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Tel: 507-634-3143

Subscriptions:

UK: support@ashdown.co.uk

US: usoffice@ashdown.co.uk

ISSN 0961 - 0928. Printed in the UK.

Subscription prices:

Per year: UK £59.99 (12 issues).

European and worldwide prices will be adjusted to local currencies. See online for details at www.dollshouseworld.com or call +44 (0)1903 884988. All of our subscriptions are handled by us here at DHW.



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welcome

This issue is simply blossoming with beautiful miniatures and inspiring ideas as we welcome spring after the gloomy days of coughs, colds and assorted viruses — or was that just me?

Leading the way on the cover is Jane Rees's gorgeous flower shop, and we've devoted the centre pages to showing you the wonderful detail in Blooms by the Sea. It was interesting to learn that Jane's first attempt took a completely different approach and "her heart wasn't in it". The shop only really came to life when she was inspired to make it less clean and tidy.

Quite the opposite in Linda Guthertz's incredible Downton Abbey tribute. Everything is in its place, and the attention to detail is amazing. It took Linda three days to set the table properly, using forceps and calling on all her skills as a microbiologist. But at least she found a home for the 17" dining table she was wondering what to do with.

We've got lots of fabulous projects for you too. Kris paints silk to look like faux leather as she makes an ottoman, Patty 'grows' grass out of faux fur, and Caroline shows how to swoosh paint shabby chic roses.

Tanja even whips up some creme eggs, and if that's not a sign of spring I don't know what is.

Richard.



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"The promise of spring's arrival is enough to get anyone through the bitter winter!"

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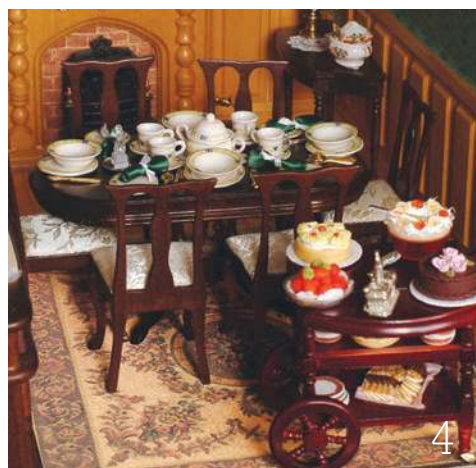
We chat with reader Elaine Williams about her life in miniatures



HOUSE HUNT



Find the little house hidden inside. Last issue it appeared on page 62.



4

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.

Extension brought a new lease of life

We revisit a lovely Victorian house where an impressive five room extension provided space to accommodate the growing family and a couple's growing ambitions

BY CHARLOTTE MERRYMAN

For around 20 years Pamela Parsons had wanted a doll's house. Then, in 1995, after a period of suffering from ME, her husband Ivan suggested that it might be a good time to get one. Together they decided on a Jubilee house kit by Sid Cooke; it was handsome, Victorian, and with a few alterations offered a lot of potential for style.

While Ivan, a former engineer, took on the construction work, Pamela set about decorating, starting with the exterior before attempting the interior. There were definite alterations and improvements to be made, such as shutters added to the windows, a far more attractive new front door and modification to the fencing.

Ivan's suggestion to get a house couldn't have been better for Pamela. Not only did it provide an interesting hobby where Pamela could do as much or as little as she liked, depending on her health that day, it also stopped her from getting depressed. However, like other hobby-husbands, perhaps Ivan didn't realise that he would inevitably participate too.

As man of the house the responsibility for wiring up the lights fell to Ivan, a task that he was not keen to repeat. Inside, he was 'commissioned' to create parquet flooring from a series of small wood strips, and to prepare that wonderful wood panelling we see in the downstairs rooms, ready for Pamela to painstakingly fit. The effect

is stunning. But five years down the line there were problems.

"The average sized doll's house tends to be a bit samey," said a frustrated Pamela. "After the kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and attic nursery - what else can you do?"

A five-room extension to the side of the house was needed to accommodate the growing family - and Pamela's growing ambitions. Ivan took it on the chin and obliged.

The extension brought a new lease



of life to the house, and to Pamela's interest in the hobby. It allowed for more interesting rooms to be included, and in doing so, for the whole house to be rearranged. Pamela had, and still has, no hesitation in moving rooms around.

"I didn't want my children to live in the roof," said Pamela. "So the music room is up there instead."

Although it may seem restless, the changes come from Pamela's constant consideration of her house, and of the family in it. For a house to be convincing sometimes changes need to be made and practical solutions found, such as applying carpet instead of parquet to floors in shared rooms, so as the children 'wouldn't get cold feet'.

Pamela's joy was always in making small alterations to personalise her miniatures, such as Alexander, the gentleman who is talking a walk past the house, simply by putting a hat and glasses on him. The bought flowers have been re-arranged and fiddled with, as have the curtains, which were one of the most difficult aspects of the house to do.

"I fiddle with them a lot," said



Above: View showing the main part of the house and interior of the extension to the left.

Left: One of the many servant dolls busy at work in the lower rooms, an integral part of this typical Victorian household.

Right: Pamela's Victorian house, a modified and personalised Jubilee house kit from Sid Cooke.





Top: Enjoying a spot of needlework in the drawing room.

Above: Most of the downstairs rooms have a beautiful wood panelled finish, which was prepared by Ivan and then carefully fitted by Pamela.

Right: The dining room has also been carefully finished with panelling and the parquet floor - which can just be seen underneath the rug.



Above: Cook, busy baking in the kitchen in the main house,

Right: Children and their nanny in the nursery, downstairs in the warmth and not hidden in the attic room, as is often the case.

Pamela. "And because I'm always changing things I will probably alter them several times before they are right."

Pamela believed you can't beat a good fiddle, claiming that she will fiddle and re-arrange until it looks right. This is partly due to the learning curve that the hobby presents us all with, but it is also a mark of someone who is constantly dreaming of possibilities and ideas and who thrives on putting them in place.

Some ideas came from books and films, but most came in the early hours of the morning when it was hard to sleep.

"If I have an idea I don't want to let it go – do I Ivan?" She turns to her husband for confirmation, who responds dryly, "No dear – you don't."

Could it be Ivan's suggestion to get a doll's house is something he now regrets? Somehow I don't think so. There is clear evidence of a 'practical' interest from the former engineer, and days out to shows are something that



both of them enjoy.

"Going to a doll's house show is like going to a garden centre, everybody is relaxed and happy," said Ivan.

While Ivan goes off and explores the tool displays and technical side of the hobby, Pamela will be hunting out

miniatures on her list, comparing and researching her options before she finally decides on a purchase.

"The best feeling is when you find what you have been looking for."

Sometimes you have to act instantly when the perfect miniature is right in



Left: Adding character - Alexander complete with top hat and glasses.

Below: Pretty bedroom in the basement extension, next to the nursery.

front of you, especially if there is any risk of it being purchased by someone else. But when it comes to dolls Pamela's tastes are more discerning, believing that you have to 'take the time to find the right character' before inviting them home.

"I don't like to compromise on my dolls," admitted Pamela, who has names for each and every one of them.

The couple's family, who have grown up and got children of their own, do not share this enthusiasm for doll's houses and miniatures. Their daughter has even asked who is going to inherit the house, to which Pamela has a firm reply, "No-one, it's coming with me – it's mine."

"That way there is no guilt," Pamela





Above: The main house (right) and extension (to the left).

Above right: In the main house we find a bedroom fit for a lady.

Below right: Children playing in the nursery, which has been thoughtfully carpeted to ensure their feet stay warm

explained to us. "I can rip off the wallpaper and change it without having to refer to anyone."

If anyone is ever in any doubt about seeing what needs to be changed in their own doll's house, take a leaf out of Pamela's book. Her suggestion is to take photographs of all the rooms in your doll's house and look them one by one. This will reveal whether a room appears balanced, show up any areas that look dull, or items out of place, and is particularly good where the positions of dolls are concerned. If someone is blocking the view – they have to be moved.

After a hard day's fiddling, there was nothing more pleasing to the soul than to sit in the dark and look at the house with its lights on, emanating a warm glow only matched by the one coming from Pamela.



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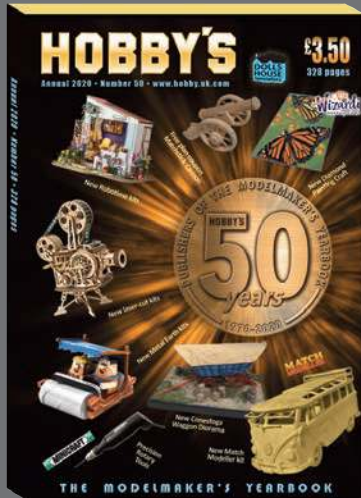
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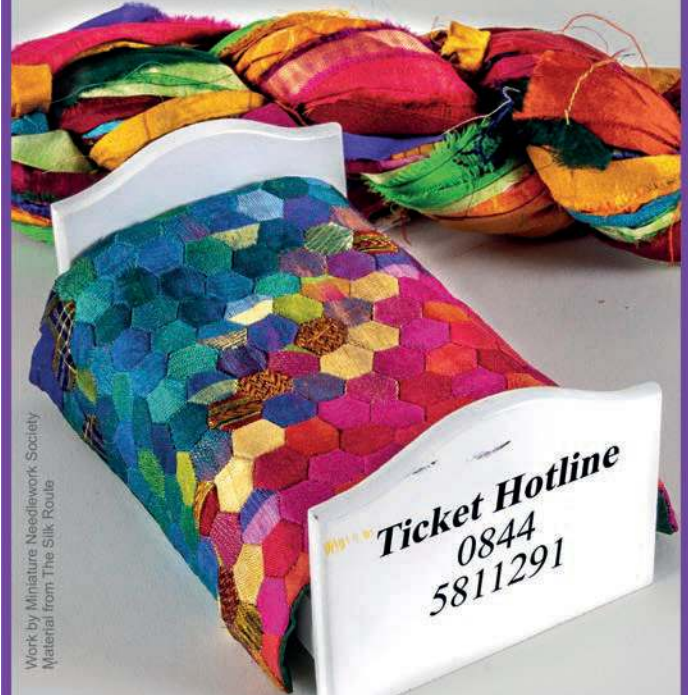
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Colette's craft room is packed with products

Step inside this fabulous craft room and you won't want to leave. Colette Cameron has filled it with everything you need to create, including a desk for children

BY PAM NORTH

The craft room of every hobbyist's dreams, where every type, colour, and size of materials lie waiting in perfect order—what more could one ask? There is one wrinkle, however; that hobbyist must be very small, as that quintessential craft room happens to be in miniature.

Colette Cameron is the Australian artist whose creations are marvellously intricate little worlds worth studying and appreciating. She's a master at gathering together the hundreds (often thousands in her larger and more ambitious works) of tiny items that complete her visions. She builds and decorates larger-scale buildings as well as room boxes, and also enjoys creating tiny furniture.

Colette is quite modest in self-assessment, saying that she is a housewife with miniatures as her hobby, and she credits part of her success to her spouse, who taught her how to use his power tools (now there's a perfect man!). "I love my power tools with a passion," she said, "And my hubby has spent years accumulating every tool and implement I could possibly want or need."

A more accurate description of Colette would describe her as an artist with challenging goals and meticulous attention to detail. Her latest piece, *Craft Room in Miniature*, reflects those qualities, and the entire project was hand-built, decorated, and made by her, with all items created from scratch,



or altered and changed to suit. She said she made it as a tribute to crafting, explaining further: "I have a huge respect for everyone with creative leanings, and I'm fascinated by the process that artists go through when creating. The *Craft Room in Miniature* for me is a reflection of a space geared toward creative endeavours, and I wanted to do a room that was reflective of that interest. I designed and built the space to contain what I personally would want in a craft room. A large desk for me to work on was part of that, and I also included a smaller desk area for children—a hint to my daughters that I am patiently waiting for grandchildren!"

The materials she used for this project are those usually incorporated into her work. The furniture and room box were built from MDF (medium density fibreboard) that she cut using a drop saw (her favourite tool). All the windows are glass, and the craft room also has a full lighting system, using fairy lights, which are inexpensive and battery-powered, and cast a soft light.

"I always have been drawn to soft lighting, as I like the effect of shadows. I utilise as many recycled items as I can, and for this particular piece beads became essential." Her favourite part about the piece was all the shelves filled to the brim with craft products, for which she used pill packets to create a full look throughout. She also had fun creating the stand adorned with hanging sticker pads, at

The colourful twelfth scale craft room shown in full.







the far left of the window. "Every item on the hanging rack is individual, and I really enjoyed working on this piece—it amused me!"

Colette makes no pretence of having any training or experience, proclaiming: "I just get an idea in my head and build it. I love the reflection of everyday life that they portray, and miniatures are so cute and fun!"

The collecting instinct is an advantage to her in her miniature-making. "I like to hoard everything, so I have a ready supply of beads, plastics, pill containers, fabrics, paper, etc.

Anything that has colour is kept, and I particularly am fond of fake plants that I can re-purpose and paint to suit whatever colour themes I am using."

Work on the craft room moved along steadily, taking around five weeks to completion, as it was a basically simple structure, but one aspect of it demanded much time and effort. "The hardest part in making this project was the hanging mobiles, which were the most time-consuming, primarily because of the fiddly and tiny pieces that were attached to the hanging strands."

While Colette has no current plans

to sell her piece, she entertains the hope that one day she might be able to make a living out of creating miniatures, although she says that she is not willing to hold her breath on that. Meanwhile, new ideas continue to inspire her, and committing to a project tends to occur out of the blue. "Right now I am working on a Priceline Pharmacy, as well as renovating a cottage for a 7-year-old girl. I'm currently doing the pharmacy as a break, but the next project is going to be a grocery store. I want to push my boundaries and have 50,000 individual items in it."

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Linda's Downton Abbey is a gorgeous tribute

Linda Guthertz started thinking about recreating Downton Abbey as soon as she saw the series on TV, and her attention to detail has resulted in an incredible mini version

BY SANDRA HARDING

This was yet another of those love at first sight moments when I saw the amazing dining room at Downton Abbey on Facebook, and for a moment I thought it was the real thing.

Then I read that it had been created by the very talented Linda Guthertz. Not only that, there were other rooms too: kitchen, servants' hall and sitting room... my cup runneth over.

I asked Linda about it of course and she said it all started with a table! She then told me everything I was long-ing to know, including the fact that she has been dabbling in miniatures and doll's houses for 41 years. And don't the photographs show the lady is no beginner?

Her real house is full of roomboxes and doll's houses and she has, in fact, built a whole town with 23 buildings with a story behind it (now I want to digress and ask her about that). However, I must learn to stick to one thing at a time, which is quite hard with so much temptation.

Back to this delight, which consists of four rooms as mentioned, and they are all totally gorgeous. The whole structure is 51" wide by 30" high and the rooms range from 33" wide for the dining room to the sitting room, which is 14" wide. Remember that Downton is a castle and things are oversized to provide that illusion. The building was



designed by Oscar Sal-abert and finished by Terry Harville to match Linda's concepts.

The amazing people (it would be rude to call them dolls as they are so good) are based on characters from the television pro-gramme, and are so easily recognisable. Each "person"

has action built into them with some turning to each other whilst others are all in different poses, and I love the lady in green in the sitting room. These amazing people were made by the talented hands of Ellen Poitras and Teresa Dudley

The table in the dining room was what started this project, as Linda has a soft spot for tables. When she saw this 17" example she had to buy it, without a clear idea of where it would end up. The tablecloth on it was actually a napkin made by Linda's grandmother — what a lovely touch. The silverware is by Pete Acquisto, the glassware by Ferenc Albert, and the dishes are by Stokesay Ware, with food made by Kiva Atkinson. The lovely paintings on the walls are reproduction copies of those on the dining room walls at Highclere Castle (the TV location for Downton Abbey). They were created by gifted artist Sue Veeder.

The lighting in this room is adjustable to create different moods with most of the lighting by the clever Ray



Above left: Actor Lesley Nicol, who plays Mrs Patmore in the TV series, with her twelfth scale counterpart.



Storey. The candelabras on the table are lit by battery-operated lights, a real pain to turn on and off Linda told me. The carpet in the dining room is tem-

porary, as Linda is having a copy of the real one at Highclere made by Cheryl Brady of Brady Stitchery. Linda had to get permission from Lady Carnarvon

to do this, and they very helpfully sent her photographs to ensure accuracy. Just the way that Linda likes.

In the television series the pro-





gramme always includes the kitchens, dining room, and the servants' hall, as this is where they wait to be summoned by the bells. So these rooms were important to this project. Now, a real first for me, and I guarantee for you too! When the bell pull in the dining room is pulled, it actually rings downstairs in the servant's hall. I need to re-adjust my idea of reality.

The kitchen is a hive of activity and you can see Mrs Patmore breaking eggs with the yolks falling in mid air. The eggs and bowl are by Patricia Paul Studios. Linda was lucky enough to meet the actress playing Mrs Patmore,



“Everything on the table had had to line up perfectly, using forceps for those very fine pieces. Her skills as a microbiologist came in very handy”





who loved the doll of herself and the other players including Daisy, who is busy grinding meat to make hamburgers. This was actually done in one of the television episodes. The stove is by Deb Jackson.

Linda is a scientist and skilled researcher and really enjoyed doing the research for this project. Things have to be right for Linda, and she knew that she had to find skilled artisans to create the quality products needed to create her dream. Linda of course dressed the Abbey and I am told the table took her three days to set properly. Everything on it had had to line up perfectly, using forceps for those very fine pieces. Her skills as a microbiologist came in very handy she tells me.

This project started about five years ago when Downton Abbey came on television. Her family supported her





and admired it at each stage but all the work was Linda's, with hands on help from dear friend Susan Perry-Hinkle of Rue de Suze. She was tiny enough to put her head and shoulders inside the dining room to hang the paintings. What a funny thought.

Linda, from San Francisco, California, tells me that there were doll's house shops in her area which have all closed, and most of her purchases are made through the internet or from doll's house shows.

I hope that you loved looking at this as much as I did. I will ask Linda nicely and maybe we can see more of this talented lady's work later.



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Painted silk is perfect for a faux leather ottoman

Kris has perfected her technique for painting silk to look like leather and here she shows how to use it to make a wonderful padded ottoman

BY KRIS COMPAS

I made an ottoman for my one-room apartment room box years ago and since then I have come up with new ways to make it even better. So let's get started and make one for your mini space.

You will need

- 100% silk material
- Red craft paint
- Ruler
- Wax paper
- Small foam roller
- Glass stain
- Foam core
- Pencil
- Craft knife
- Tacky Glue
- Scroll saw
- Card stock
- Glue stick
- Scissors
- Circle/oval template
- Mount/mat board
- 'T' pin
- Batting
- Needle and thread
- 1/4" punch
- Large stylus
- Size 10 crochet thread

Step 1. Let's make the 'vinyl' first. Don't use a blend, only use 100 per cent silk. Tape a piece of wax paper or wax freezer paper to your table. Tape the silk down, too.



Step 2. Use red craft paint to colour the silk red. Squirt the paint on the silk and use a small paint roller to spread it around. The first coat needs to saturate the silk. Clean your roller. You can see from this picture that my wax paper is covered with red paint. This won't happen on the next two coats. The silk is sealed with this first coat. You will have to throw this paper away. Hang the silk up to dry. This won't take long.



Step 3. When the first coat of paint is dry, apply another coat of craft paint. Hang to dry. Clean the paint from your roller.

Step 4. Use wax coated freezer paper for the second coat. It was what I had in my room at the time. Either can be used. Don't throw this away, you can use it for the third coat.

Step 5. For the third coat I used glass stain. Any brand will do. This brand is what I had on the shelf. Tape the silk back down onto your paper.



Step 6. Squirt the glass paint onto the painted surface and roller it on. Hang to dry. Throw away the paper and clean your roller. Wait until the paint is dry and not sticky to use.

Step 7. A note here about painted silk: I have used this before for faux leather. Use the finished product the same day or the day after. The silk is more flexible when it is fresh (not that you can't use it after a long time for flat applications like book covers and such.). For furniture I like to use it the same day. I store the extra flat or roll it onto empty paper towel cardboard rolls.



Step 8. For the base of the ottoman I used foam core. Two stacks, the first stack is 4 layers and the second stack is 2 layers.

Step 9. Trace 1 3/4" circles onto the foam core and cut out separately with a craft knife and glue together or stack and glue four layers and two layers together and cut out on a scroll saw.

Step 10. Next, cut out the foam core.

Step 11. After I made the ottoman I thought it would be best if we put 2 layers of card stock around the stacks of foam core. The silk is thin and one layer of card stock didn't hide the lines of the four layers of foam core.

Step 12. After you have measured the height of both

stacks, cut the card stock to fit.



Step 13. Glue the card stock onto the stacks of foam core with Tacky Glue. Pretend that I have a layer of card stock all ready on the stack of foam core you see!



Step 14. Trace around the bottom of the tallest stack onto card stock and cut the circle out.



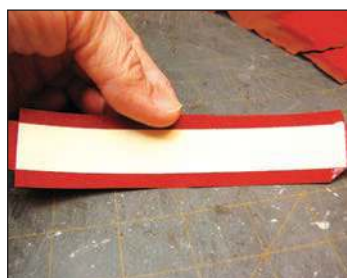
Step 15. Use a glue stick to glue the silk onto card stock. Glue the card stock circle to the wrong side of the silk.

Step 16. Cut out the silk circle with about a 1/4" extra all around. Cut 'V' notches all around. Use Tacky Glue to glue the card stock circle of silk to the ottoman base.

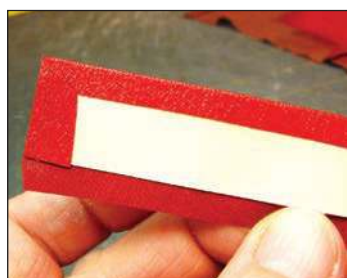
Step 17. Use the Tacky Glue to glue the silk onto the sides of the base.



Step 18. Measure the height of the base and cut out a strip of card to fit. Do a trial fit. The edges should meet.



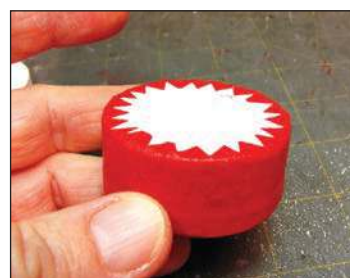
Step 19. Glue stick the silk to the card stock.



Step 20. Trim around the card leaving about a 1/4" extra all around. Cut the corners as I have in the photo. Glue to the mitred short and long sides. Glue the card stock around the base.



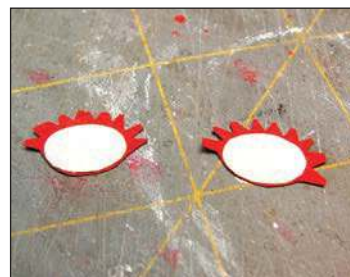
Step 21. The folded long edge is at the bottom. Begin with the short side that has the extra silk. You will end with the short side that was folded over.



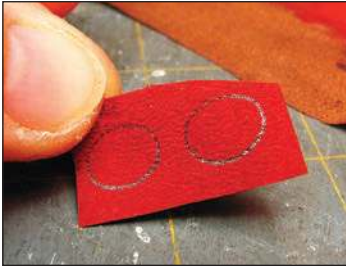
Step 22. Cut 'V' notches around the top. Glue the notches down.

Step 23. If you have an oval template I recommend using it, if you don't, then use the circle template. I traced two 50 degree ovals onto card stock. If using the circle template use the 7/16" circle. Then I cut these out.

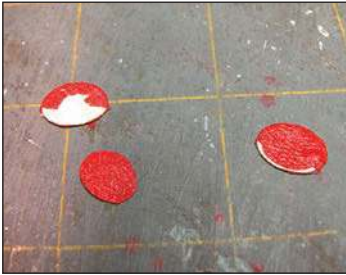
Step 24. Glue stick the silk onto the card ovals.



Step 25. Trim the silk to the edges of the card stock on half the oval. The other half of the oval I left about an 1/8" extra and cut 'V' notches. Glue the notches down.



Step 26. Trace the same size ovals onto the wrong side of the silk and cut out.



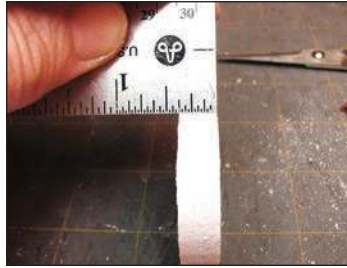
Step 27. Glue the ovals onto the backside of the covered ovals.

Step 28. Glue the silk ovals a little away from the folded edge.



Step 29. Divide the base in half and glue the ovals on. The edge that was folded is the edge that should hang over.

Step 30. Measure the height of the two layer stack of foam core.



Step 31. Cut the strip of card and do a trial fit. The edges should meet.



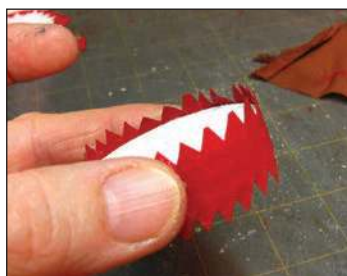
Step 32. Use glue stick to glue the silk to the card.



Step 33. Trim the silk leaving about a 1/4" all around. Cut the corners.

Step 34. With tacky glue, glue one short end to the card stock. Begin with the short end that has the extra silk.

Step 35. Glue the card stock to the foam core. You will end with the short side that folded, just like you did with the base.



Step 36. Cut 'V' notches on

the top and the bottom of this section. Then glue the notches down. Glue this new section to the top of the base.

Step 37. Trace a 1 3/4" circle onto mat board. Mark the quarters. Cut out.

Step 38. Make a hole in the centre of the circle with a 'T' pin.

Step 39. I prefer to use Thermolam Plus for the batting in my furniture. You can get this at the fabric store. Do not buy the iron on kind, only the sew on kind.



Step 40. Cut a circle of Thermolam Plus about a 1/4" smaller than the mat board circle. Cut a hole in the centre of that.

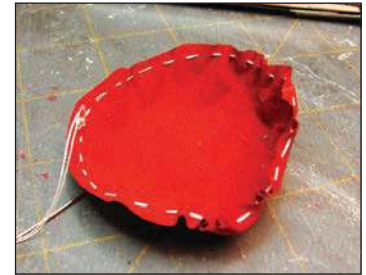


Step 41. Cut another circle of Thermolam Plus about an 1/8" smaller than the mat board circle. Cut a hole in the centre of that.

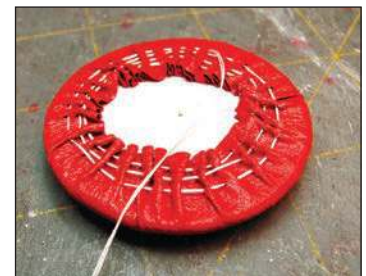
Step 42. Glue the small circle then the larger circle of the Thermolam Plus onto the mat board circle.

Step 43. The last circle of Thermolam Plus is cut to fit

the mat board circle with a tiny bit to go over the edge.



Step 44. This is where the painted silk needs to be fresh. Being pulled over a curved surface is difficult when the silk is too dry or old. Measure around the padded top and cut the silk about a 1/2" larger. Use a needle and thread to sew a running stitch around edge.



Step 45. Insert the padded top and pull the thread tight. Begin another running stitch around the silk. I've sewn three lines of running stitch with each getting closer to the edge. I also pulled tightly as I sewed.



Step 46. Insert some glue

under the silk at the edge of the mat board circle. Press the silk down trying to eliminate as many folds as you can. Trim off the extra silk.



Step 47. For the button on the top of the ottoman I couldn't decide whether to use a 1/4" or 5/16" punch. In the end I decided to use the 1/4" punch. Glue the circles onto the silk with Elmer's white glue.



Step 48. Before the glue is dry, place the circles onto some craft foam and use a large stylus to shape the buttons. I move the stylus around to get a rounded shape. If the glue is too dry it won't take shape.



Step 49. Before we sew the dimple on the top it will help if we pressed down in the centre of the padded top to stretch the silk a bit. Use a needle and thread to sew a dimple into the padded top. Start from the wrong side.

Step 50. Make at least two stitches to pull down the silk to make a dimple in the top of the ottoman. Tie off the thread.



Step 51. Use tacky glue to glue the padded top onto the rest of the ottoman.

Step 52. Piping is also better made with the silk fresh. Use size 10 crochet thread. Apply a line of tacky glue to the edge of the wrong side of the silk. Spread the glue to the edge of the silk.



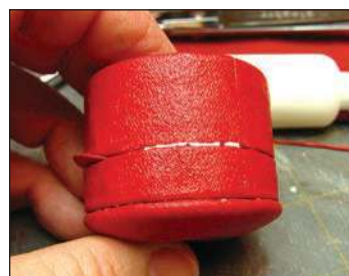
Step 53. Press the crochet thread into the glue. Fold the silk over the crochet thread making sure the crochet thread is in the very centre



of the fold. Run your fingernail over the silk, forcing it together. Turn the silk over and use your fingernail to force the silk together and pushing the crochet thread into the fold. Turn the silk again, do this several times.



Step 54. Use sharp scissors to cut the piping away. Cut very close to the crochet thread.



Step 55. Use your tacky glue to glue the piping into the first seam of the ottoman.



Step 56. Glue the piping on top of the handles.

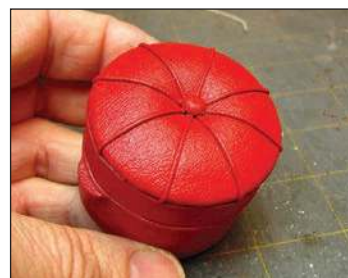
Step 57. Use the circle template to mark quarters on the padded top of the

ottoman. Turn the template and then mark eighths.



Step 58. Make more piping and glue lengths onto the top at the marks. Push the end of the piping into the seam. I've got all eight pieces glued on.

Step 59. Make another piece of piping and glue it into the top seam.



Step 60. I chose the 1/4" button to use. Glue this on with tacky glue. Here is my finished ottoman.

You can see my ottoman in its new home on p24. I like the splash of red with the avocado sofa. The silk is very easy to work with and easy to glue. It is a very good substitute for leather and vinyl when treated correctly. The painted silk could easily be used for restaurant booth seats as well. Have fun creating this comfy touch to your scene.



Visit <http://linchminisbykris.blogspot.com/> to see more of Kris's amazing miniature projects.

SMALL 

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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



Joan's French House

BY JOAN JOYCE

Regular readers will already know and be delighted by the work of Joan Joyce and this is yet again another of her perfect creations.

Joan designed and built the house as a gift for her then daughter-in-law about nine years ago. She was inspired by her beloved book on French Country Style which was a tremendous help in getting the look she wanted to create.

Joan originally planned to make real terracotta roof tiles and line it with real stones, but realised the weight would make it impossible to lift. She resorted to plan B and used corrugated card for the roof, and some very effective stone paper for the internal walls. The shutters are card with wood strips glued on while the windows and French doors were purchases. The aged effects were just made using different paints.



In the living room an old 1940's picture frame was used to make the fireplace and the lamp on the table is just a small brass candle stick with a petit-fours case lampshade. The chandelier was kept simple using various beads and the wall lights are filigrees with glass bead shades. Joan hand stitched the throw and the cushions which she filled with pudding rice which makes them sit well and keeps the shape she wanted.



A friend reduced some of Joan's family photographs which she stuck in a little photograph album. All the lovely pieces of furniture are just budget pieces which were given Joan's magical customised touch. The bedroom wallpaper is Cath Kidston wrapping paper, and the bedroom has more customised furniture pieces and a few bits of old lace added to complete the look.

It was during the research period that Joan realised many French bathrooms are in the corner of the bedroom, so one was added, with the addition of a lace curtain for modesty reasons of course. The lovely bath is an old soap dish which was painted to resemble chipped enamel. The bubbles are just bubble wrap with a

hole for Fifi La Belle to sit in. The brass washstand and small jug and basin were painted and a tiny washbag with string ties was added on the side. The French soap on the chair is just a bit of painted wood stuck on a button.

The kitchen is so glorious that Joan and I agreed that we will be doing a smaller separate piece, just about the kitchen. I think it deserves to be given special treatment, so it's on another page — page 64. Sorry.

Joan tells me that she really enjoyed decorating and furnishing this house and couldn't have taken more care to attain the look if it had been her own real house she was doing. Luckily, it is still being well looked after and is yet another of Joan's family heirlooms.

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How Diana's love was rekindled

BY SANDRA HARDING

Diana Fulmer admits that she fell in love with our miniature world at about four years of age, fascinated by the little things in her mum's china cabinet.

Many years later, in her twenties, she visited an exhibition called Mott's Miniatures at a theme park in California. She spent hours gazing at the many exhibits, including at least seven American homes from log cabin days, through to the 1950s, including a home with a mini working television.

There and then she decided that she would like to make some miniature furniture herself so purchased some kits, at the same time collecting other miniatures along the way. As often happens work, and raising a son, took up most of her time, but her husband really encouraged her to pursue her hobbies. After buying herself some doll's house books

and going to a couple of doll's house shows, her love was rekindled.

Diana had carefully saved all her early makes and purchases and she admits it was like Christmas uncovering them all again. Very soon, half finished room boxes and other projects were completed, and she started making more and more items herself.

These include the computer table and her husband's amateur radio equipment, all made from balsa wood and scraps. There is also a Coleman stove and picnic table, which will be featured in a planned outdoor display, and the amazing keyboard, made to look like a real one that she played. The craft table is full of items that all crafters have, and is in fact a representation of her real one, and where she makes most of her things.

For her son's tenth birthday she decided to create a room box, which measures 15" wide x10"high x12" deep, and his birthday is even circled on the calendar. There is a yellow raincoat, karate gi, chess board and other things in the closet. There is a fireman's hat as, at that time, that's what he wanted to be when he grew up.



Pictures on the walls reflect other things he was interested in: wolves, elephants, red Corvettes, and most of all a game system with the Mario brothers. The game and console is all ready for his next game I think. Several items here were bought but most, like the desk, chair, bookshelves, books and small table were made by Diana.

Another room box, a diorama and completely different, is the one of two bears raiding a campsite, which Diana claims she had a lot of fun making. It's made in a kind of crate used for jams and jellies, painted, with a background picture added. Simple but effective, and I love the hats the bears are wearing. I wonder where the owners are?

After a long break of 13 years where music was taking centre stage as her artistic expression, she is now returning to the miniature arts, since she is semi-retired and has lots of time. I wonder what she will accomplish next?



WHERE I WORK

THIS MONTH WE CHAT WITH LINDA ABEL OF BIJOU DOLLSHOUSES

Hi Linda, tell us when your mini adventure began When I got my first doll's house in 1991 and started by making things to go in it.

And what do you have now? Five houses of my own, not including small scenes and a large house, which is under construction. I also have three others that are for my grandchildren to play with.

Where do you work? I mostly make things at my shop at Blake House Craft Centre in Essex. Customers are always welcome and some people just love to see what I am making. However, some evenings I go down to my garden room which I was lucky enough to get a couple of years ago. I have everything I need in there, including an electric saw, a sewing machine and lots of art and craft stuff. My garden room is friends and family only.

Where do you sell? Most of my miniatures are sold in the shop and I will make things to order for customers.

We know the shop can't be a private place to work. I love a chat to people and this is a great place to meet new friends and like-minded miniaturists. Some customers give me ideas of new things to make and one customer is lending me his airbrush to see if I like it before I buy myself one.

Your most challenging order? One of my toughest makes was Andy Pandy and he was a real



labour of love! I am a very slow knitter but decided that I would have to knit one stitch at a time in blue and white silk sewing thread. It took ages and I am never making another one!

Do you listen to music or the radio while you work? The radio is on in both my workspaces. I like Magic, Gold or Heart.

How many days do you work? The shop is open six days a week and I am in the shop five of those days. I have one weekend day off when my husband or friends will be here instead. The only day we are closed is Mondays.

Describe your workspace in five words. Messy, cosy, warm, exciting, fun.

What couldn't you work without? My guilty pleasure is sweets. I keep them hidden in the car, microwave and random bags. My prayers were answered when a sweet shop opened two doors away from me so I will never run out.

Where would your dream workspace be? My ideal workshop would have a sea view. That would be my dream.

• Bijou Dollshouses, Blake House Craft Centre, Blake House Farm, Blake End, Braintree, Essex CM77 6SH. Tel: 01376 335 111 or 0780 718 8270. Email: linda@minibijou.com www.minibijou.com



"IT TOOK AGES AND I AM NEVER MAKING ANOTHER ONE!"

Chocolate creme eggs – how do you make yours?



Creme eggs are a big part of Easter so it's only right that they should appear somewhere in your doll's house. Tanja shows us how to make them

BY TANJA JENSEN



Step 1. Take a small ball of clay and use your finger to gently roll one end to form an egg shape.



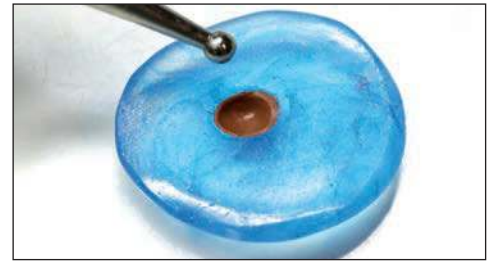
Step 2. Press this against your work surface to create one half of the chocolate egg — you want this to be approximately 4 mm in size. I also used my knife to go around the side to get a sharper edge.



Step 3. Using a needle tool create the three 'rings' as well as the star in the centre. I find it's easiest to start with the smallest ring and place everything else in relation to that. Then bake the egg according to package instructions. If your work surface is not bakeable, use a blade in a zigzag motion to 'scrape' it off the work surface, then bake.



Step 4. Take any mould maker of your choice and create a mould of the egg. I'm using this re-heatable and re-shapeable mould maker which can be found in many online craft shops. The great thing about this is that you can reuse it to create other moulds. However, it can't be used to create anything which needs to be baked IN the mould.



Steps 5 and 6. To make the whole eggs press clay into the mould, cut off excess clay from around the edge, remove from the mould and bake. You can cut off a bit from the top either before or after baking. Press a new ball of clay into the mould, place a pre-baked half on top; press, remove and bake.

To create the cracked open egg do the same thing, but hollow out the egg in the mould using the embossing tool. It may be easier to remove these if you've applied some mould release, but it can be done as long as the clay is not too soft.



continued on P35.

You will need

- Brown and white polymer clay
- Needle tool and embossing/ ball tool
- X-Acto knife
- Liquid clay (I'm using Fimo Deco Gel)
- Yellow pastel
- Mould maker of your choice
- Gloss glaze

Painting swoosh style shabby chic roses

Caroline shares her swooshing technique for painting roses that will add a beautiful touch to everything from furniture to doors and faux panels

BY CAROLINE DUPUIS

I've had a lot of questions about how I paint my roses with my swooshing technique. So here is a tutorial to help you to make your own. It really doesn't matter what brand of paint you use. I use yellow, green, red, pink, and white. I use a lot of white, so I have a litre of white. You'll only use a minuscule amount though. Also use a regular brush. Not too big, not too thin. Keep the colours in the caps and some white on a small piece of paper. Okay, let's get started.



You will need

- Acrylic paint - yellow, green, red, pink, and white
- Paint brush



Step 1. Start with adding red dots to mark where your flowers will go (there's some white in there because I didn't clean the brush after dipping it in the white. VERY IMPORTANT! DO NOT CLEAN YOUR BRUSH between steps. Mixing up all the colours gives it a great look. Back to painting roses!



Step 2. Load your brush with white, pink, and red.



Step 3. Here's the swoosh technique. Swoosh one way, under the dot like you are writing the letter 'u' from left to right.

Step 4. Then swoosh above the dot from left to right.

Step 5. Now just paint back and forth adding swooshes going out further and further until you like the size of your rose.

Step 6. Here I'm adding white for a highlight. It's really easy. Once you have something that suggests a rose then STOP! Sometimes my red centre gets lost and I have to put it back in.

It's very important not to clean your brush between steps,

Painting leaves



Step 7. Mix just a bit of yellow and green. Load your brush. Have more green than yellow. In the photo I added too much yellow so I added more green. I'll fix that later. The best is when you have a bit of pink/red showing through the green from not cleaning the brush after painting the roses. I'll fix my mistake by sticking another rose in there.

Step 8. The rose buds are so simple. Just load the brush with pink, red, white or however you like. And drag the brush from the leaf toward the outside of the painting. Done!

Step 9. I made a front door using the same technique. But here you will see I added some white in the leaves for more contrast.

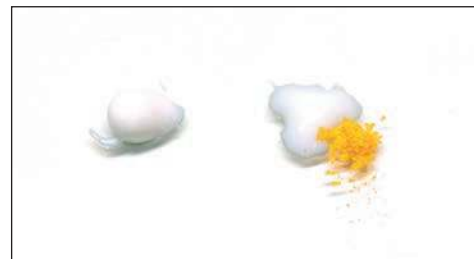
Step 10. To make faux panels I used a light brown colour for the outer edge. The tan goes on the top and the right to look like a shadow. Then mix a little white to make a lighter version of the same colour and put it at the bottom and the left. You could even add more of a shadow with some watered down black and put it on the inside of the darker tan lines.

This is the way I make my roses. I've tried the classic way of painting them, but it takes too much concentration. This is much easier.

By the way, I have no secrets. If you ever have a question about anything I've made please don't hesitate to ask. Hope this rose tutorial helps you out! See more of Caroline's work at cinderellamoments.com.



continued from P33.



Step 7. To make the crème for the inside, mix liquid clay and white clay to get 'clay icing'. Then, for the yellow crème, I used a more thinned out version mixed with yellow pastel.



Step 8. Add this to the inside of the egg, bake, add gloss glaze to the filling and you're done.

Note: I glued the egg to the base in order to take the picture, but you can hold the eggs with your fingers when doing this as well

● www.sugarcharmshop.dk

Crème egg timeline

If you're thinking of adding crème eggs to your scene, bear in mind a few dates if you want to be historically accurate. While filled eggs were first manufactured by the Cadbury Brothers in 1923, the crème egg in its current form was introduced in 1963. They were initially sold as Fry's Crème Eggs and only renamed Cadbury's Crème Eggs in 1971. They are currently made at a rate of 1.5 million per day at the Bournville factory in Birmingham.

Black & white photos, previous page:

Packing room at Cadbury's Bournville factory circa 1903. There were lots of different varieties of easter eggs being produced at this time, but Crème Eggs didn't arrive until a lot later.

Pierre's stunning work pays tribute to the past

No country has elevated furniture making as an art form more than France. Artist Pierre Mourey's work is reminiscent of a golden era when excellence was once all the rage

BY DEB WEISSLER. PHOTOS BY PIERRE MOUREY

France saw the rise of a golden age in French design in the 18th century that was much admired by an international clientèle where furniture and fashion were highly prized. The salon may have been an Italian invention but the French elevated it to new heights among royalty and the upper class. Associated with French literary and philosophical movements, salon hosts and hostesses threw lavish soirées where news, ideas, gossip, and intrigue revolved around discussions of literature, art, and politics. These fetes would be labelled the 'age of conversation.'

"I think geopolitical and cultural circumstances gave patronage to many great artists and this enabled this art form to flourish," Pierre Mourey explains. "I like doing intricate work with a variety of skills typical of that era: woodworking, marquetry, finishings, bronzing, marbling, enamelling, et cetera."

At a time when society was defined and controlled almost exclusively by men, French women finally came into their own. For the first time they were encouraged to exchange ideas, receive and give criticism, write, and enjoy the works of others. They selected their own guests, chose themes, commissioned furniture, and influenced interior design that spread throughout Europe. Furniture became elegant and



sophisticated, with stunning finishes and lush fabrics, and femininity softened the harsh lines of furniture that had come before. It is this art form that Pierre has emulated for more than three decades.

Pierre is a native Parisian who studied sound recording at the Parisian École Louis Lumière. As a recording technician, he was a freelancer for the film industry and co-owned a small company that created special effects for cinema and advertising. Many of the special effects involved scale models. In 1987 Pierre also opened a collectors' miniature and toy shop in Versailles along with his wife, where he spent most of his spare time.

The shop sold miniature furniture made by fine craftsmen and Pierre loved examining the fine details and craftsmanship. "One day my wife presented me with a complete set of miniature tools for my birthday. This was the beginning of a new adventure!"

Pierre carefully researched the miniature market, attempting to fill niches not dominated by others. He explored modern furniture, selling his pieces in his shop and at Toymania, a French collectors' toy and miniature show. His first serious piece was a meuble d'appui (high console) that he made in a workshop taught by IGMA Fellow Denis Hillman, who was well-known for his exquisite Louis XV furniture.

The workshop not only gave Pierre



the opportunity to explore marquetry and fine cabinet making, but it established his niche. The 1990 first Gulf War signalled a slowdown in the economy and Pierre sold his shop. He also closed his special effects studio, moved to the country, and began making miniatures full time. In his spare moments, he crafted full size pieces for his new home.

Since then, Pierre has hand-crafted his own line of fine 18th century furniture of the French Arts Décoratifs with mostly one-of-a-kind pieces that are complex and highly detailed. So time consuming to create, he may only craft less than a dozen pieces in a year. If creating a truly challenging and elaborate piece, there's no limit to the time involved.

"I should point out most of my work today is one of a kind, however I have been asked to do some pieces I have made in the past. But I always try to make it different; changing the pattern or marquetry, using a different finish such as French polish, wax, or gold leaf for example. So collectors have a unique and personalised item."

Pierre's finely carved lyre chair from the last quarter of the 18th century is one of his most popular selling items. It was his reproduction of a stunning Bureau à Cylindre, or cylinder desk, inspired by 18th century cabinet maker Jean-Francois Oeben, that challenged all his skill sets. Pierre spent over five months, seven days a week



Top far left: Named for the lyre shape that forms the back, this lyre chair is one of Pierre's most popular items.

Top: Front and back of a Bureau à Cylindre, or cylinder desk, inspired by 18th century cabinet maker Jean-Francois Oeben.

Top far right: The stunning twelfth scale Van Meker cabinet in progress.

Above: A hand-crafted twelfth scale room box with painted walls and trompe l'oeil.

Above right: Van Meker cabinet up close.

crafting the piece with no customer in mind. Terrified afterwards that he had made something no one would buy, it sold in the very first minutes of a Guild Show in New York.

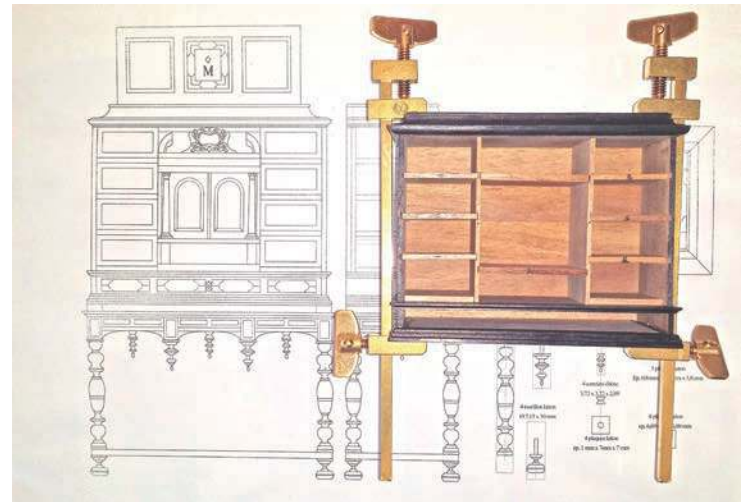
His work is not totally confined to the

“I had to find the right balance between miniature representation and its prototype.”

18th century. In recent years Pierre has received several interesting commissions that included furniture from the 17th century to contemporary designs. A few years ago Pierre received a multi-piece commission from a collector that challenged his skills as a miniature maker. Pieces from both the 17th and 18th centuries required extensive research into the manufacturing methods of the past, drawing up detailed plans, and finding techniques to adapt them to twelfth scale.

“As always, I had to find the right balance between miniature representation and its prototype,” Pierre says. “Fortunately the clients who contact me are patient, albeit demanding people. They usually know what they want and know a lot about the object they want reproduced.”

The framework of Pierre's pieces are crafted from oak for strength, and then finishings are done with a variety of specialty and exotic woods. Years ago he obtained a supply of rare



and old wood from a retiring cabinet maker that he reserves for special pieces. The wood's grains and colours were unique and harvested from 200 year old trees when pollution was non-existent and the quality of the trees were superior to today's trees.

In addition to his stunning furniture, Pierre has crafted exquisite room boxes. Unfortunately time and opportunity have prevented him from making them in recent years. He no longer attends miniature shows either, content instead to take commissions and enjoying a bit of semi-retirement. He appreciates English and American collectors since the miniature world has grown slowly in his own country, where collectors seem more interested in paintings or sculptures rather than miniatures.

"I think retirement would probably be the best way to enjoy life, and my own thumbnails remain one of my concerns," Pierre laughs. "Ageing is there

too and it is necessary to know when to "spare the horse to travel far," as the proverb says. Anyway, I plan to hang in there for a little while longer."

The French Arts Décoratifs era ended with the death of Louis XVI and the start of the French Revolution. It is a testament to the French spirit that so many pieces of fine full size furniture survived the mayhem that ensued. Pierre's creations are also a testament to the time, labour, and love French craftsmen have put into their work for centuries. On his workbench at least, the French Arts Décoratifs lives on.

Top left and top right: Antwerp cabinet in progress and Pierre's detailed drawing.

Above left: Pierre's spacious workshop located in the South of France.

Above right: An exquisite handmade mother of pearl roll top desk in twelfth scale.

Right: The Scagliola cabinet inspired by 17th century Italian craftsman Baldassare Artima.



SHOW DATES

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

APRIL

SATURDAY 04 APRIL

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

The Jubilee Hall, Congregational Church, Bowden Lane, MARKET HARBOROUGH, Leics LE16 7JD
Open: 10.30am - 3.00 pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

SUNDAY 05 APRIL

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Knights Hill Hotel & Spa, South Wootton, KING'S LYNN, PE30 3HQ (Junct. A148/A149)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

FRIDAY 10 APRIL

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Novotel Stevenage, Knebworth Park, STEVENAGE, Hertfordshire SG1 2AX (A1M/Junction 7)
Open: 10.00am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

MONDAY 13 APRIL

DOLLS HOUSES & MINIATURES FAIR

Holiday Inn Milton Keynes - East M1, Junction 14, London Road, NEWPORT PAGNELL, Buckinghamshire MK16 0JA (on A509)
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: Dolly's Daydreams

SATURDAY 18 APRIL

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Pudsey Civic Hall, Dawson's Corner, Pudsey, LEEDS LS28 5TA
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

SATURDAY 25 APRIL

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES AIR

Strathbrock Partnership Centre, 189A West Main Street, BROXBURN, West Lothian EH52 5LH
Open: 10.30am - 4.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

MAY

SATURDAY 16 MAY

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Churchdown Community Centre, Parton Road, Churchdown, GLOUCESTER GL3 2JH
Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

KENSINGTON DOLLS HOUSE FAIR

Kensington Town Hall, Horton Street, LONDON W8 7NX
Open: FRIDAY 15 - 11.00am - 6.00pm;
SATURDAY 16 - 10.00am - 5.00pm
Organiser: Kensington Dolls House Festival

SUNDAY 31 MAY

DOLLS HOUSE & MINIATURES FAIR

Festival Hall, Talbot Road, ALDERNEY EDGE Cheshire SK9 7HR
Open: 10.30am - 3.00pm
Organiser: MGM Fairs

FAIR ORGANISERS:

Dolly's Daydreams: 01945 870160.
www.dollysdaydreams.com
E: dollysdaydreams@btinternet.com

Kensington Dollshouse Festival:
020 7812 9892
E: kdf@dollshousefestival.com
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Miniatura: 0121 783 9922.
www.miniatura.co.uk

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www.dollhouse-fairs.co.uk

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www.yorkdollshousefair.co.uk

Wendy's World: 01895 834348
www.wendysworldfairs.co.uk
E: wendyhobday@wendysworld.co.uk

Quick & easy

Walking canes

BY SANDRA HARDING



You will need

- Cocktail sticks
- Beads of all kinds, suitable for the handle of a walking cane.
- Silver and gold paint
- Acrylic paint, black or brown
- Small paint brushes
- Glue, tweezers.

- Cut off one sharp end of the cocktail stick and, leaving the cut end unpainted, paint the rest black or colour of choice. Let it dry.
- Paint your beads silver or gold, or colour of choice. Make sure the holes are not filled with paint. Let them dry.
- Paint the cut end (ferrule) of the cocktail stick silver/gold, and let it dry
- Glue the silver/gold bead onto the sharp end of the cocktail stick, and add a line of matching, gold or silver paint just below the bead (handle). Fill in the hole at the top with paint, or tiny bead. Let it dry.
- If the cocktail stick's point is showing at the top of the handle, glue on a smaller painted bead.



While we make every effort to ensure the accuracy of these dates, please do check shows before travelling.



Old shop blossoms



Jane Rees eventually got around to revamping an old shop that she'd had for a long time — it's blossomed into a beautiful flower shop that was certainly worth the wait

BY JANE REES

I first found the shop in its undecorated state in an antique shop in the mid 80s. At the time my two daughters were young and we decided to make it into a grocery shop.

It stayed like that for some time until

I had the idea of making it into a flower shop.

My first attempt was a bit too clean and tidy and my heart wasn't in it.

I've been going to the Kensington Dollhouse Festival for as long as it's

been running and a few years ago I started to buy kits from Artofmini. They do some great laser cut kits. I was particularly taken with a shabby chic flower shop that they had as a display and set about gradually buying all the



into life

little kits that would suit my idea for my shop.

There are seed packets, plant books, packs of candles, lavender sachets and boxes, paper carrier bags, blackboards and plant pictures, all of which had to be cut out and assembled. Then there were the flowers to make — most of the flowers have been made by me from various kits — and collect from various sources.





“I thought it would be fun to have photos of me in my various doll's houses”





Once I had dirtied the walls and floor of the shop to the right state with watered down brown paint I started to assemble the whole thing. There is a strip of concealed LED lighting at the front of the box and, of course, my original light fitting.

The little figure is a 3D print of me I had done earlier this year by Holo-deck3D studios (see their advertisement on page 15). I thought it would be fun to have photos of me in my various doll's houses and roomboxes.

Then there was the outside to redo. I chose duck egg blue and found the contrasting blue/green lettering in Hobbycraft.

I made the awning out of starched cotton stripe material and made a frame for them to sit on over the windows. I already had the seagull, found at some miniatures fair a while ago — he had never fitted in anywhere until now.

The little table and folding chairs had been in another room box display but I thought the pavement needed some rustic looking furniture. Don't ask me why there are plates of tapas out there — it just seemed like a good idea.

The climbing plant is by Gill Rawlings of Petite Fleur; it is a sweet pea and one of my treasures. I made the ladders years ago from plans in a book and now I have it in rooms I'm currently working on.

Blooms by the Sea isn't clean and tidy like my first attempt, but my heart is certainly in this one.





Carol puts a new twist on miniature furnishings

This talented maker discovered doll's houses by accident but was so glad she didn't walk away from her future passion. And the miniature world is too

BY PAM NORTH

Carol Sherry, a retired high school Spanish teacher got into miniatures purely by chance. About fifteen years ago, while scouting estate sales for full-size wooden furniture that she could paint, she found a large, partially completed doll's house and a box of furniture, all bargain-priced at £15. She nearly passed it up, then reconsidered. Recalling that day, she said: "Knowing what I know now, I can't believe that I even hesitated and

came so close to walking away from my future passion!"

She began by painting the miniature furniture in the same style as the full-size pieces that she loved. Then she met other miniaturists at her local doll's house store, and gradually the wonderful world of minis opened up for her.

Now Carol makes punch needles, punch needle rug kits, and whimsical furniture and accessories. She finds her inspiration in colour and design that is slightly non traditional. "Much of what I do is inspired by the full-size designs of Mackenzie-Childs (a manufacturer of ceramics, and retailer of hand-painted imported furniture and home décor).

Their combinations and patterns are visually exciting and inspire me to try different combinations. I am energised by their free-spirited, colourful whimsy."

Highlighted in this article are several pieces of Carol's miniature furniture, photographed at the Philadelphia Miniaturia Show. Two chairs are pictured. The wing-backed chair with the striped feet reflects how miniatures are changing with technology; in this case, the chair is 3D printed, with the basic form made of plastic.

"A friend was looking for a technology-related focus for

his son, and asked if I had anything he could help me with," Carol explained in more detail, "so I showed him a chair I wanted, and together we worked on the design. I really enjoyed using different fabrics on the chair, and playing a little with colours and prints. It is so nice to have a consistent basic form to upholster.

"The black chair is a purchased chair that has been revamped. The table started life looking much more traditional as well. It was a purchased table that I modified, using acrylic craft paints and cotton fabrics for the most part. Paint and fabric make all the difference! The Christmas trees are my interpretation of something Mackenzie-Childs did for their NYC store; they featured tall, full-sized Christmas trees made of broken pottery. Jumping off from that idea, I created my trees out of shells, beads, and jewellery findings to create a similar feeling in miniature.

"Another direct inspiration was the dress-form lamp. I really could not resist attempting my own version in miniature! The Bombay chest is a favourite base piece for me; I love the





shape. This is a purchased piece, and I have painted it many different ways. This particular colour scheme was in response to a customer request; I really like to be pushed out of my little ruts by special requests! Making miniatures brings me great joy, and I hope that spirit is communicated to people who see my work."

Miniatures encompass many aspects, and Carol loves their variety. "If I don't feel like painting, I can upholster something, or design a punch needle rug!" Correspondingly, there are difficulties, and Carol cited hers: "Time! I never have enough time! I have so many ideas, and even working on miniatures almost every day, I probably never will manage to make everything I envision!"

Tools are another realm miniaturists embrace, and Carol has her favourites. "For miniature upholstery I have this wonderful two-ended blade sort of thing! I think it was intended for use with clay. It is perfect for tucking in fabric or easing on trim. I can't upholster without it! And of course, the best brushes for painting are the old ones with only a few bristles left!"

The future of miniatures is often in the thoughts of artists, and Carol is no exception.

"I came to miniatures late and missed the 'heyday', but I think the hobby has matured and become more interesting. I continually am astounded by the artistry and skill of the miniaturists I encounter at shows. Today's collectors are very sophisticated and appreciate the quality they see, but there is no denying that we are on the downswing as far as popularity goes. However, I believe that there will be a resurgence of interest, like we have seen with other crafts and hobbies."

Changes in technology have brought new dimensions to miniature crafting, some of which Carol is embracing for future projects. "3-D printing has opened up lots of fun possibilities. I also am interested in thin leather for upholstery, using some fun colours."



LITTLE LINKS:

Carol Sherry Miniatures
tel: 001 763 557 1160
email: carol_sherry@comcast.net
web: www.carolsherryminiatures.com

"I have so many ideas, and even working on miniatures almost every day, I probably never will manage to make everything I envision!"

More rooms in Mike's foam board fantasy

Sandra takes another look at Mike Guidry's fascinating house and homes in on three of the rooms that have been constructed using foam board

BY SANDRA HARDING



When we featured Mike Guidry's fabulous ballroom in an earlier issue I knew that you'd love it as much as I did, and so I asked Mike if we could feature more of his lovely creations made from foam board.

We felt that it would be a good idea to group them together so that you get a better idea of the size of this house, and this is the first group. The nursery, the music room and the lady's bedroom.

The Victorian nursery features nursery rhyme wallpaper by Brodnax Prints and has an angel fresco ceiling by Itsy Bitsy Mini. The furniture is all Bespaq and Mike has added a lot of Victorian toys around the room, many

artist made, including World of Miniature Bears and Silvia Leiner. There is a polar bear rug on the floor by the fireplace, which is one of Mike's favourites, and on the walls are framed Victorian samplers.

The lady's bedroom features more beautiful walnut Bespaq furniture and has dark pink upholstery. The fireplace and columns next to the fireplace are by Jim Coates and the vases on the top are by Mzia. The colour scheme in this room is dark pink and grey, and the ceiling, wall panels and flooring are by World and Model (see their advertisement on P23). The chandelier is Missy, by the Gatzens, and the dressing table has ladies' accessories by Patsy Mac and others. Like all other rooms in this house the rug is printed on fabric so that it lays nice and flat.

The music room is located between the drawing room and the dining room on the west side and the ballroom on the east side (featured in the aforementioned article). This room is large at 13" wide, 28" deep and 14" high, and has four doorways that would let music travel through the house's public rooms and also allow easy access to the ballroom during special events.

The walls, ceiling panels and flooring are again by World and Model and the colour scheme is salmon and blue, with angels playing musical instruments around the room. The beautiful lyre mahogany furniture, the organ and the grand piano are by





Bespaq, and the over mantel is actually a door surround. The columns are topped by Christmas ornaments which Mike painted and glued on, and the marble clock is another detailed artist made piece. It is also another of Mike's favourites. The rug is printed and contains all the colours used in this gorgeous room.

For those of you who did not see the article about the ballroom, a little ex-

planation is needed here I think. Mike designs and creates these rooms using foam board, and builds each room flat, adding all the papers and decorations on each wall before assembly – an amazing and clever approach I think. He furnishes each room with the care and love that full size interior designers must surely use. The end result is mouth-watering and makes me very envious.

Mix up your goo and get going on colourful gerberas

Bright, beautiful gerbera daisies are a great way of adding a splash of colour to any room or garden and Angie's here to help you make them

BY ANGIE SCARR

I do make and sell stencils, but if you want, you can make your own stencils by using flower and leaf punches on light card. If you decide to only buy one pack of paper coated flower wire, go for 26 gauge. You can find this type of paper with baking supplies. Please note the flower project requires baking several times so it's a good idea to fill your tiles and fill your oven for each process.

There are loads of uses for liquid Fimo in miniature making. When mixed with polymer clay I call it goo and it can

be used for much more than cake icing (some of which I explore in my gardens book and in my flower shop book)! But here is an idea I thought up while I was recovering from a recent illness.

I will be making gerberas here but you can substitute for whichever stencils you have.

Making the goo mixture

Polymer clay goo is simply a mix of polymer clay and liquid polymer (Fimo). I use it for stencilling and also for gluing small parts of my work together in a really permanent way. It works so much better than using any form of glue. The thickness of the mix affects the 'grab', that is to say the hold of the parts before the glue is set.

FUN FACTS:

- Gerberas were named in honour of German botanist and medical doctor Traugott Gerber
- Gerberas are the fifth most used cut flower in the world. Can you name the first four? *Answer: P53*

You will need

- Flower punches
- Light card
- Baby oil
- Palette or a butter knife
- Painters spatula
- Ceramic tile
- Polymer clay
- Liquid polymer
- Paper coated flower wire
- 24-26 gauge for the flowers
- 26-30 gauge for the leaves
- Flower Soft or a similar scenic material.
- Toothpicks
- Small matte holed beads in neutral, pale green, or the colour of your flower.
- Dry oasis flower foam
- Craft foam sheet
- Single sided blade



Step 1. To make a small quantity of the goo mixture use a piece of polymer clay in the colour you want. Mix your clay and liquid polymer on a ceramic tile with a palette knife or butter knife.

Left: Two full size gerberas, to help you with detail.

Photos: Niepokój Zbigniew. Wikicommons.



Step 2. At a certain point you will find the mass has a 'scrambled egg' look. You need to keep working, scraping the knife really flat against the tile so that little by little the lumpiness, then the graininess, disappears. When you are happy with your mix, use the knife to scrape the mix off the tile and scrape off the knife into a polymer clay proof container.

Small glass jars or small flexible plastic containers will do the job. Don't use hard plastic. Most of the hard/brittle plastics will be dissolved by the solvents in liquid polymers.

I usually make my goo the thickness of a non flowing paste, When I want a thinner mix I simply add more liquid polymer.

Stencilling flower parts

This was a light bulb moment for me when I was trying to make poppies in Fimo and found it wasn't fine enough for the project. So I asked my husband to make me a stencil.

After a bit of back and forth we came up with our first stencil set, then another and another. So now this has become a bit of an obsession for me

as it's such fun to do!

If you don't have our stencils don't worry, you can make your own using paper punches and thin card stock paper. But I'm going to be using my gerbera stencil set to show you how it's done.

For the flowers you'll need your preferred colour of polymer clay. Gerbera's come in loads of lovely colours so you're the artist here!

Whether you are using one of my stencils, or a homemade template, wipe baby oil over both sides and leave it to soak in. Wipe off any excess. This prolongs the life of the stencil and makes it easier to clean after you've used it so that you can use it multiple times.

Making flower parts

Step 3. You will need a ceramic tile and a spatula to apply the goo mixture. Hold the stencil firmly to the tile by the bottom. Ensure it does not slip.



Step 4. Scrape a little of the goo mixture onto the underside of the spatula and put it across the stencil just below the flowers and above the print. Holding the stencil down really firmly, draw your spatula upwards from the bottom of the stencil to the top at a gentle angle so as not to catch the card that separates the petals.

Step 5. The goo stays in the holes but scrapes off the stencil. Lift the stencil carefully, hopefully leaving behind a perfect imprint. If it is imperfect simply scrape the goo off and apply again.



Step 6. After filling the tile, stick a small holed bead to the back of about a third of your petal parts using the goo and a toothpick or pointed tool.

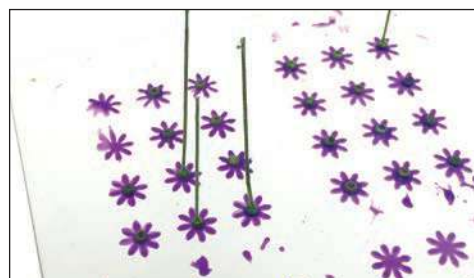


Step 7. If you have longer fingernails this will be easier! Simply push the bead off the stick into the flower with the same hand that you're holding the toothpick in!

Step 8. Bake at 250 degrees Fahrenheit (120 Centigrade) for 20 minutes.

Step 9. When cool, lift the petal parts without beads off the tile using a single sided blade. Or you can leave them on through the next baking step.

Step 10. Cut some flower wire (24 or 26-gauge) into pieces of up to 2". The length depends on whether you are using the flowers in pots or as cut flowers. For flowers in pots the stem will be shorter.



Step 11. Now dip a piece of flower wire into the green goo and stick into the back of the bead. If the fit is snug

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MiniaturesByEmy

Handmade plants, rugs and baskets.

► MiniaturesByEmy.etsy.com



Frogmorton Studios

Original Dollhouse Castings & Technique Book by Rik Pierce

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Polly's Pantry

1/12th scale handmade dolls house miniature food

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Lovely and delightful miniature designs

► ribbonwoodcottage.etsy.com



TinytownMiniatures

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and the goo mixture is thick enough the wire should stand up. If not you'll have to bake them in a piece of flower foam. Flower foam is okay in the oven at Fimo temperatures but make sure it doesn't touch any elements and that your flowers aren't too close to the oven's elements either.

Step 12. After this second baking, add extra petals by putting a little blob of stiff goo on the first and pressing the second onto it with the back of a ball tool.

Step 13. Bake in between each additional petal set. I put three petal shapes together for gerberas. Slightly reshape flowers by pressing them firmly into a craft foam sheet with a ball tool before attaching. It helps to tap the back of the tool lightly on some goo to make it sticky to pick up the petals.

Step 14. When pressed into a fairly firm goo mixture and baked reason-

ably quickly the three dimensional shape (the gap between the petals) is maintained better. Also make sure the petals are arranged so that they fill in the gaps between the lower ones.



Step 15. Finish with either a blob of goo and dip in flower soft, or use a tiny blob of another colour of clay and texture using a pin or a toothpick.



Step 16. Trim off the tip of your toothpick and sand. Press the flat end of your toothpick into the centre and that will give you a more realistic look to the centre part. I recommend that you look up colours of gerberas to make your colour choices.

Making the leaves

There are no photos needed for this because its so easy!

Step 17. Simply make your leaf templates and fill them with a green goo mixture just as you did the petals you already made.

Step 18. Bake and turn the leaves over so they are shiny side up. Cut some flower wire nearly 1" long.

Step 19. Poke the tip of each wire into some green goo mixture and press onto the centre of the leaf on the tile so that the stem is flat on the tile. DO NOT BEND the wire at this stage. Bake the leaves again.

Step 20. For more realism, vary the shades of the green goo mixture: lighter for the smaller leaves. Arrange the flowers and leaves into bunches, pots, or garden plants.

Clean up

This can be done with baby oil and/or alcohol. Its best to clean the stencil and tile by scraping as much left over clay off as you can before cleaning up with baby oil. If you made a paper stencil just discard and clean your ceramic tile.

● See more of Angie's work and contact her with any questions by visiting www.angiescarr.co.uk

Top four cut flowers are: rose, carnation, chrysanthemum, and tulip.



Forty houses on show at magical mansion

Join Sandra for a tour of the National Museum of Denmark where an exhibition of doll's houses includes many interesting examples from the last 120 years

BY SANDRA HARDING



This magnificent building is a palatial Rococo style mansion situated in Copenhagen, Denmark, and was once the official residence of the Crown Prince of Denmark. Within its three wings and courtyard is now homed the National Museum of Denmark, which includes a restaurant, gift shop and cinema.

The museum is Denmark's largest museum of cultural history covering 14,000 years of Danish history from the reindeer hunters of the ice age to the modern Danes today. There is so much to see, from a prehistoric sun chariot and Egyptian mummies, through to rooms from the 1970s. There is a children's museum, where your little ones can board a Viking ship, or take on the enemy in a castle. There are exhibits from all around the world, but the particular exhibition of about 40 doll's houses is the one that I thought you would like to know about.

The exhibition is a collection of houses which have been collected over the past 120 years or so, and which come from many different sources. They range in age from the earliest example, which is dated 1789, to the 1950s, so something for every

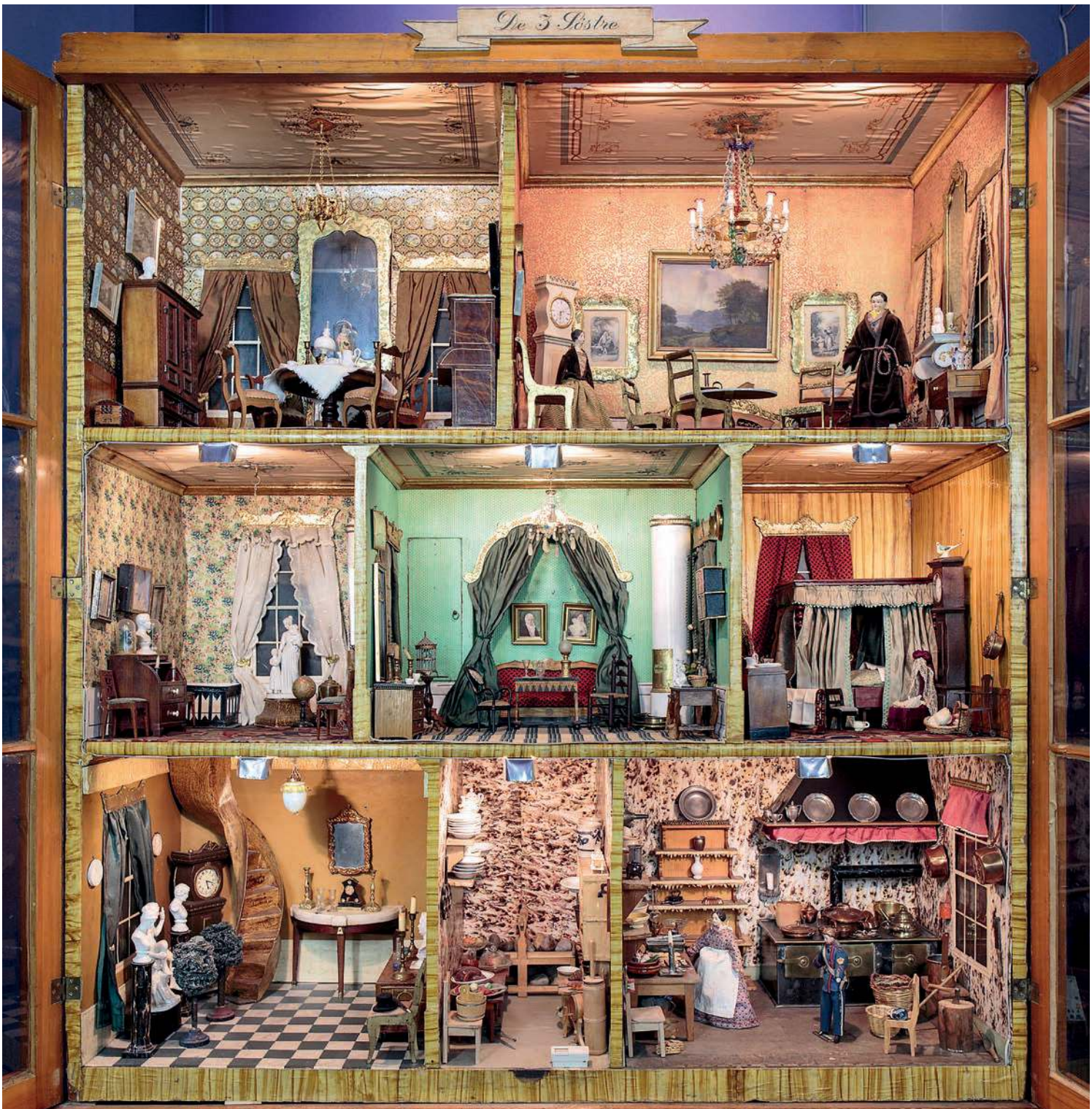
doll's house fan, whichever era you prefer. Most of the houses in the current display are from the 1850s to the 1950s, although the earliest one is on show too.

There are large houses, as well as smaller barns, and several playhouses, with some donated to the museum with their furniture left inside, and on show. Quite a few of the houses have a specific history and, from their interiors, you can see a lot about everyday life in Denmark, especially in the upper middle classes.

One house has a polar bear skin on the floor (very fancy and exotic) and another house has a nanny dressed quite differently from the family. The nanny is dressed in traditional peasant clothes, and the family are in modern city clothes. The nannys were often peasant girls, although girls from specific wealthier areas were the ones the upper classes wanted, as they were usually better fed. What a funny thought!

In the interior of the big house there is a portrait of the parents of the lady that decorated it. The house is called "Three Sisters", as the actual house was originally owned by three Danish princesses, the later Zarina of Russia (Dagmar), later Queen of the UK (Alexandra) and the Duchess of Cumberland (Thyra). There are many such stories attached to these houses and, of course, they were also often used as a learning tool, particularly for young

‘Quite a few of the houses have a specific history and, from their interiors, you can see a lot about everyday life in Denmark, especially in the upper middle classes.’



ladies to learn about running a house: where to put tablecloths and linens, china, glassware and what went on downstairs in the kitchen areas. Even boys were able to play, but only with the stable block as it was the boys' chore to learn about the livestock, and horses were an important part of his education.

This seems to be an interesting and important collection and well worth a

visit if you are travelling in the area. It has become very popular with children and adults of all ages, and there is something in every one of the houses to remind us of our own happy childhoods, and our own doll's houses.

● To visit this magical mansion, go to Ny Vestergade 10, Copenhagen. Opening hours are Tuesday – Sunday, 10am – 5pm.



Top maker shares his tips and techniques

Sometimes just understanding what goes into creating a masterpiece helps us to really appreciate the finished work of art. We've asked Gabriel Eden James to share some insights

BY ALICE MONROE

In the last issue we took a tour of the magnificent Grand Château made by the talented Gabriel Eden James. We had so many questions from readers about the techniques he uses, and we're delighted that Gabriel was only too pleased to answer them.

What are the main tools you use to sculpt the cherub faces on your Grand Château Miniature? When it comes to sculpting, my tools change constantly. It all depends on what I am trying to create. Mainly I use dentistry tools and my dressmaker's pin.

What sculpting clay would you recommend for architectural accents. Or do you make your own mix of

products? For me it has to be Milliput. I dedicated a lot of time to understanding the putty so I could use it to a high standard. Sometimes you have to wait a while for it to start to dry to create certain effects. Of course Milliput isn't for everybody so it can take a bit of experimenting with different clays to find what works best for you.

What is the best advice you can give for working with gold leaf other than patience? It's always good to watch tutorials before trying anything to do with gold leaf, it can save a lot of mistakes and a lot of money. Once you wrap your head around the process it is quite simple. Like with the clay, it's about understanding the way the size and the gold sheets work. When it



comes to gold leafing a room the cost does mount up quickly, but it will give a finish that cannot be replicated by any imitation paint.

What material did you use for the stone faces of the house? For this I used a mixture of gesso, wall filler, and glue.

How do you achieve your brick work? Once I have built up the texture of the exterior walls and etched out the brick, I go across the entire piece and individually paint and weather to give an authentic finish. My entire life has involved art of some kind so I had a lot of practice before I started miniatures.

Why do you prefer lime wood for your structures? Lime wood is a relatively soft wood which makes modelling a lot easier. It is also light in colour which gives me the freedom to decide how dark I want the finish.

How do you create your window framing? My windows are made using wood. This can take quite a lengthy amount of time, especially when you have 22 windows that need a front and back! Once completed I paint them white.

Do you use moulds to make the roof balustrades or are they purchased and hand-painted? The balustrades are wooden. I cover every individual baluster with a wall filler mix and then



sand down to give the appearance of stone. Once this is completed I paint a base coat and age appropriately.

How did you create the roof? During my first year of experimentation I tested many way to create roof tiles. I first went for the obvious which was real slate but I quickly realised that the grain in the slate was too big for the precise scale finish I wanted to achieve. The end, and best, result for me was card. Like with all modelling it's about finding the best materials for each job and manipulating them to achieve your goal. I've always said, if you can paint well you can make anything look like something else.

What was the process for this build? The interior always comes last. The exterior always starts as the bare frame. I build up the wood to create the main architectural detailing and then the long and painstaking task of building up the layers for the stone and brick work begins. The sculpting of the fine architectural detail is done separately



in between all of the other processes. The roof is also created in between as cutting and placing thousands of roof tiles can take a very long time.

How many buildings do you have

in your home? At the moment I have two structures in my home. I'd like a lot more but they have to leave eventually to make room for new work.

Do you ever have dreams about architectural wonders while sleeping? I have had many inspirational dreams about architecture but at the same time I have had nightmares about my miniatures falling over and table legs collapsing. In fact before the last Kensington Dollshouse Festival I had two nightmares about the chateau in one night!

What music do you prefer to listen to while building? I love classical and opera so I mainly listen to that while I am working. My partner is a concert pianist and when I'm not listening to his albums he always gives me new suggestions for my playlist. Sometimes I like to work in complete silence.

What advice would you give someone who wants to start elevating their miniature builds to a higher level? The ultimate advice I can give is to just practice lots! Practice consistently and frequently without giving up. And when you think you have got it perfect try and make it even better! Always strive for excellence!

● See more of Gabriel's work at www.luxuryminiatureproperty.com.



Extra sparkle at the 'gorgeous' Festival

Sandra finds there's an excited buzz at the Kensington Dollshouse Festival where the queues were longer than normal but the quality was as good as ever

BY SANDRA HARDING

For the first time in many years at shows we saw something unusual at the Kensington Dollshouse Festival — an even longer queue than normal. It was winding around the building and down the street with people all waiting for opening time.

Doors opened and the rush was on (an orderly entrance in reality, but a rush sounds more dramatic). I'm glad I arrived a little early and had a sneak preview as within minutes the stands were buzzing and the excitement building — it took me back to the good old days. The crowds were not to be disappointed as the three floors of this festival were full of the best makers there are, with stands full to overflowing with lovely things to buy.

Exquisite, adorable, unusual, exceptional, unique and gorgeous were just a few of the words I heard, and all before we had even left the ground floor, so that tells you the quality on display. There were twenty plus exhibitors new to the Christmas show, but many of them were also at the Summer show which confused me, so I might not mention them all this time. I blame a very smart colour-coded brochure, but it's really just me being confused!

I really want to mention the Perfection in Miniature Awards which Charlotte introduced some time ago. For this Christmas show, and to enable non exhibitors to enter, she cleverly made it an open competition covering knitting, crochet, patchwork and embroi-

dery and the entries flooded in from all over the world.

The winner was Sue Ressequie from the USA and the level of entries was so high that the judges, Nicola Mascall, PIMA winner in May, and Owen Davies, teacher at the Royal School of needlework, had a real problem choosing. The main PIMA will be back at KDF in Summer 2020.

The entrance hall was again very Christmassy with North London Miniaturists displaying their snowy 1/24th alpine village and, to encourage little ones into our hobby, the Gingerbread Craft Club were showing how to decorate a Christmas tree and how to make Christmas decorations — great fun.

I did notice rather more than usual children around the show, which bodes well for the future of our hobby I think. Also encouraging the children was the Golden Treasure Hunt where the youngsters could search for 10 golden coins hidden around the show to claim rewards.

I should mention a few makers who were showing at KDF for the first time ever. Small Scale, from The Nether-



Lyla at Aida Pravia stand.

lands, brought their beautiful silver, copper and brass miniatures and Annelies de Kort Miniaturen also came from The Netherlands with tiny knitted garments, toys and more. Gosia Minis, from Poland, had displays of the most delicate Fimo roses I would ever have dreamed possible, so realistic, and Ella Rose Miniatures, from the UK, had the most beautiful dressed Christmas trees and so much more.

Some more quick mentions because I found them either funny or interesting. Harlands of Hendon send guillotines to France; is that non pc? Teeny Weeny Teddies displayed a tiny teddy powder compact, with lipstick — crazy but so cute! Carol Sherry Miniatures' colourful stand looked like an out of control bag of liquorice allsorts — it was actually very jazzy furniture, and I loved it.

There were exhibitors from Spain, Italy, The Netherlands, South Africa, Germany, USA, France, Switzerland, Poland, Japan, Sweden, and every corner of the UK. No surprise then that people travel from all over the world to buy from some of the highest rated makers there are.

This has always been a popular show but somehow there seemed to be an extra buzz this time — that extra glint in the eye. That, combined with the queue and the increase in children, makes me wonder if this is the recovery we've all been waiting for. I do hope so.



David Ward.

SHOW REPORT



Annelies de Kort Miniaturen.



Tiny Ter Miniatures.



Aurearte.



Teeny Weeny Bears



Gosia Minis.



Oceane at Jo Arts stand.



BETTERLEY'S MINIATURES
Robin Betterley's Miniatures.



Catmando.



Ella Rose Miniatures.

If you want to be among the happy throng in 2020 then the dates for your diary are:

- Kensington Dollshouse Festival, Summer show, Town Hall, London W8 7NX - May 15 and 16.
- Kensington Dollshouse Festival, Christmas show, Town Hall, London, W8 7NX - Saturday, November 28.

● For further details, please contact Charlotte Stokoe.
www.dollshousefestival.com
kdf@dollshousefestival.co or 0044 (0)20 7812 9892

Hope to see you there.



Tiny Treasures Around the World.



Debra Alison Kirby.

Add bejewelled Hara to Arabian Nights scene



This month Dana adds the beautiful Hara to the scene we started last issue, and shows how to dress her in spectacular style using a paper doily

BY DANA

Hara is the second part of our Arabian Nights tutorial set, which started with the sultan in DHW 330. She is amazingly easy to create, and for those readers who like to decorate with jewels, Hara is the perfect doll for you!

Step 1. Assemble your doll using your favourite construction method. I made Hara kneeling on the floor to showcase her beautiful flowing skirt.

Step 2. Cut a 4" x 6" piece of silk material for her skirt from silk material.

Step 3. Turn the very bottom edge under to the wrong side and glue.

Step 4. Turn one side edge under to the wrong side and glue.

Step 5. Join the side edges together to form a tube.



Step 6. Slide the skirt on the doll and glue it around her hips. Add two small pleats (if necessary) at the front so the skirt fits snugly.



Step 7. Cut a 3" x 3" piece of silk material. Hairspray the entire piece until damp. Let dry.

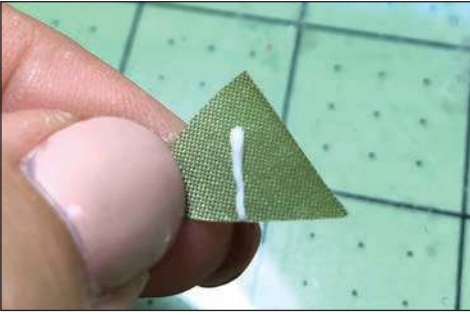


Step 8. With a rotary cutter, cut three small strips out as shown in the photo to form the shoulder straps and the chest band.

Step 9. Next, cut out two small triangles for the bra cups from your material.

You will need

- Porcelain doll's florist tape, and cotton balls for doll assembly
- Gold fingernail polish
- Scissors
- Straight pins
- Aleene's Original Tacky Glue
- Curved glue dispenser
- Needle and thread
- Ruler
- Silk material
- Tweezers
- Zap-A-Gap Super Glue
- Plant mister filled with distilled water
- Rhinestones, beads
- Tulle
- Hair (viscose)
- Hairspray
- Knitting needle size 6
- Rotary cutter
- Flat iron/hair straightener



Step 10. Put a line of glue down the middle of the cup, fold the cup in half and pinch to form a dart.



Step 11. Glue the bra cup on the doll.

Step 12. Cut two 4" x 5" pieces of tulle.



Step 14. Cut out two 2" x 3/4" strips of silk. Fold them in half and glue over the tulle raw edge to form the hip band.

Step 15. Insert the doll's lower arms and glue them in them place.

Step 16. Wrap a tiny piece of silk around her elbow to fill in the gap between the porcelain pieces.



Step 13. Glue the tulle rectangle on each hip.



Step 17. Glue tiny pieces of tulle onto the elbow wrap for decoration.

Step 18. Position your doll, and drape the skirt on the base as desired.



Step 19. Next, cut a jagged edge in the bottom of the skirt tulle.



Step 20. Find a paper doily with a pleasing design. Lightly coat the doily with gold fingernail polish to resemble burnished gold. Piece cut out a design and glue it around her hips.



Step 21. Decorate Hara with rhinestones, and beads as desired.



Step 22. Wrap damp viscose around a knitting needle and dry/set with a flat iron.

Step 23. When the curl is cool, slide the hair off the knitting needle and gently spread apart.



Step 24. Cut long sections of the curl, and glue them around her head for the wig.

That's it! You now have your very own miniature version of Arabian Nights!



From little acorns little baskets grow

This egg-filled basket is a quick and easy project to add a little fun and festivity to your doll's house Easter celebration!

Step 1. Hopefully you collected some acorn cups like we asked you to a while ago. If they have a stem attached snap it off and sand down the base of the cup so that it will sit evenly, but you should be able to find some that already have flat bases.

Step 2. Roll a small piece of clay in your palm and shape it to look like an egg. Do this for each of the three colours you chose.

Step 3. Bake the clay eggs by following the package directions.

Step 4. Cut two pieces of green cloth wire, approximately three inches long, and twist them. Bend the wire into a handle shape. Set this to the side.

Step 5. Put a dab of glue in the bottom of the acorn cup and press in some moss. Use tweezers to pick up each egg and dip them in a bit of glue, then place them in the moss and press down.

Step 6. Be sure your handle is the height you want, then dab the handle bases in glue and tuck them in the acorn cup, to the sides, in under the moss. You may have to hold both sides of the handle at the base once it's in and pull out a bit so the handle is a little wider. It just looks a bit better.

Step 7. Let dry. Glue a flower or tie a little bow on the handle. I used purple raffia, but small ribbon works. And you're finished!

“I made Hara kneeling on the floor to showcase her beautiful flowing skirt.”



THE EASTER BUNNY IS ON HIS WAY

After making a miniature poseable rabbit, Auralea decided to stage him in an Easter scene for a photo shoot. Taking photos can be a great way to play with minis

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

Little Elizabeth thought the Easter Bunny would be a bit chilly while delivering his eggs in the early morning, so she left him some warm tea and sweet treats. Secretly hoping to see him for herself, she took her time making sure the display of biscuits was perfect. When she heard a rustling in the garden, she quickly hid behind the railing to have a peek.

He was much taller than she had imagined, but his white coat just as fluffy. His nose twitched and ears turned as he hopped onto the porch to enjoy his warm tea and delicious

homemade treats.

She could barely breathe as she stayed hidden behind him in the corner of the porch. With a twinkle in his eye and a few hops he was once again in the garden and on his way. She watched as he left and then gathered the sky-blue egg he had tucked away in the flower bed.

Elizabeth thought the Easter Bunny was not aware of her spying eye, but you can be sure he is only seen when he wishes to be seen. Perhaps this magical sighting was a little present for her thoughtfulness and generosity.



The little Elizabeth doll was handmade by Iris Bodenbender in Germany.



A PERSONAL TOUR OF THE KITCHEN

BY JOAN JOYCE

Let me start the kitchen at ground level. In spite of the weight issue I couldn't bring myself to do anything other than a real terracotta tile floor.

I hand made all the tiles from air dry clay, rolling it out as thin as I could without them breaking. I laid and grouted them in exactly the same way as the real ones in my own kitchen. A powdery wash completed the desired effect.

The table was the lid from an old wooden box and I used painted brass candlesticks for the legs. I made all the food myself and the large wine bottles were a find from a gift shop in France. There are some lovely large plates and coffee cups courtesy of a Cindy doll. I painted them in muted colours.

On the left is an armoire. I chose it because the shaped carving on the doors looked French but they were solid so I cut them out which was no mean feat! I added some stiff net to resemble chicken wire and then painted the whole thing.

There is a wire-hanging rack to the side which I made from a candle holder that I massacred. I used florist wire to make tiny butcher's hooks which allowed me to hang the onions and various utensils. The enamel ones were made from jewellery findings which I painted.

The sink was a small porcelain box on a stand I had removed from a bought sink I had customised for another project. The other brackets were all made from plastic mini fence-

ing which looked so much better once painted to look a bit old and rusty.

The lovely big stove was originally a metal toy sink but I immediately spotted its potential. I added a card top, some extra card doors and painted the whole thing matt black using a gold marker for highlights. The splashback is tiled with real miniature ceramic tiles that I had bought in a sale and never used.

The clock is a picture of my own French kitchen clock taken from a catalogue and glued on to card. On the preparation table next to the stove are a few rustic hand made pieces that I spotted on a French stall in an antiques centre in Lancaster.

I wanted this kitchen to be spacious so added a card door at the back to



give the illusion of more rooms and stairs behind.

I had so much enjoyment researching and executing this project and it has certainly influenced choices I have made in my own kitchens, the cottage where I lived when I built this house and my Anglesey kitchen now.

Continued from P29.

“ I made all the food myself and the large wine bottles were a find from a gift shop in France. ”

A spring collection of miniatures

Enjoy a fine selection of hand-painted miniature furniture with a spring motif

BY SOFÍA NOGUÉS

As the flowers bloom outside, it's time to bring light to your miniature house by adding a breath of fresh air, and the feeling of a light spring breeze that brushes away the winter skies. The delicate flowers that hid during the cold winter months are no longer shying away.

Áurea Segura presents a new collection inspired by the blooming flowers and the singing birds. This elegant collection has been carefully produced by upholstering the furniture and hand-painting each piece with the finest oil paints. Every detail has been painted with dedication and passion.

The refined white sofa with hand-made cushions is very elegant. Every detail of the cushions reminds us of spring with the blooming flowers in bright fresh colours.

Áurea's grey set is a refined collection that also hints at the arrival of

spring. The details in white, and the flowers carefully painted on them, evoke this wonderful time of the year.

The miniature desk, along with the vintage chair, make a magnificent set for any doll's house. In combination with the desk, the drawer also has infinite details of flowers painted on it. Each petal and each leaf has been hand-painted with the smallest of brushes.

Every set is accompanied by a colourful bouquet of flowers. Every single set has complementary accessories, from letters and books over the unique grey desk, to tea and pastries awaiting visitors.



LITTLE LINKS:

etsy: www.etsy.com/shop/aurearte

web: www.aurearte.com call: +34 687666164

email: aureart23@gmail.com

instagram: [@aurearte_miniatures](https://www.instagram.com/aurearte_miniatures)



Above: The spring set shown with accessories that welcomes the spring season into your mini world.

Left: Two pieces that would look lovely in a doll's house bedroom.

'Grow' perfect grass by painting faux fur

It sounds ridiculous, but it does work. Paint a strip of acrylic fur and you'll end up with perfect grass for your scene, or even a lawn

BY PATTY SCHANTZ

Here's an easy way to create realistic grass for your miniature scenes. It can be as wild or as cultivated as you choose. This tutorial will show you how to make meadow grass, but by using shorter pile faux fur, you'll also be able to create lawns for your miniature gardens. The technique is the same.



You will need

- Light coloured acrylic faux fur with 1" pile
- Acrylic paints: shade of green, tan, and brown
- Water
- A fine-toothed metal comb
- Small scissors with sharp-blades
- Latex gloves, optional



Step 1. Lay the faux fur on a water-proof work surface. Use a latex glove if you don't want to end up with a green hand. Dip your fingers directly into the paint and vigorously rub the paint into the fur, all the way down to the base. Moisten your fingers with water to thin and spread the paint as necessary to get good coverage. Saturating the base with colour will ensure there are no unstained 'roots.' Don't worry that the fur looks like a matted mess at this stage.



Step 2. All grass is not the same colour, so alternate using various greens and tan or brown where the grass may be dead or dying. To make the tips lighter or darker or to highlight some of the grass, simply rub the ends of the fibres



between your thumb and fingertips with the appropriate colour of acrylic paint.

Step 3. Allow the paint and fabric backing to dry completely. You can speed the process along by using a hair dryer.



Step 4. With a fine-toothed metal comb (I used my dog's flea comb), rake the entire piece to break up any clumps and to remove any loose fibres. Don't be afraid to really dig the comb through to the base. The fibres are firmly seated in the knit backing, so you won't create a tear or hole. The goal is to thoroughly separate all the fibres since each filament is a blade of grass. If any bare spots are revealed, add more paint, let it dry and comb again.

continued on P69.



Empty shell finally springs into life

Sandra Gurney Turner put this empty house away in a dark corner for several years, but she's now excited enough to start work on the project

BY SANDRA HARDING

There are times in my job when I just can't contain my excitement, especially when I see something as fabulous as this room by Sandra Gurney Turner.

Yes, yes I know I should delay until the whole house is finished in about a year, but I just couldn't wait to show you this living room. Sorry!

Sandra tells us that she is very excited about this primitive inspired project and it's easy to see why. She is trying

to create a style that connects the past to the present inside a simple, sturdily made doll's house that was given to her three years ago. This empty shell lay neglected in a dark corner all that time waiting for inspiration whilst other projects and life pulled at her, as they do.

With the excitement of a child on Christmas morning Sandra eventually took it out of its dark corner and looked at it in the cold light of day, and suddenly lost confidence in her crea-

tive ability. After trying to ignore it for a few weeks her confidence returned and in that time, without realising it, she had subconsciously formed a plan. Beginning slowly and cautiously Sandra finished decorating the floor, ceiling and walls, and began making items for the living room, in an early colonial inspired theme. The size of the room is 15" x 10" approximately and she wanted it to be in a primitive style but situated in today's world, and deco-





rated with memories of a past life.

I happen to know that Sandra is a very talented maker and I am not surprised to find that almost everything here is handmade by her. There are crocks, jugs, bowls, candles, sheep (covered in stuffed animal fur) a crow and a doll, which all started life as a ball of clay. The dress on the hanger is from a full-size vintage doll's dress and the sofa is scrap wood, clay and trim.

There is a colonial courting candle



“Sometimes she sees herself living there and smiles.”

on the mantel — something I have not heard of before. Legend has it that in early colonial times the father of a girl being courted would adjust the height of the candle by moving the peg up or down the spiral, indicating how long her beau could visit. When Sandra heard about this she was intrigued and just had to make one using a spring from a pen, a small dish, and a fancy toothpick for the peg. Imagine if they were still in use today.

Sandra admits that when she looks into the room she sees its inhabitants and memories of a past colonial life. Sometimes she sees herself living there and smiles, and I guess we all know just what she means. Sandra and I are so besotted with this room that I can hardly wait to see what she creates in the rest of the house. Knowing Sandra, the wait will be worth it.

continued from P67.



Step 5. Trim the grass by using small scissors with sharp blades. The trick is to hold the scissors at a steep angle (no less than 45 degrees) and clip. Imagine you're a hair stylist snipping off the ends of a client's hair. Keep your hand moving at random as you trim; this will create varying heights among the grass.



Step 6. Trim the piece to fit your setting and glue in place with craft glue. When dry, fluff, bend or even blow on the grass to create the desired finish. If necessary, disguise any exposed fabric base edge with mini gravel (railway ballast), dirt, pebbles, etc.

A pale blonde faux fur was used for this tutorial, but light browns and tans also work well. Caution: don't use a fur with a very thick pile; the paint acts like glue, and it's extremely difficult to comb out.

A 1/4" or 3/8" pile makes a very lush looking lawn. If you can't find 1/4" or 3/8" fur, simply trim down a longer pile by holding the scissors horizontally and cutting off the length at a 90 degree angle. Then add paint and trim – but a little more carefully so that the finished turf doesn't look too patchy. Your doll's house family will thank you for a lovely lawn they will never have to water, weed, fertilise or mow!

Found objects get new purpose in Holly's hands

It's not about spending money or striving for perfection for this miniaturist when it comes to putting together her bright and colourful creations

BY PAM NORTH

Holly Tierney-Bedord always has been fascinated by miniatures, with buying and selling doll's houses and styling room boxes as her main interests, combined with writing about how to do it.

She is the author of three books: *Flip This (Mini) House: Turning a flea market doll's house into a mid-century marvel*; *Decorate This (Mini) Room: Fun, easy, inexpensive doll's house and miniature projects*; and *Style This (Mini) Room: Creative, simple ways to style dollhouses and miniature rooms*. Her books are all about re-purposing everyday objects into miniature furniture and décor.

Her degree in graphic design, which entailed many art and design classes, has helped her immeasurably in her work with miniatures, and she loves using bright colours and bold designs in her creations. She cites her philosophy as this: "I want to spread the message that miniatures are for

everyone, and that you don't need to spend a lot of money, have a lot of space, or be an artist or a perfectionist to get started." She is optimistic about the future of miniatures, feeling that they are going to become even more popular as time goes on, and she wants to be a part of that.

She shared several of her pieces, explaining how they evolved. "The room boxes are just cardboard boxes I got in the mail. The house is a style from the late fifties or sixties, with 1970s and early 1980s influences.

"The room boxes each have their own stories, inspired by whatever scrapbook paper and other materials that often get moved around and reused. My room boxes and doll's houses feature a mix of store-bought miniatures in their original and altered-



by-me forms, found-objects turned into miniatures, and handmade items. I use anything that appeals to me, and I'm not a purist as far as origins or scale. If it looks good in the room, I use it.

"Weavings and crocheted items are usually made by me. Plants are a mix of real, living plants and store-bought miniature plants. Room box floors are cutting boards. Wallpaper is scrapbook paper. Window blinds are made from coasters. The towel bar in the ikat-papered bathroom is part of a necklace.

"Pillows on the bed are purchased from other miniaturists. The little books are made from my own author business cards, and the fuzzy bed covering is a scrap of fabric purchased during the holidays. Some of the older-looking wood furniture pieces were purchased at antique stores and thrift shops.

"The lemon bedroom has a gold hanging light made from a Christmas ornament and a round button; the wooden vase is a big bead; the wooden night stand is the cap of a men's cologne bottle; the colourful headboard and matching rug are coasters from an import shop.

"In the wood-panelled office, the art is handmade by me, as is the little weaving on the wall. The rug on the floor is part of the Ikea Huset doll's house collection. I like most of my rooms to have some handmade, artistic touches to make them unique."

Holly has her own techniques for

Below right: Weaving a bedspread.

Below: The small handwoven bed covering placed in the bedroom.





Above right: Holly's lemon bedroom room box is fun and colourful.

Right: A stylish office with bold and happy colours.

creating her pieces, using a variety of small looms and fine-gauge thread in her mini-weaving projects, and most don't require fancy looms. Inexpensive bags of yarn turn up at thrift stores for next to nothing, to be turned into miniature rugs or blankets. Most craft stores sell tiny, inexpensive stretched canvases that can be painted to suit.

Holly embraces spontaneity in her creation of miniatures. "Because my projects are made up as I go along, I'm not up against much resistance. If I had a set plan to begin with, it would be more difficult to make it happen. My pieces usually start with the wallpaper and evolve from there. I often have no idea what a room will look like when I start; I'm usually not even sure what kind of room it will be. The lemon bedroom, for instance, was going to be a kitchen before I realised that it made an even better bedroom. There's something about creating a story—and that's what a room box or doll's house



is – that feels very satisfying, as if I've uncovered something true and meaningful. I feel this when I write and also when I create art. Even a little room box can be a many-layered story."

Looking ahead, Holly envisions creating many more room boxes and another doll's house, making more weavings for both her real home and mini-homes, and writing more books.

Residents move to tower as the mood takes Sari

There's no chance of these dolls getting bored in a box as the house owner rotates them between flats when she feels like it

BY SANDRA HARDING

When Sari Sipolainen was a small child she really wanted a Lundby doll's house, but with four siblings it really was not possible.

This made her envy the friends who had one, so her father very kindly made her a lovely dolls house when she was about seven-years-old. It was furnished with some Lundby furniture given to her at Christmas, and also pieces from Jean and Europa, which was cheaper than Lundby.

Fast forward to 2016 and Sari was surfing the internet with her eldest daughter Janna looking for toys, and they saw the most amazing Lundby houses. They decided to get one each as Janna had remembered that as a child she had a Lundby, which had been lost over time. Sari ordered

her house from Sweden and when it arrived, she realised it was made in 1970. It had wooden frames, stairs and doors, and was in quite good condition.

Soon Sari started collecting furniture for the house from flea markets, eBay and wherever else she saw them. It was mostly Lundby but she also bought Lisa, Hanse, Brio, Jean, Europa and so on. Interestingly, Sari now loves Europa furniture so much she tries to collect as much as possible.

When I asked Sari about the people in the tower, she explained that it is made up of many flats with different people in them, who change as often as Sari's mood on that day. I like that idea as it keeps the dolls busy, and saves them from being in a box for too long and getting bored. The current families are Elvis, a porter who lives in the Finnish pub room, who secretly hopes to be a famous Elvis impersonator.

He is finding it difficult as he can't sing in American, but insists on practising anyway. In the Lisa bathroom are Lasse and Signe, who are listening to "Love is in the Air" on the radio whilst bathing, where even the ducks are in love! Because Sari's flat residents move around so quickly, she has no idea who else is where right now. I will just have to make up who the people are in the current photographs I guess. Hope Sari doesn't mind.

In one flat live a couple with their



child, who have recently adopted a large dog called Spot. They wish they lived on the ground floor as the lady on the balcony, called May Sing, keeps whistling out of tune and making the dog howl. He soon gets used to it so don't worry. In another flat, there are three fellows who meet up on a regular basis for a drink and a game of darts. Jim Slipp, Ivor Chance and Hugh Vadit are considerate fellows, and try to keep the noise down as their neighbours are an elderly couple who have their grandchildren to stay at the weekends. In another kitchen in another flat, is a lady named Pat Akake giving her little baby breakfast. In another flat, there are two little girls who love to play their records which the baby likes to hear, and gurgles along to the tunes. I hope that the people are in the right place now, as I can't see Spot in any of the rooms, so maybe the couple have taken him out for a walk.

On a serious note, which I do occasionally strike, the blue and brown bedrooms are some of Sari's favourites, which includes grandmother's sewing machine and a weft in the basket. Notice the motif wallpaper on the rear wall.

Sari has also told me about her many other doll's houses and, if she forgives me for naming her dolls, maybe she will let us see them another time. But if she doesn't name them in time the temptation may again be too much to bear.





“ Soon Sari started collecting furniture for the house from flea markets, eBay and wherever else she saw them. It was mostly Lundby but she also bought Lisa, Hanse, Brio, Jean, Europa and so on. ”

Print perfect floor for a 1/24th scale home

There are lots of ways of adding flooring to your house, but using an inkjet printer is a useful way to go when working in smaller scales

BY AURALEA KRIEGER

In future issues I will be sharing the building process of a wonderful little 1/24th scale cottage. It is the Nutcote Cottage kit by Red Cottage Miniatures. This month I will be installing the flooring.

You can use my methods for any scale house and also expand on them to suit your needs.

There are obviously lots of great ways to go about installing flooring, but I have decided to print them for this project. Printed floors give you more flexibility for such a small scale. But

choosing the right floor image is the key to making your vision come to life.

The kit assembly came with great directions. I should have put the flooring in before attaching the right wall, but I thought I would be starting my first tutorial with the exterior. No worries, I can work around the stairs.

First, choose your digital floor image. When you are looking for a flooring sample online be sure to type in 'seamless'. This means more images will come up in Google images that you will be able to lay side by side in your program and they will match up perfectly.

If you are not proficient with computers you can use the flooring provided on our Cutouts page this month or purchase wood veneer flooring. Please remember, never use a copyright image in something you are selling for your business unless you have permission. Use stock images to be safe or make a floor image from scratch.

Sealing the floor

Step 1. Print out your floor on the best setting you have on your inkjet printer.



Step 2. Let it dry for about half-an-hour, then spray it with a sealer. Move your can around while spraying - you don't want heavy saturation. Let it sit for 10 minutes and spray lightly again. Let dry for half-an-hour or longer. Spray your paper outside for proper ventilation. I have always done two coats, but if you like, you can do more coats to make the varnish process easier.



Step 3. Pour a spot of matte varnish on the paper a little at a time. Pull just a small bit of varnish away on your flat brush each time from the bottom of the varnish dot.

You will need

- Inkjet printer
- Paper/card stock
- Spray fixative
- Yes Paste - or your choice of craft glue
- Credit card or painter's spatula
- Matte varnish
- Flat paint brush
- Small ball stylus
- Metal ruler
- Index cards
- Blue tape
- Craft knife
- Paint

“Choosing the right floor image is the key to making your vision come to life.”



Step 4. Quickly brush the varnish with the grain of the 'wood' onto the paper. Do a few strokes and go back quickly over to get rid of any streaking. You don't want heavy streaking. If you don't get the streaking areas within the first two strokes you may take the ink off the paper trying later. So you want to keep a minimal amount of varnish on your brush. Try and lean so you can see the glare of the wet varnish in the light and how thick your streaks are.

Step 5. Keep covering it, going down three board widths and go back up and then down the next row. Continue until you cover the



entire floor. If you get interrupted and go back to it within a few minutes start on the other side so you don't accidentally brush over a streak that hasn't dried and take up the ink. Maybe twice through the process wipe your brush on the white of the paper to get off any excess ink that may have been lifted onto the brush.

Step 6. Let everything dry. Then go back over and be sure you get every spot on the second coat. There won't be as much danger of lifting the ink on the second coat, but still be careful. Let dry completely.

Step 7. If you do get a streak, don't panic – you can always use artist pastels to cover it up, and then varnish over the pastel. If you want shiny floors, then use satin varnish.

Making a tile floor

Step 8. For the kitchen floor, either print on card stock or on paper and follow the steps below.



Step 9. Seal as I explained earlier. Let dry completely!

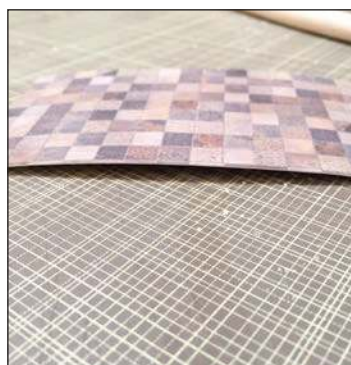


Step 10. If you printed on regular paper, get a piece of scrap paper and lay a piece of card stock on it. Coat the back of your floor print with Yes Paste and lay it on the card stock. Put a piece of wax paper over it and burnish it down with a clean credit card. I'm using two old credit cards that I cancelled years ago and kept for this purpose.

Step 11. Put flat weight on it and let it dry.



Step 12. Use a small burnishing tool and a metal ruler, placed upside down, to press the grout areas. This will give an illusion of real tile.



Step 13. Shape so it has an arch curling down and not up before gluing to be sure it doesn't peel up.

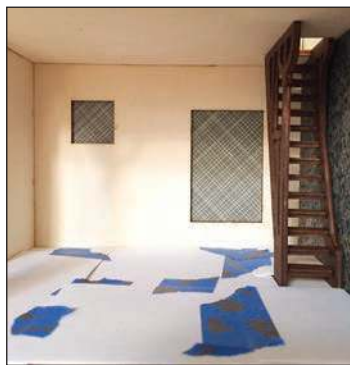
TOPTIP

If you've been using the Yes Paste and discover you can't get the lid to open, run it upside down under hot water, dry it with a towel, and then it should open easily.



Step 14. Because it is on card stock and was such a small piece I spread wood glue with a paint spatula and pressed the floor down in the house. Let dry for an hour or so.

Make a floor template



Step 15. Get some index cards and layer/tape them in the room to get your shape of the floor layout. I'm using small envelopes because I have a bunch of them on hand. Put your layout on top of your floor and trim to the shape of the template.



Step 16. Paint all the floor edges the overall colour of your floor image. I also gently used my stylus over the long planks of wood for definition.



Step 17. Start in the back of the room and spackle on Yes Paste with a credit card or painter's spatula. I really like

this paste because you can put it on very thin and then burnish any high spots out with a credit card. Work your way forward until the entire floor is down. Don't wait too long to adhere the paper because the paste will dry quickly where thin.

If you have never worked with Yes Paste please make a test run first. I have always used it for my collage art and it has never peeled up over time.

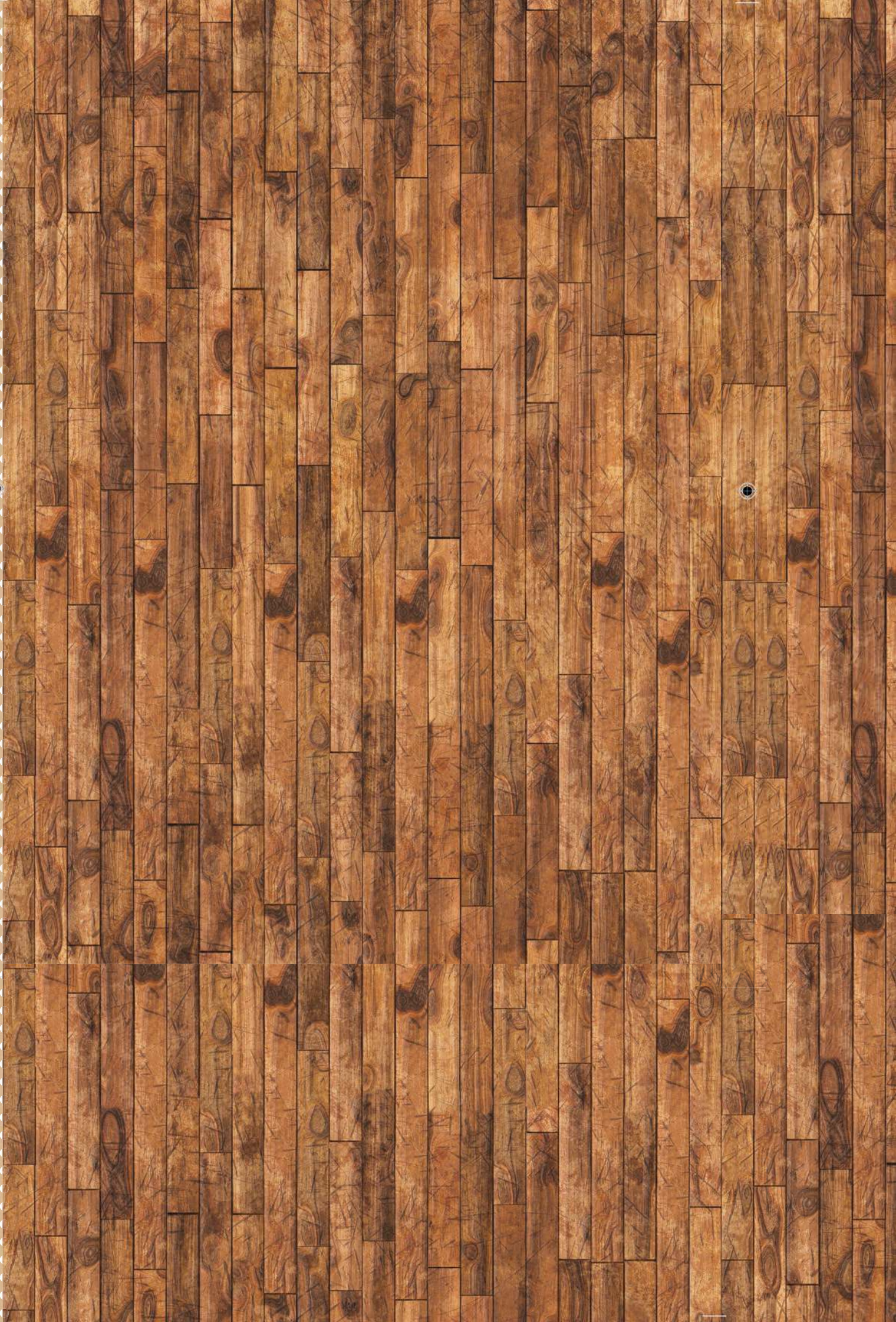
There, instant floors! Keep in mind this is only one way to put floors in your house. You can also cut wood veneer and lay in the planks or buy pre-made floor sheets. Lots of ways to get the task accomplished.

In a future issue I will go over wall techniques including applying wallpaper and making a plaster effect.



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SMALL TALK

WE CHAT WITH READER ELAINE WILLIAMS ABOUT HER LIFE IN MINIATURES

Hi Elaine. Nice to talk to you. Tell us what you are working on at the moment. I am currently working on my Cornish seaside town which is based on my love of Newquay in Cornwall.

A whole town? Wow, that sounds like a challenge. What's it like? The town is modern day and is built over three levels. The bottom level is an 18ft beach with cliffs and coves and a beachside fish restaurant and harbour. This then leads up to the middle shelf which has shops and a pub. The top shelf contains five houses which I built with a road, a play park, a pet shop — with outdoor child's petting area, a bed and breakfast place and a house that started my collection off.

And you're still adding to the town? Yes. I've recently extended all three shelves to make another beach with sand dunes, and more shops including a seaside arcade and houses.

Do you have other houses? I also have a six foot mansion that will be late Regency, early Georgian, but I haven't built it yet.

What scale do you prefer? I work and make in twelfth scale but I do have a row of 1/48th scale houses and make in that size too.

Do you prefer making to collecting? I try and make what I need, but if I can't I buy. I like doing both.

How enthusiastic is your husband about your hobby? My husband's favourite place is Cornwall, so he loves my town.

When did your mini madness start? I started



collecting five years ago, then sold all of my houses except one after I had the idea of doing a seaside town.

What other hobbies have you tried? I bake and decorate cakes and also sing, but I haven't sung professionally for seven years now.

Do you buy too much stuff? I used to impulse buy, but since I had the plan to do the town I only buy what I need.

What do you love about our hobby? How tiny it all is... but perfectly formed.

“How tiny it all is... but perfectly formed.”

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

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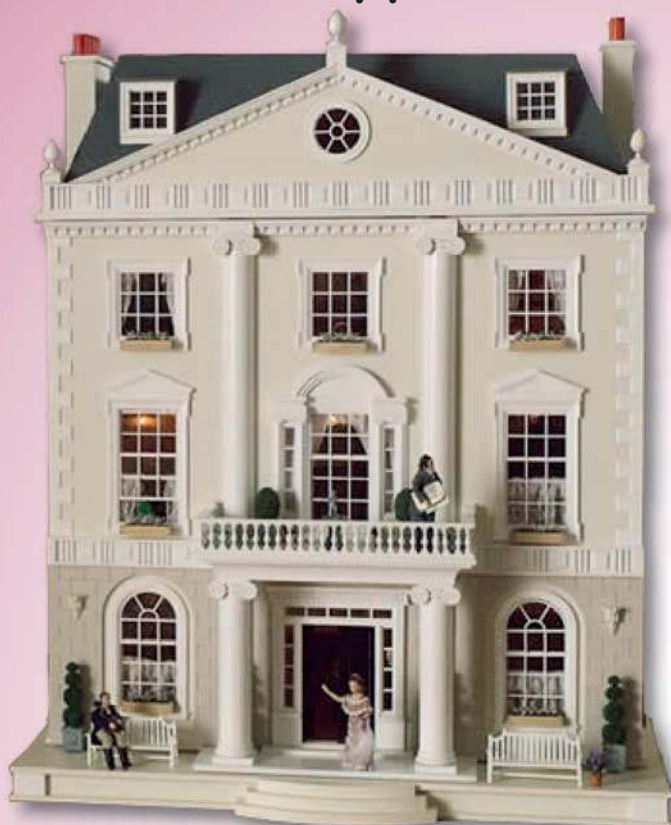
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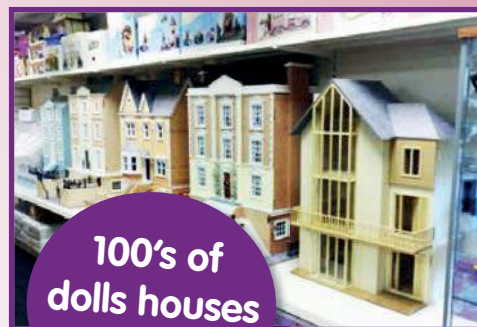
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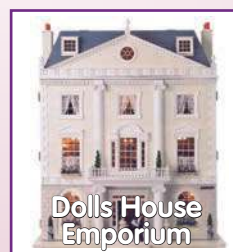
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