



THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA, BRICK BY BRICK

Andrew Frape & Cattleya Concepcion

It has been a while since we ran one of our “Dialogue” features. See Tómas Magnússon and Dan Currell, *Justice in Iceland*, 8 GREEN BAG 2D 393 (2005). We are happy to be back to it. We recently published a photo of a Lego White House and wondered why there was no Lego Supreme Court. *Article II Is Number 1 at Lego*, 15 GREEN BAG 2D 1 (2011). We were wrong. The Supreme Court of the United States has been overlooked, but at least one other nation’s high court has not. Andrew Frape designed and built a Lego model of the Supreme Court of Canada for his wife Bryn Frape, a lawyer at the Canadian Department of Justice. His impressive work of Lego-legal micro-architecture now sits in her office.

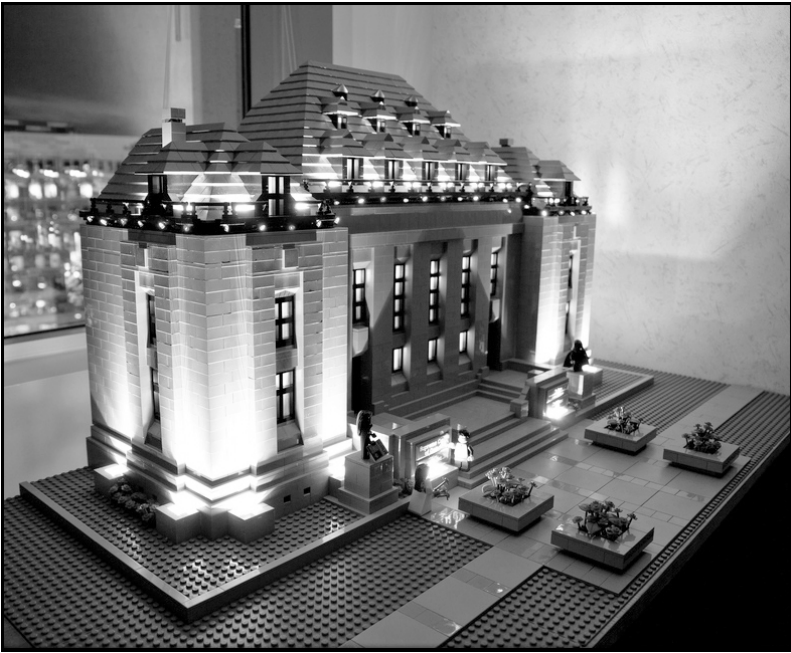
— *The Editors*

CATTLEYA CONCEPCION (CC): I read that you used 5,000 custom pieces for the model.¹ How does one go about getting custom Lego pieces?

ANDREW FRAPE (AF): The model is made of standard Lego bricks. Some of the bricks came directly from Lego, but the vast majority

Andrew Frape is an elementary school teacher in Saskatchewan, Canada. Cattleya Concepcion is a Green Bag Fellow and a graduate student in library science at the Catholic University of America. Thanks to reader Stewart M. Young for bringing this to our attention.

¹ Natalie Stechyson, *Supreme Court model build for Christmas a labour of LEGO*, FINANCIAL POST, Dec. 24, 2011, business.financialpost.com/2011/12/24/supreme-court-model-build-for-christmas-a-labour-of-lego/.



The Supreme Court of Canada, as rendered in Lego by Andrew Frape (2011).

came from a website called BrickLink.² BrickLink is an aftermarket community where every Lego piece made is for sale from sellers all over the world. The free market value of Lego from BrickLink is often less expensive than direct from Lego and there is always a wider selection. The custom nature you read about must have been referring to the ordering process, not the individual pieces.

My best example of using BrickLink was for the roof of Bryn's model. When we chose the color of the roof Bryn selected a sand green that was only available in select Harry Potter sets, which made it quite rare. Lego doesn't sell the green roof pieces individually so the only way to obtain them was through BrickLink. I immediately bought as many as I thought I would need for the roof. Unfortunately the sellers did not have enough of the pieces so I depleted their stores and waited/hoped for them to replenish their stores.

² www.bricklink.com.

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This process repeated throughout the year. It was fun knowing I had all of the sand green roof pieces but scary wondering if I could buy enough. I eventually had enough roof pieces to either shingle Hogwarts or build a Supreme Court of Canada, and I chose the latter.

CC: Do you have a "recipe list" of the types and numbers of pieces that you used?

AF: I have together most of my orders for Bryn's model:

Order Date: Oct 31, 2010

Light Bluish Gray Plate 1 x 2 (x40)	Light Bluish Gray Tile 1 x 8 (x59)
Light Bluish Gray Plate 1 x 4 (x20)	Light Bluish Gray Tile 2 x 2 with Groove (x15)
Light Bluish Gray Plate 2 x 4 (x50)	Sand Green Cone 1 x 1 without Top Groove (x8)
Light Bluish Gray Slope 45 2 x 1 Double / Inverted (x24)	Trans-Clear Brick, Round 1 x 1 Open Stud (x3)
Light Bluish Gray Tile 1 x 2 with Groove (x36)	Trans-Clear Glass for Window 1 x 2 x 2 Flat Front (x23)
Light Bluish Gray Tile 1 x 4 (x46)	
Light Bluish Gray Tile 1 x 6 (x34)	

Order Date: Oct 31, 2010

Black Container, Barrel 2 x 2 x 2 (x10)	Black Tile 1 x 1 with Groove (x20)
Black Plate, Modified 1 x 2 with 1 Stud (Jumper) (x20)	Light Bluish Gray Brick, Modified 1 x 1 with Studs on 2 Sides (x30)

Order Date: Dec 2, 2010

Light Bluish Gray Brick 2 x 4 (x100)

Order Date: Jan 6, 2011

Light Bluish Gray Brick 1 x 1 (x35)	Light Bluish Gray Tile 1 x 1 with Groove (x33)
Light Bluish Gray Brick 1 x 2 (x30)	Light Bluish Gray Tile 1 x 2 with Groove (x7)
Light Bluish Gray Brick 1 x 2 x 2 with Inside Axle Holder (x19)	Light Bluish Gray Tile 1 x 4 (x49)
Light Bluish Gray Brick 2 x 3 (x2)	Light Bluish Gray Tile 1 x 8 (x32)
Light Bluish Gray Plate 1 x 2 (x55)	Light Bluish Gray Tile 2 x 4 (x24)

Order Date: Jan 6, 2011

Black Door 1 x 5 x 7 1/2 Stockade (x2)	Light Bluish Gray Plate 2 x 4 (x28)
Light Bluish Gray Brick 1 x 1 (x24)	Light Bluish Gray Tile 2 x 2 with Groove (x20)
Light Bluish Gray Plate 1 x 2 (x40)	Light Bluish Gray Tile 2 x 4 (x12)
Light Bluish Gray Plate 1 x 3 (x14)	Trans-Clear Brick, Round 1 x 1 Open Stud (x1)
Light Bluish Gray Plate 1 x 4 (x215)	
Light Bluish Gray Plate 2 x 2 (x393)	

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Order Date: May 31, 2011

Black Tap 1 x 1, No Hole in End (x20)	with Grille (Grill) (x10)
Black Window 1 x 2 x 2 Flat Front (x16)	Light Bluish Gray Brick, Modified 1 x 4 with 4 Studs on One Side (x4)
Dark Bluish Gray Hook with Towball (x1)	Light Bluish Gray Minifig, Neck Bracket with Back Stud (x3)
Dark Bluish Gray Hook, Grappling Hook (x2)	Light Bluish Gray Slope, Inverted 33 3 x 2 with Connections betw Studs (x4)
Dark Bluish Gray Minifig, Neck Bracket with Back Stud (x3)	Light Bluish Gray Tap 1 x 1, No Hole in End (x1)
Light Bluish Gray Brick 2 x 2 (x88)	Light Bluish Gray Technic, Steering Wheel Small, 3 Studs Diameter (x4)
Light Bluish Gray Brick 2 x 3 (x106)	Light Bluish Gray Tile, Round 2 x 2 with Grille Fine Mesh Pattern (x1)
Light Bluish Gray Brick 2 x 4 (x94)	Light Bluish Gray Vehicle, Steering Wheel Small, 2 Studs Diameter (x4)
Light Bluish Gray Brick, Modified 1 x 1 with Stud on 1 Side (x20)	Trans-Clear Glass for Window 1 x 2 x 2 Flat Front (x16)
Light Bluish Gray Brick, Modified 1 x 2 Log (x6)	
Light Bluish Gray Brick, Modified 1 x 2	

Order Date: Sep 5, 2011

Dark Bluish Gray Technic, Brick 1 x 2 with Hole (x10)	Light Bluish Gray Brick 2 x 2 (x6)
Light Bluish Gray Brick 1 x 1 (x26)	Light Bluish Gray Brick 2 x 3 (x4)
Light Bluish Gray Brick 1 x 1 (x93)	Light Bluish Gray Panel 1 x 1 x 1 Corner (x12)
Light Bluish Gray Brick 2 x 2 (x6)	

Order Date: Sep 5, 2011

Dark Bluish Gray Slope 30 1 x 1 x 2/3 (x30)	Dark Bluish Gray Slope, Inverted 45 2 x 1 (x20)
Dark Bluish Gray Slope 45 2 x 1 (x20)	Dark Bluish Gray Slope, Inverted 75 2 x 1 x 3 (x10)
Dark Bluish Gray Slope 75 2 x 1 x 3 - Hollow Stud (x12)	Light Bluish Gray Brick 2 x 3 (x158)

Order Date: Sep 5, 2011

Light Bluish Gray Brick, Arch 1 x 6 x 2 (x4)

Order Date: Oct 26, 2011

Black Brick 1 x 2 x 5 (x12)	Green Brick 1 x 2 (x6)
Black Brick, Modified 1 x 1 with Headlight (x16)	Orange Minifig, Head Dual Sided Pumpkin Jack O'Lantern / Vertical Lines Pattern (x3)
Black Plate 1 x 1 (x20)	Red Brick 1 x 2 (x31)
Black Window 1 x 2 x 2 Flat Front (x6)	Red Brick 1 x 2 x 5 (x24)
Blue Brick 1 x 2 (x11)	Red Brick 2 x 2 (x10)
Blue Brick 1 x 2 (x51)	Red Brick 2 x 6 (x3)
Blue Brick 2 x 2 (x12)	

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Trans-Clear Glass for Window 1 x 2 x 2 Flat Front (x42)
White Brick 2 x 2 (x20)
White Brick 2 x 2 (x8)
Yellow Brick 2 x 2 (x13)
Yellow Brick 2 x 6 (x3)

Order Date: Nov 7, 2011

Sand Green Slope 45 2 x 2 (x102)

Order Date: Nov 8, 2011

Sand Green Slope 45 2 x 2 (x88)

Yellow Brick 2 x 2 (x200)

Order Date: Nov 22, 2011

Black Brick, Round 2 x 2 (x4)

Black Minifig, Cape Cloth, Standard (x2)

Black Tile 1 x 2 with Groove (x20)

Black Tile 1 x 4 (x8)

Black Tile 2 x 2 with Groove (x15)

Black Tile 2 x 4 (x18)

Black Tile, Round 2 x 2 (x2)

Dark Brown Container, Barrel 2 x 2 x 2 (x4)

Light Bluish Gray Brick 1 x 8 (x8)

Light Bluish Gray Brick 2 x 4 (x26)

Light Bluish Gray Brick, Modified 1 x 2 with Vertical Clip (x20)

Light Bluish Gray Tile 1 x 2 with Groove (x20)

Light Bluish Gray Tile 2 x 2 with Groove (x140)

Light Bluish Gray Tile 2 x 2 with Newspaper 'The Quibbler' Pattern (x1)

Light Bluish Gray Tile 2 x 4 (x19)

Light Bluish Gray Tile 6 x 6 (x26)

Tan Tile 2 x 2 with Newspaper 'Daily Prophet' Pattern (x1)

CC: Do you have any words of wisdom for the romantics out there who might be inspired by this?

AF: If you are inspired by my Lego model then you should really check out the work of other Lego enthusiasts. Good places to start are www.flickr.com, www.brothers-brick.com, and www.eurobricks.com. You can also find websites that cater to specific genres, like www.fbtb.net, which is a Lego Star Wars website, www.classic-space.com, www.classic-castle.com, and www.classic-pirates.com. The best help is sometimes an idea.

My own personal advice is to take your time and enjoy. Having so many deadlines at school and work has taught me that true enjoyment happens on your own time. Bryn's Supreme Court, as well as two of my other past models, took around a year to make. The extra time kept me from stressing (too much) and gave me time to accidentally, and through research, improve the way I built them. I rebuilt the Supreme Court twice to tweak the sizes of walls and

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windows. I literally had to restart from the ground up. That took time and it was good that Bryn and I had set a deadline a year away.

My last advice would be to run your idea by your friends and family. Make sure they understand your goal and can give you constructive criticism. I don't have to look far for this. My wife asked me if we could put Lego on our wedding cake. God bless her! During construction of her Supreme Court I frequently held up a picture of the court next to the model and asked her if they were close. She was honest with me when it wasn't and her Supreme Court turned out better for it.

The perfect recipe for Lego happiness is: research, plan, lots of time, definitive deadline, show it to friends, and have fun!

CC: Finally, the question asked to all architects – what is your next project?

AF: I have been asked this question a lot lately. I think my answer always comes as a surprise. I have some great sketches and a rather interesting idea of combining a mister (think dry ice) with Lego but this idea has to wait. My wife and I just bought our first house and I have a fence, cabinets, and a garage to build. I have replaced my Lego hat for the time being with my carpentry hat. After that however I plan to get back into my Lego hobby once again.

