

MANDALORIAN MERCS

BATTLECRY

ISSUE 16

RANGEFINDERS

To use or not to use, members discuss.

KAMINO CLAN

A Clan focus.

APPLICATIONS UPGRADES

Info on the planned Apps team upgrades.

MERCS CON

INFO ON THE EVENT

OF 2018

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MERCS CON

2018

WELCOME!

10 years.

Next year, at Celebration Orlando, the MMCC will be celebrating 10 whole years of life as the Mercs. It has been a struggle, but a worthwhile one as seeing something I created grow into something bigger than I first envisioned has been one of my greatest achievements.

Of course, with growth comes change and we've been through some uncomfortable ones in the past. The saddest part of running a club is not being able to please everyone and we've had to say goodbye to a lot of good members along the way, yet their legacy of building the foundations of this club will always live on.

There will always be challenges, we are a niche club within a niche costuming genre and our differences to how other clubs are run are always going to be questioned by those who don't understand our unique way of doing things.

There's a lot to look forward to, with the App team updates and MandoCon, there is a whole heap of things for us all to get excited about.

I hope I'll be here in another 10 years to reflect on the successes of the MMCC and I sincerely hope you'll be here to share them with me.

OYA!

Tom Hutchens
Mandalore the Uniter



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Battle Cry has a UK English Editor but all US English contributions have not been changed. The Mercs are an International club where all cultures and languages are respected.

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MERCS CON

We all understand that a good part of going to any convention is meeting up with your fellow clan mates and catching up face to face, having a meal together and, sometimes, even sharing a room.

Wouldn't it be awesome if we could take away the stress of kitting up and appearing at a show and concentrate on making friends with people from all over the world? That would be the whole point of MandoCon.

MandoCon is a conference meeting of Mandalorian Mercs Members, to allow members to conduct Mercs business in person, as well as spend time getting to know the people you regularly deal with personally and building bridges with people you have never personally met.

It will be an opportunity to have the Council all in one place to be able to speak to and talk about how we are going to continue to run the club in the unique way it was meant to be, whilst dealing with the challenges of growth.

Of course, it will be more than just meetings. There will be plenty of options to have fun together, as the panels and meetings are only intended for one of the three days the event will be over. From armour parties, trooping options and even organised tourism, there should be something for everyone.

The event is strictly ticketed, due to our agreement with LFL. However, members will be able to buy family tickets for their partners, as long as they are not banned members.

The event is scheduled to take place in either October or November 2018 in Orlando, Florida.

One of the biggest questions is why Florida?

The MMCC is a global organisation now, whilst we share a majority of US members, we still have to take into account the ease of transport for those around the world. Florida is a popular holiday destination for many people around the world and we'll be able to increase global camaraderie.

Once we have secured a date with the venue we will let you know further, but, as this has been a bit of a lifelong dream for Mandalore, share in the great feeling of being able to talk in person to a whole load of people behind the screen.

MandoCon is the greatest MMCC meet up since the first bash and promises to be a bucket load of fun!

Stay tuned for more info!

CLAN Spotlight

It seems only fitting that the real world birthplace of Temuera “Jango Fett” Morrison is entirely surrounded by water, like the Kaminoan cloning facilities that birthed his son Boba, and all the clones from his template.

Once served by the Mandalorian Mercs Costuming Club “Freelancers Guild,” Morrison’s native New Zealand recently entered into full clan status with the MMCC. After breaking off from Australia’s Sandhawk Clan, the group incorporated as Kamino Clan, and is growing so quickly you’d think there were cloning cylinders at their armor parties.



The New Zealand mercs are a strong and developing clan who are spread out across the country and are quickly becoming a recognized presence within the local costume community. Alor’ad NeX proudly notes that they have already grown their Facebook base (<https://www.facebook.com/nzmandalorians/>) to over 300 followers and over 1,500 “likes.” The tasks facing a small and isolated group are hardest in the beginning and these individuals have really dedicated themselves to the club to gain the following that they have received within their community. Their amazing growth in the last year is one that should be recognized and honored by all members of the Mandalorian Mercs as an example of the big things a small clan can accomplish.

Kamino Clan’s hard work has just begun as they prepare to head into their second year and continue their growth. In the upcoming year, the clan leadership is excited to be able to do more with additional members such as starting to set up booths at cons and continuing to make their presence felt within the costuming community in New Zealand. Their largest event of the year “Armageddon Auckland,” falls in October on the Northern Island of New Zealand. During this event, the Kaminoans host a cosplay panel and spend the rest of the time on the convention floor mingling with the con goers.

This is a growing and thriving clan in one of the most remote corners of the Mandalorian Mercs galaxy, but that doesn’t stop them from spreading the love of all things Mandalorian to a costuming community that has never encountered a T-visored clan until this year. They have great plans for the future including doing a patch run and have a goal of attempting to have a booth at every con in New Zealand next year on top of increasing the amount of charity work they currently engage.



LET'S DRAW...



MANDALORIAN ARMOR; PART 1

Oya,

Welcome to the first chapter on how to digitally color Mandalorian figures.

The most important thing you can do to improve is practice, practice, practice!

You will need a reasonably fast multi-core computer, a drawing tablet such as a Wacom or Yiynova, and software such as Manga Studio 5.0, GIMP 2.8, or Photoshop.

These techniques will work with most any modern graphics software.

The important thing is to pick your tools and learn them inside and out. You don't need the best equipment available; you just need to know how to get quality from what you have, and put in the work.

TOOLS USED IN DEMO:

17" 2.4 GHZ Laptop Dual Core

16GB RAM

Wacom Intous

Manga Studio 5.0

11 x 17" Heavy paper

Drafting pencils

Kneaded erasers

01

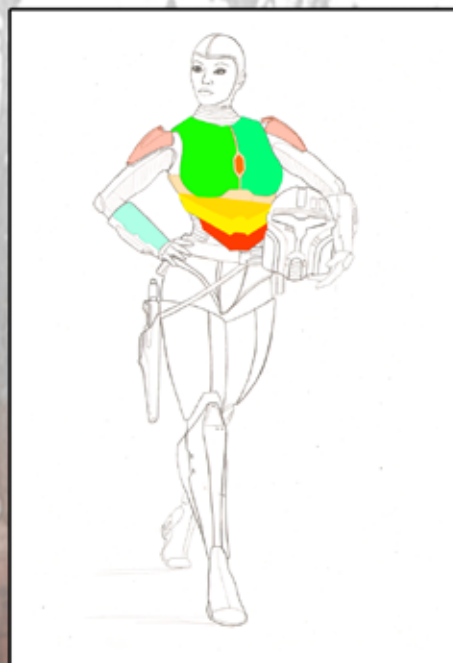
We are starting with an 11x17" line drawing on paper scanned at 300 dpi. I still prefer to start every image on paper.

Typically I copy the drawing onto a clean sheet of paper using a lightbox for crisp line work, not all of the coloring is opaque so erasing and construction lines can show though, you can edit them out digitally if you want, but it's personal preference.



02

This step is known in the comics industry as 'Flatting.' Using a lasso tool, you select areas and use the paint bucket to fill in blocks of color. These colors have no bearing on the final image. They only exist so you can use a 'Magic Wand' tool to select an area to color inside the lines.



PRO TIP:

As long as you are creating original work and not copying others, there is no such thing as 'cheating' in art. Tools are tools, so draw from references, use models, or whatever you are comfortable with that lets you produce quality work. Your art director does not care so long as you are not violating other artists' work.

MANDALORIAN ARMOR; PART 1



03

Continue selecting and filing blocks of color to create your Flats layer. When you reach a stopping point, lock the layer so you don't accidentally color on top of it. The color choices just give the selection tool something to key onto. The clown suit look keeps like colors from touching.



04

Creating a new Raster Layer over the Flats; I tend to work from large to small areas. Value is most important for a sense of depth, so the area is filled in with about a 40 percent grey to start, but how dark your midtone is can vary greatly depending on the rest of the piece.



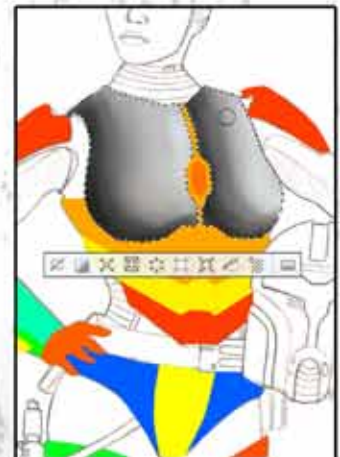
05

Working in greyscale, select a light direction, in this case from about the 2 o'clock position, and work with white and a dark grey, at about 70 percent or so, using a soft edge airbrush tool to sculpt the initial shapes.



06

Use the Airbrush and Blur tools to 'sculpt' the form. When things are looking like a black and white sculpture or CGI render, you are on your way. The Flats selection keeps all your work inside the Magic Wand selection area.



07

When you are satisfied with the forming of one area, simply use the selection wand on the next area in the Flats, drop in your grey midtone, and repeat the highlight and shading process.



08

Getting in the routine, just keep forming the areas in the Black and White, keeping your greyscales to their own layer.



MANDALORIAN ARMOR; PART 1



09

By this point, the chest plate has enough depth to move to the color stage. Make sure you incorporate shadows for items down the road; in this case the helmet will cast a shadow on the chest armor.



10

Create a new layer and set the blending mode to **OVERLAY**, **HARD LIGHT**, or **SOFT LIGHT** depending on your desired saturation. Using an airbrush tool, lay the color in, darker in the shadowed areas. This way your shading layer and color tone area can be edited independently.



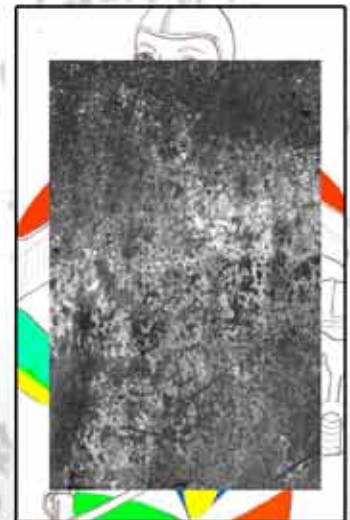
11

Yet another layer is added for Mandalorian Grunge. TEXTURES.COM is a good source with proper licensing so you can use the images in publishable work, but try to take your own reference photos as much as possible and build up a visual library.



12

This layer gets desaturated, turning it into a black and white image. You can try blending in color as well. Use the Flats layer to select the armor shape and **INVERT** the selection. Hit delete, and you are left with an armor shape.



13

In this case **HARD LIGHT** had a pleasing effect for the texture layer blending mode, but try out different blending modes and levels of opacity. There is no wrong way so long as it looks good.



14

A normal layer is added on top of the texture layer and wear is drawn in with a pencil tool using white and light grey.



MANDALORIAN ARMOR; PART 1



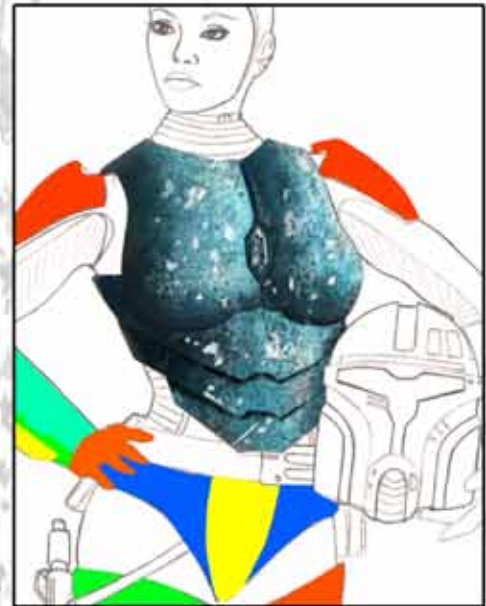
15

Paint typically has multiple layers including a primer and a topcoat. Using the darker areas from the rust texture layer serves as a natural guide for the bare metal showing through, and since that is a separate layer, you can add and remove dark spots at will without affecting your color or shading layer. Experiment with it; try different texture and draw or erase as much as you see fit, or add another layer for color tweaks. It is your world to play in.



16

The blue was nice and all, but needed a bit of life added to it, so going back to the color layer and selecting a portion of it without Polygonal lasso tool. The color was changed to more of a red using the HUE / SATURATION slider, you can add this on another layer or duplicate and try out different combinations of the color layer.



17

To close out this section of the tutorial, the red was intensified with the COLOR BLANACE and BRIGHTNESS / CONTRAST sliders. Working back and forth on the color layer with blue and red to work with the wear patterns to give the metal of this Legacy style armor depth and a sense of realism. These basic techniques are applicable to every piece of armor. Keep practicing.

Pinocchio



PRO TIP:

Get as much RAM as you can. Work at the highest resolution you can, 5000 pixels wide or better, and use as many layers as you can reasonably keep track of without your computer starting to lag. You can always make things smaller, but it is harder to scale up.

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California North - Teren Clan

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Florida - Buurenaar-Verda Clan

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Georgia/Alabama - Naast Clan

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Hawaii - Five-O Clan

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Illinois - Nexu Clan

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Indiana - Taakure Clan

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You can arrange a tour with master collector and author Steve Sansweet, plan a birthday party, or organize a corporate event at **Rancho Obi-Wan** by emailing info@ranchoobiwan.org

Rancho Obi-Wan depends on generous public support and your contribution may be tax deductible. Become a member, tour the museum or simply donate. For more information, visit us at www.ranchoobiwan.org

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A RANGE OF OPINIONS

Gaht Kyr'bes member Adenn'Kal prides himself on his Hondo Karr-inspired bucket with dual rangefinders. And while in-universe the bucket protects him from all manner of hazards, and enables him to better track and take down his targets, the real world can pose different hazards.

"Rangefinders are indeed a breaking hazard, and it's always on my mind. A friend and I were heading to an armor party, I was sitting passenger with my bucket on my lap to make sure nothing happens to it. Both rangefinders were raised and my friend was talking and waving his hands around and suddenly 'wham!' he struck the right rangefinder and the frame broke," Kal said, adding that he was able to repair the damage. "So now I'm always on edge, that's why most of the time they are lowered so I can keep an eye on them. That and because I like to look at them."



When "A New Hope" hit the galaxy in 1977, viewers were faced with smooth, symmetrical helmets on Darth Vader, stormtroopers, gunners and Rebel pilots. It wasn't until 1978 that Fett strode into view. His color scheme, T-visor, and weathered appearance set him apart from the armor that had come before, but it was the rangefinder in his silhouette that broke the symmetry, and showed that this character was different, unique.



In 2016, there are now more than 1,600 armored Official members of the Mandalorian Mercs Costuming Club, and while every one of them wears some form of the T-visor, and has armor elements that reflect Fett (or another canon source) that rangefinder has become an option. To some, however, it's a necessary part of the look.

"I'm a canon guy, so not having a rangefinder on a helmet seems like a naked helmet to me," said Tra'cor Clan Alor'ad Dha Bral, who, in addition to serving on the Approval Team acts as Canon Brigade Marshal. "I don't think they're important on a custom, but I don't think they're insignificant either. It's all personal preference." Breakages are a problem though.

"Just this last weekend at a local con we had to do some emergency repair work to a member's rangefinder after it came unseated from its contact point," said Concordia Clan Ruus'alor, Approval Team member, and regional Ruus'sol Bowfanny, a Merc synonymous with the Helmet forums for many. "Rangefinders in general are something I find both interesting and frustrating. They're interesting because they can go from the old iconic look to some newer interesting designs. I myself don't use one simply because I've not made one I like that fits my Mando's character."



Dha Bral counters that improved designs and increased access to metalworking have increased the durability of rangefinders in recent years.

"Aluminum stalks obviously will withstand a fall or direct sunlight, while resin stalks without reinforcement will generally break if moderately mishandled. If you're worried about breaking your rangefinder, seek out a steel reinforced resin stalk, or an aluminum stalk for your helmet."

KELDABE TALK RADIO

OFFICIAL PODCAST OF THE MANDALORIAN MERCS

Launched on December 1st 2007, Keldabe Talk Radio discusses all things Mandalorian and Mandalorian Mercs related. With a dedicated team made up of Mercs members, the show airs once a month and is ready to tackle the hot topics regarding Star Wars.

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STAR WARS COLLECTING NEWS

CHANGING APPLICATIONS

The Mandalorian Mercs are growing at an almost exponential rate, adding dozens of new members every month. With any growth of that magnitude, changes to the systems inside are inevitable, and just as the club, regions and clans grow by adding members, the application team, the common ground all mercs must cross, has grown and changed as well. That change is most evident in the restructuring and retraining occurring this month, during the application team shutdown that began September 17. Personnel Officer Ulrik Kanteer spoke with BattleCry about the shutdown, and what members can expect from the new application process.



Before the change, there were seven voting members of the approval team. Those seven members, along with the Mandalore, were able to handle all of the applications, post in the armor building boards, and answer personal messages on the boards regarding applications.



As the club grew this became more and more of a chore to take care of and eventually grew to a point where it was obvious that changes needed to be made. During this time the app team went to approving people in batches of four or five people to batches of 15 or more. At the time, a change was made to add more non-voting members to the team, to allow the voting members to spend more time on that specific process, and less time helping out in the armor building boards.

The team was also split into sub teams to help organize and fix some of the bottlenecks in the process. This change helped, but the demand continued.

The next step was the implementation of the Ruusol program. This program, originally given to the Regional Commanders, has grown and changed after implementation and now falls directly under the the office of the Personnel Officer so that they can provide the best help to the Ruusalors and to the newest applicants beginning the process.

All of these changes take time to implement, and so the application team declared a temporary shut-down, beginning Saturday, Sept. 17, with a projected end date one month later.

The temporary shutdown has been planned since early spring and was delayed to allow for the major rush of applications that Celebration Europe and DragonCon bring to pass through the team. Any member before the team as of the shutdown were processed as normal through the system and for them there will be no difference. Many members reported quick responses in the days and weeks leading up to Sept. 17, with some members receiving word on their applications within a week.

The overall objective of these changes is streamlining the process so that the apps will return to being processed in two to four weeks. The goal is also to remove a lot of the “moving parts” from the team as it currently stands.

During the month long shutdown the Personnel Officer is going to live stream a training session each Saturday on his fan page (www.facebook.com/ulrikkanteer) to teach everyone about the new process. The videos will be left in place for future viewers as well.

Additionally, the hiatus will allow the existing application team members to train the newer members of the team. Once trained and organized, the team will be broken down into five or six sub-teams. This will give each team a smaller set of applications to work through, rather than one team dealing with all the live applications at any one moment, which can often rise to more than 100 entries. Each team is projected to face approximately 20 applications at a given time.

While change is often concerning for longtime members of any organization, it has become clear that the evolution of the application team and process is part of the overall growth and development of the MMCC as a whole.

The application team, and the Mandalore, hope that these changes return the club's costume process to the expediency and schedule once enjoyed before the massive influx of new members, and allow the application team to grow along with the club. The videos posted on Kanteer's fan page will also provide a resource for all club Ruus'alors and interested members, to provide a better understanding of the process that will take the club into the future.

The schedule for Ulrik Kanteer's live-stream is as follows:

Sept 24 - Application Team Responsibilities, Explanation of New Process, Expectations.

Oct 1 - Ruus'sol Responsibilities, Explanation of New Process, Expectations.

Oct 8 - Ruusalor Responsibilities, Expectations, Questions for the Personnel Officer.

Oct 15 - Walkthrough of the New Process.



FROM THE EDITOR



Sometimes it is really hard to stay quiet about a good thing and I have been bursting to tell you all about MandoCon for ages!

I learnt back during CE2 just how much difference meeting people face to face was. Whilst our forums are a great communication tool, nothing ever beats being able to talk face to face with someone.

I know Tom as been eager to do some sort of major get together for as long as I've been on the Council. He's managed to pull off a camping meetup, but nothing as ambitious as MandoCon. So you could imagine it wasn't hard for me to persuade him (and the rest of the Council) that we needed to organise a meet up for everyone to participate.

I am hopeful that this will be the start of many beautiful friendships!

Speaking of starts, it is good to see the App team positively responding to their issues in a measured and functional way. Change is never a comfortable process, we have had to go through so many in the past, but I am certain the team, led by Ulrik, will make the process easier, quicker and approachable.

I'd like to think Celebration London was a great success, many representatives of LFL and Reed came over to our booth to tell us how wonderful it was. I have to say that many members really pulled the stops out and came up trumps for this event. Of course they weren't without their snags, but overcoming issues at cons is a skill many of us have learnt through trial and error. We came through fairly unscathed.

We're growing fast. Tom mentioned to me that we had more members pass CRLs in the week before the shut-down than we had in the entirety of the first year of the Mercs. Coming up to 10 years and we've come leaps and bounds from being the multicoloured step-child of Star Wars costuming to a global force for hope. We started our own charity, became a tax registered fraternity and continue to learn from the lessons given by our current and past challenges.

We continue in that vein with the final parts of the Strongholds rollout, Ulrik's App team upgrades and a project I am currently working on with the Order of Ori'ramikad members, to improve the experience for newer members and clearly set out a guide as to what is expected in the way of attitude from our members.

We've come leaps and bounds up to this point, we now need to steer the ship towards the way we want to go and find a way to stay the course.

Oya!

THE END CREDITS

EDITORIAL

Richard "Saz" Whittaker

Misha "MishaKitty" Nell

CONTRIBUTORS

Misha Nell

Tyler "Zerxus Dral" Reynolds

Jason "Coryn Jusik" Goldman-Hall

PROOF READERS

Jason Goldman-Hall

Steve "Orryin Varek" Ventimiglia

Evan "Naran Baatar" Woolbright

PHOTOGRAPHS BY

Matt Zeher

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