

Synergy 2008

Baltimore • February 24 • Cynthia Tinapple
Banquet Keynote

Don't we look grand in our finery?

Wizard of Oz – I'm used to being behind the curtain.

Thank you to all the organizers and volunteers who have brought us Synergy. This conference is certainly a big step forward toward a brighter and more distinguished future for the polymer clay community.

I want to recognize all those who have come from around the globe to join us. Those who come from beyond our borders are certainly an important part of polymer clay's future.

Let's take a look at that future.

Revisit the slides at:
polymerclaydaily.com/synergy

I'm going to whiz through these slides. Don't worry, they're online

Moving Forward

Looking Back



I think not

Watch Where You're Going



Effects ripple out

Kathleen Dustin talked about our history and how word was spread through coffee shops and serendipitous meetings and through friends of friends.

Carol Duval said that she entered television on a lark. And look at the impact she's had on our group.

Carol Watkins is wearing a Lorraine Hansberger necklace tonight that was rejected from a Creative Crafts Council show in the late 1980's. The council said it wasn't real clay and couldn't be considered.

Carol and Pat Berlin and other Washington artists were so mad that polymer clay wasn't being respected, that they formed a guild so that they could get some respect.

That necklace later won best of show and Carol felt she had to have this historically significant (and lovely) piece.

And that small circle of angry Washington artists has rippled out to be the international organization we're a part of tonight.

Appreciating the cumulative effect

of those who have gone before you

Celebrating the material

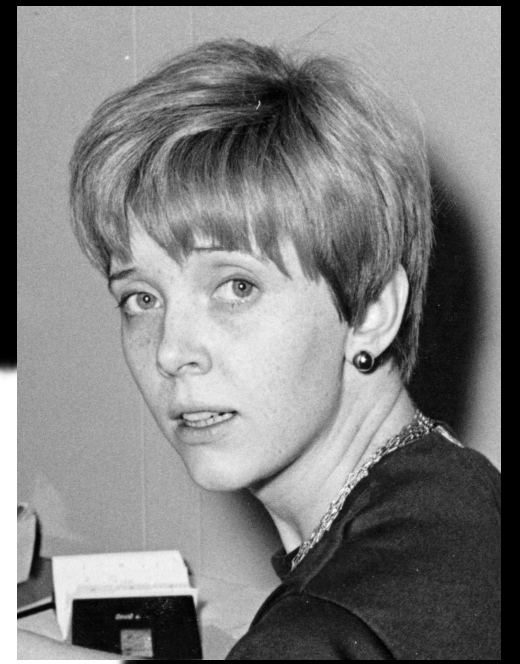
Understanding its inner qualities

Looking Back

Late 1930s - **Fl**fi's **MO**deling Compound



70's



Love Beads • Salt dough • Bread dough
Miniatures • Dolls • Puppets

80s and 90s

Riding a wave of good feeling that people felt about plastics and the wonderful array of products it brought into our lives

Early Timeline

- Pasta machine adapted by Marie Segal - 1983
- NPCG founded - 1990
- Shrine Mont begins - 1991
- “The New Clay” published - 1991
- Skinner blend introduced - 1996

Looking Back/Looking Forward

Polymer Clay 1.0	Polymer Clay 2.0	Polymer Clay 3.0
Canes Miniatures Sculpture Dolls Puppets	Transfers Carving Printing Extruding PMC Bookbinding Illustration and more	Mixed media Found objects Recycling
Media	Techniques	Story/Process

Polymer Clay Community

Polymer Clay 1.0	Polymer Clay 2.0	Polymer Clay 3.0
Sleepovers Small groups Retreats Books Newsletters Expert classes	Guilds/NPCG Cruises Regional mtgs Blogs Television Online classes	Smaller guilds Virtual guilds Internat'l classes Wikis Group blogs
National Conferences hands-on	National Conferences less hands-on	International Conferences SYNERGY

Selling Polymer Clay

Polymer Clay 1.0	Polymer Clay 2.0	Polymer Clay 3.0
Galleries Art shows Gift shops Wholesale	Etsy DaWanda Ebay Local shows Local shops	Online galleries Personal galleries
VHS tapes	DVDs	Downloads
Classes	Master classes	Online classes

Buying Clay & Tools

Tools from the domestic environment	Tools created for PC and Scrapbooking	Repurposed tools, adapters Fine tools
Clay from few Suppliers, Manufacturers, Hobby stores Mail order Phone order	Michaels JoAnns Big box stores Hobby stores	Amazon Online sources Hobby stores

Much has changed

What's next?

Art is a metaphor
for what's happening in our culture.

Art is a good barometer

- of current anxieties
- hopes
- confusions about modernity
- our place in a world over which we have little control

Post-war art appreciation

Historically there has been a resurgence of interest in
things handmade after a war

What's next?

The emphasis is shifting

Democratization of Craft

- The identity of craft is in transition
- There's an acidity, a questioning
- The rules are changing
- Reclaiming the right to seriousness
- Moving away from obsessive consumption
- DIY as an antidote to global consumerism

The Rules Are Changing

Crafts	DIY	Craft New Wave
quaint expression	self-reliance repurposing	moving away from obsessive consumption
for homemakers	post-war appreciation for handmade	global awareness reduce, reuse
early American primitive	retro 50s	collage anime, lowbrow

Anime – is that Japanese–inspired cartoony movement. I don’t understand it but it’s fabulous.

from obsessive consumption to

Meaningful Consumption

We still have a few obsessive shoppers (like Hollie, Meisha, Deb Davis and others who prefer to remain anonymous) and the gallery is grateful for them. We thank you.

- I think therefore I am
- I shop therefore I am
- I feel therefore I am

- People want to be engaged and inspired by what they buy
- Artwork must reflect strong values and ethics
- A global desire to make things better

Meaningful consumption

A way of saying

- I've contributed a little to help a craftsman and support the local economy
- The detail and the imperfection allude to a relationship with a human, not a machine
- Crafts affirm a slower pace of life, a sign of authentic quality

Demise of the consumer culture means the rise of

- Remaking
- Reconstituting
- Replicating

Similar to

- Remixing in the music industry
- Copy and paste in the software industry

The Rise of the Hybrid

- Diamonds and polymer
- PMC and polymer
- Wood and polymer
- Fiber and polymer
- Paper and polymer



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What's next?

The material will change

I'm not suggesting that the landfills have heaps of discarded polymer clay beads....though that is an interesting thing to envision.

We all have concerns about polymer clay's toxicity and how it affects those of us who work with it.. It worries us all as good citizens.

I'm predicting that our materials will continue to change over the next 5 to 10 years.

What's next?

- Biodegradable polymers and hybrid resins

Corn, sugar, castor oil, starches, switchgrass, tobacco are being genetically engineered to be used in plastic polymers

- Pushed by oil prices
- Recycling and environment necessities
- Medical and food industries

The energy is at the edges

Craft Mafia

Renegade Craft Fair

Indie Crafts

Deviant Crafts

Pop Surrealism

Anime

Outside the U.S.

These people (mostly young) are reading our blogs and following along quietly on the sidelines.

Polymer Clay 3.0
attracting youth
from the ETSY, Deviant,
foreign, DIY audiences

In some of our sessions, people seemed wary of these groups and the DIY movement. I say embrace them. They're the future of our craft.

New artists are sometimes

Fearless

Youth are drawn to:

- Communal experience of craft
- Sewing circle meets the blog
- People who are not accomplished learn from those who are accomplished

The energy is abroad

Where crafts are taken more seriously

The source of the next new technique?

The exotic art class experience

PCDaily audience
37% abroad



Your problem will not
be copying

Your problem will be
obscurity

Ask yourself

What is my intention?

Jeff Dever and his Friday panel talked about “intentionality”

Ask Yourself

How can I create art in a responsible way?

Know what informs your work

What are its emotional qualities?
Where do I get my nourishment?
Is my work authentic?
Immerse yourself in work

Personal Mission Statement

7 words

Find beauty
Share beauty
and accessorize well

Unintended consequences

effects ripple outward

I remind you that Lindly was planning a sleepover at Shrine Mont in 1990.

I have to tell you that Carol Watkins approached Tim McCreight and asked if he grew up in Dayton. Yes, he did. She asked if his father was a minister. Yes, he was. “I was your babysitter,” Carol told him.

You set the standards

In craft, comparisons, ratings and testings
are deflected from other people into the self

Design to Delight

Delight yourself. Delight your customer.

Exciting global art adventures

lie ahead for polymer clay artists

Watch Where You're Going

