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BIRTHDAY
POLYZINE!**



Polymer Clay PolyZine
November 2002
Volume 3, Issue 11

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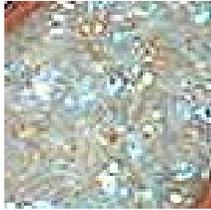
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Face Cane Components Packing and Wrapping By [Irish Red](#)

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This tutorial will show how to fill in the flesh between eyes, nose, cheeks and lips and round out the face..

Supplies:

- Clay : Cheek color
- Blade
- Pasta machine or roller



Step One:

Check the eyes and nose for distortion.

At this point, I realized that I had flattened the eyebrows so I pulled them away from the bridge of the nose and reshaped them. I also realized that the eyes were crooked so I straightened them up.

See the gaps (negative spaces) between the bridge of the nose and the inside corners of the eyes?



Step Two:

To make sure that the eyes and brows stay as you want them, pack triangles (no, not logs) into the negative spaces.

Pack triangles at the outside corners of the eyes to keep the oval shapes. See how they make flatter lines to work with?

The openings at the bottom will hold the cheek canes, but first...



Step Three:

Wrap the whole thing in a **thin** layer of flesh colored clay. Insert cheek canes into gap below eyes (so it kind of looks like a walrus).



Step Four:

Pack the area below nose and between cheeks.

Pack the area outside of the cheeks to make sides flush.



Step Five:

Roll out a sheet of clay and place under entire cane. Place mouth cane beneath it.

Wrap mouth with two sheets of clay. I'm really getting worried about that nose.



Step Six:

Begin packing around edges to make the desired shape of the face.

This is starting to look pretty good, so I'm going to smooth some edges and check where I'm at.



Step Seven:

A little smoothing done.

I added another wrap of flesh and am going to call it done.

Next month: The final cane and variations

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The wonderful thing about polymer clay is that it can be used to create many different faux looks, such as opal, and there are many different "recipes" for each faux technique.

This project is Kathy's technique for making faux opals, and the results are beautiful!

Supplies:

- 2 oz translucent clay (for this example I used Sculpey III)
- Small bits of green, blue, purple and red/pink clay
- Approximately 1 tbsp. Arnold Grummer's Iridescent flakes* (ground fine in coffee grinder). The Grummer flakes are perfect for this technique because of their random size and color
- Sandpaper, in various grits from 220 to 1500
- A buffing machine or buffing cloth
- Flecto or Future to finish (if desired)

*Flakes are available at [Arnold Grummer's](#) or can be found at your local JoAnn's store.

Click on images to see larger picture.



Step One:

Take 1/2 oz (1/4 of 2-oz block) and divide into 4 equal parts.



Step Two:

Tint each of the 4 parts with a bit of clay (approx. the size of an unpopped popcorn kernel).



Step Three:

Roll these into snakes approximately 5 inches long.



Step Four:

Take remaining 1 1/2-oz clay and condition it until it is soft; roll out into a sheet and sprinkle with Grummer flakes. Roll this into a cigar shape and begin mixing the flakes into the clay.



Notice the bumpy appearance of the clay with the flake inclusions.



Step Five:

When the flakes are incorporated, roll into a log approximately 5 inches long. Place logs of tinted clay around the large log with flakes, roll, and double over and begin marbling colors together.



Step Six:

Roll logs together and twist.



Step Seven:

Roll out, twist again.



Step Eight:

When you have achieved a pleasant marble, the clay is ready to be used. You can shape into beads, or cabs or sheets. Your clay will have a bumpy surface that must be sanded heavily after curing. I prefer to roll mine flat.



I then cut shapes with cutters and cure, adding a backing and "bezel" around the edges of the cutouts using metallic clay.



Before baking



After baking

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I'd like to thank [Kathy Gregson](#) and Chris Nichols for their demonstrations of Mokume Gane with paints and Faux Dichroic glass at Shrinemont 2002, which were the inspiration for this technique!

Debbie

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Supplies:

- 1 pkg. Premo Translucent
- 1 pkg. Premo black or gold
- Acrylic paints
- Gold leaf
- Kemper cutters, small
- Pasta machine
- Brayer or roller
- Tissue blade

To begin: Condition the translucent clay by kneading it until it is pliable, or by passing it through a pasta machine several times.

Roll the clay into a long strip, at the narrowest setting on the pasta machine. If rolling it by hand, get the clay as thin as possible, the thinner the better!

Cut off a piece that is approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the strip, and retain it for later.

Lay the clay out onto a piece of waxed paper.

[Click image for larger picture](#)



Step One:

Lay small bits of gold leaf on the clay, rubbing it to ensure it adheres to the surface.

Dip one of the Kemper cutters into the acrylic paint and apply the paint to the clay. Continue doing this with various colors and cutters until the surface is fairly well covered.

[Click image for larger picture](#)



Step Two:

Let the paint dry. If you're impatient (like I usually am!) take a hair dryer or heat gun and let the warm air flow over the clay. You don't want to cure the clay, so don't apply the heat directly!

[Click image for larger picture](#)



Step Three:

Cut the clay into three equal pieces, and stack them one upon the other. Be careful to avoid air pockets!

[Click image for larger picture](#)



Step Four:

Place the plain piece of clay reserved in Step Two on top of the clay stack. This encases the paint within layers of clay.

Click image for larger picture



Step Five:

Roll the layers with a brayer or run through the pasta machine at the widest setting.

The piece is now ready for use. Try cutting abstract pieces for pins or laying it over a base bead of gold or black.

Bake the piece according to manufacturers instructions. Place in a bath of ice water, immediately after taking it out of the oven. This enhances the translucent quality of the clay!

Now sand and buff. I sand with 220, 320, 400, and 600 grit wet/dry sandpaper, then buff with a muslin wheel on a bench grinder. Depending upon the shine you want on a piece, you can also coat the finished piece in Flecto Varathane or Future acrylic floor finish.

For some interesting 3-D variations, try using rubber stamps and stencils to create new designs. Or for the truly artistic, try painting a picture free hand.

Debbie used Elizabeth Kadaakde's instructions for modifying a scumbuster to use in sanding as seen in the [February 2001](#) issue of Polyzine. Debbie says, "It's GREAT!"



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I would like to give credit and thanks to all of these wonderful artists ([Linda Gertsch](#), [Tom Jeffrey](#), and Susan Bradshaw) for their inspiration. I would also like to extend great thanks to Sunni Bergeron, who converted my crude directions and pictures into a work of art and the polymer clay artists who tested the tutorial and provided valuable input: [Kellie Robinson](#), [Tania McCulloch](#), [Tonja Lenderman](#) and [Sunni Bergeron](#). If you would like to view some truly exquisite art created using the forerunner of the Feather cane, please consider visiting the web site of [Grove and Grove](#).

[Part One](#)

[Part Two](#)

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Supplies:

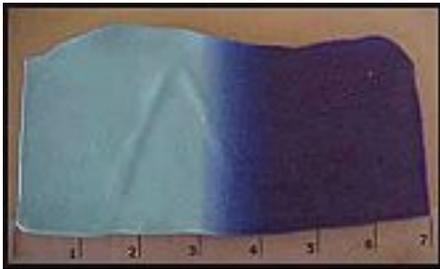
- 3 ounces Color A (Premo Purple)
- 3 ounces Color B (Premo Turquoise mixed with equal amount of Premo white)
- 1 ounce Color C (sheet) - I used a ratio of 3 parts purple to 1 part black
- 3.5 ounces Color D: 3 ounces Zinc Yellow mixed with 0.5 ounces of Raw Sienna
- 4 ounces Color E: 3 ounces Zinc Yellow mixed with 1 ounce Turquoise
- 2 ounces Color F: 1 ounce Zinc Yellow and 1 ounce Ultramarine Blue
- Pasta machine or something to roll with
- Tissue blade or something to slice with
- Brayer (optional) to flatten with
- Wax paper (optional) to lay the long sheet of clay on
- Clean work surface



Step One:

Run Color A, B and ultramarine blue through your pasta machine at the thickest setting (that's #1 on my nine setting Atlas pasta machine). Cut and arrange the colors as shown in the picture.

Blend the clay colors. Use the #3 setting (on my nine setting Atlas pasta machine) or medium thick.



Your blended sheet of clay should look similar to this.

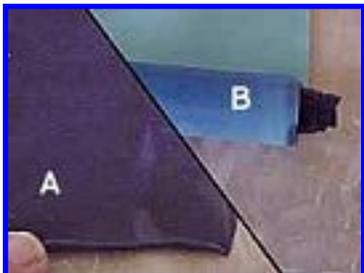


Step Two:

Set your pasta machine on medium thin (#5 on my Atlas). Insert the dark end of your Skinner blend into your pasta machine as shown and run it through to lengthen it some more.

Then set your pasta machine on thin, but not the thinnest (#7 on my Atlas), insert the dark end and run through the pasta machine once more.

[Click image for larger picture](#)



Step Three:

Starting at the **dark** end of the blended sheet, **begin** to roll the blended sheet into a jelly roll.

[Click image for larger picture](#)



Step Four:

Continue rolling until you run out of the darker clay and you've made one complete revolution of the Turquoise/White mix.

Stop.

[Click image for larger picture](#)



Step Five:

At this point, turn the cane over and fold the sheet back onto itself. Wrap it halfway back around the log in the reverse direction.

Stop.



Step Six:

Continue reversing back and forth on the same half of the log, making each wrap about 1/4 inch shorter than the last one as shown above.

Stop when you have about 2-3 inches of the sheet remaining.

[Click on image for larger picture](#)



Step Seven:

Flip your cane over (if it isn't already) so it looks like the cane on the left side of the picture.

Pick up your pencil or chopstick and lay it centered on the half where the Skinner blend is folded back and forth. See the cane on the right side of the picture.

Now push!!! Squish the chopstick or pencil into the log until you have a nicely defined channel. It will flatten the log, but that's okay.

Set your chopstick or pencil aside.

Click image for larger picture



Step Eight:

Now, begin folding the turquoise mix back and forth **only** in the depression you just created with the chop stick or pencil.

See the photo of the completed log... it's rather squished at this point, as a result of pressing in the chop stick/pencil to create the indentation... but don't worry! :)

Step Nine: Roll the log (horror! You've been told not to roll canes, but please do this time!) on your work surface to smooth it back into a round log shape.

Don't press too hard. You do not want to reduce this log, you only want to smooth it back into a round shape.

Click image for larger picture



This is the rounded cane sliced. Notice how the dark area is slightly off center. Voila, you now have your "eye." Looks pretty cool, huh?

Now set this cane aside to rest while we create the rest of the Peacock Feather.

Click here to go to [Part Two](#)

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Step Eleven:

Create a Skinner Blend with Color D and Color E using the thickest setting on your pasta machine.



Step Twelve:

Roll the Skinner blend sheet into a log, with the darker color on your left and the lighter color on your right.



Step Thirteen:

Shorten the log into a plug.



Step Fourteen:

Flatten the plug into a block shape and...



...give it a quarter turn to place the dark side away from you and the light side toward you as shown above. Stretch the cane out by grabbing the right and left sides and pulling them apart so you end up with a l-o-n-g rectangle



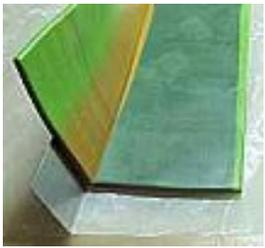
Step Fifteen:

Run Color F through the pasta machine on the thickest setting and make it fit the length of the rectangle.



Step Sixteen:

Pinch one end of the rectangle... Feed it through your pasta machine on the thickest setting making a very, very l-o-n-g ribbon and then cut into several 2 to 3 inch pieces.



Step Seventeen:

Lay one piece, Skinner blend side down, on your work surface. Put second piece next to the first with the dark EDGE on your work surface next to the dark end of the first piece. This will give you an "L" shape. Butt the base of the piece standing on end up against the piece flat on the work surface.



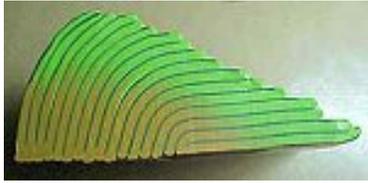
Step Eighteen:

Leaving the edge touching your work surface, fold the second piece over on top of the first piece. Continue adding pieces, always with the dark edge on your worksurface, and folding it over on top of the previous pieces.



Step Nineteen:

Keep adding pieces until you've got them all stacked together.



Step Twenty:

Your cane should now look like this picture if you flip it on its side.

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Step Twenty One:

Pick up your cane and turn the flat side toward you with the dark end on the bottom side and the light end up as shown above. Grip the left and right sides and pull them apart to reduce (elongate) your feather cane. Make it about the same length as your "eye" cane. With your thumb, make a depression in the dark area as shown above where the "eye" cane will go.



Step Twenty Two:

From the end, your cane should look like this, with a hollowed out area...



Step Twenty Three:

Continue reducing until the feather is twice the length of your "eye" cane, then cut the feather into two sections. Lay the "eye" cane into the depression in one section of the clay.



Step Twenty Four:

Be sure to check which end is up when you add the "eye" cane! You want the "frog" in the horseshoe shape to face the bottom of the feather cane as shown here.



Step Twenty Five:

Press the components together starting at one end, and trying not to capture any air inside the cane. Then squash the feather into a plump rounded triangle shape as shown.



Here is a slice of the finished Peacock Feather!

These are examples of what you can use the peacock canes for.



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The Storyteller Wreath Part One by [Dar Beck](#)

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Dar won second place in a large competition with this gourd! Way to go Dar!

This gourd lesson includes paint, fabric and polymer clay.

Indoor Materials

- Black acrylic paint for face and hair
- Fine paint brush
- Measuring tool
- Scissors
- Exacto knife
- Glues:
 - General purpose household glue
 - Hot glue
 - Weldbond glue
 - Sobo glue
- Polymer Clay, approx. 2 oz ea. of 4 colors
- Future acrylic floor finish
- 2 twig wreaths
- Wire, to wrap the wreaths together
- Raffia, to cover the wire and for design

Outdoor Materials

- Dremel and bits
- Jigsaw and blades
- Face mask
- Gloves
- Extension cord if necessary
- Heavy duty screwdriver for cleaning inside of big gourd if needed, or whatever you normally use

Polymer clay, wreath and raffia can be found at most craft stores.

Dremel and bits, jigsaws, wire and glues can be found at hardware stores and/or various gourd suppliers.

Aluminum pans can be found at your local

- Tissue blade
- Oven*
- Aluminum turkey roasting pan and clamps
- Fiberfill
- Gourds, mini and medium sizes
- Feathers
- Alternate Coverings
 - Fabric covered in stiffener
 - Fabric backed with polymer clay

grocery store.

Click picture for larger image



*Oven: I use an aluminum baking pans with tiles on the bottom to even out the heat, then put my pieces in a top pan that is attached to the first pan with paper clamps.



Click picture for larger image



Step One:

Lay out the gourds and wreaths. The twig wreaths I purchased were too skinny for me, so I wired 2 of them together.

Make a hook opening on the back of the wreath so it can be hung on the wall. Take pieces of raffia and cover the wire.

Click picture for larger image



Step Two:

Lay out the little gourds for room and spacing. Decide what gourd will be your "storyteller."

In this case, I put two gourds together to form the main figure (in the middle of the gourd).

At this point the wreaths have been wired together. Cover the wire that shows with raffia. Alternatively, use ribbon, fabric, or paint.

Click picture for larger image



Step Three:

Paint the eyes, mouth, and hair on the little figures.

Once the paint is dry, cover entire figure with Sobo glue, and let it dry (any type of white glue that dries clear could be used). Snip off the vine endings on the mini gourds.

Click picture for larger image



Step Four:

Put your 'storyteller' together (if you've needed to use two gourds), glue pieces, let dry.

Paint facial features onto the storyteller. Cover it with Sobo glue, and let the glue dry. Pictured here is a painted storyteller with Sobo glue, drying while stuck in hunk of scrap polymer clay.

Click picture for larger image



Step Five:

"Little ones" getting ready for bodies and legs.

Click picture for larger image



Step Six:

Roll the polymer clay using an acrylic roller or pasta machine. The beige color will be used for legs, the white and turquoise for part of the poncho, and the red for the body.

The top of this picture shows clay stacked for the poncho. Cut the clay in strips, stack, (top of picture) then twist the stack, smooch it all together, wrap it around itself -- make a mess!

Click picture for larger image



Step Seven:

Flatten out the marbled white and turquoise clay for the poncho.

Run some contrasting clay through the pasta machine at #4. Cut very skinny strips from the thin contrasting color clay and place them on top of the marbled white and turquoise clay.

Put the whole piece thru the pasta machine at #1, then redo at #2, #3, and #4. Now it is completely smooth without the contrasting colors blending.

Click picture for larger image



Step Eight:

Take beige clay and roll into a snake for the legs. The length of leg will depend on how tall you want the little figures to be. Cut the leg length from the beige clay.

Click picture for larger image



Step Nine:

Turn up one end of the piece for the foot, and squeeze the clay onto the body.

Click picture for larger image



Step Ten:

Make a red clay snake and place it around the middle of the little figures. Because the gourd is covered with Sobo glue, the clay will stick firmly.

Next month: Part 2

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"So What's The Point After All?"
A Ramble
by [Nora Jean Gatine](#)
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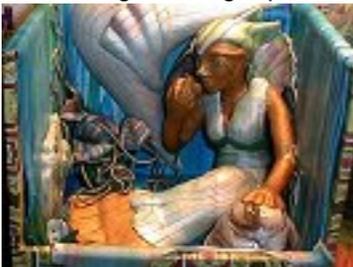
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Nora Jean Gatine, or NJ, is a moderator of MSATClayArt (Miniature Scenes and Things) group at Yahoo. She has such a unique and descriptive way of thinking of life and art that I had to share this. A [WebCam](#) goes with the ramble.

Ok for those who have been here for a long time you know there's some method to my madness. What's this all about these face sculpting, making molds, doing animal prints, doing leaves, flowers and basket weave?

Click image for larger picture



What's the point after all this nattering on about WebCam and getting logs and pix up for you to see?

The point is we are a miniatures list that attacks an idea with polymer clay. Beads notwithstanding, (and you all know I love my beaders), but that's not why we're here. We don't need a big complex and expensive doll house to make a scene. Heck Fire I make a scene each time I'm let out of the crib to prey upon the unsuspecting public. A mini scene can be as small as a pendant.

What's the point? For the majority of the world "out there" outside of the industrial and developed countries, life is man, woman, eat, drink, just like the Chinese make movies about. Out there, there are humans who are still painting their faces, like the tribesmen in New Guinea.

[Click image for larger picture](#)



My neighbor Jolie, who grew up in Uganda, laughed like a loon when I told her I don't complain about using coin operated washing machines because it is a lot easier than taking the clothes to the local stream to beat against a rock with a stick. She laughed like a loon for she was that native, as a child, beating clothing on a rock, and thinking for the most part that this was normal and a happy thing to do. Much like milking a goat.

[Click image for larger picture](#)



For 60 thousand years the brain of humans have not changed, so say those who measure the inside of skulls. So that means that a hunter and gatherer would feel the same about their babies, their loves, their petty jealousies from cave to cave. It would stand to reason that all the trappings of modern life is just pupkiss, a different tribal dance, just another gathering of humans all concerned with eating procreating and sleeping out of the rain. Beyond that it's all face paint, music and dancing the dance because the belly was full.

Ever feel like singing after a good meal? Just letting out a tune because you're so happy you're fed? The Japanese do that all the time, fun little practice actually.

These elements I've been reviewing in WebCam and with the pix and logs, to those who haven't joined us yet, are things that are part of the natural world. Civilization is a new gig. Leaves, flowers, food, faces... that's us in our primitive state, that's not so far away from the memory of our cells. Thousands of years of hunting and gathering and only a couple of hundred years of civilization, some say. Gandhi, when asked about Western Civilization, said, "interesting theory."

The Chinese and the Jews count the years in the 5,000 number. It's all arbitrary, made up, and changeable. What doesn't change is leaves, flowers, food in basic forms, faces and the rest is face paint and the yelp of a happy fed human doing a dance just because they can.

[Click image for larger picture](#)



So on to fish and abalone, feathers and more flowers, more leaves and more faces and we can build a whole world with one face. These two faces I show you here evoke emotion from us.

Snakes scare us, have all sorts of bad press in the West for the Garden of Eden. The Snake is revered in the East for it sheds its skin and renews itself, like each year renews itself. But snakes don't get a ho hum reaction, love them or hate them, they are evocative of emotion.

Leaves without color is like dream time, like it's haunting, for the color is missing. This evokes emotion from people, showing them natural things in TV black and white. It would weird out folks who never saw black and white TV before. Natives from the bush would say it looks like night time with a full moon.

Click image for larger picture



There's more to this point, like it's both the same face mold. Why does the wrapped one feel feminine? Because it's not threatening, it's decorated with beads, the leaves are softly falling over clay fabric, it's friendly. The tiger snake face has these metal leaves that point upward with snakes. It's not friendly. Sexy maybe, but not without some risk.

The faces I left emotionless for I wanted to give an example of how color affects emotional impact, how metallic things curved and pointy going up have a different feel than natural color falling softly down. I left emotion out of the faces for the color, other elements, will give a history for that face. The colors will color our emotional reaction to them. These emotionless faces have their own sense of self. You're on their turf.

Mini scenes can be in the space of one pendant.

Manipulating a cane so it can be used in miniature, like the brown basket weave of the snake, is the focus here. Small flowers, pinch pots, food...all this can be utilized in a doll house or room box, but hokey smokes, Bullwinkle, put them on your pendants, hang tea pots from your ears.

So I guess there's a number of points I wanted to make with this whole WebCam review of basic things I'd like all y'all to know and feel comfortable with. We need to sharpen our sculpting. It's imperative if we are going to have original faces to make molds from. That's going to be an ongoing effort on all of our parts.

We need to not be afraid of making a cane; when you get frightened remember the FIST OF DOOM, that's the fist of a confident clayer who isn't afraid to abuse that clay, to pound it into submission. We need to kick out any preconceived notion of what is "permissible" with mini scenes. Screw all that, we're artists here and we are the trend setters, we are the innovators, we only ask ourselves, "Does it make ME happy?" The world will accept what you make if you clay from the heart.

[Click image for larger picture](#)



Look to nature and look to the people still living in natural settings, check the past, see the variations on the basic theme of man, woman, eat, drink. Add face paint and your own dance steps.

To that now I'm hungry, off to forage like a smart monkey.

xoxo

NoraJean Gatine

-- Life is like a lump of clay, both are what you make of it.

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