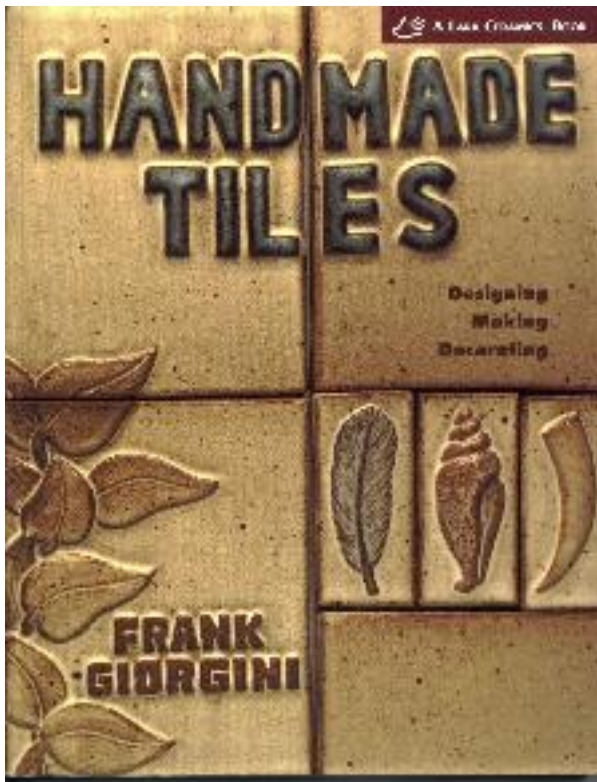


Book Reviews: Lark and Hot off the Press [print version](#)

[Editor's Letter](#) | [Letters to the Editor](#) |
[Beginners' Corner](#) | [Montreal Polymer
Clay Guild](#) | [Book Reviews](#) |
[Lazertran](#) | [Using Cake Cutters](#) | [A
Better Dremel Polishing Wheel](#) | [Inlay
Mokume Gane](#) | [Surprise Canes](#) | [E-
Mail Us!](#) | [Home](#)

What's new out there on bookshelves? Here are six offerings from two different publishers: [Lark Books](#) and [Hot off the Press](#).

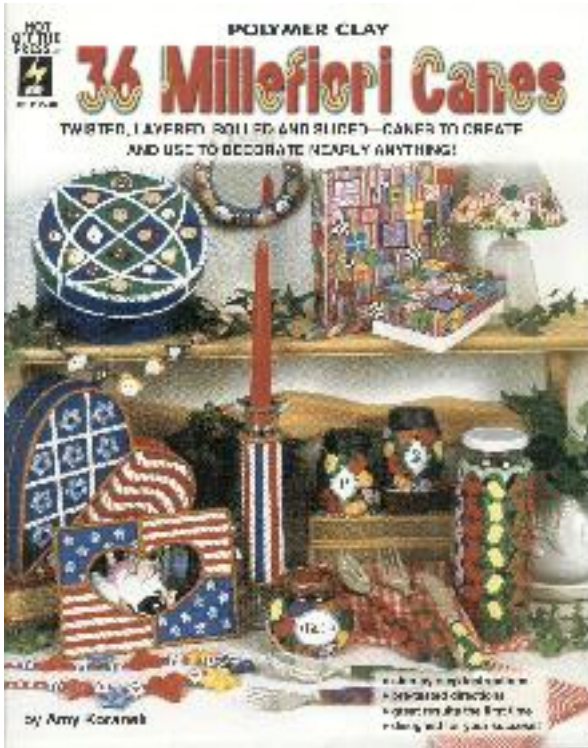


[Handmade Tiles](#) (Lark Press), while not a polymer clay book per se, is a wonderful source of ideas for both design and construction of modeled items, including tiles! It is filled with full-color photographs of clay tiles by different artists and is an inspiration for anyone looking for design or color combination ideas.

While most of the information in the book is appropriate for earthen, not polymer, clay, there are some great techniques that can easily be used with polymer clay. Giorgini shows the reader how to transfer designs onto clay and how to create molds for production work. He also explains surface decoration possibilities such as impressing, underglazing, inlaid tiles, sgraffiato, resists, screen printing, and mosaic design (since the underglazes and glazes used with earthen clay need to be fired at high temperatures, they aren't appropriate for polymer clay, but acrylic paint should work just fine). Giorgini also dedicates a chapter to making your own tools, which has some great blueprints for things like a tile press (which looks like it could be a cutting press if blades were added!).

I like this book a lot, and I'll definately use it for inspiration and tool-making.

\$19.95, ISBN 1-57990-271-5



36 Millefiori Canes (HOTP) by Amy Koranek features a variety of projects using five different cane themes: colorful abstract, vegetables, flowers, Americana, and faces.

Koranek gives nicely detailed instructions and shows us how to cover everything from paper mache to glass. She does a very nice job explaining how to make the different canes, and her projects are easy and well-illustrated.

I especially liked her vegetable canes, which include an eggplant, a carrot, corn on the cob, a pumpkin, a red onion, and a tomato. She used these canes to cover everyday kitchen items like pasta jars and salt and pepper shakers. I can't wait to get started on these canes!

\$9.95, HOTP-2240, ISBN 1-56231-629-X



The next three books are by Shelly Comiskey. Little Darlings (HOTP) features exactly what it promises: darling little figurines. I'm not much into cuteness but these designs are sweet.

The book features 11 projects, some holiday-themed and some not. Some of the projects include a spring bunny holding a flower, a wonderfully whimsical Frankenstein, a sweet "Friends Forever" girl duo, and a circus clown and seal.

The book promises that no experience is necessary, and the projects do appear both easy and low-tech. However, I suspect that to get as good results as the photos, time will be needed to do a really good job. Also, some of the projects involve a lot of white, and I'm not sure anyone's white would stay as clean as the white in the photographs!

\$6.95, HOTP-2191, ISBN 1-56231-499-8



Clever Clay Creations (HOTP) has to be my favorite of these three books. Three of the four projects featured on the cover -- the ghosts, the snowmen, and the stack of moose, bear, and racoon -- really strike my fancy.

Shelly likes to create figurines that feature animals sprawled on top of each other. Besides the woodland stack, there's a barnyard tangle that features a cow, a pig, a sheep, and the cutest chicken I think I've ever seen.

Again, the projects are easy and well-explained, but look like they will take time and patience to get good results. That said, even I, who doesn't do cute, would take the time to make these projects.

\$6.95, HOTP-2166, ISBN 1-56231-440-8



Another book featuring charming figurines, Playful Clay Creations (HOTP) was written by both Shelly Comiskey and Anita Behnen.

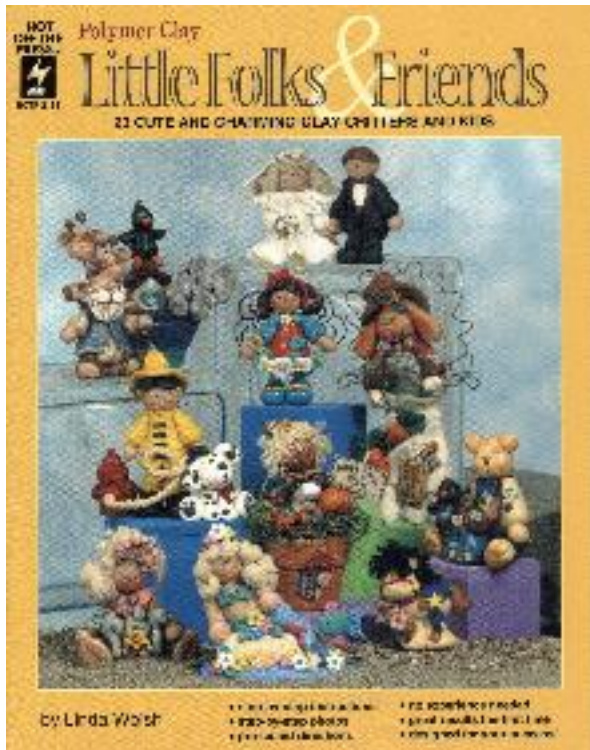
Featuring 16 projects, the book gives clear instructions for making projects ranging from a sparkling unicorn to a gingerbread boy.

These projects are easy enough, but for the most part use polymer clay in combination with other materials -- wire, fabric, and miniature-sized items -- so prepare to take a trip to the store. The directions are well-laid out and easy-to-follow, and at the end there's a chart for making balls of clay just the correct size for the projects.

As I flipped through the book, I found a little snowman Christmas tree ornament I just have to make. That's another snowman project that has

struck me -- think I'm ready for winter?

\$7.95, HOTP-2245, ISBN 1-56231-645-1



Little Folks and Friends (HOTP), by Linda Welsh, continues the theme of whimsical characters. Pigs in a bathtub, patchwork bunnies, and a crow on a pumpkin are just some of the 23 charming projects.

Linda gives clear, basic directions for working with clay, and her projects continue in that vein. Although they will take time and some need other supplies -- fabric, wire, and miniature-sized items, the projects are straightforward.

Some of the projects use paint to give the finished piece a patinaed, weathered look, which is really neat. Some of the projects also use gloss for a high-shine finish, but the figurines would be just fine with a matte finish.

\$7.95, HOTP-2193, ISBN 1-56231-601-X

Enjoy reading!

Deirdre F Woodward