



We all have admired Hellenic Air Force specially painted aircrafts either in or outside greek skies. But who are behind those projects? Who is the "mind"? Who the "hand"? Warrant Officer **George Athanasiadis**

is for sure the man that can tell us a lot about those aircrafts and we thank him for his kindness to give us a mini interview. We also thank Hellenic Air Force General Staff, Public Relations office and especially Press Spokesman Maj. Konstantinos Grapsas for the precious help.

Q: Hello Mr. Athanasiadis and thank you very much for accepting our invitation for this interview! Could you please tell us a few words about yourself and especially when and how did your involvement with painting start?

A: First I want to thank you for the invitation. My involvement with painting starts back in my childhood when I start drawing on papers and after some years with scale modeling particular aircrafts.

Q: Many have probably seen your name on Hellenic Air Force specially painted aircrafts as one of those who contributed. Could you remind us which are those aircrafts (type, squadron, year) ?

A: The first was back in 1997 when my first squadron 349MAH "Kronos"(Saturn) planned to disable ,it was a RF-5A s/n 697170.In 2005 I involved with three special decorated aircrafts F-16C s/n 136 from 346 Sqn Jason ,RF-4E s/n 7519 from 348TRS "Matia"(Eyes) and a F-4E(SRA) s/n 68-506 from 337AWS "Fantasma"(Ghost).The last one is the RF-4E

s/n 7487 from 348TRS "Matia" (Eyes). I should note that all aircrafts belong to 110CW squadrons.



Q: Could you please inform us on the general techniques that were used on each aircraft? Are they the same or different from aircraft to aircraft?

A: The most techniques are the same from aircraft to aircraft exception is the F-16C that we use shelf adhesive printed film for the decoration. For the others we use free hand and masking airbrushing and brush paint.



Q: Before painting the designs are made on hand, with use of computer or both? Could you share some of your sketches? **A: We used both techniques. Sometimes we recreated photos and designs with computer or made drawings by the hand. After that I made in scale model kit some designs to see how it will look at the real aircraft.**

Q: After the implementation of sketches what about the painting techniques? Could you give us some hints about the step by step procedure using photos?

A: There are many techniques that we use for painting the designs on the aircraft. First we made color separation and after that we used projector to draw the design in 1/1 scale at the paper. After that like scale modeling masking with paper tapes. Most difficult part

is to cut the papers by hand only at the last RF-4E 7487 we use for the letter help from a professional graphic art citizen.



Q: How many people were involved on each project? Were they all Hellenic Air Force personnel or did also simple citizens help you finish the work?

A: Most of the artwork teams were HAF personnel. Of course we had citizens for assistant. In all aircrafts the artwork team were about 4 or 5 persons only at the RF-4E 7519 we were two!!!



Q: Which is your favorite anniversary painted aircraft? Please select one of your own and one of other Air Force. **A: I cannot select one of them. I gave my heart to each aircraft.**

Everyone is special for me. From the other Air Forces there to many but I like the USN F-14B "CAG bird" from the VFA-103 .

Q: Which is according to your personal opinion the necessity of anniversary painting of military aircrafts? Does it help the

attitude of the Air Force personnel? Can that become an advertisement for the country?

A: A special decorated aircraft is something unique and the reason for this decoration is to celebrate a fact (Squadrons birthday ,disable ,retirement of the type etc)so this aircraft is like a monument for the Air Force personnel to reminds them the good all days.

Q: Recently the known Japanese company Hasegawa produced the anniversary painted RF-4E as a model kit. How do you feel when you see people recreate your work in scale?

A: It is a honor for me and I think it is every modelers desire to see his work in a model kit.



Q: If you could select any Hellenic Air Force aircraft to decorate which would be your selection as a type and which scheme would you select to paint on that strange “canvas”?

A: First we have to choose the reason to paint an aircraft.It is not the same to create a design for the type retirement or the Squadrons birthday .I will prefer a F-4E AUP at the end of their career .Both F-4E AUPs Squadrons has ancient Greek historical names that helps to design something with Greek roots.

Mr. Athanasiadis thank you one more time for your help on creating this article!!!







