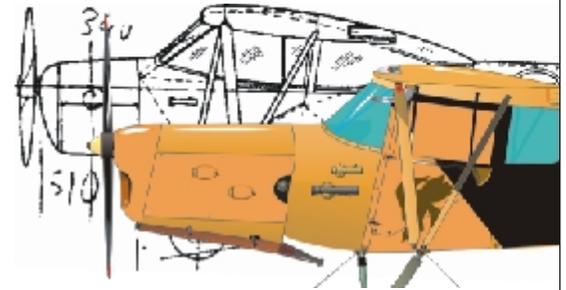


3-D Illustrator Georges Pradez uses Corel® DESIGNER™ to create a scale model fit for royalty.

"I need precision... DESIGNER helps me organize space and structure."

Georges Pradez
3-D Illustrator



SPOTLIGHT

Georges Pradez
3-D Illustrator
Corel® DESIGNER™ power user

DIGITAL ARTIST'S PALETTE

Corel DESIGNER

BENEFITS

- Easy replication of delicate patterns and designs
- Risk-free ability to create complex 3-D models

The Story

Veteran Belgian 3-D illustrator, Georges Pradez, is better known for his regular cultural radio broadcasts than for his work as an artist and a model builder with a passion for aircraft. Pradez was, in fact, already an accomplished airbrush artist when he was introduced to Corel® DESIGNER™ in 1992. Since then he has migrated through seven versions of the software and has expanded his artistic repertoire from two-dimensional illustration to computer-developed 3-D models with strong realism and flair.

As someone who has built a prestigious 40-year career communicating the spoken word, Pradez admits that in childhood he had difficulty learning the written word. "I got my revenge by pretending I knew the language," he says. He went into radio, and carved out a distinct niche in Belgium's radio and television broadcaster, RTBF.

Pradez has always held a particular fascination for flight; building model aircraft is a passion he has indulged all his life. "By creating models we can be a little like our Creator," he says. "We can own the models; we can possess them. And we can make an aeroplane, a factory, and, even a city, appear from nothing."

The Challenge

His talent for drawing aeroplanes and helicopters incited Pradez to perfect his airbrush techniques. "I always sought to push the limits of realism," he says. "And what thrilled me with the airbrush was the hyper-realism that it could add."

The problem, however, is that airbrushing is a painstaking process and once completed, an airbrushed illustration can't be reversed, and hence corrected.

The Solution

Then Georges Pradez was introduced to Corel DESIGNER. DESIGNER streamlines the production of technical design and illustration with absolute precision. It eases the task of creating, managing, plotting and sharing technical drawings and illustrations.

"I need precision; the more precise my drawings are, the happier I am," Pradez explains, adding, "DESIGNER helps me organise space and structure. It also helps me achieve the airbrushed look electronically." Through DESIGNER, Pradez has also discovered clipart and its value as a self-instructional tool. "Clipart is a formidable resource," he says. "With clipart, I can deconstruct an image to see how it was created."

DESIGNER has become a principal drafting and illustration tool for Pradez. Often beginning with an original blueprint or old photocopy, he will use DESIGNER to build and perfect a model, layer by layer, on his computer screen. Fine details can be easily applied to the lettering on a fuselage or wing, for example. Says Pradez: "You can choose any letter you want and recreate it."

“With the Undo command, this is the first time in the history of humanity that you can reverse time.”

In 1996, Pradez’ skills were put to the test when he and a friend were asked to help build a scale model destined for public display in the Musée de Belle Vue in Brussels. The model was that of the Maisonnette des Princes, a Swedish-style chalet built within the grounds of the Royal Palace in Laeken, and inspired by King Leopold III’s Swedish wife, Astrid. Intended to remind the royal family that there was life outside the castle, the Maisonnette became a part of life and leisure for the children and friends of subsequent generations of the family.

Using Corel DESIGNER, Pradez gathered his confidence and put his skills to work reconstructing the Maisonnette at a 1:10 scale. “Everything was organised and designed using DESIGNER,” he says, “even the scale chairs around the dining room table.” The actual Maisonnette is a smaller version of a real Swedish chalet, complete with three bedrooms, dining and living room, and kitchen, along with period decorations, furniture, and appliances. Pradez’ model recreates all of it to perfection.

The Benefits

Corel DESIGNER greatly eases the replication of patterns and designs, eliminating both the tediousness and the risk associated with creating complex models. There’s also the huge psychological benefit of removing the fear of making a time-wasting mistake. As Georges Pradez makes clear, it’s all in the software: “With the Undo command, this is the first time in the history of humanity that you can reverse time.”

In addition, DESIGNER interfaces with precision cutting tools which enabled, for example, the cutting of pre-fabricated sections of the Maisonnette with a high degree of accuracy.

Pradez has an almost childlike enthusiasm for software tools such as DESIGNER. He also points out, however, that he doesn’t feel computer design and production methods will ever replace hand craftsmanship and woodcarving expertise. “Traditional tools and methods still have their place,” he says. He adds, “What’s important is to express yourself in the medium in which you work. When you learn to accept the language and limitations of the software, it becomes irrelevant which tool you use.”



Illustration by Georges Pradez

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