

Jeremy Martin

Winter Project - Adventures in lifelike pilot painting – Part 2

EYES

Having successfully cracked more realistic skin tones, we now focus attention to the eyes. This is where your figure will suddenly come alive.

Eyes need the most attention as it's the first thing we look at. However good your skin tones, a model can be ruined with misaligned pupils. But fear not, with patience, magnifying glass and a steady hand, we'll crack this.

Eyeballs: Vallejo Ivory 918 with a speck of Vallejo Deck Tan 986



Eyeballs aren't white. They're more often off-white and can be stained yellow. I like a mixture of Ivory with a tiny addition of Deck Tan (a kind of yellowy grey). Add a tiny amount of water and give the eyeballs a good 3-4 coats. For Excited Eddie, I use a bit of this colour to start adding some detail to his teeth.

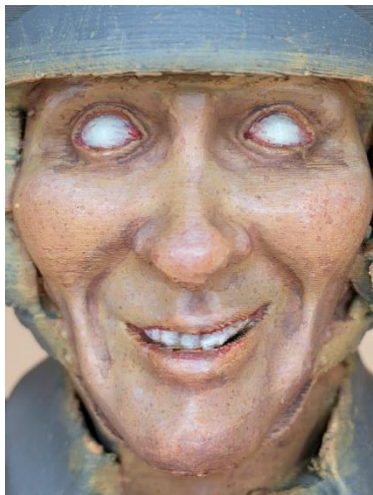


Eyes corners: Vallejo Beige Red 804 & Vermillion 909



There's a surprising amount of blood in the eyes, particularly in the corners (bright red) and around the eyesockets (beige red). Start with the bright Vermillion, adding a little water and specking the inner corners of the eyeballs toward the nose. Once you've got specks of bright Vermillion in each corner, add a little water to your brush and 'feather' some of the Vermillion towards the centre of the eyeball – look into a mirror – you're creating the miniature blood vessels that travel from the corner of the eyes toward the centre. Whist I've got some fresh Vermillion, I use some to highlight the gum line inside his mouth.

Eyeball shadow: Vallejo Neutral Grey 992



Eyeballs are spherical. To prevent them from looking flat, create a light wash by mixing a speck of 992 with water. With a thin brush, add this grey wash all around the inside of the eyeball. Because the top of the head casts a shadow on the eyeballs, I add more of a shadow across the top half of the eyeball. You should start to see the eye come out now more as a ball than a flat eye. I'm aware that working ¼ scale allows so much detail to be added to eyes. Even if you're working 1/10 scale, the more of this detail you can add under a magnifier, the more realistic your figures will become.

Popping the eyeball out: Ivory White 918

Using a smeared dot of 918, create a spot of highlight right in the middle of the eyeball. This will finish the illusion of a real snooker ball of an eyeball! I do this to the teeth also to make them look curved.

Eyelashes: Vallejo German Black Brown 822 + Beige Red 804

Eyelashes? Really? On ¼ scale, it's amazing how much realism you can add to a figure. As you get smaller scale, even creating an illusion of eyelashes with a thin dark line helps make eyes look lifelike. As ¼ scale, we can go as far as painting individual lashes as well as creating a shadow line on the top and bottom eye lids.

Irises: Vallejo Neutral Grey 992



Ok, let's get down to business. Think about where your figure is looking towards – is he looking straight at you, to the side, or down? Excited Eddie is thrilled to be flying, he's wide eyed and look straight out. My Irises will be dead centre in the eyeballs looking at me. Taking the fine pointed brush, hold your figure dead still and apply a miniature dot in each eye.

Assess how the eyes look. Are the Irises symmetrical? Are they looking in the right place? Are they cross eyed? It's a good to take a break and revisit the eyes later, show them to someone else and take a photo of them so you see them in a different format. Looking at the photo of Excited Eddie, I notice that he's slightly cross eyed, with his right iris too high. To correct, wait till dry, and overcoat with Ivory and have another go.

This is a critical stage so take your time to get it spot on.

Growing the Iris: Flat Brown 984



When you've nailed your Iris dots, it's time to enlarge them. This is where your figure transforms in character.

Starting from your mini Iris dot, gradually enlarge, keeping the circle as spherical as you can. Make sure you refer to your visual reference to see how large your Iris should be in relation to the eyeball. Sometimes they can take up a good $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the space.

Excited Eddie's eyes are huge with excitement and slightly lowered in the eyeball. Whilst I'm at it, I use some of the Flat Brown to darken the inside of the mouth.

Shading the Iris: Add German Black Brown 822 to darken Flat Brown 984

Look at your Iris and you'll note there's a shadow cast on the upper half. Create a darker shade of Flat Brown and shadow a top half semicircle of the Iris.

Colouring the Iris: Vallejo Ultramarine 839

I'm giving Excited Eddie blue eyes. I'm using the piercing blue Ultramarine to paint tiny streaks around the bottom half of the Iris.

Adding the pupil: Vallejo Black 950

This is the only time we'll use actual Black. Take your micro point brush, dab in neat paint and test on a piece of paper. You'll looking to achieve a perfect black dot. When ready, breathe in and add a tiny, neat black dot right in the centre of your iris. That's your pupil.

Reflective dot: Vallejo White 951



Using a micro spec of neat White paint, and looking at your visual reference, add a miniscule reflective dot just above the pupil.



You'll note that whilst his right eye (eye on the left) is looking good, his left eye needs tidying up. More blue needs adding to

the iris and the pupil needs to be rounder. I can make those corrections.

Eyebrows: Flat Brown 984 & German Black Brown 822

Unfortunately, the helmet obscures much of his eyebrows. First create a light wash by mixing some Flat Brown with water. Using a small brush, use the Brown to shadow where the eyebrows will go – use some visual reference to help shape the brows in the correct place. When dry, using a sharp point brush, individually painted on miniature eyebrow hairs over the shadow you've created. Towards the nose, eyebrows tend to crisscross each other, so copy this effect. Let dry and carry on marking individual strokes to build up a realist eyebrows.

To finish off...



Nervously excited Eddie's face is nearly complete. After minor corrections, I will dip a brush into some high gloss varnish and paint over his eyeballs. This creates a realistic dewy, wet eyeball appearance in contrast to his face.

I now need to focus on painting the rest of his gear and uniform.