



CONTEST KIT BASHING CORNER SPRING 2013 CABINET

Issue No. 37

Thursday, May 9, 2013

The Mini Time Machine Museum of Miniatures

Tucson, Arizona



Each contestant began with this unfinished corner cabinet.

Last month, The Mini Time Machine Museum joyfully welcomed the entries for our 3rd Annual Kitbashing Contest, a competition designed to challenge our community with a creative miniature project, while raising funds to support our education and outreach programs. This year's contest featured a corner cabinet with three shelves in the standard dollhouse scale, 1:12. Contestants would be judged based upon their creative use of scale, additional materials used and originality of concept or theme. As an added incentive, the winner would receive a \$100 gift card to Lowe's. The votes are in, and we are pleased to both announce

the winners and celebrate the diverse and clever concepts of our participants!

Our First Place prize goes to *Ant Invasion!* by Jackie Volpe. In her artist statement, Jackie tells us that this contest marked her first attempt at creating miniatures, which inspired her to push the envelope. "Being the first miniature I have ever built, I wanted to take the piece provided and really add some extra creativity to it by making it unrecognizable – after all, it is a kitbashing contest." Jackie followed her own advice and really wowed the judges with her lush foliage, mix of textures and colors, and delightful attention to detail. It was a treat to note all of the little edibles hidden in the leaves, the gnomes tucked into the greenery, and the handmade elements such as her twig fire pit and enormous mushrooms. Her oversized ants give the whole scene a playful appeal. Jackie declared that it was The Mini Time Machine Museum itself that inspired her creation, no doubt in part by our Enchanted Realm Tree. Congratulations, Jackie!

The runner up was an untitled piece by Barbara Angerhoffer, whose environmentally conscious concept really impressed the judges. "This is a model of a biogenic oyster reef structure with a dual purpose: reversing coastal erosion while restoring the decimated oyster population," she explains in her statement. To achieve her goal, Barbara erased all of the

cabinet's original features, flipping it over onto its face and transforming it into a mound of water, sand and safe harbor for oysters. She kept her materials simple, including actual seashells and costume jewelry pearls. Barbara's inspiration came from these full-scale structures which are being installed in critical areas of Chesapeake Bay by her cousin's firm, [Ready Reef, Inc.](#)

Using the art of miniatures to illustrate statements of environmental awareness is an effective way to reach the public at large; our museum's own *Japanese Family Farmhouse* (1992) by Shoichi Uchiyama is an excellent example, showcasing his passionate devotion to preservation through recreation.* We were glad to have such a worthy cause as a contribution to our contest.

We invited our visitors to take part in the fun by voting for their favorite with our Visitor's Choice category. Winning by



Ant Invasion! by Jackie Volpe. The cabinet was transformed into a tree with built-in storage. Photo by Emily Wolverton.



Untitled, by Barbara Angerhoffer. The cabinet became a model of a biogenic oyster reef. A closer look at the detail is provided above, right. Photos by Emily Wolverton.

Kit-bash-ing (kit bash'ing) v., {Miniature Colloquialism} term used by miniaturists to describe the process by which a new scale model is created by altering a commercial kit from its original form to another permutation.



The Visitor's Choice award went to *Open a Book to St. Mary Mead*, by Amy Collinsworth. The cabinet was cut into two sections: one half became a china cupboard and the other converted into a fireplace (bottom, right). The real life Miss Marple is a delightful touch (bottom, left).
Photos by Emily Wolverton.

a landslide was Amy Collinsworth, with her charming entry, *Open a Book to St. Mary Mead*. Amy explains that her piece is "a miniature representation of a room in Danemead, the cottage home of Miss Jane Marple." Miss Marple is, of course, the famous spinster detective created by renowned author, Agatha Christie, and it is not hard to imagine the shrewd Miss Marple herself sitting in the chair, settling in for some tea and a good mystery. Amy's details are truly

wonderful, turning the room into a very literal tribute to literature by using one of Christie's volumes as the base for her scene. Actual pages from the book were used for wallpaper, as well as the surface of the coffee table – even the books themselves contain the text of Christie's works. Perhaps the loveliest detail of all is the vase of flowers, the petals of which are painted pages. Want one more reason to love this piece? The little dog in the framed picture is Amy's pet chihuahua, whose name is – you guessed it – Miss Jane Marple!

Rounding out the entries were two terrific untitled pieces, one by Kathy Blanchard and the other by Paul & Diane Bodjanac. Both of these entries display the cabinet as a boat, but the similarities end there, taking vastly different directions when it comes to inspiration and execution. Kathy Blanchard was inspired by the imagery from the film adaptation of *Life of Pi* (2012), using a shot of young Pi out at sea with the tiger, Richard Parker, for her finished product. It is no wonder that Kathy was inspired: the film's



Untitled, by Kathy Blanchard. This entry drew inspiration from the film adaptation of *Life of Pi*.
Photo by Emily Wolverton.

cinematographer, Claudio Miranda, won the Oscar this year for Best Achievement in Cinematography for his work on the film. Kathy captures the sparkling stillness of the sea and the immense, starry sky using colorful felt, keeping her overall design simple and engaging. "I decided to think outside the box," she writes in her statement. "While it is not an exact representation, I hope it sets the mood for you and lets you journey to this magical adventure." It does, indeed!

The Bodjanac's took a more detailed approach with their boat scene, creating an entire beachscape, complete with sandy shore and waves. They transformed the cabinet with layers of paint, and added to the shape of the boat to give it a more realistic form (you'd never have guessed it was originally a cabinet!). There are many excellent touches throughout, including all of the beach gear – life jackets, oars, blankets and nets – and the little chap eating a sandwich gives the whole a piece the feeling of a pleasant summer afternoon. The judges loved the texture of the water and the handmade details. Well done, Paul and Diane!



Untitled, by Paul and Diane Bodjanac. The cabinet has been transformed into a boat.
Photo by Emily Wolverton.

Come and enjoy these wonderful works here at the museum, on display in our lobby through May 26th! Be sure to stay tuned for our next kitbashing contest – who knows? Your own imagination may soon be on exhibit at The Mini Time Machine Museum!

Emily Wolverton
The Mini Time Machine Museum of Miniatures

◆ Uchiyama's *Japanese Family Farmhouse* is located in our Exploring the World the gallery. It was featured in *Minis Magnified* Issue No. 17, July 9, 2011: *Japanese Family Farmhouse*.

♥ The book used by Amy Collinsworth is *Miss Marple Meets Murder*, a volume which contains four of Agatha Christie's stories featuring Miss Marple: *The Mirror Crack'd* (1962), *A Pocket Full of Rye* (1953), *At Bertram's Hotel* (1965), and *The Moving Finger* (1942).

We would like to give a special thanks to our 2013 Kitbashing Contest Judges:

**Museum Founder, Pat Arnell
IGMA Artisan Anne Snodgrass
SAME member Jan Rasmussen**