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Artist Profile of [Tere Perry](#) by Lenora B. Smith [Houston Polymer Clay Guild](#)

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Tere Perry, polymer clay artisan and miniaturist, got her start in clay at a young age...a very young age!

One of the things she remembers most from elementary school was the time spent doing art projects, especially working with clay.



The clay of that time was the oil based, non-hardening type which always frustrated Tere in her attempts to make a lasting sculpture. "My first real sculpture was done in about the third grade, of this great little lion. I was so proud of him, and put him in my closet to keep him. Well, you can imagine how flat and squished that clay lion was when I got him out the next time!"

From then on, it was a quest to find a clay that would be durable and permanent when the sculptures were finished.

Tere's first attempt with polymer clay was in the 1970's in high school, when she used the original white Sculpey. "I loved the fact that I could bake this clay and make something that would last. The only problem was the fact that it was white, and paint didn't adhere well to it." Those first polyclay pieces were to be the beginning of a life long love of polymer clay.

After high school, Tere went on to study art in college. Her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Sam Houston State University had a specialization in advertising and graphic design, but also covered all of the other fine art classes including ceramics, sculpture and 3-D design. These basics in translating an object from what one sees into a piece of art have helped Tere in her current ventures in art.



Prior to her recent efforts with polymer clay, Tere worked in ceramic and porcelain clays, learning hand building techniques and wheel-thrown work. Her first gallery exhibit was works in ceramic, shown at Masterson Design in the River Oaks area.

More recent works have mostly been in polymer clay as Tere concentrates on scale miniatures.

The studio that Tere uses is bright and airy, filled with ample lighting and lined with plants and fountains. "I find the atmosphere there conducive to creativity. It is a calming place, where the artistic spirit can overtake the stresses of the day."

Organized and ergonomic, the area makes it easier to find a few minutes to be creative after a day that is spent at her full-time newspaper job. "With all my supplies where I can find them quickly, I can work on a project even if I have only an hour to spare."



Tere, a charter member of the Texas Association of Original Doll Artists, has found herself leaning more and more toward polymer clay for her figurines. "There is a life-like quality to the skin of these miniature people made with poly clay that just can't be captured in porcelain."

Also a Regional Coordinator for National Association of Miniature Enthusiasts, Tere has become a dedicated miniaturist, educating the public about the hobby of scale miniatures. This hobby, second in scope only to the model train hobby, is shared by miniaturists world-wide. "Polymer clay is probably the most versatile art product to have ever been found by miniaturists. There aren't many things in the real world that can't be duplicated with polymer clay."

And that is exactly what Tere attempts to do with her polymer clay work; reproduce the real world in miniature...one tiny little piece at a time!

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