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Issue 357

QUICK
& EASY
MAKES

★ projects
★ houses
★ rooms

★ cutouts
★ makers
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*Christmas
Special*



contents



small details

● Issue 357

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welcome

As Bing Crosby sang so wistfully: "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas."

Well, it certainly is here at DHW as desks are covered in tiny tinsel and fake snow along with little piles of green pipe cleaners and red felt... not to mention a pair of gloves (mine!) with their thumbs cut off.

Santa's elves have had nothing on the DHW projects team as they sparkled with creativity to bring you a veritable feast of festive ideas.

We've got baubles in boxes ("Mind your feet. I've dropped one," was a frequent cry) and everything from knitted stockings to more wreaths than a garden centre in December. Have some foam fun making a gingerbread house and test your polymer clay skills with a chocolate log.

We've got ideas for a traditional celebration as well as more contemporary scenes, and readers and writers share festive houses and rooms that they are rightfully proud of.

Sandra Harding tells us how she turned a house she shouldn't have bought into a delightful shop, complete with grotto, and we visit a Christmas cottage where grey and white shades create a vintage, elegant look.

So whether you're starting on a new room box or just adding a few cards to the mantelpiece in an existing house, we hope you'll find inspiring ideas inside.

And if you get delayed or distracted at this busy time, just remember you're one of a big family of miniaturists around the world, humming the song together, and making it look a lot like Christmas.

Richard.

email: richard@ashdown.co.uk

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Sandra pays first visit to Miniatura's new home with lots to admire

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Another page of cutouts to get your house into the festive spirit

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Sandra creates a table decoration and wreath from her stash

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Once Upon a Time Sandra bought yet another shop

64 House Proud

Sisterly love shines in Hummingbird Cottage, an estate sale bargain

69 Mini Makes

Debbie shows how to make simple stockings out of felt

Quote of the month:

"Our hearts grow tender with childhood memories and love of kindred, and we are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again at Christmastime."

Laura Ingalls Wilder



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Karen sings along to favourite carol while making a beautiful wreath

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Make and dress this snowman family for a winter wonderland

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Dana was inspired to make this stunning red gown by a television series

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This month we visit the workshop of maker Olga Surina



HOUSE HUNT

Find the little house hidden inside.
 Last issue it appeared on page 70.



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Caring for the environment: Here at Dolls House World we're as concerned about the environment as you are. We're doing everything we can to ensure the magazine is produced in the most eco friendly way possible. Our magazine is printed using vegetable-based inks on an environmentally responsible paper, which is certified by the prestigious FSC® (Forest Stewardship Council), the not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion of responsible forest management worldwide. Our paper also carries the internationally recognised EU Eco-label. Our local printers, Gemini Print, are just a few miles from the DHW offices. They are one of the leading eco friendly printers in the UK, with both FSC® and ISO 14001 certification. They are backed by a series of environmental credentials that allow them to work under the "Green Printing Label". Our printers are also a sponsor of the Woodland Trust - the UK's leading woodland conservation charity.

Knit two stockings for your Christmas scene

Angela has designed a special pattern for you to knit two styles of stockings. Will you hang them on the fireplace downstairs or in one of your bedrooms?

BY ANGELA TURNER

It is getting close to Christmas. Mary has just popped out of the room to pick up the Christmas cards in the post.

She has been working hard all day knitting an angel tree topper to complete the tree in time for Christmas, and is just about to have a glass of warm ginger wine and a slice of cloutie dumpling, before returning to her knitting.

As she knits she thinks of the special gifts she will put into the stockings for her little ones. She looks forward to the festivities to come.

That's the scene I have created to show two types of stockings hanging on the fireplace. You can choose where to hang yours.

Before starting separate the strands of the embroidery thread and wrap around a bobbin. Use just one strand at a time when knitting.

Striped christmas stocking



Using light green, begin at toe and cast on 10sts.

First row: Purl.

Next row: (K1, kfb) to end.

15sts

Next row: Purl.

Change to white.

Next row: (Kfb, k2) to end. 20sts

Next row: Purl.

Change to light green and st-st 2 rows.

Change to white and st-st 2 rows.

Change to light green and st-st 2

rows.

Change to white and st-st 2 rows, inc one st each end of last row. 22sts

Work heel shaping as follows:

Change to light green.

First row: K9, turn.

Next row: Purl to end.

Next row: K7, turn.

Next row: Purl to end.

Next row: K5, turn.

Next row: Purl to end.

Next row: K3, turn.

Next row: Purl to end.

Next row: Knit to end of row, knitting into the back of the stitches where there is a little gap.

Next row: P9, turn.

Next row: Knit to end.

Next row: P7, turn.

Next row: Knit to end.

Next row: P5, turn.

Next row: Knit to end.

Next row: P3, turn.

Next row: Knit to end.

Next row: Purl to end of row.

Change to white and st-st 2 rows, dec one st each end of first row. 20sts

Change to light green and st-st 2 rows.

Work 24 more rows in stripe pattern.

Using white, work 4 rows in 1x1 rib.

Cast off in rib.

Gather round cast on sts and sew seam using mattress stitch. Use the thread from the cast off to create a little loop to hang the stocking. Ensure all loose ends are tied in securely to finish.



Red christmas stocking

Work as for striped stocking using cherry, but instead of working 24 rows for the leg, just st-st 14 rows. G-st 6 rows in cream for the top of the stocking and work the

little loop as before.



LITTLE LINKS:

Angela Turner Designs
etsy: [etsy.com/shop/AngelaTurnerDesigns](https://www.etsy.com/shop/AngelaTurnerDesigns)





You will need

Yarn

- 1 x Trimits embroidery thread cherry GE0426
- 1 x Trimits embroidery thread cream GE0131
- 1 x Trimits embroidery thread green GE7215
- 1 x Trimits embroidery thread white
- Needles: Miniature knitting needles: size 22
- Extras: Sewing needle

Measurement

- To fit 1/12th scale doll's house

Abbreviations

- alt: alternate
- cont: continue
- dec: decrease
- foll: following
- G st: garter stitch
- k: knit
- k2tog: knit 2 together
- kfb: knit 1 front & back
- p: purl
- p2tog: purl 2 together
- rem: remaining
- rep: repeat
- RS: right side
- skpo: slip 1, k1, pass slipped stitch over
- st(s): stitch(es)
- st-st: stocking stitch
- WS: wrong side
- yfwd: yarn forward

Turn a blind eye

My own doll's house is Regency in style, and everything in it is of the period, except at Christmas. I turn a blind eye to timelines and include a decorated tree, cards and a few other decorations. I plan to add Christmas dinner to the dining table in the future, with a bustling kitchen preparing delicious treats such as cloutie dumpling and ginger wine.



Stall reflects Sylvia's love of market time

Dutch miniaturist Sylvia de Groot loves the Christmas markets that are a long-standing tradition across Europe and couldn't resist reflecting that love in twelfth scale

BY DEB WEISSLER

Throughout the Netherlands and on into Germany, Austria, and other countries of Europe, residents and visitors alike share a common bond at Christmastime: their love of a seasonal fair.

Invented over five centuries ago, Christmas markets are now a mainstay of the holiday period. These markets stem from humble origins. Once a one-day event that enabled locals to gather goods for the coming winter, they have morphed into extravagant month-long festivals filled with food, drink, toys, crafts and music. Sylvia de Groot loves these annual holiday displays and has created a traditional market stall in twelfth scale. Let's take a look!

The stall is made from wood that she painted blue, ensuring it could be used throughout the year as the seasons change. Decorated Christmas trees, boxes filled with ornaments, handmade Christmas stockings, wreaths, lanterns, a sledge, skis and traditional Dutch skates are tastefully displayed.

It became the model for one of her popular workshops. Twice a year Sylvia holds miniature workshops in her shop in Almere, the Netherlands. Her latest featured a traditional European market stall displaying all things Christmas. Sylvia loves this time of year with all its holiday splendour, and combined it with her love for shabby chic to create this rustic market stall.

"I like to imitate the big world in miniature as realistically as possible, preferably old, dilapidated and weathered," Sylvia explains. "When I create a project, I always have to think about it for a while. Once I have the vision in my head, I can begin." This two-day workshop was a sellout with twenty-four participants. It was so well received, additional market stalls were made to sell in the shop.

Her classes grew so large, she had the pieces laser cut for ease of assembly and time management. Attendees were free to paint their stalls in any colours they wished, and fill them with tiny treasures. Sylvia filled hers with anything Christmassy she could

find, and with winter fast approaching, skates and skis were a must.

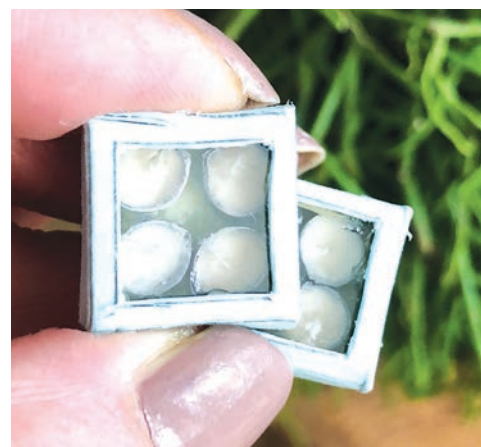
"The biggest challenge were the small wooden ice skates. I used the full size ones when I was a little girl, so it was so much fun recreating them. Most of my workshop participants recognised them from their childhood since Dutch children learn to skate at a very early age."

This market stall was not Sylvia's first foray into miniatures. In 2007 she spotted a lovely doll's house on the internet, so she bought a small doll's house kit and created her first vignette, *Attic of an Alcoholic*. Yes, you read right! She discovered a passion for building and creating all things old and weathered.

"Most of my projects are this way and many people know me from that trademark. *Attic of an Alcoholic* made me famous in the Netherlands", Sylvia laughs.

As a full time employee for the Dutch railways, Sylvia helps ensure that all international cross-border train traffic flows smoothly and is properly regulated. Her miniatures provide her with much needed downtime and relaxation. Since her youngest child has grown and left home, she has a lovely large room in which to work her magic. Here she is free to imitate her dreams in miniature –and this she finds soothing.

Sylvia doesn't regularly produce miniatures to sell, although some of





Above: A handmade set of old fashioned ice skates were added to the market stall, as well as tiny boxes of candles, shown top left.

Above right: Market stalls are a celebrated tradition.

Right: The market stall shown from the front.





Top: Many tiny items add to the magic of this little market stall.

Above: A few of the handmade accessories that were added to the stall.

Below: A sledge stands behind a crate of baubles. The miniature ski poles add a vintage touch.

her projects have found new homes. Sometimes she will accept a commission, but only if the assignment appeals to her. She created a bridal shop for her second son and his wife commemorating their wedding day. She also made a wool shop for her sister-in-law's fiftieth birthday because she loves to knit and crochet. After creating the Christmas stall, Sylvia tackled an even tinier house: a 1/48th scale replica of her daughter-in-law's

parental home.

Miniatures are quite popular in the Netherlands and nearby Germany, but have not caught on as quickly in other countries. Sylvia hopes that changes. "I hope a lot of people will embrace this hobby. I would like to do this for a long time and hope my workshops encourage others." For those readers intrigued by Sylvia's vignette Attic of an Alcoholic, we hope to feature that in a future issue!



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show&tell

MAKERS SHOW THEIR WORK AND TALK ABOUT THEIR MINI LIFE



We talk to Sandra and Geoff Read of GS Miniature Creations who are based in a small village near Winchester, Hants, about the wide range of minis they make

How did you discover miniatures?

We have both always been interested in creating with our motto being: "Only buy what you can't make". With Geoff's working life involving animals and conservation money was always tight; any toys for the children were often hand made, including a doll's house for our daughters. I've always painted, mainly wildlife and birds and one day decided to paint a Kingfisher in miniature. From then on minis have become a way of life

How long have you been making minis?

For about three years. In no time at all we became completely hooked on all things miniature and began creating other items including twelfth scale tables filled with realistic food made from polymer

clay and a variety of other materials. Geoff's imagination and ability to create something totally original resulted a potting shed lamp made from an old watering can, complete with a miniature flowerpot man, a replica farmhouse kitchen and an old outside toilet in a wooden case. The quirkier the better.

Why quirky? Geoff has a sometimes worrying imagination, as you can see from some of the miniature dioramas he makes. We look at everyday objects, the different seasons and let our imagination run riot. Would the lid of a detergent bottle make a bucket, would a piece of netting make a wire fence? The list is endless.

What's the one tool you can't live

without? For Geoff it is a sharp craft knife. For me nimble fingers and a good pair of tweezers, and of course a very tiny paint brush.

Do you collect as well as make?

Sometimes if Geoff makes something very quirky, for instance a skeleton in a bath complete with top hat and reading glasses, I ask him to make one to go on our bathroom shelf. But time constraints impact on what we make to keep and what we make to sell.

Do you own a doll's house? Not a house. But being interested in all things Harry Potter Geoff has recreated Dumbledore's office in miniature complete with lights and everything magic





Would the lid of a detergent bottle make a bucket, would a piece of netting make a wire fence?





Do you have another job in the real world? No. We are both now retired and busier than we ever were.

Tell us about your latest project? The one thing I have always wanted is a witches' house so hopefully that will be our next project just for us.

Which subject would you like to know more about? Mould making for some of our miniature work.

What do your family think of your work? Our grandchildren think what we do is awesome but worry about granddad's imagination

Any other hobbies or passions? For Geoff photography, Japanese culture and growing carnivorous plants. For me collecting and reading old books, history and crystal healing.

Any pets? A rescue cat and three tarantula spiders

What advice would you give to your younger self? Follow your dream and persevere with whatever you want to do. Don't set yourself



unreasonable goals and most of all enjoy what you do.

Where do you sell? We have an Etsy shop and sell at craft fairs, mainly in the New Forest, a most beautiful part of Hampshire.

Other makers you admire? For both Geoff and me the most inspirational creator is a Japanese miniaturist under the name of Nunu's House. His work is the best we have ever seen.

What do you love about miniatures? I love the fact miniatures are for grown up children to go back into the fantasy world

Where do you work? I have a studio at the bottom of the garden; Geoff has a workroom on the side of the kitchen and we have radios to communicate. The main message is usually: "Put the kettle on for tea".

Have you ever had a piece go horribly wrong? Anyone who creates anything hand made knows only too well that there are days when things go wrong. We tend to walk away and go back later to try again.

Anything else you'd like to share with readers? We are just a normal couple who enjoy working together to create something entirely different that others may enjoy. We always say if what we create makes you smile our work is done.



LITTLE LINKS:

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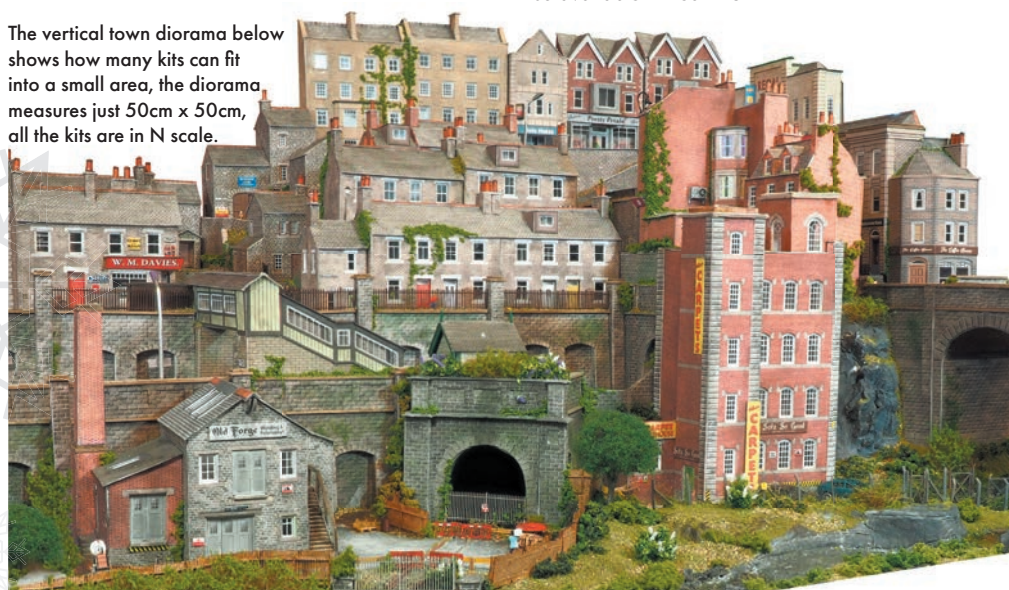


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Debbie uses imagination creating Comfort Cottage

A talented miniaturist made almost everything inside this Christmas cottage — here she tells us how it went together, starting with the rooms before walls and roof were added

BY DEBBIE MILLS

This Christmas Cottage was commissioned by one of my neighbours for a Christmas present for her daughter-in-law. She had no requirements, just wanted me to use my imagination.

I began by making the dining room, attached the living room and then the kitchen. The outside walls were the last thing.

I furnished each room before any of the outside walls were built. I made everything myself except the red chair in the living room and the moose.

The dining room has a wooden dining table and chairs, and the table is set with dishes, goblets, and cutlery made from bits and bobs of jewellery and plastic pieces. The food, cake and muffins were fashioned from clay and painted. On the buffet is a fruit bowl with grapes, bananas and apples with a wine decanter and goblets. Hanging over the table is a chandelier made from a pendant with a ring of candles.

I made the inside wall leading into the living room into a wood trimmed archway.

Wooden stairs wind up the corner of the room to indicate an upstairs. There is a fireplace in the living room with a light glowing as flames made of yellow plastic appear as fire. I also made a roll top desk with a bookcase atop with a stool for a seat. A Christmas tree lights the living room showing a comfy chair with a book, *The Night Before Christmas*, along with a side table with a cup

of cocoa, a lamp and eyeglasses.

The new owners are collectors. He collects nutcrackers and she collects moose. On the mantelpiece is a collection of nutcrackers for him. I made a sleigh from bits of wood and painted it with a leather seat. I found a moose at the hobby store — the perfect size for pulling the sleigh. The sleigh is outside the front door.

The living room has a bay window and I made ultra miniature houses to go in the window and also added a boxer dog looking out the window. The owners also have boxer dogs. I tried to incorporate as much as I could that would relate to the owners. The floors in the dining room and living room are wooden planks with wallpaper on the walls.

The kitchen has a sink made from a plastic mint container with wooden cabinets surrounding it. Plates were made from buttons and the canisters are plastic tubing with a bead on top. The flooring in the kitchen was blue and white tile floors made from vinyl paper.

After I had made the rooms I started building the outside walls around them. I needed to make sure each room had large windows so you could view in and see the contents. The roof is removable but not the walls. The base is approximately 21 inches x 24 inches.

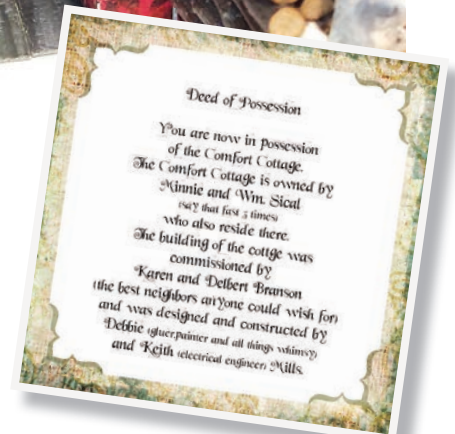
I built French doors in the dining room exiting the back of the house using some black-painted quilling on







“Snowshoes,
a sledge and
ice skates are
hanging on
the patio.”





the glass. Snowshoes, a sledge and ice skates are hanging on the patio. I made the heads of a rabbit and a fox with surprised expressions on their faces. They are sticking out of the wood pile looking at each other.

I decided to go with a Tudor style house and used twigs from my garden for the cross timbers with plaster

between them. The lower part of the walls are bricks fashioned from sandpaper and paint. I built a turret from an oatmeal box, then covered it with tree bark.

I made the roof from heavy cardboard. It seemed such a large expanse I felt it needed some interest there so I created a lit arched window. Wooden

shingles then covered the roof and I added Christmas lights around the eaves that were covered with snow and icicles.

The owners last name is Comfort so I put a sign over the door: Comfort Cottage. It is still the favourite of all my creations. I just see little stories everywhere in the house.

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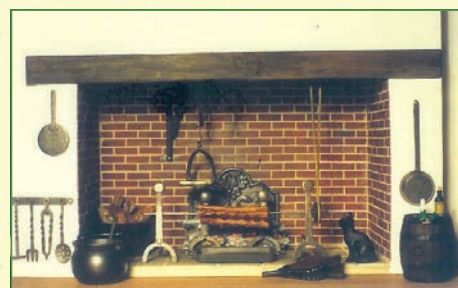


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Cottage came out of

A blue Christmas is this miniaturist's dream come true

BY DEB WEISSLER

Caroline Dupuis has once again departed from her usual white-on-white painted cottage palette to create a commissioned blue cottage shop and residence. Caroline says this is her favourite Christmas house ever! Her client approached her about a cottage with a large store display window in which to highlight her workshop and store, with living accommodations above. Caroline understands cottage style well,

capturing all the charm and delight of tiny vintage dwellings that ooze charm in every nook and cranny. It's a lifelong passion born from decades of love for interior design.

The entire structure was designed and made from scratch using tempered hardboard, plaster, craft sticks, paint and faux greenery. The roof is composed of cardboard strips made from the same material as gift boxes. "I just don't stick to only miniature-size

items to make these houses," Caroline points out. "I shop in regular stores. You just have to keep an eye out for things that will translate well to twelfth scale. I always get asked about the greenery. They are just regular sized garlands I just cut apart into tiny pieces." In this case it was winter's bare limbs and SnowTex-covered evergreens that created the perfect Christmas look for the shop's exterior.

Caroline's quintessential style is vin-



of the blue

tage-inspired cottages, weathered to a soft patina that includes cracked plaster, worn floorboards, faded wallpaper, and shabby chic furnishings. Her windows and doors are all handmade and mismatched, invoking an era when cottages were put together by hand and not with pre-made components. The exteriors are finished with diluted paint that allows the wood grain to show through. What the client desired most was a large vintage department store display window.

"I had three windows lying around that I wanted to use, so I added them to this house. Sometimes you have to clean out that unused pieces drawer!" Carolyn laughs. "As for the furnish-

ings, I did find some tiny decorations at the craft store. Most of the furniture is made from scratch. The three things I did not make were the workbench, the ladder and the chair upstairs."

A self taught artist, Caroline loves figuring things out in her head and then translating it onto paper. "I usually envision the house in my mind; it just pops into my head, colour and all. Then I draw it out, find the proportions and measurements I think the house should be. Next, I transfer all of this onto hardboard. I cut it out using mostly a scroll saw. Then the house gets glued together. I always start with the inside, plastering the walls and laying the wood floor first. The entire in-







terior, including electrics, gets done. Then I move on to the exterior. Plaster first, then the roof. Paint and age and add greenery."

Some times the smallest details can be the most difficult. For Caroline the hardest part was hanging the fiddly little glittery stars in the display window and getting the bicycle hung in the right position and at the proper height.

Carolyn loves acquiring all the components and laying them all out on her desk. Seeing it all together, fabrics, wallpaper, and accessories, gives her that excitement to get the house done! When she's not busy creating, she spends hours on Pinterest. "I love Pinterest. I can't believe I have a job that actually pays me to linger on Pinterest for hours! Also, I love magazines like Victoria magazine. I look for a photo that stirs some sort of imagination inside me. It can be a photo of anything. Sometimes just the colours, or time of year or even a cake sets off my imagination." Once inspiration strikes, she's off to her workshop.

"It's a lot like the workshops I create in my doll's houses. A huge dining

table is my desk made of unfinished wood and metal. Then I have a huge print maker's cabinet with glass hutch to store lots of materials. There's a white pie cabinet. Everything is in grey and white shades. I age all my framed art. It's a very vintage elegant space that mixes romance and a touch of industrial." Her most valued tools are her scroll saw and hot glue gun. Caro-



“Sometimes you have to clean out that unused pieces drawer!”

line loves working alone and in a quiet spot, so teaching workshops is not on her dance card.

Most of Caroline's work is either sold on Etsy or are client commissions, although she has done work for a couple of celebrities. She has had one home featured in the New York Times and was also offered a show in Hollywood. Shabby chic cottages are popular wherever you live! Her next piece is a timber and plaster house, followed by a New England-style beach cottage. But who knows? There are times her imagination or that of a client interrupts the best laid plans!

"I'm so honoured by all the support everyone always gives me on my blog, Instagram, Facebook and in my Etsy shop. I feel very loved by everyone. And I'm so proud to be part of the mini community."

How kit was transformed into gingerbread cottage

Mindy tells us how much fun she had turning a bare kit into a special gingerbread house that will last long after the Christmas celebrations are over

BY MINDY FEAGINS-MAYOVSKY.

I started collecting miniature figurines when I was a little girl but was never into dolls growing up. I only discovered my love of building doll's houses as an adult. In 2020 I was the lucky purchaser of an entire doll's house and miniatures store, formerly called Dottie's Attic. It has been the catalyst for building several houses since. This is one of my creations: The Gingerbread Christmas Cottage.

It's a twelfth scale kit called the Sugarplum by Greenleaf. I altered the kit a little bit, cutting off the benches from the front porch, and I made a wider chimney.

This house gave me the most fun of any one I've ever made! I have always loved gingerbread houses at Christmas time, but they never last, so I decided to make one from this kit.

Each shingle was individually painted and carefully applied to resemble Necco candy wafers. The brown sugar walkway and garden bedding was made by layering glue and sand. The lollipops and other candy decorations and snowflakes are mini Christmas tree ornaments that I found at a local craft store. The ice sculpture reindeer is also a Christmas ornament. There are even some vintage buttons for stepping stones and popcorn plants.

The snow is something of my own making, and I wasn't sure it would work. In the past I've tried different products that have always ended up cracking. For this, I painted a base coat of white,

and glued down a whole bunch of regular cotton balls. I then applied a layer of Mod Podge, only to discover the entire thing turned yellow. No one wants yellow snow! Nothing a bit of paint couldn't fix, luckily. I also sprinkled on some fine glitter, then sealed the whole thing again under Mod Podge, this time with the desired effect. It's rock hard and has stayed intact as it should.

The gingerbread texture on the house was made with a paint and sand mixture. The icing trim is just card stock glued on and then covered in a layer of jointing compound and paint. I did seal the entire exterior with matte Mod Podge to protect the finishes.

The chimney is made from cardboard. I cut little bricks from a styrofoam cup, adding jointing compound for grout, and then painted and embellished with candy ornaments.



Inside, the furnishings are mostly common items from my own collection from over the years. I made the little Christmas presents from pieces of wood and paper and miniature bows. Very simple, just like wrapping a real Christmas present. Dottie made the little dresser on the first floor. The brown braided rug is a vintage artist piece from 1988, and the silly reindeer head is part of a handmade Christmas ornament that I've had forever.

Santa is busy at his desk on the top floor. He's surrounded by little vintage items and toys. The globe is a vintage metal pencil sharpener. Santa himself is a handmade primitive style Christmas pin that I purchased at an estate sale — the owner had a little spot in a store at one time called The Tuffet. She made all sorts of handmade felt and hand painted wooden pins and jewelry. Some of the little wooden painted items are from her as well.

The rocking horse is a beautiful hand painted metal piece from Dottie's shop, artist unknown. It's very detailed and was a perfect addition to the house.

There are even handmade wooden pull toys that really work.

All of the trees are common bottle brush trees that can be found at craft stores everywhere. These candy colour trees came out at Christmas one year. I bought them, not really knowing what I would use them for, but as it turns out they were meant to be with this little house.



“I have always loved gingerbread houses at Christmas time, but they never last, so I decided to make one from this kit.”

Make a shabby chic stocking

Never mind those bright reds and greens, this is a different type of stocking to hang in your house full of sand.. and shabby chic elegance

BY CAROLINE DUPUIS

Add a romantic touch to your scene by making this charming stocking!

You will need

- Fabric of your choice
- Thread to match fabric
- Scissors
- Needle
- Paper or thin card stock
- Pin
- Decorative bits and trim
- Glue sticks and hot glue gun
- Sand or other filler



Step 1. Draw a stocking shape on paper or card stock, making sure the tip of your stocking has enough space to turn inside out. Cut out your pattern.



Step 2. Fold the fabric in half and trace your pattern up against the folded edge. This way you avoid having to sew an extra seam. Cut out the stocking.



Step 3. Fold the fabric so that the 'wrong' side is facing out. Sew the remaining edges together and turn out to the 'right' side.



Step 4. Flip the top part of the sock down. It will give you a neat edge at the top.



Step 5. Cut some trim or a ruffle for the top of the stocking. Attach it with white craft glue, hot glue, or by stitching it.



Step 6. Fill the stocking with sand, stopping 1/2" from the top. You can use pillow stuffing, coffee, or even baking soda to stuff the stocking – just about anything will work.



Step 7. Now, get your stocking goodies ready. I squeezed out a layer of hot glue that covers the sand and will keep it inside the stocking. While the glue was hot I inserted some Christmas trimming. You can use pine bits, little candy canes – whatever you can find. You can even use live greenery. Let dry.



Step 8. One more detail I like to add – put a dot of hot glue at the middle front of the stocking foot. Squish the front to it to give your stocking a more realistic shape.

Hang on your miniature mantelpiece and you are done. Merry Christmas!

Potted Christmas tree is fun to make

Wish your mini visitors a Merry Christmas with a lovely little tabletop tree that you can create in no time at all

BY SADIE BROWN

Celebrate Christmas with this little tree in a pot. This is the perfect accent for a small space where you want some festive joy!



Step 1. Coat a twelfth scale plant pot with red acrylic paint. Allow to dry before adding a second layer.



Step 2. Take a white acrylic paint pen with an extra fine point and cover the now red plant pot with tiny dots to create that seasonal snowy effect.

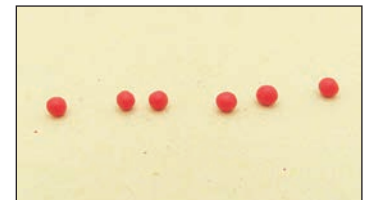


Step 3. To make the Christmas tree itself, paint the head of a single stem of dried canary grass (phalaris) with green acrylic paint. Allow to dry thoroughly and cut the stem away, leaving just the head.



Step 4. Fill the plant pot with brown clay and then use craft glue to stick the Christmas tree on top. Once the glue has dried, use your fingers to arrange and 'fluff

out' the tree – just like the real thing!



Step 5. Create simple but effective baubles for the tree by rolling bright red clay into tiny balls. Bake and leave to cool.



Step 6. Complete the look by gluing the baubles to the tree.

Happy Christmas!

You will need

- Polymer clay: red, brown
- Small paintbrush
- Scissors
- Acrylic paint: red, green
- Extra fine point white

- acrylic paint pen
- Craft glue
- Twelfth scale terracotta plant pot
- 1 stem of dried canary grass (for flower arrangements) in a natural/straw shade

Christmas shelf for the kitchen

Here is a quick and easy way to brighten up your kitchen for the festive season, but it will also be a useful place to keep bits and pieces in other rooms in the house

BY ELAINE DAY

This is a lovely little shelf that we've decorated for Christmas, but the idea can be used any time of the year. Add it to the playroom for toys and games, the study for all those extra books and papers, the bathroom for all of those bottles and extra towels and even in the shed to put your paints and tools on.

Cutting

Cut out two brackets from the piece of moulding, then drill holes to take the towel rail.

Cut the wood for the shelf.

Painting

When using Crackle Glaze the basecoat is the colour that will show through the cracks, so we have used a dark green.

Apply the basecoat colour to the

shelf, brackets and towel rail – and leave to dry.

Apply Crackle Glaze – follow the instructions and you will get the crackle finish that you require. A thick coat of glaze gives large cracks in the topcoat of paint, whereas a thin coat will give tiny cracks.

Leave the Crackle Glaze to dry – then add the topcoat. As the topcoat is applied you will immediately see cracks starting to appear. Only apply the topcoat paint in one sweep – do not go over the paint again, if you do the cracks will not appear.

Leave everything to dry again.

Assembly

Glue the brackets underneath, approximately 1/2in from each end. Make sure they are square to the shelf.

Slide the towel rail into the holes, and cut ends close to the brackets. Add a tiny dab of glue to each end of the rail.

Items for the shelf

Wooden bowls - have just been stained a darker colour – but you can use any bowls that you have available.

Glass jar – cover with a piece of gingham fabric; tie round with cotton thread; then trim fabric to neaten the edge.

Pudding basin – cover basin with a piece of white cotton; tie round with cotton thread; then trim fabric to neaten the edge.



Recipe book – cut out (see Cutouts P37) and make up; cover either with very fine leather or colourful paper.

Christmas plate – use paper plate; cut out (see Cutouts P37) and glue centre motif; draw thin line around edge.

Cloths – cut out pieces of white cotton, approximately 1 3/4in by 1in; draw lines using coloured pen to make the pattern. Or print your pattern on to fabric sheets that can go through your printer.

Then add whatever other items you may have like Christmas cards, holly, scissors or a ball of string – anything that you need to keep around in the kitchen.

You will need

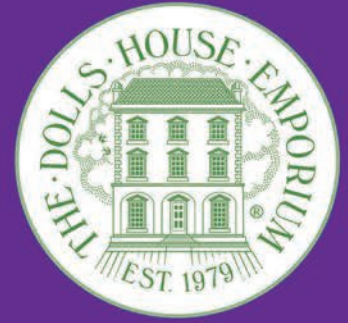
- Basswood – 3in x 3/4in x 1/8in
- Moulding for brackets
- Cocktail stick
- Acrylic paint – dark green and pale green
- Crackle Glaze

Items for shelf

- Wooden bowls
- Glass jar
- Pudding bowl - Christmas pudding
- Recipe book
- Christmas plate
- Cloths



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Cute creatures star in a magical miniature world

Veronique Lux is a talented artisan who weaves miniature dreams created with whimsy. Step into her world that is full of passion and creativity

BY JOAN MCKENZIE



Top: Three little pigs with the materials they will use to build their houses.

Above: An elephant marching band!

Below: These bunnies are getting ready for Easter.

Bottom: Veronique's signature miniature birdhouses.



As a child, Veronique loved playing with her sisters with little home-made characters and kit furniture. She did not have a doll's house. At that time she found a cardboard box would work just as well if she used her imagination. There was never a time when she wasn't building, drawing or painting.

Today she does own a doll's house that was built by Frances England. It is full of furniture and accessories made by artists from around the world. In addition to her miniature collection she also collects children's books, old toys and decorative objects so her full size house is just as full and as busy as her doll's house!

After visiting multiple miniature shows, Veronique decided to launch her own original creations. She has a



very unique design and style. If you look at her work, you'll immediately know that it belongs to her and her alone. She is a prolific artist with many customers.

Her first miniature show, where she displayed her handmade treasures, was

close to home in Paris, then she went to London and next to America. She has also dreamed about exhibiting in Japan. She showcases her work across most social media platforms.

Veronique takes inspiration from children's books, many as old as 60 years, also from old toy catalogues, the internet and Pinterest.

With some student training in drawing and painting, Veronique finds that once she has a drawing in place, she is then confident that she can transform it into something three dimensional.

As an artisan and miniaturist, she has finely honed skills. Originally, she began by creating miniature bird cages which she has now perfected and no doll's house should be without one of those charming pieces! They come in all sizes and colours and each one is charming.

She soon decided that her unique art forms would be representations of small humanised animals such as little rabbits, hedgehogs, squirrels, pigs, cats, mice, etc. These creatures are always busy working through life's daily activities.



Top: A twelfth scale toy shop full of hand-made items.

Above: Mummy bunny is rocking her little one to sleep.

Right: Veronique makes small shops to display her miniature creations.





Above: The Tom Thumb toy shop is a welcome gathering place for many creatures.

Left: Bunnies carrying wood.

Below: A hand full of little kittens dressed in charming little outfits!





Top left: An extensive collection of miniatures, both cherished antiques and hand-made art.

Above: Friends keeping warm on a chilly day.

She loves portraying festive moods and family projects like trimming a tree.

Veronique also loves making shops and very small houses largely inspired by fairy tales and children's stories so that her imagination will take over and before she knows it, her concept has come to life.

Her passion for miniatures compels her to work every day of the week. "It

would be very helpful if I had more than two hands and more than 24 hours in each day to achieve all that I want to create". She has more ideas than she can possibly make at any given time, so she takes notes and makes sketches to remind her of the ideas. Then, when she has the time, she executes them into her wonderful art form.

In the future, Veronique would like to devote herself to creating illustra-

tions in parallel with her work. What an ingenious idea. I have some of her original paintings and they are so instantly recognisable as her signature art work. She said: "When I was a child, I was never bored. It's wonderful to be passionate about our work!"

The passion and creativity are bursting out all over her work. Enjoy the beautiful photographs showcasing her creations.



A charming Petite Bo

The beautiful curves of a metal framed find instantly appealed to Sue Barcelona and right away she knew it could be turned into a beautiful French boutique

BY SANDRA HARDING

Like Sue Barcelona, had I seen this unusual building (pictured opposite) for sale I would not have been able to walk away either. Its lovely shape was just calling out to be made into a Christmas shop as far as Sue was concerned, and how right she was. It's just perfect.

Working with her husband Russ, they cut off the chicken wire at the back to create a wall, which Sue had already decided would have an olde world look to it. Sue started searching YouTube for suitable videos, and ended up watching so many that her ideas were forming thick and fast. She also realised that she would be able to make a lot of the things herself, which she found exciting.

Having already acquired various

pieces of old doll's house furniture which was not the style she wanted, she realised that she could give them a makeover for her Christmas shop. A picture was by now forming in Sue's head, and, as she loves France, the shop would be what she imagined a French Christmas shop would look like, and be called: "My Little Petite Boutique".

The chaise was bought from an etsy shop, whilst tiny parcels were made and wrapped and placed perfectly. Delightful paintings and prints were carefully arranged and a cuckoo clock and other matching items added to the walls. The pretty Christmas trees were decorated with various sized baubles and lovely swathes of ivy and ribbon decorate the fireplace along-

side candle holders and other accessories. There is even a tiny doll's house amongst the display and a wonderful clock over the fireplace in pride of place.

There are numerous tiny animals all decorated for Christmas, a carousel, and several angels. The distressed chairs and tables, full to overflowing, were painted and decorated by Sue, and even the urns all match this delightful monochrome effect. This is not as easy to do as you might think. It takes a lot of thought, and this is what makes this scene so delightful and different to the typical red and green Christmas variety.

Interestingly, when Sue first became interested in miniatures, she was overwhelmed by everything she



boutique



saw on the internet, on Facebook and in magazines and began by creating miniature gardens in her garden. Just look how she has developed her skills since those early days.

The attention to detail in this creation is amazing, and I think that this is an idea that one or two of us might just copy.



Gloves are off for quick winter hats

Here's an easy no-knit way of creating warm stylish hats for your dolls — all you need is some old gloves and scissors



BY RANDALL CASTLE

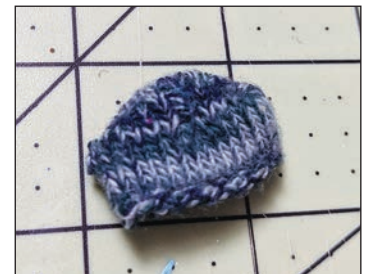
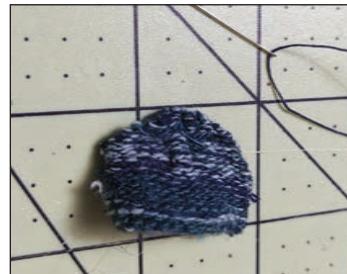
My community of dolls needed to keep their heads warm in this cold weather so I came up with a quick solution. Ask your friends and family for their old gloves or get a pair at the pound store to save some cash.

different ways with these. First you can cut off the thumb about an inch from the top. This makes for a hip simple hat that kind of covers the eyes. Or you can cut it shorter.

Step 3. Turn it inside out and get your needle and thread ready.

Step 4. Sew the end you cut to a rounded shape.

Step 6. Touch the cut edges with some tacky glue if you are worried about the knit unravelling.



Step 5. Cut away the extra glove fabric as close to the stitches as you can.

Step 7. Turn it inside out and now the part that is around the doll's face has a nice trim to it.



Step 1. We got these fingerless gloves and it turns out you can make hats in two

Step 2. Another option is to cut off the finger-less part with sharp scissors about an inch down.

You will need

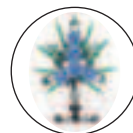
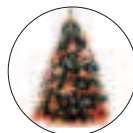
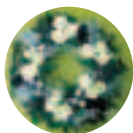
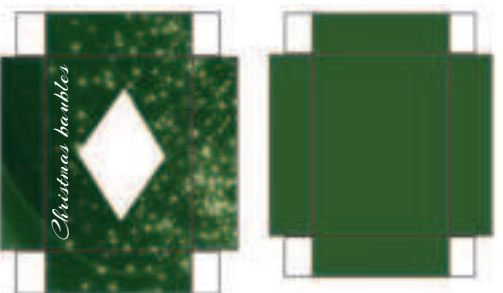
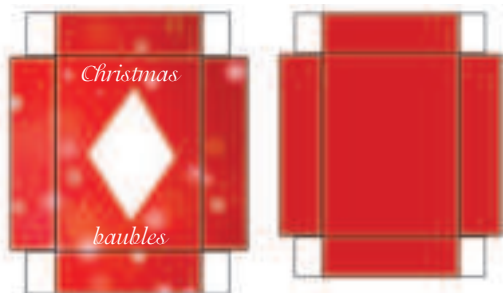
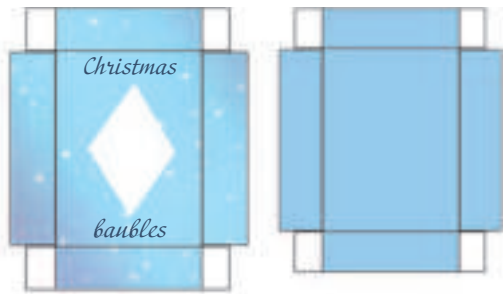
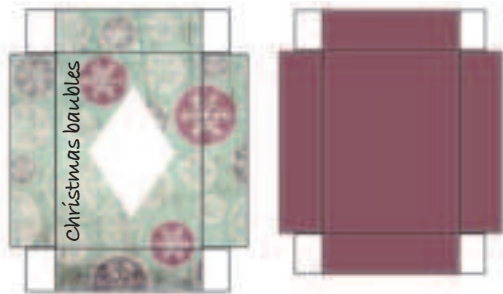
- Old or new gloves
- Scissors
- Needle
- Matching thread
- Tacky glue



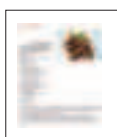
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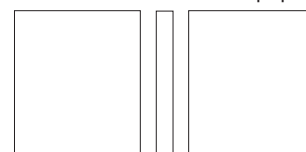
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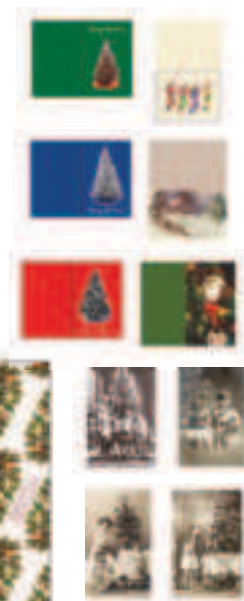
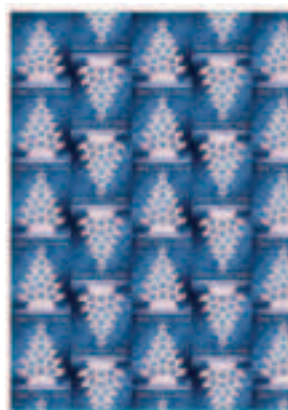
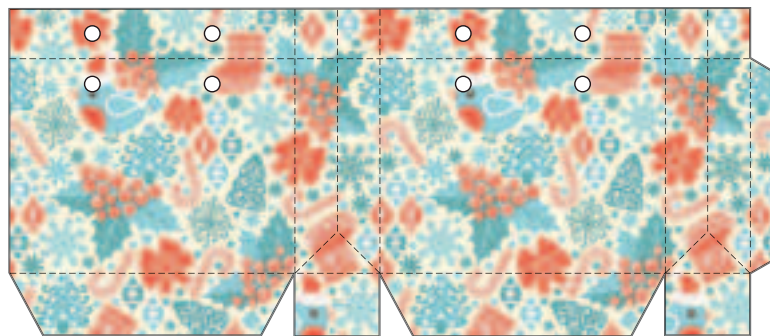
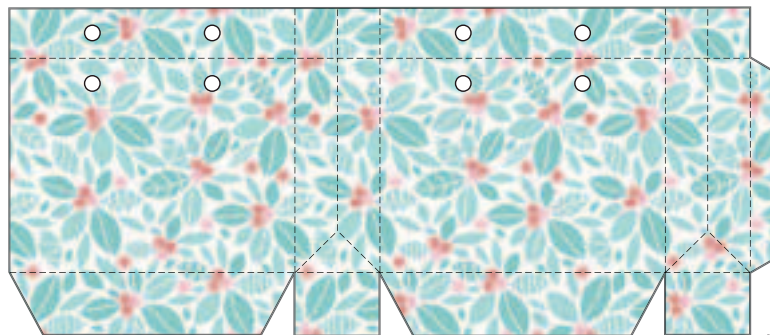
Christmas recipe book



Cut covers in thin card and cover
with leather or coloured paper



Inner sheets for covers



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Wrapping up wood

Mini presents will add to your festive scene

You can browse online to find some wonderful ideas for creating miniature Christmas presents. Although you may see full-sized ideas, you can easily re-create them in miniature.

Step 1. Using blocks of wood as the base for the gifts makes wrapping the paper around easy, as the paper can be glued directly on to the blocks and the corners and edges flattened without distorting the crisp shape.

Step 2. Then follow the ideas you found for decorating, either using ribbons and roses, or feathers and other trimmings to make each present extra special.



TOPTIP

Self-adhesive ribbon is perfect for little gifts and can be bought in a variety of different colours and designs.

Jolly bauble wreath

Make a colourful wreath for your Christmas scene

BY KATIE WILL

This jolly bauble wreath is the perfect highlight to your festive decor. Although simple to put together, it makes a high impact statement on any modern doll's house door or as part of a decoration table as shown!



Step 1. Place the macrame ring on a flat surface and using craft glue, adhere 4mm glass pearls around the outer and inner edge of the ring, alternating the colours as you go and then leave to dry completely.

You will need

- Undrilled glass pearls in sizes 2mm, 4mm and 6mm and in your choice of colours
- 3cm dia. macrame ring
- Craft glue
- 20cm length of coordinating 4mm wide ribbon



Step 2. Again, using craft glue, adhere a mixture of 4mm and 6mm glass pearls to top surface of ring until covered and leave to dry.



Step 3. Fill any gaps on the ring using the smaller 2mm glass pearls.

Step 4. Tie a tiny bow with the ribbon and attach with a dab of craft glue.

This wreath is beckoning you to try variations – why not add small charms, gems or even your own polymer clay creations? Also, add larger left over pearls to your doll's house Christmas tree for a coordinated theme.

Santa's sack

Thanks to stiffening liquid, it is possible to make a firm, freestanding sack that will not spill its contents unless provoked. I used fine hessian fabric for mine.

You will need

- Fabric of your choice, cut into a rectangle approximately 4 1/2 x 3 1/2in
- Fray Check
- Sewing thread to match
- Stiffening liquid
- Old poster colour brush
- Small tube, jar or round canister
- Waxed paper

To make

Fray check the fabric all round and leave to dry.

Turn a narrow hem along one long edge of the Hessian and either sew or glue it down.

With right sides together, fold the rectangle in half with the shorter sides touching.

Make a narrow seam along the raw edges, and over-sew afterwards.

Turn the right way out and finger press the seams flat.

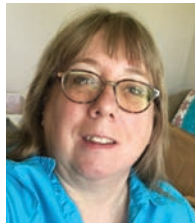
Paint the stiffening liquid liberally over the sack and allow it to soak in.

Place the jar or canister inside the sack, and pull the fabric down at one side so that the opening is at an angle to the sides. Leave until the fabric is just damp.

Remove the canister and shape the sack as you want it. Leave until really dry, then fill.



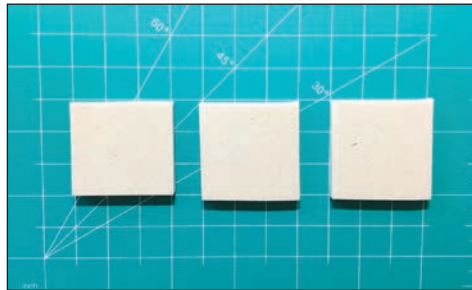
Make fun gingerbread houses from foam



If you don't like working with polymer clay don't worry, Kim is here to give you an alternative way of creating cute gingerbread houses

BY KIM SANBORN

At our festive gatherings family and friends join together to make gingerbread houses. In this tutorial we will make mini ones.



Step 1. Cut three 1-1/2" squares from craft foam.



Step 2. Glue the squares together in three layers. Cover the surface of the square totally. Make sure the edges line up. Let them dry completely.



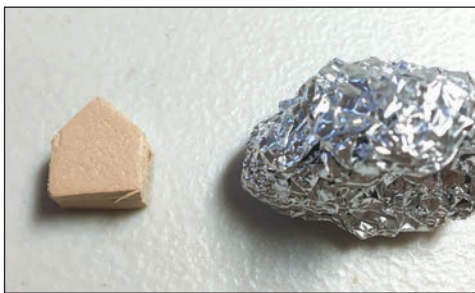
Step 3. Using the knife, cut the square from corner to corner in both directions to make four triangles.

You will need

- Craft foam - beige 5mm thick
- X-Acto knife
- Scissors - straight and decorative edge
- Metal ruler
- Super glue or quick bond
- Aluminium foil
- Artist chalk - tan, brown
- Toothpick
- White acrylic caulk (found in the hardware store)
- Glossy Mod Podge
- **Optional:** beads, candy canes, Styrofoam balls, paint, 1/8" circle punch



Step 4. With the triangle pointing up, cut 1/2" off each side of the base. Leave 1/2" for the bottom of the house. Repeat this step with the remaining triangles.



Step 5. Crumple aluminium foil, and press into the front and back of the house.



Step 6. Apply artist chalk to the edges to make it look like it was baked.



Step 7. Cut a piece of beige craft foam 3/4"x 1- 1/4" for the roof. Fold in half to find the centre, unfold. Glue to the top of the house. Add texture and chalk if you're not decorating the house.



Step 8. Mix white acrylic caulk with a small amount of glossy Mod Podge together until it is the consistency of real frosting.



Step 10. For a simpler design, use decorative scissors and cut white craft foam for trim and glue it on.



Step 9. Decorate the house. Punch 1/8" circles out coloured fun foam. Frost the roof and add 'shingles' on top. Icicles can be made by dripping frosting from the edges of the roof.



Step 11. Leftover 'frosting' can be added to bowls. Let dry up to 2 days depending on the caulk thickness.

When you finish, you will have a miniature village of gingerbread houses to adorn your doll's house table or mantelpiece.



Enjoy this heartfelt C

Allow your eyes to linger over the details of another magically assembled scene from Joan Warren's wonderful collection

BY JOAN MCKENZIE PHOTOGRAPHY BY MEGAN DEITZ

Joan Warren has one of the most enviable miniature collections outside of any museum in the USA.

She began collecting miniatures when she was a young child. She enjoyed other activities as a teenager and as a young adult, but returned to her miniature passion during her early 30's. She had been browsing in a local

miniature shop that also had some lovely artisan crafted miniatures by Ann Caesar. It was at that shop that she spotted her first copy of Nutshell News. Next, she attended her first miniature show, met the wonderful doll artisan named Susan Scogin, and remained an admirer and a friend for several decades that followed.

In this feature Joan is giving us a glimpse of her recently assembled roombox with children playing dress-up as nurses, in their bedroom during the indoor warmth of one festive season. Depicted here is a unique roombox created 30 years ago by Susan Fisher from Connecticut. Originally this room box had a colonial theme,



Christmas room box

which Joan immediately recognised as something that she would eventually transform. Today we view it as a living room set in France. Several years after having sold the original contents, Joan decided it was time to give this room box an entirely new life and look simply by changing the wallpaper and the furnishings. Joan says this is simple, but she is just being humble. Her artist's eye has always been able to select the most unique miniature items that go together beautifully. It is as if the entire room box had originally been

designed to be exactly what we are now viewing.

The primary artisan that Joan worked with to create this scene is the well-known doll maker Svetlana Blasing from Germany. Svetlana made every doll shown here except for the small child descending the steps

Above left: View of the room box from the left.

Above: Another one of Joan's beautiful scenes where every item is a work of art.

Right: A delicious cake is ready to be eaten.





Above: A view of the whole roombox. The little girls play dress up as nurses during the holiday season.

Left: Natasha Sleigh bed dressed by Marcia McClean.

wearing a white nightgown, which was made by Joan's friend Susan Scogin. Svetlana has been brilliantly helpful bringing Joan's visions to life. She clearly prioritised Joan's vision, and created the special request within one weeks' time. Joan knew she could rely on Svetlana to complete this vision as they had worked together multiple

times in the past with pleasing results. Other pieces had been previously found online or used from Joan's own collection.

Tiny Doll House of NYC is another reliable source for many of Joan's miniatures (see their advert on P18). Leslie Edelman and Timothy Potter are the owners of that shop and Joan finds

them to be sincere and kind people who are a pleasure to work with. Joan bought many of the finer miniatures in this room from them, starting with the 'Natasha' daybed.

While it took approximately four months to complete this room box, Joan knows instinctively what miniature belongs in any setting that she is working on as soon as she sees it, but they are usually costly, so she must work slowly. That's why her room boxes often do not get completely furnished for many months. It is always a happy feeling when she discovers that she has the right complementary pieces to finish her concept entirely. The 'Natasha' vintage day bed and the Art Deco vintage chair by Lynn Whisenant, with the hand painted tiger stripes on suede, was found on the Tiny Doll House website. Joan always knew that these items would complement her special daybed. She had experienced the same joy upon discovering the



items by Áurea Segura of Aurearte Miniatures (see her advert on P38). Aurea's work is often breathtaking, as she is a brilliantly talented artisan. The hand-painted cabinet which had been rendered with a beautiful winter theme was another inspiring piece that Joan added to this setting - that had also been created by Áurea.

Joan has always loved winter scenes, so finding these two complementary miniatures sparked her creativity rush making all of Joan's ideas suddenly come together to complete the design for this roombox quite easily. After finding the basics, these were the staples that provided the anchors for her story.

Prior to creating this scene, Joan had purchased some enchanting dolls identified as little children dressed as nurses, created by Svetlana Blasing. The expression on their faces is priceless as they are examining and treating their tiny little bear patients.

The very first piece that inspired Joan to begin furnishing this room box was a glorious vintage daybed made by Natasha. She found this piece on Etsy and instantly fell in love with it. Marcia McClain is a master at dressing miniature beds, was enlisted to redress

this bed exactly to Joan's specifications. After this first treasure was acquired, everything else fell into place.

As mentioned earlier, the little girl descending the steps is one of Susan Scogin's dolls. Susan is one of Joan's favourite doll makers whose dolls she treasures. She was lucky enough to find this little innocent child for sale on an Etsy shop. Since she was already dressed in a nightgown, she immediately envisioned her coming down the steps from her bedroom on a snowy winter's day. Of course, she decided that she had to provide all the neces-



Above: Mother and daughter are holding hands. The twelfth scale pair were made by Svetlana Blasing.

sary playthings for her dolls. One toy is a wonderful Renwal plastic piece from the 1950's.

Over the fireplace hangs an oil painting that is quite old, so Joan added gold leaf to its frame which adds a special touch to tarnished gold and gave it renewed life.

In this room, that is the only oil painting displayed. The other pictures that hang on the walls are all very lovely paper reproductions of paintings that are framed, which saved quite a bit of money.

When Joan finally put the last item into this room box she knew that her vision had been realised and her imagination had been brought to life as she had originally intended. For Joan, designing miniature room boxes are a rewarding past-time that she loves with all her heart.

- Tiny Doll House:
www.tinydollhousenewyorkcity.com
- Aurearte Miniatures:
www.etsy.com/shop/Aurearte

Have some foam fun with chocolate yule log cake

A chocolate log is a favourite part of many people's Christmas, and there's no reason you shouldn't replicate that in miniature

BY KIM SANBORN

Our Christmas celebrations are usually centred around family traditions. Some traditions are long standing, some favourites are from more recent times. Family and friends come together around food, seasonal festivities and memories. Here in miniature is the classic Yule log cake – often a centrepiece on many a festive table.

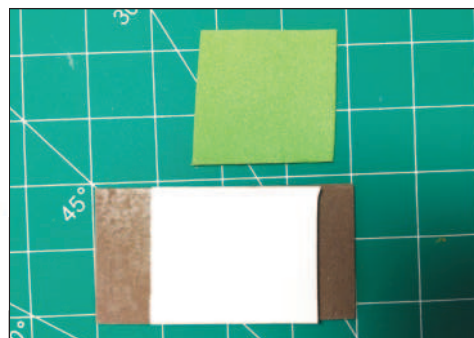


You will need

- Craft Foam: chocolate brown, white and green (sticky back)
- Tiny Styrofoam balls
- X-Acto knife
- Pin or sharp awl
- Super glue
- Acrylic Paint: white, red and dark brown
- Small stiff paint brush
- Acrylic caulk (from home improvement store)
- Mod Podge glossy
- Plastic kitchen wrap or piece of glass
- Optional: serving trays, plates



Step 1. Cut brown craft foam into a 1" x 2" rectangle, and cut white craft foam into a 1" x 1-1/4" rectangle



Step 2. Peel paper off brown foam and position white foam, non sticky side down, about 1/4" from top of brown. This will leave approximately 1/2" of brown at the bottom. If using non-sticky foam glue together and allow piece to dry thoroughly.



Step 3. Peel the paper off the white foam. From the top, tightly roll the two pieces of foam together.

Super glue the end of brown to the roll. Allow piece to dry thoroughly.



Step 4. Mix a small amount of acrylic caulk with bit of dark brown acrylic paint until it resembles chocolate frosting. Add a small amount of gloss Mod Podge and mix completely. The frosting will be darker when dry.

TOPTIP

- ⋮ Always keep a bottle of acetone (nail polish remover) handy when working
- ⋮ on small objects with super glue.



Step 5. Holding the ends of the craft foam roll, apply some 'frosting' to outside of cake. Do not frost the ends of the log.

Place on kitchen wrap or glass, allow to slightly dry (about 1/2 hour) then using the pin or awl make lines from end to end that resemble bark on a log. Place on kitchen wrap or glass and allow to dry completely. Overnight is best for drying time. When peeling off glass or plastic wrap the bottom may still be wet. Lay roll on side until dry.

Step 6. With knife, carefully slice off approximately an 1/8" on both ends. Save these for individual servings.



Step 7. Use green foam to make holly leaves. Paint Styrofoam balls red to represent berries. Glue on top of cake. After glue dries apply glossy Mod Podge to only leaves and berries. For a simpler look, stipple white paint using a dry brush technique to look like powdered sugar on top.

All your guests will enjoy this holiday treat. And it makes a great addition to your dessert table this time of year.

Quick and easy

Wood you believe it — another quick way of creating wreaths

BY SANDRA HARDING

Decide whether to have one wood layer or two. If two, glue them together and let them dry.

Paint it all green. If using two layers then add a little water to your brush and paint into all the hidden corners. Let it dry.

Add glue to the areas you want to add Flowersoft; dip the wreath in the Flowersoft and cover thoroughly. Remove any stray bits hiding the shape of the wreath. Let it dry.

To add the red berries just dip brush in undiluted red paint and dab where you want the berries to be, as many or few as you want. Let it dry. You may have tiny red beads in your collection which you may prefer to use. I wanted to keep it simple.

Glue ribbon to the top back for hanging, and two pieces at the bottom for decoration.

Add any extra flowers or decoration you want.

PS: One of the double layer wreaths is painted only in red and green. I did half to show you what I mean.

You will need

- Pack of wooden wreath shapes; mine were from Works
- Glue
- Green and red acrylic paint and brush, or colour of choice
- Green Flowersoft or colour of choice
- Ribbon, flowers, red beads, or anything small for decoration



CLUB NEWS



Club pays tribute to Jean at special have-a-go day

Club's popular annual make-it extravaganza raised funds for the local hospice while paying tribute to the late Jean Caff, a talented, well-loved member

BY CAROL LEWIS

Once again it is so pleasing to report the success of the annual Gatwick Dolls House Club Have-A-Go Day which took place in October.

The day began with sunshine and bacon butties for all the hardworking club members who had arrived at the Methodist Church Hall in Horley, Surrey, early in the morning to set out their wares and displays of miniature pieces made throughout the year.

Club chairman Barbara Hoyle said: "This year was so special to us because, with the assistance of her daughter-in-law, Kathy, the late Jean Caff, a well-known and respected

miniaturist, had requested that her vignettes, room boxes and houses were placed for sale with all proceeds going to St Catherine's Hospice which is the charity that our club has chosen to support over many years (www.stch.org.uk).

"As many of you will know, she was not only an extremely talented lady but also a lovely lady who would generously share her time and her skills with others and she always brought her infectious laughter to our monthly meetings.

"It was particularly poignant to see the free form tree house, containing typical elements of Jean's humour,

which was the last piece she made before sadly being admitted to the hospice herself."

This year's demonstrations by club members for the steady stream of people eager to have-a-go at making included Christmas wreaths with Zoe Andrews, a laundry basket by Margaret Miller and Sandra Fudge, a beautiful Victorian fireplace under the tutelage of Ralph Keemar, as well as accessories such as handbags by Sue Costello, art deco clocks by Karen Dibben and a traditional jack-in-the-box with Stephanie Methven. Carol Lewis runs a charity called Swishes which provides free emergency packs of toiletries to peo-





ple who find themselves unexpectedly staying in hospital (www.swishes.org.uk) and so was able to theme her demonstration to miniature essentials such as a toothpaste tube, box and brush, tissue and soap boxes whilst also raising funds for a worthy cause. The club should seriously think of changing the name of its annual day of quality demonstrations to "Look what I did" as the results were seriously impressive.

Another lovely touch is that all the food, including delicious cakes and biscuits, are home made. Sue Whitmore and her husband Steve do so well in ensuring that everyone is well fed and watered whilst other club members do their share in running between the kitchen and the exhibitors to keep up supplies.

Ours is a wonderful hobby which is all about sharing ideas and inspiration and as we all know, a good old rummage in a box full of someone else's no longer required miniature pieces is a great way of doing both. The sales tables were full of things such as that piece of fabric which will be just right for the chair you didn't know you needed to make.

As usual, the display pieces made by members were a stunning representation of all scales and varied from A Storm in a Tea Cup to the Mad Hatter's Tea Party along with a lovely greenhouse in twelfth scale and a



snowy 1/24th church. There was also a 1/48th tree stump house inhabited by owls and a tiny 1/144th Smuggler's Rest Inn. Other pieces showed members' talents in a Chinese garden and a stunning fantasy tree lady with detailed butterflies as leaves.

The Gatwick Dolls House Club are well established and have managed to thrive despite the lockdown, as reported in a previous article. There is a waiting list for joining the 36 existing members and once again it should

be recognised how enthusiastic and helpful the members are in working together and in sharing their talents with others on this special day.

Barbara said: "Along with the proceeds of the tombola and other donations the club are delighted to be able to make a significant donation to St Catherine's this year which sums up beautifully this club's spirit and drive – and all done whilst having a great fun day. Bring on 2023 and book 21st October in your diary."

Make a festive scene fit for a modern family

Creating a mood board before you start is the perfect way to make sure your Christmas room box plans come together whatever style you choose

BY DHW DESIGN TEAM

It must be that time again because my mum is already making our Christmas cake.

Before long thoughts will turn to decking the halls ready for the festivities and checking that those fairy lights still work. But these days many full-size modern homes steer clear of the traditional green and red Christmas colours and go for something more contemporary. Why not do the same with your doll's house?

Mood boards

Whether you have a period house or a modern one the principle remains the same. Start with a mood board and use it to gather together all the colours, textures and styles that you like



in readiness for the actual decorating. There really are some great fabrics and trimmings out there and in a mood board you can bring them all together to check how the relationship works. It lessens the chances of disaster later on.

Fireplace

All houses need a focal point and generally the fireplace fills this requirement really well. If your house doesn't come with a fireplace you might want to build your own. Mine is simply made of heavy card.

Measure the height of the room it's going into and allow an inch out from the wall. Allow for the thickness of your card in your measurements or the fireplace will not fit together properly. Once you are happy, you can cut your card with a craft knife.

I found a lovely twig in the garden the other day and immediately saw its potential. By cutting it into one inch long pieces I had wonderful logs to sit in the hearth. Any leftovers could easily fill a basket beside the fire and of course they look so seasonal.

The mantel shelf was cut from strip wood and mitred to fit around the outside of the chimney breast, approximately four inches from the floor. The garland was made from ivy I found at a fair. Holly would be better but I found it both difficult to find and expensive when I did. I threaded tiny pink beads onto some fine jewellery wire and



twisted it around a fine piece of dowelling to create a spiral, then wrapped the ivy around with small silver bows at either end. The candles are simply made from pearl lustre Fimo.

Sofa

To make the sofa I adapted my sofa bed design which I'll show you next issue. Instead of three foam seats I used two and added wadding before covering the fabric to give a softer, more voluptuous effect. The bun feet are from a craft shop and are actually cover plugs to hide holes.

Tree

This was originally bought for my daughter's house but I have acquired it and pruned it into a realistic shape and size. I took it off its wooden base and secured it into a terracotta pot. There are two sets of tree lights from Ray Storey, wired to a transformer. Don't be



afraid to splice wires. It is a simple process and the overall effect is worth it.

Contemporary colour themes usually use only two colours so I kept to pink and silver. I found some wonderful beads in one of my local shops and wired and twisted them in the same manner as the garland.

Silver ribbon was made into tiny bows and the stars, from a card shop, were just glued onto the ends of the branches. It certainly gives the desired effect. With some oddments left over from all of this I made a small box and stuck various bits in it. Well every house has a decorations box, why should this one be any different?



Diagram 1

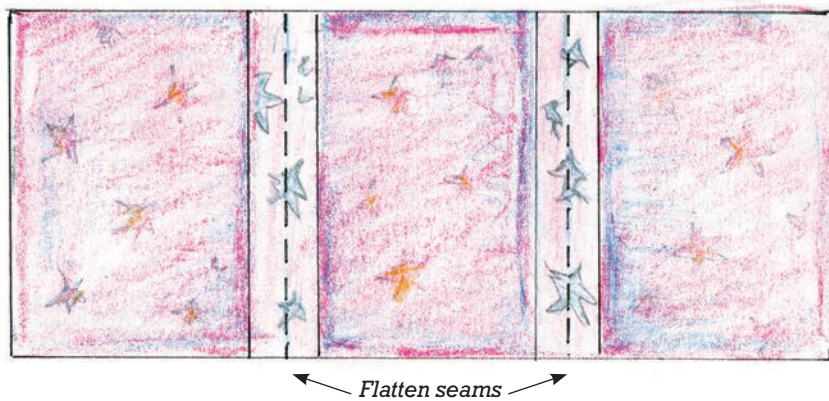


Diagram 3

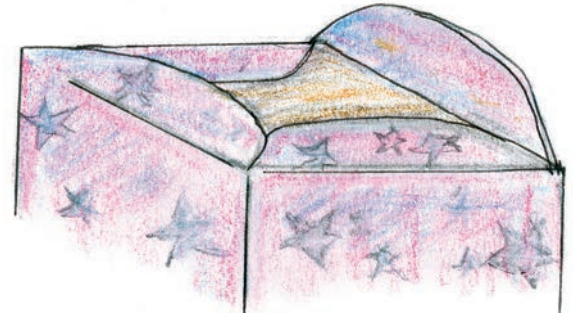


Diagram 2

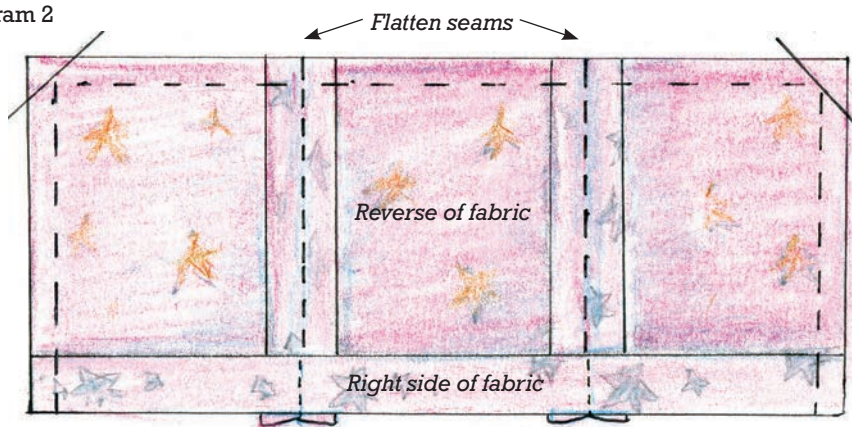
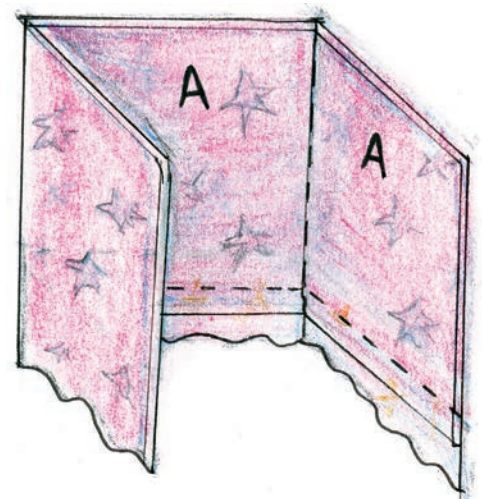


Diagram 4



You will need Chair

- Card or balsa wood
- Wadding
- Fabric
- 1/4 in dowelling
- Needle and thread



To make the chair

Step 1. Cut four pieces of card and wadding 6cm x 6cm. Cut the card and fabric pieces from the template shown. The fabric already has seam allowances included. Glue the card together to form the basis of the chair and cover the insides with wadding.

Step 2. Take the three pieces of same sized fabric and join the edges, so you have three pieces attached in a row. Do the same with the three larger pieces, joining the longer edges in the same way. Diagram 1-2.

Step 3. With the right sides of the material facing, match up the front and back and stitch along the two side edges and the upper edge as shown. Snip the corners at an angle to allow for turning the right way round. Diagram 3.

Step 4. We now need to stitch the seat piece in. This is the only tricky bit as you are stitching around corners, but as long as you've cut your pieces out right it will fit. The fourth seat piece needs to be stitched along the bottom of the three edges of piece 'A'. You then have a flap left at the front. This can be slip stitched into place once the cover is on the frame. Diagram 4.

Step 5. Carefully turn your cover the right way round and slip it over your chair frame. The extra length you have

all round can now be secured underneath by wrapping the seat like a parcel and gluing in place. Diagram 5.

Step 6. Now to attach the valance. Stitch together the two ends and form a hem around the lower edge of your long piece of fabric. Sew a running stitch along the top edge and gather to fit your chair. Place the frill, right sides facing, upside down to the base of your chair and slip stitch it into position.

Step 7. Cut your dowel into 3/4in lengths and with strong glue attach one to each corner of the chair base. To finish, cut a square from your spare fabric, just big enough to cover the rough edges underneath the chair.

Store your minis

Make a twelfth scale hanging holder

BY SANDRA BOWEN

When I started making minis everything fitted into a couple of shoe boxes. I then expanded to 'long thin things' in clear plastic candy jars, 'tiny wee things' in film canisters and 'soft pretty things' in poly-bags.

But all of them needed labels and after a while I couldn't remember what I had meant by 'spare bag accessories', 'sandwich kits' and 'left-over lavender tapes'.

I swear I have more items in storage waiting for the right setting than actually on display in a house or room box.

As I was organising everything in my world, I came up with the idea of making a mini pocket holder to organise my twelfth scale world.

Step 1. Cut the corner from a thick poly-bag so that two edges are still intact, (mine measures 2-1/2" x 4-1/2"), Try it

against your mini door.

Step 2. Using grey thread stitch the horizontal lines across the bag using the guidelines on your sewing machine to keep them parallel.

Step 3. Cut along the top layer of polythene just below each line of stitching.

Step 4. Sew the vertical lines; different rows can be different sizes for more useful storage.

Step 5. Stick braid along edges and trim off threads.

Step 6. Attach two little hooks at the top (I found mine in one of my 'useful' boxes); you could bend some out of paper clips.

Step 7. Fill the pockets with items of your choice.



You will need

- Scissors
- Poly-bag
- Ruler
- Grey thread/needle
- Narrow braid
- Hooks or paper clips

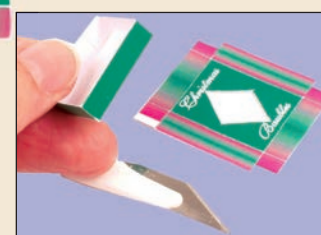
Baubles in a box

BY ALICE MONROE

I came across some wonderful iridescent beads and my miniaturist-mind, by now in full, festive flow, could see them as Christmas baubles. So I quickly designed a box for them.



Step 1. Cut out your boxes.



Step 2. Score along the lines.

You will need

- Thin, coloured card
- PVA glue
- Thin, clear acetate
- Iridescent beads

Easy peasy box

Use this template to make your box or use one of the boxes on Cutouts (P37).. Trace the size and cut it out of thin, coloured card. Score and fold the lines where shown to construct your box and glue it together. Cut out the gap for the window and stick a piece of clear acetate behind it.

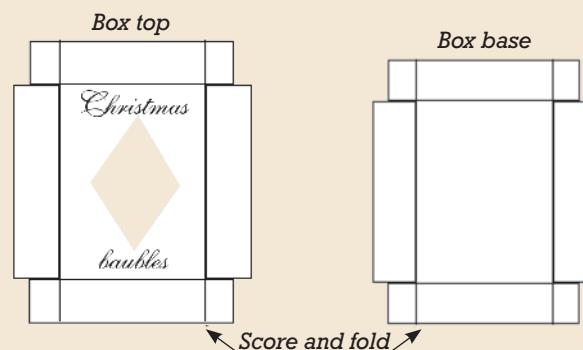
Once your box has dried, glue in your colourful beads and now you have your own box of baubles.



Step 3. Fold and glue together.



Step 4. Add your decorative baubles.



Stunning exhibitors light up Miniatura's new home

Sandra pays her first visit to the big show's new home and finds lots to admire in the venue and the stands, which were full of creative talents

BY SANDRA HARDING

This show, for me at least, felt more like an old friend's reunion than a doll's house show and my goodness, what a great show it was. We didn't make it last year, so this was my first time at Stoneleigh, and I wondered if it would be as good as the NEC.

I soon realised it was even better. Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire is easy to find with loads of easy parking a few yards away, great restaurant facilities and a walk back to our hotel of five minutes. Perfect. The first in the queue were Leslie and Tim, from New York (some journey) and second was Carol from Nottingham. I spoke to people from Hampshire, Kent, County Durham and Wales and it seems that our hobby is well and truly alive and kicking.

As for exhibitors I want to start with the newbies, as we need to encourage them to be regulars, and take over from oldies who eventually do retire. CJ Miniatures we have known for a number of years as they are regulars at Lyndhurst and, as always, they had lovely things on offer. Crawl Space were there with modern urban scenes; a crawl space, I am told by Elliott, is the space under homes in the US, and are therefore grotty and spooky. Well I didn't know that.

Merrily Mad Miniatures create witch and wizard miniatures, a theme that seems very popular right now. Laser Shrink Ray creates 1/48th and even

smaller 3D printed miniatures, including kits. Lemon Miniatures have realistic houseplants, in various scales. My Mini Maison / Elf Miniatures have a wide range of wonderful twelfth scale items from soft furnishings to kitchen appliances.

The Workshop creates twelfth and 1/24th scale houses using both exotic and home grown timbers, and his very first fair was at Alexandra Palace - a blast from the past. My Little Fancies had their stand covered in lovely flowers, bedding and up-cycled shabby chic furniture. I have saved one of the newbies (at least to me) till last. Stick and Go, which is an amazing product. It's a self-adhesive, tear-proof covering, which does not stick to itself, and can be stuck and repositioned. There are wooden and tiled floors, carpets, wallpaper, walls of books and walls with fireplaces and surroundings. I am hooked.

As always the "old" exhibitors (sorry) are some of the best you will find, and I managed to get to talk to all of them over the two days. Mind you, a few were so busy on Saturday that I had to go on Sunday before opening times to get a few minutes with them.

I got my timing right to see a very thrilled lady collect her commission from the amazing Mike Kelm. It was a harbourside cottage which Hillary is going to turn into an artist's studio. She has agreed to let us put the finished cottage in DHW, maybe next year,



hopefully. Mike, of course, apart from being half of Kastlekelm, creates mini scenes for many fantasy films.

Jan Southerton has been making amazing flowers and plants for many years but she tells us that this was her best show, anywhere, ever and, to quote Jan: "It's an awesome show — many thanks to the organisers for making work such a pleasure."

As always there were very busy workshops by Fredona's Miniature Dreams, The Rugby Miniaturists, Kit Meggitt and The Small Scale Fiddlers and talks and advice from David Bishop from Little Houses Plus. There were demonstrations from Criss Cross Miniatures and special exhibits from Ayari Tudor-Jones, Beetlejuice House, Stranger Things by Miniature Real Estate and Featherstone Hall by Dee Daw Designs. I can't believe it's ten years since this beauty was created by Julie.

Warley Model Railway Club put on their delightful display of mini trains and Rugby Miniaturists had a delightful glamping exhibition. Small Scale Fiddlers club had created realistic looking garden scenes, including an illegal whisky still by Annette — how naughty. The amount of work and effort that had gone into these displays by both clubs was amazing and appreciated by the visitors. As always, the skill shown by The Miniature Needlework Society always takes my breath away — I so envy them their talent.

Pat Cutforth's Cancer Research UK

SHOW REPORT



Artist Bear Creations.



Beetjuice House.



C J Miniatures.



Crab Pot Miniatures.



Maisie.



Janis.



Crawl Space.



Graham from the Workshop



Timea.



My Mini Maison
Elf Miniatures.



Small Scale Fiddlers Club.



Beith Miniatures.



Stick and Go.



Ella Rose Miniatures.



Kit and ladies,



Victoria.



Old Git Lamps.



Hannah.



Hilary & Mike.



Tina.



Mary with another church.

“The feedback has been 100 per cent positive for this venue and the electric atmosphere in the hall is undeniable.”

charity stall attracted another instant crowd, and this amazing lady and her band of happy helpers raised £7000 over the weekend. Pat's grand total over the years for this charity now stands at a staggering £382,220. Wow! Andy doesn't charge Pat for the stand of course, which is a nice touch.

I picked up a doll I had ordered for my toy shop from Smallsorts but there were so many other lovely dolls at the show: Crumpled and Rumples, Cinderella, Kate Pinsent, Enchanted Dolls, Kastlekelm Miniatures, Jane Laverick, plus more. There were also teddies:

Artist Bear Creations bear club, Five Valley Bears, Teeny Weeny Teddies & Friends and Shoebutton Bears. Wizard and fantasy seem to be fashionable at the moment, and this was reflected in exhibitors such as Michael R Miniatures, VH Miniatures, Kastlekelm, Mayhem, Magic & Me, plus more.

Organiser Andy Hopwood said: "It's heartening to see so many people returning to the show after the last few years. The feedback we have already has been 100 per cent positive for this venue and the electric atmosphere in the hall is undeniable. My team and I

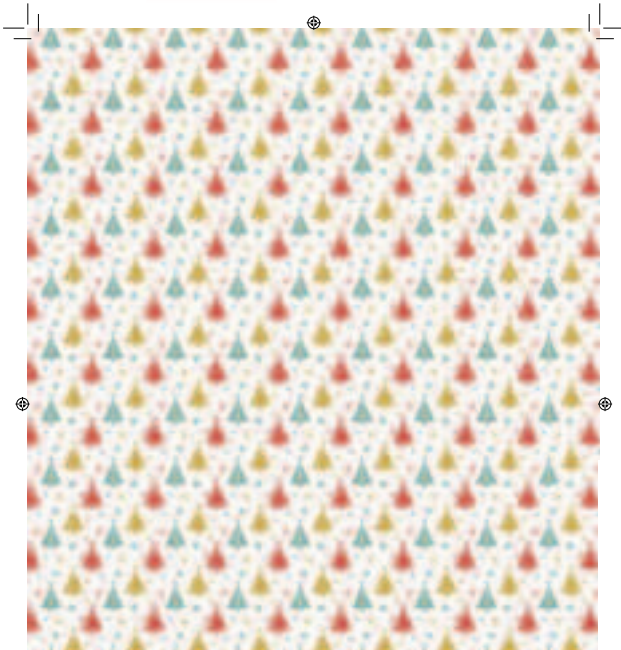
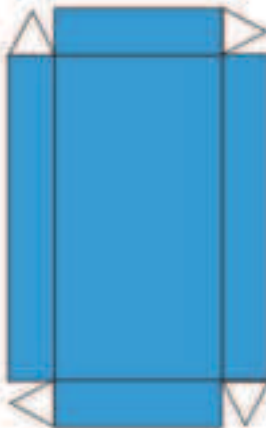
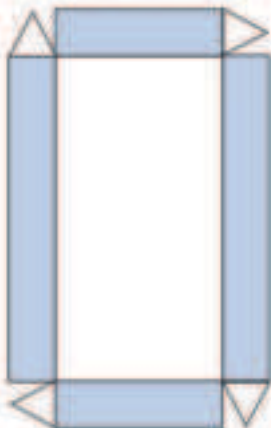
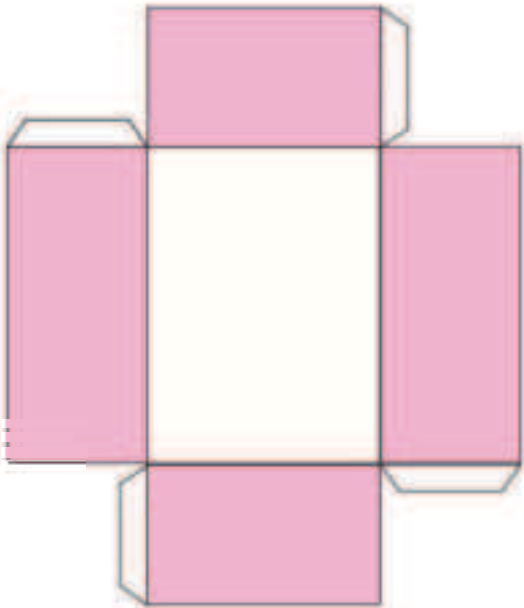
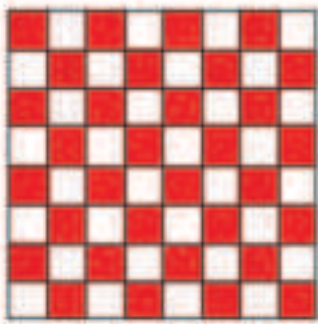
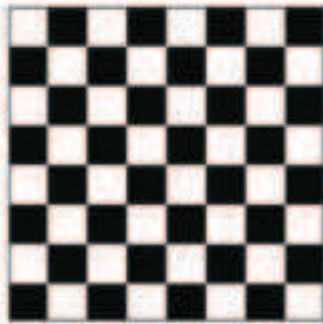
are so proud to be able to bring such brilliant makers together with enthusiastic collectors."

I would have loved to mention everyone else who was there but I also have far too many pictures to show you, and I ran out of room — sorry.

The next Miniatura will be at Stoneleigh Park, NAEC, Nr. Coventry, Warwickshire, CV8 2LZ on March 18-19 2023.

● For more information see the webpage www.miniatura.co.uk or call 0121 783 9922.

CUTOUTS 2





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Quick and easy

Sandra creates a table decoration and wreath from her stash

BY SANDRA HARDING

Choose size of button to suit (one of mine is about an inch and one about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch).

Cover button in glue and then cover it in Flowersoft to create the base. Let it dry.

Glue basic green leaves around the edge. Let it dry.

Cut off separate leaves from the glittery spray and add around as an inner layer.

Alternate them with gold leaves, or whatever glittery leaves you have. Glue the 'candle' in the centre and hold until it's set. Leave it all to dry.

Add tiny pieces of red tinsel, or whatever decoration you have to hand. Let it dry.

You will need

I have deliberately used stuff I had to hand to keep it simple.

- Buttons with flat base
- Green Flowersoft
- Plastic greenery, small leaves
- Glittery leaves or similar cut from larger sprays. I had green and gold sprays
- Cocktail sticks, painted red or gold and cut to size for the candle
- Glitter — whatever you have
- A little piece of red tinsel, or similar. Beads can be used if you have them
- Glue, tweezers, cutters for cutting wire from sprays if needed



Sprinkle generously with glitter, some will stay on.

Notes: One of these is made simply by using plain green paper cut to create leaf shapes, with shiny green and silver paper leaf shapes on the top layer. I added green glitter, shiny green beads and a green

painted cocktail stick, all stuck on a button.

The wreath is simply a piece cut from a string of decoration with gold stars, formed into a circle. I then glued on several of the aforementioned green and gold leaves off the sprays I already had. Then I added a dash of gold glitter.

Once Upon a Time Sandra bought yet another shop



Sandra succumbs to the charms of a shop that, with help from her husband, becomes the perfect home for her collection of tiny houses and toys

BY SANDRA HARDING

The funny thing about this shop is that I really shouldn't have bought it. When I arrived at the Gatwick club's Have a Go Day a few years ago I had been reciting my mantra "I must not buy another house" all the way there, occasionally said out loud.

Within seconds of my arrival, my over-vigilant husband caught me looking covetously at this distinctly irresistible shop on Desna Tysoe's stand. Even though the shop was very shallow, maybe about 7-8 inches, and had a flat roof, I really had no choice, did I?

It was an untouched, unpainted bare canvas, just waiting for me to do something lovely with. At that point I had no idea what, but I have quite a collection of tiny doll's houses and more toys than I needed, so it soon became obvious: a doll's house and toy shop. Then I just had to convince my husband that adding a few more inches to the structure would be easy (I lied). He is not a man to be beaten by any challenge I have given him, and this was no exception. Within a week or so, I had my lovely large shop, now 14 inches deep.

I really wanted it to be at Christmas time, but realising there was no room to do a grotto in the actual shop I asked my ever patient husband to make me one on the flat roof of course. I got so excited at having a grotto, I decorated and finished it before I had even started the shop.

I had a Christmas card for a backdrop, and several decorated Christmas

trees (see DHW issue 315). I used fake snow to cover the floor, added a sack of toys and a chest of more toys from stock, along with a chair for Santa. There are two little girls in the grotto, one made by talented maker Jan Clarke and the other from stock. The adorable reindeer was a Miniatura purchase and he finally had a permanent home - right at the front of the grotto, in pride of place, and Santa was bought. The electrics for the grotto are independent, and operate simply by a set of fairy lights which create the right look for a grotto.

The shop is twelfth scale and the first thing we did of course was work out where I wanted the lighting and the non-existent stairs. I only have actual stairs in my Tudor house (DHW issues 336 - 338) and my other houses all have pretend stairs, which saves a lot of room for more interesting things. A pretend stair corner unit was built for the ground and first floor in the corner



of the room, with a glass topped door at the front.

Electrics were added on both floors behind the fake door and centre lights put in. My husband did an amazing job painting the outside to look like Georgian brick work using tile grout, which he smoothed and then carefully scored to make the brick shape. It took him hours. The letters for the name were just on a card from Hobbycraft and the style and colours suited the shop I think.

We papered both floors in old book binding paper I had in stock and the floors are wooden strips polished with shoe polish. The set of shelves on the first floor were bought and those for the doll's houses were made to fit the doll's houses I already had in my collection. One of them is a Christmas tree decoration that lights up and said baby's first Christmas, which I painted. I decorated and made the furniture for a couple, while another is from Austria, with a peephole to view the Alps. There are a couple of specials amongst them.

A glorious little furnished chateau with three rooms of furniture, all made from kits, was made using a lot of



patience. Another is a kit from Jane Harrop which I made along with the tiny adorable doll's houses inside: a doll's house shop inside a doll's house shop. There are other kits which I made and filled with even more furniture. The mature lady, Mrs Montague Smythe, was made by Toni of Smallsorts, the lady at



Don't miss **dollshouse.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 **Dollshouse.live** has been such an amazing success that we've decided we have to keep it running.

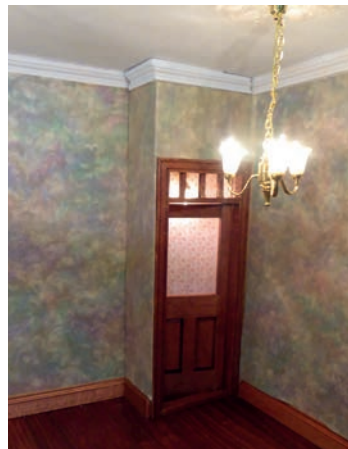
Dollshouse.live is full of fascinating features, projects and videos, and all totally free — little wonder the site has become incredibly popular with miniaturists in the UK and around the world.



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.

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the counter was a Christmas present and the little girl was from stock and should be in the grotto. Several other houses on the shelves are pretty resin houses, some of which I repainted, and a Dutch house which I didn't.

Upstairs, on your way to the grotto, you will be astonished at the amount of stock there is, from teddies of course, many from Toni of Smallsorts, who also made the lovely little chairs, plus Shoe-button Bears, Five Valley Bears along

with other fine teddy makers from all over the world. Toni also made me the lovely chap sitting stuffing teddies for the Christmas rush; his name is Percy Vere.

Many of the dolls are from Tower House Dolls and other makers and the adorable little ones in the shop window were by Judy Anderson, and I love them. There are also many other talented makers' items and more toys from Christmas crackers and many shows

over the years.

The nativity on the top shelf is one I put together for DHW (issue 337) using buttons and a stable I made. There are dozens of games and books, many are cutouts from DHW, and there are several moving toys from L & A St Leger, plus so many from various shows over the years.

I had great fun turning this bare canvas into my Once Upon a Time shop and grotto. Hope you like it too.

Sisterly love shines in Hummingbird Cottage

A chance find at an estate sale led Joan to create a house filled with tiny treasures that would mean something special to her beloved sister

BY JOAN MCKENZIE

Some of us are born with a lot of imagination, and we find ways to create what we cannot afford, especially as children. The following is a true story about my younger sister who has agreed to this interview to share her lovely little doll's house and her history with miniatures.

When Jean Ricci (pictured right) was a little girl, she was fascinated with all things small. As a five-year-old she was fortunate enough to have a very young teacher named Miss Kumakawa. This teacher asked the children to bring to school an empty matchbox container. In the mid 1950s milk was served in small glass containers with a round cardboard pull top. The teacher also asked each child to bring in as many of the cardboard pull tops from milk bottles as possible.

The following day Jean came home with a huge grin on her face as she showed our mum how she had painted the matchbox a shiny red colour, and the wheels (milk bottle tops) were painted black with silver spokes. They made a pull-handle from spare cardboard which was painted black as well. Inside the wagon there were little clay bunnies with tiny cotton tails removed from a cotton bud. I remember being so impressed at how adorable the finished project was that I wished I could return to kindergarten. I tried to



make one on my own, but it was not as good as Jean's. I was always in awe of her creativity.

While we didn't have money for things that were not necessities, that didn't stop Jean from creating an entire grocery store, filled with cans and boxes of assorted foods and lined up on her shelves. There were weekly paper advertisements sent through the mail, and also added to the grocery bags indicating what products would be on sale the following week. These ads included colour pictures of many varieties of canned and boxed food, which Jean would clip and glue to her clay cans and boxes for added realism. Some pictures came directly from cereal boxes. Most people who looked at this miniature grocery store were quite impressed. I was a 7-year-old who kept going back and forth between being jealous of my own baby sister's creations, to being exceptionally proud of her talent.

On rainy days we would play board games and also with paper dolls. By 1966 there were 11 children in our family. Jean and I were two of the oldest who had multiple responsibilities at young ages toward cleaning, cooking and care giving for the new babies. We learned everything possible about childcare through necessity, as our mother needed our help and support. We have been through good times and



bad together, but the good outweighs everything else.

Jean had a few tiny treasures growing up that remain in her memory. One was a gift from her godmother Lillian who gave her a miniature glow in the dark "Infant of Prague" statue. For her to be the only one in our large family to own a tiny doll, that would light up when it was bedtime was like handing her a gold bar. She knew she had something special there, so she treasured that little sacred talisman for many years.

When Jean was a teenager our youngest sisters Peggy and Gerri were just little girls. They both asked for a doll's house as their Christmas gift, but she knew that our mother would not be able to afford one. Jean was working full time but decided to put her skills to the test each night, creating something special for these two beloved little sisters. She asked for no help from anyone else as she set to work creating a doll's house from two milk crates stacked atop one another, using cardboard, clay and any other household items she could find. Spools of thread worked well for seats at a table. Just about everything she touched in her miniature stash of clippings, threads, yarn etc. was put to use. She cut holes for windows and made curtains that the children loved. The end result was a doll's house that our two young-

Above: The front entrance to the cottage is simply magical.





Below: Beautifully made bunk beds and dresser by Lynn Jowers.

Right: Lots of toys in this room for the grandchildren.





Above: The master bedroom is charming and full of fun!

Right: The living room is decorated for the holidays.

est sisters will never forget. I was so impressed!

Fast forward 40 years to four years ago when I had taken a Sunday drive to my favourite local miniature shop, Earth and Tree Miniatures, in New Hampshire. All the way from the highway I could see something in the window of that darling little shop that pulled me in where I made a beeline to the house that I saw from the highway. It was part of an estate sale with multiple doll's houses. Someone's son was selling his mum's beautifully artistic miniature treasures.

This little four room house was originally from the Franklin Mint collection and called Hummingbird Cottage. This was originally limited in number to 2500 count, introduced in the 1990s. I knew immediately that I wanted this little four room house and was stunned by how inexpensive it was being sold for by my favourite doll's house shop. I brought it home, cleaned it up and started adding tiny furniture for the



interior. It was in excellent shape.

About six months later Jean came to my home for a visit and saw the cottage for the first time in person, I could see how her eyes lit up when she looked at it. On that same day, she asked her daughter to come look at this doll's house. I knew from that moment on that I wanted to fill this little

house with tiny things that would mean something special to Jean and started a small list in my head about meaningful miniatures that had to be inside before I would give it to her.

Once that was decided, my first email for help was to one of my closest friends in the miniature world - Lynn Jowers from South Africa. Lynn has



Above: *The front of the Franklin Mint Hummingbird Cottage has lots of charm.*

never failed to help me with custom orders. This time I wanted help recreating a wonderfully unique bed that Jean and her first husband had purchased from the Ethan Allen collection in the mid 70's. There was a headboard that included beautiful sliding doors where one might keep an alarm clock, books, tissues and/or mints. The sliding doors were made of small ornate dowels. From one photograph and a few measurements Lynn not only perfectly recreated that beautiful bed, but she added end tables, a mirror and a bureau that complimented the bed perfectly. For the children's room she made bunk beds, a special dresser, a window seat, toy chest, a child's rocking chair, a pull toy horse and gorgeous bookshelves.

All of these items were handcrafted from cherry wood and finished with a patina that is as smooth as silk. This took Lynn the better part of a year to complete along with her other orders.

I was in no hurry to part with this charming house. I wanted to give it to my sister complete – so that she would want for nothing.

One of my favourite crochet artists made tiny blankets for the bunk beds. I chose dolls that looked the most like her six grandchildren to live in the house with one grandmother that Jean made during a Jeanne Rullie workshop at the IGMA Guild Show in September of 2018.

There are winding hidden staircases in the back of this house which make it seem larger than it is. The wallpaper adds charm all on its own. I like to add real artwork to my walls, so I commissioned some paintings from Karry Johnson who always delights me.

I have asked Jean what she likes most about the miniature art form. Her first thought was that this miniature passion does not take up a lot of space in your home. She is able to create her own scenes with the tiny furniture she has and rearrange things so many different ways that the results are almost as dramatic as a face lift.

Today Jean is a very busy grandmother to six children under the age of 12, and mother to four of her own children who are all young adults. She is very active in her children's and grandchildren's lives. Two of her little grandsons come to her home frequently enough so that they have become entranced with her miniature Hummingbird Cottage. They are gentle little boys and know what cannot be touched so they never break anything. It's a beautiful thing to witness.

The picture of Jean that's included for this feature story is one where she is holding her most requested signature family recipe called "spinach pies". If you look very carefully in her right hand, there is a tiny version of those spinach pies commission made by one of my favourite food artists named Minithaiss from Bosnia Herzegovina. Many artists contributed to making this mini house perfect for my beloved sister. I would enjoy nothing more than to find the perfect little house for my other sisters and do it all over again!

Sweet stockings are fun to make

Debbie shows how to make simple stockings out of felt. Follow along step-by-step and you'll have cute decorations in no time



BY DEBBIE BOOTH

These sweet little stockings can be made to look traditional, rustic or shabby chic depending on the colours of wool and embellishments you decide to use.



Step 1. Draw a template onto paper. Cut the stocking from felt. The stocking needs to be about 3/4" for ornaments to be glued to the top of the stocking.

Step 2. Cut ribbon to 1/8"-1/16" wide and 1-1/2" long.

Step 3. Cut a piece of tiny fringe, lace or fleece fur 1" wide (the width of the stocking can be trimmed down). and approximately 1/2" tall.



Step 4. With a toothpick or small paint brush, dab craft glue to the outer edges of the stocking. Avoid getting glue at the top where the little accessories will be glued. Place the second stocking on top and press together.

Step 5. Fold the ribbon in half and glue it to the side of the stocking (the side that the heel is on). Glue to the top side of the stocking.



Step 6. Run a line of glue at the top front edge of the stocking and press the fringe. Trim excess. Let dry.



Step 7. Add a tiny bit of greenery, red berries, or tiny red buttons at the top of the stocking. Some little pieces of greenery can be slipped inside of the stocking. Then glue tiny red buttons, ornaments or berries to the top.

Step 8. Once it dries, place in front of a pillow or hang it from a decorated miniature fireplace.

● Visit www.etsy.com/shop/RibbonwoodCottage to see more of my work.

You will need

- Wool felt 5" x 5"
- Some trim, fringe, fur or lace for upper cuff
- 5" thin ribbon for the stocking hanger
- Greenery, ornaments, pom-poms and toys
- Hot glue gun or craft glue
- Toothpick

Holly wreath reminds me of favourite carol

Karen is singing along to her favourite carol as she puts together a beautiful wreath that will add a special touch to your festive scene

BY KAREN HRITZ

When it comes to Christmas carols I have always loved The Holly and the Ivy. So I decided to make a holly and ivy wreath to hang above the fireplace in my doll's house!



Step 1. For a 2" wide wreath, I cut a 10" length of mini garland. It has a wire in it to make it easy to shape. Ten

inches will make it long enough to double the thickness of the wreath.



Step 2. Form a circle and wrap the ends in and out of the circle to secure. You can shape around a small bottle if needed.



Step 3. Next, give your wreath a 'hair cut' with small, sharp scissors. You will need a good full base to glue the tiny leaves into, and if you don't trim the base, they tend to get lost!

You will need

- 10"-12" of mini garland
- Holly and ivy leaf punches
- Green card stock – 2 colours
- Red micro-beads for berries
- Tacky glue
- 30-gauge wrapped wire
- Acrylic paint
- Small paint brush
- Stylus
- Foam sheet (for shaping)
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Wire snips
- Ribbon for a bow



Step 4. Punch out a bunch of ivy leaves from one of the sheets of green card stock. I used about 125 individual leaves on my miniature wreath.



Step 5. Using a small stylus and working on a piece of craft foam, shape each of the leaves. I usually do this by pressing into the leaf and working in a tiny circle to 'cup' the leaf. Shaping them gives them depth.



Step 6. Because I wanted my ivy to be variegated, I used a tiny bit of ivory paint and a very small dry brush to put a little ivory paint on each ivy leaf.



Step 7. Punch out a bunch of holly leaves from the other sheet of green card stock. I used about 125 individual leaves on my wreath also.



Step 8. Using a small stylus and working on a piece of craft foam, shape each of the leaves. I usually do this by pressing into the leaf and working up and down the length of the leaf to curl it.



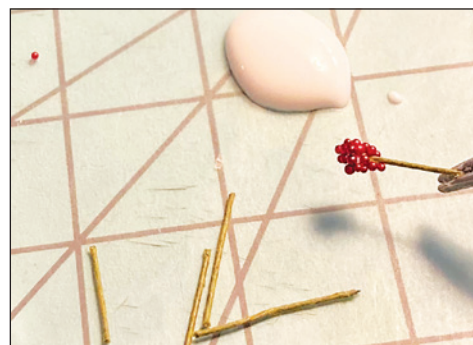
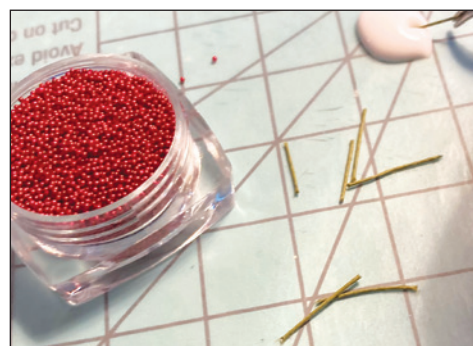
Step 9. Cut 1/2" pieces of 30-gauge wire and glue the holly leaves to the wire in bunches of 3 or 5 leaves. Most of mine are in groups of 3. Note: The gluing is easiest to accomplish with small tweezers. I put a small puddle of glue on my work surface and dip the stem end (of the leaf) in the glue.



Step 10. Begin gluing the ivy leaves into the wreath and then glue in the stems of holly. This is definitely a case where 'less is more' does not apply.



Step 11. After all the holly is glued in place, I added a few more ivy leaves. Keep going until you are happy with the thickness of your wreath.



Step 12. Cut about 28 short pieces of wire and dip the tips of them in white glue, then dip the glue ends into the micro beads.



Step 13. Let the glue on the wire with the beads dry thoroughly and then glue the end of the wires into your wreath. Use your tweezers to push the wire into the wreath.

Step 14. To finish your wreath, add a bow and hang!

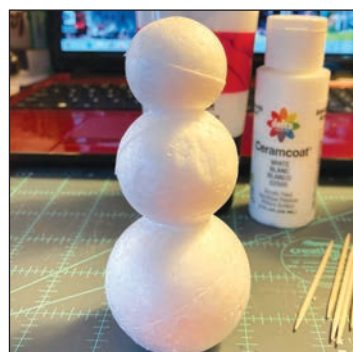
‘This is definitely a case where ‘less is more’ does not apply.’

Snow fun with Frosty family

Make and dress this snowman family to turn your mini scene into a winter wonderland

BY KAREN HRTZ

Add some winter fun to the front garden of your doll's house.



Step 1. Start by sanding opposite sides of the largest

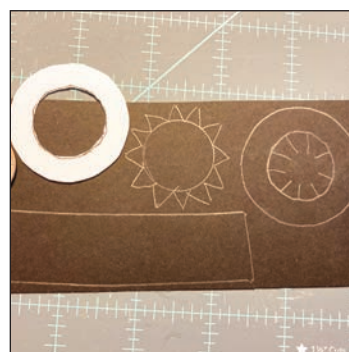
and middle Styrofoam balls and one side of the smallest. By doing this, the sections of the snowmen figures will fit snugly together. Connect the sections with toothpicks and white glue; let dry. Note: I glued a 3/4" metal washer to the bottom to give weight the figure.



Step 2. Mix craft paint and acrylic gel medium to give texture to the paint. Cover the snowman with this mixture. I wanted the surface to show some texture, so I



did not try to smooth it out completely. While the surface is still wet, sprinkle with glitter; let dry. Note: to make handling less messy, I stuck a bamboo skewer into the bottom of the figure so that I had a handle for the painting and glittering process!



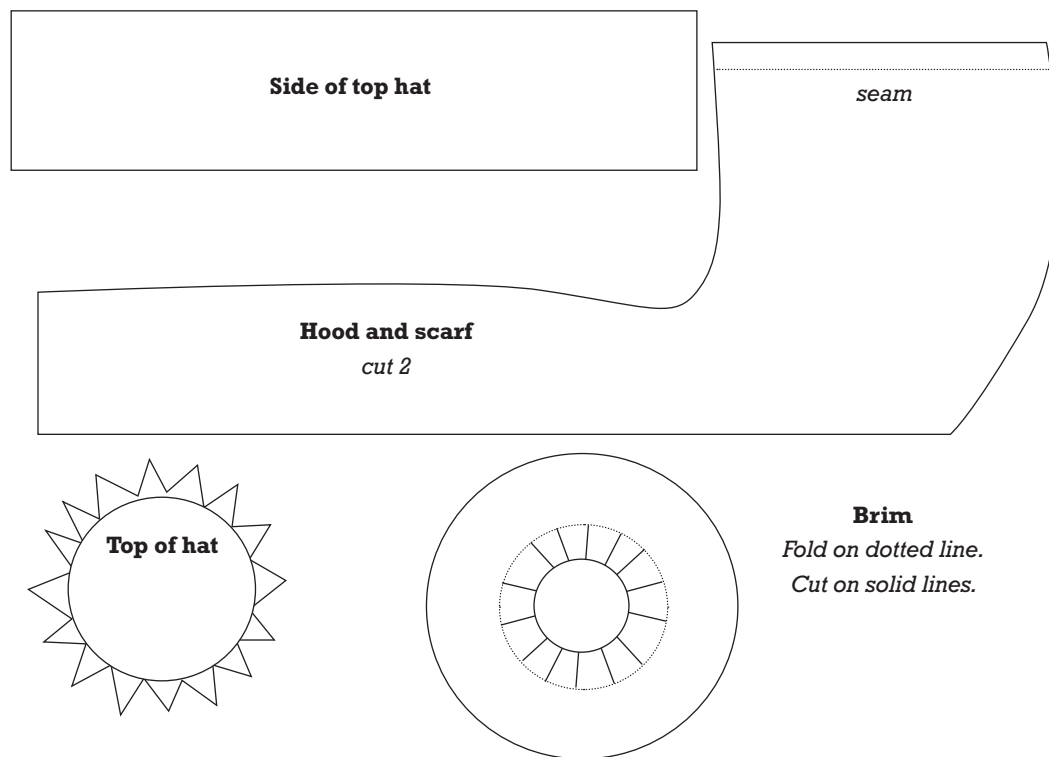
Step 3. For Frosty's top hat, I used black card stock. I traced a quarter for the top of the hat and added the triangles around the edge for gluing. The brim is another circle that was cut 1/2"

larger. The side is 7/8" by approximately 3-3/4". After cutting all the pieces, fold all the triangles up to prepare for gluing. Start by gluing the top to the side, securing with small clamps until dry. Then glue the brim. Note: I had to fold the brim down slightly so I could secure it until it dried. I also added some black paint where my glue could be seen. After it was dry, I added the braid.

You will need

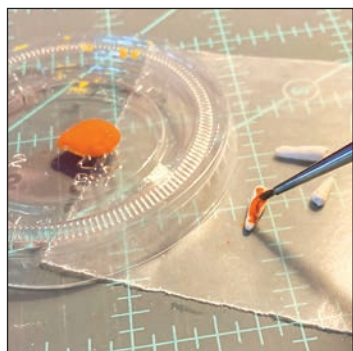
- Assorted size Styrofoam balls – I used 1", 1.5" and 2" for the adult snow people
- White acrylic craft paint
- Acrylic Gloss Gel Medium
- White glue
- Toothpicks
- Metal washer
- Fine glitter
- Assorted craft and sewing supplies for accessories (paper clay, paper-wrapped wire, fabric scraps, etc)

Pattern



Step 4. For Mrs. Frosty's hood, I cut the hood pattern from plaid flannel, sewed the top and back seams, and then added the fur trim. The raw edges of the fabric were finished with Fray Check.

Step 5. For the child's hat, I used a glove from the pound store and cut one of the fingertips off. I finished it off with a small pom-pom.



Step 6. For the noses, I used Paper Clay and when dry, painted them orange. The eyes for the adults and the mouth of Frosty are chips of

coal. Mrs. Frosty's mouth is plastic-headed straight pins that I painted red. The eyes and buttons on the child are also straight pins.

Step 7. The corn cob pipe was made from Paper Clay and a piece of a toothpick. I textured the surface of the pipe bowl with a straight pin



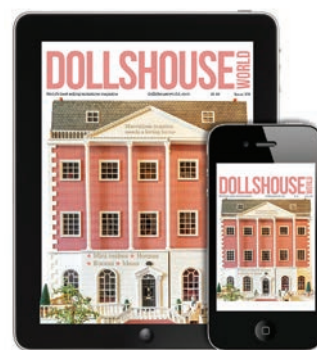
and let it dry before painting. Frosty's scarf is a strip of flannel finished with Fray Check. Mrs. Frosty's muff is a strip of fake fur.

Step 8. The arms on all the figures are brown paper-wrapped wire.

Have fun making your snowman family!



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Easy style wreath

twist the two pipe cleaners together to make one fatter, striped length.

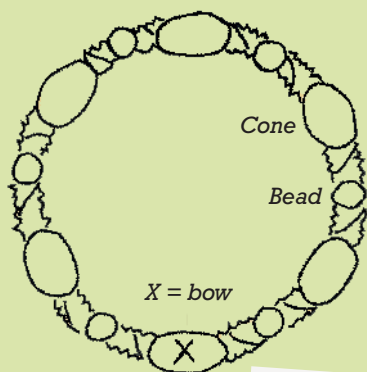
Form a circle to the diameter of your choice (mine is about 13/4in diameter) and twist the ends together to secure.

Lightly brush the cones with white paint and leave to dry.

Glue the cones evenly around the circle and leave to dry.

Glue beads between the cones.

Make a small ribbon bow and glue it at the bottom of the wreath, onto one of the cones.



You will need

- Plain green chenille pipe cleaner
- Green tinsel pipe cleaner
- Wire cutters or old scissors
- 6 larch cones
- White acrylic paint
- Brush
- 6 shiny beads
- Narrow red or red and gold ribbon
- Thick tacky glue

Stitch two samplers of Christmas cheer

These little samplers will not do much for your eyesight, but they will add festive cheer to lots of rooms in your house. Just get out the magnifier

BY ELIZABETH BENTLEY

to fit a miniature frame, this little sampler is stitched over one thread of 35 tpi evenweave fabric. Unless you have exceptionally good eyesight, you will probably need to use a magnifier to stitch these designs, but once the threads are magnified, the design is quite easy to stitch.

Silent Night

Church - The trickiest part of the design is the church, but even that is stitched with blocks of colour. It is the outlining which gives it detail. A good tip is to stitch the church first - everything else then seems really easy.

Each square of the chart represents a stitch worked over one thread of fabric.

Keeping your fabric taut in the embroidery frame follow the chart and work the design in cross stitch with one strand of Anchor stranded cotton throughout.

It is easiest to take the church as your starting point so working a little below the centre point of your fabric, follow the chart to stitch the cross stitch blocks which make up the church. Where no colour is indicated within the outline of the church, leave that square empty - the outlining will fill in the space. Once all the blocks of the church are stitched, outline in back-stitch with one strand of 382 Dark



Brown thread. You do not need to stitch your backstitches over one thread when outlining - it is quicker and easier to back-stitch over two threads, except where the design makes it impossible.

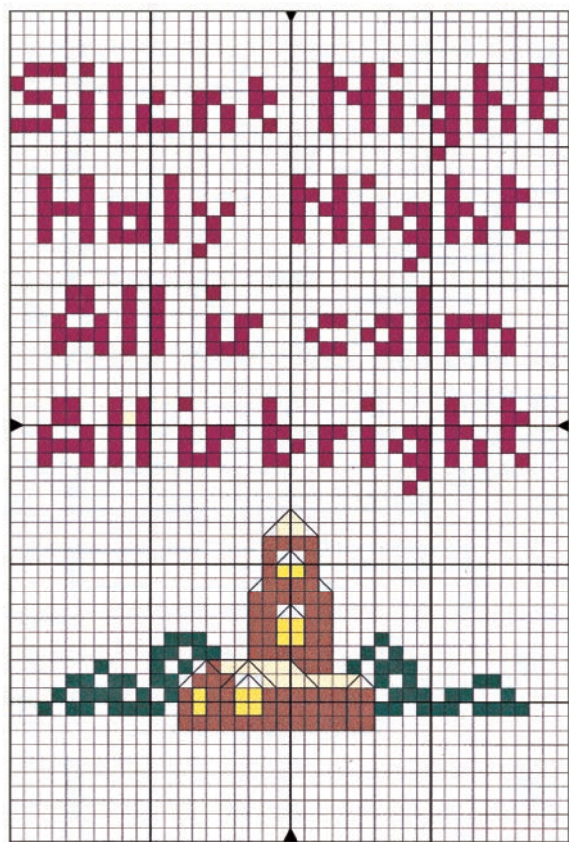
Trees - Having stitched and outlined the church, fill in the trees and bushes in cross stitch with one strand of 262 Mid Green thread.

Text - Now you have just to stitch the text, which is the easy part. Counting up from the church, follow the chart and stitch the text with one strand of 47 Red thread.

Ding Dong Merrily

Bells - I always stitch the motif first when I am stitching samplers - it makes a good fixed point for counting threads to place the text. I started, in this case, by stitching the bells, with one strand of Anchor Lame Gold (if you don't have metallic thread, or don't like working with metallic threads, one strand of Anchor Stranded 306 gold-coloured thread could be substituted here).

Next I stitched the red ribbon with one strand No. 47 Red and finally filled in the spaces which form the holly leaves with one strand No. 262 Mid Green.



- Anchor stranded cotton: No.47 Red*
- Anchor stranded cotton: No.262 Mid Green*
- Anchor stranded cotton: No.369 Light Brown*
- Anchor stranded cotton: No.295 Yellow*
- Anchor stranded cotton: 1 White*
- Anchor stranded cotton: 382 Dark Brown, for outlining church*



- Anchor stranded cotton: No.47 Red*
- Anchor stranded cotton: No.262 Mid Green*
- Anchor lame: Gold*
- Anchor stranded cotton: 403 Black*

TOPTIP

These little samplers use only small amounts of thread, so any suitably coloured oddments of stranded cotton can be substituted for the threads listed.

Text - Now, counting upwards from the red ribbon, and using one strand of No. 47 Red, stitch the text.

Holly - Fill in the holly leaves in each corner with one strand 262 Mid Green, and add a berry in each corner with a single cross stitch in Red.

Music - Finally with a single cross stitch in 403 Black, stitch the musical notes, adding the stems in backstitch before you go on to the next note.

That's the sampler completed - it didn't take too long, did it?

Framing

You can now give your eyes a rest whilst you press and mount the finished samplers. Press the work and set it aside for a moment.

Cut your piece of thick white card to size so that it is just a little bigger than the aperture of your frame. Now carefully measure and cut your work to size so that it will fit, centred, on your piece of card.

Take the protective backing off one side of your photomount. Carefully place your stitched work on the photomount, taking care to avoid making any creases in the fabric.

When you are happy that your embroidery is smooth and secure, peel off the backing on the reverse and stick the whole thing onto your cut piece of thick white card. Trim off any excess fabric.

Using a matchstick spread a very thin layer of glue around the back of your frame, keeping close to the aperture edges but not overlapping them.

Carefully position the glued frame over your embroidery, making sure that it is centred. Allow to dry.

Now your Christmas sampler is ready to be placed in your doll's house.



You will need

- 1 x 5in square of 35 tpi evenweave fabric in cream (this sample is stitched in Zweigart 35 count Edinburgh fabric)
- Embroidery hoop or frame No. 28 tapestry needle
- Miniature frame with approx 1 1/2in x 1 1/4in aperture.
- Small square of heavy duty card cut a fraction larger than the aperture of the frame
- Small piece of photomount (double sided self-adhesive sheet) for mounting
- Superglue for securing frame to picture

Dress your doll in a beautiful red gown

Dana was inspired to make this stunning red gown by a television series, but we think it would make a wonderful outfit for one of your dolls at Christmas

BY DANA

I just love the Outlander television series and one dress has always stood out for me. The red dress!

In this month's doll making tutorial we will be recreating that very outfit in twelfth scale. The dress is deceptively minimal but takes quite a bit to recreate.

Step 1. Paint your doll shoes with red fingernail polish and let dry.

Step 2. Glue on several thin silk ribbon strips for the shoe straps.



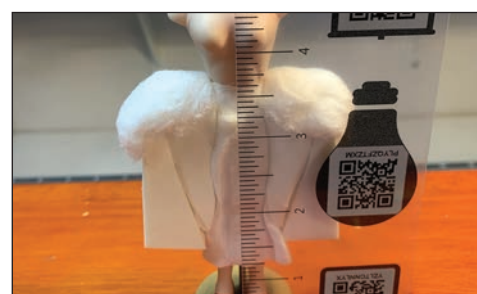
Step 3. Glue on a jewellery finding or a bead for the buckle on the sides.

Step 4. Assemble your doll using your preferred construction method, leaving off the arms until later in the creating process. Make sure that her chest and shoes are pointed in the same direction. The head/neck on this mould tilts slightly to the side. I used the Camille mould made by Stacy Hoffman.

Step 5. Glue the doll onto the doll stand.

Underskirt

Step 6. Cut a very narrow slip (rectangle) out of the batiste. Make a tube and slide it on the doll's waist.



Step 7. Glue on several layers of triangle cosmetic sponges as shown.

Step 8. Top off the padding with a cotton ball to soften the shape of her pannier.

Step 9. Cut out a 6" x 6" piece of batiste and fold in half, then iron so there is a nice crease.

Step 10. Turn one side edge under to the wrong side and glue.



Step 11. Glue the side edges together and form a tube around the padding. I gently folded the top edges inward and glued.

You will need

- Doll
- Doll stand
- Cotton ball
- Florist tape
- Pipe cleaner
- Materials, trims as desired
- Aleene's Original Tacky Glue
- Pins
- Paper towels
- Red nail polish
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Knitting needle
- Silk ribbon
- V-shape cosmetic sponges for padding
- Viscose
- Beads, jewellery finding for shoe buckles
- Hair mister
- Water
- Flat iron
- Ruler

Step 12. Lightly mist the underskirt with hair spray (1 or 2 times) to harden the fabric to use as a foundation.

Skirt

Step 13. Cut a 4" x 14" rectangle of the red silk material. Turn the bottom edge under to the wrong side and glue for a clean finished hem.

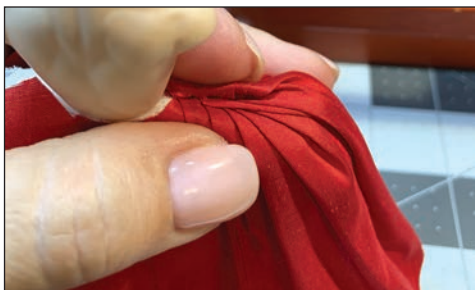


Step 14. Turn one side edge to the wrong side and glue. Overlap the back edges and glue to the back of the doll.

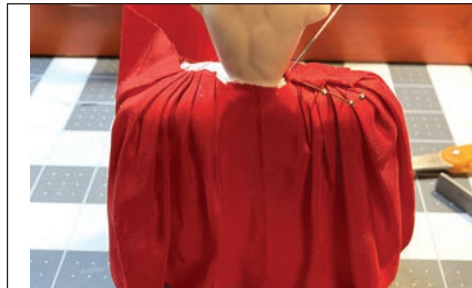
Step 15. Cut a notch out by the doll's waist. Be careful you don't cut too much or you will have a gap between the bodice and the skirt.



Step 16. Starting on one side, simply hand pleat the silk material around the doll. Then, at the back only, glue the pleated skirt top-edge-down on the batiste underskirt.



Step 17. When you reach the front of her skirt, turn the top edge of the hand pleated skirt under to the wrong side and glue. Then glue that on top of the

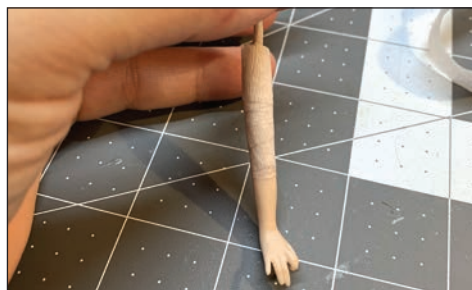


back section. Repeat for the other side of the skirt.

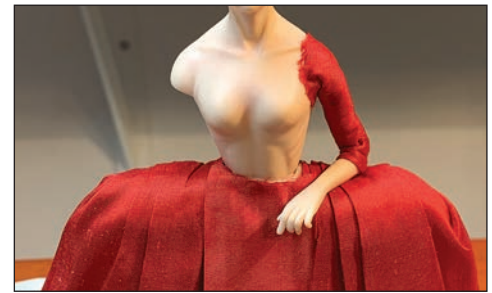
Sleeves

Step 18. Next, glue your porcelain doll arms onto a pipe cleaner. Wrap the arms with white florist tape until a little bulk is achieved to replicate a realistic arm shape.

Step 19. Insert the arm into the torso and cut off any excess wire until a realistic arm length is achieved.



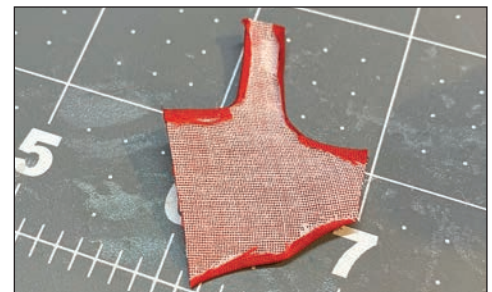
Step 20. Cut a 1 1/4" x 2" rectangle of the red silk. Note that this is only a suggestion of the size. You will need to measure your arm with a paper towel pattern to get a perfect fit because everyone assembles their doll differently.



Step 21. Make a tube, slide it up the doll's arm and leave the top edge open to glue to the shoulder as shown. Repeat for other arm.

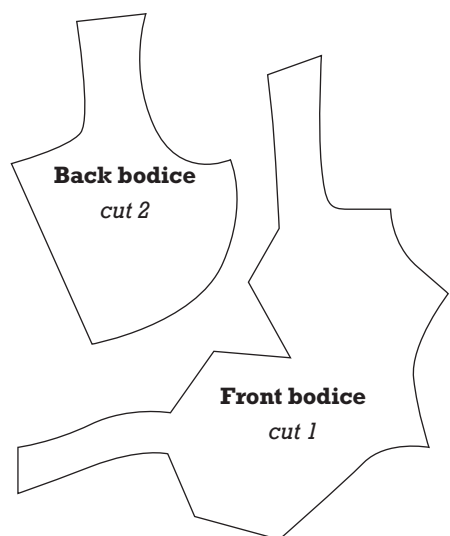
Decoration

Step 22. Cut (2) back bodice patterns out from the batiste material.



Step 23. Carefully glue the batiste pattern to the red silk and let dry. Then cut out the pattern with and add 1/4" seam allowance. Glue the seam allowance to the batiste as shown.

Pattern





Step 24. Glue on the back-bodice piece to her torso and around to the side. Glue down her shoulder strap to the middle of her shoulder.



Step 25. Repeat on other side. Glue a thin strip of silk ribbon down the back to cover the raw edges of joined back bodice.



Step 26. Cut out the front bodice piece from batiste. Following the directions above, glue to the front of her torso around to her side. Overlap the sleeve straps at the top of her shoulders and cut off any excess material, then glue it on flat.



Step 27. Lastly, glue silk ribbon in a crisscross pattern around the front of her bodice.

I cannot stress enough, using a paper towel or batiste scrap FIRST to make sure that your pattern fits your doll. Everyone assembles a doll differently, and if you do not make adjustments for your own individual doll size then this pattern will not work.

Wigging



Step 28. Mist viscose with water and wrap around a knitting needle tightly. Clamp on with a flat iron to dry and set the curl.



Step 29. When the hair is cool, slide off the rod, and gently pick hair apart for nice waves.

Step 30. Glue a realistic hairline on the doll's head. Gently spread a section of the viscose and lay on the glue (from nose to neck).

Step 31. Glue a line from ear to ear and press a strip of viscose on. Let dry. This effectively forms a wiggling cross.



Step 32. When the glue is dry, carefully gather hair into a loose ponytail and glue to the top of her head for a messy bun. Pin in place if necessary, to shape bun while the glue dries.

Step 33. Lastly, glue on the red rhinestone earrings.

You did it! Now sit back and enjoy your very own version of Claire!

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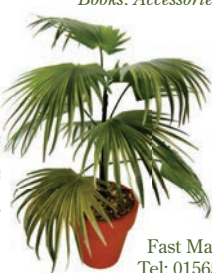


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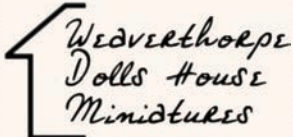
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SMALL TALK

THIS MONTH WE VISIT THE WORKSHOP OF MAKER OLGA SURINA

Hi Olga, how long have you been making miniatures? I started about eleven years ago.

Where do you create? I have a big work table in a small room. I built my own little nest with a big table, a comfy chair and a good lamp that has a magnifying glass attached to it.

What makes your space for mini making so special? I think of it like an entrance to a beautiful universe where the magic of creating is always happening.

Do you keep your workspace private? No, my guests can look at what I am doing, as long as they don't touch anything. My only other rule is that my cat is not allowed to jump on my work table.

Do you listen to music or the radio while you work? Yes, I always do. I enjoy listening to classical music and rock music. Also I like to listen to audio books.

Name one thing that is banned from your work-

space. My cat. I love my cat, but it is not safe for her to be on my work table because of materials such as glue, thinner liquid, epoxy, etc.

Describe your workspace in five words. Order, creation, passion, dreams, chaos. When starting a new project my work table is nice and tidy. I try to keep it this way in case I make a tutorial video for YouTube, but I always fail because by the end of the project my once tidy work table will be in utter chaos. I like to call it 'art chaos'.

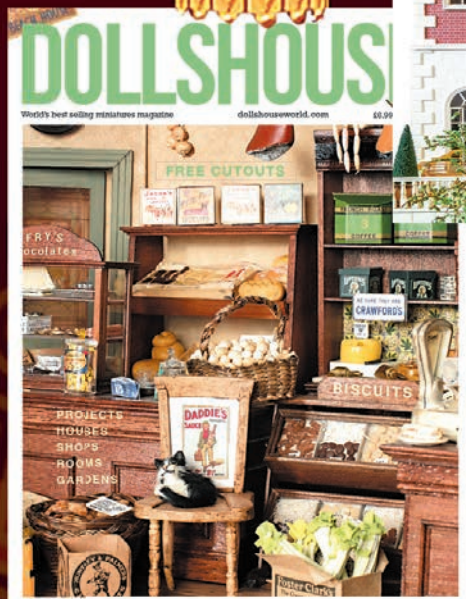
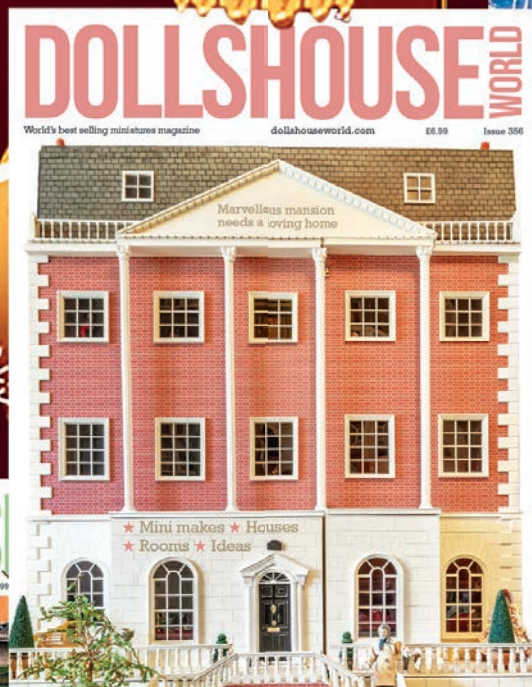
What is the one thing that your workspace can't be missing? A lamp with a magnifying glass and a computer. I need both of them, one for miniature, and one to listen to my music or to do research for a project.

What or where would be your dream workspace? I would love to have a big room with lots of light and many shelves to store my materials and tools on, as well as to display my artwork. It would be a wonderful place for me.



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

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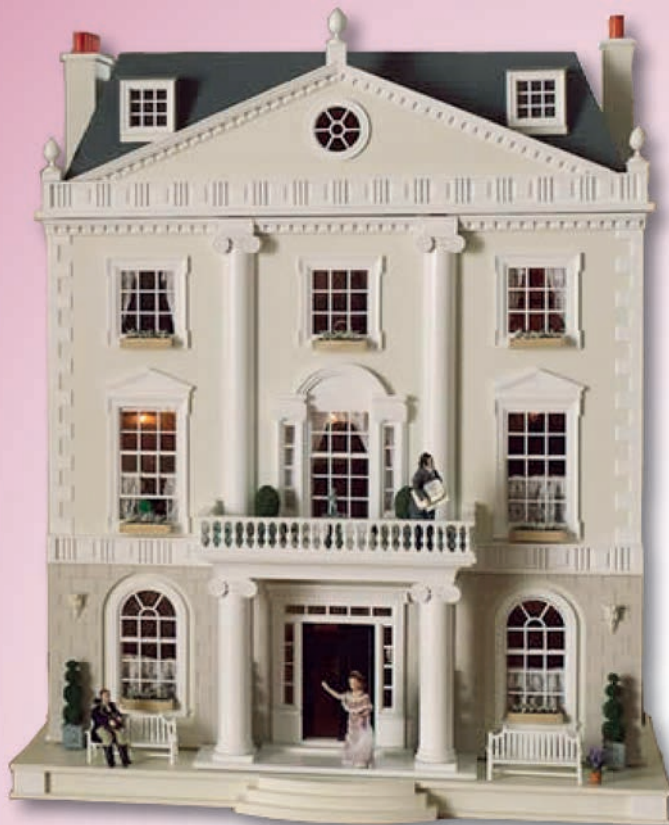
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