

Mile High Polymer Clay Guild Newsletter

www.mhpcg.org

Volume 9 Number 1

July, August, September 2004

MHPCG SPONSORS SUMMER WORKSHOP

California Polymer Clay Artist Grant Diffendaffer will teach a 2-day workshop, "Textured Beads" July 16-17th at the Phillips United Methodist Church, Lakewood, Colorado. Registration information was mailed mid-May and at this writing most of the twenty spaces are filled. Members wishing to register may contact Tina Holdman (THoldman@comcast.net) or Diane Luftig (303-798-9616). The workshop tuition is \$100 for 2 days, plus a \$10 materials fee. Your 2004-5 dues must be paid as well.

Silent Auction profits are being used to cover Grant's airfare and church use fees so that members pay tuition only. We're asking that participants sign up for at least one task: set-up, clean-up, kitchen duty or oven monitoring. More information on this will be sent with your class confirmation.

Grant's work can be seen on his website:

www.diffendaffer.com



IF YOUR NAME APPEARS ON THE LIST
BELOW YOU HAVE A TREASURE WAITING!



Diane Luftig still has copies of the Lapidary Journal special issue featuring polymer clay jewelry for these people:

Pat McNurlin	Lynne Falick
Jeri Desrochers	Jennifer West
Jackie Suyama	Rosemary Probst
Thomas Accardi	Gwen Pina
Mary Landauer	Jane Hines
Jan Rosen	Cynthia Becker

Diane will be happy to mail the magazine, but requests that you send her \$1.50 postage in advance.

CLAY DAYS

JULY 24TH

AUGUST 28TH

SEPTEMBER 25TH

9:30 A.M.

PHILLIPS UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH
LAKEWOOD, CO

BRING YOUR CLAY PROJECTS,
TOOLS & LUNCH.

BOARD MEETING 9:30 A.M.
EVERYONE'S WELCOME!

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER!

If you haven't
yet paid your
2004-5 dues,
please do it
now.



Our new year
begins July 1st
and this is the last newsletter you'll
receive unless you're a paid member. Send
your check to:

Susan Mueller
P.O. Box 4629
Breckenridge, CO 80424

Full membership, \$30

Associate (out of town) membership: \$15



THE PREZ SAYS... BY TINA HOLDMAN

This column will be a mishmash of whatever I basically want to put in it (Karen said so) just as long as I get it to her in time for the newsletter. Oh, and no cussing (much) either and no juicy gossip unless it can be legally substantiated!

This time we'll include color recipes that I made on purpose or those I accidentally came across in my quest for yet a better cane color combination. Some I just made up special for this collection, because you guys are special and deserve a good recipe. Now I know some of you have some of those gaudy fluorescent colors that you bought in a moment of "why not's" and now after they have lived on your shelf for a good long time they have become "why did I's?". This collection uses some of those strangely compelling colors and now is the time to use them up.

So now that the spring breezes are cooling our brows we can look ahead to the bright colors of summer. For those who cling tightly to those pastels or earthy tones for an everyday palette, here are some colors to tastily tantalize you into breaking wildly into a whole new zone. This month's color collection is the "Tropical Girl Drink Combo - little umbrellas optional". OK, then how about "Tropical Island Collection" if you want a more conventional name. Get out the salsa music, mix a tropical libation and heat up the pasta machine, because here we go!

Turquoise Sea - this is a nice medium turquoise. Now imagine a warm Tahitian sea where you float gently, looking through lovely shades of green & blue water, and dreaming of nice lime margarita, which will come later, okay?

1 part Premo Fluorescent Yellow
8 parts Premo Turquoise

Flowering Fuschia - soft, fragrant flowers in your hair as your grass skirt blows in the scented breeze. Imagine a softened fuschia which blends nicely with the other tropical colors.

1 part Premo Ecru
3 parts Premo Fuschia

Coral Splash - a medium orange that goes nicely with sunscreen.

10 parts Premo Cadmium Yellow
1 part Premo Fluorescent Red

Lime Margarita - the tangy explosion of lime and ice. This is a great lime green and looks fabulous next to a clear, bright red as well as other colors in this collection. This is a softer version of my regular lime green & yum, it's good!

1 part Premo Sea Green
3 parts Premo White
3 parts Premo Ecru
16 Parts Premo Fluorescent yellow

Creamy Sand - Aahhh, lolling in the warm, soft sand with flowers in your hair and the smell of coconut in the sunscreen. Premo ecru can be a bit too beige and this recipe makes a lovely darker shade of cream which is a basic on my clay table.

3 parts Premo White
4 parts Premo Ecru

Golden Pineapple - the golden yellow of delicious pineapple to decorate the tiny spots that are still available on your clay table.

1/2 part Premo Fuschia
15 parts Premo Cadmium Yellow
3 parts Premo White



Difficulty with unreturned videos led the Board to designate a committee to examine library policies and propose new guidelines. Thanks to Maggie Giza who chaired the committee and to Jan Frame, Tina Guegler, Antje Ryken and Karen Sexton who served on the committee. Members voted 15 to 1 in favor of implementing the new guidelines which go into effect July 1st.

1. Before using the library, each member will give the treasurer an undated \$50 check to be held for one fiscal year. (June 30-July 1st) At the beginning of the next fiscal year, the member's check will be returned and a new check will be written for the current fiscal year. If the member resigns before the end of the year, the check will be returned if everything is in order.
2. One video may be checked out each month.
3. The procedure will be communicated to the membership via the website, newsletter and membership booklet.
4. There will continue to be a \$3.00 rental fee for the first month's rent.
5. A \$6.00 fee will be charged for a video not returned on the due date.
6. If the video has not been returned by the end of the second month, and if there has been no communication with the librarian as to extenuating circumstances, the undated check will be cashed & placed in the guild account in order for the video to be replaced.
7. The librarian will have each member sign a card representing the video to be checked out and date of check-out.
8. The librarian will communicate with the member about the late fee and/or the cashing of the undated check.
9. Options: The member may replace the video within two months.
The member may lose the deposit and library privileges for that fiscal year.
10. If the check fails to clear the bank, the member will lose library privileges.

NEW BOARD GOALS FOR 2004-5

The MHPCG Board adopted the following goals for the coming year:

1. Revitalize membership
2. Invite Donna Kato to do a Clay-Day
3. Balance Clay Day demos with work-time
4. Plan a guest-artist workshop

Diane Luftig is our new Special Program chair and will be providing leadership for Clay Day and guest artist workshop planning. Please let her know demo topics you're interested in, ideas for workshops and techniques you can share.

WHERE DOES OUR MONEY GO?

Our \$30 dues covers a variety of annual expenses: Church use fees (\$75/day/clay days, \$100 January meeting), newsletter printing/postage, website fee, membership directory printing/postage, coffee, cream, sugar, and special treats for the Holiday Recovery Party. The \$3 library video rental fees keep the library solvent for new video purchase



or replacement. Our treasury has also paid for special equipment purchases: video/vcr, PMC kiln & tumbler, convection oven, storage carts, tables, clay extruder, bench block and anvil, extension cords and multiple plugs.

TANTALIZING TEXTURES WITH FOUND FREEBIES

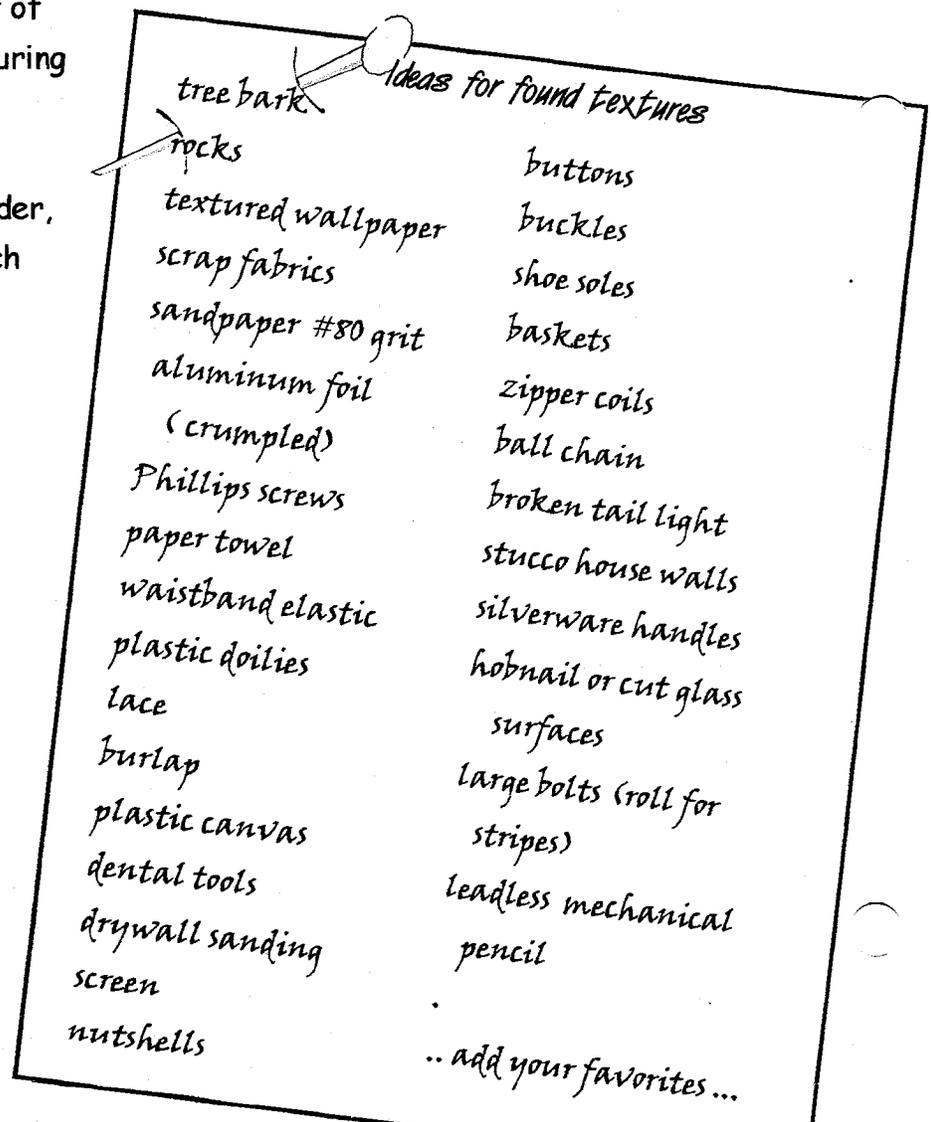
Polymer clay and textures are the perfect match. Combined, they provide countless ways to add interest, contrast, and unique design twists to almost any project.

Although craft manufacturers provide an ever-expanding range of texture sheets in plastic, paper and even rubber stamps, found items are readily available without cost and can be discovered in virtually every room in your house, including the kitchen and garage. The list below has just a few of my favorites.

Polymer Clay artist Jody Bishel makes a finger cap by molding a ball of scrap clay over her finger or the end of a rounded dowel, then texturing the tip. She writes, "My favorite finger cap was made by scoring thin lines radiating out from the center of the cup. Depending on how it's pressed into the clay, it can look like pine needles, fireworks, glass or even coral."

Many of us have discovered the necessity of using a release agent to prevent the texturing tool from sticking to the clay surface. Although clayers debate the relative effectiveness of corn starch, talcum powder, Armoral, water or even mica powders, each works well with this exception: It's been reported that water is not a good choice for Fimo because of the possible interaction between the two.

Textured surfaces can be enhanced by applying an antiquing medium. Acrylic paint is a popular medium & and burnt umber is a favorite for a traditional antique effect. Mica powders like Pearl-EX and wax finishes such as Rub 'n Buff are also widely used. Paint & wax work best on baked surfaces which have been sanded.



Tantalizing Textures, continued

The metallic powders can be applied either before or after baking but require a surface sealer such as Flecto Verathane, Future, or Golden acrylic varnish.

More unusual mediums include heat-set fabric paints such as Lumiere, which add a metallic shimmer in a variety of colors. Excess paint is easily removed from the baked surface but the piece needs to be popped back into the oven for a few minutes to assure durability.

For effectively texturing black beads, bake and then paint with several different Pearlescent Inks*, allow them to dry and then sand the top layer so the black shows through. The colors remain in the grooves, producing beautiful contrasts. (*Pearlescent Inks are made by Daler-Rowney.)

Mixing Pearl-X with Kato Medium or TLS produces interesting contrasts and color shifts when brushed on textured, baked clay and then re-baked. A duo red/blue mixture on a textured black surface appears metallic purplish blue on the raised areas and a deep transparent blue in the recessed areas .

Another favorite medium for enhancing textured surfaces was shared by Colorado artist Sarajane Helm in her book Make a Polymer Clay Impression. Sarah suggests mixing Flecto Varathane plus small amounts of black acrylic paint and gold Pearl-Ex powder. The advantage of this medium is that once it dries it doesn't need additional protection. Experiment with other TLS, Pearl-EX & paint combinations. For example, blue-greens mimic verdigris. Sarajane includes many samples in her book and as the "Texture Queen", uses a variety of beautiful custom rubber stamps made from clip art or dingbats & manufactured by www.readystamps.com.

There's little doubt that textures, clay and antiquing mediums offer countless possibilities for enhancing designs. Experiment! Consider creating a sampler of Pearl-Ex powders on different textured clay backgrounds. You'll soon build a handy reference library which will become an invaluable resource. KS

Super Simple Sample Sheet

1. Roll black clay on #4, add texture sheet & roll with clay on #3.
2. Cut clay sheet into small squares using a 3/4" Kemper cutter.
3. Brush each square with a different Pearl-Ex powder.
4. Mark 2" squares on an 8 x 11 sheet of cardstock; put a dot of glue in each square.
5. Place samples in squares, writing color beneath each.
6. Bake. Store in plastic sleeve. (Repeat, using other clay colors.)

Maj-Britt Carsthen

NEW BOOKS AND VIDEOS

ColorWorks - the Crafters Guide to Color

by Deb Menz, Interweave Press

ISBN: 1-931499-47-0

Whether you are interested in color theory or just love playing and experimenting with color, this book is for you. Deb Menz, a fiber artist, has put together this spiral-bound reference guide about color. More specifically, this book explores how colors interact in different mediums such as beadwork, fibers, paper, quilting, and weaving. Though this book is not geared toward polymer clay enthusiasts, they will surely find much of value inside. This book is a bit pricey, but I thought it well worth the \$24.95. There are tear-out color charts/color wheels and gray scales as well as a nice little pocket where everything can be stored. Color is a subject to explore for a whole lifetime, and even if you have other books on color theory you may want to add this new one to your library.

- Jennifer West

Polymer Clay in a Day - by Emma Ralph Anyone interested in polymer clay will delight in the colorful projects found in this book. Crafters will welcome Emma Ralph's affordable and beautiful gift ideas, including wine glass charms, a millefiore trinket box, stylish napkin rings, clay & metal earrings & a delicate lattice bowl. The comprehensive techniques section includes canework, blending, texture & filligree; a creative gallery of projects provides inspiration and ideas for both beginners and experienced clayers.

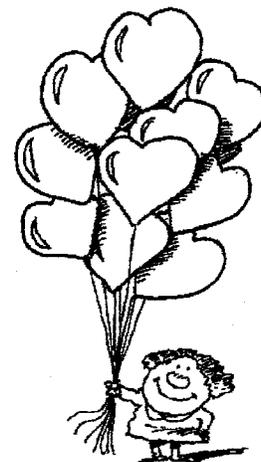
Abba Dabba Productions has recently released two new videos: **Complex Caning** (Sarah Shriever) and **Ancient Structures & Surfaces** (Nan Roche). Both have been ordered for our library and should be available for checkout soon.

Our guest workshop artist **Grant Diffendaffer** has just finished a video for Polymer Clay Express featuring his mica shift technique. Hopefully it will be available within the next few months.

AND SPEAKING OF COLOR ... After mixing Tina's Tropical Palette, do some experimenting: mix each color with white to create a new collection of pastels or use each color and white to make Skinner Blends. You'll see an instant preview of the tints possible. Marie Segul suggests using small amounts of ecru to shade colors, and that's another idea too! Visit www.glidden.com for color charts and combinations.

A Tribute to Jennifer

Often the very people who most deserve our praise and thanks are overlooked because they quietly do an A+ job on tasks we take for granted. Jennifer West, who tirelessly contributed her time and talent to writing our guild newsletter during the past several years, is such a person. Jen successfully creates and markets original polymer clay jewelry & accessories. She has developed a distinctive style with soft signature colors, beautiful caning & impeccable finishing. Due to her untiring efforts, we've enjoyed an interesting and informative newsletter which has kept us up-to-speed on guild happenings and developments in the polymer clay world. Thank you, Jennifer! You are a rare treasure and we do appreciate your generosity in doing our newsletter!



ETCETERA ...

PMC STUDY GROUP

If you're interested in getting together to work on and fire your PMC projects, you may want to join the Tuesday morning Study Group.

The group is just beginning and are tentatively planning to meet every other Tuesday morning at the Phillips United Methodist Church in Lakewood.

Interested? Contact Tina Gugeler for up-to-date details:
Phone: 720-890-0552
E-mail: tgugeler@earthlink.net

SECRETS OF INK JET TRANSFERS REVEALED!

The Kato Polyclay Website has a downloadable techniques guide for using Kato Liquid Polymer Clay Medium. It's a large file (approximately 3 Mb.) but has step-by-step information on how to create color ink-jet transfers.
www.katopolyclay.com/news.html

Several MHPCG members attended Donna's workshop and learned this technique. It is simple to do, though there are some 'tips' that make it successful, including the kind of photopaper that works best.

CREATING FAUX WOOD

www.polymerclaycentral.com
www.pcpolyzine.com/June2001
www.heartofclay.com/pc/tutorials.htm

GOT PLEXIGLAS?

Here's a great place to buy custom-size Plexiglas work surfaces:

Plastic Supply & Fabrication
2080 W. Barberry Place
Denver, CO 80204
303-5713010

They don't mind doing small orders, though it usually takes a couple of days. Sometimes they have small scraps that are useful for portable work surfaces, bi-cone bead rollers, etc. JW

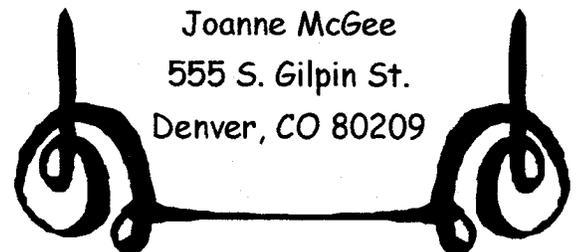
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An invitation from your Editor ...

New books and videos are an important part of the polymer clay world. Including reviews by members would add interest and variety to this newsletter. In an effort to encourage contributions, the Board has agreed to award a **Free Video Rental Coupon** to members whose reviews or articles are published. So -- sharpen those pencils and share your ideas! Karen S.

VIDEO REVIEW GUIDELINES

- Include the following information: Video Title, Producer, Featured Artist, Length of Tape**
- Content of the tape, i.e., what is this tape about?**
- What technique(s) does the artist demonstrate?**
- What projects are used to illustrate the technique(s)?**
- What did you enjoy most?**
- What things could have been improved? (camera-work, sound quality, clarity of demo.)**
- Would you recommend this tape to others? Why?**

BOOK REVIEW GUIDELINES

- Include the following information: Book Title, Author, Publisher, Date of publication**
- Content of book, i.e., what is it about? Does it appeal to intermediate or beginning clayers?**
- What technique(s) are described?**
- What projects are used to illustrate the technique(s)?**
- Are the instructions well-organized and clear? Are there illustrations?**
- Photographs: colored? good quality? helpful to support written text?**
- Is there a gallery of other artists' work?**
- What did you like/dislike about this book? Would you recommend it to others?**

Of course we welcome other kinds of articles: favorite techniques, project how-to, original tools, etc. If you send the review or article via e-mail, please either include it in the body of the message or use a Word attachment. If you have an idea but are plagued with 'writer's block', please give me a call (303-735-1602)!

Thanks!

Karen Sexton (bobwire123@msn.com)

1209 F Easter Ave. Centennial CO 80122





HIP, HIP, HORRAY FOR NEW PRODUCTS!

There's hardly anything that compares with our delight at discovering new tools, projects, books and other polymer-related treasures. Here are a few we think deserve sharing. KJS & TH

Stampabilities has new texture sheets which are deeply etched and which can be put through the pasta machine to create truly striking surfaces. The sheets are made of light blue rubber-like plastic and can also be used as traditional rubber stamps. (Hobby Lobby, \$4.95 each)

Lisa Pavelka has introduced three promising new products available on her website: www.heartinhandstudio.com. First, a cyanoacrylate glue (**PolyBonder**) formulated to withstand temperatures up to 300 degrees. This means you can rebake glued clay without degrading the glue's bonding qualities. The brush-on bottle is a handy way to prevent stuck fingers or loss of product because of clogged tips.

Lisa's second innovative product is a set of **waterslide collage transfers**. Each 8 1/2 x 11 sheet is filled with vintage images that easily transfer on to uncured or baked polymer clay as well as a variety of other surfaces including glass, wood, soap and metal. Price: \$5.00 a sheet or the complete set of eight for \$35.00.

Her third product is a set of deeply etched texture sheets. Although they appear too thick to run through the pasta machine, they would produce great images for mica shift and would also double as rubber stamps.

Twinkling H2O's These waterbased paints are more intensely opaque than typical watercolors. They also have a luminous quality that would be gorgeous in an art journal. However, being water-based they don't work directly on polymer clay. Order from: www.radiantpearls.com When you see the 60 gorgeous colors, you'll want them all!

Sherrill's Sorbets I first saw these acrylic paints in Sherrill's Traveling Kit Studio. There are eight very soft, creamy pastels often seen in Sherrill's wonderful fabric creations. The individual colors are available from www.polymerclayexpress.com

Rollagraphs Although not a new product, polymer clay artists are starting to use these handy rollers for texturing polymer clay surfaces. Handles and stamp rollers are sold separately in three sizes: jumbo, regular and mini. The variety of designs is incredible, with a choice between 40 different mini, 83 regular and 37 jumbo size sets. They are available at stamp and craft stores as well as at www.polymerclayexpress.com.

New Pearl-Ex colors - Reflex Violet, Carbon Black, Mink, Pink-Gold, Sky Blue, Salmon Pink and Grey Violet. The Reflex Violet is a rich, dark bluish-purple and is absolutely lovely! Carbon Black isn't a real shiny black but is lovely used as accent. You could probably mix the Carbon Black and Antique silver and get more shine, if that's your thing.

In October we'll include several other products we didn't have room for this time! Meantime, send us your discoveries to share!

Tina Holdman & Karen Sexton



Great news! The National Polymer Clay Guild Board of Directors will hold its annual meeting in Denver on August 28th, 2004, and MHPCG will host the event! Members and guests are invited to join us for the Saturday a.m. NPCG Board meeting and the fun events planned for the afternoon. Door prizes, refreshments, a luncheon and demonstrations by Donna Kato, Judy Belcher, and Debbie Jackson are just a few of the activities! Plan to bring your polymer clay creations for display, trading and perhaps even selling. This is a unique opportunity to connect with National Board members as well as meet well-known polymer clay artists. Mark your calendar & plan to attend:

MHPCG Clay Day Saturday, August 28, 2004

Phillips United Methodist Church Lakewood, Colorado

Check our website (www.mhpcg.org) for more information as plans develop!

A bit of background: Although local guilds have no legal or financial ties with NPCG, the organization has always promoted education and acceptance of polymer clay as an art and craft medium & encouraged local guild development. We currently have two MHPCG members on the Board: Lee Radtke, President and Diane Luftig, Treasurer. (Carol Simmons is a past president, Karen Goulet the former website coordinator and Karen Sexton has served as guild liaison, librarian and recording secretary. A number of our MHPCG members attended national conferences in Pennsylvania and Tennessee. (www.npcg.org)

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Karen J. Sexton, Editor

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