

Randy's 1:1 Scale Groove

A while back, G.K. artist Randy Pavatte started a thread on ClubHouse hobby forum entitled [“Moving up the scale....maybe.”](#) Known as “deepgroover” on ClubHouse, Randy is an award-winning modeler and has been bringing home hardware from IPMS contests for years. In his ClubHouse postings, Randy commented about having seen a number of new kits in 1:1 scale and expressed interest in trying his hand at a larger scale kit. “I’d love to try one of the life-sized busts,” he wrote, “maybe by Black Heart, but only if I think I’ll be content with the results.” Randy expressed concern about what results he could expect with a 1:1 scale monster kit because: 1) his kit-building has focused on historical figures and busts, and he had not painted fantasy and horror kits until late last year; 2) most of his kits were 1:72 scale to 200mm full figures; and 3) he paints all of his kits by hand; nope, he does not use an airbrush. But Randy also expressed his concern that embarking upon modeling in a larger scale would require that he write a larger check to buy it.

Randy Pavatte and his Werewolf of London

Black Heart loves a challenge and Randy presented the same challenge we’ve heard from many of our customers *before* they finished their first Black Heart kit. We understand that price, size, and other intimidating factors have held back a number of GK artists who might otherwise be interested in Black Heart kits. But we were confident that if Randy tried one, even without an airbrush, and even with enamels, and even at the highest price he’d ever paid for a kit, he’d dig it. We were also confident that, if we got him to try one, we’d get Randy hooked on Black Heart kits and 1:1 scale.



Henry Hull in *Werewolf of London* (1935)

Another Black Heart customer on Clubhouse tipped Randy to [How Annette Got Her Groove Back](#), an article written by Annette Smith, a first time modeler who has now developed her own Black Heart groove. With that article and testimonials from other Black Heart customers on the hobby forum, we convinced Randy to give us a try. He chose our 1:1 scale Werewolf of London wall-hanger kit sculpted by Mike Hill.

With Randy’s reservations in mind, we thought it would be interesting to share with modelers the experience of another Black Heart “virgin”. But we were particularly intrigued by the fact that Randy seemed militantly resistant to using an airbrush and anything other than enamel paint to finish his kits. We asked him to document his build up and to write an article about the experience. And, here it is. Thanks for making us look good, Randy.

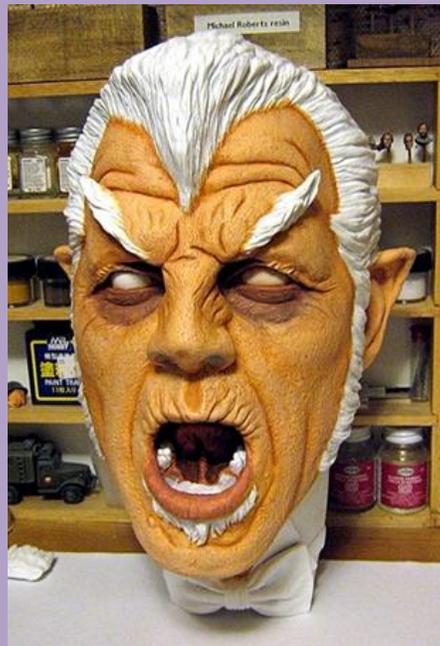


I've known since getting into figure painting that I'm in a tiny minority of modelers who paint with enamels. It's not that I believe they are better, but I've spent my whole model-building life using them, and have no desire to learn something else now. I've enjoyed scale modeling for about 35 of my 47 years, but got serious with figures within the last seven or so. I've only been doing fantasy/horror stuff for about a year and I love the creative flexibility they allow when compared to historical subjects.

When I started the thread on Club House Modeling Forum, I'd started noticing a number of larger scale kits being offered. Most GK artists use acrylics on their models but I wasn't concerned about using enamels. But, I did question whether an airbrush is needed to bring a life-sized kit to a satisfying finish. So, I read *How Annette Got Her Groove Back* and saw that someone who had no previous modeling experience (*none!*) could put a really nice finish on a 1:1 scale kit (Black Heart's Predator, no less!) and she did so without the use of an airbrush. If that's not pure inspiration, I don't know what is.

I ordered the Werewolf kit and received it in about a week. It's always a delight to buy a piece so well created and cast. And, because I don't primer any of my work, I was pleased to see the kit was cast in white. It also seemed to me that Black Heart's resin has a degree of absorbency. I brush-painted everything on this kit and used Humbrol and Testors enamels.

The first photo shows my first coat of color. Trust me, even though the photo makes it look orangy, it looks much more realistic in person. I couldn't compensate for the hue like I wanted to with my camera and photo program. The second photo shows shadows and highlights added, and much of the mouth and under the eyes.



After I laid the base coat for the eyes, I tried something different to get the irises rendered correctly. I used a circle stencil and chose a size suitable for his irises. I then traced it on a paper towel. I used a paper towel instead of ordinary paper because the towel is softer and contoured to the eye opening more easily. I then cut it out and placed it in the eye at the angle I wanted. Holding it there I traced the shape with a pencil. This helped ensure the same diameter and allowed for easier alignment. In the third photo, you can see the light outlines for the irises and the finished mouth with the lower denture installed.

At this point, I was very encouraged by the results I was getting and could hardly wait to see the Werewolf finished.

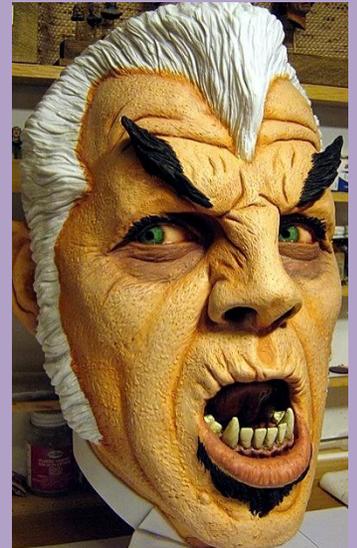


I was checking out Black Heart's website one night and noticed their T & A page (*Editor's note: Randy was disappointed to learn that "T & A" stands for "Tips and Advice". What else?!?*). Among the articles on that page were a couple of really good ones by AFM writer Fred DiSanto on how to put a realistic finish on 1:1 scale eyes ([The Eyes Have It](#) and [The Eyes Have It, Too](#)). So, I read up on the subject and adapted parts of them to my painting style. Once I was satisfied with the colors of the iris and orb, I sealed the eyes with Devcon epoxy.

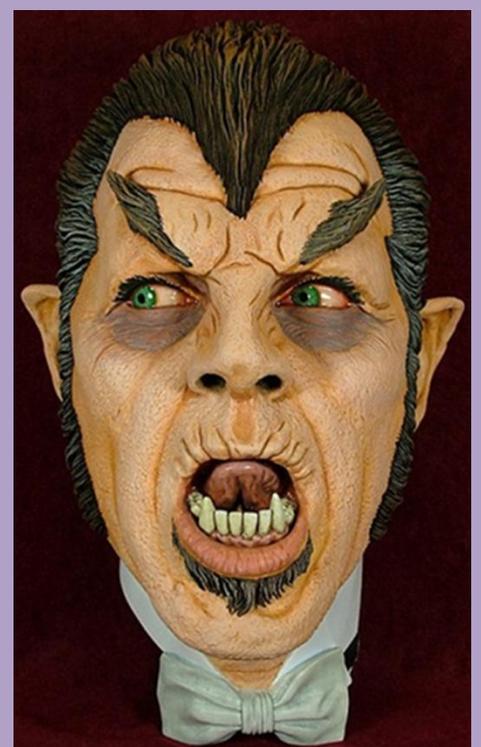
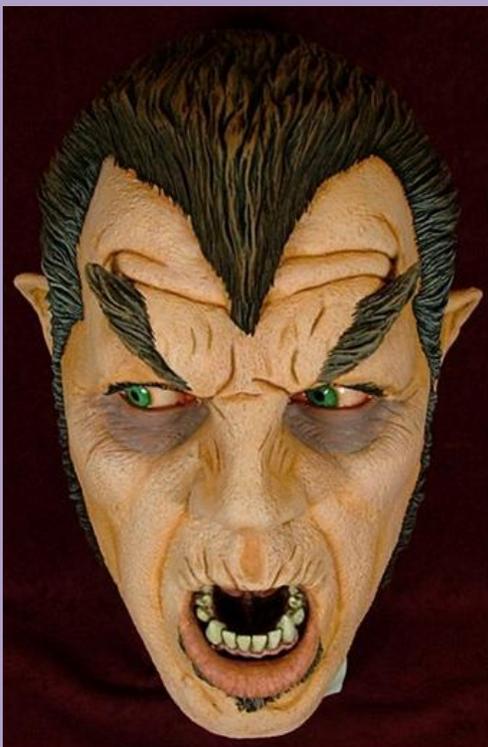
I really enjoyed doing the eyes. This was just the type of challenge I found exciting rather than scary. I must say it was a kick to stare at this thing on my work table, and have it staring back at me. All my friends know I build models, but none are into the hobby themselves. So, I hoped to really drop some jaws with these eyes.

For the base color for his "soul patch", eyebrows, and his eyelashes, I planned to use dark brown, but because I lighten from my base color, dark brown was too light for my taste. I chose black instead, and after dry-brushing brown over this, I got the shade I wanted. I also heeded some expert advice and added a hint of grey to the temples and such.

I gave his hair a black base coat and spent a good part of one night giving the hair brown highlights and a bit of grey near the temples and slightly lower. I also painted his bow tie and shadows on his shirt. I opted to leave his shirt unpainted since the white resin was a suitable look. Then I refined the grey in his hair, added a lighter brown highlight to the top of his hair, and shaded his bow tie.



And that brings to conclusion my first ever life sized piece. I wish I'd discovered Black Heart before they had retired some of their first model kits. I'm flattered to have been asked to share my creation with, and to write this article for, Black Heart's website. I can certainly be added to the many thrilled customers who came before me and I'm no longer afraid to tackle such a project. I had a blast, and will most definitely spend untold amounts of time gazing at this artwork.



EPILOGUE

Immediately after completing my Black Heart Werewolf of London wall-hanger, I purchased and then finished Black Heart's 1:1 scale Mr. Hyde wall-hanger!!!!!! Black Heart had already retired the kit but I was lucky enough to get a casting that another customer had returned in exchange for a different Black Heart kit.

Mr. Hyde is my second Black Heart model kit, and he was every bit as wonderful to work with as the Werewolf of London kit. I must admit I'm as pleased, if not more pleased, than when I finished my first full-sized piece.

Except for painting his top hat with Rustoleum Black Automotive Primer from a spray can, my Mr. Hyde was entirely hand-painted with enamels.

In September, I entered both kits at IPMS Regionals in Covington, Louisiana. Werewolf of London won the award for Best Song-Themed Kit (*Werewolves of London* by Warren Zevon) and Mr. Hyde won a Silver Award in the Busts category. Now I am pondering which Black Heart kit to do next...maybe Curse of the Werewolf?

Editor's Note: We told you we'd get you hooked, Randy!



