

Mile High Polymer Clay Guild Newsletter



October, November December 2009

www.mhpcg.org

President's Letter

I know I say this all the time, but where did August & September go? Seems like I was just thinking of what to do with kids during the summer months & now it's time for the October newsletter. Augh!

Before I gaze into the future, I want to thank Barb Harper for being our Swap Meister & for the wonderful work she did on our Spring bug swap. I think this swap re-awakened our creative interest. At least, that's what it did for me. I had so much fun making my bugs with some of Eileen's butterfly canes! (They're the eyes & eyebrows on my bugs.) See the collection on our website:

<http://www.mhpcg.org/>

Laura Schiller is taking us into the world of ATC's. It's something I've always been interested in doing. From two years of Clay Carnival I have a lovely collection from our poker chip swaps. If you haven't taken part in a swap I hope you'll take part in the next one, whatever that may turn out to be.

We're heading into the fall season which is my favorite time of year. Gary and I went to Rocky Mountain Park recently. The aspen stands were on fire with color. I came home just itching to create those golds, greens, reds & browns ... in clay! What's in your palette of fall colors?

At our October meeting we're having a hands-on day. Please bring your tools, work surface & the clay projects you're working on or have been wanting to start. We'll have informal demonstrations throughout the day so plan to stay as long as you can & be prepared for serendipity to teach you something new. I find that I always learn so much when we're all together playing with our clay. We've gotten away from doing this & I want to see it going on again. Let's make it a true "Clay Day" instead of a "drop in".

What would you like to see happening in November? Our guild day is on Thanksgiving weekend. Some of us will have house-guests, some will be out of town. Most of us, I believe, will be ready to get away from the kitchen and cook up some clay. We have no meeting in December. Our next gathering will be in January for our Holiday Party & Silent Auction event. Start thinking about which piece of your work you'll want to donate to our fund raiser or share in the gift exchange. The Silent Auction takes place to defray costs for retreats and other guild events. If you don't have time to create a piece for the auction, look through & see what items you might have that someone

else might be able to use in their clay journey. Over the last two years, due to members' estate sales & garage sale opportunities, we've gotten away from this fund raiser. It's important that we remember to take part in this along with our great party! And speaking of our party, who would like to plan and honcho this one? I'm afraid to ask our Deb Brooner. She's already done our food planning and catering for the last two years! So

Last of all, don't forget that we always need people who are willing to teach a demonstration at our meetings. Pick out a project on line, from the library or your favorite Polymer Café issue and volunteer to teach it to the rest of us.

Happy Claying!

Peg



Exploring the Rainbow

With Tina Holdman

This is a collection of polymer clay opaque colors with coordinating recipes for clay tints. A base of translucent clay is used and then tinted with a very small amount of colored clay & alcohol inks. Some of the colors in this collection did change from the original recipes, expanding this palette very nicely.

Overall, the tints are much softer colors than the original recipe colors. The #1 Crenshaw Melon changed to a Honeydew melon tint. That is, from a light opaque yellow to a more translucent light green. The #2 Champagne Mango became a brownish coral tint & the #3 Dull Peach became a very light mustard yellow tint. The #4 Soft Blueberry became a lighter, gray-based blue tint that looks quite different from the base recipe. The #5 Light Grape and #6 Dark Plum tints are fairly true to their original recipe colors but are lighter and duller than the original.

Feel free to experiment a bit with new combinations. However, be warned: it can become addictive! This is a great way to start using those alcohol inks you tucked away or a great excuse to buy some if you've not tried using them with clay. You can also roll out white or translucent clay, 'paint' it with alcohol ink and use the tinted pieces in collages or whatnot.

#1 Pale Crenshaw Melon

2 parts Kato White
2 parts Kato Yellow
1 part Kato Flesh

#2 Soft Champagne Melon

5 parts Kato Yellow
2 parts Kato White
1 part Kato Flesh
1 part Kato Brown
1/4 Kato Orange

#3 Medium Dull Peach

4 parts Kato White
2 parts Kato Yellow
2 parts Kato Brown
1 part Kato Flesh
1 part Kato Orange

#4 Soft Light Blueberry

6 parts Kato White
4 parts Kato Blue
2 parts Kato Flesh
1 part Kato Purple



#5 Soft Light Grape

4 parts Kato White
2 parts Kato Purple
1 part Kato Turquoise

#6 Dark Plum

4 parts Kato purple
1 part Kato White
1 part Kato Blue
1 part Kato Brown

I use a 3/4 Kemper cutter for all my 'parts' measurements. If you use a smaller measure, then the tints will be more intense in color. If you use a larger measure for the 'parts', then the tints will be lighter. The translucent clay is rolled through the pasta machine at a #1 (thickest setting). The opaque mixed color recipe will be rolled on a #4 (middle setting). You can put the alcohol ink on the clay at any time, spread it out and let it dry just a bit before mixing. Keep a wipe and paper towel handy for cleanup and wear gloves if you're not too fond of stained fingers!

#1T Pale Melon Tint

10 parts Kato Translucent (Rolled at #1)
2 parts #1 Crenshaw Melon (Rolled at #4)
10 drops Adirondack Alcohol Ink—*Lettuce*

#2T Soft Champagne Mango Tint

10 parts Kato Translucent (Rolled at #1)
2 parts #2 Champagne Mango Recipe (rolled at #4)
10 drops Adironcack Alcoholin Ink—*Ginger*

#3T Medium Dull Peach Tint

10 parts Kato Translucent (rolled at #1)
2 parts #3 Dull Peach recipe (rolled on #4)
10 drops Adirondack Alcohol Ink—*Caramel*

#4T Soft Light Blueberry Ting

10 parts Kato Translucent (rolled at #1)
1 part #4 Light Blueberry Recipe (rolled at #4)
9 drops Aidirondack Alcohol Ink—*Slate*

#5 Soft Light Grape Tint

10 parts Kato Translucent (rolled at #1)
2 parts #5 Light Grape recipe (rolled at #4)
10 drops Adirondack Alcohol Ink—*Eggplant*

#6T Dark Plum Tint

10 parts Kato Translucent (rolled at #1)
1 part #6 Dark Plum recipe (rolled at #4)
6 drops Adirondack Alcohol Ink—*Currant*

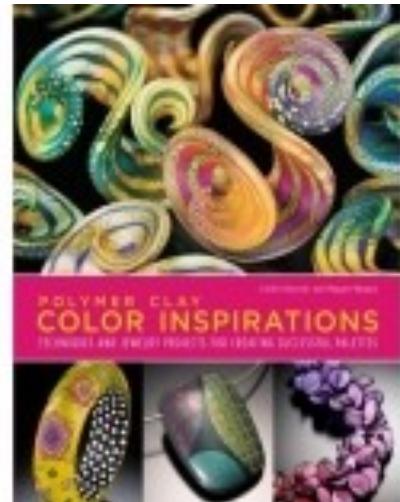


More About Color

This long-awaited book could be re-titled "Everything You Wanted to Know About Color but didn't know enough to ask!" Written by two renowned color experts, teachers & gallery-level artists, Lindly Haunani and Magagie Maggio have put together a thought-provoking, orderly treatise on color study, interspersed with interesting projects and inspiring artist profiles. Since most color books focus on painting media, this book is unique in its approach to color explorations using polymer clay.

Maggie Maggio is currently posting follow-up information and tutorials on her website, <http://maggiemaggio.com/color/>. On <http://www.youtube.com/> you can view & work along as she demonstrates her method of mixing Color Scales. The three part series contains the same info as she presents in her workshops and in the book.

Check in with Lindly's blog (<http://lindly.wordpress.com/>) for regular posts on color, links to interesting color-manipulative websites and Lindly's views on the world of polymer art.



Color Websites

Here is a fun on line color scheme generator you may want try: <http://colorschemedesigner.com/>

After you choose your pivot color, there are options to select color schemes. Additional features include adjusting the saturation and contrast within a scheme and then previewing the scheme as a web site with either a light or dark background.

This is a fun and easy way to preview possible color schemes for use in your polymer clay work. In a matter of minutes you can explore dozens of color combinations that may work well with your pivot/inspirational color.

Test your color personality using <http://www.testcolor.com/>

Test Color is a free psychological and personality color test based on color symbolism and psychology. This particular test evaluates your personality and true nature and also allows you to get to know yourself.

The test can generate over 50 million different answers, each one written by an artificial intelligence engine. All have been validated by a group of 800 people by over 1,800,000 on-line tests.

Good Stuff

For Adirondack Ink-lovers: Angela Moore reports there are new colors in this line of clay-compatible inks. Tina Holdman brought her set to the Retreat and we were all eager to order some. Angela bought hers at: www.creativeplaystamps.com and they are also available at www.polymerclayexpress.com.

Making polymer box pendants

Gwen Gibson's video, "Wearable Vessels" is available in our guild library. For those wanting to create box-like pendants, it contains two excellent step-by-step methods. Gwen developed the technique for making Japanese inro but the process can also be used to make a number of other designs.

Gwen uses a mold made by pressing clay into an Advantix film container. We're not sure this kind of 'old fashioned' film is still available. An alternative mold can be made by gluing several precut wooden shapes together. (Be sure to line up the edges accurately.) Weight the stack down while it dries and sand if needed. Wrap the wooden mold with deli paper or foil to make removing the clay shell easier. Craft stores have many different wooden shapes that lend themselves to this technique.

Old glass perfume bottles are also good shapes use as a base. To release after curing, just slip a butter knife down between the clay & glass and slide off. If the bottle's shape is curved, cut the mold down one side, remove and then glue the seam with super glue. Once covered with the decorative layer, the seam won't show.

Jana Robert Benzon's "Secret Shapes Inro" DVD is also available in our library. You may want to use her unique method for creating hollow box pendants. <http://www.janarobertsbenzon.com/>

Quick tips especially for sculptors:

You can make fur by using a small crochet hook or similar tool to push into the clay & then drag it down. Start at the lower part of the body and work your way up to the center of the animal's back. You can also use a garlic press to produce many fine strands of fur. A pin is handy for placing the strands on the figure.

Quick tips especially for new clayers

When using wood as permanent base for clay, bake the wood first to dry it out and to minimize bubbling when you later bake your clay-covered piece. You can also coat the baked and cooled wood with either white glue, gesso, or acrylic paint. Let the coating dry before adding clay.

Paper mache also needs to be sealed before adding raw clay. Sobo glue works well for this purpose.

Plastic prescription bottles with a #5 on the bottom won't melt during baking. The white outer cap will also survive the oven but the translucent inner cap will melt.

A Tip from Milli

When you buy *Studio Clay* there is a hard plastic backing sheet with the instructions on it. Keep these backing sheets. They are wonderful for small parts you want to move around or put away without touching them. I also cut against them to save my knife blade. You will find there are a number of uses for them once they are laying on your table.

Report on Carol Simmons' Workshop

By Marian Gurnee

In August, I was honored to be in the first class for this OOAK technique, created and perfected by Fort Collins Artist Carol Simmons. We used our extruders to make different versions of what is commonly called the 'Retro Cane'. Carol has put a few wonderful twists on the retro cane. We each picked out a picture and matched colors up with polymer clay circles that she had ready for us. Each had the color recipe on the back.

We did lots of blending and extruding and created our canes. Carol shared hints and tricks for making & applying slices which we turned into very thin polymer clay fabric. She showed everyone how to create great saver sheets with the material she passed out. (I learned this a few years ago from her and have been using it ever since.) Everyone got an egg to cover. Carol even created a custom rubber band for each student to use with their eggs.

Carol is a master teacher and has a wonderful way of giving each student a lot of personal attention and guidance. If you ever get to attend her class on this technique, I encourage you to do it. I am a color addict and hope she will come out with a recipe chart to buy in addition to the class. If she does, I want to be the first on the list because the colors are FABULOUS!

It was a joy to watch this wonderfully creative artist as she worked her magic on her creations.

Sh.A.R.K.

by Marian Gurnee

My Sh.A.R.K. from the Cutting Edge came yesterday and I just had to try it out! I bought the kit that comes with the Sheet Adjuster & magnetic ruler, blending templates and tutorial. First, I have to warn everyone that this is a lot more tedious than making a regular Skinner blend!

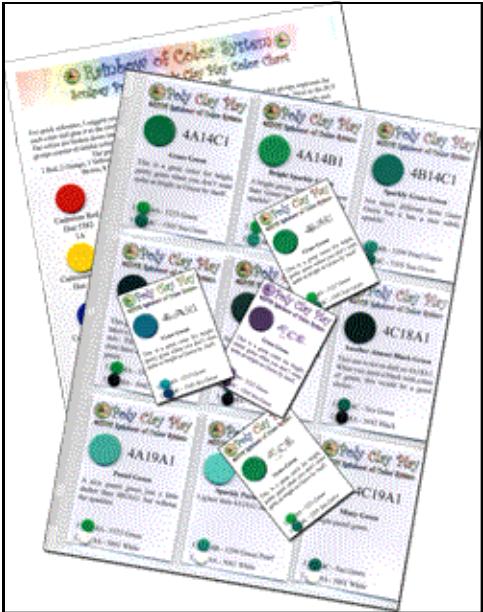
The Sheet Adjuster works very well, but it will only work on machines have still have their bumpers/guards on. It really does keep your work to the width you want it to be. It also helps to make a wider piece narrower. You can still get some 'crinkled' edges, but you can adjust for that and cut some off the sides when you're done.

You really have to be focused when you do these blends. Some of the folding needs to be fairly precise at each step and you have to be very careful about feeding the folded piece into your machine to

keep the bottom as straight as possible. There are a total of ten different blends, each with their own template. The results are worth the time and effort if this is the kind of blending you think you can use in your work.

See www.DanCourmier.com for further information .





Rainbow Color System

Have you ever mixed a wonderful new color and then wondered, "How did I make that great color?" Or do you have lots of recipes but don't know how to organize them in an easy to see and find way? This comprehensive kit has everything you need to help you avoid such frustrations.

This system is primarily designed to help you create and organize your own recipes. The ROCS comes with 152 blank cards that are pre-printed with areas to add the color chips for your recipe. There are 32 pre-made recipe cards using Premo. The cards fit into the pocketed pages included with the kit.

The system also comes with inventory sheets printed with color names for Premo, Fimo Classic & Soft, Kato & Pardo along with circles so you can add your clay color chips. Paper sheets are included so you can keep count of how many packages of clay you have, making it easier when the time comes to order more.

There are also inventory sheets printed on heavier card stock for you to add your chips to. These are a great reference when you want to know, for instance, what Pardo Ivory looks like after it's baked or to be inspired by the colors you have.

The system comes with complete instructions for using the cards, the inventory sheets and how to use the system for making and keeping track of your recipes.

You can order the system from www.polyclayplay.com. Their product list of clay-related items is amazing and We bet you'll discover many other tempting items. The site itself is brimming with information and Trish Hodgens welcomes e-mail with your questions. (Trish@polyclayplay.com) PS: Trish has a featured article on making pumpkin house sculptures in the October Polymer Clay magazine.

Transfer-making revisited

Polymer clay enthusiasts seldom tire of trying new ways for transferring images to raw or baked clay. Artist Karen McIntosh generously shares an hour and a half video demonstrating a number of these techniques. <http://www.polyclayplay.com/FreeVideos.htm>. This is only one of several free instructional videos available on this site.

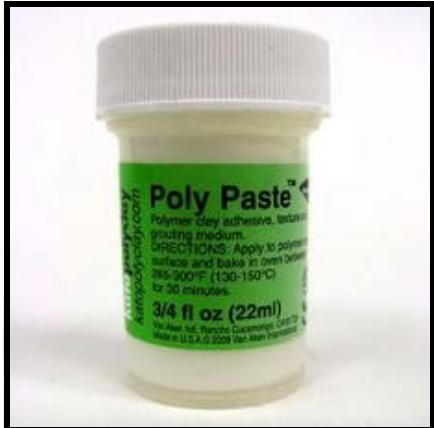
New Products



Pardo comes in 70 amazing colors, many with mica in them. You can mix it with other polymer clays. It is packaged in 2.7 oz. plastic screw-lid jars for easy storage. Pardo canes very nicely & reduces easily. When slicing, the design doesn't smear. Check out www.polyclayplay.com for color samples and more information. Pardo can be purchased locally at Hobby Lobby stores.

Pardo is a patented polymer clay that has come from Germany. It's been on the market there for about two years and is very popular. It has no phthalates and is made with beeswax and other natural ingredients. Pardo bakes at the same temperature (275 degrees) as many other polymer clays. It has no smell before or during baking.

Van Ayken's Poly Paste



This heavy bodied version of Kato Liquid Polyclay Clear Medium works great as an adhesive for polymer clays. It helps when attaching polymer clay pieces to one another in any combination of raw and cured states. Unlike other adhesives, this paste is a polymer clay, so it is 100% compatible. Also unlike the others, the required curing process fuses the two pieces together and makes the bond that much stronger. While most adhesives, lose effectiveness when exposed to curing temperatures, this paste will not degrade. When applied to vertical surfaces, the piece will stay where it is placed and not slide. Other ways to use Kato PolyClay Paste include texturing, grouting, and gilding when mixed with mica powders.

Order from <http://www.prairiecraft.com/>

Israeli artist Irish Mishley is offering a follow-up to her Flower Canes tutorial. Order on-line, save postage, and enjoy almost immediate delivery!

<http://polymerionline.blogspot.com/>



Rocky Mountain Weavers' Guild Fiber Art Sale

October 22-24, 2000

Englewood Civic Center

This is the perfect opportunity to view unique wearable and home-related textile gifts and perhaps get a head start on your Christmas shopping!

International Polymer Clay Association

Synergy II

February 24-27, 2010

Baltimore, Maryland

The theme "Exploring Connections" will unite polymer clay artists throughout the world. Over 46 sessions will be presented by artists and art professionals at the top of their game. More information is at: <http://www.npcg.org/>

Workshop Opportunities

Check out the workshop schedule at <http://www.thewoodencow.com/>

Annie Hooten plans to bring outstanding polymer clay artists to Albuquerque during the coming year. It's a great opportunity for a road trip!

MHPCG Members' News

Karen Sexton's bottle pendants are featured in the Salon section of Belle Armoire Wearable Art, (September/October issue)

Laura Schiller has revamped her website (www.lauraseggs.com) and has added an 'almost daily' blog about working with polymer clay. She has included instructions for the transfer technique she shared at our September Clay Day. If you see an idea you'd like Laura to demo, please let her

MHPCG Calendar

Saturday, October 24th Clay Day **HANDS-ON Clay time & INFORMAL DEMOS—ATC Swap**

Saturday November 29th Clay Day

THERE IS NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.

January 23 2010 **HOLIDAY RECOVERY PARTY**