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Aurora Model Kits: With Polar Lights, Moebius, Atlantis



Synopsis

Hollywood movie monsters are enduring pop culture standards. Kids and adults around the world recognize Frankenstein, Dracula, the Wolf Man, and the Mummy. Although monsters are Aurora's most famous products, the company created model kits of all varieties, including historic sailing ships, sports cars, moon rockets, military and commercial aircraft, TV stars, comic book heroes, wildlife scenes, knights, and much more. Over 500 color photographs enhance this comprehensive history and guide to Aurora models, now updated to include new companies continuing the Aurora tradition. Aurora executives, sculptors, artists, and engineers who created the models tell the story in their own words. Every model Aurora made is described in detail. Today, Polar Lights, Moebius, Atlantis, and Monarch continue the Aurora tradition. Executives from these companies explain how they have added to the list of revived Aurora models, with information on reissues and current collectors' market values.

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Customer Reviews

Thomas Graham is a prolific writer on plastic models and the companies that produce them. He is the author of five books and numerous articles. A Florida native, he is retired from teaching history at Flagler College in St. Augustine.

This book is an invaluable resource for collectors, but it's more than that: The text is an engaging history of Aurora Plastics Corporation, which was a fixture in the lives of millions of baby boomers across the United States. Many of the photos appear to be Aurora's own product shots, which are almost always more interesting than amateur built-ups or badly worn box art. The book gave me a

good sense of what the Aurora plant in Long Island was like in its heyday in the late 1960s, and I know now more about the founders and key personalities of the company. If the book has a shortcoming, it's in the price guide: Listed kit prices are unrealistic, in my view, and should have been more detailed in any case. For example, a World War I aircraft kit should grade at mint, good and fair rather than a value range. Mr Graham has provided a valuable addition to the available Aurora literature, and I'm glad to have his book on my shelf. All in all, this is a superb effort. Guys (and gals) like myself who built Aurora models in the 1960s will find this a welcome diversion; for me, the book was a genuine journey through dozens of fading childhood memories.

Very impressed with the book. Well illustrated. Especially the Universal Monster section. The history of the models was interesting. My boyfriend wished it would've been all monsters. So glad he was able to acquire this book. We even found a T-shirt and a comforter with the Aurora Box covers printed on them. (From a company called, "Society6") This book is a must for all Aurora fans.

Try as I might, I could never get any of my children interested in model kits. I grew up in the 1970's and I have fond memories of sitting in the living-room, at a card-table covered with newspapers, and gluing and then painting plastic model kits. I didn't spend much time looking at manufacturer names ... a kit was a kit to me. Was the design interesting? Did the box cover art draw me to the model? But as I read through this book I realize that most of the kits I worked on were Aurora model kits. What drew me to this book was the cover and that picture of the Frankenstein monster model. That particular model kit was a turning point for me ... possibly the kit that got me most interested in doing models. I also remember it being the winter of 1968/69 and I spent a lot of time getting it 'just right.' From there I went for the Dracula glow-in-the-dark kit, which I thought was just about the best thing I'd ever had a chance to make, and that led to a whole variety of model kits, from cars, to planes, to ships, and of course plenty of TV and pop-culture related kits (I loved that Beatles yellow submarine that you were supposed to put a coin in to help make it sink in the bathtub!). And if you can't tell by the above paragraph, reading through this book brought back a flood of fond memories. I have a couple of un-opened model kits that I'd purchased (years ago) for my children, but when they didn't show any interest in them I put them aside. Reading through this book made me want to go open one of those kits and experience the joy of carefully removing the pieces from the plastic stem; file the excess plastic off, very carefully, and begin gluing the pieces together (and likely getting glue all over my fingers!) so that I could get something that I could then carefully paint. The first portion of this book is a well-researched history of Aurora: their start-up plans, the people

behind the company, and how they got in to model kit making, as well as how some of the kits were received and who designed them. It's a tremendous biography of a company and very interesting reading. It also details the decline of the company and how other companies purchased some of these model kits. The book is tremendously illustrated with photographs - not just of the model kits (though there is plenty of that), but also of the organization and the people who made Aurora what it was. The second portion of the book is a comprehensive list of all of the models manufactured by Aurora, with kit numbers, and many of them with photographs of the boxes (and some of the completed models). It's a great checklist and a super trip down memory lane for some of us. I loved going through this and thinking, "Oh, yeah, I had that one, too!" I'd forgotten just how many different model kits I had put together through the years until I read this book. All in all, this is a really remarkable history of a small business that had a big impact on popular culture and hobbies during its peak years. It is worth reading. Looking for a good book? *Aurora Model Kits: With Polar Lights, Moebius, Atlantis* by Thomas Graham is a tremendously researched and thorough book about Aurora model kits, and is a nice addition to any library. I received a digital copy of this book from the publisher, through Edelweiss, in exchange for an honest review.

For those of us who were Aurora fans in the 50s and 60s, this book is an excellent romp thru memory lane. I would have liked a bit more info and photos of the production of these great models such as the sculpting, forming the pieces to be molded, making the molds, etc. Highly recommended.

Great book if you love Aurora kits. Even if you have one or more of the earlier books, this one includes enough new info, some pictures and write-ups that you might want to buy it. I did and I'm glad I did.

The most impressive thing about this book is Thomas knows what he is talking about. The book is not full of "some say...", "reports are..." etc. He reports the facts and provided me a lot of information to which I had no clue. Awesome work!

If you are into model building, monsters, cars, airplanes and the rest, this is a great history book and price guide about one of the most important producers of plastic kits.

Great book, color pictures of classic kits! Right up to polar lights and beyond!

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