



October 2001
Volume 2, Issue 10

PC, but not too PC by Tommie Howell

[print version](#)

[Editor's Letter](#) | [Letters to the Editor](#) |
[Beginners' Corner](#) | [Clayamies](#) |
[National Polymer Clay Guild](#)
[Publications](#) | [Cane Theory](#) | [Using](#)
[Silk Lazertran](#) | [American Flag Pin](#) |
[Patriotic TLS](#) | [American Flag Cane](#) |
[Halloween Picture Frame](#) | [Issues in](#)
[the Crafting World](#) | [Link of the Month](#)
| [Email Us!](#) | [Home](#)

(Portions of this article appeared as a post on
Polymer Clay Haven)

Well, my friends, October is normally the time I would be writing about the application of horror to art. I would have made the case for how the ugly can be beautiful. I don't feel as though that is a proper article for this time. Perhaps next year, perhaps not.

I am instead going to vent a bit, and relate it to our art.

I am sure everyone is still saturated with the news of Sept. 11, 2001. I am sure after discussing it on the newsgroups, and with friends and family, the facts of the event are well taken care of. I won't recount the tragedy.

I am filled still with a variety of emotions. I am angry, I am in mourning, I am a bit fearful. I am not sure that I feel our citizens are safe.

To begin, I would like to address our overseas readers: To you around the world, who have shown us your compassion and understanding, I thank you.

I have often felt like my country was vilified and hated in many parts of the world. And, honestly, it has been. But in these recent weeks, I have been moved to tears by pictures of thousands of flowers and candles left by you at our embassies and consulates. Old women in Russia with American flags. A young man with a green mohawk, lighting a candle in Germany. School children in Peru, and nuns in Tibet, praying for us . . .

I can't tell you how much that means to this long time patriot. I appreciated the words of your leaders, but I cried at the demonstrations made by your people.

To my fellow citizens: I have never seen so many flags and emblems of patriotism. I have talked with those older than myself and they have said they have not seen this since before the Vietnam War.

I am partly proud, partly sad, and partly confused. How strange does that sound? I am proud that my fellow Americans are taking up the red, white, and blue! I drive about and see flags and eagles and all the signs of patriotism. It moves me to pride! I am sad that it took a horrific tragedy to see it happen. I am confused a bit, because . . . well, how to explain.

I have been a patriotic sort for a long time. I am more used to images of people burning flags or being indifferent toward the emblems of patriotism than I am to people embracing and proudly displaying them! It feels a little weird to be in the majority for a change.

I can report that as of now, there is not a flag to be had in the whole city of Seattle. That is probably an exaggeration, but I spent a lot of time lately trying to purchase a few extras, and it's been difficult.

So what do we do? I think that we as artists have to make a decision. Some will choose to ignore what has happened, and still others will decide to work toward putting their feelings into their work.

I urge you, my fellow artists and crafters, to channel your feelings into the art that you do. You can do patriotic lessons online. You can translate your fears, your joys, your anger, into sculpture.

Share not only in words but in creation, with your fellow artists and those who will view it. You may inspire someone. You may move someone. Most importantly at this time, you will find an outlet for your own thoughts.

Blessings to all of you. May God see us to brighter times.

Tommie
(in transit from Seattle to Louisville)