



# GAMES WORKSHOP GUEST OF HONOR: PHIL KELLY

This year, AdeptiCon is proud to have Phil Kelly as our Games Workshop Guest of Honor. Throughout the weekend, AdeptiCon attendees will have the chance to meet, talk to, and and hear from one of the lead minds of the Games Development studio. .

As usual, we managed to catch up with Phil and feed him questions that we thought might be of interest to our attendees.

***Tell us about your history with GW. How'd you get into the hobby...how'd you get to your position at GW?***

Phil Kelly: Three for the price of one eh? OK, well, an interesting story there. I got into the hobby – first time round – back in school. My friend showed me a virtually impregnable plastic case full of these little dudes called 'Space Marines' and asked me to paint them for him. After a few utterly revolting paint jobs (I remember them vividly, hands up if you remember painting with gloopy enamel paint when you were young - yeuch) I got the hang of it, and soon I had a little sideline business going. I practically raked in the pocket money back then, but had not even the slightest interest in gaming – I was a painter through and through. How times have changed...

Anyway, then came the Teen Heresy; that time when your older brother convinces you that all the stuff you dig is for kids, and that things like music, women and beer are far more important. It was a dark and dangerous time but I made it through. Eighteen years on and what do you know? Aliens, dinosaurs, Space Marines and Transformers are still cool, in fact they are cooler than ever, and music, beer and women, well, they're pretty cool too as it turns out.

My brother, who spent all his time and money on little black boxes of audio goodness that made 'beep boop' noises, is now the director of one of the best music studios in London, and I spend my days writing about Space Marines, aliens, dinosaurs, and sometimes alien dinosaurs. In your face, sceptical parents! <grin>

***So what's a typical work day in the life of Phil Kelly?***

Phil Kelly: Well, there really is no answer to that question. Every day is completely different from the last. This is because my job involves far more than just writing and games development. I do a lot of graphic stuff, but as a lead writer I also manage projects from beginning to end, which requires a hell of a lot of what my boss calls 'getting off your ass



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and hustling'. I'm not your typical introverted creative by any means. In fact I have a megaphone under my desk.

I suppose the majority of my working day is occupied with making sure things run smoothly and what I sometimes call 'spinning plates' – we generally have so many projects on the go, and they all need attention, so it's more of an art balancing my time to make sure they are all catered for and keep the plates spinning than actually doing the work itself, which is a blessed relief from all the hustling!

### ***What codex or army book that you've worked on is your favourite and why?***

Phil Kelly: Ogre Kingdoms, no doubt. This is because that book is not a refresh of an existing race, and it was really liberating and fun to work on something that was properly mine, from the concepts to the book design. I made a bunch of mistakes, in retrospect, but it was my first Warhammer book and the army is still characterful and fun, which is a big win. I am proud of the fat lads and the dark humour that runs through the book. Ogres and Gnoblar are just ace.

I loved working on Codex: Eldar, 'cause aside from having a soft spot for Eldar I really like working with Jes Goodwin. We have very similar backgrounds, we're both Essex boys, and we studied art under the same teachers at Nottingham Uni.

Jes's knowledge of mythology is pretty

much unparalleled in these parts and that's always been a passion of mine – getting to revisit legendary characters and archetypes with a Warhammer or 40K spin is arguably the best part of my job. When we get enthused about a project and start exchanging ideas it's a real buzz.

We've got some really cool stuff in the pipeline but I'm not supposed to talk about it, more's the pity.

And Orks, well, you have to love Orks. I think I am about 10% greenskin. I stopped the 40K grand tournament final in its tracks with a particularly loud Waaagh recently, hur hur hur.

### ***What goes into creating a new and improved army book or codex?***

Phil Kelly: Nine months of very hard work, believe it or not - just cos something's fun doesn't mean it's not difficult. This is mainly because there is no single task that I can just do automatically, nothing simple that I can just get on with and turn off my brain a little whilst I listen to iTunes – every job requires a lot of concentration. Mentally tiring but very rewarding.

For me to detail the whole production process would take the rest of the day, no question – suffice to say that we deal with over twenty other departments. The Gantt charts that govern a single codex, when you printed them out on A4 and sellotape them all together, could stretch from one side of

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the street to the other. We're pretty serious about our goblins over here.

***So what's the largest army you've got, and how large is it?***

Phil Kelly: Aha! After the dawn of Apocalypse (mmm, Apocalypse), I have two 40K armies at 6,000 points – my beloved Eldar and my black-and-yellow Tyranids – plus I also have 6,000 points of Skaven.

I think 6,000 points is about the right size for an army, cos it's about all you can carry around in one trip and it's big enough to play a day-long game now and again.

***6) With the upcoming release of 5th Ed., what do we (the gaming community) have to look forward to?***

Phil Kelly: A much more dynamic and challenging game. I can't talk too much about it without the Inquisition turning up and taking me off to the detention chambers for reconditioning, but trust me, the changes we have made affect every aspect of Warhammer 40,000 for the better. The focus has shifted considerably.

***7) So, is there a Phil Kelly novel in the future? Any hints if there is?***

Phil Kelly: Undoubtedly, but not for a little while yet. I have a few books I would like to write – for example I would love to write an Orky one at some point, that could be a rollicking good laugh.

I also have some space opera stuff that I would like to write but that's more of a life's work than a novel.

***8) If you were lost in space and could bring three movies along, which ones would they be?***

Phil Kelly: You know, I would love to be lost in space, provided I had company. I have a map of the world with pins all over it to represent the places I've travelled to – by the time I die, I want a map of the solar system next to it, so I can stick a pin in Earth, Earth's orbit and maybe the Moon to boot, he he he. Well, a man can dream.

Anyway, in answer to the question I think I would bring *Withnail and I*, cos I just love that film's quintessential Englishness even if it would make me very homesick, also the *Shawshank Redemption*, which is a masterpiece, though 2001 would seem pretty appropriate I suppose. Finally I reckon I would choose *Gia*, 'cause it has a naked Angelina Jolie in it. Nuff said. ;-)

***Phil Kelly will be around for the whole AdeptiCon weekend, but if you want a chance to talk with him in detail about himself or the hobby, sign up for one of the Phil Kelly Interactive Q&A Sessions at [www.adepticon.org/cart](http://www.adepticon.org/cart).***

**Friday**

**2:30PM - 4:00PM, 7:30PM - 9:00PM**

**Saturday**

**10:30AM - 12:30PM**

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