

NOVA Open Interviews – Matt DiPietro

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MEET MATT DIPIETRO

Sometimes, a young person's curiosity can spark a lifetime commitment to art. In the case of Matt DiPietro, owner of [Contrast Miniatures](#) and NOVA Open Seminar Instructor and Capital Palette judge, his artistic journey began as a child with a curiosity about the individuals who brought the models to life on the boxes of the tanks and airplanes he built with his father. "When I would build models as a kid, I would always look at the box. I would study the models on the box, and I always thought, 'who has the job of painting that model? Maybe I can do that someday.'"



Matt, who is also a member of the NOCF Artist Consortium, subsequently received his first acrylic paint set to paint Games Workshop models when he was 13. Matt's career gained a major boost after landing a job as a Studio Miniature Painter at Privateer Press, which was "a huge step in my career." Matt noted that the mentorship opportunities were invaluable for his growth as an artist. "Ally McVey was one of my earliest mentors at Privateer Press in the early 2000s. She taught me much of what I needed to know at that time about studio painting, and her lessons have followed me ever since."

Since then, Matt has had the opportunity to learn from other masters like Jeremie Bonomant who deeply influenced Matt's unique approach to painting miniatures. "Jeremie Bonomant has been very inspirational to me. He taught a class in Seattle in 2006 that ended up influencing me to start painting "Sketch Style" later in my career." In addition to Jeremie, Matt has also worked with other artists like his friend Kirill Kanaev. "He's a painting genius, maybe the best in the world, and always great guy."

As a part of this learning process, Matt has entered – and won – numerous painting competitions, including gold medals at NOVA's Capital Palette, Crystal Brush, GenCon, and the Las Vegas Open. "Every win and competition experience is unique. There are a lot of ups and downs, but you learn from every one of them," he explained. "Every competition feels different; it is hard to compare them all. In the end, it's not about the win but about driving yourself forward to new personal bests. Competition is a good way to drive yourself to improve, and you can succeed regardless of the outcome."

MEET MATT DIPIETRO (cont.)

Fortunately, Matt has given individuals in the hobby numerous ways to access his talents that he has gained over this time. Matt currently runs Contrast Miniatures, his commission studio that caters to gamers “that like my quick style that looks great on the tabletop” to a high-end collector “that wants a custom piece of artwork.” Matt also teaches classes across the country and hosts private coaching sessions in the Pacific Northwest. “All of these things at once keep me pretty busy! It is great that I can do this as my living, because it is what I am passionate about,” he said.

Matt has been bringing these skills, experiences, and lessons to the NOVA Open for three years as a seminar instructor, which has been a rewarding experience for him. “I like watching things ‘click’ for them and their skills grow,” he said, “a lot of the time I have return students and it is great to see them progress as painters each year.” Matt also explained that the NOCF’s service-driven mission inspired him to contribute his skills to this cause. “Volunteering at NOCF every year gives me the opportunity to apply my skills and expertise to charitable giving; there aren’t many ways that miniature painters can do that,” he said.

Despite giving a lot of time and labor to the NOVA Open and his career, Matt is seeking out new opportunities to continue growing as an artist. “Last year I was given the honor to help judge the [NOVA Open] Capital Palette painting competition and I will be returning again this year to judge the Master’s Portion along with Dave Taylor and Sam Lenz,” he said. Matt is also taking on the challenge of painting his own sculptures. “I have been working towards more 100 percent scratch-built projects and will be revealing those in the future for collectors,” he said, adding “creating miniature art is my life’s passion and I look forward to seeing where it takes me in the coming years as I continue to grow.”

NOVA Open would like to thank Matt for contributing his work to our community and making the NOVA Open the best possible experience for our attendees.