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welcome

I rather think the definition of a miniaturist is a woman who finishes her house in October and realises her husband left her in May.

It sums up the blind passion and unerring commitment that this hobby can often generate. You can shut the door and leave real life behind as you immerse yourself in your mini world.

And perhaps, as events outside our doll's houses look a little bleak, there's never been a better time to retreat into a busy Victorian kitchen, stroll down an Italian street, or visit a vicarage full of the chatter of five daughters in a 'nice part' of London.

You can do all three in this issue. We'll also keep you busy making everything from an easy pipecleaner carpet and quick handbags to a more challenging wooden basket and do have a go at sanding and soldering your way to creating a lovely metal saucepan.

We also drop in on a marvellous bakery where the lessons aren't about making buns, but rather how to add atmosphere to your room box. There's another lesson too.

Jan Yinger, the creator of the scene where you can practically smell the bread, told us: "I feel that in a sometimes harsh world any little thing I can do to brighten someone's day with a happy memory or a hint of humour in my scenes will allow them to enter a happy mini world."

Jan said that quite a while ago, but never has it seemed more pertinent. Enjoy the issue and immerse yourself in that "happy mini world".

Richard.



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It has long been an axiom of mine that the little things are infinitely the most important.

Arthur Conan Doyle

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Knit a tiny dress for a beautiful little baby in colour of your choice

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We chat with reader Cherrell Knowles about her life in miniature



HOUSE HUNT



Find the little house hidden inside. Last issue it appeared on page 20.



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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.

An Italian newsstand filled with memories

Enjoy the exquisite work of miniature artist Elize C. van Es as you browse through this twelfth scale replica of an Italian newsstand from memories of past holidays

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

Spend a little time drinking in the stunning level of detail portrayed in this Italian Newsstand on a piece called Roman Street created by Elize C. van Es from the Netherlands. This is only one example of a variety of works she has made over the last few years that captivated me as uniquely detailed precision miniature nirvana. I was happily enchanted with her work, so I wanted to know more about her to share with DHW readers.

Elize loves making many kinds of miniature scenes and using different techniques along the way. She really loves a challenge. She will see something that inspires her, and think, "Am I able to make that?" It never seems to matter if it's one detailed item or a complete room box. If she is inspired by it, she will give it a try.

When it works, it works. If not, that's okay too. She learns from the moments of success as well as the moments of failure. Experimenting with recycled art is her delight and passion. Making something out of nothing purchased, simply makes her happy. Her first encounter with miniatures was in 1990 through a craft book featuring cardboard projects. The referenced catalogue featured a book with a miniature scene. Elize had never seen anything like it.

The featured book was DIY, and



fairly easy to make, but it was the miniatures that caught her eye. Out of curiosity, she ordered her first magazine in September 1990. From that moment on, she was hooked.

In 2005 she started her own business and didn't have time for miniatures. Fast forward to 2015, when Elize stepped back into the miniature world again slowly, taking baby steps. Instagram and the work of fellow miniaturists have been great source of inspiration and given her a special drive to exceed her own expectations.

Elize is an independent business consultant for non-profit organisations and social enterprises. She has her own little world, where she escapes to when she is feeling creative. Her mother, who sadly passed away recently, was the most enthusiastic about the miniatures that Elize would create. Whenever there was a party or gathering at their home, her mother would gather everyone to the doll's house cabinet and turn up the lights. She also loved reading every one of Elize's Instagram posts.

Elize's mum suffered from cancer. During the last weeks of life, she spent time in a hospice but asked that Elize bring multiple room boxes she had made for her parents, so she could show them to the nurses, doctors and volunteers. Her mum was so proud



of her daughter. She loved that Elize seemed to have inherited this creative talent from her dad. For Elize, this is a precious memory, and it always makes her smile.

Combining a full-time job, running a home, and being a miniaturist at heart can take its toll. Some would say that "it's just a hobby," but we miniature lovers know better. It's a passion. It's therapeutic. The community has come together through channels like Instagram, You-Tube, individual blogs, and other social media. We all admire each other and encourage and advise on a daily basis.

For 10 years, Elize didn't have any time for miniatures. During the last three years that has all changed. She has rediscovered how to make some time for herself and finds that she truly loves making miniatures. Tiny things make her happy and making them clears her mind. Free therapy!

Her inspiration is everywhere she looks. She can see a pretty picture, walk outside and see a beautiful day, look at work from fellow miniaturists or just fall in love with one colour, an

Above: The room box shown in full.

Right: Postcards held in a wall rack and advertisement signs cover the facade.





Top left: Close details showing the aged brick and facade.

Above left: A tiny stool with cards beneath.

Left: Gorgeous rusted newspaper stand.

Below left: Newspapers and bundles filled with current news.

Above: A close-up showing various maps that are for sale at the newsstand.

impression or a subject. Elize calls herself eclectic because she admires all styles, and she loves fusing them together from a broad range of sources.

This artist cannot imagine ever parting with the miniature scenes in a book she made for her dad and her mum. Through her miniature work she feels like she has been a mini carpenter, a painter, an architect, a designer. There is an undeniable delight the first time you work with wood, cardboard, fabric, paint, clay... the lists and the adventures are endless. And that delight only grows as time goes on.

Once you decide that you WILL make the time for miniatures in your life, the next obstacle is having enough space. Elize has a very nice room to work in, but cutting, sawing, painting, spraying all in one room can be dif-

ficult. She would love to make more houses and more room boxes, but where will she put them? This is where she may decide to sell in the future. But she is not out of space yet!

Elize acknowledges and enjoys the worldwide community of people who love miniatures. There are art lovers, DIY lovers, collectors, sellers, and buyers. There is space for everyone. Elize intends to keep sharing DIY tips and enjoying work from other miniaturists.

She is a strong enthusiast of DIY mini recycle projects. There is so much you can make with little means, and items you will usually find in your own home. Being a miniaturist does not have to cost a lot of money. For Roman Street Elize bought a roombox at Ikea. She wanted to make a scene inside but had no specific plan at that time. The first layout she made from cardboard reminded her of the Roman streets in the Trastevere district where she has spent many happy holidays. From that moment on, she had a theme and it just blossomed, so that she could put her memories into this little room box.

Roman Street is 100 per cent recycled art. Everything you see is



Above: There are many post cards to choose from.

handmade or recycled. Not that it's important, but Elize thinks the total project cost her approximately £12 for print paper, ink, glue, and cardboard. The rest was time, love, and patience. Elize is only too happy to share with others how any part of this scene was achieved. She loves helping others who love making miniatures.

Elize will admit to loving the ambience of this piece. She was satisfied when she felt it captured enough warmth and charm of the Trastevere streets. Creating the wall, pavement, and the Italian newspaper stand was both a labour of love and full elation when the Italian newspaper stand was complete and exactly as she had seen it in her mind's eye.

Some of the unconventional parts that were used to bring "Roman Street" to life were cork, wires, staples and powdered cinnamon. It required some patience and precision to cut out all of the postcards, maps, and books. But to Elize, this was a pleasant Zen evening activity. We hope you enjoy looking at Roman Street and understanding the process.



Miniature show

We head into Spring with a look at some of the fabulous and colourful creations of top miniature artists



◀ Laura Crain

A hand-painted shabby chic vanity with accessories in twelfth scale.

● Dollhouse Land - Laura Crain

Phone: 001-949-496-9841

Email: lauracrain2@aol.com

Facebook: facebook.com/Dollhouse-Land



▲ Luned Davis

A pretty twelfth scale silk hat adorned with masses of flowers and a lovely rose pink silk hat covered with net and decorated with pretty flowers. Then it was finished with some tiny pearl beads.



▲ Tatyana Orlova

Handmade doll's house miniature dress and bag for Heidi Ott doll.

◀ Kathe Knitch

A French style vanity in a soft Robin's Egg Blue with gold details. The mirror is real glass and both the wooden vanity and mirror have been antiqued.



Wcase



▲ Olga Uryvskaya

A lush skirt and slim waist accented by thin straps – that's what distinguishes this elegant style. Olga makes these dresses with the finest yarn. Each dress has miniature buttons as she pays attention to every detail.

► Tuula Palojarvi

This beautiful outfit is one-of-a-kind. Tuula said: "I love to play with colours. When beginning an outfit, I don't have any plans. I just start to work and let the magic happen."



◀ Kathy Tepper

Lady's display table is by Kathy Tepper. The bird painting is by Rainbow Hand.

● Brian (Rainbow Hand) & Kathy Tepper
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▲ Áurea Segura

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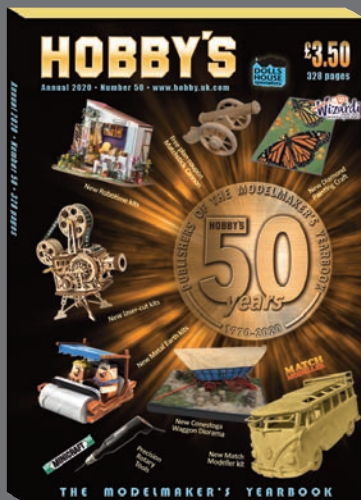
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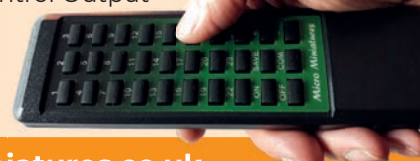
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Rare find was actually built by the founders

Rebecca's excitement reached fever pitch when she discovered a house that was put together and decorated by the couple who started the Dolls House Emporium

BY REBECCA MICALLEF

Like a few of you already know I am quite the collector and fan of old Dolls House Emporium houses. I love searching for those that have been discontinued and are rare to come by.

A few years ago I came across a lovely house. The only information that I had was the amount of rooms and the dimensions along with one black and white picture of an old catalogue. It measured 915 mm long, 380 mm deep and 790 mm tall and it was called the Tudor Manor. My heart skipped a beat as I knew straight away what it was, or thought I did. I was 100 per cent sure that it was one of those extremely rare

finds — and one I would never find in kit form.

After purchasing it I turned to my number one source for information — my dear friend Amy Purser, daughter of the founders of the Dolls House Emporium. She confirmed that it was indeed the Tudor Manor designed by her father, and one of the two first kits ever made back in 1979.

Incredibly, she also revealed my new house was actually built by her father and decorated by her mother Jackie Lee. The wallpaper and flooring are still the original, with a chimney handmade by Adam Purser. Mine has



the number 129 while on the other side there are the initials T.M. for Tudor Models. The Dolls House Emporium started life as Tudor Models

After finding out so much about this particular doll's house there was no way I was going to renovate or change anything. I kept the original decoration just the way the founders of DHE built it.

Tudor Manor is not twelfth scale as the company originally made smaller scales. However, the rooms are big enough to fit one twelfth furniture and accessories. I opted to furnish in a 1930's style.

The first room to tackle was the main bedroom, so I contacted my friend Elizabeth from Elf Miniatures to make a custom bedroom.

Together we have designed all the furniture pieces and Elf miniatures now sell the bedroom set as one of their pieces online.

The sitting room and dining room are full of pieces that have to be included if you want a Thirties look. I have added a few of my own hand painted pieces such as the portable gramophone, figurines and fireplace.

The tiny kitchen proved to be a challenge with its dimensions. I have had a few kits from Jane Harrop and these fitted in perfectly. My amazing father built







“It has such a sentimental value as it was built by the people who inspired me to take up a hobby that has grown and flourished into a passion that I can't live without.”

and painted the Moffat electric cooker as well as the ascot gas water heater. The last piece I added was the vintage washing machine by American Miniatures.

One of my favourite rooms is the tiny bathroom. In the 1930s most of the bathroom accessories used to be colourful. I thought that it was going to be difficult to find a ceramic coloured bathroom set let alone one that would fit the room. However, I came across this pink version that, surprisingly, was quite an old set in an immaculate condition. The dainty set was marked with the word “Givjoy”. I have searched

and found that Givjoy was a toy company established in 1935 but due to the war it closed 10 years later in 1945. No wonder the bathroom set fitted the era perfectly.

Finally I think the nursery is quite a cute room. I painted the furniture myself and have also hand painted some of the accessories. The lovely family residing in the house was custom made by doll maker Susan Emsell.

Another feature of the doll's house which makes it unique is its spiral staircase which was hand built and goes around the fireplace.

I have to say that it is an honour to

have such a prestigious doll's house in my collection. It has such a sentimental value as it was built by the people who inspired me to take up a hobby that has grown and flourished into a passion that I can't live without.

● To see this and other houses in Rebecca's collection you can visit her museum, My Miniature World, in Malta.



LITTLE LINKS:

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Elegant vicarage made with bricks and carpets

Vicarage is set in a nice part of London where the Rev Vere lives with his wife and five daughters. It's a comfortable home full of fabulous fabrics and furnishings

BY DHW REPORTER

When an insurance policy matured Marilyn Marsh knew exactly what she would spend the money on — a twin-gabled house she had seen at Miniatura.

She had been eyeing up some beautiful houses at the show, but thought it would be years before she could afford one. Then came the windfall and an immediate order for a Len Lewis house.

That was many years ago but here we take another look at the wonderful job Marilyn did on the house she filled with carefully co-ordinating carpets and curtains she made.

The outside is equally impressive with Marilyn painstakingly creating the exterior from 13,000 individual bricks.

She said: "The house had to be different from all my others so I looked at Grandad's Toys real bricks, and used their London yellow brick slips. The idea for the design came to me when I went to order my bricks, 13,000 in total. He didn't have enough so I returned with only 750 bricks - 500 of the lighter colour and 250 of the contrast. While the order for the rest came through I experimented with little designs."

The floors in the kitchen, porch and conservatory were finished with Richard Stacey tiles. Inside the house the mouldings and floorboards were by Anglesey Dolls Houses and the black



and white floor tiles in the hall and dining room were from Sussex Crafts.

Most of the furniture was by Masters Miniatures. The curtains, carpets, tablecloths and most of the pictures were made by Marilyn

herself.

When asked about the family in the house, Marilyn explained: "The vicar is sort of modelled after my father - he had to put up with all daughters!"

She then went on to tell us the story: "The vicar is Rev Percy Vere and he and his wife Gwendolyn, affectionately known as Gwennie, live in the Vicarage in a 'nice' part of London - Chelsea or Hampstead perhaps - with their five children, all girls, and Rev Vere's Mum.

"Faith is the oldest daughter at nearly 18 and will soon be getting married. Next comes Hope, 14, who is out at the moment then Charity, 10, who has been up in the nursery with nursemaid Fanny helping look after baby Joy who is nearly two. They are waiting for Nanny to come back from her walk with six-year old Patience (who isn't very aptly named at all!).

"Unfortunately Charity is going to be in trouble as she has not been looking after the cat who is about to have the gold fish for supper.

"Downstairs in the kitchen Mrs Good the housekeeper is preparing afternoon tea for the family. It is cook's



afternoon off but she will be back later. Gwennie has just taken up a cup of tea to her mother-in-law Peggy. Her bed-sit is on the first floor next to the lounge used by Rev Vere as a waiting room for his more influential parishioners. This room is next to Percy's study. He is wondering whether to come out and see where his tea is but thinks he can hear voices and perhaps the housemaid or Gwennie will come in with it soon.

"On the first floor the twin bedroom is shared by Faith and Hope. When Faith gets married Charity is hoping she can move downstairs from the nursery where she shares a room with Nanny. Baby Joy cries a lot and Patience has her tantrums so it would be lovely to share with Hope. But she has to prove to everyone she is grown up enough!"

Marilyn spent many hours on the house: "When you get up at six in the morning to put a coat of paint on mouldings you have cut and primed well into the night before, just so you can glue them in place when you get home from work that night, you know you are consumed."

Prior to collecting doll's houses

Above: The porch beautifully sets off the front of the house and was just one of the features that Marilyn loved about Len Lewis's design. Now named *The Vicarage* the stained front door gives the house a very welcoming feel.



Top left: Grandma and the lady of the house take tea in grandma's room.

Above: When the sun shines, the family spend much of their time in the conservatory. Marilyn used a kit for the stained glass windows, although other windows in the house she hand-painted.

Far left: The outside is covered with London yellow brick slips from Grandad's Toys, with the pattern designed by Marilyn in a contrasting brick. The house took 13,000 individual bricks, each one glued in place, to give the house a totally different look to any of the others in Marilyn's collection.



Above: Marilyn's eye for colour and toning is reflected in every room of the house. Here the wallpaper colours of blues and pale browns are matched with her own design of carpet. The cabinet in the foreground was another from Masters Miniatures.

Above right: Even the lace curtains in the kitchen have been made by Marilyn, shown here behind the painted cabinet. On it is the cutlery tray she made at a club meet.

Below: Nanny and Patience have just returned from their walk in the park. Unfortunately Patience does not live up to her name, and has been very trying all afternoon.



Above: In her bed-sit on the first floor grandma, the vicar's mother, sits chatting to Gwendolyn, who has brought up her afternoon tea. The beautiful carpets in each room have been hand-made by Marilyn, each designed to match the décor and blend in with the overall colour scheme of the house. Changing from full-size tapestry work to miniatures was something that she found very easy, and many of the dolls have been traded for a carpet.





Top: Thoughtfully decorated, this bedroom is one of the prettiest in the house. The upholstery of the chair and stool reflect the colour in the flowered wallpaper and bed trimmings.

Right: In the kitchen Mrs Good the house-keeper shoos the cat away from in front of the warm range. She is preparing tea for the family as cook is away for the day. The kitchen floor tiles are by Richard Stacey. Lighting throughout the house is by Ray Storey

Bottom right: Wherever you look in the house there are beautifully worked pictures. This little sampler worked by Marilyn, has the name Peggy Sims 1847, nine years old at the bottom.

Marilyn had been interested in needlework, creating some of the most exquisite full-size tapestries and samplers. But she soon found she needed a new hobby. "I was running out of wall space for my tapestries but I didn't expect miniatures to take over my life."

Marilyn first became interested in doll's houses through a neighbour. "She kept dragging me down to the local shop, as her husband had made her a house. I knew that I couldn't make a house, but when my son Anthony returned from college, he



“I was running out of wall space for my tapestries but I didn't expect miniatures to take over my life.”





Above left: The stained glass windows in the conservatory give it a very Victorian feeling.

Above right: The Rev Percy Vere seeks peace and quiet in his study. Here he can escape from the women of the house, and concentrate on writing his next sermon. Most of the furniture throughout the house has been made by Masters Miniatures, including the bookcases in the study.

Left: Faith is the oldest daughter. She is nearly 18-years-old and soon to be married. Her dress is all ready for the big day, and she spends a few moments dreaming of her life ahead, knowing that very soon she will be the lady of her own house.

suggested he might be able to help me. I thought - not only have I got my son back to do things with but he is going to help me build my own house as well."

The first house was a kit with extra windows cut in the back, a staircase made to go up the side and a garden. Anthony put his A Level in Craft, Art and Technology to good use by doing all the woodwork.

When asked how many houses she



Above: Outside in the little garden, in front of the conservatory, the goldfish have become aware that the cat is looking for its supper.

Right: Most of the wallpapers have come from Dorking Dolls House Gallery, and each carpet Marilyn has stitched to match. The piano, stool and cabinet are the work of Masters Miniatures.

had Marilyn replied: "Do you count the ones still in their boxes? If not, there are ten, and the eleventh one is the little Brian Frost watermill which is my first 1/24th scale.

"I was going to order a fantasy house in twelfth scale but I'm running out of space."

The houses in Marilyn's collection are all individual, each one being set in a different period: "I had just finished my Victorian house and wanted to do a Georgian one, but my daughter was getting married and there was no way I could afford another. But I won that one," said Marilyn pointing to the large Georgian house in the corner of the room.

"It came at such a good time as a child I had been fostering had just left and I was really, really down. I had gone on the coach with the doll's house club to Miniatura in 1996, and whilst waiting to return home I had some time to kill. At the DHW stand I thought I would take out a subscription as I had promised myself one. There were a couple of forms to fill in plus an entry to the prize draw.



Unfortunately at the time I was unable to leave my telephone number so when the letter from Anglesey arrived saying I had won I couldn't believe it. I then opened my second envelope and there was a letter from DHW confirming the same. I couldn't believe it. You cannot imagine the boost it gave me."



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Mini bushel basket is a great addition to scenes

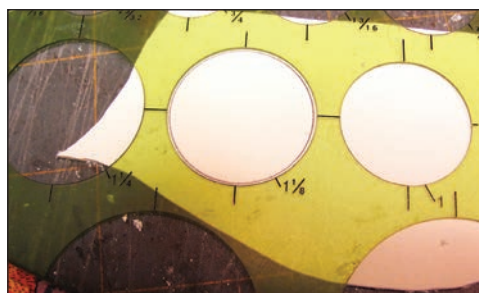
Kris shows you how, step-by-step, to create a realistic wooden tub that you can fill with all sorts of mini produce, and it will fit scenes from many periods

BY KRIS COMPASS

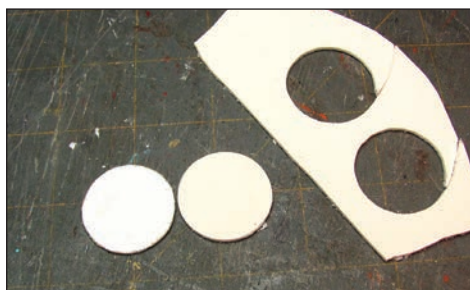
This month's tutorial is a bushel basket for all of your garden goodies. This is a full bushel, life-size it would measure: top diameter 18" (1 1/2"), bottom diameter 14 1/2" (1 3/16") and depth outside 12" (1"). The measurements in parentheses above are the twelfth scale measurements.



Step 1. Measure 1/8" marks on a strip of card stock. Cut a few 1/8" wide strips for the vertical slats of the basket. You are going to need 50, 1" tall vertical slats for the basket.



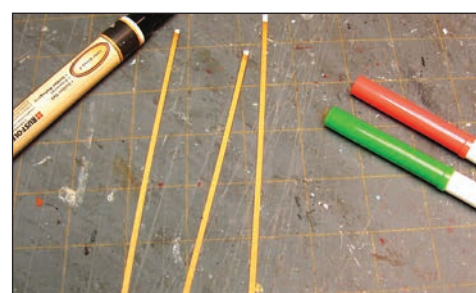
Step 2. On some scrap mount board, trace two 1 1/8" circles. Then cut the mount board circles out with your knife or small scissors.



Step 3. Smear some yellow carpenter's wood glue onto one circle and glue the two circles together. Keep the edges even.



Step 4. Now, measure 3/32" strips. These will be glued around the outside and inside of the basket. You will need enough for two tops, two middles, and one strip for the bottom outside of the basket. That's around 20" all together.



Step 5. I went ahead and stained the card stock strips with my touch-up stain marker. Hardware stores carry touch-up markers filled with stain.

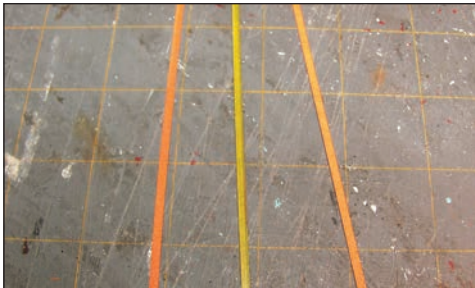
You will need

- Card stock
- Yellow carpenter's wood glue
- Mount/mat board
- Craft knife
- Circle template
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Touch-up markers filled with stain
- Coloured markers
- Needle tool or T-pin
- 28 gauge paddle wire
- 1/4" wide pliers
- Wire cutters

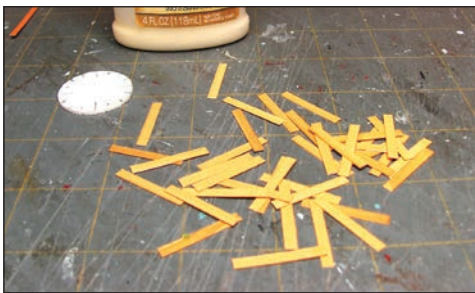


MINI MAKES

These will be in the paint department. Any brand will do. Craft stores also carry these. I chose a Golden Oak shade. You could also use coloured markers. Colour both sides of the card stock strips with this.



Step 6. I did not want my red and green horizontal rings to be too bright, so I stained them first and then coloured them so they would look old and worn.



Step 7. Measure and cut at least 50 vertical slats to 1" long from the 1/8" wide card stock.



Step 8. Use the yellow wood glue to glue the slats to the edge of the mount board circle. My circle took 25 of the slats.

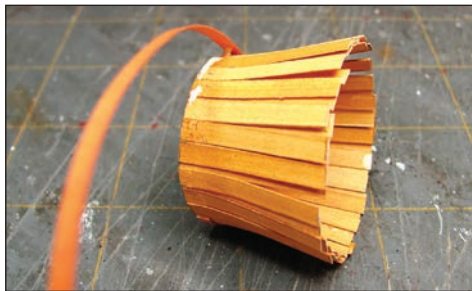
A word about this; we each cut things out a little differently than the next person. You may have to do some rearranging of the slats to fit 25 or 24. The slats should be either close together or touching one another.

Step 9. The next thing we need to do is glue the slats over the seam of the first layer of slats.

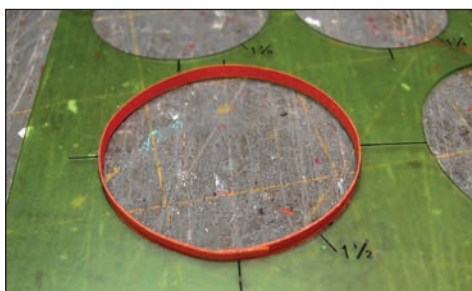
Step 10. You now have a double layer of slats around the circle. Let this dry a bit before continuing.



Step 11. Gently bend the slats out. The top should fit into the 1 1/2" circle from your template.



Step 12. Glue the first 3/32" strip around the bottom edge of the basket.



Step 13. Glue another 3/32" strip together so it fits into the 1 1/2" template hole. This is your top outside ring.



Step 14. I've got the basket on the bottom of the acrylic craft paint bottle (Apple Barrel, Delta, Folk Art). Dry fit the ring around the top of the basket. Push the slats out until the ring fits. You want the basket to sit evenly on the paint bottle.



Step 15. I took the ring off and applied wood glue to the ends of the slats. Press the top ring into the glue.



Step 16. Apply wood glue to the inside of the basket, at the top. Glue the inside ring onto the top of the basket.



Step 17. Apply wood glue to the middle of the basket with a toothpick and then glue the green ring onto the basket.

Step 18. Apply wood glue inside the basket, along the middle all the way around and glue another green ring inside the basket.



Step 19. After you have left the basket to dry a bit you can pierce two holes into each side for handles.

Step 20. The holes can be 1/4" apart and right under the top ring. Be sure to hold and brace the basket when you pierce the holes. Put your finger inside the basket. Be careful not to pierce your finger.

Step 21. I used 28 gauge paddle wire for the handles. Use pliers to shape the handles. They should also be 1/4" wide.



Step 22. Place the ends of the wire handles through the holes you made. Cut off the extra wire.



Step 23. Use the pliers to bend the ends up to secure the handles. Now it is ready to fill with some miniature produce.

SHOW DATES

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

MAY

SATURDAY 16 MAY

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Churchdown Community Centre,
Parton Road, Churchdown,
GLOUCESTER GL3 2JH

Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm

Organiser: MGM Fairs

KENSINGTON DOLLS HOUSE FAIR

Kensington Town Hall, Horton Street,
LONDON W8 7NX

Open: FRIDAY 15 - 11.00am - 6.00pm;

SATURDAY 16 - 10.00am - 5.00pm

Organiser: Kensington Dolls House
Festival

SUNDAY 31 MAY

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Festival Hall, Talbot Road, ALDERNEY
EDGE, Cheshire SK9 7HR

Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm

Organiser: MGM Fairs

JUNE

SUNDAY 7 JUNE

YORK DOLLS HOUSE FAIR

York Racecourse, YORK YO23 1EX

Open: 10.00am - 4.00pm

Organiser: Warners Exhibitions

ANTIQUÉ DOLLS HOUSE FAIR

Kensington Town Hall, Horton Street
LONDON W8 7NX

Open: 10.00am - 4.00pm

Organiser: Wendy's World

SATURDAY 13 JUNE

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

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

Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm

Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

SUNDAY 14 JUNE

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

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

Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm

Organiser: MGM Fairs

SUNDAY 21 JUNE

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Windmill Farm Hotel, Runcorn Road,
Whitby Road, LINCOLN LN6 3QZ

(on A460)

Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm

Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

SUNDAY 28 JUNE

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Tattersall Village Hall, 16 Lodge Road,
TATTERSHALL, Lincolnshire LN4 4LL

Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm

Organiser: MGM Fairs

ANTIQUÉ DOLLS HOUSE FAIR

Cobham Village Hall, Lushington Drive,
COBHAM, Surrey KT11 2LU

Open: 10.00am - 4.00pm

Organiser: Wendy's World

FAIR ORGANISERS:

Dolly's Daydreams: 01945 870160.

www.dollysdaydreams.com

E: dollysdaydreams@btinternet.com

Kensington Dollhouse Festival:

020 7812 9892

E: kdf@dollhousefestival.com

www.dollhousefestival.com

Little Priory Fairs:

www.littleprioryfairs.co.uk

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MGM FAIRS

MGM Fairs organise free Demonstrations, Mini-workshops and some exhibitions at their Dollhouse and Miniature Fairs.

- ☺ **Sunday 29 March 2020 - NEW FAIR**
Lyndhurst Community Centre, Main Car Park, **LYNDHURST**, Hants, SO43 7NY
- ☺ **Saturday 4 April 2020**
The Jubilee Hall, Congregational Church, Bowden Lane, **MARKET HARBOROUGH**, Leics, LE16 7JD
- ☺ **Saturday 18 April 2020**
Pudsey Civic Hall, Dawsons Corner, **PUDSEY, LEEDS**, LS28 5TA
- ☺ **Saturday 16 May 2020**
Churchdown Community Association Centre, Parton Road, Churchdown, **GLOUCESTER**, Glos, GL3 2JH
- ☺ **Sunday 31 May 2020**
Festival Hall, Talbot Road, **ALDERLEY EDGE**, Cheshire, SK9 7HR
- ☺ **Sunday 14 June 2020 - NEW FAIR**
The Royal Hotel, 1 South Parade, **WESTON SUPER MARE**, BS23 1JP

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Faces on a train inspire this talented doll maker

Let's get to know Julie Campbell as we are invited into the quiet life of this enchanting doll maker. Her dolls all have a twinkle in their eye and are full of character

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

Julie Campbell is a highly gifted miniature doll maker from the North East. She has loved miniatures since she was a small child and did have her own doll's house at a young age. However, it wasn't until her children started school that she was given a modern doll's house kit, geared for serious collectors. Up until then, Julie had been unaware of miniature shows or magazines that covered her favourite creative topic.

It was only when she found a collection of doll's house magazines at a garage sale that suddenly the wide world of miniatures opened up for her. She started making her own miniatures because she soon found out she had a natural aptitude for it.

Having a husband who enthusiastically encourages her creative pursuits is a blessing, but she did tell us that he gives her constructive criticism as well as generous accolades.

Two young granddaughters are another blessing. One of them strongly admires what grandma does for a living and wishes that when she grows up, it will also be her profession. This little child loves to peek inside grandma's doll's houses and see every one of the new characters as they start to come to life.

By 2009 this amazing artist was awarded IGMA status. For those who are unaware, this means she is one



of the few members of the International Guild of Miniature Artisans. This prestigious award is only given to a select number of artists in any given year. One look at her work makes you understand this wonderful achievement.

Julie admits that it's very easy to get lost in her miniature world while losing time in the process, especially when she is preparing for a show.

Most of the time this single-minded concentration works exceptionally well for her. Preparing for a multi-day show can be quite challenging as the actual creation process for one doll can be as long as four full days. She is very grateful that she does not have to travel for work. All of the magic is done in her spare bedroom at home, which has actually become the favourite room in her home.

Julie finds her inspiration in all aspects of her life. She can be reading a book or watching a film and suddenly the idea for a character doll is formed instantly.

Wherever she goes she finds herself looking carefully at faces for interesting expressions. She may see someone on a train, or simply walking past her on a street and the image forms and the person who just blinked through her life has become the inspiration for a doll without ever realising it.

To date, Julie hasn't kept any of her dolls, although there was one grumpy



old fellow who she does regret parting with, and he has stayed in her heart.

Julie, who exhibits at Kensington Festival and Miniatura, created the miniature dolls for the BBC TV production of *The Miniaturist*. Julie humbly acknowledged that this was her proudest moment. She is still thrilled to have been a part of such a wonderful production.

Julie loves that she can create her own little tiny world full of all of the things you like best! "Even when things are going wrong in the real world, there is an ideal world in miniature to escape to. There is such a charm to a beautifully made miniature, almost anything tiny and detailed is enchanting to me."

Julie's most valuable tools are her eyesight and her hands. She uses tools and brushes, but a lot of what she does is done using her fingertips. She uses magnifying eyeglasses for the detailed work and a daylight bulb. This can cause eye strain and neck-aches, but the end result is something so beautiful she admits it is always worth her sacrifice.

Above right: A twelfth scale character doll having a smoke while reading beauty tips.

Above far right: A beautifully hand-sculpted puppeteer busy at work.

Right: A lovely lady and her basket.

Far right: This lady is enjoying a day on the couch scrap-booking. A wonderfully hand-sculpted piece in twelfth scale.





Above: These lovely well-dressed woman are enjoying a chat with cake.

Left: A lovely elderly gentleman. Perhaps a retired scholar?

Below: Thanking a bee for his honey.

Below right: Nibbling on a pumpkin while rocking away.





MEET THE MAKER



“People have been collecting handmade miniatures for hundreds of years.”

Right: A true artist at work complete with a painter's smock and palette.

Below right: The workroom where all of the miniature magic happens.

Below far right: A loving grandmother making a special homemade treat.

“People have been collecting handmade miniatures for hundreds of years.” Julie can't imagine that ever changing. She loves to see young people coming into the hobby. She always tries to help beginners as much as possible so that our collective passion will continue to grow and prosper. With newcomers come new ideas. There is room for all of the miniaturists out there.

Julie has many plans for new characters and we look forward to meeting more of them in the future.



SMALL 

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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



House filled with tigers dragons and dwarfs

BY SANDRA HARDING

Maija Tawast calls this house of hers Alternate Reality or Toinen Todellisuus.

In a way I guess that every house we ever feature is some sort of al-

ternate reality for the owner. I would love to live in any of my doll's houses but I think that living in this one might be too confusing.

That's because this fascinating

place was inspired by Maija's love for everything fantasy and sci-fi with a healthy dose of pop culture thrown in.

Maija, from Helsinki, Finland, got the house after casually looking



online. She saw this one and decided she wanted it. Much to her delight she 'won it' at a good price, but without any furniture. After research, she found out that the house was made in Finland by Vaasan Invalidit in the 1970s.

There was much muttering and rolling of the eyes by her husband and two sons when she placed it beside the television and started searching for 1970's doll's house furniture. Very soon she had a collection and then remembered that her mother had kept some of her old 1950's doll's house furniture in the basement. She said it was like Christmas discovering them again.

Sometime earlier, Maija had bought Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, and she woke up one morning to find they had moved in. When she heard Snow White's story she let them stay. Snow and the dwarfs had

been evicted from their cottage in the woods as the owner wanted to build a block of flats, and Prince Charming was no help, and he isn't real anyway.

They bought with them as many animals as they could manage on the back of a cart, including a tiger, who just fancied the ride. Pretty soon though, more uprooted people started arriving, including a lost soul from Star Wars, who stole the space ship to get there, and the friendly dragon, who just happened to be asleep under the back seat.

Slowly the house filled up and the friendly and interesting chatter goes on all day (I bet). Maija did manage to make some things for the house to add comfort to the misplaced people, including the kitchen roll (essential), and toilet paper (even more so). She also made the towel rack, from Lego, as well as towels, nail polish bottles, perfume bottles and sprays (as the

dragon's breath smells awful) along with the bedroom and bathroom lamps and posters.

There are also little touches especially for her real children: potato chips, lemonade, a poster of cool cars and a vinyl record player. The latter was the most expensive item, but the inhabitants really appreciate it.

I hope you enjoy this crazy little house as much as I did.



Dawn gets her mini Mod Podge mojo back again

How one miniaturist with three children and three grandchildren eventually grabbed her favourite glue again to create an aged look in a new kit

BY DAWN PEHLING

I wanted to tell you about the first big project I have worked on in about 20 years. After I had kids I ended up putting away all my mini things because there was never time or space to work on them.

But about three months ago I bought the Greenleaf Orchid and Victoria's Farmhouse and stole half of my husband's office space. I decided to do the Orchid first. I imagined an old woman lived here deep in the woods somewhere.

I stained and aged the wallpaper, hung it, then laid the egg carton and wood floors before I put the frame together. The upstairs floor is made from craft sticks that were glued on then stained with very watery paint. I wanted the water to soak in and warp the floor. Once it dried I put little dots on each floorboard to look like nail holes, then sealed it with Mod Podge.

The main floor is a torn egg carton glued on then coloured with chalk and sealed, again with Mod Podge. My husband cut some scrap wood to make the ceiling beams and I put in hooks to hang herbs made from fake flowers I found in the floral department of my craft store.

I knew I wanted a large fireplace so I chose to leave out the bay window so I would have space for it when I put the frame together. The trim pieces that came with the kit are only lightly sanded because I wanted old rough looking edges. They were stained and

glued on.

The fireplace is made from cardboard then covered in egg carton bricks I stained with red paint. I added blacks and browns to make it look sooty then Mod Podged the entire thing. The mantel is a piece of lath from my own home. I made the cauldron by covering a Christmas ball with clay before baking it then adding jewellery findings for a handle.

The table is made from craft sticks painted, distressed, and aged. I used craft sticks to make a new ladder because the one in the kit took up too much space. I bought the blue dresser but painted and distressed it and the sink is a Chrysnbon kit.

The front door opening had to be raised for the future porch so I made a set of steps going down into the room. They also cover the left over hole from enlarging the doorway. I sanded them where they would be stepped on over the years for a worn look.

The exterior was made from toilet paper and Mod Podge, then painted and aged. This process warped the walls of the house but I was ok with that since I wasn't going for perfection and I figured it added to the character of the house. Once again I barely sanded the trim pieces before painting them because I wanted all the defects to show.

All the shingles were soaked in different shades of watered down brown paint then left to warp while they dried.







Once they were glued on I made washes of browns and greens and dripped them all over the roof and let it run down onto the walls of the house, then added moss under some of the shingles.

I had my husband cut me a base to set the house on so I would be able to build a porch and have a small yard. The base is wide enough to allow about two inches on either side, six inches in the front and runs flush with the back. I covered it in a sheet of 'grass' I found at the craft store and glued the house on top.

After cutting the door opening higher the porch was built piece by piece with various craft sticks directly onto the house so I didn't have to



worry about it not fitting later. Much to my husband's dismay, I measured everything with my eyes rather than a ruler because I was going for a lived in and settled look. After the glue dried it was painted then sanded a little for some wear.

All the vines were hot glued to the trellis and house before flowers were added one by one. I made the little path from egg cartons on a piece of cardboard then sealed it with Mod

Podge. I used sticks, rocks, and tree bark from my garden and store bought moss and glued everywhere there was space.

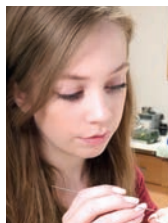
At the last minute I decided trees were needed so I found some small branches and glued them in and threw some moss on them. The last thing was adding the fence. I dirtied it up and glued it down then put on more moss and weeds to cover all the glue.

Whenever I sanded or cut anything

through this whole build I left the dust and shavings where they landed to help with the ageing of the house.

I've never worked with clay before but decided to try making a gnome. I ended up making all the foods, canned goods, pumpkins, mushrooms, animals, candles and most of the bowls. I am hoping to make most things that will go into this house over time but I think for now I am going to set it aside and start on my farmhouse.

Make your own basic 'used' metal saucepan



Tanja has a wonderful way of creating a beautiful metal saucepan for your kitchen. She takes you through the process of how to sand and solder

BY TANJA JENSEN



Step 1: No matter what size of pan you wish to make you'll need to cut three pieces: one for the cylinder shape, a smaller piece for the bottom and one for the handle (or two, if you wish to make a different style pot). I chose to use zinc for the pan itself and copper for the handle. The dimensions are completely up to you depending on what you want the pot to be for.



Step 2: Take the strip and use pliers to help form the cylinder. You can also wrap it around a cap or cookie/clay cutter in the right size to help. Trim off excess if needed.



Step 3: Next, apply flux to the seam and use the torch to heat the metal. Once the metal reaches the melting point of the solder, you can touch the solder to the metal and it should flow and fill the seam.

You will need

- Metal sheets. I'm using zinc and copper – 0.4-0.6mm in thickness will usually allow for the metal sheets to be bent and cut without too much trouble
- Scissors or metal shears, as well as flat and round nose pliers
- Files, sanding – and polishing tools. I chose to use a Dremel like tool for most of the work
- Solder, flux and soldering iron (or torch). I'm using a small butane torch
- Heat/fire proof surface to work on – especially if using the torch
- Third hand/helping hand tool



Step 4: To attach the bottom piece, place the cylinder on top of the smaller piece of metal. Apply flux and place a couple of pieces of solder around it, then heat it with the torch. The solder will flow where the heat is, so it should flow nicely around it to seal the bottom piece in place. Use scissors or shears to cut off excess metal.

TOPTIP

- When soldering each new part, if using a torch, be careful not to heat up the rest of the metal too much or for too long as this can re-melt the solder you've already added.

MINI MAKES

just lightly go around the inside. I like that the inside looks well used and will usually add some 'dirt' or distress to the outside of the pot as well, once I've decided what I'll be using it for.



Step 5 & 6: Use the sanding and polishing materials of your choice to get rid of the last bits from the bottom piece and smooth everything out. Once polished, the seams from the solder should no longer be visible.

I used a Dremel like tool with a disc made for sanding precious metals to do most of the sanding/polishing and used a fine polishing pad to

Step 7 and 8: Finally, take the piece for the handle, and use pliers to bend the end that'll go against the pot. Then, using a helping hand tool, hold the handle in place. Now apply your flux and solder and solder the handle in place. Then file/sand and polish the handle to finish off the pan.

● www.sugarcharmshop.dk



READERS' TIPS

PIPE CLEANER RUGS BY CAROLE HOUSEMAN



● Choose the thinner style pipe cleaners, readily available from craft or pound shops to make any size rug or mat.



● Glue the pipe cleaners in your chosen pattern to thin card. The card isn't essential as you can glue the pipe cleaners directly to each other, but I found this way works better.



● Make sure all little metal end pieces are pushed inward and trim off any excess card.

● Here is my finished doormat in my twelfth scale shop doorway.



Ballerina doll stars in black and white

Dana shows how you can create a beautiful ballerina costume and reveals a sneaky way to use large-scale fabrics in miniature

BY DANA

Greetings and welcome to our special ballerina doll. This tutorial showcases the beauty of black and white costuming at a beginner level. In the directions you will find a sneaky way to cut apart the large-scale fabrics to create a custom type doll costume, while still leaving room for the experienced dollers to add intricate decoration. So have fun with your ballerina and make her your own. The mould I am using is by Patricia Rose.

Assembly

Step 1. Find the doll's left leg (with the hole in it) and insert the wire pin.

Step 2. Insert the wire into the wooden base hole as a test for size. Cut off the extra wire. Do not glue the wire until

the doll is finished.



Step 3. Paint the ballerina's shoes. I used black nail polish and glued a thread around the ankles for laces.

Step 4. Insert and glue a set of twisted pipe cleaners into each leg. I put a little cotton ball into the leg cavity to fill space around the pipe cleaner. Let dry.

Step 5. Insert the pipe cleaners into

the doll's torso and glue into the desired position.

Step 6. When the doll is completely dry, gather small strips of tulle and glue it around the legs/bottom of the torso for underwear and also to act as a bandage for the porcelain parts.

Doll dressing

Step 7. Find a pretty cotton material with gold screen printing. Cut out the main circle design for skirt and set it aside.

Step 8. Using black fingernail polish, seal the edges of all material pieces to prevent fraying while you are handling.

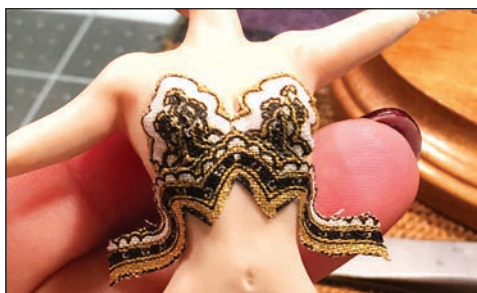


You will need

- Porcelain doll with full torso, extended arms, fine hands and long full ballerina legs
- Pipe cleaners and a cotton ball
- Wooden base
- Wire pin to hold doll/base together
- Black nail polish
- Scissors
- Pins, needle, and threads
- Ruler
- Screen printed cotton material to cut apart for outfit and tulle

- Tweezers
- Zap-A-Gap Super Glue
- Plant mister filled with distilled water
- Small black silk ribbon
- Wire nippers
- Beads, flowers and accessories as you wish
- Glue
- Viscose
- Various knitting needles/cor-sage pins as desired for curling hair

DRESS A DOLL

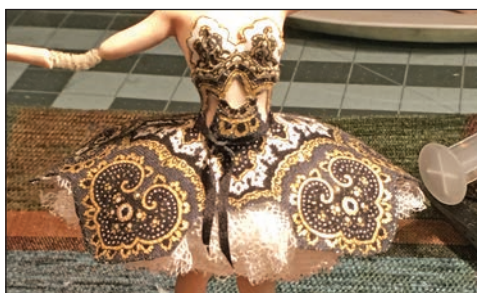


Step 9. Piece-cut the outfit designs (see photos) and glue on the doll's torso to create her pretty bodice. Pinch a little bust dart if needed to fit nicely.

Step 10. Add 1/8" for pleating allowance. This is your skirt width. The length will be 18". Since everyone assembles a doll differently, this is the easiest way to custom fit a skirt. My skirt pattern was 3 3/4" x 18".



Step 11. Now cut out rectangle pieces of tulle and gather tight. Sew these on the doll's tulle underwear (see step 6) until she has a nice full skirt.



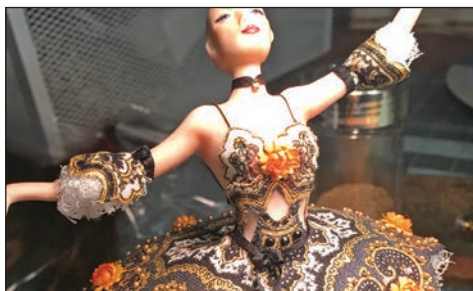
Step 12. Cut out the waist from the printed skirt circle and cut a small slit to put on doll over tulle skirt. Adjust

the tulle material if needed to make a full even ballerina skirt. Add a tiny silk ribbon belt around her waist, if your seams need to be covered.

Step 13. Insert fine pipe cleaners into her arm holes and hand/wrist hole. Cut off the excess length and glue together.



Step 14. Gather small amounts of the tulle material and sew on her arms over the pipe cleaner joint.



Step 15. Piece cut a small design out of the remaining printed material (see the photo) and glue it over the top of the tulle for the sleeve.

Doll wiggling

Step 16. Glue a realistic hairline on the doll's head with glue. Let this glue dry until tacky to prevent bleed through on the viscose hair.

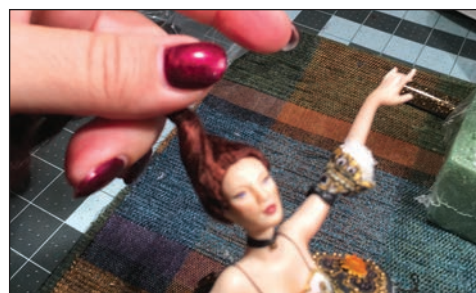
Step 17. Lay a small strip of the viscose from her nose to neck and gently press into the glue. Let dry.



Step 18. Put a line of the glue from ear to ear.



Step 19. Press on a small strip of the viscose to form a wiggling cross. Let dry.



Step 20. Gently twist the hair into a bun and glue on the top of her head.

Step 21. Add a few small curls to soften her face. I used a corsage pin as a form to wrap the viscose.

Step 22. I also added a long tendril down her neck (which seems very skinny to my taste).

Step 23. Lastly, have fun decorating your doll with beads, flowers, and special trims. My beautiful flowers shown on doll were purchased from Mari Smith-Welch.

Amazing collection of houses have such stories to tell



Wallington House was passed on to the National Trust by Sir Charles Philips Trevelyan, a member of the landed gentry but socialist MP. Today, among many other delights, it is home to a fine collection of doll's houses

BY SANDRA HARDING

Those of you lucky enough to live in Northumberland will no doubt have visited the amazing Wallington House.

For anyone on holiday in the area a trip to this historic estate is something not to be missed. And for all other miniaturists it really should be on your list as this National Trust estate is home to the most amazing collection of doll's houses. I wish I lived nearer.

During my chats with one of the house stewards, Charlotte Hawley, I was told that there were photographs taken by Amy Bell available and, much to my delight, the House & Collections Manager, Lloyd Langley, supplied me with details about the collection. That was enough to get me carried away

and wanting to share it all with you.

Before you get too excited, however, for the time being I'm only going to tell you about three of the houses. There are 18 in total and I am secretly hoping that we can have a look at more of the collection another time. I am going to quote mostly from Lloyd's description, as he explains the houses in detail so brilliantly. We're going to start with a look at the first and largest house.

The Hammond House

"This house is perhaps the jewel in the crown of the whole collection. Originally dated at 1886 there have been suggestions that it is more turn of the century in feel, perhaps because many of the accessories are Edwardian.

Acquired at auction in York for £400 by Sheila Petitt in 1970, the original owner has never been traced. Indeed, they wished to remain anonymous. Speculation initially linked it with the Hammond family who owned a large department store in Hull although subsequent research would suggest that in fact there is no such link.

"The reason it was named the Hammond House by the National Trust is that there was a towel with the name Ruby Hammond embroidered on it. There was also a book with the name T.Hammond written inside. Tenuous links, but the only clues to go on at the present time.

"The house has 36 fully furnished rooms, three connecting corridors, 1,500 pieces of furniture and pictures and 77 china faced dolls. It is fitted with electric lights in every room and used to have running water. The contents date from circa 1870 to 1920. Wallpapers are original to the house, with the exception of the exterior brickwork paper which replaced earlier coverings, which were sadly beyond repair. A dedicated team of volunteers, including Pauline Dower, daughter of Sir Charles Trevelyan, worked on restoring the house. The house measures 8 feet 10 inches long x 3 feet 3 inches high x 4 feet 1 inch deep.

Left: Visitors at Wallington, Northumberland.
Above right: Hammond Dolls House.
Right: Dining room - Hammond Dolls House.







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Top: The kitchen in the Hammond Dolls House at Wallington, Northumberland

Above: The interior of the full-size kitchen at Wallington with a variety of food being prepared. Great detail for your mini Victorian kitchen.

Right: Rooms on one side of the Hammond Dolls House at Wallington.







Top far left: The interior of the full-size saloon with its lavish display of plasterwork at Wallington.

Top left: Visitors in the full-size drawing room at Wallington.

Left: The Hammond Dolls House, view of one side of the house showing the library and dining room at Wallington.

Above: The boys' room - The Hammond Dolls House.

Right: The Hammond Dolls House library.

Below: The Claremont.

Bottom right: The full-size library at Wallington.



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Above and left: *The Long House.*

Below: *Gladstone Lodge.*

the Grand Duchess Marie of Russia (1853-1920). Alfred was one of Queen Victoria's sons. They either bought or commissioned it for their children. The family lived at Eastwell Park in Kent and the Reverend of the Parish was Reverend Evans-Gwynne. His children

The Long House

"It has been suggested the Long House is German in manufacture. Regarded as the best of the Angus Collection the curatorial decision was taken by Mrs Sheila Pettit, Historic Buildings Representative, to place the best of the furniture in this house. It is a model of a typical, well proportioned, late nineteenth century terraced house. It was originally designed as a six roomed construction, but it is

believed that the staircase was added later. It retains its original paintwork.

The White House

"Aside from the Hammond House, this house has the most historical interest. The maker is unknown, but it is believed to have originally been the property of Alfred, HRH the Duke Edinburgh and his wife



MINI TOUR

were the same age as the royal children, with whom they played.

"Eventually the Duke and Duchess gave the doll's house to the Evans-Gwynn children, when their children had outgrown it. Hettie Evans-Gwynn, one of the three daughters who played with the house, later recounted to her daughter how royal servants brought the doll's house to them in a wheelbarrow. On Hettie's death her daughter, Mrs Angela Picton of Cornhill on Tweed, inherited the house. It later became part of the Angus collection. In 1893 Hettie's royal friend Marie, married Prince (late King) Ferdinand of Rumania."

Other houses

Other houses on display are The Stockbrokers, The Gorie House, Villa Wilkie, Gladstone Lodge, The Trevelyan House, the Little House, The Long House, The Stucco House, The Red House, The Claremont, Sir Walter Gilby's House, The French House, The Brick House, The Joiners, and the delightfully sounding The Mouse House. Now, I wasn't sure whether to refer to them all or not, but it seemed sad not to give them all a mention, and you know what a sofie I am when it comes to doll's houses.

The main part of the collection was presented to The National Trust by the family of Mrs Bridget Angus on her death in 1973. Mrs Angus lived at Ravenstone, Corbridge, was the wife of Colonel Graham Angus and had been a keen collector of doll's houses



©National Trust Images/Andreas von Einsiedel

and their accessories. The donation included twelve houses and some furniture, a large selection of toys and miscellaneous miniature items, and was amassed during the 1930s and 1940s. Mrs Angus's original childhood doll's house was made from wooden crates, and is still in possession of the family.

This is a very important, and mightily impressive, collection, and I really

hope that you have enjoyed reading about it, and looking at the lovely photographs. Apart from the Angus Collection, there is so much more to see at Wallington, both inside the house and outside in the lovely gardens.

● National Trust, Wallington, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 4AR.

Tel: 01670 773602

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wallington

Above: The Trevelyan Bedroom at Wallington, Northumberland.

Below: The White House.



Zoë's so animated over her recycled property

Sandra's never seen anything like this transformed £6 house before and we don't think you will have either. It's decorated in an 'adventurous' style with 'moving' in mind

BY SANDRA HARDING

Just when I begin to think that I have covered most of the things we do with our doll's houses, along comes someone (Zoë Bread in this instance) who makes me think again.

Our hobby is certainly multi-faceted but I'm not sure which way this one faces, or even what to say about it. I think I had better just let it flow and see what happens.

It started off with Zoë finding the house in a Leeds recycling centre for £6, which she thinks may be an old GeeBee, with a new front added maybe. As she had been searching for a house

on eBay without success the timing was great, as the house matched the ideas she had for it. Not only that, it was 1/16th scale, which Zoë prefers, and she feels the slightly smaller size sucked her into a tiny world more than twelfth.

Then she discovered Lundby, and she was hooked. She loves every piece of furniture they have, especially the lighting. She ended up wiring her house using an old 70s' Lundby transformer, just so she could use their vintage lighting. Nothing else she found came close to looking as good, especially in that scale, and she also had a plan to use ani-

mation in it (I bet that's got you wondering).

The decor Zoë wanted was a run down, vaguely 1970's look, which hasn't been cleaned for some time. To reflect the modern style she stacked more than 300 VHS video tapes on the shelves in the living room along with many vinyl records. The inside is jammed full of other interesting items, many made and adapted by Zoë, and the rooms are decorated in what can only be described as 'adventurous'.

I have a real problem with the people who live here, as the lights are on but the windows are boarded up.

Are the family real or just in the house's imagination? But wait, this is where it gets even more confusing.

Zoë is a cartoonist and the house is being taken over by two of her cartoon characters: a dog called Cloth Gnocchi (named after a real toy dog — help!) and Jed, who happens to be a clay frog, named after yet another of Zoë's toys. I willingly surrender to this madness.

To get back to reality at last, the dog is the result of experiments. The first Cloth Gnocchi Zoë made didn't have any wire bones and ended up being pushed around the floor like a mop





(I have a headache). Jed is small, but the problem there (as with many frogs I have known) is that he keeps jumping around all the time, generally annoying Gnocchi.

Zoë has used an animated filmmaking technique called "stop motion" to add her little creatures to a comedy show called The Cloth Gnocchi & Jed Show. She is already planning to make longer episodes and building them a local pub to visit. Her inspiration, she tells me, comes from Only Fools & Horses, Fawlty Towers and many more great comedy shows.

The whole process has taken Zoë many months to get right and even now I am

not sure what I have been writing about. All I know for sure is that I love it. I leave it to you to decide for yourself but if this has whetted your appetite for stop motion, you can find more of Zoe's work at <http://youtube.com/zoebread>



READERS' TIPS

FLUORESCENT LIGHT

BY CAROLE HOUSEMAN



● I used four grain of wheat lightbulbs, a 5" piece of bannister painted white with two holes drilled through to match the two holes I had drilled in the kitchen ceiling. You'll also need a 5" length of white drinking straw and a couple of bits cut from a plug cover as shown.

● This is how it looks put together before I added the lightbulbs.



● This is the fiddly bit. I cut a length of tinfoil and poked four holes about 1" apart into it. I slotted the lightbulb wire through the tinfoil then through the holes in the bannister piece. I then joined the wires from each pair onto one longer wire.

● Next I squidged the lot into the groove in the bannister piece making sure all the wires were covered as those bulbs get hot.

● The bulbs are sticking out here but were then pushed down flat. Then I glued on the drinking straw and the plastic end bits as in picture 2, put a small length of silver tubing onto the wires (optional) and slotted the wires through the ceiling holes to add to the others going up to the power socket in the loft. The two wires then needed plugs adding and it was all done.



Stylish kitchen boxes made to hang on wall

Kathleen shows her passion for kitchens as she tells us how she put together two lovely room boxes that need hardly any space to display

BY KATHLEEN HOLMES

As many of you already know, I love decorating my doll's house and inventing little vignettes as a way of keeping my doll's house interesting with a lived-in look like that of a real home.

I decided to share my passion for miniatures and love of designing miniature displays by creating some shadow boxes to sell. I enjoy staying busy with my hobby and creating new and different miniatures and miniature scenes. There's always a subtle sense of amazement at imagining something and being able to see it brought into reality. In some small way I hope to help others see the wonder of life in miniature.

So far I've made two kitchen shadow boxes, both inspired by my love of miniature kitchens. I've always wanted a kitchen room box in my real kitchen, but never had the space. I had the idea of a shadow box that wouldn't take up much space and could hang on a wall or sit on a shelf and thought others might like the same in their kitchens.

The first shadow box that I made has a kitchen island, a small dresser and a kitchen chair. I took one of those standard unfinished kitchen work tables, stained, painted and aged it. I made a kitchen chair to go with it from a Chrysnbon kit and painted it to match the table. I like a soft green palette and used a leafy patterned wallpaper for the walls and a soft green paint on the



table and chair. The dresser is painted cream and "scuffed up" to look worn.

I put some wallpaper on the back wall of the dresser to provide a little interest. When the main pieces of furniture were done, then came my favourite part, decorating and filling it up with little things of interest.

I filled the dresser with a couple of cook books, some local Arkansas pottery, some stacked dishes, a canister that I made, a basket of bread that I had in my stash and a bottle of wine. The kitchen work table has a cherry pie made by Kim Marshall Saulter, some more cook books, a cutting board, rolling pin and bags of flour and sugar.

Underneath the table are pots and pans and more cookbooks. One cannot have too many cookbooks, especially in a miniature kitchen! The room had to have some life, so I added a little black and white cat curled up on the chair.

On the wall is a shelf with a couple of aprons made by Jill Marquis hanging from it. I made a couple of rustic signs to go on the walls; one is a cherry pie sign to go with the cherry pie on the table. There is also a faux window with a lace curtain and a window sill filled with a couple of plants. A broom leaning against the wall and a basket of milk bottles on the wooden floor complete the picture.

The second shadow box contains



an old fashioned stove and a corner dresser. I made both from kits; the stove is Chrysnbon and the dresser is a Houseworks kit. I had a lot of fun with the stove after I put it together.

First I spray painted it a flat black and then I used steel coloured model paint on sections of it. After that I aged it all over with various coloured weathering powders that I rubbed onto the surface.

I made pots and pans and a tea kettle from Chrysnbon and painted some with copper model paint. You'll see pans hanging on the wall and others on the stove.

Someone is cooking...bacon and eggs are frying on the stove and a pan of cinnamon rolls are fresh out of the oven.

I painted the dresser a cream colour, except for the shelf which I stained. Again, I aged the dresser to make it look worn and filled it with goodies including a copper serving dish, a stack of plates, a pumpkin pie made by Kim, a vintage espresso maker and some pottery. A shelf on the opposite wall is filled with canned goods, cookbooks, a rolling pin and a couple of pans.

I made a hanging towel for it and also hung one of Jill's aprons. Below the shelf on the floor is a cute tabby cat with his bowls of food and water. With his paw raised, he looks like he might

Right: A delightful baking scene in one of the room boxes.



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Above and right: *This kitchen has a charming rustic feel.*

be about to splash some water on the floor.

The stove is up against a faux brick wall with a neutral wallpaper on the other two walls. The floor is black and white 'tile' that I've aged, again with my handy weathering powders. A kitchen sign, garlic hanging on the wall, a broom and a crate of vegetables on the floor complete the scene.

I'm already thinking ahead and planning a bathroom shadow box. Wouldn't that look cute hanging on the wall of your bathroom?



Miniature grand pianos strike the right note

Ralph Partelow is a master miniature piano maker who creates beautiful music in twelfth scale. Each piece is made with precision and exquisite detailing

BY DEB WEISSLER

Chords of harmony arise within an interior space when a piano and elegant décor are combined.

The mere visual appearance of a keyboard instrument implies classical taste and form, whether it be in full size or miniature. For more than 40 years, master craftsman Ralph Partelow has filled beautiful miniature spaces with his love for pianos, great and small. His appreciation for these instruments and the imaginary music they create has not only been a passion, but an inspiration for all that he has accomplished in life.

"My love for pianos and music was simultaneous when I was about 10 years old," Ralph recalls. "My father, an interior and exterior decorator, would often have contracts to paint public buildings such as schools, grange halls, or churches, where there would inevitably be a piano or organ. I had a natural attraction towards keyboard instruments and could sit down at one and play a familiar tune."

His natural ear for music inspired his parents to buy a used upright piano and his first piano lessons began at age 11. His first piano instructor was so taken with his talent and eagerness that when she retired due to illness, she sold Ralph her beloved Emerson mahogany grand piano for £25. "Practically free!" Ralph smiles.

In class, while other students created lamps or other utilitarian pieces from wood, Ralph obtained permis-



sion to create miniature pianos. While crude by today's standards, his wood-working skills were honed, which would foreshadow a thriving business later on. In the meanwhile, Ralph's parents located a retired concert pianist, who became one of the greatest influences in their young son's life.

Earyle "The Maestro" Browne had once been a concert pianist in Europe and was married to a French antique dealer. Their home was a veritable museum of fine furniture, oriental carpets, and European objects d'art. But it was Browne's 19th century ebony Steinway grand piano, upon which Ralph took lessons, that stole his heart. Ralph has owned five Steinway pianos in his life and is, today, the proud owner of a rosewood Steinway grand from Steinway's crown jewel collection.



In 1960 when Ralph was 14, Browne took him to New York to tour the city, visit the famous music stores, and meet the famous Steinway family in Steinway Hall on W. 57th street. It was one of the highlights of young Ralph's life. It was there he saw some of the most beautiful instruments in the world and began a relationship with the Steinways that has lasted for decades. Ralph had entered a world from which he would never depart.

As the years went by, he honed his miniature piano making skills, selling some and gifting others.

He entered college as a music major, and after two years became a theology major when another great passion called. He married his first wife, Carolyn Kline, in 1968 and a year later the couple was devastated to learn she was suffering from multiple sclerosis. The couple refused to let MS ruled their lives however and Ralph became a pastor of churches in New Jersey and later in Pennsylvania. Their son, Jonathan, was born in 1974.

Ralph continued making miniature pianos on and off in his spare time and in 1976 Carolyn purchased an early Christmas gift for him; a book entitled "A Collector's Guide to Dollhouses and Dollhouse Miniatures" by Marion

Above left: Ralph holds nine thicknesses of wood used in building every piano.

Above: A Queen Anne grand in dark brown mahogany in twelfth scale.



Top left: An 18th century French Harpsichord in 1/24th scale (dark red cherry).

Top right: A 1750 German clavichord in rosewood.

Above left: 18th c. French harpsichord in dark red cherry (half inch).

Above: The 'Fleur-de-Lis' 18th century French harpsichord in twelfth scale.

Left: An 18th century Spinet harpsichord in 1/24th scale (dark red cherry).



Top left: Attaching a leg to a Queen Anne grand piano.
Top centre: The tedious task of making the keyboards.
Top right Finishing up a rosewood grand piano.
Above left: Attaching a keyboard to a gorgeous Louis XV upright in cherry.
Above right: Each piano has Ralph's signature.



Above: Ralph making a Queen Anne grand piano.
Right: Jonathan painting murals on the lids of Ralph's 18th century instruments.



Above: A handcrafted twelfth scale 18th c. German giraffe piano in mahogany.

Above right: A Louis XV upright piano with a cherry finish in twelfth scale.

Right: A 19th century Square grand piano with a glossy black finish made in twelfth scale.

O'Brien. It was a revelation! Filled with biographies and photos of well known miniature artists and their work, the Partelows were convinced they could make miniature pianos that would sell. They mailed photos of Ralph's work to the book's author, who said if he could reproduce them for sale, they could sell as many as they wished!

Later that year, Ralph happened upon a miniature shop in Mahopac, NY and showed the shop manager one of his pianos. He was struck speechless when she placed an order on the spot. He sold her 3 for \$40 each and was told she would take all that he could make. Working 4 hours each night, he sold over £750 worth in just two months. Encouraged by Marion, continued sales of his work at local miniature shops, and a steady stream of repeat customers, the Partelows began carving out a niche in the miniature world.

There came a time when the Partelows sensed their goals of serving a congregation had been fulfilled,



and it was time to move on to the next phase of their lives. The Africa Inland Mission accepted the couple's applications to teach in Kenya despite Carolyn's growing disability. But the couple needed £15,000 to purchase equipment and travel expenses. How could they raise such an enormous sum in just one year? The answer of course lay with Ralph's pianos.

While pondering how many collectors could be left who were willing to buy his pianos, phone calls came that changed their lives forever. In one night phone orders totalling £5,000

sent Ralph scurrying to his basement workshop. During one month alone they received over £15,000 in orders.

His friendship with John Steinway proved fortuitous when during a tour of the Steinway factory, John gave Ralph books showing photos, drawings, and details of many 18th and 19th century keyboard instruments, many of which we made in miniature," says Ralph. "John gave me specifications of real Steinways from which many of our conventional models are still fashioned."

Supporters like Faith Rogers and Sybil Harp wrote about them in their



Top: An upright player piano in walnut made to twelfth scale.

Above right: An 18th century Rococo French clavichord in twelfth scale.

Right: Doll's house (twelfth scale) that Ralph made for wife's parents in 1976.



miniature magazines, and an article in the New York Times brought notoriety and more orders. The income from these sales ensured their living expenses and enabled them to purchase the necessary equipment for their impending missionary work. For the Partelows, it was a humbling experience.

"During the furloughs between the six two year terms of service in Africa, miniature pianos was an avocation that became a vocation at times. As our son grew, he became fascinated with African wildlife and became proficient at painting and drawing. At age 14, we employed him to begin painting the lids of our clavichords and harpsichords. While stationed overseas, we managed to make almost 100 pianos to be shipped to customers in the US."

The couple's missionary work ended in 2003 and sadly Carolyn passed away in 2010, but Miniature Grand Pianos continued on. Ralph married Beverly in 2016 and is still happily making pianos in his workshop in Apache Junction, AZ.

"Almost 4000 pianos later I still love making beautiful models of miniature keyboard instruments that cover three centuries." Created from mahogany, walnut, cherry, and rosewood, each piano is signed, dated, and coded.



The frame is made using a proprietary technique and the wood is selected for realistically scaled grain. After the instrument is made, the legs and other integral parts are carved and attached. Staining is next, with up to twenty coats of finish applied. Then the strings are inserted and a hinged lid mounted.

Ralph's work is featured in dozens of publications, displayed in private museums, resides with collectors and

corporations worldwide, and is enthusiastically traded on the secondary market. Collectors recognise that no fine home is complete without a piano at its heart.



LITTLE LINKS:

Ralph E. Partelow - Miniature Grand Pianos
from: P.O. Box 2200, Apache Junction, Arizona 85117 USA **email:** ralph.partelow@aimint.org
 Website coming soon

WHERE I WORK

THIS MONTH WE CHAT WITH ANNA WYBRANOWSKA ABOUT THE WORKSPACE SHE'S CREATED IN HER TINY FLAT

Hi Anna, nice to talk to you. How long have you been involved in the hobby?

I started making miniatures in 2013.

Where do you create your minis?

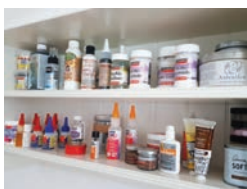
When I started, I had no desk and no shelves for storing my supplies. Everything was located in boxes all over my wardrobe. After ruining all the tables in the kitchen and living room with inks, glue and woodworking I made a decision to prepare a special area for my workspace.

And where is it now? As I have only two rooms in my apartment I decided that my working area would share space with my bedroom. It didn't cost me a lot. I only had to invest in one of the cheapest desks from IKEA and a hanging shelf to go under it. The most time-consuming part was repainting old furniture to match my desk. Some closed shelving was painted white and accessories and a drawer unit were added in a turquoise sea colour.

It looks great now. And unlike a lot of rooms we see, it's so neat. Do you always work here now?

Since I have had my workspace, no miniatures are allowed in the kitchen any more and finished projects have their place in my living room.

What makes your space for mini making so special? The most special thing about my space is that I made it myself. There, I forget about my responsibilities and disappear into the fantastic



world of miniatures. I love the fact that everything is so close at hand. I have an oven to bake polymer clay, soft pastels for shading, tools for woodworking, liquids and inks and all my supplies. Everything is kept in a white closed shelf, in transparent boxes, so it is very easy to find what I need. And when I am finished creating I close the closet, clean the desk, move the new room box to my living room and nothing reminds me of the mess that was there a few hours earlier.

Do you keep your workspace private? I do not share my workspace with anyone else. This is my private area, a special place where I can relax with a cup of hot tea and enjoy making my miniatures.

Do you listen to music or the radio while you work? I always listen to audio books while working. I mostly like Scandinavian crime novels. My favourite writers are Camilla Lackberg, Stieg Larson, and Jo Nesbø. But sometimes I listen to English or Spanish phrase audio books to learn languages.

What is the one thing that your workspace can't be missing? The most necessary thing in my workspace is definitely the protective pad on my work desk. When I moved into this workspace I promised myself that I would never destroy any more of my tables and so far I have kept my promise.



"I FORGET ABOUT MY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DISAPPEAR INTO THE FANTASTIC WORLD OF MINIATURES."



Collection honours work of a talented miniaturist

The family of the late Myra English have put much of her collection on permanent loan in England's tallest Tudor tower, and that includes the incredible Manderley

BY SANDRA HARDING



Regular readers may remember my delight when, in 2017, I was invited to give Manderley a spring clean and tidy up.

Manderley is a doll's house, made by Pat Camp, now located at Layer Marney Tower in Essex. Mind you, calling Manderley a doll's house is rather an understatement as it's 55" high, 81" wide, and 12" deep, has 18 rooms and is amazing. (We featured the spring clean in issue 299, August 2017).

Sadly, Myra English, the lovely lady who loaned Manderley to Layer Marney Tower long term, has recently died. Her family have decided that, to honour Myra's work and talent, they would offer Layer Marney Tower much of her collection to display on permanent loan.

When Sarah Openshaw sent me the photographs of the new collection I was taken aback at the amount of different items there were, all so beautifully made with great care and attention to minute details.

There are houses, including a gorgeous Tudor and a wonderful Georgian, shops, including a Christmas shop, baker's, and even a Faberge store. There are room boxes and many dioramas depicting nurseries, garden sheds, a 1950's kitchen and more. There is even an old junk room stuffed to the rafters with everything from an old Singer sewing machine to an abandoned skeleton. Myra certainly was prolific.

Even if you have visited Layer Marney Tower before, to enjoy not only the Tower itself, which is England's tallest Tudor tower, but the delightful Manderley, then it's really time for another visit. You will always manage to see something missed the first time. There is so much to see that Myra's collection has now taken over other rooms in the Tower. Just as well it's a pretty big house.

Layer Marney Tower opens its doors from March 29, on Sunday and Wednesdays from 11am-5pm.

On open days in June they plan a doll's house interiors month, when they will be concentrating on the new acquisitions. You will have the opportunity to peer into these fascinating tiny worlds as the doors and fronts of the new doll's houses will be open for you to view. An exhibition not to be missed.

Layer Marney Tower is just off the B1022, on the Colchester to Tiptree Road and the postcode is CO5 9US.



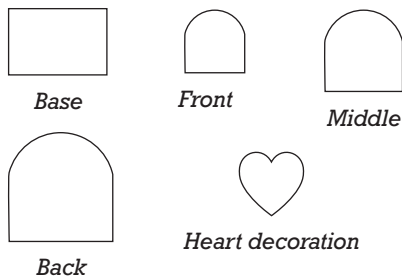


“There is so much to see that Myra’s collection has now taken over other rooms in the Tower.”

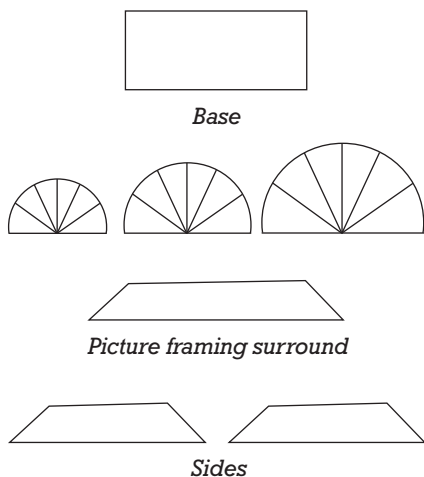
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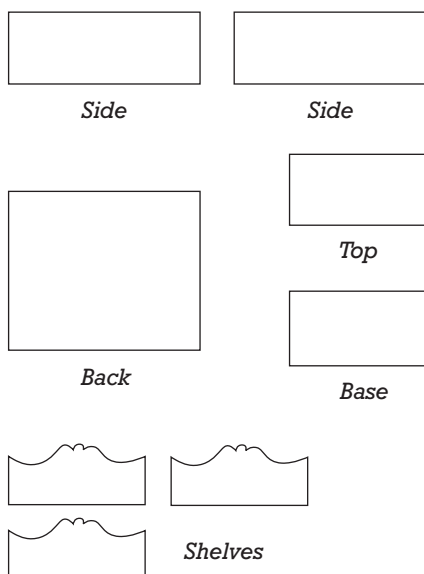
Heart letter rack



Fan letter rack



Letter rack



Make three types of mini letter racks

Here are three charming letter racks for storing all those letters and bills. With three styles, you are sure to find one that will look just perfect in your house

BY DAVID HARTSHORN

These three little letter racks will fit into most rooms. They look good in an entrance hall, or in a study or sitting room. They use very little material and mostly need some 2mm wood, picture framing or quadrant, some gold paint and other colours.

Heart letter rack



Step 1. Cut the base and three semi-circular sections from the wood using the templates.

Step 2. The heart decoration can also be cut from this wood.

Step 3. Sand the pieces thoroughly and then glue the sections onto the letter rack base.

Step 4. Place the front one on the front edge and the rear one on the back edge.

Step 5. Glue the middle section equally spaced between the other two sections.

Step 6. When set, paint this in a suitable pastel colour or varnish.

Step 7. Paint the heart red and when dry glue this to the front of the rack. Other motifs may be used.

Fan-shaped letter rack



Step 1. Cut the pieces from the templates supplied.

Step 2. Mark the fan lines onto the three sections using a compass point or sharp needle and sandpaper them all carefully.

Step 3. The base is going to be surrounded with the gilt picture frame on

You will need

- 2mm wood, picture framing or quadrant
- Gold paint and other colors of your choice
- Varnish or French polish
- Sandpaper
- Glue
- Compass or sharp needle
- 45° mitre
- Tweezers

three sides only. They should be cut with a 45° mitre and when glued together the base should just fit into the top. It is easier to do this if you bevel the edges of the base where they fit onto the frame.

Step 4. Glue the three fan sections to the base equally spaced across it.

Step 5. Finish by applying several coats of varnish or French polish to the base and sections.

Letter box rack



Step 1. Cut using the templates.

Step 2. It is very important to make sure that the top and bottom and the three shelves are exactly the same length when you have finished sanding them.

Step 3. I have added a small patterned front to mine and you can copy this, leave them straight or make one up of your own.

Step 4. Glue the sides, top and bottom to the base making sure that the whole thing is square.

Step 5. When dry you can begin to add the shelves by gluing each one and sliding it into the box, pointing upwards at a slight angle. I find a pair of tweezers helps here and it is a good idea to glue them all at the same time. This allows you to adjust the spacing while they are still moveable.

Step 6. Smooth off the sides, front and back of the letter box rack and apply stain and several coats of French polish or varnish to finish it.

Fold and cut small pieces of paper to use as mail (or see Cutout on P77) and place in your racks!

Cat toys have grown, but smaller is best

Climbing towers are a big thing for cats these days, but you can make a mini one for the pets in your house

BY CHARLOTTE MERRYMAN

have you noticed how elaborate and challenging toys have become for cats? Walking round our local pet store I was amazed at the range of toys designed to keep your pet healthy and encourage play. There were platforms, tunnels, balls on strings, feathers on wire, squeaky mice and even mice that are remote-con-

trolled so they can run all over the house chased by a very playful and energetic cat! But it was the very large play station that stopped me in my tracks.

Vast carpeted boards covered with climbing poles, ropes to swing on, and balls to bite to pieces! So I thought I'd make one and see how many items I could include on the board.

You will need

- Cardboard
- Scissors
- Craft knife
- Ruler
- Wood cutter or saw
- Wood dowels 1/4"
- Glue
- Suede material
- Bead
- String
- Cardboard tube

Step 1. I made the base board 3" x 1 1/2" by 1/4" thick. Two square poles one 1 1/4" and the other 2 1/2" x 1/4" square. The two platform boards are 1" x 1 1/2". The tunnel is made of a cardboard tube 3/4" diameter by 1 1/4".

Step 2. Cover each of the pieces in suede. Cut a slot in the long pole approximately 1/2" from the top for the platform board.

Step 3. Assemble each piece as in the picture—add a large bead as a play ball.

Place in your miniature scene and fill it with cats in different poses. They will be very happy!



A miniature ghost town is brought back to life

Coastal wind and rain took its toll on the twelfth scale buildings in this model village after the owners retired, but now the little world is being restored

BY MOI ALI

After 16 months of renovation works, an entire dilapidated twelfth scale model village has been rescued from the overgrowth and the vagaries of the wet Welsh climate. Anglesey Model Village, on the spectacular Welsh coastline, reopened to visitors in 2019 after several years of abandonment.

But let's start the story at the beginning. AMV, Anglesey Model Village, threw open its diminutive doors in 1992. The original owners made all of the models by hand, quite a remarkable feat! The attraction was popular, but the owners retired in 2015 and AMV subsequently closed. The coastal wind and rain took their toll and the once lovely village fell into disrepair.

Current owners Larry Chambers and Nick Bowler, a kind of Batman and

Robin of the miniatures world, stepped in to save the place in 2017! They were looking for a business that was both fun to run, and in a picturesque location. Cheque books at the ready, they purchased AMV.

Nick takes up the story: "The model village was in a sorry state when we viewed it. Nature had taken over and it was severely overgrown in places. Things were so bad that it was difficult to walk around the site!"

Not easily deterred, they went ahead with the purchase and began the mammoth task of rescue and refurbishment. Their aim was to return AMV to the kind of visitor attraction it had been in its heyday.

Fortunately, many of the models had been placed into safe storage by the previous owners. All they needed was



minor repair and a bit of new paint here and there. However, those left outdoors were not in such good condition. Aside from restoring what was already there, Larry and Nick decided to add people, vehicles and street scene accessories. The twelfth scale of the model village meant that there was a synergy with the doll's house world. Ready-made items could be used, which saved the time and expense of commissioning them.

People from the local community helped get the project off the ground by volunteering at the model village, helping out in the gardens, and renovating the little models. After all the teamwork, the place was finally ready to reopen its doors. "Our intention was a quiet winter 'soft launch' while we finished off the renovation and also learned how to run the operation," explained Nick, "What actually happened turned out to be very different!"

Nick continued: "We hadn't publicised the opening at all as it was a last minute decision. Other than ourselves, we had no staff and thought that only a few people would turn up. A single Facebook post was all we did to mention that the model village was open, yet by the end of that first week there had been over 1500 visitors! Although the models are still being repaired, the model village has remained very popular with visitors and feedback has been very generous. Visitors have been full of words of encouragement





Top and above: The before and after of the miniature MA Anglesey railway station.

Above left: An abandoned house in need of repairs.

Below left: The boathouse is a new addition.

Below: The toppled remains of the Dudley High St. model.





Above: A row of buildings restored to their former glory.

Left: This clock tower is another restored model.

Below: There were gaps where mini buildings had stood.



and support, simply delighted that the model village is making a return."

Now that AMV has reopened, Nick and Larry have been able to further invest in the renovation works: "We now have two members of staff working on models, meaning that restoration of models and creation of new displays is taking place. Since opening, we've also reintroduced motion and sound to the model village and are soon to introduce interaction as well."

With so many doll's house shops and other miniature attractions closing down, it is heartening to hear of one that has come back from the dead.

Quick and easy

Sandra shows you how to make a handbag in quick and easy style

BY SANDRA HARDING

Step 1. Cut the foam board to the size handbag you want. Use a craft knife rather than scissors, for a sharper shape.

Step 2. Cut out the card the same width, long enough to cover the front, bottom and back with a nice flap (this will be trimmed and shaped later).

Step 3. Lay the edge of the card on the foam board at the top, and then glue down what will be the front, the base and the back of the bag (leave the flap for now).

Step 4. Decide on the

shape of the front flap of the bag, and cut to shape.

Step 5. If decorating underneath the front flap edge with picot braid etc glue it on now and let it dry (see red bag picture).

Step 6. Glue ribbon up one side of the bag, starting at the bottom, allowing for enough ribbon to act as a handle and to go down the other side of the bag. Let it dry

Step 7. Glue down the front flap, not too flat to look more realistic, and add any further decoration you want.

If you want to add a different handle (see blue bag picture) then cover each side with the same paper you used on the main bag. Glue in each end of the handle on each side, underneath the top flap, using ribbon, chain, braid etc as seen on the blue bag. I added tiny little gold pieces of stick-ons on the sides of the blue bag. The front decoration is also a stick on.

You will need

- Foam board
- Pretty paper, or thin card, preferably with a raised pattern on it. I used luggage labels
- Glue, scissors, craft knife
- Ribbon the width of the foam board, a tiny chain, picot braid or similar braids
- Tiny cut down findings and stick on jewels or pearls etc for decoration
- Stick-ons, used for cards, from Hobbycraft for instance





Barbara's garage is j

Barbara's mini madness began six years ago with a doll's house as a retirement gift. 44 properties later Sandra takes a look around her most recent addition

BY SANDRA HARDING

The last time I showed you a piece by Barbara Cass it was a public lavatory block, so I guess I should have expected some-

thing different from her again.

This time it's a fully functioning garage which is to be added to the ever-expanding village which sits in her

purpose-built cabin/workshop in her garden, and I am really, really envious!

The garage was based around a 21x13 inch box which Barbara already



just picture perfect

had, to which she added a plywood front with a sliding door. Putting the extra box on the side for service reception was a clever touch — attention to detail every time.

An old and battered car was rescued from stock and, although it is slightly smaller than one twelfth it looked just right. Barbara wanted

to make as much as she could and started with the red tool chests as her son had a full size one, which made it easy to copy. They are simply card painted red, with a false drawer added to the front, so it appears to be open. Brilliant.

Barbara scoured the internet for pictures of car lifts, ramps and jacks to get

ideas, and even more inspiration, and copied them. They are all made from scraps of wood, and the jack handle is a black drinking straw. The small tool box is just card, the towel holder is a mini Tic Tac box, and the fan belts are the little seals that come with submersible tea lights.

The fabulous pair of overalls hang-



“The name CASSCO on the front comes from the name of her husband's grandfather's garage which he owned in the 1930s.”

ing up was made by Lynette Smith, a very talented lady already known to regular readers. There is even a radio and first aid box with the mandatory dirty mug here. Again, just study the detail — amazing.

Some of the purchased items



include the motorbike, petrol pumps, axle stands, oil drum, oil cans and tools as Barbara realised some things were best left to the experts. The name CASSCO on the front comes from the name of her husband's grandfather's garage which he owned in the 1930s, and it seemed eminently appropriate.

Barbara retired about six years ago and that's when her mini madness started (her words not mine). A doll's house was bought as a retirement gift and she now has 44 properties of all shapes and sizes, included in the aforementioned village.

Many are unfinished, some not even started, and what a lovely, perfect way to spend your retirement. Look at the photographs again. I guarantee you will see something you hadn't noticed before, or is that just me?



Jan's Village Bakery is such a special treat

Jan Stuart looks inside an inviting roombox and talks to its creator about why it works so well on many different levels from colour scheme to vital details

BY JAN STUART. PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAN STUART



Here we are in the storybook setting of the Sweet Buns Village Bakery, located in the town Miniaturia. The time is 1930 to 1940. The bakery cases, shelves, and baskets are filled with bakery must-haves! There are, of course, breads, and then cakes and buns of all kinds, plus tender donuts, iced buns, cookies, packaged goodies, and so much more. Even wedding cakes await our notice!

The atmosphere seems filled with light, scent, warmth, and crusty-to-sugary appeal. And if that were not enough, behind the counter, Mr Baker woos us inside to sit, chat, linger, and indulge—and indulge again!—while remaining quite healthy and not gaining a pound himself (of course)!

Not surprisingly, this twelfth scale room box is another creation of 30-plus-years miniatures artisan Jan Yinger. I like to look into Jan's work, past the obvious, and find lessons within to pass on to you. This time, I asked Jan what makes this setting a memorable viewing experience—that is, beyond the realism, wonderful variety, and satisfying abundance of miniature breads and cakes on display. Her firm reply was: "It's my little baker man—he says it all!"

And, indeed, he does say much! But Jan is too humble; there's more. It's actually (1) him, a great character doll, posed within (2) a successful monochromatic colour scheme themed to the room box contents, and (3) touches of enlivening colour throughout. Once again, Jan has created something wonderful: a piece guided by her innate sense of colour and design and her past real-life experiences, underscored by her humour and love of life's special moments. She recently told me: "I feel that in a sometimes 'harsh' world, any little thing I can do to brighten someone's day with a happy memory or hint of humour in my scenes will allow them to enter a happy mini world and may entice them to enjoy this great hobby."

Inspired by her collection of old flour sacks with quaint and colourful designs, Jan wanted to create a bakery room box that could display more of the individual mini products she had made over the years for both her show table and herself. More, she wanted it to seem like a place one could "sit and enjoy their choices of goodies with coffee or tea—because they can't wait 'til they get home!"

Did she do any research first, such

as consulting specialty baking books? "No," she answered. "I'm old enough to have personally eaten everything on display!"

Jan originally called it "The Bakery," until friend and dealer Suzy Yee supplied the just-right "Sweet Buns" sign, and the name stuck. Here, I've detailed what works within The Sweet Buns Village Bakery—and why.

The character doll

Jan said: "My little baker man is the first doll I ever bought. He is a very early bread-dough doll, created by Beverly Parker Levi in the 1970s, long before modelling compounds were available for character sculpting. I enjoyed looking at him for years before making him a bakery. He practically tells the whole story of the room box itself (which is the job of any great character doll). He is possibly French, hopefully Hungarian, probably Italian! He loves good hearth-baked bread, but can make anything you may want. In fact, it's all he could do to have room in his shop for all his delicious goods. He has been baking his whole life, owns his own shop, loves it, and loves his customers. He is a romantic who puts flowers on the tables, and is

“I feel that in a sometimes ‘harsh’ world, any little thing I can do to brighten someone’s day with a happy memory or hint of humour in my scenes will allow them to enter a happy mini world.”



saying 'Ohhh, how delicious—you will love it!'"

He also makes no pretence of being a realistic human likeness; rather, he's a glowing folk-person, a caricature of the "proud and happy baker man" of common lore.

From head to toe, everything counts. From behind the counter, it's the lift of his eyebrows, the gestures of his hands, the "Ohhh" of his mouth in exclamation that we see. All determine our response not only to him but to the entire scene. In my case, the response is to succumb to his charm—to believe I could really sit down and order, and be sweetly spoiled, in his mini-bakery world.

To select such a successful character doll for a setting, Jan suggests: "Consider yourself like a movie director, casting the perfect person for the part he is going to play." Or, as has happened often to many of us (Jan, too)—just fall in love with a doll at a miniatures show, then go home and build a room box just for him!

Monochromatic colour scheme

Jan tells us: "I wanted the breads so the viewer could imagine the aroma and feel the taste and texture of taking a bite." Consider how she accomplished that kind of display, one in which the goodies at hand really appeal to the senses. Jan themed the main elements of the room box decor to the subject at hand by making those elements (wallpaper, counters, and shelves) the colour of wheat, milled flour, bread crusts, sunshine, and grain. Here are shades of white, ivory, pale tan, and warm golden tan. Here we are enfolded!

And here's why: plain wallpaper with a simple, repetitive design; typical maple-finish shelves and cases; and common white enamel tables and chairs—all of which have little or no charm unto themselves—allow the small but ever-so-meaningful stuff to add up because there's no colour distraction. Plus (and this is a big plus!), the colours used in the main furnishings of this room box are found in nature, and thus are naturally pleas-

ing to the eye, opening to the senses, and relaxing to our natural wariness in examining new places.

We feel safe to be drawn, quickly, inside. Thus, the monochromatic setting provides not just a background but also a supportive atmosphere. And, once inside the scene, it's easy to linger over the special items that make this bakery a warm, exciting, and inviting place. Relaxed, your eye is free to roam, visually sampling all kinds of baked goods!

Now, I used to think my art professors were "stretching the story" when they delved into these explanations of the psychological effects of colour. But, just knowing these things really do happen on a subliminal level should encourage you to use the knowledge in your own work.

You can find many formulas for mini bread dough as well as step-by-step instructions on texturing the cut surfaces with sandpaper or with a pin or dental tool and using chalks or paints on the "baked" crusts. Whichever



Tips from Jan Yinger

- [For polymer clay,] I choose Sculpey Lite, as it has great stretchable qualities, with a grain that can produce some amazing textures and do away with the extra step of texturing with a tool. Working with it almost makes me want to bake some real breads!
- If you want an old-time, hand-made look, then vary the shapes and sizes by first rolling out a “log” and cutting it into slightly different-size pieces. If you want a modern, machine-made look, then try to size them all the same.
- 3) For surface treatment, chalks are easy to control—Burnt Sienna over pale yellow is good!

media or methods you try, mini breads are easy and rewarding to make for your bakery.

Purchased items to add to bakery

- Wooden and metal spoons
- Flour scoop
- Bottle of olive oil
- Barrels, bins, and canisters
- Large knife for cutting slices
- Carton or bowl of eggs
- Broken eggs in a bowl.
- Cookie cutters

Note: I have personally seen all but one of these items at miniature shows in the past. They do exist! If you can't find them all now, add them to your bakery as part of the ongoing fun. It's always a thrill to find some new little thing. And, that way, your interest in your room box never wanes. Why not

make it a rule to take a look at each of your settings before you attend a show, and jot down in a little notebook what you would like to find for each one. Then you can keep it in your purse for reference—no forgetting once you're there! So many times, buyers have stood at my table (and most other dealers, too) and said: “I can't remember what I have and what I don't.”

Mini colour schemes

With a monochromatic colour scheme, it's actually quite easy to achieve something akin to mastery of colour in your room box. You must choose only one colour and several of its shades (also called tints or values) for the main furnishings, such as furniture, cabinetry, walls—even floors, if you like.



Refer to a colour wheel if you're not sure what to do; there are plenty in artists' how-to-paint books, along with explanations of how to use them. Then just pick several closely graduated shades, not a lot of different ones or ones far apart on the colour wheel. Decorators suggest using an uneven number of shades—say, three to five. This way, simplicity and harmony will lend a feeling of calm, groundedness, and inclusiveness to your work.

In some mini settings, just as in real-life decorating, elegance and a smooth, modern feeling can also be achieved this way—think of a ladies' room, done in tints of pearl, cream, and soft white. In other settings, the monochromatic colour scheme induces a soothing feeling of homeliness, dreaminess, or nostalgia, depending upon the chosen colour and subject; a universal example would be a palette of mid-blues, reminding us of a day at the beach we once knew or long to someday experience, or great grandmother's kitchen in shades of ecru, soft beige, and worn oak. And let's not for-

get the monochromatic setting which smacks of sophistication or drama as almost no other can: Envision a mini uptown cafe, or modern bar scene, done in either masses of slick bright red or textures in midnight black!

Speaking of texture and design—now, I've saved the best for last: the monochromatic colour scheme also especially makes individual shapes, textures, and designs within the room box stand out nicely. This is so important in miniatures, where twelfth scale texture must be teensy-tiny.

You can use flocked paper, glittery hard surfaces, faux marble, pearl finish, leatherette, round mirrors, pin striping, bamboo, parquet—the list goes on and on—without having concern for overwhelming the rest of your decorating. Remember the Mexican restaurant you were in, which had hand-troweled stucco walls, all painted an earthy gold or terracotta colour, and how they acted as a foil for the many hand-painted Spanish tiles within? That's a great example of monochromatic colours allowing other

Items you can create for your bakery

- Bread board: 3/32" thick basswood, stained maple or pine
- Marble slab: white polymer clay marbled together with tiny amount of grey shades
- Hand towel: cut from miniature check or plain fabric, fray-check product used on edges
- Flour barrel: filled with white chalk powder, or cream-colour grout powder for unbleached flour
- Flour sacks, both full and half-full: sewn from soft cotton fabric
- White sugar bin: filled with ultra-fine white craft sand
- Can or tub: filled with mixed transparent and white polymer clay
- Sticks or tubs of butter: filled with mixed transparent, white, and golden yellow polymer clay
- Dishes or bottles of "sprinkles": made from chopped, thin, coloured brush bristles
- Bottles of spices and coloured sugars: filled with coloured ultra-fine craft sands
- Unwrapped squares of bitter-sweet chocolate: chocolate colour polymer clay
- Raisins: poppy seeds coated with very dark brown acrylic paint



focal points to stand out (and wouldn't it make a great mini room box, too!).

Remember, your room will still need vibrancy, interest, and emphasis, so unless you're working with something as colourful as those tiles, be sure to add small dabs or pinpoints of other colours in your small items within the box, especially if you choose to add very little texture, as Jan did here. Just be sure to spread these touches fairly evenly around the interior to lend a sense of balance and further the harmony as well as to draw the eye to things you want to feature.

Knit a tiny dress for a beautiful little baby

Your little baby will look so cute in this gorgeous knitted outfit. The dress and pants would also look good draped on a cot in a nursery

BY DESNA TYSOE

This little outfit is a perfect fit for a twelfth scale baby doll. Follow along with Desna and knit your own in pink or the colour of our choice.

Dress front

With size 22 needles cast on 31sts.
K 4 rows.
Next row P1 (M1, P2tog) to end.

Pattern

1st row K14, M1, K3tog, M1, K14
2nd and 4th row P
3rd row K13, M1, K2tog, K1, K2tog, M1, K13
Repeat 4 pattern rows, 4 times.
Next row (K2tog) repeat 7 times, K3tog. (K2tog) to end. 15sts.
Next row Cast on 2sts, K2, P to end.
Next row Cast on 2sts, K4 (M1, K2tog, K1, K2tog, M1, K1) repeat once, K3.
Next row K2, P15, K2.
Next row K5 (M1, K3tog, M1, K3) repeat once, K2
Next row K2, P15, K2
Next row K4 (M1, K2tog, K1, K2tog, M1, K1) repeat once, K3
Next row K2, P15, K2

You will need

- DMC Cotton 80
- Needles US 4/0 (1.0mm) and 6/0 (.75mm) (UK size 18 and 22)
- Twelfth scale baby doll

Next row K5, M1, K3tog, M1, cast off 3, M1, K2tog, M1, K5
Work on first set of sts. K2, P to last 2, K2tog.
Next row K and cast off.
Rejoin yarn to other side P2tog.
P to last 2, K2.
K one row and cast off.

Back

Using size 22 needles, cast on 31sts.
K 4 row
Next row P1 (M1, P2tog) to end
Start K work 20 rows SS
Next row K2tog, 7 times, K3tog, K2tog, times
Next row Cast on 2, K2, P to end
Next row Cast on 2, K to end
Next row K2, P11, K2
Next row K
Repeat last 2 rows 4 times
Cast off.

Pants

Using size 22 needles cast on 15sts.
K 3 rows
Next row K1 (M1, K2tog) to end
SS 16 rows, starting P row.
Single rib 2 rows.
Cast off in rib.
Make another leg the same.

To make up dress

Sew in ends. Join side seams and one shoulder - put on doll and sew up other shoulder.

To make up pants

Sew in ends, Sew each leg up to 2 rows above the hole row. Open out and join two legs together with the seams coming centre front and back.

Cover

Using size 18 needles, cast on 27sts.
K 6 rows.

Pattern

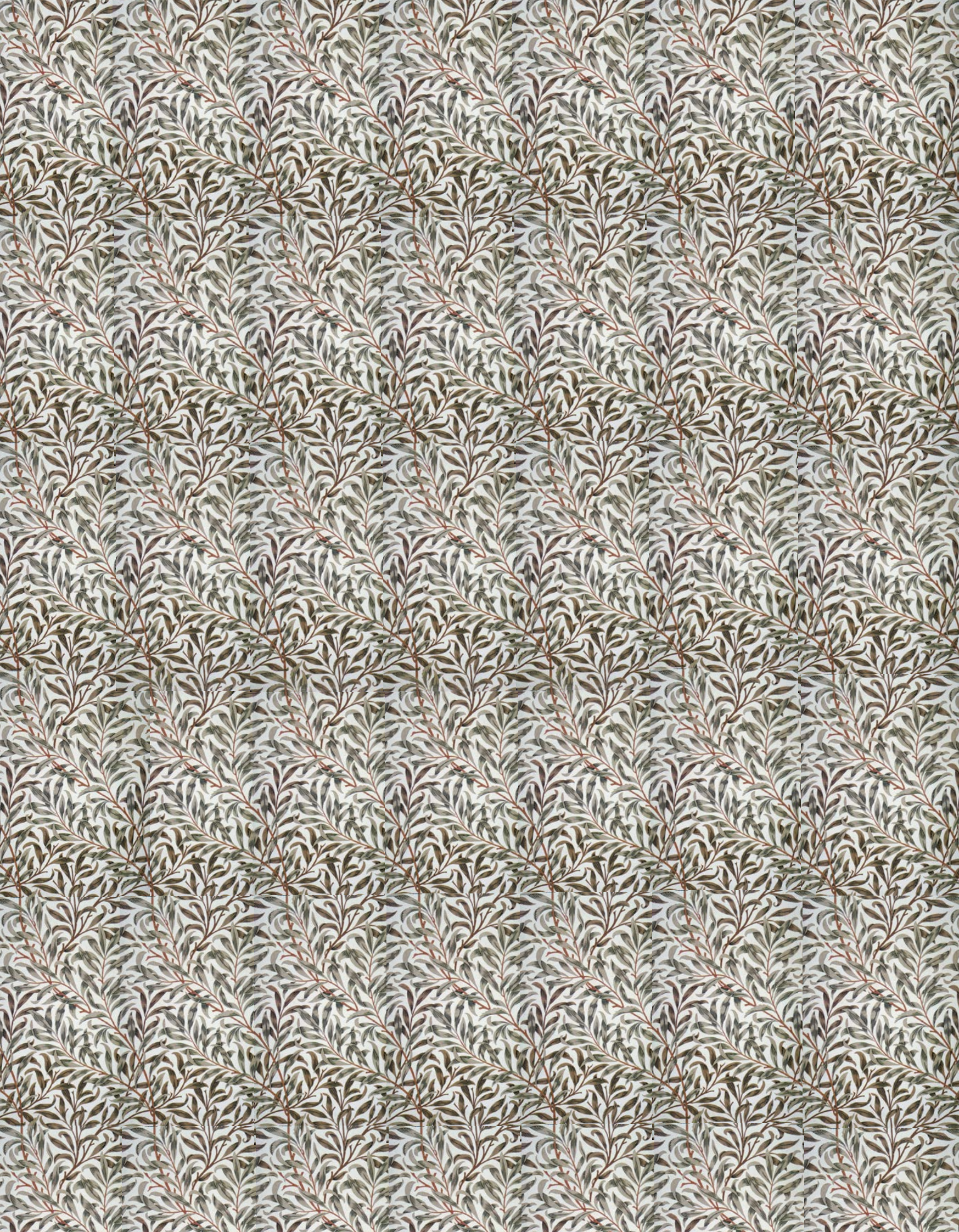
1st row K7, M1, K2tog, K1, K2tog, M1, K3, M1, K2tog, K1, K2tog, M1, K7 on 27sts.
2nd and 4th rows K5, P17, K5
3rd row K8, M1, K3tog, M1, K5, M1, K3tog, M1, K8
Repeat last 4 rows, 7 times K6 rows
Cast off. Sew in ends and press.
Slip on your doll and enjoy all your work!



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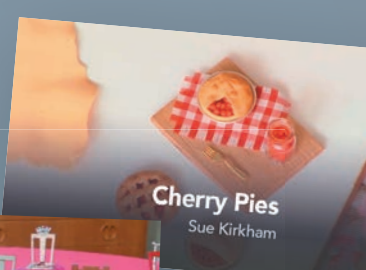
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SMALL TALK

WE CHAT WITH READER CHERRELL KNOWLES ABOUT HER LIFE IN MINIATURE

Hi Cherrell. It's great to talk to you. We hear you have one or two houses and room boxes. I have 38 in total so far.

Wow. Any particular period or style?

They're all different. I have a beautiful Victorian mansion, a large department store and a beautiful church, to name but a few. Others range from a fish and chip shop to an asylum and I've even got a funeral directors with a built-in mortuary

Tell us about your latest project. I already had 21 houses but I saw this unusual shaped building and once again ideas just popped into my head. I just thought what a fantastic ice cream parlour it would make. And I didn't have one of those. But in my collection of accessories, bought over many years, I had lots of ice cream bits and pieces. And so the idea grew.

There's a lot going on over the three floors? I made the bottom floor into a shop selling bread, cakes and ice cream. Two little boys are calling in for a well-deserved ice cream after their afternoon of playing with their remote control cars. The second floor is my ice cream parlour, while the top floor I made into my internet cafe. I made the laptops myself, which I am very pleased with. I also bought an ice cream van to sit outside.

So you do buy some things? I do like to make



things myself and will have a go: laptops, phones and the children's hand sets for the cars being some of the things I made. But if there is a doll's house show or a doll's house shop (or even on the internet) I'm there. I love to buy minis. Even if I don't have a place for them I will buy them and store them until I buy a building for them to go into. I have quite a collection of furniture and accessories so I am sure there will be another house coming along.

When did your mini madness begin? I bought my first house, Montgomery Hall, over 20 years ago as an undecorated flat

pack kit. I built and dressed it with a little help from my husband. He is a star because I have turned one of the large bedrooms into a room just for the houses and he helped me build shelves and get them all into place. He did quite a bit of head shaking but, bless him, he helps me build my dream.

Did you start adding other houses straight away? No, I didn't start collecting other houses until 12 years or so later. But now I am hooked and I can see many, many more making their way into my life.

How would you describe yourself? I am a Yorkshire lass with a massive mini passion and proud of it.



"He did quite a bit of head shaking but, bless him, he helps me build my dream."

● 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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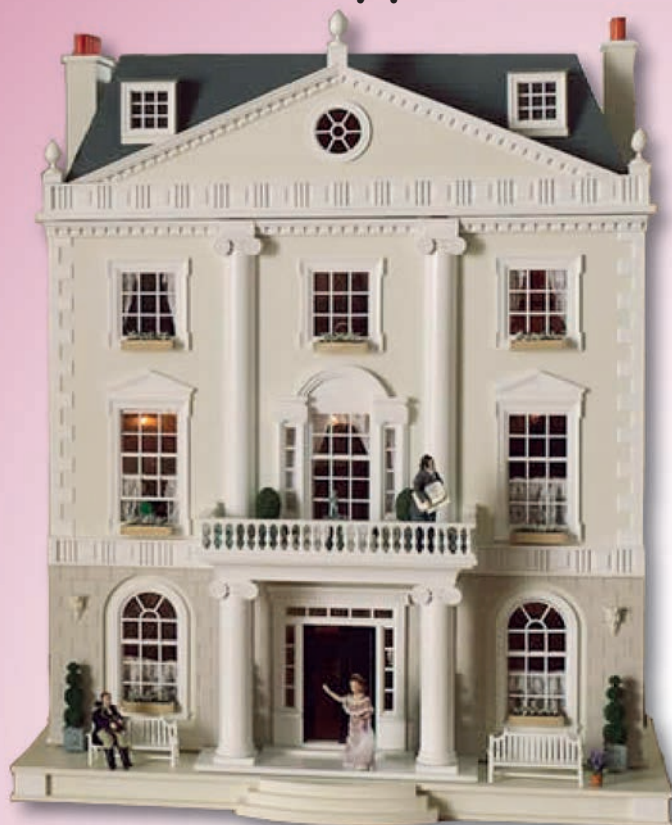
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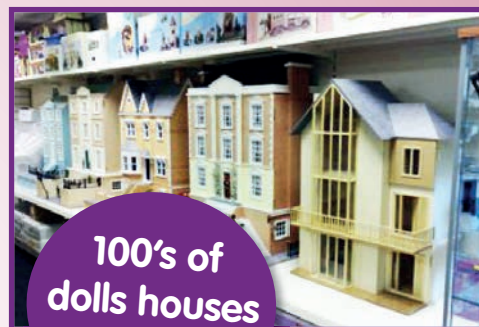
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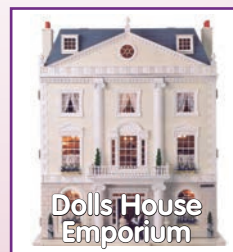
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