



NINJAGO

Masters of Spinjitzu



TEMPLE OF AIRJITZU

This is the place where Sensei Yang invented the lost art of Airjitzu. Sensei Yang trained for most of his life to master this airborne style of fighting, but by the time he finally did, he had become a very old man. He decided to pass on his legacy and started accepting students. In the beginning, he was a respected and admired master, and students even raised a statue in front of the temple in his honor. But knowing that his time was coming to an end, he became impatient and was very hard on students who failed to live up to his strict code of discipline and unusual training methods. A common practice was locking up his students in the attic to make sure they had time to reflect on why they failed to succeed in an Airjitzu training session.

Very little is known of what went on behind the temple walls, but the fact that none of his students ever left the temple has given rise to much speculation and many legends and rumors. Sensei Yang became known as 'The Sensei without Students,' and people made sure to keep their distance from the temple.

It is now believed that the ghost of Sensei Yang haunts the temple, and that anyone who enters and does not exit again before sunrise will themselves become a ghost. Over the years, the temple has fallen into disrepair and has become a popular tourist site.

That was a bit of the grim history of the Temple of Airjitzu... What will the future hold for it? You will just have to make up your own story or keep following the story of LEGO NINJAGO to find out. It would be a pretty cool headquarters for the ninja, wouldn't it?



TEMPLE OF AIRJITZU

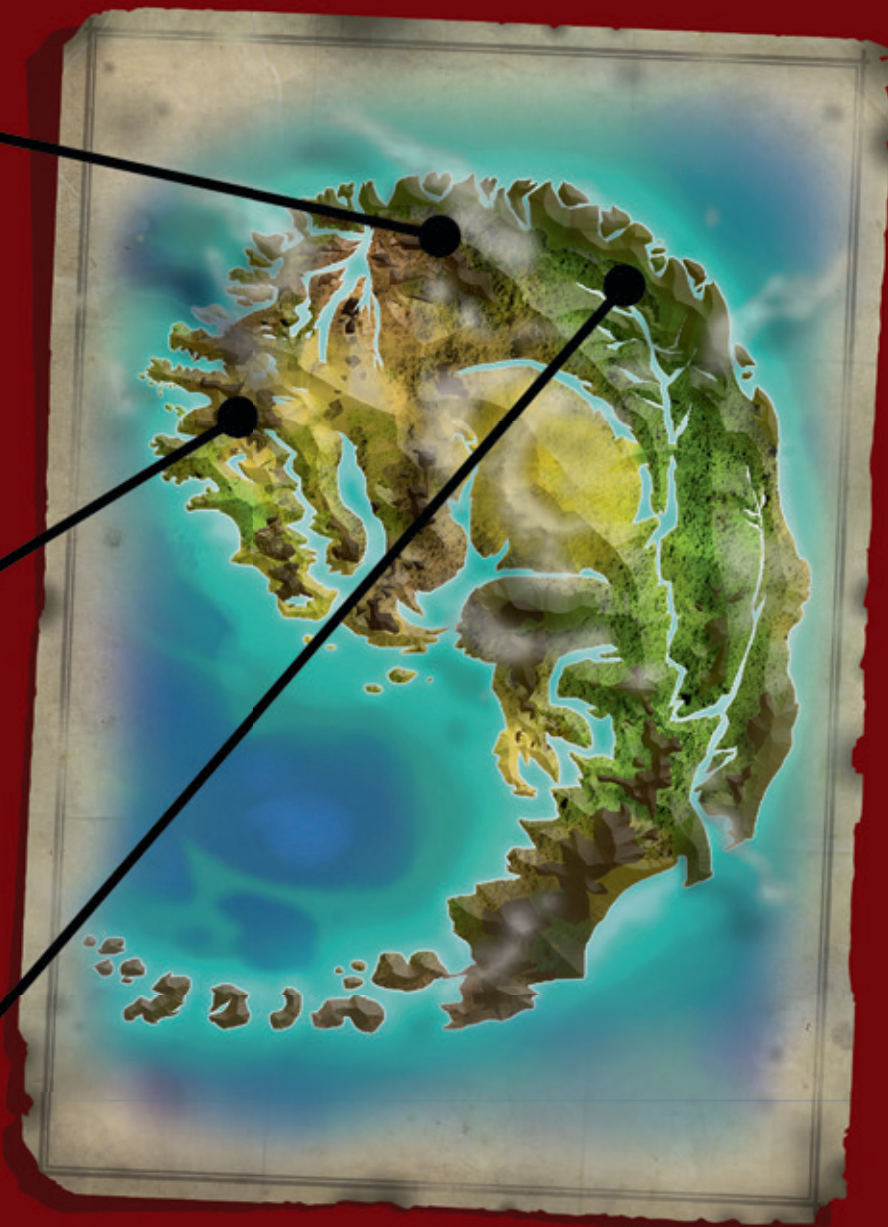
Little is known about the origin of this historic location. No one knows who built it or when, but it has been around since the EDO period. Many suspect that it is even older than that, and once was the dojo of the First Spinjitzu Master.

NINJAGO CITY

The biggest city in all of the NINJAGO world. The city has seen its share of action and was the main site of the attacks of the Great Devourer, the Overlord, the Stone Warriors, the evil Nindroids and the Golden Master. But NINJAGO City has always prevailed, and although the city has seen much conflict, destruction and transformation, the citizens are still honest and hard-working people.

THE WAILING ALPS

One of the highest and coldest peaks in the NINJAGO world. The chilling winds that rush this mountain range make a distinct and frightening sound. The Wailing Alps are the location of the Hypnobrai tomb, and a huge tornado that rages through the area, called the Blind Man's Eye, is said to be a passageway to another Realm.



AN INTERVIEW WITH THE DESIGNERS ADRIAN FLOREA AND THOMAS PARRY



Can you explain a little about the process of designing the Temple of Airjitzu model?

Sure! When I started working on the Temple of Airjitzu, I had already been working on all things LEGO NINJAGO for more than four years, so you could say that I was very familiar with the universe, the tone of voice, and of course our team of ninja. We have been equipping our ninja with state-of-the-art vehicles, glorious dragons and frightening enemies year after year, but we felt that they'd been missing something to provide context. A chance to build a large model came up, and my mind was set on the direction from the start. I could finally

use all the bits and builds that I had been keeping in boxes around my desk. In the end, the model still reflects a strong LEGO NINJAGO fantasy-inspired look, with some features that might not be based on reality.

How did you get the inspiration for this set?

It's difficult not to get inspired when digging up references on Asian architecture. The main idea for the model and the layout was to provide our main characters with an environment where they could take a break from saving the NINJAGO world. The centerpiece pagoda is luxurious and intricate, while the blacksmith's shop has a humble feel to it. The contrast is clear in the differences between the buildings such as the color, roof styles, windows, and the purpose they serve. Too much contrast can cause confusion, so I set up the base layout to be visually symmetrical with the fountain serving as the center.

What were some of the challenges you faced?

Knowing when to stop! The village had the potential to grow in so many different directions, but it was important to represent the essentials. The idea of the shadow theater came later in the process, which meant that it had

to be thought out efficiently and as quickly as possible. Determining how to cast the shadows on the foil screen was a complicated process. Some of the early versions had overlapping elements that created interesting shapes and even dragons with the light-brick turned on. One version involved more movement but turned out to be too finicky. Another challenge with the theater was building the mechanism that activates the turntable and light-brick simultaneously, since we can't allow the light to be triggered constantly, which would run down the battery. Challenges like these are fun at the end of the day when it all comes together and works as it should.

What's your favorite part of the model?

It's tricky to pinpoint one favorite part, but I am definitely happy with the visual effect of the shadow play, as it's the first feature of this kind to be added in a model. I have found myself staring at it as if it's telling an old folk tale with its minimal language.

What was the toughest part of the model to design?

The Temple (pagoda) has proven to be the trickiest. The unique layout it has, being situated in the corner, came with unexpected surprises. Each level had to be different in width, because the first floor has a

passage on the outside which means the walls had to be pushed in, and they would pop out by a stud on the next floor only to be narrowed down again on the last floor. The smooth curves of the roofs that have to fit with the rigid base shape of the building were a tough challenge from day one. The temple roof layout was built very differently at first, using tiny ball-joints to get the angles just right. It looked nice, but was needlessly complex.

Tell us a little about how you came to work at the LEGO Group.

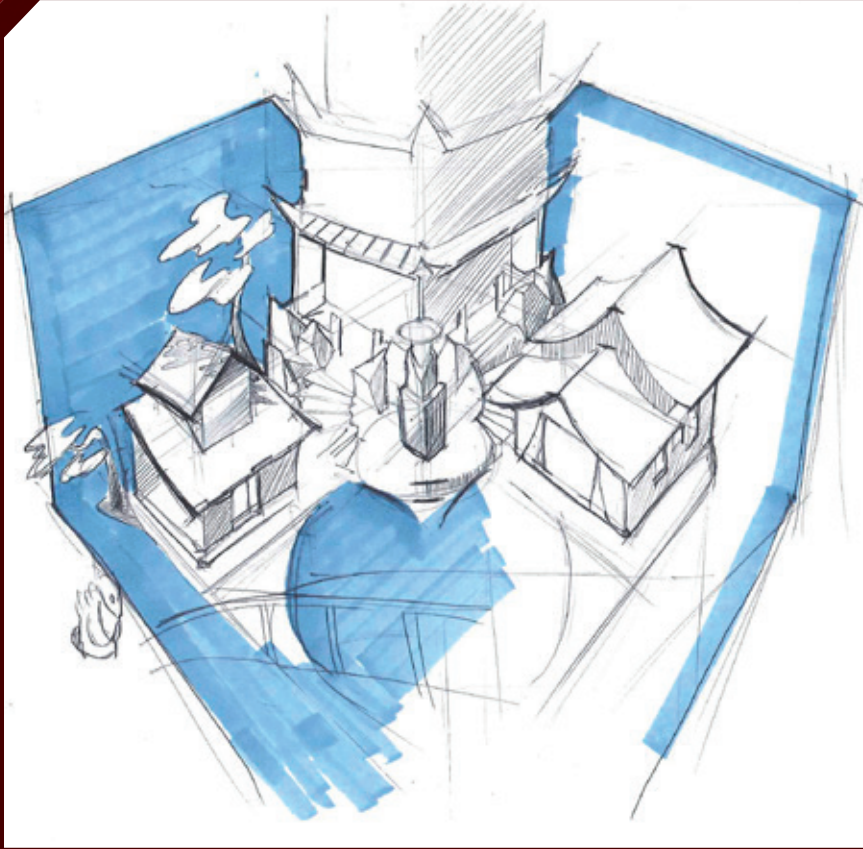
I graduated with a degree in Industrial Design, and have been putting LEGO bricks together since 2010. My very first models were designed for LEGO NINJAGO. I was happy to discover that the people who were interested in hiring me had known about my models that I had been building with LEGO bricks in my spare time as an AFOL [Adult Fan Of LEGO bricks].

What's your favorite LEGO NINJAGO set?

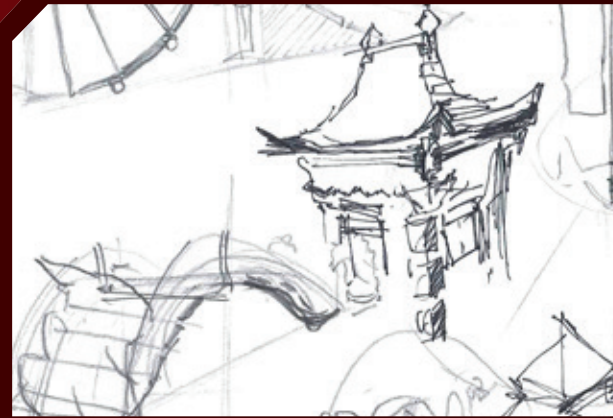
The Fire Temple still holds a special place in my heart, and a close second would be the second Destiny's Bounty. I tend to get drawn in by ridiculous features that seem to be the signature of so many LEGO NINJAGO sets.



DESIGN PROCESS



The model is close to its final version. The symmetrical layout has started to take shape, and the different heights of the buildings make for an interesting outline. You can tell that there is a focal point where the statue is in the middle of the fountain and the sides extend to fit the two extra buildings. I really get attached to small details such as the tree shade on the rooftop of the blacksmith's shop, so I ended up adding dried leaves to get a similar effect.



Rough quick sketches which helped me get comfortable with the difficult-to-build shapes that are common to Asian-style buildings.

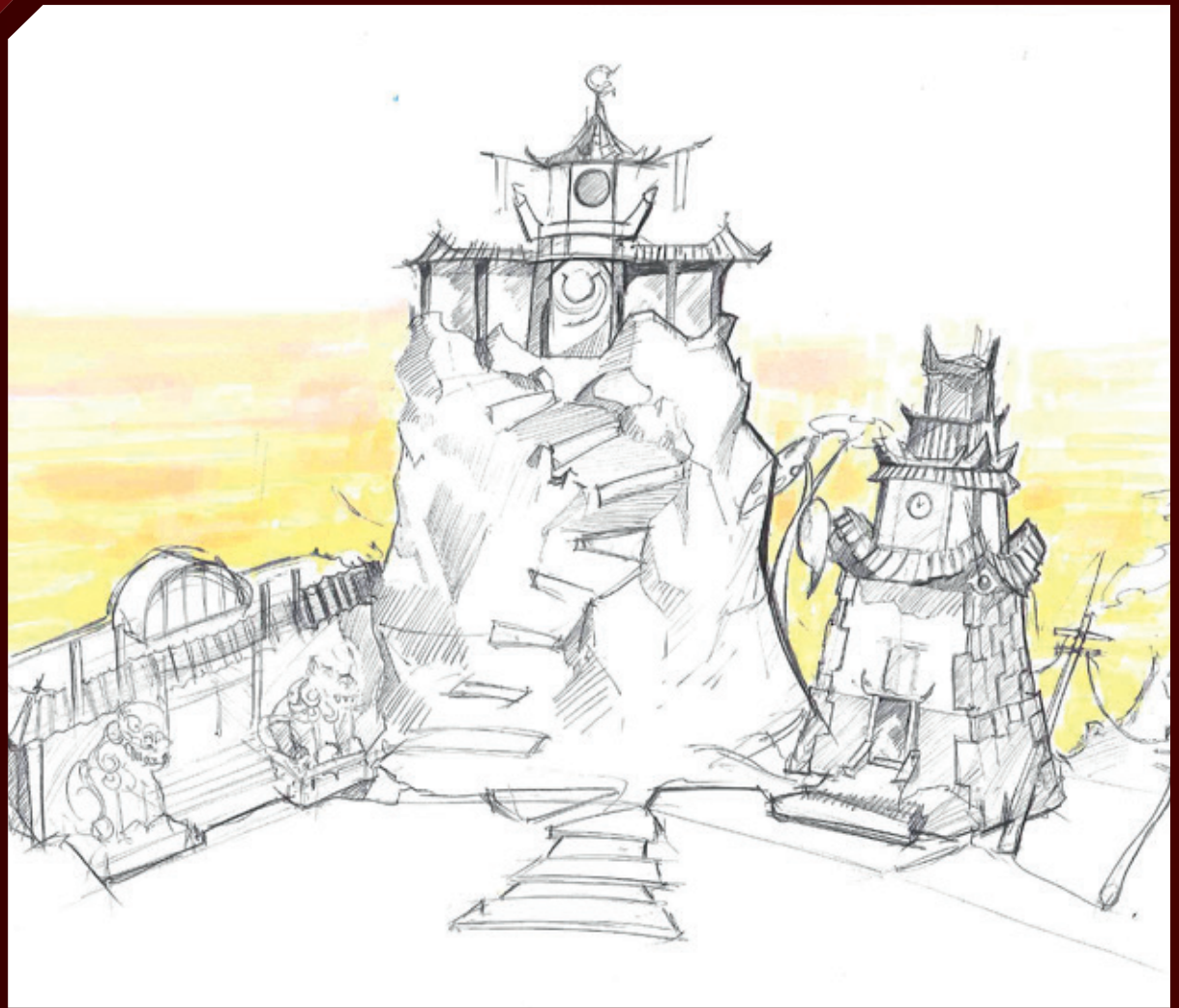


The smuggler's market has stayed mostly untouched with its open structure. The difficult part was deciding on a roof. The garage door segments allowed me at least two options for soft shapes that would reflect the symbolic style. In the end, the more recognizable and intricate double roof was chosen. More details were added with time, such as the fishing rods, crates and pathway. I am very fond of the two chickens that have taken up residence in the vicinity, probably lured in by the smell of baguettes.

DESIGN FACTS



A very modest-looking house, which in the early days of development set the tone of voice all the way to the final version. At this point, I knew I wanted to include at least one building that had an interesting wooden structure in its walls. This came to life in the blue blacksmith's shop.



Early on in the process of designing, I was very inspired by the freedom that a model this size offers. Detailed cliffs and wild trees were something I've always wanted to build as part of a model. The cliff went down in size and was replaced by the pagoda-inspired structure. In this early sketch, the direction was different and I wanted to throw in some references to Darkley's School for Bad Boys and the Ninjago City Museum, although it made little sense for them to stand side-by-side.

CHARACTER OVERVIEW

THE NINJA

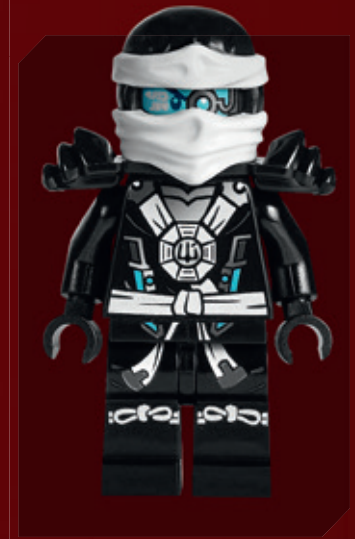
Although any one ninja is powerful, as a team, they are almost unstoppable. The ninja help each other, support each other, and in battle, they are always watching each other's backs. While they have their share of arguments, each one will risk anything for his friends and the team.



KAI



JAY



ZANE



COLE



LLOYD



NYA



WU

THE POSTMAN

The hardest-working man on Ninjago Island. A former post office worker, this postman decided as he reached retirement age that he needed to get more fresh air and exercise. He started delivering the mail (and packages with new ninja outfits) himself, but alas, he had not taken into account how dangerous the NINJAGO world could be. That's why he has developed a wide variety of strange vehicles that can help him get the mail out to even the most remote locations.



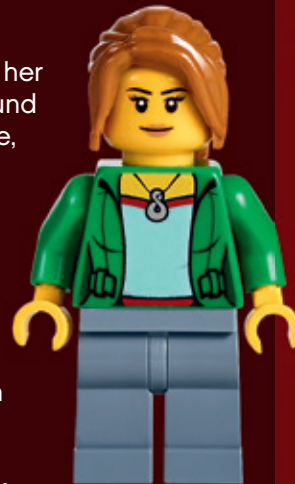
JESPER

Employed to make Yang's Haunted Temple into a pristine tourist attraction, he unfortunately hasn't been doing a very good job. It's difficult to take care of a haunted temple when you're afraid of ghosts. He is a very skilled landscaper and gardener, but his fear keeps him at a distance, so the grounds far from the temple are much better kept than the temple itself. If the temple is one day cleared of its ghoulish reputation, then he will undoubtedly do a great job. Until then, it's good that he has his daughter...



CLAIRE

The polar opposite of her father, she hangs around the Temple all the time, not afraid to do some repairs and whatever else her father is too frightened to do. In fact, she LOVES ghost stories, and in secret she spends as much time as she can investigating the Haunted Temple. She knows every nook and cranny, and has pretty much unraveled all of the mysteries and dark secrets of the temple...but she keeps it to herself because she doesn't want to scare anybody, especially her father.



MISAKO

Misako is an archaeologist for the Ninjago Museum of History and Lloyd's mother. Her commitment to her research, particularly in figuring out how to prevent the prophecy of the Green Ninja from coming true, kept her away from Lloyd throughout much of his life. Her knowledge and expertise become key to the ninja team's epic journey.



DARETH

Dareth is the owner of a small dojo called Grand Sensei Dareth's Mojo Dojo, where he teaches a small group of students. Dareth is a laid-back teacher, but a little full of himself. He often tries to prove that he's good enough to be one of the ninja, though he usually fails miserably. Nonetheless, Dareth remains a devoted friend and supporter of the team.



MOVIE THEATER

The shadow theater in the model tells a story that is simple enough to be interpreted in many different ways. The silhouettes might even be spirits trapped under the temple, forever reliving their moment of glory, learning how to master the secrets of Airjitzu in an epic fight. But was it their last fight?

The snake for me represents the Great Devourer, the ultimate baddie in the Year of the Snake, and one of the most impactful villains in the LEGO NINJAGO world. The mini Great Devourer could be sneaking in for a bite, and spinning in circles is the best way to defend against the venomous fiend. If you try moving the snake closer to the light-brick, the shadow will grow, and you can recreate a scene of Garmadon and his brother Wu fending off the powerful foe.



THEATER FACTS

It was through a coincidence that I came up with the theater. It just so happened that the Temple of Airjitzu was being designed at the same time that I stumbled upon this alternate use of the light-brick, so I knew I had to add this fun new function to the model. The use of shadows can be very symbolic, and it seemed like a perfect fit in the context of the NINJAGO world. It's also an exciting new way of using the light-brick, since its 2x3 size can make it a bit clumsy to fit into certain models.

In the days designing the theater and the mechanics behind it, I started playing around with different elements that had interesting effects, such as transparency or odd pieces that projected different kinds of shadows. Once I decided on using the tiny yet adorable trophy figure to represent the characters, the next step was adding movement. A fun challenge was linking the functions together, giving it this old-time kinoscope feel. You will also notice how the shadows of the characters grow and shrink in size depending on their distance from the light. If the stone steps are removed on the left side, you can also remove the light brick



easily by tapping the wall.

The shadow play has served as a simple yet captivating form of storytelling since ancient times, and has been a part of mythology and entertainment throughout history. Long before the invention of film, the original shadow theater came to be in ancient China, and quickly spread throughout Asia as a traditional art form. Groups of traveling artists would set up plays using myths and legends as subjects and music to accompany the story. I have also heard that it brings good luck!

I think it's a very fun and original function that I hope everyone will enjoy. You can add to it to create your own story, and there are no limits to its functionality. Some say it tells the story of two brothers fighting an unstoppable foe, but I like to think of it as open to interpretation.

