

Steve Parke has been a regular contributor to *Amazing Figure Modeler* for several years. A sketch artist, photographer, author, graphic designer, and professional garage kit artist, Steve has earned a reputation for being one of the best model painters in our hobby. Thanks, Steve for making *Black Heart* look good.

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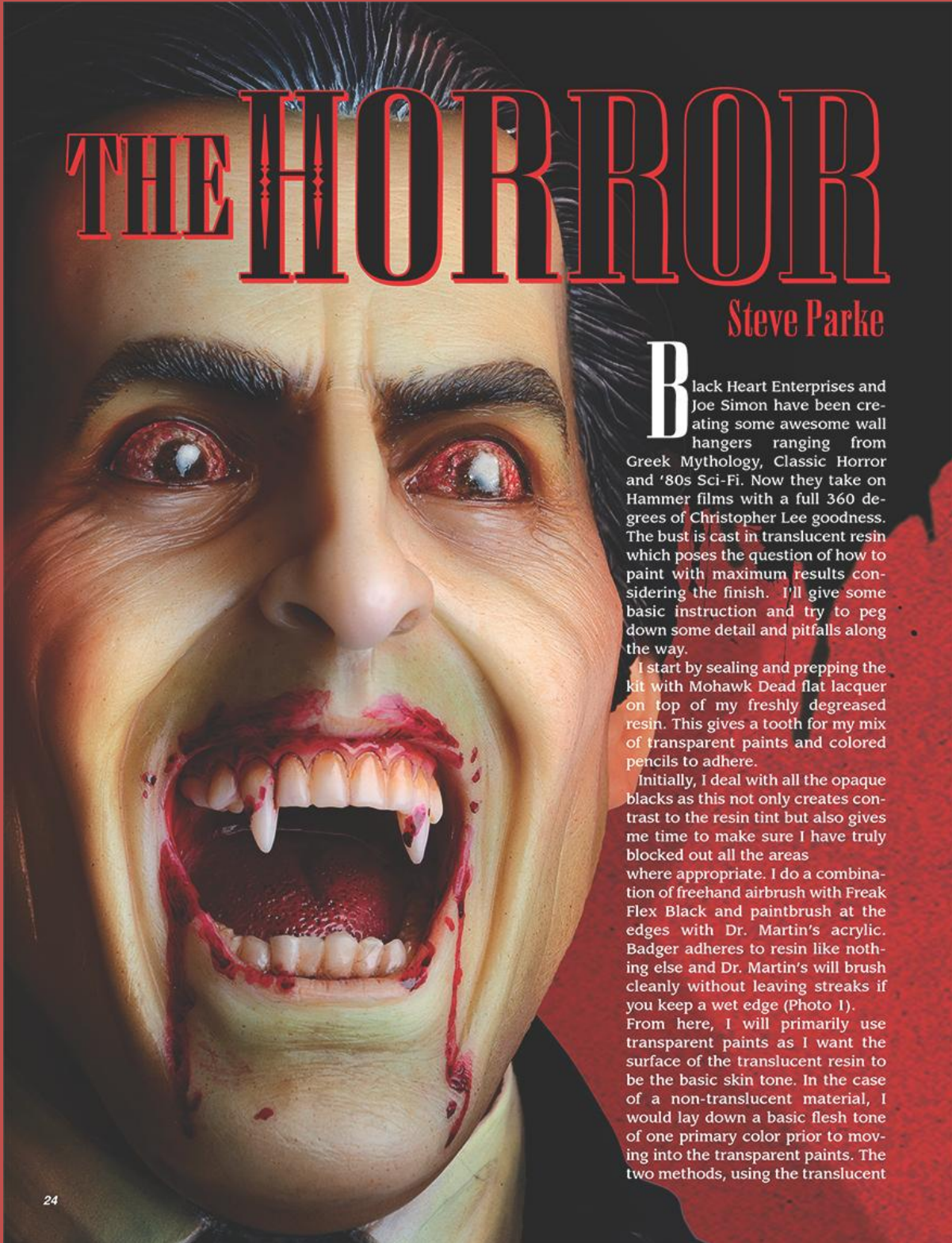
# THE HORROR

Steve Parke

**B**lack Heart Enterprises and Joe Simon have been creating some awesome wall hangers ranging from Greek Mythology, Classic Horror and '80s Sci-Fi. Now they take on Hammer films with a full 360 degrees of Christopher Lee goodness. The bust is cast in translucent resin which poses the question of how to paint with maximum results considering the finish. I'll give some basic instruction and try to peg down some detail and pitfalls along the way.

I start by sealing and prepping the kit with Mohawk Dead flat lacquer on top of my freshly degreased resin. This gives a tooth for my mix of transparent paints and colored pencils to adhere.

Initially, I deal with all the opaque blacks as this not only creates contrast to the resin tint but also gives me time to make sure I have truly blocked out all the areas where appropriate. I do a combination of freehand airbrush with Freak Flex Black and paintbrush at the edges with Dr. Martin's acrylic. Badger adheres to resin like nothing else and Dr. Martin's will brush cleanly without leaving streaks if you keep a wet edge (Photo 1). From here, I will primarily use transparent paints as I want the surface of the translucent resin to be the basic skin tone. In the case of a non-translucent material, I would lay down a basic flesh tone of one primary color prior to moving into the transparent paints. The two methods, using the translucent





resin and a painted surface, are similar to each other, except building up color on the translucent resin needs to be done more slowly since I can't go back in and simply take any layers back with the base color flesh. Working relatively slowly and observing the paint build up is the key to not getting too dark. Another factor in any and all likeness paint-ups is REFERENCE MATERIAL. I say this every time and it's true; if you want it to look like the character you have to have intimate knowledge of skin tone variation, blemishes, color cast and any other detail you won't pick up on by simply treating the kit like a coloring book to be filled in.

Christopher Lee has a lot of warm orange tones in his face coupled with a fairly heavy beard shadow. Having already painted one of these busts true to Lee's complexion, I decided to treat this one a bit more vampire-like and leave him paler than the actor's actual tones.

To start with, I focus on areas of primary importance. I blow in some burnt orange around the eyes to start deepening the sockets a bit. At the temples I put in some veining with the Blue Enhancer that will be subtle but is a nice thing to see when looking closely at realistic skin tones (Photo 2). Using the same blue, I begin to establish Lee's heavy beard shadow. I also block out the whites of the eye with an opaque Liquitex Soft White which pretty much will be the hottest light on the kit. Now that I have my darkest and lightest points, everything else will fall in between. Since this is where I am starting to block in shapes, I use some Indigo Blue Prismacolor pencil to catch the edges of the eyebrows just to establish where they live. This helps me focus on the area where I will need to darken under the brow. While I have my pencils out, I draw in the shape of the iris with Sienna Brown so I can live with it as I continue to paint and see if I have set them where I will want them to be when I get to painting them.

Prior to my next step I use PlayDoh to mask off the lower teeth and gums. The resin will be visually pale enough to serve as the tooth enamel



color (Photo 3).

To build up my skin tones, I spatter (by turning down my air pressure on the compressor) between Burnt Orange, Ochre, Rich Brown and Pale Flesh. I also use Red Enhancer at the edges of the nostril, tip of the nose, earlobes and cheeks to warm up the areas that are usually flushed. Additionally, for the heavy beard in Lee, I use ComArt Smoke to darken up any areas that are appropriate to the reference material. This is going over an already established blue tone that has been muted back with orange tones so the beard area doesn't appear all one hue. There is no huge secret to building this color; just watching the way the tones build up and not going too far too fast. Sometimes I like to get to a finish point with the paint (usually when I can't tell if I need more or not) and walk away so I can get a fresh eye on it later.

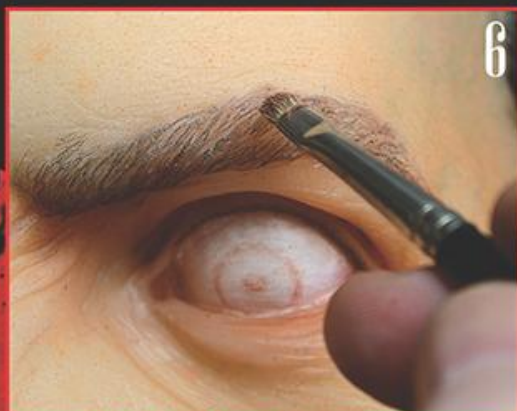
On top of the transparent paints I also use pastels to add small age spots, to line around eyes and to blend colors together in smaller places on the face (Photo 4). I also return to my colored pencil to knock in



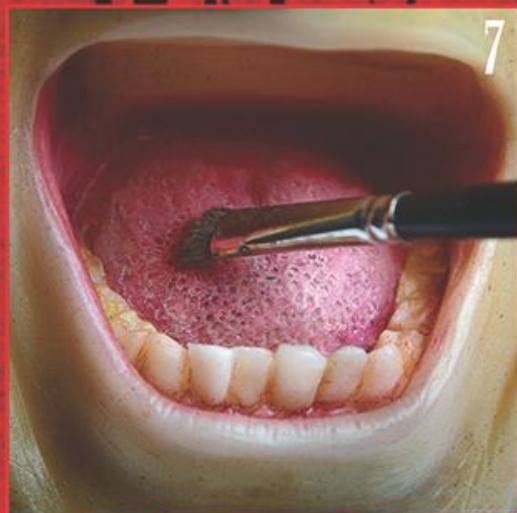




more eyebrow detail and to strengthen the eyeliner over the top of Lee's eye (Photo 5). The great thing about pencil and pastel is that it can easily be erased which is a real plus on translucent resin (Photo 6). Once the skin is in fairly good shape, it's on to the mouth!



The inside is fairly straightforward. Using ComArt Violet I spray at the back of the mouth to create depth then follow with a mist of Rose and Burnt Orange. Once the color is built up, I spray Flat Top Coat over the mouth area to seal it, then use a Violet wash on the tongue to pop the detail (Photo 7). The teeth and gums are handled with washes of Rose and Ochre. I spray some Ochre at the gum line to weather the teeth. I also wash some Sepia between the teeth to define them further. The great thing about the translucent is that you don't have to lay a base color down for the teeth; and frankly, the material allows for a more realistic look than paint. I found the Violet wash to be too dark in the tongue detail, so I loaded a dry brush with Pink chalk pastels. I pat that over top of the wash to make it more subtle (Photo 8). If this was a creature, I'd leave it as is, but another part of realistic painting is subtlety.



The eyes are the final part of the likeness. Using the Dr. Martin's black opaque, I paint in the pupil. I decide to try and bring an underlying shimmer to the iris so I paint in striations with Titan Gold (Photo 9). I seal with the Mohawk Dead flat. A coat of Tamiya gloss clear is used to start creating the wet look of the eye. Over this I use ComArt Sepia on a small brush to start bringing in the brown eye color (Photo 10). I spray transparent Rich Brown and Dark Brown with a very tight spray to deepen the brown further (Photo 11). I seal again (do not use too many brush strokes with the Tamiya clear or it can ruin your underlying paint job) so I can move forward with the veining of the eyes. I am choosing the heavy reds of the film which looks fairly surreal. I meticulously paint each one in with a liner brush (Photo 12). I add a bit more brown via my airbrush to deepen the eyes. I use a paper towel to mask the skin tones below while spraying free hand (Photo 13).



After this is complete, I decide to seal again with Garage Kits US Flat Top Coat since the lacquer is not particularly great to breathe. I really like this topcoat for general use but it is not a lacquer. I found this out the hard way because I went for one more heavy coat of the clear and was using too many passes of the brush causing the underlying reds to bleed (a reaction to the gloss coat over a non-lacquer sealant from what I can tell). Desperate to not start from scratch, I used the wooden end of the brush to try and push the clear back away from the iris so the red doesn't intrude. This action created a thin line around the iris that is almost white - somewhat like the close up images of Lee's contacts (Photo 14). Thankfully, I managed to keep this from being a disaster, but was reminded to know what paint bases might react badly with others.

To wrap up, I add a bloody mouth. Using a red colored pencil, I map out the edges of the pattern around his mouth and drips down his chin. Using a medium sized brush loaded with True Red, I paint in the general color and then darken it with a brush of ComArt sepia (see finished shot).

That's pretty much the basics to working with this type of resin. It's not much different from regular resin, except the base tone is there for you and by leaving it exposed, you can get a VERY realistic skin that an opaque can't really have by nature of the light reflectivity. Opaque surfaces bounce light off the top,





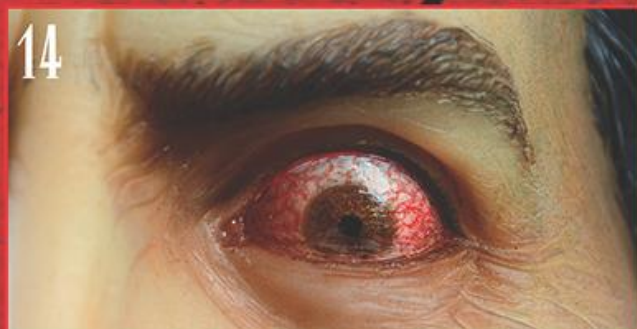
while translucent ones allows light penetration which means you are seeing light refracted back at multiple levels, which is much more like real skin.

Thanks to Black Heart and Joe Simon for such a cool bust to paint. I REALLY hope to see translucent resins used for more large scale pieces like this in the future. I'd like to say how much I enjoy the products put out by Dr. Martin's, ComArt and Garage Kits US. These are essential in my arsenal to make realistic skin tones.

#### Material list:

- Dr. Martins Spectralite: black
- GarageKits US: Transparent pale flesh, Blue Enhancer, Red Enhancer, Raw UmberEnhancer, Dark Brown, Rich Brown, True Red, Flat top coat
- Badger: Freak Flex Black
- Liquitex: Soft White
- Tamiya: Titan gold, Gloss clear
- ComArt transparent colors: Ochre, Burnt orange, Violet, Rose, Sepia, Smoke
- Pastel: Pink

The Dracula bust can be purchased directly from Blackheart Enterprises:  
P.O. Box 2011 St. Paul, MN 55102  
Website: [www.blackheartmodels.com](http://www.blackheartmodels.com)  
email: [goblackheart@comcast.net](mailto:goblackheart@comcast.net)







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