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TOP STORY

BG woman turns miniature furniture into online business

By JACKSON FRENCH jfrench@bgdailynews.com 5 hrs ago



The furniture Rebecca Stewart crafts by hand is distinct. Whether it's a sofa, bed, cabinet or even a kitchen sink, each piece is small enough to fit in your hand.

On the second floor of her Bowling Green home, Stewart works in a bedroom that's been converted into her workshop. A miniature house in the French chateau style overlooks her workspace, where pieces of doll-sized furniture at a 1-to-12 scale stand on regular-sized desks and shelves.

The tiny house – which, for now, only has one fully furnished room, complete with a chandelier that actually lights up – was Stewart's introduction to the world of dollhouse miniatures roughly three years ago.

“The house kind of started it all and it morphed into this miniature business that's become not so miniature,” she said.

Stewart's hobby is now a full-fledged business called Tiny Dwelling Miniatures. Through an Etsy account accessible through the business' website, tinydwelldingminiatures.com, Stewart sells the furniture she makes to buyers in more than a dozen countries.

Building miniature houses and filling them with miniature furniture, with pieces that can cost more than \$1,000, is a serious hobby for some.

“And it's not that they're playing dolls. They don't have dolls in there,” she said. “They're loading them up like a real life-size house with the finest miniatures they could find.”

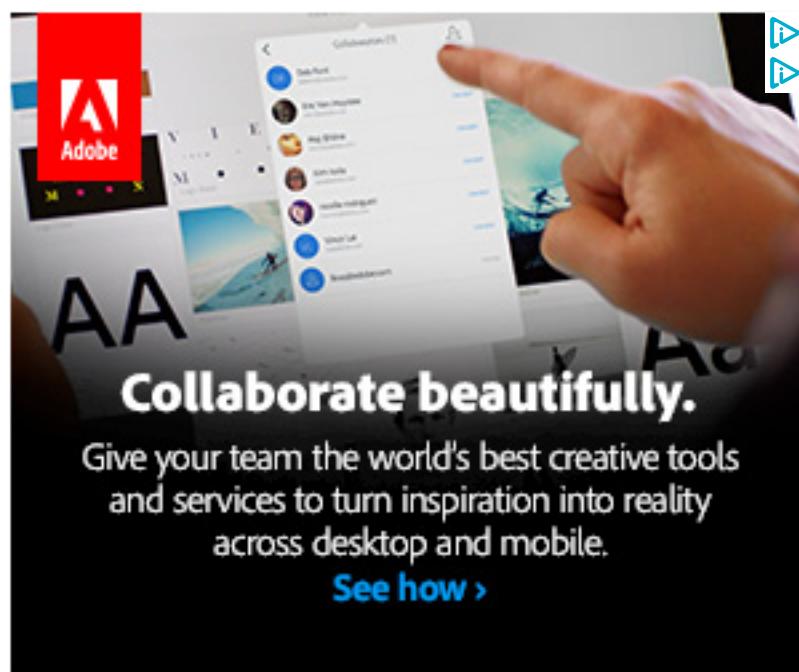
Stewart has been featured in several publications dedicated to the miniatures community, including Dollhouse World and American Miniaturist. She has also been twice to the Miniature Show in Chicago, which she said is the largest annual miniature show in the world. And in June, she plans to begin teaching classes for creating miniatures.

Details about the classes are available on the Tiny Dwelling Etsy page, though specifics regarding location and schedule are not yet confirmed.

Stewart said she's been interested in antiques and art "for as long as I can remember." She first got the idea to put together a miniature house in 2015 after finding a book that explains how to build one while in line at Hobby Lobby.

"I don't idle very well. I don't idle at all, in fact," she said. "So I was standing in the line going, 'All right, I'm idling here, what am I supposed to do while I'm waiting in line?' and I saw a book and I was kind of mesmerized by the scene on the book."

That initial enthusiasm has stayed with her through three years of crafting miniatures, Stewart said.



"I was like a little kid on Christmas Eve. I couldn't wait to wake up every morning to get started," she said of the time she was discovering the world of miniatures. "And I'm still kind of like that, honestly."

Although she enjoys working on the house, Stewart said she hasn't finished it because she's grown busy crafting miniature furniture to fill the orders that come in from around the world.

The process involves whittling and sanding pieces of wood into shape with a Dremel and a miniature table saw, painting items, building electrical circuits to light up some displays, and sewing tiny cushions together with pieces of antique cloth, she said.

For Stewart, who is frequently busy attending Western Kentucky University athletic events with her husband, WKU athletic director Todd Stewart, her workshop serves as her getaway.

“This to me is my happy place,” she said. “I’m so involved with his job doing the things that I need to do and going to games and supporting the different programs and this and that, that this is really my outlet.”

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