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September
2003
Volume 4,
Issue 9

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Polymer Clay Polyzine
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43,000 women will die every year. Please click every day to help fund free mammograms.



Wondering what next to cover with polymer clay? Look no further than your breakfast table! And after you've covered that with clay, you might want to consider another fun surface -- eggs.

First, there's nearly no end of eggs you can cover -- chicken, duck, quail, turkey, emu, ostrich, dinosaur, wooden -- you name it (well, don't attempt to cover styrofoam -- it melts in the oven). Second, there's no end of designs.

For inspiration, look no further than our little gallery of eggs right here.

Our first exhibitor is Bernie G. He calls himself "the new kid on the block" (even though he's 73) but his lovely eggs look like the work of a well-experienced clayer.



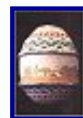
Our next "egg"cellent clayer is Chryse Laukkonen. Check out the mother-of-pearl technique on the butterfly mosaic egg!



Dawn Schiller, aka Blue Raven, brings personality to every egg she makes. I can't think of a single egg joke for her, so we will just leave it at that!



Patti Kimle is a well-known polymer clay and egg artist who gives workshops on this very topic. If you have the opportunity to take one of her workshops, don't miss it!



We round out this gallery of eggs with heavenly-detailed eggs by Jack Schwend. He's translated a Ukranian/Norwegian egg-dying technique into polymer clay canes and the results are magnificent.





Cool Tools and Dragon Skin

September 2003
By Trina Williams



The Mokume Gane Tool Swap

Who would have thought of a thread spool or a picture hanger to attack a Mokume Gane stack? Those are some of the interesting objects that came to me as a result of a Mokume Gane tool swap hosted by Dianne Cook.

While most of us have used the ball of clay under the stack then poked and prodded our stack with a variety of objects, this Mokume Gane swap really opened the floodgates for ideas for creating a fascinating Mokume Gane surface.



One of my favorite new tools was the plastic screw with a PC handle. You can use it sideways or screw it into your stack. This idea came from Ronnie Baronowitz. And Valerie Aharoni cut up some knitting needles and mounted them in a clay handle.



Jeannine Chariton sent the curly jump rope and a neat plastic wedge. Nucchi came up with the picture hanger.



And Cindy Pack built the clay spiral (it is nice and deep.)

My contribution was the plastic dot texture sheet and directions for making Dragon Skin. As far as I know, Dotty McMillan originally invented Dragon Skin, although she is not sure she was the first.

Dotty's Dragon Skin

Step One: Choose three colors that you like, including a metallic. Put the lightest color in the middle.



I have chosen Kato Polyclay™ Turquoise, Copper and Pearl.

Condition and roll your sheets on the #1 setting on your pasta machine. Use at least a 3x4" sheet. (I was working at the fair and didn't really measure well.)

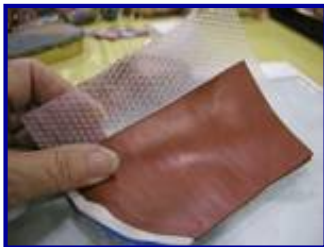


Step Two: Roll your three-color stack through on #1 again.



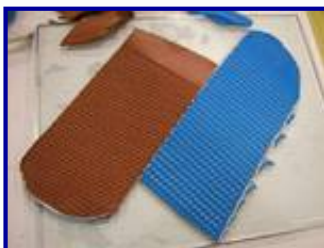
Step Three: Cut the stack in half and put one stack on the other, keeping the colors in order.

Run the stack through the pasta machine again. Repeat one more time for three "cut and stacks" (although Dotty says you can do it with two).



Step Four: Cut the stack again and layer as before. This time run the dots texture sheet with the stack through the pasta machine (use Armoral, water or cornstarch to release. I like water.)

Position the sheet so the clay is pressed against the raised dots.



Here I have cut the stack in two again and run it through with the texture sheet again with the other color up. So we have blue bumps and copper bumps.



Step Five: Very carefully start shaving off the bumps. The clay will look different depending on which color is up. Save the shaved bumps for another effect.



Step Six: You may spread out the pattern by running it through the pasta machine at thinner settings. The picture at the top of the page is one example. To the left here I have covered a pen.



Ever vigilant to the use of scraps, I rolled up my scraps and poked holes in them with Valerie's tool.



Then I shaved that piece . . .



. . . and mounted it on a layer of pearl clay . . .



. . . and made beads. You can make pins, earrings or any thing else you want.



Here is one of Dotty's boxes and a mini-scope that she made using the Dragon Skin technique.



Space Clock Tutorial

September 2003

By Laurel Nevans

Polymer Clay Artist

<http://www.Artistcrafts.com>



A new online store for polymer clay project supplies recently opened. After purchasing a few clock kits, I shared my results with one of the clay lists.

I got a really great reaction to the picture of my "Space Clock". This Space Clock was what I like to call a "happy accident"; I was originally preparing the tile base for a top layer of Mokume Gane.

The clock is a really easy project to do, perfect for a beginner who had not yet developed any caning skills. So I decided to share it with the rest of the Polymer Clay Community.

Happy Clock Making!

Materials:

- clock kit (mine came from <http://www.polymerclayprojects.com>)
- black CLS or TLS tinted black
- finger cot or latex glove
- Pearl-Ex powders in your choice of colors (I used interference blue, interference gold, Aztec gold, pearl white, silver, sparkle gold, and sparkle copper)
- baking sheet lined with parchment, wax paper, or computer paper



Place tile from clock kit on to parchment lined baking tray.



Clean tile with alcohol pad. Let alcohol evaporate.



Squeeze black CLS over tile.



Put on finger cot or glove. Spread CLS with your finger.



Continue adding CLS and spreading it with your finger.

You want a fairly thick coat of TLS (enough so that the base tile does not show through at all.) Be sure to spread the CLS all the way to the edges of the tile.



Once the tile has been covered with CLS, let it sit for 5-10 minutes, to allow time for the CLS to level itself out. Squeeze black TLS on any bare spots, if necessary.



Get out the Pearl-Ex Powders. If using unopened bottles, carefully remove the cap, but DO NOT remove the styrofoam seal. Instead, use a toothpick to poke a series of small holes through the seal, turning the bottle into a "shaker".



Shake Pearl-Ex randomly over tile. Switch colors, and sprinkle on some more. Continue sprinkling Pearl-Ex over CLS until you have a pleasing, star-like pattern.

(If using bottles with the seals already removed, you may dip a small paintbrush into the pearl-ex, then flick it onto the TLS to achieve the same effect.)



When the tile is covered to your satisfaction, let it sit for about 10-15 minutes. Make any needed "corrections" by squeezing on more black TLS, BEFORE firing the tile.



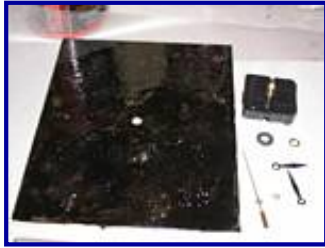
Place the baking tray in a preheated 275 degree oven. Bake for 30 minutes. Let cool.



Apply a coat of Future Floor Wax to the cooled base. Let the Future dry for approximately 45 minutes, then place the clay in a 200 degree oven for approximately 10 minutes to heat set the Future.

Let cool. Repeat at least twice, so that you have a minimum of three coats of Future on the clock.

(Note: If there are "bare spots", you may sprinkle some more Pearl-Ex over the wet Future. We recommend making any "corrections" IMMEDIATELY after applying the last coat of Future.)



Gather clock parts. Assemble according to directions contained in the clock kit.



The finished clock



Two wall clocks (above)



Two desk clocks (above)



Wreath Project

South Texas Polymer Clay Guild
[Patty Barnes](#), Vice-President

This was a great challenge for our South Texas Polymer Clay Guild. We have both new and experienced clayers in the guild so it was a wonderful opportunity for us to share. We spent one guild meeting on translating quilt patterns into quilt canes and applying some color theory. Another guild meeting was spent on learning different ways to make leaves, caned, cut and textured and cut and PearlExed.

The last meeting was putting everyone's efforts together to completely cover the entire wreath both front and back and inside and out with both quilt canes, quilted hearts, butterflies, fish, angels, and other surprises hidden under a variety of leaves. The wreath is a good sized 16" across and since it is decorated on both sides can be hung in a door window for everyone to enjoy.

Our guild meets monthly in Corpus Christi on the second Saturday from 1-4:30 p.m. We love visitors and invite ya'll to come on down.

Patty Barnes



Judy



Diane, Linda and Nancy



Patty and Diane



Nancy, Patty, Dianne, Linda, and Margaret

Judy Peche is putting cane slices on a butterfly while Diane Fredette, Linda Jones and Nancy Schultz (l-r) prepare the ribbon for hanging the wreath. Patty Barnes and Diane are adding the ribbon wrap. Nancy, Patty, Dianne, Linda and Margaret Hoelscher are "making progress"

The Wreath





click on thumbnails to see larger images



Those who contributed, but were camera shy, are: Rose Cavasos, Mary Schaudies, Ruphia Peche, Vgee Greenwood, and Claudia Gomez. We couldn't have done it without them!

If you have a group that would be interested in participating, [email IR](#).

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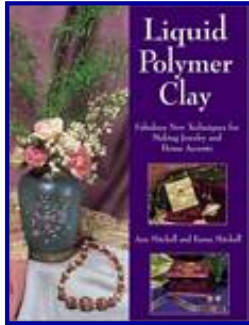
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POLYMER CLAY
POLYZINE

Book Reviews
September 2003

Polymer book lovers: Rejoice! The past several months have been good to us -- there are four new polymer clay titles out, just waiting to be added to our libraries!



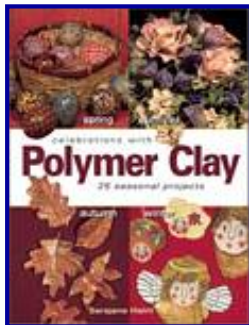
Liquid Polymer Clay
Ann Mitchell and Karen Mitchell
Krause Publications, 2003.
ISBN: 0-87349-563-2

Finally! A polymer clay book dedicated solely to the use of liquid polymer clay!

The Mitchell sisters, much loved by the polymer clay community and Carol Duvall devotees, have made liquid Sculpey their signature medium. Now they share some of their secrets with us in their lovely book *Liquid Polymer Clay*, published by Krause. The book's a beauty, with fine color photography and a project for every taste.

Projects range from clay purses to shell necklaces, and there are loads of gallery pictures to inspire you. The sisters Mitchell have included basic directions and a basic tool kit list to get even the newest of newbies started. Techniques range from marbling, transfers, and glass effects (stained! enamel! cloisonne!) to veneers and clay fabric.

My only complaint -- and this is probaby more a sign I'm getting older than a major complaint -- is that the type is a bit too small, resulting in crowded-looking pages. More white space, publishers! Make the text look inviting, not overwhelming!



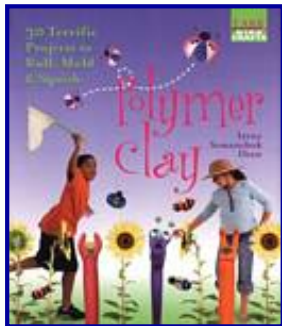
Celebrations with Polymer Clay
Sarajane Helm
Krause Publications, 2003.
ISBN: 0-87349-521-7

Well-respected polymer clay artist Sarajane Helm has published her her second polymer clay book, *Celebrations with Polymer Clay: 25 Seasonal Projects*. As its name suggests, the book focuses on projects that celebrate the spirit of the four seasons.

Helm spends a lesiurely amount of time on cane-making and includes gallery photos of various cane artists (including an explosion of Leigh Ross flowers whose muted elegance brings me to the verge of tears, it's so beautiful). It's a section well worth reading -- there's a depth to the caning advice that will add to anyone's caning knowledge.

From caning and other techniques, Helm guides us through seasonal project. Projects include a springtime flower box that makes good use of the personal computer, scrapbooking supplies, and flower canes. Summer projects range from butterful pins to memory boxes. For fall, gilded leaf pins, photo frames, and Halloween masks all make an appearance, while winter is rounded out with snowflakes, party invitations, covered candlestick holders, and lots of Christmas decorations. All seasons are followed by fairly thick gallerys of work by children as well as award-winning artists. The gallerys are perhaps the best parts of the book, as they show a wide range of polymer possibilities.

Krause does a good job with color photography, but again, the pages are a bit crowded with text for my taste.

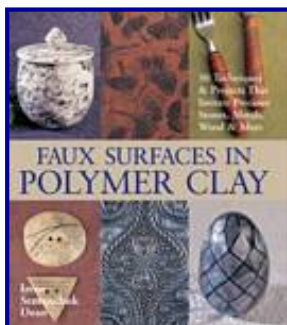


Polymer Clay
Irene Semanchuk Dean
Lark Kids Crafts, 2003.
ISBN: 0-57990-350-9

Anyone heard from Irene Semanchuk Dean lately? Well if you haven't, here's why. Irene doesn't have just one polymer clay book out this year, she has two. And while two book projects might be more than anyone should have to deal with, we thank Irene profusely for her sacrifice. It's made the polymer clay library that much more interesting.

One of her new books is *Polymer Clay: 30 Terrific Projects to Roll, Mold, and Squish*. While the title sounds fun to anyone at any age, the book is geared towards kids. The projects are easy, colorful, and useful, ranging from pushpins, novelty furniture knobs and plant stakes to a space mobile, hamburger earrings, and a colorful clock. Clearly written, with lots of white space (did you hear that, Krause?), the book is welcoming and engaging.

I look forward to the next generation of polymer clay artists who are right now learning to love the medium through Irene's book.



Faux Surfaces in Polymer Clay
Irene Semanchuk Dean
Lark Books, 2003.
ISBN: 0-57990-408-4

In the debate between "save the best for last" vs "life's short; eat dessert first," I choose "save the best for last." Here's my reasoning: many of you read the first review, then maybe the second. Perhaps some of you got to the third review, saw it was for a kid's book, then click out to virtual spaces elsewhere. Here's where my diabolically clever plan comes into play. Virtually none of you will read this review, thus keeping Irene Semanchuk Dean's new book a secret. That gives me a leg up, because after I finish this review, I intend on learning every technique in the book, veneering any object that doesn't move (sleep with one eye open, kitty!), and selling my *absolutely gorgeous* wares on ebay, thus becoming a millionaire overnight.

Sound a bit far-fetched? You won't think so when you thumb through Irene's new book, *Faux Surfaces in Polymer Clay*. She's put together an encyclopedia of faux techniques that rivals even Glass Attic.

Here's a taste: malachite, lapis lazuli, tiger-eye, turquoise, opal, jade. And that's just the first chapter. There's 24 *more* faux techniques running the gamut from alabone to zinc. Ok, there's no zinc, but there's cork. Leather. Rusted steel. Scrimshaw on faux ivory.

The book's a treasure trove of faux techniques, clearly explained and followed by really well done projects that I probably won't come near imitating, but that's ok. I have other ideas. Look for me on ebay.