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March 2020 ● Issue 330

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welcome

You just never know when inspiration for a project is going to strike.

Jo Bevilacqua was wandering around the streets of an unknown town when she chanced upon a beautiful bridal shop. She knew right away she'd have to make it in miniature.

Claire Syrett had lost touch with the hobby until she was on holiday and came across some charming gift shops that were full of fabulous sights and scents. Claire brought back more than souvenirs from her trip — she came home with the idea for a wonderful new project.

You can see both of the results in this issue. You can also find out how, back in 1966, a devoted father was inspired to have a scale medieval castle, complete with towers and turrets, built for his “little princess”. Unfortunately she was more interested in horses than doll's houses. Decades later, however, the daughter was able to find the perfect new guardian for the castle in collector Linda Gant, self-confessed “avid Princess” since the age of 8. Linda was delighted to take on the project. She says: “No words can express the joy of painting and landscaping this treasure.”

It's such a lovely story. Lots of ‘lovelys’ too at the Thame fair when generous, talented makers flocked to support a very personal cause. And we have news from joyous fund-raising at a club's demo day when they supported a local hospice.

So that's the issue summed up in two words: inspiration and joy — a bit like our hobby.

Richard.

email: richard@ashdown.co.uk

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The amazing story of how castle fit for a princess found perfect home

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From wallpaper to labels for wine bottles we've got some lovely cutouts

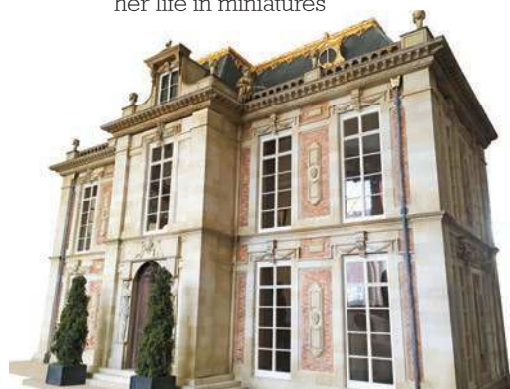
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We talk to reader Nina Eary about her life in miniatures

Quote of the month:

“We sometimes underestimate the influence of little things.”

Charles W. Chestnutt



HOUSE HUNT



Find the little house hidden inside. Last issue it appeared on page 12.



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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.

Gabriel's palaces inspired by historic buildings

After one week spent working on a house bought on eBay Gabriel Eden James soon realised what he'd been missing out on all these years

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

When he was a child, Gabriel Eden James wanted his own doll's house, but his parents did not feel this was an appropriate toy for a boy. His interest in all things small remained dormant until he was 23 when one day he found a house online that renewed his curiosity about the miniature world. He purchased his first doll's house from eBay and promptly stripped it back to its bare bones. One week of working on that house and Gabriel was hooked.

As he started to discover how extensive and thrilling the miniature world could be, his main focus turned to developing skills to a high enough standard to create a structure that would reflect his passion for this less publicised area of the art world. For

when Gabriel is not perfecting his craft as a miniaturist, he is an artist who works with pastels, creating animal portraits.

His miniature life quickly dominated his home life. When he finds a passion for something where time is essential, he devotes himself entirely to the craft. But just as important, he finds that once in a while it is nice to be able to step back and spend some time away from his work just to re-evaluate the next step of a plan. Recently he has discovered that that he has found a better work/life balance.

Gabriel takes inspiration from historic architecture, particularly grand palaces, stately homes, and French-style architecture. No matter what he creates, he lives by the rule that if



he does not want to keep the piece when it is completed, then it isn't good enough to be sold.

"The thing that I love most about miniatures are the unique creations that can be realised from each of our own imaginations," Gabriel explains. "Sometimes it ends up being something not found in the real world. From doll's houses to accessories, each piece is a work of art and represents our own individual interpretations of the world around us and the world we want to live in."

As an artist, he is entirely self-taught, mainly learning by observing the work of others, miniature and life size. To truly create an authentic miniature, one has to have an understanding of scale and design. In a short period of time,





Above: The face of a cherub that was sculpted by hand from epoxy for the rooftop details.

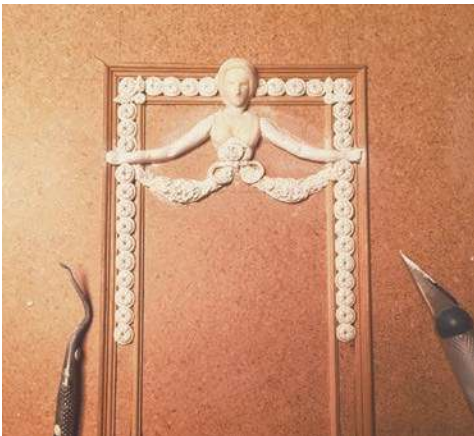
Above far left: Gabriel's house made the cover of DHW last year.

Gabriel did a tremendous amount of research and measuring to ensure he was true to scale. When it came to replicating stone and brick work, he examined various buildings and observed how they aged over time.

His sculpting was inspired by artist Sue Cook, who creates incredible examples of architecture detailing. Once Gabriel became familiar with the clay he was using, his sculpting became more adventurous.

Gabriel describes his workspace as 'organised chaos'. However, he knows that everything he needs is there somewhere and can manage to find it without calling out a search party. For each step there is a tool needed to complete a task. With accuracy foremost in his mind, the most valuable





Top: The beginning of the Grand Chateau construction.

Above: Regency mirror under construction.

Above right: Marble top miniature side table.

Above far right: The 24 carat gold leaf adds illumination and lux to the roof top.

Below right: Cherub room box.

tool is his ruler.

Each new thing he is challenged with, especially expansive projects, doesn't start to come together until the very end. These large projects require enormous mental energy that can really take its toll and can affect the quality of his work. It is at these times that he steps back and spends some time away from his art.

His latest work is entitled "Grand Château Miniature" inspired by the Palace of Versailles. He has a passion for opulence and grandeur in his miniatures, such as the gold roof he was eager to replicate. There is a dazzling reflection when the sunlight hits the gold.

Aside from a few stock mouldings, the entire piece was hand-created. Each step of the building process

presented difficult challenges that had to be overcome. Building up the layers for the brick and stone was a time-consuming process that involved a lot of sanding, texturing, and etching. Gabriel used a combination of MDF board, lime wood, epoxy putty, glue, Polyfilla mix, paint, 24 carat gold leaf, card stock, Perspex and Gesso.

Gabriel would like to dedicate much of his time to mastering his skills in miniature furniture making, drawing on his skills restoring full size antique furniture. In the meantime, he is starting to draw up plans for a miniature Highclere Castle that served as the backdrop for the television series Downton Abbey. He will also be accepting commissions which will hopefully open up a whole new genre of design styles.





Dolly's Daydreams Events

SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY - 11TH YEAR!

Windmill Farm Hotel, Runcorn Road
off Whisby Road, LINCOLN LN6 3QZ (on A46)

SUNDAY 16 FEBRUARY - 11TH YEAR!

The Rivenhall Hotel, Rivenhall End
NEAR WITHAM CM8 3HB (on A12 westbound)

SATURDAY 7 MARCH - 17TH YEAR!

The Assembly Rooms, High Street
DEDHAM CO7 6DE (off A12)

SUNDAY 15 MARCH - 23RD YEAR!

The Mill Arts & Events Centre, Bellingham Lane
off High Street, RAYLEIGH SS6 7ED

SUNDAY 5 APRIL - 35TH YEAR!

Knights Hill Hotel & Spa, South Wootton
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FRIDAY 10 APRIL - 21ST YEAR!

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WHERE I WORK

THIS MONTH WE CHAT WITH ANN LUCAS OF WORLD OF MY OWN

Hi Ann, nice to talk to you. We know you've been making your beautiful dolls for for a long, long time. When did it all start?

In 1984/85 I was a regular visitor to the Dolls House shop run by Michal Morse in Covent Garden, London. My own doll's house was a work in progress and I bought many items there before deciding to try making my own dolls. Two years, much research, trial and error later, I set up 'World Of My Own' with my husband Rob and I have been making dolls professionally ever since.

Where do you work? Our 200-year-old cottage had a part-underground cellar which we converted into three rooms. I currently occupy two of them: one for the kiln and the hundreds of plaster moulds I use, the other is my sewing area. Over the last 32 years I have spent hundreds of hours working on our stand at the fairs and many of our customers have become good friends.

Do you always make your miniatures in the same place? Yes, although when I am really busy, some evenings I take work into the lounge with a tray on my lap.

Do you work set hours? I try to keep regular hours but working from home means work can often get interrupted.

Do you keep your workspace private? As my work area is in the basement it means that visi-



tors to the house don't often get to see it. We did have two rescue cats, Kettle and Myrtle, some time ago who used to pop in for a chat.

Do you listen to music or the radio while you work? Yes, the radio is normally on. I like a mixture of music, drama and a bit of comedy.

Name one thing that is banned in your workspace. Shoddy workmanship! I hate it when things go wrong.

Describe your workspace in five words. Busy and, at times, untidy.

What are the must-haves in your basement? I could not be without my Bernina sewing machine, ultra-fine needles, sharp dressmaking scissors and a great deal of patience.

Where would be your dream workspace?

Somewhere with a beautiful view — mountains or the sea, although I probably wouldn't get much work done.

Thanks for chatting with us Ann. We'll let you get back to your basement.

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"I HATE IT WHEN THINGS GO WRONG."



Make this charming little fireplace

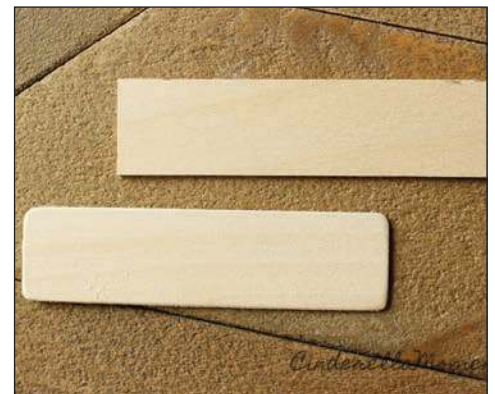
This fireplace, complete with decoration, looks delightful in different settings and it's easy to make in a variety of sizes in card and wood

BY CAROLINE DUPUIS

The evenings are still a bit chilly so it's a good time to light a fire in your house. The fireplace is the heart of the home so why not make your very own fireplace mantel. It's very easy to do. And you can make it any size you like.

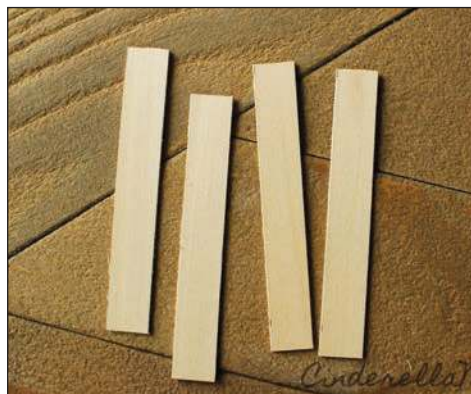


Step 1. The first piece to cut out is the back of the mantel. Mine is 4 1/4" tall x 3 1/2" wide. (If you would like to put textured paper inside your mantel this would be the time to glue it on leaving an 1/8" edge to glue the wood onto this back piece.



Step 4. Sand these two pieces gently to give them worn rounded edges and corners.

Step 5. Cut the piece for the front of the fireplace, the frieze, to 2 3/16" x 1 1/2". A nice tall one gives an old cottage feel.



Step 2. Next, cut the walls of the mantel to 4 1/4" x 5/8". You will need 4 of them.

Step 3. You need a top and bottom shelf for the mantel. Cut 2 pieces that are 1" x 3 7/8".

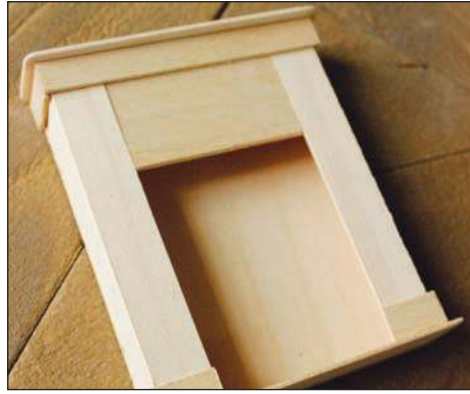
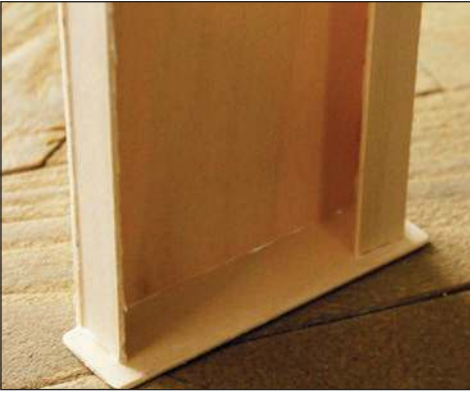


Step 6. Glue your walls to the back of the mantel with white glue. You can also use wood glue if you prefer.

You will need

- Thin wood veneer (1/16" x 4" x 24")
- Glue gun
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Cereal box or card stock
- White glue or wood glue
- Sand paper - 1500 grit
- Sharp utility knife
- Scalloped edge scissors
- Acrylic paint
- Paint brush
- Ink pads
- Hard bristle brush
- Fire kit with 1.8mm bulb & 3 volt battery with a switch
- Real sticks
- Reindeer moss





Step 7. Then glue the bottom and top pieces. The trick here is to get everything to stay together and keep it straight. I usually let it dry against a straight flat wall. If needed I add a weight to make sure it stays flush to the straight wall. Otherwise you will have problems installing it in the doll's house. Let dry completely.



Step 8. Next, glue the frieze in place. This is the basic structure I use for all my fireplace mantels. Some may be bigger, narrower, or smaller. But the process remains the same.

Step 9. The next step is to add trims. This is where you give your piece the charm it needs. I'm creating this fireplace for an English cottage, so a cute and girly style is the order of the day.

Note that I am layering the trims. The first trim you'll need to cut is for the top and the bottom of the mantel walls. The first trim is 3/8" wide. Notice that I do my side trim first then cover the rough edge with the front trim.



Step 10. Your next layer of trim will be thinner. So I would use thin cardboard like a cereal box weight or some card stock paper. This trim will be 1/8" to 1/4" thick. You can also cut out a fun detail, like dental moulding where there is a small square repeated across the trim with space in between.

Step 11. First I'm doing a simple second layer trim on the bottom. This one is 1/4".

Step 12. My top trim is scalloped from using a simple pair of scalloped edge scissors.



Step 13. And finally one more 1/8" trim on top of all of the trims. Perfect!

Step 14. Now we need to add a trim around the firebox. Two sides go on first. They are 1/8" wide.

Step 15. Next, add a shelf at the top of the fireplace that is almost 1/4" wide.

Step 16. And top it off with the remaining 1/8" trim. You are done!

Step 17. How about making some girly additions? I'm going to do a little 3D work on the frieze. First I draw a design freehand.



Step 18. Next, use your glue gun to apply 3 dots and the 2 swags. You can cut those annoying glue gun webs by releasing the trigger completely and then touching the hot nozzle on the string. It will cut the stringy web. Any remaining strings can be taken care of with a regular hair dryer. You may want to practice on paper first. The technique is like pulling sugar in candy making.

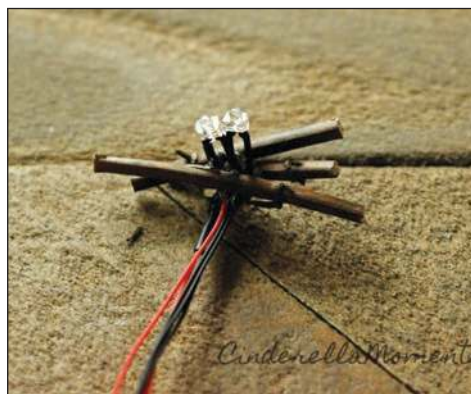
Remember this is a vintage style piece, so it doesn't need to be perfect! If you can't do it just use white glue. Make sure it's not runny.



Step 19. Paint your entire mantel with acrylic paint. It can be craft paint or house paint. Makes no difference. Lay it on there thick! If your paint is too new you may have to do 2 or 3 coats.



Step 20. Let's add some character! I use ink pads to achieve a very old look. They are all browns. Stampabilities Brown, StazOn Saddle Brown, and Color-Box Putty. It makes no difference which order you apply them. Use a hard bristle brush to get the ink in tight corners.



Step 21. Now if you want to go all the way with this project you can add fire. I order my fire kits from a model train website. I order the fire kit with the 1.8mm bulb and 3 volt battery with the switch. You can do the pico lights if you want undetectable bulbs. They put out a lot of light and work great too.

Drill a hole at the back wall at the very bottom. You can use a drill, a screw driver, a nail to do this. Whatever you have on hand. The wood is very easy to poke a hole in. I used a little screwdriver. I started the hole on the front and turned the fireplace over to continue the hole from the other side.



Step 22. I built a fire stack with real sticks from the garden to hide the bulbs. Start by building up the wood stack around the bulbs. Notice I did bend the wires 90 degrees ready to be pulled back through the hole.



Step 23. Glue it inside the fire box with hot glue.

Step 24. Make it a bit more romantic with moss.

● See more of my work at www.cinderellamoments.com



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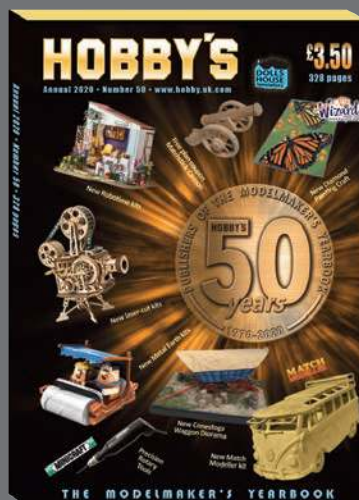
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Concorde Manor reflects Lina's love of miniatures



Lina says the hobby inspires “unlimited creativity” and that reflects in the way she has filled this elegant townhouse that she stumbled upon at an estate sale

BY LINA KREUTZBERG

I've been interested in miniatures and doll's houses since I was a child, although it wasn't until I was in my early 20s and out on my own, that I purchased my first doll's house. Over the years my doll's house hobby has waxed and waned. I work in the criminal justice sector of the provincial government, so miniatures is an excellent stress reliever.

It's only in the last ten years, as my children have now become young adults, that I've really been able to immerse myself wholeheartedly in learning new skills to create the miniature world that's always been in my

imagination.

Concorde Manor is located in my living room, where I can see it and enjoy it every day. There is a history to all of the pieces within, the interesting people I've met, the lucky finds, the satisfaction of creating something unique and the thrill of special artisan pieces I've especially wished and waited for. When I'm busy and stressed, just opening the house up and peeking in is relaxing, I may rearrange something small or see something that sparks an idea for something new. I also create professional photo-books of the doll's houses I've made, it's a

great tool for seeing how I've improved my techniques over time as well as an awesome way to share my hobby with friends and family.

I'm not able to purchase a lot of fine furnishings, but reading magazines, books, Pinterest and blogs by talented and generous artisans I've learned to make most items myself. I've always got an eye open at thrift stores and flea markets for miniatures. I attend two annual shows put on by clubs in the southern Ontario area, near my Toronto home, and this is where I pick up hard to find or make items.

My wish has always been to have a







front opening doll's house, so I feel incredibly lucky that I stumbled upon my latest doll's house, Concorde Manor from an estate sale. It is a twelfth scale townhouse style, measuring 15" deep, 25" wide and 55" tall. The original owner built it from retail doll's house plans using good quality half-inch plywood and excellent woodworking skills; everything is square and all ceilings, including the top floor, are the equivalent of ten foot ceilings. Paradise found!

The decoration of Concorde Manor is very personal and meaningful and does not adhere to any specific style or era. I love the flowing lines of Art Nouveau and the ornament of 17th Century France. Not living in a house big enough, nor having a bank account large enough to live in that style, I enjoy it vicariously through my doll's house.

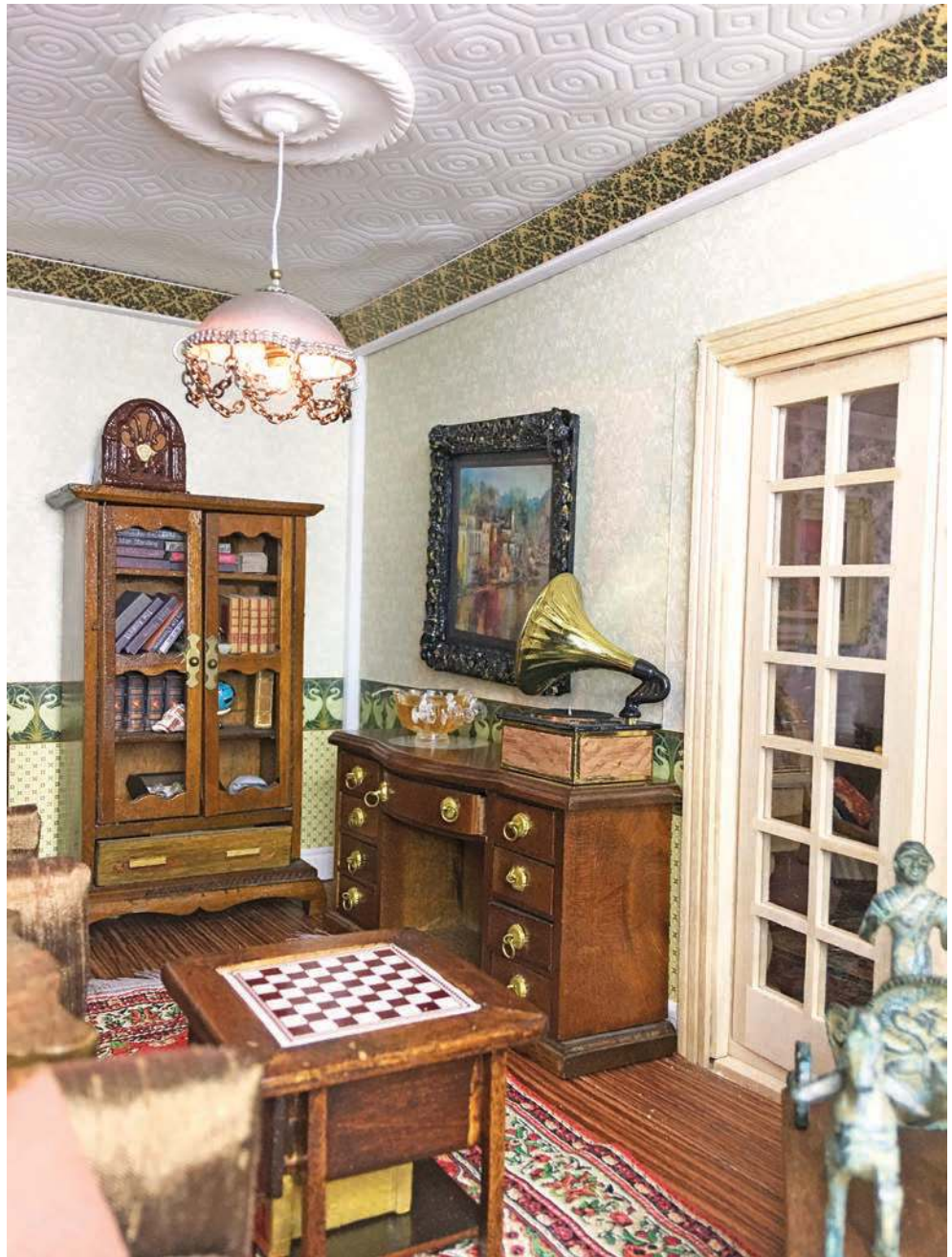
I started from an unfinished doll's house with no windows or doors by first adding an extra floor to serve as kitchen. There are a total of 19 windows, 12 of them double hung, and each was made by hand.

On the second floor are the gen-



lemen's lounge and the living room. The chairs in the gentlemen's lounge are my own creation. I've invested in some nice miniature glass bottles and decanters, along with a selection of alcohol bottles, which are displayed on a bar/wine rack I made from walnut stained basswood.

The original opening between the gentleman's lounge and the living room was smaller than the French doors I wanted. I worked up quite





the sweat cutting into the half inch plywood with various handsaws and eventually a jigsaw to make the opening big enough. Wallpaper does hide a multitude of sins, though, including windows, which I don't particularly like dressing. I decided to cover the windows on the sides of the house in each room using hardwood panels fit to the length and height of the room wall. The windows are visible from the outside but inside the walls are papered giving me more decorating flexibility.

The floor in the living room is poster board with scrapbooking wood veneer cut into a square pattern, and then covered with a thick coat of clear resin. I reupholstered the sofa and chairs.

Modifying and refinishing furniture pieces gives me particular pleasure; the black chinoiserie style table with hand-painted gold decoration used to be an inexpensive mass produced desk. I've used my own family photographs throughout Concorde Manor. The piano is another garage sale find; it's a clear windup music box that plays Edelweiss (one of my favourite melodies) and, as luck would have it, seems to be close in scale. I used a self stick shelf-liner with a wood grain design to make the piano appear more elegant. I've always enjoyed doing needlework and it's nice to be able to scale-down my needlework hobby to my doll's





house hobby by making the living room cushions and the carpet in the master bedroom.

I've made many of the ceiling lights and lamps in Concorde Manor. The gentlemen's lounge ceiling lamp is a painted ping-pong ball decorated with jewellery findings. The living room chandelier is made from brass tubing, Swarovski crystals and jewellery findings. An Art Nouveau inspired lamp in the living room is made from brass tubing and a found shell.

Dining room and lounge

On the third floor is the dining room and the ladies lounge. The floors in both of these rooms are made from iron-on wood veneer; a warning, though, cutting and ironing down veneer into a herringbone pattern is a frustratingly slippery, fingertip burning, experience.





“Taking the time to use my imagination and create with my hands adds an important dimension to my daily life that can't be underestimated.”

I wanted to achieve an elegant atmosphere in the dining room by stencilling Art Nouveau inspired plaster borders on a royal blue painted wall and a big fireplace in white with a rose plaster decoration. Mirrors reflect the light sconces above the fireplace and the ceiling light made from painted glass and brass tubing.

Some of my collected miniature porcelain pieces are displayed in a tall glass shelf unit. This dining room is great fun to decorate for formal dinner parties; the lights twinkle beautifully on the wine glasses and silverware.

Next to the dining room is the ladies library, a space to read, relax and write letters. I was aiming for the Biedermeier style when I made the

sofa and chairs from cherry wood and used ink jet printed fabric to make the decorative cushions. Other pieces that I enjoyed making were the Swedish Mora clock and the roll-top desk, which holds a quill pen made from a tiny feather from our pet budgie, Neo.

The kitchen

The kitchen is always a fun room to make; there is so much detail to add. The work table is made from two pound shop tables glued together with the extra legs removed and then surfaced with wood veneer. The butcher block is made from layered basswood with the top piece fortuitously having a natural dark and light pattern which seemed to work well for a butcher

block. I used more of that basswood to make the harp leg sewing table located in the living room. I purchased much of the breakfast room furniture used. After a good cleaning and some repairs I wound up with excellent, high-quality pieces that have an interesting history.

The vintage cathedral radio was made based on an excellent tutorial by Kris Compas. The cook is a modified porcelain doll's house doll from China.

Children's room and the master bedroom

The children's room and master bedroom are located on the fourth floor. The children share a cosy room with cheerful animal themed wallpa-

per, a play area and an ice lolly stick book shelf with a selection of children's books to read before going to bed. Through the French door, we come to the ultra feminine master bedroom with a ceiling light, made from pink shells, that gives off a romantic, soft light. The bedside tables, wardrobe and dressing table were embellished with Washi tape and the bedside lamps are made from decorative beads. The dressing table is laden with a selection of hand-made perfume bottles, make-up, dusting powders, a lovely mother of pearl comb set and a hairbrush made from natural bristles.

The wrought iron bed is one of the first pieces I made and I still think it's an attractive piece of furniture. The bedding is made from vintage handkerchiefs. Along with the dressing table accessories, I've tried my hand at making the red kitten-heel slippers casually taken off and left next to the dressing table.

Bathroom and spare room

The bathroom and another bedroom/sewing room are on the top floor. More Art Nouveau can be found in the bathroom which is opulent with glass and mother of pearl tile sealed with clear resin. Step up and into the raised claw-foot tub when you want to relax and enjoy a facial while reclining on the chaise lounge. The housekeeper and nanny share a large bedroom which has a sewing corner and television.

Upgrades and renovations to Concorde Manor will continue, of course. As time permits I slowly replace mass produced furniture with pieces I make or modify. I'm always learning new miniature furniture-making techniques, finding sources of good quality wood, watching out for flea market surprises, creating extravagant food items from polymer clay and redecorating on a whim - because we can do that in miniature scale!

I'll be focussing on the residents of Concorde Manor next — making, wigging and dressing them. I've collected twelfth scale dolls from various sources: the ubiquitous maid doll imported from China; porcelain doll kits by Joan



and Roy Hogan; and most recently, a long wished for Heidi Ott doll.

The beauty of this miniatures hobby is the unlimited creativity it inspires. In this increasingly wired world, having a hobby that stretches our imaginations, and that can be enjoyed in so many ways, from collecting to crafting, is even more important. I see the appeal of miniatures continuing into the future, although the simple joy of hands-on crafting such as knitting, needlework, clay, paint and paper crafts need to be nurtured and appreciated.

Taking the time to use my imagination and create with my hands adds an important dimension to my daily life that can't be underestimated. You'll find me with my head in a doll's house for many years to come and maybe one day I'll find the time and courage to join a local club and go from miniature enthusiast to aspiring artisan.



Make these beautiful baskets with a twist

It might be an old idea, but it's still very effective. Stretch canvas over little bottles to create a variety of wonderful baskets for your house

BY KRIS COMPAS

Let's make a sewing basket this month. This is an old idea and, I know I've seen it in various places in the past.

Needlepoint was very popular in the 60s and 70s. I had a lovely store devoted to needlepoint in a town not far from me. I loved the natural canvas they had and I especially liked the double weave. The last time I looked at the craft store they carried needlepoint canvas, only in white. I buy the 12 count. If you can't find the natural canvas you can paint it with brown glass stain or a mixture of craft paint to make it look like real wicker.

You will need

- Needlepoint canvas
- Scissors
- Forms
- Rubber band
- Old brush
- Yellow wood glue
- Acrylic paint
- Paint brush
- Toothpick
- Sandpaper
- Small metal file
- Craft knife
- Ribbon
- Pencil
- Tweezers
- Card stock
- Needle and thread
- Batting
- Bunka



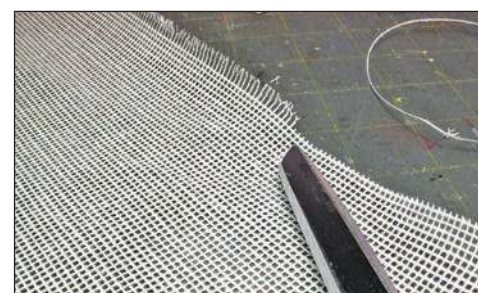
Step 1. Cut a couple of squares of your canvas. I have learned to cut generous squares, that are about 2 1/2" to 3" square.



Step 2. Slightly wet the canvas, but don't get it soggy. Stretch the canvas over your form. Forms can be any shape you like, but I will be using a couple of prescription bottles. Watch the weave, keep it straight and even. I wrap my rubber band around the form and canvas twice so it is good and tight.



Step 3. Yellow wood glue will be stiff enough to get the basket done properly. Apply the glue to the surface canvas with an old paint brush. Come back the next day when the canvas is good and dry. Don't rush this process.



Step 4. Pull 6 threads from the long side of your canvas. You will have to trim the canvas off after you pull 2 to 3 threads or your thread will break when you try to pull it off.

Step 5. Tie all six strands together with a knot at one end. Secure that end on a nail in a piece of wood.

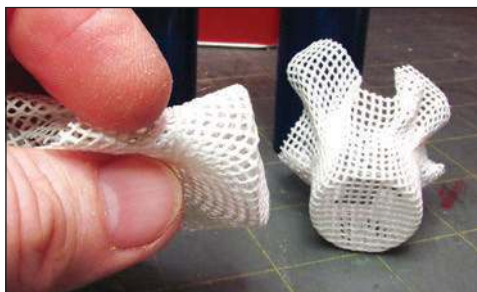


Step 6. Braid the six strands, two by two. Apply a little glue to one side of the finished braid. Rub the glue into the surface. Be careful not to lose the texture of the braid.



Step 7. Remove a couple more strands of canvas. Twist one strand until you can't twist anymore and it starts to buckle. Divide the strand in half and let it twist back on itself. I use a hook to help with this. Make another strand the same way so you have two of these.

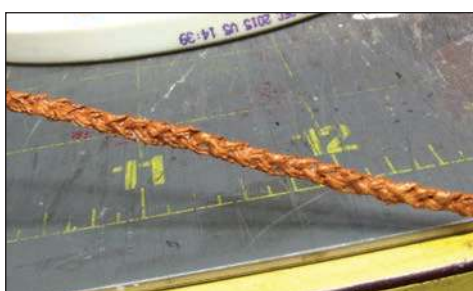
Step 8. Apply a little glue to the surface of these strands. Be careful not to lose the texture of the surface. Just a tiny bit of glue is needed. Let all of this dry along with the baskets.



Step 9. Once dry, pop the baskets off the forms.



Step 10. Mix up your basket colour. Dry brush it onto the baskets. Don't glop the paint on because you still want to see the texture of the canvas through the paint coverage.



Step 11. Apply paint to the braid and the twisted strands. Apply the paint to both sides of the braid.



Step 12. After the paint is dry, trim off the extra canvas. I have trimmed the basket down to the size I am going to use. The bottom is about 1/2" tall and the top is about 1/4" tall.

We are now going to put all of the pieces on the surface of the sewing basket before we line it.



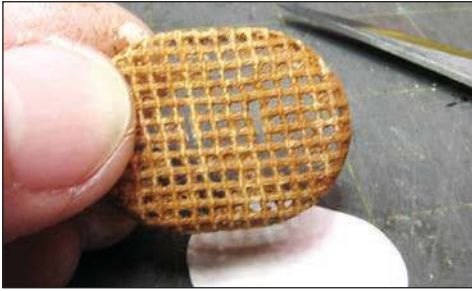
Step 13. We will start by making a toggle. Sand the end of a toothpick to the shape you like. Then round the end a bit. Next, make some marks on the toothpick at 3/16" and 1/4" with a pencil.

Step 14. Use your craft knife to score a line on the 3/16" mark. Don't cut through. I am using a triangle shaped file to widen out the score line. Be careful, don't cut the tip off.

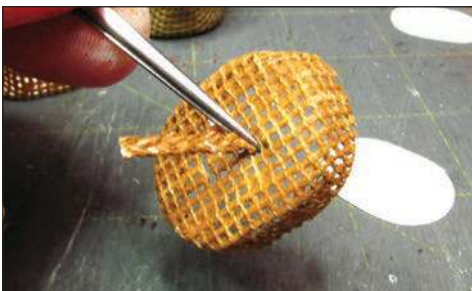


Step 15. Then use a file (mine is from Micro-Mark). This is the groove I made. This will be where the twisted strand you made earlier will be tied.

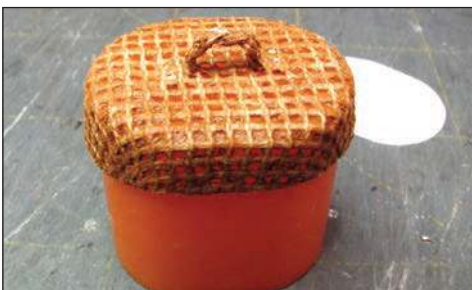
Step 16. I painted my toggle an off white. I finished it with a satin finish compatible with the craft paints I used, Delta and Folk Art. Set this aside for now.



Step 17. Cut out a couple of threads for the braid of the handle to go through. Put the ends of your handle through the slots. You can cut about 5/8" of braid and then pull the braid back to the height of the handle you would like.



Step 18. When you have the handle the way you wish, apply a little glue to the ends and bend them against the top.



Step 19. Place the top back onto the form to help glue the set to shape. I will continue to place the top and bottom back onto the form throughout this process to re-shape and help with the gluing.



Step 20. While I have the top on the form I am going to glue the braid onto the edge. Let all this dry.



Step 21. Put the bottom back onto the form and glue the braid onto the edge. When the glue is dry on the top and bottom, dab a little paint to cover the white edge on the top and bottom of the basket.

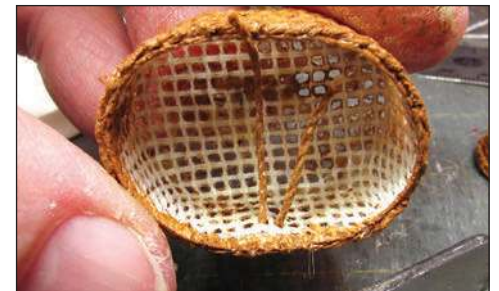


Step 22. Back to the toggle. Tie one of the twisted strands into a loop. Put the loop onto the toggle and tighten. Cut the toggle away from the rest of the toothpick and sand the end of the toothpick and paint and apply finish to it.



Step 23. Find the centre hole inside of the bottom section of the basket and

widen it out with your tweezers. Feed the ends of the strands through to the inside of the basket.



Step 24. Trim the ends and apply glue to the basket. Bend the ends of the strands into the glue.

Step 25. Put the bottom of the basket onto the form to press the strands to the side of the basket to dry.



Step 26. Put the top back on the bottom so you can find the centre of the front of the top for the loop. Thread the twisted strand through the front and glue one side of the strand onto the basket. Leave the other side unglued so you can move it.



Step 27. Fit the loop over the toggle. You want to be able to close the basket and actually use the loop and toggle to lock it. Try out the size a few times. When you have it right, glue the other side down and return the top to the form to keep the shape.



Step 28. Cut a length of ribbon to fit around the form. I use this ribbon because I don't have to worry about raw edges. I can cut and not have loose threads hanging. You could apply glue to the raw edges or even turn the raw edges of fabric but using the ribbon is easier.

Step 29. Cut two strips to go into the top and bottom basket sides. Dry fit the width and length before gluing.



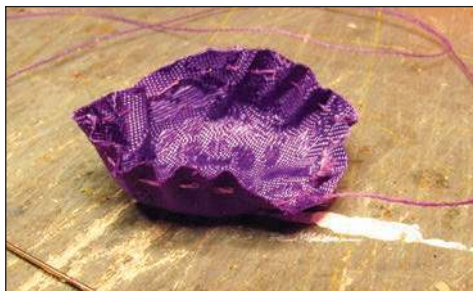
Step 30. Continue using the yellow wood glue for the next steps. Start the ribbon at the front inside of the basket so you won't see the seam. Glue the ribbon into the inside bottom and the top of the basket as well as on the sides.



Step 31. Next, get a pencil and trace around your form onto card stock. Cut out the shape and dry fit into the basket. Cut two of these. Use the card stock shape as a pattern to cut two ribbon shapes for the top and bottom.

Step 32. I like having the padded top and bottom in the sewing basket so this is what I do. Glue the card stock shape onto thin batting and cut around the card stock. Cut out the ribbon larger than the batting covered card stock.

Step 33. Use a needle and thread in matching colour to gather the edge.



Step 34. Put the batting covered card stock into the gathered ribbon. Draw up the thread and knot off. There should be no folds or wrinkles around the edges. Make two.



Step 35. Glue one into the bottom of the sewing basket on top of the ribbon you glued in earlier. Glue the second one into the top of the basket as you did for the bottom.



Step 36. For the hinge I used a double thread. Sew two hinges connecting the top to the bottom.



Step 37. Insert the needle into the canvas, but not through the ribbon. Bring the needle and thread out and snip the extra away close to the canvas.



Step 38. Paint the thread to match the basket.

Display your new basket with pride and start making another one!



Claire recreates her holiday memories

This miniaturist brought back more than souvenirs when she visited gift shops on holiday — she came home with the inspiration for a wonderful new project

BY DEB WEISSLER

Claire Syrett fondly recalls her childhood doll's house, which was a large three-story with basement. She began collecting for it in her 20's, but admits she lacked the confidence to make her own things, short of the occasional curtains or bedding. The doll's house eventually left her life and for almost a decade she didn't collect a thing. Then, a chance holiday lit the spark of creativity that brought her love of miniatures back to the forefront; resulting in a delightful shop she fondly named Vintage Rose.

What better way to celebrate than with a charming room box with rose-shaped fairy lights suspended

from the ceiling, Claire has created a unique vintage and gift shop inspired by the sights, scents, and warmth of the various shops she enjoyed, but without the need for pure authenticity and historical restrictions.

To stock her shop to the brim, Claire set about creating the candles, minerals, crystals, clocks, and lamps for her display. Crisp white shelving units and a display case and table are filled with everything a tourist would love to take home. Her handmade column candles, tea lights and incense warmers reflect all the colours of a summer day. Clocks were crafted from buttons with printed clock faces she

then coated with clear nail varnish. Her oil lamps are a series of beads and push pins glued together. Canisters are styrene tubes with button and bead lids, painted with nail varnish.

Colourful bunting trims, a shelf filled with beach bags, vintage pitchers, and bird houses. Those omnipresent signs with their wishes for the best things in life and vintage garden signs hang on the walls. Baskets filled with rolled

Below: Everywhere you look there are more one-of-a-kind items.

Top right: Tiny statues fill the shop.

Right: Just like a life size gift shop there is something new on every shelf.





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- ☺ **Sunday 15 March 2020 - NEW FAIR**
The Royal Hotel, 1 South Parade,
WESTON SUPER MARE, BS23 1JP
- ☺ **Saturday 21 March 2020**
Memorial Hall, Station Road, **ROYAL WOOTTON**
BASSETT, Wiltshire SN4 8EN
- ☺ **Sunday 29 March 2020 - NEW FAIR**
Lyndhurst Community Centre, Main Car Park,
LYNDHURST, Hants, SO43 7NY
- ☺ **Saturday 4 April 2020**
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Top right: Summer bags and signs fill the top shelf.

Above right: The lights were installed through the top of the room box.

Below right: The front of the gift shop has large display windows.

rugs, gift wrapping paper, and gaily wrapped gift boxes fill every available space. What's not to love about the Vintage Rose?

"I kept thinking of other things to add but eventually ran out of room," Claire laughs. "It turned out better than I had imagined and I'm really pleased with the results."

Claire finds inspiration in places many of us turn to when looking for new ideas: magazines, the Internet, and just day-to-day living. In this case—a favourite holiday. With a spare bedroom for sewing and non-messy projects, a garage for woodworking and painting, and a dining table where eventually most things wind up, Claire describes her workspace as everywhere she happens to be.

In addition to her Vintage Rose, Claire has a large Tudor and a Georgian she fits in during her spare time. She and a friend recently created a twelfth scale replica of a bar in a pub located near her parent's home. It was auctioned off to raise money for charity, and the person who brought it donated it back to the pub where it was put on display.

Claire also enjoys genealogy and upon discovering her husband's

ancestors were straw bonnet makers, she was instantly inspired to create a Victorian straw bonnet vignette. "I've been learning through trial and error how to make miniature straw hats. I had lost my motivation for a while, but after finding the perfect shop quite by accident in a charity shop, I'm up and running again. The ground floor will be the shop with living accommodations above." We look forward to seeing it!



Make a pretty little bag to hold pegs



Take some card and small pieces of matching cotton fabrics to create this bag for clothes pegs that will dress up the kitchen or laundry room

BY DEBBIE BOOTH

I will be sharing simple directions for making a decorative peg bag. The final measurement is approximately 1" x 2".



Step 1. Measure and cut a pattern from thick paper to 1 1/8" x 2 1/2". Fold the front pattern piece in half lengthwise and cut out the inner window area. While folded, cut and round the top corner.

You will need

- Ruler
- Card stock paper
- Pencil
- 5" square cotton fabric with small floral design
- 3" square wool felt
- 7" tiny rick rack
- 5" square gingham
- 7 1/4" cotton lace
- 1 tiny button
- 3 or 4 tiny clothes pegs
- Tacky glue
- Toothpick
- Scissors



Step 2. Unfold the pattern and place on fabric. Lightly draw a cutting line on the fabric 1/4" larger than the pattern.

Step 3. Cut one felt piece the size of the pattern for backing.



Step 4. Cut the edge of the fabric in 1/8" snips around the corners and inside the window so the fabric can be folded over easily.

Step 5. Place the paper pattern on the wrong side of the fabric. Using a toothpick apply glue to the paper pattern all the way to the edge. Using a clean toothpick, fold the fabric over onto the glue. Fold the fabric over on the outside edge and then the inside window area. Let dry.

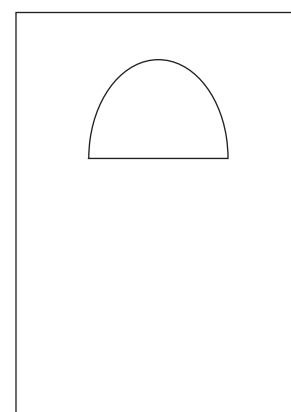


Step 6. Once dry, place the front piece that is covered in fabric over the back piece of felt.



Step 7. Cut a 1" square of gingham cotton. Place in between the pieces to show through the window. Glue in place. Do not glue the front to the back yet.

Pattern



Step 8. Measure the lace so that it covers the front bottom edge and folds over the sides about 1/4". Cut the lace. Apply glue with a toothpick on the bottom side and lay the lace across the bottom edge. Do the same with the rick rack, applying it to the top edge of the lace. Fold the sides of the lace and rick rack to the back side. Let dry.



Step 9. Cut two circles of gingham cotton fabric (trace around a pencil eraser). Glue the two circles together and glue on the peg bag. Glue a tiny button on.

Step 10. Before gluing the front to the back, cut a 1" piece of rick rack and fold it in half creating a loop for hanging. Glue this to the centre top of the back.

Step 11. Place the front piece over the back piece. Trim the back piece if necessary. Apply glue to the back, avoiding the window, and press the front piece on top adhering the two pieces together. Let dry.

Step 12. Attach 2 pegs to the inner window area of the bag.

● Ribbonwood Cottage
ribbonwoodcottage.etsy.com



Little boy blue looks cute in babygrow

Your little mini baby will so look cute tucked up after you knit this hooded outfit

BY DESNA TYSOE



Main body

Worked in garter stitch throughout.
Cast on 20 sts, K 16 rows.
Next 2 rows cast on 11 sts at beginning.
Work 36 rows.
Next row: K9, K2tog twice, K16, K2tog twice, K9.
Next row: K8, K2tog, turn.
Next row: K2tog, K to end.
K 10 rows.
Cast off 4 sts at beginning of next row, turn, cast off.

Return to next 18 sts. K2tog, K14, K2tog, turn.
Next row: K2tog, K12, K2tog.
K 11 rows and cast off.
Return to last set of sts. K2tog, K8.
Next row: K7, K2tog.
K 11 rows.
Cast off 4 sts at beginning of next row, turn, cast off.

Sleeves - work two the same.
Cast on 20 sts. K 12 rows.
K2tog at beginning of next 6 rows.
Cast off.

Hood

Cast on 28 sts. K 26 rows.
Cast off.

Make up

Sew in ends. Join shoulder seams, under-arm seams and back of hood.

Sew in sleeves and join hood to neck edge.

Sew on beads or buttons.



You will need

- Dmc cotton 80 or Anchor pearl 12
- Size 22 needles
- Beads or buttons

CLUB NEWS



Club's demo day raises funds for new hospice

Sandra reports from the Gatwick Club's annual event where visitors are encouraged to try their hand at making a variety of minis with the help of club members

BY SANDRA HARDING

"Whoops! I did it again!" is the first thing that springs to mind after my visit to the Gatwick Dolls House Club's Have-a-Go Day, and I had better explain I think.

Regular readers will know that whenever I go to any doll's house event my mantra, muttered throughout the whole journey is: "I must not buy any more doll's houses." Need I say more!

I blame Desna Tysoe as she had a lovely shop on display and when I showed interest she said: "Make me an offer." I did and, much to my surprise, she accepted (whoops). Luckily, my husband is a very understanding kind of fellow, and he needs to be as you can imagine. He just looked bemused and carried it out to the car with rather

a lot of other things too I should confess.

This is such a super, fun day, in Horley, Surrey, with so many talented makers from the club, all of whom worked hard at getting their kits ready for the many customers. I made a cuckoo clock, with the help of Zoe Andrews, and Ralph Keemar's working lamp was fascinating. Made from bits of wood, the outside of a ball point pen and a holder for a Toffifee (he had eaten all the caramel sweets, he told me).

Other talented people doing demos were Jill, Suzanne, Ella, Wendy, Sue, Nicki, Sasha, Lisa, Helen, Margaret, Sandra, Marion, Janet, Chas, and Stephanie. There were so many delightful things to make, and all the members were busy.

The club display was, as always, top

class, and the display was manned by Jean, Connie, Serena and Gillian, the St Catherine's table by Janet and Geraldine, and the club sales table was looked after by Shirley and Pat. There were loads of prizes on the tombola display, keeping Carol, Liz, Debbie and Sharon very busy all day. Other members were kept on their toes, with Marion, Barbara, Carole, Lyn and Beverley rushing, or should I say elegantly gliding, from room to room, trying to keep everyone happy.

I have to give a big thank you to Tina and Shirley, the ladies on the door who managed to keep their cool, even when others were getting hot with excitement, paying for entrance, and buying tickets to win the lovely Sam's Study, a kit made up by talented members of the club earlier. Last, but not



Zoe, Chloe, Lyn



Nikki, Kate, Marion, Bob & Barbara in background



Desna



Barbara Hoyle

Barbara Hoyle



Barbara, Janet, Shirley & Tina



Mandy's Miniatures



Carol Lewis



Ralph's light



Isabel



Sandra, Brenda & Zoe

least, the refreshment members: Sue, Steve, and Ingrid. My husband sends a well done to whoever made the coconut cake, and he wants the recipe. I hope he plans to cook it.

As always, the club attracts other traders to the day and the lovely Jay's Miniatures and Mandy's Miniatures were there, with wondrous creations as always. Such talent.

This very busy and popular club

organises this event every year, and raises funds for St Catherine's, who are building a new hospice at Pease Potage, planned to be open in 2023. This event raised £1,000 to be donated to the charity.

Please put a date in your diary for their next event – 17th October 2020. To find out more about this popular club. Email barbara@hoyle-engineering.co.uk



Dolls whisked from garden party to turn into knights

Rugby Miniaturists displayed their impressive jousting scene at the recent Miniatura exhibition. Here club member Liz Ovenden details how the whole thing went together

BY LIZ OVENDEN

The idea for our jousting scene came into being after a group discussion following a visit to Miniatura in 2018.

Initially all members were given a table mat and a piece of carpet "grass" to form the basis of their scene. We then took a small lampshade each (I believe someone spotted them for sale on eBay), stripped them of their original covers and re-covered each one in a different shade of material to form ten different coloured tents.

The roofs were made from cardboard cut into circles and formed into a slight dome. Fires were made (hair rollers cut in two) as it can get cold at these events, and some tents even had

a bed for any wounded knight.

It was then decided to hold a day's workshop one Saturday to make the knights. Various dates were bandied about before it was realised that, as we were all retired, the workshop could be on any weekday. We all had dolls which, in other lives, had been at the seaside and at garden parties so these were transformed into knights. Real leather boots were made and each knight was dressed in a colour to match his appropriate tent. Chain mail was created by using a loose woven fabric, first painted silver and fitted on the doll. This was followed by an underskirt and tunic, a belt and sword and finally a helmet.

The next step was to get the horses ready for jousting. There is an advert on the television about a man who says he saw a horse running across the road in a dress – well, I suspect it was one of our horses because "dresses" were made for all of the horses to match their knight. One did go missing for a while so it could have been that one seen on TV.

As everyone knows horses need new shoes every so often, swords have to be sharpened and helmets made so Honor, a member of our club, volunteered to gather together the blacksmiths.

Some of these ended up having really beefy muscles which most of the puny peasants present were





impressed with and even one or two of the ladies had a good look. These blacksmiths were working in a very hot environment with a smoky fire going all the time, but as the forge had every convenience known to medieval man, all the metalwork was carried out in the speediest of time and the horses shod as quickly as possible.

Now that we had the main characters for our scene, the next thing was to have an audience to view the jousting. As invitations had been sent out to the ruling king and queen, and had been accepted, we had to ensure that enough people turned out to view the jousting and pay their respects to the monarchs.

Peasants were rounded up and dressed for the occasion (again it made a change for them not to be at the seaside or garden party) and there



were various pedlars dotted around who went home having made a grout or two.

All in all everyone had a good

couple of days. The king and queen and their ladies enjoyed themselves and thanked the Rugby Miniaturists for making it such an enjoyable event.



Make flaky croissants for perfect breakfast

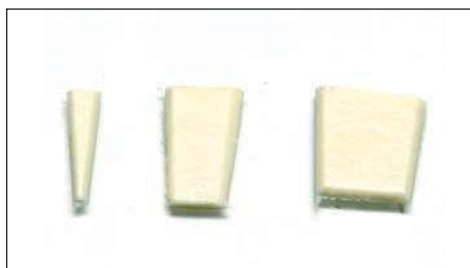
If you're going to create that ideal breakfast scene in your house, then you need golden croissants on the table or tray. Tanja shows us how to make them

BY TANJA JENSEN

Croissants are one of my favourites for breakfast and brunch – how can you say no to such a beautifully flaky, golden treat? So let's make some for that perfect miniature breakfast scene.



Step 1. Begin by mixing the clay for your 'dough'. You want a pale, lightly buttery colour with close to even amounts of white and translucent (slightly more white) but be careful with adding too much yellow — add very small quantities at a time.



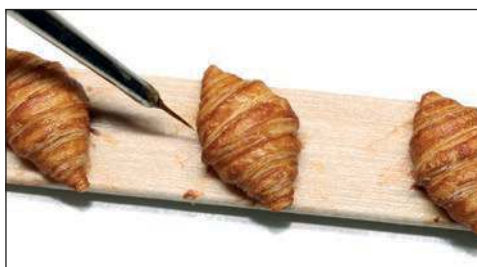
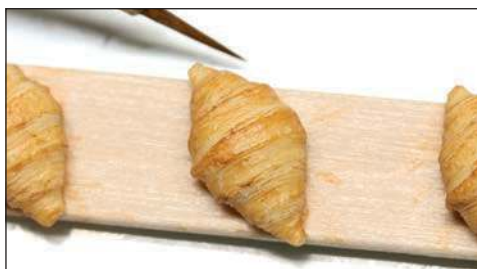
Step 2. To make the croissants, create the shape of a 'chubby banana'. You want this to be between 10-12mm in length depending on your personal preference.



Step 3. Roll out a thin sheet of your 'dough' and cut layers similar to what's shown in the picture. Then add these to the 'banana shape', starting with the widest, and cut off excess.

You will need

- Polymer clay; white, translucent, ecru and yellow
- Knife or blade to cut
- Clay rolling pin or pasta machine
- Fine needle tool
- Pointed silicone tool (I'm using a gum massager)
- Acrylic paint. I'm using raw sienna, burnt sienna and burnt umber
- Gloss varnish
- Small paint brushes



Step 4. Using the needle tool, make lines to create the look of the layers of the puff pastry and use the silicone tool to create a slightly bumpy texture on the 'flat' surfaces (you can also use a piece of crumpled up tin foil for this). Then bake according to the instructions on your clay package.

Step 5. After baking, add a thin layer of the raw sienna to the flat surfaces on the croissants, as well as on some of the lines created with the needle tool. Then mix together raw sienna, burnt sienna and a small amount of burnt umber and go over the lines as well as parts of the flat surfaces — wherever you'd like, to give them a more baked/crisp appearance.

Then finish off by dabbing on a small amount of gloss glaze, just enough to give them a sheen, and your croissants are ready to serve.

● www.sugarcharmshop.dk



SHOW DATES

A ROUND UP OF PLACES WHERE THE MINI



FLAGS WILL BE FLYING AROUND THE COUNTRY

MARCH

SATURDAY 7 MARCH

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

The Assembly Rooms, High Street,
DEDHAM CO7 6DE (off A12)

Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm

Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Northwich Memorial Court, Chester
Way, NORTHWICH CW9 5QJ

Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm

Organiser: MM Fairs

SUNDAY 08 MARCH

ANTIQUE DOLLS, DOLLHOUSES & TOYS

Cobham Village Hall, COBHAM, Surrey

Open: 10.00am - 4.00pm

Organizer: Wendy's World

SUNDAY 15 MARCH

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

The Mill Arts & Events Centre,
Bellingham Lane,
off High Street, RALEIGH SS6 7ED

Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm

Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Royal Hotel, 1 South Parade,
WESTON SUPER MARE BS23 1JP

Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm

Organiser: MGM Fairs

SATURDAY 21 MARCH

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Memorial Hall, Station Road,
ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT,
Wiltshire SN4 8EN

Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm

Organiser: MGM Fairs

SATURDAY 21 & SUNDAY 22 MARCH

MINIATURA

NEC, BIRMINGHAM B40 1NT

Open: SAT - 10.00am - 5.00pm;

SUN - 10.00am - 4.00pm

Organiser: Miniatura

SUNDAY 29 MARCH

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Lyndhurst Community Centre
Main Car Park, LYNDHURST,
Hampshire SO43 7NY

Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm

Organiser: MGM Fairs

APRIL

SATURDAY 04 APRIL

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Jubilee Hall, Congregational
Church, Bowden Lane, MARKET
HARBOROUGH, Leics LE16 7JD

Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm

Organiser: MGM Fairs

SUNDAY 05 APRIL

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Knights Hill Hotel & Spa, South Wootton,
KING'S LYNN, PE30 3HQ
(Junct. A148/A149)

Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm

Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

FAIR ORGANISERS:

Dolly's Daydreams: 01945 870160.

www.dollysdaydreams.com

E: dollysdaydreams@btinternet.com

Little Priory Fairs:

www.littleprioryfairs.co.uk

littleprioryfairs@outlook.com

London Dollshouse Festivals:

020 7812 9892 E: kdf@dollshousefestival.com

www.dollshousefestival.com

MGM Fairs: Tel: 01225 466533

Mob: 07818 462448. www.mgmfairs.co.uk

E: admin@mgmfairs.co.uk

Miniatura: 0121 783 9922.

www.miniatura.co.uk

MM Fairs: Tel: 01332 660428

www.dollhouse-fairs.co.uk

Pat Cutforth: www.patcutforth.co.uk

Warners Shows: 01778 391123

www.yorkdollshousefair.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.

Ring the bell to enter shop of mini wonders

Sandra takes a trip to the delightful market town of Northleach which is full of historic houses and home to some pretty impressive doll's houses too

BY SANDRA HARDING

I was a little confused when I first arrived at Michal Morse's famous shop in Northleach, in the Cotswolds. Where was I? Was it shop, museum, collection, estate agents, exhibition, or just a doll's house-er's paradise. The answer: it was all of the above, condensed into an experience that is "The Dolls House".

I knew the visit was going to be something different as, of course, Michal opened the very first ever bespoke doll's house shop in the UK in 1971, and is well known in the mini world as a collector and author of several books on the subject. Having had businesses in several locations including Covent Garden, Michal moved to this lovely location in 1986. Unfortunately for me, Michal was away on the day we visited but we were looked after admirably by assistant Jenny



Lawrenson who happily showed us the collection.

The first thing that struck me was that from the outside the building reminded me of a scene straight out of a Dickens novel, and after ringing the doorbell to be let in by Jenny, the inside reminded me of somewhere I could happily live and play for months. There were so many loosely packed boxes of long unopened goodies, my fingers could hardly contain themselves, but I did of course. There were hundreds of delicious little things in glass cabinets, and so many dolls of all kinds.

There were houses that made my mouth water and I really did want to open them all and play inside. I was sorely tempted by several, but lack of room at home bought me to my senses. There was an interesting Victorian Villa by Lines — the first one I have seen with opening sides only. There was also a German house from about 1947, and many different Triangs.

I loved the Kits Coty, which is waiting for Michal's magic touch before being



sold, as well as a Christian Hacker that Michal is restoring for a customer. There were several Georgian and Victorian styles from different makers from the 1930s/80s, and it's one of those places that lead you to naughtily scheme about what you can do at home to make room for just one more house.

I have to admit the one house that I found most tempting was a little delight from Lee and Annie Willis: Fairy Tale House, which was in the window. Luckily that common sense I mentioned earlier made me walk away (boo hoo). Something I had not seen before was the listing of houses for sale in the front window with photographs and all the details. That's what made me think of an estate agents — and what better way to show the customers what one has in stock?

Whilst we were there several other visitors walked in and all instantly had that look of complete wonder on their faces. I still had one on mine when I left.

● The Dolls House experience is only open on Saturdays, and most Thursdays and Fridays. You have to ring a bell to gain entry. To check for opening times go to:

The Dolls House, Market Place,
Northleach, Nr. Cheltenham,
Glos. GL54 3EJ
Call 01451 860431 or
email sales@the-dollshouse.co.uk





“There were houses that made my mouth water and I really did want to open them all and play inside.”



Room captures mag

A legendary NYC apartment building, the year 1962, and a time filled with music and magic have inspired Joan Warren's latest room box project

BY DEB WEISSLER

Director Roman Polanski's cult horror classic, *Rosemary's Baby*, was an instant hit in 1968 when it debuted; grossing £24 million, more than ten times what it took to produce. Joan, a New Yorker at the time, fell in love with the apartment build-



ic moment in time

ing, The Dakota Co-Op on West 72nd Street, whose exterior was used for the film. Built in 1884, it is considered to be one of Manhattan's most prestigious and exclusive residential addresses.

The building's high gables, deep roofs with dormers, terracotta span-

drels, niches, balconies, and balustrades give it a German Renaissance character, but its interior layout and floor plan is pure French; a hot architectural trend at the time it was built. No two apartments are alike, although they share commonality in that all the

Above left: A full view of the twelfth scale room box.

Top: Isaac Hayes Jr. sits on the beautifully made sofa, making music.

Above: Miniature replica of actor Marlon Brando (1924-2004) stands in front of the fireplace.



“A time filled with music and magic that can never be recreated, except in miniature.”

major rooms are connected to each other, and also accessible from a central hallway. This arrangement provides perfect flow for guests being entertained, and it was this layout Joan had in mind for her vision of “The Dakota”.

“It is such a beautiful and interesting co-op,” Joan recalls, “having most unusual layouts, lovely details such as crown moulding, and spacious old rooms that my imagination could just run away. It led me to throwing a party, with music playing as guests are beginning to arrive and the food and drinks are displayed on the coffee table.”

Joan wanted this room box to be different from anything else she had ever done before, so she commissioned Peter Tucker to recreate a small portion of the movie's apartment as she envisioned it. The room box is dedicated to Joan's childhood friend, Donald, and the year is 1962.

Well before this room box came along, Joan discovered Anna Maryina's doll “Jamila,” an African woman carrying a baby on her back. It was love at first sight and Joan tucked the doll away until she found the perfect venue in *The Dakota*.

Joan's first guest to arrive is singer,

songwriter, producer, and actor Isaac Hayes Jr. (1942-2008). A force behind 1960s Southern soul music, his song, “Soul Man” is recognised as one of the most influential songs of the past fifty years by the Grammy Hall of Fame. Joan commissioned Sharon Cariola to create this doll. Scattered at his feet, on Joan's handmade petit point creation, are some of her favourite record albums in miniature. “I think Donald will recognise them,” she smiles.

Next to join the party is actor Marlon Brando (1924-2004) as he appeared in the motorcycle gang film classic “*The Wild One*”. Nearby, over the fireplace is a three-dimensional diorama of Charlie Chaplin and the *Keystone Cops* by Penny Thomson, which brings another slice of the movies to the scene.



Above left: There is such amazing detail in the miniature record player in the hall.

Above and right: A few more close up photos showing the perfectly staged room box.

The typewriter on the Shaker table by Ken Byers is a nod to the way novels and news articles were written in the sixties. Isaac's pit bull terrier by Kerri Pajutee sports a gold chain collar to match that of his owner's. Autumn Leaf Miniatures supplied the nachos while SP Miniatures and Lilliput Land filled the room with furniture. Other artists featured include East to West Miniatures, Jim Pounder, Barbara Stanton, Paul Saltarelli, and Henry and Laura.

Joan points out other features: "There was an antique shop going out of business in Wilmington, NC last



summer and, as I like to browse in these places, I found some treasures. I came across a miniature Imari vase, an ivory Buddha on a walnut stand, and an ivory Virgin Mary on an ebony stand.

"There was also what looked like an umbrella stand from England that was to scale. I think they all look great and add interest to the room. The two

miniature soda bottles were purchased in an antique shop in Southport. Nothing looks out of place and everything definitely adds interest."

Joan looks back on 1962 as a watershed moment in her life; a time filled with music and magic that can never be recreated, except in miniature. Her room box has done all that and more.

Add splash of colour to your front door



This mini wreath is fun to make and will look lovely on a front door this Spring, but will also brighten up any scene inside or out

BY SADIE BROWN

Make sure your mini visitors are greeted in style with this spring doll's house door wreath.



Step 1. Roll two thin tubes of beige clay, brushing them both with grated brown pastel. Drag a brush with rough bristles down the length of each tube to create the look of tree bark.



Step 2. Twist the two ropes together into a circle. Make some smaller lengths of rope, cutting the ends straight with a craft knife, and twist these around the main circle, building the main body of the wreath. Bake according to the manufacturer's instructions and allow to cool.



Step 3. Realistic rose petals are surprisingly easy and fun to create. Simply roll tiny carrot shapes of clay and flatten them into wafer-thin petal shapes with your fingernail.



Step 4. Gradually build the petals around a rolled centre core until they resemble a rose. Make a selection of different sized roses in a variety of shades. I've used pink as the central colour, but you can choose an alternative springtime favourite to suit your own decor.



Step 5. Make a couple of daisies in two different sizes. Begin by rolling very tiny tubes of white clay, with a point at each end. Flatten with your fingernail to make a daisy petal shape and build the flower itself by sticking them together in a circle. Flatten a tiny ball of sunflower yellow coloured clay and add it to the centre of the daisy. Bake all the flowers and allow them to cool before coating both them and the wreath with a layer of matte varnish.

You will need

- Polymer clay: beige, white, sunflower yellow, pink in various shades
- Brown pastel
- Small brushes
- Craft knife
- Scenic modelling lichen/assorted faux foliage
- Super Glue
- Matte varnish

TOPTIP

To hang the wreath, I simply attached a small screw to the doll's house front door and painted it with black paint to match the door, allowing it to blend in perfectly.



Step 6. Once the matte varnish is dry, glue some scenic modelling lichen to the front of the wreath, making sure that the base of the wreath still remains visible through the foliage.



Step 7. Cut several miniature leaves from a twelfth scale garland or similar, folding each one in half to create the impression of a central vein. You can also easily make mini leaves using green paper/card and a small leaf shaped craft punch if you prefer. Glue the leaves in amongst the lichen.



Step 8. Take some strips of either green paper or suitable faux foliage, running your fingernail down the whole length to curl it like a gift ribbon. Cut to size, placing the curls and the flowers where you want them on the wreath, ensuring you're happy with the layout before securing everything carefully into position with glue.

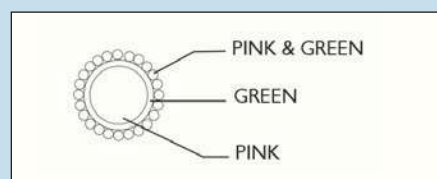
Take some photos and share with your online miniature group. Be sure to let them know it's from DHW!

Turn a plastic box into a terrarium

Make a simple Fimo snake and a glass box to keep him in

BY JOAN KEY

Little plastic boxes are really useful and can be turned into all sorts of mini things — even a snake terrarium. Here's how to do it.



Blend a beige colour and make a basic snake shape. For the markings I am using a simple version of a caning technique, which I learned

on a Polymer Guild Polymer Clay day. Roll a cylinder of pink Fimo, about 1/2 in long and 1/3 in wide. Wrap it around with a very thin layer of green and surround this with thin rolls of alternate green and yellow or any other colours you fancy.

Press and roll this cylinder to about 1/8 in diameter. Trim off one end until you reach a nicely patterned section. Slice very thinly and place along the back of your snake. Press and roll the snake until the pattern is smoothed in over the back.

Indent for the mouth and nostrils and make tiny black balls for the eyes. Bake at recommended temperature wound around one of your twigs.

Mix some fine sand with PVA glue and a small amount of water and place in the bottom of your box. Add some small stones and the snake and twig. You could give him a few dead chicks for lunch but I drew the line at that!

Make a few holes in the black bottom (now the top) with a hot needle so he can breathe.



Left: Put sand, small stones and twigs in the bottom.

Above: Plastic boxes come in many different sizes.

Lots of 'lovelys' reflect a sparkling fund-raiser

Miniaturists came from far and wide to support the charity fair at Thame where Celia Thomas put on a wonderful fund-raising show with a very personal interest

BY SANDRA HARDING

On a wet Saturday we woke very early and travelled a couple of hours or so to Thame in Oxfordshire to attend a charity show.

En route, in the rain, in a queue of traffic and bored, we idly wondered if we were too old to be doing this sort of thing. Then, when we got there, we were introduced to Alison and Greg Knight, a couple from Australia who had planned their trip to the UK around this very doll's house show. We decided then that we weren't too old after all, and what's a couple of hours anyway

This one-off show was organised by Celia Thomas of KT Miniatures to raise funds for the charity CRY (Cardiac Risk in the Young). Her daughter Kate randomly suffered a cardiac arrest in 2017, and the charity provided help and support for Kate and her family when she came out of hospital.

Regular readers will have read about this in issue 325, and we felt that we wanted to follow the story through

to the end. We are so glad we did as the event was full of the most beautifully made, and very desirable, hand-made items – and that was just the cakes! The cakes, a word that always gets my husband excited, were made by Charlotte of Time for Tea, who donated 10 per cent of her profits on the day to the charity.

When we went into the two halls we were delighted to see so many top quality makers, many well known to Celia from the days when she ran the original Thame shows. They all had even more beautifully made and desirable objects to tempt buyers including vintage furniture and accessories by KT Miniatures, Yesterday's Child, Wendy's World and Yvonne Bentley with adorable vintage dolls.

There was sparkling tableware from Victoria Fasken and Stokesay Ware, very desirable teddies from Teeny Weeny Teddies & Friends, and highly collectable books and paintings from



Malcolm's Miniatures

Ellie de Lacy. CJ Miniatures had tiny little room boxes plus so much more, and Roberson Miniatures very desirable prams

Jan The Flower Lady was there and so was Nicola Maskell Miniatures with her amazing hand-stitched works of art – such talent. Herdwick Landscapes had a rather grand house I wanted and Malcolm's Miniatures had all the accessories to fit them out.

Al'turn'ative Proportions had a lovely display of lamps and other great accessories, and Onetwelfthscale had beautifully made Art Deco furniture on display. Severn Models caters for the railway world as well as the doll's house world, and I really wanted his N gauge signal box. Luckily I don't have a railway – yet.

There was a grand charity raffle with donations from UK miniaturists and exhibitors. I am delighted to have won one of exhibitor L&A St Leger's moving figures to add to the others I have – such fun! Thanks to all those who donated the lovely prizes. Someone quite different and fascinating to chat to was artist Linda Bright. Linda paints beautiful flowers and small scenes to add to the fronts of doll's houses, and also restores vintage houses, adding her own unique touch to them. I hope to do a feature on this talented lady later for you

This was a lovely show, with lovely exhibitors, lovely venue, lovely customers from Ipswich, Wells, Dover, Cam-



Alison, Kate, Celia & Greg



Roberson Miniatures



The Flower Lady



Linda Bright



Ellie De Lacy



CJ Miniatures



Herdwick Landscapes



Yvonne Bentley



L & A St Leger

bridge, Hampshire, Australia (!) and places I had never heard of, who had travelled far just to support this worthy cause. Thanks to their hard work Celia and her happy band of volunteers, Jenny, Linda, Jill, Debbie, Kate, Melodie, Erika and Dorcas raised the grand sum of £801.46 for the Charity CRY.

Celia is very pleased it went so well, and admits that she could not have done it without the support of all her lovely friends and family. That's enough lovely for today.

● If you would like to support the CRY charity take a look at the website: www.c-r-y.org.uk/



Severn Models



Nicola Mascall Miniatures

Make a stylish top hat to display in a scene

Create your own twelfth scale top hat for your miniature scene to use in any gentleman's room or even for a night out on the town! It is simple with some patience

BY JO BEVILACQUA

Top hats add an elegant touch to any masculine room setting, especially when paired with a belt, tie, or cuff links. I hope that you will enjoy this tutorial and that your room setting will be impressive to all your mini friends and family, adding that Midas touch to your setting!

Step 1: Cut out the patterns for the barrel outer wrap, inner barrel, and top to the barrel hat brim out of card stock. NOTE: you do not have to cut the centre hole out of the top and bottom brims. I left mine closed.



Step 2: Cut out the copper brim carefully, smoothing it out once cut.

Step 3: Cut out the patterns in fabric for the copper brim pattern and the card stock brim pattern. Cut out notches along edges. NOTE: The larger brim pattern goes on the bottom and should be copper.



Step 4: Apply glue onto the copper piece – let it get tacky. Press a piece of card stock onto the glue, to test how tacky it is. It should be tacky, not wet. Align the copper over the fabric and press onto the fabric. Repeat using the card stock pattern over fabric.



Step 5: Finger-press the edges along the copper brim and the card stock brim pieces. Apply glue along the edges of the fabric for the copper brim. Once tacky, fold over and press, working the edges inward. Repeat this process for the card stock brim, do not allow the edges to pleat.

You will need

- Black silk fabric with a fine thread count
- Craft or fabric glue
- Card stock
- 1/16" black ribbon
- Black embroidery cord – thin
- Thin copper-paper
- Dowel 1 1/16" diameter
- Straight pin or needle
- Metal alligator clamp
- Black acrylic paint
- Toothpick
- Scissors
- Scotch tape
- Sharp tipped tweezers
- Paper clip



Step 6: Test fit the 2 brims together, with the larger one on the bottom. NOTE: The centre holes must be cut out now and lined up if you want a hole. Apply glue to both brim pieces, letting the glue get tacky. Align them together and press tightly. Bend the edges slightly upward. Touch up ends of fabric with black acrylic paint using a toothpick.

Step 7: Cut fabric out using the barrel top hat fabric pattern (large circle) and small card stock circle. Notch the edges to eliminate bulk.



Step 8: Apply glue to the small circle of card stock, making sure glue is not wet, but tacky. Press the card stock circle into the centre of the large fabric circle. Allow to dry.



Step 9: Use the barrel pattern in card stock to fit over the dowel. Tape in place, use a tiny piece of tape. Check the fit over the small card stock circle before continuing.

Step 10: Add glue to the fabric first and then to the card stock barrel on the dowel. Fold the fabric over the card stock barrel and press until it's smooth and snip off excess fabric.

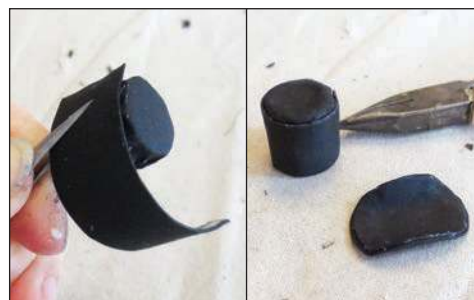


Step 11: Test fit the barrel outer wrap card stock pattern over the dowel. It should overlap just slightly. Use the barrel wrap pattern and apply glue to the card stock. Align the card stock pattern centred over the fabric pattern and press flat. Make sure the glue is tacky- not wet, and that there are no bubbles in the fabric.

Step 12: Finger press the edges on the long sides. Add glue along the entire length on both sides. Press and glue over. Snip off ends clean.

Step 13: Test fit the barrel wrap over the hat form on the dowel and decide which area will be the back for the wrap to begin and end before gluing.

Step 14: Apply glue to the fabric sides of the hat form (still on the dowel) and the barrel wrap piece.



Step 15: Apply the barrel wrap piece starting at the back of the barrel form, rolling in one direction until you get to the near seam overlay, snip off just before applying and press evenly. Black acrylic paint can be used in the seam.



Step 16: Once the barrel piece is dry, remove it from the dowel. Test fit to brim. Cut a length of the black ribbon to fit along the bottom edge of the barrel, beginning on the side chosen to add the bow for the seam. Apply glue to the ribbon, allow it to get tacky, apply carefully to the base of the barrel.



Step 17: Make the bow by double looping. Do not exceed 1/4" in length. Use a straight pin to hold the centre loop while being glued in the centre. Add glue to the centre, fold over, and press. Repeat the other side and tweezer tight till dry.

TOPTIP

- Always keep a wet cloth near you when working with glue. If you get any glue on the fabric it will be impossible to remove it.

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Golightly Miniatures

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► GolightlyMiniatures.etsy.com



It's a Miniature world

1/12 scale handmade Dolls House accessories

► itsaminatureworld1.etsy.com



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Handmade 1:12th scale dollhouse miniatures.

► SugarCharmShop.etsy.com



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1:48 Laser cut kits, lace & 1:12 kits

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FrogmortonStudios

Original Dollhouse Castings & Technique Book by Rik Pierce

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Polly's Pantry

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► pollyspantryminifood.etsy.com



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Lovely and delightful miniature designs

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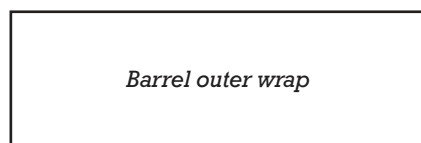
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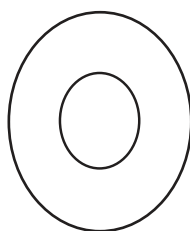


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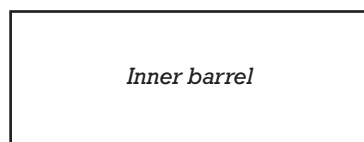
Pattern for hat card stock



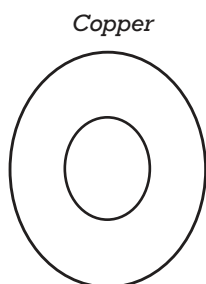
For
outside
hat



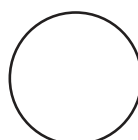
Brim card stock



Inside
form

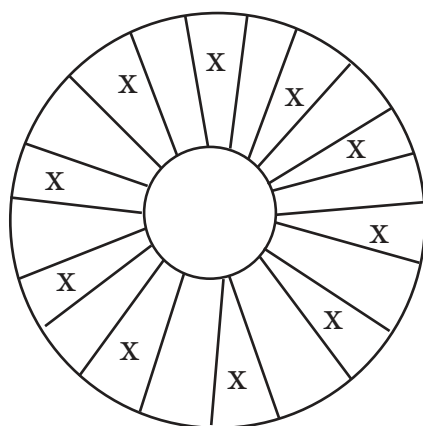


Copper brim

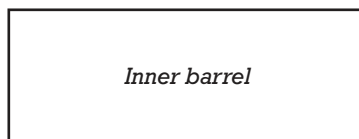


Top of hat

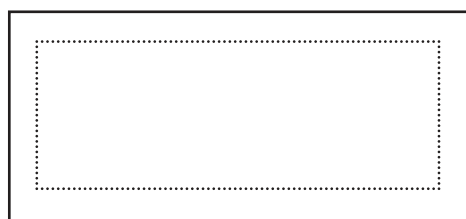
Pattern for hat fabric



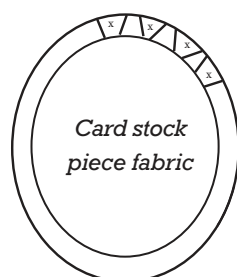
Fabric pattern top
hat barrel
x = notch and re-
move



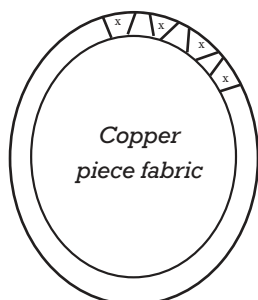
Inside form



Outer barrel
fabric



Continue making
notches all around.
Cut outer edge.
Notch evenly.



Continue making notches
all around. Cut outer
edge. Notch evenly.



Step 18: Cut a smaller piece of ribbon and apply a dot of glue to the centre of the loops. Apply the middle of the ribbon to the centre of the loops. Press tight till dry. Add a dot of glue to the other side and other end of ribbon. Fold the ribbon onto the glued back and onto the front ribbon. Tweezer tight until dry; clip the ends short.

Step 19: Add a dot of glue onto the ribbon band seam on the side of the barrel. Add the bow on the seam and press the bow in place with sharp tweezers. NOTE: a paper clip can work as well for holding the barrel wrap piece.



Step 20: Dry fit the barrel to the brims, trim if needed, and touch up any silk with black acrylic on a toothpick if needed. Add glue to the ends of the barrel piece and let it dry. Add a second coat of glue, let it get tacky-then apply to the brim. Press fit tightly until dry.

Step 21: Optional: a black thread or cord can be used along the edge of the brim to conceal any unseemly edge.



Castle fit for a princess finds the perfect home

The amazing story of how a passionate collector of doll's house furniture came to be given an exquisite castle a devoted father built for his daughter

BY LINDA GANT

In July of 2008 I received a phone call through my Petite Princess website from a woman seeking a home for her childhood castle. In 1966, her late father, William A. Bentley, former engineer and architect, made a medieval castle for her. From architectural plans carefully drafted to Petite Princess' $\frac{3}{4}$ " scale (1/16th), he presented this castle to his own "little princess" to house her Ideal 1964 Petite Princess and 1965 Princess Patti Dollhouse Furniture.

William drafted plans to design his doll's house around Ideal's Petite Princess furniture which had just come on the market upon the realisation that: "Obviously an ordinary house wouldn't do for furnishings of such regal splendour - it must be a palace, or better yet, a castle. Ideally, it would be a Gothic revival castle, something that a twentieth century romantic would build, something as close to a modern version of Neuschwanstein as my time and budget would allow."

This exquisite medieval castle that he named Kleines Neuschwanstein (little Neuschwanstein) was constructed almost entirely of a special Masonite-faced half-inch plywood. The stone facing was cast in a wooden mould, fifty stones at a time, from polyester plastic. It weighs over one hundred pounds (45 kilos) and is very large, measuring 27 by 50 inches, with the top of the turret rising 43 inches above the base.

Kleines Neuschwanstein was so ele-



gant that William entered his castle into a doll's house exhibit at a local county fair and it won the Best Craftsmanship Award. This lovely medieval castle was fashioned in part after actress Colleen Moore's 1928 Fairy Castle Doll House, with winding staircases inside stone towers and turrets, a picturesque ceiling, and a similar stair well inside the great hall.

Well, 'little princess' Barbara had always been more into horses than doll's houses and many years later her castle was taking up space and collecting dust under her staircase. So, one day, I received an astonishing phone call. Barbara wanted to donate her lovely castle treasure to me. This was truly a dream come true... to own an award-winning castle built exactly to the $\frac{3}{4}$ " scale of my Petite Princess collection. A few weeks later, Barbara and her sons carefully packed Kleines Neuschwanstein into a sturdy wooden crate to be shipped on a barge 26 miles across the Pacific Ocean to my



Catalina Island home off the coast of California.

I excitedly went to work on this treasure, stripping stained and faded wallpaper off the library walls and dirty pink carpet off the bedroom floor. New wallpaper was promptly purchased along with flooring and carpet to replace the carpets in both the bedroom and bathroom. I also purchased lovely pale pink paint for my castle's exterior. I was on a restoration roll and photos of my new adventure were added to our soon-to-be published 2009 1st Edition Petite Princess Reference Guide.

Alas, everything came to a screeching halt when I became one of 37,000 teachers in the State of California to lose my job and 21-year career. The hardest part of relocating to the mainland was leaving Kleines Neuschwanstein behind in a storage unit because it was so difficult to move.

Ten years later, Kleines Neuschwanstein was recovered from its island dungeon along with its wallpaper and paint. Now a breast cancer survivor, working on it at this time couldn't have been better as it has been quite therapeutic to restore. It was well worth the wait. No words can express the joy of painting and landscaping this treasure. I couldn't believe the difference a couple coats of paint would make to the cracks in the castle's roof. Equally exciting was installing flocked pink carpet in the bedroom, wallpaper in







“Now a breast cancer survivor, working on it at this time couldn’t have been better ... no words can express the joy of painting and landscaping this treasure.”



the library, and flooring in the bathroom and dining room.

Now, there are many things I cannot take credit for. Remember, it was designed by an architect? Much attention was given to detail in Mr Bentley's exquisite palace library, complete with wainscoting, tower steps, and floor to ceiling bookcases, and I'm sure you would agree there isn't much to add to the royal dining room with wall-

papered horses and fancy trim. The castle's great hall is breathtaking with its magnificent staircase and velveteen ceiling filled with decoupage pictures, beaded jewellery, and gold rope trim. There is no doubt this castle is fit for a princess!

Present in it are all 30 original 1964 Petite Princess Furniture pieces as well as the 1965 Princess Patti kitchen and bathroom pieces and elusive televi-

sion set. Look closely and you will find them. As with actress Colleen Moore's Fairy Castle, Kleines Neuschwanstein's inhabitants (besides the pets) are left to your imagination.



With all these lovely furnishings and accessories I'm pleased to say my Petite Princess Medieval Castle is now exactly as I had envisioned all these years. The only thing that remains is to divide the existing attic space under my hinged roof into a Renwal nursery and Blue Petite Princess children's bedroom. But I have plenty of time to do this later.

There are some things I have chosen to keep original in memory of its architect, William A. Bentley, who had the vision to build this wonderful castle. The picture of his daughter will forever remain on her bedroom wall and the dining room wallpaper is there to remember the "little princess" who gave me this castle because "she loves horses more than doll's houses."

About the author

Linda Gant is a retired elementary school teacher with a Masters Degree in Education and co-author of the popular "Complete Reference Guide to Ideal's 1964 and 1965 Petite Princess and Princess Patti Dollhouse Furniture." An avid "Princess" since the age of 8, she has carried her love for this unique hand-upholstered and



hand-painted doll's house furniture line into adulthood. Today, her complete collection of Petite Princess Dollhouse furniture, including Ideal's 1964 Petite Princess Store Display and the extremely rare 1965 Princess Patti Cardboard Dollhouse, is now a permanent exhibit at The National Building Museum in Washington D.C. Linda may be reached

by email at linda@petiteprincess.com or [petiteprincesscollectibles](https://www.facebook.com/petiteprincesscollectibles) on Facebook.



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The full size facts on Neuschwanstein

Few places look more like storybook illustrations than the real life Neuschwanstein Castle in Germany. With its towers and turrets it seems like it was plucked straight from an old fairy tale.

But behind this elaborate palace nestled in the Bavarian Alps is a less idyllic story. King Ludwig II of Bavaria commissioned the cliffside castle in 1868, just two years after Austria and Bavaria were conquered by Prussia, and Ludwig II was stripped of his powers. He disappeared into a private fantasy world, surrounding himself with opulent castles where he could live out his dreams of being a true, sovereign king.

It seems Ludwig II never saw the final Neuschwanstein. He died in 1886, and the final towers weren't completed until 1892. But within weeks of his mysterious death, the amazing castle was opened to the public, where it quickly became one of the area's most popular attractions.

Today, more than 1.4 million people visit annually, making it one of the most visited castles in the world.



Neuschwanstein Castle at Schwangau, Bavaria, Germany. Photo: Thomas Wolf, www.foto-tw.de Creative Commons.

Wedding dream magic captured in mini shop

In Italy, a bride or newly married lady is referred to as La Sposa. So how did a walk through Bochum, Germany, inspire Jo Bevilacqua to create this wedding shop?

BY DEB WEISSLER

For more than 50 years, La Sposa has been the address in the city of Bochum for exclusive, international bridal and evening wear. Concierge advice and stylish ambiance with a cosy atmosphere has made shopping at La Sposa a unique experience for brides planning their special day. Each bride is lovingly looked after by the La Sposa team, from the selection of her wedding dress to her walk down the aisle. Her bridal party receives the same hands-on service.

While Jo's husband, Andy, presented a paper at Ruhr University in Bochum, Jo decided to explore the city on foot. "I stopped in my tracks when I spotted La Sposa located in a beautiful old building that exuded the feeling of a spectacular gala," Jo recalls.

It was instant inspiration for a miniature bridal shop, and from that point on she began to collect ideas and accumulate items she wanted to display in the elegant shop windows she envisioned building. What she couldn't find, she commissioned.

"I think anything in real life that's recreated in miniature strikes an emotion in all of us, especially clothing, because it feels magical. The reason I feel wedding miniatures are so appealing is the allure of the wedding dream itself. It's a new start to a new life."

Her items came from the who's who of the miniature world: Grafialuna (shoes), Kerri Pajutee and

Sylvia Mobley (street critters), Gerd Felka (glassware), Sylvia Rountree (tux shoes), Nantasy Fantasy (canes), Carol Wagner (bouquets), Charrita Teague (hydrangeas), Diane Almeyda (buttons and pearls), Jim Pounder (lanterns), Gerry DeCave (chandelier), Frank Crescente (entry doors), and Nova Lytes (LED display lighting).

Jo began by sketching the building as she envisioned it in her mind, incorporating some of the architectural details from the full size building. She had already begun collecting the architectural elements needed to embellish the walls and had stored up pounds of mixed colour clay.

She began by building a mock up of



the structure using foam core. Better to experiment now than make a mistake later with real wood. Window holes were cut out and landings inside were laid out that would ultimately support five window displays and an entry alcove. All the window boxes needed to be electrically accessible. Once her mock up was complete, Jo met with her box builder, Paul Hayes, to discuss materials and processes.

"I used all wood construction for the box and walls, hand-sculpted clay stones, resin doors and various architectural mouldings from Unique Miniatures and Lawbre. For lighting I used Vintage Lemax spotlights I had stored away for three decades. I found that I could remove the wiring and replace the housing with a CirKit bulb unit. Sadly they don't make these anymore but I found another pair on eBay that gave me enough. I painted them all gun metal grey and drilled out two holes in each base in order to screw the bases upside down into the ceiling of each display stage box. This was very important to me as it gives realism to the space."

While Paul got busy constructing the box to Jo's exact specifications, she was busy sculpting three male mannequins. "I began by making the patterns for shirts; bow ties; ties; ascots; bests; and jackets with lapels, sleeves, and cummerbunds. I knew this was going to be a 'soul searching' process for me because men's attire is horrendously



Above left: The display window is full of many ornate and sentimental gifts for the bride and groom.

Below left: A close up showing the beautiful shop entrance doors with a cat in wait.

Above: A mouse is scurrying outside and by the door the 'cat and mouse chase' is over.

Above right: A gorgeous display window for brides to be.

difficult. I created three different shirts. However, you cannot see the work because of the vests overlaying each shirt," Jo laughs. "Nor the cummerbunds I hand-pleated and made for each waist."

Constructing the jackets was worse than she expected. She managed to make three bridal and bridesmaid gowns and was still working on those tuxes. At the last minute she wanted a top hat, but after buying it and placing it near the male mannequins she knew instantly the scale was off. With no time to find another, Jo made her very first top hat. She had to learn how to form the brims, make the barrels, and come up with assembly techniques that would work. "I always say: If it looks simple, it will probably be the hardest thing to do. Believe me, it was! Do I ever have respect for miniature costume artists?"

By now Jo was getting very close to deadline and with the box still under construction, she hadn't begun the interior walls yet. She had to create mouldings that fit along the perimeter



of the architecture and make all the cut stone that would have to be glued in place. Frames needed to be cut to fit the openings of each display window along with decals that needed to be designed to spray frost them onto the glass windows on the street side. Laser cut banner stencils were also needed. So Jo was forced to work on the interior walls first without the outer box to fit it consistently. This was very risky because anything related to fit, form or function could go wrong.

Each window opening had a display box with a hinged door to work inside the display window. The box itself would have a door that latched in the back for easy access. Holes were

TIP OF THE HAT
Jo shows how she made her top hat on page 50







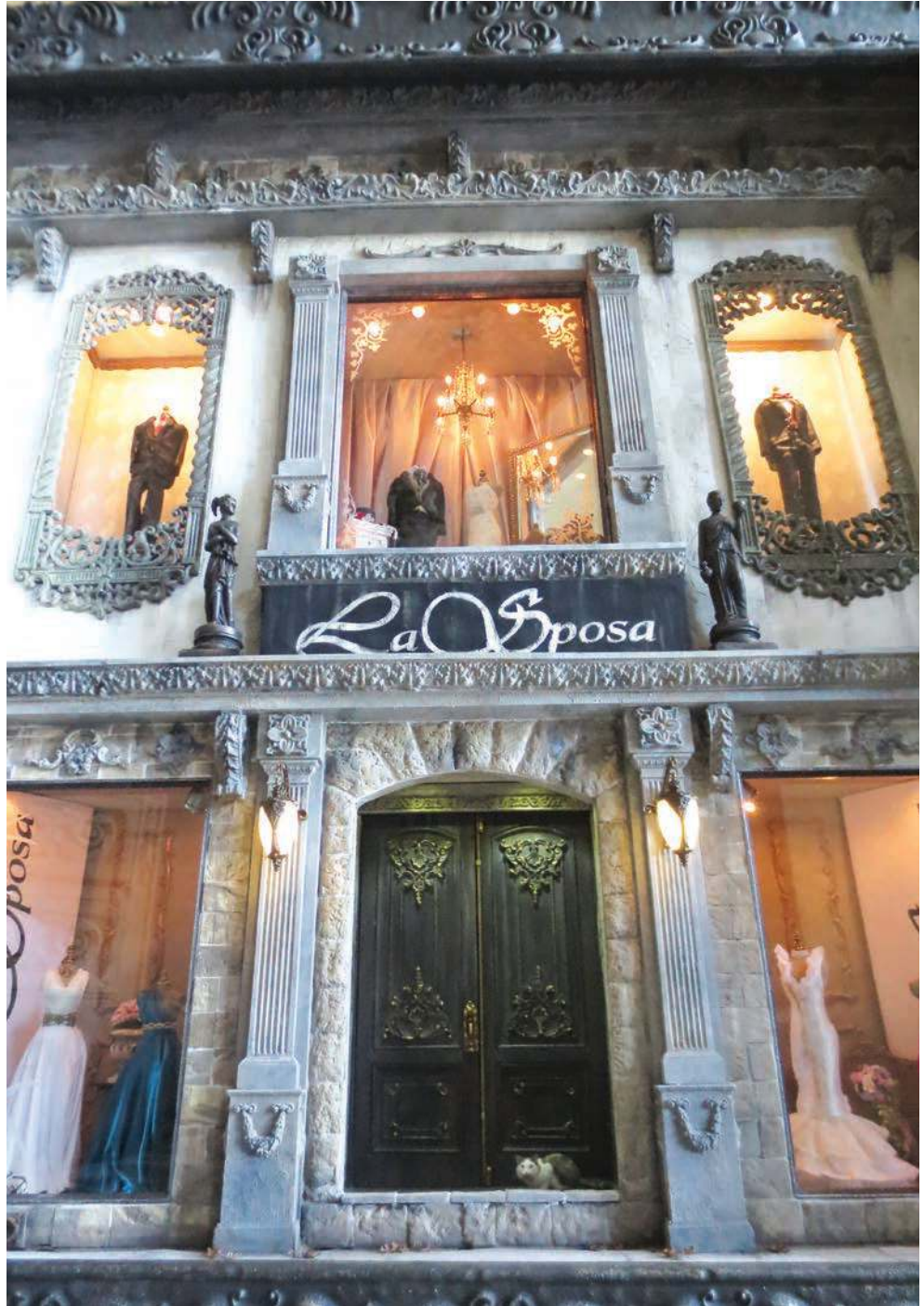
Above left: Progress photo of the bridal shop before the windows and door were installed.

Centre left: Lots of miniature stones waiting to be adhered to the facade.

Bottom left: The facade of the bridal shop in progress.

Top: Stonework lined up on the worktable.

Above: The show room window before installation with its gorgeous flooring.



drilled out in the ceiling to allow heat generated by the lights to be released. Can light tubes were installed.

"I built this structure out of sequence because Paul was delayed making the outer box due to travel obligations. There were also issues with the custom frame laying flat on the outer box, which held up delivery for weeks. I knew when the box arrived there would be a ton of work to do, so I planned to have the bulk of the interior complete beforehand."

Finally the box arrived and all of

Jo's hard work and planning paid off. Then the priming and faux finishing began. Jo had been gifted with two antique, ornate grates ten years earlier by Ron's Miniature Shop and she was finally able to use them for the tuxedo show window frames. She was thrilled with the results.

Like all of Jo's structures, this box was quite heavy so she installed wrought iron handles on the box exterior. Even the exterior of the shop, with its street scene, was carefully staged.

After endless days and a few minor

hiccups, it all came together. "La Sposa is my perfect vision of a bridal shop. I feel the romance of the historic age of the building. To fill it, I chose items from past relationships with fellow artists selected for the quality of their work and that have become a part of my miniature family."

Retired? Maybe. "Today I work slower and have time for my family and my bird. I only do commissions now. I have three room boxes and some study kits to assemble this year." And there's always Jo's beloved garden waiting.

Lynn found her passion after move to the sun

Lyn Jowers only discovered she had a talent for making miniature furniture after moving abroad. Now she feels she was put on this earth to do it

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

My most treasured miniature furniture maker is Lynn Jowers from South Africa. This story is a little peek into the world where Lynn came from and how she became the beloved artisan that she is today. If you have never held one of her relief carved masterpieces made from cherry wood in your hands and felt the silken finishing, I urge you to discover this extraordinary pleasure. If you cannot do this immediately, put it on your 'bucket list'. You will thank yourself for discovering her.

As a child growing up in England, Lynn had always been fascinated with small things. It wasn't until she saw her eldest sister Ann's beautiful three-storey Victorian doll's house with its working lights and flickering fireplaces that she realised this interest had taken hold of her, not imagining that this would turn into an absolute obsession.

In the beginning Lynn only collected little treasures from the UK miniature shows that she would visit with her sister Ann. One day she discovered someone's unfinished doll's house project at a street auction. It was just flat pieces of plywood with windows and door shapes cut out, but even in this state she could see the potential. Lynn decided at that moment that this pile of wood was coming home with



her and she was already dreaming of a beautiful Tudor style cottage. This event happened sixteen years ago. Although it is her prize personal little home, only the inside of her cottage is finished. Lynn has many specific plans to one day add finishing touches to complete this personal

project.

As noted before, Lynn was originally from the UK where her husband Dennis and she ran a successful electronics company with a lot of help from their young son Colin. Dennis had lived in South Africa many years before they had met and it was his dream to one day retire there. They visited for many holidays, but Lynn would not commit until one day sitting next to his ICU hospital bed after open heart surgery she decided that if he pulled through she would somehow fulfil his wish and get him back to South Africa.

They have now lived in South Africa for eleven years and although she loves the long sunny days and quiet life she misses her beloved extended family with a vengeance. She also misses the culture in England where there are multiple miniature shows and exhibi-

Above: Miniature artist, Lynne, happily working in her workshop where she produces miniature works of art.



tions that were easy to attend.

After settling in South Africa, it was not long before she decided that if she wanted to carry on with her miniature hobby she would have to start making furniture herself. It was only much later that she realised there was already a great miniature following in SA. In fact, she has found that South Africa has some of the greatest miniature artisans in the world. By the time she realised this, she was already hooked on creating.

Lynn feels as though she was put on this earth to make miniature furniture. She had made quite a few pieces of full-sized furniture with her husband Dennis in the past, so she knew all about dovetailing and mitred joints. Dennis taught her how to make fixtures and jigs to hold the pieces of wood in place. She has a lot of woodworking machinery, some small and some large.

Each piece of miniature furniture starts with a plank of wood that must be cut and thinned down to the correct twelfth thickness - this is one job Lynn does not enjoy. She does have a



Left: A meticulously made toy riding horse with pull string. A must have in any doll's house with little ones.

Above: A twelfth scale sewing box with removable lid.

Below left: A beautifully crafted bureau with a mirror and teddy bear relief.

Below: Matching toy shelf and side table.





Top: The beautiful Tudor style cottage That Lynn discovered at an auction and daringly brought to life.

Above left: A twelfth scale vanity with a complementing wall mirror.

Above centre: A bunk bed with a small attached ladder.

Above right: An adorable handmade rocking chair to match the set.

love for quality tools, so her workshop has an abundant supply. Some tools she uses every day, others are seldom used but they are all important in some specific way.

Small furniture is not easy to make! Lynn often spends more than an entire week creating one single piece. With each piece she makes, she pretends that it is for her own collection. This

way she knows that when it is finished, her valued customer will be quite pleased.

Lynn has sent miniature pieces to customers all over the world and hopes to continue this plan for a few more years. Working with tiny pieces of wood continually does have a physical effect on the joints of her hands and fingers.

Lynn's workshop is detached from



her home with many windows providing incoming sunshine and a spectacular view of the South African coastline, which includes mountains and blue skies. The setting is idyllic for a creative person. She has been asked many times about her methods of turning out such beautiful work. She maintains that she uses a mixture of techniques, the old, where she uses the mortise and tenon joints, mitred corners, and the more modern techniques to help produce the relief carvings such as the teddy bears. Both these techniques work very well together to produce beautiful modern and vintage style miniatures.

Lynn chooses wood with a very fine grain and finishes each piece with bee's wax polish. Each piece takes her many hour of work.

Once you behold the resulting miniature masterpiece in your hands you will understand immediately that this was very carefully measured and joined together, and that these could never be mass produced.

Lynn's work is something completely unique and identifiable. I

Above: A beautifully made long wall table.

Top right: One of Joyce's favourite pieces is this little school desk. (Doll by Iris Bodenbender).

Right: A highchair to match the teddy bear theme. Doll made by Karen Ferrier and doll's outfit made by Sharon Blackburn.

Below right: A bread box with chickens on it!

cherish each piece that I own and have purchased over the years. It's difficult to state that I have any one favourite piece, because I will look at the child's school desk and think "Oh, this is my favourite." Then I will look at the master bedroom commission furniture and I'm still stunned at how perfectly she recreated my Ethan Allen bedroom set from the 1970s.

At last I finally understand that ALL of the associated pieces are my favourites. Each piece is a labour of love. Lynn Jowers should be recognised as an international treasure.

● The pictures from this article, aside from the Tudor house, belong to my own cherished personal collection.



“ Each piece is a labour of love. Lynn Jowers should be recognised as an international treasure. ”



Create an Arabian Nights fantasy



Dana shows how to create a sumptuous scene and then make the figures to lounge serenely upon it. This month she starts with the base and the Sultan

BY DANA

Greetings everyone! With this tutorial I will be introducing the Sultan and the directions to make a platform on which to build his scene. In the next issue I will show you how to create the Sultan's wife. So, for those readers that long for an Arabian Nights story, here is the start to a whole new adventure. Big hugs for now, and happy creating!

Base floor

Please note, that full-size stores can provide many treasures in your miniature making endeavours. For instance, the background screen used in my finished photo (above), is a candle base that I bought cheaply.



Step 1. Find a wooden base that is large enough to hold the Sultan, the Sultan's favourite (2 dolls), along with some accessories such as the pillows and the couch.

Step 2. Cover the base with gold metallic polymer clay (Fimo). Bake according to the directions.



Step 3. Using a stencil grid, stipple on alternating chalk colours.

Step 4. Bake the entire base again, and the chalks will slightly melt into the polymer clay.

Step 5. When the base is cool, spray with a mat sealer.

Pillows and couch

Step 6. Create the setting for the Sultan to sit upon. I used charity shop neckties to create the various textures and colours for the pillows. Also miniature carpets were cut up for the pillows and base.



Dress your doll

Step 7. Paint the shoes with flat black

You will need

- Wood base
- Gold metallic polymer clay
- Stencil grid
- Coarse paint brush
- Artist pastels
- Sealer spray
- Porcelain doll's house doll
- Pipe cleaners, florist tape, and cotton balls for doll assembly
- Paint for doll's shoes
- Scissors
- Straight pins
- Aleene's Original Tacky Glue
- Curved glue dispenser
- Needle and thread
- Ruler
- Materials, laces, silk ribbon, feather, rhinestones, and trims
- Tweezers
- Zap-A-Gap Super Glue
- Corsage pin
- Plant mister filled with distilled water
- Chalk
- Paper to print pattern
- No-hole bead pearls, and gold beads
- Cotton bud
- Clear fingernail polish
- Various miniatures to fill the scene

nail polish. I purchased a female doll that was converted into a man doll with Fimo, facial hair, and a padded stomach.

Step 8. Assemble your doll, using more padding in the construction process on his stomach. Do not worry if your doll has a female chest because his stomach will be pushed up to form rolls on his torso. Think of a fat Sultan.

Harem pants

Step 9. Cut out the two pant pieces from your silk material.

Step 10. Seal the edges of the silk material with some clear fingernail polish or glue.

Step 11. Fold each pant leg in half, with the right sides together.



Step 12. Sew or glue a seam, from the hem to the crotch of the pants.



Step 13. Slide on the left pant leg and glue on the doll's leg/fat tummy. Your doll will most likely have a different

size stomach. So if my base pattern is too large for your individual doll, simply glue a few pleats in the waistband to take up room.

Step 14. Take your right pant leg, and carefully turn the edge of the front and the back centre seam (see the pattern) to the wrong side.

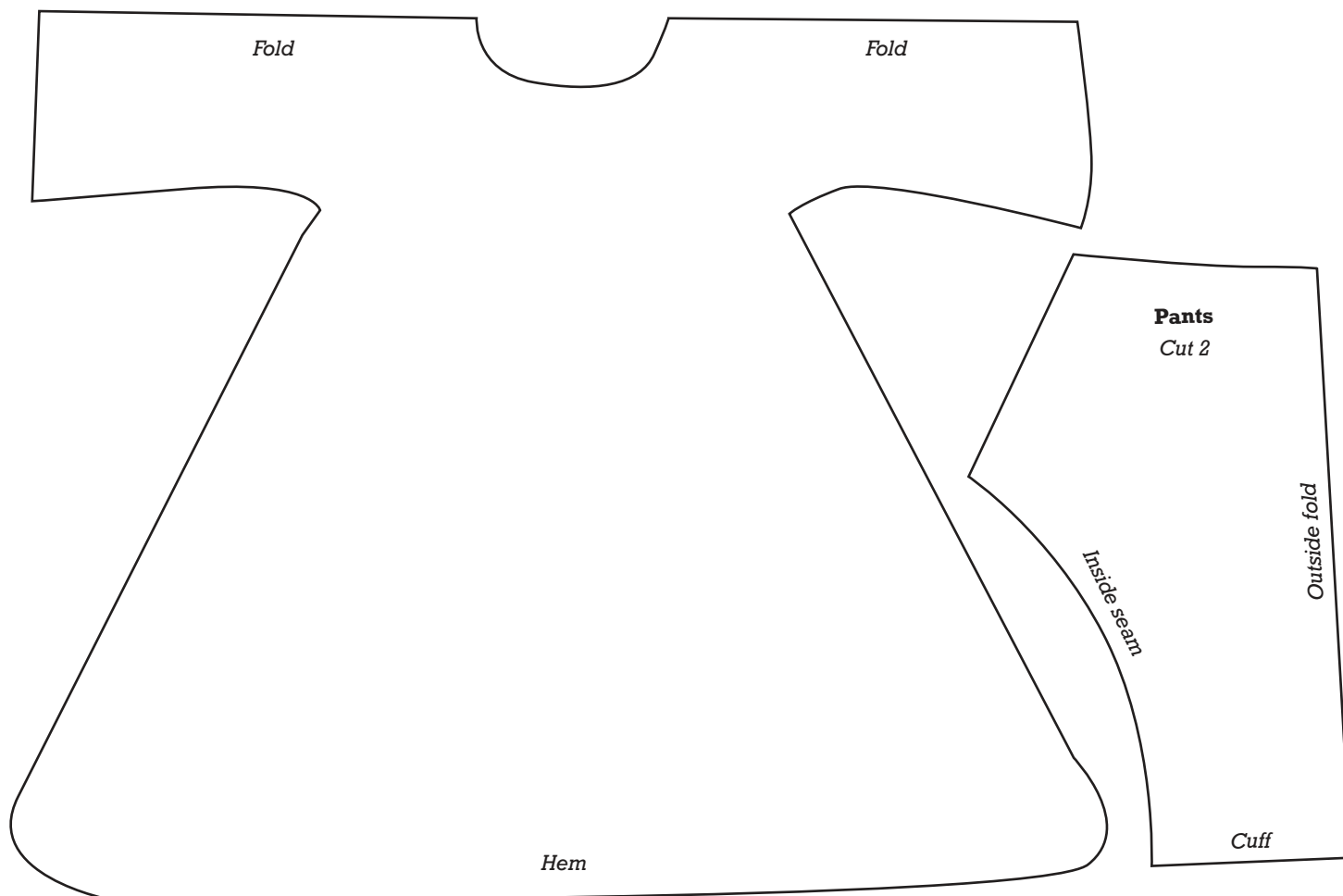
Step 15. Slide the right pant leg on the doll and glue on.

Step 16. Glue a small piece of matching silk ribbon around the pant cuff.

Under sleeves

Step 17. Glue the pipe cleaners into your porcelain doll's arms. Slide the arms TEMPORARILY into the doll's torso, check the length and cut off any excess. Wrap the arms with white florist tape for realistic bulk.

Step 18. Glue wide silk ribbon around the wrists for a contrasting cuff.





Step 19. Decorate the cuffs, or use metallic nail art stickers for an exotic decoration.

Under robe

Step 20. Glue a strip of silk ribbon from his stomach, around neck and back to stomach to form a false shirt front.



Step 21. Glue the silk ribbon around his waist for a belt base.

Step 22. Glue on the contrasting decorative beads or trim, on top of his belt.

Sultan's robe

Step 23. Cut out the robe pattern from the printed cotton material.

Step 24. With the right sides together, sew from the hem to the cuff.

Step 25. Turn the robe right side out.

Step 26. Lay your finished robe on top of the contrasting robe material. Trace the bottom edge and 3" of side width. Cut the contrasting material out.



Step 27. With the right sides of the robe/contrasting material together, glue or sew the bottom hem.



Step 28. Turn the robe right side out and glue the bottom side edges of the robe over the lining to finish.

Step 29. Put the robe on the Sultan, and pin/drape his folds in place. I used Super Glue to adhere my doll to the couch/pillows.

Be sure to leave room for the Sultan's wife to sit on one side of the Sultan (she is kneeling on the floor and leaning up on his couch).

Decoration



Step 30. Now for the fun part, decorations! Glue on the trim, beads, and rhinestones as you desire.

I have also added a dirk into his waistband for added contrast. In the close-up photo you can see all the beading I added to the basic trim.

Turban



Step 31. To create the Sultan's turban, find a piece of embroidered cotton material and glue it around his head.



Step 32. Shape the turban with your fingers and glue in place.

Step 33. Decorate the turban as desired and add a curled parrot feather. If you do not have a pet bird at home, try to find a local pet shop and pick up feathers from between their cages or on the floor.

I hope you will join in on creating my miniature Arabian fantasy. Be ready to make a beautiful addition to this scene in next month's DHW!



LUNDBY FROG HOUSE AT PARTY TIME

BY SANDRA HARDING

Although Rita Ross has since added other houses to her Lundby collection, this Gothenburg Frog House was her first buy in May 2017, and was "the house that started her Lundby fever" (her words).

Rita is now married with two grown-up sons and lives in Eisenberg Rheinland Pfalz in Germany and, apart from all things Lundby, her other hobby is motorcycling.

The Frog House, as it's called, was made in Sweden at the same time as a children's book was produced, called *Salame & Signor* which was about a frog family. Obviously, the house had to reflect that and a special wallpapered room was created, which luckily still survives in Rita's house.

Rita loves to buy old Lundby furniture and it gives her pleasure to grant it a new lease of life by mending, sanding or painting, and each piece is always given a nice place to live. Rita considers that the most beautiful room is the forest tapete room, which is the room with the lovely woodland effect

on the back wall. The brown furniture in this room is a limited edition set by Lundby, and there were only 500 pieces made I am told. Rita has made most of the curtains and decorated the lights in most of the rooms.

The family living here also love this room. They are Aunt Lily and Uncle Albert, then Grandpa Robert and

Grandma Marie, and luckily both couples also have their own beautiful rooms which is just as well as there is a party going on in the house.

Mind you, they are all young at heart, and in fact grandpa keeps popping downstairs to have another little glass of something not approved by Marie. He is also wondering who all these people are anyway and insists on calling all the men Dave and they are too polite to argue. Robert assumes that they are friends of their son and daughter who are currently visiting with their adorable new baby.

It is quite hard to keep track of this happy foursome, who like to keep popping up whenever they see a camera, and insist on rushing around the house to make sure they are in shot every time. Luckily they all attend the local gym three times a week and swim regularly, so they're pretty fit for oldies.

I think this is a delightful home, and the occupants and guests all seem to enjoy it too – well done Rita, another happy family.



Mark's modern home is built with views in mind

Structures artist Mark Turpin returns to his roots as a contemporary miniature architect in his latest stunning four storey creation full of clean lines and spacious windows

BY DEB WEISSLER. PHOTOS BY MARK TURPIN

Living along the coast of Southern California, one of Mark Turpin's favourite apartments was in an old Colonial building, originally a hotel, which exuded charm. He loved its creaky floors and stairs and while his cosy apartment was filled with overstuffed furniture and books everywhere, he also coveted the home of friends who lived up the coast in Pacific Palisades.

Both places enjoyed ocean views but in stark contrast to his own bachelor pad, their contemporary home was all about clean lines and surfaces. Mark dreamed of bringing this minimalist feeling to a miniature structure, where rooms were open and bright and where one could imagine soft ocean breezes wafting through the house. He named his latest house Palisades for the expansive feeling he experienced at that time and place.

"I began working on the design while I was finishing up Birch Hill (DHW 322), which was one of two new traditional houses

"In between, I wanted to do something contemporary, along the lines of my earlier structure called Watermark, but with more colours and layers. After three possible design concepts, the third plan appealed most to me because of the mix of stone and glass and the corner windows."

Mark wanted the house's footprint to be as small as possible, so making it tall and narrow was the best way to fit

more rooms into less square footage. He planned all the rooms and staircases first and so Palisades is one of the few houses where Mark started with the floor plans rather than the facade and elevations.

"The exterior was inspired by older moderns that feature corner windows, and also by newer modern houses that have updated colours and materials. For example, Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater has wonderful functional corner windows with painted frames, and layers of rooms on horizontal planes grounded by enormous vertical structural support. In contrast, today's new moderns, and many creative renewals of classic modern houses, feature assorted concrete finishes, various window configurations, smooth stonework, bold new colours and medium to dark stained wood. I was drawn to the contrasting horizontal/vertical lines of Fallingwater, but I wanted to do something taller, with a specific blend of colours and smooth surfaces, including more glass."

Mark envisioned two or three settings where Palisades would ideally be sited: on a bluff overlooking the ocean; perched high up in a canyon; or sitting above a river, where the back of the house would be tucked into a hillside and the front looking over a peaceful view of valleys or hills. Of course its future owner can choose their own dream locale. Dramatic landscape or a serene setting, Palisades will be sur-





Above: Close-up of Mark's beautifully crafted and detailed windows.



rounded by the natural world.

As with most of Mark's structures, this house is sold unfurnished, but he can recommend several talented artists who work in modern and contemporary who can produce appropriate lighting, furnishings, sculptures, and artwork. The house is not currently wired but the chimney column is accessible from every room and will facilitate wiring.

Now that we have admired the soaring exterior, let's step inside and let Mark take us on a tour.

Palisades has two entrances. One is on the ground floor leading directly into the kitchen and optional office space. The main entrance or front door is upstairs on the first floor. There is a

three-story entry hall with a skylight. Left of the entry is the double-height living room; to the right of the entry is the dining room. The living and dining rooms share a double fireplace. The living room has two-story corner window walls that slide open, in the tradition of modern house architects from the 1960s like Richard Neutra, who brilliantly used opening panels and window walls to let in the light and air.

Above the dining room is a media or family room, which also has a fireplace and overlooks the living room. Above that is the master bedroom with fireplace; the master bathroom is above the living room and includes access to a rooftop terrace over the living room. The ground floor has

Above: *Palisades as viewed from the back. A single glass stairwell links all four floors.*

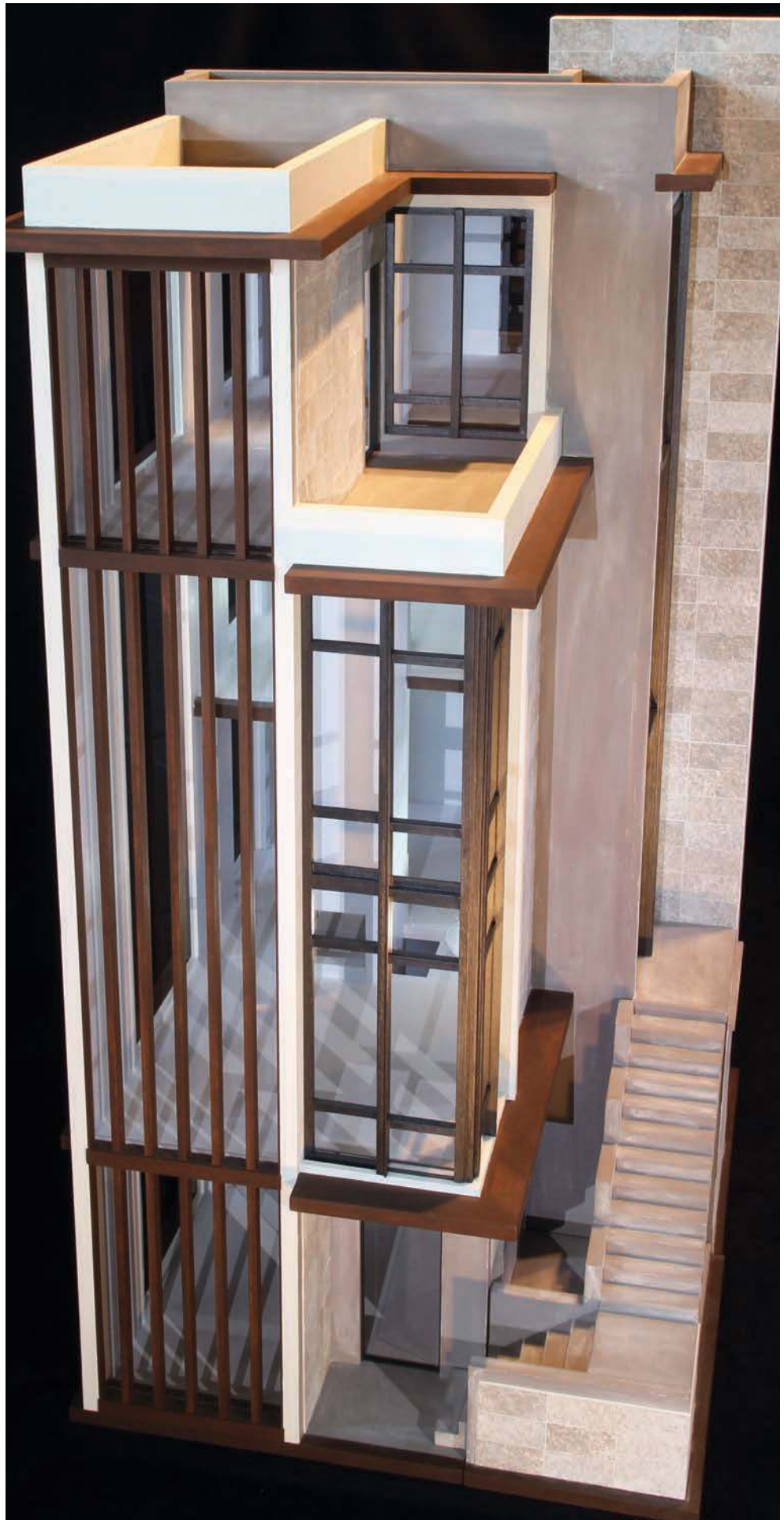
Far right: *A view from slightly above the Palisades.*

space for a kitchen beneath the dining room, a bathroom beneath the entry, and an office or second bedroom beneath the living room. Palisades could be a multi-functional home with the office on the ground floor with its own entrance. A four-story stacked staircase connects all of the levels and features corner windows, as do many of the rooms. The roof includes space for a skylight above the entry hall and another skylight above the narrow hallway connecting the master bedroom and bathroom.



The base and floors of Palisades are made of solid Birch plywood. The walls are solid clear pine. The window frames are made from poplar and basswood. The stones are handmade using illustration board. The windows are 1/16" thick clear acrylic. Most of the rooms have 9" ceilings, with 18" in the living room, 26" in the entry hall, and 36" in the main stair hall. The overall dimensions are 29.5" wide, 20" deep, and 41" high. Overall, Palisades has over 1200 square inches of living space to decorate.

Asked what there is about contemporary design that speaks to him, Mark has this to say: "I like the comfort of traditional houses, but I also like the freedom of contemporary design. The





Left: Realistic window reflections makes Palisades come alive.



rules are different and fewer. I don't think contemporary houses or rooms have to be cold or unwelcoming. In fact, their bright, airy rooms can be very inviting and refreshing. Style af-

fects our moods, and experimenting with different styles in miniature is a lot of fun.

"Contemporary designs can include different shapes and configurations of

rooms. As with full scale houses, high ceilings in a miniature house are not always practical or typical, but they do add a certain something not found in ordinary rooms. I don't think of it as wasted space, because the extra space is what gives the feeling that there is room to grow and expand, room to breathe."

One of Mark's clients thought she had seen it all and was finished with collecting miniatures until she spotted one of his contemporary structures. She quickly realised there were additional, exciting ways to experience miniatures and she was seeing something she had never considered before. Another collector was inspired to create a mini neighbourhood of houses in all different styles.

"I'm hearing from lots of people who are new to miniatures, so it appears the hobby is not shrinking (no pun intended) but expanding," Mark reflects. "There is a new generation of collectors emerging, and they have an extremely wide variety of interests in terms of style. Younger hobbyists want to create spaces that are similar to where they live or will live in reality. As with any storytelling, the author, in this case the collector or maker, is creating something very personal."

For Mark, the allure of models and miniatures is compelling and comprehensive; a three-dimensional art form that can be explored from every angle. He enjoys staging his houses on turntables. As the light changes throughout the day the experience of three-dimensional art changes, too. These subtle visual differences are only a small part of the interactive experiences we enjoy when it comes to making and collecting miniatures as art.



LITTLE LINKS:

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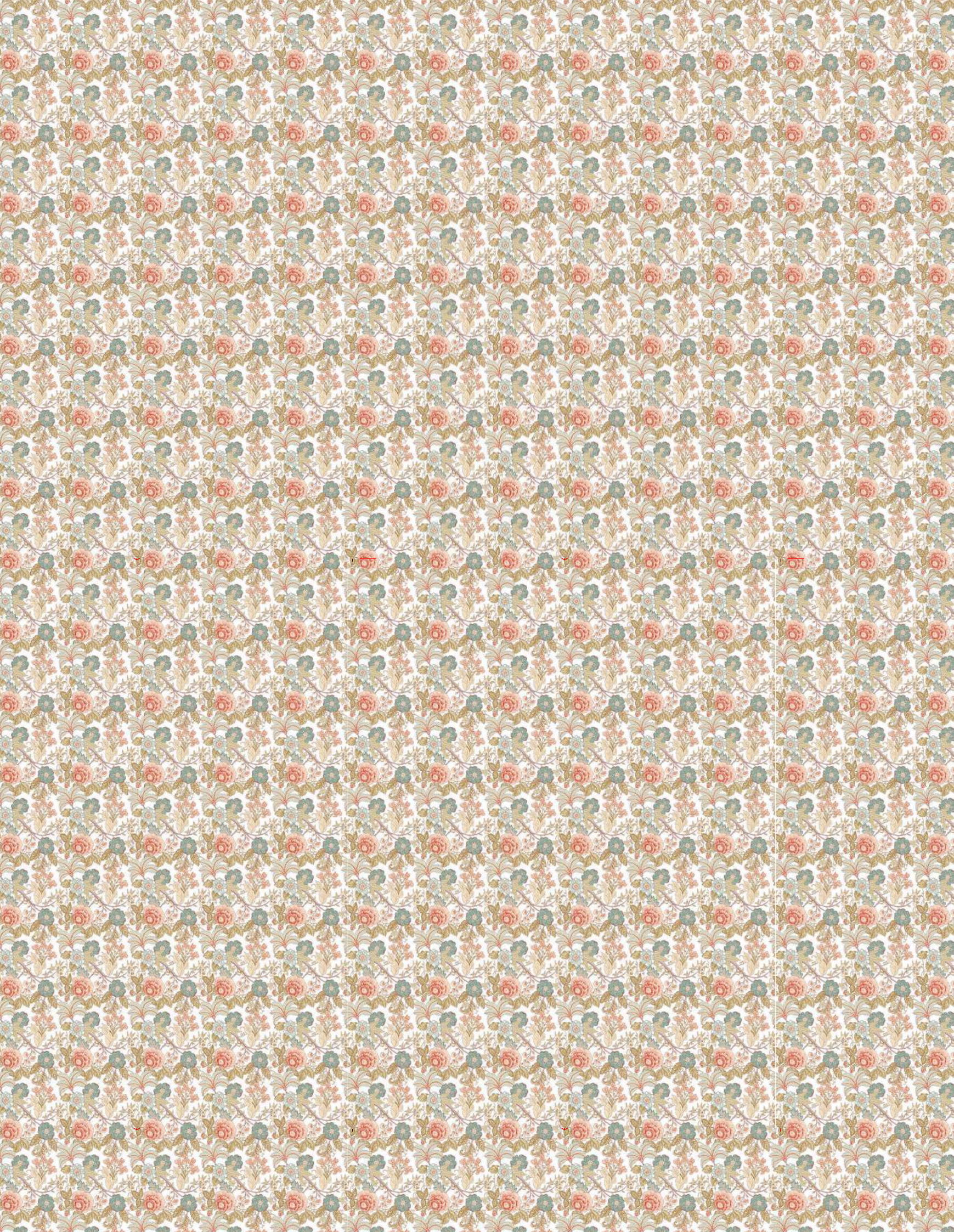
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SMALL TALK

WE TALK TO READER NINA EARY ABOUT HER LIFE IN MINIATURES

Hi Nina. Lovely to chat with you. We hear you make quite a lot of different things. I make just about anything that adorns a doll's house or miniature scene. I work mostly in twelfth scale, but also do 1/48th and 1/24th scale.

What have you got on the go at the moment? Currently I am working on applying fur to small resin animals, such as dogs, cats and wildlife. I also am sculpting dolls, fairies and mermaids although I specialise in porcelain dinnerware, teapots and teacups. I also do miniature aquariums with LED lights and hand-sculpted fish.

Do you have a house? I have three doll's houses in each scale so I can better cater to my clients' needs and wants. I'm not a 'builder' per se, as my 1/24th scale farmhouse was gifted to me. However, I did build my 1/48th modern house from a kit and expanded it. I was very honoured to have my three-storey twelfth scale Victorian (with a modern twist) 'The Lilac' (above) featured here in DHW a couple of years ago.

How does your husband feel about your hobby? My husband is very supportive of my career and is my best critic. If it passes his inspection then I know that my clients and customers will be happy with whatever I'm creating for them.

When did your mini madness start? When I was a little girl. My mother would take me to



a wonderful store, called Mr Peepers, in Seattle, which was one of the largest doll's house and miniatures stores here in the Pacific Northwest. Sadly it has closed, but I could spend hours there, looking at all the amazing miniatures. I would also make fairy gardens while my mother gardened.

And how did you get into minis as a career? I was injured on my job and could no longer work outside of home. Through my faith I felt an inspiration and calling to pursue what I love, so began creating miniatures and fairy garden items. I started my company, Nina's Mini Creations.

What do you do when not in mini mode? I enjoy spending time with my husband, family and five granddaughters, as well as travelling, camping, gardening and cooking.

Do you spend too much money on your hobby? I don't spend outrageous amounts of money on miniatures but my one indulgence is playing with adult twelfth and 1/6th scale dolls and probably spend more than I should on apparel for them.

Have you tried other hobbies? My mum was a huge crafter, so I enjoyed painting, paper mache, sewing, macrame and all types of papercrafts. But none has satisfied me more than creating miniatures. I think what I love most about it is seeing my work in my customers' doll's houses.

● We want to feature more readers in Small Talk and we would love to hear about your life in minis and your passion for making or collecting, or both. Just send a quick email to richard@ashdown.co.uk to express an interest.

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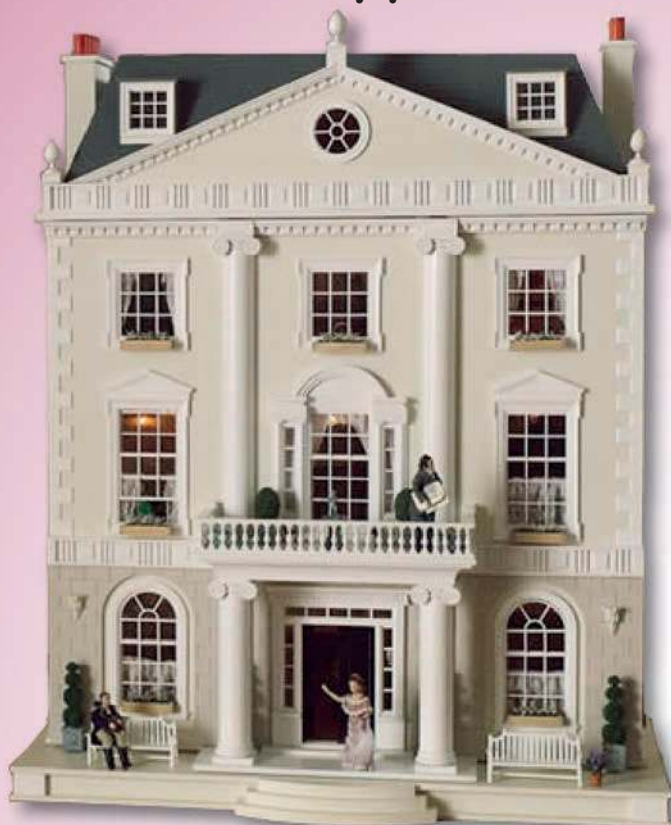
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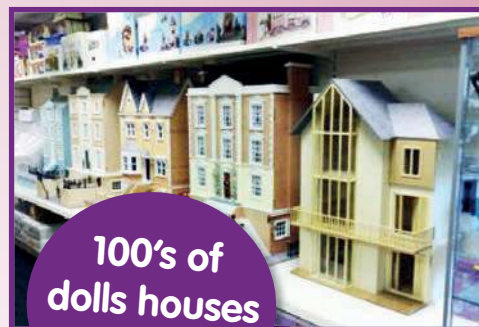
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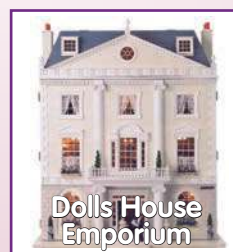
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