



San and I at work in the garage at Las Rozas. Note San's Vespa in the left foreground.

autumn it was time for to move out of Madrid. Concha was expecting our first son Hernán and we decided to take a chance and change Madrid for the surrounding countryside. At the same time I thought it would be good for the business too, in the sense that we were going to use the garage of our new house as a new Andrea studio thus saving the rent we paid in Madrid. The location was a small town 16km from Madrid called Las Rozas.

San, who still lived with my parents, commuted every day by train and later by motorcycle, sometimes spending the night with us. Once again the routine was very simple: 16 hours a day closed in the inhospitable garage from which we rarely moved. It was simply as hard and thrilling as before, though my worries tortured me quite a bit as I was going to father a son. The future ahead still remain very uncertain and money, as usual, was very short. I was con-



Figure pioneer Al Charles, San and I enjoying some beers at Folkestone during some of the first Euromilitaires.

tinually scheming ways to get enough money to re-launch Andrea Miniatures in a profitable way and especially to acquire our own casting machinery as by then it had become pretty obvious that we were never to make significant cash on a hired casting basis. Then, one beautiful spring morning, a stranger knocked at the garage door look-



The old Olympia machine used in pre-computer era at Andrea's office.

The complete project, as a whole, left us pretty exhausted but deeply satisfied, especially after the warm public welcome and the extraordinary success. When the diorama was presented at the Nuremberg

Toy Fair it became the main attraction of the fair and I still remember how the people stuck their noses to the show case holding the piece, totally amazed by what they saw inside. We were at the peak of the

modelling world.

The U-Boat project is very meaningful and undoubtedly a landmark in the history of Andrea Miniatures, a kind of departure point from those times when the compa-

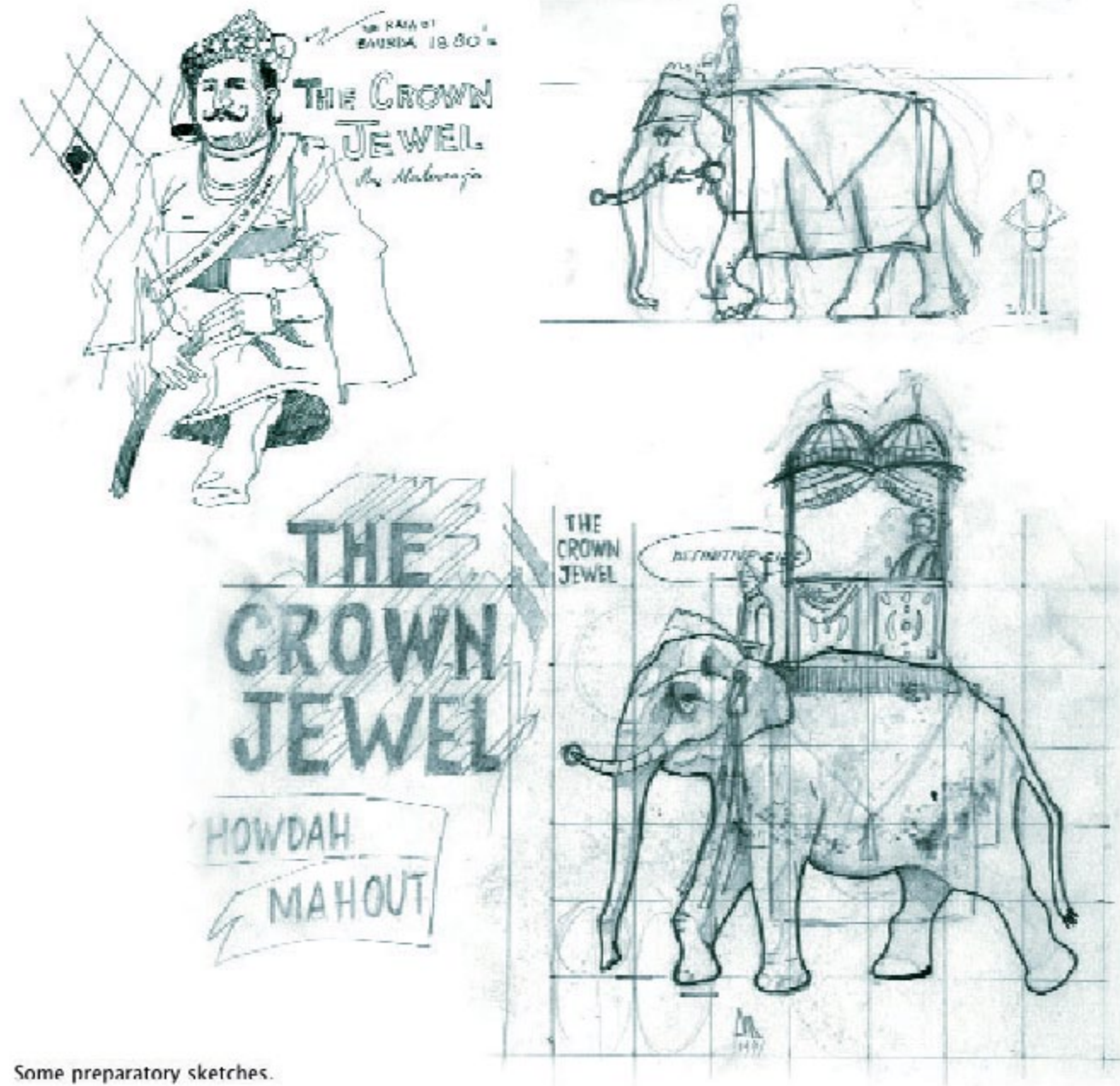
ny's output was mainly based on San's and my own modelling work. From then onwards there would be a highly specialised team and a true Andrea style based on a particular concept of mint figures

'Das Boot':
The diorama
1:32



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Some preparatory sketches.



Tony and I at Check Point Charlie, in Berlin.

fans. This was in fact a very old idea that we couldn't undertake before but now the time had come. The project was a challenge as it was a large kit comprising quite a number of pieces that had to fit together very closely, which demanded clever engineering. The work was divided into three major parts: the elephant itself, the figures and the howdah or covered seat

holding the passengers.

It was the first modelling contribution of an artist and a friend who was to play a very important role in many further Andrea projects: Baldomero Sáiz. He had been around in the figure and modelling world since late seventies, just like us, and we had known each other since long ago, but this was the first recorded time that he had crafted a piece for an Andrea kit. Baldo, as he is familiarly called, was commissioned with the howdah and eventually painted the whole kit too. I made the bare animal and posed the



Marcelino, Tony's successor and casting chief.