

Eva Perendreu takes us on a mini Gypsy caravan journey.

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Little things **THAT MATTER**

The process of making tiny things is Dorota Mateusiak's utmost passion. Specializing in mini kitchen accessories and equipment.



Despite the fact that miniatures are not a popular hobby in Poland, I feel like my entire life has been dedicated to them. Thanks to the many facets of craft and artistry that surrounded me, starting at an early age, I was able to adapt easily to the hobby.

Since I can remember, my mother has been knitting, sewing, and crocheting. My dad is a handyman who can fix everything on his own,

"Making miniatures is not so difficult; it only requires ingenuity and creativity."

and my grandfather was an inventor. He made furniture and various household items that we still use to this day. Over the past several years I have cultivated different tech-

niques and handicrafts, taken part in several workshops, and gone to many fairs. During this time I learned a lot, but I still felt unfulfilled. That is, until I discovered miniatures. As it turns out, this was what I was searching for all along.

I have been creating miniature interiors, furniture, and accessories in 1:12-scale for

several years. I believe that handmade items have greater value. Making miniatures is not so difficult; it only requires ingenuity and creativity. Designing new miniatures and finding appropriate materials for their implementation is a real challenge for me, but also great fun.

To help resolve the miniature challenges that may be



Right: A collection of 1:12-scale accessories and food that was handmade by Dorota.



Above: Every appliance you could need in your miniature kitchen!

Below: This little mixer come with it's box. Perfect for a mini store.



posed to me, I have been collecting various materials to aid in problem solving such as strings and ribbons, wires, boxes, caps, inks, varnishes, and decorative papers.

There are hundreds of boxes filled with these useful items in my studio. Old document folders were turned into 1,000 tiles for my dollhouse, string was used to make rugs, and baking tools proved useful for making lamps. Creating miniatures can be a great source for recycling. In fact, most of the materials are all around us—we just have to look a little closer and keep our minds open.



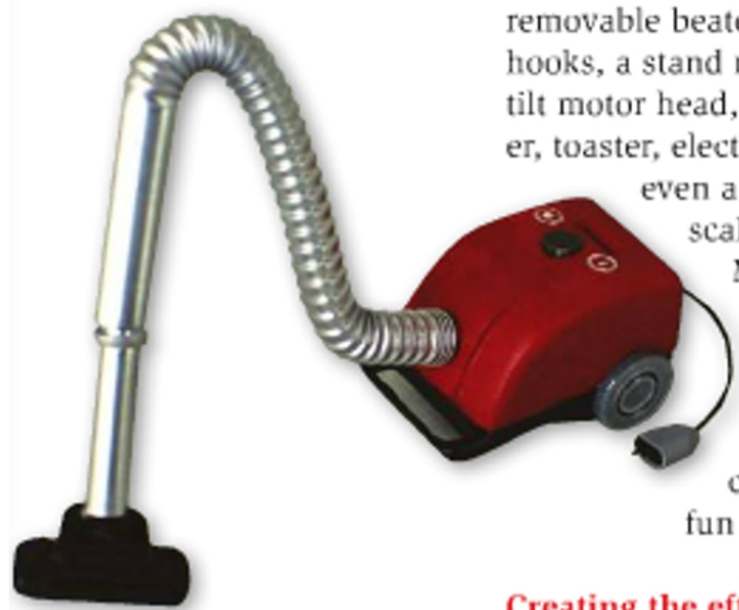
Above and left: Dorota's favorite thing to make in miniature are kitchen appliances. Here you have a mixer in every color. Toast is ready in the toaster and the mixer's tools can be switched out.

Below: Dorota prefers her miniatures to be handmade in her scenes for a more personal effect.

For the past few months, miniatures have not only been my passion, but they have turned into a small business. It is thrilling for me to create unique items that are custom made for individuals. My goal is to proudly sign my name to each one of these items. Having a technical background as an engineer helps make it easier to achieve realism in the scaling process.

I spend much of time in my studio, accompanied by my husband. He suggests new ideas and has helped me





Above: Dorota handmade this small vacuum cleaners with a plug.

install electricity. Because of his growing interest, he has become involved in HO scale models and is now building the central part of a city with a market, town hall, tenement houses, and a tramline. In the evening he illuminates the buildings and it's quite beautiful. I also help him with his miniature projects by making miniature phone booths, park benches with umbrellas, market stalls, and even a few dozen pigeons that are only 3mm tall!

Kitchen accessories

One of my favorite things to make is miniature kitchen accessories and equipment. Making handmade miniature household equipment is a fun challenge for me. I have made miniature hand mixer sets, which include a bowl and

removable beaters and dough hooks, a stand mixer with a tilt motor head, a coffee maker, toaster, electric kettle, and even a small kitchen scale with a tray.

Miniature electric vacuum cleaners with a hoses and electrical cords are also fun to construct.

Creating the effect

I like when a miniature scene is filled with lots of handmade accessories and decorations. It makes the entire arrangement more interesting and enables the person who is viewing it to discover more and more miniature treasures.

Garden Box

One of my favorite miniature scenes is the cellar room box. This room also serves as a pantry, workshop, and storage room. It was made from an old garden box found at a flea market. My husband helped me with the lighting. The lamp was made from a pills blister pack and a piece of wire. I made the workshop table, bookcase, shelves, and the

oak barrel. I also made all the miniature accessories: workshop tools, buckets of paint, ladder, paint rollers, baskets, vegetables, and preserves in glass jars.

Bookends

Two of my favorite bookends represent Christmas and Easter scenes. The first bookend shows the making of dumplings, one of the most famous Polish Christmas Eve dishes. There is a cookbook on the table, dough, rolling pin, flour, and a few ready dumplings. To complete the festive mood of Christmas I added a tree branch composition, gingerbreads, and Christmas cards.

On the Easter bookend there are also many traditional details: basket with eggs, Easter cake with icing,

Below: Beautifully handmade one-inch scale pink roses overfl w from pitchers, vases, and baskets.





Above left and right: Dorota has made miniature bookends that represent Christmas and Easter. Each are filled with holiday treats. **Below:** An old garden box found at a flea market was turned into a fun miniature scene.





Above and below: After finding the little bunny, Dorota knew she had to make a house for him to live in.

a branch of boxwood, a bouquet of catkins, and many other decorations.

Bunny House

The Bunny House is the most unusual miniature scene I have made thus far. I never planned on making something like this, but one day during the holidays I saw a little bunny on sale from the Sylvanian Families collection in a shop window. That childhood feeling of wanting each toy to have a small house to call its own came over me and I decided to buy him and make a house for him.

The house was constructed with wood and cardboard. I wanted it to look like a rabbit hole, so the roof and walls are rounded. The windows were cut as circles and the roof was covered with artificial grass. For a finishing touch, I added

small stones on the roof, so it looks like a small hill.

Many ecological materials were used in the interior such as sticks, reed, bark, seeds, pine cones, and nuts. I made the bedding, accessories, fireplace (with a chimney outside), carrots, preserves, and many other items. The photos show the bunny's family.

I also made a pet for him so he doesn't feel alone—a small ladybug in a cage next to the bed. That piece was inspired by



a book written by Michael Hoyer. The story was about a little mouse detective who had a ladybug named Terfle. Now the bunny lives in our living room in his own miniature house!

It is so wonderful that I can combine what I love to do with my daily work. My studio is a reward for patience, determination, and the pursuit of dreams. But most of all it is another piece of my little world. [AM](#)

GET IN TOUCH

Miniature World of Lady Fanaberia

Website: www.minifanaberia.com

Blog: minifanaberia.blogspot.com

Email: minifanaberia@gmail.com

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