

# Gas Van

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# #67

Maquette en papier  
Paper model kit  
Kartonmodellbausatz



The Gaswagen, otherwise known as the Gas Van, was one of the more gruesome vehicles to come out of the Nazi regime during the Second World War. Used by the Einsatzgruppen, Hitler's Death Squads, the Gaswagen allowed the SS to kill victims of the Regime much more efficiently and swiftly. Victims would no longer need to be shipped off to the nearest concentration camp, but rather, they could simply be packed into the rear compartment of the truck and exterminated.

The largest Gaswagen had room for up to 100 people, all of whom would have been squeezed into a tight space. A small light mounted to the center of the ceiling would provide meek illumination. An exhaust pipe connected to the engine fed into a hole at the bottom of the compartment. All drivers had to do was start the engine. Ideally, the victims would have passed out first before succumbing to the noxious gases.

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## A letter from the designer

Dear fellow model-makers,

I'm Bryan Tan, otherwise known as RocketmanTan on deviantArt and elsewhere. I am the designer of this model, along with many other kits. A lot of my subjects deal with historical objects, the vast majority of them being from Nazi Germany. Nonetheless, I'm sure that seeing me design a model such as this might leave a few of you confused, and most of you offended. After all, who in their right mind would want to make a kit about something as close to the Holocaust as this? Well, this model has a backstory of its own.

I had actually started work on this design back in January, its release planned to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference, which was the discussion that finalized Hitler's Final Solution. I wanted to do something that would recognize the event, but wouldn't celebrate it, or cover it up under tears and bouquets of flowers. I wanted something that would represent what had actually happened during those horrible years. A gas chamber would have been far too obscene, and so I had my options down to two things: the Gas Van and a "transport railcar".

Even then, however, I had a very hard time deciding whether or not I should actually go through with this project. I thought it over many times and discussed it with a close friend of mine. Eventually, he convinced me to cancel the whole thing. So, halfway into my weekend and with finals coming up, I scrapped the model, leaving it to rot in my "in-progress" folder.

Recently, however, I have reconsidered finishing the model. I've discussed the idea with some very experienced modelers. Their rationale was that like the other models I've designed, this subject has been used to kill people. The only difference here being the ideology behind it. Nonetheless, I know that this argument will sway very few.

To be honest, there is no real way for me to explain my own rationale for this model in a way that will please everyone. Simply put, I wanted to show people the harsh reality of the Holocaust, that it did happen, and on such a large, industrial scale.

This model was definitely not an easy one to do. I often found myself getting nauseous at the thought of such a machine existing, and drawing out the rear door piece was particularly distressing. Despite the part being a few vectored rectangles, I was drawing what was to be for many, the last thing they would ever see, a veritable gate to hell.

As I've already said, this explanation is far from an excuse, it will neither absolve me nor appease most of you. All I can say is that this is a model, depicting a historical object. Its sole purpose is to document said object's existence, as gruesome as it was. I'm sure not a lot of you will build this model, and I expect that. There's really nothing left for me to say, I'll just leave you with this kit, to do with as you please.

— *Bryan Tan*

Bryan Tan

# The Einsatzgruppen - Hitler's Angels of Death

The story of the Nazis' campaign of hatred against the Jews has seen gruesome deaths even before the establishment of the first death camps. As Germany began to sharpen its teeth for the impending war, the Einsatzgruppen were founded. Their purpose during the invasion of Czechoslovakia, however, was something fairly remote from the mass murders of innocents. Like the Einsatzkommando during the annexation of Austria, the Einsatzgruppen were tasked with securing government documents and offices. The Einsatzgruppen were largely rag-tag groups of soldiers, placed together to carry out their mission. The first Einsatzgruppen were disbanded shortly after the Czechoslovak campaign.

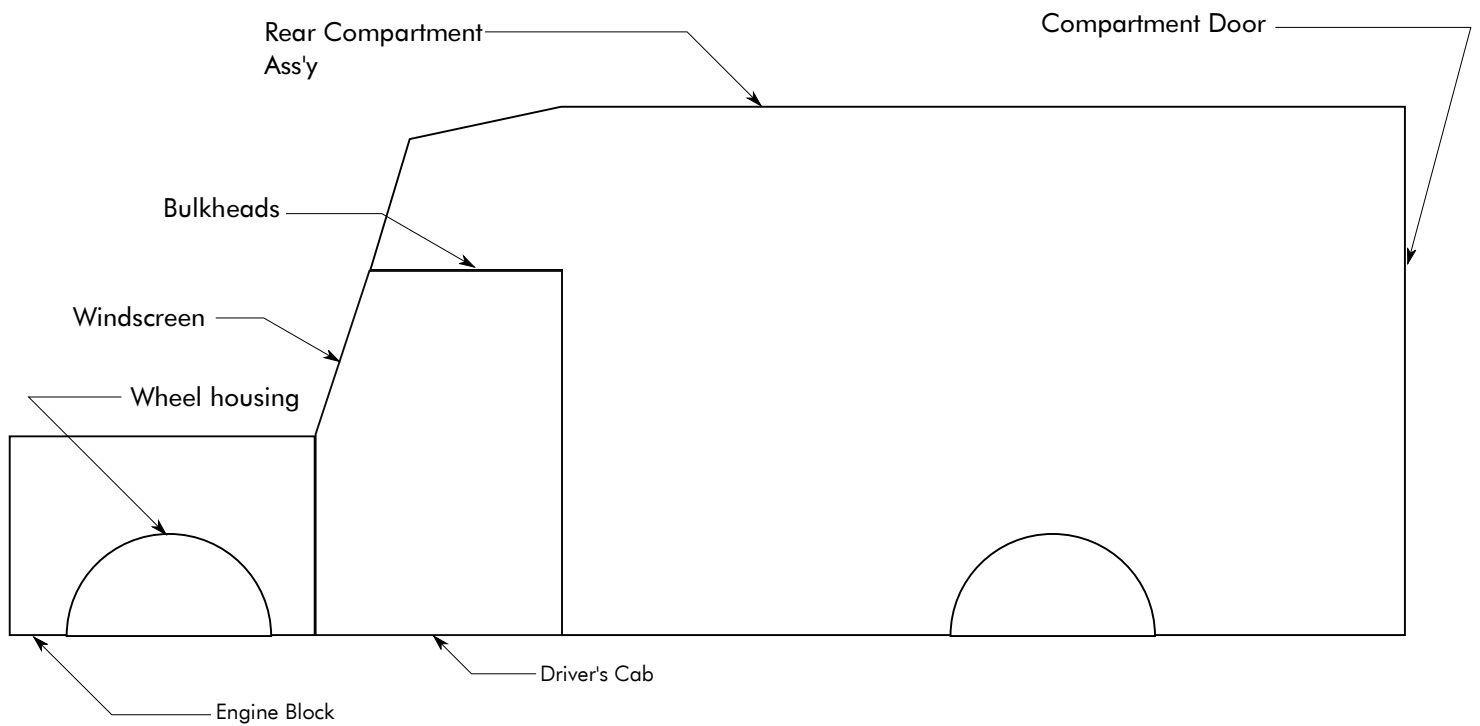
This "impromptu" group of soldiers would be re-organized once again, however, after Hitler's armies had conquered Poland. This time, however, Reinhard Heydrich, the Einsatzgruppen's founder, gave the Einsatzgruppen free rein over the handling of "hostile" prisoners. With that order, the Einsatzgruppen quickly became the blunt instrument with which Hitler would use to clear Europe for his much-desired Lebensraum. They would move from state to state, village to village, the literal harbingers of death. Almost immediately, these legions of murderers set out to slaughter members of the Polish Intelligentsia. Unfeeling and without compassion, the SS men gained experience in organized, militaristic murder with each bullet expended, with each freshly-killed body tumbling into a mass grave.

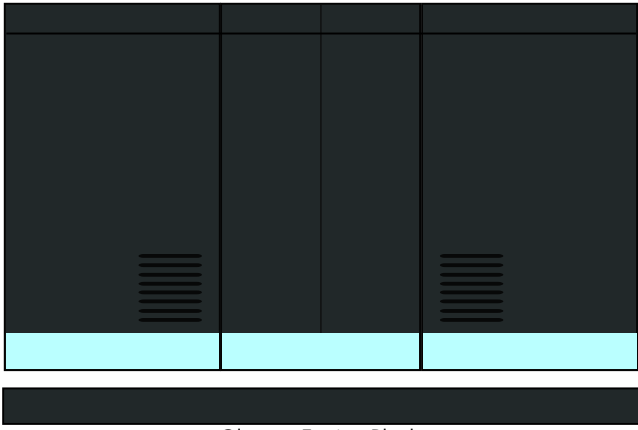
The Einsatzgruppen followed the Heer across the rest of Europe. Some records indicate that had Operation Sealion been launched, six Einsatzgruppen would have been sent to Britain. After Operation Barbarossa, the Einsatzgruppen became a more-or-less bona-fide force within the Waffen SS. Throughout Russia and the Baltic States, the death squads roamed about, wiping out entire populations of Jews in various areas.

Their methods of extermination were disturbingly systematic. They would move into occupied towns, issuing orders for enemies of the Regime (e.g. Communists, members of the bourgeoisie, and of course, Jews) to assemble for deportation. Local volunteers usually helped to round up the victims. The most common procedure that followed had the victims march into the nearby woods, where a mass grave had been prepared. There, they were promptly shot by soldiers of the Einsatzgruppe(n), their now lifeless bodies crumpling into the pits. Another method with which the Einsatzgruppen achieved their goal was through gas vans. Their operation was simple: route the exhaust gas through a pipe leading into a hole in the bottom of the cargo compartment, thus achieving the mission via carbon monoxide poisoning/asphyxiation. The vans exemplified the operations of the Einsatzgruppen: they were mobile, deadly, and eerily sinister. Eventually, Hitler found the Einsatzgruppen to be too inefficient and cost-effective. Now the killing of Jews and enemies of the regime would be carried out on a mass and industrial scale, the likes of which the world has never seen.

# MAGIRUS DEUTZ

## Instructions

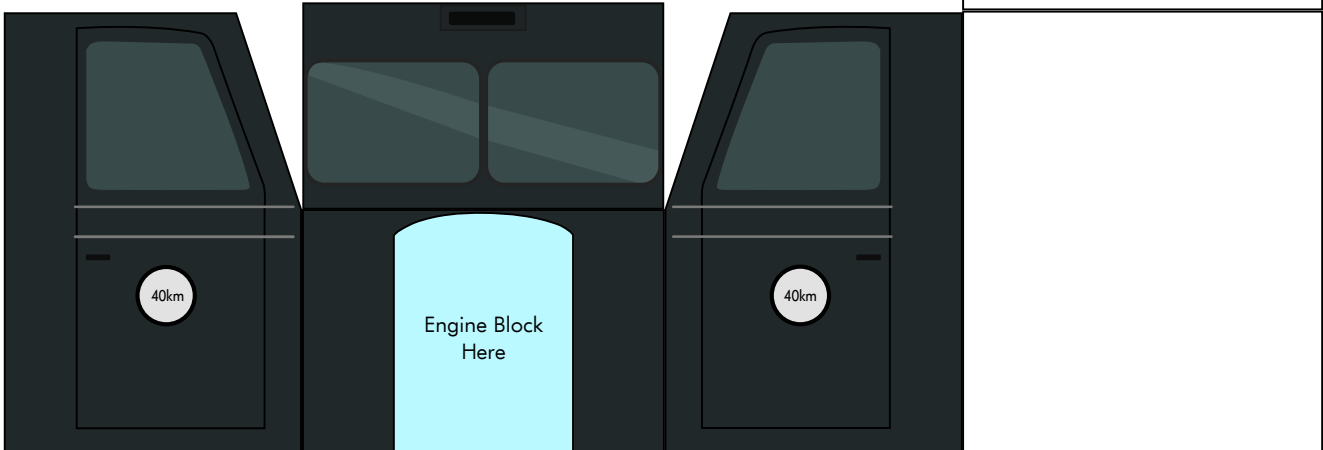




Glue on Engine Block



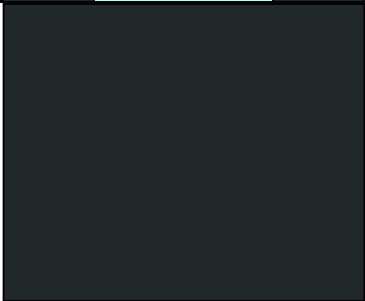
Engine Block



Driver's Cab



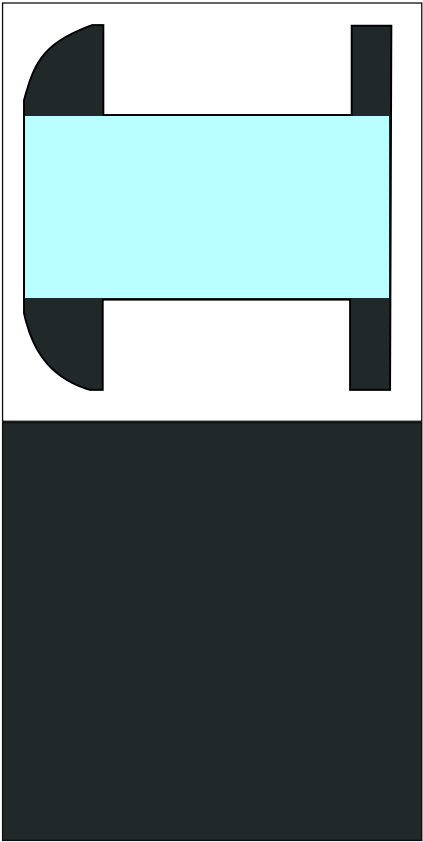
Place detail on top of windscreen



Forward Wheel Wells

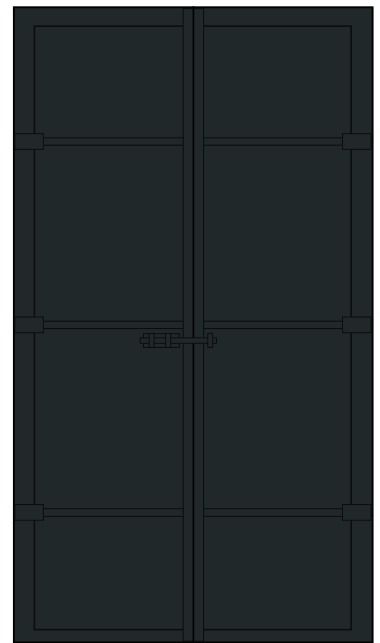


Engine Block Mount

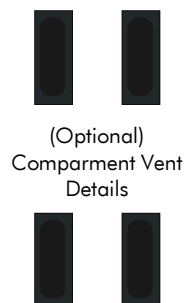


On 20 January, 1942, the Wannsee Conference is held. It discusses the exact details of Hitler's Final Solution. Rather than just scattered executions and detentions, Hitler's plan of worldwide industrialized extermination is finalized and immediately put into effect. By the end of the war, the death camps will have claimed the lives of over seventeen million people.

Rear compartment underbelly



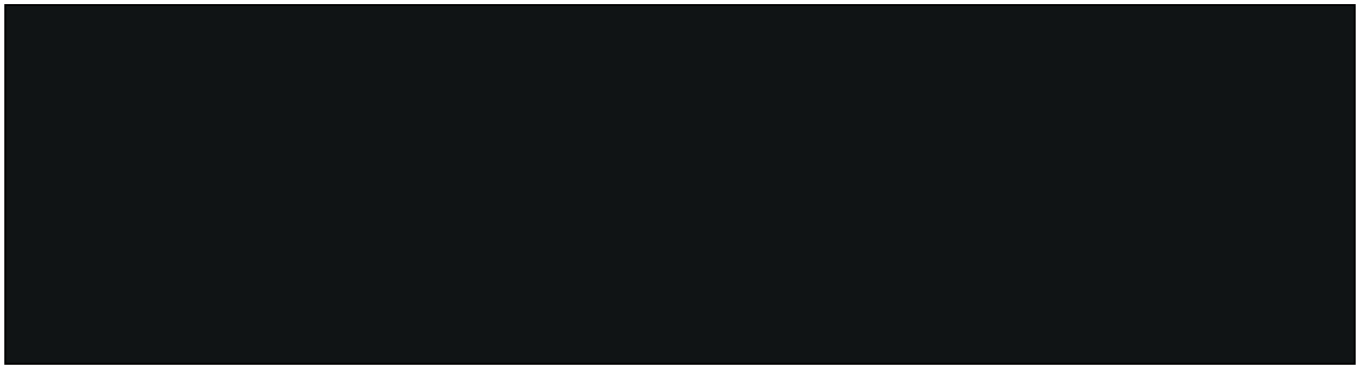
Rear compartment door



(Optional)  
Compartment Vent  
Details

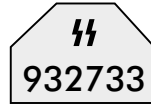
Rear compartment left

Rear compartment right



Rear compartment roof

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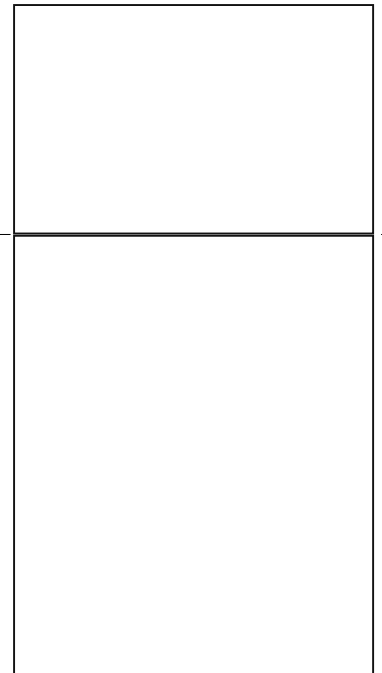


License Plates

Rear wheels

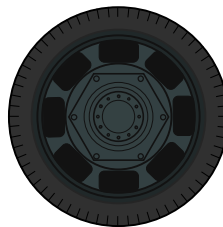
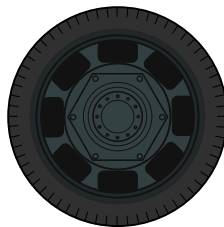
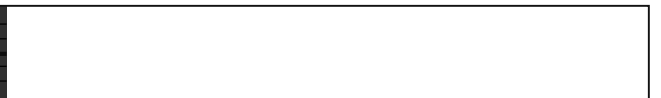
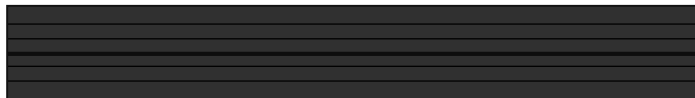
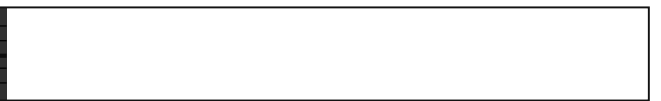
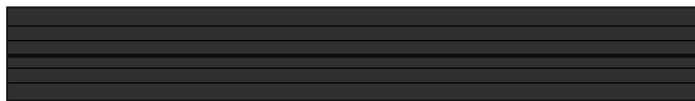


Rear wheel housings



Rear compartment front

Rear wheel tires



Fwd Wheels

