

Skill Builder

by Mark Hembree



Moebius Models' 1/24 scale Chariot from "Lost in Space" (including Robot B9) provides a clear study in painting canopy frames.

CANOPY PAINTING inside and out

You can scale down this technique and use it for aircraft, too!

The secret of painting a canopy frame interior and exterior is to paint the inside and the outside on the outside. Got that? Well, let me explain.

Building Moebius Models' Chariot from the 1960s TV show "Lost in Space," I disregarded the instructions for painting the large, clear cabin of the excursion vehicle. The sheet suggested masking inside the piece, painting the interior frame international orange, then painting the exterior of the frame metallic gray (or covering it with Bare-Metal Foil). But I airbrushed both colors from the *outside*. It's an aircraft mod-

elers' trick that makes it easier to apply both colors and requires only one set of masking.

That's good, because masking is what takes the most time. I covered everything on the outside with thin Tamiya tape, used a hobby knife to trim away tape and expose the frame to airbrushing, burnished all the tape edges to prevent paint from creeping underneath, then attached large paper masks inside to protect from overspray, **1**. (By the way, you can save time by purchasing a set of pre-cut, self-adhesive masks at www.starshipmodeler.biz. I found out about it after I was through painting!)

Before painting, I cleaned up with Polly

S Plastic Prep to remove dirt and oils and ensure better adhesion, **2**. Then I sprayed the interior color on the outside, **3**. When that was dry to the touch, I painted over that with the exterior metallic gray, **4**.

The sooner you remove the masking, the more likely you'll avoid pulling up paint with it. (I gave it about a half hour.)

You can see the results on the doors of the Chariot, **5** – international orange on the inside, metallic gray on the outside. The same technique colors the Chariot's canopy frame, **6**.

And that is how to paint the inside *and* the outside on the outside. **FSM**



1

Mark masked the entire exterior of the clear piece, then used a hobby knife to trim away and expose the frame and areas that would receive paint.



2

Masking requires extensive handling that's bound to leave dirt, oils, and adhesive residue. Polly S Plastic Prep cleans up for better paint adhesion.



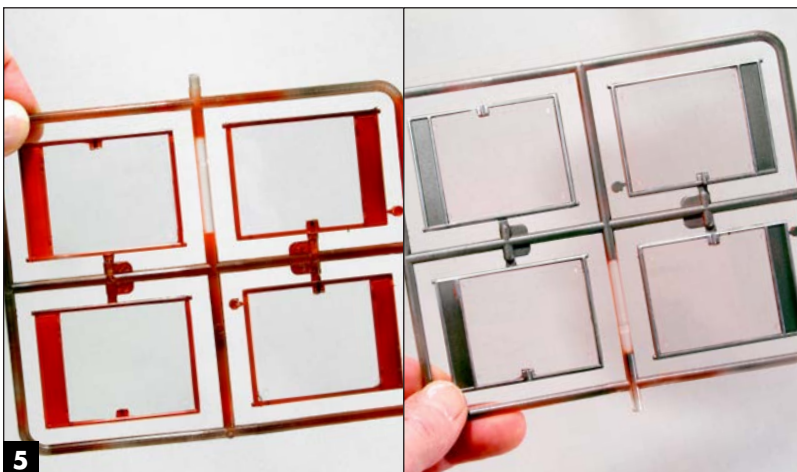
3

The interior color – international orange – is sprayed from the outside. The inside masking protects against overspray.



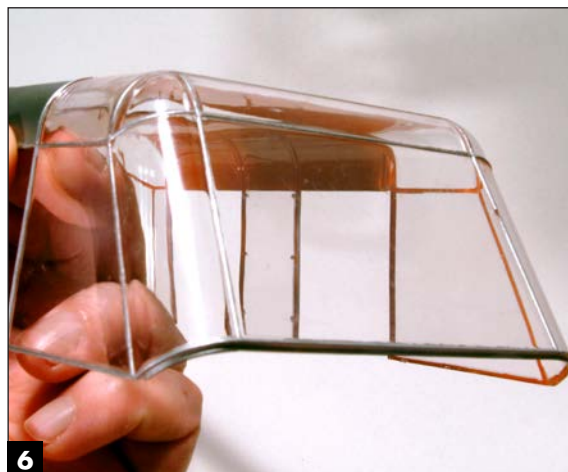
4

Next comes the exterior color, metallic gray. Instructions suggest covering the frame with Bare-Metal Foil, but this is much quicker.



5

Left: Inside, international orange shows through the clear plastic. Right: The exterior of the same pieces is metallic gray. Both colors were applied to this side.



6

With metallic gray on the outside, international orange on the inside, the Chariot's cabin is ready for its doors and drapes.