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FRENCH CHATEAU

BY ERIC LANDSDOWN, FURNISHED BY PAT ARNELL

Location: Exploring the World Gallery

In an old house in Paris that was covered with vines, lived two sophisticated poodles dressed to the nines! They left the house to dance and drink wine, but upstairs they left an elegant lady behind.

The proprietors of our French Chateau may conjure up all kinds of storylines in your mind as you gaze upon their chic costumes and ponder the incongruity of two dogs and an elegant lady residing together in this three story estate. The Mini-Time Machine's Founder Pat Arnell was looking for a home for the two sophisticated canines when she found this beautiful cabinet house create by miniature artist Eric Landsdown. It was just the right setting for a pair of savvy French poodles.

Eric Landsdown is enamored with the French Renaissance and finds inspiration in photographs of structures from this and other historic periods. He began making miniatures in 1973 and sold his first miniature Victorian house in 1974 to Lillian Williams who owns La Ville du Soleil, a shop in San Francisco that specializes in French antiques and crafts. He is best known for his whimsical aviaries and dollhouses painted on both the interior and exterior. In addition to dollhouses he also creates cabinets and decorative objects.



Pat Arnell acquired the French Chateau in 1993 and set to work furnishing the rooms in French Rococo style. She chose a variety of exquisite miniature furnishings to capture the imagination of the vicarious visitor. One charming touch on the first floor is the upright French harpsichord with a portrait of a lady and her dog painted on the inside of the lid. One can imagine that the painting is a portrait of the lovely young lady on the third floor. Every miniature element, the porcelain and silver curios in the cabinets and on tables, a powdered wig on the dresser and tallow candle on the nightstand, delight the eye and evoke a romantic interpretation of the 18th century. With all these wonderful details who can resist creating a narrative for the residents?



So, you might be asking yourself, "Who are these sophisticated canines and what is their relationship to the young lady on the third floor?" Well, Pat Arnell will tell you that the figures are actually aristocrats dressed as poodles heading off to a costume ball. Perhaps the young lady is not old enough to attend a ball and will take the paws of her pooch and dance around her room imagining the grand sight of a Great Hall filled with elegant ladies and formidable gents. Ah, an opportunity to create another miniature setting!