

## Painting a bust

by  
Stephen Mallia

Hauptsturmführer  
(1:10 scale resin bust)  
*courtesy of El Viejo Dragon Miniaturas*

Following the series of tutorials, particularly aimed at the novice painter, I'm glad to present you another topic: the preparation and painting of a bust. For this purpose, we chose a large scale bust, namely the Hauptsturmführer (CB17) by El Viejo Dragon in 1:10 scale. The size is slightly larger than normal but this will be to our advantage as we can see better what's going on, thus leading to better understanding.

Instead of boring you with a lot of words, I chose to take as many pictures as possible. In this way, I can add a clear description with every picture, making it a lot easier to understand.

### Preparation

In all painting projects where stock figures are used, the basic preparation is somewhat similar. The only difference would depend on the way the figure is cast and divided. This bust consisted of four parts: the main body, head, left arm (including hat) and pedestal. Due to the good quality of the casting, cleaning was minimal and was done in the normal manner using needle files, sandpaper and some fine steel wool. Excess resin left from the casting process was first removed with a side cutter and then sanded down. This was only done because these were a bit large considering the size of the bust.

A metal pin was inserted at the neck centre and a corresponding hole drilled at the base of the head. Try to make the receiving holes slightly larger in diameter than the pins.



Another hole was drilled at the left shoulder and a brass rod inserted. Again a corresponding hole was drilled in the left arm. The pedestal and wooden base were centred at this stage. The pedestal was drilled right through so the steel rod would go from the bust, through the pedestal and down to the wooden base.

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At this stage all the parts were glued with 2 part epoxy and left to dry. A little putty was needed at the left shoulder joint. This was applied after the glue had set and smoothed with isopropyl alcohol and brush along the shoulder contours. The bust was then primed with Citadel's skull white primer in spray can.



### The Eyes

With full figures I think that the prime focal point is always the face. With busts, where the face is more prominent, the eyes take that primary role. I will try to explain the way I paint the eyes. One of my rules of thumb is to never use pure white for the white of the eyes. It will make them look unnatural, in a stare.

The first step I take is to paint the eyes with a light grey colour (AC60). Next I paint the pupils with black, trying to get them as even and the same size as possible. Note that the upper and lower edges of the pupil will not be visible.





Next I chose the actual colour of the eyes, in this case brown, and repaint the pupils. Only this time I leave a thin outer line of the black colour visible. So now we have a brown pupil with a black outline. At this stage I highlight the brown. I mix a lighter brown and apply an area about a quarter of the pupil. In this case it's the left upper side.



Next comes the black smaller centre of the pupil. Try to make these as centred as possible. Now the real fun begins because the next steps will give life to the eyes. A catchlight is applied in pure white. It is applied in the same area as the brown highlight (direction of light), only this time it's smaller and goes both from the black centre to the brown. You will now notice the eyes looking a lot better.



For the next step, some red paint is diluted in such a way that it looks like dirty water. Very carefully, apply some of this with just the brush tip at the inner corners of the eyes. You may have to repeat this step because the paint is so diluted that it won't show at the first attempt. Now it's time for all the outlining. I use black to outline the upper eyelid and dark brown for the lower. Look at the eyes to check if everything is correct and when happy apply a coat or two of gloss varnish.





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## Painting a bust, cont.

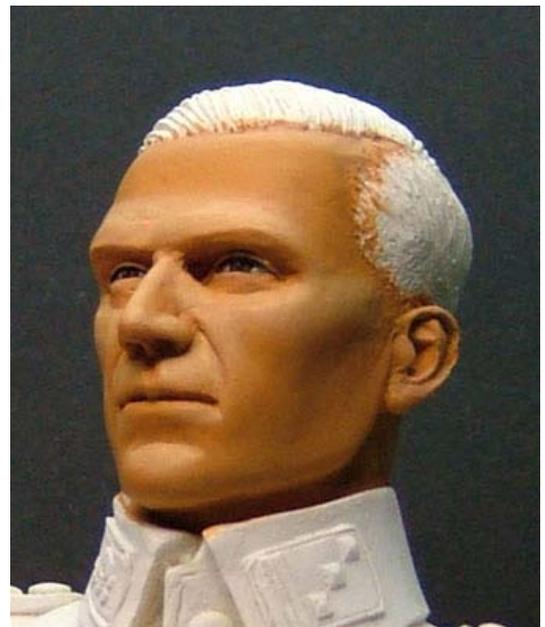
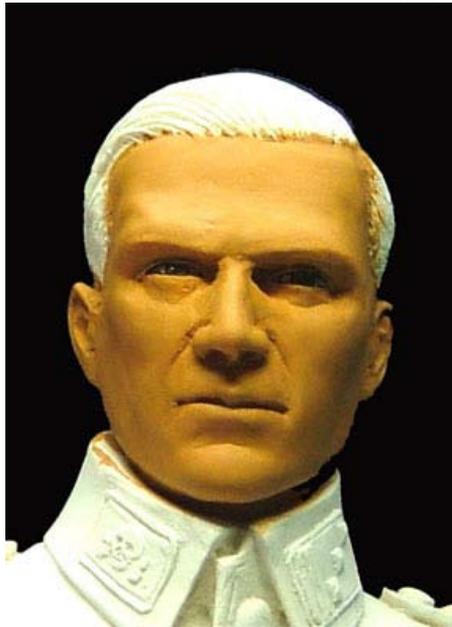
### The Face

Next in importance after the eyes, definitely comes the face. For the purpose of this article, I left the flesh mix as simple as possible. This was done in order to concentrate on the application of the paint itself as I did not wish that anyone trying this out, get confused with complicated mixes. The mix for the flesh is the following:

Base	AC10
H/L 1	base + AV815
H/L 2	H/L 1 + AV815
H/L 3	AV815
L/L	base + AV814
L/L 2	L/L 1 + AV814
L/L 3	AV814 + AC26

As you can see, this is extremely simple and uncomplicated, thus making things a lot easier.

After the base is applied, make sure that it is well and evenly covered. A highlight colour is mixed, of which the dilution should be about 1:5. I apply the first Highlight about twice and in all the highlight areas.



This will give me room to narrow the area when applying the second and third highlights. Dilution for these should be approximately the same. If at this stage you notice some hard edges between the colours soften it with washes of the same colours and try to get a soft colour transition. The wash should be at least 1:12.

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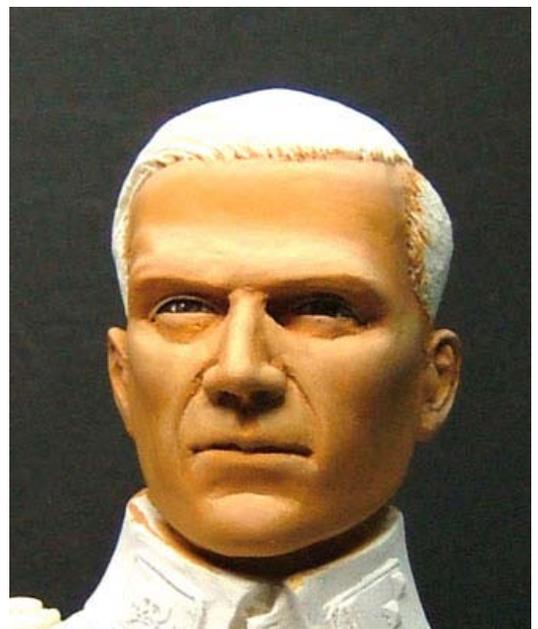
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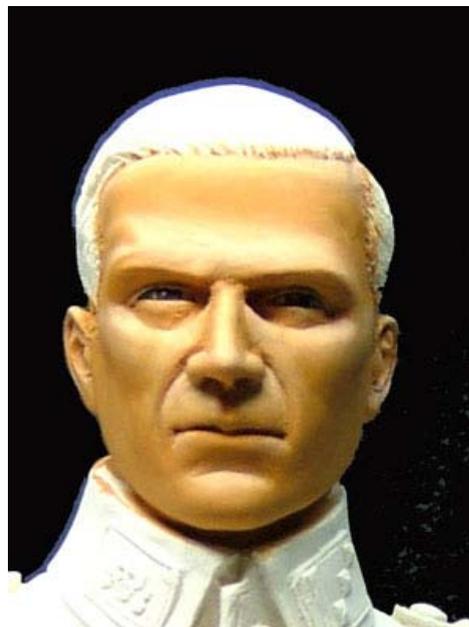
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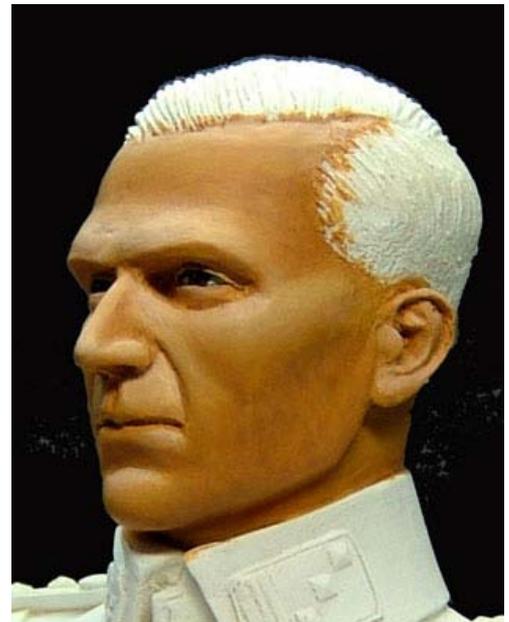
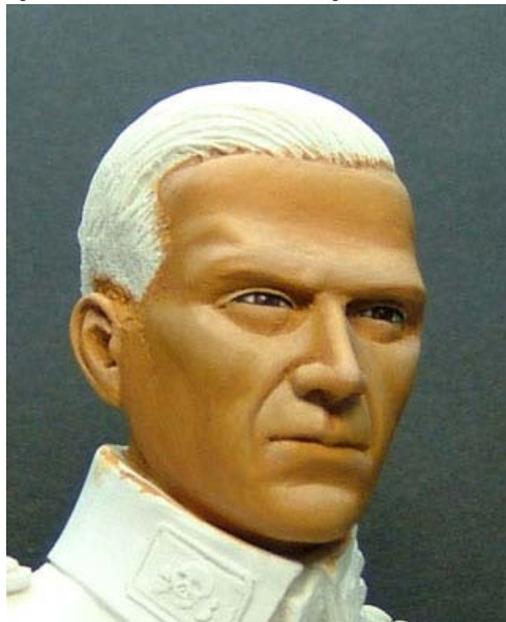
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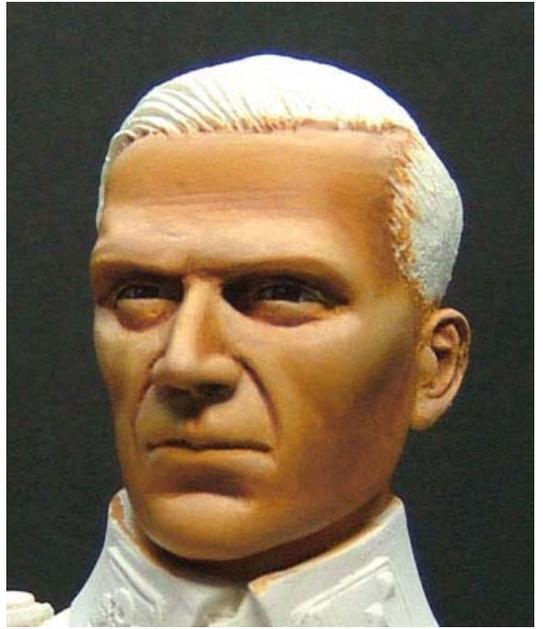
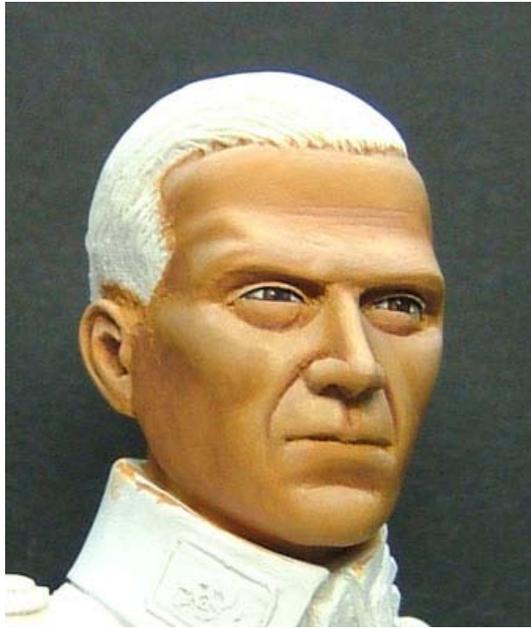


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The lowlights are applied in the same manner except that the dilution is higher. At least 1:8 and you need to apply this a few times for each lowlight step. Apply common sense and ask yourself which are the areas that catch light the less and go darker in the areas with less light.



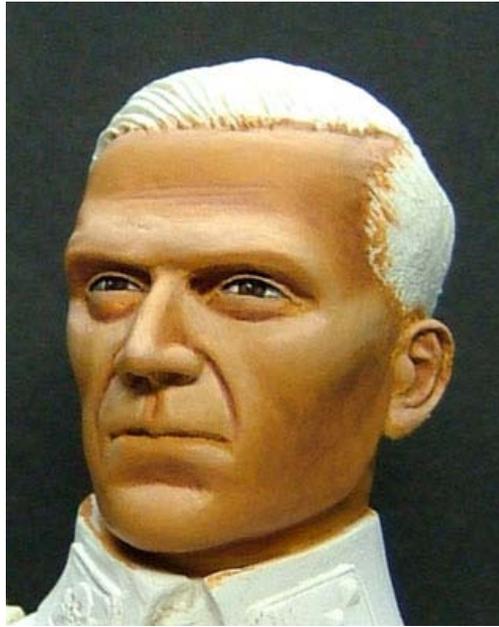


A mix of AV994+ a touch of black and AC10 (base) is mixed. Dilute it to a stage where you need to apply several coats to see the effect; apply this in the beard area. Again, hard edges are eliminated in the same manner.



For a final step I mix some black and AV909 and add a lot of water to it. Reduce it to murky water and apply controlled washes from above the beard area (and just below the first HL). This will bond everything together and help in getting a more natural look. Keep in mind that it's a bust we're painting so the rather cosmetic approach that we use for

smaller figures does not apply that much here (this bust is even larger so this theory applies more). At this stage the details like lips, etc. can be painted. For the lips, I mix some dark red by Vallejo to the base mix and apply it accordingly. It is then highlighted in the same manner with lighter/darker colours.



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## Painting a bust, cont.

The rest of the figure was painted using these same techniques.

### Jacket

Mix for jacket:

Base	AC1 + AV994 + AV886
H/L	base + AV886
H/H/L	AV886
L/L	base + AC26
L/L/L	L/L+ AC26



Jacket base



Jacket, first highlight



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Jacket, second highlight and 2 lowlight steps



Jacket, second highlight and 2 lowlight steps

The outlining and edging stage is very important to bring out the details. After all the highlights and shadows are applied, all the details are outlined with black paint. After that we need to edge all the details. This is done by applying thin lines of highlight colours along the edges. One thing to note is that if the area in question is in ex. second shadow, you edge using the base colour because the highest highlight would be too stark for that area. It is all a question of keeping everything well balanced.



Edging

Hat

The mix for the hat is the same as for the jacket except that AV886 was replaced with AC59.



Hat base



Hat, first highlight



Hat, second highlight



Hat, lowlight, outlining



Finished hat

Finished hat

Base	AC48+ AC26
H/L	base + AV981
H/H/L	H/L + AV981
L/L	base+ AC26
L/L/L	more AC26

Belt

Mix:



Belt base



Belt, first highlight



Belt, second highlight



Belt, third highlight



Belt, lowlights



Belt, edging



Collar



Hair base



Hair, lowlights

Finished bust



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Should you have any questions regarding painting busts, or figures in general, you may contact Stephen [directly at this address.](#)

