

THE SETTING

The wooden base has a usable area of 180 mm x 90 mm.

The house was built entirely of the wooden sticks that are used for naval modelling, produced by the Italian firm Amati. Through the open door can be seen an upturned wooden stool that testifies a precipitous escape. Using a jeweller's punch and a metal sheet I made the nails on the horizontal wooden beams. Almost all the working tools in the setting are Historex spare parts. The pieces of firewood on the ground come from a 6 mm section wooden rod cut to various sizes and then textured with an iron brush.

To achieve the snow effect I have used "Effetto Neve", produced by the Italian firm Prochima. To apply it on the ground, I made a soft mixture of this white powder, white glue and water. After mixing thoroughly, I applied a first layer. Once this had dried, I repeated the process four or five times to achieve the desired result.

To blend the snow layer with the ground I applied some Glossy Varnish along the edges. In this way I obtained a wet effect on the ground typical of melted or trampled snow. To paint the setting I have used only acrylic colours.

On the house, I applied a Black base colour, followed by a layer of thinned Dark Leather. After this, I dry brushed the horizontal wooden planks using flat brushes of different sizes. The colours that I have used are: Beige Brown, Leather Brown, Medium Flesh and Beige. For the square section beams I used Flat Brown, Ochre Brown and Light Flesh. The dark glass in the window is a square of glossy transparent plastic that I painted only on the inside in Matt Black.

I want to conclude this article by thanking my friend Gianfranco Pellegrino for his invaluable help with the historical research.



Vladimir DOUCHKINE



Light and color in perfect harmony

Vladimir Douchkine (1900-1989) was born in Kaplounovka, Ukraine. He was lucky enough to receive a fine education, including music and painting, but led a hazardous life from the moment he volunteered as a soldier in the White army during the Russian revolution of 1917

After the Red victory, Douchkine fled the country and started drifting across Europe, surviving on a variety of trades and crafts, before finally arriving in Paris in dire straits in 1926.

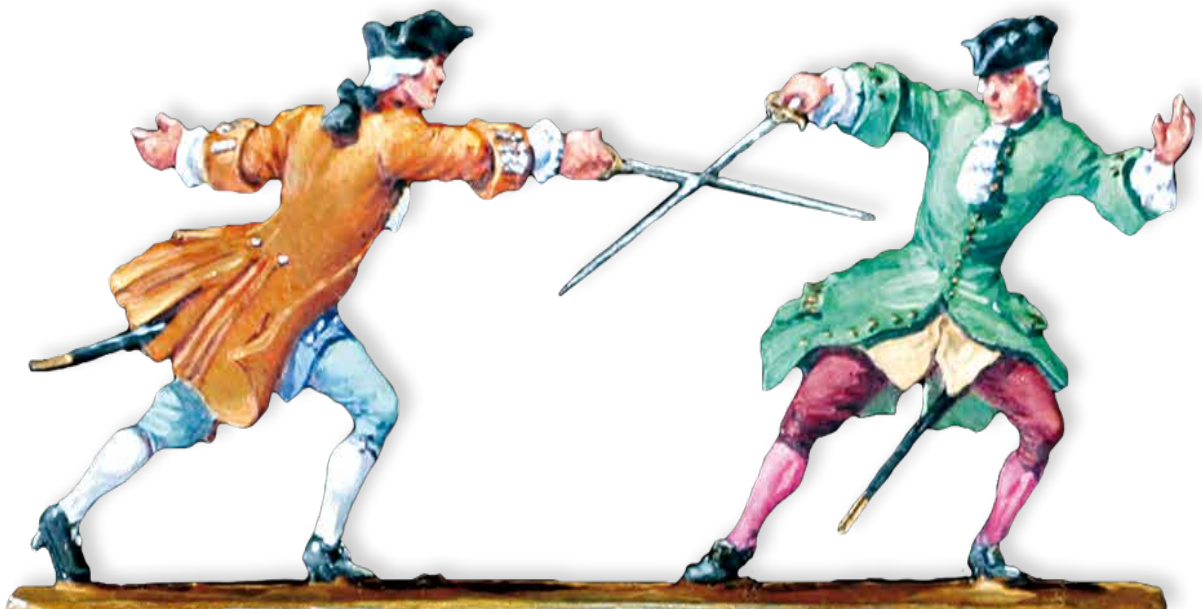
There he managed to find a job as a draughtsman but was fired in 1929, in the maelstrom of the financial crisis that broke out that year.

Desperate and desolate, he was unexpectedly offered a job as a figure painter by the playwright Paul Armont, a well-known collector of flat figures at the time.

As Douchkine would recollect years later, the first flats he ever saw were a Louis XV infantry guard in white uniform and some Egyptian types sporting colourful shields. He was

mesmerized by the little pieces but, at the same time, felt he was unskilled to paint them properly and it was only after some pressing insistence by Armont that he accepted.

A couple of duelists as belonging to the series "A Night in Venice", released by Wimor and painted about 1960.





In the next step I concentrated on the arms, altering the right arm so that the hand was positioned to hold the reins, and commencing work on the left arm, which had to be vertical. I also added the cords on the right shoulder (**Photos 34 and 35**).



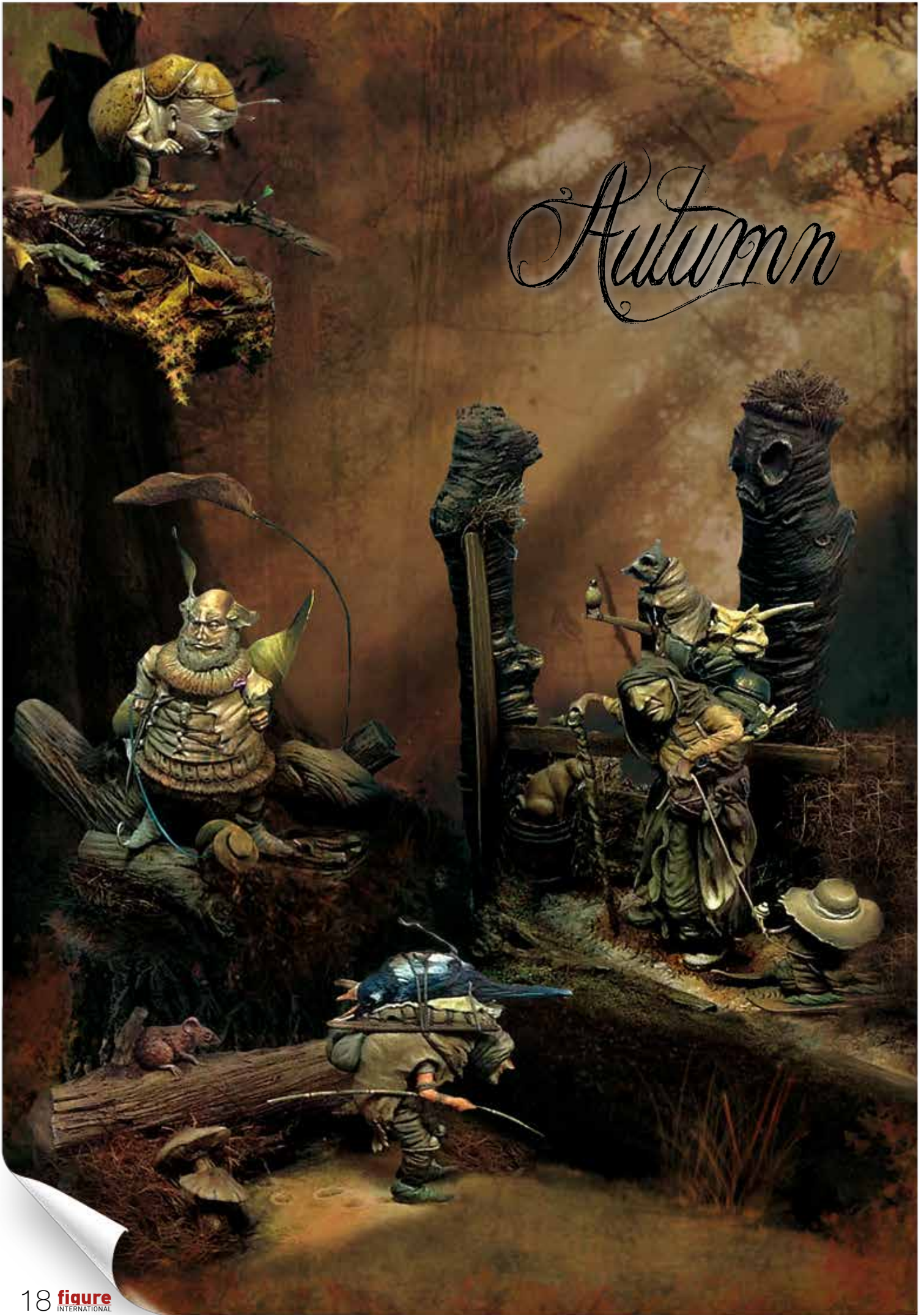
As the left arm gave me some trouble in fixing the sword, I cut the shoulder and re-modelled the left arm so that the sword would fit in the sword-belt, and hang vertically in the correct position (**Photos 37 and 38**).



Lastly, I finished the rider's left arm and added the horse's harness and bridle (**Photo 39**). And, after attaching the spurs, the job was done (**Photos 40 and 41**). Now all I had to do was to paint it, but I will leave that for another article.



Autumn





Julio CABOS

With regard to the face, I admit that in this case I am more or less obliged to include a 'step-by-step' account of the painting process, especially bearing in mind the colours in the uniform, since it was an absolute priority for me to achieve a base colour in which olive tones were prevalent, avoiding tan or orange hues that would not benefit the overall look of the figure at all.

I tested several mixtures before finding what I was looking for: colour no. 1 from the flesh-tone paint set ACS-01, Russian uniform 08-XNAC, colour no. 6 from the red paint set ACS-04 and marine blue 11-XNAC.



36 Second lights, for which small amounts of matte white 01-XNAC mixed with crimson 31-XNAC and light flesh 43-XNAC were added to the base colour.



37 For the final highlights, no. 4 from the flesh colour paint set ACS-01 was added to the second lights mixture.



38 Painting the final details on the face.



39 40 Views of the torso complete with all details.



41 The shadows on the sleeves were airbrushed, leaving some areas of white primer. The mixture used was no. 3 from the set for "non-metallic metal" ACS-12 with ultramarine blue 27-XNAC.



42 Base colour for the gold thread details, within the colour range used on the red uniform.



43 Detail of lights and first shadows.

When it came to adding lights, I gradually added to the base colour a mix of matte white 01-XNAC, crimson 31-XNAC and light flesh 43-XNAC. For final lights, I added to the mixture mentioned above some no. 4 from the flesh paint set ACS-01. In this case, as the base colour is in a dark shade shadows were unnecessary and all I needed to add were some washes in reddish brown 47-XNAC to sharpen the cheekbones and the tip of the nose.



Having spent a good few hours on the sash and other details such as the pistols, the dagger and the plume, the shirtsleeves still needed my attention. These were to be white, and to differentiate them from the horse's coat I used a bluish grey for the shadows.

Before proceeding with the final assembly, I thought it would be a good idea to make a simple terrain of artificial grass, which would help to enhance the elegance of the figure's pose with a foreleg raised in the air.

Now, with the figure fully completed, it was time to breathe deeply and start to think about the next challenge...

Julio Cabos

