

Fairy Studio News

January 2007

Volume 1, Issue 1

The Beginners Polymer Clay Art Guild's... Fairy Studio launches the first Newsletter



New Look to the Fairy Studio

Special points of interest:

- What's new for 2007
Fairy Studio News
- This Month's Challenge:
A Polar Bear
- Past Challenges: What
have we been up to?
- Challenge Ideas: We're
leaving that up to you!



JCat

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This January, Jay and Shateal, the founders and co-owners of Beginners Polymer Clay Art Guild decided to give the Fairy Studio a whole new look. With this new look, there are new ideas of which this group newsletter is one.

There appear to many new exciting ideas coming forward this year, one of which is our "creating for a cause" project. The idea of this format is to take a few of our monthly challenges and designate a charitable group or wildlife assistance and donate the proceeds of the sale of our challenge entries.

Jay is setting up an eBay store for the group and will handle all the details. As the information is available the group will be informed.

We currently have 133 members in the BPCAG and 11 new members since January 1st. Welcome, and if you haven't already, please take a look at the Fairy Studio and meet the other members and check out some of the cool stuff! If you are a creative writer, there is a story waiting for you to continue in "The Never Ending Story".

If you need help and just don't know where to begin, or fear taking the first step, this is the group for you. All of the members will assist and make the first one or the 100th one a pleasurable experience. This group is not just for beginners. Many have advanced, but remain because this is not just a group, but a family. We all share what we have learned.

Nuts & Bolts... Where to start

One of the things you need is a good set of bones. Bones meaning a good armature. Depending on what you want to create, you'll need an armature to build on. A good armature is flexible, but not flimsy. If you want to make a Unicorn, you'll want good strong wire for the legs. If you are making a fairy, you'll want an armature that is easy to pose yet be thin enough so the wire doesn't poke through the clay on the arms.

Armatures can also be a combination of wire and tin foil. If you are making a piece that is going to be large, you will want to bulk up the armature with tin foil. Tin foil reduces the amount of clay being used, so the economical value is obvious. It also keeps the thickness of the clay consistent and that is very important when baking your piece. Try to keep your clay the same overall thickness as much as possible. Some clays bake at 260 to 275 for 15 min per 1/4 inch thickness. Making sure the thickness is similar throughout will make for a fully cured piece. This should also reduce thinner areas such as ears from burning.. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK!

Please email your questions and tips to Sprite: BRoKenPlanet@aol.com

Banner Selection

Starts

January 27, 2007

Fairy Studio News

CREATING ART AND FRIENDS

There be magic here!

Contacts

Fairy Studio Website

BPCAG Founders and Owners

Jay jcat@mtaonline.net

Shateal The_clay_girl@yahoo.com

BPCAG Co-Owners

Sprite BRoKenPlanet@aol.com

Suni suniann1123@yahoo.com

Jenny jennyvictorian@yahoo.com

Newletter Contributors

Judy serresseque@sanbrunocable.com

Janet KRay690387@aol.com

Purple Wyvern,

By Crafty Celtic Fairie



If you are a member of BPCAG and sell Polymer Clay related supplies, please send a clear photo of your item and a brief description to Shateal at:

The_clay_girl@yahoo.com



We started January 2006 with a wing challenge. Wings are very scary if you haven't tried them. They can be made of almost anything as our entries show.

March brought us the Leprechaun challenge. We girls got together to play a prank on our Jay. We decided to moon him! All of the entries were sent to Jay at the same time. That way, he didn't see it coming...you're a great guy Jay.

April was our Easter bunny challenge...what a cute bunch of wascally wabbits!

The idea of the challenges is to get us to try different things. To overcome obstacles we face in the art we want to create. To learn new things and to have FUN!



Polar Bear Challenge Starts
January 1st to the 31st.
Get your entries in to Jay



What kind of clay is best?

The clay you choose depends on what type of art you want to create. There are many good quality brands with fantastic colors to create anything. The strength of the clay will be important to the project.

The first clay we will find is Fimo or Sculpey and available in most craft stores. It will be a small package and many times on sale at a very good price. If you want to make colorful art, these are good to get started. Fimo makes four types of clay: Fimo Classic, Fimo Soft, Fimo Translucent and Fimo Decorating Gel. There are several Sculpey products. Regular Sculpey, Sculpey 3, Super Sculpey, Translucent Liquid Sculpey. Sculpey also

has the Premo brand. These are similarly priced in comparison to Fimo.

The higher end clays are Cernit, Prosculpt, Puppenfimo. These clays are available in larger, 1lb bricks. The colors are primarily flesh tones and are used by artist to create fairies and other characters. They also are higher in price.

Amongst all the members, each of the clays mentioned has been used by somebody, and each person has formed an opinion as to which they prefer. The best way to determine which clay is best for you, is to decide on a few projects and get some of each type of clay and experiment. You will soon see which ones you like to work

with and give you the best results. Try to get the freshest clay you can. If it has been on the shelf a while, the package when squeezed will not be soft. If you gently apply a little pressure and the clay gives, it's probably won't be so hard that it will crumble. Even older clay can be reconditioned. If you have clay that is so hard it just crumples, you can re-condition it with several items such as a little baby oil, or smoothing oil or similar products.

Someone in the group will have the right answer to that question.

Fairy Studio News

Philosopher's Corner

Janet

The Critique, for better or worse...



Oh Noooo Mr. Bill!

Cool Tip

Did you know...that clay can be kept in the freezer?

We learned this tip from

Jack Johnson,

developer of ProSculpt Clay

If you have a tip

Email Sprite:

BroKenPlanet@aol.com

It's hard to explain in words, but in a nutshell, a critique is intended to be constructive. It may end up hurting feelings or making the artist think, "I've been doing it wrong all along?", but its INTENT is to help. Perhaps the artwork is finished, or the suggested corrections cannot be made on THAT piece (erasers can do only just so much!) but the suggestions can be implemented in future works. Remember, they are only suggestions! They are offered by someone viewing with objective eyes, someone who means well and has to guess whether the artistic choices were made in the learning process or by stylistic purpose. (The artist had better be able to justify style choices, though!) The person offering critique may or may not have skills in tact and diplomacy. New art students often have bruised feelings when they first are exposed to class critiques. They get over it, or they don't. The art world will still move on. It's never a personal attack, even if the artist considers their work an extension of him/her self.

I don't know if that really clarifies the difference between critique and criticism. But perhaps it helps a bit. I've noticed that some folks over these many months I've been a member here are quite fragile about their work. Others are more accustomed to the critique process and seem to think it's an even playing field, which it's not. The first word in our group's name is "Beginners". Artists who are accustomed to critiques need to remember this. We need to remember what it felt like when we were new to the "crit". We may have been kids, but the tender-

ness of those moments wasn't so much from our age but from being NEW to criticism, however constructive. It can come at any age.

In my sophomore painting class, the professor was responding to an issue something like this. I don't recall the details, but I remember what he said. He addressed the entire class, not pinpointing the student who prompted it.

Tony was a GOOD teacher, BTW, and I'll bet he'd had to say this at least once a year. "If you want someone to say only nice things about your art, and not critique it, take it home and give it to your mother or grandmother. She'll put it up on her refrigerator, and show it off to all her friends." Sounds a bit harsh, but it made the impression it was meant to, even on those of us to whom it was not directed.

Tony was toughening us up, in his way. Another benefit of critiques is that they are meant to do that too. If we're not toughened up sooner, the art world, and the world of economics will do it later on.

Back to the word, "Beginners". I know that only a few of us have had that privilege of earlier critiques. This is a Beginner group... new to clay, new to sculpting, new to art, new to computers... any combination of the above, plus toss in a few more. Certainly we're new to each other, until we get settled in. This is an eclectic grouping of people with only a few common bonds, at first: we're beginners at polymer clay, or to sculpture... and we're concerned about turning polymer clay into ART of

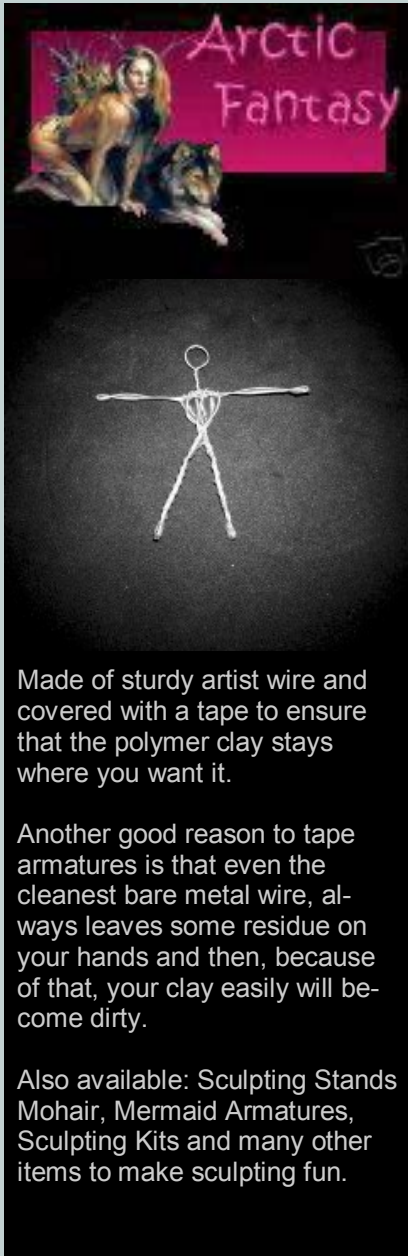
some kind. Through gentle encouragement, humor, and sharing, we have been *growing ourselves* together. I don't mean increasing the numbers of the group; I mean, growing as individuals, as artists, but doing it together, as a team. But it takes time for individuals to coalesce into a unit. And that unit will always be dynamic, changing as individuals change, come, or go.

Often, constructive criticism takes a back seat to this gentle encouragement, and I think that this is fine, given our Beginner status. But it's still in the back seat, silent or not. Some welcome it, others don't. Those who welcome critiques of their work need to be mindful of those who don't, and respect that. I could expound upon the difficulties of critiquing finished work, that cannot be altered for improvements, but that would be a whole other essay.

I have no ADVICE, other than to be sensitive to this difference, be open to development in your art, and be respectful of others' rights to be where and what they are in their art. This isn't a sermon, it's only an essay. I'm attempting to shed a little light on the artistic critique, as I have watched the need for such light in the past 15+ months that I've been privileged to call myself a member of this dynamic group.

Fairy Studio News

Things you just gotta have



Made of sturdy artist wire and covered with a tape to ensure that the polymer clay stays where you want it.

Another good reason to tape armatures is that even the cleanest bare metal wire, always leaves some residue on your hands and then, because of that, your clay easily will become dirty.

Also available: Sculpting Stands Mohair, Mermaid Armatures, Sculpting Kits and many other items to make sculpting fun.

This page is for members who also sell sculpting supplies.

If you have a Polymer Clay related supply business, your ad can go here.

Let other members know that you have what they need and are looking for.

Send your Logo and a clear photo of the item you want people to know about and a brief description to Shateal.

Shateal can enhance less than perfect images.

So send what you have. One Ad per issue.

One item per ad and a link to your site.

Ad size will be adjusted to fit the space

The_clay_girl@yahoo.com

www.arcticfantasy.com

We encourage all members to submit questions and items of interest. We hope you found this first issue interesting, informative and helpful. Your participation is welcome. All submissions must be received by the 3rd Monday of the month for the next upcoming issue.

Fairy Studio News

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 January Challenge Polar Bear	2 Chat 1:00 p ET	3 Chat 7:00 p ET	4	5	6 Chat 8:00 p ET
7	8 Marigold's BD	9 Chat 1:00 p ET	10 Chat 7:00 p ET	11	12	13 Chat 8:00 p ET
14	15	16 Chat 1:00 p ET	17 Shanna's BD Chat 7:00 p ET	18 Alex's BD	19	20 Chat 8:00 p ET
21	22	23 Chat 1:00 p ET	24 Chat 7:00 p ET	25	26	27 Suni's BD Chat 8:00 p ET
28	29	30 Chat 1:00 p ET	31 End of Challenge Chat 7:00 p ET	The Banners for the BPCAG will be added to the Fairy Studio on Friday 1/27. A poll will be set up and the voting will begin. Be sure to vote for your favorite.		

Happenings and Events

Four members celebrate their birthday this month....

Marigold 1/8

Shanna 1/17

Alex 1/18

Suni 1/27



Happy Birthday to YOU!

If you know of good online classes and think our members would be interested, or know of an upcoming event, please contact

Suni at:

suniann1123@yahoo.com

Don't forget to tell her your birthday!

Updates about the Creating for a Cause idea Will be available in the near future

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