



WRATH OF SKULLMASTER

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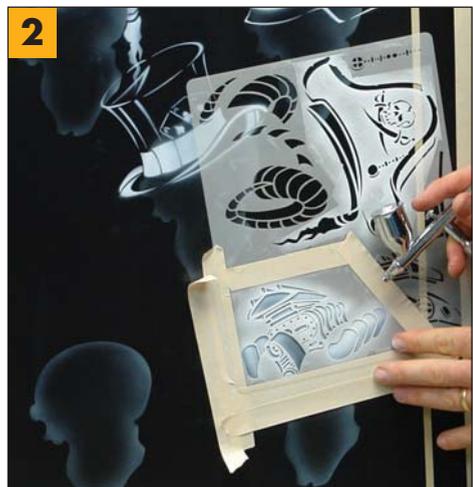
Checking out the newest stencil system from Artool, and cranking out some skulls in time for Halloween

Remember that just because this is an automotive column that doesn't mean you have to stick to painting cars and bikes. These stencils can be used for everything from body art, to wall murals, to cake decorating, and they're made with a solvent-proof polymer, so you don't have to worry about what you paint them with because you aren't going to hurt these babies.

In the previous issue, we painted an RC car using a number of the newer *Nano* and *Micro* stencils. In this article, I demonstrate *The Wrath of Skullmaster*, the newest stencil system from Artool. (As you can see, I still use old sci-fi horror movies to title my stencils). *The Wrath of Skullmaster* is a six-stencil set with three of them as system stencils to help you create multi-themed skulls. These are called *Mr. Potato Bonz* because you can create many designs from a single character, a la *Mr. Potato Head*TM. The other three stencils are background, or mural stencils: *Kalaveras* is a collection of stylized skulls, similar to those found in Mexican Day of the Dead artwork; *Burial Ground* is a collection of skulls on sticks and is perfect for creating tribal, or ancient cemetery images (very popular with the Vlad Tepes crowd). And last, but not least, is the long-awaited *Bonz III*. This lineup represents a new myriad of skulls designed to work alone to create killer skull landscapes, or with the previous *Bonz* stencils. It bears repeating that stencils are merely tools to help you create certain artwork faster and more efficiently. >>



1. For this demo, I created five different skulls from the *Mr. Potato Bonz* stencil. This positive/negative stencil provides all the tools necessary to create some seriously innovative skulls. Using my trusty Iwata Eclipse CS and some favourite basecoat white, I airbrushed the positive outline of the skull.



2. After spraying the base outline of the skulls, I added the accessory items (pirate's hat, German skull with machine gun eyes, top hat, blower head) from *Mr. Potato Bonz Stuph* and *Mr. Potato Bonz' Other Stuph* stencils.



3. So far, all of the details in the skulls were generated from the stencils. The number of combinations and changes an artist can make are practically limitless. The freehand work commences in the next step.



4. Sticking with the basecoat white in the gun, I fogged in the background area to look like smoke, and filled in the skulls themselves to lighten them up. This also provides a solid base to airbrush from in the future.



5. Before I switched to black, I used the white to create a border with the *Kalaveras* stencil. You can probably tell by this design that I was a big Oingo Boingo fan.



6. I switched to basecoat black and started airbrushing the dark details with the negative part of the skull stencil. This might seem redundant since I already did this in white. The white was necessary as a sketching tool to align the other elements of the stencil as they were laid in.



7. With the black details stenciled in, I freehanded my own details. The black has a little violet-kandy in it to knock the sepia back, and to add some color to the black-and-white piece. In the following steps, the goal is to soften the stencil lines and give the overall piece a true freehand look. The first step is to re-delineate the design. The Micron C Kustom airbrush works just fine for this.



8. As you can see, it takes just a little work to give even the harshest stenciled piece a true freehand look. A little linework here, a little shading there...



9. In the next few steps, I performed the identical treatment to all five of the *Mr. Potato Bonz* skulls. To save time, I won't show them all, but you get the point. Good time to practice your freehand skills—dagger strokes, dagger strokes, and more dagger strokes.



10. You never have to stick with every detail in the stencils. I took one of the spade stencils from the *Kustom Kulture* line and threw them on the pirate's bandana. Notice that I added some spider webs and other details.

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11. I added a few last minute details on the cleanup. In this step, you can see why I threw in the background smoke. It really makes the finished skulls pop.



12. Because Wrath is a six-stencil set, we might as well use the remaining two stencils. *Burial Ground* gives us some classic HP Lovecraft skulls on sticks, a nice background effect, and is killer for sketching creepy background scenes in haunted murals.



13. I finished the stencil work with *Bonz III*. *Bonz fanatics* can now feast on another skull landscape stencil. Unlike *Bonz I* and *II*, *III* has random-sized skulls interspersed throughout the design, it works well with both of its predecessors, and is perfect for skulled-out backgrounds.



14. With some added freehand work, the background looks killer. While the stencil allows you to do this background in record time, the freehand work will make people think you've spent days on it.

FINAL. Well, there you have it. It's nice to get back to basics once in a while. The *Wrath of Skullmaster*, if anything, is a basic stencil set that offers all the tools to create unique skull designs, backgrounds, borders, landscapes, and more. All you need is your airbrush and the ability to create some dagger strokes.

I hope you enjoyed this installment. What's next? You're just gonna have to wait and see!



Craig Fraser, author of *Automotive Cheap Tricks & Special F/X*, has been airbrushing for nearly two decades. The owner and operator of Air Syndicate, Fraser has also been the in-house airbrush artist and designer for Kal Concepts since 1992. Located in Bakersfield, California, Kal Concepts/Air Syndicate specializes in custom graphics, automotive airbrush, and the fine art of the custom culture. Craig divides his time between working in his shop, writing magazine articles, and instructing. He has also appeared in a number of instructional videos, and is credited with pioneering the original automotive custom paint workshop for the Airbrush Getaway more than 10 years ago. Craig works directly with a number of manufacturers to develop new and innovative custom paint products. You can check out his artwork at

