

DOLLSHOUSE WORLD

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small details

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welcome

Summer's drawing to a close and the evenings are getting longer. That's good news as it means you can

get back into full mini-making mode again without feeling slightly guilty you should be outdoors.

It also signals that shows are thankfully starting to return with the major events like Miniatura and Kensington Dollhouse Festival both up and running.

If you can't make either don't worry. Put your feet up with a cup of coffee and enjoy this issue as we take you on a tour of some wonderful houses and roomboxes.

I'm sure you'll be captivated by the magical Peter Pan nursery which proved to be a real family affair. There's a house with 56 teapots hidden away, a fabulous sparkling jewellery store and a slightly more rustic shop built in an old orange crate. We've got so many rooms in so many different styles to show you.

Some amazing makers too, with some fascinating stories. Agnes Horvath found a mini cake-making tutorial on You Tube by accident and was whisked right in. "I can't explain the feeling when you hold that first piece of mini food in your hand," she said. "It's like you got an entry into a tiny, secret world. I knew from the first second that I wanted to make more."

Timea Vajonne discovered the hobby when she came across a twelfth scale display on a day trip in West Sussex and admits to being "mesmerised by this miniature world". She now sells her characters to miniaturists around the world.

We've got lots of mini makes for you this issue too, plus some William Morris wallpaper and Beatrix Potter covers to cut out. And if you want to indulge in a last sunshine project then try your hand at the welly planters. They'll remind you of summer all winter long.

Richard.

email: richard@ashdown.co.uk

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HOUSE HUNT



Find the little house hidden inside.

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Quote of the month:

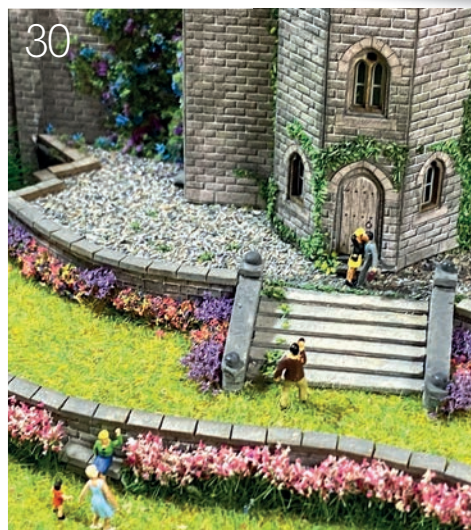
"Sometimes it's just the little things that make you happy."

Anon



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.

Cover story: Izabela Kononowicz's shop reflects her love of flowers and miniatures. Meet the Maker on P37.





How Peter Pan nursery became a family affair



Karen Bond's house is still a work in progress but she has let us into the finished nursery which is based on one of her favourite childhood books

BY SANDRA HARDING

When I am chatting to doll's house owners about their projects I often ask if this was all their own work, and often it is. However, this adorable Peter Pan nursery not only involved the owner, Karen Bond, but almost her entire family.

I was very interested to learn that this is, in fact, just one room from a large doll's house bought for Karen's fiftieth birthday. Inside there is a mas-

querade ball going on in the ballroom, and I really hope to show you more of this later if I ask nicely. In fact, I am told that several of the rooms depict scenes from Karen's favourite childhood books, and now I am really intrigued and want to show you them all.

Before I get too excited and ahead of myself, let's get back to this room. Karen admits that her hands aren't too steady, so daughter Charlotte



painted the beautiful beds and the cuckoo clock. Her two sons Chris and Lewis helped with the painting, plastering and wallpapering and her mum, Pauline, knitted the blankets and dressed Michael and John, who are in bed. Karen has dressed both Peter and Wendy, and they are just gorgeous. She also hand sewed and embroidered the sheets, pillowcases and eiderdowns. More gorgeousness.

In this room we see Peter, who has found his shadow in a drawer, and Wendy who has sewn it back on for him. They have exchanged 'kisses', an acorn button and a silver thimble while Tinkerbelle is sitting on top of the cuckoo clock sulking. Peter has taken

some of her fairy dust to help Wendy fly you see, and Wendy is practising, and doing well.

Interestingly, whilst Karen was researching, she discovered that fairy dust was a later addition to the play. Originally, Peter and the lost boys could fly unaided but after several reports of real children injuring themselves whilst attempting to fly from their beds, JM Barrie added fairy dust as a necessary factor for taking to the skies. John and Michael are tucked up in bed unaware of the rumpus going on above them as Michael is dreaming about pirates and John is hugging his beloved teddy bear.

Nana, made by Annie Willis, is at the

door outside and knows something is going on, but can't get in. The children were made by Pat Alston (Tiny Treasures) and the tiny slippers are by Jo Dykes. The cheetah pullalong toy and the jack-in-the-box were made by Sandra Morris of Tower House Dolls, who also made the kits for the small doll's house bookcase, the toy theatre and some boxed toys. Many of the other items Karen had in stock and, luckily, she was able to find Beatrix Potter wallpaper.

Karen tells me that the house is very much a work in progress and I really hope that we can show you more of these magical, fairy tale rooms when they are ready.



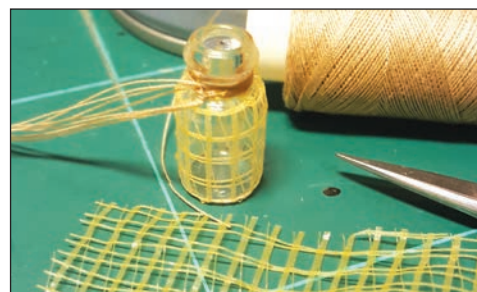
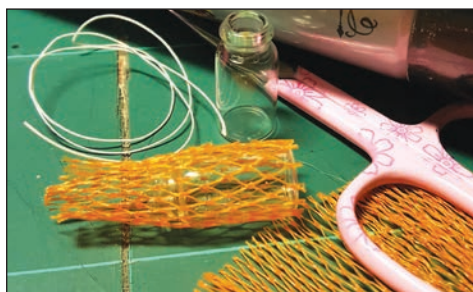


Make little twine covered jars with packaging nets

You've taken out the garlic and satsumas from the bags and you're wondering how to use the netting in a mini project? Elize has the answer

BY ELIZE VAN ES

I have no macramé or weaving skills at all, so to take on this challenge I had to think outside the box. While grocery shopping, my eye focused in on the packaging net used for the onions, potatoes and garlic. So I did a little experimentation with re-purposing.



Step 2. Glue the strip to the bottle/jar. Let it dry for 30 minutes when using spray glue and for 1 hour if your using tacky glue.



Step 1. Measure the bottle/jar and cut a strip of the packaging net that's a bit larger.

You will need

- Packaging nets for garlic or onions
- Little glass bottles or jars
- Thread to match the colour of the packaging nets
- Tacky glue or spray glue
- Scissors



Step 3. Wind the thread around the top and secure. (I like making a knot but gluing will work too).

Step 4. Cut off all the threads that stick out.

That's it! It is such an easy way to add interest to these common glass jars.



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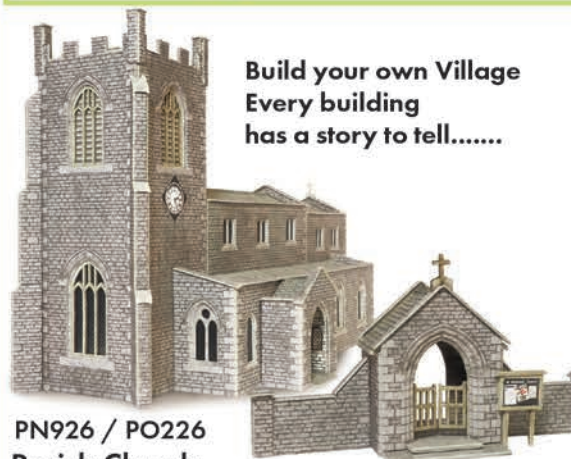


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Art studio is a perfect gift to lifelong friend

Quarantine has inspired many artists to create beautiful work, and that's exactly what Kelly Little has done with this roombox made with her heart and soul

BY SANDRA HARDING

Kelly Little created this charming studio during Covid quarantine for her dear artist friend, Eric Ebert.

The custom-made box is personalised and measures 10" x 12" with the name 'The Heart & The Soul' on the front of the box. Kelly believes that every artist puts their heart and soul into their work, and I can't argue with that.

All of the paintings and drawings inside are by Eric, with the exception of the rabbit with a bow on it, painted by Greg Simkins. He is a popular artist and Kelly always promised Eric one of his paintings, and a mini version seemed an excellent way to do it.

The only purchased items in this room are the Buddha and the monk figures, made by Mike Guidry, lights bought from Minimum World, and the record player that actually spins, which is a toy keychain. Everything else has been made by Kelly and means

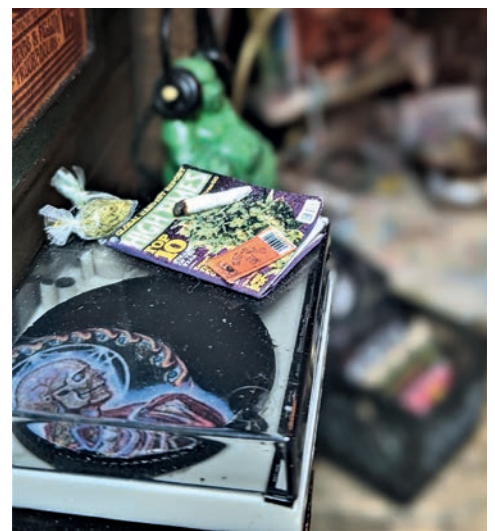
something special to Eric. The very effective picture outside the window is of the courthouse in Greenfield, Indiana, just because it was the view from Eric's apartment.

There is a photograph of his daughter on the desk, his favourite books and music are represented along with his many other interests. You can even tell the cigarettes he smokes. Kelly has created a lot of symbolism in this room and, as she has known him since they were teenagers, she understands him well.

As a teen Eric lived above a store which was a very cool, old brick building, and so Kelly decided on a brick effect for the studio. As they both like graffiti Kelly has added their initials, along with the year they met, to the outside brickwork.

I think this is a truly lovely gift to a friend - well done Kelly, a forever memento.





Agnes loves tiny, secret world she's discovered

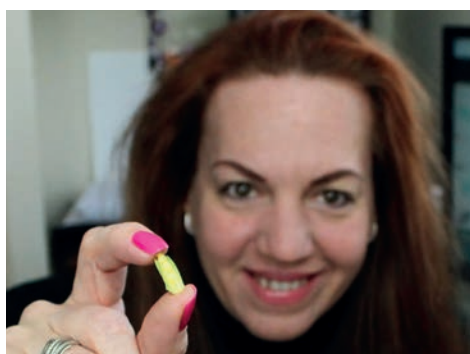
We chat with Agnes Horvath of Aggies Miniatures. She works 16 hours a day, with no days off, making minis and selling a new invention. And she couldn't be happier

BY ALICE MONROE

Hi Agnes, tell us how you discovered miniatures? It all started with a miniature cake making tutorial on YouTube. It was so cute and looked very realistic. I was curious to find out if I was capable of making a realistic miniature myself. I didn't know that people made miniatures for collectors. I made some cake and doughnuts as practice, and I loved them so much. I can't explain the feeling when you hold that first piece of mini food in your hand. It's like you got an entry into a tiny, secret world. I knew from the first second that I wanted to make more.

And that was only recently? Yes, I'm a newbie. I made my very first miniature in April 2019 and I sold my first one on Etsy two months later. I had worked with polymer clay before but it was only a relaxing hobby at weekends.

Where does your inspiration come from? It comes mostly from the past. I studied history and cultural anthropology. My last job in Hungary was in an auction house in Budapest. When I see



a vintage stool I want to make a replica in twelfth scale. If I see an old photo of a family's festive holiday I want to make all the traditional food or Christmas ornaments in miniature.

Where are you based now? I live with my husband in London. We love London, but we would like to move into our own house somewhere in Yorkshire as soon as the housing market goes back to normal. We were both brought up in the same small town, Kazincbarcika, Hungary. We miss nature, the hills and fields so much.

Do you collect as well as make? I would love to, but we live in a one-bedroom flat in Central London. Running our family business requires too much space already. We have 8-10 large machines, from printers to cutting machines, as well as materials. I'm lucky that we don't have time to live our personal life because



we have no place for that. I can't wait to move into a bigger house. After that my plan is to build the most realistic doll's houses in the world and fill them with accessories from artists I admire.

That's quite a plan. Do you own a doll's house art the moment? Yes, I do. I got my first doll's house from Gill Brian in 2019. Her husband, Terry, built a beautiful little Tudor style pub around 1995. The renovation of this little house is on my endless to-do list. Until then I use it as a background for my photo shoots.

Tell us about your latest pieces? I'm just working on a few wheelbarrows for the autumn collection. For me the harvest season and winter are the busiest periods. My flickering Jack-o-lanterns are very popular every year and I try to make 10-15 for every season. The working snow globes are the other most popular pieces.

What do your family think of your work? My mum is my biggest fan. She lives in Hungary but we see each other every day on Skype. I always show her every piece, mostly in photos, because the camera can't capture these tiny things. Even nowadays when people ask my mum what her daughter does in the UK, she's in trouble. She needs to explain first what a scale doll's house is. However, the biggest supporter of my work is my perfect husband. He





supports me whatever I do. When I'm struggling in my work, he always has a useful idea. He's always ready to help — that's how he invented the Pac-Pen tool.

The what? The Pac-Pen (pictured above). In 2018 I was making a design with lots of polka dots and it was a nightmare to clean the cutters every time I used them. My lovely husband said he would find a solution. And he did. He made a plunger cutter with interchangeable nozzles. When I tried it for the first time I told him we needed to show it to everybody in the polymer clay community, because professionals can't live without it. And I was right. Polymer clay artists around the

world love it. We have had more than a thousand happy customers so far just through recommendations. This is the only plunger micro cutter on the market for miniature makers with twelfth scale cutters. We are very proud that we didn't advertise our tool and didn't share it directly in social media groups. This is the very first time that I have talked about it in public.

Any other hobbies or passions? I have an endless list. I'm a bookworm. Do you know the girl who doesn't want to go out and play with other kids because she prefers to read the second or third book in a week? That was me. My perfect evening: book, herbal tea and blanket. Yes, I am super boring.

There's also history, anthropology and ethnography — passions which are a lifestyle for me. If you love them, you see them everywhere. You can think from this perspective only. You want to save and share desperately everything from the past — objects, knowledge, memories. I have lots more hobbies, including yoga — I'd like to do it daily, but I'm lazy.

What advice would you give to your younger self? Don't waste your time!

Do you plan your work or do you dive right in? I think both. I am that kind of person who plans everything. I have three or four planners, one for my daily to-do list, one for work only. I use





stickers and Excel spreadsheets, even diagrams to record everything. I have a strict timetable for when I should make miniatures for my shop or when to take photo shots of the new Pac-Pen nozzles. Then I see something that inspires me and I want to make it straight away. And I do, even if it destroys all my plans for the next few days or weeks.

Where do you sell? My main platform is my website, of course. www.AgnesHorvath.co.uk That's the home of my work. I list all of my miniatures there first and take commissions online. You can also find the full range of Pac-Pen nozzles there. I still use Etsy as a secondary platform, for those who are more comfortable to buy miniatures or micro cutters via marketplaces. My shop name is Aggiesminiatures. I would like to exhibit at Kensington Dollshouse Festival one day, but I think I need another few years to make enough miniatures to fill up a table.

Other makers you admire? There are many artists from different fields whom I admire. Tatiana Bugai, Katie



Doka, Craig Labenz, they all work on a really high level that I would like to achieve one day. Back in 2019 the very first artist who impressed me was Tanja Jensen. I'm sure her professional tutorials, which were available on her website, saved me from months, or years, of experimenting. The real gold in her tutorials for me is the tons of information about high quality materials and tools. But William R. Robertson is my absolute role model. His work represents everything, history in twelfth scale, accurate replicas, a passion for antiques, that I love in miniatures. It's how I'd like to work in the next few decades.

It's obviously the historical element of minis that you love most? Miniatures are like books. There is a room filled with old furniture, you can see how people lived 50 years ago; how they spent their days in their homes, what kind of toys the kids played with; how they decorated their walls. There is some food on the table, so you can see what they ate back in those days. And all that information you can hold in your hand as a tiny diorama. I think that's amazing.

Where do you work? I have a desk in the corner of our living room which is not a living room anymore. Instead of a flat it's better to call it a work studio with a bed.

Have you ever had a piece go horribly wrong? Oh, yes. If my work is not perfect, I don't keep it. I learned years ago that it's easier (and much quicker) to make a new piece than try to fix the one which went wrong. I can always use the scrap clay for something else. This mentality is the opposite of what I think we should do with real life objects.

Lovely to talk to you Agnes. We better let you get on with those wheelbarrows.

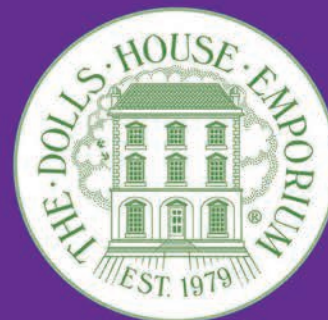


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Finish first

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

Getting the right finishing effect can take some trial and error. I wanted to share a few products I enjoy using.

To make a crackling effect, I use FolkArt Crackle Medium but it seems it works best when paired with Ceramcoat paints verses other Folk Art paints, which I thought was odd, but you can test for your own results. Regular Elmer's white glue works too. You just have to paint over it at the right dry time to get a nice crackle. Make a test sheet and write dry times and paints used above each test area.

I could never seem to find a matte varnish that didn't look rubbery when applied, until I stumbled upon a satin varnish that wasn't 'satin' at all! Folk Art 792 Satin Finish has the perfect matte finish. Deco Art Americana DuraClear satin varnish is my absolute favourite for a beautiful satin finish. Note the matt varnish from Deco Art will have a rubbery finish.

Usually for a rendered interior I would use filler. Recently I started using an amazing Golden product for exterior render. It is so easy and requires no sanding! Golden Coarse Moulding Paste. It is an opaque acrylic medium with a sandy texture. You can apply with a putty knife and smooth out carefully. It dries hard with a nice texture. Sample is on the wall with my mailbox on it.



Step up with these fun welly planters

These little welly boots are fun to make out of polymer clay and will be a great addition to a front porch or summer scene

BY SADIE BROWN

If you're still putting some finishing touches on a miniature summer themed project, these happy little rain boots are just what you need!

Step 1. Mix white polymer clay with a rich blue, creating two different shades, one bright and one pale. Mix a third shade by adding a little black clay to some blue, making dark blue. Mix this with white to create a powder blue colour.



Step 2. Mould the mixed clays into the basic shapes of three pairs of wellies, using 1.5cm balls of clay for the larger boots and 1.2cm balls for the smaller pair.



Step 3. Use a small ball tool to create a hole in the top of each welly.



Step 4. Use the side of a paintbrush stem to create a small 'dip' at the back of the underside of each boot for the heel to fit.

You will need

- Polymer clay - white, blue, black
- Extra fine acrylic paint pens - white, light blue, yellow
- Small paintbrush
- Small ball tool
- Self-adhesive landscape flower tufts - blue, white, yellow
- 3mm blue and yellow ribbon
- Small piece of blue paper (ideally blue on one side, white on the reverse)
- Small twig/length of wood or piece from old twelfth scale bamboo basket
- Matt varnish
- Glue stick
- Super glue
- Scissors



Step 5. Roll one small piece of white clay into a tube for each boot and flatten the front end into the flat end of the sole, shaping the back into the heel. Place one sole on each boot and, again using the side of a small paintbrush stem, create an arch to divide up the flat portion of the sole and the heel. Roll a 2mm ball of bright blue clay and bake this alongside the wellies. Allow everything to cool and place clay to the side.

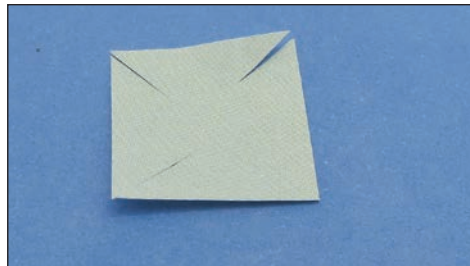


Step 6. Use extra fine acrylic paint pens to add polka dot patterns to the wellies. Decorate the light blue wellies with yellow dots, the bright blue with light blue dots and the powder blue with white dots. Allow to dry and coat with matt varnish.

Once dry, cut lengths of 3mm ribbon in blue and yellow, securing into position around the tops of each pair of wellies with a dot of super glue at the ends.



Step 7. Stick pieces of self-adhesive landscape flower tuft inside the top of the wellies.



Step 8. Cut a small 1.4cm square of paper, ideally blue on one side and white on the reverse. Make a small cut, a few millimetres in length at each corner, going towards the centre.



Step 9. Place the paper blue side up and fold alternate corners towards the centre, forming the windmill/pinwheel, sticking into place with a glue stick. Use super glue to stick the 2mm ball of blue clay to the centre of the windmill.



Step 10. Take a tiny twig, length of wood or even a piece of bamboo from an old twelfth scale basket and paint with the light blue acrylic paint pen. Allow to dry and coat with matt varnish. Once the varnish has dried, glue the stick to the back of the windmill. Next, use the same acrylic paint pen to add polka dots to both the white sections of the windmill and the ball at the centre.

Step 11. Glue the windmill stem into the top of one of the powder blue wellies.



Aida's painted pieces reflect glorious past

For this Spanish artist, miniatures are her passion and her life. You can witness that deep feeling for creating in every brush stroke that makes up these masterpieces

BY DEB WEISSLER

As she carefully applies gilding to a centuries-old-inspired piece of furniture, Spanish miniature artist Aida Pravia is already envisioning her next design while working at home in her studio. Trained in Fine Art and Art History at the University of Oviedo in Northwest Spain, Aida has garnered awards for both her full size restorations and her miniature creations.

"From a very early age I felt the need to express myself through drawing and painting," Aida recalls. "I complemented these studies at university with graphic and engraved design. At the end of my studies, I specialised in the restoration of ancient religious sculptures and church altarpieces, including techniques in gold leaf (Pan de oro) and elaborate painted emulations of woven textiles known as Estofado."

Aida also learned the art of painting and restoring full size antique furniture. "I apply the same techniques I use on my full size pieces: lacquer, decapé, gold leaf, stucco, and oil painting decorative details. This type of furniture is one of the most decorated and complex in the world."

The history of painted furniture is as old as organised society. The ancient Egyptians perfected the art of painting and gilding the fine furniture of their time. In addition to a wealthy Egyptian's decorated sarcophagus, his worldly possessions were seen not just as works of art, but elegant acces-

sories that would accompany him into the afterlife.

The Greeks and Romans adopted this expression of refinement, employing highly trained wood and stone carvers, painters and gilders to create frescoes, sculptural reliefs, furniture and objects of religious significance. Despite the interruptions of the Dark Ages, medieval craftsmen were employed to enhance secular furniture and objects of religious devotion as altars and cathedral interiors became increasingly elaborate.

As with any art form, painted furnishings mirrored the societies they were exposed to. During the Renaissance, exposure to the Orient influenced European décor with the introduction of Chinese lacquer. By the 18th century, painted furniture reached new levels of refinement known as Rococo.

Venice produced some of the world's great furniture, with extravagant designs, sumptuous fabrics, girandole mirrors, chandeliers crafted of Murano glass, rich lacquer and Chinoiserie. It is this era that Aida has recreated here in miniature.

Aida always liked doll's houses but as a child she never owned one. In 1990 she began making miniature furniture for a local miniature shop, which led to her first doll's house contest. In 1995 she took first prize in the artist-made furniture category and from that moment on she dedicated all her



Above: Baroque inspired wardrobe decorated with landscapes. This piece was hand-painted with oil paints.

Right: A close up of an in-progress wardrobe that is lavishly decorated with fine garlands of flowers and arabesques.

spare time to miniatures. She began creating items for sale in a number of stores and began attending several international miniature fairs throughout Spain, the UK and USA. Fifteen years ago she opened a workshop to not only display her pieces but to teach workshops in building and finishing. She also has an Etsy store.

But her favourite spot is in her home workshop with shelves filled with min-



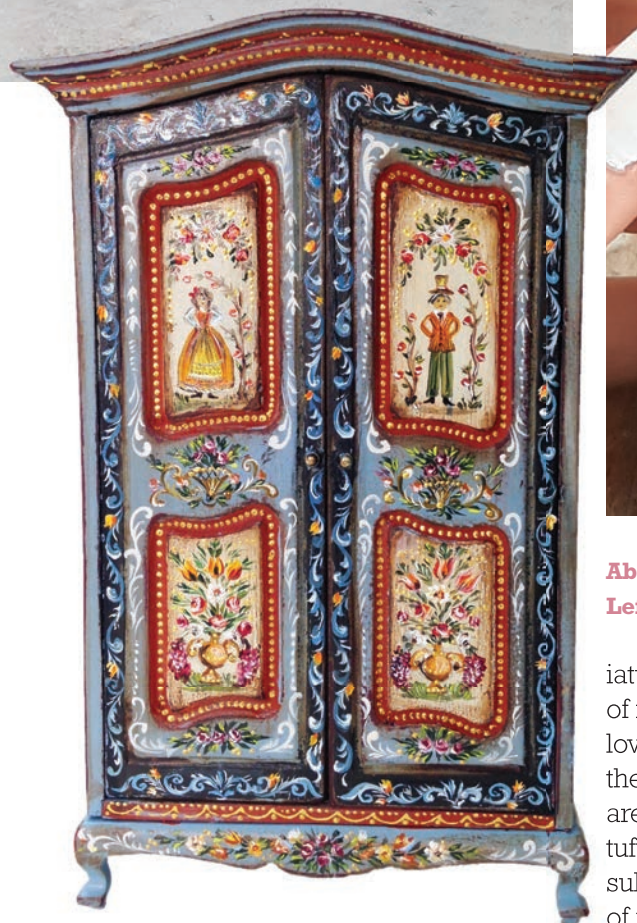
“During the Renaissance, exposure to the Orient influenced European décor with the introduction of Chinese lacquer.”



Above: This two-storey doll's house is filled with delicate hand-painted designs.

Above right: Hand-painted nursery furniture inspired by vintage illustrations.

Right: The wardrobe was painted in a French country style.



Above: This rooster themed lavender sideboard and dish ware were hand-painted with oils.
Left: This highly detailed wardrobe was inspired by Bauernmalerei folk painting.

atures, dioramas and vignettes. "Most of my furniture is handmade, but I also love to paint commercial pieces to give them a new look. Many of my pieces are painted with pastoral landscapes, tufting, mouldings and fabrics. As a result of my imagination, I love the world of fantasy. Upon entering my store,

many shoppers tell me it's like stepping into a story."

Aida's process is extremely laborious, beginning with a thorough sanding, priming, and sanding again until the wood surface is smooth as silk. Once the surface is prepared, lacquer of various colours are applied, with



Above and left: This piece recently sold at the Kensington Dollshouse Festival for £1500.
Above right: A Little Red Riding Hood inspired bedroom set.



additional sanding between layers. Then gilding is applied to all the mouldings, followed by decorative details done in oils. The finished piece is protected with a special varnish and aged.

The featured closet or wardrobe here was inspired by an eighteenth century Venetian closet has been displayed in the New York Metropolitan Museum. It recently sold at the Kensington Dollshouse Festival for £1500. Looking back on the project, Aida said: "My favourite part of this piece were the doors and the delicacy of the flowers."

Her wardrobes, bombe dressers, dressed beds, secretaries and ex-

quisite room boxes are pure perfection. Her children's furniture speak of fairytales and nursery rhymes. Each piece is meticulously executed and hand-painted. No need for art on the walls; her furniture is the art!

"The time I dedicate to my miniatures is seemingly 24 hours a day," smiles Aida. If I am not working, I am teaching a workshop or thinking about a new project. I have so many new ideas that I do not have enough hours in the day to be able to carry them out. My job — my miniatures — is my life and my passion."



LITTLE LINKS:

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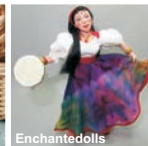
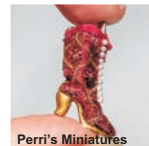
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Annmarie named Manor in honour of Olympics

The year Annmarie LaBella was working on the broadcasting team for NBC Sports, covering the Centennial Olympics, just happened to be the year she bought a new doll's house

BY SANDRA HARDING

Now this is something I rarely get the chance to tell you about: a side-opening, thoroughly kit-bashed, very interesting and beautiful manor, named after the 1996 Centennial Olympics. I bet that's got your interest.

In 1996 Annmarie LaBella was working on the broadcasting team for NBC Sports, and that year the Olympics was held in Georgia. It was also the year that Annmarie bought The Manor, which she christened Centennoly Manor, in honour of the Olympics.

It is 53" tall, 29" wide and 33" deep, and was made by the Lawbre Com-

pany. Annmarie ordered 'The Winchester' from their brochure, a house based on the San Franciscan Painted Lady. However, as she was originally a New Yorker, she wanted it altered to be more like a brownstone house, and she also wanted some minor changes made to it, including different windows.

It was happily decorated and furnished until, about four years ago, Annmarie decided on a complete overhaul, including the removal of the entire fourth floor. Mind you, it has now gained another four rooms and a roof deck instead of one attic, and it looks grand.



In the dining room, the fireplace was originally white, but Annmarie painted it to co-ordinate with the blue wainscoting. The kitchen cupboards and counter tops came in kit form, so Annmarie assembled and stained them to the style and colour she wanted. In the music room, a window seat was made and a standard bookcase was customised to better fit the wall, and I adore Mrs Daintee's teapot collection.

I am told there are 56 teapots scattered through the house by many makers, including six by Janice Crawley. What a fabulous collection. There is a man cave, and in this room the wallpa-











per mural was too short to cover the walls, so Annmarie added wood trim. There is even a hidden powder room, built behind a wall under the stairs. I love the fact that there is something different in every room in this house.

Annmarie is no newcomer to our miniature world. She even remembers having a tin doll's house when she was five with plastic furniture which she knew was too small. She later had a lovely Barbie doll and house which lasted for a few more of her childhood years.

When she was nineteen she visited a local flea market and met a lady called Elaine who was selling doll's houses and miniatures, and she just knew she had to have one. She decided on The Highland by Greenleaf and

“I am told there are 56 teapots scattered through the house by many makers.”

told her brother that she was saving up to get it. Luckily he told her parents, who bought it for her for Christmas. Elaine eventually opened a shop and taught Annmarie a lot about miniatures.

The Daintee family live in The Manor and are Heidi Ott ball-jointed dolls. Dean is a lawyer who plays the piano and his wife Donna is a professional artist. They have four-year-old twins, Dex and Diana, and baby Darla. They live in New York City with their Papil-

lon Dominic and a greyhound named Gertrude, who they have adopted after a dear friend passed away, which is how Annmarie acquired her.

As well as The Manor Annmarie now has a Vermont Farmhouse, by Real Good Toys, The Litchfield by Earth & Tree Dollhouse Miniatures, and a fairy house, made from scraps of wood. Although there are no doll's house shops close to Annmarie in Florida, where she now lives, she manages to visit the Fun in the Sun Miniature Show in Sarasota, and Ron's Miniature Shop when she is in Orlando.

Annmarie has given me some information about the properties mentioned above and has whetted my appetite. I will ask her nicely if we can show you more of these later.

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Jane has tower power creating tiny castle

Jane Crosland had a steep learning curve when she started on a card kit designed for model railways, but her efforts have paid off handsomely

BY SANDRA HARDING



I know that this can't actually be called a doll's house, and I know the size isn't for everyone but, as a miniaturist, could you have possibly ignored it? I couldn't, so from one dollshouser to another, I hope you enjoy looking at this delightful creation by Jane Crosland as much as I did.

I was astonished to find that it is actually made from card and came as a kit made by model railway suppliers Metcalfe (see contact details below and their advert on P9). It is classed in railway terms as N gauge and, having built my son a railway layout in that scale, more years ago than I will admit to, I know it's small.

Jane tells me the whole thing measures 11" by 16" and is the smallest scale she has ever worked in, although

the biggest scene she's created. It took her about 90 hours to make.

Although the kit comes ready printed Jane was able to adapt and change the look and the layout as she wanted, which she did most successfully. The steps were made using card and stone look paper and the concrete balls are painted beads.

Although she had a few attempts to get the look she wanted she is pleased with the end result. The trees in the scene were all purchased but since then Jane has learned how to make her own, which hopefully we will get to see in another of her creations. The pretty flower borders are all made using Flowersoft.

I was fascinated to learn that the grass is made to stand up by using a gizmo (Jane's description) that creates static (well I never). It's time consuming I am told, but worth the effort. For those of you who want to have a go it's a Pro Grass Micro Applicator made by War World Scenics. Good luck to you.

This was Jane's first foray into making water so she painted the wooden base, taped the edges and poured in the resin, a very scary moment Jane admits, but it turned out better than she expected. The ducks and extra little touches were bought and added whenever she saw something suitable, and I think the highlight has to be the little people who are all about half-an-inch high and very busy doing things.

The castle has an amazing history





and is now looked after by the people of Yorkshire. It is open to the public and gets thousands of visitors a year, some of whom you can see today. They are taking no notice of the workmen, who seem in imminent danger of falling off the wall. Well, that's fantasy for you.

Considering that Jane has been at our miniaturist lark for only two years, I find the castle quite amazing. She admits it has been a steep learning curve; she does not think of herself as artistic but has learnt intense patience and care.

I also see a great attention to detail in the castle which is so important in our lovely hobby. I look forward to seeing more of Jane's little creations.



LITTLE LINKS:

Metcalfe Models
web: www.metcalfe-models.com
tel: 01729 830072



show&tell

MAKERS SHOW THEIR WORK AND TALK ABOUT THEIR MINI LIFE



Timea Vajonne of Enchantedolls shows us her dolls and tells us a little about the love that goes into making them

Hi Timea. Tell us about your dolls. I make twelfth scale OOAK miniature polymer clay dolls with big personalities. My popular characters are gypsies, old craftsmen and craftswomen as well as grannies and grandpas. In 2019 I was involved in a charity project raising money for injured soldiers, by Paul Woolnough, who made a beautiful house set at the time of WW1. I made the Mercian regiment soldiers as well as Private Derby, the ram mascot. It was a challenging task, but a humbling one and I was very proud to be involved.

What is special about your characters? I try to make every doll special, individual and inspired by real life.

Sometimes it's humorous, sometimes it's cheerful or sad. I always position them doing something, to capture a moment in life.

I feel they are special because of the delicate details and the emotion on their faces. It's always heartwarming when they put a smile on someone's face. That's one of the reasons I miss live shows, to meet face to face with customers and collectors.

How did you discover miniatures? As an Eastern European I had not heard of the hobby before. I came across a miniature exhibition on a day trip to Leonardslee Gardens in West Sussex. It is a beautiful display by Helen Holland depicting life as it was c.1900. I was mesmerised by this miniature world. I bought her book and then I started to research and read about this new world. In the same year I got my first polymer clay for Christmas. I taught myself to sculpt little figures.

Where is home? Home is the sunniest town in the south of England — Eastbourne. Although I was born in Hungary I have been in England since 2005.

Do you have another job in the real world? My real world job is in the NHS. I work in the local hospital, on the ophthalmology ward, helping people to see again after their operation.

I meet many interesting people with fascinating hobbies. Their life

improves after eye surgery so they can enjoy their hobbies again.

How do you cope with a busy job and making your dolls? It's not very easy to combine the two as I work full time. Sometimes it feels like a vicious circle, as the more dolls I make and sell the more time I need to make them. And I need time for other things, as I love travelling and going on day trips or to see a show. I wish there were at least 30 hours in a day.

But you have another relaxing hobby? Yes. I have three fish tanks in the lounge and I love to create underwater worlds for my tropical fish and shrimps. It's very fascinating to watch and breed them. My local fish store relies on me as their shrimp supplier. You can waste so much time just sitting and watching them. It's very calming and relaxing so it's time well spent really.

What's the one tool you can't live without? No tool, but my dear husband's support, help, modelling and love I couldn't live without.

What makes you pull your hair out? I am a very laid back, calm person so not many things make me pull my hair out. Only thing is if my two black cats jump on my workplace and start to play with my bits and pieces. I







have to catch them and regain what is mine. This is never easy, but I cannot be angry with them for long. So soon they are back on my table again.

Do you plan your people or do you dive right in? I do plan my characters in advance. I get an idea in my head then research the relevant pictures or information. If I work on commissioned work, I measure all the time. It takes so many hours of work for just the face to be similar to the one requested. When I start to create them they look nothing like

a human, more of an alien, but as I work on the details they emerge as I imagined them (most of the time). Clothing and hair is the final step. Every little step really transforms them into a character. The whole process is very satisfying.

What are your plans for the future? I have the privilege to make some dolls for the Pendon museum in Oxfordshire, where the scenes and roomboxes show English rural life around 1930. It is an amazing place to spend some time and learn about the past. My other plans are to cut

my hours in my full time job and concentrate more time on my small people.

Where can readers buy your miniatures – do you attend fairs? I do attend KDF London and Miniatura Birmingham. I have an Etsy store as well: [etsy.com/uk/shop/EnchantedollsByTimea](https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/EnchantedollsByTimea)

Do you still love miniatures, even though it's no longer a hobby to you? Miniature doll making will always be part of my life. I cannot imagine life without creating my characters as it gives me and others happiness.

I never feel bored of them and always get excited about new projects. I have so many characters waiting to be born.



LITTLE LINKS:

Enchantedolls by Timea Vajonne
tel: 07707 638523
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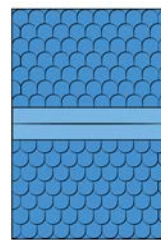
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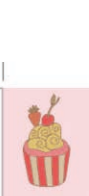
Young Beatrix Potter and Beatrix with her mother.
Photo: Wikicommons



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Izabela loves details in flowers and minis

We meet Izabela Kononowicz who tells us about her love for miniatures and how the passion for the hobby has given her the strength to keep fighting her cancer

BY DHW REPORTER



Izabela Kononowicz is, among other things, an interior designer, a florist and a talented miniaturist.

She says the power of flowers is often underrated. "Through their scent and colour, they can change any interior into a warm, elegant and romantic kingdom full of life and peace."

The secret "lies in the details" and that's exactly what she loves about the miniature world.

"I have a big and boundless love for flowers and miniatures," she said. "Being an interior decorator I put my whole heart into the arrangement of tiny houses. And as if by magic, I move

from an everyday big world to a tiny world, my passionate world, full of love, dreams and emotions."

For over 35 years Izabela and her husband have been building and selling houses in twelfth scale under the name Miniza Dollhouse Miniatures. They're quite a team. He builds the houses, papers walls and installs the electrics while she designs and decorates the interiors with pieces bought on their travels along with other pieces, such as food and flowers, she makes herself.

Sadly, Izabela is not working at the moment because of illness. She said: "Five years ago I was diagnosed with cancer and have had chemotherapy and a bone marrow transplant. I am currently having a relapse. It is the miniatures that give me strength to fight the disease, especially when I must be completely isolated, due to a lack of immunity, from the outside world. Of course, I owe the most to my loved ones, but passion is a cure for all kinds of problems and from my own experience I know that it helps to survive difficult times."

Izabela has loved miniatures since childhood when she would make miniature furniture in primary school "using plywood and terribly smelling carpentry glue".

"As a little girl I loved playing with doll's houses. I saw the first house on display in a toy store. My mum and I used to go to this store a lot and I





watched it. I really wanted it, but it was very expensive. A few years later my dad brought me from the GDR (German Democratic Republic) a real one with few rooms and a kitchen. What a joy it was! The doll's house was equipped with furniture and other accessories, but it was missing things like curtains, vases, flowers and other decorations so I created these myself using the remnants of cloths and plasticine."

Izabela has lived in Częstochowa, Poland, all her life. One room in her house displays their collection of miniature houses, dioramas, dolls, stamps and coins.

"But I do not hide the fact that miniatures are located almost all over our house," she said. "My husband has his own workshop called Tinker Zone. I make miniatures at the desk, but also in the kitchen and other places." She even makes her minis while undergo-



ing treatment at the hospital.

They have 15 fully finished houses and four under construction, and many reflect Izabela's other passions. So there is a flower shop and bonsai exhibition, an art gallery and a greenhouse with orchids, plus many more, including 31 dioramas. Izabela used to sell her miniatures at fairs and on Etsy but currently sells through orders via e-mail, on Facebook or on her web-site.



● The couple's new project is an album of their work with 193 photos of their houses on 165 pages. The album is a limited edition of 130 signed copies. They are also preparing the publication of a series of books telling the history of the creation of each of their miniature houses. The album can be purchased by placing an order by e-mail at miniza.miniatures@gmail.com or on the web-site www.minizadollhouseminiatures.com



Jackie's jewellery store

BY SANDRA HARDING

I am regularly left in awe at some of the creations that I'm lucky enough to see and write about, and this is surely among the best. It's far too superior to be called simply a store, as that's like calling Garrard of London a store. Do you see what I mean?

This lovely creation measuring 19" deep and 22" wide was made by Jackie Bekkouche at a week's course she attended, organised by the extraordinarily talented Michael Reynolds. Jackie was able to finish most of the interior and create the beautiful stained glass door during that week. It is made up of six pieces, two of clear acrylic with leaded stained acrylic on both sides, and fitted between two resin pieces. The ceiling was covered in ceiling paper which Jackie sprayed with 24k gold paint, and she added and wired the electrics herself.

All the amazing inside and outside trims were carved by Michael which

he then made moulds of, and created a set in cast resin for each student to add their own personal touch. Jackie painted the pieces inside to look like wood, and on the outside she created a stone finish taught by Michael, consisting of several layers of paint and glaze. The exterior render/stucco finish was also a three step process using Elmer's wood filler and two different colours of paint. The delightful lighting



is by several makers, including Rosell, and Jackie created the flower arrangements.

Michael made Jackie all of the custom made furniture including the L-shaped table she wanted for the corner window, and also the settee, a console table, coffee table, four chairs and two small side tables. Michael also upholstered the furniture to match the beautiful wallpaper from Les Chinoiserie in France and he also painted the oil portrait on the wall, and made the mirror over the console. A man of so many talents, I am rather lost for words — again. Obviously everything that this man touches turns to gold. The perfectly placed dolls were made to order by Sebastian in the 1920's costumes that Jackie wanted, and don't they look just right in this setting? The silver wine holder was made by Peter Acquisto.

I would recognise the fabulous



re sparkles with ideas



jewellery by Sun Lemmens of Nal-ladris anywhere, as I have often seen her stand at Kensington surrounded by her many admirers. Each piece was carefully chosen by Jackie, and they include some famous pieces of jewel-lery.

This work of art is truly beautiful and the amount of skill that has been used, both inside and out, leaves me almost speechless, and that really could be a first. Well done to all involved – pure magic, and a pleasure to see.



Kensington sh

After a Covid-enforced break of two years miniatures are back at Kensington Town Hall. The KDF London Showcase takes place on September 17 and 18 and one thing won't have changed — the high standard of wonderful miniatures. Here we preview some of the talented artists who will be there.



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● info@smallscale.nl

www.smallscale.nl



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John Hodgson has now retired after more than forty years producing some of the finest hand-carved miniature furniture, together with beautiful cast items. But much to the delight of customers, his wife, Sue, and their daughters, are continuing to produce John's work using moulds made from his hand-carved original masters.

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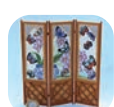
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Brock House has such a warm, lived-in feel

Claire Mitchell's eye for interiors is reflected everywhere in this beautiful house, and the attention to detail even extends into the garden

BY CHARLOTTE MERRYMAN

The Country Store by The Dolls House Emporium was perhaps one of the most popular styles of doll's house to be embraced by collectors. We have seen it presented in varying adaptations, such as a shop, pub, city home or rural country residence.

Perhaps one of the reasons that this particular model was so appealing is that it doesn't have to be a store, as it is not obviously designed to be so. It is a manageable size, looks welcoming with two attractive bay windows at the front and when complete, 'extras' could be purchased, such as a basement and conservatory. Country Store was



a good allrounder and we never tire of showing you the different interpretations readers have put in to making it their own.

When DHW reader, Claire Mitchell, sent in photographs of her Country Store, aptly renamed Brock House after her love of badgers, we couldn't wait to drive the short journey to her West Sussex home to see it. Having sailed through a hazardous downpour and weaved through frantic traffic, we surprised poor Claire by arriving early for our appointment.

However, when we saw Brock House we got a surprise of our own. The sample pictures had done it no justice at all

and we spent a quite a while pointing out clever arrangements and thoughtful finishing touches left for onlookers to discover themselves.

My concern had been that the furniture could be identified as mass produced, which it is, but ironically it is responsible for creating a balance and correctness that may not have been so evident with craftsman made furniture. For a start, by using furniture with the same style and finish Claire had achieved a homogenic look to her rooms. The furniture held the identity of the house together and it made it easy to look from one room to the other without feeling that there had been a harsh change in style; thus avoiding random compilations.

"The house has been done to a budget to allow me to even have a hobby," explained Claire, entering the room with two welcoming cups of hot

Above: The small garden at the side of the house has a fabulous, full flower border, with evidence of a gardener hard at work in the form of the spade still stuck in the bed.

Left: Overview of the interior of this stylish house, a miniature version of Claire's own home.

Above right: Attention to detail gives the rooms character, a 'lived in' feel, such as the upturned glass on the bedside table and water bottles on top of the bed.

Right: The upstairs bedroom spans the entire attic space, and is decorated and furnished in complementary colours and styles.







Left: The eclectic mix of old and new gives a very realistic feel to the furnishing of this house.

Below left: Potted plants are an attractive addition to this downstairs living room.

Right: The bathroom, decorated using the same colours and dark wood furniture as the other two rooms on the same floor - keeping a uniform look.

Below right: The his and hers evening wear shows this couple has a social life.

coffee. "Spending less on some items mean I can spend more on the things that really matter."

Perhaps being an avid reader of home and lifestyle magazines has helped to give Claire a good understanding of room layouts, or maybe it is just that she is naturally observant and attentive to small details, but either way, she had cracked it.

Take the upstairs bedroom for example, positioning the dressing table in front of the banisters shows real confidence in using the available space. There are some lovely arrangements too, such as the mounted gold necklace, the upturned glass on the bedside decanter, two hot water bottles on the bed and the childhood doll sitting beside the pot plant. There is even a wedding dress in a box under the bed that Claire made using part of her own wedding dress. Such a sweet thing to do but surely it goes largely unseen?

"I know it's there," comes the reply, proving again that miniatures are something you do for yourself – not for other people.

House plants are good feng shui, even in miniature and there are plenty in the downstairs lounge. Again Claire has not been afraid to position furniture to maximise space; handsome, traditional pieces sit beside modern items and it looks right.

As we sup on our coffee and take in our surroundings, it occurs to me that we are in a similar environment ourselves. Claire had also gone for darker woods in her own home, using some classic pieces, acquired from auctions, alongside modern furnishings. Again she had got it right.

Our suspicions are confirmed when



“The conservatory turned out to be expensive as Claire tripped while carrying a pot of wood stain and ruined her sofa,”

Claire admits that she has modelled the house on somewhere she would like to live, creating her ideal in min-

iature. Her hobby has allowed her to imagine her upstairs flat, as a lovely house, complete with a roof terrace,



Above: *Courtyard garden.*

Left: *Further hints of the missing inhabitants - an easel with sketched out painting by Claire outside the house.*



garden, conservatory and her dream room: a study.

Claire had wanted a doll's house for years but finally bought one following a tax rebate. Although she originally chose Country Store with the basement, it just didn't look right, so Claire downsized the property and removed it, replacing the lost rooms with a five-foot base-garden, a homemade extension and a conservatory. Sadly the conservatory turned out to be the most expensive one they had ever bought, as during the finishing stages, Claire tripped while carrying a pot of wood stain and ruined her own sofa by spilling the stain all over it.

The attention to detail outside the house is as good as within, if not better. I loved the way the garden is effectively worn at the front. The window boxes are overflowing and the side garden is well worth a snoop for interesting things, including a badger peeking out of the foliage and two dove cotes that

Right: Exterior of Brock House showing the arrangement of the rooms, conservatory and roof garden.

Below right: Two dovescots nestled in the foliage on the wall of the house, which were re-thatched by Claire.

Below far right: The conservatory is home made. Attention to detail extends outside the house, for example the tiny blue tit inspecting the overturned pot by the door. The hanging pheasants are a nod in the direction of Claire's grandfather, who was a farmer in Cuckfield and often went shooting - including pigeons in his own back garden.

Claire re-thatched herself.

Despite wanting a doll's house for years, Claire was too superstitious to buy anything for it until she actually got the house and put it together. Then the exterior had to be done first and here, the roof tiles serve as a prime example of Claire spending money on 'the things that really matter'.

"They were majorly expensive," she admits. "But well worth doing."

As a result of these early days embarking on ambitious DIY jobs, Claire now feels she has grown in confidence in tackling things she thought she couldn't do. Husband Neil also helped out with areas of DIY, and has always been supportive.

"When Neil did the extension he took it outside and cut holes in the side of the house. I couldn't look until it was all over and put back together," Claire remembers.

Neil did a sterling job and enjoyed it so much that he has invested in a shop kit, which he intends to turn into a pub.

Others have been influenced into trying the hobby through Brock House. Claire's friend started by making Fimo food; the apples, cookies and cherry pie, and now she too has got herself a doll's house.

Brock House is pretty much full to look at, but there are still one or two things that Claire needs to turn her attentions to. Having done a lot of the needlework in the house herself, she wanted to 'knock-up' a few more pairs of curtains. Then there were always work surfaces, as opposed to rooms that needed a little re-arranging and



she had plans to add a magnifying glass and carved chess set to the study.

Interestingly there are no dolls, but it doesn't look empty without them. Even their son and his friends were fascinated by the house. "Hulking great lads would come in and say, 'Can I just have a look?'"

Then there were the couple's friends who came to dinner and disappeared

for over half an hour as they took great pleasure and amusement in the discovery of miniature bottles of Barcardi and the like for the first time. It is somehow a captivating house. It had the same effect on us when we went to visit – even though we were familiar with miniatures. So, Country Store is definitely a property of many guises, but as far as successful interpretations go, this one receives top-marks.

Wanda's grocery store is loved by generations

This detailed grocery store, built in an orange crate, took a year to put together but its heritage has lasted for nearly thirty years

BY SANDRA HARDING

Wanda Kenley wanted to make something special as a gift for her grandmother, Mary. That was back in Christmas 1993. Little did she know that her miniature grocery store would create such a history, and still be loved by the family after three generations, and through several makeovers.

The store, which took Wanda an entire year to make, is built inside a wooden crate, which once held oranges. All the little items in it had to be chosen and either made or bought. Wanda made the muffins from furniture buttons, which she put in a gumball machine container, with a milk carton top for the base.

The egg basket is simply brown paper bag strips woven to shape. The eggs, potatoes, carrots and other vegetables were made from a clay mix of white bread and glue (that's a first). The barrels for the brooms and rakes were made using a pan spray lid, with clothes pegs around the top. The black kettle is made from a gumball machine container, with furniture buttons for the feet, and wire for the handle.

The bird feeder is two buttons with a piece of glue stick in between and the birdseed is painted on the glue stick. The tobacco stand is a cat treat tin with plastic cigarette filter legs (another first) and the tobacco is twisted che-nille stems. This little detail was added

as her grandma was a tobacco farmer.

The rug beater was made from wire and a bead and the wallpaper and flooring is scrapbook paper. The cashier is an exact copy of a lipstick doll that sat on Wanda's grandmother's dresser — the ruffles at the bottom would hold her lipsticks.

For this latest makeover, Wanda added new wallpaper and also decided to replace the old popsicle roof with a rusty tin one. This was made using flashing left over from an actual leak around her real chimney. The flashing was flattened, beaten with a hammer, teased and tweaked until it was good enough, and then painted with pumpkin orange paint, mixed with cinnamon.

When Wanda's grandmother Mary was given the store she loved it so much that she showed it at the Scott County Kentucky Fair in 1994 in the crafts division and won a second place ribbon. The house was left to Wanda's uncle Howard after Mary died, and he later entered it into the same show, winning a first place ribbon in the woodworking division. As he grew older, he put the house safely back in Wanda's hands as he wanted it to be taken care of properly.

I told you at the beginning that this lovely little gift had a history, and I really do think the ending is delightful. As Wanda plans to hand it down to her son Mickie I can see this creation is a real family heirloom.





Create beautiful curtains with swags and tails

Curtains add warmth and elegance to any room. Jane shows how to make the perfect pair, but she says choosing the right fabric is key



BY JANE BRAITHWAITE

Choosing the curtains for your rooms can either be fun or a nightmare! Do you coordinate them with the wallpaper or the upholstery of the suite? Or do you choose something that

will brighten or lighten the décor? Jane has mastered the skill of creating curtains that hang correctly, fit the windows and are perfect in their surroundings – and here she shares her design and instructions for curtains with either a single or double swag.

The key to making high quality miniature window dressings is the choice of fabric. I am a huge fan of silk dupion. Habatoi silk and cotton voiles work well too. Silk dupion reflects the light on the folds in a way that enhances the overall effect.

Curtain frame



Step 1. Using your chosen window as a guide cut 3 pieces of strip wood the same size as the top and sides as the window frame.

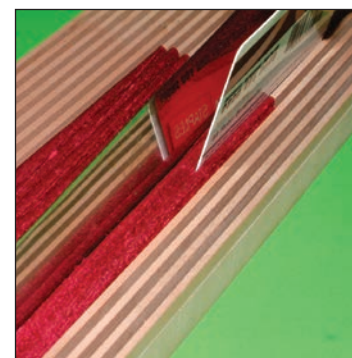


Step 2. Using the hot glue gun, glue the 2 vertical pieces to the corners of the horizontal piece.

Curtains

I use a pleater that my husband machined for me; similar rubber pleaters are available from doll's house shops. I find, for a standard window such as the one pictured, that 10 folds is ideal. You will need to insert your fabric into the pleater to see how wide it needs to be. The length of the fabric depends on how long you want the curtains.

Step 3. Cut 2 pieces of fabric to your dimensions and apply Fray Check to the raw edges. Once it is dry, iron the fabric pieces so that they are smooth.



Step 4. You now need to make the pleated curtains. If you are using a pleater it can be tricky if you haven't used one before. I find a palette knife and a plastic card works well. Once you have the fabric inserted into the first channel you hold

You will need

- 5-10mm stripwood
- Fine fabric - that drapes well
- Contrasting fabric
- Fray Check
- Spray starch
- Brass tube 3mm or wooden dowel
- Beads or jewellery findings for the finials
- Trimming
- Fabric glue
- Contact adhesive
- Thread to match curtain fabric
- 'Wundaweb' or similar product
- Pleater
- Palette knife
- Plastic credit card
- Hot glue gun
- Scissors
- Pins
- Sponge
- Steam iron
- Sewing needle

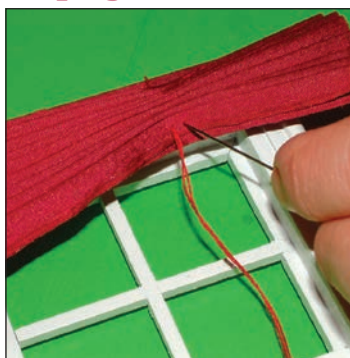
it in place with the palette knife while you push the fabric into the next channel with the plastic card. Continue in this fashion until you have pleated the entire piece of fabric.

Step 5. Spray generously with starch and leave on a radiator to dry. You can also use hair spray.



Step 6. When the starch is dry ease the fabric out of the pleater. You are now going to stick the curtain onto the curtain frame. You can use contact adhesive or hot glue. The first fold is going to wrap around the back of the frame so that when you install your curtains the frame is invisible. Be gentle when gluing the top of the curtain down as you must not flatten the folds.

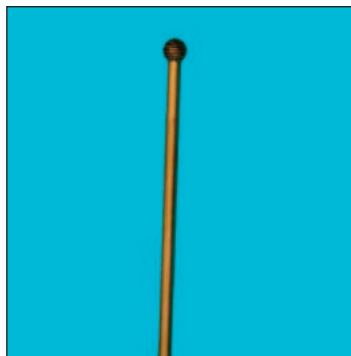
Shaping the curtain



Step 7. You are now going to draw part of the curtain in to give the impression that there is a tie back in place (you can apply one later).

You must identify where on the curtain you want it to 'go in'. Placing it over the window will help. Using the needle and thread push the needle through the pleats from the outside and then back again, pull tight and tie off the thread.

Curtain pole

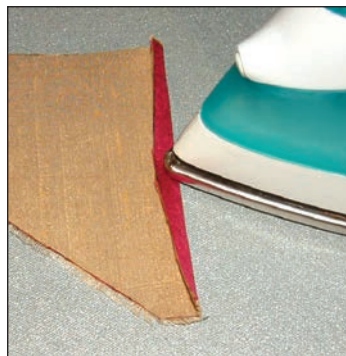


Step 8. The curtain pole needs to be a total of 25mm longer than the width of the window frame. I like to use 3mm brass tubing because it looks so professional. A range of beads and other jewellery bits and bobs can make great finials. The best adhesive to use to glue them in place is super glue.

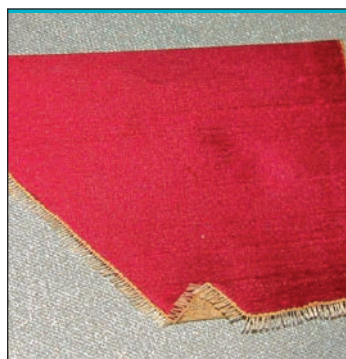
Tails



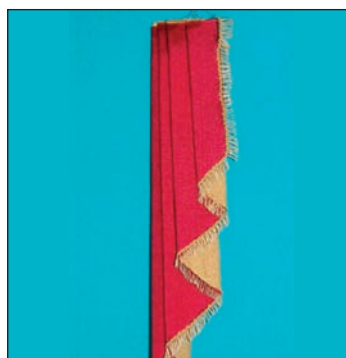
Step 9. Using the pattern provided (feel free to alter it to your own specification) cut out 2 tails in the curtain fabric and 2 in a contrasting fabric.



Step 10. Using one of each type of fabric per tail you must place them wrong sides together. Put the Wundaweb in between the layers and press with the iron.

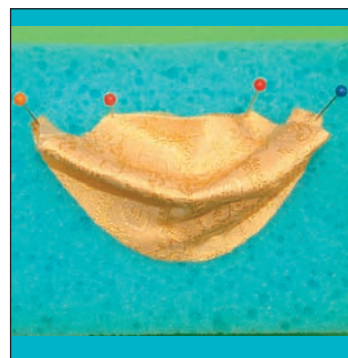


Step 11. Using the fabric glue apply trimming to the edges shown in the photo.



Step 12. Using the pattern as a guide for putting in the curtain folds, put the outside fold in first, use your steam iron. Then start at the opposite end putting in the rest of the folds, do not press them in until you are very sure they are in the right place.

Swags



Step 13. Using the pattern piece provided, cut out one piece per swag. Pin the corners of the swag into the sponge, try to pin them so that the four corners form a line and that the narrow top 'bellies' out slightly.

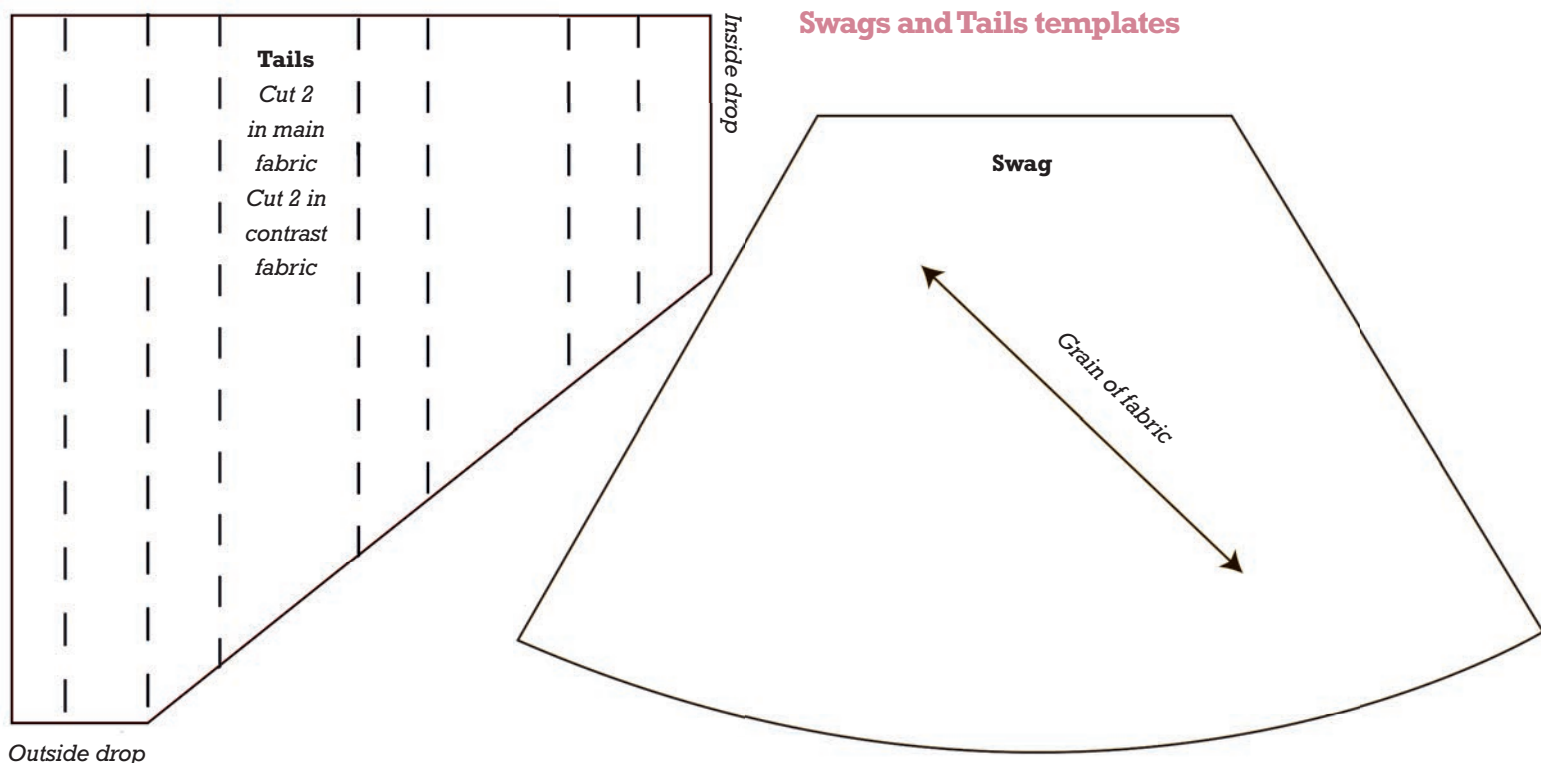


Step 14. This is now the hardest part as it is very fiddly. You must now arrange the folds so that they form a realistic swag. Take your time and use pins to secure each fold when you are happy with it. Once you have completed all the folds spray generously with starch and leave to dry thoroughly. Put the kettle on... You now deserve a break!

TOPTIP

When using contact adhesive ensure that both surfaces to be glued have a coat of glue that is allowed to dry completely before the two surfaces are brought together.

Swags and Tails templates



Assembly



Step 15. Once you have all the parts for your window dressing completed you can start to assemble them. You will need to decide whether you are having one or two swags (always make two as one is always better than the other, it also means you can

have a play around at this stage). Just lay the swags and tails on the curtains to see which you prefer.



Step 16. You will need the curtain pole as the swags and tails are going to be glued onto it using the contact adhesive. As you glue the swags on first ensure that the glue goes all the way around the pole so that the fabric can be smoothed around it and no raw edges can be seen. Do the same with the tails which will be stuck to the swags in the same way so that raw edges are invisible.



Step 17. Again using the super glue, stick the curtain frame onto the window frame. Hold the swags and tails up to the curtains to decide where you need to apply glue on both the curtains and the swags and tails. Then glue in place!

Below: The beautiful curtains that Jane Braithwaite has in her doll's house have been made using this method.





Daisy wallpaper designed by William Morris. 1864. The second pattern offered by Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., block printed by Jeffrey & Co. Photo: Wikicommons

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The team at Dolls House World weren't sitting idly by during lockdown. As well as producing the magazine we also came up with an online newsletter to serve the mini community.

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The newsletter began as a way of keeping miniaturists in touch with the hobby during lockdown, and also letting people know how makers and others were coping with isolation.

But it has grown incredibly. Now our mini mad team add new features every week. We are sharing articles from the magazine, but are bringing you a wealth of exciting new content and up-to-the minute news on shows and makers.

So don't miss out. Go to **www.dollshouse.live** on your computer or phone now to read the site everyone's talking about.

Quick and easy

Sandra has another quick & easy idea for you to make: posies

BY SANDRA HARDING

POSY 1

- Separate the fabric backing from the flowers.
- Glue the green plastic spray with a piece of stem through the centre hole of the fabric backing and let it dry (the cut down spray was meant for fish tanks)
- Glue pieces of sphagnum moss into the plastic, trying to create a natural softness.
- Add a little green Flowersoft to keep the soft look.
- Glue in your choice of flowers into a pleasing arrangement.
- Glue in tiny amounts of Flowersoft in the gaps, to look like buds, or tiny flowers.
- I added red fish tank "fronds" to soften the edge of the red arrangement, and added shiny red beads I had in stock.
- Add florist's tape around the stem (handle).



POSY 2

- Take the fabric backing, thread three or more small leaves through centre.
- Thread several flowers through the centre, creating a pleasing posy

continued on P61

You will need

- Small silk flower arrangement with three sided backing (Hobbycraft or similar)
- Small silk, paper, fabric or fimo flowers, cut with little or no stem for 1, and more for 2
- Plastic spray or similar greenery, cut so it has a stem. (Hobbycraft, craft shops, or similar)

- Flowersoft in green, and one to contrast or match flowers as required. (craft shops or online)
- Small amount of sphagnum moss to glue flowers into.
- Small amount of fish tank fronds, and small beads or similar if needed.
- Glue
- Tweezers, wire cutters.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WHERE READERS SHARE PROJECTS THEY'RE PROUD OF, HOWEVER SMALL. EMAIL YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO RICHARD@ASHDOWN.CO.UK



Painted conservatory in Ikea terrarium

BY SANDRA HARDING

You might be thinking that it was the colourful flower arrangements that first caught my eye in Danielle McConaghy's conservatory. However, when you see the crazy colours of the setting they are so lovingly placed in, then you get the whole picture, and how could I resist showing you.

We have featured this young lady before, and she certainly is young – actually sixteen when she created this, and it's not her first either. In DHW 342 we featured Danielle's dress shop, and the story about it being exhibited in Pippins Tea Room.

This creation was originally an

IKEA plant terrarium called the 'Socker' measuring 17" x 8" x 13" which Danielle painted black and modified by removing the front Plexiglas panel and adding a wooden frame and hinges. The designs on the glass were created using stencils from a miniatures book, *Treasury of Traditions Stained Glass Designs*, by Ann V. Winterbottom. All the window panels were then painted with imitation stained glass paints very carefully and delicately. It must have taken hours and hours.

The floor of the terrarium was created using broken clam shells which were chosen to add a lustrous

surface of mother of pearl, and the little chairs and table in the centre were painted black to add more drama. The treats on the table were made from clay and the empire biscuit was added because it's her dad's favourite cookie. There are a further two tables which were fashioned from Asian wooden fan blades.

The arrangement of the flowers was important to Danielle. She chose a mixture of cheap store items, added some she made herself, and mixed these with bought flowers from shows to complete the displays. The main purpose was to create a sense of volume and abundance of colour



and she has certainly done that.

I am not surprised to be told by Denise (Danielle's mum) that this latest creation was also displayed in Pippins Tea Shop and that she is already working on a hat shop to be displayed in 2020, which I am sure we will get to see. Danielle is off to university soon so we may have to wait a while for her next creation.

It's good to know that younger people are still into miniatures. We need more like Danielle to take up our lovely hobby. Well done!



shape. Add glue to secure and let it dry, making sure the backing is tight up to the flower stems.

- Glue Flowersoft in amongst the leaves and flowers to create a softer effect if needed. Let it dry
- Take the wire stem of one of the flowers, and wind it tightly round to secure the flowers and leaves.
- Leaving a small length of stems (for the handle), cut off the excess wires, and cover the handle with florist's tape.

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Mini gamble paid off for Streets Ahead

We talk to the team at one of the UK's leading wholesale suppliers of doll's houses and miniatures and find out what goes on behind the scenes

BY ALICE MONROE

How did you get into the miniatures business? We were always in the giftware trade since starting the company in 1987, but one year we noticed that our range of miniature tea sets was selling particularly well. On a subsequent buying trip to Taiwan we were in a showroom and saw some doll's house items in the corner. We decided to take a gamble with more items of furniture and dolls; they started to sell really well and we slowly found them taking over. From a couple of items we now have over 5000 items in our range.

Where does the company name come from? One of the original partners had the surname Streeter; the other partner had the surname Appleby so the trading name was SA imports. A suitable name appeared to be Streets Ahead to reflect the dynamic nature of the two founding partners. We still feel that this reflects the quality of our range of items as we are 'simply streets ahead of our competitors'. When we



entered the doll's house world Streets Ahead seemed even more applicable.

Have you always been based in the West Country? We have yes. Streets Ahead has always been based in beautiful Plymouth, Britain's ocean city.

How big is your team? We have a very large warehouse staffed by 10 dedicated team members. We are a family business with father and son responsible for the buying and the daughter and her husband running the office and warehouse respectively. Within the team we also have a mother and



daughter. We love that Streets Ahead can support families to work together.

What do you think makes your business special? Through years of gift buying our team have a real flair for what sells and that skill transferred to the miniature market. We are always listening to suggestions from customers for new items. We regularly watch period dramas and visit historic houses for inspiration for new products. Also, as a small family run business, we feel that this makes us special and enables us to form good relationships with our customers, some of whom we have been supplying for decades.

Who stocks your products? Our main market is in the UK. We supply the whole country, but in the last 10 years we have significantly expanded into Europe and worldwide. We are always keen to supply new countries and add a new pin to our office world map. Within the UK and worldwide we





supply shops, museums, tourist attractions, cake makers and more. We are always keen for businesses to give us a call and we can, I'm sure, help with any needs that they have for hard to find miniature items.

Do you offer items in different scales?

The majority of our items are twelfth scale; we used to stock 1/24th but there was very little demand.

What's the most unusual product you've been asked for?

We were once asked for a miniature coffin by a pet shop. We then took this as a sign and introduced a coffin as a stock item. We have also supplied many items for seasonal TV adverts for major retailers and are currently advising a couple of TV shows in production.

How often do you add new items to

your catalogue/website? We have an annual catalogue printed. Throughout the year we are constantly updating our range to keep it fresh and varied. The buying department works tirelessly to supply an ever-evolving collection of high quality miniatures.

Tell us about a typical day? There are no typical days; we have found that, as a miniature wholesaler, no two days are the same. We are constantly reacting to the needs of our customers both domestically and worldwide. We process and pick orders and love to wave them off to exotic destinations. The buying team often ask staff members for input on new products, which leads to lively discussions.

What changes have you noticed in miniatures over the years? We have noticed the quality of the products improving every year; the attention

to detail that our suppliers achieve constantly amazes us. We have also noticed, as everyone has, the move from physical shops to online retailers.

What are your plans for the future?

We are always striving to make our range of items the best it can be. We have recently introduced an already highly popular range of UK printed embossed papers. We are focussed on supplying even more places around the world and spreading the love of all things dollshouse with whatever era people require, most notably Victorian and modern.

● For more information about Streets Ahead products please contact your local stockist or any DHW advertisers that stock their products. Further information on stockists can be found online at: www.streetsaheaddollshouse.com/stockist/stockist.php

Happy ending for Suffolk House after a long wait

When Valerie bought an old house she had to wait a while to start work on it but she's kept it shabby and filled it with happy people

BY SANDRA HARDING

Like the reason that this house is called Suffolk House because the owner, Valerie Towers, bought it from a seller who lived in Suffolk. Simple really.

Unfortunately, as Valerie lives on the south coast, she had to wait a while to get the house. But thankfully her cousin Jill lives nearer and collected it for her.

So it was six months before Valerie got her hands on the house but luckily, she still loved it. However, it was in poor condition and Valerie was not sure exactly what to do with it although she knew it needed some TLC.

It was left sitting on a chest in her hall for another year. Valerie thinks that the house was originally made by a granddad, probably in the 1930s, so she really didn't want to change much to something that was obviously made

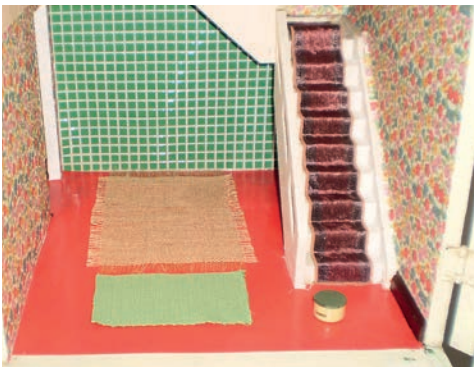
with love.

Eventually it taken down and given a thoroughly good wash and brush up. It was carefully cleaned and freshly papered and began to look as originally intended. The papers are lovely, especially the one used in the living room, which is Laura Ashley Palmetto, and all are so very carefully done.

Valerie's friends found out about the little house and they rallied round and gave Valerie some lovely drawer liners, nursery paper and the nursery curtains. Valerie made a chimney breast in the living room to house her redundant Honeychurch fireplace and the blinds were made from a bamboo table mat (good idea).

The beaded curtain over the kitchen door was a necklace made of strings of beads and chains and the aspidistras on the window sill are silk leaves in beads stuck on cotton reels, with buttons for top and bases.

The picture in the living room was an old brooch which was painted gold with a picture stuck on. The sandals in the bedroom also started life as a brooch (nice find), and the food on the trolley downstairs was made by Joan Joyce. Valerie stuck the elephants on the sideboard onto a couple of buttons to make them stand up and the golly and the pushchair were in the house when she got it. The delightful embroidered picture on the back wall of the nursery was a card from Valerie's daughter Laura, made for her birthday.





The doll's house on the chest in the nursery is just a matchbox with a cut-out picture of a doll's house stuck on it (clever) and the rest of the accessories, furniture and dolls were either from Cobham doll's house fair, or bought online. There is an Elgin sideboard amongst the collection from Cobham, and the Crescent cooker and fridge

in the kitchen were from eBay. Valerie wanted the outside to look a bit shabby as the house has been through the wars, so decided it would always be VE day, with flags and bunting flying.

This little house is now a very happy little house, filled with happy little people, including a granny, maids and children. I love a happy ending.

Make wicker baskets the easy no-weave way

If you thought making wicker baskets meant tackling tricky, waxed linen cord then think again. Judy has come up with an easier way

BY JUDY FERGUSON

This is a very easy to make project, and would even be a good starter item for a novice woodworker. The first basket I made was done with waxed linen cord using a miniature wicker technique. I thought this would be too time consuming, so I came up with another idea for making the baskets that is quick and easy. For anyone that prefers weaving wicker baskets, feel free to do it that way instead.

The bookcase can be stained, painted, or left natural. The completed baskets may also be stained if you want them a different colour. The baskets are made from cardstock and eighteen count needlepoint canvas. The canvas can usually be found at a needlework store and sometimes in hobby stores. It is available online also. The canvas I used was already tan, but white might be easier to find. White canvas can be dyed using a strong tea solution. You can also use a solution made with walnut ink crystals or brown India ink. I opted for the walnut ink crystals. If you dye the canvas, you need to lay it out flat and dry completely before using it. It will retain its stiffness when completely dry. I also dyed the crochet thread to match.

I made a couple of tools from scraps of wood to make assembly easier. I made a basket form by using a 3/4" piece of square dowel with a 1/16" thick piece of basswood glued onto two sides making it 13/16" square. This is slightly smaller than the inside

measurements of the basket, but is sufficient to form the basket and easily remove the form. I also cut two extra pieces from the 1" strip the shelves were cut from to help with the spacing of the shelves and dividers. The length of the spacers doesn't really matter as long as they are 1" wide.

When cutting the wood pieces, they will be more accurate if you use a stop (a piece of wood clamped to your table saw or miter box). Cut the shelves and back with a stop at 3-3/16", the sides with a stop at 2-5/8", and the dividers with a stop at 1 inch. Remember the back is from 1/16" thick wood and the shelves from 3/32" wood. If these pieces are not exact, the bookcase will not go together correctly.

I use a gluing jig whenever assembling furniture to assure squareness. A simple jig can be made by gluing a sheet of tin or steel to a piece of plywood, and then glue two square dowels on top at a perfect 90 degree angle using a square to align them. A couple of extra strong ceramic magnets used on the jig will hold the pieces in place.

It will save some sanding later if the wood sheets are sanded before cutting into pieces. During assembly I like to smooth the unit on a sanding board, which can easily be made by attaching a piece of sandpaper to a piece of plywood, glass, or acrylic. This helps even up the side and also helps to remove any excess glue. I also use the sanding board to sand the pieces after cutting

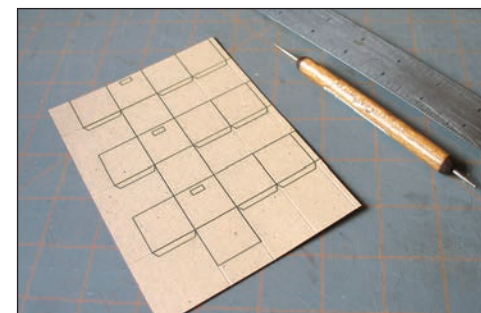


to the proper size. Never sand the cut edges that are to be glued together. Any "feathers" on the cut edges can be trimmed with a small pair of sharp scissors.

If you would like shorter baskets for your bookcase, adjust the height in the pattern before copying to cardstock. When cutting out for the handles you could use a 1/8" circle punch to make a hole on each side of the handle, then use a craft knife or small scissors to cut between the holes. The baskets may be stained with an oil-based stain if desired. I have not tried water-based stain as I do not have any.

Basket construction

Please make sure to read all of the instructions above before proceeding.



Step 1: Use the supplied pattern for the number of baskets you want in your bookcase. They need to be copied or traced on standard weight cardstock. For shorter baskets, adjust the height of the sides before putting together. You could move the handle

You will need

- Wood in 3/32" & 1/16" thicknesses
- Eighteen count needlepoint canvas
- Tan cardstock
- Cotton crochet thread size 10
- Wood glue
- Aleene's fast grab tacky glue (or other tacky glue)
- X-Acto knife with new blade, #11 preferred
- Wood conditioner (optional)
- Paintbrush
- Wood stain or paint
- Lacquer, varnish, or clear sealer
- Table saw or mitre box & saw (optional, you may also cut with a ruler and craft knife)
- Cork-backed steel ruler
- Embossing tool
- Pencil
- Small sharp scissors
- Fine tip glue applicator or toothpicks
- Gluing jig (optional)
- Cut from wood:

Two sides: 1-1/16" x 2-5/8" x 3/32"

Three shelves: 1" x 3-3/16" x 3/32"

One back: 2-3/8" x 3-3/16" x 1/16"

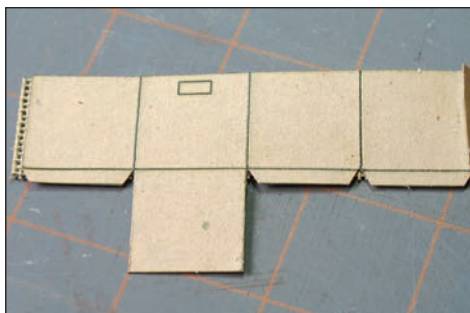
Four dividers: 1" x 1" x 3/32" (cut 2 extra for spacing the shelves & dividers)

One top: 3-5/8" x 1-3/16" x 3/32"

- Cut from cardstock:
- Three or six basket patterns
- Cut from eighteen count needlepoint canvas:

Three or six pieces about 3-3/5/8" x approximately 13/16" (Fourteen squares high) – if making shorter baskets, adjust the height of the canvas. Trim off any little thread nubs from the two long sides.

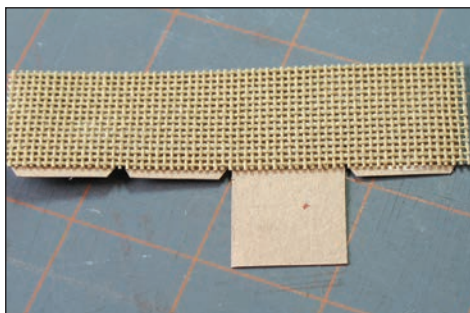
down and trim the top the desired amount.



Step 2: Before cutting out the patterns use a ruler and embossing tool to score all fold lines.

Step 3: Cut out each basket and then fold toward the side with the lines on the score lines. Any adjustments to the height of the basket must be done now before proceeding to the next step.

Step 4: Cut out the handle opening using a new X-Acto blade (#11 preferred) to cut through the cardstock. It's okay if you cut through the canvas too, but it is easier to cut the canvas later. Cut by starting the knife at the end of each corner and cut away from the corner. Note: You could use a hand punch as instructed above if you prefer.

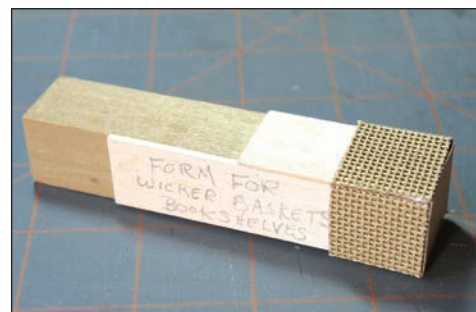


Step 5: Apply glue to the side of the cardstock without the printing on it, except for the four tabs and the bottom. An old credit card is a good glue spreader. Line up a piece of the canvas with the top edges even and a little overhanging the cardstock on both short sides. If you have it even with the sides, it will not be long enough after folding. Any excess canvas will be trimmed later.



Step 6: Try to form the basket before the glue dries by holding the canvas to the cardstock and folding on the fold lines again and pressing the folds with your thumbnail or a bone folder. You could press with the side of the embossing tool also. Do not glue the sides of the basket together just yet.

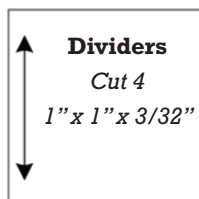
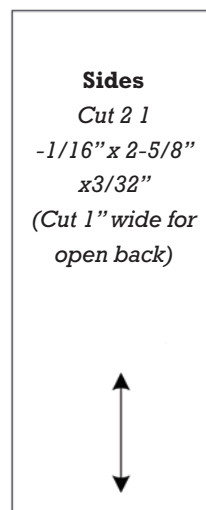
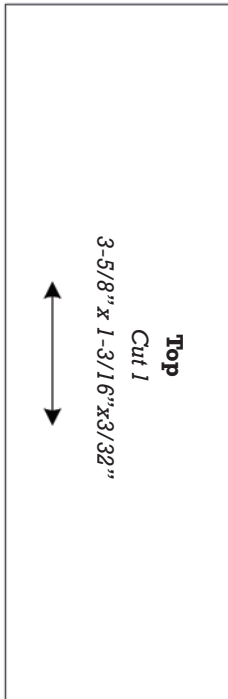
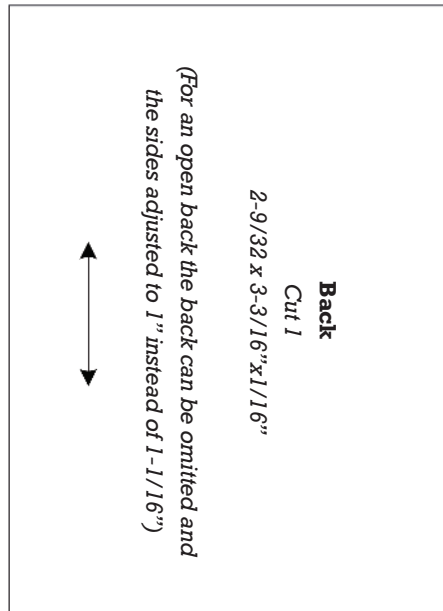
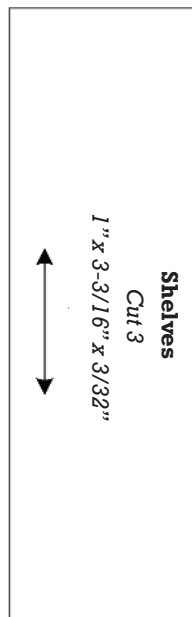
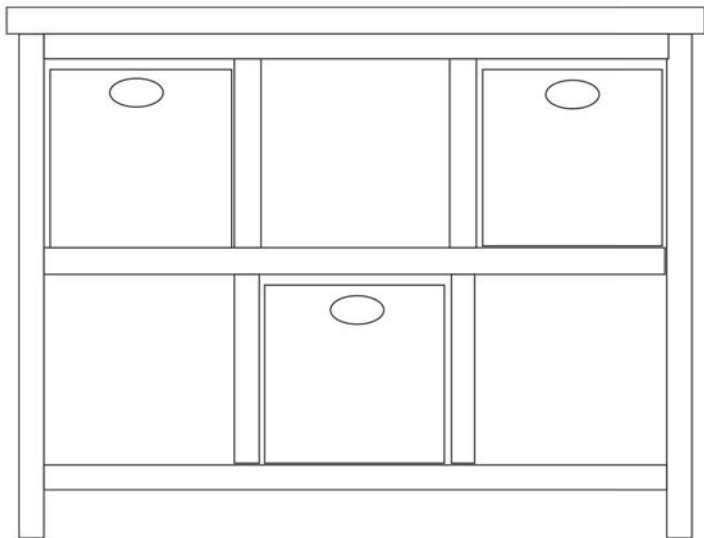
Step 7: Note: before gluing the basket together you must cut out the canvas in the hole for the handle. If you removed the canvas earlier, you can skip this step. It's easier to press the knife straight down rather than dragging it. After the canvas is removed from the hole, apply a little glue around the edges to seal them.



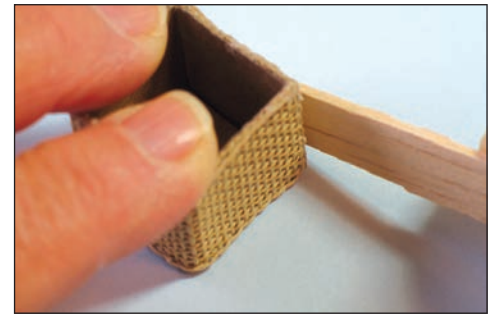
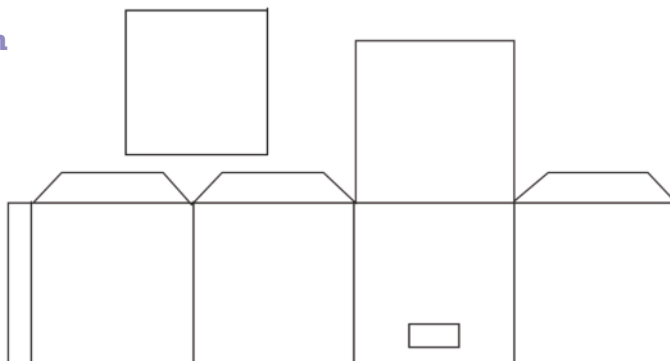
Step 8: Apply glue to the four tabs and wrap around the basket form, if you created one, gluing the side tab first, and then fold the bottom over and glue to the three bottom tabs. Trim any excess canvas from the sides where they meet.

Above left: This stunning black bookshelf holds three woven baskets and displays a beautiful vase of orchids.

Bookcase pattern



Basket pattern



Step 9: If you have a 3/4" paper punch, use it to punch squares from the cardstock to glue to the inside bottom of each basket and press it down with the basket form, a piece of wood, or the eraser end of a pencil. Just cut out some 3/4" squares if you do not have a paper punch.



Step 10: To trim the baskets, cut two 5" pieces of the dyed crochet thread for each basket. Apply a thin line of glue to each side of a basket along the bottom thread. Wrap the thread around the basket starting and ending at the back and trim off the excess where the threads meet. Hold the basket with the bottom down and use a craft stick or scrap of wood to press the crochet thread against the basket and down so it is even with the bottom. Turn the basket upside down and do the same for the top trim. This also helps seal the top edge.

Building a bookcase

Step 1: Cut and sand the pieces of wood as instructed.



Step 2: Glue the sides to the edges of the back, keeping the top edges even.

Step 3: Glue one of the shelves between the sides, keeping it flush with the top of the sides and back.



Step 4: Place one of the 1" spacers against the bottom of the first shelf and the left side, placed so that it is 1" from where the next shelf will be placed. Place the other 1" spacer against the right side the same way, then glue the next shelf in place.



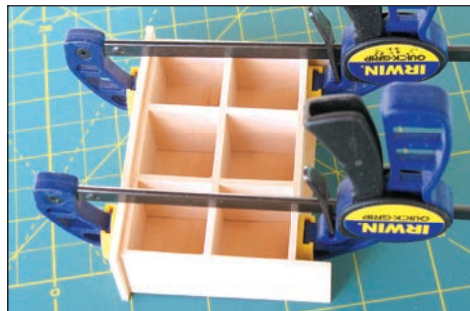
Step 5: Repeat the preceding step for the other two shelves.



Step 6: Glue the dividers in place using the 1" spacers.

Step 7: When completely dry, I like to smooth the front, back and top by rubbing on a sanding board to even them and remove any excess glue.

Step 8: The top may be shaped as desired by sanding or routing the two short edges and one long edge which will be the front, or may be left as is.



Step 9: Glue the top to the top of the shelf unit keeping the back edges

flush and with and equal overhang on both sides.

Step 10: Sand all of the edges of the wood lightly to remove the sharpness of the corners.

Step 11: If you will be staining the piece, a coat of wood conditioner helps the stain to be absorbed more evenly.

Step 12: Stain or paint, and seal with lacquer, varnish, or a clear sealer.

Place the baskets in the bookcase and that will complete the project. Add a plant or floral arrangement and maybe some books or magazines. By using only three baskets there is more room to display some of your mini treasures. Please feel free to contact me at jk.ferguson@cox.net if you have any questions about this tutorial.

Below: This bookshelf is stained in a rich red mahogany to show off the wood's grain.





Bird boxes began Alan's love of working in wood

Alan Cottingham, who describes himself 'a miniature woodturning addict', creates beautiful little pieces with the help of big Betsy in his crowded shed

BY SANDRA HARDING

I am always fascinated when a little, delightfully-made item pops up on my Facebook page and the interesting piece that popped up recently was made by Alan Cottingham.

It was shortly followed by even more items and, as they became ever more lovely, I thought you would like to see them too.

Alan's love of wood came from his granddad Rowland when they used to make bird boxes together, when Alan

was just a lad. He later began working as a French polisher although, as he didn't know what the job entailed, he started on a very steep learning curve. However, it all worked out in the end as he gained qualifications in French polishing and cabinet making. Serendipity or what.

Around 15 years ago Betsy, a 13 stone Record Coronet no.3 lathe was delivered into Alan's six foot shed. He was soon surrounded by logs and

blanks and could hardly move.

Looking on Google he found the work of a fantastic miniature turner, Bertie Pittman, and his life and vision took on a smaller, different outlook. Bertie became a friend and he inspired Alan by sending him pictures of his tools and his work.

Very soon he became, as Alan describes himself, 'a miniature woodturning addict', and started to sell his lovely pieces. Interestingly the first piece he sold in 2008 was to a lady well known to a lot of us – Bea Broadwood, another fine maker.

The piece was a small burr oak with an ebony finial, and when a photograph appeared on Facebook in its new home, Alan was thrilled. The wood Alan uses is very important because he likes to work with tight grains and burls, and he searches and buys from everywhere and anywhere if it's right.

Most of the woods are natural colours so he does at times stain them





with a water-based stain, sometimes using gold, copper or silver to add a bit of bling. The brown and cream piece is a cocobola top, and the body is actually a betel nut, native to Asia. A complicated piece like this, with maybe 4-5 joints, can take up to two hours to make, and a simpler one anywhere between 30-90 minutes.

After a house move and a break of a few years, Betsy is out of storage, and Alan is once again making miniatures, thank goodness, and had plans to show at the doll's house show in York this year.

Luckily, his talent appears to have been handed down to the next generation, as Alan's nine-year-old son has already turned a couple of spin tops. Alan is also creating a larger work area at his home, and maybe his business will in time become Alan & Son!

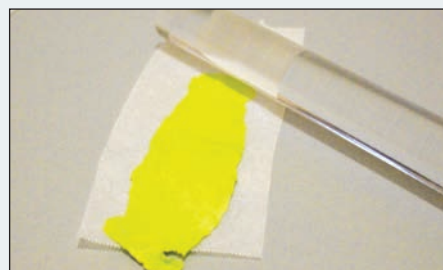
Mini air plants — fun to make



Air plants require little maintenance in a full-size home so they shouldn't cause any problems when you add them to your doll's house

BY KATE SANTICHEN

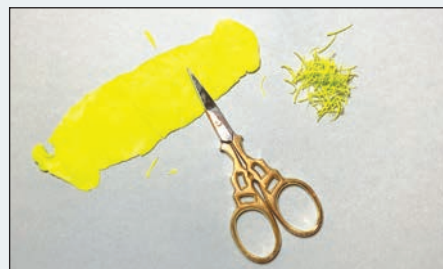
I love how air plants bring greenery to a room and require very little care in the full-size world, so I had to have them in my miniature scenes, too. 'Planting' them in seashells adds a modern touch.



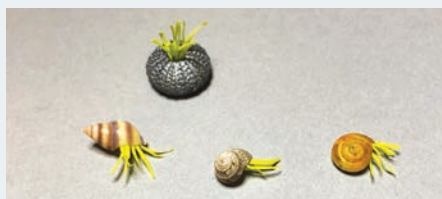
Step 2. Place clay between wax parchment paper and roll out until the clay is paper thin. Peel off paper and allow it to dry.



Step 1. Mix a couple drops of green paint into a 1/2" ball of resin clay. Work quickly, as air dry resin clay sets fast.



Step 3. Cut narrow strips of clay in varying lengths from roughly 1/2cm to 1 1/2cm.



Step 4. Using tweezers, dip one end of the clay strips in glue and place into shell. You can add until you're pleased with the size of your plant, usually 4-9 pieces depending on shell size.

Visit Kate on Instagram @the_tiny_craftress to see more of her work.

You will need

- Miniature seashells
- Craft tweezers
- Air dry resin clay
- Green acrylic paint
- Parchment or wax paper
- Rolling pin
- Craft glue
- Sewing scissors
- Ruler

Tear up egg cartons to make a brick fireplace

Jodi uses old egg cartons, torn up and painted, to create the brickwork for her fireplace and then adds that to a foam core base

BY JODI HIPPLER

The central focus of my little piggy scene is going to be the fireplace. So, I needed to come up with a design that would fit the layout and accommodate the elements that I wanted to include. Important stuff, like firewood storage, a place to bake yummy loaves of bread, and of course a large enough fire to heat the house and cook with. I measured the wall space and then drew a rough design that was the perfect size for Maxwell. He seemed very happy with it!



Step 1. I decided that foam core would be the best material to work with. It's easy to cut and is much lighter than wood. So, to start, I measured my drawing and cut the pieces.



Step 2. I did a dry fit to make sure it looked proportionate to Maxwell. Then



I glued and clamped it, leaving the front and shelf as separate pieces for easier brick application.



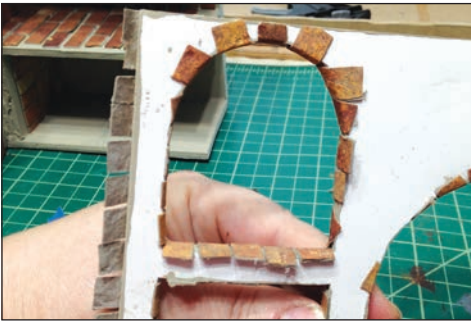
Step 3. While the glue dried, I set to work making my 'bricks'. I grabbed a couple of egg carton lids. Then picked out colours and squirted a little of each one on a paper plate. I started with the lighter colour combinations as the backdrop, then splotched and dry brushed on additional colours until I liked the look.



Step 4. Once the paint had dried overnight, it was time to cut out the bricks. I only used two lids, but it took a very long time to cut each little brick to size.

You will need

- Foam core
- Cutting knife
- Pencil
- Fast Grab Tacky Glue
- Ruler
- Clamps
- Egg cartons
- Acrylic paints
- Paint brush
- Matte varnish
- Filler (spackle)
- Fire kit



Step 5. Brick by egg carton brick I went. In total, it took me about two full days to cover every inch. In the end, I had just enough!



Step 6. I left the front and the shelf detached so that it would be easier to grout. This meant that I had to attach the side bricks and the brick openings around the shelf only half on so that they could be joined to the main piece and grouted after the pieces were glued together.

Step 7. I wrapped around and glued bricks where the openings could be seen.

TOPTIP

- Using two coats of mat varnish keeps the 'bricks' safe when you spackle on the grout.

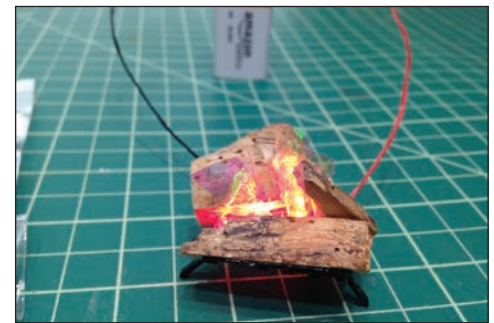


Step 8. I applied two coats of matt varnish, letting them dry thoroughly in between, and then used filler to grout the bricks.

Step 9. While I let everything dry and while I was contemplated how I would age the grout/brick, I decided to get out the supplies I needed to make a fire for the fireplace.

I purchased a miniature fire kit last summer. Unfortunately I can't remember where I got it but you should be able to Google it. It has three bulbs; two orange and one red.

It flickers and runs off of its own battery so you don't have to worry about it pulling juice from your 12 volt system and dimming the lights. This is a known problem when you run the flickering bulbs off of the main circuit of your doll's house lights. It also comes with a piece of shimmery cellophane that when lit up, gives the effect of a real burning fire.



Step 10. I glued the three bulbs into a metal fire grate, then layered the cellophane and logs to get the look of a real fire. This is it when it was finished drying and hooked up to a 9 volt battery to test it. I love it! It's going to look great under the copper pot in the fireplace!



Step 11. I made a swinging pot arm with a hook and attached it to the inside of the fireplace. Then I aged the grout and brick with a watered down brown wash. I love the way it turned out! All it needs now is a mantel and some fun accessories!

Baking in progress in your mini kitchen

Deri creates a worktop scene of chocolate croissants being made. Add your own personal touches and use her ideas to create a busy kitchen display

BY DERI TERRY

I was in need of a baking table for my French chateaux doll's house. Since necessity is the mother of invention, I decided to create a chocolate croissant work in progress scene. Note: all clay should be well kneaded before you start. Either by hand or with the aid of a pasta machine.

You will need

- Polymer clay - creamy dough colour, Chocolate Brown, Yolk Yellow, Butter Yellow, translucent
- Liquid polymer
- A kitchen island
- White craft glue
- X-Acto knife
- Miniature mixing bowl, spoon or spatula
- Disposable mixing bowl
- Gold Bond body powder
- Cookie sheet or tile for baking
- Clear nail polish
- Matte acrylic sealer
- Clay rolling pin
- Small paint brush
- Tacky glue and white glue
- Accessories - rolling pin, knife, flour container, flour sifter, hot pad, measuring cup, spoons, whisk, etc.

Optional:

- Pizza cutter
- Ball stylus tool
- USB plug cover

Frosting

Use a Chocolate Brown clay, purchased or custom mixed. I added a bit of black and a pinch of red to a Chocolate Brown clay. It is fun to experiment with mixing colours and the possibilities are endless when you mix them yourself!

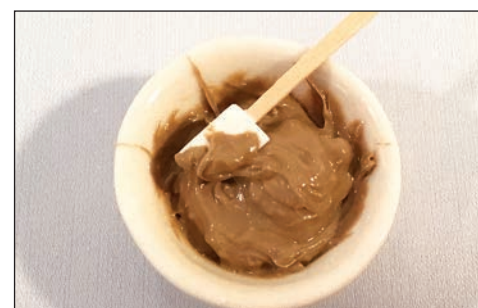
Step 1. Pinch off a piece large enough to fill half of your miniature mixing bowl. Place the clay in a disposable container. Slowly add the liquid clay.



Step 2. Mix with a wood craft stick. It will be difficult at first as the clay will be stiff. Note: the craft stick may break so have several on hand. Keep stirring until it becomes the consistency of spreadable frosting.

TOPTIP

- ⋮ When mixing clays yourself it is wise to bake a small test piece to be sure it turns out to be the colour you're after.



Step 3. Pour into the mixing bowl. Now is the time to dip any spoons, knives or spatulas into the mixture. These will add realism to the scene. Place the items onto a baking sheet and bake according to manufacturer's directions, as each brand varies. The utensils will need to be removed from the oven before the bowl, because they are smaller. (My spoon was done in 1 1/2 minutes.)

Dough ball

To create the croissant pastry resembling buttery dough, I combined white with a bit of yellow and a tiny bit of brown.

Step 4. Start with a ball of clay. On a flat surface, press down slightly, shaping the clay into a mound of dough. Make the ball the size you need. Mine is 1/2" wide. Place on the baking sheet. You may bake multiple pieces together, after completing step 8.

Flour mound with well

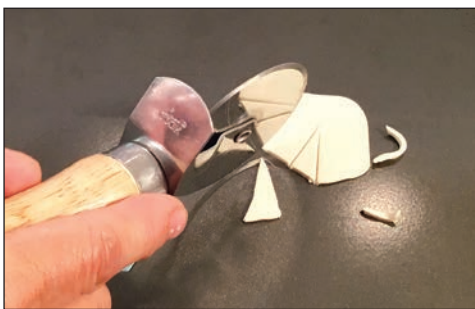


Above: Blue egg whisk by Lawrence St. Leger.

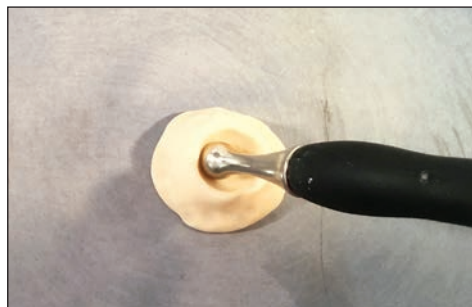
Rolled pastry



Step 5. Take a small ball of clay and roll it out using a rolling pin until it is almost completely flat.



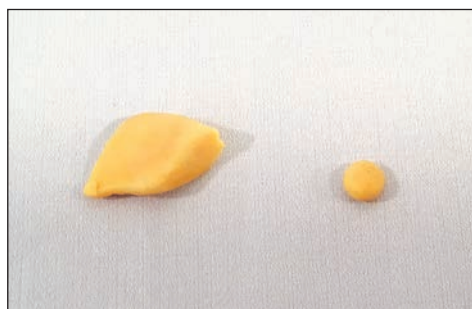
Step 6. Using a pizza cutter, make desired triangular cuts. Separate one or two triangles, leaving the discarded segments. Curl some of the extra 'dough' between cuts, as this will add to the realism of the scene. You may even roll one or two croissants, from the triangles.



Step 7. Pinch off a small piece of dough (clay) and roll into a ball. Place it onto a flat surface and flatten slightly. Using a ball stylus tool or your finger, create the well for the egg by pushing a divot into the top of the mound. Continue pushing smaller dents into the side of the mound to add dimension. The mound will be flared at the bottom. Make the flour mound the size you need. Mine are about 1/2" to 3/4" at the base. When happy, place on the baking sheet.

Mini eggs

To create eggs, use a colour resembling the yolk. I mixed yellow with tiny dots of red and brown, continually comparing the result to a real yolk. When the colour is correct, add translucent clay (1/3 amount of the yellow clay).



Step 8. Roll the yolk coloured clay into a ball. On a flat surface, slightly flatten the top. Eggs are different sizes, but I made my yolk just under 1/8". Place on the baking sheet.

TOPTIP

• Dipping clay into water or dusting the end with corn starch, will keep it from sticking. Note: forming the butter into a square is appropriate for a period scene, while cutting it into smaller sticks will lend a modern feel. If you don't have a plastic USB cover, just cut the clay into sticks or blocks using a craft knife.



Step 9. This is a good time to bake the items on the baking sheet (according to manufacturer's directions).

Step 10. When the flour mounds have cooled, coat the outside with glue using a small artist paint brush. Then lightly coat the inside of the well.



Step 11. Dust with medicated powder. Let it dry. If there are bare spots, reapply the glue and then dust it again.

Step 12. Once dry, place a drop of tacky glue on the bottom of the egg and place into the well.



Step 13. Once the glue has dried, carefully coat the egg liberally, with clear nail polish. Apply 3 coats, allowing to dry between each coat.

Butter

To achieve the butter colour, I started with a small piece of the pastry coloured clay and added small amounts of yellow and then a dot of orange clay.



Step 14. Roll out the clay to the height desired. Use a plastic USB plug cover like a cookie cutter and stamp out the block of butter. Place on baking sheet.

Chocolate block

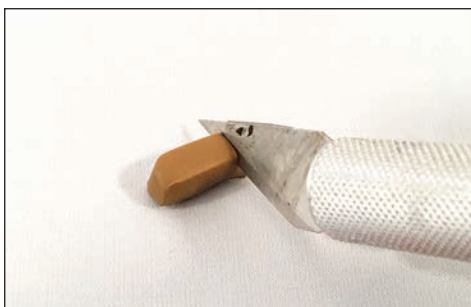
The 'baking chocolate' was created by mixing dark brown with a bit of red and black and a dab of white. You may purchase a dark brown clay resembling chocolate if you would like to avoid mixing your own polymer clay.



Step 15. Roll the clay, to the height of the plug. This will create a wide block. Using the USB cap, cut out the rectangle and remove. Place on the baking sheet. Idea: for a more modern kitchen, make a thinner rectangle and score it into squares. I have not shown this, but wrapping the squares in foil after baking adds a nice touch. Now, is the time to bake the items assembled on the baking sheet according to manufacturer's directions.



Step 16. When the 'butter' is cooled, carefully apply a matt sealer using a small paint brush.



Step 17. When the 'chocolate' block has cooled, cut off a few pieces that would typically be rolled inside a croissant. Arrange these as you like, either on a miniature plate or directly onto the baking island with tacky glue.



Step 18. Paint the centre of the top of the island using white glue mixed with a little water. I achieved the mixture by

adding 1-part water to 2-parts white glue. Lightly dust with powder.



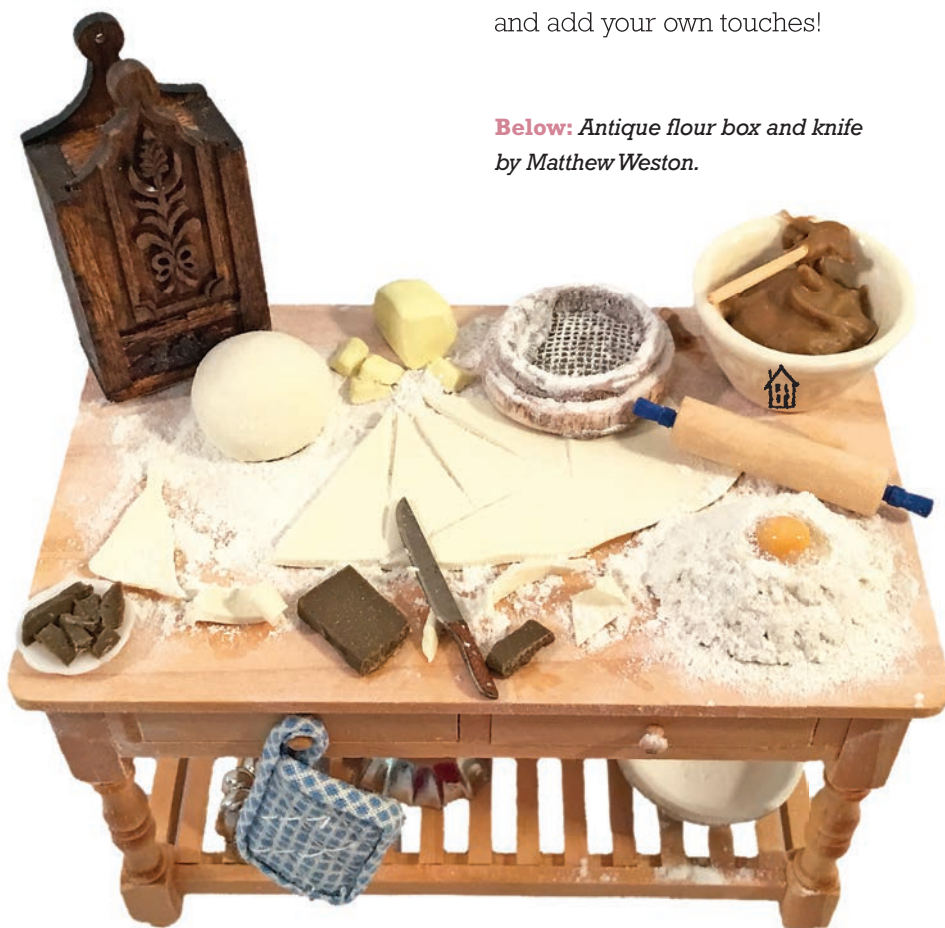
Step 19. Arrange the various pastry pieces, butter and chocolate on the island gluing them in place with white glue. If you don't want the scene to be permanent then use museum wax.

This baking scene tutorial is a project which may be adapted for a kitchen table or scaled down as a baking board.

It will work for any time period, by making simple changes. I have styled a scene for a period house and a more current version.

Now, it is up to you to create a realistic scene, such as placing a knife next to the chopped chocolate and adding other accessories. Have fun with this and add your own touches!

Below: Antique flour box and knife by Matthew Weston.



Knit a lovely shawl to drape over shoulders

Designed by Desna Tysoe, this delightful knit wrap would make a lovely gift and looks gorgeous around a lady's shoulders in any doll's house scene

BY DESNA TYSOE

This pretty little shawl is perfect for grandma to slip round her shoulders on a chilly evenings or it could even be worn as a summer bed-jacket. It can be knitted using either cotton or silk so that it drapes softly over the shoulders.

The shawl is worked in two pieces.

Centre

Cast on 6 sts. Work 3 rows K.

Pattern

1st row: (k2, m1) repeat x 2; k2
 2nd row (and all even rows): knit
 3rd row: k2, m1, k4, m1, k2
 5th row: k2, m1, k6, m1, k2
 7th row: k2, m1 (k2, m1, k2tog) x 2;
 m1, k2
 9th row: k2, m1, k10, m1, k2
 11th row: k2, m1, (k2, m1, k2tog) x 3;
 m1, k2
 13th row: k2, m1, k14, m1, k2
 15th row: k2, m1 (k2, m1, k2tog) x 4;
 m1, k2
 17th row: k2, m1, k18, m1, k2
 19th row: k2, m1 (k2, m1, k2tog) x 5;
 m1, k2
 21st row: k2, m1, k22, m1, k2
 Continue in pattern until 56 sts on
 needle
 Knit 6 rows
 Cast off. (Don't worry if it curls as
 this forms the shoulder shaping)

You will need

- 1 pair size 18 needles
- Sewing cotton or silk

Abbreviations:

st/sts – stitch/stitches
 k – knit
 p – purl
 tog – together
 sl – slip
 m1 – make one (yarn round
 needle)
 alt – alternate



Lace edge

Cast on 9 sts. K 6 rows

Note: sts should only be counted after the 1st or 12th rows

1st and every alt row: knit (right side)

2nd row: k3, k2tog, m1, k2tog (m1, k1) x 2

4th row: k2 (k2tog, m1) x 2; k3, m1, k1

6th row: k1 (k2tog, m1) x 2; k5, m1, k1

8th row: k3 (m1, k2tog) x 2; k1, k2tog, m1, k2tog

10th row: k4, m1, k2tog, m1, k3tog, m1, k2tog

12th row: k5, m1, k3tog, m1, k2tog

Repeat these 12 rows 15 times

Knit 6 rows.

Cast off loosely

To make up

Sew in ends. Sew lace edging to 'V' edge of centre piece, easing lace around point.

Sew on ribbon bow if desired.



Quick and easy

Sandra discovers some fun wooden house fronts that you can transform easily

BY SANDRA HARDING

Choose a house to start, and cut out a shape in paper to match, smaller than the house front.

Choose a house, and paint it any colour you want. I kept the church type in stone or grey colours. Paint the roof a different colour, usually either slate or terracotta. You may need to mix your colours



You will need

- Pack of wooden house fronts from Hobbycraft or similar (They are about an inch high, so about a foot tall; a small twelfth scale or larger 1/24th scale doll's house)
- Box of acrylic paints in various colours
- Very fine paint-brushes
- Palette or similar for mixing
- Glue
- Paper for cut-outs
- Scissors

on the palette to get the one you like. Let it dry.

Chose the colours for the door and behind your windows, and paint the paper shape to match the shapes of the windows and door on the house front.

I painted a stained glass effect for the church windows: just tiny dabs of red and blue paint. Let it dry.

Glue the paper to the back of the painted house front, matching the painted area with the windows and doors. Let it dry a little.

Glue the remaining flat house fronts behind, one on top of each other, making sure the 5 house fronts match up and are level. Make sure it's flat, and that the house stands up straight. Let it all dry.

Paint the outside of the house (the sides and the back) to match the front colour, and the roof sides and top to match the colour of the roof. Let it dry.

Add any little decoration. I painted tiny dabs for flowers, and accentuated around the windows and doors on a couple.



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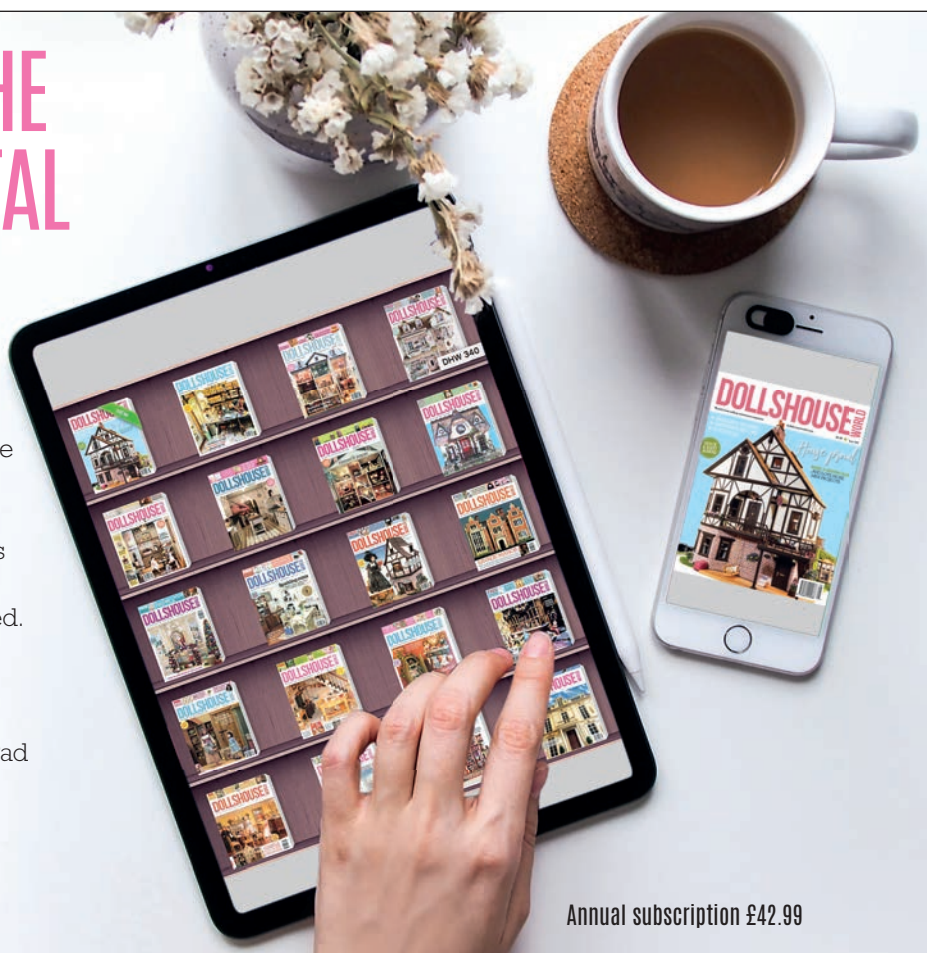
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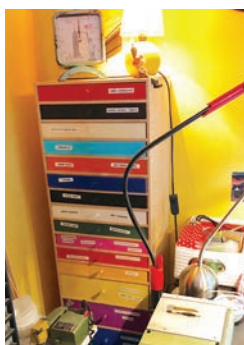
WHERE I WORK

WE TALK TO DANIELLE MULLER ABOUT HER WORKSPACE THAT'S RESERVED FOR MINIS

Hi Danielle, how long have you been making miniatures?

My love for all things mini started when I was a child, but all I did back then was collect all sorts of miniature items, in different scales. Growing up in Luxembourg, a country where nobody knew doll's houses even existed, collecting was all I could do. I started with this wonderful hobby in 1995, the same year I got married. My dad, who sadly passed away in 2016 at the age of 85, did build model airplanes. When he retired he started with N scale train models. So somehow I guess, that's where I got my love for miniatures. I always remember seeing him in his workplace working on his models.

Where do you create? I'm very lucky to have a really nice workplace in our house. It has access to the terrace and garden, which is absolutely fabulous during the summer months. I am an outdoor person and I was able to plan it while we were designing our life size house.



Do you keep your workspace private?

It is mostly private but my husband and some very good friends, who always want to see what I'm working on when they come to visit, are allowed to enter. I also have two beautiful Maine Coon cats who are crazy about making miniatures. Most of the time they're lying right in front of me on my desk, as long as I don't work with any dangerous materials of course. I cover the tools with an old kitchen towel so that they can't hurt themselves when sniffing around. What can I do, they just wanna help!

Do you listen to music while you work?

I love to listen to music. Playing music in the background has a calming effect for me.

Describe your workspace in five words.

Spacious, colourful, full of memories, nicely decorated, well-organised.

One thing your workspace can't be missing?

My Proxxon micromot power tools.



"PLAYING MUSIC IN THE BACKGROUND HAS A CALMING EFFECT FOR ME."



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