

Letters to the Editor



Hi gang,

I just have to comment on the Polyzine. I think you all are doing a fantastic job; please keep up the good work. I have found every issue to be inspiring, which helps me a lot when the polymer clay muse hasn't visited lately!

Michelle Kosek in Wilmette



Dear Editor:

I just took a class from Gwen Gibson who demonstrated making silk screen to use on polymer clay among other materias using a new photosensitive screen, called PhotoEz and sunlight. For dark days a flurosecent light bulb can be used. I knew about thermafax imaging, but that start up cost is quite high. For the cost of a package of film at \$21.80, two pieces of plexiglass and two clamps, one is in business.

The web site for the person who developed the project is www.cbridge.com.

AnnaMaria Galdieri

Dear AnnaMaria:

Thank you for that useful tip! This sounds like a great project!

Deirdre



Dear Editor,

I am writing about the pillow bead question. A pillow bead is a bead which looks like an overstuffed square throw pillow. There is a lesson for making pillow beads from polymer clay at www.clayfulminglesgallery.homestead.com/pillowbeadlesson.html on the Clayful Mingles website. Been having fun making a few, still a bit more like lumpy pillow, but more the maker's issue and not the instructions. Check out the gallery, lots of neat stuff.

Tina Holdman



Dear Editor:

I have a lesson on my site for pillow beads! :) My web site, Clayfulmingles: <http://clayfulmingles.homestead.com/HOMEPAGE.html>

Mia



Dear Deirdre,

I make pillow beads! They are made by rolling a small ball of scrap clay, then covering it with a slice of a round cane. Place the ball in the middle of the slice, then one by one press the sides of the slice into the center of the ball. The edges of the cane will naturally make four corners. They are incredibly easy and very cute! You can see some pillow beads on my website under jewelry. :) www.claytherapy.com

BTW, LOVE the Polyzine!!! Thanks so much for everyone's hard work in putting it together!

Jen Kendall

jenken@claytherapy.com



Dear Editor:

I was enjoying your Feb issue and was amazed by some of the Reader's Gallery exhibiting the Elissa Chrysanthemum cane and found myself unable to link up. Can you tell me how to get to past issues?

Thank You

Pam Pierce SDPCG

(I'm sure it's very simple and I appreciate your help and time and your polyzine).

Hi Pam!

[Click here](#) for a direct link to that article.

Did you find the link to the previous issues on the left-hand side of [this issue](#)? If you didn't, try to link to our previous issues through that link.

If you did try, try again and then let me know if there is a bad link.

Thanks!

Deirdre



Dear Editor:

Wow! I'm so glad I ran across your site. For the last 3 months I've been doing nothing but paper arts, with my new-found skill in calligraphy. It's been lots of fun, making personalized holiday cards, ornaments etc. But right after Christmas I realized I had really missed working with polymer clay. I've been a clayhead for 8 years. I missed the feel of the clay, the colors, the delight in the first slice of a new cane.

So I put all my pens, paper, and scissors away and got out my clay and tools. But I had no inspiration. I didn't know what to make or where to start. I had never experienced clay block before and it felt lousy. Yesterday, I went to the NPCG site to see what was new and saw a link to your site. Well, that is exactly what I needed. Wonderful inspiration, new ideas, techniques, great interviews, etc. etc.

Thank you for saving me. I'm re-born.

Sincerely,

Dedra True



Dear Editor:

Thank you for a new "fair" skin recipe (November 2000). I have 2 figures to make and have run out of my usual colors that I use. I am going to go whip up a batch right now!

I look forward to future Polyzine articles.

Linda H



Dear Polyzine,

Thank you so much for taking the time to put together such a great magazine and sharing it so openly with all! I'm a devoted polyholic (as confirmed by the test in November's edition), but am very handicapped by the fact that I live in Ontario, Canada. There are no clay courses that I can find, no clay artists anywhere near me geographically and certainly no clay guilds that I can find. So, finding you has been really exciting! I really enjoyed every word on your site and got some great ideas!

Thanks so very much again,

Sincerely,

Wendy Debicki, Ancaster, Ontario, Canada.



Dear Editor:

I am pretty new at this clay, been doing it for about 6 months. Please tell me about the hole punches used to punch out the clay to make the little balls. I do not know where to get those, and haven't seen them mentioned anywhere. I have punches I use for paper. Are these something different?

I can't wait to try the box that looks like a decorated cake. Fabulous. The few Altoid boxes I've made are not nearly as professional looking. I was trying to cover the top in one piece, and the bottom in another single piece. I think your idea is so much better.

I am loving Polyzine. Keep up the fabulous work!

Carlos Haun

Hi Carlos!

I didn't know what those punches were either, so I wrote to Desiree McCrorey and this is what she told me:

"They're from a leather punch set I got at a local craft store like Michaels or Benjamin Franklins. They're not likely considered high quality leather punch tools, but they're great for polymer clay. In addition for using them to make consistently sized beads, they're also very useful when doing color recipes. When following recipes such as 10 parts white, 2 parts red, 3 parts yellow, 1 part caramel; it's easy to create using the extremely small parts allowed by the small punches."

Good luck with your tins, Carlos, and feel free to send us photos of your finished project!

Deirdre



Dear Editor:

Hi, I enjoyed [Tommie Howell's article in the December issue](#), and had some comments to add. I'm a professional artist with formal training in fine arts, and I've been drawing since I was 2. At the end of my undergrad college years, my focus turned from traditional "older" arts to computer graphics and animation. I still had to go through years of training in drawing, painting, sculpture, art history, theory, etc., in order to get my degree, yet there is still a group of artists that look down upon these "new" mediums, like computer graphics.

If the art form hasn't existed for hundreds, if not thousands of years, does that make it less of a fine art? In my eyes, no. But in Tommie's story, that sculpture falls into the artist minority who believes this is the case. As a computer artist, I've run into this similar view of "oh, that's not real art" many times.

Polymer is a new medium, but that doesn't make it any less of an art form....and yes, I'm of the belief that there shouldn't be a distinguishing line between art and craft, the two blend together. Art is the expression of ideas, forms, and feelings in a form that can be shared with others.

My joy in life is to be able to express myself visually, and then to share it with others. The minority of artists with egos that need their own zip code probably have never stopped to feel what others get from their artwork. Tommie dealt with this individual in the perfect manner!

The artist who feels he or she knows everything and therefore cannot continue to learn on a daily basis will never reach their full potential. So, when telling others about what you do, don't be ashamed of polymer as a medium!

When acrylic paints first were used, some oil painters looked down on those who tried this new paint, and didn't consider it a real material, since it was only plastic. But time changes such thoughts, and in time, polymer clay won't be as new as it seems now. And even if it's always marketed as a kid's material, I'll still visit my local craft store to buy it!

I make my living creating computer art, and PC is really the best art form I've found that gets me away from the computer screen, and gets my hands into my work! Unlike paints, I can clean up easily in my small apartment, and unlike ceramics, I don't need a huge kiln to fire my work. Never be discouraged from working with a material you love! Express your artistic self, and enjoy it!

Jen Moulton

Proctor BFA, Computer Art & Animation



Dear Editor:

I am a polymer clay artist in the Chicago area and am interested in what other people are doing in the medium. I am especially interested in how to make molds from polymer clay artifacts.

Sincerely,

Kathy Marie Garness

Dear Kathy:

Making molds from polymer clay artifacts is really hot right now. I think it's really cool that polymer clay can be both the medium and the tools for our artwork.

Is anyone out there doing molds they'd like to share with the community? [E-mail us!](#)

Deirdre



Hi,

This is in response to Kim, the person looking for more information about polymer clay. One of the best information sites I have been to is at www.glassattic.com. She has over 400 pages of information, all broken up into different categories. I would definitely recommend this site to anyone looking for more information about polymer clay!

Hope this helps!

Stacey Morgan



Dear Editor:

Congratulations on producing the best, most comprehensive site on the web. I've made poly dolls for years but your projects have inspired me to add polyclay to my jewelry endeavors. Thanks to all who contribute!

Amaccash



Hi there,

Please sign me up for the Polyzine email list!

I just started "PCing" less than a month ago - and I'm fully hooked! I've already devoured books like Nan Roche's *New Clay*, I have two Sue Heaser books, another by Donna Kato, etc. I've also read all three issues of your 'zine. I'd love to hear about new books coming out, and I really enjoy the techniques section of your 'zine.

Also, it would be great if you could include some "advance" coverage (as available/possible) of the June PC conference being held at Bryn Mawr. It's called *Courting the Muse*, and info. can be found online at the [NPCG](#). I'd love to hear some inside stories about how the conference is shaping up. They aren't even accepting registrations until March, so I imagine people are really anxious to hear what's going on - I know I am!

Finally, I know people advertise online about "swaps" and being so new to PC, I'm a little intimidated about (1) participating in a swap, and (2) not sure if I have to know the people I'm swapping with to participate, like being part of a guild for instance.

THANK YOU for putting your staff's personal time and effort into this ezine. It's very helpful to me as a novice, but I imagine that it's a great way to build the PC community as well. I know it can probably seem like a thankless task at times, but there are many of us out there just getting started that are benefiting tremendously from your efforts!

Best regards,

Carol Deminski

Dear Carol:

Good for you for getting so involved in polymer clay. It's a lot of fun and quite addictive!

We have an article on the [Muse](#) in this issue, so please check that out for up-to-date information about this wonderful conference.

Swaps are **so** much fun! I've been in a couple and I've been the meister of several. In fact, I was the meister of the Carol Duvall Swap, and Carol is going to show our items (all 26 of them!) on her HGTV show, [The Carol Duvall Show](#). That episode will air March 22, 2001, at 2:00 p.m. I encourage all polymer clay enthusiasts to watch it, tape it, or get a friend to tape it if you don't have cable!

Anyway, back to getting involved. A lot of people feel nervous, not just in their first swap, but in every swap they enter. We are all terrified that our items are going to pale in comparison with everyone else's items. My advice: just join one. Jump in with both feet. Your work is going to be worse than some people's. It's going to be better than other people's. But the best thing about the swap is, **no one cares!** We are all delighted to see everyone's items, regardless of whether they are beginner items or advanced items. Here's a basic truth about the polymer clay community: we are very welcoming and supportive!

You do not need to know a single person in the swap. Simply sign up with the meister and clay away. Some rules:

- If you are going to drop out, drop out as early as possible and **tell the meister!** People drop out of swaps all the time, for lots of reasons. There is no shame in dropping out. Just be considerate and let the meister know.
- Mail your items by the due date, or, if you are going to be a *couple* (usually less than a week) days late, **tell the meister!** People are waiting in great anticipation for their swap items, so let the meister know your situation so s/he can decide whether or not to start sending out swap packages.
- Include postage stamps instead of money, if possible. It makes the meister's job so much easier when s/he can simply drop off packages at the post office, rather than wait in a long line to buy postage!
- Include a sticky-backed self-addressed mailing label. Meistering is labor intensive, and writing out addresses can become really time-consuming, especially if you are retentive like me and need to double and triple check to make sure you've gotten all addresses exactly right. If you send a self-addressed label, the address is most certainly right!
- Wrap your item in something protective, like a sandwich bag, and include a slip of paper with at least your name, but also your e-mail address if you'd like, and some information about your item. Including your name makes it easier to sort and distribute the swap items, and adding some personal information about how and why you made that particular item is interesting and useful to many of us.
- Many people like to add a little extra item for the meister. This is **not** necessary, but it's a nice touch. I love getting little gifts when I am the meister. In fact, I think we should all send little polymer clay items in all of our correspondences -- the water bill, the gas bill, whatever.

There are two sites that I know of for polymer clay swaps. The first is the polymerclayinterest group, which you can join at [groups.yahoo.com](#). The second is at [Polymer Clay Central](#), which runs a swap board.

Happy swapping, Carol! Send us a picture of your swap items!

Deindre

