

OTHERWORLD ARTIFACTS are a range of miniature building accessories — wall sections, floor tiles, working doors, columns, arches, cables & chairs etc., — which can be assembled in almost infinite variety to create dungeons, halls, throne rooms, temples, towers and so on, for the use of 25 mm scale miniature figures.

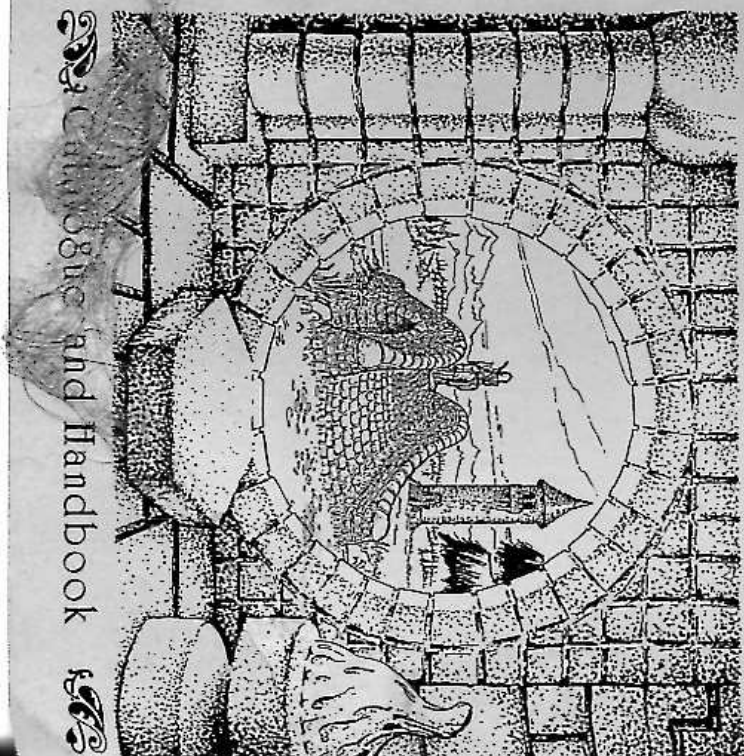
These settings can be temporary or permanent and can be used in role-playing games, wargaming, landscapes or decorative model displays. As far as possible, the accessories have no special historical styles, and so can be used in a wide span of period settings.

All pieces are cast in an authentic crushed stone medium which can be easily glued and painted. The range comes in pre-boxed sets for both general purpose and special constructions. Items can also be selected for your own individual requirements.

This catalogue and handbook contains not only a fully illustrated guide to the Otherworld range, but information and advice on painting, design and construction, to help you build your own world in miniature.

Miniature building accessories
for 25mm gaming and modelling

OTHERWORLD ARTIFACTS



Catalogue and Handbook

Introduction

A few years ago, I came across 25mm scale fantasy figures for the first time. These miniatures and their associated role-playing game systems had just crossed the Atlantic and were beginning to spread over here.

From the first, I was fascinated by them.

Of course there had been a tradition of miniature wargaming figures for many years, but they had never appealed to me greatly. Fantasy gaming was a different thing. To bring to life the world of Middle Earth or the Hyborian Age of Conan, to fight with magical weapons... In search of treasure... strange creatures... adventure....

But....

There was something missing.

The best miniature figures were beautiful pieces of tiny sculpture, however, either for gaming or model display, they needed fully three dimensional settings to make them complete. The existing wargaming or model railway buildings were not suitable, so I decided to start making my own range, first selling them in the shop we ran at that time, later exclusively through mail order and specialist games stores. The result, after several editions, is the current catalogue you are now holding.

Since then, other system building ranges have appeared, but I still believe the Otherworld Artifacts (OMA) range is the most varied and flexible in use, for both gaming and modelmaking.

On the following pages you will find advice on using our accessories, how to paint, design and build game settings, dioramas and displays. Please remember that these are only my personal methods and ideas - if you can achieve the same results your own way, that's fine. Also, should some of the following advice seem rather basic to experienced modelmakers, remember that there are many younger readers just starting to build their own world in miniature.

Designs & Text
© Otherworld Artifacts 1986

Have fun,
Chris Bullis, B.A. (Arch.)
OMA Designer,
Summer 1986.



The scale to which Otherworld Artifacts are built.



Painting

However else you choose to use OMA accessories, you will probably want to paint them. There are two principal methods.

Firstly, as the pieces are already cast in an integral pale brown tint, they can simply be coloured by applying a dark brown wash with a large soft brush to fill the surface recesses, wiping down before the paint dries to pick out the detail. You will find the crushed stone based mixture used to cast the ranges, taken paint well and this method will give a basic stone effect without much effort.

For more elaborate colour schemes, I strongly suggest using mat acrylic paints. They can be thinned with water, are quick drying, have a durable finish. Here is a useful selection which gives you most of the colours and mixes that you are likely to need. They can be bought in tubes at any good art shop. Don't worry if you can't get exactly these shades.

* Payne's Grey * White = Basic Grey.
(washes & floers)
* Basic Grey + P. Green/Blue
(coal mate grey for roofs/rocks)
* Basic Grey + Red Iron Oxide
(earth or wood colours)
* Yellow Ochre & White
(Sand)
* Raw Umber & White
(general stone work)
* Red Iron Oxide + Yellow Ochre
(mushrooms caps/earth/scenes)
* Phthalo Green + Grey
(basic vegetation tint)
* Phthalo Green & Yellow Ochre
(leaf green)

The idea is to extend the use of the tube colours by mixing small amounts in thin washes, with water, or thicker but paler colours with the cheaper white paint, which also gives a more hardwearing finish.

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There are many, many ways of painting. You must experiment with mixed & thinned, Precipitation paper or card when creating new colours. Note down the amount of each colour in a mix for future reference. Remember it only takes a little of the colour to tint the white base.

I can recommend three brush sizes. A 23mm soft, flat brush for wash coats and landscapes. A 9mm flat brush for main colours and landscape details. A small round brush for general detail, (door handles & hinges etc.). It is important to wash and clean brushes after use.

For the best results, paint should be applied in these stages.

First, mix a wash, (a thin mix of paint with plenty of water), of Payne's Grey and Red Iron Oxide to achieve a 'warm' dark brown. Paint on with a large soft brush, so that the recesses are coloured.

Next, using a medium large brush apply the main coat colour, a thicker paint mix than the wash coat. (It can be two or three colours, with practise - 'mottled' camouflage, 'tints' on uneven walls for instance), so that it covers the raised surface areas and does not flow into the recesses.

Finally, the top coat is a much paler tint of the main colour, or possibly plain white. If the main colour is already pale, it is put on by dry brushing, that is a thick paint mix that is almost scraped off the brush and applied with the tip only. Brush very lightly to give a 'dusting' of paint over the raised areas.

The end result is a gradation of shades from dark to light that gives the pieces a more realistic appearance.

Work neatly - it helps make better models. Use a proper workboard if possible, with plenty of room. Younger modelers please note: protect tops (and carpets) from paint. Get permission to dry pieces in an airing cupboard. Handy water pots and paint containers can be made from plastic tubs and spray can tops.

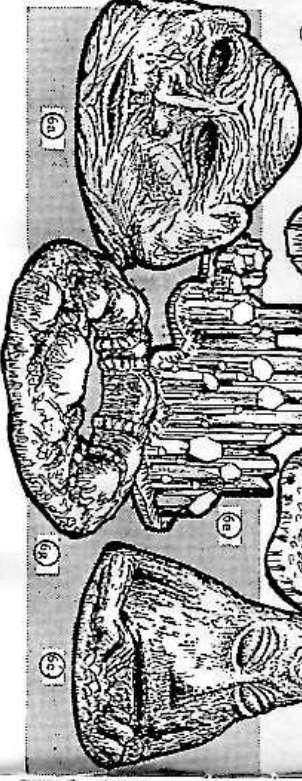
These are some of many possible layouts. Multiple pieces included in set.



Code 4 & 5 items & flooring are included in Box Set 2. (Flooring as in Set 1.)



Rock bridge 3 pieces 50ft. long 20ft. span



13 pieces



3 pieces

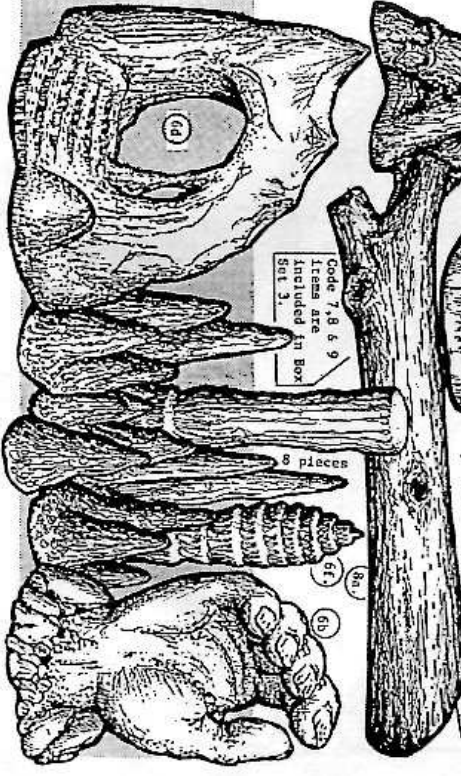
3 pieces

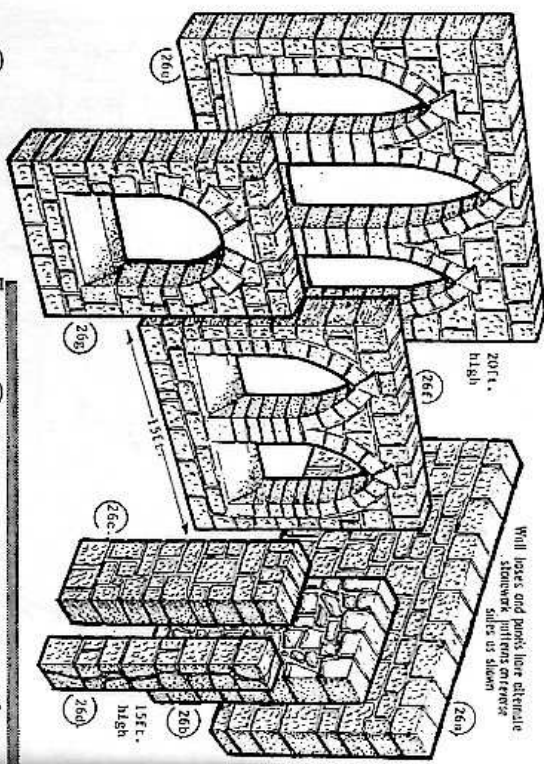
4 pieces

3 pieces

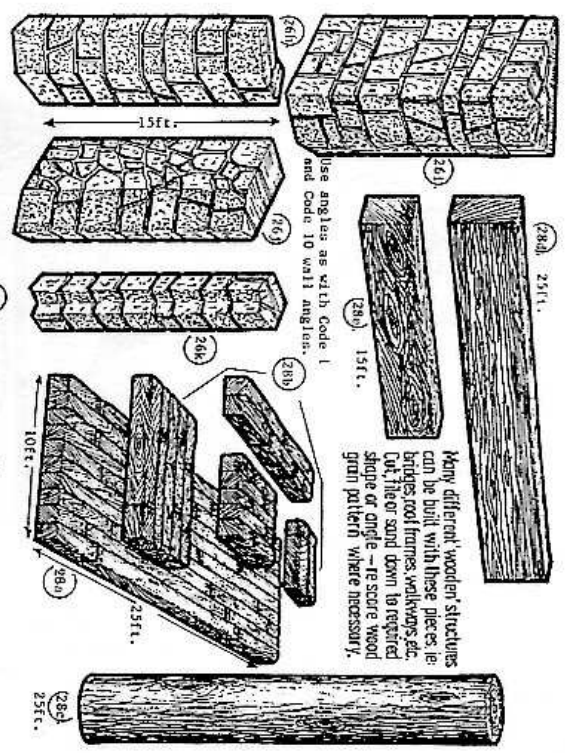
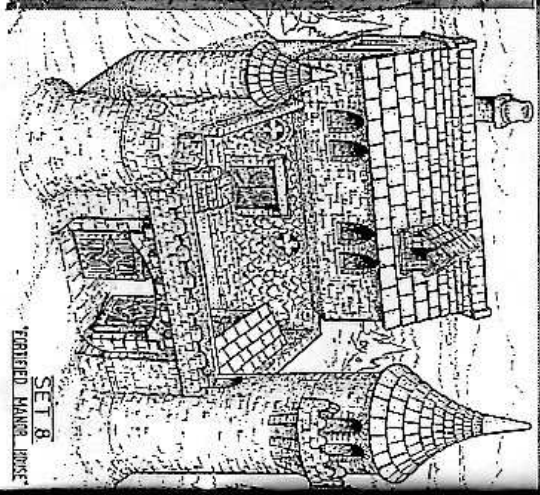
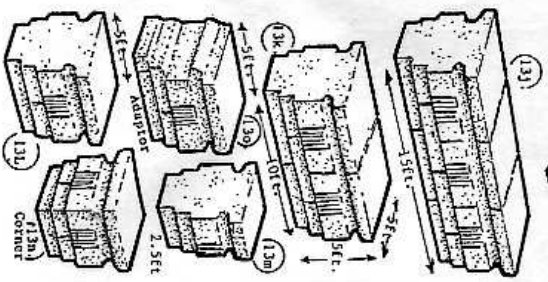
Code 7, 8 & 9 items are included in Box Set 3.

8 pieces

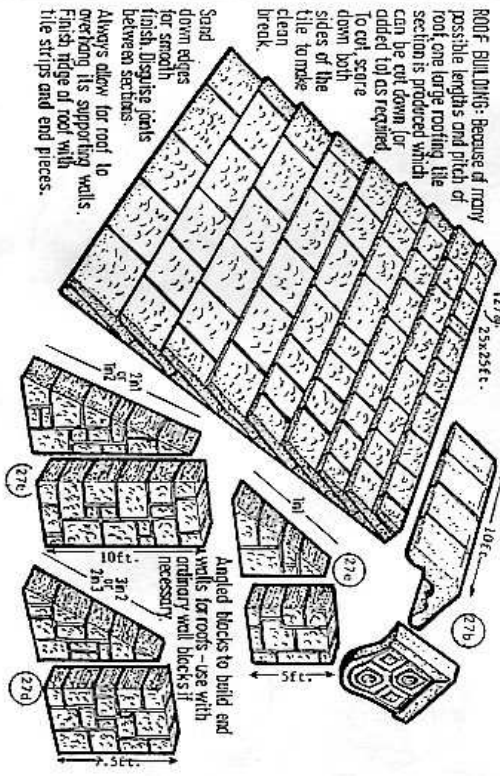




Wall bases and piers here alternate stone-work patterns on every side of block



Many different wooden structures can be built with these pieces: bridges, roof frames, walkways, etc. Oak, pine or sandalwood is required. Slope of angle - 15 score wood grain pattern where necessary.



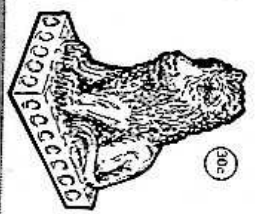
ROOF BUILDING: Because of many possible lengths and pitches of roof, one large roofing tile section is produced which can be cut down, for added top as required. To cut, score down both sides of the tile to make clean break.

Sand down edges for smooth finish. Disrupt joints between sections. Always allow for roof to overhang its supporting walls. Finish ridge of roof with the strips and end pieces.

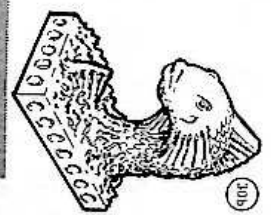
Angled blocks to build end walls for roofs - see with necessary ordinary wall blocks if necessary



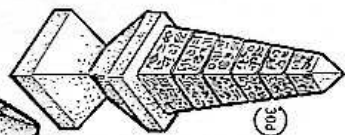
30a



30b

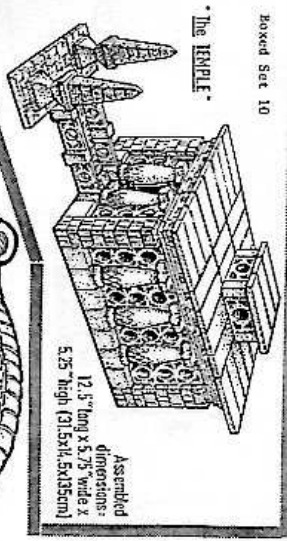


30c

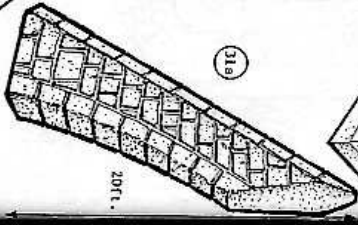


30d

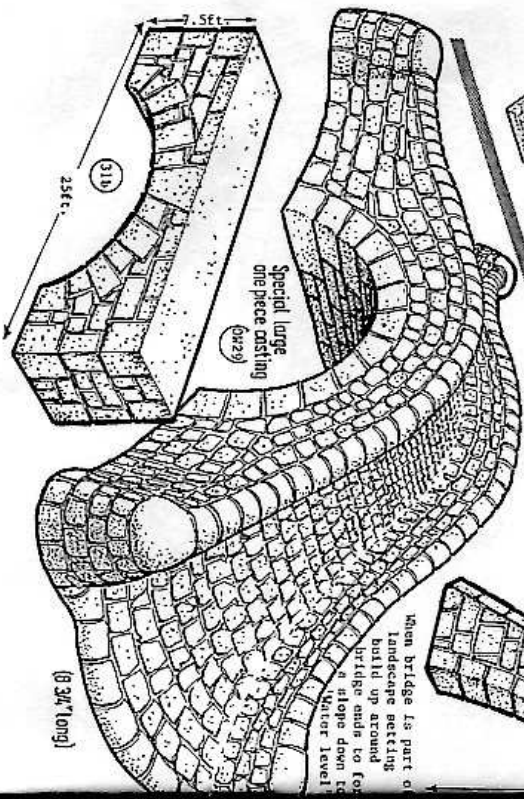
boxed Set 10



Assembled dimensions: 12.5" long x 5.75" wide x 5.25" high (31.5x15.1x13.5cm)



31b



Special large one-piece casting (6x29)

(3.34" long)

When bridge is part of landscape setting build up around bridge ends to form a slope down to water level.

Very large pieces — great covers of forest areas — will probably be too large to build in one module. Either divide it into sections, or use a few removable detail pieces added as required. The miniature can't cover the space by having the sections re-land in front of them as they go. Keep a careful note of distance traveled.

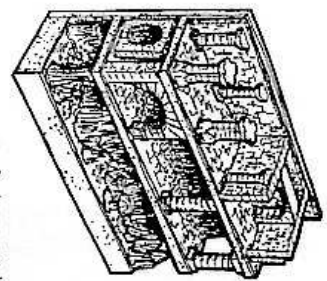
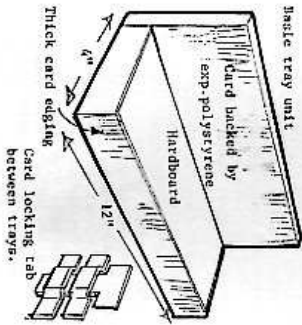
It is easy on paper to plan, say a cavern 200 feet across, but in reality this is about 32 inches! Measure it out. That cavern would fill an average table top!

In these circumstances, don't try to represent the whole thing, model a small section and describe the rest.

The modular unit method is best used for your own scenario design and layout. Use GM pieces to help plan out the adventure, so that when you play, everything you describe can be represented exactly in these dimensions. The scale grid on the floor tiles will aid you.

A Shelf Display

Stair in construction to the modular units, this allows you to show off the miniature in realistic settings, whilst taking up the least amount of space. Use polystyrene ceiling tiles, backing card from art shops, and hardboard. Use the same glue as with the modular units.



Any arrangement of pieces can be made so long as the tallest is equal to the background board in height and supports the front edges of each section above. Trays can be arranged and linked with adjoining stacks.

Elaborations

When designing a dungeon, draw a sectional view of it showing the levels and connections between them. GM pieces can be used to build linking stairways as well as level floors. Draw out a good plan of your finished design to a convenient scale and cover it with tracing paper during the game so that you can note down the progress of the players without spoiling it. Make use of as much source material as you can to inspire your imagination — other scenarios, magazine articles on gaming, architectural plans of castles etc...

Beside what the function of a dungeon complex, for instance, would be. Is it guarding treasure? A prison? The entertainment complex of a high level magician with a twisted sense of humor? Once you know this you can plan with a sense of purpose in mind.

It is important to remember not to limit your settings just to dungeons. GM accessories can be used to represent castles, country houses, manor houses, woodlands and city streets. As the range is extended there will be even more possibilities.

Landscaping & Dioramas

Experimenting with different arrangements of pieces, will help you create interesting settings for an adventure, and there are enough small pieces like tables, chairs, chests, torches etc., to provide variety. But once you have a detailed room, cavern or glacier, it still needs one final touch to give it 'atmosphere', and bring it alive!

For example: you have built a cavern. It contains stalagmites, a crystal rock, giant mushrooms and floor edging pieces that imitate a subterranean river. The players can see all this of course, but how can you place to imitate a 'living description', let:-

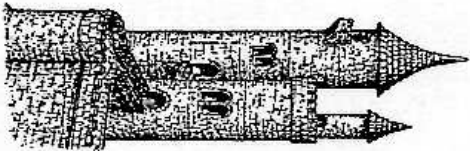
"The air is damp, murky with the smell of mushrooms. The rocks drip with slime and mildew. Sparkles of torchlight are reflected in the crystal rock, whilst the river flows cold and black, its ripples and splashes echoing from the cavern walls..." and so on.

Or another example, you have a great hall, with columns, incense burners, torches and large double doors. This can be described as follows:-

"The doors creak slightly as they are opened. Footsteps ring on the flagstones. The incense burners fill the air with a strange thick scent that, in the flickering torchlight, forms a bluish haze in the air. The columns cast long dancing shadows..."

You may wish to emphasize details by actually representing them in the setting, either by more detailed painting, or, using glass varnish and green decorative glitter to produce slime on cavern walls, for instance. Try adding your own extraneous painted card cut to fit the floor edging to form a river, perhaps. It is even possible to have real incense sticks burning to create a 'smoky atmosphere'! Just don't let light to anything else of course!

If you use our accessories to create that initial scene of reality, you will find it easy to add further details, if only in words, that will bring animation to your designs.

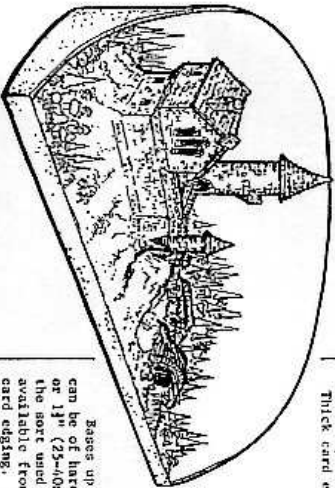


There is no more impressive way of displaying miniatures than as part of a large, well modelled landscape.

There is insufficient room to detail all the finer points of design, construction and painting. There are many good modelers magazines that will provide advice for the more advanced or ambitious modeller and these are strongly recommended. The following methods will produce quite satisfactory results however.

First you must decide what you want out of a display. The best effect will be achieved by an arrangement that has plenty of detail to interest the eye, but does not appear crowded. Before you start, decide roughly how many miniatures you will use, is an entire one army with multiple engines or one horse and rider, what buildings or other structures will be needed and how much landscaping, trees, hills, rocks, a river, - will surround them.

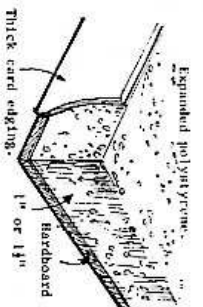
Experiment with composition. In the scene to be viewed from the front, side, or all round? If you are using one of our towers and a humpback bridge for instance, (a popular combination), then build and paint them first, and see them to test out settings. (Try books draped in a towel to represent landscaping).



There are no precise rules about what makes for good composition, but here are some general points:

Don't put a building in the dead centre of the board.
The ground should, generally, rise as it gets nearer the back of the scene to conceal the junction with the backdrop.
Nothing should overhang the edge of the board or touch the backdrop.
Buildings usually look more impressive on slightly raised ground.
Asymmetry adds interest - do not line up all the building lines with the edge of the baseboard as it looks surreal.

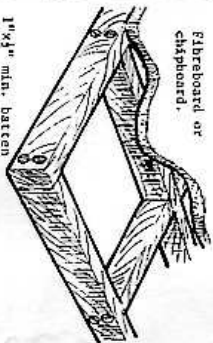
Once you have determined the layout, you should have a good idea of the base size, (the width should not be less than the tallest structure). If you are building your first display, don't make it too large. A big display will have to be made in sections anyway. No section should be wider than 30" x 40", well 30" is the recommended door width and a display you can't take out of a room that it was built in, might be a problem).



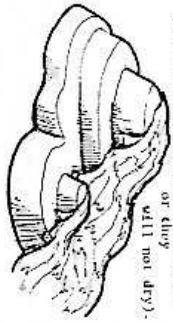
If you are making a backdrop, it should be as tall as the highest part of the setting.

Bases up to 24" x 24" (60x60cm) can be of hardboard sheet glued to 1" or 1 1/2" (25-40mm), expanded polystyrene, the sort used for water tank insulation available from DIY stores, with thick card edging. Glue with Copypox for best results.

For larger bases, use an open lattice wooden construction as shown here.

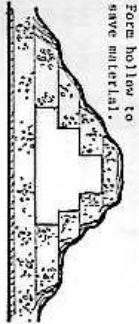


The simplest way of constructing the landscaping is to use more expanded polystyrene sheet and cover with torn paper strips. Experiment with arrangements of the sheet blocks until you make your planned contours. Glue with Copypox or white PVA adhesive.



(Don't forget to use thickly or clay will not dry.)

(If you are building an 'active' display - where the structures have bases and can be moved about, (arranging for instance) you will need more level ground and stepped hillides for them to stand reasonably level on. In a static display, the figure bases will be removed or concealed by the top surface finish and the landscape contours can be more realistic).



Form hollow to save material.

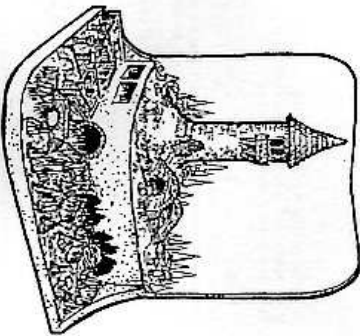
The end result in light weight and will not sag with age. Poly styrene can be cut with a sharp knife (take care) or a hot 'wire cutter' (available from craft or hardware shops).

The paper strips can be applied with heavy duty wallpaper paste, or a commercial filler like 'Tecton', 'poly-filla' or 'Artes'. Alternatively, the filler can be layered directly onto the polystyrene with fingers and a palette knife.

Generally, all adhesives should be used in well ventilated places, and some wallpaper pastes contain fungicides - so don't lick your fingers!

IMPORTANT NOTES: Expanded polystyrene does not produce dust when cut, (except when using a hot wire cutter, which does not produce dust) - should not be inhaled. Cut in a well ventilated place or out of doors. Wear a face mask (as you should with any heavy job). Also, expanded polystyrene is highly flammable and should always be covered. In the finished display, by card edging, layered paper or plaster as described. You may be able to get exp. polystyrene that is already treated with a flame retardant, (from larger hardware stores).

Buildings should be glued onto the display at this point, so that the paper strips/filler can conceal the junction with their base line and blend them into the landscape. Then, using a 'texture' wash of filler and colour, (darker than the final landscape line), brush over the paper strips to conceal their edges and give the surface a more realistic appearance. Apply this wash round the building bases to prevent them looking as though they have just been 'dropped' onto the landscape.



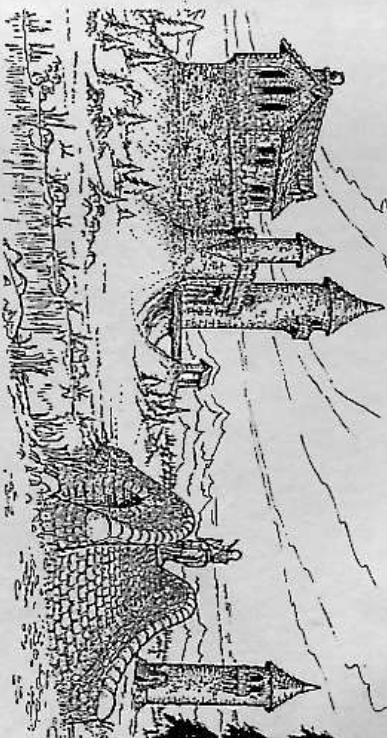
Good model shops provide plenty of surface finishing materials including cork bark, (rock outcrop), dyed sand/ dust scatter, 'grass', bags of lichen 'hedges and bushes' etc. Also wall-able are pre formed trees of various scales which save a lot of time (though you can always try making making your own with florist's wire and cotton wool).

All 'rocks' and 'bare earth' should be fixed in place and painted first, then add 'grass', 'bushes' and 'trees'. Remember to dull down the rather bright colours the artificial grass and bushes come in.

The base principals of painting given earlier can be applied to landscapes as a whole. Gradation of colour and tone from dull to light, dry brushing to give weathering effects etc. It is important to weather buildings in the same way, with the same range of colours and effects as their surroundings, to help them blend together. Don't mix pieces have a slightly worn, chipped look built into them and it is often worth emphasizing this for greater reality. Any building that looks as though it has been stained and bleached by wind, rain, sun and mould for a couple of hundred years, looks less like a scale model - and that is the idea of the whole thing.

Look around you in the real world to see how things get weather stained, sunbleached and covered in moss and lichen, and try to imitate these effects. Always use mat finish colours.

Water is not easy to model. You can try mirror glass, metal cooking foil or, most realistically, a layer of translucent embedding resin poured over a model river/lake bed. (Use this material with care - follow the manufacturers' instructions).



Shadows must be emphasized to increase contrast and the illusion of depth. A single grey/blue wash can produce the effect if applied to the recessed and sheltered parts of each piece or setting.

The finishing touch to a display is the backdrop. The easiest to make is a single sheet of card, curved to fit the back of the display. Unless you are a good artist, keep the painting simple. Take examples from landscape pictures and photographs for your guidance. Distant objects like mountains, tree lines and hills, should only be block coloured - no detail. The colours should be dull and pale - plenty of grey - that are less intense than the colours of the setting itself. The most distant object should be the palest, to give the illusion of atmospheric haze, making the background seem as distant as it is meant to be. If you can achieve the appearance of depth and recession, you are well on the way to a realistic display.

