

# Sculpting A Mane & Forelock

This tutorial explains and illustrates the steps to sculpt a mane and forelock onto Rio Rondo's "Valor-HP" or other resin sculptures.

10/30/06 Version 1.0

**RIO RONDO**  
  
**ENTERPRISES**  
PO Box 111  
COPELAND, KS 67837  
620 - 668 - 5421  
WWW.RIORONDO.COM

## Tools You Will Need

- 320 grit sandpaper
- Rio Rondo's Carbide Scrapers or other seam-removing tool
- Rubbing Alcohol, Cotton Pads and Cotton Swabs, Paper Towels
- Small Shallow container to hold rubbing alcohol. (*An empty tuna can works well.*)
- Small Soft Flat paintbrush (filbert or bright) preferably used or worn (*no need to use a good brand-new brush for this*)
- Sculpting Tools/Modeling Stylus\*
- Gapoxio or other sculpting-type 2-part epoxy (*do not use standard liquid 2-part epoxy, as it will be too runny for this procedure.*)

\*A modeling stylus of almost any type will work fine . . . you can craft your own from a wooden craft stick and carve or sand it down to a tapered pointed shape. Or use a wooden dowel, a sharpened pencil tip, a small pointed stylus. Alternatively, try a piece of wire with one end sanded smooth. Just about anything will work for this that tapers down to a fine blunted/rounded point.

## Getting Ready to Start

This operation may be performed before or after attaching the tail.

Prep the seams (if they have not been prepped already). Use a scraper to remove any flash or raised material. Follow up with the 320 grit sandpaper to smooth things out nicely.

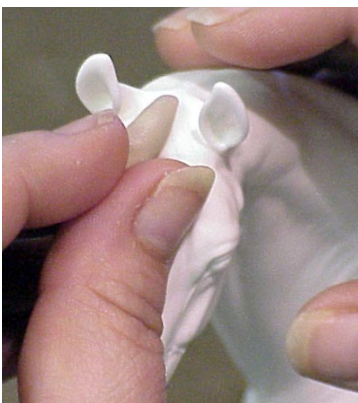
Wipe the area around the forelock and neck with alcohol on a cotton pad, to remove any residual mold release from the casting process. If the ears are wrapped, remove it now.

Assemble all of your tools and items, including Gapoxio (or similar sculpting putty), modeling tools, alcohol, cotton pads, brush etc.

We'll start with the forelock, since it's a good small project to start with if you haven't done this before.

## Start With The Forelock

Mix up a small amount of Gapoxio or similar putty according to the package directions. Make a small banana-shaped bit of putty as shown below. Slightly dampen your fingers and tools with alcohol as needed to help them "glide" more smoothly through the putty once the putty has been placed on the horse.



Place the putty.



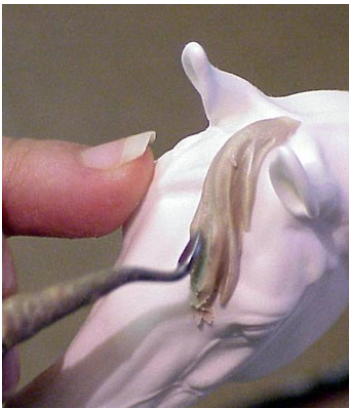
Press down lightly at the poll to anchor it.



Begin stroking hair texture in with a modeling tool.



Continue to work the texture.



Refine the detail.



Stop when you like the results.



Lightly stroke a dampened brush over the putty to smooth.



Done!

Using a cotton pad or swab dampened with alcohol, carefully remove any excess putty from around the area. Don't forget to clean off your fingers and tools and rinse the brush in alcohol as well.

If you don't like what you've done so far, simply peel off the putty, swipe the area with alcohol to clear all the old material away and start again with a freshly mixed bit of putty.

**Tip:** If you use too much alcohol, the putty can get goeey. If this happens, you can either clear away the putty and start again, or wait 5 minutes or so until the putty stiffens up a bit, and then continue to work.

### Set The Sculpture Aside to Cure

Once you have the forelock as you want it to be, stop and set the piece aside for 1-2 hours to cure. This will prevent accidentally sticking your finger into what you've just completed and messing it up as you proceed.

### On To The Mane

When the forelock is cured, mix up a walnut-sized batch of putty and have all your tools and items ready. Press the putty out into a "wad" of material a little shorter than the length of the neck, about 1/4" thick, and about 1/2" wide. This tutorial will show how to do a moderately short race-length mane.



Press the putty along the crest of the neck.



Press the putty down to the side you want the mane to lay.



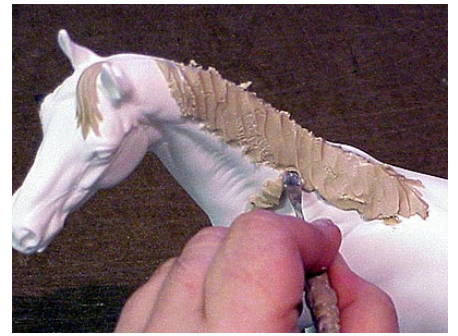
Trim off excess on the non-mane side.



Rough in hair texture along the crest. Remove excess as you go.



Remember to dampen your tool with alcohol as needed.



Rough in hair texture on the mane side. Remove excess as you go.



Dampen your fingers and smooth down the mane area.



Start stroking in some rough hair texture.



Continue to work down the mane and refine the texture.



Lightly smooth the mane with a brush dampened with alcohol.



Even up the putty along the crest. The overall line should be straight, but with somewhat irregular texture.



Lightly Smooth with alcohol as needed, and start adding fine detail. Here I've decided to put some tendrils on the non-mane side.



More smoothing.



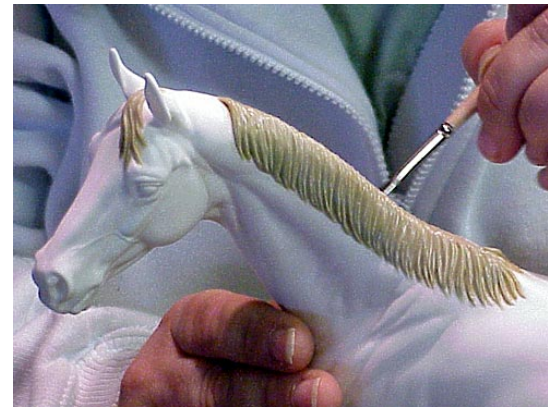
Fine Detailing



Almost there . . .



Final light smoothing with a brush dampened with alcohol.



and Done!

### **Special Tips:**

If you're not confident about sculpting the whole mane in one swath, try applying just a little bit (as with the forelock) starting either at the top of the crest, or at the withers. When you get it to look like you want, stop and allow your work to cure, then do the next swath later.

If the putty wants to behave "crumbly", smooth the area with a little alcohol to soften it. If the putty gets goeey, proceed to work on another area for a few minutes to let the goeey putty stiffen up a bit.

Remember, you can always pull off the putty before it cures and start again with fresh putty, if you don't like what you've done.

The putty along the mane should be about  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch thick when completed, more or less.

Typically, the length of the bridle path is about the same as the length of the ear. For most horses, the mane hair ends about halfway down the withers.

Don't forget to use alcohol on a cotton pad and on swabs to clean up extra putty from the horse as you go, as well as off your fingers and tools.

### **Finishing Up . . .**

When you are satisfied with how things look, make sure any bits or smears of putty are removed from the horse. Set the model aside in a warm area and allow it to cure. Cure time is about 1 hour at 75 degrees F . . . add 1 hour of time for each 5 degrees cooler the temperature is.

Don't forget to clean off your tools and wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water!

Once all the putty is completely cured, you should proceed with any additional seam prepping and priming to prepare the horse for painting.

