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*Creating Space: The Story of the Space Age Told Through Models, Mat Irvine, Apogee Books, Collectors Guide Publishing Inc (Canada), 2002, 351pp, US\$29.95; Can\$39.95; £24.95 ISBN 1-896522-86-6 [softback]*

They say that, as you get older, you reminisce more - and this book will provide that opportunity for many readers. It reminds me of the hours of my youth spent making models of rockets and other space paraphernalia. Its author, however, is no Sunday afternoon model-maker: Mat Irvine has made a career constructing models of spacecraft and rockets for film and TV. According to Irvine, the book has two aims: to chronicle the history of space model construction kits and, in doing so, to chronicle the story of spaceflight. It is divided into two parts, distinguished by different types of paper: the first 160-odd pages - in glossy colour - is the space history in models; the rest - mostly monochrome and not so glossy - comprises three appendices (kit

listing by manufacturer, list by type and references & organisations). The colour sections are very nicely produced, though I do have a design criticism: the thick yellow/orange border round all the photos does not show the images to their best advantage. It's also slightly annoying how the book refers to the Saturn V as the Saturn 5, despite the facsimiles of the model boxes showing the correct 'Roman designation'.

Apart from a few exceptions, which were based on contemporary technology or proposals, there are no science fiction models in the book; there are, however, some weird and wonderful designs that never flew, but that is in keeping with the real world of space technology development.

Ultimately, this is a book for those of 'train-spotting' mentality: did you know, for example, that the Revell 1:96 scale Apollo model used the Block I version of the CSM, which was not used for manned spaceflight, so specialist companies produced an upgrade kit? I thought not. Having said that, anyone who has ever made space models will be interested in this book, if only to bring back, for a moment, the days when you had time to separate microscopic parts from plastic 'sprue', insert tiny pegs in tiny holes...and avoid gluing your fingers together.

*by Mark Williamson*

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