

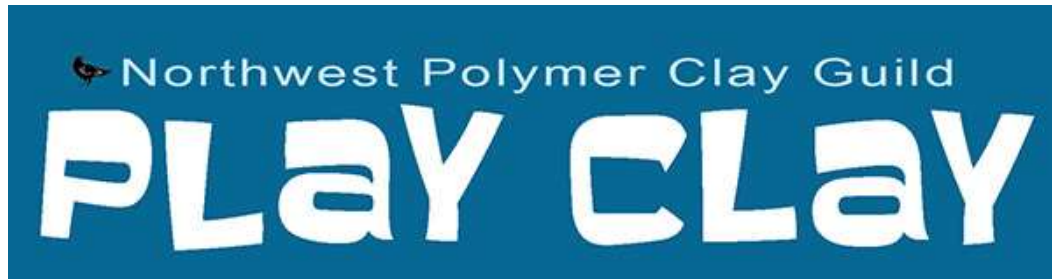
Salvage old canes, vote & more!

From: Northwest Polymer Clay Guild Newsletter <newsletter@nwpcg.org>

To: Maria Jam <mariajambrown@yahoo.com>

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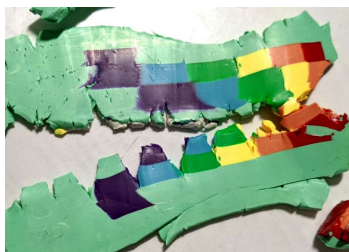
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Hi Maria Jam!

Guild Highlights: Salvaging Old Clay & Canes

By Kim Day | polymerclay@gmail.com

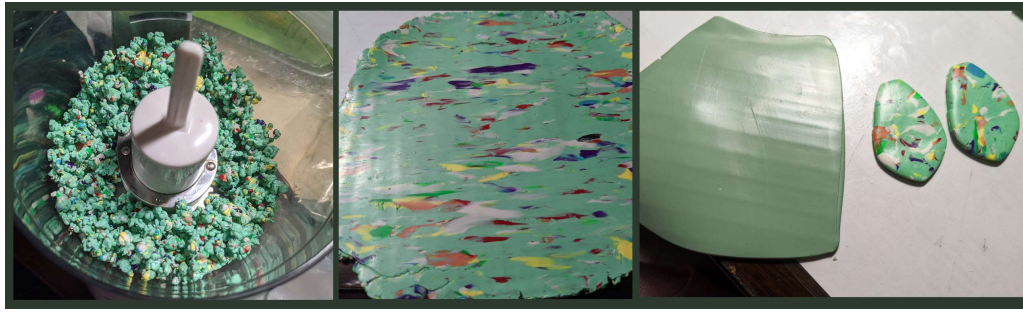


In the September Zoom monthly Guild meeting's Round Robin program, I showed several methods for reviving old clay. Here's your cheat sheet, for those that weren't meticulously taking notes during my presentation.

Clay gets crumbly for two reasons. First reason is it's partially baked (maybe it sat in a hot car). You can tell when this is the case when the clay crumbles in the pasta machine, and squishing some crumbs doesn't make them stick together. There is no saving this clay, unfortunately. If it is a cane, you can bake the whole cane and make slices while it is still warm.

The second reason is plasticizer. Plasticizer (thank you dictionary) is a substance (typically a solvent) added to a synthetic resin to produce or promote plasticity and flexibility and to reduce brittleness. Old clay can have the plasticizer unevenly distributed, or leached from the clay.

Here are some of the methods used to revive the clay:



1. Percussive maintenance. Hit it with a hammer or thump it on a table. This works with old canes as well. The kinetic energy warms up the clay, and allows it to move. Sometimes this is all you need. However, if it is still crackly after using the pasta machine, you might need to add additional methods.
2. Heat. Once the polymer clay is workable, it is easier to redistribute the plasticizer and make it into a lovely lump of clay. You can put it in a sandwich bag and sit on it, or stick it in your bra. You can use a heating pad on the low setting. You can put your oven on super low (100F? 150F? My gauge doesn't measure so I can't tell you exactly what I used). Heat is also lovely for reducing old canes.
3. If percussion and heat don't work, you need to add plasticizer to the clay. You can mix your hard clay with soft clay. You can add liquid clay. You can add diluent/clay softener, or mineral oil – it only takes a few drops of this! It's very easy to make it too slimy and end up being unusable, so my preferred method is the liquid clay. You can mix with your hands, with a pasta machine, or a small food processor (my very, very favorite). If you mix several colors of clay (scrap for example) in the food processor, you end up with a fun mosaic-like clay, with pieces of lots of colors. It is also easy to make it a uniform color by mixing it.



I also did strength tests with baked pieces for each of these additions, since I had read mixed results with some saying mineral oil made the clay more brittle. I can safely say I could tell no difference with Premo, your mileage may vary.

If percussion and/or heat doesn't work on your old cane, adding plasticizer to that is a little trickier. The two methods that seemed best were rubbing softener or mineral oil all around the cane, and letting it soak in for a week. Then add some heat. The liquid clay didn't absorb as well, but the cane was still softer than untreated cane.

If you ever need stiffer clay/want to remove some plasticizer, roll your clay out in a sheet. Put it between pieces of standard copy paper. Then heat and/or weight and/or time will leach the clay (you'll see an oily stain on the paper). Some people put heavy books on their leaching clay, but I always found the speediest method was sitting on it. If you're fixing clay that had too much softener added, you may need to replace the paper and repeat.



Journal cover by Dawn Gray



Jewelry pieces by Dawn Gray



Faux malachite by Dawn Gray



Earrings by Esther Schmidt



Earrings and pendant by Esther Schmidt



Earrings and pendant by Esther Schmidt



Earrings by Esther Schmidt



Earrings by Kim Day



Earrings by Kim Day



Earrings by Kim Day

October Program: Creating Faux Turquoise, Howlite & Coral

By Maria Brown | Zoom | October 7th | 6:30 p.m.



See my latest techniques for these faux stones that look so beautiful together! Since there are several steps that include drying time, it will be a 'relax, watch & learn' demonstration rather than a 'follow-along' program. I will have a PDF tutorial available to download at the end of the demo.

My techniques are easy to learn and use stuff you most likely already have in your studio. They're nice little nuggets of knowledge (get it? Nuggets?) to have in your repertoire, perfect for creating that specific size or shape

of stone that you want.

So mark your calendar and join us on Wednesday, October 7th and learn something new!

Online Meetings: **Zoom with Us!**

By Kim Day | polymerclay@gmail.com



Our monthly Zoom meetings are germ-free zones. There's no reason for you not to be there! We have it on the first Wednesday of the month from 6:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

We also have small informal clay days every Wednesday 6:30-9:00 p.m. and every Saturday 9:00 a.m.-noon. All of these use the same Zoom link.

You are welcome to invite other people you know to these, there is no membership requirement for our informal get togethers. They can also craft with other mediums than clay.

If you'd like to be on an email list for people who want to schedule Zoom things outside these Wednesday and Saturday times, please let me know with very specific words "Add me to the Zoom e-mail list" at polymerclay@gmail.com

[Zoom Link](#)

Meeting ID: 988 553 9980

Password: clayisfun

[Zoom with Us](#)

Announcement

Guild Business: **NWPCG Board Election**

By Kim Day | polymerclay@gmail.com



Another year, another set of elections. Luckily this one just involves you clicking a link, easy peasy. Here are the candidates running unopposed for the following board positions:

Secretary: Susan Locsin

VP of Membership: Grace Seto

Treasurer: Maria Brown

Thank you lovely ladies for being willing to help the guild keep running. We aim to make it as small a sacrifice as possible. :) So vote! You may choose the candidate, or do a write-in name (though probably make sure that person is okay with you writing their name?).

To **vote**, please click the button below:

[Vote Now!](#)

Guild Business: **September Board Meeting Election**

By Kim Day | polymerclay@gmail.com



The board held a virtual meeting by email, and we voted on two issues. First, we voted to allow Maria Brown to assume Cathy Gilbert's Treasurer position until the end of the current term (December 31st). Welcome to our new treasurer Maria, and thanks for helping out! Cathy, you've been amazing, we appreciate your service. Salute! (generic salute, non-political).



Second, we voted to invite internationally known polymer clay teachers to teach virtual Zoom classes. These classes will not be held during normal meeting days. There is much detail to be hammered out. So please, help us out. Let us know what you're interested in learning. Let us know if you specifically know any teachers already offering Zoom classes like Cristi Friesen. How often we do these will depend on teacher availability, and membership participation.

[What would you like to learn?](#)

President's Message

By Kim Day | polymerclay@gmail.com



What's keeping you sane?

Hello Dear Clayers,

Another month of overwhelming natural disasters and political drama. I hope you all have found methods to help keep you (as) sane (as you were). Feel free to share them! We happily publish all sorts of things from members in the monthly newsletter. In the past we've had classes, books, products, and video reviews. Find a new product? Let us know.

My method is petting my cat, trying to stop myself from reading too much news, and actively trying to appreciate the things that are good in my life.

My creative side has definitely taken a bit of a beating from all of this, but the weekly zoom clay days (Wednesday evenings 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. and Saturday mornings 9:00 - 12:00 noon) have kept my finger in the pot, so to speak. In my opinion, you can't wait until you're feeling creative and motivated. Doing clay on a regular basis makes you see inspiration in your everyday life. Trying something for the sake of trying it, versus making something with a deadline/goal.

Yes, this is just another way of saying "Come Zoom with us more! I miss you!" You know, just in case I was being too subtle.

We are officially cancelling the in person Mini Gingerbread House Party for this year. We have also been talking about ways we can still do the Christmas Party brown bag exchange over Zoom. More to come in future newsletters!

Take care clay peeps,

Kim Day



Update your Info

New members need to sign-up to our newsletter, the sign-up form is included in your NWPCG Welcome email from Membership.

Changing your email? You can [update your personal](#) information to ensure that you receive our newsletter. You can also add your website or social media links to your profile. This link is also available in every newsletter at the footer area.

If you haven't yet, please add "newsletter@nwpcg.org" to your address book so our newsletters do not go to spam.

Update

 Forward

[NWPCG website](#)



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