

The Creative process:

Creating a character by Kitbashing



Fans of the 1960's TV show *Star Trek* all remember "Scotty," (seen here) portrayed by actor James Doohan. The SciFi series was so popular, toys and action figures were mass produced for sale to its legions of fans.

Like many action figures that simulate the features of live actors, the toys have facial features that are amazingly well-sculpted and colored.



The 8 inch high Scotty figure had "14 point articulation", meaning it was surprisingly flexible for a solid plastic toy.

The clothes and accessories were put aside for possible future use. They can always be dyed and modified.



In fabric stores there are lots of materials that look like fur when applied to action figures.



A pattern can be traced on tracing paper to guide in the fabric cutting.



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Wood glue adheres to the plastic and fabric. Fitting is mostly trial and error. Excess material is cut away as one goes along.



The explorer's beard can then be painted with inexpensive acrylic paints*.

Hair is taken from a doll like the one at right and glued to the top of his head. Once the glue dries his "grooming" can begin using scissors or Exacto knives.



Dolls like this one are inexpensive sources for faux hair.

Painting the hands roughly in brown paint make them look like gloves.



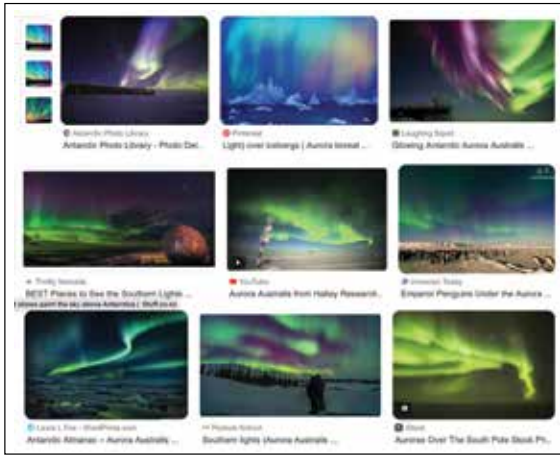
Scotty the Star Trekker is now a polar explorer ready to embark on any adventure you may have in mind.

The process demonstrated here is an example of **Kitbashing**, a form of model making where the creator blends parts of different models, toys and materials to create something new in 3 dimensions. Conceptually, it is a process similar to making a collage.

*Walmart, for one, sells acrylics that are not "artists grade" but are just fine for projects like this.

The Creative process: Setting a scene

The *Aurora Australis*, or “southern lights”, are the shimmering curtains of green, red and sometimes violet light appearing in the night sky around the south magnetic pole. After researching images of the phenomenon on the internet, the challenge is to depict it artistically.



A 24 inch by 36 inch piece of cardboard is a good place to start.

Cover the cardboard with dark blue cloth. Staple the cloth to the cardboard along the edges. Make sure the cloth is flat, ironing it if necessary. Place the assembly on a painters' dropcloth or newspaper. Purchase at least 3 cans of the 3 most vibrant and glossiest colors you find that closely match the aurora you envision.



Now is the time to **go wild!** Spray the paint in sweeping patterns. The effect won't take place all at once. It will require several applications after repeated drying stages. Just see what happens and build on what you see.



Important:

Always paint in a well ventilated area with surrounding areas well covered. After every spray paint application, walk away and seek fresh air. Allow ample time for drying and, if necessary, additional painting.



The painted aurora is now a backdrop for your posed action figure or models. The amount of light that is shone on it will determine the color's vibrancy.