

WORLD'S FAVORITE DOLLHOUSE AND MINIATURES MAGAZINE

Miniature Collector

NOVEMBER 2016

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Encounters**
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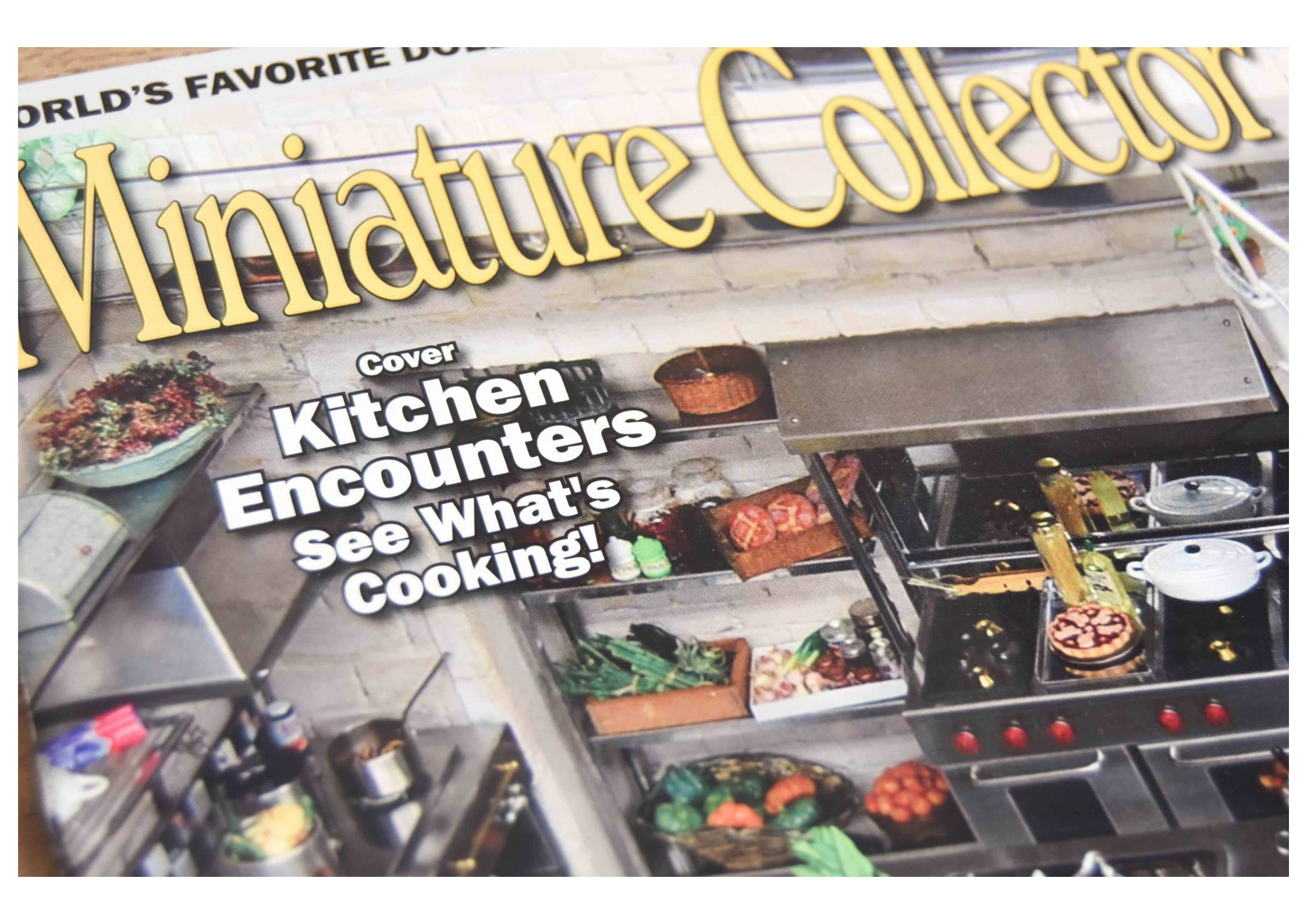
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ENGINEER PUTS TALENTS TO WORK IN MINIATURE



Photo by Alan Lumetta

Dorota Mateusiak's appliances are made from aluminum, brass, and styrene. From left are a dishwasher, side-by-side refrigerator, microwave and stove. Aluminum is used for exteriors, and styrene for interiors and smaller appliances. Brass is used to add realistic details, such as racks.

At the high point in her professional career, Dorota Mateusiak was working as a civil engineer designing bridges. Then the company collapsed, she lost her job, and shortly after, came down with health issues. It was at that low point she fell into her new vocation and avocation—miniatures.

Although Dorota is no longer designing bridges, she still utilizes those skills in miniature, combining her precision engineering prowess and architectural sense to create realistic-looking kitchen appliances of all kinds—refrigerators, stoves, microwave ovens, tabletop appliances such as mixers and coffee makers, as well as other household appliances.

She began making appliances when she discovered miniatures on the Internet about seven years ago. Utilizing every technique she had learned, she created her first little kitchen. It wasn't easy, because she had to learn everything on her own. Miniatures are not a popular pastime in Poland,

she explains, so workshops, magazines, clubs and other miniaturists aren't handy when there's a question or a process to be learned. That can result in "many stupid mistakes."

"Do you know that my first—and I mean first ever—miniature was a wedding cake?" she says. "I made and baked it, but in the evening, this cake started to glow! I didn't really know that there was fluorescent FIMO. I thought it was ecru, and I panicked. My husband (Maciej Mateusiak)—actually my boyfriend at the time—almost died from laughter!"

The skills she has gained are manifest in the intricacy of her work. Press a tiny button on the countertop microwave, and the door pops open and a light turns on. There's an electrical cord attached to the back. A side-door refrigerator/freezer not only has lights that turn on, but racks and bins that slide. Even the back replicates real life, with a visible compressor and attached power cord.

She taps into shelves filled with appliance and furniture catalogs and folders for her inspiration. "I have so many catalogs with kitchen items, and I love to spend time in stores to get new ideas," she says.

Her appliances are made from aluminum, brass, and styrene. Because of all the metal, her creations are quite heavy.

Of the three materials, styrene is her favorite to work with. "It is quite easy to cut and grind. And it's very easy to cut few pieces from styrene sheets, glue them together, then apply modeling putty and grind to get the desired shape," she says. Styrene is used for the interiors of her large appliances and also for some of her tabletop appliances.

Brass sheets and wires are used to add realistic details. "I think that brass elements make every miniature more realistic," she says. For example, brass is used for dishwasher racks and dishwasher cover panels.

Dorota began her company—MiniFanaberia—about two years

Her appliances are made from aluminum, brass, and styrene. Because of all the metal, her creations are quite heavy.



The dishwasher has a door that lowers on two metal hinges, and features two pull-out metal racks and a spray arm.



Photos by Alan Lumetta

The range has working lights, a convection fan, and metal racks and side supports.



The metal side-by-side refrigerator has doors that swing open on metal hinges and stay tightly closed with magnetic latches. The lighted interior features an ice container, cooling bins, and multiple shelves.



The metal microwave features an opening door, working light, metal hinges and a magnetic door latch.

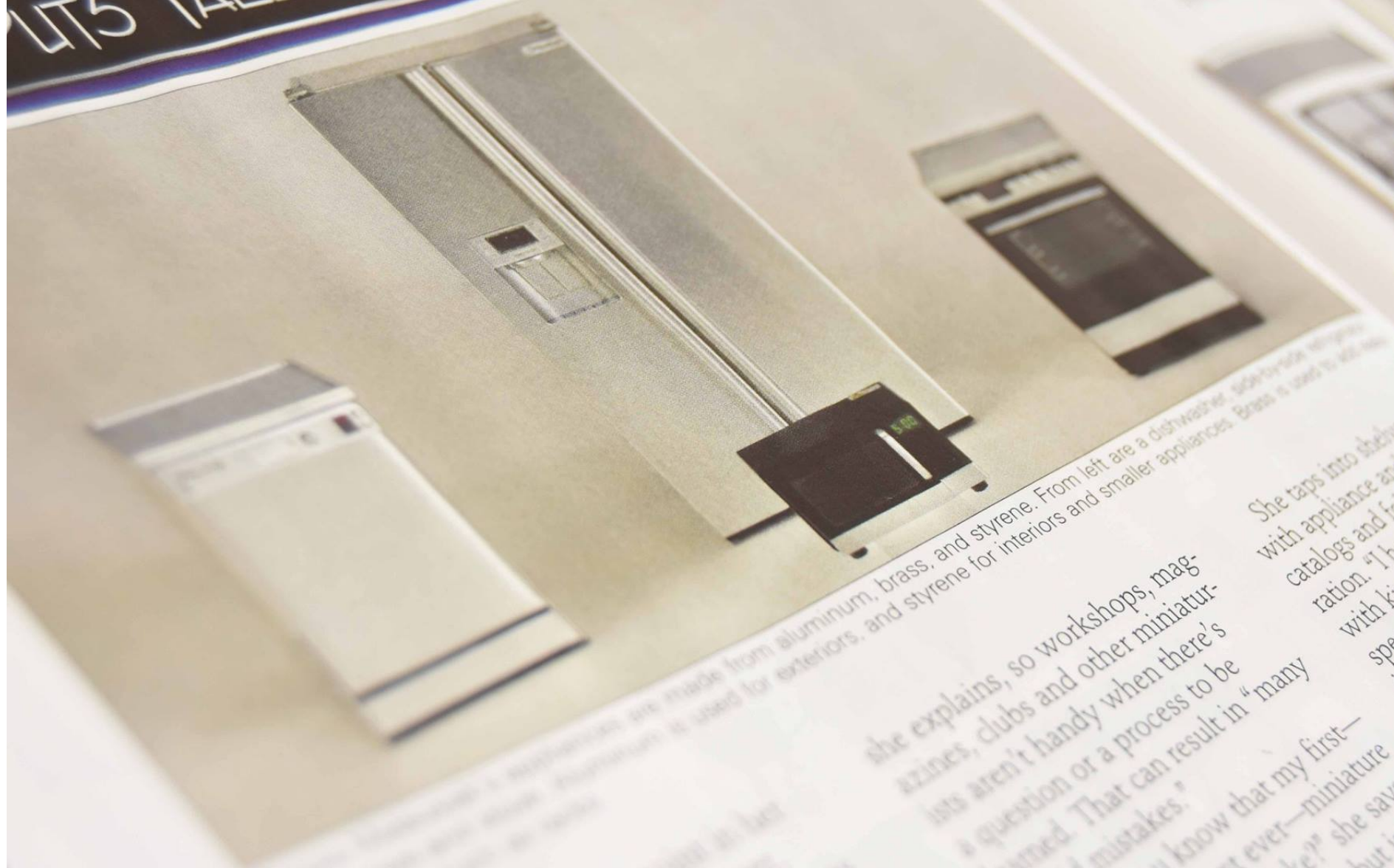
ago, selling her miniatures on her website and her online Etsy shop. The name "Fanaberia" is Polish for "whim." "Sometimes I want to make something in miniature, and I make everything (for it) to learn new techniques to make this one thing by myself—no matter how much time it takes," she explains. "So others say that it is my 'fanaberia.' I'm just a Lady Fanaberia."

She and her husband frequent miniatures shows in Europe, and this year, attended the Chicago International.

Dorota Mateusiak, of Siemianowice Slaskie, Poland, can be reached at minifanaberia@gmail.com, www.minifanaberia.com, www.facebook.com/MiniFanaberia, or www.etsy.com/shop/Minifanaberia.



ULTS TALENTS TO WORK WITH



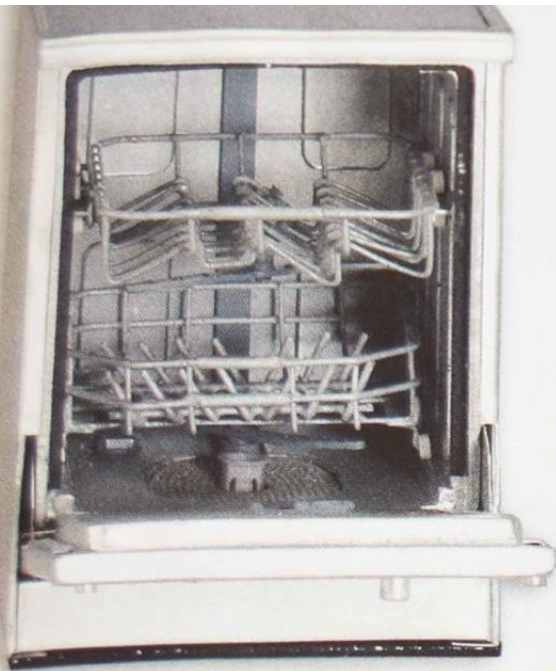
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personal career...
personal work...

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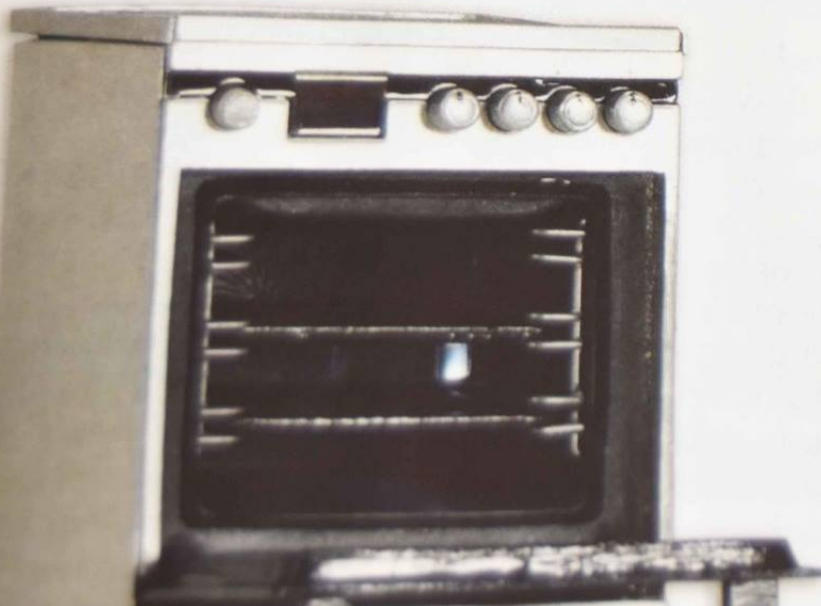
Her appliances are made of aluminum, brass, and styrene. Because of all the materials, Of the...



The dishwasher has a door that lowers on two metal hinges, and features two pull-out metal racks and a spray arm.



The metal side-by-side refrigerator has doors that swing open on metal hinges and stay tightly closed with magnetic latches. The lighted interior features an ice container, cooling bins, and multiple shelves.



The metal microwave features an opening door, working light, metal hinges and a magnetic door latch.

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Photo by Alan Lumetta



The dishwasher has a door that lowers
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The metal side-by-side refrigerator has doors that swing open on metal hinges
tightly closed with magnetic latches. The lighted interior features six shelves
bins, and multiple shelves.



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