



Mile High Polymer Clay Guild Newsletter

President's Letter

Hi everybody. I just got back from our first open house and I think it was a pretty good first effort. We had over a dozen members selling their work. The room was full and there was a lot of variety from steampunkery, dragons, sculpture, eggs, crocheted zombie dolls, scarves, cards, and of course canes and jewelry. Sue Mueller and I set up demos in the side room and got a lot of interest from new clayers. Nancy Lane and I were lucky enough to win the two fantastic Christi Freisen sculptures that the guild gave away. A number of people asked that we do another open house which is certainly a possibility. Patty Schneider and Nancy Lane put out a nice variety of food for everyone and Patty's son Trevyn was very helpful. See pictures from the open house on our website.

The summer sure went by quickly. I've been all over the country, Philadelphia, Sacramento, San Francisco, Santa Fe, and Baton Rouge. I enjoy going to bead shops in other cities to see if I can find new and unusual beads. Ritual Adornments in Santa Fe is one of my favorites. It's run by a great couple. They have a wonderful variety of stone and glass beads, vintage beads, metal beads, and folk art. And they gave me a discount.

My husband and I just celebrated our 30th anniversary with a weekend getaway to Manitou Springs. We went out for dinner on our actual anniversary and ended up at a table next to Peyton Manning. My daughter Hannah is back at school and really enjoying it this year (whew) so my nest is empty once again. This should give me more time for claying. I'll let you know how that works out for me.

I've started making pins, beads and pendants with sculptural elements, kind of like zentangles in relief. I try to include a face and twisty spout-like pieces in each one along with a variety of other elements. They're a lot of fun to do and hard to part with. I'm trying some different surface treatments like gilder's paste and Swellegant products but I really love just using Premo's peacock pearl clay. Here are some samples.



As far as things are going with the guild, we have almost 100 members y'all! We have fantastic workshops coming up with Christi Freisen in October, the "Make it and Take it" in November and the holiday recovery party in January. We're looking at some exciting teachers for next spring and fall. Watch for opportunities to volunteer with the guild.

Happy claying,

Clare



EXPLORING THE RAINBOW

With Tina Holdman

Life is Just a Bowl of Peaches

When we bought our house a dozen years ago, the elderly owner's son walked us around the yard and told us about the Siberian Peach bush he father ordered from a gardening magazine years before. He pointed to this huge tree, one that was probably thirty-five or forty feet tall and laughed, saying that it was the Siberian Peach bush. Fruit trees usually get not much over 20 or so feet. He said though maybe it was a tad warmer here than in Siberia. Usually this tree is the very first tree to bloom every Spring and is covered with pale pink flowers. I assumed my Siberian Peach bush was a non-fruiting ornamental tree, but I went out this week and behold! There are baby peaches peeking all over the place. For the first time.

I was going through an old magazine and was bemused by a photo of a bowl of peaches. The photo was so well done that you could see the yellowish fuzz on the peaches themselves. The peaches themselves were at different states of ripeness and mottled with a dozen shades of orange.

Now orange is an unusual color in the sense that people seem to like it or not. Or like only certain shades, from the palest coral to the deeper rusts. I do know many in our guild do like peach shades while others favor the energetic and brighter tones. There is one "cheater" color in this set. That is to say, not a shade of orange. It is the color of the fuzz on the peaches themselves.

Premo Colors needed for this collection: White, Sunshine, Cadmium Yellow, Orange, Blush, Cadmium Red, Pomegranate and Candy.

Light Yellow Fuzz

1 part Premo Sunshine
1 part Premo Cadmium Yellow
4 parts Premo White

Ripe Peach

1 part Premo Orange
1 part Premo Blush
1 part Premo White

Deep Orange

1 part Premo Bush
1 part Premo Orange
1 part Premo Cadmium Red

Delicate Pastel Peach

1 part Premo Orange
1 part Premo Sunshine
4 parts Premo White

Juicy Orange

2 parts Premo Orange
2 parts Premo Sunshine
1 part Premo Cadmium Red
1 part Premo White

Red Orange

3 parts Premo Candy
1 part Premo Pomegranate

You're Invited!



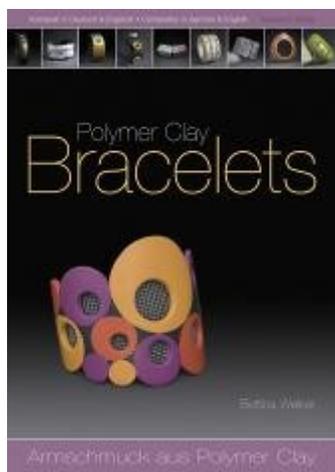
*Come meet Christie Friesen
Thursday, October 11th
5:30-7 p.m.
Lockwood Christian Fellowship*

Congratulations!

Jainnie Jenkins' article, "Playing with Repetition", appears in the Fall *Polymer Arts Magazine*.

Tina Gugeler's Musical Muse Pendant was honored with Best of Inspiration Challenge in the Fall *Polymer Arts Magazine*.

Patty Schneider's bracelet is featured in the current *Polymer Café Magazine*.



German polymer clay artist Bettina Welker's new book is now available. It is translated into English & can be ordered directly from the artist:

<http://www.beadworx.de/book/>

MHPCG Board of Directors

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Important change: Guild Equipment Policy

The MHPCG Board unanimously voted to remove the rental fee for all equipment & require only a deposit check equal to equipment replacement cost. The check will be returned at the end of the rental period when the equipment is checked in. A late fee will be charged

for items not returned on time. Please refer to the Equipment Rental & Policy statement on our mhpcg.org website.

The following equipment is available for check-out: Polypress (2), Buffer, Vibratory Tumbler, Rotary Tumbler, Cloud Dome. Because it is fragile, the Precious Metal Clay Kiln is not available for home check-out but may be used by paid members during regular Clay Days and retreats.

Rosanne Thompson is in charge of rentals & you may arrange check-out with her or with our librarian, Tina Gugeler. There is a notebook with instructions for using the equipment that will also be checked out. This notebook must be returned with the equipment.

Coming Events

Clay Day October 27th (Poker Chip Swap)

Clay Day November 24th

No meeting in December

Make It Take It Event - November 2 & 3

Christi Friesen Workshop October 12 & 13
(Workshop is full.)

Meet the Artist Reception for Christi Friesen
Thursday, October 5 to 7 p.m.



TINA'S TREASURES

By Tina McDonald

If you are anything like me, it's often times not the main design piece that gives you trouble, but figuring out what you want to do with it once it's baked. I'm ashamed to say that yes, I have a container full of baked pieces that don't know what they want to be when they grow up.

One of my favorite places to get ideas for jewelry pieces besides Pinterest or Flickr is Susan Waddington's site www.polydogz.com. even though I'm not a big pet lover. (Puppies and kitties seem to love me, though, and flock to me knowing that I'm allergic to them). So even if you aren't a big fan of the doggies, be sure to check out her dog breed jewelry as well as the polymer jewelry categories in her gallery. Susan has taken backgrounds, surrounds, and bails to a whole new level.

In fact her bails gave me an idea for super simple bail designs. You know all that special pretty flatware that you bring out three or four times a year? Take a look at the handles next time you bring it out, or look at your everyday stuff. Now, imagine those designs surrounding the plain tube that Susan Waddington uses on a lot of her stuff with the end of the handle over the front face of your piece. Even some of the plainer designs of flatware have great shapes that you can mold. Now imagine it with Laurie Mika's paint techniques, or Christy Friesen's Swellegant patinas, or even just lightly dusted with Pearlex powders.

If you frequent the thrift stores, dig through the bins of flatware the next time you go thrift store shopping to find cool new designs. It's kind of funny looking up at people watching you wondering what in the world is so fascinating about a tub of forks and see them decide maybe they need to look through the spoons before you get to them. *"I've got to find the good stuff before she does! What's the good stuff? Did the price of Silver go up that much that melting down flatware for the silverplate is profitable? Does she resell this?"*

Ingenuous idea: Find out how to make your own clay shaper tools from María Sáiz, aka Japaya

<http://www.craftster.org/forum/index.php?topic=172119.0>



WEB DISCOVERIES

<http://www.theenchantedgallery.com/clay.html>

This site offers an extensive array of molds, texturing tools, alphabet sets, gold leafing & mica powders as well as tutorials.

www.cooltools.us. Although this vendor sells items primarily for PCM artists, there are many appealing textures for use with polymer clay. Check out the informative video demonstrating techniques for using the texture tiles.

<http://www.packagetech.com/printable-boxes-and-seals.html> This is a good source for free, downloadable boxes. Simply print the patterns on card stock that you've pre-colored with spray or brayered inks. After cutting out & assembling, the small jewelry boxes are just right for presenting your pc pins, earrings, pendants, etc. There are also attractive seals for embellishing the boxes.

If you're looking for ideas for Christmas gifts, check out this tutorial for making unusual night-lights using stencils. Thanks, Shirley Rufener.

<http://shirleyrufener.com/Mar11.html>

<http://www.trendbible.co.uk/blog/>

Browse the site for color & design inspiration.

<http://site.jkdjewelry.com/blog/2012/09/06/fall-color-inspirations/> This is an interesting look at current clothing color trends, translated into beads.



Check out Julie Fei-Fan Balzer's thoughts on studio reorganization. Her small New York City apartment studio is a perfect example of using what's available to the best advantage. <http://www.balzerdesigns.com/> Look under 'Past Features' on the home page. (If you're interested in art journaling, you may enjoy Julie's excellent videos showing various techniques.)



<http://tejaesart.com/blog/> Tejae Floyde's blog is a delight to follow. Her Enchanting Crowns class on Craft Art Edu is on my list of things to do. KS

Library news: Tina just subscribed to the *Polymer Arts Magazine* & has also ordered all the back issues. These as well as other magazines are for at-meeting use only & will not be checked out.



Extruder Magic

By Karen Sexton

Following Helen McKee's informative presentation at our August meeting, I concluded that the extruder is one of our most versatile tools whose design & function have changed through the years.

Looking back to the early 90's when polymer was a fledgling material on the craft scene, the only extruder available was a pot-metal contraption by Sculpey, sold at the hobby stores for under \$10. Both Sculpey & Kemper still market these today. Most of us bought one only to realize that getting the clay through the tube was an overwhelming task. Maureen Carson of Wee Folk Creations developed a device aimed at making the extruder more useful. It consisted of two 2 x 4's hinged together, with holes strategically placed so that the extruder would fit. Pressing the top 2 x 4 down caused the clay to be extruded without undue force. It worked well but was heavy, unwieldy & took up a lot of work space.

Polymer Clay pioneer Nan Roche adapted a caulking gun to house the extruder & included instructions in her video "Ancient Structures & Surfaces. For a time that was the best way to compensate for the inexpensive clay gun's shortcomings. An adapter disc is available at <http://www.poly-tools.com/product/AD>

Not long afterward some enterprising folks developed the Poly Press, a much more sophisticated tool modeled after the one used by professional potters. This table top model made extruding clay effortless. Our guild bought one for members' use & from time to time provided demonstrations showing its virtues. When our Cheyenne, Wyoming member, Lorealee Larson was forced to give up polymer clay because of health difficulties, she generously gifted the guild with her Poly Press. Hence we have two. Both are available for check-out (no rental fee) from our guild library.

A few years ago Wilma Yost designed the Ace Extruder with two barrel sizes and countless dies. It is marketed by her company, Polymer Clay Express & is available in several models. Artist Mari O'Dell's DVD showing how she uses the Ace Extruder to make bangle bracelets & embellishments is available from our Guild Library. You may want to watch Wilma demonstrate the Lexus of polymer clay extruders: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SpqwdaVeYIs> http://www.polymerclayexpress.com/clay_extruder.html

Makins and Walnut Hollow currently market improved extruders with mechanisms designed to make extruding much easier. These are available at local hobby stores and with a coupon

the price is affordable. The Makins' model also has ClayCore Extruder adapters in various sizes for making tube beads with inherent holes. Very handy.

Still other innovations recently emerged in the clay world when Cynthia Tinapple introduced an adapter for attaching the Makins extruder to an electric drill. (www.polymerclaydaily.com) Cynthia's "Extrusion Tricks" video is posted on her website <http://www.polymerclaydaily.com/dreammachine.html> <http://vimeo.com/11508901>

As you may know, there are dozens of things you can do with extruded clay, from beads and baubles to home dec vases & boxes to details on figurines, etc. etc. etc. Most recently, Bettina Welker shared an excellent tutorial for making an extruded cane. It is a perfect project for the PolyPress or your own extruder. Just think of the possibilities!
<http://www.beadworx.de/2012/07/03/the-pixelated-retro-blend-cane/>

Want to learn more? Here are a few ideas & resources:

Craft Art Edu class with Cathy Harm Extrusion Designs
<http://polymerionline.blogspot.com/2008/06/what-can-we-do-with-clay-gun.html>

Israeli artist Iris Mishly offers over a dozen links to tutorials illustrating clay gun projects.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyC5hVzD3wk>

<http://craftygoat.com/videos/>

Angela Mabray of Crafty Goat shows how to use the Makins extruder for crafting coiled beads.

