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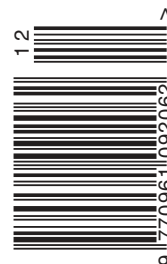


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“where little things matter”



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welcome

The leaves have only just turned yellow and we haven't seen the first real frost but here at DHW we've been getting into the festive spirit. We've got glitter in our hair, while our fingers are covered in sparkly stuff and tacky glue.

If you think it's too early to start thinking about Christmas, I'd remind you that some of the wonderful rooms and houses we're featuring this issue were being packed with festive items when other people were packing suitcases for their summer holiday.

The stunning new painted furniture on the front cover was made by talented artist Aurea Segura. When we chatted with her she did say she felt “like I've lived a little bit of Christmas already this year.” But she was still looking forward to December.

And that's the wonder of this special season. As someone once said: “Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful.” I think that's especially true when it comes to our miniature world.

This issue we immerse ourselves in magical scenes in rooms and houses that we hope will inspire your own creations. Bake panettone, create some fun hats, make it snow or put together some old-fashioned paper chains (editor's warning: they need a lot of patience) — whatever your festive choice we recommend waving that magic wand as early as possible.



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Follow me on Instagram @dollshouseworld

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“He who has not Christmas in his or her heart will never find it under a tree.”

Roy L. Smith



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HOUSE HUNT

Find the little house hidden inside.

■ Last issue it appeared on page 59.



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.



Christmas concert at Mistletoe Manor

We pay a return visit to a wonderful Christmas house to watch as the curtain goes up on the exciting annual performance at Ivy Winter's ballet school



It's Christmas Eve at Mistletoe Manor. Outside the snow is gently falling, but inside there is an air of excited anticipation.

The annual ballet concert is soon to get underway and Ivy Winter, the ballet mistress, wants everything to be perfect. It is the chance for her pupils to show their parents what progress they have made during the year.

As the final preparations are put in place Ivy takes charge of the seating in the concert hall, as her pupils wait anxiously on the stairs.

Mistletoe Manor has always been the home of the Winter family and Ivy has lived in it since she was born. She started the ballet school when she was old enough to help pay the bills for her parents. After her parents died her eldest brother Noel, inherited the house and moved in with his wife, Holly and their two children Nicholas and Carol.

This is the story behind the Christmas house created by Desna Tysoe, who many readers will know as the knitter behind some of the beautiful little patterns that have appeared in DHW over the years. Desna cannot build a house or shop without first creating the story of the characters who will live there – they start off just as ideas in her head but as soon as she finds the right doll or fabric for the clothes, her little people evolve.

Mistletoe Manor started life as a ballet school and was built by her friend,

June Smith. Both June and Desna are continually creating houses and shops and when June wanted to dispose of the large school house to make way for other projects – Desna immediately saw it as a Christmas house – and so the property changed hands.

Some of the rooms have been left with their original decoration – the concert hall room with its stage, highly decorated walls and ceiling were perfect and fitted in with Desna's plans for the house – but other rooms have been re-decorated in her own style.

The beautifully stitched carpets and pictures throughout the house are just some of the many things that this talented miniaturist has created. She's also made furniture, including upholstered chairs, toys, beds and bedding, as well as the food in the kitchen and the dining rooms. And, of course, each and every doll has been carefully dressed.

Many of the items have been made at workshops or club meetings that Desna has attended over the years. Curtains with very elegant pelmets, made by June, can be seen in a number of rooms along with cushions and items of clothing draped over chairs or screens, added by Desna.

Set in the Edwardian period the house continues to have items added when suitable projects come along. Houses in her collection are never finished as Desna has no hesitation in re-doing something as a new idea takes shape. All of the characters she





creates have a purpose as part of the scene and if that scene changes, then they do too.

So as the curtain rises on this year's concert, and Mrs Frost gives Jack his final instructions the only thing left to do is to wish everyone a very happy Christmas!

Top left: *Mistletoe Manor with its pretty blue exterior is a very inviting house, and now that the snow has come on Christmas Eve the picture is complete. Jack Frost, the gardener, has been busy making sure that the window boxes have not been spoilt by the snow, and that his specially grown roses are at their best today.*

Left: *The top floor hall houses more of Desna's handiwork, including the upholstered chair, carpet and stitched pictures — although the centre one was stitched by her daughter.*

Above: *Mistletoe Manor is home to the Winter family and also Ivy Winter's flourishing ballet school. Today is a special occasion and the chance for her pupils to dance for their parents.*

OPEN HOUSE

Right: Nicholas should not have been left alone and has found the presents in the sitting room that his parents have just finished wrapping. The room has been beautifully decorated with greenery from the garden. Desna was responsible for the carpet and curtains and many pieces of furniture.

Far right: The children have been excited all day with the prospect of seeing Father Christmas and knowing that they will be going home with a gift. Just as well that his sack is full of presents — there will be plenty for everyone. Warm hats, coats and capes have all been made by Desna, either knitted or made from fabric — many of the outfits have been featured in past issues of DHW.

Below: In the master bedroom Noel and his wife Holly, hurriedly dress — they have had so many things to attend to today, including wrapping the Christmas presents for their children. Now, with the guests arriving for the concert, they will need to be ready to greet them. From the bed and bed linen, carpets and pictures to the clothes that both wear everything has been handmade by Desna. Her special knitting talent can be seen in Holly's beautiful lacy underwear.

Below right: Everything is ready for the concert. Guests are taking their seats and Ivy (on the stage) is ready to introduce her pupils.

Below far right: Looking after children is something that nanny — Mrs Joseph — has done all her life. She started her career as a nursery helper, and under the guidance of a strict nanny quickly learned how children were expected to be brought up. Things have changed a little as more time is now spent playing with the younger children, although Nicholas has to do his lessons each day. Many of the toys in the nursery have been made by Desna at club meetings or workshops.







Above: With all the food now prepared cook, Mrs Christmas, has sat down in front of the fire for a few minutes rest, whilst Christine deals with a mouse that has found its way into the kitchen. Christine's daughter, Hazel, sits waiting for her opportunity to visit Father Christmas out in the hall.

Left: The dining room looks very elegant and Mrs Frost gives Jack his final instructions before serving the guests their drinks. Jack is not happy about having to help out but he knows that it is best not to argue.



“All of the characters she creates have a purpose as part of the scene and if that scene changes, then they do too.”

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The cherished Christmas

'I am eight years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, "if you see it in THE SUN, it's so." Please tell me the truth; is there a Santa Claus?'



Christmas cottage

BY DEB WEISSLER PHOTOGRAPHY BY MEGAN DEITZ

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus," ... came the now iconic reply to a little girl's plea for validation that the jolly old man in the red suit did indeed exist. Virginia's letter and its quick editorial response was printed on September 21, 1897 as a letter to the editor in the New York Sun newspaper. It has become history's most reprinted newspaper editorial, appearing in whole or in part in dozens of languages in books, movies, magazines, posters, and stamps. That one line embodies all that is magical about Christmas.

Joan Warren's latest room box was inspired by this Christmas letter and Joan's own roots in New York. "When I came upon a Nic Nichols room box at a miniature show, it was decorated for something other than Christmas," Joan recalls. The cottage, decorated with a winter scene seen through the window, reminded Joan of Christmas. She took the empty box home, already envisioning the scene she had in mind.

Joan has always had the ability to visualise a scene before she's ready to begin. Inspired by the classic Santa Claus letter and Nell Corkin's delightful Christmas house built inside a walnut shell she once admired, she longed to incorporate that charm into her own Christmas scene.

Her story, "The Christmas Cottage," begins in 1920, in the small town of Roscoe, in the Catskill Mountains of upstate New York. It's Christmas Eve and three young sisters have settled into the family's cottage for the holidays. Their parents have gone into town to do some last minute Christmas shopping and to bring back the feast for tomorrow's dinner. Charlotte, the eldest, is babysitting.

The two younger girls are embroiled in a controversy as to whether Santa Claus is real. Charlotte, ever the arbitrator, fetches a book from the attic entitled "Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus". Written by Francis Pharcellus Church (1839-1906), it was his unsigned editorial that appeared in The Sun newspaper years before. Charlotte settles in to read aloud to



her fractious siblings.

The rustic cottage with its charming Dutch door is decked out for the holidays from top to bottom. The country-style Christmas tree by Karen Markland is trimmed with home-baked cookies, berries, nuts, and frosted glass balls. The diamond pane window is framed by Karen's nature garland. Christmas stockings are hung on the mantel, awaiting the annual gifts of oranges, nuts, and candies. Ornaments spill from a basket and litter the floor,

along with an assortment of dolls, toys, and books. A German nutcracker and tiny forest hut are German treasures, reminding us where the origin of the Christmas tree originated.

The two seated sisters were made by the late Marcia Backstrom in her classic vintage style. The smallest one is by doll maker Amanda Skinner.

A beautiful Borzoi by Karl Blindheim affably accepts the attentions of a tiny kitten. On the tree stand near the door hangs a hand-knitted sweater by UK

artist Nicola Smith, *The Knitting Lady*. Photographic images of timeless Christmas scenes by Hemy and Laura add another Christmas element to the festive scene.

"Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding. No Santa Claus? Thank God! He lives and lives forever.

A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay 10 times 10,000 years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."





REGENCY RADIO TRANSFORMATION

BY SANDRA HARDING

Marike Noordhoek does not claim to be a maker, instead preferring to buy her beautiful pieces from experts who can make them, and I go along with that idea myself.

She is indeed an interior decorator and designer, and it shows in the way that she has transformed an ordinary old radio, into this lovely living room. The radio was bought in 2015 with the plan in mind to turn it into an Edwardian sitting room, Marike's favourite period, and the miniatures in the room were all carefully chosen as suitable for that period.

The inspiration came from Marike's trips to the UK, where she loves to visit country houses, and this one was inspired by the *Downton Abbey* series on television. Further inspiration came when Marike bought the beautiful lady of the house made by Dana Burton, and knew just who she was to represent.

She is Cora Crawley, Countess of Grantham, who is presently waiting for the butler to bring her afternoon tea. Cora is an animal lover, and enjoys playing with her dog Bailey and her cat Luna who has recently had kittens who are warming by the fire.

Cora is very happy today,

as her husband presented her with a new set of jewellery as a Christmas gift which she is trying out ready for the grand Christmas ball later tonight, and they are really hoping royalty may attend. The beautiful jewellery pieces were made especially for Cora/Marike by the very talented mini jewellery maker Nalladris, and the gift was a lovely surprise. Marike rather likes them too.

The room is full of delightful items, including the chinoiserie stools from Lavenderbell Miniatures from Australia, and the beautiful flowers are from Carmen Dollhouse Flowers from Spain. The Christmas tree in the glass dome and the photograph on the right wall are from Antonella Nardi from Italy, and the magic lantern is from Reina Mab Miniatures from Argentina.

The little desk on the left is from Sara's Miniatures from The Netherlands, and I just love the clock on the wall, which Marike bought at a fair. She tells me the clock is handmade by a lovely lady whose name is Ingeborg, who also made the rest of the various clocks in Marike's other houses.

This little room is so charming, and I love the eclectic mix of makers and talent Marike has put together in one lovely piece – what fun.



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WHERE I WORK

WE DROP IN ON AURORA OF PAGAN MOON MINIATURES

Hi Aurora, you've been in the hobby for quite some time?

I've been making twelfth scale miniatures for 28 years since my daughter had a doll's house — I took it over once she reached her teenage years and I have not stopped since.

It does take over your life, doesn't it?

In fact I am now in the position where it is widely known that I am obsessed with the mini world and, if I am not actually creating, I'm thinking about it. I am constantly learning new skills with books and online videos. At present I'm trying out resin and improving the more intricate woodworking skills. Miniature knitting is also something I've started recently.

Where do you work? I am lucky enough to have a dedicated workroom upstairs where I have my "messy" table for glue, cutting out, painting etc plus a long clean table where I can place things waiting to dry or which are half completed. Although I have to admit this space can get quite busy and messy as well.



But it isn't all messy. It looks like you are quite organised.

I am quite organised in having numerous labelled containers where I can lay my hands on exactly what I need at any time. I am also strict with myself in keeping my mini tools clean and in their boxes when not in use.

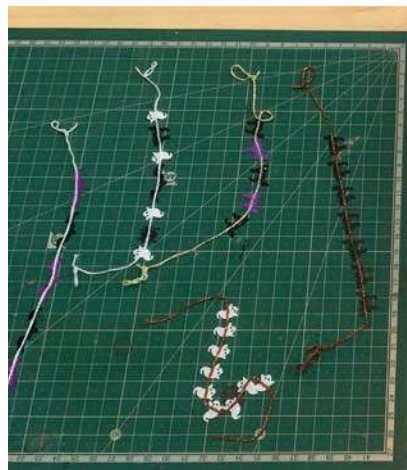
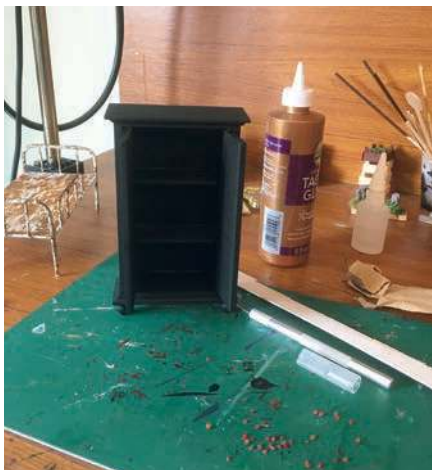
And you spend quite a bit of time in your workroom?

I can go in there, shut the door and be happily lost in my mini world for hours creating and letting my mind creatively wander.

What does your husband make of it?

My husband is very good in buying me new mini tools for birthdays and Christmas and says he's never seen a woman so happy to receive tools before. Personally, I think he buys them so I don't go in his mancave and steal his.

What inspires your work? My inspiration largely comes from my imagination. Sometimes I will see an item in normal size and think, now if I do this and this I can recreate that





with a twist in twelfth scale. I am so full of ideas I now keep a notepad for future projects so I can jot down thoughts and sketches. I also find inspiration from the most unlikely things. I can be in a tool section of a shop and see plumbing bits and think...ooo that can be turned into such and such so I have to buy. I'm sure my local ironmongers just think I'm a very practical female. If only they knew.

Where is home? I live in very rural south west England, near to Glastonbury, and whilst on walks or foraging I can gain inspiration from things I see. I will pick up various seeds and acorn caps and pieces of twigs, for example, to use in my miniatures.

When do you work? I would create and work pretty much from the time I get up to when I go to bed if I could but unfortunately housework and shopping does also have to be done. I usually work for about five hours a day and, if the weather is hot and sunny, I may go outside if what I'm working on allows. If not, I'll start something that can be done outside.

You can happily work on more than one thing at a time? I will admit to having a "flitty" brain and can work on four or five creations at once. Coming out with mini-related ideas during a conversation which is nothing about minis or doll's houses is quite normal for me. Luckily friends and my family are used to this



her to the pleasures of the mini world. Luckily my husband is very tolerant and realises how important my making is for me. He is happy to muck in and do what is needed in house and garden as well when I am extra busy or have a big commission to work on. I can leave creations everywhere and just shut the door until the next time. I feel fortunate to have such a space.

What music do you listen to? I'll whisper this: Showaddywaddy. Occasionally I will put a dvd on and listen more than watch.

Do you let people in? When I'm working people are banned as they disturb my concentration, although I don't object to being brought a cup of tea. But food is definitely a no no. I have two cats which do come in, but luckily they just curl up on the floor and chair and so far they've caused no accidents.



so they just roll their eyes and say: "she's at it again". I have also been known to slip an extra wooden coffee stirrer or straw in my handbag when out as I have thought of a use for it.

What makes your workspace so special? It's that it is all mine. No one can say tidy up I need the table. All my children have now left home and are spreading their wings, so it is just myself and my husband. My granddaughter does like to come in and look around when she comes to visit and, when she's a little older, I will introduce

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Describe your workspace in five words Pleasurably mine, all mine, mwahahaha

What couldn't you live without in your workspace? I couldn't be without so many things, it's hard to narrow it down to just one. But it would have to be my imagination. It works in weird ways I know at times, and sometimes can be a bit wacky and off the wall, but so far it has never let me down.

Where would your dream workspace be? My dream workspace would be a big log cabin at the top of my garden overlooking the fields. I'd have a wood burner and sofa plus somewhere to make tea and coffee and keep biscuits. Everything would be in labelled boxes in shelves, a bit like they are now, but much bigger. Trouble is, I may never leave if I had that.

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"I'M SURE MY LOCAL IRONMONGERS JUST THINK I'M A VERY PRACTICAL FEMALE. IF ONLY THEY KNEW."

Sue's boxing clever again after 25 years

What's a couple of decades between friends?



We have to give a big welcome back to Sue Chadwick, who has returned to selling her minis after a little break — well, 25 years to be precise. She gave up in the first place because of her daughter and now it's Allie who has sparked her return.

If you've been in the hobby for a number of years you may remember the name Boxing Clever, which was a stall Sue ran at fairs back in the 1990s selling room box kits and doll's house accessories.

She took a break from the hobby in 1997 when she gave birth to her daughter, Allie, and had all but forgotten about her love affair with doll's houses. Instead it was Allie who got the miniaturist bug and started making miniature food from Fimo.

Talented Allie set up her own stall selling her handmade miniatures under the name Fredona's Miniature Dreams. As she couldn't drive Sue became driver along with being the admin person, accountant and stall assistant.

After doing a few shows and enjoying getting back in to the miniature world Sue has now relaunched her own stall, calling it Clever Accommodation, selling twelfth scale, 1/24th and 1/48th room box kits.

Clever Accommodation will be at a number of fairs over the coming months and Sue looks forward to saying hello to both old and new customers. Give her a warm welcome.

For more information call Sue on 07807 942 917 or email her at cleveraccommini@virginmedia.com





ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WHERE READERS SHARE PROJECTS THEY'RE PROUD OF, HOWEVER SMALL. EMAIL YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO [RICHARD@ASHDOWN.CO.UK](mailto:richard@ashdown.co.uk)



Ann's lovely Christmas box

BY SANDRA HARDING

Ann Giling is originally from Denmark, but has lived in the Netherlands for about 35 years. She has always loved tiny things and got into the doll's house hobby when she was pregnant with her first child and wanted a doll's house for her. Later it became clear that the kind of houses and miniatures she liked were not the kind suitable for children.

Ann sent us details of the little Christmas box she made. She told us: "It is twelfth scale and measures 10 x 15". The stones on the wall are hand cut from full size faux wall tiles which have been finished with fine grout. The lamps I bought, but the door wreath, the starlight in the window and the garland I made myself. The bushes by the door are made from train building trees, which





I have painted and decorated.

"The door, window and bench were bought, and the bench was actually made up from a kit, as were the grocery items on the steps. The little snowman I made from Fimo, and there are small bird seed nets in the tree which I made."

Ann said: "My usual hobby is handwork, especially crochet and knitting, and I'm addicted to it. I especially love creating miniature (micro) crochet items and what it can bring to a tiny scene, and make it come alive."

"Although I always have lots of projects on the go I always seem to get taken back to new crochet ideas, and I love making tiny scenes, just for the pleasure of seeing the photographs and to create a cosy atmosphere."



Christine's gingerbread house

BY SANDRA HARDING

This delightful little creation is by the very talented Christine Kneen, and it's yet another first for me.

It's a laser cut kit house bought on eBay, and it measures 14 inches high, 14 inches across, and is near 1/24th scale Christine tells me. However, as the house was not expensive, it needed lots of minor adjustments to make it fit together nicely. The end result makes it all worthwhile I think.

After assembly, Christine covered the house in Galleria black lava gel, which is like PVA with grit in it, to give it texture. It was then painted in a gingerbread colour and the trimmings were painted white to resemble icing sugar. Christine marked out all the shingles on the roof and glued a nail art sticker of a cake in each one, a real labour of love. The sweets are all buttons and beads and the proper gingerbread people, tree and rocking horse are all Christmas decorations.

Inside the house, the people, dog, and virtually everything else was made by Christine using polymer clay. There is a sweet shop

downstairs and the passageway in the middle has a floor covered in the left over nail stickers, mixed with glue and spread on. At the other end of the house is a living room, with family pictures on the wall.

Upstairs one half is the kitchen where the gingerbread people are making replacement things for the shop as gingerbread people are prone to losing bits of themselves. The nurse is very carefully using her icing stitches, trying hard not to hurt the gingerbread patient, and other bits, eyes, buttons etc are kept in jars by the bed – just in case.

I love this simply gorgeous bit of nonsense and, as I said at the beginning, another first for me.





Santa at the North Pole

BY SANDRA HARDING

It was a few years ago that the Latrobe Miniature Group in Victoria, Australia, created this delightful Christmas collection, but I believe it's never too late to show you something so lovely.

Seven members of this busy group created a two-tiered box made from a flat pack shelf unit, causing them much merriment I am told. I can just imagine the scene. The lower rooms and some of the upper rooms were workshops, and the first three upper rooms were Santa's residence, with the two attics reserved for Santa's little helpers.

On the roof was Santa's sleigh and reindeer, plus presents in a huge sack, a snow man built by the elves, lights and Christmas tree. On the ground were red post boxes, one for each continent, plus more

snow and polar bears, a combined contribution by all the members.

Helen Counsel sent me these details and photographs, and there are so many boxes that I can't tell you who made which one, except that Helen, and most of the members, made almost everything in their individual boxes. This great effort took them about ten months to create, and they were delighted when the time came to fit all the boxes together to form this delightful scene.

The members responsible for this happy Christmas scene were: Helen Counsel, Lisa O'Shannessy, Leonia Blundell, June Reviere, Michelle Ireland, Rose Ewald, and Sheila Baxter. Sadly, Sheila has since died.

I hope you enjoyed looking at this as much as I did.



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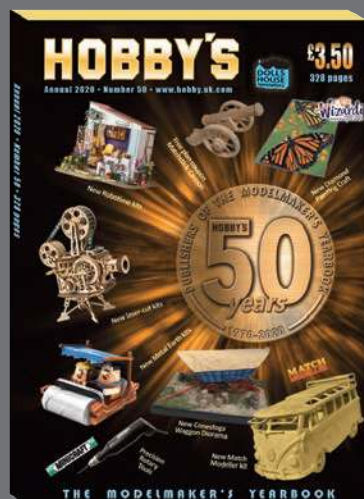


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Festive house is filled with pink and white

Vickielynn's Pink Doll's House gets a shabby chic decoration in time for the Christmas season and it's full of tiny treasures and delightful touches

BY VICKIELYNN THORNBURG. EDITED BY DEB WEISSLER

My name is Vickielynn Thornburg and I live in Waipahu, Hawaii. In Hawaii we say "Share Aloha," which simply means to share love. My Pink Doll's House has made me many friends, both in person and on-line. Aware that miniaturists appreciate what I've created has encouraged me to share my doll's house - all decorated for Christmas - with you!

This time of year I get to see the excited looks in my grandchildren's eyes when they play with it. Christmas is an especially thrilling time to show them the tiniest presents, the little gingerbread men, and the Christmas trees decorated throughout my doll's house.

I've always looked at everything—furniture, jewellery, lace, kitchen décor, even flowers and thought how can I make that in miniature? The thrill of gathering supplies and making

something in my own style to fit in a particular spot in a doll's house is such a rewarding skill that has given me so much happiness and calmness in a sometimes hectic life.

I think all my life I've made the best from what I had. My first doll's house was made from a cardboard box, windows created by cutting out the sides and making curtains from scrap fabric. My furniture was made out of match boxes and thread spools, toothpicks glued together to make tables and chairs. Folded cardboard became beds and couches.

I remember spending hours just looking over my creations and dreaming of what more I could do. Those are such happy memories!

As I envision a new project and gather ideas, the old saying that what you put out there in the world comes back to you couldn't be more true. I'm amazed to find the most wonderful things everywhere I look: doll's houses on eBay, miniatures on Etsy, tiny treasures in pound stores and antique collectibles shows. I'm always looking and inquiring. Over the years, I've made many friends who share my love and appreciation for miniatures.

I'm pleasantly surprised to see the joy on the faces of the many people who have visited my home and seen all the details I've put into my doll's houses, room boxes and vignettes: the tiny flowers, little forks and teacups, and scaled down magazines. They



notice the lighting that I've self-taught myself to make: tiny lamps and chandeliers crafted out of bulbs and wires I found in an old lot of miniatures at a thrift store years ago. I'm amazed by the many people who have said I've inspired them to try miniature projects themselves!

So let me take you on a tour of my Pink Doll's House! Christmas is that wonderful time of the year to bring out all the festive decorations. I loved decorating the tree with my favourite shabby chic pink and white colours; the tiny vintage box of ornaments are ready to be hung on the tree. The beautiful handmade ribbon presents were made by another miniature enthusiast I met at our Antique Collectible Show here in Hawaii.

I made the Christmas stockings for





Above: A look into the kitchen that is decorated for the holidays.

Right: The dining room table is set for a family meal.

the mantel from matching shabby chic fabric that I had covered the wing-back chair with. I had fun making the slipcover and matching pillow by the fireplace from fabric scraps, lace, and a little glue. I also covered the lampshade on the side table. I wanted this room to be an open, cosy space where I could imagine sitting by the bay window with a cup of tea looking through my Christmas card list.

I decorated the pink miniature shadow box with Christmas items I've collected over the years. There are little Christmas wreaths and trees with a special theme in each square. A







Above left: The beautiful "Pink Doll's House" from the front.

Below left: The little kitchen is full of fresh baked treats and decorations for Christmas.

vintage Santa and presents are in the silver and red tree and there's a white and gold tree with little presents. There are tiny gingerbread cutouts and dancing gingerbread men in another, while another square has a tiny tree and stockings.

My doll's house kitchen is busy with baking gingerbread cookies, pies, and cupcakes. The vintage miniature radio on top of the refrigerator plays Christmas carols as yummy smells fill the air, and the tea kettle is heating water for hot cocoa accompanied by a few Christmas cookies. If the weather warms, the fresh squeezed orange juice will be served later in the garden gazebo.

The dining room table is set for a festive feast and there's a Christmas tree in almost every room! I love the refreshing and soft colours. I think it's a happy place to be. I've included a miniature Pomeranian just like my real life



ones, Little Rocket Pup and Miss Hailey.

I'm always finding treasures to add to and redecorate it for the changing seasons. It's always on my mind in everything I see in my day to day life. It truly is my favourite treasure!

There's so much more I want to do with other projects too. I'm always rearranging and adding to my doll's houses just like I do in my own home. All I have to do is look through DHW magazines, view the many beautiful creations on Pinterest, Instagram and Facebook blogs just to be inspired. There's so many ideas and talented people in this wonderful world of miniatures!

It's always so rewarding to create a new interest or project. I once discovered there are a lot of miniaturists in Japan where my mother is from. Years ago when she was hospitalised for a long stay I sent her a room box full of vintage-looking Japanese miniatures, which brought back happy memories to her.

I hope I've inspired a new generation of miniature enthusiasts and want to keep sharing my doll's house and displays with everyone. Thank you so much for inviting me to share my treasured doll's house with you. Mahalo, Vickielynn.

Marcia's carvings come straight from the heart

Talented woodcarver Marcia Berkall creates a delightful cast of miniature Santas but you won't find them carrying anything but symbols of love and peace

BY DEB WEISSLER. PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARCIA BERKALL

With Christmas just around the corner, Marcia Berkall's chips are flying! In a genre dominated by men, Marcia wields more than just a sharp blade. Armed with a variety of knives, chisels, gouges, mallets, and power tools, Marcia creates endearing Santas from nature's bounty.

"I love Santa!" Marcia states emphatically. "For me, Santa is the embodiment of the spirit of giving. But you won't see my Santas with sacks of toys or wrapped gifts. Instead they carry gifts

of nature—animals, flowers, or symbols of love, friendship, or peace." As a former hippie, she retains her Sixties idealism.

Carved from cypress knees or basswood, Marcia's whimsical Santas often wind up on mantels where they stay year round, their owners reluctant to put them away along with the other ornaments. There's a strong hint of the North Woods and Downeast Maine imbued in every one; not surprising since Marcia currently calls Maine her home.

One look out of her

windows at nature's wonders and it's clear where she draws her inspirations. The movement found in a special piece of wood sends her off to her studio to carve another original design. The truly messy work—the sawing and routing—takes place in the cellar, after which Marcia can retreat to her favourite spot—her sun-room overlooking a lake. It's here, where in summer the sounds of loons provide an excuse to pause and listen, or in winter, when snowfall settles softly and fallen leaves open up her vista. It

all sounds ideal, but Marcia admits it has its drawbacks.

"I love the studio but it's difficult and expensive to heat in winter and equally difficult to cool in summer. The southern and western lights are often too intense, so blinds are necessary. Wall space is at a premium with three walls of glass. Like all miniaturists, I could always use more room!"

Despite the drawbacks, the studio is a sanctuary to both Marcia and her students, who come from all over to learn the art of wood carving. Marcia's philosophy is "carving from the heart". All too often, beginners rely heavily on books and patterns to learn carving. The plethora of how-to instructions creates the illusion that one must copy someone else's pattern in order to do it right. Marcia takes a different approach.

"As artists, we need to teach students to 'see', and then be able to put

Left: A trio of Santas reflect three popular Christmas themes. From left to right, the white dove of peace, a giraffe from Noah's ark, and a fly fishing Santa.





what they see on paper and translate that into a carving. I teach drawing as part of my classes. Instead of handing out a pattern I teach how to create a pattern." Observing one of her classes, each student might be carving the same item, but everyone is doing it differently; and that was the goal all along.

Marcia applies that same philosophy to her own work. All her figures begin with an idea that is translated to a series of sketches done on tracing paper so that she can easily make changes as she goes along. She enlarges her design on the computer and once she has a satisfactory pattern, she uses graphite paper to transfer the pattern onto a piece of wood. A truly complex design may begin as a clay model, which she then photographs from all angles in order to create a pattern.

Marcia loves working with cypress knees—those distinctive knobs that protrude above the roots of cypress trees indigenous to swampy regions. With a soft texture and twisting grain, they are

difficult to carve, but it's those twists, bumps, and misshapen forms that make them so much fun to carve.

It's difficult to find miniature cypress knees however, so most of Marcia's twelfth scale Santas are carved from basswood, albeit retaining the quirks and whimsy of their larger cousins. Relying on a band saw and router to remove much of the unwanted wood, there's still a fair amount of wood left that must be

carved by hand. Beginning from the bottom, Marcia's knives move from one part of the figure to another, achieving balance and symmetry as she works.

"One of my favourite parts is carving hair," Marcia admits. I can spend many pleasant hours carving beards and flowing hair, as well as the fur trim on Santa's suit." On occasion she will add baskets or dried flowers, jute, ribbons, and LED lights.



Above from far left: Santa holding a red squirrel. Santa's baby harp seal balances a gold ball upon its nose. Fur-draped Santa bears a small fir tree as a gift. Santa, dressed in white fur, cradles a baby sea otter.

Below left: Santa in a red robe with a lantern. His sack is tied with jute.

Below right: Heartland Santa with shovel in hand and chicken on his shoulder.

"I like to leave the face for last, paying special attention to the eyes, which can be intimidating to beginners. Eyes give a carving its expression and are probably the most important part of the carving. Several years ago I was getting ready for a big show, painting Santas late into the night. When I looked at them in the morning they all looked terribly sinister, with beady little eyes. They all had to be repainted!" Marcia laughingly recalls.

Paint can make or break an otherwise great carving. Over the years she's experimented with both oils and acrylics, preferring the

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Above: *The quintessential pirate, complete with a peg leg and a parrot perched upon his shoulder.*

Below right: *A green-robed Santa with a puffin resting happily in his arms.*

latter because it dries faster and creates fewer fumes, especially in winter with the house closed up. To achieve the transparency only oils can imbue, Marcia applies several thin layers of acrylic, using the paint more like a stain that is allowed to penetrate and dry rather than sit on the surface.

"I want colour but I also want the carvings to look like wood, with the grain showing through. I do a lot of shading to enhance shadows and light, and to tone the paint down and add more depth with a final antiquing of very thin burnt

umber. When that is dry, I apply an acrylic matte finish."

So where did Marcia learn her carving craft? As a child, she was always active in music, dance, and art. Later, she dabbled in knitting, dressmaking, and alterations. It was while she was living in New York that she decided to sign up for a beginner's drawing class. "The timing was right, the instructor was right, and my mind was open" to any and all possibilities. But what kind of art should she pursue?

She read of a weekend class being taught by a well-known folk carver and decided to give it a try. For Marcia it was serendipitous. Afterwards she went to a local art fair and met a wonderful sculptor who agreed to give her lessons. What

Armed with a variety of knives, chisels, gouges, mallets, and power tools, Marcia creates endearing Santas from nature's bounty. »

she learned from David Holmes was beyond her expectations and before long she was taking her carved Santas to area craft fairs.

Her figures range in size from 6 inches to 2 feet tall. Although the demands for Santas from online orders tend to be seasonal, many of the galleries who carry her work feature them year round. In addition, Marcia takes commissions and over the years some have required her to test her skills to the limit.

"The first large figure I carved was a trophy for a college football rivalry," Marcia recalls. "It was the statue of Athena standing with a gold leafed shield. I knew when I accepted the

commission it would be a huge stretch for me, but I also knew that at some level I was up to it." When the game was televised and Marcia spotted her trophy on the screen, it was a huge rush.

She has also done garden gnomes, Christmas ornaments, and wood spirits. "I jokingly say that I will carve anything with a face except birds, although I have carved puffins and parrots." Just last week she made a fruit salad and just couldn't resist carving a watermelon rose!

Marcia's life was turned upside down three years ago when her husband of 42 years suddenly passed away. The decision to leave Maine and move closer to family meant months of work getting her home ready to sell. For someone who was used to spending eight hours a day in her studio, the past three years have been a struggle.

"I look forward to this move. I'm hoping to share space, ideally a two-family house, with my younger sister and her husband. Both are professional musicians and I look forward to having the air around me filled with music and creativity." And her family looks forward to the sounds of carving and the sight of Santa's ever-present comfort and joy.



Christmas sho

A selection of skilled and creative miniature artists share a variety of beautiful pieces to celebrate the festive season



▲ Sandra Jusak

Sandra tell us: "This winter fairy measures 5 3/4" tall. The mould is by Parker-Levi. The slate base has semi-precious gemstones surrounding her feet and the path. I have been collecting gemstones on my hikes in the North Georgia and Alabama mountains.

"I always carry a backpack to gather pretty stones and other things. Sometimes it gets pretty heavy!"

"Her hair and dress are 100% silk along with a hand-blown glass crown. There is no pattern for the dress. I just start laying the fabric and let it tell me where it wants to go. The flower is made of handmade paper.

"The back view shows her dress and her handmade wings. I love making the wings. These are of two layers of Fantasy Film, again, no pattern, just a base of either 20 or 24 gauge wire."



▼ Ingrid Auer

Twelfth scale Christmas stockings stuffed with miniature goodies.



◀ Mo Tipton

Mo is a regular tutorial contributor to DHW and is sharing some of her mini works for Christmas. This happy little plate of snowman cookies and festive holiday ham are both twelfth scale and made from polymer clay.



owcase



▲ Caroline Sherman

This wonderful miniature garden gnome village is 3' wide and 8" tall (including the chimney smoke). Caroline also makes individual houses such as her Whimsy Purple Deer House, which is 10" wide and 9" tall. Each are filled with sparkle and magical details.

► Kristin Castenschiold

These twelfth scale reindeer are geared up in harness and ready to start pulling Santa's sleigh. Furred in a warm alpaca coat they can take on even the coldest miniature scenes to bring smiles to the faces of children and adults alike.

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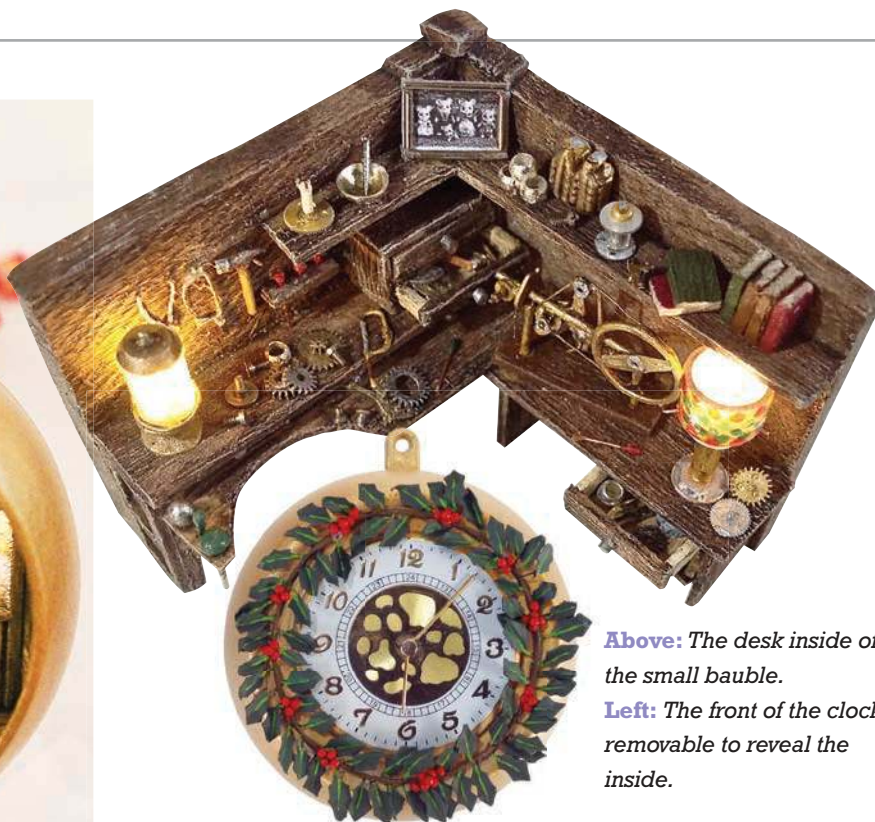
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▲ Jo Bevilacqua

"This twelfth scale tree was custom made for a customer. It has 175 handmade ornaments and stands 10 1/2" tall. The bird at the top was sculpted and body feathered. The tail wrapping down the tree had feathers individually laid one by one until they reached the base."





Above: The desk inside of the small bauble.

Left: The front of the clock is removable to reveal the inside.

▲ Conal Oakes

"This bauble is titled The Christmas Clock," Conal told us. "I wanted to keep this one pretty small so that it could be hung on the Christmas tree. The bauble is 8cm in diameter and was made from one of the hollow plastic baubles you fill with sweets, glitter, etc. The clock face was from the top off a tin of cashew nuts! I used magnetic tape to hold the clock face securely to the bauble when on the tree but it is easy to remove to see the scene inside. My youngest son, Michael had not been featured on any of the previous baubles and my older two kids have been featured so I decided to make this one with him in mind.

The scene inside is of the clockmaker's workshop and 'Mickey' the mouse is hard at work. If you look closely, there is a tiny coffee mug with the letter 'M' on the side and the clock hands show Michael's birthday (7 minutes past six as he was born on the seventh of July).

▼ Ana Cristina Novo

These beautifully made twelfth scale butter cookies in various shapes, patterns, and frostings are proudly presented on decorative metal trays. Each carefully handmade and painted by Ana.



▼ Mariangela Gagliardi

Handmade Christmas tree in red and white in a modern touch with some traditional accents. Tree is 7 1/4" tall.





MAKE IT SNOW

Dreaming of a white Christmas in your mini scene?
We take a look at the best ways to make it snow



There are many different ways of achieving a snow effect in miniature, and everyone you ask has their own idea of what looks best. Whether your desired effect is temporary or permanent makes a difference to the product used. For a permanent effect using spray snow from an aerosol can gives you that frosty 'just started-snowing' look. It is a good idea to paint the area white as this will help with the coverage. Whilst Polyfilla can be built up to give a thick 'snowing-hard' effect. This now comes in hand-size ready-mixed containers, although if you are covering a large area, like a roof, the powder version works out cheaper. Snow drifts and uneven areas can be created using Polyfilla, but of course once it has set it is permanent.

If, like me, you just want to create a white Christmas for your house, then using one of the sprinkle snows is perfect (apart from the fact that you could be hoovering up snow for many weeks after Christmas if your house is in a draughty position).

Another idea for large areas is a

cotton wool blanket. This is bought in sheets about one inch thick and can be cut to fit over any surface.

Other ideas involve using salt or sugar, or a mixture of both: these give a very realistic effect, and you can even make footprints using miniature boots.

Snowmen can be made from cardboard covered in Polyfilla, foam or cotton wool. Eyes and buttons are tiny beads, whilst his mouth can be a long bead, tiny piece of wood, or just drawn on with a marker pen. Don't forgetting the carrot for his nose.

Trees look great when covered with spray snow, and if they are made of resin the snow can be washed off gently in the spring, leaving your tree or bush green again.

Don't forget to add the snow to window sills and any other ledges, and pile it up slightly against doors or in corners of the garden.

Snow always weaves its magic spell. It can give your whole house a new look and makes a wonderful Christmas display in your own home. Even if the weathermen don't predict a white Christmas this year, as miniaturists - we know differently!

Glamorous dress for beautiful lady in red

Creating this stylish dress takes some effort but Dana shows you how step-by-step. And then your doll will be ready for any festive ball

BY DANA

Greetings and welcome to another DANA doll tutorial. For this adventure I wanted to re-create the beautiful couture of a fashion Barbie or a runway dress in real life. The amount of silk material, the hours beading, and leaf cutting all come together to make this doll outstanding in detail. I hope you enjoy her as much as I do.

Step 1: Paint the shoes.

Step 2: Assemble the doll and put her on a doll stand.

Step 3: Cover the face with a plastic food bag to protect her while you are dressing her.

Underskirt

Step 1: Cut a rectangle of blue silk to 3 1/2" x 12". Turn the bottom hem edge under so the skirt fits around her hips and glue.

Step 2: Join the sides then gather the top and tie it shut on the doll. You may add a small line of glue around the hips (under the gathers) to hold the skirt nicely in place. The only part that will show under the red dress is on one side.



Step 3: Lightly hair spray the skirt to make it stiff and have the blue skirt act as a petticoat.

Red skirt

Step 1: Cut a rectangle of red silk to 4" x 18".



Step 2: Turn the hem edge under, so the skirt rests at the waist and to the ground. You can make it a bit longer if you wish, but it will be a bit more difficult to drape. But it will also be so pretty to puddle it on the ground. Glue the hem.

Step 3: Join the side edges and gather the top.



Step 4: Slide on the doll with the bulk of the gathers/material in front and on the side. The back of the skirt has a train so no need to waste material there.

You will need

- Doll with a stand
- Paint for shoes
- Material – silk
- Plastic sandwich bag
- Tacky glue
- Scissors
- Pins
- Aerosol hair spray
- Ruler
- Silk tulle
- Cotton buds
- Chalk
- Green paper for leaves
- Beads
- Knitting needle
- Viscose
- Flat iron

Dress train

Step 1: Cut two 4" x 12" pieces of red silk.



Step 2: With the right sides together, glue one side. When dry, turn the right side out.



Step 3: Turn the bottom edge and both outside edges to the wrong side and glue. I made a pretty deep hem incase the train turned a little upward then you won't see the raw edge.



Step 4: Gather the top. Glue the train to the back of the skirt.



Step 5: Drape the skirt as desired. I like to push the material forward (see photos), and then press down and stick pins in until the "puddled" effect is accomplished.

There is a lot of material and I did this several times before I was happy. One big tip would be to pull up (don't glue, only pin) the side of dress so you see blue underneath. This will give you a better idea of how to drape the train.



Step 6: After the train is draped then mist it with several light coats of hair spray to hold the drape.

I personally don't use a particular brand, just aerosol.

Dress bodice

Step 1: Cut a 2 1/2" x 2" piece of silk tulle.

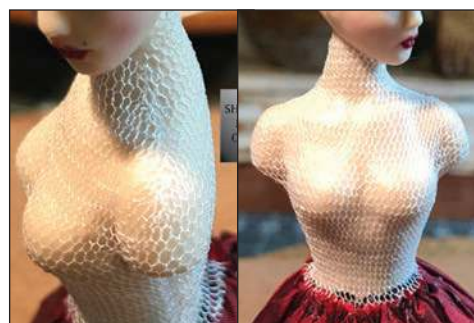
Step 2: Put a light layer of glue on the doll torso and spread it with a cotton bud and then let it get tacky.



Step 3: Gently press on the front of the torso, wrapping the edges around to the back. Remember there is a slight PULL you can do to make things stretch and fit.



Step 4: Put a line of glue down her back. Make the back edges meet. Cut off any excess. If necessary, pinch the pleat to make a little side dart for a better fit at the waist. All these descriptions can be seen in the photos.

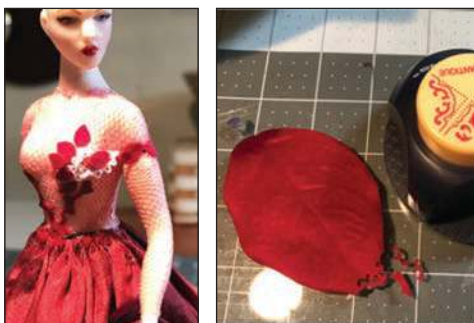


Step 5: Cut and draw silk tulle upward, cut it flush at the shoulder seam line.

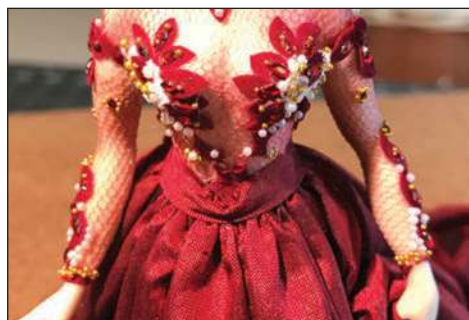


Step 6: Chalk the entire silk tulle with red chalk and a cotton bud. Do this lightly until you like the results. Several light layers are best. Remember you want it to look sheer.

Step 7: Now cut out the leaves and add the beading as desired.



Step 8: Cover the sleeves from the wrist to the shoulder with silk tulle. A little bit goes a long way. Remember to glue on one edge and when it's dry, stretch, and gently pull the tulle around. Then overlap and glue.



Step 9: Lastly, cut a small piece of silk and turn the edges under to the wrong side. Then glue on for the waist belt.

Step 10: Take your poinsettia leaf pattern and hand cut leaf shapes to glue on for the design. You can also take your zig/zag scissors and use them to cut a design.

“Chalk the entire silk tulle with red chalk and a cotton bud. Do this lightly until you like the results.”

Two choices for wiggling



Step 1: Take a piece of misted viscose and tightly wrap and twist it around a knitting needle. I use a size 9 or 10 needle.

Step 2: Take your hair straightener (flat iron) and clamp it on the drying hair to set it with heat.

Step 3: Slide off and gently pull apart to make nice soft waves.



Step 4: Glue curls on around the head.



Step 5: Do a wiggling cross, when the hair is dry, lift it upwards and wrap it into a high ponytail and work the curl in the pony tail to make it twist.

That's it, the rest is up to you!

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Neglected house gets a hippy makeover

When Kitty added this house to her collection she wasn't very impressed with the dark interior and myriad of room and arches. Now it oozes Seventies style

BY SANDRA HARDING

Kitty van Meurs blames her mother for her doll's house addiction getting out of hand. It all started many years ago when the family moved to another town, and a house with less room.

Even though Kitty's grandfather had built her a doll's house, her mother felt there was no longer room for it, so it was lost! After all these years, Kitty still reminds her mum regularly that her addiction to doll's houses started then.

The house we are looking at today is one of twelve now owned by Kitty — this one is a 16th scale Lundby Stockholm from the late 1970s and was bought in 2017. The house had been neglected and Kitty didn't like the interior very much as it was too dark, and had too many rooms and arches which she never had liked anyway. The bathroom without a door was another rather odd arrangement and, having had one of these houses, I have to agree with her.

Kitty wanted the house to have a 1970's hippy feeling, using brown, orange and purple, which we did in those days (if you're old enough to remember of course). Walls were removed and a very nice addition is the dormer window on the far right, which nicely turns into the bathroom, with a door (hurrah).

Much of the vintage Lundby furniture was bought, but Kitty also added her own handmade items to it. This includes the lovely table and dining chairs in the sitting room, and the

unusual hookah and glass bead curtain in the middle room. Kitty made the delightful handmade Seventies rugs, and those in the bathroom, using the needle punch method. The bathroom floor is made out of linoleum which Kitty cut up into little squares.

Although she admits to loving every room in this house there are some that she feels stand out. For instance, the kitchen, with its yellow furniture and gorgeous table and chairs, as well as the green and orange bathroom with the little toothbrushes, soap and abandoned bra on the stool. The cute blanket in the bedroom, which was made by Kitty's sister-in-law, and the cosy living room with original period wallpaper, brown couches, chairs and stool all add to the atmosphere.



Probably Kitty's favourite room, she tells me, is the room with the funky purple carpet, the posters and the stereo. The reason is simple really: Kitty would have loved a room like this in the 1970s in full size, and I can see why; it's so cool.

I wasn't surprised to learn that Kitty studied to be an interior designer, and she still acts as a customer advisor to a local homeware store. Her 12 doll's houses are in one room in her house, which she also uses as a craft room, working and creating her doll's house items.

Kitty, from The Netherlands, belongs to several Facebook groups, which is where I found her lovely house. A talented lady indeed, and maybe we can see more of her houses in the future.



A LOOK AT LUNDBY





Aurea captures joy o

We chat with Aurea Segura of Aurearte about the inspiration behind her beautiful new furniture collection and how it reflects her memories of the festive season

BY CHARLOTTE MERRYMAN



Hi Aurea. You started painting quite young, at the age of 14. What did you paint in those early days? I used to paint anything and everything. I liked to paint nature scenes as well as reflecting scenes of people having a good time. I recall a box I still have where I painted a woman dressed in the traditional flamenco dress.

You went on to study art techniques in Rome. Does a background of studying Michelangelo and Caravaggio help when it comes to painting miniatures? It does. It has helped me tremendously. Understanding the

techniques these artists used, how they portrayed the reality of that time, the materials they used, etc. I also studied marble imitation techniques. I did an antique restoration course and one of the things we covered was marble imitation. I use those techniques in my miniatures to do coffee tables, etc. It gives them a really sophisticated touch.

You've painted large murals for international conferences, portraying some of the flagship monuments in your home town of Barcelona. Can it be difficult to switch back to tiny brushes and twelfth scale? It can be



of a child's Christmas

difficult sometimes but I really enjoy doing both. When doing large murals, getting the scale right can be difficult because you've got a really large space to work on, whereas when working on miniature pieces, you've got a set space that helps you get the scale right. Although one is much larger than the other, they both require a lot of detail and even when I'm working on murals, I will take a close look to work on the details that make it more outstanding and reflect every detail.

You travel to museums and antique boutiques in London and Paris for inspiration. But where did the inspiration for your latest pieces come from? I like to visit museums and antique boutiques because they have pieces that are very similar to what I want to reproduce in miniature fur-

niture. It allows me to see the details close up. The inspiration for my latest pieces comes from a reminiscence of the holiday season. I went to a German school when I was growing up and in this Christmas collection I have tried to reflect the European tradition of Christmas - the one you might see in Christmas markets across Germany. The scenes depict the tradition of Santa Claus and the joy of getting together as a family for the holiday season. It also reflects the joy of children when they receive their gifts.

Is it true that you started your journey in miniatures by making pieces for your mother's doll's house? Yes, I started doing miniatures for my mother's doll's house as well as my own doll's house. I have painted my whole life and so I thought I could use

some of my painting techniques to do miniature furniture. When friends and family saw our decorated doll's houses they said I had to take this to other miniaturists. That's when I started to go to doll's house miniatures shows in Barcelona, London, Madrid and the USA and when my daughters set up my online shop.

What do you upholster your pieces with? It depends on the piece. Sometimes I upholster pieces with linen cloth, others I add lace and then hand paint small details on it such as flowers, etc. I like to go to small local shops to find the materials I need to upholster my miniatures and when I tell the shop owner what it's for, they find it fascinating.

What paints do you use? I use oil paint for the small details. I have



painted with oil paint my whole life and I really understand the texture, how it looks on each material, its resistance. It makes the pieces very exclusive and it gives them a sophisticated touch.

How do you achieve your realistic marble surfaces on counters and tables? When I was studying art techniques in Rome I did a course on antique restoration and one of the areas we covered was marble imitation techniques. I really enjoyed this subject and when I started doing miniatures I thought it was the perfect technique to produce marble surfaces on counters and tables. Doing this takes a lot of time and special attention to detail because it's the small details that make it realistic.

You say you love the romance of the 18th and 19th Century. What particularly attracts you to this period? I really like the aesthetics of that time — the elaborate dresses and the hairdos, the brightness, the details in gold and the fresh colours. I try to reflect

scenes of romance and rejoice in the outdoors so that each piece is a breath of freedom. And I like to work on all of the elaborate details that make these pieces sophisticated.



And Jane Austen? What part does she play in your work? Again, it's the romance mixed with the drama - the complex love stories, the countryside scenes, the secret lovers that meet in a hidden spot by a river. Her love stories and where/when they take place inspire many of my scenes.

Is it strange to work on festive pieces during the summer? Not really but it makes you crave Christmas a lot more. I feel like I've lived a little bit of Christmas already this year but now I can't wait until December! I'm really looking forward to it.

What do you love about Christmas? I love getting together as a family to celebrate the holiday season. One of my daughters lives in Ireland and she comes back for Christmas. We all get together and now I've got a grandson which makes it even more special. I really like cooking a nice elaborate meal for Christmas and sitting around the table as a family.



“It's the small details that make it realistic.”

How will you and your family spend the Christmas holidays? We will get together for Christmas Day like we do every year. We give each other gifts in the morning after breakfast and then we have a really nice lunch all together.

Have you always spent Christmas in Spain? Most of my life I have. It's a time to be with family and that's where most of us are. Even my sister, who lives in California, has flown back to Barcelona for Christmas.

What do you remember of Christmas as a child? I remember it as being one of the best seasons of the year. In Spain we celebrate the Three Kings which is in early January and that's when children receive the most gifts. For Christmas we got together as a family and sometimes we got a small gift but Three Kings was the day we all longed for as children. I used to do a short list of gifts I wanted for Three Kings and I behaved well all year long to get them. That day was full of magic

and happiness. I would share my gifts with my siblings and we would spend the morning playing.

What's the best Christmas present you've ever been given? A set of professional paints when I was 15-years-old. I got an artist box with all the paints and brushes I had always wanted.

What's the best Christmas present you've ever given? That's a difficult question! I don't know exactly which one would be the best present - I try to give presents that I know the other person will enjoy and make the most out of it.

Can you tell us about any Spanish Christmas traditions, that might differ from those in the UK? As I mentioned earlier, the Three Kings tradition. They are also known as The Three Wise Men. The tradition says that the three kings travel on camel from the East to visit all the children and give them presents if they've behaved well during the year (if they haven't, they

leave candy-coal instead). When they arrive in Spain on the 5th of January, they go to each of the villages to listen to the children's requests and collect their letters. There are parades in each town where the Three Kings march and give out candy and take children's letters. On the night of January 5th, since the three kings travel such a long distance and have a lot of work to do during the 5th and 6th of January, families traditionally leave water, turrón (a typical Christmas nougat), and milk out for the three kings and their camels to eat and drink. On the morning of January 6th, Three Kings' Day, children get up early and run to see what gifts they have received. It's a very special tradition.

We hope you enjoy it with your family. Thanks for chatting with us Aurea.



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MIKE'S CHRISTMAS

BY SANDRA HARDING

This is another of those little delights that pops up on Facebook, and it's so pretty that I asked the maker, Mike Hogan, to tell me about it.

"I like challenges, even when it comes to miniature room box design makeovers. This room box was recently purchased from the estate of an avid collector, and measures 27" wide x 13.5" tall x 20.5" deep. Whilst it was a great room box structurally, and had all the architectural elements in place, I knew that it was in need of some updates. I dismantled most of the interior, so that I could install new wiring, and add walls, flooring, lighting, wallpaper and drapery.

I knew I wanted a sophisticated, comfortable warm look, using a lot of beige, gold and orange hues as accents. I wanted it to fit well with my permanent pieces, as well as my seasonal decor, like Christmas. Many of

the pieces were made specifically for the room box, such as the Chesterfield couch by Gail Steffey, the coffee table by Tony Jones, the grandfather clock by Keith Bougourd, the floral peonies by Carmen Sanchez, and the chandelier by Jason Getzan. Other pieces were bought from either online auctions, estates or doll's house stores.

I will often redecorate and rearrange the accent pieces and furniture a few times, until I am satisfied with the room. I take decorating a room box as serious as interior designers do when they decorate a life-size room, and it has to pass my test.

I like designing all types of and styles too, including primitive, mid-century and colonial amongst others. I love that I don't have just one style because I like so many styles of decorating from different periods. It keeps me versed in all design trends.

When it comes to miniatures, it's all

about having a vision and achieving realism. When I decorate a room box, I want people to think it's a real life-size room when they look at the photograph. It's always great when you tell your friends and family it's twelfth scale and they think you are fooling them."

On a personal note, I think that Mike has achieved just what he wanted as the room really does look real. The attention to detail is amazing, and I just love the Christmas tree.

I really hope that Mike will show us more of his other nine room boxes, or either of his doll's houses, as both have unusual names: A Pam Throop Cranberry Grove, Cape Cod doll's house, and a Lawbre Rosedawn Plantation doll's house. I will ask him nicely.

I was also expecting Mike to be an interior designer by profession, but find that he is a Senior Public Relations Manager in the technology field. A loss to the world of interior design maybe?



ROOM



Bake some panettone ready for Christmas



The origins of this lovely Italian cake are ancient, dating back to Roman times, but today it is a popular addition to the Christmas table around the world



BY SADIE BROWN

Laden with fruit and the taste of Christmas, make a realistic miniature festive panettone. Panettone is an Italian type of sweet bread loaf originally from Milan.



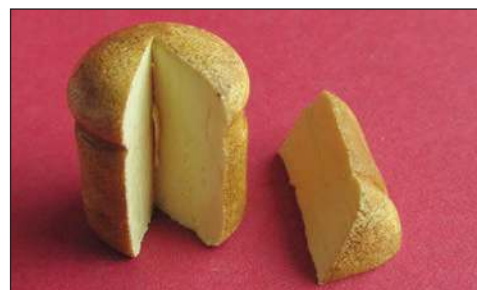
Step 1. Mix white clay with a little yellow to make cream, adding Golden Ochre pastel and just a touch of brown to achieve the look of real panettone. Roll a ball into a tube and, placing one end against your work surface, press down on the other end to form a tube with two flat ends. Then roll the clay again to get the straight sides just right.



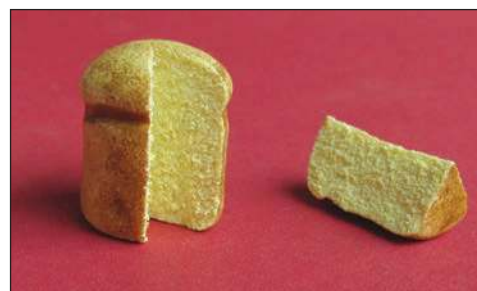
Step 2. Take another ball of the same polymer clay mixture and shape into a dome large enough to, very slightly, hang over the main body of the panettone (the tube made in step one). Use a needle tool to blend the two pieces of clay together and create the overall shape of the finished panettone.



Step 3. Create a rich golden brown grated pastel mix using Golden Ochre, dark Cadmium Orange, and brown. Brush over the panettone, adding deeper shading here and there to reflect the uneven look of the real thing.



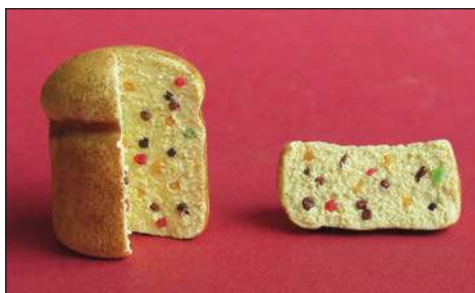
Step 4. Place in the freezer for a few minutes, allowing the clay to harden before carefully cutting a single slice from the panettone.



Step 5. Use the needle tool to texture the bread. It's important to take your time over this to get the best effect. Don't be afraid to keep returning the clay to the freezer for a few minutes every so often, to ensure the panettone doesn't lose its shape if you feel the clay begin to soften while texturing.

You will need

- Polymer clay - white, yellow, translucent, light brown, dark brown
- Pastels - Golden Ochre, dark Cadmium Orange, brown, orange, yellow, green, red
- Small brushes
- Needle tool
- Craft knife
- Gloss and matte varnish



Step 6. Make the candied fruit for the panettone by taking three pieces of translucent clay, mixing one with orange/yellow grated pastels, one with green and one with red. Using the needle tool, make tiny holes in the textured clay and place little balls/pieces of the mixed clay into them. Also fill some of the holes with light and dark brown clay to make sure the raisins are well represented.



Step 7. Make a few tiny holes on the outside of the panettone and the slice, adding a few pieces of fruit here as well. Bake according to the manufacturer's instructions and allow to cool thoroughly.



Step 8. Coat both the panettone and slice with matte varnish, adding gloss to the tiny pieces of fruit to finish your panettone.

Have fun creating and happy holidays!

Corner tree shelf is simple to create

Here's a pattern for a lovely little shelf that is easy to put together but will brighten up the corner of any festive scene

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

While browsing a second hand shop I spotted a shelf like this and decided to make it in miniature.

Step 1. Place tracing paper on the patterns and draw with pencil. Flip the paper over and draw over your lines onto mat board and cut out your pieces.

You will need

- Mount/mat board
- Craft knife
- Wood or card glue
- Paint
- Satin varnish
- Paint brush

Step 2. Glue the shorter side to the wider side (within the dotted line) and the base shelf at the same time.

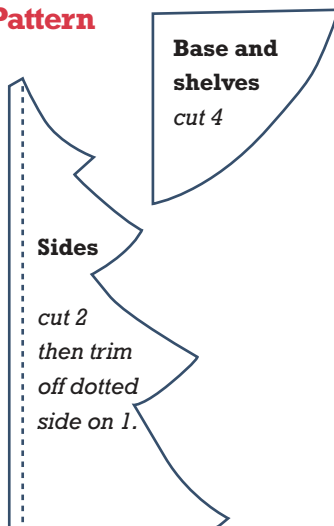
Step 3. Trim 1/8" or so off one of the rounded pieces and glue it under the base shelf flush to the sides.

Step 4. Insert your other shelves where you want them to be and mark on both sides where they need to end. Then trim in a curved shape. Glue them in place.

Step 5. Paint on a few coats of paint, sand, and finish with satin varnish.

If you prefer you can add three beads for legs instead of the smaller base piece. Place in the corner and fill your tree shelf with tiny Christmas trinkets.

Pattern



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Festive cards & paper chains

More easy to make ideas for your traditional Christmas decorations - bring a touch of the festive season into your house



BY SARA SCALES

Many of us have dabbled in Christmas card making so I decided to miniaturise some of the ideas available to give that hand crafted and not mass produced look for the doll's house.

Obviously Christmas cards can vary in size so measurements are approximate.

Step 1. Cut card 3cm x 2cm then carefully fold in half to create a 1.5cm x 2cm card.

Step 2. Choose sticker or cut out image of choice and apply to the front.

Step 3. I used a touch of glitter to add some festive detail. Remember these designs are just ideas so let your imagination run and create some cards that are distinct to you.

Advent calendar

Now this was a challenge, not the making of but the fitting of 24 numbers in such a small space. I decided to go with the modern concept of the advent calendar and based it on one of the ones that my children have had.

I added the candy canes as each pocket is supposed to contain a gift.

Step 1. Cut main colour 9cm x 5cm.

Step 2. Fold over 1 cm at each end and stitch or glue into place; remember that a gap is required to thread cocktail

stick through.

Step 3. Cut 4 strips of felt in contrast colour of 5cm x 1cm.

Step 4. Stitch on numbers (I advise if you haven't done this before that you have a go on a spare piece of fabric first to get sizing etc.)

Step 5. Position strips and stitch into place.

Step 6. Thread through cocktail sticks and glue beads into place. You may need to file the end on the cocktail sticks for the beads to fit on.

Step 7. Tie on hanging ribbon.

You will need

Christmas cards

- Card (colours of choice)
- Peel off stickers
- Glitter
- PVA glue
- Paint brush
- Guillotine
- Printed off inserts

Advent calendar

- Felt, two colours
- Gold thread
- Cocktail sticks
- 4 x beads
- Ribbon



Knit cute little Santa & his snowman pal

These tiny little figures are challenging to knit, but they are so worth the effort. This loveable pair will look amazing in a nursery or shop

BY MOIRA CHAPLIN

Although these toys are very fiddly to knit, the result is a delightful toy for a doll's house nursery, or for a Christmas shop. When knitting, try and weave in all the loose ends along the back of the work as this will make it easier when sewing up if you keep them all on the inside, unless they are more than about two inches long.

Make a firm cast on edge by using your left thumb and one needle. If you use two needles to cast on, after putting on the first two stitches, make new stitches by pushing the right hand needle between the previous two stitches on left hand needle.

When knitting with two needles always knit one stitch at the beginning and end of each purl row. This gives a better finish and stronger edge for sewing up.



Father Christmas

Shoes: Using two needles and black cotton, cast on 14 sts.

Row 1: P

Row 2: K5, K2tog twice, K5

Row 3: P4, K2tog twice, P4

Row 4: K

Row 5: P

Legs: Rows 6-9: As rows 4 and 5. Break off black and join in red.

Rows 10-26: SS (1 row K1 row P) Work second leg to match.

Body: Row 27: Still using red and with right side facing, knit across tops of both legs (20 sts.) and then divide stitches on to three of the four needles; 5 sts on first needle, 10 sts on the second needle and the remaining 5 sts on third needle. (5.10.5)

The division of these stitches is important as the needle with 10 sts on will be the face of your Father Christmas. As you are now going round and round on four needles you only use knit stitches for the rest of the head and body.

Rounds 28-33: K (6 rounds). Break off blue and join in white.

Rounds 34-41: K (8 rounds).

Shoulders: Round 43: K3, K2tog, K2tog through back of loops, K6, K2tog, K2tog, through back of loops K3. (16 stitches 4.8.4)

Round 44: K1 round.

Round 45: K2, K2tog, K2tog through back of loops, K4, K2tog, K2tog through

back of loops, K2. (12 stitches 3.6.3) Break off white and join in pink.

Round 46: K1 round.

Head: Round 47: K1, make 1 by knitting into the back of st, repeat to end of round (24 stitches 6.12.6)

Rounds 48-59: K 12 rounds

Round 60: K1, K2tog, repeat to end of round (16 stitches)

Round 61: K1 round

Round 62: K2tog repeat to end of round (8 sts). Break off pink and draw end through remaining sts.

Hands: Using two needles and pink cast on 10 sts.

Rows 1-4: Work four rows in SS (1 row k 1 row p)

Shirt sleeves: Break off black and join in white

Rows 5-20: Work 16 rows in SS ending with a purl row. Cast off. Work second arm to match.

Coat: The body of the coat is knitted on 2 needles starting with the hemline. Using white cotton, cast on 36 stitches.

Rows 1-3: K. Break off white and join in red.

Row 4: K

Row 5: K1 purl to last stitch K1.

Rows 6-31: As rows 4 and 5 (26 rows)

Divide for arm holes

Right front

Row 32: K7 turn (work on these 7



stitches only)

Row 33: K1, P5, K1
 Row 34: K4, K2tog, K1
 Row 35: K 1, P4, K1
 Row 36: K3 K2tog, K1
 Row 37: K1, P3, K1
 Row 38: Knit
 Row 39: K1, P3, K1
 Decrease for neck
 Row 40: Cast off 2 sts. K to end.
 Row 41: K1, P1, K1
 Row 42: K
 Rows 43-44: As rows 41-42.
 Row 45: As row 41. Cast off.

Back: With right side facing rejoin red yarn to main body.

Row 32: Cast off 4 sts, K13. (Should be 14 sts on your right hand needle)

TURN

Row 33: K1, P12, K1
 Row 34: K1, K2tog. tbl, K8, K2tog, K1
 Row 35: K1, P10, K1
 Row 36: K1, K2tog, tbl, K6, K2tog, K1
 Row 37: K1, P8, K1
 Row 38: K
 Row 39: K1, P8, K1
 Rows 40-45: As rows 38-39 (6 rows).
 Row 47: Cast off 3 sts. K3, Cast off 3 sts.

Leave the remaining 4 stitches on a piece of contrasting yarn.

Left front: With right side facing rejoin red yarn to remaining 11 stitches.

Row 32: Cast off 4 sts K to end (Should be 7 sts on your right hand needle) TURN.

Row 33: K1, P5, K.
 Row 34: K1, K2tog. tbl, K to end.
 Row 35: K 1, P4, K1
 Row 36: K1, K2tog. tbl, K to end.
 Row 37: K1, P3, K1
 Row 38: K
 Row 39: K1, P3, K1
 Row 40: Knit
 Decrease for neck
 Row 41: Cast off 2 sts. Purlwise, P to last st. K1
 Row 42: K
 Row 43: K1, P1, K1
 Rows 44-45 As rows 42-43. Cast off.
 Join shoulder seams.

Sleeves: Using a set of four needles, red yard and starting at underarm,



pick up 20 stitches evenly around arm-hole. A size .06 crochet hook is indispensable for this. Knit 14 rounds.

Cuffs: Break off red and join in white.

Round 15: K
 Round 16: P
 Round 17: Cast off. Purlwise.
 Work second sleeve to match.

Hood: Using two needles and red cotton, with right side facing, pick up 8 stitches along right neck and shoulder. Knit across 4 stitches on spare yarn and pick up a further 8 stitches along

left shoulder and neck. (20 stitches)

If you find you can't manage to pick up sufficient stitches then increase the necessary amount on the first row.

Row 1: K1, P18, K1
 Row 2: K
 Row 3: K1, P18, K1
 Rows 4-15: As rows 2-3
 Row 16: K13, TURN.
 Row 17 : K1, P4, K1, TURN.
 Row 18: Slip 1, K4, K2tog, TURN.
 Row 19: Slip 1, P4, P2tog, TURN.

Repeat rows 18-19 until all stitches have been knitted in and you are left with only 6 stitches.

Leave remaining 6 stitches on a length of contrasting yarn.

Front border: Working with 2 needles and with right side facing, start at the hem of right front, pick up 36 stitches up front of coat and hood.

Knit across 6 stitches left on thread, and then pick up 36 stitches down left side of hood and left front.

Row 1: K
 Row 2: Cast off, Purlwise.

Beard: Using 2 needles and white cotton, cast on 15 stitches





Rows 1-2: K
 Row 3: K1, K2tog, tbl, knit to last 3 sts. K2tog, K1
 Row 4: K
 Repeat rows 3 and 4 until 5 stitches remain.
 Next row K1, Slip 1, K2tog. psso. K1, Knit 1 row and cast off.

Sack: Using 4 needles, cast on 30 stitches, Knit 26 rounds
 Round 27: K2tog, M1 repeat to end.
 Rounds 28-32: K, Cast off.

Making up

Using the thread pulled through the stitches on the top of the head and an ordinary sewing needle, secure the end by making a few stitches and then push the needle through to the inside.

Stuff head and trunk with polyester filling. With right side out, join leg seams by over-sewing. The easiest way to do this is to hold each leg round a larger knitting needle or similar. Then stuff legs from feet up, pushing the stuffing in with a blunt cocktail stick.

Once you are happy with the shape of the body and legs, sew up the seam on the soles of the feet.

Join up bottom and side seams on arms and stuff. Sew arms to body at shoulder level.

Embroider eyes, eyebrows and mouth on to face. Make sure you give him a 'smiley' face! When embroidering the features, bring your needle from the back of the neck, that way the ends of the thread are hidden under the coat and hood.



Make curly hair by stitching with three strands of embroidery cotton forming loops on the front of the head, making sure that you have an even hairline around the face.

Make curls for a beard with three strands of embroidery cotton. Stitch the beard to the chin making sure you can still see his smile.

Stitch up side of sack, stuff lightly and draw a thread through eyelet holes. Either stitch to hand or stand at feet.

Snowman

Body: Using two needles and white cotton, cast on 8 sts. Using Knit stitches throughout.

Row 1: K
 Row 2: *K1, M1 by knitting into back of stitch, repeat from * to end (16 sts)
 Row 3: K
 Row 4: *K2, M1 by knitting into back of 2nd stitch, repeat from * to end (24 stitches)
 Row 5: K
 Row 6: *K3, M1 by knitting into back of 3rd stitch, repeat from * to end (32 stitches)
 Row 7: K
 Row 8: *K4, M1 by knitting into back of 4th stitch, repeat from * to end (40 stitches)
 Rows 9-48: K
 Row 49: *K3, K2 tog, repeat from * to end (32 stitches)
 Row 50: K
 Row 51: *K2, K2 tog, repeat from * to end (24 stitches)
 Row 52: K
 Row 53: K2tog, repeat to end (12 stitches)

Neck: Rows 54-55: K (2 rows)

Head: Row 56: *K1, M1 by knitting into back of stitch, repeat from * to end (24 sts)

Rows 57-68: K

Row 69: *K1 K2tog, repeat from * to end (18 sts)

Row 70: K

Row 71: K2tog repeat to end (9 sts)

Break off yarn and thread through remaining stitches.

Making up

Using the thread pulled through the stitches on the top of the head and an ordinary sewing needle, over-sew seam from top of head to neck. Stuff head at this point. Continue sewing seam and stuffing the body as you go. This seam will be at the back of your snowman.

Embroider eyes and mouth on to face. When embroidering the features bring your needle from the back of the neck, that way the ends of the thread will be hidden by his scarf. Embroider buttons down front.

Scarf

Cast on 5 sts in red and K 6 rows, Join in green (do not break red).

Knit 6 rows in green, carrying the red thread up the side of the scarf by making sure it is held behind the green thread at the start of each alternate row

Continue knitting 6 rows red, 6 rows green until scarf is as long as you want it. Cast off.



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FIND BEAUTIFUL
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Get a head start on the Christmas fun



Festive hats are fun to make and there are so many different styles to suit a variety of scenes. Take your pick from the line-up on the right

BY KAT HAZELTON

With Christmas fast approaching you will soon be busy decorating the tree, wrapping presents and hanging up your stocking, but don't forget to make some festive hats for your doll's house family. These are great fun to make and are easy to adapt into different styles, depending on the type of decoration you want to put on them. You can either make a traditional hat or go completely over the top, depending on whether the hat belongs to a child or adult.

You will need

Christmas top hat

- Pre-stiffened red felt
 - PVA glue or needle and cotton
 - A length of 4mm black silk ribbon
 - A length of 4mm gold braid
 - A length of red picot braid
 - Green felt and small red pom-poms (from craft shops)
 - Scissors
- Ruler

Christmas elf hat

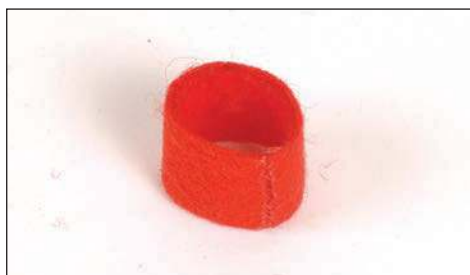
- A piece of green felt
- A piece of red felt 6cm x 1cm
- Small bell
- PVA glue
- Needle and white thread
- Scissors

Christmas top hat To make the brim



Cut a circle of 3.5cm dia from the red felt. Wet the felt and allow to dry over a jam jar. Once completely dry, cut a hole a little over 1.5cm in diameter in the middle of the circle, or the size of your doll's head.

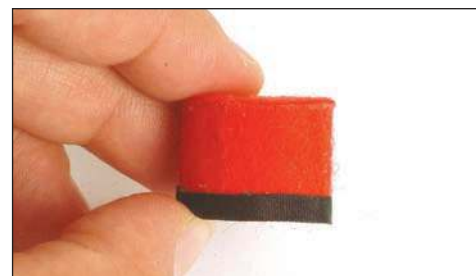
To make the crown



Measure a length of your stiffened felt 6cm long by 1.5cm high. Curl this into an oval shaped tube and glue or sew together.



Cut out a square of the stiffened felt, which must be larger than the opening of the oval shaped tube you have just created. Glue this square in place to one end of the tube.



Once the glue has dried, trim the excess felt off to leave a neat oval top to your hat. To add the trimmings I have used a 4mm black silk ribbon, which I glued around the bottom of the crown.



Next, glue the gold braid just above

the black ribbon, followed by your picot trim around the top of the crown.

Assembly and decoration



To assemble, carefully glue the crown to the brim and allow to dry. If you prefer more decoration, add some extra picot braid around the edge of the brim.

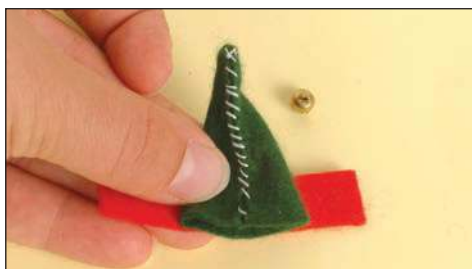


As a final decorative touch, cut out three holly leaves from green felt and use small red pom-poms for the berries. You could also use miniature tinsel or even mistletoe if you can find it.

Christmas elf hat



Using the template given, cut out the shape in green felt, and sew together the edges marked A and B with large, visible stitches in white thread to make it look handmade by Mrs Claus.



Cut a strip of red felt measuring 6cm x 1cm and glue it to the bottom of the hat.

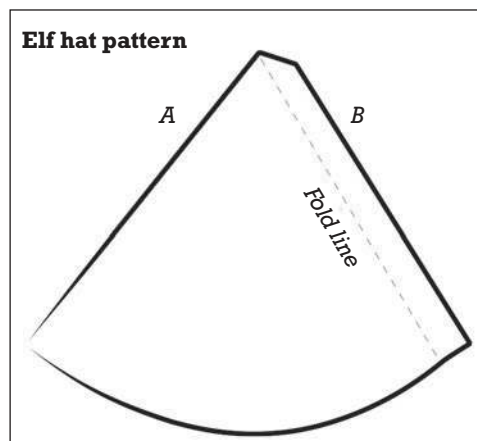


Sew a little bell to the top of the hat, bend the tip over and hold it in place with a small stitch.

Variations



The pattern for the elf hat can also be used to make a traditional Santa hat. Just sew or glue the edges marked A and B together to form a cone shape and add a white trim, either with felt or a length of fluffy pipe cleaner. To finish it off, glue a white pom-pom to the top of the hat.



Angel delight



These angels were painted, wooden tree ornaments which were made interesting by changing their outfits.

Green skiing angel

Cut a 1/8in wide strip of green miniature grass that looks like boucle knitting. Glue a piece around the hat to start with and then a slightly narrower piece around the neck for a scarf. Unravel a piece of yellow bunka and glue it directly to the hair, bringing it forward to give a pretty hairline.

Pink skiing angel

Take a white pipe cleaner and glue a piece around the hat, then another around the neck for a scarf. Then repeat the wiggling process using bunka, allowing short ringlets to hang down either side of the face and taking a strand around the back of the neck beneath the hat.

Rocking angel

To start, prise the angel off her mount and remove the horse's tail. Then glue a short strip of brown pipe cleaner to the horse's neck for a mane and insert another piece for a tail. Stick thick lengths of crochet thread around the head to represent a harness and draw eyes in the correct place, so the original eyes become nostrils.



Christmas market stall is a perfect mini store

When Barbara saw a market stall kit she knew it would be fun to make, and would also be ideal to display her extra Christmas minis

BY BARBARA ANTOL

Christmas truly is the most wonderful time of the year for me. In addition to decorating our "big" house, I enjoy decorating four of my doll's houses for Christmas. Still, in over 30 years of collecting and making miniatures, I had gathered more mini Christmas decorations than I could use in those houses.

When I spotted the twelfth scale Christmas market stall kit by Michelle Faleshock (Michelle's Miniatures in Pennsylvania, USA. See ad on P39) I knew it would be a perfect place to properly display all my extra Christmas minis.

The kit was easy and fun to build. I chose to stain it using Age-It Easy Gray from Micro Mark Small Tool Specialists. A single coat yielded a very nice weathered gray finish. The kit included shingles, which I painted lightly using grey, beige and green to simulate an aged roof. My husband cut and routed the wood base, which I painted white. Both the roof and the white base got a very light dusting of glitter snow.

I had some extra gingerbread trim which I decided to age and glue around the stall's front and side counters. I also added a string of battery-operated LED lights inside the stall. A wooden skewer worked great to hold the lights in the ceiling. I draped the light string over the skewer, with a few of the bulbs on the string dangling down the sides. The skewer would be easy to remove should I ever need to

replace the lights.

Then came the really fun part of filling the market stall with all sorts of Christmas goodies from my collection. The kit includes three long shelves on the back wall. I decided to accent the front edges of the shelves with some tiny red Dresden paper trim. It adds a nice little touch of colour.

The shelves are filled with quite a variety of Christmas minis. There are Christmas plates, a tiny wooden Schwibbogen, advent calendars, a manger and gingerbread house, books, nutcrackers, boxes of ornaments, some tiny glitter houses, teddy bears, packages of cookies and other goodies.

I purchased many of them from a variety of artisans in the UK, US, Germany and elsewhere around the world. Some of the baked goods were hand-made by me and I also built the little glitter houses using kits from Karin Corbin. Some of the Christmas stockings hanging in front of the shelves are actually little flocked buttons.

I had a little old-fashioned paper chain garland which I found years ago and really wanted to include that in the display. I decided to use a second wooden skewer mounted in the ceiling above the shelves. Thus, I was able to drape the paper garland in front of the shelves.

I had some extra shrine pedestal kits from Retro Cafe Arts Gallery which I painted and papered in Christmas



motif. They fit perfectly in front of the shelves and provided some additional display space for the tiny feather tree and the Reutter Porcelain Glühwein pot and pewter hot cocoa pot.

I reserved the front counter for some extra special minis. On the right, there's an advent calendar from Cinen Miniature Etsy shop. Each of the 24 drawers open and contain a unique tiny treat or ornament. The North Pole sign is also a purchase from Cinen Miniature.

The little nativity scene in a walnut shell, along with the shepherds and magi, was made by Sally Reader. The tiny figures are exquisitely dressed with such amazing detail. She also made the little angel that's sitting atop the Cinen Advent calendar. The green tray of fancy Christmas cookies was made by Jasmin Schwarz of Bitty Bits and Bobs. The tiny working wooden angel pyramid which I bought many years ago also fit perfectly on the front counter.

Since I'm also a cat lover, I think every mini scene needs a cat or two to be complete. The little tabby kitten peeking out of the Christmas stocking (hanging to the right of the counter) is a Julie Parrot creation.

I also decided to add the adorable little calico kitty trying to climb up on the counter. It reminds me of our old gal kitty, Mothra. She certainly would have wanted to climb up and check out that counter. There's actually a third



kitty sleeping under the shelves inside the market stall.

I had a lot of fun working on this project. One of the best things is that I'm not going to pack it away with the other Christmas decorations. It will be stored in one of the glass front bookcases along with some my other mini projects. So, I will get to enjoy a little touch of Christmas spirit throughout the year.

Bethina finds recipe to spread love and smiles

Cold porcelain has been pushed into the background by polymer clay in recent years but Bethina Murta prefers the feel of it and the results speak for themselves

BY DHW REPORTER

You use the cold porcelain process. Please explain this as a preference over clay. I have been using the cold porcelain method since 2004. I tried using polymer clay but found I liked working with cold porcelain better to achieve the results I wanted. Anyone can make cold porcelain at home. It's very soft to work with; you do not have to bake it because it air dries.

When did you first become interested in creating miniatures? In 2004 I made my first miniature twelfth scale teapot. I was in love with the results.

When did you realise you had a talent for making miniatures to sell? I sold my first miniature teapots in 2005. They were very popular, so I realised I might have a hidden talent that I should explore.

What other kind of work did you do before making miniatures? I worked for 30 years as a secretary in Brazil. I always enjoyed miniatures as a hobby, but my secretarial job was not related to my second chapter of life.

What does your family think of your creations? My family is very supportive and happy with what I do. My mum used to say that I was "inspired by angels".

What inspires you? Everything has potential to transform into miniatures! I



am looking around me every moment for inspiration. I get ideas walking through the colourful world of the Walt Disney Parks. I live in Orlando, so my daughter and I visit Disney World every week when possible and enjoy every minute of it.

What brought you to America? I was 54 when I retired from being a secretary. My daughter was living in Washington D.C. as a student. I moved here to be close to her and now she lives with me in beautiful Orlando, Florida.

What are your future hopes for growth with your miniature busi-



ness? Miniatures for me is like a passion, some might even say it's an addiction. Everywhere I go I have a piece of cold porcelain and I'm always making something, always thinking of new ideas. I'm a very happy woman. I love meeting new people at the shows I attend with my miniatures.

It may be hard to fit in this activity because I work by myself and must manage my business, my home and my dogs. Luckily my daughter lives with me and encourages everything I want to do.

One of my favourite things to make for my customers is hearts. I have made thousands of these very tiny hearts. I put a very tiny heart inside almost all of my creations. My intention is to spread love through my miniatures. If I can spread love and smiles to others, then I am happy. Mission accomplished!

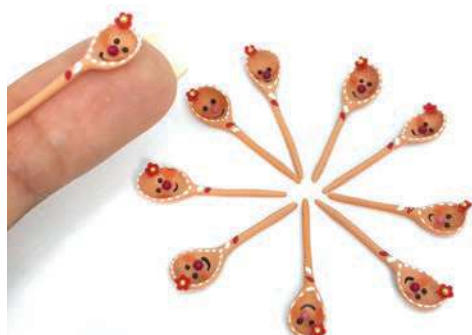
Do you like travelling all over the country to sell at shows? I do love travelling and meeting people. I'm always delighted when someone stops at my table and looks for a while and selects their favourite things. These are people with many options to choose from at the miniature shows but they make my heart burst with pride when they leave my table so happy.

Is making miniatures a relaxing activity or are there some parts that



You can see this artists' whimsical style in these fun seasonal miniatures.

“Miniatures for me is like a passion, some might even say it's an addiction.”





Top left: A beautiful miniature cake for Mother's Day!

Above right: A beautiful cake in twelfth scale.

Below: Tiny hearts for Valentine's Day.

are difficult? Making miniatures is very relaxing for me. It's fun to be creative. It's not like a job at all. It's about love and thinking what will make other people happy. When I love a miniature, I feel others will love it and I'm usually right about this. §



Cold porcelain recipe

If you fancy trying your hand at cold porcelain Bethina has shared her recipe with us.

You can make a wonderful soft clay that will keep for up to six months with just a few simple ingredients.

Remember cold porcelain is air dried and you can colour it with oil paint.

Recipe

240ml of Elmer's white glue (extra strong formula)
125gms of corn flour
1 tablespoon of lemon juice
1 tablespoon of Johnson's baby oil
1 tablespoon of moisturising lotion

Direction

In a microwavable bowl add glue, corn flour, lemon juice and baby oil. Mix everything until you get a complete mixture. Place the bowl in a microwave oven for 30 seconds. Mix

again until all the ingredients are together. Add this mixture back to the microwave for 1 minute more. Mix again. Add back to microwave for 30 seconds more and mix again. If necessary, keep adding for 30 seconds more until you obtain a good consistency, like a bread dough/clay.

Spread the moisturising cream on a flat surface and mix in the original 4 ingredients enough to make the final product pliable and the right consistency for moulding. Be careful because the clay may still be hot. Let the finished cold porcelain cool completely and then wrap with cling film but keep this outside of your refrigerator. You can use this mixture for up to six months.

Colouring the clay

Use any colour you like of oil paint to mix with the cold porcelain until you get the colour you desire! This is simple and fun!

Hang up that pretty little winter coat

A wardrobe always looks better with something hanging inside, so here's a cute coat to add to yours. Or just leave it lying on a bed or chair

BY MICHELLE ELLIDES

This smart little coat can be trimmed with many different braids or ribbons that will create different looks. It could even become a school coat if made in a matching colour to that of a school gym slip. For the coat I have used a very soft dark blue velvet; make sure that your fabric drapes as the coat needs to hang properly. Red felt has been used for the collar and cuffs. As this coat is designed to be put on a hanger seams are all glued, but if you prefer to stitch; Fray Check the edges and keep the seams and your stitches tiny.

Step 1. Cut out the pattern and then trace on to the fabric and cut out.

Step 2. Fray Check edges of fabric.

You will need

- Hanger
- Fabric – velvet
- Braid or felt
- Fabric glue
- Fray Check – optional



Step 3. Glue side and sleeve seams together (or stitch) - turn both front edges in 1/8in and glue.



Step 4. Cut collar and cuffs out of contrasting fabric - I have used red felt for this coat.



Step 5. Glue collar in place - start at the centre of the back and ease gently into the neckline.

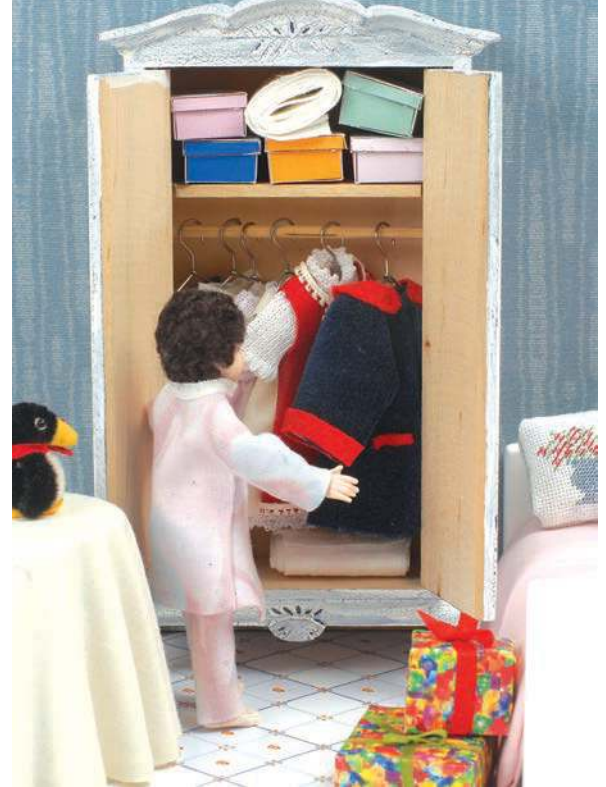
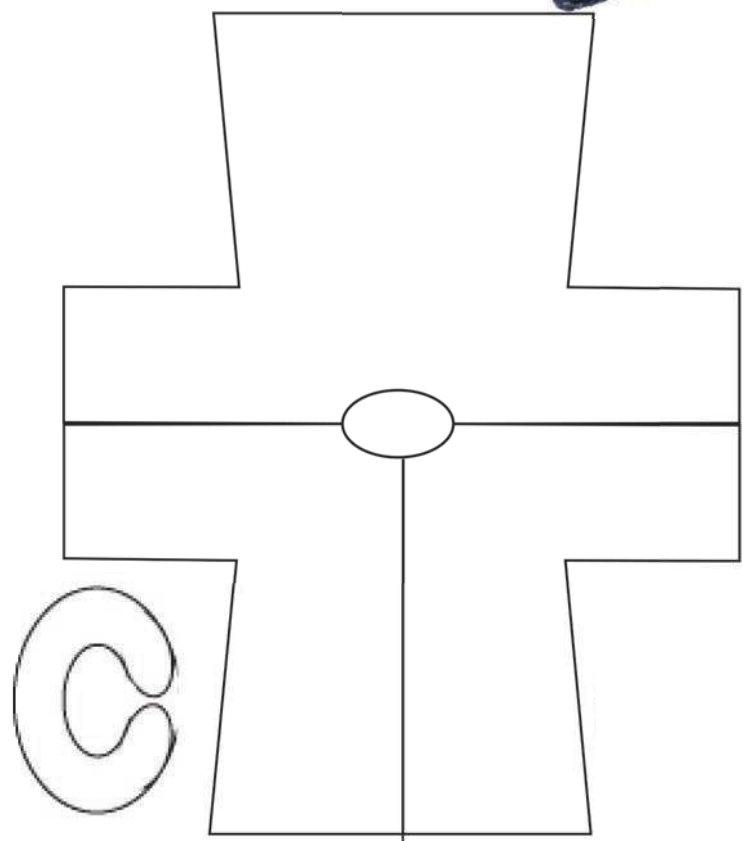


Step 6. Glue cuffs in place.

Step 7. Add tiny strips of red felt for the pockets.



Step 8. Put coat on to the hanger and glue fronts together. Make sure that the sleeves drape before putting in the wardrobe.



Mini scenes at centre of this club's party

A miniature club makes an assortment of fabulous festive table centrepieces for their party and you can borrow many of their ideas to create your own

BY DESIREE HALL

Each year a small group of our club members decorate a dozen party centrepieces for our Christmas party and then raffle them off to all club members during the party. The centrepieces for last year's party were based around a twelfth scale window scene.

Our seven volunteers used their imaginations and decorated one or two centrepieces in a festive or winter theme. The decorating styles used included gingerbread houses, winter snow scenes, traditional décor, storefronts, and cosy family scenes. They used a great assortment of paint, wallpapers, decorations, landscaping,

snow, icicles, and even LED lighting. Love was poured into many tiny details.

Making the kits

The starting project was designed and assembled into kits with the help of my husband, Michael Hall. Each kit included a standing hardboard wall with a twelve-pane glass window. The wall slides into a narrow wood base and it can slide out for easy painting and wallpapering. To make the walls, hardboard was cut into 6" x 10" rectangles, and a window was cut into each one with a jigsaw. The window trim that came with the purchased windows allowed for some leeway on the window opening size.

All twelve bases were made at one time starting with a 1/4" x 3" x 6' long poplar board. A 1" x 1" x 6' poplar



board was glued to one side, a gap just wide enough for the hardboard was allowed, and then a 1" x 2" x 6' board was glued down. This created one long track with a narrow slot for the hardboard walls. The whole track was clamped down and allowed to dry overnight. The track was then sawed into 6" long pieces using a mitre box. Lastly, clapboard was glued to the exterior side of each hardboard wall.

If you are attempting to recreate this idea be sure to leave a couple of inches larger on both sides of the wall to allow more options for decorating. Several members extended their bases for this purpose.

The makers

Rosemary Arthur decorated the exterior of her scene with bushes covered in frosty snow with two little birds. From the outside looking in, you see a little girl decorating a lovely Christmas tree. The little girl's nightgown reads "Daddy's girl". The decorations on the tree include gold beaded garlands,

Above right: Michael Hall working on the club kit structures.

Below: The club's Christmas party.





Rosemary Arthur



Lani Lugo



Maureen Van Ripper



colourful balls, bears, and toy decorations.

Lani Lugo chose a pale bluish-grey exterior wall colour and decorated with snow and icicles. She extended the base and made deep snow using



filler. She lightly dusted the filler with iridescent glitter. Her first exterior has a decorated tree and a wonderful stick reindeer. The interior of this scene has a rocking horse surrounded by gifts. Her second exterior has a pair of



bundled snowmen and a winter tree. The interior has a red berry tree and wrapped gifts.

Maureen McPherson created a store scene. She extended the bases with wide boards under both the exterior



Carol Rush



Claudia Vigness



Maureen McPherson



“Christmas bulbs surround the interior and a holiday gnome and a gingerbread man sit on a sledge under the table.”



Desiree Hall

and interior. She also added awnings to the exterior. A jolly Santa Claus stands outside the toy store. The window looks into a toy store scene. The interior has a shop counter with a cash register and a Christmas tree decorated with blue LED lights and looks onto a lighted street scene.

Carol Rush decorated her scene with a gingerbread house theme. The outside is covered in handmade clay candy canes and gingerbread men. The interior has a happy kitchen table with gingerbread cookies being rolled out. The open recipe book is readable. Christmas bulbs surround the interior and a holiday gnome and a gingerbread man sit on a sledge under the table.

Maureen Van Riper decorated her exterior with plants, a wagon wheel, a snowman, and a red cardinal. Lights and garland surround the wall and a gold star is above the window. The lights are a battery powered Christmas necklace!

The inside scene has a silver and blue tabletop



tree with a tree skirt and is surrounded by decoratively wrapped gifts. For a finishing touch, cards and garland surround the window.

Claudia Vigness decorated her kit exteriors with a snowy landscape full of bushes and benches. She placed a warm homely scene in the window looking in and on the interior side she placed a cold winter scene looking out. She extended her bases on the interior and exterior to make more room for decorating.

Her interiors are cosy rooms with furniture and decorations, including curtains and garland above the windows.

I, Desiree Hall, decorated my first exterior with pale green paint and white shutters. The interior is traditional wallpaper with green trim and a lace curtain. The second exterior is dark red with purple shutters and a small flower box. The interior is light coloured wallpaper and a lace curtain with a dark red silk valance.



Paper chains

These paper chains need patience and are fiddly to make — just like the full-size ones of my childhood.

For the paper I found a cheap children's colouring book that contains different colour sheets, its texture is perfect when using PVA glue. The guillotine makes cutting easier but scissors can be used and the paint brush was handy for applying the glue. Its shaft was also great for forming the actual link of the chain.

You will need

- Coloured paper
- PVA glue or equivalent
- Guillotine (to cut paper into strips)
- Paint brush

Step 1. Cut mixed colour paper strips of 3cm x 0.5cm. Amount will vary depending on the length of chain you need.

Step 2. Carefully glue first strip into a link and make sure is dry before continuing, this link is your anchor so it is important that it is firm. I slid the link onto the paint brush as it made it easier to hold.

Step 3. Thread second link through and once again glue using the brush as a shaper.

Step 4. Continue this method till length achieved.



Pretty up some n

Impress your friends when they come to dinner with these delightful, easy to make little plates - just right for the festive season

BY DHW PROJECT DESIGNER

One of the pleasures of this time of year is looking at the pretty, Christmassy china and linen in the shops, and maybe even succumbing to its gentle allure. It really brings the festive spirit to the home with its reds, greens and golds.

Here's a way of bringing a bit of that Christmas colour to your doll's house - without spending a fortune or taking a lot of precious time! I have used materials that can be found in most craft shops or many high street

chain stores, with the addition of cheap paper plates that are available either from miniatures shops, fairs or online. Scrap-bookers or card makers might already have many of these items in their stores.

Before I start, a word of warning. These plates look best varnished, but please DO NOT do what I did, and use a water-based gold pen because when you apply the varnish it smudges, even though the ink is apparently dry. It will also smudge acrylic paint if it is even the slightest bit damp. The plates in my waste bin will attest to this fact!

Five gold rings design

Step 1. Using tweezers and starting at the top of the tree, stick 5 rings in a triangle shape so that the one at the top is touching the rim of the plate.

Step 2. Paint 'NOEL' in small capitals under the rings, following the curve of the rim.

Step 3. Then, using the tip of a cocktail stick dipped into red paint, make the small dots to form the 'trunks' and to embellish the word.

Step 4. Finally, draw a gold line around the edge of the plate with the gold pen.

Step 5. Varnish the front of the plate

when everything is dry.

Snowflake plates

White: I used white peel-off snowflake stickers for these plates.

Plate 1

Step 1. Carefully peel off a large sticker and position it centrally on the plate with tweezers. Don't worry if the sticker is too big. Trim it with fine scissors.

Step 2. Then, using the gold pen, colour in the white plate between the arms of the snowflake.

Step 3. Varnish when everything is dry.

Plate 2

Step 1. Using a middle-sized sticker, position it centrally on a plate.

Step 2. Colour in the plate as before but leave the rim free of colour.

Step 3. Finally, draw a gold line around the edge of the plate.

Step 4. Varnish when everything is dry.

GREEN: I liked the idea of these more than I liked the finished article, mainly because I couldn't get a really smooth green surface to work on. Some of the plates also lost their

You will need

- Paper plates
- Glue pen
- Fine gold waterproof pen
- White snowflake peel-offs
- Little gold circle peel-offs
- Gold and silver paper
- Tiny punched trees, cherubs and bells
- Acrylic paint in red and green or very fine waterproof pen
- Gold paint - optional
- Cocktail sticks
- Fine paintbrush
- Fine tweezers or forceps
- Fine scissors
- Clear acrylic varnish



mini paper plates

shape because they were too damp. I think that metal or plastic plates would be a better option. Anyway, this is what to do:

Step 1. Paint the plates with green acrylic paint. They will need several coats for an even finish.

Step 2. Stick snowflakes onto the centre of each plate.

Step 3. Using the gold pen, draw a line around the rim, and also make tiny gold dots to accentuate the flake.

Step 4. Finally, using the point of a cocktail stick and red paint, make tiny red dots at the tip of each arm of the snowflake.

Step 5. Varnish when all is dry.

Christmas tree plates

I punched out tiny trees from gold paper and used a glue pen to attach them to the plates, but could have drawn them straight onto the plates with gold pen.

Step 1. Stick or paint gold trees centrally onto the plate.

Step 2. Draw a gold line around the edge of the plate.

Step 3. Using the tip of a cocktail stick and red paint, make tiny dots to decorate the trees.

Step 4. Make a plant pot either with tiny red dots or with a gold peel-off circle.

Step 5. Varnish the plate when dry.

Snowflake edges

The last tree plate is made using the snowflake peel-offs in a slightly

different way.

Step 1. Position the smallest snowflake peeloffs around the edge so that they are half on and half off the plate. The snowflakes should be touching around the rim. Leave a gap at the bottom of the plate.

Step 2. Trim off the overhanging shapes. Using the gold pen, outline the snowflakes at the centre of the plate and fill in some of the spaces in the shapes.

Step 3. Write 'NOEL' on the rim in the snowflake-free area.

Step 4. Finally, stick or draw a small gold tree in the centre.

Step 5. Varnish when dry.

Cherub plates

Gold: I used tiny shapes punched from gold or silver paper for these plates, and attached them with glue pen. The cherubs are positioned off centre on these two plates, in a north-east alignment.

Step 1. Stick a cherub close to the rim of the plate.

Step 2. Using gold pen, write 'NOEL' or '2008' under the cherub, following the curve of the rim, and remembering the alignment of the plate.

Step 3. Draw a gold line around the rim of the plate.

Step 4. Varnish when dry.

Silver: I used a tiny cherub and tiny stars punched from silver paper. The stars were part of a border punch design.

Step 1. Stick the cherub in the centre of a plate and the stars around the rim.

Step 2. Paint 'NOEL' with little red dot at each end above and below the cherub.

Step 3. Varnish when dry.

Holly plate

Step 1. Paint three tiny holly leaves at the top of the plate.

Step 2. Using the top of a cocktail stick, make small dots underneath the leaves.

Step 3. Paint 'NOEL' beneath the leaves, slightly curving the work.

Step 4. Embellish with more red dots and add gold ones if you wish.

Step 5. Draw a gold line around the rim.

Step 6. Varnish when dry.

Bell plate

I used a small gold punched bell shape but could have drawn one with the gold pen.

Step 1. Stick the bell towards the top of the plate.

Step 2. Write '2008' in a curve under the bell and embellish with gold dots to either side.

Step 3. Paint the ribbon and dots on the bell in red.

Step 4. Draw a gold rim around the plate. 5 - Varnish when dry.



Tiny Harry Potter scene sits on a Pringle tube

You won't believe the detail in this amazing Christmas table decoration that was made from scratch and inspired by the buildings in the Harry Potter films

BY CONAL OAKES

My wife and I are big fans of the Harry Potter novels and films, and now that our children have become interested in them, it has become a family affair! This piece was a Christmas present for my wife.

I actually had this idea in my head from the start and I envisioned the train going from house to house, but I underestimated the size it would turn out to be as I tried to replicate the buildings in as much detail as possible using stills from the Harry Potter films.

This specific piece was scratch built from materials found around the home with the exception of a turntable motor taken from a second-hand jewellery display turntable and coloured LEDs.

The main structure was made from a Pringles tube cut in half and attached on either side of a detergent bottle. The houses are made from card, balsa wood, toothpicks, and overhead projector acetate sheets.

The Hogwarts Express was made using the hollow body of a colouring pen, a toothpick, a hollow plastic lollipop stick, a cotton swab, colouring pencil lead, and wire from the inside of a plug for the fine detail. The pictures should help show what I mean by this as I'm sure it sounds a bit confusing!

The Whomping Willow was created using modelling putty and the bristles from a floor brush to simulate the branches. The gold and silver Christmas baubles were made using the very small cavity wall insulation

polystyrene beads that happened to have been blown out of a small hole in the extractor fan leading to the outer wall of the house one very windy afternoon!

The Hogwarts Express moves around the houses using a small motor taken from a second-hand jewellery display turntable.

I have found that I am now a bit of a magpie, storing any small bits of plastic, card, metal, etc especially strange shapes, in a 'bits' box and the fun part is seeing what can be made from very run-of-the-mill household items. I was particularly pleased with the small Hogwarts Express Train as it was built entirely from random bits and pieces from my bits box! I have found that a very sharp blade works best for the fine detail and I am forever changing the blades to obtain the very fine cuts necessary for working in that detail.

One of the more difficult tasks was finding a glue that I was totally happy with. I mainly use very small amounts of super glue but I found early on in the project that it began to fog up all the acetate windows and I did not know how to keep the acetate window in place as PVA glue was not fit for purpose. I ended up having to slice very small strips of double-sided tape for each window! As it turns out, I found out after I had finished that 'Canopy Glue' would have been perfect for the job. If only I had known it existed! I have purchased some now and it is

very good but not quick drying.

I also found it quite difficult hiding the wires to the LEDs as there are at least two LEDs in each individual house, three to light up the Hogwarts Express and three used as up lighters for the Whomping Willow. The wires normally have to be concealed under the flooring area or inside the structure.

A couple of days before Christmas day, I was working late into the evening and managed to cut through the lead wire running to the battery. As a result, nothing lit up! At this point they were all hidden, so I had to carefully run through all the areas the wires were laid down to find the break in the circuit. Thankfully I was able to find the break and repair it!

My favourite part about this piece would have to be either the Hogwarts Express or Hagrid's Hut. Hagrid's Hut nearly drove me mad, however, as I realised early on that to get the realistic effect I was looking for I would have to tile the roof properly. I think there are hundreds of little tiles about two mm wide on that roof!!

The part that was the most fun to create would have to be The Hogwarts Express, especially seeing it move through the arches for the first time!

I also loved making the Weasley's home. If you look really carefully you will see a Christmas tree on the landing and you can see into their kitchen as I obtained a photo of the inside of the house, shrunk it in size and placed



MORE SMALL ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Above: One of the four sides of this tiny piece. The train actually has a small motor and runs around the piece. Dimensions are 9 3/4" tall x 7" wide.

Above far right: The table decoration shown with the lights on. Conal usually makes a Christmas bauble every year but this project shows his skill set in a new way.

it inside. It's little details like that, that I love creating the most: little things that not everyone will realise are there.

As Vice-Principal of a Primary school and having three young children there isn't really time for any mini work during the year but I always make time for this project as my wife and family love them and I love making them. I find creating in miniature very relaxing (unless you cut through the wires two days before Christmas or slice your hand requiring an all-night hospital trip, five stitches and a tetanus injection on the 23rd of December!

Working in miniature requires extreme concentration and it is a time where you leave everything else behind you. All the stresses from work and plans for the day are gone for a period of time and I find that very beneficial. All crafters should make time for their hobby as it will improve their well-being.

My hobby is just something I do as a bit of fun for my family.

It is lovely to think that someone else gets a wee bit of pleasure looking at them.



Photos above and right take you through the building process. This piece was made mostly with things we have in our home on a regular basis or are easy to find.



Mini house made of dyed gingerbread

When 'lunatic' Cheryl decided she would make an edible snowy scene she wasn't prepared for some of the problems, or the challenges her friends kept coming up with

BY CHARLOTTE MERRYMAN

Cheryl Barkley has had a passion for miniatures ever since a good friend showed her a doll's house that their father had built for their daughter twenty-five years ago. After she laid her eyes on that, she was hooked! Cheryl's first doll's house was a memory house. Almost everything in it was a memory of something her or her family considered special. Now that Cheryl is a retired medical ultrasound technician, she is able to enjoy being more focused on her mini life. She has created all types of doll's houses, including a haunted house.

When talking about her miniatures, Cheryl remarks: "I get to have a second childhood! The creativity inspires me as well as solving a problem or designing a new project. Also the great memories it evokes."

Her granddaughter, Ashlyn, is her

biggest fan, but the rest of her family always likes to see her latest projects too. Although there has been some arguing behind her back about who will have to take all of her "stuff" when she's gone, now that she has her granddaughter, who is hooked on her minis, that problem is solved!

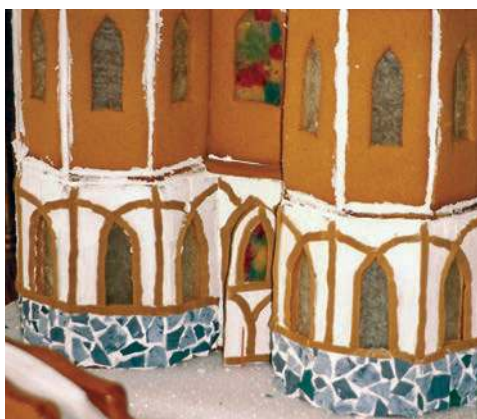
This gingerbread house is based on her "Fox Manor house" which she is still constructing. This delicious little house is only 1/24th scale. Because of her love of baking, when Cheryl had decided to create this miniature gingerbread house she was determined to use no inedible supports or pre-made items. With exception of the logs (pretzels) bear-shaped cracker biscuits for bed decorations, and teddy sprinkles on the tree, she succeeded. Each shingle was cut out separately from gingerbread dough and baked for different times to get the range of colours. She then added edible glitter. Everything is handmade except for the Christmas tree decorations and the pretzel logs. Some trees are made from sweets.

It took three months to build, during which time her kitchen was a mess, but she said it smelled great!

Cheryl found the hardest part about making this miniature house was keeping the walls from falling down.

"I didn't want to use any materials that weren't edible, even for base materials. Why? I'm a lunatic."

The floors are embossed to look



Top left: Dad sleeping in his chair is one of Cheryl's favourite scene in her manor creation.

Top right: Hand-piped bears show family memories of Cheryl's childhood, which includes her doing a face-plant in the snow while skiing.

Above: The most difficult part of construction was trying to keep the wall from falling down during the process.

Above right: After three months of baking and piping the miniature gingerbread manor was finally complete.

like plank flooring. Then she dyed the gingerbread and embossed the bricks for the chimney. All of the glass and pond are made from hard candies that were melted.

As she was constructing this house her friends kept egging her on to attempt harder and harder challenges including the canopy bed. She accepted each challenge with sheer determination to succeed.

All of the bears that she piped using gingerbread and royal icing are participating in activities that reflect some of her family's favourites sports and memories growing up. This includes her doing a face-plant in the snow while trying to ski!

Cheryl's favourite parts of this

project are the fun details, like the slippers on the rugs, mum making a gingerbread house in the kitchen, dad in his chair, the three little bears and the skiing bear out front mimicking her face-plant.

Although some changes were made along the way, this little gingerbread house surpassed all of Cheryl's original hopes and expectations after she had finished it.

She may not have received a mention in The Good Housekeeping annual contest, which was also a driving force for creating it, but we are delighted to showcase this wonderful example of what happens when you pipe gingerbread, icing and love into a little house that brings big smiles.

SHOW DATES

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



OCTOBER

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, Oxon
Open: 10.00am - 3.30pm
Organiser: 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 DOLLHOUSE SALE

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

ALL PROCEEDS TO CANCER RESEARCH UK

NOVEMBER

SATURDAY 02 NOVEMBER

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR
Pudsey Civic Hall, Dawsons Corner,
PUDSEY, Leeds LS28 5TA
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

SUNDAY 10 NOVEMBER

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR
York Racecourse, YO23 1EX
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Warner Exhibitions

SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR
Bentley Heath Community Centre,
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,
NANTWICH, Cheshire CW5 5DG
Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm
Organiser: MM Fairs

SATURDAY 30 NOVEMBER

KENSINGTON CHRISTMAS DOLLS HOUSE FESTIVAL
Kensington Town Hall,
Hornton Street,
LONDON W8 7NX
Open: 11.00am - 6.00pm
Organiser: London Dollhouse Festivals

DECEMBER

SUNDAY 01 DECEMBER

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR
Holiday Inn Basildon,
Waterfront Walk,
Festival Leisure Park,
BASILDON SS14 3DG
(off A127)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

2020 JANUARY

SATURDAY 11 JANUARY

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR
The Benn Hall, Newbold Road,
RUGBY, Warwickshire
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: MM Fairs

SUNDAY 12 JANUARY

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR
Members Pavilion, County Showground,
Weston Road, STAFFORD, ST18 0BD
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

SUNDAY 19 JANUARY

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR
Ipswich Hotel, Old London Road,
Copdock, nr IPSWICH IP8 3JD
(off A12)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

FEBRUARY

SATURDAY 1 FEBRUARY

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR
Southport Theatre & Convention Centre,
SOUTHPORT
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: MM Fairs

FAIR ORGANISERS:

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www.dollysdaydreams.com
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www.dollhouse-fairs.co.uk

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www.yorkdollhousefair.co.uk

Wendy's World: 01895 834348
www.wendysworldfairs.co.uk
E: wendyhobday@wendysworld.co.uk

While we make every effort to ensure the accuracy of these dates, please do check shows before travelling.

Christmas pudding has a top secret ingredient

Bake a beautiful looking pudding that will impress your mini guests using polymer clay along with seeds and beads.. and one special addition



BY MAGS CASSIDY

first of all, wash your hands – you will be surprised at how much dirt transfers onto the clay from seemingly clean hands.

Your clay should be soft and pliable, not crumbly and with no air bubbles in it.

If you overwork the clay, don't worry, just place it on some silver foil in the refrigerator for a while and allow to cool. Another alternative is to use a little talcum powder on your hands.



You will need

- Fimo Soft in: Chocolate (1/4 block), White (1/8 block), Transparent (1/16 block), Indian Red (tiny piece)
- Fimo Classic in: Leaf Green (tiny pieces)
- Sesame seeds 1/4 tsp
- Poppy seeds 1/4 tsp
- Red and green ballentine (no hole beads)
- Craft knife
- Sugarcraft rolling pin
- Ceramic tile
- Foil lined baking tray

Making your pudding

Take the white and transparent clay and work them together until the colour is even, rolling and folding until the mix is soft and pliable. Roll it into a small ball and put it to one side.

Take the chocolate brown clay and work it until ready for use. Roll it into a ball and put it to one side.

Mix together the poppy and sesame seeds and put them by in a container. I find the tops of aerosol cans useful for this task.

Roll out the brown clay and sprinkle some of the seed mix onto the clay. Fold over and roll again. Fold and roll several times.

Repeat, this time with some seed mix and the ballentine (small, no-hole glass beads).

At this point I add my secret ingredient – sssshh, don't tell anyone – budgerigar sand. This gives the pudding a really gritty texture.

Roll the Fimo mix back into a ball and put it to one side.

Wash your hands again and take the white/transparent ball mix and roll out. Cut it into a circle. It doesn't

need to be precise as you want your brandy butter to appear to run down the pudding.

Gently shape the circle by pulling small pieces out, then place it on top of the pudding, pressing down from the top to remove any air bubbles. Place your pudding to one side and work a little red and green clay separately. Roll out the green piece and make a

ball with the red.

Cut out two little holly leaf shapes from the green clay and roll a little of the red into tiny balls for the berries.

Place the decoration on the top and now you are ready to bake your pudding in the oven according to the instructions on the packet.

When the pudding is cold, brush the sauce with Fimo varnish for a glossy, welcoming finish.



READERS' TIPS

POT BELLIED STOVE

BY MARIA BYRNE



1. Pop the centre out of the drink bottle and cut off the flip up lid.

2. Cut off the top part of the shampoo bottle and sand flat.

3. Punch a hole in the back of the bottle towards the top, big enough to take the plastic straw.



4. Cut a circle from the cardboard, slightly larger than the shampoo bottle.

5. Use PVA glue to attach the flip up lid at the bottom. The screw part of the lid should fit snugly inside the bottle. Glue into place.



6. Glue the straw into the hole in the back.

7. Glue the cardboard circle on top and leave it all to dry.

8. Using cardboard, cut out shapes for the door, hinges, and rings on top of the stove.

9. Paint the door, body of stove, hinges and straw with two coats of black acrylic paint.



10. Paint the stove rings in gold acrylic paint, and add gold definition to stove with the paint.

11. Cut out a picture of a fire from magazine or catalogue and glue onto the front; edge with gold paint and attach the door.

12. Glue the small circles onto the top of the stove.



13. Roll piece of embroidery thread in PVA glue and leave to dry. Cut off small pieces to add handles for the door and pull out draw at the bottom.

You will need

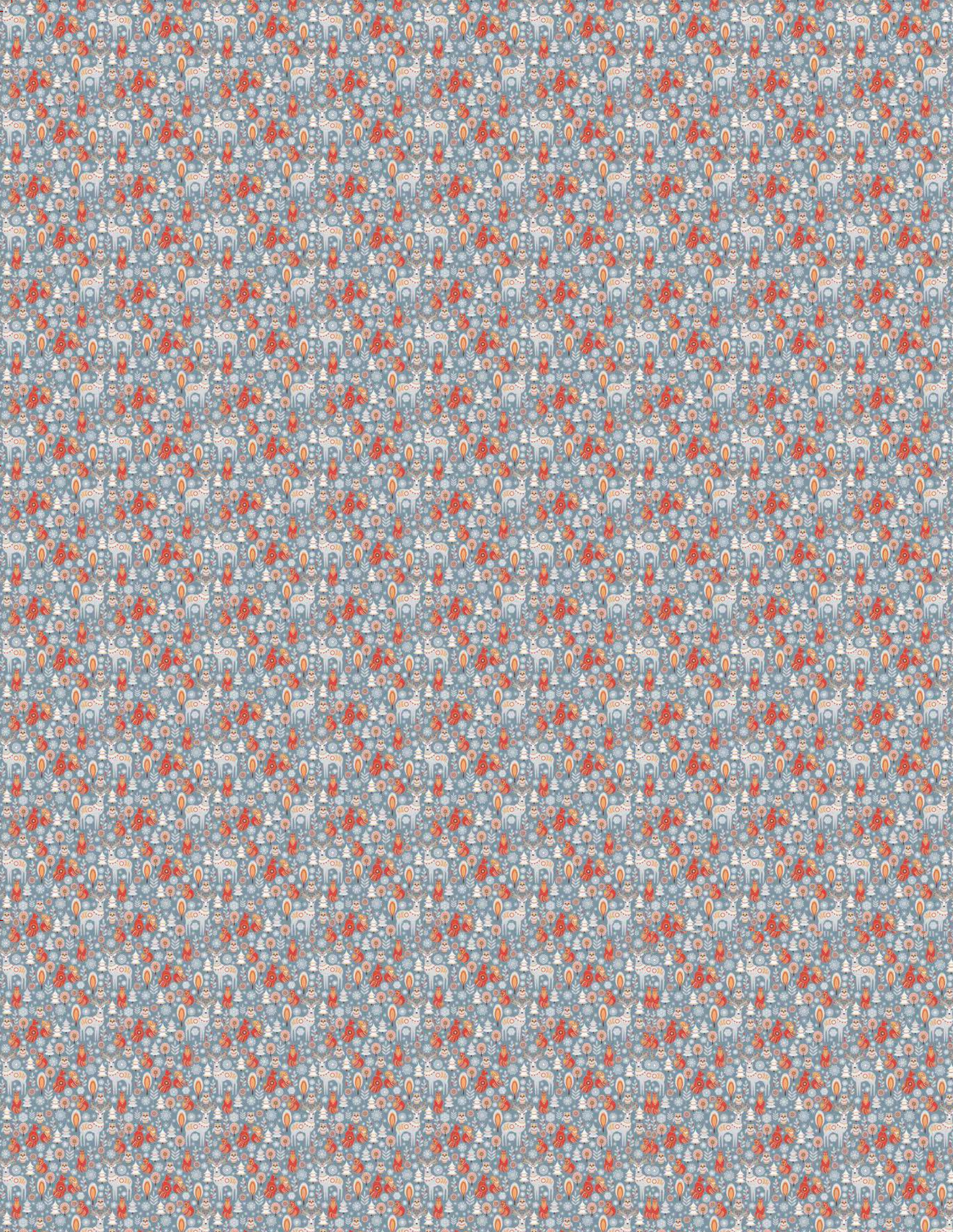
- PVA glue
- Hacksaw and scissors
- Sandpaper
- Drink bottle lid
- Travel shampoo bottle
- Cardboard
- Bendy plastic straw
- Black acrylic paint
- Gold acrylic paint
- Picture of "fire" from magazine
- Embroidery thread

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SMALL TALK

THIS MONTH WE CHAT WITH BARBARA LATZKO

Hi Barbara, tell us about your latest project?

Right now I'm working on a 1/48th scale church. My husband and I were at a flea market and it caught my eye. After several minutes of indecision (did I really need another project?) my husband finally said 'just buy it' because if I didn't, I wouldn't stop thinking about it. It was nothing special, just a beige-coloured church. I painted it white and added a foundation, wood floor, post and beam ceiling and stained glass windows. I envisioned a country church scene. It now has a stone wall surrounding it with a cemetery, apple trees and a wedding happening inside. It is almost finished and I'm really happy with how it is shaping up.



Tell us about your houses. I have a Beacon Hill, which I have done in a Victorian style, a General Mercantile, which I've modelled in the 1940s, a colonial, and a more modern style that is my granddaughter's — we made it for her when she was six. These four are all twelfth scale.

Do you make or collect? I used to buy everything that went into my houses when I was first learning this craft. Now I've gotten into making as much as I can. I really like finding odd little things in flea markets or antique shops that can be changed in some way to fit in one of the houses.

How enthusiastic is your husband about your hobby? I am very lucky to have a very supportive husband in this miniature world. He'll see something at an antique shop or flea market and

show it to me to see if it will work in one of the houses. He and I built the General Mercantile from a 1970's plan book that I found. This took months but we worked around football. He also made the plexi glass covers for the houses to keep our lovely cat out as much as we can.

When did your mini madness start?

My jump into the mini world started about 15 years ago when I was lucky enough to get my first house for very little money. It was the Beacon Hill. It was orange and in disrepair and needed a lot of love and attention. I spent hours and days and months and months working on it and making it beautiful. Then I was hooked.

Other hobbies? I also crochet and sew and paint and build things with wood. I am willing to try to learn anything.

Do you buy too much stuff? I don't think I buy too much. But does any miniaturist think they buy too much? The most extravagant thing I have purchased was a handmade trunk full of travel items. Since then I have learned how to make my own travelling trunks and many other pieces.

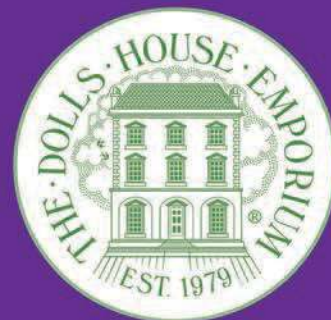
What do you love about our hobby? I think what draws me to miniatures, and why I enjoy it so much, is that it's very relaxing. Life can be busy

and stressful. There are no worries in the miniature world. I get so much joy when I'm working on something that's giving me a challenge and I figure it out, and it looks great.



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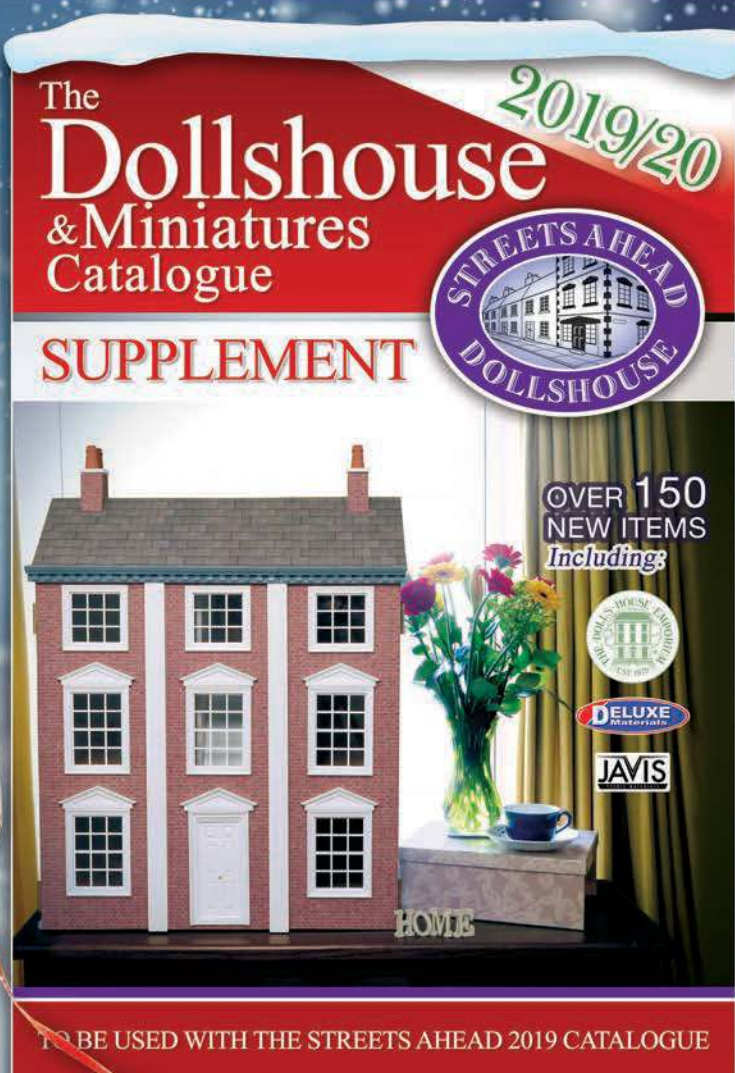


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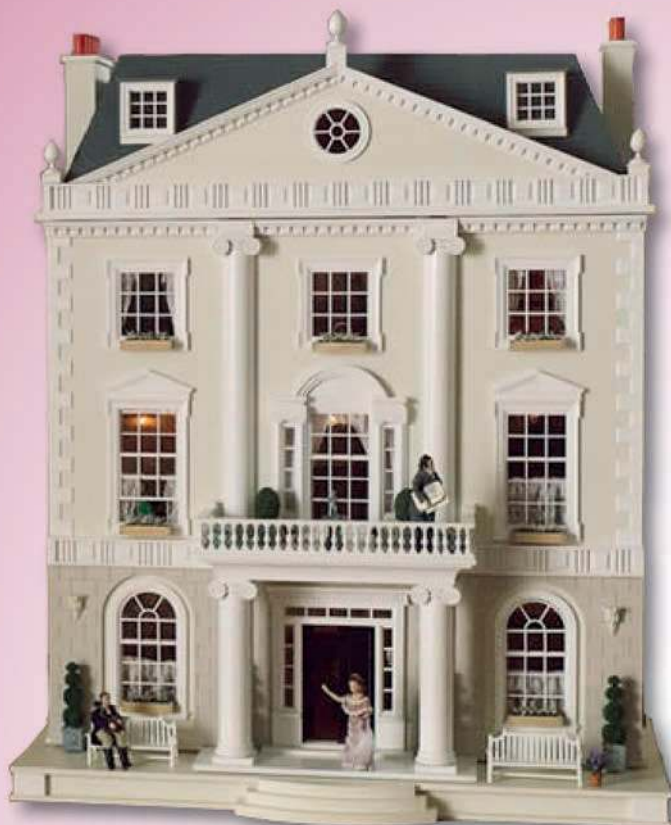
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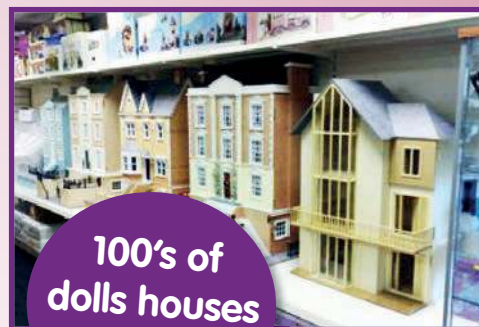
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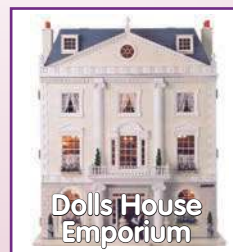
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