

# HOW TO...MAKE SAINT LOUIS'S STATUE



Wi Project Manager James takes a break from polishing our social media strategy and gets busy putting the patina onto a Saint Louis statue.

This month's *Giant in Miniature* is Saint Louis, or Louis XI of France if you were his mate before his death in 1270 and canonisation in 1297. As the only French King to be declared a Saint his likeness and name adorn many locations and buildings across France and beyond; that's where the inspiration for this guide and the model itself comes from.

Ignoring probable protests from residents of the city of St. Louis, it is the statue of Louis himself at Paris's Sacré-Cœur that remains his most iconic representation. Louis and Jeanne d'Arc make their saintly presences felt many centuries after their deaths, immortalised by Hippolyte Lefèbvre in bronze, and mounted on either side of the basilica's impressive entrance.

Because these statues are made in bronze, they have developed the beautiful blue-green patina that occurs over decades of exposure. In this guide I investigate a really simple and effective way to replicate the effect. But first, Saint Louis needs to be mounted in place.



## CONSTRUCTING THE PORTICO BRICKWORK

I built the portico edge from scratch, using just a few materials, starting out with three different sized rectangles. The first, from 2mm plasticard, represents the copper plinth that the statue rests on. It is approximately the same size as a standard cavalry base, so you could even use something from your preferred base manufacturer instead.

The next two rectangles are cut from foamcore board and make up the top part of the travertine stone portico. The bottom is scaled to be just a few millimetres wider than the plasticard on top, the other is a little wider still. These may not look like much now but, thanks to them being made of foamcore, we can quickly add lots of detail.

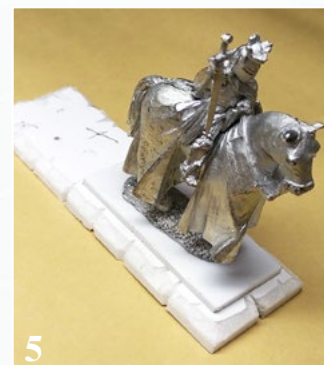


Regularly referencing photographs of the Sacré-Cœur, I began to add detail to the foamcore with a scalpel and a pencil. The first job was to trim the top bricks, cutting a 45 degree angle into the edges all the way around. I made sure this only reached half-way down the board to create what looks like a carved stone lip.

With that done I started to add nicks and chips to the material. I've accentuated these far more than is present on the real building because I think it makes scenery at this scale not only more interesting, but can actually fool the eye into finding it more believable. We have an expectation that old bricks will be tarnished and damaged and need to boost that look when replicating it on our scenery pieces to fool the eye.



The other rectangle is glued beneath, and I repeat the scoring technique, making sure everything lines up to match the design of the reference images. (Shown below.)



9. Finally, I used the exact same techniques as above to add further height, making sure to stagger the brickwork. Everything felt a little too flat so I lightly applied PVA in patches and drizzled fine sand over it (shown on the next page). This breaks the surface detail and is another way that the model gains texture to trick the eye into seeing greater realism.

To add another graduation, I place a trimmed rod of plasticard between the two base elements. This is an easy way to represent the angling of the elements further, matching up to the look of the real portico with the minimum of effort. Any excess length is trimmed off at the end.

I used superglue to fit the pieces together but do so with caution. You're fine as long as the adhesion is against the card elements that sandwich the foam. If that glue touches the inner foam it will aggressively melt it and ruin your hard work. If you have more patience than me and want to play it safe use PVA!





## Sacré Bleu Sacré-Cœur

Dan, our Editor, took a march up the butte Montmartre on his last visit to Paris to see the imposing sight of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Paris, more commonly known as the Sacré-Cœur.

This early 20th Century Roman Catholic church stands at the highest point of the city and, if you can tear your eyes from the sensational views of Paris that its highest dome offers, is a fascinating building.

Constructed between 1875 and 1914 its Romano-Byzantine design gives it a somewhat timeless, almost fantastical style, replete with many nationalist themes. The portico is one such element, with large, bronze, equestrian statues of Jeanne d'Arc and Louis XI topping the three arches.

While browsing his holiday snaps, one of which is shown to the right, Dan realised that two new Giants in Miniature could come from this visit – Saint Louis, who is covered here and Jeanne d'Arc, who will be a future release.

Neither of the models are exact replicas – some artistic licence has been taken by sculptor Matt Bickley to make them more fitting on the tabletop and in your battle lines. They are, however, close enough that my instant reaction to seeing Saint Louis (having made the climb to the Sacré-Cœur myself in my formative years) was to create a replica of Hippolyte Lefebvre's statue.



### PAINTING TIME

With Saint Louis's build done I applied black primer from Vallejo, left it 24 hours to firm up, then got myself ready to finish the paint job.

1



1. The whole model – statue and brickwork – is painted with Mig Ammo New Wood. You can use any paint brand you prefer, but I like the pigmentation and thickness of the Mig Ammo paints. You'll notice that I've not been obsessive about getting perfect coverage. I like to leave some recesses darker, a hint of the primer coming through, to start to build depth into the paint scheme.

2. Next I've used Mig Ammo Light Gray, which brightens the model considerably. This is a more selective approach to coverage, aimed primarily at the points of the model that would catch more light.

This is easy to do with an airbrush, spraying the model at an angle from above. You can create the same effect with a drybrush too, gradually increasing the saturation of paint with multiple coats, making sure you keep your brush strokes following the angle of the light. This is known as a zenithal highlight – in laymans terms it means that we, the painters, decide on the origin point of the light (its zenith) away from the model and apply our lighter colours from that direction to create realistic volumes.

Notice that on the side brickwork I've taken a different approach – vertical faces are difficult to apply zenithal lighting to so it's something that can be 'faked'. By applying the lighter tone to the same part of each separate surface (in this case the bottom right third of each brick) it again builds up the feeling of depth and realism. It may look a bit stark right now but have no fear, it will soon be fixed.



2

3



3. This is where the fun really starts! The zenithal highlights act as a guide for anything translucent that is put over the top so it's now easy to add colour, tone and detail but maintain the look of the lighting. This is a similar technique to that of underpainting – used by many canvas artists to make their masterpieces. Form and detail would be rendered in a desaturated palette, to ensure the best contrast and play of light, then vivid glazes of colour would go on top to add the final pizzazz.

This is my humbler approach, but the goal is the same. Citadel Shade paints are an absolutely ideal easy option for this; I've used Reikland Fleshade, thinned down slightly with water. It's applied softly and I'll often remove some with a quick dab from a wide makeup brush to soften it even more. As long as it is applied carefully and selectively, after a little time depth and contrast appear more prominently on the brickwork. Because this is a fleshtone Shade it also adds warmth which I find is an important element in creating the natural feel of limestone.

4. I'm still using the Reikland Fleshade but undiluted this time. I have enhanced the lines in the brickwork and any chips by tracing a fine brush down them, letting the Shade paint flow along but with a fair bit of control. Once more this enhances the 3D feeling of the model.



5. The same Light Gray I used earlier is applied to edges that would catch the light, adding that final 'pop' to the brickwork.



6. With the brickwork done we move onto the statue and its distinctive blue-green patina. With the initial work that has been added to the Saint Louis model this is a beautifully simple technique using a great Citadel paint that is made for the purpose. Nihilakh Oxide from the Technical range is specifically formulated to add an oxidised look to models. When you've applied zenithal highlights already the paint can be used, mixed with a small amount of water, as a glaze. Carefully covering the whole model with it in a thin coat (which you can reinforce with a second glaze if needed) makes for an already realistic look. You'll note that I also added drips down the stone, as can be seen on the real statue.



7



7. Treat this as an optional stage – I added a very minimal amount of Citadel Shade Drakenhoff Nightshade to some of the recesses to reinforce volumes. This needs to be done very carefully and you may find yourself adding back more Nihilakh Oxide as the effect needs to remain prominent through most of the shadow areas too.



## Inspiration for gaming

As a relatively modern structure the Sacré-Cœur is not the easiest fit for historical gaming. The closest the basilica itself has gotten to war (beyond its construction representing France's reinvigoration after the Franco-Prussian War) is the destruction of its stained-glass windows. In the Second World War thirteen bombs exploded near the basilica - only the windows suffered, the building's structure remained miraculously unscarred. Perhaps there's something to be said for Saintly protection!

### STATUES AS OBJECTIVES

With the techniques here you will be ready to make any bronze statue and support of your choice and, once constructed, it will make an ideal objective. As obvious landmarks they are perfect thematic reconnaissance points; they are also easily recognisable to everyone playing the game.

You could create a mission where a squad must be protected as it sets a radio mast on the high point. There could be civilians gathered around an iconic landmark, needing rescue and evac. Perhaps the mission is to destroy a statue or statues to diminish the opposition's morale.

### WHAT IF?

Troops have not hunkered down behind the Sacré-Cœur's limestone walls and columns - that doesn't mean they can't in your own games. Building the whole of the Sacré-Cœur for a 'what if?' battle

would be a monumental challenge but what if some of those thirteen bombs had hit? You could represent most of the basilica with ruins and enhance the theme with more accurate details that remain intact. It is easy to envisage troops battling over the butte Montmartre as it could be a superb observation point and staging post.

Most *Bolt Action*, *Flames of War*, *Battlegroup*, etc. players have plenty of ruined terrain that could represent the bombed basilica's remains. Placing representations of the statues at its front would add the finishing thematic touch. Indeed, with the towering scale of the real statues the size of the Giants in Miniature Saint Louis is a closer fit to *Flames of War*'s scale than 28mm games.

### WEIRD WARS

Hitler made just one brief visit to Paris during the war, in 1940, and his convoy's final stop was the Sacré-Cœur. Not a fan of the basilica, but impressed by the view, this could be a wonderful moment to switch up the war and make things weird.

Perhaps Hitler chooses this as a base of operations, never returning to Berlin, and making the basilica and surrounding area his bastion in Europe. I'm starting to play Clockwork Goblin's *Konflikt '47* and can envisage the architecture of the Sacré-Cœur offset against the increasingly strange advanced weaponry and troops in the game. Would Hitler allow a statue of a French Saint to remain? Probably not! There are fun possibilities working out what could replace it or modify it though.

8. To finish I have added a very soft Light Gray drybrush to the top of the statue, the base of the mount's caparison, and the edge of the base.



And that's it. You can add these techniques to so many projects and I hope that they'll allow you to vary up the weathering effects on so much more than just statues!

