



## **Dr Michael A Fopp**

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### **‘This book lays bare how such a beautiful model can be made’.**

‘When the head of the Luftwaffe, Hermann Goering, asked one of his most senior squadron commanders what was needed to defeat the Royal Air Force in the Battle of Britain in 1940, the response was “Equip my squadron with Spitfires, Herr Reichsmarschall”! It was not only its performance and the bravery of its pilots which made this aircraft so famous, it was its intrinsic beauty, style and form. It looked good on the ground, even better in the air and was a delight to fly. Eighty years on, the legend of the Spitfire is still alive. No other icon better represents the Royal Air Force and British aviation achievement. Concorde and the Spitfire are universally recognised by young and old as the epitome of style and speed of their time, yet only the Spitfire can still be seen and enjoyed in its element today.

When asked if I would accept David Glen’s Spitfire model for the Royal Air Force Museum I was obliged to decline. We had strict policies that precluded our acquiring models, even by expert model makers. With a perfect set of every machine flown by the RAF/RFC/RNAS, we simply did not need them. David’s Spitfire was something quite different - not only perfect in every detail but, like the real thing, an iconic example of the model maker’s art.

In my own small way I made it even more special when I insisted that it must be ‘anonymous’ and represent the aircraft itself, rather than any unit or squadron to which it may have been assigned. It must, therefore, be unpainted and in its natural metal finish. The result is now displayed in the foyer of the Royal Air Force Museum Hendon, in all its glory. Every rivet and panel is clear to see and nothing which could have been covered by paint is missing. It is a huge achievement by an undoubted master of the modellers’ craft.

I, and the hundreds of thousands of visitors who gaze in wonder at this Spitfire each year, can see the results of David’s meticulous workmanship, but have little idea of what actually went in to creating this masterpiece. This book lays bare the full extent of his work and perfectly closes the circle on how such a beautiful thing can be made’.