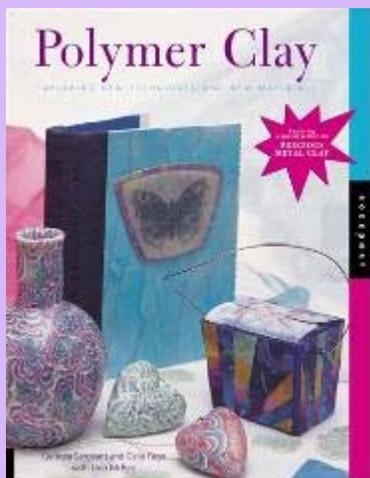


What a lot of book do I have to share with you! The following are five books, two that deal specifically with polymer clay, and three that deal with making jewelry, that came my way in the past month.



Polymer Clay: Exploring New Techniques and New Materials

When I was talking with Georgia Sargeant this spring at the Baltimore ACC show, she mentioned that her polymer clay book was in production and would be out sometime in 2002. Imagine my surprise to find it in France, of all places, this June! I immediately made a note on my to-do list for when I got home: Buy this book!

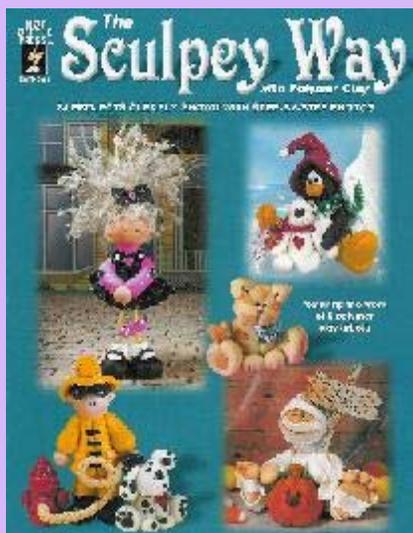
Georgia, along with Celie Fago and Livia McRee, have put together a lively collection new techniques and new materials which they demonstrate and use in nearly twenty sophisticated but not difficult projects.

Starting with a short discussion about exploring polymer clay, the book continues with the requisite polymer clay basics, including a discussion of the various clays necessary tools, and basic techniques. The rest of the book is broken into thematic sections, the first dealing with creating visual effects with the clay, the second with creating structures from the clay, and the third with surface enhancements to the clay.

What makes this book significantly different from other polymer clay books is the fourth section, written by Celie Fago and dedicated entirely to exploring, explaining and creating with precious metal clay.

The book, published by Rockport, is well-photographed and printed on fine paper. The overall effect is a lovely book within and without, beautiful to look at and filled with beautiful projects to make.

Polymer Clay, by Georgia Sargeant and Celie Fago with Livia McRee
Rockport Publishers, Inc., 2002
ISBN: 1-56496-869-3
Retail Price: \$22.00



The Sculpey Way with Polymer Clay

Hot off the Press has a corner on the cute market, and their newest publication, The Sculpey Way, continues that trend. I don't particularly like cute, but with this book and the others in the Hot off the Press polymer clay series, I find myself drawn to these projects for three simple reasons: they are well done, with easy-to-read instructions and clear illustrations.

The 74 projects in The Sculpey Way cover a wide variety of themes, from animals such as Glory Bee and Antique Bear to people like Noah and Old McDonald to holiday-themed projects such as Halloween Friends and Parker Pilgrim, and range in complexity from simple to detailed. There is something here for everyone, and the clear writing and detailed photographs ensure understanding at every stage as

you work your way to a nicely detailed polymer clay figure.

The designers for these 74 projects are Anita Behnen, Shelly Comishkey, Shohreh Dolkhani, Judy Ferrill, Sara Naumann, and Linda Welsh.

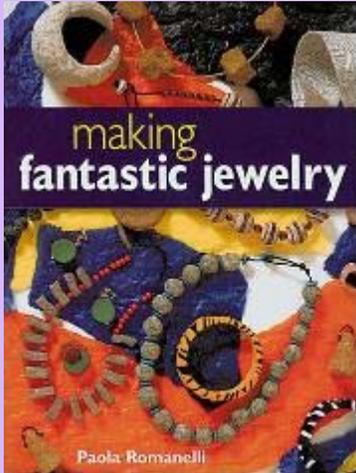
The Sculpey Way with Polymer Clay

Hot off the Press Inc., 2002

ISBN: 1-56231-823-3

Retail Price: \$13.95

The following books are jewelry, wire, and bead books that struck me as interesting and potentially useful for the polymer clay artist.



Making Fantastic Jewelry

Originally published in Italian, Paola Romanelli's Making Fantastic Jewelry leaves no material untouched in the search to create unique jewelry pieces, including polymer clay. From papier-mache to natural material (including orange peels!) to rubber to safety pins, the materials used in each project surprised and intrigued me and opened up new avenues of inspiration for my own polymer clay work.

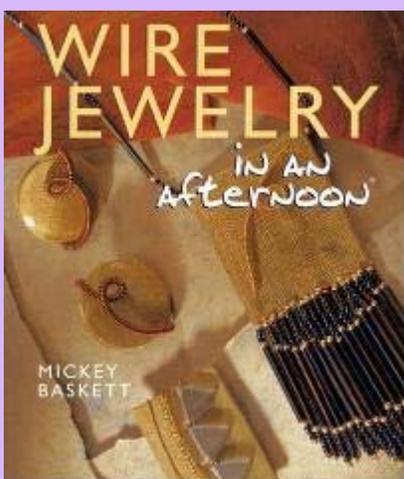
Romanelli's chapter on polymer clay itself shows only the most basic marbling technique, but the inventive reader can reinvent some of her other projects (necklace of candy, for instance) in polymer clay to create fun and visually interesting jewelry that will certainly be one of a kind.

Making Fantastic Jewelry, by Paola Romanelli

Sterling Publishing, 2002

ISBN: 1-4027-0124-1

Retail Price: \$16.95



Wire Jewelry in an Afternoon

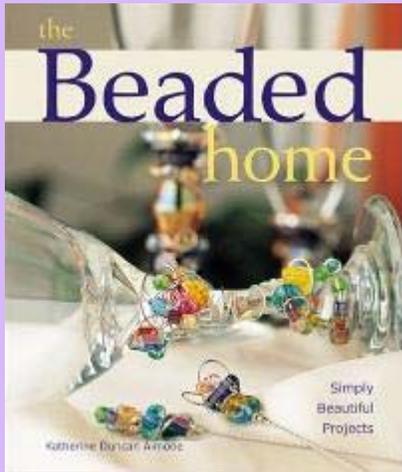
I've always wanted to know how to wrap wire around beads and how to use wire in other projects, so I read this book with special interest. It opens promisingly enough, with information about types of wires and which wire to use in which project, along with instructions for twisting and coiling wire, but ultimately I walked away from this book feeling a bit flat -- less inspired than I thought I would be.

The projects are certainly interesting, incorporating wire and beads into necklaces, earrings, glasses holders, headbands, and all kinds of pins, but none of the projects really induced me to gather my materials and give it a try. Perhaps I'm just not a wire person, or perhaps the projects themselves were kind of pedestrian -- not really visually stimulating. Additionally, the illustrations for the step-by-step instructions were black-and-white drawings, which I find harder to understand than detailed photographs.

I found the final section -- Whimsical Wire Shapes -- to be the most interesting section. Offering tips on how to use wire jigs, this sections shows designs for a variety of shapes that could be used to add decorative accents to the jewelry projects shown in the book or to any project that incorporates wire, from sculpture to boxes and books.

Wire Jewelry in an Afternoon, Mickey Baskett

Sterling Publications, 2002
ISBN: 1-4027-0132-2
Retail Price: \$14.95



The Beaded Home: Simply Beautiful Projects

Ohh. I love this book. Ostensibly, it's a book about beads, with basic bead, tools, supplies, and knotting information filling out the first several pages, but really, it's a book about fantastic projects that will really inspire you.

From beaded drawer pulls to beaded pillows, the nearly 50 lovely projects in this book, along with the spectacular photography, will draw out even the most reluctant designer in all of us. I found every project sparked a polymer clay design idea as well as a desire to make the project itself (as if I had enough time for that!).

Written by Katherine Duncan Aimone, The Beaded Home has quickly become one of my favorite books.

The Beaded Home, Katherine Duncan Aimone
Lark Books, 2002
ISBN 1-57990-381-9
Retail Price: \$14.95