

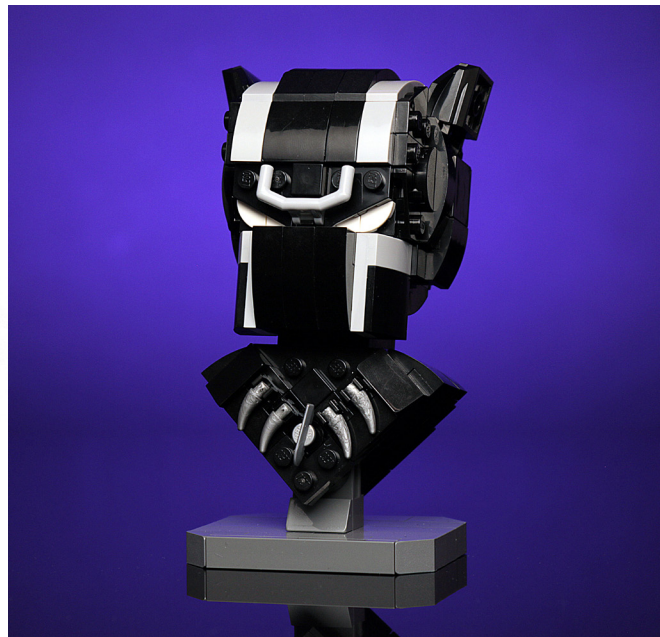


*Cinderella Castle.*

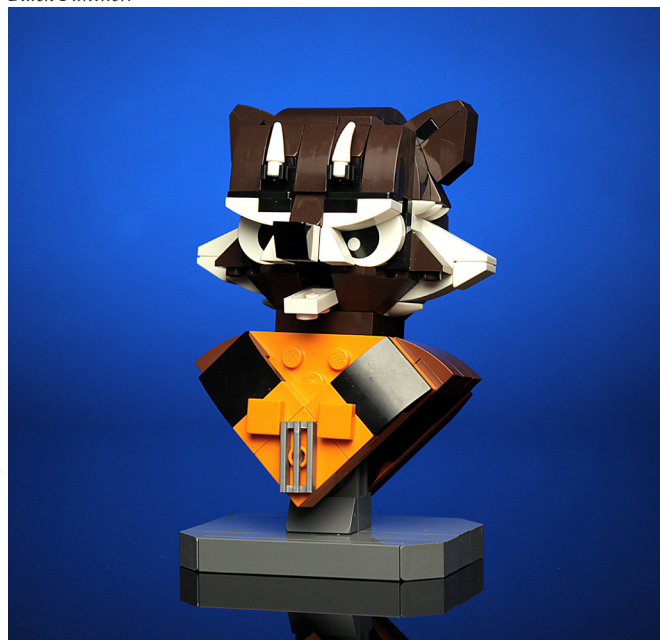
# Build Better Bricks (B<sup>3</sup>): Creating Custom High Quality LEGO Instructions!

*Article by Vaughn Himber*

*Photography provided by Build Better Bricks*



*Black Panther.*



*Rocket Raccoon.*

Have you seen an amazing LEGO creation online and ever wondered how you could build your own version with the parts you already have at home? Imagine if you had special high-quality instructions which would allow you to build some of the coolest custom models out there.

Well, now the wait is over! Enter Build Better Bricks (B<sup>3</sup>). Created by renowned builders Tyler Clites and Sean Mayo, Build Better Bricks provides incredible custom-designed LEGO model instructions and parts lists.

“Many builders can relate to their friends or family saying something like: ‘You should make instructions and sell these!’ So having heard this hundreds of times, while already doing occasional commissions on the side, we figured why not. Well turns out there’s a lot that goes into it, and there’s always something just outside your wheelhouse. These things ranged from building styles, initial overhead, to programming, studio space, and of





*Darth Maul.*



*Yoda.*

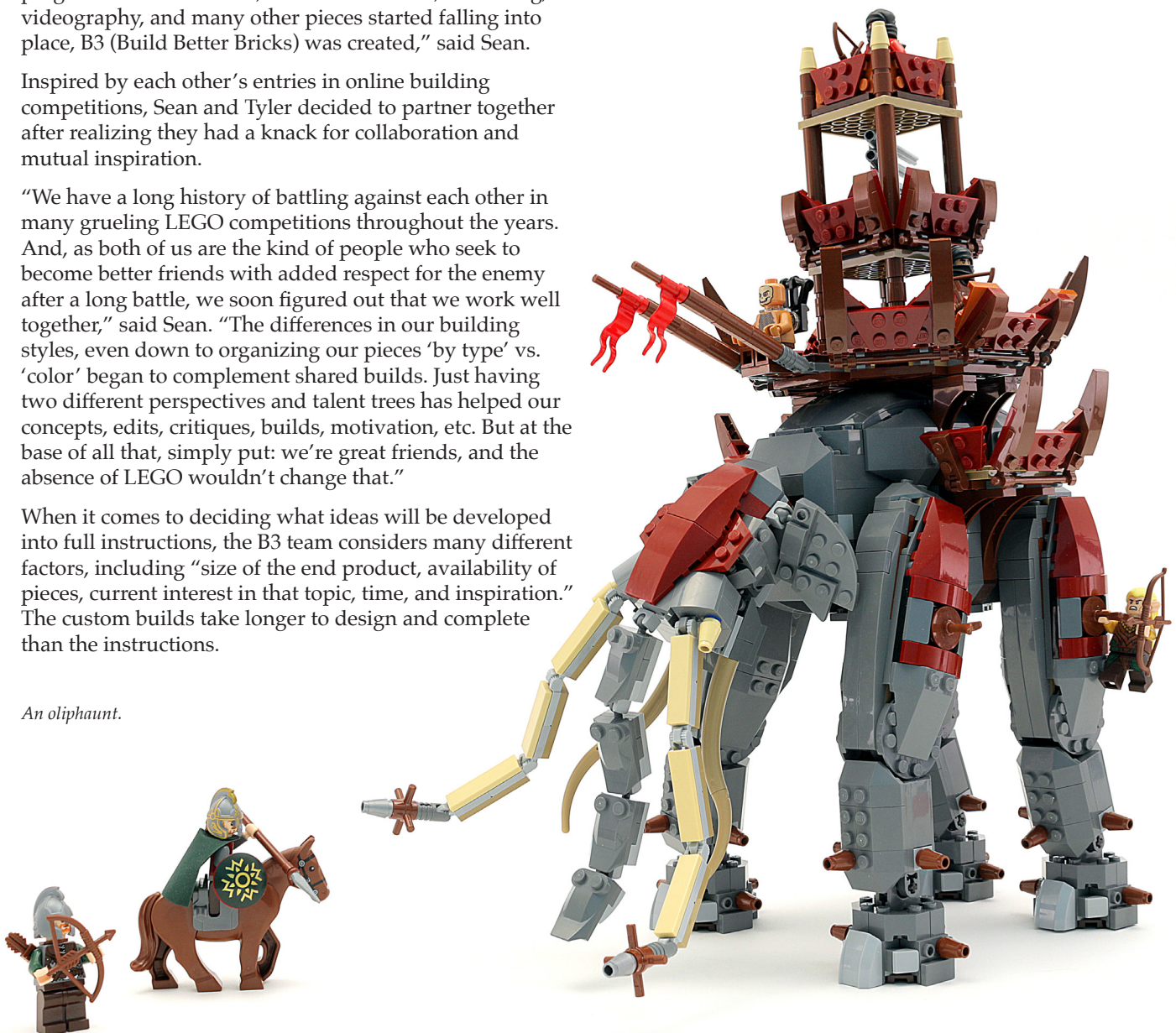
course more organized LEGO than is sane. But as various programs like the stud.io, life circumstances, marketing, videography, and many other pieces started falling into place, B3 (Build Better Bricks) was created,” said Sean.

Inspired by each other’s entries in online building competitions, Sean and Tyler decided to partner together after realizing they had a knack for collaboration and mutual inspiration.

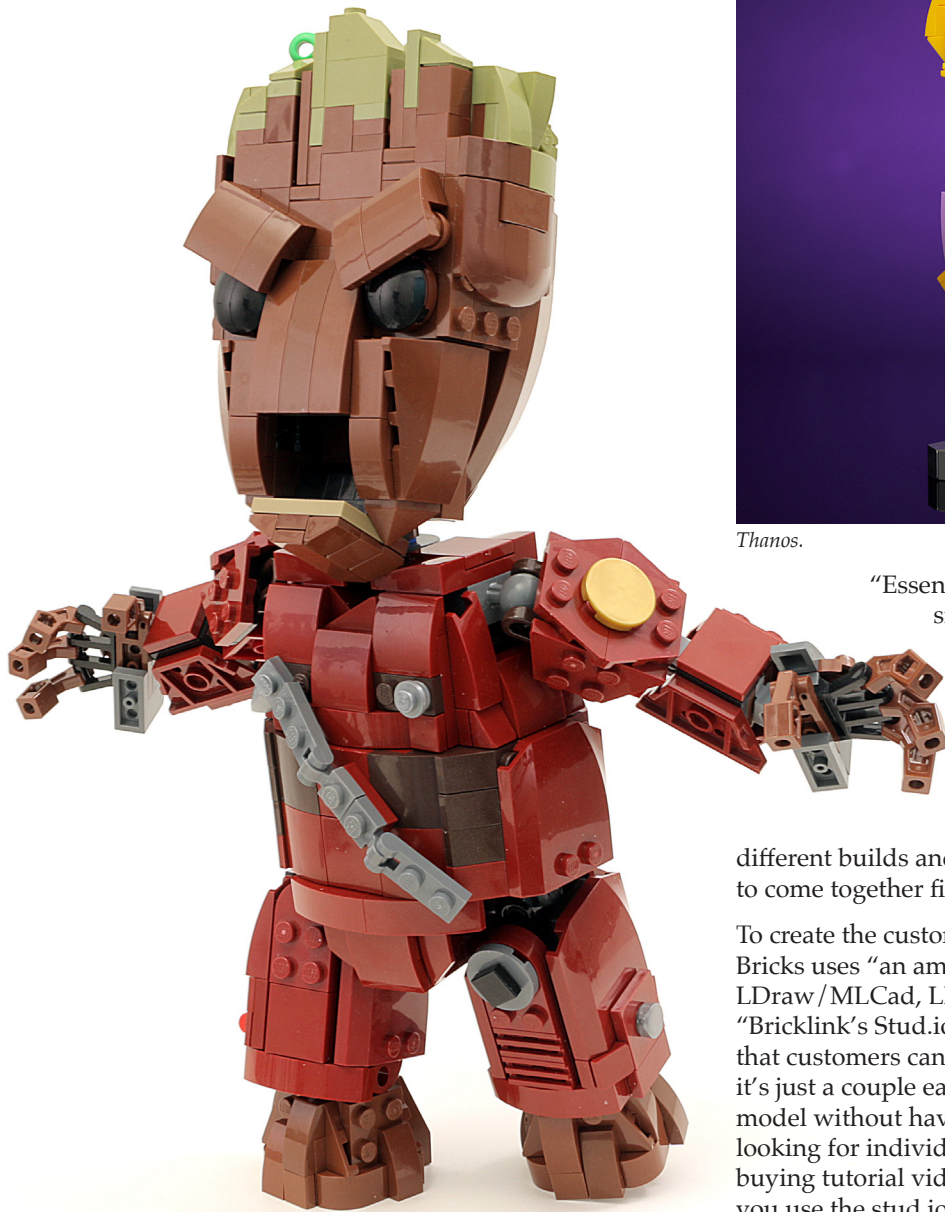
“We have a long history of battling against each other in many grueling LEGO competitions throughout the years. And, as both of us are the kind of people who seek to become better friends with added respect for the enemy after a long battle, we soon figured out that we work well together,” said Sean. “The differences in our building styles, even down to organizing our pieces ‘by type’ vs. ‘color’ began to complement shared builds. Just having two different perspectives and talent trees has helped our concepts, edits, critiques, builds, motivation, etc. But at the base of all that, simply put: we’re great friends, and the absence of LEGO wouldn’t change that.”

When it comes to deciding what ideas will be developed into full instructions, the B3 team considers many different factors, including “size of the end product, availability of pieces, current interest in that topic, time, and inspiration.” The custom builds take longer to design and complete than the instructions.

*An oliphaunt.*







*They are Groot.*



*Thanos.*

"Essentially, we want to create reasonably sized models that don't take up tons of space, whose pieces are easy to get and don't require old, rare, or expensive parts. Through that lens, we like to tackle fun and popular themes from movies, games, or shows. But honestly, creative inspiration is always key. We can sit down and start 10

different builds and not always know which one is going to come together first," said Sean.

To create the custom instructions themselves, Build Better Bricks uses "an amalgamation of programs," including LDraw / MLCad, LIC (LEGO Instruction Creator), and "Bricklink's Stud.io program to create a file of the parts that customers can easily upload to Bricklink. That way, it's just a couple easy steps, to order all the parts for the model without having to browse through countless sellers looking for individual pieces. There's even a quick parts buying tutorial video, and estimated cost of parts for when you use the stud.io file. The end result is instructions that are on par with the instructions you would get from an official Lego set and ordering the parts is almost as easy as buying an official set," said Sean.


In addition to high-quality instructions, Build Better Bricks also provides a great selection of models to choose from, such as a series of busts inspired by popular Star Wars characters like Luke Skywalker, Darth Maul, a First Order Stormtrooper, and Yoda, or Marvel superheroes and villains like Deadpool, Black Panther, and Thanos. Other models include custom and highly detailed Nintendo characters like Mario, Yoshi, and Bowser. And Build Better Bricks features a variety of scales, too, including a mini Disney Cinderella Castle, UCS-scale model of the *Milano* spaceship from *Guardians of the Galaxy*, and a "life-sized" Baby Groot! Additionally, B3 offers "Bundles" of building instructions from several different models combined together for a lower price, such as four custom mini pirate ships from *Pirates of the Caribbean*, including The Black Pearl and The Flying Dutchman.





B3 plans to add more characters, busts, and figures to their collection, inspired by "comic books, upcoming movies, and cultural icons," said Sean. "We anticipate making dozens of these so that there's a plethora to choose from and most anyone might be able to pick out their favorites for building them at home." In the meantime, to get a sense of the variety of models offered by Build Better Bricks, visit their website for free instructions, like how to build a LEGO Rubik's Cube.

In terms of future plans for Build Better Bricks, Tyler and Sean were excited to further expand and complement their initial concept of custom instructions. "There are seemingly endless ideas! From hosting competitions, Lego story and instruction books, full kits, replicas, and the list goes on," said Sean. "I think, however, one of the first evolutions will be in creating physical models so that people have the option to just buy the kit and circumvent bricksellers."

Overall, Build Better Bricks is a great and affordable way to build excellent LEGO models with the bricks you already have at home while also refining your building techniques and drawing inspiration from some of the world's most talented and versatile expert LEGO builders. 

Visit Build Better Bricks online at <https://buildbetterbricks.com>

*Jack Sparrow and the Black Pearl.*



*Examples of the instructions for the Star Wars First Order Stormtrooper Bust.*

