

M88 A1 - Gulf war 2003 - 1/35 scale

24/05/2018 — Advanced Techniques

Contents

1. The setting.
2. The vehicle.
3. Painting.
4. Dust

Lors de la guerre du Golfe, les américains se sont faits un devoir de détruire toutes représentations de feu Saddam Hussein, statues et autres stèles... L'engin du génie M88 comportant une lame de bulldozer à l'avant étant l'outil idéal pour cette fonction... C'était l'occasion également...

Diorama of the M88A1 toppling a statue in a desert setting littered with rubble



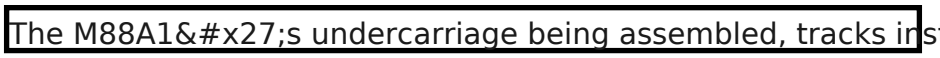
Reference photo of a sand-colored M88A1 toppling a statue, with the crew on board

During the Gulf War, the Americans made it their mission to destroy all depictions of the late Saddam Hussein, including statues and other monuments... The M88 engineering vehicle, equipped with a bulldozer blade at the front, was the ideal tool for this task...

It was also an opportunity to create a unique diorama showcasing this interesting vehicle, which is rarely seen in model exhibitions. AFV CLUB has produced a very good model of this tank...

Unpainted M88A1 chassis placed on a diorama under construction with blue foam ru

First thing: modifying the suspension of the undercarriage to handle the rubble and concrete slabs...


The M88A1's undercarriage being assembled, tracks installed, blue foam debr

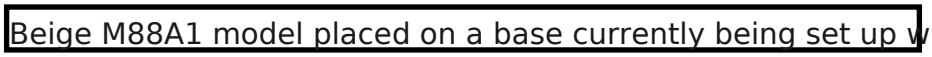
We extend the suspension using Evergreen rods, attach the tracks after installing the entire undercarriage, and then begin arranging the concrete slabs and rubble—carved from extruded polystyrene—to define the exact location...

The setting.


Base of the display under construction with blue foam rubble and a test figure

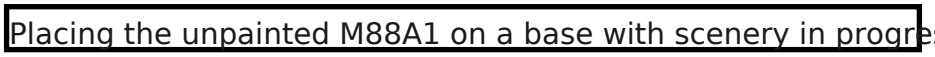
We'll pause the vehicle's assembly for a moment to focus on the set design, which is a crucial element here...

We'll pause the vehicle's assembly for a moment to focus on the scenery, which is a key element here...

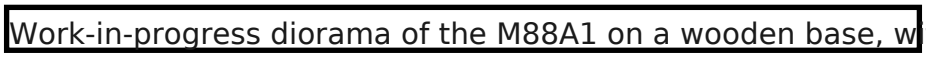

Beige M88A1 model placed on a base currently being set up with rubble and a figure

... more important for the overall realism of the scene...

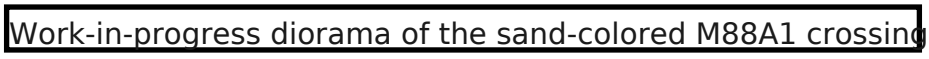
... more important for the overall realism of the scene...


Placing the unpainted M88A1 on a base with scenery in progress, made of polystyren

A base from another destroyed diorama; a lead military figure will serve as a stand-in for Saddam, while the resin pedestal is salvaged from the surplus box...


Work-in-progress diorama of the M88A1 on a wooden base, with unpainted rubble ar

The point of the scene is to capture the moment when the stele shatters, when the pieces scatter and roll in all directions from the impact...


Work-in-progress diorama of the sand-colored M88A1 crossing concrete ruins, featur

Hence, the need to give the stones a sense of movement...

Hence the need to give the stones a sense of movement...

Current diorama base: sand, rubble from ruins, paved road, and figurine

The set is complete. Rubble and plants (dried mimosa leaves) have been added...

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Decorative base under construction, ruins and rubble on sand, before painting

The entire model is airbrushed with Hobby Color acrylic paints in 85 Sail Color and 318 Radome...

The entire model is airbrushed with Hobby Color acrylic paint in colors 85 (sail) and 318 (radome)...

Diorama base under construction, concrete ruins, road, and sandy terrain without ve

Apply a water-based acrylic paint (never use any other type of thinner on extruded polystyrene) in shades of chocolate brown and black, then...

Wood-framed scenery base: sand, rubble, dry vegetation, and a can

... After the entire model has dried, finish it off with a dry-brush technique using Humbrol 121 oil-based paint, light gray, and white...

Base of the diorama in progress: concrete ruins and a collapsed statue on sandy grou

Our set is now ready for the main piece...

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The vehicle.

Top view of the M88A1 in assembly, showing the detailed interior of the crew compa

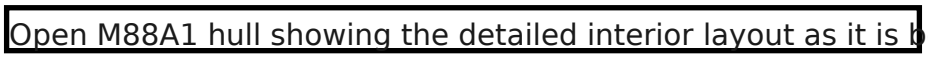
The M88 has quite a few openings that allow you to see its fairly "spacious" interior...

The M88 has quite a few openings that allow you to see its fairly "spacious" interior...

Top view of the M88A1 chassis with internal wiring and added details

The interior of the vehicle, desperately empty...

The interior of the vehicle is hopelessly empty...


Open M88A1 hull showing the detailed interior layout as it is being assembled

So, the solution was to create the set using plastic cards, items from the surplus box, photographs, and sketches...


MR Models MR-35031 Detail Kit Box, Interior Fittings for the US Army M88A1

MR Models sells a resin kit, which I don't recommend... The casting quality is average for a price of over €50...


Detailed interior layout of the M88A1's fighting compartment currently under

So, let's roll up our sleeves... and get to work!

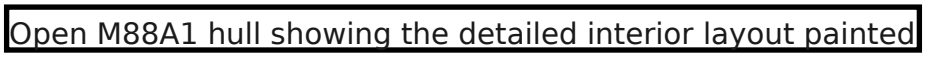
So, let's roll up our sleeves... and get to work!


M88A1 hull without superstructure, showing the detailed interior layout during assen

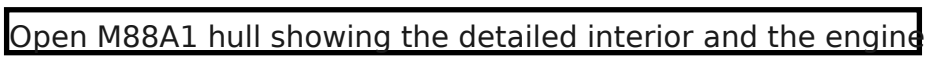
We're working on the assumption that any parts that are hidden once the "hood" is closed won't be built. It's pointless and a waste of time... Especially since the two center seats visible through the two side doors each consist of 17 parts...


Interior shell of the M88A1 undergoing outfitting; wiring and added partitions installe

Let's not forget the details of the upper section, which includes quite a few cables...


Open M88A1 hull showing the detailed interior layout painted white

After a few hours (especially of getting my fingers sticky!), the pieces are ready and are given a coat of matte white primer...


Open M88A1 hull showing the detailed interior and the engine compartment under c

Followed—after it has dried completely—by a wash of Terre d'ombre and Winsor & Newton black oil...

Followed—after it has dried completely—by a wash of Winsor & Newton umber and black oil...

M88A1 hull open, detailed interior, and separate superstructure prior to assembly

Next, we move on to the final paint job using the dry-brush technique. The ACAV turret—included in the kit—is painted as well. The upper section of the hull has been widened, and the original turret has been removed...

M88A1 hull assembled using sand casting, with the bulldozer blade and tracks install

Gluing the top piece—phew!—making sure nothing gets caught and that everything is properly joined...

Gluing the top piece in place—phew!—making sure nothing gets caught and that everything is properly joined together...

M88A1 model assembled using sand, with tracks attached, on a neutral background

We're continuing to assemble the tank, specifically by installing the crane boom—a delicate, movable part that includes a photo-etched plate supplied in the kit... Here, in the road position...

M88A1 with crew on a sand-based base under construction, made of polystyrene deb

The figures are positioned, and the front and rear headlight guards are remade from plastic and metal...

M88A1 recovery tank in sand color, mounted on a sandy base; currently being assem

A rear view, showing the various cables that have been added. The side doors, which are glued in the open position, will hold a jerry can with its mount...



Various accessories have been added, including chains. The smoke canisters will be covered with toilet paper soaked in liquid wood glue. The episcopes have been perforated...

Painting.

Completed sand-colored model of the M88A1, with detailed winch and cables, on a n

We plug all the holes with toilet paper or paper towels. Tamiya XF64 Fiel Brown acrylic airbrush primer...

Completed model of the M88A1 recovery tank, three-quarter rear view on a white ba

Next up is Hobby Color 85 (sail color) and 318 (radome), softened to white...

Next up is Hobby Color 85 (sail color) and 318 (radome), softened with white...

Completed M88A1 model on a neutral background, three-quarter rear view, with a du

We'll finish with a dry-brush using Humbrol 121, 103, and white...

We finish with a dry-brushing technique using Humbrol 121, 103, and white...

Completed sand-colored M88A1 model, three-quarter rear view, with detailed track a

We paint every detail of the body using photographs as references (which are always essential when working on historical projects)...

Model of the M88A1 recovery tank in sand color, three-quarter rear view on a white b

We use a fine brush to chip the paint, particularly on tow bars, rollers, and bulldozer blades...

Completed model of the M88A1 in sand color, viewed from the rear three-quarter an

Finishing up the paintwork on the details and adding the final accessories...

Completed model of the M88A1 in sand color, blade raised, three-quarter front view

Model of the M88A1 recovery tank completed, with a sandy patina and the bulldozer

More views...

More views...

M88A1 recovery tank, front view, with the dozer blade lowered, neutral background

Completed model of the M88A1 in sand camouflage, three-quarter rear view against

The exhaust pipes are blackened with black pastel powder...

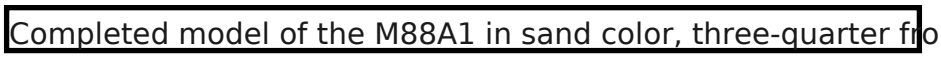
Completed M88A1 sand-colored model on a white background, with accessories and

Apply a thin layer of Winsor & Newton oil paint made from umber and sienna over the entire surface...

Apply a Winsor & Newton oil wash made from Umber and Sienna over the entire piece...

Completed M88A1 model on a neutral background, with an earthmoving blade and s

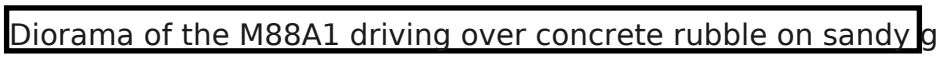
Note that chipping effects were applied to the dozer blade and the tow bars using a fine brush and Humbrol dark green paint...


Completed model of the M88A1 in sand color, three-quarter front view against a neu


Model of the M88A1 recovery tank completed, with a sand-colored patina and weath

The model is finished...

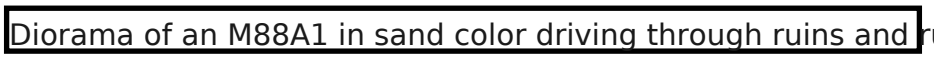
The model is finished...


Diorama of the M88A1 driving over concrete rubble on sandy ground


Diorama of an M88A1 in sand color on a desert road, with rubble and dry vegetation

The tank is positioned on the set...

The tank is positioned on the set...


Diorama of an M88A1 in sand color driving through ruins and rubble with an overturn

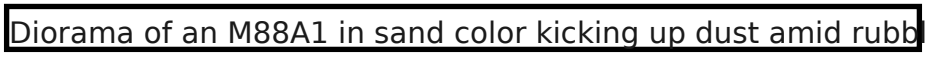
... Then glued with fast-setting wood glue...

... Then glued with fast-setting wood glue...

Dust


Diorama of an M88A1 in sand color, with dusty ruins in the background and an overtu

Dust—the final touch! It’s hard to do without it in these hot countries... It will be made from aquarium filter material, which is much more pliable than ordinary cotton...


Diorama of an M88A1 in sand color kicking up dust amid rubble, dry vegetation, and

After being spray-painted, it is placed in the various crevices of the rock garden...

After being spray-painted, it is placed in the various crevices of the rock garden...



Diorama of the M88A1 toppling a statue amid a cloud of desert dust

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