

Kostas Kavvathias was born in Lefkimmi, Corfu in July 24th 1968. He was interested in Aviation in generall at early age mainly because of the model making (Matchbox, Airfix kits) and the war comics who where so popular at the time. He never went to Art school, but took aerodynamic courses during his 4 year living in England; years (1989 – 1992). He now lives and works in the island of Corfu in Greece. A mini interview with Kostas Kavvathias follows...

Q: Hello Mr. Kavvathias and first of all thank you very much for accepting our proposition for this mini-interview. Please tell us when was the first time you did paint an aviation subject? Was that a result of your personal need to express yourself? Do you depicture only Hellenic Air Force themes?

A: The first 'serious' Aviation Art painting was done in the summer of 1993 depicting a 335 greek Sqn Hurricane MkIIc in flight above the pyramides of Egypt. I like to paint all aviation subjects but I really prefer WW2 German and American planes.

Q: As we know you mainly use airbrush on an illustration board as your art technique. Is that the only technique you have used during your career and why do you prefer it among the others?

A: I started using airbrush on an illustration board in the early days, but nowdays, I use stretching canvas as medium plus acrylics (Liquitex) paint.

However, one of these days I ’ll try to convert to oils cos paintings done in these, seem to be more popular with the clients.

I use less airbrush works in the recent years.



Q: Since you do not fly what is your inspiration when you are called to paint a flight subject? Do you use real aircraft photos in flight for instance? Any aircraft models perhaps to figure out the silhouette of a particular aircraft?

A: To start a painting composition, i use anything that will be helpful to create an originally correct image.

From 3-view plans (of that particular aircraft), model kits and of course as many as photographs I think will be ideal for the task.

Q: So do you proceed on realistic recreation of the scene or do you compose different details on the aircrafts and aerial surrounding elements like clouds etc?

A: I never use data as they are, I always alter positions, markings, backgrounds ans so on in order to create an image that (at least) never been painted by somebody else before, unless, the specific subject is difficult to find data and information. In these occasions I use whatever material is available with the risk the final result to remind the viewer an image seen before with similar layout.

Q: Before you even actually begin to paint do you make any drafts on paper? If yes could you please share with us a draft like that in order to point the evolution from the original idea to the final result?

A: I always begin the idea of a painting with a drawing.

In this form, the client can be able to see the image and to express his opinion (or to change the composition if ’s not satisfied).

Also it gives the artist a look, a second look at the idea he had in his mind and the way it looks printed.





Click on images above to enlarge.

Q: Some of your work belongs to private collections and some other to the Hellenic Air Force. Could you remind us some of your work that is hanging on HAF buildings' walls?

A: Most of my work done for Hellenic Air Force consists of paintings depicting mainly aircraft activities from the bygone days (and nights).

I have done images for the 114 Combat Wing at Tanagra Air base, plus 337, 339 Sqns.

A few images hunged on the walls of 359 Public Services Air Support unit at Dekelia Air base.

Q: The ‘Aviation Art’ as we are used to call it is something more or less new for Greek reality. What is the response that you accept from people inside or outside Greece?

A: The response from people inside Greece is limited, cos as you mentioned, Aviation Art is something new in Greek reality.

It’s getting known of course day by day, but in an extreme slow pace.

As for outside Greece, US is the best place (I think) for these kind of business.

England is quite good, but they have the tendency to prefer ‘british’ artists there.

France and Germany are strong supporters lately.



Q: Is there any other artist that you admire his/her work and believe as inspiring for you? Not necessarily an Aviation one.

A: My favourite aviation artist is mr Shigeo Koike, a Japanese guy who does most of box art works for Hasegawa model making co.

Other artists I respect (and inspired from) are Robert Taylor, William S. Philips, the great Gill Cohen, R.G. Smith, Roy Grinnell and Philip West.

No disrespect for the other guys, but the above are the elit today, to my opinion.

Q: Do you have any plans for a new project right now? Could you tell us a few things about that?

A: My plans for the future are to come in collaboration with the American galleries for a more wider way of clients and ideas for paintings.

As for painting ideas, I want to paint HAF F-16's, one work for those brave aviators, plus other subjects such as P-38 Lightinings in the Pacific front, Focke Wulf 190's over the desert and my beloved battleship, Bismark!!



Q: If someone wants to buy some of your work where can he find it on the net or a gallery?

A: If anybody wants to order an original image, he can consult the site www.discounthobbyzone.gr (category: 'Art for Action!').

Plus he can contact me directly at the following numbers: 0030-6975759592 and 0030-2662022293.

Thank you very much Mr. Kavvathias and hope to see more of your work soon!!!