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Happy New Year!

I rather like the beginning of a new year. It is full of promise, and possibilities, surprises and special people I have yet to meet.

Since I found polymer clay, it is also another chance to stretch myself, and try something new. I look forward to seeing what comes out of my "studio" this year!

How about you? Why not go out of the box? If you are a caner, why not try sculpting? If you like covering things with clay, why not try a miniature of some sort. The Yahoo groups site has dozens of polymer clay interest groups, and they're free to join. Just point your cursor at <http://groups.yahoo.com> and see what they have. You can find almost anything at all!

This month, a question from Lynda:

Can you mix clays? In other words can you mix Sculpey with Premo or Fimo clays?

In a nutshell? Yes! When you do mix clays, you blend their qualities. For instance, Sculpey and Sculpey III are rather weak and brittle clays. If you mix them with Premo, a very strong clay that remains a bit flexible after curing, you will strengthen the Sculpey, which might make it strong enough to create fine details in sculpture, such as wings or hands. Cernit imparts a certain porcelain-like translucence when it is mixed with other brands, and is very easy to condition. If you were to mix it with Fimo, which is very stiff out of the package, your end result would be somewhere in the middle, with qualities of each.

I have never had any problems with mixing clays, but your mileage, as they say, may vary. If you decide you will be mixing brands, you should remember one thing. You need to mix them thoroughly. To make sure you have done this, take two bits of different colored clay and mix them until they're blended into a new color. Keep track of how long it takes to get the new color throughout. Make sure you have mixed your new blend for the same length of time, even if both brands are the same color.

And finally, remember there is no such thing as trash clay. If it doesn't turn out the way you wanted it can be saved and used as bead cores, as backing clay, or used as mud in a clay landscape!

Here's to 2002!

And to you!

Deborah