

International Polymer Clay Association News

March 2009

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<http://www.theipca.org>

This is the space for you to communicate with the Polymer Clay community. Send materials for consideration in the next IPCA newsletter by the deadline March 22, 2009.

Send to the [Executive Director, Kathy Reynolds](#).

From the IPCA Executive Director

We're Listening . . . Results of the IPCA Online Survey



Last month the IPCA invited members and nonmembers alike to participate in a survey. We were overwhelmed by over 1000 returns, and are still processing them! Thanks to all of you for your input. The board reviewed the survey results at our Strategic Planning Meeting last month, and we're now working hard on a list of projects and methods to put your feedback into action. Watch for an article in the April newsletter by IPCA president Suzanne Ivester about discussions and decisions at the Strategic Planning Meeting.

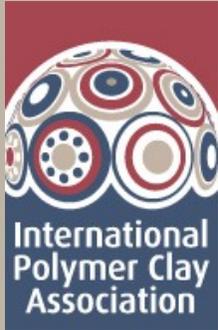
Although the survey is now closed, you can still contact us at administration@theipca.org to let us know what's important to you. You can also register for IPCA membership online at www.theipca.org.

Who responded to the survey?

Of those who answered the survey, 30% identified themselves as hobbyists and 40% as semi-professionals. Nearly two-thirds of those who responded belong to a local polymer clay group and/or a virtual online group. Current IPCA members constituted 37% of survey respondents.

What do clayers want from the IPCA?

- Most frequent requests: more retreats, master workshops, juried exhibits, and project articles.
- Members-only galleries of all work, along with artist interviews, tutorials, and project articles (2/3 of responses).
- Self-selecting tiered memberships with additional benefits to include: a gallery page on the website with links to individual websites; compilation of IPCA portfolios to be published yearly for museums and galleries; notices of professional opportunities.



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- Special exhibit opportunities.
- A teachers' registration area on the website.
- IPCA partnerships with local polymer clay groups to provide assistance with materials, mentoring programs, and links with regional, national and international guilds.

How can the IPCA change to better serve your needs?

Events and Travel Options About one-third of those surveyed felt IPCA events were too far away and expressed concerns about the costs of travel and fees. Over half of US respondents said they probably couldn't attend international events. We're working hard to have smaller, regional events and to offer online resources as an alternative. We're also negotiating for sites and travel at the lowest possible rates.

The IPCA's 2009 retreat, "A World of Inspiration," is open to registration now at a special early-bird rate. Centrally located in suburban Chicago, the retreat is within a day's drive of much of the US, and air travel to Chicago's O'Hare airport is competitively priced.

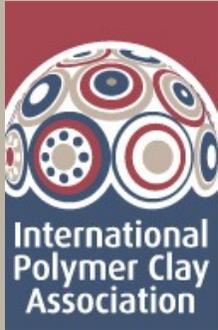
You can help control event costs for IPCA members by suggesting venues, facilitating, and by volunteering for events to keep them affordable and more accessible.

International Scope The IPCA is committed to living up to the "International" in its new name. The survey revealed a strong interest in international events and collaborations, which will be increasingly important as our membership grows. An interest was expressed in developing juried exhibitions to travel nationally and eventually internationally. Another suggestion was advertising in international publications as part of our marketing and communications planning. Events and conferences outside the US are also under consideration.

Hands-on Clay Opportunities Those surveyed cited master workshops as a priority. Another suggestion was for the IPCA to host more than one retreat every two years. The board will keep these interests in mind as we plan future events.

Newsletter Over 80% of those surveyed said they value the monthly newsletter, but 15% were not aware of it! The IPCA newsletter is e-mailed to members monthly. It is designed to be interactive and depends on your continued input. For more information regarding membership benefits, including the newsletter, visit the [Membership Benefits](#) page on our Web site.

Website Over two-thirds of survey respondents visit the IPCA website monthly or at least several times a year. The board has taken note of the sections of the website you enjoy most. Since this is our primary communications resource, we want to continue to improve it and tailor it specifically to your needs. It is also a means of forming international connections and linking with important



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information and updates.

We are a non-profit and so are considering advertising primarily as a service and not as a source of revenue. About 30% of those surveyed approved, and half had no opinion. Marketing plans are underway to consider these options.

Executive Director The survey also addressed the role of our new Executive Director. Responses concerning her most important functions were divided fairly evenly among: networking with arts organizations, working with the board to facilitate events and activities, fundraising, and acting as a spokesperson/advocate. Also emphasized were personal exchanges, developing a vision statement, generating ideas, and responding to geographic diversity.

Specific objectives for the Executive Director included developing a business plan, outlining and achieving goals, administrative direction, and financial management. Flexibility, background in the arts and experience in polymer clay, and the support of local artists were also noted as important.

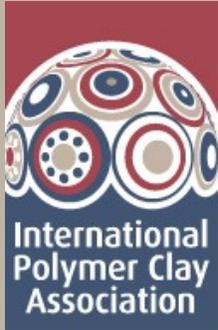
Help us to earn your membership!

Almost two-thirds of those surveyed had either never joined the IPCA or had let their membership lapse. Many of those respondents said they saw little value in membership. We want to change that!

Almost one-third of the non-members who responded said they didn't understand the benefits of membership, but more than 250 requested more information. This is a real opportunity for the IPCA! We won't contact you without your permission, but we encourage you to [contact us](#) with any questions or to request more information about the IPCA and its programs.

We are now working on an Action Plan to incorporate the valuable ideas and directions provided by our members and associates. Please contact us with any questions at administration@theipca.org; we welcome your continued support and input as many of these concepts become reality.

Special thanks to Barbara Forbes-Lyons, Judy Belcher and the Board of the IPCA for their formatting and administration of the survey, and to all of you for your candid, creative, and constructive Bottom of Form responses.



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You Asked, and We Listened

Our recent survey showed that members were interested in viewing each others work, so the IPCA has turned to Flickr (free photo sharing application) to implement that capability. IPCA members with current Flickr accounts are encouraged to make 'internationalpolymerclay' a contact, which will trigger an invite to join the group pool. Members who do not currently have a Flickr account will need a [Yahoo! ID](#) before following these simple instructions to [create](#) an account.

To view the group directly, visit <http://www.flickr.com/groups/theipca>

The upcoming IPCA Retreat 2009 is a direct result of feedback from a survey last July, and is also evidence that your input matters to the IPCA in its programs and planning.

IPCA Retreat 2009: A World of Inspiration

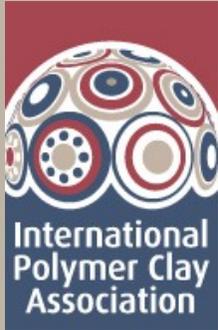
What is a Retreat?

As defined in Wikipedia:

"The term retreat has several related meanings, all of which have in common the notion of safety or temporarily removing oneself from one's usual environment in order to become immersed in a particular subject matter."

In the polymer clay community a retreat is an event where members of the community gather together and experience the joy of creating and learning, together. These Retreat events usually take place over the course of several days and can include demonstrations by the participants, themed swaps and challenges, philanthropic projects (such as Bottles of Hope or Hearts for Heroes) and allow the participants to 'get away from it all' with their claying friends.

Retreats differ from a Workshop event in that there are no scheduled classes and participants are free to work on whatever project or technique is appealing.



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We hope you'll join the members of the world-wide polymer clay community at the 2009 IPCA Retreat: A World of Inspiration!

Retreat Registration is Open

Please visit the IPCA web site at <http://internationalpolymerclay.org> and you will see the Retreat Registration menu item at the top of the list.

Before registering, please [log in](#) to the site and verify that your membership is current. After you log in, check the User Menu and click My Membership to see your current status and click Join or Renew your Membership to renew.

After your renewal payment is processed, the Registration form will be available to you.

The Members' Only Earlybird Registration Fees for the 2009 Retreat are \$375 (with banquet), \$330 (without Banquet)

You may purchase meal plans or banquet tickets for your traveling companions. Single tickets for the Closing Banquet are \$45. Full meal packages, which include access to the coffee/soda breaks, are \$200.

Souvenir t-shirts are available for purchase at the time of registration.

Full details about the Retreat, including Frequently Asked Questions are on the IPCA Web site. Please remember that Registration does not include lodging. Please refer to the IPCA Web site for details.

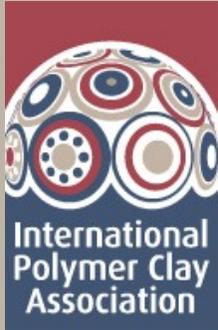
Our Guest Artist



The Guest Artist for the 2009 IPCA Retreat is well-known polymer clay artist and teacher (and all around great gal), Christi Friesen! Christi will spend most of Monday, July 13 holding scheduled demonstrations as well as being available to Retreat Attendees for questions, critiques and advice.

Christi teaches all over the world, publishes a series of books and individual project sheets and sells supplies and art through her website. She's a lively and dynamic individual and you will love spending

time with her, both in the Retreat Workroom and during her Demo Day.



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Metal Clay World Conference

Immediately following the IPCA Retreat, Art Clay Silver USA is hosting the 2009 Metal Clay World Conference at the Hilton Indian Lakes Resort. Pre-conference workshops begin on July 13 and the Metal World Conference runs from July 16-18. The event includes classes and presentations by IPCA members Lorrene Davis, Maria Martinez, Lisa Pavelka and IPCA Board member Cindy Silas plus many other artists in the metal clay and metalworking community.

Consider staying on a few days extra and exploring this exciting medium!

For more information, please visit <http://www.metalclayworldconference.com>.

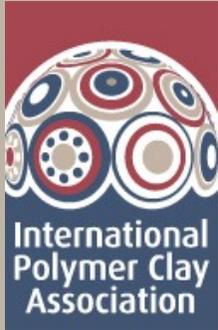
Synergy II Request for Proposals

Synergy, one of the most successful and enjoyable NPCG past conferences is being reformulated and given an international scope for the sequel, titled Synergy II, coming to Baltimore, Maryland in 2010. Synergy II promises to be even more dynamic than the original, and is already gaining momentum and excitement in the polymer and mixed media communities. Full details and the Request for Proposals form will be posted to the IPCA website in the next few weeks, so keep watching. You may also contact administration@theipca.org for further information.

International Association Updates

ACREs of Opportunity

The final three artists for the NPCG booth at the ACRE show in Las Vegas have been selected! The artists who will be attending ACRE, representing the possibilities of polymer clay and taking orders for their work are: Lauren Abrams, Pat Bolgar and Barbara Fajardo.



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CODAchrome

Winning designs from Progress & Possibilities Exhibition will be selected for a special exhibit and sale to be held during the Craft Organization Development Association (CODA) conference. The exhibit will continue through August 2009. The exhibit is being assembled by the American Woodturner's Association, hosts of this year's CODA conference and will include work by each attending organization.

Approaching Deadlines

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Please submit any news, polymer tips or information you'd like to be considered for use in the next IPCN e-mail by March 22, 2009. Submit all information to: administration@theipca.org

Focus on IPCA Members

(IPCA members are highlighted in bold face):

Melanie West in Art Jewelry Magazine April issue

Christi Friesen, Lynn Anne Schwarzenberg in Bead Unique Magazine

Barbara McGuire in Bead & Button Magazine

Deborah Anderson in Bead Unique Magazine

PolymerCAFÉ - February 2009

Berry Cute Critter - **Christi Friesen**

Mica Shift Pendant - Lorraine Robertson

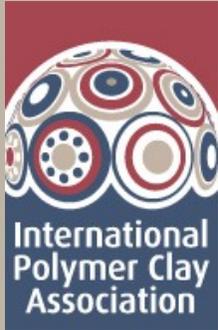
The Look of Ceramic - **Sharon Solly**

Fast and Easy Jewelry Finishing Techniques, Part 2 - Stephania Harden-Martin

NO FEAR Sculpting: Some Structural Advice for Tough Times - **Les Polinko**

"Skinner Blending" My Passions - **Ron Lehocky MD**

Creative Sparks - **Dayle Doroshow**



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Two Clay or Not Two Clay: A Metal Clay and Polymer Clay Pendant - Donna Penoyer and Laura Tabakman

PolymerCAFÉ - April 2009

Lantern Beads - Sophia Lenz

Twisted Bead Necklace - Carina Feichtinger

Catching Compliments - Lela (Lee Ann) Armstrong

No Waste Clay Beads: Two for One - Julie Samara

The Mixing Media Challenge Winners

Nudge Your Creativity - Christi Friesen

A Bouquet in a Cane - Beth Kazee Curran

Painted Mica Technique - Sharon "Harry" Solly



Mark and Myra Johnson, owners of

Uniquities! Jewelry and Accessories in Lexington, Kentucky and IPCA members, have their 'Inferno' color pattern polymer art clay necklace featured in the March/April 2009 issue of Step By Step Beads.

They also have their 'Inferno' color pattern bracelet featured as a free project on Beading Daily, Step By Step Beads' sister site. Make this Inferno Bead bracelet to complement the Inferno Bead necklace in the March-April 2009 issue of Step by Step Beads.

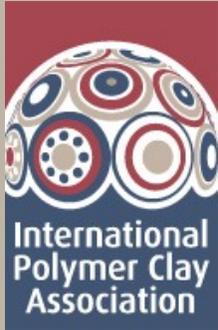
The link is:

<http://www.stepbystepbeads.com/sbsbeads/issues/marapr09.cfm> .

Their work may be seen at www.uniquitiesja.com and in their ShopHandmade store at www.shophandmade.com/Store/Uniquitiesja . They can be reached at info@uniquitiesja.com. Phone: 859-489-1025. Fax: 859-263-1962.



Ann Kruglak has a polymer clay piece entitled "Silverada" which was accepted into the 2009 Women's Work exhibit in Woodstock, Illinois. The exhibit runs from March 5 - April 25 at the Old Court House Art Center. Ann's website is: www.MysticDreamerArt.com or contact Art for the Earth at 303-443-231.



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Awards/Call for Entries

(Refer to [Art Calendar](#) magazine for expanded listings)

Awards

[Interweave's Bead Star](#) winners have been announced.

[2009 NICHE Award](#) winners have been announced. Winners were announced Feb. 15, 2009 during the Buyer's Market of American Craft show in Philadelphia, PA. Congratulations to IPCA member Jeffrey Lloyd Dever!

Applications for the 2010 NICHE award contest will be available Spring 2009.

Call for Entries

Halstead Bead Jewelry Business Development Grant

Deadline: June 17, 2009

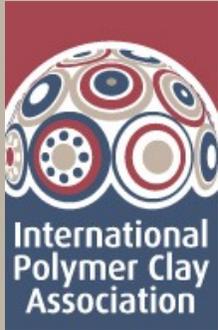
Award: \$5,000 cash+

No entry fee required

www.halsteadbead.com/grant

Halstead Bead, Inc. is calling for entries to its fourth annual Business Development Grant competition for new American jewelry designers entering the bridge jewelry trade. The grant will be awarded to a winning candidate in August. All finalists will be eligible for a mentorship program that matches new designers with established and successful jewelry entrepreneurs. The Halstead Bead Business Development Grant differs from other jewelry industry competitions and awards because of its emphasis on business skills. Entrants must demonstrate extraordinary design, and a strong business strategy.

Designers utilizing a wide variety of fabrication techniques including casting, lampworking, precious metal clay, beading, or metalsmithing are eligible to enter the competition. Candidates must be US citizens who began their businesses after January 1, 2006. Previous grant winners include Bridgland Studios, Belle Brooke Designs, and Ananda Khalsa Jewelry.



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Bead Star 2009

[Bead Star 2009 contest rules are now available](#) . Check out the IPCA website for complete details.

Polymer Clay Productions

PCP is hosting classes and they're looking for teachers who are willing to "cast" from their own homes. For teaching, attending classes and general information, visit Craftedonline.com .

Events and Classes

Events

[CRAFTBOSTON](#) - March 27-29, 2009, Seaport World Trade Center, 200 Seaport Blvd., Boston, MA

[American Craft Council St. Paul](#) - April 17-19, 2009, St Paul River Centre, 175 West Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, MN

[2009 Smithsonian Craft Show](#) - April 23-26, 2009, Washington, D.C. National Building Museum

[American Association of Museums](#) Annual Meeting - April 30- May 4, 2009, Philadelphia Convention Center, Philadelphia, PA

[American Craft Council San Francisco](#) - August 14-16, 2009, Fort Mason Center, San Francisco, CA

Polymer Clay Collaborative & Mixed Media Retreat. First Annual Retreat, June 1-6, 2009. www.pccmmretreat.com

Bolinas (California) Creativity Retreat, April 7-12, 2009. "Color Everywhere!"

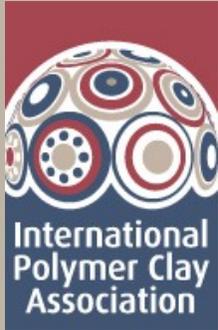
Two sources of information: website-

http://www.toryhughes.com/TORY_HUGHES/Bolinas.html

Tory's blog just for Bolinas, with RSS feed and you can comment too!

http://www.toryhughes.com/TORY_HUGHES/Bolinas_Log/Bolinas_Log.html

The retreat fee of \$1400 includes everything, and can be paid by check or Paypal. Read more about Tory's thoughts on her blog.



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Portuguese Polymer Group

Lisbon, Portugal, July 4-5, 2009

Boxes with Personality

A two day class that explores three types of box construction as well as surface design. Bring in a favorite bead to add to your lid or as another element inside your box.

<http://www.associacaoartemassapolimera.pt/>

contact: Cristina apampgeral@gmail.com

That Creative Place

[That Creative Place](#) - hosting clay and clay-related classes, ongoing dates. Upcoming classes include: Barb Fajardo, March 21, 2009.

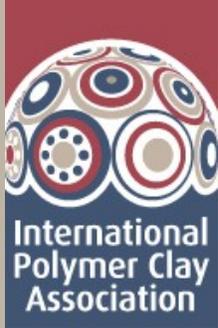
Other Classes

2009 Bead & Button Show in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. For more information about Show events, the marketplace, and a full listing of classes (May 31 – June 7, 2009), please check out the B & B Show website:

<http://www.beadandbuttonshow.com/bnbshow/default.aspx>

[Callforcreativity.com](http://www.callforcreativity.com)

It is no secret that times are tough. They are tough for everyone. You, however, are a bit more fortunate than most. Why? Because you are a creative person. No matter whether you paint, sculpt, write prose or poetry, you belong to an extraordinary collection of people on this planet that have dreams and visions and act to put that which you create out there for others to see. Call for Creativity is about Discipline and Courage. It is a place where creative people come together to connect with others who will encourage a disciplined approach to creativity. Call for Creativity is a community that builds courage. Your paintings, sculptures, photos, poems, prose, and musical compositions (yes now we have audio!!) are welcome at Call for Creativity. Oh, and as for the money, it is free!! The only cost is your discipline and courage. Come join with us today, it can make the tough times a little easier. You have friends waiting for you at <http://www.callforcreativity.com>



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Action Flower Brooch

Louise Fischer Cozzi is coming to Houston for a 2-day Workshop entitled “Action Flower Brooch”, May 16-17, 2009. Louise will be teaching her unique translucent coloring methods using oil paints and Prismacolor pencils/sticks, and demo'ing her rub off image transfer. Serious professional finishing techniques will be stressed.

Techniques taught will include:

- Mixing clay with paints
- Etching and transferring patterns
- Image Transfer
- Fine edge finishing - sanding, golding and varnishing
- Translucent surface coloring methods using oil paints and Prismacolor pencils and sticks
- Assembly methods
- Professional pinback finishing and signatures

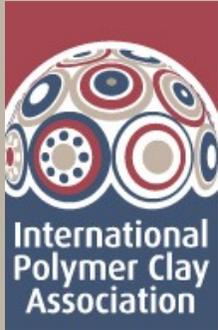
Join us for this fun and inspiring class. Go the Houston Polymer Clay Guild website at www.houstonpolyclay.org to see photos of samples of the project and to sign up.

Lorreen Davis

Lorrene Davis will be holding Introductory and Intermediate polymer clay workshops on April 25 - 26. She has won numerous jewelry awards, had an article in PolymerCAFE (2006), Jewelry Artist (Lapidary Journal 2005), written a book Setting Gemstones into Metal Clay, and has given many demos on the use of polymer clay. Her focus is on cane making and the use of color. She has a new blade shaping technique she loves to demo. Lorrene Davis, ACM - new class listing posted. Gemstones in Metal Clay Book : Under 100 left.

<http://www.LorreneDavisDesigns.com>

<http://www.lorrene-davis-designs.blogspot.com>



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Meredith Arnold

Meredith Arnold will be teaching two workshops through the South Florida Jewelry Arts Guild - Miami, FL beginning March 19, 2009. The two workshops combined will result in an etched metal and polymer bracelet similar to her bracelet in the Dec. issue of Jewelry Artist magazine.

Meredith Arnold and Marie Segal will be teaching some mini workshops at the Polymer Clay Collaborative Mixed Media Retreat in Shepardstown, W.V. being held June 1-6. Meredith's subjects include "Polymer Clay Books" and her popular, new Silk Beads. Marie's mini-shops include "Ink, Powder and Paints", "Beads, Beads, and More Beads" and "Stamp This: Mokume Gane". These mini workshops range from 2 - 4 hours long with prices ranging from \$25-\$40. Come join the fun! www.mereditharnold.com.

Meredith Arnold's interview is on PBS Create!TV in 'Beads, Baubles and Jewels' (episode #906). A brief clip of Meredith's interview with Indie Arts DVD magazine is on www.indieartsdvd.com, for Issue #8. Her article and interview is in the December 2008 issue of Jewelry Artist Magazine. Meredith is also on EdCC TV, the schedule is on www.edcc.edu/artsnow.

Julie Eakes

Julie Eakes will be teaching 'Face Canes' at Annie Hooten's, Albuquerque, New Mexico - March 28-29, 2009. Contact Annie for information and registration (505)228-8703.

MDPAG Retreat

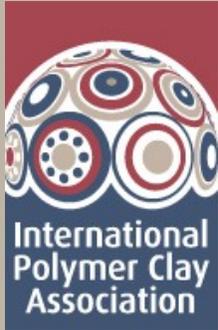
[MDPAG Retreat](#) (Metro Detroit Polymer Art Guild) - March 26-29, 2009, Clarkston, MI

For events beyond March 2009, please visit the IPCA website.

Does your local guild have an upcoming workshop or class - or are you hosting a workshop or class? Log in to the IPCA website to post your information and to be included in the events calendar.

Not sure if there is a local guild near you? Visit the IPCA website to find a local guild - and to see the events and classes posted.

For art events worldwide - visit [American Craft Magazine's calendar](#).



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Exhibitions

SCULPTING COLOR IN YOUR HANDS

Fuller Craft Museum

455 Oak Street

Brockton, MA

August 8 - November 22, 2009

info: www.fullercraft.org

If you have your work on display, please be sure to send details by the 22nd of the month prior to distribution.

Charitable and Social Efforts

You can help to make a difference! Check out the organizations/efforts listed below and consider sharing some of your talent, time and creativity.

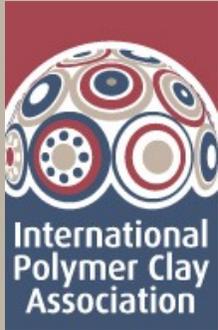
Change.org

Take a moment to join Change.org (if you aren't already a member) and vote to let our government know you agree that American made souvenirs should be displayed and sold in our national parks.

Arrowmont

Arrowmont needs your help - they have lost their lease! The Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts has played a vital role in the growth of the NPCG/IPCA. Many a polymer workshop and retreat has been held on the Arrowmont grounds.

Arrowmont also provides high quality art and craft instruction and outreach to Sevier County schools and is key partner in Gatlinburg's craft community. Further, the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts is a key participant in a brand new Tennessee Department of Tourism initiative, undertaken as a partnership with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the National Geographic Society, the University of Tennessee, and the Center for Historic Preservation at MTSU. This effort, to establish "sustainable heritage tourism" in Gatlinburg, is designed to work as an economic engine attracting high quality tourism and increased tourist revenue to the gateway cities of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and



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the surrounding region. Visit <http://www.arrowmont.org/arrowmontnews.html> to learn more.

Ongoing Efforts

[Bead of Courage](#) and [how to help](#); "[Hearts for Heroes](#)" and [how to help](#)

This is the space for you to communicate with the Polymer Clay community. Send materials for consideration in the next IPCA newsletter by the deadline March 22, 2009. Send to administration@theipca.org.

Local Guild News

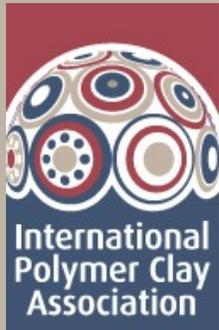
A new Guild is forming in central Vermont. Anyone interested in joining the group can contact [Christine Damm](#) for more information.

Sylvie Peraud announced the creation of a new association in France, Gathering Polymer and Metal Clays. Its name is "[LezArt'gil](#)" which in fact means "the clays". The objectives of this association are quite similar to those of the IPCA: concentrate and share information, educate by the means of workshops, conferences, publications, have polymer and metal clays recognized as artistic mediums.

A new Guild is forming for Sioux Falls SD and surrounding areas. Guild Meetings are currently scheduled for the first Saturday each month. Classes and Workshops will be given on a weekly basis. Call [Cheryl](#) for more information at 605-362-6599.

The [Polymer Clay Artists Guild of Etsy](#) runs monthly challenges for guild members, with prizes being provided by members of PCAoGE. They also run an [Etsy Street Team](#).

Additional guild news and updates are available at the [IPCA website](#).



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Ongoing Multi-Media Resources and Blogs

[Polymer Clay Workshops](#) - online calendar and news of polymer clay workshops and classes.

[Craft Cast](#) - podcasts hosted by Alison Lee. Download artist interviews for use on your iPod or listen online

[Polymer Clay TV.com](#)

[Swoondimples](#) -Heather Wynn's blog

[Polymer Clay Daily](#) - Cynthia Tinapple's blog

[IndieArtVideo](#) - blog of the publisher/producer of a multi-media magazine in DVD format

[Clayzee.com](#) - resources in polymer clay and mixed media publications

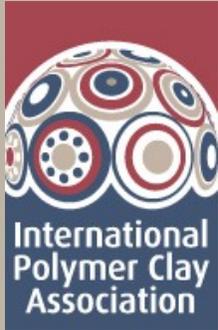
New blog featuring polymer clay artists from [etsy.com](#) - one artist a day. The blog also has a growing collection of links to the blogs of other clayers. The link is:<http://polymerclaychameleon.blogspot.com>. For more information contact eugena@eugenascrations.com.

[Facebook](#) is the 5th most trafficked site in the world. It has over 63 million active users, and that doubles every 6 months. Mari Smith discussed how to use Facebook as another way to create visibility for you and your art at the smARTist Telesummit 2009 last month. Recordings are available by contacting [Artist Advocate Magazine.com](#).

Publications, Newsletters, and Media Resources

[Polymer Art Archive](#) documents the early development of polymer art with weekly posts about polymer work which is not represented elsewhere on the internet.

American Style Magazine featured an extensive article on polymer clay in the April issue, along with photos and editorials. www.americanstyle.com



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NICHE Magazine 2009 Top Retailer Award

It all begins with your nominations, so cast your vote now at:
www.AmericanCraft.com/Top_Retailer

Sponsored by *NICHE* magazine, the **NICHE Top Retailer Awards** annually recognize the best craft retailers, arts nonprofits, museum stores and guilds in the U.S. and Canada for growing and strengthening the North American craft community.

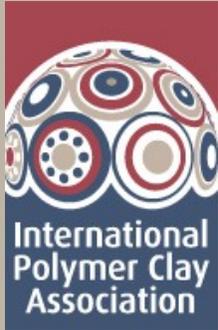
Only 24 retailers will be named a **2009 Top Retailer**, and only one will win the coveted **2009 NICHE Retailer of the Year** award. *NICHE* magazine will also honor 10 retailers, arts nonprofits, museums and guilds in special categories including Best Visual Merchandising, Best Advertising Campaign and Best Arts Nonprofit.

Nominations close March 31. Nominate up to five galleries for a Top Retailer Award and at least one retailer, arts nonprofit, museum store or guild for any of the special categories. **To vote online, download a ballot or request a ballot by mail, please visit www.AmericanCraft.com/Top_Retailer.**

Arts Advocacy

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was one of the first agencies in the federal government to release [grant guidelines](#) for applying for economic stimulus and job recovery arts funds. As you may recall, the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act signed by President Obama on February 17, 2009 provided \$50 million to support jobs in the arts through NEA grants.

This recovery funding is a direct outcome of the hard work of arts advocates across the country. It is a major accomplishment that Congress included direct support for the arts along with increased funding for several other federal programs that can indirectly support the arts, such as Community Development Block grants, the Rural Development program and Transportation Enhancements. On the NEA Recovery webpage, the new guidelines provide application dates, eligibility criteria and potential project outlines. In order to get money out to the arts field as quickly as possible, the NEA is fast-tracking the process. The deadline for applying for the direct grants is April 2, 2009, with grants being awarded as early as July 1, 2009. These direct grants will be available to arts organizations as non-matching one-time grants of \$25,000 or \$50,000. Local arts agencies are provided \$100,000 or \$250,000 for re-granting activities.



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One immediate issue of concern for Americans for the Arts is that the NEA is requiring that any applicant for the direct grants must have received an NEA grant within the last four years. The agency has set this requirement as a result of direction from the White House Office of Management &

Budget (OMB). OMB has recommended obligating funds to existing award recipients as a method of ensuring that the applicant pool can be considered quickly and to ensure quality. Complete details on applicant eligibility and the rest of the recovery grant program are available on the [NEA's Recovery website](#).

The arts community is undergoing enormous challenges right now - like much of the workforce. Earlier this week,

USAToday ran a front-page story titled, "[Fine Arts Are In Survival Mode As Funds Dry Up](#)." These recovery funds are intended "to focus on projects that preserve jobs in the arts." Please help us continue this important work by becoming an official member of the Arts Action Fund. Play your part by joining the Arts Action Fund today -- it's free and simple.

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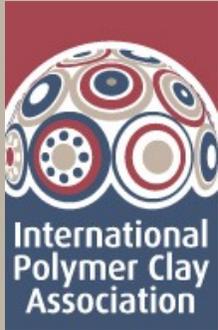
Arts & the Economy Report

The National Governors Association has released a new 40-page report, [Arts & the Economy: Using Arts and Culture to Stimulate State Economic Development](#), that demonstrates the vital role that arts and culture industries play in the economic health of every state. Using concrete examples from many states, the report details benefits provided by the creative industries - including job creation, increased tourism, and ways the arts give businesses a creative edge.

Arts & the Economy was prepared in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and NASAA. Read this report and the six Issue Briefs that have resulted from this collaboration at: <http://www.nasaa-arts.org/nasaa/news/nga.shtml>

Craft Emergency Relief Fund (CERF)

CERF invites you to look at their [Yearbook 2008](#): which is a sampling of the artists they assisted this past year. In this atmosphere of uncertainty, two things remain constant. The first is that craft artists will continue to create tangible objects that are beautiful and inspired. The second constant is that some of those artists



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will face career-threatening emergencies that will challenge their ability to continue creating the objects we value.

CERF asks that you consider a donation so that it can continue to assist artists in 2009 as it has in 2008 and over the last 23 years, to help them keep temporary setbacks for artists from turning into permanent silence.

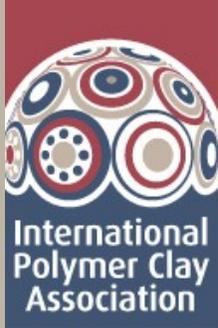
Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act

After the many toy recalls in 2007 and early 2008, Congress acted swiftly to create and approve legislation that has come to be known as the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA). The intent of the law, to protect our nation's children from toxic substances, is a noble cause. Unfortunately, the law has caused many unintended consequences for handcrafters throughout our nation. Simply stated, the law requires third party batch testing and labeling for all products created for children under the age of 12. This not only includes toys, but books, clothing, accessories, school equipment, and the list goes on. For large manufacturers who work in batches totally in the thousands, this is not a major expense, but for artisans, this is cost prohibitive.

We, at Wholesalecrafts.com have been watching the enactment of this law, which was to go in affect February 10, 2009, but thankfully, a 'stay' has been granted. The law affects makers and sellers of all products for children under the age of 12 that have not been certified to be below the new national standard for lead and phthalates (a chemical that makes plastics more pliable).

Currently, groups such as the Handmade Toy Alliance (www.handmadetoyalliance.org), are working hard to have Congress adapt common sense amendments, such as component based testing certification and natural materials exemptions, to the CPSIA. Their idea, "Save Small Business from the CPSIA" was one of the top ten ideas for change on www.change.org - a President Obama initiative - and was presented to President Obama upon his inauguration. They are now working with the change.org team to pair with a non profit agency to build national awareness of the CPSIA and its affects on small business. Their collective voices are being heard, but there is much work to be done and without a formal lobby or lawyers, the path to enact change is long. As artists, retailers, and arts managers, we all know the passion and energy that goes into our businesses. We are a community and often come together in times of trouble to support one another. The children's craft market needs your help!

There is still much work to be done to change the CPSIA. This week, a proposal by Sen. DeMint (SC) will be heard on the Senate floor to amend the CPSIA. We urge you to write a letter to your Members of Congress letting them know that you are aware of the CPSIA and the unintended consequences it has on artists throughout our nation. Tell your legislators that common sense changes need to be made to help small businesses comply with the CPSIA and should be enacted in



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the law. Urge them to support the technical amendment before them. To find the Congress people in your district, go to:

http://www.house.gov/house/MemberWWW_by_State.shtml. To read more about the technical amendment that will be introduced, click [here](#).

For more information and additional ways that you can help, please visit www.handmadetoyalliance.org. Thank you for your help with their mission.

Nancy Vince, President

www.Wholesalecrafts.com

www.ACRELasVegas.com

Resources

Artist Advocate Magazine is mailed to 6,500 galleries and can showcase work to help artists contract with an art gallery. Unfortunately, many artists are simply not in a position to invest in a full- or half-page ad. To answer their need, *Artist Advocate* has developed the [Artist Directory](#), which will appear inside a future issue of *Artist Advocate*. For more information, visit <http://www.artistadvocatemagazine.com>.

My name is Yaroslav, and I am a student of the University of Minnesota. My father and I have developed a new polymer clay. The initial state is similar to a mix of Silly Putty and Play-Doh, and after baking in the oven it becomes a resin (soft, elastic, expandable to 500% material). It has various gamma of colors and has unique properties. You can find it on the website oleg.knet.ru (in Russian, but with pictures).

Polymer Clay Swaps - Darleen Bellan is hosting a Steampunk Swap using PC as the main medium. Contact her at www.darbelladesigns.com.

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