

# Model Ship building is an Art Form

Webster's defines, "Art form" as an unconventional form or medium in which Impulses regarded as artistic may be expressed".

I have always thought one of the beauties of scratch building radio control model ships is the advanced problem solving that is rumbling around in the back of your creative mind from start to finish of the project. We, modelers, for one reason or another all have our favorite ship designs, It could be a tug, a cutter, the Titanic, a war ship from any era, ocean liners or subs. For some reason there are ship designs that are just, special. They look right. Perhaps something you saw early in life, saw in a movie or book or from a story told. We who like to make miniature things regard these favorites as something we have always wanted to build. We add it to the list of projects to model. That is the start of the art project! The ship is put on a list. From that moment the problem solving process begins. The list has no order. The new addition could be on the bottom of the list, perhaps for years or never realized. The new item could be whisked to the top of the list, or ever push another project in process off of the workbench. There is no rule. It is artistic impulse.

The questions of kit or scratch built, plan availability, size, propulsion, number of channels for control, features, color, where to find documentation, and buoyancy all need to be answered.

The modeler is constantly on the lookout for miniature shapes to add to the model as realistic looking components. Those could be something out of the trash or a catalog, the right size cardboard tube, something from the hardware store or countless small shapes that reward the modeler with the realization, "this is just what I need".

Some special components of the construction must be, problem solved, prototype or built, well in advance of even the most basic hull. These items need to be understood, sized, and deemed practical or even do-able before other design elements can be integrated.

Something that is so consuming of creative thought, that can take years to complete, combines wood, plastic, resins, brass and paint is defiantly an art form. The result of the project is a scale, working, authentic miniature of the real ship copied. It is both delicate and yet designed to be tough enough to be loaded in and out of the house to the car, from car to waters edge and back again. It is reliable and it's design is fool proof enough to be put into a body of water, sailed, then to return to it's creator. Each time we put our artful expression into the water, we risk it, adding to the excitement and safe feeling when, "she" is finally hauled out of the water

R/C model shipbuilding is the perfect artful hobby. It is an art form that can be as complicated or uncomplicated, expensive or inexpensive as you want it to be. The builder plays the role of an artist, historian, and an inventor. For both adults and kids, It teaches patience, planning, proper order, (of assembly), problem solving, where to find information, history, skills with glues, resins, electricity, radio, engineering and painting

and much more. The artisans who build R/C model ships are a great bunch, happy to share ideas and talk of ship history. Each modeler uses the same basic techniques but expresses the art form in their own building style. We know model shipbuilding is an art form because the creations are one of a kind masterpieces. **Congratulations to all the model builders.** You know the solitary hours on the workbench that are rewarded by the artistic and inventive satisfaction of a good working scale ship cutting through the water. The lake, pool or pond is our art gallery, a sailing day, our showing. The time spent with family and other artists of like mind, the sharing of ideas, materials sources and solutions to problems are also a rich reward. People love model ships, when we sail, a crowd gathers. There is most likely a dad with a ten year old in the gathered, asking, “how to get started”?

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