

Gone to the Dogs

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When I made this Tiny Pug toy for my sister last February, I didn't exactly realize what I was getting myself into! Zoe the Pug was quickly followed -- by request -- with a Labradoodle, a

Heinz 57 Mutt, a Bulldog, and a Jack Russell Terrier, and then by cartoon dogs Grimmy and Gromit, and more recently by a Golden Lab.



If you've been following my projects, you've seen all of these in previous posts, but what you may not know is that I seem to have become well and truly hooked on this dog thing!

I hadn't intended -- or expected -- to be making particular dog breeds or "portrait" dogs, but having made these others, I

thought it would be nice to surprise my friend Daisy with a Tiny Dachshund, in honour of her special four-legged friends. I wanted to gift Daisy, but I also wanted to challenge myself, to see if I could actually make a dachshund in tiny form. (I did!)



Digitizing these "realistic" little dogs imposes a few constraints. The Mini Stockings are small, and each tiny toy has to fit easily inside. At such a scale, and stitched on felt, they can't be too heavy with detail, but at the same time they still need to be recognizable as the specific breed, or in some cases, as the particular dog, that they're intended to represent.

Like the previous little dog toys, Tiny Dachshund turned out so cute that I began to wonder who else might be waiting to appear!

Doberman, Shepherd and Border Collie! That doesn't rhythm, but -- Oh My!



Getting the face just right on the Tiny Doberman was the main challenge – they are so skinny, with longish snouts. It took a bit of fiddling until I felt I had captured the look accurately, but I'm pretty pleased with him. Everyone who has seen him has recognized right away what breed he represents: Score!



And can you say "Littlest Hobo"? This German Shepherd took a couple of tries too – I didn't want him to be mistaken for a Husky. Since German Shepherd coat colours vary quite a bit, I experimented with the felt colour until I settled on this light tan. I might still stitch one up on a darker brown felt, using black thread for the fur accents.

The Tiny Dog toys are meant to slip into my Mini Stocking Ornaments, but I've also been playing with the idea of digitizing them in a slightly larger size so they can become stand-alone ornaments, or even pocket pals.

Tiny Border Collie might be my favourite so far, possibly because we had two much-loved border collies when I was a kid. I especially love his expression!



Meanwhile, my friends have requested Mini Stocking ornament with a toy of Coco, their daughter's beloved dog. Aargh: now this one is going to be a challenge!

After that, there are other breeds out there that I might be able to digitize successfully: a Newfoundland dog, for instance, or maybe a Keeshond, or perhaps an actual Husky!

I'm sure there will be some dogs that I just can't render recognizably in such a context, but . . . we'll see.