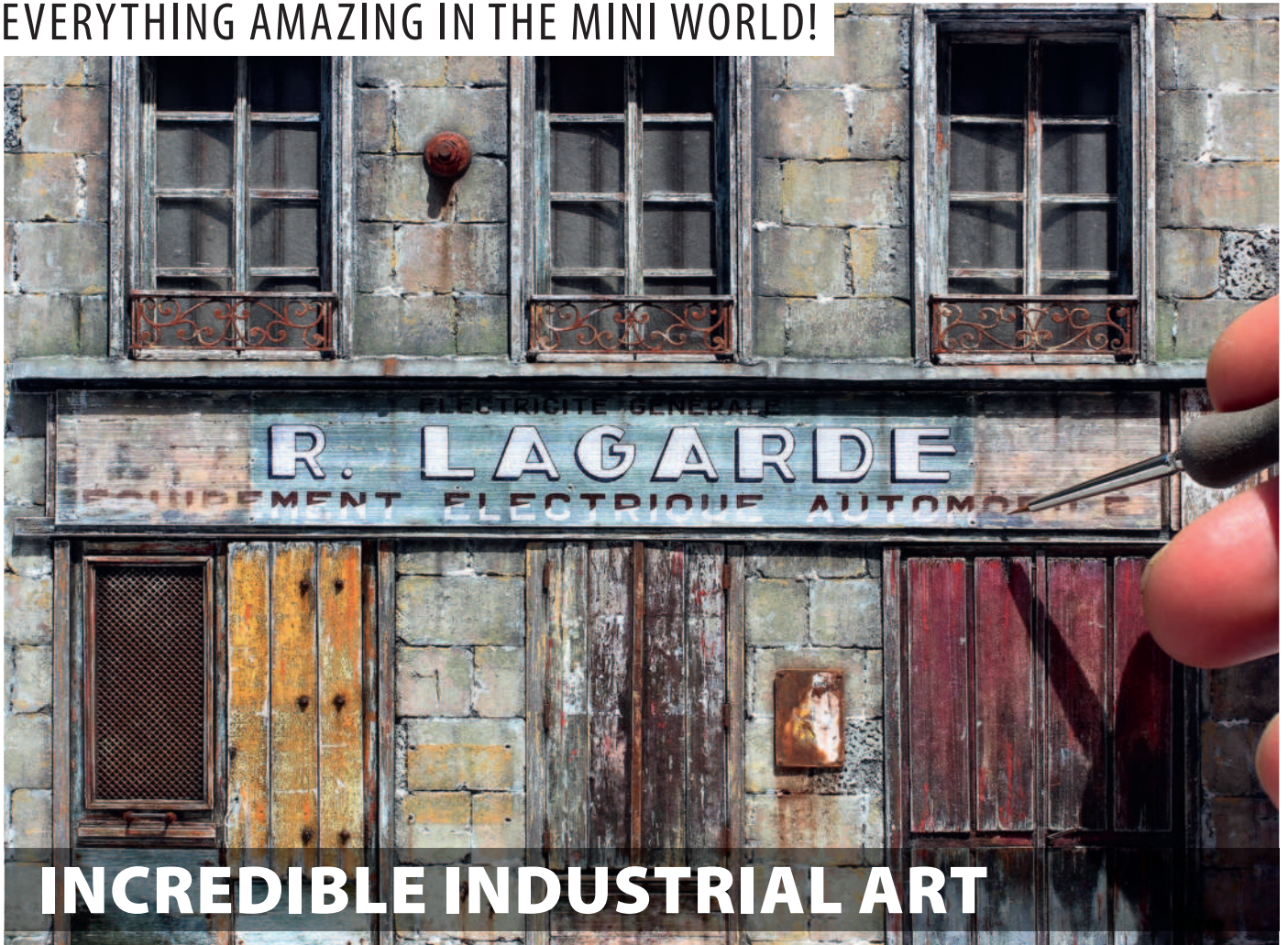


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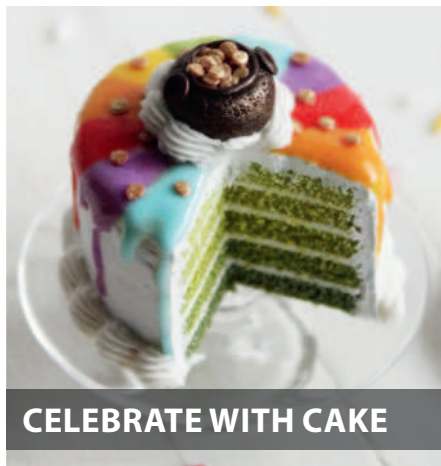
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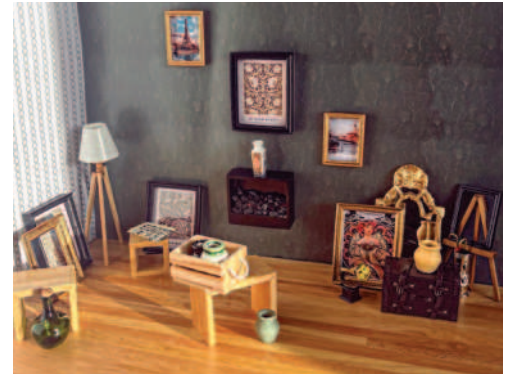
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WELCOME to the March edition!

Spring has sprung in the UK, and that often means it's time for a spring clean – of your mini makes! Freshen up anything you feel is looking tired or add some brighter elements to those looking a little dark. We have plenty of pint-sized projects for you to try this issue, including how to add grass to your scenes, part two of Moi Ali's 'Retro fit realism', where last month she looked at the roof of your house, this issue she looks at brick walls and other external wall effects.

For those who love to make mini food – we know this is a popular aspect of making miniatures – we have two projects; Sadie Brown's waffles that can be used as a UK Mother's Day treat, and Maive Ferrando's green ombre cake complete with a little pot of gold on top, perfect for celebrating St Patrick's Day!

Also this issue you'll find Trash to Treasure by new contributor Eleanor Catalina, demonstrating how you can use trinkets that you might want to throw away and turn them into details on your miniatures! Plus lots more projects, inspiring reads and an abundance of top advice from artisans you love!

Happy mini-making!

Joanne Garwell

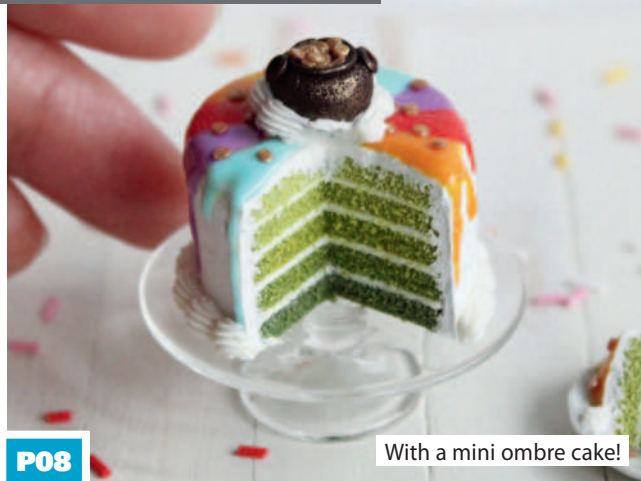
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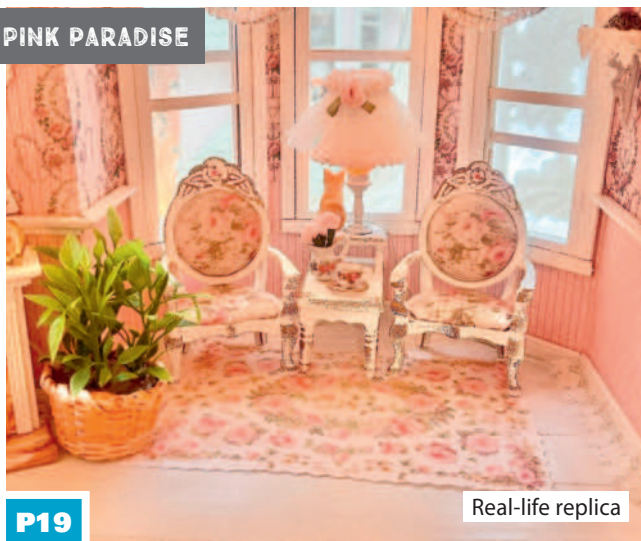
CELEBRATE ST PATRICK'S DAY



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With a mini ombre cake!

PINK PARADISE



P19

Real-life replica

LAY YOUR LAWN



P24

Freshen up for spring

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

Sadie Brown, Bea Broadwood, Maive Ferrando, Ann Evans, Moi Ali, Eleanor Catalina, Louise Goldsborough Bird & Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel.



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Jen Lavery, @_pretty_small_things

See how an eclectic career path led Polish-born Marta Kochanek to some pretty small things.



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This issue Moi Ali's kit review is both pretty and useful for Mother's Day.

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Celebrate St Patrick's Day with this green ombre cake with a little pot of gold!

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Trash to treasure

One man's trash is another man's treasure – see how it's true in the miniature world too with new contributor Eleanor Catalina.

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Tool shed

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Retro-fit realism: external walls ▶

Part two of this six-part series, Moi Ali shows how to add a 3D external wall realistically.



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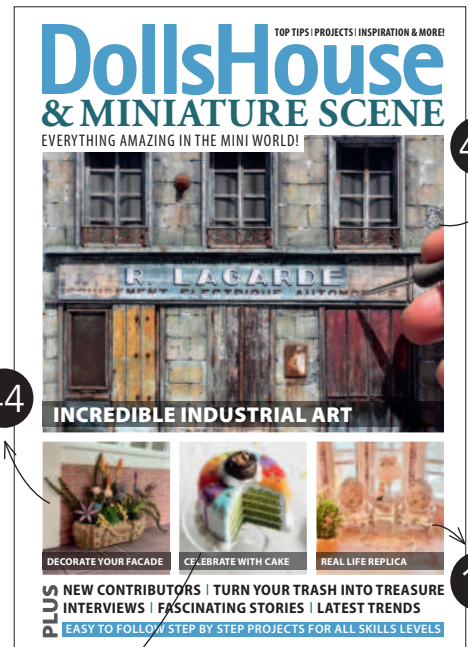
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19 **Say aloha to spring** ▶
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DHMS contributor and artisan Louise Goldsborough Bird, behind Angelique Miniatures, is celebrating 35 years as a professional miniature dolls artist and doll couturier this month. We find out what inspired her journey.



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Mother's Day waffles

Waffle on about your creativity this month with this special Mother's Day breakfast.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- White, yellow, dark blue, black, red, fuchsia pink, purple and spring green polymer clay
- Golden ochre, brown, dark cadmium orange and white pastels
- Gloss varnish
- Metallic gold, pink and cream acrylic paint

TOOLS REQUIRED

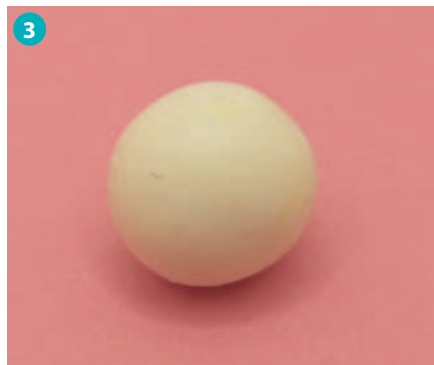
- 1/12th scale cream ceramic plate
- 1/12th scale knife and fork
- Sculpey Bake & Bond (or similar)
- Small paintbrush
- Craft knife
- Old butter knife
- Needle tool or sewing pin



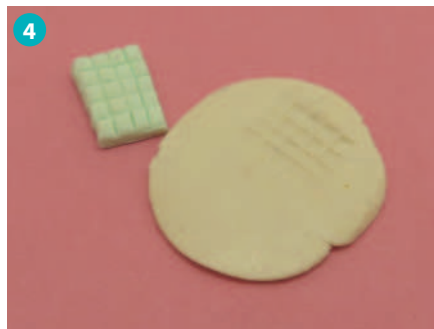
1 To make the mould for the waffles, begin by taking a piece of polymer clay, any colour, and roll out to around 2mm in thickness. Score four horizontal lines across the clay, each one 2mm apart.



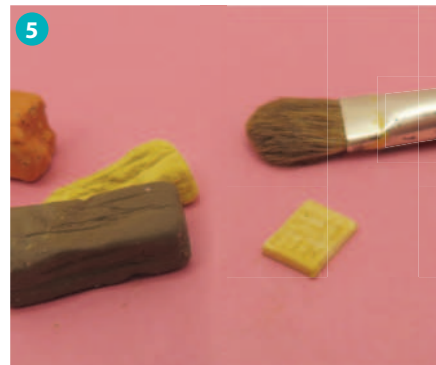
2 Score a second set of lines in the opposite direction to form a series of squares. Cut into individual moulds measuring roughly 8mm by a little over 5mm. Bake and allow to cool.



3 Mix white polymer clay with a small amount of yellow to make pale cream, resembling the colour of batter mixture.



4 Roll the cream clay out to just under 2mm in thickness. Press the tiny moulds into the clay to create the familiar waffle pattern.



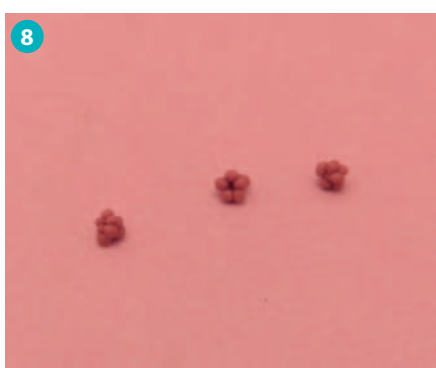
5 Leaving a border of around 1mm all the way around the edge, use a craft knife to cut out each waffle. Mix grated golden ochre pastel with a little brown and dark cadmium orange, brushing the mixture over the waffles.



6 Take a 1/12th scale ceramic plate, preferably cream, and use Sculpey Bake & Bond or similar to stick the waffles into position.



7 Mix dark blue clay with a little black to create the perfect shade of blueberry! For the raspberries, mix fuchsia pink, purple and red.



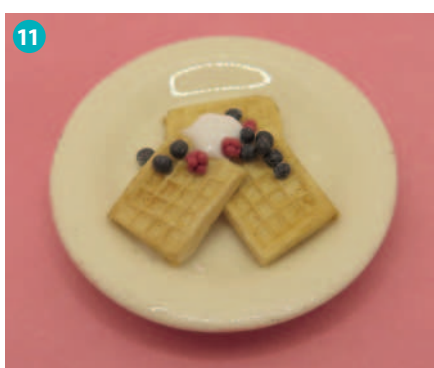
8 Roll lots of very tiny balls of clay from the pink/purple/red mix, as small as you can manage, putting them all together, to form the individual raspberries.



9 To make the blueberries, take several 1mm balls of the blue/black clay mix, rolling in some grated white pastel. Roll each coated ball with your finger in the palm of your hand to 'diffuse' the pastel, creating the appearance of a real blueberry. Use a needle tool or sewing pin to make a very tiny hole in the top of each blueberry.



10 Use an old butter knife to mix Sculpey Bake & Bond with a little white clay to create a smooth mixture resembling thick cream.



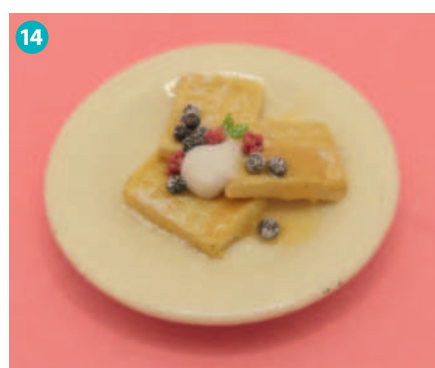
11 Add a small swirl of cream to the top of the waffles using a needle tool or sewing pin. Arrange the fruit over the top of the waffles, sticking them into place with a little Bake & Bond. For added realism, make sure to stick one or two to the plate as well.



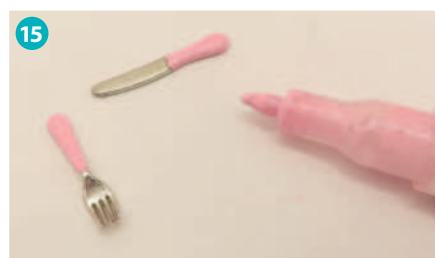
12 Take some bright, spring green clay and roll two tiny balls into carrots, flattening with a fingernail to create mint leaf shapes. Use a needle tool/sewing pin to score a central vein down each leaf before sticking into place amongst the fruit with Bake & Bond. Grate a little white pastel over the top of the waffles to resemble icing sugar. Bake and allow to cool.



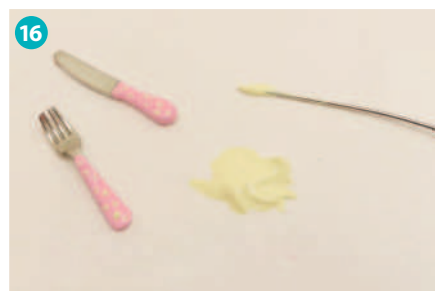
13 Mix gloss varnish with a little metallic gold acrylic paint to create a 'syrup'.



14 Use a needle tool/sewing pin to drizzle the 'syrup' over the waffles and the plate. Once dry, add an extra coat of gloss varnish to the 'syrup' for extra shine.



15 Paint the handles of a 1/12th scale knife and fork with pink acrylic paint. You will most likely need two coats of paint for the most realistic effect. Allow to dry.



16 Dip a needle tool or sewing pin into cream acrylic paint and add lots of tiny dots over the pink handles to complete the look.

Pot of gold cake

Let's bring a little of the luck of the Irish with this tiny St. Patrick's Day cake! It's a fun project because there is a lot of colours involved, mica powders to achieve metallic effects and cold porcelain, but this can easily be substituted with polymer clay.



YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- White, translucent, dark brown (or black), green, metallic (optional), yellow, red, orange, light blue and purple polymer clay
- Liquid polymer clay
- Ceramic tiles to work and bake your polymer clay on
- Water-based gloss varnish
- Bronze and gold mica powder
- Cold porcelain
- PVA glue

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Blades
- Toothbrush
- Craft knife
- Needle tool
- Small cutter
- Small embossing tools
- Small paintbrushes
- Pointy tool/toothpick
- Flat sculpting tool
- Piping nozzle (and disposable piping bag)
- Miniature ceramic plate (optional)
- Acetone

1 Take some green clay of your choice and separate it into five batches. Mix four of these with increasingly more white clay to achieve an ombre effect. Add the same amount of translucent to each (optional) and put through the thickest setting of your pasta machine. Cut out a circle of each.

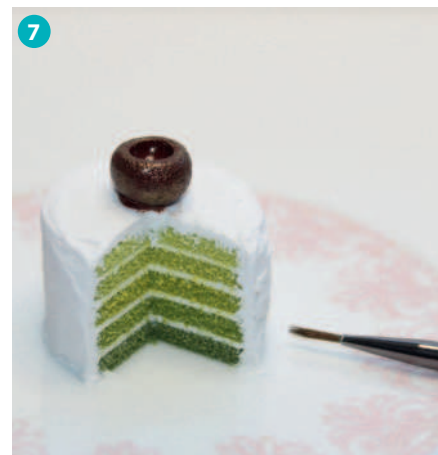
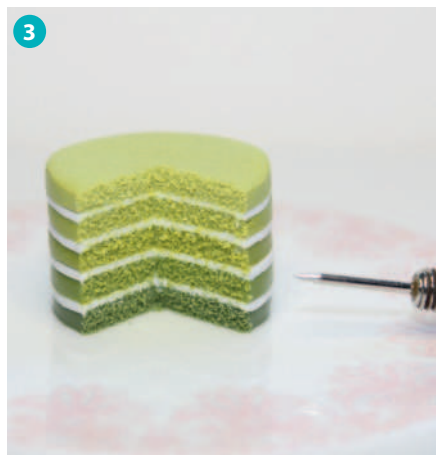
2 Put white clay through setting 5/6 of your pasta machine and cut out four circles. Stack the layers together starting from the darkest shade of green.

3 Cut out a portion (save the slices) and texture the inside of the cake with a needle.

4 Dab a little liquid clay on the ceramic plate and press the slice of cake on it. Remove a little piece with a knife and texture the sponge. Part-bake both the cake and slice for 20 minutes.

5 In the meantime, mix white clay with liquid clay until you obtain a buttercream-like consistency. This should hold its shape. When the cakes are out of the oven and cool, spread this mixture on them with a flat tool or a tool with a straight side. Part-bake for at least 10 minutes. After the cake was baked and cool, I wiped some acetone on the buttercream to smooth it out a little bit so that the drips come out straighter. Acetone works by melting the clay, so do this slowly and allow to dry completely before moving on to the next step.

6 To make the pot of gold, take a small amount of dark-brown clay and shape it into a ball. Take an even smaller amount, shape it into a ball and then flatten it to make a base for the pot to sit on. Dab a little liquid clay on the centre of the cake and place the base on it. Use an embossing tool to create a hollow in the pot



and place this on the base, using the tool to press it down gently. Add a little texture with a toothbrush.

7 To make the pot look metallic, brush a little bronze mica powder on it before part-baking.

8 To make the rim, take a small amount of the same dark-brown clay and stretch it into a thin strand. Dab a little liquid clay on the top of the pot and add the strand of clay, trimming the excess. Part-bake if necessary.

9 To make the handles, take the same dark-brown clay, make two very small balls and flatten them slightly. Use a small embossing tool to poke two holes in the balls and gently enlarge them using a circular motion.

10 Pick these up with a blade and add them to the pot bonding with liquid clay. Part-bake. Once baked, I rubbed some of the bronze mica powder on the handles and rim with my finger. 



Maive's Top Tip!

"Polymer clay softens while baking so make sure your mixture isn't too runny to start with or the drip will collect at the base and the colours might bleed into each other"



11 To make the rainbow drip, take polymer clay in yellow, orange, red, purple, light blue and green and mix them with liquid clay to a runny/medium consistency. Spread them on the cake, dragging some of it down to create the drips.

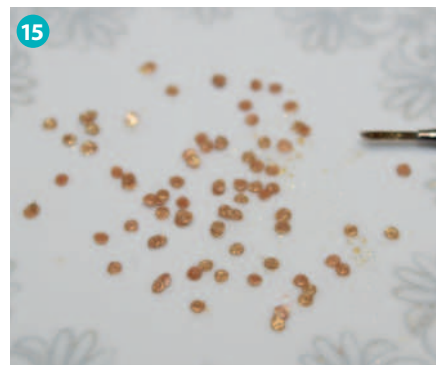
12 Once baked and cool, take some gold mica powder and mix it with some gloss water-based varnish. Spread this on the rainbow drip to give it a beautiful golden sheen. Allow to dry.



13 To make the coins, take a metallic-effect clay and roll it out thinly. Use the same gold mica powder to give it a golden sheen. Use a very small round cutter to cut out lots of circles.

14 Remove the excess clay and texture the coins with a toothbrush.

15 Slide a blade underneath to pick them up and finish dusting them with mica powder before part-baking them.



16 Once baked and cool, put some coins in the pot and on the cake bonding with liquid clay. Bake one last time for at least 30 minutes.

17 After baking the cake and once it's completely cool, take some cold porcelain (this can be bought or easily made at home) and pipe the cream around the pot and base of the cake bonding with PVA glue. Let it dry completely and apply a layer of varnish if desired. I brushed a little gloss varnish mixed with gold mica powders to the coins to enhance the golden effect. 🏠



Maive's Top Tip!

Cold porcelain can be bought or easily be made at home; otherwise, the piped decorations can be individually sculpted from polymer clay and bonded to the cake with liquid polymer clay.



INFO

To view more of Maive's work, visit her Instagram: [@maiveferrando](https://www.instagram.com/maiveferrando)

At Home with THE BROADWOODS



CAN YOU KEEP A SECRET? PETITE PROPERTIES' CUSTOMERS CAN!

Would you make a miniature purchase without knowing what it was? Petite Properties' customers did and their imaginations were fired up as a result! With the official launch of the (top secret) contents of PP's 2022 Advent calendar at the Spring Miniatura Show this month, professional miniaturist Bea Broadwood explains the idea behind PP's bold concept and how so many miniaturists got so very excited and inspired by it all!



▲ PP's 2022 Advent Calendar

Restoring the magic...

We may be in March, but for me, thoughts of Christmas are never far away at any time of year. Since I was a young child I have always loved the Christmas season, but the older I get the more the magic has become somewhat depleted. As an adult, it is a busy time of year and as a wife, Mum and Nanna, I definitely now spend most of December sorting out and arranging Christmas surprises for everyone else. A few years ago, my husband Tony thoughtfully treated me to a scented candle Advent Calendar. Remembering the excitement of the little paper calendars from childhood, I was over the moon; until I looked on the back of the packaging and saw the entire contents

in advance. The element of surprise was immediately lost and although I enjoyed my calendar, it didn't deliver the childlike magic that I had hoped for... but then I had an idea!

No peeking and definitely no sharing!

Back in 2019, we took the plunge and launched our very first Advent Calendar. It contained an assortment of 25 brand new 1/48th kits, each one hidden inside individually numbered envelopes that could be strung up to create a festive display. The contents of each envelope was not only a closely guarded secret... but there was also a catch! As our lovely customers are spread all around the world in multiple time zones, to avoid any online spoilers we asked everyone who bought a calendar NOT to share what was in it until Advent was over. Tony thought this idea was simply quite mad. Mo thought it was totally undoable. But to our complete surprise, the secret was kept and I like to think that in just a small way a little bit of Christmas magic was restored.

▼ Only the PP team know what will be inside the calendar...



"Of course we can't police it, but we are so appreciative that our customers so willingly enter into the spirit of our Advent Calendar and over the four years we have launched them, not one spoiler has been shared on any social media platforms!" Bea

It's a family affair...

Four years on and the annual production of the PP calendar has grown to such an extent that our whole family is involved in one way or another. From my grandson bagging up the pegs, to my son-in-law winding all the twine, it has become such a huge undertaking for our small family business. The calendar for 2022 was our most ambitious to date and I cannot lie that by the time the last one left PPHQ, we collectively never wanted to see another little brown envelope again! But then came the best bit - we got to be part of something very special, as thanks to social media, we were able to enjoy and share in our customers' excited reactions. It is always a real joy to see the calendar's eclectic content give so many miniaturists



▲ Sylvia had lots of fun building her OO gauge scene for the top of the Advent drawers



▲ The little retro sink unit fitted perfectly into Sarah's current 1/48th project

ideas and inspiration for new dolls house projects and before we are even a few days into December, we could already tell their creative juices were in full flow... and that, made all the hard work worth it! *Bea*

25 little brown envelopes, 25 brand new kits!

"For me the excitement starts on the day the Advent Calendar goes on sale - will I/won't I be lucky and get one? Then how will I display it and where to store each item after opening and constructing. All this helped the excitement of waiting until 1st December. Then each day the envelope sat by my side waiting to be opened after eating breakfast. Which was my favourite? Every single one of them!"

Sylvia Warner

"The Advent Calendar made every day very special. It is like a childhood memory, you can hardly wait to open the next door. I just love the surprise and there are no spoilers. In most Advent Calendars you know exactly what you will get, but not with this one!!! Every morning with the first sip of coffee we opened the envelope AND it had 25 little surprises, all German ones just have 24!!"

Sabine Cheshire

"My favourite kit was the retro kitchen sink. It's the only one I've built so far and that's because it was just what I needed for my current project. It fits perfectly in the living kitchen I wanted to include in Hangman's Halt although I did have to rearrange my plans to fit it in. The Advent Calendar was a distinctly me thing and my own bit of seasonal magic which is rare as an adult."

Sarah Rathbone

"It's impossible for me to pick an absolute favourite but I can pick one that I knew immediately how it would be used. Day 4 will be a flower cart in Little Village. Flowers have already been commissioned. The Advent Calendar is my gift to myself.

It's an event that has helped me look forward to December again when I had not for many years. When I wake up each morning of Advent there is a childish bit of excitement wondering what will be in the day's magic packet. I'm at a point in my life where I can indulge myself with opening and building the kit inside while I have my morning coffee and I'm grateful." *Rachel Scott, Iowa*



Day 4's market barrow was Rachel's stand out kit

The contents of envelope No.13 was a favourite for many!

"This was the first time I have had a PP Advent Calendar and I have loved the surprise of opening an envelope a day. It's hard to choose a favourite but, I love the stagecoach. I haven't started building it yet, but I think I'm going to make a Christmas scene with it".

Michelle Mason

"I had a lot of fun fixing this carriage. I understand very well that it is Bea's favourite. I am very happy with it!"

Melissa Verhoeven

◀ Day 13's carriage was a very popular kit in the 2022 calendar!



Melissa has brought her carriage to life using traditional colours and gilt highlights



Anita has used her carriage to transport a 1/48th bride and groom

morning to discover what would become an inspirational and fun project. I immediately pictured this little cottage nestled down a path in the woods, the trees sprinkled with fresh snow. A warm glow emanates from the little windows. The door is ajar, and visitors are welcome. Inside it is a scene of warm organised industry. The lady who lives here is a master gingerbread maker. Little gingerbread men await baking in the stove (also from PP's 2022 calendar) whilst constructed houses await building or frosting to be sent to eagerly awaiting customers. By the fire, an overstuffed armchair awaits with a cup of tea balanced on the arm. The cottage is very much still a work in progress, but the vision is coming together beautifully. All furniture so far is PP whilst accessories have been sourced from the talents of the quarter scale world. This project has been a truly wonderful escape and look forward to the rest of the journey."

Amanda Miller

And finally...

As ever, a huge thank you to all the talented members of Petite Properties' Modelling Community who contributed to this article. If you have been intrigued and want to find out more about our secretive and unique Christmas countdown (and discover just what was included in our 2022 calendar), simply head to our website for more information. In the meantime, all 25 of the brand-new quarter scale kits from the 2022 calendar will be available via our online shop from March 18th... which one will inspire you? 🏠



INFO

Website: www.petite-properties.com

Online shop: www.petitepropertiesltd.com

*PLEASE NOTE – we have a new phone number: **01526 320 958**

Looking for inspiration for your next smaller scale project? Why not join likeminded miniaturists in PP's Modelling Community on Facebook?

www.facebook.com/groups/petiteproperties

"From the calendar this was for me the most amazing one. I have put velvet on the sofa in the carriage. I have cut out one door so it can be put back like it is open. The paint it off white with gold accents. I also made one for a friend from her calendar."

Anita Waijer-Deeterink

Last but not least... Day 25 brought with it a Gingerbread Cottage!

"The PP Advent Calendar is always a highlight at Christmas, but no.25 is always particularly special. So, it was with giddy anticipation the 25th envelope was opened Christmas

▼ Amanda's Gingerbread Cottage is still a work in progress



▼ Gingerbread Cottage in quarter scale



The tiny finishing touches are bringing the interior to life!



Honey, I shrunk the heirloom!



Find out how one lady miniaturised a family heirloom, in Moi Ali's interview with Etsy seller Paula McBride.

Most of us have a treasured family heirloom – something of great sentimental (if not always financial) value. Paula McBride from Bath in Somerset is no exception, although in Paula's case, she did more than put her Auntie Grace's Art Deco centrepiece on a shelf where she could admire it. No, Paula McBride paid the ultimate compliment: she miniaturised it.

Let's start at the beginning, with a few words about Aunt Grace and how Paula came to create

perfect miniature replicas of her prize piece: "When my Aunt moved from a larger house to an older person's bungalow in the 1980s, she decided to give items to the family at that point, rather than waiting until she was 'gone'. She was quite a lively character and wanted to be around to share in the giving. After she died, we found items with family names stuck on the back that she hadn't got round to giving, or wanted to keep for a while longer herself." ➡





Available in four colours



Fits on a finger



The family dolls house



▲ Inside the dolls house

Paula continued: "It was at that time that Auntie Grace gave me the 'green girl', as we all call her. She had known I'd liked it from years before. I love the Art Deco and Art Nouveau eras. My Gran, who was born in 1908, and Grace used to reminisce about their 'good old days' to me. They sounded such fun times! Their mothers were Victorians, but Gran and Auntie Grace had so much more freedom in the roaring

1920s and '30s. They both loved fashion, and the descriptions of the outfits they wore to parties sounded fabulous!"

Being such a treasured item, Paula decided that the green girl was the perfect candidate to take centre stage in the Etsy shop she planned to open: "I started my Etsy business just nine months ago, mainly to see if I could make some income by making and selling miniatures. I've always been creative



▲ Paula made this for her daughter

and artsy, and needed something more sedate to provide some of my income, as my job was very physical and I'm not as young as I once was!"

Paula explained: "It was my daughter who suggested dolls house items. We have a little old dolls house from my mother's side of the family that's been passed down the generations and I used to make my daughter little things to go in it - mainly little plates of food, cakes and meals such as fish, chips and peas! We had a lot of fun crafting the food from Fimo. I've always been into arts and crafts, though mainly watercolour painting."

Paula has recently got back from her daughter the little hand-me-down dolls house, known as No.2 Rose Cottage. "I think it is handmade," said Paula, "and it has been passed around the family a lot! It needs some TLC, so I might do it up as a project for myself."

Having purchased a green girl from Paula, I can confirm that it's a really detailed piece - hence its incredible realism. "Yes, the glass girl was a complex item to choose for one of my first miniatures! But she is so perfect and so loved that I set her as my challenge. Fortunately, my husband is very tech-minded. He suggested that we scan her first, which we did. The original full-size glass girl is in two parts, with the bowl fitting into a holder at the top of the girl. First we thought we'd scan her in one, but this didn't seem to be working, so we scanned the two parts separately: first the girl, then the bowl. After uploading the scan to 3D modelling software, we worked for many hours cleaning up the scan, slightly changing

Charming frog book ends



some areas that would have been too thin or too complex for 3D printing."

"Finally, we had our image ready. But that was not the end of the story! When it came to printing on the 3D printer, there were a few mishaps and failed prints. It was far from 'press the print button and go!' You really have to get the settings right for the specific item you are printing. After a little trial and error, we got there. It is so satisfying to see a perfect miniature green girl grow in front of your eyes!"

It certainly sounds a challenging process, but there were other challenges too, as Paula explained: "One of the biggest challenges was to make her in 1/48th scale, in response to a customer who said it was so hard to get anything beautiful in 1/48th scale, let alone anything Art Deco! We rose to the challenge and we did it! And people love it that size too."

The green girl is also available in clear, blue, and antique gold – as well as in 1/12th, 1/24th and 1/48th.

It was good fortune that Paula was forced to make the centrepiece in two pieces: "In the end I was so glad, as the lower section – the girl without her bowl – was perfect for making into a candlestick! The candlesticks go together so well with the girl/bowl that most of my sales are a set of girl/bowl, plus two candlesticks to go one on each side. They do look fabulous on a shelf together! I've had so many five-star reviews."

"I have also made some Art Deco mirrors, mainly because someone asked for a custom order. They were so pleased with what I made that I decided to put them in my Etsy shop, and they are very popular as there is nothing like them. Each one is finished with a wooden back, small chain to hang them, and even a little maker's label. I like my miniatures to look authentic! I do intend to do some more Art Deco pieces. I have other items from my Auntie Grace, as does my Mum, such as glass jugs, a cookie jar, a gorgeous teapot and a glass clock. Not all

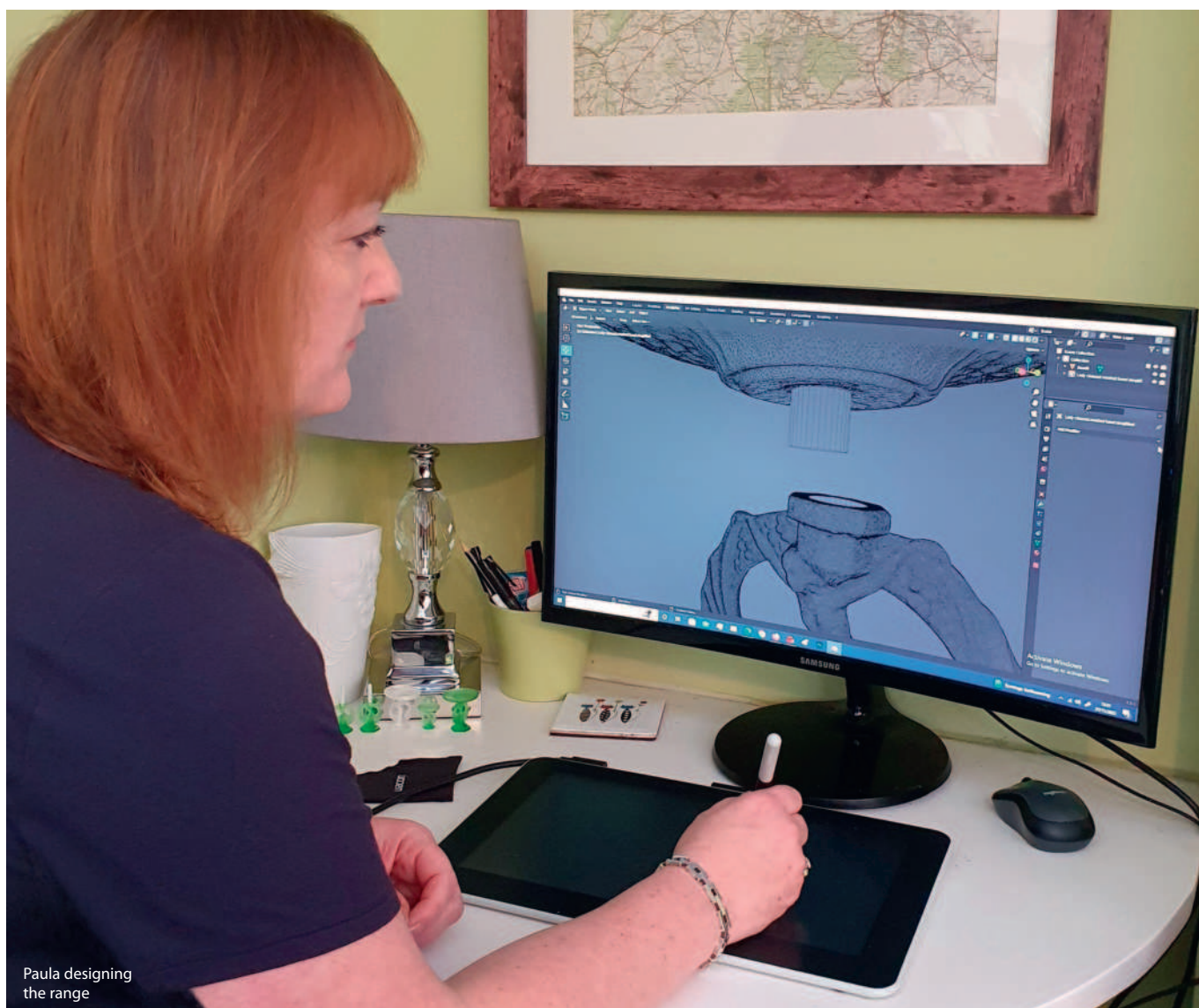
pieces suit themselves to being 3D printed, but I certainly intend to expand my Auntie Gracie range!"

I asked Paula why Art Deco style seems to have captured the imagination of miniaturists: "I think the Art Deco era is popular as there was an elegant, sophisticated feel to the décor. Even mundane items such as coffee tables, milk jugs and letter racks were beautifully designed with fresh angular lines that were so opulent and different for their time. My mission for 2023 is to create pieces in miniature that look authentic for my little Etsy shop. I might even end up having to do this full time! Poor me...! I have much to thank Auntie Grace for, but I never expected that her gift would set me off on a whole new career!" 🏠



INFO

You can find Paula's work in her Etsy shop, [ToTheWillowGarden](#)



Paula designing the range

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Say aloha to spring

The magic of spring blooms all year round for Vickielynn Thornburg.

A dream come true

Increasingly, the miniatures world is a place where we create the dream home we strive to find in our future. But for Vickielynn Thornburg, surrounded by the vibrant and inspirational landscape of Hawaii, it provided the opportunity to recreate her own beautiful living room in small scale. [PH](#)





▲ A room with a view. A tiny cat gazes from the window

◀ Stylish dining!

▼ Sit by the fireplace in Vicky's favourite upcycled chair



Home is where the heart is





Under the eaves.
The spacious top floor bedroom

“Sharing my collection of dolls houses and miniatures keeps me wanting to be creative and to inspire others to find the joy in miniatures too!”



The stunning white and pink décor of both her miniature and home environments has built Vicky a legion of fans. “My joy was when my grandson looked and said, “wow, same-same”, pointing at my living room and my roombox,” Vicky tells me, thrilled by winning the approval of her biggest fan.

An incredibly talented artisan, the spacious replica of Vicky’s living room is an extraordinary piece of miniature art, and one which meant she had to find ways to recreate all those important elements unique to her own home - this included replicating the look of her designer lamps, two of which sit on the coffee table, complete with matching glass candlesticks and two seasonal spring bunnies. When compared with the real thing, the accessories on her miniature coffee table are some of Vicky’s finest creations. “I even added a garden gazebo like I have in my living room.” The gazebo, covered in white lace, is a wonderful design feature and Vicky’s attention to detail even goes so far as to replicate the exquisite stained-glass windows found within the room’s real-life counterpart. Featuring butterflies with a splash of blue and purple, the windows are incredibly special. “Light coming through the decal stained glass looks like the morning light in my windows too!” says Vicky. With almost 70,000 followers on Instagram, Vicky’s miniatures share space alongside images of that real life interior décor, and so incredible is her 1/12th scale version, that you find yourself looking twice to check which you’re looking at! “My home is my Happy Place. Making a replica dolls house or roombox is a way to see my home in miniature too!” says Vicky. “Sharing my collection of dolls houses and miniatures keeps me wanting to be creative and to inspire others to find the joy in miniatures too!”

The comforts of home

Vicky’s incredible replica of her living room also includes a carefully hand-painted and beautifully furnished 1/144th scale miniature version of what is undoubtedly Vicky’s largest project to date. Her magnificent Pink Dolls House. The Greenleaf Garfield dolls house is a long way from the days when, as a child, Vicky would transform an everyday cardboard box into a miniature home away from home, complete with curtains, the latter surely demonstrating an early flair for those important details. “Dolls houses and miniatures have always been a way for

◀ Enjoying the spring sunshine on the patio



▲ Beautiful lighting features throughout Vicky's designs



me to 'decorate,'" Vicky reveals. With ten rooms, Vicky describes her famous pink house as a labour of love, every space filled with nooks and crannies. From huge glittering chandeliers to floral displays, calling this simply shabby chic feels like a disservice. This is glamour combined with the cosy comforts of home. Even the kitchen has

a chandelier! Putting those comforts together has seen Vicky source many wonderful pieces from gifted artisans on sites such as Etsy and eBay, but it's a vintage piece upcycled by Vicky herself which she cites as a particularly special design. "Detailing an old piece turned into a favourite comfy chair by the fireplace where my Pomeranian, Rocket, sits." Above



▲ Home from home! Vicky's outstanding replica of her own living room



▲ The tiny replica of the pink dolls house

◀ The replica coffee table

that fireplace is a beautiful vintage style clock and not one but two bouquets of flowers. It is, though, the tiniest grand piano I have ever seen which immediately catches the eye, making you realise just how much thought has gone into the intricacies of each room. At the other side sits a gorgeous heart shaped freestanding bird cage. Who wouldn't fall in love with that?

From the opulent chandeliers, to the fairy lights strung around the various living spaces, and the many lamps tucked into corners, lighting is a hugely important element within the house, a character in its own right. One which Vicky perfectly describes as making the house appear 'lived in', the centrepiece of the

dining room table an illuminated candelabra. It's elements such as this which do indeed make the house feel lived in, leaving you with that slight thrill as you imagine everyone about to gather round the table. The thought which has clearly gone into every element of the design of the pink dolls house is staggering.

When inspiration calls

The exterior is equally exciting, with colourful tiled steps leading up to the house and the small patio furnished with high quality wicker chairs. Then there's the pink tandem waiting to take us for a spin! Each window box is filled with spring flowers matching those 'growing' up the trellis. Staying with flowers and taking us a long way from the miniature Hawaiian property scene, Vicky transports us back across the Atlantic with the classic British telephone box. However, bursting with spring florals, this one isn't quite so traditional as those once a mainstay

▼ The call of spring



▲ The real thing! Vicky's living room



of British life. "I found a red phone booth at a thrift store and painted it pink like the famous London Pink Phone Booth," explains Vicky. "And I made a miniature cafe garden tablescapes in my backyard pergola where my daughter and I breakfast."

Exploring the miniature worlds designed and created by Vicky takes you to a different world, and for those of us who don't get to enjoy Hawaiian temperatures this season, her floral designs reveal many inspiring ways we can bring a touch of the outdoors indoors, both in small scale and within our own homes. Vicky's flair for interior design and skill as an exceptional artisan combine to deliver a stunning twist on the contemporary miniatures so popular right now, proving that the imagination of the talented miniaturist truly has no limits. Whether it's through recreating your own living room, to a ten-room mansion or a telephone box in Belgravia, miniature art can truly take you wherever you want to go! 🏠



INFO

For more information please visit:

www.instagram.com/pinkinparadise808/

Green green grass of home

Moi Ali shares how to make a lawn quickly - and cheaply!



YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- ☐ Offcut of astroturf/fake grass
- ☐ Glue
- ☐ Teabag dust
- ☐ Moss
- ☐ Green scenic scatter
- ☐ Railway foliage material
- ☐ One or two shades of green paint
- ☐ Lawn edging

Moi says...

"Convincing grass is difficult to find, and costly too. The cheaper alternatives such as green velvet, felt and green dolls house carpet, rarely look the part, and the nicest modelmakers' lawn on a roll is rather pricey. What to do? How about using an offcut of astroturf? I found a small piece in my local pound store, which was being sold as an Easter table mat. It was perfect for making rough grass. It's not suitable for a perfectly-manicured lawn, but ideal as realistic garden grass."



PDF NEWSPAPERS and MAGAZINES: WWW.XSAVA.XYZ



1 Cut the fake grass to size, then trim the length of the blades, as they will be way too long.



2 Pull out a few clumps here and there to reveal the base fabric.



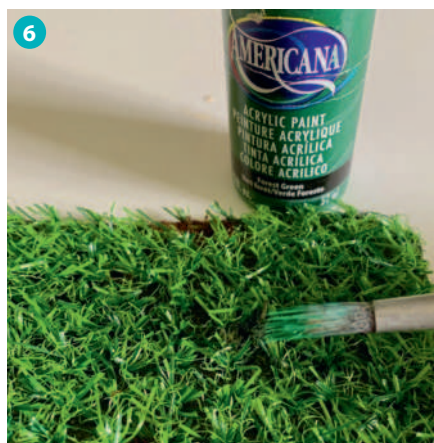
3 Put glue in the gaps you've just made.



4 Scatter teabag dust over the glue, shake off excess and leave to dry.



5 Add small clumps of railway foliage and moss to help break up the grassy surface and make it less uniform.



6 Apply green paint here and there to get a bit of colour variety that adds to the realism. A tiny bit of brown may be used here and there too.



7 Add lawn edging all around. I used a plastic edging in a traditional Victorian rope twist design. 🏡

Moi says...

"Why not add a dandelion or a few daisies? A 'keep off the grass' sign might look good too."



Trash to treasure

We have all heard the saying; one man's trash is another man's treasure - and it's true in the miniature world too!

Although the origins are unknown, 'trash to treasure' is particularly relevant today, as many find environmentally friendly solutions for everyday unwanted household objects - plus, you can benefit by making some wonderful, realistic and practically free miniatures!

Perfect excuse for tea!

Dried tea makes for a fantastic compost!

Next time you brew a cuppa, be sure to remove the teabag before adding the milk/sugar (if you do!) and leave them to cool.

Rip open the bag and spread the granules onto a plate or paper towel to dry.

Once fully dried, fill your pots, beds, wheelbarrow, bags... for instant natural compost!



▲ Brew it. Wash it. Rip it. Dry it - instant compost

It's for minis - you're not cracking up!

Whether you love a morning scramble, sunny-side up or over-easy, save your egg shells! (Just make sure you rinse them first!) This usual 'trash' is perfect for many applications, such as crushed to give an interesting wall texture when painted (as shown).

It is also wonderful for landscaping, such as for flower beds and hedging.



▲ Once your egg shells have been washed and dried, crush them into tiny pieces



▲ Apply a coat of paint to your surface before you begin gluing to ensure no background materials show through



▲ With a coat of PVA glue applied, add the eggshells to create your desired texture



▲ When completely dry, give the surface another coat of paint (or two) to finish off the effect

Anything is possible!

Before you throw away, well, anything, ask yourself one question - can it be SOMETHING? With just a 2-part silicone, the majority of items can be used to form a quick mould. When it is cured, remove the items and your set to replicate the design however you wish. Here, I've turned a simple keyring into a fireback - although nothing is impossible.



▲ Using a simple 2-part silicone moulding paste (such as Siligum), mix as per instructions before pressing in your chosen item to create an impression



▲ When cured, remove your object and fill the cavity with plaster of Paris (but you could also use polymer clay and bake) and leave until fully set



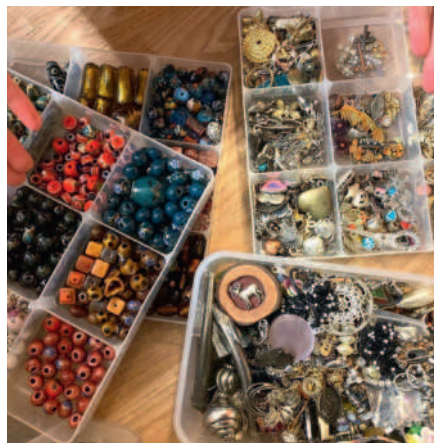
▲ Once your cast is ready, fix it to a scrap piece of wood and apply some surrounding texture if desired



▲ Apply a coat of paint and even a touch of weathering to finish off your piece

Beads!

Left over, loose, lonely or... from broken jewellery, Beads are even more adaptive than egg shells. Just a couple of beads can come together to create the true treasure of a beautiful miniature perfume bottle. With a dab or two of glue and a central headpin, you can achieve such a stunning result. Let your imagination roll (not your beads) and add then to small jars for 'sweets', adorn small bowls for instant decor or even create a glorious bead curtain.



▲ Why don't you have a rummage around in your craft stash (yes, we all have one!), box of broken/mismatched jewellery, or even pick up a second hand piece or two...



▲ With a few simple beads, a couple of headpins and a dab of glue your very own, unique perfume bottles are born

MORE IDEAS...

- Up-cycle old miniature furniture - such as adding beads to dresser drawers for handles, or use scrap paper to decoupage areas.
- Next time you have your photos digitally printed, keep hold of the 'photo' that has all the contact sized copies, and use them to make a miniature album or wall photos of real, memorable images.
- Using an empty cotton reel, a cosmetic sponge and a scrap of fabric (plus a dab of glue, or quick stitch) make a truly unique padded seat.
- Repurpose fraying ribbon into simple frilled edge table runners, place mats - and even Christmas garlands.
- Save tiny lids that are suitable for transforming into your next set of miniature planters and tubs.

DON'T FORGET NATURE TOO...

- Tiny twigs cut to fill a miniature log basket, or bundled together to make a besom broom.
- Minute shells to place in your garden.
- Recycle your aquarium grit for paths, landscaping and pebbledash. 

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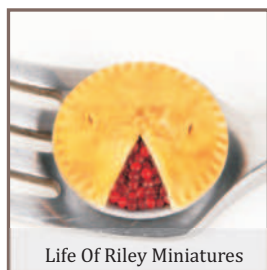


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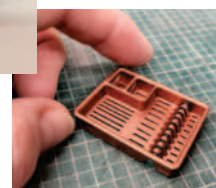
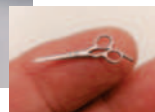
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An eclectic career path led to some pretty small things, for Polish-born Marta Kochanek



At work on a tiny doorway

Marta Kochanek, the face behind @pretty_small_things, has been living in the UK for almost two decades, just outside Birmingham. I came across her on Instagram and was blown away by her incredible creations – and just as inspiring is the story of her journey into the miniature world, and how her diverse career proved to be the perfect training for creating amazing scenes in small scale.



Marta's passion was architecture, which she studied to degree level, with interior design as a specialisation. This understanding of buildings shows itself in her miniatures. Marta told me: "It quickly became obvious when studying architecture that patience was crucial, but thankfully it was one of the qualities I possessed. [PH](#)

◀ Marta with one of her creations



A gift made with love



▲▼ Doorway to a tiny world



Deep concentration



Some years later, I changed direction into a career that also required patience, attention to detail, precision and concentration."

From buildings and grand designs, Marta switched to training to become a prosthodontist – a specialist in treating and handling dental and facial problems that involve restoring missing teeth and jaw structures, cosmetic dentistry, dental implants, crowns, bridges and dentures. That's quite a switch! She explained: "I really enjoyed that period of my life, and as a hobby to relax after the day job, I loved to take photos."

She continued: "The hobby really took over, throwing me into the world of advertising photography. A few years later, advertising photography moved from hobby to new career path and so began a new chapter in my professional career."

"I spent 15 years in advertising photography, I loved every minute, and I was successful too. It allowed me to travel around the world, meet and work with different people, respond to many challenges, and I won awards for my work. It was fantastic seeing my images on billboards, being published in magazines and books, getting requests for talks and interviews... and I was asked to become a university lecturer on the subject. What a ride!"

I waited with bated breath to find out how and when miniatures made their way into Marta's life. The answer lay in the pandemic, as Marta explained: "We were in lockdown, and I had been giving university lectures from home. Teaching theory over Microsoft Teams was one thing, but the practical aspect was quite another! It was very challenging arranging remote/virtual practical workshops."

"I had to find a way to keep photography students creative, while we were all locked down in homes and apartments, with little or no access to interesting locations, models, or even proper equipment. I really wanted to show my students that they could keep creative and inventive in such critical and challenging circumstances. I took my dog for a walk one day, and I started gathering things that we commonly describe as rubbish. I brought home my found objects – wires, pieces of plastic and rubber, stickers, rotten bits of fencing..."

Marta began playing with her trash and creating what in advertising is known as a set design, only hers this time was in a tiny scale. "It took me 18 hours to build a little garage on a table in my living room, which I then creatively covered in light with a few torches I had at home. In the end it appeared to be one of the best workshops I delivered. 📸➡️"



Finishing touches



Marta's sister's front door

It was something my students found very inspiring, as well as being great fun."

"The creative industries found the pandemic a super stressful period, and photographers literally stopped working. I guess the most positive outcome I took from this experience was the fact that I found myself beginning to relax when making this miniature scene, despite all the worries of Covid. It was a really calming experience that required forward thinking and some degree of invention to convert rubbish into something useful. I then delivered another workshop, as the previous one had been so well received by the students."

Like many a miniaturist, Marta loves a challenge! She told me: "Scale modelmaking is an adventure. You look at something real size and you wonder how you can replicate it in a small size. You then look for materials to use, try it out, and make it look as authentic as possible. There are no hard rules: the more creative and inventive you are, the better results you achieve. The more mistakes you make, the better solutions you look for next time. It is very refreshing, something you won't get from books. Practice is the only way to get better."

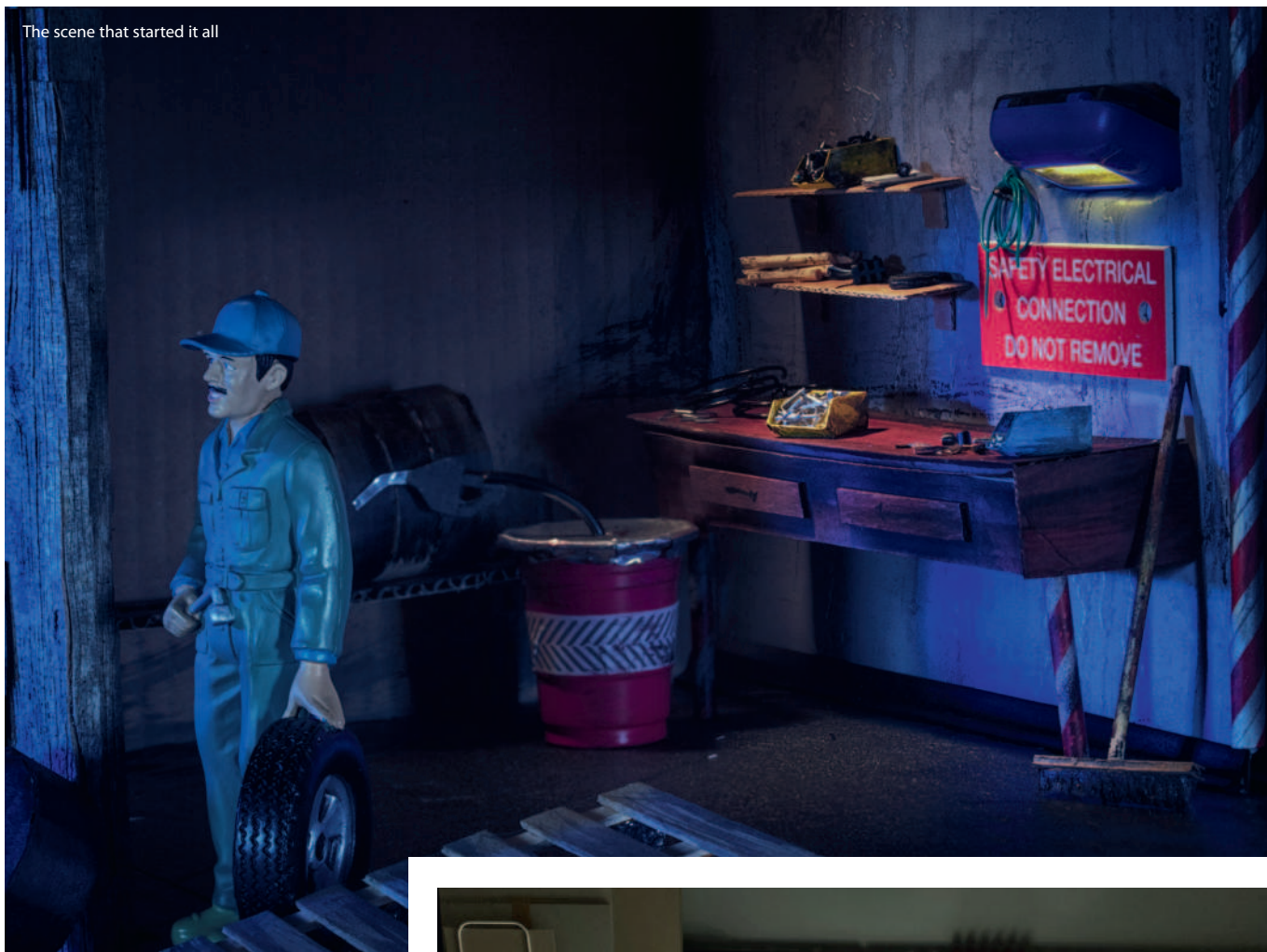
Tiny skip



Even the graffiti is miniaturised



The scene that started it all



For as far back as she can remember, Marta has been creative: "I used to paint, make sculptures, and all things handmade. Not professionally, just some out-of-working-hours interests, where I found my skills useful to make things and gift them to family members or friends. Since I discovered my new hobby of miniatures, I started gathering more tools to help me create small things. This is still very new to me, and when it comes to techniques, I am in a process of learning how to 'weather' a building. It's a challenge, but I know that only practice will help me to master it."

"My nature is to be super precise, and this forces me to do things properly. It's fun struggling with 2-3mm padlock to get it perfect in every detail. Something someone else may see as OK, to me may still be not just right yet. I take time to make or build my tiny things so they must be absolutely perfect! Otherwise, I don't see a point in doing it. I don't accept failure and I don't accept OK-ish results. I would rather make a thing a hundred times until I master it than give up when it does not look great at first attempt."



▲ Marta in creative mode

From someone who has already had an incredibly eclectic career, there's a potential new career in miniature-making, as Marta explains: "At the moment, mini-making is purely a hobby, but I do see potential for using my skill in advertising. I need to build a portfolio and confidence (which will come with practice) so that I can accept advertising briefs, respond

professionally, and build a top-quality set to a deadline. Meanwhile, I am happy to accept commissions from individuals." [Read more](#)

**INFO**

To take a closer look at Marta's work, head to her Instagram

@_pretty_small_things

Tool shed

This little tool shed has a small footprint but a lot of personality! The design, with its asymmetric roofline, is what we in Canada know as a New England Saltbox, the architectural style originating in the USA Northeast. For its small size there is a lot of storage potential as well as an ample well-lit workbench area. This month we make the building itself and next month we fill the inside.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 3/8in (10mm) thick cork-faced foamcore
- 1/32in (0.8mm), 1/16in (1.6mm) and 1/8in (3mm) thick sheetwood
- 3/8in (10mm) corner moulding
- Miniature window and door casing
- Model railroad 2x6 HO stripwood
- Clear rigid plastic packaging
- Scrap of card
- Transparent tape
- Door pulls (e.g. Handley House #71129)
- Miniature hinge (e.g. Handley House #10975)
- 16-gauge steel wire
- White and beige acrylic paint
- Silver Sharpie marker
- Golden oak wood stain*
- White glue
- Superglue

*Oil based stain won't warp the pieces or raise the grain, and this shade is a simple way to age the wood.

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Knife and steel ruler
- Small saw and mitre-box
- Wire cutters
- Needle-nose pliers
- Ball stylus
- Needle tool
- Small hand drills
- Wax paper
- Grid paper

1 The cork face resembles particle board and makes a great modern interior look. Cut the two end walls, following the template and making one with the door and the other without. Since you are cutting on the cork side, remember the door location will be reversed from what you see facing upwards. Refer to the cutting list for the remaining pieces. Cut the floor, tall wall, short wall, long roof, short roof, and two roof supports. Cut out all the window and door openings as shown.

Ruth's Top Tip!

"Use an ultra fine black Sharpie or ballpoint pen to mark the cork."



Photos by Stephen Lesbirel

2 Cut pieces of the thinnest sheetwood for each wall exterior, making the end walls 3/8in (10mm) wider on each side. These overhangs will overlap the foam edges of the front and back walls in a later step. Align the sheetwood pieces with the outside of each wall and mark the window and door openings through the foamcore openings to ensure correct placement. Measure to refine these markings and cut the openings in the sheetwood. Stain the outside of these sheetwood pieces. Mark vertical lines 1in (25mm) apart on the sheetwood. Glue and weight the sheetwood on the outside of each wall. These will be covered with stained trim boards in a later step. **Tip:** White glue warps wood, so spot glue in several places rather than smear it all over the sheetwood.

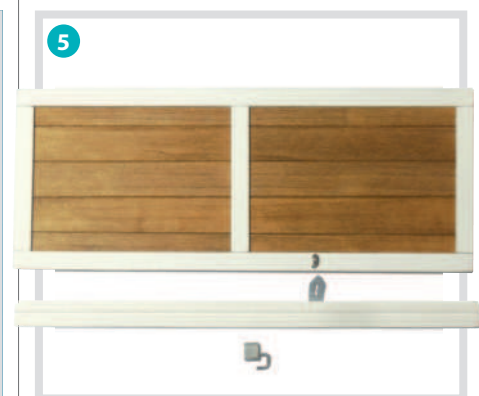
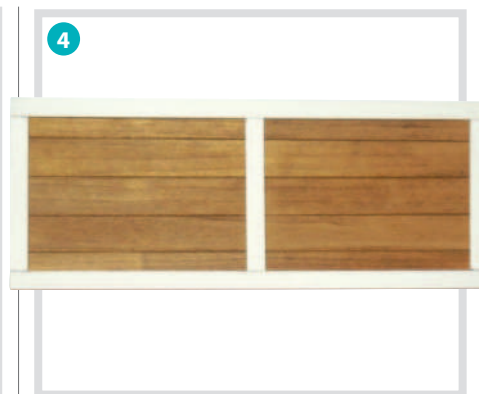
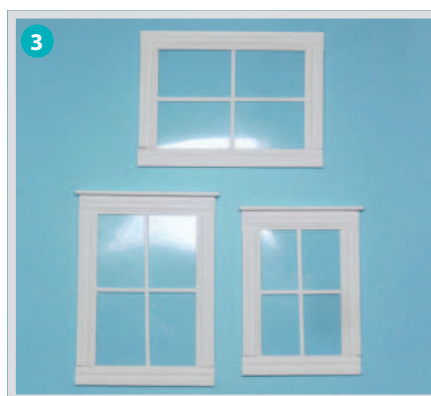
3 Paint casing and HO 2x6 mullion strips white. Let dry and repaint. Cut clear plastic window 'glass' 1/4in (6mm) wider and taller than each window opening. Cut all the window side, top and bottom casing pieces listed in the

cutting list. Glue the side pieces between the top and bottom pieces making a frame for each window opening. Cut a vertical mullion and two adjacent cross mullions from HO stripwood for each window. Touch up the paint on all cut ends. Glue the mullions pieces to the frame over wax paper covered grid paper. Cut and glue a sheetwood window header on edge and centered across the front and back windows. Edge-glue the clear plastic to the back of each frame, centered on the frame's opening.

4 Cut the step, door, door planks, door trim uprights and cross pieces (see the cutting list for sizes). Paint the step beige. Stain the door and planks. Spot glue the planks vertically on the door and weight this assembly until it is dry. Turn the door and emboss vertical lines every 1/2in (13mm), shading the grooves lightly with pencil. Cut the door sill and jambs. Cut the door casings and paint them and the door trim pieces white as before. Glue the trim strips on the door.



5 Cut the hasp from card, fold it at the dotted line and paint it silver. To strengthen the card hasp, apply a strip of transparent tape to the back. Trial-fit the door and casings on the front wall. Shape the wire hasp loop and cut it off. Superglue it into drilled holes in the door trim where the hasp's slit will slip over it. Glue the non-slit end of the hasp to the back of one uninstalled casing upright, so the hasp can hinge forward and its slot fit over the wire loop on the door trim. Cut the lock and sand the vertical corners rounded. Paint it silver. Drill two holes in the top of the lock. Make another wire loop. Superglue one end of this loop into one of the drilled holes in the top of the lock, as if it is open.



TOOL SHED CUTTING LIST

Material	Description	Quantity	Imperial	Metric	Notes (See template)
3/8in (10mm)-thick cork-faced foamcore	floor	1	7-1/4in x 8-1/4in	184mm x 210mm	
	front and back wall	2	9in x 11in	229mm x 279mm	asymmetric slants, openings
	short wall	1	6in x 7-1/4in	152mm x 184mm	wide window opening
	tall wall	1	7-1/4in x 8-1/4in	203mm x 184mm	no openings
	short roof	1	5in x 9-1/2in	127mm x 241mm	
	long roof	1	9in x 9-1/2in	229mm x 241mm	
	roof support	1	2in x 2in	51mm x 51mm	cut into two pieces, diagonally
miniature casing 3/8in (10mm)-wide	front window top, bottom	2	2-3/8in	60mm	adjust if casing is not 3/8in
	front window side	2	2-1/2in	64mm	
	back window top, bottom	2	2-3/4in	70mm	adjust if casing is not 3/8in
	back window side	2	3in	76mm	
	side window top, bottom	2	3-3/4in	95mm	adjust if casing is not 3/8in
	side window side	2	2in	51mm	
	door top	1	3-7/16in	87mm	adjust if casing is not 3/8in
	door side	2	6-9/16in	167mm	
1/16in x 1/4in stripwood (1.6mm x 6mm)	front window header	1	2-1/2in	64mm	
	back window header	1	2-7/8in	73mm	
	door header	1	3-9/16in	90mm	
	door trim uprights	2	6-7/16in	164mm	
	door trim cross piece	3	2-1/16in	52mm	
	gable wall end trim	4	gable length	gable length	angle cut both ends
1/32in (0.8mm)-thick sheetwood [usually 4in (102mm) wide, so walls will be spanned by two or three widths]	door planks	5	1/2in x 6-7/16in	13mm x 164mm	
	short end wall	1	6in x 8in	152mm x 203mm	allows overhang on both sides
	tall end wall	1	8in x 8in	203mm x 203mm	allows overhang on both sides
	front and back wall	2	9in x 11in	229mm x 279mm	mirror-image the gables
	window fillers	12	3/8in x opening size	10mm x opening	
	roof edges	6	3/8in x roof edge	10mm x roof edge	mitre at peak
	wall trim board	26	3/16in x wall height	5mm x wall height	excluding door and windows
1/16in (1.6mm)-thick sheetwood	door jamb top	1	3/8in x 2-3/4in	10mm x 70mm	
	door jamb side	2	3/8in x 6-1/2in	10mm x 165mm	
	door sill	1	1/2in x 2-3/4in	13mm x 70mm	
1/8in (3mm)-thick sheetwood	door	1	2-9/16in x 6-7/16in	65mm x 164mm	
	step	1	2in x 4in	51mm x 102mm	
	lock	1	3/16in x 1/4in	5mm x 6mm	sand side corners rounded



6 Stain 3/16in (5mm) wide wall trim strips to cover all the joins and pencil lines of the walls. Paint the wall corner boards and stripwood for the gable end walls, which will go along the top following the roofline, white. Paint the 3/8in (10mm) wide 1/32in (0.8mm) thick sheetwood roof edge strips white. These wider strips will cover the roof panels' foam edges. Set these strips and the roof panels aside for completion next month, when the roof will be assembled.



7 Frame the foamcore edges of each window opening with 3/8in (10mm) wide thinnest sheetwood uprights spot glued between a top and bottom piece. Spot glue the windows to the siding centered over each opening. Spot glue the door sill and jambs to the foamcore, aligned with the inside edge. Superglue and nail the hinges to the door (see the template) and to the siding. Superglue a door pull on each side of the door. Glue the door casing uprights to the siding with the top casing spanning them. Add interior window and door casings.



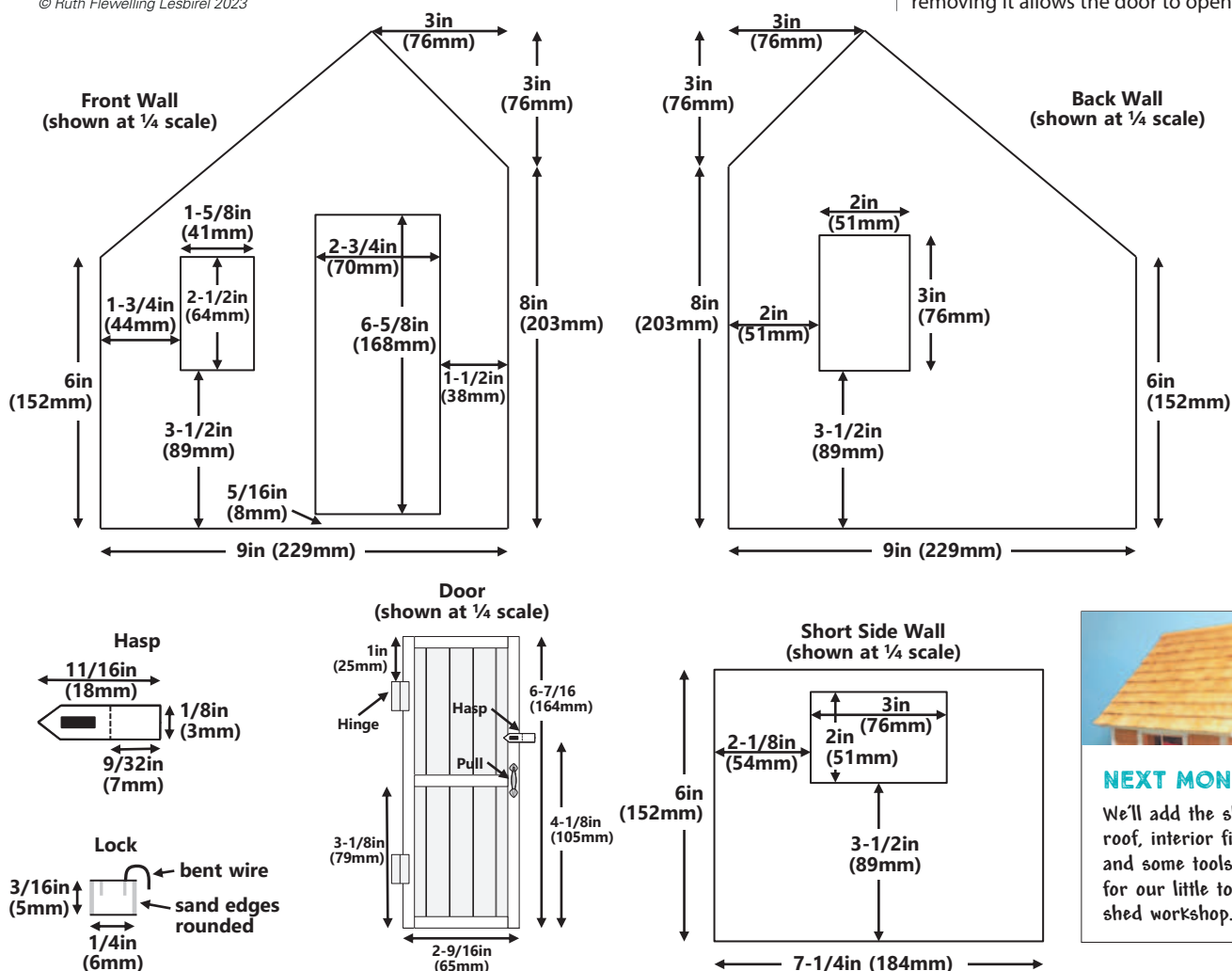
8 Glue painted stripwood outlining the top of both gable walls. Glue the stained wood strips over the joins and lines on the siding, including the lines that touch the window and door casings. **Tip:** Be sure to angle cut the ends of the trim strips for the gable walls so they meet properly at the top and will be ready for the straight cut corner boards. Glue the front and end wall against the floor over wax paper. Glue the back and other end wall against the floor and the installed walls. Brace this assembly with books until completely dry. Add white painted corner boards covering the corner seams.

To finish for this month, hook the lock over the hasp's loop. This will keep the door shut; removing it allows the door to open. 🏠

TOOL SHED TEMPLATE

Patterns at 100%

© Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel 2023



NEXT MONTH

We'll add the shingled roof, interior fittings and some tools for our little tool shed workshop.

Ruth's MINITIPS

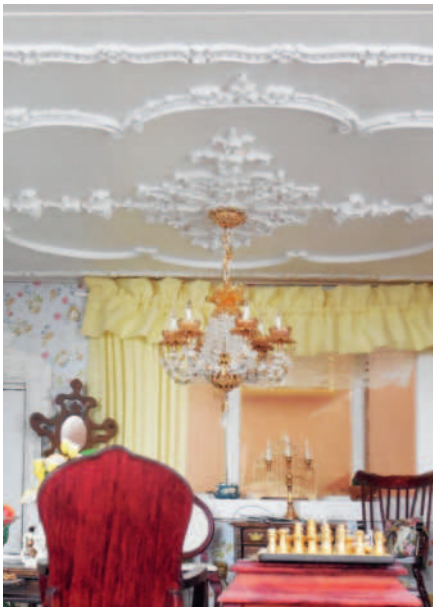
Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel continues her top tips and advice for what has worked (and not worked!) throughout her years of experience. This month, Ruth talks about ways of keeping your hobby cost effective...

Photos by Stephen Lesbirel

Until you've been in the hobby for a while, you may wonder what's really worth a splurge and what's not. To me, miniatures should be a guilt free hobby. You don't want to 'break the bank', only to later suffer buyer's remorse. You know that feeling when you get home after a shopping trip and say, "Oh dear! Why in the world did I ever buy this? I could have used that money in so many more appropriate ways!" Worse, what if you buy something and shortly after you get it home, you don't even want or like it anymore (a feeling often caused by buyer's remorse).

On the other hand, it's wonderful to buy just the perfect furniture piece or accessory, even if it cost almost as much as it would

▼ My dolls house chandelier



in full scale, to really complete a miniature room! My parents gave me a beautiful crystal chandelier for my dolls house living room and wow, does it pop! Now there's something I definitely couldn't make myself and it really sets the tone for the whole room.

I make a lot of my own furniture because it is so cost effective, rewarding and unique. I think I also appreciate it much more because I know the work involved in getting it just right. I also like that I learn so much about its components and construction – things I was never taught in school or university, and I get real satisfaction from knowing I made it myself from scratch. Anything made of wood or fabric (choose natural fibres) is really worth attempting yourself, for all of these reasons. Even 'marble' topped tables can be easily and effectively made.



▲ Marble topped table

However, there are many other things that are not worth trying and some things are even impossible for a hobbyist to achieve. Most of them not only are better left to the professionals but they add that special touch that gives a piece real presence. I wrote about bling in a previous article, but I find that brass or other metal hardware are really good purchases and usually are not that expensive. Often brass knobs for instance come in packages of 12, which will do several project pieces. The same is true for turned spindles and legs. These are made on a miniature lathe and are impossible otherwise without a huge investment in time. Even then it's hard to get identical ones. I made cabriole legs for the wood stove at the pub, because I needed shorter ones than I could buy, but I would rarely do it again! ▶



▲ Wood stove with small cabriole legs



▲ Knobs, spindles, legs and hinges

Another good 'investment' is wooden knobs. These can be approximated with tiny wooden dowels or cocktail stick bits, but the purchased ones come in packages of 18 for an excellent price. I use them for knobs, of course, but also for trim in pieces like the canterbury and planter in the February 2023 issue.

Along with brass hinges, casters and finials are also very effective at adding realism to a project and worth a splurge.

► Canterbury and planter



▼ Furniture with brass accents



Although miniature groceries can often be made by gluing coupon and magazine images to stripwood and dowel lengths, I usually buy these items, especially if they come in shaped 'bottles', often made of resin.

▼ Grocery items



Worth the splurge are exquisitely intricate needlework items made by very skilled (and patient!) needle workers, from mats to samplers, cushion covers to quilts and throws. I have made some of these items myself, but they are very time consuming and laborious! Purchasing these items to include in scenes can really upgrade their surroundings, add a sense of warmth, and increase the realism factor.

Similarly, it is possible to make your own wire wicker furniture, fine baskets, and stained glass and often a lot of fun and very satisfying to do this, but buying

these pieces is well worth the seemingly extravagant price, when your time is figured into the equation. Paintings and prints add a warm, homey touch too. Unless you are a gifted artist, a purchased painting or those

▼ Cat cushion, sampler, carpet, throw and bear quilt



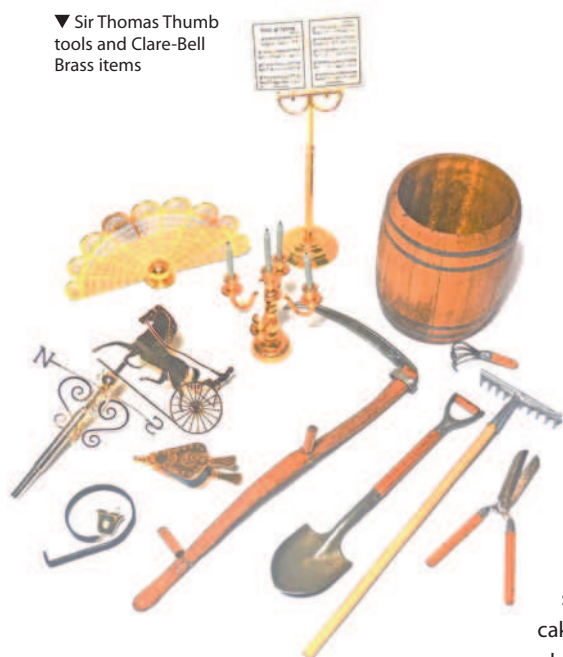
realistic prints found at most dolls house shops, are a good investment.

Anything forged or moulded is a must splurge. These really can't be duplicated by an amateur! The beautiful and authentic hand tools made by Sir Thomas Thumb are well worth the price and really complete a barn, workshop, tool shed, or garden scene. Bling from Clare-Bell Brass, from weathervanes to candelabras, bud vases

▼ Wire chair, basket, stained glass lamp and prints



▼ Sir Thomas Thumb tools and Clare-Bell Brass items



to brass beds, fruit bowls, curtain rods, doorknobs, hour glasses, goblets and more are fabulous additions to so many settings too. Even plumbing faucets and pots and pans can be good purchases.

A lovely day out to a miniatures show like Miniatura can yield many happy splurges from diminutive working clocks to exquisite glassware, not to mention the wonderful Stokesayware tea sets and porcelain pieces. I even got a couple of poodles on my last visit (one can never have too many dogs!)

If you happen upon other really unique, quality artisan pieces, snap them up while they are available. These pieces are a real joy to own and a brilliant memory of the encounter. On my first trip to Miniatura, I was fortunate to meet David Edwards, the maker of finely detailed, tiny turned wooden sewing accessories and other household items. I really don't regret any of my splurges at his table! Should you decide in future to sell your artisan treasures, they may be worth far more than their original cost.

There are so many things that really are worth the splurge, especially if you are short on time and have a bit of spare cash.

Miniature shops and shows can also be great sources for unique dolls house people, like the ones made by Carol Bull

of Bags of Character. I have one of her vicars in my chapel.

And of course, unique materials for making your own miniatures from unique mouldings to small patterned, natural fibre upholstery fabrics.

Generally, there are also very

▼ Small Time and Hall clocks, glassware, Stokesayware and poodles



convincing (and seemingly yummy) cakes, breads, meats and seafood, fruits and vegetables made from polymer clay. And laser cut paper doilies and wood trim.

All of these tips on splurging a bit for truly special miniature pieces save valuable time that can be better spent making the things a hobbyist can really do well. Just as in my real life, I feel justified in my miniature splurges because I do make the easier things myself. Really intricate furniture pieces are often worth the splurge, but generally simpler pieces can be made quite easily and quickly. If you need a basic table or chair, a bit of sheetwood and some inexpensive spindles or even wooden cocktail sticks and small dowels can fit the bill. A single piece of sheetwood can make several tables and chairs, and even fireplace mantels. Combined with fabric and sometimes stuffing, beds, sofas, and draperies are all frugal makes that are within reach of a hobbyist. Furniture kits are also doable projects, are generally very high quality, cost less than finished pieces, and for many,

► Laser cut doilies, silk fabric, foods and 1/24th scale vegetables



▼ Some of my David Edwards pieces



they are a springboard to making more miniatures from scratch. Help getting started with your own furniture and accessory builds is as close as magazines like this one!

My last frugal tip is that before buying that dolls house of your dreams, try a little kit to test your interest. There are several room box kits available now, from greenhouses to book shops, each with a myriad of accessories and often in 1/24th scale, that will give a real feel for further adventures into this wonderful hobby. 🏠

◀ Vintage kits



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The Quartermaster:

WHAT EVERY DOLLS HOUSE NEEDS

Many people love model railways and have a layout tucked away in the attic or garden shed. Well, it's the same for dolls houses...



Tanis Law, Tadpoles, at the Miniatura stand.

Tanis Law, who goes under the name of Tadpoles – Working Model Railways for your Dolls House, firmly believes that every dolls house needs a model railway. Where it's located however is entirely up to the dolls house owner. It might be in the spare bedroom, or in the attic at eye level, in the children's nursery perhaps – or maybe in grandad's potting shed. Whichever room is chosen, the tiny train layout brings a dolls house to life as it chugs around the track, perhaps through tiny tunnels and stopping at the smallest of stations for passengers to get on and off.

Around 20 years ago Tanis was selling niche items of dolls house miniatures, travelling all over America and Europe looking for items to bring back. But then social media became bigger so people could look for unusual miniatures themselves without leaving their front room and travelling became more expensive. So, for Tanis it just wasn't viable to continue what she was doing, so decided it was time to think about making her own unique miniatures.

It wasn't difficult to decide what to make, as memories flooded back of her late father-in-law's model railway layout which he had in his spare bedroom. "The layout was huge," said Tanis. "It took up most of the bedroom. I started to think about men and their train sets and got to thinking that every dolls house needs a model railway."

So, Tanis set about making these little dioramas of model railways – working in N and Z gauge which are almost the smallest railway gauges train enthusiasts work in. N gauge is a set of standards used in railway modelling to define the distance between two rails, referred to as the gauge. The 'N' stems from the distance of nine millimetres between rails. The British ratio used is 1/148th scale. Z scale is smaller still with a track gauge of 6.5mm/0.256in. The British ratio would be 1/220th.

"I buy the engines, motors and carriages," Tanis explained. "The motors are connected to cogs which drive a belt that runs

Quality Streets layout



Lions and Tigers and Bears, oh my! Circus animals are on the loose!





along the trackside. I also buy 'N' or 'Z' gauge figures. I don't glue these down so that people can move them about and play with them. Then I make all the scenery and construct the track. Scale purists would be horrified but it works for the human eye."

Tanis makes her model railway layouts either 4x4in or 4x7in. "The scale of the engine is 1/900 which makes it approximately 00 railway gauge for a 1in scale dolls house. Each layout is different and unique, and each one is given a name and has a backstory."

Explaining further, Tanis continued, "The train runs on the custom-built track and around the landscaped scenery. Power is provided by either a 9 or 12-volt transformer or using the supplied 9-volt battery clip and via a jack plug point at the rear. There are cut out notches at each corner underneath to enable legs to be added thus making it into a table layout."

When it comes to building each layout, Tanis says that she doesn't have a clear picture in her mind as to how it will look, apart from whether it's to be a snowy scene or greenery. "The layout just develops – it develops its own story. Every layout has its own back story. I have everything around me and as I'm working, eventually the name of

the layout comes through. So, when people buy a layout, it comes with its own name."

Until early 2022 Tanis had taken a break from making her tiny railway layouts. But she had been toying with the idea of returning to her miniatures. It took a final bit of coaxing from Miniatura's Andy Hopwood that made her mind up – and she was back!

The summer months of 2022 saw her making a dozen or more layouts. Amongst them were: A Snowy Scene; the Grand Tour; Christmas Morning; Wingbridge Water Mill; High Chapel; Snowball Fight; Three Ways Hill; Quality Street; and Lions and Tigers and Bears Oh My!

We caught up with her at the Autumn Miniatura Show 2022 at Stoneleigh where she admitted to being really pleased to be back making her tiny railway dioramas again. "Andy has always liked my railways and returning to Miniatura was really enjoyable."

She's also happy to create a layout to the customer's requests. If they have had a memorable train journey and want it created in miniature, she will happily re-create this, even down to the re-painting of the train, and of course the scenery and time of year regarding snow or greenery.

▲ Childhood memories relived in this diorama

She added, "If they let me know what their own layout would like to be and their memories, and photographs, I'll make this for them. I've done a few for people already. There was one lady who had travelled on the Orient Express in the Italian Alps and wanted this re-created."

Tanis' workshop is a little unusual. As she lives on a narrowboat, space is at a premium, so she is equipped with a 'huge high workbench' and because of the small size of the miniatures she's working with, she can store them under the bed when she needs to and bring them out to continue working on them.

Typically, the cost for a basic custom-built railway is £220 for the 4x4in and £250 for the 4x7in, although it does depend on the level of detail required and any elements added such as working lights, animated figures in the scenery, and realistic train sounds. When a new railway is ready for purchase, Tanis lists it on her social media pages. 🏠



INFO

For more information, visit:

<https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/TadpolesMiniRailways>

RETRO-FIT REALISM:

EXTERNAL WALLS

In part two of this new series, Moi Ali shows how to accessorise your facade to make your dolls house more realistic.



Conservatory 'before' adding embossed paper.



Brick slips are made from real brick

Brick slips – thin slices of real brick – create the illusion that your dolls house is constructed from solid brick. Glue slips with PVA, seal with a 1:1 mix of PVA/water, then grout. It's messy, and a bit fiddly and time-consuming, but the effect is extremely lifelike. Corner slips wrap around corners to maintain the 'solid brick' illusion.

Brick wall effects

The easiest, cheapest alternative to brick paper is embossed brick sheeting. It's better than a normal paper as it has a 3D effect and nice texture. Simply fix it to walls with glue. I retro-fitted some to an old, yellow-painted conservatory, and it really brought the place to life – as you can see from the 'before' and 'after' photos!

If you're unable to remove the windows and doors when retro-fitting embossed paper, make a paper template and keep adjusting it until you get a perfect fit around windows and doors. Simply transfer the template outline to the embossed paper. Not only will you get a neater finish, you will also avoid costly mistakes, as any errors will be made on cheap scrap paper.



Brick slips are made from real brick

You can also achieve a highly realistic effect with a stencil, but that too is rather messy. Brick powder compound is mixed with water to form a paste, which is applied though a stencil with a palette knife. It's best done on a horizontal surface (with doors and windows removed if possible) so try to gently lay your dolls house on its back when stencilling. Better still, remove the screws/ hinges and unattach the front of the house so you can work on it horizontally.



▲ Stencilling is messy

Moi's Top Tip!

"Use repositionable spray adhesive to hold the stencil in place and prevent the brick paste from 'bleeding' under the stencil. Apply 'bricks' over walls that have first been painted a mortar-colour"

Paperclay brick and stone

Paperclay makes fantastic brick and stone effects in any colour or shape you wish. This affordable clay product can be used to create patterned brickwork such as herringbone, Flemish bond and any other pattern you care to choose, as well as rubble stone, sandstone in blond and red, flint, cobblestone... the only limitation is your imagination. Look for inspiration in real life, then mimic it in small scale with this wonder product!

Roll out the clay, apply a thin sheet of it to a glued surface, and incise with a brick or stone block pattern using a scribe. Once dry, paint it to taste. Practise first on a piece of scrap MDF, as it's quite tricky to master. I have used it to create stone and brickwork on my folly, and I made a nice, decorative brick wall with arch on my pub. It's lightweight, and suitable for floors as well as walls.



▲ Paperclay makes great brick and stone

Moi's Top Tip!

"Paper clay can be pushed into a mould to make decorations such as plaques and keystones for walls"

Quoin stones

Quoin stones are found on the outside corners of buildings, and are a popular feature on dolls houses. Why not retro fit some to yours! You can buy real stone pieces – either flat or L-shaped, to wrap around the corner of your dolls house. Glue them and grout. Simple! Another solution is a strip of ready-made wooden quoin stones, although these do not wrap around the corner but are nonetheless a nice feature to add (and you can sometimes get them

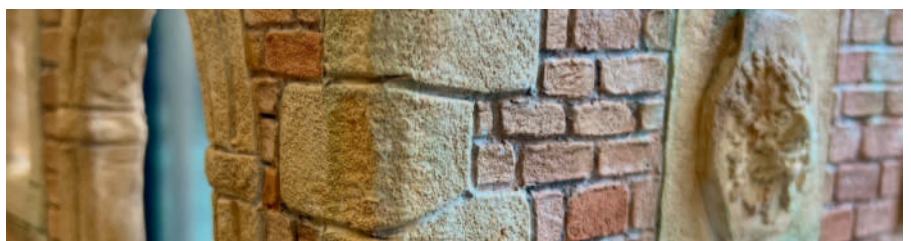
Moi's Top Tip!

"When considering quoins, remember to factor in that you will still need to be able to open the front of your dolls house and any quoining you add will need to accommodate this"

as individual wooden 'stones' rather than strips. Glue in place and paint. Again, really simple. Paperclay is another way to make realistic quoin stones, as is stencilling using a quoin-shaped stencil (simply apply stone compound with a spatula).

The quickest, cheapest way to make quoins is to use the egg box method, as featured in last month's issue. Cut stones from textured cardboard egg cartons, glue, paint and grout. You can even wrap the 'stones' around corners for realistic effects. [PH](#)

▼ Paperclay quoin stones



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Pargetting

Create 'pargetting', an elaborate, traditional Tudor or Jacobean plaster effect. It's simple to do using air-drying clay. This effect can also be used indoors.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Air-drying clay
- Glue
- Paint
- Shapes to press in the clay



1 Roll out clay. Cut pieces to match the size of the areas to be 'plastered'. Make them slightly larger to allow for shrinkage and sanding.



2 Press objects into the wet clay to create a decorative plaster effect. Shields, fleur de lys, Tudor roses and heraldic emblems evoke that period's style. Metal charms or even rubber stamps can be used to emboss the clay. Allow to dry overnight.



3 Sand the panel edges and paint cream or another suitable colour and weather the pieces if you wish. Glue them in place – they look good framed with stained stripwood.

Moi's Top Tip!

"Apply Polyfilla to external walls to create a roughcast stucco finish. Smooth it with a spatula but don't make it too even. Paint walls whatever colour you wish, depending on the style of your house"



▲ Columns come in many forms

Other wall details

There are so many other ways to add realism to your walls. The simplest way is to paint walls with a textured paint such as Sandtex. This stops them looking so flat. 'Weather' painted walls with dirty washes of watered down black, brown and even very diluted green paint for algae. Mop up excess paint and runs with kitchen towel, although some runs can look very effective.

Wooden, plastic or plaster pillars/columns can make a plain house look rather grand. Buy plain or fluted, with Doric (plain), Ionic (scrolled) or Corinthian (highly decorative, with acanthus leaves) capitals. They come as full rounds, but also as half columns. A pair either side of a door can look rather nice and bring a classical touch to a dolls house, very fitting for a Georgian or Regency façade.

While columns add grandeur, hoppers,



▲ Rainwater goods

downpipes and guttering (known collectively as rainwater goods) often look best on more humble abodes – although retired lawyer Geoffrey Walkley made beautiful custom monogrammed hoppers for the miniature stately home he made for his daughter Sarah. Available in metal or plastic and round or square profile, just as in real life, gutters definitely make a dolls house look more like a miniature real house. For a cheaper alternative, use doweling for downpipes.

Beams can add rustic charm to a dolls house and are easy to add. Simply buy stripwood, shave the sides to create a less regular line, then paint or stain. Glue the finished 'beams' to your building. For gritty urban realism, take a tip from Instagrammer Tokyo Build, who adds cabling, wires, alarms and other features to walls, or Hack Life, who prints 3D air con units for a real-life feel.



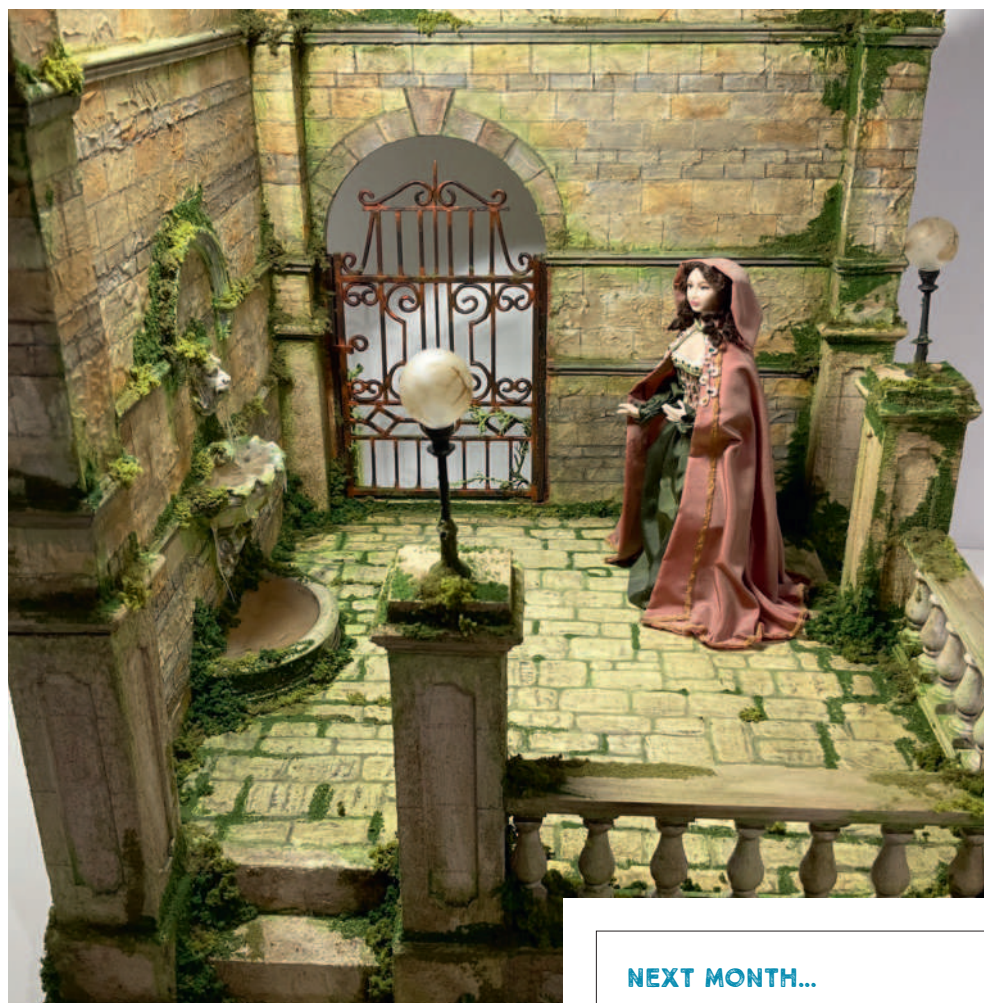
▲ Stripwood makes great beams



▲ A street sign and post box add detail



▲ Cables and wires by Tokyo Build



▲ Hazel Wyle's secret garden shows how moss can add realism to walls

NEXT MONTH...

We will look at doors and windows!

Street signs are another nice touch. Buy a ready-made resin or metal sign such as 'High Street', or get a custom-made laser cut sign that incorporates your family name or a street name that is important to you. I often make my own signs by printing off a picture of a real sign, rescaled, mounting it on card and adding layers of glossy varnish to create a cast iron effect.

Don't forget greenery and flowers too, to bring external walls to life. How about a bit of ivy or some wisteria growing up a wall trellis, or even a few hanging baskets? When it comes to adding detail, more is more! 🏡

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Artist spotlight

We speak to professional artist Emmanuel Nouaillier to discover what inspires his innovative creativity when making miniature pieces of industrial art...

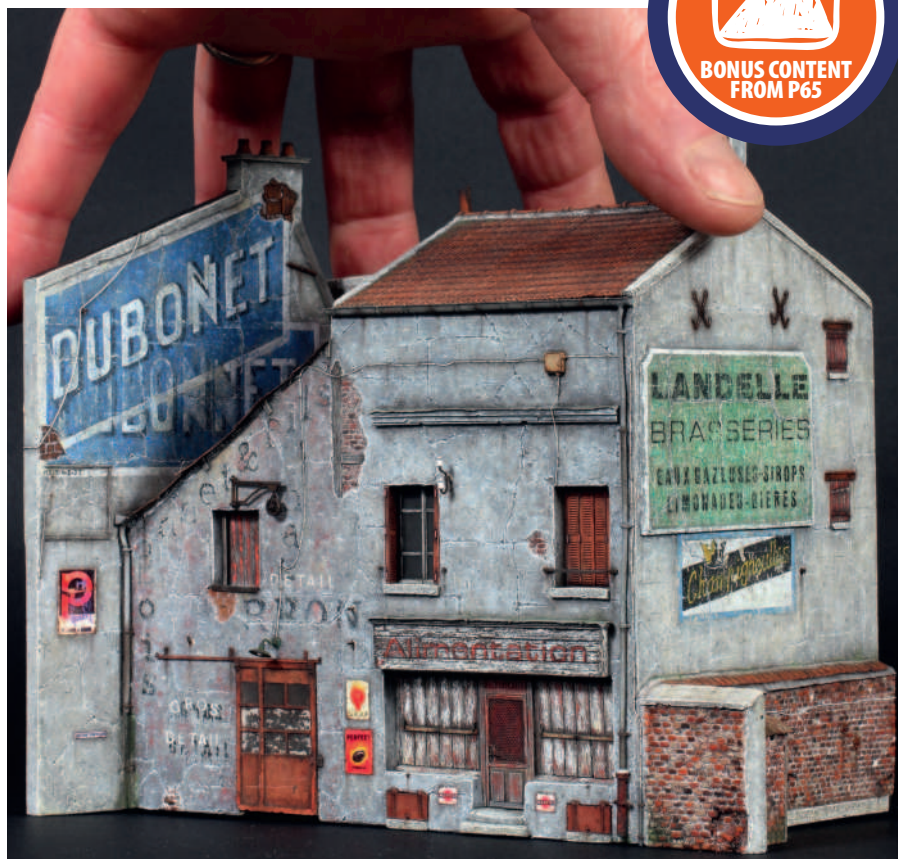


Hi Emmanuel, can you tell us about yourself...

I am a married 57 year old professional author-artist, born and living in Normandy, where we bought a house near the sea. In addition to my passion which has become my full-time job, we like flea markets and industrial furniture that we restore. In addition to travelling for professional events, I like to organize photographic wanderings several times a year and visit our several British friends.

How long have you been making miniatures?

As a hobby, I started very early as a child, building poetic houses made with shoebox cardboard. I worked on a small desk installed in my father's studio, who was a sculptor and marine painter. As a teenager, I gradually developed a passion for historical figurines, then historical miniature scenes. At that time, I learned the first basics of realistic aging techniques and the use of various materials such as plastic card sheets to make models on my own. After a long break, I came back to creating in the mid-90's. I then turned towards the 'realistic' miniature to depict a certain French urban/industrial landscape through mini-sketches at small scale. My first creations lead to numerous contributions in the European modelling press, my 'hyper-realistic' approach appealing to a large audience. After the sale of several sketches at the International Museum of Miniature in Lyon, France, I became a professional artist and photographer. I have partnerships with editors and companies while refining my artistic approach with the structures. This allows me to be exhibited in art galleries, other museums (Spain, Japan) and to organize my own exhibits in France, with or without other artists. 



▲ Blast from the past, with one of the latest pieces I made in small scale a decade ago, before I focused my work on larger scales.

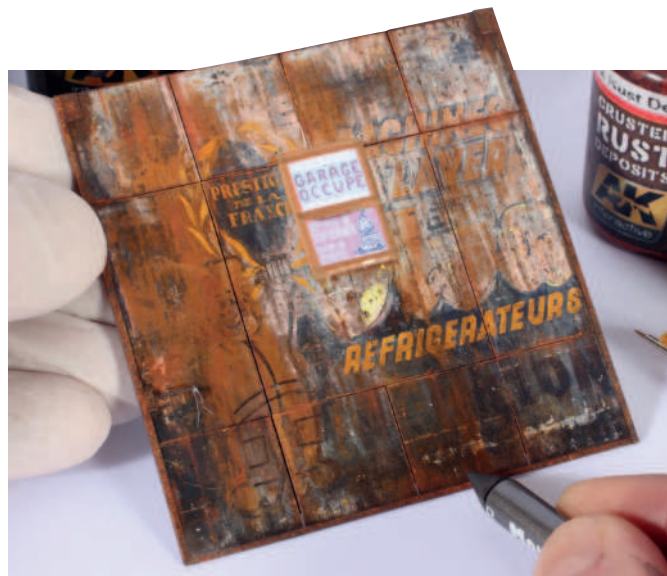


How it looks at the beginning of each of my vignettes... with the help of a solid visual documentation, I shape the structures, always respecting a sketch or a more precise plan

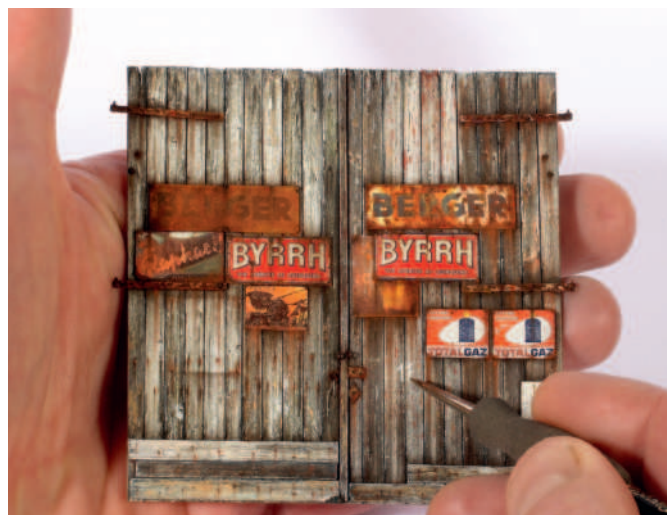


▲ Several dozen hours of work later, here's almost the finished façade, after extensive painting and aging steps to obtain such realistic appearance

▼ Even if the ground surfaces remain very modest for such framed pieces, the care taken in the scenography must fully highlight the whole work



▲ Rust is one perfect example of the numerous effects I enjoy to imitate



▲ Wood made with engraved plastic card was one of the first things I learnt when making structures for historic models. Over time I gradually improved the process, especially in the trimming work and the aging





▲ I find my inspiration in the traces of the past that fade with time... the poetry of interpretation mixed with nostalgia are linked to my work on miniatures



▲ I reworked some openings and imagined a truncated first floor, that the spectator can freely imagine



◀▲ This was sold to a private collector



Part of my work for my first 'Closed' and 'Relics' series, during the figurative art fair in the fabulous showroom of the Brantome Abbey in Perigord, 2018

► Almost based on a real situation of a building frozen in its state. This is now part of the collection fund of a private museum in Spain

What got you first interested in making miniatures?

I really don't know, perhaps the fact that I was imbued with some of my father's miniature sculptures. Looking back on all these years and even more now, the fact to 'give life' to pieces of inert materials and tell stories through my work. Working on the scenic composition, finding the right interpretation of a real situation, adding the tiny detail which will make the difference or bring more contrasts. An obsession with perfection and mimicry with reality, right down to the photographic approach.

Where do you get your inspiration from?

I started in the early 90s with iconographic research showing the 'urban landscape' of the 50s/60s depicting streets full of antique shopfronts, old workshops, decayed shacks. These situations have inspired me to create my first series of vignettes at small scale, and perfect the work of extreme detail, without taking into consideration the limit of scale. For my work in perpetual evolution

in the treatment and the presentation of the miniature, but also the time devoted to the methods of aging, I decided to work in larger scales and focus, like a photographer, on miniature close shots. From then on, I undertook a more personal research work of what I call the "traces from the past" still appearing nowadays: antique shops, garages of another era, disused workshops. So every year since, I organize one or two photos expeditions, after locating interesting situations with the help of Streetview. At end these pictures are not only used as inspiration for my work, but I also print and frame the best of them to exhibit in addition to my miniature frames.

Tell us how you go about creating your work?

As a general rule, I systematically imagine my creations from real situations. It can be only one, on which I will add or remove some elements that I consider visually interesting or not. It can also be the conjunction of two

or three situations, to bring more contrasts, a particular aging or even an old erased typography. In any case, the goal is to make something that should appear more real than a real situation. Practically, I draw up a plan to scale, with the details to be added, the effects here and there.

What do you do with the miniatures you make?

don't keep any creations for myself once framed, from the moment I've captured them for art prints or sequenced steps. All of my production is intended for acquisition, either directly, through my Instagram account, or through an art gallery when I exhibit. I also have commissioned work.

Do you have a favourite project?

I don't in fact have any, they all are! I would say it's perpetually the next one, or ones... Indeed, I always work on several creations at the same time, which allows me to systematically have a step back on each one and avoid any weariness on a project. I would say that my projects file is constantly being filled up... according to my discoveries, although I wouldn't have enough time in my life to make them all come true! 



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Edwardian lady

If you have a dolls house or roombox set in the Edwardian era, dress your 1/12th scale doll to suit by making her full outfit.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Young lady 1/12th scale doll with ample bosom, small waist and painted ankle boots
- Scrap of fine lace or tulle for stockings
- Fine white cotton for pantaloons and petticoat (approx. 12x7in)
- White lace for underwear trim (approx. 1 yard)
- Fine cotton or silk for blouse base and blouse sleeve base (approx. 6x4in)
- Lace or tulle for blouse front and sleeves (approx. 7x5in)
- Silk or cotton for skirt, hat and bolero jacket (approx. 12x6in)
- Selection of flat lace trim to make cut-outs for skirt, bolero, blouse, bag, umbrella and hat decoration (approx. 16x12in)
- Scrap of contrasting silk or cotton for belt, bag, umbrella and hat lining
- Scrap of bonding web for belt
- Scrap of strong foil for hat inner, fine chain for bag handle and cocktail stick plus acrylic paint for umbrella
- Mixture of silk ribbons/feathers/braid for decoration
- Jewellery findings/filigrees, beads and crystals for bag clasp, umbrella, brooch
- Edge sealer like fraycheck/fraystop
- Good quality fabric glue

PREPARATION:

- Enlarge the pattern pieces if they have not been printed to full scale. Trace the pattern pieces. Check the fit against your doll and make any adjustments (it is a good idea to make up the garment in kitchen paper/roll first before cutting your fabric).
- Once you are happy with the fit, cut the patterns out from the relevant fabric and seal all edges to stop fraying.
- There is a seam allowance of three 16ths of an inch included on all pieces unless otherwise stated. Clip all curves and press seams open unless otherwise advised.

Louise says...

"At the start of the 20th century, a new type of corset known as the 'health' corset became very popular. This corset pushed the bust forwards and the hips back (supposedly to relieve the pressure on the abdomen) and gave the wearer the iconic 'S' shape of that era.

The style was further enhanced with a tiny waist, delicate drapes or frills at the bust and skirt gathers concentrated towards the back, giving the outfit a soft, flowing, elegant and feminine look. With this in mind, try to find fine fabrics that will drape well. If you wish to enhance the 'S' shape further, padding can be added to your doll's derrière (under the back of her skirt) and/or her bust, if you feel she needs it"



UNDERWEAR**STOCKINGS:**

Cut the stockings as two rectangles in fine lace or cotton tulle. These rectangles need to be long enough to reach from just above the knee to the top of the boots, and wide enough to wrap around the leg and comfortably meet at the centre back (always add a little extra).

Louise's Top Tip!

"Always use any stretch in your lace to go around the leg when making stockings"

Run a thin line of glue down the centre back of your doll's leg from just above the knee to just above the top of the boots and allow it to become tacky. Carefully press one straight edge of the oblong into the line of glue. Allow to dry thoroughly.

Carefully and thinly spread glue over the rest of the leg. Allow the glue to become slightly tacky and then gently ease the stocking around the leg, trimming carefully around the top of the boot, until it meets at the centre back and there are no wrinkles. Glue the centre back line and press the stocking into place. Allow it to dry before carefully trimming away any excess. A piece of sewing thread can be glued over the centre back join to make the stocking seams. The lower edges will be neatened later.

PANTALOONS:

Cut the pantaloons in fine white cotton. Stitch the centre back and centre front seams

and press open. Turn up the hems. Glue or stitch lace to the lower edges.



Stitch the inside leg seam.



Turn and run gathering threads around the lower leg edges.

Run a gathering thread around the waist, dress onto your doll and pull up tightly, spreading the gathers out evenly. Repeat for the legs.

The lower edges can be further decorated with narrow silk ribbon and tiny bows as desired.

To neat the lower edges of the stockings, carefully glue a very narrow braid or ribbon around the top of the boot. At this stage, tiny 'buttons' can also be glued in place on the sides of the boots using flat backed nail art pearls or studs.

Allow everything to dry thoroughly before moving on to the petticoat.

PETTICOAT:

Cut the petticoat in fine white cotton. Turn up the hem. Glue or stitch two layers of lace frills to the lower outside edge.

Glue one layer of frilled lace to the inside edge, covering the turned under hem.

Louise's Top Tip!

"If you leave the lace frills on the petticoat unstitched/unglued for about an inch either side of the centre back seam allowance, they can be fixed in place over the seam once it's been stitched, to give a neater finish"



Stitch the centre back seam to the dot.



Turn and add any further decoration you would like. Dress onto your doll and close up the centre back seam above the dot. Run a gathering thread around the waist and pull up, spreading any gathers towards the back and keeping the front mainly flat.

Louise's Top Tip!

"A fine mist of clean water will help the petticoat drape nicely."

TOP CLOTHES

BLOUSE BASE AND BLOUSE SLEEVES:



To cut the blouse base pattern on a double fold:

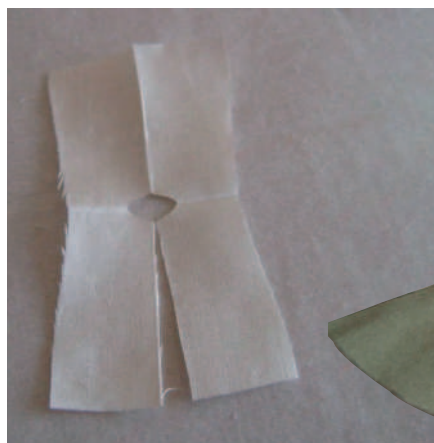
With right sides together, fold the fabric across once to make a vertical fold, making sure that you have folded over enough for the width of the pattern.



Fold the fabric upwards to make a horizontal fold, and check again that you have folded up enough for the length of the pattern. You should now have four layers of fabric and both horizontal and vertical folds.

Place the CF/CB along the vertical folds and the shoulder along the horizontal folds as shown.

Cut the pattern out, remembering to cut the tiny section in the lower corner that will become the neck.



Open out the blouse base. Decide which you would like to be the back and cut along it to make the centre back opening.



Carefully glue the blouse base onto your doll, keeping the front nice and smooth and meeting the centre backs. Take any excess at the back, under the arms, and tuck and glue it around the body towards the front. Repeat this process, tucking the excess front towards the back.



Cut the blouse sleeve bases from your solid blouse fabric. Once the edges have been sealed, carefully run a very thin line of glue around all the edges on the right side and press each sleeve onto your tulle or lace fabric. Once the glue is dry, you can cut around the sleeves as shown.

Join the short edges together as shown and set aside till later. **NB:** The blouse construction will continue later.

SKIRT:



Cut the skirt pieces from your silk or cotton fabric and stitch the sides to the front at the SF (side front) seams.



Stitch the backs to the sides at the SB (side back) seams.

Turn under a hem on the lower edge.



Decorate the skirt as desired using lace motifs/ border cut out from flat lace trim.

See picture for some ideas. [▶](#)

Louise's Top Tip!

"Although cutting out lace motifs and borders is time consuming and quite fiddly; a pair of small, sharp pointed scissors makes cutting them out much easier. You can also mix and match different laces to get the effect you would like"



Stitch the skirt centre back seam.

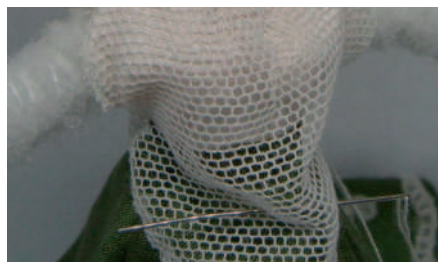


Turn and dress the skirt onto your doll over the blouse base. Run a gathering thread around the top edge and pull up the gathers tightly, arranging them towards the back of the skirt, keeping the front as flat as possible. This will help to accentuate the 'S' shape at the back.

BLOUSE FRONT AND SLEEVES, BELT AND BOLERO JACKET:



Cut the blouse front from tulle/lace. Turn under a very narrow hem on the sides (under the arm holes) and the lower edge as shown. Run a fine gathering thread along this lower edge, but do not pull up the gathers just yet.



Run a small amount of glue around the front of the blouse base neck, from shoulder to shoulder at the front only. Gently press the top edge of the blouse front into the glue,

using a pin or a cocktail stick to arrange the excess into gathers as shown. Allow the glue to dry thoroughly.

Secure the blouse front to the top of the chest (above the bust only) and to your doll's sides under the arms.



The yoke and frill of the blouse can be created from several different laces. These are the laces I used, using aspects of each lace to make up the yoke (from left to right, laces 1, 2 and 3) but you can use more or less, depending on how you'd like the yoke to be.



First, cut a piece/pieces of lace wide enough and deep enough lay across the top of the chest, and glue it/them in place (I used a piece from my lace number 1 for this).

Next, make a frill and carefully glue this right across the bust line (I used my lace number 2). This frill helps to accentuate the 'S' shape at the front.

If necessary, cut a narrow border and glue in place to cover the join between the two laces across the bust (I cut this from my lace number 1). The sides will be covered by the bolero jacket.

Finally, glue in place a stand-up collar around the whole of the neck (I cut mine from my lace number 3). NB: The blouse construction will continue after the belt is applied.



Bond two pieces of your belt fabric together following the manufacturer's instructions and cut out the belt from this. Decorate the lower edge of the belt as desired.



Carefully glue the centre front of the belt in place over the raw edge of the centre front skirt (underneath the tulle blouse front) and allow the glue to dry.

Pull up the gathers along the lower edge of the blouse front, tucking the gathers underneath to form a pouch, further accentuating that classic 'S' shape style. Arrange the gathers over the front of the belt and secure with a little glue. Once dry, continue to glue the rest of the belt over the raw edges of the skirt, to meet neatly at the centre back. Trim off any excess.



Cut lace wide enough to wrap around the lower arm and long enough to reach from her wrist to just past her elbow. Glue the lace piece/s to the centre of your doll's lower arm as shown and allow the glue to dry.



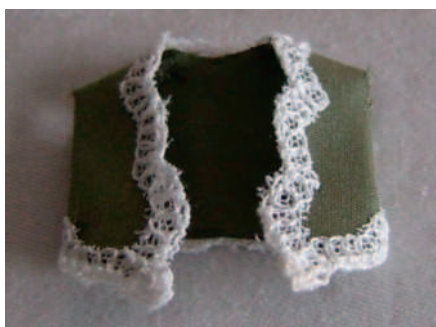
Carefully wrap the lace around the lower arms to meet neatly, and cut off any excess. Add lace at the wrist to form cuffs to match the collar, or as desired. **NB:** The blouse sleeves will be finished after the bolero is in place.



Cut the bolero jacket pieces to match the skirt. Stitch the bolero fronts to the back at the shoulder seams.



Stitch the under-arm seams as shown (the bolero bodice will not be hemmed)



Decorate the outside edges of the bolero and set it aside till later.



Cut each bolero sleeve from the lower edge up to the dot. Turn under a narrow hem on each side of the slit. Turn under a hem on the lower edges either side of the slit



Decorate around the sleeve slits. Once the glue is dry, stitch the sleeve seams.



Turn and finish decorating the lower edges of the sleeves.



Dress the bolero bodice onto your doll and secure over the blouse at the back neck edge. Once the glue is dry, carefully glue the sides to your doll's sides and once dry, secure the front edges so that they hang down either side of the blouse frill as shown.



Run a tiny gathering stitch around the top edge of the bolero sleeves and dress onto your doll. Pull up the gathers tucking the raw edge under. Carefully stitch the sleeve to the bolero with tiny invisible stitches.

TO FINISH THE BLOUSE SLEEVES:

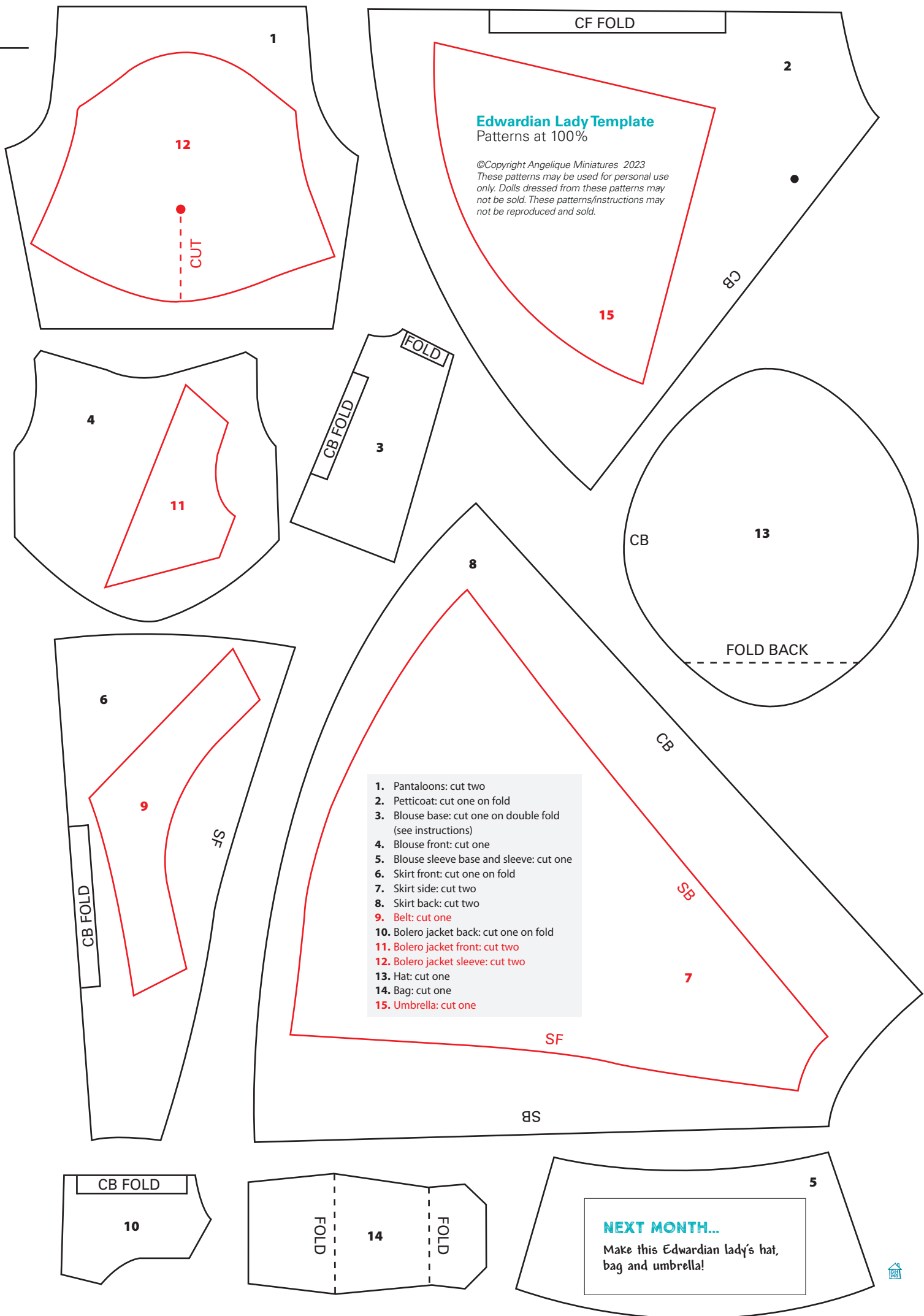


Run a tiny gathering stitch around the top and lower edges of the blouse sleeves you set aside earlier.

Pull the bolero sleeves up out of the way as far as possible. Slide the blouse sleeves onto your doll's arm, with the narrowest end at the top of her arm. Pull up the top gathers tightly, spread them out and secure to the top of her arm.

Pull up the lower gathers a little, and tuck them under as you pull them tight to form a puff just below her elbows. Add a little glue to secure the lower sleeves in place.

Once the glue is dry, carefully pull the bolero sleeves back down. 



1. Pantaloons: cut two
2. Petticoat: cut one on fold
3. Blouse base: cut one on double fold (see instructions)
4. Blouse front: cut one
5. Blouse sleeve base and sleeve: cut one
6. Skirt front: cut one on fold
7. Skirt side: cut two
8. Skirt back: cut two
9. Belt: cut one
10. Bolero jacket back: cut one on fold
11. Bolero jacket front: cut two
12. Bolero jacket sleeve: cut two
13. Hat: cut one
14. Bag: cut one
15. Umbrella: cut one



Angelique Miniatures 35th Anniversary

Louise Goldsborough Bird, the artisan behind Angelique Miniatures, is celebrating 35 years as a professional miniature dolls artist and doll couturier this month. We find out what inspired her to begin her miniature making journey...



Louise Goldsborough Bird



▲ Inside my childhood dolls house

"I create 1/12th scale miniature porcelain dolls and ornamental clothing from all historical periods, plus fairies and fantasy characters. I also design and make couture doll clothing plus ballet, theatrical and historical costumes for larger fashion dolls such as Gene, Tonner dolls, Clea Bella. My work is enjoyed by collectors from all over the world, including the USA, Canada, Ireland, mainland Europe including Scandinavia, Australia and New Zealand to name but a few, and of course, the United Kingdom. In addition, I have written doll dressing projects for DHMS for many years.

Angelique Miniatures began back in 1988 when I needed a career change. I originally trained and worked as a professional dancer, singer and actress, and dressing dolls was my hobby. So, I swapped my hobby for my business with help from the 'Government Enterprise Allowance Scheme' which provided start up help for new businesses at that time.

Originally from Cornwall, I now live and work from my home in South Devon, where I have my own designated sewing room, so that I can keep all of my doll creating materials in one place. Bliss! The love of dolls and miniatures started when I was very little when my Dad made me a dolls house for my 2nd birthday/Christmas present. To this day I have never been able to part with it and recently renovated it as a lockdown project. This was only the second renovation it has had in 55 years, the first being when I was about 17 or 18! It was wonderful to find some of Dad's original pencil markings underneath the carpets. I'd forgotten all about them, so this was especially poignant for me, as Dad sadly passed away suddenly in 2015 aged 69. ▶▶



▲ Oriental princess 38in porcelain doll

Making and creating things certainly runs in my family. Dad trained as a ship's carpenter when he was a teenager and then became a master printer when he left the Merchant Navy. He also loved model railways and could always turn his hand to most mini things. My Mum was a ballet teacher and came from a sewing and theatrical background and made many of my childhood clothes and also all my costumes for dancing competitions. My maternal grandmother was the daughter of a gentlemen's tailor and theatrical tailoress,

so was especially good at all kinds of sewing skills. She also loved dolls and used to make ballerina and fancy boudoir dolls back when she was younger. When I was about 11, she made me a one-piece paper dressing gown pattern for one of my fashion dolls. She also showed me how to cut this out from fabric on a 'double fold', and I still use this method for many of my DHMS doll dressing projects!

I am mostly self-taught for the general sewing and pattern making skills I use to create the miniature costumes, and these are



▲ 'Romanza' ballet costume on 16in clea bella ballerina doll

skills I have picked up over the years, mainly through trial and error. In the early 1990s, I decided to make all my own porcelain doll parts and had a one-day crash course in the basics of porcelain making from the lovely Sandra Morris of Tower House Dolls. Armed with my newly bought kiln, liquid slip and some moulds from America, I began another trial and error learning curve. The same was true when it came to painting the dolls' faces, which I found the scariest part of all as I've never been able to draw! However, I



Armada Elizabeth I



Henry VII and Elizabeth of York

had learnt stage make-up at theatre school, so I reasoned that painting a doll's face was actually no different from painting my own... and this approach worked well. Another skill I had to get to grips with was wiggling and, after several unsuccessful and very sticky attempts, I found my own methods of creating the hair styles my miniature dolls required.

I'm often asked if I use special tools for the work I do and in all honesty, my most useful tool is the end of a very old paintbrush! It's handy for turning small clothing and poking stuffing into tiny spaces. Even the point of a simple pin is ideal for positioning rhinestones in place to form jewellery on a miniature doll.

As well as working through my order book of commissions, I am often inspired to create a doll or doll costume. Inspiration comes in many forms for me, such as TV costume dramas and films, characters from history and even books and music. For example, after reading about Elizabeth of York, the mother of King Henry VIII, I really wanted to create her in miniature doll form, along with

her husband, Henry VII. Both dolls tested my skills, but I really enjoyed the challenge and it was lovely to work on those late Medieval/early Tudor style costumes, which are rarely seen in miniature form.

I particularly enjoy Tudor and Medieval costume and have created Henry VIII and his six wives many, many times over the years, but my favourite was when I made this notorious King slumped asleep in a chair after one too many drinks! Henry's youngest daughter, Queen Elizabeth 1st, has also inspired me many times, the most challenging being her 'Armada' portrait costume.

People often ask me how long it takes to create one of my miniature characters and my answer is always the same: "How long is a piece of string?!" With all the different stages of the doll's production, the process for each and every doll takes many, many hours.

Most of my orders are commission based and I really enjoy creating something special for my customers. Sometimes these commissions are based on my previous work

that the customer has seen and liked, and I then adapt the order to suit that particular customer. For example, a change of hair or costume colour, or a slight difference in style etc. Other times, a customer will give me a brief of a character or design they would like for a miniature setting, and I am asked to create an original doll for them. Each customer's order is unique to them and I really enjoy the creative process and the pleasure the finished character or doll costume brings to that person.

I've been asked many times if I have a favourite amongst all the dolls I have created over the years, and to be honest, my favourite is always the one I have just finished! But one thing remains constant: no matter what I am working on, I look forward to each day in my sewing room, helping somebody's miniature dreams to come true! 🏠

▼ Sleeping Henry VIII



▼ Silk lingerie set



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The Whole Kit & Caboodle:

WILLOW PATTERN TEA COSY

Give your mum something pretty and useful this Mother's Day, says Moi Ali.



English textile designer and poet William Morris famously said: "Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be beautiful or believe to be useful". This gorgeous little kit fits the bill on both counts, making it the perfect gift for Mother's Day.

Designed by Janet Granger, the tiny tea cosy kit is in the popular Willow Pattern. It is quick to stitch, and easy to make up. Janet recommends it if you have not worked on gauze before (it is stitched on 32 count silk gauze with Anchor stranded cotton). There are ten tea cosy kits in Janet's extensive range of 1/12th scale needlepoint kits, including a cottage and a crinoline lady design. Each of her tea cosies features a different motif on the reverse.

There is a co-ordinating tray cloth for every tea cosy, which is available separately.



The Willow Pattern story

The design depicts the story of a wealthy man's beautiful daughter, who fell in love with her father's humble accounting assistant. Due to the difference in social status and his plans to marry her off to a Duke, the father sacked his employee and built a high fence to keep the lovers apart. The wedding to the Duke was to be on the day the blossom fell from the willow tree.

The Duke arrived by boat with a box of jewels as a gift. On the eve of the wedding, the accountant slipped into the palace disguised as a servant, and the lovers escaped over a bridge with the jewels, chased by the father, and onto the Duke's ship. After several happy years together, the Duke found them and sought revenge by having the lovers killed. The gods were sad and transformed them into a pair of doves. 🏠

THE FACTS

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Cost: £14.95

Comes with: Colour block chart and instructions, silk gauze, Anchor stranded cotton and a suitable needle.

Additional materials needed:
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Specialist tools needed: None

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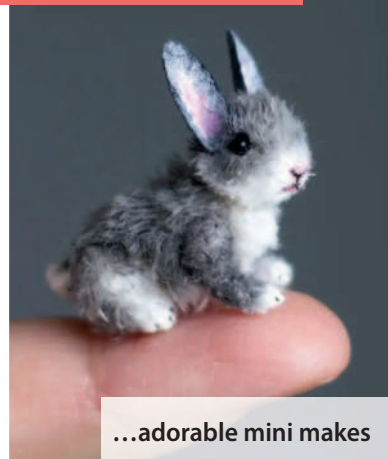
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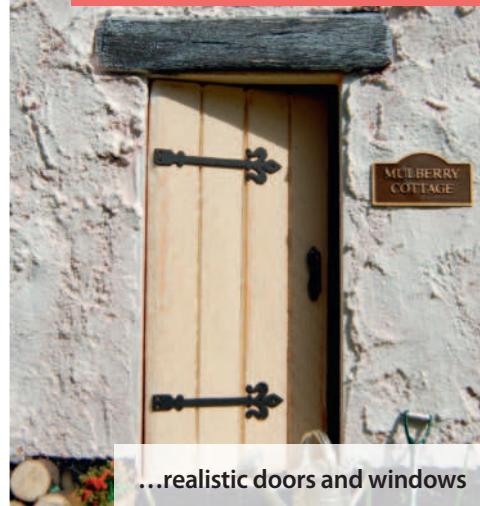
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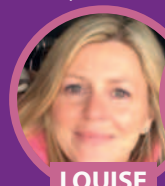
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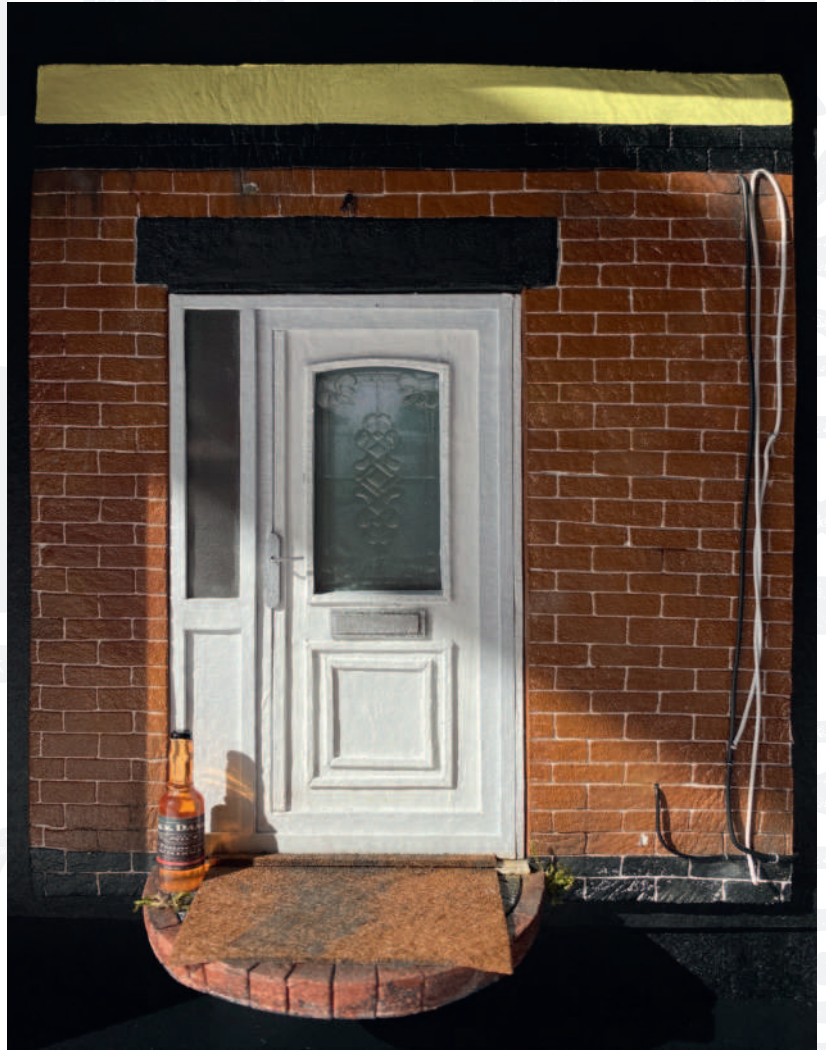
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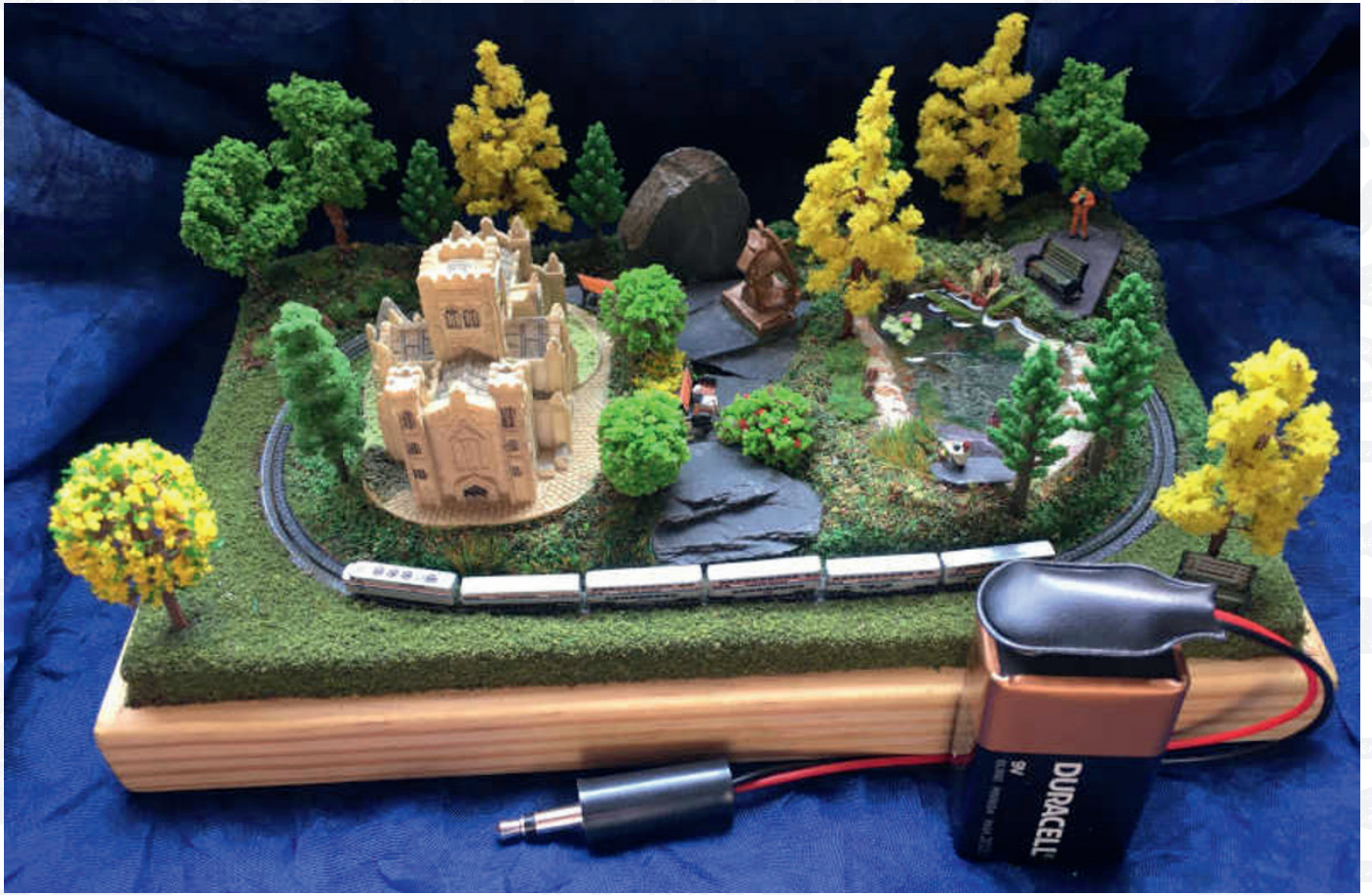
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