



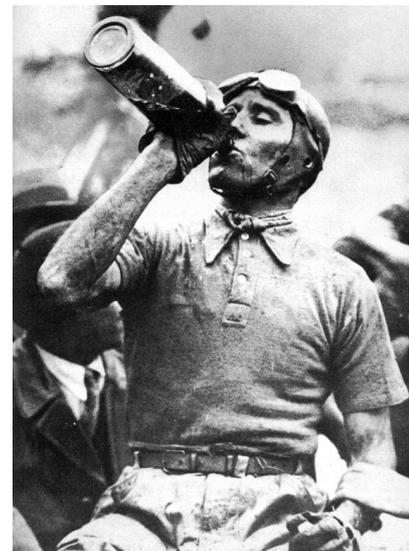
THE BIRTH OF A PROJECT (SECOND PART)

“NIVOLA”

(by Stefano Toscano etienne.toscano@gmail.com)

THE SCULPTURE

Clearly he accepted the challenge made by my friend Pino to create the sculpture of “Nivola” and therefore, considering that I generally work on figures ranging from 75 to 90mm (1:24 to 1:20 scales), I first began to assess the technical difficulties in creating a piece in 150mm (scale 1:12) and - first and foremost - by asking myself how to position it; whether to have Nuvolari sitting in the vehicle or standing and, in this case, in what context ? **(Pictures 1 & 2)**



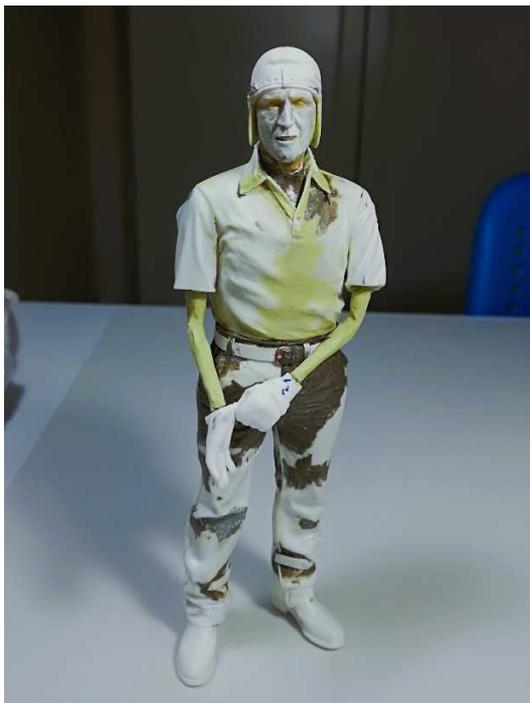
Pictures 1 & 2: NUVOLARI TRIUMPHS AT GRAND PRIX

Excluding the hypothesis of putting him inside the vehicle (such a solution would certainly have facilitated the work but would have hidden a large part of the car's interior), I found my inspiration in a old F1 Pilot's Photo, which suggested the posture to be given to my subject; while he is putting on his driving gloves, preparing to get into the car during the G.P. trial days!



So, using a “posing mannequin”, I armed myself with wire to make the “skeleton” of the figure in the chosen posture, taking care to reproduce the height of the “Flying Mantuaman” in the right scale (he was 164 cm. tall and weighed about 65 kg. !).

Having created the shape, I covered it with Milliput, starting by modelling the legs, then proceeding with the torso, arms and, lastly, the head. Once the rough figure was prepared, then again divided into head, torso, upper and lower limbs, to facilitate the work I switched to “Magic Sculpt” to outline the clothes with drapery and the various folds of the fabric, while most of the other details were made with “Brown Stuff” and with the aid of metal sheets or plasticard. **(Pictures 3 & 4)**



Pictures 3 & 4: SHAPE COMPLETED

Obviously, a question arose as to how Nuvolari was dressed during the days of the 1932 Monaco “Grand Prix” but, after some “historical research” on the internet, I managed to retrieve some photos from the period and compare them with some of the Champion's original clothing (polo shirt, trousers and helmet with goggles), preserved in the “Nuvolari Museum” in Mantua.



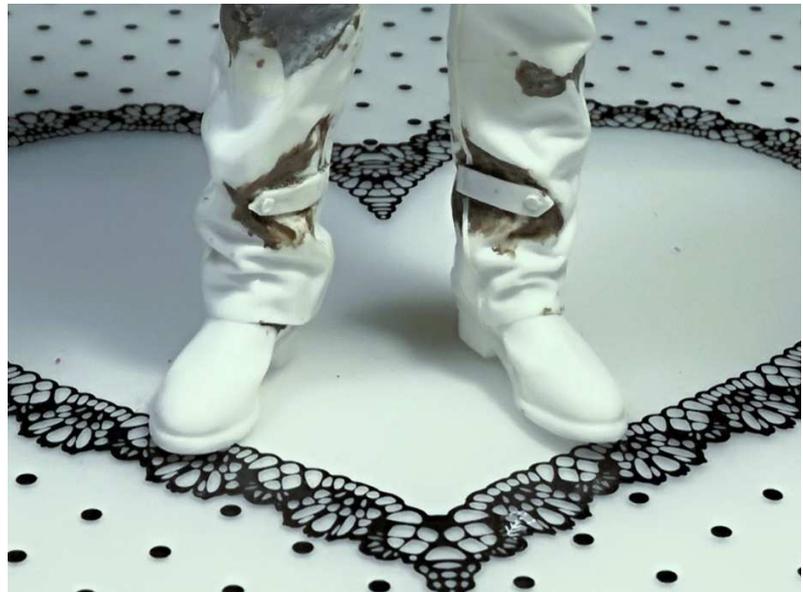
In detail, the driver's breeches were of a particular style, with fabric reinforcements near the pockets and on the behind, and with two buttoned cuffs at the end of each leg, which were used to close the bottom of the trousers while driving so that they would not get caught in the brake or clutch pedal.

(Pictures 5 & 6)

In addition, I reproduced the shape of the chronometer that Nuvolari always wore in his left front pocket, with a chain attached to the belt loop. **(Picture 7)**



Pic. 5: DRIVER'S BREECHES IN PROGRESS



Pic. 6: DETAIL OF THE BUTTONED CUFFS

On the other hand, for the shirt, a classic 3-button Polo, I allowed myself "creative licence" by adding the characteristic "Nivola" TN "monogram logo", which was only officially introduced after the Monaco GP but which, in any case, was already in use on some of the Champion's garments in 1932. After the polo shirt, I moved on to modelling the forearms and, using as a base the "cannibalised" hands from another model, I added a watch on the left wrist and recreated the typical racing driver's gloves with button closures. **(Picture 8)**



Pic. 7: DETAIL OF THE POCKET



Pic. 8: FOREARMS AND HANDS COMPLETED



Pic. 9: THE HEAD IN PROGRESS



Pic. 10 E 11: SCULPTURE COMPLETED AND READY FOR PAINTING



Lastly, a specific problem was posed by the head which, once roughened, was modelled in detail, always having as a reference some headshots of Nuvolari with his typical “sardonic” expression of a half-smile on his lips. In fact, the greatest difficulties were in finding the right shape of the eyes and the position of the mouth. I then went on to give form to the neck scarf, the leather helmet with its details (padding, stitching and chin strap with snap fasteners) and the goggles including a belt with buckles (made of copper wire), to which lenses were then added, made from a sheet of transparent acetate. **(Pictures 9 & 10)**

THE VARNISHING

Once modelling was completed, a base coat of synthetic primer was sprayed over the entire figure. **(Picture 11)**

For the subsequent painting, carried out with a brush, as is customary I started with the head to which a further coat of synthetic Humbrol Flesh Matt 61 was given and, once the whites of the eyes were defined, with iris, pupil (Nuvolari had hazel eyes), and eyelashes, I began to apply the base coat of acrylic Vallejo “Sunny Skin Tone” (70.845), lightened for the highlights with “Basic Skin Tone” (70.815) while for shading I used Arteza tube acrylics “Burnt Siena”, “Van Dyke Brown” (especially for the outline of the eyes) and “Carmine Red” for (very light) glazes on the lips and cheeks. Finally, a further light glaze was applied on the jaw area with a mix of “Van Dyke Brown” and Vallejo “London Grey” (70.836), to emphasise a “five o’clock shadow” beard effect.

For the helmet I considered the model kept in the “**Nuvolari Museum**”, in brown/reddish leather and for the base colour I used a mix of Vallejo Red Leather (70.818) and Maimeri Polycolor “Red Ochre”, brightened with Arteza’s “Raw Sienna” and “Yellow Ochre” and shaded with “Mars Brown” and the usual “Van Dyke Brown”. For the belt of the goggles, on the other hand, I used a mixture of Vallejo “Pale Sand” (70.837) and “Stone Grey” (70.884), while for the actual goggles, made of rubber, the base colour was “German Grey” (70.995) with glazes of “Neutral Grey” (70.992) and “Black Glaze” (70.855), and for the metal rim of the lenses I used Vallejo Air “Aluminium” (71.062), obviously given with a brush. For the foulard, a sort of bandana that the pilot wore around his neck, I used a mix of Vallejo “White”



(70.951) and “Pale Sand”, shaded with “Stone Grey” and “Neutral Grey”. **(Picture 12)**

Turning to the Polo shirt, this was an intense yellow, similar to “Giallo Modena”. I would like to emphasise that, in my opinion, yellow is one of the most difficult colours to use, as it generally covers very poorly; in any case, my friend Pino helped me with the base, providing me with a tin of Humbrol Acrylic “Yellow 154”, used as the base colour. For the highlights, I used Vallejo Pale Sand (70.837), Arteza “Naples Yellow” and Ferrario Acrylic Master “Yellow Ochre Light” as the base, and for the shading, “Indian Yellow” and “Mars Orange”, also Arteza. The TN monogram was painted with Maimeri Polycolor “Navy Blue” and lightened with Vallejo “Ultramarine Blue” (70.839). **(Picture 13)**



Pic. 12: PAINTED HEAD AND HELMET



Pic. 13: DETAIL OF THE POLO WITH THE MONOGRAM

With regard to the trousers, I could not find a colour in the shade I needed, a sort of grey/dove grey with blue undertones, and had to create one in sufficient quantity for the job. I took a 2.5ml airtight pot and mixed Vallejo “Neutral Grey”, “Stone Grey” and “Intermediate Blue” (70.903), adding a very small amount of LeFranc & Bourgeois Medium Gel Mat (so that the colour wouldn't dry out and would keep for at least a couple of weeks); for the highlights I then used “Stone Grey”, “Pale Sand” and “Pale Grey



Blue” (70.907) while for the shading I used “Neutral Grey” and, as a light glaze, “German Grey” with a bit of “Van Dyke Brown”.

For the shoes, made of black leather, I used a mix of Arteza “Mars Black” and “Van Dyke Brown”, brightened with “Raw Sienna” and used pure black for the shaded parts.

For the leather belt I used a base of Vallejo Leather Brown (70.871), lightened with Saddle Brown (70.940) and with the “Raw Sienna”, while for the glazes I used the usual “Van Dyke Brown”. **(Pic. 14)**

Finally, once everything was finished, to give a sort of wear to the garments, I gave a very light wash of Polycolor Maimeri “Verdaccio” on the Polo shirt and Vallejo “German Grey” on the breeches, adjusting both colours with LeFranc & Bourgeois Medium Gel. **(Pic 15)**



Pic. 14: DETAIL OF THE DRIVER'S BREECHES



Pic. 15: MODEL COMPLETED



THE DIORAMA

There was still the matter of contextualising man and machine, and here again some 1930s G.P. photos discovered on the internet helped. So it was decided to place “Nivola” and his 2300 8c “Monza” standing at the Paddock, recreating a portion of asphalted road to which a wooden fence was added and on which, at that time, billboards were affixed. **(Pictures 16 & 17)**

In this circumstance, the poster advertisement of the “Superlubrifiant Stelcyl” (a special motor oil made by Renault) was reproduced from a beautiful picture of that time, and to add further realism to the scene, a forklift for tyre changes was constructed with a metal bar and two small wheels recovered from a “parts graveyard” (the pieces originally belonged to a 1/72 scale Panzer II!).

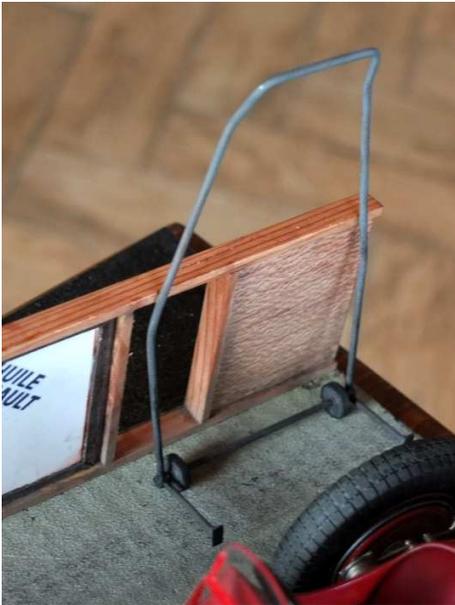
Finally, an oilcan, a screwdriver, a wrench and the ever-present dirty rag that every good mechanic must always have at hand were added. **(Pictures 18 & 19)**



**Picture 16: ALFA ROMEO P3 AT THE PADDOCK
MONACO GRAND PRIX - 1934**



Picture 17: COMPOSITION TESTS



Picture 18: THE FORKLIFT



Picture 19: THE BILBOARD AND THE TOOLS

With that, and the addition of a commemorative plaque of the event, on which Nuvolari's little turtle amulet and the A.R. logo stands out, the project could finally be considered finished. **(Pictures 20 & 21)**



Pictures 20 & 21: THE PROJECT COMPLETED