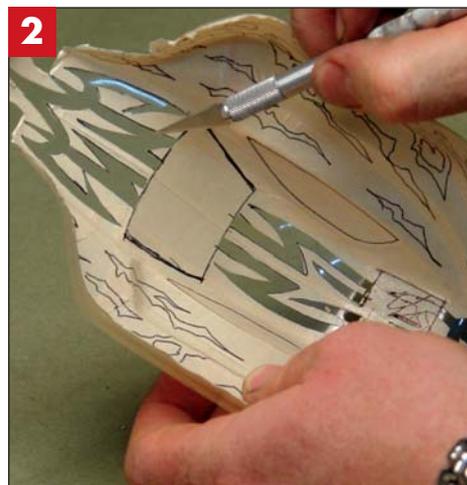
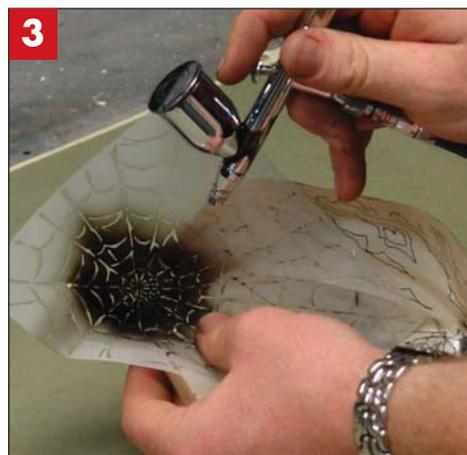




1. No matter what scale or brand, the first step is to use an X-Acto blade to clean the edges of the RC body, cut out any necessary holes, and you're ready to paint. Before spraying, I like to apply a layer of 3M automotive-grade masking tape. Keep overlaps to a minimum, and this will give you a great masking surface.



2. After sketching my design with a Sharpie marker pen, I carefully cut it out using my trusty X-Acto knife with a new blade. A dull blade gives a lousy cut, and can score your plastic. I only cut out one design at a time to minimize bleeds.



3. For the center tribal graphic I used the *Spider Web* mini-stencil from FX-3. These smaller-scale stencils are perfect for larger RC car bodies and are available at most hobby stores. I airbrushed a simple mixture of transparent black onto the Lexan™.

STENCILING OUT A

KUSTOM RC

BREAKING OUT SOME OF THE NEW MINI-STENCILS FOR SOME MINI-KUSTOMIZING

BY CRAIG FRASER

LATELY, I'VE GOTTEN MANY REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION ON PAINTING RC car bodies. While the popularity and demand for kustom painted Lexan™ car bodies and helicopter canopies are rapidly growing, numerous new painting and kustomizing products are being introduced. Namely, the new hobby line of scaled down Artool stencils (the Minis, Micro-Minis, and Nanos), and House of Kolor's Kustom Kolor line. Kustomizing clear Lexan bodies is different because they require painting in the reverse order of most other substrates. It's hard to describe, so I'll just show you.

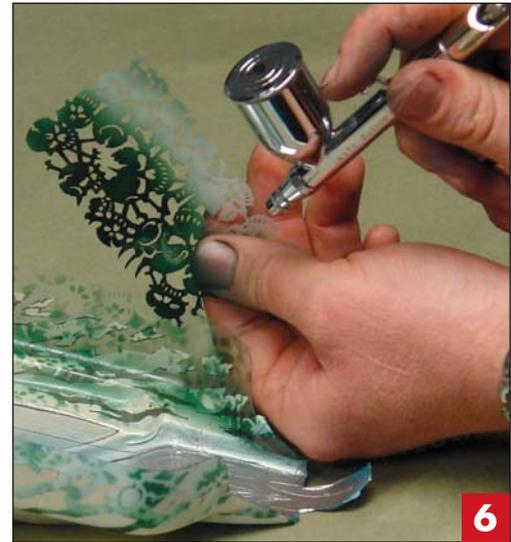
Remember that just because this is an automotive column, doesn't mean you have to stick to painting cars and bikes. These stencils can be used for everything from body art, to wall murals, to cake decorating, and they're made with a solvent-proof polymer, so you don't have to worry about what you paint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



4. With the *Spider Web* design airbrushed, I added a blue fade using SG-100 and KK-04 intercoat clear. Because I used standard House of Kolor basecoats for this step, it was necessary to airbrush a light coat of AP-01 adhesion promoter ahead of time.



5. After the kandy dried, I layered in a few light coats of House of Kolor's new Kosmic Krome Aluminum effect to give the tribal graphic a killer aluminum look. Remember, when spraying these graphics on Lexan™, you have to work in reverse order of how you would normally paint a metal surface. Therefore, the aluminum application on lexan is the backing color; the last color sprayed instead of being the first.



6. The cool part of reverse painting is that you don't have to re-mask previous graphics to protect them. So, I just go on to the next shredded graphic, and cut and unmask it for painting. I switched to *Nano*, the new *Bonz* stencil from Artool. These suckers are the size of a business card, and can get into really tight spaces. I used a mixture of kandy organic green and basecoat black to airbrush the bones pattern.



7. After tipping the flames with pure kandy organic green and SG-100, I used opaque yellow from House of Kolor's new Kustom Kolor line of hobby paints as a backing color for the graphic. Kustom Kolor paints are available through Walmart and Coast Airbrush.



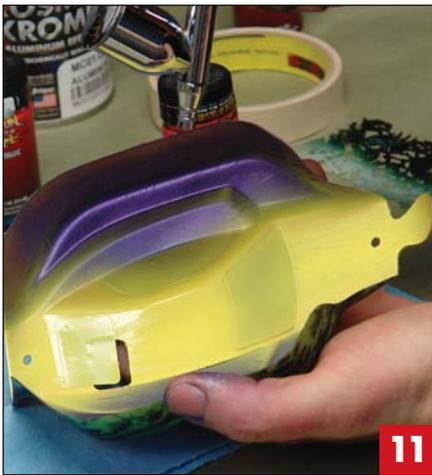
8. After unmasking the remaining areas of the car, I wiped down all the overspray with House of Kolor's KCA-100 pre-cleaner. This stuff is killer and comes in an aerosol can. I spray KCA-100 into a rag first and then wipe out any bleeds or defects in the paint job. It's also great for removing any residual tape adhesive.



9. After masking off an underlying two-tone with 1/2-inch masking tape, I rendered a cool fade using Kustom Kolor's Metallic Blue and Pavo Purple. Backing up a step, while you can't see the drop shadow, I did airbrush one in before any color was applied to this two-tone. Remember, everything is backwards.



10. Here, you can see the end result of the stenciling, airbrushed drop-shadows, and metallic fades. Pretty cool. **Caution:** although drop shadows first appear very transparent, they will darken up quite a bit after they're back-painted.



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11. While you can only see the Kustom Kolor yellow in this step, I previously unmasked the center two-tone and fogged in some Caribbean Surf Kameleon and orange for a cool yellow-to-orange fade with a color shift. (If I showed every step, this article would be 30 pics long!)



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12. Here's the piece with all the graphics airbrushed. These things look killer as you're spraying, but be careful not to get any paint on the outside of the body! If you're wondering, the factory's stickers are on the windows. Ultimately, I only use them as masks to keep the windows clean during the painting process.



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13. After removing the window stickers, I airbrushed the *Multiple II* stencil with black. This stencil comes exclusively in the micro-mini size and is also available from Walmart's Kustom Kolor section.



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14. Next up, the background or backing base color. White is the best choice to brighten up the colors. I prefer Kustom Kolor's paints for this application because they're single-stage colors that dry much tougher, and with better adhesion than House of Kolor's urethane basecoats. Be careful not to touch these paints until they dry completely or you'll damage the job.



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15. One of the most rewarding aspects of this process is removing the protective coating from the body, after which the design literally comes to life and looks terrific. Of course, don't be like me and forget to remove the coating, as I did the first time I painted a Lexan™ body. Sadly, I had to remove all the logos and pinstripes I had painted and start over!



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16. The last step was the top striping. Many artists prefer to keep it all underneath, but that can be difficult, if not impossible, on these bodies. I prefer to catalyze House of Kolor's striping enamels and apply them to the top of the body. I outlined the windows in black, and outlined the graphics with lime green and orange. The striping adds a great touch to the design, doesn't it?

I enjoyed the transition to painting a cool RC car, and I believe I succeeded in demonstrating the various sizes and uses of Artool's stencils. You can achieve a killer paintjob on an RC or scale model car with minimum freehand work, masking tape, some stencils, and dynamic color from House of Kolor. While many of you may envision painting RC bodies for profit, let's not forget that it's a great hobby, too. By the way, this car was painted for my 7-year-old son, Simon. Because the kid has been broke for most of his life and has never paid me for anything, I would qualify this as a hobby job. Keep the requests coming!

Please e-mail any comments, suggestions, or requests to Craig Fraser at Fraser@gotpaint.com. You may also cruise the new Q&A forum at www.kustomkulturelounge.com where you can have any of your questions answered. See you there!

Paint to live, live to paint; and sometimes with stencils. —Fraser

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 www.gotpaint.com.