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Your ClayAround Newsletter

ClayAround



I first mastered making canes with the wonderful guidance of Carol Simmons (see top left) and have always been fascinated by the process. However, the first canes I encountered were the [Silly Milly's](#) and to my delight they are still being showcased. There is so much information on the Net about making canes so I am choosing some key information, not the least because we are unashamedly highlighting Fiona, the British 'cane queen' in this newsletter.

Let's start with the basics. Obviously by now you will have subscribed to Fiona's YouTube channel (!). If not her videos can be found [here](#) but you can learn lots, too, from Samantha at [Jessama](#) and/or [Teresa Salgado](#). Of course so many more tutorials can be found on a [Pinterest site](#) but maybe you are interested in specific canes. What about face canes? This by [Mo Clay](#) (If you are interested Mo Clay also teaches you how to make a [minion!](#)) or this brilliant one by [Cynthia Tinapple..](#) Ludmila Bakulina teaches how to make a cane with letters [here](#) and we mustn't forget Bettina's [retro cane](#).

Have you mastered reducing canes yet? Well there is an excellent video tutorial on [Sarah Shriver's website](#) and above right you will see another example of her quite superb work.

There are no ending possibilities with canes, which is makes the skill so fascinating - I do hope you, too, will enjoy learning about how to make them.



Summer Blooms Bangles

Workshop with Fiona Abel-Smith

I have never been particularly interested in making bangles (I don't wear jewellery!) but I absolutely love making canes and always learn so much from workshops. This workshop (picture above) is 'the future' – using technology so that we can meet tutors who find travel difficult and/or who live in other countries. Through sophisticated conferencing technology we can get the benefit of top quality workshops for a much reduced price. Added to that we still have the advantage of being able to share with, and enjoy the company of, other clayers from whom we always learn so much.

This workshop is a pilot and is costing even less than other similar workshops would be. Not only will you learn oh so much because of Fiona's generosity (She will be available for any questions and answers throughout the day) but you will also have unlimited access to the video that is made of the workshop.

It will be held in my home where we have, over many years of monthly claydays, established a pattern of constantly available beverages, a plethora of equipment and access to 'the shop' where you can buy anything you decide you need there and then. We are in beautiful Wales less than Two hours easy drive from Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool. There are lots of local B&B's if you want to make a weekend



This is what Fiona has to say:

"I can't remember ever not creating something.

After an accident, I had to look for an alternative job and turned to creative work. I met Ange Smith in 2006, who introduced me to Polymer Clay, and the rest, as they say, is history.

I love Polymer Clay. It is so versatile, so hands on, so colourful, so able to be and do whatever you need or envision.

I joined the Midlands Polymer Clay Group and my understanding and experience grew, as I realised the importance of attending workshops and how much I could learn from others' experiences.

Learning about Pietra Dura work from Sue Heaser, was amazing and I am still experimenting with 'painting with clay' ideas. I have made a couple of Pietra Dura boxes (see picture above) completely from Polymer Clay They take over 100 hours to complete.

I do have a life outside of my art, I have a partner who I adore, and 2 Japanese Akitas, Kizzie and Yoshi. They are 10 now, so getting on a bit for big dogs, and Kizzie like me, limps badly, so we are a right pair when I take her walking.

I began teaching polymer clay in 2008, but until last year I had to teach locally as I was unable to travel. Then with a

of it and explore Wales on the Sunday.

There are only 10 places and they are filling up fast. You need to commit by paying [here](#) so that you can ensure a place.

Do not miss this opportunity, not the least because Fiona is pretty special!



Once upon a time I used to stock Cernit. It wasn't particularly popular in the early years. It has been reprocessed and with improvements it is gaining momentum. Translucent is particularly popular so we are starting by stocking that. If it proves popular then more colours will follow. You can find it on the website. If you haven't used it before, [try it](#), you may like it!

new camera and editing app, YouTube beckoned.

I plan to continue my free tutorials, but also share more complex techniques in new paid for Video tutorials. Every day I learn something new about our wonderful medium, as I see how far I can push both it, and myself to create new techniques, work or designs. I look forward to seeing where this creative journey takes me."

And here are links where you can find Fiona: [Website](#), [Facebook](#), and [Etsy](#),

Other thoughts

Buy early for Christmas! The postage becomes chaotic the nearer we get to the Christmas season, so to avoid losses and delays do order what you need early!

You may know that 'Polymer Arts' is no longer being published.

I have acquired a large quantity of past copies that you can buy [here](#) in the UK (saving a lot of postage costs!) – they are available here

I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it...

Pablo Picasso

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