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featured miniature: detail from The Carriage House Antique Store, Ron and April Gill, gift of the Yankey Family honoring the memory of Mary Paul Yankey.



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museum of miniatures

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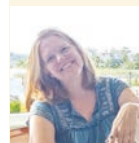


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welcome



For the past month I have been digging deep to understand my anxiety and

discovering new tools to keep it in check. With everything that has happened the past few years there has been a rise in anxiety across the globe, but this is something I have always had to deal with. The good things that have come from recent events is the outreach programs and open conversations dealing with anxiety and how to cope.

I don't have space here to get into a lot of detail but I do want to stress that creating any form of art is crucial for coping with anxiety. Luckily for me I have many miniature art projects to pick from!

Meditation and exercise are also at the top of the list to be mentally healthy and happy. Think positively and love those around you, but the very first thing you need to do is love yourself by making healthy choices. Then you are fit enough to love others.

We hope you enjoy all of the outstanding miniature art work in this issue of *DHM* and pour your inspiration into a new creative adventure that will take you to your 'happy place'.

Auralea Krieger, Editor
auralea@ashdown.co.uk

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The Botanist's Folly

Gina Zetts shares her latest work of art, which captures the passion of botany as an ambitious interest in the Victorian era.

BY DEB WEISSLER

Dollhouse Miniatures is excited to spend some time chatting with miniature artist Gina Zetts in this exclusive interview about her latest one-inch scale creation.

DHM: Gina, what is the piece we are highlighting for this issue?

Gina: *The Botanist's Folly* was created as a sister work to a dollhouse I made in 2018 named the *Natural Philosopher's Study*. My previous piece was masculine in its details. In this piece I wanted to explore a bit of obscure feminine history around the study of botany in the Victorian era.

To ambitious women of the time, botany offered a more intrepid and exciting creative outlet than the feminine fancywork that was more

common during the time. Much like dollhouses are thought of by modern culture as existing within the tropes of the feminine, I wanted this dollhouse to fully embrace that. It embraces 'feminine' as a thing of wonder and exploration, not just as a passing curiosity.

DHM: What inspired you to make this piece?

Gina: This piece was built as part of the 2021 Creatin' Contest hosted by Hobby Builders Supply. I started the project with their MiniTown Studio Shell Kit, which looks quite different from where the piece eventually ended up. Most of the items in this build are handmade by me, including the blown glass bell jars.



Miniature artist Gina Zetts.

DHM: What materials did you use?

Gina: The primary materials are plywood, balsa wood, cork for the floor tiles, Plexiglas, and polymer





clay. I used egg cartons to make the stone blocks and cork sheet to create the stone floor tiles.

DHM: What was the most exciting part of the project?

Gina: Figuring out how to create the wrought iron window frames

and wavy glass windows. The wrought iron frames are made from liquid polymer clay shaped in silicone molds and painted black. The frames sit on a Plexiglas sheet that is cut to fit the window openings. The frames are filled with Dura Clear Satin Varnish to adhere them

to the Plexiglas and to make them look aged and wavy.

DHM: What part of this piece was the most challenging?

Gina: The hardest part about making this piece was figuring out how to make a building with thick walls





and many details in an octagonal shape. I had to rely on a lot of math to figure things out. I couldn't just eyeball the angles on this build.

DHM: What's your favorite part about this piece?

Gina: There are so many things I love about this build, but the light coming through the wavy glass windows and the apothecary cabinet with built-in folding desk are particularly magical elements to me. I wish I had a life-sized desk like this one! I want viewers to want to pull those little apothecary drawers open, page through the open herbarium and maybe pull a cork from one of the bottles, just be careful with that poison please.

DHM: What was the one thing that was the most fun to create?

Gina: I loved making the old overgrown carved stone fountain! I found the cherub-like figure in a discount bin at a miniature show. I hadn't even been thinking about a



fountain for the build, but as soon as I saw it I knew I needed to make something dramatic from it. Sourcing the other little bits and discarded scraps of wood from my own collection of materials was really fun. Once it was painted and aged it felt like it had always been part of the idea for this piece.

DHM: Did your design for this piece turn out as you first envisioned, or did it morph as you went along?

Gina: I had been thinking about the idea for this piece ever since I completed another dollhouse in 2018 named the Natural Philosopher's Study. After I finished that build I still had so many ideas that I wasn't able to explore in the first version. I knew that I wanted to create a complimentary, more feminine version of the Natural Philosopher's Study, this time focused on Victorian Era Botany.

More than any other dollhouse I have attempted, this build morphed

greatly as I worked on it. I started and stopped it twice while working on it and in the end, I had an almost entirely different piece than I had originally planned on building.

DHM: What new skills were you able to learn?

Gina: I brushed up on my basic math skills and learned how to work with Plexiglas in more creative ways!

DHM: What's the greatest difficulty you encounter when working on any miniature project?

Gina: Finding the right materials to convey accurate scale of specific surfaces and textures. I tend to hoard bits and pieces of product packaging all over my studio because I know that someday I'll find the perfect use for it as an ancient artifact or mid-century modern lamp.

DHM: Do you have any formal training when it comes to miniature making?

Gina: I have no formal training specifically, but I do have a BFA in sculpture and an MFA in glass. I have taken classes and worked as a professor and instructor in various crafts-based programs across the United States.

Currently I work as a Project Manager in the Provost's Office at Saint Mary's College of California. Although not currently teaching, I am also a Professor at the California College of the Arts in the Glass Department.

DHM: What does your family think of your miniature interests?

Gina: Although I'm sure they'd prefer I spent less time in my studio tinkering with miniatures, my family is very supportive of my art.

My husband is also an artist so he understands the need to be a maker and the time and dedication it takes to become skilled. Our daughter is about to turn three and she is already showing a passion for making as well. I am looking forward to having her with me in my studio more often over the coming years. I cannot wait to help her follow her own creative passions the way my parents always supported me as a child.

DHM: Have you made anything that you can't bear to part with?

Gina: I've made many things. I made a historic newspaper print shop a few years back and the printing press from that project is particularly dear to my heart. I don't think I could ever part with it.

DHM: What do you think about the future of miniatures?

Gina: I've been working in miniatures for a few years now and seeing the renaissance that has taken place as a result of the pandemic and technology making creative practices more accessible. I am so inspired by 3D printing as well as all of the skills shared on social media. I hope that makers push the practice even more into the mainstream of the art world. I hope to see more miniature makers featured in art fairs and gallery shows in the future.

DHM: What do you love most about miniatures?

Gina: I love how intimate miniatures are both physically and emotionally. As an artist I'm really interested in the intrinsic motivations of working in this medium. There is a strange satisfaction when non-traditional art forms break into the mainstream and challenge our



perceptions of what is acceptable or fashionable.

DHM: What's next for you and your miniature creations?

Gina: I am constantly creating new work and trying to refine my skills as a maker. Although I thoroughly enjoy making things by hand, I am thinking about making the jump to buying a 3D printer in the near future. Technology is opening up so many more possibilities for making small scale work.

I've already started my next dollhouse build and although it will have a historical feel like this one, it will definitely be a stylistic and thematic departure. I love to keep a little mystery around my current projects but I always share my progress on Instagram, so please follow @letties.dollhouse if you are interested!

Although I take custom commissions and am happy to sell most of the work I make, I do not have a specific web store at the moment.

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A Lovely Room Box in Provence

From her home in Bamako, Mali, Ana tells us how she created a special room box to bring summer to her sister during the long days of winter.

BY ANA SVETLANA

It all started in 2017 when I visited my family in Moscow, as I do every summer. I was particularly eager to travel. I had already carefully prepared a shopping list of miniatures that could fit in my suitcase without exploding the family budget.

Above all, I was thrilled to share my new passion with my loved ones, especially my father and sister. I must say that I was a little apprehensive, as experience has taught me that most people believe miniature making fits with children's toys.

To my relief, my father (who is also an artist and brilliant handyman) found it great. My sister also reacted positively and was even more excited than I was to go shopping in DIY stores, and search her

house for useful stuff I could use for my minis. We started to spend long evenings talking about miniatures, looking at pictures, until she shyly expressed a request: "If you'll have time someday, would you please make me a little room box, with just a sofa and lavender flowers? Somewhere I can sit in and relax my mind during long winter days." Yes, my sister hates the cold and grey-ness of winter. That's why she often travels in hot countries with sun and shiny colors all year round.

Then I came back to Bamako and my life's routine. It was only in May 2018 while planning my next trip that I realized in a panic that I had no present to take. That was unacceptable; I had to keep my promise to my sister, even if I had only three months left to do so. That



A few progress photos during the building process of the room box.



was extremely short considering I'm slow in the making, and only had limited time in the evenings and weekends to work at it. I also had to find clear ideas to design the project from scratch. In that mix of stress and excitement a miracle finally happened, and I quickly had great ideas which made the execution of the project fairly fluent.

This work allowed me to acquire new skills and to progress very quickly. I couldn't believe that I was capable of such an achievement. So it was with a light heart, the room box packed in my luggage, that I left for Moscow. My sister obviously knew nothing and I can't convey the surprise and joy that it inspired in her and the family. She

was in heaven...in Provence.

How the project went together: The first idea was simple: a cozy little nook with a sofa and lavender. But it did not meet my purpose of brightening up the winter gloom with light and color. My sister and I both love Provence, so I thought a sunny porch of a house in the Midi de France would be perfect. A small garden with a fountain was added later.

To build a room box the first thing is to define the scale and choose materials. The twelfth scale I love so much, turned out to be too big to fit in my suitcase. For the structure of the box, I only had cardboard — too light and quite fragile. Fortunately, in my junk, I found old ebony frames

with HDF fiberboard sheets in the background. After long calculations I found that 1/16th scale, though unconventional, suited my needs. All the objects were designed on this basis. I used the sheets of fiberboard to make the box which was cut with a craft cutter, and glued and reinforced with wooden school rulers. The hardest part was done.

To make the decor, furniture and objects I didn't need much. I used all kinds of everyday stuff: cardboard, paper, ice cream sticks, bamboo sticks, cork, scraps of fabric and pieces of jewelry. The list of additional purchases was not long and cheap. I took advantage of my daughter's trip to France to order the clay flower pots, the LED

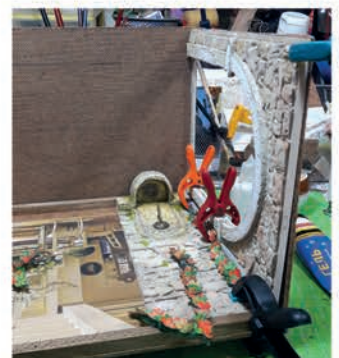


lantern (the one on the wall), the fence grid and especially the mini paper punch to cut out the flowers. Given the quantity and time, I couldn't make them by hand.

I am fortunate to have good computer skills, especially with Adobe Illustrator which I use to design my plans and patterns. This is very useful and allows me to respect the shape, proportions and measurements of objects with great precision. The choice of colors was

also predefined. I chose to show the colors of the South of France, with the blue of its famous shutters, the purple of lavender, the pink of roses and the white and ochre of their houses and stone walls. Personally, I prefer more pastel tones and patina colors of old France, but that was not the point.

I can talk for hours and hours about my miniatures, but I think the photos will speak more eloquently.

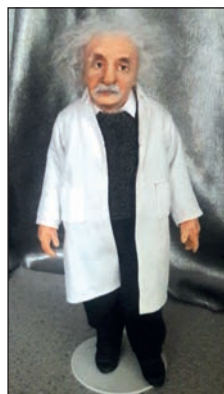


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by Auralea Krieger



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The Most Uncommon American CEO

In this issue we pay tribute to Annette Petersen the founder of Wee Forest Folk, June 13th, 1919 - June 8th, 2022.

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

With a heavy heart I must share the passing of Annette Petersen, founder of Wee Forest Folk from Concord, Massachusetts. Annette may have been one of the original American miniaturists, whose imaginatively tiny woodland creatures became popular so quickly that she had to hire local stay-at-home-Moms to fulfill demand. The forest animals that she created were originally made from bread dough in 1972, and were sold at local craft fairs and farmer's markets. Some were as small as 3/4" tall, and others were as tall as two full inches.

Part of what compelled people to desire these charming little forest creatures was the fact that they wore clothing and always seemed to be preoccupied in every-day human activities with focused concentration. There was a busy secretary at a desk with a typewriter who had been labeled "Miss Pell". The deliberate play on words was always

part of the fun.

Miniatures introduced by Annette had such a beautiful three-dimensional and powerful effect that anyone could derive hours of entertainment discovering the artistry evident from every angle. No matter how you turned her creatures around, there would always be a tiny, unexpected surprise in the design. Sometimes it was a bow, or a handkerchief hanging from a pocket, or a patched article of clothing.

My most cherished piece is called Skater Mouse, which is a little boy mouse dressed in a red snowsuit with a pillow attached to his behind. While the pillow was part of the sculpture, Annette added a small cord wrapped around the pillow to trick your eye into believing that the cord was holding the pillow on.

After completing college, her son Willy and her daughter Donna joined the family business and with their combined talent took the designs



The lovely Annette Petersen. Read more about her accomplishments in *American Miniaturist* issue 198.

to more intricate and sometimes jaw dropping little masterpieces. There was a butterfly net, a little girl blowing bubbles, an entire train set, a delightful series in Halloween costumes, and a Fairy Tea Party that included exquisite gossamer wings. The imaginativeness and detail that define this series of great artwork has been continually surprising and delightful, as they became more meticulously designed each year. The



latest surprise arrived a few years back when granddaughter Bonnie, daughter of Willy and his wife Jenny, tried her hand at sculpting, and turned out some of the most delightful and detailed new forest creatures yet! Annette's vision lives on through her lovingly devoted family.

Annette was born in 1919 in NYC, Manhattan, NY. She overcame an enormous amount of adversity as a child, which included abandonment from both parents. She moved through the foster care system throughout her childhood. Her formative years were during the time of the Great Depression. Annette developed a powerful sense of resilience and learned early on that she could only rely on herself to survive. She loved to draw, and all forms of art,

observing nature all around her and perusing books of all kinds. While she never grew past five feet tall, she was a lioness of determination and inner strength. A true survivor!

The Wee Forest Folk family may be the most innovative family that has ever existed in New England. At one time the company had sixty full time painters on the payroll. These were primarily stay-at-home moms. It was the perfect job for those who needed to supplement the family income, but also be home with their children. The employees could paint during their children's nap times, while they were in school or in the evenings.

If a person had artistic talent, worked with integrity and precision, and had the self-discipline to return the carefully painted woodland creatures to the factory once a week, then they could keep their jobs at Wee Forest Folk indefinitely. Since 1972, more than two hundred local painters have been in their employ. These people all have their own stories to tell, which always acknowledged Annette for the improved quality of family life they were able to maintain.

There were multiple times over the years when Annette was approached by business advisors telling her that she could make far more money by having the painting done in China, spending only pennies on the dollar. Though always clever enough to recognize an opportunity, she decided instead to keep the



Annette's son Willy made her a special mouse, about 6 times larger than normal so she could see it as she was having failed vision.

local people employed and maintain the quality control in-house.

Annette never gave in to the temptation to accrue vast wealth. She wanted to thrive but also to help others have a better quality of life, so she created a company that made all of this possible, for hundreds of people. Annette's vision was so unique that I cannot name another company that has had the true interest of their employees at the heart of their business.

Annette's life represented engrained resilience, magnanimity, foresight, loyalty, and instinctual kindness. She was humanity at its best. RIP sweet Annette. You have been a brilliant and amazing woman.



Making a Frame Base for a Display Case

Making a decorative frame base for your diorama scene or for a display collection is a great way to add a finishing touch to your miniature project.

BY CONNIE SAUVE

I love using frames, new or old, for my bases. They make each project special. You can find old frames at thrift stores, garage sales, or you can even buy a new one. Usually, I have to cut the frame apart and turn the pieces on their edge, cut a new angle and put it back together just like a regular frame. This leaves the lip that is usually where the picture goes, on top and you set your wood base on the lip.

Only certain types of frames will work if you're planning on cutting it apart. The frames that work are the ones where the outside edges of the frame angle towards you.

You will need

- A store bought frame that suits your project
- Wood to use as a base
- A saw to cut your wood base
- Ruler
- Acrylic cover
- 1/2" thick wood corner blocks
- Wood glue
- Felt pads to put under the frame to keep it from scratching your table surface
- Finish your project off with a brass name plate



The frames don't work if the edges angle away from you.

Most frames are too wide to use as is. They stick out too far and just make your whole base that much bigger. Plus, I usually want to add height to a project.



Above is a stock frame I bought that I will be cutting apart. Make sure there is enough length to accommodate cutting it apart and cutting new angles.

The width of the wood of this frame would work okay to leave as-is, and lay it flat. Add your wood base underneath the frame. Buy the appropriately sized frame for your project.



Above shows the base after I've cut it apart, turned the pieces, put it back together and painted it. Looking down on the finished base.



Below is the edge showing the 1/4" wood base in position. The wood base sits lower than the top edge



PROJECT

of the frame. I like to leave a lip after the wood base is in place. This holds my acrylic cover in position so it doesn't slide around. I usually leave 1/4" space around the perimeter free from any landscaping, otherwise the acrylic base doesn't sit flat. I paint the 1/4" clear area so it blends in with whatever color landscaping is next to it.

The photo below is underneath the base. I've added 1/2" thick wood corner blocks to give the base strength.



Here is a closer view of the corner blocks. These are nailed and glued in place.



Below shows the frame without the wood base in place.



Below shows the loose wood base out of the frame. Glue the wood base in place before working on the landscaping.

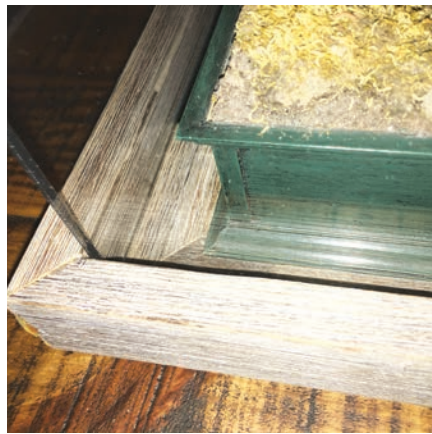


These frames were purchased in the exact size I needed. They were originally framed pictures. I already had the acrylic cover, so I took the measurements of the covers with me to the craft store and searched and measured until I found an appropriate size, color and style that



PROJECT

would work for my project. I added a colored piece of paper cut to size, to cover the print, then just set the project and acrylic cover on top. Quick and easy!



This style of frame is called open-back frames, which means they don't have the glass and backing included. I purchased them at the craft store for a few different projects that I had made really early on in my miniature career and I had the acrylic covers already made. What I like about this barnwood

frame is the wide ledge on the inside of the frame. This allows me to set my project on that ledge, because my project already has a built-in base. The project sits on top of the built-in base, but extends over the edge, so I'm not able to add a cover directly onto the built-in base. This frame actually adds an additional base to accommodate the acrylic cover.



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Nonna Palermo's Kitchen

Miniature artist, Chris Marlow, used high tech methods to replicate a very special vintage kitchen in one-inch scale and the results are awe-inspiring!

BY JOAN MCKENZIE AND CHRIS MARLOW

We at *Dollhouse Miniatures* magazine sincerely hope that you enjoy this long-awaited feature about an incredibly special room box made by the amazingly talented artist, Chris Marlow. I met Chris a few years ago at an IGMA Guild Show class taught by Jeanne Rullie. My sister, Jean, and I were there as students, and so was Chris. We all thoroughly enjoyed that week of creating under the fun tutelage of Jeanne Rullie. My sister and I noted fairly early that Chris had been intensely striving to recreate a specific face, meant to resemble her own beloved great grandmother. That extraordinary woman managed a household of eleven in the USA during the Great Depression, spending most of her waking hours

in her kitchen.

Women did not own hot water heaters or washing machines at that time. They washed in a tub using hot water boiled on a stove. They adjusted cooking temperature by rearranging wood inside the stove. Only the wealthy had babies born inside hospitals. It's difficult to imagine the tough lifestyle that people endured during those times. This is what makes Chris Marlow's intense efforts to perfectly recreate this vignette so fascinating.

Our entire class became captivated by the final 1:12 scale doll that Chris managed to replicate, especially as we looked back and forth at her picture that was her inspiration. I dared not change most of what Chris has written, as in her earlier life, she was an engineer in



Artist Chris Marlow in her studio.

high tech, and most of our readers who love to make miniatures will thoroughly enjoy following the engineering mind of my dear friend Chris Marlow. Buckle up, remember your own ancestors, and feast your eyes. The words below are all from Chris.



FEATURE



1 The inspiration photo. **2** The sculpted Granny doll with a wooden spoon. **3** The silver colander was made using jewelry techniques and a CNC router. **4** The stove top. **5** Custom artwork on dye-sublimated panels replicates a vintage pasta tin.





The brass stove shown from two different angles before it was painted black.

My Great-Grandma posed in her modest kitchen for a 1936 newspaper advertisement promoting a “new” kitchen gas service. The ad photo shown, captures a rare look inside the lives of humble immigrants.

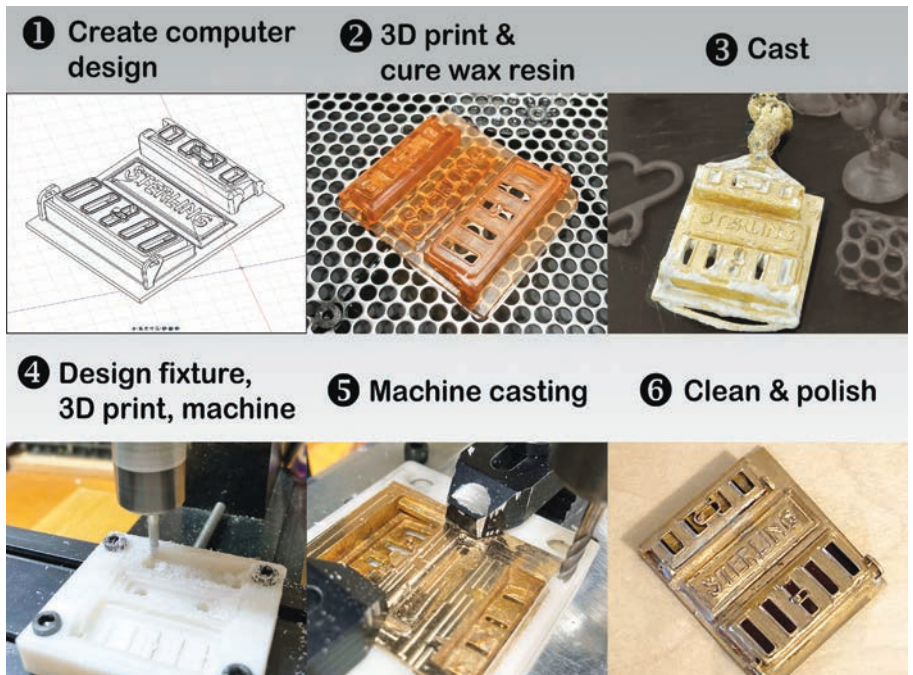
How is this related to computer modeling, 3D printing, laser cutting, digital artwork, dye sublimation, or computerized CNC machining? These sound like things a ‘20-something’ tech wizard would use for a sleek modern scene. The project and I are vastly different from those images - the project is a vintage kitchen and I have blue-jeans older than ‘20-something’ years! But these unlikely technologies figure prominently in this project.

I replicated the vintage kitchen using computerized and conventional techniques including working with wood, metal work, ceramics, sculpting, casting, carving, machin-

ing, and artwork. Everything was shop-made (by me) from scratch, except for a few small components. You will not notice the technologies

behind the scenes, but you will see the results.

The room-box exterior simulates a vintage pasta tin. It is actually a





plywood box, skinned with glossy, dye-sublimated aluminum panels, comparable to vintage Band-Aid tins. I dye-sublimated my custom digital artwork onto panels at the 'Dallas Makerspace', in Texas.

In dye sublimation, special dyes are printed onto transfer paper then transferred to the substrate (specially coated aluminum here) via a heat press machine. The result

is a permanent, high-resolution, full-color print that will not crack, fade, or peel.

The interior features laser cut floor tiles, individual wall planks, and backlit outdoor photos in the shop-made door and working window. The LED ceiling light has a 3D-printed resin shade and lathe-turned brass base and knurled bolt.

Two components star in the box:

Great-Grandma and the stove. I made the grandma first – she was essential. Having absolutely no clue how I would make the stove, I made a bold leap of faith and made the stove last!

Great-Grandma is a short, buxom, plump little old Italian granny with coarse "sausage fingers", swollen granny ankles, and practical "nun shoes". She wears a

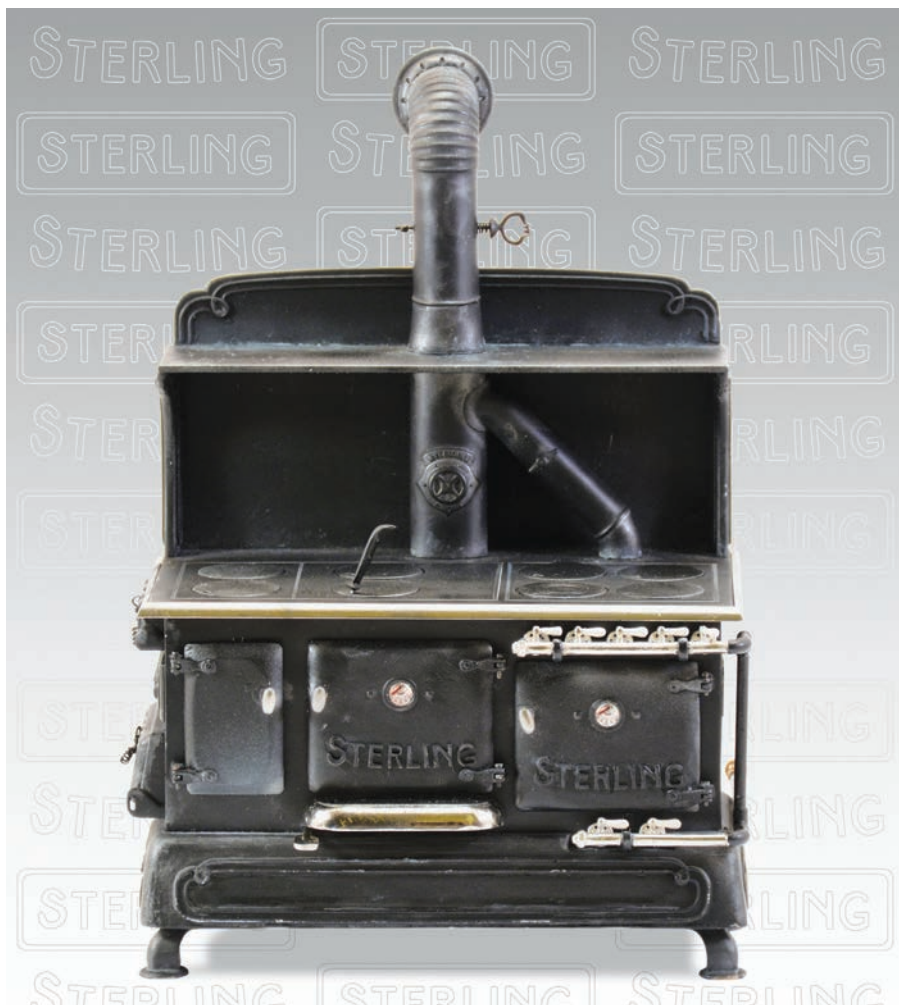
wedding ring and pearl earrings. Grandma is sculpted from polymer clay and dressed in cotton lawn. I learned to make the grandma from the talented and amazingly patient Jeanne Rullie, IGMA Artisan.

The stove replicates an early 20th century Sill Stove Works Sterling combination gas & woodburning stove/oven. It combines eighty-two machined bronze castings and machined/turned brass parts. It required twenty-two fixtures for machining/assembly and weighs over one pound. The doors open, latches work, oven grates come out and stove burners are removable using a separate burner lifter. A gas valve connects the stove's pipes to the wall.

The stove took two years to complete. Most of the stove-making skills, except the machining, were new for me. This was my first casting encounter, and I was nervous.

Although the stove is vintage, my process relies on leading-edge technology. My first step was teaching myself the computer modeling software to design the stove. 3D-printed wax enabled lost-wax bronze investment castings. I could not have made the wax-masters without the modern enablers. Now I am obsessed with this process. This technology has opened a world of possibilities.

Initially I created a detailed three-dimensional computer model of the stove – a perfect pandemic isolation task. Then I modified each component's model to account for printing/casting shrinkage and machining. I used castable wax resin to 3D-print a master, for each part. Some parts pushed the resin's material limits – I redesigned and printed the more difficult parts over a dozen times before succeeding. The wax masters were filed, sanded, cleaned up and attached to



1:12 scale Sill Sterling gas/wood burning stove and ovens.

wax sprues to carry metal into the part. After investment casting, each part was machined square and flat, to precise size and to remove the sprues. I made digital cutouts of the stove model to 3D-print resin holding fixtures, which I machined to fit.

Printed fixtures are not sturdy enough for full size parts, but they were an innovative shortcut for miniatures. After machining, cleaning, and polishing, the castings were ready to solder.

Fabrication order was crucial. To accommodate casting shrinkage, I cast and machined all the castings before making the brass sheet metal parts. I could fine tune the panels to fit the castings

but not vice versa! I programmed, then machined the stovetop using a CNC (Computer Numerically Controlled) mill, primarily because of the round burner openings.

This kitchen pre-dates built-in cabinetry. The modest belongings were stored in a single cupboard. I made the miniature cherry wood cupboard using conventional woodworking and milled a sliding brass latch. The chair is a challenging example of compound/complex angles and I laser-cut pin routing fixtures for the curved side supports and the back.

My mom and I enjoyed reminiscing about Great-Grandma in her kitchen. The table reflects

Cherry wood cupboard and chair.





The ceramic sink was hand-built. Tomatoes being prepared on the prep table, and laundry supplies line the shelf.

memories of the typical pasta meal that she cooked. The cherry wood table includes aluminum hardware from my Sherline mill and Taig lathe. I poured custom resin blanks for the various lathe-turned bottles on the table and laundry shelf.

The star colander was made from silver sheet, drilled on a small Shapeoko CNC router, domed on a dapping block, with soldered feet and handles.

The hand-built glazed ceramic sink showcases cast faucets and a historically accurate copper drain-

‘The hand-built glazed ceramic sink showcases cast faucets and a historically accurate copper drainage trap.’

age trap. The mirror is a chemically silvered microscope slide, with shop made moldings and hand-carved shell motif.

Great-Grandma's kitchen broad-

ened my abilities and pushed my comfort zone, particularly with the high-tech skills. Computerized technology still cannot spit out a finished object with a button push - but it simplifies parts that are precise, repeatable, or curved.

It is a timesaving aid for fixture blanks and casting masters. It complements conventional technologies, enabling results that I could not have otherwise achieved.

Making a Mini Scene With a Story

Connie Sauve shares her 1:12 scale diorama “Where to Lady?” with us as well as how she created this imaginative scene.

BY CONNIE SAUVE

This scene came about quite by accident. I was browsing through a shop one day, when my eye caught a colorful yellow checkered taxi sitting on the bottom shelf. My heart skipped a beat! I loved the 1930's style of the taxi. The only problem was, somebody else was looking at it too! I moved down the aisle a bit and waited, keeping my eye on the taxi. In my head I kept chanting “don't buy it, don't buy it”, to the guy looking at it. He finally moved away, leaving it behind. Whew! I snatched it up, and immediately bought it. So started yet another vehicle project!

I altered the taxi very little, as it was just about perfect the way it was. But, I wanted back doors on the taxi. I made a mold of one of the door handles, poured two handles using resin and added them to the back to make two additional doors. The spokes on the wheels were a bit odd looking on how they stuck out so much, and were easily removed. I also added a 1931 license plate which helps set the scene's era.

The first part of this project went together very quickly. I borrowed the base from my “Surprise!” dollhouse truck project and changed out the main elements

and turned it into a whole new project. I borrowed the snooty rich lady from my Ray Whitledge, Georgian Antique Shop project. The taxi driver is Grandpa also from the “Surprise!” scene – he made the perfect taxi driver. The thrown-together project was displayed at the Good Sam Miniature Show in 2014. I left the scene together for about a week to enjoy it, then returned everything back to my “Surprise!” dollhouse truck scene.

After several years of having the taxi packed away, I decided to make a landscaped base specifically for it. I will always have the pictures of the original set-up of “Where to, Lady?” to remember it by. But it was time to finish the project by making a base specifically for the scene, so I could display it all the time. Since taxis are something you usually only see in a city, I thought it would be fun to set the scene in an upscale part of a large city, set in the 1930's.

For the new base, I started with a frame cut to size, turned the pieces on their edge and nailed them back together. I chose black for the frame to blend in with the black asphalt road. I cut a plywood base to fit inside the frame for the scene to sit on. A piece of 1/2”



Gatorboard was the perfect height for the raised sidewalk. A piece of wood roof gutter worked great to simulate the curb.

For the road, I used thick black card stock from the backing of a picture frame. I needed it to be thick enough so I could sink a manhole cover into the road. The road was aged by sponging on greys and splattering with black to simulate oil spots, and dirt was also added along the curb.

A plastic poker chip was the





perfect size and had some great details for a manhole cover. The chip was too thick, so I sanded the back until it was the same thickness as the black cardboard road. Next, I used a small round file to sand out the two rounded areas along the edge, to simulate where the workers insert a pry bar to lift out the heavy cover. Wanting a fun design in the middle of the manhole cover, I cut out a star from card stock and glued it to the middle of the cover. I drilled 5 drain holes and spray-painted the chip with matt black, then aged it with rust colored paint. Once the chip was inserted into the road, it made a very convincing manhole cover.

I like using backdrops behind the vehicles to help tell the story and thought a brick garden wall





1 All the luggage is ready to be loaded on the Taxi. 2 The doll was repainted and dressed to look like a wealthy lady. 3 The scene has a few pigeons to give a clue that the story is based in a city. 4 The fancy pup spies the pigeon on the lamp post!



with a gate would look like an area of a city where a rich person lives.

The walls were built using stock wood. The posts are 3/4" square and topped off with a 1" wide piece of wood which I beveled around the top edges with my belt sander. The wall is 3/8" thick, which was also topped off with a beveled piece of wood. For the bricks, I planned on using egg cartons, so I had to take into account the thickness of the egg carton bricks, which would add additional thickness to the walls. The finials on top of the posts are stock turnings from the craft store. From my stash, I made two wood walls with a gate in the middle. Black plastic railing finishes off the top of the wall and adds a nice detail.



FEATURE



Connie demonstrated making the bricks and bricking a wall at the The Mini Time Machine Museum of Miniatures.





I volunteer at The Mini Time Machine Museum of Miniatures, cleaning and repairing the exhibits. The museum likes to have people do demonstrations at the museum so visitors can see how miniatures are made. Most visitors to the museum are non-miniaturists, so it's always fun to show them how we make the miniatures and hopefully get some new people interested in the art form. I asked the museum if they would be interested in having me demonstrate making the bricks and bricking a wall. This was the perfect way to get my brick wall finished and have some fun while I worked on it too.

I set up my work table in the middle of the museum and went to work for a few hours. Cutting all the bricks out is rather tedious, so I had them ready to go before demonstrating. Laying the bricks goes rather quickly, and are easily cut apart with scissors for odd sizes. For added detail, I used a double layer of bricks for the vertical bricks under the top lip of the wall and column. I demonstrated the brick technique

a couple different times at the museum, and by then I had my wall completely bricked. I left the messy job of painting and grouting to finish at home.

‘After the grout had dried, I aged the brick walls, stone tops and finials with a dirty water wash.’

After the walls were bricked, I painted them using Burnt Sienna, applied with a sponge. I then painted some of the bricks using a wash of Golden Brown on some bricks and Brown Iron Oxide on others. Then I sponged on a wash of Dark Burnt Umber over all the bricks which helps blends all the colors together. The paint helps seal the cardboard bricks for grouting. I also added some bricks under the gate to simulate a walkway that leads up to the ‘residence’ behind the wall.

For the grout, I used DAP Fast ‘N Final Lightweight Spackling, mixed with Neutral Grey paint. I spread this into the grout lines with my fingers, working in small sections, then immediately removing excess grout with a damp sponge. If the grout is allowed to dry too long, it's difficult to get it off the bricks. It's OK to leave some of the grout compound in the surface crevices of the bricks for added aging.

For the cement/stone tops and finials, I first painted the bare wood with Neutral Grey paint. I then used an old paint brush and brushed on the same colored DAP mixture used for the grout and brushed it onto the wood. It took a couple layers of DAP to cover the painted wood completely.

After the grout had dried, I aged the brick walls, stone tops and finials with a dirty water wash. To simulate moss, I sponged on very watered-down Winsor and Newton Sap Green watercolor paint, in the areas where moss would grow along the bottom edge, and under the ledges. The back of the wall was kind of boring, so I added



some green vines to bring a bit of interest to the back of the wall.

To make the cement sidewalk, I used thin grey paper and covered the sidewalk and curb, then added cut lines in the sidewalk to simulate the separate squares like real cement sidewalks have. Using an X-ACTO knife I added cracks in the sidewalk along some of the edges and corners. Then I aged the paper covered sidewalk and curb with a sponge and dirty water wash, then used watercolor Sap Green along the edges.

For the wrought iron parts of the wall, I spray painted the plastic rails and metal gate, a flat black. I then painted with Rustall to age and rust them slightly. The gate swings open

and can be locked closed with a gate latch.

The topiary trees (by Falcon Miniatures) are resin, and by adding multi-green colored foam to the tree balls and dirt in the planters helped tremendously to make them more realistic. The fire hydrant is a fun addition to accentuate the city feel of the scene. The dandelions are from my stash and are the last of them, which I had made many years ago and add a fun little touch to a lot of my scenes. What city is complete without pigeons, which are also by Falcon. The streetlight is an accessory from a Todd McFarlane figure.

The designer luggage set I had

custom made for the scene, was made by an artist from Korea. I also ordered two extra logo fabric sheets she had used to make her luggage. I wanted to make two additional designer trunks, so I started with two Cats Paw trunk kits from my stash. I greatly altered both kits and custom made the two large trunks to add to the pile of luggage. I used photos of real vintage trunks to get as much authentic detail in the trunks as I could. I couldn't resist finishing



artist details

Cat's Paw

Phone: 203-775-4717

336 Candlewood Lake Road

Brookfield, CT 06804

Email: melembosent.net



- 1 The beautifully detailed designer luggage kits are by Cat's Paw.
- 2 The red vintage fire hydrant confirms that this is a city scene.
- 3 The gate was given a rusted effect to look realistic.
- 4 The pigeon walking along the wall adds to the story.



the interiors too, complete with a removable tray in the larger trunk, even though they may never be seen again. The insides of the trunks are finished with cotton fabric and over 600 faux nail heads from Dr. G's Brass were added to the exterior and interior of the trunks, along with brass hardware from my stash. A few vintage looking hat boxes added to the ever growing pile of luggage. The poor cab driver!

I dressed the taxi driver exactly the same as in my other set-up of the scene. I thought he made the perfect looking taxi driver just as I made him the first time. The snooty lady is also the same figure as before. I custom painted her

resin face and body, which is from Marcia Backstrom. I dressed her in cruise wear style clothes this time and accessorized her with custom made jewelry, leather shoes, hat, gloves and purse. She can't bear to leave her precious pampered Pomeranian behind, made by Leslie Frick, so she's going on the cruise too. The world traveler is also holding travel brochures which gives the subtle hint that she's going on an extended cruise around the world, and is why she is waiting for a taxi with a HUGE pile of luggage. I find it rather amusing, being a professional doll maker, that the doll figures are one of the hardest parts I agonize over. They are usually one of the main

elements of my projects that helps tell the story, but always seem to be the last thing I struggle with, to finish a scene.

This is the end of the road for my On the Road Again series...at least for now. Who knows where new roads will take me for future vehicle projects? I see a country road leading to a Christmas tree farm, an ice cream truck on a hot summer day, a wedding, a vintage bike, a fishing boat, and hopefully someday I'll finish my flower truck, which is what started me on this long journey in the first place!

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me, Connie Sauve at cmsauve2@gmail.com.



calendar listings 2022

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.

August 5 & 6

New Brighton, MN

Minnesota Dollhouse and Miniature Show will be held at New Brighton Community Center, 400 10th Street NW, New Brighton, MN.

Show will be held on Fri 4pm-8pm and Sat 9am-3pm. For more information, please visit www.miniatureshows.com or contact tdminiatures@gmail.com or call 314-277-2601.

August 7

Fogelsville, PA

Lehigh Valley Miniatures Club 43rd Annual Dollhouse & Miniatures Show and Sale, will be held at the Delta by Marriott Hotel, 7736 Adrienne Drive, Breinigsville, PA 18031. Exit 49A off I-78 onto Rt. 100 South. 10am-4pm. \$5.00 Adults (4.50 with coupon), \$1.00 children under 12. Vendors selling miniature items of all kinds. Exhibits, door prizes, make + take projects, free parking, food available. Free children's class at 1pm. Show info: Lois Kunkle, 610-760-2288, lois.kunkle@yahoo.com Check our website: www.lehigh-valleyminiatures.com for more show information and to print a discount coupon. Show proceeds benefit charities and education.

September 10-11

Greenwood Village, CO

Denver Museum of Miniatures, Dolls and Toys 41st Annual Fall Show & Sale, September 10-11, 2022 at the Doubletree Hotel by Hilton Denver Tech Center, 7801 E Orchard Road, Greenwood Village, CO 80111. Show runs from

Saturday 10am-5pm and Sunday 11am-4pm. Pre-registered workshops held Wed, Sept 7 through Fri, September 9. Contact Marjorie Smelt: marjorie.smelt@gmail.com, (720) 206-5545.

September 16 & 17

Westfield, IN

Indianapolis Dollhouse and Miniature Show will be held at Cambria Hotel, 18592 Carousell Lane, Westfield, IN.

Show will be held on Fri 4pm-8pm and Sat 9am-3pm. For more information, please visit www.miniatureshows.com or contact tdminiatures@gmail.com or call 314-277-2601.

September 30 & October 1

Bridgeton, Mo

St Louis Dollhouse and Miniature Show will be held at Machinist Hall, 12365 St Charles Rock Rd, Bridgeton, Mo.

Show will be held on Fri 4pm-8pm and Sat 9am-3pm. For more information, please visit www.miniatureshows.com or contact tdminiatures@gmail.com or call 314-277-2601.

October 8 & 9

San Jose, CA

The Good Sam Showcase of Miniatures 46th Annual Show & Sale, October 8th & 9th 2022, at Doubletree Hotel San Jose, 2050 Gateway Place, San Jose, CA 95110-1047. On Saturday 10am-5pm and Sunday 11am-4pm. Show admission: Adults \$7, Children (5-12) \$3, Children under 5 free. Please see website for more information: <https://goodsamshowcase.org> or

contact (408) 997-1004, email: grouchybeartoo@aol.com

November 4 - 6

CHERRY HILL, NJ

Philadelphia Miniaturia 2022 will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton, Philadelphia/Cherry Hill located at 2349 W. Marlton Pike, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002. To be admitted on Friday preview, November 4, 2022, you must purchase a preview ticket for \$25, (covers full weekend admission). Preview hours are Friday, 6pm - 9pm and Saturday, 9am - 10am.

You may purchase from dealers during preview hours! Workshops listed on our website: www.philadelphiaminiaturia.com. For daily show general admission - pay at the door, Saturday, November 5, 2022, the show runs from 10am to 5pm and Sunday, November 6, 2022, 10am to 3pm. \$10 Adults per day and \$4 Children under 10 years old per day. Lunch will be available for purchase each day.

November 11 & 12

Chicago, IL

Chicago Autumn Showcase of Miniatures will be held at Holiday Inn, 1000 Busse Rd, Elk Grove II, Chicago, IL.

Show will be held on Fri 4pm-8pm and Sat 9am-3pm. For more information, please visit www.miniatureshows.com or contact tdminiatures@gmail.com or call 314-277-2601.

To have your show or special event listed on these pages, please contact Maria on + 44 (0) 7730 622416 or email: maria@ashdown.co.uk for rates and availability.



A Tiny Townhouse

Auralea Krieger has turned a basic room box into an elegant townhouse to showcase a collection of treasured miniatures.

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

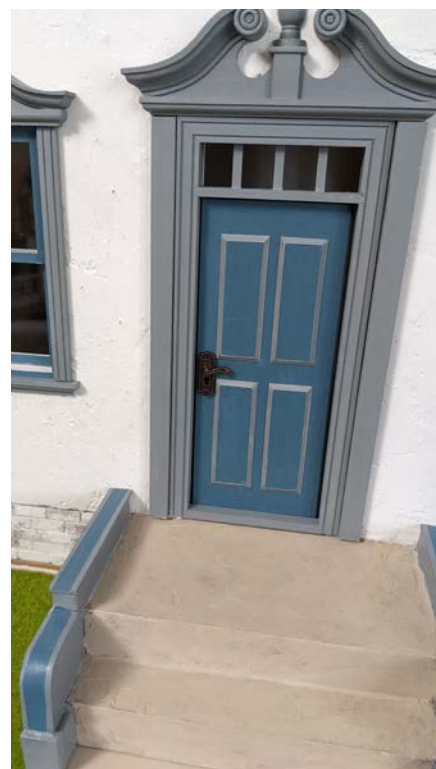
Sometimes all you need is a simple structure to build upon and you can make something special. This piece started with a very basic double room box from Hobby Builders Supply. The walls were thickened and I added an attic as well as the opening front door on hinges.

The room box kit was adjusted a bit by moving the upstairs back window over a little. The back piece of the floor was also cut away to have a larger opening for a ladder. I added foam core to the two sides that have windows so the walls would be thick enough to house the pre-made windows. The downstairs right side door hole was turned into a window hole that is now centered under the upstairs side window hole.

The front opening wall was cut from light-weight plywood. I added some thicker wood trim on the insides of the room box to hold the screws for the hinges. I attached the hinges by first drilling small holes in the plywood front piece then screwing on the hinges. Then I attached the hinges to the room box in the same way.

This room box has become an experimental project for me. While making my stone cottage I found an interesting Golden product that was basically fine sand in a gel medium. So when I put it on the entrance addition of the stone cottage it looked like coarse stucco. It was very expensive, even with a coupon, so I decided to try to make something similar.

I mixed sand with watered down





Tacky Glue (because I had it on hand) and added regular white glue that I had. First I tried to spread it on with a painter's spatula but it was too thick so I ended up applying it with the spatula and letting it run down the sides as it thinned itself out and I kept spreading out the drips. In the end, I think my sand was not fine enough or the glue was too watered down and it was a failure. But if you wanted a very coarse texture for something it could work.

I saved the project by applying spackle and sanding it down with an electric sander. I wanted it to be rustic so the combination of the sand, spackle and sanding it down turned out nice! When you are building, don't be afraid to experiment. Always know you are clever enough to take a mishap and turn it into something you never would have thought of that works perfectly with your build!

The addition of the curved Mansard roof with a small attic was the finishing touch for the structure. I designed a Mansard roof on my Kinfeld (*DHM74-76*) because I love how the curves add style and a softness to the house.

The entire house has real wood flooring by Bleau's Custom Molding. Parish Bleau sent me 1" x 1/4" laser cut pieces in a few different tones and a few long planks and I placed them in the design I wanted. Both of the fireplaces were handmade from mat board.

For this build I wanted the windows and the front door to be extra special. The HBS Bonnet Pediment windows were the perfect style!

I wanted this small house to have a stylish, romantic feel. Having these windows and a fancy door pediment added curves and a softness to the build.

FEATURE



- 1 The attic has parquet floors.
- 2 The front panel opens to keep the inside of the house dust free.
- 3 An antique latch is used to close the front in an elegant way.
- 4 There is a hiding place for the electrical strip.
- 5 The downstairs fireplace.
- 6 The upstairs fireplace.





For the door, I wanted to add two tones to the panels so I first painted strips of card stock. Then I cut and glued them on the beveled edges of the door. Then added some paint in any gaps where the corners joined.

The door pediment was a little wider than I thought because I ordered the wrong one. This was an easy fix, I cut strips of thick basswood and put them on either side of the door. It became the perfect place for house numbers!

The stairs and front lawn are removable so you can open the door but still have a finished garden and entrance when it's closed.

The roses down the side of the house are hiding the wiring from the electrical plugs in the walls.

There is a ladder that is removable and can be replaced with a spiral staircase or left as is. That will depend on what the future owner of this townhouse decides to do.

There's also a small hole above the stairway in the ceiling to the

attic where a beautiful chandelier could be hung. Then the wire can run down the side of the house to the electrical strip underneath. The installed electrical strip has room for three more lights. The on/off switch is on the strip tucked inside the base of the house. The lawn is waiting for a beautiful garden to be added under the window.

This 1:12 scale structure was made to house a treasured miniature collection. It serves as a beautiful protective housing for many miniature treasures and keeps them dust free. Because it's tall, versus wide, it takes up less space but still holds a large amount of miniatures with three rooms to fill. It is 10" x 12", the garden extends out 6" and is removable. This townhouse stands 30" tall.

The finishing touch was to fill the window boxes with handmade paper poppies! If you have any questions you can email me at auraleakrieger@gmail.com.



Add a Timeless Game of Chess

It's your move – keep ahead of the game with a chess board and pieces for your dollhouse. It's a perfect addition to a parlor or nook in the hall.



Chess in the 19th Century was very much a game for educated men, or those who saw themselves as such. It was considered a genteel game, but increasingly more competitive gentlemen played. There was much interest in the game, brought on by books and the popular matches between champion players, yet the social image of chess in the 19th

Century was set to repel those not of genteel status as well as women and the young.

Chess clubs only appeared after the 1870s in universities and the standard of play stayed very low until 1914. After that, the changes from World War I affected almost every social activity, including games and sports. In the last part of the Twentieth Century chess has become

a popular game for all age groups and genders. There are many chess tournaments and organizations where members can play against people from all over the globe and be ranked on the worldwide scale. There are chess computer games. It can even be played over the Internet and in recreational chess clubs. Chess is truly one of the most popular and timeless games ever.



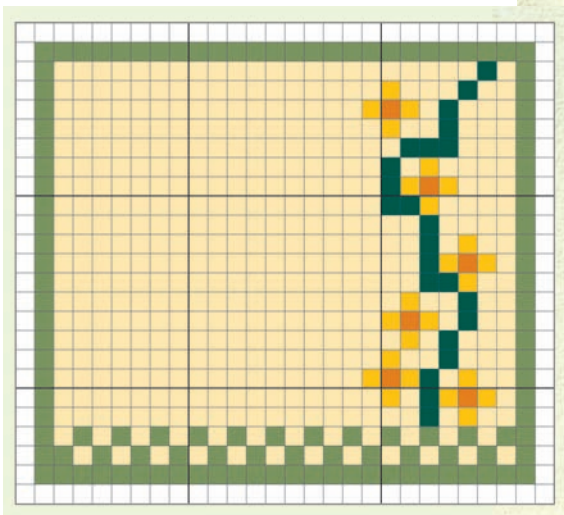
Making Initial Impressions

This stitched pattern for a Georgian fire screen allows you to personalize it with your family's initials then install into a preexisting frame.

Up until the 19th Century, open fires were often the only source of heat for the average home. Families gathered around the fireplace to keep warm, but all too often the fire gave away more heat than was comfortable when sitting in front of the fireplace. Thus, the fire screen was devised to divert heat and shelter those sitting by the fireside.

Many fire screens were embroidered and set within heavily decorated wooden frames. The lady of the house would spend much of her time embroidering, so putting the family's initials on linen and household items was one of her favorite patterns.

To stitch the pattern shown I have used 22-count canvas; three strands of cotton and half cross-stitch for everything apart from the flowers, where I have used a full cross-stitch. By inserting the different initials into the main pattern of this fire screen, you can personalize your work. Draw your initial on the blank pattern then stitch the appropriate squares. Change your threads to any color you prefer.



A Picnic Basket for a Fun Mini Outing

This easy to make one-inch scale basket will hold everything needed for a fun day at the beach or a relaxing picnic in the countryside.

BY ALICE MONROE

When it comes to spending the day outside with the family, food and drinks are always top of the list for a good time. This picnic basket is big enough to hold sandwiches, cakes, biscuits and fruit along with soft drinks or a thermos of coffee. But the same basket could be used for a more formal occasion with china plates, cups and saucers, glasses and bottles of wine.

Step 1: Cut the pattern for base out of card and glue to Hessian or canvas, leaving 1/4" all around the edges.



You will need

- Thick card
- Thin card
- Hessian or embroidery canvas
- Cotton fabric
- Thin leather for straps and hinges
- 4 tiny jump rings
- Tacky Glue

Step 2: Turn these edges over and glue to card; trim the corners of the canvas to lose the bulk.

Step 3: For the sides of the base, lay out the side pieces along the canvas, leaving a very small space in between each, starting with a long piece then short, long, short, allowing about 3/8" all around the edges.



Step 4: Glue card pieces to the canvas, turn over and glue the edges and neaten the corners as before.

Step 5: Glue the strip of side pieces around the edge of the covered base; it should fit snugly around the corners.

Step 6: For the lid, cover the outer lid card in canvas, as the base.



Step 7: Cover the lid lining card in cotton fabric. Do not glue to the outer lid at this stage.

Step 8: Glue two 1/4" wide strips of leather to the back of the base and the lid to act as hinges.

Step 9: Now glue the lid lining to the outer lid. This will hide the hinges.

Step 10: Cover the inside base with cotton fabric, and also the sides. Check the side pieces of card before covering to make sure they fit neatly inside the basket.

Step 11: When you are happy with the fit, glue the side pieces around the inside base and glue into the basket.

Step 12: For the straps, cut 2 long strips of leather, 3/16" wide. Glue a jump ring (to represent the buckles) on to one end and glue the strap around the basket and leave



PROJECT



the top edge free.

Step 13: To make the handle, glue a jump ring onto each end of a strip of leather, approx 1-1/4" long. Cut two strips of leather 1/2" long and

thread through each jump ring and glue each end together. Glue in place on to the basket to form the handle.



You can fill your basket with beautiful china and champagne glasses for a fancy affair, but if yours is for the family to use on the beach then use plastic plates and cups with disposable cutlery.



Remember also that the food should reflect the type of picnic you have planned. From lots of soft drinks and sandwiches for something casual, to bottles of wine or champagne and salmon salad for a fancier outing.



Sides of base
cut 2 of each
38.5mm x 20mm
Cut out of thin card



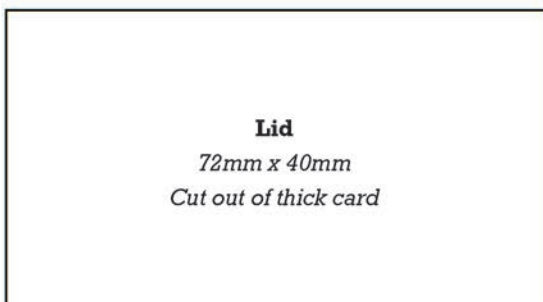
Front and back of base
cut 2 of each
70mm x 20mm
Cut out of thin card



Sides of base lining
cut 2 of each
38mm x 16mm
Cut out of thin card



Front and back lining of base
cut 2 of each
68mm x 16mm
Cut out of thin card



The Ultimate Design Studio in Miniature

When you have accumulated a mass amount of miniature decorating supplies, why not make a home design studio in one-inch scale!

BY PAM NORTH

Marie Knight always has enjoyed the concept of decorating, even wishing at times that she had become an interior decorator. She was introduced to the miniatures hobby with a subscription to the HOME Kit of the Month Club back in the early 1990s. Once she had a healthy collection of finished furniture kits, Marie's mom presented her with her first dollhouse kit, and the rest is history. With no formal training in any aspect of miniature making, she is 100% self-taught. With each subsequent build, she always made an effort to try at least one new thing she'd never done

before. When she isn't playing with miniatures, she works full-time as an IT Help Desk Coordinator.

Her family understands her addiction to miniatures, and are all extremely supportive, but her biggest fan is probably her father, who shares her love for miniatures. "I know he absolutely loves watching and following along with each new project," Marie said.

After accumulating a healthy stockpile of scrap flooring, trims, light fixtures, rugs, and miscellaneous supplies a few years ago, she saw some photos of design studios on Pinterest, which inspired her to recreate



one in miniature. The result was a project she calls *Interior Motives*, which is constructed in 1:12 scale. Her concept was that it was a mini home business with a residence attached to it. Its nucleus is the Malibu Beach House kit by Dollhouse Emporium, to which she says she did a “fair amount of bashing” to get the spaces she needed. About 60% or more of the project’s contents were designed by her in her favorite design software, and then 3D

printed. Many furniture items were either handmade or 3D printed. She made a sizable dent in that stockpile of supplies she had accumulated.

She changed a large portion of the upper floors to gain more living space. Opting not to use the staircases that came with the kit, she designed her own. The floating stairs at the first floor were made using stripwood, brass rods, and 3D printed components she designed. Underneath that

staircase is a faux water feature made with clear resin, artificial plants, and rocks. The second-floor staircase was made using small, thin slabs of natural wood salvaged from fire pits at local campgrounds, sanded, and then varnished. Resin 3D printed items, however, make up the bulk of the project.

She had spent months accumulating notes on the design studios on Pinterest, and she continued to make notes throughout the build, allowing her



ideas to change as her project progressed. "I pretty much just winged it when I started assembling the kit, taking my time and going one floor and room at a time," she explained. "I prefer to finish all rooms of a project before ever adding a piece of furniture or décor. It's like walking up to a new, turnkey home that is just waiting to be filled."

"I suppose the hardest part of this project was turning the original third floor terrace area into a bedroom to gain living space," she continued. "I didn't want this space to look like it didn't belong, so I worked very hard to make sure it blended in with the rest of the original design of the kit. For the first time, I needed to bend stripwood to match the curve of





the original structure in order to make the window framing. I did this by placing the desired strip wood pieces through a complete cycle in the dishwasher; being sure to remove them the instant the steam-dry cycle was complete. While the strip wood was still damp and pliable, I bent the pieces to the appropriate curve and held them in place with heavy clamps for three days, which worked perfectly! I think the bedroom space turned out fabulously, matching the rest of the structure as closely as possible. As luck would have it, creating the bedroom space on the third floor allowed me to have an enormous rooftop terrace."

Marie won't start a project until she has a very good idea how it's going to look at completion. It gives

her a goal, and she feels that this project turned out exactly as she envisioned.

While making *Interior Motives*, she also learned to construct a working pocket door. »

While making *Interior Motives*, she also learned to construct a working pocket door. "It was my very first one and I winged it. The door actually slides in and out of the wall. I am so very pleased with how it turned out!"

The kitchen also ranked high on her list because of the appliances



she designed and 3D printed.

"I never thought there would be a day when I would have modern wall ovens in one of my dollhouses! The modern, rooftop, outdoor kitchen is also a favorite. It's definitely a space I could see myself using a lot if I had it in real life."

Using a 3D printer is unique for many hobbyists, since the method is still fairly new in the miniatures realm. "More and more miniaturists are using them, so it won't be long until the tool is even more mainstream," Marie commented. "It's a free, very straight-forward approach to learning 3D modeling, and I prefer it to others I have tried to use so far. The tools most valuable to me are design software and my 3D printers. I can literally create anything I need, and make



it for less than paying retail prices, if the pieces I need even could be found in the retail sector. I suppose that once my needs start to really exceed the capability of my design software, I will have to make the time to really sit down and devote time to learning a software that is more robust."

For anyone interested in seeing this build from beginning to end, they can follow Marie on Instagram @marieknightminiatures. She writes about all of her adventures in miniatures there, and is happy to answer any questions her followers might have. She currently has no plans to sell *Interior Motives*.

Marie sees a lot of potential for the future of miniatures. "I see more and more folks venturing away from the traditional Victorian or Edwardian style dollhouses, and moving toward more contemporary,



about 60% through it before a newer, more exciting idea came along and relegated it to a back-burner for 17 years! Last fall, I finally got it out, dusted it off and removed the cobwebs, and started giving it the love it's been lacking for so long. It's now slowly turning into a 1:12 scale modern-day French manor house. It's pretty exciting, and I don't imagine that I'll even recognize it when 2022 comes to a close!"

“Using a 3D printer is unique for many hobbyists, since the method is still fairly new in the miniatures realm.”

She also is starting to venture into 1:6 scale builds as time and room permit, with a new loft apartment for her 1:6 scale modern doll collection.

and modern builds, which really open up new textures and design styles just waiting to be tapped. More and more, it's also the tools, such as 3D printers, die-cut machines, laser cutters, and CNC machines, that will contribute to the longevity of the miniatures hobby.”

Up next on her agenda is continued work on her French manor house renovation. She had recently started a complete overhaul of a custom Tudor-style dollhouse that she had started building in 2004. “I had only gotten



The Suffragette House Holds Cherished Dolls

There's no front on Donna Rau's beauty, with a faded Victorian look, but that's deliberate because she loves to move her cast of characters around inside.

BY SANDRA HARDING

It's rather unusual to find such a delightful and pretty house that doesn't have a front facade on it, but Donna Rau decided this house had to be dynamic.

She wanted it to be on view at all times when she is busy in her playroom, either reading or crocheting, or just playing with the gorgeous dolls, moving them around as she wants. The house is a Greenleaf and was bought as a brand new kit in 2018, and she has

managed to create that wonderful, faded Victorian look that's not at all easy to do. It is called Suffragette House because Donna held a suffragette party in the house, and the name stuck.

The lovely dining room furniture is recognizable as Schneegas and the sewing hutch, which dates back to about 1900, is by Start Novelty, as are the rocker in the grandparent's room and the tea table in the parlor. The rest of the furniture is antique,



FEATURE





and made in Germany.

Donna is especially fond of the couch and chairs in the parlor as they are very old and sturdy, and probably from about 1890. They are a little too large for a normal twelfth scale, but a perfect fit for the 6" tall Simon & Halbig people, who are dressed splendidly. The three children upstairs are a delight, and two are by Simon & Halbig, and one is a Kestner. They are either wearing their original clothes or have been redressed by Donna.

The dining room is filled with many antique pieces.

The people in this particular house are important, and they all have names. The lady on the couch is Hallie and her husband is Simon, and the pretty blonde in the froufrou pink dress is Simon's younger sister, Heilwig.

The lady in peach is Simone, and the two ladies sitting in the parlor are wearing dresses that Donna specifically made for "sitting down in", and we know what she means. I love the little doll's houses in the playroom which were all made by Donna as replicas of real 1890's doll's houses in her collection. Two of them fold up, as do the originals

— quite amazing. The only new things in this house are the clavichord and embroidery stand by Elena Avdeeva.

The grandparents are so lucky to have an old cigar box for a bed, and they love it, as do I. Donna simply added the bed linen to it so

“The wallpaper was printed out on a laser printer and is all copied from the year 1898.”



the oldies get a good night's sleep. The sewing basket is by Gerlach, as is the gorgeous metal tea set in the parlor and the pieces on the dining table.

Donna is especially fond of the couch and chairs in the parlor as they are very old and sturdy, and probably from about 1890. 🍷

The wallpaper was printed out on a laser printer and is all copied from the year 1898. Donna made the lacemaker in the parlor using graphics from a Biedermeier Boule clock.

Donna is no newcomer to our miniature world and currently has 26 houses, mostly bought online. Three or four were bought from friends, but mostly she finds them on eBay. I love the fact that Donna still plays with this house, as many of us do, and the photographs of dolls moving around proves that the residents of this house like it as much as we do.



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 roasted turkey.

All it takes is a small paragraph for our random drawing! Send your entry to **DHM88 Highlights contest**, via email to auralea@ashdown.co.uk. You may also mail entries to PO Box 219, Kasson, MN 55944. Please be sure to include *DHM* issue number, and your name and address.

The deadline for this contest is **Friday, Sept 9, 2022**.

Allyson's Minis

Etsy: www.etsy.com/shop/allysonsminis



Recent winners

DHM86 Highlights contest

Naomi from Fairfield, CT

Book giveaway

Ann from Austin Tx

Congratulations!

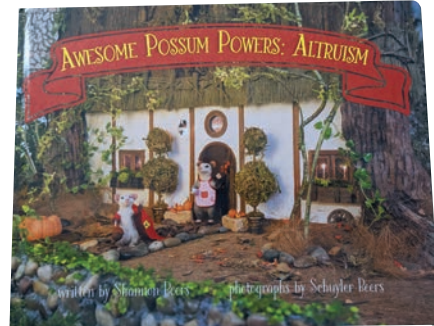


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magazine on Facebook,
Twitter, and Instagram!

Book giveaway

Enter to win this fun book by Shannon Beers. *Awesome Possum Powers: Altruism* is a picture book that imparts a character trait in the form of a superhero-sounding word. Photography enriches the story of these fuzzy, felted characters who inhabit this cozy miniature realm. 48 pages. (Found on Amazon.). Send your entry to **DHM88 Book contest** via email

to auralea@ashdown.co.uk. You may also mail entries to PO Box 219, Kasson, MN 55944. Please be sure to include *DHM* issue number, and your name and address. The deadline for this contest is **Friday, Sept 9, 2022**.



Calling out to our readers

Do you have questions about a miniature piece in your collection that you would like to ask our readers? Please feel free to email the editor at auralea@ashdown.co.uk and we can list your questions right here in Big Buzz. Our readers have a vast knowledge about vintage miniatures and miniature artist's works. Or maybe you have some exciting news about our miniature community! Be sure to mention you would be interested in Big Buzz page content!

Update

Doll artist, Elle Piccolo made the male doll in the feature in *DHM87* on page 22. We would like to update her email to epartdol@hotmail.com for anyone interested in reaching out to her. There was a phantom 's' on the end of it earlier.



Contributing tutorials

We hope you have been enjoying all of the wonderful tutorials in *Dollhouse Miniatures*. There are so many impressive creative ideas and new techniques in the miniature community. We try our best to find projects we think our readers will enjoy, but we know there are more that we can find out there. Please consider being one of our valued contributors. We have great opportunities for miniaturists who submit tutorials, such as credit towards subscriptions and individual issues. And, if you are in business, your tutorials are a great way to promote your business. We'll furnish

these details after your submission has been approved.

Imagine how much joy your mini project could give others who share your passion for this art form! Send your step-by-step instructions and photos to Tutorial Submission, *Dollhouse Miniatures* PO Box 219, Kasson, MN 55944. You may also send your entries via email to auralea@ashdown.co.uk. Please be sure to include your name, address, phone number, and email address. We can't wait to see your projects!

little letters

FEEDBACK AND STORIES FROM OUR DEVOTED READERS

★ Star letter winner

My favorite highlights were the art gallery in miniature by Catherine Jones. I was first inspired by Joann Swanson in January 1992. She had given instructions for a do-it-yourself project for an art gallery inside a mall. One side of the gallery houses a combination of prints and originals from old masters to contemporary work. On the other side of a partition is a separate room to make, sell, and display frames and mats. Catherine has taken her gallery to a much higher level. Not only is the free standing building beautiful, but the floors, walls, and lighting very impressive. Catherine's display of the paintings, the office, public restroom, outdoor patio, and elevator put this project over the top.

~Joyce from Kettering, OH

Be our Star letter winner next issue

You could win this miniature wine and cheese set just by sending in a letter with whatever is on your mind about miniatures or an issue of *DHM*!



Karen's Dollhouse Shop

Web: www.KarensDollhouse.com

Dolly's Gallery

Gail & Bryan Arrington

Web: www.DollysGallery.com

Etsy: DollysGallery.etsy.com



Inspiration

I was extremely impressed with Catherine Jones' Art Gallery. This is her first miniature project and she did a fantastic job. I also loved her own comment at the end of the article where she says that she tries to imagine herself a few inches tall, physically moving through the space. That is exactly what I try to do when I am making my miniature scenes.

~Naomi from Fairfield, CT



dollhouse miniatures

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Return to Château de l'Amour

Let's take a peek inside Jackie's magnificent Château now that it is fully decorated.

BY DEB WEISSLER

When last we visited Château de l'Amour (*DHM80*), architectural artist Mark Turpin had just handed over the keys to its new owner, Jackie H. Over a year in the making, Le Château de l'Amour was one of the largest, tallest and heaviest structures Mark had ever created. It was entirely handcrafted, using birch plywood, solid pine, poplar,

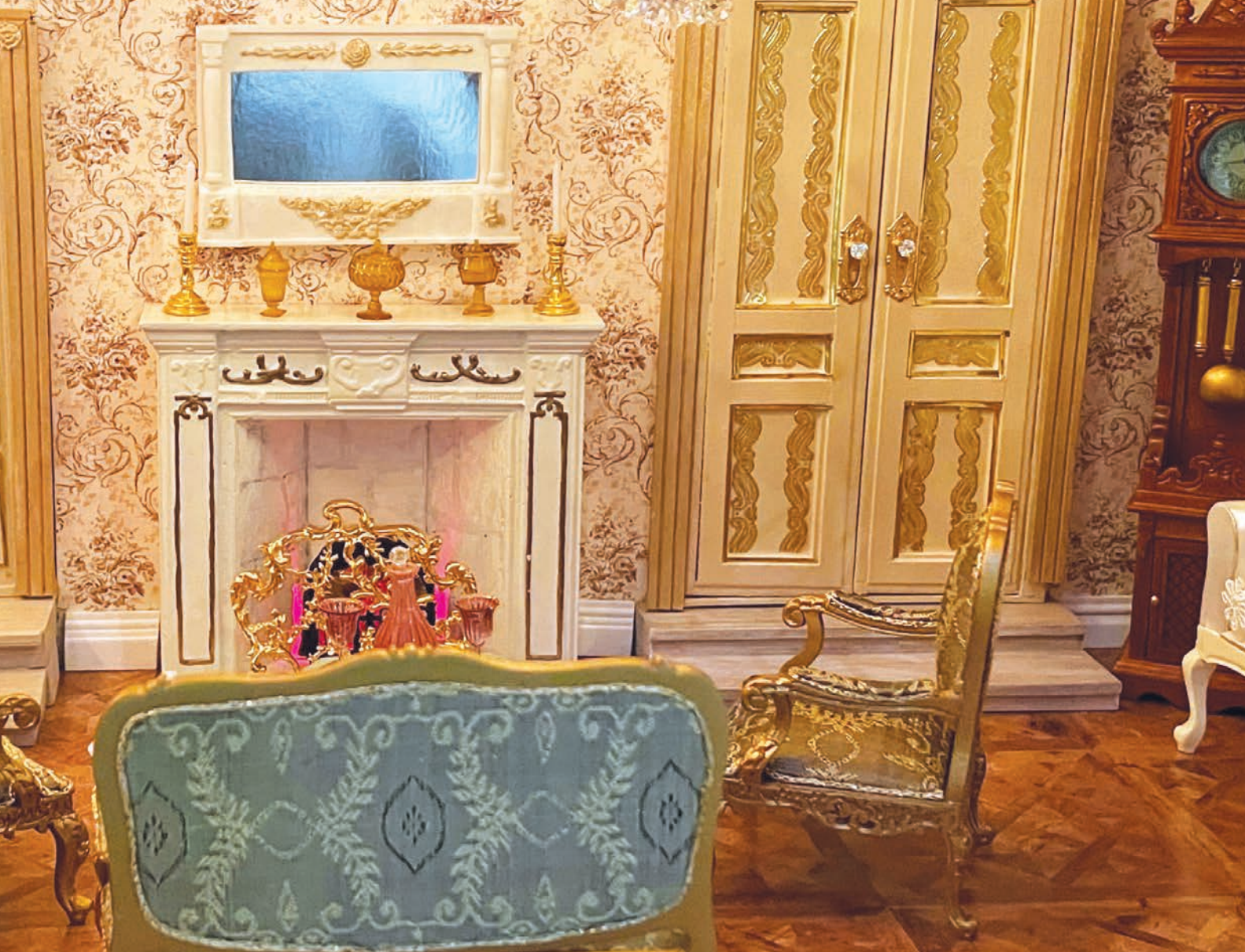
basswood, balsa, illustration board, acrylic windows, and numerous pots of paint. A French-style château appealed to Jackie because it was architecturally beautiful and with elegant interiors that allowed her to create opulence in a variety of spaces.

With over 5,000 square inches to work with, Jackie had already begun shopping for the château's



interior even as Mark laid the first board. "I was not able to buy furniture, as I needed to see the end product before making those kinds of decisions," Jackie explains, "but a few gorgeous little accessories soon began to accumulate, like nursery toys, a glass decanter and glasses, an easel for the school room and so on. I had been collecting miniatures for forty years, but this château was on another level. At times I was a little overwhelmed by the size and potential the building would give me, but I just knew it would thrill me, and keep me busy for some time to come!"

Jackie discovered Mark's work one evening in the form of a small advertisement in a miniature



Jackie received the working grandfather clock as present.

magazine. She knew it would be exquisite and expensive, but she finally plucked up the courage to email him and inquire about building and shipping to the UK, as it would be such a grand work of art.

Although Jackie is not an avid historian, the era of the château is eighteenth century. With regard to a family living there, she prefers to imagine herself living in it temporarily. Its name took her some time to think about, and Mark was keen to name his new build on his website. Eventually they came up with the perfect name: Château De l'Amour, because she

absolutely loves it!

"Mark was marvelous to work with," says Jackie. Many emails were exchanged. Firstly, a decision had to be made about the size, as the space in my home had become somewhat limited due to six other doll houses. The design was a beautiful creation on Mark's part, and I had to decide on things I had never imagined it would involve. However, Mark's plans were clearly explained so I could begin to relate to the building as a whole. Then came the delicious discussions about secret doors, dumbwaiters and the desired rooms."

What better place to start decorating than the Wine Cellar? A flagstone floor and rough brick walls were in order, followed

by several wine racks. A family member, who was really keen on 3D printing, created several racks and lots of wine bottles, to which Jackie affixed printed labels and varnished them to look more like glass. She bought various barrels and a barrel table and chairs for the wine tasting area.

Then the servant's dining area followed. Jackie used damp tea bags to tint the walls, creating an aged look. A table and six chairs and dresser are set with plain glasses, plates and cutlery. A clothes horse with wet-looking washing and clothes pegs nearby was fun to make and Ray Storey's lighting added an authentic look. Then it was on to the kitchen.



1 Lavish drapes cover the dining room windows on the opening dollhouse door. **2** The dining table was made by Jackie's late Uncle. **3** The music room has a harp and a grand piano. **4** The library is accented with a brilliant chandelier for easy reading.





"Mark gave me a certain amount of freedom within some of the rooms by including a few partitions and archways to use if I wanted," Jackie points out. That is where a grey stone archway was perfect to set the range against a red and white tiled backing. A loaded table with a pot/meat hanger above came next, then a sink unit with drainer, shelving and a dresser. What makes the whole structure so interesting are the little extras like the pantry opening. I managed to get some shelves inside it, which I then dressed with various packets, tins and food items. Makes me smile every time I peer inside."





The kitchen has a small pantry where Jackie managed to insert some shelving.





The servant's quarters is shown above. Below are the stairs to the kitchen.

The upstairs rooms required careful thought, as these spaces are more refined. "I decided on a pale blue and white color palette for the dining room and set about spraying the doors and creating the architrave, and making the doors look more ornate. The dining table was made by my late Uncle and sits perfectly in the center with a dinner service from Victoria Faskin. The chairs were from Dolls House Interiors, who provided me with a choice of upholstery, hence the blue stripe. Two sideboards were the perfect place for a few accessories. The draperies were made by Simply Silk Miniatures." A secret door leads down to the





kitchen and there was space for a dumb waiter, which Jackie built from balsa wood.

Deciding on a sumptuous gold look, Jackie wallpapered and painted the doors of the Grand Salon. A grand fireplace and overmantel mirror grace one wall. "My birthday came with a wonderful working grandfather clock as a present, which is

displayed across the corner of the room, and you can actually hear it tick! A display cabinet with some exquisite pieces, a fire guard, and sofa and two chairs from Dolls House Interiors create a very comfortable but elegant space."

The Music Room and the Library share an area with the staircase on the second floor. The Music Room has instruments and the Library

FEATURE

has some two hundred hand-made books that Jackie managed over a period of time. Nearby, the Gentleman's Bedroom was quite a challenge, as Jackie used one of the partitions Mark had given her as an option, which meant an extra door to paint and decorate, and a much-reduced space in which to work. The bedroom contains an exquisite dressed bed and curtains from Simply Silk Miniatures. The Gentleman's bathroom is blue and white and a bathroom suite completes the look.

There still remains the small tower rooms to complete, the Play Room, Nursery, Office and

Sewing Room, as well as the Servant's sleeping areas and Attic storage. So we will end our tour in the Entrance Hall with its grand staircase. But there is still one more surprise! An Entrance Hall hidden

in the paneling that leads to a cozy Parlor with arm chairs, a cake stand and a hand painted small table with drinks on it. A sideboard can be found in the alcove, disguising access to the secret door into the

Entrance Hall. As work progresses, we will return again to Château de l'Amour where more surprises await!

The wine cellar has barrel seats.





An Inspirational French Château

A chance glance at an advertisement lit the spark for Jennifer Lavery's first dollhouse, and her creativity continues to grow.

BY SANDRA HARDING

I'm always interested to learn about the many ways people discover our dollhouse hobby, and what they do when they have found it. For some it starts at an early age, having a dollhouse as a child. Maybe it's the delight of building one from scratch, while for others it's tackling a kit, and for some it's buying one already built. Whichever road taken, the house will need to be painted, decorated and furnished of course, with tweaks at every step. And very often it will never actually be finished.

I was therefore fascinated when I talked to Jennifer, the owner of this absolutely gorgeous French château, who claims that she has merely tinkered with the house and simply added all the wonderful decoration and beautiful things

inside. However, I soon realized that although this was her first dollhouse, it wasn't as simple as she made it sound.

‘Many of the items came as kits, which Jennifer adapted, and recreated them in her own style.’

Although Jennifer had always wanted a miniature house it wasn't until she saw a picture of a dollhouse advertised on a French interiors Facebook page that she knew what she wanted. The house in question has been designed and

made by Julie Gill who specializes in making French-style buildings, always using her signature colors: duck egg blue and various shades of cream.

Julie's houses are usually custom made and this means that she will add any specific request the customer asks for, making each one quite individual. For instance, Jennifer particularly wanted a changing room on the shop floor, doors leading to a storage room, and shutters for the inside windows. The pretty lighting was also added at Jennifer's request.

The house arrived by courier in May 2020 and was perfect. It measures 19.5" wide by 36" tall, and had been painted, both inside and out, and decorated as requested. Jennifer made and added the lovely





panels in the lounge using Alison Davies wallpaper, and the upholstery was all done by Jennifer, using Susan Bembridge fabrics.

Many of the items came as kits, which Jennifer adapted, and

recreated them in her own style. The torchere (a tall ornamental flat-topped stand) with the bust on is by Alison Davies and Jennifer added ivy and a little dove at the bottom as dressing. The various



paintings in the château are either bought or are prints with frames made by Jennifer.

It is obvious that Jennifer has an eye for quality, and it shows in her choice of makers. The dogs' bed, the bed in the bedroom, the birdcage and the mannequin in the window are by Maritza Moran for instance. The gilt furniture and the



lovely globe are from Dolls House Interiors, and the little doll's houses are decorated to match Jennifer's French style — one is from Petit Huset in the Netherlands.

The table and chairs in the shop, and the chair in the bedroom, are by Alison Davies, which Jennifer upholstered, and the gorgeous fireplace and painting above was a kit from Alison Davies. Another table, the mirror and writing table in the shop are by Art of Mini. Jennifer tells me she is besotted with pug dogs and she always incorporates one into her houses, as you can see from the dogs' bed. They are modelled on her real beloved pug Dolly. The picture of a pug on the birdcage was hand painted by Maritza, and the pug was made by Pearl, from Literature in Miniature. The painted picture of the pug on the easel was from the USA.

“The various paintings in the château are either bought or are prints with frames made by Jennifer.”

I think that this is one of the prettiest French shops I have seen and, if it were real, I would really, really want to visit. Jennifer has indeed crashed headfirst into being a really good interior designer; this was her first attempt after all! I am also delighted that Julie, the maker of the château, has agreed to an article about her later, and I also feel that this won't be the last we see of Jennifer's creations.



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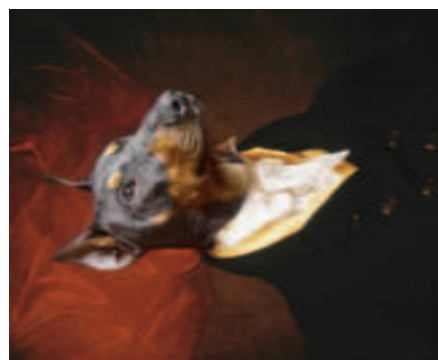
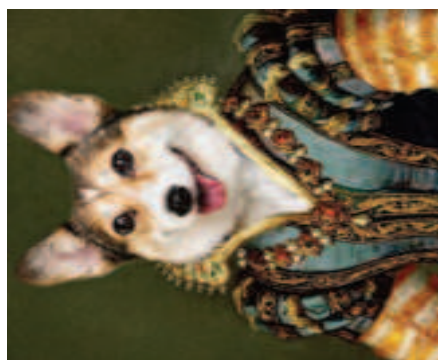
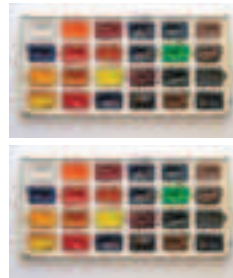
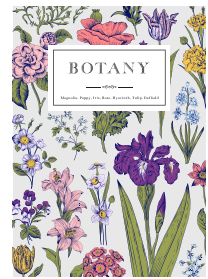
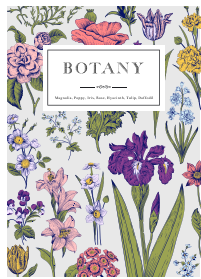


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