

Doll's House & Miniature Scene

DIGITAL
EDITION WITH
BONUS FEATURES

OVER
115
INSPIRATIONAL
IDEAS INSIDE!

FROM BEGINNER TO EXPERT MAKES



Tiny detailing



Celebrate spring



Quackers for nature



Workshop wonders

PLUS

- MINIATURE MAKES ● THE DAILY MINI ● ARTISAN INTERVIEWS
- INSPIRING IMAGES ● HELPFUL TIPS AND READER PROJECTS
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A background image showing several colorful Easter eggs (one with blue, orange, and yellow stripes; another solid green; and a third with pink and orange stripes) nestled in green grass with small white daisies.

DollHouse **& MINIATURE SCENE**

**WELCOME TO THE
APRIL ISSUE!**

CLICK TO VIEW VIDEO



WELCOME to the April issue

Hooray for Easter! Not only because the nights are starting to get brighter and weather is getting warmer, but because it's a license to eat all of the chocolate and sweet treats! *

We begin this month's edition looking at the inspiring miniatures created by Bridget McCarty. Born and raised in Los Angeles, Bridget brings Easter to life with her collection of fabulous furry creatures, creating everything from curious cats in baskets to busy bunnies in bows delivering eggs. All of Bridget's pieces are beautifully painted with meticulous detailing and whiskers and fur added for realism. Before venturing into miniatures on a full time basis Bridget studied animation and figure sculpting and was quickly discovered by Disney to help, advise and sculpt pieces for the Disney parks. Now she works on commissions creating cute pets and animals for collectors.

There's a host of Easter themed projects for you to create too, for fans of polymer clay we'll show you how to celebrate in style with a platter of cute 1/12th scale cupcakes, create a tree with ornately painted eggs and a selection of wreaths to decorate your scene. Just a small selection of the content included inside!

Before I sign off, can I please draw your attention to Exact Editions, our new subscriber service; it does exactly what it says on the tin; every edition from 2010 to 2020 for a very special price! More details can be found on page 38.

Enjoy the issue.

*within reason.



Carl
Carl Golder
Editor

✉ Carl.golder@warnersgroup.co.uk

☎ 01778 391146

**FANTASTIC
GIVEAWAYS!**
ON PAGES
6, 35 & 37



If you're reading the online version of this magazine...
Keep an eye out for these symbols

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

Moi Ali, Bea Broadwood, Sadie Brown, Julie Campbell, Kaz Calnan, Rob Crouch, Virginia Chase Sanderson, Ann Evans, Maive Ferrando, Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel, Stephanie Guy, Jane Harrop, Yana Ivanyuk, Kati Kainulainen, Beate Klein, Anna Kerley, Bridget McCarty, Erika Pitera, Angie Scarr, Kate Ünver, Sandra Vickery and Deb Weissler

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...Moi Ali's trip to the City of London fair

MAKE THIS...



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...A comfortable armchair in 1/24th scale

CARL'S FAVOURITE FIND ON INSTAGRAM

"This photograph is taken from the National Trust's textile conservation team, who are currently working on site at Nostell Priory in Yorkshire, helping to restore an 18th Century dolls house. This includes treating the pelmets, curtains and numerous silk velvet wall coverings."



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Let us inspire you

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FOR ONLINE READERS**



**EXCLUSIVE AUDIO CONTENT
FOR ONLINE READERS**



**EXCLUSIVE VIDEO CONTENT
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www.dollshouseandminiaturescene.co.uk

The closing date for all entries is
30th April 2020. Good luck!

VISIT WWW.DOLLHOUSEANDMINIATURESCENE.CO.UK FOR MORE GREAT FEATURES AND PROJECTS

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Celebrate Easter and spring with
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The Miniature SCENE

✉ Carl.golder@warnersgroup.co.uk

👍 www.facebook.com/dollshouseandminiaturescene

📷 www.instagram.com/dolls_house_miniature_scene/

🐦 www.twitter.com/dhmsmagazine

Is your club doing anything exciting, got a new project on the go, raising money for charity or tackling a project from Dolls House & Miniature Scene? Let us know your news by contacting us via the above:

Alternatively, send a letter (and photos) to Carl Golder, Dolls House & Miniature Scene, Warners Group Publications, West Street, Bourne, Lincs, PE10 9PH

News copy deadline for the May issue (No. 313) is 15th April 2020

PIMA's back for 2020

The Perfection in Miniature Awards began back in 2015 as a competition for exhibitors at all London Dollhouse Festival Shows to create something really special to be included in the PIMA display at the Kensington Dollhouse Festival in May. In 2019 organiser Charlotte Stokoe introduced the PIMA Open Competition. The theme for 2019 was 'needlework' and Charlotte did not know what to expect, but pleasantly surprised by receiving incredible entries from all over the world. One of the runners up Lynn Lumb, will be exhibiting her micro knitting at KDF Summer this year. Now Charlotte is launching the 2020 PIMA Open Competition with the aim of creating an awareness for this incredible art form and to find a new generation of makers for the future.

Anyone can enter (as long as you haven't exhibited at an LDF show in the past five years). Each year the focus will shift on one particular area of expertise and for 2020 it will be 'carpentry.' This will include all kinds of disciplines including wood carving, inlay, marquetry, gilding and painted furniture. The main component of the entries must be wood, from a bed to a sideboard or chair, and in any era. The prize will be a table at an LDF show in 2021 + £500. Judging for this part of the PIMA will take place prior to KDF Christmas 2020. Entries can either be dropped off at the Summer Show, or posted to the LDF offices. Closing date for entries is **5th November 2020**. Winners will be announced at the KDF Christmas where entries will also be displayed.



If you are interested or require more information send an email to: ✉ kdf@dollhousefestival.com.



If you're looking for top tips on how to make modern dolls houses, subscribe to Missy Miniatures' YouTube channel. Although the channel is still in its infancy, you will find super easy to follow instructional videos featuring lots of top tips and handy guides along the way. Simply search for Missy Miniac.



Creative clay

Ranger has introduced new Black QuickCure Clay! QuickCure Clay is a pliable clay formula that cures in minutes with just the use of a heat tool, without the need for a kiln or oven. Colourize clay right after cooling with paints and mediums such as pearl and embossing powders and alcohol inks to create a glazelike effect. The finished product is strong and durable, great for miniatures too! Available in 8oz and 16oz bags, there's no mixing required and no chance of the clay hardening when left out and uncured! Check out the brand-new products at:

🖱 www.rangerink.com

GIVEAWAY!

Missy Miniac is giving away an Oriental Fan Shelf Kit to one lucky viewer. **To be in with a chance of winning simply subscribe to her channel and comment 'DHMS' on the Oriental fan kit video.** The winner will be chosen at random by Missy Miniac on 30th April 2020. Good luck!



Good Sam Showcase of Miniatures

Congratulations to Michael Robbins of Michael R Miniatures who has just been accepted to exhibit his miniature fantasy figures and creations at the Good Sam Showcase in San Jose, California, this October. Have a good show!



Share your news!

Calling all miniaturists and miniature enthusiasts! Share your miniature news with the readers of Dolls House & Miniature Scene magazine.

Are you a member of a dolls house or miniaturists club? Is your club doing anything exciting? Have you got a new club project on the go or are you tackling a project from the magazine? Maybe there's a product that you have just discovered that's blown you away? Let us know your news and thoughts and we'll share it in print with the readers of DHMS!

Send an email with any accompanying photos to:

✉ Carl.golder@warnersgroup.co.uk

Conceptual knitting

Althea Crome is a self-taught fibre artist who has pioneered conceptual knitting in small scale. As a miniaturist she appreciates the importance of scale, as a knitter she respects the art of traditional technique and pattern design and as an artist she rejoices in adaptation, discovery and experimentation. Althea's latest project is Warhol 2.0, and follows on from 2007's original Warhol mini knit which featured four faces of Marilyn Monroe. Warhol 2.0 has nine! The piece is made up of over 60,00 stitches, 45 different colours of silk and over 500 hours in the making. To read and see more about this extreme piece of knitting visit: www.altheacrome.com



WE ASKED YOU...

WE POSTED THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE:

Who do you turn to when you need advice?

Star post and winner of this penguin family kit by Jane Harrop



Cath Bell:

If it's woodwork or metalwork I ask my husband first. Anything else I access my hoard of books, magazines and online archive, the answer or inspiration is always there.

Marjorie Wannamaker:

The internet, then my mini mags, then other miniaturists. If that does not work I wing it.

Kaz Oliver:

The articles I have kept from DHMS for all things miniature, the Terrainiacs for all things diorama wise... and then sometimes I just wait for that lightbulb moment!

Elaine Hearnshaw:

My husband. As I am lucky that he is as interested in miniatures as I am.

Caroline Mansell:

Google, friends and our miniaturist group.

Shelly Chalmers:

My aunt and my husband... then if things still aren't working out, the internet.

Shirley Coates:

In the past I have asked advice from stallholders that I have met at fairs over the years, who are now personal friends. They are true miniaturists who will go out of their way to give help and keep this wonderful hobby of ours going.

Jacinta Downing:

Dolls House & Miniature Scene magazine of course!

Eileen Weaver:

Jane Harrop and Bob Williams!

Jane Harrop has been making miniatures for 25 years and teaching miniature making for 21 years. Visit her website to see more of her kits in 1/12th, 1/24th and 1/48th scales.
✉ www.janeharrop.co.uk

EXACT EDITIONS

Introducing Exact Editions, the new subscriber service from Dolls House & Miniature Scene.

If you're looking for ideas, inspiration, projects or something to read whilst enjoying a brew Exact Editions is ideal. Featuring ten years worth of content, it's accessible via PC, tablet or smartphone for only £9.99 a quarter! It's user friendly and can be read offline too.

More information can be found via: www.dhmsmag.uk/exacteditions

Caught @n Camera

When it comes to inspiration, social media is an important tool especially with a watching world-wide audience. The DHMS team have been scrolling through their Instagram feeds using the hashtag #miniatureeaster and want to share with you these magnificent miniatures.



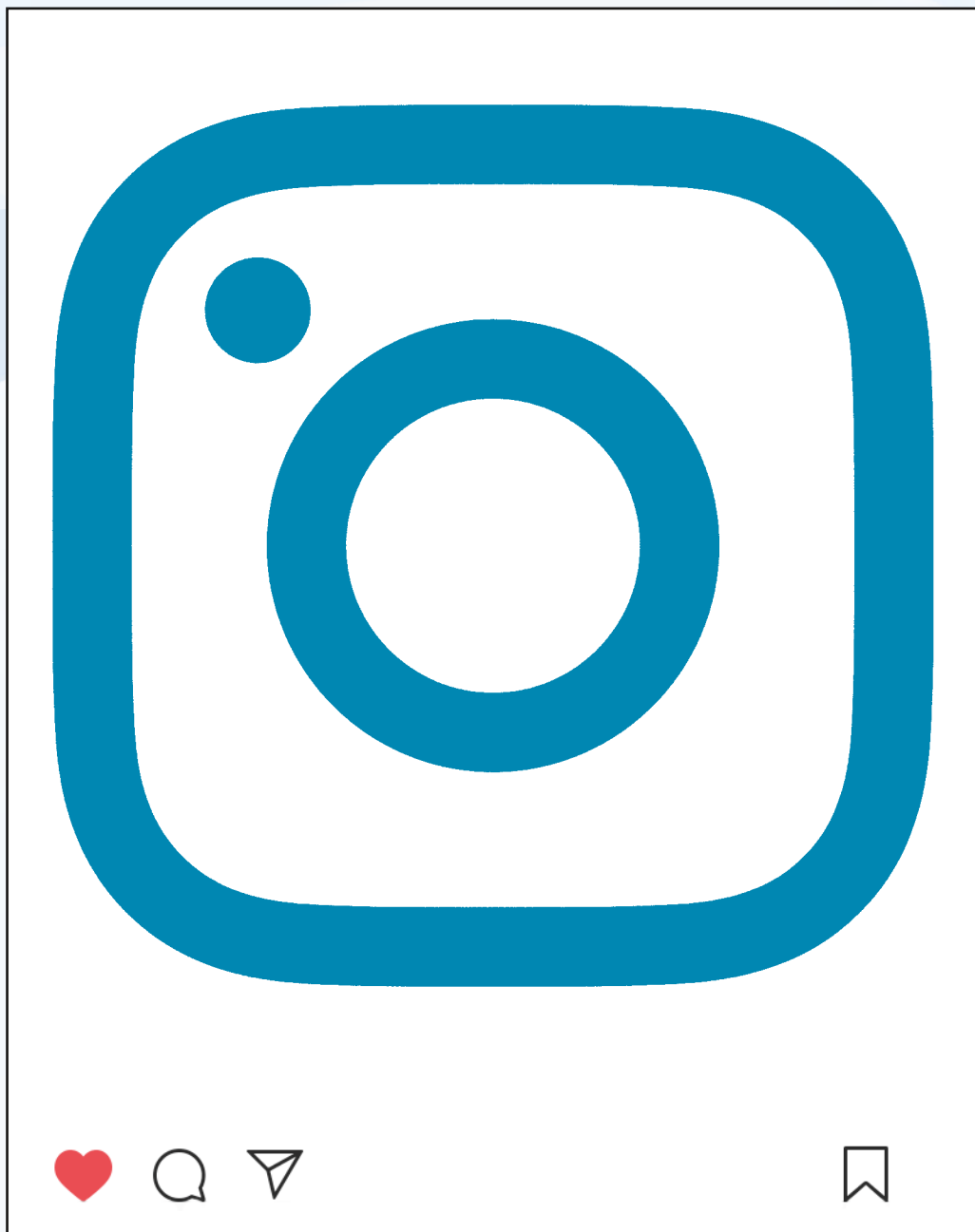
Turn to
PAGE 21
to see more
of Erika's work

Follow our page for more inspiration: @Dolls_House_Minature_Scene

If you would like us to notice your work, don't forget to add the hashtag: #dollshouseandminiaturescene

Caught Camera

DIGITAL EXCLUSIVE



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Hoppy Easter!

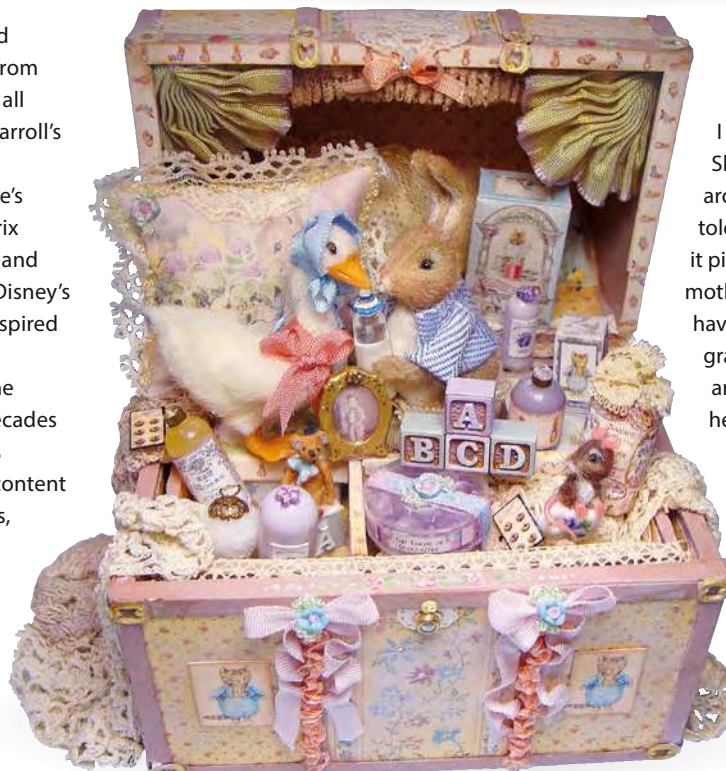
Easter is the perfect time of year to showcase artist **Bridget McCarty's** love for furry creatures. Creating them is what she loves best!

► 17" Mad Hatter Tea Party where every detail was created from scratch



Bridget's huggable animals and familiar figures come straight from the pages of storybooks we've all loved since childhood. Lewis Carroll's zany characters from 'Alice in Wonderland', Kenneth Grahame's 'The Wind in the Willows', Beatrix Potter's delightful cast of furry and feathered creatures, and Walt Disney's beloved animations have all inspired Bridget's art.

When she first burst upon the miniature scene almost two decades ago, Bridget's unique style was immediately identifiable. Not content to craft just stand-alone figures, she often creates entire vignettes that instantly tell a story. From our beloved childhood books to the heroes of our favourite animated films, her work speaks to the child in all of us. Miniatures certainly spoke



to her as a child growing up in Southern California.

"The first time I saw a miniature, I was in my grandma's walk-in closet. She had a shelf full of tiny items from around the world and she specifically told me not to touch them. Of course it piqued my curiosity and I asked my mother for a chair to stand upon and have a closer look. I promised my grandma I could safely touch them and to illustrate that fact I made her some tiny paper craft castles.

They were small enough to fit onto a cotton ball and I rolled pink paper as the turrets and cut ridges and doors in the front of each. She loved the castles so much, she added them to her collection. I was so proud."

◄ An adorable Victorian-style trunk filled with Beatrix Potter characters and treasures

Later on, Bridget's older brother, Juan, made her a small half-scale dolls house out of craft sticks. She loved painting and playing with it until one day as she was taking it down from a shelf, it fell. Every stick shattered and so did her heart.

"My first traumatic experience with miniatures," Bridget recalls, "led Juan to buy me a Heritage dolls house kit; my first true dolls house. I watched him build it, piece by piece. It slowly began to tilt and by the time its glue had dried, the house was canted sideways. I loved that slanted dolls house so I assume that is where I learned to give my art that whimsical touch."

A debut in the San Fernando Valley

With a mother who was a wall muralist, Bridget learned how to properly paint. Mum also served as the perfect role model for Bridget; independent and self-employed. Surrounded by Hollywood's vibrant film industry, Bridget loved cartoons and animation. She studied character design and background layout at the Animation Academy and currently freelances with Disney Company, creating fine art paintings for their theme parks galleries.

Freelancing allows her to create her miniatures and travel to shows without being tied down in the office nine to five. It is the miniature fairs that really get Bridget's creative juices flowing. "My first miniature show was at a Tom Bishop venue in the San Fernando Valley. I was so blown away! I needed to figure out how such amazing little creations were made no matter how long it took. Miniatures are definitely something that inspires a "love at first sight" feeling for me."

When Bridget first began making miniatures, it was for her own personal enjoyment. She longed to create something on the level of the professional artisans. She never envisioned selling her work until she showed a few friendly dealers what she had made and they expressed belief they were good enough to sell. Her first show proved to be a rousing success and Bridget, like her mother before her, became self-employed. She's never looked back.

Loveable and huggable inspirations

"Creating small, furry characters is what I love best," Bridget says. "I stick to medium or long haired pets like cats, Yorkshire terriers, Maltese and Poodles. Bunnies have become a new best seller as have hedgehogs. Small pets are something I find adorable because I am an animal lover."



▲ White baby bunny nestled inside a hand painted wicker basket



▲ Brown rabbit tucked inside a beribboned basket filled with Easter treats



In this 8" x 10" scene an Easter bunny egg hunts with his smaller pal and baby chicks. The lighting is a battery operated strand and covered with moss and glitter to add Easter magic

I currently live near Pasadena with my two fluffy white cats. They are both a source of company and inspiration, so cats are first on my list. Secondly, small dogs and hamsters. I'm not into creating fish or birds but I do them once in a while if asked. I stay away from animals that feel too complicated or that don't inspire me."

What does inspire is that burst of creativity she gets after seeing a photo or image that piques her interest. It could be as simple as glimpsing an on-line image or a beautiful Christmas card with animals dozing by the fire. Sometimes a collector will send photos of their pets for Bridget to recreate.

"If I create something I really love, I end up keeping it," Bridget laughs. "I also collect so it's almost like Bridget gets first choice at Bridget's table! I also enjoy seeing collectors' reactions to my pieces. It lets me know they're going to good homes. I love getting photos of my pieces settled in their new places."

Dressed in the finest cloth

Beginning with polymer clay, Bridget forms her figures over wire armatures that can be bent and posed for the desired look. "Sometimes you get that extra bit of life-like pose in each animal just by bending the tail or head a little bit." After the form takes shape, she applies layers of faux fur. Once the glue dries, she carefully snips the excess fur with scissors. 



▲ Lovely ladies table is filled with elegant items and a special Yorkshire terrier. Below is a doll house with a tiny white kitten on top



▲ Louis Vuitton-style cases with kittens and a puppy

A tiny trio of yellow chicks in wagons is following the bunny leader



Paws and heads are formed from Sculpey and she paints the handmade eyes before adding more fur. Bows, ribbons, and accessories are added towards the end. And of course no storybook character would be complete without the proper costume.

Her favourite fabrics are soft pastels in cotton or silk that lends itself to proper draping. Many craft store fabrics have patterns too large and colours too bold so it's best to find these at miniature shows.

"I love dressing creatures but my challenge is that it's not my specialty," Bridget confesses. "I have taken a few classes in it but it definitely takes me twice as long as the professional costuming artist. I can achieve the look I want but I feel like I could

expand my knowledge in that area. I've learned by making many mistakes."

Whilst waiting for the glue dry Bridget creates more than one character at a time, which can take several hours. Meanwhile she's working on something else. It can be 3-10 characters, depending on what stage they are in. Bridget loves waking up around 10am but ends up staying up well past midnight creating. Her studio is a table in the kitchen. Like many miniature artists, she doesn't require a huge space to work in, but there are times her work tends to travel from the kitchen table to other parts of the house.

"When I'm truly inspired, I don't think about where I'm working until the area becomes a total mess and can't expand

any further. I mostly like sunlight in the workspace and a few very bright spot lights. I don't use glasses or magnifying lenses, which most people find amazing. My tools are very basic but I use my fingers and small scissors the most."

For a time, much of Bridget's work were commissions but she soon appreciated she's much more productive when making what inspires her most. "My favourite commissions are where the collector lets me do what I like or feel like creating. I currently have four commissions but I get requests consistently."

Bridget really only has one advice for collectors desiring a commission, "I have received various bags of cut animal fur in the mail. It's not necessary for me to use your own pets fur because I only use my own special supplies to make miniatures. You can definitely keep your pets fur at home and I'll love you for it!

So as Easter rolls around, Bridget has opened up her heart and her art to springtime's favourite holiday.

Baby bunnies, chicks, puppies, kittens, and coloured eggs represent the start of new life, and isn't that what Easter is all about? 🏠

▼ Two best selling baby bunnies enjoy playing in the warm spring air



🏠 INFORMATION

Bridget's work can be found at her show tables at Tom Bishop's Chicago International, Miniatures West in California, Good Sam Showcase of Miniatures, Dallas Miniature Showcase, Denver Miniatures Museum and the Philadelphia Miniaturia.

🌐 www.bridgetmccarty.com

📷 [Bridgetmccartyminis](https://www.instagram.com/Bridgetmccartyminis)

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& MINIATURE SCENE

Hoppy Easter

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Easter Cupcakes

Not sure what to add to your miniature bakery this Easter? Why not try these super cute Easter cupcakes with chocolate bunnies? They are really fun to make and the end result will have everyone awing at your miniature creations.



Maive's Top Tip!

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Polymer clay in: pink, mint, dark brown, brown, white and pale yellow (with translucent for the vanilla sponge)
- FIMO Liquid (or other liquid clay)
- FIMO Gloss
- Acrylic paints
- Miniature dried flowers
- Soft pastels
- Silicone mould putty

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Toothbrush
- Dotting tools
- Craft knife
- Large and small flat chisel silicone sculpting tool
- Paint brushes
- Pasta machine or acrylic rolling pin

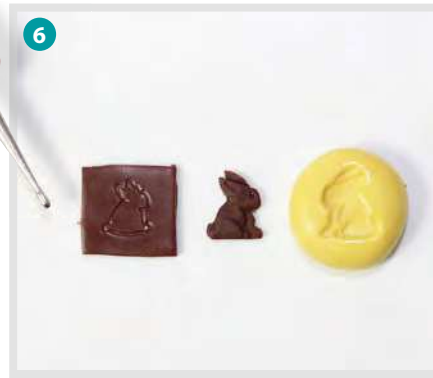


1 To make the cupcake liner, roll a piece of clay into a ball and then a cylinder in the size you want your cupcake to be. Flatten it and use a large flat chisel sculpting tool to shape the sides at angle and a small one to create the creases of the liner. You can use a needle too.

"If you find sculpting a cupcake liner a little tricky, miniature cupcake moulds can also be bought from specialized stores or made from a small toothpaste tube cap or similar."



2 Bake the liner for at least 10 minutes at 110°C and once cool, make a mould using silicone mould putty.



Maive's Top Tip!

"You can also use clay in different colours to make the eggs and add specks after baking with acrylic paint."

3 Fill the mould with mint and pink clay, or in colours of your choice, to make the liners. Make sure to not overfill the mould.

4 Then grab dark brown clay and/or a pale vanilla colour, roll them into small balls and place them on top of the liner. Flatten them giving them a domed shape and texture them with a toothbrush.

5 Dust the vanilla cupcakes with a little bit of beige soft pastels to make them look baked. Bake all the cupcakes in the moulds for 10 minutes at 110°C.

6 In the meantime, put a small piece of dark brown clay through a medium setting of your pasta machine (or use a rolling pin). Use a dotting tool to draw a bunny and cut it out with a knife. Bake it and make a mould (as per step 1).

7 To make the mini Easter eggs, roll a piece of white clay into a long strand and cut lots of tiny pieces. Roll them into balls and then into eggs by rolling only one side of them. Separate them into groups and dust them with soft pastels of chalk in different colours.

8 To make the chocolate shavings, bake a piece of brown clay and once cool, use a small grater to obtain small chocolate-like shavings. NOTE: Do not use the grater for food.

9 Once the cupcakes are out of the oven and cool, add a little shading with warm brown acrylic paint around the edge of the vanilla cupcakes, underneath the top edge of the liner and a little on the base.

10 Mix a little pastel yellow clay with liquid clay to make the frosting and spread a little on the cupcakes in a circular motion. Don't make the icing runny, or it won't hold the bunnies up. Now you can place the decorations! I also used some miniature dried flowers to give them a touch of spring magic. Bake the cupcakes one last time and once cool, glaze them to protect the paint and to give the sponges a little sheen. 🏠



INFORMATION

ALL TOOLS AND MATERIALS USED IN THIS PROJECT ARE WIDELY AVAILABLE FROM ANY GOOD ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOP.

Turn to
PAGE 48
for our Chocolate
Bunny project



An Eggcellent Idea

Say happy Easter in style with this trendy Easter tree, made from small twigs and polymer clay.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Polymer clay in various pastel shades
- White acrylic paint
- Small twigs
- 1/12th scale glass jar
- Cotton thread in various pastel shades
- Permanent marker pens
- Matte varnish
- All-purpose glue

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Small brushes
- Scissors



DID YOU KNOW?

Whilst on first glance the Easter Tree may appear to be a modern offshoot of its Christmas counterpart, decorating trees at Easter actually began life as a German tradition which has spanned hundreds of years, known as Ostereierbaum!



1 Find a couple of suitable twigs from the garden and cut carefully to size. Paint the twigs using white acrylic paint. You might find that they need a couple of coats to ensure a good, even coverage. Allow to dry thoroughly before sealing with matte varnish.



2 Roll 6mm balls of polymer clay in a variety of pastel shades into egg shapes. Repeat the process with 2mm balls of clay, this time making enough eggs to fill a 1/12th scale glass jar for the base of the tree. Bake all the eggs and allow to cool.



3 Use permanent marker pens to decorate some of the larger eggs with tiny dots or indeed any design which springs to mind before coating with matte varnish to seal. Cut small lengths of cotton, again using pastel shades, and glue a loop to the top of each egg.



4 Place some all-purpose glue on the base of your twigs and stick into position in the bottom of your glass jar. Fill the jar with the smallest eggs.



5 Before hanging the eggs, add a small amount of glue to the branches where you want them to sit to ensure that they stay firmly in place. 🏠



INFORMATION

For more information please visit:

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JULIE CAMPBELL



Picking up from last month's first introduction to shows... April is traditionally the time when we roll up our sleeves and do the spring cleaning!

I always love this time of the year, it's nice to throw open the doors and windows and let in some fresh air and clear out the clutter. Our dolls houses also like some attention in the spring and lots of them have a miniature cleaning lady or maid in residence to help with all of the various chores.

One of the characters that has proved most popular over the years has been the ever popular cleaner. From saucy French maids to grumpy old ladies with mops and buckets they really seem to add a touch of life to a miniature property. I've made pretty parlour maids, grubby kitchen maids, gossiping cleaning ladies and a whole host of others.

I've also been asked to make portraits of well-known maids and characters such as Anna from Downton Abbey, and of course the wonderful Nora Batty from Last of the Summer Wine.

The springtime of my doll making career

For me spring has always been a time to plan future projects and after the success of my first fair I was already planning the next step of my doll making journey, those early days were the springtime of my doll making career. Many happy hours were spent at my kitchen table working on new dolls and my mind was full of characters and I wanted to sculpt them all! I was already planning my next fair and the dolls who would be on my table.

I was still honing my craft and desperately wanted to improve my sculpting techniques. I wanted my little people to look more and more realistic as they were still very naïve with their big eyes and cartoonish features. Everywhere I went I would be studying faces!

Even a trip to the supermarket would be an opportunity to look at people. I was often stood in the queue studying the ears of the person in front of me! Noses and lips fascinated me and of course eyes, but it was difficult to study strangers without being noticed or appearing a bit odd. Family was different though.



Julie's French maid



Her work is never done

Jamie Carrington

I'd often be sculpting and stop to study my husband's face; luckily he didn't mind holding a pose for me, and even to this day all of the male dolls I make have a slight resemblance to him as I studied him so much. I bought some videos to help me learn, I found those by Jamie Carrington and the Creagers to be most helpful and I would spend hours watching them as I worked picking up helpful hints and trying out new techniques.

I wanted to sculpt an open smile with teeth showing, so would spend hours making tiny dentures to insert into mouths. They say practice makes perfect. I was nowhere near that but I was certainly practising a lot! My online miniaturist friends were very helpful and encouraging too, they often spoke of the I.G.M.A. (The International Guild of Miniature Artisans). I had no idea what it was so I spent time researching it, what it was, and how I could be a part of it. It seemed like a fantastic organisation supporting miniature artists and enthusiasts alike and promoting artisans.

There was a Guild school where you could take classes, and attend various auctions, but it all seemed out of my reach, especially as they were all being held in USA. I could however join as a general member and I discovered that after a year of membership you could put your work forward to a committee to be assessed and possibly be awarded Artisan status. The more I thought about it the more I wanted to go for it!

Even if I didn't pass the strict selection process this was a chance to have my work looked at and critiqued. I was at the point where I really needed some constructive criticism to help me move forward. Family and friends were always complimentary but I knew they wouldn't want to hurt my feelings by being too honest. The plan was formed, I sent off my payment and joined IGMA. Now I had a year to work on the best dolls I could create with the goal of becoming an IGMA Artisan member to spur me on. It wasn't going to be as easy as I had hoped... 🏠

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North East -
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YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1/12th scale eggs
- Wool/yarn in various colours
- Scissors
- Cling film
- PVA glue



INFORMATION

ALL TOOLS AND MATERIALS USED IN THIS PROJECT ARE WIDELY AVAILABLE FROM ANY GOOD ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOP.

Egg Warmers

Add a touch of elegance to your breakfast table with these contemporary themed egg warmers.



1 To make this project you will need: lengths of wool/yarn in various colours and 1/12th scale eggs.



2 Cut a piece of cling film and wrap it around one of the eggs.



3 Add a small dab of glue to the top of the egg. Starting from the centre, begin to wrap the wool/yarn around the egg working towards the top.



4 Gently press the yarn against the egg and form. Allow the glue to dry completely.



5 Carefully remove the eggs from within the plastic wrap.



6 Use scissors to carefully trim away any excess wool/yarn. Your egg warmers are now ready for use!

Easter Provisions

We look forward to Easter with a selection of tempting seasonal provisions and visit a tropical paradise by **Erika Pitera of The Petite Provisions Co.**

A classically trained pianist and violinist, with a degree in visual journalism, Erika Pitera has also added another very important string to her bow as a hugely imaginative and talented miniaturist. It's here where her love of tiny things comes together to join forces with her passion for art and food. The roots of Erika's miniature journey lie with her Gourmet Fuzzies, a range of beautifully needle felted characters which include 'Bean', an utterly charming Easter Bunny and 'Rory' the mouse, celebrating St. Patrick's Day with a beer and the most delicious looking pretzel. "I've been an animal lover pretty much since birth and have spent my entire life surrounded by pets, so I'd have to say they influence and inspire virtually every aspect of my life," says Erika, her 'crew' currently comprising a team of six, two Dachshunds named Lexie and Logan and four cats, Ella, Daphne, Ernie and Marty. "Each pet that I've been blessed with loving over the years has a special place in my heart, and I absolutely think their personalities have come to life in my work, whether it's a dash of mischief or a sweet expression." [DH Ms](#)

◀ Celebrating Easter with the Piteras!

▼ Who wouldn't want to raise a glass to 'Rory'?





▲ The Easter Bunny waves hello

Feeling fuzzy

It was her Gourmet Fuzzies characters which led Erika to expand her miniature repertoire, founding The Petite Provisions Co. It's here where she creates a wide variety of miniatures for every season and occasion throughout the year, but I'm curious to know if there are also any elements of her musical training, such as structure and discipline, which she has found herself able to bring to her detailed miniatures? Erika describes how, growing up, she was instilled with a strong work ethic which encompassed both her school life and her musical training. "I rehearsed with two different orchestras and even chamber ensembles multiple times a week, sang with my school choir, and practiced piano at home daily," she recalls. "All of that experience, structure and discipline moulded me into an adult who constantly strives to learn new things and improve my skills."



▲ Fresh spring peas with lashings of butter!

▼ Celebrating Easter with butterflies and roses



"Erika's Easter creations evoke wonderful family memories"

The patience of perfection

When it comes to her small scale work, Erika says that desire to continually strive further has enabled her to come a long way very quickly. "The funny thing is, I've never considered myself a patient person, just ask my parents or my husband," she tells me. "But when it comes to miniatures, I become laser-focused and will keep working at something until it's just right. I guess I'm a little bit of a perfectionist."

That perfectionist streak is clearly visible throughout Erika's work, whether it's the captivating character of a needle felted mouse measuring at most 4" in height, a minute bowl of buttered peas, each one carefully hand rolled, or even an Easter wreath decorated with perfectly formed eggs and bunny rabbits.

"One of my favourite aspects of creating spring and Easter-themed pieces is experimenting with colour palettes, like soft pastels versus vibrant hues, as well as fun patterns like polka dots and stripes," says Erika, full of ideas and an infectious enthusiasm for the season. "Since springtime is a time of renewal, I also love incorporating floral elements and animals into my designs. If it's whimsical and sweet, it's perfect for spring!"

Easter memories

Erika explains that although Easter wasn't a huge family event when she was a child, she holds dear some very special memories of spending time in the kitchen with her mother and grandmother. "That's how we've always celebrated holidays, spending time together cooking," she remembers. "My grandma passed away last year, and the kitchen just isn't the same without her. One of the things we liked to make at Easter was carrot cake because it was our favourite dessert, all three of us, making it a special treat for our family."

Those wonderful memories have also inspired Erika's miniature work. Her tiny carrot cake creates a beautiful centrepiece for any Easter table, and something slightly less traditional if no less seasonal, are her carrot cake doughnuts. Offering a fun take on Easter treats, each doughnut is covered

▼ Fun carrot cake doughnuts



Every Easter scene should have an Easter wreath!



Turn to
PAGE 54
for our
Easter wreath
project

We show you
how to make
Easter eggs on
PAGE 16



Easter in a basket

This carrot cake is the perfect
centrepiece for the Easter table





▲ A tropical haven. 'The Conservatory'

with lashings of white icing, but you need a very steady hand to perfect the four little iced carrots, they're a delight!

Erika uses a variety of different materials to create her ever expanding range of Petite Provisions, and it's a difficult decision when she's asked to choose what she most enjoys working with. "I think my favourites would be polymer clay, wool and paper," she smuses. "That's one of my favourite things about miniatures, though, you can create magic from literally anything with a little imagination. I also use my design skills on the computer frequently to create signs, tea towels, garden flags and other printables that truly add a lot to every miniature scene."

A tropical paradise

It was a few weeks before last Easter when Erika spotted an advert for terrariums whilst browsing social media, leading to the quick purchase of two daisy terrariums and the creation of 'The Conservatory', a scene she describes as a labour of love and one which she understandably considers to be the personal highlight of her miniatures career so far. "It was the first room box I ever conceptualized and created from start to finish! I was immediately inspired to create a beautiful space filled with plants and flowers,"



▲ Erika's brilliant scarlet macaw

she says. "I'm also especially proud of the fact that I learned completely new skills to make all of the different plants and flowers, ranging from palm trees to orchids with tiny butterflies."

Erika thoroughly researched tropical plants to great success. Whilst some of these, including the orchids, were made with the assistance of laser cut sheets from Mary Kinloch, Erika also jumped in and hand cut many of the plants herself. She admits the bird of paradise was a tricky one to tackle, but the final effect is absolutely stunning. The butterflies found within the scene were

printed using Erika's inkjet printer, their hand cut finish once again showing the skill of an artisan with a steady hand.

A feathered friend

"I also really pushed my boundaries by learning to sculpt, flock and feather a macaw and to make a fountain with resin to emulate running water and a sculpted koi fish," adds Erika. The quality of the conservatory's resident scarlet macaw, made from polymer clay and with individually cut feathers, belies the fact that it was actually Erika's very first attempt at such a sculpt and demonstrates just what an exciting talent she is. Anyone admiring him would think they were looking at the work of an artisan much more experienced in similar work. And what about that second daisy terrarium? Well, Erika has been pondering the idea of an aviary, a project which, with a clear knack for creating complex birds and an eye for vibrant scenes, will be one to watch out for. In fact, simply opening the door to the pantry of The Petite Provisions Co. is no doubt going to prove exciting for some time to come! 🏠



INFORMATION

For more information please visit:

🔗 www.petiteprovisionsco.com

DollHouse

& MINIATURE SCENE

Easter Provisions

CLICK & SWIPE TO VIEW IMAGES



Bunny Wreath

This super seasonal project allows you to choose between decorated eggs or pom poms.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Mount board
- Thick white insert card
- Tracing paper
- Pastel green paper
- White felt
- DMC 25 thread in pastel colours
- 4mm Silk ribbon bow
- White polymer clay
- Watercolours
- Pastel coloured pencils
- Iridescent medium

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Craft knife & scissors
- Pencil & paint brush
- Tacky glue
- Fine point tweezers
- Small leaf punch



Patterns at 100%

1 Cut out the template provided or trace and secure to mount board. Carefully cut out using a sharp craft knife. Any rough edges will be covered with the thread.



2 Cut a 60cm length of DMC thread and glue the end of it to what will be the back of your wreath. Allow to dry. When dry, start wrapping around the wreath, keeping the thread tight. Once all the way round glue down and hold for a minute. Leave to dry and then cut excess thread.

Beate says...

"Try variations on this design by swapping the eggs for pom poms".



3 Trace or cut out the bunny template and transfer to thick white insert card. Carefully cut out using a sharp craft knife. Using a green pen or pencil, go around the edge of your bunny to help it stand out.



4 Use the leaf template provided (or a suitably sized paper punch) on pastel green paper to create ten leaves. Score through the centre and attach to the wreath.



5 Working with white polymer clay make eggs measuring 6mm x 4mm wide. Bake as per manufacturers instructions. When dry use acrylic paints in pastel shades to paint the eggs adding an iridescent medium to give the eggs some sparkle. Secure to the wreath. Finish off the wreath by adding a pom pom on the bunny and a green bow to the top. 🏠



INFORMATION

ALL TOOLS AND MATERIALS USED IN THIS PROJECT ARE WIDELY AVAILABLE FROM ANY GOOD ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOP.

Kensington Dollshouse Festival



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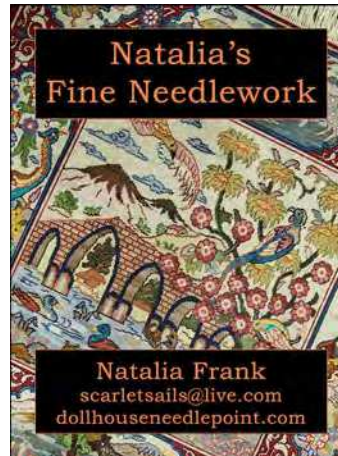


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Summer Show 2020

Exhibitor list for KDF Summer Show 2020

Exhibitors in bold are new or returning to the Summer Show. List correct at time of printing.

UK	Katty Korner	Tumdee Dollshouse	RUSSIA
Aidan Campbell	Kleine Archin	Miniatures	Victoria Morozova
Miniatures	L & A St Leger	Valerie Claire Miniatures	Miniatures
Alison Davies Miniatures	Leslie & Lyndel Smith	Veronica Ann Pickup	
Anglia Dolls Houses	Life of Riley Miniatures	Victoria Fasken	SPAIN
Ann High	The Little Hatter	Wood Supplies	Chris Malcomson
Arlotte's Miniatures	Little House at the Priory	Woodside Dolls	Miniatures
Artforge	Lucy Askew	World of My Own & Rob	David Iriarte
Bags of Character	The Luggage Lady	Lucas	Fatima Dona
Beith Miniatures	Luxury Miniature Property	Yvonne's Dolls House	Fernando Setien
Blue Riband	Lyndalu		Taller Targioni
Carol Cook	Marie-France Beglan	CANADA	Victoria Heredia Guerbois
Constance Irene	Masters Miniatures	Janice Crawley Miniatures	Yolanda Bartolome
Cornellieson Gallery	Michael Mortimer	Petworth Miniatures	Fernandez
Country Contrast	Mike Sparrow		
Country Treasures	Mini Africa	FRANCE	SWEDEN
Criss Cross Miniatures	Miniature Needlework	Catmando Miniatures	Crazy4minis
Crumpled & Rumped	Society	Domino	Hesselborn Fine
Dateman Books	The Modelroom	Elisabeth Causeret	Miniatures
David Hurley Miniatures	Mouse House Miniatures	Les Petits Chapeaux de	Minst.com
David Ward	Mulvany & Rogers	Coralie	
DCT Miniature Fashions	My Mini Maison	Oiseum De Nim	SWITZERLAND
Debra Alison Kirby	Neil Carter	Small Time	Franzy's Dolls & Teddy
Dee-Daw Designs	Newton Wood Miniatures	Veronique Lux	Paradise
Delph Miniatures	Nicola Mascall Miniatures		
The Dolls House Builder	Nikki Nakki Nu	GERMANY	THE NETHERLANDS
E H Miniatures	Pan Miniatures	Artofmini.com	Arjen Spinhoven
Elite Petite Interiors	Paul Briggs of Nottingham	Gerd Felka Glassblower	Miniaturen
Ellie de Lacy	Petite Fleur	Joachim Kuhner	Hannah Roet Miniatures
Enchanteddolls	Petite Properties	Microdolls	MiniaKturen
Fabulous Miniatures	Pride of Plaice	Stephan Wein	Miniatuur Boekbinden
The Flower Lady	Ray Storey Lighting	Volker Arnold	Montheron
Gale Elena Bantock	Replicast Miniatures		Smallscale
Geoff Wonnacott	Roberson Miniatures	ITALY	Time 4 Dolls
Georgina Ritson Dolls	Robert Stubbs Dolls	Alemikimikri	
Glasscraft Miniatures Ltd	Houses	Cinen	USA
Grace Mary Miniatures	Sally Reader Miniatures	Eleonora Cappelletti	Acquisto Silver
Halls Miniature Clocks	Say it with Flowers	Graffialuna	Atomic Miniature
Harlands of Hedon	Seaside Miniatures	Ludmilla's Creations	Beale Street Puppets
Heidi Ott Miniatures	Shepherd Miniatures	Minimadeinitaly	Carol Sherry Miniatures
Heverbell Miniatures	Shoebutton Bears		Erik Goddard
A House of Wonders	Small Sweet Something	JAPAN	Fern Vasi Dolls
House of Zoe	Stacey's Miniature	Kimy Okumura	IGMA
Itzy Bitzy Workshop	Masonry	Miyuki Miniature Porcelain	Kreative Acrylics
Jacqueline Crosby	Stokesay Ware	Sphere S Yoshi	Natalia's Fine
Miniatures	Susan Bembridge Designs	Yuriko	Needlework
Jane Harrop	T Facey Miniatures		Stewart Dollhouse
Jaydee Miniatures	Tarbenia Miniatures	NEW ZEALAND	Creations
Jens Torp Design	Teeny Weeny Teddies	Kimsminis	Tiny Doll House NYC
John & Sue Hodgson	Templewood Miniatures	Mini Knitting &	True 2 Scale
Julie Campbell Doll Artist	Thimblemins	Collectables	
K Gold Treasures	Tiny Tails Miniatures	PORTUGAL	+ more to confirm
Kastlekelm Miniatures	Tony Dunham	Henny Staring-Egberts	
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Family (10am-5pm)	£20.00

* £15 on the door
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INFORMATION:

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For more info or to book your place, visit

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ACROSS THE POND

See what's new and on trend in the miniature world as **Kate Ünver** of The Daily Mini shares with us her favourite artisans. This month we're introduced to **Anna Kerley** who makes miniature baked goods from polymer clay.

You can connect with Kate via Twitter: **@thedailymini** or via her website: **www.thedailymini.com**



FIRST AND LAST NAME

Anna Kerley

CITY/STATE OF RESIDENCE

Pell City, Alabama, USA

HOW DID YOU FIRST GET INTO MINIATURE MAKING?

I got into miniatures as a hobby at first. I wanted to learn how to make miniatures so my daughter would have them to play with. It turned into my passion as I learned how fun it was to turn a piece of clay into a tiny cake that looked real.

DESCRIBE YOUR PROCESS WHEN CREATING MINIATURES?

I always set aside a few hours. It takes as much time to make a miniature cake as it does to make a real cake. I work with my clay until I have the colour just right. I have a multitude of tools; some as simple as a toothpick or a straight pin all the way up to an expensive pasta roller used for clay.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT MINIATURES THAT INSPIRE YOU?

Miniatures make everyone smile. They are so tiny and yet so detailed; they just bring a smile to your face. I always say that you don't have to have a dolls house to love miniatures, you can just collect the things you love. 🐰▶

Miniature Easter baking table. Easter miniatures made in pretty pastel colours



Neapolitan layer cake made from polymer clay, on a 1" round cake stand, a slice of cake, and a tiny kitchen towel

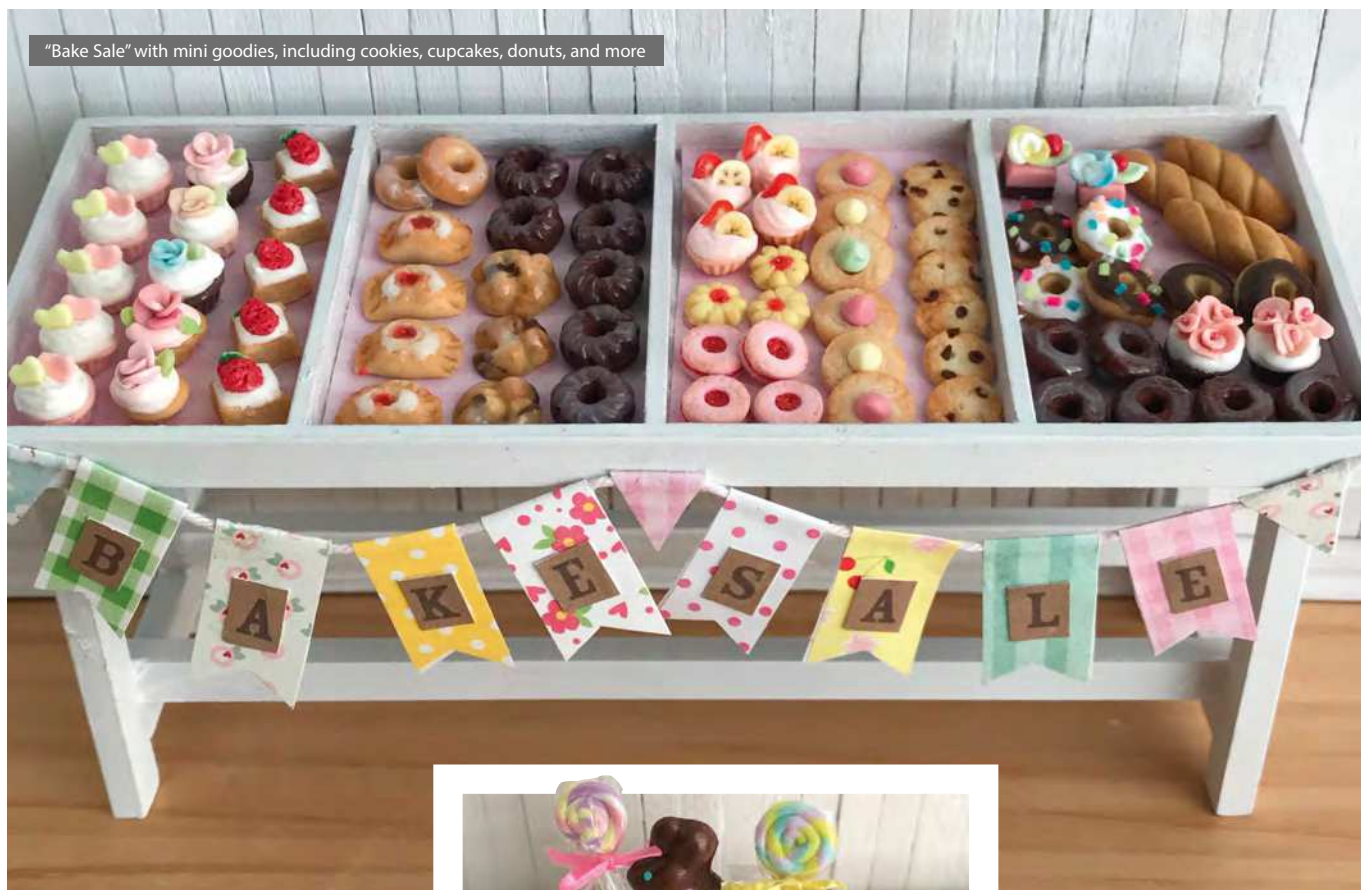


Darling Easter goodies! There's an Easter basket with a white chocolate bunny sweets



Q: WHAT IS THE DAILY MINI

A: It's a digitally curated space that showcases internationally renowned artists and designers working in small scale
Follow along on @dailymini!



"Bake Sale" with mini goodies, including cookies, cupcakes, donuts, and more



Easter basket with chocolate bunny and Easter eggs. All made from polymer clay



Easter cake with bunnies on top, a slice of cake, and a bowl of Easter eggs





Kitchen in Anna's Easter dolls house, complete with Easter goodies



Making a miniature cake from polymer clay. This 1/12th scale cake is 1"



Spring floral arrangement with Easter eggs

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE SPRING THEMED MINIATURE TO CREATE?

My favourite springtime miniature to create is an Easter cake from polymer clay. I like to add tiny bunnies, Easter eggs and flowers.

WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT ASPECT OF YOUR WORK WITH MINIATURES?

The most difficult aspect is the small scale. I use lots of light and a large magnifying glass.

ANY EASTER TRADITIONS YOU ENJOY RECREATING IN MINIATURE?

I love to create Easter dessert tables with rabbit shaped sugar cookies, coloured Easter eggs, and bunny garland. The pastel colour palette is so fresh and perfect for spring. 🐰



INFORMATION

To see more of Anna's work visit:

[etsy.com/shop/LittleThingsByAnna](https://www.etsy.com/shop/LittleThingsByAnna)

The Quartermaster:

SHARING THE KNOWLEDGE

Robert Crouch opens his workshop doors to share his miniature world - and his expert tips with DHMS readers.

After 22 years in the Royal Air Force, Rob Crouch of Buckinghamshire took on a new role in civvy street of running his own gardening and decorating business. He also decided he needed a hobby. So around five years ago he started building 1/12th scale room boxes. Enjoying his new career and new hobby, Rob returned from visiting his first ever dolls house show to discover that he'd won a prize in a competition. To his surprise, he'd won the complete Memory Lane Kit by Petite Properties of eight buildings in 1/48th scale.

The kits were Rob's first introduction to making anything of that scale. But he welcomed the challenge, discovering that he really enjoyed working in quarter scale and has not looked back since.

Today, Rob's highly detailed 1/48th scale models are earning him the reputation of being quite the expert, and he constantly finds himself being asked how to achieve certain effects, or the best way of making something.



▲ Le Café du Jardin. Look closely and see the champagne in the window

◀ Rob with Memory Lane, the kit that started his passion for 1/48th scale models

"I like sharing my knowledge," said Rob. "I don't like not sharing! If someone asks where I've got something from, I'll tell them and give them the link to the website. Or if they ask, how do you do that, I'll tell them, or do a video. I recently started a Facebook page: Rob Crouch Miniatures Group, and I'm thinking about starting a YouTube channel where I can share videos of various tutorials and show how to make certain things.

An Edwardian bolt hole

At his home nestled away in a little village in Buckinghamshire, Rob lives in an atmospheric 1909 Edwardian cottage, with wisteria-covered walls and a garden providing interest at every twist and turn. Amidst the winding paths, archways and hedges, you eventually come across his unique rustic workshop, which he built and finished last October. ➡



Dodging the scampering little paws of his own puppy and a friend's, he said, "I was working in a little shed just 7ft by 5ft and decided enough was enough, so I took that down and built this bigger one. It's made from old reclaimed wood and stained-glass windows purchased on eBay.

"I found the main display cabinet on eBay too and had to get the seller to open the doors and measure the width to make sure I could fit the largest of my models – Cobblestone Snicket, in. And it just fits!

▲ The fabulously rustic workshop where the magic happens

► Inside Beech Tree Manor, wonderfully grand rooms with only a hint of the below-stairs kitchen

▼ The exterior of Beech Tree Manor





▲ A little scraping of chalk pastels is required

The fact that Rob loves being outdoors, loves gardening and has an artistic flair of how things should look is reflected in his modelling. There's attention to detail, and a love of giving a place character and authenticity - whether that's in real life or quarter scale.

"The thing I love most when making models is weathering the exterior of the building," said Rob who has also deliberately weathered the outbuildings in his garden. "And probably my least favourite job is gluing the kit together."

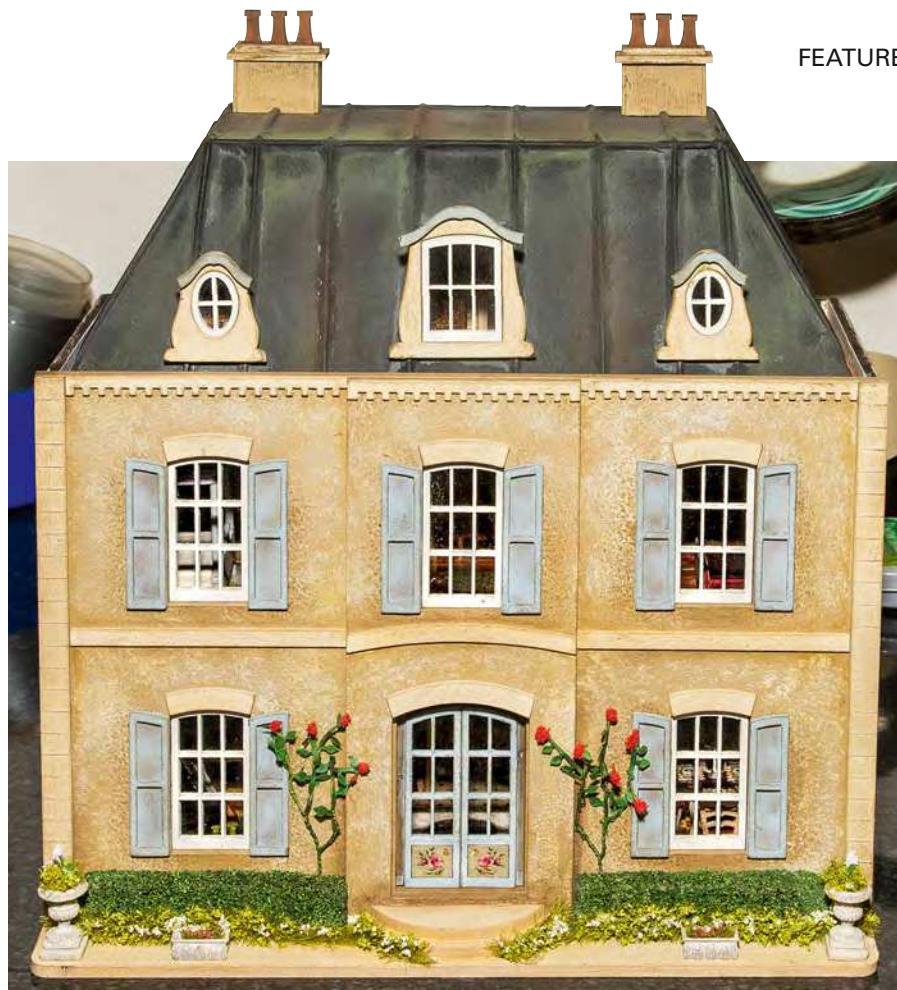
Building from the ground up

Talking about his method of making up a dolls house kit, he said the very first thing is to PVA the surfaces. "That seals the surfaces and gives a good base. Then anything you put on will adhere to it."

He then begins by loosely putting the house kit together using masking tape. "Then you can start to visualise what you've got and start thinking about the rooms," he added. "I then make or buy the base or plinth, and build from the ground floor, working my way up. However, I'll cover the floors and wallpaper the walls prior to construction. I then fully furnish each level before putting in the ceiling."

The lighting is very important. I use lighting kits by Jennifer Maddox of Small Scale Lights. She will make bespoke lighting for me. So, I'll drill a hole for the electrical wire to come in through the back and I'll drill a little hole in the ceiling where the lights will go. I then make a tiny groove for the wiring to slot into. The wire is so fine, it only needs a slight groove, as when the flooring covers it, it's unnoticeable."

"I use real lead for the flashing on the roofs - plumbers lead tape, and then fake lead. To create a faux lead effect, I glue cocktail sticks - making a strip effect, cover in tissue paper with PVA glue and then weather it green with chalk pastels. I use chalk pastels for all my external aging and weathering. I scrape a bit of chalk with a blade and apply it to the walls or roof with a dry brush. I also render the outside of



some walls with real brick dust which you can buy. I mix some with a bit of water and then apply over a stencil - so you get genuine bricks!"

When it comes to making thatched roofs, Rob finds the best thing to make them from is hanging basket liners. While for interiors he's found that Wood Supplies do really fine woods, perfect for skirting boards and picture rails.

"Pot plants, candlesticks, a decanter of wine, a tray with glasses, an open book left lying in the reading nook, and hundreds of other little additions, all made to perfection."

Realistic accessories

Many people compliment Rob on his finished rooms, which look so realistic you might think that the occupier had left just moment before. Talking about his Beech Tree Manor (Petite Properties Haversham Hall kit) he said, "I try to make everything look as authentic as possible, for example the manor is a grand

▲ Weathering a building is Rob's favourite job

house and I wanted grand rooms. So, I made wall friezes and put up Chinoiserie wallpaper. I also wanted a music room - because I've never done one before, and a study with dark wood and mahogany.

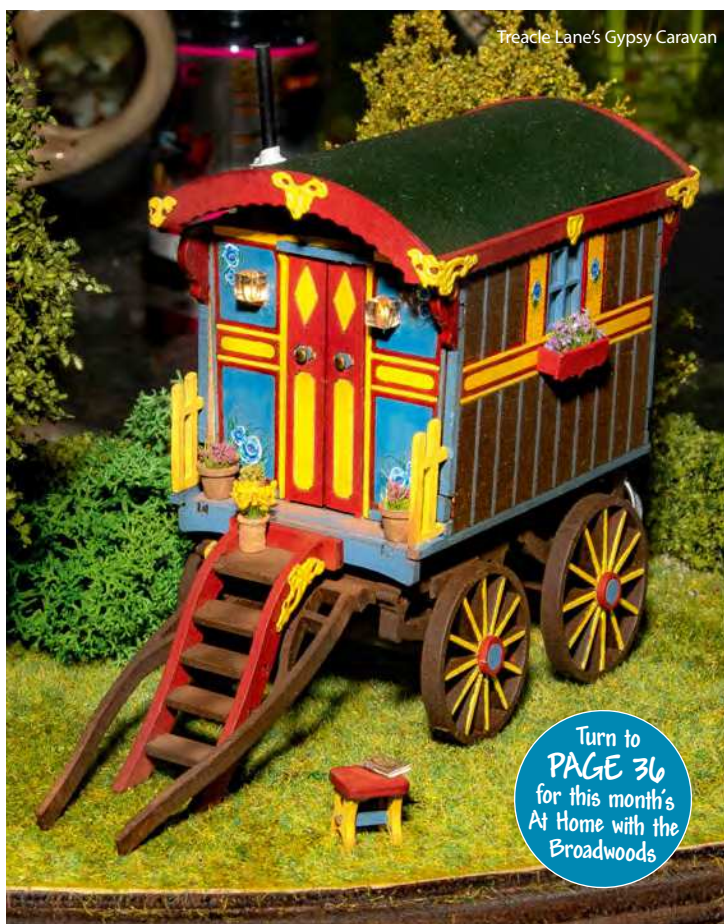
"You might not notice straight away, but it doesn't have a kitchen. That's because it's a very grand manor house, so the kitchen would be below stairs. But I have put in a door at the back which leads down to the kitchen!"

Rob goes to great lengths to accessorise his buildings to make them realistic. Amongst the accessory and furniture kits he uses are those by: Jean Day, Jane Harrop, Petite Properties, Cynthia Howe, Petworth Miniatures, Castle Crafts, Seaside Miniatures, Stewart Dollhouse Creations, trees from MBR Models and others. Additionally, he makes all those other little items that set him apart, with nothing seeming to be too much trouble.

"There's lots of things online in 1/12th scale which you can reduce right down to quarter scale and print out," added Rob who makes use of plasticine, beads and other bits and pieces for making tiny objects. Also 'O' gauge railway accessories, such as railings, which when cut down will make ideal Parisian balconies. The lamps on top of the walls of his Café du Jardin are ordinary streetlamps cut down with a wire put through. "I'll look at something and think how I can adapt it for my needs." ▶



Mr and Mrs Bickers' Cottage Stores



Treacle Lane's Gypsy Caravan

The first 'non-house' Rob made is a Treacle Lane kit of a Gypsy Caravan, saying that the painting of it took the longest time, because of getting the lines of the wood panels just right. As with the build of any house, he made the base then furnished the interior of the caravan before attaching the sides. "In my mind I imagined copper pans and a pot-bellied stove which I've put in. While outside, the chickens are 'O' gauge railway chickens. If they look a bit too big it's because they're really healthy!"

He says that his imagination runs away with him when he's creating these miniature houses. "When building The Cottage Store (Petite Properties) it became Mr and Mrs Bickers Cottage Stores because they are always bickering. They don't get on at all. Mr Bickers has the hardware store downstairs and Mrs Bickers has the grocery shop upstairs. They just can't work together!"

The dolls are made by Theresa Macarty-Fruen and Rob made all the groceries. Rob meticulously printed out the packaging labels and wrapped them around bits of wood to make the jars and the products. If you look closely and you'll find flour, Bisto, tomato soup and cornflakes; while the fresh fruit and veg are made from plasticine. "I can't tell you how happy I was when I'd finally stocked her shelves!" said Rob.



▲ Ann Evans meets up with Rob Crouch and two little friends!

Although he has a magnifying glass, he generally works by eye, and admits that he's not pedantic about size. "If it looks correct, I am happy."

Rob works on his miniatures for a couple of hours in the evenings and a few hours at the weekend. Beech Tree Manor took about three months to complete and Cobblestone Snicket took about eight months. As for the individual pieces of furniture, some are quick to make, some are more time consuming. If he has for example a lot of chairs to make, he tends to get all the gluing over and done with, then he will paint all the chairs, and then use Super Glue to secure all of the

braiding and trim. There are times however, when the 'labour of love' gets stretched to the limits.

"In the dining room of Le Petit Palais for instance, the table is set for six – so, six plates, six knives and forks, six glasses... sometimes you have to walk away and do something else!"

He also says that he knows when a house is finished. "I do get to a point when I know when a project is finished. And while I'm pleased with what I've accomplished, at the same time I feel a little bit empty. But I know it's time to move on to something new."

Although this is just a hobby and a passion for Rob, he says he would be very happy to do commissions. He explained, "Rather than sell what I've made, if someone wants something similar, I'd rather make another one for them – plus it would have their own preferences with colour schemes and so on." He's currently got three or four ideas of what he wants to make next. Perhaps it will be a replica of his own home? One thing is for sure, whatever it is, it's going to be amazing! 🏠



INFORMATION

All photos by

by Rob Tysall

🌐 www.facebook.com/Rob.Crouch.Minatures.Group

DollHouse

& MINIATURE SCENE

Quartermaster

CLICK & SWIPE TO VIEW IMAGES



The Whole Kit & Caboodle:

DOWNTOWN ABBEY BY POPPETS DOLLY BITS



The kit

At Easter, many of our finest stately homes pull off the dust sheets, pull back the shutters and throw open their doors to the ticket-buying public. But, if you can't get out this Easter weekend, stay in and enjoy a taste of upstairs/downstairs with this marvelous "Downton Abbey Era Social Set" kit by Poppets Dolly Bits. The kit contains over 30 full-colour items for you to cut out and display in your mini stately home. There are documents that can be placed on desks, pretty cards for on a dressing table, invitations for the mantelpiece, and various items of posh ephemera to go in your dolls house drawers. This period memorabilia set also includes theatre programmes, posters and menus.

For a more modest mini abode, Poppets Dolly Bits "Family Ephemera" kit is just the ticket. It contains family documents of the type that most households accumulate over the years. There are photographs and receipts, postcards, letters, and telegrams.

▼ The contents of the kit



The many pieces within the completed kit

The kit even comes with a free box that you simply cut and glue together, creating the perfect container to hold all that family history and a wonderful addition to your dolls house loft or attic. Both kits come with a few surprise freebies.

Poppets Dolly Bits is an online shop with all manner of fascinating paper kits. The Downton range also includes a love letters kit and a desktop items kit. You will also find a WWII kit and some lovely wallpapers too. Take a look today if you want something a bit different! 🏠

THE FACTS

Buy from: 🌐 www.poppetsdollybits.com

Cost: £3.49 per set

Comes with: Cutouts on a single sheet

Additional materials needed:

Scissors and glue

Specialist tools needed: None

Time: An hour

Experience: Complete beginner

Top tip: Use a craft knife for a cleaner cut than scissors can achieve

GIVEAWAY!

Turn to page 4
to find out how to enter!

One lucky
reader will win
the two kits
featured here



At Home with THE BROADWOODS



Despite being best known in the miniature world for her quarter scale creations, this month professional miniaturist **Bea Broadwood** shares one of her favourite 1/24th scale projects.

Regular readers will already know that when I began to make miniatures, 1/24th scale was my preferred scale. For me, the attraction of half scale dolls houses has always been that they are small enough not to dominate a room, yet large enough to retain a very high level of detail; both inside and out. Back in 2007, I was so inspired by the scale that I set about writing a series of project books dedicated to it. The aim of the books was to show just how easy it is to create realistic dolls house miniatures in 1/24th scale, using only inexpensive craft materials.

HALF THE SIZE, BUT NOT HALF THE FUN!

The ratio or scale - 1/24 translates into:
1 foot = 1/2", making it half the size of 1/12th
Note: 1/24 is also often referred to as
'half scale'.

It's just an illusion!

For me, smaller scale miniatures are all about fooling the eye and creating the illusion of a full scale object, rather than replicating it using the same materials and methods. Therefore I think it's important to first consider the finish you want to create and then decide on the most effective materials to use to achieve the required 'look'. For example, when I was designing this half scale armchair for my second project book, I quickly realised that to stay true to the scale, I would need to create the 'illusion of upholstery' instead of just reaching for some full scale fabric. As it turned out, tissue paper and a baby wipe were the perfect substitution!

So, if you're tempted to have a go at this adorable smaller scale, why not try out this simple, but highly realistic 1/24th scale project? You never know, you might (like me) fall in love with it too!



▲ A comfy armchair in 1/24th scale

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- ☐ Foam board - (5mm thick)
- ☐ Tissue paper
- ☐ Air dry clay
- ☐ A soft baby wipe (clean and dried!)
- ☐ PVA adhesive or tacky glue
- ☐ Paint (in your preferred colour scheme)
- ☐ Four wooden beads

TOOLS REQUIRED

- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Craft knife
- ☐ Metal ruler (with finger guard)
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Assorted paint brushes

What is foam (core) board?

Although not pure cardboard, foam board consists of a layer of polystyrene foam sandwiched between two pieces of thin card. It is incredibly light and easy to cut and when foam board is stuck together, it can create incredibly strong miniature structures. Foam board is readily available in a variety of thicknesses from good art suppliers or hobby shops.

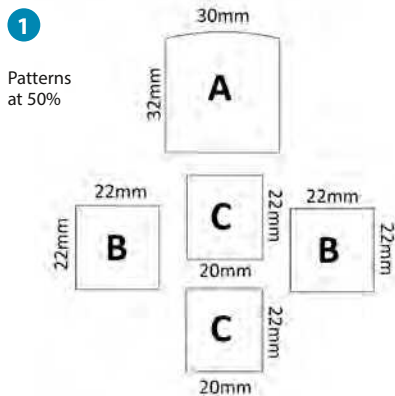


INFORMATION

www.petite-properties.com

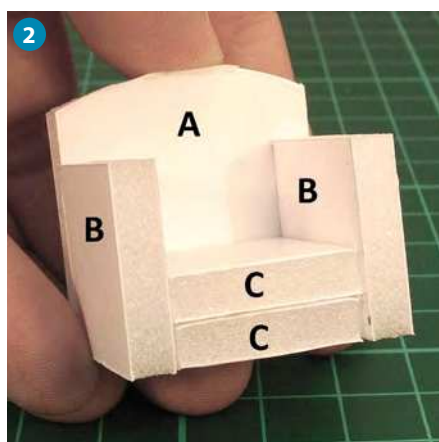
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Bea used a dark beige shade to create the illusion of an 'old traditional' woollen blanket

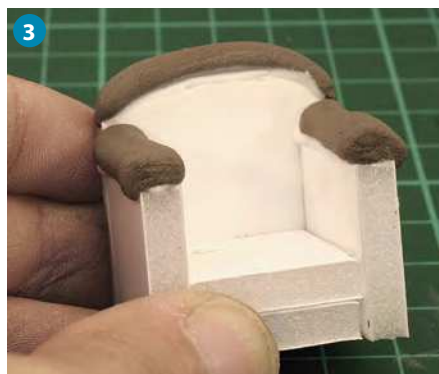


Not to scale - for guidance only!

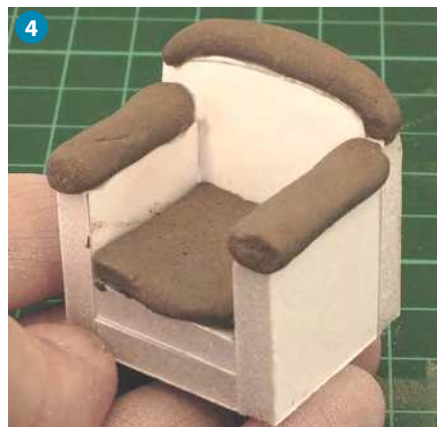
1 Draw out the shapes shown onto a sheet of foam core board. Carefully, cut out each shape using a craft knife and metal ruler.



2 Glue the foam board parts together as shown in the picture. Leave to dry completely before continuing.



3 Roll a small lump of air dry clay into a simple sausage shape. Stick the clay sausage onto top back edge of the chair. Repeat and stick two further sausage pieces of clay onto the top edge of each of the arms.



4 Using a little air dry clay form a seat cushion to fit the armchair. Stick the cushion into position, then use your finger make a 'dent' in the front edge of the cushion, to create a 'worn' and 'sat in' illusion. Leave the chair to dry out completely, ideally overnight.



5 Paint the surface of armchair with PVA adhesive and cover with pieces of tissue paper. Allow the tissue paper to crumple up. Cover the entire chair in this way and once again leave to dry.



6 Paint the armchair with two coats of paint and when dry, distress if required.



7 Take a clean baby wipe and leave it to completely dry out. Cut out a 5cm x 5cm square of the wipe. Working on a cleanable surface, totally coat one side of the baby wipe by painting on PVA adhesive. Carefully lift the wipe and 'drape' it over the back and one arm of the chair. Allow the fabric to crumple up, drape and fold realistically. Press the baby wipe into the corners and contours of the chair using a brush loaded with more PVA adhesive. Leave to dry until the baby wipe has completely hardened, then carefully paint with two coats of paint in the colour of your choice.



8 Stick a wooden bead onto the underside in each corner of the armchair to create the feet and leave to dry.

...Then step back and admire your work! 🏠

▼ This entire sitting room is made from card, paper and air dry clay



GIVEAWAY!

Turn to page 4 for more information

Two lucky readers will each WIN a signed copy of 'A Country Sitting Room'



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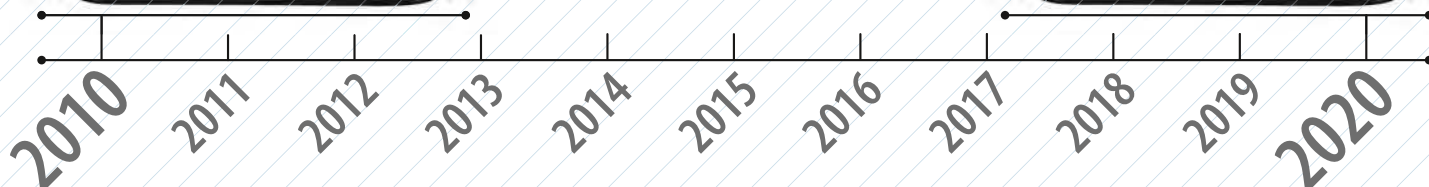
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YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Polymer clay in white, sunflower yellow and light pink
- Acrylic paints in metallic bronze, terracotta, burnt umber, black, grass green and phthalo green
- 1/12th Scale watering can
- 1mm Jewellery wire
- Self-adhesive landscape flower tufts
- All-purpose glue
- Matte varnish

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Small brushes
- Needle tool
- Jewellery wire cutters

Spring in a Can

Celebrate spring with the rustic look and a burst of colour this Easter.

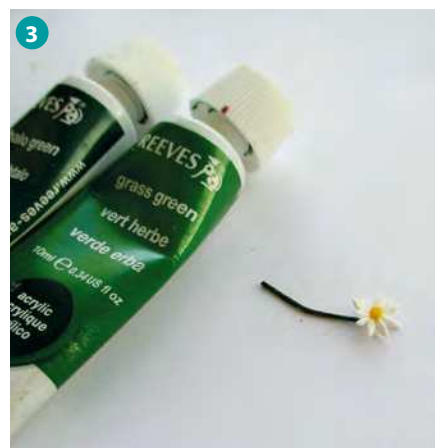


1 Mix metallic bronze acrylic paint with terracotta, burnt umber and just a dash of black to create a rusty shade. Coat a 1/12th scale metal watering can thoroughly. As this is to give the can its aged, rusty effect, try and give the paint a slightly textured look using a rough brush.



2 Roll tiny tubes of polymer clay in white and pink, creating a point at each end. Flatten with a fingernail to create petals and arrange in a flower formation. For the large daisies, just one layer of white petals is required, with a second layer of smaller petals for the pink flowers. Add a small ball of sunflower

yellow clay, flattened slightly to the centre of each daisy. You can also make a couple of roses by flattening balls of pale pink clay with a fingernail, levering them from your work surface with a needle tool. Roll the first petal into a cone shape and build the rose by adding the rest of the petals around that central core. Bake and allow to cool.



3 Cut a small length of 1mm jewellery wire to create a single flower stem. Coat with mixed grass green and phthalo green acrylic paint. Allow to dry and coat this and the flowers with matte varnish. Glue a daisy to the top of the stem.



INFORMATION

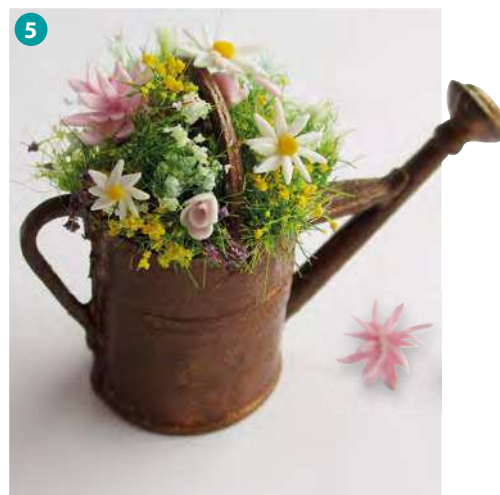
For more information visit:

www.homewardflight.etsy.com

ALL TOOLS AND MATERIALS USED IN THIS PROJECT ARE WIDELY AVAILABLE FROM ANY GOOD ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOP.



4 Using a variety of seasonal colours, cover the top of the watering can with carefully cut and small pieces of self-adhesive landscape flower tufts.



5 Glue the flowers over the top of the flower tufts to create the final 'bouquet' effect.

Fly into Spring

Find yourself soaring to new miniature heights this spring with the work of IGMA Fellow and nature lover, **Fanni Sándor**.

It's often said that music creates the soundtrack to our lives, but the sights and sounds of nature too provide us with an enduring link to not only our own lives, but the changing seasons they represent. Following the cold days of an, at times, seemingly endless winter, nothing says spring more than the excited chatter of birdsong as the garden bursts back into bloom. Fanni Sándor is a very well-known name on the miniature scene, her birds and animals delighting collectors worldwide, and her exquisite bird's nests are a joy to behold!

Miniature history

Fanni's love of small scale is lifelong, having completed her first project, a lovely furnished shoebox, at just six years old back in the days when she would source ordinary household items to create those very first miniatures. "In my country there's no tradition of 1/12th scale miniature making," she explains, adding that following the Second World War, all the classic handmade dolls houses became absent from the shops, but now a number of Hungarian museums have surviving dolls houses and accessories on display from both the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

For Fanni, however, it was during her twenties when the internet really opened her eyes to the growing and evolving miniatures world. "I was completely fascinated," she says, as enthralled now as she was then. "I realised there are a lot of miniature lovers around the world, and some of them making miniatures at artistic level. And that was the point when I decided I wanted to be a professional miniaturist, and I wanted to create art."

Cooking up an idea

Already a more than capable artist who enjoyed drawing, painting and sculpting, Fanni had discovered an artform that would not only become her passion, but something which would also go on to define her future career. She kept creating and practicing until she had a piece she felt confident

in revealing to her public, a wonderful kitchen scene. "There was a fireplace, and two tables full of meat, veggies and breads," she remembers fondly. "And there were a few hunted pheasant. From my eyes today it was a bit rudimentary, but back then I was satisfied with it."

Fanni is, however, far too modest as the scene actually went on to become award winning, claiming a prize in an exhibition. But, a biologist by trade, and with a background in nature conservation projects, Fanni's heart truly lies in immersing herself amongst the marvels of nature in small scale. Accepted as an IGMA Artisan in 2014, Fanni went on to become one of the privileged miniaturists to be able count themselves as an IGMA Fellow just two years later, the cube and certificate she received a

▼ One of Fanni's dainty butterflies



◀ A family of mallards



► Hungry chipmunks





► Flying home

“The pinnacle of miniature art at its finest”

tangible recognition of an achievement she is clearly extremely proud of. She is now completely dedicated to her work as a full time miniaturist, living in Budapest with her husband and young family, the former being an agricultural engineer who she describes as the biggest fan of her work.

New life

All of Fanni's sculptures are created entirely by hand using polymer clay and depending on the complexity involved in an individual piece or small scene, can take anything ranging from two days to a full week for her to bring a new idea to fruition. She cites a robin with a tasty worm dangling from its beak and the accompanying nest with nestling as a piece which took around three days to create. Robins and blue tits are amongst Fanni's favourite nesting birds and her miniature versions leave you in awe of her natural aptitude for creating such an amazingly high level of detail in something which sits easily on a fingernail. Once baked and she's added even more detail using her trusty Dremel carving tools, Fanni paints each sculpture before adding the final coat of fibres or feathers, which are attached using a strong glue. "I especially love the theme when the mother bird is feeding her babies," she says. "I love to make eggs and egg shells for the nest, showing the beauty of the birth of a new life."



T'wit T'woo!

Food for thought

The Blu Jay is another nest where our intrepid mother has been out catching worms to feed her eager young, but over in the barn owl nest, dinner appears to be an entirely more hearty affair. Both mum and chick demonstrate Fanni's flair for interpreting the individual details required in any species so incredibly successfully, and with such care.



◀ Making a splash with this incredible kingfisher

No matter how many times you look at them, it never ceases to become any the less fascinating to realise just how realistic her work is. It's almost as though, rather than consuming hours and hours of Fanni's time, someone has simply waved a magic wand and has achieved the impossible, shrinking a genuine barn owl nest down to 1/12th scale. Her stunning kingfisher, seen quite literally making a splash as it flies from the water with a proudly caught fish in its beak also demonstrates the pinnacle of miniature art at its absolute finest whilst showing us just how clever nature is too!

At this point we briefly hark back to winter to look at a tiny blue tit, sculpted storing away reserves for those chillier days and nights as it tucks into a suet fat ball. As someone who has spent a lifetime ensuring well fed birds are a steadfast part of the ritual of winter, I can honestly say this is a miniature every dolls house garden definitely shouldn't be without.

Find your wings

Moving away from our feathered friends we find a pair of lively, peckish miniature chipmunks, feasting on peanuts from their shells, leaving you every bit as speechless as you admire their intricacy. However, if you think Fanni's birds and animals are tiny, then spare a thought for the level of concentration that must be required when creating something such as the tiny dragonfly snared by her beautifully made frog. Just like the birds and animals, Fanni's insects are also sculpted from polymer clay. However, ensuring the most miniature of miniatures combines realism with the necessary sturdy construction is a hugely important part of the design process, so she uses plastic fibre or very tiny wire to create elements such as legs and antennae. In addition, the delicate dragonfly wings are made through the ingenious use of plastic foil, or in the case of the butterflies, liquid clay. Fanni then uses acrylic paint to give the wings their intricate and realistic appearance.

► This tiny robin brings an appetising meal back to the nest



▼ Fanni proudly holding her IGMA Fellow cube and certificate

An ongoing quest

Fanni is also understandably much in demand for commission work and delights in being asked to create more unusual pieces. These special requests have included a not uncomplicated scene depicting two male bald eagles fighting over a fish, an albino hedgehog and a baby bat wrapped in a towel! But for Fanni, who believes that miniature development always continues to grow, no matter how advanced your

"Showing the beauty of the birth of a new life"



skills might become, what have been the highlights of a career which can only go on to gain strength and reach as yet undiscovered new heights? "The first is that my husband and family are proud of me," she says. "The second is achieving IGMA Fellow status, and the third is that I reached twenty three thousand followers on Instagram without the aid of any advertising. It was just through sharing the photos of my miniatures, which means for me, that people like what I'm doing."

Other recent creations offered up from Fanni's busy worktable are a diverse collection, including a Roman snail, an African spurred tortoise, playful mice, a red kite and a magnificent phoenix, but what advice would she give to a novice looking to give sculpting small animals or birds a go for the very first time, and what does she believe is the key to being able to achieve that realistic look? "The most important thing is to love making miniatures," she says. "The second is the skill of sculpting, the third

is the accurate observation of the animal you want to make." Definitely just the excuse we need to get out there and immerse ourselves in the magic of the natural world all around us this spring! 🏡



INFORMATION

To see more of Fanni's work visit:

🔗 www.instagram.com/fanniminature

► Eager diners in the blue jay nest!



▼ Amazing! The dragonfly's delicate wings are made with plastic foil





Dollshouse

& MINIATURE SCENE

Fly into Spring

CLICK & SWIPE TO VIEW IMAGES



YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 300gsm (or heavier) cold pressed slightly textured (not) watercolour paper
- Derwent Artbar water soluble wax in opaque white, black, Payne's grey, primary red, Alizarin crimson, green Earth, Tertiary green, Tertiary orange and process yellow (If you don't have art bars, use watercolour or gouache instead)

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Sharp craft knife, cutting mat & steel ruler
- Three water pots
- Size 4 and Size 10/0 (that's ten zeros) synthetic watercolour or acrylic brush with a good point



Modern Daffodil Tutorial

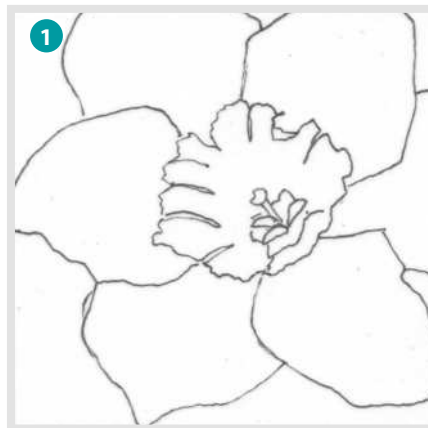
This month, resident expert **Stephanie Guy** uses a soluble wax to create a bright, modern and OOAK mini.

PREPARATION

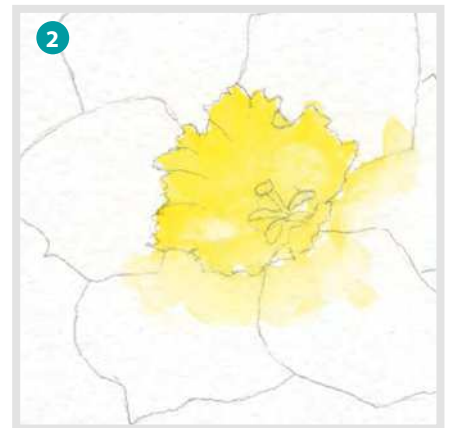
To begin, choose the size of piece you want to create and using your steel rule and craft knife, or a good sharp pair of scissors and a steady hand, cut out the watercolour paper. If you're using a frame add an allowance so that you can stick it in place at the end. For this tutorial I'm going for a large contemporary piece, using approximately 70mm x 70mm paper.

Stephanie says...

"My technique using Derwent Artbars to create a modern painting means that every single one is completely different - I couldn't recreate one exactly no matter how hard I tried. Yours will not look like mine, yours will be totally unique and special. Just relax, go with it, and enjoy the process."



1 Draw your big bold daffodil, starting with the frilly edges of the cup. Add in the petal. Notice that some of the petals don't fit on the paper - they spill over the sides, and this is partly what makes it look so modern.



2 Dip your brush into clean water and swirl it round on the yellow artbar to pick up paint. You may need to peel back some of the cover to get at the paint - if so, take care to peel off from the end that doesn't have the colour name on it. Firstly paint the whole of the daffodil cup, and then paint some yellow onto the petals where the colour is being reflected. Before the reflected yellow is dry, dab it lightly with a tissue to make it slightly less bright. ▶





3 Clean your brush and swirl it around on the orange artbar to pick up lots of lovely colour, and paint the frill on the edge of the cup. Start with wiggly squiggly lines all around the outside, making some areas heavier than others. When you've gone all the way round, bring some of the orange down into the centre of the cup following your drawn lines, and add some extra finer lines of orange in between. Make sure you can still see a lot of the yellow!

4 By now you should have the hang of picking up juicy colour from your artbars! Pick up some of the alizarin crimson and paint strong colour around the very middle of the cup - around the bottom of the stamen and pistil. Whilst the paint is still wet tickle the outside edges of your freshly painted area to blend them out with a clean damp brush, again avoiding the stamen and pistil. Take great care to only touch the outside edges of the crimson as we want the paint at the centre to stay dark. Don't worry if you're too heavy handed to begin with, it's all a learning process and easy to fix! Just wait for it to dry and try again.

5 Once this is dry, repeat the process with the alizarin crimson, this time adding a little orange to the outside areas as you blend. It's all going to look quite soft at this stage and that's OK as we'll come back in later and sharpen it all up.

6 Pop a little drop of water onto your Tertiary green, Earth green and Alizarin crimson artbars. This will soften them and make them easier to work with. Wet all of the background with plenty of clean water taking care to leave the petals completely dry. When you're done you should be able to see a layer of water. Now pick up some of the bright Tertiary green and touch it to the background in short brush strokes. You'll immediately see the paint flow out into the water - try not to disturb this process. Pick up fresh paint each time and leave a gap between each brush stroke. Move on to the next step quickly, while it's all very wet.

7 Next to the still-wet tertiary green, brush a little Alizarin crimson, and next to that, some Earth green. Place the strong wet colours so that they are just touching, and watch them mix together. If yours aren't feeling too sociable, give them a nudge with the brush. If they're drying out too fast, add a little more water to encourage them to dance. Let this dry.

8 For this next step you'll need two brushes, one of which needs to be dry. Using your smaller brush, wet it with clean water and pick up a little Payne's grey. Push the point of your brush right up into the top corner of the bottom left petal, and sweep it over to the right hand side of that petal. Can you see how this has added shadow on to the petal, cast by the cup? Whilst this paint is still damp, take a dry brush and, in two or three separate goes, pull it down towards the bottom of the petal. This will give you some textured shadows of different lengths. Repeat this for all of the petals, working all the way around the cup. Notice how I have used the same technique where some of the petals cast shadows on to each other. You can do this too.





Have a good squint at your work. Are your petal shadows darker than the background? If the answer to that question is yes, you can either lift some of the shadows off with a damp brush and a tissue, or darken the background. Or perhaps a bit of both.

9 To make the petals look more three dimensional, pick up a touch of Payne's grey with a damp (not wet) brush, and using the belly of the brush gently sweep shadows on the flesh of the petals. Move your brush from the outside of the petals towards the centre. We're only painting shadows, so remember to leave plenty of white on the petals.

10 Now we're going to add texture and colour to the petals by adding reflections of the background colours to the petals. This will make the flower sit into the background better. Using a slightly damp brush, pick up a little Tertiary green and lightly brush this, just once, on three or four different petals. Less is more! I've added mine to the top right petal, the left hand petal (at the top), the right hand petal close to the cup, and the bottom right hand petal towards the bottom. Now do the same with Alizarin crimson. You can see mine on each petal, in a different place each time. Keep your brush strokes very light so that you're just skimming the surface of the paper.

11 Next we'll add definition and depth to the daffodil cup. For this we need to use primary red, our smallest round brush, and I also used a magnifying glass for this stage too. Add little squiggles of primary red around the frill of the cup, lifting your brush off in places so that you don't paint a solid line. Now paint behind the stamen and pistil in the centre of the cup, and finally add tiny bit of red in the centre of the stamen and pistil, leaving some yellow showing so that they don't disappear into the depths of the shadows.

12 Now we'll put in the darkest darks. Don't be afraid of this step as this is what makes the daffodil really pop out. In a few places on the frill, add a tiny amount of strong crimson. Make sure it's only a touch here and there, otherwise we'll overpower it. Swap to black and paint just one or two tiny frill shadows at most. This time it's even more important that it's only a tiny touch in a couple of places. Again with the black, add the very dark shadows right in the centre at the base of the stamen and pistil. Pop small black shadows on the background at the bottom of the daffodil, just touching the lower petals. Now clean your brush thoroughly, change your water, and paint a white highlight on the top of the pistil.

13 This next part finishes off the modern look and is so much fun! Practice it first on a scrap of paper. Swap back to your larger brush, holding it in your dominant hand, and pick up your white art bar in your non-dominant hand. Swirl plenty of water onto the artbar and flick paint off the edge of the artbar onto your painting, leaving little white splashes. Repeat with yellow and primary red, and maybe some of the other colours that we have used. It's really up to you which colours you want to use. If you're using watercolour or gouache instead of artbars, pop some juicy paint on the flat side of a ruler and flick it off the end.

14 Finally, sign your painting in pencil (most pens don't work too well on top of the waxy art bars). Remember to share it on your social media and tag me! 🏠

TOP TIP FOR PAINTING WITH ART BARS

- Don't use expensive brushes with artbars as you will wear them out quite quickly. Synthetic student grade watercolour brushes will be perfect for this medium.



INFORMATION

ALL TOOLS AND MATERIALS USED IN THIS PROJECT ARE WIDELY AVAILABLE FROM ANY GOOD ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOP.

Chocolate Bunnies

With over 300 issues in the library, the DHMS team have been reading through the Exact Editions archive, the new subscriber service from DHMS, providing a wealth of inspiration, ideas and projects. This month Tanja shows us how make chocolate bunnies.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Polymer clay in chocolate brown and/or caramel
- Needle tool and a small embossing tool
- Gloss varnish

Turn to
PAGE 38
to find out
more about
Exact Editions

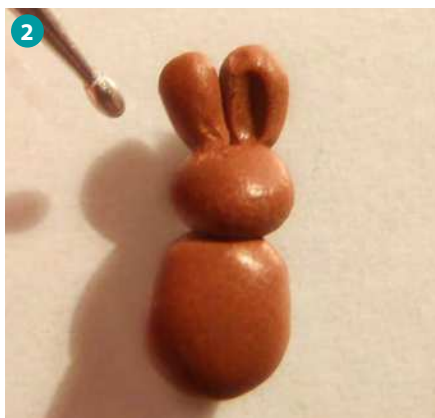


1a



1b

1 For the bunnies I used chocolate brown (dark chocolate) and caramel (milk chocolate). Begin by rolling out two tiny balls of clay; one for the head and one for the body.



2

2 Now roll out two tear drop shapes for the ears; I used a small embossing tool to attach, blend and make a small dent for the inside of each ear.



3

3 Roll out an additional four tear drop shapes; two for the feet and two for the arms.



4

4 If you wish, you can define the cheeks by lightly pressing the embossing tool in that area, moving in a circular motion. For the nose I added a tiny triangle and used a needle tool for making two holes for the eyes. You can make the bunnies as large or as small as you'd like – mine are approximately 12mm in size.

5



5 Bake the bunnies in the oven as per the manufacturers instructions. 

Tanja says...

"If you wish to make the hot cross buns, they can be found in the April 2013 edition"



INFORMATION

Tanja Jensen
SugarCharmShop

 www.sugarcharmshop.com

 www.scs-craft.com

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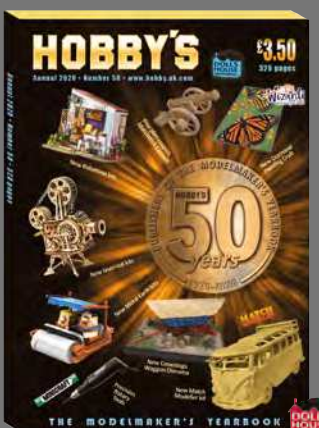
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The Musings of a Miniaturist

A new series of occasional columns looking at the human side of the miniature world. In this first piece, Virginia reminisces about attending her first miniature workshop, twenty years ago.

I am up at the crack of dawn. I tumble down my treacherous basement stairs and pluck my Midwest Miniature Guild apron off its cobwebby hook. I throw a few tools into my proud new tool kit, cast a rueful glance back at my still unfinished dolls house, and hurry off to my first miniature workshop. The Midwest Miniature Guild meets three times a year in Minneapolis, Minnesota, for an entire day. I have had to carve this day out of a thicket of responsibilities. What will it be like, a whole day spent on just one task? Have I ever, in my entire adult life, had the experience of doing just one thing all day? And what will it be like to meet my fellow miniature lovers? Who are these people? I am vaguely aware that I am also curious to perceive, in their mirror, who I am. When I am not a teacher, writer, wife, daughter, mother, when I steal away for something just for myself, for my heart, for my very own purest pleasure, who am I?

Working with pleasure

In the Hilton ballroom we don our array of checked, flowered and paint-besmeared (or in my case spotless), aprons and seat ourselves at great oval tables. I have brought every wrong thing. I have forgotten the damp cloth in a plastic bag. I have forgotten waxed paper. But our endearingly organized table leader, Jean Ocken has supplied each of us with a waxed paper place mat, a cup, and a rag.

The project is a lovely one - a blanket chest by d. Anne Ruff, and, to swell our delight, d. Anne Ruff is here in person to supervise the project.

I am immediately absorbed in the creation of this delicate little piece. As in all miniature construction, it requires at once deftness of touch, decisiveness, and a faultless sense of timing - shall I now, is this the moment now, to press hard into the corner and forever make my peace with the result, or shall I toy with the alignment just a little longer and risk the glue drying? If I can successfully perform this intricate concerto of timing and attack, what is there I cannot do? Our charming table leader walks about, leaning over our shoulders, coaching "Love it! Love it some more!" by which she means touch it, handle it, rub it, press into the corners, hold the glued paper down, square it up, massage the little cardboard chest into submission.

As my attention surfaces now and then, I look far and wide over the sea of faces in the ballroom - a hundred busy miniaturists, the great mass of us a little gray and a little plump. We are working with concentration and pleasure, some chatting, some quiet; laughter bubbles up naturally. We are at peace. Our minds, focused on our task, are freed to enjoy each other's presence without self-consciousness. There are a few men in this group; I wonder if they feel conspicuous. It takes only a moment of further scrutiny to

realise that these men are fully comfortable in a world of women.

And what a world we are! Young and old we are here, rich and poor. The woman to my right is wearing a fistful of diamonds on the fingers of her right hand. But this task of making something with our hands is a grand equalizer. Here we are satisfied and puzzled, struggling and questioning, discovering and triumphing, creating a lovely artifact out of will and glue and paper.

A happy child in an apron

Is this, then, what childhood was? This quiet play, this easy companionability, this slow and stately sail through the day - lunch! A sandwich and an apple. The slow sweet spiral of the afternoon begins. We grow sleepy. Make little mistakes. Stretch our backs, wander around looking at each other's work, each with secret satisfaction, confirming that our own is indeed the best, or we stare in dumb admiration when we see what is possible.

Is this, then, who I am at heart? A happy child in a big apron, content with an apple, a sandwich, and a glass of water? How lucky if it is so! For one thing is very clear to me: that this group of people who love miniatures is a benign and harmless lot. In this sea of faces I read the innocence of life, the peace of homes, the stability of nations. 🏠



Virginia with her finished chest



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MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Model railroad green scatter
- Green florist foam
- Lightweight wire
- Green & brown paper-covered florist wire
- Woodland-effect heavy wire
- 3mm and 6mm wide ribbons
- Pastel enamel dots, crystals and Easter egg stickers
- Fine hemp twine
- Lycopodium or tiny greenery
- Brown chenille stem
- Fiberfill batting
- Small pom-pom
- Wool felt
- Threads
- Leaf and flower coloured paper
- Needlepoint canvas (e.g. Penelope double mesh by Zweigart)
- Narrow millinery braided straw (43cm)
- Ultra fine marker pens
- Coloured pencils
- Satin varnish
- White glue & Super Glue

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Needle-nose pliers & wire-cutters
- Steel ruler & scissors
- 38mm - 44mm-diameter jar
- Sewing needle & needle tool
- Small leaf and flower paper punches
- Wooden cocktail stick
- Ball stylus
- Needle tool

Easter Wreaths

This is a really fun project, celebrating Easter and spring with endless possibilities using a multitude of everyday and readily available materials.



BASIC WIRE WREATH FORMS

1 Cut a 178mm length of heavy woodland-effect wire and fold it in half. Pinch the fold to a point with pliers, hold the point and open the wire ends back. Cross the free ends to form a heart. Bind the crossed wires with twine to hold them together, **1a**. Form a circle around a small jar, making five wraps of brown or green paper-covered florist wire. Bind the wire with another piece of wire at evenly spaced intervals, **1b**. Form an egg-shaped wreath in the same way, binding it instead with narrow ribbon, edges just touching. Super Glue the ribbon end and press the upper sides inward to make it more pointed at the top.

EASTER BONNET



2 Thread a needle with matching knotted thread. Make running stitches just inside one edge of the millinery straw and pull the thread to coil the straw. Begin at the centre and sew the coiled end tightly together, then sew each round to the previous one, until the circle is about 44mm. Tuck the end under the last round and sew it in place. Shape the centre of the millinery straw coil to raise the crown a bit. Sew gathered lace under the edge of the brim.

HALF BASKET



3 Cut the pattern pieces from needlepoint canvas. Run a bead of white glue along all the edges to prevent fraying. Let dry. Finger-press the folds where shown. Overlap and glue the centre back edges together. Glue the base inside the bottom edges, aligning the side folds with the points of the base, to form a half basket shape with a flat back. Glue a small piece of florist foam into the basket. Braid/plait three 76mm florist wire pieces together and glue the ends against the back, inside the basket at each side, as a handle. Make another braid and glue it around the top of the basket.

GREENERY



4 Smear the wire of some of the wreath forms with glue and press them into green scatter to look moss-covered. Insert several pieces of lycopodium into the basket's foam or glue them to other wreath forms as ferns. Short brown wire lengths resemble twigs and make

effective additions to a wreath. Tip some with pastel coloured paint, for an Easter feel, or dot them with white paint alternating down the twig as pussy willows. Glue overlapped leaves around part of one wreath as a base for more trims. Make ivy tendrils by gluing embossed tiny maple leaves alternating along a length of fine green florist wire. Varnish the leaves.

FLOWERS



5 Punch coloured paper flowers and shade the centres with ultra-fine markers or coloured pencils. Cup them with a ball stylus. A 16mm six-petal punch, with the petals curled to a centre point, makes quick tulips. Detail some petals with coloured pencil. Pierce through the centre and glue onto a wire stem. Tulips, daisies, open single roses, or other tiny flowers work well for these wreaths. Glue the flowers clustered abundantly along one side or at the bottom for a simple wreath, place them into the basket's foam, ring the crown of the hat, or cover an entire wreath for a really exuberant spring flourish!

NEST AND BIRD



6 Form a tiny wire nest on the tip of your finger and fill the nest with pastel dot sticker 'eggs'. Glue the nest to the inside bottom of the heart

wreath. Cut the bird's body and wing from paper. Add dark feathers (with a pen) to the tail and wing and tip the beak orange. Glue the pom-pom onto the body and the wing onto the pom-pom. Glue the bird to the wreath beside the nest.

LAMB AND BUNNY

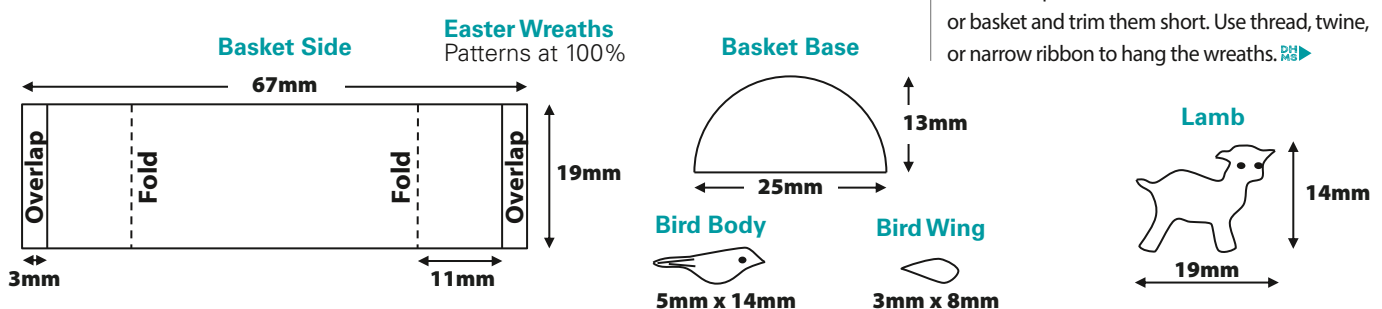


7 Cut the lamb silhouette from felt, dot the eyes with an ultra fine marker, and glue the lamb to the mossy wreath. Make a small figure-eight from the chenille stem for the bunny's head and body. Sew on thread whiskers and make a pink French knot nose. Make two French knot eyes and glue a tied string length around the neck. Roll a fiberfill tail and Super Glue it on. Super Glue the bunny to the egg-shaped wreath, place an Easter egg sticker at each side, and three tiny crystal stickers above each egg.

MULTI-LOOP BOWS AND HANGERS



8 Make a multi-loop bow by forming a 25mm-wide figure-eight with four/five loops on each side and 32mm or longer tails. Wind fine wire around the centre (or sew thread through it), twist the wire ends tightly together in the back, and fan out the loops. Secure the ends to the wreath, hat, or basket and trim them short. Use thread, twine, or narrow ribbon to hang the wreaths. ▶



DOUBLE-LOOP BOW



9 Cut a 127mm length of wider ribbon, fold it in a V and sew through the fold so that the satin side faces outward on both tails. Overlap and sew the ends of a 57mm length of ribbon to the centre, satin-side-out. Wind the thread around the middle to gather it, and sew it to the tails. Secure this bow by sewing thread through the bow and tying it to the wreath.

EASTER MORNING



10 When I visited a number of UK cathedrals just after Easter, I was pleasantly surprised to see so many lovely depictions of the open tomb in a garden setting. Bring this uplifting theme to your dolls house door by making a garden scene in a mossy wreath. Simply cut a rough circle from a small piece of beige felt. Back it with brown felt and glue the cut out circle to the side of the opening. Glue this at the inside bottom of the wreath, surrounded by the tiniest and brightest flowers. Top the wreath with a joyful satin bow with long tails. 🏠

Ruth's Top Tip!

"I used a 2mm hole punch for the tiny flowers. Apply a glue dot to the wreath with the cocktail stick, moisten the other end to pick up and place the flower."



INFORMATION

All photos by
Stephen Lesbirel

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for more
wreaths



A Towering Show

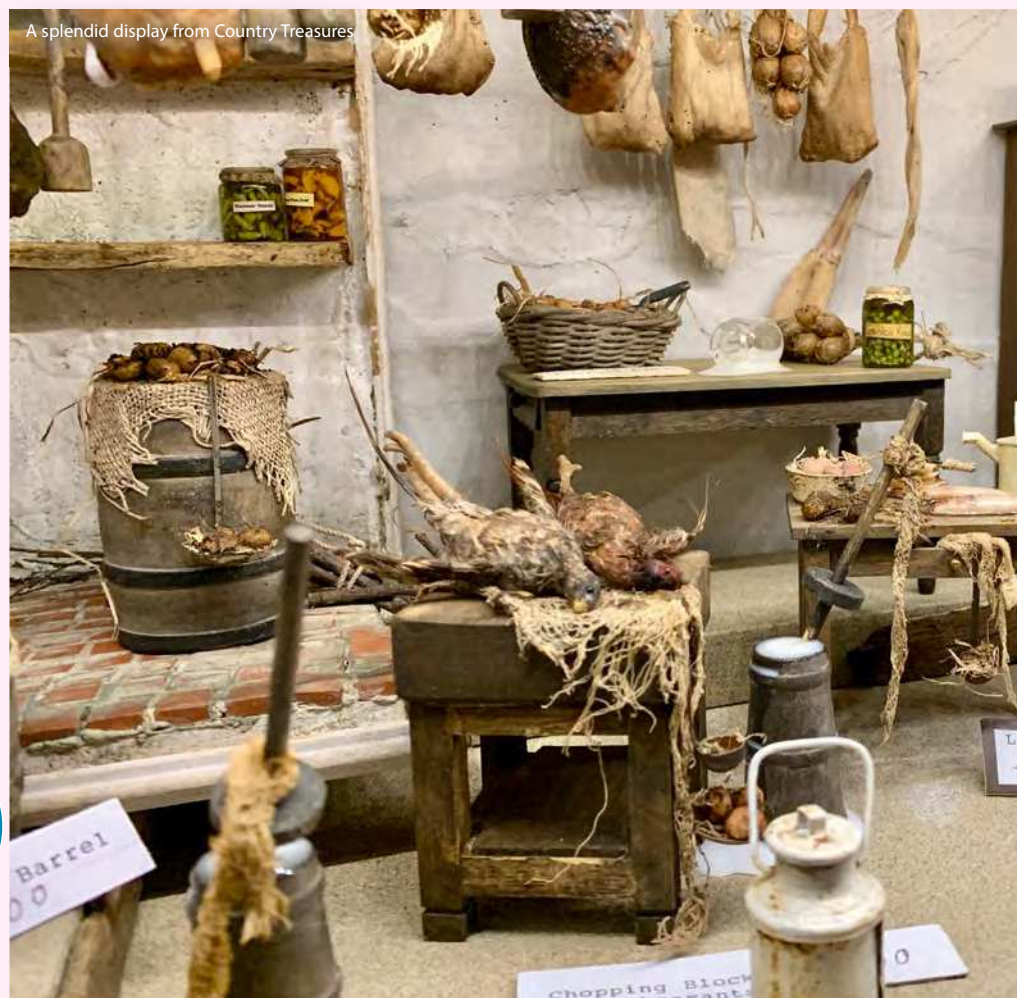
Moi Ali visits the City of London Fair for the first time.



▲ Pretty ceramics by Valerie Anne Casson

It's not just the spectacular view of London's huge Tower Bridge that drew me to the Tower Hotel on the banks of the river Thames in January 2020. The attractions that had me heading south from my home in Scotland were much smaller. Miniature, in fact! Yes, I was a newbie visitor to the seventh City of London Dollshouse Festival in the capital, and it was such a fun day out.

Although smaller than its sister show at Kensington, the atmosphere at the City of London is more laid back so it's a case of swings and roundabouts. Talking of which, a delightful miniature carousel was the first item to catch my eye. It was beyond my price point, but I found plenty that was both affordable and great quality. A hand-turned wooden bowl, exquisitely crafted, cost me just £3. Packages of champagne came in at only £1.50 each, and candles in wine bottles were also just £1.50.



A splendid display from Country Treasures

Turn to
PAGE 26
for details about
Kensington
Dollhouse
Festival

► Costumes all the way from France

Another stall with pocket money prices, Blue Ribband, had a vast range of scale fabric for just £1 a pack. I stocked up on some delightful designs for the 1930s house I'm currently working on. It was great being spoilt for choice, and at those prices I was able to splash out without breaking the bank!

Top end makers were also there, such as the talented Geoff Wonnacott and his exquisite furniture, and Stokesay Ware with their perfectly miniaturised china. There was a Continental feel thanks to Cinen, a quirky maker from Italy, and Ludmilla's, another Italian maker. A Swedish silversmith had some lovely pieces too. New exhibitors included Jayden Miniatures, A House of Wonders, and Art Deco Miniatures.

All scales could be found at the show, from 12th, 24th and the increasingly popular quarter scale, right down to minuscule 1/144th scale. This meant that everyone was happy, whatever scale was their preference.

Whereas the Kensington show could easily occupy you for a full day, the City of London show kept me entertained all morning - which left the afternoon free to visit the Tower and the many nearby attractions. All in all, a perfect Sunday. 🏠



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The Business End



Last month **Angie Scarr** made a welcome return to the magazine, sharing with us vital knowledge and experience about starting up in the miniatures business. This month... finding your customers.

My top piece of advice

If I can give one piece of advice to someone who is starting out in the miniatures business it's to not under price your miniatures, because if you do, you will stay there.

The reason for this is twofold; even as your work gets better, your customers won't understand a price hike and because you can never put the time in to making it that much better, once you've priced too low, you're too busy trying to make a living to take the important, "That won't do" decisions not to sell something you've put hours into making even if it is inferior. Your mistakes go on the stand next to your best work and they stink... and they infect all your work with their stinkiness.

This is all the more likely to happen if there is no back-up income in your home. This is what leads you to being a jobbing craftsman instead of one of those respected artists you may envy. (oh yes I'm envious of them too!). Of course this may be the place you want to be. It may suit you. But don't find yourself there by accident like I did. The accident being that you priced too low in order to get more sales, instead of aiming higher and getting less sales but ultimately earning just as much from the few sales you make and because of that being able to spend more time perfecting each piece.

Do not deny yourself

Since making that initial mistake myself I have advised two of my creative relatives (as well as my friends and Patreon patrons), about how to structure their prices, and then subsequently watch them reach the top of their respective trees within a couple of years. Not only because they had a talent to nurture but also because they priced at double or treble what they thought they could achieve. They then found that customers, though fewer, were happy to pay for work which they could now make with more love and attention to detail. If you're an artist, people don't need your work to live so don't give it away! Those who need it in their lives but can't afford to buy it will gaze longingly and then go home and make their own work and gain pleasure from those two acts. So you aren't denying anyone the beauty of your work and you aren't denying yourself a meal on the table or the rent paid.

Customers or collectors

One of the first questions to ask when assessing your business is "Who is my customer?" The answer to this will change throughout your working life. I was lucky to come into this world at a time that was ripe for an advance in the way my area of the hobby worked. I'd hit upon some ideas which

hadn't been fully explored by the miniatures world at the time. My first customers were collectors and quality miniatures shops. I went straight in at a level I never thought possible. Of course I was lucky. I'd hit the right ideas at the right time and I had a passion for passing them on. The collectors who passed by my stand at fairs or found my webpage see some of the best mid-price work available. BUT I got stuck with my pricing bracket. This could have been a big mistake. However, I quickly identified that my place in the miniatures world was as a sharer of ideas and not a guarder of secrets. I also found that sharing was, in my case, also selling. So my customers are pretty much everyone who is interested in miniatures whether they collect, or make or both.

Of course if I were to present my early work now it wouldn't look so special because the hobby has moved on. And in many ways (but not all) so have I. I still undercharge for my work and do too much of it in order to make a living. But I'm moving away from that and next month I will tell you where I am at the moment, which suits me... and it may suit you. There are other ways of improving the living you can make as a miniaturist and I'll be covering those ideas in future articles too. Meanwhile look hard at your hourly value and then double it for the hours when you are shopping for parts, travelling to and from fairs and working out solutions to problems. 🏠

NEXT MONTH...

...The important considerations



INFORMATION

For more information visit:

🔗 www.angiescarr.co.uk

🔗 www.patreon.com/angie_scarr



Made by You:

Bird Box Bashing

KAZ CALNAN

We know how much hard work and dedication goes into dressing a doll, creating a room box or constructing a house, whether it be producing it from scratch or following instructions in a kit form. We thought that it would be nice to give the readers the spotlight that they deserve and share with you their finished projects.

I love crafting of all types, but my heart has always truly belonged to mini things since I made my first house out of a cardboard box. It was the home of a very loved and very scruffy knitted rabbit and had home-made curtains and furniture. Due to health problems I no longer go to work and so luckily have much more time for crafting. If I could, I would craft all day, but the body is less willing than the mind and I have learnt my limitations!

The project with the bird boxes was prompted by the affordability and easy availability of the basic box from a high street craft store. I started by just painting the houses in a variety of colours, but this soon progressed to adding extras such as foliage. Then I felt that the roofs looked a bit bland and so tried a few paint effects, and then had the idea of covering them with different materials.

These bird boxes now started to look more like little houses, and being a lover of derelict buildings, where nature starts to reclaim them, I thought I would do a rather sad looking weathered bird house.

Coffee stirrers and cocktail sticks

The fact there wasn't a door bothered me, so I removed one of the windows and replaced it with a new (but very battered) one made from coffee stirrers and cocktail sticks. It was great fun creating the ageing by cutting at the crisp edges with a craft knife, and dry brushing several layers of paint to create a weathered look. While I had the door off I decided it would look more authentic to have wallpaper inside, so sheets of patterned paper were glued onto the walls with watered down PVA and again aged with paint, this time with a very thin wash. I then made window sills with more cut to size



stirrers, and a chimney, doorstep and door knob from air dry clay. It took ages deciding what would be a good roofing material and then I spotted a sushi rolling mat in my local discount store. This was duly trimmed



to fit and aged with paint along with the whole exterior of the house. The edges were covered with more stirrers to act as fascia boards and I added green scatter and some reindeer moss to create an aged roof.

This project was so much fun and I thought successful, that I wondered if I could do more to open up one of these bird houses. I decided to work on the smaller size as I had a fairy house in mind, and thought it would work better than the larger one for this project. I managed to break the house down to its parts without splitting the wood, but I have to admit to wondering if I had made a mistake when my lap was covered in splinters! Everything was sanded down while I decided what I was going to do now. The best thing about being in pieces was that it was very easy to paint! I decided to use a pale green for the inside and magnolia for the outside. I tend to use match pots of household paints as there is a huge range of colours available and the consistency is easy to use, or it waters down nicely if you need it to.

Finding a seat

To make the outside a bit more interesting I used stirrers trimmed down as half timbering, and they were also useful for covering the edges where I had left the back of the bird house off. I cut a length of cord that had leaves entwined in it and glued it around the heart shaped entrance to the bird house, then added a few pieces of dried purple flowers. The base was painted green and a mixture of coloured scatter was added to decorate. Before putting the roof back on I turned my attention to the inside and covered the base with 'grass' trimmed from some fake turf, and a few leaves cut from a silk 

flower bouquet. I then added a curtain pole made from a kebab stick, and glued two red petals from the bouquet as curtains. I painted a miniature landscape and made a frame from very small twigs and hung it on the wall. The occupants then needed something to sit on and so I made a little bench from slightly larger twigs. Although I nearly gave up with this, as it was so fiddly and I managed to Super Glue myself to it and the bench a few times! But I persisted and am pleased with the result.

Looking through my twig box I spotted an acorn cup and had the idea of using it as a light fitting, but it needed a bulb. Again raiding one of my many boxes of bits I came across a rhinestone that had fallen off of a piece of jewellery and I coloured it with an orange marker to give it a warm glow.

Next the roof. I glued the panels back on, and once they had dried I glued on a piece of fake turf cut to size. The edges were a bit scruffy and so more stirrers were added to cover the join. I felt the roof needed just a little something but didn't know quite what. I tried a little ladybird, and then I spotted some cute little flower buttons in my local shop. I cut the shank off of one and super glued it onto the grass where I feel it looked just right with an added bee! I then realised that the occupant of this house had no way of enjoying the roof garden. A kebab stick was too thick for this and so I trimmed cocktail sticks to size and made a ladder. After my sticky experience with the bench I have learnt when making something flat to glue it on a sheet of acetate, as the glue can stick to that and not to me! Also if the joint glued sticks to the acetate you can just peel it off.

The back of the bird house still seemed a bit bare and so I added a fine twig across the back and trimmed some leaves from a plastic flower branch to add onto it.

I am so pleased that I decided to de-construct a bird box as it gave me a lot more scope to personalise my design, and I will definitely be 'bashing' more of them! 🏠

Kaz Calnan, Rustington, West Sussex



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FAIRS DIARY



7 June

Location: York

Venue: York Racecourse, York YO23 1EX

Organiser: Wamers Dollhouse & Miniatures Fair

MARCH

21-22 March

Location: Birmingham

Venue: National Exhibition Centre, Perimeter Road, Birmingham, West Midlands, B40 1NT

Organiser: Miniatura Exhibitions

21 March

Location: Royal Wootton Bassett

Venue: The Memorial Hall, Station Road, Royal Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire, SN4 8EN

Organiser: MGM Fairs.

29 March

Location: Lyndhurst - **NEW FAIR**

Venue: Lyndhurst Community Centre, Main car park, Lyndhurst, Hants, SO43 7NY

Organiser: MGM Fairs.

APRIL

4 April

Location: Market Harborough

Venue: The Jubilee Hall, Congregational Hall, Bowden Lane, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7JD

Organiser: MGM Fairs.

18 April

Location: Leeds

Venue: Pudsey Civic Hall, Dawsons Corner, Pudsey, Leeds, LS28 5TA

Organiser: MGM Fairs.

24-25 April

Location: London

Venue: ExCel, **Organiser:** The Creative Craft Show

26 April

Location: North East - Craft Show

Venue: Gateshead International Stadium

Organiser: Create It Events

MAY

15-16 May

Location: London

Venue: Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London, W8 7NX

Organiser: Kensington Dollhouse Festival

15-16 May

Location: Kent - Craft Show

Venue: Kent Event Centre, **Organiser:** Create It Events

16 May

Location: Gloucester

Venue: Churchdown Community Association Centre, Parton Road, Churchdown, Gloucester, Glos., GL3 2JH

Organiser: MGM Fairs.

31 May

Location: Alderley Edge

Venue: Festival Hall, Talbot Road, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, SK9 7HR

Organiser: MGM Fairs.

JUNE

6-7 June

Location: Rheda-Wiedenbruck, Germany

Venue: A2 Forum, D-33378 Rheda-Wiedenbruck, Gutersloher Strasse 100,

Organiser: 1zu12

7 June

Location: York

Venue: York Racecourse, Knavesmire Road, York, Yorkshire, YO23 1EX

Organiser: York Dolls House & Miniatures Fair

7 June

Location: London - Antique dolls, dollhouse & toys

Venue: Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London, W8 7NX

Organiser: Wendy's World.

14 June

Location: Weston Super Mare - **NEW FAIR**

Venue: The Royal Hotel, 1 South Parade, Weston Super Mare, Somerset, BS23 1JP

Organiser: MGM Fairs

26-28 June

Location: Birmingham

Venue: National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham

Organiser: The Creative Craft Show

28 June

Location: Tattershall

Venue: Tattershall Village Hall, 16 Lodge Road, Tattershall, Lincs., LN4 4LL

Organiser: MGM Fairs

28 June

Location: Cobham - Antique dolls, dollhouse & toys

Venue: Cobham Village Hall, Lushington Drive, Cobham, Surrey, KT11 2LU

Organiser: Wendy's World.

AUGUST

30 August

Location: Exeter - **NEW FAIR**

Venue: Westpoint Conference Centre, Westpoint, Clyst St Mary, Exeter, EX5 1DJ

Organiser: MGM Fairs

SEPTEMBER

3 September

Location: Manchester

Venue: EventCity, Manchester

Organiser: The Creative Craft Show

6 September

Location: London - Antique dolls, dollhouse & toys

Venue: Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London, W8 7NX

Organiser: Wendy's World.

ORGANISERS DETAILS

1zu12

T: 0049 2941 810980

E: info@1zu12.com

W: www.1zu12.com

Create It Events

T: 07494096088

W: www.createitevents.com

See our advert on page 19

Kensington

Dollhouse Festival

T: 0044 (0)20 7812 9892

E: kdf@dollhousefestival.com

W: www.dollhousefestival.com

See our advert on page 26 & 27

MGM Fairs

E: enquiries@mgmfairs.co.uk

W: www.mgmfairs.co.uk

MM Fairs

T: 01332 660428

W: www.dollhouse-fairs.co.uk

Miniatura

T: 0121 783 9922

Ticket Hotline: 0844 581 1291

W: www.miniatura.co.uk

See our advert on page 13

Wamers Dolls House &

Miniatures Fair

T: 0844 581 4946

W: www.yorkdollhousefair.co.uk

See our advert on page 17

Wendy's World Fairs

T: 01895 834348

M: 07831 820760

E: wendyhobday@wendysworld.co.uk

W: www.wendysworldfairs.co.uk

6 September

Location: Stafford

Venue: Members Pavilion, County Showground, Weston Road, Stafford, ST18 0BD

Organiser: MGM Fairs

MINI MEETINGS

Sandra Vickery from the Small Scale Fiddlers Club writes about homegrown vegetables, miniature style



Carrots and cabbages

Always a dilemma

The Small Scale Fiddlers Allotment Association is a work in progress. You know how us miniaturists have a detailed vision on how our latest project is going to look when it's finished? Every detail is clear in your mind, the effect you want to achieve has been set and you've taken inspiration from a the real-life scene you've either visited in person or explored in depth on the internet. The only hurdle you need to overcome now is how to bring each element to life.

This is the dilemma the Fiddlers are tackling now. We each had a 30" x 15" allotment plot to fill. And that means filling it twice, once with raised beds, pots and containers and then planting these up with lots of lovely fruit and vegetables. Tsk, can't be that hard can it?

The Fiddlers have a vision of a healthy productive allotment not a neglected one. In our imagination we've already skipped the laborious stage of removing bind weed, couch grass and nettles from our plots. We have rotovated the soil, added our organic matter and have a crop rotation plan in place. We're ready for planting.

How does your garden grow?

The range of vegetables and fruit grown on an allotment is vast and some members of the group had ambitious ideas of what to include. But instead of jumping straight to mange tout or chicory we started with the humble carrot from polymer clay and the carrot tops from small clippings of reindeer moss. Getting a carrot shape is not so hard but getting a true carrot colour from the clay is trickier - surprisingly carrots aren't just orange when you study them in detail.

Feeling energised by the carrot success, we upped the ante with cabbages. To get an effective cabbage leaf we each made a leaf mould out of a spare bit of clay, making the outer leaf mould from an imprint of the inner leaf. After making a green cane from various deepening shades of green clay, we cut thin slices to press between the two moulds. Before baking you simply build up your cabbage leaves around a small scrap of green clay, like making a rose although not so precise. Aim for a scruffy cabbage for realism.

On the vine

Now the Fiddlers are feeling confident, it's time to attempt something more complex - the tomato on the vine. This needed a workshop and our wonderful Jean stepped up to run the class. Armed with red clay, tiny paper leaves and flowers, wires and even a grow-bag template, we all gave it a go. I must admit that my tomato plant is still in various stages of unfinished but I do have a good crop of tiny tomatoes ranging from green to really ripe red ready to be attached to the vine.

No need to cry

And then biggest vegetable challenge yet - the onion. No allotment is complete without a crop of white onions, the stock ingredient of many homemade dishes. Now we could have gone simple, it's not too difficult to make onion shaped bulbs from a soft brown clay is it? Even adding a few sprouting tops wasn't beyond us. But no, that was too easy - we wanted to master the 'onion skin'. Recreating those delicate pale green and dark brown vertical stripes in a tiny bulb no bigger than your little fingernail was probably one of the most difficult techniques we've attempted at SSF. We were inspired by the wonderful miniaturist Angie Scarr and followed her instructions for making an onion cane, complete with stripes and a translucent inner. I made sure there was plenty of clay in all colours as I knew how easy it was to get to the very last stages only to ruin your hard work by feeding your skin into the pasta machine the wrong way round! We might not have produced award-winning onions that evening but we gave it a blooming good go. There were tears and laughter and a few more tears as we battled to make a workable cane. I'm sure that growing a decent crop in a real allotment would require less skill and attention than making a miniature onion - but I expect many allotment owners to challenge me on that. 🏠



INFORMATION

| www.facebook.com/SmallScaleFiddlers



A trough of onions

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Editor: Carl Golder

Tel: 01778 391146

carl.golder@warnersgroup.co.uk

Managing Editor: Sally Stirling

Tel: 01778 392433

sally.stirling@warnersgroup.co.uk

Advertising Sales: Hayley Comey

Tel: 01778 392445

hayleyc@warnersgroup.co.uk

Production Secretary: Sue Woodgates

Tel: 01778 392062

production@warnersgroup.co.uk

Design: Ady Braddock

Publisher: Lucie Dawson

lucie.dawson@warnersgroup.co.uk

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The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire, PE10 9PH.

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Martin Harris

Tel: 01778 391000

Newstrade Distribution

Warners Group Publications Plc,

Nikki Munton

Tel: 01778 391171

Nikkim@warnersgroup.co.uk

Subscriptions, reader offers and back issues

Tel: 01778 392007

dhms-subs@warnersgroup.co.uk

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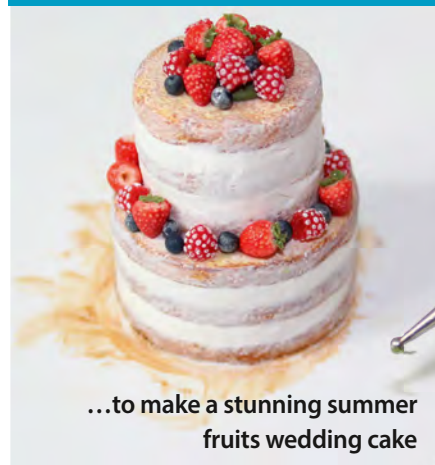
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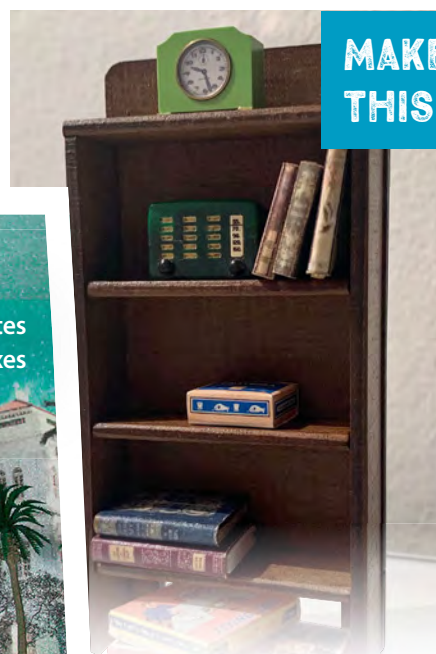
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BONUS PROJECTS



Hot Cross Buns

Celebrate Easter in 1/12th scale with a platter of hot cross buns.

By **Kelly Murdie of Dinky Diner Miniatures.**



You will need:

Materials required

- ☐ Polymer clay – white, translucent white, chocolate, Windsor blue, tropical green, tangerine, black, champagne, ochre, magenta and lemon yellow
- ☐ Soft pastels – ochre, pale terracotta, terracotta and burnt Sienna
- ☐ Acrylic paint – green and yellow
- ☐ Fimo Liquid gel
- ☐ Fimo Clear Gloss varnish
- ☐ Dried semolina
- ☐ Poppy seeds
- ☐ Ball of tin foil
- ☐ PVA glue
- ☐ Wooden circular boards/discs (40mm in diameter)
- ☐ Small piece of 1/12th scale printed fabric
- ☐ 1/12th scale glass butter dish
- ☐ 1/12th scale dinner knife (part of a cutlery set)

Tools required

- ☐ Cutting pliers
- ☐ Long thin needle tool (or pin)
- ☐ Craft knife/ razor blade
- ☐ Glass/ tile work surface
- ☐ Roller
- ☐ Nail art dotting tools
- ☐ Fine artist's paintbrushes

Fimo mixing guide (ratio)

Ochre Mix: Ochre (1) Champagne

Hot Cross Bun Mix: Translucent white (10) white (1) ochre mix (1)

Butter Mix: Translucent white (1) + equal, but tiny amounts of white and lemon yellow clay

1 Begin by mixing the Hot Cross Bun Mix clay and add some dried semolina and poppy seeds (not too much though). The clay still needs to be pliable and be mindful that there are only a few raisins inside each hot cross bun.

2 Divide the mixture into four even sized balls and position together, as pictured, making sure that they are touching.

3 To add a bit of texture to each bun, press each ball lightly with a piece of scrunched up tin foil. Next, using a thin needle tool gently trace along where each of the clay balls touch to create a smooth join.

4 In each of the hot cross buns, trace a plus sign (north, south, east and west) using a thin needle tool. Using a small amount of each of the pastel colours,

dust the top of the buns with a soft paintbrush. Next, cut the outer outside edges of the hot cross bun square (see picture for guidance) then separate each of the buns along the joins you made in step 3. Score into the buns where you made the slices to create a crumbed effect. Bake for ten minutes.

5 Mix together some translucent white clay with a small amount of the ochre mix. Smear the tops of the hot cross buns with a thin layer of liquid Fimo. Next, roll out a thin cable of the clay and cut eight small pieces, thin enough to make cross shapes in the hot cross buns. Using the fine end of the dotting tool, make dotting patterns over the cross lines, smoothing as you go to attach them seamlessly in the cross shaped grooves you made in step 4.

6 Condition the butter mix clay and attach a small piece inside the glass butter dish using a thin smear of Liquid Fimo. For added realism, add texture to the butter by creating spreading patterns with your knife. Bake in the oven for five minutes and set aside to cool. Next, paint the remaining wooden board with approximately three layers of yellow acrylic paint (allowing time to dry between each coat). Once dry, put a dab of PVA glue on one half of the board and lay the piece of fabric on top, crumpling it up slightly, then 'painting' it in place with a thin layer of PVA glue. Attach each of the hot cross buns with a small dab of PVA glue underneath and position in place. Glue the butter dish and the knife into place. Once everything is set in place, 'paint' the surface of the hot cross buns with clear gloss varnish and leave to dry. 



Information

To see more of Kelly's work visit:

 www.dinkydinerminis.etsy.com

 www.facebook.com/dinkydinerminis

 www.instagram.com/dinkydinerminis

 dinkydinerminis@yahoo.co.uk