

DOLLHOUSE WORLD

World's best selling miniatures magazine

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small details

● Issue 347

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welcome

"We spend January 1st walking through our lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work to be done, cracks to be patched."

That's the writer Ellen Goodman. If it was a miniaturist talking they'd be walking through the rooms of their doll's house making lists for the New Year.

Ellen went on to add: "Maybe this year, to balance the list, we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives... not looking for flaws, but for potential."

That sounds like good advice whatever scale you're talking about.

Cindy Coon's latest scene might well qualify as a 'room of her life'. You can see her walk-in closet up close and personal in this issue. As Craig might say: "Fab..u..lous."

The room on our front cover might be less glamorous, but it's equally deserving of a set of tens if we were applying Strictly judging. Gill Brightwell's Welsh cottage is full of charming touches.

As we head into 2022 we've got a diary for you to make and a calendar to cut out. Happy New Year from all of us at DHW and thank you for all your support during 2021. We wouldn't be here without you.

Richard.

email: richard@ashdown.co.uk



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From our house to your house... another page for you to cut out

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Start the New Year by making a lovely little diary, complete with key

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We chat to one reader about her life in miniature

Quote of the month:

"Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."

Martin Luther King Jr.



HOUSE HUNT



Find the little house hidden inside. Last issue it appeared on page 77.



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.

Welsh family scene in Gill's cosy cottage

Grandparents Nain and Taid are feeling rather worn out after a day babysitting, which included a trip to the allotment and a game of football

BY SANDRA HARDING

Gill Brightwell is a very, very patient lady as she was an adult before she got her own doll's house, although she had wanted one from about the age of five.

It was during visits to an orphanage with her father that she saw her first doll's house and she knew she wanted one of her own. The orphanage was supported by her local church, and after each visit she felt little twinges of jealousy and hated leaving the little house behind.

We have to fast forward many years now and meet very understanding husband, Hugh, who encouraged her to visit doll's house shows close to her

home as well as in London. They even went together to the Chicago show after they heard about the show and the dates coincided with a wedding they were going to attend in Texas. You will gather Gill was well and truly hooked.

The first house she bought was from Lawrence Holden but is not yet completed. The house we're featuring here is Ty Clyd (Cosy House), one of two delightful cottages she bought from Little Homes of England — you will get to see the other later.

This cottage is owned by single Welsh mum Angharad who has a son, Gethin, and today she is having a girlie day away with her friends. Her mum



and dad, Nain and Taid, are babysitting and Taid is feeling a little jaded as he and Gethin have been down to the allotment all day, collecting fresh vegetables. Gethin also insisted that grandad played football with him when they got home and, of course, being a grandad, he did. Taid is now worn out, but happy with his pint and cigarettes. To make it perfect, his feet are in a footbath — such bliss.

Not only did the football game wear out Taid, little Gethin is so tired that he didn't have time to get under the covers before he fell asleep, clutching his tiny Paddington bear. Nain has spent the day knitting and reading the bible (in Welsh) and is now staring out of the window and dreaming of her beloved Wales with hiraeth (a very strong longing) in her heart.

There are many Welsh accessories in every room, but you may need







“I particularly love the collection of mini hair combs in a frame, as I have not seen this done before.”

to look hard to find them. There is a spoon rack and shepherd's chair in the kitchen, made by Truly Scrumptious. There are also love spoons, a crwth (a stringed musical instrument) and a Welsh bible in the sitting room made by Pear Tree Miniatures. In Gethin's room is a red dragon by L&A St Leger and in Angharad's room is another prized possession, an embroidery of Harlech Castle. This was made by Barbara Green from Canada as a special favour for Gill, as Barbara has arthritis in her hands.

On the door/window opening are samplers commemorating William and Kate's and Harry and Megan's weddings, and are by Nicola Mascal. I particularly love the collection of mini hair combs in a frame, as I have not seen this done



before. A couple of them were made by Sun Lemmens of Nalladris and the others are by Jane of Truly Scrumptious. The lights are all by Ray Storey.

Outside the house Taid has left his spade and brush and Gethin has left his football boots where they landed. The black cat, Fudgey, is so intent on watching the comings and goings of the house martins that she completely fails to notice either the little mouse, or the blackbird on the boots.

As for the Siamese cat, Misty, she is of course far too aristocratic to even

think of chasing anything as she is aware her destiny is to be hand fed and completely pampered. I love this family scene and the lovely people in it: Gethin (made by Jane Davies) and Nain and Taid (made by Julie Campbell).





John finds his niche in making mini furniture

Lessons learnt making full-size pieces of furniture in a joinery workshop have been put to good use in the miniature world with authentic touches

BY SANDRA HARDING

Talking to John Peck, the maker of these fine pieces, I was reminded yet again how interesting life's twists and turns are before we finally reach our accidental destination.

Over the years in his different jobs, which luckily for us included working in a joinery workshop, John learnt several skills. He put those skills to use making detailed miniature furniture using full scale methods, miniature mortice and tenon joints for instance.

If you are now wondering why those skills were important, I will let you into a little secret. Since 2010 John has been managing his own business, making bespoke miniature furniture based on actual antiques, usually from commissions, and with regular returning customers.



Eventually, he bought a planer thicknesser, a wood-working machine designed for trimming down boards to a consistent thickness and width. This means he can buy rough timber, usually Malaysian Jelutong, which takes shaping and carving well, and create a smooth finish even down to 1mm thickness. This wood also takes wood dyes and stains well.

It's important to John that he keeps his work authentic and detailed and he loves it when the customer is pleased with the end result. Although he has attended fairs in Newark and Matlock, he has been so busy with his online and return-

ing customers, that he finds it hard to build up enough stock to attend fairs. That could change in the next year or so.

John's love of our miniature world started twenty years ago when his wife, Denise, found plans for a doll's house in a magazine which John decided to make for their niece. He enjoyed it so much that he soon after made a shop with living accommodation.

Denise started buying furniture for it and soon realised that John's handmade pieces were so much better than those she had bought, so she began replacing those with John's creations. Denise continues to be his greatest fan and encourages his artistic skills.





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WHERE I WORK

WE TALK TO AGNES HORVATH OF AGGIES MINIATURES ABOUT HER WORKSPACE

Hi Agnes, when did you start making miniatures? I made my first miniature – a tiny cake with whipped cream – in 2019. I saw a YouTube tutorial on how to make miniature cakes from polymer clay and as soon as I made the first one, I was hooked.

Where do you work? My husband and I live in a small one-bedroom flat in central London. We run our little family business from here. We spend most of the time together on a few square meters and he is still alive nonetheless.

Do you always make your minis in the same place? Yes, my studio is the only place where I make miniatures. I have my own territory in the flat, a sunny corner in the living room. My work area is super organised, with fixed places for everything. Just like everybody in the handmade/art industry I have tons of materials and I wouldn't be able to work without them.

Do you work at set times? My work area is super organised and I should do the same with my time as well but, unfortunately, I'm not capable of doing that yet. I always promise myself a free evening or



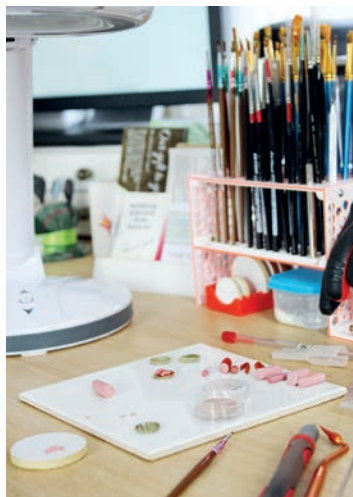
day off, but usually I fail with those promises. Prioritising is the only way which works for me. I always work on one project at a time; if I don't finish it I don't start the next one, otherwise I would be lost.

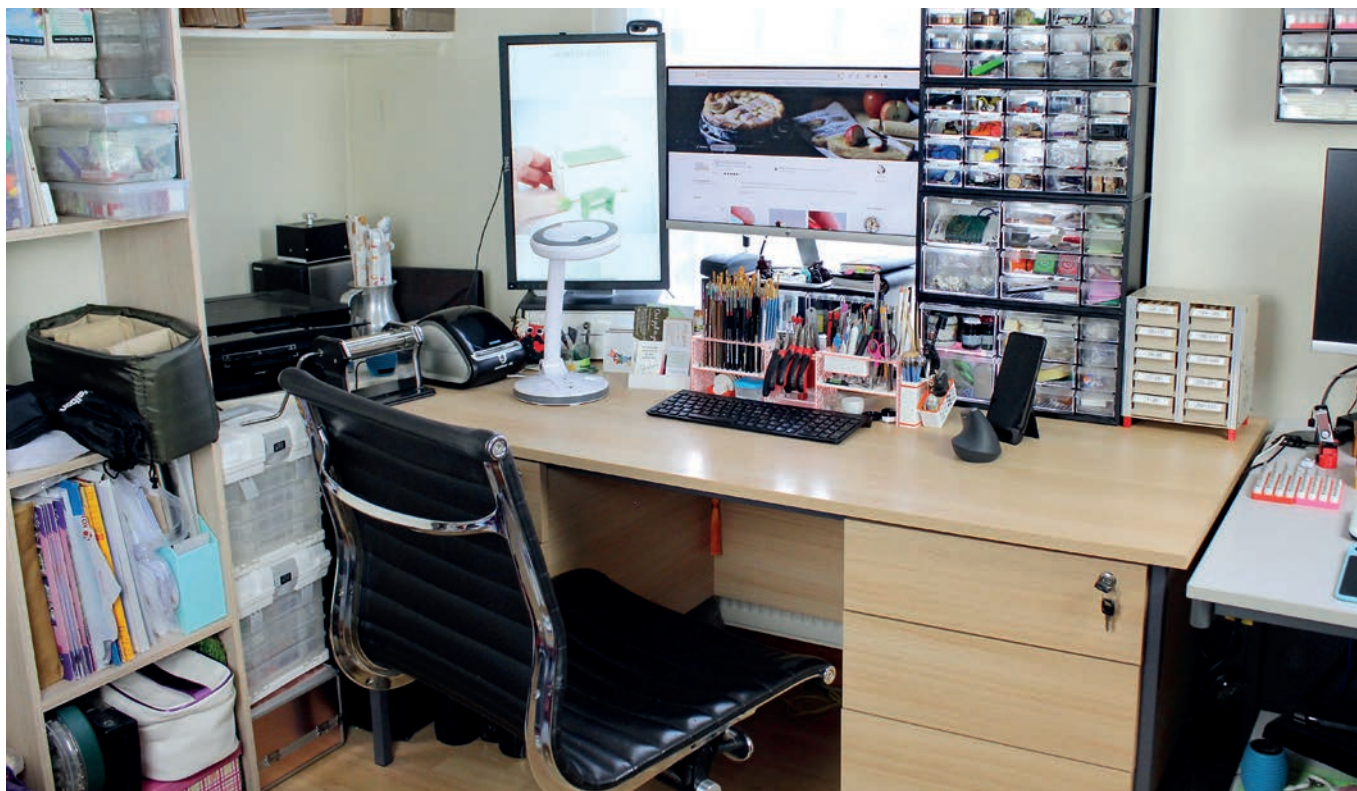
What makes your space for mini making so special? My work is my hobby, my colleague is my best friend. I have had plenty of happy moments here already and have much more to come. This is the place where I always wanted to be.

Do you keep your workspace private? It's difficult to keep the guests far from the living room corner, so everybody is welcome to be in my space as long as they don't touch anything.

Do you listen to music while you work? Instead of music we prefer to listen to podcasts, tutorials or documentaries as an 'informative background noise' if this term makes any sense.

Name one thing that is banned from your workspace. Lint. My biggest enemy is dirty clay and I really don't like it when my clay contains lint. I try to





remove every single piece of lint because take close-up shots of my finished miniatures and every single spec of dust would be visible on photos. Lint and dust are huge problem to every polymer clay artist but it's even more annoying when you make miniatures. I have tried all of the tricks like handwashing and baby wipes but they didn't give me a perfect solution.

So what did you do? For perfectly lint free miniatures I had to work out my own way. I have a few different coloured scrap clays I use only for cleaning. Before I start work on my miniatures I take a similar colour (dark if I plan to use dark or light if I am working with white) scrap clay and start to do some conditioning. I roll the clay on the surface where I will work and knead it in my hands until is perfectly soft. It takes a few minutes but after that my work surface and hands are perfectly lint free. After I finish this cleaning method I don't touch anything else, like my clothes, my face, my hair,

or even my phone. If I need to leave my desk I repeat the procedure before I continue to work on my minis.

Describe your workspace in five words. Organised – small – busy – clean – cosy.

What is the one thing that your workspace can't be missing? Light - my desk is in front of the window but sometimes I still feel it's too dark to see the colours perfectly. I have a light with a strong cool bulb on my desk and I use this even in daytime.

What or where would be your dream workspace? I can't wait to move into our own home. We are looking for our dream house at the moment and I already know how the work studio will look like if we finally find it. It will be large and super bright; it will have lots of huge windows with a view of a garden or hills or fields. It will be a three or four times bigger space than we have now. I love my desk; I would keep it but I will need much more storage space around me with shelves and wall cabinets. Finally, we will be able to keep our social life and work life in separate rooms — the workspace will be in the biggest room of course

● AggiesMiniatures
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“I HAVE HAD PLenty OF HAPPY MOMENTS HERE ALREADY AND HAVE MUCH MORE TO COME.”

A love of mini pillows spreads worldwide

June Sprigg Tooley started making mini pillows during the pandemic to relieve her anxiety and thousands of people around the world have found comfort in her soft furnishings

BY JUNE SPRIGG TOOLEY

It all started with the coronavirus pandemic in early 2020, when I began making tiny pillows to relieve my anxiety. As a kid, I made mini quilts and stuffed animals. As an adult, I have collected miniatures for more than twenty years. My original project was a room box inspired by grandma's kitchen, but fourteen room boxes, a doll's house, and an antique shop later, I was running out of room in my 800-square-foot house.

With no room but lots of time, my tiny pillow enterprise was born. My kitchen is now a workshop. Supplies line my long table and my workplace is my handy island counter, a convenient height and directly under bright light. My comfortable workstation allows me to stand, a healthy change from sitting. Let's just say that making miniatures is more interesting to me than cooking!

Once I got the hang of making simple squares, I found that making pillow sets allowed me to combine colours and patterns in the unconventional ways I like. I experimented with mini furniture kits from CastleCrafts, nicely designed and easy to finish with chalk paint and wax.

My go-to source for mini fabrics is Les Chinoiseries. With two major suppliers based in South Africa and Spain, Tooley's Tiny



Pillows was off to an international start. I branched out with unfinished furniture and graduated to finished pieces which I give new life with paint, pillows, and upholstery, a step up from making simple pillows and a whole new challenge. I

shop online always on the lookout for whimsical furniture. I'm just starting to work with 1/24th scale chairs and settees. My smallest pillows are 1/2" across, smaller than my fingernail.

The pillows are glued, not sewn, because I can have more fun with embellishments. I would be lost without Aleene's Fast Grab Tacky Glue. Nothing else sticks so efficiently and dries clear. I use the tiniest trims I can find: silk ribbon, buttons, pompoms, tassels, silk cord, and lace. Some years ago, I found 2mm buttons for a project. Now the smallest I can find are 3mm. (If you know a source for the really tiny ones,

please let me know.)

People comment that the work must be hard, but it just needs patience. The hardest part for me is waiting for the paint or glue to dry.

My earliest efforts featured traditional colours and patterns, but I have increasingly indulged my preference for unexpected combinations. If a piece has six or seven different fabrics, I think that's just about right. I love contrasting colours and patterns that "go but don't match." I play around with asymmetry. Since making minis is a way for me to play, I make what I like and figure that someone else will find it appealing, too. I've been pleasantly surprised that some of the wilder pieces have been quick to sell.

Since the coronavirus quarantine changed the rhythm of life, I've had more time to develop marketing. Without miniature shows, online sales are the only venue. I opened a shop on Etsy in April and have enjoyed small but steady sales and a growing number of people who call my shop a favourite.

I also opened a Facebook page called TooleysTinyPillows with the intention of selling, but within days I realised that something extraordinary was happening. To my astonishment, the page had 2,000 likes, then 4,000, and within just a few weeks there were more than 8,600 people from more than forty countries





around the world who were interested in tiny pillows!

The vast majority are from the Middle East, Africa, and many parts of Asia. Many are Muslim, as I have learned in message conversations I cherish. There are more men than anybody would expect.

I haven't had a single sale from this page, but that's not why it's important to me. I use the page for global goodwill outreach. I enjoy thanking people in their native languages (thanks to

Google Translate). At first I tried to check everyone's Facebook pages to try to understand who they were, but with so many followers, it became impossible.

However, one woman's page showed her beautiful quilted and embroidered handbags, placemats, and other goods. I asked her if I could use my page to share her work, and ever since, Khin Phyo Lwin in Myanmar has sent me photos of her creations, which I post on the TooleysTinyPillows page.

I post what I am making, with photos of the process of selecting furniture and fabrics. I celebrate my sales with pictures of each item and where it went in the world. My best friend, also a doll's house enthusiast, gave me a sweet miniature of my cat Marley, and I use Mini-Marley in my photos, crediting her as the business manager and boss. People love her tiny accessories – a mug of hot cocoa, a cup of tea with a slice of lemon, a MacBook laptop of her own – and of course a tiny face



mask! My goal is to create items with precision work, lots of detail, and stylish design, in a range of prices from under £7 to £120 (\$7-\$150) and up.

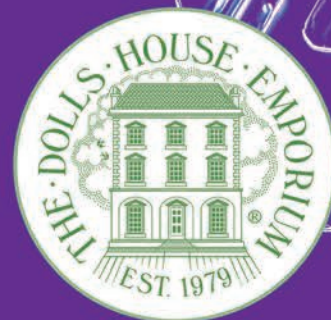
So why on earth do more than 8,600 people around the world like tiny pillows? I'm convinced that it is a consequence of the coronavirus. People have more time at home. On all our Facebook pages I see universal concern about the pandemic and a global plea for staying home, staying clean, and wearing masks. As for the baffling appeal of tiny pillows, I suspect it has something to do with comfort. In a big, newly challenging world, people of all kinds are drawn to a cosy, manageable miniature world where in their imaginations they can rest on tiny settees, nestle in comfy pillows, and get away from it all.

We are all in this together. That is the biggest gift of the tiny pillows that have come to play an important part in my daily life. In the meantime, I've set myself new challenges – refining the art of making 1/24th scale bolsters, real appliqué, and perfect rosettes. Stay tuned!

LITTLE LINKS:

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Tamar's Moroccan Patio evokes fond memories

Playing for hours as a child on her grandparents' patio, surrounded by jasmine and lemon trees, was the inspiration behind Tamar Cohen's 1/24th scale scene

BY TAMAR COHEN

Welcome to the Moroccan Patio where you can relax, have some mint tea, and enjoy the sun and breeze while surrounded by a beautiful green plantation. It's a place you can leave your troubles behind and it's where I wanted to be while creating during the cold winter.

As a child, I used to play for hours on my grandparents' beautiful patio. It felt like the most magical place in the middle of the organic landscape of Tel Aviv. I still remember the greenery, the smell of jasmine and baking in the air and the magnificent blossom of the lemon tree.

My father was born in Iraq and immigrated to Israel as a child, so I grew up surrounded by oriental tastes, smells, and culture. When I turned 18 I



travelled to London to visit my father's sister who was an amazing belly dancer when she was younger. She taught me some dance moves and gave me her beautiful handmade costumes and I still dance today. All of those experiences are a part of my recent work. I had a very clear vision of how I wanted the patio to look like, and how I wanted it to make others feel. It turned out exactly how I imagined. Around a year ago I came across a phenomenal Syrian artist, Abdulrahman Eid, who created the most amazing oriental diorama. It left a huge impact on me and inspired me greatly. I have never been to Morocco but working on this piece I felt as if I was truly there. Now, that's how I feel whenever I look at this piece.

Previously, I made a time machine in an alchemist's castle. I think I had better convert that to a shrinking machine to make me smaller so I can spend some time inside the miniature world I have created



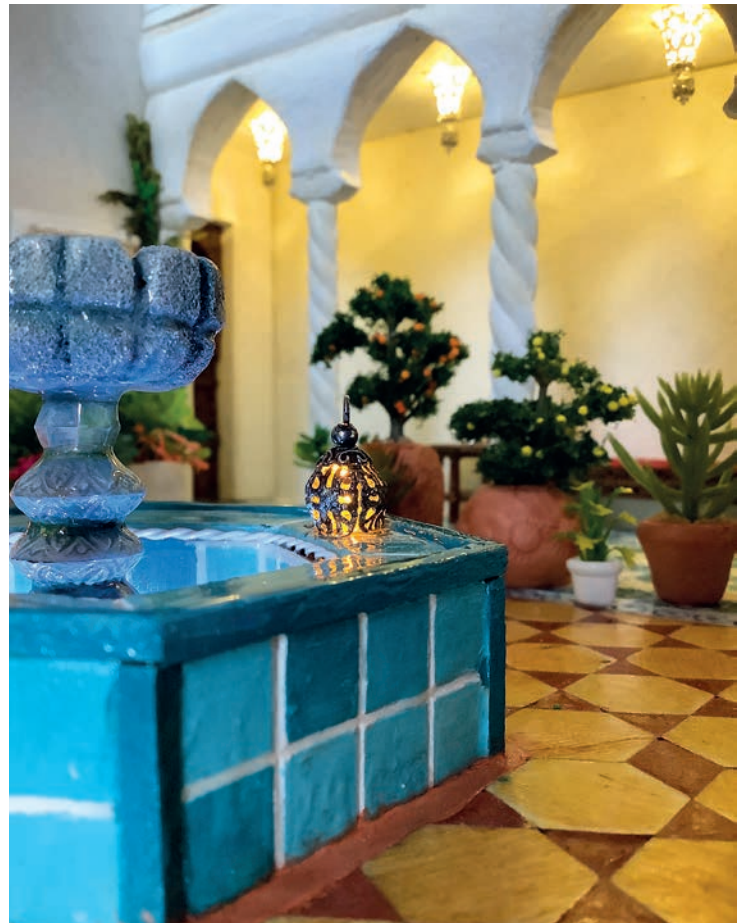
I have been working on the patio for a month and probably spent around 160 hours creating it from scratch. It was made from a mixture of different materials, some not exactly the typical ones that are used for miniature making. It is 48cm long, 38cm high and 31cm deep — 1/24th scale.

For the structure I used MDF and wood scraps I had at home. I made the floor tiles from balsa, using markers and stamps I created. The glossy effect was made with a lacquer spray I covered the front of the house with mortar and the side walls too. The carved doors are made from balsa, which I covered with thick lace and painted with acrylic; it gave it a very authentic look, so I used it for the windows as well.

Making the wooden balcony was a bit of a challenge and demanded some imagination and creativity, which led me to use a plastic basket, metal beads, lace, and balsa wood all painted with primer and acrylic paint. For the lighting I used 9v pre-wired bulbs. The fountain is operated separately, while the hallways are operated together and the house is separate.

I used the plastic basket for the fences as well, it turned out to be very useful! For the roof shingles I used the edges of coffee sticks, they were the exact size I needed — a little thinner than popsicles. When I work, I always try to keep an open mind and explore new materials and new ways to create and bring to life what I imagine.





Add some funky fashion to your house with floor lamp

Have some kit-bashing fun with your mini makes by creating this stylish light. Kris guides you through the process step-by-step

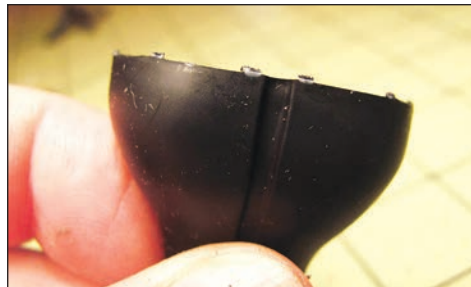
BY KRIS COMPAS

I have been wanting to make one of these for a long time. I have a full-size dress form from the forties in my home, it's just like the ones on Project Runway. I've always wanted someone to make it into a floor lamp for me. 'Someone' hasn't, so I have made one in miniature!

You will need to order the Chrysnbon kit and the suggested glue for it. The light kit is wonderful for making your own lamps. I love this kit and usually have a few on hand.

You will need

- Chrysnbon dress form kit and the suggested glue
- Snippers
- File
- Cir-Kit Concepts Lamp Shade Kit CK5009 (available from <https://hobby.uk.com>)
- Dremel with 1/8" bit
- Muslin fabric
- Matte Mod Podge
- Scissors
- Paint brush
- Elmer's white glue
- Elmer's yellow glue
- Card stock
- 'T' pin
- Testors glue
- Miniature plug
- Gold paint
- Leopard print fabric
- Tiny braid



Step 1. Disconnect the dress form from the frame work in the package. Then disconnect the bottom portion of the dress form. This will leave small nubs. File them smooth. File the one on the side too.



Step 2. Cut off the knob at the top. I used my Dremel to drill a hole in the top. I know this seems silly but drilling the hole made it easier for me to cut off the rounded edge.



Step 3. I have NOT glued the dress form together. I am holding the dress form together and used my Dremel again to make a larger hole at the neck. I had a 1/8" bit in and used it to



carve out the plastic. I want as much out as the neck can stand. There is about a 1/16" left all around. I used the 1/8" bit to drill a hole in the bottom of the BACK part of the dress form. This is for the electric wires to pass through.



Step 4. I am using a good quality muslin to cover the dress form and matte Mod Podge to glue it to the dress form. Dab on the Mod Podge. I did not apply any Mod Podge in the indentation on the centre of the back and front of the dress form.

Step 5. This is important: use the fabric on its bias or the fabric will not stretch over the form nicely. Press the fabric onto the Mod Podge, pulling the fabric over the dress form. Pull the fabric tightly leaving no folds on the outside of the dress form.



Step 6. Trim the fabric leaving enough to fold to the inside of the dress form. Apply the Mod Podge to the inside and glue the rest of the fabric down. Cut out around the two knobs at the bottom. Make sure all your corners

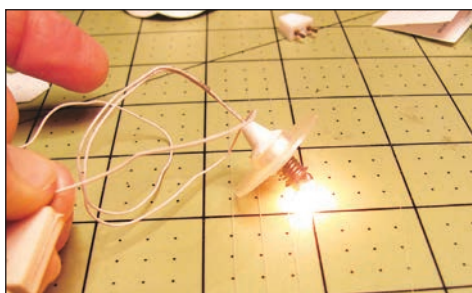
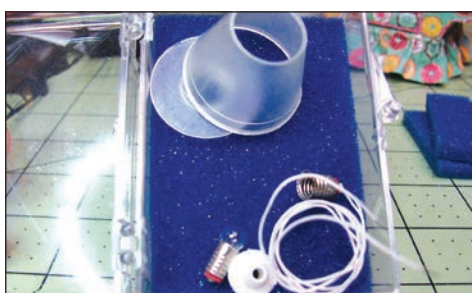
are nicely turned.



Step 7. Apply the Mod Podge to the front of the dress form and pull the fabric to fit. This will be a little more difficult because of the shape but all the folds and wrinkles can be removed. See above, the fabric is on with no folds.



Step 8. Trim the fabric and glue the extra to the inside. Trim out at the bottom corners for the holes that receive the knobs. Just holding it together. Shown is the neck that will receive the socket holder.



Step 9. Always test the light to see if it's working. This kit does have a replaceable bulb but I want to know if the wires have a good connection to the socket.

Step 10. I have applied Elmer's white glue along the edge and into the holes at the bottom. I do not like tacky glue for this. Tacky glue remains flexible and I don't want this to be flexible. Please use the Elmer's white glue. I didn't use Elmer's yellow glue because I did not want the glue to possibly squeeze out and dry showing a yellow line.



Step 11. In both necks, apply Elmer's yellow glue. The yellow glue will hold the plastic socket firmly. I tried this the day before with tacky glue and it was wobbly, I want a firm hold.



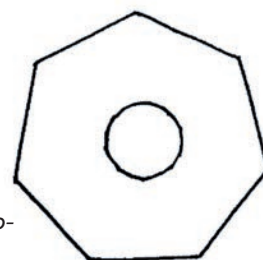
Step 12. Thread the wires through the hole you drilled earlier.

Step 13. Place the socket into the neck and press the two parts together.

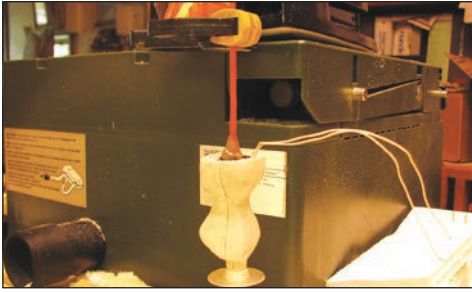
Pattern



You will need 7 panels for making the shade.



This is the base for the new lampshade base.

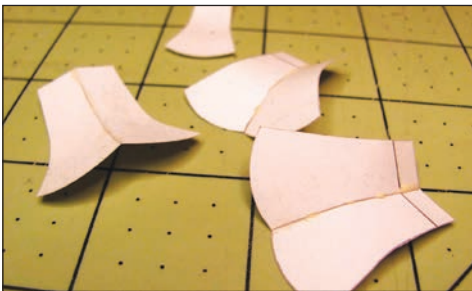


Step 14. Hold the two parts together until you can see that they are holding without spreading back apart when you let go. This will probably take 3 to 5 minutes. I let my dress form dry upside down to get the glue to dry around the socket. PLEASE LET THIS DRY OVERNIGHT.



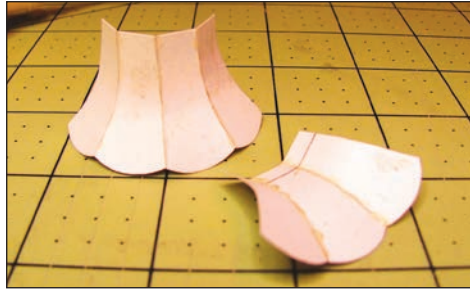
Step 15. I've shown this lamp shade before but I've changed the size for this lamp. Use the pattern on P19 to print out the pieces.

Step 16. Use your fingers to bend the card stock shapes a bit.



Step 17. Use Elmer's yellow glue to glue the pieces together. Butt the edges of the card stock together, do not overlap them.

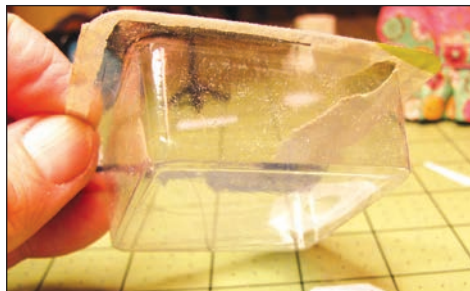
Step 18. Glue pairs together first. Let these dry for about 5 minutes.



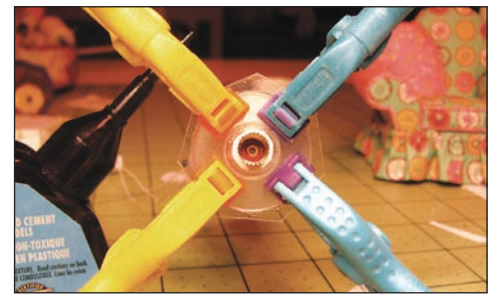
Step 19. Glue two pairs together and glue the last piece to the last pair. Let this dry for five minutes.



Step 20. Glue the two pieces together and let dry. Next, glue the last seam.



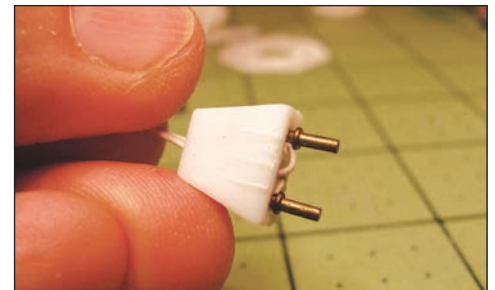
Step 21. We will need to enlarge the lamp shade base for our shade. I am using plastic from packaging. I've used my pattern and scratched using a "T" pin into the plastic. Can you see my lines?



Step 22. Cut the new lamp shade base out. Using the Testors glue, I centred the new lamp shade base onto the original lamp shade base and clamped. I let this set over night, along with my lamp shade.



Step 23. It's another day and the glue is dry on my new lamp shade base. Using the Testors glue, adhere the stand onto the form.



Step 24. You will have to purchase a plug to attach the wires to at the end of your light.

Step 25. I painted the inside of my shade gold.

Step 26. I am using a leopard print and some tiny braid I bought at a miniature show years ago. This braid is available from miniature doll suppliers. I used the braid instead of the ribbon for its ability to curve without folds. I did not pull the threads on the braid, I left it flat. That will be explained on the supplier's site.



Step 27. Use a big chunk of fabric to cover this shade. We have to use the bias again and trimming that down has not always been a good idea for me, I've come up short a couple of times and lost the shade. Give the fabric a good tug on the diagonal to get the stretch going.

Step 28. I debated about using Elmer's white glue or the Mod Podge; I settled on the Mod Podge. Apply the Mod Podge onto three of the shade's panels.



Step 29. Press the fabric onto the shade, smoothing the fabric over the shade.

Step 30. Apply the Mod Podge to another couple of panels and smooth the fabric onto the shade.

Step 31. Apply the Mod Podge to the last two panels and bring the fabric together.



Above: Here she is in the attic!



Step 32. Trim off the extra fabric at the top and bottom, leaving about a quarter inch all around. You can see the gold on the inside of my shade.

Step 33. Trim the fabric to the very edge of the shade.



Step 34. Cut the extra fabric off the side of the shade. Cut as close as you can get!

Step 35. Guess what, I used tacky glue to glue the braid to the top and bottom edges of the shade.

Step 36. I did not glue my shade to the lamp shade base; it sits nicely on its own. I will leave that decision up to you.

Why not make the funky armchair to match your new light. Kris showed how to make it in Issue 339 of DHW.



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Little steps to creating tiny toddler treasures

From a young age Karen Tadman was encouraged to create with her hands and now she has grown into an amazing artist who makes sought after miniature dolls

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

Karen Tadman makes a wide range of different miniature figures, including babies, toddlers and young children in twelfth, 1/24th and 1/48th scale. She also makes tiny toys and recently, after several years hiatus, she returned to making miniature sculpted teddy bears as well. When she started making miniatures, teddy bears were the first items that she decided to sell. This is how the name of her business was chosen.

When Karen was a child, she did not have a doll's house, but her mother was exceptionally creative, so they always had craft items around to make things. They would make doll's house room boxes for their tiny dolls out of cardboard boxes and then make furniture from things like matchboxes and popsicle sticks. Accessories were made from clay and Playdough.

Karen's mother always had a huge supply of craft items handy because she operated her own nursery school. She would encourage Karen to create her own fun and use her imagination. Her mother was an artist for her entire life, always making her children their cuddly bears, puppets, and dolls that often had a dual purpose.

If you turned the doll inside out it became a completely different toy. All of her handmade toys had clothing and blankets made by her mother. Karen and her siblings always had clay available, so she used to make tiny



fruits, vegetables and clay sandwiches for her dolls to pretend-eat.

Karen cannot remember a time when she wasn't interested in miniatures. It always delighted her to see anything diminutive. She did not know that actual doll's house miniatures existed when she was a child, but she was always fascinated by things like key chains as they had tiny versions of things hanging from them like tiny shoes or tiny notebooks and teeny pencils. She collected erasers as well.

When Karen was a member of Brownies, they had a task to collect as many tiny things that they could fit into a matchbox. This is where Karen discovered her true calling, collecting the tiniest items she could find to fit inside the matchbox. She always loved anything small and cute that could fit into her pockets.

Karen works full time in a furniture shop that she owns with her husband, Gary. She knows that she is lucky to have a small room at the office where



she often creates miniatures when it is not busy in the shop.

All of her family loves the miniatures that Karen makes. Her daughter, Gemma, always wants just about everything that Karen makes and she treasures the smaller scale things the most. Gemma has recently completed her own 1/48th scale house and furnished it all with tiny items from kits. Karen's son Liam followed her into making miniatures for a few years, but he now primarily makes larger items. Liam collects "Toy Story" memorabilia and he also creates items for collectors that the film did not produce.

Karen is always thinking about what she will make next. She finds inspiration everywhere she goes. If she sees little children wearing cute outfits or holding a toy in a certain way, she often thinks, "I MUST make that!" She always has a notebook with her or her iPad so that she can make notes to act on when she has the chance. Some ideas will stay in her mind for years until they finally come to completion.

She often has a doll or a bear that she or Gemma cannot abide parting with, so they may keep these pieces for several months before they will allow themselves to let them go. She must always repeat to herself, in most cases the treasure she makes will be going to a good and welcoming home.

Karen's workplace is completely portable. She has a work box that holds all of her essential supplies that



Above left: The little girl is taking her bunny for a ride.

Above: A little hand sculpted toddler in shorts playing with a bunny. Look at those cute pudgy knees!

Left: It doesn't get much cuter than brothers with matching outfits.

Below left: A little girl and her teddy bear.

Below: Each of her little dolls have their own personality based on their sweet little outfits and hairstyle.





Top: Doggy kisses!

Above: This tiny boy is placed in a twelfth scene.

Below: Playtime in the doll's house.

Above: These two little ones are cute as can be.



Above: Time to open some presents! These twelfth scale dolls are beautifully dressed for colder weather.

Above right: The little boy loves his new present.

Right: This twelfth scale doll has her own doll, both sculpted by Karen.



she takes everywhere. She does not take custom orders. If she did take custom orders, she would have to allow for other people's ideas for a doll that she may not want in circulation representing her work. And then there would also be dealing with buyer's remorse – some tiny detail was not exactly right. With her method of selling, she encounters none of that hassle. All of her work eventually ends up for auction on eBay. This is the method she has always used to sell her miniatures since 2004. "If it ain't broke – don't fix it!"

She is also known to be exception-

ally helpful to new artists who are looking for advice. The great miniaturist Iris Bodenbender spent quite a bit of time with Karen before she made her own dolls which turned out to be exactly what she needed to get started. You can actually see the influence of Karen in the dolls made by Iris, and yet they are distinctly different. Iris came away from her time spent with Karen filled with gratitude and excited to begin the process, and with an open invitation to speak as often as necessary in order to get herself going. Karen feels as if there is room for everyone out there. Iris is eternally grateful to Karen.

Karen has not yet had any workshops as she is painfully shy in person. She thinks she might end up hiding throughout the entire lesson. However, she has made a few wonderful YouTube videos which were fun to make. She might make more tutorials in the future, but they are quite time consuming to make and edit.

Still, there are some delightful tutorials out there that she made which is exceptionally generous on Karen's part. I challenge you to check out these tutorials and then tell me that it looks easy. So many steps, but the outcome is amazing every time!

Michal's shop still going strong after fifty years

Michal Morse opened the first doll's house shop in the UK fifty years ago. Here she recalls how heart-warming it has been to witness the "pleasure the hobby gives"

BY MICHAL MORSE

I recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of the opening of my small doll's house shop in London, and the memories came flooding back.

I had £200 worth of stock — a couple of antique houses, a Tudor one and mainly mass-produced furniture from Bartons and Dol-Toi.

'The Dolls House', in Marylebone, was the first specialist shop in the UK although the hobby was starting in America. Flora Gill Jacobs already had a collection in Washington, Kaye MacLaren was an American enthusiast who brought some groups over and organised some fairs, while Flora held some Miniatur fairs.

Several collectors and dealers also started running fairs here. I remember appearing on a TV programme just before a fair at Knightsbridge — such a crowd turned up it had to close. Now London Dollshouse Festivals and Miniatura are well established and attract worldwide craftsmen and collectors, with many small fairs around the country.

In the UK Vivien Greene opened her collection in Oxford to the public, Lorna Gandolfo had a small museum in Sandwich while Faith Eaton showed her collection in London's Little Venice to groups by appointment. I was very fortunate to stay in her house while I was in Covent Garden. She once spent days volunteering to clean an early German doll's house in Bethnal Green Museum, and was delighted to dis-



cover some tiny Christmas decorations hidden in a drawer, as she often went to Christmas markets in Germany.

It is heart-warming how much pleasure the hobby gives — a recent customer of mine snapped out of a three year depression after buying a half-finished doll's house. When I was in Covent Garden I sold a huge display house to a man who was house-bound with a debilitating disease but could stand for about half an hour at a time; a deaf couple who lived in the East End fell for a Tudor cottage they couldn't have afforded in real life — they even paid for it with a building society draft. A woman MP commissioned a 'type-writer cosy' — a hollow shop to drop over her typewriter in the spare room, long before computers and laptops.

Recently I heard from someone who



used to take a bus past my shop in Lisson Grove as a child but was never allowed to have a doll's house. She wrote to say that forty years later, now her boys were at university, she was going to treat herself to one. She came and bought a lovely antique house.

Some houses have gone full circle and come back to me. A corner shop and matching terraced house, built by Sue and Trevor Cook, were bought in Covent Garden for eight-year old boy and girl twins. Ten years later when they needed money for university they sold them back to me in perfect condition. Another shop and cottage, also made by the Cooks, turned up recently and was immediately snapped up by someone whose aunt used to have one of the same design, complete with working awning.

When I had several Handicraft houses, with a balcony, pillars and fret-work windows, I found a craftsman to make copies, and bought back one of them years later. I have a couple in my own collection, and several in the shop. One is the basic design I copied, an original from the 1920s but completely redecorated.

A very unusual one, with an exten-

Above left: Michal's shop is now located in Northleach, near Cheltenham.

Left: Annie Willis made mini versions of Michal's dogs.

Top right: Michal's favourite - an 1870's French house with opening shutters



Above left: Another Sue and Trevor Cook which found its way back to the shop.

Above right: A customer bought this antique house forty years after first wanting one.



sion at the back, has original wallpapers and a craftsman at the local Men in Sheds has copied a missing fretwork window and balcony. I once had one complete with fretwork fireplaces and bannisters. For an L-shaped one in my own collection (aka the attic) I found beautiful fretwork furniture. Some fretwork kits available a few years ago would also fit well in these houses.

Over the last 50 years I have met some amazing craftsmen, sadly many no longer with us. Annie Willis was a lovely friend. She first came into Covent Garden with some miniature boards of food, thinking they would provide some extra money on top of her teaching crafts at a school, but soon decided to make miniatures full time, eventually specialising in miniature furry animals,

which have been collected worldwide.

Doll's houses have universal appeal; everyone is fascinated by miniatures, real life re-created in miniature. My favourite doll's house is an 1870's two-storey French house with opening shutters and a fretwork balcony. Six months after I opened the Broadley Street shop I took it home to my flat in Portobello Road when a customer threatened to partition the rooms.

As it was larger scale, about 1 1/2 inches to 1 foot, we kept the sherry and glasses in the bottom room, until I found a large scale French bedroom set. It is now fully furnished with period antique furniture, beautiful dolls with glass eyes and a working Art Nouveau oil lamp. It now has pride of place in my sitting room.



Above: This corner shop, built by Sue and Trevor Cook, was bought in Covent Garden for eight-year old boy and girl twins. Ten years later when they needed money for university they sold them back to Michal in perfect condition.



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Karen's magical fairy fort is 50 yards long

Karen Lam shares the proof that it doesn't need to cost much "to create our own little fantasy world which can keep us happy and sane, even in trying times."

BY SANDRA HARDING

I love fairyland so when I heard about a fairy fort created by Karen Lam I did what any fantasist would do, I asked her to send me some photographs. That's when the trouble started!

Even as I am writing this I am still not entirely sure what I have let myself in for as, I am told, each room, corridor and stairwell measures five feet six inches long, and four feet high, and there are about 24 sets (as Karen calls the rooms). You can see my dilemma!

When just one of the sets is on display Karen has to extend her dining table to seven feet six inches, but then I suppose it is the Throne Room after all, so that's all right I suppose! All the rooms have to be stored away between filming and reassembled for each photo shoot, using the dining table as the floor, and my mind boggles.

To try to unravel the story I will tell you what Karen has told me. Her love of doll's houses started when her grandfather made her a house that lit up and which was played with and loved by both Karen and later her own daughter. It eventually became too dilapidated to play with and was put away.

Some years later, a friend asked Karen if she could illustrate a children's book which was about a tiny man called Mr Brady, and to help with the illustrations she made a little wax man. Very soon Karen's husband David made the wax man some beautiful carved furniture, which was put in the

old house with Mr Brady, who was not very happy with the old house.

David then decided that Mr Brady needed a new house so a new one was made, and he even made a little piano which played, using a music box. Mr Brady's family began to grow as Karen sculpted a family of dolls in porcelain, using 1860's family glass photographs as inspiration. The dolls are between four to six inches high and Karen says they are about 1/10th scale. She has now made about 150 – wow! Eventually, the grandchildren were given the old house and now Karen's collection is in an adapted wardrobe

When the grandchildren came along Karen kept them entertained by making animated videos about the family living in the doll's house, and as the stories and the children grew, so did the fairy fort. Karen can't recall why she decided that the fairies would make the dolls come alive, but that's what happened. Maybe like the Greek sculptor Pygmalion who fell in love with the beautiful lady he had carved.

Karen has imagined that they all live in a semi-underground world, frozen in time somewhere in the 18th century and ruled by a king who does not allow anything modern in the fort. This is why they still live in the rather elegant manner of the court of King Louis XIV with lots of candles (the king won't tolerate electricity you see).

In Karen's mind she admits that the fort has taken on a life of its own and



the dolls have all become actors on a glittering stage full of splendour and delight. In reality, Karen realises that to have the complete fort on show she would need to be living in a castle herself as it's so big.

Everything you can see Karen has made, including the horses, caravans, roundabout, helter skelter, stall — the list is endless. Karen treats each room as a mini stage and sets it up on her table, as the mood takes her. Fabric or cardboard backdrops create the scene. The stone blocks for walls and stairs are either painted polystyrene or plaster of Paris. The facade was made of wooden pellets mixed with wood glue, and she has adapted large wooden jewellery boxes for the frames of the windows and doors.

Karen said: "This magical little world has completely captured my imagination, and what a wonderful gift imagination is. It need cost so little to create our own little fantasy world which can keep us happy and sane, even in trying times. The cherry on the cake is being able to share such delights with others who also enjoy them. In that way we fire each other's inspiration and create better and better things to bring joy into this world."

Having reached the end of this story, I think you might begin to understand why I had such an interesting time trying to fathom out the reality (what reality I hear you ask) of this beautiful, and certainly the largest, creation I



have ever seen. Just when I had started to almost understand it I made the mistake of asking Karen roughly how big it would be when put together. Bad mistake. If she put the rooms together, back in a row, it would measure 50 yards long—that's when I needed the smelling salts.

I still haven't worked it all out but that's the fun of this hobby.



Family enjoy different roles in Marie's house

This collector buys and sells anything Lundby, and that gives her a lot of scope when it comes to furnishing her house and putting people in it

BY SANDRA HARDING

For any Lundby purists reading this I suggest you take a deep breath as Marie-Laure's Lundby is anything but pure. That's not a criticism, just a statement of fact as you will discover as you read on.

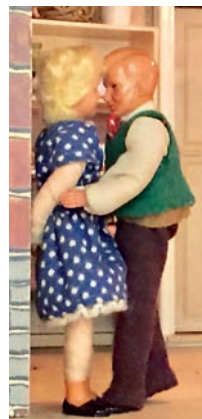
Marie admits that she buys and sells anything Lundby almost as a hobby, and being in that position gives her lots of choice over what she sells on, or keeps. When I saw the photographs, as an ex-Lundby owner but far from an expert, even I felt confused with what I saw. I am told that it was originally a 1980's Lisa 521 chalet that Marie bought from Germany in 2020. She soon added windows from a German house from the 1960s, followed by several Lisa of Denmark and Lundby walls taken from cannibalised houses not in favour at the time.

Not having electrics was no problem for Marie as she cut an "electrified" wall out of a Lundby house, which she placed at the back to plug in a transformer, giving it light. Marie blames her love of having lights in her houses on the fact that the original Lundby house she had as a child had none.

Marie sent me many photographs and I became confused by those with people in, as they all seemed to take on a different role in every photograph. But that's what makes it quite delightful.

The people are Caco dolls from the 1970s — Marie loves this make as they all have different expressions, and she uses them sometimes to show what she is doing in real life. The happy family that live here seem to be mum and dad, with children, and they love entertaining and having their parents and friends visit. They also love their dogs.

Marie is obviously a free spirit and has really made a lovely job of this little delight. She has carefully collected so many unusual and items, all arranged beautifully, and moves them around from room to room as the whim takes her. I love the colours — especially the curtains made from chain necklaces. Marie feels that this is now a modular creation and she is more of an architect than a dollshouser. However, I think that this is very much a living doll's house — if you know what I mean.





“Marie is obviously a free spirit and has really made a lovely job of this little delight.”



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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



Rosalind's Tiffany hat box

BY SANDRA HARDING

I love it when someone makes something in an unusual container and this caught my eye because I am an Audrey Hepburn fan as is Rosalind Lock, the maker.

The little box was given to Rosalind by a friend and she thought it was just too pretty to be put away, so she decided to create a room box in it. The size is about 6-7" across and 3" deep, so a little smaller than 1/24th scale, and not a lot of space to play with. The first thing of course was to create a floor to form the base to build the room on. To pick up on the lovely wallpaper she wanted to use, the floor was painted black.

Rosalind made the dresser and bedside cabinet from thick card and

covered it in thin silver card. The legs are cocktail sticks and beads painted with glitter nail polish and the bed was made from thick card, with a fan for the headboard painted silver (what a good idea). The picture frames are from a card making kit which Rosalind painted with glitter nail varnish and the pictures of Audrey Hepburn were printed from



the computer and resized to fit.

The wallpaper I mentioned earlier is amazing, as it's actually fabric glued on to card, and I really like this effect. The lighting is a battery-operated light and the bags are handmade. The one on the bed is actually a small bulldog clip — clever. The tissue box is made from card, the perfume bottles are beads, and the necklace laying over the dressing table are pearls. The chair is from a doll's house set which Rosalind painted silver and made a new cushion for.

Rosalind tells me that she has created several room boxes, shops and doll's houses, including a mansion, and I hope that we can see them at a later date.

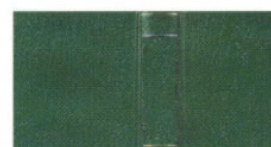
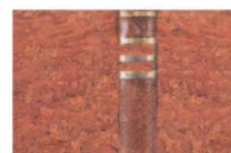
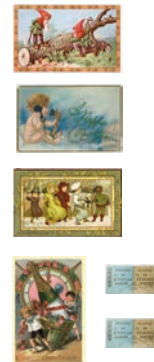


THE CUTOUTS PAGE

The image displays a collection of 24 dog-themed calendar pages arranged in a 4x6 grid. Each page features a high-quality photograph of a dog in a specific setting, with a corresponding calendar for that month. The dogs and their settings are as follows:

- January:** A Husky puppy sitting in the snow.
- February:** A Beagle puppy resting its head on a red heart.
- March:** A Yorkshire Terrier puppy sitting on a floral mug next to pink flowers.
- April:** Two white Poodle puppies sitting in a field of blue flowers.
- May:** A golden retriever puppy sitting in a field of pink flowers.
- June:** A Weimaraner puppy lying down on a white surface.
- July:** A small Chihuahua puppy sitting inside a large, wrapped gift box.
- August:** A French Bulldog puppy lying down with a red heart.
- September:** A Basset Hound puppy sleeping in an orange hammock.
- October:** A German Shepherd puppy sitting on top of a carved jack-o'-lantern.
- November:** A golden retriever puppy running through autumn leaves.
- December:** A golden retriever puppy sitting next to wrapped Christmas gifts.

Each calendar page includes the month name at the top, followed by a grid showing the days of the week (Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat) and the dates. The dates are color-coded: red for the first day of the month, green for other days, and blue for weekends.



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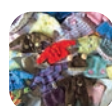
► HartsDesireMinis.etsy.com



LadiesMileMiniatures

Miniature Flower Kits & Handmade Dolls House Plants

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Sharonsminiknits

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These sites are free to browse without subscribing to Etsy.



Make a potting bench ready for your plants

It might be cold and windy outside but there's no reason you can't plan for a mini spring scene. Start by making this lovely little potting bench

BY BELINDA MCWILLIAMS

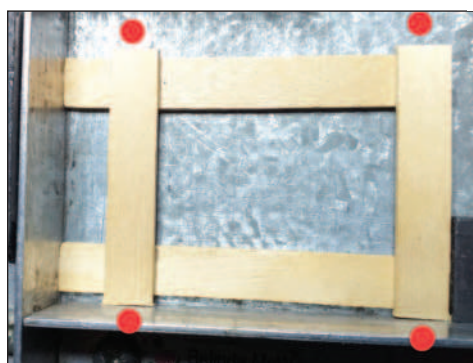
Take a break from the cold and make a potting bench full of blooming plants.

Step 1. Cut the ice cream sticks as follows:

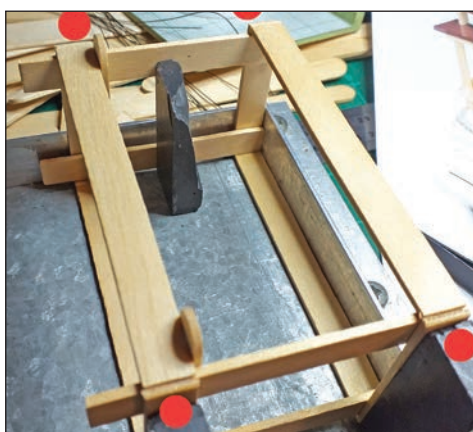
- 4 pieces 75mm long (cut off round ends first) - legs
- 4 pieces 100mm long (cut off round ends first) – horizontal slats front and back
- 4 pieces 50mm long (cut off round ends first) – horizontal slats sides
- 8 pieces 55mm long (keep round ends) – shelf slats
- 6 sticks (keep round ends) – bench top
- 3 pieces 105mm long (cut off round ends first) – back shelves
- 8 pieces 55mm long (keep round ends) – back shelves
- 4 pieces 50mm long (cut off round ends first) – back shelves

You will need

- 27 ice cream sticks or wood strips 10mm wide and 2mm thick
- Toothpick
- Scissors or small saw
- Steel ruler
- Pencil
- Paint



Step 2. Starting with the legs, glue the side slats as shown leaving a 2mm gap on either end – one slat is flush to the end and the other is 10mm from the end.



Step 3. Glue the horizontal slats onto the sides as shown. The ends fit into the 2mm gaps you left on the sides.

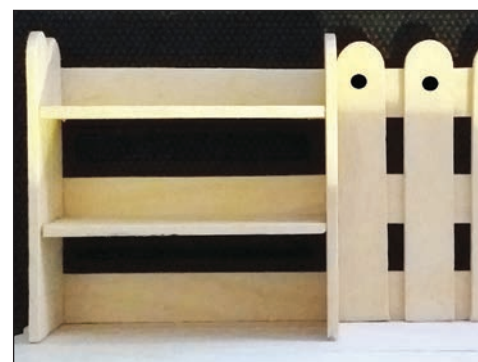
Step 4. Glue the 8 shelf slats evenly to make the shelf with the round ends pointing forward and the straight ends flush at the back.



Step 5. Glue the 6 sticks onto the top starting from the back so that the back stick is flush with the back and there is an overhang at the front.

Step 6. Using the 4 50mm sticks with straight ends, glue them together to make the 2 shelves.

Step 7. Use 4 of the 55mm long sticks with round ends to make the shelf sides.



Step 8. Glue a shelf 18mm from the bottom and then the upper shelf 18mm above the lower shelf.

Continued on P38

Continued from P37

Step 9. Lay the 3 long strips flat and glue the shelves on so that the long strips are flush with the bottom of the shelf and flush with each shelf.



Step 10. Glue the remaining 4 pieces evenly spaced on the right as shown.



Step 11. Cut 4 pieces from the toothpick 10mm long to make pegs on the right as shown.

Step 12. Once all the glue is dry you can paint and add your plants.

Have fun filling your bench with lots of tools and plants!



Sandra's Dusty Clockshop reflects time well spent

It was something of a challenge for someone inbetween cataract surgeries when Sandra decided to create a shop inside an old clock, complete with 1/24th scale mouse

BY SANDRA GURNEY TURNER

The inspiration for my clock shop came about a couple years ago when I saw a few online that I liked. The idea stayed in hibernation until last summer, when I spotted this gothic beehive mantel clock at a garage sale.

It had seen better days with its peeling veneer and chipped paintwork but if the cost was reasonable I would gut it out and start fresh. Assuming that a clock that looked so rough wouldn't work, I asked the gentleman: "How much do you want for that non-working clock?" He wanted just £7 so I quickly paid and rushed home to admire my lucky purchase.

I placed it on the table and noticed the two holes on the face, which make it a 'time and strike' clock. Upon researching I discovered it's around 150 years old. I grabbed one of my clock keys, started winding both mechanisms and gave the pendulum a swing. I was excited to discover it ticked and struck a gong sound. Then I noticed the beautiful, aged original label, with winding instructions on the back. I noticed the wood below with a patina that could only be achieved with age.

When I noticed the visible clockworks I decided I had to keep all this in my clock shop and it sent me in a direction that I would follow for the next seven weeks. I would leave it basically unaltered, work around the mechanism and call it My Dusty Old Clockshop.

That same day I started scraping

off the chipped paint on the glass.

After three hours, I removed all the veneer around the door, and more on the sides. Later I replaced some of the missing veneer with brown paper painted in several shades to match the original veneer.

To determine scale I measured the clock. It is eighteen and a half inches tall, ten inches wide, and three inches deep. The part that would be my shop was seven inches tall, so I decided that I would get it close to 1/24th scale.

With that in mind I started on a work table. To make full use of the space, I made it three inches wide to fit in the left corner, below a tall window which I made with scrap wood, and a scenic photo that I took.

I made most of the clocks using photos from a magazine of antique clocks, given to me by a clocksmith friend. I glued these onto wood, adding trim from thin wood strips, and detailing with a gold pen, plastic acetate and cardstock. I also turned other decorative items into clocks.

After making a few tools to lay around I decided to make a 1/24 scale mouse, a challenge for someone inbetween cataract surgeries. After a few tries, mission accomplished!

At this point I thought I was done, but when I put the pendulum back on there was another challenge. It blocked some of the view and looked better without it. Not wanting to remove the hook, I decided to make



a kerosene lamp to hang where the pendulum was.

Something was still missing, what was it? I had already added steps with a railing, so the customers wouldn't fall, but how would this clocksmith get up to the attic? A pulldown ladder with a cord, of course. I plan on having an engraved sign, My Dusty Old Clockshop, made for it later on. That, plus the £7 for the clock, will be my only purchases, along with time well spent.



A kind mini world

My journey into the wonderful world of miniatures, started less than five years ago. I did a few rehabs for my granddaughters, mostly from curbside finds. I am presently working on a homemade basic frame, that a friend gave me, and after two years of scratch made miniatures, I am nearly finished. I took a hiatus to make my clock shop. The style of the house is a little primitive, and a little eclectic, which reflects my style well. Recently I was gifted a Painted Lady, the outside built. Kindness from a complete stranger who wanted it to go to a good home. It's a kind mini world after all. SGT



Miniature stained glass lamps

Journey with us to Japan to get to know this talented miniature artist and enjoy her uniquely hand-painted lights that give the illusion of stained glass

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

As a small child BamBini became fascinated with miniatures after seeing a wall mounted doll's house in a neighbour's home. She never owned a twelfth scale house, but she had the Japanese version of the 1/6th style Barbie doll's house. She and her friends enjoyed that immensely. She is a young person from Japan who creates twelfth scale miniature stained glass lamp shades, terrariums, stained glass windows as well as full size 1/48th and twelfth scale doll's houses.

She has been making doll's houses with full time devotion for the past 13



years. Her expertise has allowed for autonomy as she feels she has attained her unique ability with precision in this medium.

When she begins work on a doll's house, whether it is a commission or something inspired by her imagination, she's always mindful that the finished piece may never be a part of her personal collection. Regardless, she makes each piece with the effort she would if it were to be presented to royalty. Sometimes a creation takes so much effort and love it's quite difficult to let it go, but she always follows through on the intended plan.

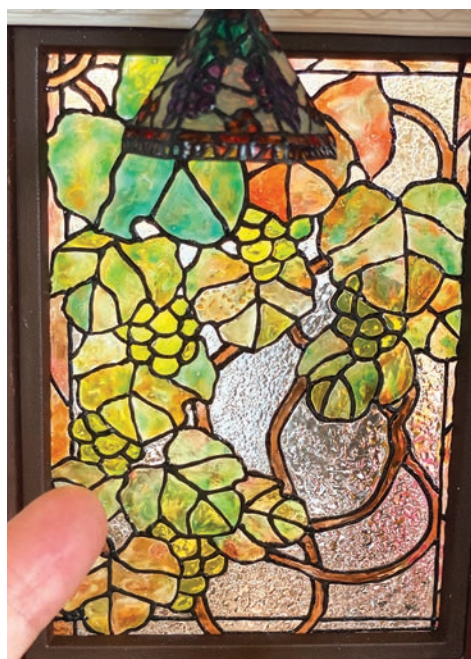


Most of her work is sold at events in Japan. Her work also exists in some online shops. At this point in her career as a miniaturist she has been teaching classes in Tokyo and Osaka. She would someday also love to teach outside of Asia.

At Abu Dhabi Art Exhibition she has her miniatures on display. She also has a solo exhibition at a very special department store in Hong Kong. And she has one more exhibit in the Odaiba retro space in Japan.

BamBini has an interesting perspective on miniatures versus reality. "I love how miniatures allow us to realise within a doll's house display, things that we cannot own or perfectly express in true life scale." This is one of the definitions of true art. Art takes us away from reality with joy, whether it is a song, or a painting or a sculpture. If something stops you and you examine it with pleasure, you are experiencing the abundant rewards of true art.

BamBini feels that her most important tool is her favourite brand of acrylic paints. When you work with high quality products such as these vibrant and quick drying paints, your finished project will reflect a superior product. She also loves working with resin, clay and wood. It has always been impor-



Far left: Where all the magic happens, her workroom.

Left: A beautifully handmade twelfth scale stained glass window.



tant to BamBini to differentiate herself from other artists by offering miniatures that are unique and so beautiful that the customer is very happy to add her work to their precious collection.

She has always aimed for authenticity as well as something dazzlingly impressive. As I hold my two lamps that she sent to me I can see that even though she is very young she has already realised her goals.

Top left: A tall lamp with a uniquely styled shade and a smaller table lamp decorated in reds and greens.

Above left: A collection of twelfth scale working lamps all with their own unique design.



“I love how miniatures allow us to realise things that we cannot own or perfectly express in life.”

Cindy's luxury closet is full of glamour & style

Passionate miniaturist Cindy Coon shares the story on how her luxury miniature closet building adventure started. Kick off your shoes and let's have a look around

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

Twenty years ago, on a random stop at a tiny doll's house shop Cindy Coons fell in love with a glorious Queen Anne Victorian doll's house that stood at the front of the store. The Queen was not decorated, but she imagined the fun she could have as she scoped out the shop.

She was suddenly in miniature nirvana, a place she had only dreamt about as a child. There stood a doll's house she thought could never exist except in dreams. That Christmas, her husband, Ray, surprised her with The Queen in the form of two extraordinarily large boxes. She wondered, was this his idea of a joke? She was surprised and thrilled at the same time. She had wanted the actual beautiful pink doll's house from the window of the tiny doll's house store, not the kit! As reality set in, she heard Ray say: "It will mean so much more to you if you build it yourself." Who knew then that what he said then was so smart?

The Queen is truly a part of Cindy's heart and soul today. I can fully relate to this feeling, as the current owner of my daughter's doll's house that was made by my husband in 1976 over a seven-month period on the cusp of our little Jenny's fifth birthday.

With Cindy's busy work schedule, The Queen took three years to build, which included installing electricity. Each room turns on and off with its own switch. Cindy works full-time at a major furniture company, however, not

as a designer as most people assume. Ray and Cindy both work in the IT department of the company's corporate headquarters. That is not to say that they do not see their share of beautiful furniture and home furnishings. Inspiration is everywhere.

She learned to build The Queen by reading every book that she could find, and every article in every magazine she could subscribe to. Once built, she spent a few more years designing the interior and another seven years decorating, building additions and landscaping, until The Queen was finally crowned.

The things you learn while building stay with you forever. If you have ever glued a wall in place upside down or inside out, you have learned that a blow dryer is a great tool for melting glue and removing a wall. If you have crossed your wires and set your miniature scene on fire, you have learned a lesson, and quite possibly burnt your fingers putting the fire out.

This feature story is meant to be about the interior luxury closet that sent Cindy's imagination soaring. For her birthday two years ago, Ray's gift was that she could have her real life closet redone. All she could say to herself was, "Best...gift...ever!" No sooner had the announcement of her gift left his mouth than Cindy was busy Googling designer closet. She poured over images of luxurious closets until she found what she called, "The Perfect Five".



Ray listened carefully as she explained that she did not want all five closets, but rather there was an element in each of them that she wanted to incorporate into her new closet. This miniature version of the luxury closet was born to guide him in making the real life one she desired. Then it ended up being a great way to display her varied collections of miniature designer shoes, bags, luggage and jewellery!



Top left: A close up of Cindy's miniature chaise lounge in soft pink.

Top: Wine and spirit bottles fill the upper shelves and small refrigerator.

Top right: The vanity has a collection of tiny make up and perfumes.

Above: All of the shelves and drawers in this glamorous closet are packed full of miniature treasures

Right: The island showcases some favourite fashion accessories.



Left: It took years to collect all the right miniature handbags.
Above: The luxurious twelfth scale vanity is framed with gold sconces.



Right: A pink dress hangs from the wall.



When it came to building this closet, she had more than a few obstacles to overcome. The biggest one was that she did not have a saw capable of cutting large pieces of wood. She had learned to use some smaller saws in her basement, but for the size of her walls, she would have to improvise.

She found a set of Housework's Street of Shops kits, which were still in their unopened boxes. She started pulling the walls out of each set. The size of Cindy's closet was pretty much defined by the size and number of walls she had available and the maximum length and width of a piece of wood that had been found in her basement which would become the base. Their real-life dining room table was now a construction zone. Luckily, Thanksgiving was a full eight months away.

Cindy designed and refined ideas for walls that became an all-encompassing focus, trying to determine the final layout, keeping in mind all of the

‘She then came to the shattering realisation that her original walls were not high enough!’

features she wanted to include and preserve from “The Perfect Five”. Her design ultimately ended up as a two-room closet, with each room having its own unique style. She did not glue the walls in place, in the event she might need to make tweaks as she went along. Taking the visions in her head, she began creating interior cabinets.

She began with one room on the right, and then worked her way around the room clockwise. She studied each page from “The Perfect Five” and figured out how she was going to re-create it and electrify this elegantly. Once she completed the design for the first room, she lined the walls up as they would appear in the room and then placed the walls around the cabinets.

She then came to the shattering realisation that her original walls were

not high enough! Cindy had been having so much fun building the interior that she never stopped to consider the height of the walls. As stated earlier, she is not an engineer. And neither is her husband, but she found herself enlisting his advice. This was when Cindy bought her first table saw. She was now able to custom cut her walls to the exact size she needed. She could build the cabinets as high as necessary. The only limit was her imagination and a tiny dose of reality.

Having completed one room, the second one seemed to come together much more easily. Her confidence level was up, and time was running out, Thanksgiving was around the corner. With the cabinets built, the plan was to electrify each of them – and the wine fridge as well. The most difficult part of



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this project was the electric wiring.

Each of the lights that ran through a hole into the top of each cabinet was a tiny micro light on the end of a very thin wire. Running these individual wires throughout the tops of the cabinets, while hiding them from view and providing easy access to them when they get cranky and need to be worked on was a bit difficult, and somewhat painful.

In addition, there are under-cabinet fluorescent bulbs used for lighting the counters and the French sconces on each side of the makeup vanity. These lights run off of a separate source than the micro lights, simply because the power to light the fluorescent lights is greater than that of the micro lights. These are also much easier to get to if you need to change a blown bulb, since they are on the outside of the cabinets. Obviously, if you do not want electrical wiring running through your cabinets, this project could be much easier. You can always substitute strategically placed miniature LED lights, but just remember to turn them off when you are done playing or you will burn through a lot of batteries, which can be a nuisance if you intend on using as many lights as Cindy did.

After the major construction was completed, the glamorous colours livened up things even more. She added actual granite counter tops, which she advised us is easier than one might imagine. These really make a difference in the final look. Trimming between every cabinet hides any gaps and gives you a nice clean look in the end. Cindy also added a crown moulding and finally gorgeous carpeting. She used a beautiful velvet fabric in a dusty rose shade.

Once your 'landscape' has been laid, it is time to decorate. This is where all of our hearts start to beat faster. In Cindy's mind, she had been decorating this luxury closet from day one. When she envisions a miniature setting, it is all about the details. Her goal is always to make it look as realistic as possible.

When she welcomes you to her luxury closet, she will greet you with



a glass of champagne or other age-appropriate beverages! The first thing you will notice is a selection of necklaces displayed in the mirrored cabinet in the far-left corner. To the left of this you will find a small bar, large enough to accommodate a wine fridge, set at the perfect temperature for chilling all those bottles of champagne and wine. The fridge is electrified, and lit, but not actually chilled.

On the counter, you will always find a sterling silver wine bucket filled with rose champagne on ice, just waiting to be popped. Above the counter is a large custom-made wine holder for the red wines. The back wall consists of two closeted cabinets filled with designer bags, boots, and shoes and a hanging clothes closet which holds her favourite pieces, which change almost daily. Designer luggage collection lines the top of the cabinets in this room, ready to be filled and taken away. In the centre of the room, close to the champagne, a chaise lounge has been placed to collapse on at the

end of a long day, adorned with a cosy cashmere throw, perfect for cuddling.

Enter the second room in the closet. Welcome to Nirvana. Shoes, mostly designer heels, and bags as far as the eye can see. There are a couple of pairs of ballet flats in there as well. The vanity has delicate French sconces on each side of the mirror, providing the perfect lighting for applying all of that miniature makeup. The drawers are filled with miniature undergarments and clothes. Each one opens with a crystal drawer pull. The centre island holds jewellery, sunglasses, gloves, hankies – all the accessories you would expect to find in a luxury closet.

Thank you for stopping by to visit this amazing closet designed for the dreamer in all of us.



LITTLE LINKS:

Cindy Coons
etsy: www.etsy.com/shop/CinsMiniCity
instagram: [cinandthemini-city](https://www.instagram.com/cinandthemini-city)
email: cinsaprilshowers@aol.com

Weave baskets out of different types of card

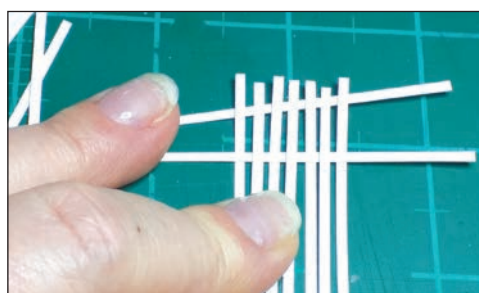
Little woven baskets are great to add interest to lots of scenes, whether on a porch or in a kitchen. Belinda shows how to make them easily

BY BELINDA MCWILLIAMS

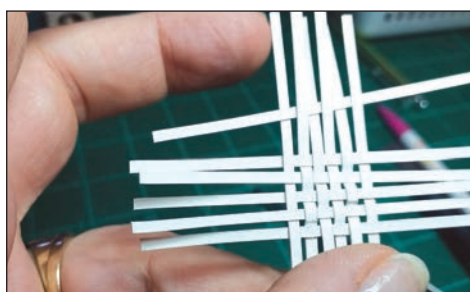
Making baskets from card stock is affordable and easy to do! You can use brown card stock or any colour you like. Scrapbook paper is ideal. Or you can paint white card stock to look like a woven reed or bamboo basket.

Step 1. Start by cutting 12 strips that are 2mm wide and 7cm long.

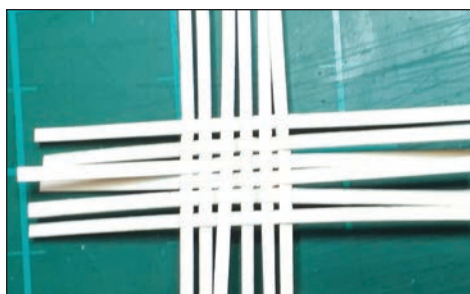
Step 2. Line up 6 lengths with a slight space between.



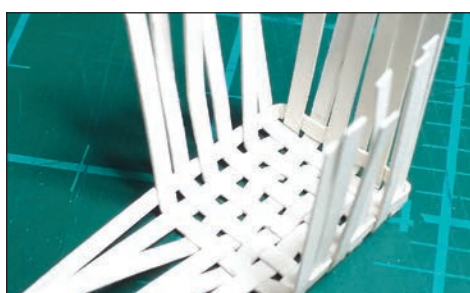
Step 3. Hold a finger down over one end or tape it down.



Step 4. Weave a length through. Then weave another length through, alternating.



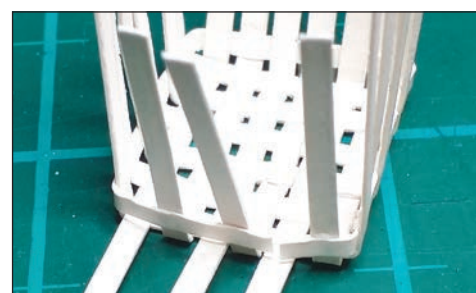
Step 5. Gently ease the weave close into a square. I used my tweezers to push each strip closer. Take your time and work gently.



Step 6. Fold the lengths up. This makes the base of the basket.



Step 7. Cut 6 strips 2mm wide 8cm long.



Step 8. Weave the long piece through forming the sides into a box.

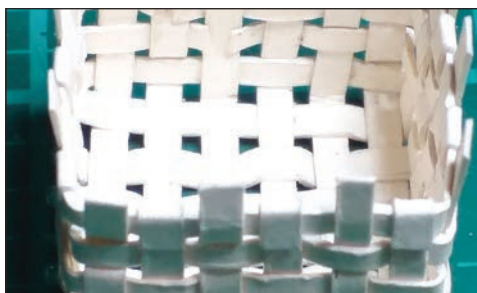
Step 9. Cut the length to join behind a strip with the tiniest dot of glue.

Step 10. Add the next strip and the next. The sample has 5 strips.

Step 11. Fold the inside strips over.

You will need

- Card stock - in any colour you like or you can paint
- Steel ruler
- Pencil (propelling)
- Craft knife with new blade
- Tweezers
- Small sharp scissors
- White glue
- Ruler - mm, cm, inches



Step 12. Trim the inside strips so they will fit over the top row.

Step 13. Glue down with a tiny dot of glue.



Step 14. Trim the remaining strips, fold to the outside and glue down.

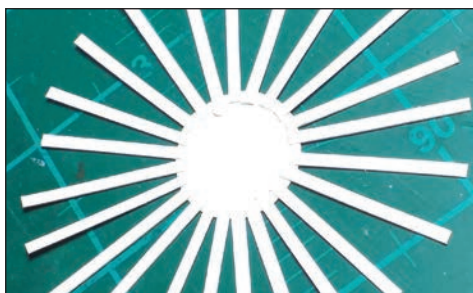


Step 15. Add a handle if you desire.

Other basket styles

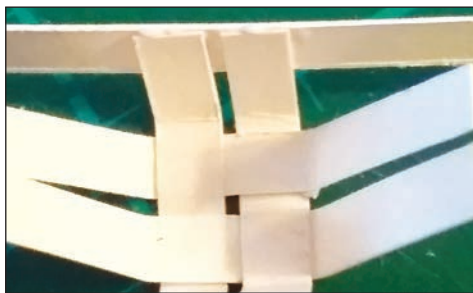
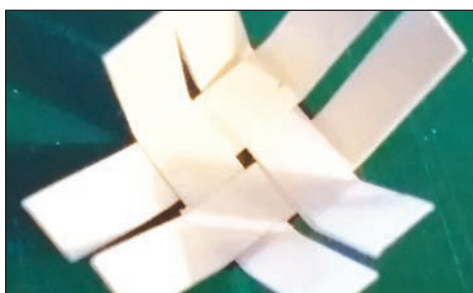
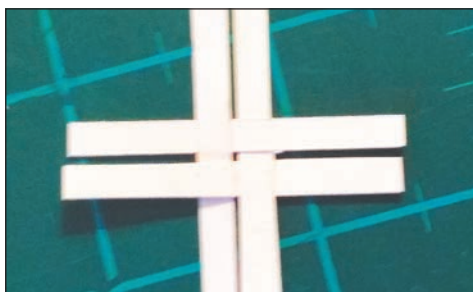


Step 16. Cut the strips narrower 1.5mm or 1mm which will make the basket much finer but it will be more fragile in the making.



I made a round basket too with a round disc and glued the strips around the edge then folded up the strips and wove as I did the square basket finishing the top the same way.

Step 17. Or you can make some bushel baskets like you would use in a market scene.



Step 18. Using card stock, cut 5 strips that are 4mm wide and 4cm long. These are perfect for cherries.



Step 19. Using card stock, cut 6 strips that are 4mm wide and 7cm long.



Step 20. These are perfect for a basket of peaches.



Turn over a new page with Belinda's book-making tips

There are many different ways of making tiny volumes to fill your mini bookshelves, but here's a few to get you started

BY BELINDA MCWILLIAMS

fill our book shelves or miniature library tables with an assortment of books. Or one special book for a side table.

Step 1. We will be starting by making a book cover made from card. Whatever card you were able to find, cut the card into pieces 28mm x 16mm.

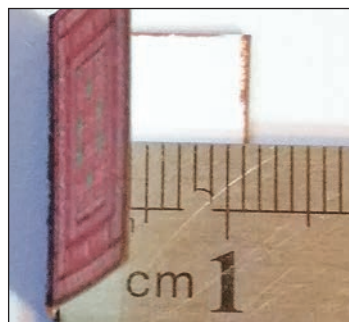


Step 2. Measure 2mm in the centre of the long sides; score and fold on the marks. The printed book covers would be cut apart and scored along the edges of the spines. The scoring could be done either inside or outside the cover. Some of the spines are wider than others, but that's fine because you'll end up with a nice variety of books.



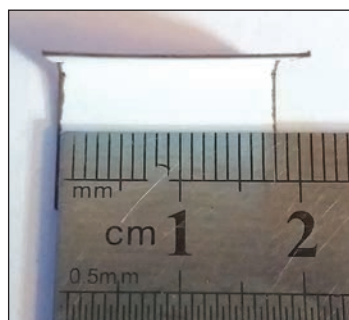
Step 3. The cover edges can be decorated with a gold marker or aged with chalk, ink pads, pencil crayons, pas-

tels, eye shadow, etc. Colouring the edges gives the book cover a 'grounded' look.



Step 4. For the pages, measure the inner measurement from the spine to the cover edge. My cover is 11mm, which is less half a mm so my page width is 10.5mm.

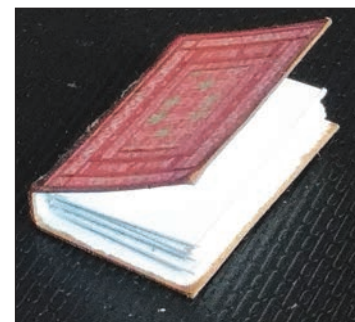
Step 5. Cut a strip of printer paper 10.5mm.



Step 6. Measure the height of the cover. Mine is 18mm - less 1mm so my page is 17mm.

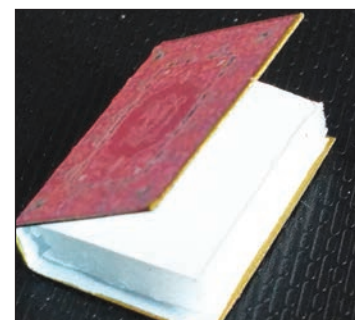


Step 7. Cut up the paper strip into 17mm pieces - these will now be your book pages.



Step 8. There are two ways to add your pages.

Method 1: Tack enough pages to fill the cover. You can either glue the pages in one at a time or you can glue the spine of the pages and then glue the stack in. This would give you a book with pages that can turn. Mini books with separate pages are great for displaying individually.



You will need

- Sheet of white paper
- Steel ruler
- Cutting knife
- Pencil
- White glue
- Card stock in any colour, design, pattern, print, etc

Optional:

- Paperback to cut up
- Printed mini book covers available on internet - or see Cutouts on P35



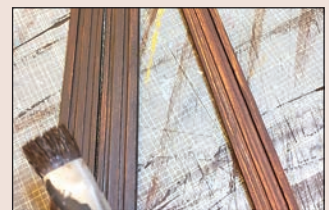
Make your card look like wood

Auralea shares a technique she used for making her cardstock gothic windows look like real wood

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

When I made my gothic style windows

I used mount board but needed them to look like wood. I also made my own moulding from mount board and card stock. Use this technique to make your moulding, windows or doors in an original style. Have a piece of real stained wood nearby to match.



2. Use a coarse brush to paint a dark brown over the orange - 2 coats. Let dry between coats.

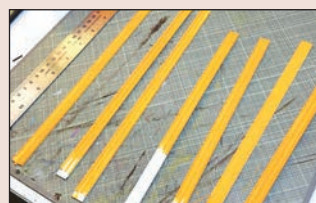


3. Seal with a satin or gloss varnish.



You will need

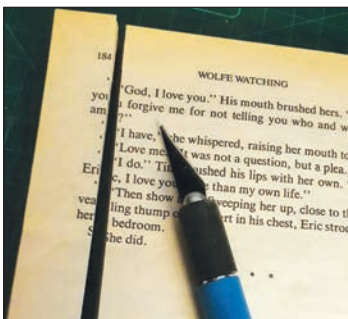
- Mount/mat board
- Acrylic craft paint - orange, brown
- Paint brushes
- Varnish



1. Paint the mount/mat board in a bright orange colour. Let it dry completely.

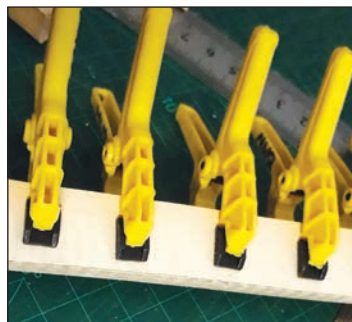
Method 2: If you are impatient or need a mountain of books, you can use foam core or even thick card for a quick and easy filling. This is really great for many quick shelf filler books all the same thickness. You can get very clever and glue a miniature book page onto the foam cover so that it peeks out.

Step 9. My best friend Debi taught me a great method to make book pages. Pop out to your local charity store or second hand book store and buy a handful of the cheapest books. Rip off the covers.



Step 10. Measure and mark your desired page width from the page edge. It doesn't matter if you will be cutting through the type because what you are really needing are the page edges.

Step 11. Holding the ruler firmly and securely, cut through the whole book until you are left with a pack of page ends.



Step 12. Straighten them up and clamp them evenly and neatly.

Step 13. Put an even layer of glue on the cut edge.

Step 14. When dry, measure the pages to figure out the size for the covers with a lip and cut them out.

Step 15. Glue the book pages into the covers. Clamp until the glue is dry.

Step 16. To dress up the spines I use tiny stickers like you can find in nail art.

■ Visit www.castlecrafts.co.za.

Take a tour of stunning Château de l'Amour!

TV programme 'Escape to the Chateau' inspired this wonderful home. It was the start of a long journey shared by a collector and builder Mark Turpin

BY DEB WEISSLER

Set upon a sweeping expanse of lawn, we approach Château de l'Amour in awe, for it is indeed a grand structure. Not the largest château in the Loire Valley, it is certainly one of the most elegant and now its new owner is incorporating the latest décor into its thirty rooms. We've been invited for a private tour so let's take a look!

As we wend our way down a broad avenue, the stone edifice looms overhead. Rising six stories tall, its impressive stonework and flanking twin towers reflect the sunlight as we approach. It is a dream come true for its owner.

The château can be approached in a number of ways. From the drive, a pair of symmetrical staircases wind their way up to the front doors. The ground floor is the service level, accessible via the front vestibule, as well as the side door to the kitchen and the double doors to the wine cellar. It takes an enormous staff and services to keep the château running. As guests, of course, we are escorted up the front stairs and through the double doors where miniature artist extraordinaire Mark Turpin awaits us.

Beyond the front doors is an entrance hall with steps leading down to a salon on the left and the dining room to the right. Straight ahead, the grand staircase leads to the upper levels. Behind the salon and dining room are twin back stairs leading to the service areas below. The grand salon and the

dining room are the château's largest rooms and feature the first of the round tower rooms. Off the salon, a library with rounded bookcases is in the making, and an area to serve tea next to the dining room. The back walls of the salon and dining room both have hidden doors to small water closets or storage areas above the backstairs.

Above the first floor's entertaining rooms are his/her bedroom suites on the second floor. These also include round tower rooms in each suite. They are joined in the middle with sitting rooms in the front and also behind the staircase. A large window on the back wall brings extra light to the sitting areas on the second and third floors. The third floor is the children's level, with a nursery and children's bedroom on one side with its own round tower room; the other side provides room for the nanny as well as a schoolroom with another round tower room.

The attic has two levels. The main attic space can accommodate up to four rooms for servants, with a shared space in the centre. There are plans for a sewing room. The upper windowless attic is for storage and leads to a rooftop lookout deck. Four chimneys anchor the roof to the main structure. There are small door cutouts that join the conical rooftops with the attic. Ladders from the upper round tower rooms on the third floor connect the rooms to the attic.

We finally descend to the lowest

level, bustling with activity. The wine cellar and kitchen have vaulted archways as room dividers, and its owner is planning brick walls and stone floors with rustic wine racks. There is a storage area under the backstairs for wine barrels. The front vestibule has narrow spaces on both sides for a small bathroom and coat room or storage. The middle room is a large area for a servants' dining hall and break room, with plenty of space for a large table.

After climbing up and down dozens and dozens of stone steps, we look forward to refreshments served in the grand salon, tea or a glass of wine from the château's own vineyards. The owner and Mark await, for clearly we have dozens of questions!

Over a year in the making, Le Château de l'Amour is one of the largest, tallest and heaviest structures Mark has ever constructed. It is entirely handcrafted using birch plywood, solid pine and poplar, basswood, balsa, illustration board, acrylic windows, and numerous colours of paint. The entire structure was hand-painted, including handmade windows, doors and



Above: A close-up of the beautifully handcrafted dormer window.

Above right: The chateau rises six stories high.

Right: A close up of the detailed facade and windows.

Far right: The faux stone work was created with ten different paint colours.





Top left: There is easy access to all the rooms with opening walls.

Top: A peek inside the round tower rooms.

Above: A bird's eye view of the handmade painted roof and tower tiles.

Left: The side service entrance door leads to the basement work areas.



Above: Flanking staircases lead up to the front door.

staircases. The exterior faux stonework finish is comprised of ten colours and has many variations in its appearance under different lighting conditions. Thousands of hand-cut tiles cover the rooftops and elongated pepper-pot roofs on the two towers. Forty-nine handmade windows bring light to the interior, which includes over 5,000 square inches of living space measuring 44 inches long, 28 inches deep, and 67 inches high.

So how did Le Château de l'Amour come about? "The Château will be my seventh project over a forty-year period," the owner explains. "I have dreamed of having a French Château for a few years, as it would be very different from my previous houses, and far more challenging. I had completed all my previous houses and wanted something new. When I saw

the television program "Escape to the Château", I decided to try to find one similar to the one in the program.

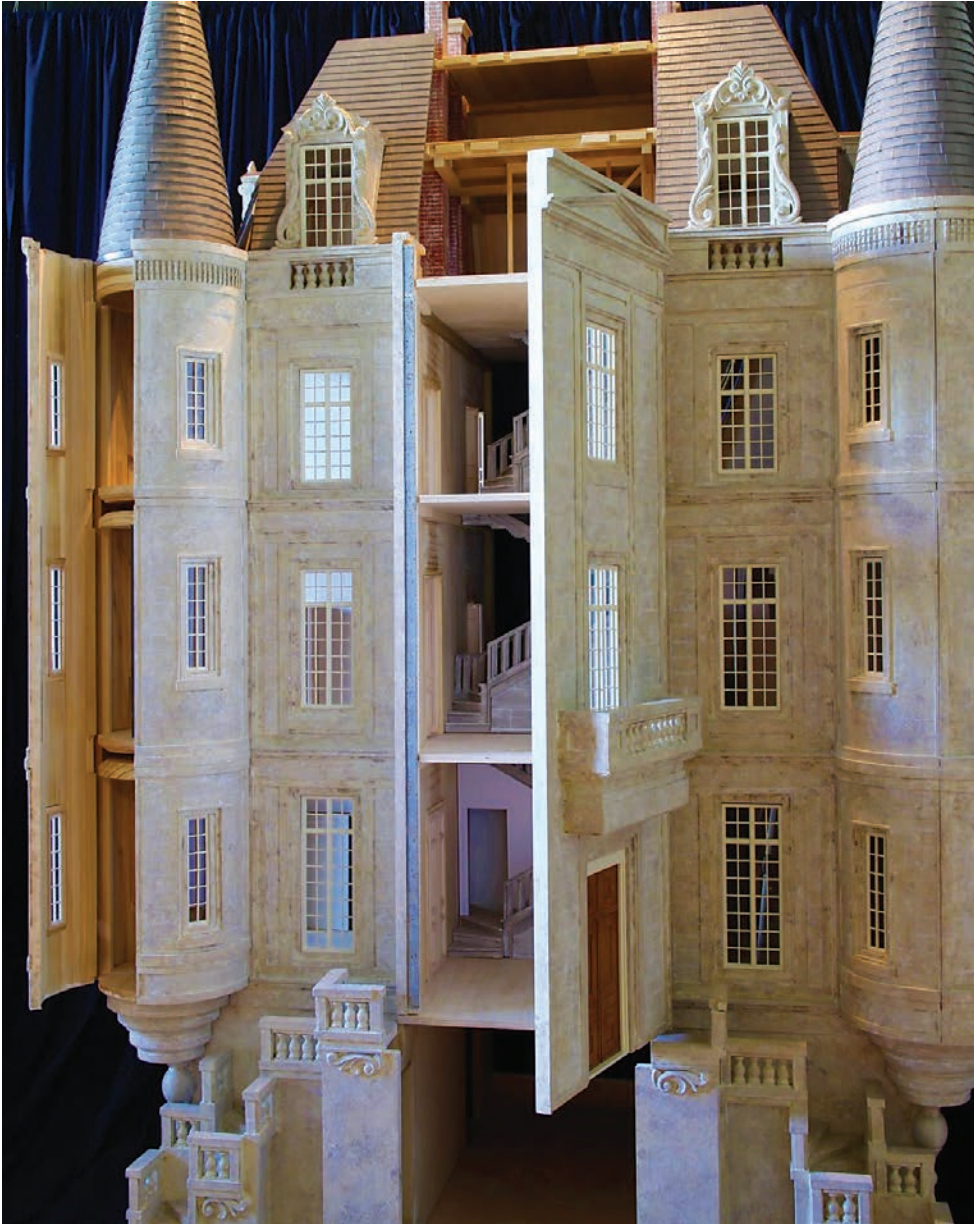
"I was looking through a doll's house magazine when I saw a fairly small advertisement with a picture of a château on it. After a glass of wine, I plucked up the courage to approach Mark by email. I knew it would be outrageously expensive, but I thought I would check it out and see. It all went from there," she smiles.

Mark takes up the story. "Actually her original inquiry was in reference to an earlier project I had done, Château des Songes, which was enormous. I was relieved to know she was willing to build smaller! I submitted three proposed sizes and she selected the middle one. She was looking for a project to enjoy for many years, with dozens of rooms to decorate and furnish at her leisure. My client provided a list of rooms she wanted to include, and together we did an enormous amount

of research. It took several months to gather everything together.

"Rather than copying period rooms, she expressed an interest in decorating new rooms that are stylish and chic, where she can feature her collected Georgian-style furnishings along with homemade items that reflect her personal interests. I had the pleasure of seeing some photos from her collection, and every detail in each room was very thoughtfully planned."

With a structure this large, once completed, one always wishes changes after the fact. Mark solved that dilemma brilliantly. "The interior was designed with convertible spaces that can be configured to accommodate from six to ten bedrooms in combination with five to seven bathrooms, Mark explains. "Each suite of rooms has adjustable walls for flexible room sizing, with variable sizes according to the placement of the partitions. Or they can be eliminated altogether. She can



Left: The interior of the *Château* awaits the future owner's finishing touches.

Above: The forty-nine handmade windows fill the structure with natural light.

also add built-in alcoves or other architectural features. The roof was made in eight sections that can be removed for decorating or viewing the rooms beneath."

This concept helped Mark when it came to preparing the *château* for shipping. All the large sections could be broken down and packed individually, for to ship the structure as a whole would have been enormously expensive. "I have used this method before but not to this extent," Mark explains. It is more work and takes much more time, because everything has to be put together in a way that it can also be taken apart. There are thousands of pieces that fit seamlessly together. In a way it's like an elaborate, partially

assembled kit."

Now that the *château* has arrived in its new home, the thrilling task of completing the interior begins. "I am hoping to do all the interiors myself," says the owner. "During construction, Mark and I researched what rooms the building should include and what French Chateaux interiors looked like. I had collected some furnishings, flooring and accessories, but it is very hard to furnish a room without being physically able to see it, despite Mark's exquisite attention to detail, telling the measurements of every room."

"I hope to use Ray Storey's lighting and Simply Silk's soft furnishings. I would like some of Michael Mortimer's pieces, Stokesay Ware china and other

pieces from some of my favourite websites. I love attending the London and Birmingham doll's house fairs, where I am able to see and buy various pieces from some excellent exhibitors. The *château*'s story will be a very long one. I hope it will be very beautiful, if not always historically correct throughout."

As Mark looks back on this journey the two have shared, he reflects: "Early on, we found many interests that we share in common, and we corresponded regularly during every stage of the project. Along the way, we shared many experiences and thoughts and just enjoyed being pen pals as well as builders. Creating something new is always a good idea, I think, and being productive is a great alternative in times like these. You will never be bored if you are looking for new ideas and building your dreams. Having shared interests with someone makes the process even more fun!"



LITTLE LINKS:

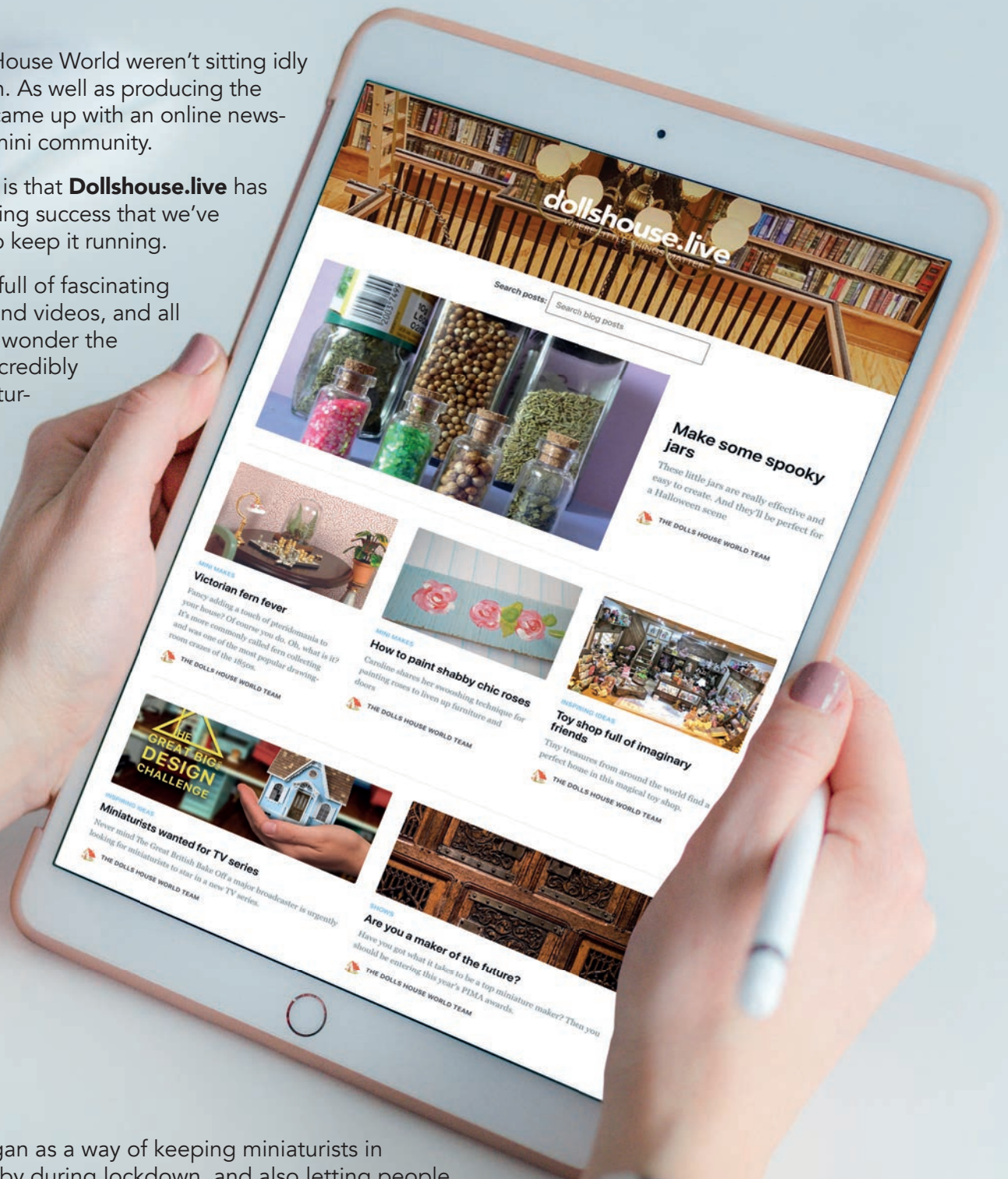
Mark Turpin
website: markturpin.com
email: mail@markturpin.com

Don't miss **dollhouse.live**

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.

But the good news is that **Dollhouse.live** has been such an amazing success that we've decided we have to keep it running.

Dollhouse.live is full of fascinating features, projects and videos, and all totally free — little wonder the site has become incredibly popular with miniaturists in the UK and around the world.



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.dollhouse.live** on your computer or phone now to read the site everyone's talking about.

The key to the past is held in this little diary



Start the New Year by making a lovely little diary, complete with key to keep things secret, for a resident in your doll's house

BY SADIE BROWN

Adding small details like this cute little diary will give your miniature scene something extra special!

ing. Make a mug of tea and allow to go cold before using the tea bag to add an 'aged' effect to each of the pages and the title.



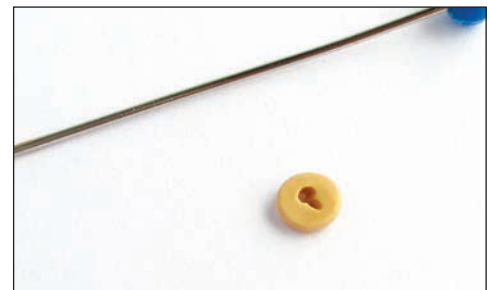
Step 1. Create the diary pages by cutting six pieces of thick paper, each measuring 3cm by 1.9cm and folding them in half. Thick watercolour paper is ideal. To create the title for the book's front cover, simply write or print the word 'Diary' using very tiny letter-



Step 2. Once the pages have dried thoroughly, use a glue stick to stick them all together to form a solid book.



Step 3. Cut a piece of card in your chosen colour, textured/leather effect if you can find it, to fit all the way around the glued pages of the book, creating the cover. In addition, cut a small strip of card measuring 2cm by 3mm. Glue the cover into place around the pages and stick the strip around the 'open' side of the book half-way up.



Step 4. Make the diary lock by first rolling a 2mm ball of ecru polymer clay and flattening it to roughly 1mm in thickness with a fingernail. Use a needle tool or sewing pin to create the shape of the keyhole in the centre.



Step 5. Now to create the key, which comprises three components. Take a 1.5mm ball of Ecru coloured clay, flattening to around 1mm in thickness with a fingernail before using a needle tool or sewing pin to make a hole in the centre.

This is the bow of the key (the bit you hold to turn the key!). Roll out a tube of clay to just under 1mm in diameter, cutting a 5mm length to form the stem. Stick the stem to the bow with a little Sculpey Bake & Bond.

You will need

- Tea bag and a cold cup of tea
- Thick watercolour paper
- Leather effect card
- Polymer clay - Ecru
- Metallic gold acrylic paint
- Matt varnish
- Glue stick
- All-purpose glue
- Sculpey Bake & Bond
- Needle tool or sewing pin
- Scissors
- Cutting knife
- Small brush

Continued on P60

Continued from P59

To make the bit (the piece at the end of the key!), roll out a tiny piece of clay to under 1mm in thickness and cut out a tiny very oblong.

Next, cut a slant at either end of the oblong, creating a shape which resembles the bottom half of a triangle. Make a tiny cut half-way along the shortest side before sticking the other side to the stem to complete the key. Bake the lock and key and allow the clay to cool.

Paint them both with metallic gold acrylic paint. Once dry, coat with matte varnish.



Step 6. Use all-purpose glue to stick the lock to the top of the front cover, positioning it at the end of the strip of card placed around the 'open' side of the book so it appears to be attached to it. Glue the key below this. Finally, stick the title to the cover using a glue stick.

Have fun making lots of diaries. You can even use scrapbook papers and fabrics with colourful designs.



Make a tiny cut half-way along the shortest side before sticking the other side to the stem to complete the key.

Create easy paint tubes for your artist's studio

Randall livened up his mini artist's studio with the addition of these colourful tubes of paint. Here he shares his technique

BY RANDALL CASTLE

I've been busy making cool paints for my studio. You can add your own twist to this tutorial to make whatever brand you prefer. Or switch up the size of the tubes to your needs.



Step 1. Create or find some acrylic paint labels and print them out to scale. If you go to your preferred brand's website you will see all the colours to choose from so you know what to name each tube.

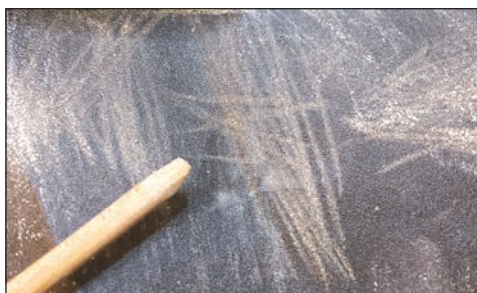


You will need

- Ink jet printer
- Printer paper
- Wood toothpicks
- Pencil sharpener
- Fine sandpaper
- Permanent black marker
- Cutting knife
- Small beads
- White glue
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Small paint brush
- Paint



Step 2. Put wooden toothpicks in a pencil sharpener and shave off a little from the tip.



Step 3. Rub the toothpick over some fine sandpaper to smooth it out.



Step 4. Colour the tip black with a marker. If you want a silver tip then make it!



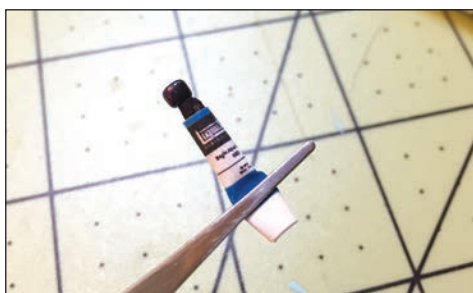
Step 5. Glue a bead onto the top. I shaved a little off the wood to get my tubes a little smaller but you may not need to do this.



Step 6. Cut out your labels and wrap them around a toothpick and glue them into tubes. You don't want it to stick to the toothpick so you need to slide them off the toothpick and let them dry.



Step 7. Fill the paper tubes with glue at the tops by placing the Elmer's glue nozzle inside and slide in the wood with bead.



Step 8. Use your tweezers to flatten the bottom of the tube. Be sure there is glue in the bottom so it sticks.



Step 9. Once it is dry, snip off the extra paper at the bottom of the tube with scissors.



Step 10. If needed, paint the bead to match the neck of the tube.

There you go! This is how Randall finally got some twelfth scale paints for his artist studio!

Dress your baby dolls with bunka style

Becky Winsor utilised her vast collection of bunka to create a crocheted-style outfit for her dolls—without any crocheting! Here she shows how you can do the same

BY BECKY WINSOR

There are several tiny “fixed wing” naked dolls wrapped in nothing but tissue paper, tucked away in a plastic box on a shelf in my work room (or TV room or bedroom or music room). I can

You will need

- Mini baby doll
- Bunka in your choice of colours (available online)
- Tacky glue that dries clear
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Toothpicks
- Mini trim, beads, buttons, or other items of your choice and imagination

crochet, knit, sew, and glue mini clothes for mini dolls, but when their tiny arms and legs cannot be moved, I have issues. I once experimented with gluing bunka, all crinkled up, to tiny heads for hair, and that worked well; so, I decided to try gluing it to the the body, and that works quite well too. It's inexpensive and really takes very little time to dress a mini baby.

Thanks to my dear friend Nola MacDonald I have a near-lifetime supply of bunka in a vast colour range. I also had a porcelain baby given to me by another dear friend, Ann Kimler so I decided I'd start with him. I was amazed to find many mini baby dolls are “anatomically correct,” which is

just too funny. Makes you want to just leave them naked, lying on a changing table!

For the first little boy I used light blue bunka; a bit of tiny, darker blue trim; and three seed beads for his little romper. I didn't make booties as his little toes are just too cute to cover.

Step 1. First, pick the bunka colours of your choice and “fray” the bunka by pulling a single thread from the end. The bunka unravels into a curly thread. Pull until you have about two feet of frayed bunka. Do that to as many colours as you plan to use. You can use a contrasting colour for trim, too.

Step 2. This is my method for covering the doll, but you may develop a method easier for you. Using a toothpick, I spread glue, starting at the neck, down to about 1/4” of the upper body.

Step 3. Start laying the curly bunka around the neck and continue working around the body, down to just under the armpits. I use another toothpick to push the curly



bunka into place, keeping the rows close together so there are no uncovered places on the doll. Don't pull the bunka tight. Leave it loose and curly as you work it into place. Continue down the whole body.

Step 4. If there are gaps found later, I cut some real short pieces of bunka and glue them into those gaps. This is sometimes necessary in the crotch or chest or the back area between the arms. Just dab on some glue and push the bunka down well so there are no ends sticking up.



Step 5. Cover the arms and legs the same way. I start at the shoulder for arms and at the thigh for legs. Push the bunka well against the body bunka for a good cover. How far down the arms and legs you want to cover is your choice.

Step 6. Add any trim, such as buttons or pompoms, as desired. This part really adds a completed look to the clothing, as you can see in the photos.

I haven't tried this on bigger mini dolls, but I suspect the crochet-style bunka would work well for sweaters to be worn under another shirt, vest, or jacket. The colours could be alternated for stripes. Have fun and let your imagination go wild.

When it's all dry and decorated, doesn't it look very similar to a crocheted outfit? Of course, I won't tell if you won't.



Quick and easy

Sandra eats grapes and thinks about making bonsai trees

BY SANDRA HARDING

Eat grapes, and then choose a suitable piece of stalks; cut to about 1 inch high

Roll up a small piece of Fimo, flatten it slightly and glue it into the centre of your bowl. Push the stalk

in to make an indent in the centre, and then take the stalk out.

Tip a small quantity of the flock into a small bowl, add glue to the tips of your grape stalks and dip the tips into the flocking. Tidy it, and add more if needed. Put it to one side to dry.

In the meantime, cover the Fimo in the dish in glue, avoiding the centre hole, and start gluing on very tiny stones, shells, grit and anything that looks right, avoiding the centre hole.

When the grape "bonsai" is dry, add glue to the centre of the Fimo in dish, and glue the bonsai in the centre hole.

Glue in more tiny stones shells etc around the base of the bonsai to keep it firm and straight. Let it all dry.

You will need

- Grape stalk
- Small shallow bowl/dish
- Fimo
- Tiny stones, shells, grit etc (I used stones used for fish tanks)
- Green flocking, as used by railway modellers
- Glue, scissors



Debbie transforms rotting bird box into log cabin

A bird box with a lot of memories was falling apart in the garden, but Debbie Mills came to the rescue and has transformed it into a delightful scene

BY SANDRA HARDING

This is certainly a first for me — a doll's house in a bird box, and I am very impressed.

The story started off as a sad one when Debbie Mills was given an old bird box that was rotting away by a friend, Nancy. The box had belonged to her mother who had sadly died, and she wanted it saved.

Nancy knew that Debbie was an experienced miniaturist and that the box was in safe hands, but even Debbie was surprised at the request. Undaunted, she began by completely taking the box apart, and then altered the round "bird-shaped" windows to square "people or doll shaped" windows, including adding a door which was not there before, as birds find them hard to open. And that was just the beginning.

The roof was so rotten that it just fell apart, so a new one was created using plywood which Debbie made removable so that the interior could be seen from above. To give it strength and an outside space, Debbie added a base for the house to stand on, which measures about 24" by 24".

She made all the inside furniture and fittings, including the cabinets, the shelves and their contents. She also made the kitchen sink that has an old pump faucet, and the wood burning cook stove. Debbie made most of the items outside including the well, the picnic table and croquet set. The animals, the camera, the cart and the

birds were all purchased, as the birds felt hard done by after being evicted from their home.

Debbie wanted to reflect Nancy's mother's life and hobbies, so Nancy had given Debbie many of her late mother's miniature objects which all found a place in the house. Nancy's mum played the guitar, so a mini guitar was placed on the front porch, and her husband Adrian had a 1966 red Corvette, so there is a picture of one over the mantelpiece. There is a barbecue, and a lovely bench with Nancy and Adrian's initials carved into it. There is also a wheelbarrow, flowers and fir trees, and I love the chimney, made from pebbles. On one side of the building there is a small vegetable garden, with a chicken coop on the other side, and I am amazed at the amount of detail there is here, considering it was just a bird box. Amazing.

I bet that this was a very grand bird box when it was new, and Debbie has now turned it into a delightful little memento for Nancy, and she should be very proud.





Andreas creates scenes full of detailed stories

Escape to Greece for the perfect miniature holiday with the work of Andreas Rousounelis

BY SADIE BROWN

With the aid of the internet, Andreas Rousounelis is able to source inspiration without leaving his work bench, but he also says that by observing everything around him he is able to draw inspiration from day to day life. The beauty of whitewashed Cycladic architecture, familiar to us set against a backdrop of the crystal waters of the Aegean Sea, is just one aspect of Andreas' Greek homeland which provides a wonderful source of inspiration for his dioramas.

His 'Cyclades' diorama, at home in 1/24th scale and featuring that rich blue so synonymous with Cycladic buildings, was inspired by Mykonos and features excellent use of LED lighting. "I placed it in a box to light it up and give it a more beautiful and nostalgic atmosphere," says Andreas, who used a range of materials in the scene's construction, including mostly paper for the walls and wood for the doors and windows. "I love using paper for wall construction and wood for making wooden surfaces," he adds. That atmosphere Andreas speaks of is something which is hugely important to his work, believing that detail brings a greater level of realism to a scene.

The perfection of freshly painted Cycladic architecture offers a complete contrast to the abandoned



buildings and the stories of yesteryear which are a recurrent theme throughout Andreas' dioramas and form the basis for much of his work. One such scene is a 1/35th scale diorama depicting an abandoned Greek house, perfectly capturing the feel of a building lost to time and just waiting

for someone to discover the history bound forever within its stone walls.

The blue painted doors and the ornate bracket on the wall offer hints of the building's former life. "I saw the Greek stone house in a photo and I really liked it," remembers Andreas. "I mainly liked the image of abandonment and the atmosphere it produced. The building is made of foam which I carved and the tiles from a circular plastic sheet made and placed one by one."

Andreas creates a popular range of simple but incredibly evocative vignettes which often portray just a door and window set into an aged exterior. Framed, these scenes are able to spread the word about small scale, with a broad appeal for those with no prior connection to the world of miniatures and are simply looking for that perfect decoration for the home.

They are the ideal way to reminisce over time spent walking down a narrow Greek cobbled street, envious of those lucky enough to have been able

to call it home.

'Old Greek Door' is a 1/24th scale framed vignette which features a blue door and window, the once bright paint weathered above a worn stone step which has held the footprints of the many stories which were told beyond the threshold. Nature encroaches once more as weeds begin to take hold, the footsteps that once kept them at bay





Above far left: "Old Greek Door".

Above left: Cabin fever! Andreas' rustic A-frame cabin.

Above right: Oodles of summer sunshine.

Left: The shell of a rusting tram waits for passengers who will never come.

Below: Get down from there!





now long gone. Above, a bougainvillea continues to flower, bringing a burst of colour to the scene.

Andreas also offers us an intriguing glimpse into the lives of deserted buildings, where once treasured possessions are discovered strewn across a landscape undermined by years of abandonment with nothing but dust and decay to fill the space left behind by those who once lived there. In one scene, an old photograph still hangs on the wall, sitting in the centre of an ornate frame above a chest of drawers, again leaving the onlooker to conjure with a myriad of potential tales to be told.

Other scenes left behind by time include the shell of an old tram, which sits rusting away as it waits for passengers no longer likely to board, and

Left: *Over the garden gate.*

Below left: *Tiny 1/35th scale wooden house.*

Below: *Andreas' abandoned Greek house.*





Above: *Discovering stories of yesteryear.*
Below: *Frozen in time.*

'Lonely Rails', a once lively railway station where, now abandoned, the tracks see nature reclaiming its territory.

Equally captivating is a charming diorama featuring a set of old wrought iron gates at its heart. The scene depicts a young boy wearing a flat cap, stood against a brick pillar as he reflects on how to retrieve the brightly coloured ball which, for the moment, remains just out of reach at the other side of the closed gates.

"I mainly use acrylic paints and oil paints to imitate rust," says Andreas, discussing more of the materials regularly found on his busy work bench. "I also use a lot of pigments to build and shape the soil as well as to dust various objects." All these scenes are 1/35th scale, but Andreas also tests his skills with even smaller work in 1/43th and 1/87th scales.

A seafaring diorama, where a large and expensive yacht is seen ploughing through rippled blue waters even saw him venture into the world of 1:350 scale. A recently completed project in 1/43th scale focuses

on a delightful A Frame cabin with corrugated roof. With bags of rustic charm, you can imagine this being a much needed riverside retreat for the owner of the canoe which sits outside, waiting to paddle away from the rigours of city life.

Andreas' dioramas also transport

us to chillier climbs, where a woman and her small dog stand amid a setting almost quite literally frozen in time and a world away from the Greek sunshine. The scene offers a hint of fading winter light and a time when the sun fails to reach the dizzy heights of summer. Like all Andreas' work, the key to authenticity is marked by his attention to fine detailing. With snow piled high at either side of the freshly cleared path, to the natural way the falling snowflakes have gathered between the brickwork, nothing has been eliminated or forgotten.

In addition to that sharp eye for detail, you can feel that Andreas also has a keen understanding of a past which surrounds us at every turn.

The enduring history of the buildings he is inspired by when creating his models pulses through his designs, enabling us to walk down lanes lined with memories, absorbing a rich history which we ourselves can find out there, waiting for us on our own street corners.



An apron to celebrate grandma's canning

Debbie makes a colourful apron and tea towel but you can change the design and colours to suit any season or memory

BY DEBBIE BOOTH

As a little girl I remember my grandmother had a basement filled with shelves, and on those shelves were countless canning jars filled with fruits, vegetables, preserves and homemade jam. It was a beautiful sight.

That same grandmother, years later, stirred in me a love for quilting. This miniature apron with little canning jars adhered to it has two different versions. The first version has the hem area lined with canning jars. The second version has a simple felt pocket with a canning jar adhered to it.

Join me and make some simple decorative miniature aprons and tea towels. I used light coloured fabrics for

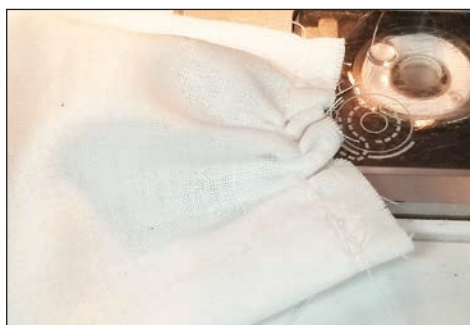
the apron so that the canning jars can be easily seen.

Apron

Step 1. Measure and cut the main apron piece to 7" x 3 1/4".

Step 2. Fold it in half with the right sides facing each other. Pin sides.

Step 3. Sew along the edge using 1/4" seam allowance. Sew the left side, and then the right side leaving the top open. Turn right sides out. Trim threads and press flat.



Step 4. Using a large stitch, sew along the top open edge using 1/8" seam allowance. Gather the thread by pulling the top thread.



Step 5. Cut 12" of double fold bias tape. Once the apron is gathered at the top, open the double fold bias tape, find the centre and place the gathered edge inside. Pin and sew the bias tape across the top of the gathered apron edge. Trim threads and press.



Step 6. Next, cut a square from the paper backed interfacing about 5" x 5". Trace the jar pattern onto the paper side of the interfacing. Draw several jars.

Each jar pattern will be pressed onto different colours of fabric, so for now just rough cut around the jars. Place the pattern onto the wrong side of cotton fabric and press in place. Us-

You will need

- Fat quarter or 18" square of white/cream cotton fabric
- Scraps of cotton fabric with tiny print in different colours
- 1/2 yard of flat, 1/4" wide white cotton lace
- Grey fabric
- Scraps of felt the same colour as your apron
- Package of HeatnBond
- 1 package of double fold bias tape, 1/4" - 1/2" wide
- Iron
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Tweezers

ing sharp scissors, cut around the jar. Press and cut out several jar pieces.



Step 7. Place three different coloured jars at the bottom of the apron piece. Line them up so they are not crooked and carefully press in place.

Step 8. Press a square piece of paper backed interfacing to the back of a piece of grey fabric. Cut several little rectangles out for lids. They are less than 1/8" tall and the width depends on the jar.



Step 9. Eyeball the jar and then cut the grey rectangle to fit the top. See photos. It is very small and using tweezers helps. Pull the paper off the back side and press the lids into place. Initially I tried to sew and appliqué the jars into place and it looked awful because the jars and the lids are so tiny. Hence the term 'decorative miniature.' The HeatnBond is strong enough to hold the pieces in place.



Step 10. The second version embellishes the apron with a pocket. Cut a pocket from felt 1" x 3/4". Cut a jar piece that contrasts with the colour of the pocket.



Step 11. Centre and press the jar to the pocket. Press a jar lid piece on the jar.

Step 12. Pin the pocket to the bottom right or left side of the apron. Top stitch the pocket to the apron. Trim threads and remove the pins.

Kitchen towel

Step 13. Cut a rectangle of cotton fabric 2 1/2" x 5".

Step 14. Fold the rectangle in half with right sides together. Once folded, it should measure 2 1/2" x 2 1/2". Similar to the apron construction, pin the sides and sew both sides using 1/4" straight seam allowance. Turn right side out and press.

Step 15. This time, pin and sew flat lace across the raw edge end. The lace will be the bottom of the kitchen tea towel.

Step 16. Cut out 2 or 3 jar pieces and align them on the base of the kitchen towel. Press in place. Press a small grey rectangle piece for the jar lids in place.

Step 17. Once the jars are in place, the kitchen towel can be sprayed with water or another preferred liquid (spray starch) and folded or draped on a kitchen counter or a chair.

The colour of the jars can be coordinated with a season (Christmas or Autumn) or a miniature doll's house kitchen decor and colour scheme. Have fun decorating!

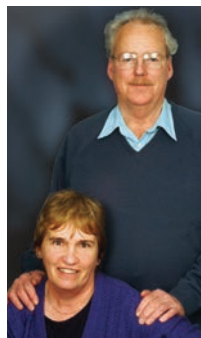
Passion for miniatures started with the manor

We look back at how one impatient miniaturist dived right in to create her first house, but loved it despite making mistakes on the way

BY CHARLOTTE MERRYMAN

Mums and dads out there may agree that one of the benefits to the children finally leaving home is the extra room that becomes available for hobbies. Such was the case for Phyllis Goulding from West Sussex. When she first got a doll's house many years ago, having wanted one all her life, she was contained to working in the loft space. But as her three sons left home one by one she was able to move from loft to small bedroom and finally to large bedroom.

Phyllis got her first house, pictured here after shopping around and



considering her options. It's a bit like buying a full size house, without the hassle of surveys. The important thing is to make sure it fulfils your requirements, looks good, and is well made and affordable.

For Phyllis the doll's house and miniatures hobby is the perfect recreation as it encompasses everything she enjoys doing, and has taught her more besides; woodwork, wallpapering, painting, embroidery, knitting, sewing and love it or hate it - working with Fimo.

Some skills she learnt as a child, such as knitting, which her nan taught her to do with matchsticks. But other



disciplines she has had to learn the hard way. When Phyllis got the house home it was flat-packed. She knows now that it would have been better to decorate the ceiling before constructing the house, ditto the stairs - and not to use gloss paint, but these are all the mistakes and joys of having your own doll's house for the first time, and they come with no regrets.

"I'm a bit impatient and just wanted to put house together, decorate it and fill it up," admitted Phyllis. "My husband Richard would say, 'I'm not going to interfere but if you need my help, I'll help you'. So that made me all the more determined not to ask for it."

The desire to fill up the house and see the finished result meant that Phyllis has bought rather more commercial pieces than she now wishes, but it is out of the question to replace them with new, improved versions or home made miniatures.

"It's my first house and I want it to stay like that forever. Even though I've moved on and become more experienced."

In this respect doll's houses can be a solid memory. Phyllis' face lights up as she explains how chuffed she was to even buy the house with her own money in the first place. At the beginning she spent so many hours upstairs



Left: What's cooking? Must be Dundee cake.

Above: All the dolls in the house have been given activities to do.



Above and below: Please be seated. Dinner is served in style.



in the loft working on the project that one day her remaining son suggested that she might need to 'go and get help'. Being so enthralled with her new found pleasure it's no wonder Phyllis fell prey to his sense of humour.

"He used to go in there when I wasn't around and move all the dolls about," she said, trying to stifle a chuckle.

The house only took about a month to make, but since then Phyllis has



Left and far right: Inside the Manor - despite the learning curve it remains Phyllis' first love.

Top: A common pitfall is to fix the stairs before decorating the hall wall.

Above: The lady of the house is ready for visitors.

continued to add to the contents, believing that nothing is ever finished. There is a nice sense of ambience to the scene as the dolls, some of which are homemade, strike a pose through their given tasks.

One servant is attending to the fire,

while a maid cleans the bath. In the bedroom an old man has taken his teeth out and left them on the side, while the old lady peers into a hand mirror and applies lashings of bright red lipstick.

"It is boring if the dolls are stood

there doing nothing," claimed Phyllis. "You have to think what they are doing and what time of day it is and so on. It helps to bring life to the house."

Having gone head over heels into the hobby it was just a matter of time before house number two came along.



Top: One of the guests arrives.

Above: Phyllis has learnt skills from woodwork and wallpapering to needlework.

Enter 'The Priory' - a grand, ten-room Georgian style house destined to be an old people's home. Faced with such a large amount of rooms to play with Phyllis experienced the equivalent of writer's block and found creative inspiration just did not come. To date the project remains largely unfinished.



Above left and left: What a dashing chap - even if his false teeth are on the dressing table.

Above: A bit of lippy and she's done.



Top: No. 77 found in an antique shop while on holiday.

Above: Bought at a boot sale, but what a gem.

Above right: The maid at work scrubs that bath!

This is not a matter of being a one hit wonder, rather than learning what you like and how you like to work. The slightly smaller 'Country Store' soon filled the gap and was cleverly divided into three shops inside, which gives the perfect excuse to include a lot of something you particularly like making, followed by a wood cutter's cottage and then a toy shop.

That was the time Phyllis got into

“You have to think what they are doing and what time of day it is and so on. It helps to bring life to the house.”

Dolls House World - bless her. Last on her list of wants was an old Triang house, but fate works in mysterious ways. "I always used to see Marion Osborne's articles in the magazine and think 'oh no those old houses are not for me'. But then I actually started reading the articles and I really got into them."

A sweet little Triang followed, bought at a boot sale. Then came a

number 77, discovered in an antique shop while on holiday in Chipping Norton. This was really quite a find as the shop owner handed Phyllis a plastic bag full of furniture, and rarities on her way out claiming, 'It's





Above and right: *A picture of happiness in the nursery.*

only rubbish', which of course it wasn't. Eight different Triangs now nestle on the shelves in the workroom, with three in the spare room and quite a few in the loft. Phyllis and Richard developed a soft spot for them. Richard renovated old houses and scanned the Internet for furniture, replacement windows and general bargains. Both agreed that part of the charm of any old house, manufactured or homemade, is the crudeness of their construction. In many cases they come with bits of furniture that has been made out of whatever wood was available at the time.

"I really like old houses because they're so different. Think of all the little kids that must have played with them and how treasured they were," said Phyllis. Despite the golden oldies, a modern house is a must, providing an excellent outlet for Phyllis to make her own miniatures. It was not unknown for her to knock up a Dundee cake while sitting in front of the telly of an evening.

"I can't sit without doing something," she said. "At the end of the evening I have to feel I've achieved

something."

Making your own stuff eliminates the need for chequebook miniatures and keeps the cost of the hobby down too - why commission other people to make something when you love to do it yourself? This was always the feeling behind the hobby for Phyllis and as she continued to make and fill 'The Manor' anything that didn't turn out quite right always went towards the back of the house.

It seems the miniatures hobby just keeps delivering; to the extent that it became an addiction of sorts. For Phyllis and Richard it formed a major pleasure and indispensable part of their lives. Their home was filled with an assortment of modern doll's houses, in twelfth and 1/24th scale that jostled for space in the main hobby room.



“At the end of the evening I have to feel I've achieved something.”

Those of a more genteel nature; a few particularly old Triangs and an enormous, but sadly battered 18th Century Georgian house lived out their days with dignity in the small room, while in the loft space visitors had to tip-toe their way around the plethora of houses, boxes, tubs and containers filled with stored furniture, rarities, replacements and various accessories.

With no more spare rooms to commandeer, space to accumulate more houses was limited. It was getting to the stage where a 'one-in, one-out' system might have come in to operation. But of all the treasures, and there are many that have their own charms and merits, Phyllis would not be parted from her manor house. You might call it her first love. This is one treasure that will not be leaving home.

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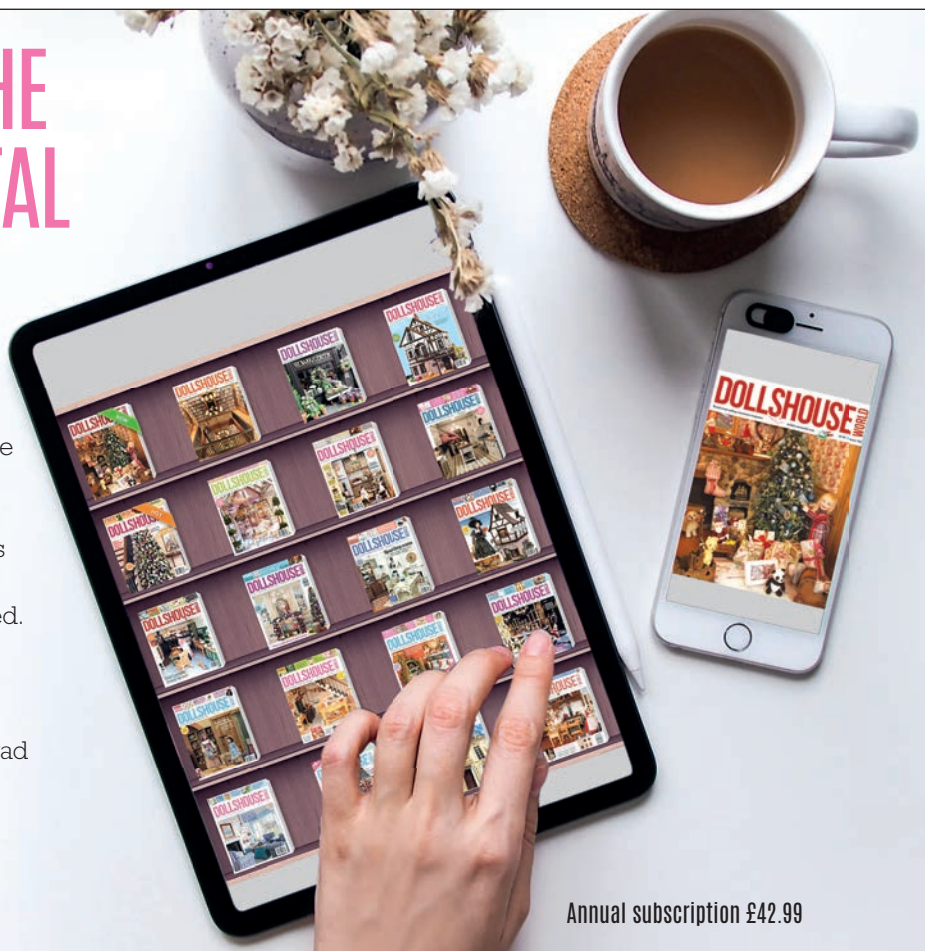
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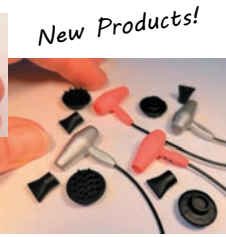
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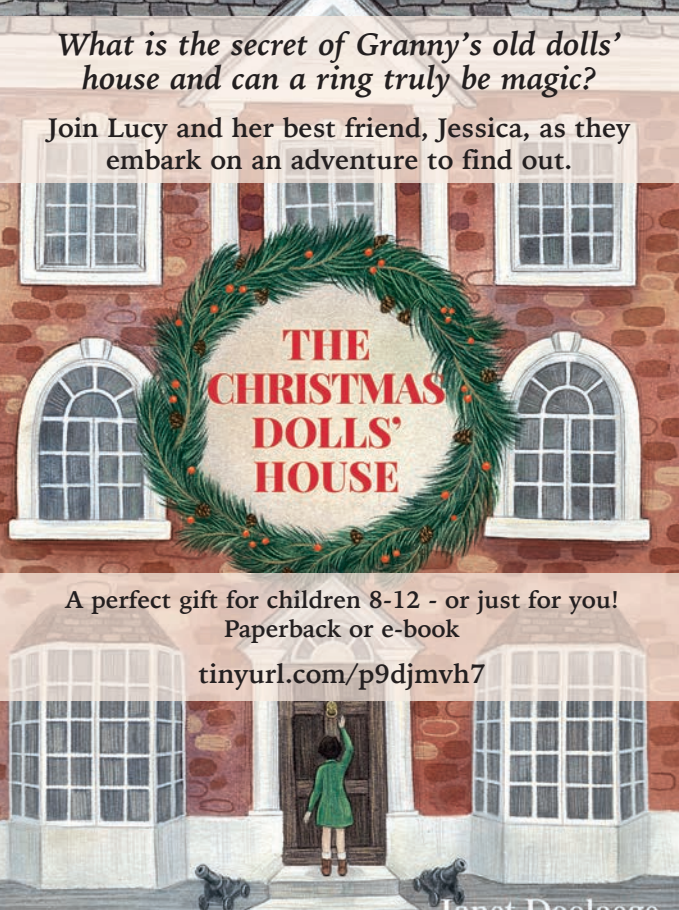
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SMALL TALK

WE CHAT WITH SUSAN FARNIK ABOUT HER LIFE IN MINIATURES

Hi Susan. Tell us how long you have been making miniatures? I've been active in miniatures since the mid 80s.

Where do you work? I have a studio in my home where I work on miniatures. The main room is about 11' x 20', there is a walk in closet that's 6' x 11' and then the power tool room is about 6' x 6'. We made the space in our attic, so I have the sloping walls of the roof. We added the dormer to make more space. It has a opening window seat for more storage. When the contractor was building it, he kept saying, you have a lot of space. When he came back after I had moved in, he finally understood why I wanted so much space!

And you make all your minis there? Yes, except for needlework, I do all my miniature work in my studio. I have ample storage space and everything I need to create is there.

Do you work at set times? Right now, I stitch in the morning and I work in my studio in the afternoon. After I have finished making my rug, I plan on spending a lot more time in the studio.

What makes your space for mini making so



special? I designed the space, not only to work in, but also as a space to dream in. I put a wicker chaise in the corner where I can sit and think about what to create.

Do you keep your workspace private? The door is open, so my husband, who has his workroom on the same floor, can come in if he chooses. There is a Jack and Jill bath between our two rooms.

Name one thing that is banned from your workspace. Spray paints and oil-based stains.

Describe your workspace in five words: My favourite place to be.

What is the one thing that your workspace can't be missing? Good lighting.

We were going to ask about your dream workspace. But it sounds like you have it already. Yes. The only thing that would be better is if it were bigger. There never seems to be enough space! I do have a separate room for my power tools, I would love it if it were larger too. You can never have too much room for your minis.



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