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## Sparkling minis

FROM CLASSIC JEWELLER'S  
TO STUNNING HOUSES



- ★ Stunning shops
- ★ Meet the makers
- ★ Workshop visit
- ★ Smaller scales
- ★ Tips & techniques



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## small details

November 2019 • Issue 326

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# "where little things matter"



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## welcome

Autumn's here and, to paraphrase Keats: 'tis the season of minis and twelfth scale fruitfulness.'

As the evenings draw in it's the perfect time to settle inside and get on with those houses and room boxes, and we've a wide variety of miniatures to inspire you.

We're hearing a lot about homes made of foam board, and Sandra Harding has come across another one full of beautiful colours and interesting scenes. We've more of these fun creations on the way.

We drop in on a busy bakery, and have a few recipes of our own for you to try. Squidgy brownies anyone? And with Halloween around the corner we've got haunted houses and spooky makes too.

There's less spook and more sparkle in an elegant jewellery store based on a young couple with their engagement ring, although neither appear in the shop.

You'll find a complete contrast in the more crowded scene in Deb Dintaman's house where 58 dolls are gathered for a party, complete with bubbling hot tub.

We chat with Kristina Golightly about the workspace where she creates her beautiful pieces. Sadly we weren't able to visit (as she's moved back to Australia) but it was fascinating to learn how she fell in love with miniatures during a 12-year stint in London, and regular visits to the Kensington Festival.

Difficult to know how could anybody not fall in love with miniatures after a Festival trip? We preview the show this issue and showcase some of the talented makers who will be appearing. A visit would be fruitful.

Richard.

PS: I loved Kristina Golightly's wonderful screen, and cheekily suggested running it on our Cutouts page so everyone could have a version in their house. Generously, she agreed. Get out the scissors — you're going to love it.

email: richard@ashdown.co.uk  
Follow me on Instagram @dollshouseworld

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### HOUSE HUNT

Find the little house hidden inside.

Last issue it appeared on page 32.



### Quote of the month:

*The month of November makes me feel that life is passing more quickly. In an effort to slow it down, I try to fill the hours more meaningfully.*

Henry Rollins



**Caring for the environment:** Here at Dolls House World we're as concerned about the environment as you are. We're doing everything we can to ensure the magazine is produced in the most eco friendly way possible. Our magazine is printed using vegetable-based inks on an environmentally responsible paper, which is certified by the prestigious FSC® (Forest Stewardship Council), the not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion of responsible forest management worldwide. Our paper also carries the internationally recognised EU Eco-label. Our local printers, Gemini Print, are just a few miles from the DHW offices. They are one of the leading eco friendly printers in the UK, with both FSC® and ISO 14001 certification. They are backed by a series of environmental credentials that allow them to work under the "Green Printing Label". Our printers are also a sponsor of the Woodland Trust – the UK's leading woodland conservation charity.

# Deri's jewellery store is full of mini sparkle

Step into a room box that stages a delightful fantasy... a young couple visit the store wanting to combine their engagement ring with their grandmother's ring

BY DERI TERRY

A twelfth inch scale jewellery store, designed to house a growing collection of miniature jewellery, is the fulfilment of a longtime goal. The timing coincided with the celebration of my daughter's fifth wedding anniversary, inspiring the story and influencing select choices of jewellery.

Designing a box and designating it a store or shop geared toward a specific collection, whether jewellery, hats, silver, crystal, shoes or handbags, is an ideal solution to contain a collection. Once finished, items may be added over time.

I purchased the Empress room box, made by Alex Zohar of Canada. This

ensured my starting with a realistic, well-built store, and freed me to concentrate on making a large part of the jewellery, displays, and furniture for the scene.

The concept is an imagined, modern day shop, in an older building whose architecture evokes a feeling of tradition and provenance. The interior showroom contains built-in shelves, and a number of high-end display cases filled with beautiful, tiny, sparkling jewellery.

The story unfolds as a young, recently engaged couple, Brittany and Joey, bring her new engagement ring to the store, along with his grandmother's ring set, to have them

combined, into a custom wedding ring. Brittany, also has brought her grandmothers' pearl necklace (seen in the vintage blue box on the desk), to have it inspected by the jeweller, before she wears it on her special day, as her "something old."

Well-placed objects convey important information about the scenario. One of the French doors is open slightly, and the studio/workshop scene that I printed and hung outside the doors can be seen beyond the embroidered "Private" sign hanging on the knob, indicating the couple has been escorted to the jewellers' bench, to discuss ring designs.

The store is not yet open, so the jewellery left on the desk is secure, and it is implied the couple will return shortly, as she has left her iPhone behind on the chair.

The proprietors' desk displays his personal items: a phone, pen, tape dispenser, a set of keys to the jewellery cases. Reading glasses hint he is probably at least middle-aged. His coffee contributes to the early morning atmosphere; the fact it is in a china cup and saucer indicate he is a refined gentleman.

The newly engaged couple likely are young and stylish, hence his cool, aviator sunglasses rest in front of his chair, as well as her designer handbag and cell phone in a glittery, silver case. Viewed from above, the contents of her purse are visible: a bottle of water;





**Top:** Many clues about the shop keeper and customers are scattered throughout this scene.  
**Left:** Amazingly small watches are lined up in the display.



hand wipes; lipstick; a tear-stained, crumpled tissue (remaining from the emotional proposal); and the latest copy of a bridal magazine. There is an engagement ring in a little blue box, and wedding rings on the black velvet display mat. The pearls in their vintage box complete the vignette of a couple planning a wedding.

The shop is furnished as if pieces were accumulated over a long period of time, this being a third generation business. There are antique pieces combined with modern acrylic units. Most of the 'antique' furniture pieces came as unfinished kits from Alison Davies. The matching commodes are painted black, and the ornamentation gilded with a gold pen.

I marbleised the tops in the same technique used for full-scale pieces,

using tiny brushes and sponges. I gave the top a leather effect, using layers of dark and clear waxes, made for chalk painting.

The three French chairs, created on a 3-D printer by Alison Davies, are scaled down from real French antiques. The twin walnut display cases are Bespaq, as well as the mirrored shelf unit fitted between them. One shelf holds "heirloom" baby items, a silver basket and jewellery items. The frosted glass bowls trimmed with cobalt are hand-blown by Phil Grenyer.

The vignette holds pieces crafted by some of the most talented miniature artisans; I also wanted to try making my own tiny jewellery in the style of David Yurman, mixing gold and silver, combining twisted rope designs with signature end caps. A number of silver



**Above:** Deri made the toggles in these displays.

**Above right:** The room box boutique.

and gold jewellery findings were selected, such as toggles and jump rings, as well as pearls and rhinestones (sold for scrapbooking projects), which I set to work cutting, shaping; and gluing.

The bracelet display stands, one for each wall display, hang atop the matching chests. Each stand is fashioned from a toggle clasp, a toothpick, and a small silver bead. The bracelets are various silver and gold jump rings.

The straight bar from a toggle clasp becomes the hanging rod, attached over a segment of painted toothpick, anchored into a silver bead serving as the base. The toggles also are used as chokers, jewellery components, bracelet display stands, logo card holders, and as hangers for the Aubusson tapestries at the windows.

The bracelet displays are part of three components forming twin, wall-hung displays, created from the bottom section of acrylic boxes with gilt top edges. Skin-toned mannequins are

painted black, to coordinate with busts throughout the store. The earrings, attached by the glue stick 'acrylic bases,' complete the design.

The front entrance of the store is imagined, as there is only Plexiglas. The wide facade frames a panorama of the entire shop. The display windows were a challenge; they are narrow, and the individual panes block a clear view, but are not removable. After assessing the mullions, I decided the panes are appropriate for an old store building in the same location for three generations.

I found inspiration in the New York City windows of Tiffany & Co., styled a few years ago as a Winter Wonderland in shades of blue and white. The backdrops are framed sections of Christmas cards depicting snow scenes, combined with white plastic deer from the craft store, cotton 'snow', and clear fairy lights. Lettering for the window displays and signs in the store interior is marketed for scrapbooking projects. After installing the jewellery displays, the window sills were dusted with artificial snow. The cylinders used to showcase the jewellery boxes are cut

segments of small glue sticks, sprinkled throughout the store to house earrings and bracelets. When cut on an angle they look like the acrylic risers used in actual stores.

There are incredible miniature artisans creating jewellery emulating their full-sized counterparts. My most prized pieces are from three artists: Lori Ann Potts, Chanel Harmon, and Sun Lemmens.

Quartz crystal specimens, sold as real-sized charms, make pleasing display props inside the walnut and glass cases, and on either side of the mantle framing the sign, "Marry Me." The crystal chandelier and brass desk lamp are battery operated LED lights.

The end result is a culmination of everything I had envisioned. The variation of jewellery styles, combining metals and multi-coloured stones as well as realistic merchandising, adds a depth of realism, evoking the awe of stepping into an actual jewellery store. The viewers are invited to indulge a dream. Who wouldn't want an entire jewellery store at their fingertips? It is certainly a delightful fantasy!



## THESE LITTLE PIGGIES WENT TO MARKET

Ashley Sanson makes miniature felt animals that are perfect for a fun autumn scene

BY PAM NORTH

In a nice little studio space in her very old basement, self-taught artist, Ashley Sanson, makes miniature needle-felted animal characters, foods, and many other tiny items.

Her latest creation, After All Fall Market, featuring the Von-Oink Family, is an amusing vignette combining cute little pigs with ambience of the fall season. "I love the Beatrix Potter-like quality of animals in human situations and with human mannerisms," Ashley explained. "I really love autumn, and I had the idea of creating a little fall scene with a quaint market and miniature characters."

The piece almost entirely was made by hand. Ashley's husband made the diorama box for her, after which she painted in the background, and fashioned the trees and brick walk. She also made the pumpkins and other vegetable items, and the vegetable stand. The baskets, table, and cash register had been purchased previously over the years.

Materials used for the scene itself were wood, Paper Clay, polymer clay, and acrylic paint. The amusing piglets were needle-felted, a technique using wool roving that is wrapped and sculpted around a wire armature, then hand-painted with accents of glass beads added. Each of the pigs took several hours to complete.

The most difficult part of the scene for her was the trees, as she explained, "I've been at this for a while, but this was my first time making miniature trees, and they were very tedious!" Her perseverance proved successful, however, as the final piece turned out exactly as she had envisioned. Her favourite part of the piece was the little pigs. "They were the most fun to create," she said, "Their little faces just came to me as I was brain-storming, and they just melted my heart!"

Ashley does not plan to sell the piece, preferring to keep it for display. Making miniatures is a joy for her.

"I think that the escapism is the most alluring part; being able to create your own world or realm where there is a story all its own is awesome. It's the closest thing to magic that we can create all on our own."

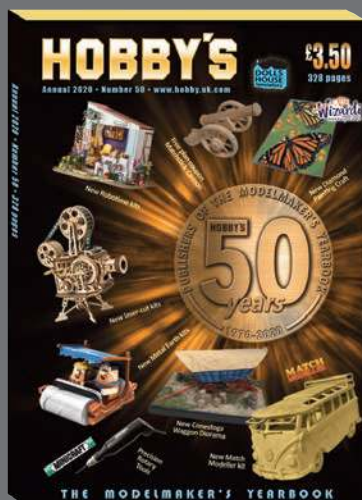
As for what's next for her and her creations, she plans to create a line of minis to offer for sale online and she's working on a collec-

tion of art dolls with Halloween and Christmas themes. "My hope is to spread my love of tiny things as far into the world as possible. I'm thrilled to be able to share my creations with other enthusiasts, and I hope to inspire others to take a chance and try a new skill. You'll never know what you can do if you don't try!"



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# WHERE I WORK

WE CHAT WITH KRISTINA TRUTER - GOLIGHTLY OF GOLIGHTLY MINIATURES

**Hi Kristina. Lovely to talk to you. When did you start making miniatures?**

Just over two years ago when I was pregnant with my first daughter. I had just moved back to Australia after 12 years in London and it was the first time in a long time that I had some spare space and time up my sleeve.

**What inspired you to take up making?**

While I was living in London I went to the Kensington Dollhouse Festival every year and dreamt about having my own doll's house but I seriously lacked space in my East London flat. The week I moved back to Australia I was in an antique shop in my home town and found the Flora Gill Jacobs doll's house book — it inspired me to finally take the plunge into my own miniature world. The first thing I ever made were miniature books, Breakfast at Tiffanys and The Bell Jar. I still love making books.

**Where do you work** It depends on what I am doing but most of my work at the moment is done at my dining table. My husband and I bought our first house recently and only moved in



eight weeks ago. We are busy doing renovations, painting, gardening and I still have boxes that haven't been unpacked or even looked at in a decade or more. The boxes are taking up precious miniature building real estate in my garage; I just don't have the time to tackle them at the moment.

**Do you always make your minis in the same place?**

The decorating and small work I always do at the table. However, the large pieces are made in the garage. I also do all of my scenes and photos for Etsy and Instagram in the guest bedroom where my doll's house is set up.

**Do you work at regular times?**

I would love to have more set times. However, my little people don't really allow for that. I just catch miniature making minutes whenever I can.

**What makes your space for mini making so special?**

The fact that it is a new space that is all my own. I am very much in love with my house — I'm in the midst of a new homeowner's honeymoon phase. I also love that my





creature comforts are never too far away.

**Do you let people into your workspace?** If they are coming to help, the more the merrier. My husband does a lot of miniature work; he does most of the big building, the electrics and all of the soldering of our metal work. My 16-year-old sister has also become a budding miniaturist; the dressed mannequins she makes I absolutely adore.

**Do you listen to music or the radio while you work?** If I am lucky enough to get to do miniatures during the day while my munchkins are napping I normally listen to French music on Spotify. It's a playlist that is all female artists – Francoise Hardy, Claudine Longet, Jane Birkin, Bridget Bardot. But most of the time I do my miniature work in the evenings and I watch Antiques Roadshow — a tradition I have carried on after living in the UK. I actually think they show more episodes of Antiques Roadshow in a week in Australia than they do in England.

**Name one thing that is banned from your workspace.** My daughter Luella. She loves miniatures, which is amazing, but she is too young to be involved in the creative process at the moment. It will be amazing to be able to create simultaneously side by side with my girls but I think we are quite a few years off of that.



**Above:** Kristina has just finished this beautiful screen. She's generously agreed to have it reproduced on our Cutouts page, so you can have a replica in your house. If you'd prefer the original (and who wouldn't?) get in touch with Kristina.

**Describe your workspace in five words.** Where all the fun happens

**What is the one thing that your workspace can't be missing?**

TEA... is essential. Tea is a great accompaniment for all tasks, perfect for both creative work and tedious work. There is nothing worse than so much time pass-

ing me by unnoticed that when I go to take a sip of my well-earned tea it's stone cold.

**Where would be your dream workspace?** I remember seeing a store front for rent in a gorgeous historical town that is near where I live. It was a real fairytale building that was covered in ivy and had a watermill. I thought what a magical place to have a store. It's quite corny but honestly at this moment in my life I really love being at home with my babies and creating with my husband; it's pretty much the dream. I feel very lucky in life.

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"THERE IS NOTHING WORSE THAN SO MUCH TIME PASSING ME BY UNNOTICED THAT WHEN I GO TO TAKE A SIP OF MY WELL-EARNED TEA IT'S STONE COLD."

# General store was inspired by The Waltons TV series

Barbara always thought it would be fun to grow up in a general store from the 1940s — no surprise then that she's built one in miniature

BY BARBARA LATZKO

I didn't get my first house until about 12 years ago. It belonged to an older woman and sadly no one in her family wanted it. So they donated it to the preschool in the building where I worked. It was the Victorian Beacon Hill: not appropriate for preschoolers at all.

So I made a donation to the preschool and it became mine. The outside was orange and the inside was not finished. I redid the outside and wired and completed the inside. I had never done anything like this so it was a learning experience. I really enjoyed the process of having an idea and making it happen. I really liked hunting for an item and then finally finding it. I have since built a log cabin, and a colonial. The colonial also received an addition. That one is my granddaughter Ava's. She loves mine and really enjoys working in hers. The log cabin was given to a child in need for Christmas.

When I was working on my Beacon Hill, and hunting for goodies, I came upon an older plan book for a general store. I bought it before I was even finished with the Victorian, knowing I had to build it. My husband, Curtis and I built it together about six years ago. We made alterations as we went along.

The plans called for a hinged roof to give access to the top two rooms. I wanted those open like the first and second floor, so we changed it. There wasn't a door on the second floor, but

it made sense to me to have access to a balcony. Once the frame was built the rest was up to me. I laid all three floors of flooring ¼" strip at a time. Some of the walls are covered in wallpaper that I printed — for others I used scrapbooking paper. I have built a cabinet for the kitchen, made napkins, curtains, newspapers, books, bedding, candy jars, perfume bottles, food, and the toy display table in the store.

On the outside, we did all the siding and lattice work from scratch, made the steps, railings, general merchandise sign and landscaping. A challenge was the front door to the store. I found the second floor door at an out of the

way shop but I could not find a second. I searched for a couple of years and finally decided we needed to make one. I am very pleased with how it turned out. I have also purchased items from many places, like London, Italy, Greece as well as the United States. I find things in flea markets and antique shops.

I grew up watching Little House on The Prairie and The Waltons television shows. They both had these great general stores. When I was a kid I thought it would be fun to grow up in







one so it's no surprise that I came to build one. I was going for the 1940's era store, the Waltons time period. I even have a photo of Ike and Corabeth Godsey hanging in the store; they were the store owners in the Waltons show.

I change the outside of my Victorian, Ava's Colonial, and the General Store according to the seasons. So I need Santas for all three. That led to my current project.

I am building the Diana House which will be Santa's Workshop. I have completed the outside and I am thrilled with how it is coming along. My vision for this is to be an "old world" Santa's Workshop. I am going to learn how to do stained glass windows for this one.

I have become very passionate about my houses and I find working on them is so peaceful and relaxing.

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Work by Lisa Tabbamor

# Vibrant house is full of tributes to friends

From cakes to canes and clairvoyants Christine's Dutch style house is a cheerful, colourful reminder of the important things in life — friends and family

BY CHRISTINE BEVAN

I started the house (it is a Dutch style called The Hague) from the wall at the back of the second floor. It was here I wanted to have an exhibition of paintings by an Italian artist, Silvano Gamba; he paints snowmen and beautiful landscapes. Phil (my husband) and I have two of his paintings, so that started me thinking. I obtained a brochure of an exhibition and proceeded to cut out the pictures; they were exactly the right size, and I made individual frames for them all. Thus was born the idea of having an 'exhibition' of all the things I liked and dedicating them to friends and family.

Now if you read on further, I know that you won't know the people I talk about, but by the end you may realise why all these people are so special to us, and why I wanted to make them part of my project. Like most miniaturists I don't always get it right. First let me tell you that it took me four attempts to get the bathroom wall-papered. I'm not a hundred percent about it even now, but after four lots of re-papering, I decided enough was enough, so I put a photo of my favourite Blackpool Tower behind the back window and hoped for the best.

Then there is the living room; I found a very inexpensive white and red three piece suite and thought that I would build the room around it. It looked different from the usual dark wood fur-



niture so often used. I also found a few sheets of embossed see-through paper covered in roses that took my fancy in a craft shop, so my rose room was started. I really enjoyed doing the ceiling of that one.

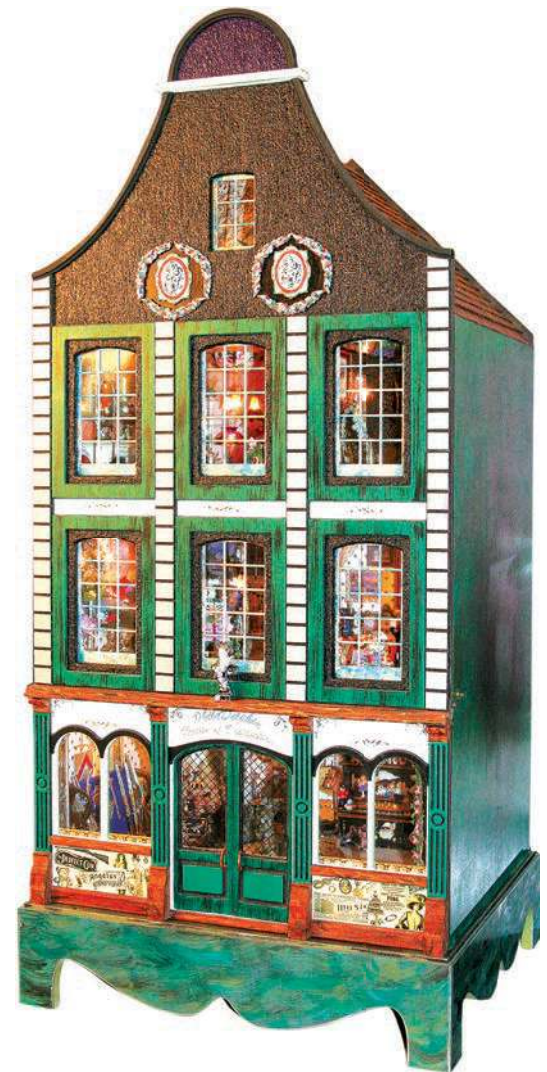
I then moved on to the bedroom; I wanted it to be dark; this was influenced mainly by the fact that I had found some beautiful paper produced by my friend in Utah at Enchanted Miniatures. So it became a black and gold room without question. I bought the four-poster bed as a bare wood item for about £3 or £4 and then painted it gold. I then used my black 'rub n buff', stuck a bare wood frame on the headboard and added some artwork and a bit of gold fabric. Thank goodness for super glue, that's all I can say.

I used a plain mirror on a stand then added some rhinestones and little flowers. The mirror over the dressing table is a Christmas decoration from a garden centre.

Oh yes! The ceiling is from an idea that came to mind every time I visited the ballroom in Blackpool and had never used - but now I have!

So, that takes care of the first two floors. Now for the interesting bits.

I've already mentioned the idea of including the painting exhibition, but before doing that I chose a fairly plain black and white paper for the rest of the house as I wanted all the colours,



that I was going to incorporate everywhere to show up, because by now I more or less knew who and what was going in there.

When I looked at the house, I could see that the bottom floor would be very dark and things wouldn't show up at the back, so what to do about it? I had to have a bit of help from a friend

**Above:** The Dutch style exterior with its stunning dark green mottled walls hides another of Christine's fascinating interiors – Philadelphia, House of Distinction is the perfect place for her imagination to come to life. She has used vibrant colours and items to create each wonderful room.

**Top right:** The bright red and white living room on the second floor is a cheerful place to sit and have tea. Christine calls this her 'rose room' – starting with the ceiling rose which has been covered using a see-through rose patterned paper. The staircase has been edged with white embossing stickers, and even the rose carpet has had its colours enhanced with felt-tipped pens.

**Centre right:** The chaise longue from the bedroom with the crystal mirror.



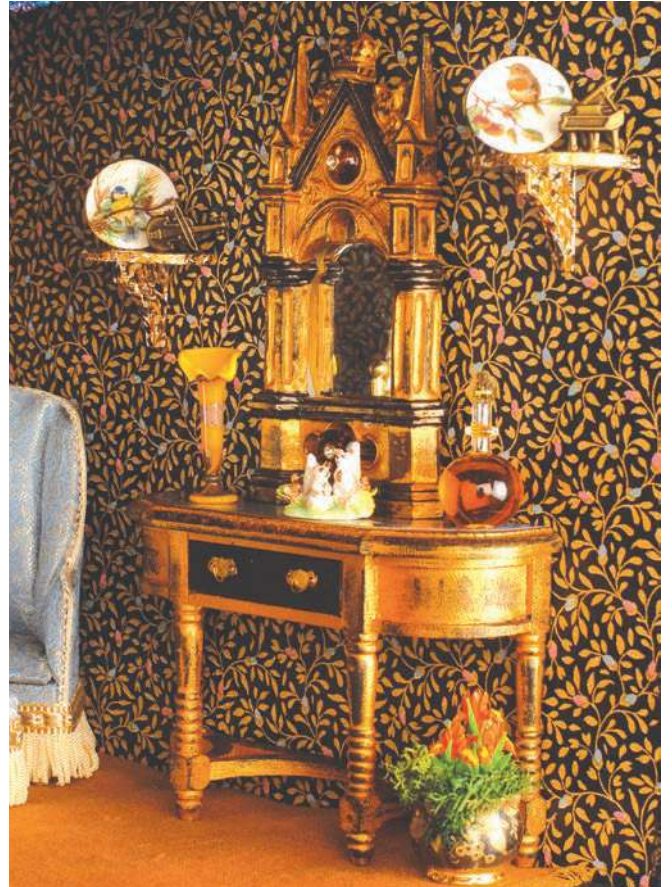
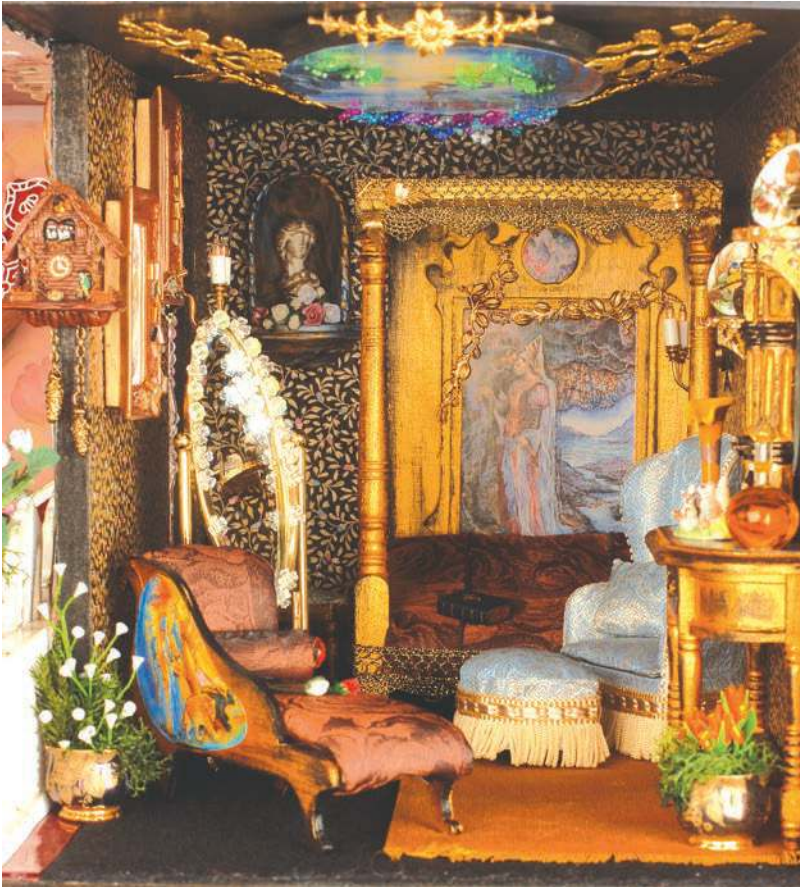
to solve this, as I had decided to have a large semicircle cut out of the first floor to make the second floor more of a balcony. I'm not very skilful with a grown-up jigsaw tool – I keep stopping and that's no good – so he did the job for me. I then had to bend a few railings round the curve as I didn't want my customers plummeting over the edge!

### The exhibits

The first exhibit you see is 'Hats by Lydia', dedicated to a friend I have known for a long time, and the same friend gave me the idea of the sign saying that you can 'Hire the Hats for Ascot Week only'. I would never have thought of that little addition.

Then there is a table with 'Candelabra designed by Eileen'. I individually

**Above:** In the attic room there's a delightful bathroom suite hand-painted by Christine. The bath was yellow when she bought it, but because she fell in love with its design she was determined to do something with it to make it fit into her bathroom colour scheme. So after several coats of paint, and the embossed pattern on the side carefully repainted, she was happy with the result.





**Above left:** The bedroom is in fantasy-land with the black and gold wallpaper from America. The gold four-poster bed has a picture headboard embossed with gold stickers. The gold floor-standing mirror has added sparkle with the crystal beads around the edge, and the chaise longue has been re-covered and decorated with a colourful motif. The ceiling light has been made into a wonderful gold and aqua decoration that gives the room a magical feel.

**Below left:** On the left-hand side of the balcony can be found 'Hats by Lydia'. Christine bought many of the hats but has added feathers, flowers or lace. The table started out as plain white-wood, but Christine added her favourite colours of mauve through to purple.

**Above:** On the opposite side of the balcony stands a mannequin in a black dress trimmed with red roses – Christine found this at a fair and couldn't resist it. The jardinière along side has been painted with two different colours of nail varnish to give the column a beautiful sheen. The background includes a stained glass window set in a large oval picture frame.

**Above right:** This delicious cake setting is for Bridget (or Philomena to give her her correct name) – again Christine has added to the cake decorations giving them that extra appeal. To the left is the 'Candle Design by Eileen' with many of the candlesticks being made from jewellery findings and beads.



painted these candlesticks using beads and painted the candles different colours (Liberace influenced that, as you may guess). I got to know Eileen when my mum was ill quite a few years ago, and since then she has become a very dear friend to Phil and I. She has a soft spot for Phil, and for my doll's houses. In fact Eileen has three wonderful granddaughters and I couldn't think of a better home for my mum's doll's house to go to as I know it will be carefully looked after.

The next table is 'Cakes made to order by Bridget' - not her real name,

her real name is Philomena, but we decided that her middle name sounded better. Philomena works at Phil's Day centre in Fulham and is a really caring and close friend. All the cakes I bought from various fairs, repainted them, and stuck bits of 'stuff' on them to make them as ornate as possible.

Most importantly, up on the second floor we have 'Canes by Monsieur Berry' – collecting and repainting these was great fun.

David Berry and his wife Eleonore (she has the toy exhibition on the ground floor), have been part of Phil's life since he was born. They were originally friends of his parents many years ago, but have been like second parents to both of us ever since I met Phil. Their enthusiasm for the houses and what we do as a couple, make them more special than I can say.

Eleonore said to me one day that I couldn't have a piano in EVERY house I have, and I thought: 'Oh, yes I can,' so when you go downstairs I've used one as part of the display for 'Toys by Eleonore'.

Downstairs there is 'Crystal by Shirls' – Shirley is my closest friend.

**Left:** 'Canes by Monsieur Berry' – Christine has made many of the canes and cane-tops using pieces of jewellery or plastic items.





of the tiny Swarovski crystal chips I had; I knew they would sparkle when the lights were on. So I have a display of little glass vases, and object d'art and where I could, I have filled the glass vases with the crystals.

The rest of the crystals I've put in the fountain – I wanted a centre piece with benches so that people could have a rest after wandering around. The original fountain had a chunky little cherub on top; this has been replaced with a mermaid. I added some gold stickers as decoration for the benches. You can buy sheets of stickers from most arty shops and these are invaluable for decorating furniture, staircases and almost everything.

Tucked away in the corner is a bit of relaxation for customers - 'Clairvoyant readings by Pat'. My friend Pat moved to Spain a few years ago and I miss her very much, but I wanted her in my house. She likes angels, horoscopes and new-age stuff, but she did say: "Why is there a witch's cauldron and a broomstick in my section?" Sorry Pat, only joking!

Lastly, we come to my dad; I wanted something masculine to remember him by. After much thought I decided that my love of collecting tiny weapons was perfect for him. So for 'Weaponry by William', I bought a whole load of them, medieval things, guns, blunderbusses, swords, and a few I'm unable to name. I painted them different – and tasteful colours. Although my dad has never picked up a weapon in his life, if he had, maybe he'd have fancied a

**Above:** The inside of this delightful house – so many wonderful friends are remembered within its rooms. The displays take up the first two floors with the living room and bedroom on the second and bathroom in the attic.

**Left:** Clairvoyant readings by Pat' – this display is tucked away in the corner of the ground floor.



She still lives in Birmingham with her family, which is where I originally came from, and we know just about everything there is to know about each other - hopefully we all have a friend like that. I wanted a way of displaying some



**Above:** To the left of the ground floor is the exhibit in memory of Christine's own father. Christine is fascinated by tiny guns and armour and had built up a collection before she created the house. In the centre of the picture is the stand 'Crystal designed by Shirls' – Shirley is Christine's closest friend and a very important person in her life. The tiny crystals are by Swarovski and sparkle brilliantly – Christine had been looking for something to include them in, and this setting with its diamond encrusted crowns and glassware are the perfect way to display them. Even the handrail for the stairs is a chain of black beads.

**Right:** At the back of the room is an upright piano that has made the ideal display stand for 'Eleonore's Toys'. Christine has worked her magic touch on the piano by adding stars and stickers of angels, finally picking out the edges with gold paint. Wherever you look in the rooms the woodwork has been gold buffed to give it an antique-look.

pink duelling pistol?

Before you go, please take a look at the front of the house. It's fairly dark for a doll's house, but look at the name - Philadelphia, House of Distinction. Well, I couldn't leave Phil out, now could I?



# Make brownies and then cuddle up on the couch

You can't go wrong with brownies — everyone loves them. And you can't go wrong with this recipe as Tanja guides you step-by-step through the making process

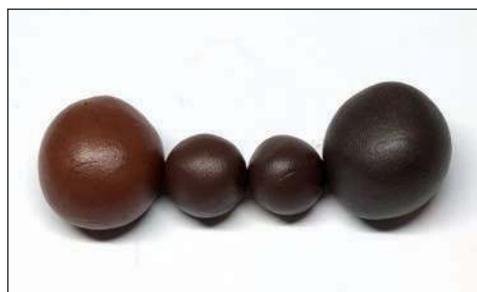
BY TANJA JENSEN

**T**he colder months always make me want to whip up something delicious that I can eat whilst being all curled up on the couch with a blanket. And who doesn't love brownies? Fudgy cake, perfect on their own or paired with ice cream — so let's make some for the doll's house.



mix of Raw Sienna and chocolate, which will be used as the top layer. The remaining colours are chocolate, which have been mixed with black, making them gradually darker. You'll want to mix these three shades

50/50 with translucent clay.



**Step 1.** Begin by mixing your colours of clay. The colour on the far left is a

## You will need

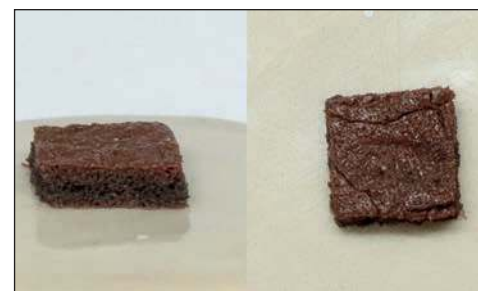
- Clay: black, Premo Raw Sienna, Fimo chocolate and translucent
- Clay roller
- Blade for cutting
- Needle tool
- Crumbled up tin foil
- Toothbrush
- Acrylic paint; Raw Sienna and burnt umber
- Soft pastel — a nice, 'light cocoa powder' colour
- Matt and gloss glaze
- Paint brushes



**Step 2.** Roll out sheets of all the colours — the proportions are not that important, but you do want the darkest shade in the centre to be the thickest. Sandwich the darkest shade between two thin layers of the second darkest shade and sandwich that between two thin layers of the lightest of those three (second from the left in the picture). Then add a very thin sheet of the lightest colour to the top and roll it out to get the thickness you want (I went for approx. 2mm).



**Step 3.** Add texture to the top surface using the crumpled-up tin foil and a toothbrush, and use your blade to cut out the brownie squares — I made mine 6x6mm



**Step 4 & 5.** Add texture to all four sides of each square using a fine needle tool in a poking motion. You can add a few larger dents to give a more 'crumb like' appearance. Then finish off by

adding a few lines/cracks to the top surface and bake according to package instructions.



**Step 6, 7 & 8.** Next, paint the top surface of the brownies with the pastel. I'm adding a small amount of matt glaze to my brush and applying the pastel powder in a dapping motion to get a more textured look.

Lastly you can use the paint to enhance the cracks or to add some additional shading and colour variation — then finish off with a touch of gloss glaze to the top as well as to the centre of the brownies where they'd naturally appear more 'moist/fudgy' and they're done!



# Pat's charity sale aims to beat last year's record

BY PAT CUTFORTH

**A**lmost time again for the annual sale at my farm in Marlborough, Wiltshire, in aid of Cancer Research UK, and there are many new things to tempt you.

As well as a barn full of miniatures of all sorts, in all price ranges and several different scales, there are many doll's houses in the old stables. Everything has been donated, so all your money goes to this great charity.

## Here are a few of the houses that are new this year:

**An old house dating from the early 1900s.** I may call this Hazard House as it is wired for mains connection with normal lamp bulbs and a complete disregard for electrical safety. The exterior is beautiful and unusual, with large wooden roof tiles in which a section can be lifted to show two attic rooms. The inside benefits from having windows in both sides, some with their old curtains, along with some built-in corner fireplaces.

**1/24th scale mansion.** Six floors give you the opportunity to have a large family with resident grandparents, or perhaps some student lodgers. The house is fully electrified ready for insertion of lights, and is beautifully finished inside and out. Not a good photo so you will just have to come and judge for yourself.

**The Georgian mansion.** This large building was individually made as a present for a grandchild, and it has many charming details like the mahogany window surrounds. Inside is finished and ready for new occupants, and it is fully electrified.

The drawer underneath pulls out so you can lift up the front stairs and garden. Of course this house suffers from one disadvantage: it is large. Because of this, the price is only £150, so a terrific bargain if you have space for it.

Of course there will also be a barn stuffed with all the smaller items that have collected here since last year's sale: furniture, dolls, small artifacts, accessories, books and tools.

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## Christine plasters her way to a spooky party

BY SANDRA HARDING

**T**his scary, creepy and horribly ugly creation is by the very talented and imaginative Christine Kneen, and I love it. It is home to an awful lot of very happy skeletons who appear to be having a real party night.

Originally it was a 1/24th scale kit which didn't go together very well, so Christine decided to plaster over everything, including the roof, to

give it a distressed, aged look, and it worked – very well. She then added paint in several shades before covering the outside in railway scenery vines and moss.

Perspex was added to the upstairs windows and the bottom ones and the roof hole were boarded up using balsa wood planks. The inside walls were painted and distressed, using several creepy shades, and fine grey

hairnet “cobwebs” were added.

The bottom graveyard scene was made in a roombox — it's shaped wire covered in Modroc to give it form. Then the whole box was painted in various shades. To finish off the look a coating of glitter glue was added.

On the back wall Christine used paper die cuts which she cut and pieced together to make the scene



she wanted. The coffins are also flat pack paper die cuts which she made up and painted. The wall is an aquarium decoration and is just perfectly placed in the scene.

The brilliant poseable skeletons are from Japan which Christine had been collecting in readiness for such a project, and she added some cheaper ones to add bulk (that doesn't sound the right way to describe a skeleton). They kept falling apart, as skeletons do, so she had to glue and reinforce them — apart from the one without a head, as the dog ate that. I wonder if she means her real dog, Henry, or one of the skeleton dogs, but that would make it a two headed dog, and now I am writing my own story.

Back to reality. The headless body has now got a pumpkin head and wears a ghost costume, so he has survived the attack. The pumpkins are mostly homemade, although there are some seed heads added, and there are various others from children's halloween toys and a cut up bracelet.

The table is a cut up coffin, and the duck-apple barrel is from Christine's secret stash, which she filled with resin water and polymer clay apples. The drum kit and banners were bought, while the spider drummer was made by a friend.

The amount of brilliant detail and fun in this project is amazing, and I am not surprised that it won first prize in a competition. I look forward to seeing more of Christine's imaginative work.



# Lantern shows off nice Jan's dark side

BY SANDRA HARDING

When Paula gave her friend Jan Baker a lantern, she did not know that Jan had dark thoughts the moment she saw it, otherwise she might have saved it from a fate worse than death. Dr Death that is!

That's enough whimsy for now, let's get on with the detail. Jan covered the base in black felt, and bought very small brass candlesticks, children's dressing up clothes and a rubber skeleton from charity shops. Luckily the skeleton didn't feel a thing when Jan chopped bits of him off.

Another friend, Julie, gave Jan another skeleton which was painted and then dressed with scraps of rags and some wisps of hair — he was left unchopped, much to his relief. Mind you, he was hung from a chain rather unceremoniously at the back of the lantern. Using Fimo,

Jan made Gor (in the jar), Dr Death and the severed hand (sounds like a good title for a horror film). The strange creature in the doctor's hand was from Osborne House gift shop with fangs and a chain added. Dr Death was dressed and Jan added the wand, a book, and other spooky things that he might find useful.

The shelf was a strip of skirting board and the brackets were cut from a plastic fence. The table was a strip of wood from Jan's scrap box, as were the legs, and Jan added paint and glued a piece of cobweb lace on; the spiders are Fimo with wire and false eyelashes added. Jan found a doll's head amongst her stock and the poor thing is now looking very worse for wear. However, she does have some hair (well, Jan is a hairdresser).

The brass candlestick in front is



very effective with a battery light added on top. The many other accessories in this lantern were either bought or made by Jan. The large spider on top was cut from an old dress, and black netting and other spooky things added. Finally the lights were wound round card and simply left where they looked best.

I have known Jan for a few years now and she always seems so nice. I had no idea she had a dark side. Another imaginative use for a lantern and very good use of limited space too.



## Bored Jean builds a rock house from broken pots

Jean Caff came up with the lovely idea of creating a rock house because she was bored and wanted to do something different — it certainly is that!

BY JEAN CAFF

**T**ake one terracotta pot 10x10 inches (or any size you want). Lay it on its side on a folded towel and gently pat with a hammer on the same spot, just below the rim. With luck a few more taps will give you a random break.

I worked on the cave first, marking where the shelf was to be, and then the walls were given a light coating of Polyfilla using a brush. A small amount of pva glue mixed with the water helps the Polyfilla stick better to any surface, and makes it stronger too.

It was then painted with a mixture of grey, burgundy and mocha. A former was fashioned from foam core as it is waterproof and will accept the Polyfilla without bending. Woodland Scenics have produced a one-part water resin which I found much easier to use for the still water. Their water effects resin is used for making waterfalls and creating rough effects.

Cling film was glued in place prior to creating the water effects.

I created another foam core former for the shelf which I first covered in foil. I then applied several coats of Polyfilla which takes several days to dry to rock hard. A string of battery operated lights were attached to the underside and then painted, before being glued in place using silicone gel which dries in an hour.

I wanted the buildings to look old and carved and, although it was a bit of a problem, I made them from foam

core and wood. The tower is a cardboard centre from a roll of foil. I then covered everything in my beloved Polyfilla.

The leaves were from Georgina Steed and my daughter-in-law Kathy and I made the trunks of the trees, using several lengths of strong flower wire twisted together. The tops were left open to form the branches which were then covered in floral tape and painted. The fencing is made from fancy cocktail sticks and flower wire.

### Rock house history

Rock houses were built around 1500 to give protection to the very poor and their cattle. They were abandoned in about 1755 and remained empty for many years until local farmers began using them again to stable their horses. In 1900 they were taken into council ownership and opened to the public. In 1997 they were deemed unsafe as the rock face had collapsed revealing the caves underneath. When the Preiser fairies moved in is a mystery.



# Add a cathedral style radio to your house

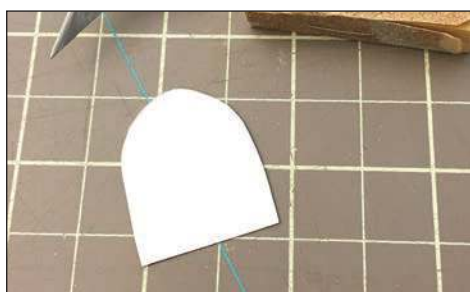
In the 1930s families would be glued to radios like this one. They originated in the US but the style found its way to the UK



BY AURALEA KRIEGER/KRIS COMPAS

I will be using a tutorial by Kris Compas, but taking new photos and using a few different techniques. I was smitten with this tutorial but needed to use what I had on hand. This will be perfect in my 1930's farm house.

**Step 1.** Transfer one copy of the shell and dial frame, and two copies of the grille and frame onto card stock.



**Step 2.** I sanded the edges of the card stock shell pattern to be sure it would be a clean smooth trace.



**Step 5.** After you've glued the two pieces together cut a strip 1/2" (13mm) x 3-1/8" (79mm) long.

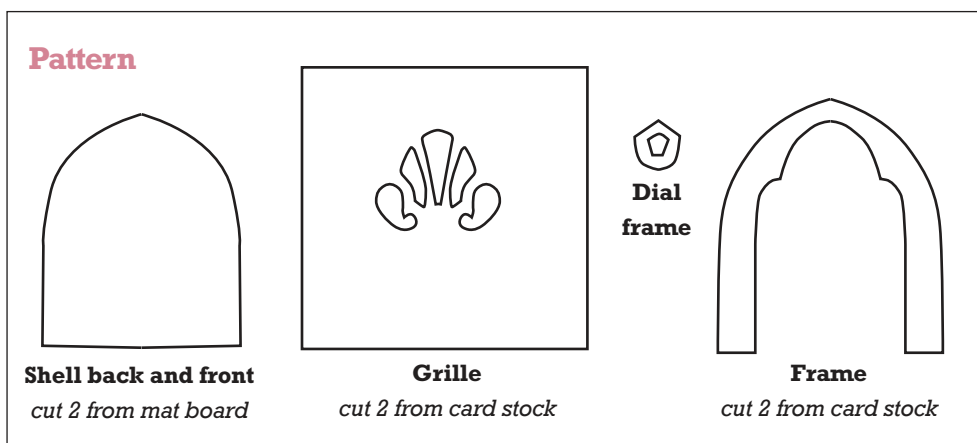
**Step 3.** Trace the shell pattern onto mat board twice. Cut the two patterns out.

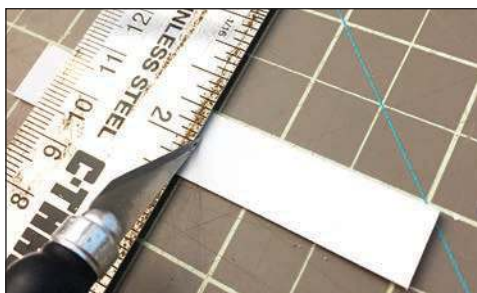
**Step 6.** For the rest of the tutorial we will use yellow carpenter's wood glue.

**Step 4.** Glue two strips of card together using white glue. We are using white glue for this piece because we don't want it to dry too fast. We will need to work with it.

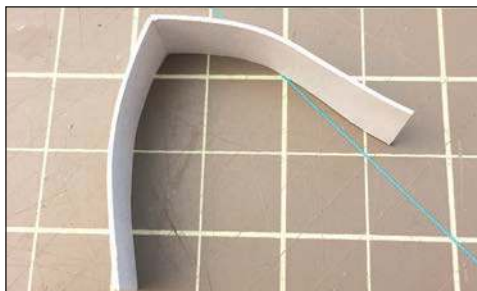
## You will need

- Pencil
- White glue
- Wood glue
- Scherenschnitte scissors - optional
- Ruler
- Craft knife
- Card stock
- Mount/mat board
- Fine sandpaper
- Medium to small paint brushes
- Paint - gold, orange, Burnt Sienna, and dark brown
- Satin varnish
- 1/16" punch
- Toothpicks
- Gel pen



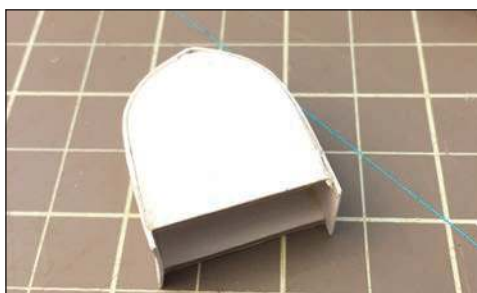


**Step 7.** Score a line in the centre of this strip using the back of your craft knife.



**Step 8.** Fold the strip in half, moulding it a bit with your thumb and forefinger. See the little bit of curve?

**Step 9.** Apply wood glue to the edge of the mat board shell pattern and starting with the fold at the centre top, glue the strip to the mat board edge pressing as you go. Lay flat on the table to help keep it flush. Don't trim the extra card stock off, yet.



**Step 10.** Apply wood glue to the other mat board shell pattern edge and glue it to the assembly you've just made. Let this dry. Trim off any extra card stock you might have by placing it on its side. Set this piece aside for now.

**Step 11.** Don't cut the square out from the grille yet. Only cut out the grille patterns inside. It's easier not to have the small square paper slipping around.



**Step 12.** I just used my craft knife but Kris recommends another technique: "Make a small slice with your knife inside the grill drawings for your Scherenschnitte scissors (they make the cutting easier) to slip into. Scherenschnitte scissors have a sharp point and short blades. You cut with the tip, don't take a big bite with the blades. Cut the design's line off. Don't leave any of the design's line on the finished grille."

**Step 13.** When you have both grilles cut out, carefully spread wood glue onto the card stock, being careful around the grille area. Press together. A toothpick cleans up any stray glue.

**Step 14.** Cut out the frames. Cut the inside of the frame then the outside.

**Step 15.** When you have both frames cut out, glue them together with wood glue. When gluing the frames together, try to match up the legs first; this way the top will take care of itself to be aligned.



**Step 16.** Centre the frame over the grille and glue the frame to the grille with wood glue.

**Step 17.** Trim off the extra card around the frame.



**Step 18.** Measure a 1/2" (13mm) up from the bottom of the frame. Make a mark. Do this on both legs of the frame.

**Step 19.** Using a pencil and a ruler make three vertical lines on each leg of the frame. Try to get them equally spaced.



**Step 20.** Use a very small ball stylus to make indents on those lines. If you don't have a stylus use a toothpick; you'll need several because you will press the point off and you need the sharp point to keep the impressed line very narrow.

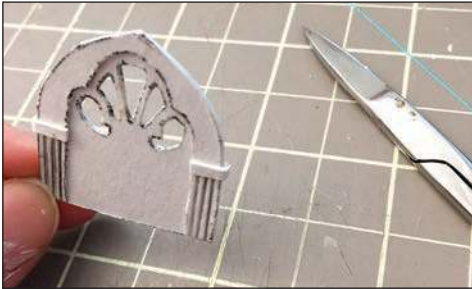
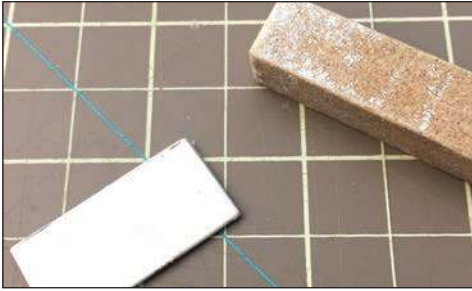
**Step 21.** Glue two strips of card stock together with wood glue.

**Step 22.** Now, cut a strip just 1/16" (2mm) and 1-1/2" (39mm) long.

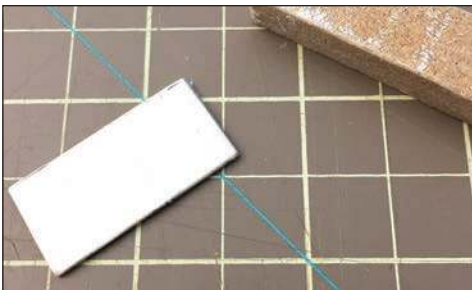


Photo by Gregory F. Maxwell on Wikimedia.

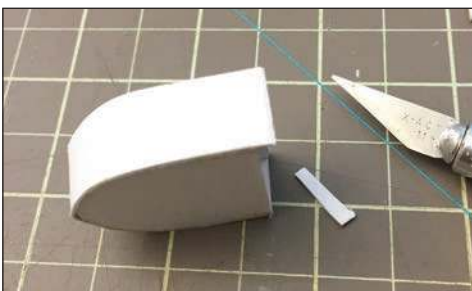
*A Philco 90 cathedral style radio from 1931, similar to the US imports sold in the UK. The British manufacturer Bush did make a similar version around the same time.*



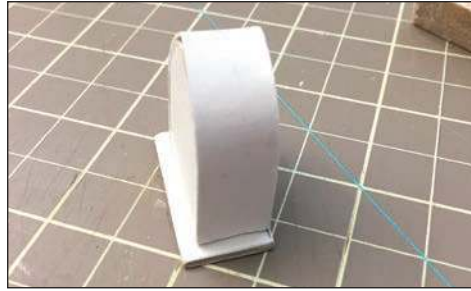
**Step 23.** Cut two short pieces from this strip to be glued at the top of the vertical lines on the frame's legs. Glue the strips so they wrap around the edges. Then press on its side and trim off the extra with your sharp craft knife or scissors. Add another piece to the base of the 'legs' if you wish. I chose not to.



**Step 24.** From mat board cut a piece  $5/8$ " (16mm) x  $1-1/4$ " (31mm) long. Sand the two short edges and one long edge to be half round. The back is square.



**Step 25.** Set the radio body on the first layer of the platform flush to the back.

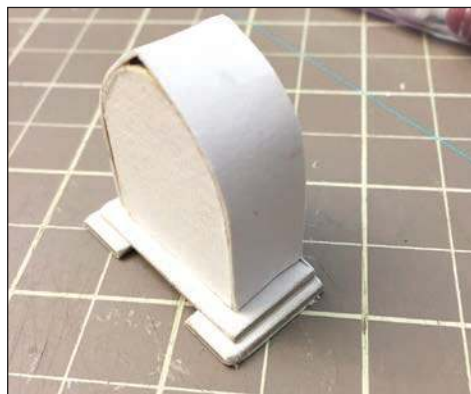


**Step 27.** Apply wood glue to the bottom of the radio body, centre the mat board and glue the mat board on. The back should be flush. Wipe away any excess glue with a toothpick.



**Step 28.** The second layer of the platform is  $11/16$ " (18mm) x just under  $1-3/8$ " (34mm). Measure in from each side  $3/8$ " (9mm) and  $1/8$ " (4mm) deep. Cut this centre piece out. This makes it look like the platform is on legs.

**Step 29.** Sand this layer's edges just like you did with the first.



**Step 30.** Glue on the second layer of the platform.

**Step 31.** At this point sand the top of the front frame between the small side pieces you added that wrapped around.

**Step 32.** I am adding this step because my front did not match the body. Check this now and trim from the bottom if your front is too high. I left mine because I didn't mind a small lip. But if you want it to be flush then test fit it before you start painting.



**Step 33.** Use Delta's Ceramcoat Pumpkin for an orange base coat! Give the body and front piece two coats and let dry.



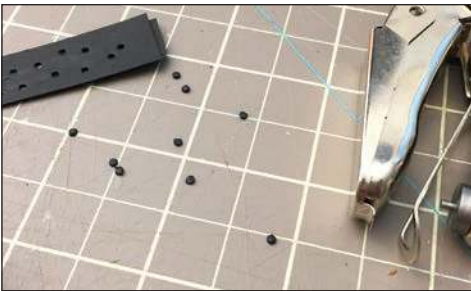
**Step 34.** Next, use a  $1/4$ " wide flat brush and brush on Delta's Ceramcoat Burnt Sienna. Leave streaks, but also cover up enough of the orange to tone it down. Use a small round brush to fill with Burnt Sienna for the seams.



**Step 35.** Next paint on Burnt Sienna and use a paper towel to dab some of the paint off. Let the paint dry on your radio pieces.

**Step 36.** While the radio pieces dry let's make the knobs and dial frame.

**Step 37.** Cut out the dial frame and paint it dark brown or gold (or use coloured paper). Let dry.



**Step 38.** Use a thin layer of white glue to stack up three layers of black card stock. Let dry for a few minutes. Use a 1/6" circle punch and punch out a about 10 circles. Pick your best four.



**Step 39.** Paint the front of the body of the radio gold. Use your brush to dab to give it texture. Let it dry.

**Step 40.** Glue the front onto your radio body.



**Step 41.** You can spray them with Krylon's Acrylic Crystal Clear satin finish spray. I just brushed on some satin varnish.



**Step 42.** Glue on your radio dial frame and use a gold gel pen to fill in the centre hole.



**Step 43.** Dot some white glue where the knobs will go. Then pick them up with tweezers and put in place. Gently press down with the other end of your tweezers. Use a toothpick to put a drop of varnish on each knob and let dry.



**Step 44.** Once the gel pen was dry I used a fine sharpie to draw lines inside the dial frame.

Place it in your miniature scene and enjoy your creativity!



# Debs puts on a party with 58 different dolls



Neighbours converge on this Gothenburg where the sun is shining, the hot tub is bubbling and the major is leading everyone in song with some old tunes

BY SANDRA HARDING

There is definitely a celebration going on in Deb Dintaman's Lundby Gothenburg, and the whole neighbourhood seems to have been invited, including young and old alike.

The top is a complete house which was bought fifteen years ago. That was her first but she followed it up with eight Lundbys. Well and truly hooked I reckon.

Since the purchase of this house she has cleverly converted the bottom two floors from garage extensions to create even more rooms and, as a bonus, has made a lovely outside area for the family and friends to enjoy. Most of the items in the house and outside were from eBay and Etsy, both UK and US, and all the lighting works. Deb tells me she had very little to do in the house, merely replacing some carpet and wallpaper.

Looking at the clothes (or lack of them) means that today is obviously a lovely hot summer's day, and the party is a way to get to know all the neigh-

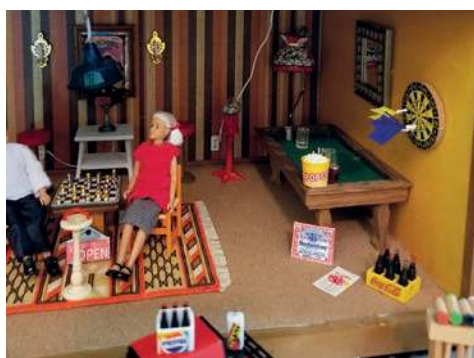
bours at once. It saves wondering who you have missed out you see, according to old timer Major Day, who insists on being called major, even though he retired from the army 30 years ago. He is a lovely, friendly fellow though, and no party is complete without him as he keeps singing very old songs and gets everybody to join in.

The owners of the house are Tony and Sheila Blige, who moved here with their twins to be nearer to good schools. The twins are still rather shy and are happy to be in their room until the noise settles down. They really want to go in the hot tub but Lucy Lastic and Sam Sung are in there at the moment.

In the house there is a fully equipped games room, with darts, a snooker table and more, and another couple are playing chess, trying to take no notice of the children playing table tennis or in the sand pit.

I gave up trying to place the children with the right families as Deb tells me there are 58 dolls here, and it would take another page or two to give them all names, but not really knowing who's who is half the fun of dollshousing isn't it? I too have babies and children and no one quite knows where they are from, but then I think that children always are irresistible aren't they?

Deb has since downsized due to the arrival of two real baby grandsons and she needed the space. At least dolls stay where they are put and keep quiet.



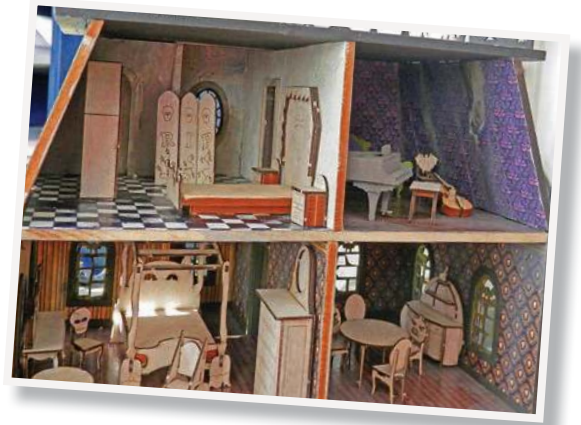


## A LOOK AT LUNDBY



# Jeff creates smaller scale spooky homes

Jeff Wilkerson wanted to yell "It's alive" like Frankenstein when he started putting his finished furniture kits into the small scale house he created



BY PAM NORTH

Jeff Wilkerson started collecting miniature furniture and making room boxes over 30 years ago. Formerly a miniature painter, he didn't like the framed printed art available at the time, so he started painting and framing his own.

His paintings appear in at least a dozen different countries and a few have been spotted in museum displays, but now he says: "I still have a passion for painting on canvas, but I can no longer do miniature work, so my studio time is divided between drafting laser designs and painting on a canvas on my easel. As I get older, my eyesight and eye-hand co-ordination is becoming more and more challenging.

"Unsteady hands are a source of frequent frustrations. I'm still alive, though not kicking nearly as hard as I used to, but nevertheless, I am still enjoying little things in a big way."

Other than his laser designs, Jeff does occasional miniature work for his own pleasure, and his latest a delightfully spooky Halloween mansion, falls in that category.

"I always have had a love affair with anything Halloween," he explained. "When I was designing 1/144 scale house kits, I decided I wanted to make a larger kit for a haunted house, with furniture in a fantasy genre that was both familiar and also unique."

The result of his idea was his 1/48 scale Halloween House and accessories kits. "This house and all of its contents were designed by me. The components were all cut and/or engraved on a laser cutter from various sheet wood materials ranging in thickness from 1/64" to 1/8" thick, and also paper for printed materials.

Jeff said: "Corel Draw was used to create all the drafting of the cutting and engraving lines, and Photoshop to make the printed wallpapers and art for framing. It's all a product of drafting and graphic art work. The hardest part about making this miniature was having to constantly hold in one's mind

the relationships of the various pieces, and how they make a whole unit. Many of the details are not what I imagined at the beginning. The biggest challenge is to translate flat forms, (the sheets of wood) into three-dimensional forms that express both the purpose and style of the piece.

"My favourite parts about this piece are the fanciful forms and the way the colours come together. It's by far my favourite laser cut design of all of mine. Putting the first one together and seeing it 'come alive', I felt like Victor Frankenstein in the old movie. I wanted to shout, 'It's alive! It's alive!' as I was putting the finished furniture into the house for the first time."

There are actually a total of seven kits represented in the full display. The house is one kit; the front yard details is a kit; and there are six kits for the rooms.

Future projects beckon. "I would love to create a haunted pirate ship some day, but I love the detail so much that I don't know if this model will ever be realised. From beginning to end, my creations always are a labour of love for me. These are always the most dangerous and risky dreams to try to make into a business. Not only is there seldom profit in them, but you can quickly lose your shirt, which may be okay for Halloween zombies, but a bad thing for a miniaturist in business."



"From beginning to end, my creations always are a labour of love for me."



**Top left and right:** Jeff's kits shown with two different finishings. These also come with interior accessories and furniture.

**Above left and right:** A few progress photos showing the haunted house kits as they are being assembled.

**Right and far right:** The inside of the two differently styled haunted houses. The furniture kits are easy to assemble and make your own.

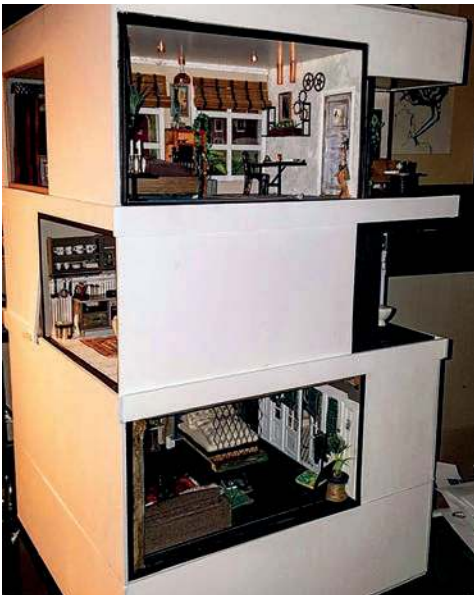


# Foam rooms merge into marvellous high rise mix



Sandra doesn't quite know where to start when she takes a look at Louise Bjargo's beautifully decorated collection of rooms in a variety of sizes

BY SANDRA HARDING



When is a doll's house not a doll's house? What is the right size or scale for a doll's house anyway? These are just a couple of many mystifying questions on my mind right now.

I blame Louise Bjargo and the many 1/48th scale doll's house fans for my quandary. Let me explain. Last week at a doll's house show I was told that 1/48th size sales are growing and, backed by other feedback, I believed it. Today, I heard from Louise who told me her doll's house is not a doll's house, but a series of room boxes assembled into a rotatable "high-rise" building made of foam board. Some of the rooms are 35 x 20 x 18 cm but some are bigger and some are smaller, she explained. Not only that, the scale is 1/16th and my head hurts.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not looking

for sympathy. I am always delighted to write about any doll's house, room box or anything miniature, whatever the scale, and this one was just so irresistible and interesting I reckoned you might just find it so too.

I asked Louise for some photographs, and I had another headache trying to decide which was the front, back or sides, so I gave up and decided to just tell you a little about the 14 rooms and the beautiful decor. Now, where do I start as each room seems to be a little work of art which, of course, it is.

There is an Andy Warhol room — the posters are a dead giveaway. There are orange chairs and footstools, and is this my favourite? Not a chance, because then I see a Beatles room with posters of the fab four, and just look at that fabulous rug, lamp, sofa and stools. Maybe the best is the super cool bedroom with sofa, posters and plants, or maybe it's the room with a raised dais and red lampshade, or even the swanky bathroom. I've just seen another bedroom, with very exotic colours, with a huge map above the bed. What a novel idea.

Wait a moment, I have just spotted the children's play room — utterly magic, and now I see the view from the window in the sitting room with green accessories, and wonder how on earth Louise made it look so very real. Another mystifying question. The sewing room is a delight and the room with the





“ I think that this is really something special, beautifully created.”

cream sofa and distressed furniture is gorgeous (I hope you're keeping up).

Another bedroom has fur covers on the bed and a headboard of lace, plus more distressed furniture, and my mouth waters. I want this in full size. I begin to wonder whether this lady is a secret interior designer, she has got everything just so right.

As I leave the bedroom I am in the kitchen diner, and I want this for real too. Just look at the lovely colours here. The brilliant blue of the dining furniture and the simple plain wood of the actual kitchen, with everything matching. Much of the furniture in the rooms is either Lundby or Brio, with a smattering of items made by Louise with lots of it recycled I am told. Just perfect.

There are too many rooms to men-

tion them all and, anyway, I have run out of superlatives now, so you can make up your own when you look at these photographs.

As a last comment, I notice the lack of dolls here but then this does seem to be the kind of creation that would spoil if it had people in it. Just a passing thought. I think that this is really something special, beautifully created, and I hope you agree, If not, look again.



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# Heathcliffe Manor on Ocean Avenue is full of coastal chic

Sandra is excited to visit a house with a mezzanine floor. It's a glittering and beautiful creation that forms part of Judy Riggs' Seaside Village

BY SANDRA HARDING

The glittery lights were the first thing I noticed about Judy Riggs' pretty house before I realised it was yet another first for me, a doll's house with a mezzanine floor.

This one, however, is not a bit like any factory floor or mezzanine office I've ever seen, as it's really beautiful. Judy has called this glittering creation Heathcliffe Manor, and it is now part of her "Seaside Village". You won't be surprised to learn that Judy's favourite decor is what she calls "coastal chic".

Heathcliffe Manor was originally a Duracraft farmhouse, which was stained a brown colour inside and out, not to Judy's taste at all. The house had tiny partitioned rooms which made Judy feel hemmed in, so decisive action was needed.

Walls, floors, staircase and doorways were opened up and removed altogether and Judy immediately felt much better. The house measures 42 inches wide by 21 inches deep by 33 inches tall, so it's quite a sizeable structure.

Judy tells me that she likes her houses to reflect how she would like to live in them herself, and so designs them with that thought in mind. The houses have to be white, light and bright, and they certainly seem that way to me.

It's fascinating to see that Judy has completely opened up one side of the house, to create an amazing, almost museum like feel, with high ceilings and walls, just dripping with works of art, which all sit above the delightful

kitchen dining area. The chandelier is a joy and is made from safety pins and beads would you believe, bought from an antique shop. The furniture throughout is a mix of Petite Princess from 1964 mixed with other makes.

The unusual little girls are Petite Blyth dolls which were custom made by Californian artist Denise Farinsky, who has even managed to create a doll based on a picture of Judy's mother as a child. Her portrait is over the blue bed.

Another rather unique touch is that Judy likes to incorporate her late mother's items into her houses and here they really do add to the scene. For instance, there's a string of pearls draped elegantly across the bed, almost as if a miniature Judy has just walked through her doll's house, and casually left it there. A pretty brooch and pendant that she just happened to have in her hand, is left almost accidentally on another bed. Under normal circumstances the scale wouldn't work but, somehow, in this house, it just does.

There are also roosters here that

shouldn't be, but are, and even glass perfume bottles, one sitting alongside a perfect piano which still manages to look right. There are lovely, vintage white Lennox rabbits that Judy has had for years, all quite at home, and in the bathroom a tall pink flamingo, another little brooch and a Christmas tree, all looking as if they have a right to be there, and they do.

The floors have been beautifully stencilled by Judy, keeping the colour palette to her favourite coastal chic decor. I have to mention the unique lighting, as I can't think of any other doll's house I have seen where the lighting is just draped where it wants to drape, seemingly accidentally, and yet amazingly just works. Even the lighting on the outside of the house is cleverly strung, and I love the full size Christmas tree ornaments. How does that work so well?

Judy is no newcomer to miniatures. She has created "houses" from sets of shelves and cabinets, and made many room boxes; I also know that there are more like this, just waiting in the wings for you to see. The houses are all on Ocean Avenue, and they are all so lovely and glittery, I look forward to doing them for you.

Although Judy and her family live in New York currently, they are planning a move to Florida when husband Thomas retires in a couple of years. Now we know where her love of the sea comes from.





# Kensington sh

We take a look at some of the wonderful work of just a few of the many talented makers who will be appearing at the Kensington Dollshouse Festival on November 30



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## ▲ Jane Harrop

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● [www.janeharrop.co.uk](http://www.janeharrop.co.uk)  
01625 873 117  
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## ◀ Eleonora Cappelletti (IT)

Eleonora, from Italy, makes soft and embroidered accessories in alpine and modern styles. "My favourites in real size too," she admits. Look out for the cat accessories, like cat-beds and scratching posts, she sometimes adds.

● 0039 029 795 0343  
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## ▶ Delph Miniatures

Delph always love being at the Festival. They say: "At KDF we can showcase our more specialised modern miniatures, and it's also a great place to meet our customers from abroad too."

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● [www.alisondaviesminiatures.co.uk](http://www.alisondaviesminiatures.co.uk)

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## New addition to Perfection in Miniature Awards

An exciting new competition was launched this year as part of the Perfection in Miniature Awards (PIMA), that take place at the Kensington Dollhouse Festival Summer Show.

Charlotte Stokoe, Festival organiser, told us: "In the past the PIMA have only accepted entries from craftsmen who exhibit at London Dollhouse Festival shows, so we were excited to add the PIMA Open Competition this year, which enabled anyone to enter."

She added: "The theme for 2019 was "Needle-work" and we received some incredible entries from all over the world, in all kinds of disciplines, from knitting and crochet to patchwork and embroidery."

The winner has not yet been announced but you can see the entries displayed at the KDF Christmas Show on November 30.



**Top right:** Embroidered Scene by Laura Lisowsky. **Above:** Joker sweater by Olga Surina.



**Above:** The top shelf holds handmade pottery bottles with tiny corks.

**Right:** The braided garlic took many attempts to get just right and Erzsébet is thankful she didn't give up because she loves the results.

**Far right:** The realistic miniature cupboard shown in full.



## A WELL STOCKED MINI PANTRY

After spending six years carefully setting small creations to the side Erzsébet Bodzás has finally finished her twelfth scale pantry cupboard

Erzsébet has spent the last ten years making miniatures, first as a hobby and now full time as a miniatures business owner. She left her job as a landscape architect and started her business so she could have more flexibility while raising her children.

After spending six years putting aside special handmade miniature pieces, Erzsébet had finally collected enough items to fill her twelfth scale pantry cupboard display.

The foods were all made from polymer clay and the pots and plate were made from air dry clay. The cupboard its self was constructed

using wood as were the trays. In fact this little cupboard was made to replicate the one her grandmother had in her pantry.

"Everything is my own work in the scene. I'm a perfectionist. Everything has to be just the same as I envision it. Since it would be impossible to find the right accessories in the market, I have to make everything myself."

A well stocked pantry cupboard has to be filled with a the mixture of various food related items, vegetables and fruits, preserves and meat products, old pots and pans, and rusty kitchen tools. This artist added so

much beautiful contrast and texture that no doubt made it a special piece.

The containers for the preserves are capacitors (electrical components) that she painted and then sprayed over with a few layers of gloss varnish. She found this idea online after reading a Russian blogger's post.

With every project Erzsébet loves the challenge of learning something new. Making the garlic braid was something that took her a few tries to get just right. "My previous tries weren't very satisfying, The final version included multiple baking and at attaching some paper stalks. It was

very time consuming but I have to admit the final results were worth the time involved and it was a great victory once completed."

Once all the components were completed it was time for the best part – the moving in. Erzsébet felt it was a well-deserved reward after all her weeks of hard work. She even spent some extra time playing with the miniature pieces before the final arrangement was decided upon.

Erzsébet plans to keep her focus on still life scenes and will soon be making them, not only for miniature collectors, but also for a wider audience.

# READERS' TIPS

## MAKE A MOROCCAN STYLE CABINET

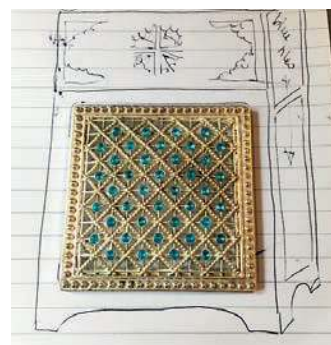
BY MICHELLE EMBLETON THOMPSON

### You will need

- Balsa and coffee stirrers
- 4 wooden pushpins
- 4 spherical beads and 4 smaller spherical beads
- A decorative grille (here I've used the lid from a small square trinket box and its dimensions are 6.5 x 6.5cm)
- Metallic sticky embellishments
- Printed tiles (here I've used the freebies from an earlier issue of DHW)
- Tacky glue, super-glue,
- Emery board
- Black acrylic paint and black sharpie
- Spray varnish or clear nail polish
- Sharp craft knife, straight edge and a mitre trim cutting tool
- Latex gloves



- Cut 2 pieces of balsa (11.5 x 7.5cm) for the front and back panels.
- Cut 2 pieces of balsa (11.5 x 5cm) for the side panels.
- Cut 1 piece of balsa (7.5 x 5cm) for the top.
- Cut the following lengths of coffee stirrer: 6 of 5cm, 4 of 11.5cm, 2 of 7.5cm and 2 of 3.5cm.
- Using the mitre tool, cut the ends of the stirrers at a 45 degree angle.
- Using the emery board sand off all cut edges on balsa and coffee stirrer pieces.
- Ensure your coffee stirrer pieces sit nicely together on the sides and top of the box.
- Cut three sections of the tile to fit the two larger side panels and the top panel created by the stirrers
- As my grille had an 0.5cm internal lip on its rear side, I measured the centre of the front panel and I cut out a 6cm x 6cm aperture in the front panel so the grill would be flush when fitted
- Carefully glue the balsa pieces together ensuring sides are straight and



parallel.

- Once the sides are dry glue on the top panel. Once the box shape is firm add the coffee stirrer; trim and glue into place.
- Once dry, place your metallic stickers into the panels you have created on the sides and add stickers in the top section on the front. Paint everything black. Whilst the paint is almost dry, wearing latex gloves, carefully rub over the embellishment areas to remove some of the paint and let the embellishment shine through. Once the paint is dry glue the tile pieces into place.
- For the feet, colour the four wooden pushpins with a black Sharpie. Add a dot of super glue to the pin and push them into four corners on the bottom of the cabinet.
- Once all glues are dry give the entire piece a coat of varnish and leave



to dry.

- Super glue the four smaller spherical beads to each of the four larger beads.
- Once all items are dry super glue each bead cluster to each of the top four corners.
- Add tacky glue along all inner lip edges of the grille and a dot of super glue in the corners. Glue the grille in place over the aperture and leave to dry.



# Frankenstein cake was an experiment in clay

Auralea admits to being a novice with polymer clay, but that didn't stop her having fun with this cake and ending up with a monster mini

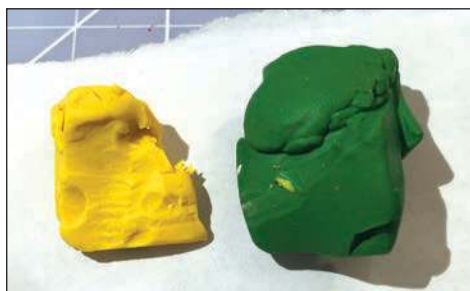
BY AURALEA KRIEGER

I have been wanting to make a fun Halloween cake for some time and finally was able to do it. After thinking about my Frankenstein cake I thought he would be more fun with a square head! I am a beginner with polymer and still learning each time. I encourage you to try this and have fun!

**Step 1.** First, line up two pieces of wood that are the thickness you want each cake level to be and the width of your cutter.



**Step 2.** Then roll out some brown polymer clay inside of the wood strips and cut out your cakes. I cut three of them.



**Step 3.** I mixed in some yellow with my green polymer clay to get it a little brighter. After all, Frank does have a glowing personality.



**Step 4.** Next, roll out the green clay into a log shape with your hand and

then with a roller to about 1/16" thick and cut two of those with the same cutter you used to cut the brown. Be sure to clean any brown clay off of it first!



**Step 5.** Stack the brown and green pieces up making sure they are even and straight as you go.



**Step 6.** Now roll out the green clay to a longer log again with your hand and then with a roller to about 1/16" thick. Lay your cake on it and cut the height from top to bottom.

## You will need

- Polymer clay - white, green, brown, and black
- Liquid polymer
- Square cutter
- Roller
- Craft knife
- Scrap wood
- Needle tool and an old toothbrush
- Plastic cup
- Small spatula
- Small circle cutter
- Toothpick
- Bake and Bond
- Matt varnish



## MINI MAKES

cake with your craft knife.



**Step 10.** Make some texture with a needle tool and an old toothbrush. I made the mistake of not zooming in on my photo to check my texture before baking it. So do that with your phone or use a magnifier to be sure it is textured enough.

**Step 11.** Give the green icing in the middle some texture as well.

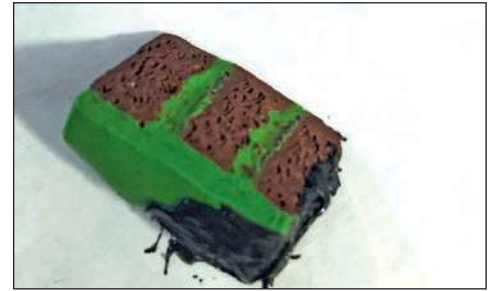
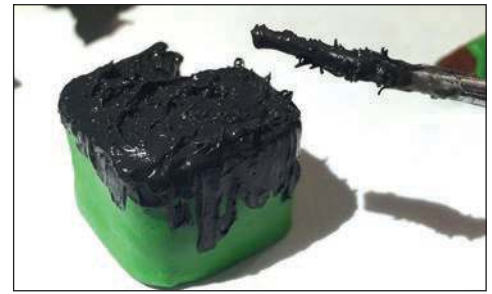


**Step 12.** I save my yogurt cups for just this sort of thing. Find a cup you can throw away after we are finished. Roll some black polymer very thin and break off pieces and put it in the cup. Then squeeze some liquid polymer on it.

**Step 13.** Work it with a small spatula. I used a manicure tool.



**Step 14.** I added some black pastel shavings to make sure the clay was very black.



**Step 15.** When it gets to the consistency of icing put it on the top and down the sides like his hair would be. Don't forget to add some to your cake slice too.

**Step 16.** Bake both the cake and the cake slice according to the manufacturer's instructions. Let it cool.



**Step 17.** Find something to cut out the white clay for the eyes. I used a small glass. I had pen caps but they were a tad too big. If the clay gets stuck in the glass use your blade tip to get it out. Don't worry if you end up denting them in a small section.



*If your cake looks anything like this version of Frankenstein you deserve a place on Bake Off.*

Photo: Wikicommons



**Step 7.** Lay your cake above it and roll it to determine how long of a piece you will need to wrap the cake. Trim the piece of green clay.



**Step 8.** Start wrapping it on one side and then all the way around. I pressed it from two sides at a time with flat pieces of hard plastic to get it firm.



**Step 9.** Carefully cut a slice out of the

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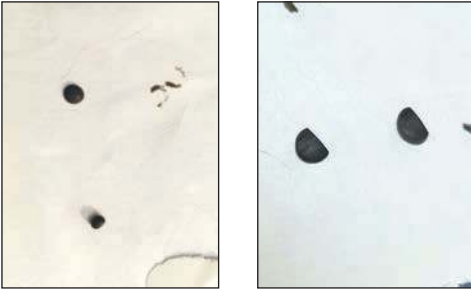
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**Step 18.** Now cut the tops off of the circles, a little less than half the circle. If you did leave a dent in them you will be cutting off that particular section.



**Step 19.** Roll up a tiny piece of black clay and press it flat into a circle for the pupil. Cut the tips off of those as well.



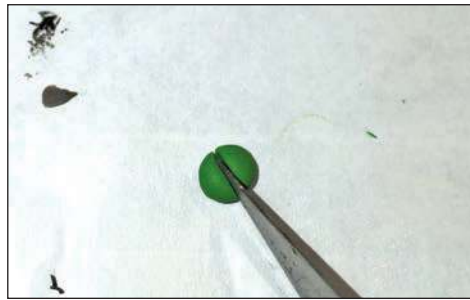
**Step 20.** Use a toothpick to put a tiny spot of Bake and Bond where the eyes will go and press them down gently. Now do the same with the pupils.



**Step 21.** Roll out some black for his eyebrow. Trim it to the correct length, put a tiny bit of Bake and Bond down and press it on over his eyes.

**Step 22.** Roll out a very thin piece of black and shape it for his mouth. For this I just held it and used a toothpick to dab on some Bake and Bond then pressed it on the head.

**Step 23.** Put a spot of Bake and Bond on his cheek and place tiny rolled pieces there for the stitches.



**Step 24.** Roll a green ball, press down with your finger, and cut in half with your knife.



**Step 25.** Put a spot of Bake and Bond on both sides of his head where ears will go and put them on.

**Step 26.** For the bolts I mixed black with a tiny amount of white, made a small ball and put a spot of Bake and Bond where I wanted the bolt and placed the ball there on both sides.



**Step 27.** Then I cut two tiny squares and put a spot of Bake and Bond on the grey balls and adhered the square to them.

**Step 28.** Bake again according to the manufacturer's instructions. Let cool.

**Step 29.** I covered the cake icing with satin varnish but it was too shiny so I painted the entire outside with matt varnish. Don't paint the actual cake inside. Let dry.



If you like you can also make a knife from card stock by cutting the blade out from silver card stock then glue two small pieces of black card together. Cut each of those to be the shape of handles and glue them on either side of the back of the silver card. Colour the edges black with a marker and add two silver dots on the handle.



I traced around my cake cutter and added about 1/8" and cut it out for the cake board.



Isn't he handsome? Just perfect for a miniature Halloween party!

While you are creating be sure to play some spooky music, eat a bag of sweets and serve up some Halloween fun!

# Showcase kitchen is a baker's delight

Roxanne Fern has a flair for creating scenes that make you want to get to baking in the kitchen. Take a look at the scene she uses to show off her minis

BY PAM NORTH

**D**ieting miniaturists better have resolves of steel before being faced with Roxanne Fern's miniature kitchen vignette. Everything about it is centred around the world of food, and tiny, delicious-looking baked pies, cookies, and candies are part of the montage of items that she has so skilfully made, collected, and mixed together. The artist recreates kitchen and baking-themed miniatures in all scales, focusing mainly on twelfth and 1:6 scales.

She started making miniatures in 2006, and opened her Etsy shop, turning the endeavour into a full-time job in 2010. Initially, she was fascinated by miniature sculpted babies, and wanted to try her hand at them, but soon she branched out into miniature clothing,

crocheted blankets, decorated cribs, and accessories (even adorable tiny dumplings), for the babies.

Her journey into miniatures soon turned into a full-time occupation, and she dedicates all of her time designing and building miniatures. "I love what I do," she said happily, "and I enjoy every moment of the process

that allows my passion to come across to others. I am excited every time I get an idea or inspiration to create something in miniature, and seeing a finished product gives me a great sense of joy and pride in my work."

Combining home life and miniature making can be challenging, but for Roxanne they blend together just fine. Her family fully supports her, and her young children think it's wonderful, and love helping her come up with new ideas. She can make miniatures in her home studio and concentrate on filling orders in the daytime while

**Above:** Roxanne has an extensive collection of metal moulds.

**Left:** Each piece shows a wonderful attention to detail.

**Above right:** Two circus cakes are ready to go on display.

**Right:** Each nook on this shelf is filled with mini magic. Mixers, blenders, straws, and books all add something special to this miniature scene.



## MEET THE MAKER



adding little things here and there to make it look as it does today.

"I started working on it about three years ago, after I built the baker's table from scratch, along with the tall cabinet that sits next to it displaying all of my favourite kitchen accessories. Next was the vintage plate rack that holds all my mini pots, pans, and baking essentials. Then I made the display shelf to showcase my vintage ice cream containers, and slowly it all has come together beautifully as the mini kitchen of my dreams."

Materials used were: wood for the furniture pieces, photo card stock, plastic, paint, glue, polymer clay, and printed fabric. "The cookies and donuts were made by a dear and talented friend of mine, Catherine Parsons from SweetPetite-Shoppe. I love the polymer clay miniatures she creates, and they always work so harmoniously in my kitchen and baking scenes.

Roxanne said: "The cakes, wooden pieces, and other accessories were handmade by me. There are a few plastic and metal pots/ pans and kitchen tools that were purchased and customised by me as well. A personal

favourite for me are the holiday sprinkle bottles that I've recently created.

"I spent many hours sculpting each teeny tiny bottle out of polymer clay, making sure to create enough colours that I could mix and match to create a fun assortment. The glass bottles were sealed, given hand-painted tops and placed in the wood rack I had made for displaying them. It was very time-consuming, but well worth it. It's a mini replica of the real one I have in my own kitchen. I also loved recreating all of the vintage ice cream containers in miniature, with all their soft and pretty colours."

Self-taught, Roxanne swears by a good pair of sharp scissors as her most valuable tool for cutting the paper and card stock she uses so much in her work. Realism is paramount in her endeavour, and inspiration comes easily to her, from real life, television, magazines, and social media sites such as Pinterest."

**Below:** Miniature heart-themed desserts are a great way to bake with love on Valentine's day.

her children are in school, then work in the evening once the kids are in bed. "I work best in a peaceful and quiet environment," she explained.

She finds inspiration everywhere: real life, television, magazines, and social media sites such as Pinterest. "I love dreaming up new miniatures to create that are fun, sweet, perhaps a bit vintage, retro, or shabby chic and unexpected."

One of Roxanne's projects, a kitchen scene, is part of her personal collection, and includes some of her favourite miniature baking items. She set it up as a background for photographing the constantly evolving selection of kitchen minis that she makes. "It is somewhat of a miniature replica of how my real-life kitchen is coming along, and includes many of the vintage and kitschy items I have collected and have displayed in my 'bakery-style' kitchen. It makes me happy to have it set up in my workspace, and I constantly am



"Seeing a finished product gives me a great sense of joy and pride in my work."

# Pumpkin bread's perfect to make for autumn

Here's an idea for a seasonal recipe using polymer clay, but the fun starts when you decide how you're going to display your bread

BY GAIL TAYLOR GISMONDI

It's harvest time and pumpkins are everywhere. So let's take out the baking supplies and get to work. Our family loves the taste of warm pumpkin bread and so will your miniature family.



**Step 1.** Mix 1 strip each of pumpkin and Burnt Umber clay. Add in 1/12 strip of translucent clay. Roll and blend thoroughly.



**Step 2.** Add a bit of liquid clay to the blend on your ceramic tile. Use a coffee stirrer to swirl the clays.

**Step 3.** Add a little bit at a time into your mixing bowl with a stirrer. Place a spoon or spatula in the bowl.



**Step 4.** Next, bake your filled bowl according to the clay package instructions.

**Step 5.** To make the eggs, take one strip of white clay and mix with 1/4 strip of translucent clay. Then roll small pieces into an egg shape and bake.

Display your pieces on a wood prep board or table. Add more accessories as you desire. The fun of this project is trying different arrangements! Your autumn baking will make a holiday scene come to life.

Contact Gail with any questions at [etsy.com/shop/kensingtonminiatures](https://etsy.com/shop/kensingtonminiatures)

## You will need

- Polymer clay: Burnt umber, pumpkin, translucent, and white
- Liquid Polymer clay
- 2 loaf tins or a muffin tin
- Mixing bowl (ceramic or metal)
- E-6000 glue
- Coffee stirrers
- Clay machine or roller
- Ceramic tile
- Foam mat or heavy paper
- Clay oven or toaster oven



# Add a cosy cardigan to your mini wardrobe

Keep the chills away with this smart pattern for a lady's cardigan by Roz Walters. The perfect mini project to keep you busy as the chilly evenings arrive

BY ROZ WALTERS



**T**his is such a lovely little sweater to have as part of your miniature collection. You can make it in any colour you wish. Add a collar for a more finished look and then slip it onto your twelfth scale doll or stage it in your miniature room scene. Either way it will be a great addition!

Working back and fronts in one piece to armholes make 41 ch. 1 dc into the second ch from hook, 1 dc in each ch to end, 1 ch, turn. (40 dc plus the turning ch)

**Next row:** Miss the first st, 1 dc in next and every st to the end of the row, 1 dc in the turning ch, 1 ch, turn.

**Foundation row:** 1 tr into the first st, \* miss the next dc, (1 dc, 1 tr) into the next dc; rep from \* to the last 2 sts, 1 dc

in the top of the turning ch, 1 ch, turn.

**Pattern row:** 1 tr in the first st, \* miss the next tr, (1 dc, 1 tr) into the next dc; rep from \* to last 2 sts, miss the next tr, 1 dc into the top of the turning ch, 1 ch, turn.

Repeat the pattern row 12 times more, or until the length required.

## Divide for armholes

1 tr into the first st, \* miss the next tr, (1 dc, 1 tr) into the next dc; rep from \* 3 times more, miss the next tr, 1 dc into the next dc, 1 ch, turn. Work 8 more rows in pattern for the front.

**Next row:** 1 tr in the first st, \* miss the next tr, (1 dc, 1 tr) into the next dc, rep from \* once more, miss the next tr, 1 dc into the next dc.

Work 1 more row. Fasten off.

## Sweater back

Return to the main piece, miss the first tr, rejoin the yarn to the next dc with a sl st, 1 ch, 1 tr into the same st, \* miss the next tr, (1 dc, 1 tr) into the next dc; rep from \* 6 times more, miss the next tr, 1 dc into the next dc, 1 ch, turn. Work 10 more rows in the pattern. Fasten off.

**Second front:** Return to the main piece, miss the next tr, rejoin the yarn to the next dc with a sl st, 1 tr into the same st, \* miss the next tr, (1 dc, 1 tr) into the next dc; rep from \* to the last 2 sts, miss the next tr, 1 dc into the top of the turning ch, 1 ch, turn.

Work 9 more rows in the pattern.

**Next row:** 1 tr in the first st, \* miss the next tr, (1 dc, 1 tr) into the next dc, rep from \* once more, miss the next tr, 1 dc into the next dc.

Work 1 more row. Fasten off.

## You will need

- 1 ply yarn, approx 50 metres
- 1.25 steel crochet hook

## Abbreviations:

ch = chain  
dc = double crochet  
st(s) = stitch(es)  
cont = continue  
beg = beginning  
tr = treble  
inc = increase  
rem = remaining  
rep = repeat  
sl st = slip stitch



*continued on P56.*

continued from P55.

## Sleeves

**Work two:** Starting at the cuff work 12 ch. 1 dc into the second ch from hook, 1 dc in each ch to end, 1 ch, turn. (11 dc plus the turning ch) Work 2 rows in dc as on the main piece.

**Increase row:** 1 dc in the first st (first inc made), 2 dc in each dc across the row, 1 dc in the turning ch, 1 ch, turn. (22 dc plus the turning ch)

Work the foundation row as on the main piece. Work 20 rows in pattern, or to length required. Fasten off.

Sew up the shoulder seams and the sleeve seams. Set each sleeve into the armhole and sew in.

## Collar

(Optional): With the right side facing, miss the first st at the right neck edge, rejoin the yarn to the next st with a sl st, 1 ch. Work approx 30 dc across the neck edge, ending 1 st from the left edge, 1 ch, turn. Work 1 row in dc, ending the row with 1 dc into the turning ch, 1 ch, turn.

**Increase row:** 1 dc into the first st (inc made), dc to the end, 1 dc into the turning ch, 1 ch, turn. Rep the inc row three times more.

Please note, only one increase is made on each row at the beginning. Fasten off. With the right side facing rejoin the yarn to the left front with a sl st, 1 ch. Work in dc down the left front, across the bottom, and up the right front, remembering to work 2 dc into both bottom corners, 1 ch, turn. Work 1 more row in dc. Fasten off. Sew in all ends, sew on mini buttons or beads.

If you wish to make the same cardigan without the collar work as follows: With the wrong side facing, rejoin the yarn to the corner of the neck with a sl st, 1 ch, 2 dc into the same st. Work in dc across the neck edge, working three dc at the second corner. Work down the first front, across the bottom, and up the second front, working three dc at each bottom corner, sl st to join.

**Next row:** 1 ch, 2 dc into the same corner st, work 1 dc into each dc, working three dc into the corner st, sl st to join. Fasten off.

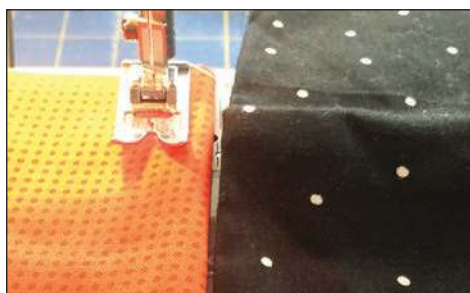
Admire your new mini sweater!

# Quick stitch tricks for a pillow and throw

Debbie takes us step-by-step through a simplified way of making a pumpkin-themed pillow and throw for an autumn display

BY DEBBIE BOOTH

I will be sharing a very simple Halloween pillow and throw tutorial with you. As a life-long quilter, I have learned to make shortcuts in making miniature pillows, throws, and linens to avoid bulk. Bulk can make a quilt look like a hot pad for your kitchen instead of a beautiful quilt for your doll's house! Normally appliquéing a design to a throw or pillow requires several steps. We are not ignoring those steps, but simplifying the process in making the pillow and throw.

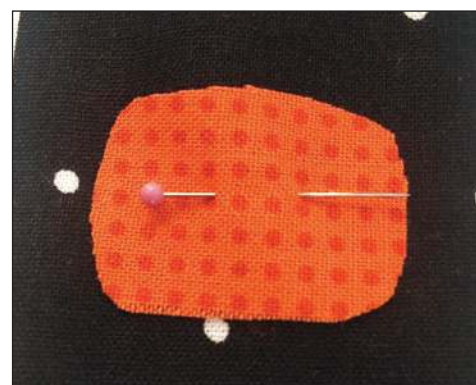


## Pumpkin pillow

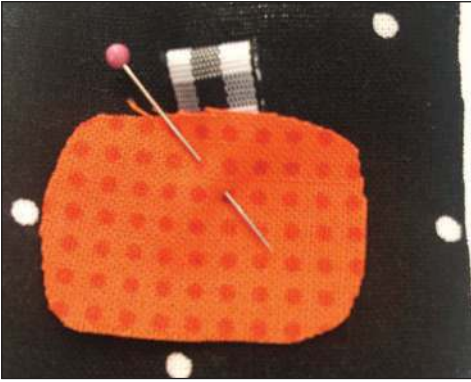
**Step 1.** For one pillow, cut 2 squares that are 2" x 2". Cut 1 oval pumpkin shape for the pumpkin.

### You will need

- Black cotton material
- Orange or rust material
- 4" of 1/4" wide ribbon
- Batting
- Needle and thread or sewing machine
- Scissors
- Ruler



**Step 2.** Place the oval pumpkin shape in the centre of the square. Before pinning, cut ribbon length to 1". Fold the ribbon in half and slip it under the top of the pumpkin fabric so just enough sticks out to look like a pumpkin stem. See photo. Pumpkin may need to be moved down a little bit to fit in the ribbon. Keep in mind while sewing, a 1/4" seam allowance will be used. So be sure the ribbon is lower than the seam allowance.



**Step 3.** Pin the pumpkin and ribbon in place. With the sewing machine, using a straight stitch, sew near the edge of the pumpkin which is called top stitching.

The inside of the pumpkin is also stitched by sewing a continuous rounded stitch. The top stitching also sews the ribbon in place. There is no need to tack it down, unless desired. Trim threads and remove pins.



**Step 4.** Place the pillow backing face down onto the pumpkin (right sides together) and pin the squares together. Sew around three sides and leave the fourth side open. Remove pins and trim the threads. Turn it right-side-out. Work on the corners to square them up. Fill with a tiny bit of stuffing, and sew the pillow closed.

### Throw

**Step 5.** Cut a piece of black fabric to 3 1/2" x 7 1/2".

**Step 6.** Using the same pumpkin shape, cut 1 oval pumpkin shape out.



**Step 7.** About 1" away from the edges, pin the pumpkin in place near the right bottom corner. Cut a small 1" length of ribbon. Fold ribbon in half and slip under the top edge of the pumpkin. The pumpkin needs to be far enough away from the edge that the sewing (seam allowance) has room without catching the edge of the pumpkin.

**Step 8.** Sew around the pumpkin, top stitching it around the edges. This will sew the ribbon in place as well. Once the pumpkin has been sewn, trim threads and remove pins. Fold the fabric of the throw in half. Pin together (right sides together) and sew around the throw using 1/4" seam allowance and leave a 2" section open. Trim threads.

**Step 9.** Turn the throw right-side-out. Square up the corners. Fold in the opening 1/4" be sure it is square and pin together.

**Step 10.** Spritz with water and drape over a mini chair, couch, or bed. Add your pillow and voila, a fun and decorative miniature Halloween vignette has been created!

# Victoria brings her fantasies to life

Russian maker Victoria Shaparina creates her own 1/24th scale fairy tales in a romantically haunting style and tiny details are a hallmark of her work

BY PAM NORTH. PHOTOGRAPHS BY OLGA KINDINOVA

Like many other self-taught artists, Victoria Shaparina's interest began in her childhood from her fascination with fairy tales. The books depicting dark forests and quaint cottages provided the backdrop for Victoria's own imagination in conjuring up images of fantasy characters in folklore: wizards, vampires, werewolves.

These magical beings inspired her to write short stories and make drawings to capture their make-believe essence into her own reality, and eventually the miniature world became the venue for recreating the elements of her fascination for mysteries, haunted houses, haute couture and history, all coming together for her as a dream job.

The catalyst for her entrance into creativity and self-expression was by chance; it started with a friend's gift to her eight years ago – a polymer clay pendant that her friend had made. It was the spark that touched off her own creativity. Victoria decided to try working in the same material, although her



first effort, a green-skinned vampire, was baked in the oven at too high a temperature, resulting in a burnt offering, so to speak.

Refusing to be discouraged, she prevailed, and her practice efforts ultimately yielded success. Internet doll-making tutorials aided in the development of her expertise, and her initial primitive figures evolved into dolls, which, of course, needed accessories and then their own environment, and so a doll's house demanded to be created. A Victorian haunted mansion became a reality, requiring almost six months to complete. It had two inhabitants: Joachim, a young man, and Adelina, a ghost. The story Victoria devised as a backdrop had Joachim purchasing an old house to refurbish it to live in with his future wife.

A ghost intervened with his plan, however, haunting his everyday life. The concept intrigued her, fuelling her ideas as to what elements should surround her imaginary characters. The house primarily was of cardboard, wood, and papier-mâché, the last be-

coming her favourite and an indispensable material for constructing miniature components, such as trees, stones, grounds, and ornaments.

A resident of Ryazan, Russia, Victoria now expresses herself in 1/24th scale dolls, houses, and furniture just for the creatures that dwell in her imagination. It's important for her to make everything herself, with the exception of LED lighting, which she leaves to her brother to install. The creativity process gives her great enjoyment.

She loves the detail work, such as things like a mouse under a door, or a handprint on a wall, which are hallmarks of her work. What she likes most about miniatures is the constant development, experimenting with new techniques, materials, and forms, and she keeps evolving to more complex projects. "I never get bored," she said. She depicts her workplace as more of a storage area, with large bags and boxes of paints, fabrics, leathers, and other materials. "The quantity in it is constantly growing. Sometimes it's hard to believe I need such a great amount of materials to make such small things!"

Her tools are quite simple; she especially likes toothpicks for sculpting, carving, and gluing, and also prefers using silicone brushes. Inspiration comes from many sources, such as books, phrases, a song, or a picture. "While I'm working, time flies for me. It seems to me that I've just begun work-





**Above centre:** *Beauty and the beast are out for a stroll in the gardens.*

**Above far right:** *A beautiful ghost doll floating in the forest.*

**Right:** *Joachim purchases an old house and is visited by a beautiful ghost, Adelina.*

**Below right:** *The house in a swamp inspired from her childhood.*

ing, but then it's already time to have supper, and I haven't even cooked it yet! I'm thankful for my boyfriend who can do it for me. Maybe dark aesthetic is not what he appreciates much, but he has supported me from the very start of my artistic career."

Technically she is not a collector of miniatures, preferring instead that her creatures go to loving homes. She did attempt to make a doll for herself a few years ago; it was Joker, a character from Japanese manga, *Black Butler*. "I was greatly impressed by his sad story," she explained. "The doll looks a bit simple in comparison with the dolls I make now, but I still love him and would never part with him."

She has made a second doll's house that reminds her of an image she liked as a child – a small old hut in a swampy forest. Her interpretation of that image includes a young witch named Letty, who resides there with her pets and magical creatures.

The hut's materials include cardboard, wood, and papier-mâché, and she used a glazing resin to simulate water. She is working now on a vam-



pire castle, having long been fascinated with Gothic architecture and classical, aristocratic vampires who wear dark cloaks and sleep in coffins.

The castle has several inhabitants,

each with its own story and personality. She intends to have it completed next year, and considers it to be the most challenging project she has attempted so far.

# Turn twigs into a rustic bench

This little bench is fun to make and will fit perfectly into any outdoor scene — surround it with fallen leaves for Halloween or bonfire night

BY KEITH WALKER

**N**ow that autumn is almost here, there has never been a better time to get into the garden and trim those trees and hedges. Not only does this check the box for tidying up, it also gives you the

chance to use the cuttings to make a rustic miniature seat; recycling at its best.

The cuttings I used were from my damson tree, but almost any species of round twigs 8-12mm in diameter will do.

As the design of this chair is rustic, it is quite forgiving to make. You might like to consider it as part of a scene for autumn, or for bonfire night.

## You will need

- Fret pins 15mm long (x12)
- White glue
- Sharp knife
- Wood stain or varnish

## Cutting list:

- a - 8mm dia x 50
- b - 10mm dia x 50
- c - 8mm dia x 25
- d - 5mm dia x 35
- e - 8mm dia x 50
- f - 8mm or 10mm dia x 100
- g - 5mm x 5mm x 5mm x 45
- h - 5mm x 5mm x 40mm



**Step 1.** Cut out all the pieces (a, b, c, d) for the two ends of the bench. Cut a slight angle on the two (d) sections.



**Step 2.** Make a flat on one side of (a) that will fit to the top of (a) and (e). Using two fret pins, pin the angle

pieces (d) to the back and front legs.



**Step 3.** Pin the top (a) to the legs, also the bottom cross piece (c), which should now look like the one in the photo.



**Step 4.** Split some wood to give a size about 5 x 5mm to make the seat and back supports (g and h).



**Step 5.** Next, tack the seat supports into position.



**Step 6.** From about 10mm in from the seat support back edge, angle the back support to the top corner of the arm rest back, as shown in the photo.



**Step 7.** Carefully cut out small flats on each end of the seat laths.

## TOPTIP

- Pre drill the holes for the fret pins using a 0.8-1mm drill bit. This will help to stop the wood from splitting.





**Step 8.** Don't forget to pre-drill the hole for the fret pins. Note that the front lath is pinned from the side to reduce the risk of splitting the seat support.



**Step 9.** Using the fret pins, set the top back rest into position first, then the middle and bottom one.



**Step 10.** You have now completed the rustic seat.

It can be left in its natural wood state, or stained to the colour of your choice.

## Adding leaves

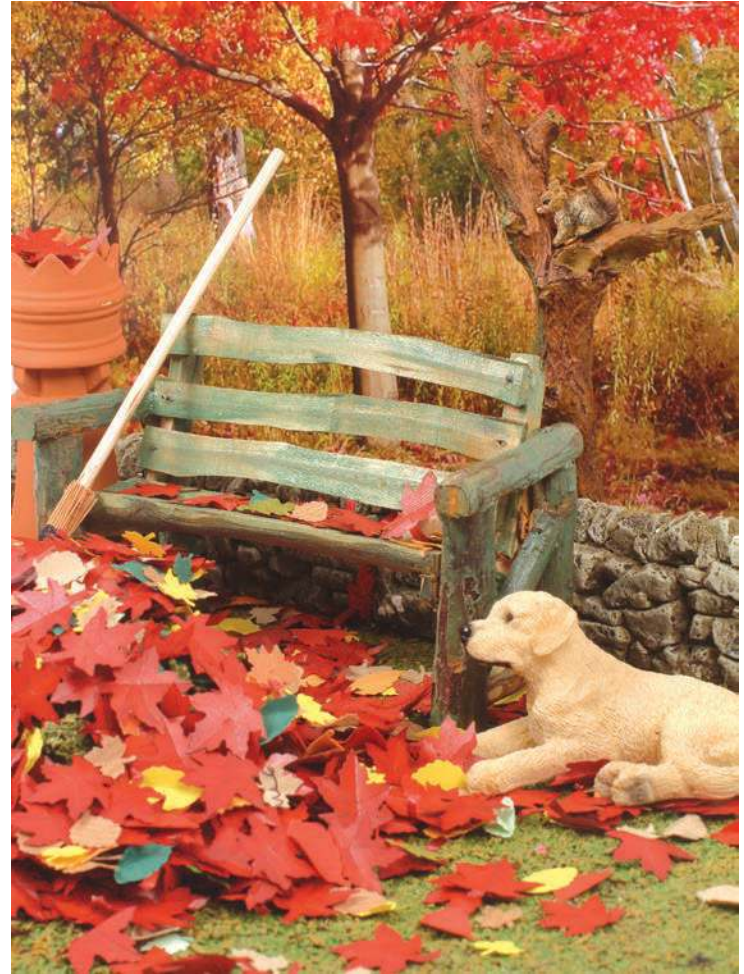


Fallen leaves are not something miniaturists appear to include in their settings very often. Why is that? Unlike our full size lives, where we get what we are given, in miniatures you can add as few or as many leaves to your project as you like. Think of it as seasoning to taste.

Far from being untidy, or a reminder of chores to be done, fallen leaves can add a realistic detail that others will kick themselves for forgetting.

If you want to make realistic leaves, look to nature first. See what shapes, colours and textures you can find and look for the places that leaves collect. Then when you know what you want to achieve and you are ready to start, arm yourself with a selection of leaf punches from a craft shop and gather up as many suitable colours and textures of paper that you can find.

Try everything from

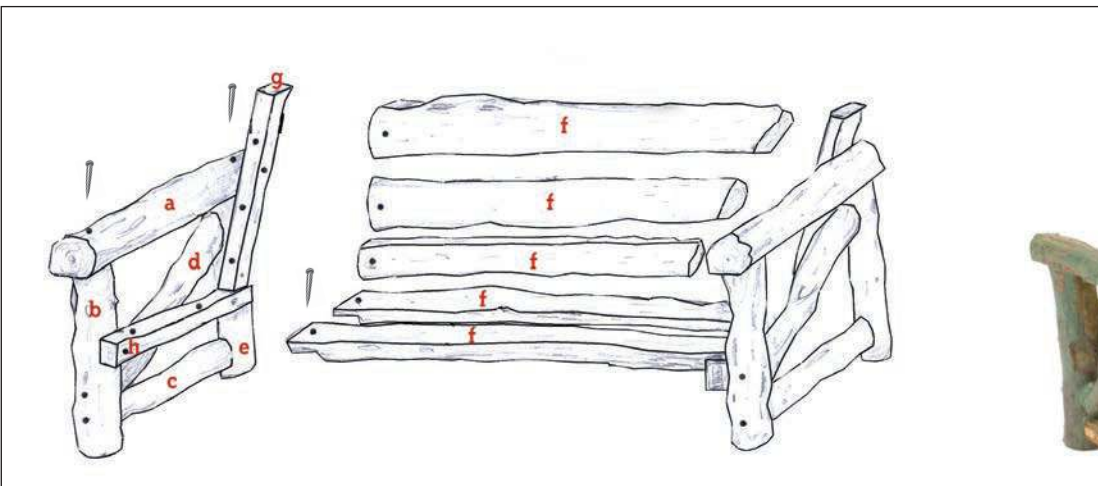


envelopes, crepe paper, wrapping paper, packing material, tissue paper and craft papers. Use oranges, browns and yellow for autumn, along with various shades of green and mix them all in together. Air mail weight paper is ideal for "touching up the tips". Just apply a thin layer of acrylic paint to both sides and it will

still droop and curl nicely, as if it were an old leaf.

To curl standard papers, drag the face of your scissors along to paper to force it to curl, holding the paper between your scissor blade and your thumb.

Random colours, shapes and textures will give depth and movement to your leaf mountain. Pile them up or sprinkle them where the wind normally swirls and forces them to gather in corners or by brickwork and drains.





# Tiny tools are fun & quick to create

These little tools are quite rustic, which means that they won't test your woodworking skills too much - and they'll look good in all sorts of scenes

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

I needed some tools for my elf tree house and luckily they only needed to be primitive tools so the steps are easy to follow and the tools are quick to make.

## Primitive hammers



**Step 1.** Start with a wooden dowel. Mine is about 1/4" in circumference. Carve the end so it's rounded. Get a drill bit that is as wide as a toothpick and drill a hole in the centre.



**Step 2.** Sand it so it is semi-smooth. Perfectly smooth if you want something more modern.



**Step 3.** Cut the end off of the dowel. Cut a toothpick and sand the end and glue it into the hole.

**Step 4.** For the mallet/hammer use a similar method.



**Step 5.** Stain everything in your desired colour.

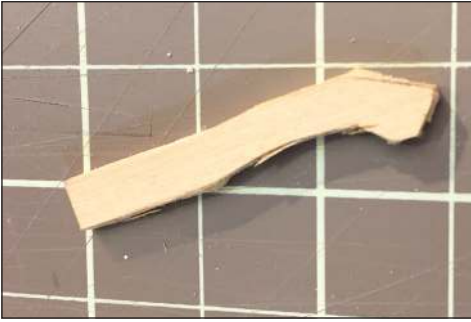
## Primitive axe



### You will need

- 1/4" wood dowel
- Craft knife
- Fine sand paper
- Toothpicks
- Wood glue
- Wood stain
- Basswood

- Polymer clay
- Grey acrylic paint
- Pencil
- Silver metallic dust
- Wire
- Wire cutters
- Thick thread
- Hand drill/small drill bit



**Step 6.** Draw your handle shape on a piece of basswood. Carefully trim around it with a craft knife. Don't press too hard or you will split the wood. Take your time.



**Step 7.** Once you get the shape carve the edges gently with the knife to make it smoother, but still mainly flat. Sand the edges a little.



**Step 8.** Use some polymer clay to shape the blade. You could use left over clay and paint it or use a medium grey. Make the wood poke out of the top of the blade.

I pressed it on the board in a basic shape. Then cut away what I didn't want. Slide a flat clay blade under it and flip it over. Shape with the knife again then carefully pick it up and shape the blade to have a sharper tip.



**Step 9.** Once you are happy put it back down and cut excess clay away from the handle for the final shape. I kept one straight but added a point to the other on the neck of the wood.

**Step 10.** Bake the polymer clay according to the manufacturer's instructions, let cool. You can sand the blade to get it sharper. Paint in a steel grey acrylic then go in and dry brush a lighter grey.

**Step 11.** Stain the handle the colour of your choice.

**Step 12.** I mixed up some silver metallic dust with mat varnish and painted the shiny blade edge.

### Drill

**Step 13.** Cut a toothpick and round the edges. Drill a tiny hole in the handle.

I had two tiny drill bits and decided to cut one to use but it went flying



when I cut it and got lost in my studio. If you are going to attempt to cut one do it in a food bag so it won't fly away!

Instead, I covered wire with glue and wrapped thick thread around it in a spiral fashion. Then I painted it silver.

### Level

**Step 14.** I cut into a piece of wood and made a clay handle. Then I painted the clay to match the wood.

The beeswax candles took a lot of trial and error to get the colour I wanted. My browns kept turning the clay green when baked.

I ended up using a smaller portion of translucent, yellow, and a tiny pinch of the right brown. If any one needs slime-green candles let me know – I have a large batch for free!

Do a little research and come up with more primitive tool creations. And if you come up with the perfect clay mix for beeswax let me know!



# A doll's house full of haunted memories

Juli Steel proves that there is a certain romantic beauty to abandoned items and houses. We discover how she fills her homes with quirky items rescued from junk yards

BY DEB WEISSLER

**A**bandoned, overgrown, derelict, and decaying. There's something about deserted houses at Halloween that discourages trick-or-treating. These dwellings certainly lack instant appeal, but there's something about them that make us linger as we pass. Does the hair stand up on the back of your neck? Do you dare step up on the porch and try the door knob? Miniaturist Juli hopes you do, for she has a treat waiting inside.

"I have always preferred to make the unusual," Juli confesses. "I find more enjoyment in the visual feeling it gives me. Anyone can make a beautiful doll's house, but re-purposing old and discarded doll's houses and giving them new life fulfills me in ways I cannot begin to explain."

Juli has a deep affinity for vintage, damaged, and abandoned pieces and parts she discovers in flea markets, antique shops, and junkyards, and is an established assemblage artist who combines both full-size and miniature items into quirky works of art.

In a tiny studio in her own vintage home in Fort Worth, Texas, Juli examines the dozens of articles she has collected after hours of wandering, looking, and touching. Pieces that for whatever reason spoke to her, drawing her in to someone else's life and story, and ultimately sparking her creativity. These items will fill the rooms and halls



of her abandoned and time-forgotten doll's houses.

"I start modifying by adding or removing part of the home, applying layers of paint and paper to give the feeling of years of repainting and decorating a family would have done over time," Juli

explains. "As you stand there, peeking into the corners of each room, you wonder about who lived there, what their lives must have been like, why did they move away and leave the house standing as it is?"

These are not haunted houses so much as houses haunted with memories of bygone days, the detritus of daily living, and ultimate decay. Juli's houses are filled with old and worn antiques that have been touched by many hands and used until there is no life left in them. For Juli, these are also memories of her childhood.

When Juli was growing up there was no money to buy and furnish the



perfect doll's house like so many of her friends owned. So she would imagine what she wanted and then would set out to hunt for materials to make her own. Her first doll's house made from repurposed materials became a class project that earned her an A+. Self-taught, she retired from a career in childcare a few years ago to pursue her dream as an artist.

Combining used structures, paint, paper, wood, moss, twigs, various grasses, new and used miniatures, and various mediums, Juli skilfully weaves a montage of abandonment. Boarded up and broken windows, worn floor boards, peeling wallpaper, fallen plaster, dust, and mouldering belongings left behind add to the overall look of and house and things no longer val-

**Above far right:** The imaginative abandoned twelfth scale doll's house is full of mystery.

**Below right:** A closer look at a broken window.







**Above:** The outdoor elements slowly find their way inside.

**Above right:** A small vintage doll adds to the haunting mood in this house with moody long shadows.





ued. Her use of natural lighting underscores that feeling of abandonment, so she does not typically add lighting.

Her supplies are not just limited to doll's house accessories. She may hand-make furnishings out of items she finds around her home or during one of her flea market and thrift store outings.

"I sometimes create my own paneling, along with previous or unfinished house supplies I find."

Admittedly her studio is small but filled with all the things she loves—miniatures, old dolls, gifts from loved ones, and shelves filled with items that inspire her creativity. A plethora of supplies are stacked in every available space. "I really need to get more organised," Juli laughs, but then again her abandoned houses are likewise strewn so perhaps this is as it should be.

For Juli, miniatures transport her to a different place; a magical realm where

everything is perfect and provides her with feel good moments; even the tired, worn, and forgotten. Her family and friends are amazed at what she



**Above:** *The floors and walls in this house are aged to perfection.*

can create, often turning trash into treasures. Treasures that will see another life time of use. She never makes the same thing twice, so each piece or house is unique.

Active on social media sites from assemblage art to steam punk, altered dolls to miniatures, Juli always has several items in the works to fill her online store. Her miniature pieces range from small apothecary items to large abandoned doll's houses. She even maintains a booth at a local antique mall.

As the door shuts behind us, one feels a little shiver. There are ghost-like qualities to Juli's work and as darkness descends, we feel the urge to quicken our steps down the worn stairs. And yet we linger, taking a backward glance at a home once loved and still loved by its artist. Look there, in the windows high above! Is that a ghost?

# Use raffia to roll out a corn stalk display

Here's a quick way to come up with a pretty decorative display for your house, either inside or outside, this autumn. Or a harvest festival scene anyone?

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

**M**y Kinfeld needed some autumnal decor by the front door so I came up with a quick and easy way to make dried corn stalks using what I had on hand. raffia is very inexpensive and can be found by the bag at the craft store.



**Step 1.** First, cut five bamboo skewers to different heights from 4" to 5".



**Step 2.** Apply wood glue with a toothpick to the tip of the skewer and let it get a little tacky while you complete step 3.



**Step 3.** Cut a collection of Raffia strips to 3" long.



**Step 4.** Apply to both sides of the skewer top and roll



in-between your finger and thumb so they are wrapped around the skewer.



**Step 5.** Keep doing this down the stalk with about a half-inch between each section. Leave a half-inch of the skewer showing at the base.



**Step 6.** Once dry, start shaping the 'corn leaves' so they roll up and then downwards from the stalk. Then shred some of the raffia that is at the very top of the stalk as thin as you can.



**Step 7.** Next, start trimming the tips of the leaves so they are the right length and pointed at the tips. Not all of the leaves will be thick like this one. If you like you can add more once finished.



## You will need

- Raffia
- Scissors
- Wood Glue
- Skewers
- Wood cutters
- Toothpick
- Thin rope
- Watercolour paints
- Paint brush
- Mini sunflower or ribbon



**Step 8.** I covered mine with some cheap brown water-colour paints. Apply from the stalk and up the leaf. Water down your paint so it is a wash. Let them dry about halfway and then shape again to your liking.

**Step 9.** Bunch them together so the corn stalks lean in different directions. Tie with a thin string lower than half way down around the stalks.

**Step 10.** Go back in and be sure they are leaning in somewhat different directions and shape the leaves.

**Step 11.** Spray with hair spray and prop up to dry.

**Step 12.** Add a sunflower in the front of the tie or a ribbon for extra flair. I couldn't resist adding a few of Kathy Obrenski's beautiful pumpkins for this autumnal scene!



# Quick and easy

Picture your perfect carpet

BY SANDRA HARDING

## You will need

- Book, magazine or catalogue with coloured pages of carpets, as near in size to the scale you want. Or you can use one that we've added to the Cutouts page this issue (P77)

- Piece of card cut very slightly smaller than the picture size. I used the back of a cheap, large note-book from Works, as it's thicker than a cereal packet for instance. It is better to use a thicker one, to raise the "carpet" a little.

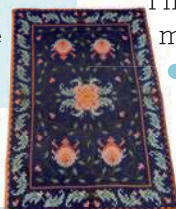
- Scissors
- Glue (Pritt Stick)

I used this so that the paper carpet picture doesn't crinkle. Applying normal glue all over may not be successful



- Carefully cut out the carpet or rug. Jiggle scissors as you go, so the carpet edges aren't exact. I couldn't think of a better word than jiggle, but if the word doesn't work for you, I hope you know what I mean.

- Cut out a piece of card to just slightly under the size of the carpet picture



## Cut from a book

My carpet pictures are from a lovely twelfth scale embroidery book by Sue Hawkins. I don't normally cut up my books, but, as I am never going to actually do any embroidery, I couldn't think of a better use.

you're using

- Run Pritt Stick around the edge of the card
- Carefully lay the card on the back of the carpet picture leaving a very slight overlap.

- Turn the carpet the right way up, and very gently press around the edges, so the carpet now seems to be laying flat. Do not actually fold, just give the impression that the carpet is laying flat.

- With the smaller rug, I cut the card to the edge of the actual carpet, not under the tassel, so the tassel droops nicely.

Place it in its setting.

# Castle pays tribute to Dracula legend

Each interior represents a scene from Bram Stoker's classic novel as one maker delights in re-creating weird scenes and unexpected moments you just can't explain

BY DEB WEISSLER PHOTOS BY ERIK GODDARD

**B**ram Stoker's classic Gothic horror tale begins with English clerk Jonathan Harker, enroute to Transylvania to secure the purchase of a London property at the behest of a Romanian count named Dracula. As Harker travels through the Carpathians on his way to Dracula's castle, the superstitious villagers and fellow travellers warn him not to continue. Following a harried carriage ride through frightful landscapes, his arrival at a dark, mouldering castle fills him with foreboding.

"As I envisioned my diorama, my intention was to include several scenes that lend themselves well to illustration and imagination," explains artist Erik Goddard, the master of the miniature dark side. "I toyed with the idea of building this as several different stand alone scenes, but it didn't really gel with me. Instead I chose a dark, decaying, and unwelcoming castle."

When Bram Stoker's novel came out in 1897, it introduced the world to Count Dracula, establishing many of the legends and conventions associated with vampires today. It was a story of romance, sexuality, and supernatural horror; subjects that titillated the Victorian public. "Gothic and contemporary at the same time, the narrative is written as entry-style journals, and the narrative is very effective at conveying the story and plotline," says Erik. The story is dark and macabre, which is right up Erik's alley.

"The part of the story that most interests me is the journey to the castle, the interaction there between Harker and the Count, and Harker falling victim to Dracula and the realisation he is trapped in the castle. Once Dracula departs for London, leaving Harker locked up with the Count's three female brides, the rest of the story is a little less interesting to me."

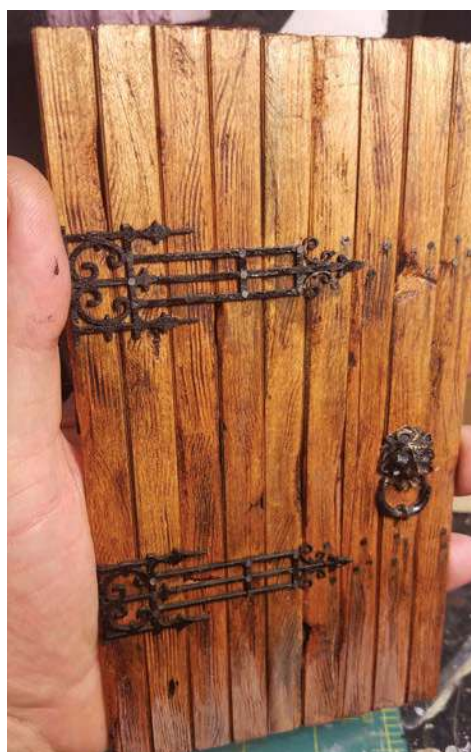
Erik's approach to miniature vignettes features uncluttered interiors and exteriors that are realistically proportional, structures that have stood the test of time and exposure to the elements. "I'm not interested in using items that don't play a central role in the story," Erik explains. Well aware not everyone appreciates this approach,

for those who do, his structures offer "real world" aesthetics difficult to achieve in miniature without time, skill, and lots of practice. This leaves room for potential customers to fill the spaces as they choose.

Unlike many other doll's house or room box artists who confine their work to a particular genre, Erik describes his work as "all over the board." Traditional to classic, modern to contemporary, classic Japanese to tree houses, classic horror tales by Poe and Stoker, murder mysteries, and supernatural horror are all fodder for his imagination.

"I'm not particularly interested in vampire stories per se," Erik confesses. "I just think the original novel, and the various cinematic versions that followed, have provided great material for interpretation. I'm just as interested in other tales of the night: ghosts, apparitions, exorcisms, and supernatural tales from around the world. Anything that causes an unexpected reaction or surprise; a thing out of the blue happening at an unexpected moment; and weird things that you just can't explain. That is the theme I love."

There have been numerous interpretations of Dracula; pulp fiction, films, television series, fantasy and horror novels have all put their unique twists on the classic tale. Erik's latest vignette has drawn on three classic movies to illustrate his vision of the story and he explains what each has





**Above:** The windows in the dark dusty crypt are filled in with bricks.

**Below left:** A weathered wood door with gorgeous iron hinges and door pull.

**Above right:** Van Helsing confronts Dracula, who has Lucy under his spell. The ubiquitous rats that follow Dracula around are a nod to the 1922 and 1977 films.

**Below right:** The three seductive brides of Dracula.

brought to his castle vignette:

"The first cinematic interpretation of the novel, F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* in 1922, is still a classic in horror by any definition. Being silent, the lack of dialogue, music, and special effects actually adds to the fear and dread. He made great use of shadows, lighting, and timing; all of which I love when creating dioramas and vignettes.

"In contrast, Francis Ford Coppola's 1992 film version is definitely a reflection of the modern era. Nude scenes, far stronger sexuality and violence, and overwhelming use of film techniques tend to distract from the basic tale. One bright note—Anthony Hopkins made a great Van Helsing and it was his inspiration that I used for one of my figures in the diorama.

"But my favourite film version is Werner Herzog's *Nosferatu*, released in 1977. It looks a little dated here and



**Top:** The





**Above:** The exterior of Dracula's stone twelfth scale castle in progress.

**Above right:** Jonathan Harker sits nervously with the Count in front of a grand fireplace.

**Right:** A shot of Jonathan Harker's humble room.



there, but the essence and the take on Stoker's story is much more meaningful. The brilliant surrealism fits the mood and atmosphere of the story very well. I used the great Bruno Gans as inspiration for the Jonathan Harker character in the fireplace scene."

Doll makers Sherry Colvin and Jeanne Rullie brilliantly captured the cast of characters.

Erik chose to use the term 'Nosferatu' rather than Dracula. Synonymous with the Hungarian-Romanian word 'vampire', the term Nosferatu became a popular vampire legend in the late 19th century, and may be derived from the Romanian 'Nesuferitu,' meaning the repugnant one, or 'Necuratu,' meaning unclean spirit. Either way, Nosferatu was popularised by Western fiction with the publication of Stoker's novel and the films that followed.

Each interior room represents a scene from the story. All take place within the castle with the exception of the encounter between Nosferatu, Lucy, and Van Helsing, which takes place in London. "As with all my work, this model is not interactive—it's all about viewing from a focused point of view," Erik points out. "I knew that I wanted to incorporate the interior scenes as being separate from the castle, so the doorway in the castle as viewed from the outside, does not cor-

respond to the castle's interior room or doorway."

The structure, currently a work in progress, is crafted from wood, foam, plaster, clay, glass, paper, and Erik's odds and ends. It stands nearly three feet high and wide and 18 inches deep. The mood of the interior scenes is captured using different types of LEDs. The castle began as 1/24 scale but Erik soon realised the juxtaposition between the exterior and interior was too conflicting, so in the end he went with portions of a twelfth scale castle to minimise size. Doorways and stairways lead off in different directions, implying

there is more than meets the eye.

"It took me about 80 hours to create most of this diorama. Sometimes when I work on a smaller project, I work on two or three things at a time in the beginning. But as the pieces become more organic and more complex, all my attention is focused on one piece. One problem I often run into is scope creep, where the original idea evolves into something bigger. I saw extra space and opportunity and decided to add new scenes, which meant making the coffins, crypt, and stairs. That's why the castle isn't finished yet," Erik laughs.

# SHOW DATES



A ROUND UP OF PLACES WHERE THE MINI FLAGS WILL BE FLYING AROUND THE COUNTRY

## OCTOBER

### SATURDAY 5 & SUNDAY 6 OCTOBER

#### AUTUMN MINIATURA

National Exhibition Centre,  
BIRMINGHAM, B40 1NT  
Open: Saturday 10am-5pm  
Sunday 10am - 4pm  
Organiser: Miniatura

### SUNDAY 06 OCTOBER KENSINGTON TOWN HALL DOLL SHOW

**CANCELLED**

Horton Street, Kensington,  
London W8 7NX  
Open: 10.00am - 4.00pm  
Organiser: Wendy's World

### SUNDAY 13 OCTOBER DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

The Mill Arts & Events Centre,  
Bellingham Lane, off High Street,  
RAYLEIGH SS6 7ED (off A127)  
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm  
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

### SUNDAY 20 OCTOBER DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Knights Hill Hotel & Spa,  
SOUTH WOOTTON,  
near Kings Lynn, PE30 3HQ  
(A148/149 Junction)  
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm  
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

### SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Holt Community Centre,  
Kerridge Way, HOLT,  
Norfolk NR25 6DN  
Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm  
Organiser: MGM Fairs

### DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Burford School, Cheltenham Rd,  
BURFORD OX18 4PL  
Open: 10.30am - 3.30pm  
Organisers: Little Priory Fairs

### SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER

#### DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

The Cedric Ford Pavilion,  
Newark Showground,  
Lincoln Road, NEWARK NG24 2NY  
(A1/A46 Junction)  
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm  
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

#### DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Lyndhurst Community Centre  
Main Car Park, LYNDHURST,  
Hants SO43 7NY  
Open: 10.00am - 4.00pm  
Organiser: Wendy's World

#### CHARITY DOLLS HOUSE SALE

for CANCER RESEARCH UK  
Shaw Farm, Wiltshire, SN8 4LU  
Open: 10.30am - 2.30pm  
Organiser: Pat Cutforth

#### FAIR ORGANISERS:

**Dolly's Daydreams:** 01945 870160.  
[www.dollysdaydreams.com](http://www.dollysdaydreams.com)  
E: [dollysdaydreams@btinternet.com](mailto:dollysdaydreams@btinternet.com)

**Little Priory Fairs:**  
[www.littleprioryfairs.co.uk](http://www.littleprioryfairs.co.uk)  
[littleprioryfairs@outlook.com](mailto:littleprioryfairs@outlook.com)

**London Dollshouse Festivals:**  
020 7812 9892 E: [kdf@dollshousefestival.com](mailto:kdf@dollshousefestival.com)  
[www.dollshousefestival.com](http://www.dollshousefestival.com)

**MGM Fairs:** Tel: 01225 466533  
Mob: 07818 462448. [www.mgmfairs.co.uk](http://www.mgmfairs.co.uk)  
E: [admin@mgmfairs.co.uk](mailto:admin@mgmfairs.co.uk)

**Miniatura:** 0121 783 9922.  
[www.miniatura.co.uk](http://www.miniatura.co.uk)

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## NOVEMBER

### SATURDAY 02 NOVEMBER DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Pudsey Civic Hall, Dawsons Corner,  
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### SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

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Sidney Road, Bentley Heath,  
SOLIHULL B93 9BQ  
Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm  
Organiser: MGM Fairs

### SATURDAY 23 NOVEMBER DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

The Assembly Rooms, High Street,  
DEDHAM CO7 6DE (off A12)  
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm  
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

### SUNDAY 24 NOVEMBER DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Civic Hall, Market Street,  
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### SATURDAY 30 NOVEMBER KENSINGTON CHRISTMAS DOLLS HOUSE FESTIVAL

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## DECEMBER

### SUNDAY 01 DECEMBER DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

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Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm  
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

# Nursery rhyme inspired pretty pumpkin cottage

A familiar nursery rhyme kept going around in Debra's head as she started to put together her cosy little home full of pumpkin charm

BY PAM NORTH

**D**ebra Hornung Zachrich, lives in a rural home along with her husband and their two Cairn terriers. "It's wonderfully peaceful here," she said, "and a great place for letting the ideas flow from mind to fingers." Debra creates a little of everything. "I scratch-build my own furniture designs, and enjoy making different foods from polymer clay. I think what I truly love, though, is making dolls and seeing them come alive in my hands, and adding them to my scenes."

She became interested in miniatures in 1990 when on a holiday; she saw a beautiful doll's house in a store, with many things to buy for it. Raising two sons in a small house did not lend itself to doll's houses then, so it was 23 years before she could indulge what soon would become a passion. "Finally, I had the room for a doll's house, and bought a small kit, the RGT Beachside Bungalow. Since then, I've been like a sponge, soaking in all I can learn about different techniques." When asked what she loves about miniatures, she replied: "The total freedom to create anything I want. Whether it's a simple scene or a highly detailed one, the choice is totally up to me. I love the challenge of making what I create look realistic."

Debra had no formal training in the miniature field, but she had crafted



things her whole life. Her father was a mechanic, and her grandfather was a carpenter, so she learned about basic construction and workmanship from both of them. She is mainly self-taught through books and videos.

One of her recent pieces is The Pumpkin Cottage, also known as The Summer Cottage of Mrs. Peter, Peter Pumpkin Eater. "Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater, had a wife and couldn't keep her; he put her in a pumpkin shell, and there he kept her, very well." That familiar nursery rhyme, paired with a Halloween scene of skeletons in a pumpkin shell she had seen, comprised the initial inspiration for her project, but she opted out of Halloween, substituting instead an autumn theme she could display for an entire season. "That rhyme kept going 'round and 'round in the back of my mind," Debra remembered. "Making something in the fantasy realm was a little bit of a stretch for me; I tend to make things more realistic. It was a good chance to try out some new techniques."

Debra started with a round base from the gardening department, and an end-of-season carve-able foam pumpkin from the hobby store. Some Chrysnbon kits were implemented with some modifications, along with a trunk kit, and a miniature dresser. She made the pumpkin rug using needle punch.



Some of the items on the hutch, and the cats, were either purchases or items she had on hand, but one required more effort. "The pumpkin teapot was the hardest to get; I had to sweet-talk a friend out of it!" Other materials were: coffee stir-sticks, DAS air-dry clay, artificial flowers, Heki grass, DMC floss for the rug, FIMO, while the rest of the items mostly were odds-and-ends left over from other projects. Under the flooring, which was made of coffee stir-sticks, mat board, and foam core, is the battery and wiring for the LED lights - two sconces, the lamp, and the coal stove. "I used the 'pico' size LED for the Chrysnbon lamp, which conveniently had a hole running right up through the centre of the lamp



base. I made a little notch in the base for the wire to run out the back, then down behind the table, and through the floor. The coal stove was done the same way, with a larger, orange LED, but I hid the wiring down behind one leg of the stove.

"The switch for the lights is hidden among the foundation rocks for the pumpkin. The inside walls are 'plastered' with air-dry clay, which also conceals the wiring for the LED sconce near the front, and in the loft."

Once the wiring and floor were done, and the walls plastered and painted, the project went very quickly. Debra made the front removable. The door, left over from a doll's house, was given an etched look by cutting vinyl

**Above:** A view inside the warm and cosy little pumpkin cottage.

**Below:** A close up showing the rock foundation and the on/off switch for the lights.





and adhering it to the window. The flowers were sprigs purchased from the craft store and trimmed. The ivy around the entry was added with paper leaves and crochet cotton stems.

"Constructing the front door entry was the most difficult, as it required a lot of trial and error to get it to fit. The fun part was wiring LED lighting into the Chrysnbon stove and lamp." Outside, a mummy cat has a batch of new kittens underneath the steps. "I like it when someone looks at my miniatures and sees something that they didn't expect. Their reaction is priceless!"

Debra's inspiration comes from memorable things she sees and hears. She cites one major difficulty with working in miniature: "Finding how-to techniques has been a chore at times, especially those in miniature.

Many times, learning a new method or style is a trial-and-error process, simply because there is no video or book available from which to learn. I wish more skilled artisans would con-

**Above and right:** A full view and some close ups of the cats that dwell on the property. Looks as if one has had cute kittens!

**Below right:** A special little moment with the glowing lamp in front of the lace curtained window.

sider doing them, as there are many of us who can't attend or afford a workshop they put on."

As for the future of miniatures, she is optimistic. "I think there's great hope for miniatures in the future if we just reach the younger people, and find out what they want to create. It may be something quite different from the doll's houses and room boxes we are familiar with, but the urge to create something lies within each person, and we just need to nurture it."

Next for her is a bakery/confectioner shop, built into a small cabinet. "There was one in a nearby town when I was growing up, and I want to create something similar." She also is continuing to make dolls.

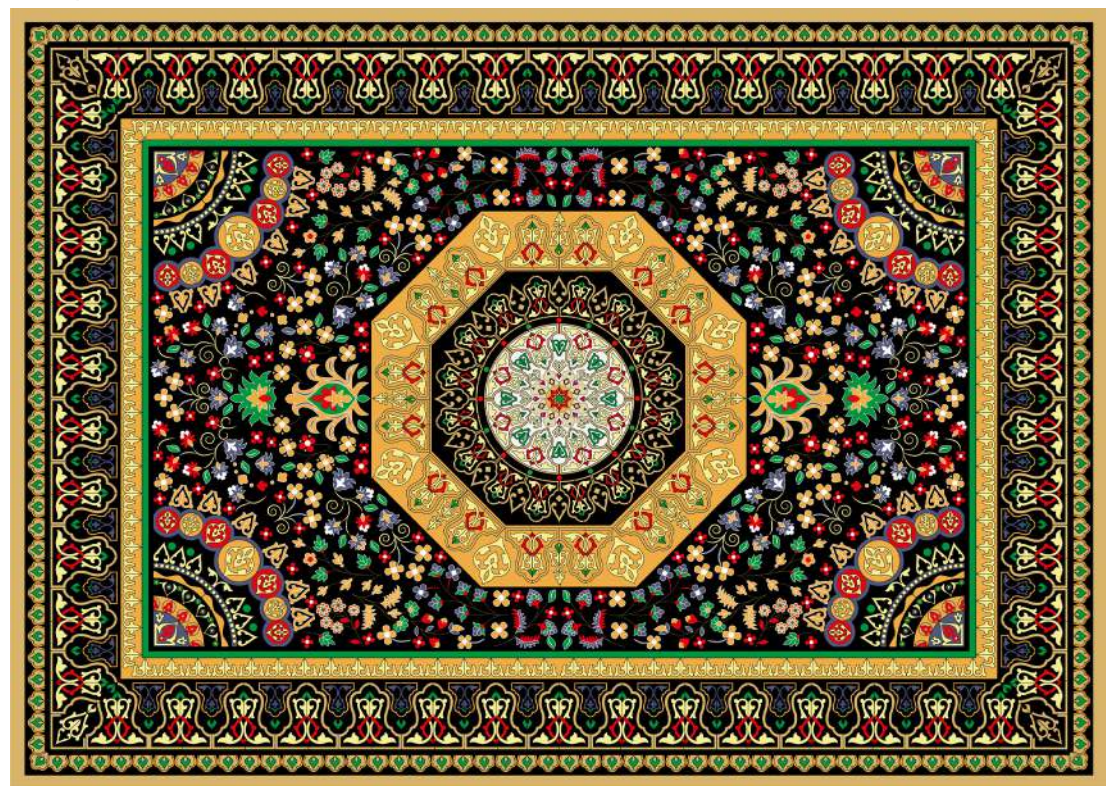


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THE CUTOUTS PAGE



Painting by Henry Scott Tuke. (A man's bare bum in DHW? Well if it's okay for the BBC in Sanditon, it's okay for us - Ed.)

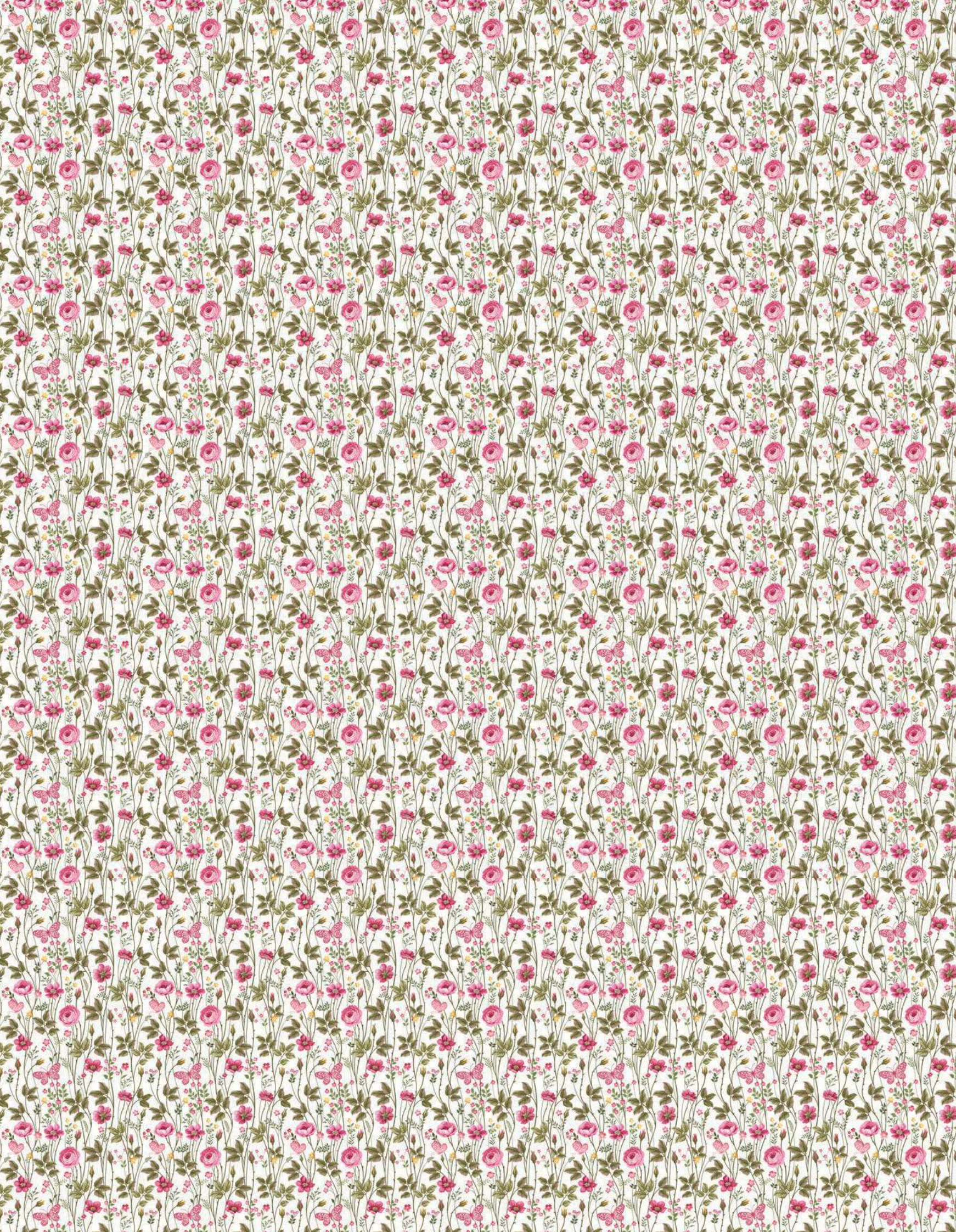


See Quick & Easy rugs on P 69



Painted screen by Kristina Truter-Golightly of Golightly Miniatures. Either cutout and fold, or cutout and glue panels to heavy card or light wood. GolightlyMiniatures.etsy.com. See interview on P 10.

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# SMALL TALK

THIS MONTH WE CHAT WITH MANDY WRIGHT

**Hi Mandy, what you are working on at the moment?** I'm currently in the process of stripping back and re-decorating two houses for selling on. I'm also finishing off an Edwardian ladies' shop, selling corsetry, gloves and hats on the first floor; perfumes, jewellery and gifts on the ground floor. And I still need to complete an Edwardian toy shop room box. Then I have a 16 room mansion still flat packed from Christmas to build, which is going to be late Victorian.. and the list goes on!!



**Tell us about your collection.**

All of my houses and room boxes are in twelfth scale – that's small enough for me! As previously mentioned, there's the Edwardian ladies' shop, toy shop and soon to be Victorian mansion – plus a modern(ish) living room box with leopard print upholstery, complete with pet leopard on the rug, which is by the late (and very talented) Annie Willis. I have a French/Louis style four-storey town-house, a George Pal "The Time Machine" themed room box, complete with a scale model of the time machine itself; a modern café/tea room in a converted orangery, with cake counters, brass tea urn and roof terrace, a medieval wizard's tower, Victorian style conservatory and a Victorian style cherub themes lady's boudoir.

**Wow, that's quite a list. Do you make and collect?** Both! I don't think I have a preference – I love making the tiny foods and accessories, repainting and reupholstering furniture and creating unusual minis for myself and to sell in my Etsy shop (MandysMiniaturesUK). But I also love the thrill of find-

ing something unique and perfect to add to my own collection.

**When and how did your mini madness start?** I honestly don't remember a time when I wasn't afflicted. My first ever doll's house was made by a friend of my father's when I was a tiny baby; he even made all the furniture to go in it. I remember playing with that until I was maybe 10 or 11 – then upgrading to a Caroline's Home one. I got my first "adult" house when I was in my late 20s.

**What other craft hobbies have you**

**tried?** My mum used to knit and crochet; she used to make such amazing things. Unfortunately, she was left-handed and I'm right-handed, so she was unable to teach me, although a neighbour did try, but I never really picked it up. I was awesome with the four nails in a cotton reel though. I've also done some sewing, patchwork, painting and drawing.

**What do you do when you're not in mini mode?**

I have two dogs, three (grown up) children and a 10-month-old granddaughter, so I'm kept busy.

**Do you buy too much stuff?** Definitely! You remember that 16 room Victorian mansion that I have yet to build? I already have three boxes of furniture and accessories to go in it.

**What do you love about our hobby?** That has to be, without a doubt, all the lovely people I have been lucky enough to meet. There is such a wonderful, global community and everyone is always ready to offer help and advice.

"I also love the thrill of finding something unique and perfect to add to my own collection."

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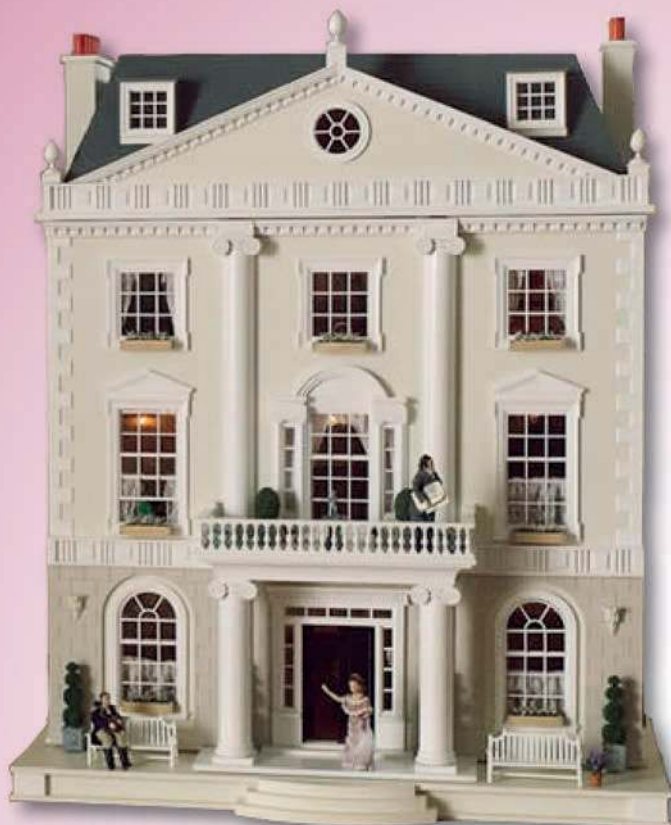
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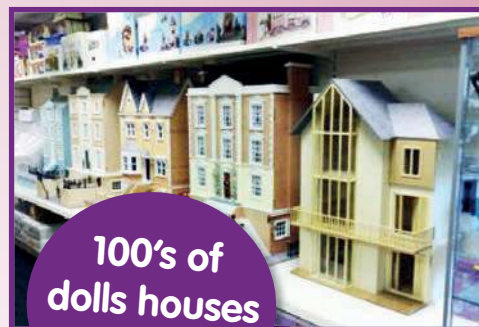
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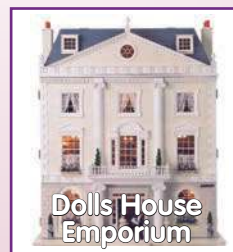
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