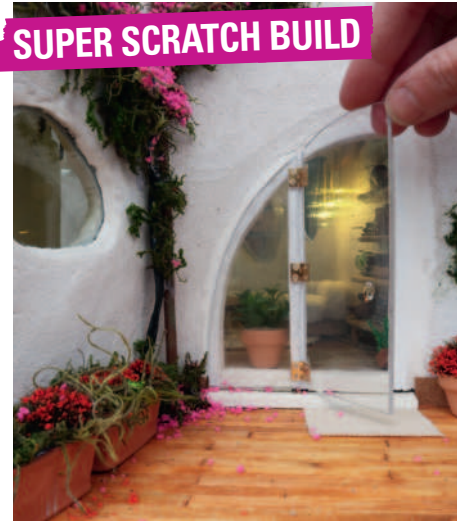


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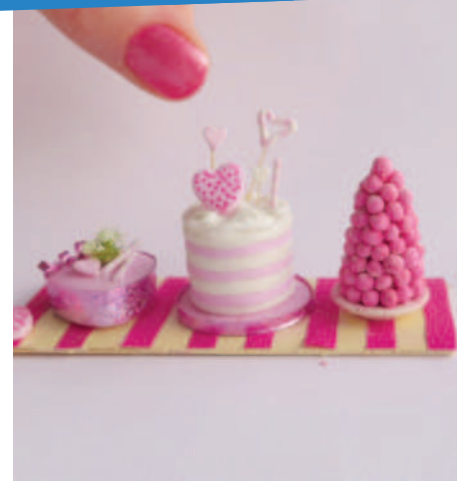
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WELCOME

to the February edition!

It's the season of love and we are here to celebrate! Sadie Brown certainly is, as her feature on fabulous artisans Lilli Bass, Linda Cummings and Gosia Suchodolska showcasing their wonderful work on page 10 demonstrates. Sadie continues the theme on page 22, with the next in her series of mini sweet treats, this month for Valentine's Day.

Elsewhere, Moi Ali continues her series Take Two, where two artisans take the same kit and each give their own interpretation – always an interesting result! Plus, Bea Broadwood of Petite Properties returns for 2022 going back to basics, with a step by step look at quarter scale.

There is a plethora of projects for you to try your hand at this issue, in an array of themes! From SJ Holmes' mini dreamcatchers for a boho look, to Moi Ali's 1950s kitchen table, to Louise Bird's version of the popular character Fagin from the Charles Dickens novel Oliver Twist! It's a must see and a must try.

All this and so much more including features, projects and reviews!

Happy crafting!

The DHMS team

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

Sadie Brown, Moi Ali, Bea Broadwood, Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel, SJ Holmes, Deb Weissler & Louise Bird



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With a big heart

BOHO CHIC



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We show you how

A COMPLEX PROJECT



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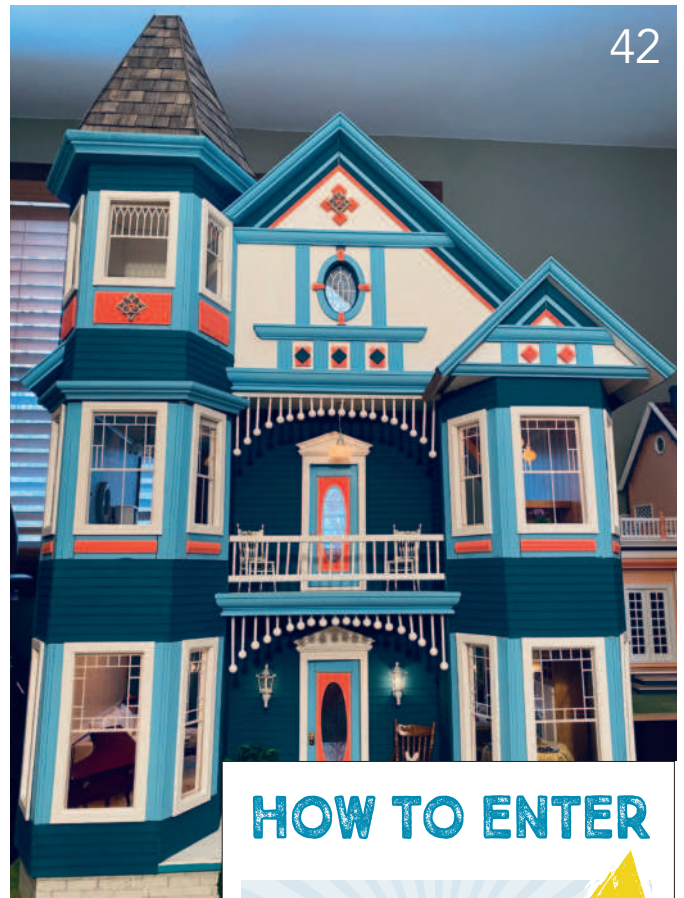
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The closing date for all entries is
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EASY TO FOLLOW STEP BY STEP PROJECTS FOR ALL SKILLS LEVELS



Instagram Identities:

JON TRENCHARD @HORDLECASTLE



Moi Ali found out how a decapitated Yoda toy took centre stage in actor Jon Trenchard's marvellous miniature castle!

Growing up in Rushden, Northamptonshire, Jon Trenchard was inspired by his parents' love of small things. He explained: "Mum collected dolls houses and made miniature food and my Dad made model railways, so I've always been surrounded with minis. I started with Sylvanian Families and my brother and I made things for my Mum's houses, like toys for her nursery and a settle for her Trigger Pond pub. When Mum started taking me to dolls house fairs, I got hooked and started collecting myself. But as a child, many items were beyond my pocket money, so I set about trying to make what I couldn't afford out of odds and ends."

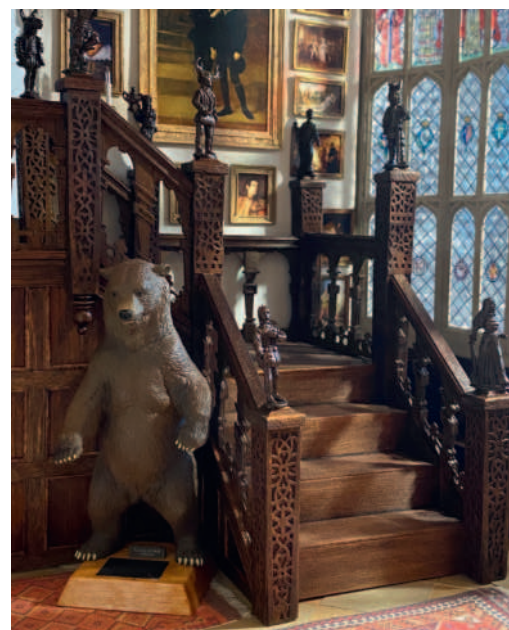
I asked Jon about the inspiration for Hordle

Castle, the masterpiece he has showcased on Instagram: "On holiday, my parents used to take us to visit National Trust houses and castles and I used to imagine and design my own castle, arranging where I'd put the library, the portcullis and so on. When I was about 12, I persuaded Dad to cut the plywood walls of a Great Hall in 1/12th scale, for which I made a cardboard fireplace and flagstones. And I've been designing the next rooms of Hordle Castle ever since!"

He continued: "My inspiration still comes mainly from visiting historic houses. National Trust Life Membership was the best present my parents ever bought me! Knole and Ham



One of the commissioned mini theatre sets on the real stage



▲ The banisters of the oak staircase were made from a single piece of card

▲ Lady De Mohun's room with a ceiling of cocktail sticks

► The chapel is mostly made from cereal packet and pencils

House are particular favourites, along with fortified manors like Athelhampton, Baddesley Clinton, Ightham Mote and Hever Castle (and John Hodgson's miniatures there). I particularly love the medieval, Tudor, Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, with Arts and Crafts and Gothic Revival thrown in, and I've always adored that antique whiff of different eras of architecture and furniture all mingled into one ancient home: wood panelling, flagstones, inglenooks, priest holes, secret doors in library shelves... I'm also increasingly inspired and awed by other miniaturists on Instagram too, like Mulvany & Rogers."

Jon told me: "Over the years, I have collected many pieces of furniture ready for the rooms I have yet to create... a hand-made billiard table I found on eBay, an antique Chesterfield for the library, a hand-carved Tudor bed from Pear Tree Miniatures. As an actor, I have toured the UK and internationally a few times, gathering inspiration (and minis) along the way: classical statues from Rome and Samurai armour from Tokyo, to name but two."

He went on: "But my progress in making the rooms themselves has been slow, because I am often away on tour for long stretches of time. Some bits do get made whilst working though, like the banisters of the oak staircase, which I made in snatched moments off-stage in dressing rooms around the country, and the 1/144th scale kit furniture for the Dutch Baby House, which was made when I was in Stratford working for the Royal Shakespeare Company." Making miniatures 'on the road' ►





▲ The castle has signs like a National Trust property

▼ The cellar is just 10cm wide



▲ The gatehouse complete with murder holes

▼ The gatehouse with the stained glass windows of the chapel



is not easy, but Jon and his partner have recently moved to South Norwood, and he's excited to finally have a workspace to make miniatures in.

So far, Hordle Castle has ten rooms; a Great Hall, vestibule, oak stairs, stone stairs, cellar, chapel, tapestry room, nursery, Turkish bathroom and an alchemist's turret. Each room in the castle is a separate roombox, and they all fit together like a 3D jigsaw puzzle. I say 'so far' because Jon has plans! "There are at least another 13 rooms in my head, including kitchens, a suite of Georgian rooms, a library, billiard room and a long gallery. And then there'll be the gardens... People say dolls houses are never finished, but even so I need to get a move on to get anywhere near finishing Hordle!"

Incredibly, apart from what he's learnt from his parents' hobbies, Jon has no training in art or model-making: "I love using recycled materials to create something new. I am always on the hunt for new techniques and ideas, either inventing things myself or finding tips on Instagram or YouTube. I think part of the joy of miniatures is the different perspective it gives you on life. I see a brick wall and I imagine it as cut up bits of egg box, painted in various shades of acrylic; I see the cardboard tube left over after tin foil runs out and see the twists of a Norman pillar!"

I asked Jon about his favourite part of Hordle Castle: "It's hard to choose," he told me. "The reason we make miniatures is to have everything just the way we like, isn't it?! But the room I am most proud of so

far is the chapel. Nearly all of it is recycled; the pillars are pencils, the interior carved stonework is all cereal packet and the stained glass windows are transparent packaging decorated with Sharpies. Even the central ceiling boss is a decapitated Yoda toy, disguised as a Green Man! I think this speaks volumes about what I feel about religion too. I'm interested in the stories and truths all religions recycle and share, so the decoration incorporates images and ideas from Daoism, Hinduism, Judaism, Greek philosophy, Norse myth and Paganism, as well as Christianity."

I asked Jon if he was tempted to give up the limelight and turn his attention to miniatures full-time: "In past years, I have only had time for miniatures as a hobby, but having more time for minis during recent lockdowns has left me hankering for more and I have been wondering if I could turn my passion into a business."

Jon explained that he was once commissioned by a theatre producer to make miniature sets of 'A Comedy About A Bank Robbery', in which he performed on



▲ Work in progress on one of Jon's tiny theatre sets

tour and in the West End. "I ended up making three mini sets inside three ice cream tubs from front of house in the theatre..." he told me, "...so the furnishings were approximately 1/144th. It was the first time I created models of reality rather than just from my imagination."

He continued: "I guess I am still experimenting with techniques really, but I would be interested in making things to sell, or taking more commissions if people like what I do... perhaps a roombox interior, or a half-timbered house, a haunted tower, or another castle? Maybe Hogwarts? Or just an aumbry, dummy board or a copper boiler? All ideas welcome! I get very excited when miniaturist friends on Instagram talk about their dream projects, so I am sure I would love to design and make for others. I am also happy to share tips and ideas."

"I want to say a big thank you to everyone in the miniaturist community on Instagram for being so welcoming and encouraging. I only really started on Instagram during lockdown and it has meant a lot to me to have a space to chat and share with others just as passionate about miniatures as I am. It was also lovely to meet some Insta friends in person at Miniatura back in October. I would heartily encourage other miniaturists to get in touch on Instagram to share ideas and dream projects too." 🏠

INFORMATION

You can find Jon on

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



For the love of miniatures



“Lilli has an immaculate eye for bridalwear design, her choice of fabrics and the cut and style of the dress makes this a definitively standout piece amongst a portfolio bursting with incredible ideas”

Proving that small gestures have a big heart this Valentine's Day with Lilli Bass, Linda Cummings and Gosia Suchodolska.

Wedded to true love

Cupid's arrow ensures we fall in love with the world of Valentine's Day in small scale time and again, year after year. That and the exceptional work of some of the finest artisans in our midst. One of the most engaging stories surrounding the origins of Saint Valentine's Day takes us back to the reign of the Roman Emperor, Claudius II. Ceasing to allow eligible young bachelors to wed, with the belief that without the pressures of family, they would better dedicate themselves to life as a soldier, did not go down well with Valentine, a third century priest. Believing these men should still be allowed to follow the path of true love, it is said that he continued to marry young lovers, a decision which ultimately cost him his life when his actions were uncovered. However, it wasn't only Valentine that was captured, it was also his heart, one of his final acts being to send the first 'Valentine' to the girl who had gained his heart during his time in prison. Today, many centuries later, sending a Valentine's card to that special someone in our lives has become a time-honoured tradition. [Read more](#)

◀▼ Bonnie marries style with romance (Lilli Bass)





Ready to walk down the miniature aisle (*Lilli Bass*)



Facing detail (Lilli Bass)



Wake up to a champagne breakfast this Valentine's Day (Linda Cummings)



Bottling art

IGMA Fellow, Linda Cummings raises a toast to Saint Valentine with two marvellous miniatures. As many a miniaturist will know and sympathise, perfecting just a single bunch of grapes is a time-consuming business on its own, but Linda has taken the challenge one step further. Her tiny bottle of Merlot rests inside a crate filled with the most exceptional tiny fruits. With their delicate shading and authentic variation in colour, each juicy grape is carefully crafted by hand and demonstrates that same dedication and attention to fine detail we have come to expect from Linda's work. The leaves add a splash of colour and the rustic crate with 'Moët & Chandon' emblazoned on the side is an inspired touch! This also leads us very nicely to Linda's second crate, where a bottle of champagne sits nestled amongst a bed of green grapes. Again, we find that same subtle attention to each individual fruit, giving the overall piece that realistic finish. The top-quality bottles Linda uses also adds to the overall luxury feel. But before we raise our own glass to Linda's work, there's time for her to share a couple of other, earlier Valentine's pieces from her expansive and ever-increasing body of work. Her cookie casket is a particular hit, filled with butter biscuits sure to melt the most hardened of hearts. However, her 'Be my Valentine' bread offers a literal slice of romance along with the ultimate Valentine's treat, chocolate! The texturing is superb and perfect for those seeking to incorporate a more subtle Valentine's Day reference within their miniature scene.

Our gardens are well acquainted with varieties of rose carrying wonderful

Bottling romance (Linda Cummings)



Valentine's cookie casket (Linda Cummings)



names such as 'Valentine's heart' and 'Love knot', the symbolic flower of romance a must make for those with a passion for seasonal miniatures. Talented artisan, Gosia Suchodolska wins our heart with an afternoon tea for two. The table is laid for a romantic rendezvous with a deliciously tempting chocolate gateaux, laden with cherries and thick cream. There's also a bowl of luxurious cherry jam, ripe for spreading

We love these roses!
(Gosia Suchodolska)



▼ Say it with 1/12th scale flowers this Valentine's Day (Gosia Suchodolska)



Afternoon tea for two! (Gosia Suchodolska)

This tiny loaf takes us to the heart of Valentine's Day (*Linda Cummings*)



on that freshly baked bloomer. It is though, those gorgeous pink roses which really add atmosphere and set the scene for romance. Known for her extraordinary ability to create delicate petals for that all-important true to life appearance, Gosia's bouquets are of an extremely high standard. Her designs are equally reminiscent of warm summer days as they are the 14th February, especially when her beautiful flowers take us out into the carefully manicured miniature garden! Gosia's rose petals are lovingly crafted from polymer clay and past projects have seen her add them to 1/12th scale baths and even filling full-size wine glasses. That's an awful lot of petals and no mean feat when you consider their small scale!

The face of romance

Also basking in the joy of that 'rosy' glow is Bonnie, about to follow in the footsteps of many a Valentine's Day bride before her as she makes her way up the aisle. Carrying a lovely bouquet of white and pink roses, Bonnie was created by top doll artisan, Lilli Bass, and could easily have stepped straight

from the pages of a bridal magazine. Lilli has an immaculate eye for bridalwear design, her choice of fabrics and the cut and style of the dress makes this a definitively standout piece amongst a portfolio bursting with incredible ideas from a diverse range of eras and themes. Standing at roughly five and a quarter inches tall, Bonnie's accessories are equally impressive. The gold buttons running up the back of the dress are accented perfectly by the clip in Bonnie's hair and the tiny pearl earrings and necklace are a fantastic and well thought out addition. Perhaps even echoing the tradition of something borrowed by wearing treasured family heirlooms handed down through the generations.

Bonnie's hand painted facial features leave you in awe of Lilli's skill with a brush. Not to mention her steady hand! The individual eyelashes and eyebrow hairs are stunning, Bonnie's eyes offering an exceptional window into the character she has created. Romance was also key to one of Lilli's most exciting and important projects to date. Several years ago, she took the

term self-portrait to new heights, designing and creating the cake topper for her own wedding, exquisitely crafted 1/12th scale figures of both Lilli and her husband to be.

With somewhere in the region of 24 million Valentine's cards sent in the UK alone, this adds up to one of the busiest times of year for posties across the globe. Not unlike the handwritten messages inside those cards, every grape, rose petal and doll, all lovingly handmade by our trio of exceptional artisans is unique. Linda, Gosia and Lilli's designs are a love letter to miniature art that, like the legends surrounding Saint Valentine himself, will go on to stand the test of time. 🏠



INFO

For more information please visit:

Lilli Bass

website: www.lillislittles.com

Linda Cummings

website: www.etsy.com/shop/linsminis

Gosia Suchodolska

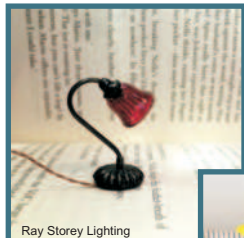
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David Inarte

Mini dreamcatchers

You can get really creative with dreamcatchers - why not try adding different coloured threads as a fringe, or adding beads in as you weave the thread in the centre of the hoop?

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

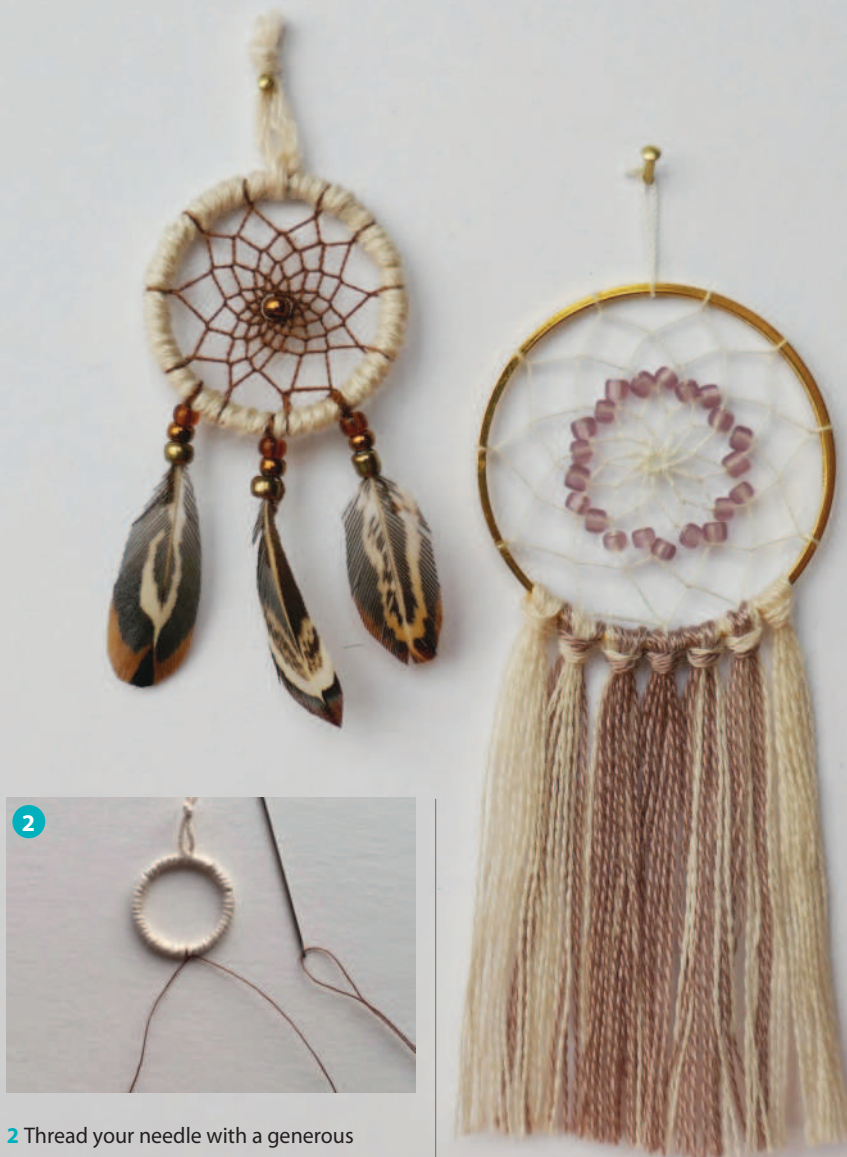
- Metal hoop (find them in the jewellery crafting section) or make your own out of wire
- Sewing thread
- Embroidery thread
- Glue
- Beads & feathers for decoration (optional)

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Scissors
- Blunt needle



1 Begin by securing the end of the embroidery thread to your metal hoop with a dab of glue, then wrap the thread continuously around the hoop tightly until the whole hoop is covered. When you get to the end, tie both ends of thread to each other, then tie again to create a loop to hang the dreamcatcher by.

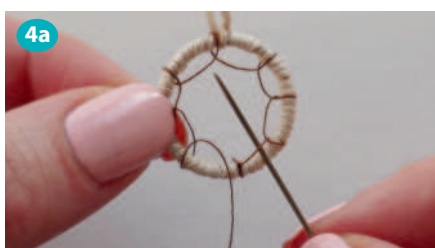


2 Thread your needle with a generous length of sewing thread and tie it to the hoop.





3 Take your needle and begin by threading it through and around the hoop, passing behind itself as you create a loop. Repeat this step while working around the hoop in an anti-clockwise motion. The number of initial loops you make will influence how complex the final design looks. If you're not feeling too ambitious try making seven outer loops as your starting point. When you reach where you started, take a moment to even out the spacing between your loops before moving onto the second round.



4 Pass the needle from the front to the back, going over the thread between the first loops you made. Repeat around the circle, weaving over each 'bridge' of thread between the loops. Try to keep the thread fairly loose as you work; if you pull it too tight it will be difficult to get to the centre of the circle!



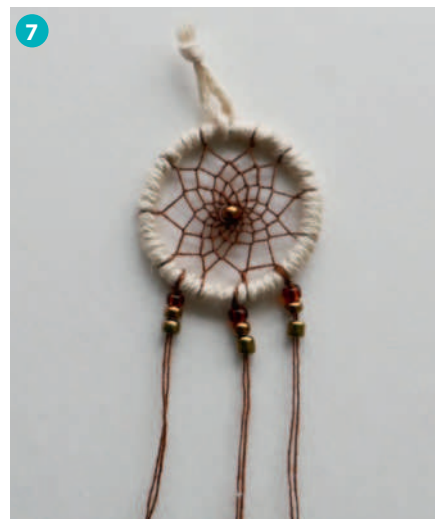
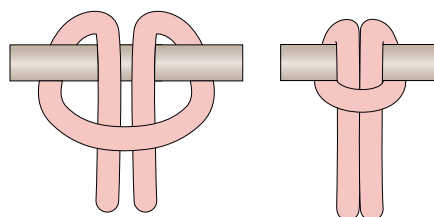
5 Continue working around in a spiral until you reach the centre of the hoop. Give the thread a pull and the tension should even out the pattern. Add a bead to the thread and tie off in the centre. That's the hard part done!



6 Cut three lengths of thread and attach to the bottom edge of your hoop with a larks head knot. To make a larks head knot fold the thread in half, pass this across the hoop, then pass the tails through the loop in the thread.

Larks head knot

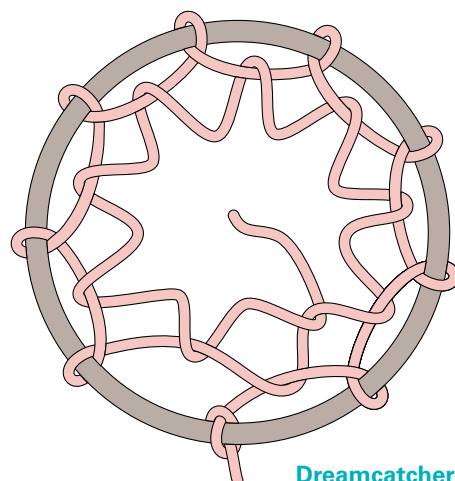
Patterns not to scale



7 Add some beads to your threads and tie off to secure them.



8 To attach the feathers, I added a dab of glue to the quill and inserted it into the beads. Trim the ends of your thread and you're all finished! I used a combination of naturally tiny feathers and big feathers that I trimmed down into shape. If you don't want to use real feathers why not make some out of thread? 🏠



Dreamcatcher

Eleanor of Aquitaine

A powerful English queen inspires a brilliant Robert Off roombox.

When many people think about powerful English queens, Elizabeth I is likely the first to come to mind. There's no denying Elizabeth I is revered as one of the greatest English monarchs to have ever ruled, but 400 years earlier, Eleanor of Aquitaine helped rule a dynasty that ensured her place among the prominent European families. One of the most powerful and influential women of her time, she would become queen of France,

queen of England, help lead a crusade to the Holy Land, and give birth to three kings, two queens, and numerous counts and countesses.

During Eleanor's lifetime, feudalism was the social order of the day with numerous political upheavals throughout Europe. Monarchs and lords fought constantly for territory, power and position, with the future of their legacies forever on their minds.

Eleanor's husband, Henry II, was a successful warrior king, but his unwillingness to grant his adult children power, money and freedom to exercise their own positions of responsibility caused his sons to become increasingly frustrated.



Roombox full view



Finally, with the assistance of their mother, they attempted to depose their father. Learning of their plot, Henry quickly put an end to it and no longer able to trust his consort, imprisoned Eleanor in her chambers in various castles for the next 16 years. Eleanor was unable to communicate with her children or the outside world during much of that time. It is Robert's fascination with this incredibly powerful but dysfunctional family that inspired this roombox.

No actual images or descriptions exist today of what Eleanor's chambers would have looked like in 1173, so drawing on historical texts and illustrations, Bob's latest roombox represents the bed chambers worthy of a person of note but certainly not the opulence due a queen. The entire box is made of wood, the walls spackled, rough

sanded, then painted and distressed using coffee mixed into diluted brown paint. The windows were designed by Bob and laser cut by Scott Allesio of New York.

The walls are supported with heavy timbers made from bass wood strips that Bob distressed using a Dremel tool. The floor boards are hand laid basswood strips. Lighting comes from LED strips that have been painted with nail polish to dim the lighting and provide a warm glow. The entire interior was built outside the box shell and then inserted.

The furniture was made by retired artist Barbara Moore of Pear Tree Miniatures. The only way Bob was able to obtain these pieces was from the secondary market. Bob dressed the bed and made the pillow. The tapestries are photos of actual tapestries he photocopied, backed, treated with

various mediums and varnish and attached to rods and rings. The results look like fine needlework. A small reading nook to the left contains a leaded window that overlooks the expansive grounds of the castle. The box took nine months to complete.

Over the years, Bob has created dozens of striking vignettes and his workshop has always been a source of fascination for like-minded individuals. "I moved my studio into a 650 square foot studio apartment about one year ago," Bob explains. "The studio has a nice little kitchen and an enclosed balcony which I use for painting and other items needing ventilation and where odor is an issue. I had lots of tables built and added factory-type lighting. It also receives lots of natural light. The studio, because it is so bright and cheerful, is a great space for entertaining past clients who have purchased my work, ▶▶▶



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Bob's new workshop



▲ Landscapes and wiring

◀ Reading nook

for fellow miniaturists and other interested parties. I frequently ask folks to join me there for a simple lunch and tour."

Here, miniaturists not only get to see Bob's collection and work in progress, but have an opportunity to probe him with questions about many of his techniques. For the serious roombox maker, Bob's methodology is invaluable and he has agreed to share his processes with us.

"First, I don't think of what I do as making a box and then furnishing it. I like to approach my work as an artist would. It must successfully take the viewer on a journey using their imagination. It must create a mood, tell a story and basically take the viewer to a different place and time. When I explain to someone that I spend most of my time thinking about what I am going to create versus the time I actually spend with the hands-on construction phase, they don't believe me. I spend about 50% of the time coming up with the idea for the box and doing the research on the historical time frame. Most of my inspirations come from books which I read or from warm memories of my past. I read about 30 to 40 books a year and from all that reading I generally get one or two inspirations. Once I settle on a specific person, place or time I research it extensively. When I created the Aquitaine box I read a half dozen books about her life. Afterwards I settled on a specific room, the bedroom where Eleanor was detained for so many years. I try to envision what it must have been like living in her bed chambers and what



Box in progress

► Tapestry

types of objects would likely be in it. After I do a general drawing, I try to give the interior floor plan some visual interest by creating spaces around corners, windows, doors to hallways and other forced perspective tricks to fool the viewer's eye. These add-ons help create a sense of depth and visual interest. I have found, at this point, most miniature builders, artisans, and artists frequently let practicality get in the way of being creative. Do not do this! Once I finalize the floorplan, fitting it into the defined space, I must decide on the interior details that I wish to focus on and illuminate. This is where I must decide where to place the lights, how to bring in electricity and how to hide the light wiring and any lighting fixtures. At the same time, I draw viewer sight lines on the floor plan drawing. These straight lines simulate exactly what the viewer would see from various vantage points, looking from the front of the box to the rear. Once pleased with the results, the next step is to create a heavy paper mock-up of the proposed walls, doors, windows, etc. This wall template is then inserted into the box itself. Many times what looks like it will work on paper does not work well in 3D and I must then revise my floorplan. While my paper walls are in place, the next step is to furnish the box with furnishings and other elements, which help tell the story and set the mood. Always be careful not to over stuff your box. Too often miniaturists over-fill their boxes, which takes away from the essence of what you want the viewer to focus on. I always try to work in threes and visual triangles. It is almost like designing a kitchen. I also need to think about colour. Think one or



two colours. More than that and the viewer's eye gets confused, wonders around and the box loses its magic. At this point I really know my story and my character well. I almost feel like an actor who puts themselves into character to the point that I become them. All the walls, doors, windows, beams and such are constructed outside the box whenever possible. It is generally easier to do because I have more work area, much better light and my fingers better positioned to work, much like someone building a ship in a bottle. Now I'm ready to assemble everything. I begin by gluing the floorboards down onto a sub-floor and sliding it into the box. I do

the same procedure for the walls and then attach and hook up the lights inside the box, adding any photos of the window views. I assemble the box starting from the rear and working forward. The box is now ready to be furnished." 



INFO

Bob's techniques are invaluable if your desire is to create a polished and professional look. The project may require more time, but the results may be well worth it. You can watch Bob's YouTube video on miniatures as an art form at

Website: <https://youtu.be/JYA0Zd6XB5E>

To view more visit his website,

Website: www.miniaturerooms.com

The sweetest time of year

Fall in love with Valentine's Day in small scale and create this display of sweet treats.

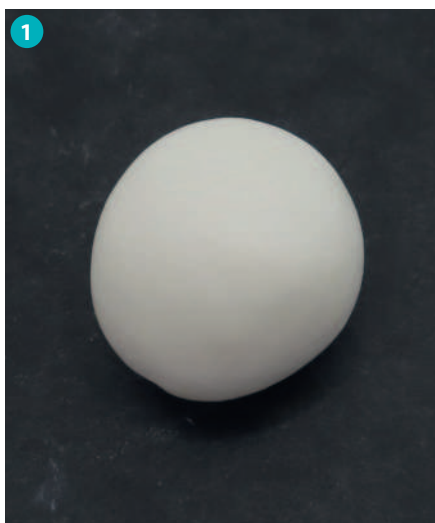
YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

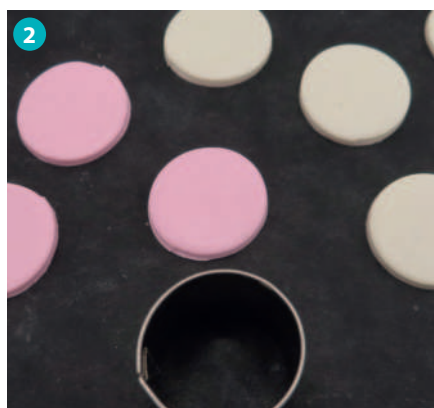
- White, yellow and pink polymer clay
- Fuchsia pink and white pastels
- Sculpey Bake & Bond (or similar)
- Permanent marker pens with fine point in two shades of pink
- Cream acrylic paint
- Craft glue
- Pink and holographic pink ribbon
- Old 1/12th scale bamboo basket
- Small 1/12th scale ceramic plate
- Self-adhesive landscape tuft with white flowers
- Piece of soft wood

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Small paintbrushes
- 2cm round sugarcraft cutter
- 2cm and 1cm heart shaped plunger cutters
- Roller or glass
- Needle tool
- Small ball tool
- Old butter knife
- Craft knife
- Scissors



1 Mix white polymer clay with just a tiny amount of yellow to make a very pale cream.



2 Roll the cream clay out to around 1 1/2mm in thickness. Repeat with pink clay and use a 2cm round sugarcraft cutter to cut out four circles of each.



3 Take one of the pink circles and use a roller or a glass to make it a little bit larger than the others. This will form the base for the completed cake.



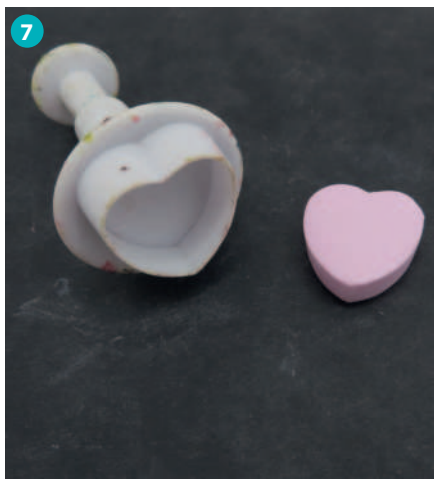
4 Take the four cream and three remaining pink circles and carefully stack them alternately, starting with cream at the bottom. Roll the stack on its side a little to adhere the layers together for a more realistic appearance.



5 Use an old butter knife to mix Sculpey Bake & Bond or similar with some of the cream clay. Take your time over this to ensure the final mixture is smooth like buttercream icing.



6 Spread the icing mixture over the top of the cake with a needle tool.



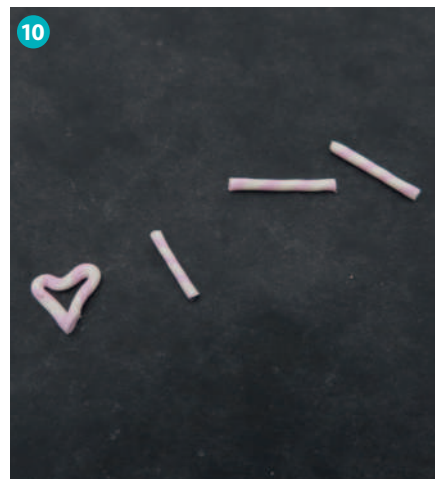
7 Roll out some further pink clay to 6mm and 1mm in thickness. Use a 2cm plunger cutter to press out a single heart shape from the 6mm thick clay and a 1cm plunger cutter to press out two further hearts from the 1mm thick clay. The former will become the second cake.



8 Make a selection of very tiny heart shapes for decoration by first rolling both some cream and pink clay into tiny carrot shapes. Flatten these with a fingernail and then use a needle tool or a small ball tool to form a dip in the top to create the heart shape.



9 To make the candy stick decorations, begin by rolling two thin tubes of clay, one cream and one pink, and twist together forming a rope



10 Roll the rope of clay into a smooth tube 1mm in thickness and cut three lengths, two around 1.2cm and one 9mm. Cut a further length and use your fingers to twist into a tiny heart shape.



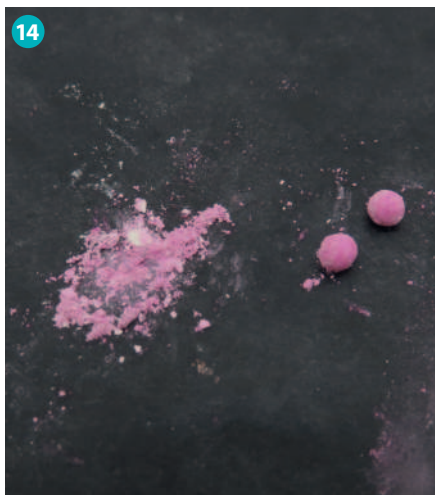
11 Roll out a 2cm long carrot of pink clay. Flatten the bottom by pressing it down against your worksurface and the top with your fingernail.



12 Take a small 1/12th scale ceramic plate, preferably cream if you can find one, and attach the clay using Bake & Bond, resembling a traffic cone! ▶



13 Grate some fuchsia pink and white pastel and mix together.



14 Roll lots of 3mm balls of pink clay, enough to cover the polymer clay half of the 'traffic cone' and roll them in the grated pastel mixture.



15 Coat the cone/candy tree with Bake & Bond and cover with the balls. Make sure that one sweet is stuck to the very top of the cone, raised just slightly above all the others.



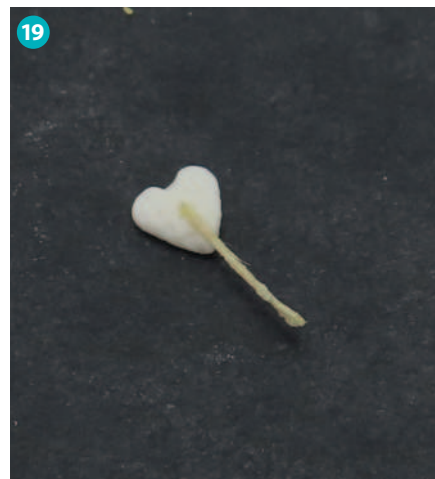
16 Once you're satisfied with the look of the cone/candy tree, grate a little white pastel over the top. Bake alongside the two cakes and all the hearts and candy decorations. Allow everything to cool thoroughly.



17 Time to start decorating! Take the two 1mm thick heart decorations from step 7 and decorate very simply, using permanent marker pens in two different shades of pink with fine points to create a polka dot effect.



18 Stick one of the polka dot hearts to the top of the layered cake with craft glue, carefully positioning it slightly at an angle. You might find you need to rest something against it while the glue dries to ensure that it doesn't fall over.



19 Cut three short lengths in three sizes from an old 1/12th scale bamboo basket to make the stems for the other heart shaped decorations required for the layer cake. Glue a tiny heart to each of the two shortest stems and the candy stick heart to the longest.



20 Whilst the stems are drying, take some pink holographic ribbon, such as from an old gift bow, and cut to size wrapping all the way around the heart shaped cake and around the cake board made in step 3. When wrapping the heart shaped cake, start at the dip in the heart as the dip deceives the eye and makes the join appear invisible!



21 Use a needle tool to very carefully make three tiny holes in the 'buttercream icing' on top of the layered cake. Glue the heart shaped decorations into position, also adding the shorter of the three candy stick lengths.



22 Glue the remaining candy sticks to the top of the heart shaped cake, placing one over the other. Also add the remaining tiny heart decoration.



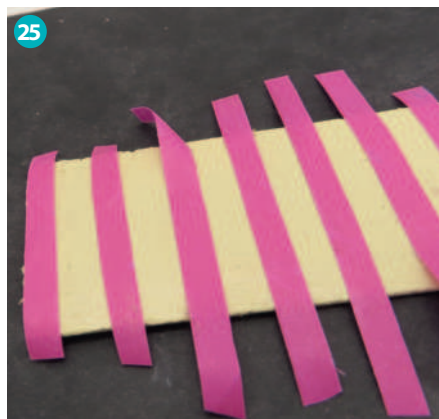
24 Take a piece of 1mm thick soft wood measuring roughly 7.8cm by 3cm and paint with cream acrylic paint, allowing to dry thoroughly between coats.



26 Once the glue has dried, cut the ribbon/ paper as closely to the edge of the wood as possible to create a neat finish.



23 Cut a small piece from a self-adhesive landscape tuft with white flowers and attach to the top of the heart shaped cake, positioning between the decorations. Cut a short length of pink holographic ribbon and roll around a needle tool to create a tiny streamer and glue to the top of the cake.



25 Cut eight strips of 4mm wide pink paper or ribbon and glue at intervals all the way along the length of wood to create a striped effect. Again, the ribbon in the pictures was cut from an old gift bow.



27 Stick the cakes and candy to the display board, with the candy tree on the right and the layered cake in the middle. Finally, glue the second polka dot heart to the bottom left-hand corner of the board. 🏠

Sadie says...

"Why not adapt the colour scheme for other celebrations throughout the year? Swap the hearts for Easter eggs or ghosts and have fun creating a design unique to you!"

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Tamar with The Organic House



Going organic

Go with the flow as we explore Tamar Cohen's incredible scratch build, The Organic House.

The tools of the trade

Tamar Cohen's first encounter with miniature art came whilst still in school, when she would find herself regularly visiting her local museum, captivated by a room brimming with miniature art. The walls inside the display were black, a striking background for the brightly lit miniature rooms. This wasn't the

only aspect of those days to influence Tamar's future artwork as she also credits those heady teenage years and early adulthood with helping to provide her with a solid skillset on which to draw. "I was in the art department in high school, which taught me photography, sculpture, and painting, all of which came in handy for miniature making,"



The Organic House really comes into its own at night



▲ Arriving home

she tells me. "Many of the tools and skills I use for miniature crafting came from an 8 month course I completed when I was 21 years old to become a silversmith. However, I never learned how to make miniatures in a precise way; instead, it turned out to be a blend of all the abilities I'd acquired over the years."

A present received from her sister just over a year ago offered Tamar much more

than the 1/100th scale kit contained within, it also gave her the gift of miniature creativity. Building the kit began as a simple way of filling the time during a period when many of us found ourselves confined within our own four walls. However, Tamar quickly found herself starting work on her own projects. "I constructed a perfume shop from scratch, which was a lot of fun, and then I challenged myself to build a castle



▲ Cosy curves in the living room

roombox, which took a month to complete, and after I finished it, I realised there was nothing else I'd rather do! As a result, I just kept creating." Named 'The Alchemist's Castle', the castle roombox was completed a mere five months into Tamar's model making career, the gothic windows bearing the hallmarks of an experienced artisan. 'The Organic House', Tamar's 1/20th scale home, inspired in part by the style of the 19th/20th century architect, Antoni Gaudí was also completed within her first year as a miniaturist, making this stunning scratch build an incredible achievement.

Following the curve

With its curved walls, stained glass and inspirational interior, The Organic House appears a complex project, but it's a challenge which Tamar rose to with exceptional ability. "Creating that house with all of the curves was a real challenge and I had a lot of obstacles to overcome," she admits. "I started by making the floor out of MDF and then covering it with stone I cut and wood plates I glued. I used cardboard to make the walls and I covered it with grout, the same one used for tile installation, to give it that true stone effect. The windows are made of glass. I started by making the area for the living room and kitchen, then the bedroom floor, and finally the bathroom floor at the top. When everything was finished, including the furnishings, I installed the roof, which I also made out of cardboard." Tamar then surprises me with the revelation that the house was



◀ The fabulous kitchen

actually built from the inside out as she initially began with the core feature of the house, the sweeping staircase! "I have to be honest, I dislike measuring, so before I started creating the walls, I built the stairs to give me a sense of scale and something to rely on."

This is a house where you could easily imagine spending time. The interior is exceptionally well planned and whilst the curved walls could have posed an issue if using ready-made pieces, as Tamar intended to create the furniture herself, it actually provided an opportunity to add to the design. This is something evident in every room, the curved kitchen cabinets and sofa are particularly exciting pieces. "I used a variety of materials to produce the furniture for the house, I mostly used olive wood and sculpting foam, which I used to make the toilet and bathtub. The sculpting foam has a beautiful stone-like feel, which was exactly what I needed to keep the organic mood going." "The use of olive wood also allowed Tamar to give 'The Organic House' a very personal family connection, making it even more special." "Working with olive wood is difficult because it is firm and I needed to make all of the furniture suit the house's curves, so I had to cut it in a precise shape and sand it to fit. It does, however, have lovely designs, and it reminded me of home because my father is the one who sends it to me."



▲ Shining a light on stained glass!

▼ A warm welcome awaits visitors arriving at The Organic House



A shower of detail

Tamar has a growing number of fans on social media and at the time of our interview her Instagram account had reached almost 15,000 followers. It was here that fans first fell in love with the incredible 'running water' seen in the over bath shower. But just how was this special effect created? "That's a funny one; I didn't see the effect until it was brought up in the comments," says Tamar. "I constructed the bath barrier out of plexiglass, which scratches easily but is quite easy to work with. My reasoning was, this will get scratched at some point, so why not make some nice scratches myself to make it look like a genuine bathroom glass, so I used sanding paper, which eventually made it look like running water, I absolutely love those 'accidents'!"

Adding extra intrigue to the house is the 'organic' way in which one of the most important accessories for any house was created. "Whenever I find a shortcut, I take it!" says Tamar. "I wanted toilet paper in the bathroom but was too lazy to create it. Then it occurred to me that I could simply use painted wood." The results are incredibly effective and an idea many miniaturists may well find themselves wondering why they hadn't thought of before! 🌿



▲ The organic house is a step up for scratch builds



▲ Plenty of storage

The residents of The Organic House are avid readers





The stained glass windows undoubtedly take their inspiration from Javier Senosiain's 'Nautilus House', where coloured glass is a key element of the design, but is lighting always an important aspect for Tamar? "Yes, that is the answer to that question! I adore window lights, as well as fixture lights and reflections. I wanted to add some colour to the house, so I made this stained window, which creates lovely reflections inside. I used glass to make it, and I glued small pieces of colourful plastic foil to it. It's also why there are so many windows in that house, as well as a skylight on the roof."

Whilst the stained glass adds lighting effects during the day, it is at night when the house really comes alive, the 48 LED lights delivering atmosphere in spades. Whether it's the lights on the decking, or the globe lights seen throughout the house, every room oozes character and charm. If this is the standard of unique build achieved by Tamar so early on in her model making career, then this can only be the beginning for an artist destined to reach big places in a small world. 🏠

▼ Tamar's wooden toilet rolls

▲ The luxury bathroom



INFO

For more information please visit:

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



Book table

"We got the full-sized version of this handy little book table several years ago to house a collection of leather-bound field guides. It has a lot of presence for its small size and usually holds photographs and other books on the top too. It fits in well in a snug, more formal space, or even a bedroom" *Ruth*

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1/32in (0.8mm) and 1/16in (1.6mm)-thick sheetwood
- 4x 1-9/16in (40mm) cabriole legs (Houseworks #43112)
- 2x small brass knobs (Houseworks #1112)
- 2x brass handles with back plates (Houseworks #12001)
- HO scale 4x10 stripwood or a 1/8in wide strip of the thicker sheetwood
- Wood stain
- Satin varnish
- White glue
- Superglue

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Knife and steel ruler
- Small saw and mitre-box
- Small hand drills
- Needle files
- Needle tool
- Emery board
- Sanding sponge or fine sandpaper
- Needle-nose pliers
- Wire cutters
- Soft makeup brush

Photos by Stephen Lesbirel



Ruth's Top Tip!

"Hold the two niche sides together while finishing the sanding, to ensure they are alike."

CUT AND SHAPE THE WOOD



1 Cut the sheetwood pieces as shown in the template. File and sand the shapes in the niche sides. Sand the top edge of the back and the leading edges of the niche top and the niche sides rounded where shown in the template. Round the front and side edges of the table top. Shape the drawer fronts to best conform to the niche base and shelf by lightly sanding the front of the faces which will be beside the divider and the opposite end of the drawer faces, next to the niche side.

SHAPE THE LEGS, DRILL AND STAIN THE WOOD



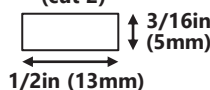
2 Sand the legs to round off all of the sharp vertical corners and smooth the 'knees' at the top of the legs. Sand the feet rounded. Pierce through the pattern pieces with the needle tool to mark the drill locations in the corresponding wood pieces. Drill the centre of the two drawer fronts to receive the knobs. Drill the niche sides for the handles. Stain all the wood, the legs and one length of HO stripwood.

ASSEMBLE DRAWERS

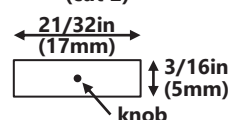


3 Glue the drawer back against the drawer base. Glue the sides against the base and back. Glue the front centred against the drawer sides and base. Make a second mirror-image drawer.

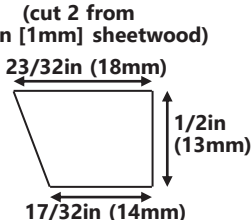
Drawer Back (cut 2)



Drawer Front (cut 2)



Drawer Base (cut 2 from 1/32in [1mm] sheetwood)



BOOK TABLE

Patterns at 100%
© Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel 2022

ASSEMBLE THE NICHE



4 Cut the HO supports for the niche back and niche sides to later support the niche top and to position the divider. Glue them in place. Glue the niche base centred on the table top. Weight this assembly until it is dry to prevent warping. Glue the niche divider to the niche base, ensuring it is vertical and centred by positioning it with the drawers on either side of it and the niche back temporarily in place against the niche base. Glue the niche sides to the table top and to the edges of the niche base, with the back edges of the sides even with the back of the table top, using the back as a spacer.

COMPLETE THE ASSEMBLY



5 Glue the shelf onto the top of the divider and to the sides, with the drawers in place. Sand to adjust the drawer heights, if necessary. The shelf should be level and aligned with the front of the sides, the drawer fronts (which may need

to be pulled out slightly), and the niche base. Glue the back between the sides and onto the table top. Glue the niche top between the sides, on its supports and against the back and sides. Glue a leg under each corner of the table top, with the knee of each leg extending just slightly beyond the corner of the table top.

FINISH THE TABLE



6 Varnish the drawer fronts and insides and the case to a soft sheen, sanding lightly between thin coats and brushing away any dust with the makeup brush. Pierce through the existing holes in the niche sides to penetrate the varnish.

INSTALL THE HARDWARE



7 Superglue the knobs into the drawer fronts and the side handles' back-plates on the niche sides, aligning the holes with the holes in the case. Snip 1/8in (3mm) off the tips of the loop pins with the wire cutters. File the remaining

tips pointed to make them feed through the holes easier. Slide the two pins which are closer to the back into the back-plate holes first. Slide the front pins into their holes, capturing the bail handle ends in the loops of the pins. If the bail falls out, spread it a bit and reinstall.

FOR A MATCHING SET OF SMALL BOOKS:

This little table could hold a set of poetry books or any combination of books, ornaments, photos, a small clock, or even tech accessories, depending on its setting.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS:

- Mattboard, sheetwood, or 3/8in (10mm)-wide stripwood
- Scrapbook paper in various colours
- Gold acrylic paint & fine gold gel pen
- White glue

ADDITIONAL TOOLS:

- Ball stylus

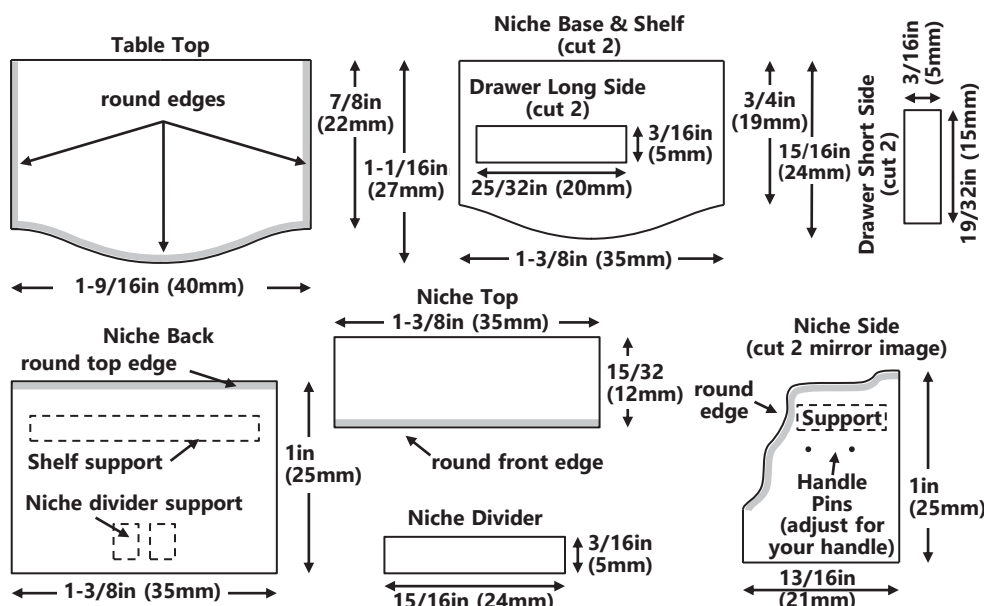
PREPARE THE BOOK PAGES AND COVERS



8 Cut mattboard, sheetwood, or stripwood 'blanks', 7/16in (11mm) tall and 3/8in (10mm) wide. Sand the spines slightly rounded and all the edges smooth. Paint the 'page' edges with gold paint on three sides. Set aside to dry. Cut scrapbook paper book covers, just slightly taller and wider than the blanks, adding 1/32in (1mm) to the height and to the doubled width of each book plus its spine width. Score the book cover spines, just a hair over the width of the blank from each end, using the ball stylus and steel ruler. Fold on the score lines.

ASSEMBLE THE BOOKS

9 Label the front and/or spine of the book covers in gold pen as desired. Glue each blank's spine centred into the spine of its cover. Glue the front and back covers to the blanks with equal overhang all around. When the assembled books are dry, optionally varnish the covers to deepen the colours and look more like leather. Place the books in the niche.



At Home with THE BROADWOODS



GETTING STARTED

Although 1/12th scale dominates in the dolls house world, over the last decade or so the smaller scales have drastically grown in popularity. However, there are still many miniaturists that are more than a little nervous of taking the plunge and having a go! So this month, professional model maker Bea Broadwood continues her new (mini) series which will go back to basics and take a step by step look at working in quarter scale. Helped by members of the PP Modelling Community, she will not only be sharing her top tips, but together they will be taking a closer look at the techniques, materials and tools that can be used to create highly realistic smaller scale dolls houses on even the tiniest of budgets!

► Our quarter scale February Cottage is only 15cm tall



Many miniaturists who are new to quarter scale are sometimes daunted at the size of the dolls houses. They often wonder if they will be able to easily bring such small interior spaces successfully to life. The answer is yes, as the best solution for this dilemma is to work from the inside out! I personally always advocate decorating the interior of a quarter scale property as much as possible prior to construction. This allows you to take your time and incorporate as much detail as you wish with no restrictive access. Myriad features, including panelling, internal false doors or architrave (all made from scrap card) can be added prior to construction.

▼ Avoid keyhole surgery style decorating, by working from the inside out!



Paint versus paper

Because so many of the houses I have designed over the years have been in the style of early architecture, I mostly apply paint to the interior walls. The type and colour of paint you use is completely up to you, but I would strongly recommend a water-based paint with a matt finish to obtain the best results. I also like to apply the paint using either a paint dabber or off cut of sponge as this avoids leaving (oversized) brush strokes and also creates a subtle rough texture to the internal walls too. However, internal decoration also depends on the external period style of your house and for many in the PP range, wallpaper works really well and helps add cosiness and character.

“I am often asked if I prime the elevations of my dolls house kits prior to painting and the simple answer is no!”

Bea



▲ Using a sponge to apply the paint adds texture

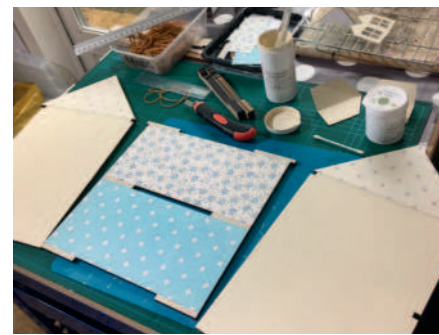
“I personally like to decorate all interior walls before putting the structure together. I dry fit the house and then make notes as to what colour to paint where and where to wallpaper. I usually lightly mark what is what as it will be covered”

Top tip from
Donna Rohm-Golden

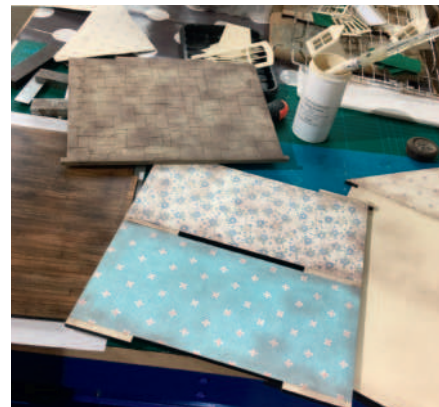
“I print my own paper using a resized image from Google. I usually print onto A4 card and stick to the walls with Pritt Stick as it's not wet enough to soak the card (or paper), but is still slightly tacky to let me gently reposition”

Top tip from Sandra Cowie

Quarter scale wallpaper is cheap and readily available from modelling shops, dolls house shows and of course online. There are many types and styles to choose from, but my main piece of advice would be to avoid any wallpaper with a glossy finish and also ensure that any patterns or motifs depicted on it are not oversized and to scale. However, there are other alternatives and inexpensive craft solutions available. A few years ago, when I decorated the interior of my 'Broadwood & Co' shop, I used A4 scrapbook paper which had come as a free gift with a craft magazine. I stuck the paper into position using PVA adhesive and then when dry, I trimmed away the excess using a scalpel. As I wanted a more 'worn out' look I then lightly distressed the paper with eye shadow to make it less pristine.



▲ Before...



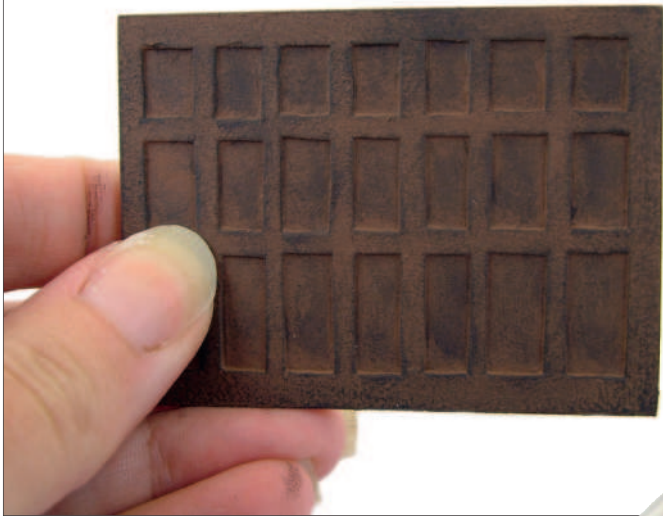
▲ ...after the eye shadow had been applied

If you have access to a computer and printer and are happy to use them, you could always have a go at creating your own designs, or some online sellers offer wallpapers that can be downloaded and then printed out at home. ▶

“I print wallpaper on A4 sticky labels as they are easy to reposition if needed”

Top tip from Sylvia Warner

Beam panelling made from cereal boxes



Balsa wood beams, but mind the gap!



Ready for construction



"Many quarter scale kits include internal features such as panelling or ceiling beams. However, you can also easily make your own in order to adapt or customise the finished house"

Panels, beams & the golden rule of internal decoration!

Many quarter scale kits include internal features such as panelling or ceiling beams. However, you can also easily make your own in order to adapt or customise the finished house. As with all the other internal decoration, it is best to fit these into position before the house, cottage or shop is constructed. Panelling can be easily made by cutting out the required size and shape from off cuts or card; cereal boxes are ideal, just always stick the shiny side down! Little off cuts of balsa wood make highly detailed ceiling beams, but whatever the internal decoration or features you add to the interior of your unconstructed dolls house there is one golden rule: Always leave a gap where the pieces of the kit join together!

Failure to leave a gap will mean that the pieces don't fit as they have been designed to. As you will have read in last month's AHWTB's, members of the PP modelling Community strongly recommend undertaking a dry fit prior to beginning any work on your kit. A dry fit is simply when the parts of the kit are put together without adding any adhesive, so that you can see how they fit together and

where they join. As Donna earlier mentioned, she cleverly uses the dry fit to allow her the opportunity to mark the contact points, floor levels etc, so that she can avoid applying any flooring or wall finishes in the wrong area or in the way of the kits joins. This is such good advice and I hope you find it helpful – happy mini-ing!

And finally...

As ever, special thanks to Donna Rohm-Golde, Sandra Cowie and Sylvia Warner for contributing to this article and also to all the members who so readily share their advice, help and support to everyone on the PP Modelling Community Forum. What a talented, helpful and friendly bunch you are! Bea. 🏠

NEXT MONTH

Bea and the members of the PP modelling community again come together to share their top tips and advice for creating realistic and scale effective internal floor coverings for 1/48th scale dolls houses...



INFO

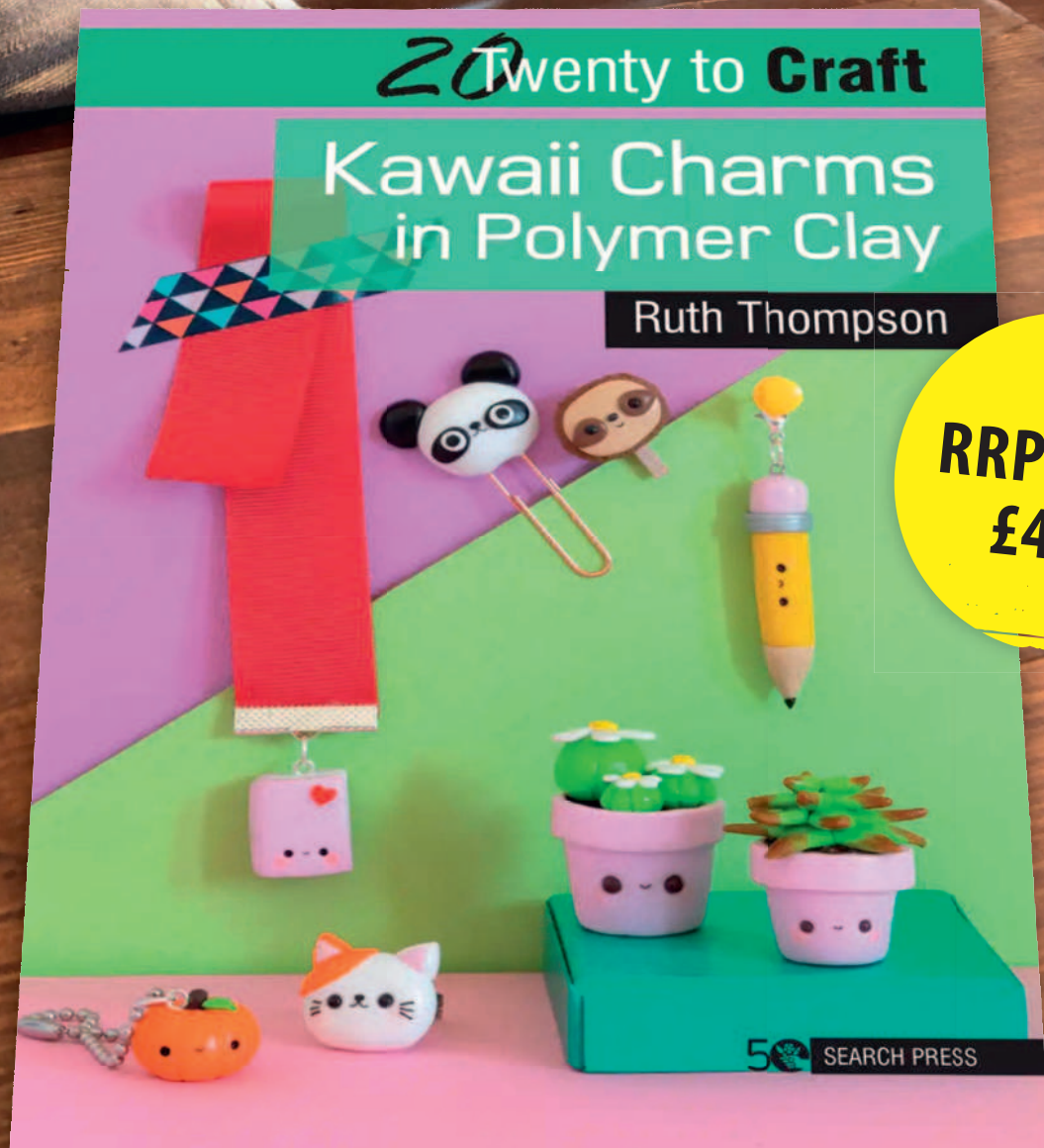
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Stylish denim



Designs on miniature fashion

Dress for success in small scale with Nancy from PUPA Miniatures.

A wardrobe staple



Pocket size!



The gift of miniature design

Based in The Netherlands, Nancy, the designer behind PUPA miniatures, is quickly amassing a dedicated following... her realistic miniature fashions appealing to an audience inspired by her 1/12th scale clothing. Although her Instagram account only dates to last summer, Nancy is far from new to miniatures, initially discovering the world of small scale during the mid-nineties. This was a moment she says she'll never forget. A friend of her then young daughter had been lucky enough to receive the gift of a dolls house from her parents, but Nancy is quick to point out that the house, bought at auction, was far from a traditional children's dolls house! "It was real miniature art, Victorian style, filled with loads of beautiful furniture and finished with lighting. I couldn't keep my eyes off the house!" she recalls. "Unfortunately, back then this hobby was too expensive for me, but it never left my mind." Nancy began her career as a miniaturist creating pieces from polymer clay and various sundry items, but it wasn't until later that she was in a position to purchase her first dolls house. This became a turning point and she certainly hasn't looked back.

"The freedom of creating my own fabric is another aspect I really love about making miniature fashion"

The fabric of art

The fabric Nancy uses looks as if it were all made for 1/12th scale. In fact, she brings the designs she has carefully chosen down to size with the aid of modern technology, printing them on soft micro cotton of a very high standard. "Through this I can create photographic effects which gives visible depth and details to my clothing," she explains. "The freedom of creating my own fabric is another aspect I really love about making miniature fashion."

From glamorous champagne evening dresses, stylish winter coats, to boho trends which take us to the heart of the swinging sixties, it is the denim look which has become something of a signature style amongst Nancy's portfolio. Complete with tiny pockets, her classic denim jacket is a true work of art and a magnificent example of exactly what can be accomplished in small scale. It looks so authentic that you'd never guess it's really made from cotton! "This jacket went through the same phases as my other items. The inspiration for it was my own denim jacket. All I needed was fabric, lots of hours, patience and my materials. And before I knew it, I had a tiny denim jacket!" Nancy's denim range has also featured dresses, handbags and, of course, the obligatory jeans.

Although Nancy has created beautiful, cosy cushions for the miniature home, it is her eye for fashion which is making her name. "I have a very wide interest in fashion and I can love one style as much as another. That's another thing I like about fashion. Even items that were hot a long time ago

are making their return and you see new generations wearing them." To an audience eagerly awaiting her latest miniature designs, Nancy's fashions appear ready to hit the catwalk, but getting there proved a process of trial and error. "Over the years I tried several techniques and used different materials to find my perfect match. I love to create new things and designs and working with fabric is something that relaxes me."

In addition to providing a creative outlet, Nancy's skill also provides her with a way to kick high and make those style dreams a reality in small scale. "In real life I can't walk on high heels anymore due to a bad knee and I just wear clothing I like and which is comfortable. But, in miniature I can make almost everything," she says. "The possibility to create one of a kind items like a couture piece or comfy denim pants is what I like so much. I never duplicate an item which makes them unique. With making my pieces of clothing I can help fellow miniaturists to create a decorative wardrobe of their dreams. Decorative because my miniatures can't be worn by dolls, but they look fabulous on its included clothes hanger, in, or in front of, a closet or washing line." Although there is always something to be said for those hidden corners in a dolls house, just waiting to be revealed behind closed doors, the idea of shutting Nancy's beautiful work inside a wardrobe seems like sacrilege. It's no wonder that when browsing social media there appears to be a growing trend for the dressing room within a contemporary dolls house! ➡



▲ Boho in miniature



▲ Kimono style



▲ Spring fashion



◀ Get ready to sparkle!

“Some go smoothly, others make me try over and over again. I keep working on it, adjusting my technique, until I’m satisfied with the result”

▼ Kimono dress



Stylish poncho coat



Put your best foot forward

As every fashion-conscious style icon knows, no outfit is complete without the right shoes, but it’s okay, because Nancy has us covered with her selection of boots, lacquered sandals and skyscraper heels. “The sandals and boots are even designed by me, something I’m quite proud of!” says Nancy. “They’re made out of high-quality resin and then the fun starts for me; painting. I paint all my shoes with a micro brush by hand, so

no spray paint over a full bunch but stroke by stroke. Does it take hours? Yes, it does, but as making miniatures is still my hobby, I love spending time on making them.” The spots on Nancy’s leopard print high heels are each around 2mm in diameter, but just how challenging is it to create such finely detailed pieces in small scale? “Very challenging,” she admits, revealing just how time consuming each item is to create. “Some go smoothly, others make me try over and over again. I

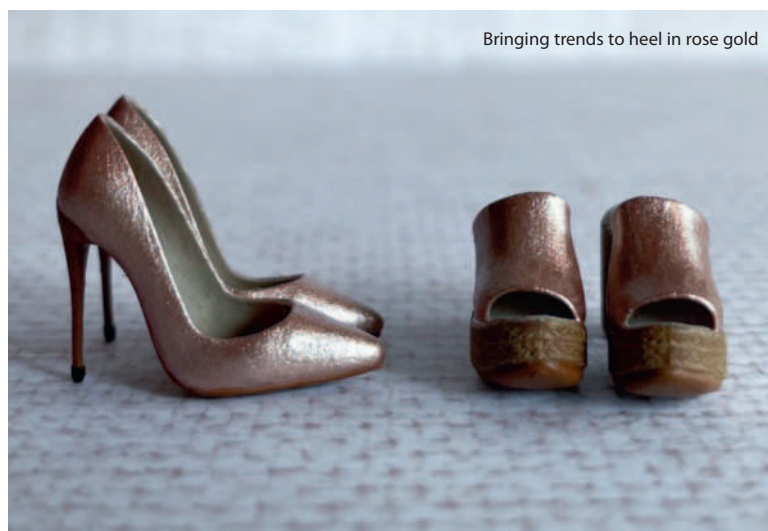
keep working on it, adjusting my technique, until I’m satisfied with the result. And yes, this also means that some items will be unseen by the world forever, because they don’t meet my own quality standard.”

When asked to name some of her favourite designs, Nancy puzzles over the question. “To be honest, and my daughter can confirm, I have difficulties parting with all of my items. With every item I say a couple of times ‘I wish I had this one in



my miniature wardrobe," she says wistfully. "But if I have to pick an item it would be my denim jacket and my sparkling holiday/ Christmas dresses. Previously I said I never duplicate my items, but I do make a little correction on that, I'm planning to duplicate some of my favorites for my own dolls house."

Those plans may yet be waylaid. As we head into spring next month, Nancy, whose brand PUPA Miniatures is named after her much-loved Greek rescue dog, will be focusing on the new seasons with a collection of what she describes as brightly coloured feminine pieces. "To all readers, newbie or expert, I'd like to say never give up on making miniatures as I truly believe that creating them is therapy for your soul. Be creative and release your inner child." Nancy also points out that small scale art is very much all about dreaming, and with her range of fashion continually expanding through new ideas, there is no doubt she will continue to make those miniature dreams come true. 🏠



INFO

For more information please visit:

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

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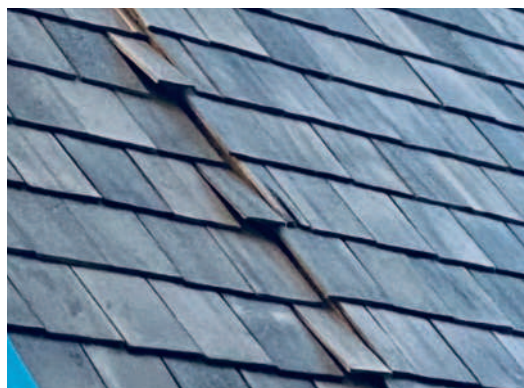


Ana's colourful house



Kelly's house

TAKE TWO... Painted ladies



Moi Ali's occasional series looks at two interpretations of the same kit...

British readers may be unfamiliar with the term 'painted ladies': they are Victorian and Edwardian-era houses in San Francisco, California, which have been re-painted in three or more colours to pick out and highlight their architectural details.

As with most iconic house styles, it's only a matter of time before they are immortalised in miniature. In the case of the painted lady, she has been turned into a kit house designed and manufactured by Real Good Toys. I have found two rather lovely painted ladies that are worthy of comparison. One is owned by Brazilian-born Ana Bertolassi, who has lived in New Hampshire, USA, for a decade now. Retired microbiologist Kelly Ludwig from rural Pennsylvania owns the other.

Ana, a former hospital worker and now a stay-at-home mother, spends as much time as she can on her dolls house passion "when the kids give me a break!" She bought her painted lady

two years ago in a sale at the Earth and Tree store in Amherst. She told me: "It was second-hand but still in its box and was effectively brand new. My inspiration to build it came from the gorgeous Victorian houses in Maine, which have intense, cheerful colours."

Like Ana, Kelly chose a painted lady because: "I love Victorian houses with all the fancy trim and woodwork. I wanted to build this as my first dolls house, but after reading the reviews I thought it would be too hard for a first-time build. I bought my first dolls house kit in 2015, but waited a year to build since I was afraid I would not be able to do it. The painted lady was my second build. My husband bought me the kit for our 15th wedding anniversary in 2018, with a little coaxing from our daughter!"

Ana's main challenge was to alter the interior layout to create a modern design: "I've changed the stairs in the first and second floors [that's ground and first



▲ Inside Ana's place



“My inspiration to build it came from the gorgeous Victorian houses in Maine, which have intense, cheerful colours.”



▲ Welcome to Ana's



▲ Welcome to Kelly's

▼ Ana's modern living area



▼ Kelly's ceiling uses Christmas paper



Ana's kitchen



Kelly's Christmas fireplace



◀▲ Kelly's kitchen



Ana's rejigged first floor



Kelly's dining room

▼ Ana's bedroom

to British readers] to create an open-plan design at first floor level and I've increased the stairwell/landing area on the second floor. My tip to anyone building a kit is patience. I'd also advise keeping an open mind about layout, to see if there are opportunities for creating new spaces and layouts."

Kelly agrees. She talked me through the adjustments she made to hers: "I used thinner stairs from my daughter's old castle toy on the second [first] floor as they didn't take up as much room. I also closed off the top floor staircase opening to create more space. My bathroom has a half-wall so I used gallery glass so it would not feel as dark and closed off. I added an extension to incorporate a kitchen and grandparents' room using 12x12 craft wood."

Ana has made almost all chandeliers using beads, old jewelry and a porcelain thimble. Outside, she has added some wood and resin decorative touches to embellish the exterior. She has honed her miniature skills across her two other dolls houses: a Harborside Mansion and a Victorian Allison Jr, both from Real Good Toys. She also built these from kits.

Kelly also has a Real Good Toys Allison Jr., which was her first house kit, and a Dutch Baby but she is yet to furnish all the rooms. ▶



◀▲ Kelly's blue bedroom



Ana's elegant bathroom



Kelly's bathroom with window



Ana's crib



Kelly's cradle

REAL GOOD TOYS

The Painted Lady dolls house is a Kit made by Vermont-based company Real Good Toys, which this year celebrates half-a-century in woodworking manufacturing. A pioneer in sustainability, the company started out with a commitment to be thrifty, reuse, recycle and manufacture using sustainable resources. Its dolls houses have been under the White House Christmas tree, featured on Hollywood television and film sets and been owned by celebrities.

Kelly took her painted lady down the grand Victorian house design route and was determined to incorporate a red and gold living room: "I am an eclectic decorator at heart," she explained. "I used Christmas wrapping paper for my ceilings in the living room and the dining room. I have a family heirloom Victorian scrapbook from 1882, full of stickers, postcards and cards for dry goods stores in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In the dining room I used a picture from the scrapbook, The Peacemaker. In the living room I reproduced a picture of an oyster shell with a beach scene, and a framed sticker hangs in the peach master bedroom."

Challenges for Kelly came in the form of the multiple angles, which proved quite tricky: "I was glad this was not my first build," she exclaimed. "Making mitre cuts for trims was especially hard, which I guess that is why others have left that off. Lining up the bay windows was a little challenging too."

Kelly's creative thrifty finds include: two black chairs, reupholstered with a petit point purse bought at a flea market for \$5; antique lace as a border in the blue bedroom; a piece of real zebra skin for a rug from when her father worked for a taxidermist in the 1950s; and two lights made from Laura Ashley perfume lids. All her curtains are made from old dress fabric and lace collars. The music room contains a rug crocheted by Kelly's grandmother and the wooden trivet in that room she brought back from Germany. Two rooms have stones for fireplace screens: music room has agate and the dining room has crystal quartz.

Ana told me: "I love to build dolls houses! Each one is a different challenge and they naturally spark your sense of creativity and imagination. This is an excellent therapy for me." Ana's passion is contagious and now her husband is into the hobby as well!

Kelly's experience is similar: "Out of all my hobbies, which include sewing, quilting, painting and crocheting, this is my favourite. I have managed to get my brother-in-law hooked on this hobby and he is a car mechanic! It is very interesting how different people decorate the same house." It certainly is, Kelly – and that's why we are all loving Take Two! 🏠



Kelly's music room

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Fagin

"7th February is the 210th anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens, famous Victorian author of such well known novels as, 'Great Expectations', 'The Pickwick Papers' and 'The Old Curiosity Shop', to name but a few. But my favourite of all his novels was 'Oliver Twist', first published in 1838. From this, I have chosen the colourful character of 'Fagin', made even more iconic in the 1960 stage and film musical 'Oliver!' by Lionel Bart" Louise

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Male doll
- 2x different colours of fine cotton jersey for stockings and gloves
- Scraps of fine leather and scrap of card for slippers
- Narrow striped cotton for shirt front, collar and false cuffs (approx. 7x9in)
- Scrap of fine iron-on interfacing/stiffening for shirt cuffs
- Scrap of fine cotton/muslin for neck tie
- Dark cotton for breeches (approx. 8x4in)
- Contrasting cotton for coat (approx. 12x15in)
- Fine patterned cotton for false waistcoat (approx. 6x7in)
- Fine patterned cotton for false jacket (approx. 8x5in)
- Contrasting plain cotton for false jacket lining (as above)
- Tiny beads/studs for shirt, waistcoat, jacket and coat button
- Scraps of fine black felt for hat
- Scraps of various fine fabrics for patches, false lining and handkerchief
- Watercolour paints (child's paint box) for ageing and dirtying
- Edge sealer (like fray stop/check etc)
- Good quality fabric glue

PREPARATION

- Trace the pattern pieces. Check the fit against your doll and make any adjustments. It is a good idea to make up the garment in kitchen paper first before cutting your fabric.
- Once you are happy with the fit, cut the patterns out from the relevant fabric and seal all edges to stop fraying.
- There is a seam allowance of three 16ths of an inch included on all pieces unless otherwise stated. Clip all curves and press seams open unless otherwise advised.

READ THROUGH ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE STARTING.



Louise says...

"Whilst this project may take quite a while to complete, it is not technically difficult. It just requires a little patience to work through all the different stages.

There is a layered look to Fagin's clothing, to reflect the fact that many poorer people of the Victorian era had to wear multiple and often very old and tattered clothing to keep warm.

Try to use thin fabrics to achieve this layered look, and avoid bulkiness. The tattering and 'dirtying' is time consuming, but is well worth the end result."



UNDER CLOTHING:

Stockings

1 Cut two rectangles of cotton jersey long enough to reach from above the knee to a good inch past the heel at the centre back, and wide enough to wrap around the leg and comfortably meet at the centre back (always add a little extra). It helps to have the most stretch in the fabric for the width.

2 Run a thin line of glue down the centre back of your doll's leg from above the knee to the bottom of the heel and allow it to become tacky.



3 Press one long straight edge of the fabric into the line of glue, making sure that you have plenty of excess length below the foot to trim later. Before the glue dries, carefully pull the fabric into wrinkles as shown, with your nails or a large blunt needle. Allow to dry thoroughly.



4 Gradually working round, a little at a time, spread glue over the next part of the leg. Allow the glue to become slightly tacky and then gently ease the fabric around the leg, wrinkling it as you go, as shown. Allow each section to dry before moving on to the next.

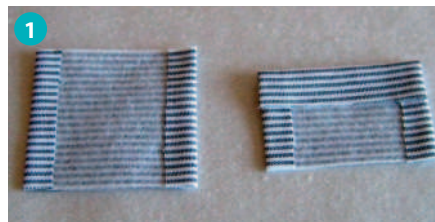
5 Glue the centre back line and press and wrinkle the fabric into place to meet the starting edge. Allow it to dry before carefully trimming any excess away. (A strand of thread can be carefully glued into place as a seam line if desired).

6 Add tiny 'moth holes' by snipping random holes into the stockings and fraying with your finger nail. This can be done either as you are forming the stocking or at the end.



7 Fold the stocking under the foot and glue in place, trimming neatly.

False shirt



1 Cut the cuffs in interfacing/stiffening first, fuse to the fabric following the manufacturer's instructions and then cut out. Press under the two side edges on each cuff. Press the long edges along the fold lines.



2 Carefully snip the folded edge at random, as close to the edge as you can, and fray with your finger nail to make a ragged cuff edge as shown.



3 Make a tiny stitch at each end of each cuff (false cufflink holes) as shown.

4 Put the cuffs aside for now, as these will be put on the doll later.

5 Cut the two shirt pieces on the fold and carefully secure the outside edges together with a little glue. Overlap the front edges, leaving the top edge open a little to form the open neckline. Secure with a little glue.

6 Make three stitches on one side (mock button holes).



7 Stitch tiny beads on the opposite side. Leave the top without a bead and just a few loose threads (optional) as if a button has been lost.



8 Secure the shirt onto your doll with stitching and/or a little glue, leaving the front neckline slightly open as shown.

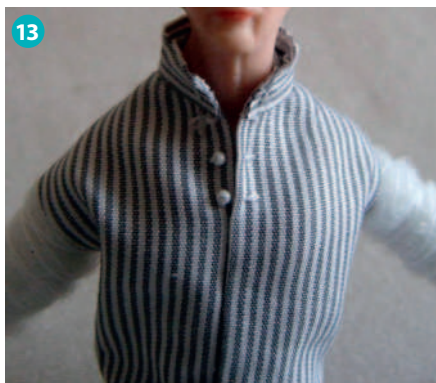
9 Cut the shirt collar approx. 2-2.5in long by 1/2in wide.

10 Fold one long edge into the middle and fold the other long edge over this and secure with a little glue, to make a long thin strip.

11 Cut a rounded edge on one end, before checking the length of collar needed on your doll. Once you are happy with the length, cut a rounded edge on the other end. ➡



12 Fray the top edge of the collar as you did for the cuffs, and then make a false button hole (stitch) at each end.



13 Carefully glue the collar to the neck edge of your doll's shirt as shown.

TOP CLOTHES

Breeches



1 Cut the breeches in your chosen cotton. Stitch the centre front seam, and turn up the hems as shown.



2 Stitch the centre back seam to the dot and make the hems tattered and ragged.



3 Stitch the inside leg seam and clip the curves carefully.



4 Turn and dress the breeches onto your doll and stitch the back opening closed. Secure to your doll's waist with a few stitches, keeping the front as flat as possible.

Slippers

1 Check that the slipper inner sole pattern fits the underside of your doll's foot or is slightly longer (your choice) and adjust if necessary. Cut a pair of soles in index card.

2 Glue the tops of the inner soles to a scrap of leather and trim all round as shown.



3 Snip the excess leather all round, carefully fold over and glue to the underside of the card.

4 Glue the covered inner soles to the bottom of your doll's feet, covered side up as shown and allow the glue to dry thoroughly.

5 Glue a scrap of leather over the top front of your doll's foot as shown and allow it to dry.

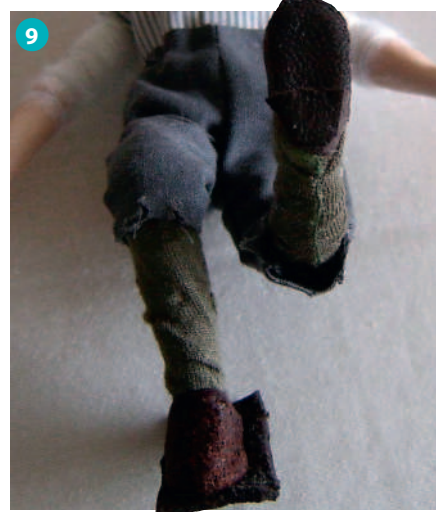


6 Trim the leather, leaving enough to tuck under the sole, and snip into it as shown.



7 Carefully glue the excess to the underside of the inner sole and allow it to dry.

8 Glue leather onto the underside of each foot to form a sole and trim to fit when the glue is dry. Add a pair of heels in the same way (optional).



9 The leather can be scratched and scuffed with a sharp needle to add 'wear'. Stain and dirty with paint.

False waistcoat

1 Cut a pair of waistcoat pieces from patterned cotton. Stitch from point A to B and then from point C to D.



2 Clip all the curves, trim very carefully and turn the right way out. Press well.

3 Place the left side over the right side and stitch the centre fronts together with tiny beads to look like a fastened front. A length of chain can also be added if desired.

Louise's Top Tip!

"Use different coloured beads to give the look of the original matching buttons having been lost over many years of wear."



4 Use small sharp scissors to snip random holes along the waistcoat edges and also in the middles. Use your nails to rub and scrape the fabric to 'distress' and add wear/moth holes etc.



5 Stitch or glue the waistcoat onto your doll, securing it at the back of the shoulders and at the back of the waist (the coat will cover all this).

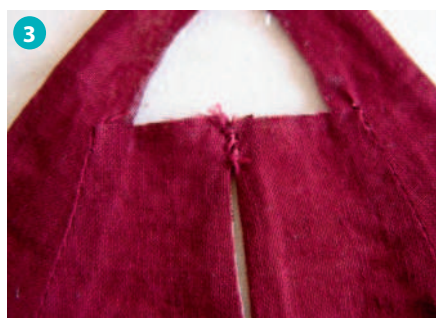
False jacket



1 Cut the false jacket pieces from patterned cotton and the linings from plain contrasting cotton. Sew the false jacket fronts to the backs at the side seams and press well. Repeat for the linings.



2 With right sides together, stitch the jacket pieces to the linings from the top of the front, along the lower edges and up the centre back as shown. Trim and clip seams, turn and press well.



3 On the lining side, stitch together the top of the centre back sections as shown.

NB: Stitches can be added to the front to represent button holes and also tufts of thread where buttons used to be (optional).



4 Thoroughly tatter and distress the fronts of the jacket (the backs will be mainly covered by the coat) and dress onto your doll, positioning and securing the fronts first.



5 Ease the jacket backs into place at your doll's waist and secure as shown.

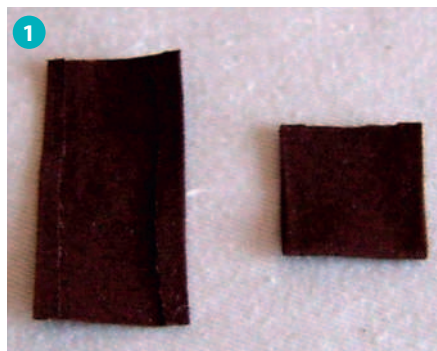
Louise's Top Tip!

"Now is a really good time to 'dirty' your doll's clothing with some water colour paint. Use as little water as possible and try to smear and rub the paint into the fabric to emulate ingrained dirt and stains. The shirt cuffs you put aside earlier can also be 'dirtied' at the same time, ready to be put on later."

Allow all the paint time to thoroughly dry before moving on to the next stage. ▶▶

Coat, gloves and necktie

1 Cut all the coat pieces in your chosen fabric.



2 Turn under the tiniest hem on the long edges of the pocket flaps. Fold the pocket flaps in half and glue with wrong sides together.

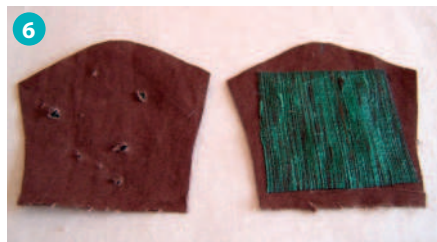


3 Fold the pocket flap over again and glue the raw edges underneath as shown. Thoroughly distress and tatter the pocket flaps as shown.

4 Set the pocket flaps aside until later.



5 Turn under the hems on both sleeve pieces. Tatter the wrist edges.



6 Make random rough, tattered holes over each sleeve. For false linings, cut and glue in place scraps of contrasting fabric to the insides of each sleeve as shown.



7 Stitch the underarm seams and turn.

8 Set the coat sleeves aside until later.



9 Stitch the coat fronts to the coat back at the shoulder seams.



10 Stitch the side seams as shown.



11 Decide which side you want the handkerchief to be hanging out of the coat pocket and carefully make a slit along the relevant mark as shown.

Louise's Top Tip!

"To make the slit, use a large needle to make a hole big enough to slip the scissor blade into, then carefully cut along the mark."



12 Cut a small square of coloured scrap fabric to make your pocket handkerchief. Fray the edges, crumple, tatter and 'dirty' it with paint and allow it to dry.



13 Fold the handkerchief diagonally and 'post' it through the slit in the right side of the coat as shown. Do not fix it to the right side yet. This will be done at the end.



14 On the inside, use a little glue to secure the end of the handkerchief.



15 Stitch the coat lining fronts to the coat lining backs as shown. Turn under the shoulder seams as indicated with my pencil in the picture.

16 With right sides together, stitch the coat to the lining from one shoulder seam, along the lapel, down the front, along the lower back edge and up to the other shoulder seam, as shown (shoulder seams indicated with pencils in picture).



NB: Make sure the front of the handkerchief is pinned/taped out of the way!

17 Trim seams and turn right side out. Remove the pin or tape and press the coat well. Turn under the back neck edge, snipping into it to make it lay flat.

18 Make stitches down one side for mock buttonholes. Stitch buttons/beads on the opposite side. Some can be left hanging and/or tufts of thread in place of missing buttons.



19 Give the coat a thorough tattering. (Any holes you don't like later on can always be covered with patches).

20 Dress the coat onto your doll but don't secure it in place yet.

Gloves

1 Cut two strips of fine cotton jersey for the gloves, deep enough to reach from your doll's wrist to mid finger length plus a tiny extra, and wide enough to wrap around his hand with some extra. Use the most stretch of the fabric to go around the hand.



2 Carefully glue one short straight end to the centre of your doll's palm and allow it to dry.

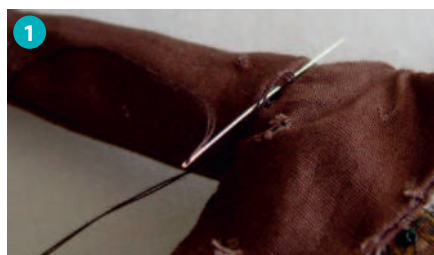
3 Gradually spread glue over the back of your doll's hand, and finger by finger, press the fabric in place, pushing it into the groves between each finger with a blunt needle or your nail. Allow each section to dry before moving to the next.



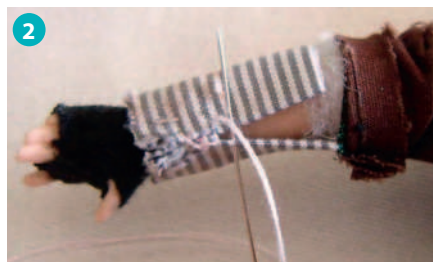
4 When you reach the thumb (or any separate fingers) carefully snip a TINY hole where needed into the fabric and push the thumb/finger through, adding glue as you go to secure in place.

5 Carefully join at the centre of the palm and cut off any excess. The gloves can be easily tattered with a sharp needle and/or a few tiny snips.

Coat and necktie continued



1 Run a tiny gathering stitch around the top of the coat sleeve and dress onto your doll. Pull up the gathers slightly to make a smooth sleeve head, tucking the raw edges under. Stitch the sleeve to the coat with tiny invisible stitches.



2 Roll the coat sleeves up out of the way. Take the shirt cuffs that you put aside earlier and stitch them onto your doll's lower arms, leaving the wrist ends open as shown. Secure the cuffs further up the arm so they don't slip down.

3 Roll the coat sleeves back down over the shirt cuffs and secure with a little glue so that the shirt cuffs peep out from under the coat sleeves.



4 Turn under a hem on the long sides of the coat collar and fold the collar right sides together. Stitch the short sides as shown.

5 Trim seams, turn and press well. Secure the long edges together with a little glue, tatter and set the collar aside till later.



6 To make the necktie, cut a strip of muslin approx. 4in long and half an inch wide. Tatter and 'dirty' it. Don't worry about getting it very wet as this will help to make it look really ragged.

7 Let it dry thoroughly before tying around your doll's neck. Trim away any ends that you feel are too long. ▶

Coat continued

1 Secure the coat to your doll as much as you need to, folding back and securing the front lapels into place. Carefully glue the coat collar in place around the neck line of the coat.

2 Glue the pocket flaps you made earlier in place with one over the top edge of the handkerchief. Secure the handkerchief in place with a little glue.

Hat

1 Cut the hat brim from fine black felt. Cut an oblong of felt approx. 2.5in long by quarter of an inch wide. Overlap the ends and glue together to form a circle. Carefully glue this to the brim as shown



2 To form the top of the hat, carefully glue the hat onto a scrap of felt.

3 Once dry the top can be trimmed to size. To 'fade' the felt, you can either gently brush in talc or dry powdered paint with a small brush.

To finish

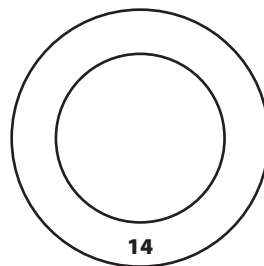
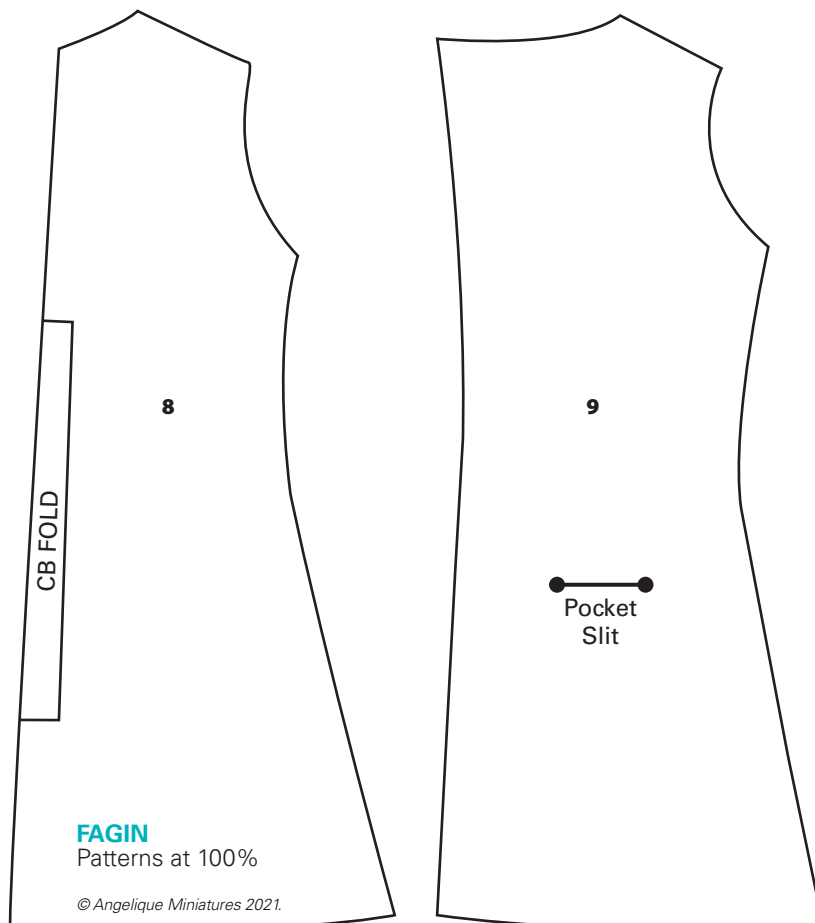
1 Thoroughly tatter and 'dirty' the coat and anything else you think needs to be done. Patches can be cut from scraps of odd fabric and glued and/or stitched in place if desired.

2 Finally place the hat on your doll's head.

3 Your Fagin is now ready to go and pick a pocket or two!

Pattern key:

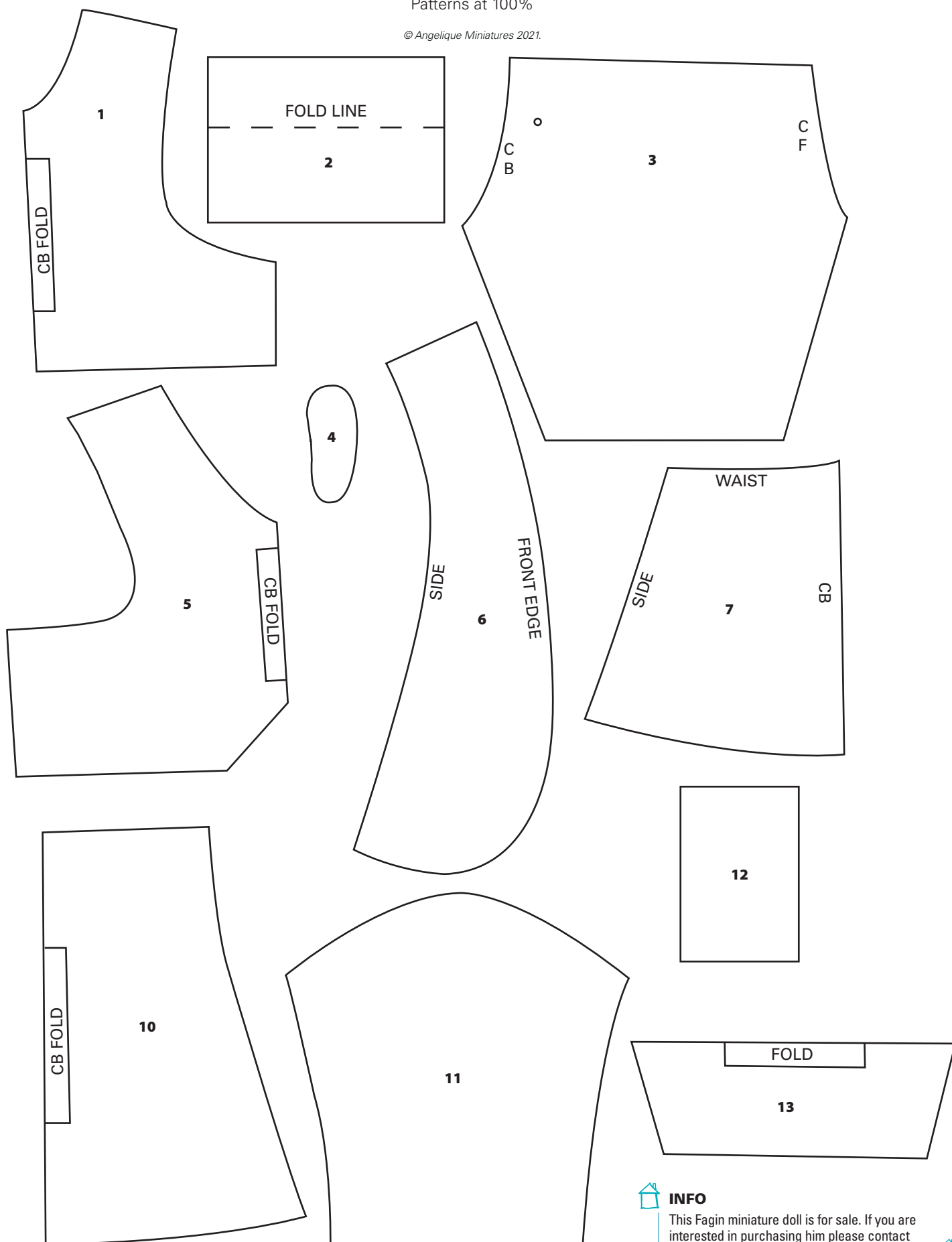
- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Shirt false front. Cut 2 on fold | 8. Coat back. Cut 1 on fold |
| 2. Shirt false cuffs. Cut 2 | 9. Coat front. Cut 2 plus 2 lining |
| 3. Breeches. Cut 2 | 10. Coat back lining. Cut 1 on fold |
| 4. Slipper sole. Cut 2 | 11. Coat sleeve. Cut 2 |
| 5. False waistcoat. Cut 2 on fold | 12. Coat pocket flap. Cut 2 |
| 6. False jacket front. Cut 2 plus 2 lining | 13. Coat collar. Cut 1 on fold |
| 7. False jacket back. Cut 2 plus 2 lining | 14. Hat brim. Cut 1 |



FAGIN

Patterns at 100%

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**INFO**

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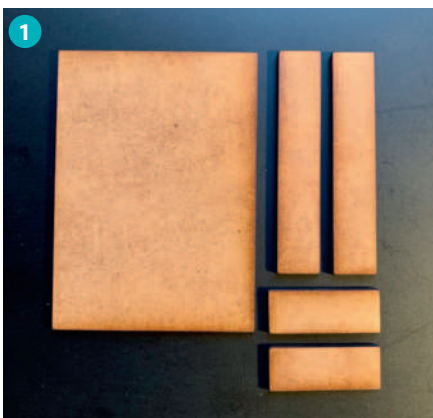
1950s kitchen table

"We had one of these when I was a child, although ours had a drop leaf. This is a quick but effective project and can be adapted to fit any space or era. Yellow Fablon gives it a very 1950s vibe, but dark brown painted legs and a varnished top would transform it into a Victorian table. Alternatively, paint in a deep colour, overpaint with a lighter colour, then gently sand to create a distressed, shabby chic effect for a modern interior" *Moi*

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 2mm thick wood
- 6mm square dowel
- Coffee stirrer
- Sticky back plastic
- Paint for the sub structure
- Permanent black marker
- Glue



1 Cut a table top 75x55mm; two long sides 60x12mm and two short sides 30x12mm (if you want a drawer, cut a third piece).



2 Cut four legs from 6mm square dowel to a length of 63mm.



3 Mark the legs with a pencil line approximately 2cm from the bottom. [▶](#)



4 Using a scalpel, shave the legs from the pencil mark to the bottom to create a taper. Sand to soften the taper.



5 Round off the corners of the table top using sandpaper then colour the edges black with a permanent marker.



6 Cover the table top with sticky back plastic.



7 Glue the four sides and four legs to form the sub structure.



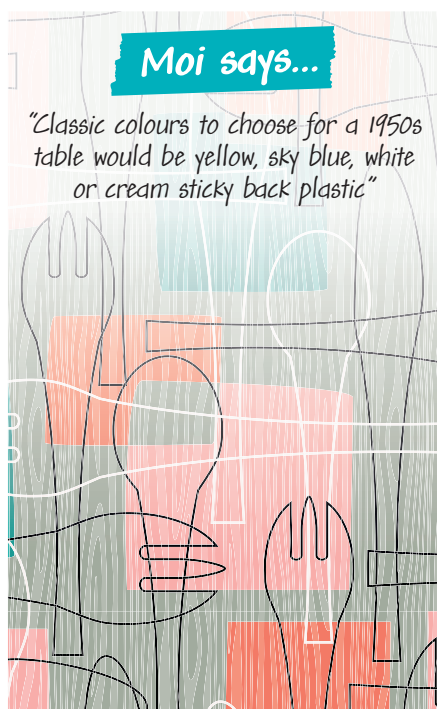
8 Paint the substructure then glue it to the table top underside.



9 (Optional) If you have cut a drawer front, paint that too, having first sanded the corners so they are a little rounded.



10 Cut a small piece of wood such as a coffee stirrer to make a drawer pull.

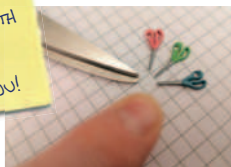


11 Colour the drawer pull using the black marker and glue it to the fake drawer front, then glue that to the front of the table. 

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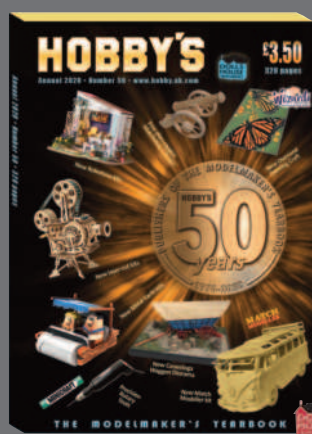
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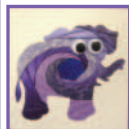
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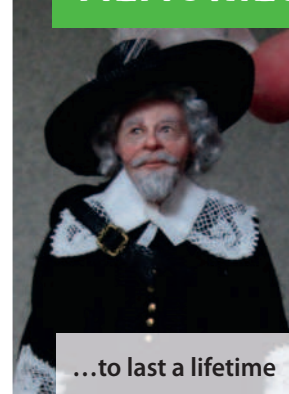
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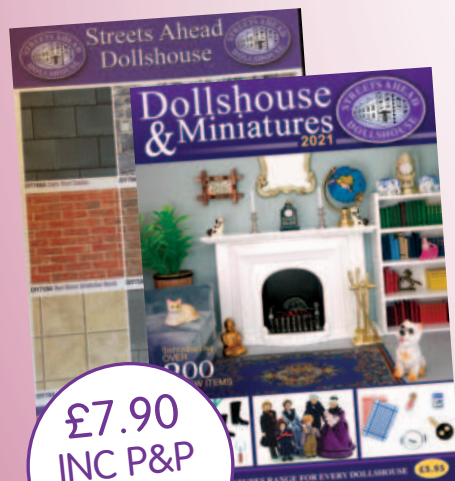
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