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Happy Mother's Day!

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The collection of Joan Warren.

SMALL DETAILS

May 2020 ☆ Issue 205

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WELCOME



Staying positive in difficult times is essential to a healthy mind, body and soul. It's easy to let your thoughts wander to dark places and situations that are not even in front of you in the moment. While it is important to plan ahead and be prepared it's also a must to let your mind rest and go to a 'happy place' on a regular basis.

My hope is that *American Miniaturist* can assist with some positivity. This issue has great tutorials that will help you add something special to your 'happy place'! Making something wonderful from the most basic supplies is a very rewarding feeling. If you can't get out to the craft shops, no worries, because I bet if you dig to the back of those studio shelves and drawers and use your imagination you will see you have everything you need.

Taking some creative mental breaks will let your mind and heart be free to soar and dance. Let us know how you have found a way to stay positive and creative. We would also love to see what miniatures you are making in the moment. I have been working on my own outdoor fairy gardens and also building my French stone cottage.

Another super way to get rid of any anxieties is to get organized. Why not gut that studio and reassemble it so you can take inventory and set your work station up to be more productive? Then revisit your past issues of *AM* for fun ideas.

Auralea Krieger, Editor
auralea@ashdown.co.uk

Up-cycling bottles

Give your average wine bottles a classy French look

BY ELIZE VAN ES

I just love it when miniatures have an authentic, realistic and almost classic look. When it comes to wine bottles it doesn't matter which style you like. A French wine bottle gives every miniature scene – from modern to Victorian – an extra touch of elegance.

Making these 'fancy' wine bottles is fun and an easy DIY project. The most time will be spent searching the internet for the wine labels of your choice to print.

1 Mix the glass paint to match the color of a wine bottle. I personally like a rich dark red Bordeaux color. You get this by mixing red, blue, yellow and a drop of black.

Scale = 1:12

Materials:

- Cheap/average 1:12 wine bottles (remove any labels)
- Glass paint - red, blue, yellow, black
- Wine labels
- Paintbrush
- Glue stick or Tacky Glue



2 Next, paint your wine bottles. Hold the top and paint the entire bottle. The paint is sticky so you need to paint the entire bottle at one time. Later you can do the bottom.

TOPTIP:

Don't mix too much! Glass paint gets sticky in a short time. So if you like the color just keep adding the mix of colors when you almost run out of the paint you are using.

3 Let the paint dry for at least 2 hours. After 1 hour you can paint the bottom of the bottles if necessary.

4 In the meantime, download the wine labels of your choice. Adjust them to size, print and cut out.

5 Glue the labels to the bottles (make sure they are straight! It's all in the details) and let dry.



TOPTIP:

I don't like it when the edges of the labels stick out. So I use a small piece of wet cloth to pad the labels down once there are glued on. It creates an authentic look after they dry.



Mini tutorials needed

We hope you have been enjoying all of the wonderful tutorials featured in *American Miniaturist*. There are so many impressive creative ideas and new techniques in the miniature community. We try our best to find projects we think our readers will enjoy, but we know there are more that we can find out there.

If you would like to be a part of this fun publication, please consider being one of our valued contributors.

We have great opportunities for miniaturists who submit tutorials such as credit towards subscriptions and individual issues. And, if you are in business, your tutorials might actually help promote what you are selling. We'll furnish you with these details after your submission has been approved.

Imagine how much joy your mini project could give others who share your passion for this art form!

Send your step-by-step instructions and photos to Tutorial Submission, *American Miniaturist*, PO Box 219, Kasson, MN 55944. You may also send your entries via email to auralea@ashdown.co.uk. Please be sure to include your name, address, phone number, and email address. We can't wait to see your projects!

MINI MAIL

■ AM is your magazine, and we want to hear from you. Write to: MiniMail, American Miniaturist, PO Box 219, Kasson, MN 55944. Or email: auralea@ashdown.co.uk. Letters may be edited if necessary.

★ Star letter

I was overwhelmed with excitement when I saw the miniature gardens by Sophie Dalton! I live in a small apartment and have one of my own to tend to. I can't imagine having an entire backyard of them. Kudos to her for making this world a

Thank you

I call myself *The Renovator* because most of my dollhouses are ones that need help or are containers that strike my fancy. *American Miniaturist* magazine has helped me solved many problems while working on my project's. Thank you!

Sandi from Rutland MA



This is a Patrick Duclou creation that was featured in the article, "Becoming a miniaturist artist" in our March issue.

beautiful place with all of her container gardens.

Miniatures and gardening are a great way to stay young at heart so how wonderful to be able to combine them. Thank you Sophie for sharing your gardens!

Jenny from Boston, MA

Nice words

Auralea Krieger's article, "Becoming a miniaturist artist" really resonated with me. It has so much good advice that I could have used when I realized a few years ago that I wasn't just repairing the family dollhouse, I was embarking on a new hobby. I especially like the sentiment on personal growth where she was comparing similar projects over time and she said, "each project made with



pride in their own time.” It helps me and will be helpful for those just starting out.

Sherrill from Eugene, OR

Highlights

There are always so many highlights in *American Miniaturist* but my favorite for March has to be Paul Block’s Galesong boat house. Looking at his project prompted me to think of many tales that could come to mind from the young boy sitting on dreaming of the day he can hoist the sails on the boat at the dock and sail away

to many exciting places.

Maybe a pirate adventure or discovery of new tropic

islands just waiting for him to go ashore and explore their wonders. The little girl and her dog sitting waiting for her father to return from his travels across the oceans and regale her with stories of wondrous things he has seen.

I also liked the staging of the Galesong, not having too much ‘stuff’ in the boat house that sometimes artists won’t do. It has just the right amount of fixtures and fittings so we can see what is happening inside and let our imaginations run wild.

And kudos to Paul for his decorative and ingenious way to let us see inside the building and sneak a peek at the people inside. LOVED IT, LOVED IT! And thank you *AM* for bringing Paul’s creation to us.

Barbara from Canada

Mini Make It Challenge

Suellen from Weyauwega, WI took us up on our Mini Make It Challenge in *AM* April. Here is her mini cupcake!



Above: Actual Baby Chick Cupcake found at <https://easyfamilyrecipeideas.com>.



Above: Not 1:12, but still a fun replica. Gotta love googly eyes! Great mini cupcake Suellen!

The bed chamber of Marie Antoinette

Enjoy this period piece room box with stunningly gorgeous intricacies

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

There are miniature structures with scenes that charm us, and some that delight us with whimsicality, but there are very few that astound us with the level of detail and richly accurate historical flourishes as the exquisite room box commissioned by Louise Glass that represents the bed chamber of Marie Antoinette during 1755 - 1793.

Louise has one of the most unique and enviable miniature collections that I have ever seen. In this feature she

is sharing with us her newly finished replica of Marie Antoinette's luxurious bed chamber at chateau Versailles. There is so much to see in this one room that your eyes will not know what to look at first! What initially drew me in was the tiny King Charles spaniel with soulful eyes. This puppy sitting near Marie's feet is so perfectly positioned as a captivating addition to this scene.

The closer I zoom in, the more tiny and incredible details are revealed. More than 20 individual highly

specialized artisans were commissioned to participate in this recreation.

Louise has actually been to the chateau in Versailles, not once, but several times. The first time she visited this chateau she was only a young bride of 21. Her husband could see how much this experience meant to her so he happily assisted her in acquiring everything she would need to complete her vision as

Below left: A sweet 1:12 puppy.
Below: A beautifully hand-painted fire screen adds luxury.





accurately as possible.

Her first experience with the 1:12 scale miniature world is a very happy memory for Louise. It happened during the holiday season. Her husband Les and she were newlyweds. They were window shopping when she spotted a swiss chalet style small dollhouse. She wanted this as her Chanukah present, but her husband was initially under the misconception that dollhouses and miniatures were only for children. Even though she was only 21 at that time, she recognized that she was looking at something very special.

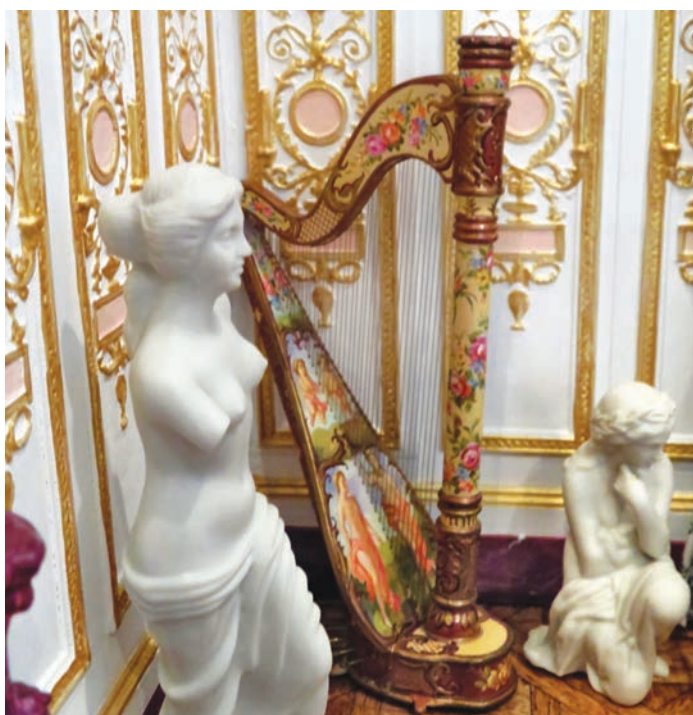




Above: Sharon Cariola made Louis the fourteenth and Sherri Colvin made Marie Antoinette.

The chalet had real stones and beautiful wood. She felt quite strongly that she had to own this little house. Her husband Les became her hero that day, something he would repeat many times over the years as he happily collaborates and encourages Louise by bringing her artistic visions to life.

After that experience she knew there had to be a whole world of miniatures out there, so she went to bookstores to find books on dollhouses and miniatures. She discovered *Nutshell News* and later on





Miniature Collector magazine and subscribed to both. She is now a proud subscriber to Ashdown publications.

Louise also discovered the joys of selling and buying miniatures on eBay and Etsy. Once she began attending the IGMA and Philadelphia miniature show her eyes were opened to truly fine miniatures by wonderfully talented artisans. There was no turning back from there. Once you fall in love with this art form you never lose it.

As a child Louise had always collected tiny fine china animals and other similar small collectibles that were quite tiny. Like most of us, her love of very small things

“Once you fall in love with this art form you never lose it.”

began at an early age.

After she completed college, she was a merchandise buyer for handbags and accessories. She also worked as an interior designer. Interior design is still a passion for her which is evident in her ability to coordinate and demonstrate every detail of Versailles. She feels strongly that her experience with interior design helps her to create her miniature rooms. She is always able to visualize

Above: Both of the dogs were made by artist, Michal Gvir.

the finished room. Symmetry is extremely important to all of her rooms.

Louise has many interests. She firmly believes that people have something they were meant to do, and her true gift is writing novels. That is her full-time career now. One morning she awoke, grabbed pen and a novel started cascading out of her fingers. Her first book was published with a mainstream publisher. The editor had her alter the story line to such an extent that it temporarily dampened her spirit. At this time, she has decided to self-publish her book. Eventually she may go

mainstream again. She finds herself at her computer most days for 6-8 hours of writing. The characters she creates always seem to become like a second family to her.

Louise has sold miniatures to help pay for higher quality artisan pieces. Some of her sales she deeply regrets having parted with. She has been looking for a nearby miniature club in New Jersey where she currently resides but so far, all that she is aware of are quite a distance away.

“The other wonderful thing about belonging to this art form is the friendships she has made through the years.”

When she lived in New York she started a club called The New York Miniholics. She was the president and held meetings in her home. Those were very happy times, but members moved out of the city and eventually that club dissolved.

Her favorite thing about working in 1:12 scale is that she can create a scene from any period in time. There are so many different things that have inspired her exquisite rooms. She often finds herself



working on several projects at a time.

The other wonderful thing about belonging to this art form is the friendships she has made through the years. Today her closest friends are highly regarded miniature artisans. If not for miniatures, these wonderful people would not be in her life. She also firmly believes that this art form will continue to grow

Right: Nothing better to wake up to than a gorgeous vase of flowers.

and thrive no matter what state our economy is in.

Louise looks at life and everything in it as an artistic experience. Versailles is just one of the treasures she is willing to share with our readers so stay tuned as I hope and expect to showcase at least one more feature on her artistry in the very near future.



An inside story on cookbooks

This clever room box was made as a special gift for a dear friend

BY PAM NORTH

Like many other miniaturists, Sandy O'Grady's introduction to the mini world came about with a childhood dollhouse, given to her in 1953 as a Christmas present when she was four years old. It was a metal one with plastic furniture. Her second dollhouse was made for her by her grandfather in 1956, and her third one was self-built, beginning in 1977. That one took her several years to complete, and she has been making miniatures ever since, focus-

ing on dollhouses, dioramas, room boxes nestled within sets of books, accessories and furnishings.

Sandy has spent the majority of her life caring for her family as a homemaker, and also doing volunteer work. Since her family takes up less of her time now that they don't live at home, she can use her spare moments making miniatures. "I don't have as much of that time as I'd like," she said, "but I am able to finish several projects a year." Her family, espe-

cially her daughter, are fascinated by her interest and encourage her, and they also are a source of inspiration for her. She makes almost all of her miniatures for them and her friends, enjoying her ability to surprise them with miniatures that reflect special meaning for them.

There has only been one item so far that she has decided not to part with, and that is her Sherlock

Below left: The carefully chosen used cookbooks. **Below:** The room box in progress.





unique and I make almost everything from scratch.” she explained.

Her miniature power table saw and her miniature miter box are valued tools that she has mastered and swears she can’t live without. “One of the major difficulties involved with working in miniature is keeping things in scale, making them as accurate as possible. I like realistic scenes, and the pleasure of creating something that has meaning for others.”

She did precisely that with her most recent piece, called C’s Kitchen, which is

Holmes’ three-story apartment building that includes his flat (featured in *AM*185). It is the largest project she has completed, and is made entirely from scratch. She has had her dollhouses on display at her local library, and her Frankie’s Garage (featured in *AM*184) won a second place in Hobby Builders Supply’s 2017 Creatin’ Contest. She has received an award for her miniature needlework, and has appeared in several articles in *American Miniaturist*.

She is self-taught, and works in a quiet, well-lit corner of her basement. “I am always thinking about making something different and





Right: An apron hangs on the wall and the dogs' bowl is full of kibble.

a 1:12 scale rendering of a realistically equipped miniature kitchen sandwiched in between several cookbooks. The idea for it came from a conversation she had with a friend. "She and I had discussed a kitchen in a set of cookbooks. When I saw her mother's handwritten sugar cookie recipe framed on her kitchen wall, I knew that would be the theme. Her mom was not well at the time, and since has passed away. I decided to make it to honor her memory, and I gave it to my friend as a birthday gift. I made all the



items revolve around her mother's recipe."

Sandy purchased flea market cookbooks, and some of the items on the counter, the table, and the stove. She constructed the room box, wired it for lights, made the cabinets and counter tops, framed the recipe and pictures, and made the baskets from kits.

Other materials used were Gatorfoam board, cabinet hinges, LED lights on 9-volt batteries, basswood for the cabinets and range hood, acrylic paints, and computer printouts for the flooring and counter tops, cabinet magnetic stops, and hinges for the room box.

She started with the cookbooks, choosing ones that were oversized so that she could fit a room box within their dimensions. She glued the outside of the pages with white glue, thinned with water, pressing them while they dried, and leaving one bookend cover unglued for access to the room box.

Then she drew cutting lines on the books, lining them up evenly. She holloed out the books by cutting the pages on the lines with a band saw. Out of Gatorfoam board she built a room box that would fit inside the cut cookbooks,



"She is self-taught, and works in a quiet, well-lit corner of her basement."

gluing the books together around the box but not to it; large clamps were used to hold them together while the glue dried. She removed the box and finished the inside of it, painting the walls with acrylic paints.

She added the lights, running two lights through each one of five holes she had drilled along the front of the room box, and one inside the range hood. After first starting with five

Above: The island is Sandy's favorite part of this project.

single white LED bulbs that imparted a harsh, washed-out effect, she added another five amber-colored LED lights to balance out the illumination to look more natural. To avoid a cord that had to be plugged into an outlet, Sandy used two nine-volt batteries to power all the lights, adding button switches on the back of the end cookbook to turn the lights on/off.

The batteries are contained within the unglued book cover on the outside of the room box, and the back cover is held closed with a



cabinet magnet.

The kitchen cabinets were built from basswood, painted with acrylics. Black glass beads were used for the knobs, and pieces of black electric 12-volt wire for the cabinet hinges. The tile floor and the marble counter tops were printed via her computer. The printed flooring was glued directly to the Gator-foam board floor. The marble print for the counter tops was glued to pieces of mat board cut to size, and the work table was spray-painted red to honor her friend's request that the kitchen colors be gray and red.

"I like to fill the cabinets and the table with objects

before I glue them to the wall and floor." Sandy explained. "I made most of the food item boxes after printing them on card stock using my computer, and labels for cans and canisters were made the same way. White, tan, and translucent FIMO modeling clay was used for the dough and cookies; the butter is made from white, yellow, and translucent FIMO also, cut into sticks and put in the box I had printed.

The apron, oven mitt, and tea towel hanging on the oven are from cloth scraps. There is a red drinking glass on a saucer of sugar to press into the cookies as mentioned in the recipe; the

sugar was made from glass beads, ground up by mortar and pestle.

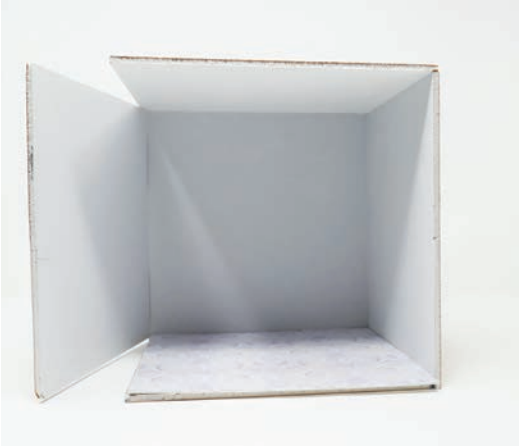
The flour in the bowl of dough and on the cutting board is baby powder. I reduced the pictures of the recipe and photos on my computer, and framed them. When all the items were arranged the way I wanted, I glued the cabinets, stove, and table to the walls and floor. I then placed the room box into the cookbooks shell and glued it in place, adding the window last."

The hardest part about making this miniature was the lighting. "After experimenting with several types,

"I like to fill the cabinets and the table with objects before I glue them to the wall and floor."

the easiest solution was the LED lights used by model railroaders. I tried several different sizes and colors before I found the right combination. My favorite part about this piece was the kitchen work table. I like the color, and it was fun to arrange all the ingredients for the sugar cookie recipe."

Her efforts turned out



Above: A few photos showing the construction of the hinged box containing the kitchen.

successfully if slightly different than she had envisioned. “I had an idea of what would please the friend for whom I was making this, but like most of my projects, over time and with many trials and errors, it evolved, as I had to tear it down and rebuild it to make room for all the objects I decided to put in it.”

Sandy is optimistic about the future of miniatures, saying, “I think miniatures always will be popular with the public. Who does not like looking into a dollhouse room, or seeing a mini-version of an everyday object? Anyone can collect or make miniatures, and there’s no limit to what you can do with them.”

She looks forward to the excitement of bringing new ideas into reality, and is presently working on creating a

miniature computer with a screen that is illuminated by LED lights.

Her daughter, a software writer, is designing a website

(www.moonlight-miniatures.com) that should be up and running by May to showcase all of Sandy’s projects.



Making a miniature retreat

Helen Holland shares her one-of-a-kind beach huts, each with their own individually

When a friend suggested that Helen make beach huts, she asked her very artistic daughter Fiona whether or not she should try. Fiona's immediate reply was, "Go for it Mum, everyone loves beach huts, and they use them for all different purposes."

Over time, beach huts in the UK have become used for other things, not just as a place to change your clothes for the beach. Some people use them for escapism, if you don't have room at home to do something then a beach hut is the perfect place.

Each of Helen's beach huts has a weathered look on the outside, as she prefers to show things as they are in real life. Each hut is named by reflecting the occupant and is lit by tiny LED lights connected to their own battery.

There is the hut with the

name *The Writer's Block*, this is the second hut Helen has made for a writer, the first was called *The Writer's Retreat*. The hut comes with everything a hardworking author would need including a typewriter, paper, research books, a snack (just in case he's hungry) and of course, the peace and quiet that he needs to write.

For the man that is not allowed to play at home there is *The Engine Shed*. He can hide

away for hours and play with a tiny railway set, and there are plenty of magazines and posters to keep him happy. No two huts are the same, even when Helen has already put together a hut for say an artist or writer, the interiors are never identical, one other thing that can always be found in each hut, there is always something to eat and drink, like fruit, biscuits or even some chocolate.

Right: *The Railway Shed* is a playroom for the grown ups.



Another of the beach huts is *Shabby Chic*. Helen was unable to buy the large candles that can be seen on the shelves, so she made them by using a little tube and

Right: *Dunroamin'* is set in the 1950s and still has the décor from that period. **Below:** One of Helen's favorite beach huts, *The Artist's Studio* is a busy, lively place where you can work without interruption.





Below: The sewing room has everything for busy hands.



dripping the wax from a real candle carefully into it, finally adding a tiny piece of cotton thread before the wax set, to make the wick. This is the perfect place for displaying a collection of tiny sea shells.

The artist's studio is one of Helen's favorite settings, and the first one she built was a copy of Fiona's studio for her birthday, she is a textile designer, and the hut included copies of her work. Helen scanned her designs, added them to mugs and other fabric items and displayed them around the walls. Of course Fiona loved it!

So Helen decided to make another one, there are hundreds of artists in Brighton all with different studios, so she will never run out of ideas. The paper cabinet in the hut is similar to one that

Fiona has in her studio, and Helen has made the portfolio, although Fiona's one contained miniature prints of the designs she has created, so she can actually go through them.

Dunroamin' is a very popular beach hut – and Helen

is now on her third one, although it is not yet complete. It is set in the 1950s and the couple who own it have not done anything to it since they first bought it. The photograph on the wall shows their wedding



Above: Shabby Chic is a light airy hut that allows occupants to just relax. **Right:** The weathered exteriors of the miniature beach huts hide an assortment of industrious interiors.

day, with the bride wearing a typical 1950s style dress and veil. *The book Worm* is for someone who wants to escape and read.

Helen has made a number of commissioned huts, one for a special 21st birthday with balloons and a wonderful party table laden with food. She still has doz-

ens of ideas for the contents of her beach huts, often sparked off by a certain

item, like the teapots with knitted cosies, just perfect for the *Dunroamin'* huts.



A passion for mini fashion

*Introducing IGMA Fellow Valeria Bonomi
a master mini maker from Italy*

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

As women, can we ever have enough shoes and bags? While most of us cannot afford the Gucci's, Ferragamo's and Jimmy Choo's, we are able to live vicariously in this world by the gorgeously replicated miniature creations made by the supremely talented Valeria Bonomi. No detail is too small for this wonderful artisan to reproduce in miniature.

While her collection of miniature offerings is primarily shoes and handbags, she also makes beautiful hats and

other fashion accessories.

Fifteen years ago, her husband purchased a dollhouse for her to build, when suddenly she discovered she had a great passion for miniatures.

Following that labor of love, she found that her favorite materials to work with were leather, silk, special fabrics as well as metal. Her husband has been so enthusiastic with her results that she was encouraged to continue with her new passion. Her own mother cannot sew or even handle tiny objects, but

she adores everything that Valeria creates. She has been self-taught for many years. And she is exceptionally grateful to the IGMA School where she learned multiple new and remarkable techniques that she added to her field of competence.

She now has a dedicated space for a workshop in her home, usually covered by tiny scraps of leather, scissors,

Below left: Miniature artist Valeria Bonomi. **Below:** A beautiful selection of spring shoes and a matching handbag.





tweezers and other tools. It's surprising how many things one needs to create such tiny objects. She starts work each day early in the morning, taking a brief break for lunch and normal home responsibilities, returning back to work each afternoon until 6 pm.

Valeria believes she is lucky to have unearthed this hidden talent, as she now has the flexibility for other commit-

ments. She gets to manage her own time, and everything else required of her. The talent alone is enviable, but I think just about everyone wonders at one time how they could be in complete control of their own time.

On her workbench her most valuable tool is her scissors. In retrospect, she loves all of her tools, including brushes, tweezers, files, and

paints. She can never have too much of any of these items!

Coming from Northern Italy, where Milan is considered one of the premier places in the world to exhibit finely crafted clothing and accessories for humans, Valeria has always been an admirer of high fashion. She follows the greatest fashion designers, trying to get inspiration and then processing the trends in her



Above: A stylish boot and purse set made in 1:12 scale.

own way. Her goal has always been to exhibit elegance and grace, while at the same time she is giving a beautiful and unique tribute to all of these great artists that she admires so much.

When she submitted items for her IGMA Artisan and Fellow status, she decided to keep the items that she submitted. They have a great deal of sentimental value to her so she cannot consider selling them. I know of at least one artisan who was talked into selling three beautiful dolls she had submitted for IGMA status and regrets it to this day. Once again, Valeria has made a wise choice.

Her work is on display and

for sale at miniature shows in Chicago, London, Philadelphia, Japan, Hartford, and The Netherlands, as well as online in her miniature shop. She also accepts commissions.

She is also a very popular teacher at the IGMA Guild School in Castine, Maine.

For the last two years she has collaborated with additional impressive artists such as Ursula Dyrbye-Skovsted, Linda Den Besten, and Pien Van Bueren. Together they run a summer school, which is at the top of my own 'bucket list'.

Valeria thoroughly enjoys everything about miniatures. Especially the amazing feeling of being part of this wonderful world, where she always meets amazing artists and truly

lovely people. Each of them enjoys sharing that same great passion. She has been quoted as saying: "Focusing on details allows me to appreciate even the smallest shade of life."

The continuing acknowledgement from every miniaturist I meet is that we need 'fresh blood' to keep this world of ours growing. Valeria echoes this sentiment. Every helpful idea should be envisioned, recognized and used to spread knowledge of the miniature world. Valeria believes this is fundamental to the progression and continuation of the current growth we are experiencing.

Currently she is collaborating with two wonderful artists. They are focusing on newly designed items, using silk flowers that she makes using a Japanese technique called Somebana – where every petal and leaf is cut by hand, then painted with a liquid paint made from powder pigments and later formed into shape with a specific warm tool. Once that is done, one must build the flower. The result is very pleasing to behold because the silk texture and the shades one is able to attain with that specific paint. Each color applied spreads into the fibers perfectly. Brandaen Jones provides lovely baskets. Mariella Vitale contributes



parts that require her finely detailed crochet mastery.

Their combined work is completely exquisite. They merge leather, silk, metal, resin and crystals for this collaboration. Valeria feels exceptionally honored and proud to be part of these shared projects. She is completely in love with this technique, and as a result has decided to dedicate almost her entire production offering to this unique theme for this year. I have purchased two of

this year's selection and yearn for more!

“Valeria notes that her miniature pieces are not usually what she initially envisions in the beginning.”

Valeria notes that her miniature pieces are not usually what she initially envisions in the beginning. Many times she has changed some detail,

Above: A mix of fun spring purses and hats in one-inch scale!

according to the inspiration of the moment. For her, completion of her flowers bring the most joy. She will readily admit that the best compliment she has ever heard is this, “Oh, I thought from the pictures that it was real!” Having this result is exactly what most miniaturists strive for and makes all of the long hours and intense work worth all of the effort.



Mini slippers

Add some fuzzy slippers to your mini scene

BY SADIE BROWN

Start your projects off on the right foot this month with a selection of his and hers slippers.

Ladies slippers

LTake two balls of light pink polymer clay and two white, roll into tubes with rounded ends and use either a small styles ball tool or the end of a small paint brush to mold into slipper shapes.



2 Roll eight very tiny balls of white clay and eight light pink, flattening them with a fingernail to create individual flower petals. Lever them carefully from your work surface with a needle tool, an action which reveals a natural petal shape in the process.

Create four flowers, two white and two pink, each with four petals. Add a little ball of black clay to the center of the white flowers, but nothing to the pink as we'll do this later using diamanté stones. Bake the flowers alongside the slipper bases and let cool.

3 Coat the soles of the pink slippers using either a Fuchsia fine permanent marker pen or

bright pink acrylic paint. Once dry, use a cutting knife to lightly and carefully score diagonal lines all the way down the length of the soles, creating a pattern and revealing the original color beneath.

Add a dotted pattern to the inside of the slippers with a Fuchsia fine permanent marker pen.

4 Cut some dark blue plush from an old soft toy into small pieces, creating enough material to cover one pair of slippers. Don't be afraid to take your time over this step.

5 Use Super Glue to stick the finely cut material to the top of the slippers and all the way around the sides.

Scale = 1:12

Materials:

- Polymer clay - white, Ecrú, light pink, black, Sunflower yellow
- Acrylic paint - metallic gold, Burnt Umber, Fuchsia
- Fine permanent marker pens - black, red, fuchsia
- Small brushes
- Small ball tool
- Needle tool or sewing pin
- Cutting knife
- Scissors
- Sculpey Bake & Bond
- Super Glue
- Glue stick
- Old soft toys in dark blue, dark green and tan
- Glittery black craft sand
- Small diamanté stones



6 Once the glue has dried, use a pair of scissors to trim the edges of the slippers, ensuring a nice, neat finish.

7 Next, take the white slipper bases and paint the insides and soles with metallic gold acrylic paint. You might find this needs a couple of coats to give a good, solid color.

Alternatively, you could also use a metallic gold fine permanent marker pen for this step.

8 Allow the paint to dry thoroughly before adding a dotted pattern to the gold finish using a black fine permanent marker pen.

9 Cover the top and sides (the remaining white areas) of the slippers with Super Glue and sprinkle liberally with glittery black craft sand.

10 Glue the flowers made in step two into position on top of the slippers, the pink on the blue/pink

slippers and the white on the glittery pair. To give the blue/pink slippers a similarly glamorous finish to the others, add a tiny diamanté stone to the center of the flower and a smaller stone beneath it.

Men's slippers

11 Take four balls of polymer clay in an Ecru shade, slightly larger than those used for the ladies slippers, and roll into tubes with rounded ends. Use a small ball tool to create a



mule shape with a completely flat back. Bake both pairs of shoes and allow to cool thoroughly.

12 Mix white clay with a very small amount of Sunflower Yellow to create cream. Roll into a tube measuring just under 3mm in diameter and cut two lengths long enough to fit around the open ends of one pair of mules, creating fluffy edged slippers. Stick the edging in place using Sculpey Bake & Bond.

13 Use a needle tool or sewing pin to create the edging's fluffy texture before returning the slippers to the oven to bake.

14 Once all the slippers have cooled, paint the soles with Burnt Umber acrylic paint and allow to dry. As with the ladies slippers, use a knife to carefully score a pattern into the painted soles, just lightly enough to reveal the Ecru clay base beneath.

15 Divide the tops of the mules into four squares by lightly scoring lines with a knife. Cut some dark green and tan colored plush from old soft toys. Spread a little super glue over the top left and bottom

right squares and cover with dark green.

Repeat with the remaining squares, this time using the tan. Finally, coat all the way around the sides of the shoes using the dark green. Once the glue has dried, use a red fine permanent marker pen to highlight the individual squares.

16 Cut out two very tiny labels and use a glue stick to secure them in place on the insoles of the mules. The labels can either be something you've typed and printed on the computer or simply cut from a pretty piece of paper. Coat the tops and sides of the fluffy edged slippers with glue, covering with the dark green material.



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The art of life in miniature

A world of history brings a big miniature future for doll artisan Georgina Ritson

BY SADIE BROWN

Georgina Ritson is an artisan who excels in drawing inspiration from an exquisite era of doll making in the mid 19th century. “My dolls are all bisque porcelain like the French and German fashion dolls of the 1860s,” she says. “I do not glaze my porcelain, but I hand-paint each face using traditional china painting techniques. I fire the faces between each paint layer to build up a delicate

and, hopefully, realistic appearance.”

It is that defined realism which allows Georgina, who owns the rights to a range of eighteen master sculptures, to create unique dolls which thrive on her passion for inventing heartfelt characters. Among these is ‘Dora’, a sparkling lady with the tales of a life lived and continuing to be lived to the very fullest etched perfectly across her face.

Georgina uses this mold

to create varied dolls in a selection of costumes and styles, but one, inspired by a real life encounter in the Merseyside city of Liverpool, North West England, stands out. “I make quite a lot of this doll in little lavender suits,” she explains, showing me two fascinating examples. “I met the most

Below left: This is Dora dressed in lavender. **Below:** Philip is top of his class. **Right:** There are many secrets to be told.







Above: The Ballroom of Georgina's dollhouse. **Right:** 'Janey' with 'Louis' the dog in the hall of Georgina's dollhouse.

wonderful lady a few years ago. She was dressed immaculately all in lavender. Every accessory was lavender from head to toe and she was amazing!"

Depicting how the same mold can successfully create entirely different characters who bear no resemblance to one another, 'Dora' also features in a scene entitled 'Whisper', where two beautifully dressed 18th century ladies share a story over tea as a Siamese cat looks on. While these exclusive master





sculptures form the basis for a wide variety of personalities, these are not the only molds Georgina uses. "There are so many wonderful characters created by other porcelain doll makers. When I first started making dolls, I had hundreds of molds from all different makers. I use Parker Levi molds a lot; I especially love the fashion dolls." Other molds Georgina uses include those by Gina Bellous, House of Caron and Paulette Stinson.

The process of creating Georgina's dolls initially involve casting, firing, painting and assembling. "I use traditional porcelain process techniques to create the pieces that form my figures," she says. "Liquid porcelain slip is poured into plaster molds, porcelain pieces are fettled then fired to a very high temperature."

Many doll makers will no doubt agree with Georgina's assertion that hand painting each face is a challenge,

Above: It is time for afternoon tea with Countess Dora.

owing to the eye strain involved, but once both this and the all-important assembling stages are complete, she is able to bring her skills as a costume designer, wig maker, hairdresser and milliner very firmly to the fore. "I have a myriad of materials for miniature work; my studio is stuffed with boxes of silk, vintage lawn, antique lace, ribbon, feathers, beads, crystals and goodness knows

what else.” Says Georgina, describing an undoubted miniaturists haven.

“Like costuming, I create the hair style using similar techniques to real life,” Georgina explains. “I style the ‘hair’ using heat and fix it with hair products. Finally, I add finishing touches with accessories; hats, bags, parasols and jewelry which is another very fiddly business, but I think it’s worth it.” She also points out that, while inspiration for her costumes can come from both photographs and paintings, she also works from memory, particularly when focussing on more contemporary designs.

Creating dolls which take us on a visual journey through the splendor of the Georgian, Regency and Victorian eras, all the way up to Edwardian, the 1920s and contemporary, is there any single era which Georgina finds herself consistently drawn to? “I think that all depends on my mood at the time,” she concludes. “I love 18th century costumes though, it’s certainly the period I find most aesthetically pleasing.” It’s easy to see why. One of Georgina’s most stunning 18th century costumes designs belongs

Right: Marie Antoinette’ features in Georgina’s favorite photograph.







to marvellous Court Lady, 'Faye', her entry for the 2019 Perfection in Miniature Awards (PIMA). However, it isn't only the wig and costume which make 'Faye' stand out from the miniature crowd, it's her natural pose.

This is something which is to be found mirrored throughout Georgina's multi-generational characters, from 'Dora' and her elegant lavender outfit, to 'Janey', playing with 'Louis' the dog, a canine character

from Georgina's growing collection of animals by Sarah Hendry. Georgina herself believes it is the figure which provides that crucial element in ensuring a doll is as lifelike as possible. "If your figure is holding a pose that isn't possible for a human, even the best face or costume won't make it look lifelike."

'Faye' also finds herself in a stunning scene featuring 'Marie Antoinette', who was made

Above left: Time for a nap. Louise **Above:** Joanna', wearing a Victorian era coat and bonnet.

using the Cyrene mould by Parker Levi. "This is my favorite picture and took a while to compose," she says, showing me the photograph. "The scene is in the ballroom of my own dollhouse. You'll probably recognize the table as John J. Hodgson. The fireplace is Sue Cook, I marbled and gilded it myself. I did the walls and my dad did the



Left: Dressed for success! 'Dora' and 'Katherine'.

floor! The gateaux are all Lesley Burgess. I borrowed them from my French Patisserie for the photo.”

Georgina’s love of miniatures is something which stems from childhood, helped along by an incredibly special dollhouse which first found life in 1993 during conversations with her father, Bill while on holiday in Corsica. “We’ve both spent a mind-boggling amount of time working on

it since then. I was 11 when he started building it, so I couldn’t do anything on it myself,” she says, recalling the care her father lavished on the design for his young daughter. “He made all the windows from scratch which took the better part of a year. The house stayed in the dining room for at least two years while it was being built. During this time, I remember Grandad Ritson standing in front of

it, shaking his head and saying: ‘Bill. You’re mad.’”

In more recent years, Georgina has had space to accommodate the house within her own home, so it has undergone a complete redecoration and she’s been also able to fill it with lots of exciting new acquisitions. “My dad helps with it when he visits. I can’t do the lights myself and I’m no use with a saw. Grandad Ritson is no longer with us, but I dare say he would shake his head and say we’re both mad if he saw the dollhouse today!”

Even if that were the case, there’s no doubt that he would also be exceptionally proud of his granddaughter and all that she has achieved as an artisan, going on to become one of the very best in a field which features the work of some incredible miniaturists.

The dollhouse now finding its own global audience, featuring in much of her miniature photography, it’s almost certain that 11 year old Georgina could never have imagined just how that simple holiday conversation with her dad back in the early Nineties would play its part in shaping her life and her future.

Miniature memories of Mama

A special little room box is full of loving memories for Karen Hritz

BY KAREN HRITZ

My mama, Marjorie Dowling Kurtright, died the day after Mother's Day in 1990. The day we buried her, I had to leave for a two week-long meeting in Europe for my job and the grieving process got pushed aside. It took me 25 years to find a way to remember her and take away the sting of losing her on Mother's Day.

In 2015, I was browsing through the various vendors at a miniature show in Atlanta when I came across a lady

who had 3 miniature Hummel plates. Mama collected Hummel figurines and annual plates. And to my surprise, the three miniature plates at the show were the same years as Mama's three plates on my living room wall!

Thus, began the miniature project I call *Memories of Mama*. The project is housed in a clock case and is filled with things that remind me of her.

The painting of the pine tree was painted by a

long-time friend of Mama's, Florence Eden. To reproduce it in miniature, I took a photo of the painting outside on a bright sunny day, being careful to square the frame up in the camera view. Then I inserted the digital file into PowerPoint, resized it to 1:12 scale and printed it on textured card stock, giving it the texture of an oil painting.

Below left: Karen and her maternal grandparents.

Below: The same plate her mother had but in miniature.





I recreated the Roseville teapot using paper clay and acrylic paint. I like the shape and dimensions, but my lilies aren't the greatest! From a distance, though, it looks like the original.

The photo on the shelf is my maternal grandparents and myself when I was about 6 months old. I scanned the original photo and resized in PowerPoint.

The suitcase stuffed with fabric was made from an Altoids tin and photos of the suitcase Mama took to college

in 1942. The photos were resized in PowerPoint, printed on fabric, glued to the tin, and coated with polyurethane.

The grandfather clock was a kit, and the face looks exactly like the clockworks that Mama's boss gave her one Christmas. My dad was supposed to build the case, but it never happened. So, finally, Mama, your clock was built - in miniature!

Mama was an excellent seamstress and sewed every stitch I wore until I went to college. Her machine was



mounted in a Singer treadle machine cabinet. During the 1970's she went a little crazy with green antiquing! I used a Chrysnbon kit and molded paper clay over the sewing machine part of the kit and painted it to look like her machine.

Finally, on the left wall is a collage of my brother and sister and our families. Digital photos were inserted into PowerPoint, resized and printed on photo paper.

A room box is a great way to bring precious memories back to life!

Kitchen hutch

Part two of making a colorful hutch

BY RANDALL CASTLE

Scale = 1:12

My human made a hutch for my Bibi's (Grand-mas) kitchen, she really liked how it turned out! Now you can make one for yourself! Because I'm a doll, my human will share how they did it with you so you can make one for yourself.

1 Cut out the side pieces. I doubled up two pieces of mat board to make them thicker. Mine are 1" deep and 3 3/4" tall. Then I cut a design out of them.

2 To determine the width of your back piece hold your sides up to your hutch base leaving 1/16" on each side of the top of it, then measure the inside area. My back piece is about 3 3/4" tall. Glue some decorative paper on. I cut mine to center but glued it on wrong so mine shifted. Whoops!

3 Sand your side piece design so it is smooth. Then place the side on a piece of regular paper to

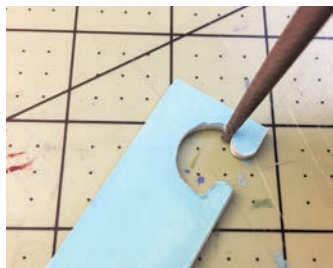
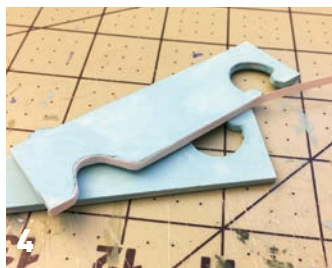
Materials:

- Mat board
- Cutting knife
- Ruler
- Pencil
- White glue
- Fine sandpaper
- Card stock
- Paper
- Acrylic paints
- Tacky Glue
- Decorative scissors
- Scrap book paper
- Poster board
- Stair spindles
- Mini miter saw
- Metallic paint
- Hole punch 1/8" and 1/16"
- Paint brushes
- Satin or matte varnish to seal - optional

determine the thickness and cut a strip of paper.

4 Using white glue, line that paper to cover the front edge of the front of the sides. Once dry, If you have big gaps on the sides you can fill them in with white glue and sand them. Now the front decorative edges for the side pieces looks nice and smooth.





5 Use decorative scissors to cut strips from poster board or heavy card stock. I glued two together. Don't worry about the width/length, we can trim later.

6 Now cut 2 long shelves using the width of your back piece and the depth of your side piece, minus the thickness of the back piece.

7 If you happen to have this stair spindle style it would be perfect, unfortunately I only had one of

them so I went ahead and used a different design.

8 To determine the size for the top of the hutch, put your two sides and your back together and then make it the depth of the top of the side piece.

9 Paint the sides, the decorative trim, spindles and the two shelves. And then put on a satin varnish.

10 Paint and the glue the top on.

11 Glue on the bottom shelf.

12 Place the top shelf in and line up the spindles where they will go. Make marks (I did this before I painted it). Cut out grooves and sand. Cut notches out from back of spindles. Do a dry fit.

13 Paint the top shelf and glue it in.

14 Glue in two shelf sides. Determine the



size by making them the same depth as the top and bottom shelves. Then cut them to the right height to slide in.

15 Cut a piece for the center shelf. Slide in and put the spindles against it and draw where you're going to need to cut out notches. Paint and varnish that piece. Then glue it in.

16 Now go ahead and glue in the spindles.

17 Slide in some scrap board the depth of the bottom and center shelves minus the thickness of the drawer front. Glue them in.

18 Cut drawer fronts and sand the front edges.



Paint, let dry and glue in holes. Do a dry fit first.

19 Next, trim the decorative elements to the height you want. Glue in as shown in finished photos.

20 Hole punch nine 1/16" circles from brown paper.

21 Glue them into three sets of three.

22 Hole punch six 1/8" circles from brown paper. Glue in three pairs of two.

23 Glue the 1/16" circle stacks in the center of each drawer. Then glue the 1/8" circle pairs on top of those.

24 Paint in a bronze. Then add white glue in the center of each knob. Let dry and paint again.

25 Go back and make any touch-ups.

My human hooked you up, right? Come on over to @randall_castle on Instagram and get to know me and my crew so you can join in on our daily adventures!

editor picks from Instagram

Here are a few Instagram pages that will brighten your day! Each has something special to offer and is worth a follow.



tulsatinystuff

See the best in vintage dollhouse furniture and houses.

reddragonpottery

Feast your eyes on the beautifully hand made miniature pottery.



velichkoelena

Sweet and whimsical miniature animals that will surely make you smile.

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Wall cabinet

A wall cabinet with drawers and hooks

BY KRIS COMPAS

I saw this cabinet online and thought it would make a good tutorial. The drawers and door open so you can fill them. The door is a little thick, I would recommend using 1/32" thick basswood for the outer layers and keep the middle layer. The door would then be 1/8" thick instead of 3/16". I used purchased wooden knobs and metal hooks from Hobby Builders Supply. The wire mesh is something I bought from a craft store or you can

Scale = 1:12

Materials:

- 1/32" thick basswood
- 1/16" thick basswood
- 1/8" thick basswood
- Glue stick
- Scrap of paper
- Clamp
- Wooden knobs/metal hooks
- Wire mesh
- Metal ruler
- Yellow carpenters glue
- Saw or blade
- Fine sand paper
- Glass Paint
- T-pin
- Paintbrush

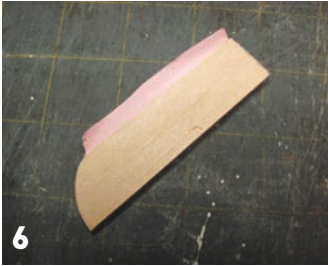
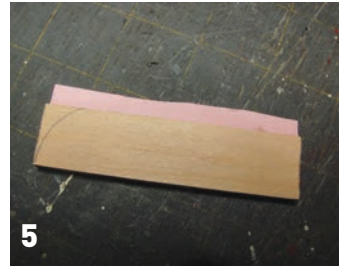


Google Paragona wire form or Amaco wire form. Let's get started building this little wall cabinet.

1 Cut the back and sides from 3/32" thick basswood. The back and sides are the same length or height, 3 1/8", the grain is vertical on both pieces.

2 After cutting that length, set the saw to 2 11/16" and cut the width of the

back. With the saw still set at 2 11/16" cut the bottom shelf that holds the drawers. This is cut from 1/16" thick stock, and will fit between the sides just like the back. It's easier to cut this now so you don't have to re-set the saw. The grain will be horizontal on this piece. I'll cut the depth of the shelf later along with the other shelves. Set this piece aside after you have it cut. You might want to mark what it's



for so you don't use it for something else.

3 Back to the sides, the sides are $\frac{3}{4}$ " deep or wide. After I have the width cut I am marking the curve at the bottom using my circle template. I am using the $1\frac{5}{8}$ " circle to mark that curve.

4 To make identical cuts, I am using glue stick to glue a scrap of paper to one side of a side. Apply glue stick to the paper.

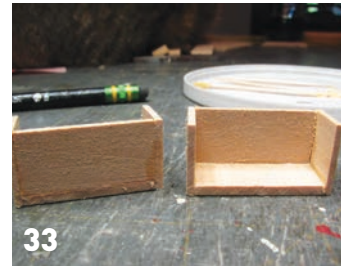
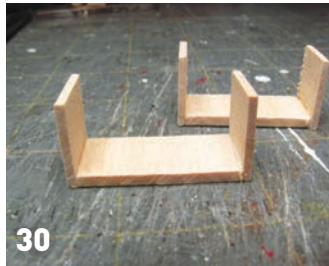
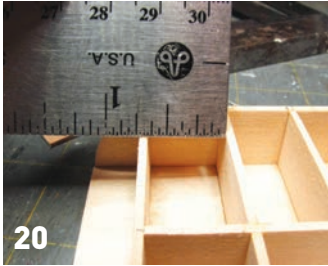
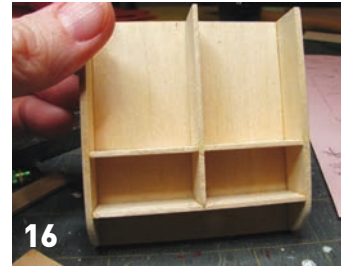
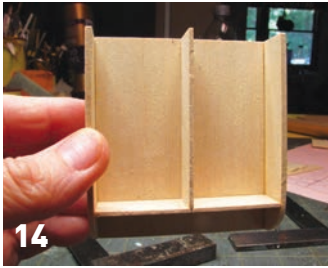
5 After applying glue stick to the paper, press the other side onto the paper. Line up all the edges and let this dry for about fifteen minutes. You might want to clamp this if you have clamps because the wood might curl away from the glue.

6 I used my scroll saw to cut the curve. Pop the two pieces apart, peel off the paper. Give the surface a light sanding to remove the glue residue. These are

my two sides and the back.

7 Use yellow carpenter's glue and glue the sides to the back. Glue the sides to the side edges of the back. Do not glue the sides on top of the back. Let this dry thoroughly.

8 The shelves and middle divider are $\frac{5}{8}$ " deep, your first shelf is cut to length all ready. Set the saw to $\frac{5}{8}$ " and cut the bottom shelf that width. With the saw still set on $\frac{5}{8}$ " cut



at least 10" of 1/16" thick basswood for the shelves and middle divider.

9 I cut myself a cheater block so my shelf will be level when glued. This piece of wood is 1/2" tall. That is the space left at the bottom of the cabinet. The cheater block doesn't have to be exactly the width of the back just close. Glue the shelf in. Let the glue tack, then carefully remove the cheater block. You should have a level shelf.

10 Find the middle of your cabinet back. Find the middle of the bottom shelf. Measure and cut the middle divider.

11 Center the divider on your marks and glue into your cabinet.

12 Re-measure to make sure your space at the top is the same measurement as the space at the bottom. It isn't as important to have exactly the same width on each side, but it

is important that the space be square or you will have trouble with your cabinet door. Let this dry a bit.

13 The second set of shelves will hold the drawers. Measure between the left side and the middle divider.

14 When you have that measurement, cut your shelf. Check that the width all the way up the left side is the same. Cut two more shelves for the left



side. Set aside for now.

15 You'll notice I cut myself another set of cheater blocks to get my shelves level. Cut a couple of pieces of scrap wood $2\frac{1}{32}$ " tall, that's the space between these shelves. I am sorry about the 32 " measurement, that's just past $\frac{5}{8}$ ". At this point you change the distance between these shelves and the ones above. You are going to be measuring on your own so it's up to you.

16 Glue the shelf in, let it tack and carefully remove the cheater blocks.

17 Measure between the middle divider and the right side and cut another shelf.

18 You have another shelf for inside the cabinet, it is cut narrower to fit behind the cabinet door. Go ahead and cut this shelf to length now. We will cut its depth later. Set it aside.



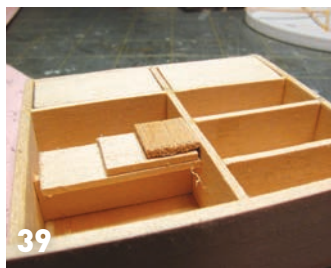
19 Glue the other shelf in and let this assembly dry for a bit.

20 From the looks of the next picture I got into the zone of constructing the cabinet and forgot to take pictures of gluing in the upper two shelves.

21 Cut some scrap wood for cheater blocks to $\frac{9}{16}$ " tall, that's the space between the shelves on the left side of the cabinet. Glue your two shelves in using yellow carpenter's glue. Let this assembly dry for a bit.

22 I am measuring for the drawer fronts. They are cut from $\frac{3}{32}$ " thick basswood. I must stress at this point you are going to have to measure for yourself and cut to your measurements. We all make our cuts a little differently. The width of a pencil line makes a great difference.

23 I want to leave a little room for the drawer



to slide in and out easily so I am going to cut the height of the drawer front at $\frac{5}{8}$ ". That will leave a little room at top and bottom. Cut a piece of $\frac{3}{32}$ " thick basswood, enough to cut two drawer fronts from $\frac{5}{8}$ " wide. Set this aside.

24 Since I know the height of the drawer front I can also cut the height of the sides from $\frac{1}{16}$ " thick basswood. Cut the drawer sides, enough to cut four sides from.

25 Put two drawer sides into the drawer space and measure the width of the space left. I am measuring for the drawer bottom. I cut my drawer bottom at $1\frac{1}{8}$ " wide.

26 The grain of the drawer bottom is going from front to back. The grain of the sides and back of the drawer is horizontal.

27 With your saw still set at $1\frac{1}{8}$ " wide cut

a piece of basswood for the back. Label all of these pieces to keep straight.

28 I've slid in the drawer bottom with the sides (remember the sides haven't been cut to length, yet). Measure the depth of the drawer space, minus the thickness of the drawer front, $3/32''$.

29 I cut my drawer bottoms $1/2''$ deep. My saw is set at $1/2''$ and that is how long the sides are.

30 I have two drawer bottoms and four sides ready to be glued together. Glue the sides to the edges of the bottoms. Please let this dry.

31 Your back is all ready cut to length when you cut your drawer bottom. What you need to do is cut its height or width.

32 Measure on the inside of the drawer the height of the sides and set your saw and cut the backs.

33 Glue the backs onto the bottom and between the sides.

34 Measure along the bottom front of your

drawer and cut two drawer fronts that length. Glue the drawer fronts on.

35 I cut a top from $3/32''$ basswood. I cut it so that $1/8''$ is extra at each side and across the front. My top measured $3\ 1/8''$ long (from side to side) and $7/8''$ deep. The grain is horizontal. Glue your top onto the top of the cabinet.

36 My right side shelf is all ready cut to length. The shelf needs to be $3/16''$ less than the depth of the other shelves. $3/16''$ is how thick my door is.

37 I mentioned this before, I think I would have liked to use $1/32''$ thick wood for the face and back of the door, that would have the door be $1/8''$ thick. If you do this adjust the width of your shelf, add a $1/16''$ to my measurement.

38 My shelf width is $7/16''$ wide.

39 This picture shows the thickness of my door, 3 layers of $1/16''$ thick basswood brings it door even with the cabinet face.

40 I've made a cheater block for this, too. I've

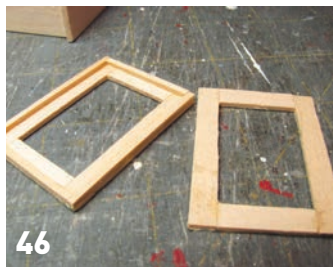
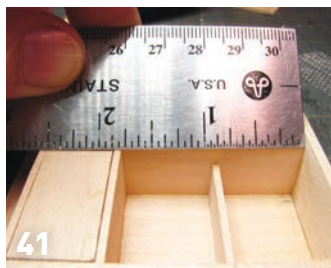
divided the space in half and cut my block $7/8''$ wide. Glue the shelf in and let it dry a bit.

41 Measuring for the stiles (the vertical part of the door frame) for the door. I cut them $1\ 3/4''$.

42 The width of my stiles is a fat $3/16''$. I thought $1/4''$ was just to wide. If you are buying your wood buy strip-wood $3/16''$ wide. I've cut two stiles, will cut two more. You are going to have a front and back to your cabinet door with the wire mesh between.

43 Measure between the stiles for the rails (the horizontal part of a cabinet door). I cut my rails just shy of $13/16''$ to make sure I have space to open and close my door.

44 I have four stiles and two pieces of $1/16''$ x $1/16''$. The $1/16''$ x $1/16''$ will be glued between the doors making the space for the wire mesh. The next photo shows the stiles and rails to make a front and back cabinet door. (Ignore the shorter $1/16''$ x $1/16''$ on the bottom. You will cut them when the door is further along.)



45 Glue the rails between the stiles for the front and back. Glue the 1/16" x 1/16" long pieces onto the stiles. Glue them so that the outside edges are even.

46 Then measure and cut pieces of the 1/16" x 1/16" to fit between the longer pieces on the sides. Make sure all the edges are even.

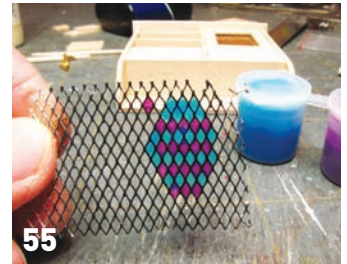
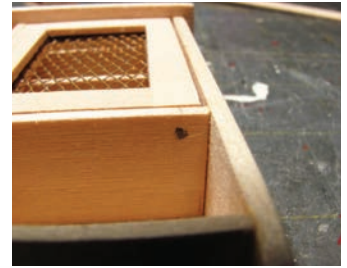
47 I painted my wire a brassy color and cut

it to fit inside the frame I made with the 1/16" x 1/16" strip wood.

48 Glue the other cabinet frame onto of this assembly. If you have clamps you may use them, just be careful to not mark the surface of the doors.

49 To help keep the door steady I cut a couple of pieces of scrap wood the same width as my shelf, 7/16". I've set my door into place.

50 With pin hinges you need to have the pins the same distance from the edges at top and bottom. If the pins are not in the same place the door will have trouble opening and certainly not open straight. The door will be wonky. So we measure but we have a top that extends beyond the rest of the cabinet, problem number one. Measure not more than an 1/8" away from the side or front and make a mark. I usually measure 3/32".



51 Remember the top extends 1/8" beyond the body of the cabinet. Add that on and make your marks.

52 I am using a "T" pin to start my hole before I drill. Problem number 2 is that I have a shelf to drill around. I have tried make cabinets leaving the problem parts off until I fit the pin hinge and that certainly could have been done here. I usually can get around this and set the pin.

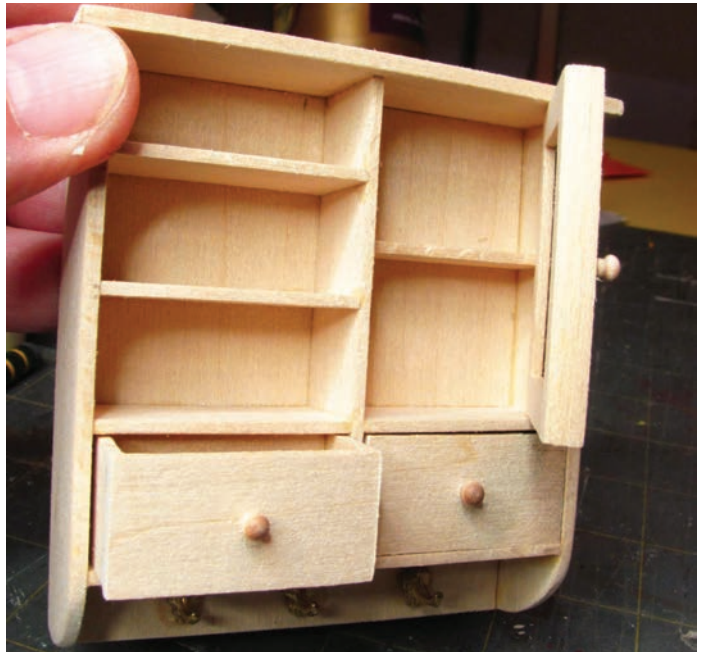
53 I cut straight pins off and use them for my hinges.

54 I drilled holes for my wooden knobs and glued them in. I used super

glue, medium thickness to glue on the metal hooks.

55 If you like add some stained glass paint to your mesh.

Stain or paint your new cabinet and hang it up in your dollhouse or room box! See more of my work at <http://1inchminisbykris.blogspot.com>.



Quick room box

Turn a storage box in to a room box

BY SHERREDAWN MILLER

Find the perfect box for your taste. It should be a minimum of 8 inches high and 6 inches deep. You want it high and deep enough to be able to place furniture comfortably inside for your scene.

If you have a special piece of furniture that you want to place in your scene, take it with you when you go shopping. Make sure it will fit where you want it. Don't guess, know. Also you

want your box to sit level on the work table. Some lids will prevent this when setting a box on its side. That doesn't mean you can't use that box. If there is a lid that prevents the box from sitting level you can add a bit of cork or felt to the bottom of the box to make it level with the lid.

Decide on your color palette. Look for shades or finishes that will complement the decorations on the box you have chosen.

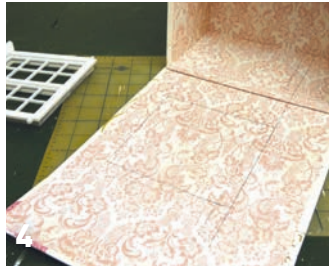
Scale = 1:12

Materials:

- Pencil
- Cutting mat
- Cutting knife
- A box cutter
- Miter box
- Metal ruler
- Craft paint or stain
- Sponge brushes
- Foam core board
- Bookbinder's glue
- Contact adhesive
- Tacky Glue
- Sandpaper 400 grit
- Paper towels
- Wallpaper
- Chair rail, baseboard, crown molding, window trim
- 1 piece of 1/8" square stringer
- Carpeting
- Ceiling paper
- 1 double window frame
- 1 battery powered light



If you want a specific era or look? Try to find a box that suits your theme. There are many looks and styles of decorative boxes available to choose from. Make sure that you have room to place your window into the box without having to remove



too much of the box lid. Placement of the window is important for people to be able to see into your scene. Try to visualize where the opening will go and if it will remove or interfere with an image or saying that you drew you to that box in the first place.

Once you have all your materials chosen and assembled, read the following instructions all the way through before you begin. Then go step by step, completing each step before you move on to the next. Remember to leave time for glue to set and cure before beginning the next step. Your box should take roughly two days to finish. Don't rush to the next step before your glue is dry. It

will only cause problems for you in the long run.

1 Remove the 'glass' from your window, if possible, and paint or stain the frame in your chosen color.

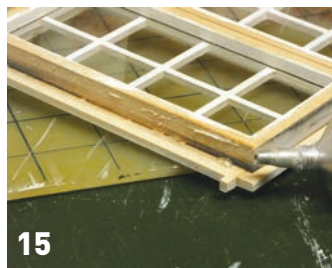
2 Paint or stain all of your trim pieces, including baseboards, crown molding, chair rails etc. For the stringer, only paint or stain one side, that is all that will show when you use it. Be sure to sand lightly between coats of paint. Remember to paint just the side that will show, not the side you want to glue. Some paint may take three or more coats to achieve a good finish. I have chosen white, but a nice contrasting or complementary color can give

your room some interest.

Set your trims aside on a flat surface in a single layer to dry.

3 Measure the inside opening of your box and cut a piece of foam core to fit into the opening. It should be roughly one 1/8" smaller than the opening of your box. This will prevent rubbing and leave you room to paper the edges of the foam core for a nice finished look.

4 On the inside flap of the box lid, mark your center in pencil. Measure 2 1/2" from the bottom edge of the box lid. Mark and center the opening for your window. Now carry the line for the window sill height



over into your box so you will have an even height for your chair rail all the way around. Double check the lid to make sure that you have the opening lined up correctly with the direction you want the orientation of the box. Then with the box cutter carefully cut out the window opening.

5 Center your piece of foam core over the window opening. Make sure it lines up correctly with the box. Using tacky glue, glue the foam core to the inside of the box lid. Be sure to run a line of glue right to the edge of the window opening and along the very edge of the foam core board. This will help prevent the foam core from

paper between the cans and the foam core if you are using paint cans. This will prevent any rust stains or possible bits of paint from transferring to your foam core and smudging your finished project.

6 Measure the inside of your box from floor to ceiling. There is no hard fast rule for the height of a chair rail. The higher the room the higher the dado (the

lower part of the wall of a room)/chair rail.

7 Once you have the height of the dado for placement of the chair rail, measure your paper for your lower half of the room. Trim your paper to size.

8 Dry fit your wallpaper in the lower portion of the box. Start at the edge of one wall and smooth the paper into the corner. Using your thumbnail gently crease your paper into the corner to give a crisp fold. If your sheet of paper does not go fully across the back wall, trim the edge 1/4" away from the fold. Then fit your next piece of paper snugly into the corner seam of the first paper.

TOPTIP:

A cork board backed metal ruler will prevent sliding and help keep your cut even. Make sure your craft knife is clean and sharp to make a nice straight cut and prevent snagging.

TOPTIP:

If you are using a patterned wallpaper take care to match up the location of the pattern when cutting your next piece so the patterns align.

The last wall will be the window wall. We will cover this a bit later.

9 Measure from the marked chair rail to the top of the box. Mark your paper to the measurement taken and repeat step 8 with the paper for the upper half of the chair rail. Be sure to check your measurements before cutting your paper. Measure twice, cut once. However, if you do make a mistake and your cut is a bit wobbly or you've shorted yourself a hair. There is no need to despair. Baseboard and coving can help hide your little mistakes from the eyes of the world. You should still use care when measuring and cutting, but don't let little mistakes overwhelm you. They aren't the end of your project.

10 Once you have all your paper correctly fitted, you are now ready to glue the paper in the

box. Using a sponge brush, spread the bookbinder's glue evenly over the first sheet of paper you fitted into the box. Make sure to keep the glue off your fingers. Use the dampened paper towels to wipe your hands clean before placing your paper into the box.

A piece of plastic placed under your wallpaper as you spread the glue can help keep your work surface clean.

You will need to spread a nice even layer of glue over the entire paper right up to the edges to ensure it will lay flat and smooth.

11 Use the dry paper towel to smooth the paper to the wall and avoid air bubbles. I find if I am using a patterned paper that has a definite 'top' that it helps to mark the top lightly in pencil on the back of the sheet. You can number the order in which they go into the box on the back as well. This helps to ensure you don't accidentally put it in upside down or in the wrong order.

12 Replace the plastic into the window frame. Cut a matching opening into the piece of foam core. Test fit the window

and make any adjustments needed. Do not glue it in at this time.

13 To paper the window wall of the box, take your measurements from the inside of the box and add 1/4" to the height. This will leave you with an edge you can use to wrap over the edges of the foam core for a clean finished look. You will need to cut a notch in two corners of the paper to fit it to the foam core. This notch should be just under 1/4" square. Measure in 1/4" and fold the paper down evenly on three sides.

14 Apply the Bookbinder's glue to the back of the wall paper and smooth it gently onto the foam core being sure to stick your edges down neatly. You may have to smooth it lightly with a dry paper towel to ensure it doesn't bubble. Wait for it to dry and then use your craft knife to cut out the window opening from the wallpaper. Your window opening will now be evenly cut through all three layers of the box lid. The lid, the foam core and the paper.

15 Using the contact adhesive just on the

edge of the window frame, secure your window into the box front. Be sure to double check the you have the box aligned in the correct orientation. Use clothespins or clamps to hold the window firmly into place while it dries.

16 Using the mitre box cut the stringer to fit the edge for the window. Using the contact adhesive glue the stringer in place to bring the outside edge of the window even with the box. Measure and mitre the window trim to cover the edge of the window and stringer. Glue into place using the contact adhesive.

17 Measure and cut chair rail to cover the seam where the wallpaper meets. Use contact adhesive to glue in the chair rail. You should not be able to see a gap between your papers with the chair rail in place. There may be a gap at the corners of your trims. Cardboard boxes aren't always square. A touch of your paint color or stain in the gaps can help hide them.

18 Measure and fit the ceiling paper. Use Bookbinders glue to apply the ceiling paper. Measure

and cut the carpet to fit the floor of the box. Take your time with both. It's easier to trim off a bit more than to try to hide a large gap. Small shortages will be covered by the baseboard and coving, but the closer you have to a nice fit the better things will look. Use Contact Adhesive to glue in your carpet.

19 Using the mitre box cut the crown molding and baseboard. Always make sure your crown molding is oriented the same direction when cutting or applying. Take your time with this step. It can be tricky and frustrating. Especially if you are trying to rush through it to complete your project. A little extra care here will help things go smoothly. Also check the orientation of the trim in the miter box to ensure you are cutting it at the correct

angle to fit in your box. If you accidentally make a cut in the wrong direction, trim the mistake off and try again. This is why I recommend you get one more piece than you need.

20 Using the contact adhesive to attach the baseboard and crown molding to the inside of the box. When placing your trims on the door of the box be sure to leave room for the box to properly close.

21 Once the glues are all dry your room box is complete and ready to decorate!



Put your green thumb to work

Sophie Dalton walks you through making your own miniature garden that will bloom and grow

BY SOPHIE DALTON

In our last issue of *American Miniaturist*, April 204, Sophie Dalton shared her beautiful real miniature gardens with us. We loved them so much we wanted to share some more photos with you plus share how you can make your own!

It really is so much work to constantly be nurturing and cleaning these tiny gardens, but it must also be very rewarding. Sophie shares some great tips on she how puts hers together.

Choosing the container is usually how I start. After that the container sort of dictates my creative ideas by forcing me to answer some important questions. How big do you want the garden to be? Will it be able to be moved? What theme/colors do you want?

If you are designing an indoor garden like a terrarium, many don't have drainage holes so you have to judge how much moisture it needs. If a garden is

to be outside and not under-cover it's essential that it has a drainage hole because it can get waterlogged quickly when it rains. You can add drainage holes with a standard drill bit to most containers from a vintage metal bucket to a tiny teacup or

teacup. For teacups you want to use a drill bit that was made to use on ceramic tile.

When choosing plants for a miniature garden it's important first of all to know where the pot is going to live. Will it be indoors or outside, will it have





full sun or shade? Then you can choose the plants accordingly, just as you would in a big garden. For example, succulents (especially sedum) are great to use in a miniature garden, but are low water plants so they need to be paired with similar plants that have the same water and sun requirements.

I try to choose plants that grow slowly. You want to keep your miniature garden in a







pot for many years. Miniature conifers are great to use in a miniature garden and they usually state on the label how much they grow in a year. Ideally you are looking for a growth rate of no more than a few inches a year.

Bonsai can also be used, but require a lot more work as they will need to be taken out and repotted and have their roots trimmed every year or two while they are young. They also need to be pruned to shape, with more specific water and feeding requirements. Cheap bonsai starters can also be used

and planted straight in but be aware that if they are not confined in a smaller pot they will eventually grow into a full sized tree!

I love using hardy plants that look like little trees such as Dwarf Buxus (Dutch edging box) shown in a variegated form on the right of the cow photo at the end of this article. *Cuphea hyssopifolia* (False Heather) has pink flowers or white and simple pruning will keep them shaped.

Choose plants that have small leaves but can be pruned back to stay small. Herbs and

three inch tube starter plants look cute in the nursery, but do think about how big they will eventually grow. Rosemary with its tiny leaves can grow into a large bush over three feet in height by its second season and would be way too big for a tiny pot. Look at the labels and discuss with the nursery staff how quickly and how tall the plants will grow.

Annual plants can be used with tiny flowers and changed each year providing they don't grow too large. Annuals can be a lot more work (as will need to be removed at the end of





the season and because they grow faster will require more pruning) but if you have the time they can be fun and rewarding as you can quickly add more variety and color to your little garden.

Maintaining a garden if you've started with the right plants is the easy part and ground covers might just need a prune to stop them from taking over during the growing months.

Different plants have different watering needs. Some need to be kept moist and some like to dry out completely before being watered again. Learn how dry the soil is by pushing in with your finger or a wooden stick to see if it's wet.

Getting to know your

plants and their requirements takes time and don't ever be put off by plants dying as this is one way to learn. As the saying goes, "You don't really know a plant until you've killed it three times." Also, "There are no gardening mistakes, only experiments!"

Potting soil

I use a potting soil without too many fertilizers or if using succulents you can use/make up a succulent/cacti mix which has more drainage for these particular plants. An organic fertilizer can be added (especially to the conifers) after a few years during the growing seasons.

Usually a miniature garden doesn't require any fertiliser for the first few years as you

don't want the plants to grow fast. If it's in a pot after this time a slow release organic fertiliser can be used during spring and summer.

Growing zone

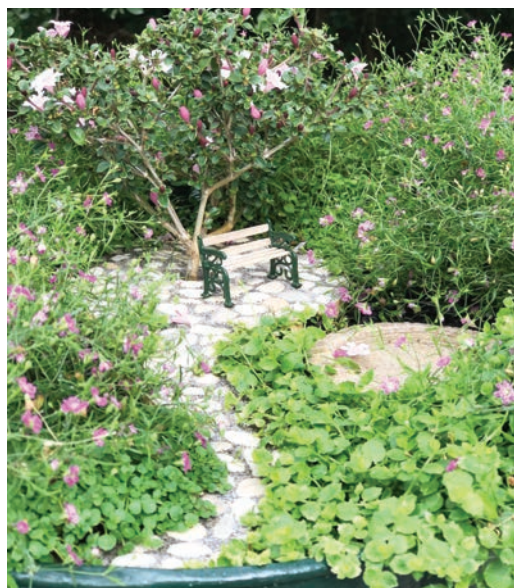
Think about the hardiness zone of where you live, taking into account that your pot may need to come in during the colder winter months or need to be protected in the harsh sun outside.

Garden design

When planting keep in mind that the garden will be viewed as a whole; so planting the tallest plants at the back then work down to the smallest plants at the front. Ground covers like Baby Tears (*Soleirolia soleirolii*),



Above: Simple touches like the geese flying above the church is what makes Sophie's gardens so special.



Irish moss (*Sagina Subulata*), sedum, elfin thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*) that are small leaved can all be used to form a low carpet at the front.

Fun Accessories

Accessories like a little bench, pond, garden pots, an arch with climbing dwarf ivy or fuchsia tell the story, add a focal point to the viewer and show the scale of the garden.

Larger pots and in-ground miniature and gardens are better with larger 1:12 scale accessories and smaller pots can use 1:24 or 1:48 scale. The joy is that the theme can be changed in an instant by swapping accessories and as the plants grow the whole scene changes again. With fairy gardens little houses can be used but scale is harder to manage as the other accessories have to be so tiny. I think this is okay as a fairy garden is meant to be whimsical and you can use a bit of fairy license.

Remember that anything you use needs to withstand getting wet and weather extremes. You can use many dollhouse patio furniture outside if it's made of metal, resin, plastic and some timbers. I quickly spray or paint absolutely everything with an outdoor paint or clear polyurethane spray to protect accessories from fade, rot and rust and wood hardener on softer

timbers. The look of furniture can be changed by painting it in different colors and using aging techniques to make new items look old and rusty.

So much fun can be had making little patios, paths, using different materials gathered from the back yard like twigs to create fences, trellis and furniture to use in your garden.

Inspirational reading

For more detailed information on creating a miniature garden, choosing plants for a miniature garden, maintaining a garden with lots of project ideas I have found these books to be a great resource: *Garden-*

ing in Miniature, Create your own tiny living world by Janit Calvo. This was the first book I bought and a complete bible on miniature gardening.

There is also, *Fairy Gardening, Creating your own magical miniature garden* by Julie Bawden-Davis and Beverly Turner. This has lots of projects and photos for creating whimsical gardens and a great section on plants. *Miniature Gardens* by Katie Elzer-Peters had dozens of fun step-by-step projects including indoor dish and terrarium gardens!

Have fun making magic! Visit Sophia on Instagram @minifairygarden!



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Small scale landscape

Create your own tiny scene in a 1:12 coffee table

BY GRACE SHAW

Scale = 1:12

We know that the Victorians loved to show off their collections in their display tables, and it will make the ideal place if you have a number of tiny shells, butterflies or other small items that would fit beneath the glass – but why not build a tiny landscape – one with hill streams, fields and fences and even tiny animals.

1 Measure the inside of your glass topped table, and then cut the card to fit loosely inside.

2 Starting at one corner, draw a stream onto the card. You can make the stream any shape you want. It can have a 'Y' or go around a little island or just wind lazily through your garden park.

3 Using tracing paper, trace the grassy areas around the stream. Cut out the patterns for the grassy areas, and then set aside.

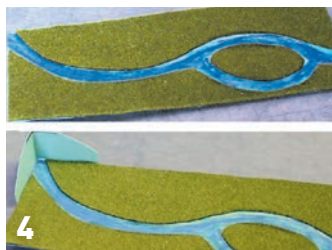
4 Use slightly watered-down paint, and give your stream depth by coloring some areas of the

Materials:

- Card in blue or green
- Grass matting
- Paint - blues, greens, two or three shades of grey
- Felt-tip markers - blues and greens
- Wood colored stain stick
- Tracing paper
- Tacky Glue
- Toothpick
- Landscaping materials - greens for bushes and trees, colors for flowers; if available get both the kind that has little clumps, and the very fine kind in flower colors and green.
- Clear nail polish
- Fine sawdust, very fine sand, or dry coffee grounds
- Bark, cork, coarse ground pepper, fine aquarium gravel or small seeds
- Thin 1/4" wide scrap wood
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Cutting knife
- Small dry clean brush
- Tiny paintbrush



stream bed. Darker colors make it look deeper and lighter colors shallower. You don't have to paint the entire stream. Let some of the card stock show through. Leave to dry, and then add



more highlights with the blue or green markers.

5 Make the stream a bit wider than you actually want it to be. Place the tracing paper patterns on the grass matting, and trace the grassy areas.

6 Cut the grassy areas from the grass mat, glue only around the edges, and glue the grass to the card in the appropriate places. This will confine your stream.

7 Cut a tiny strip of card, 5/8" tall and as wide as your stream. The strip can be wider if you want, as this will make your waterfall. If you want to make a little hill, make it wider.

8 Fold this strip into half. Using a tiny bit of glue

(applied with a toothpick, fasten the strip to the stream corner edge of your insert, matching the fold with the corner. Don't glue the insert to the work surface.

9 When the strip has dried, place the insert into the table and make sure the corner does not stop the top from closing. If it does, trim it back.

10 Remove the insert from the table. If you are making a hill, trim the corners of the strip round to simulate a gentle hill. When the corner is dry, start gluing bits of cork, coffee grounds, pepper chunks, fine aquarium gravel or seeds to the strip of card to form boulders and rocks for your stream to tumble down.

11 If desired, you can paint the rocks different shades of grey.

12 To make the waterfall look more realistic, paint some of the boulders in the center with blues and greens. You can also spread a tiny bit of glue on some areas of the rocks, and sprinkle on very fine green landscaping material to look like grass growing on your hill. Shake off excess.

13 If the card stock shows above the rocks, trim it, paint it or use a tiny bit of stain the color of your table to make it disappear.

14 Now using fine saw dust, fine sand, ground pepper, or finely chopped cork line the stream edges with rocks. Larger ones



should be closer to the waterfall, and finer ones as you move away from the falls. Some very fine ones can be in the stream bed but use less rather than more.

15 Decide where you want your bridge to go, and then cut the pieces from the 1/4" wide scrap wood. Cut the sections and glue them together, or just score the wood and bend it to form an arch over the stream. Cut very thin strips to make handrails.

16 Another option is to use strips of thin plastic or paper for the handrails. Paint or stain as desired. Leave to dry.

17 If you need posts to set your bridge on, use tiny beads. I let the arch of the wood span the stream. If you want pathways in your garden, spread a thin line of glue and sprinkle on fine sand or sawdust. Shake off the excess.

Other ideas

Reduce some pictures of bricks or stones to 1:144 scale and glue them onto the grass for pathways. Use the landscape material to create trees, bushes and flowers where desired. Try tiny plastic or dried flowers. If they are too big, cut or pull them apart to make them smaller. Also the pink, yellow, white and purple landscape material makes nice floral bushes and plants.

For fencing, you can cut small-scale plastic canvas and paint it. Glue it to the edge of the insert. Don't forget to leave gate openings where the fence crosses your pathways. Check to make sure that your insert still fits into the table when using fencing around the edges.

When your landscaping is finished, take clear nail polish and drizzle or paint it over the rocks in the corner and down your stream bed. Add as many

coats as desired to make your miniature stream look wet and watery.

Then glue the bridge over the stream. You can add 1:144 scale benches to your park or garden.

Make a pond instead of the stream, use the same landscaping materials around the edges and use nail polish as the water.

Use your imagination. Think about what you want your little garden scene to be. Look around for different materials to use. Your kitchen spice rack is a good place to start. Then create your own tiny garden for inside your glass-topped Victorian table.

Place the finish insert into the glass-topped table, and proudly display it in any dollhouse sitting room. This is also a great place to start if you are making a miniature train scene for a hobby room in your dollhouse. The possibilities are endless. Have fun creating!

Ball of yarn

Set the scene with these small balls of yarn

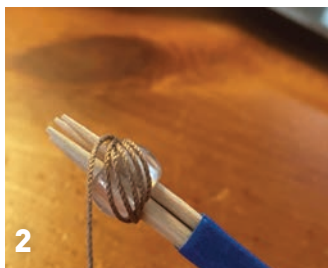
BY KAREN HRITZ

Making a knitters display is easier than you think. Follow the directions and use whatever colors make you happy.

1 Tape the four toothpicks together and then insert into pony bead. Spread white glue on the pony bead and attach the end of the cord/thread.

2 To wind the cord on the bead, you will turn the toothpicks clockwise while wrapping the cord around the bead. The cord needs to cross the bead at an angle. This will keep it from sliding off the bead.

3 Each time you wrap the cord, you place it over the pass before it. If the



cord begins to slip, add a little dab of glue.

4 Continue to wrap the cord on the bead until your ball of twine or yarn is the size you want. To finish, secure the end of the cord with glue. Put your different

colors of 'yarn' into a small basket to display!

TOPTIP:

You could even use two trimmed head pins for knitting needles if you like.

Scale = 1:12

Materials:

- Pony beads
- Thin twine, cord, crochet thread, floss, etc
- White glue
- 4 toothpicks
- Scissors

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Tile coasters

Coasters with a storage box will look great on a table

BY KLEINE ARTCHIN

This is a fun project to make some pretty little coasters, along with a wooden storage box. It will look great on a table in your lounge or study.

Tile coasters

Choose your tile design copy and paste into a Word doc. Reduce the size to 1cm square. Repeat this process until you have the amount of tiles you want to make. I'm making four but



Scale = 1:12

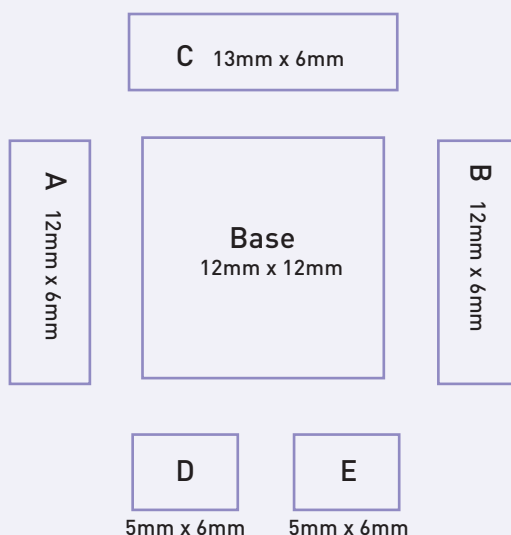
Materials:

- 1cm square printed tiles
- Smooth non-fraying fabric (felt, suede or leather)
- Sharp, small scissors
- White glue
- Toothpick

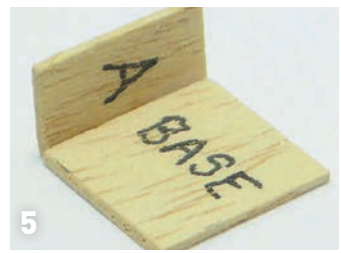
Storage box:

- 1/32 obeche wood
- Fine grade sandpaper
- Wood glue
- Toothpick
- Sharp pencil (mechanical pencil with 0.35 lead)
- Cutting knife
- Metal ruler
- Smooth fabric as above
- Optional - paint or wood polish to finish

Pattern:



Pattern not to scale



you could make as many as you want. You could try looking through tile catalogs for images and trim to size, glue onto card stock and give the image a coat of white glue to give it a nice shine.

2 If you found something online, print your image out onto photo paper and cut out with scissors. Remember to let the ink dry before cutting out. (You can print onto card stock, then coat the image with white glue for shine. Apply glue with a toothpick to the back of the tile picture; stick down on chosen fabric and leave to dry.

3 When dry, trim around tile and that's it.

Storage box

4 Cut the obeche wood to the 6 pieces needed using a knife and metal ruler. (Always use a fresh blade as less pressure is needed to cut through the wood and accidents are less likely to occur). The storage box has been designed to hold four coasters. If you want yours to hold more, just increase the height of the side pieces.

5 Lightly sand all pieces. Then apply a little glue to the bottom edge of side piece A and press flush to side of base. Repeat with piece B and press flush to the other side. Apply glue to the bottom edge and sides of the back piece (C) and press flush to base.

Check the side pieces are square to the back. Remove excess glue with the toothpick. Leave to dry.

6 Apply glue to front piece D on bottom edge and side. Glue to the left hand side of front. Repeat with piece E and glue to the right hand side. Remove excess glue and leave to dry.

7 Lightly sand all sides, then paint or stain. Or you can leave it plain.

8 Apply glue to the underside of the base with a toothpick and stick onto chosen fabric. Leave to dry. When dry trim round edges with a pair of sharp scissors.

THE mini SCOOP

■ AM's news page is devoted to keeping busy miniaturists up to speed. Please submit items of mini interest to auralea@ashdown.co.uk or to *American Miniaturist* - Mini Scoop, PO Box 219, Kasson, MN 55944.

Technology used in miniatures

Do you make your miniatures with a Cricut® Smart Cutting Machine or similar devices? If so, we would love to see what you have made and even better we would urge you to send in a tutorial to show others how you did it.

These machines are becoming more and more popular in our community to make mini items. Email

auralea@ashdown.co.uk with photos of your finished items and let her know if you are interested in sharing a tutorial.

Marilyn Woodard Barclay made these amazing roses using one!



Mini Make It Challenge

Each month we will give you a fun challenge by posting a photo right here in MiniScoop. Take your best shot to duplicate it in 1:12 scale or smaller.

We can't wait to see what you can achieve. Email your finished photo to auralea@ashdown.co.uk and we'll print it in MiniMail!

For this May issue, we challenge you to make this lemon shaped pitcher. This could be a fun club project or a way to add some spring details to your existing projects. Have fun!

Giveaway contributions

If you would like to be considered to have your products featured for our giveaways with your business link mentioned please email the editor at auralea@ashdown.co.uk.

This is a great way to up your shops traffic!

AM Facebook

We have a lot happening on *American Miniaturist's* Facebook page! Be sure to follow us and be a part of our future polls, keep up with the latest news in our miniature community!



WHERE'S ARTHUR CONTEST

Arthur was found on page 70 visiting the mini cottage in the March issue (AM203). We have randomly selected **Heather** from **Anderson, SC** to be our winner for this month's Where's Arthur contest. We will be sending her a very special prize for helping

us find Arthur.

But as you know Arthur loves to roam through each page and, as expected, he has once again wandered off while we weren't looking. Hopefully you can help us find him.

May Highlights contest



We would love to know what your favorite highlights were in this issue of *AM*. You could win this tiny garden chair. All it takes is a written paragraph for this random drawing!

Send your entry to May Highlights contest, *American Miniaturist*, PO Box 219, Kasson, MN 55944. You may also send

your entries via email to auralea@ashdown.co.uk. Please be sure to include your name, address, phone number, and email address.

Tall shelf giveaway

Enter to win this 1:12 wooden shelf that is perfect for an office or any room. Paint it or keep it the way it is either way it would be a great addition to your miniature scene!



Contest entries

To be eligible for the listed contests/giveaways please indicate the **name of the contest/giveaway** and **AM issue number** and send your entry to *American Miniaturist*, PO Box 219, Kasson, MN 55944, or email them to auralea@ashdown.co.uk. Please be sure to include your name, address, phone number, and email address. The deadline for this issue's entry is **Friday, May 15, 2020**.

Good luck!

Recent winners

March Highlights

Barbara from Canada

Chair kit giveaway

Martha from, Shreveport, LA

Congratulations!

A little reminder. Please remember to add **ALL** of the required info in your contest entries so you can be considered for the drawings!



Be sure to like and follow *American Miniaturist* magazine on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram!

Tulips for mom

Create a bouquet of wrapped tulips

BY KATE SANTICHEN



MEET THE MAKER: Kate Santichen

"I've been making minis since I got a dollhouse at age 12. I begged for my own wooden dollhouse for years, but my family kept saying I'd grow out of it! Little did they know! I am a media producer live and live in NY with my perfect 35-lb rescue mutt, Cooper Pierogi."



It is the small touches that bring a scene to life. Add a bouquet of tulips to your scene by following along with this fun and quick tutorial.

1 Cut wire into six 1" pieces. Roll the air dry clay into six egg-shaped balls. Dip the end of the wire into glue. Then gently push into the shorter end of the clay balls. Allow to dry.

2 Paint the clay balls to match the paper color.

3 Punch 12 hearts (two for each flower). You may need more depending on the size of your heart punch and clay balls. Shape the hearts into a bowl shape with the ball stylus tool.

4 Cut 12 leaves from craft paper so the leaf is as long as the flower. Leaves should be no more than 1/4cm wide at the bottom and taper to a point. Glue the widest part of leaf around the stem.

Scale = 1:12

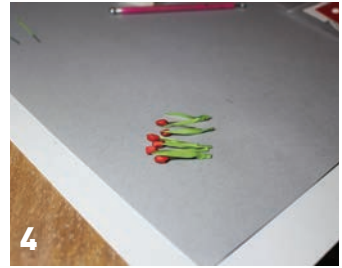
Materials:

- 24 gauge paper-wrapped floral wire
- Air dry clay
- Acrylic paint and craft paper in same color
- Ball stylus
- Eraser or foam
- Green craft paper
- Tissue paper
- Velum or clear plastic sheet
- Ruler
- Craft glue
- Tiny rubber band

5 Cut a piece of tissue paper and plastic sheet, each 2" by 1 1/4". Wrap around the tulips and then secure them with a small rubber band.

Visit Kate on Instagram @the_tiny_craftress to see more of her work.





Become an *American Miniaturist* contributor

Tell us your story

Do you love making miniatures and/or miniature scenes? Do you have an interesting life story connected to the art of miniatures? If so, then we want to hear from you! Send in your story (no more than 750 words, please!) and some photos to be considered for publication.

Keep us in the loop

Are you a member of a miniature group, charity, or show? Or do you know of an upcoming event or mini-terrific news story? Keep us in the loop by sharing it with us!

Teach us

If you have a passion for teaching miniatures, or dollhouse tips, tricks, and techniques, then we'd love to hear from you.

How to submit

We want to hear from all miniaturists, and those who have a passion for this wonderful art form. Do you want to be a part of our next fun, fresh, and fabulous issue? Email your ideas, contributions, and questions to auralea@ashdown.co.uk. For more information and submission guidelines, visit <http://www.americanminiaturist.com/getinvolved.html>

We look forward to you joining the *American Miniaturist* team!



Paul Block



Anna Maria Megna



Shane Rossiter

Mini cake

Make an easy peasy Mother Day's cake

BY EMANUELA FESTA SUNDELL

The sweetest of cakes to celebrate Mother's Day can be both simple and elegant. Whether you are trying your hand at creating with polymer clay for the first time or you are a polymer clay expert and need to make something quick for the celebration, you will find this an easy and lovely project.

For this tutorial, I have made chocolate and vanilla cakes to suit any occasion, but cakes in other colors, for example pink or light blue for a baby shower or christening, white for a

wedding or red for Christmas, would be just as lovely.

General directions

When working with polymer clay it is very important to keep your working surface and your hands clean. Handle the lighter colors first, to avoid staining them when working with darker colors. Wash your hands and your tools in hot water before each change of color. I also like to keep some baby wipes handy for the occasional quick cleaning.

Pet hair seems to love polymer clay as much as

Scale = 1:12

Materials:

- Polymer clay - brown, white, yellow, red
- Ceramic or glass tile
- Rolling tool for clay
- 1" round cutting mold
- 3/8" round cutting mold
- Heart shaped metallic cutter for polymer clay
- Gloss medium for polymer clay or clear nail polish

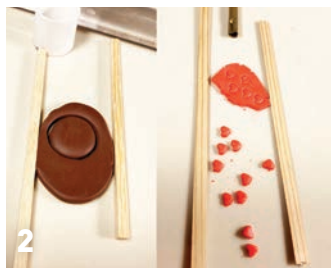
Optional

- Wooden strips)
- Mini plate or card stock
- Tacky Glue
- Tweezers

you love your furry babies, so keep them away from your clay project.

Before starting to shape the clay, make sure it is warm and soft by kneading it with your fingers for a few minutes. If your hands are like mine, icy cold all the time (well, I do live in Sweden!) you will need to warm the clay and your hands near a heater or stove. Once the clay is soft, you will be able to shape, roll or stretch it without getting cracks or splits.





When blending colors, for example white and yellow to obtain a nice color for a vanilla cake, always start with some white and a LITTLE yellow. Try 9 parts white and 1 part yellow to start with. Remember, you can always add more color later, no need to waste any clay by adding too much color and having to add more and more white to lighten the yellow.

There are many colors of clay available, but I find that by blending different shades, I am able to obtain more realistic colors. For example, I don't buy pink or purple, I simply mix white and red or red and blue to get my own preferred shades of these two colors. By buying some

basic colors and some black and white you can virtually obtain any shade you like. But buying ready to use colors will certainly save time.

1 Start softening the clay in your chosen color by kneading it with your fingers. The clay should be soft, so it won't crack or split when you roll it. Using your rolling tool and two square strips of 1/2" thick wood, roll your clay between them to obtain an even thickness.

The strips are optional, but it is much harder to obtain an even result without them. I do this step directly on a ceramic tile so I don't need to handle the clay before it is baked.

2 Now it is time to cut the shape of your cake. I suggest raiding your kitchen or bathroom for bottle cups or such, preferably with somewhat sharp edges, which will produce a cleaner cut.

Don't worry if your bottle cup produces less than perfect edges, you can always use a nail file or sandpaper to smooth them out later.

Cut the shape you have chosen and bake the cake according to the instructions on the package. Read thoroughly, polymer clay is NOT a toy and should be handled carefully. Let the cake cool.

3 In the meantime, roll your clay in the chosen color for the hearts as thin as you can on a second ceramic tile, but not too thin so that you will not be able to lift the shapes later. I rolled my clay between 1/16" thick wooden strips.

4 Cut a number of heart shapes by using your metal cutter. Lift the clay that is left between the hearts and save for another project. Leave the hearts on the tile without disturbing and bake as before. Let cool.

5 Once everything is baked and cooled, cover the cake generously with gloss medium or nail polish (top coat is my favorite) using a soft brush. I know that no polymer clay manufacturer will recommend nail polish as it is supposed to get yellowish with time, but I have used it for many projects without problems. Some of my earliest cakes were made more than 10 years ago and they look as good as ever.

6 Place the hearts carefully on the cake, I like

to use tweezers for this step. I use 3 or 9 on the large cakes, and just 1 on the small ones. Try to be as precise as you can from the start when placing the hearts on the cake. You may shift the hearts a little on the polish, but not too much, or you will leave marks on the glossy surface. Let dry.

7 Time to finish! Apply several coats of your gloss medium or nail polish letting it dry completely between the coats. I like my cakes very glossy, I use 4-5 coats or more.

8 Place the cakes on a small tray or plate if you like, attaching with a thin layer of glue. You may also cut nice square or round shapes a little bigger than the cakes from gold or silver card stock, to simulate paper trays.

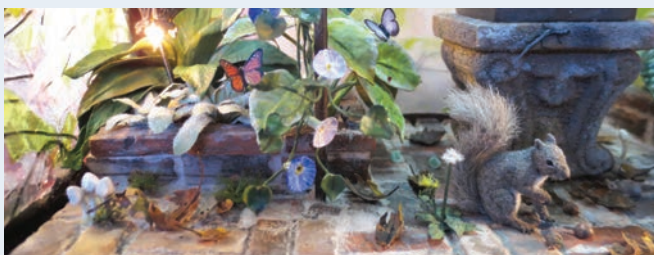
9 Sit back and admire your work. Well done!

The cakes are also available for purchase in my Etsy shop www.etsy.com/MiniaturesByEmy.

dollhouse miniatures

FINE MINIATURE ART FOR THE DEVOTED COLLECTOR

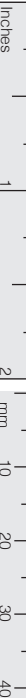
Don't miss the tutorials, tips, and techniques by top makers in the latest issue of Dollhouse Miniatures. Auralea Krieger makes a Gothic Revival Fireplace. Shannon May shares how she made a spring wreath and Jo Bevilacqua features her Morning Glory Garden and shares great tips!



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Wine labels, tiles for coaster tutorial, Mother's Day cards, artist paints and wall art.





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- 1:24 Food Truck
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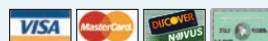
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UPCOMING SHOWS, AUCTIONS & EXHIBITS

MAY 3

LIVERPOOL, NY

Syracuse Area Miniature Enthusiasts will hold its annual show and sale on May 3rd from 10am - 4pm at the Holiday Inn Express, Liverpool, NY. On I-90 take exit 31. Admission is \$5.50, children 12 and under are free. No strollers. Dealers please contact Sandy Fillingham at 315-399-8520. For general information, please contact Marian at 315-469-4253.

MAY 9

KINGSTON, ON CANADA

The Dollhouse and Miniatures Show and Sale presented by the Miniature Enthusiasts of Kingston and Area will be held on Saturday, May 9, 10 am to 4 pm at the Kingston Olympic Harbour, 53 Yonge Street, Kingston, Ontario. Dealers, Displays and Door Prizes.

The cost is: \$8 Adults, \$5 Seniors and Children, \$20 Family fee.
We hope to see you there!

MAY 17

CLEVELAND, OH

2020 Greater Cleveland Dollhouse & Miniature Show & Sale, Sunday May 17, 2020, 10am - 4pm. Show will be held at Willoughby Hills Country Center, 2500 Gardon Rd. (Rt. 103) Willoughby Hills, OH 44094. This is an eastern suburb, just off I-271 & I-90 (use the local lanes of I-271, not the Express). Admission: \$5, children 4-12 \$2, under 4 Free. Raffles, Customer Appreciation Gifts, Special sales table for kids 12 & under. Snacks are available at the show! For more information, email minicellar@sbcglobal.net or wsmale@windstream.net or see our website at www.cleveland-miniatureshow.com Show

benefits Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital.

JUNE 13

MOORESVILLE, NC

7th Annual Mooresville North Carolina Miniatures Show and Sale will be held June 13, 2020 from 10 am - 4 pm at the Hampton Inn and Suites, 119 Gallery Center Drive, Mooresville, NC 28117. Contact Maria for more information including workshops at 704-230-0569 or via email at MariaCanz01@aol.com

JUNE 14

ELMIRA, NY

The Third Annual Indoor Yard Sale will be held on June 14, 2020. Featuring Dollhouses, Miniatures, Dolls and Teddy Bears and Low Yard Prices. The sale runs from 10am to 4pm at the National Soaring Museum, 51 Soaring Hill Drive--Harris

UPCOMING SHOWS, AUCTIONS & EXHIBITS

Hill, Elmira, NY. Adults \$5.00, Students (7-18) \$3.00. Lunch Available. For further information contact Jean via email at info@soaringmuseum.org 607-734-3128 or Shirlee via email at atopdoll@npacc.net or by phone at 570-596-3563.

JUNE 25-28

LAKELAND, FL

Miniatures Weekend presented by the Lakeland Miniature Guild. Workshops run Thursday-Friday, June 25 - June 26. Saturday FUNDAY June 27, 2020 with the Show and exhibits on Sunday, June 28th from 10:00am - 4pm. Admission Fee: Adults \$8.00, Children's aged 6-12 yrs \$1.00. This Miniatures Weekend will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn at 3839 Don Emerson Drive, Lakeland, FL 33811. For more information call 1-407-733-7988 or contact

via email disniedoll@aol.com and be sure to check out our website for more information on workshops at www.Lakelandminiatureguild.com

AUGUST 9

FOGELSVILLE, PA

Lehigh Valley Miniatures Club 43rd Annual Doll-house & Miniatures Show and Sale, will be held at The Holiday Inn/Delta, 7736 Adrienne Drive, Breinigsville, PA 18031. Exit 49A off I-78 onto Rt. 100 South. 10 am - 4 pm. \$5.00 Adults (4.50 with coupon), \$1.00 children under 12. Vendors selling miniature items of all kinds. Exhibits, door prizes, demos, make + take projects, free parking, food available. Free children's class at 1 pm. Show info: Karen Barone, 561-596-6855, kbarone0117@live.com Check our website: [\[tures.com\]\(http://tures.com\) for more show information and to print a discount coupon. Show proceeds benefit charities and education.](http://www.lehighvalleyminia-</p>
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SEPTEMBER 12-13

GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO

Denver Museum of Miniatures, Dolls and Toys 40th Annual Fall Show and Sale on September 12-13, 2020 at the Doubletree Hotel by Hilton Denver Tech Center, 7801 E Orchard Road, Greenwood Village, CO. 80111. Show runs from Saturday 10am - 5pm and Sunday 11am - 4pm. Pre-registered workshops held Wed, Sept 9 through Fri, Sept 11. Contact Marjorie Smelt: marjorie.smelt@gmail.com, (720) 206-5545.

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Flower display

Stacking the miniature pots in your favor

BY ELKE SKINNER

While spending the winter in Florida one year I came upon a flower pot pyramid in a neighbor's garden and it tickled my fancy. As soon as we arrived back home that spring, I set about constructing one of these for my own garden. It turned out quite lovely and the idea struck me immediately—why not make one in miniature, too!

Not having made very many miniature flowers in the past, I improvised with other materials, and although it turned out all right, I was not completely satisfied with it. I then contacted my good friend Ruth Hanke and ordered several of her different floral kits.

Scale = 1:12

Materials:

- Miniature clay pots in two different sizes
- Stiff metal wire
- Acrylic paint
- Paint brushes
- Putty
- Glue
- Miniature flowers



Ruth was most gracious in giving me pointers when I got stuck and never tired of my endless questions. And with her wonderful instructions and guidance I was able to create some pretty little flowers for my miniature flower pot display.

This project will show you how to make your own flower pot display from beginning to end. There really is not much to it!

Above: You can paint your pots in different colors or leave them a natural terra-cotta color.

As you can see, I have made up two different versions of the pyramid, one with different colored pots and one with pots of the same color. You can make whichever best fits your mini décor. My own display, real and miniature, are of the different colored pots design.



Above: The real stacked flower pots in Elke's neighbor's garden that inspired her to try to make them in miniature.

1 First, you will need to decide what size pots you would like to use for your miniature display. You could either purchase some in sizes to match your scale of choice or use whatever sizes you happen to have lying around in your mini stash. I used a 1:12 scale clay pot for the bottom of the pyramid and four 1:24 scale clay pots to build the top of the display.

2 Make sure the pots all have a hole in the bottom and feel free to paint



Above: The miniature replicas. This is a great project to let your imagination soar! You could even make them for all seasons.

the pots in the colors of your choice. You could go with a fun, springy multi-colored design like mine; a nice neutral palette of colors would like very nice too. Use acrylic paints for this.

TOPTIP:

Paint the inside rim as well in case your plants don't hide it.

3 Now take a small piece of stiff wire and a bit of putty. Use the putty to secure the end of the wire in the bottom of the larger flower pot.

4 Next, simply weave your four smaller flower pots onto the wire, making sure they go in opposite directions. Add a small drop of white glue to the bottom edge of each small flower pot to keep it secured on the pot below.

5 Now all you have to do is add a dollop of putty to each pot that can hold your miniature flowers securely in place. Or you can glue in some flower foam to hold your flowers.

You can now fill your little pots with the flowers of your choice. Use some that you have purchased, made from a kit, or even ones you made from scratch!

No matter which, your display will be beautiful! This little garden feature will fit well into any miniature yard, garden, or front porch, and will add a much-needed dash of spring freshness.

Try making some of your pots with lovely greenery spilling over the edges for an interesting twist on your average indoor houseplant pot. And remember, with a profusion of lovely flowers spilling over the edges of your new flower pot display, it really can be spring all year round!

Sweet dreams

Dress your mini baby in a beautiful knit gown

BY NICOLA SMITH

Nicola Smith, also known as The Knitting Lady, has dressed this doll in a beautiful gown with pretty pink trim.

Knitting with beads

Bring yarn to front and slide the bead into position at front of work.

P the next st keeping the yarn fairly tight. Return yarn to back of work still keeping tension quite firm.

Abbreviations: k = knit, p = purl, ss = stocking stitch, sts = stitches, inc = increase by knitting into front and back of st, sl = slip, yf = yarn forward, yrn = yarn backward, tog = together, psso = pass sl st over, rep = repeat, rem = remaining, patt = pattern, comm = commencing, sep = separately, ktbl = knit into back of next st, rs = right side, B = bead

Scale = 1:12

Materials:

- DMC 80 count thread
- 1mm needles
- 24 beads
- Silk ribbon
- Thin wire 1.5mm dia
- Small rubber, baby doll



Gown front

Thread 11 beads onto yarn.
Cast on 33 sts and k3 rows.

Diamond pattern

Row 1: (k4, yf, sl1, k1, psso)
rep to last 3 sts

Eyelet pattern

Row 1: k.

Row 2: p.

Row 3: k6 (k2tog, yf, k4):
rep to last 3 sts, k3.

Row 4: p.

Rep eyelet patt rows 1 – 4
another 6 times.

Row 49: k2tog (k2tog, k1)
9 times, (k2tog) twice, (21
sts).

Row 50: (p2tog, yrn) to
last st, p1.

Front bodice

Row 51: k.

Row 52: k3, p to last
3 sts, k3.

GOWN BACK

Thread 9 beads onto yarn
and work as front to *.

Row 11: k7, (yf, sl1, k1,
psso, k4) rep to last 2 sts, k2.

Row 13: (yf, sl1, k1, psso,
k1, k2tog, yf, k1) rep to last
st, k1.

Row 15: k3 (yf, sl1, k2tog,
psso, yf, k1, B, k1) rep to last
6 sts, yf, sl1, k2tog, psso, yf, k3.

Row 17: k1, k2tog, yf (k3,
yf, sl1, k2tog, psso, yf) rep
to last 6 sts, k3, yf, sl1, k1,
psso, k1.

Row 19: as Row 11.

Row 20: p.



Eyelet pattern

Thread 9 beads onto yarn and work as front to *.

Row 1: k.

Row 2: p.

Row 3: k6 (k2tog, yf, k4): rep to last 3 sts, k3.

Row 4: p.

Rep eyelet patt rows 1 – 4 another 6 times.

Row 49: k2tog (k2tog, k1) 9 times, (k2tog) twice, (21 sts).

Row 50: (p2tog, yrn) to last st, pl.

Back bodice

Row 51: k1 l turn.

Row 52: k1, p7, k3.

Row 53: k.

Repeat last 2 rows, 6 times. Cast off in p.

Rejoin yarn to rem 10 sts.

Row 51: Cast on 2 sts, k to end.

Row 52: k3, p7, k2.

Row 53: k.

Repeat last 2 rows twice.

Row 58: k3, p7, k2.

Row 59: k1, yf, k2tog (the buttonhole), k to end.

Row 60: k3, p7, k2.

Row 61: k.

Row 62: k3, p7, k2.

Row 63: k.

Row 64: k3, p7, k2.

Row 65: k1, yf, k2tog, (buttonhole), k to end.

Cast off in p.

Join shoulder and side seams. Attach buttons.

Bonnet

Cast on 27 sts and k3 rows.

Work rows 1 to 10 of Gown diamond patt.

Next: comm K, ss 4 rows.

Next Row: (K1, K2tog) to end.

Cut yarn and thread through sts and pull up. Sew a few stitches to fasten and shape bonnet. Attach ribbon ties to each side of bonnet – or work a crochet chain tie.

Pants

Cast on 20 sts.

Work 2 rows single rib, then 2 rows SS.

K2tog at each end of next 8 rows (4 sts).

Work 2 rows SS.

Inc 1 st at each end of next 8 rows (20 sts).

Work 2 rows SS then 2 rows in single rib.

Cast off. Sew side seams together, place on doll and if necessary run a gathering thread around waist.

Bootees

Make two alike.

Thread 1 bead onto yarn and cast on 19 sts and K4 rows.

Dec 1: K6, sl1, K2tog, psso, B, sl1, K2tog, psso, K6.

Dec 2: K6, sl1, K2tog, psso, K6.

Then: work 3 rows in rib. Cast off loosely. Join bottom sole and back seams.

Place all the components on your miniature 1:12 scale baby and place in your scene.

Floral accents

Create art using your lotion bottles

BY DEBBIE ANWEILER

Did you ever look at a soap bottle with a label on it and think that would make a pretty wall art? Well, I recently made mini wall art from a soap bottle label and you can too.

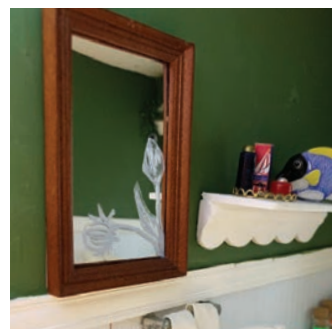
1 Take a Bath and Body Works hand soap bottle and use the label and make the smallest or largest art piece you want. I show three varieties of bottles that I used.

2 Carefully peel off the label from the bottle, but be sure to do it very slowly and carefully, as it does tear easily. Then cut out the main portion you want to use.

3 Using your small blade scissors, carefully cut out the general portion(s) of the label you want to use.

4 Using the larger portion you cut out, carefully trim the flowers you want to use for your wall art. Try and keep all the small details when cutting it out. Once finished it will look like the photos shown.

5 Take this piece and lay it on pieces of card stock and lay a frame on top. This is to determine what background and frame you will want for your finished



Scale = 1:12

Materials:

- Bath and Body Works hand soap bottles
- Small blade scissors
- Tweezers
- Glue stick
- Assorted color card stock
- Assorted frames
- Wax paper

PROJECT



piece. Once you have determined which card stock to use, measure it to fit the frame and cut it out.

6 Next, using your glue stick, glue your cutout to the card stock and let it dry. After it has dried you can attach the card stock to the miniature frame.

You now have beautiful wall art to hang in your dollhouse that no one else will have. Enjoy the possi-



TOPTIP:

You can use a simple design on a mirror or glass to look like etching.

bilities you can make from this idea. I am now going to make trivets for my kitchen.



Above: There are many styles to choose from so pay attention the next time you get soap!

Pin cushion *By Debbie Booth*



Materials:

- Mini creamer or pitcher
- Cotton print fabric
- Decoupage glue
- Polyester fiberfill
- Small paint brush
- Threaded needle
- Wire cutter
- Straight pins

1 Cut a small piece of a cotton fabric design and glue it on the front of the pitcher. Press in place.

2 Cut 1" circle. Stitch around the edge of the fabric circle. Stuff the fiberfill inside. Pull thread tight and knot.



3 Add glue and place the stuffed fabric circle inside the pitcher.

4 Use wire cutter to cut straight pins. Cut 2/3 off of the straight pins.

5 Once the pin cushion has dried place 3 or 4 straight pins inside the puffy part of the pin cushion. You're done!

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