

Meeting of the London Polymer Clay Group 22 March 2009

Report and photos by Carol Blackburn



For our March meeting we hired a room at the London Bubble theatre company in Rotherhithe as we had outgrown my studio and the homes of the other group members.

Our clay day fell on Mother's Day which meant some people couldn't come but Sally, a newcomer, solved this by bringing along her mum, Hazel, who is also a polyclayer!



We had a different format this time and instead of us each discussing our polymer creations, we displayed them all on the 'show and tell' table. Throughout the day we could view the items and ask the individual maker how something was made. Some people also displayed books showing the original source for their work. This gave us more time in which to have 3 demonstrations.

Susan Rimmer was the first to demo and she chose to show a range of beads she had made having been inspired after seeing Desiree McCrorey's website demo of her (American) football shaped Casablanca Beads. Susan started by making several different coloured skinny Skinner blends which she cut and stacked and rolled into a jelly roll cane. She made the beads by cutting the cane with a curved tissue blade held by a piece of thin wire. There was time between the first and the next demo to 'have-a-go' at making the beads.



For lunch everyone chose to save time and ate their packed lunches while continuing to clay.

After lunch I demo-ed Sutton Slicing. This is a technique named after Pete Sutton who 'discovered' it when trying to remove the remaining bits of polymer clay out of a deep cut rubber stamp. Lisa Pavelka developed the technique. The rubber stamp must be flexible with no wood backing. I pressed small pieces of clay into the rubber stamp.

Then I sliced the excess clay away with a very sharp tissue blade leaving clay in the recesses of the stamp only. After pressing and slicing more pieces of clay I placed a sheet of clay in a contrasting colour on the stamp, spritzed it with water and rolled the clay firmly with an acrylic roller. I flipped the stamp over and peeled the rubber stamp back on its self to release the 2 coloured textured clay.



After taking some time to experiment with the Sutton Slice technique, we had planned for Christine Dumont to present her Voila! project but she was unable to attend the clay day due to illness so Alison Gallant kindly stepped in and demo-ed for us. She showed us her 'take' on Julie Picarello's mokume gane technique and used Studio polymer clay for her demo. This prompted a discussion among the group about the merits of this relative new clay.

There was plenty of time after the final demo to try out the third technique of the day and take a group photo.

Our room at the Bubble Theatre was bright and airy with ample space for future expansion, and affordable with more participants. We all felt that there was great potential for this venue to become our regular home.

The next clay days are:-

**Sunday 24th May,
Sunday 26th July
Sunday 27th September.**

There is a fee of £10 for the day. If you plan to come please contact carol@carolblackburn.co.uk for details.