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PROJECTS,
INSPIRATION
& MORE!

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A MINI MASTERPIECE!

TOP TABLE DÉCOR



SUPER INTERIORS



UNIQUE IDEAS



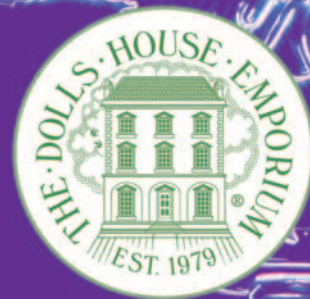
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WELCOME

to the December edition!

Christmas is well and truly here, so we have to make sure our mini makes are in the Christmas spirit! We have even more projects for you to try this issue, starting with Maive Ferrando's stunning winter wonderland Christmas cake on page 20, the icing really does look good enough to eat! We have not one, but two table centrepieces, in the form of a candelabra on page 34 and a modern festive tree, decorated with tiny baubles on page 48. The perfect additions to your seasonal scenes.

You will be amazed at the reader projects this issue, we couldn't believe the detail that had gone into making scenes inside sliced baubles – such an original idea by Conal Oakes! This year, he has made a scene from a book his wife loves – what a beautiful present to give. Elsewhere, after 18 months Miniatura was back! With the world becoming more and more 'normal', Moi Ali was there to tell us what it was like.

All this, plus plenty more fascinating reads, competitions and more!

Happy crafting!

The DHMS team

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

Darren Scala, Sadie Brown,
Moi Ali, Bea Broadwood,
Maive Ferrando, Beate Klotz &
Jan's Minis



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MINI MASTERPIECE



P20

Good enough to eat

SET YOUR TABLE



P34

With tiny décor

READER CREATIONS



P42

Incredible detail



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Last month Moi Ali wrote about Nancy Haponiuk in 'It Takes Two', now she's back to see Nancy's other houses.



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The closing date for all entries is
31st December 2021. Good luck!

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- FASCINATING FEATURES
- SOCIAL MEDIA STUNNERS
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- DETAILED MAKES AND QUICK MAKES
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EASY TO FOLLOW STEP BY STEP PROJECTS FOR ALL SKILLS LEVELS

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Meet the Miniaturist: Al Chailosky/Sculpture Artist

Darren Scala chats with Al Chailosky, who recreates restaurants, bars and clubs from another era in small scale, which have made an impact on his life, but have been torn down in gentrified neighbourhoods in New York and Miami.



You have an impressive background, having studied art at the prestigious Rhode Island School of Design and NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, followed by contributions to Broadway, fashion, and art... what was your earliest inspiration?

I have many inspirations from different times in my life. First was watching colour television, I saw magic! It was the opening scene to *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*. The camera panned around through this amazing miniature city. I get chills to this day watching that scene. Love at first sight, I guess.

You've talked about your interest in '3D art' – can you talk more about how this relates the type of miniatures you create?

I always loved 3D. I always saw my art as not just on paper or canvas, but as '360 degree' – you see it from all different angles. I also loved to build stuff and was always a tinkerer. I was interested in theatre and did the school plays (set design) and started to create these worlds. It was one of the ways I expressed myself.

Your work captures moments in time from familiar places, which have made an impact on your life – what does creating this work mean to you?

I love collecting memories and remembering parts of my life through actual physical objects, and seeing them and reliving those memories. I build structures from all my photographs that I have taken – I have like 20,000 photos! It's an interest for me to capture the life of these places – what they mean to me and to other people too.

Let's talk a bit about your process - what is the first thing you think of before beginning a piece?

The very first thing I do when starting a piece, is pick the place I want to sculpt and the story I want to tell. I'm not interested in doing random places. My story is just as important as the art. Each sculpture is both a work of art, and a piece of my life and a story of me.

What are some of the materials you use to sculpt your work?

I use everything. I collect 'things' and objects that I can tinker with, take apart and rebuild to create miniature versions of the original. I spend as much time in hardware stores looking for objects, as I do in art stores getting materials. The glass from the gumball machines in my newspaper stand, was made using perfume bottles, glue caps, buttons, wood, plastic and little things created from paper.

I'm struck by your sense of realism. Can you describe how you're able to capture these places with such amazing detail?

The number one thing is observation and looking beyond the obvious, and knowing the subject matter you are doing. You walk around sidewalks in New York and they all look like they have these black dots everywhere, and it is years of people dropping gum which has been stepped on! We used to call it the "New York measles." You have to observe that and that has to be part of the piece too.

I'm excited for your solo exhibition and to see so much of your work in one show, can you tell us more about it?

'Lost but not Forgotten' is both a historical trip and autobiographical adventure of the late 80s and 90s. It is of places that have both significant meaning (either socially or architecturally), but also have personal meaning to me, where I have experienced life in those places. This is about my story that I wanted to tell through my art. 🏠



INFORMATION

Lost But Not Forgotten featuring work by Al Chailosky will be on view now through December 12, 2021 at Big Arts Sanibel Island, in the Dunham Family Gallery on the West coast of sunny Florida. Catch the replay from my Meet the Miniaturist livestream with Al Chailosky on my YouTube channel here:

bit.ly/DThomasYT





A house for all seasons

Kristine Hanna shares how she created a year in the life of the miniature garden.



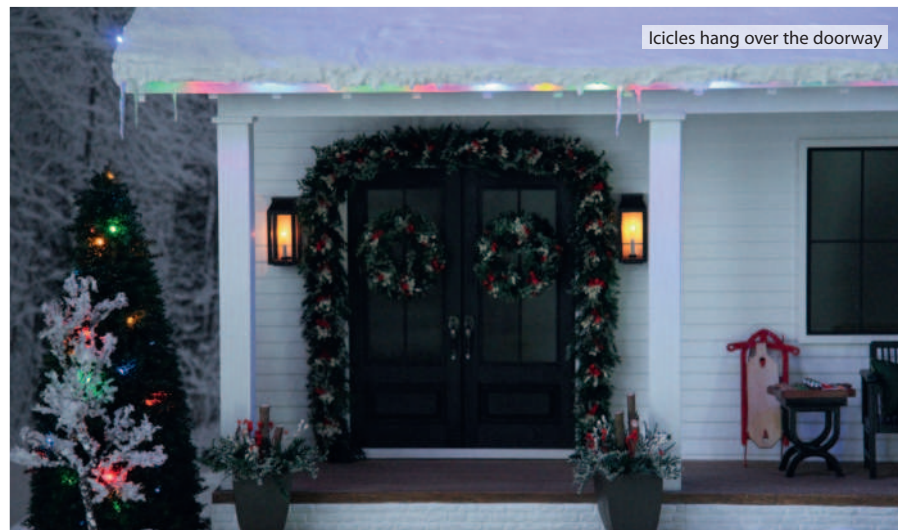
Christmas lights

It may be a beachside bungalow kit, but Kristine Hanna's house for all seasons is all about the land. Kristine's dormer bungalow exterior, and the surrounding garden, brightens the darkest nights of the year with Christmas lights to get you in the festive spirit. The brightly coloured lights then





morph into the colours of summer as her garden takes us on a journey through the seasons, ending with the rich, deep shades of autumn as the crisp leaves tumble to the ground. "I bought the beachside bungalow kit specifically for the porch and the exterior. I loved seeing other miniaturists change their dolls house porches seasonally, but I didn't have a spot to do so myself until this dolls house," explains Kristine. "At the moment, I've barely touched the interior! I did kit-bash the front porch to give myself more room to decorate and play. I took away the railings and changed the columns for better access, and I also switched the front door to a double door. These changes influenced a lot of my design choices for the décor."



At night, it's the lights which add the colour to the winter scene, something Kristine describes as having that 'wow factor', but during the day the festive colour comes courtesy of the lavish and beautiful wreaths and garlands, made by Michelle Currie of Tiny Naturals Gift Shop. "They add the perfect pop of colour to the white landscape. I also made some matching planters and added some thin birch tree sticks. The greenery is probably my favourite part of this scene, but it's the snowy backdrop that brings it all together!"

A winter cold snap

Kristine's sweeping winter landscape is exceptional and the perfect place to draw inspiration for our own seasonal scenes. [PH](#)



Creating festive vibes on the veranda



With a deep layer of snow, this is definitely a prolonged cold snap, but how did Kristine manage to achieve such an incredibly realistic effect? "The snow was a bit of trial and error," she admits. "I first covered my roof in foam board and then added modelling paste to create dimension and snowdrifts. Once that had dried, I used glue and sprinkled a snowflake powder, meant for models on top, along with some fine iridescent glitter. However, if I were to do this again, I would use spray adhesive glue and do layers of snow because I found I didn't get a thick enough layer of snow. In the end, I piled a lot of extra loose snow on top, which worked for the photographs but was a bit more frustrating to work with and clean up!" The icicles hanging from the veranda's sloping roof are one of the most intriguing elements of the entire scene. "The foam board layer did make it easy to add the extra icicles and snowdrifts on the sides of the roof. The icicles were made with water effects by Woodland Scenics. They were simple to make; you spread a little line of the gel on wax paper and let it dry overnight. Then you could peel them off and attach them to the roof."

As Kristine mentions, the loose snow within the scene was challenging to remove, one problem with a miniature winter garden being that, if you decide to change things around, the snow doesn't miraculously disappear with the warmer weather. Finding it a useful tool, Kristine actually used a miniature 1/12th scale snow shovel to help remove the snow when it came to reworking the scene for summer! "Returning the house to its pre-snow fall condition was far more complicated than I ever expected. Even though I tried to protect the dolls house, I did damage areas of the roof. And the little snowflakes got everywhere! I was still vacuuming snow I had missed cleaning up months later in August! It got stuck in the roof asphalt as well, which was probably the most frustrating thing. So, while it was pretty, I don't honestly think I would do another temporary snow scene quite like that again."

The summer garden



Summer flowers



In full bloom

The days of summer

Kristine talks with equal enthusiasm about each season and explains how she tried to ensure the core structure of the garden remained the same as we move throughout the year. "I didn't have the same shrubs and trees to work with each time, so I made some substitutes that fit the scene better," she explains. "I look at it now as perhaps this is a change of seasons over a few years, so the landscape has more room to grow or move. I did use the evergreen cedar mini trees and round bushes in the front to give some continuity."

Moving into summer, Kristine says this version of the scene was the season she most enjoyed gathering plants for. In fact, it was over two years ago when Kristine first began collecting the amazing collection of summer flowers she brings together within the

garden, the centrepiece being two beautiful hanging baskets by Kraig Councill from Creative Eye Miniatures. "They are so lush and vibrant, with hundreds of tiny leaves and petals that look incredibly realistic! I decided to leave the double doors bare this time so that the hanging baskets could take centre stage," enthuses Kristine. "I tried to stick to pinks, purples, whites, and pops of yellows to coordinate with the baskets. I love the purple lisianthus Kraig made, as well as the gardenia and daylily by SDK miniatures. As August started coming to an end, I knew I didn't have time to order more plants, so I decided to make some myself. I made coneflowers, more black-eyed Susans, marigolds, and cosmos with my laser cutter and craft supplies to fill in the gaps of my flower bed. It has an overgrown and wildflower look, and the colours pop with the white exterior."

Fall into autumn

With burnished oranges and golds, the autumn garden expertly recreates everything you would expect from those weeks approaching Halloween and Thanksgiving. There are fallen leaves, pumpkins sitting on the step up to the veranda, where you'll also find a tray of Halloween cupcakes waiting on the table, and of course, the stunning tree lined background. This season was also an exciting partnership with Hobby Builders Supply and Miniatures.com, who supplied Kristine with pieces to be used for autumn, including the wonderful bales of hay decorating the veranda. Michelle at Tiny Naturals Gift Shop was again responsible for the fabulous seasonal door wreaths and it was these which provided Kristine with her starting point for this season's project. "The wreaths took the scene to a whole new



level and drew the focus to the double doors," she says. "I also designed the lanterns on this house specifically for this porch. I love the way they add a warm glow! HBS and Miniatures.com supplied several fall decor items like apples, treats on the table, sunflowers, and tall yellow and orange shrubs. They make it look as if the porch is being enjoyed and lived in! The backdrop was the last thing I added, and it reminded me of those precious few weeks in fall where the leaves are at their most vibrant."

Kristine is widely known for the extremely high standard of her outdoor scenes, not least of which is her summer patio scene, seen in the June issue of the magazine. However, even as an experienced miniature landscape artisan, her house for all seasons brought new challenges. "My landscaping experience has been slightly different because so much of what I have done is temporary. It's been gratifying to create different seasons with just one dolls house, but at the same time, it's a challenge to not permanently glue down all the elements. It can be messy, and it's easy for things to wear and break down." Kristine also has some advice for those looking to venture into the art of miniature landscaping themselves. "I would highly suggest working in layers and getting the soil or snow to adhere to your base for the least amount of mess. Overall, gluing down all the components will make creating your scene much more manageable and produce very realistic effects. I found my local hobby train store had a lot of excellent materials for landscaping."

As we talked, Kristine was busy planning new Christmas miniatures, but looking ahead says she loves the beachside bungalow's whitewashed façade and anticipates being able to create further ideas over time. This includes a potential return to the miniature garden for a final seasonal transformation. "I had initially only planned to do fall, winter, and then a spring/summer combo. But now, I think I will do a separate spring scene in the coming year. I like the idea of having a garden of tulips and daffodils and having another set of wreaths on the doors! It will truly be an all-season dolls house." 🏠



INFO

For more information please visit:
www.paperdollminiatures.com

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December 4th 2021 11.30 – 18.30

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L & A St Leger
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Little House at the Priory

Michael Mortimer
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The Miniature Hat Boutique
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Newtonwood Miniatures
Nicola Mascall Miniatures
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Pocket People
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With social media proving a hub of talented miniaturists of all skill levels, we love to delve into the world of online to discover what's new and emerging. This issue we're bringing you talents of Debby Wolf...



A festive welcome

Debby Wolf lives in the Black Forest between Freudenstadt and Stuttgart in Hailerbach. She got her first dolls house when she was just five years old. It was not a commercially available one but, rather, was made by the friend of her parents, and was for Debby to share with her sister.

And that, dear reader, is how this story began. Sadly, the family moved to another continent and Debby and her sister had to leave most of their possessions behind – including the treasured dolls house. Her new replacement was a plastic Playmobil Victorian dolls house. By then, though, Debby was hooked on miniatures.

Debby takes up the story: "I love renovating full-size houses, and that's also the reason I love the dolls house hobby so much. In the miniature world I can renovate as much as I wish, as often as I wish! I can even buy wonderful furniture which I'd love to own and put in my real, full-size house. I have so much freedom in the small world."

She continued: "For obvious reasons, my husband does not want to change the décor



Living area



Kitchen

and furniture in our home every year, but in my dolls house it's up to me. I can do a make-over or refresh the interior as often as I like!"

Debby had the difficult decision of deciding on a colour scheme and style for her new dolls house. "At first, I thought I'd just paint it white," she explained. "But then I decided to build a new one in the Farmhouse Style. Outside it is like a Victorian house, and

inside I have given it a Farmhouse/Hamptons Style with a lot of white."

Like so many of us, Debby saw a few dolls houses on social media but decided that she wanted to have her own interior style: "I started building the new dolls house in 2014. Since that time, I have been collecting and searching out all the small items I need for the look I have tried to achieve. 📺▶"

I don't usually like dolls in a dolls house, but I saw some made by Willowtree that were the perfect scale, so I put some characters inside the house. I think they work well."

Debby likes many interior styles and is heavily influenced by the current trends of French, Shabby Chic and Scandinavian design. She is contemplating creating some room boxes to showcase different styles. Given her interest in interiors large and small, it's hard to believe that she is not an interior designer, so good is her eye for design. I was surprised to hear that she actually works as a nurse! She told me: "Sometimes I spot some small items in my clients' homes. When they hear about my hobby, many give me some of their little items if they are the correct scale!"

I wondered what elements of miniature making Debby likes most: the short answer

seems to be... all of it! "I like to make my own signs in farmhouse style. Oh, and I love making bedding, pillows and other soft furnishings. I also love decorations for all seasons, especially Christmas décor. Renovating floors and walls, changing rooms, sawing stuff... I love it all!"

With her daughter she sells dolls house furniture and other items. Her daughter is a polymer clay food artist and she makes 1/12 miniatures which she sells on Etsy under the name GiuliasMinis – and, of course, she helps her mum with her dolls house! "For me it is a hobby," she explained. "For my daughter it is a business. Her most unusual commission was to equip a kebab shop. Once she was asked to supply miniature Koi carp too." It's always heart-warming to see a passion for miniatures being passed down through the generations! 🏠



Music room



Splash splash is this antique bath



Pretty bathroom



- ▲ More living space
- ◀ Another view point
- ▼ Debby's little cabinet cafe



The new dining room ready for Christmas



Nursery

Cake made by Debby's daughter



INFORMATION

Check out Debby's latest images on

Instagram: [Instagram.com/whitegreystone](https://www.instagram.com/whitegreystone)

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Winter wonderland Christmas cake

"I love the look of a magical winter wonderland cake! In this case, I went for a chocolate and white frosting cake with little rosemary pine trees and winter berries covered in sugar, but feel free to play around with colours and Christmassy decorations, why not try adding gingerbread men cookies or pine trees made of ice-cream cones?" Maive

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Burnt umber (dark brown), white, olive green, translucent, red, alizarin crimson plus some scrap polymer clay
- FIMO Liquid (or other liquid polymer clay)
- White/clear craft sand
- Water-based varnish
- White acrylic paint

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Blades
- Toothbrush
- Round cutters in two slightly different sizes
- Tiles (to work on and bake your cake on)
- Toothpick
- Wire
- Side cutting pliers
- Flat and tapered silicone sculpting tool
- Flat metal sculpting tool
- Pointy silicone tool
- Pasta machine/rolling pin
- File
- Hand drill

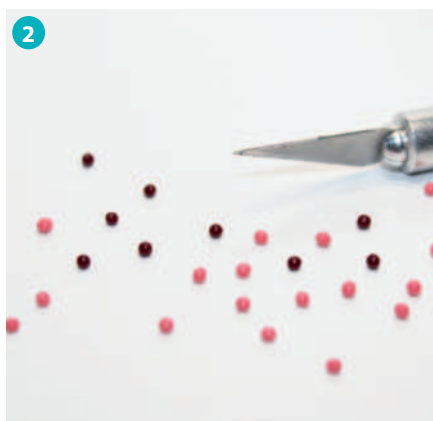


Maive's Top Tip!

"To create the snowy look in the photos, I used white chalk and applied it on my cake using a sieve just before taking the pictures. You can also sprinkle white or clear craft sand on the scene or even a little white glitter dust. If you want this to be permanent on the frosting, add it before baking it in step 7. Alternatively, sprinkle it immediately after applying varnish."



1 After conditioning some dark brown clay (I used Premol in Burnt UMBER), put it through the thickest setting of your pasta machine and cut out three circles. Place them on the same tile you are going to bake them on and texture them thoroughly with a toothbrush. Put them to one side.



2 Take some clay in alizarin crimson (a dark red) and red mixed with the same amount of translucent, roll them into strands and cut lots of tiny even pieces. Then roll them into balls.



3 Roll the little balls in some FIMO Liquid and using a brush, pick them up individually and dip them in clear or white craft sand to make them look covered in sugar. Bake all the berries, and the cake sponges, for 10-15 minutes at 110°C.



4 In the meantime, take some scrap clay and after conditioning it, put it through a thinner setting of your pasta machine, say setting #3. Cut out two circles using a slightly smaller cutter. Once your cake sponges are out of the oven and cool, stack the layers together, sandwiching the smaller layers of scrap clay in between, bonding with FIMO Liquid. Make sure the cake is nice and straight and bake again for 10 minutes.



5 Take some white polymer clay and mix it with a little FIMO Liquid to create the frosting. This should be very firm so that it holds while baking. Once your cake is cool, use a toothpick to fill in the gaps between the sponges with the white frosting. Then using a flat silicone sculpting tool (or a clean toothpick), scrape all the excess frosting away, wiping your tool between each swipe.



6 Take some more frosting and spread it on the top using a flat sculpting tool. If you like, you can leave the top barely covered in frosting as in step 5, so that it looks like the crumb coat. Bake again for 10 minutes.



7 Leave the cake to cool, before drilling a hole where you'd like the first little rosemary pine tree to be. Take a piece of wire and trim it to the desired length. I filed the top into a point so that it didn't look square, before adding it to the cake.



8 Brush a little FIMO Liquid around the base of the wire. Take a small piece of olive-green clay and roll it into a ball. Slide the ball through the wire until you reach the cake and press the clay down to attach it to the cake, using a sculpting tool to blend it upwards toward the wire.



9 Roll some more olive-green clay into a thin strand and cut lots of tiny pieces. After you cut the first piece, keep rolling the end of the strand into a point to that it doesn't look square or roll the pieces slightly after cutting them. Use a pointy tool to arrange the little pieces around the wire. TIP: You can also paint the wire green or brown or use antique bronze wire too.



10 Make a few more trees in the same way. I suggest sculpting the trees one at a time before making any more holes, so you don't run the risk of making the trees too close together. Bake for 10 minutes.



11 Once the cake is cool, dip the berries in a little FIMO Liquid and arrange them to taste. At this point, you can add more branches to the trees if you like and bake one last time for at least 20 minutes.



12 Let the cake cool down before dry brushing a little white acrylic paint on the trees. Glaze with water-based matte or gloss varnish and your cake is complete. 🏠

Christmas Igloo

We love how Hazel Wyle has kindly shared how she created this fantastic igloo, with a simple step-by-step guide!



To start my project, I blew up the balloon to the size needed for the cake board. The widest part of the balloon was about the same size as the cake board. I covered the balloon in torn pieces of newspaper, stuck on with wallpaper paste (papier mâché). I had to do several layers, allowing them to dry in between. I repeated the process until the paper could not be squeezed any more. This made sure the 'igloo' was sufficiently rigid.

Once dry, I popped the balloon, and marked the bottom of the igloo and the opening for the front.

I cut around with an old pair of scissors and then marked the bottom of the igloo onto the cake board. Before I attached the igloo, I covered the base with plaster of Paris. Because of the silver, the plaster would not attach, so I scored through the board. It could be left silver or painted. I used a cardboard tube to make a chimney. I had to carefully cut a curved section from it, so it would fit to the curves of the igloo. It didn't have to be too precise. Before



Making the marks



▲ Making the chimney

attaching the chimney, I used brick-patterned paper, glued to the inside, because I was putting in a fireplace. I cut a square hole into the back of the igloo for a fireplace.

Before I stuck any parts together, I painted the inside of the igloo with left-over white emulsion. Before the paint was dry, I blew glitter onto it (I was careful to close my eyes since I was expecting it to come back onto my face, but that never actually happened, since it stuck to the wet paint). The igloo was attached to the board, and chimney sections were put together with more papier mâché. It didn't really matter that the paper covered over some of the painted areas. I just repainted when it was dry and sprinkled in a little more glitter.

I decided to add some lighting into this, so I wired up a spare dolls house light before decorating the outside. I also added a spare fire I had. Once this was done, I covered the outside with plaster of Paris, painted and blew on more glitter. This could simply be painted without the plaster or lighting. A little battery light could be added. You can see from the picture, the brick back in the fireplace. I added a mantelpiece by carving a scrap of wood. It had to be quite curved at the back in order to fit the curve of the igloo. I made a couple of brick sides to hold it up.



▲ Lighting up the igloo

Before I did anything else, I decided to use a small socket, as I wanted to put in a small Christmas tree with lights. I used a bit more plaster to cover the wire, and took it out



Time to furnish

through the fireplace. I realised that if I had used a larger board, I could have had other decorative items on the outside, so I stuck the whole thing onto a 12-inch square cake board. I glued the socket strip to this for plugging in the light, fire and socket.

Whilst the plaster was still wet, I used the wellingtons to make footprints in it.



▲ Footprints

I made the snowman using cotton wool balls and covered him in plaster. The pole was made from a piece of broom handle with a wooden door knob on top. Painting the pole was the hardest part of the entire project! I made the axe from a piece of tin can and carved a piece of wood. The snowman's accessories are pieces of Fimo, which were baked before attaching. I made the chair some time ago, but decided it was suited to this. The Santa was the first time I have tried to make a doll. I printed off the

paper he is reading - making the title 'Elf and Fitness'. The reindeer skin was from a fur item purchased from a charity shop. Other decorations are bought.

I thought I would try and make an elf. I did plan on just making a pair of feet sticking out of the chimney, but it did end up with having a go at making an entire character out of Fimo. I then decided that I'd have another try and made a second one. They can get up to mischief together!



▲ Naughty elves



▲ Elves on the roof

Once I had completed this, I found out about the film 'Frozen'. I suppose I will have to make another one with the characters from the film. 



▲ A grand Christmas!

Decorating the tree

Tell the story of the family Christmas as we decorate the tree with miniaturist and interior designer, Maria Bevill.

Family traditions

Surrounded by presents, the tree is itself one of the biggest gifts to any family Christmas. Christmas is the most inherently evocative corner of the year. It's a time for memories, both for making new ones and remembering those special days of Christmas' past. The Christmas tree can be a powerful storyteller, laden with decorations regaling the tales of a family down the generations. There's nothing quite like the tradition of carefully unwrapping those delicate glass baubles, and remembering when and where you bought them, who gave them to you and recalling the all-important stories behind them. We all know it was Queen Victoria and Prince Albert who were responsible for the exponential growth of the Christmas Tree, but several decades prior to this, the wife of King George III, Queen Charlotte, was actually the first member of the royal family to put the custom at the heart of a British Christmas. In more recent times, when people were looking to bring some much needed joy to the end of an extremely difficult 2020, it was the comforting sight of the Christmas tree they turned to, with many putting up the decorations before the first door on the advent calendar had been prised open.

Miniature roots

The towering 221ft high Christmas tree which stood at the Northgate Shopping Centre in Seattle back in 1950, remains in possession of the Guinness World Record for the tallest tree cut for the festive season, seventy-one years later. However, a Christmas tree in miniature is equally special, as showcased by the exceptional designs of US artisan, Maria Bevill, whose work is certain to become treasured family heirlooms of the future. As an award-winning interior designer, Maria's natural flair, skill and imagination come together to create some of the most staggeringly beautiful Christmas trees found in the world of small scale today. She has become renowned for these seasonal creations, an idea she first began exploring after being unable to find a miniature Christmas tree incorporating the detail she was searching for.

Realism is key to all Maria's trees and it therefore comes as little surprise that she can spend as much as forty hours working on a single Christmas tree, the most complex being her 10-inch-tall Fabergé egg inspired design.

The eggs for this spectacular tree began life as corsage pins and the design is also amongst Maria's most popular, representing just one element of a burgeoning miniature portfolio that incorporates an expanding variety of themes and colour schemes. Her recent creations include 'Blue Moon', a sparkling love letter to the season, decorated in shades of peacock and ice blue, white and silver. With a classical elegance, this stunning design is amongst Maria's very finest work.

Meanwhile, the warmth of Christmas is depicted in reds, greens and golds in a tree evocative of those family traditions. 'Presents under the Tree' is decorated with a mix of brightly coloured baubles and a selection of traditional Christmas cards. Two trees which bring to life that wonderful sense of joy and fun Christmas is all about, are her teddy bear and sweets and cakes inspired designs. The latter brings together a rainbow of colour and is a testament to Maria's creativity. Every tree is equally eye catching in its design, as are Maria's wonderful door wreaths and it's impossible not to find yourself charmed by them all. [▶](#)

▼ Have a sparkling Christmas with Maria's 'Blue Moon' tree





◀ Make sure your mini celebrations have more than the bear necessities!

▲ A 'sweet' idea!

▼ Gifts galore!

▼ 'Purple Splendour'



A year-round celebration

Simply attaching such a large quantity of individual baubles to these amazing trees must prove quite the challenge on its own, but the effort involved begins way before this time-consuming part of the process. "Ninety percent of the ornaments on the tree are made by me. I find premade ones too large" says Maria, who can count a number of trees as part of the acclaimed KSB Miniatures Collection in Maysville, Kentucky. Her own favourite miniature trees see her go for gold with the magnificent 'Golden Splendour', alongside an exquisite Della Robbia style design.

Maria's woodland themed tree, featuring not only owls, but tiny birds' nests filled with eggs reminds us that, during the time of year when days are short, spring is waiting for us just around the corner. Proving that beautifully decorated trees aren't just for Christmas, Maria's portfolio also includes trees for other seasonal celebrations throughout the year, including Easter, which she says is her most requested tree moving away from the December festivities. However, her

Halloween tree also takes the magic to new heights. Topped with a witches' hat, rather than the traditional angel or star of the Christmas tree, this sparkly black tree is bursting with skulls, spider's webs and the obligatory pumpkins. And you can't fail to miss those beady eyes staring out at you from deep amongst the branches! Maria says she finds inspiration for her designs almost everywhere, citing miniaturists favourite, Pinterest, amongst a list which also includes museums. The wealth of inspiration at her disposal means she's unlikely to run out of ideas any time soon! Christmas, Easter

or Halloween, Maria's trees are also a fabulous piece of seasonal miniature art to display outside the confines of the dolls house.

Despite the appearance of many minimalist Christmas decorations in recent years, does Maria think there will always be an appetite for tradition when it comes to the festive season? "With Christmas more is always better," she says, adding that her own full-size Christmas tree is of a traditional design, decorated in sumptuous shades of gold and burgundy. Maria also has some great advice for the collector. "When it comes to your collection, try to buy the best you can afford even if you have to save for it, and most of all, have fun and enjoy the magic." And that magic means whether your Christmas tree this year is real or artificial, new or old, miniature or 6ft tall, every branch is making a memory which will last well beyond the Twelfth Night. 🏠



▲ Maria's Fabergé egg inspired design

▼ A woodland Christmas

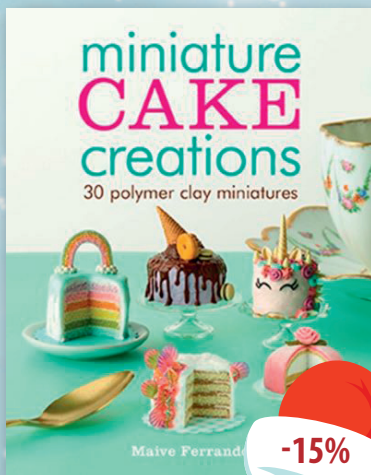


Festive door wreaths

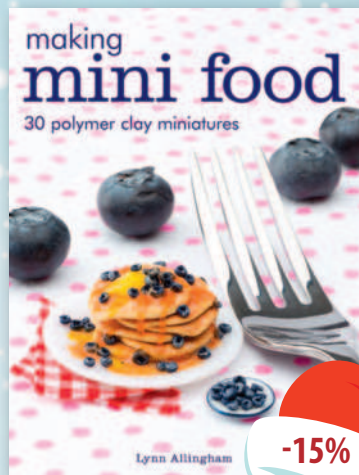


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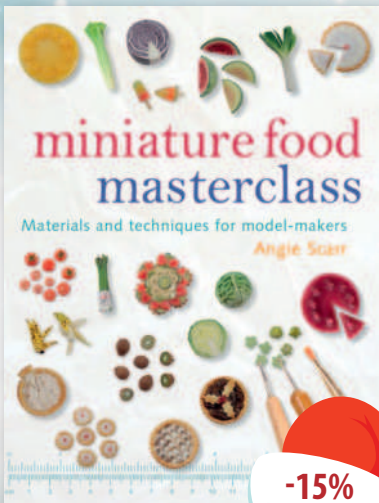
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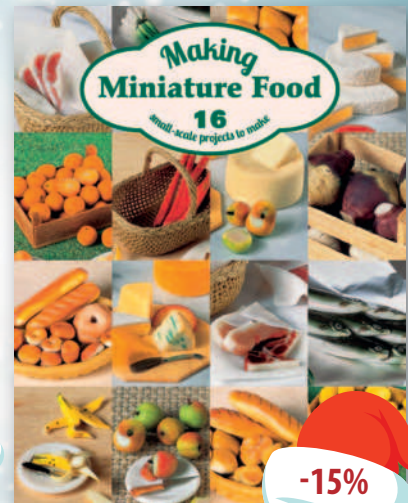
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Miniatutura returns

After an 18 month wait, Miniatutura returned and Moi Ali was there to capture the event...



Back in March 2020, I was poised to attend the Spring Miniatura in Birmingham, then jet off to Miami for a Caribbean cruise. Needless to say, a pesky virus put paid to both of those. It's been a VERY long 18 months under Covid restrictions, and I realise that some have had huge issues to cope with, including illness and bereavement. That helps put my personal disappointments into perspective.

Yet despite the hard times, it was wonderful to see the long-awaited return of Miniatura – it was a boost to our morale! I met up with old friends, made a few new ones and absolutely loved chatting to the exhibitors old and new.



When the doors were thrown open, I made a beeline for the Cancer Research stand, which always has some great items (and it gives a warm glow to know that purchases are helping a very worthwhile cause). I could not believe my luck when I spotted not one, but three Art Deco style vases by Muriel Hopwood. For those of you who don't know, Muriel (with the help of her husband Bob) set up Miniatura way back in 1983. She is, to me, miniature royalty. Queen Muriel. Now, Muriel and Bob's son Andy runs the show. It seemed so fitting to have bought some of Muriel's exquisite work at the come-back fair. They will take pride of place in my 1930s dolls house.

Next port of call was Country Treasures, to admire the adorable little birds, rustic birdboxes... and my favourite of all, birds on a garden seat tucking into windfall apples. It was so realistic and whoever has that in their collection now is very lucky indeed. Another old favourite was there: Harlands of Hedon, and my favourite kit-maker, Jane Harrop. There were too many old favourites to list, but it was great to see you all.

I then headed to a new exhibitor, Miniature Real Estate, to see some amazing pre-loved







houses and dioramas. The owner specialises in abandoned and distressed items. I had, by chance, recently visited her lovely shop in Morecambe and hope to write a feature on that soon, as it's definitely worth a trip. I'll also be featuring newcomer Kitten Von Mew in a forthcoming issue, so look out for that!

Another newcomer was Modelmakers and their 1/12th scale interpretation of the Star Ship Enterprise from Star Trek was breathtaking. They make architectural models and are happy to accept unusual commissions. Newbie, Stick and Go were there too. I'd come across them before, as the lovely owner David has always been so helpful to me with special requests. His peel and stick wall and floor coverings were flying off the shelves, along with his pop-up room boxes made from robust cardboard.

I really loved the special stands, which formed a little island. These were inspirational makers, happy to share trade secrets. Retired

teacher Ken Bonham's threshing barns were amazing, and I was blown away by Jon Trenchard's Hordle Castle model. I will tell you more about that in a future issue.

I also fell for the new venue: Stoneleigh. There was loads of space for social distancing and mobility scooters, a super café (I opted for the unusual vividly-coloured green tea cake, which was delicious), and parking literally alongside. It was also very easy to reach from the motorway, and the organisers laid on transport too, from Coventry railway station. Everyone I spoke to gave it the thumbs up. Next time, the show returns to its traditional home at the NEC in Birmingham (19th and 20th March 2022). Thereafter, consideration will be given to a permanent home for the show. Whichever venue is chosen, I for one will remain a regular attendee. The two shows a year are a highlight in my calendar and I'm already ticking off the days until March. 🏠



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Yuletide centrepiece

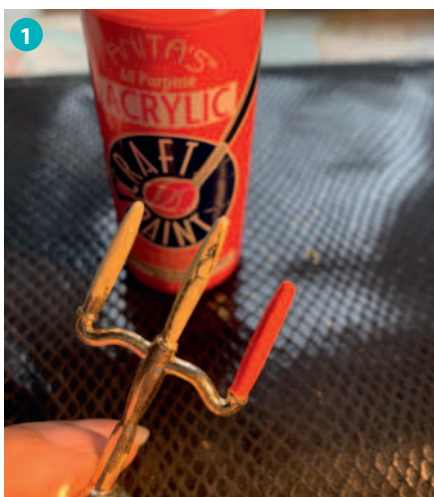
Moi Ali shows how to make a festive centrepiece for Christmas dinner.



YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- A candelabra and candles
- toothpick
- Red paint
- Red wax candle
- Glue
- Leaves on bendy wire
- Red nail caviar or hole-less seed beads



1 Take a cheap, plastic candelabra and candles, and paint the candles red.



2 Melt a red candle and wait until the wax is molten.



3 Take care as molten wax is very hot. Carefully drip wax onto your little candles, using a toothpick to create drips and runs.



4 Artistically arrange the greenery around the candelabra.



5 Dip a toothpick in glue and dot glue on the greenery. Add nail caviar to the glue to create clusters of berries.



6 Place the candelabra in the centre of your dining table and set the table for a delicious Christmas meal. Season's Greetings! 🏠

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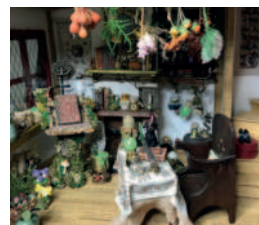


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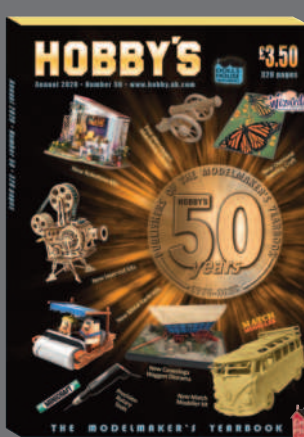


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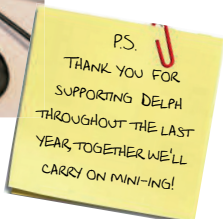
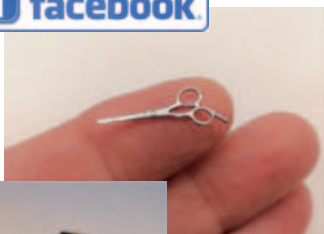
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Dish up the colours of Christmas

Lay the table for a celebration to remember this Christmas, with Sally Crisafulli.

A wheelie good idea

Artisan ceramicist, Sally Crisafulli recently made a thrilling discovery which, for her, reinvented the wheel – the potters' wheel. After a sabbatical during which she moved to the USA, Sally returned to her passion for miniature ceramics during lockdown, and it was whilst browsing social media that she first came across a miniature potterythrowing



◀▶ Set the scene for a Merry Christmas with Sally's festive tableware



wheel. "I didn't even know they existed!" says Sally enthusiastically. "I belong to a world challenge pottery group, and there was a video of a guy throwing little vases. Eureka. I was excited to say the least. I bought one immediately off Amazon and they cost a fraction of a full-size wheel, so I felt quite humble." With the addition of a small kiln designed for doll making, Sally was ready to spin!

"It took a little time to get into throwing clay again," she admits. "I did a little at college but not on such a small

scale. I had to teach myself an effective way to throw in miniature, using tools instead of using my fingers! I am loving it. I get more precision making the miniatures with the wheel, I wish I had found it years ago. It has given me more versatility; there are things I can now make that I couldn't without it. I recently had a commission to make a larger version of my Alice in Wonderland tea set. This was in 1/6th scale - it was a joy to make, and only possible because I had the wheel." Sally also still uses slip casting in her work, but it's evident that this has been usurped in her affections by her new studio companion. "I like the process of slip casting, but making miniature plaster moulds, not so much. I'm glad I have found an alternative and better method to produce my work." 

A learning curve

It was Sally's time at college, that initially sparked her interest in ceramics and was the place she discovered clay - something she was initially uncertain of, due to what she describes as the unpredictability of the results. "However, my teacher must have seen something in me and helped me develop a better understanding of the subject." She says. Having found her creative direction, Sally focused on ceramics and glass at university, coming top in a national bursary competition for student design. This afforded her an enviable opportunity for any ceramics' student, the chance to immerse herself in the environments of the world-famous Poole Pottery and Royal Doulton.

At this point, fate was still to see Sally's talent collide with the world of miniatures. This happened through her mother-in-law, who created dolls house furniture, and a visit to the Kensington Dolls House Festival in 2001, proved to be a vital influence on Sally's future career. "The cogs started working and I tried to adapt my skills to working in this tiny scale. I love the Art Deco period and admire ceramics of that era. Recreating some pieces gave me a real buzz. I love Clarice Cliff and have been fortunate enough to get my hands on some full-size pieces of my own."

Creating festive joy

Sally's portfolio is wide-ranging, from the delights of the Alice in Wonderland themed tea set, to highly-detailed blue and white tulip vases, cats and miniature cabbage-ware. "As there is a market for collectors wanting period pieces for their dolls houses, I look at art history and recreating pieces in my own style," Sally explains. "I interpret patterns. I don't like to copy things exactly; I like to put a twist on it." At this time of year, however, it's impossible not to find yourself drawn to Sally's Christmas ceramics, where Santa Claus teapots sit alongside their snowman and Christmas pudding counterparts. Sally says she finds a wealth of inspiration whilst out walking, and this includes the design for her festive tableware range. Brimming with seasonal charm, the set started out as a simple commission for a client looking for a Christmas dinner service, but has gone on to become a popular part of Sally's range. "I found some nice blue fir and Christmas- looking plants with berries. I do some quick sketches of the plants and then I create a pattern that's relatively quick to paint. I liked the pattern, so continued making more pieces for the collection." This hand-thrown range, now features not

►▼ Bowl-ed over by detail



Sally pours creativity into her festive teapots





▲ A brush with Christmas



▲ A miniature fairy tale. Alice in Wonderland inspired ceramics

◀▼ Sally's cat ceramics give paws for thought





Tulip vases



Sally's fabulous miniature pottery wheel



only a traditional tea set, but also many other items such as a ceramic rolling pin for miniature festive baking, a stand for that centrepiece Christmas cake and a cookie jar to ensure there's plenty of treats for Santa on Christmas Eve. Sally's holly-themed tableware incorporates a similar selection of pieces, but one thing her work all shares, is her skill for hand painting. Painting full scale ceramics is one thing, but hand painting that same level of detail in miniature is quite another. This is something found throughout her designs and is a huge testament to the clear talent for ceramics, spotted by her college tutor.

The vegetable patch

For those with a love of seasonal miniatures, Sally has recently expanded her range to include a variety of autumnal pumpkin-ware. She has also created a ceramic allotment of miniature inspiration, with a selection of fabulous cauliflower and chard-ware tea sets. It is through the wonderful world of cabbage-ware, which Sally says has carved that extra special place in her heart. "My grandmother had some pieces. I always remember them from when we visited her house when I was a child," she recalls fondly, going on to explain how their miniature counterparts are created. "I started by replicating miniature cabbage leaves by scoring out the veins into a slab of plaster. This enables the veins to be in relief. The pieces are first created by pressing pieces of clay into the mould, then everything is made by hand. The pieces are bisque-fired and the final pieces are glazed with a translucent green colour."

Sally still has the occasional foray into

◀ Sally's blue and white ceramics are a standout collection amongst her portfolio



Sally's new pumpkin-ware range

larger ceramics, teasing some of the exciting and intriguing pieces she has created. "I mainly concentrate on miniatures, but from time to time, I like to produce full-sized pieces, mainly vases. I enjoy experimenting with surface decoration and glazes, using objects around the house and foliage from my walks," she says. "I have made some full-size moulds using vegetable leaves like bok choy, celery and asparagus to make teapots and vases. I also like producing plaques. I have made a couple as presents and used to sell them as commissions. My small doll kiln however is a bit limited for space, I will soon need a bigger kiln!"

Clearly, Sally is an incredibly busy artisan, but just how did her move to the US impact upon her creativity and has it enabled her to tap into a whole new branch of exciting inspiration? "When I moved to the US, I wasn't planning to carry on with my creativity, I wanted a little break from making miniatures," she reveals. "However, after a couple of years, it was lockdown that spurred me back into creative mode, I knew it wouldn't last long being away from clay. It has opened up a whole new client base, new Etsy shop and hopefully visiting new venues to sell my work, but I still intend on coming back and selling at the London fair. It has always been a favourite of mine. I have a whole new area of pottery to discover, I'm going to look at early American pottery and red ware designs. I already have a commission for a miniature red ware tea set." With ideas spinning as quickly as that mini throwing wheel, perhaps Santa will have that larger kiln aboard his sleigh this year! 🏠



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Beautiful baubles

Primary school teacher and Vice Principal, Conal Oakes, brings a very unique approach to miniature modelling with his novel Christmas decorations!

For Conal, each diorama is presented in a bauble which is hung either on the Christmas tree or, in the case of the larger, more extravagant examples, a display base constructed from drift wood. "Christmas, for me, has always been a time associated with crafts and I can remember making my parents their presents from scraps of card and materials that I found lying around the house."

It wasn't until the Christmas of 2006 that he decided to create a present for his wife, Catherine, that "couldn't be bought". His first efforts required sawing a bauble in half and it wasn't the neatest of jobs, he recalls, but the creative spark had been rekindled.

Ever since then, a new bauble has been produced every year and it has become part of the Christmas tradition among his family and friends. It is fair to say, that the baubles have become more intricate and detailed with the addition of LEDs, but the underlying principles have remained the same. "The bauble has to be created mainly from everyday household materials and the challenge is often how to create the structure within the spherical shape of the bauble." 



"This year's Christmas bauble was based on the Peter Rabbit series of books by Beatrix Potter as my wife read the books as a child and really enjoyed them. My daughter Aoife is also a big fan of the animated series, so I thought they would both really enjoy the surprise on Christmas morning!"

Creating the layout



Stages of construction



Kitchen details



Detail for kitchen





Hobbit LEDs on

Conal has an eye for detail and admits that he now acts like a magpie, hoarding a variety of bits and bobs, and is often heard saying, "you never know when that will come in handy..." much to his wife's consternation. What can be said, is that he definitely has the ability to turn the ordinary into the extraordinary!

Bauble making is not without its risks he jokes, as he recalls the night that a slip with a craft knife ended up in a trip to A&E. It turned out be one of the coldest nights that Northern Ireland had experienced since records began and he ended up spending the whole night in hospital, nursing five stitches and a tetanus injection for his trouble!

When asked if he has a favourite bauble, he remarked fondly on the Penguin Band. "It was the first bauble I could include all my children in. I decided to up the scale a little and add LED lights. It was also the one that I thought was never going to get finished!" he recalls. He also remembers the look on his wife's face when she opened it. "I don't think I've totally grown up," he admits. "I look forward to seeing what she thinks and there is always good fun leading up to Christmas when I am running round with a panicked look on my face!" 📺



Town scene



The Wind in the Willows completed



Harry Potter Christmas table decoration complete

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If you have enjoyed reading this great magazine, or indeed any of the ones shown above, it would be great if you could leave us a review. We all like to know when something is good and when we've done a good job! Thanks 😊

At Home with THE BROADWOODS



As we head towards the festive season, professional model maker Bea Broadwood, takes a look back over the last 12 months and reflects on the challenges, new designs and opportunities 2021 brought with it!



important our shared hobbies are for our collective mental health. Ironically, whilst our customers were increasing their creativity, for once, mine was diminished. With a team member down, the job roles here in PPHQ have had to adapt and change, and whilst I am normally entrenched in the design and development on new kits, I have had to help Mr Bea with the processing of orders and his seemingly never ending quest to re-stock!

But, as the final days of 2021 are crossed off the calendar, here

in our new PPHQ, we find ourselves in a reflective mood. Although many of our kit plans for 2021 had to be put on hold, we managed to plough on and get through what has been yet another challenging year. Back in March, with dolls house shows and events still cancelled, we did manage to find the time (and energy) to launch online, the 25 top secret 1/48th kits that

had been included in our 2020 Advent Calendar.

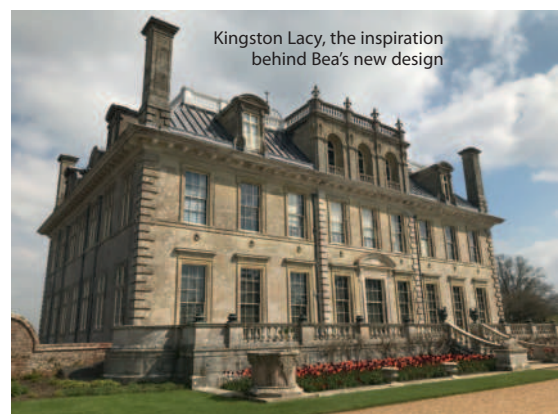
The new kits were incredibly well received and we have struggled to keep them in stock ever since; which is a good problem to have!

◀ Just one of the kits from PP's 2020 Advent Calendar



The year that was...

Looking back, 2021 has been a strange year. Here in the UK, it began in lockdown, but gradually over the summer (for many) a subtle sense of normality slowly began to return. Time confined at home continued to allow many miniaturists all around the world, the opportunity to spend more time working on miniature projects. I think it is safe to say, that the online dolls house community has really come together and flourished; at a time when face to face contact was not an option for so many. Indeed, 2021 has followed closely in 2020's footsteps and world events have reaffirmed just how



Kingston Lacy, the inspiration behind Bea's new design

Dorset inspiration and the return of the autumn Miniatura show...

Despite my change of job role this year, I did manage to squeeze in a tiny bit of creativity into the summer. Thanks to a previous spring time adventure in Dorset, I was able to temporarily put my creative hat back on and work on at least one new quarter scale design. Despite its French shabby chic styling, our 'Le Grand Chateau' was in fact inspired by somewhere much closer to home. Before 'social distancing' and 'shielding' became everyday phrases, Mr Bea and I visited a beautiful property in Dorset. Kingston Lacy is now owned by the National Trust, but it was once the home to the Bankes family. Over time, this grand house has been altered and remodelled to reflect a more European style of architecture and from the first moment I saw it, I was immediately inspired! Using photographs that I'd taken at Kingston Lacy, I was slowly able to work with individual architectural elements and transform them into a brand new addition to our popular 'Dolls House Collection'. We were also delighted to be able to use the eagerly anticipated return of the autumn Miniatura show, as the platform to exclusively launch this elegant new dolls house kit. Designing 'Le Grand Chateau' was,

Unexpected European
architecture in beautiful Dorset



Looking forward...

Now, as the world slowly begins to open up again and with a shiny brand-new year just around the corner, we are looking forward to taking a break to celebrate Christmas together as a family. However, come January our collective boots will be hitting the ground as we have big plans in 2022. We've got so many exciting new kits waiting in the wings, that I just can't wait to share them here with DHMS readers. But for now, my lips are sealed; you'll just have to watch this space!

And finally...

After such a busy year, and with Christmas looming large on the horizon, here in PPHQ, we are very much looking forward to indulging in our own body weight of cheese, spending time together as a family and (most of all) unwinding with our feet up in front of a roaring fire. But, before we shut up shop and skip off into the festive sunset, Tony, Mo and I would like to take this opportunity to thank our customers for your continued support and unwavering patience and enthusiasm for the kits we create. We never cease to be incredibly humbled by the overwhelming response our work receives and this year particularly, we've been touched by all the cards, letters and emails we've been sent; thanking us for the enjoyment our kits have brought during a difficult time for miniaturists all over the world.

Not only as a family business, but more importantly as a family, we would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and we hope that 2022 will be a kind year to us all. We also hope that the New Year brings not only health and happiness, but also plenty of time to enjoy the magical world of miniatures too!

So Merry Christmas everyone... from our home to yours!

Tony, Bea & Mo 'The Broadwoods' 🏠

▼ Happy Christmas from our home to yours!



for me, a real highlight of 2021 and I really loved being able to be creative again. It was also lovely to (at last) be back behind the PP stand and being able to combine the two, felt very special.

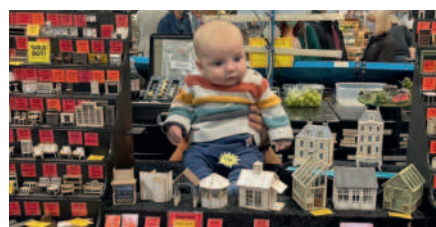
A big move and a new addition...

Not only has 2021 been relentlessly busy, but it has also been a year of exciting changes and new additions. Regular DHMS readers will recall that back in May, we took the plunge and moved PP into a very unusual new HQ. Working in The Old Methodist Church, is all that we hoped it would be and more. The space we now have, allows us to work so much more efficiently and I am particularly loving taking my tea breaks in the quiet of the chapel. Progress on the interior of our new PPHQ is still ongoing, and the launch of not one, but two top secret Advent Calendars, has meant that my future work space is still a work in progress. At the time of typing, I am still 'camped' out on a temporary folding table in the corner of the School Room. However,

we hope to be able to resume work on the Chapel Room when the rush of the festive season calms and allows us a little breathing space for some serious DIY. In the meantime, I know that it will all be worth the wait and we are incredibly excited to fling open the church doors next summer and welcome visitors inside!

Over the last 20 months or so, it has been hard work to keep PP going, without Mo working with us as part of the team. However, despite her absence at work, as a family she has added a brand-new member and in July, Mo and her partner Adam were overjoyed at the birth of their baby son; Edward. He is the most perfect miniature (although I know that this Nanna is more than a little biased) and I am sure he will be joining the ever-growing PP team when he's that little bit older!

▼ Edward making his debut on the PP stand at the autumn Miniatura show!



Progress is slow, but the PP team are settling into their new home



Tree decoration

Complete your festive décor with this modern decoration.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 3mm square strip wood
- White polymer clay
- 8x3mm wide beads
- Fine jewellery wire (34 gauge/0.23mm)
- Acrylic paints (white, red, gold, silver)
- Acrylic gloss varnish (optional, I like my decorations shiny)
- Candles and red cotton thread
- Wood glue & tacky glue
- Super glue gel
- Sandpaper fine grade
- Small piece of Bristol board

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Tiny 5mm star, heart and circle cutters
- Plastic rolling pin/pasta maker
- Craft knife & wire cutters
- Fine point tweezers
- 3/0 size paint brush



1 Condition your polymer clay and then roll out to a 1mm thickness, using a rolling pin or pasta machine. Using the tiny cutters or freehand, cut out six of each shape. I have cut out some larger hearts as well. Roll out a snake shape that is 2mm wide and 10cm long, from the polymer clay. Bake the polymer clay as per the manufacturer instructions. When the snake shape is baked, cut it into 8mm lengths - these will be the candles.

Cut 18 1cm strips from the jewellery wire and bend those in half over the middle of a cocktail stick and pinch the ends in. This will make the loops to hang the decorations. Put a small amount of super glue onto a jar lid, dip the ends of the loops in, then place on the back of your decorations. By using baking soda, you can cure the super glue almost instantly. Repeat until all decorations have their loops.

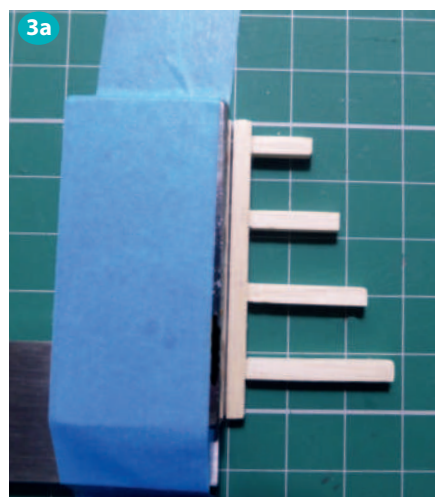


2 Cutting list to make the tree:

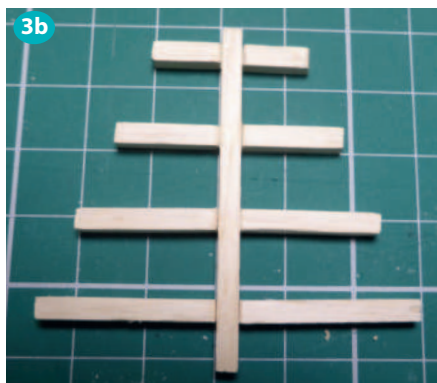
1x5cm • 2x2.5cm • 2x2cm • 2x1.5cm • 2x1cm

All cut from the 3mm square strip wood. The base is made from 1x3cm and 2x1.2cm pieces.

With fine grade sandpaper, sand all sides of the wood strips. Sand the top and bottom of the strips by holding them vertically and pulling them across the sandpaper in one direction. Take the 5cm and mark the following points along the length; 8mm then 13mm from that point, then 13mm from that point, and the last 13mm from that.



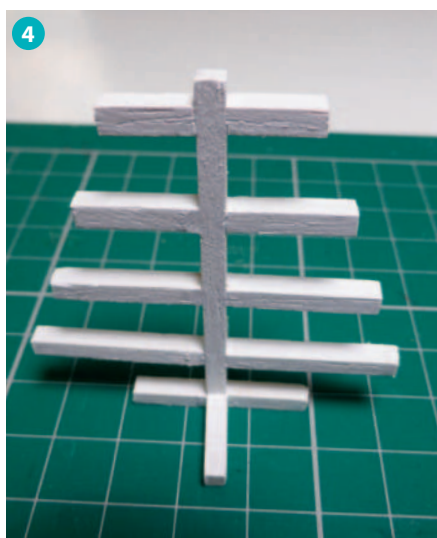
3 First, tape down a block (I have used a metal set square) onto a cutting mat. This is to make sure the tree stays square. Lay the 5cm piece against the block and have the marked edge on the side profile. Take one of the 2.5cm pieces and glue this at the 8mm mark using wood glue. Next, glue a 2cm piece at the next mark, then the 1.5cm piece and last the 1cm piece. Leave to dry completely - this can take several hours (I left mine overnight).



Remove the block that you have used as a support and carefully remove the tree from the cutting mat. Lay it back down and glue on the corresponding lengths on the opposite side. Use the grid lines on the cutting mat to help keep things square. Leave to dry.

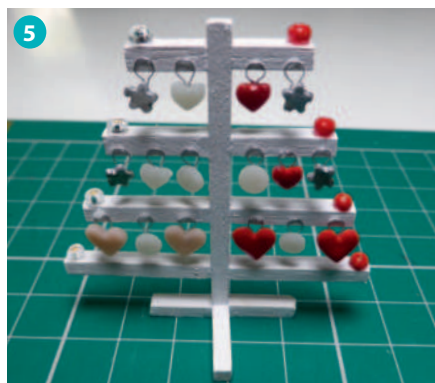


Glue together the three pieces that make the base into an 'x' shape and leave that to dry.

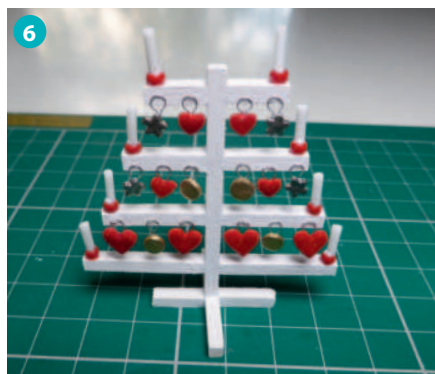


4 Glue the tree to the base using wood glue. You will have to support it until the glue starts to take.

Leave it to dry overnight before painting it white. Apply two coats of white paint.



5 Glue on the decorations and beads as shown, using super glue gel. I would recommend dispensing a small amount of the glue onto a jar lid, dipping the hoops of the ornaments into it and then attaching to the tree, using a pair of fine-pointed tweezers to hold them. This will prevent getting large blobs of the glue on the tree. It's a bit trickier with the beads.



6 Using a 3/0 size brush, paint the decorations on both sides, and then the beads. Any paint that gets on the tree can be easily painted over in white. Leave to dry - a second coat can be applied if necessary.

When that is dry, put a small amount of tacky glue on top of the eight beads, and then attach the candles. The tacky glue will give you time to adjust the candles so they are perfectly straight. Cut eight 8mm wicks from red cotton thread. Dip one end into super glue using tweezers and then glue these on top of the candles. When dry, you can trim down the wicks to the desired length. I made mine about 3mm. Apply glass varnish at this point, if you like your decorations to be shiny.



7 Cut out a 3x1 cm wide 5-pointed star from Bristol board or heavy card. Glue them together using tacky glue and then paint it silver. When dry, glue this on top of the tree with tacky glue. Again, you can gloss varnish this if you like. 🏠

Beate's Top Tip!

"Using a little superglue and tacky glue together creates a faster bond!"

Christmas quick makes

Deck the halls with Moi Ali's quick make vintage Christmas accessories.

Moi says...

"At the beginning of December my husband makes his way up the ladder, lifts the loft hatch, reaches into the darkness and hands me down a box of assorted festive 'stuff'. It's an annual ritual repeated by households up and down the land, and it marks the start of the excitement.

This project is really versatile. Make up the box and pop it in the loft space of your dolls house, or place it downstairs by an undressed tree. Or just make up individual items en masse for a Christmas market stall or seasonal shop window display. The choice is yours!"

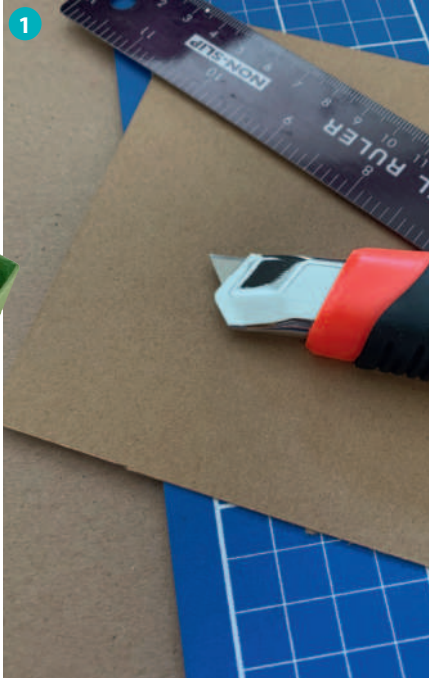
YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

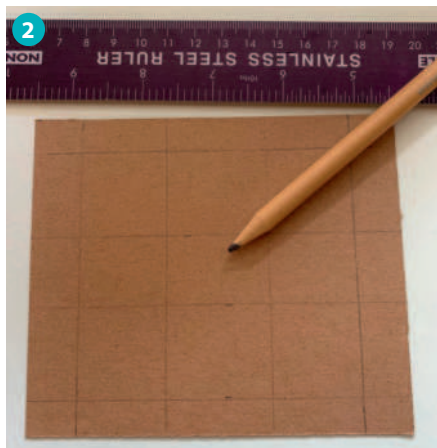
- ☐ Manilla card (old packaging is fine)
- ☐ Brown inkpad
- ☐ 'Fragile' sticker
- ☐ Tacky glue and a glue stick
- ☐ Packaging polystyrene
- ☐ Christmas papers
- ☐ Thin white card
- ☐ Images for crackers, baubles and other boxes
- ☐ Bead garlands
- ☐ Cellophane
- ☐ Fine glitter
- ☐ Tinsel and other festive items

CARDBOARD BOX

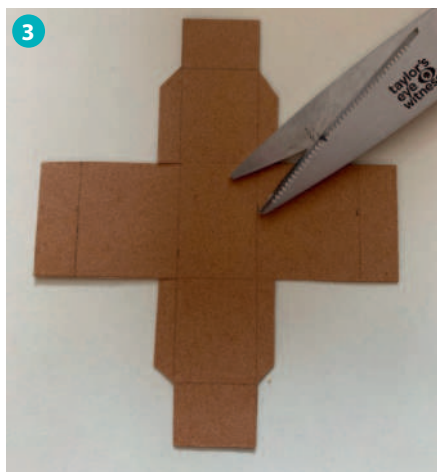
This can be filled with anything for use in another project. For example, fill it with household items for a moving house scene, with cans of food for a grocer's scene, with assorted items such as old games and tennis racquets for a loft scene, or with junk for the garden shed.



1 Cut a piece of manilla card 11x13cm.



2 Using a pencil, mark lines along the shortest side at the following points: 1.8cm up from the bottom, 3cm up from that, 3.5cm from the previous line, then 3cm from that. Along the longer length, mark lines at: 1.3cm up from the bottom edge, 3cm up from the last line drawn, then 2.5cm up, then 3cm from that.



3 Cut out as shown in the image, leaving tabs on either side of the two side pieces as shown.



4 Fold the card to form a box.



5 Add a 'fragile' label printed from the internet and glue the tabs to form a box. 'Age' the box using a brown crafting inkpad.



6 Add polystyrene from old packaging to fill half of the box and raise the level of the bottom (to enable you to see the contents of the box).



7 Roll strips of Christmas paper around a straw or slim dowel piece, and glue to hold in a rolled-up position. Make three rolls of different heights.



8 Glue the three rolls of paper to the back left-hand corner of the box using plenty of tacky glue.



9 Make up boxes of baubles, crackers etc, by following the instructions below.



10 Take these and other festive items, and continue to fill the box in an artistic arrangement. ▶



PACKAGING BOXES

All of the boxes are made in the same way, regardless of the box contents – although some have an opening cut in them, so the contents can be seen, and others do not.



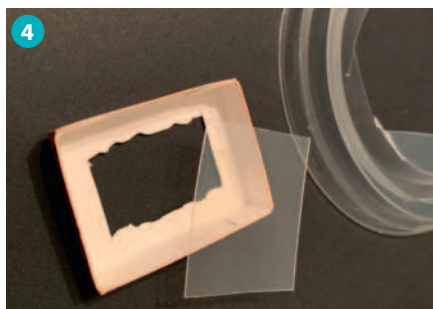
1 Scan vintage packaging, miniaturise and print out at your printer's best setting (or find copyright-free images online to use).



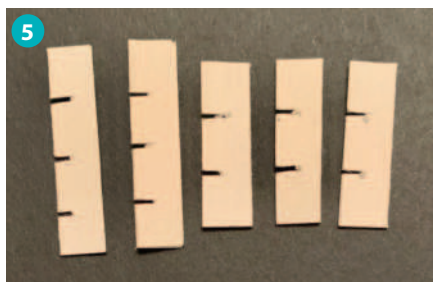
2 Glue the printed images onto thin card using a glue stick (or print directly onto the card if your printer will accept it).



3 Cut around the packaging, adding tabs to help you glue the boxes together. Cut a small 'v' shape into the tabs to ensure a neat fit. Crease along the fold lines.



4 Glue the boxes together with tacky glue, cutting out any apertures first using a craft knife. Cut cellophane (from old packaging) and glue to the reverse of any apertures.



5 For the bauble boxes, cut card dividers as shown.

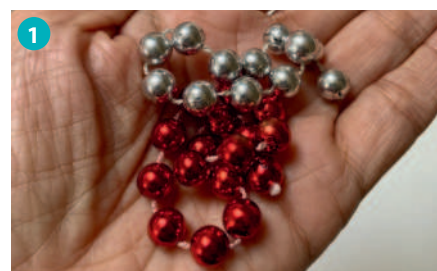


6 Add the assembled dividers to the bauble boxes.

Moi says...

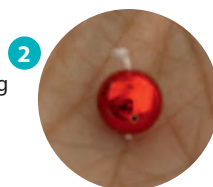
"Instead of filling a cardboard box, why not work on a larger scale and create a festive crate full of seasonal goodies."

BAUBLES



1 Make baubles from plastic bead garlands, available cheaply from discount stores and supermarkets.

2 Cut the garland into individual baubles, leaving the connecting thread at one end to look like a bauble hanger.



3 Decorate each bauble by painting it with glue and then dipping into fine glitter for extra sparkle.

SHEET MUSIC

1 Scan Christmas music, scale it down and print it out.



2 Trim excess paper, then colour the edges using a light brown inkpad. I've used a colour called gingerbread, which is perfect for an old, vintage feel. Roll it up and add to your box.

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The icing on the cake

Enjoy a slice of tradition with this iced Christmas cake.



YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

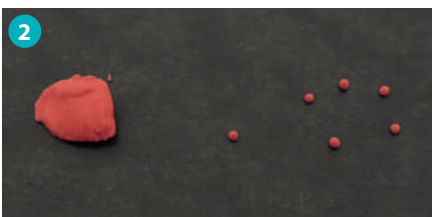
- White and red polymer clay
- Faux green foliage or stiff green card
- Craft glue
- Red ribbon
- Red permanent fine tip marker pen
- 1/12th scale ceramic plate
- Matte varnish

TOOLS REQUIRED

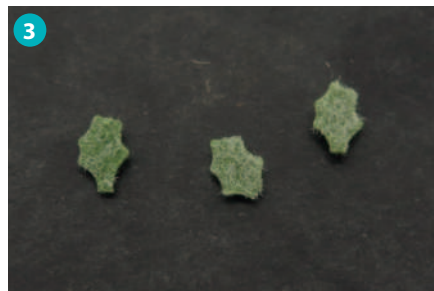
- 2cm round sugar craft cutter
- Scissors
- Small paintbrush
- Small holly shaped lever paper punch



1 Roll out some white polymer clay to roughly 6mm in thickness and cut out the cake base using a 2cm round sugar craft cutter.



2 Roll five very tiny balls of red clay. These will form the holly berries. Bake the berries alongside the cake base and allow to cool thoroughly.



3 Press three holly leaves from either some faux green foliage or stiff green card, using a very small holly shaped lever paper punch.



4 Use craft glue to attach the holly leaves to the top of the cake, followed by the tiny berries. Cut a small length of red ribbon to fit all the way around the cake and stick into place.



5 Take a 1/12th scale ceramic plate and decorate using a bright red permanent marker pen with a fine point. Coat the plate with matte varnish to seal, and allow to dry before gluing the cake to the centre. 🏠

Sadie says...

"This cake has the slightly curved edge, but you could also create a 'sharper' edge by putting the clay into the freezer for a few moments before cutting out the base."



Quite a collection!

Last month, Moi Ali wrote about Nancy Haponiuk's San Fran, and this month she's back to explore Nancy's diverse collection of houses.



"My grandma had a few mini furniture pieces that I would play with when I went to visit," explained Nancy Haponiuk, and that is how it all started. "Then, I got a tin litho dolls house with plastic furniture from Santa, and later a Barbie Dream House and penthouse." I wondered how it spiralled from that to her current collection. I use the word "collecting" advisedly, because Nancy didn't stop at one or two. Or even three or four... no, she has 35 houses of various scales, but mostly 1/12th. Some are built from kits, almost always modified, and a few were designed and built by Nancy from scratch.

Canadian Nancy, an accountant and office manager for a property management company, started collecting as an adult almost a quarter of a century ago. She built, [PH](#)





“I am glad that I have a hobby that I enjoy and allows me to express my creativity!”







decorated and landscaped all of her houses, which are displayed in a special room in her basement. She told me: "For the longest time my dolls houses were all over the house, but now I have a dolls house room, in what used to be a bedroom, and there are a few in my family room too."

Her diverse collection includes a lighthouse, a log cabin and a big yellow house, made from plastic needle point canvas. She told me: "I wanted a dolls house for a very long time, but there was never the time or the money. Mini magazines were snobs in those days and did not encourage beginner builders like they do now. My late husband and I went to an antique mall and I found a small wooden house that needed to be renovated. It was only \$20, so it seemed to me to be a good house to learn with."

Given the size of her collection, I wanted to know which was her favourite. It was a bit like asking about a favourite child! "I don't really have a favourite. I love them all because I put so much of myself into my houses! The vintage Travel Trailer kit by Greenleaf, would probably be the house I kept if I could only keep one. I built this kit as a tribute to my parents when they passed. It is based on childhood memories of spending summers on the shores of Lake Huron in a trailer and having the best childhood ever."

She continued: "I don't think I have a favourite small piece, but if I did, it would probably be something I made with my own imagination. I love making things from what I have on hand, rather than looking online and buying items specially. I am first and foremost a builder, not a collector."

Recently widowed, Nancy's late husband Don bought her a clock in a case with shelves and a load of small furniture for her birthday. "These will be my next projects," she explained, "and will eventually they will join the collection. My husband was very supportive, and the rest of my family and friends admire my houses but I don't think most of them really get it."

Her oldest items are pink tin litho pieces from the 1950s: "I have a sofa, two chairs, a stove and a sink."

As much as she loves everything in her collection, nothing is of great value – although clearly everything has immense sentimental value: "There's not one piece in my collection that I would consider extremely valuable. Everything was purchased because I liked it and could visualise it in a project. Value doesn't come into it." 🏠



The Mad Hatter's Tea Party

Miniaturists Sue Cooke and Mark Noel set out to create a scene from Lewis Carroll's celebrated story Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, with just one major challenge: to shrink all the scenery from one famous episode in this story, so that it would fit inside a teapot.

Carroll was famous for infusing his tales with unfathomable riddles, and the Mad Hatter's Tea Party is a charming scene from the seventh chapter which many readers will remember from childhood. In it, the Hatter tells Alice that both he and the Hare are always having tea, with Carroll describing the scene at the ensuing party as follows:

"The table was a large one, but the three were all crowded together at one corner of it: 'No room! No room!' they cried out when they saw Alice coming. 'There's plenty of room!' said Alice indignantly, and she sat down in a large arm-chair at one end of the table..."

In our recreation there is even less room for the Mouse, the Hare and the Hatter, because we set out to model the party at 1/12th scale inside an old teapot! The project has involved dolls house craft work by Sue in her hobby room, and basic metalworking methods in my engineering workshop. The starting point was the offer of an old teapot on eBay which was snapped up for a song. With an 8 pint capacity, this was surely the sort of vessel that would have slaked the thirst of the Hatter and

the Hare. Our idea was to cut a window in the side of the pot and decorate the interior to resemble the garden where Carroll's party was set, complete with furniture, table settings and characters from the story.

We started by deciding on the size and shape of the opening that fits the scene. Our teapot is about 10" (25cm) in diameter and the aperture occupies a third of the circumference, giving a 'roombox' feel to the result. Using a piece of soft copper wire, we marked out the shape of the cut using a black felt tip permanent marker pen.

The opening in the inside of the teapot can be made using a variety of methods. These include: slowly grinding a narrow slot along your marker line with a Dremel-type tool and grindstone or 'chain drilling' a line of closely-spaced holes using a drill with diameter similar to the thickness of the metal. However, this latter method is fraught with hazard and is not to be recommended. The best solution, and what we did, was to use a nibbler which effectively munches its way along the line by taking hundreds of tiny clippings.

Inexpensive hand nibblers are available from model engineering and eBay suppliers, and resemble a pair of pliers with a specialised set of jaws. After cutting only a few inches in even thin metal, you will wish you had invested in a powered version! This versatile gadget fits into the chuck of a Black and Decker-type drill, doing all the munching while you concentrate on guiding it along the marked curve. Another advantage is that the power nibbler has a longer snout enabling it to cut closer to obstructions, such as the handle and spout of the teapot.

The nibbler itself cannot break into the teapot, but must start in a hole large enough to clear the snout. The only safe way to create such a hole in thin metal is by using a cone drill, which slowly enlarges the hole by shaving away the sides. If you try this, do not try using a conventional twist drill, since this can suddenly grab the workpiece, spinning it round with disastrous consequences. Also note, that it is important to firmly secure the teapot to your workbench or drilling machine, to keep your hands free and out of

the way. We used the cone drill to enlarge the hole until we could insert the nibbler.



▲ Using the nibbler

Before making the opening, we applied plenty of oil to both the teapot and nibbler, then switched on the drill and proceeded to munch along the cut line.



▲ Making the cut

The nibbler leaves a ragged, wavy edge which had to be smoothed out in several stages. We started by using flat and half-round files to dress the straight and radiused parts of the opening. The most effective technique to do this is draw-filing, in which the file is held between two hands and moved from side to side along the edge, or left to right.



▲ Draw-filing

Once we had produced the best possible result by filing, there remained a sharp edge or 'burr' on both edges of the cut which is unattractive and can be dangerous. These edges are quickly and easily removed with a de-burring tool, which you would also find handy when finishing other projects that involve cutting thin sheet or tubular metal.



▲ De-burring

We finally worked the edges with a fine polish using steel wool, followed by Brasso.

With our 2mm thick aluminium teapot, we were happy to leave the edge with a smooth shiny polish. However, with thin steel containers, it is safer and often more appealing when a soft rib is fitted to the edge. For example, in another project, we modelled a garden shed inside a watering can, fitting an 8mm diameter nylon cord to the edge. To do this, choose a light 'kernmantle' type cord from a yacht chandler in a suitable colour, or alternatively dye a white cord to suit your decor. Kernmantle ropes have a bundle of parallel fibres inside a woven sheath and are ideal for this purpose. You would cut the cord to the desired length plus an inch or two, and draw it tight across your work table using adhesive tape at each end. Then, use an electrical fine-tipped soldering iron to slowly melt a narrow groove along the cord to a depth of about half the diameter. It is a good



▲ The watering can

idea to first practise with a short offcut and to have good ventilation when carrying this out. The resulting slotted cord can be fixed to the edge using a general purpose glue such as UHU. In the case of the watering can shed, we arranged for the cord ends to meet at the top of the opening where the joint was concealed beneath a wooden sign.

Aluminium is a tricky surface on which to achieve a good key with paint, so to improve matters, the inside of the pot was roughened by lightly sanding the surface. Michael Starkey, a noted Manx artist, then used acrylics to paint the sky and clouds.



▲ Applying the paint

The picnic 'lawn' was created by fixing railway grass paper to a circle of mount board which was cut after tracing round the base of the teapot. We prefer this material as it seems more 'weedy' and realistic compared to the usual dolls house grass paper.



▲ Railway grass paper

A 1/12th scale table and chairs were bought from the model shop in Ramsey, where Linda kindly shortened their legs, as the furniture was too tall for the setting. The food and crockery was also from this shop and made by various suppliers. 1/12th scale playing cards were enlarged x2 with a photocopier and fixed to the backs of the chairs with Tackywax, while a home-made top hat for the Hatter was stuck to the back of his chair. Alice was another find on eBay, although her shoes had to be painted black to better match period illustrations that accompany the story. White Rabbit was a Sylvanian but, as he was from the Chocolate Family, we had to glue white felt to his ears and fluff it up with a sewing needle, again to fit with his character. His watch was a chance find of a button bearing a clock face and this was stitched to a length of chain. We made his white shirt and blue jacket and then used UHU to fix these garments in place. A miniature Alice in Wonderland book was purchased from Dateman Books and fixed to Alice's lap with Tackywax to complete the ensemble and thus our recreation inside the teapot! 🏠

A Cosy Christmas

Create your very own 1/12th scale cosy Christmas jumpers for your characters to enjoy this festive season!

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1ply cotton (2/16cc) in white and oddments of green, blue and red.

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Size 19 needles (1.00mm)

Size: to fit 4inch (10cm) doll.
Heidi Ott or similar

Abbreviations: **K** knit, **P** purl, **st(s)** stitch(es), tog together, **K2togtbl** k2tog through back of loop, **rep** repeat **beg.** Beginning, **St st**, knitting first row knit, and second row Purl.

WINTER REINDEER JUMPER

Front

With Green, cast on 25 sts

1. (K1, p1) to last st, k1.

2. P1, (k1, p1) to end.

Repeat last 2 rows twice more.

Change to st st, follow the chart, and keeping the pattern correct and start the armhole shaping on row 19.

19. Shape armhole Cast off 2 sts beg next 2 rows

K2tog beg next 4 rows (17sts)

St st 2 rows*

Neck shaping K5 k2tog turn

P2tog p4 (5sts)

St st 4 rows

Cast off.

Rejoin main yarn and cast off next 3 sts for centre neck k2tog k to end

P4 P2tog

St st 4 rows

Cast off.

Back

Work as for front (omit pattern if you wish) until*

St st 2 rows

Neck shaping

K5 k2tog turn

P2tog p4 (5sts)

St st 2 rows

Cast off.

Rejoin main yarn and cast off next 3 sts for centre neck k2tog k to end

P4 P2tog

St st 2 rows

Cast off.

Sleeves

Make two the same (I always make both

at the same time to make sure that an extra row has not sneaked in on one of them)

With Green, **cast** on 16 sts

1. (K1, p1) to end

2. (P1, k1) to end.

Repeat last 2 rows twice more.

Change to st st, use the chart, but follow the shaping as you work in the extra sts.

1. K

2. Inc 1 st at each end

3-5.St st 3 rows

Rep the last 4 rows twice more (22sts)

St st 3 rows.

Adding more rows for a longer sleeve if required.

17. Shape armhole.

Cast of 2 sts beg next 2 rows

K2tog beg next 4 rows (14sts)

Cast off.

Neckband

Starting on front with main colour pick up 6 sts down right side of neck 3 centre neck, 6 sts left side neck, 3 sts back right side neck 3 sts centre and 3 sts left side neck (24sts)

Rib 2 rows

Cast off loosely rib wise.

Sew up seams, but remember to leave the back armhole and shoulder seam on one side open if you wish to put it on your doll. Finish sewing up on doll.

Bobble hat

Using Green cast on 38sts

1. (K1, p1) to end

2. (P1, k1) to end.

Repeat last 2 rows twice more.

Change to st st and use chart as a guide,

8. Change to White and P.

9. (K2tog, k3) to last st, k1. 30sts.

10. (p3, p2tog) to end. 24sts.

11. (K2tog, k1) to end. 16sts.

12. (P2tog) to end. 8sts.

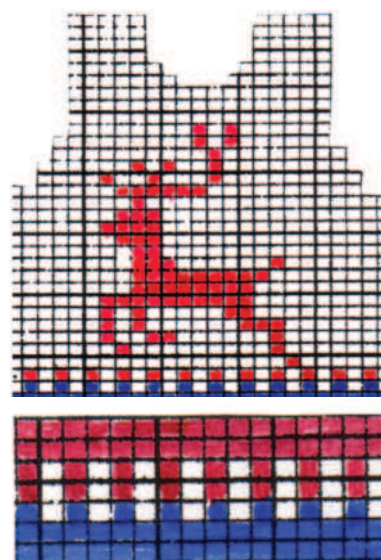
13. (K2tog) to end. 4sts.

Cut cotton and draw up through sts.

Sew up the side and finish with a white pompom.

Reindeer

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YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1ply cotton (2/16cc) in blue and oddments of white, pink and red.
- Size 19 needles (1.00mm)

Size: to fit 4inch (10cm) doll.
Heidi Ott or similar

Abbreviations: K knit, P purl, st(s) stitch(es), tog together, **K2togtbl** k2tog through back of loop, **rep** repeat **beg.** beginning



SANTA CLAUS JUMPER

Front

With blue, **cast** on 25 sts

1. (K1, p1) to last st, k1.
2. P1, (k1, p1) to end.

Repeat last 2 rows twice more.

Change to white. Knit 1 row, purl 1 row.

Using st st, follow the chart, and keeping the pattern correct...

19. Shape armhole

Cast off 2 sts beg next 2 rows

K2tog beg next 4 rows (17sts)

St st 2 rows*

Neck shaping

K5 k2tog turn

P2tog p4 (5sts)

St st 4 rows

Cast off.

Rejoin main yarn and cast off next 3 sts for centre neck k2tog k to end

P4 P2tog

St st 4 rows

Cast off.

Back

Work as for front (omit pattern if you wish) until*

St st 2 rows

Neck shaping

K5 k2tog turn

P2tog p4 (5sts)

St st 2 rows

Cast off.

Rejoin main yarn and cast off next 3 sts for centre neck k2tog k to end

P4 P2tog

St st 2 rows

Cast off.

Sleeves

Make two the same (I always make both at the same time to make sure that an extra row has not sneaked in on one of them)

With blue, cast on 16 sts

1. (K1, p1) to end
2. (P1, k1) to end.

Repeat last 2 rows twice more.

Change to white.

1. K
2. Inc 1 st at each end
- 3 (K1 white, k1 blue) to end. Cut off white.
4. K
5. P

Continue in Stocking stitch.

6. Inc 1 st at each end

7-9.St st 3 rows

Rep the last 4 rows once more (22sts)

St st 3 rows

17. Shape armhole

Cast of 2 sts beg next 2 rows

K2tog beg next 4 rows (14sts)

Cast off.

Neckband

starting on front with main colour pick up 6 sts down right side of neck 3 centre neck, 6 sts left side neck, 3 sts back right side neck 3 sts centre and 3 sts left side neck (24sts)

Rib 2 rows

Cast off loosely rib wise.

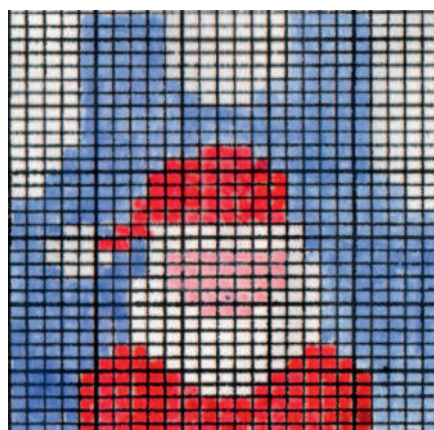
Sew up seams, but remember to leave the back armhole and shoulder seam on one side open if you wish to put it on your doll. For the snowflakes, please do random french knots using white.

Sew in face details, and you can also sew on eyebrows and moustache to give a craggy look to the beard.

Finish sewing up on doll.

Santa

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INFO

To view and find other patterns from Jan visit

Web: www.theknittinglady.co.uk

or contact Jan directly on

Tel: 01234 772225

The Whole Kit & Caboodle:

CHRISTMAS STOCKING

This month's kit review has Moi Ali feeling all Christmassy!



Kit contents

I love miniatures, but my second favourite hobby is needlepoint tapestry. The perfect project, therefore, is one that brings together these two passions: miniature needlepoint tapestry! This month's kit does exactly that and it's the ideal choice in the run up to Christmas.

I must admit, I was a little worried when I opened the kit and saw just how tiny the canvas was, with its 40 holes per inch, but there was no need to be concerned.

THE FACTS

Buy from:

Nicola Mascall Miniatures
(www.nicolamascallminiatures.co.uk)

Cost: £11 plus p&p

Comes with: Everything you need including colour block chart and instructions, canvas, needle, silks, backing fabric and trim

Additional materials needed: None

Tools needed: None

Time: A week

Experience: Experienced beginner

Top tip: Stitch in a good light, and use a magnifier if you have one



This lovely little Christmas stocking kit is made in exactly the same way as a full-size one, using either half-cross or tent stitch - and the kit includes enough cotton thread for either.

Nicola Mascall has designed some glorious kits, from exquisite and highly complex carpets and rugs in striking designs, through to smaller, less daunting items such as bell pulls, traditional samplers and church kneelers in 1/12th scale. The Christmas stocking kits come in 16 different designs,

featuring robins, snowmen, angels, crackers, Santas, Christmas puddings, candy canes and other festive motifs.

Each kit comes complete with a delicate silk gauze canvas, pre-mounted on a robust card stitching frame along with thread, full colour chart, needle, backing fabric and faux suede trim.

My little stocking is the perfect festive fireside accessory to conjure up the spirit of Christmas!

READER GIVEAWAY!

Would you like to win the stocking of your choice from Nicola's range of 16 unique designs?

One lucky reader will win!

To enter simply visit www.dollhouseandminiaturescene.co.uk and click on giveaways!

Competition closes 31st December 2021. Good luck!

For more information regarding competitions visit www.warnersgroup.co.uk/competition-terms/

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A HYGGE NEW YEAR



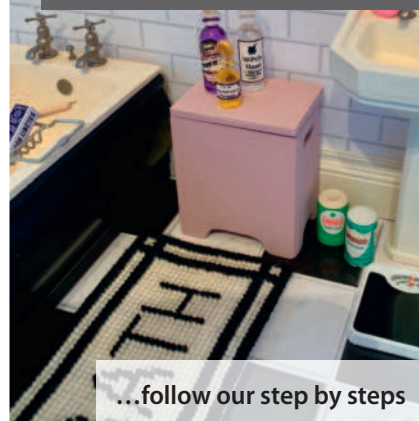
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