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contents

little details

Issue 80

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- 7 **A Birthday Surprise**
Connie Sauve continues to share her "On the Road Again" series

- 16 **Heart Macaron Cake**
Rina Vellichor shares how to make an extra special miniature cake

- 17 **Make a Mini Coconut**
Oksana Parkhomenko shares how to create miniature coconuts

- 20 **Food Fantasies**
Oksana Parkhomenko shows her passion for making miniature food

- 26 **Painted Furniture**
Aurearte Miniatures shares her new 1:12 scale spring inspired collection

- 32 **Be My Valentine**
Pamela Friend-Gwinn beachcombs for her Sailors' Valentines

- 36 **A Taste of Europe**
Nick Busch shares how he created a realistic village scene

- 42 **Château de l'Amour**
Mark Turpin's latest creation is filled with surprises at every turn

- 50 **Luxury Closet**
Cindy Coon shares her luxury miniature closet building adventure

- 57 **Kitchen Cupboard**
Kris Compas turns mat board into miniature furniture



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 [dollhouseminiaturesmagazine](http://dollhouseminiaturesmagazine.com)



66

63 Big Buzz

This page is filled with news updates, events and contests

64 Little Letters

Feedback and stories from our devoted readers

66 Rachel's House

Aaron Friedman creates a 1:12 version of his granddaughter's home



7



20

74 Hippity-Hop Easter

Denise Morales shares her fun filled one-inch scale Easter room box

81 Mini Cutouts

Cut out your own needle point art, gift bags and tiles



74



welcome

We have a wide range of miniature art in this issue.

From vintage

to modern, shiny new to gorgeously weathered. You are sure to be inspired plus learn great tips from some of the best miniature makers in our community.

Often in our features our artists share that one special moment when they discover their passion for miniatures. Then I think about all the people out there that are not familiar with this art form and how discovering it could change their lives. What if each of us takes a reflective moment and came up with a way we could introduce just one person to the world of miniatures? What kind of impact would that have on the growth of our community?

Think about the places the masses go, this could be a good place to donate a scene or room box for display. Many local shops may have a perfect window to showcase a miniature build that would pique the interest of people walking by. Tuck your card in with the piece and who knows, you may get an order.

Let's all get creative and spread the word about this art form. If you find a method that works let us know about it!

Auralea Krieger, Editor
auralea@ashdown.co.uk

The Story of a Historical Dollhouse

This 17th century treasure took 20 years to complete and was the inspiration for a novel written by Jessie Burton in 2004.

This stunning cabinet house from the 17th century took over 20 years to build and furnish. It was enamelled in tortoiseshell and pewter and is valued the same as a full-size townhouse in the most expensive part of Amsterdam.

‘The dollhouse is now on permanent display at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.’

It was curated by Petronella Oortman, the wealthy wife of a successful Dutch merchant. Starting in 1686 she ordered miniature porcelain from China and commissioned cabinetmakers, glassblowers, silversmiths, basket-weavers and artists to furnish her dollhouse.

It was filled with miniature Venetian glasses, oil paintings, silver candlesticks, as well as ceramics and silks shipped from the Indies. There was even a working fountain in the garden which, sadly, did not survive. She finished furnishing this stunning dollhouse in 1710.



Petronella Oortman's dollhouse is one of few that survived the centuries, and today is considered a masterpiece in the Rijksmuseum located in Amsterdam.

The dollhouse, now on permanent display at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, was the inspiration for the 2014 novel *The Miniaturist* by Jessie Burton. Burton wrote of the house: "Like many cabinet houses of the time, every room was a replica of Oortman's real home,

Anything she owned in full-size, she had shrunk down so that she could see all her treasures in one glance of her eye. It was, you might argue, a reminder of the Netherlands' extraordinary imperial power."





A Special Birthday Surprise

Connie Sauve continues to share her “On the Road Again” vehicle series. Let’s enjoy this diorama as Grandpa shows up with a special delivery.

BY CONNIE SAUVE

My fourth truck...wow, four already? Like I said, this turned into a slight obsession quickly. I found this truck at a Hobby Lobby craft store. At first, I couldn't figure out what to do with it, so I added it to my container stash for a while until inspiration hit. Then my friend, who makes all my bases for me, was over for our weekly mini day.

We used to get together almost weekly from 2005-2015. He was telling me about a picture of a real size truck he had seen recently, that had a large dollhouse sitting in the back bed of the truck. The minute he told me about it, the light bulb went off in my head...yet again. He barely finished saying it, when I jumped up, went out into the garage and dug around in my container stash closet.

I found the truck I had been storing there and brought it in to show him. I said it would be perfect to have a little dollhouse sitting in the back. So started another new project!

The truck was originally all red, but to add a bit of interest to the truck, I decided to make it a two-toned truck. First, I painted the fenders black. Then I used Sophisticated Finishes Iron paint, which contains metal, on the areas I wanted to be rusty. Then I added a rusting solution to complete final effect.

The 1950's era truck set the scene. I knew I wanted a dollhouse to sit in the back of the truck, but I needed a story as to why there was a fully finished dollhouse sitting in the back. I decided that Grandpa was delivering a dollhouse he had lovingly made for his granddaughter's

birthday. “Surprise!” was the perfect name for the project.

The little girl's parents are happily watching the big event. Grandpa would be delivering the dollhouse to the parents' home, so I wanted to park the truck in front of a residence, but not have to build the actual facade of a house. So, I decided on only making a road, curb, sidewalk, grass and white picket fence with a gate, and also some flowers in the landscaping for added color. This suggests a house is just out of sight, and the fence and flowers give a nice colorful backdrop to the truck.

As usual when working out a new design, I laid everything out on graph paper first to figure out the size of the base. Using a black frame for the base, ties in with the color of the road, and once again my friend



1 The front of the truck showing all the fun details. 2 Mom and Dad happily look on as the birthday girl receives her new dollhouse from her Grandpa. 3 Look out kitty! The pup found your hiding spot! 4 The birthday girl is so surprised! 5 Grandpa shows his granddaughter what he made for her birthday.



5



Connie custom made the beautifully detailed fence, gate and posts for this special scene.

came to my rescue by making the base for me. I sure keep him busy! We helped each other a lot with various parts of our own projects we were working on. We always worked on our own separate projects, as we both have so many projects, kits and ideas we each want to accomplish.

Once the wood base was made, I used a dark grey mottled paper for the asphalt of the road. Additional oil spots, marks and other stuff found on roads was added. I elevated the rest of the landscaping with 1/2" thick gatorboard and used a piece of wood



The modern style bike is shown on the left and the refurbished bike is shown above, after unmodernizing it by painting and aging it just right.



The hanging sign that says, "Surprise!" was made from craft foam letters.

rain gutter turned on its side for the curbing. I glued a cement-colored paper over the wood and used this same paper for the sidewalks. I made cuts at certain intervals to simulate the seams made when pouring real cement. For the sidewalk, I also added cracks and aged it with dirty washes. I used Windsor & Newton Sap Green watercolor to simulate moss on the edges. I cut down into the gatorboard a bit to countersink the faux grass I like to use for grass. I also countersunk the flower beds by Falcon Miniatures, into the gatorboard and added bark on top of each flower bed. A birdhouse was

added with some birds, and also a wonderful metal mailbox with lots of birthday cards inside for the little girl.

Next came the white picket fence, posts and gate. I didn't want an ordinary picket fence, so I looked online and found some pictures of fun full-size picket fences. It wasn't a long fence, so I wanted to add some interesting details as long as I was making it from scratch. After finding a picket fence design I liked, I carved the top of each picket, making 35 of them in all. The arched working gate was also made from scratch and the hardware is from Olde Mountain Miniatures. The fence posts were fun

to do, and I only had to make four, so I added lots of details on each post. I painted the whole fence white, then aged and weathered it. The picket fence made a wonderful white backdrop for the colorful truck.

I had found an incredibly detailed 1:12 scale bike online, that would be perfect for the little girl. Problem was, it was a very modern

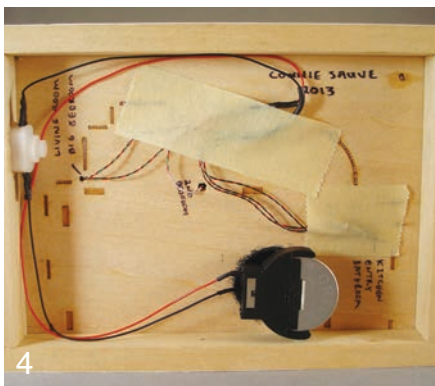
‘The main focus of the scene was the dollhouse in the back of the truck, the little girl and Grandpa.’

bike and this scene was set in the 1950's. It needed to be unmodernized. First, I removed all the modern wires, gears and brakes. Then repainted it red and white and painted whitewalls on the tires. I also added a chain for the pedals using an old necklace, added springs to the underside of the seat, and extended the front fender. I then aged everything and wove a white wicker basket for the front. What a difference! The refurbished 1950's bike now sits leaning up against the fence. The bike helped bring a little interest to the right side of the scene, as most of the action is on the left side of the scene.

The main focus of the scene was the dollhouse in the back of the truck, the little girl and Grandpa. I took careful measurements of the truck bed as the dollhouse needed to fit in the bed of the truck, but not look too big, too small, or too tall. I have a miniature project I had made in 1997 called "In the Good Ol' Summer-time", where I had incorporated a



1 Proud Grandpa helping untie the dollhouse. **2** The dollhouse can be removed as a stand-alone piece. **3** LED lights are wired in the ceiling and covered with paper. **4** All the battery operated LED wiring and on/off switch are hidden under the house and labeled. **5** LED lighting helps illuminate the tiny house.





The interior of the house is fully furnished with 1:144 scale furniture and residents.

finished 1:144 scale dollhouse made by Pat Russo, onto a fully landscaped base. The Queen Anne style of the house with the wrap-around porch, two-tone pink colors, and the landscaping on the house, were perfect for a little girl's first dollhouse. The size of this house would fit great in the truck. This whole section was repetitive so I tried to condense it:

I ordered the Northeastern Queen Anne dollhouse kit, then set the kit aside as I wanted it to be the last thing I worked on for the project, since I knew it was going to take a while to finish. I really liked the idea of mixing scales with miniature projects, so using a 1:144 scale doll-

house in a 1:12 scale scene was going to be a fun addition. I wanted the tiny house to be completely finished inside and out. While working on the base for the scene, I searched for tiny furniture, wallpapers and landscaping materials.

In the meantime, I attended NAME Nat'l in Tucson. I had arranged with a dealer to purchase some 1:144 scale wallpaper from her. It was nice to be able to pick out the wallpapers in person, which helped tremendously when matching patterns and colors. Attending the LED lighting seminar also sealed the deal that I definitely wanted to light the interior of the tiny house. I hadn't planned on doing this,

so it opened up a whole new can of worms for me. I do have a tendency to make things difficult for myself! But this is how we grow, by learning new techniques, and by pushing ourselves to be better. I like to try and learn at least one new technique or skill with each project I work on.

Building the little house, turned into a whole project itself, as I knew it would. I had never actually built a 1:144 house, fully furnished, landscaped and lighted it before, so this was going to be a BIG, little project! After lots of building, painting, landscaping and furnishing the interior, I love how the house turned out! Absolutely perfect for a little girl. I



The interior is finished with wallpaper, flooring, trims and curtains. The roof is shingled with two different styles of shingles.

added a brick base riser onto the bottom of the house, which gave the house a more solid base to sit on. It also gave me a hollow space underneath to hide the wires, battery, and on/off switch.

The house is totally transportable so I can place it anywhere and it still lights up. It can even be a stand-alone piece. By adding a couple wood pallets in the back of the truck to sit the dollhouse on, helped to raise it up a bit. There are even ropes that tie the house down, while Grandpa is transporting it.

For the four figures in the scene, I made all the costuming. The proud Grandpa showing off his handy work, the little girl in her favorite pink and black polka-dot party dress is so surprised at her wonderful new dollhouse, and the proud parents looking on. Dad is holding some beautiful glass balloons I had found on eBay many years before. This was the perfect time to use them. The balloons also added a bit of height to the whole scene. I made the "Surprise!" banner hanging sign on the back of the truck, using foam letters from

the craft store. I love to add animals to my scenes, so there is also a dog antagonizing a cat under the front end of the truck. The finished project is a fun slice of Americana, of a little girl receiving her first dollhouse from her beloved Grandpa.

If you have any questions, feel

free to contact me, Connie Sauve at cmsauve2@gmail.com You can also call me at 209-329-8978, or check out my Shutterfly site that shows pictures of all my miniature projects <https://ConnieSauveAmericanaInMiniature.Shutterfly.com>



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Artists featured: Framed photos
top to bottom- Kate Andrews,
Auralea Krieger, DANA, Sadie Brown,
Mo Tipton, Elize van Es, Randall
Castle. Silhouettes from left to right -
Sherrill Necessary, Rina Vellichor,
Elize van Es, Brian Long.

Ombre Heart Macaron Cake

Add something extra special to the top of your miniature cake. Rina will show you how to do it.

BY RINA VELLICHOR

From medieval to modern times, the macaron has made its mark. So why not use them to make a mini macaron tower on top of a cake?

Step 1: Make a skinner blend with pink and vanilla clay. You can use any other colors. It is important that one color is darker than the other.

EDITOR'S NOTE

A skinner blend is the name for a method of creating sheets of clay in graduated colors.

Step 2: To cut the macarons, you can use a standard round cutter, cocktail straw, paper template, or make your own shape from an aluminum can. I cut a small piece of aluminum from a tea candle holder, bent it into a ring,



and then squeezed it with tweezers from the outside and inside to make a heart shape.

Step 3: Cut out the heart shapes and sort them by color. To make it easier, you can cut them out vertically in a column. This way 1-2 vertical columns will fit in one horizontal macaron row on the cake.

Step 4: Place each heart on a flat base for cooking. Gently scratch



the skirt of each macaron using the needle tool. Add some texture to the top and sides of the macaron with a soft toothbrush.

Step 5: This step depends entirely on your skill. You can bake the macaron halves in the oven for 10 minutes to make it easier to join them together. Or you can gently cut the halves off the base with a knife and join them together without baking. This will allow you to make exactly as many macarons as you need for the layers.

In any case, you will need to make some cream using white clay and Fimo Liquid. Connect the halves with cream. Again, if you find it difficult to work with soft clay, you can bake it again for 10 minutes.

Step 6: Make a white clay cone. Attach it to the baking base with a drop of hot glue. Bake the cone for 10 minutes. After baking, never detach the cone from the base! Apply the liquid white cream from the previous step evenly all over the cone.

Step 7: Attach the macarons carefully from bottom to top. The bottom layer should be the darkest and the top layer the lightest.



You will need

- Polymer clay - pink, Vanilla, white
- Beads
- Fimo Liquid
- Hot glue gun
- Pasta machine or roller
- Cutting knife
- Needle tool
- Soft toothbrush
- Mica pearl pigment powder
- Ceramic, glass or metal base for baking

Step 8: If you have unsightly gaps between the hearts, you can fill them with small balls of white clay and mica white pearl powder. You can also use microbeads in a suitable color.

Step 9: Bake the finished tower for 15-20 minutes.

Step 10: For the base of the cake, cut a cylinder of white clay about 1 cm high. Attach the cylinder to the base for baking and round the edges.



Step 11: Use a hot glue to attach the tower to the clay base. You can use white pearl clay beads, microbeads, or ready-made beads from your craft store as decoration, but be careful! If the beads are made of plastic, then they can be attached with glue only after the cake is baked and cooled.

Step 12: Bake the cake for 20-30 minutes. If you want, after baking, cover the cream and pearls with a layer of glossy varnish.

Congratulations! Your ombre heart macarons cake is finished!

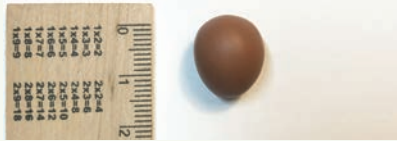
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Make a Mini Coconut

These mini coconuts are easier to make than you think. They are a perfect addition to a tropical miniature scene.

BY OKSANA PARKHOMENKO

Step 1: Knead the clay and roll into a drop ball shape.



Step 2: Using the dotting tool, make three small dents in the upper/wider part of the coconut.



Step 3: Since the real coconut does not have a smooth surface, we need to create a texture. Using a knife, apply light pressure and press the knife from the round dents to the pointed part to make shallow notches along the entire coconut surface.



Step 4: Tint the coconut with a light brown pastel color. To do this you can either crumble the pastels and use a brush to apply the dust to the coconut. Or you can take a brush, rub it against the pastels, and apply to your coconut.

Step 5: Apply a drop of Fimo gel to the coconut and distribute it evenly over the entire surface.



You will need

- Polymer clay - light brown (I used Cernit clay No. 812)
- Art pastels - browns
- Oven-hardening Fimo gel
- Natural twine
- Ball stylus tool
- Knife
- Paint brush

Step 6: Cut the twine and divide it into fibers, this will be coconut fiber. Very carefully wrap the coconut with fibers, twist it a little at the bottom so that it doesn't flake off.



Step 7: Tint it once again. Crumble pastels in shades of brown and apply to the entire coconut.

Step 8: Bake in the oven for 15 minutes at 130C/265F.

Step 9: Cut off excess fibers. Your coconut is ready!

Visit Oksana Parkhomenko on Instagram @cutthingsplace

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Veggie Visions and Food Fantasies

Miniaturist artist Oksana Parkhomenko shows her passion for making miniature food with each of her clay creations. Inspiration fuels her to never stop learning.

BY PAM NORTH

Ukraine artist Oksana Parkhomenko is both an engineer by profession and a talented artist who creates miniature fruits, vegetables, and other food items for dollhouses. "For my miniatures I use baked polymer clay and dry art pastels," she explained. "Mostly I work in 1:12 scale, but on rare occasions I create both smaller and larger items for special orders. I also like to create small jars with jam, canned vegetables, fruits, and I love experimenting with tray compositions such as cheeses, meats and sausages, baked dishes, turkey dinners, breads, and sweets."

Plump and juicy, their essence perfectly captured, it's like a mouth-watering trip to the market, but as their creation is in polymer clay, their implied succulence and

delicious taste is simply a clever illusion. Her artistic spectrum and creative array of various food items is wide, and includes realistic avocados, bananas, watermelons, sweet corn, peppers, and many other items, all wonderfully done, but especially delightful are her coconuts. They are the *pièces de résistance*, their shaggy fibrous exteriors expertly crafted, and some split open to reveal their reservoirs of creamy milk and layers of white copra. They are done in a scale of 1:12; the finished figure size is about 1.5cm/0.5in. She uses polymer clay (Cernit No. 812), dry art pastels, oven-hardening liquid gel (Fimo), and natural twine. For the tools she uses an X-ACTO knife, dotting tool, and a brush.

Her idea evolved from simply



Miniature artist Oksana Parkhomenko.

wanting to create something interesting for her fruit compositions. "It definitely came after I had gathered some experience trying existing techniques, and I finally



was able to envision something of my own," she said. "The coconut was perfect for that."

She came up with her method of making a coconut by focusing on the techniques and materials that she regularly used in her work, and improvising the missing elements. "I did not come to the final version right away. It took some trial and error until I was able to make it look lifelike. The most difficult part was to make the coconut realistic while maintaining the desired scale. The stage of applying the fibers to the coconut's exterior is my favorite part, as it is then that the coconut becomes so natural-looking." She has made over 70 miniature coconuts, all of which have been sold at \$3.50 apiece. She sells her products on Etsy. Prices for her products differ, depending on the complexity of manufacturing, but on average it's \$.75 to \$2.50 per piece.

Oksana became interested in miniatures about 3 years ago. "Back then I could not even imagine that I would do this myself, and I definitely didn't dream of having my own store," she related. "I really liked looking at photos on Pinterest, and I was subscribed to several accounts on Instagram, but I didn't create anything myself until



one day I molded a magnet to hold my needles for my other hobby, embroidery. I found some tutorials on YouTube and started experimenting, and that's how the magic began for me."

Her family soon learned how passionate Oksana had become about her craft. "My parents at first did not understand my hobby, but after they saw how obsessed and serious I had become about it, and that people were showing interest in it and even buying my work, they accepted it. My boyfriend was always helpful and supportive, and

Opposite page: A wide variety of one-inch scale canned vegetables. A colorful collection of handmade miniature fruits and vegetables.

1 A roasted miniature turkey, hand-sculpted from clay. **2** Cauliflower, red bell peppers, leeks and lettuce.

3 Miniature citrus at its best!

he is definitely my biggest fan!"

Combining her career and home life with her passion for miniatures is not always easy. "It is challenging sometimes due to how much time I spend creating each piece. I want everything to be perfect, and when something doesn't meet my standards, I will redo it until measures up to my demands. At the same time, it gives me a special fulfillment that not a single job in the world can provide, but time-wise it is definitely my second job." |

Inspiration is easy for her. "Honestly, I enjoy the process so much that I find inspiration in the process and the result itself, but even simple things ignite my creativity: music, movies, travel, communication with family and friends. I also





1 Miniature sliced avocado shown with some full-scale inspiration.
2 A tray of miniature vegetables, all hand-sculpted. **3** Detailed corn on the cob. **4** Summer watermelon with seeds. **5** 1:12 scale canned olives. **6** A handful of realistic miniature bananas.





Above is a variety of fresh vegetables, all hand-sculpted from clay. To the right are sliced and whole peppers.

am inspired by nature. After a walk by the sea, in the park, or gardening, I get very uplifted and just want to create!"

She doesn't tend to want to keep her creations, but rather the opposite, saying, "I want to share what I do with others, and it makes me feel amazing that something I've created makes someone else happy."

She is fortunate to have her own area in which to indulge her creativity. "My workshop is a separate room in the house, a place where I can immerse myself completely into my work. It has everything I need to create miniatures: a large table by the window with organizers for materials, a special lamp, tools, brushes, paints, an oven for baking polymer clay."

Working in miniature brings her



great joy and pleasure. "I really like the process of creating a miniature, and it is not that difficult for me. However, focusing on small details over a long period of time affects vision, so I have to limit my working time. I admire people who create entire houses, movie scenes, and

even entire streets with many tiny details. It is fascinating and inspiring. You can look at it for hours, and while doing so, you feel happy like a small child."

Sharing her knowledge and skills is something that appeals to her, and she intends to conduct



1



2

1 Miniature sliced papaya, made with stunning detail. **2** A fall bounty of miniature vegetables. **3** Tiny, handmade spring onions. **4** A collection of 1:12 scale vegetables. **5** 1:12 scale coconuts. See how to make your own in this issue!



3

workshops in the future. "On my Instagram page, there are several video tutorials on how to create miniature foods, and I often include photos of the process in the stories, but this is not enough, and I would like to develop more in this direction. In the future, I plan to shoot more videos of creating miniatures,

taking the virtual content creation more seriously, maybe having my own YouTube channel. I might even organize live master classes and seminars for both children and adults. Since I'm only a few years into this, I never stop trying new things and exploring! I plan to make lots of new items, and to learn or even invent my own techniques for the miniature world!"



4



5

calendar listings

Due to the current pandemic, please be sure to double check with the show provider's website and social media pages for the latest up to date information.

May 7 & 8 2021

Ann Arbor, MI

Ann Arbor Dollhouse and Miniature Show will be held at the Wyndam Garden Hotel 2900 Jackson Ave, Ann Arbor. Strollers welcome. Show will be held on Fri 4 PM to 8 PM and Sat 9 AM to 3 PM. Classes are on Friday. For more information, please visit www.miniatureshows.com or contact tdminiatures@gmail.com or call 314-277-2601.

May 14 & 15

Waukesha, WI

Wisconsin Dollhouse and Miniature Show will be held at the Waukesha Expo Center, 1000 Northview Rd, Waukesha, WI. Show hours are from Fri 4 PM to 8 PM and Sat 9 AM to 3 PM. Classes are on Friday. For more information, please visit www.miniatureshows.com or contact tdminiatures@gmail.com or call 314-277-2601.

May 21 & 22

Cleveland, OH

Cleveland Dollhouse and Miniature Show will be held at the Holiday Inn, 780 Beta Drive, Mayfield Village, OH. Show hours are Friday 4 PM to 8 PM and Sat 9 AM to 3 PM. Classes are on Friday. For more information, please visit www.miniatureshows.com or contact tdminiatures@gmail.com or call 314-277-2601.

June 11 & 12

Kansas City, KS

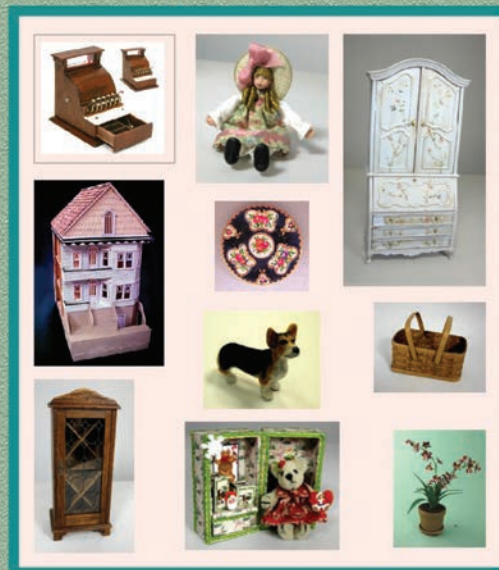
Kansas City Dollhouse and Miniature Show will be held at the Abdallah Shrine, 5300 Metcalf Ave, Overland Park, KS. Show hours are from Friday 4 PM to 8 PM and Sat 9 AM to 3 PM. Classes will be held on Friday. For more information, please visit www.miniatureshows.com or contact tdminiatures@gmail.com or call 314-277-2601.

July 15-17

Chicago, IL

Chicago Spring Showcase of Miniatures will be held at Wyndam Garden Hotel 1725 E Algonquin, Schaumburg, IL. Show will be held from Thursday, 12 PM to 8 PM, Friday from 12 PM to 8 PM and Saturday from 9 AM to 4 PM. Classes will also be offered. For more information, please visit www.miniatureshows.com or contact tdminiatures@gmail.com or call 314-277-2601.

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Hand-Painted Miniature Furniture

Aurearte Miniatures shares her new 1:12 scale spring inspired collection of hand-painted furniture for 2021 with *Dollhouse Miniatures*.

Aurea Segura's miniature art has been gracing our pages for a few years and we are always delighted to share her latest pieces with our readers. In this issue of *DHM* she shares the process as well as her latest finished collection.

How did you come up with the idea for this piece? Were you inspired by one certain item or moment, or was it a gradual accumulation of ideas?

I've always found inspiration in the 18th Century and Louis XVI's France and in Jane Austen's novels. However, now I'm finding inspiration in nature. Looking out my window and seeing the blooming flowers and the birds flocking in the Spring really inspires me. I'm also inspired by the sea and sailing - living in Barcelona very close to the sea, I enjoy staring out at the sailing boats and they have really inspired me for this collection.





Above is an 18th century France scene in pink tones upholstered and hand-painted. To the left is a hand-painted dress and chaise lounge with a spring flowers theme. To the right is a spring themed hand-painted pink bed.

What goes into making your miniature art?

I have upholstered and hand-painted my pieces. I select the fabrics and paint I want to use to create them, which I feel makes them unique. The process of selecting just the right fabrics and paint colors is something I enjoy very much.

What materials did you use to make your collection?

I used paint, silk fabrics, lace and





1

- 1 A bird inspired blue set, hand-painted and upholstered.
- 2 A bird inspired bed, handmade cushions and hand-painted frame.
- 3 Hand-painted piano with bird themes and romantic scenes.



2



3



1 A yellow hand-painted sofa with a French style 18th century romantic scene. **2** A blue sailing themed sofa set, upholstered and hand-painted with fine details.

This collection is an instant reminder of the spring season, they envelop you in the beauty of nature or to the free feeling of sailing away into a bright horizon.

What's your favorite part about these pieces?

I'm excited about incorporating the sailing themes into my pieces. It's the first time I've done this and I really like the results. The bird theme is also one I really enjoy. I feel it's elegant and it evokes nature at its fullest.

What part of this was the most fun to create?

I really liked working on the miniature piano. It's such an elaborate piece, full of detail and it also includes the bird theme as well as a romantic scene.

miniature furniture. I make the cushions for all the pieces (beds, sofas) and then hand-paint them with details that remind me of a spring season full of happiness.

Can you share your technique for creating the pieces?

I put a lot of effort into the smallest details. I think this is what makes the pieces stand out. At a first glance, you see one scene painted in each piece, but as you get closer and look in more detail, you can see the full story with many small details.

What was the hardest part about making this miniature?

The hardest part of making these miniatures is always making sure I get the tiniest details right. They make the wider scene so I put a lot of effort into these to make sure that they are perfect.

What inspired you to make this miniature collection?

I wanted to bring the light and freshness of spring to dollhouses.



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Above are blue, sailing themed chairs combined with classic hand-painted tables. Below is a beautifully handmade 1:12 scale dress with a sailing theme, hand-painted sofa and a hand-painted bird themed dresser.





13. Are you going to sell this miniature collection or display it? If you sell, what price

range will it be?

Yes, all these pieces will be on sale – prices vary.

What's next for you and your creations?

I'm always creating new collections. Next, I will be working on a children's collection and I'm also working on a collection inspired by Beatrix Potter's tales.



artist details

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Etsy: www.etsy.com/shop/aurearte

Facebook: Aurearte-Miniatures

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



Be My Valentine

Pamela Friend-Gwinn beachcombs for her Sailors' Valentines. Many of her miniature masterpieces measure 1 1/2" to 3/5" across with fine and delicate sea shells.

BY DEB WEISSLER PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAMELA GWINN

Pam is often asked about her tiny seashell sources and her answer is simple: "That person was me!" Only a dedicated artist in search of perfect shells would swim and crawl on her stomach along the half tide water line and at the end of four hours have just a tablespoon of tiny but exquisite shells to bring home to be sorted by type, color, size, then rinsed and sun dried.

"I almost never swam alone," Pam recalls. "Once I went off the swim platform at the end of the sailboat, a tiny yellow fish would come up to my mask and look at me as if to welcome me into its watery world. It would stay with me all day within 3 inches of my mask."

As a child growing up in Massachusetts, Pam lived in the heart

of Sailors' Valentines country. The legends of Sailors' Valentines paint romantic images of lonely sailors creating works of arts as they sailed the seven seas far from home and loved ones. According to popular legend, the tradition of Sailors' Valentines began in the late nineteenth century, when seamen brought octagonal boxes made of wood and glass filled with decorative seashells home as tokens of their love.

Whether these stories are true, or whether they were most likely purchased from native artisans in the West Indies, is unknown. What is known is that two British entrepreneurs, George and B. H. Belgrave, realized the potential in these 'fancy works' and came up with designs of their own and were sold to sailors from around the world.



Pamela Gwinn holding a full scale version of her shell art.

Not that she was aware of them then, but Pam's love of collecting sea shells would foretell her life's work. Her father, a self-employed businessman, instilled a business ethic in his daughter. Pam began her first business at age 7, selling beaded rings to her neighbors. By



age 10, a trip to the Maine coast meant boxes of shells brought home in the family car. Within a few weeks, Pam had 3 local gift shops selling her seashell floral jewelry. By her teen years, Pam had a lucrative business selling floral and wedding cakes.

For a time, Pam's hobby included repairing antique clocks and watches. "I started doing reverse painting on glass and restoring the clock faces. At the same time I did reproduction and original Victorian theorems, which are pictures done with stencils on cotton velvet." Although she eventually left the antique clock venture behind, her reputation for meticulous art work followed her. For the next 30 years, Pam mounted ladders, restoring and producing classic wall stencils. She created hundreds of original stencil designs and primitive paintings, but it was a visit to her sister's house that sparked her greatest love.

Her sister was a dollhouse builder, who at the time was working on a New England-style cottage. The two decided the period of the house required wall stencils and so Pam set to work creating them in miniature. It was love at first sight for them both, and after shar-

ing Pam's work with the organizers of the NAME show in Boston, Pam began receiving invitations to display and sell at shows and teach workshops. For the next 8 years, she never missed a NAME national convention.

In her late 50s, Pam met the love of her life and the couple decided to move aboard his 44-foot sailboat.

Opposite page: Minuscule Abalone shells surround delicate rose-colored shells and on the left, tiny scallop shells surround a central heart-shaped design.

1 Shells spell out 'Thee I Love' above a central cockle shell in this lovely double Sailors' Valentine.

2 A coral montage of single and double valentines.

"My late husband and I spent the better part of 13 years on the East Coast and the Bahama Islands. We particularly liked the lower of the 700 Bahamian islands as they were not as populated. Many of the beaches in the area are unnamed, but if you have a shallow draft boat you can explore all winter long. Down in the Georgetown family islands area, there are several areas good for all sizes of shells, but most





1 Sailing ship scrimshaw and nautical rope double valentine.

2 A collection of mini shells found on the beach. **3** Stylized LOVE and a teeny seahorse form the central themes for this double valentine.



folks don't look closely enough to see those tiny, tiny pieces of Nature's art. Anything still alive went back in the water.

"After two years at sea, my husband came out of our storage area one morning with a carton of sea shells I had collected. It was a cruising woman's answer to shopping - picking the beach," Pamela laughs. "I could see them all going overboard if I did not have a use for them. I had seen a Sailor's Valentine in a magazine and decided to try making a full size one. My very first one took a blue ribbon at a Sanibel Island, Florida shell show a year later!"

Shows and awards followed one after another until she had made so many she ran out of display room. Gradually her pieces shrank in size until she had mastered the art of producing them in 1:12 and 1:24

scale. The miniatures shown in this article measure 3/4", 1" and 1 1/2" across. After losing her husband in 2013, Pam mourned his passing by continuing to collect shells, some as small as 2mm.

Whether full-size or miniatures, Pam's Sailors' Valentines begin with a single shell. Once that shell is placed, it begins to 'speak' to her as a design coalesces. Once the shell design has been laid out and properly secured, any empty spaces between them are filled with shell dust ground in an old blender or with beach sand gathered from a number of sources.

"The Bahamas provide pink sand, pure white sand and several shades of browns, Pam points out. "My fa-

vorite and most used is a black mica sand I found in Pemaquid, Maine back in 1957. On a recent cruise I spotted volcanic sand and had the tour bus operator stop so I could get a baggy full!" Each valentine is then enclosed inside a proper octagonal wooden frame under museum glass to protect the colors.

"I usually create two or three pieces a month but can do more if inspired. I admit to spending several hours a day just sorting thousands of tiny shells by size. Each SV requires an average of 20 hours of sorting and about ten hours of assembly." Pam also loves to take on special commissions, trading design ideas with clients regarding color, size and price. "After a



- 1 A trio of doubles in all the colors of the rainbow or the sea in this case.
- 2 A single Sailors Valentine.
- 3 A delicate cameo is the central theme in this single valentine.
- 4 A nautical theme.

project is complete, I hate letting go of my tiny treasures but I also love seeing pictures of where my little sweet things end up."

Now in her 70s, Pam no longer swims the tide line but admittedly has enough shells stored to last for years.



Bringing a Taste of Europe to Iowa

Nick Busch shares some helpful tips in creating a realistic village scene made in 1:35 scale. His attention to detail is inspiring.

BY PAM NORTH

A resident of Davenport, Iowa, Nick Busch was introduced to miniatures when he watched the *Lord of the Rings* movies. He shared his reaction, saying, "After seeing what was achieved there, I was completely fascinated. It was only 3 years ago when I finally decided to give it a try, and my first attempt was crafting a miniature swing set made out of styrene plastic. About two years ago, I crafted a 1:35 scale diorama of Bilbo Baggins' hobbit house from *Lord of the Rings*. The piece sits right next to my work bench."

The hobbit house project was done similarly to his current undertaking, which is a 1:35 scale re-imagination of a European-influenced village, and which so far has encompassed five buildings, with two more planned. The idea for the piece has been in his mind for years, inspired by Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. "Since I was a kid I always had a vision of European architecture, and with miniatures I am able to create it in a way that fits that vision."

"Almost the entire project has been scratch-built; the only parts I purchased were the lamp post, windows and doors. All of the siding, shingles, cobblestones, and bricks were made with plaster,

balsa wood, basswood, and some styrene plastic."

Nick devised his own techniques for creating the piece, with just about everything from trial and error. All of the bricks and cobblestones were made using a mold into which he poured plaster. "I used a small amount of black pigment powder to achieve the gray stone look," he explained. "I then glued each stone and brick, one by one, until the streets and walls were complete. The houses and buildings I worked on one section at a time, using bricks and balsa wood as the frame of the house. The shingles were thin strips of balsa wood that I scored with a metal brush, and then dyed with a thin amount of weathering oils. Doing each piece individually it gave it a more authentic look."

The hardest part for him was not getting lazy and cutting corners. "It's easy to want to rush certain parts, but being patient really shows in the end result," he recounted. "The final piece did morph slightly over time when I realized the composition on the entire layout wasn't working. Certain buildings had to be rearranged to get it to look right, which required me to redo some of the road work."



"I made the piece for the love of the craft; it's something I have been wanting to do for a long time. My favorite part of it is the mansion; it was that building that took me the longest, but I think it definitely is the highlight of the project. I used many new techniques with the architecture, and I think my decisions really paid off. Probably the most fun part was Squid's Bar. The idea came from a photo I saw of a bar in Japan, and I put my own spin on it."

He also had many valuable tips to share to those working in miniature, particularly when age and history are part of the ambience. "One of the biggest mistakes I made when starting off is rushing the process. Taking my time and making sure all my



The layout of the village changed as Nick worked on his diorama.





Nick finds that creating the weathering effects on his diorama projects is the most enjoyable part of the building process.

measurements are correct really does add to the quality in the end. When scratch-building doors or windows, having good reference photos makes the process so much easier, and the photos also help for textures. One of the most enjoyable parts of crafting miniatures is the weathering; that's where the historic appearance is added to the piece, and the miniatures really come to life."

He is still considering whether to keep the pieces or sell them. "A few people have reached out about buying certain buildings, but nothing has been determined yet. Most of my work I keep on display in my home, as I find it too hard to part with any of them."

Nick shared his thoughts on creating his projects: "The best part

of miniatures for me is that I am able to create scenes that I would want to visit in real life. I really love the architectural designs of English buildings, which translates into most of my work." Nick gets much of his inspiration from movies and music. "Music scores really help me paint a picture in my head to use in my creation process."

Nick drives trucks for a living, and manages to combine his home life and miniature life with the help of his family. His workplace is his entire basement, which he has transformed into a space for his crafting. He had no formal training in the miniature field; most of his creative background is in photography. "I would make all the main structural elements by hand for the scenes, then blend other

elements into the backgrounds, adding the sky or what not. The possibilities are endless with creating this type of artwork. The only thing that holds me back is my own imagination."

"My family is very supportive of my creative work," he continued. "My girlfriend, Michelle, designs costumes, and she helps me with new ideas and layouts. My father does a lot of custom woodwork, and he has helped me learn a lot of techniques that translate into miniatures. He assists with some of my laser cutting, and also with using Adobe Illustrator to get the precise measurements for my cuts."

Nick learned proficiency in using tools, and said, "The tool I use the most is my micro cutting board. When I am cutting out shingles

FEATURE



for the houses, I am able to mass produce them at a very quick rate. It is probably my most used tool for getting multiple cuts at the exact length. The part that I have the most trouble with is bevels and curves on buildings. Getting the bevels to line up just right is extremely tedious and difficult. There really is no simple way to do it."

As for what's next for him and his creations, he had this to say: "This project still has some work to be done. Probably next on the burner is my plan to make a 1:35 scale cathedral, which will require a lot of planning. The windows and stained glass are aspects that will take a lot of trial and error to get right, and the brick layout of the building will be tricky in getting the measurements correct."

Happily Ever After

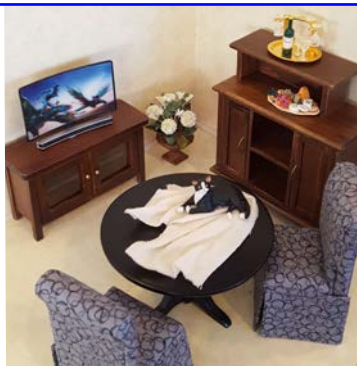
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Welcome to Château de l'Amour!

Let's take a tour and instantly fall in love with Mark Turpin's latest creation that is filled with new surprises at every turn!

BY DEB WEISSLER

Set upon a sweeping expanse of lawn, we approach Château de l'Amour in awe, for it is indeed a grand structure. Not the largest château in the Loire Valley, it is certainly one of the most elegant and now its new owner is incorporating the latest décor into its thirty rooms. We've been invited for a private tour so let's take a look!

As we wend our way down a broad avenue, the stone edifice looms overhead. Rising six stories tall, its impressive stonework and flanking twin towers reflect the sunlight as we approach. It is a dream come true for its owner.

The château can be approached in a number of ways. From the drive, a pair of symmetrical staircases wind their way up to the front doors. The ground floor is the service level,

accessible via the front vestibule, as well as the side door to the kitchen and the double doors to the wine cellar. It takes an enormous staff and services to keep the château running. As guests, of course, we are escorted up the front stairs and through the double doors where miniature artist extraordinaire Mark Turpin awaits us.

Beyond the front doors is an entrance hall with steps leading down to a salon on the left and the dining room to the right. Straight ahead, the grand staircase leads to the upper levels. Behind the salon and dining room are twin back stairs leading to the service areas below. The grand salon and the dining room are the château's largest rooms and feature the first of the round tower rooms. Off the salon, a library with rounded

bookcases is in the making, and an area to serve tea next to the dining room. The back walls of the salon and dining room both have hidden doors to small water closets or storage areas above the backstairs.

Above the first floor's entertaining rooms are his/her bedroom suites on the second floor. These also include round tower rooms in each suite. They are joined in the middle with sitting rooms in the front and also behind the staircase. A large window on the back wall brings extra light to the sitting areas on the second and third floors. The third floor is the children's level, with a nursery and children's bedroom on one side with its own round tower room; the other side provides room for the nanny as well as a schoolroom with another round tower room.



FEATURE



1 A close-up of the beautifully hand-crafted dormer window. **2** The forty-nine handmade windows fill the structure with natural light. **3** The faux stone work was created with ten different paint colors.





Flanking staircases lead up to the front door. The side service entrance door leads to the basement work areas.

The attic has two levels. The main attic space can accommodate up to four rooms for servants, with a shared space in the center. There are plans for a sewing room. The upper windowless attic is for storage and leads to a rooftop lookout deck. Four chimneys anchor the roof to the main structure. There are small door cutouts that join the conical rooftops with the attic. Ladders from the upper round tower rooms on the third floor connect the rooms to the attic.

We finally descend to the lowest level, bustling with activity. The wine cellar and kitchen have vaulted archways as room dividers, and its owner is planning brick walls and stone



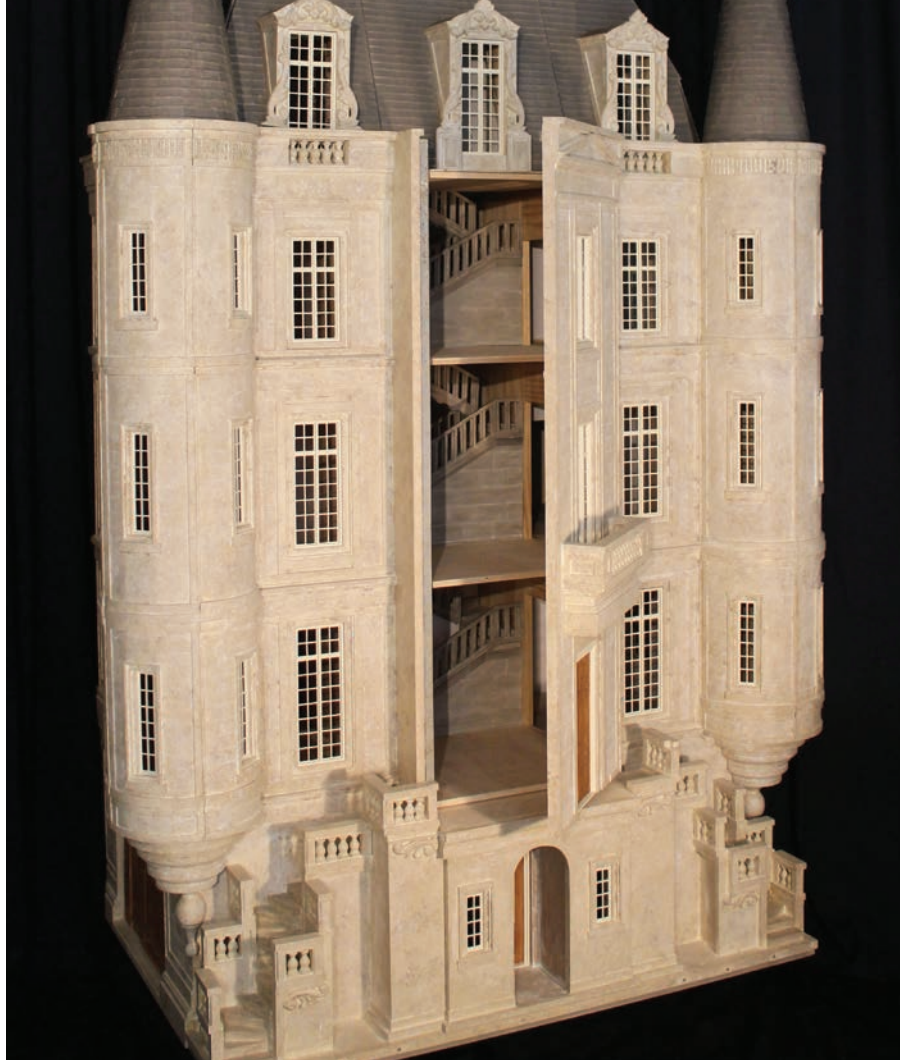


The chateau rises six stories high.

a storage area under the backstairs for wine barrels. The front vestibule has narrow spaces on both sides for a small bathroom and coat room or storage. The middle room is a large area for a servants' dining hall and break room, with plenty of space for a large table.

After climbing up and down dozens and dozens of stone steps, we look forward to refreshments served in the grand salon, tea or a glass of wine from the chateau's own vineyards. The owner and Mark await, for clearly we have dozens of questions!

Over a year in the making, Le Château de l'Amour is one of the largest, tallest and heaviest structures Mark has ever constructed. It is entirely handcrafted using birch plywood, solid pine and poplar, basswood, balsa, illustration board,



acrylic windows, and numerous colors of paint. The entire structure was hand-painted, including hand-made windows, doors and staircases. The exterior faux stonework finish is comprised of ten colors and has many variations in its appearance under different lighting conditions. Thousands of hand-cut tiles cover the rooftops and elongated pepper-pot roofs on the two towers. Forty-nine handmade windows bring light to the interior, which includes over 5,000 square inches of living space measuring 44 inches long, 28 inches deep, and 67 inches high.

So how did Le Château de l'Amour come about? "The Château will be my seventh project over a forty-year period," the owner explains. "I have dreamed of having a French Château for a few years, as it would be very different from my previous houses, and far more challenging. I had completed all my previous

houses and wanted something new. When I saw the television program "Escape to the Château", I decided to try to find one similar to the one in the program.

"I was looking through a dolls house magazine when I saw a fairly small advertisement with a picture of a chateau on it. After a glass of wine, I plucked up the courage to approach Mark by email. I knew it would be outrageously expensive, but I thought I would check it out and see. It all went from there," she smiles.

Mark takes up the story. "Actually her original inquiry was in reference to an earlier project I had done, Château des Songes, which was enormous. I was relieved to know she was willing to build smaller! I submitted three proposed sizes and she selected the middle one. She was looking for a project to enjoy for many years, with dozens of rooms to decorate and furnish at her leisure.



1 A peek inside the round tower rooms. **2** There is easy access to all the rooms with opening walls. **3** A close up of the detailed facade and windows. **4** A bird's eye view of the handmade painted roof and tower tiles.

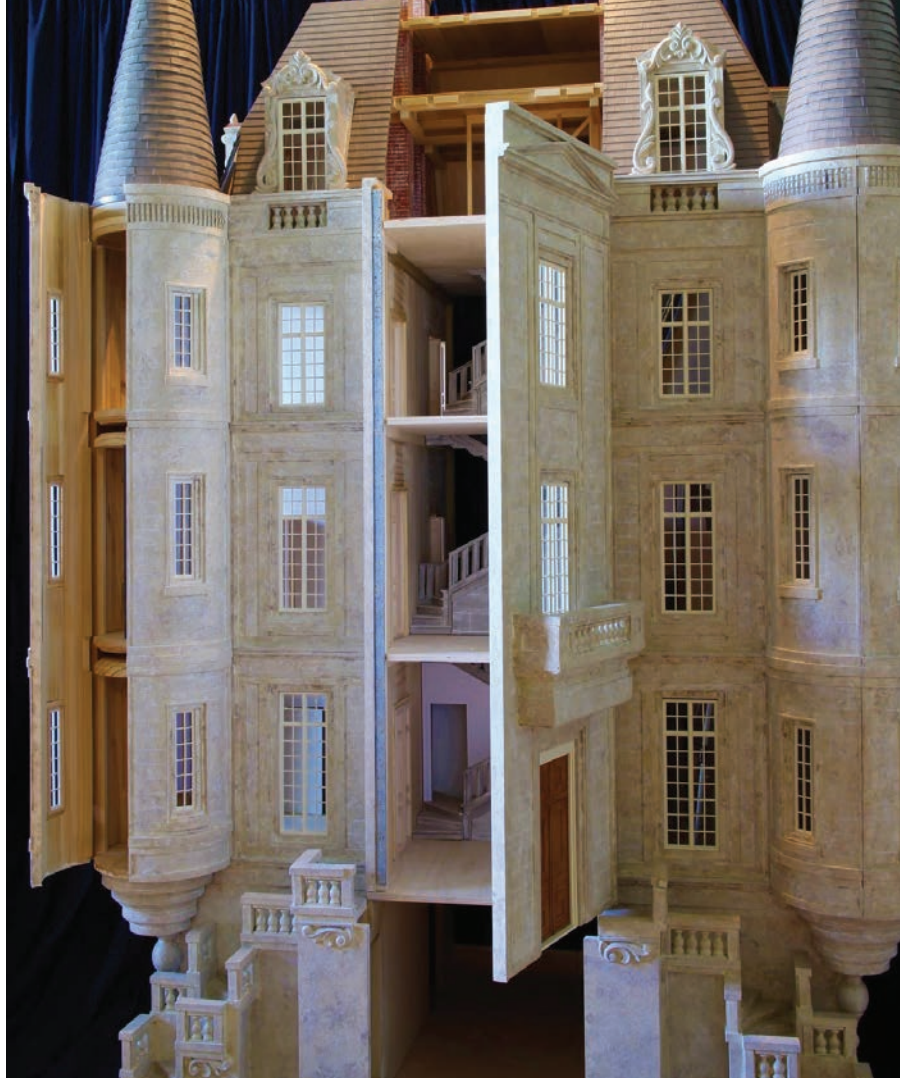


My client provided a list of rooms she wanted to include, and together we did an enormous amount of research. It took several months to gather everything together.

"Rather than copying period rooms, she expressed an interest in decorating new rooms that are stylish and chic, where she can feature her collected Georgian-style furnishings along with homemade items that reflect her personal interests. I had the pleasure of seeing some photos from her collection, and every detail in each room was very thoughtfully planned."

With a structure this large, once completed, one always wishes changes after the fact. Mark solved that dilemma brilliantly. "The interior was designed with convertible spaces that can be configured to accommodate from six to ten bedrooms in combination with five to seven bathrooms, Mark explains. "Each suite of rooms has adjustable walls for flexible room sizing, with variable sizes according to the placement of the partitions. Or they can be eliminated altogether. She can also add built-in alcoves or other architectural features. The roof was made in eight sections that can be removed for decorating or viewing the rooms beneath."

This concept helped Mark when it came to preparing the château for shipping. All the large sections could be broken down and packed individually, for to ship the structure as a whole would have been enormously expensive. "I have used this method before but not to this extent," Mark explains. It is more work and takes much more time, because everything has to be put together in a way that it can also be taken apart. There are thousands of pieces that fit seamlessly together. In a way it's like an elaborate, partially assembled kit."



The interior of the Château awaits the future owner's finishing touches.

Now that the château has arrived in its new home, the thrilling task of completing the interior begins. "I am hoping to do all the interiors myself," says the owner. "During construction, Mark and I researched what rooms the building should include and what French Chateaux interiors looked like. I had collected some furnishings, flooring and accessories, but it is very hard to furnish a room without being physically able to see it, despite Mark's exquisite attention to detail, telling the measurements of every room."

"I hope to use Ray Storey's lighting and Simply Silk's soft furnishings. I would like some of Michael Mortimer's pieces, Stokesay Ware china and other pieces from some of my favorite websites. I love attending the London and Birmingham dolls house fairs, where I am

able to see and buy various pieces from some excellent exhibitors. The château's story will be a very long one. I hope it will be very beautiful, if not always historically correct throughout."

As Mark looks back on this journey the two have shared, he reflects: "Early on, we found many interests that we share in common, and we corresponded regularly during every stage of the project. Along the way, we shared many experiences and thoughts and just enjoyed being pen pals as well as builders. Creating something new is always a good idea, I think, and being productive is a great alternative in times like these. You will never be bored if you are looking for new ideas and building your dreams. Having shared interests with someone makes the process even more fun!"



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A Luxury Miniature Closet

Passionate miniaturist Cindy Coon shares the story on how her luxury miniature closet building adventure started. Kick off your shoes and let's have a look around.

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

Twenty years ago, on a random stop at a tiny dollhouse shop in Connecticut, Cindy Coons fell in love with a glorious Queen Anne Victorian Dollhouse that stood at the front of the store. The Queen was not decorated, but she imagined the fun she could have as she scoped out the shop.

She was suddenly in miniature nirvana, a place she had only dreamt about as a child. There stood a dollhouse she thought could never exist except in dreams. That Christmas, her husband, Ray, surprised her with The Queen in the form of two extraordinarily large boxes. She wondered, was this his idea of a joke? She was surprised and thrilled at the same time. She had wanted the actual beautiful pink dollhouse from the

window of the tiny dollhouse store, not the kit! As reality set in, she heard Ray say, "It will mean so much more to you if you build it yourself." Who knew then that what he said then was so smart?

“The Queen is truly a part of Cindy's heart and soul today.”

The Queen is truly a part of Cindy's heart and soul today. I can fully relate to this feeling, as the current owner of my daughter's dollhouse that was made by my husband in 1976 over a 7-month period on the cusp of our little Jenny's 5th birthday.

With Cindy's busy work schedule, The Queen took three years to build, which included installing electricity. Each room turns on and off with its own switch. Cindy works full-time at Ethan Allen, however, not as a designer as most people assume. Ray and Cindy both work in the IT department of Ethan Allen's corporate headquarters. That is not to say that they do not see their share of beautiful furniture and home furnishings. Inspiration is everywhere.

She learned to build The Queen by reading every book that she could find, and every article in every magazine she could subscribe to. Once built, she spent a few more years designing the interior and another seven years decorating, building additions and landscaping, until

The Queen was finally crowned.

The things you learn while building stay with you forever. If you have ever glued a wall in place upside down or inside out, you have learned that a blow dryer is a great tool for melting glue and removing a wall. If you have crossed your wires and set your miniature scene on fire, you have learned a lesson, and quite possibly burnt your fingers putting the fire out.

This feature story is meant to be about the interior Luxury Closet that sent Cindy's imagination soaring. For her birthday two years ago, Ray's gift was that she could have her real life closet redone. All she could say to herself was, "Best...gift...ever!" No sooner had the announcement of her gift left his mouth than Cindy was busy Googling designer closet. She poured over images of luxurious



Above is a close up of Cindy's miniature chaise lounge in soft pink. Below shows the center island in the luxurious closet.



FEATURE



1



2

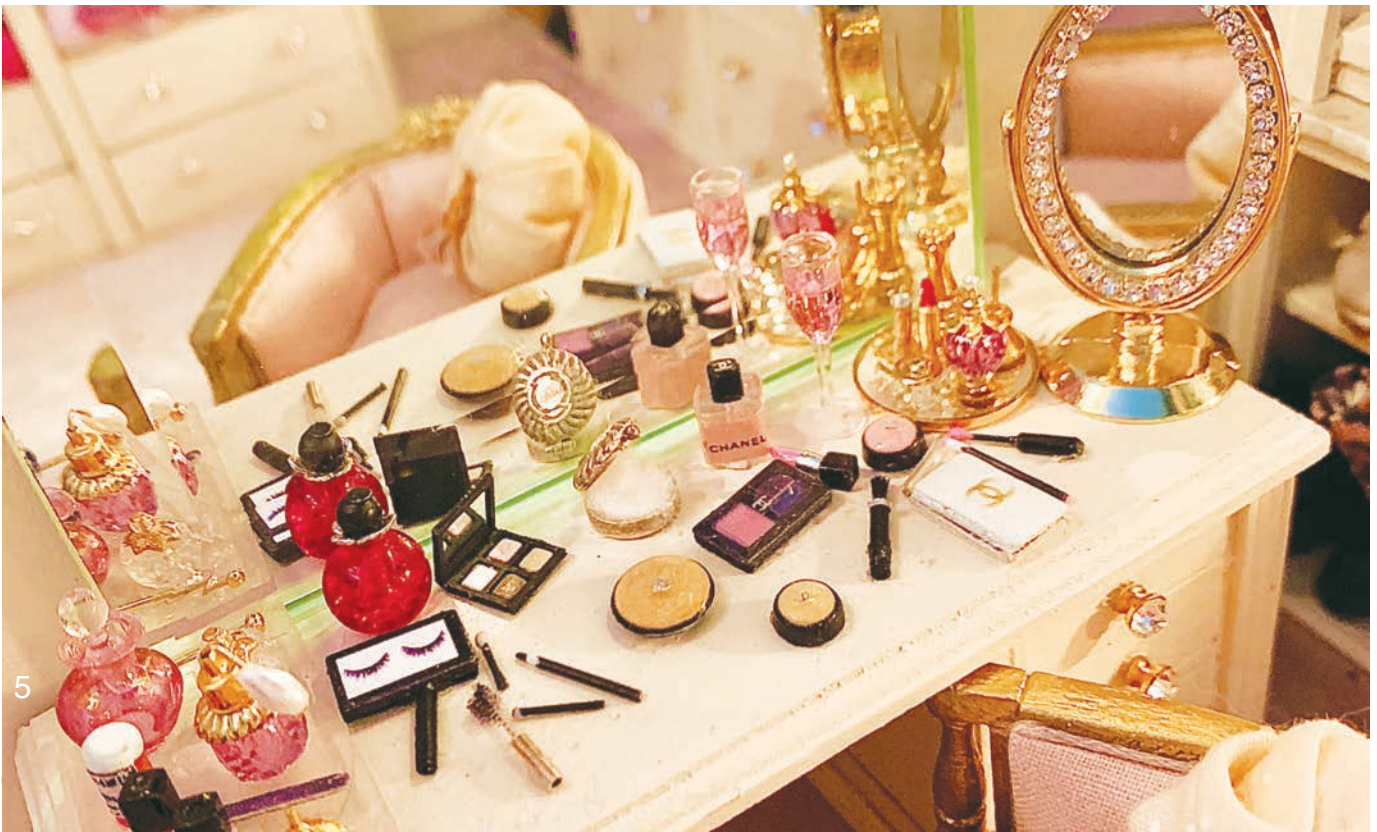
1 The island showcases some favorite fashion accessories. 2 Sparkling jewelry fills the shelves. 3 A pink dress hangs from the wall. 4 Beverage bottles are chilling in the refrigerator. 5 The vanity has a collection of tiny make up and perfumes.



3



4



5



All of the shelves and drawers in this glamorous closet are packed full of miniature treasures.

closets until she found what she called, "The Perfect Five".

Ray listened carefully as she explained that she did not want all five closets, but rather there was an element in each of them that she wanted to incorporate into her new closet. This miniature version of the Luxury Closet was born to guide him in making the real life one she desired. Then it ended up being a great way to display her varied collections of miniature designer shoes, bags, luggage and jewelry!

When it came to building this closet, she had more than a few obstacles to overcome. The biggest one was that she did not have a saw capable of cutting large pieces of wood. She had learned to use some smaller saws in her basement, but for the size of her walls, she would have to improvise.

She found a set of Housework's



It took years to collect all the right miniature handbags.

Street of Shops kits, which were still in their unopened boxes. She started pulling the walls out of each set. The size of Cindy's closet was pretty much defined by the size and number of walls she had available and the maximum length and width of a piece of wood that had been found in her basement which would become the base. Their real-life dining room table was now a construction zone. Luckily, Thanksgiving was a full eight months away.

Her design ultimately ended up as a two-room closet, with each room having its own unique style.

Cindy designed and refined ideas for walls that became an all-encompassing focus, trying to determine the final layout, keeping in mind all of the features she wanted to include and preserve from "The Perfect Five". Her design ultimately ended up as a two-room closet, with each room having its own unique style. She did not glue the walls in place, in the event she might need to make tweaks as she went along. Taking the visions in her head, she began creating interior cabinets.

She began with one room on the right, and then worked her way around the room clockwise. She studied each page from "The Perfect Five" and figured out how she was going to re-create it and electrify this elegantly. Once she completed the design for the first room,





she lined the walls up as they would appear in the room and then placed the walls around the cabinets.

She then came to the shattering realization that her original walls were not high enough! Cindy had been having so much fun building the interior that she never stopped to consider the height of the walls. As stated earlier, she is not an engineer. And neither is her husband, but she found herself enlisting his advice. This was when Cindy bought her first table saw. She was now able to custom cut her walls to the exact size she needed. She could build the cabinets as high, as necessary. The only limit was her imagination and a tiny dose of reality.

Having completed one room, the second one seemed to come together much more easily. Her confidence level was up, and time was running out, Thanksgiving was around the corner. With the cabinets built, the plan was to electrify each of them – and the wine fridge as well. The most difficult part of this project was the electric wiring.

Each of the lights that ran through a hole into the top of each cabinet was a tiny micro light on the end of a very thin wire. Running these



Wine and liquor bottles fill the upper shelves and small refrigerator.

individual wires throughout the tops of the cabinets, while hiding them from view and providing easy access to them when they get cranky and need to be worked on was a bit difficult, and somewhat painful.

In addition, there are under-cabinet fluorescent bulbs used for lighting the counters and the French sconces on each side of the makeup vanity. These lights run off of a separate source than the micro lights, simply because the

power to light the fluorescent lights is greater than that of the micro lights. These are also much easier to get to if you need to change a blown bulb, since they are on the outside of the cabinets. Obviously, if you do not want electrical wiring running through your cabinets, this project could be much easier. You can always substitute strategically placed miniature LED lights, but just remember to turn them off when you are done playing or you



The luxurious 1:12 scale vanity is framed with gold sconces.

will burn through a lot of batteries, which can be a nuisance if you intend on using as many lights as Cindy did.

After the major construction was completed, the glamorous colors livened up things even more. She added actual granite counter tops, which she advised us is easier than one might imagine. These really make a difference in the final look. Trimming between every cabinet hides any gaps and gives you a nice clean look in the end. Cindy also added a crown molding and finally gorgeous carpeting. She used a beautiful velvet fabric in a dusty rose shade.

Once your 'landscape' has been laid, it is time to decorate. This is where all of our hearts start to beat faster. In Cindy's mind, she had been decorating this Luxury Closet from day one. When she envisions

a miniature setting, it is all about the details. Her goal is ALWAYS to make it look as realistic as possible.

When she welcomes you to her Luxury Closet, she will greet you with a glass of champagne or other age-appropriate beverages! The first thing you will notice is a selection of necklaces displayed in the mirrored cabinet in the far-left corner. To the left of this you will find a small bar, large enough to accommodate a wine fridge, set at the perfect temperature for chilling all those bottles of champagne and wine. The fridge is electrified, and lit, but not actually chilled.

On the counter, you will always find a sterling silver wine bucket filled with rose champagne on ice, just waiting to be popped. Above the counter is a large custom-made wine holder for the red wines. The back wall consists of two closeted

cabinets filled with designer bags, boots, and shoes and a hanging clothes closet which holds her favorite pieces, which change almost daily. Designer luggage collection lines the top of the cabinets in this room, ready to be filled and taken away. In the center of the room, close to the champagne, a chaise lounge has been placed to collapse on at the end of a long day, adorned with a cozy cashmere throw, perfect for cuddling.

“Designer luggage collection lines the top of the cabinets in this room, ready to be filled and taken away.”

Enter the second room in the closet. Welcome to Nirvana. Shoes, mostly designer heels, and bags as far as the eye can see. There are a couple of pairs of ballet flats in there as well. The vanity has delicate French sconces on each side of the mirror, providing the perfect lighting for applying all of that miniature makeup. The drawers are filled with miniature undergarments and clothes. Each one opens with a crystal drawer pull. The center island holds jewelry, sunglasses, gloves, hankies – all the accessories you would expect to find in a Luxury Closet.

Thank you for stopping by to visit this amazing closet designed for the dreamer in all of us.



artist details

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Make Mini Kitchen Furniture from Mat Board

Kris Compas shares her technique for turning mat board into miniature furniture. This is a great option if wood and power tools are hard for you to come by.

BY KRIS COMPAS

You might think this is a lot of trouble to go through when you are using mat board and not basswood to make this kitchen dresser. Mat board is easier to get, it's less expensive than basswood and you don't need a table saw and scroll saw to cut it. You need only an X-ACTO knife.

You might not want mat board furniture in your finest dollhouse, but painted mat board furniture is certainly acceptable for small proj-

ects and miniature gifts. Painted mat board furniture makes for fine rustic country cabinets and a shabby chic touch.

To make this cabinet easier for first timers, I've not shown how to make opening drawers or doors. I am not an advocate of leaving drawers and doors open to show what's inside. They aren't left open in my real home so I'm not going to leave them open in my miniature scenes. I am sorry if that doesn't agree with some miniaturists. But I have made the dresser deep so the top can be filled and of course you can fill the shelves.

Base cabinet

I have included the centimeter measurements. This project depends on the measurements more than the previous projects. I would do some double checking just to be sure.

Step 1: Cut from mat board:

- Sides - cut 2 at 1 5/8" (41mm) x 2 1/2" (63mm)
- Back - cut 1 at 2 1/2" (63mm) x 2 1/2" (63mm)
- Bottom and top - cut each at 2 1/2" (63mm) x 1 9/16" (39mm)
- Front - cut 1 at 2 5/8" (67mm) x 2 1/2" (63mm)



I must discuss 'dry fitting' at this point. It's very important to fit the pieces without glue first. This is to check on the fit and if adjustments need to be made.

Step 2: Once you have gotten the back and sides cut, draw a line up from the bottom of the back and sides to 3/8" (1 cm). This is the line you will glue the bottom on.

Step 3: I drew an arch shape at the bottom of the sides. This lightens the look of the finished cabinet. I used my knife to cut out the arch.

Step 4: Glue the sides to the outside edge of the back using yellow glue. Yellow glue is also called carpenter's glue, wood glue, Elmer's Carpenter Glue, or Titebond.

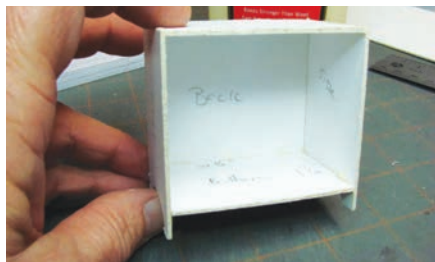


Step 5: Glue the bottom in along the drawn line.

You will need

- X-ACTO knife
- Mat board
- Steel straight edge ruler
- Yellow wood glue
- 320 grit sand paper
- Pencil
- Small ball stylus tool
- Matte finish spray
- Delta's Wedgewood Green spray paint
- Paintbrush
- Acrylic paint
- Small rock
- Minwax Water Based Stain
- Brown paper bag
- Card stock
- Straight pins
- Delta's PermEnamel Clear Gloss
- Glaze
- Small drill

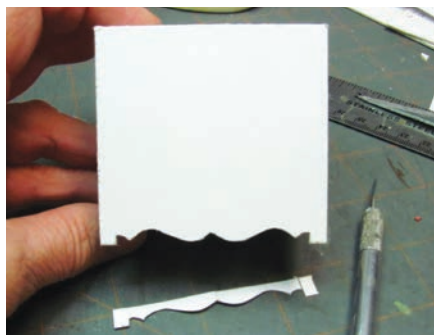
PROJECT



Step 6: Glue the top into the base cabinet.

Step 7: Use my pattern or make one of your own design for the front bottom. Cut this out with your knife.

Step 8: Glue the front onto the base.



Step 9: The decorative base cabinet top is made from 2 pieces of mat board.

Step 10: The first piece is cut 2 11/16" (68mm) x 1 3/4" (44mm). The second piece is cut 2 13/16" (71mm) x 1 13/16" (46mm).

Step 11: Use 320 grit sand paper to sand one long side and the 2 short sides half round. Sand both pieces this way.

Step 12: Glue these two pieces together with the flat backs even.

Pattern



Step 13: Glue the decorative top onto the top of the base cabinet.



Step 14: The drawer front is cut 2 1/4" (57mm) x 1/2" (12mm).



Step 15: Sand all four edges half round. Do not glue onto the front of the cabinet, yet. Set the drawer front aside for now.

Step 16: The doors are cut to 1 3/8" (35mm) x 1 1/16" (27mm).



Step 17: Measure and draw lines 1/8" (3mm) in from all sides. At the top you can draw an arch to make the door more interesting.

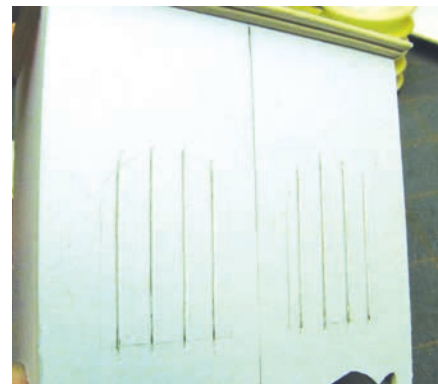
Step 18: Use 320 grit sand paper to sand all four edges half round.

Step 19: Use a sharp blade to cut the centers out.

Step 20: Set the drawer front and doors onto the face of the base cabinet. Center everything, leaving a bit of space between the cabinet doors.

Step 21: Carefully trace a line around the inside of the doors onto the base cabinet front.

Step 22: Using your knife and a steel straight edge ruler, lightly score lines on the shapes you've just drawn.



Step 23: Use a small ball stylus tool to widen out the lines (or a ball-point pen that's run out of ink).

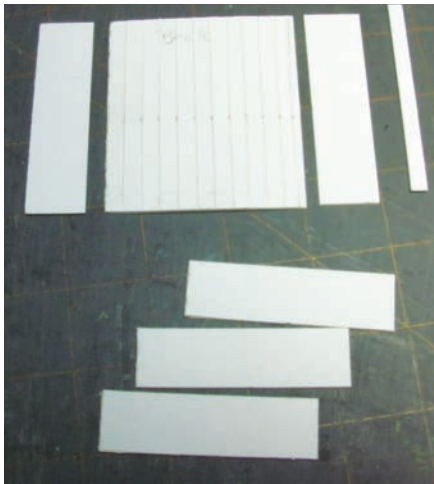
Step 24: The drawer front and doors aren't glued on yet. Set them aside for now. Looking good!



PROJECT

Step 25: Now we need to cut the pieces for the top shelving unit of the kitchen dresser.

- Cut a back - 2 1/2" (63mm) x 2 3/4" (70mm)
- 2 sides - 2 3/4" (70mm) x 3/4" (19mm)
- 2 shelves and a top - 2 1/2" (63mm) x 11/16" (17mm)
- Face frame, 2 pieces - 2 3/4" (70mm) x 3 1/16" (4mm)
- The piece you will cut the shaped top apron from - 2 1/8" (54mm) x 15/16" (9mm).
- You will also need to cut 2 pieces



for the decorative top - 2 3/4" (70mm) x 7/8" (22mm) and 2 7/8" (73mm) x 15/16" (24mm).

- Copy and paste the decorative pattern as you did for the bottom apron.

Step 27: If you notice in the picture above I have lines on the back. I wanted the back of the cabinet to have some surface interest so I measured 3/16" (4mm) between lines and used one slice of my knife and a small stylus tool to make grooves in the back.

I have built so many cabinets wishing I had waited to put the finish on and then glue the shelving together. It's very hard to get a good looking finish with the shelv-

ing in the cabinet. Since we are focusing here on an aged finish we might as well try to do a nice job.

Finishing

Step 1: First, spray all of the pieces with a matte finish to seal the mat board. Let dry.

Step 2: I am going to use Delta's Wedgewood Green as my base coat. Apply 2 coats, drying between coats. While the paint is still wet use a stylus to clean out the grooves you made on the front of the base cabinet and the back of the upper shelving unit. Just take the extra paint out.

TOPTIP

Keep your fingers clean and dry. Wipe them frequently. Paint on your fingers will stick to the paint on the mat board causing surface blemishes. Let these 2 coats dry thoroughly. Remember, we are working with paper and now it's damp.

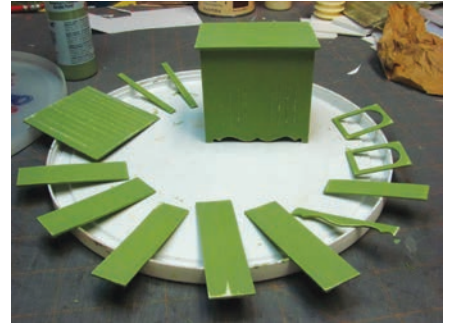
Step 3: Sand using 320 grit paper.

Step 4: Paint the third coat of the base color onto everything and let it dry.

Step 5: For my top color I am using a light ivory. Paint this on leaving brush strokes and light and dark areas. If you are timid, start on the back of the base cabinet to get the feel of it.

Step 6: Use 320 grit sand paper to sand the top color. Use a circular motion and a light touch. Keep in mind the natural wear areas.

Step 7: I used a rock with lots of uneven surface to dent the surface of the mat board. Just make a few dents on some of the pieces.



Step 8: Use Minwax Water Based Stain; I used walnut. Brush onto the surface. Do one piece at a time. I left it on about 30 to 60 seconds, no more. Wipe the stain off leaving what you want behind. Make sure you leave some in the dents.

Step 9: To finish, I used a piece

PROJECT

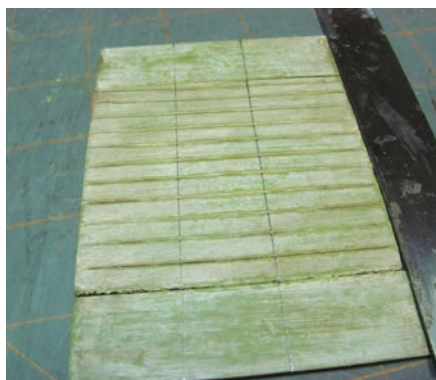
of crumpled brown paper bag. Crumple it up to soften it. Burnish the surface of all pieces.



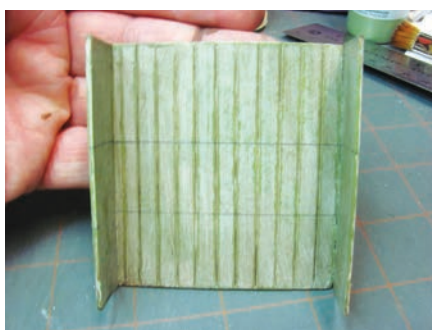
Upper cabinet

Step 1: Your pieces should now be painted and ready to assemble.

Line up a side, back and the other side against a straight edge. Measure for the shelves, I measured up from the bottom 7/8" (22mm) and 3/4" (19mm) more for the second shelf. Draw a line all across. I know we are gluing paint to paint, it's usually not a good bond. I don't like using 'instant' glues as I always have to move the pieces. We will use yellow glue to do this. Please dry fit before applying any glue and take it slow.



Step 2: Glue the sides onto the back outside edges. Let this dry and set aside for a bit.



Step 3: Now move on to the base cabinet. Glue the drawer front and doors onto the front of the base cabinet. You can measure and mark or go by eye. Center everything. Set this aside.



Step 4: Glue the shelves in on the lines you drew earlier.

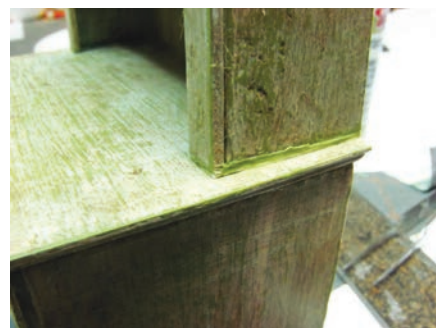
Step 5: Glue the top on to this assembly.

Step 6: Glue on the face frame pieces. Make the sides of these pieces even to the edge of the side pieces.



Step 7: Dry fit the shaped apron that goes across the top front. You may have to trim the ends. Glue the apron on.

Step 8: The right side of my upper cabinet was just a hair short. It made my shelves look uneven. I used a very narrow strip of card stock, doubled and glued to the bottom of the right upper cabinet. I used paint tinted glue and after everything was dry, I chipped off the extra and blended it in. I also had to sand the right top side to make everything look even.



Step 9: Glue the upper cabinet to the base cabinet, centering it.

TOPTIP

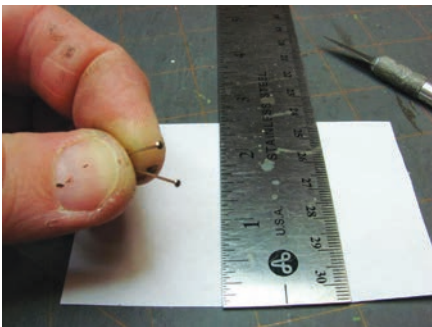
Mix very little paint with the glue to use to fill gaps.

Step 10: Glue the decorative top to the top of the upper cabinet, center it. Looks pretty good for mat board. Even if someone handles it, they won't be able to tell it's mat board.

Cabinet knobs

If you have some you like, use them. Or if you have the right size beads you can use them. I live in the middle of no-where and I've gotten used to creating what I need without driving 30 to 40 miles. I am going to show you what I've used in the past. This is not new and can be used in other applications, such as 'gingerbread' trim. It's seen in Victorian homes, the dowel and bead type of trim that's used in the top of doorways between rooms such as the parlor and dining room.

Onto the knobs, again. I used straight pins. I used to sew a lot. I used to own a fabric shop and I also taught quilting there. The pins are a particular type, pleating pins, they have a small head. Any type will do, though. If you have some extra dollhouse size brass nails, they will work, too.



Step 1: Cut a strip of paper 2 1/2" (63mm) wide, it doesn't have to be very long, you are only going to make 4 knobs.

Step 2: Put a new blade in your knife and sharpen your pencil.

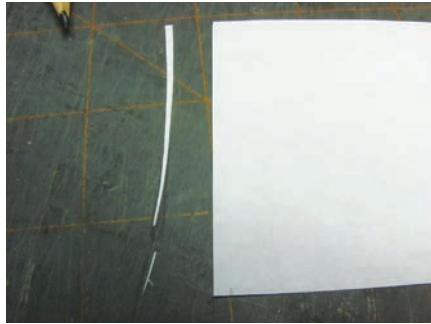
Step 3: Measure 1/8" (3mm) from the bottom corner. Measure 1/16" (2mm) from the top corner.

Step 4: Align your straight edge with the 1/16" mark and out to the edge of the bottom corner. Cut this

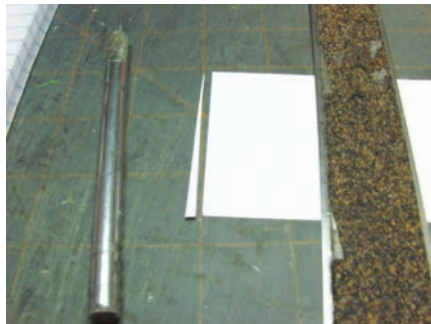
scrap piece off with your knife. (I turn my steel ruler over to cut.)

Step 5: This is the scrap piece.

Step 6: Align the ruler at the top

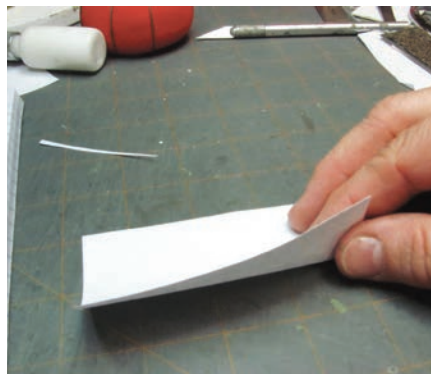


edge and the bottom mark and cut. Cut away from you, this saves the point. Set this piece aside, it's one of your knobs.



Step 7: From now on you will only have to measure 1/8" from the bottom corner. The trick is turning the paper after each cut.

Step 8: Pick up a bottom corner of the paper. Keep turning the paper away from you and lay it down.



Step 9: Do you see the orange line of my cutting mat on the left side of my paper? Now the paper is ready to measure 1/8" at the bottom corner. Align your ruler at the top corner and the new mark at the bottom. Cut another wedge and set it aside, too. Flip your paper again, measure 1/8" from the bottom corner and cut another wedge. Set it aside and do the same as above one more time.

Step 10: The size and shape of the 'bead' is determined by the length and width of the wedge shape.

Step 11: Get your Tacky Glue out. Dab the wide end into the glue. Wrap the wide end around the pin just under the head. Press and seal the paper to the pin. Set this aside to dry and glue the other 3 the same way.

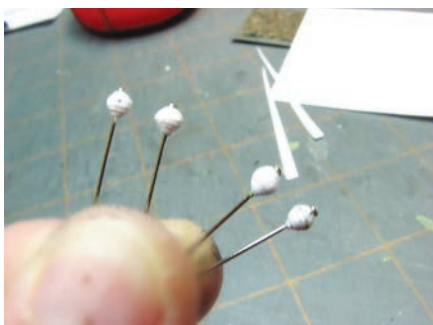


Step 12: Run a thin line of Tacky Glue along the wedge and start wrapping the wedge around the pin. Take it slow, don't pull, it will catch and you will start wrapping it. Roll the 'bead' between your fin-



press down) the glue. When rolling, keep the wedge point centered. This will make an even 'bead'.

Step 13: Let these dry before you paint them. You could paint on some gesso to cover the edges of the paper if you want. I just painted them white. I painted a dot of brass colored paint onto the head of the pin. I then coated the knob with acrylic varnish, I used Delta's PermEnamel Clear Gloss Glaze.



S
Step 14: Measure and mark where you want your knobs, drill a hole and glue and insert your knobs. Pretty cool for mat board, huh? My cabinet is pretty grungy, you can use a lighter stain so it won't look as dark.

S
Step 15: If you want to finish your cabinet like the full size ones there is one more thing you can do. I didn't include it because cutting very thin strips of mat board is difficult to do. At the seam where the top cabinet is glued to the bottom base cabinet, on the inside, there is usually a piece of quarter round molding applied. Hobby Builders now carries quarter round molding. Quarter round molding is fantastic to have in your stash. It's also called shoe molding and should be applied to your baseboard molding at the bottom (if your baseboard doesn't all ready h

Remember, quarter round - down; and use the cove moldings up at the ceiling. This cabinet could use the 3/64" or 1/16". Another thing to get is the Mini Drill. It's very useful and I keep it on my table all the time. It's a pin vice and it has 12 drill bits in the handle. I wouldn't recommend going out to buy some sort of mat cutting system but if you all ready have one it would be good to use on this type of project.

I hope you will try this out, it will open up a whole new world of building to you. And remember, have fun, expand on it, make it better. Just keep making minis!

Kris sells a selection of her 1:12 scale furniture kits through Miniatures.com.



Gina's Instagram Favorites



Hello! I'm Gina Theesfield, a proud part of the Social Media team for *Dollhouse Miniatures*

magazine. Like all of you, I am a miniature lover, so I'm thrilled to be highlighting some of the spectacular Instagram pages that catch my eye. You will be sure to be inspired by their miniature art.



[Rosalinda_mebel](#)

Absolutely lovely 1:12 scale miniature cozy furniture.



[PolimIrina](#)

Fabulously detailed miniature polymer clay food artist.



[Cherryvanilla_gifts](#)

Micro knitting at it's very finest.

big buzz

CONTESTS, PRODUCTS, NEWS, & VIEWS FOR MINIATURISTS

Highlights contest

We would love to know what your favorite highlights were in this issue of *DHM*. You could win this 1:12 apron made by Debbie Booth at www.etsy.com/shop/RibbonwoodCottage!

All it takes is a small paragraph for our random drawing! Send your entry to **DHM80 Highlights contest**, PO Box 219, Kasson, MN 55944. You may also send your entries via email to auralea@ashdown.co.uk. Please be sure to include *DHM* issue, your name and address as well.

The deadline for this contest is **Thursday, April 22, 2021**.



Recent winners

Highlights contest

Helen from Belle Plaine, MN

Frame giveaway

Kathleen from Loudon, TN



Be sure to like and follow
Dollhouse Miniatures
magazine on Facebook,
Twitter, and Instagram!

Gerbera kit giveaway

Angie Scarr is donating this stencil kit to give away. Send your entry to **Gerbera kit giveaway DHM80**, PO Box 219, Kasson, MN 55944. You may also send your entries via email to auralea@ashdown.co.uk. Please be sure to include *DHM* issue, your name and address. The deadline for this contest is **Thursday, April 22, 2021**. See more of her work at www.angiescarr.co.uk.



Scheduled Events for 2021

Scaled to Perfection: Encore!

April 6 to Dec. 31, 2021

Maysville, KY

KSB Miniatures Collection at KYGMC
Back by popular demand, the KSB Miniatures Collection is pleased to announce a repeat presentation of its widely acclaimed 2018-2019 exhibition of new miniatures, Scaled to Perfection. Catherine Palace on temporary display Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, 2021. Details at www.ksbminiaturescollection.com

American Miniaturist

Shannon Beers is the author of the children's picture book, *Awesome Possum Powers: Altruism*. Enjoy some amazing photos from the 3D set.



Customer Service Queries

Due to the effects of the pandemic, we have very limited phone support available. Should you have a query, please email us. You can address your email to usoffice@ashdown.co.uk and please be sure to include your name and complete address along with the details of your question or problem. We look forward to helping you via email!

Giveaway contributions

If you would like to be considered to have your products featured for our giveaways please email the editor at auralea@ashdown.co.uk. Your item and business link will be shown in contest listing.

Please note

We are no longer using months to distinguish our issues, but are strictly using issue numbers.

If you are calling or emailing us asking about an issue, please be sure to use issue numbers and not months when querying.

A little reminder. Please remember to add ALL of the required info in your contest entries so you can be considered for the drawings!

little letters

FEEDBACK AND STORIES FROM OUR DEVOTED READERS

★ Star letter winner

The Lakeland Miniature Guild members found a unique way to share the Christmas Spirit with residents of an assisted living facility.

In 2019 the Project Chair, Ilona Merritt, inherited 20, 1:12 scale window frames. "What to do with them?" She posed the question at one of the meetings. Carol Kira suggested decorating them for Christmas, and immediately someone suggested giving them to a home for the elderly. Grand Villa of Lakeland was chosen to receive the gifts.

We attached a piece of wood as a stand to the window frame and then painted and dressed them up with Christmas decorations. Then their names were printed on transparent film and attached to the windows. A truly cheerful addition to the Christmas spirit.

Last year, the ladies made little holly children holding tree ornaments, as a holiday greeting. A heavy-gauge wrapped wire formed the entire body and was attached to a wood base. A wooden bead served as the head, which had a smiling face painted by Pat Gazie, and was glued to the top of the wire. Silk holly leaves and decorations were added along with a bit of sparkling snow. Then in early December, Marcia Kehler and Ilona took 50 holly children to the Grand Villa of Lakeland in Florida.

Ilona from Lakeland, FL

Sharing minis

Way back when *Dollhouse Miniatures* was *Nutshell News*, I picked up a copy at a garage sale and affirmed my love for minis. I always loved little things, but the magazine made it acceptable to have a passion for miniatures. I thought if people were interested enough to write, share and actually print a magazine about minis, then it was more than fine for me to take my collection



seriously! Since then, every chance I get I make minis, shop for minis, gift minis, teach minis, and generally spread the cheer of minis wherever I go.

I'm now retired and there's this pandemic going on, but weirdly this has been the sweetest mini winter of my life. House bound, fewer distractions, plenty of time to ponder, and I'm thoroughly enjoying this unique time. Your magazine is a big part of it. I anticipate each issue like a visit from an old friend and will pull out back issues to renew my acquaintance. Thank you so much for your extra effort to send me that wayward copy. We're back on track!

JoAnn from Roy, WA

Highlights

The ultimate highlight of *DHMT9* was the article and photo spread, "Visiting Anna" by Jere Friedman. It is based on a French Manor style house Aaron and Sarah Friedman originally planned to give their granddaughter, but in the end is on display at the History Museum of Mobil, Alabama.

Glancing at the photos of the inside the house makes you think you are looking at a 'real' house – the details are amazingly accurate: scale, realism,

lighting, furniture, accessories etc. I only hope that some day one of my pieces will have so much realism.

Stella from Columbia, SC

Making minis

I wanted to share two projects that I have worked on in the last 6-8 months while coping with the pandemic. For myself I made a kitchen room box and a small stone house.

The other dollhouse I made was specifically for my five-year-old granddaughter as a Christmas gift. The house is made from foam board. I made everything in the house with exception of the chests in the living room and bedroom, all dishware, food and the rug in the kitchen. It was very affordable and a perfect way for a young child to enjoy miniatures.

Debbie from Brownsburg, IN



back issues

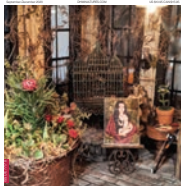
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In this issue:

- Stoneybook Farms
- Horse Carriages
- Italian Cantinetta
- Pet Boutique

dollhouse miniatures **Issue 77/78**



In this issue:

- Spook'tacular Remodel
- Christmas Inspiration
- Miniature Paintings

dollhouse miniatures **Issue 76**



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- Piano Collection
- Charming Book Store
- Make a Garden Deck
- Regency Library

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- Mother's Day Gallery
- Aida Pravia's Furniture
- Carl Larsson's Cottage

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- Almaira de Jonge

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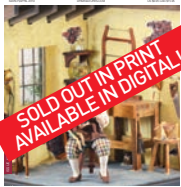


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- Tips from Mark Turpin
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- Tudor Architecture

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- Birch Hill; Mark Turpin
- 1981 Victorian Resurrected
- Holiday Gallery of Artists

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- Erik Goddard Creates
- Fine Furniture Gallery
- Masterpiece Puppies

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- The 1st President
- Tahitian Room Box
- Patrick Duclou Charm

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Visiting Rachel's House

Aaron Friedman took on the task to create a 1:12 version of the house where his seven-year-old granddaughter, Rachel, lived.

BY JERE FRIEDMAN

When Aaron Friedman began his very first dollhouse project in 1977, he did not start out with a ready-made kit or a published set of plans. Instead, he undertook the daunting task of copying the house where his seven-year-old granddaughter, Rachel, lived. He drew upon his years of experience in developing commercial real estate, poring over the blueprints from the renovation of the house located in Atlanta, taking photographs and measurements of the actual house, and creating detailed plans.

"When I decided to build Rachel's House, I had no idea where to start," Friedman confessed at the time. The books he had access to did not provide as much help as he would have liked, so Friedman

used his prior woodworking experience and ingenuity. To complicate matters, the commercial miniature market was still in its infancy with

“He hand-made the brackets supporting the roof overhangs as well as the attic ventilation louvers.”

few building components, materials, furnishings, and readily available accessories. Friedman and his wife, Sarah, had to be resourceful and use their imagination. For example, it took them a month before finding fabrics that looked like the original house's carpeting.

At the time, Friedman's son and his family lived in a house in the Midtown neighborhood of Atlanta. Originally built in 1911, Rachel's parents had bought the house in the early 1970's. They restored the exterior to its original look, but gutted and renovated the interior into an ultra-contemporary design.

Rachel's House is held together with about 200 wood screws. Friedman estimated that he assembled and disassembled the dollhouse between 15 and 25 times at various stages of construction for wiring, painting, and wallpapering, in that order. Friedman purchased ready-made clapboard siding and asphalt shingles in 1:12 scale, and windows and doors to which he added panes and door features identical to those of the Atlanta home. He hand-made



Above is a view showing the rooms on one side of Rachel's House. Below shows the dining area and kitchen.

the French doors and used the same paint formulas from the house in Atlanta to mix his paints to ensure they matched the exterior and interior wall colors exactly.

In order to replicate the stone-work foundation of the house, he etched plywood with an engraving tool and painted it different shades of gray to achieve the effect of gran-

ite. The front porch is fitted with real screen. He hand-made the brackets supporting the roof overhangs as well as the attic ventilation louvers. He installed aluminum drainage



FEATURE

1 The sitting area, looking out to the screened-in front porch.
2 The front entry area. **3** A view of the living area. Note the detailed bookcase made by Aaron and the needlepoint rug made by Sarah Friedman.





Details of the kitchen, including the Scandinavian-style cabinets painstakingly handmade by Aaron Friedman.

valleys and gutters on the roof and went so far as to drill drainage holes in the window boxes filled with tiny geraniums.

Friedman put in every detail, sometimes spending hours just making one door. The original home has one skylight over the kitchen and another over the upstairs playroom. Friedman searched for commercially available miniature skylights but was unable to find anything close to the originals, so he used the plastic bubble packaging from toy airplanes instead. He bought the toys, threw them away and used the bubble packaging.

The interior of the house reflects the actual house in Atlanta with the same detail as the exterior. Downstairs, the flooring in the entry area, living area and dining room is authentic wood parquet. Friedman cut real vinyl flooring tiles to replicate



‘The interior of the house reflects the actual house in Atlanta with the same detail as the exterior.’

the floors in the kitchen, bathrooms and utility room. The upstairs bedrooms and playroom are carpeted in the exact color and texture of the original house. One of the most realistic aspects of Rachel's House is the bookcase in the living area. Friedman made the shelves and stocked them with books, some of which are handmade by cutting out pictures



1 Sarah Friedman made the runner that is placed on the dresser in the master bedroom. 2 Details of the master bedroom. 3 Friedman handmade the file cabinets for the home office because he couldn't find commercially available replicas when he built Rachel's House in 1977.





Above shows one of the bedrooms in Rachel's House with a colorful bedspread and matching chair. Below is a detail shot of the playroom, including the washer and dryer that are behind the bifold doors.

from book club advertisements he found in magazines and mounting them on strips of balsa wood.

Sarah Friedman needle-pointed the multicolored blue shag rug in front of the bookcase and it is al-

most identical to the one in the real house. Another example of Friedman's creative problem solving is the aquarium in the entry area that he made from the inverted cover of a Plexiglas butter dish.

The downstairs layout exactly reflects the original house, with the living and dining areas separated by a semi-circular wall. Recessed lighting is positioned throughout the downstairs in the exact locations they have in Atlanta. Friedman could not find a light fixture that matched the original hanging above the dining table, so he improvised by cutting the bottom from two different sized pill bottles and gluing them together.

Friedman's greatest challenge and most intricate work was building the ultra-contemporary Scandinavian-style cabinets found throughout the house. The kitchen





Sarah Friedman made the needle-point wall hangings and throw pillows pictured to the left. She also handmade the bedspreads, window valances and curtains, upholstered covers for the dressing table and bench, and the runner shown on the dresser in these bedrooms. Aaron Friedman handmade the swivelling track lighting fixtures.

alone has 22 handmade cabinets, and every door and drawer opens and closes. It took him four weeks to make them using balsa wood and thin plywood veneer.

Kitchen appliances include a double-door refrigerator with an ice and water dispenser, stove, oven and dishwasher, many made of aluminum to simulate stainless steel. Friedman used metal washers to serve as the burners on the stove and dress snaps to replicate the stove's control knobs. Miniature bottles of Coca-Cola on the counter are a nod to Friedman's son, Murray, who was an executive with The Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta.

The second floor of Rachel's House showcases the master



bedroom in the front of the house. Three other bedrooms are located on either side of a central play-room, where accordion doors open to reveal the washer and dryer. When Friedman couldn't find a shower curtain for one of the upstairs bathrooms, he improvised by cutting one of Sarah's plastic rain bonnets to size. He also fashioned the working track lighting fixtures, which swivel in all directions, that match the ones found in two of the original bedrooms.

Sarah Friedman, who called herself "the carpenter's helper," was on call to help her husband at the workbench or at other times throughout the project. She also collaborated on selecting interior accessories and made many handmade contributions. She needle-pointed a hammock for the front porch, made many of the rugs, pillows, and wall hangings found throughout the house, a bedspread and window valances for one bedroom, runners found on several of the dressers, and even the welcome mat at the front door.

Rachel's House took 14 months to complete, working almost every day and night. When it was complete, Friedman vowed that he would never again try to copy an interior exactly!



The downstairs powder room can be seen behind the workbench in the utility room. Below is the master bathroom. Note the shower curtain that Aaron made by cutting one of Sarah's plastic rain bonnets.



Have a Happy Hippity-Hop Easter

Denise shares her fun filled one-inch scale Easter room box as well as lots of great tips on how she made most of the items.

BY DENISE MORALES

I have had so much fun with this theme. I could have made a box twice the size as the possibilities for creating Easter miniatures seemed endless. I made hundreds of tiny little Easter things to fill this 1:12 scale shop. In addition to miniatures that I made, this shop also includes items that I have made through kits, group projects and miniatures collected from past decades.

I felt the worst part in doing this project was that no sooner had I started it than I had to close off the spigot of ideas in my head because I knew that I would not have enough room to display them if they came to fruition. Isn't that one of the most enjoyable parts of miniatures – immersing yourself in dreaming of the many ways and possibilities of doing something?

In completing this room box, the biggest challenge was finding cohesive ways of grouping and displaying hundreds of tiny Easter things without it looking like hundreds of individually displayed items. On a humorous note, in response to wondering why this box was taking so long to complete, a friend described that I had found six more inches to decorate. I believe that is fairly accurate after you look at the photos.



I spotted the tiny rabbit head in a kit and knew it would make a perfect tree-topper. I just love making what I call 'kindergarten level miniatures' and this Easter tree provided a great place to display them all.

Since I had so many bunnies, chicks and other Easter critters, I decided to place them on long shelves that spanned the top of both left and right sides of the



box, so that they formed a long line as if they were marching in an Easter parade. I then added green moss onto the edge of the shelves because it gave the illusion of a forest setting plus it looked cold and bare without the lacy moss.

The bunnies on the shelf, on the left of the box, consist of charms painted with chalk paints, shrinky dinks, paper prints that were cut out and then layered onto card stock, a metal mini bunny that I painted with chalk paints and the bunnies/lamb were made from a



mold using Hearty brand clay and the lamb was covered in bunka.

The bowls on the egg dying board are cut from the closing tabs of the plastic strawberry containers. Lisa Pavelka Magic Glos and scrapbooking chalk make the dye. The white eggs and dyed eggs are made with the Hearty clay that is mixed with dots of Sharpie marker colors. I loved making these eggs because they required no oven to bake them like you would have to if using the polymer clay products.

I downloaded a "Bunny Tails" label from the internet and made the marshmallows from Hearty clay that was rolled into a snake and sliced with a blade after it had dried. The tiny plastic eggs in the back left side were covered with decal papers that were leftovers from a kitchen room box.

I searched on eBay to find the hutch kit by Shenandoah Designs, Inc. (yellow hutch). I don't believe this kit is manufactured anymore. Displayed on the top of the hutch are eggs, bunnies, topiaries





I made the chick pulling a flocked bunny in an egg with Hearty clay pressed into a mold. I used a metal mini for the bunny, a tiny resin chick made by Falcon miniatures and a bead for the egg. Then pressed these forms into my mold.

and an ornament-filled Easter tree. Joanne Swanson's tree tutorial was used to make the ornament tree; then I added German glass-glittered eggs and millefiori slices to fill it up. The topiaries were made by gluing headpins into green pearl beads, then painting the wire brown and gluing railroad turf greenery on the pearls.

The Easter plates and laser cut wood bunnies were some of all of the kits that I purchased from Robin

Betterley in her super 1:12 scale Easter hutch collection.

I consider this counter the candy shelf of the room box (shown top center). The two stacked candy boxes on the left, the two boxed standing bunnies and the pink bunny head candy stick were purchased many years ago at a miniature shop.

I do consider my room boxes as memory boxes that display treasured things that my children



have given to me over the years.

The roses on the top of the armoire were made with thin strips (that I cut) of the two-sided crepe paper using the same technique to make silk ribbon roses with a rose tool. Except with the crepe paper, you can shape the petals with fine point tweezers to make the petals curl and fan out.

My friend Nancy hand-painted an egg with glass paint and I loved

the effect so I decided to paint the shell casing 'vase', that holds the chocolate bunny pops, with the glass paint. The white and pink Easter basket and rabbit cut out that you cannot see well from this angle were part of the CH kit. Also, the lace doilies that are displayed on these shelves are inexpensive Martha Stewart stickers found at the crafts store.

This blue shelving unit was part



Since I liked the way the white flocked RB rabbit pull toy turned out, I decided to make two more and group them. The gray rabbit was part of the CH kit and the brown one was painted with chalk paints using a cheap ugly plastic rabbit I had in my stash.

loves to play with pipe cleaners and while I was away one day, it stole two pipe cleaner bunnies that I had made. I was able to find one, albeit, full of dust and hair, badly misshapen and with eyes dangling by threads. I decided that I liked its tattered look.

I hope you enjoyed the Easter room box tour and have a fun filled Easter holiday!

of the CH kit.

I bought the three white porcelain rabbits (center previous page) from Tina Squire. I then painted and dressed them. They are among my favorite things in the box. The two pussy willow

bunnies have such cute cottontails. The little white flocked bunny lays in a stroller made from two hollow Hearty clay egg halves that were made using molds. Millefiori was used for the wheels and a thin wire made the handle. My cat



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The Mini Time Machine Museum
4455 E. Camp Lowell Dr.
Tucson, AZ 85712

CALIFORNIA

Ms. Peggie's Place
5063 Cass St.
San Diego, CA 92109

My Dolls House
1218 El Prado Ave
Torrance, CA 90501

The Hobby Co of SF
5150 Geary Blvd.
San Francisco, CA 94118-2816

FLORIDA

Ron's Miniature Shop Inc
751 W Colonial Dr.
Orlando, FL 32804-7343

The Toy Box
419 Brevard Ave.
Cocoa, FL 32922-7901

GEORGIA

Miniature Designs, Inc
3555 Lawrenceville Hwy
Lawrenceville, GA 30044

ILLINOIS

Tom Thumb Hobby & Crafts
6001 Gross Point Rd
Niles, IL 60714

INDIANA

Museum of Miniature Houses
111 East Main Street
Carmel, IN 46032

MICHIGAN

Wee Dollhouse Shop
140 South River Ave
Holland, MI 49423

MONTANA

The Treasure Chest
1612 Benton Ave.
Missoula, MT 59801-7818

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Earth & Tree Miniatures
276 Rt 101 #1
Amherst, NH 03031-1732

OHIO

Dolls and Minis
8068 Columbia Road
Olmsted Falls, OH 44138

PENNSYLVANIA

Lynlott Miniatures
223 Commercial Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15215-3054

WASHINGTON

Miniatures & More
610 5th Ave. S, Ste D
Edmonds, WA 98020

CANADA

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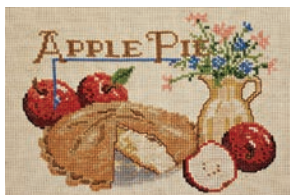
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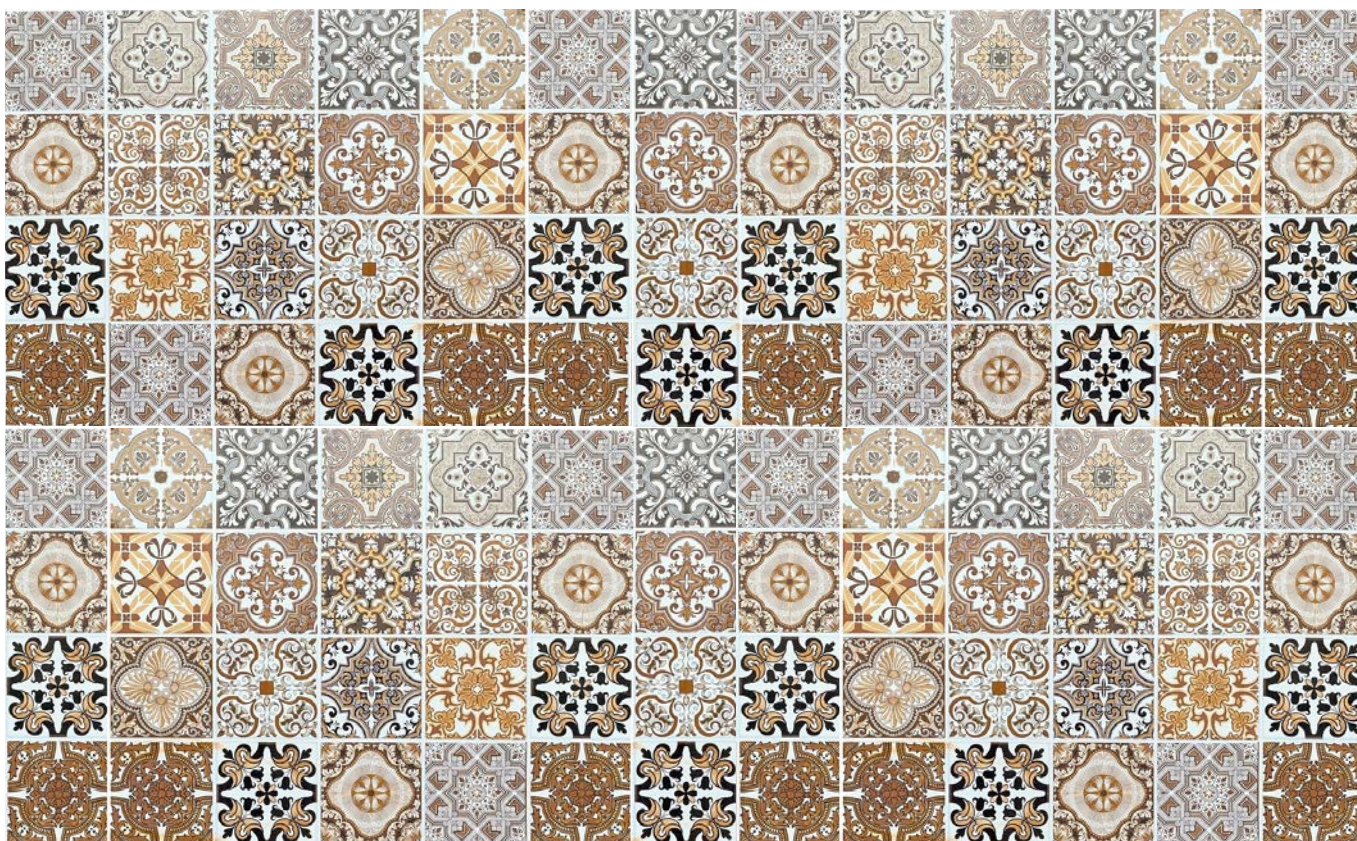
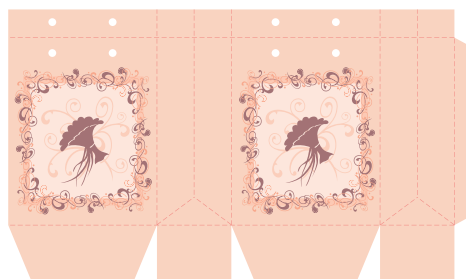
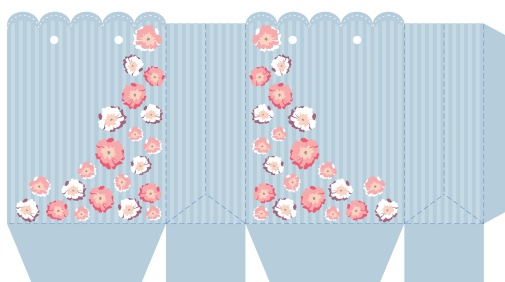
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This auction is from two private estate collections. The estates are from IGMA Fellow Shirlee Greenberg and the Paradise Sisters, Marilyn & Pat Paradise. Shirlee Greenberg was an IGMA Fellow known for her needlework and rugs. Included in this auction is one incredible needlepoint rug handmade by Shirlee. The rest of her rugs were donated to museums. The Paradise sisters were avid dollhouse collectors for years.



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