

Master Series Paint Open

An Exhibition and Painting Contest For Miniature Figurines and Models

History-

The Master Series Open was established in 2009 when Reaper Miniatures desired to expand their annual ReaperCon painting contest to include entries composed of new subjects and products made by all manufacturers around the world. It was at this time that Reaper Miniatures also decided to adopt the 'Open System' format and the International Judging Criteria, both developed by the Military Miniature Society of Illinois for their prestigious Chicago show.

The Open System is designed to recognize and reward modelers of all skill levels and is based on the conceptual goal that no deserving work should go home unrewarded. Supporting this concept is the guiding belief that anything done to further this goal is a good idea, and anything that impedes it is a bad one.

Armed with just this simple goal and these few words Reaper Miniatures drastically changed their existing show format to wholeheartedly embrace the Open System and the International Judging Criteria. The changes proved to be an instant success and the Master Series Open has grown dramatically in entries each year.

Open System Basics-

The Open System reduces the quantity of categories normally found in most painting competitions. Gone are familiar categories such as Best Unit or best Large Scale Model. Rather than focus on the types of subject matter being presented the Open System focuses on the type of modeling work being performed. The four categories are:

- Open Division
- Painters Division
- Ordnance Division
- Youth Division

Open Division includes converted and/or scratch-sculpted entries where the exhibitor understands that all aspects of the entry are judged. While unmodified or stock models might be found as part of a diorama or vignette, no single unmodified or stock model will be found in this division regardless of the basing of the entry. This is the division where you will find almost all of the scratch built, converted figures, vignettes, and dioramas. Entries in this division are judged for Difficulty, Creativity, Workmanship, Painting Skill and Presentation.

Painters Division includes figure models where the exhibitor understands that only the painting aspects of the entry are judged. Regardless of any added basing, an entry that is single figure model that is unmodified or stock belongs in this division. Scratch built and converted figures are not excluded from this division but they are judged as if they were a painted stock commercial casting. Entries in this division are judged for Difficulty, Workmanship, Painting Skill and Presentation.

Ordnance Division includes all types of mechanical-in-nature entries where the exhibitor understands that all aspects of the entry are judged. This is the division where you will find tanks, airplanes, vehicles, ships, cannons, spaceships and machines of every type imaginable. Figures may be included, but they will not count in the judging of the machine. Entries in this division are judged on equal

measures of imagination and skill. Entries in this division are judged for Difficulty, Creativity, Workmanship, Painting Skill and Presentation.

Youth Division includes any type of model kit, figure or machine, scratch built, stock or built out of the box. Exhibitors in this division must be 15 years old or younger.

Entry Size Limitations-

Please contact the Exhibition Staff before bringing any entry larger than 24" cubed. Any large diorama or display requires additional preparation by the staff and space may not be available.

Awards-

The biggest advantages of the Open System are how the show is non-competitive in nature and the quantities of awards that can be presented are not predetermined. The Open System creates a show where no entry will win the sole award available at the expense of another equally competent entry. Each exhibitor's work is individually evaluated and receives the level of award the judges feel that their work merits, without regard to the awards given to other pieces in the exhibition. Modelers can thus judge the progress of their work from show to show, without worrying about what other modelers may create.

Entries in the three divisions of Open, Painters, and Ordnance may be awarded a Gold, Silver, or Bronze Medal or a Certificate of Merit and modelers are free to enter their work in any or all of these divisions. Only Certificates of Merit and Certificates of Excellence may be awarded in the Youth Division.

International Judging Criteria-

The Master Series Open follows International Judging Criteria and the purpose of the International Judging Criteria document is three-fold. First, it provides a uniform set of criteria for judging entries in the exhibit. Second, it presents a sound basic text for the training of future judges. Third, it gives exhibitors specific information as to what the judges will be looking for.

The International Judging Criteria are not a set of rules to judge a painting contest by. They are a set of artistic criteria by which judges can compare entries in an exhibit uniformly and fairly. The cornerstones of the International Judging Criteria are the five criteria that are used to evaluate each entry in an exhibit:

- Degree of difficulty
- Creativity
- Workmanship
- Painting Skill
- Presentation and overall effect

Judges-

However good an awards system might be, its success is ultimately determined by the quality and experience of the judges who serve it. The staff of the Master Series Open devotes considerable care to the selection and training of its Judges. Judges at all levels are selected for their skills as modelers, familiarity with commercial castings, and proven ability to judge objectively. Whenever possible, Judges serve at least one "apprenticeship" as an Assistant Judge before they are allowed to judge on their own. While we encourage Assistant Judges to voice their views, the final word always belongs to the Judges.

Assistant Judges are generally there to learn about the Open System and develop their skill as a judge through a first-hand practice of the art. But they might also be a special guest judge or simply an interested hobbyist who wants to see how the Open System works from the inside.

Serving as an Assistant Judge can be fascinating, and no experience is required. Space is very limited so anyone wishing to participate is encouraged to contact the current Exhibition Director as soon as possible.

Judging-

The Exhibition Director or (ED) will create teams of Judges consisting of three Judges and one Stand-By Judge. The (ED) will create as many teams as are needed to insure that judging is completed in a timely and efficient manner. As needed Stand-By Judges will step in and judge the entries of active Judges who have entered in the event as an Exhibitor. A Judge/Exhibitor is disqualified from judging their own work.

The Judges go through the Main Exhibition twice; once to select the pieces to be judged, and a second time to judge them.

The first pass through the exhibit is made as a team. The judges discuss each exhibitor's exhibits in turn, selecting for judgment the piece or combination of pieces most likely to give the exhibitor the highest possible award. Even if the judges feel an exhibitor's work is not likely to win an award at least one piece or group of pieces is selected for evaluation. As the selections are made, each judge enters the title and exhibitor on his judging sheet.

The judges then separate and make the second pass through the exhibit independently. Each judge then awards each piece or group selected for evaluation by the team a score of 1 to 4. 1 is for a Certificate of Merit, 2 is for a Bronze Medal, 3 is for a Silver, and 4 is for a Gold Medal.

When scoring is complete the team Captain collects up the score sheets and after being examined for completeness they are turned over to the awards committee, who then compare the lists and make the awards according to the totals. 11 out of a possible 12 points is sufficient for a Gold Medal, 8- 10 points for a Silver Medal, 5-7 for a Bronze Medal, and 1-4 for a Certificate of Merit.

All judging is supervised by the Exhibition Director (ED) and their role is to keep all teams focused and on track. The (ED) is the final word on all situations that require a decision. Experience with the system and detachment from the actual judging process gives them an overall view of the work on exhibition and the judging process.

Assisting the Exhibition Director is the Assistant Director. (AD) The role of the (AD) is to support the (ED) in all aspects of the exhibition and they are an (ED) in training. The team of the (ED) and the (AD) tallies scores for the entire exhibition.

Perhaps the most unusual aspect of the Open System is that since the judges are not present during the tally, they have no idea what awards they have given until the presentation ceremony, when they learn the results along with everyone else. All Judges will remain available after the Awards Ceremony to field questions from the Exhibitors.

Special Awards-

Best of Show

The Best of Show is chosen by combined vote of the judges and attendees. Each attendee has a single vote, while each judge has three. Since there are always far more attendees than judges, the judges' block of votes generally never amounts to more than 25% of the total. In the event that the judges' block does exceed 25%, it will be capped at that amount and prorated with the attendee's block of votes.

Theme Award

Theme awards are for the best-coordinated display of figure(s), diorama(s), model(s) or vignette(s), centered on the theme of the exhibition. In 2012 the theme is Pirates and in 2011 the theme was Action/Adventure.

Best Displayer Award

Best Displayer Awards are for the imaginative use of materials and techniques to set off an exhibitor's display. The quality of the exhibited work itself is not considered.

Sponsored Awards

The number and categories of Sponsored Awards may vary from year-to-year. These awards are presented to the entry that best fits the sponsor-defined category and is of quality superior to the other qualifying entries. The Sponsor has input as to the scope and definition of the award, but the team of judges appointed by the (ED) makes the choice for the award.

Sponsored Awards in 2012 are:

Reaper Miniatures – Sophie Trophies