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WELCOME

to the December edition!

"Tis the season to be jolly..." and make lots of festive miniatures! This issue is fabulously festive, from making a Christmas cookie cake, enjoying a host of incredible artisans' Christmas food work, to knitting a tiny elf outfit for the baby in your dolls house or adorning your house with snow. Whether your pleasure lies in the making, or perusing the inspiration, we have something to suit.

Last month saw with arrival of the autumn Miniatura show, and contributor Ann Evans was there to celebrate in the joy in visiting a show – she also bumped into a number of contestants from The Great Big Tiny Design Challenge, turn to page 30 for all the details!

We do have something exciting to share with you this issue, we are 30! December marks the 30th anniversary of Dolls House and Miniature Scene – what an incredible achievement! I'd like to take this opportunity to thank every reader, old and new, who has supported the magazine throughout these three decades. Have you been with us since the very beginning?! Do let us know! It's a very exciting time, to look back at what has been achieved and how the miniature industry has developed over that time, and also to look forward – as we enter this new decade, we look to make sure our readers are enjoying the contents, whether that's the themes, history, projects – we want to hear from you to make sure we thrive for the next ten years! But first, let's celebrate with cake – creating Sadie Brown's celebration cake on page 36.

From everyone at DHMS, we wish you and your loved ones a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year!

Joanne Garwell

Editor



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A FESTIVE FEAST



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Mini makes to inspire

CONTESTANTS REUNITED!



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WE'RE 30!



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Celebrate with cake

A massive thank you to this month's contributors...

Sadie Brown, Deb Weissler, Ann Evans, Angela Turner, Maive Ferrando, Moi Ali & Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel.



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Elizabeth Joseph,
@blackgirldollhouseclub ▶

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HOW TO ENTER GIVEAWAYS

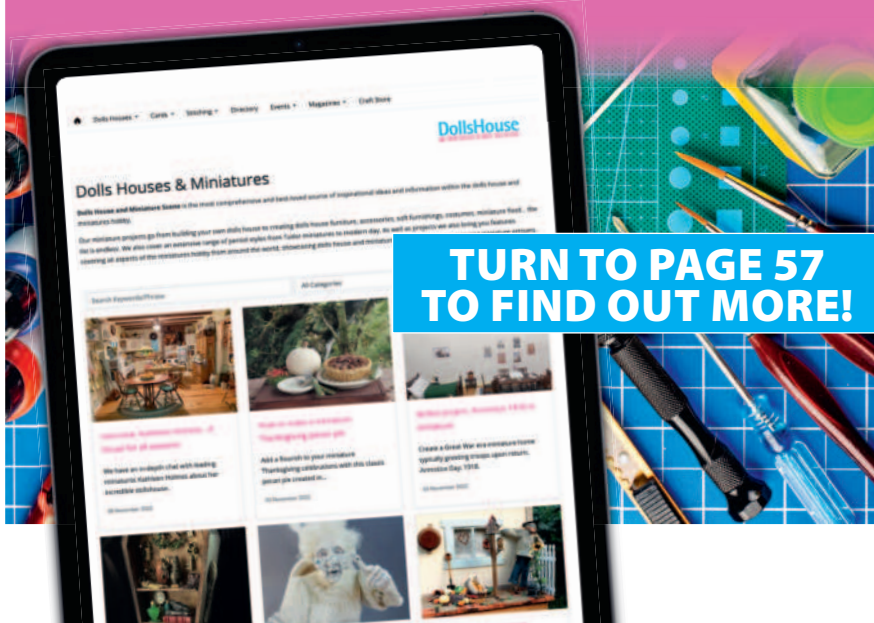
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Christmas cookie cake

"I hope you have lots of miniature Christmas cookies leftover from last year, because you're going to need a lot in this project! I will show you how to make the checkerboard biscuits and the candy canes, as the other cookies are much simpler, but feel free to decorate your cake with other cookies, fruit or whichever food means Christmas to you" Maive



YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- White, dark brown, translucent, red, dark red, vanilla, light brown and ecru polymer clay (plus some spare/scrap clay)
- Liquid polymer clay
- Water-based gloss varnish
- Soft pastels and acrylic paint
- Craft sand and micro marbles
- Different Christmas coloured decorations that you may already have

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Small paintbrushes
- Blades
- Small ball tools
- Pasta machine (or acrylic rolling pin)
- Ceramic tiles to work and bake your pieces on
- Flat sculpting tool and pointy tool
- Toothbrush



1 Roll out a sheet of scrap clay (any colour) and cut out five circles. Then roll out a thin sheet of polymer clay in the colour you imagine the flavour of the cake to be, in my case chocolate, and cut out a circle. Stack the layers together starting from the chocolate, so when the cake is complete, and you turn it over it looks like it's all chocolate on the inside. Part-bake on a ceramic tile for 20 minutes.



2 While the cake is baking, mix white clay with liquid polymer clay until you obtain a thick consistency. When the cake is out of the oven and cool, spread this all over with a flat sculpting tool and bake again for 15 minutes.



3 To make the candy cane, roll some white polymer clay into a cylinder and use a toothpick to create grooves. Roll two smaller strands of red clay and pop them in the grooves. Turn the cylinder over and create another two smaller grooves and add two much thinner strands of dark red clay for variation.



4 Gently press the strands into the white clay and once you're confident they're secured, roll the cylinder into a cane until you have the desired gauge for the candy canes and twist it. Shape them into lollipops or candy canes and cut them a little longer than needed as you can always trim them later. Bake for 15 minutes.



5 To make the checkerboard biscuits, roll out a sheet of vanilla clay and one in a chocolate colour. Stack two sheets (settings number #1 and #5 of your pasta machine – settings may differ) of the same colour and cut into even strips. Arrange the strips into a checkerboard pattern and slice. Soften the biscuits with your finger and texture with a toothbrush. Dust a little beige soft pastel to make the vanilla part look baked. Part-bake for 15-20 minutes.



6 I made a couple of gingerbread men mixing ecru and light brown clay and decorating them with a little white liquid polymer clay and red and green micro marbles. Part-bake for 15-20 minutes.



7 To make the sugar-coated berries, take translucent clay and mix it with equal amounts of red and dark red for a little variation. Roll the clays into strands and cut a few even pieces. Roll them into balls and coat them in a little liquid clay. Roll the balls of clay in some white craft sand to create the illusion of sugar. Part-bake. You can add these to the cake before or immediately after spreading the chocolate icing.

TO MAKE MORE COOKIES:



8 Thumbprint jam cookies: Roll a sheet of vanilla clay (setting #4 or so of your pasta machine). Cut out some small circles and indent the centre with a small ball tool. Add texture with a toothbrush and dust a little beige soft pastel. Add a mix of red clay and liquid clay in the centre to make the jam.

Heart shaped cookies:

Roll out a sheet of vanilla clay and cut lots of hearts. Add texture with a toothbrush and dust a little beige soft pastel. Paint half of the hearts with brown acrylic paint after baking. Use brown clay to make the chocolate heart cookies and decorate with a mix of white clay and liquid clay.



9 Spread a thin layer of the white cream on top of the cake and arrange your decorations. Try to use the decorations themselves as support of some of the bigger ones like the candy canes. The cream will need to be thick for it to hold the decorations in place. To add the gingerbread man and candy cane on the front, use the cream as glue. Part-bake.



10 To make the chocolate icing, mix dark brown polymer clay and liquid polymer clay to a runny consistency and carefully spread it on top of the cake. Then use a pointy tool to create all the drips round the sides. Add some micro marbles here and there plus any other decorations you want and bake one last time for at least 30 minutes. Once baked and cool, glaze the elements of your choice with gloss varnish and your miniature. Your Christmas cake is complete! 🏠

Maive's Top Tip!

To make any of the cookies, miniature cutters can be used, or you can make your own. Simply make the original from clay or make a paper template to easily cut out the shape. Once your originals are baked and cool, make moulds of them using 2-part silicone mould putty. Another great way of making cookies is using miniature paper punches.

Tiny appetites

Miniature clay food sculptures whet holiday appetites!



▲ Holiday table

“So many people use their tiny homes as a special place to recreate their happy childhoods. If I can help, I do”



Holiday hams

As the holidays come rushing in and we eagerly fill our grocery carts for the Christmas feast, our dolls houses should be doing likewise. For many miniaturists, our vignettes often remain static year-round, but the four seasons offer plenty of opportunities to refresh, renew and decorate with panache!

No other holiday has quite the cultural impact like Christmas. What was once toted out in early December, now Halloween is barely over before the stores are decorated top to bottom. No other holiday consumes an entire month (or more), making it the favourite throughout much of the world. The Christmas season encompasses movies, music, gifts, glittering decorations and food. For miniaturists who love portraying the various holidays in their own lilliputian worlds, Christmas tops the list. Just ask mini clay food sculptor Dianne Gordon...

Much of her sales and inventory focus around the holidays. By the time our spring



▲ Cookies For Santa

and early summer flowers are in bloom, Dianne has already started on her Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas items. Always in high demand are her breads and cakes that her customers remember their European grandmothers making. "Last year, I spent an entire week just recreating miniature Christmas breads from around the world. The German stollen was the most popular, followed closely by the Santa Lucia breads and the Italian fruit-studded Panettone."

Dianne readily admits she has a passion for real food, both making and eating it, "In my home, the kitchen is its heart. So, the idea of creating it in miniature really appeals to me. At Christmas, it's not enough to whip up a batch of ordinary chocolate chip cookies. Everything at Christmas is labour intensive, and is as beautiful to look at, as it is to eat. Half of the cookies baked are strung and displayed on a tree in our family room. Albeit challenging at times, it's nice to be able to preserve the memory of all



these beautiful foods in miniature. Between the fruit cakes, gingerbread houses and miniature prime rib roasts, there is just never enough surface space in any of my miniature vignettes to display all I've made."

Dianne is truly proficient at creating miniature food with clay, but admits she's never been able to make serving dishes, cookware or cutting boards on which to display them. Fortunately, her son Blake has a gift for design as well. With his laser cutter and 3D printer, he makes all her bowls, plates, casserole dishes, frying pans, cutting boards etc that showcase both their work.

The two are already working overtime getting ready for the 2022 holiday season. With a gift for recreating meat in miniature, Dianne is busy accumulating mounds

of crown roasts, hams and turkeys. It's a veritable feast for the eye! "I like to create meat in all stages: raw on a wooden board, wrapped in foam packaging, oven ready in a roasting pan, fresh from the oven, browned and set on a serving platter, or sliced and placed on individual dinner plates set on the table."

This is TinyAppetite's third Etsy Christmas, and, looking back, it all began with a Lundby dolls house. Growing up in the San Fernando Valley in Southern California, Dianne spent a great deal of time admiring one particular dolls house she had spotted in a toy shop. "Much to my delight, when I was nine years old it materialized under my Christmas tree," she recalls. "Over the years, my parents and grandparents bought me all the major

furniture pieces and once I had all the big stuff, I turned my attentions to acquiring all the little accessories. I soon learned that most of the things I liked were 1/12th scale, unlike my Lundby house, so if I wanted tiny food, tiny throw pillows or tiny dolls, I was going to have to make them myself."

Fortunately, Dianne's mother was a Hollywood set designer and art director, who supplied her daughter with all the tools, materials and know-how to make her tiny dreams come true. The first pieces may have been clumsy and rudimentary, but one has to start somewhere! Later on, married and with four children of her own, she would never let them play with that beloved childhood treasure. Instead, she gave them a 1/12th scale dolls house of their own. Once they



Stockings were hung

were all grown up, she considered giving it away, but it was still in good condition.

"I only gave away the cheap furnishings. I refurnished the house with lovely pieces collected here and there, and then decided to invest in all the wonderful little accessories. I admit, I had sticker shock when I found out what artists were asking for their beautiful little cakes and roasts. When I complained to my mother, she was surprised I was even considering buying someone else's art. "You can make all of those things yourself, Dianne." My mom started sending me videos of other polymer clay artists

creating tiny foods. Nearly 80, who knew she even knew how to access YouTube?!"

After a year of trial and error, Dianne had ironed out the wrinkles. She also had enough inventory to fill ten dolls houses! That was when her eldest daughter suggested setting up an Etsy shop to sell off excess inventory. With Dianne's university degree in journalism, which included knowledge of photo journalism, she has been able to create and photograph charming vignettes that attract a host of miniaturists and more friends than she ever dreamed of.

"I know so many different dolls houses and their owners intimately. I try and accept all custom orders suggested to me, because I enjoy being able to give my customers exactly what they're dreaming of. So many people use their tiny homes as a special place to recreate their happy childhoods. If I can help, I do."

To keep her inventory well stocked, Dianne begins work at 6AM, her kitchen table a collection of sharp dental tools, a high-powered light and a cup of black coffee. At 57, Dianne can still sculpt without the aid of glasses or magnification. During the day she sculpts, and when it's too dark to sculpt any longer, she researches a variety of foods online and packages orders. "I work every day of the week," Dianne confesses, "because I love what I do. I do not know the difference between being at work and enjoying my free time."

Her love for miniature food is evident in the exacting details of her work. Hams glisten with fat, roasted turkey skin looks crisp and perfectly browned, European breads appear piping hot from the oven, her sweet treats look mouth-watering. Rest assured her house is the first stop Santa makes for a plate of delicious cookies. Her mini vignettes are sheer perfection and one could build an entire room around one. Clearly her dream is to make even the smallest Christmas wish come true.

So while you are busy decorating your own home and planning the Christmas feast, don't overlook the wee folks in your dolls houses who have been awaiting the holidays all year long too. 🏠

Hanukkah treats



Cookies



Chocolate delight



Isla's original 1930s ice skate



▲ Changing times! The 1970s inspired ice skater's changing room



Making memories



DHMS magazine isn't just for Christmas, it's for life! As the magazine celebrates its 30th birthday this month, we skate into the past with emerging talent, Isla Bissbolissian, who shares her experience as a first-time exhibitor at the Kensington Dollshouse Festival.

Show time

'Miniature spaces in vintage places' is how Isla Bissbolissian sums up her work on Instagram, a perfect synopsis for art reflecting the past, present and future in a variety of different ways. The year of 2022 has been an important year for Isla, who was amongst the new exhibitors at the Kensington Dollshouse Festival in the spring and is now gearing up to attend

their Christmas show. "I love the KDF and have been many times. But I knew that it's hard to get in as an exhibitor. It was my husband who finally persuaded me that I should approach the KDF," says Isla, adding her heart was in her mouth when she finally pressed send on that all-important email. "They agreed to having a look at my work during my visit to the autumn show. I was so nervous! I couldn't decide what to wear.

I couldn't decide which pieces to take. I worked right up to the last moment. In the end Charlotte (Stokoe) was so welcoming there was nothing to be nervous of. And the best bit was she loved my work and was willing to take a chance on me as a new exhibitor. I was so thrilled!" With Isla's place at the show secured, she remembers the magnitude of what lay ahead dawning on her on the drive home. "I worked so hard. [PH](#)



The architect of miniature design



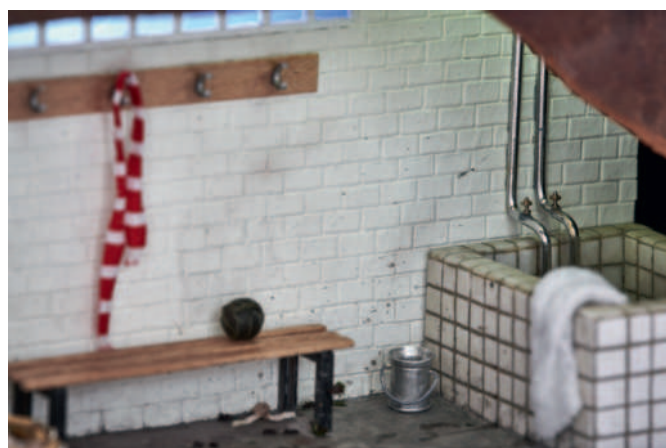
Heart and sole. Kick off the imagination with Isla's 1950s football boot

It was very exciting, but I can't tell you the amount of times I scrapped something because it wasn't quite good enough. The learning curve was practically a vertical line as I tried to solve problems with conserving and restoring items, introducing lighting safely into vintage spaces and getting the tiny scales perfectly right."

But as Isla discovered, the delights and challenges of being a show exhibitor extend well beyond the artist's studio. "Once you have your designs you suddenly realise you have to display them. What on earth did I want it to look like? I had designed the whole business to be quietly eco-friendly. 'Miniatures with a tiny footprint' is my motto. I was recycling and reusing items. Using as little plastic as possible, sourcing materials locally. Even my energy was renewable." Bearing this in mind, Isla didn't want to



▲► Miniature art meets its match!





▲ Top left & top right:
'The Writer's Retreat'

◀ Watch your favourite
festive films in
'The Old Cinema'

visiting there were absolutely lovely! We had such a good reception. People loved what I did. It was a wonderful two days, and I am really looking forward to being back there in December to show everyone all my new ideas." Additions to Isla's portfolio at this month's Christmas show will include a new range of vintage pieces with 1/48th scale interiors, each one unfurnished to allow collectors to add their own stamp. Isla describes them as unconventional dolls houses. "I think it will be wonderful to see how people fill them. The miniaturing world is full of such creative people!"

Get off on the right foot

Taking Isla's experience into consideration, it seems there is one thing we should all remember, ensuring we can follow in her successful footsteps! "The biggest lesson I learnt of all at the fair is that comfortable shoes are the only way to go!" Staying with shoes, amongst the pieces exhibited by Isla at Kensington was her vintage ice skate. Made in Newcastle in the 1930s, this piece of real history has found a new life as a 1970s themed ice skater's changing room. Beautifully designed with frosted shower cubicles edged in brass and a genuine limestone floor, this is a stunning example of miniature art. Its companion piece, a 1950s football boot is amongst Isla's favourite pieces, the seventy-year-old footwear's wear and tear only adding to its ability to capture her imagination. "You can't help but think of all the cold rainy Sundays it skid about on mud. And the best thing

simply bulk purchase mass produced display plinths with an already sizeable carbon footprint. Instead, she created a unique display, upcycling surplus wooden crates sourced from a nearby wine retailer in return for charitable donations. With their dark stain, they looked incredible and proved ideal for showcasing Isla's vintage dioramas. "I was convinced the table cloth should be wool as it creases less than cotton. I even rolled it on a long cardboard tube rather than fold it. Annoyingly, when I got it out at the show to set up it had got creased at one end in the car, and of course that was the end that was right at the front! Best laid

plans, eh? There were logistics, like payment systems and packaging to be procured. Parking and hotels to be booked. I hoped my sister would come help me on the stall but actually my husband offered. He is very successful and to be honest, I was quite worried about doing miserably at the fair, everyone hating my work and him being there to witness it! I don't know if anyone else ever feels like that? As it turned out he was such a massive help. He was really good at speaking to people at the fair. I am dyslexic and after a while I seem to just simply run out of words. But he talked all day and even did the lunch runs. The people

Brick by brick

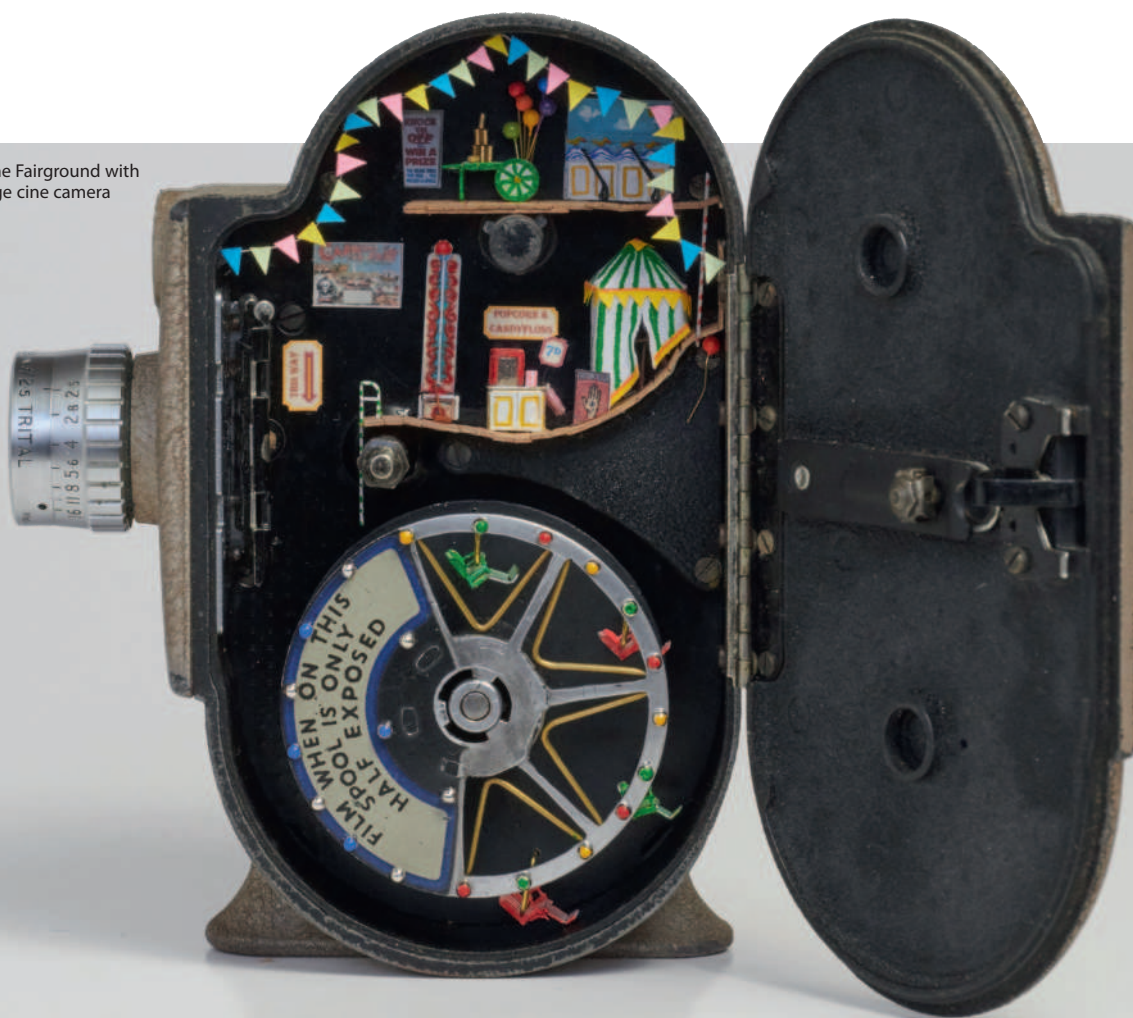


The beautiful vintage watch with a miniature surprise inside



'Five Minutes of Peace'

A trip to The Fairground with Isla's vintage cine camera



is that when we bought it, its pair had a letter tucked into it to act as an insole. It was all about a girl leaving a boy. I love the irreverence of using it as an insole!" The piece, which was also Isla's 2022 PIMA entry, proved exceptionally challenging when it came to creating a viewpoint into the scene. "It was nerve wracking to cut it," remembers Isla. "The biggest problem with a shoe is that there isn't a straight line or regular angle in any direction! I do not recommend them for the fainthearted. There was a lot of trial and error, made worse because I was so admiring of the boot."

Isla lists some of the accessories she designed for the interior, including the tiny leather football, but there is one aspect of the diorama it's clear she really enjoyed creating! "The grassy mud!" she exclaims. "I really enjoyed that. Oh, and weaving the little laundry basket, such good fun. I love a bit of weaving. It was one of the first pieces I made where the contents aren't stuck down like a classic diorama. So the owner can change it up, play with or design – whatever you like to call it – the space however they like it. But the whole project was all made even better by us winning the Euros this year! And in such an honourable and happy fashion that everyone could be proud of and enjoy. Well done our team!"

The art of a jeweller

To achieve this level of incredible detail within such a small space is indicative of exceptional talent, and Isla is also a trained jeweller and silversmith, skills which translate well to her new career in the miniatures arts. "Jewellery is naturally on a small scale. The tools are really well suited to fine and intricate work," she explains. "From the casting of individual items to the piercing of tiny details with saw blades thinner than a strand of cotton. I often use many of my jewellery tools today, in particular the needle files, piercing saw and pliers. I highly recommend locking diamond tweezers for miniaturists. They are tweezers with a sliding lock which makes painting, filing, or gluing something so much easier as the item stays firmly held however long you are working on it. Jeweller's often work using magnifying glasses too, which is good practice for miniaturising. In jewellery making, the little parts are always pinging off so you get very good at keeping hold of them or finding them, which has also been really useful. And you certainly know your way around a pair of pliers."

Isla's appreciation of miniature art goes back much further, however, fondly recalling childhood holidays with her Nanny and Grampa at their home in East Sussex. "There was a lovely library which my nan started to

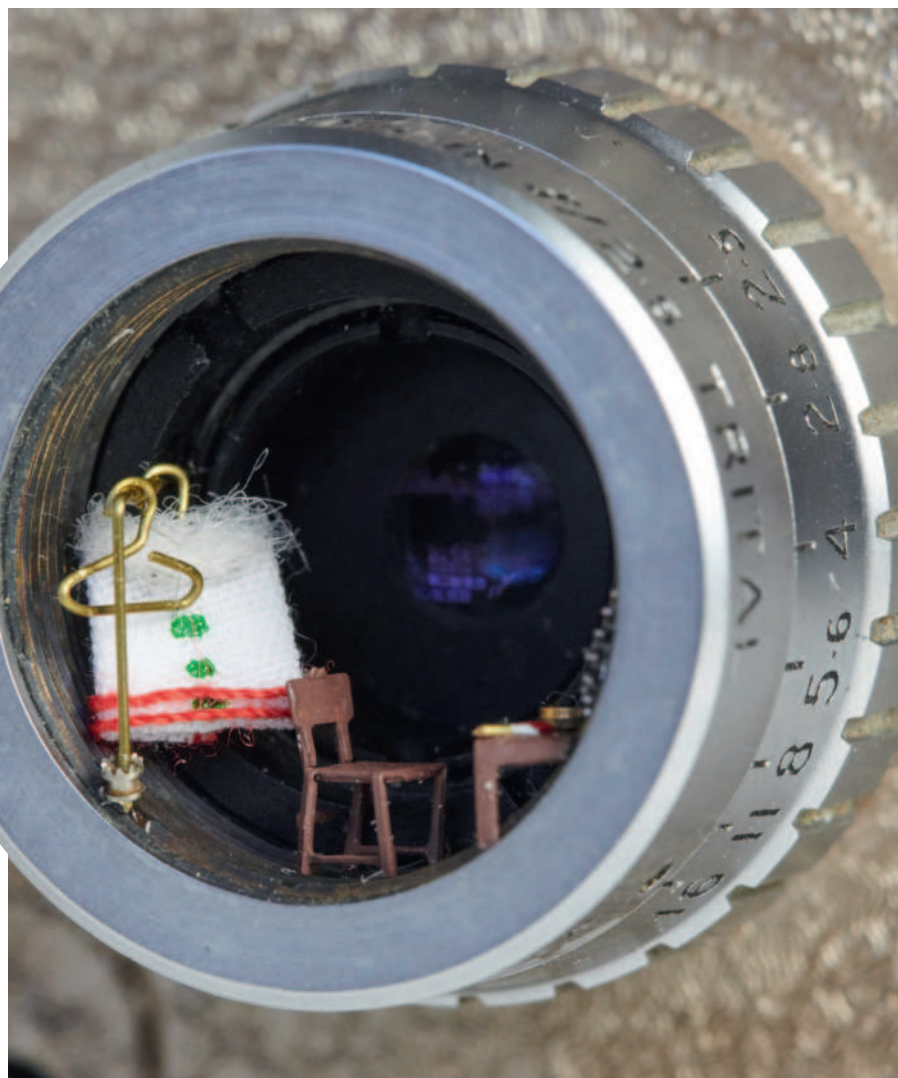
take us to when I was about seven. But my favourite place was the toy museum above it. I was fascinated by the exhibits and lost my heart to the tiny dolls house items. The museum had a small shop. The first thing I fell in love with was a tiny teddy bear. The size of your fingernail. So small!! Eventually, after a summer of admiring it, my mum bought it for me. Which was a big thing as we were quite poor at the time. And she said to me 'you know, I think you could make that,' and she was right. It was just a few pieces of pipe cleaner, two tiny black beads and a snippet of leather as a waistcoat. She leant me her pliers and soon I was making them for all my friends. My Nanny also took me to the amazing toy museum in Arundel. Sadly, it is no longer there. In fact, I was lucky enough to be working at Bonhams Auction House when the museum's contents were consigned to them for sale. I felt sad but also very privileged to be able to handle the contents as we packed it up to take back to London. It was an amazing opportunity to see up close some really fantastic miniatures."

Lights, camera, action

Gathering a lifetime of inspiration, other unusual vintage items Isla has used to create her miniature spaces include a beautiful Woodstock typewriter, incorporating a tiny

'writer's retreat' and an old pocket watch, home to the cleverly titled interior/exterior scene, 'Five Minutes Peace'. They are both exquisite, but it's impossible not to be drawn to several vintage cameras found within Isla's portfolio, creating a snapshot of miniature art inside each one. "I have always loved mechanical objects. I have a tendency to take them apart and find out how they work. And sometimes I even put them back together working again!" admits Isla. "My uncle gave us a second hand SLR camera, a Nikon FE2, when my sister and I started art foundation courses. I loved that camera, I loved developing the pictures even, but shooting pictures was not for me. I am a 3D person. However, I did marry a photographer. We have a lot of vintage cameras in our house on display and I find the design enigmatic and beautiful, and I enjoy looking at them. I thought to myself, here is a way I could have a shelf displaying beautiful objects and then when you get up close you see the miniature world too. The best of both worlds!"

Inspired by these exceptional pieces of photographic history, Isla couldn't resist the opportunity to create a diorama within an old Brownie camera, no longer functioning and similar to one her mother used to own. The scene is an architect's office, complete with drawing board and tiny filing cabinet. There are books lining the shelves and even an open box file sitting on the desk. "When I saw the box Brownie camera, the space inside it just looked so much like a room. And I thought of the little goblins that Terry Pratchett said painted pictures in the iconograph in the Discworld novels and I thought to myself, this space is too smart for a goblin," says Isla, deciding that the interior lent itself much better to that of a designer. This, however, took some consideration. "But a designer of what? I had seen a set from Severn Models which had an architect's desk which would work so well for a designer. The scale fit. The design period fit. It was like they were made for each other. I added other details as the idea evolved. Even if I plan something meticulously there will always be inspirations as I go along." Isla talks about all the tiny elements, including the plants and paint jars, but there is one element with a very special connection. "The brass ceiling light shade I was particularly pleased with. It's a tiny brass part from a



▲ Clowning around inside the lens. A tiny fairground dressing room

broken Walkman that I took apart when I was 15 and didn't get back working again. I felt that my years of holding onto things because one day they might be useful was finally vindicated! In the end it had exactly the atmosphere I was looking for. And I loved it. So much so I have never been able to part with it. I thought, I have to do this again. But I am no good at making the same thing over and over again. I used to get bored making the second earring in a pair!" This led to the diorama becoming, for want of a better word, the architect of Isla's miniature journey. "That's when I decided to choose different cameras and objects. There are so many wonderful ones to choose from. I have a cupboard full of inspiring pieces all calling to be worked on. I choose items that are past being useful or are broken so I am saving something from landfill or the scrap heap and giving them a new lease of life."

Throughout this short series we have looked at the work of artisan, Kathleen Holmes, whose kitchen roombox seamlessly

melded retro design with contemporary miniatures technology, and talked to Kath Holden of Delph Miniatures, who are celebrating their own 30 years in small scale this year. Isla joins these ranks of excellence as an undeniably exciting talent, demonstrating that the world of smallscale art has much to celebrate, and is going from strength to strength as the magazine moves into its fourth decade. The best is definitely yet to come! 🏠



INFO

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www.theborrowedisle.com

Missed the August issue of DHMS with part 1 or the October issue with part 2? Don't worry, head to our website to get your copy.

Instagram identities:

ELIZABETH JOSEPH @BLACKGIRLDOLLSHOUSECLUB



Elizabeth Joseph

You may recognise Elizabeth Joseph from on the telly!



Tablescape at the Museum of the Home



When I was watching The Great Big Tiny Design Challenge, I was very taken with Elizabeth Joseph's miniatures and I looked up her Instagram account. It was so colourful that it left me inspired to try making a miniature item inspired by my own heritage.

Londoner Elizabeth was given a dolls house when she was around seven years old and she's never looked back. "I've always gone to dolls house exhibitions," she told me, "and visited the (now closed) [P&P](#)



Stunning tablescape

dolls house shop owned by the late Kristin Baybar. Over the years I've also looked out for miniature objects to buy at car boot sales."

During lockdown 2021, Elizabeth was thinking about starting a new project: "Inspired by a mini dolls house for sale online, I made my own full-sized dolls house based on a typical Caribbean house."

Elizabeth is a graphic designer, has a degree in 3-Dimensional Design and has also studied Art History. She is completely self-taught when it comes to miniatures, although her design degree stood her in good stead and she further honed her craft skills as a jewellery maker, where she used laser-cutting to make small acrylic charms and necklaces and this has come in handy as a mini-maker. It has also influenced her work, as she explained: "I'm revamping the front of my dolls house at the moment, using yellow paint, green bold Adinkra patterns and I will decorate it with silver diamantés at the end."

I asked her about Adinkra patterns: "Adinkra are symbols from Ghana that are used extensively in fabrics, ceramics, household items such as carved stools, and in various architectural features. They are very decorative but they also have meaning and convey traditional wisdom. I'm influenced by my travels around North Africa and my Ghanaian ancestry, and also by fashion trends. I've started incorporating Adinkra symbols into the surface of my miniatures. My chairs and tables are Victorian or Regency in style, but I cover them with 'African' fabric and paint them in bright colours. I use Photoshop to rescale the patterns, and an online company prints the fabric and posts it to me."



Adinkra designs



A pop of colour in the dining room

What I love about Elizabeth's work is how it conveys something about her and her heritage. She outlined her vision: "I would love for people of all backgrounds to start creating a family heirloom dolls house full of a family's stories and incorporating miniature versions of items that no longer exist. Just imagine that dolls house being handed down the generations as a family possession with a history!" My own Bengali heritage would be a good starting place for my next miniature, perhaps using the vibrant colours of the sub-continent and textiles such as sari fabric.

Elizabeth believes that miniatures are potentially a great leveller: "Right now, adult dolls house appreciation has an older, middle-class image, and I want to create a space where we can all feel at home.

▼ Colourful cabinet



There's no need to tip-toe around the edges of a world that doesn't reflect our tastes and histories. I still love looking at people's Regency and Victorian style dolls houses, and can appreciate all that wood-turning on a lathe and carefully carved details. They are so captivating in miniature form. But the anonymous framed portraits of random Victorian landowners? I don't really relate to them that much!"

She continued: "You don't have to have a full-sized dolls house in your home, and you may not have the space, but most of us can have a roombox or even just a small collection of miniature items lined up on the mantelpiece."



Ghanaian prints on chair seats



One of Elizabeth's chairs

Miniatures are more than just a hobby to Elizabeth, who has a business running workshops, and has plans for offshoots: "There are a lot of people selling dolls house furniture, so doing workshops is a bit different. I'm also working on a kit so people can make an item at home if they are unable to attend a workshop. Oh, and I'm going to expand into miniature fashion using deadstock or unsold clothes from designer brands. So if any designer fashion brands are reading... get in touch! I'll be using the fabric to cover miniature chaise lounge and Victorian style chairs."

Elizabeth was commissioned by the Museum of the Home in Hoxton, London, to

make a miniature 'tablescape' which is now on permanent display there. It comprises of 20 miniature chairs along a table dressed for a dinner party. Each chair represents a woman who has succeeded in the creative industries. "I'm very proud to be the Resident Miniaturist for the Museum," she told me, "and to have my work displayed there. I run workshops there too. Back in June I did one where everyone made a miniature Art Deco style dressing table. Part of my role is to encourage people to create their own miniature world that reflects their own background and interests."

Unusually, Elizabeth's furniture for her workshops is 1/10th scale: "This is so the item is not too fiddly for people unused to crafting."



China cabinet workshop



Dressing table closeup



Take a Deco at this



Elizabeth's distinctive style



Afro hair tools and ointment

But I also make 1/12th scale pieces for my own dolls house, although I do mix 1/12th and 1/10th scale in my dolls house as well. If I like something, I'm not too worried about scale. Dolls houses are there to be enjoyed. It's a pretend world, not a maths class!"

Her own dolls house is a sight to behold. It contains a beauty room with items such as a hand-made Afro comb, a hot comb, Madam C J Walker's Hair Ointment, and a glamorous faux crocodile skin clutch bag with diamante clasp. The walls are decorated with illustrations of Josephine Baker with banana leaves. Miss Baker, a black American dancer, took America by storm in the 1920s, before moving to France.

The dining room is work in progress. Its vibrant yellow wooden kitchen cabinet contains glass jars with seasonings, a miniature macrame hanging, and Barbados plates and tray made from air clay and printed paper. This wallpaper is a repeat pattern called 'Mango Trees' that Elizabeth created in Photoshop. There is a dining table with Caribbean-style table decorations and wooden painted chairs. "I'm currently designing a Georgian-style bedroom, which will have fabrics printed in Ghana," she told me, "and I'm collaborating with a fabric designer for the bed linen and fabric for the canopy."

The Art Gallery room is also still in progress. Elizabeth explained: "I'm currently collecting artworks from different artists for my art gallery room. I've asked them to either miniaturise a piece of their work, or send me small offcuts and I will make a collage from them. I will display the artworks on the walls of one of the rooms."

I couldn't say goodbye to this incredible miniature talent without asking her how she ended up on the telly: "One of the casting directors found me via my Instagram account and asked me to apply to be on the show. It was an interesting experience, as we were on a time limit to make the items. Of course, usually there is no time limit and I can spend as many hours as I want making my items, so that was a challenge. We had to work as a team on the show, which was really great as we all learnt from each other."

You may not be a casting director, dear reader, but I urge you to drop by and check out Elizabeth's Instagram for some colourful, creative miniature inspiration. 🏠

**INFO**

If you'd like to see more of Elizabeth's work, she also has a website where you can sign up for her newsletter:

www.blackgirldollhouseclub.com



Chairs as ornaments

Let it snow!

Learn how to create a snowy log cabin effect on an MDF building. MDF is a great building material, but it can be a bit 'flat'. This simple tutorial shows two techniques; how to create a log cabin effect, and how to make it snow! The log cabin effect can be added to any building – all over, or just to a wall or roof. You decide!

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Dry twigs
- Brown paint
- Glue
- White tissues
- Snow (I used Deluxe Materials Scenic Snow Kit)
- Fine white glitter or Deluxe Materials Icy Sparkles (optional)



1 Go for a country walk and gather sufficient straight twigs approx. 8-10mm diameter. Leave them to dry thoroughly (e.g. place them across a radiator and leave them there for a week or so) before cutting to size.



2 Paint the base of the roof brown, as it may be seen in places between the sticks. A patchy finish looks best.



3 Glue the first stick to the edge of the surface where you want to create a log effect. Choose a nice straight stick.



4 Start gluing the rest of the sticks to the surface, as close as possible to each other.



5 Tear up tissues into roughly 1in pieces and place in a bowl.



6 Add warm water and cheap, runny PVA glue to create a kind of paste. Mix well.



7 Apply PVA glue where you would like there to be snow.



8 Apply the papier mache to the glued areas and mould with your fingers to the desired shape and thickness, creating snow drifts and clumps.



9 When the papier mache is dry, add glue or Scenic Bond from the kit and sprinkle with snow. Add snow to areas where there is no papier mache for a frosty look.

Moi says...

"Make sure the sticks are fully dry, as you don't want them to go mouldy!"

LOG PILE



1 Use twig off-cuts to make a log pile.



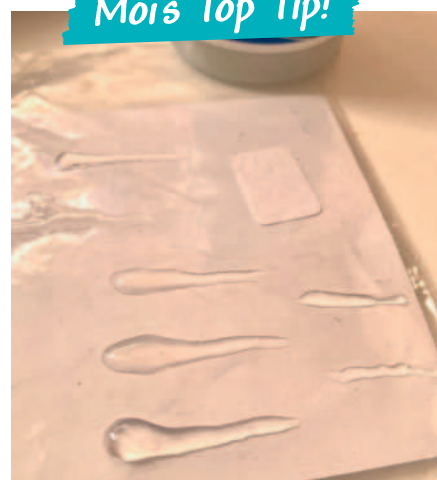
2 Cut six pieces each an inch long. Glue three together, then two on top, then one on top of that to create a triangular shape. Add papier mache where you want the snow to be (as with step 7 to step 8).



3 Add snow as per step 9, and a bird. Perhaps even a spring of holly or a robin on top for an extra festive touch! 🏠



Moi's Top Tip!



"To make non-yellowing icicles, use resin. Using a toothpick, create icicle shapes in resin on a non-porous surface such as a thin piece of plastic (a plastic folder is ideal). You may need to add two or three layers of resin (letting it dry in between) to get the right thickness. When dry, peel off and glue in place on your building."



Moi says...

"To make a thick layer of snow on your roof, without the log effect, cut a piece of polystyrene to fit the area. Add a thin layer of the papier mache for texture, then follow the snow instructions below from step number 5."

96 and counting!

Miniatura's 96th show was bigger and better than ever...



and neglected dwellings! Also new to the autumn show were C J Miniatures, Laser Shrink Ray, Merrily Mad Miniatures, My Little Fancies, My Mini Maison, and The Workshop.

Exquisite one-of-a-kind Polymer Clay Dolls on Enchanted Dolls stand were catching the eye of many people. Artist Timea P Vajonne originally from Hungary achieved IGMA status last year which she was delighted about. Timea is entirely self-taught and, she says is always learning and evolving. Currently, she is working on a tribute figure to HRH Queen Elizabeth II. She commented, "I enjoy creating hand sculpted figures from scratch, inspired by real life. Each figure is created with a little story in mind, hoping to put a smile on everyone's face."

Equally as awesome are the sculptures of Sarah Hendry of Pocket People. Sarah said, "I have fashioned a high quality, aesthetically pleasing collectable range of miniatures called 'Pocket Pets', for dolls house enthusiasts, miniaturists and collectors alike to treasure. They are all hand painted and finished with precision and care for people to treasure."

One of the great things about Miniaturists is how they enjoy sharing their knowledge and methods of work. At the show there were demonstrations

Bigger and better! That was the verdict on the Autumn Miniatura Show held at Stoneleigh NAEC on 1st and 2nd October 2022. This was their 96th show, having started back in 1983 by Bob and Muriel Hopwood. These days, son Andy is at the helm, but he made sure Bob and Muriel were kept fully informed and in touch with many old friends by video calls over the two days.

The show attracted around 1,600 visitors – a 20% increase on the previous year and something they are hoping to continue into the future. It seems that holding the show at Stoneleigh NAEC is a popular move, offering the space, facilities and easy access that the stallholders and visitors appreciated.

Plus, a good choice of hot and cold food and snacks available just a few steps away.

Amongst the 93 exhibitors and so many stunning hand-made miniatures crafted by talented artisans to explore, there were nine new exhibitors. At opposite ends of the scale were Lemon Miniatures who make beautifully realistic house plants from clay that would grace any home, while newcomers Crawlspace – as the name suggests, have the darkest miniatures imaginable, ideal for haunted

▼ Pocket People



by Criss Cross Miniatures, Petite Properties and WHB Miniatures; also talks and advice from Andy Spencer Photography, and David Bishop offering wiring advice and answering questions.

Additionally, Fredonas Miniature Dreams, Kit Meggitt, Rugby Miniaturists and Small Scale Fiddlers all put on workshops over the weekend. Some for beginners and children, others for the more experienced. For many it was their first attempt at making a miniature, but if they'd caught the bug they were in the right place to stock up on materials and equipment to take up the hobby.

Rugby Miniaturists and Small Scale Fiddlers had also brought along an exhibition of what they'd been working on over the last few months. Rugby Miniaturists had created a Glamping display showing how creative you can be with an upturned hanging basket liner! While Small Scale Fiddlers had been exercising their green fingers by making their own allotments. There wasn't two alike with the plots cultivating every sort of salad and vegetable along with keeping chickens and bees; building bonfires and compost heaps and even secretly brewing some illicit hooch!

The special exhibits were really popular at the show. Ayari Tudor-Jones brought along her room boxes showing her family's early life in Mexico, and her grandparents' lives in Russia. Dee Dale had built a fun reproduction of the Beetlejuice House with some adaptations of her own such as a chair in the shape of a hand. Rebecca of Miniature Real Estate had created a scene from the TV series Stranger Things. ▶



Photos by Rob Tysall – Pro Photography



Beetlejuice

And Julie Jackson of Dee Daw Designs had brought her famous Featherstone Hall Hotel out of retirement to the delight of the visitors. Many readers will recall Julie building this incredible mansion for the 200th issue of Dolls House & Miniature Scene magazine some ten years ago.

Julie explained, "The creation of the house was featured in the magazine over 24-months and it went on display at Miniatura several times, and also to a show in Holland – but that was a trip too far and afterwards I retired the house from exhibitions.

"It was only after realising I had missed the 10-year anniversary which happened during the Covid lockdowns, that I took a good look at the house and thought how great it would be to spruce it up and get it back out there! The only place to take it had to be back to the show it was launched at – Miniatura."

Miniatura organiser Andy Hopwood said, "I want to say a great big thank you to everyone who helped make Miniatura so fantastic. The exhibitors excelled themselves as always. The visitors brought so much enthusiasm and created a great buzz in the hall. I also want to thank my brilliant team who really are indispensable.

Miniature Needlework Society





D.B. Miniatures Diane and Pete Bull.



Kate Pinsent

And a special thanks to the security and traffic staff, and our shuttle bus drivers. They all went the extra mile and the positive, kind, compliments from visitors prove it. We hope you had a lovely visit, and we will see you all again soon."

All in all, a fabulous show that's got everyone looking forward to the next one in spring 2023! 🏠

**INFO**

More information:

www.miniature.co.uk



Visitors enjoy Romney Miniatures stand

Great Big Tiny Design Challenge. L-R: Julie, Sharon, Beth and Thomas



A great big tiny get together



Quirky pumpkins on Michael R Miniatures stand

Photos by Rob Tysall – Pro Photography

It's always fun to meet up with old friends at dolls house shows, and this autumn's Miniatura show was a super opportunity to catch up with friends, acquaintances... and fellow contestants!

Five of the contestants from More4's series, *The Great Big Tiny Design Challenge*, descended on Miniatura over the weekend of the 1st and 2nd October 2022 at Stoneleigh NAEC near Warwick.

Julie, Beth, Sharon, Michael and Thomas stopped visitors in their tracks as people recognised the familiar faces from the TV programme. They and the other five contestants have all become good friends since the series was aired, meeting up whenever possible, so Miniatura was the perfect opportunity.

Beth Krum from Southampton was actually exhibiting at Miniatura for the very first time with My Mini Maison which specialises in 1/12th scale contemporary kitchens and kitchenware. "I like modern miniatures. I get interested in real life and reproduce them in miniature," said Beth who thoroughly enjoyed being on the programme and making some great friendships. "It was great to be able to promote miniatures to the wider public especially those who knew nothing about the hobby. When you are passionate about something you just want everyone to know about it too. A lot of people have got in touch to say that because of the show they have got into miniatures."

Michael Robbins is a full-time miniature artist who got through to the semi-finals of the show. His stand Michael R Miniatures makes curiosities, fantasy items, characters, hand painted furniture and ephemera. Michael, from West Yorkshire said being on the show was stressful at times purely because of the time constraints – not having enough time to finish something to the standard he wanted. Staying good friends with the others has been the best bit!



▲ One of Beth's modern kitchens on My Mini Maison

Thomas Murray from Carlow in South-East Ireland made it through to Episode 5, the Rococo period. He is no stranger to building and decorating mansions. In his early days of making dolls houses, he started with an Argos bookcase! From this he made a six-room Georgian town house; then he added a basement and an attic. Pleased with his efforts, he added and decorated more rooms, turning his 6-roomed house into a 25-roomed house, but still he didn't stop until finally he had created a 110 roomed mansion!

Thomas added that what he really wanted to do was to raise awareness of dolls house miniatures as a hobby. "It's fine in the UK but in Ireland it's still behind closed doors," he said. "So, to raise the awareness and let people over there know it's normal to be into dolls houses, that would make me proud."

Julie Gill only made it through to the first week, but her bright and bubbly personality

and talent made her unforgettable! Julie from Clitheroe, explained that she has always been very creative but got into dolls houses and miniatures after her husband, a builder, built an orangery at their home. "I had an awkward corner of the room which I just couldn't find the right piece of furniture to place in it. Then out of the blue I thought I could make a fancy French inspired dolls house. So, I did that, and when I showed it to some friends, they just said, "Wow!" That was the start it.

"Being on the show has been a marvellous experience. I enjoyed every minute. I just laughed all the time it was great fun. And I've made some really good friends. We're all keeping in touch and have already met up at the Kensington Show, and now at Miniatura."

Finalist Sharon Harvey also came along to the Miniatura Show to meet up with her fellow contestants. After seven weeks of working alongside finalist Dom Kane, Sharon had to go head-to-head against him as they decorated the final room of the mansion. Sharon decided on a Rococo music room and was assisted by Bexie, while Dom was joined by Michael to make an Elizabethan banqueting hall.

It was a fantastic final that gave the judges some headaches in choosing the overall winner. And although Sharon was pipped at the post by Dom, she feels they are all winners in making such good friends and promoting the hobby of dolls house miniatures. And the future for Sharon will also see her writing a book on – what else but Miniatures. 



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Paint techniques for 3D miniatures

Ever fancied buying 3D-printed minis 'in the raw'? Find out how to paint them and bring them to life!

Moi's finished haul

Whether it's Etsy, eBay or other online sales platforms, you will find a wide range of 3D printed pieces for sale 'in the raw' – in other words, unfinished and unpainted. These are usually very competitively priced, as the time-consuming part is the painting. This is when an object really begins to look realistic, and you can give it a unique identity to blend with your décor or to match-in with your diorama. But is it difficult? How do you prepare pieces? What paint should you use? I spoke to Nathan Ross, last month's Instagram Identities hero, for some insider info on how to achieve the best results...

Nathan's 3D pieces are totally awesome when painted by him, and I knew that I could never achieve such skilled results. I did wonder, though, whether I could produce acceptable effects by applying some of his professional advice and top tips. I must say, for a total amateur in this game, I'm actually quite pleased with the results – and they look far better in real life than in my photos (which for some reason have accentuated the less good parts of my painting).

When a piece emerges from the 3D printer, it's very far from good-to-go. Step one is prepping, and the amount of prep required will depend on what method of 3D printing produced it (filament or resin). Filament printing uses a reel of thermoplastic filament – usually 1.75mm or 2.85mm diameter and available in a wide range of colours. The different types of [FDM](#)

Aircon as it arrived



filament have different properties, requiring different temperatures to print. The most common types are known as 'ABS' and 'PLA'. A filament printed piece will require a lot of sanding and filling/levelling because the printing method produces are less refined piece. Think of it as the equivalent to a page of type produced on a dot matrix printer.

Resin, on the other hand, is the equivalent of a laser printer in print quality terms, in that you will get a lot more detail and smaller 'layer lines'. This means it requires a lot less prep and should only take a few minutes to prepare for painting. Nathan's pieces are resin.

The first step is sanding. Nathan advises having a selection of sandpaper 'grits' available, starting with a lower grade (approx. 100/200 grit) for the majority of support removal (3D pieces are printed on a support, which then needs to be removed). Work your way up, using the highest grit (2000) almost as a polish.

After applying a primer and allowing it to dry, you can start to paint. Nathan uses a mixture of paints and washes from the model and wargaming scene, including Tamiya and Citadel brands. He also uses Vallejo army painter for hand-painting and airbrushing. He's also a fan of acrylic in spray cans and sticks to premium brands like 'Montana Gold'. He advises to avoid mixing types and brands of paint to avoid problems of incompatibility.

What I love about artists like Nathan, is the special effects they manage to achieve, which look incredibly realistic. I have often struggled to get life-like metallic effects so I asked Nathan what he would recommend. He responded: "Finding the right metal effect depends on what you want to achieve. If you want a new, fresh chrome effect, I'd recommend Molotow chrome. It's great, but make sure you don't touch it while it's tacky as you'll spoil the effect. Leave it to dry for a good 48 hours. For older, weathered and scratched metal, simply spray with a cheap silver spray, apply a dark wash (wiping off 90 per cent of it) and then dry brush fresh silver over some edges.

I wondered if he would share with me how he produces his awesome small-scale graffiti. He did! "My graffiti is achieved mainly using paint pens made by Posca and Molotow (although cheaper ones are available and work pretty well too). These come with different sized tips, such as 1mm-5mm and round and flat. Look at real graffiti too – either in person or online (search for 'hand styles', 'tags' and 'throw-ups'. Copying something is easier than creating graffiti



I used pencil on the TV screen

from scratch. Obviously practise on paper before adding graffiti to your models, just in case it's not quite your forte."

For that urban grunge look, Nathan suggests printing out paper stickers and artwork sourced online and gluing those to street furniture such as fire hydrants and electricity boxes. He also creates his own artwork and scales it down for his mini makes.

I asked Nathan what advice he would give a novice like me. He said: "Take your time, practise, and use reference sources to recreate realistic finishes.



Try silver gilding wax



I used a black Sharpie for small details

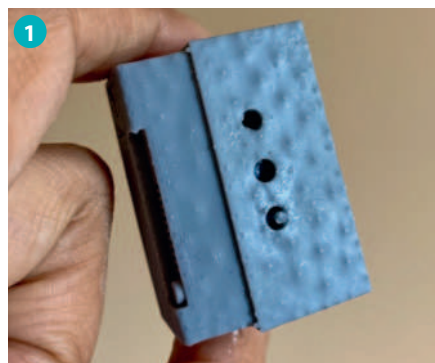


▲ Moi's finished aircon unit

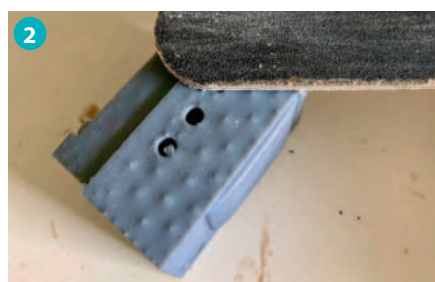
For example, search Google for images of what you want to achieve, take photos of grime in the real world, or even look at a real rusty item as you work. Also, watch some of the expert painters/model-makers on YouTube and pick up more tips and techniques from them. Instagram is another great source of inspirational images and useful tips." Nathan also advised that before painting an expensive model, test the paint and techniques on something cheap, such as an old plastic toy from a charity shop. Above all, he reminded me: "The main thing is to have fun! If you're not happy with paint you've applied, just wipe it off and start again. Don't stress! Give it a go!" So, I did!

I even experimented with a few techniques of my own. For example, I used Sharpie pens to add graffiti and also to dot on a bit of rust here and there on my aircon unit. I used a black Sharpie for the button on my aerosol spray can, as it's easier to control than a paintbrush. I used silver gilding wax on my aircon unit to look like exposed metal, and also on the 'metal' part of my spray can and on the raised areas of the TV. I printed out a paint label for the spray paint, and added white paper to the video tape cassette with handwriting using a very fine pen. I used a pencil to achieve the silvery grey screen on the TV.

I will now show you how to turn a bit of grey printed resin into an amazing miniature masterpiece...



1 Carefully inspect your piece and identify any areas that are a bit lumpy or ridged from being printed on supports.



2 'Prep' by sanding to remove any supports and layer lines (for filament prints you may also need a filler primer designed for cars and available in auto stores such as Halfords. This thick spray paint fills and self-levels to help build up lower sitting lines. Simply spray, sand and repeat. Be careful not to 'flood' areas and obliterate smaller, finer details).

Moi's Top Tips!

"Nathan recommends using liquid black or brown shoe polish for a cheap 'dirty wash'. Create your own by watering down cheap black/brown paint and adding a drop of washing up liquid."

"He advises when weathering or adding grunge that knowing when to stop is key. Don't overdo it! If using acrylics, wipe clean with a wet wipe if you're not happy with how it's going."



3 Wash and dry to remove sanding residue then prime your piece using a spray or hand painted primer. Nathan recommends 'Army Painters colour primer' or a pound shop cheap car primer for larger dioramas. I used the latter and it worked well for me.



4 Next, start painting – this is when your creativity kicks in. Go for a nice, even and clean finish, or try adding different techniques (see over the page) to add rust, dirt and grime.



▲ Nathan's aircon unit

► Moi's finished video cassette



Moi's finished TV

Moi's Top Tip!

"Nathan advises sanding using a multi-sided nail file (available for a pound or so at discount stores and offering different grades of roughness on each side), as well as attaching sandpaper to coffee stirrers to get into small areas, as this is a cheaper option than sanding sticks."

REALISTIC RUST

I absolutely adore Nathan's rust recipe. You can see on his air conditioning unit how very realistic it is. Here he exclusively shares his trade secret for achieving it.

- 1 Apply a base coat in a brownish-red coloured paint.
- 2 Once dry, apply a mask using tooth paste (it's cheaper than a 'proper' paint mask) or/and spray with cheap hair spray and then sprinkle regular table salt and rock salt to areas where rust would normally occur, such as on corners, tops, around bolts and so on.
- 3 Once dry, spray with your top colour.

Moi says...

"Take care, as sanding resin can be toxic so work outside and wear a face mask."



- 4 Using warm water and a washing-up scrubbing sponge, wipe off the salt and tooth paste to expose the 'rust'.

- 5 On the rusted areas you can paint/dry-brush further shades of rust going from brownish red to orange. These multi-coloured layers add realism, as real rust is not a uniform colour.

CONVINCING GRIME

- 1 Once you've finished painting your piece, including adding any graffiti, apply a dark brown wash.
- 2 Let the wash start to dry, then start wiping it off. Keep wiping until around 90% has been removed.

- 3 Repeat step 2 a few times, encouraging the 'dirt' to build up in the corners and lower details, as well as making the fresh top colour look a little grubby.

- 4 For a finishing touch, use weathering pigments (or create your own with ground up chalk pastels) or use weathering pencils/watercolour pencils to add subtle orange streaks. This is great for rusty outdoor metal items.

- 5 Glue on any paper print outs or stickers.

- 6 Once happy with your hard work, add a matte top coat to protect your work. 🏠

Moi's Top Tip!

"Nathan warns not to use different paint types. If you are unsure, check out **Model Paint Compatibility Chart & How-To / Airbrush Modeler**. Alternatively, test your paint on something like a plastic spoon, so you don't ruin your great paint job with a top coat that doesn't 'take'."

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Merry birthday!

30 years in the making! Join us as we celebrate the magazine's December birthday with a slice of cake and a seasonal twist.



YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Red, terracotta, fuchsia pink, white and yellow polymer clay
- Red, purple and white pastels
- Gold, metallic green, white and brown acrylic paint
- Gold permanent marker pens (extra fine point)
- Sculpey Bake & Bond (or similar)
- Craft glue
- 1x stem of dried canary grass for flower arrangements in natural/straw shade
- 1/12th scale cream plate
- 1/12th scale breakfast tray
- 1/12th scale gold/brass effect door numbers, 3 and 0 (or other, alternative numbers/decorations of your choice)
- Matte varnish
- Black bristle from an old hairbrush

TOOLS REQUIRED

- 2cm round sugarcraft cutter
- Roller
- Old sterile toothbrush
- Small paintbrush
- Craft knife
- Scissors
- Needle tool or sewing pin
- 1/12th scale silicone cupcake mould



1 To make the base colour for the red velvet cake, mix one part red polymer clay with one part terracotta, and a small amount of fuchsia pink. Add grated red and purple pastel until you have a mixture resembling the perfect shade of red velvet cake. Next, mix white polymer clay with yellow to make cream.



2 Roll the red velvet clay mixture out to around 3mm in thickness and the cream to 11/2mm. Use a round 2cm sugarcraft cutter to press out three circles from the red velvet and two cream.



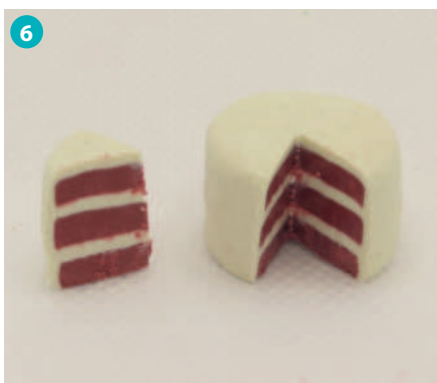
3 Build the cake by stacking each layer in the following order: red velvet, cream, red velvet, cream, red velvet.



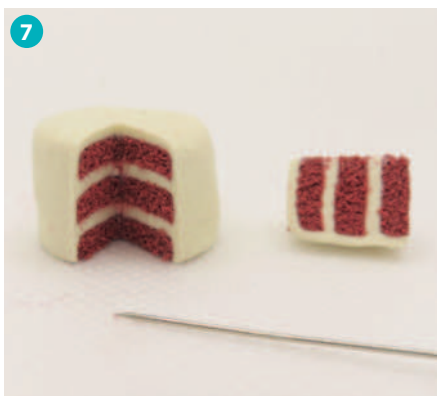
4 Roll out the rest of the cream clay as thinly and carefully as possible, making sure you do not crack it.



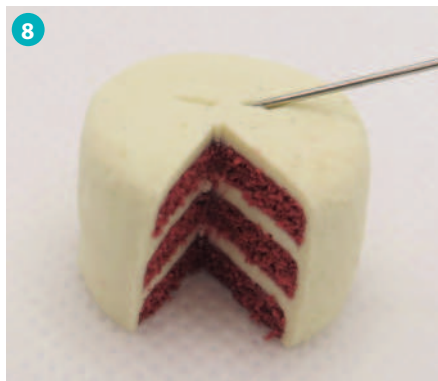
5 'Ice' the cake by covering it with the rolled-out cream clay, cutting away the excess to form a nice, neat finish. Take an old, sterile toothbrush, using to add texture to the icing.



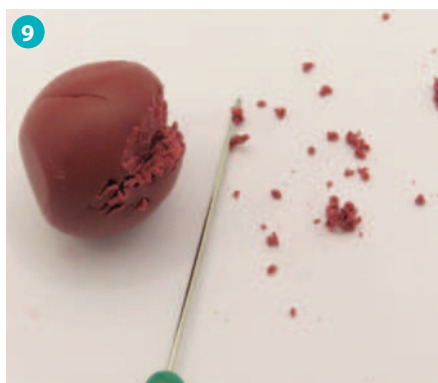
6 Place the cake into the freezer for several minutes, allowing the polymer clay to harden up before carefully cutting away a slice to reveal the layers within.



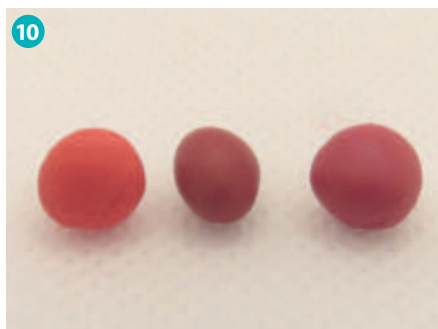
7 Use a needle tool or sewing pin to texture the red velvet layers of both the main cake and the slice, taking care to avoid the cream layers. For the most realistic appearance, make sure to take your time over this step.



8 Make two small, shallow grooves in the centre top of the cake, just large enough to slot two numbers into later on.



9 Again, using the needle tool or sewing pin, grate some tiny 'cake crumbs' from some of the remaining red velvet mixture.



10 Take the rest of the red velvet cake mixture, adding some white clay to make a lighter shade of cranberry. Break off half of this mixture and add grated purple pastel to the other. These will be used to make tiny cranberries. You'll also need some plain red clay.



11 Roll the three colours of clay into tiny 1mm balls to make the cranberries, using Sculpey Bake & Bond or similar to stick them into position in the shape of a wreath, all the way around the edge of both the cake and the slice. Keep a few loose cranberries for later decoration.



12 For that snowy effect, finely grate white pastel over the top of cranberries, being careful to avoid getting any on the layers of cake.



13 Fill a 1/12th scale silicone cupcake mould with the same cream clay mixture as used for the layer cake. Use a small ball tool to create a hollow in the centre top, leaving a rim all the way around the edge of what will be the cupcake case. Carefully remove from the silicone mould. ▶

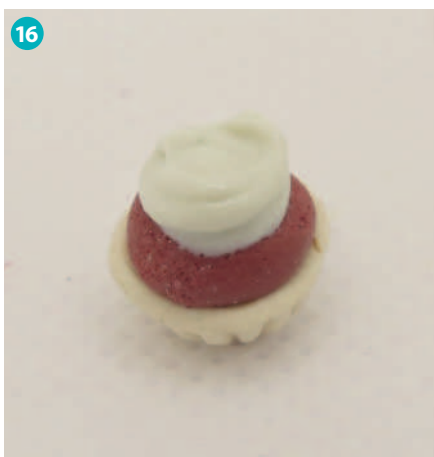




14 Take a small ball of the red velvet clay mixture, flattening into a dome shape to create the top of the cupcake itself. Use the toothbrush to add texture for a realistic effect.



15 Attach the cupcake top into the 'case' with Bake & Bond, making sure that it fits inside the rim made with the ball tool in step 13.



16 Mix some of the cream clay mixture with Bake & Bond to create a thick icing. Use a needle tool/sewing pin to carefully swirl this on top of the cupcake.

Sadie says...

"Why not make some coordinating cupcakes too!"



17 Roll two thin tubes of cream clay, twisting together into a rope roughly 1mm thick. For a clean finish, allow to harden in the freezer for a few minutes before cutting a small length, just large enough for a candle. Bake this on its own and allow to cool.



18 Carefully press the candle into the centre of the icing on top of the cupcake.



19 To create the cake board for the main cake, roll out some old clay to around 1½mm in thickness. It can be any colour, as it's going to be painted. Cut out a circle with a 2cm shape cutter, before using a roller to make it large enough that the cake will fit on top with a small border around the edge. Bake the cake, slice, crumbs, loose cranberries, cupcake and the board, allowing everything to cool thoroughly.



20 Paint the cake board with gold metallic acrylic paint. You might find that this requires at least two coats to get a good, even coverage.



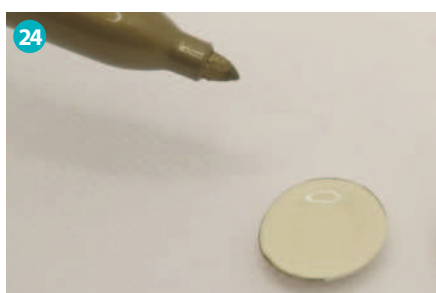
21 Paint the candle on top of the cupcake with the same gold acrylic paint, being as careful as you can to not overlap onto the icing around the base. Once dry, give the candle and the cake board a coat of matte varnish. After leaving that to dry, make the wick to go on top of the candle by cutting a very tiny length of black bristle from an old hairbrush, gluing into place.



22 Remember the grooves made in the top of the cake in step 8? Take two 1/12th scale gold/brass effect door numbers, in this instance a 3 and a 0 to mark DHMS magazine's December birthday, and glue them into the grooves.



23 Glue the main cake to the gold cake board, being careful to ensure you position it in the centre.



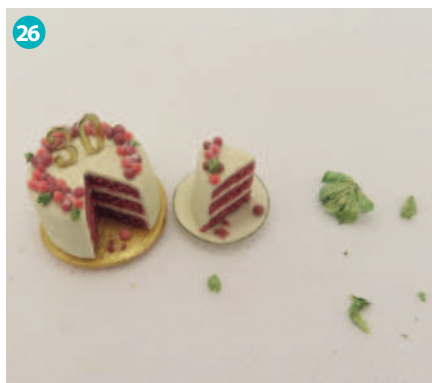
24 Take a permanent marker pen with an extra fine point in metallic gold, using it to trace all the way around the edge of a small 1/12th scale ceramic plate, preferably cream, to give it that extra luxurious finish.



25 Glue the cake slice to the cream plate. Stick the remaining cranberries and the crumbs to both the plate and the cake board.

Sadie's Top Tip!

"You can, of course, replace the numbers with any other numbers/ festive decorations you want; the cake works equally well as a delightful Christmas cake as it does for the winter birthday party!"



26 Take a single stem of dried canary grass meant for flower arranging, in a straw/natural shade and coat with metallic green acrylic paint. Once dry, tear or cut into really tiny pieces, gluing into place on top of the cake's cranberry wreath, making sure to add a couple to the top of the slice too.



27 Paint a 1/12th scale wooden breakfast tray with a brown acrylic paint mixed with a little water. Once dry, coat with white acrylic paint, leaving a little of the brown showing through here and there to create that rustic vibe. Again, leave to dry before coating with matte varnish to seal.



28 Glue the cake, slice and cupcake to the upturned tray, adding any extra decorations you want! 🏠



DID YOU KNOW?

Christmas Day is statistically one of the rarest birthdays, so if you were born on 25th December, you're a member of an exclusive club!



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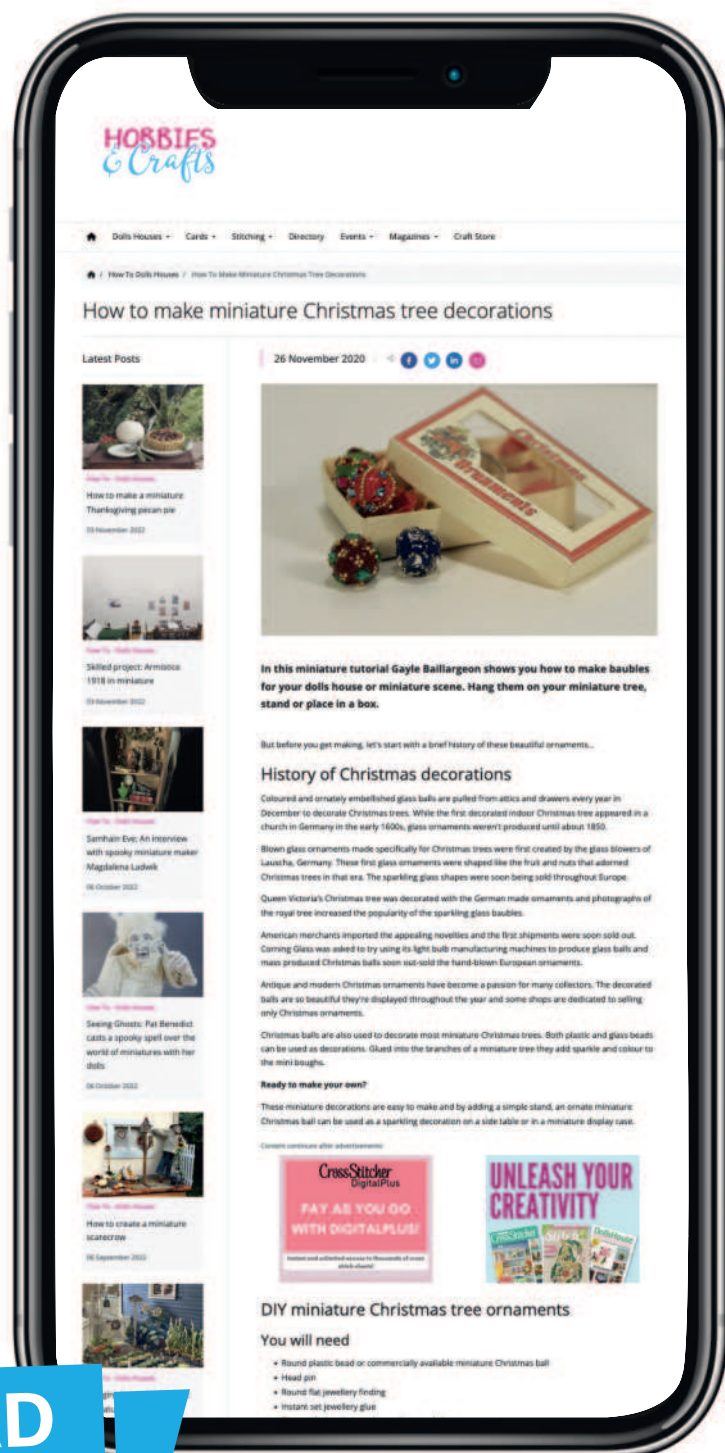
**DollsHouse
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10
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Festive lamp post

Here's a super quick and fun make to add to a wintery outdoor scene.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Battery-powered lamp post
- Miniature wired holly stem (optional)
- Green chenille pipe cleaners
- White batting
- Strung mini beads
- Assorted additional beads or other small trims
- Narrow ribbon & black thread
- White glue

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Wire cutters
- Sewing needle



1 Coil a pipe cleaner around two fingers, making a 1 in (25mm) diameter circle comprised of several rounds. Tame this thickness by wrapping the wreath with a wired holly stem or simply with green florist wire. Wrap it again in the same direction with a length of mini beads. Secure the ends with thread.



2 Make a bow from the narrow ribbon and glue or sew it to the top of the wreath. Take a couple of tiny stitches through the ribbon tails at the bow's knot to ensure they will hang vertically, rather than sticking out awkwardly to the sides. Glue a few additional beads or trims around the wreath. Slip a thread for hanging through one of the pipe cleaner loops at the top of the wreath in the back.



Photos by Stephen Lesbirel



3 Twist a holly stem around a pipe cleaner length. Add the trims as for the wreath, except for the bow. Wind the stem down the lamp post beginning at the knob on the top of the lantern. Tie the wreath's hanging thread at the back of the lamp post, above the cross arms. 🏠

Ruth's Top Tip!

"I've chosen quite traditional colours for my festive lamp post but other options can be just as effective: white or metallic chenille stems with blue, green, or purple beads or your favourite seasonal colour scheme would work really well."

MORE INSPIRATION

Nestle the trimmed lamp post in a bed of batting, with a cool blue paper 'sky' behind it. Further the story with a gift package on a piece of luggage and maybe a pup (as I always seem to do), for an evocative picture of home town comfort at this festive time of year.

Have a very mini Christmas



Photos by Rob Tysall Pro Photography



Christmas is almost here and if you're still decorating your dolls house, here's a few glittering miniatures you'll love.

When Santa got stuck up the chimney...

Miniaturist Michael Robbins made a nice little model of his boots dangling over the fireplace! He made sure there was a mince pie and a carrot for Rudolf, and a cart full of decorations to add to the festivities.

Earlier in the day, he'd made a gingerbread house and some candy walking sticks. And for those doing some last-minute shopping, a retail shop shelf and counter with a few necessities such as wrapping paper and Christmas tree baubles.

Meanwhile, over in the Cotswolds, Jenny Kelm of Kastlekelm Miniatures was making sure Santa had enough elves to help out in his workshop. Although judging by the empty spaces on Jenny's elf stand, two or three had absconded! But at least Santa looked a little more comfortable in his armchair with a mince pie to enjoy.

Christmas is Panto time, and a favourite panto, film and story is A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. IGMA artist Timea Vajonne of Enchantedolls created a very realistic Ebenezer Scrooge heading off to bed, not

realising that the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and To Come are soon to pay him a visit! Timea also created Santa Claus and Mrs Claus. I wonder what's in those packages!

Perhaps it's a tiny model railway layout. The sort that fits into a dolls house, in the attic maybe – the sort of working layout in 1/900th scale that Tanis Law of Tadpoles makes. Her layouts are actually for all year round, but specially for Christmas, Tanis made one called 'Christmas Morning' and another that was glistening with snow. As for those teeny little trains, they do actually work! [▶](#)









Talking about snow – are we all hoping for a white Christmas? Shoebutton Bears are, then they can go sledging again.

Hands up, is there anyone who doesn't enjoy looking through people's windows at Christmas time, when lights are on indoors and curtains are open for passers-by to see the decorations and the tree. Maybe a cottage such as one built by Petite Properties. Peeping through the window we caught a glimpse of this gorgeous room decorated by Simply Silk, how it sparkles!

Through another window we spotted a little sideboard in Fredona Miniature Dreams's house. It was delightfully cluttered with Christmas bits and bobs and Christmas cards and beside it was an old suitcase full of Christmas decorations ready to be put up.

Hoping you will be decking the halls of your dolls house with boughs of holly and Christmas sparkle this year.

Merry Christmas! 🏠



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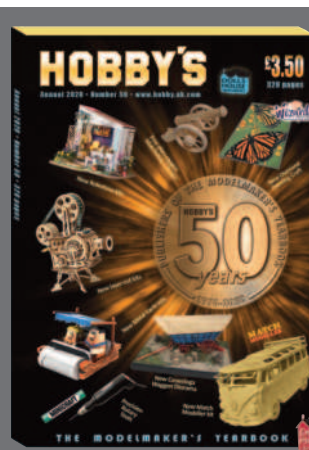


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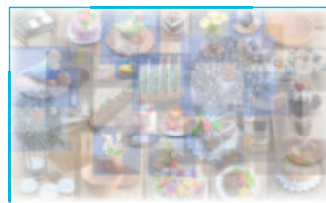
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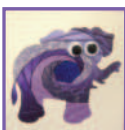
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Ruth's MINITIPS

Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel continues her top tips and advice for what has worked (and not worked!) throughout her years of experience. This month, let's look at developing the eye for the most common miniature scales.

Photos by Stephen Lesbirel

When I first started in miniatures, I worked exclusively in 1/12th scale and I had to measure everything to be sure it was correct. Suddenly, I found that given any one piece in the proper scale, I had no trouble surrounding it with similarly accurately scaled pieces. Happily, this translated immediately as well when I began to look at 1/24th scale. It really doesn't take long to develop the eye!

I have to say that what bothers me the most in a miniature scene is something that is out of scale! To me, a single item can destroy the whole effect. While it is usually fine to use a smaller than correctly scaled item in a scene without any harm, a larger one never seems to work. My sister-in-law gave me an under-sized white wire table and chair set, somewhere between 1/12th and 1/24th scales, which worked well in a children's nursery (see my Edwardian Day Nursery in the Tips feature from the 2022 10 issue). But the oversized yellow roses and the large soup tureen really look out of place in my otherwise well-scaled kitchen.

Almost as bad as out of scale is the gravity issue – curtains or towels that stick out from the rod, books laid flat that don't close, tilted bottles or glasses, or tablecloths and bedspreads that don't hang vertically. I've since learned that a spot of glue between the towel folds, standing the books upright or wedging them between bookends, and loads of spray starch on curtains make much more realistic additions than leaving these things to their own devices! Museum wax on glassware and bottle bases helps them stand vertically too.

▼ Towels, mop and a book in my dolls house bathroom, all defying gravity



My Top Tip for making a realistically scaled scene is to take a picture of your creation and look at it very carefully. It's amazing what will jump right out at you, that was so easily overlooked when viewing the actual scene. Maybe it's that you know what you meant to show, so that's what you see in the real world, but a picture doesn't mislead. For example, in my room box recreating the old movie 'The Ghost and Mrs. Muir', which was one of the earliest of my scenes, everything looks quite realistic except the proximity of the chest and armchair to the roaring fireplace and a stiffly protruding Granny square throw. I had crocheted the throw to drape on a chair, but drape it would not! A few strategically placed stitches

▼ Dolls house kitchen with larger than scale items



made it appear to fall much more softly and naturally. These stitches can always be removed if I want the throw to lie flat in another scene.



▲ The Ghost and Mrs. Muir roombox

Another tip is to choose the maker of miniatures carefully. One maker's 1/12th scale may not be quite the same as another's. The slight difference may not work as well from one scene to another. Take Chrysnbon, for instance. Their products and kits are made of plastic, which may be objectionable to some but I find their 'silverware', 'glassware' and 'porcelain' particularly effective, with realistically thin walls. I also use their tables, chairs, parlour organ, and other furniture pieces for the fine details that can be achieved in plastic. All their pieces are 1/12th scale and appear very detailed and refined. The delicate little hands of my dolls house ladies can actually hold a Chrysnbon goblet and look perfectly natural. When painted, their chairs, tables, and other accessories work well in my scenes too. Other manufacturers may make porcelain pieces, which often work well but of necessity in that medium, the walls are generally thicker and items seem slightly larger. Plastic seems to lend itself to very tiny things!

▼ Chrysnbon examples



Beware of Pound Shop and Dollar Store 'miniatures', whose scales can vary alarmingly! I did find three lovely lady doll porcelain heads at a Dollar Store. I finished one already and plan to complete and dress the other two dolls for my dolls house. There can be some real finds at excellent prices here, as well as some components that work well in various scenes, but this is where you should measure and translate the measurements to scale to be sure of the look, unless you can tell at a glance. I have a small paper dressmaker's tape, actually the prize in a Christmas cracker, that fits easily in my pocket or purse to confirm spontaneous finds. Fairy furniture can sometimes work in 1/24th scale, as can Christmas ornaments from companies like Hallmark.



▲ Dollar Store finds, small tape measure and Christmas ornament finds

One reason why I make so much of my own furniture is to get the delicate realistic look, where table tops and legs are scaled as full-scale furniture is. Sometimes purchased items, especially at lower price points have a taffy apple-like finish and an overall 'chunky' appearance, with tabletops, doors, and legs too thick. These are fine for children's play or even in a nursery setting, but won't pass the "does it look real?" test in most dolls houses. Measure and ask yourself – would my tabletop really be 3in (76mm) thick or



▼ Chunky furniture with taffy-apple finish

a cabinet door 1-1/2in (38mm) thick? The answer would generally be no, they would be half these thicknesses. The trade-off is that truly scaled items are generally more fragile than their sturdier but less realistic cousins. In the smallest scales, purchased furniture often lacks the slants and curves we expect to see in full-scale chair backs and table legs too. This is simpler construction but again, won't pass the realism test.

It's a good tip to always carry a tape measure since you never know where potential miniatures will be. And if you're not good at converting to scale in your head, use this handy table as a guide for approximate heights:

	1/12 th scale	1/24 th scale	1/48 th scale
Ceiling	10in (254mm)	5in (127mm)	2-1/2in (64mm)
Door	7in (178mm)	3-1/2in (89mm)	1-3/4in (44mm)
Man	6in (152mm)	3in (76mm)	1-1/2in (38mm)
Woman	5-1/2in (140mm)	2-3/4in (70mm)	1-3/8in (35mm)
Tabletop	2-1/2in (64mm)	1-1/4in (32mm)	5/8in (16mm)
Chair seat	1-1/4in (32mm)	5/8in (16mm)	5/16in (8mm)

The biggest compliment that a miniaturist can get is when someone sees a photo of a scene and asks, "Whose home is this?" or "Where was this pub?". They have mistaken a scale scene for full-size!

So, what scale is 'best'? That's a matter of personal choice. You will no doubt find the most variety of houses, furniture, and accessories in 1/12th scale and I find it easiest to make any number of items from structures to furnishings in this scale. My mentor, the very skilled long-time miniaturist, magazine contributor, and author, Ruth Armstrong, was a huge

“One reason why I make so much of my own furniture is to get the delicate realistic look”

fan of 1/24th scale, since it was petite by comparison and took up much less room in her home. And of course, 1/48th scale is much smaller again. Someday, I'd like to make a whole little village in 1/48th scale of all the architectural style structures that I would love to have. There also seems to be more furniture for purchase in 1/48th scale than in 1/24th, but I would find it very difficult to make many accessories in such a small scale. I'd also like to make a series of 1/144th scale structures. These are dolls houses for the dolls house. I think I'll leave mine unfurnished though! 🏠



▼ The Golden Acorn pub

Baby elf dress set

Made to fit a 1/12th scale newborn baby dolls, those who love to knit will enjoy creating these pieces.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

Yarn:

- ☐ 1x green Trimits embroidery thread
- ☐ 1x it green Trimits embroidery thread
- ☐ 1x red Trimits embroidery thread
- ☐ 1x mid grey Trimits embroidery thread
- ☐ 1x cream Trimits embroidery thread
- ☐ 2x seed beads or buttons
- ☐ 1x gold 1.5mm belt buckle
(Blacksparrowuk on Etsy)
- ☐ Foam blocking board

Needles:

- ☐ Size 22 miniature knitting needles
- ☐ Foam blocking board
- ☐ Pins

ABBREVIATIONS

alt	alternate
cont	continue
dec	decrease
foll	following
g-st	garter stitch
k	knit
k2tog	knit 2 together
kfb	knit 1 front & back
p	purl
psso	pass slipped stitch over
p2tog	purl 2 together
rem	remaining
rep	repeat
RS	right side
skpo	slip 1, k1, pass slipped stitch over
st(s)	stitch(es)
st-st	stocking stitch
tbl	through back loop
WS	wrong side
yfwd	yarn forward



BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Separate the strands of the embroidery thread and wrap around a bobbin. Use just one strand at a time when knitting.

DRESS

FRONT (knitted in one piece to armholes)

- Cast on 68 sts with green and g-st, three rows.
- Work two rows st-st.
- Change to red.
- **Next row:** Knit.
- **Next row:** (Using red p1, using green p1) to end.
- Change to it green and work 10 rows st-st.

- Next (dec) row: K2tog to end. 34sts
- **Next row:** Purl (try to keep the tension tight).
- Change to mid grey.
- **Next row:** Kfb in first st, knit to end, 35 sts
- **Next row:** Knit.
- Begin armhole shaping: First row: K9, cast off two sts, k17 (including st remaining from cast off), turn (leaving last seven sts on left-hand needle).
- **Next row:** Cast off two sts purlways, p15 (including st remaining from cast off).
- Work on these 15 sts for front first:
 - First row:** Knit.
 - Next row:** Knit.
 - Change to it green.
 - **Next row:** Knit.



- **Next row:** Knit.
- **Next row:** K2, purl to last two sts, k2.
- Repeat last two rows again.
- **Next row** (buttonhole): K1, yfwd, k2tog, knit to end.
- **Next row:** K2, purl to last two sts, k2.
- Cast off.
- Re-join yarn to second side (seven sts).
- **First row:** Knit.
- **Next row:** Purl to last two sts, k2.
- **Next row:** Knit.
- **Next row:** Knit.
- Change to it green.
- **Next row:** Knit.
- **Next row:** K2, purl to last two sts, k2.
- Repeat last two rows again twice.
- Cast off.
- Sew shoulder seams of dress. Use the cast off st at neck to sew a few sts on to right front of dress to help neaten the neckline. Sew seam of dress at back to waist. Turn right side out. Overlap the buttonhole border at the base so that it sits on top of the button border. Tie in all loose ends. Sew a tiny button or bead to button band to match buttonhole positions. Sew a tiny 1.5mm gold belt buckle to the front of mid grey belt to finish. Place dress on doll, being careful not to pull limbs or head too much. ➡

- **Next row:** K2, purl to last two sts, k2.
- Begin neck shaping: First row: K9, turn.
- **Next row:** Cast off three sts purlways, p4 (including stitch left from cast off), k2.
- Work on this side first.
- **Next row:** K4, k2tog, five sts
- **Next row:** Purl to last two sts, k2.
- **Next row:** K3, k2tog, four sts
- **Next row:** Purl to last two sts, k2.
- Cast off.
- Re-join yarn to second side.
- **First row:** Knit.
- **Next row:** K2, purl to end.
- **Next row:** K2tog, k4, five sts
- **Next row:** K2, purl to end.
- **Next row:** K2tog, k3, four sts
- **Next row:** K2, purl to end.
- Cast off.

BACK

- Return to first set of sts (nine sts) and re-join mid grey thread.
- **First row:** Purl to last two sts, k2.
- Next row (buttonhole): K1, yfwd, k2tog, knit to end.
- **Next row:** Knit.
- Change to it green.





Pants

- Start at back and cast on 16 sts using cream.
- Work four rows 1x1 rib.
- **Next row:** K2tog, rib to last two sts, k2tog, 14 sts
- **Next row:** Rib.
- Repeat last two rows till six sts remain.
- Work two rows rib.
- **Next row:** Kfb in first st, rib to last st, kfb, eight sts
- **Next row:** Rib.
- Repeat last two rows till 16 sts.
- Work four rows 1x1 rib.
- Cast off in rib.
- Join side seams (before leg shaping) tog. Tie in loose ends. Turn right way round and put on doll.

Hat

Edging

- Using green, cast on three sts.
- ***First row:** Knit.
- **Next row:** Kfb, knit to end, four sts
- **Next row:** Knit.
- **Next row:** Sl1, k1, psso, knit to end, three sts
- **Next row:** Knit.
- **Next row:** Sl1, k1, psso, knit to end, two sts
- **Next row:** Knit.
- **Next row:** Kfb, knit to end, three sts
- Rep from * six times.
- Pin the edging to a foam block and spray lightly with water to block. Allow to dry.

Hat

- Start at base and cast on 32 sts using red.
- St-st four rows.
- Change to cream and st-st two rows.
- Change to red and st-st two rows.
- These four rows set stripe pattern. Cont in stripe pattern throughout.
- Rep last four rows x2.
- **Next row:** (K2, k2tog) to end, 24 sts
- Starting with a purl row, st-st five rows.
- **Next row:** (K1, k2tog) to end, 16 sts
- Starting with a purl row, st-st five rows.
- **Next row:** (K2tog) to end, eight sts
- Starting with a purl row, st-st nine rows.
- **Next row:** (K2tog) to end, four sts
- Starting with a purl row, st-st nine rows.
- Change to cream.
- **First row:** Knit.
- **Next row:** Kfb in every st. eight sts
- Starting with a purl row, st-st three rows.
- **Next row:** K2tog to end, four sts
- Cut yarn and thread through sts.
- Pull up sts tightly then sew seam of cream 'pom-pom' with reverse st-st facing. Run a length of cream around the base of the pom-pom and pull up tightly to help form the spherical shape. Sew seam of hat using mattress stitch. Sew edging to base of hat. Place on doll. Fold top down on one side and secure in place with a couple of sts.

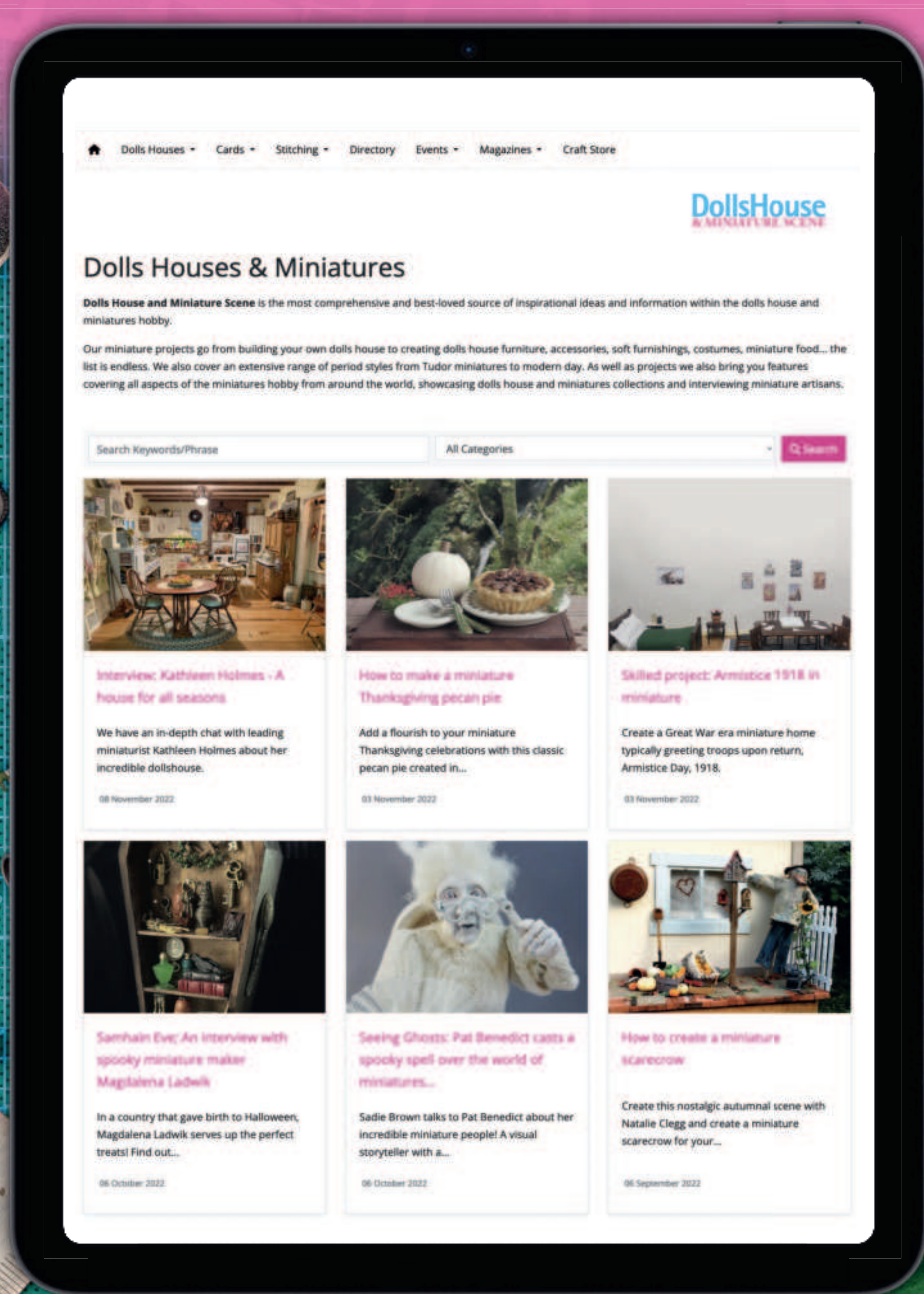


Booties (make 2)

- Using green, cast on 16 sts (leaving a length of thread for sewing up) and g-st four rows.
- **Next row:** K6, skpo, k2tog, k6, 14 sts
- **Next row:** Purl.
- **Next row:** K5, skpo, k2tog, k5, 12 sts
- **Next row:** Purl.
- Change to red and st-st two rows.
- Change to cream and st-st two rows.
- Change to red and knit.
- Cast off knitways.
- Sew over g-st sole seam and turn right way round. Place on foot of doll and mattress stitch the seam at the back of bootie to finish. 🏠

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Lounge chair

The curvaceous style of this little lounge is not as complicated as it at first may appear. The wood trim along the front accentuates the more basic shape of the cushions to achieve a truly elegant look. Even the wood trim is a bit simpler than it seems, being in two pieces, each cut along the grain-line.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Illustration board or heavy matt board
- Quilt batting
- Cotton fabric
- Matching thread
- Hemp twine
- Candlewick braid (optional)
- 1/16in (1.6mm) thick sheetwood
- 1/4in (6mm) square stripwood
- 3/8in (10mm) diameter dowel
- Round wooden cocktail sticks
- Mustard and/or coriander seeds
- Heavy scrapbook paper
- Lightweight card
- Wood stain & satin varnish
- Brown coloured pencil
- White glue & superglue

TOOLS REQUIRED

- 2in diameter tin can
- Scrap 1x4 boards
- Rubber bands
- Lolly sticks
- Knife and steel ruler
- Small saw and mitre box
- Dressmaker's measuring tape
- Sewing needle
- Flower, leaf and 3/8in circle punches
- Small hand drills
- Ball stylus
- Needle files
- Emery board

1 Construct the drying jig by supergluing the small tin can and wood scraps to a board, as shown in the template. Soak a 1½in (38mm) x 5¼in (133mm) piece of matt board until it is pliable. Gradually shape it into the curve shown in the template and hold it in place in the jig with rubber bands over lolly sticks until it is dry. Tip: If a paper ply separates, simply glue it back on when the matt board dries.

2 Each leg has a square stripwood, bevelled-footed main piece with a decorated curved sheetwood trim piece on the outside. Cut four ¾in (19mm) long legs from square stripwood and four curved sheetwood trim pieces. Carefully support each trim piece while sanding and filing the curved trim curves smooth. Cut the bottom of the square



stripwood angled as shown. File the middle of the square stripwood concave on the opposite side. Drill the centre top 1/8in (3mm) deep to receive a cocktail stick 'pin'. Stain these eight pieces. Glue each trim piece to a square piece, even with the bottom and concealing the bevelled square leg behind the trim. Make two reversed for the back side of the lounge.

Ruth's Top Tip!

"As with the sheetwood frame trim, the curved leg trim can be cut from matt board instead of sheetwood, avoiding the chance of splitting."

3 Cut two 3in (76mm) frame lengths and four 1in (25mm) cross-pieces from square stripwood. Stain the wood. Glue the cross-pieces between the lengths at both ends and equally spaced between the ends. Drill 1/8in (3mm) from the ends and sides of each long frame piece to receive a cocktail stick 'pin'. Cut ¼in (6mm) long cocktail stick pins and glue them into the legs and frame. Use the pattern trim pieces to set the correct angles and make sure the frame sits on all four legs without wobbling.

4 Cut the curved back piece from sheetwood for the front and again from lightweight card for the back. Sand the wood smooth. Cut 1/16in (2mm) from the upper curved edge of the card so it won't show from the front. Cut two layers of quilt batting and the fabric patterns as shown. Turn the card over so it is reversed from the sheetwood. Cover the card with fabric and set it aside. Position the batting even with the top edge of the sheetwood. Glue the fabric tabs to the back of the sheetwood and onto its face ¼in (6mm) above the sheetwood's lower edge as shown in the template. Stain the bottom edge of the back. Glue the covered card to the back, covering all the tabs.

5 The cushion will wrap the upper end of the matt board, with its upholstery fabric end glued onto the bottom of the matt board and the other fabric end glued onto the top of the matt board above that. Cut the 1½in (38mm) x 4½in (114mm) card base for the head cushion, score two fold lines, at 2¼in (57mm) and 2¾in (60mm) from the left end, and fold them. This is where the head cushion wraps the upper end of the matt board. Position three layers of batting along the entire length of this card and cover the batting with

3in (76mm) x 6in (152mm) of fabric. Glue the fabric to the underside of the cardstock along the long side edges, fold the cardstock, and neatly pleat it at the fold, using the ball stylus. Leave ½in (13mm) fabric ends free.

6 This cushion is constructed in the same way as the head cushion, except that the fabric at the upper end that will be next to the head cushion is glued under the card, so it will fit snugly against the head cushion, atop the head cushion's fabric end tab. The double fold again will go over the matt board end at the foot of the lounge and the other fabric end is left free. Cut the 1½in (38mm) x 4¼in (121mm) card base for the foot cushion of the lounge, score two fold lines, at 3⅞in (81mm) and 3⅝in (84mm) from the left end, and fold them. Assemble a 3in (76mm) x 6¼in (159mm) piece of fabric over three batting layers on the card and glue the fabric to the underside of the cardstock, pleating at the fold as before.

7 Cut a 1⅜in (35mm) length of the round dowel for the squab pillow. Glue 1¼in (32mm) wide by 1½in (38mm) long batting to the sides. Cut a 1¾in (44mm) square piece of upholstery fabric. Glue one edge along the batting seam. Fold the other end and glue it over that raw edge. Pleat and glue the ends. Pad one side of two punched card 'buttons' with batting bits. Run tiny gathering stitches ⅜in (2mm) inside the edges of two ¾in (19mm) fabric circles, lay the padded card on the wrong side of the fabric, poke stray batting bits between the card and the fabric, pull the thread ends and tie them at the back, covering the buttons. Glue the buttons centred over the ends of the squab.

8 Spot glue the side edges of the head cushion's cardstock and press along the top and bottom of the matt board's head end. Glue its fabric end tabs to the top and bottom faces of the matt board. Spot glue the foot cushion edges onto the top and bottom of the opposite end so that the two cushions meet. Glue the free end of fabric to the bottom of the matt board. Notch out the bottom of the sheetwood back to accommodate the tops of the legs behind the upholstered card. Glue the back against the frame, with the bottom edges even. Glue the matt board onto the frame and centre cross pieces, and against the back. Position the pattern trim pieces against the frame to ensure they just cover the matboard edge.

9 Cut the wood trim pieces for the front of the lounge from sheetwood. Sand and stain



them and a small piece of scrapbook paper from which the trim motifs will be punched. Stain 16in (40cm) of hemp twine. Glue the trim pieces to the front of the lounge. Glue the stained hemp twine along the wood trim edges. Cut a shell motif from the stained scrapbook paper for the centre of the front wood trim (see template). Emboss the shell's lines from the back to raise them on the front and shade the spaces between them with coloured pencil. Curl the tips towards the front. Glue this shell to the wood trim. Add dimension to punched flowers and leaves with coloured pencil and the ball stylus, and glue



them and the seeds to the legs and both front wood trim pieces.

10 Varnish the wood legs and front trim, carefully avoiding the upholstery. Let dry and varnish again. Glue unstained hemp twine or candlewick braid along the cushions next to the wood trim, along the edge of the back on the upholstery seam, and around the ends of the squab pillow, between the pillow and the end buttons. 🏠

Photos by Stephen Lesbirel

Make-believe in mini



Reader Michael Arnold combined his love of both history and Germany, along with miniatures, to create his very own town...



I love history and I love to visit Germany, and this led to my imagination roaming wild and creating a meeting between the Kaiser and Emperor Franz Joseph, Ludwig II of Bavaria and Empress Elisabeth, his cousin. This diorama represented the Rathaus Platz of my imagined 1/87th scale town of Arnaltburg. I am fascinated by the royalty of Europe in the 'Fin de Siècle' but this is set in an imagined period around 1910 (by this time, however,



Elisabeth had been assassinated and her cousin Ludwig had drowned in mysterious circumstances). Therefore I have used artistic licence as some of the fashions are not of the correct period, spanning some 50 years during which women's fashion, in particular, went through some extremes!

The figures are all made by Preiser which I have collected over a number of years. Most are hand painted but others are purchased readymade. The military band is a limited edition and is described as that of the German state of Wurttemberg. The buildings are also by German companies Fallner and Vollmer. The beautiful Landau and the white Audi car are by a company from the Netherlands called Artitec and are really delicate. Thankfully, they arrive fully built.

What is not shown here is the rest of the town, which covers a space of a 6x4ft baseboard, but maybe that's for another time?! 🏠



The Whole Kit & Caboodle:

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Having friends around for Christmas drinks? Then you need one of these: a miniature globe with a secret bar inside! It's perfect for the dining room, gentleman's study, library or even a drawing room. Great for a period dolls house, but also for a 1970s pad, as it's quite retro cool.

This unusual kit by Canadian maker Sandra Quigley is beautifully detailed. It comes with a full colour illustrated instruction booklet, laser-cut wooden pieces,



a 3D printed globe in two parts (with paper maps), waterslide decals and brass casters. The globe opens on a tiny hinge, to reveal glasses inside (which don't come with the kit, but are widely available).

I admit that I was a little daunted initially, as there is some very small-scale drilling

involved, but in the end it didn't pose a problem and I am absolutely delighted with the result. It's certainly not a beginner's kit, but nor does it take great skill as everything is so well designed. What's more, Sandra has even made a video (<https://youtu.be/jj0w-oE2mlA>) that shows you how to put the kit together. 🏠

THE FACTS

Buy from:
www.etsy.com/uk/shop/PetiteHandicrafts1

Cost: £47.87 each plus postage

Comes with: All components

Additional materials needed:

Wood glue, super glue, wood stain, matt varnish and black paint – plus bottles and glasses!

Specialist tools needed: Pin vice with a 1/32in (.81mm) drill bit

Time: Almost a day, including staining and varnishing

Experience: Experienced

Top tip: Make sure you line up the continents on the northern and southern hemispheres

EXCLUSIVE GIVEAWAY!

*Fancy winning a wonderful globe bar kit?
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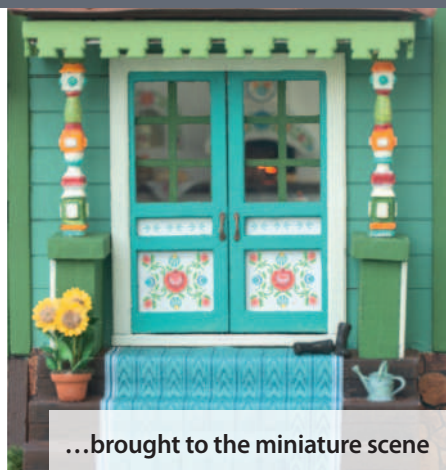
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