

April 2002
Volume 3, Issue 4

Dear Polyzine :

As a NY polymer clay artist (belonging to the NYPCGuild) I enjoyed [\[Tommie Howell's\] Polyzine article on "helping artists,"](#) in the aftermath of 9/11.

Wish we of the PCGuild had known of this help you talked about -- last year.

Our meeting space was at ground zero. Our space was at the College of Insurance (Murray Street, NYC, East Side). It has since changed hands and is now called St. John's Downtown campus. We rented space there (with all of our equipment) for a good price (because one of our members was employed at the College of Insurance).

Not only did we not have access to our meeting place for a year, we couldn't get the equipment (kiln, oven, clays and lending library) out. Absolute quarantine.

We were forced finally to suspend operation for a year. We had one meeting up at the 52nd Street YWCA. But their space cost was way out of our price range.

No one would put us up. And believe me our president and members worked the phones.

The end of the story is this: After a year we're back on Murray Street. We had our first meeting in February.

(There's no parking next door because the Kinney Lot has been taken over by Con Edison for all their equipment and generators.)

We walk over huge sidewalk obstructions with our workshop gear because all the streets are torn up with cable work. The entire infrastructure of phones and electrical lines was destroyed and had to be temporarily placed above ground, closing streets and diverting traffic.

There is no "normal" down there. We see the trucks coming out of the site through a wash down tent the EPA has set up.

BUT, HEY, WE WERE BACK TOGETHER AND WE CRIED WHEN WE FINALLY MET. We lost one member to cancer in that time period -- sadly the gal who worked at the College of Insurance, securing our space for us.

Our plight was noticed by many of our community's "famous" polymer clay artists who have sent us polymer articles and jewelry that we are in the process of bidding on. I don't have the list of artists but their gifts to us were so very touching and heartwarming.

That's probably more than you want to know. But I did want to reach out and tell the world we are still here! Thanks for "listening."

[Laura Godler](#)

New York Polymer Clay Guild Member



Dear Editor,

After the rush of Christmas slows, and the production work for spring begins, I always seem to question why it is I do what I do. Thank you Tommie for reminding me that I get my fingernails dirty because not only do I love what I do, but, like breathing, it sustains me.

Carol



Dear Editor:

I literally stumbled onto your site in my search for information on polymer clay and related items. I am so thankful I did. I am just really getting into working more with polymer clays. I have done some doll sculpting and miscellaneous things in the past. When I saw the article about the new clay from Donna Kato, I was ecstatic!

I thought I would pass along my experience with a company link from your site. From your site I contacted Prairie Craft Co. and immediately placed an order for some of this new clay. Because of an error (my fault) on my order, I needed to call the company and was very impressed at the great customer service I received. The person I spoke to was friendly, informative and very helpful. A very pleasant experience!

Your site is great. I enjoyed reading all the various information you have provided and look forward to many more delightful days of reading.

Sincerely,
Linda Maile-Smith
A Moment in Time



Dear Editor:

You have the greatest 'zine I ever seen! I don't like to wish the time away but I am anxious for you to pop up every month.

There are two of us that get together and try everything at least once. We are starved for other polymer clays artists around the Broward County area in Florida. We would like to start a guild or at least get together to get the juices flowing. We both have studio settings so space is no problem. We're informal. We would like your help in passing the word on.

I'll be watching my E-mail in great anticipation.

[Nancy Greene](#)



Dear Polyzine,

I have some comments in response to Erum Munir's article in the March Polyzine. While I agree with most of her article, I take exception to:

"Try to keep your prices slightly below the prices at traditional brick and mortar stores. The person who is going to purchase from you is also going to pay shipping cost; lower prices lets them justify the shipping costs."

This may be true if you're selling books or CDs or athletic shoes, but I don't feel it applies to handcrafted work. First, one can't buy handcrafted work, especially from any one specific artist, just anywhere, so it's not likely that someone is comparison shopping for artwork.

Second, selling at less than retail is not fair to yourself as a craftsperson. Books, CDs, clothes, computers, and most other typical on-line purchases are mass-produced, and costs can be cut at various points in the manufacturing and/or distribution.

On the other hand, craftspeople are generally making each item by hand, and their work is usually not sold to distributors who sell to wholesalers who sell to retailers. Cutting prices directly affects the amount of income for the craftsperson, since there is virtually nowhere between the creation of a piece and the sale of it for costs to be cut.

Third, and perhaps most important, selling on a web site at less than retail means undercutting the stores and galleries that buy your work for resale. These stores are repeat buyers who buy quantity, and undercutting them will damage your relationship with them.

Personally, I *want* customers to buy from the galleries that carry my work - it's less work for me and it's good for the gallery. This is why I list links to places that sell my work, and why I would never consider selling at less than retail, whether at a show or on my web site.

I'd like to add a couple of items that help make a web site customer friendly.

A clearly stated return policy will reduce the chance of misunderstandings. Acceptance of returns within a specified period will assure the customer that they are not taking a risk by buying on line. As Erum pointed out, buying on line means the customer is not able to touch the piece, turn it over, feel its weight. If they know they are not obligated to keep what they've ordered if they don't like it, they're going to feel their purchase is less of a risk.

If you're interested, here are my policies: [Policies](#). For what it's worth, I've only had one return in the three years I've been selling on line.

Also, it's not enough just to accept credit cards. If possible, install a shopping cart. It's far easier for customers to click a "buy this item" box than to have to type in what they want.

Thanks for including an article about selling on line in Polyzine. I think it's a topic that is of interest to many who work with polymer clay.

Irene Semanchuk Dean

[Good Night Irene!](#)



Dear Polyzine team,

Thank you, thank you, thank you for existing and staying alive so steadily month after month. Every first of the month, there is this huge treat , a new issue of Polyzine. And best of all it is available right here in France, one of the polymer deserts of this world. Pleaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaase don't stop !!!

I started claying 15 months ago and have tried a lot of your projects, but my all time favorite stays Elissa Powell's mum cane. Inspired by a discussion on PolymerClay People on lentil beads (what would I do without the great internet resources?), this is my last use of this cane: a reversible lentil necklace, one side is Elissa's cane, the other size is a sort of jelly roll mokume gane with some insert of opaque clay. So again thank you Deborah, Deirdre, Jenny, Marty, Tommie, and Trina.

Claudine Peyrat

Dear Readers:

Check out the great necklace Claudine made -- it's in the [reader's gallery](#)



Hi -

The magazine is wonderful! However, could you go back to a former practice -you used to put the index at the bottom of each page as well as at the top, so it was possible to click to another page without having to return to the top - sometimes a long scroll. Hope you can accommodate this request.

Jo Anna

Jo Anna:

I think you are quite right. I myself, on other people's pages, find myself wishing they put links

at the bottom of the page -- where I am when I am done reading!

Thanks for pointing that out. We will make the change in this issue.

Deirdre

