

# April 2018

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Your ClayAround Newsletter

ClayAround



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When I first discovered polymer clay, predictably I made beads. I made so many beads that eventually I chose to string them together just as a memento – but even this amateurish work was effective in my view (top right). So let's look at a multitude of beads mostly using pretty basic techniques! We can start with a selection presented to us by [fimo](#) and more from fimo [here](#) and even more, but [bubbles this time](#)

So to tutorials. Here's the well known [planet bead](#); here [bulls-eye lace beads](#) (and here is an example of the [use of bullseyes](#) by Donna Kato) and another tutorial by Desire showing you her lovely [swirl beads](#). A tutorial on how to make [faceted crackle beads](#) is worth looking at whilst Marie Segal shows you how to make a very simple

[opaque cane](#) to then make into beads. Clare, of Lottie of London, shows us how to make [different faceted beads](#) here.

. On this Russian site is a tutorial for the equivalent of the [water colour technique](#) for beads, If you search around on that site you will find so many more really useful and interesting tutorials on all sorts of techniques. More of the watercolour technique can be found a video by [Jessama](#). On another YouTube video you can learn about the [Raku effect](#) whilst you can learn to make [sea glass](#) from this Youtube video. Finally, have a look at the work of [Rebecca Watkins](#) on her flickr page – the beads above left are one of the examples of her experiments with embossing powder but you will see that she experiments with all sorts of techniques. For me, the joy of polymer clay has always been to unlimited variety of possibilities, and one can see from these websites just how many there are that can be developed. We are spoilt for choice!



A strange, but interesting addition to our stock is [iridescent sheets](#) – despite there being only three different coloured sheets in this very inexpensive bag, a little goes a long way and produces lots of shiny possibilities. See the bead above that I made but it isn't a patch on the one I copied that was made by Debbie Crowther in [this tutorial](#) I believe this is the sort of film that Ginger uses in some of her tutorials so get along to [The Blue Bottle Tree](#) and investigate.

Carol Blackburn was telling me that whilst there is still a demand for her book and yet the publishers are refusing to print again. So being out of print it is even more in demand despite the last reprint being in 2012. Why? Because it is a comprehensive

Aiofe Smyth Murphy's love of Faery Folk stems from wonderful stories told to her by her grandfather. More recently her daughter wanted a fairy door and I decided to make one and stumbled across some Fimo in the local craft shop. And so the love story began!

Aiofe is generally confined to home due to a congenital spinal defect, but has three beautiful children and a wonderful husband (she explained that her daughter chose the picture on the left to display, but I like the one on the right!) She told me she enjoys seeing children's faces when she presents them with her fairy doors.

You can see her work [here](#): Surfing the Net she realised there was no meeting point for the Irish Polymer

why? Because it is a comprehensive book generously sharing skills and polymer clay knowledge. [I have copies!](#)

Another book that is unbelievably full of valuable information is the one by Lindly Haunani and Maggie Maggio. That, too, is out of print. If colour is your fascination, then this is [the one for you.](#)

In May the ClayAround Claydays group have a special project instigated by Helen Breil. That, and the attendant technology, has resulted in new ideas, ideas that may bring us into a new generation of claydays. We are experimenting currently, so will let you know all about our work with Helen as well as further potentials....maybe in the next newsletter!

Meanwhile Helen is in the process of producing more texture stamps (as is Mel Muir by the way) so look out for lots of new exciting designs.

Clay Community and with mentoring from her friend Angela Kent she founded the first ever Irish Polymer Clay Guild. Aiofe is now the Chairperson of the Guild and she has the goal of bringing as many learning opportunities as she can to the Irish Artists. Predictably she is always looking for tutors who would like a trip to Ireland! This is the Facebook page of the [Irish Guild:](#)

The Irish group are true to their word (bringing tutors to Ireland) for on 6th October Carol Simmons will be travelling there to demonstrate her mokume gane technique. It is 165 euros for the weekend which includes the Premo clay and will be in Portlaoise Leisure Centre in Co Laoise. Book early – it will be very popular.

And more news: Debbie Bulford has a new set of excellent new products available on her website. I am particularly taken with the lovely little tree that has been cut as a stand for displaying earrings. Look for them all [here](#)

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It is impossible to explain creativity. It's like asking a bird 'How do you fly?' You just do.

Eric Jerome Dickey

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