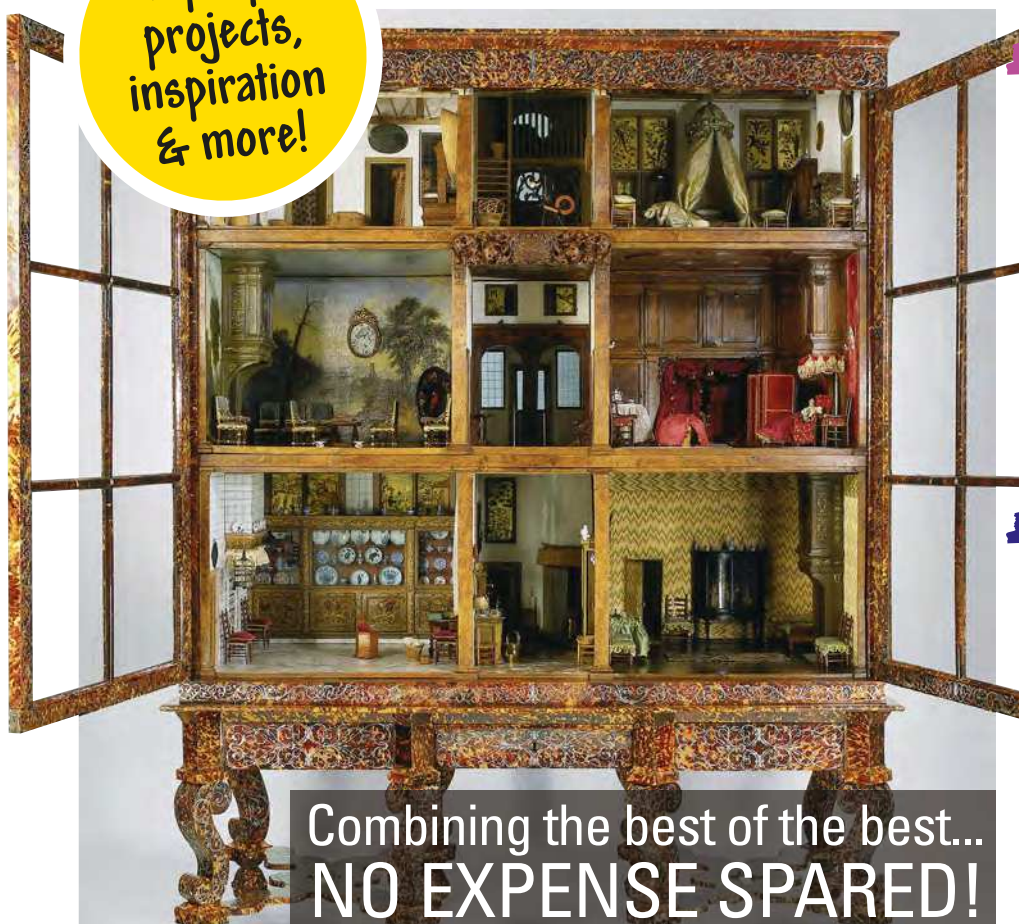


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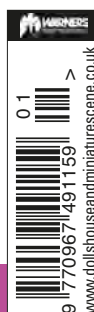
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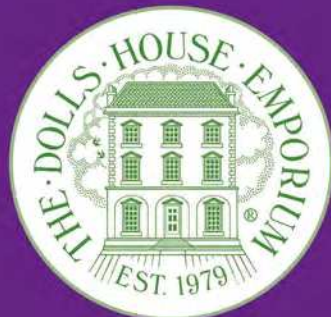
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# WELCOME

## to the January edition!

We kick off the new year with a look at the exceptional talent of Susan Parris who creates historically accurate costumes in 1/12th scale, a skill which has led to her association with high profile miniature projects on both sides of the Atlantic. Turn to page 6 to find out how Susan's work is helping historians.

Sticking with historic builds, if you've read international bestseller *The Miniaturist*, or watched the BBC's television adaptation, you'll know that it's set in Amsterdam in 1686–87. You may not, however, know that the fictional work was inspired by a real dolls house, owned by Petronella Oortman. Oortman spared no expense on her lavish miniature home, commissioning cabinetmakers, glassblowers, silversmiths and basket-weavers to furnish it with bespoke items – it truly is a work of art. Take a tour of this incredible project starting on page 13.

In contrast to the grandeur of time gone by, we also explore the work of Joshua Smith, one of a new generation of miniaturists who have sidelined the idea of perfection, favoured in the early days of minatures, and shaken up the hobby with his incredibly realistic but grungy dioramas. Check out Joshua's realistic projects on page 22.

If modern miniatures are your thing we look at Amanda Smith's thoroughly modern loft apartment on page 29 and the Scandi style work of Marloes Olieadam on page 57, both whose senses of style are straight out of the most trendy interiors magazine.

This edition also sees the start of two new projects series'. In a three-part project Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel shares how to create a classic pub bar including drinks and working lights, a build that would make a great diorama – what will you name your place? And in eight parts, Candy Chappill demonstrates individual pieces that together can be used to build the scene of a garden greenhouse. Starting with the greenhouse itself in this edition, future issues will see the addition of paving slabs, plants and accessories like garden tools and wellies! I'll leave you to discover the rest of the great content in this issue!

All that's left to say is here's to a new year, hopefully a much better one for many of us and a year of regaining some sense of normality. We know it's been hard for many of you and appreciate the comments we've received letting us know how continuing with the hobby of miniatures has helped you through the tough times. We wish you all the best for 2021!

*The DHMS team*

### BUILD YOUR OWN PUB



P48

Bring the fun home!

### MAKE IT MODERN



P57

On-trend Scandi style!

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

Sadie Brown, Moi Ali, Candy Chappill, Bea Broadwood, Ann Evans, Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel.

**FANTASTIC GIVEAWAY!**  
ON PAGE 62



If you're reading the online version of this magazine.. Keep an eye out for these symbols, they will show you that there this bonus extra content you can view, watch or listen too!



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## Collections and Features...

**06** **Threads of history** ▶  
Delve into the pockets of historian Susan Parris and her incredible and historically accurate miniature costumes, admired around the world!



**13** **Double Dutch** ▶  
Moi Ali looks at Petronella Oortman's lavish cabinet house, a project constructed with no expense spared and on display at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam after inspiring the popular book and television series The Minaturist.



**22** **Insta Identities: Joshua Smith** ▶  
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**29** **Lofty ambitions** ▶  
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**57** **We Discover: Marloes Oliedam**  
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**60** **Recreating history** ▶  
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**12** **Free blog content**  
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## THE SUBS ZONE

**LOVE MAKING  
MINIATURES?**

**TURN TO PAGE 27  
TO FIND OUT MORE!**

**5 reasons  
to never miss  
an issue!**

**REMIND YOURSELF WHY  
WE'RE THE BEST ON PAGE 18**







# Threads of History

Delve into the pockets of history with miniaturist and living historian, Susan Parris.

## Susan says...

*"Titled 'An Educated Man,' this piece represents the mid-18th century with a waistcoat made of an original Spitalfields silk from the period that is approximately 270 years old. As well as a lined wool felt tricorne, leather document satchel, authentic ephemera reproductions and a man's greatcoat."*



A mid-18th century waistcoat made using Spitalfields silk

## Chronicling the past

When the story of miniatures is written, the exceptional talent of Susan Parris will provide some of the most fascinating material. Susan's historically accurate costumes and accessories present a tangible documentation of past methods in 1/12th scale. In turn, this makes the skills and techniques she shares highly sought after by those working in the fields of historical research and costume design. Many readers will be familiar with Susan's name for her association with high profile miniature projects on both sides of the Atlantic. This includes pieces created for Mulvany and Rogers' 1/12th scale replica of National Trust



property, Ham House and the acclaimed KSB Miniatures Collection.

Susan's love of history has afforded her an enviable career which has seen her work on projects as varied as they are fascinating, but the passion for immersing herself in the stories of the past initially came to the fore whilst working in a place which has, appropriately, huge historical significance. "I discovered a passion for historical research when I worked as a writer on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, in the 1980s and early 90s," she explains. "At that time, I had unlimited access to all the resources in the Library of

◀ Mid-18th century tavern coat rack featuring greatcoat with silver buttons





In the footsteps of history. Mid-17th century slippers created for the Ham House project.

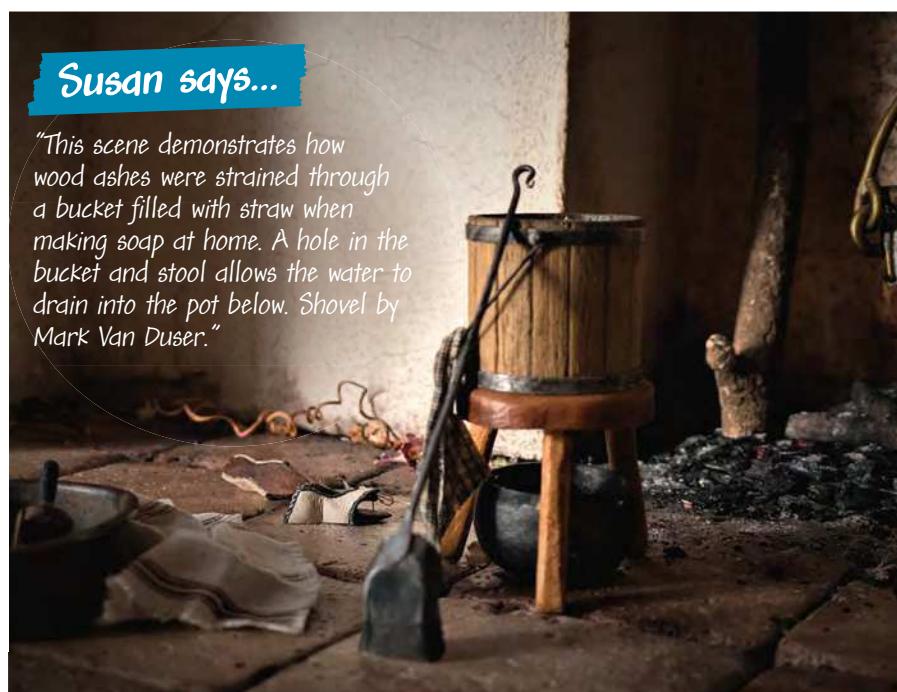


▲ Made for a Duke! Justacorps (coat) made for the Ham House project.

Congress and the unique privilege of being able to check books out of the building. As a living historian, I've been researching and recreating authentic, full size history for over 30 years."

### Designs on detail

From clothes to ephemera and an 18th century wing back chair living a double life as a commode, Susan's authentic designs are meticulously researched and are created with painstaking attention to detail. The level of that research can span anything from a matter of days to months for an individual project and this will often see Susan consult a range of historical materials. These include diaries, letters, paintings and even garments which have



▲ Homemade soap the old-fashioned way!

succeeded generation after generation to survive through to the present day. "My living history experience offers me a unique perspective and advantage as a miniature artist. Over the years, I've studied extant full-size and original 18th century Queen Anne style doll's garments in museums and private collections. I've also researched, draped, patterned, handsewn and worn historically accurate reproductions from the 15th to 20th centuries so I'm very familiar with the correct silhouettes which is very important in historical garments." The intricacies of

many historical garments may have become as familiar to Susan as the ubiquitous pair of jeans is to modern society, but such is her dedication to the craft that she is always certain to pour over the details afresh before starting work on a new piece.

Discovering the stories of those who wore the garments or used the items depicted in a scene is an equally important part of the process for Susan. It is this ability to connect with the story behind any given item that lends her work an edge which stretches beyond the technicalities of the centuries 





▲ Get shirty! 17th century small linens created for the drying attic in Kaye Browning's Savage Manor



▲ Mid-18th century bathing gowns drying near the hearth

old skills involved. "From the beginning, I've only created one-of-a-kind pieces that tell an authentic historical story about how everyday life was lived and the status of who lived the life portrayed."

Susan's work becomes even more exceptional when you factor in that these faithful reproductions are created in such small scale. The exclusive use of antique fabrics, the majority stemming from the Victorian era, also lends every garment an extra blend of authenticity which takes every piece to the very highest standard. "For me the hardest part in recreating realism and believability in 1/12 scale is locating the necessary textiles and materials," says Susan, who admits that there are some clothes she has been unable to recreate thus far, as finding authentic materials has proved impossible. "Although they can be hard to find, antique textiles are easier to work with because of their superior quality over modern fabrics. The natural worn patina and texture that comes from their previous life is impossible to duplicate and the colours are rich without being garish or flat."

### The winds of change

Susan speaks with great fondness about how an item as ordinary as soap can show just how everyday items have evolved down the line of history. "Today, we just buy a bar of soap or a bottle of laundry detergent," she points out. "But for generations, soap for any purpose was made at home with lard and strained wood ash."

Her miniature scene depicting this process also demonstrates just how a simple scene can prove as equally captivating as 'Selecting Music for Tonight's Entertainment',

her tableau of upper class life in the mid-17th century. The latter features Susan's embossed and gilded leather wall panels alongside an upper-class gentleman's waistcoat and silk day cap made for the Ham House project.

However, it isn't just the seamless transition through the ages which creates change, often it's the curveballs thrown to us in our own lives which prove to be the catalyst for something new. "I had received an unexpected cancer diagnosis about three weeks before my last show, Tom Bishop's Chicago International in April 2019, and planned to just play in the studio while recovering, something I don't get to do very often. However, soon after the surgery, I decided what I really wanted to do was teach again."

A workshop was scheduled for October last year and would have seen lucky participants recreating the blue and white check bathing gown worn by Martha Washington, the very first First Lady of the United States and dating from the late 1760s. Also including a day visit to the Mount Vernon estate of Martha's husband, George Washington, students would have spent time immersed in the heart of American history. This would have afforded them the opportunity to view the bathing gown itself, one of the few surviving garments which belonged to Martha.

Sadly, no one could have anticipated what 2020 would write in the next chapter of the history books, and due to the ongoing Pandemic, an exciting event which would have seen historians, professional costume designers and miniaturists converge from across the globe had to be cast aside to the

winds of the future. Despite severe life-long health issues and her bout with cancer, Susan has accomplished more than many of us do in a lifetime and she certainly wasn't going to be beaten by the cancellation of her workshop. Taking inspiration from fans of her work who were interested in distance learning, Susan, like many of us during an unusual year, turned to technology. Bringing forward her future plans, a series of 1/12th scale online tutorials began to take shape. "I've been working non-stop for months creating my first multimedia online tutorial. However, it's important to me for the online experience to have the same depth and level of support that I'd carefully planned for the in-person workshop."





## All sewn up

To the delight of those who have been eagerly awaiting its release, the first of these extensive tutorials went live before Christmas, focusing on the recreation of that famous Martha Washington bathing gown and shift. "It includes two patterns, written step-by-step instructions, detailed photos, demonstration videos and all the secret techniques that I've developed over the years," reveals Susan. "It's very comprehensive, from tips on purchasing materials to the final step of literally sculpting textiles for display and will support any level of experience. The techniques and tips I share can be used for any textile related miniature project, from curtains to modern clothing and isn't limited to just the historical patterns I provide."

Susan describes these tutorials as the culmination of her life's work and passions. She has already referenced the importance of ensuring the tutorials see her students receive exactly the same support as with a conventional workshop, and Susan will this month commence individual Zoom and Facetime tuition to support her students as they advance their skills. "A private Facebook group, also limited to tutorial students, will be available to ask questions, share images and be part of a unique community of miniature costumers who all speak the same language. Future tutorials and patterns will continue in the 18th century with stays, petticoats, pocket, hoops and false rumps before moving on to various gowns, outerwear and men's garments, too. Then on to the 17th century."

## A surprise offer

History went viral for Susan in late 2018, when an image of a tiny 1/12th scale 17th century bodice gained a reach in excess of 100,000 people on social media. Amongst them was the costume designer for Laika, the stop motion animation studio behind the films *Coraline* and *ParaNorman*. Susan was subsequently approached regarding a position, proving that, in the age of technology, small scale can take us to big places.

Accepting the job would have meant Susan uprooting her life, a fundamental change she ultimately decided against. "I considered doing it for a year just for the incredible experience, but I would have had to move to the west coast 3,000 miles away from my husband and family," she reflects. "What I didn't know then is that if I had taken the job, I would have had to come right back home only a few months later because of the cancer diagnosis, or worse not have gone to the doctor to find it early enough. However, it was a great compliment to the quality of my work and has been an inspiration to me ever since. So, everything really does happen for a reason, doesn't it? The good and the bad."

As Susan's new tutorials ramp up to take the miniature scene by storm this new year, Laika's loss is very much our gain, her place in the history of miniatures and historical costume guaranteed. 

▼ This 18th century wing back chair enjoys a double life as a commode



▲ Founding fashion. Martha Washington's bathing gown

## CREATE MARTHA WASHINGTON'S BATHING GOWN & SHIFT WITH SUSAN PARRIS

With easy to follow written instructions, companion videos, one-of-a-kind patterns and historical context, master artist and award-winning living historian, Susan Parris, guides you step-by-step through her unique process to create a historically accurate miniature reproduction of Mrs. Washington's bathing gown and shift (c. 1767-9) in her first online tutorial available now.

A very limited number of companion Kits are also available by post that include all the recommended products and a piece of antique (c. 1900) blue or brown cotton check to create one miniature bathing gown.

The techniques Susan developed and demonstrates in the tutorial's lesson videos can be used for any textile related miniature project. Even if you don't sew, are unfamiliar with the unique construction methods of historical garments or have never worked in 1/12 scale, these multimedia tutorials will clearly demonstrate how Susan designs, constructs and displays historically accurate miniature garments down to the tiniest detail so you can, too.

For more information, please visit - [SusanParrisOriginals.Thinkific.com](http://SusanParrisOriginals.Thinkific.com)





Beautiful mid-18th century sack-back gown created using antique cotton



#### INFORMATION

To see more of Susan's work please visit:

[www.susanparrisoriginals.com](http://www.susanparrisoriginals.com)

Facebook: Susan Parris Originals

Instagram: @susan\_parris\_originals

Designed for Savage Manor.  
17th century silk gown with  
boned bodice and hand  
carved wood busk.





# DollHouse & MINIATURE SCENE

## THREADS OF HISTORY

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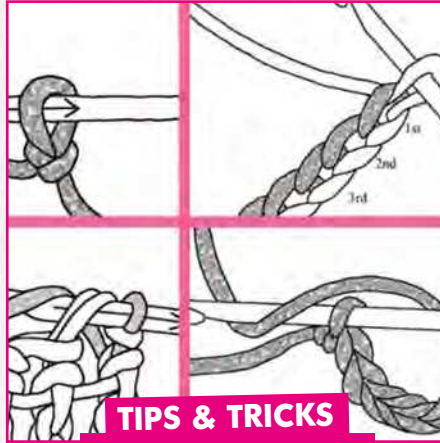
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# Double Dutch

Moi Ali discovered two magnificent Dutch dolls houses, including the one that inspired bestselling novel, *The Miniaturist*.

If you've read Jessie Burton's international bestseller *The Miniaturist*, or watched the BBC's adaptation, you'll know that it's set in Amsterdam in 1686–87. You may not, however, know that the fictional work was inspired by a real dolls' house, owned by Petronella Oortman. The exquisite miniature home, complete with contents, has survived over three centuries and is on display at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam for all to enjoy. ▶



▲ Oortman 1 © Rijksmuseum



▲ Oortman being admired

▼ Leiden







Oortman birdcage



▲ Oortman china

On a recent trip to that city I visited the dolls house and was blown away by its scale (it's huge), its quality (it is housed in a stunning inlaid cabinet), and its condition (it looks as good as new).

The original dolls house in Amsterdam is about three times the size of the one made for the BBC film by acclaimed miniaturists Mulvaney and Rogers. I was fortunate enough to see the film replica at the Kensington Dollhouse Festival a couple of years ago.

It's incredible that the dolls house has survived in such original condition. Oortman spared no expense on her lavish miniature home, commissioning cabinetmakers, glassblowers, silversmiths and basket-weavers to furnish it with bespoke items. She commissioned leading Dutch artists to paint miniature murals in the games room and tapestry room, in the fashionable styles of the time. This was an expensive hobby and she lavished as much money on it as a full-size house might cost! Everything inside was of the finest quality: exquisite silverware, real marble flooring, silk and embroidered furnishings, expensive imported China... originally there was even a working water fountain and a fully-operational water pump in the garden.

So proud of her house was she that she had it immortalised in a painting.



▲ Oortman painting



▲ Oortman being admired

That oil painting now hangs alongside the dolls' house in the Rijksmuseum. The contemporary work by the Dutch artist Jacob Appel was painted in 1710, six years before Oortman's death. It's fun comparing the Oortman house with the Appel painting, seeing which rooms still have their original wallpaper, furniture and accessories more than three centuries on. The answer is... almost all of them! The painting shows that originally the house was protected by yellow curtains, giving the impression when drawn of a four-poster bed with plumes at the corners. The curtains no longer exist. The furnishings and other contents, however, are remarkably intact. Aside from a baby in the cradle, all of the original dolls unfortunately are lost.

The dolls house is, strictly speaking, a 'cabinet' house. Architectural house-like dolls' house structures had not yet been invented. The oak cabinet is covered in Boulle-work, a French technique that inlays tortoiseshell with brass, silver or, in this case, pewter.

For the film, Mulvaney and Rogers made some of the contents themselves, but they commissioned others to help too. Leading artisans from the miniature world created wonderful works for the replica house.



## Dunois House

Excited as I was to find this amazing dolls house, imagine my joy at discovering that the gallery in which it is housed has another cabinet house belonging to another Petronella! The Petronella Dunois miniature house dates to 1676 and is housed in an oak cabinet inlaid with walnut, cedar and ebony. It comprises a reception room, dining room, peat loft, nursery, lying-in room (where convalescing mothers and their babies 'lie in' after a birth), linen room and cellar.

Dunois lived with her sister in Amsterdam after their parents died. The wealthy sisters each created a dolls house, as was the fashion at that time for affluent women – although unlike Petronella Oortman's bespoke furnishings, theirs contained ready-made miniatures. Of the two sisters, only Petronella's dolls house survived the centuries. It is mentioned first in her dowry list in 1677, the year she married. As is often the tradition with heirloom quality dolls' houses, this one was passed down the female line of the family until in 1934 it was donated to the Rijksmuseum.



### INFORMATION

For more details visit:

[www.rijksmuseum.nl](http://www.rijksmuseum.nl) Rijksmuseum,  
Museumstraat 1, 1071 XX Amsterdam



▲ Dunois whole house © Rijksmuseum



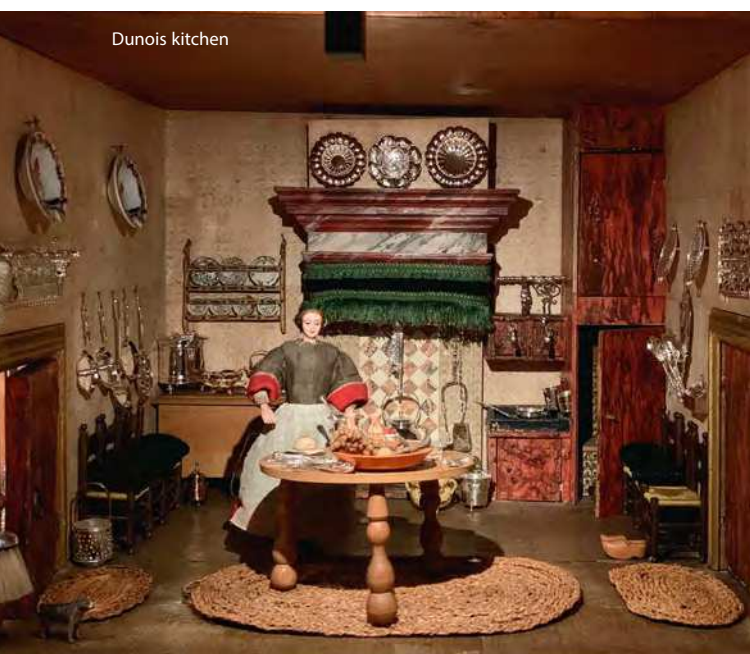
Close up of Dunois dining room



Dunois dining room



Dunois nursery



Dunois kitchen

The Miniaturist tells the story of Petronella (Nella) Oortman, a humble 18-year-old girl from the countryside, who moves to a splendid Amsterdam home when she marries prosperous merchant Johannes Brandt. Brandt gives Nella a dolls house as a wedding present, a copy of their nine-room home in miniature. She commissions a local miniaturist to create realistic furnishings. It all sounds idyllic but the story is dark. Jessie Burton's novel was set in Amsterdam but the TV adaptation was unable to film in that city as it was simply too busy, there were too many tourists, cars and neon signs to achieve an authentic look. The canal scenes were shot in the ancient university city of Leiden. Instead of filming at Amsterdam's Oude Kerk in the city's red light District, the BBC shot the church scenes in the Leiden's late gothic Pieterskerk (which has interesting links to the Pilgrim Fathers).



▲ Miniaturist book





# DollHouse

## & MINIATURE SCENE

### DOUBLE DUTCH

**CLICK & SWIPE TO VIEW IMAGES**





# Gardener's delight...

## PART 1

Over the next few issues Candy Chappill will build up a delightful greenhouse until it is full, in time for summer! This issue, she starts by constructing the actual greenhouse itself.

### YOU WILL NEED

#### MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 10x10mm and 6x6mm square wooden trim
- PVA glue
- Sand paper
- Decorators' filler
- Polymer clay
- Ceramic tile
- Acrylic paint
- Thin perspex
- Paper (optional)
- Clear double-sided tape

#### TOOLS REQUIRED

- Saw
- Ruler
- Pen
- Roller
- 3mm spacers
- Paintbrush
- Scalpel
- Cutting mat
- Scissors
- Swivel pin vice and drill bit
- Screw driver
- Mini brass hinges



**1** Start by making the two end pieces of your greenhouse. Cut your wooden trim into two 140mm lengths, one 150mm length, and two angled pieces. I found it easier to draw the finished shape on some paper and then lay the wood on top. This gave me the correct angles for the last two pieces.



**2** Glue your pieces of cut wood into the correct shape; this can be a little fiddly. To help strengthen, once dried, I filled all the joins with some decorators' filler, and then sanded back to a fine finish.



**3** To make the lengths of your greenhouse, cut five 250mm pieces of wood.

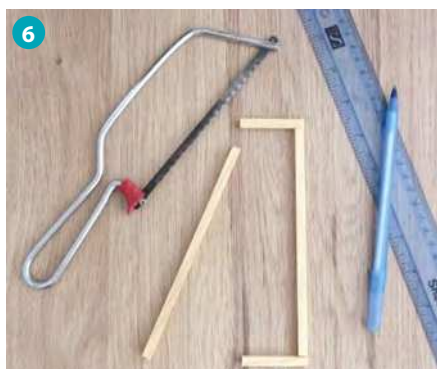




**4** Glue your two assembled end pieces to your 250mm lengths. Again, this can be tricky. I used some books to help keep the structure stable whilst it dried. Once dry, fill and sand again to add strength.



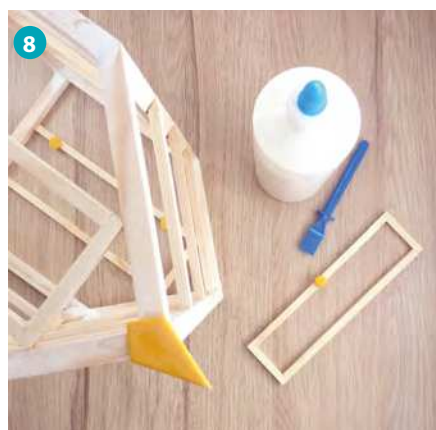
**5** To add the side panels, use some smaller 6x6mm wooden trim. I added a doorframe to each end, and three supports on each of the sides and roof sections. I would advise measuring each length separately, as your greenhouse might not be 100% true. Once cut, glue, fill and sand as before.



**6** Once your greenhouse has its side supports and doorframes, carefully measure one of the doorframes for a door. The door wants to be a millimetre or so smaller all the way around.



**7** To add some of the details, roll out some polymer clay to 3mm thick. Cut out some decorative finials, a doorknob, and door stops (to put on the door frame to stop the door being pushed right through). Once cut out, bake your polymer clay pieces on its tile in an oven (see the manufacturer instructions).



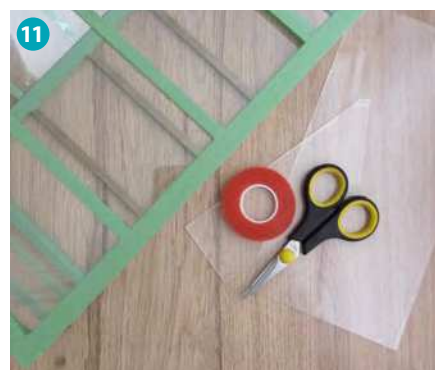
**8** Once baked and cooled, sand any rough edges off your polymer clay as needed, and glue in place on your greenhouse.



**9** Once all dry and you are happy with it (do fill and sand as much as needed, until you are happy), paint your greenhouse in your chosen colour.



**10** To glaze your greenhouse, cut your perspex into the correct sizes for each side. Again, I found it easier to make a paper template for each piece first, as the greenhouse wasn't 100% true. Use a sharp scalpel to score and then snap your perspex.



**11** Attach your cut perspex to your greenhouse using some double-sided tape. I added the tape to each support, so it had good strength. Don't forget to use clear tape so from the inside you can't see it.



**12** To attach your hinge, mark up the drill holes, making sure the door has room to open and close in its frame. Use a hand swivel pin vice, drill some pilot holes, and then secure the hinge in place.

### NEXT ISSUE...

Create your paving floor & soil beds!





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# Using silicon moulds

"Find out how to make wonderfully detailed miniatures using silicon moulds... I've noticed a proliferation of silicon moulds for miniature-making for sale on online sites, as well as at fairs. I asked my friends if they'd used them but no one had. Then people started asking me if they were any good, but I'd no idea! So, I put a mould to the test and here I share the results with you and explain how best to use it." *Moi Ali*

## YOU WILL NEED

### MATERIALS REQUIRED

- White polymer clay
- Chalk pastels
- Fimo metallic silver powder (or silver eye shadow)
- Fimo glossy glaze or water-based gloss
- varnish
- Fine tipped black permanent marker

### TOOLS REQUIRED

- Small fish mould
- ([www.angiescarr.co.uk](http://www.angiescarr.co.uk))



## Moi says...

"You can buy moulds for cupcakes, bread, fruit, bowls and plates, bottles and all manner of other items. They are affordably priced and yet offer a way of creating detailed minis quickly and easily, making mass-production a doddle. You can even make your own using a two-part silicon mould-maker – but first you'll need to sculpt the item and use that to cast the mould.



I opted for ready-made fish moulds as it's so difficult sculpting tiny fish, and it takes real talent to get all the detail – eyes, fins, scales, gills... Creating a crate of fish in the normal way would take forever, whereas a mould can speed up the process no end. I have used Angie Scarr moulds but you can use any mould that you have. Whatever you're making using a mould, whether it's a cupcake or a bottle of wine, the techniques are largely as explained below for my fish."

## The best way to use a silicone mould...

1 Push conditioned white clay into the mould.

1



2 Trim off the excess clay.



3 Squeeze the mould to push the clay out.

3



4

4 Neaten up any rough edges with a blade.







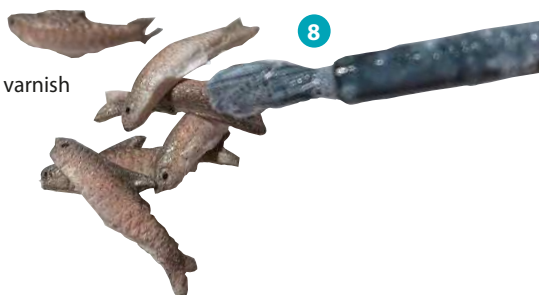
**5** Colour the fish with chalk pastels using a small paintbrush. Leave the bottom of the fish white, add pink in the middle horizontal section of the fish and add grey followed by silver along the top.



**6** Crumple a small piece of baking parchment. Arrange the fish on top of it, bending and curling them to make them look more realistic. Overlap the fish to form a pile. Use a small dab of liquid Fimo to help the fish stick to each other.



**7** Bake the fish according to the packet instructions on your chosen clay brand. When cooled, use a black permanent marker to add a dot to create the eye.



**8** Apply a gloss varnish to give the fish a wet look. 

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# Instagram Identities:

## JOSHUA SMITH - STREET ARTIST

Moi Ali looks behind iconic miniaturists' Instagram accounts.

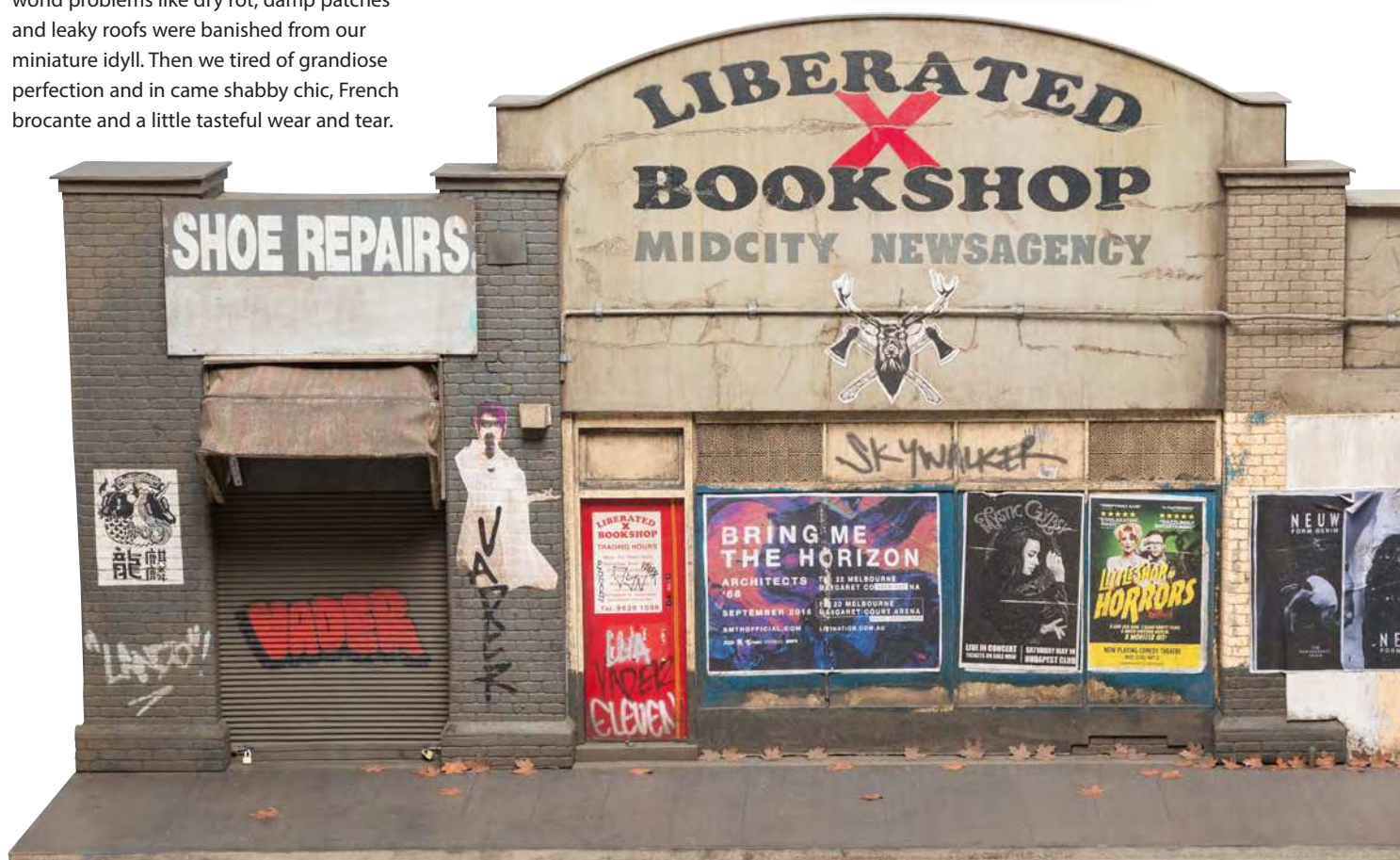
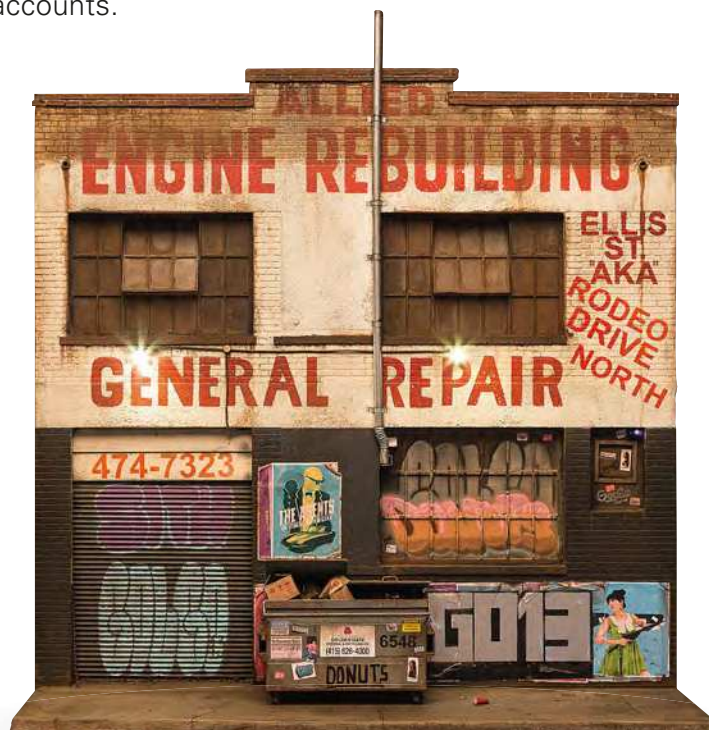
This month Joshua Smith is under the spotlight..



In the early days of the miniaturist hobby we sought to create perfection. Everything was new, neat and tidy. We could model in miniature what we could only dream about in the real world: Georgian mansions, stately manors and opulent interiors. Real world problems like dry rot, damp patches and leaky roofs were banished from our miniature idyll. Then we tired of grandiose perfection and in came shabby chic, French brocante and a little tasteful wear and tear.

► Engine repair

▼ Bookstore



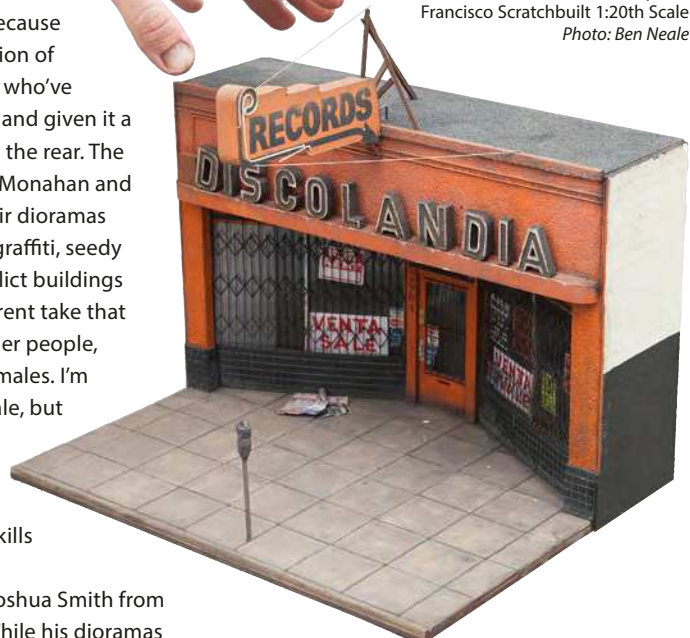
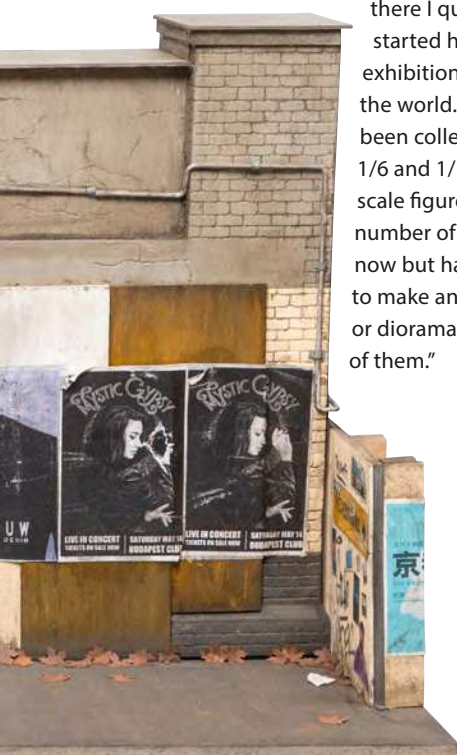


Well, move aside because there's a new generation of miniaturist modellers who've shaken up the hobby and given it a very welcome kick up the rear. The likes of Ryan Thomas Monahan and Randy Hage, with their dioramas of grimy shopfronts, graffiti, seedy peep shows and derelict buildings have provided a different take that is appealing to younger people, particularly younger males. I'm neither young nor male, but I think these new kids on the block really rock and their creative and artistic skills are breath-taking.

Amongst them is Joshua Smith from Adelaide, Australia. While his dioramas might depict rubbish bins, graffiti-covered rusting shipping containers, and urban buildings that have seen better days, there's nothing unglamorous about his lifestyle as a miniaturist modeller. His first exhibition was on the other side of the globe in London, and it didn't stop there! Next was Paris, then New York City. Oh, and did I mention his shows in Berlin, Denmark, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Sydney, Melbourne... over 100 in all.

But how did it all start? Joshua told me: "I was building kit models for a number of years as a hobby and then around five or six years ago I experimented by building my first scratch-built model based on a building in Sydney for an art exhibition. From

there I quickly started having exhibitions all over the world. I have been collecting 1/6 and 1/12 scale figures for a number of years now but have yet to make any scenes or dioramas for any of them."



▼ Discolandia 2 Record Shop San Francisco Scratchbuilt 1:20th Scale  
Photo: Ben Neale

"I experimented by building my first scratch-built model based on a building in Sydney for an art exhibition. From there I quickly started having exhibitions all over the world!"



▲ Scratchbuilt General Laundry New Orleans 1:24th scale

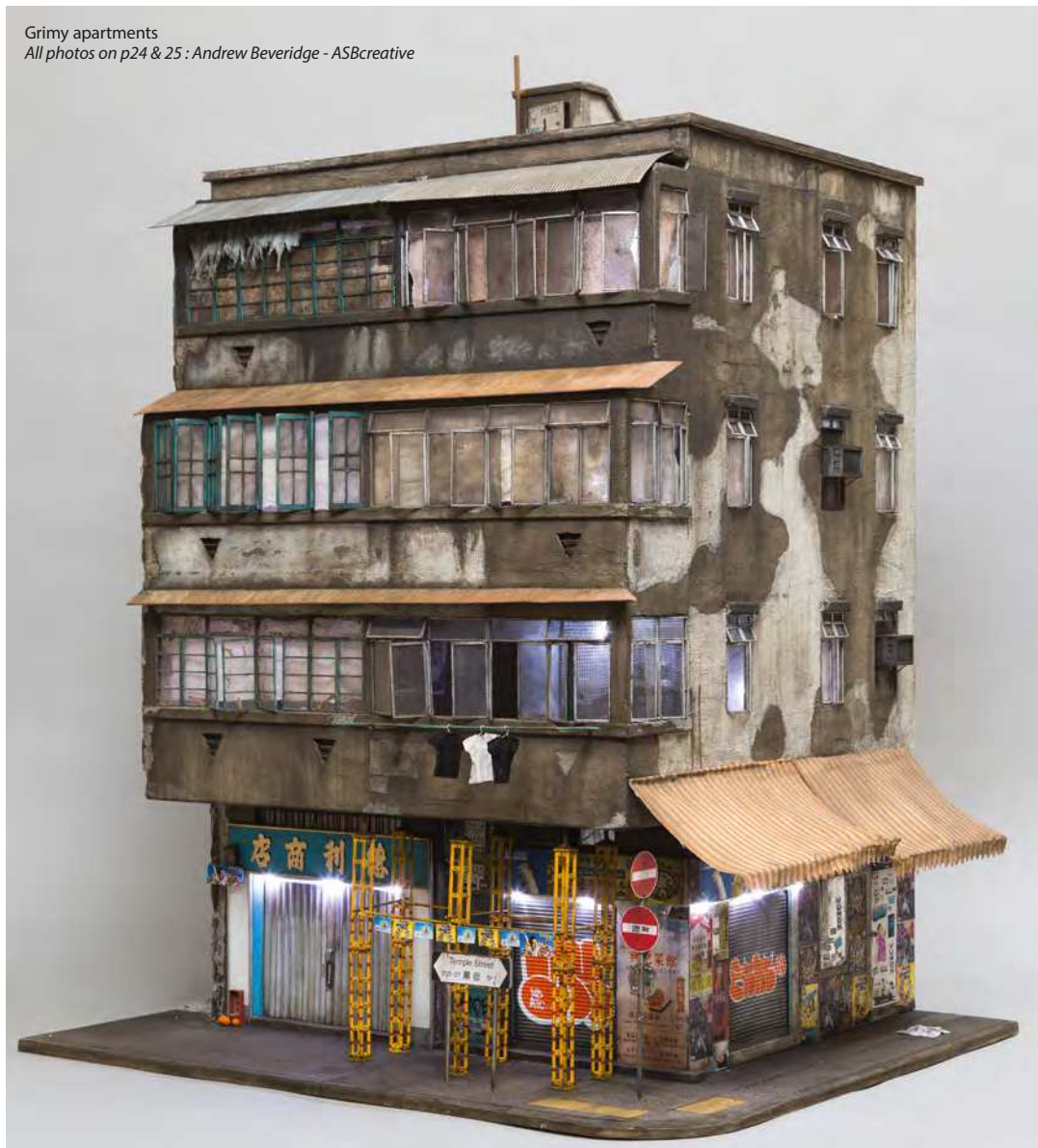
After high school Joshua went straight into university, studying graphic design for three years. "During university," he explained, "and for about six years afterwards I was creating stencil artwork and also doing murals for exhibitions around Australia, Canada and Japan. After this I decided to open and run my own art gallery, Espionage, showcasing emerging and established local, interstate and international artists for about four years in a fixed gallery." ➡

Josh with a finished model

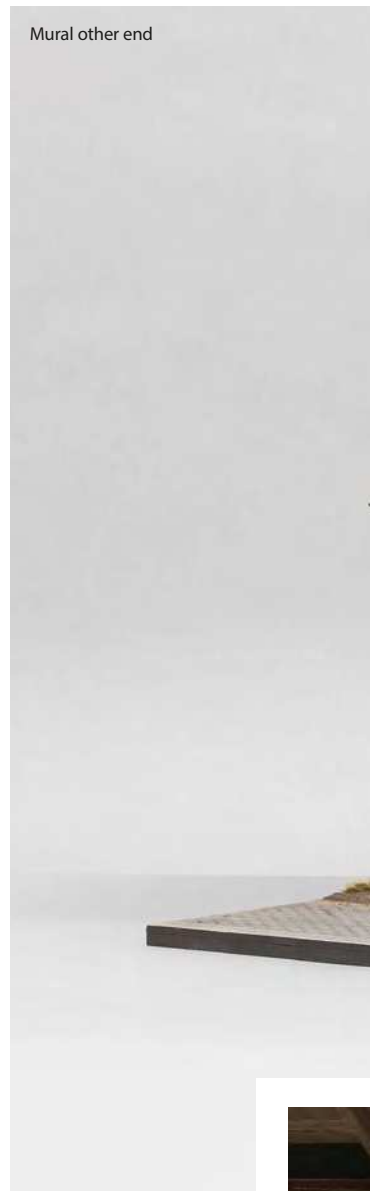




Grimy apartments  
All photos on p24 & 25 : Andrew Beveridge - ASBcreative



Mural other end



Grimy apartments through the window







Mural close up





▲ New Realities. Photo: Ben Neale

Following his stint running his own gallery, Joshua hosted three successful 'pop up' exhibitions. "After all of this I then started creating the miniatures you can see on Instagram. I now do this as a full-time job. Initially I was doing a mixture of commissions and exhibitions but in 2020 I decided to fully concentrate on commissions only." I asked Joshua if he's been asked to undertake any unusual commissions. He told me: "Most people commission doors these days, or small buildings. Each commission usually means something special to the people I make them for. For example, one client ordered a miniature replica of the door to the first apartment he shared with his wife." Awww, what a lovely idea!



▲ Rubbish skip close up. Photo: Andrew Beveridge - ASBcreative

Why urban decay, I asked? "It fascinates me and I find there is beauty in the decay. Urban decay tells so much of a story from where the buildings started right through history to neglect. All of these layers of decay are layers of history." Joshua is so right: a derelict or abandoned building has a story to tell, and he tells that story visually in three dimensions.

Joshua loves being a miniaturist, but like the cobbler never having decent shoes of his own, Joshua finds that fitting in his own projects can be a problem: "My job is often fun, but can be challenging at times. I find

I never have enough time to build all the things I want to build!" Nevertheless, how wonderful to have a job where other people pay you to make tiny things!

I know that Joshua's work has inspired my own twenty-something son to finally show an interest in miniatures and I am sure that his work will inspire others and give our hobby the shot in the arm that it so desperately needs.

If you would like Moi to find out more about your favourite Instagram hero, please get in touch. 🏠

▼ Shipping container  
Photo: Andrew Beveridge - ASBcreative

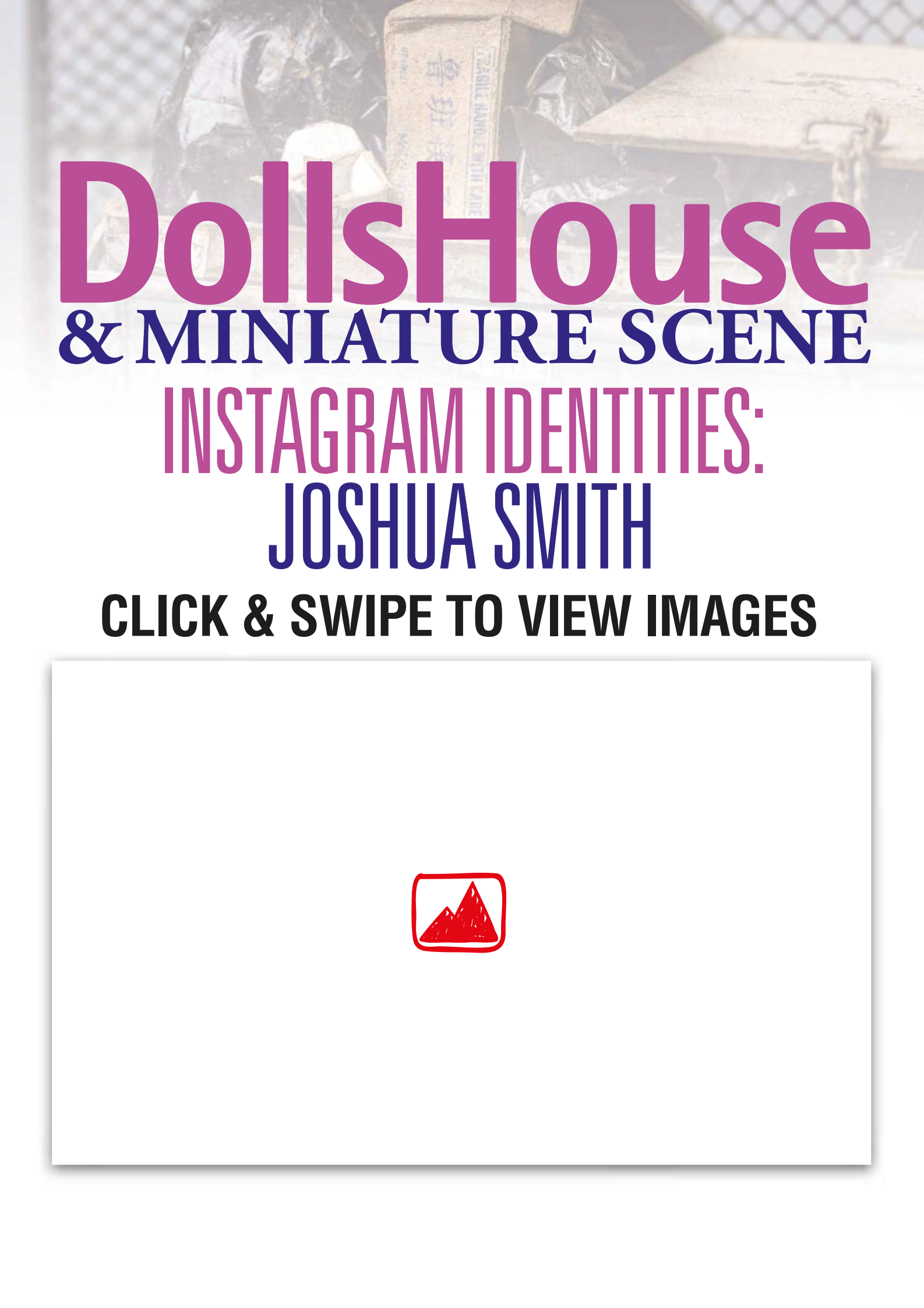


#### INFORMATION

Instagram: @joshua\_smith\_street\_artist

Website: [www.iknowjoshuasmith.com](http://www.iknowjoshuasmith.com)





# **DollHouse** **& MINIATURE SCENE** **INSTAGRAM IDENTITIES:** **JOSHUA SMITH**

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# Caught @n Camera

The DHMS team have been scrolling through their Instagram feeds to keep an eye on all going on in the miniature world across the globe. This month we thought we would celebrate some of the incredible characters out there!



Follow our page for more inspiration @Dolls\_House\_Minature\_Scene

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



▼► The loft apartment and roof terrace come alive as dusk falls



▼ The roof terrace pergola adds a whole new dimension to the apartment



# Lofty Ambitions

Take a tour of Amanda Smith's luxury loft apartment, where industrial heritage meets contemporary urban living.

## The heritage of style

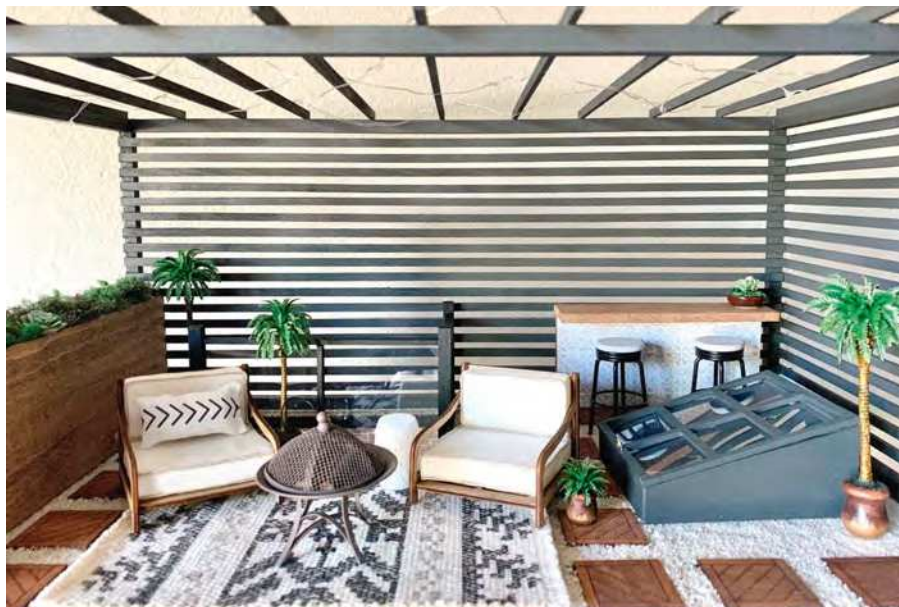
Amanda Smith's loft apartment taps into what has become a cornerstone of the modern property market, the repurposing of our industrial heritage to create stylish modern homes. The main outline of the loft was already there when Amanda acquired this

former children's dolls house, complete with large windows and a mezzanine level, enabling her to get stuck in straight away, adapting and renovating the building's spacious interior. A coat of black paint on the double height ceiling instantly transformed the loft and when combined with high quality brick wallpaper,

gives the impression of a light and airy urban space in keeping with many modern conversions. Replacing the existing floor with strips of stained wood veneer edging also creates the effect of original floorboards ingrained with the footsteps of history. "I've always been drawn to the character of loft apartments," admits Amanda. "I love all the brick, moody lighting, and clean lines, but generally I gravitate to more of the 



▼ Amanda's skylight frame is a real feature



farmhouse style in my dollhouse builds. I think that was what I really liked about the modern loft apartment though, it was so different than my usual style. I drew a lot of inspiration from Pinterest for the loft build."

### Urban chic

The dark ceiling was originally meant to offset industrial pipework, something which Amanda still intends to add when time allows, but it has in addition, become an integral part of the overall colour scheme. This gives the apartment a sense of heightened luxury whilst continuing to retain a suggestion of the building's former identity as an industrial space. The trendy black and white kitchen was a purchase and is brought to life through

a range of well-chosen accessories, but the loft incorporates many pieces designed and crafted by Amanda herself. These include the four-poster bed frame and the balustrade which surrounds the mezzanine level. It's the clever design of the mezzanine which gives what is otherwise a relatively straightforward box shape its multi-faceted interior. It's also something which Amanda has made the most of, the mezzanine's musical theme adding to overall ambience of the loft. A tiny cabinet is filled with voices in miniature vinyl, and a copy of Fleetwood Mac's 1977 album, 'Rumours' sits on top of the record player. Meanwhile, a guitar rests against a beautifully handcrafted bench seat. "I felt like the braided leather bench was the perfect fit for that room," says



A recipe for modern living

▼ Take a seat on the roof terrace



Amanda, who used thin strips of tan leather and a piece of basswood to create this unique piece, before adding simple but stylish legs made from gold tone jewellery wire.

### Climbing the wall

Prior to the Coronavirus Pandemic, Amanda and her husband visited the Broll Mountain Vineyards in the Californian gold rush town of Murphys. It was here, in the vineyards tasting room, where Amanda discovered the living wall which inspired what would go on to become a central focus of the loft's open plan living kitchen. "I knew the loft apartment was the right build to really showcase it," reflects Amanda. "I built the living wall by making a box frame, painting it charcoal grey, and gluing in different mosses used to build a terrarium. I think my favourite element of the loft is all the greenery. Plants make everything better and in this build they add so much to the vibe."

With the loft interior almost complete, Amanda turned her attention towards the roof terrace, taking the simple rooftop covered in faux astro turf and creating a fabulous entertaining area complete with bar. The first step was the construction of the wooden pergola, something which completely changes the overall view of the apartment. The addition of a wall planter, with its carefully crafted outward facing chevron pattern also brings something very special to the exterior. "The rooftop patio was the most challenging part of the build, hands down," she concludes. However, Amanda wasn't entirely alone on this part of the build, gaining the assistance



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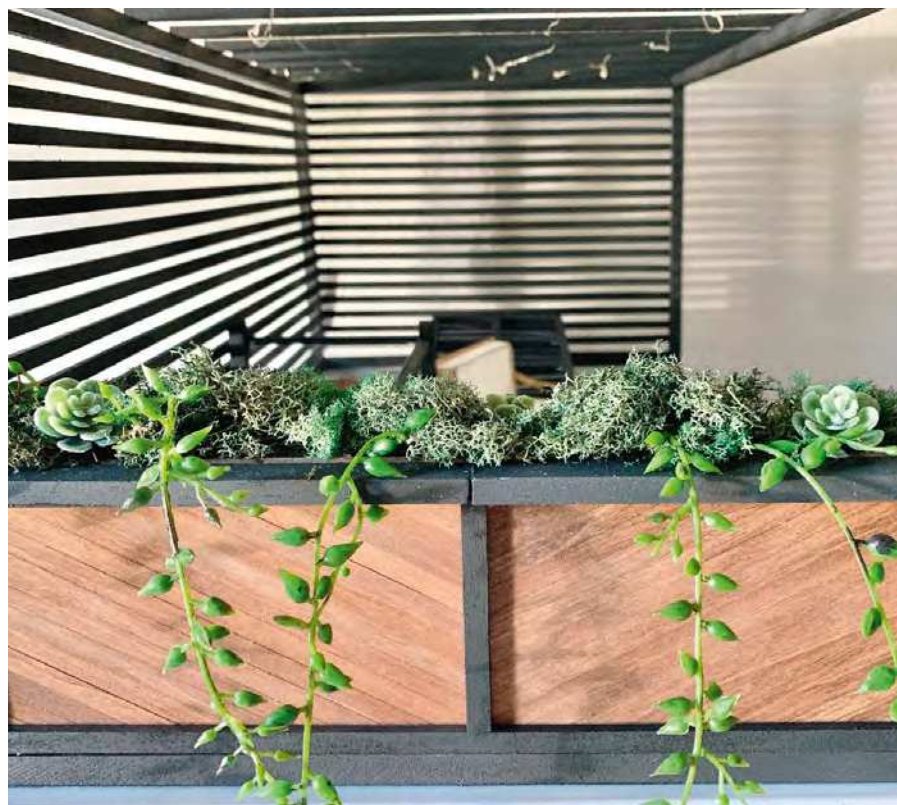
of a much-loved furry companion who was determined to lend a paw by removing the contents of the newly built planter!

"Between the astro turf and the randomly placed holes in the floor, I had a really hard time feeling inspired. Once I figured out the layout, things started to fall in place, and the pebbles/gravel were the icing on top. They really made the space feel finished." The first of those pre-cut holes in the roof leads you through to the terrace from the apartment below, but Amanda has turned the second to her advantage. Building a frame for the skylight it becomes a fantastic design feature, whilst back in the loft you can lie back on the four-poster bed, gazing towards the twinkling warmth of the LED lights threaded across the pergola.

### A shining example

From the roof terrace to the bedside wall lamps, Amanda's use of LED lighting creates an ambience which ensures the loft really comes into its own after dark. The large lamp shade hanging over the living area is another piece which looks as though it's been reclaimed from the building's industrial past. "I created the pendant light from a cardboard cup that came with an unplanted sunflower plant, some grey paint, a piece of USB cord, a wooden bead, wooden checker game pieces, and a battery-operated LED light," Amanda explains. "I knew I wanted an oversized pendant light to hang over the couch area, but I had never experimented with lighting, so when I found the battery-operated LED lights, I was super excited." 

▼ Planting ideas on the roof terrace



The rooftop bar





▼ Providing a focal point. The living area



Recording detail

▼ Framed in luxury! Amanda's four poster bed frame



◀ Amanda's scratch built balustrade and four poster bed

“I think my favourite element of the loft is all the greenery. Plants make everything better and in this build they add so much to the vibe”

### A Christmas wish

Amanda and her mother were never able to fulfil the shared dream of working on a dolls house project together when she was a child, but recent times have seen them both add a little miniature magic to their lives. “I bought a beautiful vintage handmade dollhouse for her as a Christmas present last year and that helped me rediscover the world of small scale,” says Amanda. “Watching her get excited to renovate her dollhouse inspired me to start my own projects.”

Since beginning her first miniature renovation Amanda has discovered a range of exciting new skills, all of which she will take with her past the lockdown era which saw many of us spend our time at home on creative projects. “I remember working on my first project and feeling so insecure in my



▼ The sound of music in miniature!



The art of nature



▲ The interior prior to renovations

own capabilities and overwhelmed at all that needed to be done," she concedes. "There has been a lot of trial and error, but now I feel pretty confident in what I can make. Or at least I don't feel afraid to try. Don't be afraid to step outside your comfort zone! The more you do, the more creativity flows."

For Amanda, stepping outside that comfort zone has revealed a flair for design and a talent for bringing her visions to life with a remarkable eye for realistic detail. Through the loft apartment, Amanda has created much more than just a show home for 21st century urban living, she has designed a genuine modern classic which is hard to beat. 🏠



#### INFORMATION

For more information please visit:  
Instagram: @olive.lane.minis



# DollHouse

## & MINIATURE SCENE

### LOFTY AMBITIONS

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# At Home with THE BROADWOODS



## IT'S ALL IN THE PREPARATION...

A new year brings with it a new start!

This month, professional miniaturist Bea Broadwood whisks us back to the beginning of the creative process, to take a closer look at how she and members of the Petite Properties Modelling Community not only find inspiration, but also how they transform their ideas into a miniature reality...

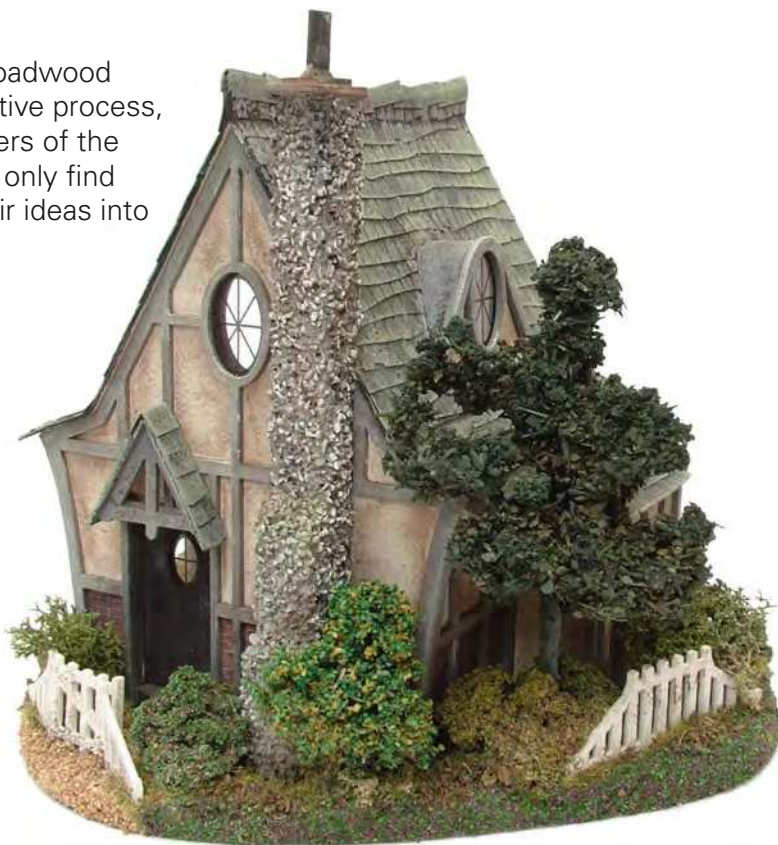
January is traditionally a time of fresh starts, new resolutions and blank pages. For me, it has always been a time of year when I relish the opportunity to take time out to collect my thoughts and make new plans for what I will work on in the months ahead. However, whatever scale I plan to work in, all new miniature projects begin with the same starting point; a flash of inspiration or the tiny seed of an idea! Sometimes, an idea can take time to fully form and at other times a whole concept can hit all at once. We're all different and I've been interested in exploring how other miniaturists are inspired and how, in turn, they approach the planning and research behind their own small scale projects.



▲ A folder full to the brim with potential new ideas!

### Collect your thoughts...

Each January, I draw up a yearly schedule of new PP projects. The inspiration behind this schedule comes directly from the content of several 'idea' folders that line the shelves of PPHQ. Each folder is filled with a myriad ideas or tiny starting points. These can take the form of scribbled notes, doodles or random images; all of which are collected together and filed away for future reference. Over time, these individual sparks of inspiration begin to evolve together to form the foundation of a new design.



"I am a bit of a scatter brain, so I find my reference files really helpful, as they bring all of my eclectic ideas together in one place. This then helps me link them together and merge them into the starting point of a new PP design."

*Bea*

### Picture this...

As a visual person, the majority of my inspiration and ideas come from old photographs or architectural illustrations. Google images and Pinterest are both helpful online research tools, but personally I prefer to reach for a book from my own little reference library that I have collected and built up over the years. Alongside my collection of architectural books, I also have amassed a huge file of research photos that I have taken from all over the UK and beyond. Many of my reference pictures are either close ups of architectural elements or photos of interesting buildings which also helpfully feature my trusted (but slightly grumpy) 'human scale ruler'.



▲ A handful of much used reference books...



"I start on Pinterest if it is a visual project - collecting images and looking at references for things that really inspire me. Mood boarding is everything!"

*Winnie Finesse*



Mr Bea the  
'human ruler'

### Drawn out...

Once an idea or concept has taken hold, the first thing I do is reach for my pen! As an architectural illustrator I find that the process of sketching out my idea helps to identify specific individual elements of the design. I was once taught by a very good teacher, that when you sketch a design, the drawing process forces you to focus only on the key elements. For example, there's a lot of visual information contained within a photo of a building... where as a sketch of the same building, pinpoints and includes only the 'important bits'.



▲ Bea's trusty sketch book is in constant use!

"I tend to have an idea and a back-story in my head for my 'Yorkshire village'. It is often the back-story that creates the look of the building. I back-up with research as regards the period, look, feel, and colours etc. I tend to make sketches and sometimes small mock ups to see if it looks right. If I can translate all of that into a realistic and plausible image, then I'm a happy bunny!"

*Neil Armstrong*

### From the pages of a book...

Literature is also a rich source of inspiration and over the years I have seen many miniature creations inspired by stories and novels of all genres. I have also watched many miniaturists create complex and intriguing back stories for their miniature houses or dioramas. Thinking about the characters that might live in them and how they would inhabit the miniature environment seems to really get the creative juices flowing!

"I use a lot of the medieval websites and books to copy from but also use ideas from other interests i.e. my Terry Pratchett themed collection, then I photograph the advert of the house, and have a special folder for all my ideas, then on that house page I also list the furniture kits I would like for it and any paints, that way I can dip in and out of each house and don't lose track of which project I am doing."

*Daisy Bell*



◀ The Little Stump house was inspired by Bea's childhood fascination with the Faraway Tree Collection by Enid Blyton

### Is planning always key?

For me, I always feel a buzz of excitement when inspiration for a new miniature idea strikes. I personally love rolling my ideas around on paper and referring to my tried and tested collection of techniques and resources. However, that is certainly not true for everyone! Many miniaturists, like Chrystine Quenalt prefer to work by the seat of their pants and just go for it! And if that is how you like to create; it can never be wrong. The important thing is to have fun and go with whatever approach works for you.

"It's art, no planning! 1:48 projects are so small and fast building... I let it inspire me and it can change as I go."

*Chrystine Quenalt*

Ultimately, however you approach a new project, I truly hope that 2021 will give us all space and time to be able to immerse ourselves in new projects and in the process, enjoy all that the miniature world has to offer! Happy mini-ing, Bea

### And finally...

Many thanks to PP modelling forum members: Neil Armstrong, Daisy Bell, Winnie Finesse and Chrystine Quenalt, for their contributions.

If you are tempted to have a go at the smaller scales, why not join in the fun at Petite Properties Modelling Community on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/groups/petiteproperties/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/petiteproperties/)



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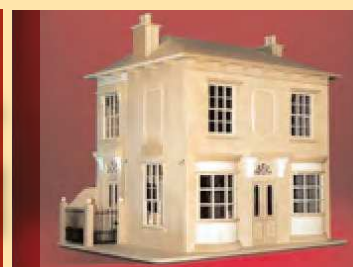
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# The Quartermaster:

## DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS

Ann Evans talks to Texan miniaturist Samantha Murray about all things extra mini...



Samantha Murray

### How it all began for Sam...

When you think of Dallas, Texas, you think of everything being on a grand scale and larger than life. If you speak to Dallas miniaturist, Samantha Murray, she will tell you that Dallas is very much like what you see on television – and more. However, for the last 30 years she has been enjoying the smaller things in life – that is, making her quarter scale dollhouse furniture.

Sam, as she's known more commonly, makes everything from upright and baby grand pianos to beautiful glass fronted wooden furniture. Take a peep at her online shop and you'll see china cabinets, writing tables, marble topped cabinets and glass fronted Queen Ann style Highboys. Also, nursery furniture – baby's changing tables, nursery chifferobes and cots. She also makes beds and fabulous armchairs and sofas in a range of styles that all look incredibly realistic and very comfortable.



◀ Baby grand piano



◀ Bird sofa chair

"I like trying to see if I can actually make something I see, especially in small scale. I like the design; I like the research. I love architecture and furniture design. I'm a bit of an art and design history nerd!"

Sam

"The furniture looks really comfy because it is actually padded," said Sam, who is a graphic designer in *real life* – as she put it. "My furniture is upholstered very much like the real thing. It is made from individual pieces, covered in fabric, then assembled and finished. I do not use cast pieces."

For Sam, her interest in miniatures was inspired by her mother, Pepper. "My mom and some of her friends got involved in miniatures first. Like a lot of 'newbies' it was all she talked about. It was really a matter of, 'if you can't beat them, join them.'"

Prior to this, when she was growing up, she played with a dollhouse that her grandfather had built for her mother. "This was about the time that Petite Princess furniture came out (debuting in the early 1960's this range from

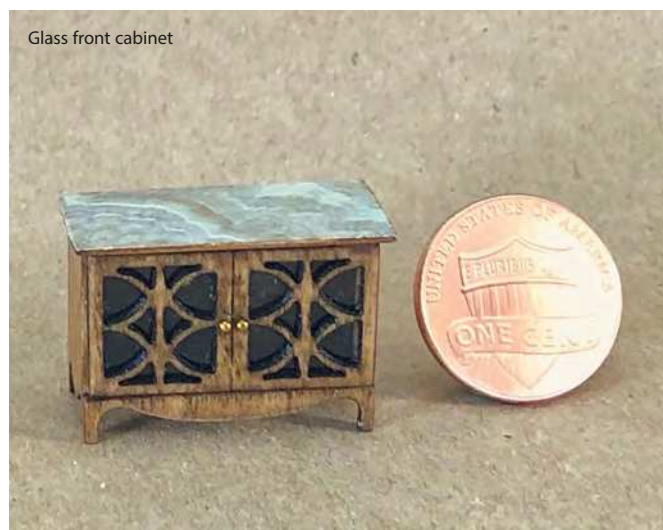
▼ Chest on chest



US company the Ideal Toy & Novelty Corporation used state of the art plastic molding processes to create hyper-realised furniture for dollhouse markers specifically to young girls offering a mix of Italian Renaissance, French Provincial, Rococo, Art Nouveau, Victorian, and other styles),

so I had this simple, somewhat rustic, unsophisticated house with very fancy silk and velvet furniture. Quite the juxtaposition of styles. I still have that house with the intention of someday renovating it." ➡





Sam also still has the very first room box that she made. This was an empty 1/12th scale room box that had been tucked into a package of things her mother had shipped for her. "She'd used it as protection for something delicate. I created a graphic design studio in it based on the place where I was working at the time."

"I've been making miniatures for over 30 years now! When I started doing shows, it was in partnership with my mother. We sold first under the name of Itty Bitty Bits, then later changed it to Those Murray Girls. When Mom passed away, I changed to SamanthaCreations."

### The learning process

"I'm a stickler when it comes to scale. I am constantly measuring things to make sure it's right. I also print my own fabrics so that they are in scale. The only place where I bend scale a little is in my dolls house kits. I make the ceilings a little taller than normal in 1/4in scale because it's such a small space."

When it comes to making items of furniture, Sam says it's easier for her to make six of something than to make one. She explained, "Otherwise, I'm sitting around

waiting on glue or paint to dry. By making six, by the time I finish a step on the last one, the first one is ready to go. Good old assembly line! I also love designing house kits, but it got to be a pain to get the kits together because I would have to pay someone to cut the pieces for me, so I stopped. Then I bought a desktop laser cutter last year which has changed everything for me. Now I can design and really finesse the kit."

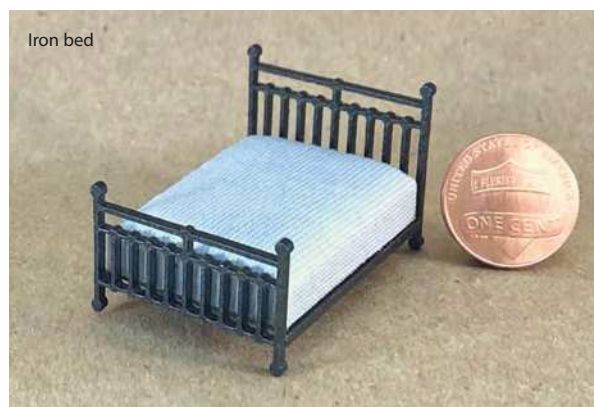
Her skills are mostly self-taught although she does like to go to classes. "I have to admit that I am one of those people that can pretty much do anything they try. I just assume I can do it. I just look at how things are made and do it. If I can't figure it out, I ask. My brain is very three dimensional and I have a lot of patience."

In the past Sam has also run classes and workshops and she had plans to start teaching again this year. Sadly, Covid-19 put paid to that idea. However, she is now exploring the option of producing a video demonstration for assembling one of her room box kits. In addition to written instructions, people will also get the link to the YouTube video and be able to work alongside her as they put the kit together.

As most people have experienced, the pandemic has forced shows and exhibitions to be postponed. Under normal circumstances, Sam would attend two or three shows a year: The Good Sam Show in San Jose, California; the Dallas Miniatures Showcase – Sam's local show; and the Philadelphia Miniatures show. With these all being cancelled this year she's hoping that 2021 will see them all taking place once again.

### Not just a creator...

As well as making quarter scale miniatures, Sam also collects dolls house miniatures – in 1/12th scale. "I have a nice sized collection with work from some of the top artisans around. Additionally, she has a variety of projects – not just miniatures, going on all the time. "Every flat surface pretty much has a project of some sort on it. I tend to spread out! So, my workspace is pretty much where I can find an open space! My brother lives nearby and while he appreciates my talent, he doesn't really get the appeal. My friends think it's fascinating though. I have one friend who always introduces me to people by saying, "This is Sam. Ask her what she does." I chuckle every time she does this."





The new Carson's Cottage house kit that Sam designed based on the cottage that Mr. Carson and Mrs. Hughes lived in in the Downton Abbey film. It is an Edwardian style stone cottage with four rooms and a central staircase and hallway.



▲ Chinoiserie room box

The new Chinoiserie room box online workshop. The kit comes with a link for the video so that you can work alongside Sam as she puts the kit together. The video shows how she put things together and even has her making mistakes just like everyone else does. This is the first of what she hopes are many video workshops to come.

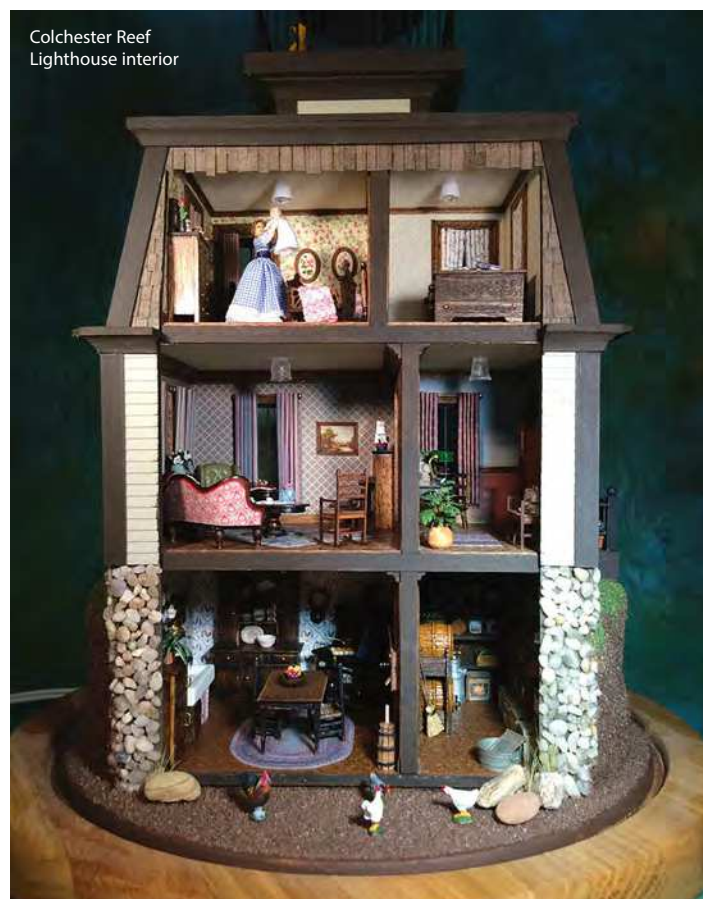
This is the very first house kit Sam designed back in the 90s. It was based on the Colchester Reef Lighthouse at the Shelbourne Museum in Burlington, VT. The furniture inside is a combination of her furniture and kits that she's collected along the way. Dolls are by Sally Manwell. 🏠



▼ Carson's Cottage exterior



Colchester Reef  
Lighthouse Exterior



Colchester Reef  
Lighthouse interior



#### INFORMATION

Visit [www.SamanthaCreations.etsy.com](http://www.SamanthaCreations.etsy.com) to full Sam's collection.



A miniature black grand piano and a US penny coin are positioned in the upper background. The piano is a detailed miniature model, and the penny is a real one, showing the Lincoln Memorial and the words "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" and "ONE CENT".

# DollHouse

## & MINIATURE SCENE

THE QUARTERMASTER:  
DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS

**CLICK & SWIPE TO VIEW IMAGES**





# An Aussie New Year

Banish those winter blues for a trip Down Under and a taste of sunshine as we celebrate New Year Aussie style with a beachside barbie. With worldwide readers, DHMS aims to help you celebrate, this project can also be used for your Australia Day scene!

## YOU WILL NEED

### MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Black acrylic paint
- Black, ecru, white, orange and spring green polymer clay
- Black, white, brown, dark cadmium orange and red ochre pastels
- Gloss varnish
- Super glue
- 1mm silver tone jewellery wire
- Bamboo skewers
- 1/12th scale skirting board
- 3mm thick soft wood
- Old 1/12th scale bamboo basket
- Metallic orange Halloween confetti or card

### TOOLS REQUIRED

- Craft knife
- Small paintbrushes
- Roller
- Old sterile toothbrush
- Needle tool or sewing pin
- Jewellery wire cutters
- Scissors
- Ruler

**1** Cut a strip of 3mm thick soft wood measuring 8x2cm. Cut four strips of 1/12th scale wooden skirting board to fit around the sides. This will create a rectangle box shape so check the pieces will fit together as you go along.

**2** Cut four 4cm lengths of bamboo skewer. These will form the uprights for the barbecue.

**3** Paint all the pieces of wood/bamboo from the previous two steps using black acrylic. You might find this requires two coats for an even coverage.

**4** Roll out some black polymer clay to just over 2mm in thickness. Cut four 6mm squares and four rectangles measuring roughly 9x7mm. Use the flat end of a bamboo skewer to make a hole in the centre of each piece.

**5** Again, using black polymer clay, shape enough tiny pieces of 'charcoal' in various sizes to cover the base of the barbecue. Grate black and white pastel and mix together to make grey. Roll the pieces of 'charcoal' in the mixture before baking both these and all the squares/rectangles from step 4 before leaving them to cool.



**6** Coat the eight squares/rectangles of clay and all the pieces of painted wood and bamboo skewer with gloss varnish.

**7** Once the varnish has dried thoroughly, stick the four small squares to the 8x2cm length of wood with super glue. Place one in each corner, ensuring the small holes are facing upwards.

**8** Turn the wood over so that it is standing on the four squares. Ensuring the ridged section of the skirting board is at the bottom and facing inwards, glue the four lengths of board around the sides, creating the oblong box shape.

**9** Form the legs for the barbecue by gluing each of the 4cm lengths of bamboo skewer into the round holes in the four rectangles.

**10** Glue the other end of the legs into the holes in the four squares on the underside of the box. Cut a few tiny pieces of either some leftover metallic orange Halloween confetti or metallic orange card, scattering both these and the 'charcoal' over the inside of the box. Next, cut four lengths of silver tone jewellery wire (1mm or less in diameter), each long enough to run the entire length of the inside of the box. Glue two of these to the box interior, one on each side and around 2mm from the top. Put the other two to one side.

**11** Cut forty-three pieces of jewellery wire, this time just long enough to fit across the width of the box interior. Glue each one into position between the two strips of jewellery wire running the length of the box, creating the grill effect. Finally, stick the two remaining long strips of wire into place on top along each side, creating a neat finish.

**12** No Aussie barbie is complete without snags; the humble sausage is an absolute must! Take 5mm balls of ecru clay and roll into individual sausages, giving each one a slight curve. Mix grated brown and red ochre pastel and brush over the sausages. Vary the degree of shading, making sure some areas are more 'burnt' than others. Add the chargrilled markings with a needle tool or sewing pin, the side of which has been dipped in brown and/or black grated pastel. The markings should be roughly the same distance apart as between the straights on the grill.

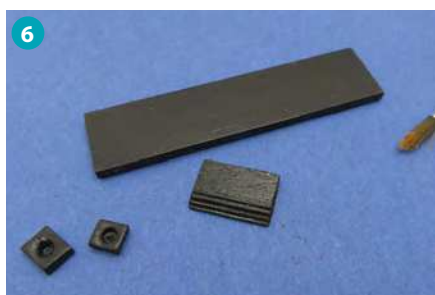
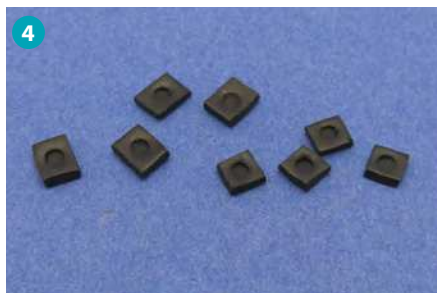
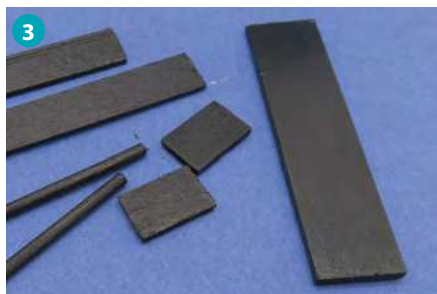
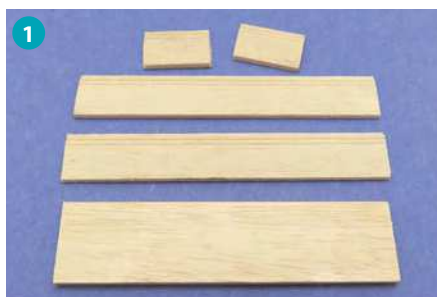
**13** Mix ecru clay with a little brown. Mould into flat, randomly shaped steaks before using an old sterile toothbrush to add texture to the surface of the meat.

**14** Colour each steak with brown and black pastel before adding chargrilled markings using the same technique as for the sausages.



**15** To create another Aussie barbecue classic, the shrimp, begin by mixing white clay with a little orange to make pale peach. Take a 3mm ball of the mixture for each shrimp and, rolling and curling into shape, with one pointed end. Mix grated orange and dark cadmium orange pastel, brushing liberally over the pointed ends. Add lines, markings and texture to the shrimps with a small brush and a needle tool. Take a few finely flaked specks of spring green clay, dotting them haphazardly over each shrimp.

**16** Bake the shrimps, sausages and steaks, allowing to cool thoroughly before coating everything with gloss varnish. Once dry, cut a length from an old 1/12th scale bamboo basket for each shrimp skewer you want to make and glue four shrimps to each one. 





A two storey fairy hollow apothecary and healing crystal lodge, which was made as a visual diary during the recent coronavirus lockdown

# We discover:

## GEMMA HARRIS OF LITTLE FOLK

While modern builds are fast becoming the biggest trend in miniatures right now we know that there are those of you who just adore the mystical element. One of those is Gemma who creates pocket-sized fantasy lands. Be part of the magic...

### How long have you been making miniatures?

I have only been making to sell since June of 2019. I had been working in my husband's businesses for over a decade and whilst we work really well together, equally I felt it was time I branched out and created my own little niche again. Historically, my work roles have been creative (design, photography, copywriting etc.) but I always felt there was an itch I hadn't quite scratched.

### What got your first interested in making miniatures?

I think the ingredients that moulded to form the Little Folk pursuit have been building from the get-go. From a young age I was drawn to nature - foraging the wood floor for interesting feathers, cones and flowers - and combing along holiday shores; for shells and knotted and gnarly driftwood. I was mesmerised watching insects living in their tiny world, and my go-to bedtime stories

were always those set within fantasy pocket-sized lands: The Borrowers, The Elves and The Shoemakers or The Faraway Tree. I was also fascinated by all things folk or slightly witchy: worry dolls and dreamcatchers, gemstones and fossils. I did an arts-based degree near the coast and the wilds of Exmoor and have always loved crafting with all the natural booty I find - selling landscape photography, making dreamcatchers and Christmas decorations. As a distracting, relaxing outlet when I was struggling to conceive, I made a few pieces of fairy furniture from twigs and found objects for my youngest niece, who was enchanted by all things 'fairy' at the time. It was cathartic and magical to create this





▲ A two storey fairy hollow with reading room and bedroom, watch tower and swing, complete with dormer window and direction board. Pictured by day

miniature world for her, which I too could get lost in and, by submerging myself in a child's mind, it reignited my own imagination - because kids are the experts in that field!

### What sort of miniatures do you make and why these in particular?

I create fairy houses, built to look like tree hollows, filled with driftwood four poster beds, or spell shops stocked full of wands, scrolls, potion jars and gemstones. I make a popular wall hung dormer window, which is lit with twinkly lights from the rear. These look lovely as décor, but also make great presents - especially to warm up winter walls! I also make individual pieces like love seats and woodland thrones, as well as wands and staffs topped with crystals, freestanding fairy doors and fairy couture outfits; which are either draped on a miniature mannequin or presented in a box frame so they can be hung up. With the exception of the boxed couture fairy outfits, they're all sized to 1:12 and, selfishly, I have come to make those particular creations simply because they're what the child in me would have been enraptured with.

### Where do you get your inspiration from?

Predominantly from nature - what's right at the end of our nose if we could just pause and take a closer look. When I walk the dogs, they take advantage of plenty of pauses as I peer

into tree hollows, photograph twirling vines wrapped around a sagging branch of berries, or watch would-be fairies skimming across the stream and catching the light. I discovered the beautiful and ethereal work of American couple Mike and Debbie Schramer years ago and it started my love affair with fairy art. But when I started Little Folk I also spent a good 2-3 months experimenting. Without wanting to some of my early pieces just didn't feel right to me. I think I was unconsciously mirroring other people's work too closely without wanting to. I almost threw in the towel last Spring for that reason, but then pulled out all the boxes of materials I've collected over the years, put the radio on, made myself a brew, trusted my instincts and stopped over thinking it. The Little Folk style really did fall into its own rhythm from that day on. Nowadays, the challenge is too many ideas and not enough time. And whilst I'm a bit of a social media sceptic on a personal level, I do think Instagram is a wonderful platform of inspiration for creatives - it's the largest community of ideas together in one spot and, so far, I've found there's a warming mutual support and respect amongst makers; whether they're professional or hobbyists; I'm happily somewhere in between the two!



▲ Discarded fairy couture pieces on mannequins

► Wall hung driftwood and bark dormer window, lit by twinkling fairy lights



### Tell us how you go about creating your work?

Not very commercially! The magic is in the making for me. So, whilst I do have quite a defined set of pieces I make, the real passion is sparked up when I do one-of-a-kind projects, or commissions. Once I'm in a position where I need to make six of something, I get artist's fog and find it a little less motivating. So, I'd say I create organically. I set out with clear intentions, something always goes wrong or not quite the way I'd like it part way through and somehow each piece surprises me at the end and looks different from the idea I started out with. It's rather like warming up for a race too. I always have a finite time I can spend in the workshop around caring for our four-year-old, but that

"The magic is in the making for me. So whilst I do have quite a defined set of pieces I make the real passion is sparked up when I do one-of-a-kind projects"





▲ Boxed fairy couture dress and fascinator. This one is: *The Blush Dove Debutante Gown & Fascinator*, last worn at the *Veiled Jewel Ball* by *Shimmer Spry of Ellyllon*

urgency doesn't stop me from messing around and procrastinating for a while. I was the same when I used to do photography – there's a definite period of warming up before I get in a rhythm for the job at hand. I'm no good at drawing so I don't sketch my ideas out, but I have a background in a creative agency and interior design, so mostly I make quick mood-boards of an idea I have before I head into the workshop to make it a reality (or fantasy – depending on how you look at it!).

### Do you have a favourite material to work with such as wood etc?

Well, fairies live in woodland communities, underground kingdoms, in our gardens or near water so to make them feel at home I try to work with mostly natural materials. "Natural" accounts for a combination of things I've found myself – like driftwood, shells, pods and cones, feathers and pressed and dried flowers – and floristry supplies I buy in like bark pieces, moss, lichen and twine. I've had a few creative guises

over the years and they all rear their head at some point, so from the interiors days my magpie eye is responsible for amassing leftover fabrics, lace and yarn and I love nothing more than trailing antique stores and incorporating vintage brooches or trinkets into my work too.

### Where do you make your miniatures? Do you have a dedicated craft room?

I'm insanely lucky. We converted a disused, Edwardian outhouse – which looks more like a beautiful tiled cottage – into my workshop. The Pump House hides a historic spring which still pumps water to the neighbouring farm and cottages. It's cool in the summer and pretty chilly in the winter, but I have a log burner, a terrier or two and the frequent hum of the pump motor to keep me company – and plenty of room to house all the boxes and baskets of materials I collect!

### Do you have a top tip you would like to share with the readers?

I think nourishing your passion or hobby is really important in the current day. We live in a very frenetic, over stimulating, pressured world by and large, so I would say indulge yourself – think of a project but enjoy the exploration to its completion, rather than racing to do so. This hobbyist job is undoubtedly my version of doing a little yoga each day! Making something to display or sell is always going to be personal; you're potentially laying yourself open to criticism, so the journey is more valuable than reaching the destination.

▼ Gold dripped birch twig staffs, decorated with beads, gemstones and feathers and topped by a healing chakra point: a must for all the best spells in town!



Woodland glade thrones, fit for any fairy!





## What do you do with the miniatures you make?

I sell most of them – through my Instagram page, on Etsy and I also have a small shop space at our rural pub and food market, The Muddy Duck, in Oxfordshire. This means I get the best of both worlds – I have stock to sell and keep me ticking over, but I'm also open to commissions and end up meeting a wonderful patchwork of miniature, fantasy-loving individuals (most of whom are more big kid than little kid!). For those pieces that don't sell, I'm very at home with the idea of keeping them as heirlooms for our daughter to enjoy. In fact,



▲ Wide view of The Pump House with the work bench on top of what conceals the well below it

during the coronavirus lockdown, I made Fleur an heirloom piece to keep: The Healing Lodge was my visual diary of all the activities we did to fill our days during those weeks. The crystal dresser on the top floor has a drawer filled with miniature photos documenting those weeks and a scroll on which I wrote her a little diary to reminisce over.

## Do you have a favourite project?

Any kind of creative practice is really personal, and I'm always surprised that customers are drawn to the pieces I'm least happy with and those I'm very proud of



▲ A view of The Pump House with wood burner, driftwood seasoning and basket of dried foliage and grasses and feathers

stay on the shelves a little longer than I'd anticipated... So, every job is a surprise and a favourite in that respect. But I love any project when I know the story or intent behind the purchase or commission. My own sister means the world to me and I had one lady who bought a group of products to surprise her fairy loving sister – she was critically ill at the time which made the job and the gesture all the more special. I have a group of loyal, repeat customers so it's always fun creating something for them because I know a little more about them, and will sometimes include some surprise details by way of a thank you. I'm a busy bee and live by lists and darting around at 100mph, so it's surprising that my favourite Little Folk projects are sometimes the first of something I create, where time is not of the essence and I can really live up to my head-in-the-clouds star sign and get lost in the fantasy... 🏠



## INFORMATION

Website: [www.littlefolk.co](http://www.littlefolk.co)

Instagram: @littlefolkuk

Etsy: [www.etsy.com/uk/shop/LittleFolkFairies](https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/LittleFolkFairies)

Email: [themaker@littlefolk.co](mailto:themaker@littlefolk.co)

## SPRING MINIATURA

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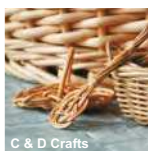
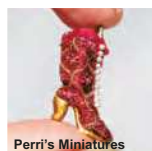
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# Dollshouse

## & MINIATURE SCENE

WE DISCOVER:  
GEMMA HARRIS

**CLICK & SWIPE TO VIEW IMAGES**







# My Little Pet Shop

Alice Rasmussen-Wolno shares her incredible winning pet shop!







Last time I wrote to DHMS I talked about how I found myself getting into miniatures in 2017. In that year, I took on the monumental task (by myself) and built the Grange house. That was when I fell in love with everything mini in all its cuteness. In the second year, I was lucky enough to find like-minded people locally and joined a club called Ipswich Mini Crafters here in Australia. And in this third year I have started to sell some of my stuff via my Etsy store, AllysAussieMinis. So, I've been so busy with miniatures that I haven't had a chance to write again, until now. In the last three years, I have learned so much from my friends, the internet and by my own trial and errors, and I am still enthusiastic now about this craft, as I was back then. In fact, I have even taken over my husband's two bay shed and filled it up with all my woodworking hand tools, power tools, wood, etc. Which I might add, my husband has been very supportive about, bless his loving heart.

### My first competition

In my last letter, published in 2018, I mentioned how I would love to do a diorama and enter it in to my local show like all my other club friends have. And how I would like to share that experience with you all when I did. Well I did enter my first diorama in 2019. I wanted to enter again in 2020 but with Covid the show was cancelled. But never mind, hopefully it will be on again next year. Anyway, in the show, there is four different categories that our fine arts are judged on; 1: Everything is handmade, no manufactured items or kit work, 2: Handmade with minor inclusions of bought or manufactured items, 3: Handmade model ornaments and 4: Juniors - Handmade with minor inclusions of bought or manufactured items. Then there is a Champion Category for the most outstanding miniature from all categories which gets the Champion Ribbon. I didn't know about this until later. So, I went for it and chose Category 1, entering my L'il Critters Pet Shop.

from moulds that I bought online. It was a fun little project. I packed in everything that I thought a real pet shop should have. I would've added more but I ran out of room. My favourite item by far was my guinea pig hutch which I made out of popsicle sticks. I made pet food, a fish display unit, pet enclosures, a service counter, reptile tank, dog houses, bird houses, dog leashes, tennis balls, aquarium ornaments, fish food and a cash register with credit card machine, etc.

### Winners

Anyway, back to the competition, guess who won in my category – me, first place! I really wasn't expecting that, especially with all the other talents I've seen over the years. Not only did I come first but I also won the Champion Ribbon too! I wasn't the only winner celebrating, my friend Lynette Dawson from my Ipswich Mini Crafters Club won second place. I was so proud for her and for myself, it was her first entrance too. She made a western saloon which looked wonderful. Our group did well. I can't wait for 2021 show so I can display my latest diorama and see how I rank with that one. I also can't wait to see what my club does as well. 🏠



### The pet shop

In my pet shop, I made everything from my diorama box to my animals, which I made





# DollHouse

## & MINIATURE SCENE

### READER PROJECT:

### MY LITTLE PET SHOP

**CLICK & SWIPE TO VIEW IMAGES**







# PART 1

# Build your own bar scene!

Miniatures are, for many of us, a bit of escape from everyday life. Often, they are nostalgic reminders of better days or cherished times too. So, join in creating this cosy traditional pub scene, which will become bustling with activity over the next couple of issues. This month in part one of three, we'll make the bar itself, the bar stools and make sure there are working lights!



## YOU WILL NEED

### MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1-1/4in (32mm) Loew Cornell Woodsies circles or cut from sheetwood
- 1/12in (2mm) micro dowels (optional)
- 1/4in (6mm) wide grooved miniature casing
- Four stair balusters for each stool (e.g. Houseworks #7202)
- Six porch spindles (e.g. Houseworks #7009)
- Sequin pins
- 1/16in (1.6mm) thick sheetwood
- 1/16in x 1/4in (2mm x 6mm) stripwood or cut from sheetwood

- Mattboard
- 1/16in (2mm) diameter brass tubing
- Marble-effect paper
- Wide miniature crown cornice moulding
- Miniature baseboard
- Battery-operated set of 10 micro lightbulbs
- Eyelets to fit the lightbulbs
- Wood stain
- Satin varnish
- White glue
- Glue stick for paper
- Superglue

### TOOLS REQUIRED

- Small saw and mitre box
- Knife
- Steel ruler
- Needle files
- Emery board
- Small hand drills
- Wire cutters
- Ball stylus
- Transparent tape
- Grid paper & wax paper
- Wooden cocktail stick



## PREPARE BAR STOOL PARTS



### PREPARE BAR STOOL PARTS

**1** Cut four 3/16in x 1/2in (5x13mm) skirts and four 1/8in x 1-1/16in (3x27mm) stretchers from sheetwood. Cut the tip off four balusters to measure 2-3/8in (60mm) from the square end. Sand the top and bottom of each baluster 'leg' as shown in the template. Drill the legs to receive brass tubing. Repeat this step for two more stools. Stain these wood pieces and six Woodsies circles.

## BEGIN ASSEMBLY



**2** Fix the circles together in pairs and weight them until dry. Work on wax paper taped over the template to assemble two leg pairs for each stool. Cut brass tubing to length and superglue it into the prepared holes in two legs. Sand the angles of the skirt ends and glue the skirt between and even with the leg's tops, against the wax paper. Sand the stretcher ends and glue them where shown.

## FINISH THE STOOLS

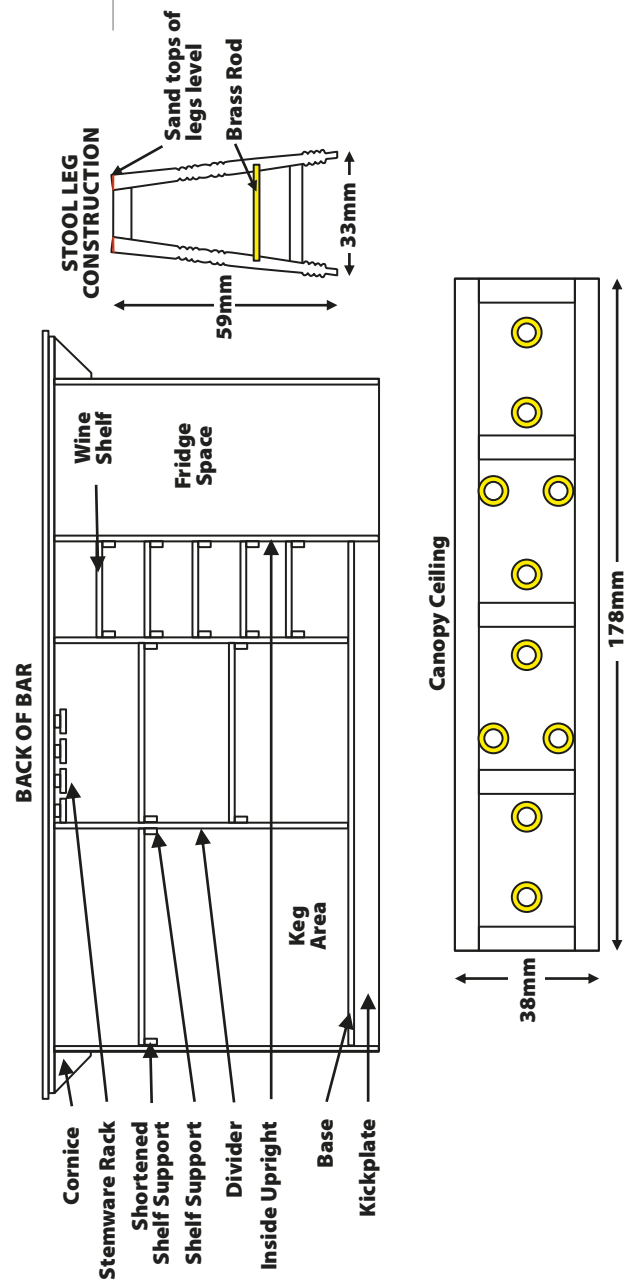
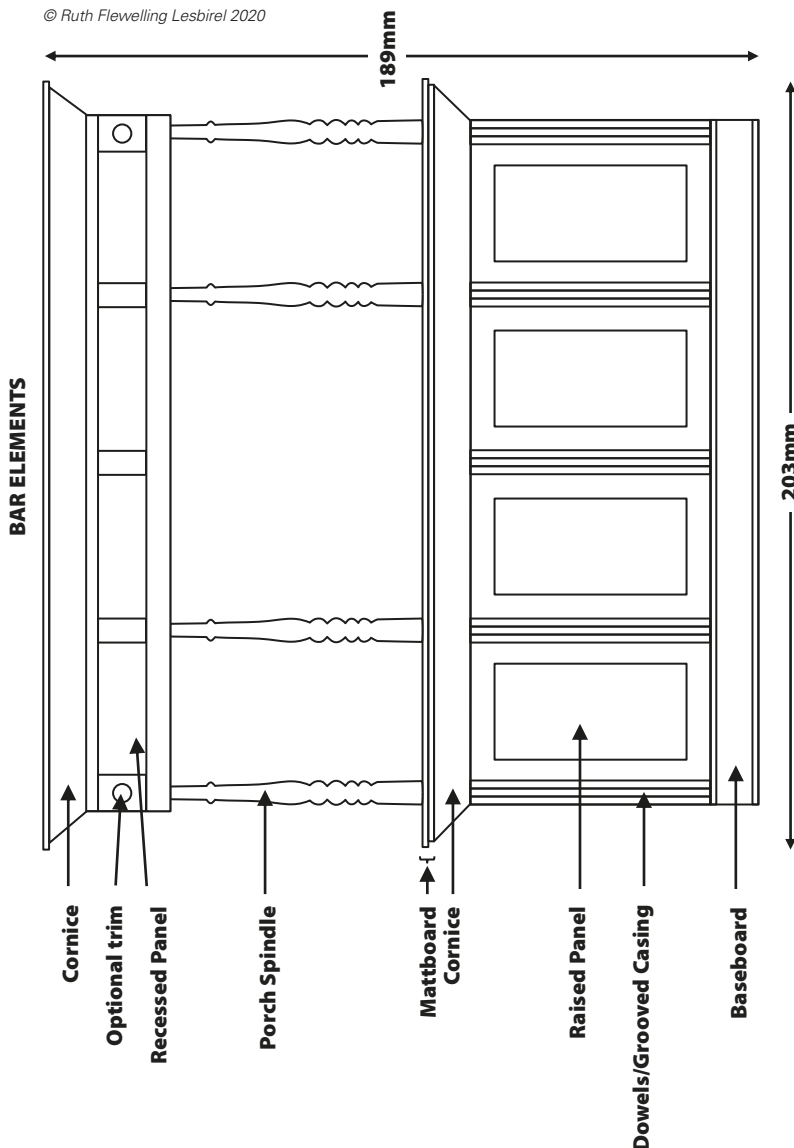


**3** Tape two leg pairs on edge over the template. Sand and glue a skirt and stretcher between them. Sand and glue the final skirt and stretcher in place. Before the glue sets, adjust the legs to ensure the assembly is square. Let dry. Glue the stacked seat onto the top. Repeat for the other two stools. ▶

## PUB TEMPLATE

Patterns at 50%

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## BAR COUNTERTOP



4 Cut a 2in x 8in (51 x 203mm) upper countertop and a 1-15/16in x 7-7/8in (49x200mm) lower countertop from mattboard. Glue them together with the long back edges even and with equal overhang on the front and ends. Cut the marble paper 3-1/2in x 9-1/2in (89x241mm). Fix the mattboard centred on the back of the marble paper, and smooth the paper onto the top. Press the paper over the edges and into the groove with the ball stylus. Mitre the corners and glue the overlap onto the underside of the counter.

## CUT AND STAIN BAR PIECES



5 Refer to the cutting list. Cut the bar front, ends, panels, dividers, shelves, canopy parts and kickplate from sheetwood. Stain these wood pieces, as well as 14 thin dowels, the baseboard, and the crown moulding, which will be cut to length later.

## ASSEMBLE THE BASIC BAR CASE



6 Secure the corner support pieces together in pairs. Glue a support pair to the back of each bar case's end wall, aligned with the front edge. Fix the bar front to the ends and supports, working over grid paper. Adhere the left base support to the left wall, against the support. Stick the right

base support under the base, aligned with the bar front and right edges. Cut a 1/8in (3mm) square out of the base's left corner, facing the bar front. Secure the base into the case, against the bar's front and onto the left-hand support. Glue the kickplate to the base support ends.

## INSIDE DIVIDERS AND SHELVES



7 Fix the shelf supports to the inside upright and vertical dividers where shown. Cut an 1/8in (3mm) square out of the keg area shelf's left corner, facing the bar front. Adhere a shortened support to the inside bar left wall, the left divider to the front wall and base, and the keg area shelf on its supports. Secure the middle divider and its shelves in the same way. Glue the inside upright against the open end of the base and bar front, and the wine shelves to their supports.

## STEMWARE RACK



8 Secure the counter onto the case with equal overhang on the ends and front. Fix a narrow stemware holder length centred on a wider stemware length. Repeat for three more 'stemware holders'. Fix these to the underside of the counter front-to-back, leaving space between each to slide the stem in between holders.

## Ruth's Top Tips!

*"Leave the long wood strips uncut until after staining, then touch up the cut ends with matching stain marker."*

*"Cut all trim pieces, especially mitres a bit longer and sand for the best fit."*



## TRIMMING THE BAR CASE



**9** Fix the mitred baseboard along the front and ends of the bottom of the case and mitred crown cornice along the top, against the countertop. Stick trios of wood dowels (or grooved casing) vertically between the baseboard and crown moulding on either side of each raised panel location. Rather than completely covering a panel back with glue, run a thin bead of glue just inside the back perimeter, to avoid the panel warping.

## CANOPY CEILING



**10** Cut the canopy ceiling from mattboard. Drill the ceiling holes just big enough to embed the eyelets even with the underside of the ceiling. Coffe the ceiling with stained grooved casings as shown in the template.

## CANOPY



**11** Construct the recessed panel front, ends, and flat back from stained sheetwood and 1/4in (6mm) wide stripwood. Tape the lights into the eyelets. Lay the battery pack on top. Glue the end panels to the edge of the ceiling and its coffers. Glue the front and back walls to the edge of the ceiling and to the end panels. Mitre stained crown cornice for the canopy's front and ends. Glue it overlapping the top stripwood.

## FINISH



**12** Trial-fit the porch spindles on the countertop, aligned with the dowel trios on the front and ends of the case. Cut the heads off six sequin pins. Drill the centre of the spindle locations in the counter and drill the porch spindles' centres. Embed sequin pins and glue the spindles onto the counter. Glue the canopy onto the spindle tops. Lay a stained sheetwood top on the canopy, so you have access to the battery pack. Varnish the bar and stools. 🏠

## NEXT MONTH

Next month's edition will look at starting to stock your bar with traditional items found in a traditional pub!





# Zoetrope

As a forerunner of the movies, the zoetrope 'wheel of life' was a popular Victorian optical toy. **Jane Harrop** shows us how to make our very own miniature version.



## YOU WILL NEED

### MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Thin (matt finished) craft card for drum frame and base
- Cream or white copier paper for illustrations strip
- Wooden spindle for stand
- 3/4" (19mm) diameter wooden craft toy wheel for stand
- 3/8" x 1/16" (9.5mm x 1.5mm) wooden washer bead for stand
- Wood stain
- Brass sequin pin

### TOOLS REQUIRED

- Access to a photocopier or scanner
- Compass or compass cutter
- Black marker pen
- Glue stick
- Tacky glue

The first zoetrope was made in 1834 by William Horner in England, but it didn't become popular until the 1860s.

It was made up from a simple drum which housed a strip of paper illustrations on the inside with each slightly changing in appearance. Slots were positioned at equal distances just above the pictures, and the drum placed on a central axis. The illustrations could be viewed through the slots and when the drum was spun, the pictures appeared to be moving.

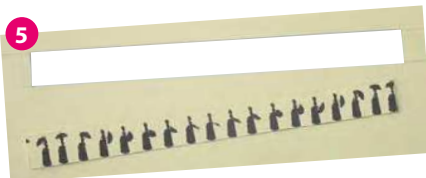
He also sold books that had a series of small images individually printed in the top corner on each page which created the same effect as the zoetrope when the pages were flipped... we've created one in the top right corner of this issue – give it a go and see what happens.



### INFORMATION

#### Supplier details

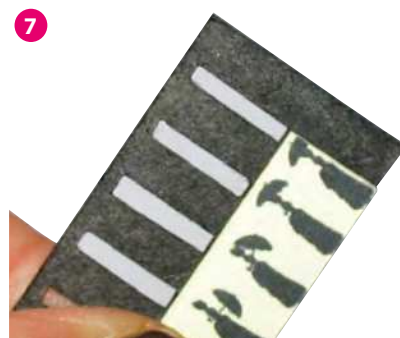
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**5** Scan or photocopy the illustrations strip on to copier paper. Use a craft knife and metal ruler to cut out.



**6** Curl the drum frame by gently rolling it around a cylindrical object like a pen.



**7** Use a glue stick to attach the illustrations to the band beneath the slots. The end of the strip must be flush with the outside of the last slot. Glue this section into place and work your way back. The end of the strip on the left hand side shouldn't be glued down as the drum shape needs to be formed first.

**8** Form the drum frame into a cylinder and glue the right hand end underneath the left hand end. The ends of the images strip should match up when you do this.



**9** Apply a small amount of tacky glue to the bottom edge of the drum and glue centrally on top of the base piece.



**10** Cut the spindle as shown and sand each end smooth.



**11** Drill down into the end with a fine drill bit. Colour all of the wood pieces with wood stain and buff with a clean piece of cloth to produce a soft sheen.



**12** Glue the rounded end of the column into the wooden craft disc. Once dry, glue the wooden washer bead centrally on top.



**13** Trim the pointed end off a brass sequin pin. Thread the pin through the hole in the base of the drum from the inside and then into the top of the column stand. Gently press down, but not too much, to allow the zoetrope to freely revolve.



**1** Scan or photocopy the drum frame on to thin matt finished craft card. The card needs to have no coating so it can absorb the marker pen and leave a flat matt finish. Using a sharp craft knife and metal ruler, carefully cut out the slots.

**2** Cut round the outer lines keeping the surrounding card attached as you do so.



**3** For the drum base, draw and cut out a 1-3/16" (30mm) circle from the same card. NB: The central point is required.

**4** Colour all sides and edges of the drum frame and base, using a black marker pen and leave to dry.





# Lockdown in miniature:

## PORTRAIT OF A CLUB



Clarks lockdown: Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy, self-isolating

The starting point for this letter is my scene for our 2019 club project, recreating a picture in 3D; for some reason I was smitten by the idea of reproducing David Hockney's iconic 1960s picture 'Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy'.

I loved making the background, but struggled with the figures, as I don't normally make figures or costumes, the wigs and costumes were looking rather dishevelled. By February last year, I was finding it hard to motivate myself, and let it slide... but then I thought if Mr and Mrs Clark were in lockdown, the flyaway hair, dishevelled looks and general lack of elegance would be an advantage! I renamed it 'Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy, Self-isolating' and added a stack of toilet rolls, the symbol of the early days in the run-up to lockdown. I later added a Zoom meeting on an iPad, the board game 'Monotony' and decided the scene was finished.

Meanwhile, what about my club, Poynton Miniaturists? When I think back, the run-up to lockdown had its own distinct atmosphere... we started with a sad event, the funeral of one of our long-standing members, Dorothy. We were all aware that the world was closing in on us, and all felt scared and apprehensive. Most of us went to our club meeting that same evening. For the first time we did all the things that we are now so familiar with: disinfecting, cleaning our hands etc, and a lot of the talk was about the virus, what we would do, who might be able to continue working, who would

be safer at home. There was a suggestion to form a WhatsApp group, to stay in touch and keep motivated, and we set it up that evening, though sadly missing one person who had no smart phone. We left the club, not knowing whether we would be able to meet the following month.

The very next day we were more or less in lockdown, the decision was out of our hands. One by one, our activities and socialising closed down.

We started messaging each other, and lots of funny or uplifting videos and photos were shared. I think probably those of us that had retired or were furloughed were thinking we could finally catch up on all our unfinished miniaturising projects, start new ones etc; but, as many people found, the psychological effects of lockdown led many of us to find concentration and motivation difficult, though a lot of useful work was done, and many diverse skills were shared, from gardening tips to art ideas, as well as miniature making.



▲ Clarks original: David Hockney's iconic original 1960s picture

Ann, a nurse, was advised to self-isolate due to her age, kept busy finishing a 1/24th model house. She was thinking of retirement even before lockdown, and decided the time was right. She continued her medical involvement making scrub bags for her working colleagues.

Hannah, retired, kept herself busy gardening and now the weather has changed, will do some miniaturising.

Jan, a primary school head teacher, working from home, was kept extremely busy planning new ways of supporting her learners; her workload increased, though she managed to spend a few hours each week for crafting.

Jayne, retired, has been embroidering and is making a workshop in her garage as she is going to teach herself upholstery to re-cover her grandmother's chairs.

Jen, who runs a business from home selling scale model LED lighting kits has continued to be very busy, but found time to finish and paint a model.

Mary, retired, who came recently to the digital age, but doesn't have a smartphone to join our WhatsApp, found the time to finish a 1/24th camping coach that she was working on a few years ago.

Olwyn, retired, has been gardening, making cards, knitting and enjoying reading, and like many others, is having a good clear out.

My own experience (I'm retired) is that I struggle to motivate myself, unless I have an external pressure; I started delivering food parcels through the community centre, and hot food via another community project; collected clothes and bikes for local families; finished three small miniature projects; read a lot, watched the whole of Upstairs Downstairs and became addicted to The Yorkshire Vet.

To some extent our club echoes the national divide between keyworkers working extra hard, and others having spare time, though making our contribution by 'staying home and saving the NHS' and helping where we could. We all missed friends and family, our club, and being able to hug our loved ones. We are all grateful for the things we have.

With most of us retired, none of us are keyworkers working in risky situations, though many of us have family or friends in that situation; we all rely daily on keyworkers, and we continue to be grateful to them all.

*Virginia Bazley, Secretary,  
Poynton Miniaturists Club*



# A Canadian Roombox with a UK Connection



We find out more about the story of this roombox, 'The Sewing Room' handmade with care by Debbie Walker from Regina, Canada.



Sharon Noble lived (up until the time of her marriage to Graham Noble) in Bradford, Yorkshire, England. The couple are also the Lord and Lady of Kelby. Following their move to Canada in 1979, they lived in Kamloops, British Columbia for twenty years and then moved to Canora, Saskatchewan in 1999. Graham was in the financial business and had his office in their home. Sharon played the role of secretary and she would look after their client's children when Graham had meetings with their parents. Over the years, they accumulated a large collection of toys along with autographed photographs. When they moved to Canora, they brought everything with them and then Graham decided to create 'Canada's Only Toy and Autograph Museum,' and they have had visitors from all over the world including France, Germany and Norway. They ran the museum together until Graham's passing in 2018. Sharon, as the Dowager Lady of Kelby, now oversees the museum.

This is where I come in. A number of years ago I pursued having some of my miniatures on display in museums. I found the website for 'Canada's Only Toy and Autograph Museum'

when I was Googling online and I called them and asked if they would be interested in displaying any of my miniatures in their museum. They said they would have room for two pieces, so I took my 4-room Victorian house and 2-room tea house to them where they were on display until they were brought back to Regina and sold. This year, I sold two of my pieces (a travel trailer and a 1:24 scale Victorian house) through their museum. This meant they



needed something new to put on display which leads me to my Sewing Room roombox.

This roombox is an original design and I started the project in December 2018 using a House of Miniatures roombox kit for the walls, floor and ceiling. For the furnishings, I made the walnut fabric display unit from a Dragonfly International kit along with the Fabric Bolt Kit and I made all the bolts that are standing upright in the display unit. I added two mannequins (the black one is Chrysnbon and the white one is metal). The chest of drawers and shelving unit is from the House of Miniatures line and I stained it with English chestnut stain (my personal favorite). The stitching stand in the corner and the rectangular table in the front were from my inventory. I added in the accessories, the ironing board and one battery operated light on the ceiling.

The finishing touches for this box had to be stitched pieces; I couldn't settle for prints. I had the two gold-framed pieces in my inventory and I stitched the sampler and the flower vase myself. I also made the frame for the flower piece. Lastly, I added the shelves so that I could fill up the rest of the wall space (without it looking crowded) and so that I could add more accessories.

This was a super fun project and it is now on display at the museum in Sharon's care! 🏠







The Toy and Autograph Museum



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# DollHouse

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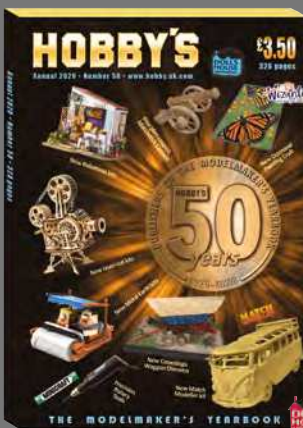
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**THE MODELMAKER'S YEARBOOK**



# We discover:

## MARLOES OLIEDAM, OF OLLIE'S DOLLHOUSE

Uber trendy with it's Scandi-style, this modern make by Marloes captured our eye with its calming style, clean lines and muted colours.

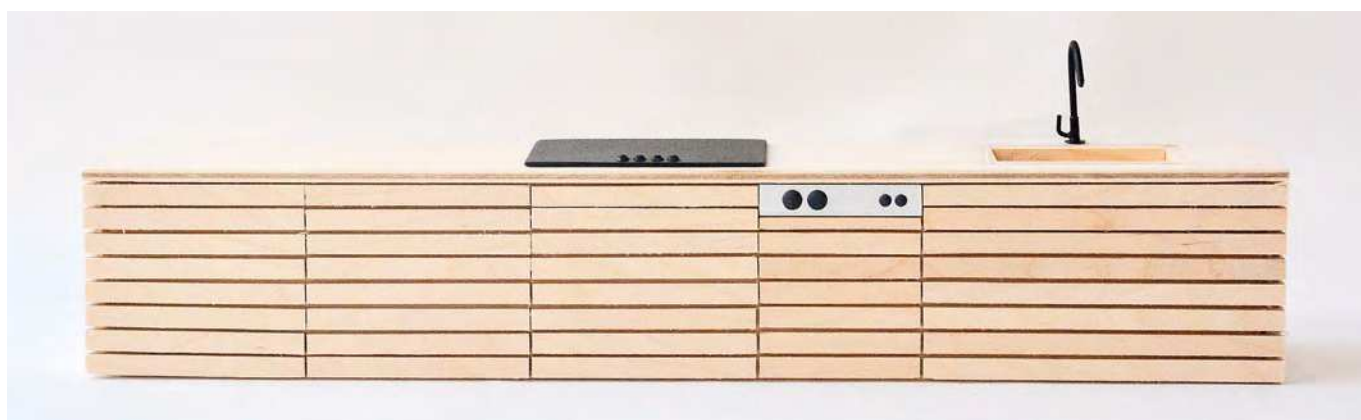


### How did the world of miniatures begin for you?

I have been making miniatures for 3 and a half years now. It all started with buying a second-hand dolls house for my youngest daughter Flori. It came with lots of carpet in various colours in the house, so the first day we had it I started to remove it and painted it all white. It made me think, where do people buy nice, modern pieces for a dolls house? After some research, I changed my question to how do I make modern dolls house items, because I couldn't find what I was looking for.

My father came to our house and had some ideas about a kitchen, he wanted to make the tap for it since he loves working with metal and steel. He also bought me my first sawing machine to make some smaller items. I really enjoyed making it and added a photo on Facebook in a group for dolls house makers (owned by Lolkje's Dollhouse at the time). The tap my father made was in the photo, so many people were asking if I would sell them. I think in the end he had to make about 250 small taps! 





“There are about 10,000 photos of dolls house items saved on my phone!”

### What made you want to start a business?

Lolkje of Lolkje's Dollhouse works near my house and she wanted to come and see me and my miniatures for herself. We were discussing what to make and she said do you have an Instagram account. I didn't then,

but now I have 7200 followers and last year I also created a website because I was always busy answering questions via Instagram and letting people know what I could make. They can now see what I sell on the website. My whole collection actually started with special requests. People letting me know what they wanted and if I could make it. Now it is more standardised.

### Where do you make your minis?

Because I saw a lot, I mostly work from the garage. The packing of the orders and sewing I do in my office, which is located behind the garage. It is also my children's play room! They love to create too.

### What inspires you?

I get my inspiration from photos customers send me - I love it when customers come to me with a photo - and also from Pinterest. There are about 10,000 photos of dolls house items saved on my phone so I have a lot to choose from! I love the Scandinavian style.

### What do you enjoy making most?

I make kitchens and all sorts of furniture, but also macrame items and plants. I just bought a pottery machine to try something new. 🏠



### INFORMATION

Instagram: @ollies.dollhouse

Website: <http://www.olliesdollhouse.nl>







# Recreating history

When Angela Law got in touch to share her fantastic miniature carriage we just had to find out more. The DMHS team talked to Angela to discover the inspiration behind her marvellous makes.



Angela's personal dolls house

Angela, born in Oxford, UK but now residing in Hirschberg, Thuringia in Germany, had been making miniatures for herself for around 10 years to decorate her own dollhouse when she was asked by a fellow private collector of all things miniature if she could make them a totally unique and bespoke piece. This has since led to the creation of Dandyllion Miniatures launched in July 2020. "I had been purchasing items for some time but finally opened my own amidst the pandemic" Angela told us, "I think, like most miniaturists, I started buying dollhouse furniture for my dollhouse and realised I was mutilating and adding to these purchases to try and make them resemble what I wanted them to be in style and quality. I figured I might as well be making pieces myself."

Angela's style edges towards historical pieces, created in Gothic, Tudor, Medieval, Jacobean, Georgian, and antiquarian/museum styles and Angela openly admits she seems to have a thing for beds, "The bed has become a place of luxury to me! I would not exchange it for all the thrones in the world – that's what Napoleon Bonaparte said" she adds. "That said, I do venture to the unusual now and again such as with my Medici carriage. I also like to add a bit of symbolism to some pieces and experiment a little so as to go down avenues that can sometimes result in pieces that would not look out of place in Game of Thrones or Lord of the Rings."

The 1:12 scale 15th century style carriage mentioned is Angela's latest project and based on the original carriage used in one



◀▶ Medici carriage, dressed dolls by Costume Cavallade



"My top tip to any collector would be always choose what delights you, as a maker make what you love and you will delight others."





Day bed



Half tester bed

of Angela's favourite television programmes, the Medici series. Based on Medici The Magnificent and broadcast between 2016 and 2019, the series is political family drama set in early fifteenth century Florence. In the drama the carriage used was actually an original from the 15th century that was found and restored. "The carriage is handmade completely by me except for the dolls, these were supplied by the wonderful Theresa Thompson of Costume Cavalcade ([www.costumecavalcade.co.uk](http://www.costumecavalcade.co.uk)). The horses are by Magic Mini House ([www.etsy.com/shop/MagicMiniHouse](http://www.etsy.com/shop/MagicMiniHouse)). I have been waiting two months now for some little lanterns to arrive from Russia to hang on the back hooks, but that are delayed in the post due to Covid."

The majority of Angela's projects are made with wood as the main material, her favourite material to work with. "Sometimes I simply find a material and say to myself that would be perfect for... and I will just make it. I am not a great organiser so this can at times be a chaotic dance of going back and forth and searching for bits and pieces. Other times I will get inspiration from a scene in a movie

or documentary, or from a castle or grand house I've just visited, and I will go away and draw up the plans (as I did with the Medici coach) and then start to select the material for working with. I then overlay the materials on the plan and then piece together. I normally tend to make things by eye rather than by drawing and plans, which is probably why I found the Medici coach harder as I had to take my time. I also had to research the workings of a carriage including wheel fixtures and harnessing of horses. I now try to work out how long a piece will take to make. I didn't plan for one of the rooms in my own dolls house and it took me several weekends just to make the books. I didn't realise it would take literally hundreds of books to fill the book cases I had made and so I now always try to, if necessary, split projects, for example make 10 books then make one bookcase, eat, sleep then repeat!"

If you look at Angela's work you'll be treated to a range of work straight out of the history books. "I have always loved costume dramas and theater including: The Tudors, The Medici, Pride & Prejudice, Poldark, Outlander

and I will throw in Gladiator and Henry V (the Kenneth Branagh version) as well because it would simply be a crime not to. I am not ashamed to say that William Shakespeare has, in desperate times, made life endurable and has also been somewhat of an influence in my pieces along with poets such as Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey from 1516 to 1547 (the quiet mind being my favourite). I like to think that my pieces look like they have a history behind them and ideally a great story.

With 10 years-worth of making behind her, in a dedicated craft room at home, we were interested to know if there's been a stand out favourite project, "I think recently my favorite project was my Georgian swing boat. Everything came together beautifully. My medici carriage turned out wonderful but there were times it made me crazy as it was quite a complicated piece with many small parts and I did have to walk away and come back to it a few times, this aside it comes a close second."



#### INFORMATION

[www.etsy.com/shop/DandyLionMiniatures](http://www.etsy.com/shop/DandyLionMiniatures)

Angela's favourite project;  
a swing boat

Silver cradle



# DollHouse & MINIATURE SCENE

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# The Whole Kit & Caboodle:

## 'SIGNED AND SEALED' PROJECT KIT



Call me old-fashioned, but I'm a stickler for writing 'thank you' letters to show my appreciation for all my lovely Christmas presents. An email simply won't do, and in any case, many of my older relatives are not tech savvy! I sit down at my desk, bring out the Basildon Bond, fill my fountain pen, and dig out a few first class stamps. If you're 'old school' like me, you'll adore this delightful Jane Harrop project kit. It comes with everything, and I mean EVERYTHING that you see here, making it spectacular value for money. Jane even includes a really handy jig for getting your joints square, and you'll find it a handy addition to your tool box for other projects.

Each kit contains a lovely wooden desk and chair to make, plus: letter opener, letters, cards, envelopes, invoices and other ephemera; pen, capstan inkwell, bottle of ink, pen wipe and pencils; books and a copy of *Woman's World*; rocker blotter, sealing wax and wax seal; stamps and stamp dish; magnifying glass, letter clip,



brass bell, candles and candlesticks; a package of brown paper and string... and all for just £35. This kit certainly gives a lot for the money.

Like Jane's other kits, this is good quality, thoughtfully designed and affordable. It can be made at home, or be used as a club project in which everyone buys their own kit and you each personalise it. Paint the desk, stain it, varnish it or decoupage it, the possibilities are endless. Make it pretty in pink, or go for a dark, masculine look. With this kit, the choice is yours!

Although this kit is 1/12th scale, most of the other kits available come in 1/12th, 1/24th and in many cases, 1/48th scale too. Jane's clear instructions and the step-by-step colour illustrations make them so easy to make.

The range of kits cover so many eras, including Edwardian, Arts and Crafts, 1930s and Art Deco, 1940s and utility, and even a



fab 1970s retro range of G-Plan and other iconic mid-century pieces. You will find Jane's pieces in virtually all of my own dolls houses and miniature scenes because they are just so versatile and easy to personalise as the bare wood pieces lend themselves so readily to a finish that matches your décor and era.

### THE FACTS

**Buy from:** Jane Harrop  
([www.janeharrop.co.uk](http://www.janeharrop.co.uk))

**Cost:** £35

**Comes with:** Absolutely everything you can see in the photographs on the desk and chair.

**Additional materials needed:** Glue; paint or wood stain; polish or satin varnish.

**Specialist tools needed:** None

**Time:** A day

**Experience:** Beginner

**Top tip:** Make the accessories while the glue and paint on the desk and chair dry.

## READER GIVEAWAY!

Would you like one of these delightful lovely 'Signed and Sealed' Jane Harrop Kits? One lucky reader will win this Kit in our exclusive prize draw.

To enter simply visit [www.dollshouseandminiaturescene.co.uk](http://www.dollshouseandminiaturescene.co.uk) and click on giveaways!

Competition closes 31st January 2021. Good luck!

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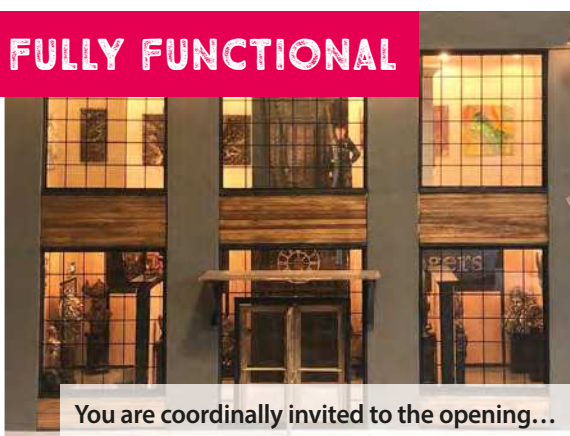
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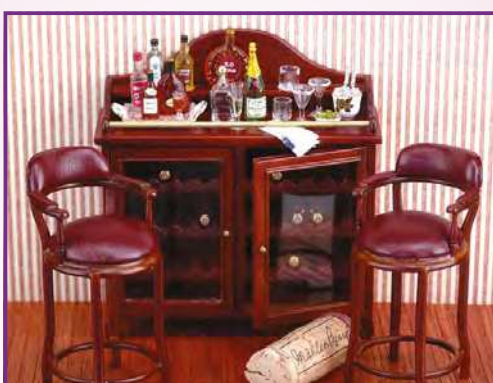


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