work required for assembly.

I wrapped the thin power pipes of the head with soldered wires and glued them. I slightly enlarged the nose. For the power pipes of the body and legs, I engraved lines like the ones on flexible tubes with a feather edge file to give the impression that they were well fused with the other parts.

■ Painting

The kit's "silver bald spot weathering" on the

surface and the texture of the energy tubes of the earlier example kit from back then clearly showed the influences from Kunio Okawara's illustrations. To reflect the aesthetics of the time, I started with the primary treatment for "hairspray chipping," which was to be applied later. After priming, I painted the surface with a gray created by mixing GX colors, which have a strong paint film, and finished it beautifully with C8 Silver. Next, I used the hairspray "Cape Super Hard" in a suitable container and sprayed it evenly with an airbrush to complete the basic pretreatment. I painted and masked the gray area and moving parts of the frame beforehand (I used lacquer paints for each process).

As far as the camouflage was concerned, the following colors were sprayed on randomly at low pressure, referring to examples from the work

back then.

C39 Dark Yellow → C136 Russian Green (2)
→ C135 Russian Green (1) → C70 Dark Green
→ C12 Olive Drab

First, I painted each part, then spray painted after assembly to adjust the camouflage to perfection with an airbrush gun. The hairspray's adhesive component will soften when alcohol is applied, so I applied Aqueous Hobby Color Thinner to the hairspray with a brush each time and peeled it off with a bamboo skewer. I also used Color Splendor—an alcohol-based marker.

I wanted to recreate a Zaku marching through the jungle towards the Federation Army in Jabro. How do you think it turned out?

Kei Tadano

He makes his living through various types of modeling, design and model making. His works are especially popular with people in their 40s and 50s, and he has also mastered various forms of expression in modeling and painting, including weathering.



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